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PRESS RELEASE

**ALL SEWN UP. WOVEN AND EMBROIDERED TEXTILES FROM
THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE
9.12.2022–11.6.2023**

100 years after the end of the Ottoman Empire (1299–1922), the Museum Fünf Kontinente is showing around 70 textiles and everyday objects from the 18th to the 20th centuries in the special exhibition *All sewn up. Woven and embroidered textiles from the Ottoman Empire*.

Embroidered textiles were to be found in homes throughout the Ottoman Empire. While the urban elites also used them on an everyday basis, the rural population stored them carefully and mainly presented them on special occasions such as weddings, births and circumcisions.

With all their different forms and their variations on established individual motifs, the textiles illustrate the skill and imaginativeness of the needleworkers. What is unusual about them is their reversibility: the textiles have no front and back but two identical show sides with motifs running in opposite directions.

The textiles are made of undyed cotton or linen and decorated on the narrow sides with borders either of elaborate embroidery created with metal and silk threads or of woven-in blue and red patterns. The motifs consist of flowers, fruit and architectural elements – often in alternating colours – and sequences of geometric elements.

The work shown banishes the idea of embroidery as a purely female occupation. While articles for a trousseau or the needleworkers' own use were produced at home, most of the luxury items came from urban manufactories, which mainly employed men.

Together with everyday objects made of wood, ceramics and metal, the textiles shed light on the various contexts in which they were used such as the public bath (hamam) or the hosting of guests in private homes. At the same time, the exhibition shows how skill, wealth and status were communicated via the woven and embroidered textiles.

Today these objects are an important part of Turkey's cultural heritage.

Items from the museum's own inventory are presented together with exhibits from the private collections of Werner Middendorf and Ulla Ther.

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The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue

Anahita Mittertrainer (ed.) with articles by Hülya Bilgi, Beate Kränzle and Ulla Ther. In trockenen Tüchern. Gewebtes und Besticktes aus dem Osmanischen Reich, Arnoldsche Art Publishers, Museum Fünf Kontinente, 2022.

Opening times

Tue–Sun, 9.30am–5.30pm

For times on public holidays see www.museum-fuenf-kontinente.de

Admission charges

Adults €6, concessions €5. All admission charges can be found on our [Website](#) under Öffnungszeiten & Tickets (English summary)

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