



A Dragon Bedquilt

By Gazo Foudji

IN CHINA and Japan the dragon has been used for many years for decorative purposes. It is used as the national emblem on the Chinese flag, and in the decoration of the Emperor's robes, and is found on many articles employed in Chinese worship.

According to the Chinese legend the origin of its use goes back one thousand years. One night the Emperor Bunter dreamed of this strange monster, and in the morning he described what he had seen in sleep to his Ministers, who assured him that it was an omen of good fortune. Artists were at once employed to depict in line and color the image of the Emperor's dream, and thus was produced the unreal but decorative creature that has become so well known throughout the world.

Chinese artists have not adhered to any one shape, character or color in painting the dragon, although they have kept to conventional lines. From the Chinese the artists of Japan learned many years ago to make use of this decoration, but they, have changed it a great deal to suit their own style and taste.

In view of its decorative origin the dragon seems entirely suitable to use to the making of a bedquilt, and I have taken it as the basis of my design.

The size of this quilt is seven feet square, but, of course, the dimensions may be changed. Many persons wishing to make the quilt may not be able to draw the design, but with a pantograph the design may be enlarged to any size and still be kept perfect.

The general effect is rich and warm. On the large square at the centre I have placed the dragon in circular form with mouth open, sending forth darts of flame. Conventionalized clouds fill the corners of the square. This square is framed by a border in fret pattern. Outside of this is a repeating pattern made up of a small dragon in the centre of cloud forms which are designed in a Japanese shape. The spaces between these repeating patterns are filled with other Japanese cloud forms. I have used the chrysanthemum, the flower of

Japan, in two corners, diagonally opposite, and another Japanese conception of the dragon in the other two corners. The outside border is a repeating pattern of chrysanthemums.

The quilt is made by sewing pieces of plain cloth or silk of different colors on to a background of buff mercerized linen. It would be found very effective to use silk for the large dragon in the centre, and cloth, such as a thin dress fabric, for all the other forms. The shading on the back of the dragon can be done with water color by those who are skillful with this medium. Use very little color, however. The detail hues on the back of the dragon are worked with embroidery silk of a darker shade than the silk itself. The color scheme is as follows:

The head and back of the dragon, also claws, wings and tail, two shades of light olive green- this if water-colors are not used.

Under side of dragon's body and petals of chrysanthemums in outside border, very light red.

Eye of dragon, light yellow- pupil of eye indicated by a knot of black silk.

Flames around dragon and tongue of same, bright vermilion.

Background of centre square and background of four corners, deep cherry red. This color also is used for centre of the chrysanthemums in outside border and for the two parallel hoes of outside border.

Clouds in corners of centre square, dragons and cloud patterns of large border, dark yellow brown,

Inside border pattern, next to large centre square, also background of outside chrysanthemum border, and pointed chrysanthemum leaves in corners, dark olive green.

Background of inside border, indigo.

Dragons and chrysanthemums in corners, two shades of red brown.

Appliqué with black silk floss.

It is impossible for us to supply any patterns for this quilt. All that can be told about it is told here.

Gazo Foudji, the Japanese artist, is the last in this series.