soul cannot bear the burden of another", the footnote states: "Rejection of the doctrine of original sin; at the same time, rejection of the idea of salvation or an expiatory death".

These few examples should suffice to show how so many misconceptions about Islam found among non-Muslims can be removed most effectively by a happy choice of just a few appropriate words. And who has the time and the patience nowadays to read long and complicated commentaries?

As Dr Hofmann states, he has remained true to the Henning translation as long as he found at least one contemporary translation by a Muslim who understands the Qur'an on any particular point in the same way. If this was not the case, he kept to the Islamic consensus. Where there was no consensus, he mostly (though not always) was guided by Muhammad Asad's translation and comments on the Qur'an.

At a time when books tend to become increasingly expensive, it is delightful to be able to recommend a handy, not at all costly, and very true to the original translation of the Qur'an in the German language

*Fatima Grimm*


In an article entitled "Asian Calligraphy" in *The World's Writing Systems* (1999) eds. P. T. Daniels and W. Bright, John Stevens describes calligraphy as the 'principal art motif in the Muslim world'. And, indeed, one finds monumental pieces of calligraphy on huge buildings — such as the great mosques and the Taj Mahal — as well as works of art on grains of rice. Since the representation of the human figure was prohibited in Islam, the artistic impulse probably expressed itself more through calligraphy than in other ways.

The book under review introduces the reader to some of the most representative pieces of calligraphy and individual calligraphers of Ottoman Turkey. The Ottoman Turks came from Central Asia to Anatolia and founded a principality in 1299. By 1453, with the conquest of Constantinople, the Ottoman empire became a power of which European rulers lived in awe. The Ottomans, like other Muslim rulers, also appreciated calligraphy and there are stories in this book of princes holding

*Her present address: Bauernrosenweg 27 – 22177, Hamburg, Germany.*
the inkpots for famous calligraphers.

The book serves as an excellent introduction to the art of calligraphy because it begins with a history of the art. The six classical styles (or scripts) of Islamic calligraphy are called zihuluth, naskh, muhaggag, rayhani, riqa and tawqi. In this book they are spelled in Turkish (sülüs, reyhani, rikā, muhakkak, tevkī, etc) and a brief history of their evolution is given. Moreover, the process by which the pens and the ink with which the scripts were written is described. Such kind of details are not available in books on scripts and I doubt if there are many books which combine this kind of detail about scripts

The book goes on to describe how these classical styles of Arab calligraphy were adapted by Turkish calligraphers. In some cases Turkish calligraphers actually created new styles. Thus, the first great calligrapher after the Ottomans became a great power was Şeyh Hamdullah (1429-1520). He was encouraged by Sultan Bayezid II (1481-1512), who was also his student, to create a unique style of his own. Another great calligrapher was Hâfiz Osman (1642-1698) who based his work on the style of Hamdullah but went on to create the kind of originality which may be called paradigmatic (following one of Kuhn's definitions of 'paradigm'). Other important calligraphers were Ismail Zühdi (d. 1806) and Mustafa Rakim (1758-1826). The most important achievement of Mustafa Rakim is that the celî sülüs style of Turkish calligraphy reached a high level of excellence. Rakim perfected the tuğra which was the emblem of the rulers. Another stylist was Sâmi Efendi whose speciality lay in designing the most attractive vowel signs and reading aids.

The calligraphers were appreciated by the rulers and the learned and some were rewarded handsomely. However, in keeping with the values of their society, they did not take a fee from their students. Indeed, they even refused gifts and thought it an act of piety to teach their skills to others. When the student became good at his work, he was given permission to sign his works. Some students, to show gratitude to their masters, found ways of mentioning them either orally or through extensions in the signature. Some teachers, although very busy people as the art of calligraphy required, found time not only to teach students who came to them but even those who missed their classes and whom they encountered on the way.

The most important part of the book is the 'Catalogue' section. It gives brief biographical notes on the calligraphers and coloured specimens of their work. The work is also described in some detail so that the use of the variations in style become clear. The specimens are works of art in their own right. They have been photographed on art paper and give a good idea of the beauty and splendour of the original masterpieces.

The book is an excellent attempt at combining specialization in a less
known subject with an eye for art, colour and detail. The book will be of interest for linguists, artists and specialists on the cultures of the Muslim world in general and Ottoman Turkey in particular. The book should be a part of all good libraries.

Tariq Rahman

'Tariq Rahman is Professor in the National Institute of Pakistan Studies, in Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad.