AN OTTOMAN EMBROIDERED SILK COVER WITH THE TUGHRAT OF ABD AL-HAMID II, DATED A.H. 1323/A.D. 1906-1907

of square form, silver and silver-gilt metal threads embroidered on a pictorial green ground, with a large central tughra with arched inscription and date above and further calligraphic elements alongside: all contained within a large floral and foliate cartouche enriched with ribbons and scrolls, the whole enclosed within a red ground border with undulating scroll and rosette spandrels, a mudhif inscription band running along the bottom.

£15,000-20,000 €19,000-26,000

INSCRIPTIONS
On the top Qur’an surah Al Imran, (111), parts of 160.

Tughra of ‘Abd al-Hamid II (1295-1322/1876-1909) with signature in the band.

سین الملاک از ایل یا نیا کفندش که احتمالاً توسط علی بن حمید، بنایی از ایل یا نیا کفندش

This band of silver and gold threads was made in the House of al-Kawa (coverings for the ka’ba) of the Blessed, by the order of the Commander of the Believers Sultan ‘Abd al-Hamid Khan II (in the year 1225 (A.D. 1906-1907).

For a detailed and clear version of the tughra of ‘Abd al-Hamid II in decorated as it appears here including the epitaph alghaf (“The Champion”) and signed by Samsa see Sotheby 1996, p.250-2, no.141.

A SILVER AND GILT THREAD EMBROIDERED CALLIGRAPHIC PANEL. LATE 19TH-20TH CENTURY

the rectangular section with an emerald-green ground stitched with a band of calligraphy on a gold ground centred around four knotted cartouches, the corner pieces formed of palm-frond arabesques.

92cm square.

INSCRIPTIONS
Invocations to God as

یا مهاری / یا امام / یا دیمان / یا ایبی / یا ایبی

“O The Ever-bountiful One! O The Ever-younging One! O The Everrequisite One! O The Praised One!”

£20,000-25,000 €26,000-33,000
A SILK AND METAL-THREAD CURTAIN WITH THE TUGHRA OF MAHMUD III (A.H. 1225-1255/A.D. 1808-1838)

of rectangular form, the emerald green ground embroidered with silver and silver-gilt metal threads, with salmon pink rectangular and circular calligraphic cartouches framed by garlands, wreaths and ribbons, the cartouch of Sultan Mahmud III below, framed by extravagant floral sprays issuing from the base line with a central ribboned bow, the interlaced filled with floral and vegetal scrolls with further swags, tassels and ribbons, the design crowned with a palm tree motif contained within a salmon pink ground calligraphic border with minor bands of palmettes.  

238 B.1/154 CM

INSCRIPTIONS

In the borders: Qur'ani, surah al-Baqara (2), 255 and 256.

In the rectangular cartouche:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ وَاللَّهُ بِيَمِينِهِ

Benediction and Peace be upon you, O Friend of God.

In the rounds: The shahada


£80,000-90,000 - €106,000-120,000
A CURTAIN FROM THE TOMB OF THE PROPHET (HURAT AL-QASR AL-NABAWI AL-SHARIF) IN MEDINA, OTTOMAN, WITH THE TUGHRÃ OF SULTAN MAHMUD II (A.H. 1225-1255/AD. 1808-1838)

of rectangular form, the black silk ground embroidered with silver and silver-gilt metal threads with tughra of Mahmud II surrounded by a laurel wreath issuing crossed quivers tied with a ribbon with paired ribboned garlands above flanking wreathed calligraphic roundels, the upper section filled with a lozenge-shaped panel of red silk with rays of light emanating from inscriptions in silver and gold, all enclosed by a wide border of chevron-shaped leaves with rosette sprays and further ribbons above and below.

260 BY 190CM.

£40,000-60,000

INSCRIPTIONS
In the top cartouche:
السلاطين البهجة
al-salâtins bahájudín
Blessed are the faithful
Underneath it in a tughra-like form:
عبدلا мамمعون
Abdul-mammu’ bin ‘Abd al-Hamid Khan
"Mahmud (bin) Abd al-Hamid Khan wrote it"
That means: Mahmud II (A.H. 1225-1255/AD. 1808-1838)
In the roundels: The shahâds
With the tughra of Sultan Mahmud II (A.H. 1225-1255/AD. 1808-1838).
Similar curtains sold through these rooms, 12 October 2009, lot 12 and Christie’s, 23 October 2009, lot 32.
A SILK AND METAL-THREAD CURTAIN WITH THE TUGHRA OF MAHMUD II (A.H. 1223-1258/A.D. 1808-1838)

of rectangular form, silver and silver gilt-metal threads embroidered on black and coloured silk ground with calligraphic rectangular and circular cartouches surrounded by floral scrolls and garlands; the ground filled with ribbon scrolls and floral sprays; an inner border with calligraphic bands on a red ground with outer border with paired C-scrolls on a black ground.

214 by 122cm.

INSCRIPTIONS

In the borders: Qur'an, surah al-Fath (XLVIII), 27-29.

In the rectangular cartouche:

السلام عليكم وصلى الله عليكم

‘Blessed are the people; Peace be upon you. O the one Who is the ornament of God’

In the roundels: The shahada


£60,000-80,000 € 76,500-106,000
OTTOmAn CALLiGRAPHiC TOMB COVeR, TURkEy,
17TH CEnTuRY

of rectangular form woven with green and cream silk threads with
major and minor alternating horizontal chevron bands filled with
calligraphy
193 BY 115CM

iNSCRiPTIONS
Repetition of the following in four bands:
1. 'God is my Lord and there is no equal to Him, Muhammad is the Friend
of God' (wide band)
2. 'O God! Bless and grant salvation upon the most noble of all the
prophets and messengers' (narrow band)
3. 'Peace and salutation be upon you O The Messenger of God'
(wide band)
4. 'And May Mighty God be pleased with Ali Bakr and 'Umar and
'Uthman and 'Ali and the rest of the friends all of them' (narrow band)

A similar piece in the Topkapi Museum, Istanbul, Turkey, inv no13/1990 is
published in Nihan Atasoy, Walter B. Donny, Louis W. Mackie and Hoyla
Tezer, (ed) - 'The Crescent & the Rose: Imperial Ottoman Silks and

£7,000-10,000 €8,000-12,000
A Rare and Important Abbasid Ka’ba Key

DATED A.H. 575/A.D. 1179-1180

£ 400,000 - 500,000

Perhaps one of the most powerful symbols of Islam, the ka’ba key is associated with a much blessing in the Ka’ba cloth that covers the structure itself. This key unlocks the doors of one of the most iconic buildings of the world, and certainly the most highly honoured within the pan-Islamic community.

The tradition of dedicating the key to each Caliph seems to have originated with the Abbasid Caliphs in Baghdad. A physical object demonstrates the power of the reigning monarch, the key to the holiest building of an entire religion lies in his hands. It is the ultimate embodiment of power, and to engrave such an object with his name is an even bolder assertion of the custodian’s might than representing himself as a lion, or inlaying his name as a shining sun. Aesthetically the object might appear unassuming, but symbolically it should not be underestimated. It is not just a political tool though, metaphorically the key represents the unveiling of the soul in the eyes of God, the opening of the mind to enlightenment and the ultimate capitulation to God. Of all the symbols of Islam, this is arguably the most iconic.

In later periods the key continued to be engraved with the Caliph’s name, certainly during the Mamluk and Ottoman eras, when the key and the Ka’ba were both produced in Egypt.

Fifty-eight keys, apart from this, are recorded. Fifty-four are in the Topkapi Palace Museum, two, previously owned by Prince Sadullah Aga Khan, are in the Nabih Da-Said Collection; one is in the Louvre, previously in the Roytel collection; and another is in the Islamic Art Museum in Cairo. Of these, seven date from the Abbasid period. The earliest is dated A.H. 935/A.D. 1526. This key is the second-earliest example known, and is previously unpublished.

Max van Berchem was the first to publish two ka’ba keys in 1912, one of which from the Roytel collection, now in the Louvre, is dated A.D. 1563-4. Jamine Soudel-Thornome studied the Topkapi collection between 1966 and 1970 for Gaston Wiet’s corpus of inscriptions of Mecca and Medina. She notes seven Abbasid keys dated between 550/1150 and 622/1225, and quotes the earliest written record of a gold lock in the year 219/834 for the door of the ka’ba by the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustansir.
are recorded. Fifty-four are in the previously owned by Prince Saidbeh Said Collection, one is in the Louvre, and another is in the Islamic Art Museum date from the Abbasid period. A.D. 1000. This key is the second earliest unpublished.

To publish two Abbasid keys in 1904, one now in the Louvre, is dated A.D. 866. This is the earliest written record of a gold key, the door of the ka'ba by the Abbasid

edition to the corpus of known keys of keys manufactured there are very few in museums.