

MIDDLE EAST EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE BOX

- ED.1972.436 A fragment of a much larger woman's headscarf from the Armenian area of Turkey. Chain stitch (tamboured) embroidery over a plaid woven background fabric. Early 1900.
- ED.1974.896 This is the cover to a food dish. It is made of a sheet of incised brass laid over a pewter base. It is covered with designs of elegant Arabic script. It is from Turkey in the 1800s and is typical of the fine craftsmanship of the metal workers of the Ottoman Empire.
- ED.1986.20.2 Small flag with star and crescent embroidered in white pearl cotton thread over cardboard form and then applied to dark green wool felt "field". From Pakistan.
- ED.1991.D.1 Simple stuffed cotton cloth doll from Turkey with embroidered face. She wears a flounced dress decorated with pailletes (large, sequin-like decorations with a hole pierced on the side, not the center). Typical of women in rural areas or conservative cities, she wears a headscarf as well.
- ED.1996.35.13 Unfinished headscarf of nylon net with embroidered strips of silver metal woven into the holes and the design built from "blocks" like a pattern graph. This type of work was made by women from Armenia to Egypt. Red ones like this were known to have been worn by Armenian brides around 1900. The most famous examples come from the town of Assuit in Egypt and were wildly popular as shawls in Western Europe and North America during the "flapper era" of the 1920s. They were often sold by weight as the metal was usually sterling silver.
- ED.2004.1.14 Miniature "saz" from Turkey made in plastic. The saz is a lute-like instrument that figures prominently in traditional music forms in Turkey.
- ED.2004.1.15 Picture of a girl in traditional Turkish peasant dress. This picture was made by burning or charring the lines of the design into a piece of wood with a hot piece of metal and then painting in a few of the details. Note the curled up toes of the shoes she wears and the baggy shalwar (pants) under the long tunic covered with a short jacket.
- ED.2004.3.112 Part of an Anatolian kilim (flat-woven, tapestry weave rug) from Turkey. It is made all of handspun wool (notice the moths have enjoyed a few good meals of this!) probably dyed with plants, not synthetic modern dyes. The design motifs are typical of rural Anatolian work and this piece is probably from the 1800s. Carpets like this were and are used in great quantity to cover floors and divans through the region.
- ED.2005.1.68 Black cotton shalwar. These baggy pants are worn by women and girls under long tunics throughout Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc. This pair was probably made for a tourist as there is a zipper in them. They usually are fitted and tied with a drawstring. Feel free to try them on.
- ED.2005.1.77 Hexagonal ceramic tile with bright turquoise glaze. This is a typical "Yesil" ceramic tile work from the town of Bursa. Bright-colored tiles such as this were/are extremely popular for decorating mosques and other public buildings.
- ED.2005.1.87 Islamic prayer beads consisting of groups of 11 round beads separated by

- a single disk bead and ending with a large pendant bead with a rayon thread tassel. Similar in function to a rosary used by Roman Catholics, the beads are used to help count prayers. They are sometimes referred to as “worry beads” as men can often be seen and heard to be fingering the beads in public as a sort of nervous habit.
- ED.2005.1.210 Cut and painted leather shadow puppet (missing the sticks that operate him). This puppet is of a familiar Turkish comic character named Karagoz, who with his partner Hacivat are the main features of many plays that poke jokes at and make fun of everyday life situations. Karagoz is considered a bit of a country bumpkin, though he is shrewd and witty and often gets the best of his encounters with more sophisticated city dwellers. (Included in this box is a plastic bag with templates that can be photocopied onto manila card stock and colored as well as bamboo sticks to make your own shadow puppets of both Karagoz and Hacivat.)
- ED.2005.1.259 White satin shalwar (drawstring trousers) worn by women and girls throughout the Middle East under long tunics. Feel free to try these on and compare them with #ED.2005.1.68.
- ED.2005.1.260 A woman’s white cotton burka from Afghanistan. In a conservative society such as Afghanistan, it is considered improper for a woman or girl to leave her house without covering her body from head to toe to avoid the gaze of males who are not immediate family members or anyone, male or female, who may be a non-Muslim. Feel free to try this on and notice how it restricts both your movements and your “view” of the world outside of the burka.
- ED.2005.1.324 Fragment of Ottoman-style Turkish embroidery of silk thread on a linen background. The embroidery stitches include laidwork, couched thread and metal strip embroidery. This piece is from the late 1800s or early 1900s.
- ED.2005.3.17 a,b UNICEF cardstock figures of children in traditional dress. (a) is a boy from a kibbutz in Israel with a tree seedling in his hands. (b) is a boy from Turkey playing a flute in traditional dress of a turban-wrapped fez hat, wide sash, baggy trousers and a short braid-trimmed jacket with over-long, open sleeves.
- ED.2005.42.1 A block-printed cotton napkin with fish motifs from Turkey. Block printed cotton scarves are common head wear for women throughout the country. Wooden blocks are carved with designs and the coated with pigment. These are then pressed onto a cloth to transfer the designs.
- ED.2006.1.133 Small brass dish, probably from Persia (modern-day Iran). Brass-work such as this is made all over the Middle East and used for many different types of household items, from cooking and serving dishes to storage containers. This piece has an enameled design inside of a goat or deer leaping in a meadow of flowers and grasses.
- ED.2006.1.168 Arab man’s head tie (called an iqal- pronounced ee-cal) to hold a cotton head scarf on head. Cotton yarn is wrapped around a thick cord & doubled so it can be adjusted to fit any size head. Men in Egypt, Arabia, Syria and any country that has an Arab population can be seen wearing these. This one is an “everyday” type, but fancy ones can be made of gold threads.
- ED.2006.9.19 Laminated National Geographic map of the Middle East. One side is a political map and the other shows topographical features and land use info. Dated 1991.

ED.2006.9.36 A fragment of a hand embroidered textile. The embroidery technique is cross stitch which is very popular in garments and household cloths throughout the Middle East. This piece probably came from Egypt, perhaps from the Sinai Peninsula which has close cultural connections with the Arabic cultures of the Middle East. Typical of designs made by Islamic women, stylized leaves make a border design in this piece. (It is forbidden in their religion to make images of humans or animals, thus their emphasis on floral and geometric patterning in their arts.)

ED.2007.5.7 An Arab man's kufiyah (head scarf) of black and white cotton geometric designs and fringe on all four sides. This type of head scarf is worn wherever there are Arab men (Israel, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq). It is usually worn layered over a small round skull cap and held in place by an iqal or head rope and keeps the head sheltered from the intense sun in those countries. Another popular version of the kufiyah is in the color red with white. Individual style is expressed in the way the kufiyah is draped and folded around the head after tying it in place with the iqal.