

European Galleries C&T, June 29, 2018-December 2, 2018

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Turkish (Bursa)

Textile Length, 1550 - 1650

Silk and cotton satin weave with supplementary cut-warp pile (velvet) and supplementary wrapped metallic weft (çatmas)

Gift of William McCue 1988.082.2



Sinuous floral garlands weave between gold abstracted carnations in this silk velvet textile. The form of the carnations evokes the tree-of-life motif popular in Indian design, which was familiar to Turkish artisans through generations of trade. Another cross-cultural motif—the *chintamani*—is found within the petals of the carnation. Defined by three circles in triangular formation, this design originated in Buddhist imagery, including the paintings in Central Asia's Mogao caves (ca. 1000 CE), and may represent pearls and flames. The *chintamani* also relates to Turkish crescent-and-horn designs from the first century. These references were expertly woven together in a textile workshop in Bursa, Turkey, creating a distinctly Ottoman style.

Indian or Portuguese

Marriage Quilt (Colcha), 1700s

Silk plain weave with silk chain-stitch embroidery

Jesse Metcalf Fund 1996.99



After Portugal established a colonial trade center in Goa, India, in the early 1500s, it was flooded with imported Indian luxury textiles. Painstakingly embroidered with carnations and vines, this marriage quilt, or *colcha*, was either made in India for the Portuguese market or crafted in Portugal as a version of an Indian original. The makers substituted the carnation—a flower from the Mediterranean—for the lotus-blossom motif that would have been more familiar to Asian consumers.

Colcha were indispensable items for Portuguese brides of all social classes. Greatly elegant, this coverlet was made in silk instead of the more commonly used linen.

RISD MUSEUM

Chinese, for the European (possibly French) market
Textile Length, late 1700s-early 1800s
Silk gauze weave with hand-painting
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Duncan H. Mauran 1997.47

This lively silk textile is hand-painted with vines and birds and bordered by a garland of flowers. In the 1700s, Chinese artisans produced painted silk wall hangings and wallpaper for export. These were entirely new products developed for the European market, and unlike anything used in domestic Chinese interiors. The white base fabric, made using a Chinese technique known as gauze weave, is translucent. This quality may have been exploited in this textile's use as a screen or room divider.



Portuguese or Spanish (Andalusia)
Textile, 1700 - 1725
Silk and chenille brocade and satin weave with discontinuous supplementary weft patterning
Gift of Mr. Richard Greenleaf 49.353

Although this textile shows wear, it is still lustrous, and its chenille yarns are still fluffy and splendid. Across its surface a dynamic narrative unfolds, featuring hunters and beasts and boats atop waves. This textile likely once adorned the walls of a room where its story was studied and appreciated. Expertly darned and re-woven passages speak to this work's value across generations. The large floral motif is similar to that of the marriage quilt hanging behind. Both examples reflect the heavy influence in Spain and Portugal of designs from Goa, India, in the 1700s.



RISD MUSEUM

German or Spanish

Chasuble, 1400s

Silk velvet ground with appliquéd linen plain weave, embroidered with silk floss and gilt threads

Museum Collection INV2003.388

Roman Catholic bishops and priests wore silk chasubles like this one to celebrate Mass. Fabrics made of silk and embroidered with threads wrapped in precious metals were among the most valuable items owned by individuals or the Church during the Renaissance. The embroidered cross applied to the back and front of this garment depicts various Apostles. Their feet are bare, in accordance with scriptural instruction to travel without purse, bag, or sandals. Many are also shown with a scallop shell, a symbol of pilgrimages made to the shrine of Saint James of Compostela in Spain.



American, made of Chinese export silk

Dress, ca. 1810

Silk-crepe plain weave with silk velvet trim

Museum Collection S83.096

The Empire silhouette of the early 1800s reinterpreted the ancient Greco-Roman *chiton*, a tubular garment draped from the shoulders and sometimes belted beneath the bust.

The Empire style first appeared as white cotton children's wear, then was adopted in women's dresses with skirts gathered under the bust. Women wore white as well as richer hues, especially for daytime, and Americans in particular loved bright hues. Brighter and darker colors were more practical than white, as they did not show stains as readily. Saturated fabrics like this madder-dyed example were popularized as "Etruscan," the color evoking the red hues of Etruscan vases.



RISD MUSEUM

Turkish (Istanbul or Bursa), for the Italian export market
Textile, ca. 1500

Silk and cotton satin weave with supplementary cut-warp pile (velvet)
and supplementary wrapped metallic weft (*çatmas*)
Museum Collection S85.056

Known as *çatma* by the Ottomans, this type of textile combines smooth areas of silk satin weave and lush velvet pile with shiny metallic brocade. This velvet was produced in great quantity in the city of Bursa in northwest Turkey. Bursa was an important stop on the Silk Road, and textile trade between Italy, Turkey, and Persia was extensive. The same motifs and techniques appeared across borders, although styles were distinctive to each region. Ottoman rulers established looms in Bursa, creating a thriving industry there by the 1400s. Bursa's workshops produced many designs for export, often in the Italian style seen in this example.

