



PRINTED FABRIC  
LINING FROM THE TENT OF TSAR ALEKSEI MIKHAILOVICH (1645-1676).  
MOSCOW ARMORY MUSEUM (PAGE 9).

# PRINTED TEXTILES IN RUSSIA

By N. SOBOLEV

*Translated by* EUGENIA TOLMACHOFF

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Sobolev's book was printed in Moscow in 1912, and a copy of it exists in the library of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. It has not been possible to reproduce all the illustrations in the original Russian book. Examples of some of the fabrics described and illustrated by Sobolev exist in the Brooklyn Museum,\* and photographs of these have been used in place of reproductions of the illustrations in the book, wherever possible. It is probable that the names of the Russian museums referred to in this book have all been changed since the Revolution of 1917. The last section of the book, on the technique of printing from woodblocks, has been omitted in translation, since it is so similar to other descriptions already existing in English.

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THE vast machine production of printed fabrics used for upholstery and costumes (modern cretonnes, sateens, batistes, cottons, and various other modern textiles), where every yard of material passes through dozens of hands, derives from the humble peasant industry of hand-blocking or hand-printing. Hand-blocking, which supported whole counties in Russia, disappeared almost completely in a comparatively short period of time; and the huge buildings of modern factories completely overshadow the memory of those printers, whose art formed the basis of mechanical printing. This thoroughly forgotten art had its representatives at the courts of the Moscow tsars, and examples of the prints of that period, preserved in various museums and in the vestries of city and country churches and monasteries, show how popular this art was in Russia.

Besides the fabrics themselves, there is other testimony. In old monastery registries, inventories, and other documents, we find numerous references to the printed fabrics, which were used for ecclesiastical vestments

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\* From the collection of National Russian Art presented to the Brooklyn Museum by Mrs. Edward S. Harkness in 1931.

and priests' costumes, for book bindings, for army tents and banners, for curtains, for bench covers, for feather-beds and mattresses, for covering trunks and lining the backs of icons, for sleeveless jackets, coats, and sarafans—in fact, we see printed fabrics everywhere. Obviously, there was a craving for such decorated fabrics; their production was easy and inexpensive, and they fully satisfied the æsthetic demands of our ancestors.

In Russia, the manufacture of printed fabrics did not originate from the same causes as in the West. We shall not discuss the pre-Mongolian era of our country,\* for we have no printed textiles from this period, although examples of the flourishing of Byzantine culture have been preserved in other branches of art. We shall, however, study the Eastern influences on Russia, since Russia was closer to the East than to the West, not only politically but also commercially. The products exported by Russians from their country were exchanged for products which were frequently imitated in Russia. This imitation was developed on a large scale, and the manufactured goods gave their names to the places where they were manufactured. Such were the "Hamovnya" villages and towns, which have existed near Moscow from times immemorial, and which received their name from the Hindu word "haman," meaning a cotton linen, very fine and thin, resembling Dutch linen; such is the village Kindiakovo, whose name derives from the word *kindiak*, a printed cotton fabric originally imported from Persia. The fact that the arts of dyeing and printing textiles were already known in Russia in the twelfth century is proved by the remaining parts of the church vestments of St. Varlaam Hootinski (died 1193). These vestments are lined with turquoise blue *krashenina*.† In the Shabelski and Sidamon-Eristov collections, there are ancient cuffs and a piece of white canvas, badly preserved, with a design of Byzantine-Romanesque character. They might also be attributed with certainty to this early period, but for the recurrence of the same motives and the same style in later periods. There are other indications of the existence of printed fabrics from this early period, but, because of canonical restrictions, they are not available for study. From this time on there is a great deal of evidence, actual examples as well as written references, where these fabrics are mentioned, and their different varieties are listed by name, such as: *zendien*, *krashenina*, *uzchina*, *kindiak*, *daba*, *pestriad*,‡ nankeen, and other fabrics.

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\* Before the Mongolian invasion of Russia which occurred about 1223 A.D.

† I. I. Tolstoi and N. P. Kondakov, *Russian Antiquities*.

‡ Ed. NOTE: See *Appendix* for meaning of italicized words.

Most probably the icon-painters were the first craftsmen to work on textile decoration, for they were most familiar with paints and methods of using them. These icon-painters, specializing, as we know, in different branches of painting, also had special apprentices whose task it was to paint "herbs," that is, the decorative motives on the icons. These specialists, who painted "herbs" or plant ornament on church walls, icon backgrounds, and saints' vestments, were better fitted than anybody else for decorating fabrics. The various types of objects ornamented by the icon-painters are known from documents dealing with the life of such decorators in the Moscow state. They did the murals in the new mansions, painted "pictures on gold backgrounds and plant motives on textiles," decorated regimental standards, "gilded and painted wooden beds," decorated book covers, hat-boxes, and bookcases with plant and fruit designs in polychrome, "painted carved wooden eggs on two-tone gold grounds," etc. Their skill was even used later, after special block-printers had appeared. We still have the top of a tent of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich (1645-1676) in the Moscow Armory Museum, lined with a beautiful printed fabric (Frontispiece); its outer side is of linen, with painted decorations by the icon-painter, Saltanov. So we see, even at that time, the icon-painters were in demand when fabrics had to be decorated for a special purpose.

The wide use of printed fabrics in the seventeenth century is proved by the existence in Moscow of a special market called "Printed Fabrics Row," which occasionally supplied the palace of the Moscow tsar, when the palace supplies ran short. We read in the Palace account books: "additional 5 *arshins* and 6 *vershoks* of green *kindiak* bought in Printed Fabrics Row at 2 *altyns* an *arshin*." As a rule, the printed fabrics for the court were either imported from Kizilbash or produced by the local masters appointed to the court.

The masters, whose specialty it was to decorate fabrics in polychrome, were called *pestriadilniki* (polychrome decorators). They were not the least in importance among the other masters appointed to the court. Like other court masters, they had to take an oath of allegiance, were put on a salary basis, and were provided with food, given a yearly supply of goods for their clothes, and "hat tops" of colored woolen cloth. These appointments were usually for life, and if a master died his successor often came from the provinces if a worthy successor could not be found in Moscow.

Very little is known about the life of the master attached to the courts

of the Moscow tsars. As to the masters working for Printed Fabrics Row, the little we know concerns chiefly their relationship with their apprentices. Their written contracts tell us about the length of the apprenticeship and about the salary paid, and give other curious details about their everyday life. Apprenticeship lasted from five to ten years; the first five years were devoted to learning the craft, and during the last five years the apprentice served as an assistant and was paid two roubles a year; the whole salary was usually paid all at once at the expiration of the last five years. Sometimes, according to the agreement, the master provided the apprentice with a copper kettle at the completion of the ten-year term, in addition to the money. This very valuable and useful utensil was necessary for dissolving colors and for boiling the printed fabrics. It is very probable that the kettles were given to those apprentices who planned to start their own business. We know that even in our times an apprentice is under the authority not only of his master but also of the master's family; but in the seventeenth century, judging by the written contracts, this subordination was still more striking: "he should obey the master's wife and children, and do work for them, he should not drink, or steal from his master, or run away, and he should be provided with shoes and clothes and food by the master." These contracts, describing the relations between apprentice and master, also show us the dark side of this relationship—drunkenness, stealing, or running away. It is evident that these conditions were especially typical of those times, for should the apprentice run away before the end of his term his sponsors were financially responsible. It often happened that when the apprentice ran away he not only severed his relations with his former master but even drove the latter to ask the authorities for protection, since the runaway "secretly and without witnesses insults him and threatens to kill him." And, moreover, often nobody bothered to pay the master in such a case.

According to the ancient documents, printed linens, printed cottons, *kindiak*, and other printed fabrics played an important part in our ancestors' everyday life. As was mentioned above, they were used for church vestments, standards and tents, book bindings, men's and women's clothes, and also were given as presents by the tsars in recognition of good service. For example, in the account book, year 7163 (1555 A.D.) we find the following entry: "October 24, a *kindiak* given to the falconer, Mikhei Tabulin, as a present from the tsar. . . ." But gradually the cotton and linen printed fabrics were replaced by more expen-

sive imported silk and velvet fabrics, which from then on played a more important part in the daily life of the Moscow tsars. Nevertheless, long afterwards, church vestments and caftans of expensive brocade were lined with rough linen decorated with exquisite designs. The replacement of linen and cotton fabrics by more expensive ones is especially noticeable in regimental standards. The book of Lukian Iakovlev (*Ancient Russian Standards*) describes the gradual replacement of *krashenina*, of a variety of kinds and colors, by the more monotonous and uniform silk standards.

In visualizing the everyday life of that early period,\* we cannot help marveling at its beauty and the æsthetic standards applied even to the small and insignificant things of life. Those of our ancestors who could not afford expensive brocade or silk fabrics were content with printed textiles with designs imitating the expensive silk originals; besides, such fabrics were quickly made—a couple of days' work, and a piece was ready for use. For example, "in the year 7139 (1631 A.D.) February 24th, given to the master O. Elizariiev 8 *arshins* of *mitkal* (calico) to be painted. On February 26th, received back."

At the beginning, the design was painted on the fabric in oil paints, without any chemical process; it was only a question of the time needed to dry the paint. This is proved not only by the old painted fabrics still preserved, but also by the ledger of the time of Aleksei Mikhailovich mentioning the money paid to the fabric painters for buying materials: "8 *altyns* 2 *dengas* for  $\frac{1}{8}$  pail of linseed oil; 4 *altyns* 1 *denga* for amber to be added to dyeing oil; 4 *altyns* for a pound of white lead." To dye textiles yellow, saffron was used, beside other substances. Most of the printed fabrics were monotone, but occasionally they were decorated in other colors by hand. Since the technique was poor, and the painting imperfect, most of the attention was given to the design. The names of the patterns, mentioned in archives, which emphasize the characteristic details of the design, are very helpful to us when reconstructing the patterns of those fabrics which have not been preserved until our time. Among these names we find those which indicate the type and the character of the motives: herb design, stepped, paw, running, cone, wavy, thistle, hoof, checkered, etc. Besides these names of the motives, we find in the descriptions of imported fabrics names referring to the place of production, such as: *kindiak* of Ispahan, Indian printed fabrics, run-

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\* ED. NOTE: Seems to refer to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

ners from Riazhsk, *lagozhanski*, etc. The following names probably indicate the character of the design: *lekovrovnyi* (*kindiak*), *derbadovnyi*, *ferespirevnyi*. Equally characteristic are the names of colors, such as sugar, scarlet, deep-red, cherry, blood-red, aspen, dark-lemon, violet, azure (sky-blue), cranberry, brick-red, dark-smoky, red-yellow, light-red, etc.

Studying the old printed fabrics, preserved in various collections,\* we see that, with very few exceptions, the oldest of them are no earlier than the beginning of the sixteenth century. In spite of their comparatively late date, the decorative compositions of these fabrics have retained the motives of much earlier periods. Although they are original in general composition, the various details of these designs exhibit long familiar and common motives, carried over from the past. Besides archaic forms and motives derived from nature, we see in them traces of a culture which came from far away, from the steppes of the Asiatic East. In the minor details of these designs we recognize motives from classical ornament, stylized plant forms of Moslem art, and also Byzantine influence which, in spite of its antiquity, appears now and then in the details of later work. The preservation of the same motives over long periods was inevitable, because of the very methods of production. A change of design meant the cutting out of new molds, which required skilled craftsmen and good dry wood, and which took a lot of time; therefore, the old molds were mended as long as possible and served several generations. Also, conservatism reigned here as everywhere in folk art, and the craftsmen preferred to repeat a familiar and successful design rather than to take a chance on a new one. We see this repetition of the same patterns over long periods, not only in the work of the old craftsmen but also in our own day. In the Prokhorov Tregornaia manufactory, some fabrics produced for Eastern consumers are decorated with designs almost a century old. We must also note the fact that no other branch of ancient craftsmanship was as free from direct foreign influences as this one. In the seventeenth century, when foreigners penetrated into all other trades, even icon-painting, there were no foreign teachers in the textile trade among the fabric painters. In spite of that, however, no other craft reflected so vividly those influences and cultural attainments which were penetrating into Russia from various directions. Many of the orig-

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\* The Moscow Historical Museum, the Museum of Alexander II in the Stroganov School (Moscow), the Archives of the Department of Justice (where are kept record books of the early eighteenth century, bound in printed fabrics), the Moscow Armory Museum, the Shabelski and Sidamon-Eristov collections, and also the Smolensk Museum of Princess Tenishev.

inal sources, imitated in this art, have since disappeared; but the examples of Russian art, created under their influence, reflect these sources of inspiration like a mirror. A study of the existing examples of printed fabrics shows that the national taste dominated here, avoiding blind imitation of foreigners, but interpreting and assimilating the new forms according to the standards of the national art. Foreign motives were assimilated very slowly, but once they had penetrated into the national consciousness they were very slow in giving way to new ones which came to replace them. A vivid example of this is the top of the field tent of the Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, in the Moscow Armory Museum; the tent's outer surface is painted "with a decorative design on linen by the Tsar's artist and nobleman, Ivan Ievlevich Saltanov"; and the tent is lined with a beautiful printed fabric. Describing Saltanov's work, V. K. Trutovski says: "The style of the painted design of this tent is very interesting, in that it shows how the representations of such secular objects were dominated by Western, particularly German, influence. There is not a line that could be recognized as one of the usual floral motives of Russian illuminated manuscripts or, to some extent, of icons. In this work, the Russian icon-painter, half Tartar and half Armenian, resembles a real German." In fact, all the decorative elements, from the central ornament to the minor curves of the leaves, show that the pattern was an imitation of the decorative motives of some German manuscript. The printed fabric, which is used to line this painting, is quite different (Frontispiece). Its composition consists of an uninterrupted field of flowers (sunflower, cornflower, and blackberry) connected by ropelike twisted branches, decorated with rich foliage. All the floral forms show definite traces of Eastern stylization. The stems, interwoven into ropes, have occurred before; a similar embroidered motive is seen on a chasuble of the period of Prince Pozharski. The rich foliage of the background and the slightly distorted acanthus leaves are a long-preserved inheritance from those Italians who left so many examples of their art in Moscow. Thus on the same subject we find quite different tendencies in two branches of applied art. While even the icon-painters, in spite of the particularly severe attitude toward their art, are influenced by the West, the polychrome painters live as if in a magic circle; their *tzvétki* (printing blocks) reflect the era of Ivan the Terrible in the richness and elaboration of their compositions and in their magnificent color combinations. Obviously, the textile trade, being the more conservative, retained those Eastern influences which the seventeenth cen-



tury icon trade had long since abandoned. The colors of the material, its foliage, leaves, and the complete filling in of the background—these are very typical characteristics which speak for themselves.

The Eastern silk and velvet brocades, printed linen, and printed cotton fabrics, *daba* and *kindiak* of various designs, fabrics brought to Russia from Venice, Turin, and Brabant—all these were imitated by the Russian masters. Many of the foreign textiles which inspired the Russian craftsmen have been lost, but many originals of these rich fabrics are still preserved in the vestries of our cathedrals and monasteries. They are also found in the distant provinces as gifts of tsars, of tsarinas, or of the members of their courts. The cotton and linen printed fabrics, imported from Persia or India, have, however, almost completely disappeared, since they were less expensive and less durable. One example, however, is preserved in the Moscow Armory Museum. It is called a "horse scarf" and is in the shape of a long triangle with two openings for the horse's ears (Fig. 1). It has a pink background, on which, in separate elliptical spots, are arranged full-blown narcissus flowers with small buds and leaves. Another example (dated 1689 \*) is in the Moscow Historical Museum (Fig. 2); it is used as the lining for the back of a small icon. The design of this material (done on a light background in a brownish-black tone with touches of green) consists of long cucumbers, covered with scales, and placed apart from each other. The type of material is similar to that of the previous example.

Although most imported printed linen and cotton fabrics have disappeared, there still remain a few examples of the printed linen fabrics made in Russia in imitation of the imported textiles. The weave of these Russian fabrics is coarser, the design is heavier, and the foreign motives are interpreted according to the ideas of national art. The details borrowed from the foreign motive are often distorted, others have been omitted or have lost all their meaning; but on the whole they are so interesting that one is amazed at the taste with which the creator of the design succeeded in using a foreign motive and creating a new composition, which successfully replaced the imported design and gave its contemporaries a fine example of national folk art. Foreign influence, spread by the imported fabrics, was not the only source of inspiration for Russian artists. The surrounding nature, animals, plants, embroidery used on costumes, carved wooden decorations on houses, creations of folk art, early wood-cuts, decorative stove-tiles, decorations of manuscripts

\* TRANS. NOTE: According to the caption of the illustration this piece is dated 1668.



FIG. 1 (PAGE 10)  
PRINTED FABRIC. HORSE'S KERCHIEF.  
MOSCOW ARMORY MUSEUM.

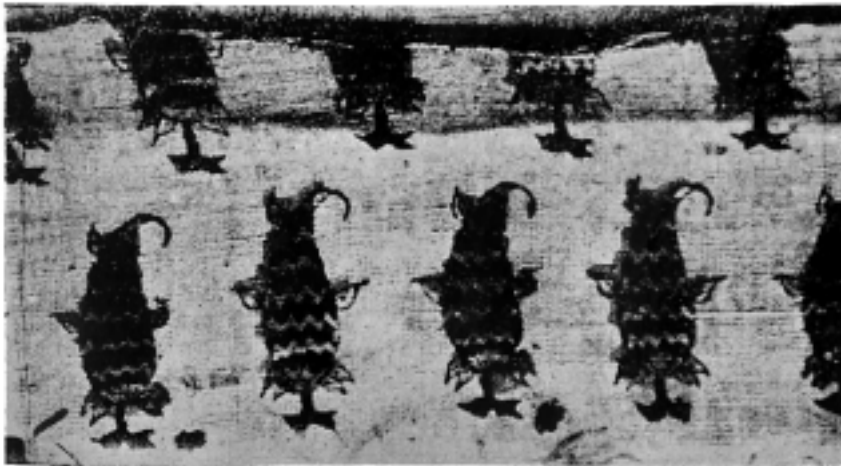


FIG. 2 (PAGE 10)  
PRINTED FABRIC DATED 1668. USED AS THE LINING OF AN ICON.  
MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

FIGS. 1-2. PRINTED FABRICS IMPORTED FROM PERSIA OR INDIA.

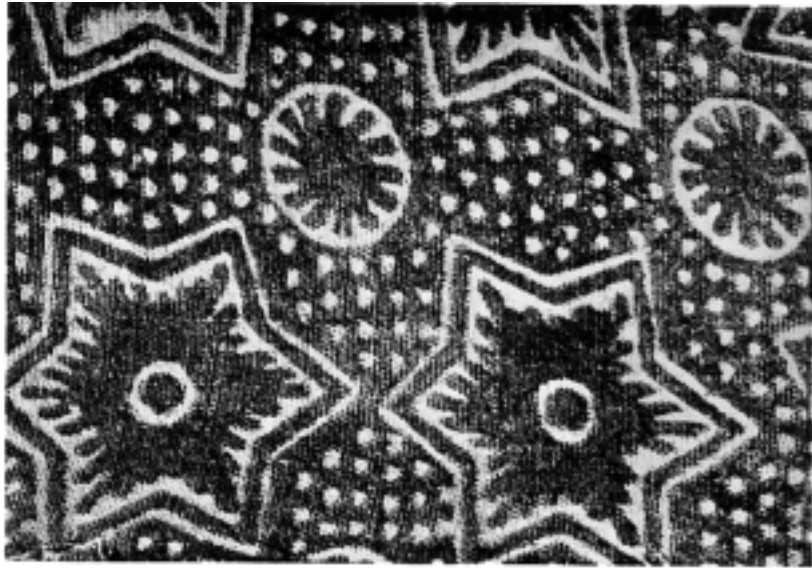


FIG. 3 (PAGE 13)  
PART OF A CHASUBLE. MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

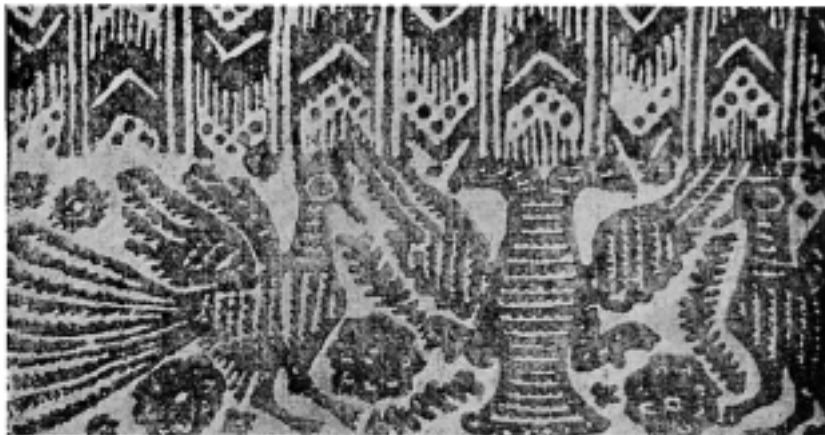


FIG. 4 (PAGE 14)  
PART OF A CURTAIN PRINTED IN NAVY BLUE. XVII CENTURY.  
MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

and of the first printed books—all these were reflected in the designs of the printed fabrics. This national craft, constantly renewed, produced brilliant results.

The remains of ancient printed linen fabrics, preserved in the above-mentioned collections, reflect traces of all the influences enumerated. In studying them we must first consider those fabrics which are distinguished by the primitive quality of their design and weave. The simplest designs consist of combinations of small squares. From the simplicity of the pattern and from the fact that even today the first exercises of the pupils of the textile block carvers consist of cutting out such designs, we may consider this type to be a transition between fabrics dyed in monotone and fabrics decorated by the use of carved blocks. One example of such a fabric is seen in a small piece of a crude material known by the name of *veretie*. A more complicated design consists of a combination of large and small squares. A third example with rosettes enclosed by square frames interrupted on the intersections by small square carnations is reminiscent of classical floor mosaics and forms parts of a chasuble decorated on canvas in black oil paint. Besides such simple motives as these designs of squares, there are other designs, whose date of appearance is hard to determine since they have no typical characteristics except their very rough material and the method of transferring the design to the cloth. Among such patterns can be placed the piece of a chasuble, printed with large and small stars, in the Moscow Historical Museum (Fig. 3). The large stars are nine centimeters in diameter and are placed on a dark blue background covered with white spots. Here also belong those linen prints in which the pattern consists of geometric figures formed by intersecting circles. Such designs occur in Roman mosaics; there are a few of them in printed linens. Of the floral ornament, which replaced these, there are many examples; these motives were borrowed from the East with which there were always lively relations, in trade as well as in politics. This is confirmed by many documents and trade agreements with the Eastern rulers. In the message of the Metropolitan Jonas (1461) to the Tsar of Kazan is contained a request of protection for the Russians going to Kazan with merchandise and a reminder that "he (the Tsar) had always been well-disposed toward them." After the destruction of the Kazan Empire and the widening of the borders of Muscovy, these dealings were transferred first to Astrakhan and then to the Ghilan shore in the Kizilbash Land, with which there was particularly busy trade in the seventeenth century.

An imitation of striped Eastern fabrics, the *dorogi* used by Asiatic people, is seen in an example with little flowers on dark broad stripes and with slanting lines sloping in different directions. These *dorogi* or *daragi*, made of silk, were very popular. The printed fabrics imitating these were made on canvas or linen and were called by the ancient Russian name *dorojhniki*. Fabrics of this type sold well in Astrakhan in "Ghilansky Yard" where the "shah's subjects" from Persia had a permanent stopping place. In the middle of the seventeenth century many peasant-merchants from Ivanovo-Voznesensk began to go there. The designs of these *dorojhniki* consist of combinations of stripes, monotone or polychrome, solid color or covered with little flowers—the favorite floral motives of Eastern ornament. To the striped fabrics made in Russia were often added borders of a purely original character. One striped printed fabric has a border on which is represented an eagle with a peacock on either side (Fig. 4). The type of these birds shows the strong influence of gingerbread molds, which were very popular in Russia in the era before Peter the Great (1672-1725).

In passing from the striped fabrics to others, whose designs contain floral forms, we must note some interesting fabrics covered with scattered rosettes on a background of small triangles whose corners touch each other. These printed linen fabrics were used for albs and chasubles, and also for the bindings of books preserved in the archives of the Ministry of Justice. There are a great many fabrics with designs of this type. They differ from each other as to rosettes; sometimes they are scattered over the background, alternating with rosettes of a different type; sometimes they are arranged in a checkerboard pattern and have garlands hanging from them; sometimes very large and very small rosettes alternate, as on the books of the Tambov administration in the above-mentioned archives (Fig. 5). It is difficult to enumerate all the variations of this motive, which was very popular, perhaps because the stylized form of the open daisy flower (rosette) resembled one of the flowers of the surrounding nature. Moreover, the facility with which patterns of this type could be executed left us many varieties of this design. In studying the backgrounds of these printed linens, we see in their rectilinear character a trace of those cuts that are so common in decorations of furniture, and which still survive today. Even more traces of wood-carving are seen in a printed fabric on which the space between stripes is filled with wavy stems which have flowers on one side and berries on the other (Fig. 6); the stripes are covered with a geometric

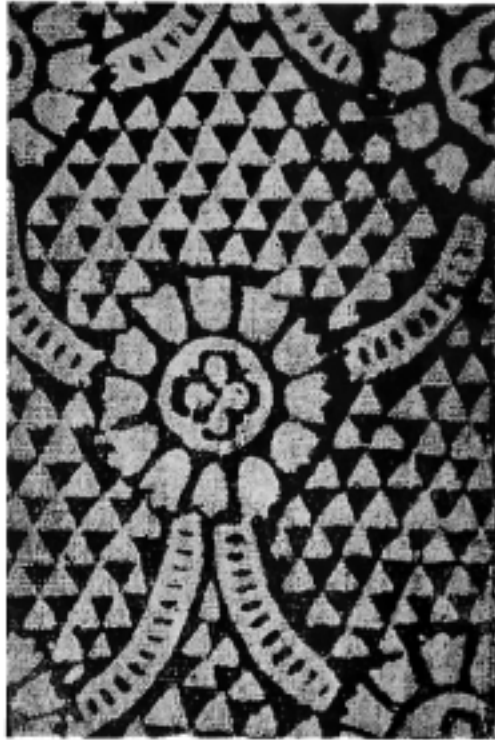


FIG. 5 (PAGE 14)  
PRINTED CLOTH BOOK BINDING. ARCHIVES  
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, MOSCOW.

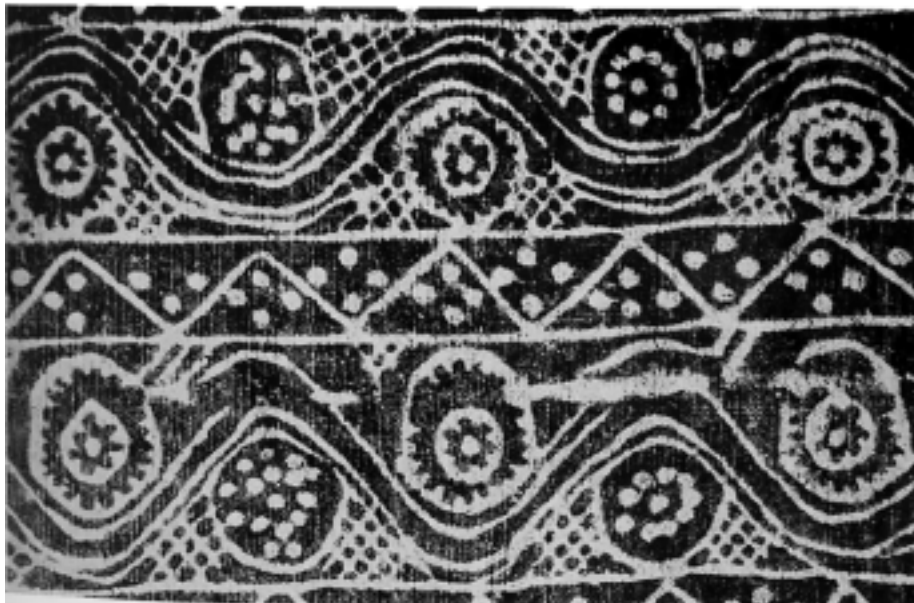


FIG. 6 (PAGE 14)  
PRINTED PILLOW COVER. MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.  
PHOTOGRAPH, BROOKLYN MUSEUM.



FIG. 7 (PAGE 17)  
PRINTED FABRIC.  
MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

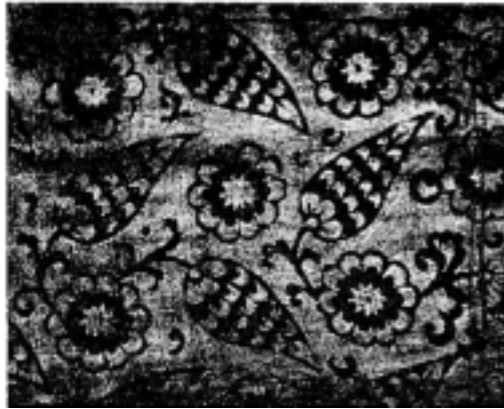


FIG. 8 (PAGE 17)  
PART OF PRINTED CHASUBLE.  
MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

design of triangles filled with small white circles. This design, reminiscent of wood-carving on the houses of Northern Russia, and printed in dark blue on white canvas, is on a feather-bed cover now in the Arts and Crafts Museum of the Stroganov School.\* Another design is more carefully executed, but this careful execution deprives it of the naïve and archaic charm which makes the previous example so attractive. The varying spots of flowers and berries are replaced by identical rosettes, and the regularity of the wavy stem has changed a plant form into a narrow band. In fact, the improvement of drawing, its exactness, and its resultant dryness of line make a sharp difference between the later and the earlier work, and between factory-made and hand-made designs. In hand-printing, the pressure of the block often gives different shades to a single tone and produces a new play of light and shade; a machine can never do this because it works too exactly and regularly. Among the designs, purely national in spirit, somewhat crude in form, and based on local plant forms, belongs the printed fabric with separate small conventionalized flowers, resembling sunflowers, treated in a very primitive manner inspired by the carving on wooden houses (Fig. 7). The design seems to represent a field covered with similar flowers, one above the other. Another printed fabric, done in red lead on gray canvas, has a very compact design of regular spirals on the ends of which are placed flowers, Eastern in character. The type of the design is reminiscent of the *basma* decorations of Byzantine icons with their pointed dense foliage.

Among the more complex designs there is an interesting one of the same flower, but without the geometric background; instead, the background is filled with small moon-shaped leaves and small rosettes. In studying the petals of the flower, one can see in them an interpretation of Eastern motives, which is even more obvious in another example (Fig. 8). In this design, an imitation of that imported printed fabric in the Moscow Historical Museum (Fig. 2), which we have already discussed, are preserved all the Eastern characteristics—the same shapes covered with the same scales; but, in spite of that, the similarity of many features is seen only by direct comparison, while the treatment of the motive, the filling in of the background with the closely placed forms, the introduction of the rosettes to counterbalance the oval “cucumbers,” the use of the little spirals to fill in the remaining empty spaces—all this has produced a Rus-

\* ED. NOTE: In the Russian book this museum is always referred to in the text as above, but in the captions of the illustrations it is always referred to as the Museum of Arts and Crafts of Alexander II. The footnote on p. 8 suggests that the full name was the Museum of Arts and Crafts of Alexander II in the Stroganov School.





FIG. 9 (PAGE 19)

PRINTED FABRIC. MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.  
PHOTOGRAPH FROM A PIECE IN THE HARKNESS COLLECTION, BROOKLYN MUSEUM.

sian printed fabric inspired by a foreign example. Even further removed from its source is a printed fabric in which the ornament overshadows the background; here the abundance of rosettes, and the general floral scheme, give the design an entirely different character. This pattern was done in cinnabar on canvas and, for technical reasons, could not be reproduced in this book. Fantastic berries, resembling blackberries, flowers connecting the bending stems with small leaves, on a background filled with square dots—this is what became of the design which we studied in the previous examples. In it the cucumbers have been so changed as to be almost unrecognizable, their scales have been altered, the rosettes have been reduced in size and deprived of decorative central motives, and the complex curves of the stems have been simplified. In gradually altering the foreign motives, the Russian artists introduced into them more and more national characteristics, made additions to the design which seemed necessary to them, altered the Eastern angularity which did not satisfy their æsthetic ideas, and in the end produced a typically Russian printed fabric.

The carnation flower is very important in Persian floral ornament, but it is hard to trace its evolution in Russian printed fabrics because there are no existing examples of transitional designs. A piece of printed fabric in the Arts and Crafts Museum of the Stroganov School shows this pattern in a strongly Russian interpretation (Fig. 9). The heavy black contour, outlining the shape of the flower, makes this design resemble the decorative painting on the walls of the Church of St. Basil in Moscow, where floral forms are outlined by a similar line. Backgrounds filled in with little squares were a common characteristic of national seventeenth century printed fabrics, in which the backgrounds were never left empty. The minute pattern of the background does not touch the main design, but leaves a narrow band of the plain material around the whole design. This printed fabric is slightly illuminated with yellow and red. More fantastic and original is another printed fabric showing a further development of the same motive and preserved in the same museum.

The borrowing of motives for printed fabrics from the valuable Near Eastern brocades was quite usual; a shoulder piece of a chasuble, preserved in the Museum of the Stroganov School, is an example. In this printed fabric, the Persian lotus flowers form richly framed rosettes which alternate with other plant forms. The Eastern motives have been altered by a Russian craftsman, who gave them a certain heaviness and

originality, yet the source of inspiration can be very clearly seen. The design is done in black on grey canvas with some coloring in yellow and red. Another example shows the same rosette motive (Fig. 10). This is a remnant of a communion table or altar cover, printed in black on a light blue *krashenina*, and the design has a repeat of thirty-four by forty centimeters. The cross-shaped motive of the rosette was probably taken from a costly fabric woven in gold or silver thread, for it even gives that impression in the photograph. The stylized barley was not a new motive in the reign of Aleksei Mikhailovich; similar plant motives, borrowed from the East, can be seen in the carved decorations of the altar screens in Iaroslav churches. We know that one of the best altar screens in Iaroslav, covered with plant ornamentation in which these motives dominate, was made in Kazan, which was famous for its Tartar carvers. The design of another fabric (Fig. 11) consists of an Eastern motive in which the round spots of flowers resemble the rosettes seen on silk kerchiefs woven with gold or silver thread. An ornament of beautifully curved black leaves winds among the oval and round red flower rosettes. Similar designs, more simplified, also occur in other collections. A design, similar in character but greatly reduced in scale, is seen on a small piece of printed fabric sewn along the hem of a badly preserved chasuble, now in the Historical Museum in Moscow. Here the rosettes alternate with bulb-like motives, but the form of the leaves is dry and lacks the easy curve which we saw in the previous drawing. As for the woven silk kerchiefs, mentioned above, an imitation of them is seen in a printed kerchief in the Museum of Princess Tenishev in Smolensk (Fig. 12). The design of this kerchief, done in dark red and black tones, is Near Eastern in the arrangement of the pattern, which consists of simple scallops with little stars and leaves. Even the knotted fringes of the woven kerchief are imitated in the printed example, thus showing the complete lack of understanding of decorative principles that appears in periods of decline. This fabric is of later date.

Quite different were the designs imitating the seventeenth century Venetian velvets. A type which occurs frequently consists of scattered large flowers, forming paw-shaped motives with little rosettes and tails on a dark background. The design in the example illustrated (Fig. 13) has a repeat of thirty-four by twenty-two centimeters and is done in black on dark blue *krashenina*. A chasuble in the Arts and Crafts Museum in Moscow is decorated with the same flowers, worked out in more detail

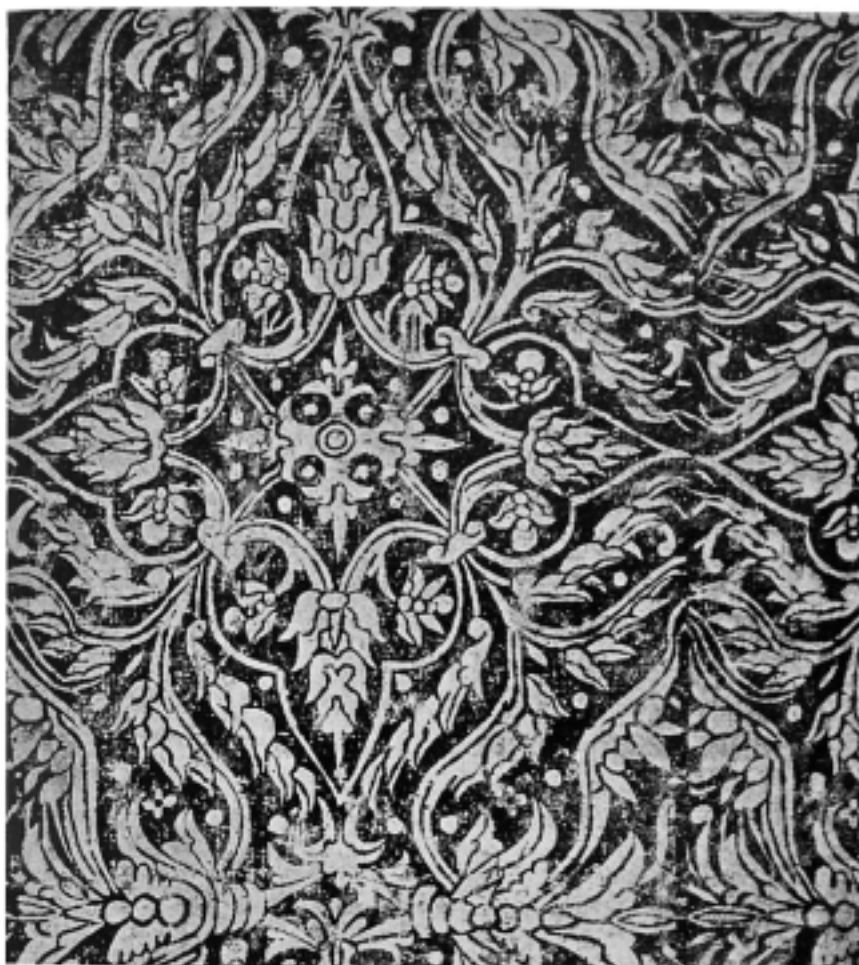


FIG. 10 (PAGE 20)

PART OF AN ALTAR CLOTH; PRINTED IN BLACK ON LIGHT BLUE KRASHENINA.  
MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.



FIG. 11 (PAGE 20)

PRINTED FABRIC. MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.



FIG. 12 (PAGE 20)

CORNER OF A PRINTED KERCHIEF.  
MUSEUM OF THE PRINCESS K. N. TENISHEV, SMOLENSK.



FIG. 13 (PAGE 20)  
PRINTED FABRIC. MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.



FIG. 14 (PAGE 24)  
PRINTED FABRIC. SHABELSKI COLLECTION, MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS OF  
THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II. PHOTOGRAPH, BROOKLYN MUSEUM.

and connected with branches. This chasuble represents a further development of the ornamental motive of the fabric mentioned above.

Patterns inspired by Near Eastern tiles are found in various printed fabrics. The alternating motives, frequently seen in Iranian art, and some of which resemble the Assyro-Babylonian "tree of life," have been placed in frames. But the wide unfilled spaces of the background, quite natural in glazed tile, seemed uninteresting in printed fabrics, and the Russian artist covered the background with his favorite little squares (Fig. 14). In another fabric, the frames are made in a different proportion, and the design itself is so rich and heavy that it seems to be crowded into the frame. Here rows of vases with a kind of Greek acroter alternate with rows of queer flowers, whose half-opened buds, Byzantine in character, are reminiscent of bookmarks done in the same style.\* A fabric from the collection of Princess Tenishev is of the same type; its extremely rich design consists of alternate rows of fantastic flowers with rosettes, whimsical combs, and some kind of amazing little animals that stand on their hind legs and reach for a flower that separates them (Fig. 15). This printed fabric preserves certain Byzantine forms; but the domination of the design over the background, the curves of the leaves, the primitive shapes of the flowers, and the treatment of the rosettes constitute a wonderful example of the Russian art of the seventeenth century. More primitive is the pattern of another example which represents the imprint of a wooden block (Fig. 16). Here the central spots of the repeat consist of large rosettes, filling the width of diamond-shaped frames; the rest of the frames is filled with motives resembling willow leaves. This block is in the Smolensk Museum of Princess Tenishev.

There are two prints which stand out because of the richness and beauty of their designs. They are (1) the tsar's tent, discussed earlier,† and (2) part of a chasuble, examples of which may be seen in two places—the Arts and Crafts Museum of the Stroganov School and the Smolensk Museum of Princess Tenishev (Fig. 17). In the chasuble, a design of acanthus leaves, Italian in character, alternates with rosettes representing full-blown carnations and water-lilies. The carefully studied and gracefully interweaving curves show the influence of the best traditions of Western art of that period. The flowers are inspired by Eastern plant ornament, and, like all the more interesting designs of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, they show a successful combination of

\* A piece of this fabric may be seen in the Harkness Collection, Brooklyn Museum (accession No. 31-403).

† See Frontispiece and pp. 5 and 9.



FIG. 15 (PAGE 24)  
PRINTED FABRIC. MUSEUM OF THE  
PRINCESS K. N. TENISHEV, SMOLENSK.

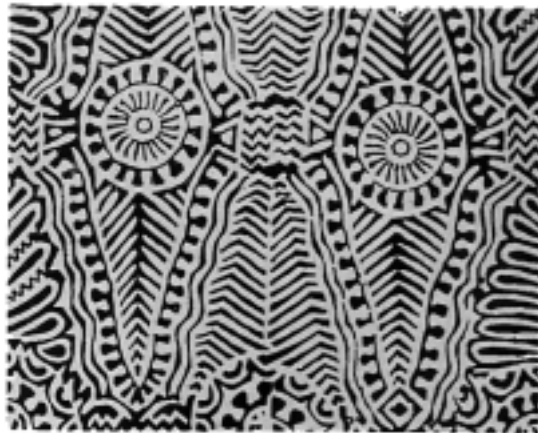


FIG 16 (PAGE 24)  
IMPRINT OF A WOODEN BLOCK. MUSEUM OF  
THE PRINCESS K. N. TENISHEV, SMOLENSK.





FIG. 17 (PAGE 24)  
PART OF A CHURCH VESTMENT.  
MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.

the two different influences, which penetrated into Russia and were interpreted by Russian artists into fantastic and original designs. Similar rich patterns are sometimes found in the representations of saints' vestments on the icons of the same period, of which there are many examples in Rostov, in Iaroslav province, and in Gorokhovetz, in Vladimir province. This printed fabric was probably made of plain white canvas, but it has yellowed with age. The design is printed with a single color, the outline is dark, almost black, and only the flowers are partly covered with paint, probably a solution of saffron. The fact that such coloring of fabrics continued for a long time, even into the early nineteenth century, is pointed out by several writers,\* who tell us that, even in 1798, small details of the design were colored by hand with a little brush. "This work was chiefly done by women—they would take a brush and decorate a bolt of calico with a previously prepared paint. There would be as many as twenty women doing this in each factory, and each of them succeeded in finishing a bolt of material a day."

The cloisonné and enamel objects, so popular in the sixteenth century, with their characteristic "tendril" patterns, such as we find on the cups and tumblers of Ivan the Terrible† (still preserved among the treasures of the Moscow Armory and in other museums), could not help influencing the designs of printed fabrics. Many prints have designs obviously inspired by the ornament used in this craft. To be sure, in the printed fabrics the ornament is often misunderstood or greatly altered, and sometimes the overflowing liquid paint distorts the design, yet the general treatment is reminiscent of cloisonné painting, and the use of tulips and other flowers with widely spreading, freely curving stems points to the Persian source which inspired the designs. The alterations enhance the interest of the patterns, and the introduction of shading in the flowers and leaves gives the designs in the printed fabrics a new and original character (Fig. 18). Particularly interesting is a well-preserved complete chasuble which has a shoulder piece of sky-blue, done in the spirit of the typographical designs of the early printed books. The design is carefully made, the color is evenly distributed, and produces a well-executed, decorative motive; this shoulder piece is separated by yellow tape from the rest of the chasuble, which is printed in a dark reddish brown tone on gray linen. Here, in the monotone print, the shaded "tendril" pattern may be seen.

\* G. N. Polushin, *A Study of the Beginning and Development of Calico Production in the Village of Ivanovo*, and Y. P. Garelin, *Town of Ivanovo-Voznesensk*.

† Ivan IV (1530-1584).



FIG. 18 (PAGE 27)  
ROUGH LINEN PRINTED WITH CINNABAR.  
MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.



FIG. 19 (PAGE 29)  
PRINTED CHASUBLE WITH VELVET SHOULDER PIECE.  
MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

China's original ornament also had some influence on Russian arts and crafts. Today there are still calicos called *kitaika* (from Kitai, the Russian word for China). They are far removed from the source which gave them its name, but among the old printed fabrics there are some which are close to this source in design. Such is the chasuble in the Moscow Historical Museum, with a rich shoulder piece, Turkish—or rather Crimean—in character, done in green and dark red on a dark tan background, the colors of which have remained unusually bright (Fig. 19). The chasuble itself is printed on dark blue *krashenina* and constitutes an interesting adaptation of a Chinese design by a Russian artist. This adaptation is particularly evident in the curved interweaving bands, which in some places are stiff or distorted, showing that the purpose and inner meaning of the Chinese pattern were foreign to the Russian artist, who was only superficially interested in the complicated forms and who departed from his source in interpreting the foreign motive.

Decorative murals also influenced printed fabrics, and one chasuble, preserved in the collections of the Moscow Historical Museum, has a design directly inspired by this type of decoration (Fig. 20). The ornamental motives used in Iaroslav church murals have a great deal in common with this printed fabric—the bulbs with the stylized roots, the flowers growing from them (carnations, cornflowers, tulips, and others), freely scattered on a background of wide, fantastic leaves covered with fine shading.

The metalwork of Augsburg masters, with traces of the Gothic in the herb ornament, imported into Muscovy at the end of the reign of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, were very popular and had a great deal of influence on the character of printed fabrics. The silver door of the iconostasis in the Monastery of Sts. Boris and Gleb in Chernigov offers an example of this type of metalwork, and there is a printed fabric in the Moscow Historical Museum imitating the style. The wire spirals covered with small Gothic leaves, the free and rich curves of the ornament, form its handsome decorative motive. Similar in character is the design of another printed fabric (Fig. 21), whose stems are covered with rich foliage, with small flower rosettes placed in the centers of the spirals. The style of the design of this fabric is reminiscent of metal *basma* decorations of icon trimmings and other similar metal objects. The influence of herbal design in metalwork is particularly evident in the joining of the leaves to the stems.

Similar in character are the first printed book decorations, which also



FIG. 20 (PAGE 29)

PRINTED VESTMENT. MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

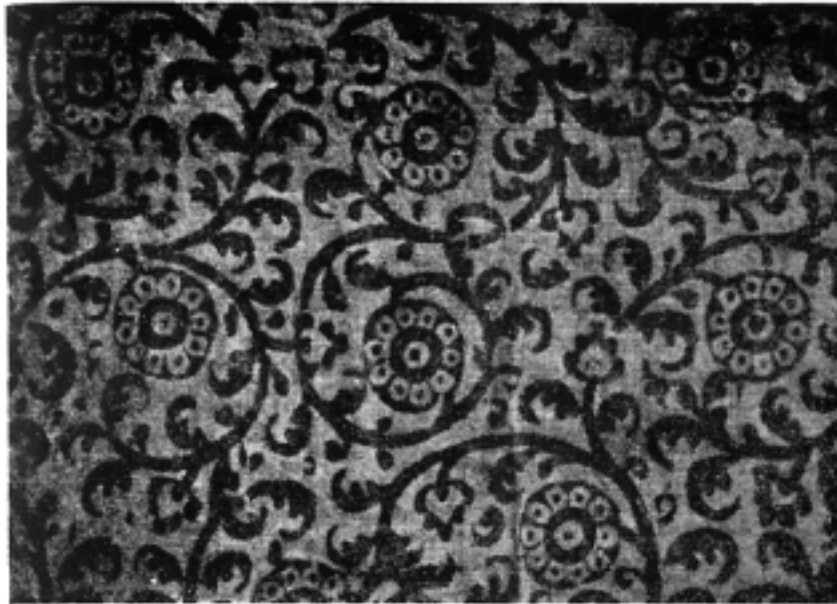


FIG. 21 (PAGE 29)  
PRINTED FABRIC. MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

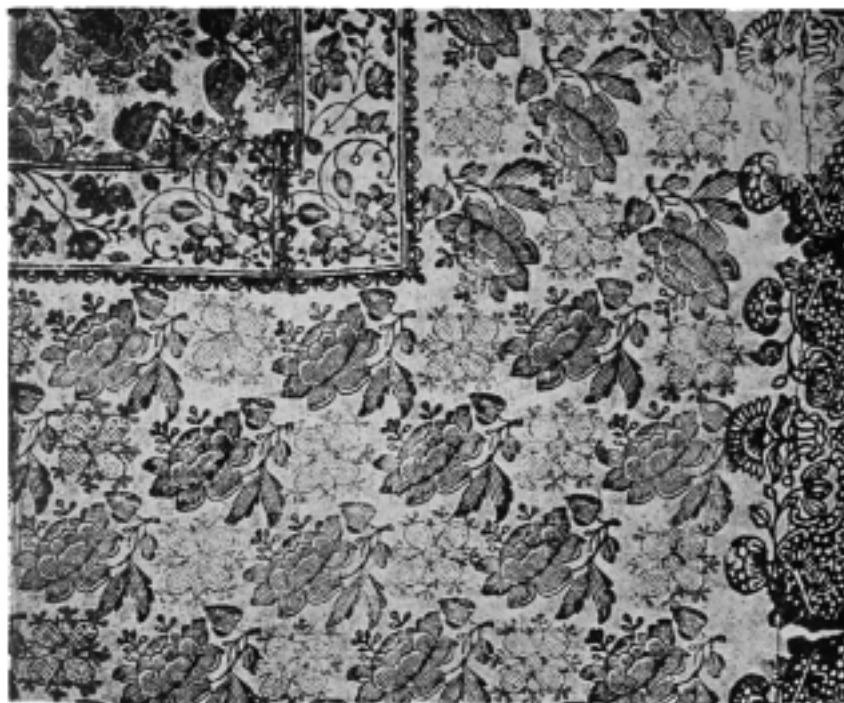


FIG. 22 (PAGE 32)  
PART OF A PRINTED TABLE-CLOTH. MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

inspired the designs of printed fabrics. A small piece of fabric, in the Shabelski collection in the Museum of the Stroganov School, is a fine example of such imitations of book decorations. These typographical designs, imported from the West, together with early engravings and woodcuts, produced examples of plant ornament quite different in spirit from the motives previously made under Eastern influence. The relationship between Russia and the West became closer and closer, and the new influence, which affected many aspects of life, gradually penetrated into printed fabrics. In the textiles of this type, the design looks as if it had been drawn with a pen and produces an entirely new style of ornament unlike anything that preceded it. An exceptionally fine table-cloth was produced under this influence in the era of Elizabeth Petrovna (1709-1762). It is printed in two colors, red and black, and in its character it is reminiscent of an engraving (Fig. 22). The distribution of spots here is not as interesting as in the examples of the preceding century; they seem disconnected, and the design lacks the unity of composition so pleasing in seventeenth century work. It is interesting to note that, even in the eighteenth century, when Louis XV ornament is combined with Western forms of flowers, the Near Eastern carnation still persists—it was so popular that we shall meet it for a long time yet in the designs of printed fabrics. The appearance of new ornamental forms produced designs of a new type; the separate parts, which lack flexibility, are reminiscent of metal overlaid work of the period of Elizabeth Petrovna, and exemplify crude provincial work. Such a print is seen on the binding of an eighteenth century book in the archives of the Department of Justice in Moscow (Fig. 23). To the same period belongs a print which consists of plant forms derived from the East. The open lotus, carnation, cornflower, and daisy, while retaining a slight trace of their origin, have been greatly altered by a provincial Russian master who introduced certain innovations into this composition; such are the oak leaves covered with dots, which give original character to the design. Even more original, unlike anything that preceded it, is a print done in black and pink paint on crude starched canvas, taken from the binding of one of the books of the Vladimir administration. Its composition is inspired by French fabrics, very popular in the eighteenth century; but as it has no predetermined scheme, it is an example of a design created during the cutting of the block. The composition was created during the cutting, and the quite accidental curves of the bands covered with small herbs became so individual that it is hard to see the



FIG. 23 (PAGE 32)  
PRINTED CLOTH BOOK BINDING.  
ARCHIVES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, MOSCOW.



FIG. 24 (PAGE 34)  
PRINTED FABRIC. MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.



main idea. Y. P. Garelin says that designs imitating expensive French fabrics appeared because of the styles which at that time were popular among the rich. The poorer people, who could not afford these fabrics, had to be satisfied with the printed fabrics imitating them (Fig. 24). In studying designs done in two colors with rosettes or flowers on a criss-crossed background, we can see their prototypes, the rich silk fabrics of farthingales, hoop-skirts, and caftans, to which they are related by typically French forms, framed by fine shading, which serves as a transition to the shaded background covered with small round berries. Strong French influence is also seen in the large design of an alb, preserved in the Museum of the Stroganov School, in which the wide swing of the design and the easy shading of the ornament point to a first-class master, who arranged the interesting composition of the fabric (Fig. 25).

As we have already pointed out, gingerbread molds with their queer fantastic world of birds and other animals influenced the design of printed fabrics; an example of this influence in national art is seen in a fabric covered with peacocks, two-headed eagles, and other birds on a background of small dots (Fig. 26).\* Even more interesting is a curtain in the collections of the Arts and Crafts Museum of the Stroganov School. The design consists of strange birds on the branches of fantastic plants, and while some of them are inspired by gingerbread molds others were undoubtedly influenced by woodcuts, very popular in Muscovy. The upper band of the ornament shows the strong French influence, which ruled all Europe, and Russia in particular, from the middle of the eighteenth century. Woodcuts, known in Russia as early as the sixteenth century,† became more widespread in the next era; they were imported from the West or made in Russia; they were used to decorate the apartments of Princess Sophia Alekseevna; there were 270 sheets of them in the private treasury of the Patriarch Nikon in 1686; Prince Golitzin and Artamon Matveiev had them; and they were a necessary decoration of every peasant hut.‡ At the time of their greatest popularity, under Peter the Great, they, together with gingerbread molds, contributed new motives for the decoration of textiles. The first blocks were probably printed directly on the fabric, without any system—that is, applying one block after another, and thus filling the fabric with a variety of unconnected subjects, using whatever blocks happened to be at hand. Thus, on a large curtain in the Smolensk Museum of Princess Tenishev, next

\* A piece of this fabric may be seen in the Harkness Collection, Brooklyn Museum.

† Zabelin, *Domestic Life of the Russian Tsars*, p. 169.

‡ D. A. Rovinski, *Russian Folk Pictures*, Vol. I.



FIG. 25 (PAGE 34)

PRINTED ALB. MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.

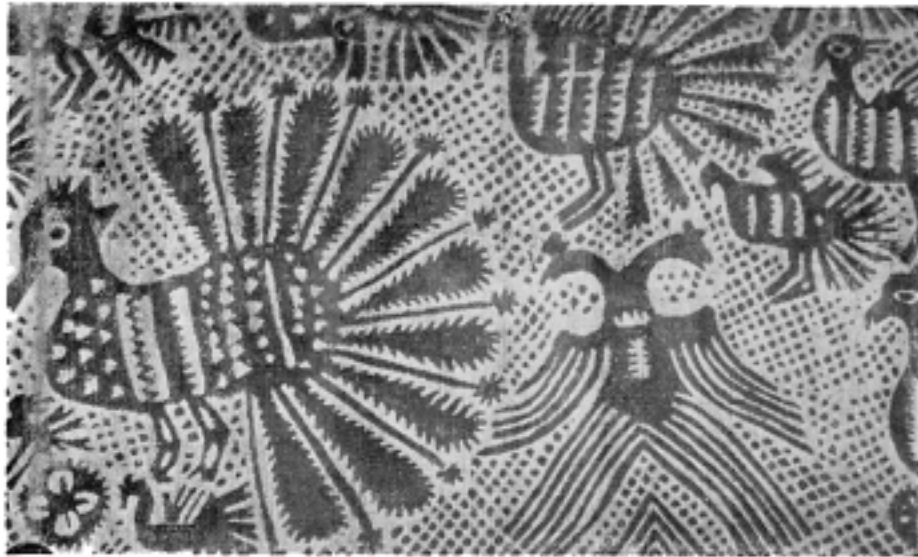


FIG. 26 (PAGE 34)  
PRINTED FABRIC SHOWING THE INFLUENCE OF GINGERBREAD MOLDS. MOSCOW  
HISTORICAL MUSEUM. PHOTOGRAPH FROM A PIECE IN THE HARKNESS  
COLLECTION, BROOKLYN MUSEUM.



FIG. 28 (PAGE 38)  
PART OF A CURTAIN. PRINTED FABRIC. MOSCOW HISTORICAL  
MUSEUM. PHOTOGRAPH FROM A PIECE IN THE  
HARKNESS COLLECTION, BROOKLYN MUSEUM.



FIG. 27 (PAGE 38)

PART OF A CURTAIN. PRINTED FABRIC. MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

to a bird of paradise enframed in a decorative circle, are such subjects as dandies in sleeveless jackets feasting with ladies in costumes of the same era, the Knight Polkan, a battle between Alexander of Macedonia and an unknown warrior, and a bird hunt. These subjects are surrounded by an ornamental monotone border. Such a choice of blocks intended for another purpose (the printing of woodcuts) could not, however, satisfy the requirements for decoration of printed fabrics. The lines of the blocks were too thin for a fabric and produced weak designs. Special blocks with similar figures appeared and were used to print fabrics, chiefly for curtains of various kinds. At first these secular subjects preserved an icon-like conventional and ascetic character of design, but under the influence of woodcuts, the design became more lively and acquired a new style expressive of the national life of the period. Another example (Fig. 27), a curtain of the period of Peter the Great, has a richly decorated top border in the style of Louis XIV; the design above the two birds is reminiscent of those stone cornices above windows, of which so many still remain from the time of Peter the Great. The costumes of the two warriors riding toward each other reflect the era of the Great Reformer with his long wars and new uniforms. The typical rider of this tsar wears a hat, an embroidered short coat with the skirts turned back, short trousers, stockings, and shoes with buckles. The workman who carved this block could not bear to part with the old heroic traditions, and, after representing a contemporary horseman whose face is reminiscent of the tsar himself, he placed in the left corner of the picture an inscription: "the mighty warrior Oosynnia Gorynnych." The horseman riding to meet the first one is dressed in a coat of mail, a round hat, and a cloak which flies back from his shoulders. In his right hand he holds a spear with a flag, pointed at the enemy. He is called simply "Mighty Warrior." It is interesting to note that on this and on many other printing blocks of this era the inscriptions were carved without considering the fact that if they were cut to be readable on the block they would come out in reverse when the fabric was printed, as we can see in the illustration.

An example with repeated figures of horsemen rushing toward each other (Fig. 28) is enclosed in a wide border somewhat reminiscent of French lace with small rosettes in which carnation flowers can be seen. If we remember the woodcut of King Alexander of Macedonia \* we

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\* D. A. Rovinski, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 132.

shall understand the source of the design of the warrior at the right.\* The one at the left is simply a copy of the "Mighty Warrior" of the preceding illustration. The drawing of the bush under the feet of the rearing horse shows the influence of the grain spikes frequently seen on French fabrics of the era of Elizabeth Petrovna. Besides the military subjects which inspired the printers, we see peaceful riders alternating with pairs of conversing dandies and elegant ladies, which were produced under the influence of the same woodcuts representing Princess Druzhinevna with the famed warrior Prince Bova.† Some old characteristics of printed fabrics, however, still remain in these designs—a fear of large empty spaces of the background and a constant filling in of these spaces. The open parts of the background are filled with characteristic rosettes, inscriptions, and ornament in the form of scallops, checkers, or even plain shading. Birds are often seen on these printed fabrics; they are inspired by gingerbread molds or by woodcuts, and are used to fill in the open spaces in the background, and occur oftener than any other member of the animal kingdom. From the days of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich they appear constantly in decorative ornament. In wood-carving, on the painted decorations of various household objects, and on textiles, birds occur frequently, but they express the characteristics of each period. There are some pieces of coarse linen with birds pecking at berries, printed in a bluish tone. They are excellently stylized and are quite different in character from the birds of a later period seen on the skirts in the Arts and Crafts Museum (Fig. 29). Their stylization is cruder, with the birds arranged in a checkerboard order and alternating with small branches which have leaves shaped like Turkish cucumbers. To make the design stand out from the background, the bodies of the birds and the surfaces of the leaves are covered with small dots. A design of birds flying above little trees is more refined; but the exactness and the refinement of forms, due to the curves of the metal plate (*manera*), give a certain dryness to the design and deprive it of that picturesqueness which is common in the designs printed with wooden blocks. Another design (Fig. 30), showing birds stepping from branch to branch, is drawn in thin white lines on a dark blue ground; the effect is much more interesting than a more carefully drawn design printed from a metal plate. This pattern is enlivened by groups of small yellow and red spots printed

\* The warrior at the right is missing in the piece illustrated in Fig. 28. The piece, which is in the Brooklyn Museum, shows other slight variations from the example illustrated in Sobolev's book.

† D. A. Rovinski, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 196.



FIG. 29 (PAGE 39)  
PART OF A SKIRT. MUSEUM OF ARTS AND  
CRAFTS OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.



FIG. 30 (PAGE 39)  
PART OF A SARAFAN. MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE E  
ALEXANDER II. PHOTOGRAPH, BROOKLYN MUSEUM.



FIG. 31 (PAGE 42)

PART OF A BLUE KERCHIEF, WITH PATTERN RESERVED IN WHITE. XVIII CENTURY.  
MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.



with oil paint over the design; these give the sarafans a very dressy appearance.

A large blue kerchief, with the decoration reserved in white, shows a sharp difference between the design of the center and of the border (Fig. 31). In this eighteenth century fabric, the center is a survival of some Eastern motive still preserved, although the border has nothing in common with Eastern motives and seems more like the embroidery of some caftan of this period. The birds on the kerchief, printed with some other block, harmonize with the general character of the border and tie into the general composition of the design. As we see on this kerchief, embroidery patterns also influenced the design of printed fabrics; in studying examples of these, and beginning with the simplest ones, we find on an alb a primitive pattern of zigzags, which run between stripes and alternate with interwoven plants (Fig. 32). The fabric with this unusual design is in the Museum of Princess Tenishev in Smolensk, and is done in a pale blue tone on light colored coarse linen. Reminiscent of South Russian embroidery is an example with an adaptation of a Persian motive, an exquisite and whimsical band of ornament, meandering in a rich design between stripes representing gleaming silk (Fig. 33). We have studied similar examples before. Striped French ribbons, embroidered in gold and very popular in the era of the Empress Catherine, influenced printed fabrics which copied their most characteristic motives in a crude manner. The gold embroidery on the edges of uniforms in the period of the Emperor Paul, garlands interwoven with chains, bands of herring-bone design and between them some sloping architectural forms interrupted by leaves—all this piled up into a strange composition—are found in examples of the printed fabrics of this time (Fig. 34). To the same period belongs another design done in a free manner on plain coarse linen (Fig. 35). In the center of its square repeat, in a rectangular frame, is placed a building with a dome-like roof and columns; on either side of the building grow plants done in the style of gingerbread molds. The whole is framed in an ornament of wide straps which curve around the stars placed in the corners of each square. The background is covered with heavy shading in various directions, which adds interest to the design. A large blue kerchief of this period, of exquisite design, shows in the center a bird flying upward with uplifted wings. We may guess that it was inspired by a phoenix flying up over a flame, but the cutter misunderstood the design and turned the bird into a one-headed eagle holding a palm branch. Thin stems and branches surround the bird,



FIG. 32 (PAGE 42)

PART OF A CHASUBLE. PRINTED FABRIC, PALE BLUE PATTERN ON UNDYED LINEN. MUSEUM OF THE PRINCESS K. N. TENISHEV, SMOLENSK.



FIG. 33 (PAGE 42)

PRINTED FABRIC. MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.



FIG. 34 (PAGE 42)

PRINTED FABRIC. SHABELSKI COLLECTION, MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.



FIG. 35 (PAGE 42)

REPEAT OF A PRINTED CURTAIN.  
MOSCOW HISTORICAL MUSEUM.

small rosettes with ribbons and hanging garlands fill the background of the kerchief, and along the border are placed vases of flowers standing under canopies of branches. The bird seen in the center is repeated six times among the flowers of the border. In the corners of the kerchief are the owner's initials. The general composition of the kerchief is done in a very delicate manner, and the stylization of all the decorative elements is excellent. Napkins with a woven design of the same type can be seen in the collections of the great Iaroslav manufactory, when it still belonged to the merchants Zatraperznikov. While in the preceding example everything was still stylized and flat, the art of making printed fabrics began to imitate nature and worked in that direction with an amazing constancy throughout the nineteenth century, trying to model even the flat ornament. A printed fabric on which cartouches and curls are interrupted by plant forms, and on which the wide bands alternate with other bands of semifantastic flowers, was created under the influence of Aubusson and Beauvais tapestries or of painted wall decorations (Fig. 36). Another design done in a still more naturalistic manner is an imitation or a copy of some foreign example. A desire to represent nature is seen in the poses of the birds which lean down; and in studying this design, we begin to feel the strain of an incompleting movement, for the birds seem constantly on the point of starting to fly.

Beginning with the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the Russian printed fabrics lose all their individual features, and the character of their designs can hardly be distinguished from Western fabrics, which they copy in almost every respect. Designs which were made to commemorate some particular event are the only exception. Such is a printed fabric made soon after the erection of the monument to Minin and Pozharski in Moscow (Fig. 37). It is typical of the "Empire" style of the period of Nicholas I,\* and crudely mixes contemporary drums and cartridge pouches with Roman armor and medieval helmets. Shoulder pieces hang below; laurels and oval shields complete the pattern. The war trophies are surmounted by a baldachin and separated by a garland from the next repeat. The other wider part represents the monument seen through lifted draperies of a heavy pseudo-antique building with Ionic capitals on scaly columns. This fabric is the prototype of all the later ones inspired by notable events, such as kerchiefs made on the occasions of coronations, visits of Russian and French seamen, etc.

In completing the description of printed fabrics mentioned in this book, we must remember that the few examples given do not present an entirely

\* (1796-1855).



FIG. 36 (PAGE 45)

PRINTED FABRIC. LINING OF AN EMBROIDERED EPITAPHIOS.  
MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.



FIG. 37 (PAGE 45)

PRINTED FABRIC. MUSEUM OF ARTS AND CRAFTS OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.

complete picture of the development of this craft in Russia. Many links are missing in the chain which connects the first fabric decorators with the modern masters, and many unknown examples of printed fabrics still remain hidden in various corners of our country. Also, it is impossible to draw conclusions about the whole country from collections accidentally gathered in Moscow and in Smolensk. The few examples which we have studied show, however, what the early craft of printed fabrics was like, and how it reflected various influences. These examples also give a vivid picture of a national craftsmanship little known till now. In this work we have tried to bring it at least partially to light.

## NOTES ON SOME COTTON FABRICS MENTIONED IN SOBOLEV'S WORK

Excerpts from V. Klein's "Foreign Textiles Found in Russia up to the Eighteenth Century, and Their Terminology," in *Moscow Armory Museum Bulletin*, Moscow, 1925, pp. 11-72.

*Translated by* EUGENIA TOLMACHOFF

### ZENDEN

**Z**ENDEN is a fabric which Savvaitov \* classified as silk without any explanation. Inostrantsev † noticed this lack of explanation, but, for some reason, he himself agreed with Savvaitov. Referring to the *Historical and Topographical Description of Bokhara*, compiled in the twelfth century by Narshahi, Savvaitov points to the name of the village "Zandana or Zendene" which gave this name to the fabric *zenden*. According to the historian, this fabric was produced in many villages in Bokhara and was also exported to far-away provinces. Narshahi definitely calls it a cotton fabric, but Inostrantsev has some doubts since this fabric was worn "by tsars and nobility who paid for it as much as for brocade" (we do not know where this quotation comes from). Consequently, Inostrantsev, as against the definite opinion of Narshahi, is inclined to classify this fabric as silk. We should remember, first of all, that in the seventeenth century *zenden* was very cheap; for instance, the church vestments made of *mitkal* in 1623 for the Church of Our Lady of Rzhev in Trubniki were bordered with "dark blue *zenden*" which cost only 10 *denga* an *arshin*.‡ The appearance and the weave of the fabric is well seen on an alb from the Cathedral of the Twelve Apostles (now in the Moscow Armory Museum, No. 12,057), made of satin and

\* P. Savvaitov, *Description of Old Russian Objects of Everyday Life*. St. Petersburg, 2d ed., 1896.

† K. Inostrantsev, "Notes on the History of Old Textiles," in *The Bulletin of the Oriental Section of the Imperial Russian Archaeological Society*, Vol. XII, pt. IV.

‡ *Reports of the Commission for the Study of the Monuments of Religious Antiquity in Moscow and in the Moscow Diocese*, Vol. IV. *Materials on the History of Moscow Cathedrals*, ed. by V. Klein.



lined with "sky-blue *zenden*"; this is also mentioned in the Inventory of 1772 (Sheet 39, No. 2). This lining is made of a purely cotton fabric, without any traces of silk. Its weave is identical with that of the fabrics of the *mitkal* type, but its yarn is somewhat heavier than that of *kindiak* (q.v.). The inventories mention several colors of *zenden*: carnation, azure, meat color, blue, scarlet, and others. *Zenden* was mostly used for linings or for very simple church vestments in the village churches. The Moscow Armory Museum and the Moscow Historical Museum both have many examples of *zenden* in carnation, azure, blue, and red colors.

### KINDIAK

*Kindiak* belongs to the class of Eastern cotton fabrics. According to a member of the Academy of Science, F. E. Korsh, the name comes from the Persian word *kunag*, which means cotton or silk thread. A chasuble from the old sacristy of the Moscow Church of Assumption (now in the Moscow Armory Museum, No. 12,046), made of "crimson satin with gold thread," is lined with "brick-red *kindiak*," mentioned in the Inventory of 1701.\* In the Moscow Historical Museum there is a communion cloth lined with a brick red *kindiak* identical with the one mentioned above. Examples of *kindiaks* of various colors have been used as linings of the church vestments in the Voskresensky Museum, Moscow (the former New Jerusalem monastery): green, lemon color, sand color.

These examples show clearly the peculiarities of this fabric. It is definitely classified now as a cotton fabric. The warp and weft threads are of about equal thickness and are loosely woven in *gros de Naples* weave; the fabric itself is rather thin and slightly transparent. The other peculiarity of the fabric is the technique of its dyeing. A close study of the fabric shows that it was woven with colorless yarn and was dyed after it was removed from the loom. This is proved by the uneven coloring of the thread, by the spaces between threads filled with running dye, and by the cohesion of the threads.

As already mentioned above, *kindiak* was dyed different colors. When dyed red it was called *kumach* (this term is mentioned in seventeenth century documents).

This fabric, *kindiak*, gave its name also to a type of garment. In the Dahl dictionary there is a reference to a caftan of a special cut worn in the Pskov and Tver provinces. Dahl and Savvaitov point out that

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\* See *Russian Historical Library*, Vol. III, p. 773.

*kindiak* is a printed fabric. We never saw a printed fabric called by that name, and we think that this definition is wrong, since *kindiak* is always monotone and has no design, while the printed fabric *naboika* (print), as its name shows, always had some design printed from a wooden block or a metal cliché, but never made by dyeing the threads.

## MITKAL

The name *mitkal* is explained by Inostrantsev in his article mentioned before. According to this author, the name derives from the Arabic *miskal*, meaning a definite unit of weight and also a gold coin, and he thinks that the name of the weight unit or of the coin was given also to the fabric; the same thing applies to the word *parcha* (brocade), which in Persian means a piece, while in Russia this name was given to the fabric woven with gold thread. As a reason for the Eastern origin of this name, Inostrantsev recalls the ancient name of *mitkal*—"Arabic *mitkal*." Inostrantsev classifies this fabric as flax or linen, accepting the definition of the Johnson dictionary where the word *miskal* is referred to as Persian. These definitions are not clear to us. *Mitkal* is one of the most popular kinds of fabric, preserved until our times with the same name and the same weave. The basic characteristic of this fabric is that it is made of cotton only. It is woven in *gros de Naples* weave, and according to the thickness of the weave and the count of yarn different kinds of *mitkal* are obtained, which are given different names. In its natural state, *mitkal* is of a natural white color, and the count of yarn would be 32 to 48 for warp and 36 to 50 for weft. Fine kinds of *mitkal* are called *sitetz*. Thus, the above-mentioned cotton fabrics: *mitkal*, *kindiak*, *kumach*, and *naboika* (print) are identical in technique. A cotton fabric of *gros de Naples* weave, undyed, is called *mitkal*; dyed red it becomes *kumach*; dyed blue, or yellow-red, or some other color, it will be called *kindiak*; when printed in colors with a design, the white *mitkal* is called *naboika* (print); *kindiak* will be called *naboika* too when printed with a design.

Among other seventeenth century cotton fabrics in Russia, we will mention also a fabric called *biaz*. It is a kind of very heavy *mitkal* (warp yarn 16-18, weft yarn 20-22), with wavelike raising on the right or on the wrong side. It is distinguished by the count of weft being smaller than the count of warp. This is done so that the warp threads can be used for producing a raised wrong side.

## KUTNIA

*Kutnia* derives its name from the Bokharese *hutne* and Arabic *kutni*. The documents give several of its names: Bokharese, Turkish, Kizilbash, Indian, Babylonian, and German, usually defined as striped. Savvaitov classifies this fabric as woven with silk and cotton. The examples of *kutnia* preserved to our days confirm this definition. In its appearance this fabric differs but slightly from plain satin of medium quality; its coarseness points to a considerable amount of non-silk yarn. The analysis of the fabric shows that its warp yarn is silk, while the weft yarn consists of very thick undyed cotton threads connected with a regular satin weave. *Kutnia* is easily recognized by its wrong side on which the thick threads of the weft come out distinctly; this can never be seen in pure silk satin.

## APPENDIX

ALEKSEI MIKHAILOVICH (1645-1676).—Tsar of Russia, the second of the Romanov dynasty.

ALEXANDER II (1818-1881).—Tsar of Russia, eldest son of Nicholas I.

ALTABAS (Altobasso).—Silk fabric; the oldest example known in Russia, dated 1540. Serge weave; woven with one warp and two wefts, the second weft coming out on the right side of fabric and consisting of thin gold wire. (See Klein, *Foreign Textiles Found in Russia*. 1925, pp. 21-27, Ill.)

ALTYN.—Three-copeck coin.

ARSHIN.—28 inches.

ASTRAKHAN.—Province and city on the northwestern coast of the Caspian sea, at the mouth of the Volga River.

BAIBEREK.—Textile made of twisted silk threads, plain or with gold and silver pattern. (See Moscow Armory Museum. *Guide to the Collections*, by IU. Trutovski. Glossary of terms, p. 283.) The earliest example mentioned in Russian documents is of 1640. Not mentioned in Western literature. (Klein, pp. 51-53, illustrated.)

BASMA.—Thin gold, silver, tin, and sometimes copper, leaf with embossed ornament. Was used for decorating various objects and also for trimming icons. The name derives from Turkish verb *basmak*, which means to press, to emboss. (Trutovski and Arseniev, p. 284.)

BLAZ.—Kind of *mitkal* (q.v.), very heavy cotton fabric (count of the warp threads, 16-18, and of the weft threads, 20-22). The characteristic feature of this fabric is the count of weft being smaller than the count of warp. This is done in order to obtain a raised surface by means of warp threads. (Klein.)

BIELO OZERO (White Lake).—A lake in Novgorod province, Russia.

- BOVA KOROLEVICH (Prince Bova; Italian, Buovo).—Hero of Russian folklore of the seventeenth century. Bova was son of Tsar Gvison (Guidone) and Princess Militrisa (Mettris). Story adapted from Italian. (See Rovinski, pp. 195-196.)
- BRUSA BROCADE.—Brusa, city of Anatolia (Asiatic Turkey), 57 miles S.S.E. of Constantinople.
- CAFTAN.—(Fr. *cafetan*, from Turkish *gaftan*, whence Persian *caftan*.) A garment worn throughout the Levant, consisting of a long gown fastened by a girdle and having sleeves reaching below the hands. (Webster.)
- CHERNIGOV (Tchernigov).—Town of Russia, capital of the principality of Syeversk in the eleventh century, 80 m. N.N.E. of Kiev.
- COPECK.—1/100 of a rouble.
- DABA.—Chinese cotton fabric, very similar to plain *kumach* (q.v.) or *biaz* from Bokhara (q.v.). It is a cotton linen weave, white or dyed, very popular among Russian peasants because of its low cost. (Klein.)
- DENGA.—1/2 copeck coin.
- DEXTRIN.—Soluble gummy carbohydrate formed by decomposition of starch by action of heat, acid, etc.
- DOROGA (pl. DOROGI).—Silk fabric, often with striped pattern. It is an Oriental taffeta. (Rodes who visited Russia in the seventeenth century and who was well acquainted with the imported fabrics of the period, definitely calls it "Oriental taffetas.") The documents preserved until our times often mention "*doroga*" with striped pattern and also with floral pattern, made of silk and gold threads, also plain ones, green, red, etc. (See Klein, p. 66.)
- DRUZHINEVNA, PRINCESS.—Daughter of Armenian King Zenzevei, and wife of Prince Bova (Russian seventeenth century folklore). (See Rovinski, pp. 169-199.)
- ELIZABETH PETROVNA (1709-1762).—Empress of Russia and daughter of Peter the Great.
- EPITAPHIOS.—Cover or shroud spread on the casket representing Our Savior in the grave (in Russian Orthodox Church).

- FATA.—Fine silk fabrics woven in *gros de Naples* weave, very loosely. Very similar to taffeta, but slightly transparent. (Klein, pp. 65-66.)
- FINIFT.—Cloisonné enamel applied on various metallic objects. (Arseniev and Trutovski, p. 300.)
- GARANÇE.—The common madder of Europe. (In Russian also called *Krapp*.)
- GARANSIN.—An extract of madder made with sulphuric acid (Fr. *garancine*).
- GHILAN.—A province of Persia, having on the N.E. the Caspian Sea. The capital is *Roeshd*.
- GOLITZIN, VASILI VASILEVICH, PRINCE (1643-1714).—Russian statesman, head of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Prime Minister during the regency of Princess Sophia, half-sister of Peter the Great.
- GOROKHOVETZ.—Town of Russia, in the province of Vladimir.
- HAMOVNYA SELA (Hamovnya Villages).—In the vicinity of Moscow. Villages (sixteenth-seventeenth century) which were producing linen fabrics. The name derives from the Hindu “haman,” which means “cotton linen.”
- HOLST (kholst).—Single linen (Schlomann-Oldenbourg, Illustrated Technical Dictionaries, vol. 16).
- HOLSTINA.—Plain coarse fabric, of flax or hemp yarn; coarse single linen. Also made of cotton yarn.
- IAROSLAV (YAROSLAV) I THE WISE (978-1054).—Grand Prince of Kiev, son of Vladimir.
- IAROSLAVL (YAROSLAVL).—City of Russia on Volga River, capital of the province of same name; 160 miles N.E. of Moscow.
- ISPAHAN (Isfagan).—Famous city, formerly metropolis of Persia.
- IVANOVO-VOZNESENSK.—Town of Russia in the province of Vladimir, called sometimes “The Russian Manchester.”
- IVAN THE TERRIBLE (IVAN IV) (1530-1584).—Tsar of Russia, 1547-1584.
- IZORBAF (Zarbat).—Persian silk fabric woven with gold and silver threads. One example only known in Russia (Moscow Armory

- Museum, No. 12,134). (See Klein, p. 50.) Woven in satin weave, with one, sometimes two-colored warp and several wefts (sometimes as many as six). Name consists of two parts: *izer*, gold, and *baf*, textiles. (See also J. Le Chevalier Chardin, *Le couronnement de Solesman, troisième roi de Perse*. Paris, 1671.)
- KADASHEVO.—Village in the vicinity of Moscow, known for its textile industry.
- KAMKA.—Silk fabric woven in the same weave as damask. Was one of the most popular silk fabrics in Russia; many varieties of it were known. Was imported from the West as well as from the East, but the latter was its real homeland. The name is Persian. It is possible that the most ancient examples still preserved came from China. The weave is very much like *gros de Naples*, with that distinction that the warp and weft threads do not alternate regularly, thus producing a pattern. *Kamka* is always woven with one warp and one weft. (See Klein, p. 56.)
- KAMZOL.—A man's coat.
- KAZAN.—City and province of Russia, on the Volga River.
- KHOLST.—Single linen (Schlomann-Oldenbourg).
- KHOLSTINA.—Plain coarse fabric, of flax or hemp yarn; coarse linen, single. It is also made of cotton yarn.
- KINDIAK.—For description of this material see "Notes on Some Cotton Fabrics Mentioned in Sobolev's Work," p. 50.
- KIZILBASH LAND.—Most probably that part of Afghanistan where Kizilbashes lived until the second half of the seventeenth century. Kizilbashes ("Red Heads"), nickname given by the Orthodox Turks to the shiitic Turkish immigrants from Persia who began coming after 1737.
- KRASHENINA.—Kind of dyed and glazed linen, usually blue.
- KUMACH.—Mitkal (q.v.), dyed red. Cotton fabrics of *gros de Naples* weave.
- LAGOZHANSKI.—Probably an old geographical name, apparently no longer in use and not to be found now.
- LEKOVROVYI, DERBADOVYI, FERESPIREVYI.—According to the author these words imply special designs, but their meanings cannot be found now.

- LEVKAS.—Impasto made of glue and chalk to make a ground for gilt or paint. All the ancient icons were painted on impasto ground. Name derives from Greek *levkos*, meaning white (since the impasto was always white). (See Arseniev and Trutovski, p. 290.)
- MAKARIEVO FAIR.—Yearly fair in Makariev, town in the province of Kostroma, known for its linen industry and its famous Makarievo Fair.
- MATVEIEV, ARTAMON SERGIEEVICH (d. 1682).—Russian statesman and reformer, scholar and author; keeper of the “Great Seal.”
- METROPOLITAN JONAS.—In the Eastern church, a metropolitan ranks above an archbishop, but below a patriarch.
- MININ, KOZMA.—A civil leader who headed the patriotic rising in order to chase the Poles from Moscow (ca. 1613).
- MITKAL.—For description of this material see “Notes on Some Cotton Fabrics Mentioned in Sobolev’s Work,” p. 51.
- NABOIKA (see also VYBOIKA).—Cotton fabric of *gros de Naples* weave; kind of white *mitkal*, printed.
- NANKEEN.—A plain cotton fabric, primarily died yellow; in olden times imported into Russia from China.
- NEW JERUSALEM (see VOSKRESENSKY MONASTERY).
- NIKON, PATRIARCH.—Russian Patriarch (1652-1659), under the Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich.
- OBIAR.—Two kinds of this fabric known in Russia—silk and silk with gold. The most ancient example known in Russia, dated 1328. Silk *obiar* woven in rep weave (Western origin); silk and gold or silk and silver *obiar* is of Eastern origin, Turkish and Kizilbash (q.v.). (See Klein, pp. 44-50.) Examples in the Moscow Armory Museum. N. N. Sobolev calls it “type of contemporary moiré woven in rep weave.”
- PASSIR.—Cow dung.
- PESTRIAD.—General name for material with printed design; usually rather coarse fabric worn by Russian peasants.
- PETER THE GREAT (1672-1725).—Son of Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich.
- PINEGA.—River in north of European Russia, in Vologda and Archangel provinces.



PLIS.—Cotton and woolen drugget (Russian Dictionary). Uncut velvet, pile weaving (Schlomann-Oldenbourg Technical Dictionary).

POLKAN BOGATYR (Knight Polkan, It. Pulican).—Half man, half dog, born from “an eminent Christian lady.” (See Rovinski, pp. 198, 217, 298.) (There is a variety of opinions among Russian scholars as to Polkan’s pedigree, but definitely it is a monster of the Russian seventeenth century folklore adapted from Italian.)

POSKON.—Fabric woven with hemp yarn, very rough and unbleached. (Klein, p. 60.)

PRINCE POZHARSKI (Posharski).—Beginning of seventeenth century. National leader in Russia, commander-in-chief of national army fighting against Poles (1612).

RIAZHNSK.—Town of Russia.

RIGA.—Formerly city of Russia. Capital of Latvia.

ROSTOV (of Iaroslav province).—City of Russia, also called Rostov Iaroslavski, to distinguish this city from Rostov on the Don River.

ST. VARLAAM HOOTINSKI.—Saint of the Russian Church (d. 1193).

SAINT BASIL CHURCH.—Built in Moscow Kremlin by Ivan the Terrible in 1534-1584.

SARAFAN.—Russian national woman’s dress, sleeveless; kind of jumper. Sleeveless coat forming part of national dress of Russian peasant women.

SCHLÜSSELBURG.—Town and fortress in St. Petersburg province on an island on Neva River, near Lake Ladoga.

SHAFAN.—Cabinet, bookcase.

SITETZ.—Fine kind of printed *mitkal* (q.v.). (Klein, p. 70.)

SMOLENSK.—City and province in central Russia.

SOPHIA ALEKSEIEVNA.—Russian princess regent (1682-1689), half-sister of Peter the Great.

STAROPAVLOVSK.—Town of Russia.

TAMBOV.—City and province in central Russia.

TIELOGREI.—Woman’s sleeveless warm jacket.

UZCHINA.—A plain coarse linen; very narrow; very popular among peasants in Russia.

VAIDA (wad, wade, woad).—A blue dyestuff, now little used, prepared from the leaves of woad. Its essential constituent, indigotin, is identical with that of indigo. In olden times used in Russia instead of indigo. Also: cotton or silk obtained from the Syrian swallowwort, formerly cultivated in Egypt and imported to Europe.

VERETIE (Vatola).—Very coarse, thick, peasant fabric. Warp and weft of thickest kind, weft thread twisted, of the thickness of goose quill (Dahl Russian dictionary).

VERSHOK.—1¾ inches.

VIATKA.—City and province in the central Russia.

VOSKRESENSKY MONASTERY.—A monastery near Moscow. Also called *New Jerusalem*.

VYBOIKA.—Same as NABOIKA (printed textile).

ZENDEN (ZENDIEN).—For description of this material see "Notes on Some Cotton Fabrics Mentioned in Sobolev's Work," p. 49.

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TOMB COVER WITH KUFIC INSCRIPTION

(COMPOUND TWILL.) PERSIA, XI-XII CENTURY. FROM THE HOBART MOORE MEMORIAL COLLECTION, YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY, NEW HAVEN. THE INSCRIPTION READS: "IT IS IN DEATH THAT IS MY GRIEVOUS AFFLICTION; IT IS IN THE TOMB THAT IS MY SOLITUDE; IT IS IN MY COFFIN THAT IS MY BRUTAL ISOLATION."