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TITLE: THE ART OF MOSAIC IN HATAY

AUTHORS: Aysegül KARAKELLE, Feryal SÖYLEMEZOĞLU

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ORIGINAL PDF URL: <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/561956>

## THE ART OF MOSAIC IN HATAY<sup>1</sup> (HATAY'DA YAPILAN MOZAİK SANATI)

Ayşegül KARAKELLE

Hatay Mustafa Kemal University Faculty of Education Department of Fine Arts  
Education

Feryal SÖYLEMEZOĞLU

Ankara University Faculty of Fine Arts Department of Conservation and Restoration  
of Cultural Heritage

Makale Geliş Tarihi: 12.06.2018 Makale Kabul Tarihi: 09.10.2018

### Abstract

*The art of mosaic, which is based on the amazing ancient Greek and Roman art of decoration, has been a stable and important art activity in art history. Mosaic is the general name given to figured and figureless murals and floor coverings made by piecing together different colors of little pieces such as stones, metal, glass, marble, tile, ceramic or seashells. Socio-economic periods, culture and belief systems showed their effects in artworks in every age. Mosaic products have become some of the most important artworks which reached today as they have changed over the centuries with different societies and cultures. Either materials used or techniques used and compositions made changed over great periods of time however mosaic artworks have always kept decorating the living quarters of mankind. It started with pebbles and continued with glass, ceramic, bone, lime stone, basalt and even with the use of valuable stones such as emerald, pearl and ruby. These artworks, which require huge amounts of effort, patience and time mostly used to decorate sacred places however, today, they are used in many interior and exterior decorations and decorative product making.*

*Hatay, has the marks of cultural interaction due to it encompassing multiple cultures. Today, stone working in Hatay especially in Harbiye (Defne), Samandağ and Antakya counties, is done by a few master craftsmen, and shows up as touristic items and souvenirs. In this article, art of mosaic in Hatay is explained and variations of touristic items and souvenirs produced and production stages are explained with examples.*

**Keywords:** Hatay, Handcrafts, Stone Processing, Mosaic, Product

### Öz

*Temelleri Antik Yunan ve Roma'nın muhteşem dekorasyon sanatına dayanan mozaik sanatı sanat tarihinde dayanıklı ve önemli sanatsal faaliyetlerden olmuştur. Mozaik, çeşitli renklerdeki taş, metal, cam, mermer, çini, seramik ya da deniz kabuğu gibi küçük ve çeşitli parçaların bir zemin üstünde yan yana getirilmesiyle yapılan figürlü ve figürsüz duvar resimlerine ve taban döşemelerine verilen genel addır. Yaşanılan sosyo-ekonomik süreçler, kültür ve inanç sistemleri her çağda insanın oluşturduğu sanat eserlerinde etkisini göstermiştir. Mozaik ürünler de ortaya çıktığı dönem itibarıyla yüzyıllar içerisinde farklı toplumlar ve kültürler tarafından işlenerek çeşitli değişimler geçirmiş ve günümüze kadar ulaşmış en önemli sanat eserlerinden olmuştur. Gerek yapımında kullanılan malzemeler gerekse yapım teknikleri ve oluşturulan kompozisyonlar büyük zaman dilimleri içerisinde farklılaşmış ancak mozaik eserler insanın yaşadığı mekanı süslemeye hep devam etmiştir. Çakıl taşı ile başlayıp cam, seramik, kemik, kalker ve bazaltın dışında, zümrüt, inci ve yakut gibi çok değerli taşların kullanımına kadar sürmüştür.*

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<sup>1</sup> This article was provided in the International Association of Social Science Research, V. European Conference on Social and Behavioral Sciences St Petersburg, Russia - September 11-14, 2014 oral presentation.

## THE ART OF MOSAIC IN HATAY (Hatay'da Yapılan Mozaik Sanatı)

*Oluşturulmasında büyük emek, sabır ve zaman isteyen bu sanat eserleri eskiden daha çok kutsal mekanların duvarlarını ve döşemelerini süslerken günümüzde artık birçok iç ve dış mekan süslemelerinde ve dekoratif ürün yapımında da kullanılmaktadır.*

*Hatay, birçok kültürü bir arada barındırmasından dolayı, sanat alanında da kültürel etkileşimin izlerini taşıyan bir il olma özelliğine sahiptir. Günümüzde Hatay'da taş işlemeciliği, özellikle Harbiye (Defne), Samandağ ve Antakya ilçelerinde birkaç usta tarafından yapılmakta, turistik ve hediyeelik amaçlı ürünler olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Bu bildiride ise; Hatay'da yapılan mozaik sanatı hakkında bilgi verilerek turistik ve hediyeelik amaçlı üretilen ürünlerin yapım aşamaları ve ürün çeşitleri örneklerle açıklanmıştır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Hatay, El Sanatları, Taş İşlemeciliği, Mozaik, Ürün

### Introduction

Art changes depending on the fields of application, geographical structure, living styles and materials used. This causes the increase of knowledge base and aesthetical variety. In variety of handicrafts, materials used in region are important. Among handicrafts that use stone as raw material, art of mosaic is important when historically analyzed.

Art of mosaic is one of the oldest arts, and also one of the most modern arts. Due to this property, art of mosaic, which suits today's tastes, has wide range of uses and shows variety depending on the period of the work, use and production technique (Erkan, 2006:18-19).

Mosaic is the picture or decorative method using colored fragments of glass, marble and similar suitable materials and gluing them using lime or cement to a surface (Genç, 1994:89).

In broader sense, in mosaic, defined as the arranging technique bringing together one or multiple materials' small fragments, except glass and marble, materials such as ceramic, wood, enamel, and stone fragments also paper and fabric fragments can be used (Hasol, 1998; Demir, 2011).



Photograph 1: Zeugma Museum of Mosaic/Gaziantep "Çingene Kızı" (Gipsy Girl)

This art is applied extensively in ancient Rome, used mostly in floor, wall and arc decorations. Later, throughout all Middle Age, in Byzantine Empire, it is used in public architecture and Christian churches, in modern architecture, it is used in exterior decoration. It is understood that, mosaic technique is used in furniture and small sized art objects although not very extensively. The most interesting examples of this art can be seen in panoramic, large sized and partly monumental compositions (Genç, 1994; Karaçoban, 1996; Karakelle&Kayabaşı, 2013)



Photograph 2: Antakya Museum of Mosaic “Yakto Mosaic (5th century B.C. Defne-Harbiye)”

Hatay is the main city where mosaic is applied in Turkey. It has the second biggest mosaic museum in the world after Bardo, Tunis. In Hatay Museum of Archaeology, mosaics from Roman and Byzantine remain from between 2nd and 5th century B.C. At the start, mostly geometric lines are applied but with time, as the materials used expanded, human, animal, plant figures, sections from daily life and religious objects are used. Some of the important mosaics in the museum are: Defne and Apollon, Kemgöz, Seasons, Drunk Dionysus, Birds, Dancers, Yakto, Ocenaus, and Tethys and Talassa Sea mosaics (Anonymous, 2011).

Due to the rich collection, mosaics in one of the most important mosaic museums in the world, Hatay Museum of Archaeology, are excavated around Antakya, in Harbiye (Daphne) and Samandağ (Seleucia Pieria) between 1932 and 1939.

Hatay, known as the queen of the east, has been an important settling location for every civilization in history. The city residing next to River Asi (Orontes River) between Amanos and Habib-i Neccar mountains, traces from every civilization in Anatolia can be found. From 4 thousand B.C. to today, traces countless civilizations, cultures beliefs can be found in Hatay, which makes Hatay one of the important cities where visitors will be fascinated by historical richness.

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Hatay is a border city, residing at the east end of the Mediterranean Sea. It covers 7 thousandths of the total country area. This 5.403 km<sup>2</sup> area reside between 35°52' and 37°04' north and 35°40' and 36°35' east. Hatay city is surrounded by Syria from east and south, Islahiye county of Gaziantep from northeast and Ceyhan and Yumurtalık counties and of Adana and Osmaniye from north and northwest and Gulf of İskenderun from west. In the city which has richness of history and touristic values, Castle of Antakya, Mosque of Habib-i Neccar, Sokullu Mehmet Paşa Social Complex, Kanuni Sultan Süleyman Inn, Church of Saint Pierre, Monastery of Saint Simon, Samandağ Çevlik Titüs Tunnel and Rock Tombs, Erzin İssos Ruins, Reyhanlı Yenişehir Lake and Harbiye is worth visiting. (Anonymous, 1997).



Photograph 3: Hatay city map.



A view from Antakya centrum.

### **Method**

Research is planned and conducted in 2014 in Hatay Antakya centrum, Samandağ and Harbiye (Defne) counties where a few master craftsmen try to keep this art alive, in order to determine touristic items and souvenirs. For this purpose, first master craftsmen are established in the region of the study, and workshops and houses of said masters were visited, information about their works was obtained by interviewing. Moreover, raw materials they used (stone, glass, marble, seashell etc.), production methods and variety of products were determined by observation and photographed.

### **Findings**

Handicrafts are shaped with effects from the society's economic, social and cultural states. Therefore, these products differ from country to country, from city to city. In Hatay, which has a different cultural mosaic, handicrafts reflecting nature, history, culture properties which are touristic items or souvenirs vary due to the preferences of the consumer and some handicrafts continue in production. Stone working, one of these handicrafts, is known as art of mosaic in region.

Analyzed from the point of touristic items and souvenirs, variety of products draw the attention such as pendants, statues of various sizes, prayer beads, pictures, tables, trinkets, trivets, mirrors and frames. As raw materials, natural stones such as marble, silver ore, onyx, basalt and turquoise stone are used. (Karakelle and Kayabaşı, 2013).

Mosaic production technique in Hatay can be divided into two: arranging stones on mortar and gluing technique. Gluing technique is the mostly used technique in region.

#### **Tools and Materials Used in Mosaic Product Making**

Tools used in mosaic making can be sorted as such: Pincers are the tool used in cutting the stones into triangles or quadrilaterals depending on the pattern (Photograph 4). Tweezers are used in mounting small stones into pattern or removing stones (Photograph 5).



Photograph 4: Pincers



Photograph 5: Tweezers

As for the materials used: mosaic stones, granite and marble is preferred because they are solid and shiny (Photograph 6). In mortar mosaic, mortar and suture filling is required. In a mosaic without mortar, glue or a strong adhesive is used (Photograph 7). Besides these, a photocopy or a drawing of the picture to be made (Photograph 8), thick chipboard hardboard or cardboard the same size (Photograph 9), tape to stick the pattern to chipboard (Photograph 10), transparent nylon to use the pattern again (Photograph 11), and white netting is used to keep the board or picture portable (Photograph 12).



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Photograph:6



Photograph:7



Photograph:8



Photograph:9



Photograph:10

Photograph:11

Photograph:12

**Mozaic Product Making Stages**

Depending on the product type, making stages vary. Making stages of mosaic picture using marble in the region is explained.

Pattern of the product is determined and stuck to a thick chipboard or hardboard. Later, transparent nylon and file is laid onto the pattern (Photographs 13-14-15).





Photograph: 13



Photograph: 14

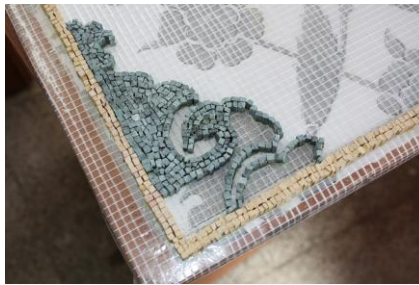


Photograph 15:



Photograph 16:

Stone are determined according to the pattern color, then broken into little pieces using pincers, then pieces are placed according to the flow of the pattern using glue or adhesive (Photograph 16-17).



Photograph 17:

First motif borders are contoured then, inside is filled (Photographs 18-19)  
At last, product is completed by placing stones to the base cavity. If there are gaps



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in the stone array, gaps are filled with suture or mosaic gel. If a tight and steady placing is exercised, these materials are not needed (Photograph 20).



Photograph 18:



Photograph 19:



Photograph 20:

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### **Mosaic Products**

Besides panels and pictures, mosaic is applied to different materials. Tables, mirrors and picture frames, trivets, vases and various decorative products can be given as examples (Photograph 21).



Photograph 21: Table and mirror frame

Besides in the research, art of mosaic contribute to the promotion of the region with authentic touristic items and souvenirs. Mosaic patterned silk scarves, mugs, cups, plates trinkets etc. are the types of products (Photograph 22).



Photograph 22: Mosaic patterned souvenirs



Photograph 23: Kemgöz Mosaic and reproduction work

Mosaic patterns in the Antakya Museum of Mosaic, are used in reproduction works (Photograph 23) and also patterns are used in different crafts in the region such as pyrography (Photograph 24).



Photograph 24: Mosaic patterned pyrography pictures

Besides works with various stones, mosaic products made with glass and bead materials also draw attention. Especially products made with broken mirror fragments are preferred. Glass is used as transparent or it is colored. Or colored glass is broken into small pieces to suit the product. Trays, mirror frames, vases, and night lights are made as decorative items and souvenirs (Photograph 25).





Photograph 25: Glass mosaic products

In the region, in stone working, other than mosaic, pendants, various trinkets and little statues made from onyx and basalt are also important (Photograph 26).



Photograph 26: Products made using various stones.

### Conclusion

Mosaic is an art specific to Hatay. Hatay has a special place because it is one of the mosaic centers of the world. This art is tried to be kept alive in the region, especially in the recent years with projects such as DOĞAKA (Eastern Mediterranean Progress Agency), SODES (Social Financial Support Fund), Mustafa Kemal University BAP. Few master craftsmen try to keep this art alive. In 2012, Mustafa Kemal University Stone Working Research and Application Center is established and it conducts professional studies regarding mosaic.

In order for this art to be kept alive, various projects are required to support this art, regional handicraft product markets should be opened, products should be displayed, this will contribute the sales of these products to the domestic and foreign tourists and contribute to the promotion of the region. New jobs will open for those who are interested in this art especially for women who would like a job. Within Public Education Centers; many courses can be given in Apprenticeship Education Centers, Prisons, Compassion Houses, and Women Culture and Art Houses of municipalities, Vocational Courses which will help women who do not work contribute to the family economy and this will keep the art alive by learning and applying this art in their houses. In 2015, Mustafa Kemal University Vocational School, Department of Handicrafts, as part of İKMEP and BOLOGNA, revised their academic catalog, adding “Stone Working” class to its curriculum, thus contributing to promote regional handicrafts and transfer it to future generation.

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Photograph 26: Mosaic village established in Şenköy as part of SODES in 2012



Photograph 27: Master mosaic craftsmen



from Antakya: Ahmet BOSTANCI and



Abdullah ÖZALP

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\* The research of this used photographs was taken by author Ayşeg l KARAKELLE.