

ANTIQUÉ OTTOMAN RUGS IN TRANSYLVANIA©

EDITORIAL PROJECT

The Ottoman rugs of 'classical' age which survived in Transylvania are the most important heritage of the Turkish textile art in Eastern Europe, a region which for centuries was submitted by the Ottoman Empire. Actually more than 380 Turkish rugs, dating from the second half of the 15th century to the second half of the 18th century can be found in Transylvania, a period when the Ottoman textile production was at its highest. This is also the largest ensemble of such exceptionally well preserved rugs existing in the Christian world. Despite its impressive worth, this treasure has been scarcely researched and barely brought to the attention of the public.

The mass presence of these rugs, often in the format of prayer rugs, which survived mostly in the Lutheran Evangelical Churches of the German minority in Transylvania (also called Saxons, who live alongside with Protestant Hungarian and Romanian Orthodox communities) is an unique and complex cultural phenomenon, which this publication will try to elucidate.

A number of these rugs were first published by *Emil Schmutzler*, a rug-collector and fabric manufacturer from Braşov who also was a refined connoisseur of the rugs from Transylvania. He published the monumental album *Altorientalische Teppiche in Siebenbürgen*, printed in Leipzig in 1933 in only 325 copies. Coveted by collectors, with 55 excellent illustrations, this album has been the most important source of reference for several generations of scholars.

On the seventieth anniversary of the publication of *Schmutzler's* book, it was our intention to extend his study by publishing quality photographs and updated information complete with textile analysis for over 260 rugs from all the Church and Museum collections in Transylvania.

The complete collection of the Black Church in Braşov is published for the first time, together with other highly important examples from the Evangelical Churches of Mediaş, Sighişoara, Rupea, Biertan, Sebeş, Călnic, Râşnov, Richiş, Cisnădie, from the National Brukenthal Museum in Sibiu, from the National Museum of History of Transylvania in Cluj and from the National Museum of Art in Bucharest.

A major objective of the project is to stimulate the preservation and restoration of this important heritage and to facilitate exhibiting an increasing number of rugs at museum standards in the future.

CONTENT OF THE BOOK

FOREWORD by dr.dr.h.c. Christoph Klein

I – EARLY STUDIES

A short discussion of the publications on the Turkish Rugs from Transylvania.

II – TRANSYLVANIA AND THE TURKISH RUGS

1. Historical background
2. Trade and the arrival of Ottoman rugs in Transylvania.
3. The role of rugs in Transylvania.

III. – TYPOLOGY OF OTTOMAN RUGS IN TRANSYLVANIA

During several campaigns in Transylvania, a full and detailed data base of all the antique carpets of 'classical' age has been set up; some very rare pieces will be discussed and published for the first time.

IV. – CATALOGUE

Over 250 classical Turkish rugs illustrated in colours, many of which have not been previously published, with 50 full page photographs including: 'Ghirlandajo', 'Holbein', Ushak, Selendi, 'Lotto', Double-niche 'Transylvanian', 'Transylvanian' Prayers, Column Prayers, Ghiordes and Kula rugs.

Colour photography has been done with state of art equipment inside the Churches, with rugs placed horizontally. All the rugs have been washed prior to being photographed.

V. – THE RUG COLLECTIONS IN TRANSYLVANIA

A short introduction of the main collections (Black Church in Braşov, Brukenthal Museum in Sibiu, The Parish Churches of Sighişoara, Mediaş, Biertan, Rupea), with illustrations and documentation referring to each Church.



In an attempt to open a page from the past, the Bistrița collection now displaced from Transylvania is also included.

APPENDIXES

1. E. Schmutzler (biographical notes)
2. Teodor Tuduc
3. Inscriptions on Ottoman rugs
4. Index of rug locations
5. Index of published rugs
6. Textile analyses
7. Oriental carpets in the Romanian Principalities

AUTHORS

arch. Alberto Boralevi - Florence
ing. Stefan Ionescu - Rome
dr. Andrei Kertesz - Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu

CONSULTANT EDITORS

arch. Alberto Boralevi - Chief Consultant Editor
dr. Radu Ardevan - Cluj University
ing. Erwin Hellmann - Brașov Parish
Gernot Nussbächer - Brașov Parish
dr. Șerban Turcuș - Romanian Embassy by the Holy See

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Mircea Dunca - National Museum of Art, Bucharest
George E. Schmutzler - Germany

TEXTILE ANALYSES

Rodica Dinulescu - Brukenthal Museum, Sibiu

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

Brenda Walker - London
Lidia Ionescu - Bucharest

COPY EDITOR

Jill Tilden - HALI Associate Editor, London

PHOTOGRAPHY

Arpad Udvardi - Brașov

GENERAL EDITOR

ing. Ștefan Ionescu (Bucharest and Rome) - Promoter and co-ordinator of the project, owner of the copyright.

The book is available in two language editions: **Italian** and **English**.

The project also enjoys the approval of THE SUPERIOR CONSISTORY OF THE EV. CHURCH A.C. OF ROMANIA.

The work is also supported by the following institutions which will undertake the cultural promotion:

THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS OF ROMANIA

NATIONAL MUSEUM BRUKENTHAL

ROMANIAN ACADEMY OF ROME

ROMANIAN EMBASSY BY THE HOLY SEE

The book was published with the support of the

MARSHALL AND MARILYN R. WOLF FOUNDATION, NEW YORK

RATIU FAMILY FOUNDATION, UNITED KINGDOM

