

## TURKISH EMBROIDERIES FROM THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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In the sixteenth century, as with every branch of art, the embroidery of the period appears as a product of social, economic and cultural level. The pieces remaining from this period comprise the essence as well as creative value of Anatolian Turkish art which was driven from the sources of ancient Asian and Anatolian cultures and formed by a synthesis of cultures living together on the lands of the Ottoman Empire at that time.

Among the rare samples in existence from the sixteenth century which attract attention are: Bundle wrappers, hat-dust covers, covers, quilts, towels, napkins, kaftans, hair-bands, kerchieves, handkerchieves, shields worked in mainly natural fibres such as: fine high quality, narrow, beige, hand woven linen about 30 inch in width; silk satin materials, thick twisted silk thread dyed with natural dyes, or silver and gold metallic thread indicating a high level of technology. A synthesis of techniques applied in this century is visible such as; double darning, darning which was used in the Islamic world and Slav stitch, satin stitch that occurred on the Western samples with the addition of applique, dotted stitch which was employed in the Central Asia by the Turcomans.

During the period the thoughts of the time as well as the social life played a role in the choosing of the subject matter. Among some of the art historians this selection is explained by the Islamic rules.

The subject matter may be apportioned into three groups under three headlines such as: Subject matter in objective forms, subject matter in non-objective forms and mixed combinations. While for the former pomegranate, pomegranate blossom, tulip, caranation, iris, rose, rosette, artichoke, artichoke - leaf, pineapple, plane - tree leaf can be mentioned as floral patterns; birds, sheep and dragon headed branches (rumi), dragons may be shown as evidence for the figurative patterns, and geometrical units as well as calligraphy may be marked for the latter.

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In shaping of patterns on most of the samples artists used an anti-naturalistic style gained by units created according to conceptual aesthetics acquired by stylization of natural objects. On some pieces a constructivist mood used demonstrating forms created by simple, straight strong and pungent lines showing the self confidence of the artists draw attention.

The popular colours used during this period were tomatoe-red, ruby, blue, drak cream, yellow and green. To suit the ideas and forms, colours were selected with an antinaturalistic approach to nature, such as blue for leaves of red for stems. Natural colours such as; white, blue and red were used in a constructivist manner where pure forms of nature, in other words formulas of nature, were exhibited. A lack of hues and tones and use of primary colours for constrasts can be generally noticed, in setting of colours causing a lack of perspective so that an optical dynamism was gained.

Compositions were formed in accordance with the use of the product where the units appeared as half of a motive, quarter of a pattern or a design and used with deliberate aim as a means of composition. Units shaped without symmetry or proportion with free-hand drawings supplied with the idea of decorating the whole surface of the article ornamented with plants placed near each other in truncated but dynamic lines, depicted with arrows throws a light on the foregoing.

The lay-out of the composition can be apportioned to two main groups. Composition formed by increasing the number of the motives and compositions formed by one motive. While variations of the former in which a linear system was used either appearing as medallions of looped compartments depending on the placing of the lines, such as: compositions formed by units in regular, irregular, joint, fitted lines and compositions formed by motives directed towards a marked center is worth to mention. A dynamism existing on most of the samples causes the composition seems to move before our eyes; either striving towards the middle (GOD) or wallowing in a rough sea of desire - the momentum going towards the horizons - (SEARCHING FOR GOD).