

# OXFORD ASIAN TEXTILE GROUP

Newsletter No. 24

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Portrait of Edward Lane in Oriental dress, drawn by his brother Richard Lane. 1838. Private collection. See featured exhibition.

## CONTENTS

Asian Textiles in the Horniman Museum ...	4
Afghan Embroideries Acquired by the British Museum ...	6
Yurts and Their Textile Furnishings ...	8
A Closer Look at Turban Covers, Wrapping Cloths and Head-Squares from Ottoman Turkey ...	11
Reports of O.A.T.G. Meetings ...	15
Museums Round-Up ...	18
Obituary: Marlene Hinshelwood ...	19
Book Review: N.C. Rousmaniere, <i>Kazari: Decoration and Display in Japan, 16th to 19th Centuries</i> ...	20
Short notices of other books ...	21
Exhibition: An Englishman's Travels in Egypt - Edward Lane in Cairo (1825-35) ...	22
The Other Exhibitions ...	25
Conferences ...	26
Events at the British Museum ...	27

## EDITORIAL

It has always been my view that about ten years is the right length of time for a person to edit a newsletter such as this. For that reason I opposed the suggestion that the Editor's tenure of office should be three years, the same as that for other officers, when the O.A.T.G. constitution was discussed. It was not so much that I wished to cling to office myself, but that experience elsewhere had led me to believe that it takes some time to build up and maintain a network of valuable contacts on the one hand, and on the other that a journal tends to become stale if it continues under the same editorship for too long. This was what led to the conclusion that ten years was just about right.

Many of you will know that my husband has been an invalid for the last few years; not so many will be aware that since last September he has suffered a sharp decline in both his mobility and his mental health. The main effect has been that he is no longer able to go upstairs, and in a house with the sitting-room is on the first floor this is a problem, so we decided the time had come to move somewhere where we could live on one floor. We are now in the process of buying a bungalow in Bournemouth, five minutes walk from our son.

You may think that, as I have been editor for eight years, this might be taken as a good opportunity to resign, but I enjoy the job and was not altogether displeased to see the expressions of dismay on the faces of Ruth and the other officers when I told them what was happening. The outcome is that I have been persuaded to continue. It is, after all, not essential to live in or near Oxford to be editor; most of my information is gleaned by e-mail, post, phone and fax, and I always ask other members to report on meetings. Such problems as I envisage are more of a logistical nature, but I am willing to give it a go. Two more issues of the newsletter are due before the A.G.M., which I hope to be able to come back for (not to mention other meetings) when, if it is proving difficult, I may suggest the appointment of an assistant editor who might be expected to take on the full editorship the following year.

Meanwhile, my address is as given on the back page until mid-April, and I have no doubt things will be forwarded thereafter, but my e-mail address will not change.

## PROGRAMME

Wednesday 19 February at 6 p.m.

**Silken Threads: Lacquer Thrones**  
by **Susan Conway**

Tutor for The British Museum Arts of Asia Diploma  
and Adjunct Professor at New School University, New York  
Susan will talk on the inland courts of South East Asia, their dress, regalia and  
textiles in the nineteenth century.

Saturday 1 March

**VISIT TO THE HORNIMAN MUSEUM**

The Friends of the Pitt Rivers Museum have invited the O.A.T.G. to join them  
on their outing to the Horniman Museum. While few textiles are on display at present, this  
gives us an excellent opportunity to browse around the Museum.

Contact Megan Price, megaprice2000@hotmail.com , or Rosemary Lee (address below).  
Departure 8.30 a.m. from the Pitt Rivers Museum. Cost £10-15

Thursday 17 April at 5.45 p.m.

**INDIGENOUS ARTS AND CRAFTS OF ANATOLIA**  
by **Selcuk Gurisik**

Research Student at the London Institute, Central St Martin's College  
Selcuk will talk on traditional crafts and contemporary feltmaking in the light of  
the exhibition he is presenting this summer at the Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul

Thursday 12 June at 5.45 p.m.

**OTTOMAN EMBROIDERY**  
by **Marianne Ellis**

The Ottoman embroideries from the 16th to the end of the 19th centuries  
are full of colour, contain brilliant designs and reveal intricate needlework.  
They were often made for the magnificent Imperial court.

The meetings on 19 February, 17 April and 12 June  
will all be held at the Pauling Centre, 58 Banbury Road, Oxford  
and will be preceded by refreshments half an hour before the times stated.  
Members free Non-members welcome, £2.

Further information can be obtained from the Programme Secretaries:

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## ASIAN TEXTILES IN THE HORNIMAN MUSEUM

The Horniman Museum contains a collection of over 2000 costumes and textiles from Asia. The most numerous are those from China and India, while there are sizeable collections from Turkey, Kurdistan, Palestine, Iran, Saudi Arabia, various parts of Central Asia, Nepal, Burma, Bhutan, Tibet, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Japan. There are also items of costume from Korea, Hong Kong the Philippines and several other countries.

Although the Horniman Museum was not officially opened to the public until 1901, Frederick Horniman had begun collecting in the mid-nineteenth century, and some of the textiles date from this period. Amongst these early pieces are a number of kimonos and embroideries from Japan, some Indian material including an embroidered silk sash and some silk caps, several pairs of Turkish slippers and a number of items from Burma. Most of the material acquired during the nineteenth century, however, is in the Chinese collection, which contains around 100 of such early items. Other nineteenth century material came in at a later date. The Chinese robe illustrated below, for example, was donated in 1977 by Mrs Mackworth-Praed, along with several other items from her collection.



Chinese robe, 19th century, donated by Mrs Macworth Praed (Museum no. 1977.34)

There are other interesting collections from individuals. Mr Bradshaw's donation of Kurdish costume consists of 16 items, acquired by the Museum in 1960 but dating from 1919. Mr Edmonds' gift from the same region in 1968 includes a number of complete costumes and is accompanied by detailed documentation. Another particularly well documented collection is the Palestinian material acquired in 1961 from Miss Jan Macdonald, who worked at the American YMCA in Palestine from 1932-1939.

The Arabian collections include a number of items obtained in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by an English gentleman 'travelling in the east' as well as a collection donated by the Commonwealth Institute.

From India, - early items include a number of pieces of mirror embroidery obtained around 1860 by Sergeant General Charles Dodgson Madden, C.B., K.H.S., who was in the Crimea as a young military doctor in the 39<sup>th</sup> regiment, and in India at the time of the Mutiny with the 43<sup>rd</sup> Light Infantry.

Amongst items associated with the textile collections and also of considerable interest area range of pieces of equipment used in the manufacture of textiles from many parts of the world. An early collection of such items from the Maldives entered the Museum in 1903.

Recent donations include a collection of textiles from Indonesia from Dr Minter-Goedbloed, whose family lived in the former Dutch East Indies for several generations. Most of these items date from the early decades of the twentieth century. They were obtained from several parts of the archipelago, and include material from Chinese communities as well as Javanese batik, and weavings from Sumba and north Sumatra.

As well as material donated to and purchased by the Museum, a great many items were collected in the field by the Museum's own curators. The tradition of field collection was established very early on, and continues in the present day. For example, in the 1990's Ken Teague, then the Deputy Keeper of Anthropology, collected a number of contemporary textiles in Uzbekistan. Another very recent field collection consists of some 50 items, mostly contemporary, from the north east of Thailand, together with accompanying slides and video. The Museum also occasionally commissions anthropologists working in the field to make collections. Genevieve Duggan, who is currently conducting research on the island of Savu, in eastern Indonesia, has recently put together a representative selection of material for the Museum which relates to her research and her recently published book.

The Horniman's textile collections contain a wide variety of types of material. While there are some spectacularly fine pieces, the aim of the Museum is to document cultures through the material which they make and use, so that care is taken to collect items which will illustrate the lives and beliefs of people at all levels of society. The Chinese collection contains the costume worn by fishermen as well as mandarin squares and dragon robes. From Thailand there are fine silk cloths with gold and silver supplementary weft as well as a pair of simple



Baluchi costume collected in Quetta, Afghanistan, by a Mrs E. Elliott (1975.258)

hand-woven trousers in handspun cotton obtained from the washing line at a farm in the countryside. The collections are therefore of interest not just to those whose primary interest is in the technical and artistic aspects of textiles, but also to those who are looking to find an insight into the lives of people from other parts of the world.

Fiona Kerlogue

### LAKAI UZBEK EMBROIDERIES FROM AFGHANISTAN

Dynamic designs evoking spiralling suns, scorpions and insect forms embellish many of the textiles in an important collection recently acquired by The British Museum. The fifty textiles come from the Lakai Uzbek tribe in Afghanistan. Incorporating shield-shaped and square panels, bed pile covers, a horse cloth, camel headdress and tent band, these vividly embroidered pieces date from the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Notable is a particularly striking marriage canopy decorated with the forms of two birds. However,



generally the embroideries of the Lakai reflect their nomadic heritage - relatively small textiles for tent decoration and storage, and animal regalia.

Traditionally fiercely independent nomadic herders based in northern Afghanistan, and later southern Tajikistan from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Lakai were crushed by the Emir of Bokhara after 1869 and forced into agriculture by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Under the leadership of Mullah Ibrahim Beg, the tribe achieved notoriety in the 1920s as guerrilla fighters against the Bolsheviks. At this time, some semi-nomadic Lakai arrived in Konduz province (northern Afghanistan) as horse-breeders, while the majority of the tribe (estimate at 46,000 in the late 1920s) were settled on collective farms on the northern bank of the Amu Darya River in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The textiles of the Lakai Uzbek in Afghanistan came to prominence during the mid 1970s when examples started to appear on the Afghan market.

The textiles feature silk thread embroidery on cotton cloth or wool flannel, backed with printed cotton cloth. Some pieces feature crocheted fringes, and tassels of twisted silk thread, coloured glass beads and metal sequins. Materials – including silk *ikat* from Uzbekistan and printed cotton cloth from Russia – were bought from traders. The shield-shaped and square embroidered panels were prestige dowry goods, made during the period of the bride(s) seclusion just prior to her marriage. Although called 'pouches' (*ilgitsh*), these were decorative items, produced in pairs, to hang in the yurt either side of the place of honour. A Lakai bride of decent means would have three to four pairs, and at least one pair of each kind. The motifs to be embroidered were prepared by older women who worked as pattern designers, drawing the outlines in chalk or simple stitches. The detail and texture of the embroidery is striking and the overall designs, highly abstracted and frequently in asymmetric composition, visually stunning.

Embroidered textiles feature in the traditions of all Uzbek peoples - urban, rural and nomadic. But it is the urban traditions which are better-represented in European and American museums: the best-known of these, the large hangings (*susanis*) and fine *ikat*-dyed coats, are largely to be found in decorative arts rather than ethnography collections. Few examples of Lakai embroidery have been acquired in Britain and rarely on the Continent, while in the US the Textile Museum in Washington is a notable exception.

The textiles formed the private collection of the London-based textile collector and dealer Pip Rau, built up over almost three decades. Trained as a painter, Pip first visited Kabul in 1976 and was struck by the colours and visual impact of the embroidery. The Museum is delighted to have acquired such a large and extensive collection of older, high quality pieces; it would be impossible to put together a comparable range today. The purchase has been made possible through the generous support of the National Art Collections Fund and The British Museum Friends.

Sarah Posey  
Curator, Ethnography Department  
The British Museum

## Yurts and Their Textile Furnishings

Yurts are trellised, felt-covered, tents, traditionally lived in by nomads across Eurasia, from eastern Iran and Afghanistan, through Central Asia, South Siberia to Mongolia. They have been increasingly drawn to the attention of European and American textile enthusiasts since the 1992 coup in the Soviet Union, when many Central Asian states and Mongolia moved out of the sphere of Soviet influence and more information about the culture of the peoples who dwelt in them became available.

The word 'yurt' came into European languages through a misunderstanding of the Central Asian word *djurt*, which means land, home place or tent-site. The latter meaning was probably mistakenly taken to mean the tent itself by travellers to the east. The many different Central Asian peoples who live in such tents all have their own names for them, none of which is 'yurt', but 'yurt' is a useful general term, variations of which have now entered the dictionaries of many European languages, and so it continues to be used.

The yurt is a classic example of a collapsible free-standing structure which needs neither guys nor pegs for support. Rather like the Bedouin tent, or the Algonquin birch bark canoe, yurts engender a special kind of excitement among those who are interested in them, both because of their simple ingenuity of structure, and their intrinsic beauty of form.

Yurt frames are made by men - masters - who are usually settled themselves. They consist of four or more collapsible trellises which can be assembled together to form walls and are attached to a wooden door-frame. Roof poles are tied on to the crosses at the top of the trellis, and extend up to slots in a round roof-ring, or crown, at the centre top. The key to this structure and the reason it does not fall down, pushed outwards by its own weight, is a woven tension band which extends around the outside of the trellis and is attached to either side of the door frame, preventing the trellis expanding outwards.

This basic structural principle applies to all yurts across the whole steppe and mountain region of Eurasia. As a successful structural system, it allows great flexibility of form, and there are many variations in yurt type across the region. One of the main differences is that between the Turkic type, such as the Kyrgyz *boz uy* or Turkmen *oy*, and the Mongolian *ger*.

The Turkic yurt, is usually made from steam bent wood, and has curved roof poles which extend up to the crown at a sufficient angle to support it. The Kyrgyz *boz uy* has a particularly steep roof, which is best suited for mountain regions with a high rainfall. The Turkmen *oy* has a lower more rounded roof and in the summer its wall are not covered with felt but reed screens which allow maximum ventilation, while still giving privacy. This suits the hot desert climate of the Iranian Plateau and Turkmenistan. The Mongolian *ger* may be made from carpentered wood and has straight roof poles. This creates a conical roof which is generally lower and wider, suiting the strong winds of the steppe. Sometimes *gers* are so wide that they need special supports to hold up the crown.



There are many regional variations, even within one group. One particularly striking example is the yurt of the Chahar Aimag from Afghanistan. This has a two-tiered trellis and concave roof poles curving in up to a tiny hooped crown, creating a beautiful classical form, reminiscent of yurts illustrated in miniature paintings. They have painted reed screen walls and felt roofs.

It is not only the structure of the yurt which is so remarkable, but the diversity of textile arts which this dwelling has inspired. Almost all yurt textiles are made by women, although in some societies, men may help with the more physical work. The simple, well-tailored felt covers which give the exterior a pleasing and quite modest appearance, belie the vibrant colours and rich textiles within. The skill and time given to making these textiles brings prestige 'to the whole family.

Essential textiles inside the yurt vary from culture to culture. They can include the whole variety of bands the tent requires simply in order to stand up; sedge or reed screens which may surround the yurt walls or section off the kitchen area inside; embroidered hangings, such as Kyrgyz *tusk kiiz*, which may be purely decorative or provide privacy for newly weds; decorative bands to cover the meeting point of roof poles and trellis; textile shelving suspended from the roof poles to the trellis; a great variety of bags to hold anything from clothing to cups to salt; ornate bedding piles which act as a backdrop to the 'place of honour' in Turkic yurts; patchwork sitting quilts - Kyrgyz *toshok* and sheepskin *golderlung*; woven carpets; a whole range of 'minor' textiles from pot-holders to hanging cradles to amulets; and a huge variety of floor felts. All the artefacts reflect a basic tenet of nomadic life, which is that one does not need more than one can carry, but what one has is made with consummate skill and care.

The interior of the yurt is not only decorated, it is also laid-out to a prescribed system, so that people and objects are positioned strictly according to age, status and sex. In brief, the yurt is usually erected facing south. From the inside looking out, the hearth is at the centre, men sit on the right or west, and women sit on the left or east. Honoured guests and respected elders, including the host, sit in the place of honour, opposite the door in the north, while the daughter-in-law who does the cooking sits near the door. Objects follow the positions of people, so kitchen gear is on the women's side, while horse harness is on the men's side, valued items are kept in trunks behind the place of honour, while work equipment is kept near the door, and so on.

These organisational principles are adhered to strictly, but also allow for flexibility. The main variations are between Turkic and Mongol tents, specifically concerning what is displayed in the place of honour. In Turkic tents such as the Kyrgyz *boz uy*, this place, the *tor*, is backed by the *djuk*, a brilliant display of bedding, which illustrates the wife's skill in domestic crafts and her ability to look after guests. In the *ger*, the same place, the *khoimor*, was traditionally occupied by an altar for Buddhist idols and lamps. Later photographs, pictures of party leaders or even televisions took their place. This difference can be explained by religious differences between the two peoples. Turkic people are Muslim and do not use

representative imagery. Mongols are Buddhist. (Both were formerly shamanist.)

While a separate paper could be written about almost every variety of yurt textile, several are particularly worthy of mention. These include tent bands, sedge screens and felts.

Along with the *kerege chalgych* (Kyrg: tension band), there are an almost unimaginable number of bands in the yurt. These include bands to tie the trellis to each other, bands to tie these to the door frame, tasselled yak hair cords to tie the roof poles to the tops of the trellis, a snake rope to keep the snakes out, outer ropes to hold the walls in place, bands to tie down the roof felts to the frame, bands to hold the crown with, bands to space the roof poles, bands for the crown felt, purely decorative bands and many more.

They all have different names (*bo'o, bay, basskur* etc), depending on where and how they are used, and which vary from group to group. A whole variety of weaving techniques are used to make them. Particularly beautiful bands, woven by Kazakhs, Karakalpaks and Turkmen, have a white flat weave ground and a coloured pile pattern. They are called *ak basskur* in Kazakh and are criss-crossed in intricate patterns over the interior dome of the tent, extending from the crown behind the roof poles to the trellis walls.

Sedge or reed screens are used in almost all Turkic yurts. In Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, they are made from the wild sedge - *chiy* or *shiy*. The screens have the same name. To weave *chiy*, each individual stem is painstakingly wrapped with small pieces of different colour fleece to build up a pattern which traditionally could be both delicate and detailed. *Chiy* are woven on a warp-weighted loom which uses stones to weigh down the warp. When making a yurt, much of the time goes into the interior decorations, and the *chiy* is one of the most time consuming pieces. Ashkhana *chiy* for the kitchen section are particularly beautiful.

Felt is the ideal nomadic fabric in Central Asia. It provides maximum insulation against cold and wind and protection against rain. It requires sheep's wool, of which there are abundant supplies from nomad's herds, and its technology is easily transportable. Felt is used for tent covers, decorative bands, many of the bags and accessories in the yurt, and floor coverings.

Felt rugs, in particular, are highly decorated, and many different techniques are used to embellish them, including felted-in patterning, appliqué, mosaic work, embroidery, couching on cords, patchwork and quilting. Interestingly, while most Turkic feltwork is highly coloured and adds brightness to the yurt interior, in the Mongolian *ger*, felts are white or neutral colours, and it is painted wood furniture which gives the interior its brightness.

Few Mongolian textiles are dyed and felt is no exception. Instead it is quilted into intricate, rhythmic patterns. Like many peoples who develop a skill within a quite limiting framework, Mongolians have developed felt quilting very highly. They also have special names for all the different floor felts they use, describing differences which the unaccustomed

eye would find quite subtle.

Since the 1930s in Central Asia, most yurt-dwelling herders have settled or become semi-nomadic, though there are still fully nomadic herders in Mongolia. Yurts are still used in summer and high mountain pastures although far less than before. However, they are still sufficiently important as to be used at festivals, celebrations, as *chaff khans* or teahouse on the roadside and as summer houses in people's gardens. They are also important for family ceremonies, particularly weddings, and for funerals.

Stephanie Bunn

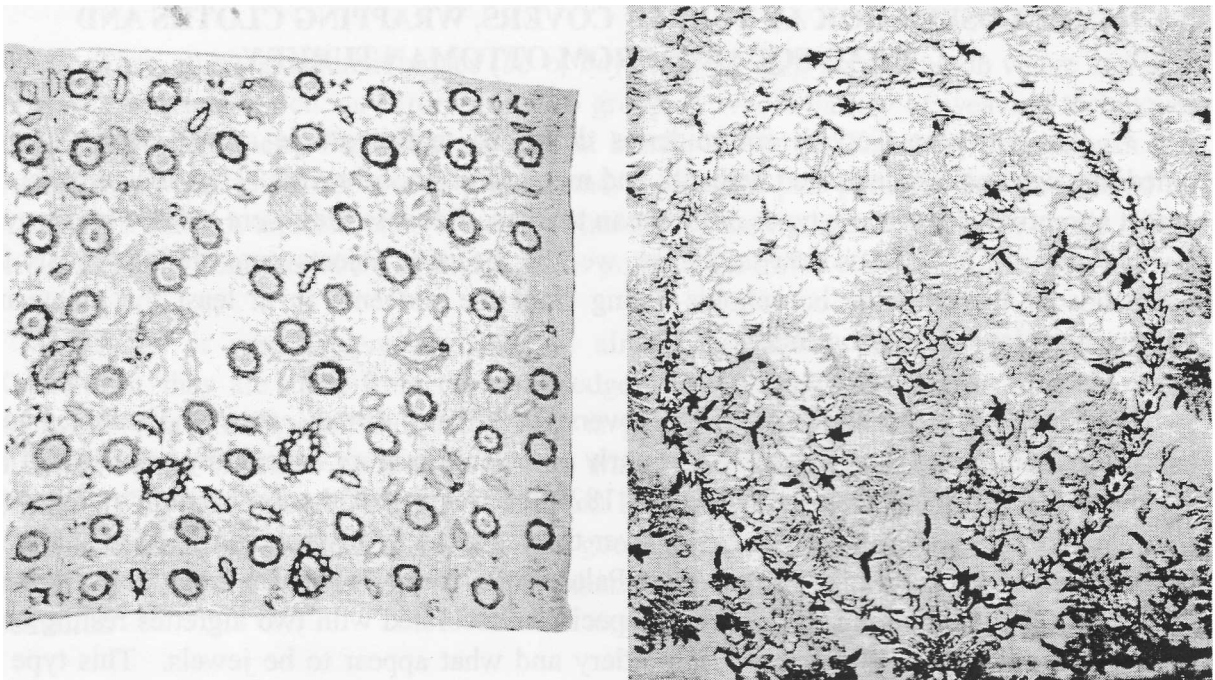
### **A CLOSER LOOK AT TURBAN COVERS, WRAPPING CLOTHS AND HEAD-SQUARES FROM OTTOMAN TURKEY**

The Ottoman Turkish embroideries described in this article are all square-shaped medium-sized covers decorated with silk and metal thread needlework. They are amongst the most attractive of the many types of Ottoman textiles. Because they were closely interwoven with a way of life that was slow to change, we find the same objects were made to satisfy the demands of the Ottoman households dating from the sixteenth to at least the nineteenth century and later in some instances.

Some square embroideries were covers for turbans, *kavuk ortustu*. Examples have survived dating from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth century, when they were part of the traditional dress of the Ottoman Turks (in 1829 the wearing of the fez became mandatory). Turbans varied greatly in shape and size over the centuries signifying profession or status. A painting dated 1720 depicts a high ranking Palace official responsible for the Sultan's turbans, *Tulbend Agasi*, holding up a magnificent specimen decorated with two aigrettes resting on a stand covered with gold fabric or embroidery and what appear to be jewels. This type of turban was fashioned by winding a long strip of folded cloth carefully around a cap and leaving it there in position; both cap and cloth were removed from the head in one piece. Resembling a hat, it was then placed on a turban stand, perhaps in a niche, or put on a special bracket fixed to the wall for this purpose. Some surviving examples of wooden brackets were themselves very attractive with their rococo curves and carved decoration. In order to protect such turbans from dirt and dust, pretty light covers were then draped over them, adding colour to the interior decoration of the room.

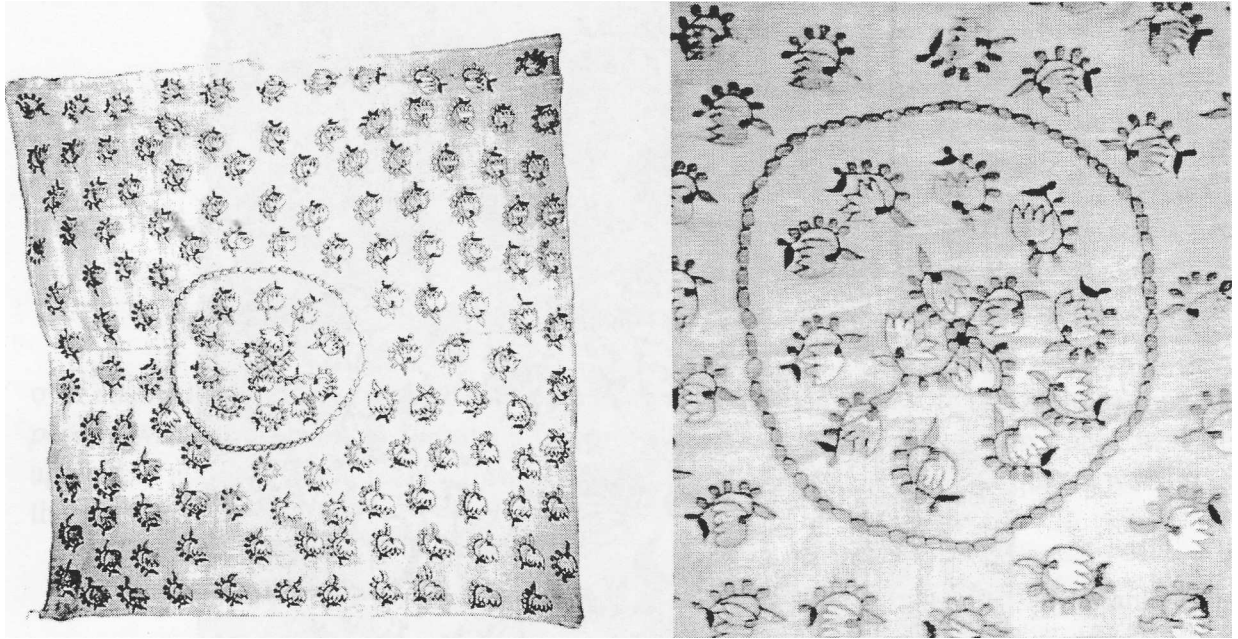
The Topkapi Palace Museum (TPM) collection in Istanbul contains embroidered squares instantly recognisable as turban covers by the layout of their designs. This format, which continued throughout four centuries, consisted of a central motif, surrounded by more motifs, all enclosed within a large circle and the field filled with larger related designs. Linked stylised leaf shapes or small ovals resembling beads often defined the edges of the large circles, which helps with identification. In fact, this characteristic made it possible to identify a small fragment from the rubbish heaps of Fustat, Cairo, and now in the Newberry Collection in the Ashmolean Museum.

The designs and stitches embroidered on turban covers were the same as those seen on other embroidered items of the period. For instance, an early example in TPM, datable to the sixteenth or seventeenth century, is decorated with bouquets composed of stylised carnations, tulips, hyacinths and pomegranates that are comparable with floral designs seen on a large hanging from this period; both objects have the same restricted colour scheme. In each case, the stitch used is fine darning over just one thread, known as *kum ignesi*, literally "sand needle", meaning each stitch is as fine as a grain of sand. Little embroidery worked this way has survived; possibly not much was produced since the method is so laborious.



Turban covers were invariably made of delicate, almost transparent fabric, usually linen or cotton, to avoid putting pressure on the turbans. This in turn influenced the size of the stitches, which was always fine. The covers were not lined and the stitches chosen produced reversible embroidery, presumably because parts of the inside of a cover would show when it was draped over a turban on a shelf. It is difficult to know who made the embroideries, most probably some were paid outworkers and others were girls at home trained to embroider from an early age; there is evidence that work was produced in commercial workshops in the nineteenth century. The two embroideries illustrated above are dated to the eighteenth century and worked in variations of double running stitches on fine linen. A simpler turban cover, illustrated opposite (detail on right) belongs to a group thought to date from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Compared with earlier examples, this type is smaller, made of muslin instead of linen, and decorated with small repeating floral motifs. They have a small flower-head at their centres, and stalks bearing blossoms curve out in circular motion.

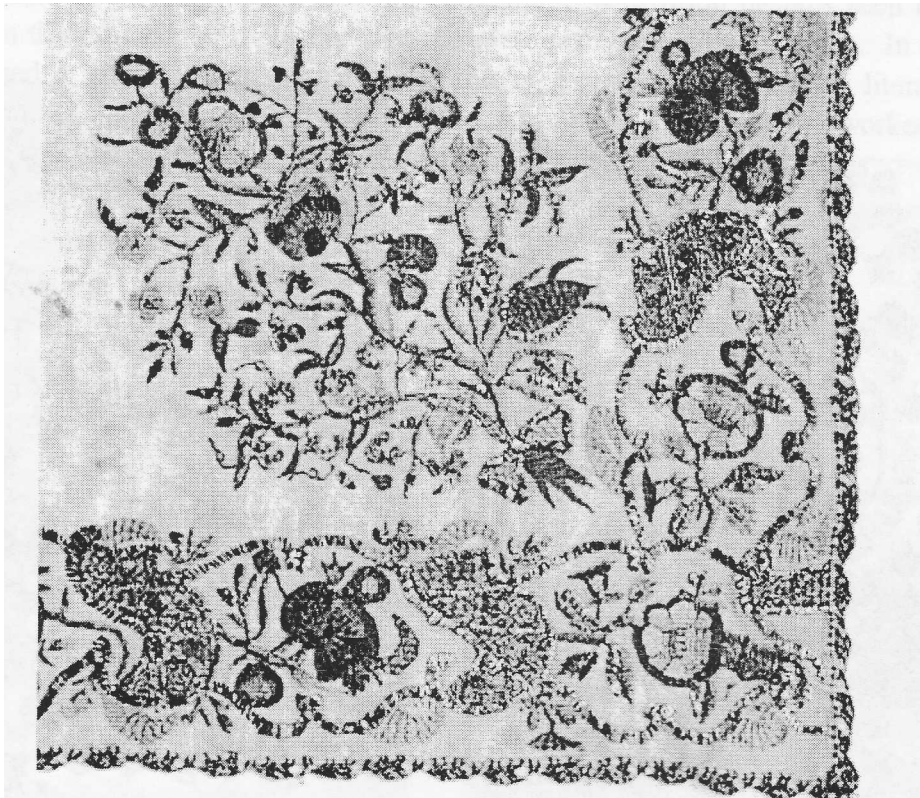
Examples in collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Embroiderers' Guild are considerably more decorative than the one illustrated, having more elaborate motifs and details worked in metal thread using reversible stitches.



Like turban covers, embroidered *bohcas*, or wrapping cloths, were square in shape, but the arrangement of their designs does not conform to a specific layout. The motifs chosen were generally stylised floral forms arranged according to the prevailing fashion, such as repeating medallions placed in offset rows enclosed by a border of scrolling leaves and flowers, or bouquets of flowers springing from corners towards the centre. Owing to the custom of wrapping and storing the belongings of dead sultans and princes, the TPM has a particularly fine collection of wrappers. In Ottoman households they acted as receptacles for garments and household linens stored in cupboards and chests. When ladies went to the *haman*, public baths, necessities such as towels and clean clothes were bundled up in wrappers acting as containers. Folded envelope fashion, they made attractive wrappers for gifts, especially those presented on such occasions as betrothal and marriage. The custom continued as shown by a late twentieth century machine-embroidered example, illustrated overleaf

The stitches selected for machine-embroidery on *bohcas* differ from those on turban covers, so assisting in distinguishing between these categories of square covers. *Bohcas* were made of silk as well as linen and were lined (in most cases the linings have been removed), with the result that the reverse sides were hidden. Since double-sided embroidery was not

necessary, embroiderers used one of the two traditional surface darning stitches on linen grounds, and couched threads in the technique known as *atma*, "laid and couched with a couched line" on silk fabrics.



Decoration worked on women's head-squares or *cevres* was arranged differently again, consisting of a continuous border and a design in each corner facing towards the centre. The word *cevre* means "surrounding, encircling" or "enclosing", referring to the band of embroidery. Of those dated to the second and third decades of the eighteenth century, the most remarkable are a group of veils preserved in Sweden. They were made of sheer silk fabric and exquisitely embroidered with semi-naturalistic floral designs and rococo details such as bows and ribbons. Traditional stitches were modified to suit the designs; double darning remained the principal stitch used, but the colours were shaded and stitches followed the lines of the shapes. Also a considerable amount of metal thread embroidery was introduced, including areas worked in reversible pulled work stitches to produce a glittering mesh. The Victoria and Albert Museum's collection contains attractive examples of the same genre datable to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. The item illustrated opposite shows one corner of an eighteenth to nineteenth century *cevre* extravagantly embroidered with an ornate design in Turkish rococo style. Less elaborate head-squares with a similar design layout were embroidered in counted work stitches. They are most likely to have been made in a domestic situation, having patterns similar to those seen on samplers that acted as aide-memoires.

Ottoman embroidered square covers are particularly fascinating in the way they demonstrate that the same fondness for floral subjects and use of traditional stitches continued



over such a long period. A stitch found on many Ottoman embroideries is double darning, or *pesent*, which translates as "worthy of approval" or "pleasing". This term could well be applied to many of the attractive turban covers, wrapping cloths and head-squares worked in the most delicate manner.

Marianne Ellis

## REPORTS OF O.A.T.G. MEETINGS

### **Carpet Weavers and Their Patterns: The Technology of Design Transmission**

Following the A.G.M. on October 30th, Jon Thompson, May Beattie Fellow in Carpet Studies at the Ashmolean Museum, gave us an insight into some of the problems of carpet design and their implications for carpet dating. He began by introducing us to the different sources of knotted pile carpets: nomadic weavers using ground looms which can be easily moved; village weavers working on upright fixed looms; and workshop weavers in an urban setting using more sophisticated metal-framed looms.

Musical analogies were to the fore in characterising the different ways in which patterns arise and are transmitted. Whilst true improvisation is uncommon, there is often improvisation in the central field of a carpet within more structured borders. More common is variation on a theme. Only when there is precise instruction for each knot can exact transmission be approached.

In the nomadic and village context, patterns are learnt from early childhood as girls learn to weave. Such patterns are transmitted by memory and are known to have been so transmitted over many hundreds of years. The easiest patterns to transmit in this way are small and rectilinear, often being repeated but given variety by colour change. They may have been copied, for example from weft-patterned weaves.



Jon proposed two laws: that where a pattern occurs in more than one medium, it will have originated in the medium with the greater technical limitations (e.g., carpet patterns could originate from flat-weaves, but the converse was less likely). The second law suggests that where technical limitations are less, pattern stability is less. He showed us a fascinating sequence of carpets, one for each century from the fifteenth to the twentieth, to demonstrate how copying when the design logic is not understood leads to simplification and patterns are made more rectilinear.

Moving on from memorised and copied patterns, we saw how precise instructions for each knot are becoming more common, from the varnished hand-drawn graphed patterns on sale from a shop in Isfahan, to the computer-plotted charts produced from scanned images, also in Iran.

In India, patterns have been translated by a *talim*-writer into a sequence of symbols indicating the number of warps to be covered by each colour (comparable to old-fashioned knitting instructions before graphical designs became more common). For this too there is now an electronic version. I imagine it would be harder with this system for the weaver to work the knots bounding a design before filling it in, and in turn the likelihood of error would be greater.

Jon finished his survey by showing us details of discrepancies in the Ardabil carpet in the V.& A. which have convinced him that it was created by copying from a cartoon rather than from precise knot details. He has an on-going search for carpet cartoons and would welcome information from anyone who thinks he or she may have or have encountered such a thing.

Alison Smith

### **Iranian Regional Dress: Beyond the Chador**

Gillian Vogelsand-Eastwood's lively and colourful talk on Iranian costume on 27 November challenged media stereotypes about Iranian costume, leaving us with an impression not of homogeneity but of huge diversity.

Gillian is the Director of the Study Centre for Dress in the Islamic World in Leiden, the Netherlands. She and her husband (an expert on Iran himself) recently had the opportunity to do a survey of Iranian regional and urban dress, with the object of collecting garments for the Centre. This major project involved six trips, structured around "shopping lists". A second aim was to produce a CD-Rom; hence she also took numerous slides, on which her talk was based.

The talk vividly conveyed the great geographical and cultural span of Iran, whose disparate peoples include Turks, Arabs, Kurds and nomadic Kashgais, among many others. Non-cultural factors, such as terrain, climate and available materials, were also shown to influence dress in different regions.

Numerous Western assumptions about Iranian women's dress were undermined, particularly relating to the *chador* (veil) and *burka* (face mask). The *chador* is not common in the capital, Tehran, and exists elsewhere in many different forms and colours, not just the stereotypical black. It also tends to be worn by younger, rather than older, women, and young Kurdish women often don a black *chador* to go into towns. Sometimes it is transparent, in a subtly rebellious gesture against homogenizing state laws.

The fierce cultural independence of Iranian Kurds was illustrated with beautiful slides, showing the brilliant colours and rich fabrics worn in everyday contexts. Women wearing trousers, marking them out as ex-freedom fighters, displayed one of many dress types used by Kurds as silent identity symbols.

Gillian ended her talk with a discussion of *burkas* worn by women in the southern seaboard region. Contrary to expectations, designs and colours varied considerably: not all covered the whole face, and some were actually cut to accentuate the most admired features. As a fitting conclusion to her talk, Gillian presented us with several lovely examples which she had brought along for our perusal. This poignantly underlined the beauty of traditions which are rapidly disappearing and which this survey has recorded in the nick of time.

Flora Nuttgens

### **The New Year Party**

On a cold and frosty 9th of January more than twenty members and guests gathered at Joyce Seaman's house in Oxford to enjoy another Christmastide party. Members brought delicious food ranging from a Japanese prawn dish to savoury nibbles and some wicked chocolate and nut squares.

Fortified by food and drink we settled down for "show and tell" where members explain how items got into their possession, and what they knew about them, this information often supplemented by wise and knowledgeable experts. We admired a large Kashmir shawl, some men's knitting from Peru, a knitted jacket with a pattern based on the double ikat technique from Bali - *geringsing* - a labour of love but of incredible expertise made by Alison Smith, a headdress from the Banjani of central India, and an elegantly embroidered Javanese sarong band. Our chairman, breathless from the book launch in Mumbai brought an advance copy of *Trade, Temple and Court*. This is a magnificent and scholarly book on Indian textiles from the Tapi collection about which we look forward to hearing more later in the year.

The smallest and the largest items were also fascinating; the smallest, a delightful silk knitted purse from Isfahan - Alison Smith is still figuring out the techniques used - the largest, from Uzbekistan was worn by Sheila Paine. The magnificent man's silk coat had been given to Sheila by the puppet-maker from Khiva whom she had brought over to Art in Action 2002. We admired the golden-red colour, the complex weaving and the style of the cut as modelled by Sheila (see overleaf). The organisers were pleased to have been able to offer Sheila a lift as driving a car with 8ft long sleeves alone would have been hazardous.

A very successful party and many thanks to Joyce Seaman for her hospitality.

Fiona Sutcliffe and Rosemary Lee



Sheila Paine at the party.

#### MUSEUMS ROUND-UP

By the time you get as far as this you will have read of the Friends of the Pitt Rivers' kind invitation to us to accompany them on their trip to the Horniman Museum. You will also have read Fiona Kerlogue's tantalizing article on the textiles there - tantalizing because you know very few of them are on view at present.

Fiona also writes, however, that the Museum was given a grant last year from the Designation Challenge fund for a special project to inventory the entire textile collection and a sizeable part of the costume collection. Work is due to start shortly. The project also involves new storage facilities incorporating a small study area, as well as new gallery space to be devoted specifically to textiles. Exhibitions will be rotated and the first, on the textiles of south-East Asia, is planned to open in 2004. I understand our programme secretaries are planning a visit then. Watch this space!

Nearer home, the erstwhile Balfour Galleries of the Pitt Rivers Museum at 60 Banbury Road, have at last been transformed to accommodate the textile store and conservation department, which started life in the 1970s in huts behind the Museum and have spent the last three years in a former rifle range. O.A.T.G. member Birgitte Speake, who is Head of

Conservation, and her colleagues are now enjoying their light and airy new quarters. To quote from the Friends' newsletter:

"The Department aims for visible storage of the reserve collection, and one sees rows and rows of hats and head-dresses in clear plastic bags in the cabinets. In boxes is the collection of more than 500 pairs of shoes. They have all been photographed by a former intern and, as with the boxes of robes and coats, the colour photographs will show what is in each box... On rollers, plastic wrapped, are the textiles in all their splendour. In large drawers are layers of clothes, each sandwiched in crisp white tissue paper with a layered list for each box"

Although the move was made only in August, already by October Birgitte and her crew were welcoming researchers, and they are always ready to welcome people who need to see the collection - by appointment, of course - so perhaps our programme secretaries may find a need for us to go.

In Singapore the old colonial Empress Place Building, situated on the river beside the site where Sir Stamford Raffles landed in 1819, is being refurbished as a Museum of Asian Civilizations, and is due to open shortly. The exhibits will be divided into four areas, West, South, East and South-East Asia (including Tibet), but, perhaps for historic reasons, Japan is not included at all. There is to be a performing arts, area, a children's centre, and a "discovery room". The behind-the-scenes areas all sound very "state of the art", and include three conservation labs. Lynn McLean, Head of Textile and Paper Conservation at the National museums of Scotland, spent some time there last year, and I hope to persuade her to write something on the textiles there in a later newsletter.

Also opening shortly - on 20 March to be precise - is the relocated Asian Art museum in San Francisco. The city was chosen by Avery Brundage in 1959, because of its links with Asia, to establish a centre for Asian Art to which he could give his collection of over 6,000 works of art from China as well as many works from other Asian countries. Since then the holdings have been enlarged and enriched by the addition of substantial collections from other benefactors. Over the last half-dozen years the Old main Library, built in 1917, has been transformed at a cost of over \$160 million to provide a new home for the Museum.

Editor

## **O B I T U A R Y**

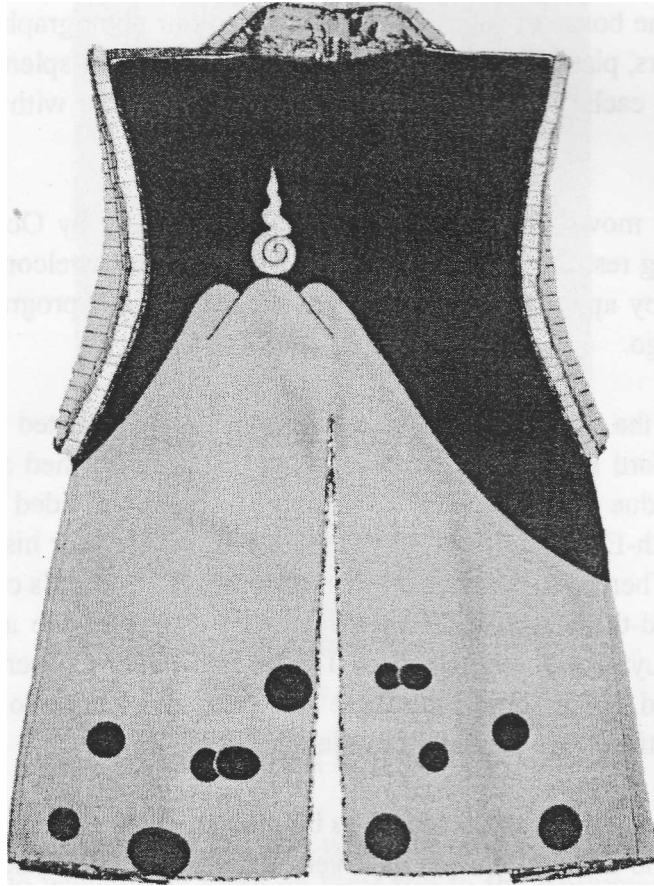
### **Marlene Hinshelwood**

We are sorry to hear of the death in December of Marlene Hinshelwood, a lively and lovely person, who was a long-standing member of the Group and frequent attender of its meetings. Like me, she was particularly interested in the spread of textiles along trade routes and its part in the mingling of cultures. She was also an active member of the Friends of the Pitt Rivers and for the last five years had been guiding schoolchildren round the Museum.

Editor

## BOOKS

Nicole Coolidge Rousmaniere, *Kazari: Decoration and Display in Japan, 15th - 19th Centuries*, British Museum Press, November 2002, ISBN 0 7141 2636 5, 27.5 x 23 cm, 304 pp, 250 colour and 50 b/w illus., pb., £24.99.



Campaign coat (*jinbaori*) with Mount Fuji and "divine fire". Early 17th century. Rearview. Black and yellow woollen cloth (*rasha*) with applique. L 97.8 cm, W 104 cm. Osaka Castle Museum.

This sumptuous catalogue, which accompanies the KAZARI exhibition at the British Museum, is the menu for an exotic banquet of visual delights. The 184 "delicacies" assembled from 49 private and museum collections include ceramics, paintings, metalwork, glass, lacquer, hair ornaments and textiles. They offer an insight into the practice of KAZARI - using objects "for decoration" and "display in specific settings and contexts".

Eight introductory essays by respected experts show how the development and meaning of KAZARI changed over the centuries. One, *Women's Kosode and Social Status*, by Professor Iwao Nagasaki (who also selected the textiles for the exhibition), traces how styles and decorative techniques in kimono design influenced perceptions of class. Another, by Timothy Clark, examines the *Flowers of Yoshiwara: Iconography of the Courtesan*. The rest of the catalogue, which features stunning photographs and fascinating descriptions of all the objects, is helpfully divided into six chronological and thematic sections. These take us

from the Shogun's court in the 15th - 16th centuries to the warrior and merchant classes of the 17th - 18th centuries, and the courtesans and elite women of the 18th - 19th centuries.

In her preface, the Editor says, "From the beginning it was felt that textiles should have a central role in the exhibition". And so they have! Many textiles are depicted in the hand and hanging scrolls, others on five of the folding screens. The stars of the show, however, are the *fukusa* (wrapping cloth) painted by Hokusai when he was 85 and the forty garments which include *jinbaori* (campaign coats) (see illustration above), Noh and Kabuki theatre costumes, fire-fighters' coats and hoods, *kosode* (small-sleeved robes), *uchikake* (over-robes) and *obi* (sashes). There are miracles of weaving, embroidery, tie-dyeing (*shibori*), paste-resist dyeing (*Yuzen*) and pressed metal-foil decoration (*surihaku*), and a plethora of patterns, colours and symbols.

What stimulated their development? The virtual closure of Japan and absence of war! 250 years of peace prevailed during the Edo period (1615 - 1868), due mainly to *sankin kotai*, a system requiring feudal lords to travel to Edo (now Tokyo) with thousands of retainers every other year. This arrangement enabled the Tokugawa shoguns to maintain control, and forced their vassals to spend lavishly on textiles to display their status - KAZARI in motion. In Edo, the bodies of courtesans processing in the Yoshiwara district became "transformed into vehicles of gorgeous display", and increased leisure and wealth led the merchants to indulge in ever more ostentatious ornamentation.

Whether you are seeking an insight into another culture, inspiration for designs and dazzling decorative techniques, or a feast for the eyes, this catalogue has them all. Even if you cannot get to the British Museum for the exhibition (see below p.25), treat yourself to this enjoyable addition to research on the Japanese way with decoration and display.

Marion Maule

### **The Other Books**

Ruth Barnes, Steven Cohen and Rosemary Crill, *Trade, Temple and Court: Indian Textiles from the Tapi Collection*, was published in December by India Book House Pvt Ltd, Mumbai, India. I am sorry I have no further information about it, but I daresay Ruth can supply. The publishers' address is Mahalaxmi Chambers, 5th Floor, 22 Bhulabhai Desai Road, Mumbai 400026, India, or by e-mail: [sales@ibhpublishing.com](mailto:sales@ibhpublishing.com)

Information about the following books comes from the Textile Society of Hong Kong but unfortunately in most cases the information is incomplete. I hope, however, that there is enough for you to be able to track down any works in which you may be interested.

David K. Barker, *Designs of Bhutan*, ISBN 974 8495 03 05, 21 x 30 cm, , 124 pp, , fully illus., 9 pp in colour, pb. 289 individual designs illustrated in 100 plates drawn from woven and decorated items made in Bhutan.

Harold Bohmer, *Koekboya; Natural Dyes ad Textiles*, a colour journey from Turkey to India and beyond. US\$119 (inc. p&p. Order by fax. 0049 4221 588712

Rachel Hasson, *Flowering Gardens Along the Silk Road: Embroidered Textiles from Uzbekistan*, Mayer Museum for Islamic Art, Jerusalem, 2001, ISBN 965904030X, 48 pp, English and Hebrew text, pb. Exhibition catalogue featuring suzanis from Israeli private collections.

Cheryl Imperatore. *Kimono: Vanishing Tradition*, Shiffer, 2001, £39.95. Japanese textiles of the 20th century.

N.H. Kahlenberg et al, *Asian Costumes and Textiles from the Bosphorus to Fujiyama*, Milan, 2001, ISBN 8881 1897 12, hb, £48

Sharon Takeda Sadako and Luke Roberts, *Fishermen's Coats from Awaji Island*, Fowler Museum, Los Angeles, 2001, ISBN 09307418628, 80 pp, pb, US\$30

## EXHIBITIONS

### **An Englishman's Travels in Egypt: Edward Lane in Cairo, 1825-35**



Edward Lane's Turkish trousers. Wool. blue silk braid, pink silk waistband.  
Ashmolean Museum (EA 1983.6)



"As I approached the shore, I felt like an Eastern bridegroom, about to lift up the veil of his bride, and to see, for the first time, the features which were to charm, or disappoint, or disgust him. I was not visiting Egypt merely as a traveller, to examine its pyramids and temples and grottoes, and, after satisfying my curiosity, to quit it for other scenes and other pleasures: but I was about to throw myself entirely among strangers; to adopt their language, their customs and their dress; and, in associating almost exclusively with the natives, to prosecute the study of their literature. My feelings therefore, on that occasion, partook too much of anxiety to be very pleasing."

Thus wrote Edward William Lane (1801-76), later to become a well-known Arabic scholar, about his arrival in Egypt on 17 September 1825. It was an eagerly anticipated encounter for which he had prepared himself with exceptional care and dedication. In the early 1820's Lane was working as an engraver's apprentice when he became interested in Egypt.

The civilization of Ancient Egypt was a fascination to many in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and no doubt it was the spark that started his enthusiasm for the country. But Edward Lane's interest extended beyond the world of the Pharaohs and embraced the Egypt of his day; while still in London he started learning both classical and contemporary colloquial Arabic.

Once he reached Cairo he fully immersed himself in Egyptian society: he immediately adopted local dress, rented a native house which he furnished in Cairene style, and made every effort to develop a wide circle of Egyptian friends, with whom he would converse in Arabic. To all intents he was undertaking what later became known in anthropology as the 'participant observation' of an ethnographic field researcher. His European friends were John Gardner Wilkinson, Robert Hay, James Burton and Lord Prudhoe, all men with a similar interest in Egyptian society. Lane intended to write a book about his experiences, and he kept diaries and notebooks from the beginning of his stay. He also recorded his observations in sketches and drawings, many of remarkable quality. Oxford is very fortunate in having several collections that are associated with Lane's time in Egypt: the Griffith Institute has his notebooks, diaries and drawings, the Bodleian has parts of his correspondence and the first manuscript of his 'Description of Egypt', and in 1983 the Department of Eastern Art in the Ashmolean received a set of Turkish-style clothing worn by Lane during his time in Cairo, donated by the Oxford artist Catherine Dupre who is a direct descendant of his. A display in the Department's Eric North Room brings some of this material together for the first time.

The focus of the exhibition is the set of garments. A total of eight dress items are on view, ranging from a magnificent set of trousers and matching green jacket to his purse, his undershirt and drawers. At the time of his visits Egypt was under Ottoman rule, and middle-class urban dress was Turkish rather than Arabic. To give the display a wider social context, an Ottoman woman's dress from the period is also included. Several of Lane's drawings, on loan from the Griffith Institute, illustrate how these garments were worn. Two fortuitous private loans are also available to the exhibition; they are a drawing (illustrated on p. 1) and portrait painting, respectively, of Edward Lane in Oriental dress, prepared by his brother Richard who was a painter. Remarkably, the two portraits show the sitter wearing a jacket and striped shirt now in the Ashmolean.



Edward Lane's purse, velvet and leather. Ashmolean Museum (EA\* 1953:6)

Lane stayed in Egypt until June 1828; he returned to England with a young female companion, the Greek girl Nefeeseh, whom he (or possibly his friend Robert Hay) had bought as a child in one of Cairo's slave markets. His mother took her under her wings, and she and Lane were largely responsible for Nefeeseh's education-, eventually Edward married her. Back in England he started writing a book about his experiences in contemporary Egypt and his extensive travels to sites of the Pharaonic past. The manuscript (now in the Bodleian and on loan for the exhibition) was never published in this form, instead Lane decided to take the parts dealing with Egyptian society and daily life and expand on them. To gather further material he returned to Egypt 1833 and spent almost another two years there, The result, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptian* (1836), was immediately a great success and had numerous reprints. It was soon followed by his translation of the *Arabian Nights*, which appeared in three volumes between 1838 and 1841. The first edition of

this set is also on view in the exhibition. Lane's lasting contribution to Oriental scholarship was to be the compilation of the *Arabic-English Lexicon*, which remains a standard reference work to this day.<sup>2</sup> Its preparation was financially supported by his friend from early days in Egypt, Lord Prudhoe, and it gave Lane the opportunity to return to Cairo in 1842. This time he stayed until 1849, again living in the Arabic part of the city. He was accompanied by his sister Sophia, her two sons, and Nefeeseh, who by now was his wife. During this time Sophia reworked parts of her brother's unpublished 'Description of Egypt' added accounts of some of her own experiences as a woman living in nineteenth century Egypt, and turned all into her own book *The Englishwoman in Egypt: Letters from Cairo* (3 vols., published in London in 1844-46). During this time Edward Lane was completely absorbed with his work on the Lexicon. It remained his major preoccupation until his death in 1876.

2 When I asked for the loan of the first edition from the Bodleian Library for this exhibition, the Keeper of Oriental Books was very helpful and wanted to accommodate the request, but asked how essential the edition would be to the display, as it is on open shelf in the Library's Oriental Reading Room, and "is referred to daily by scholars of Arabic". I decided that manuscript selections for the *Lexicon*, now in the Griffith Institute, might be a better alternative as a loan for the exhibition.

*An Englishman's Travels in Egypt* is on display in the Eric North Room at the Ashmolean Museum from 23 April to 20 July. If you want further information, please contact me on 01865 278076, or e-mail: [ruth.bames@ashmus.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ruth.bames@ashmus.ox.ac.uk)

Ruth Barnes

### The Other Exhibitions

**Kazari: Decoration and Display in Japan. 15th - 19th Centuries** - at the British Museum, now until 13 April, the exhibition includes some 200 objects, some of which have never been seen in Britain before and is arranged in six sections: China in Japan, The Shogun's Court (15th - 16th centuries); Swagger of the New Military Elite (first half of the 17th century); Styles of the Merchant Class (late 17th - early 18th century); Fashions for Women of the Warrior Class (18th - 19th centuries); The Floating World on Display (late 18th - 19th centuries); and Spectacular Festivals (17th to 19th centuries). A number of events are being held in connexion with the exhibition. Tel. 020 7323 8000. (Marion Maule, whose review of the accompanying catalogue appears above (p. 20) is visiting the exhibition at least eight times, and would be pleased give any members who would like it a guided tour.)

**The Exquisite Kimono** - now until 16 March at Bankfield Museum, Boothtown Road, Halifax, Yorkshire. Described as "a celebration of this traditional form of dress, featuring a range of historic and contemporary kimono - and encompassing everything from the jeans of the kimono world to the sumptuous wedding gowns that are hired for a day and worn for just a few short minutes". Tel. 01422 352334

### Overseas Exhibitions

**Hold it : Textiles as Containers** - an exhibition celebrating the use of textiles as utilitarian containers and shedding light on the various cultures that use them, at The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., now until 2 June. Tel. 001 202 667 0441

**Glorious Geometries** - 500 years of abstract Asian carpet and textile design, in honour of the reopening of the San Francisco Asian Art Museum, presented by Linda Wrigglesworth and Sandra Whitman at 361 Oak Street, San Francisco. Tel. (415) 437 2402

**The Legacy of Genghiz Khan** - A major exhibition of art (including textiles) from 13th to 14th century Iran, at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California, 13 April -27 July.

#### Last Chance to See ...

**Mediating With Spirits** - Korean shamanism at the Royal Museum of Scotland, chambers Street., Edinburgh, ends 30 March. Tel. 0131 247 4219/4422

**The Legacy of Genghiz Khan** - (see above) Metropolitan Museum, New York, ends 16 February.

**The Classical Tradition in Anatolian Carpets** - at the Textile Museum, Washington D.C., ends 16 February. Tel. +(202) 667 0441

### CONFERENCES

#### Feltmakers' Conference

The International Feltmakers' Conference for 2003 will be held from 4 to 6 April at Auchincruve in Ayrshire, Scotland. The conference will take the form of a residential meeting with feltmakers from around the world running hands-on workshops for participants. Further information can be obtained from *Echoes*, the I.F.A. journal, or by visiting [www.feltmakers.com](http://www.feltmakers.com)

#### Association for the Study of Travel in Egypt and the Near East

The fifth biennial conference will be held from 11 to 14 July at Worcester College, Oxford. Papers are invited on a wide range of topics - none, so far as I can see, specifically textile, though no doubt any such would be welcome. Among subjects suggested are: Travel in Classical Times; Pilgrims; Caravanserai etc; Nile boats; Scientific Travels; The travels of Bible Historians; Travellers' Observations of Culture (perhaps this could include textiles) and Music; Topographical and other Artists; Travellers in Particular Regions; and Individual Travellers (such as Edward Lane; it is not pure chance that the exhibition at the Ashmolean featured above has been put on at this time).

For members of ASTENE, the full conference including accommodation and all meals costs from £270 to £345, depending on the type of accommodation occupied, or £20 a day non-residential. O.A.T.G. members are welcome to attend at the same rate; otherwise non-members are required to pay a supplement of £7 per day.(though if you are going for three days or more it is cheaper to become a member at £20).

Further information may be obtained from the ASTENE website:  
[www.dur.ac.uk/astene.association](http://www.dur.ac.uk/astene.association)

### **Carpets and Textiles in the Iranian World, 1400-1700**

A conference on this subject will be held on 30 and 31 August at the Ashmolean Museum under the auspices of the Beattie Carpet Archive and the Iran Heritage Foundation. The approach will be interdisciplinary rather than object-orientated, and the following themes have been suggested: art historical matters and questions; the organization of carpet and textile production; the social function and importance of carpets and textiles; cross border influences; trade and economy; studies of objects; the history of technology; the application of scientific techniques to art historical problems.

The convenors Jon Thompson, Willem Floor and Farhad Hakimadeh would welcome other proposals (even from non-attenders), and invite papers. Anyone interested in participating is asked to submit a 200 word abstract of their proposed paper to the convenors by 1 March. Those invited to contribute will be asked to write up their oral presentation. The papers, together with the comments made during the conference will be published in a format yet to be decided.,

Further information may be obtained from [jon.thompson@ashmus.ox.ac.uk](mailto:jon.thompson@ashmus.ox.ac.uk) or [willem.floor@verizon.net](mailto:willem.floor@verizon.net) or [farhad@iranheritage.org](mailto:farhad@iranheritage.org) (or, if you do not have access to e-mail, try Jon Thompson or Emma Dick at the Ashmolean, tel. 01865 278076). Further details will be included in the next newsletter.

### **EVENTS AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM**

Thursday 13 February - **Kazari: Decoration and Display in Japan, 15th - 19th Centuries**, 11.15 a.m. Gallery talk in the exhibition by Tim Clark

Saturday 15 February - **\*Caring for Textiles**, 10 a.m. - 12 noon. Allyson Rae from the Department of Conservation and Helen Wolfe from the Department of Ethnography will demonstrate techniques using textiles from the Museum's own collections as examples. Participants are also invited to bring in one item for advice on how to look after it.

Thursday 20 February and 5 following Thursdays - **\*Arts of Kazari: Japan on Display**, 1 -3 p.m. Complementing the exhibition of the same name, Nicole Rousmaniere, curator, and

Tim Clark, Assistant keeper of Japanese Antiquities, will lead a course combining lectures, gallery talks and behind-the-scenes sessions.

Friday 28 February - **Kazari: Decoration and Display in Japan, 15th to 19th Centuries**, 11.15 a.m. Gallery talk in the exhibition by Tim Clark.

Saturday 1 March - **\*Arts of Kazari**, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Study day bringing together leading specialists from the U.K., U.S.A. and Japan to give presentations on various aspects of Kazari.

Thursday 12 June - **\*World Textiles: Palestine, 2 - 4 p.m.** Shelagh Weir will run a workshop introducing the social and symbolic significance of Palestinian costume, with an opportunity for participants to examine examples at close hand and try some of the embroidery and appliqué techniques themselves.

\*Limited number of places, which may all be filled already, but it is worth inquiring.

Information on all the above and other events may be obtained from the Education Department at the Museum, tel. 020 7323 8511/8854 or e-mail: [education@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk](mailto:education@thebritishmuseum.ac.uk)

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**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE - MONDAY 2 JUNE**

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