Discussion Question:

• Why might calligraphy be an important and popular aspect of art in Islam?
Calligraphy in Art

- Calligraphy is the most highly regarded and most fundamental element of Islamic art.
- The Qur’an was transmitted in Arabic, and the Arabic script has the potential for developing a variety of ornamental forms.
- Calligraphy is principally a means to transmit a text, albeit in a decorative form.

http://www.metmuseum.org
Art of the Ottoman Empire
Discussion Question:

• Drawing upon your knowledge of geography and history, what empires/cultures might have influenced the art of the Ottoman Empire?
Mehmed II

• Mehmed II conquered Constantinople and envisioned the city as the center of his growing world empire.

• He drew from Turkic, Perso-Islamic, and Byzantine artistic styles.

• Ottoman, Iranian, and European artists and scholars flocked to Mehmed’s court.

http://www.theottomans.org
Ottoman Additions to the Hagia Sophia

- Mehmed II converted the Hagia Sophia into a mosque.
- Succeeding sultans added to the building.
  - Minarets and mausoleums were added.
  - In 1739, during the reign of Mahmud I, a madrasa, a library, and a kitchen to serve the poor were built.
  - In 1740 a fountain for ritual ablutions were built.

http://istanbulvisions.com/hagia_sophia.htm
Topkapi Palace

• Mehmed also commissioned the construction of Topkapı Palace, which was completed in 1478.

• It served as the administrative, educational and art center of the Empire for nearly four hundred years.

Süleyman I (r. 1520-66)

• The age of Süleyman (r. 1520-66) witnessed the pinnacle of Ottoman art and culture.

• Hundreds of public buildings were designed and constructed throughout the Ottoman empire.

• He commissioned mosques, schools, hospices, and soup kitchens

• He also commissioned repairs and additions to major historical monuments.

http://www.theottomans.org
Late 15th & 16th Centuries

- Significant gains in architecture, calligraphy, manuscript painting, textiles, and ceramics occurred.
- There were major artistic and commercial centers outside of the capital.
  - Iznik was renowned for ceramics
  - Bursa for silks and textiles
  - Cairo for the production of carpets
  - Baghdad for manuscripts
  - Ottoman artistic tradition from this time can still be seen in monuments from the Balkans to the Caucasus, from Algeria to Baghdad, and from Crimea to Yemen.
Discussion Question:

• Nature motifs were an important part of art in the Gunpowder Empires. What aspects of nature might be found in Ottoman art?
Saz Style

- In the second half of the sixteenth century, saz style of painting developed.
- Named after the reed pen used to create the patterns.
- Known for feathery leaf patterns
- Characterized Ottoman art for many years, and is found in textiles, illumination, and architectural ornament.

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/tott/hd_tott.htm
Blue Mosque

- The Sultan Ahmet Mosque, popularly known as the Blue Mosque, was completed in 1617 in Istanbul.
- Created by Sultan Ahmet I.
- Considered one of the last classical Ottoman structures.
- Traditional motifs on the tiles include cypress trees, tulips, roses, and fruits.
- The lavish use of tile decoration on the interior was a first in Imperial Ottoman mosque architecture.

www.khanacademy.org
Ahmed III (r. 1703-30)

• Under Ahmed III the arts revived.
• Ahmed’s reign is also known as the Tulip Period.
  • This flower is reflected in a new style of floral decoration.
  • Replaced the saz style

Ottoman Silk

- Ottoman silk textiles are among the most elegant textiles produced in the Islamic world.
- They are characterized by large-scale stylized motifs often highlighted by shimmering metallic threads.
- They are created from a range of woven techniques including satin and velvet.
- They were created for use inside the empire, as well as export to Europe and the Middle East.
Ottoman Textiles

Date: mid-16th century
Medium: Silk, metal wrapped thread

Date: second half 15th century
Medium: Silk, metal wrapped thread; cut and voided velvet, brocaded

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/tott/hd_tott.htm
Ottoman Textiles

Date: ca. 1565–80
Medium: Silk, metal wrapped thread

Velvet panel, Turkey 17th century. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, no. 15-1300

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/tott/hd_tott.htm

http://www.tcoletribalrugs.com/article59Silk&Wool.html