Turkey Red

The Turkey Red process
A recent attempt

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2017
This color is the goal, more or less.
Examples of Turkey red dyeing include red-colored and figured bandanas. *(This one is printed, but “bandhana” is Hindi for “tie-dye.”)*
My standard dye test set. Here, the set is madder-dyed using a traditional European method for wool. Note the lighter color of the linen (first) and cotton (last) swatches. *Textile chemistry at work!*
Left to right:
Linen
Cotton
("Airplane cloth")
Cotton batiste
Quilted composite
(Cotton muslin + 2 polyesters)

The Turkey red sample set before processing.
Gall nut, alum, sheep dung
The sample set after mordanting 3 times with a castor oil mordant. You can’t see how stiff they are.
Samples after the first application of tannin (gall nut). At right is a standard set I added for comparison.
Sample sets after the first mordanting with alum+. The image is not well lit, but the samples are streaky. That can mean an uneven result.
After the second application of alum+: Ready for dyeing. Still uneven, but a much darker color.
Dried madder root. I purchased the “new” madder already ground. The ground madder from Afghanistan was given to me about 10 years ago.
From the left: Pink X—Afghan madder; Black +—New madder; Traditional set, Reserve (this one won’t be dyed)

The samples are marked for identification and ready for dyeing.
Left to right:
New madder, Standard or traditional samples (with new madder), Afghan madder

After dyeing—out of the vat and still wet.
Dyed samples after drying
After brightening
Traditional method of madder dyeing vs. Turkey red method. Both sets are L-R: linen, wool, silk cotton.
Books

Suppliers
» *Dyes and exotic dye assistants: Kremer Pigmente*
» *Fabrics: Testfabrics, Inc.*
» Sheep dung: Queens County Farm Museum, NYC Parks Department
» Miscellaneous supplies: Duane Reade Drugs (NYC), Wankel Hardware (NYC)

Thanks to M. Susan Barger for the Afghan madder.

Resources and Acknowledgements
I am the creator and owner of the images and text included here.

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Thanks!
Sarah L.

Please Note