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FRONTISPIECE

PORTRAIT OF A LADY WEARING SCALLOPED LACE OF THE TYPE OF DANIELI'S DESIGNS.
BY A HAMBURG PAINTER, COLLECTION OF DR. OERTEL, MUNICH.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ITALIAN LACE
FROM THE EARLY PERIODS TO THE BAROQUE

by DR. MARIE SCHUETTE
formerly Director of the Leipzig Museum

FOR A LONG TIME the history of lace has been treated more as a part of the history of culture than of the history of art and made interesting by amusing anecdotes, though there is scarcely a craft that can be more obviously followed in its formal evolution than lace. For its life is short, beginning with the middle of the sixteenth and ending with the last part of the eighteenth century, and belongs to the period when painting and portraits were at their height and the interest in fashion and dress had gained an importance not dreamt of in earlier times.

Dated portraits of people wearing lace, "lace without words," would be the ideal history of this fabric, but it will be long before this dream becomes reality, if ever it does, for today only America takes a real interest in lace, and many such portraits are still hidden, if not destroyed. Such a picture book would be a gay accompaniment to the most serious and painstakingly written book on lace, Lotz' *Bibliographie der Modelbücher*.* This is written with the utmost modesty and careful scholarship and an incomparable scientific acerbity which somewhat conceals the history of lace as an oyster hides its pearl. It is a book that is not easy to read, even for a German, and therefore I should like to try, with Lotz as my guide, to follow up the evolution of lace from its beginning to its baroque period even if facts are repeated that are known to the connoisseur. For this I apologize in advance.

The history of lace starts with the year 1542 in Venice with Matio Pagano's *Giardinetto di punti tagliati* (Lotz 80). This is the first mention of *punto tagliato*, cutwork, the immediate forerunner of needlepoint lace, that took as its beginning the open quadrangles of linen prepared for cutwork (Plate I). This kind of rich embroidery must have been well known and familiarly practiced by the Venetian needlewoman even before a publisher had the idea of printing a book of patterns exclusively

* *Bibliographie der Modelbücher*, von Arthur Lotz. Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der Stick- und Spitzenmusterbücher des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts. Karl W. Hiersemann, Leipzig, 1933.

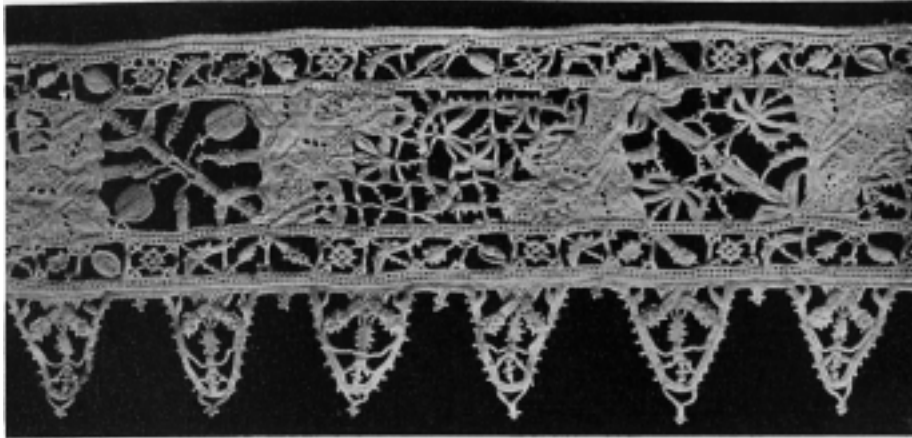


PLATE I

BORDER SHOWING EARLY ITALIAN LACE TECHNIQUES, XVI CENTURY. RETICELLA; PUNTO TAGLIATO (CUTWORK); PUNTO IN ARIA (IN THE SCALLOPS). EMBROIDERY STITCHES: PUNTO QUADRO (SQUARE HEMSTITCH); PUNTO REALE (SATIN STITCH); PUNTO RICCIO (CURL STITCH).

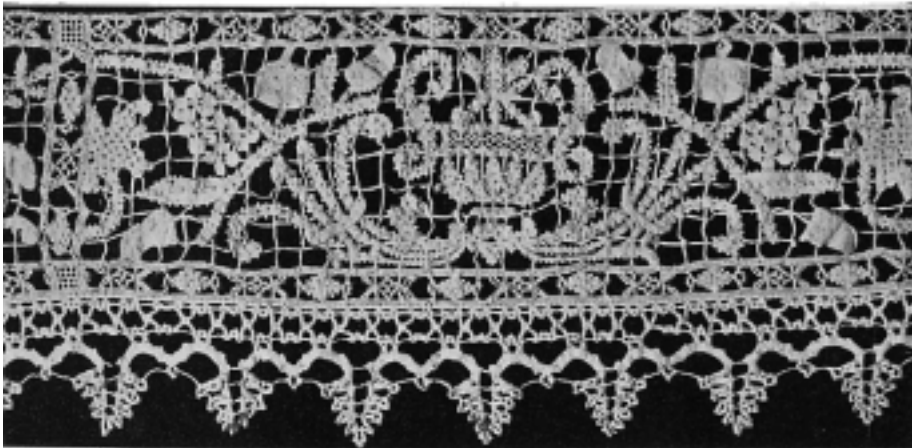


PLATE II

CUTWORK WITH FOLIAGE DESIGNS FROM L'HONESTO ESSEMPIO, MATIO PAGANO, VENICE 1550. COOPER UNION MUSEUM.

for the purpose of introducing a new technique for the benefit of Venetian ladies, eager for novelty to outdo their neighbors, very much as housewives do with cooking recipes. Technical details in the designs, such as the picots on the edges of little triangles filling the corners of squares would seem to prove this theory. These few facts sum up all that is known positively about the predecessor of needlepoint.

The next stage is *punto a fogliami*, cutwork with foliage designs (Plate II). It appears eight years later, in 1550, on the title page of the same ambitious publisher's *L'Honesto Essempio* (Lotz 85) and is its sole subject. This is, in fact, needlepoint, for the foliage-like pattern in spreading out and crossing the quadrangular openings does away with the little geometric lozenges, crosses and broken S-lines. *Punto tagliato* now adopts the foliage patterns of embroidery and introduces into the lace pattern blossoms, leaves, vases and human and animal figures.

The term *punto a fogliami* was in use for only a short time during the sixteenth century. It appears in 1556 for the last time on the title page of the second edition of Pagano's *Gloria et l'Honore de ponti tagliati a fogliami*, adding in a most instructive manner as the title continues, *delle quali tu portai fare ponti in stuora (matting stitch) a fogliami: Opera nuova & con somma diligentia posta in luce* (Lotz 87b), which is to say, Glory and honor to cutwork with foliage from which you can learn to make stitches in the air, network with foliage; a new work brought into being by means of the greatest diligence.

Stitch in the air (*punto in aria*) is the name for the fully developed free needlepoint and appears for the first time in 1554 on the title page of the first edition of Pagano's *Gloria et l'Honore* (Lotz 87a) as a new type and as an equal to the popular *punto tagliato* (Plate III). This is the birth certificate of the freely worked needlepoint and, judging from the pattern books, we would infer that needlepoint changed from the linen grounding of *punto tagliato* to the parchment foundation in the years between 1550 and 1554 with the term *a fogliami* added to that of *punto in aere*. Venetian pattern books of the sixth and seventh decades of the sixteenth century show the horizontal classical scroll to be the favorite lace design emphasizing the close connection with the older art of embroidery, as lace was considered in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

It is remarkable that while in Italy these scroll patterns lead uninterruptedly into the seventeenth century and, in the first half of that century, to the baroque style of that versatile lace maker, etcher and designer of lace, Danieli of Bologna, in Paris in 1587 a Venetian, Frederic Vinciolo,

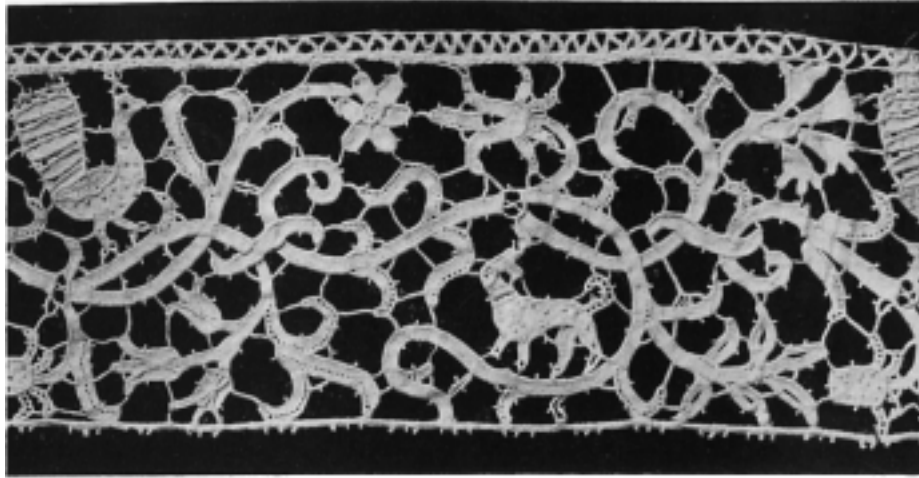


PLATE III
PUNTO IN ARIA, ITALIAN, XVI-XVII CENTURY.

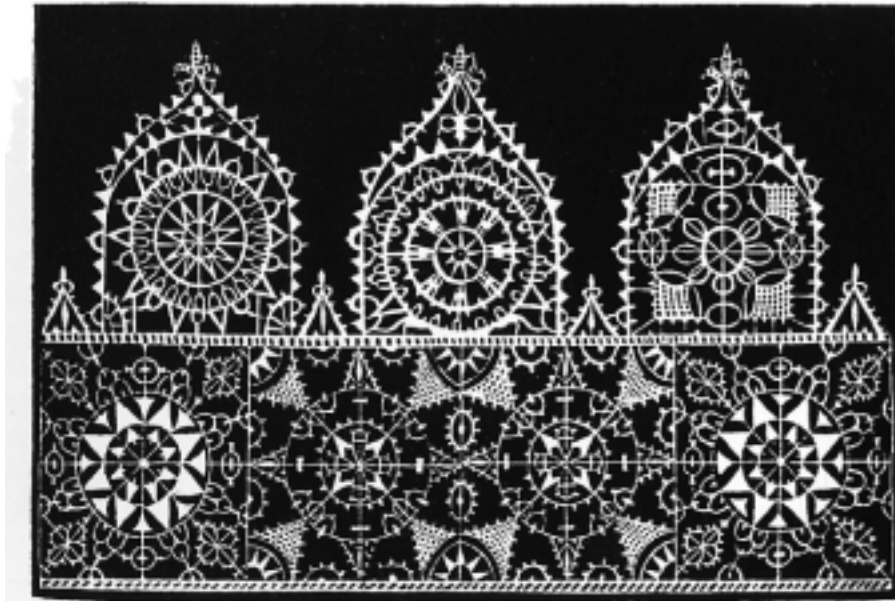


PLATE IV
RETICELLA DESIGN FROM CORONA DELLE NOBILI ET VIRTUOSE DONNE, LIBRO PRIMO,
CESARE VECELLIO, VENICE 1601.

was offering the first geometrical lace designs (later to be termed *reticella*) in his famous work, *Les singuliers et nouveaux pourtraicts et ouvrages de Lingerie* (Lotz 110). No doubt the book owed its stupendous success to the more severe and new patterns which were in harmony with the French spirit, but as late as 1587 it means as well a reversion to the cutwork of the forties and in keeping with this every pattern is marked *point coupé*. In pronounced contrast to the Italian usage which, under *punto tagliato* means only cutwork, French needlework of the Renaissance is never named otherwise than *point coupé* by Vinciolo's contemporaries.

Vecellio, the artistic and imaginative relative of Titian, cultivated the Italian character — scrolls, figures and animal forms — without neglecting the new geometrical patterns, the *reticella* (Plate IV). This familiar name appears for the first time in 1591 (Lotz 116, 120) in Vecellio's *Corona delle nobili et virtuose donne*, the most graceful, abundant and inspiring of all Italian Renaissance lace books. For nearly thirty-five years it remained the favorite of both Italian women and their foreign sisters so that it attained about sixty editions until 1625. The influence of this stimulating work with its five separate books cannot be easily overrated as to style, propagation and fashions in lace.

These two Venetian authors published, with their *reticella* designs (a name that, as we see, had apparently not yet been taken up in 1587, the year of Vinciolo's publication), a type of lace that, to judge by portraits, had been in fashion at the French court in about the year 1560 and that can be found in Venice about 1570. This is a matter of importance for it shows, as has already been demonstrated, that the actual practice of such handicraft preceded the books. Many authors also lay stress upon the fact that they have painstakingly collected their patterns in foreign countries and give them respectively local names whose real meaning we can not unfortunately prove.

So far no satisfactory explanation of the term *reticella* has been found, nor of its derivation. The simplest seems to be its likeness to the spider's web with its threads, like rays, radiating from the center. [As a source there also is to be considered the rectangular character of its design.] *Reticella* may be termed a classical lace type. It lives a life of its own, apart from changing lace patterns. After its first appearance in the third quarter of the Cinquecento it remained long in fashion and was so much in favor that the bobbin copied this pattern that had its origin in cutwork and the construction of the linen weave with the result that bobbin-made *reti-*

cella, such as is seen in Parasole's *Teatro delle nobili et virtuose donne* 1616 (Lotz 143), and in the Englishman, Mignerak's *La pratique de l'aiguille industrielle* 1605 (Lotz 140), became the height of fashion for ruffs and collars in Holland and England. Since the days of Vecellio, *reticella* has become a customary feature on the titles of lace books so that in the course of time the term has changed its meaning. Giacomo Franco, who had the courtesy in his *Inventione nuova* 1596 (Lotz 143) to give every pattern its name, called *reticella* the "quadrangular patterns" no matter whether they were composed of straight lines only or of foliage and flowers. In the later pattern books the once so popular *punto tagliato* is seldom mentioned; it seems to hide under the name of *reticella* as in Parasole's *Specchio delle nobili* 1595 (Lotz 129a). The book does not mention *punto tagliato* but shows under the title *Lavoro a ponto Reticella* a broad cutwork insertion (Lotz plates 90, 176) which in technique and pattern bears the closest resemblance to the earliest *punto tagliato* in Pagano's *Giardinetto* of 1542 (Lotz 80, plates 59, 114). This is worth mentioning as it shows how strong tradition was in the course of the evolution of lace and how popular cutwork remained. The last mention of *Reticelli di varie sorti* in about 1634 in the title of Danieli's *Libro di diversi disegni* (Lotz 48) means lace in general as the author never showed designs of this particular kind of lace in any of his works.

The development of *punto in aria* can be clearly traced in Parasole's books. (Lotz, plates 91, 178 and 94, 184). The earlier type of *lavoro a ponto in aria* as it is named shows an effective design of coats-of-arms in quadrangles and the characteristic graceful Renaissance scallop with corresponding figures, while in the *Studio delle virtuose dame* (Lotz 132) in 1597 the modern style appears as the symmetrical S-shaped scroll without the slightest trace of a *bride* or tie-bar. The design might just as well have been used for embroidery except that the *jours* [or open spaces in the pattern] refer to lace. The co-called *Intagliatela* and "false Spanish lace" [the design cut out of linen edged with colored silk thread with gold forming the picots] appear also in lace work in this period of transition.

Tie-bars or *brides*, very modest in character, appear for the first time in Vecellio's work. Bartolomeo Danieli is the designer who cultivated this important little item, and even the few specimens shown by Lotz (plates 100, 104, 105, 106) make clear how he developed this motive until, in his last book of 1641-1643, it developed into a background for the design (Plate V). And with this we have early baroque lace.

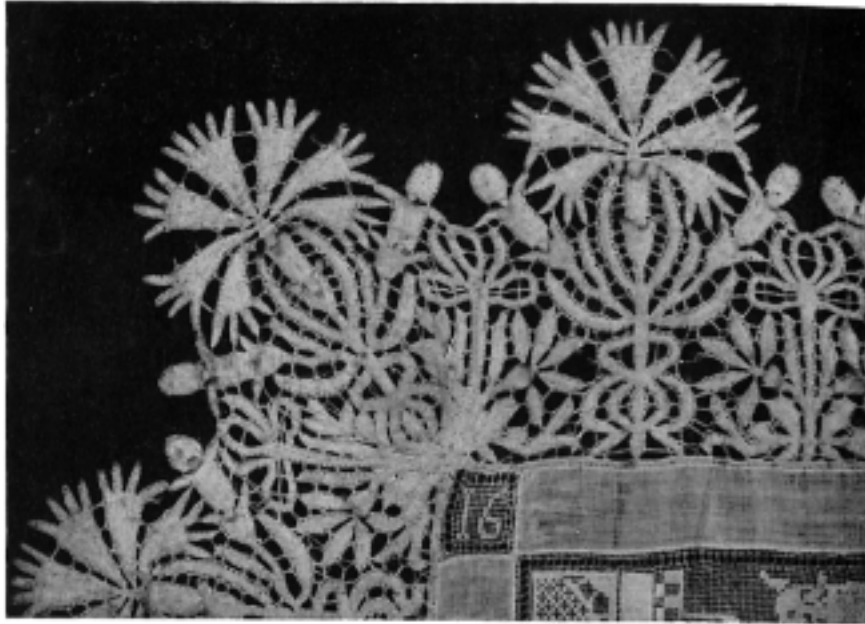


PLATE V
DETAIL OF A LINEN COVERLET WITH FILET INSERTIONS DATED 1612.
ITALIAN, STYLE OF BARTOLOMEO DANIELI.



PLATE VI
NEEDLEPOINT LACE, MEZZO-PUNTO, ITALIAN, VENETIAN, XVII CENTURY.

Early baroque is shown in the large size of Danieli's patterns, by the shape of his lace, that is to say, the deep and broad tongue-shaped scallop, and by the foliage (Frontispiece). Danieli's designs are of special interest as, owing to the haphazard chance by which old lace is preserved, it is impossible, with the few specimens that still exist, to follow clearly the transition of Renaissance lace to the baroque style. There is, well known to all lovers of old lace,¹ a most graceful type of the same period as Danieli's late work — Venetian, with long, interlaced band-scrolls radiating flowers, palmettes, carnations, lilies and columbines with curly spurs, in the same manner as Danieli's (Lotz, plates 106, 209) (Plate VI). These laces are, perhaps, more Renaissance in character in their details than Danieli's designs, but on the other hand they show, with very few exceptions, and in marked contrast to Danieli, the straight border of the baroque lace which followed the heavy, broad and tongue-like scallop. These laces, both needlepoint and bobbin, are the late Renaissance predecessors of the baroque scroll lace in which figure and animal motives show less and less. Never were needle and bobbin lace more closely related in technique and design than in this transitional period.

Early baroque and transitional lace is extremely rare and shows certain characteristics peculiar to itself. The scroll work has another rhythm, the leaves become shorter and as a rule there are two main alternating axes in which the leaves and flowers swing symmetrically to the two sides of the design forming in turn a heart and a lyre (Plate VII). The design is less naturalistic and more conventional than the beautiful lace in the Victoria and Albert Museum.² This type is followed by the lace of the Kunstgewerbe Museum in Vienna, and from there the way leads to the close texture of the piece in the Anton Ulrich Museum in Braunschweig, formerly the Vieweg-Brockhaus Collection.³ This type has been called "Spanish" without, as often occurs, any proof. Therefore until more information has been added they may remain as Italian and Venetian.

Danieli is the last Italian lace designer of importance. Lace making

¹ Dreger: *Entwicklungsgeschichte der Spitze*. Wien, 1901. Plates 17, 18, 19, 24a.

Schuette: *Alte Spitzen. Handbuch*. Berlin, 1926 Abb. 94.

Schuette: *Spitzen von der Renaissance bis zum Empire*. Sammlung Vieweg-Brockhaus. Plate 37. Nr. 56, Plate 54, Nr. 40.

Morris and Hague: *Antique Laces of American Collectors*. New York, 1920. 1926. Pl. XXIII, etc.

Ricci: *Antiche Trine*. I, II. Bergamo, 1908, 1911.

² Schuette: *Alte Spitzen. Handbuch*. Abb. 96, 97.

Dreger: *l.c.* Pl. 25 a, 26.

³ Schuette: *Alte Spitzen. Spitzen-Ausstellung*. Leipzig, 1911. Leipzig, 1912, Pl. 32.

Schuette: *Spitzen Renaissance bis Empire*. p. 46. Nr. 92.



PLATE VII
NEEDLEPOINT, TRANSITION STYLE, VENICE, SECOND THIRD OF THE XVII CENTURY.
KUNSTGEWERBE MUSEUM, VIENNA.

having become an industry in the seventeenth century — of which we know nothing definite about Italy, however interesting it might be — the manufacturers made their own designs for their special use so that there was no longer need for pattern books. It was a rare happening, and one that affords a peculiar interest, to have found in the Print Room of the Victoria and Albert Museum loose leaves of pattern books of Italian lace makers with patterns copied a hundred years ago from books already mentioned, Parasole's *Teatro delle nobili donne* 1616 (Lotz 143) and Danieli, *Libro di diversi disegni*, about 1630 (Lotz 148a), three from each book.⁴ The copies were made, as is noted on the backs of the etchings, by a renowned lace maker, Francesca Bulgarini born Solemni of Sienna, in the years 1841 to 1845 for high-born persons and for merchants in Paris and London who paid from 500 to 900 francs, for that time a high price. This leads to the question as to whether we may have met with one or the other of Signora Bulgarini's works without knowing what it was, or if indeed we shall ever find one.

⁴ The leaves from Parasole are stamped "Luigi Arragoni Libreria Antiquara, Milano" and are inscribed as follows: 1. Corner of a table-cloth (Lotz pl. 101, 199). "Eseguito dalla Bulgarini a commissione del Negoziante Roberto Faure e di Parigi e pagato alla sudd. compresa una golettina ed un paio maniche fr 900." (Executed by the Bulgarini as commission from the dealer Signor Roberto a pair of sleeves at 900 francs.)

2. (Reticella) "Eseguito in ricamo da Francesca Bulgarini Sienese e venduto a Londra per F 500." *On the back*: "Xbre 1852 a Milano £500. Eseguito da Francesca Bulgarini e venduto a Londra nell'Anno 1854." (Reticella executed in embroidery by Francesca Bulgarini, Siennese, and sold in London for 500 francs.)

3. "Eseguito della Bulgarini Francesca a Commissione della Msa Spinola di Genova pagato F 500." (Made by the Bulgarini Francesca as a commission from Msa Spinola in Genoa for 500 francs.) *On the back*: N 27 "Disegni rimasti di Srina—400 imitati alla perfezione da Francesca Bulgarini nata Solemmei fino dell' Anno 1841." (Drawings remaining of Srina—imitating to perfection the fine work of Francesca Bulgarini end of the year 1841.)

The three etchings from Danieli (Lotz 148a) have the initials: F B. One is dated 1841, the others 1842. The one dated 1841 is inscribed: "Eseguito dalla Bulgarini p il corredo di S.A. la Principessa Christina figlia del Granduca di Toscana." (Scallops) Fazzoletto eseguito dalla Bulgarini per S.A.I. e R. la Granduchessa di Toscana 1845." (Executed by Bulgarini for the trousseau of S.A. the Princess Christine, daughter of the Grand Duke of Tuscany." (Scallops) "Handkerchief executed by the Bulgarini for S.A.I. the Grand Duchess of Tuscany 1845.")

TIBETAN APPLIQUE WORK

by

ELEANOR OLSON

In charge of Tibetan Collection of the Newark Museum

TIBETAN APPLIQUE WORK, perhaps the most original and distinctive art of this remote and mysterious land, is little known in the Western world. The writer knows of only ten examples of Tibetan applied hangings, or banners, in American collections. Four are at the Newark Museum in Newark, New Jersey, three at the American Museum of Natural History, one at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and one is at the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art in Kansas City, Missouri. In addition to these, six enormous fragments, apparently parts of one great hanging, are at the Detroit Institute of Arts in Detroit, Michigan.

In general it may be said that appliqué, or applied work, is the characteristic needlework of Tibet. Boots, gowns, costume accessories and saddle blankets of cloth, felt and leather are attractively decorated with scrolls or other simple patterns. The art reaches more impressive heights in the tents and awnings which enliven the landscape or the lamasery courtyards at religious festivals, picnics and other entertainments during the summer months. These are often very large and their designs exceedingly handsome and elaborate, consisting of arabesques and religious emblems in dark blue, or blue and red cloth on a white ground.¹

Here we are concerned, however, with the religious hangings applied with silk, the so-called "tapestries" of Tibet. These interesting examples of design and needlework represent an art which has been practiced, no doubt, on a grand scale and for centuries behind the closed doors of Tibet's forbidden borders. The Tibetans call them by a term which means "fabric images."² Deities and other Tibetan Buddhist figures make up their subjects, presented in a pattern composed of colored silks cut and put together with a skill that achieves the effect of painting. Since the only weaving material available to the Tibetans is their native wool, the silks used exclusively in these banners are of necessity imported, chiefly from China. They comprise a variety of weaves including satins, damasks and silks patterned in gold, silver and colors.

The techniques used in this applied work are few and simple but they are employed with exquisite skill. In many of the hangings the pieces, after being joined, are outlined by a thin, delicate cord whipped over with colored silks used not only to define the pattern but to delineate as well certain details such as features and folds in the skin. In other instances each separate unit is made up of silk sewn over a paper foundation cut to the shape required and without any additional outline. Occasionally also paper-thin, metallic-finished leather is used, combined effectively with the silk as a border material. Embroidery, if it appears at all, occupies a minor role; it is confined to eyes, fingernails and other small areas, generally in overcast or satin stitch. Occasionally details are painted. Many of these hangings are very large, some as much as a hundred feet long and almost as wide. The creative effort and the labor involved in the designing, cutting and stitching by hand of such great and elaborate pieces tax the powers of comprehension.

Virtually no firsthand information about the industry was available to the present writer until the arrival in 1948 of a Tibetan trade mission to the United States. Shakabpa, the leader, and Surkhang, a cultured member of the mission, who spoke English fluently, supplied the answers to questions and confirmed or modified impressions acquired from published sources. Interestingly enough, "tapestries" were listed by the mission as among the products which Tibet hoped to export to the United States.³ Recently additional information has been made available through Giuseppe Tucci's splendid volumes, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, lately published in Rome.⁴

The applied hangings and the tents as well, as stated by this writer, are made by craftsmen who specialize in this kind of work and carry it on according to ancient traditions. They live in the environs of Gyantse in southern (often called central) Tibet which, unlike Chinese-controlled eastern Tibet, is governed by the Dalai Lama who lives in Lhasa, the capital and holy city. The craftsmen are usually laymen, although, as in the case of Tibetan paintings, the responsibility for the composition rests with lamas who may draw the outlines or sketch the general plan, always according to the prescriptions of liturgical treatises. When a banner is completed a lama intervenes again to consecrate it.

The Myang c'ung, a native literary work of unknown date, contains, according to Tucci, an account of an applied hanging, thirty-three cubits, or about fifty feet, in length, which was made to order for the Nanc'en, an official of Gyantse, when a title was conferred upon him by the Mongol



PLATE I
SECTION OF FRIEZE SHOWING SAMVARA AND HIS CONSORT, 20' x 1 1/2'.
COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, NEW YORK, N. Y.

Emperors. Since to this day the value of an object in Tibet is determined largely by its materials, the time, labor and skill of the artisans counting for little, the supplies which went into its making are first enumerated. Twenty-three bolts of silk were used for the pattern, twenty-four for the lining, with forty-two spools of silk required for the sewing. Thirty-six craftsmen worked on it without interruption for twenty-seven days. Flowers, as stated in the account, fell from heaven when it was consecrated. It was shown in public and borne in solemn processions. An account of another great hanging has been preserved in the writings of no less a dignitary than the fifth Dalai Lama, a great and a colorful figure in Tibetan history, who lived in the seventeenth century. After mentioning the quantity and quality of the materials used, the writer records the name of the draughtsman who traced the design, his assistant and the chief craftsmen who worked upon it.

Nearly half a century ago John Claude White, first British resident in Sikkim, admired such applied hangings in the Bhutanese lamaseries and described them as an art peculiar to that small Lamaist country on the Indian-Tibetan border.⁵ Shakabpa and Surkhang, however, insisted to the writer that these must have been pieces exported from southern Tibet. And Jacques Bacot, that able interpreter of life in eastern Tibet during the first decade of the present century, was told by the lamas there that these hangings always came from Lhasa.⁶

Among the many types of these decorative silks are long friezes made to adorn the lamasery chanting halls or courtyards on ceremonial occasions. One such elaborately worked frieze is in the collection of the American Museum of Natural History (Plate I). Designed in an open-work type of pattern, each detail of the appliqué is outlined with fine silk cord. In the center the tutelary deity Samvara, adorned with human skull jewelry and other Tantric emblems, clasps his consort or female energy in the father-mother embrace, a sacred pose which symbolizes the dual aspect of power.⁷ On either side of the god are eight dancing goddesses of four-armed Tantric form playing musical instruments. The frieze was obtained from David Macdonald in Kalimpong, northern Bengal, by C. Suydam Cutting and Arthur S. Vernay during their expedition to Tibet in 1935. It was said to have been stolen from the great lamasery of Tashilhünpo after the Panchen (or Tashi) Lama, because of a breach with the late Dalai Lama, fled to China in 1923. As is well known to students of the subject, the Panchen Lama is not only the second

great religious leader of Tibet, virtually the Dalai Lama's equal, but also the Grand Lama of Tashilhünpo.

Another frieze of about the same size is illustrated in *The Burlington Magazine* for June, 1931. It belongs to the Calcutta Museum where, according to Robert Byron who wrote the accompanying article, there is, as stated in a catalogued description, a much larger one of similar pattern. The design in the piece illustrated in *The Burlington Magazine* is composed of Tantric emblems and animals including a remarkably vigorous and lifelike pony and yak. Byron, basing his observation on these friezes, writes of Tibetan appliqué: "Though pervaded by a sort of crude brutality which is far removed from the highest levels of art, they appear, both in technique and inspiration, to be entirely original. Here it seems the native genius of the country has found free play, untrammelled by the classic conventions of China or the refined delicacy of Nepal."⁸

Whether or not Tibetan appliqué techniques may be described as original the writer is not prepared to state. Appliqué has been a common form of needlework in China since ancient times, and as Tibet as indebted to her great neighbor for most art techniques it is reasonable to assume that the knowledge of appliqué also came from China. Its use in the field of elaborate pictorial representation, however, may well have been a Tibetan development. In the subject matter, as is true of most Tibetan arts, Indian and Chinese influences blend with native Tibetan elements. The Indo-Nepalese character of the divinities reveals itself especially in the Buddhas, the many-limbed Tantric forms and the elegant, graceful goddesses with their abbreviated drapery, so foreign to Tibetan climatic conditions and habits of life. Scenic and other decorative details are often of Chinese derivation. Native design as such occurs rather rarely but the wild vigor and the intensity of religious feeling which often infuse even the traditional imported forms are unmistakably Tibetan.

Two unique articles in the Newark Museum collection are a ceremonial saddle blanket and a saddle cover (Plates II and III). These are worked in the appliqué technique using satins of many colors and in combination a thin gold-finished leather. In both these pieces each unit of satin that makes up the design is sewn to a base of the leather which forms a shimmering border around it. In the case of the saddle blanket these borders are barely perceptible; they are considerably more apparent in the saddle cover where the leather also appears independently as part of the pattern. In neither piece is there any embroidery, but on the saddle



PLATE II
CEREMONIAL SADDLE BLANKET, 4'1" x 2'5".
COURTESY OF THE NEWARK MUSEUM, NEWARK, N. J.

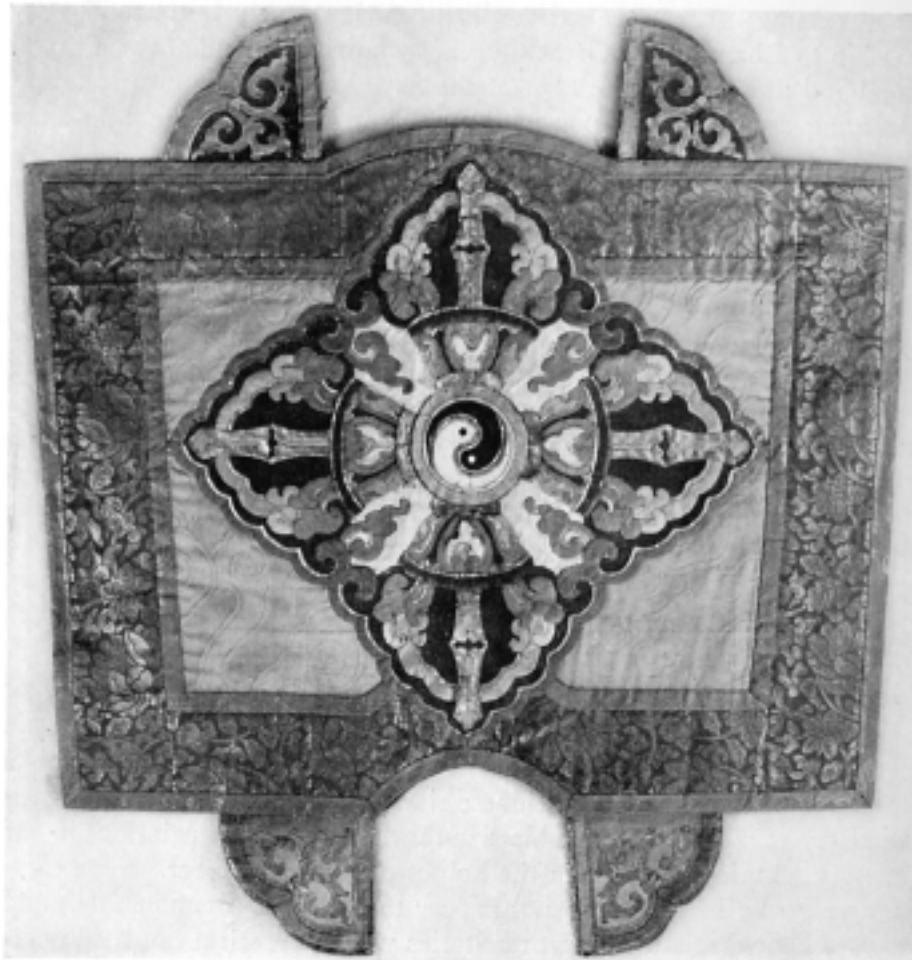


PLATE III
CEREMONIAL SADDLE COVER, 1'11" x 2'1".
COURTESY OF THE NEWARK MUSEUM, NEWARK, N. J.

blanket paint has been employed to depict, and with considerable realism, anatomical details.

The pattern of the saddle blanket features two flayed human skins against a background of formalized waves symbolizing, apparently, a sea of blood. Surrounding this central device is a border of skulls from whose mouths flames issue. The extraordinary design surely bears some relationship to Lhamo, "the Great Queen," who rides a mule over a sea of blood and uses as a saddle blanket the flayed skin of her own son. The terrifying aspect of this powerful Protector Goddess is held to ward off all forms of evil.

The companion piece, the saddle cover, employs for its main design a familiar Tibetan emblem, two crossed ritualistic scepters or *dorjes* shaped roughly like dumbbells. At their intersection is a circle divided by a curved line into two equal sections; this is the *yin-yang*, a Chinese symbol of the duality of nature. The whole forms a flamboyant scroll pattern of lozenge form against a yellow damask ground. The *dorje*, which is derived from the thunderbolt of Indra, the Indian Jupiter, has at each end four rounded prongs. Two *dorjes* placed crosswise, as in this example, are symbolic of equilibrium, immutability and almighty power.⁹ Utilitarian ties on the front of the saddle blanket and on the back of the saddle cover suggest that the pair may have been intended for actual use on a large figure of Lhamo and her mount. This, however, is no more than conjecture. Surkhang, of the Tibetan mission, stated merely that such articles were used by oracles.

Many of these Tibetan hangings take for their subject a deity or saint, often accompanied by subsidiary figures depicted precisely as in the well-known Tibetan painted scrolls and mounted similarly with a border, sometimes triple, of Chinese silk. Like the latter they are often called *t'angka*. When of suitable size they are hung like paintings in the lamasery temples, and also in the houses of southern Tibet. These comparatively small banners do not appear to be at all common, if indeed they are known at all, in most territories where Lamaism holds sway. It is the larger pieces, depicting figures of at least life-size and usually heroic proportions, that are exported from Lhasa to the various lamaseries throughout Tibet, western China, Mongolia, Ladakh, Bhutan and Sikkim. Each lamasery seems to have one or more of these large banners. They are profoundly esteemed and stored in the treasure houses except on certain great religious days which occur, as a rule, annually or biennially. On these occasions the hangings usually are displayed in the open,

sometimes in the lamasery courtyards, more often on a hilltop or some other eminence presenting to the worshippers scenes of spectacular beauty.

Two small banners of the type just described are in American collections. In both of these, as well as in the piece that follows, each unit of fabric is sewn over a foundation of paper. The first, the Green Tārā, with flesh tints of green, is owned by the American Museum of Natural History (Plate IV). The design is in soft-colored satins put together with such delicate precision and fine detail that the casual observer would be inclined to pass it by as a painting. The goddess is seated in her customary pose with the right foot pendant. The right arm also is pendant, fingers extended downward and palm outward in the ritualistic gesture which symbolizes charity or gift bestowing. The left hand is raised with third finger and thumb touching in the gesture signifying argument. In each hand is the stem of a lotus blossom. The type of garments and the jewelry indicate that she is a Bodhisattva, one of those revered beings who have earned the right to Buddhahood but refuse to enter Nirvana until they have helped all others to enter with them.

The second of these small banners, which is at the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, represents Tsong Khapa, a great religious leader who founded at the beginning of the fifteenth century the Gelugpa order of lamas, popularly known as Yellow Hats to distinguish them from the unreformed Red Hat orders (Plate V). Tsong Khapa is held to be an incarnation of the Bodhisattva Mānjuśrī, God of Wisdom, whose emblems, the Sword of Knowledge and the Book of Wisdom, he bears. The Gelugpa order has become the established church of Tibet with the Dalai Lama at its head. In this banner Tsong Khapa is shown in the customary manner seated in meditative pose, the legs closely locked and the soles of both feet visible, upon a lotus throne. He wears the ceremonial dress of a Yellow Hat lama. His hands, raised to his breast with index fingers and thumbs touching, are in the position which symbolizes Preaching or Turning the Wheel of the Law. They hold the stems of lotus blossoms on which rest the Sword of Knowledge and the Book of Wisdom.

In the Newark Museum is another Tsong Khapa (Plate VI). The figure of the saint is here shown life-size and depicted in the same pose as in the banner above. Before him on a small table are two holy water vases, a skull drum, a bowl with flowers, a bell, a thunderbolt scepter and a cup made from a skull. The worn and tattered condition of the banner is probably the result, not of extreme age, but rather of exposure



PLATE IV
THE GREEN TĀRĀ, CA., 32" x 18".
COURTESY OF THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, NEW YORK, N. Y.



PLATE V

TSONG KHAPA, A XIV OR XV CENTURY TIBETAN SAINT, $33\frac{3}{4}$ " x 18".
COURTESY OF THE WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON GALLERY OF ART, KANSAS CITY, MO.



PLATE VI
FIGURE OF TSONG KHAPA BEARING INSCRIPTION ON BACK, 6'5" x 3'8".
COURTESY OF THE NEWARK MUSEUM, NEWARK, N. J.

to rough weather since one of the damasks used in the costume dates no earlier than the eighteenth century.¹⁰ A rather badly printed Tibetan inscription on its watermarked brown cloth lining indicates that the hanging was displayed in the open at the ceremony of the Sunning of the Buddha. Much smaller than the banners usually shown upon this occasion, it may have belonged to some small lamasery remote from southern Tibet, its probable place of origin. The materials are satin and Chinese damasks whose colors have softened and blended into subdued tones of ivory and gold.

The fourth and last example in the Newark Museum collection represents the White Tārā, another interpretation of the Goddess of Mercy (Plate VII). White satin is used for the skin of the goddess and for her lotus throne. A metallic fabric is employed for her jewelry. The remainder of the pattern is made of colored damasks and satins, some patterned in gold, with silk cord outlining every detail. The tips of the lotus petals forming the throne are painted a delicate pink. The goddess has seven eyes, one in the palm of each hand and the sole of each foot. Before her is a dish containing the Offerings of the Five Senses. Over the forehead a piece of black sateen, undoubtedly a later addition, has been crudely applied to simulate the effect of hair; normally the figure would show a high forehead with the hairline beginning at the crown as in the case of the Green Tārā.

The largest examples of this Tibetan applied work known to the writer in a Western collection are the six large fragments at the Detroit Institute of Arts. These are believed to be parts of what was once a great hanging. Four are figures — two sitting and two standing. The other two are sections of a lion-supported throne. The great size of the original piece may be judged when it is considered that the figures measure from about thirteen to twenty-five feet in height. The two standing figures, Avalokiteśvara (Plate VIII) and Maitreya, probably flanked the seated Buddha, forming a familiar triad. A smaller seated figure represents Atīśa (Plate IX). Avalokiteśvara here is represented as Padmāpani, the "lotus bearer," holding a lotus spray in his left hand. Maitreya, the Buddha of the Future, is virtually a duplicate in appearance except that it is his right hand that holds the lotus spray which serves here as a support for the holy water vase which is his special emblem. Atīśa is the Indian Buddhist priest who visited Tibet in the eleventh century and reformed the religion. He is shown seated in the traditional manner with his emblems, a miniature *chörten*, or Buddhist relic-shrine, at his left and a spherical holy water vase at his right.



PLATE VII
THE WHITE TĀRĀ, 6'6" x 4'2".
COURTESY OF THE NEWARK MUSEUM, NEWARK, N. J.



PLATE VIII

AVALOKITEŚVARA AS PADMĀPANI, THE LOTUS BEARER, 24'3" x 10'6".
COURTESY OF THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS, DETROIT, MICH.



PLATE IX

ATÍŚA, AN XI CENTURY INDIAN SAINT, 12'8" x 8'4".
COURTESY OF THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS, DETROIT, MICH.

Approximately the same size as the Atīśa figure at Detroit, but strikingly different in the elaborate detail of its design is the hanging at the Metropolitan Museum (Plates X and XI). The central figure is the Bodhisattva Mānjuśrī, God of Wisdom, whose relation to Tsong Khapa has been referred to above. Riding upon a roaring lion which typifies the powerful voice of the Law, he is depicted as a handsome Indian prince wearing the Bodhisattva ornaments. He holds in either hand lotus blossoms which bear his emblems, the Sword of Knowledge and the Book of Wisdom. Above his head is a small figure of Aksobhya, one of the five celestial Buddhas, between groups of heavenly beings, each playing a musical instrument or bearing a sacred emblem. Below, amid the graceful lotuses, under the forefeet of the lion, is the figure of a kneeling worshipper, and at the right, another representation of Mānjuśrī.

An unusual feature of this exquisitely detailed hanging is the use of thin silvery-finished leather to suggest metal. Minute discs of this paper-thin leather form, for example, the links of Mānjuśrī's necklace, and slim bands supply a metallic touch for bracelets and anklets. Cords, such as outline the figures in other hangings, are utilized to suggest the separate hairs in the lion's mane and plumed tail. The predominating color tone, especially in the central figure and the lion's fur, is a soft golden brown. The lion itself and the smaller divinities are a rather intense blue. Time has dimmed and blended the many other soft shades which originally must have formed an effective symphony of color.

Chinese Buddhist art of the Ming dynasty is reflected in this hanging which the Metropolitan Museum assigns to the seventeenth century. According to Tucci, however, this style appeared in Tibet during the early eighteenth century with the general rekindling of Chinese influences after four centuries of adherence to the more formal Nepalese traditions. Compositions in this era were marked by a new sense of space, a liveliness and gayety of detail and interest in landscape of the conventional Chinese type. Nimble gazelles, birds and graceful blossoms, portrayed with great delicacy and grace, betoken also a joy in nature which is new to Tibetan art.¹¹

The large hangings described above are of the type which would be displayed at the open-air ceremonies. Several Westerners have seen the Sunning of the Buddha which takes place annually in the early morning.¹² Upon this occasion the banner shown is unfurled against a smooth hill slope or hung from some high wall or steep declivity serving



PLATE X
MĀNJUŚRĪ, GOD OF WISDOM, 12'11" x 7'8".
COURTESY OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK, N. Y.



PLATE XI
DETAIL OF PRECEDING PLATE.

a like purpose. At Gyantse the same great hanging appears to be displayed every year. At Labrang in western Kansu province, it is said to change each year usually to represent Tsong Khapa or one of the Buddhas. A table with offerings is placed before the hanging and a group of lamas performs appropriate ceremonies consisting usually of chanting accompanied by cymbals and trumpets. It has been suggested that the verses on the back of the Tsong Khapa hanging at Newark were chanted during the ceremony. They have been translated as follows by Wesley E. Needham:

Immortal chief of supreme attainment
and power
Into noble birth descending as a precious
jewel held by the saintly mother
For the purpose of bringing revision of
the doctrine and insight to
virtuous scholars

This silken reflected image of the gentle
benefactor
Is presented on a high elevation under a
clear sky in the cool of the morning
Serving our purpose for worship on an
equal basis with the *chörten*
remains of the spiritual body
of His Holiness.

The precious object having been delivered
into a cavern, we all depart
Youth! May you adhere with devotion inspired
by this precious possession
And may virtue and merit increase.

The verses indicate the extreme reverence which the worshippers feel for the banner. At Kumbum when the great banner is carried in a long roll on the shoulders of many lamas to the scene of the ceremonies, small acolytes are said to try to pass beneath it and cross from side to side in the belief that this brings immunity from disease.¹³

Banners representing Tsong Khapa are displayed also at the great Feast of Lights known as *Gahdan Namchod* which is celebrated annually by all Gelugpa lamaseries to commemorate the death of this great

leader. This festival occurs on the twenty-fifth day of the tenth month, which in the Dalai Lama's realms marks the official ending of summer. Upon such an occasion every building, lay and ecclesiastical, blazes with butter lamps, the Tibetan substitute for candles, set in rows on the window sills and roofs. The religious ceremonies, attended only by the clergy, are held in the beautifully decorated chanting halls or courtyards of the lamaseries. The American explorer, Joseph F. Rock, observed these festivities in 1925 at Chone and Yungning lamaseries in the Sino-Tibetan borderlands. At Chone the Tsong Khapa banner formed the center of a group of five which represented other divinities. Rows of burning butter lamps and various offerings including exquisitely modeled butter sculptures were placed before them. Kawaguchi, the Japanese Buddhist scholar who spent three years in Tibet, witnessed in 1902 somewhat similar ceremonies in Sera lamasery.¹⁴

At Tashilhünpo it appears that gigantic hangings are displayed annually on several successive days in honor of the anniversary of the death of the Buddha Sākyamuni, founder of Buddhism, who lived in India in the sixth century B.C. The ceremonies were witnessed in the summer of 1882 by Lama Ugyen Gyatso, a Tibetan from Sikkim, and related by him to Sarat Chandra Das and L. Austine Waddell, who included brief descriptions of them in their well-known books.¹⁵

From the tenth to the fifteenth day of the fourth month we are told that the people and the lamas "make merry under tents" and immense silk banners are displayed on the façade of the nine-storied tower called Kiku. On the first day of the celebration a mast about one hundred and twenty feet high is erected and ropes stretched from it to the Kiku on which are displayed appliqué pictures of all the gods of the pantheon. The following day is sacred to the Buddha known as Dīpaṅkara, one of the predecessors of Sākyamuni, and the latter's teacher in a former life. A hanging approximately one hundred feet high, showing Buddha Dīpaṅkara, occupies a prominent place with giant representations of Sākyamuni on either side. From morning to evening, it is recounted, the people occupy themselves with singing and dancing, the music of drums, cymbals and trumpets never ceasing. The next day is that of the full moon when a gigantic hanging of Sākyamuni Buddha is substituted for Dīpaṅkara, brought out from the lamasery with great ceremony to the sound of deafening music and surrounded by the applied likenesses of all the Buddhas of past and future ages. A solemn religious service is conducted before the banner. On the following day Maitreya, the future Buddha,

as will be remembered, is shown. In the evening the people — even women are admitted on this day — seek the benediction of this sacred figure by endeavoring to touch with their heads the lower border of the great hanging.

In Lhasa similar festivals are held beginning in the latter part of the second moon or the middle of March and lasting for a month. Two applied hangings, about eighty by seventy feet each, representing Buddhas, are displayed on the southern face of the Potala, the great monastery-palace of the Dalai Lama. At the same time, according to a Chinese writer, objects regarded as precious are taken out of the cathedral and arranged in view. The celebration is said to be called “the daylight of the brilliant treasures.”¹⁶

It is questionable whether the art of appliqué in present-day Tibet has maintained the high standards of former centuries. It is true that there have been relatively few travelers to southern Tibet, but in any case, no one appears to have observed any evidence of the industry, and Mr. Cutting was told when he obtained the Samvara frieze that it represented an obsolete art. Roderick A. MacLeod, a former missionary to Chinese-controlled eastern Tibet, exclaimed with regard to the White Tārā banner in the Newark Museum: “I have never known of a Tibetan who could do such fine needlework. I feel sure the work is Chinese.” Of the museum’s Tsong Khapa piece he said: “A Tibetan made that. A Chinese worker would not take such long stitches.” On the other hand, our friends of the Tibetan mission assert that the art flourishes today as in the past; that Chinese craftsmen do not and never have worked upon the banners; and that the examples at the Newark Museum, including the White Tārā, cannot be compared in beauty and workmanship with many which are still produced by the native craftsmen of southern Tibet.

It does not lie within the province of this article to discuss at length the liturgical aspect of the appliqué hangings, but it should be emphasized that it is their religious rather than their artistic value which concerns the Tibetans. Each subject is depicted according to fixed and inviolable rules. Nothing is left to the artist’s whim or fancy. It is believed that when the hanging has been properly consecrated by a high lama, the spiritual essence enters into the outlined forms. The great value of the hangings as of all Tibetan religious arts lies in their capacity to evoke a divine presence and to lift the consciousness of the worshipper above the plane of worldly existence.

The writer has never made a study of the banners which also follow

the style of Tibetan paintings, but which are worked entirely in embroidery, chiefly in satin stitch. The art apparently exists side by side with that of appliqué in southern Tibet though banners of this sort are also made in China. Two similar and very fine examples of this work, dated respectively 1778 and 1783, one owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the other by the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, were made, for instance, in Peking while two others at the Metropolitan Museum and one at the American Museum of Natural History are probably of Tibetan workmanship. The gigantic banner which is displayed at the Sunning of the Buddha ceremony at Labrang on the Kansu border is said to be made entirely of embroidery rather than appliqué, but this seems to be an unusual instance.¹⁷

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ F. Spencer Chapman, *Lhasa the Holy City*, New York and London, 1939, plates pp. 58, 224, 301, 305, 306.
- ² Sarat Chandra Das, *A Tibetan-English Dictionary with Sanskrit synonyms*, Calcutta, 1902, p. 88.
- ³ *The New York Times*, August 12, 1948.
- ⁴ Giuseppe Tucci, *Tibetan Painted Scrolls*, Rome, 1949, Vol. I, pp. 317-318, 291-288, 153; Vol. II, p. 609.
- ⁵ J. Claude White, *Sikkim and Bhutan*, New York, 1909, pp. 298-299, 148, 220; J. Claude White, "Castles in the Air," *The National Geographic Magazine*, xxv, April 1914, pp. 405, 445.
- ⁶ Jacques Bacot, "L'Art Tibetain," *Annales du Musée Guimet*, xxxvi, 1912, p. 216; Jacques Bacot, Introduction to J. Hackin's *L'Art Tibetain*, Paris, 1911, p. xx; Jacques Bacot, *Decorations Tibétaines and Kunstgewerbe in Tibet*, Introductions.
- ⁷ Unless otherwise noted, iconographical information throughout the text is derived from the following sources: L. Austine Waddell, *The Buddhism of Tibet*, London, 1895; Alice Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, Oxford, 1914, and Antoinette K. Gordon, *The Iconography of Tibetan Buddhism*, New York, 1939. The term Tantric is derived from the Tantras or Hindu books in which the doctrine is expounded. Tantric iconography, which entered Tibet with Buddhism, is distinguished by the father-mother forms, multiplicity of limbs, the use of skulls and bone ornaments, weapons and flames.
- ⁸ Robert Byron, "Tibetan Appliqué-work," *The Burlington Magazine*, lviii, June, 1931, pp. 267-269, pl.
- ⁹ For the crossed *dorje* emblem see Alexandra David-Neel, *Tibetan Journey*, London, 1936, pp. 186-187, and n.i.; W. Y. Evans-Wentz, *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, London, 1927, p. xxiii.
- ¹⁰ Dr. Schuyler V. R. Cammann.
- ¹¹ Tucci, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 277 ff.
- ¹² Joseph F. Rock, "Life Among the Lamas of Choni," *The National Geographic Magazine*, liv, November, 1928, pp. 581-584, pl.; Theos Bernard, *Penthouse of the Gods*, New York, 1939, pp. 72-73, pl.; *Life*, June 12, 1939, p. 24, pl.; David Macdonald, *Twenty Years in Tibet*, Philadelphia, n.d., p. 134.
- ¹³ T. H. R. Candlin, "Dagoba Lamasery," *Asia*, xxxiv, October, 1934, pp. 620-623, pl.
- ¹⁴ Rock, *op. cit.*, pp. 604-605, 611, pl.; S. E. Kawaguchi, *Three Years in Tibet*, Benares and London, 1909, pp. 467-471; Waddell, *op. cit.*, pp. 510-511; Sir Charles Bell, *The Religion of Tibet*, Oxford, 1931, p. 101.
- ¹⁵ L. Austine Waddell, *op. cit.*, pp. 272, 507-508; Sarat Chandra Das, *A Journey to Lhasa and Central Tibet*, London, 1902, pp. 198-200, 117.
- ¹⁶ Bell, *op. cit.*, p. 130, pl.; William Woodville Rockhill, *Tibet, a Geographical Ethnographical and Historical Sketch Derived from Chinese Sources*, reprint from the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1891, pp. 185-201.
- ¹⁷ See Mary Symonds and Lovisa Preece, *Needlework Through the Ages*, London, 1928, pl. xciii; Chapman, *op. cit.*, p. 103; Tucci, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 268, 317; information about the Labrang banner from Mr. M. G. Griebenow, a missionary in that area.



PLATE A
SILK FOUND IN A BURIAL MOUND IN KERCH.

NOTES ON CHINESE SILK
FOUND IN THE SOUTH OF RUSSIA

by N. P. TOLL

*Translated by Eugenia Tolmachoff from "Seminarium Kondakovianum."
Recueil d'Etudes. Prague, "Seminarium Kondakovianum," 1927, pp. 85-92*

Readers of the Bulletin will remember an article written by Mrs. Tolmachoff (Vol. 26, 1942, No. 2) on the subject of Ancient Greek Textiles found in South Russia, with a reference, made in a footnote, to an account written in Russian by N. P. Toll on a Chinese silk found in the same locality. The statement was made at the same time that a translation of this account would sometime be made and it is this English version that we are now able to present.

IN 1878 the Russian Academy of Science in St. Petersburg published in its Comptes Rendus a group of fabrics from the mounds of the Crimean Peninsula and Tanan. In that group is described a small piece of silk¹ with a design in yellowish-brown of overlapping rhombs* each containing two smaller rhombs, the whole forming a numeral 8 (see Fig. 1 and Plate A). This piece was found in 1842 near Kerch by M. Koreisha in the course of the excavation of a burial mound near the city park.² In this mound M. Koreisha found two tombs built of stone slabs in one of which was a small cypress bier with a tripod standing nearby, made of the same wood. The bier, which was covered with a piece of material partly disintegrated, contained an urn wrapped in a piece of heavy purple silk apparently lined with fur and in the urn were contained ashes of the dead preserved in the piece of silk with the pattern of rhombs referred to above.

In the same mound were found also thin gold plaques, a plain gold bracelet and an iron sword. These latter finds, unfortunately, have never been published in detail. The gold bracelet and the iron sword, published

¹ Comptes Rendus de la Commission Impériale Archéologique, 1898, SPB. p. 135. Atlas, Plate V, fig. 3.

* A lozenge-like shape with oblique angles. (Ed.)

² Les Antiquités du Bosphore Cimmérien, SPB, 1854. Introduction, p. LXX-LXXII.

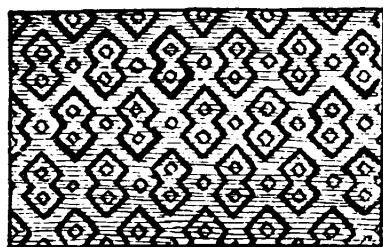


FIG. 1



FIG. 2



FIG. 3

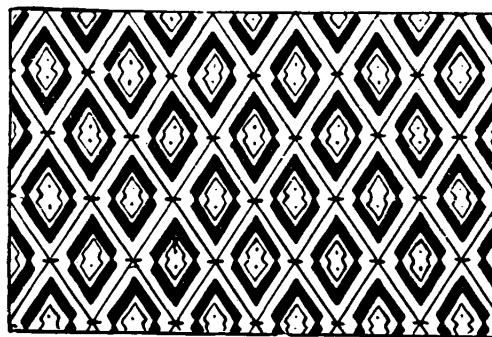


FIG. 4

FIG. 1. DESIGN OF SILK FABRIC FROM KERCH. FIG. 2. FOOT OF A CYPRESS TRIPOD FROM KERCH.
FIG. 3. CHINESE SILK FABRIC (DESIGN OF RHOMBS). FIG. 4. ORNAMENT OF A CHINESE
BRONZE VASE (DESIGN RATHER SIMILAR TO THE DESIGN OF THE KERCH PIECE).

in *Les Antiquités du Bosphore Cimmérien*, do not give any indication as to the date of the burial.³

The cypress tripod is more helpful. The feet, still in a good state of preservation, are carved with figures of dogs, the front paws reaching upward following the line of the foot. Their thin, elongated heads, also pointing upward, are made of a separate piece of wood. The body of each figure ends in an acanthus leaf which terminates in a lion's paw (see Fig. 2).⁴ Feet in the shape of animal paws variously elaborated are frequently seen on objects of Roman decorative art.⁵ Preserved in the British Museum is the replica of a foot carved with the figure of a dog which was found in Kerch.⁶ Another, similar to the Kerch example, was discovered in the ruins of a small town near Fayum.⁷ Roman coins and papyri found in these same ruins belong to the era of the last Ptolemies [first century B.C.] and the Roman emperors of whom the last was Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.).

C. Ransom attributes the Kerch tripod to the era of Augustus (Caius Octavius) (63 B.C.—14 A.D. Transl.). Considering, however, that the tripod may have been made long before the time of the burial, it would appear safer to attribute this latter to the first or second century A.D. with the consequence that the silk fabric should belong approximately to the same period.

Because of the miniature scale of its design the silk cannot be Roman or Egyptian. All fabrics known to be of Greco-Roman or Egyptian origin are distinguished by their more or less large-scale designs, due partly to contemporary taste and partly to the weaving technique of that time. A rhomb, on the other hand, as a basic ornamental motive, is common both to the figured fabrics of Egypt and to ancient Chinese decoration. The development of this motive proceeded independently. It can be traced in Egypt from the time of the Old Kingdom (2680—2280 B.C.). As to ancient China, however, the writer is unable to say how far back this motive may have existed. Purely geometric rhomb ornamentation can be seen on objects of art attributed to the dynasties of the Chou

³ A more detailed study of the inventory and of the reports of the excavation (if available) would probably give more information about the date of the burial.

⁴ *Antiquités du Bosphore Cimmérien*, Plate LXXXI.

⁵ *E. Pernice*. *Die Hellenistische Kunst in Pompeji*, 1925.

⁶ *C. Ransom*. *Reste Griechischer Holzmöbel in Berlin*, *Jahrb. d. Kais. deutsch. Archäol. Inst.* XVII, 1902, pp. 124-140.

⁷ *B. P. Grenfell, A. Hunt, and D. Hogarth*. *Fayum Towns and their Papyri*. L. 1900. Plate XVI, Fig. 1.

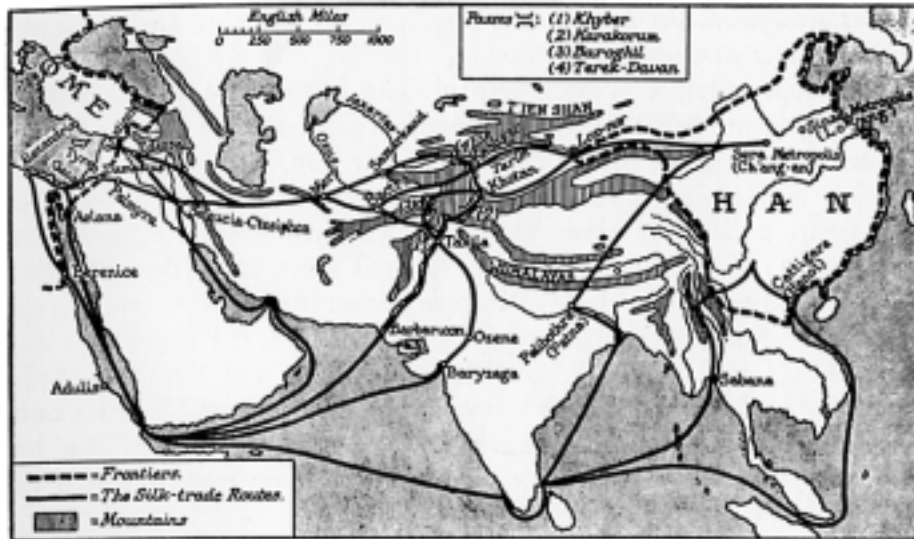
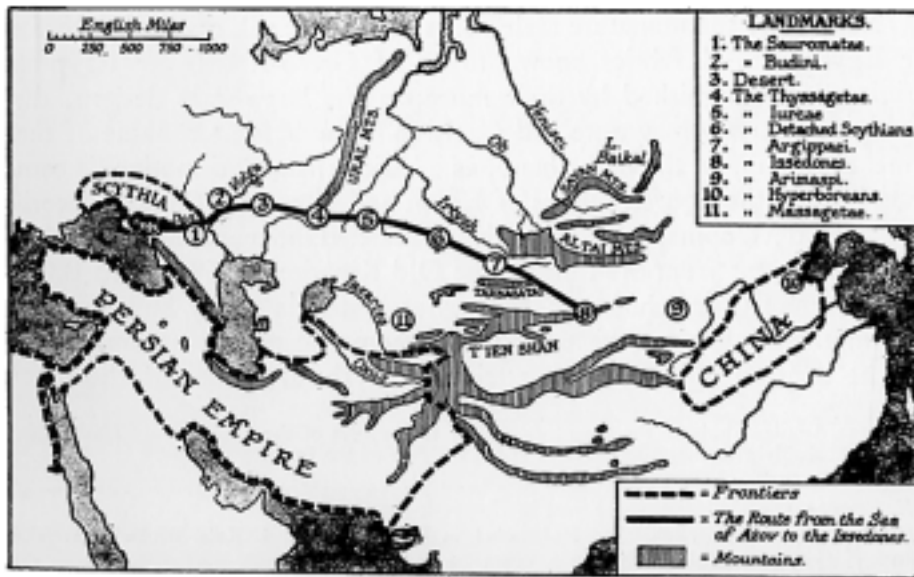


PLATE B



TRADE ROUTE FROM THE SEA OF AZOV TO THE ESHEDONES IN THE TIME OF HERODOTUS

PLATE C

(1122-249 B.C.), Han (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), and later periods.⁸ The fact that this same ornament appeared frequently in the textiles of Egypt and of China during the first millennium A.D. does not prove that it was China exclusively that influenced the ornament of Egypt and Byzantium.⁹

Among the Chinese textiles found by A. Stein in the ruins of ancient Lou-lan near Lob-nor dating from the first century B.C. to the third A.D. four pieces are ornamented with rhomb designs.¹⁰ The purely geometric pattern appearing in the fabric on Fig. 14 (see Fig. 3) consists of large rhombs with corners intersected by small rhombs.

Numerous examples of ancient Chinese silks with small rhomb designs are published in Vol. IV of A. Stein's *Serindia*.¹¹ Fabrics recently found by Kozlov in the mounds of northern Mongolia also show additional examples of Chinese silks with similar small geometric designs.¹² As a motive of textile design the rhomb occurs also on the frescoes of Buddhist temple-caves in Chinese Turkestan.¹³ A rather similar, but not identical, design appears on a bronze Chinese vessel published by Münsterberg and attributed to the time of the Chou dynasty (1122-249 B.C.).¹⁴ The outer surfaces of this vessel are covered with a mesh-like pattern made up of rhombs, each with an angular figure eight inside (Fig. 4). This detail of the ornament is particularly like the design of the silk.¹⁵

The fact that a piece of Chinese silk was found in a first or second century A.D. burial site in the Crimea is in no way surprising. It is known that during these two centuries trade relations between the Roman-Hellenistic world and China had already been established (Plate B).¹⁶ Silks [from China] reached the Mediterranean chiefly by two routes:

⁸ O. Münsterberg. *Chinesische Kunstgeschichte*. I, figs. 32, 60, II, figs. 90-96, 384. *Ars Asiatica* VII, "Docum. d'Art Chinois de la Collect. O. Sirén." Paris, 1925, édit. Van Oest. Plates XXVII, XLIII.

⁹ See *Strzygowski Seidenstoffe aus Aegypten im Kaiser Friedrich Museum Jahrb. d. Kgl. Preuss. Kunstm. 1903.*

¹⁰ See F. H. Andrews "Ancient Chinese figured silks excavated by Sir Aurel Stein." *The Burlington Magazine*. XXXVII, 1920. Figs. 9, 11, 12, and 14.

¹¹ I can not quote more exactly since the book is not available to me.

¹² W. Perceval Yetts. "Discoveries of the Kozlov expedition." *The Burlington Magazine*, April 1926. Tables I A and III F.

¹³ Grünwedel. *Alt Buddhistische Kultstädte in Chin. Turkistan*. Figs. 664, 665, 666.

¹⁴ O. Münsterberg. *Chinesische Kunstgeschichte*. II, fig. 189. f. Vase mit Deckel. Choustil. 1122-249 vor Chr.

¹⁵ The exact shape of the figure eight can not be perfectly distinguished in Münsterberg's small illustration.

For still other examples of lozenge-pattern Han silks, found in 1933 at Palmyra in Syria, see R. Pfister, *Textiles de Palmyre*, vol. I, pp. 6-51, pls. X & XI; vol. III, pp. 6-84, pls. XI & XII; and Pauline Simmons, *Chinese Patterned Silks*, pp. 8 & 9, pls. 8 & 9. (Ed.)

¹⁶ See M. Khvostov, *History of the Eastern Trade of Greco-Roman Egypt*. Kazan, 1907. p. 150 and following.

first, the land route, mentioned by Ptolemy and by Chinese chronicles, across Chinese Turkestan, Ferghana and Persia; and, second, by a sea route through India — which served as a connecting link between China and the West — to the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, and thence by caravan to the Mediterranean ports. From Syria and Egypt silk could easily be brought to the Crimea and southern Russia. But apart from these trade routes, definitely established by scientific knowledge, there was, as well, one other possible way by which silks and other Chinese products could make their way to southern Russia.

In Herodotus¹⁷ we find the first mention of a trade route from the steppes of the Black Sea region to Central Asia. In his account of the Sauromatae, the Budini, the Thyssagetæ, the Iyrcaæ, the Scythians and the Argippæi [migratory tribes], Herodotus adds that he had collected information about these people from Scythian and Greek merchants who traveled from the Black Sea towns to the Argippæi. "There is very precise information [says this writer] about the lands as far up as those of these bald people (Argippæi) and about the tribes that live on this side of them; from Scythians who go there it is easy to get information as well as from Greeks from Boristhenes and other Black Sea towns"¹⁸ (Plate C). A Greek, Aristæus from Prokonnis (650 B.C.), who had visited not only the Argippæi but also the Issedones, recounted his journey in a poem which has not reached us.¹⁹

The investigations of W. Tomaschek²⁰ establish the geographical location of the peoples mentioned by Herodotus as well as the general direction of the trade route which led from the Black Sea colonies, north to Kama into the region of the Thyssagetæ to the Argippæi. The Argippæi, in Tomaschek's opinion, were a Mongolian tribe that lived near Balkhash and the northern slopes of T'ien Shan and who formed the border beyond which the ordinary Black Sea trade caravans did not penetrate.

Minns, in his *Scythians and Greeks*, in agreement with Tomaschek's theories, writes that the trade route from the Black Sea to Asia was already in existence in the seventh and eighth centuries and that it led into the

¹⁷ V. B. Latyshev. Records of ancient authors about Scythia and Caucasus. I. SPB. 1890. Supplement to the Reports of the Imperial Russian Archeological Society V.

¹⁸ Herodotus. IV, 24. Latyshev. p. 18.

¹⁹ Herodotus. IV, 13. Latyshev. p. 15.

²⁰ W. Tomaschek. Kritik der ältesten Nachrichten über den Skythischen Norden. CXVI pp. 715-780. Die Nachrichten Herodot's über den Skythischen Karawanenweg nach Innerasien. CXVII, pp. 1-70. Sitzungsber. d. kk. Akad. zu Wien, 1888-89.

present Kuldja district and thence to the land of Herodotus' Argippaei. Along this route objects of Ionic art reached central Asia and Siberia.²¹

According to M. I. Rostovtzeff, however, caravans with Far Eastern products came from central Asia and western Siberia to the shores of the Black Sea.²²

The northern direction, unnecessarily so, of the route from Rušsia to central Asia leads to a suspicion that Herodotus may have confused the road that led north from the Black Sea colonies to the Kama region with that of the route that connected the Black Sea steppes with the steppes of western Siberia. According to Minns the route curved northward to avoid the barren plains of the Caspian sea region.

Strabo describes an extensive caravan trade in the land of the Aorsi, who lived to the north of the Caspian Sea.²³ Pliny in *Hist. Natur.* (book VI, chapter 20) vaguely mentions a route that led from the northern shores of the Caspian Sea east across desert lands inhabited only by wild beasts and Scyths-anthropophagi to the land of Seres.²⁴ Pliny's statement is of great value, despite its vagueness, since it establishes the existence of a trade in silk between China and the northern shores of the Caspian Sea.

Additional details about the eastern part of the trade route from Russia to China are given in Chinese sources. The Chinese account, *Wei Lio*, tells of three routes leading west from China.²⁵ The southern route led across Lou-lan and Khotan to Kashmir, Kabul and India.²⁶ The central route led across Karachar, Aksu, Uch Turfan to Ferghana, Bactria, Parthia and Syria.²⁷ The new, or northern, route was opened only in the second century A.D.²⁸ and led, according to Chavannes, north of T'ien Shan across Urumchi and Manas to the valley of the Ili river.²⁹

The Chinese text tells of the existence of a route which led from China to Lake Bor-Kul and farther to the northwest along T'ien Shan to the Osun nation in the valley of the Ili, hence through nomadic nations into the lands of the Alans and the Aorsi which were situated to the north of the Caspian Sea.

²¹ E. Minns. *Scythians and Greeks*. Cambridge, 1913, pp. 107, 108, 114, 264. M. Ebert. *Südrussland im Altertum*. Bonn u. Leipzig, 1921, p. 188.

²² M. Rostovtzeff. *Iranians and Greeks in South Russia*. Oxford, 1922, p. 231.

²³ Strabo, XI, V, 8. Latyshev. p. 148.

²⁴ C. Plinius Secundus. *Natur. Hist.* Teubner, 1906. VI, 15; VI, 20.

²⁵ E. Chavannes. *Les pays d'Occident d'après le Wei Lio*. Toung Pao. 1905. Sér. II, vol. VI, pp. 519-571.

²⁶ E. Chavannes. *Les pays d'Occid. d'après le Wei Lio*, pp. 537-539.

²⁷ E. Chavannes. *Wei Lio*, pp. 552-556. Pelliot. "Note sur les anciens itinéraires chinois de l'Orient Romain." *Journ. Asiat.*, 1921.

²⁸ E. Chavannes. *Wei Lio*, p. 533, note 1.

²⁹ E. Chavannes. *Wei Lio*, p. 534, note 3.

The general direction of the western part of this route coincides with that of Herodotus. The eastern part, which probably in the time of Herodotus was in the hands of the Hiung-nu [a nomad tribe], did not pass into the possession of the Chinese until the beginning of our era after the weakening of the nomadic empire. Up to the time that this route came into the hands of the Chinese the middle road had been used to reach the Osun nation across Chinese Turkestan and Ferghana, where the way turned north.³⁰

The fact of a relationship between China and Osun is established by Chinese chronicles which tell of a marriage between a Chinese princess and an Osun prince, of growing diplomatic relations and a military alliance against the Hiung-hu between 110 and 70 B.C.³¹ If the silk robe found by V. V. Radlov in the mound at the River Katanda could be dated more exactly we would have a very convincing proof of the early penetration of Chinese silk into western Siberia.³²

It is quite probable that the Hiung-nu, who for a long time separated China from the West, acted as intermediaries in the trade between China and western Siberia. From 190 B.C., Chinese chronicles contain a great deal of information about the export of silk and other merchandise, sometimes in large quantities, from China to the Hiung-nu.³³

We can not be sure that even prior to this date the Hiung-nu did not know and receive Chinese silk. Under the Han dynasty the Hiung-nu's demands for silk became so great that it seems possible that this fabric may have served as an object of trade between the Hiung-nu and the neighboring nomadic tribes. Chapter 94 of Tashien Han chou says: "When he (the emperor of the Hiung-nu) came to court, he received 20,000 pieces of embroidery and unembroidered silk and 20,000 lbs. of unspun silk."³⁴ (27 B.C.)

"In the first century B.C. the number of costumes given to him was increased to 370, the number of pieces of brocade, embroidered and unembroidered silk to 30,000, the weight of unspun silk to 30,000 lbs."³⁵ Besides these enforced presents and tribute, the Hiung-nu received

³⁰ CXVIII chapter of Heou Han says, "plus à l'Ouest, la route du nord franchit les Ts'ong-ling (Pamirs) et débouche à Ta-yuan (Ura-tepe), dans le K'ang-Kiu (Samarkand) et chez les Yen-ts'ai (Alains). *Chavannes*, Heou Han chou, p. 170.

³¹ *J. J. M. de Groot*. Die Hunnen der vorchristl. Zeit. I.B.u L., 1921, p. 192 and following.

³² *Radlov*, Siberian Antiquities. (Aus Sibirien, trans. by Bobrinsky.) Reports of the Imp. Russ. Archeol. Soc. VII. 1894. p. 181 and following. *Dr. A. Zakharov*, Antiquities of Katanda (Altai). Journ. of the Royal Anthropol. Inst. LV, 1925.

³³ *de Groot*. pp. 69, 78, 87, 157, 185, 216, 220, 249, 261.

³⁴ *de Groot*. p. 249.

³⁵ *de Groot*. pp. 261, 262.

Chinese merchandise and silk through an active trade during periods of peace.³⁶

“I could not make use,” says the writer, “of archeological material to any great degree since Russian sources and material are not available to me. Naturally,” he continues, “in studying archeological material one must keep in mind the fact that Chinese objects could have come singly to western Siberia and Russia not only by way of trade, but also as a result of the periodic movements of nomadic tribes from east to west.”

The great route, which from the time of Herodotus had connected Russia with Central Asia and China, could not always be used for peaceful trade because of the constant movement and wars of the nomadic tribes. Minns suggests that the opportunity of using the route along its entire length always coincided with the appearance in the steppes of nomadic tribes allied in great numbers under a single leader. In any case the existence of the great trade route was known and remembered, both in the East and in the West, and it was used, whenever possible, to renew trade relations which had been interrupted.

³⁶ *de Groot*. pp. 97, 91 and 96.



CLUB NOTES

On Thursday, October the nineteenth, 1950, at three o'clock, by invitation of Miss Gertrude Whiting, a large exhibition of dolls from private collections, varying in provenance and kinds, was shown to members of the Needle and Bobbin Club at her apartment, at 1 West 72nd Street. Among the examples, representing both the old and the modern, were dolls from India illustrating occupations and castes, of especial interest in relation to Miss Whiting's India Guilds of which she is the President.

The first regular meeting for 1950 was held, through the kindness of Dr. Phyllis Ackerman, on Friday, January the seventh, when members were invited at three o'clock to the Asia Institute, 7 East 70th Street, to view the important Loan Exhibition of Persian Art being shown in honor of the visit of the Shah of Persia. A special feature of the meeting was a Gallery Talk given by Dr. Arthur Upham Pope on the important carpets being shown and a Tour of the Galleries under the guidance of Dr. Ackerman.

The Annual Meeting of the Club was held on February sixteenth at three o'clock, at the house of Mrs. Gerrish H. Milliken, 723 Park Avenue, where, after a short business meeting, Mrs. Samuel Cabot spoke to an intent audience on Pattern Sources as a Hobby, outlining her researches among old prints and engravings as a source for old embroidery patterns, and illustrating, by means of slides, a series of such works together with the embroideries for which their patterns had been utilized as models.

On Thursday, March sixteenth, at half past three, Miss Dorothy Liebes, whose hand-loomed fabrics are universally known, gave a talk in her studio, 116 East 66th Street, on her striking and original textiles, displaying in illustration a generous number of these fine weaves. After

the meeting, through the kindness of Mrs. Walter Ayer and Miss Mildred McCormick, tea was served at the Cosmopolitan Club, 122 East 66th Street.

The spring meeting was held on April 26th, through kind invitation, at the Museum of the City of New York, where, at three o'clock, Miss V. Isabelle Miller, Curator of Costumes, spoke on the entertaining subject of Eighteenth Century Costumes Worn in New York, illustrating her talk by the exhibition of such costumes taken from the Museum's collection.

For the first meeting of the autumn, on Thursday, November thirtieth, the Club was indebted to the courtesy of Miss Marian Hague, where at 333 East 68th Street, at three o'clock, members were privileged to see her large and distinguished collection illustrating the History of Embroidery and Lace where a great variety of examples, arranged by groups, showed stitches of past ages, and which are in use today. After the meeting members of the Club were invited to a delightful tea at the apartment of Mrs. F. Leonard Kellogg in the same house.

Through the kindness of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Club members were invited on Friday afternoon, December first, at three o'clock, to see the great collections entitled *The World of Silk*, where the finest examples in the Museum's ownership, from both East and West, were shown. An added pleasure was the informal talk on the exhibition given by Miss Edith A. Standen, Assistant Curator in charge of the Textile Study Room, during the afternoon.

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