

Nedim Sönmez The Inseparable Cycle of *Alba Amicorum*, Turkish Paper and Watermark in Dating Processes

In the 16th century, Turkish paper art experienced its golden age. Marbling and other Oriental decorated paper techniques made an entrance into European circles under the name of "Turkish Paper" in the second half of the 16th century during a period of association with different cultures and with learning what is new and what doesn't exist in Europe. The introduction of these papers into Europe started with the *alba amicorum* of the foreign travellers who visited Istanbul in the last quarter of the 16th century. The examples of albums from this early period that are preserved today not only show us a rich diversity, but are also important primary sources that allow us to explore the origins of European and Turkish decorated papers. Just as the albums are important for dating decorated papers; their watermarks also play an important role in dating the albums. Decorated papers have their own development process. We can follow these techniques, with patterns and colour properties on an annual basis. A preliminary dating can be made for the albums through decorated paper, and this date can be confirmed by watermarks. *Alba amicorum* may possibly contain still unexplored and undiscovered matters and answers to many questions particularly related to the history and techniques of paper and decorated paper.

Keywords: Turkish Paper, Decorated Paper, *Album Amicorum*, Watermark