

The Age of Süleyman "the Magnificent" (1520–1566) Under Süleyman, popularly known as "the Magnificent" or "the Lawmaker," the Ottoman empire reached the apogee of its military and political power. Süleyman's armies conquered Hungary, over which the Ottomans maintained control for over 150 years, and they advanced as far west as Vienna, threatening the Habsburgs. To the east, the Ottoman forces wrested control of Iraq from the Safavids of Iran. In the Mediterranean, their navy captured all the principal North African ports, and for a time the Ottoman fleet completely dominated the sea. By the end of Süleyman's reign, Ottoman hegemony extended over a great portion of Europe, Asia, and Africa. Geographic expansion, trade, economic growth, and tremendous cultural and artistic activity helped define the reign of Süleyman as a "Golden Age." Developments occurred in every field of the arts; however, those in calligraphy, manuscript painting, textiles, and ceramics were particularly significant. Artists renowned by name include calligrapher Ahmad Karahisari as well as painters Shah Quli and Kara Memi. In architecture, the most outstanding achievements of this period were the public buildings designed by Sinan (ca. 1500–1588), chief of the Corps of Royal Architects. While Sinan is often remembered for his two major commissions, the mosque complexes of Süleymaniye in Istanbul (1550–57) and of the later Selimiye in Edirne (1568–74), he designed hundreds of buildings across the Ottoman empire and contributed to the dissemination of Ottoman culture. Apart from mosques and other pious foundations including schools, hospices, and soup kitchens, supported by shops, markets, baths, and caravanserais Süleyman also commissioned repairs and additions to major historical monuments. The tile revetment of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, as well as several additions to sites in Mecca and Medina, the two Holy Cities of Islam, date from this period