



## FERETIKO (RIZE CLOTHING) AS A CULTURAL IDENTITY OF RIZE CITY\*

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### Abstract

Feretiko (Rize Fabric) has still been woven locally in Rize which is located in region of Black Sea. Feretiko is a kind of cloth which are woven on hand looms. Feretiko belongs to culture of Rize and it is known as "Rize Cloth" due to woven in region. Today, Rize Cloth (Feretiko) weaving, are shown considerable interest in Rize. Thanks to Geographical Indications this interests getting higher. Culture and handicrafts goes together, they improve and identity eachother. Today, Rize Fabric (Feretiko) weaving shows the cultural aspect of Rize province.

In this research, Rize Cloth (Feretiko) weaving has been examined. In this respect, Feretiko's cultural side, importance of Geographical Indication, connection between handcraft and culture, present state, used motifs of the woven fabrics, composition and characteristic of handling have been identified by photos.

**Keywords:** Handcraft, Rize, Culturel Identity, Geographical Indications, Art.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

It is known that the art of weaving which is as old as the history of humanity, begins with the primitive touch of the fibers obtained from various herbs and plants. In the process, weaving can be done for the basic needs of mankind such as dressing and covering with factors such as the production of hand tools and the development of hunting, plant and animal fibers can be handled. In Anatolia, which hosts many civilizations, weaving has become an art and continued to develop under the influence of civilizations that is hosted.

Such reasons as developments in science and technology, the constant variability of the fashion concept, diligence against foreign brands, failure to meet the expectations of artists and artisans, migration from rural to urban areas, the inability to cultivate agricultural lands, global warming, handcraft arts completed their period, making some handcraft arts be away from social life, rapid increase at population, not being able to meet the needs as desired are basic factors playing a role in the poor position of handcraft arts and thus hand weaving in Anatolia. The art of weaving which was regarded as an art of ancestors in every region of Anatolia, has lost its earlier importance and extensiveness even though it has still been carried out in some places. Feretiko weaving was also in danger of being lost. The city of Rize is one of the districts trying to revive the culture of weaving and surveying Feretiko weaving.

Located in the coastal region of Black Sea, the city of Rize is in the northeast of Turkey and surrounded by Trabzon in the west, Artvin in the east, Bayburt in the southwest and Erzurum in the south. Rize has a rough geographical territory. It is the city taking the most rainfall in Turkey. The most significant product of Rize is tea. Tea plant has an important place in the agricultural and economical position of the city. Fruit and vegetable growing is just in the level of the needs of the people living there.

Summer time is warm in Rize. Autumn and winter is wet. Located in the Eastern Black Sea Region, Rize has the characteristics of the region. It is different from other regions of Anatolia with its cultural texture. It is of great importance in terms of tourism with its valleys, mountains, glacier lakes, highlands, historical arched bridges and castles, and its brooks (Karpuz, 1992).

The city of Rize is quite rich in handcraft arts. Copper work, wood work, wood decoration, basket knitting and matting, Rize cloth weaving and sock knitting are some of the leading handcraft arts in the city. Copper beating in the city of Rize is produced for the purpose of tourism today. Beating process is carried out as fine beating and tight hammering. Copper work has a special place in the city in this sense (<http://www.rizekulturturizm.gov.tr> 25/08/2010).

Types of trees are so various due to the climate in Rize. Therefore woodwork is carried out in the city so widely. Some kinds of buckets, called "Kadı" and "Gerdel", spoons, cradles and even boats are

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produced from trees. In addition, the arts of carving and wood decoration can be seen in wood tools, at homes and mosques.

Due to the fact that the city of Rize has a rough landscape, carrying goods are mostly done by people on their backs, with baskets. Basket knitting used to be produced from such fibres of bows, cornhusk and corn sapling. Fibres obtained from chestnut and hazelnut trees are widely used today. However these fibres are replaced by the ones made of synthetics. Besides basket knitting, chair knitting is also carried out in Rize (<http://rizekulturturizm.gov.tr>, 25/08/2010).

Hand woven socks are especially produced in the town of Hemşin. Sock knitting in the town is very rich in design and model. Plant decorations (cherry, ear of corn, flower, tulip, corn order, pine branch, Poinciana flower, torn leaf, bow etc.), animal decorations (chicken leg, birds, winged ones, ram horn, ladybird, butterflies etc.) and geometrical decorations (diamond line, hook, lined, cubic, star etc.) are used in socks.

## 2. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

In this research, which is conducted as field study, maintaining the existence of hand weaving, which has a very long history in Anatolia, the contribution of Feretiko weaving as a cultural handicraft to the economy of Rize and its provinces, becoming the brand of Rize and besides preserving traditional features; raising awareness of this local handicraft that constitutes the cultural identity of the province, development and transfer to the future generations are also intended.

In accordance with this purpose, introducing the weaving steps of Feretiko, giving the past examples and production of new designs in line with traditional features are important. Production of Feretiko weaving registered under geographical indication is also important in terms of continuing with emphasis on cultural and economic value.

## 2. EXPERIMENTAL METHOD

This research is a field study which is conducted in the center of Rize city and qualitative research method was used. The historical and current examples of Feretiko in the archives of the public education center in Rize province were examined, photographs were taken and recorded. In the examination conducted at the public education center, Feretiko weaving was recorded by using observation and interview technique together with phases. The data which constituting this study were obtained as a result of literature review. The data obtained are evaluated under appropriate headings.

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 4.1. Feretiko (Rize Clothing) As A Cultural Identity of Rize City

The richness of Rize's handicrafts is an important influence on the obtaining information about cultural identity as well as geographical and economic aspect of the province. Culture which is related to tradition and the combination of as roots, destiny, history, continuity and sharing on the one hand, and as impulses, choice, future, change, variation on the other. Craft is considered as 'symbolic cultural product' with sharing the meaning between people in the community. From the legal aspect, craft is a part of tangible traditional culture expression that is protected under intellectual property rights. This right is valuable to preserve the cultural value behind it, and to protect craft as a market commodity. To sum up, craft is an activity based on traditional and cultural value to create a functional object by craftsmen and artist-craftsmen. The context of craft in this essay will include traditional and contemporary craft, which is still based on traditional culture expression (Arief, 2016).

As an integral parts of a whole culture and handicrafts are substitute for a historical document on obtaining reliable information about a society.

The tradition of decoration and ornamentation, clothes harness, bundle customs, dowry and many more handicraft products, have quite a great deal of importance in fulfilling the elements of national culture. In addition to fulfilling a culinary need of culture, giving value to the such handicraft products is also displayed as an identity and economic power indicator for families.

Handicraft serves as a mirror of cultural identity which is becoming the brand of the district in accordance with the geographical and economical diversity. Thus, creating economical conditions, conveying public to researching and production, and creating cultural and touristical opponents can be possible. People who are upset by the tiredness of city life are trying to create their own private living spaces by preferring to go where natural life is possible. Preferring of these living areas the existence of handicrafts, cultural events, eating and drinking traditions, tourism, health fields are the determining factor.



For this reason, local authorities value the handicrafts and cultural activities of the regions and artistic and makes a special effort in the foreground of cultural identity. In this way, the research and development of local handicrafts can be encouraged and transferred to future generations. In this sense, geographical marking is an important process.

A Geographical Indication identifies a good as originating in a delimited territory or region where a noted quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin and/or the human or natural factors there. Geographical Indication is not exclusively commercial or legal instruments. They exist in a broader context as an integral form of rural development that offers a valuable framework for powerfully advancing commercial and economic interests while potentially integrating local needs that are anchored in cultural tradition, environment and broad levels of participation. A Geographical Indication is a unique and important form of collective intellectual and cultural property, with various rights. The right to the exclusive use of a name, which typically defines a specific geographic (or sometimes cultural) area, is given by the State to regional producers and processors of particular products for their use only in relation to those products. It is expected that there is a direct link between the distinguishing characteristics, cultural aspects or the quality of a product and the place of origin or geographic area. Hence, the Geographical Indication is a device that signals a set of unique qualities or attributes to consumers (Giovannucci, 2009).

A Geographical Indication may also highlight specific qualities of a product that are due to human factors found in the product's place of origin, such as specific manufacturing skills and traditions. That is the case, for instance, for handicrafts, which are generally handmade using local natural resources and usually embedded in the traditions of local communities. A Geographical Indication confirms a link not only between a product and a specific geographic region, but usually also with unique production methods, characteristics or qualities that are known to exist in the region. They also tend to have positive spillover effects in terms of improving the reputation of a region, influencing other products in the region, and fostering tourism (Giovannucci, 2009).

The potential long-term value is not only at the economic level (i.e. jobs, greater income, or ancillary development such as tourism) but also at a cultural level in terms of the recognition of customary and value-adding traditions that can convey a deep sense of a people, their culture, and of their long-standing relationship to a region. This esteem can be a springboard to the recognition of assets and diverse forms of local development that can be as valuable as increased income. As a means to foster culture and tradition, Geographical Indication are indeed viable tools. They value the cultural aspects and traditional methods that are intrinsic to the production and processing of a product (Giovannucci, 2009).

Geographical Indications may bring value to a region not only in terms of jobs and higher income, but also by promoting the region as a whole. In this regard, Geographical Indication may contribute to the creation of a "regional brand." Some products identified by a Geographical Indication may embody characteristic elements of the traditional artistic heritage developed in a given region, known as "traditional cultural expressions". This is particularly true for tangible products such as handicrafts, made using natural resources and having qualities derived from their geographical origin. In addition, certain traditional cultural expressions – such as indigenous and traditional names, signs and symbols – may also be protected as Geographical Indications despite their having no direct geographical meaning. Geographical Indications can provide protection for traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions against misleading and deceptive trading practices. First, Geographical Indication protection recognizes the cultural significance of traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions and can help preserve them for future generations (WIPO, 2004).

The Geographical Indications that is important for a place to recognize the values that it possessed like handicrafts has added value to Feretiko in the province of Rize. The Geographical Indications application made in 2005 resulted in 2008 and Feretiko has been included in the geographical Indication. In this way, Feretiko courses were opened in public education centers and women were educated in this subject and after graduated from the course they started to educate next generations as master trainer. Thus, thanks to the Geographical Indications Feretiko is preserved for future generations and contribute to the creation of a regional brand.

#### **4.2. Weaving Technique of Rize Cloth**

Rize cloth is a kind of fabric produced at hand loom from hempen yarn. Local name of the cloth is known as "Feretiko".



Hemp fiber is more transparent compared to that of linen. It has an approximate resistance of 50-70cN/text. Resistance increases when heated. As in other bast fibers, hempen fiber has less elasticity (Kaya and Yazıcıoğlu, 1992).

Hemp is a plant that can be grown in many regions of Turkey. Other than its fibre, its seeds are also used as the production of oil. Hemp fibre is used in the production of rope. Very thin ropes are produced from the hempen fibres grown in the region of Rize. The fact that Rize has a climate with less sunlight and more rainfall prevents hempen fiber to harden. Humid and wet climate of Rize is available for the hempen fibre to be at its desired form. Therefore, hempen fibre produced in the region is quite available for weaving Rize Cloth.

Prior to 1960, when tea production was not so widespread in Rize, hempen fiber growing was a significant source of making a living. It is pointed out that hempen fiber growing was almost at the same level of tea growing in those days. However, due to the fact that producing ropes from hemp plant is a very laborious task, hempen fiber is not produced today. In the fields where hemp plant used to be grown, people grow tea today (Arer, 1969).

The replacement of hemp production by tea production in the Republican Period and using cotton thread in woven materials changed the characteristics of weaving and hemp based weaving in the city decreased gradually. Feretiko weavings are made up of 40% hempen fiber and % 60 cotton fibres today. Hempen fiber used in weaving cloths is imported from such countries as Romania, India and China (Arer, 1969).

In a study carried out between the years 1997 – 2000 in Black Sea Region by Tağı et al., (2006), it was pointed out that towel, Rize cloth, loincloth and keşan weaving was carried out in the central town. It was pointed out that cotton was used as the warp of towel and silk was used as woof or hemp-viscous for warp and hemp for woof; cotton was used for warp and hemp for woof in Rize cloth; cotton was used for both warp and woof in loincloth and keşan weaving; and plain weave was used as weaving texture for all weavings. In addition, Rize cloth was pointed out to be used as the cloths for coffee tables, tables, cupboards and for the production of clothing.

In order to provide a continuation of Feretiko weaving in the city of Rize and the towns, various EU projects have been prepared. Here are some:

A project was initiated by the Governorship of Rize named “Reviving Feretiko Weaving which is to Disappear” in 2003. Within the content of the project, an application was made to Turkish Patent Institute for Rize Cloth (Feretiko) to be registered as a “geographical remark”. In the project, some courses of feretiko weaving in public education centres in the city centre and towns of Rize. 500 loom specially produced within the content of the project were delivered to city and town public education centres (Yücel Bayraktar, Personal Interview, August 13, 2010).

Three other projects were carried out One of them was in the town of İyidere in 2006 named “The Project of Improving Textile with the Models of Feretiko (Rize Cloth) Specific to İyidere”. Another was a project in the name of “New Name of Turkish Textile: Feretiko” in 2007 and the other one was “Weaving and Clothing Course Project on Feretiko Textile” which was carried out by the Directorate of National Education in 2007 and are still in effect. A project was initiated in the town of Çayeli by the Foundation of Social Assistance and Solidarity as a course of weaving Rize Cloth, which is still in effect (Yücel Bayraktar, Personal Interview, August 13, 2010).

The project of weaving traditional Rize Cloth education which was initiated in 2004 by the Foundation of Social Assistance and Solidarity in the town of Ardeşen in a large atelier with 60 looms and another project within the content of EU grant program started with a purpose of “Introduction and Sales Education of Rize Cloth” in 2008 were two other projects (Yücel Bayraktar, Personal Interview, August 13, 2010).

Feretiko weavings are produced in the city of Rize at 108 looms with the guidance of 16 teachers. Other than these, feretiko weaving is also produced in ateliers in the city centre with about small and big 100 looms. Most of the workers are women but there are some assistant boy students. In a recent questionnaire it was found that a total 6.000 people have been trained in the courses of Feretiko in the last seven years and graduated. A teacher of painting, Yücel Bayraktar pointed out that two thousand metres feretiko were woven in one year in Talip Kahraman Public Education Centre in the city of Rize. Whipped looms are used in feretiko weaving. Looms, the first sample of which was produced by ITU (Istanbul Technical University), are now produced by Industrial Vocational High School (Yücel Bayraktar, Personal Interview, August 13, 2010).

These are the towns where Rize Cloth is woven: İyidere, Derepaşarı, Kalkandere, İkizdere, Güneysu, Çayeli, Pazar, Ardeşen, Fındıklı, Çamlıhemşin and Pazarhemşin. Those graduating from the courses are able to work as teachers in the Public Education Centres. Public Education Centres are also used as ateliers. Thanks to their economical incomes and opportunities of employment, weaving is aroused interest (Yücel Bayraktar, Personal Interview, August 13, 2010).

Feretiko is one of the most widespread and most significant handicrafts arts of Rize which is of rich handicraft arts. Therefore, when it comes to Rize, Feretiko is recalled after the plant of tea. Weaving Feretiko which contributes to the culture and tourism of the city much is a laborious and gradual process.

In order to make the process of weaving, warp thread is prepared in the circle of warp. In the warp circle, thread systems are rolled to the beams spatially in an only system. Rolling of beams is made through thread systems taken from the bobbins placed on the bobbin carrying tables. The ends of threads taken on each bobbin are passed through carriage channels bobbin carrying tables are turned into photocell system. The task of photocell system is to determine the cut of thread system which is transferred from the bobbin and also to determine from which bobbin the cut thread is transferred. The thread systems passed through photocell system is collected by a comb and a certain spatial form and direction is given to it. The thread systems which are given a certain spatial form and a direction at the comb pass through the warp bridge and rolled on the beam and warp preparation is completed (Saliha Mete, Personal Interview, August 13, 2010).



Figure 1. Bobbin carrying tables  
Fotoğraf 1. Bobin Taşıma Sehpaları

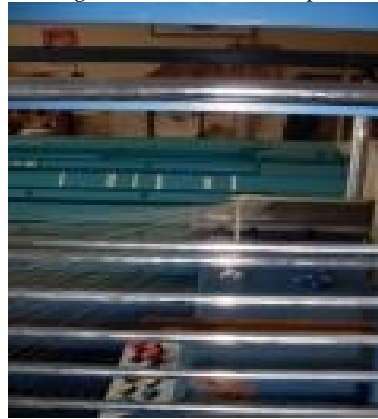


Figure 2. Transfer of warp yarns  
Fotoğraf 2. Çözgü İplerinin Sağlumu



Figure 3. Passing thread systems into comb  
Fotoğraf 3. İplik sistemlerinin tarağa geçirilmesi

The beams of which rolling is made in the warp circle are fixed to the places on whipped looms and weaving starts.



Figure 4. Warp beam  
Fotoğraf 4. Çözgü Levendi



Figure 5. Weaving loom  
Fotoğraf 5. Dokuma Tezgahı

In the process of weaving, the weaver sits in front of the weaving loom. He starts weaving with a piece of plain cloth. He holds sley in one hand and holder in the other. Pressing on the legs mouth is created. In the mouth opened shuttle is thrown toward right and woof throwing process is started. Sley is pulled firmly towards the weaving and woof is squeezed. Legs are pressed on again and a new mouth is opened. This time the holder is pulled strongly and shuttle is thrown towards left and woof throwing is done and woof is squeezed. This process is repeated again and again to weave plain cloth.



Figure 6. Feretiko weaving process  
Fotoğraf 6. Feretiko dokuma işlemi



Figure 7. Weaving design  
Fotoğraf 7. Dokuma deseni

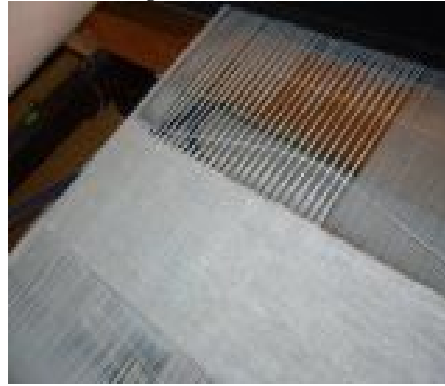


Figure 8. Plain cloth weaving  
Fotoğraf 8. Bezayağı dokuma işlemi

Plain cloth is woven as desired in the design. In the next step, hemstitch (ajour) weaving starts. In the ajour technique which is made simply and without design, a certain amount of warp thread is counted and the same number thread is released. In this way, woof thread is thrown in the mouth opened and woof threads are squeezed through sley. A few row of plain cloth is woven again and ajours become clear. In the patterned ajour weavings, ajour is made in certain number in certain parts depending on the design drawn on milimetric paper and after making plain cloth, it is squeezed through sley. This process is repeated until the weaving is finished.



Figure 9. Feretiko ajour weaving process  
Fotoğraf 9. Feretiko ajur dokuma aşamaları

The woven Feretiko is rolled on weaving beam. After the completion of weaving, some amount is released and some other part is woven as plain cloth. The woven cloth is cut into two. One half provides the fringe in the weaving taken out of the beam not to mix each other. The other half in the plain cloth allows the warp threads left to open a mouth in order to place them on the beam. Warp threads is placed again on the beam with the help of sticks fixed on the beam and they are transferred on another weaving with the same warp threads.



Figure 10. Opening of the beam and Opening of the weaving  
Fotoğraf 10. Çözümlenmenin ve Dokumanın Açılması



Figure 11. Cutting of the weaving  
Fotoğraf 11. Dokumanın kesilmesi

After taken out of the warp beam, Feretiko weaving is opened a mouth at the upper side and an iron bar is passed through it. These are the bars fixed on the beam. In this way warp threads are fixed on the beam firmly and after the completion of the weaving, it is easy for the weaving to leave from the beam.



Figure 12. Threading the wrap beams again  
Fotoğraf 12. Çözümlenmelerinin yeniden levante takılması

After the completion of weaving and cutting out of the beam, Feretiko weavings are ready to use for different purposes.

Feretiko is available for such handicraft arts as counting work and canvas work. Feretiko has a feature of absorbing sweat and drying easily. Therefore, it is preferred much in summer season. Feretiko is in beige colour when it is first woven due to the natural colour of hempen fiber. However, it turns into white as long as it is washed. So, there might be some darkening of colours on the cloth. Rize Cloth (Feretiko) is used as underwear, as dress, shirt, trousers, skirt and jacket in outfit, as handbag in accessory and as embroidery which one of the handicraft arts, and arouses interest.





Figure 13. Feretiko weaving with kilim motif  
Fotoğraf 13. Kilim motifi ile dokunmuş Feretiko



Figure 14. Feretiko weaving with kilim motif  
Fotoğraf 14. Kilim motifi ile dokunmuş Feretiko



Figure 15. Feretiko weaving with ajour technique  
Fotoğraf 15. Ajur tekniği ile dokunmuş Feretiko



Figure 16. Feretiko weaving with ajour technique  
Fotoğraf 16. Ajur tekniği ile dokunmuş Feretiko



Figure 17. Feretiko weaving with ajour technique  
Fotoğraf 17. Ajur tekniği ile dokunmuş Feretiko



Figure 18. Historical Feretiko weaving

Fotoğraf. 18 Tarihi Feretiko Dokumalar



Figure 19. Historical Feretiko weaving  
Fotoğraf 19. Tarihi Feretiko Dokumalar



Figure 20. Embroidered Feretiko  
Fotoğraf 20. İşlemeli Feretiko



Figure 21. Feretiko weaving  
Fotoğraf 21. Feretiko dokumaları

## 5. CONCLUSION

Handcraft is a symbolic cultural product which reflect a community's cultural and social identity. It has interaction with nature and their history, and provide them with a sense of identity and continuity. With this perception, Traditional Rize Cloth (Feretiko) is an important handicraft of Rize district.

Traditional Rize Cloth (Feretiko) has been produced at hand looms in the city of Rize and is of cultural and touristy values. In the weaving of Rize cloth, raw hempen fibre cannot be used due to the fact that hemp plant is not produced there any longer. In its weaving, woof threads are made of hemp and warp threads are made of cotton. The hempen fibre used in weaving is imported from Romania, China and India.

Besides its hard texture, Rize Cloth has a silken appearance and it can be used as underwear and night gown as it has a feature of sweat absorbent, and it is also used as a dress in daily life. As home accessories, it is used as a table cloth, coffee table cloth, curtains, bed cloth and counting work and canvas work in embroidery.

With making the Feretiko weaving constant, local handicraft art will carry on its existence and the art of weaving will be carried to the coming generations with a constant traditional art.

Hemp farming is not done today because of it's very diffucult conditions. Because of this, warp thread of feretiko are ussed as cotton, and it's weft thread are hemp.

Feretiko is a cultural object of Rize and gives information about Rize's culture, economic and geographical conditions. Culture and handicraft serving the tourism industry. Thanks to Feretiko handicraft economic development fostered, reduced unemployment and it has become a means of livelihood to habitants.



Geographical Indication is created to protect a product based on its geographical location that is prone to free-riding, and also to protect the culture and the customer (Arief, 2016).

Geographical Indication provide powerful support and ensure consistent levels of quality and to reduce the likelihood of fraud or the substitution of other fabrics so as to maintain the reputation of the geographical indication. The form of the legal protection is very important to help ensure a measure of equity for the producers. Since the geographical indications are held as public trusts, there is no possibility of granting private exclusivity or selling the name as could be possible with a trademark.

Thanks to geographical indication handicrafts of a district gain reputation all over the world, such as Rize Cloth (Feretiko). The Geographical Indications application made in 2005 resulted in 2008 and Feretiko has been included in the geographical indication. In this way, Feretiko courses were opened in public education centers and women were educated in this subject and after graduated from the course they started to educate next generations as master trainer. Thus, thanks to the Geographical Indications Feretiko is preserved for future generations and contribute to the creation of a regional brand. A somewhat higher degree of awareness among the regional people is a onsequences of a Geographical Indication.

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