Ceremonial saddle

Textile and Costume Collection

Accession Nr.:	52.2863.1
Date of production:	mid 17th century
Place of production:	Turkey (Ottoman Empire)
Materials:	leather; nephrite; ruby; silk fabric brocaded with silver thread; silver gilt plate; wooden frame
Techniques:	silver gilt skófium embroidery
Dimensions:	height: 60 cm length: 51 cm width: 31 cm

High in front, with a pommel of a narrow and with a small ball, at the back, it has a wide, semicircular back a short, narrow, low seat with two lateral .sides. The seat, the sides and the rear side of the pommel are covered with a textile lanciered with silver (its Turkish name is "seraser") the surface is embroidered with gilt metal wire. The pattern of the embroidery on the seat: rose motif in an ogee arch framework, on the top of the framework is a leafy palmette, on the lateral sides: pomegranates with leaves in threes frameworks of foliage pattern. The lateral sides are fastened to the wooden framework with two pairs of rosette-shaped copper rivets. The pommel and the flat back are covered with silver-gilt plates: applied rosette and foliage ornaments with almandines, stamped on the base of foliage pattern. Among the applied ornaments there are nephrite panels with gold and decorated with almandines, on the front pentagonal and diamond shaped with curved sides, at the back circular and oval. The metal plate is fastened to the parts of the saddle covered with textile with small nails, covered with a band of trimming, with a pattern woven with metal thread. There is a leather girth at the bottom: two straps full of holes on two sides for the girth and stirrup, on the front and the back two straps and buckles for the fastening of the breast-strap and crupper. A characteristic example of Osmanli-Turkish saddles, which is different from the western type as it does not lie on the back of the horse with its full weight, but rests on it through the two sides. It does not require a strong strapping because of its lightness and relatively small size so it does increase the burden of the horse, and makes possible its quick movement. Analogous pieces are in the Museum of Applied Arts, Budapest, with similar textile covering, but both with pads. (Inv. Nos. 52.2683, 52.2892.). The saddle may be identified with the following item of the 1725 inventory of Fraknó: "A Turkish saddle covered with beautiful textile and set with precious stones." (Inventarium Thesauri Fraknensis Anno 1725. Almarium Sub. Nris. 69 et 70. Nro. 4. — Inventory of the Museum of Applied Arts 236/1957).

Literature

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