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A YAHYALI SAJJADE RUG FROM THE 18th CENTURY

(XVIII. YÜZYILA AİT BİR YAHYALI SECCADE HALISI)

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ÖZET

Kayseri ve Yahyalı bölgesi halı dokumacılığının Osmanlı dönemine kadar giden uzun bir tarihi geçmişi vardır.

Özellikle Yahyalı halıcılığı tamamıyla yün ve Türk düğümlü olup taban ve seccade tarzı halılarıyla ünlüdür.

Bildiride XVIII. yüzyıla ait orijinal bir Yahyalı seccadesi teknik ve desen özellikleri dikkate alınarak tanıtılacaktır.

Key words: weaving, carpet, dizayn, Ottoman, culture.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, the Turks have contributed many great works of art to the world. Weaving, which originated in Central Asia, holds a significant place in Turkish culture. From the Pazirik rug, which dates back to between the fifth and third centuries BC, to the rugs of Anatolia, the Turks can be credited with having shaped the field of weaving. The traditional form of Turkish weaving has not changed much from Central Asia to Anatolia despite the semi-nomadic summer and winter pastoralism and cultural or geographical differences.

In the sixth century, at the time of the Gokturks, rug and cloth weaving was very popular. During this period, in addition to ruling the area between Central Asia and the Black Sea, the Gokturks also controlled the Silk Road[1]. A Chinese fairy tale from the Gokturk Period recounts how Gokturks, or members of the Kangili clan, would put wool rugs on the grass during their *toys* ("feast")[2].

It is well known that the cities of Yahyali and Kayseri in Turkey were important centers of weaving during the Ottoman Period. The Yahyali rugs in particular hold a significant place in Turkish weaving culture.

Starting from the early years of Turkish settlement in Anatolia, Kayseri has been a major center of production; at the end of the 14th century, the area of "Boyaci Kapısı" was established in Kayseri"[3]. The records in Kayseri, which include the registries of many weaving professionals and work places, show that the rate of production in the city far exceeded the rate of consumption. It is highly likely that the surplus was offered for sale in the Ottoman domestic market. The Kayseri records also include the registry of foreign merchants, of which the Persians

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1 AKA, İ, "İpek Yolu Üzerinde İran", *Unesco İpek Yolları Deniz Araştırmaları Gezisi Konferansları*, 30 Ekim 1990 İzmir, Kültür Bakanlığı yayını, Ankara, 1993, s. 57-58.

2 ESİN, Emel, "İslamiyet'ten Önceki Türk Kültür Tarihi ve İslam'a Giriş", İstanbul, Edebiyat Fakültesi Matbaası, 1978; Sadık TURAL, *İlmek'e Yansıyan Şiir Halı-Kilim*, Ankara, 1999, s. 38.

3 ESTERABADİ Aziz Bin Erdeşir, *Bezm-ü Rezm,* (Çeviren: Mürsel ÖZTÜRK), Kültür Bakanlığı Yayınları, No:1253/15.

constituted the majority[4]. "Cehride", a plant used to produce paint, was at that time regarded as a highly valued commodity in Kayseri and its vicinity.[5].

YAHYALI RUGS

The city of Yahyali is approximately 110 km from Kayseri and is located on the foothills of the Toroslar Mountains. The former name of Yahyali is "Gazibenli".

Yahyali and its villages, such as Kapuzbasi, Hacibeyli, Kirazli, Elibeyli and Seydili, were among the centers of rug weaving in the past[6].

On Yahyali rugs, the traditional design arrangement in respective order is fringes, outer mother-of-pearl, "su" (border), inner mother-of-pearl and backdrop; these designs are arranged horizontally. Usually, the same composition is applied on both of the mother-of-pearls. Local people usually use the same word for the "border" and mother-of –pearl parts.

The Turkish knot is used in Yahyali rugs. "Sarma citi" is applied after leaving 6 to 7 cm of space for fringes. The yarn is usually red or blue. In some rugs, there is only one line of "suzme atki" instead of two lines. This is an important quality in that it allows the rug to be thin.

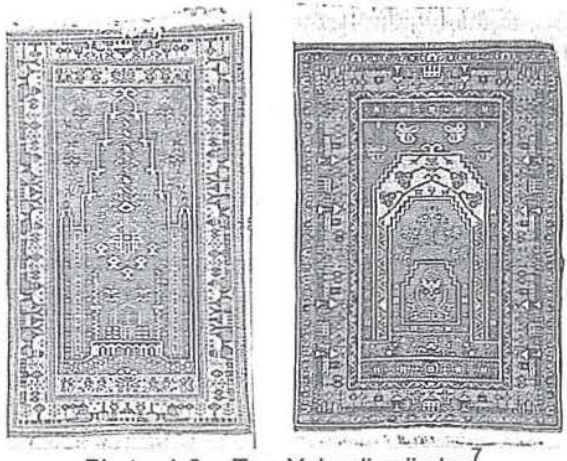


Photo: 1-2 -- Two Yahyali sajjadas[7].

Hand-made rugs have evolved over time and have a significant place in the history of weaving, from Asia Central to Anatolia. Their intended use has also

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[4] YÜCEKAYA, Hüsnü, "Şer'iyye Sicillerine Göre: 19. Yüzyılda Amasya Kayseri, Tokat ve Trabzon Şehirlerinde Dokumacılık", Gazi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tarih Anabilim Dalı Yakın çağ Tarihi Anabilim Dalı Yayınlanmamış Doktora Tezi, Ankara, 2012

[5] BAYKARA, Tuncer, "Cehri Üzerine Notlar", *İstanbul Üniversitesi Coğrafya Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 1967, 8 (16), s.160-164.

[6] ÇAĞLITÜTÜNCİGİL, Ersel, "Cami Tasvirli Yahyalı (Kayseri) Halıları", *Erdem Dergisi Halı Özel Sayısı I*, Cilt: 10, Ankara, s. 87-95.

[7] http://megep.meb.gov.tr/mte_program_modul/moduller_pdf/Yahyal%C4%B1%20Hal%C4%B1s%C4%B1%20Dokuma.pdf

varied, leading to them being classified into many groups, such as "floor", "wall", "side", "paspas", "yolluk", "pillow", "sajjada" or "namazlik" (to be used while praying namaz). Among these groups, the sajjade rugs are the most prominent.



Photo: 3 -- A Konya Sille Rug depicting a mosque (Konya Ethnography Museum).

"Sajjada" and "namazlik" are used for the same intended purpose. Although these two words are synonymous with one another, they are used separately to distinguish between rugs of different sizes[8]. Sajjada is part of Islam culture, but there is no religious obligation to use it. Instead, it is simply used to ensure a clean area for worship. Most sajjadas have depictions of mihrabs and very few sajjada rugs have mosque depictions without mihrabs included.

18th CENTURY YAHYALI SAJJADA



Photo: 4 -- Ahmet Cebeci

In this region, the rugs that feature a pattern diagram of mosques, called Dabazli, are very well-known.

The rug that is the subject of this analysis is included in the collection of Ahmet Cebeci. Ahmet Cebeci was born in 1940. His lineage from father to son is shown below:

Ahmet Cebeci

[8] AYTAÇ, Ahmet, "Türk Halı Sanatında Seccâdeler", *Tarih Dergisi*, İstanbul, S: 184, Nisan 2002, s. 31-34.

Hasan Cebeci (Ahmet Cebeci's father)
Salih Cebeci (Ahmet Cebeci's grandfather)
Ahmet Effendi (martyrized in Pleven)
Mustafa Effendi (martyrized in Pleven)
Bekir Effendi
Osman Effendi (born in 1762)
Cebecibasi Mehmet Effendi

Ahmet Cebeci said that his grandfather had told him that this rug was woven by Lady Emis, the wife of Cebecibasi Mehmet Effendi, one of his great-grandfathers, who was appointed to Silistra in 1772 as "Cebecibasi". Purportedly, Lady Emis weaved this rug when her son Osman was born (1762) to be used as his dowry, as she envisioned that the rug would serve as a namaz prayer mat for him and his future wife. However, a part of the original became old and worn out; therefore, Ahmet Cebeci cut it and overlocked what remained of the rug to prevent it from unraveling (Photo 3).



Photo: 4.

The size of the sajjada rug is 53x142 cm and the density of its knots is 35x39. To determine the density, the author calculated the number of knots at three different points from the direction of the warp and the direction of the weft and then calculated their means.

A horizontally arranged line of water flowers decorate the top border of the rug. Between the two mother-of-pearls, flowers are lined up geometrically on a curved branch within a sea of dark blue water. Trees and mosques with minarets are placed, again, horizontally, in a yellow portion of the field, which is called *sandik* in Anatolia. These flower ornaments in water are called "zile" in Anatolia. Above the mihrab, there are two pitcher motifs on both sides in a dark blue field, with a candle motif between the mihrab niches. Two pillars fall from the mihrab

into the middle of the composition, which is colored in red, and they are combined with the minarets of the mosque depiction. The depiction of the six-minaret mosque that is combined with the structure occupies the center space.

CONCLUSION

The sajjada analyzed in this study is a specific piece, which can be included in the group of rugs that have a landscape depiction. These kinds of compositions are also found in other locations, such as Sivas and Aksaray.

Larger sized bedstead rugs produced in this region also have similar patterns.

It was determined that wool was the only material used in this piece. After analyzing the weaving, fiber and paint qualities of the rug, taking into consideration the pattern and their colors, the author found that indigo was used for the dark blue and that natural paints were used for the other colors – red, blue, green, white and yellow.

These types of rugs are included in a private collection and date back to the 19th century. This particular rug was woven in the 18th century, which adds to its significance within its own group.

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http://megep.meb.gov.tr/mte_program_modul/moduller_pdf/Yahyal%C4%B1%20Hal%C4%B1s%C4%B1%20Dokuma.pdf