Asian Domestic Embroideries

1 Suzani, Shakhrisabz, South Uzbekistan, 19th century. Floss silk needlework on tabby weave cotton made up of 5½ widths. 249 × 195.5 cms. 30/4

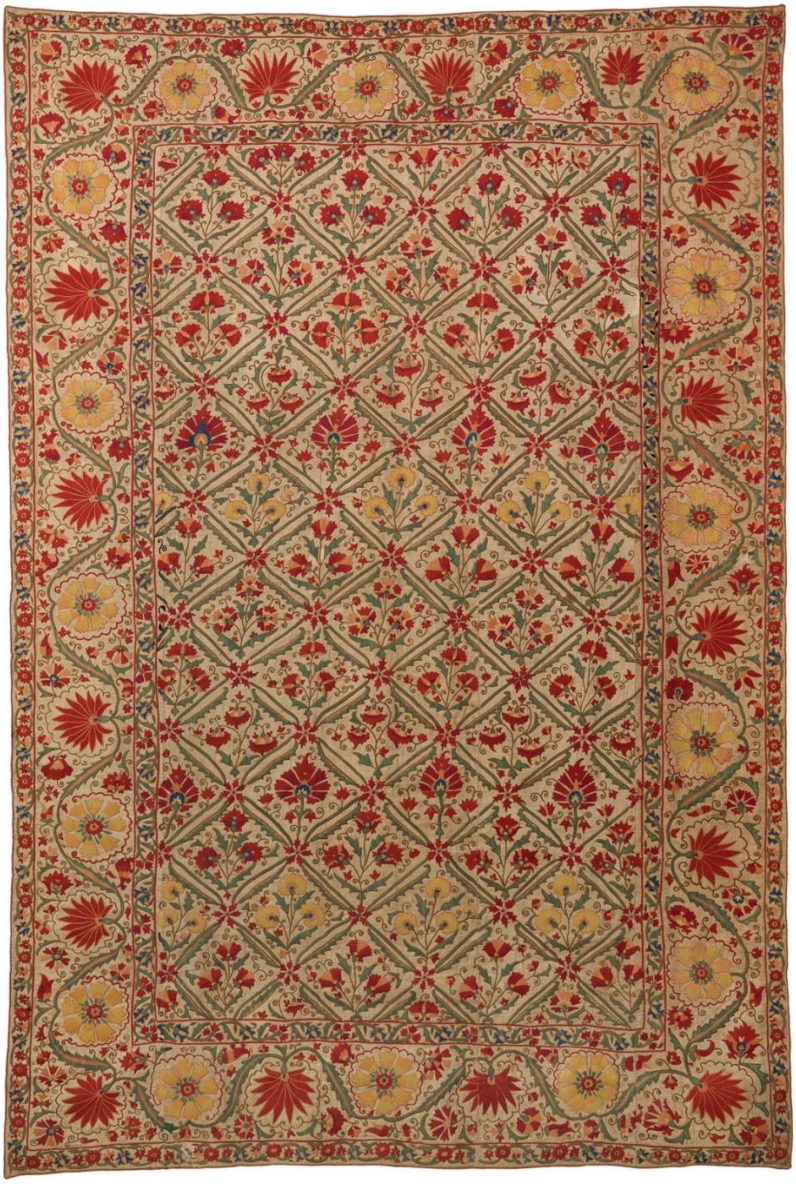
Fig 111 Suzani, 30-4

ASIAN DOMESTIC embroideries in The Burrell Collection comprise eleven hangings (suzani) from Uzbekistan (one shown)***(111)***, four from Turkey, two said to be from West Turkestan (an expression covering the whole of Soviet Central Asia) and one from Northwest Persia. The suzani are the most important as there are only two other collections of these in the British Isles, namely in the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Suzani is derived from a Tadzhik word for a needle, and means an embroidered cloth used mainly as a hanging or cover, made in Uzbekistan in the nineteenth century. The great majority of examples are held in museums in the U.S.S.R. (See G.L. Chepelevetskaya: *Suzani Uzbekistana,* Tashkent. 1961.)

The documented historical background to such suzani begins as late as 1 820. when a Russian diplomatic mission, headed by AT. Negri, arrived in Bukhara, the capital of the Khanate of Greater Bukharia. It came on the invitation of the Emir and its aims were to conclude a trade agreement, to obtain news of Russians held in captivity and to negotiate for their release. The picture which E.A. Eversmann, a naturalist accompanying the mission, draws is of a city alive with caravans. (E.A. Eversmann and P.L. Jakovlew: "Journey from Orenburg to Bucharia" in *Russian Missions into the Interior of Asia*, London, 1823, pages 11 to 61.) Trading was the principal occupation of the two major ethnic 'groups, Tadzhik and Uzbek. Of the third group, the Jews, only the most wealthy took part in the wholesale business; other Jews made their living by dyeing and distilling. Caravans from Russia brought calicoes, silk and cotton as well as brass and iron goods and carried back silk and cotton, raw and worked, Kashmiri and Persian shawls and indigo. By the mid nineteenth century half the silk sent to Russia came from Bukhara and the rest from Kokand. From Kashmir and Kabul came Indian calicoes, Kashmiri shawls and Indian silks. Of the forty thousand shawls said to be exported annually from Kashmir, three thousand came to Bukhara. Trade with Persia was said not to be considerable. Fine woollen shawls, which served as sashes for the men, silks, cottons and fine carpets and, of course, slaves were imported. Cotton, velvet, gold thread and cochineal were sent to Persia in return.

Eversmann makes special mention of the lot of women in a Muslim city: they were regarded as slaves to be bought and sold. This, according to Eversmann ".. .produced a great corruption of morals." Another traveller, Count Pahlen, writing of his visit to Samarkand in 1908, exclaims with horror at the life of women ". . .taught complete submissiveness to men, married and mothers at ten or twelve, reduced to spending their days either embroidering suzani (embroidered silk coverlets for the walls) or making carpets, but mostly killing time by gossiping." (Count K.K. Pahlen: *Mission to Turkestan*, London, 1964.)

In 1865, the Russians captured Tashkent and thus extended their conquest of Central Asia as far as the River Jaxartes (Syr Darya). In 1866 the Russian army-invaded the territory of Bukhara and defeated the Bukharans, and captured Samarkand in 1868. In 1873 a treaty with Bukhara was signed giving the Russians what they had been seeking. The Russian object in conquering Central Asia, like that of the British in India, was to develop trade. The local products, especially the rugs and carpets, had been prized for centuries at the rich market of Bukhara and further a field in Persia and India. The Russians were anxious to divert them to new markets. Hard on the heels of the military came the dealers, intent on profiting from the breakdown of the monopolies enforced in the old Khanates of Khiva, Bukhara and Kokand.



112 Suzani. Bukhara district, 19th century. Floss silk needlework on tabby weave cotton made up of 5 widths. 239 × 162 cms. 30/5

Fig 112 Suzani, 30-5

113 Suzani. Shakhrisabz, South Uzbekistan, 19th century. Floss silk needlework on tabby weave cotton made up of 2 widths. 225.5 × 155 cms. 30/3

Fig 113 Suzani, 30-3

114 Ruidzho (wedding bedspread) suzani. Bukhara district, 19th century. Floss silk needlework on tabby weave cotton made up of 3 widths. 207.5 × 145 cms. 30/16

Fig 114 Ruidzho suzani, 30-16

115 Nimsuzani (small hanging). Bukhara district, 19th century. Floss silk needlework on tabby weave cotton made up of 4 widths. 175 x 122 cms. 30/14

Fig 115 Suzani, 30-14

From now on local trading was expanded. The improvement of the cotton used as the ground fabric of suzani was due to the first Governor-General of Turkestan. Konstantin Petroviich Kaufman. He was quick to realise the economic potential of cotton and he imported American seed, which natives were ordered to sow. During the following years not only was there a sharp rise in production but also an improvement in quality. It was now that Uzbek embroidered cloths were first seen with real appreciation by Western eyes, though doubtless they had long been used to wrap up rugs sent to trading centres. The British, no less than the Russians, were anxious to extend their commercial connections in this area and pieces of Uzbek embroidery-found their way to India, though the trade by caravan between Bukhara and Peshawar, which continued into the twentieth century, was shrinking.

Of the main centres of Uzbek domestic embroidery. Bukhara, Nurata, Shakhrisabz, Samarkand, Tashkent and Fergana, only the first three are represented in The Burrell Collection. All surviving suzani were embroidered in the nineteenth century. This can be deduced partly from the evidence of the bright red wool thread and partly from the development of design and stitchery.

116 Suzani. Nurata, North Bukhara, 19th century. Floss silk needlework on tabby weave cotton made up of 5 widths. 238.5 x 164.5 cms. 30/6

Fig 116 Suzani, 30-6

The suzani of Bukhara and Nurata have many common characteristics. In the middle of the ground of both there is often an eight-pointed star and in diagonally opposite corners, bouquets of flowers. In Nurata embroideries***(116)***, the flowers in the bouquets are dissimilar; in Bukhara embroideries they are similar. The smaller and more

.numerous the flowers in the bouquets, the older the embroidery; there is one with forty-three flowers in one of the Soviet museums.

If an embroidery is stitched only in chain stitch, it is always assumed to have been made in Bukhara. The suzani from Bukhara not only have edges bound in cross-way strips of silk, but are usually fully-lined with a cheap cotton of attractive design. Another popular design from Bukhara is a diamond trellis of leaves***(112)***, in each space of which there is a motif which may be a rosette, an animal or a bird. It is called locally *tabadoni*. Less common is a square trellis. This type of embroidery may be worked in Bukharan couching, as well as chain stitch. The border is usually a trail of leaves with rosettes and palmettes. Sometimes flowers on slender stalks cover the central ground.

In Nurata embroideries, the ground not occupied by the star and corner bouquets is sprinkled with sprays of bwers. In the earlier embroideries, these are delicate but later on not only does the embroidery become coarser, but so does the design, so that much of the background is filled and circles take the place of flowers. Birds are frequently included. The foliage of embroideries, especially those from Bukhara, is green, edged with light gold or even khaki. Often blue predominates in hangings from Nurata.

Embroideries from Shakhrisabz (the former Kesh and the birthplace of Timur), have a bold design and are stitched in strong colours***(113)***. The size of the ground is smaller, in relation to that of the borders, than in other areas. The guard stripes (i.e. the edges of the border), are broader and resemble each other in their floral design. Sometimes the guard stripes are identical both in design and colour. The foliage is usually dark green, outlined with dark blue or even black. Red, orange and magenta are dominant colours, and the *chor-chirog* (lamp motif) is a frequent design.

There is almost no documentary evidence, which is not surprising in domestic embroidery made as part of a bride's dowry and handed down in the family. It is recorded that even as late as the beginning of the twentieth century, when the literacy rate in the Russian Empire was improving, only fifteen per cent of the adult population in Central Asia was literate.

It is however known that the manufacture of silk in Tashkent, Khodzhent (present-day Leninabad) and Samarkand had entirely died out until it was revived after the capture of Merv by Shah Murad Khan in 1785. He transferred all the inhabitants of this city to Bukhara where they continued the silk culture which was one of their favourite occupations. In 1821 Eversmann wrote: "The country does not produce much silk, for this reason, they procure it from Persia. There are no considerable manufactories in Bucharia." However, by 1864 Schuyler wrote of Tashkent: ''Rude as its methods, the silk manufacture of Central Asia, owing its importance to the country, is relatively more developed than other branches of industry." (Eugene Schuyler: *Turkistan*, New York, 1876.)

The only certain dates of specimens of suzani in Britain are of one in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which was bought in Peshawar in 1890, and another owned privately in Edinburgh, which was bought in 1884 in Kabul, where a Scottish regiment was stationed. The officer wrote of his purchase in a letter to his wife.

Soviet sources suggest that forays of dealers after the Russian Revolution account for the rarity of early pieces, but it is more likely that, like all purely peasant pieces, they were always few in number because of the poverty of the region before and after the Russian invasion. Only the few more well-to-do families had the time and money to indulge in decorative work. Soviet scholars agree that between 1860 and 1880 cinnabar red wool imported at great expense from India was used on the embroideries. After 1880, it ceased to be fashionable.

Despite the turmoil of war, conquest and revolution, Uzbek domestic architecture has changed little. Travellers have essentially the same story to tell (Eversmann in 1821, Pahlen in 1909, Maiilart in 1938, the present writer in 1983). Houses are reached through wooden gates set in the otherwise blank walls which line the streets. The gates give access to a yard round which rooms are built. The door into the main room usually faces a blank wall with shelved niches at either end. Niches were also built into the walls on either side of the door. There is little or no furniture, except for a low table, but an abundance of soft furnishings, bolsters, pillows, coverings and hangings. Bedding is stored on the shelves during the day in an embroidered wrapping (*bolinpush*), and in front of the shelves hangs a curtain (*kirpech*). Between the niches hang the large suzani and if there is space above that, an embroidered frieze (*dorpech* or *zardevor*) runs round the room.

A *dzhoinamaz* (from the Uzbek word for prayer mat, used also in Iran and Turkey), is often a square cloth in which a Muslim wraps his Koran and/or piece of stone for ritual use. At times the name is used for a rectangle of which the unembroidered centre is curved at one end to suggest a prayer niche (*mikharab*). At prayer the worshipper must stand on a perfectly clean piece of material, if possible owned by him.

A *ruidzho* (bed in Tadzhik) is one name for the bridal sheet. It is embroidered at one short end and down both long sides***(114)***. In Tashkent it is known as a choishab and in Bukhara a dzoipush. The word boiinpush is also used for the embroidered cover for the head of the bridal bed (*push* means covering in Tadzhik).

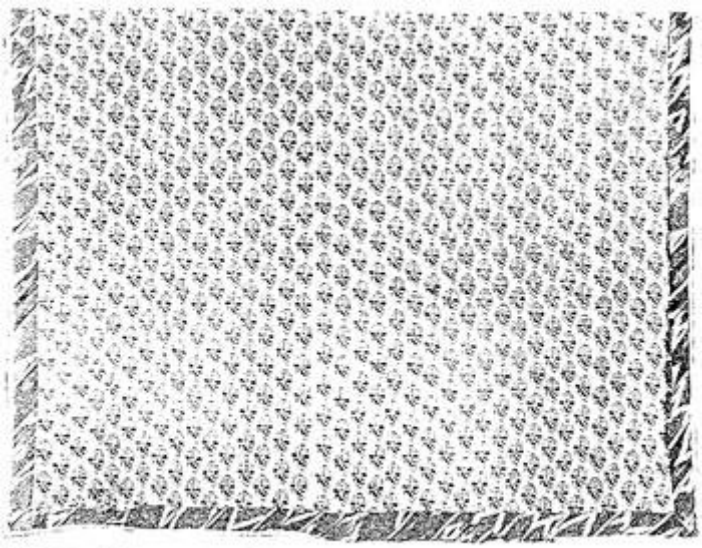
The element *nim* in the term *nimsuzani* means half***(115)***. This hanging was used purely for decoration or for curtaining the shelves where clothing was kept. It is a term used more frequently in Bukhara and Nurata than in other Uzbek towns.

A Nurat bride in the nineteenth century was expected to have two suzani, two nimsuzani, two *tak'yapush*, two dzhoinamaz and two *sandalpush*. Tak'yapush and bolinpush are words used for the same piece of embroidery. Sandalpush is a table-cloth, sometimes round, more often square, which covered a sandalwood table beneath which would stand a small brazier, the only form of traditional domestic heating.

Apart from the very large suzani, the names of the embroidered hangings refer to their function. A bolinpush may be used to curtain the bride and groom during the marriage ceremony, when promises on their behalf were made by witnesses. It is then called a *chimildik*.

The embroidered cloth used as a baldachin covering the bride as she goes to her husband's house is usually on a white background to ward off evil spirits. If a young girl dies between her betrothal and her wedding a ruidzho is used as her shroud.

The majority of suzani are embroidered on cotton fabric called *buz*, whether made at home or in a factory. Buz is undyed and generally unbleached. The Russians usually refer to it through a misunderstanding as *mata*, which is properly an Uzbek measure of about 8 yards. The strips of cotton made at home are usually 14 or 15 inches wide.



117 Detail of the reverse of the suzani seen in 113, showing printed cotton lining and ikat border facing. 30/3

Fig 117 Detail of Suzani, 30-3

A few suzani from Bukhara are lined with a cheap printed cotton of which there was a large import, designed and manufactured in Russia for the Uzbek market, for example, the lining of the suzani from Shakhrisabz***(117)*** which dates from the beginning of the nineteenth century (seen in ***113***). The binding on the edges, if any, is made of local silk or a mixture of silk and cotton (*adras*), sometimes plain, more often striped. It is cut on the cross into strips. The edge-binding of the Shakhrisabz is *ikat* (warp-dyed silk).

The embroidery stitches were originally worked in a floss silk, manufactured locally from the external covering of the cocoons, which is corded, spun and made into hanks, without undergoing the process of twisting. Between

1860 and 1880 a tiny proportion of the embroidery in any one hanging, depending on the money available, was worked in the expensive cinnabar red wool imported from India. A tightly spun silk thread indicates a date after 1880. By the turn of the century stranded embroidery cotton was imported from Western Europe, presumably through Russia.

Traditionally carpets were the work of the-men and embroidery that of the women, who spent years on the embroideries for their houses. Embroideries made with the help of a tambour frame were an exception and were made by men. The arrival of the Russians had increased the demand and raised the prices of pillows and tablecloths.

To embroider a full size suzani was reckoned to take two years. The embroiderer did not draw the design herself but gave the cloth to a professional *kalamkash* (designer). Each village or town quarter had its kalamkash who inherited her position from her mother or sponsor. The inheritance of the position was accompanied by a special ceremony. When the design had been drawn***(118)***, the strips were separated and returned. If there was any danger that the dowry would not be ready in time, a *kashgar* (group) was called in to finish the work, in much the same way that quilts were finished in similar situations in America and Britain.

Chain stitch and its variants, ladder stitch, heavy chain and loop stitch, Bukharan couching and Rumanian couching, are the principal stitches seen in these embroideries. In Uzbek embroideries, chain stitch (*yurma*) was made with a *bigiz*, an instrument similar to a crochet hook but with a pointed, not rounded, head. The embroidery was not framed but worked in the hand, as were Kashmiri embroideries. Chain stitch is used both as a filling and for outlining. The use of chain stitch alone in an embroidery is characteristic of Bukhara work. It may be called *darafsh* (the Tadzhik word for crochet hook).

118 Detail of ruidzho from Bukhara seen in 114, showing unstitched guide-lines on the base.

Fig 118 Ruidzho suzani detail, 30-16

Fig 119 Suzani detail, 30-12

120 Detail of 19th century suzani from Shakhrisabz seen in 111, showing Rumanian couching. 30/4

Fig 120 Suzani detail, 30-4

121 Detail of suzani described in 119 showing the triangular tumura motif, an old amulet shape. 30/12

Fig 121 Suzani detail, 30-12

2 Detail of suzani in 119 showing the unusual round amulet shape. 30/12

Fig 122 Suzani detail, 30-12

123 Detail of suzani from Nurata seen in 116 showing a bird motif. 30/6

Fig 123 Suzani detail, 30-6

124 Detail of suzani from Bukhara in 112 with Cannabis sativa border design. 30/5

Fig 124 Suzani detail, 30-5

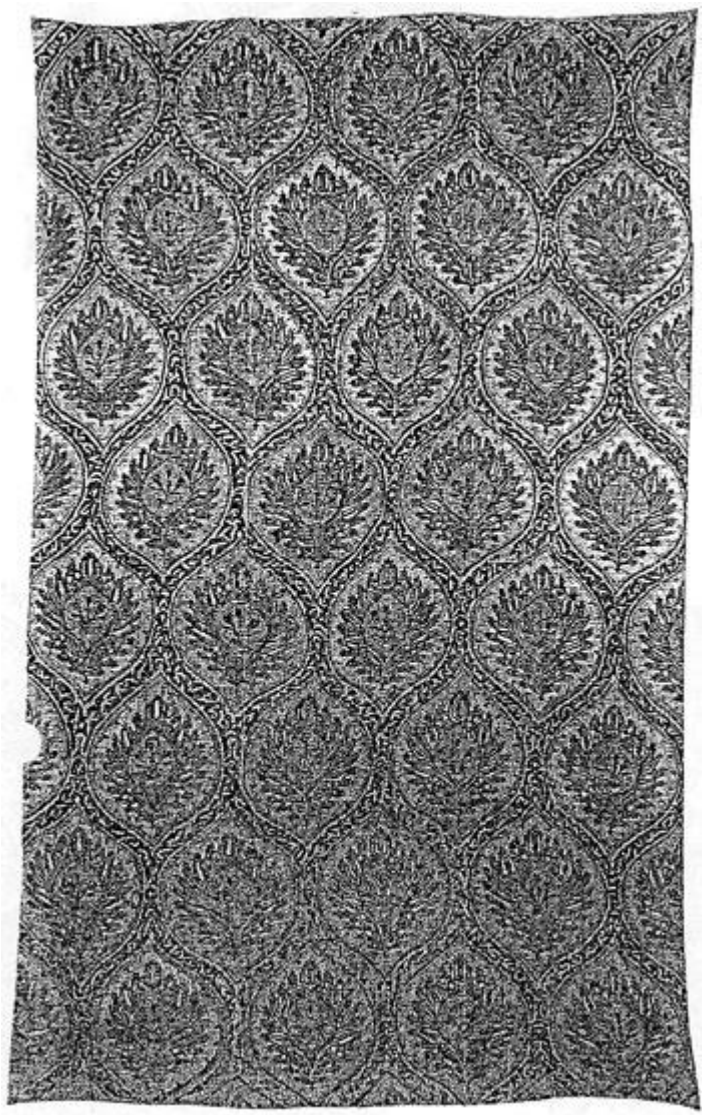
Loop stitch (*ilmok*) is worked "sideways" to outline a motif or to embroider small details, especially tendrils, or is "two-sided'' when it becomes ladder stitch. Ladder stitch is frequently worked in orange silk to edge guard stripes. The two most commonly used filling stitches are Rumanian couching and Bukharan couching. Modifications of both these stitches have been identified in modern Uzbek embroideries but do not appear in any pieces in this collection. Couching stitches are made by laying a thread across the surface of the material and tying it down by another stitch. It is easy to determine the difference between the two forms. In Bukharan couching***(119)*** the long thread is sewn down with small, evenly spaced stitches pulled tightly. Sometimes the length and angle of the couching stitch to the laid thread are such that the whole surface appears plaited. The stitch is locally known as *basma*, a Tadzhik word meaning design. In Rumanian couching***(120)*** the laid thread is left looser and is sewn down with longer stitches'. A very small amount of the ground material is picked up. As a result, it is difficult to distinguish the ground and the couching thread. The resulting appearance is of a woven fabric. The local name is *kanda khaiol* (revealing imagination).

Double darning (*chinda khaiol* in Uzbek), occurs in Turkish, Persian and modern Uzbek embroideries. It is not often seen in nineteenth centuxy suzani. Satin stitch used as a filling' is called *chamduzi*. *Iraki* is a half-cross or tent stitch, characteristic of the late nineteenth century embroideries from Shakhrisabz. *Chamak* or herringbone is used to edge leaves or *buta* (Paisley motif). Very frequently on hangings from Bukhara a line of apparently fine braid about half an inch wide runs round the outer border. At first it looks like magic chain, but on closer examination it can be seen that it is a loop-manipulated braid.

The only abstract design frequently found on suzani is the triangular motif *lumura****(121)***, known as an old amulet shape among Turkic peoples. It appears most frequently on suzani from Dzhizhak and signifies life. The round amulet***(122)*** is less common. The buta or Paisley motif first came to be well known in Europe in Kashmiri shawls and scarves: not surprisingly, since they were imported to Bukhara, it appears on embroideries from the Bukharan region***(123)***. It was thought to have magic powers and to be a symbol of immortality. In the suzani illustrated, the form is filled with pomegranate seeds, signifying fecundity.

Of the inanimate objects which appear on the suzani, the "cook's knife", as it is known by Soviet scholars, is the most usual; like other designs representing cutting objects (the small sabre and scissor), it was intended to protect the owner. The cook's knife may appear as a leaf with serrations on one or both sides. The tip is often curved and ends in a tuft of leaves. The other end is usually rounded.

The lamp with four reservoirs (called chor-chirog), a design which was used especially in Shakhrisabz embroideries, is in the form of a central rosette from which spring four leaf forms. It derives from a folk memory of fire worship and also has protective powers. A lamp with four wicks was often put near a young child.



125 Hanging. Turkey. 17th century. Floss silk on even weave linen made up of 3 widths. 223 × 145 cms. 30/9

Fig 125 Suzani detail, 30-9

126 Hanging. Turkey. 17th century. Floss silk on even weave linen made up of 3 widths. 218 × 142 cms. 30/11

Fig 126 Suzani detail, 30-11

Pitchers and vases, often containing flowers or sprays of willow, occur as individual motifs. They symbolise the Great Mother or the Waters of Paradise. Empty pitchers in varying numbers surround the centre of rosettes. The great majority of the objects embroidered are flowers. *Islimi*, the winding trail (for details see the next section) so characteristic of Bukharan and Nuratan borders, symbolises continuity. Often the trail winds round flower heads in such a way that some face the outer and others the inner guard stripe. Those facing outwards ward off evil and those inwards keep in good. Motifs representing living creatures are usually of birds or fish***(123)***. A bird signifies a good beginning and a fish female fertility.

On the bride's ruidzho***(114)***, the embroidery only appears on both long sides and one end, making an arch or doorway. The symbolism, the entry to a new life, is obvious and intentional. Part of an embroidered piece is deliberately left uncompleted to express the wishes "may the marriage be unending", and "long life to the daughter and unceasing joy in the house".

No single explanation of the designs on suzani seems adequate. They are magnificently decorative, sufficiently to arouse comment from many of the nineteenth century travellers in the Zarafshan oasis, but as dowry pieces that took two years to create, suzani probably had a greater significance.

In addition to their purely decorative function, two other uses for the designs on suzani can be adduced; as talismans, and as a pharmacopoeia. All Soviet scholars who have studied Uzbek domestic embroideries have emphasised their magic properties in the eyes of the women who use them. They have their part in the rituals accompanying birth, marriage and death even today and they are decorated with talismans. However there is a further probability and that is that the plants-represented on them are important in Muslim medicine.

The diseases which are mentioned by travellers are malaria, guinea worm, round and tape worms, trachoma, venereal diseases, tuberculosis and cholera. The flowers which Chepelevetskaya lists as being represented on the hangings are iris, carnation, tulip, cockscomb, mallow, zinnia and the fruits pomegranate, almonds, pepper, the heads of the opium poppy and cherries. The most common design is the large rosette often appearing with six elliptical marks near the centre. Without doubt these represented poppies. Opium was smoked as well as eaten in small cakes to produce oblivion.

According to Chepelevetskaya, the second most common design, a palmette, is cockscomb (*Celosia argentea forma cristata*), a plant which has been cultivated for a very long time, particularly in the tropics. It has been regarded by some as efficaceous in treating diarrhoea, blood diseases, mouth sores and excessive menstrual discharge as well as clearing the vision and being a useful pot herb. However a more recent view is that the palmette is the flower of the pomegranate, which has long had an honourable place in the medicine chest. The rind was used as a cure for diarrhoea, the root to get rid of tapeworm. Its styptic qualities are highly regarded. Certainly many of the palmettes resemble those of Turkish embroideries thought to be pomegranate. The frequency with which these two designs appear emphasises their importance in the lives of Uzbek women.

Iris germanica served as an aperient and a diuretic. An extract was applied to small sores and pimples and an extract made from its roots was used in conjunction with *Capsicum annuum* in cases of cholera. The medicinal properties are sufficient in themselves to account for its popularity without taking into account its decorative value and symbolic significance.

Sprays of willow (*Salix babylonica*), which are often represented in vases, may have been included because the bark yields the well-known febrifuge salicylic acid (the principle of aspirin). The design in the Nurata illustrated earlier***(116)***, in the middle ground on the left, is possibly a representation of *Peganum hamale*, a form of garden rue. The local inhabitants know it as *khazaras-pand* (a thousand illnesses). It is burned in the sickrooms of those with chest infections to relieve congestion. It is thought to have aphrodisiac qualities and the infusion or tincture produces slight intoxication like cannabis. Where the plant grows abundantly, underground water is found. The palmate divided leaves which appear in the border of the suzani from Bukhara***(124)***, are almost certainly *Cannabis saliva*, which is a native of Western and Central Asia.

The author has not been, able to identify the other flowers and fruits mentioned by Chepelevetskaya in these suzani and they may only occur in more recent examples, where the original purpose of the flower motifs has been forgotten and the desire has been purely for decoration.

With the exception of indigo and logwood, which were imported from India, all the dyestuffs used on the suzani were from local sources. None of the dyes on embroidery silks on the Burrell suzanis has been analysed, but the following were probably used.

Carthamus tinctorius (safflower), gives both a red and yellow dye. It was extensively cultivated as a dye crop. *Delphinium zalil* (in Uzbek: *isparyak*, in Punjabi: *asbarg*), was well known in India as the source of asbarg dye, a bright sulphur yellow. The plant grows in great abundance on the steppes. An important source seems to have been Khorasan in Persia.

Haemoloxylon campechianum (logwood), is a native of Central America and the West Indies. It was imported into India. It gives a black dye of "lustre and velvety cast". Its heartwood gives a violet or grey dye.

Indigofera tinctoria (indigo, or in Uzbek *nil*), was imported from India where it was extensively cultivated in Bengal, the Northwest Provinces, Punjab and Sind.

Pistacia integerrima (sumak, or in Uzbek *abuzgunla*), yields the galls from which black is obtained. *Punica granatum* (pomegranate, or in Uzbek *anor*), when combined with salts of iron, gives black. *Rubia*

tinctorum (madder), gives a red, pink, orange, lilac or brown dye, depending on the mordant, as well as the well known Turkey red. *Sophor japonica* (Uzbek: *tukmak*), gives sulphur yellow.

127 Hanging. West Turkestan, 17th century. Silk on linen.
104 x 104 cms. 30/25

Fig 127 Suzani detail, 30-25

Cinnabar (sulphide of mercury) dyed the wool which appears in suzani embroidered between 1860 and 1880. (The grey-green wool on a suzani in the Whitworth Art Gallery appears to be a unique example.) This cinnabar-red wool, whose dye cost five times as much as Asbarg dye, was imported from India. According to Soviet scholars, it started to come from about 1860 through Afghanistan and was used together with the traditional floss silk. When it was first introduced, it was very popular, but interest faded and after 1880 it was no longer used. Fuchsine was introduced from Russia after 1873 and with the general availability of aniline dyes, the use of native dyes declined.

All the remaining embroideries take the visitor from the nineteenth back to the seventeenth century. The four Turkish pieces***(128)***, would have been used for many purposes: wrapping clothing taken to and from the hammam (Turkish bath), curtains for alcoves, and coverings for beds or for the chests which were often the only piece of furniture in a traditional Turkish home. The background material is linen, without doubt made of home-grown, homespun flax. The embroidery thread is silk and the floral designs are copied from the highly desirable and very expensive brocades. Carnations, tulips and pomegranates are most frequent.

The patterns fall into two groups, those in which the design is ogival with pomegranates***(125)*** and those in which it consists of vertical wavy stems bearing leaves and flowers, here tulips***(126)***. The embroideries employ darning-stitch worked over three and under one of the threads of the fine linen background. The lines of darning are often stepped by one thread in each row to produce a twill effect. The dyes are traditional. Red and blue predominate. When the style was carried on into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the embroidery and the linen background tended to become coarser.

Hangin West Turkestan, 17th century. Wools
on lin 122 × 77.5 cms. 30/24

Fig128 Suzani detail, 30-24

The two West Turkestan covers are a link between the purely Turkish and the Uzbek hangings. The stylised pomegranate design of this piece***(127)*** is similar to the Turkish patterns but the embroidery stitches, laid couched and herringbone, are those used in nineteenth century Uzbek hangings. The next piece***(128)*** is even closer to suzani in design. An eight-pointed star in the centre field reminds us of designs from Bukhara.

129 Hanging. Northwest Persia. 17th century. Silk needlework on blue and white checked cotton. 137 x 117 cms. 30/1

Fig 129 Suzani detail, 30-1

The final piece illustrated belongs to the group known as Northwest Persian and was probably made in the seventeenth century***(129)***. Though embroidered in double darning, this piece does not resemble woven brocade but in design looks like a carpet. It is the only piece in The Burrell Collection here described with a design portraying men and animals as well as plants. There are men on horseback accompanied by dogs and a bird is sitting on the top of the tree of life. The portrayal of animals in movement connects the embroidery with carpet design. This type of embroidery seems most likely to have been taken from "hunting" patterns.