



Abb. 5: 1683 erbeutetes Türkenzelt (Ausstellung vor 1942)

SUZANIS OF CENTRAL ASIA

von

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The Central Asia Medzdurechye embroidery, usually called *suzani*, is a complex and varied phenomenon in oriental culture. It is very difficult to attribute the local origin of *suzanis* because of the great degree of movement of designs and ornamentation within the region, but also due to our inadequate knowledge of the subject, especially the period up to the early 19th century. On the whole, the history of development of *suzani* has still not been made clear. The only factors of which we can be sure are the influence of early medieval wall paintings in respect of design and the active influence of Indian, Persian and Chinese embroidery, especially from the times of Timur (Tamerlan) in the 14th century.

It is quite logical to assume that *suzanis* appeared in Central Asia later than, for example, pile carpets, which would explain to some extent the 'eroded' character of the local compositions and ornamental traditions, especially with respect to the earliest (late 18th to early 19th century) examples. However strange may appear, during the later period, especially at the end of the 19th century, local characteristics and peculiarities became more pronounced. This observation is not the result of having more numerous specimens for comparison, but rather because of the more formal character which appears in their items themselves.

Research in recent years has made it possible now to single out a few of the most important centres of Maverannahr embroidery: Nurata, Bukhara and the Bukhara district, Samarkand and the Samarkand district, Shahrissabz, Tashkent and Ferghana; there are also some smaller places, such as Ura Tube, or Karshi, which appear to have been influenced by the main centres¹.

This short article is based on material held by the State Museum of Ethnography (SME) of the Peoples of the U.S.S.R., Sankt Petersburg², and might be better titled, "Some information on the peculiarities of the 19th century decorative embroidery of the Central Asian Medzdurechye oases". Here the objects of the six groups mentioned will be examined in the order given above. The discussion focusses mainly on the attribution criteria for the various types, namely: the peculiarities of technique, the forms and artistic imagery of the embroidery originating in the different centres and at different periods during the 19th century. It must be

¹ In addition some other centres such as Dzizak, Pskent, Urghench, also worth noting, produced original embroidered furnishings. The SME collection unfortunately represents them rather poorly, and the materials available do not permit adequate comparisons, which is why these items are not included in this discussion.

² The State Museum of Ethnography keeps more than 250 items of traditional decorative Central Asian embroidery including *suzanis*, panels, table-cloths, and so on. Of special value are the collections of S. M. Dudin (coll. No. 58, which entered the museum in 1901), S. A. Polovtseva (coll. No. 4489, entered in 1923), articles from the Imperial collections (in particular the gifts of the Emir of Bukhara to the Tsar's family, coll. Nr. 5474, etc.); and also those from the stores of the former Museum of Peoples, which were based on the collections of the Dashkova Museum, Moscow.

emphasized that none of these factors taken by itself is sufficient for attributing the origin of most suzani; only by combining all three adequate evidence can be obtained. As we said above, this article deals mainly with 19th century items³. I tried to select the most outstanding specimens to represent the beginning, middle and end of that period so as to demonstrate the changes which took place in the art of 19th century Central Asian embroidery.

The decorative embroideries of the Central Asia are usually just termed 'suzanis' without considering the type of object in question, which can be very different indeed. The most common types are described below.

As regard dimensions, the largest and most well known are *suzanis* and *nim-suzanis* ('half suzani'). These were used as wall hangings or as covers for the bridal bed. The most common size were 170/200×230/280 cm, the ratio of the width to height can vary in different localities (the most 'square' ones were Bukhara suzani and Tashkent *oi-palaks*: the longest were from Nurata). Somewhat smaller were those to cover the folded bedding during daytime, or the head of the bridal bed. In Samarkand they were called *bolinpush* ('head of the bed cover'), in Nurata, *takya-push* and in Shahrissabz, *yastykpush*. Their usual dimensions were 120/150×170/250 cm.

Besides wall hangings, there were other embroidered items used for home furnishings: *sandalipush* for covering the table-hearth 'sandali' (80/90×80/90 cm); prayer rugs *namazlyks/oinamaz* (90/110×130/150 cm). Similar in composition, but larger in size, were the wedding sheets *ruijo/djoipush* (165/200×260/285 cm).

In Tashkent, the suzani with the largest dimensions (190/210×230/270 cm) were the *palak* wall hangings, placed opposite the entrance; some late 19th century examples being even larger. The *palak* was usually flanked by a pair of *gulkurpa* embroideries, similar in height to the *palaks* but much narrower in width. The obligatory item of furnishing for the bridal room was the *dorpech* frieze (called *zabidevor* in Samarkand). As to sheets, in Tashkent they were smaller than in Bukhara and were called *choishab* (130/140×180/205 cm).

Examining Central Asian embroidery from the point of view of shape, it becomes obvious that Bukhara, Shahrissabz and Nurata articles make one group, while those of Samarkand and Tashkent represent another, more structured group. We shall see later that these groupings also apply as concerns composition, ornament and technical peculiarities. A third group, the Ferghana, stands apart. The variety of decorative embroideries usually includes other patterned textiles as well: wedding towels, bride's veils, kerchiefs, bags, horse trappings, and so on, as these were produced with the same techniques and with the same ornamentation and colours as suzani.

Before moving on to discuss the main embroidery-making centres, it is necessary to describe the basic technical characteristics of Central Asian suzani.

The most common material for the ground was the local *karbos* cotton textile,

³ Some suzani included in this article can probably be attributed to the late 18th century (coll. No. 58-134, Shahrissabz; coll. No. 58-164, Nurata).

or that imported from Afghanistan. For most festive items silk in cold dark tints was also used, this being typical for Ferghana but less so for Bukhara and other places. Up to the late 1860's some textiles were imported from other countries, especially from India, Afghanistan and England, but after that time the Russian government forbade these imports and large quantities of Russian textiles appeared in the region; for suzani the most important were red calico and green serge.

As to the stitching, the needlework used can be categorized as widespread, rare or local, while the specific stitching techniques can be associated with couchwork, satin, loop, feather and cross stitching. The most popular stitch was *basma* couchwork (*ill. 1*) and slightly less widespread was *kanda khayol*. The difference is in the arrangement of the fastening stitch which was almost perpendicular to the basic threads of the embroidery in *basma*, while nearly parallel in *kanda khayol*. In *basma*, the attaching stitch is usually short, while in *kanda khayol*, rather long: A rare type of *basma* was a special kind of couchwork, used mostly in Nurata (*ill. 2*); here the basic stitches are done in loosely spun silk, with the fastening stitches done in widely spaced parallel rows, sometimes in colours different from those of the basic threads.

The most rare stitch, though used everywhere, was the satin doublesided *khom-duzi* stitch, used usually for decoration in double-sided items such as wedding towels and kerchiefs.

The most well-known stitch, used in all parts of Central Asia, was the tambur chain stitch *yurma*, (*ill. 3*) applied both as edging and for the main design. The *yurma* stitch was especially characteristic for Bukhara and some Bukharian suzani were made exclusively in the *yurma* stitch. *Yurma* could be done both by special hook or by needle; in second variant the stitch would be especially fine. Another popular variant of this type was the double-chain *ilmak* stitch used for some purposes as the tambur, but providing a stronger outline and greater relief.

Rather rare, though enough well-known, was the feather or stem stitch, used mostly for tracing flower stems and other fine lines. While studying the collection I paid particular attention to the local use of this stitch in Shahrissabz, where it edged the floral patterns and was applied instead of (or together with) tambur.

The most simple stitches are practically never seen, at least for design-making: it looks like they were used for edging motifs after these were traced by *kalamkaz*, and then covered over with embroidery. A strictly local stitch was the half-cross *iroki/iraki* (*ill. 4*) used in Shahrissabz and sometimes in Kitab⁴. According to its name, it was adopted from Iran and was applied mostly for manufacturing gala items at the Emir's workshops as state gifts.

As to the material of the threads, this was mostly silk, although in some late 'rural' objects cotton was used and in the most festive 'metropolitan' examples, red wool (Z2S) imported from India up to the late 1860's.

Nurata is a large Tadjik town situated on the northern slopes of the Nurata Mountains at the southern edge of the Kyzylkum desert. In the 19th century it

⁴ Chepelevetskaya G.L., Suzani of Uzbekistan. Tashkent 1961, p. 26.

was the administrative centre of the Nurata Bekstvo and historically one of the most ancient Tadjik settlements in the region. Starting rather early on, the main economic and cultural orientation for Nurata was Bukhara, the contacts between these urban centres being carried out mostly through Kemene, the residence of the heirs to the Bukhara throne. Nevertheless, during this period the population of Nurata preserved its ancient Tadjik traditions in lifestyle and material culture.

The largest part of Nurata suzanis was made in a definite style which makes it possible to recognize them easily from the production of other places. The basic characteristics of the classical Nurata suzanis of the 19th century were the closed, regular, loose composition; narrow borders (the ratio of the border width to the central field is approximately 1:4:1 to 1:8:1, with variations known). The special characteristics of Nurata suzani decor were the use of large fine bouquets in the pattern and light warm tints in the colouring. From the point of view of composition, Nurata suzanis were close to those of Bukhara and Shahrisabz, but had some local peculiarities. The most favoured Nurata pattern was the 'chor shoh-u yak moh' ('four branches and one moon'), which consisted of an eight-pointed central rosette, four large bouquets of flowers in the corners of the central field and a multitude of small branches covering the free area. A wonderful example of this composition is represented by the suzani in *ill. 3* done in the local variant of the basma technique (*ill. 2*). Another composition popular in Nurata was a rhomboid net, filled with small bouquets or single flowers ('tabadoni' pattern) (*ill. 1*).

Describing the main changes which took place in Nurata embroidery during the 19th century, first of all must be mentioned the tendency towards simplification. The patterns became poorer over time as rich bouquets turned into simple branches with seven circles instead of the 30–40 flowers common earlier. The special Nurata basma disappeared, ilmak moved into the central field, tambur being used only as a framing stitch, while earlier it filled in small details of the patterns. It must be noted that the process of simplification was characteristic for the Central Asian embroidery as a whole: what took place was the stylization of patterns and compositions accompanied by a simultaneous simplification and schematization. A similar phenomenon occurred with the stitches: the "step", which had earlier been fine became larger and the number of stitches reduced. At the same time the dimensions of embroideries increased and suzanis as a whole began to be more commonly used as objects of home furnishing.

The largest and best known Central Asian centre for decorative embroidery was Bukhara, the capital of the Bukhara Emirate during the 19th century. This city, which counts thousands of years of history, had been the ancient capital of the local Iranian population, the Tadjiks, during the last millenium and was the leading cultural, trade and religious centre of the region.

The art of Bukhara, embroidery included, was influenced by the long period of its status as a capital; its important cultural role naturally conditioned the formation and development of crafts to very high levels. Bukhara was also a great trade centre for the whole Steppe Corridor and one of the most important points on the Great Silk Road. The art of the city was thus exposed to strong influences

from many cultures which were linked to the trade passing along the Silk Road and to China in particular. The multi-layered and diverse character of Bukhara art and handicrafts is reflected in the great variety of its forms. For example, the decorative embroidery of Bukhara incorporates a much larger variety of designs and ornamentation than any other in the region, which in itself adds to the difficulties experienced in respect of attribution. Specific to Bukhara, however, are such technical details as the tambur stitch and the extremely fine execution. Another characteristic feature in the treatment of the centre is the use of strong red and violet silk textile as the basic material, such as represented in *ill. 5*. Somewhat special were the proportions of Bukhara suzanis, which approximate a square due to the large width of the borders (the relationship of the borders to the central field generally being between 1:1:1 and up to 1:4:1).

Bukhara embroidery also experienced rather important changes during the 19th century. We find that most old examples based on the central rosette composition usually exhibited a very large and luxurious array of colours in the rosette, which occupied practically the whole width of the central field. In later examples the relative size of the rosette became much smaller and there appeared fine, small additional rosettes at the sides of the central one. The lines became fine and "scriptive", and the pattern of stitches now filled in less area, leaving the white ground to add "space" to the composition. One of the features of the period was the fine inner border, with *boteh* designs⁵ (*ill. 5*) not limited by framing lines, and the asymmetric display of motifs in the main border. Sometimes these motifs are arranged in a clockwise direction.

The mid-19th century embroidery as a rule used rather strong shades of crimson and light blue complemented by a multitude of pale colours. Bukhara suzanis by the end of the century had become sharper in colouring and technique and larger in size. The basma stitch became more popular, as did ilmak, which tended to replace the tambur stitch. Even within the large variety of compositions characteristic of Bukhara, it is still possible to single out the most popular ones: those with the central rosette (*ill. 5*) and those with the net-rhomboid (*ill. 6*). The passion for the non-symmetrical arrangements in design, which allowed the needle-women to represent borders full of movement, sometimes led to completely unusual variations of lattice composition, as seen in *ill. 6*.

Besides wall hangings, Bukhara produced a large number of embroideries with a nominally religious motifs, especially *namazlyks*. Most of the older prayer rugs were notable for their fineness of design, and a lightness in the arch "mihrab" composition, as if their modest but elegant patterns were correlated with ideas of high spiritual thoughts of the persons at prayer (*ill. 7*). Later the *namazlyk* patterns became more dense, their arches more massive and more dominant in pattern and in coloring. The fine *boteh* border disappeared, and the borders became broader and more clearly outlined.

⁵ Very often suzanis such as represented in *ill. 5* are attributed to the Lokai tribe; as I have insufficient evidence for this, I follow the local tradition by putting them into Bukhara group.

The arch motif was also characteristic of designs for another type of embroidery used as wedding sheets. They were often treated with less care than suzanis, that is why only few old items have been preserved even in early collections. In the SME we have some interesting ruijo attributed to the Bukhara group; for example, a very old sample of Ura Tubeh work. Rural, or rustic embroideries, if they can be so termed, were thicker and heavier in pattern and, at the same time, of simpler workmanship and composition. They usually were based on one motif of design with the role of tambur taken by rather thick ilmak stitching. While somewhat simple, these items nevertheless illustrate an easy beauty and a definite attractiveness, vital power and optimism.

Even a short survey of Bukhara embroidery would not be complete without mentioning one more type of this form. Bukhara, or to be more correct, its Emir's workshops, were the centre of metalthread embroidery in the region. It must be stressed that gold thread embroidery of definite types (suzanis, robes, horse trappings) was produced only in palace manufactories; the use of these articles by common people was severely punished. According to the established canons, gold thread embroidered items were made for use by the Emir himself or as presents which could be given only by him. The higher the rank of the recipient, the more golden thread covered the surface of the gift. Thus the articles to be presented to the Russian Emperor were executed in *zaminduzy* technique, where the entire surface was covered with embroidery; other members of the royal family could receive textiles done in *gulduzy* embroidery where a certain portion of the ground remained free of decor (*ill. 8*). In both cases the technique was couchwork; silver, gold and silk threads, plus spangles, were used in *gulduzy*.⁶

The elite character of the items embroidered in gold makes it possible to single out the character and peculiarities of the Bukhara court style and to distinguish articles similar in appointment in the production of other Central Asian centres, as for example, Shahrisabz.

Shahrisabz ("the green town") is situated in a fertile watered valley and is one of the most ancient towns of the Central Asia. It is old Kesh, the motherland of Timur (Tamerlane). In the 19th century Shahrisabz was the centre of a large district within the Bukhara Emirate and had developed crafts and active trade, mainly with Bukhara and Samarkand. The embroidery workshops situated in the town itself worked for the court in a similar way as did those in Bukhara. It seems quite possible that production of festive palace embroidery had been established in this place from the times of Timur (Tamerlane), who created a huge empire and was an admirer and patron of many crafts. It is known for example, from the diary of Clavijo, that Timur liked luxurious textiles, carpets and embroideries, which were also used during his time in constructing whole movable towns.

In the 19th century in Shahrisabz, court embroideries were made mostly in the half-cross stitch *iroki* (*ill. 4*). These were articles of the same type as those

executed in golden thread in Bukhara: robes, very large panels for wrapping rich gifts, and horse trappings (*ill. 9*). These items, similar to those made with gold embroidery, came to the SME stores from the Imperial Collections.

Besides *iroki*, in Shahrisabz some other stitches, not popular in other places, were used: *kanda-khayok*, stem stitch (for edging, usually of olive colour, and the double-sided satin stitch).

Concerning artistic peculiarities of suzanis, mention should first be made of the absolute dominance of the central composition, either a large medallion with soft outlines, or on the contrary, with a small flower in the centre from which small branches radiate. In both cases the large bright bouquets were used as the corner and supplementary motifs. Early Shahrisabz suzanis give quite a special joyful impression: artistically this item looks like a real painting. Its composition reached a very high balance between the area of the ground and the embroidery.

The characteristic feature of Shahrisabz suzani was a broad border, tightly covered with embroidered patterns, often equal in area to the central field (1:3:1). At the same time, there is no impression of domination, thanks both to the fineness of the design and to the character of the pattern, where the floral and meander designs of the border seem to grow out of the motifs of the central field.

Typical for the first half of the 19th century were suzanis with a large rosette, while in mid-century the dimensions of the central medallion became smaller. An item typical of this period is represented in *ill. 10*.

Equally bright and pictorial were other Shahrisabz embroideries. Some cradle covers (?) show a two-sided arch composition; technically the item demonstrates a very rare use of double-sided satin stitch usually found on wedding towels as mentioned earlier.

Samarkand (antique Marakanda) is a city known already from the middle of the 1st millennium B.C. For a long period it was a centre for many artistic crafts, including the production of silk. Samarkand embroideries demonstrate some archaic features related to the art of ancient Soghd and also, though it may sound strange, to the nomadic carpets of Central Asia. This last observation is especially true as regards the designs of Samarkand suzanis, which are close to the *gül* compositions of the Turkomans.

Early Samarkand embroidery is not represented in SME collection; examples from the mid-19th century, however, show large ornamental forms, a laconic, decorative and severe design. The main motifs of Samarkand suzanis and bolinpushes were round rosettes (*basma* with tambur edging) framed by rings of toothed leaves organized in rows. In early examples the rosettes have a complex multicoloured elaboration; where the rosette is in one colour, it is composed of concentric circles with fine separations between the circles. The central field bears a multitude of small animal-like figures and representations of household utensils: jugs, knives, and so on. Also the corners of practically every old embroidery were decorated with triangle amulets *bozband*.

Another peculiar feature of Samarkand decorative embroidery are the very narrow borders. Usually there is only one border, with a chain of terminating

⁶ "Zamindusi" means "ground embroidery", or "embroidered ground"; while "gulduzy"—"flower embroidery".

crosses and flowers, disposed in a clockwise direction. The usual ratio of the borders to the central field is 1:12:1, with variants of 1:7:1 to 1:15:1. As to the dating, red wool must be mentioned which was often used in Samarkand up to the 1860's; for a short period between the 1860's and the 1880's green cotton serge was popular, but never before or after that time.

In the late 19th century the patterns of Samarkand embroidery became much larger and simpler. Instead of the former richness of colours (up to 14 were used), four to six became usual, in rather poor dark shades.

As to Samarkand Province, practically the same patterns were used, though in other variants, Sjizak being a good example, while other places represented other styles of more dynamic compositions, with extended zoomorphic figures.

Old Samarkand embroideries have many features in common with those of early Tashkent, so that it is sometimes very difficult to determine the local origin of this or that article. Being extremely rare – possibly unique – this item in itself represents the technique and manner of the development of designs characteristic for both cities during the first half of the 19th century.

The earliest *Tashkent* suzanis in the SME collection are produced on the white karbos ground with a multicoloured pattern combining floral, animal-like and other subjects, including amulets, which are similar to early examples from Samarkand. As to the arrangement of the central field patterns, in early samples of *palaks* and *gulkurpas*, the favourite variant was the star-pointed rosette with circles, disposed either in rows or around the rosette, or at the ends of the central field. The borders of Tashkent wall embroideries were rather wide, with many similar circles alternating with the floral motifs (the number of circles could reach 40). Besides the traditional compositions, sometimes there were really exceptional, original ones. The ordinary star-shaped central rosette of this palak is flanked by two vertical stripes bearing the same pattern as the borders, producing a special effect of extremely wide borders. This palak seems to be one of the earliest Tashkent embroideries known and as such, it demonstrates the features characteristic of the best products originating from the vast "Tashkent-influenced" territory.

During a later period the central star-pointed rosette turned into a circle while the supplementary rosettes of the central field and the borders enlarged so much that they practically blended together. The small intervals left between the circles were filled with a wealth of coloured spots.

It is known that in the early 20th century the favourite design for palaks became one consisting of concentric circles which got the name of *oi palak* ("palak with a moon").⁷

The favourite combination of stitches in Taskent was basma with ilmak, sometimes with tambur added. In the late 19th century embroideries ilmak was often done with thick dark threads, so that it rose somewhat over the surface of the field and made the pattern not only more graphic, but relieved.

⁷ *Palak* ("falak") means "the vault of heaven", so "oi palak" means "the vault of heaven with a moon".

Speaking about the quality of late Tashkent suzanis, it must be noted that although both of the items themselves and the extent of embroidered surface grew larger the quality of the needlework remained as high as in the best early pieces.

As to the textiles used for embroidery, from the 1860's through the 1870's they were similar to those used in Samarkand – green cotton serge and, in addition, coloured silk. Later this fashion changed and returned to a white ground; as it was not exposed under the all-over embroidery there was no reason to use a coloured textile ground.

Examining in a general way the changes which occurred in Tashkent embroidery during the 19th century, it becomes clear that it altered greatly and took on a completely different artistic image, moving far from its earlier motifs and compositions. It is possible that this process was stimulated by the alteration of the city's status during the second half of the 19th century. An ancient Central Asian town, it was sometimes included within the Kokand Khanate, and sometimes within the Bukhara Emirate. In the 1860's, after the Trans-Caspian Province was joined to the Russian Empire, Tashkent became the administrative centre of the region. It appears that this influenced the development of the crafts; as to Tashkent embroidery, in particular, starting from that period it demonstrated a tendency to enlargement of the forms produced with all-over embroidery. Earlier, this manner had been practiced only in Bukhara and Shahrizabz for making gala court items.

Ferghana Valley embroidery is usually considered as a unitary phenomenon; individual centres such as Kokand, Marghelan, Rishtan, Isfara are not singled out because of inadequate knowledge of these centres, but also because of the common features of most of the embroidery of this area. According to historical data, early Ferghana embroidery was made on a white karbos ground, similar to the embroidery of other Central Asian centres. Known items in collections of the SME, dated to the second half of the 19th century, were as a rule produced on a coloured ground of cotton or, most often, silk. As to the stitch, in Ferghana basma of strongly twisted silk threads was used, attached by short slanting stitches. The basic threads were tightly twisted and so spaced that sometimes the ground can be seen under the embroidery. The second stitch used is fine tambur, edging every detail of the ornament. Besides the silk of different colours and red wool, common for the whole of Central Asia, cotton of white, black, grey and light-blue tints was applied. Cotton seems to be used mostly in rural places, while white colour became common for the Central Asia rather late; at least it is quite rare to find it in early pieces.

The Ferghana suzani⁸ represented in *ill. 11* is classical for this district and for his time, the 1860's to the 1870's. It is embroidered on dark coloured local silk, produced in variants of basma and tambur stitches characteristic for Ferghana and

⁸ It should be noted that some centres in the Ferghana district, such as Tadjik-speaking Isfara, represent a completely different type of embroidery which is close to Bukhara-Samarkand variety. This seems to suggest that within the Ferghana art of embroidery there existed some cultural/historical strata, the largest of these representing a particular selection of items from which the production of the region as a whole took its name.

representing typical local compositions with all the peculiarities of the type: large unembroidered areas, light graphic lines of a somewhat "chinese-looking" floral pattern, relatively few colours, with some executed in cotton.

Aside from what was described above, it is necessary to point out that we are still standing at the shoreline of an ocean called "Central Asian embroidery" which poses us the work of future: to single out still unknown groups, to analyse their attributional characteristics and to determine the place of their origin. It seems that in this work considerable attention will have to be paid to seemingly secondary factors – the geographical location of the settlement, its political, economic and cultural importance, its trade and historical relationships – all these influences being very important in the development of embroidery variants. And in this respect it still remains to be determined why Bukhara produced more ideas for compositions and motifs than Samarkand, which was not less ancient or active in crafts and trade. Whence did the multitude of "chinese-looking" patterns come to Ferghana, and the Iranian *iroki* stitch and *lechek-e torondji* compositions to Shahrisabz? These questions are more numerous than answers and to solve them we need the full publication of collections plus thorough research carried by whole groups of specialists.

GLOSSARY.

Adras — semi-silk textile, with ikat pattern.

Basma — couching stitch; long, closely worked stitches tied several times at either irregular or regular intervals with back stitches, which could be very small but rather long as well, usually crossed the ground stitches perpendicular. The basic material should not show through.

Bekasab — striped cotton or semi-silk textile.

Bolinpush — Samarkand name for a special type of embroidery (120/150×170/250 cm) which covered the folded bedding during the day time, or the head of the bridal bed during the wedding.

Choishab — Tashkent name for *bolinpush*.

Dziyak — narrow ornamented edging for textile objects; in suzani plaited over the selvages of the base.

Dorpech — embroidered stripe (frieze) which was put on in Tashkent over the set of embroidery which included *palak* and two *gulkurpas*.

Chit — stamped cotton textile; the kinds most loose in structure were used for lining.

Gulkurpa — wall embroidery of rectangular shape, used in Tashkent in pairs, were flanking *palak*.

Ilmak — open double chain stitch, used mostly for main pattern edging.

Iraki/iroki — half-cross stitch, each row of crosses covering one basic thread. Used in Shahrisabz and Kitab.

Joipush — embroidered bridal sheet; usual size between 160/200×260/285 cm.

Kalamkaz — the master who drew the pattern of the embroidery on the textile; in Central Asia it was a female occupation.

Kanda-khayol — couchwork stitching, different from *basma* in direction of attaching stitches; in *kanda-khayol* they are nearly parallel to the main pattern-making stitches.

Karbos — cotton hand-made textile of white colour; called "mata" as well.

Khomduzi — double-sided satin stitch, made in loosely spun silk.

Ikat — common name for a special type of textiles, called "abr" in Central Asia and manufactured either in silk and cotton or just in silk, sometimes in velvet technique.

Nimsuzani — in translation "half-suzani" – similar to suzani wall embroidery, but smaller in size, used in Nurata and Bukhara.

Nurata basma — special type of basma, manufactured in loosely spun silk, the attaching stitches being arranged in spare parallel rows and often in colours different from the main stitches.

Namazlyk — prayer rug, usually with arched composition in the central field, 90/110×130/150 cm, also called *joinamaz*.

Palak — similar to suzani embroidery; manufactured in Tashkent and Pskent.

Sandalipush — embroidery, square in shape used during the day time to cover the table-hearth "sandali"; 70×70 – 90×90 cm.

Suzani — wall embroidery of large dimensions and rectangular form. Used for decorating the walls, especially during the wedding, and as a cover for a bridal bed as well; 120/150×170/250 cm. In Tadjik "suzan" means a "needle".

Takyapush — Nurata name for *bolinpush*.

Vaghire — a sample cartoon for embroidery, made as complete item, but composed of different details of the most important patterns.

Yastykpush — Shahrisabz name for *bolinpush*.

Yurma/darafsh — local name for the tambur chain stitch.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Sample of a couchwork *basma* and *ilmak* double-chain stitching (coll. No. 58-136).
2. Sample of a *Nurata-type basma* stitch (coll. No. 21828 "T").
3. Sample of *yurma/tambur*-chain stitch (coll. No. 21847 "T").
4. Sample of an *iroki/iraki* half-cross stitch (coll. No. 5474-80).
5. Wall embroidery *suzani*. 170×235 cm. Bukhara, Emir's workshops (?). 19th century (coll. No. 4457-11).
Base: red silk (42 cm); *lining*: grey-blue silk (42 cm); *edging*: silk velvet.
Embroidery: silk, Z2S; red wool, Z2S.
Stitch: tambur, made by needle.
Colours: (9) red, pink, yellow, violet of two tints, blue, green, light turquoise, ivory. Received from the Imperial collections, belonged to Maria Feodorovna.
6. Wall embroidery *suzani*. 166×240 cm. Bukhara. Mid-19th century (?). (coll. No. 21830 "T").
Base: "mata" (30 cm); *edging*: "adras" semi-silk.
Embroidery: silk, Z2S; wool, Z2S.
Stitches: tambur and *ilmak* in the borders.
Colours: (15) crimson, bright red (wool), orange, yellow, pink-beige, olive, dark-green, blue, grey, violet, light green, bright dark-blue, turquoise, pink, light blue. Received from the collections of the former Museum of Peoples.
7. Prayer rug *namazlyk*. 84×126.5 cm. Bukhara. First half – mid-19th century (coll. No. 21951 "T").
Base: "mata" (28.5 cm); *lining*: loose "mata" (28.5 cm); *edging*: "bekasab" semi-silk.

Embroidery: silk, Z2S; slightly spun, slightly plied.

Stitch: fine needle-made tambur.

Colours: (8) orange-red, crimson, flesh, yellow, dark green, dark-blue, grey, pistashio. Received from collections of the former Museum of Peoples.

8. Horse trapping. 122-182×137 cm. Bukhara Emir's workshops. 1870's. (coll. No. 5474-69).

Base: velvet (33.5 cm); *lining:* ikat (29 cm); *edging:* felt, silk fringe.

Embroidery: spun gold and silver threads; silk, slightly twisted, Z2S; spangles.

Stitch: couchwork.

Colours: (3) gold, silver, light green.

Received from the palace collections, granted by Emir of Bukhara to the royal family in 1874.

9. Horse trapping. 140.5-196×148 cm. Shahrisabz Emir's workshops. Early 20th century (coll. No. 5474-80).

Base: "karbos"; *lining:* ikat (41 cm); *edging:* "dziyak" plaiting.

Embroidery: silk, Z2S.

Stitch: half-cross "iroki".

Colours: (7) red, yellow, white, turquoise, violet, blue, green.

Received from the Imperial collections; granted by Emir of Bukhara in 1910.

10. Wall embroidery *suzani*. 194×258 cm. Shahrisabz. Mid-19th century. (coll. No. 4489-22).

Base: "karbos".

Embroidery: silk, Z2S; wool, Z2S.

Stitches: kanda-khayol, tambur, ilmak in borders.

Colours: (11) red, bright red (wool), pink, flesh, yellow, orange, light beige, green, dark blue of two tints, blue.

Received from the collection of S. A. Polovtseva, registered in 1923.

11. Embroidered cover *bolinpush*. 117×145 cm. Ferghana Valley. Mid-19th century. (coll. No. 21833 "T").

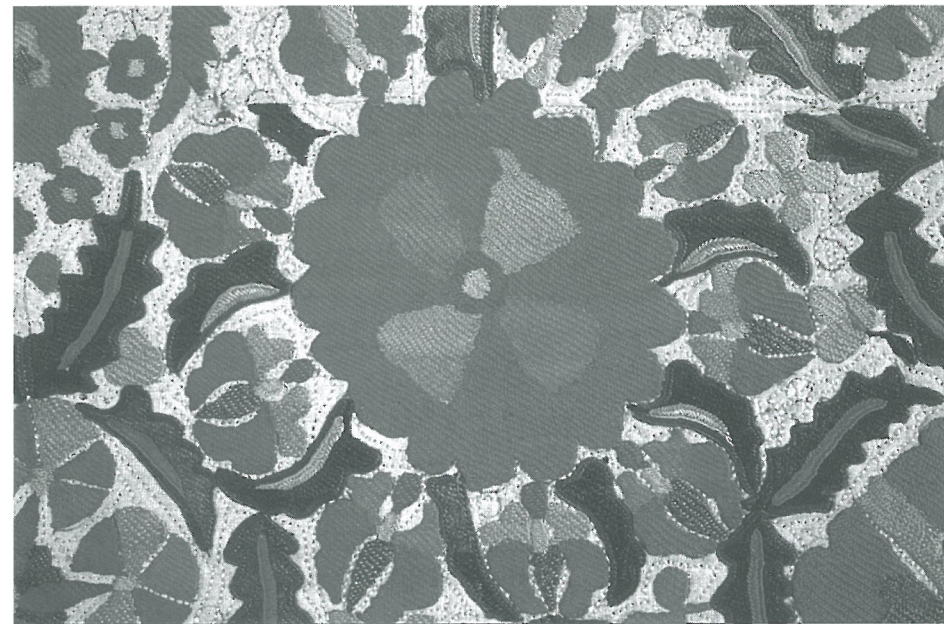
Base: green silk (39.5 cm); *lining:* calico.

Embroidery: silk, Z2S.

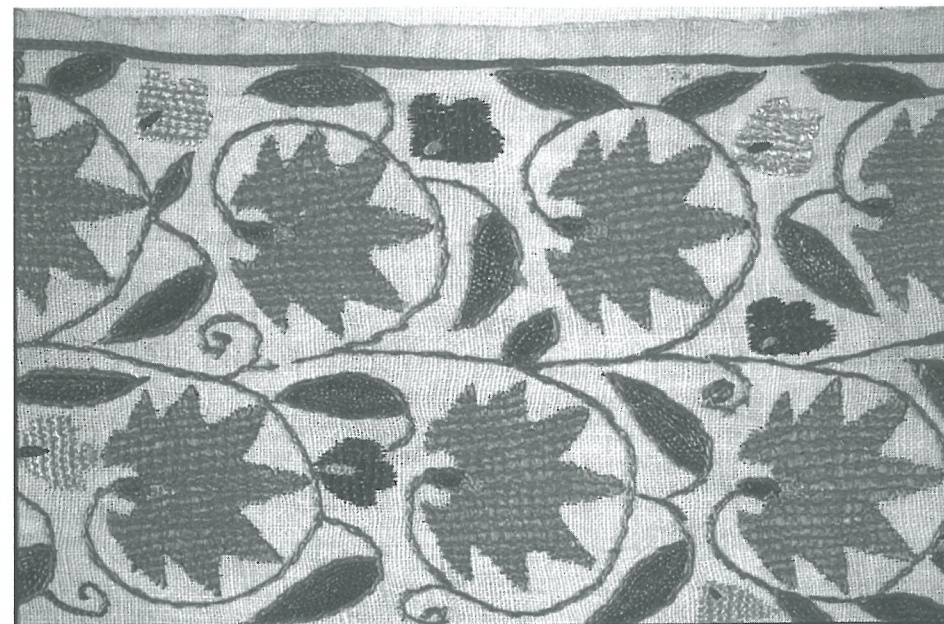
Stitches: basma, tambur.

Colours: (15) bright red (cotton), orange, yellow, violet, brown, light green, green, light violet, dark blue, blue of different tints, grey (cotton), white (cotton), blue (cotton), black.

Received from the collections of the former Museum of Peoples.



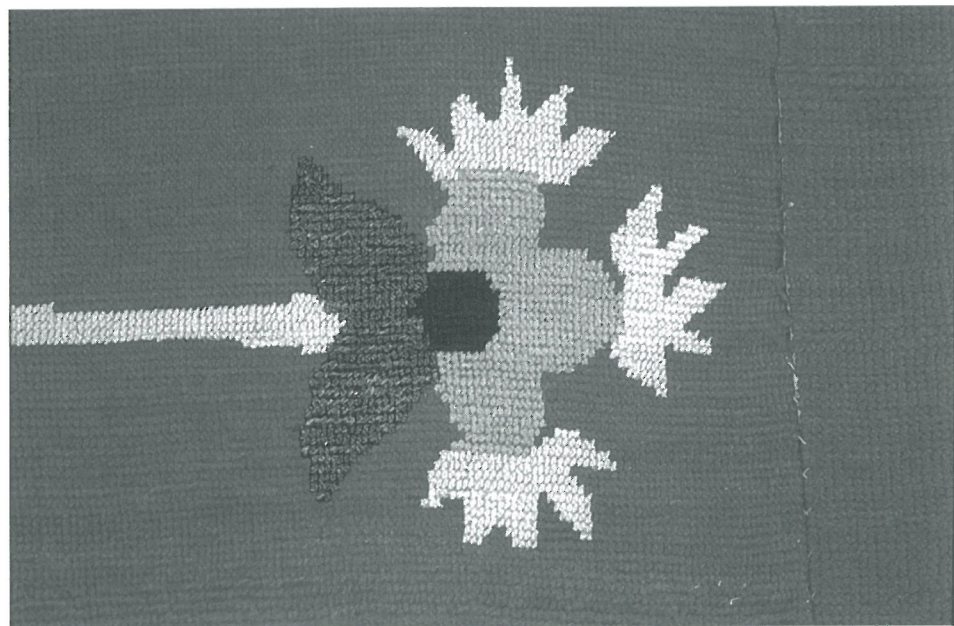
III. 1



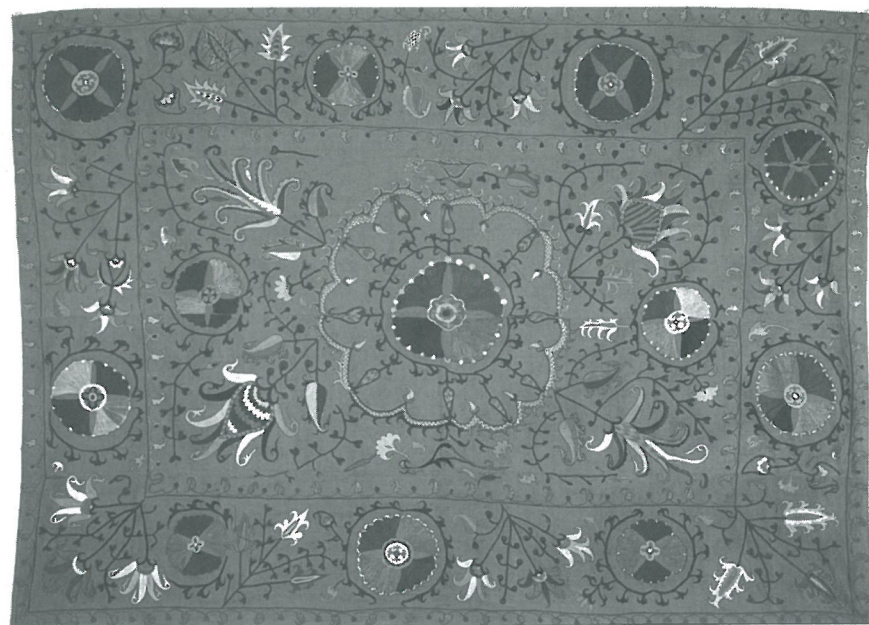
III. 2



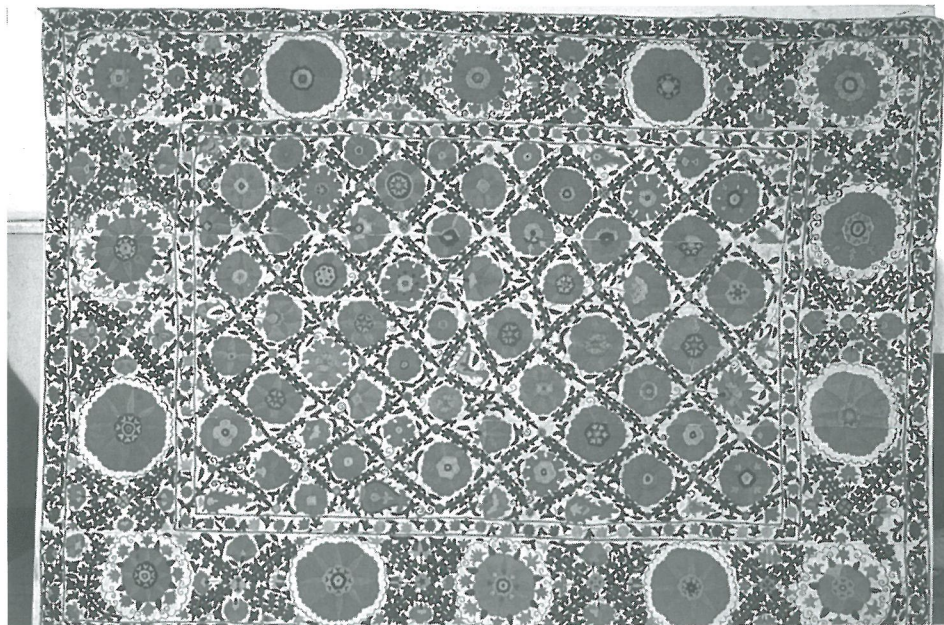
III. 3



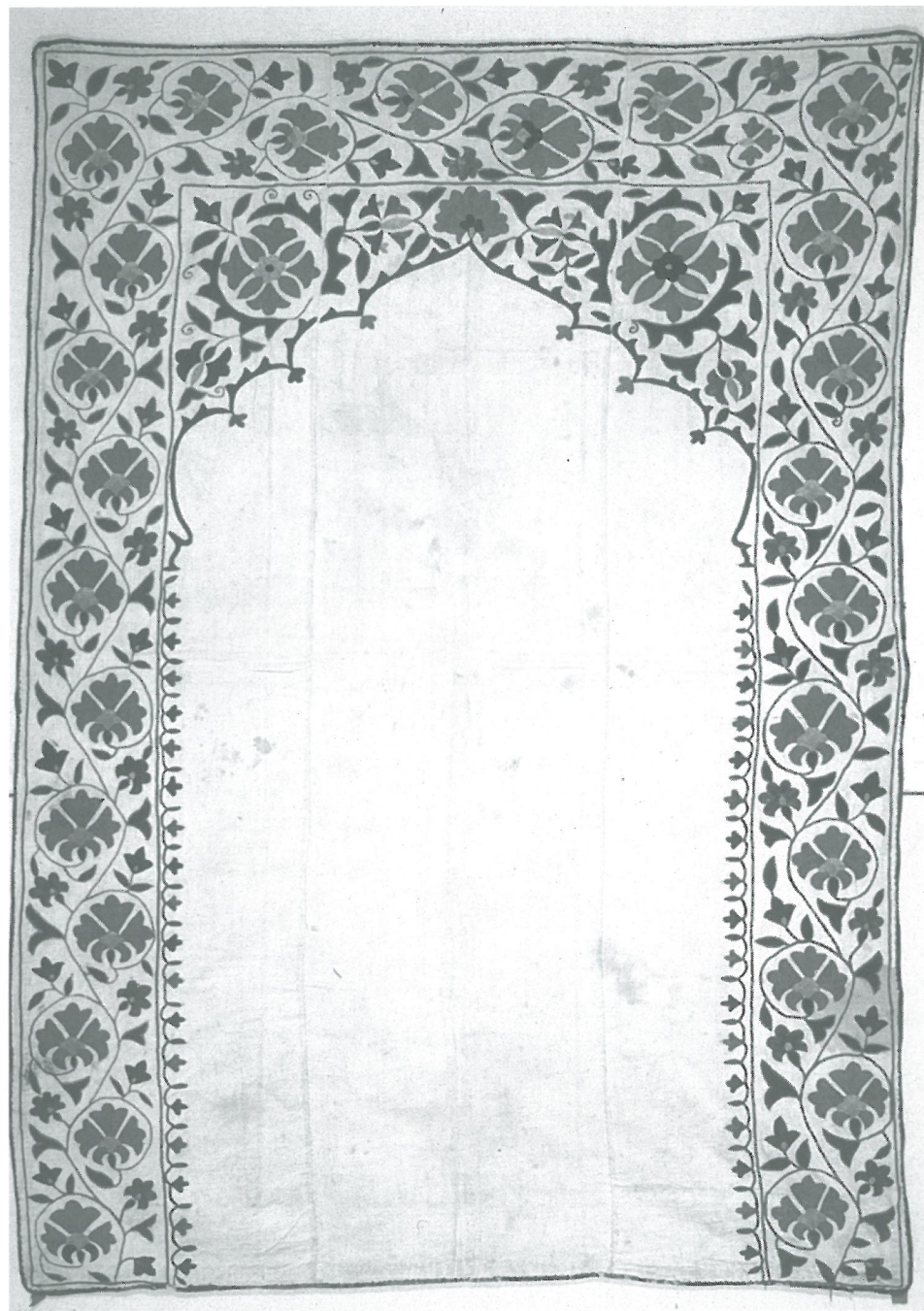
III. 4



III. 5



III. 6



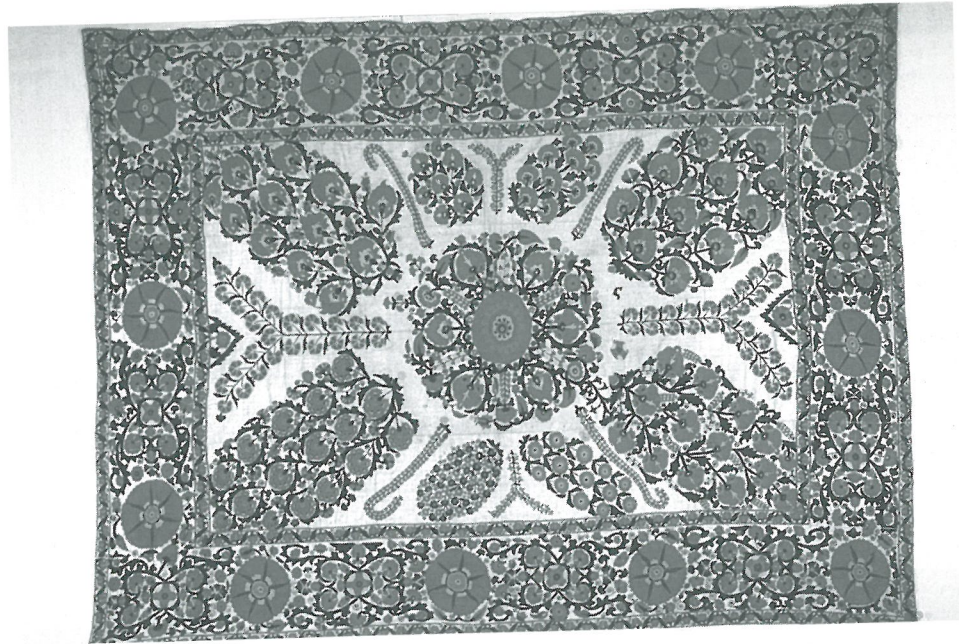
III. 7



III. 8



III. 9



Ill. 10



Ill. 11

ÜBER DIE SPOLIENVERWENDUNG
AN DER SULTAN AHMET MOSCHEE IN ISTANBUL¹

von
Lioba THEIS, Bonn

Innerhalb der großen Sultansstiftung der Ahmediye, die zwischen 1610 und 1617 östlich des Hippodroms erbaut worden ist, nimmt die sogenannte „Blaue Moschee“ den bedeutendsten Platz ein². Die Moschee und ihr gleichgroßer auf der Südwestseite vorgelagerter Vorhof erheben sich über einem einheitlichen Sockel (s. Plan). Dieser Sockel der Sultan Ahmet Moschee ist bis auf die Anlage für die rituellen Waschungen an der Südwest- und der Nordwestseite des Vorhofes einheitlich gestaltet. Er besteht aus großen rechteckigen Platten prokonnesischen Marmors von starker grau-weißer Äderung, die alle ein einheitliches Höhenmaß besitzen (2,03 m), in der Breite aber leicht variieren³. Die Oberfläche der marmornen Platten ist geglättet. Soweit bisher zu ermitteln war, beträgt die Plattendecke circa 0,10 m. Dem überwiegenden Teil der Platten ist auch gemeinsam, daß sie auf ihren beiden Langseiten jeweils im oberen Viertel (circa 0,45 m unter der Oberkante) eine ungefähr 5 cm breite Abarbeitung besitzen, die auf die Einsetzung einer eisernen Klammer zurückzuführen ist. Bei einzelnen Platten ist eine entsprechende Abarbeitung auch im unteren Viertel zu erkennen (*Abb. 1, 2*). Teilweise sind Eisenklammern noch *in situ* vorhanden (*Abb. 3*)⁴. Der Sockel wird abgeschlossen durch ein wenig profiliertes Gesims, welches aus dem gleichen Material gefertigt wurde, aus dem auch die Verkleidungsplatten bestehen. Das Profil besitzt eine einfache Ansträgung, seine Oberfläche ist leicht strukturiert. Die schon oben angesprochenen Anlagen für die rituellen Waschungen, die sich in Sockelhöhe dem vorgegebenen Rahmen einpassen, sind aus dem gleichen Material geschaffen worden, besitzen aber eine andere Oberflächenstruktur: hier ist die Oberfläche leicht scharriert (*Abb. 4, 5*) Diese Oberflächenbeschaffenheit findet sich auch bei dem Profilgesims und den Architekturteilen der aufgehenden Wände der Moschee (Pfeiler und Brüstungen). Die Andersartigkeit dieser Wandverkleidung wird auch noch darin sichtbar, daß sie einheitliche Breite besitzen und keinerlei Spuren eiser-

¹ Die Beobachtungen an der Sultan Ahmet Moschee wurden bei einem gemeinsamen Besuch mit Albrecht Berger und Winfried Held, beide Archäologisches Institut, Istanbul, gemacht. Mit letzterem konnte ich einige Maße am Sockel nehmen. Beiden sei an dieser Stelle ausdrücklich gedankt. Die im Folgenden angeführten Überlegungen sind eine Skizze zu einer ausführlicheren Untersuchung zum obengenannten Thema, welche demnächst durchgeführt werden soll.

² Zur Sultan Ahmet Moschee allgemein vgl. M. Restle, Istanbul, Bursa, Edirne, Iznik. Baudenkmäler und Museen, Stuttgart 1976, 244–251; H. J. Sauermost, Istanbul Moscheen, München 1981, 206–214 und W. Müller-Wiener, Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbuls, Tübingen 1977, 470–474 dort auch die weiterführende Literatur.

³ Der weitaus größte Teil der Platten mißt in der Breite zwischen 0,65 m und 0,80 m, aber einige der Platten weisen Breiten bis zu 1,25 m auf.

⁴ An einigen Stellen konnten Reste abgebrochener Eisenklammern noch in den Eintiefungen festgestellt werden.

EOTHEN

JAHRESHEFTE
DER
GESELLSCHAFT DER FREUNDE
ISLAMISCHER KUNST UND KULTUR

Im Auftrag des Vorstandes
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