



1995

# Turcoman Portieres and Arabia's Sweetest Perfumes: The Turkish Style in American Middle-Class Interiors, 1890-1930

Karina Helen Hiltje Corrigan  
*University of Pennsylvania*

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## **Disciplines**

Historic Preservation and Conservation

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**Turcoman Portieres and Arabia's Sweetest Perfumes:  
The Turkish Style in American Middle-Class Interiors, 1890-1930**

Karina Helen Hiltje Corrigan

A THESIS

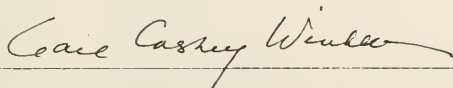
in

The Graduate Program in Historic Preservation

Presented to the faculties  
of the University of Pennsylvania  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

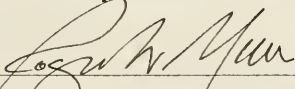
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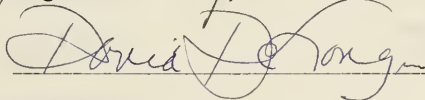
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Tim Marr offered a host of thoughts on the subject of Orientalism and reassured me that this topic was not completely absurd. Jane Bowerfind has earned my eternal thanks. Her clear guidance allowed this thesis to be completed only slightly off course. Without her, it surely would never have been finished. My sister, Caitlin Corrigan has earned special recognition for her willingness to proofread when she would have preferred to surf. Spiritual and financial support for this thesis was provided by my remarkable and loving parents. They deserve particular thanks for trying so hard not to nag. I hope that they are ready for another round!

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## PREFACE

The Middle East, the Far East, and South Asia are the design sources incorporated into the exotic Islamic style, also known as the Moorish style, a nineteenth-century trend in American and European homes. I have limited the study for this thesis to American manifestations of Middle Eastern, more specifically Turkish design. Both the cosy corner and the smoking alcove, two key elements of this thesis, had direct connections to Turkey in the minds of nineteenth-century Americans. Consequently, I have chosen to refer to the trend discussed herein as the "Turkish style."

I examined trade catalogues, travel literature, postcards, contemporary newspaper articles, and magazines directed at middle-income families while researching this thesis. Wanting a body of evidence that followed middle-class design tastes throughout the period, I turned to the mail order catalogues which debuted at the end of the nineteenth century. I chose to examine the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogues from 1896 to 1940. Known as the "Wish Book," the Sears catalogue advertised inexpensive and sought after merchandise through the mail for middle-income Americans. The Sears catalogue was chosen in favor of the Montgomery, Ward catalogue and other nineteenth-century mail order catalogues because the Free Library of Philadelphia has a complete run of the Sears catalogue on microfilm.





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## INTRODUCTION

"The Eternal East," as the Near East was often coined in the nineteenth century, conjured up images of turbaned men smoking hashish in hookahs and their many wives lounging on divans, gazing longingly out of the latticed windows of harems. Westerners were enchanted with the Near East and the seemingly languorous lifestyle of all its inhabitants. This fascination with Eastern life led many Westerners to incorporate furnishings and textiles reminiscent of Middle-Eastern interiors into their homes. Most design histories regard the Turkish craze of the 1880s and 1890s in the United States and Europe as one of the many fashion phases of Victorians' fickle tastes, overlooking the fact that many American middle-income families maintained a fascination with this style until well into the 1930s.<sup>1</sup>

Like nearly all design trends, the Turkish style emerged among the upper echelons of American and European society. Traveling between Europe and the Middle East became easier in the early decades of the nineteenth century and by the 1850's, wealthy Americans were visiting the Near East in larger numbers. Visitors brought back rugs, tabouret tables, narghiles, and elaborately embroidered fabrics to the fashionable parlors and smoking rooms of their families and friends.<sup>2</sup> Frederick Edwin

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<sup>1</sup>Katherine Grier discussed the upholstered Turkish furnishings of both elaborate and simple American parlors in her book, Culture and Comfort: People, Parlors, and Upholstery 1850-1930, published in 1988.

<sup>2</sup>Amanda Lange examined how the American elite used these souvenirs to replicate their image of the East in her 1990 Winterthur thesis, The Islamic Taste in American Domestic Interiors, 1869-1910.



Church's home, Olana, in Hudson, New York is perhaps the most famous American building in the exotic Islamic style. Built between 1870 and 1876, Olana was the first American home designed in this style on both the interior and the exterior. Although the house was based on a Beaux-Arts plan, the exterior was ornamented with Moorish arches and mosaics. Church filled the interior with Turkish portieres and smoldering mosque lanterns. Jay Gould and Frederick Lautenberg, both from prominent New York families, also incorporated elaborate elements of the exotic Islamic style in their homes.<sup>3</sup>

Powerful and wealthy people like Gould, Lautenberg and Church were at the pinnacle of American society during the nineteenth century and their luscious interiors were often carefully documented through descriptions and photographs. Modest American interiors were less consciously documented, but surviving photographs of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century middle-class interiors reveal that many contained elements of Turkish design. The depth and length of this design trend becomes more apparent when examining the mail order catalogues and prescriptive design literature of the period. Magazines like *Art Amateur* and *Household News*, which were written for women managing households on a limited budget, published articles on "Oriental" interiors in nearly every issue at the end of the century. These articles and the availability of Near Eastern-inspired objects in the catalogues of Sears, Roebuck and Company until the 1930s reveal a

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<sup>3</sup>Joseph Byron photographed these and other New York interiors at the end of the nineteenth century. His collection is now housed at the Museum of the City of New York.





previously underestimated American fascination for all things Eastern in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893 introduced tremendous numbers of Americans to the Near East at the exhibits on the Midway Plaisance. Chapter One explores the relationship between mid-nineteenth century travel accounts of the Near East and the journey that many less affluent Americans took half a century later to the "Streets of Cairo" and the "Turkish Bazaar" at the Columbian Exposition.<sup>4</sup> Chapters Two and Three focus specifically on the manifestations of this style in furniture and in textiles and carpets. Chapter Four addresses a unique Moorish interior, the jewel box of a study which Joseph Jastrow, a professor at the University of Wisconsin, constructed in the attic of his home from 1910 to 1928.

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<sup>4</sup>The centennial of the Exposition encouraged the publication of many histories of the Fair. Contesting Images: Photography and the World's Columbian Exposition, by Julie Brown was particularly helpful for my research, as was Constructing the Fair: Platinum Photographs by C.D. Arnold of the World's Columbian Exposition, by Peter B. Hales.



- 1 -

## THE GRAND TOUR AND THE "STREETS OF CAIRO"

### Nineteenth-Century Perceptions of the Near East

#### Travel Literature

Western visitors to the Near East were not unheard of in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but as travel in the region became increasingly safe and less arduous, members of affluent families in Europe and the United States began including Egypt, Palestine, and Turkey on their list of Grand Tour destinations. After the mid-1860's, Turkish cosy corners and Islamicized smoking alcoves were added to upper-class parlors to reflect these visits.

Travelers brought home with them stories of the enchanted East and exotic souvenirs as testimony to their adventures. Amateur and professional artists frequently documented their travels with sketches and paintings. During the second half of the century, photographs documented life in Constantinople and Cairo with increased detail. The plethora of nineteenth-century books chronicling travel in the Near East might lead one to believe that every Western visitor to Constantinople felt compelled to reveal to the rest of the world the story of his or her journey to the East. The demand for these accounts encouraged their staggering publication numbers.

If a traveling party to the Near East were fortunate enough to include women who were granted entrance into a harem, any accounts of the journey would naturally include a description of the interior and the



odalisques who inhabited it. The lure of the harems was so great that most travel accounts included some description of life within them, even if the writer lacked first-hand knowledge. Turkish baths were only slightly less fascinating to Western readers; the vast majority of nineteenth-century travel literature on Turkey included descriptions and discussions of both.

James Boulden was fully aware of the appeal of his topic when he titled his travel account of 1855, An American among the Orientals, including an Audience with the Sultan and a Visit to the Interior of a Turkish Harem. He described the furniture in the Sultan's Palace, noting the basic design similarities between the Sultan's house and most Turkish homes: "Divans . . . as, in almost every Turkish house, extended around three sides of the room."<sup>5</sup> Boulden noted on a trip to the home of Fuad Effendi, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, that the divans in the house of this cosmopolitan politician "were almost the only relic of the luxurious past."<sup>6</sup> Communication with the West "was rapidly revolutionizing the mode of living among the Orientals of the better class, at least," and Effendi's furniture reflected this contact.<sup>7</sup>

Over fifty years later, Lucy Garnett recorded her impressions of Turkish living conditions in her book, Home Life in Turkey. Most Turkish homes were "irregularly built, rambling edifices of two stories, divided internally into two establishments: the *haremlik* and the

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<sup>5</sup>James A. P. Boulden. An American among the Orientals, including an Audience with the Sultan and a Visit to the Interior of a Turkish Harem. Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1855: 72.

<sup>6</sup>Boulden: 86.

<sup>7</sup>Boulden: 89.



*salemlik*."<sup>8</sup> The space within Turkish homes was segregated by sex. The public area within the house, the *salemlik*, was the domain of the adult men of the house. Women of the household could join their husbands in this space only when they were not visited by guests. The *haremlik* was the women's realm of the house, where non-family males were not permitted. Whether accurate or not, many Western accounts asserted that the matriarch of the house was not permitted out of the harem, whereas the patriarch had access to the entire house. The *mabeyn*, which in Arabic means "the space between two objects," linked the *haremlik* and the *salemlik*. Goods were transferred from the *mabeyn* into the *haremlik* through a revolving cupboard. Only the patriarch had the keys to the *mabeyn* and thus access to the *haremlik*.<sup>9</sup> Although Turkish and other Islamic women's actions were certainly regulated in many ways, Western writers often appear to have exaggerated the restrictions upon Islamic women's movements within their homes.

James Boulden maintained in his account of travels in 1855 that "the windows of the harem are closely latticed to prevent its inmates from being observed by outsiders. No male infidel vision ever penetrates into those sacred recesses, where, reclining luxuriously upon rich gold embroidered cloth divans, the air glowing with Arabia's sweetest perfumes . . . these houris while away the time in blissful indolence."<sup>10</sup> The *haremlik*'s inaccessibility to all but a few fortunate female visitors

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<sup>8</sup>Lucy M. Garnett. *Home Life in Turkey*. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1909: 260.

<sup>9</sup>*ibid*: 260-265.

<sup>10</sup>Boulden: 64.





heightened Westerners' fascination with the world behind the latticed windows.

Boulton's choice of the word "inmate" to describe the women of the harem reflected a Western misconception of the Near East. Americans often perceived these women as prisoners, held in their own homes by ruthless husbands and fathers. A beautiful piece of antique embroidery, found in a Constantinople bazaar, was described by a dealer as "the work of some fair odalisque, of the harem of a Sultan long since gone to his account with Allah." The dealer lamented that the embroidery was "the one poor resource of pleasure in a life condemned to thralldom, which was as hateful as its surroundings were mockingly gorgeous."<sup>11</sup> The many images and descriptions of the pale skinned odalisques lying down all day portrayed Turkish women as well-kept prostitutes (see figure 1.1).

Although provided with their every material need, these women were not free to leave their homes unless they were shrouded so completely in cloth as to make them nearly invisible. Westerners curiously had little difficulty in uniting the image of Turkish women in *hejab*, wrapped from head to toe in fabric, with the luscious nudes in Ingres' paintings of the Turkish baths (see figures 1.2 and 1.3). Western images of Eastern women transformed the all-encompassing *hejab* into a sexually enticing object for Western men's gaze and the source of as much interest as the *haremlik* itself.

Lucy Garnett attempted to dispel the elaborate fantasies surrounding women in harems. Despite many of the other

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<sup>11</sup>S.M. Putnam. "Draperies and Embroideries in the East." *The Decorator and Furnisher*, vol. xix, no. 1 (October 1891): 19.



generalizations Garnett made about "Orientals," she asserted that harems were not full of women "reclining on a divan, eating sweets and playing with [their] jewels," an image made popular in so many paintings and descriptions in the 19th century.<sup>12</sup> On the contrary, Garnett argued that the daily schedules of Turkish women were quite full. Rising early to prepare coffee and pipes for the men of the house, women proceeded to oversee the cooking and cleaning. Garnett acknowledged that women never went outside without being fully covered. However, these veiled women, according to Garnett, moved freely through the streets of Constantinople without an escort on their way to a women's luncheon or to the baths. She concluded her section on the fate of women in the Near East by maintaining that "Turkish women are legally as free or freer than European women."<sup>13</sup> Yet, the fact that Garnett felt it necessary to dispel these attitudes indicates their pervasiveness in American culture at the time.

Malek Alloula examined 19th century French postcards in his long essay entitled "The Colonial Harem." Alloula analyzed the many posed photographs of "Moorish" and Algerian women in their homes. Because photographers were unable to actually get inside harems, prostitutes were hired to represent the women in harems in these photographic postcards. In many of the photographs, women stand at a window, gazing longingly out of the bars (see figure 1.4). The window bars used in these photographs do not resemble the lattice work on the windows of real harems precisely because the viewer/photographer would not have been

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<sup>12</sup>Garnett: 269.

<sup>13</sup>Garnett: 269, 274, 27.



able to see through authentic lattice work. The window bars in the photographs both provide a clear view of the interior of the harem and resemble prison bars familiar to Western viewers. Many of the photographs do not contain these window bars at all, implying that they were taken "inside" the harem.<sup>14</sup> Through these photographs, the viewer is able to travel into the *haremlik*, overcoming the restrictions imposed upon him by Turkish men.

Photographs like the *Femme Arabe dans leur interieur* in figure 1.5 showed Eastern women smoking (How shocking!) and enjoying cups of coffee. Many of the women in these postcard photographs were semi-clothed; the images served as an apparently acceptable form of erotic imagery for the senders and receivers of these postcards.<sup>15</sup> Figure 1.6 is a particularly dramatic image of a Near Eastern woman. Clothed in a *yachmak*, only her eyes and breasts are visible. Women in *hejab* were normally entirely shrouded in fabric, their eyes being the only visible part of their body. Western imaginations (and Eastern for that matter) were normally forced to mentally recreate the alluring body underneath the cloth. This image simultaneously provided the Western viewer with both the exotic element of a hidden, inaccessible treasure and the visual exposure and presentation of the forbidden body. During the nineteenth-century, Americans defined the Near East through images like these and

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<sup>14</sup>Malek Alloula. The Colonial Harem. translated by Myrna Godzich and Wlad Godzich. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1986.

<sup>15</sup>Martha, a French tourist in Algeria, would probably have been more hesitant to send her postcard of a bare chested Moorish woman carrying a tambourine if the woman pictured had been a "proper" Western woman. Curiously Martha sent the postcard with the greeting, "I am sending you a package to be picked up at the railway station. The babies are doing well; they have just taken a walk by the beach. I shall write you shortly at greater length. Warm kisses to all of you." quoted in Alloula: 26.



the writings of travelers like James Boulden and Lucy Garnett. Cosy corners and smoking alcoves were derived from these images and descriptions. Western impressions of the East, however inaccurate they may have been, are important to examine because they shaped the development of the Turkish style in American homes.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, awareness of the Near East had been largely limited to the wealthy who could afford to travel. These affluent families littered their parlors with references to the Near East throughout the 1870s and 1880s. The decor of their homes was intended to reflect their privileged status in society and their highly developed aesthetic sense. Postcard representations of the East like those in figures 1.1 to 1.6 from the early 1900s exposed a wider audience to the wonders of distant regions of the world. Widely available travel accounts offered glimpses of the East to Americans who could never have afforded to travel to the region. Many of the emerging mail order catalogues began offering inexpensive variations of luxurious Eastern textiles and carpets, allowing middle and lower middle-income households on a limited budget to also display their fine tuned aesthetic sensibilities. Although imported goods were always preferable to their domestic reproductions, "to the great majority of our American homes, the imitations of wall coverings, tapestries, etc. are appropriate and desirable," advised A.G. Morrison in his 1906 handbook on interior decoration.<sup>16</sup> By the turn of the century, the Turkish decorating craze had already been largely abandoned by the wealthy elite. As with most fads, once the Middle Class

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<sup>16</sup>A.G. Morrison. Drapery, Interior Decoration and Architecture: A Practical Handbook for the Dealer, Decorator and the Workroom. New York: T.A. Cawthra and Company, 1906: 22.





began to adopt these elements of Eastern design in their own homes, the upper-class trend setters mocked the masses' enthusiasm for the style.

Unlike the travelers who had returned to New York, Philadelphia, or Boston, towing trunks laden with Eastern goods and memories of Constantinople lit by moonlight, the vast majority of Americans learned about the Near East through the literature written by more fortunate travelers and perhaps a trip to the Midway Plaisance, an international bazaar at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. In 1893, nearly fifty years after James Boulden wrote of "rich, embroidered cloth divans" and "Arabia's sweetest perfumes," millions of Americans made their own symbolic journey to the Near East along the Midway Plaisance.

#### The World's Columbian Exposition

When Columbus landed in the Americas in 1492, he could never have anticipated the spectacle which the city of Chicago would orchestrate in his honor four hundred years later. The World's Columbian Exposition was designed as both a celebration of the "discovery of America" by Christopher Columbus and an enormous exposé on the latest technological, artistic, and architectural advances. The Exposition officially began with a dedication ceremony on October 21, 1892, but most of the buildings were only partially constructed at that time. It opened to the public on May 1, 1893.<sup>17</sup> The Fairgrounds were constructed on six hundred and sixty-four acres of land south of downtown Chicago and boasted a mile long frontage on Lake Michigan.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>*Ladies' Home Journal*. (July, 1892): 6.

<sup>18</sup>Howard M. Rossen and John M. Kaduck. Columbian World's Fair Collectibles. Des Moines, IA: Wallace-Homestead Book Company, 1976: vii.



The Exposition is perhaps remembered most through surviving photographs of the colossal figure of "Columbia," designed by Daniel Chester French, and the enormous classical buildings that surrounded the giant central basin (see figure 1.7). These images are familiar to our eyes, as they must have been to so many of the visitors who toured the grounds of the Exposition and the millions of Americans who purchased any one among the sea of pictorial records of the Fair. The presence of so many of these souvenir books in library collections hints at the plethora of editions that must have been available in 1893.<sup>19</sup>

"The White City," as the Exposition was informally known, referred specifically to the central basin, the lagoon and the buildings which surrounded these bodies of water (see figure 1.8 for a map of the fairgrounds).<sup>20</sup> In addition to the main concourse of buildings, most states constructed a building at the north end of the fair, above the Art Galleries, to display their trademark goods and to provide a place for visiting state residents to rest during the day. Delegates from visiting countries also constructed buildings to highlight each nation's culture and exported

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<sup>19</sup>The Free Library of Philadelphia has over 50 different contemporary pictorial and textual explorations of the Exposition in its non-circulating collection.

<sup>20</sup>The Administration Building dominated the west end of the central basin, which was also surrounded by the Agriculture Building, a Casino and a Music Hall. The enormous Manufacturers and Liberal Arts Building fronted on both the central basin and the lagoon. The U.S. Government Building, the Women's Building, the Horticulture Building, the Mines and Electricity Buildings, and the Transportation Building all surrounded the lagoon as well. The Transportation Building, Louis Sullivan's golden-arched masterpiece with a multicolored and glittering facade, was the only building on the main concourse which did not imitate the Classical Style. The small porticoes on each side of the Transportation Building's arch loosely resembled much of the "Islamic" architectural improvisations at the Midway Plaisance, further distancing this building from the architecture on the rest of the main concourse. "Columbia" and the Palace of Fine Arts are two of the few reminders of the Exposition which survive on the fairgrounds south of Chicago. The Palace of Fine Arts was considerably altered and now serves as the Museum of Science and Industry.



products. The classical buildings of the main basin and lagoon were devoted largely to education, commerce and industry. Buildings for the display of industrial innovations stood beside buildings devoted to the emerging field of anthropology.

Frederick W. Putnam, a curator from the Peabody Museum at Harvard, was placed in charge of the Department of Ethnology and Archaeology at the Exposition. Franz Boas, widely regarded as the father of American professional anthropology, assisted Putnam with the exhibits.<sup>21</sup> Both Putnam and Boas were interested in creating exhibits which would be beneficial and educational for anthropologists and tourists alike. J.W. Buel asserted that "an ethnologist might have gone no further than the Chicago Fair to find the races of the world and . . . study their characteristics."<sup>22</sup> Boas acknowledged that viewers frequently did "not want anything other than entertainment."<sup>23</sup> He hoped to be able to clarify the purpose of each exhibit into an easily understood theme for those who did not want to seek that message out for themselves. Putnam and Boas were particularly concerned with the accuracy of their exhibits. Creating a clear message for reluctant viewers was useful only if the message being conveyed was accurate. The Department of Ethnology and Archaeology funded both anthropological field research and digs in order to ensure this professionalism.

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<sup>21</sup>Ira Jacknis. "Franz Boas and Exhibits: On the Limitations of the Museum Method of Anthropology." In Objects and Others: Essays on Museums and Material Culture, ed. George Stocking. Madison: University of Wisconsin, Madison Press, 1985: 75.

<sup>22</sup>J.W. Buel. The Magic City: A Massive Portfolio of Original Photographic Views of the Great World's Fair and its Treasures of Art, vol. I, no. 12 (April 2, 1894). St. Louis: Historical Publishing Company, 1894: 91.

<sup>23</sup>Franz Boas. "Some Principles of Museum Administration." *Science* 25: 921-33. In Jacknis: 86.



Boas and Putnam's insistence on anthropological "accuracy" was most clearly articulated in the Exposition-funded archaeological digs at Labna and Uxmal in the Yucatan, two important Mesoamerican sites. Putnam used photographs taken on these digs to construct full-size replicas of the Portal of Labna and of the twenty-seven foot arch from the Governor's Palace at Uxmal outside the Anthropological Building at the Exposition.<sup>24</sup> Photographs of these and other sites were exhibited inside the building. The replicas of the ruins functioned as Boas' clear and simple message to which most of the visitors to the Fair could respond with little or no effort. The exhibits and photographs inside the ruins were designed for those people who wanted to learn more about the site and the culture from which it emerged.

#### International Pavilions

The international buildings north of the lagoon largely ignored Boas and Putnam's interest in scholarly-based representations of other cultures in favor of a more entertaining perspective. Like the state buildings throughout the Exposition, the international buildings were designed to encourage trade and travel. Most of these structures were reminiscent of vernacular architectural styles in their respective countries. Exhibits within these buildings highlighted the major exports of each country as well as some of its artistic and cultural traditions.

The Turkish Building and its exhibits were designed to try to dispel the pervasive image of Turkey as a nation of languorous men and women (see figure 1.9). Immediately upon entering the building, one was

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<sup>24</sup>Julie K. Brown. Contesting Images: Photography and the World's Columbian Exposition. Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1994: 41.





confronted by "a huge torpedo, exploded by an electric cap, made in Constantinople . . . it is sixteen feet long and looks anything but the offspring of the somnolent Orient."<sup>25</sup> Display cases filled with mineral salts, Turkish coffee, and a map in stucco of Constantinople accompanied the torpedo. A fire engine, proudly displayed in the center of the room, provided Constantinople's best defense against the fires which frequently raged within the city.

When commenting on the Turkish Building near the lagoon, James Shepp, in Shepp's World's Fair Photographed, expressed his astonishment at the efficiency of the Turks. He offered a somewhat backhanded compliment at their ability to complete the exhibit on schedule: "Strange as it may appear, this semi-oriental nation was the first to complete her exhibits at the Fair. Turkey has been called the 'sick man of Europe,' but here, there is no evidence of decrepitude."<sup>26</sup> Despite the overall impression of technological advances in the exhibit and the efficiency of the building's construction, Shepp was quick to associate the elaborate embroidery and needlework on display with the "women of the Turkish harems [who had] ample time to spend upon needlework," because they were locked in their harems for a lifetime.<sup>27</sup>

### The Midway Plaisance

The Midway Plaisance at the World's Columbian Exposition also presented a fashion show of cultures, albeit in a slightly more irreverent manner. West of the central basin and reflecting its less serious function

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<sup>25</sup>James E. Shepp and Daniel B. Shepp. Shepp's World's Fair Photographed. Chicago: Globe Bible Publishing Company, 1893: 482.

<sup>26</sup>Shepp: 482

<sup>27</sup>Shepp: 482.



as a center of entertainment, the Midway stood in marked contrast to the gleaming white classical buildings of the "White City" (see figure 1.10). A single street extending west from the outskirts of the main promenade, the Midway contained a variety of "villages." Visitors could enter the enclosed displays for a fee, generally twenty-five cents per village. The Irish Village was located nearest to the rest of the fair, followed closely by the New England Log Cabin. The German Village, the Turkish Village, Old Vienna, the Moorish Palace, and the Cairo Street were the largest concessions within the Midway Plaisance.<sup>28</sup>

Four years after the Exposition closed, Rossiter Johnson described the Midway's function in the larger plan of the Exposition: "The Midway Plaisance . . . offered an admirable location for picturesque displays, characteristic of the customs of foreign nations and various forms of amusement, refreshment, comfort, and rest. This narrow strip of land had the advantage of isolating these special features from the grand *ensemble* of the Exposition grounds, thus preventing jarring contrasts between the beautiful buildings and grounds on the one hand, and the amusing, distracting, ludicrous, and sometimes noisy attractions of the Midway."<sup>29</sup> Most of the rest of the Exposition functioned as a technological exhibit or museum, whereas the Midway functioned as an amusement park and shopping mall.

Nearly everyone who visited the Exposition also visited the Midway on their way to the Ferris wheel, whether they went inside any of

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<sup>28</sup>Rand, McNally & Company's *Standard Guide of the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago*, 1893. Republished in *Contesting Images*, 1994: xiv-xv.

<sup>29</sup>Rossiter Johnson. *A History of the World's Columbian Exposition*, vol. I. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1897: 75.



the villages or not. Nine out of ten visitors to the fair rode the Ferris Wheel, which was located halfway down the Plaisance.<sup>30</sup> Hawkers outside all of the exhibits attempted to lure visitors inside their concessions, for indeed, that is what these villages were.

Ardeshi and Byramji's East India Palace sold "black-wood and sandal-wood furniture, boxes, tables, chairs, . . . moradabad-brass and copper hand-chased and enameled vases, . . . a large assortment of shawls, table covers and cushions . . . [and] old battle axes."<sup>31</sup> Having been to many of the Expositions in Europe, Ardeshir and Byramji were well informed about which goods appealed to European consumers. Consequently, they claimed to have "placed on sale a collection of [merchandise] seldom, if ever seen outside India."<sup>32</sup> With factories in London as well as in India, they were well suited to provide Westerners with all of their Eastern design needs.

Visitors were enticed to take another trip to the "Orient" by the women who beckoned from the open portiere at the Turkish Bazaar. Unlike the Turkish Building on the lagoon, the Turkish Village and Bazaar were primarily commercial ventures. The photograph of the Turkish Bazaar in figure 1.11 includes two women dressed in Turkish garb, although neither appear to be Turkish. One of them was probably Josephine Dolson, Chief Saleslady in the Turkish Village, whose employee

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<sup>30</sup>George Ferris, a steel bridge engineer, designed the wheel which boasted a diameter of two hundred and fifty feet. Each of the thirty-six cars comfortably carried forty passengers. The Ferris Wheel was dismantled after the Fair and continues to operate at the Prater in Vienna. Brown: 103, 155n.48.

<sup>31</sup>Harry T. Smith. *Pictorial Album and History of the World's Fair and Midway*. Chicago: Harry T. Smith and Company, 1893: unpaginated.

<sup>32</sup>Smith, 1893: unpaginated.



photograph was included at the end of Harry T. Smith's Pictorial Album and History of the World's Fair and Midway. In the photograph, Miss Dolson and her companion hold open the portiere, welcoming the viewer with smiles. The portiere is surrounded by an elaborate wood frieze, which covers the entire wall. Small rugs and tabouret tables for sale are scattered before the entrance. A handmade sign tacked to the wall states, "silver bedstead-300 years old. Persian War Tent 400 years old - \$10. today."<sup>33</sup> The entrance provided a taste of the luxuries that visitors might find behind the portiere if they offered up their twenty-five cent admission fee. Once inside the Turkish Bazaar, one could purchase a wide assortment of household goods and trinkets at stands like the one in figure 1.12, constructed by Elia Souhami Sadulla and Company, a Constantinople-based establishment.

The "Streets of Cairo" in the Midway "proved to be the most spectacular financial success of all" (see figure 1.13).<sup>34</sup> The popularity of the *Rue du Caire* at the Paris Exposition of 1889 inspired the exhibit in Chicago.<sup>35</sup> Thanks to "Egyptomania," stockholders in the Egypt-Chicago Exposition Company, which organized the exhibit, made more than a one hundred percent profit on their initial investment.<sup>36</sup> The drab exterior wall of the Egyptian concession opened onto a bustling and exciting fabricated city. Just as the recreated archaeological sites of the Yucatan and the exhibits inside these "ruins" allowed visitors to symbolically travel to

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<sup>33</sup>C.D. Arnold. Official Views of the World's Columbian Exposition. Chicago: Press Chicago Photo-Gravure Company, 1894: 104. Smith: unpaginated.

<sup>34</sup>Brown: 105.

<sup>35</sup>Shepp: 506.

<sup>36</sup>Johnson: 76.





South America and learn about that region, the replica of the Temple of Luxor within the "Streets of Cairo" allowed visitors to travel to the Valley of the Kings. Inside the temple, display cases held wax mummies, reproductions of the tombs of Thi, circa 3800 BC, and the Sacred Bull Apis, circa 260 BC.<sup>37</sup>

Yet, unlike the Yucatan exhibit, the variably dated materials in the "Streets of Cairo" were presented as a collage, rather than a clear picture of Egyptian history. The Temple's sponsor, John M. Cook, a partner in Thomas Cook and Sons, the travel organization, was primarily interested in encouraging people to take trips to Egypt through his travel agency.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, accuracy was not as important an issue as it had been for Boas and Putnam in their anthropological exhibitions. Despite the variations in dating and the speculative nature of some of the reconstruction and decoration, the Temple of Luxor was geared more at education than most of the other activities within the "Streets of Cairo."

Buildings with latticed windows and overhanging second stories dominated the landscape. Snake charmers, boys on donkeys, men in unfamiliar clothing on camels, strange cooking smells, and women in *hejab* filled the streets with the spirit of the East. A wedding procession filed daily through the streets like a parade (see figure 1.14). A tall, white minaret dominated the landscape and was one of the few elements of the street which was visible from outside the gates on the Midway. The "Streets of Cairo" offered for sale a wide assortment of Eastern goods.

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<sup>37</sup>Smith: unpaginated.

<sup>38</sup>Brown: 108.



Visitors could acquire "ivories, brass-work, Soudanese arms and draperies, gold and silver coins of ancient Egyptian dynasties, genuine mummies [!] . . . slippers, scarves, and caps," from the sixty-one vendors within.<sup>39</sup>

Although not as successful as the "Streets of Cairo," most of the other exhibits also offered never-before seen sights for visitors. The Ottoman Hippodrome offered "racing on dromedaries, Arabian sports and horsemanship, dancing, feasting, and wedding ceremonies, showing life in the wild East" (see figure 1.15).<sup>40</sup> The Midway also featured a Colorado gold mining exhibit, a California ostrich farm, Bulgarian curiosities, a Lapland village, stereopticon views of Pompeii, and curiously, amid these exotic displays, a "reproduction of a model cottage, such as are owned by workingmen in Philadelphia."<sup>41</sup>

Harry Smith, in his book, Pictorial Album and History of the World's Fair and Midway, expressed the delight, which so many visitors to the World's Columbian Exposition must also have experienced, of traveling to the far corners of the world: "Citizens of Chicago, and Americans in general have read, no doubt, columns of the manners and customs of the far East . . . but few who attended [the] Fair, have trod the streets of those Oriental cities. . . . To make a tour of the Holy-land and spend several months of sight seeing, a small fortune would have to be expended. The World's Fair gave you all the privileges for a trifle."<sup>42</sup> Although the Exposition was inaccessible to the poorest class of

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<sup>39</sup>Smith: unpaginated.

<sup>40</sup>Johnson: 79.

<sup>41</sup>Johnson: 78-9.

<sup>42</sup>Smith: unpaginated.



Americans, it was an affordable and exciting vacation destination for many middle-class Americans.

In Contesting Images, Julie Brown discussed the popularity of amateur photography at the Fair. Many "members of the living-people exhibits" charged amateur photographers for the privilege of taking their portrait. Costumed participants often assumed poses that they had learned through experience were popular among the tourists, thereby reinforcing Americans' preconceived impressions of Near-Easterners (see figure 1.16). Brown recounted the story of Carl Koerner who paid two Turkish sedan-chair carriers before photographing them. Koerner observed that they "adopted a pose of standing with heads and shoulders erect, with one foot a little in advance of the other as if in the act of walking."<sup>43</sup> These photographic opportunities provided mementos of a visitor's journey in the same way that photos of real streets in Cairo and bazaars in Constantinople would have done for trans-Atlantic travelers.

Visitors to the Exposition could also acquire many of the souvenirs of a grand tour. Hester Poole described in *Household News*, a monthly magazine for barely middle-income families, the home of a cosmopolitan woman who had decorated her parlor with mementos of her trips around the globe. Poole asked, "has she visited the old world? If so, a glaring picture of Vesuvius in eruption, coruscating with orange and crimson, overhangs a copy of Apollo, or the Marble Fawn, while beside it is placed a life-size bust, in plaster, of the latest fashionable Spanish dancer. Below

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<sup>43</sup>Carl C. Koerner, Jr. "Snap Shooting at the Great Fair: Interesting Experiences of an Amateur with a Hand-Camera at the World's Columbian Exposition," *American Amateur Photographer* 5 (July 1893): 297-98, quoted in Brown: 110.



may stand a low Turkish table, inlaid with ivory, and on the sofa beside it a Navajo blanket hanging over a Daghestan rug."<sup>44</sup> All of these "telltale signs" of travel in Europe and the Middle East could have been purchased at the concession stands at the Exposition.

Who needed to actually journey to the Near East when the exhibits at the Exposition allowed one to photograph the sights and purchase the merchandise of foreign nations? Most members of the Middle Class were not fortunate enough to accompany the throngs of wealthy Americans and Europeans who began touring the Near East in the nineteenth century. Many had probably read accounts of these countries in novels and in travelogues. For the majority, a trip to "Turkey" on the Midway Plaisance was their first direct exposure to Turkish people and culture and probably the closest that many would ever get to the Near East.<sup>45</sup>

After the Exposition finally closed, the editor of a New York journal asked a variety of prominent men and women their impressions of the fair in Chicago. E.C. Stedman heartily defended of the architecture of the White City, which many others had criticized. Stedman maintained that "to rouse the sense of beauty itself among our faraway plain people was the highest mission of the Fair. It sent thousands back to unlovely homes with the beginning of a noble discontent."<sup>46</sup> Although Stedman himself may have detested the Midway Plaisance and the orchestrated chaos of its exhibits, his words underlie the impact of the Midway and the various Near Eastern exhibits within it. American middle-class families returned

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<sup>44</sup>Hester Poole. "A Japanese Room." *Household News*, vol. III (1893): 89.

<sup>45</sup>Brown: 110.

<sup>46</sup>Elizabeth Brown and Alan Fern. "Introduction." In Revisiting the White City: American Art at the 1893 World's Fair. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1993: 13.





to their homes with the Smyrna rugs, portieres, tabouret tables, hookah pipes, and tapestries which they had accumulated at the Exposition and integrated them into the decorative schemes of their homes.

The often inaccurate image of the Near East projected by the Midway Plaisance and the subsequent publications surrounding the Exposition supported the "vivid mythology" of the Near East which initially had been generated by the Orientalist painters and writers of the nineteenth-century. The Midway Plaisance brought this previously elite imagery into the minds, lives, and living rooms of millions of Americans.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>Brandon Brome Fortune and Michelle Mead point out in Revisiting the White City: American Art at the 1893 World's Fair that many American and European Orientalist painters created combinations of images, scenes and people, "striving for visual effect rather than ethnographical authenticity," in paintings of Eastern scenes. Like the Orientalist painters of the period, the Midway Plaisance sought to create a visually pleasing scene rather than an accurate representation of the Near East. Fortune and Mead. "Catalogue of American Paintings and Sculptures exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition." In Revisiting the White City: American Art at the 1893 World's Fair. National Museum of American Art. Hanover: University Press of New England, 1994: 162.



## FURNISHINGS IN THE TURKISH STYLE

Although textiles and carpets were frequently imported from the Near East, the furniture which was incorporated in exotic Islamic, or Turkish style interiors was largely constructed in the United States. Tabouret tables were one of the few imported items of furniture to be included in nineteenth-century American interiors of the Turkish style. The American furniture which came to be described as "Turkish," "Oriental" or "Moorish" and which occupied prominent positions in American parlors of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries bore little resemblance to anything of the furnishings in the Near East. The distinction between the source and its offspring became even greater after the turn of the century, when the pieces identified as "Turkish" bore closer resemblance to a Lazy-Boy recliner than any of the furnishings in the divan khane, or main living space, in Turkish homes.

### Divans

Low couches and lounges, which resembled the divans in so many of the late nineteenth-century Orientalist paintings of elaborate Eastern interiors, were an all-purpose furniture item in Victorian homes: "The first requisite of a family room is a good, wide lounge, not a narrow, stiff, short affair, nor one with tufted upholstery. Much as the old box lounge has been ridiculed, nothing can quite supersede it."<sup>1</sup> These lounges were ideal for children's naps or a relaxing afternoon snooze. They provided a

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<sup>1</sup> Hester Poole. "The Family Room - Continued." *Household News*, vol. IV (1896): 309.



convenient respite for nurses assisting at the side of a sick bed and the drawer below the mattress could be used for extra storage space.

Jamestown Lounge Company offered such a "wardrobe couch," covered in a kilim-pattered fabric, in 1906.<sup>2</sup> Sears, Roebuck and Company, offering goods for those unable to patronize the Jamestown Lounge Company, advertised a seemingly endless selection of Turkish divans and lounges from the 1890's until well into the 1930's. The rather expensive leather covered Turkish lounge in figure 2.1 was made in about 1910 and is believed to have been from a home in Grand Rapids, Michigan.<sup>3</sup>

Hester Poole, whose monthly column on interior decorating was surrounded by recipes and cost-cutting home management tips in *Household News*, offered specific guidelines about the lounges within the ever-popular cosy corner. Cosy corners and their role in the Turkish style in America are discussed in greater detail in chapter three. Poole recommended that the couch in a cosy corner be made "out of pine, six feet long, thirty inches wide and eighteen inches high, with wire springs and a good mattress; [it] may be covered with blue corduroy, which sells from 60 cents upward. It should have plenty of pillows in all shades of yellow and yellowish red."<sup>4</sup> Several months later Poole insisted that, for a reception room, "the only covered furnishings [should be] a long divan,

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<sup>2</sup> Jamestown Lounge Company advertisement. In *Drapery, Interior Decoration and Architecture: A Practical Handbook for the Dealer, Decorator, and the Workroom*, by A.G. Morrison. New York: Cawthra and Comany, 1906: viii.

<sup>3</sup> Katherine Grier. *Culture & Comfort: People, Parlors and Upholstery 1850-1930*. Rochester, NY: The Strong Museum, 1988, plate 19 between pp.180-181.

<sup>4</sup> Hester Poole. "Answers to Inquirers." *Household News*, vol III (1895): 165.



where the room is exceedingly spacious. The covering of this piece of furniture should be self-colored, deep and rich, rather than bright."<sup>5</sup>

In a column on "Economy in Decoration," Poole provided instructions for those who could not afford a new lounge on how to rehabilitate an old lounge. "Rub it well with coarse sand-paper and paint it with black enamel . . . touch the carvings . . . with a narrow line of gilt, such as is sold in powder, with liquid for mixing. Make a soft cushion for the bottom and cover it with rep, tapestry, or cretonne; whatever is suitable. At either end arrange a couple of square pillows, covered with a contrasting tint."<sup>6</sup>

Poole was sympathetic to those families even too poor to have a lounge to be salvaged. Undaunted, she offered directions for constructing a lounge from scratch. "Press pater familias or one of the boys into service to make a frame for a lounge," to which she added instructions on dimensions and hints on materials, construction, the interior webbing and filling, and covers. She concluded these directions with a finishing decorative suggestion: "two or three large square pillows, covered with the stuff upon the lounge or with India silk, standing against the wall, finishes a handsome piece of furniture, and one that is serviceable."<sup>7</sup>

### Ottomans and Hassocks

Small hassocks, pillows in leather or tapestry, were used as foot rests in American parlors. Their affordability made them a frequent addition to middle-class homes. Sears offered eleven different varieties of hassocks

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<sup>5</sup> Hester Poole. "The Reception Hall." *Household News*, vol III (1895): 448.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*: 41.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*: 41.





and footrests in the 1905 Catalogue (see figure 2.2). A children's hassock was available for 19 cents. The "octagon ottoman foot rest," covered in tapestry cost 75 cents. Sears claimed to be the sole producer of a "grand Oriental sumptuous hassock," a large velvet footstool, available for 85 cents.<sup>8</sup>

Because practicality was as important as beauty to the readers of *Household News*, Hester Poole suggested that "window seats [were] especially luxurious receptacles for clothing that is not too fine, while square box ottomans, covered and valenced with a durable material, make shoe boxes that a queen might envy."<sup>9</sup> Sears offered such a "hassock and slipper box combined" in 1905 for 89 cents. Ottomans carried the cultural associations of the East in their name, which referred to the Turkish dynasty founded by Osman I in 1300.

#### Tabouret Tables

The main room in a Turkish home was generally surrounded on three sides by divans. The fourth side contained a storage console of some kind where ornamental and functional objects were displayed. In each room, "one or two inlaid walnut-wood tray-stools [were] placed . . . near the divan to hold cigarette boxes, ashtrays, and other trifles."<sup>10</sup> The tabouret in figure 2.3, on which "Belle Fatmah" rested her coffee, was similar to many of the tabouret tables imported to the United States. Even American parlors which did not incorporate any other aspects of the Near Eastern style frequently contained one of these little all-purpose tabouret

<sup>8</sup> Sears, Roebuck Company Catalogue for Spring 1905, vol. 114. Chicago: Sears, Roebuck and Company, 1905: 803.

<sup>9</sup> Hester Poole. "Decoration: Carpets." *Household News*, vol II (1894): 749.

<sup>10</sup> Lucy M. Garnett. Home Life in Turkey. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1909: 261.



tables. Sears asserted that "jardinier stands" were a "very stylish ornament for any parlor." These small tables, illustrated in figure 2.4, were available in oak or "imitation mahogany finish" for \$1.70 in 1897.<sup>11</sup> Zella Milhau considered the tabouret table, or Karan inlaid stool, a fundamental component of the Near Eastern interior. She included them in all of the illustrations of cosy corners for her article in *The Decorator and Furnisher*.<sup>12</sup>

The Flemish Art Company sold small tabouret tables in plain wood, without the mother of pearl and ivory commonly inlaid on imported tabouret tables. Consumers added their own decoration to the Flemish Art Company's tabouret tables with pyrography kits they sold. Pyrography, a widely popular "craft" activity in the nineteenth century, entailed creating designs on the surface of the wood with a burning poker. After their application, these burned sections could be left plain or colored. A pamphlet published by the Flemish Art Company detailed the procedure of this "simple, artistic and fascinating pastime." Pyrography was useful both as a leisure activity and a way to "increase ones income."<sup>13</sup> Hester Poole assured her readers that "pyrography . . . is done after a little practice by any one (sic) having the least art-training or dexterity and precision in drawing."<sup>14</sup> The column also instructed readers on how to avoid creating

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<sup>11</sup>Fred Israel. *1897 Sears, Roebuck*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1968: 669.

<sup>12</sup>Zella Milhau. "Home Decoration." *The Decorator and Furnisher*, vol. xix, no. 3 (August, 1888): 109-112.

<sup>13</sup>Koenig. *Pyrography: A Complete Course of Instructions, Practical, Simple, and Progressive*. New York: Flemish Art Company, undated: 2.

<sup>14</sup>Hester Poole. "The Reception Hall." *Household News*, vol III (1895): 447.



unwanted dots, how to shade the background and the best types of woods to use.

### Latticework Grilles

Because the harem held such fascination for American readers, latticework became a popular ornamental feature in American homes of the nineteenth century. But, American consumers incorporated this symbol of the harem window in a decidedly impotent manner. Lucy Garnett described the "latticed blinds of unpainted wood" which covered the windows of the *haremlik*.<sup>15</sup> The windows contained "circular openings through which the hanums, themselves unseen, may gaze from their cushioned divans on the ever changing scene below."<sup>16</sup> The fret work grilles which resembled the lattice-work of harem windows were sometimes placed into the window frames of American parlors. Far more frequently, these grilles supported the portieres which draped doorways in many American homes. Sears, Roebuck and Company sold the grilles in figure 2.5 in 1910.<sup>17</sup>

N.W. Jacobs addressed the "considerable controversy . . . concerning lattice-work, fret-work, and grilles," in his Practical Handbook on Cutting Drapery, published in 1890. He maintained that "grilles are used to the best advantage in doorways where the spaces are too high to drape with good effect, but of late they have been used in windows as well."<sup>18</sup> In an "Indo-Saracenic Smoking Room," A.G. Morrison suggested hanging

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<sup>15</sup> Garnett: 258.

<sup>16</sup> Garnett: 259.

<sup>17</sup> Sears, Roebuck and Company Catalogue (1910), illustrated in Winkler and Moss: 215.

<sup>18</sup> N.W. Jacobs. Practical Handbook on Cutting Drapery. Minneapolis: Harrison & Smith, 1890: 117.



"India Mehrut print [curtains] from a twelve-inch ebonized grille with a shelf, [and lining] the shelf with yellow silk."<sup>19</sup> Jacobs illustrated the majority of the grilles from his book in the more conventional American position over doorways (see figure 2.6). These grilles, which supported portieres, allowed for tantalizing views into the next room of the house, in much the same way that the harem postcards discussed in chapter one provided a coveted view into the impenetrable recesses of the harem.

In 1905, *House and Garden*, a magazine whose readers had already abandoned the Turkish style, announced that "fortunately with the passing of the jig-saw work and grills from the wooden trim of the interior, the brass and onyx table, the plush covered rocker, with all that these stand for in furniture, is fast disappearing."<sup>20</sup> *House and Garden* filled the void created by the demise of so many of the nineteenth century women's magazines; its articles reflected the journal's cutting edge approach to design in the early decades of the twentieth century.

### Narghiles and Smoking Alcoves

Americans associated smoking with life in the Near East. A water pipe, narghile, or hookah was a clear moniker of an Eastern interior.<sup>21</sup> James Boulden, in *An American among the Orientals* (1855), described these ubiquitous narghiles "with their long tubes gracefully winding over

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<sup>19</sup> Morrison: 16.

<sup>20</sup> Margaret Greeleaf. "The Interior Finish and Furnishing of the Small House, Part I." *House and Garden*, vol viii, no. 3 (October, 1905): 207.

<sup>21</sup> The word "hookah" is derived from the Arabic word "huqqah," a casket, vase, or cup. It made its debut in the English language in 1783. "Narghile" did not enter the English language until 1836. Narghile is derived from the Persian word, "narghil," which means cocoanut, from which the bowl of early water pipes was made. William Little. *The Oxford Universal Dictionary on Historical Principles*. C.T. Onions, editor. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955: 919, 930.





them, their cut glass and decanter formed bodies half filled with rose water, and their perforated earthen bowls holding the grateful tobacco."<sup>22</sup> These "peace pipes" were generally of immense value. Turkish dignitaries brought their own pipes with them when visiting each other. Boulden maintained that "Franks," otherwise known as Westerners, were not expected to bring their own water pipes when visiting Turkish homes.<sup>23</sup> From 1897 to 1905, Sears, Roebuck offered a "Turkish Water Pipe," alongside the more familiar German Meerschaum and American pipes (see figure 2.7). The narghile sold by Sears had a colored glass bowl with painted ornamentation. A "long flexible stem with small amber mouthpiece" was attached to the neck of the pipe. A more elaborate pipe with two stems, "so two persons can smoke at the same time," would have permitted the men reclining on divans in their smoking rooms to partake of the "grateful tobacco" without moving. Smoking jackets, like those in figure 2.8 were often made of imported fabric with Indian paisleys and Near Eastern designs. Small Turkish slippers were also made for lounging in these smoking rooms.<sup>24</sup>

In many ways, the nineteenth-century smoking room was a cosy corner which occupied an entire room. A.G. Morrison offered the smoking room as a respite for the rigors of life in an emerging industrial economy:

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<sup>22</sup> James A. P. Boulden. An American among the Orientals, including an Audience with the Sultan and a Visit to the interior of a Harem. Philadelphia: Lindsay and Blakiston, 1855: 61.

<sup>23</sup> Boulden: 73-4.

<sup>24</sup> Richard Martin and Harold Koda. Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994: 44.



Conversant as we are with the strenuous life the average American leads, be it in the stock market, at the desk, or in other spheres of activity, one thing is evident, that the home should supply the retreat where the cares of the day, are forgotten in home-like comforts and congenial surroundings, where the association of a nicely flavored cigar will not trespass on dainty hangings, . . . there are times in every one's experience where absolute rest and quiet is required to restore the shattered nerves, to soothe the aching head and to rest the weary muscles, and what better place than such a room, which we will call the Gentleman's Den . . . Such a room, if arranged comfortably, would in a great measure offset the charms of the club, and could contain all the ingredients necessary for comfort and rest.<sup>25</sup>

Unlike cosy corners, which will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three, smoking rooms were decidedly male spaces in nineteenth century homes. Cosy corners were associated with women because they were frequently located in the parlor, a more feminine area of the house.

#### Turkish Baths

In addition to the descriptions of the reclining women in harems and the mosques of Constantinople, nearly all of the nineteenth-century European travel literature on Turkey discussed the public bath houses. Turkish baths titillated American Victorian sensibilities with fantasies of steamy rooms filled with semi-clad and nude people. Nearly all of the descriptions of the baths were written by men. They spoke of the bath attendants who washed and flogged the bathers into a state of cleanliness. After this apparently painful experience, the battered Western man in question was carried to a separate room by another bath worker, wrapped in a towel (a Turkish towel!) and left to recline with tea or coffee and a

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<sup>25</sup> Morrison: 20.



languorous smoke on a narghile, surrounded by Turkish men who had also gone through this ordeal.<sup>26</sup>

Westerners' descriptions of their experiences in a Turkish bath embodied their general perceptions of the Near East: savagery and languorous indolence. Americans intrigued by tales of the bath could recreate this experience in the far less threatening environment of their own homes by purchasing imported Turkish towels. Lucy Garnett, in her description of Home Life in Turkey (1909), remarked that the "East has of late been almost emptied by the demand for [these "chevreh towels"] in the West."<sup>27</sup> Constance Cary Harrison suggested to her readers in 1881 that they appliqu  the embroidery on "Turkish towels, so much used now for tidies" onto maroon plush or sage-green velvet as an inexpensive way to make mantel lambrequins.<sup>28</sup> Although she herself was a member of the Upper Class, Harrison wrote for poorer women. She offered suggestions on how her readers could earn money and decorate their own homes in inexpensive ways. The towels which Harrison suggested could be made into lambrequins were available in nearly every mail order catalogue at the turn of the century. Bloomingdales offered, "striped Turkish towels, VERY CHEAP" for seventeen cents each in the summer of 1891.<sup>29</sup> Sears, Roebuck continued to offer Turkish towels well into the 1940s, though they removed the scimitar-wielding, beturbaned man in figure 2.9 from

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<sup>26</sup> Boulden: 107.

<sup>27</sup> Garnett: 275.

<sup>28</sup> Constance Cary Harrison. Woman's Handiwork in Modern Homes. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881: 203.

<sup>29</sup> Bloomingdale Brothers. Illustrated Fashion Catalogue, Spring and Summer 1891. New York: Bloomingdales Brothers, 1891: 84.



the advertisement after 1902. Expensive towels continue to be advertised as "Turkish" in contemporary catalogues of luxury household linens, whether or not these towels were actually imported from Turkey.

Although less pervasive in American homes than the Turkish towel, the "Turkish bath," a type of portable sauna also appeared in American homes in the early decades of the 20th century. Sears, Roebuck advertised "What a Turkish Bath Will Do For You" in its 1915 catalogue, maintaining that "a Turkish bath, taken just before retiring opens the pores of the skin, thereby aiding elimination. There is nothing that will produce a clean healthy body as will a hot Turkish bath" (see figure 2.10).<sup>30</sup> These portable screens promised to sweat dirt out of the pores and aid weight-loss.

The appearance of this appliance in the Sears Catalogue cannot be attributed solely to Americans' fascination with the Near East. Its appeal to consumers was also undoubtedly related to the emerging interest in hygiene, spas, and assisted weight loss. Once again, Americans imposed a Near Eastern aura on a primarily Western object. This square box had little to do with the cavernous stone arched series of rooms with hot steam, cold water, and teams of bath attendants at the Turkish baths. The woman standing next to the open box in the Sears catalogue illustration wears a slim sarong of unknown origin. Although her dress does not correspond to the clothing worn by Turkish women, it is sufficiently foreign to evoke in the advertisement a sense of the "other".<sup>31</sup> By

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<sup>30</sup> Sears, Roebuck Company Catalogue for Fall 1915, volume 131. Chicago: Sears, Roebuck and Company, 1915: 762.

<sup>31</sup> James Boulden wrote about this inaccurate appropriation of Eastern dress in his book, An American among the Orientals, published in 1855.





ascribing the word "Turkish" to this appliance, Sears made it more appealing to consumers. Customers were given the privilege of feeling that they were expanding their horizons and knowledge of the world without really challenging their way of life.

A comic strip, the Adventures of Peck's Bad Boy, published in 1908, parodied American's interest in the "Turkish bath." A young boy brings his rotund father a "Home Turkish Bath," saying, "Doc Wingert sent this and he says you must take a turkey bath tonight!" The entire family gathers around the box to admire it. Initially, Pa responds positively to his son's query about how it feels: "It's "out o'sight! Just fasten that hasp for me sose to make it feel snug! I feel like a broiled frankfurter!" The animals of the house are quicker to dismiss this appliance than their human companions. A parrot declares that it "smells like glue cooking" and the cat worries that "trouble is coming." Rapidly, the Turkish bath becomes too hot to stand and the lamp inside begins to smoke. After nearly being "cremated," Pa is released from the contraption and doused with water by his son.

That most readers had a basic awareness of Turkish baths is implicit in the story line of this particular comic. Pa's misfortune comically criticized the introduction of these new-fangled contraptions. The cartoon ends with Pa swathed in bandages and lying in bed after his brief interaction with this marvelous new invention. The doctor in attendance recommends that the family "get him to perspire" in order to help him heal. Ironically, getting him to perspire (in order to lose weight) was precisely what the Turkish bath was intended to do in the first place.



### Turkish Tufting and Upholstered Seating

Americans at the end of the nineteenth century began to ascribe the "Turkish" label to nearly anything that they perceived as excessive, luxurious, or encouraging sloth like behavior. Turkish men and women would have found the "Turkish" furniture in figures 2.11 to 2.13 perplexing. Nothing even vaguely resembling these pieces would have been found in a nineteenth-century interior in Turkey. Steel spring frames made these upholstered pieces more comfortable than furniture previously available in the United States. Curiously, S. Karpen and Brothers offered a "rococo suite of parlor furniture," which was "made in the diamond tufted Turkish style of . . . upholstery of the finest workmanship."<sup>32</sup> In 1897, Sears, Roebuck and Company offered a considerably more affordable parlor suite in the Turkish style (see figure 2.11).

A large "Turkish frame sofa" was exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893 (see figure 2.12). Perhaps the most outrageous of these later manifestations of Turko-American design were the leather chairs with elaborate "Turkish tufting" popular in the 1910's. Karpen offered a "Turkish Rocker," which "belonged to the highest type of the Turkish design. The frame is fashioned into shape by hand and is made of high carbon steel wire. The upholstery is . . . perfect in every detail." The bottom of the frame was decorated with fringe which touched the floor. This rocker sold for \$86 in 1906.<sup>33</sup> An even more elaborate arm

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<sup>32</sup> S. Karpen and Brothers. Upholstered Furniture. Chicago: S. Karpen and Brothers, 1906: 12.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid*: 30



chair was constructed specifically for the St. Louis World's Fair, where it "attracted the attention of manufacturers and craftsmen as one of the finest examples of American craftsmanship shown at the Fair."<sup>34</sup>

In 1928, Martha Van Rensselaer included an illustration of a similar, elaborately tufted "Turkish" leather chair in her Manual of Home-Making, classifying it as a "type of furniture ugly in proportion, erratic in line, overdecorated in finish, that should be avoided" (see figure 2.13).<sup>35</sup> Although few people would presumably disagree with Ms. Van Rensselaer's suggestion, her words indicated that at least a few of her readers still retained these chairs in their homes. Van Rensselaer hoped to convince these holdouts to discard them. She offered drawings of different "davenport," a reproduction cricket table, and a tea table as more appropriate household furnishings.<sup>36</sup>

The popularity of Turkish tufting filled many homes with elaborately darted furniture. Hester Poole expressed the widely held concern about the health risks of this type of upholstery: "Avoid purchasing upholstered tufted furniture. It harbors dust and disease germs and is out of date among people gifted with common sense . . . . If there is anything of the kind new, the bamboo or cane chairs are best. Stained brown, black or white, and finished with a cushion, they are fit for any apartment."<sup>37</sup> The popularity of bamboo furniture spread rapidly: for "chairs, divans, settees, stands and tables, cabinets, screen, the tops of chair

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<sup>34</sup> *ibid*: 30.

<sup>35</sup> Martha Van Rensselaer, Flora Rose and Helen Canon. A Manual of Home-Making. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1928: 76.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*: 87.

<sup>37</sup> Hester Poole. "Economy in Decoration." *Household News*, vol III (1895): 42.



railings and dados, as a trim for light wood beds, bureaus and other furnishings, bamboo is superior."<sup>38</sup> Bamboo furniture was incorporated into many "Turkish" interiors and often successfully made the transition into the "modern" decor of American homes in the late 1930s and 1940's, after the cosy corners and smoking alcoves of the previous decades had long been abandoned.

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<sup>38</sup> Hester Poole. "Decorative Notes." *Household News*, vol III (1895): 343.





- 3 -

## TEXTILES AND CARPETS IN TURKISH STYLE INTERIORS

From the Turkey carpets laid across tables in eighteenth-century American portraits and the elaborate drapery and costumes at Paul Poiret's 1002nd Night festivities (see figure 3.1) to the Oriental rugs which adorn many late twentieth-century interiors, textiles have always played a prominent role in the transference of Eastern culture to Western society.<sup>1</sup> In the eighteenth century, the difficulty of manufacturing textiles made them highly valued items in any estate. As the textile industry became increasingly mechanized, textiles became less expensive. In spite of their increased affordability, fabrics retained some of their cultural associations to wealth. Middle-income Americans, who were less able to afford the elaborate woodworking, furniture and other permanent elements of the exotic Islamic style, defined their "Eastern interiors" by adorning their homes with inexpensive fabrics. This chapter explores the ways in which cosy corners, portieres, divan covers, and Oriental rugs were used in American homes. Through these textiles, less affluent Americans were able to emulate the luxurious interiors of the East.

### Cosy Corners

Perhaps the most distinct adaptation of the "Moorish Style" in textiles were the Turkish cosy corners which appeared in both affluent and

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<sup>1</sup> The Poirets hosted their "1002nd Night" festivities in 1911. The evening was widely regarded as the most significant fashion party of its time. Richard Martin and Harold Koda. *Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1995: 12.



humble homes. Cosy corners were generally located, as their name implies, in the corner of a room. A low sofa or divan was often arranged in the corner below a tent-like draping of fabric that created a room within a room. John Stephenson, in Cutting and Draping: A Practical Handbook for Drapers, stressed that "the simple desire for its possession should be no excuse for its introduction in a location where coziness or even comfort would be an impossibility."<sup>2</sup>

Hester Poole, writing in the *Household News* to an audience too poor to patronize the drapers using Stephenson's handbook, suggested that with "half a dozen pillows of various sizes and different colors, square, oblong, and round," and a divan, a resourceful housekeeper could "convert [a] corner into a fascinating nook, especially for the younger members of the family."<sup>3</sup> By emphasizing that the children of the family would particularly enjoy the cosy corner, Poole successfully stripped the cosy corner of all of its subdued sexual innuendoes, thereby making it an appropriate addition to the homes of her readers.

A. G. Morrison illustrated the cosy corner in figure 3.2 in his handbook for decorators and drapers. The John Curtis family added a considerably more modest cosy corner to their parlor in Dorchester, Massachusetts in 1910 and were kind enough to document both the "before" and "after" views of their efforts (see figures 3.3 and 3.4).<sup>4</sup> The Curtis family's cosy corner, complete with wood grille above the portiere

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<sup>2</sup> John W. Stephenson. Cutting and Draping: A Practical Handbook for Upholsterers and Decorators. New York: Clifford and Lawton, 1913: 93.

<sup>3</sup> Poole, vol III: 309.

<sup>4</sup> Katherine Grier. Culture and Comfort: People, Parlors and Upholstery 1850-1930. Rochester, NY: The Strong Museum, 1988: 196, figures 37 and 38.



draperies, replaced a dresser that would have been more appropriate for a bedroom than a parlor.

Hester Poole included a description of a cosy corner in her suggestions for ornamenting a sitting room. She recommended, "in one corner, a triangular, low-cushioned seat, the front slightly rounded, . . . covered with blue corduroy. Overhead it may be draped with the curtain material over a crane-shaped arm fastened to the wall, and looped back at either side, a yard from the floor, making a cosy corner. At one side of it place a low stand, upholding a palm or rubber-tree, or a low screen, and across another corner place the large table, with a low bookcase reaching from mantle to corner."<sup>5</sup>

Poole revisited the cosy corner several months later in a section on decorating "the family room." Straying from a strictly Turkish motif, she recommended "dark-hued Japanese . . . material, adorned with wavy gilt lines, stars, dragons or other conceptions of the curious artists of the 'Land of the Rising Sun'." These fabrics were,

just suited to distinguish such a retreat from the remainder of the room. Should it be large, quite a section might be spaced off by placing a curtain pole across from side to side, about seven feet from the floor. From it suspend a pair of portieres differing in texture and material from the other hangings, but harmonizing in color. At pleasure they may hang perpendicularly or be looped at the sides. <sup>6</sup>

Poole placed a small table within the folds of the portiere, next to the couch and illuminated the space with a modern "Moorish lantern."

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<sup>5</sup> Hester M. Poole. "Answers to Inquirers: Cottage Decorations." *Household News*, vol III. (1895): 165.

<sup>6</sup> Poole, vol III: 309.



In 1888, writing for the generally privileged readers of *The Decorator and Furnisher*, Zella Milhau asserted that "every well ordered home now has its den or cosey (sic) corner, a nook where my lady may sit and sew, or the master in slippers repose, smoke, ponder or read" (see figure 3.5).<sup>7</sup> Milhau maintained that "cosy corners make a most comfortable addition to any room and can be arranged in various ways." Pen and ink illustrations of various arrangements accompany her descriptions of these corners. Her first example was intended for a bachelor's study:

A wide bracket in the shape of a mantelshelf is fixed against the wall, and an ottoman placed beneath, with an easy chair and a small table on either side. The drapery above the bracket is arranged over a brass rod, an Eastern rug taking the place of the looking-glass . . . . To form a corner another Eastern drapery is suspended from a branch of hammered iron, which has a decorative lantern attached. To the right of the ottoman stands a statuette on pedestal against a background of palm fronds.<sup>8</sup>

The backdrop cloth of the cosy corner was generally a plain colored fabric. This plain background accentuated the Nubian head, pipes, chains, crescent stars, "frequently displayed above the divan in a cosy corner."<sup>9</sup>

Mrs. Hughes, whose New York apartment was photographed by Joseph Byron in 1899, added a cosy corner to her predominantly French Empire parlor. The photograph in figure 3.6 illustrated this cosy corner, complete with a divan, enormous pillows, a tabouret table, a banjo, and a

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<sup>7</sup> Zella Milhau. "Home Decoration." *The Decorator and Furnisher*, vol xix, no. 3 (August, 1888): 109.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*: 112.

<sup>9</sup> A.G. Morrison. *Drapery, Interior Decoration and Architecture: A Practical Handbook for the Dealer, Decorator and the Workroom*. New York: T. A. Cawthra & Company, 1906: 22.





small arsenal of Eastern weaponry.<sup>10</sup> Mrs. Hughes presumably derived the composition of her cosy corner from illustrations like figure 3.7, which appeared in Streitenfeld's Decorator's Portfolio, published concurrently in New York and Berlin in 1885.<sup>11</sup>

### Portieres

The Islamic style in America was not defined solely by the cosy corner. Several other key elements of design in fabric were almost as synonymous with the exotic East. The portiere, perhaps the most ubiquitous drapery of the turn of the century, played a prominent and long lasting role in Americans' conception of Eastern interiors. In 1881, at the height of the exotic Islamic rage, Constance Cary Harrison noted that "there is something thoroughly Eastern in the conception of a portiere. The stirring of its stately drapery seems to bring to the senses a waft from 'far Cathay.' Throughout all the glittering phantasmagoria of the Arabian Nights, this curtain plays an important part."<sup>12</sup> In addition to the associations replete in each swishing portiere, its (relative) affordability may account for its lengthy popularity. Harrison went on to point out that, "difficult as it would be for most of us to provide the house fittings mentioned as accompanying the portieres for the Arabian Nights, 'columns of jasper with bases and capitals of purest gold,' 'urns of porphyry and carpets of cloth of gold strewn with precious stones and

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<sup>10</sup> Joseph Byron. New York Interiors at the Turn of the Century. New York: Dover Publishing, 1976: figure 35.

<sup>11</sup> A. & L. Streitenfeld. The Decorator's Portfolio. New York: Hessling and Spielmeyer, 1885.

<sup>12</sup> Constance Cary Harrison. Woman's Handiwork in Modern Homes. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881: 160.



musk and ambergris,' there is no doubt of a [portiere's] picturesque effect in any home."<sup>13</sup>

Many design critics emphasized that portieres were largely intended as a winter decoration. Hester Poole, in her description of a summer parlor stated that "Heavy hangings have long been shaken and packed away, and all the textile fabrics, such as tidies, "throws" and needless draperies stripped from the parlor . . . . To see bright, deep, brilliant colors in midsummer, is to feel warm whether one is or is not."<sup>14</sup>

Portieres were advocated as an easy way to create a comforting space in which people wanted to linger. Zella Milhau described in *Decorator and Furnisher* how many "modern homes" had alcoves in the second floor hallway. She recommended that if this alcove were not being used as a supplemental bedroom, it could be converted into a cosy nook. Portieres could be used to "cut off the alcove from the larger apartment." They functioned as the transition between the more public space into this quiet private space, ornamented with the "Moresque lattice work, now so much in vogue".<sup>15</sup> Constance Cary Harrison reminded her readers that, "the portiere should not repeat the curtains of a room . . . . the tint of the drapery in the doorway may be more vivid, or less so, than the window curtains. But be sure the coloring is controlled by the other decorations of the room."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Harrison: 160.

<sup>14</sup> Hester M. Poole. "Housekeeping: Up Stairs, Down Stairs and in my Lady's Chamber." *Household News*, vol. IV (1896): 276.

<sup>15</sup> Milhau: 111-112.

<sup>16</sup> Harrison: 120.



Ten years after Harrison had praised the use of portieres, Bloomingdale's offered "Turcoman portieres" in garnet, blue, olive, gold, terra-cotta or steel for \$4.25 per pair.<sup>17</sup> Sears, Roebuck and Company first advertised a pair chenille portieres in their 1896 catalogue. The curtains offered by Sears were three yards long with "handsome wide chenille fringe on the top, four inches deep, with chenille tassels on the bottom" and cost \$2.50 per pair. Imported portieres, though the catalogue does not specify from where they were imported, were available for \$3.25 per pair. Only one type of portiere was illustrated in the 1897 catalogue though Sears offered five types. The following year, Sears added another style of portiere and chose to illustrate four of the varieties they offered for sale. The eastern ambiance of these portieres, which had only been implied in the 1896 catalogue, was more fully articulated in the 1897 catalogue where illustrations depicted a pair of tapestry curtains hanging before a room with a low divan (see figure 3.8). An exotic animal rug lay on the floor in front of the divan and a shield with two swords was displayed on the wall behind the divan. This and other illustrations in the catalogue specifically articulated the direct connection between portieres and "Eastern" interiors for readers who might not have otherwise been aware of this design trend. By 1902, Sears, Roebuck offered three pages of "wonderful values in chenille, tapestry, and Oriental curtains." These included "Oriental portieres" for \$5.75 per pair, "ottoman portieres" for \$4.25, and "new

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<sup>17</sup> Bloomingdale Brothers. Illustrated Fashion Catalogue, Spring and Summer 1891. New York: Bloomingdale Brothers, 1891: 79.



handsome 36 inch Bagdad (sic) Draperies," which sold for 15 cents per yard and could be constructed by the consumer (see figure 3.9).<sup>18</sup>

Portieres still maintained a prominent place in the Sears Catalogue of 1915. In fact, most styles offered that year were less expensive than their turn of the century counterparts, with prices ranging from \$1.49 to \$4.75. Although three portiere patterns were advertised in the 1929 Sears catalogue, their prominence as the most fashionable parlor accessory had waned by the 1930s.

The pervasive use of portieres during the second half of the nineteenth century spanned all classes. Even those people who were unable to afford the portieres sold in the Sears Catalogue were given guidance on how to make their own. Almon Varney published a book in 1882 on decorating houses with limited financial resources. He advocated the use of portieres as an element of hospitality. "A beautiful room is far more beautiful when there is no square means of egress suggesting the unpleasant idea of departure. Where, however, the means are limited, one pretty portiere covering, or replacing an ugly door, or curtaining an outside one, gives an air of taste and elegance."<sup>19</sup> Varney emphasized the ease with which these elements of "elegance" could be made with little monetary expenditure. In addition to providing the directions for creating inexpensive portieres, he assured his readers that their homemade efforts at decorating could be tasteful, as well as inexpensive. He related the story of a "friend [who] had a bare, cheap, new cottage. Money was not

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<sup>18</sup> Sears, Roebuck, and Company. Catalogue #111. Chicago: Sears, Roebuck and Company, 1902: 884-886.

<sup>19</sup> Almon Varney. Our Homes and their Adornments. Detroit: J.C. Chilton and Company, 1882: 259.





abundant. Old grandmother-woven indigo-blue woolen blankets were. She began sewing in little figures - stars, crescents, and odd stitches in colored silks - and the woolen blanket became a gorgeous fabric. It was hung with wooden rungs on a length of gilded gas pipe midway in the bare hall, and your first impressions entering were of Eastern richness."<sup>20</sup>

Varney went so far as to recommend that portieres be made of fabric that was useless for any other purpose, "though the temptation is great to cut up what might be turned to better account."<sup>21</sup> Varney suggested that both portieres and curtains could be made "out of old silk rag carpets, yes!, nothing more or less. Old silks, even soiled and faded, are cut in strips as for carpet and either woven with cotton warp, or better still knitted upon fine ivory needles in stripes and tastefully joined together."<sup>22</sup>

Twenty-five years after Almon Varney suggested making portieres out of fabric scraps, Clara Laughlin offered suggestions on how women could sew their own portieres. Laughlin, a leader in the emerging field of domestic science and an advocate for lower-middle-class women, published The Complete Home in 1907, which offered advice to housewives on the maintenance and inexpensive decoration of their homes. She maintained that the portieres made from "plain goods in dull, soft greens, blues and browns with conventional designs in appliqué or outlining, are not only inexpensive but artistic to a high degree and are easily fashioned by home talent."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> *ibid*: 260.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid*: 261.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*: 261.

<sup>23</sup> Clara Laughlin, editor. The Complete Home. New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1907: 250.



The large Oriental textile portieres, whether purchased from a dealer, the Sears Catalogue, or homemade, were soon joined in American homes by portieres in materials even more tenuously linked to their Eastern design sources than the fabric portieres. Portieres made of velvet cord, known as "rope portieres" were added to the Sears Catalogue in 1900 (see figure 3.10). Sears offered this sampling of alternative portieres in 1915: "hand made leather portieres or mission draperies"; "strictly Mission style . . . beautiful California Leather drapery"; and "a leather portiere specially designed to meet the demands of the modern home."<sup>24</sup> Sears also offered a red and green rope portiere for 87 cents in the Christmas section of the 1925 Catalogue.<sup>25</sup> Hester Poole described several of these new types of portieres to her readers:

Bamboo and bead portieres as a rule, are about three yards long, though some are made shorter. For five dollars one can be procured that is made entirely of beads, either with colored on a white ground or *vice versa*.<sup>26</sup>

Clara Laughlin disapproved of these alternative portieres: "Beaded, bamboo, and rope affairs are neither draperies nor curtain, graceful, useful, nor ornamental, and care consequently not to be considered."<sup>27</sup>

Hester Poole suggested in the *Household News* that her financially-limited readers decorate their portieres by sewing one foot of fish netting to the bottom of portieres and tying small silk tassels to the bottom of the

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<sup>24</sup> Sears, Roebuck, and Company. Catalogue #131. Chicago: Sears, Roebuck and Company, 1915: 1017.

<sup>25</sup> Sears, Roebuck and Company. Catalogue. Chicago: Sears, Roebuck and Company, 1925: 505.

<sup>26</sup> Poole. "Homekeeping: Up Stairs, Down Stairs and in my Lady's Chamber." *Household News*, vol IV (1896): 276.

<sup>27</sup> Laughlin: 257.



netting. The dark recesses of a room could be enlivened with "two or three rows of those cheap, brass sequins sold at trimming shops, [which] would illuminate the portiere of a dark room." She also recommended that "when a dark hanging is used in a dark room, it can be enlivened by edging the trimming with a row of small Turkish coins."<sup>28</sup> Poole asserted that many of her cost cutting measures resulted in better products than those available for sale, perhaps to give her readers the impression that through their own handiwork, they were creating more tasteful interiors. She maintained that "Bagdad portieres and couch covers have been so popular that the latter weaves are exceedingly flimsy and coarse." Sears Roebuck offered a wide variety of Bagdad portieres and couch covers in their catalogues until the mid 1930's. Poole suggested that her readers acquire one of these portieres and some "common narrow grey crash." By ripping the portiere into bands and sewing it onto "any plain coarse cotton or woolen stuff". . . "[t]he stripes may then be made into beautiful borders for plain portieres. Although the stripes are of different colors, the effect is better than if the edges were all alike."<sup>29</sup> This technique would allow a frugal housewife to ornament all of the doorways and windows of her house with the purchase of only one pair of Bagdad portieres.

#### Divan and Couch Covers

Tapestry couch covers were used to cover old and frayed couches as well as to augment the room's ornamental decor. Imported couch covers were constructed of strips of fabric in different colors, which were subsequently sewn together. Couch covers were initially imported from

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<sup>28</sup> *ibid*: 612, 660.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid*: 613.



the Near East but as they became harder to find, companies like John Pray, Bloomingdales and Sears all began offering couch covers reproduced in domestic mills. The domestic cover in figure 3.11 is one piece of cloth; the stitching along the bands was meant to imitate an imported cover which had been pieced together. In 1906, John H. Pray and Sons offered Artloom Tapestry curtains, which could also be used as couch covers, in Roman and Baghdad stripes for between \$1.50 and \$2.50 (see figure 3.12).<sup>30</sup> A five dollar reversible, "rich and heavy couch cover . . . of eastern design . . . is just the thing for a cosy corner, library, or living room . . . A cover thrown over an old couch gives to the surroundings an air of luxury."<sup>31</sup> Sears, Roebuck and Company devoted two pages of the 1915 catalogue to Oriental couch covers which ranged in price from \$1.25 to \$4.25.<sup>32</sup> The *Ladies Home Journal* encouraged its middle-income readers to subscribe by offering "the pearl rug-maker" to a "club of five yearly subscribers." This 75 cent contraption was advertised as "the easiest and most economical process ever invented for making rag-and Turkish rugs, Ottoman and Furniture covers and Cloak trimmings."<sup>33</sup>

### Oriental Rugs

Oriental rugs were (and are) the last vestige of this style to figure prominently in American interiors. They were among the first objects imported into Europe in the 15th century. Despite the continued preference for imported rugs, most nineteenth-century Americans were

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<sup>30</sup> John H. Pray, *Rug and Carpet Book*, catalogue no. 31. Boston: John H. Pray and Sons Company, 1906: 54.

<sup>31</sup> Pray: 54.

<sup>32</sup> Sears, Roebuck and Company. *Catalogue # 131*. 1915: 1017-1018.

<sup>33</sup> "The Pearl Rug-Maker." *Ladies Home Journal*. (June 1890): 33.





unable to afford them. Consequently, machine woven rugs became quite popular. In 1906, John Pray and Sons offered the Waverly Wiltons in figure 3.13, which were based on Oriental designs and the Temple Brussels carpets in figure 3.14, which recall Islamic prayer rugs.<sup>34</sup>

Hester Poole reassured her readers that, "if an Oriental rug is too expensive, then an American Smyrna, 9x12, will be sufficiently large for a room 16x16."<sup>35</sup> Sears, Roebuck and Company, that arbiter of struggling middle-class taste, offered small "Smyrna Rugs" for \$1.08 in their 1897 catalogue (see figure 3.15).<sup>36</sup> In the event that readers did not associate "Smyrna" with the port in Asia Minor, the advertisement was accompanied by an illustration of a wise old man wearing an enormous fez and a Turkish vest, kneeling on the Smyrna rug in prayer.<sup>37</sup> In a section devoted to the variety of reproduction Orientals, Poole offered her readers suggestions on the choice of colors and patterns among the imitation Daghestan carpeting, the Wiltons with "designs on sombre (sic) ground, and Moorish figures in geometrical designs," and the "medium dark carpetings" which mimic the "dull coloring of Turkish rugs."<sup>38</sup>

Poole acknowledged the debt that the Western world owed to the East for elevating American design standards via these imported rugs. She "rejoiced in the popularization of [Oriental] patterns, as they are the

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<sup>34</sup> Pray: 3.

<sup>35</sup> Hester Poole. "Answers to Inquirers: Cottage Decorations." *Household News*, vol III. (1895): 164.

<sup>36</sup> Fred L. Israel, editor. *1897 Sears, Roebuck Catalogue*. New York: Chelsea house Publishers, 1968.

<sup>37</sup> Smyrna, now Izmir, is a large port city on the Turkish coast, south of Istanbul.

<sup>38</sup> Israel: 745.



educators for our people."<sup>39</sup> A.G. Morrison shared Hester Poole's opinion on Oriental rugs. He believed that "the Oriental rug will give the finishing touch to a room, even if of American manufacture . . . . I believe in using the constructive and decorative ideas of older nations to the advancement of our own civilization. It will take centuries of investigation to exhaust the reservoirs of Oriental art."<sup>40</sup>

*Art Amateur* lamented the arrival of the "British Civilizer" into Turkey, who brought with him a "various array of aniline abominations."<sup>41</sup> These dyes threatened to destroy the "tradition of Eastern carpet makers."<sup>42</sup> Americans in the post-industrial world were nostalgically drawn to hand-made Oriental carpets. Hester Poole asserted that, "no machine work can ever vie with that handwork."<sup>43</sup> *Art Amateur* maintained that "the Oriental rug [was] a product of Eastern life . . . . the religion of the people became the impulse and guiding spirit of the deft women's fingers, that spread the knotted mystic cover in the homes and shrines of the Orient."<sup>44</sup> While celebrating the handicrafts of what they believed to be a pre-industrial nation, Americans also celebrated their own advanced culture.

Even after machine woven carpeting became available, design critics encouraged people to purchase an "authentic" Oriental rug. Charles Locke Eastlake asserted that he preferred Oriental rugs which emerged

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<sup>39</sup> Poole, vol III: 744.

<sup>40</sup> Morrison: 24.

<sup>41</sup> "Turkey Carpets." *Art Amateur*, vol xiii, no. 4 (March, 1886): 90.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Hester Poole. "Home Decoration-How to Beautify the Home-Rugs of Various Kinds." *Household News*, vol II (1894): 370.

<sup>44</sup> *Art Amateur*, vol xxiii, no. 1 (January, 1889): 51.



from the individual ability of the weaver, rather than the mass-produced oriental carpets produced by a machine.<sup>45</sup> Eastlake, a prosperous and well-educated Englishman, distinguished the expensive (and therefore more stylish) hand-woven Oriental rugs from more affordable mass-produced rugs. Eastlake surreptitiously focused on the craftsmanship of the rugs rather than their prices to differentiate these rugs. The expense of hand-woven Oriental rugs prohibited most people from acquiring them. Affluent members of society, terrified of losing their positions of superiority, needed only to deem the most expensive versions of any object as the trendiest, thereby keeping the middle-class forever at bay.

In 1881, Ella Rodman Church offered advice on how to furnish a home in her book of the same title. She acknowledged the basic connection between the Oriental rug and the exotic Islamic or Turkish style which emerged in American homes at the time. She discouraged the installation of wall to wall carpeting because the individualization of a carpet for a room frequently made it useless in a different space. She also advocated a "large square, or oblong rug, showing all around it a yard or so of dark polished floor. A bordering of inlaid woodwork is very pretty, and not much more expensive than first class Brussels carpet. Such a floor-covering has a sort of old-time and Eastern look about it."<sup>46</sup> A column in *Art Amateur* on "suggestions for an Oriental room" recommended that "if detached Persian rugs are to be used, the floor should be first covered

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<sup>45</sup> Charles Locke Eastlake. Hints on Household Taste, cited in Victorian Interior Decoration: American Interiors 1830-1900, by Gail Caskey Winkler and Roger W. Moss. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1986: 153.

<sup>46</sup> Ella Rodman Church. How to Furnish a Home. New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1881: 53.



with a good Indian red matting, or if that be considered too bold, a sombre-colored ingrain carpet, without design, or a felt."<sup>47</sup>

The Oriental rug was retained in many homes even after people had abandoned all of the other design elements discussed in this thesis. Ironically the first metaphor for the East to enter Western homes remains the only vestige of this style to be found in American homes today.

### John Stephenson's *Drapers' Catalogue: 1913 and 1926*

Tracking the dissemination of any style is difficult when comparing dated material from sources which were created for different audiences. An extremely fashionable text geared toward an elite audience bore little resemblance to the Sears Catalogue published the same year. Editions of a drapers' handbook published by John Stephenson in 1913 and again in 1926, invite a unique comparison of how the "Turkish style" changed over the intervening years. These books were presumably intended for similar audiences and reflect the interests of a specific body of Americans during those years.

The 1913 edition of John Stephenson's Cutting and Draping: a Practical Handbook included a section on "interior groupings, cosy corners, and wall hangings." Stephenson advised his readers that cosy corners were "applicable and suitable in almost every room of the house." He emphasized that care should be taken in placing the cosy corner in an appropriate space. "A cosy seat should never be placed in a position where its presence would cause a nuisance, as its atmosphere is retiring, it should occupy the least conspicuous position. It is not intended as a single seat,

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<sup>47</sup> "The Decoration of Our Homes, vii: Suggestions for an Oriental Room," *Art Amateur*, vol. xiv, no. 5 (April, 1887): 110.





and should therefore be fairly commodious but not oppressively large."<sup>48</sup> Stephenson offered suggestions on the color of these cosy seats and included a variety of ink drawings of simple tufted seats and benches. The drawing with the most overt references to the East illustrated a low couch piled with pillows. Four swords were arranged on the wall behind the couch and a canopy of fabric over the couch was constructed out of "two scarf draperies and a pair of curtains."<sup>49</sup> Although this edition still retained a section on cosy corners, few of the drawings bore any resemblance to the elaborately draped, festooned, and armored cosy corners of the 1890s.

Stephenson eliminated the entire section on wall hangings and cosy corners from the 1926 edition. The designs in general are much crisper and more modern than those in the 1913 edition. Curiously, the "Turkish style" resurfaced in a different section of the second addition. A bed canopy which had been described in the 1913 edition as a "French Canopy," was enlarged and labeled in the 1926 edition as a "Turkish Canopy . . . which adapts itself very readily to the decoration of some simple types of beds."<sup>50</sup> This elaborate ornamentation with fabrics demanded that much of the furniture in the room be comparatively simple. The onion dome of the canopy and the author's residual interest in the Near East may have inspired the alteration of the canopy's title.

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<sup>48</sup> John W. Stephenson. Cutting and Draping: A Practical Handbook for Upholsterers and Decorators. New York: Clifford & Lawton, 1913: 93.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid*: 93, figure 136.

<sup>50</sup> John W. Stephenson. Drapery Cutting and Making: A Practical Handbook for Drapery Workers, Upholsterers, and Interior Decorators. New York: Clifford & Lawton, 1926: 76.



### The Demise of the Cosy Corner

By the turn of the century, wealthy and fashion-conscious Americans had ceased to "Islamicize" their interiors, preferring instead the sparser Colonial Revival and Arts and Crafts interiors featured in the new women's magazines like *House Beautiful* and *House and Garden*. These publications replaced the many out-dated and limping or defunct women's magazines of the nineteenth century.

In the early years of the twentieth century, many writers on interior decoration were critical of the opulence of Victorian interiors. The lingering popularity of the cosy corner among middle-class Americans was perhaps best proven by frequent and vehement denunciations of it after the turn of the century. Critics rarely felt compelled to condemn design trends adopted by a minority of the population. One of the most scathing of these critiques appeared in *The Practical Handbook of Interior Decoration*, published in 1919. After a relatively emotionless history of the evolution of interior design, the authors devoted an entire chapter to bombasting the "Nineteenth Century Episodes and After."

By their standards, all design for nearly a century had been thoroughly offensive: "After about 1830, architecture, furniture design and the practice of decorative furnishing slumped into a dismal vale of barrenness or of revolting vulgarities and simpering inanities, a deplorable state with almost no bright spots at all to relieve the artificiality, dreariness, and stupidity." After ridiculing Gothic Revival and the Empire Style, they tackled, "the still more atrocious whimsicalities of the Centennial fashion with bird-box masses and details that were a most



unhappy medley derived from Gothic tracery, Moorish fretwork, and Hamburg edging."<sup>51</sup> The cosy corner was given individual attention later in the text of this roasting. In a section on "other decorative accessories and moveable decoration," they maintained that "this dreary period of progressive horrors . . . reached its culmination in the Turkish cosy corner with all the grotesque and inappropriate accompaniments thereto appertaining."<sup>52</sup>

As the industrial revolution made a wide variety of goods more accessible to middle-income Americans, differentiating oneself as a member of the elite became more complicated. In the conclusion of The Practical Book of Interior Decoration, the authors betray their anxiety over class consciousness through their interpretation of nineteenth-century design failure.

One cause, perhaps, for all the dreary, expensive banality and lack of either humanity or a modicum of taste was the fact that it was a period of preeminently material prosperity and rapid accumulation of wealth which brought to the fore a vast crowd of *nouveaux riches* who had neither the knowledge nor traditions back of them to impel them to better things.<sup>53</sup>

The elite abandoned design styles and fashions almost as soon as they were adopted by Americans with more limited incomes. Industrialization of the textile industry allowed lower-middle and middle-income Americans to copy wealthy Americans more quickly than they had ever

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<sup>51</sup> Harold Donaldson Eberlein, Abbot McClure and Edward Stratton Holloway. The Practical Book of Interior Decoration. Philadelphia and London: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1919: 173.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*: 175.



been able to do before. Loath to be mistaken for middle-class Americans, upper-class Americans were forced to develop new and increasingly complex ways to differentiate themselves. The concept of "authenticity" assumed an increasingly important role because of its usefulness in, often arbitrarily, differentiating those "in the know" from the masses. A.G. Morrison asked the rhetorical question, "What kind of a cosy corner can you get for \$7.98? The first corner I ever saw, about fifteen years ago [circa 1890], was upholstered in hair and springs and cost \$60 at retail." He criticized the, "unscrupulous dealers who try to cheapen everything and thereby kill the sale of respectable stuff."<sup>54</sup> Asserting that the simple act of developing inexpensive varieties of fashionable goods would invariably destroy their stylishness, conveniently allowed wealthy Americans to dismiss more affordable mass-produced goods.

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<sup>54</sup> Morrison: 22.





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### A "FABULOUS SECRET ROOM"

The Moorish Study of Dr. Joseph Jastrow

One of the most interesting manifestations of a Turkish interior in a modest American home survived until the mid 1970's in the attic of a house in Madison, Wisconsin. Joseph Jastrow, who was a professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin, and his wife, Rachel Jastrow, built the four story house on Langdon Street in 1892. Jastrow and several assistants spent almost twenty years constructing a Moorish private study on the top floor of the house. Jastrow's comparatively limited financial situation and his identity as a recently immigrated Polish Jew denied him a place in the blue-blooded bastions of society. Yet, as an intellectual and a highly educated leader in his field, Jastrow's Moorish study differed from the many Turkish interiors created in American homes with purchases from Sears, Bloomingdales and the bazaars at the World's Columbian Exposition. Like Boas and Putnam, the heads of the Department of Ethnology and Archaeology at the World's Columbian Exposition, Jastrow was concerned with the accuracy of his recreated interior. He filled his study with "authentic" woodwork, fabrics, lamps and furniture gathered in the Near East.

Joseph Jastrow had immigrated to the United States from Poland with his parents in 1869. His father, who was a rabbi, assumed the leadership of the Rodeph Shalom congregation upon his arrival in



Philadelphia. Joseph Jastrow received both his undergraduate degree and master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania. In 1886, he earned his doctorate at Johns Hopkins University, becoming the first recipient of a Ph.D. in psychology from that institution.<sup>1</sup>

In 1888, Jastrow married Rachel Szold, the daughter of a Baltimore rabbi. Together, they moved to Madison, Wisconsin, where Jastrow became the first professor of experimental and comparative psychology at the University. They remained in Wisconsin until Rachel Jastrow's death in 1927, when Jastrow returned to the East coast to work at the New School for Social Research in New York. He retired in 1933 and died in 1944, at the age of 79.<sup>2</sup>

While in Wisconsin, the Jastrows built a comfortable and spacious home, which they named the Altruria, at 237 Langdon Street. They had initially lived in a small apartment provided by the University. They chose to build the house on Langdon Street because Joseph Jastrow "had a penchant for entertaining - both because he enjoyed it and because it was essential for advancement."<sup>3</sup> However, after living in the house for several years, the Jastrows determined that the house was too large for them. The couple chose to renovate the house into a series of apartments because it was "far too large for a childless couple and far too expensive to maintain on a professor's salary."<sup>4</sup> They proceeded to convert the first two

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<sup>1</sup> Unpublished biography of Joseph Jastrow. Mss 276 in the Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Alexandra Lee Levin. "U. Co-ed Finds Uncle's Moorish Den is Still Fantastic." *The Capitol Times* (Madison, Wisconsin), May 4, 1962. In File 2808, Sound and Visual Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*



floors into apartments for rent, reserving the third floor and the attic for their own use.

Despite Jastrow's primary interest in psychology, he was also an amateur architect and interior designer. Jastrow recounted the process of the renovation in an article he wrote for *House Beautiful* in 1909: "A Top-Floor Apartment: An Amateur Adventure." Referring to himself in the third person as "the Professor," Jastrow asserted that he had "just enough skill of hand and knowledge of processes to be able to appreciate the possibilities of things. He also [had] some amateur notions in regard to matters architectural and decorative."<sup>5</sup> Jastrow hired a professional architect to ensure that his proposed changes were structurally sound, but designed all of the aesthetic changes to the space himself. He transformed the third floor into an apartment consisting of a reception room, study, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, and three bedrooms.<sup>6</sup>

Pen and ink drawings and photographs included in the article illustrated many of the unique additions to the apartment. Jastrow maintained that the candlebrum and wrought iron fixtures had "originally - some two hundred years ago or more - dimly illuminated some castle wall in the north of England."<sup>7</sup> Each of the rooms in the apartment were decorated in a different style. The dining room suggested a seventeenth-century Dutch interior with the tiles around the fireplace mantle and the tiles on floor of the adjoining conservatory. The reception

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<sup>5</sup> Joseph Jastrow. "A Top-Floor Apartment: An Amateur Adventure." Reprinted with additional illustrations from *House Beautiful*, August 1909: 4. In File 2808, Sound and Visual Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*: 6.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*: 17.



room was decorated in the French Empire Style, though, "the ceiling is a solid Japanese gilt paper-cloth."<sup>8</sup> Jastrow regarded the fireplace in the study as the "center of all family and social life." He designed a mantle for the fireplace in the study which incorporated the panels of a Germanic blanket chest from 1780.<sup>9</sup>

Jastrow only made a passing reference to the component of the renovation with the most lasting interest for our purposes. He stated that "it should be noted that the apartment has an extension in a commodious attic under the roof."<sup>10</sup> He spoke briefly about the ladder which provided the only access to the attic space and about the skylight in the roof which illuminated both the attic and the third floor passageway. The attic study was meant to provide a place "to which the Professor may retire when he desires a retreat from the life of the apartment."<sup>11</sup> This seemingly straightforward description of the attic belied the wondrous alterations which Jastrow had undertaken in his private retreat for study and relaxation.

Further hints of the Eastern oasis in the attic were found on a standardized invitation to tea with the Jastrows which survives in the collection of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. This card, with blanks for the appropriate date and time, states that "a cup of tea and a welcome await you at The Studio." A pen and ink drawing illustrates the 1780 chest-fireplace mantle which was ornamented with a menorah and a

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<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*: 13.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*: 7,9.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*: 23.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*





fringed shawl. A steaming teapot rests on a small tabouret table, which stands in front of a low divan with pillows.<sup>12</sup>

Two newspaper articles from 1953 and 1954 and a series of photographs taken in the early 1960's document the surprisingly unchanged interior. The "Fabulous Secret Room" was described in 1953 as "one of the most beautiful and unusual rooms on this continent."<sup>13</sup> Despite these rather hyperbolic assertions, Jastrow's private study was certainly one of the most elaborate exotic Islamic interiors in the United States to survive long after the penchant for decorating in the Moorish style had passed.

The ladder to the attic from the third floor provided access to a hallway which was "six feet wide and twenty feet long, where soft lights glowed behind delicately carved walnut walls and pierced brass hanging lamps shed a soft glow on a silver ceiling painted in a blue and green design."<sup>14</sup> All of the walls were ornamented with elaborately tooled wood panelling; many sections were inlaid with mother of pearl (see figures 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3). The skylight in the hallway resembled a sunset and was purportedly copied from an Egyptian skylight in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Electric lights behind the latticed wall-carvings enhanced the glow of the skylight on gray days and at night. Both ends of the hall were dominated by a pair of doors. In a letter written in

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<sup>12</sup> Invitation in File 2808, Sound and Visual Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

<sup>13</sup> "Fabulous Secret Room in Home Here." *The Capitol Times*. (Madison, Wisconsin), February 19, 1953. The Sound and Visual Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, folder 2808: unpaginated.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*



1932, Jastrow explained that he had designed the hallway to represent the division between men's and women's spaces in a "Moorish house."<sup>15</sup> Despite his desire to create the two distinct spaces implied by these doors, space in the attic was limited. One set of these doors was false; the other set opened into the main room of the floor. One wonders which space, the *haremlik* or the *salemlik*, Jastrow envisioned entering each time he passed through the doorway.

The room beyond the doors was a square room, eighteen feet wide. A large dome dominated the otherwise low ceiling of the room (see figure 4.4). The dome was painted green and blue on silver leaf like the ceiling in the hall, but was also ornamented with inlaid mother of pearl. Jastrow claimed that most of the woodwork incorporated in the interior was imported from Syria for an "Oriental shop" in New York City. He hired F. Furman Martin, a student at the University of Wisconsin, and an assistant to carve the additional woodwork.<sup>16</sup> In her hand-written annotations to a published article about the renovations, Martin's daughter asserted that her father had carved nearly all of the woodwork in the attic himself.<sup>17</sup>

Sally Levin, Jastrow's grandniece visited the house in 1961 and found the "Moorish room" still largely intact. Levin took the photographs in figures 4.3 and 4.5 during this visit. She described the room in a letter to her parents: "The walls are all inlaid with mother-of-pearl in lovely designs, while the door is carved in elaborate detail. Behind the carved wood is red paper and when Mrs. Blank [the present occupant] turned on

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<sup>15</sup> Correspondence quoted in "Fabulous 'Secret Room' in Home Here.": unpaginated.

<sup>16</sup> "Fabulous 'Secret Room' in Home Here.": unpaginated.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*



the lights behind the panel, it glowed through the interstices in the wood."<sup>18</sup> A professor from Baghdad visited the house in 1961 with Sally Levin. The professor was able to read many of the Arabic inscriptions painted on the hallway ceiling and on some of the wall panelling in the attic study. Although the phrases were in an archaic script, the professor translated many of them for Levin: "Work is like a fruit . . . . The fruit of wisdom is rest the fruit of money is anxiety . . . . Science is like a seed."<sup>19</sup>

Grille work was applied to the three windows of the main room in the attic to create the impression that the room had six small ogee-bracketed windows. Brass lamps were hung on the wall between each of these "windows." Many of the niches contained shelves for Jastrow's collection of *objet d'art*. Several benches lined the walls of the room, reminiscent of the wall divans in Turkish homes. Long couch pillows in blue, red and yellow striped fabric covered the benches (see figure 4.5). The wooden benches themselves were "ornamented with an elaborately inlaid floral pattern in which the flowers are of pearl or ivory and the leaves and stems are either silver or pewter."<sup>20</sup>

Jastrow designed a table reminiscent of the ubiquitous tabouret table for the center of the room, based on tables that he had seen in Cairo. The table opened to reveal inclosed seats and a dining surface. One of the walls of the study contained a recessed niche which resembled an altar. Jastrow used the exterior to store books and art objects. Alexandra Levin, Jastrow's

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<sup>18</sup> Correspondence from Sally Levin to her parents, 1961, quoted in Lee Levin: unpaginated.

<sup>19</sup> Lee Levin: unpaginated.

<sup>20</sup> Correspondence from Sally Levin to her parents, 1961, quoted in Lee Levin: unpaginated.



niece, explained that the altar could be opened with a crank "to reveal the professor's constantly used typewriter."<sup>21</sup>

Jastrow intended for the study in the attic to be a quiet work space for himself as well as a place to display some of the objects that he had collected around the world. In addition to the objects that Jastrow had acquired on his own journeys, he enlisted the help of his brother-in-law, Louis Levin. In 1915, Levin travelled to Palestine with a food supply boat to support people impoverished during the Second World War.<sup>22</sup> Jastrow wrote Levin on March 3, 1915, expressing his best wishes for the journey, but articulating in great detail the specific design elements he hoped that his brother-in-law could acquire for him while there:

What I need most of all is tiles; and if you get old ones you are safe. They will be dominantly in blues, relieved by turquoise shades; yellows may enter but sparingly. I doubt whether you will find any reds in them; at all events they should be avoided. The real Damascus antiques reflect the Persian and Rhodesian patterns. These are dear and rare, and I do not hope for them. You may find one or two at a bargain probably broken but if not too seriously, still valuable (sic) Provided the colors are as in the old, I would take the new. Large, bold designs should be avoided. Delicate, small ones simple rather than intricate are desired."<sup>23</sup>

He requested about 150 tiles for a total of between \$15 to \$30. Desiring to take advantage of the difficult financial situation of the area during the war, Jastrow pointed out that "there is really very little demand for this sort of thing and money is scarce. So there is really a chance for a great find . . . . You will doubtless meet some one who will have to take a week and

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<sup>21</sup> Lee Levin: unpaginated.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Correspondence from Joseph Jastrow to Louis Levin, March 3, 1915. In File 2808, Sound and Visual Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.





use up a Koran of argument in getting them, but such is life for a long-lived people."<sup>24</sup> After more discussion of the types of tile patterns he sought, Jastrow concluded the letter with a different request. "I don't want any knickknacks but good old big (not too big) things for little money. My room is dominantly Moorish; but that tradition goes back to Damascus, so that you tap it at its source."<sup>25</sup> He justified the introduction of inaccurate objects from Damascus into his Moorish interior by stressing Moorish culture's origins in the Middle East. Although it is unknown whether Levin was able to acquire any tiles or other ornamental features for Jastrow's attic on his journey, this letter articulated Jastrow's concern for some measure of "authenticity" in the interior he was constructing in Wisconsin.

The Jastrows apparently did not regularly entertain in this space. However, they did provide private viewings for several well known artists, including Albert Herter (1871-1950) and Edward Blashfield (1863-1942), prominent muralists, and the architect, Ralph Adams Cram (1848-1936). Cram was presumably intrigued by the interior. More than twenty-five years before his visit to Jastrow's retreat, he published an article on "A Smoking Alcove" in *The Decorator and Furnisher*. Despite Cram's general aversion to the "system of decorating a room in some particular style," he conceded that "giving a distinct Oriental character to this alcove" was only a "superficial" sin, "[so] long as the character of the nineteenth century is preserved."<sup>26</sup> Cram asserted that the Near Eastern

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<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Ralph A. Cram. "A Smoking Alcove." *The Decorator and Furnisher*,



style was ideal for a smoking room because, "one always associates Orientalism with a luxurious smoke and because an Oriental atmosphere is the most conducive to rest and drowsiness."<sup>27</sup>

Like Frederick Church, Jay Gould, and Frederick Lauterbach, the Jastrows incorporated elaborate elements of the exotic Islamic style in their home at the turn of the century.<sup>28</sup> Although the Jastrows were quite well educated and were prominent members of the University community, they were firmly entrenched in the upper echelons of the intellectual Middle Class in the United States. Madison, Wisconsin was only emerging as a Midwest center of culture during the Jastrow's occupation.

Rachel Jastrow, like her husband, moved in the intellectual circles of Madison. Although some socially prominent women participated in the women's suffrage movement, it was primarily orchestrated and fueled by white middle-class women, aspiring to increased power and mobility for women in the American social hierarchy. Rachel Jastrow annotated a photograph taken in 1915 of herself in an open auto with a "Vote for Women" banner draped across the back with these words: "this happened last Spring. I promise not to do it again altho (sic) matters are getting lively out here and great pressure is brought to bear!"<sup>29</sup>

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vol. viii, no. 3 (June 1886): 78.

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> The Moorish Hall at Jay Gould's Manhattan home was highlighted in an article in *The Decorator and Furnisher* in July, 1883. Joseph Byron photographed the "Islamic" hall in Edward Lauterbach's house at 2 East 78th Street in 1899. In *New York Interiors at the Turn of the Century*. Text by Clay Lancaster. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1976.

<sup>29</sup> Loose photograph of Rachel Szold Jastrow, 1915. File 2808 in the Photoarchives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.



Financially, professionally, and socially, the Jastrows were members of the Middle Class. Yet, they were members of the intellectual elite of the United States. They also vacationed in Bar Harbor, Maine, the summer residence of some of the leading families of the nation. The Jastrows rented an old farm house from Mrs. J. Pierpont Morgan on Mt. Desert Island in Bar Harbor during the summers of 1924 and 1925. Jastrow converted the barn on the property into a second "Moorish fantasy," though this barn was destroyed by fire during the 1940s.<sup>30</sup> Their desire to rent property during the summer on an island frequented by many of the wealthiest families in America further supports the assertion that the Jastrows were responding to the tastes of the elite in nearly every aspect of their lives.

The Jastrows' adaptation of the attic in the house in Madison, Wisconsin was a direct attempt to create a leisured space or at least the impression of leisure within their largely regulated lifestyle. Jastrow's interest in creating an accurate Moorish interior is both a function of his role as an intellectual and his overriding Victorian concern with identifying design styles by their "original" sources.

Jastrow's elaborate interior was lovingly created with the same intentions that had driven Frederick Church to build Olana, an intense interest in the Near East and a desire to illustrate one's worldliness. Art journals published articles in the 1880s and 1890s on interiors like Jastrow's study, but Jastrow did not begin work on his Eastern interior

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<sup>30</sup> Alexandra Lee Levin. Correspondence to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. December 11, 1962. In File 2808, Sound and Visual Archives of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.



until after the 1907 renovation of the house. Over seven years later, Jastrow was still working on the rooms, as evidenced by the solicitation of his brother-in-law for imported goods. Jastrow apparently did not consider the room finished when he left Madison in 1927. Even when Jastrow began the installation in 1907, the crest of the Islamic design wave had already fallen. Jastrow was imitating the interior decorating trends of the American elite twenty years after they had abandoned these ideas in favor of the Arts and Crafts Movement and the Colonial Revival. Although the product of Jastrow's labor resembled the opulent interiors of the 1880s more closely than the middle-income manifestations of the Turkish style, the construction of this interior in the first quarter of the twentieth century warranted its inclusion in this thesis.





## CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to illustrate the lengthy and widespread popularity of the Turkish style among middle-income American families in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Smoking rooms and cosy corners were the most common elements of the Turkish style in American homes. They also represent the most prominent elements in the American public's imagination of life in Turkey: the *salemlik* and the *haremlik*, the segregated spaces in Turkish homes. Smoking rooms became an American *salemlik* and cosy corners became an American *haremlik*. Western men were forbidden to enter the harems of the East, but they could sit on divans in cosy corners in their own homes in Buffalo or San Francisco or Philadelphia. These cosy corners represented the exotic, impenetrable Eastern spaces, and their (more) accessible wives represented the completely inaccessible odalisques of the harem. By replicating these themes in their own homes, Americans could experience places that they would never be able to visit.

Lucy Garnett approved of the appropriation of Eastern design ideals for use in Western interiors. She explained that "native costume and native furniture, no less than native architecture and art, however rich and varied in colour and material, never offend a cultured eye when used in accordance with time honored customs, as evidenced by our appreciation of Oriental embroideries, carpets, and textile fabrics generally."<sup>1</sup> In other words, European and American incorporation of

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<sup>1</sup> Garnett: 264.



Eastern textiles in their homes was perfectly tasteful. Although Americans were comfortable utilizing other cultures' designs in their own interiors, many disapproved of Eastern interiors which incorporated elements of Western design. Garnett wrote about the tasteless and unfortunate manner in which Turks were marring the interiors of their homes by incorporating Western design elements. She described American stovepipes in a Turkish interior as "unsightly."

Garnett did not credit the Eastern eye with the same ability for tasteful incorporation of Western crafts, ridiculing the Turkish home where, "crimson is trimmed with scarlet, and pink with violet; shabby chintz hangs side by side a rug "made in Germany," and representing a dog or a lion, [that] is spread side by side with a silken carpet of almost priceless value."<sup>2</sup> Garnett implied with these words that Turkish homes often contained what she, with her Western artistic sensibility, would deem a "priceless" rug. She believed that the Turkish families who owned them were unable to recognize the beauty of these objects because the "priceless pieces" were such a part of their cultural tradition. Garnett asserted that when Turks purchased Western goods they chose the least tasteful objects and used them inappropriately (from a Western perspective.) According to this biased theory, the ancient cultural tradition of the Turkish people bequeathed them with beautiful objects automatically, but if they were forced to choose new and non-traditional types of goods, their lack of inherent "taste" was apparent. Garnett maintained that this lack of taste was also visible among Turkish women

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<sup>2</sup> Garnett: 265.



who abandoned their traditional clothing for "what are too often ludicrous and lamentable travesties of Parisian fashions."<sup>3</sup>

"The eternal East" was prohibited from adopting elements of modern society or resembling anything but the fairy tale lands of the Arabian Nights. This fabricated image of the East was more appealing to readers and visitors alike than the reality of life in the East. In 1836, Francis Herve traveled to Constantinople by boat. While approaching the city at night, Herve watched as parts of the city were engulfed in flames. He described the sight as "sublime" and "magnificent" and hypothesized that it was "like some vision in the Arabian Nights' entertainment." However, after the boat docked and Herve disembarked, his perception of the city took a turn for the worse. He was horrified by the smells, the dirt, and the crowded streets. Herve's image of Constantinople, gleaned from many of the travelogues and fictional accounts of the city, was irreconcilable with the realities of Constantinople and the East in general.<sup>4</sup> Herve recounted with a bit of jealousy the story of a man who prevented this rude awakening to the true East by remaining on the ship which had brought him to Constantinople. He was thoroughly, "enchanted by the silhouette," but remained on the ship, "for fear a view of the interior should dissolve the charm."<sup>5</sup>

By remaining in an unchanging, languorous, and decaying state, the East assured Westerners of how far they themselves had advanced. If Turks adopted Western modes of dress, interior design, or cultural

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<sup>3</sup> Garnett: 279.

<sup>4</sup> Reinhold Schiffer. Turkey Romanticized: Images of the Turks in Early 19th Century English Travel Literature. Materialia Turcica, Beihaft 5. Bochum: Studienverlag Dr. N. Brockmeyer, 1982: 1.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*: 3.



patterns too fully, they threatened to undermine the clarity of European dominance. By incorporating Eastern elements into their own homes without "becoming" Eastern, Americans asserted their taste and superiority. Americans who included Turkish interiors in their homes created their own image of the East. The presence of these Turkish, Islamic, or Moorish interiors has always been acknowledged. However, the continued incorporation of these motifs in the first quarter of the twentieth century has been largely overlooked. The vast majority of people who put cosy corners in their parlors and added smoking dens to their stair alcoves had never visited the Middle East, but through these interior decorations they demonstrated their education and awareness of the expansion of Western influence around the world.







Figure 1.1 John Frederick Lewis, *The Siesta*, 1876  
The Tate Gallery, London (From Verrier, *The Orientalists*, plate 31)



Figure 1.2 Moorish Women taking a Walk  
(From Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, 8)





Figure 1.3 Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres. *Odalisque*, 1864  
Musée Bonnat, Bayonne. Study for *The Turkish Bath*  
(From Jullian, *The Orientalists: European Paintings of Eastern Scenes*, 77)





Figure 1.4 Women (young girls) at Home  
(From Alloula, The Colonial Harem, 20)





589. Femme Arabe dans son Interieur  
(From Alloula, The Colonial Harem, 69)







**Figure 1.6** Arabian Woman with the Yachmak  
(From Alloula, *The Colonial Harem*, 126)





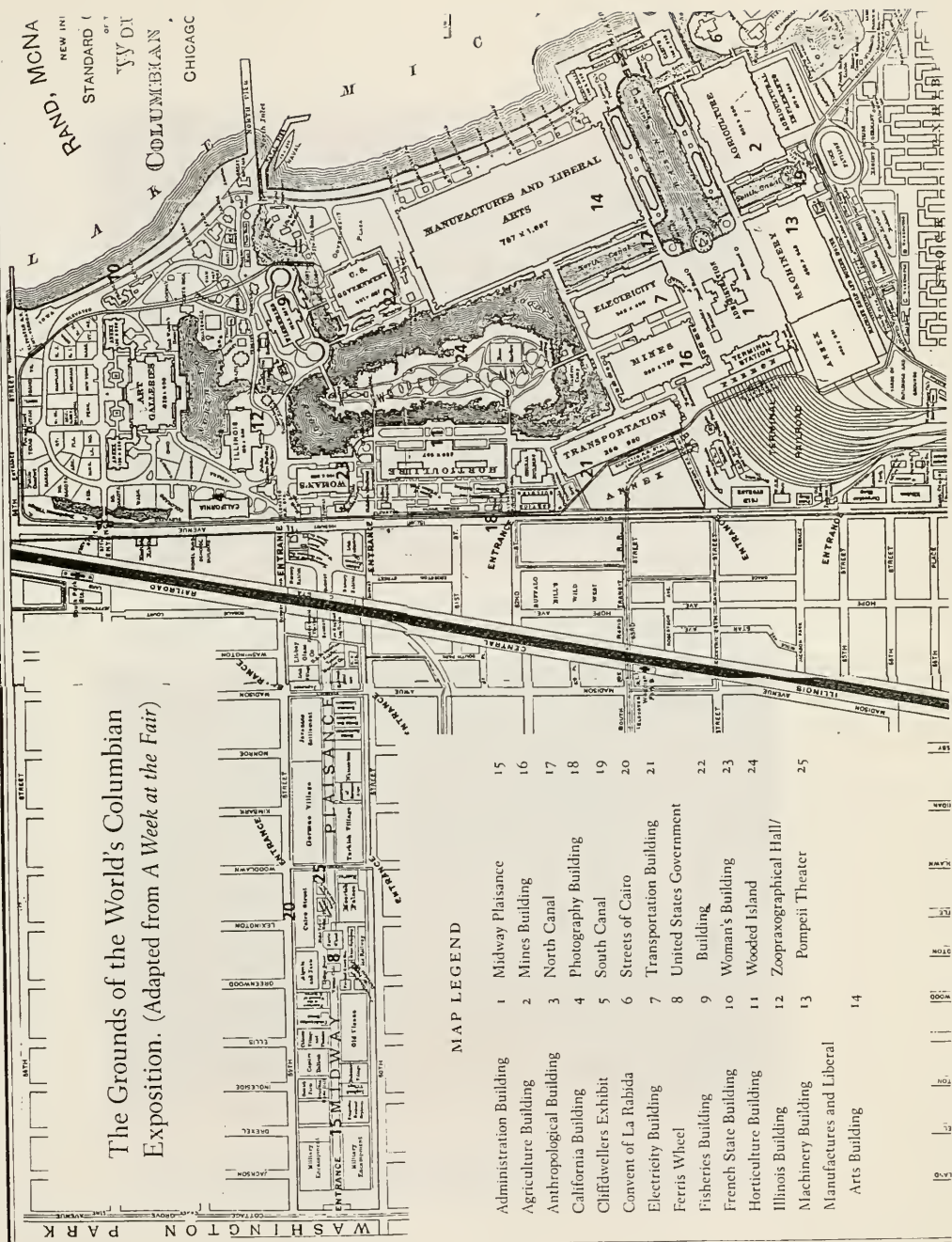
**Figure 1.7** The Central Basin at the World's Columbian Exposition  
(From Shepp, Shepp's World's Fair Photographed, 23)



**Figure 1.9** The Turkish Building at the World's Columbian Exposition  
(From Shepp, Shepp's World's Fair Photographed, 483)



The Grounds of the World's Columbian Exposition. (Adapted from *A Week at the Fair*)



MAP LEGEND

- |                                         |    |
|-----------------------------------------|----|
| Administration Building                 | 15 |
| Agriculture Building                    | 16 |
| Anthropological Building                | 17 |
| California Building                     | 18 |
| Cliffdwellers Exhibit                   | 19 |
| Convention of La Rabida                 | 20 |
| Electricity Building                    | 21 |
| Ferris Wheel                            | 22 |
| Fisheries Building                      | 23 |
| French State Building                   | 24 |
| Horticulture Building                   | 25 |
| Illinois Building                       |    |
| Machinery Building                      |    |
| Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building  |    |
| Midway Plaisance                        |    |
| Mines Building                          |    |
| North Canal                             |    |
| Photography Building                    |    |
| South Canal                             |    |
| Streets of Cairo                        |    |
| Transportation Building                 |    |
| United States Government Building       |    |
| Woman's Building                        |    |
| Wooded Island                           |    |
| Zoopraxographical Hall/ Pompeii Theater |    |







Figure 1.10 The Midway, Looking East from the Ferris Wheel  
 (From Arnold, Official Views of the World's Columbian Exposition, plate 98)

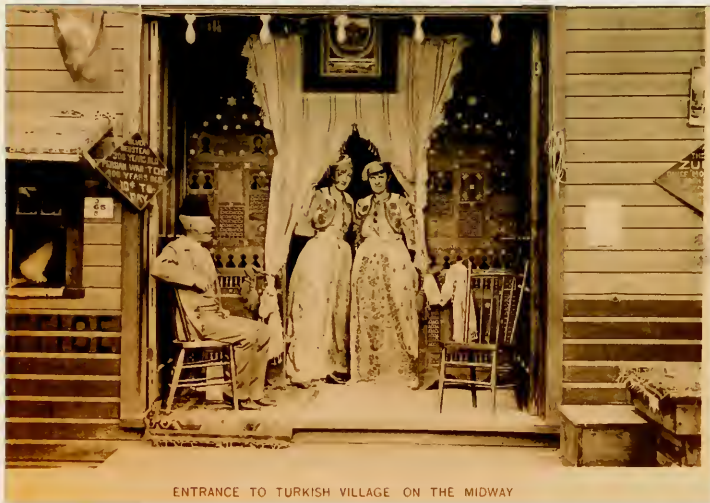


Figure 1.11 The Turkish Bazaar at the World's Columbian Exposition  
 (From Arnold, Official Views of the World's Columbian Exposition, plate 104)







Figure 1.12 Elia Souhami Sadullah's Concession at the Turkish Bazaar  
(From Arnold, *Official Views of the World's Columbian Exposition*, plate 102)



Figure 1.13 The "Streets of Cairo" at the World's Columbian Exposition  
(From Smith, *Pictorial Album and History of the World's Fair and Midway*, unpaginated)





**Figure 1.14** Daily Wedding Procession on the "Streets of Cairo"  
at the World's Columbian Exposition  
(From Shepp, Shepp's World's Fair Photographed, 509)





Figure 1.15 The Ottoman Hippodrome at the World's Columbian Exposition  
(From Arnold, Official Views of the World' Columbian Exposition, plate 113)



Figure 1.16 Turkish Guard in Customary Pose at the World's Columbian Exposition  
(From Brown, Contesting Images, 410)





Figure 2.1 Turkish Lounge, ca. 1910

(From Grier, Culture & Comfort: People, Parlors and Upholstery 1850-1930, plate 19)

<p>Brussels order one ..... 30c e. covered e carpet. Price ..... 50c</p>	<p>mer cottage. Top covered with satin printed velour, or with Wilton velvet carpet. No. 37C1081 Size of top, 12 inches in diameter; height, 10 inches. Price ..... 31.00 No. 37C1083 Size of top, 14 1/4 inches in diameter; height, 10 1/4 inches. Price ..... 31.25</p>	<p>No. 37C1085 Price..... 31.25</p>	<p>home. Price, full size, 10.00 combination hassocks. Price, each, 2.00, with No. No. 37C1109. Covered with Price.</p>
<p><b>Our 49-Cent Hassock.</b> The illustration represents the thickest and most stylish original shape hassock in our collection. Size, 12x14 inches, 10 inches high. Covered with a good quality of Brussels carpet. No. 37C1069 Price ..... 49c</p>		<p>The illustration gives a good idea of the handsome style of this durable and ornamental hassock. It is covered with a superior quality of Wilton velvet carpet. Size, 12x12 inches, 8 1/2 inches high. No. 37C1089 Price..... 75c</p>	<p><b>Our Parlor Stool or Footstool</b> (Can also be used for child) No. 37C1113 These stools have wood frames, malle- able iron legs, built-in in- gold brocade. They will cer- tainly make an ornament for any house. The face covered with velvet carpet only, and the wheels a truly phenom- enal consideration. They which we give you in one of these versatile and con- venient stool or foot stools. 7 inches high. Price</p>
<p><b>The Star Hassock.</b> A very strong and ornamental hassock. Size, 13x13 inches, 8 inches high. Velvet covered in pretty designs. No. 37C1077 Price..... 69c</p>	<p><b>Our Octagon Ottoman Foot Rest.</b> Comes 11x 12 inches and 9 1/2 inches high. This is a very beautiful home decoration. It is something that should be in every parlor or sit- ting room. Covered with best tapestry carpet. Price Covered with mosquito or velvet No. 37C1097 carpet. Price ..... 75c</p>		<p><b>Our Commode for Use</b> This is one articles that house. Comm- in case of sick modies are in thin oak, with se carpet cov- inches high and These are made that should be well recognized value for sin- comes the spec- No. 37C1117 Price, each, 1.50 No. 37C1121 Price, with pat-</p>
<p><b>CARPET AND RUG WEAVING MACHINERY AND ACCESSORIES.</b></p>			
<p><b>Our Hand Carpet Bob</b> The accompanying illustration</p>			

Figure 2.2 Hassocks and Ottomans

(From the Sears, Roebuck and Company Catalogue, 1905, 802-3)








Figure 2.3 *Belle Fatma*  
(From Alloula, The Colonial Harem, 34)



Our C. O. D. terms are very liberal. Send \$5.00 with your order and we will send this beautiful hall tree subject to examination. Our special price, each..... \$10.95

---

**JARDINIER STANDS.**  
Our \$1.70 Stand.  
A Very Stylish Ornament for any Parlor.  
Just  
The Thing  
For Flowers.



No. 9538 The Jardiner Stand which we show in this illustration is 22 inches high and the top is 13x13 inches in size. The stand is made in oak or imitation mahogany finish, as may be desired. This stand is unusually well made, the top is fancy pattern and shape, sides are handsomely carved and decorated. Our special Price..... \$1.70

**WHEN YOU SEE ANYTHING IN THE FURNITURE LINE AS GOOD AS OURS CENT. HIGHER TH**

Figure 2.4 Jardiner Stand  
(From the *Sears, Roebuck and Company Catalogue, 1897, 669*)

**Artistic Grilles Will Beautify Your Home**  
THE FINEST LINE MADE—OUR PRICES ARE JUST ONE-HALF REGULAR PRICES

**A STRONG FEATURE**  
OUR PATENT  
ADJUSTABLE  
END SCREW

So simple a child can fix these grilles. The only tool required is a hammer or screwdriver. Makes a perfect job.

Put in under one end and hold in the other. The grille will adjust itself to any opening. No matter how irregular the opening, it will fit. No matter how irregular the opening, it will fit. No matter how irregular the opening, it will fit.

All grilles illustrated and described in the columns at the right hand side of this page are made with the patented adjustable end screw (see Fig. 1 in middle column). Always use in all cases of irregular openings. (Exposition, in fact, any case when it is likely to be a mistake, the better one place in the window. It is the adjustable end screw that is not necessary to do any skiving or trimming. All that is necessary is to put the grille over the opening and drive down on each end of the screw with the key or screwdriver. The grille in the case takes care of all skiving or trimming of the opening. The grille is made of oak, mahogany or imitation mahogany. The grille is made of oak, mahogany or imitation mahogany. The grille is made of oak, mahogany or imitation mahogany.

**EXTREMELY NEW 12 INCHES AT \$2.00**

**No. 63A8436**  
Made in oak, birch, yellow pine or cypress (in the white).  
Price, per hand foot..... **60c**

**No. 63A8440**  
Made in oak, birch, yellow pine or cypress (in the white).  
Price, per hand foot..... **80c**

**No. 63A8443**  
Made in oak, birch, yellow pine or cypress (in the white).  
Price, per hand foot..... **\$1.10**

**No. 63A8444**  
Made in oak, birch, yellow pine or cypress (in the white).  
Price, per hand foot..... **89c**

**EXTREMELY NEW 12 INCHES AT \$2.00**

**No. 63A8428**  
Made in oak, birch, yellow pine or cypress (in the white).  
Price, per hand foot..... **57c**

**No. 63A8431**  
Made in oak, birch, yellow pine or cypress (in the white).  
Price, per hand foot..... **58c**

**No. 63A8438**  
Made in oak, birch, yellow pine or cypress (in the white).  
Price, per hand foot..... **59c**

ALL GRILLES ORDERED UNDER A FEET WILL BE CHARGED AS IF A FEET LONG UNLESS THE GRILLES ORDERED ARE IN EXCESS OF 1 FOOT IN LENGTH. MAKE US KNOW.

Figure 2.5 "Artistic Grilles" in the Sears, Catalogue, 1910  
(From Winkler and Moss, *Victorian Interior Decoration, 215*)





Figure 2.6 Alcove showing grilles in doorway and window  
(From Jacobs, Practical Handbook on Cutting Drapery, 79)











Figure 2.8 Left: American lounging coat, late 1840's  
Right: American smoking jacket, 1860-1880  
(From Martin and Koda, Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress, 44)



A SPECIALLY KNOWN TOWEL  
 at a very low price.  
 Each ..... \$0.10  
 Price per dozen 1.00  
 No. 23209 Extra  
 fine glass towel; same  
 as preceding number;  
 made of pure linen;  
 size 18x3.  
 Price each... \$0.10  
 Per dozen... 1.00



## TURKISH TOWELS

A good  
 rubbing  
 down with  
 a Turkish  
 towel after  
 a refresh-  
 ing bath,  
 will put  
 new life and vigor into  
 your system. Nothing  
 will dry the skin so  
 quickly or create such  
 a ruddy glow to the  
 skin and quicken the  
 circulation quite so  
 well. Turkish Towels

were never quite so good or so remarkably cheap  
 as they are with us this season.

No. 23210 Genuine Turkish towels, cream  
 color; size 18x30; good  
 heavy weight and specially  
 good value. Price each, 6c.  
 Per dozen..... 55c

No. 23211 Genuine  
 Turkish towels; cream or  
 unbleached; extra heavy  
 weight. Size 18x12. Spe-  
 cially good value. Price, each....6c. Per doz.....98c



ESCAPE YOUR NOTICE. IF YOU FORGET TO DEDUCT  
 YOUR CHECK FOR IT.

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 h.... \$0.25  
 ..... 2.85

Figure 2.9 Turkish Towels  
 (From the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogue, 1897, 296)



### What a Turkish Bath Will Do for You



A Turkish bath, such as before used, is a most efficacious means of purifying the blood and invigorating the system. There is nothing but pure water used, and it is so pure that it is safe to use it in any part of the world. You can have it in your home for the same price as you pay for it in the bath house. It is a most efficacious means of purifying the blood and invigorating the system.

It has been many years since we introduced a Turkish Bath into this country, and there is no one here that has not seen the benefit of its use. It is a most efficacious means of purifying the blood and invigorating the system.

The following are the names of the various models of our Turkish Baths, and their prices:

- Imperial Bath Cabinet, \$9.15.
- Standard Bath Cabinet, \$14.50.
- Large Bath Cabinet, \$19.00.

Our Turkish Baths are made of the best material, and they are so constructed that they will last for many years. They are a most efficacious means of purifying the blood and invigorating the system.

**Imperial Bath Cabinet, \$9.15.**  
 This bath cabinet is made with double doors, heavy rubber-lined interior, and is made of the best material. The top is made of the same material as the sides, and is reinforced with heavy rubber-lined chairs. The side walls are of the same material. The cabinet is made of the best material, and it is so constructed that it will last for many years. The cabinet is made of the best material, and it is so constructed that it will last for many years.

Price \$145

No. 804008's Price \$9.15

Figure 2.10 Turkish Bath  
 (From the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogue, 1915, 841)

**OUR SPECIAL OFFER:** SEND US \$5.00 as a guarantee of good faith and we will send you our catalogues. You can examine it at your freight depot, and if found perfectly satisfactory, we will refund you the \$5.00. Three per cent. discount allowed if cash in full accompanies your order, when \$25.00 pays for the goods.



No. 9503 This elegant Turkish parlor suit consists of 1 Tete-a-Tete, 1 Rocker, 1 Gent's Easy Chair, 1 Parlor or Reception Chair. All these pieces are made in extra large size, high backs and large comfortable seats, latest design and pattern of imported goods; each piece is covered in a different color. We will be pleased to mail you samples of six different colors to select from, or if left to us to make selection in colors our applicants will in all cases give you colors in this suit that will please you in every respect. The suit is finely upholstered, with plush hand and rolls on top and sides of back and trimmed with a heavy worsted fringe. This suit is made with good grade of crushed plush, and is so constructed that it will last for many years. The suit is made with good grade of crushed plush, and is so constructed that it will last for many years.

4 piece Parlor Suit,  
 4 piece Parlor Suit,  
 4 piece Parlor Suit,  
 4 piece Parlor Suit,  
 4 piece Parlor Suit.

**A \$35.00 PARLOR SUIT FOR \$24**

Figure 2.11 Turkish Parlor Suite  
 (From the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogue, 1897, 884)



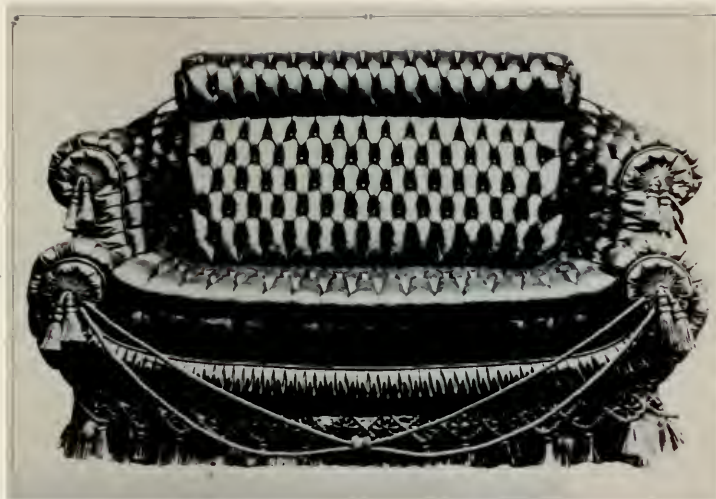


Figure 2.12 Turkish frame sofa, displayed at the World's Columbian Exposition  
(From Bishop and Coblentz, *American Decorative Arts: 360 Years of Creative Design*, 286)



Figure 2.13 Turkish leather chair, circa 1910.  
(From Van Rensselaer, *Manual of Home-Making*, 76)







**Figure 3.1** Madame Paul Poiret and a Guest at the Poirets' 1002 party, 1911  
(From Martin and Koda, *Orientalism: Visions of the East in Western Dress*, 12)





**Figure 3.2 A Cosy Corner**  
(From Morrison, Drapery, Interior Decoration, and Architecture, figure 16)





Figure 3.4 Parlor in the John Curtis House, Dorchester, MA, 1910  
Following the addition of a cosy corner  
(From Grier, Culture and Comfort: People Parlors, and Upholstery 1850-1930, 196)





Figure 3.5 A Cosy Corner  
(From Milhau, "Home Decoration," 112)







Figure 3.6 Mrs. Hughes's Turkish Cosy Corner, New York, 1899  
(From Byron, *New York Interiors at the Turn of the Century*, figure 35)





Figure 3.7 A Cosy Corner  
(From Streitenfeld, The Decorator's Portfolio, unpaginated)



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.....\$0.15  
en.. 1.70

and 2 1/2 inch Chenille tassels on the bottom. The following colors can be had: peacock, red, bronze, olive, blue terra cotta, rose and brown. This curtain is a winner every time at the price we sell it. Such values as these are obtainable only from Sears, Roebuck & Co. Each ..... \$2.95

**A \$6.00 Tapestry Curtain for \$3.25**  
No. 23274 It's a bargain like these that make us friends. A handsome tapestry curtain, 3 yards long and 36 inches wide, a beautiful floral design, has a 6 inch knotted fringe at the top and a 4 inch fringe at the bottom; this curtain comes in the new and very fashionable changeable effects, and is a great big bargain at the price we sell it. Don't pay \$6.00 but send to S. R. & Co., and save your money. Colors are terra cotta, olive and cardinal. Per pair.. \$3.25

No. 23275 A Rich Appearing Tapestry Curtain, 3 yards long and 36 inches wide, comes in solid colors interwoven with a





No. 23276 Fancy Yarned Y Curtains, 36 inches wide, a beautiful floral design, with

Figure 3.8 Sears, Roebuck and Company Portieres  
(From the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogue, 1897)

**OUR NEW HANDSOME 36-INCH BAGDAG DRAPERIES**

**FOR 15 CENTS PER YARD.**

These are the genuine Bagdad colors. They are imported goods.

THEY ARE GOODS THAT SELL EVERYWHERE AT 25 AND AS HIGH AS 35 CENTS PER YARD.

We have bought a tremendous lot of these imported genuine Bagdad materials at about 10 cents on the dollar, and as long as they last, which we think will be about the term of this catalogue, which is twelve months, we will be able to supply these beautiful draperies in any quantity. They are swell patterns, and the accompanying illustration gives you a fair idea of the patterns. They have a beautiful combination of colors and are handsomely worked out in oriental fabrics, in which yellows, Indian reds and soft tan blues, also green, have prominence. The colorings that prevail in these beautiful Bagdad draperies are blues, reds, greens, olives, castles, hints, porcelain, tans, yellows and tile green. Width, 36 inches.

No. 378049 Price, per yard..... 15c

Silkolno.  
No. 378854  
Handsome Figured  
Silkolno. Not the





Final Drapery,  
No. 378860 The

Figure 3.9 Bagdad Curtains, 1902  
(From the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogue, 886)



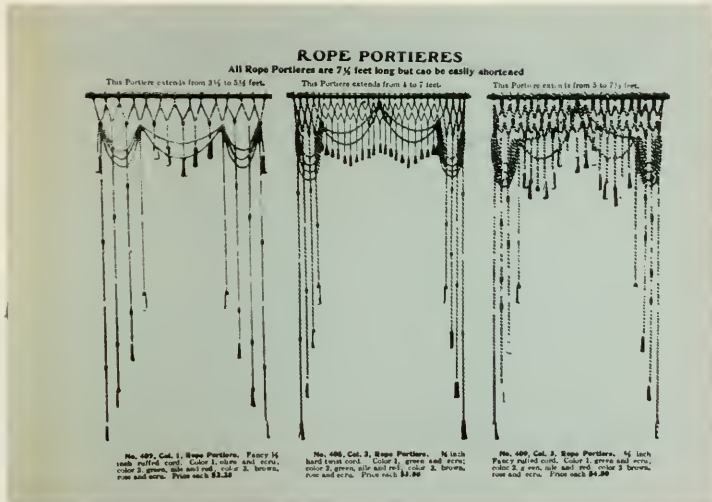


Figure 3.10 Rope Portieres  
(From Winkler and Moss, Victorian Interior Decoration, 219)



Figure 3.11 Turkish Couch Cover, circa 1910  
(From Grier, Culture and Comfort: People, Parlors and Upholstery, plate 28)





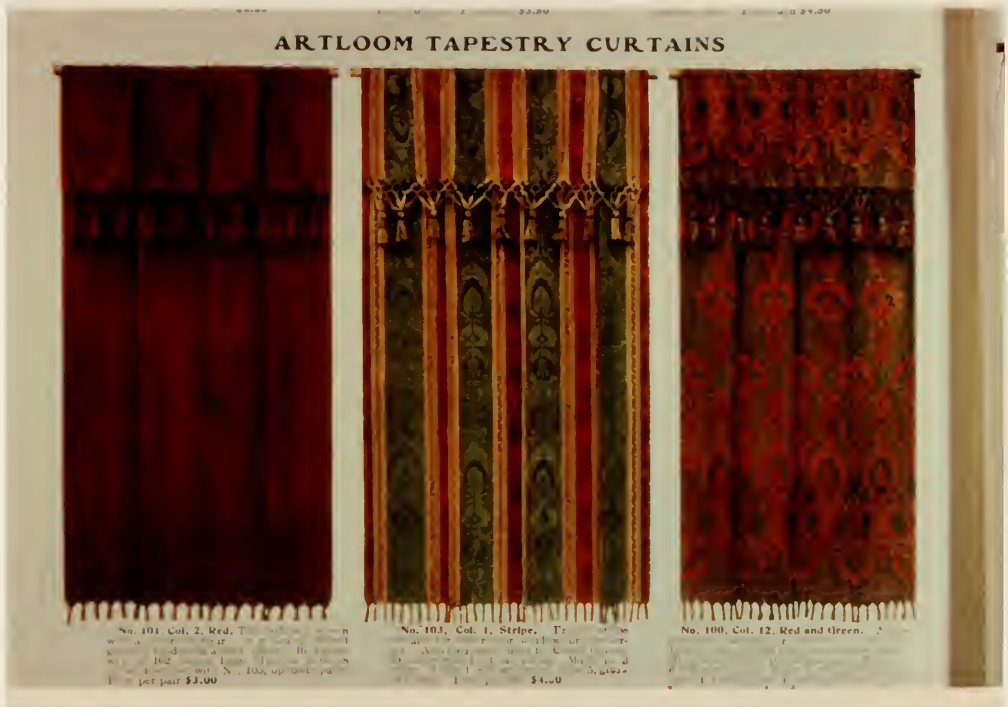


Figure 3.12 Artloom Tapestry Curtains  
 (From John Pray and Sons, Rug and Carpet Book, catalogue #31)





Figure 3.13 Waverly Wilton Rugs  
(From *Pray, Rug and Carpet Book*, catalogue #31)





Figure 3.14 Temple Brussels Rugs  
(From Pray, Rug and Carpet Book, catalogue # 31)



state whether a plain and fancy pattern is preferred, or all figure. We will use our best judgment in making selections, or cannot be returned if sent as ordered.

**PETS** Ascertain the width of room in inches; divide that product by the width of carpet (27 or 30 inches); the breadths required. Multiply the number of breadths by the 3 inches on each breadth for possible waste in matching; the number of feet required. Divide that number by 3 to find the or bordered carpets must be very exact. Give diagram of all

edlum or bright  
..... 11c  
et, medium or  
ard..... 10c  
**S.**  
..... \$0.54  
..... .96  
..... .73  
..... .87

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hes wide, nice  
n or yellow.  
..... 10c  
pet, handsome  
..... 12c  
s wide, a fine  
ice variety of  
..... 17c  
ou like most  
all get it.

**CHINA  
STRAW  
Matting.**

matting is be-  
ly used and at  
we sell them  
can be saved.  
Plain Straw  
Check Straw  
nches wide,  
..... 10c  
rds..... 9c  
**Fancy Check**  
1 inches wide,  
to 40 yds \$5.20  
**Straw Color**  
grades made:  
yard... \$0.22  
..... 1.60  
**ting.**  
Wee White

**Smyrna Rugs.**

**THIS RUG IS ONE OF OUR EXTRA SPECIAL BARGAINS.**

No. 23415 Smyrna rug, size 1 foot 9 inches by 3 feet 8 1/2 inches; a good quality rug, beautiful combination of colors. We have bought the entire stock of a leading manufacturer of this rug at a price which for the quality of the goods was ridiculously cheap. We are to turn over to our customers at a very slight advance and urge all people in need of a rug to send in their orders early as although the quantity is large, they are sure to sell rapidly.

Retailers would ask you \$2.00 for a Rug like this. Our special price, each..... \$1.08



No. 23414 A Very Pretty Smyrna Rug, artistic combination of colors, fringed, size 16x31 inches. Each..... \$6.62



No. 23416 Nice Rugs at a nice little saving if bought here. Smyrna rugs of a good quality; the combination of colors are beautiful, nothing flashy or loud about them, but so gotten up that they look rich and handsome.  
Sizes, 1 foot 10 inches x 3 feet 9 inches, each.. \$1.15  
Sizes, 2 feet 2 inches x 4 feet 6 inches, each.. 1.03  
Sizes, 2 feet 6 inches x 3 feet, each..... 1.00  
Sizes, 3 feet x 8 feet, each..... 2.00  
Sizes, 4 feet x 7 feet, each..... 4.75

**Moquette Rugs.**

No. 23417 A Beautiful Moquette Rug, has no



be of a rug  
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Ingrain  
Ingrainet  
they also  
like a rug  
fectly fa  
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rugs on 6  
No. 234  
Size, 7 1/2 x  
Each, \$4.

No. 234  
Size, Incl  
Price, ea

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Figure 3.15 Smyrna Rug, 1897  
(From the Sears, Roebuck and Company catalogue, 1897)





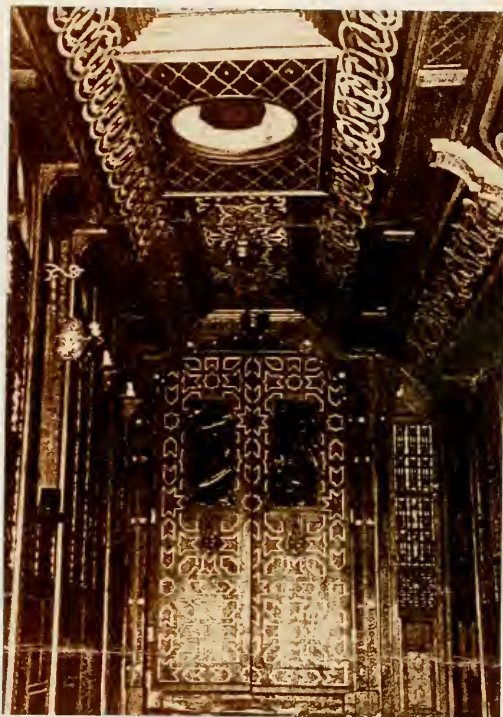


Figure 4.1 The Entrance Hall to Joseph Jastrow's Study  
(From the Sound and Visual Archives  
of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, folder 2808)





Figure 4.2 The Entrance Hall to Joseph Jastrow's Study  
(From "Fabulous 'Secret Room' in Home Here, unpaginated)





**Figure 4.3** The Entrance Hall to Joseph Jastrow's Study  
Taken in 1961 by Sally Levin  
(From the Sound and Visual Archives  
of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, folder 2808)





**Figure 4.4** Joseph Jastrow's Study  
(From the Sound and Visual Archives  
of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, folder 2808)







**Figure 4.5** Joseph Jastrow's Study, circa 1961  
Photo taken by Sally Levin  
(From the Sound and Visual Archives  
of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin)



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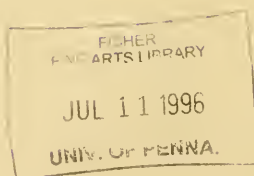


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