

**SAMPLE OF GERMAN EMBROIDERY FROM THE HAND-  
EMBROIDERY APPLICATIONS IN THE CITY OF  
KAHRAMANMARAŞ**

**KAHRAMANMARAŞ ŞEHRİNDE EL-NAKIŞ  
UYGULAMALARINDAN ALMAN NAKIŞI ÖRNEĞİ**

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**Abstract**

Forming one of the most important branches of our culture and traditional arts, embroidery was born by making sewing in a decorative way and it is likely to say that it is as early as humanity. Embroidered clothing on the sculptures excavated and the narration that the daughter of Noah in Hebrew history wears an embroidered belt shows that this branch of art goes back to earlier times. Hand embroidery, which are the products of intelligence, skill and subtle wit, reached the current time by preserving its value. Out of a great many embroidery techniques reaching large public masses, a technique called “German Embroidery” was encountered in the researches carried out in the city of Kahramanmaraş and its towns in the years 2013-2014. According to the information taken from the source people in the research carried out in the city of Kahramanmaraş, German Embroidery dating back to earlier times is not produced today however, it is likely to find pillows, clothes and dresses embroidered with German Embroidery at the houses. In the current paper, embroidery samples were determined in order to unveil this technique that was embroidered on any kind of cloth with a plain surface and it was aimed to make the embroidery alive and to promote it by analysing the way of embroidering.

**Keywords:** *Embroidery, Ornament, Technique, Traditional*

**Özet**

Kültürümüzün ve geleneksel sanatların en önemli dallarından birini oluşturan nakış, dekoratif bir şekilde dikiş yapılarak doğmuştur ve bunun insanlık kadar erken olduğu söylenebilmektedir. Kazılarda bulunan heykeller üzerindeki

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işlemeli kıyafetler ve İbranice tarihinde Nuh'un kızının işlemeli bir kemer taktığı anlatısı, bu sanat dalının daha eski zamanlara geri döndüğünü göstermektedir. Zeka, beceri ve ince zekâ ürünleri olan el nakışı, değerini koruyarak şimdiki zamana ulaşmıştır. Büyük kitlelere ulaşan birçok nakış tekniğinden 2013-2014 yılları arasında Kahramanmaraş ve ilçelerinde yapılan araştırmalarda “Alman Nakış” tekniğine rastlanmıştır. Kahramanmaraş ilinde yapılan araştırmada kaynak insanlardan alınan bilgilere göre, daha önceki zamanlara dayanan Alman Nakış bugün üretilmemekle birlikte, evlerde Alman Nakış ile işlemeli yastıklar, kıyafetler ve elbiseler bulmak mümkündür. Mevcut makalede, düz bir yüzeye sahip her türlü kumaşa işlemeli bu tekniği ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla nakış örnekleri belirlenmiş ve nakışın canlı hale getirilmesi ve nakışın yolu analiz edilerek teşvik edilmesi amaçlanmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Nakış, Süsleme, Teknik, Geleneksel*

### **Introduction**

Traditional arts are of great importance in Turkish culture. Works of art are the most valuable documents unveiling the tracks of the past with a rich variety and caring them to the current time. Having a task of a mirror and reflecting mostly the inner world of human being, art products are significant transmitters setting a light to many centuries later. Art products which are as important as written sources in conveying the cultural heritage formed by the nations having lived in the past have always been a good tool of communication.

While preparing the thing which will benefit him, an individual makes the handicraft arts in a way to reflect the colour, design, style, harmony, his personal talent and regional character. Throughout the history the lifestyle, taste, climatic conditions, sense of art of the community were combined with the talent and skills of people and carried Turkish handicraft art to its highest level. One of the most important branches of handicraft arts with high artistic value, embroidery found a place of application in an intensive way in the city of Kahramanmaraş.

Kahramanmaraş, which is one of the important cities of the Mediterranean Region, was a developed city in terms of population and economy in the Ottoman period and the economic structure of the city mostly developed depending on agriculture, animal husbandry and small handicraft arts after the Republican period. (Yılmazoğlu,2013:20)

In Turkey, which has a rich past in the field of handicraft arts, embroidery varies from one region to another in line with the taste and needs of the people in that region. The techniques that people learn in communication with different cultures around them have found a field of application in a widespread manner up to the current time.

(Baykasoğlu,1993:10) The embroidery known as German embroidery (Alman Nakışı) in the city of Kahramanmaraş is a type of embroidery which is similar to basic embroidery techniques in terms of its production but the wrong side of it is just a stitch and all the embroidery is made on the right side.

Almost no information, except for its name, is encountered in Turkish sources with regard to the embroidery known as German embroidery which is tried to be revive in the city of Kahramanmaraş today. For that reason, it was aimed to investigate the embroidery technique of German embroidery decorating the trousseadus and homes in Kahramanmaraş.

In the current study, scanning method was used. An intense investigation was made in the city centre and towns in the project of “Kahramanmaraş Handicraft Arts” that was organized by Gazi University the Centre of Turkish Handicraft Arts Research and Application and Kahramanmaraş Municipality in the years 2013-2014. In this study, 14 German embroidery with different motives and usages that were determined at homes and in foreign sources were studied.

### **1. Features of German Embroidery**

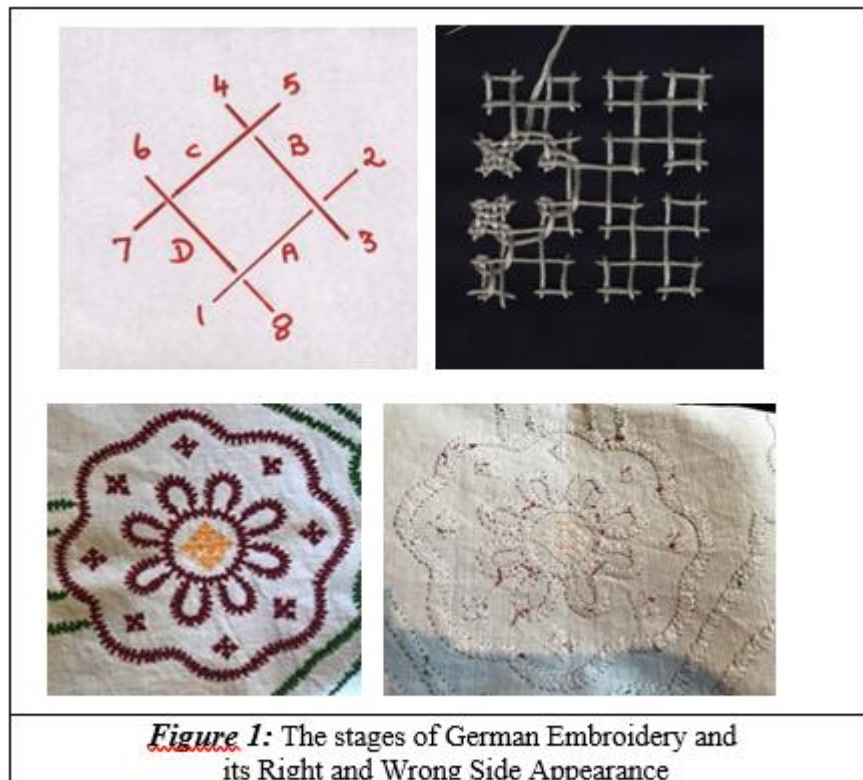
The city of Kahramanmaraş is of a very rich structure in terms of handicraft arts. In particular, it is rich in technique, motive and product variety in the issues of embroidery, knitting (laces) and carving (wooden). As a result of our study carried out in the region in the years 2013-2014 into embroidery, it was found that Maraş work (dival work), Maraş fileşi (Maraş net), süzeni (kantan), canvas, white work, sarma-susma and German embroidery are made in the region (Akpınarlı, Baykasoğlu et al., 2014: 49). The art of embroidery has a special place in the handicraft arts in Kahramanmaraş. The embroidery that has been made for centuries are applied with different techniques by means of needle and similar tools, with colourful threads and golden and silver wires on such fabrics as cotton, linen, satin, velvet, baize, and on felt and leather using embroidery frame, embroidery hoop or cülde (Yetim, 2013: 332-333; Barışta, 2005: 9). There are different views over the reasons why embroidery is so rich in the city of Kahramanmaraş. The efforts of Byzantium Empire to weaken Armenia resulted in the deportation of thousands of Armenian and locating them out of Armenia to Cilicia which is a partly mountainous region. After the decline of Artsrunies (1021) and Bagratunies (1045), a new surge of immigrants reached Cilicia. A town of Cilicia Armenia, Maraş (Guermanic) is famous for its art of embroidery. Large groups coming from different towns of the Great Haik brought their special traditions and style of thought together. Possibly, it is the reason for the abundant variety in the design of Maraş

embroidery, namely, German embroidery (Tokmajian, 2010:5). As a result of cultural interaction, the embroidery produced by the Turkish people living in the region and those immigrating to the region formed a synthesis. For that reason, the embroidery known as German embroidery in the region of Kahramanmaraş is also called as Maraş embroidery in some foreign sources.

In the source called Nakiş (Embroidery), Korkusuz (1992) mentioned that local embroidery developed in 19th century was applied to various goods and that one of them was German needle or plain needle. In the research carried out into German embroidery in the region, a great much information was obtained. It was found in the field study that this embroidery is known in the region for a long time and it is a traditional embroidery but that the reason why the name of it is German embroidery is known by the source people. It was striking that I encountered the decorations on the throw pillows, clothes and on the collars of dresses made with German embroidery almost in all houses when I visited the city of Kahramanmaraş in 1968. It was told that this embroidery is difficult to make and some embroiderers made it so well and that I saw some ladies was producing this embroidery. When we wanted to determine this embroidery I had encountered in another region and in the books with a project that we conducted in the year 2013, we encountered very few samples and the people making it. It was found that it was not taught to the new generation (Akpınarlı, 2019).







German embroidery is preferred because of its easiness in application and it is a type of embroidery of which appearance of the right and wrong side is completely different. While a stich is formed on the wrong side, the floor is formed with bottom and top transitions in the intensity to fill the inside of the design drawn on the right side. In German embroidery, it is embroidered by tenting it on the frame if its size is large and it is embroidered on the hoop in the small size products.

German embroidery is divided into two groups. The first one is the plain stitch which is popularly known as atlasloma in other cities as well. The second one is the secret stitch (twisted stitch known as irka (Tokmajian, 2010, p. 5).



*Table 1: German Embroidered Products Chosen as Samples*

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*Kahramanmaraş Şehrinde El-Nakış Uygulamalarından Alman Nakışı Örneği*

Product Information	Product Picture	Product Detail
Type of Product: Clothing Decoration Production Year: 20 <sup>th</sup> century Sizes: 190 x 90 cm Fabric Used: Cotton Fabric Thread Used: Cotton thread Source: <u>Gülten Ülgen</u>		
Type of Product: Pillowcase Production Year: 1950 Sizes: 47x47 cm Fabric Used: <u>Woollen</u> Fabric Thread Used: Cotton thread Source: <u>Tokmaian</u> , 2010: 108		
Type of Product: Cloth Production Year: 1940 Sizes: 57x100 cm Fabric Used: Cotton Fabric Thread Used: Cotton thread Source: <u>Tokmaian</u> , 2010: 194		

<p>Type of Product: Pillowcase          Production Year: 1970          Sizes: 50x50 cm          Fabric Used: Velvet Fabric          Thread Used: Cotton thread          Source: Tokmajian, 2010: 361</p>		
<p>Type of Product: Cloth          Production Year: 20.yy          Sizes: 100 x 80 cm          Fabric Used: Cotton Fabric          Thread Used: Cotton thread          Source: Leman Yaşar</p>		
<p>Type of Product: Pan Holder          Production Year: 2000          Sizes: 35 cm          Fabric Used: Silk Fabric          Thread Used: Cotton thread          Source: Tokmajian, 2010</p>		

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*Kahramanmaraş Şehrinde El-Nakış Uygulamalarından Alman Nakışı Örneği*

<p>Type of Product: Pillowcase Production Year: 1968 Sizes: 120 x 90 cm Fabric Used: Cotton Fabric Thread Used: Cotton thread Source: <a href="#">Mehtap Emirmahmutoğlu</a></p>		
<p>Type of Product: Throw Pillow Production Year: 1930-40 Sizes: 32 x 32,5 cm Fabric Used: Cotton Fabric Thread Used: Cotton thread Source: Tokmajian, 2010: 361</p>		
<p>Type of Product: Pillowcase Production Year: 1940 Sizes: 40 x 40 cm Fabric Used: Cotton Fabric Thread Used: Cotton Thread Source: Sevinç <a href="#">Çubadar</a></p>		



<p>Type of Product:  <u>Table Cloth</u>                  Production Year: 1945                  Sizes: 50x50 cm                  Fabric Used: Cotton                  Fabric                  Thread Used: Cotton                  thread                  Source: Berhen                  Yilmazoğlu</p>		
<p>Type of Product:                  Kitchen Apron                  Production Year: 1940                  Sizes:-                  Fabric Used: Cotton                  Fabric                  Thread Used: Cotton                  thread                  Source: Tokmajian,                  2010: 181</p>		
<p>Type of Product:                  Umbilical cord cloth                  of a new-born baby.                  Production Year: 1943                  Sizes: 94x13 cm                  Fabric Used: Cotton                  Fabric                  Thread Used: Cotton                  thread                  Source: Tokmajian,                  2010</p>		

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*Kahramanmaraş Şehrinde El-Nakış Uygulamalarından Alman Nakışı Örneği*

Type of Product: <u>Table Cloth</u> Production Year: 1945 Sizes: 90 x90 cm Fabric Used: Cotton Fabric Thread Used: Cotton thread Source: Bedriye Güray		
Type of Product: Cloth Production Year: - Sizes: 100 x90 cm Fabric Used: Cotton Fabric Thread Used: Cotton thread Source: Gülten Ülgen		

Cotton fabric and cotton thread were preferred in 14 German embroidery products investigated. The types of products are mostly cloths, throw pillows, pillows, kitchen apron in various features. Even though only one colour is common in embroidery, there are more colourful samples. Blue cotton thread on white fabric is the mostly preferred colour.

## 2. Conclusion

As is clear in the paper, embroidery is an art and its techniques are mostly universal. It is the traditional values making it special. Embroidery is also a tool of communication. It bares profound meanings inside. It is one of the styles that human being expresses himself and conveys his thoughts. Therefore, embroidery formed a visual language.

Living conditions and industrialization process in the region affected the handicraft arts and artists; even so, an improvement was obtained in hand embroidery because of the tradition of trousseau. German embroidery of which production stages have using fewer colours and original design feature are mostly embroidered by drawing double lines parallel to each other. Today, it is tried to be revived in the region of Kahramanmaraş and taught in the Public Education Centres. In order to revive German Embroidery, it should be taught in formal education institutions as well.

Exhibiting the works will contribute to the promotion of the products both in the country and in foreign countries by working touristry and gift products with their new fields of usage.

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