

Changes in Consumption Pattern of Western Consumers and Its Effect to the Ottoman Oriental Carpet-Making Industry

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Abstract : Ottoman carpets were depicted in Renaissance painting while they were exported commercially. The carpets were highly demanded and used by the middle and upper classes of Western European countries. The motifs, designs, patterns, and ornamentation of these carpets were decorative objects of luxury for Western European residences as well as paintings. Oriental carpets found their way into European market already from the medieval times to the present century. They were considered as luxury items first, however, demanded by middle classes in Europe and North America within the nineteenth century. This century brought unprecedented changes in production and consumption in the world. Expanding industries created quick urbanization, changed the city life and new types of goods dominated the entire century. Increases in income allowed Europeans to spend on luxury items, consumers taste changed in number of ways including furniture and decoration. Use of a carpet in the orient lifestyle often considered as an art object with Western aesthetic sensibility. A carpet with an oriental character, an essential part of home decoration, was highly appreciated for floor, table covering and wall hanging. Turkish carpets with distinctive classical style, patterns, and colours were changed for the tastes of European consumers. This paper attempts to analyse how the taste and preferences of European and American consumers increased their buying of oriental objects namely carpets. The production of local hand woven carpet industry developed, carpet factories were set up and special weaving schools were opened in some major weaving centres, and carpet weaving became one of the main manufacturing and export commodity of the empire. All of these attempts increased the reputation and market share in international market. The industry flourished, commercially operated carpet looms, sales revenues and export increased unprecedentedly. British and Ottoman archival documents, parliamentary papers and travel notes were used to analyse above mentioned effect on how the foreign demand changed designs of carpets and the business itself, how the production in households moved to the commercial premises and a flourished the industry.

Keywords : consumption patterns, carpet weaving, ottoman oriental carpets, commercialisation

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