

CONSERVATION IN THE MUSEUM

Restoration and conservation mean to stabilize the movable and/or immovable cultural properties by using appropriate and recyclable materials and techniques (without harming physical and chemical integrity) and transfer them to posterity by lengthening their lives. When the number of the cultural properties in our country is considered it is understood that these fields are of great importance.

Directorate General for Foundations who is the owner of an important majority of the above mentioned cultural properties has taken serious steps with its activities in the field of museums and established Ankara Vakıflar Museum in this context. A conservation and restoration laboratory is built for the items that will be exhibited in the museum.

Complete, sufficient registry and documentation processes, written and visual archiving are the first requirement in operations. These phases are realized in the conservation laboratory. After determining whether the items are in good or bad condition; the reasons for their bad conditions are determined and methods to slow down or stop the dissolution are chosen. As a result of these, conservation priority is designated and active conservation processes are started.

The items which will be processed in active conservation are rated by their current status and the ones that have weak conditions are strengthened.

Mechanic and chemical cleaning process which is the most important phase of conservation after strengthening is applied to every item in the museum.

Items which consist of more than one piece and need to be combined are fixed with the appropriate adhesive, made compound and retouched at necessary areas.

These processes are applied to the tile panel which is displayed in upper floor room of the museum. It consists of 24 tiles and belonged to Üsküdar Valide-i Atik Mosque, it was found abroad and brought back to Turkey.

Surface covering and strengthener suitable for organic material were used to stabilize the active conservation processes which were applied on the handwriting on canvas item that was made by Sultan Abdulmecid.

Missing naces of the nacre inlaid items were fixed by animal adhesive and sandpapered. New naces were cut suitable to missing areas of the wooden candlestick and fixed.

In addition to these, a carpet washing pool is built for carpets and kilims which constitute an important majority of the museum collection. In this washing pool which is made of stainless steel, kilims and carpets are washed untouched on vibrant rails and dried by heating and drying system that is mounted to the ceiling.

After all these active conservation applications, passive conservation precautions are taken in our museum. Environmental conditions of the items are monitored continuously. These processes are provided by observation and recording of relative humidity and heat values, arranging level of light according to the item's needs and using hardware that impede air pollution.

All these form the backbone of conservation application. In the knowledge that conservation is needed to perpetuate our culture, our personnel also observe the chemical decay that could occur on the items.

MUSEUM LABORATORY

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According to the state and variety of the items in the museum, most suitable location was designated to be the conservatory laboratory considering the physical state of the museum building. Considering that different materials should operate in different fields, separate working areas were established. After establishing storage and wide bench fields and supplying chemicals and consumables, active conservation processes are made.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES WHICH WERE BROUGHT BACK FROM ABROAD

Works which were stolen from the mosques that belong to Directorate General for Foundations and brought back to Turkey by efforts of Smuggling Unit are displayed at the museum.

Tile Panel from Üsküdar Valide-i Atik Mosque; was stolen on 23.04.2004, consists of 24 tiles and belongs to 16th century. It was handed over to Turkish Embassy in Paris to be conveyed to Directorate General for Foundations.

Kaaba cloth (Kiswa) from Newşehir Kebir Kurşunlu Mosque; was stolen in 2003 and brought back on 24.02.2004.

Carpet from Muğla Milas Pazar Mosque; was stolen from the Depot of Directorate General for Foundations in 1994 and brought back on 05.10.2004.

Calligraphic signboard from İstanbul Katip Muslihittin Mosque; was stolen on 01.09.2004 and handed back to Directorate General for Foundations by a famous businessman personally on 10.04.2005. Calligrapher is Sultan Abdülmecid.

Two candlesticks from İstanbul Sinan Paşa Mosque; were stolen on 29.02.2004 and found in Bodrum on 16.07.2005.

Candlestick from İstanbul Şeyh Devati Mustafa Efendi Mosque; was stolen on 05.05.1996 and found on 05.08.2004. The mosque that it belongs to, year and its craftsman are written on it.

Tile from Bursa Yenişehir Sinan Paşa Mosque; belongs to 16th Century tile. It was stolen on 17.02.1998 and given back to Directorate General for Foundations on 29.05.2003.

Tile panels from Yeni Cami Sultan's Summer Palace; were stolen in December 2002, identified in the catalogue of Sotheby's Auction in 2007 and brought back to Ankara in April 2008.

Tile panel from İstanbul Cezeri Kasım Paşa Mosque; was stolen on 26.08.2003 and brought back to Ankara in April 2008. It consists of 41 tiles.

Minbar Door wings from Amasya Mehmet Paşa Mosque; were stolen in June 2002 and brought back to Ankara in April 2008. It belongs to 16th century.

TECHNOLOGY USAGE AT THE MUSEUM

First examples of Directorate General for Foundation's point of view for museums can be seen in Ankara Vakıflar Museum. Variety and richness of display in the museum where the sacred objects are exhibited emphasize that not only exhibiting is important but also information and reflects that an understanding of making the museum a live learning center is adopted.

A hand computer is given to visitors to use during their visit and get information about items and item groups. By this system which we call electronic guide system, information in 5 languages (Turkish, English, Arabic, German and Japanese) is available for visitors. By this technology, visitor can get information about the item by holding the computer to the chip under the item.

In two kiosks, information about activities of Directorate General for Foundations, restorations of ancient monuments, other foundation (vakıf) museums and items in Ankara Vakıflar Museum is given.

It is obvious that nowadays it is easy to reach information by the help of continuously developing technological instruments. Items that are in display, history and old photos of the museum building, information about other museums in Ankara and foundation museums in other cities are provided to visitors at kiosks. When it is thought that new generation is susceptible to technology and our target audience is children; it can be seen that computer information system is a felicitous way of information.

Documentaries of traditional handicraftsmanship are displayed continuously on the LCD which is at the entrance of the museum. Thus, visitors who want to relax get informed while relaxing.

There is an elevator for handicapped visitors having regard to difficulties that handicapped people face in social life. They will be able to visit every floor by using this elevator.

SAMPLES OF CARPET ART

Primal known carpet is dated back to B.C. 5th – 3rd Centuries which was found in the Pazırık Barrows in Altay Mountains. Carpet, which has spread first to the Islamic world with the Seljuks and then to the entire world, **is a gift of Turks to world civilization.**

In Anatolia there is a tradition of donating carpets to mosques. It is hoped that the good deed from the prayer on that rug will also be shared by the donator. By courtesy of this tradition, carpets that were gathered in mosques and masjids gained historical feature. These items were held in depots against theft and met with public by courtesy of museums.

Carpets that date to 16th -17th – 18th -19th -20th Centuries and that belong to Middle Anatolia, West Anatolia and Ladik, Milas, Ada (island) Milas, Kula, Kömürcü, Kula, Gördes, Bergama, Kırşehir, Uşak, Çanakkale, Aydın, Bursa, Beypazarı-Mihalıççık and Caucasian carpets are exhibited in our museum.

SAMPLES OF KILIM ART

It is understood from the findings of archeological findings that; men invented weaving first to cover themselves then to keep the environment they live in warm and to decorate, after that they invented kilim and carpet, and the history of weaving dates back to early times. For example in Anatolia Çatalhöyük weaving fragments belonging to Neolithic Age, kilim fragment which was found in Troy king graves dating back to B.C. 2300, in Tokat - Erbaa a kirman belonging to Bronze Age, in Alacahöyük silver kirmans belonging to B.C. 3000 – 2000 and in Gordion wool and linen weaving fragments which have geometrical designs belonging to B.C 700 were found.

Kilims which are understood from resources to be known and used before carpet are made by lengthwise and transverse two thread system. Transverse threads which are called weft form the design. As an element of nomadic culture, kilims were mostly woven on traveling looms and completely for necessity.

Kilims which are world of symbols are the most beautiful examples of abstract painting. Usually geometric and stylized motifs are seen on kilims. Every motif which is processed as a symbol of feeling and thought has a meaning.

Kilims that date to 18th – 19th – 20th Centuries and that belong to West Anatolia, Middle Anatolia, Aegean, Şarköy, Sivrihisar, Muş, Afyon, Balıkesir, Fethiye, Niğde, Gaziantep, Konya, Adana, Adıyaman and Malatya regions.

SAMPLES OF CALLIGRAPHIC ART

The definition of calligraphy as artistic writing coincides to A.D. 7th century while it was used in meaning of line extending from one spot to another. Islam religion has an important role in the fast spreading and development of calligraphy art. In 7th Century, the Holy Qur'an was first spread orally among public and it was transferred into writing afterwards. One of the most important calligraphers of the period is Hz. Ali ibn Ebu Talip. Artistic writing has become an art starting from this period. Celi, Tomar, Sülüseyn and Sülüs

were the most important types in early period. Furthermore, mainly used writing types in calligraphy are kufic, nesih, sülüs, muhakkak, reyhani, tevkii, rik'a and talik. Beginning from Fatih period, a writing type called "siyakat" which is very difficult to read was used in foundation title deeds, estate books and legal records.

Calligraphic Art lived a promising improvement in 15th – 17th Centuries by courtesy of Ottoman Palace. Like in all Turkish Islamic art, calligraphy was put before all kinds of arts and calligraphers earned great prestige in Ottomans.

In the second half of 15th century a big change was experienced. Saikh Hamdullah who has taught writing to Bayezid II in this period, brought new interpretations to calligraphy art.

The most important calligrapher in 16th century Kanuni (Suleyman the Magnificent) period was Ahmed Karahisari.

Another touchstone of Ottoman calligraphy art in 17th century was Hafiz Osman.

The Sultan who was famous with his Tughra style writings and calligraphy albums was Ahmed III.

Our most important calligrapher in 18th century is Mustafa Rakım. Sultan Mahmud II who was his student and who has ornamented lots of mosques and collections with his signboards is also among calligraphers of this period.

Although calligraphy art which has continued its existence in 19th century and after proclamation of the Republic was interrupted for a period of time, today artistic writing tradition is sustained by masters and students which were raised by lots of private institutions and agencies. This is a proud situation for providing sustainability of calligraphy art.

Silsilename, foundation charters of Sultans, Qur'ans, calligraphic signboards and tiles that belong to Ottoman Era are exhibited in our museum.

SAMPLES OF TILE ART

Anatolian Turkish tile art is world famous especially with its various colors, techniques and designs. Tile art which evolved relatively with architecture has entered to Anatolia with Seljuks, gave its most successful and beautiful examples with various techniques and enriched in Ottoman art. Tile, Tile mosaic and glazed brick have been the important component of religious and civil architecture.

Various techniques have been used in the art of tiles which gave hundreds of samples for centuries. At the first samples use of glazed brick attracts attention. But after a short time, application of high level shear mosaic tile techniques which are formed by piecing together tile board and pieces that are cut as requested from turquoise, eggplant purple, green, dark blue glazed panels on gypsum surface can be seen. At the religious structures where ashlar mosaic technique is used, in addition to curled branch embellishments which are enriched with abstract vegetal motifs like zoomorphic and palmette ornaments, decorations with large kufic and tuluth writings are also used. At civil structures like palace and villas the walls were covered with star shaped, cross-like, rectangle and hexagonal geometric tile plates.

The first important tile center in Anatolia is Konya. All kinds of marvelous examples of Seljuk Era can be seen at architectural works in Konya and its environs. It is understood from the Beyşehir Kubadabad Palace excavations that tile ovens were established here to make palace tiles. The structures with tiles in Akşehir, Sivas, Tokat, Malatya, Afyon, Kayseri, Antalya, Alanya, Amasya, Aksaray, Harput, Ankara, Diyarbakır indicate that tile making in Seljuk Era was prevalent. It is seen that hexagonal tile panels, turquoise, eggplant purple and black tile mosaic decorations were densely used at the interiors of Karatay Madrasah, Sırçalı Madrasah, Sahip Ata Dervish Lodge and Mosque in Konya.

Sultanates period tile art is rather weak when it is compared with Seljuk and Ottoman period. Usually Seljuk tradition continues. Turquoise, dark blue, eggplant purple tiles some of which are underglazed and that are buried in plaster in plaster mihrabs and iznik cups which are called “Milas Type” are novelties seen in 14th – 15th centuries in Ankara and Sivrihisar in Ermenek Karaman period.

Hexagon tile plates which appear to cover the walls in Karaman, Konya and Ermenek structures indicate that Seljuk tradition has continued. Tile mosaic and glazed brick which used to cover large areas before are very few in mosques, mesjids and madrasahs belonging to Sultanates period. Minaret of İznik Yeşil Mosque is an exceptional sample with its rich tile decoration.

In Ottoman period there was richness in colors with addition of white, yellow, pistachio green and purple. Furthermore hatayi compositions and peony designs were added into tile art. The flowers gushing vase and oil lamp motifs hung above between the candlesticks of mihrab in Bursa Yeşil Tomb is one of the most favorable examples of changing decoration style. At the tile decorations covering the interior of Şehzade Mehmed Tomb (1548), architectural forms including columns, capital and pedestal are seen. These samples display the most common use of colored glaze technique concordant with architecture.

After the second half of 15th century, coral red color which would last only for half a century was added among colors. In these tiles which were of very good quality and made with an elegant design concept; flowers like tulip, hyacinth, carnation, rose, rosebud, iris, daffodil and bunch of grapes, spring branches, cypress tree and apple trees which were made in naturalist concept take their places in the compositions. Furthermore fang leaves curled like dagger, bird figures in various positions and sometimes legendary animals take their places in these motifs.

Tile draws attention as an important decorative element in 15th – 18th century Ottoman architecture. Tile elements differing relative to century and region; present a great richness which goes beyond Seljuk period. Tile finds itself a wide area of use in structures like mosque, mesjid, madrasah, imaret, hamam, palace, villa, private house, fountain, buffet d’eau, even church and library.

SAMPLES OF METAL ART

Art of metal works is one of the oldest arts of Turks. In the light of the researches and excavations started in the late 19th century, it has clearly been public that Turkish art of metal works is in advanced level since Neolithic era. Lots of metal works of art in “animal form”

was discovered at Noin Ula and Pazırık tumulus. Guns, some tools, ornamental items and metal plates on tents are among the first works of Turks.

Art of metal works in Ottoman Era comes forward as a period where new techniques were tried while old traditions were protected. In the decoration program naturalist motifs like tulip, carnation, peony, and pomegranate were used in addition to traditional motifs. For the ottomans, just like other arts, the period till the second half of 15th century is accepted to be the period where old traditions were continued and new forms were sought in the art of metal works. In the 17th century, it reaches a full synthesis by combining different interactions. These centuries are “Classical Period” for the Ottoman Art. “Tall Mihrab Candlesticks” which were amply produced in 16th century continued their effect until 17th century then left its place to “Tulip Formed Candlesticks” with the influence of Tulip Period.

Another group of work which we see mostly in 18th and 19th centuries is Tombac. In this technique mercury oxide alloyed gold coating is applied on copper or brass work, gold is covered on work after it is heated and almost gold looking works of art are produced.

Copper, bronze and tombac candlesticks that are in various forms and dimensions, swords and alems are exhibited in our museum.

SAMPLES OF WOODEN ART

Wood, can be seen in different kinds of arts since the early periods of Turkish Art. Door to be the first, it is used in production of architectural elements like window casements, minbar, mihrab, capital, beam and items like reading desk, Qur'an storage, chest and table in different techniques. As wood is a common material in use, the techniques differ according to this variety.

Wooden decorative techniques are; künde-kârî technique (authentic and imitation), carving technique (flat surface, round surface, deep carving, double layer, curved cutting technique), embossment, engraving technique, inlaying technique, tarsi technique, lattice technique, lattice technique made by lath, lattice carving (ajur) technique, maşrabıye type lattice technique, ajur adhesive technique and paint on wood technique.

Usually walnut, apple, pear, cedar, ebony, rose, box, oak and pine trees are used and it is tried to be found if not available around according to the importance of the work. The technique which needs original workmanship and which is mostly used in making doors, window casements, minbar and mihrab is künde-kârî. In this technique, geometrical joints like diamond shape and stars are surrounded with a frame without using glue. Framework is formed by adjusting the pieces. Other than this, in the technique called “imitation künde-kârî”, wooden pieces are processed in geometrical design embossment form after the pieces are brought side by side.

Especially in 16th and 17th Centuries use of nacreous items have become widespread, it has found itself fields of application in architectural elements and other kinds of items. Nacre is sometimes used on its own on wood and sometimes used together with ivory, bone and tortoise shell.

Works that belong to 13th century and made by künde-karî and carving (ajur) technique are exhibited in our museum right along with wooden samples which belong to late period and processed by künde-karî and carving (ajur) technique. Nacre inlaid reading desks, candlesticks and Sakal-ı Şerif (Box with the Holy Beard of Prophet Muhammad) samples are also available in the museum.

CAMERAS AND OTHER TOOLS

Photograph is the most important witness of the social, political and cultural developments, changes and history. The photograph which was introduced in Ottoman press in 1838 was mostly used to document palace notables and army commanders. With the thought of Islam considering depiction as sin, the sector has been in the hands of non-Muslims for a long time; after a while came into possession of Muslims with Abdullah brothers and embraced with public after the firman that ordered to mount photographs on ID's.

In 19th -20th Centuries, with using of different astigmatic lenses, cellulose based films and developments in photograph apparatus and film sector; photograph has come to its state today.

Cameras that are exhibited in our museum consist of veteran cameras which were used to establish the archive of Directorate General for Foundations. There are also enlargers and exposure meters.

SAMPLES OF CLOCKS

Clocks are among technologies that Ottomans took from West. These objects that humans measured time with examples like water clock, sun clock, sand clock have gone through various alterations in time. Clock concept which gained importance for determination of praying times in Ottoman Era had different repercussions.

Clocks in various heights and designs which were made by local and foreign craftsmen are exhibited in our museum.