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***Front cover**: Procession of Lampung ladies, 2003, photograph by Anshori Djausal. See article on page 4.*

ORTS JOURNAL SPRING 2023

Two major articles in this issue are by Mary-Louise Totton and Valide Pashayeva. Mary-Louise will be speaking to the Society in the summer on another topic; here she analyses three previously unpublished textiles in the Dallas Museum of Art collections, linking them to her seminal work on the splendid women's skirt cloths of Lampung, Sumatra. Valide's article brings together two subjects: the *buta* motif, found in textiles across Asia, and the *kelaghayi* silk head scarves of Azerbaijan. Valide's earlier work on these scarves is much drawn upon by other writers; in this article she explores how and why the buta motif is used in them. Two book reviews are among other contributions this time. Thank you to all the authors— suggestions for future content are always welcome!

Fiona Kerlogue

Above: ORTS members in the Tentmakers Street, Cairo, November 2010. Left to right: Patricia Windebank, Louise Teague, guide, Ken Teague, Elizabeth Jackson and Del Blacker. More on the Tentmakers of Cairo on page 29.

ORTS LECTURE PROGRAMME Spring to Summer 2023

Wednesday, March 15th. Penny Oakley: Suzanis: a new look at an old story. University Women's Club. 18.00 for 19.00.

Wednesday, April 19th. Dr Ben Hinson: Collecting late antique textiles at the Victoria and Albert Museum: Greville Chester, Gayet, Thomas and friends. University Women's Club. 18.00 for 19.00.

Wednesday, May 17th. Sarah Piram: To be confirmed. University Women's Club. 18.00 for 19.00.

Wednesday, June 21st. Mary-Louise Totton. Past is Prologue: Contemporary Indonesian Batik. University Women's Club. 18.00 for 19.00.

Saturday, July 1st. ORTS Garden Party. New Beckenham, London.

Playful Abundance: Lampung tapis from the Dallas Museum of Art collection

Mary-Louise Totton

Tapis, woven and embellished tubular dresses created and worn by women in Lampung, Indonesia, are some of the most exuberant and playful textile arts in the region. This essay is but a tiny sampling of extant historical tapis. By studying three exquisite examples found in a remarkable American museum collection much may be understood of the abundant artistic techniques and materials utilized in the creative making of ceremonial attire in this province as well as of the socio-historical context of such playful couture.

Lampung

Lampung is situated in the southernmost region of Sumatra within the world's largest archipelago of what we now know as Indonesia (Figure 1). Of the hundreds of ethnic groups that live on the islands, some of the most fascinating are those now known collectively as the Lampungese. They speak of themselves today as a union of two peoples, the Saibatin and the Pepadon, terms which define whether titles and status were inherited or earned. Within each of these groups are multiple *marga* (small clan-based groups with their own micro-rules and traditions termed *'adat'*). Outsiders have also divided these groups into other categories, the most common being Abung (northern interior), Pesisir (coastal), and Paminggir (western highlands). The location of Lampung, a day's sail just northwest of Java, between the straits of Malacca and Sunda strait, has brought foreigners from all over the globe to these shores. During colonial times and before, the rulers of this region were known especially for their gold and pepper trading. *Merantau* was an age-old custom of men sailing off to have adventures and make their fortunes before returning home to secure their family's future status and security. Wealth was most often displayed in material goods acquired or created in Lampung; textile arts, those still extant, are the most distinctive forms in which womenfolk created heirloom-worthy affluence. Clothing was and still is of the utmost importance to life status ceremonies for many Indonesians today: what someone wears or displays marks their identity and relative status as well as conveying respect for their clan and culture.

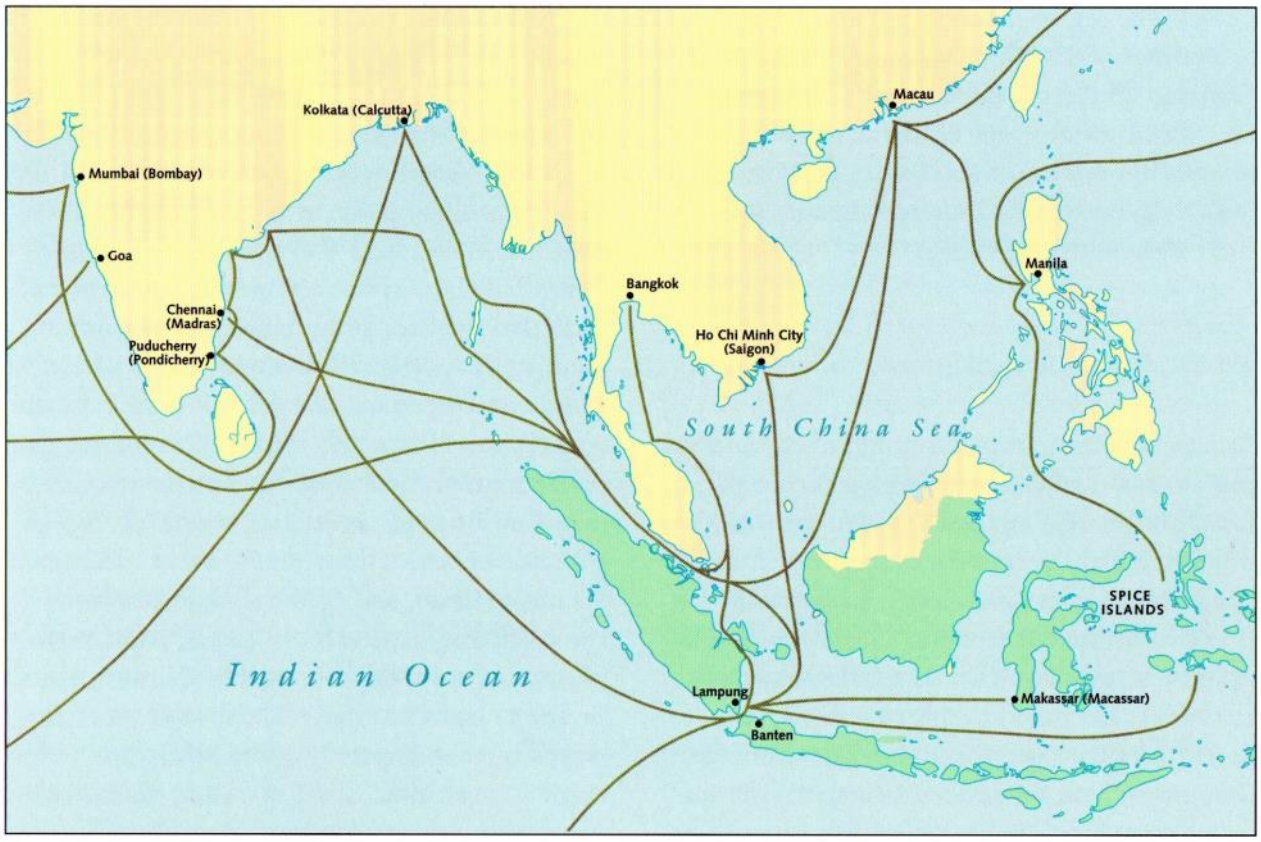


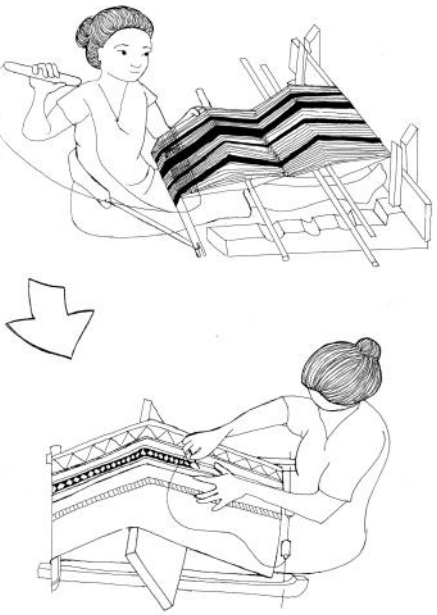
Figure 1. Map of Indian Ocean shipping routes.

Materials and Techniques

The ceremonial dress of Lampung required many months of preparation and intricate work. What is so remarkable, extraordinary really, is the extensive variety of materials and techniques used to make the tapis (ceremonial dresses/skirts) in the various *marga* of Lampung. Silk and cotton were both cultivated in the region but today's tapis are often made with imported, pre-dyed thread (rayon or cotton blend). In the past, after spinning and dyeing, cotton threads were washed in rice water to stiffen them for the weaving process. Tapis have a minimum of two layers: a woven foundation and additional layer(s) of embellishments on top of that. After dyeing, threads are woven on a backstrap loom called a *mattakh* (fig. 2 above). The varying widths of these weavings suggest that pre-modern/contemporary tapis were custom made for an individual. Nearly every tapis is striped in complex formats of narrow to wide bands. It is these stripes that either frame or serve as grounds for subsequent ornamentation.

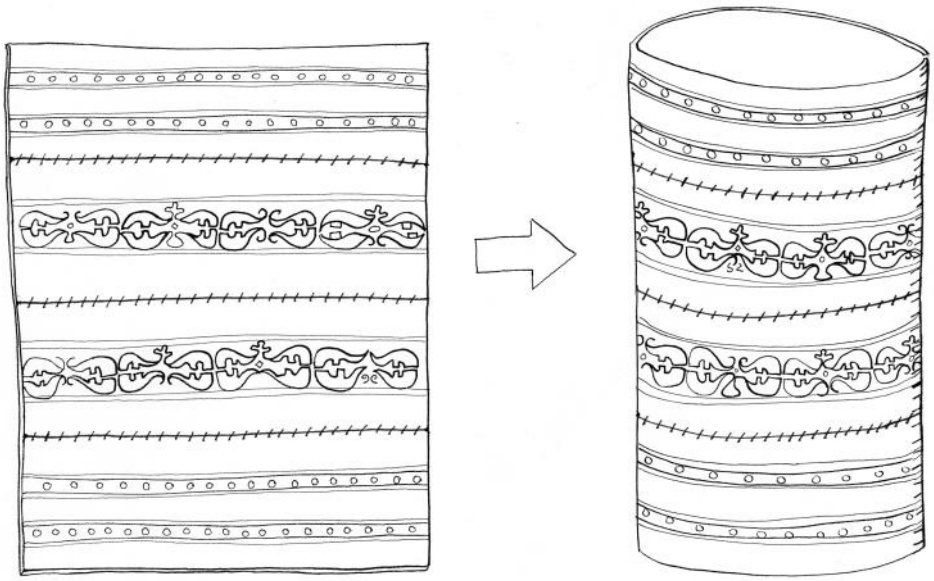
To ornament the woven cloth, a simple device called a *tekang* is used to keep the fabric taut for the application of various secondary materials (fig. 2 below). Once embellished, two or more striped weavings are joined horizontally, and then one vertical seam is sewn to complete the tubular form of a tapis (fig. 3). Analysis of most historical tapis show that tapis were ornamented first and then stitched together. However, some were ornamented a second time after the stitching into a tubular form (Djausal 1999, 115). On the body, a tapis should be large enough to skim the hips and tuck snugly around the woman's upper chest. Prior to the late nineteenth century, it appears that tapis were worn as dresses but later, and currently, tapis are worn as skirts, with the upper body covered in current blouse-jacket fashions.

Figure 2. Mattakh & Tekang. Illustration by Anne Liu .



While contemporary tapis tend to follow fashion trends and are manufactured in runs of the same type—a sort of 'ready to wear', historical tapis are examples of Indonesian *haute couture*, each one a unique 'over-the-top' display of wealth, despite fitting into a typology of *marga* traditions. Thus, although we may be able to assign a category to each of the tapis under discussion, each is nevertheless unique in sizing, colour, and/or ornamentation details.

Figure 3. Tubular form of tapis. Illustration by Anne Liu.



Example 1: Tapis Raja Medal, 'King's Procession Tapis' (Figure 5)

Let's begin with the gold. For the Pepadon *marga* artists, the most prestigious tapis are ornamented with gold-wrapped threads. A tapis that is fully covered in gold thread is termed a *jung sarat*, 'fully-laden,' in reference to a heavily burdened cargo ship—a treasure ship that offers the maximum opportunity for profits. Accordingly, the most heavily ornamented tapis would be exclusively worn by the highest ranked woman (who took her status from her husband or father). In figure 4 (see cover) we see a 21st century continuation of this tradition with a procession of ladies, the lead lady in such a fully-laden tapis. Our first example (Figure 5) is heavily embellished with gold-wrapped thread. Although it is not 'fully laden,' this is a tapis that was worn by a highly placed aristocratic matron, for title ceremonies or in her role as a bridal escort, or by a new bride whose father was a *marga* leader (Sitorus, 1990-1991, 49-51). Images were created using gold-wrapped threads that were bent into shape and sewn onto the woven cotton ground cloth with a non-wrapped thread, a couching technique locally termed *cucuk*. Gold, too valuable to hide below the fabric surface and difficult to sew in and out of the fabric as in traditional embroidery, also offers a brilliant reflective surface to further embellish. Thus, each golden figure, object, or banding is intricately patterned by coloured tacking threads to create a third layer of expressive patterns called *sasab*. The tacking threads of the two top and bottom bands are gold, and in the third band, the threads are red (Figures 6 & 7), which are most humorously patterned on the human figures. Spangles (many missing now) and pieces of appliquéd red, peach and green wool or embroidery add additional flash to this tapis.

Figure 5. Tapis Raja Medal, DMA 1983.68, 19th century, cotton, silk, natural dyes, gold-wrapped thread, felt, sequins, 46 x 54 ¼ in. Courtesy of Dallas Museum of Art.

Figure 6. Detail showing sasab on Tapis Raja Medal, DMA 1983.68. Courtesy of Dallas Museum of Art.

The four wide horizontal registers of images set out lively pictorials, framed between solid gold bands of couching. A novel aspect of this tapis is the artistic breaking of the gold under-framing to feature mythical dragons (*naga*) and bases of the harbour lamps, allowing us to see the striped base cloth. The type of ship it appears to feature in the brown bands are side-wheeler steamships with sails. Such sea-going paddlewheel ships (circa 19th century) could travel in any season, no longer dependent upon winds. Sails would assist in powering the boat if winds were right or if the crew ran out of fuel to power the steam engines. Water seems to churn furiously below these ships; their flags bend with the wind. Yet the boats are also framed between tall posts (gas lamp posts?), as if each has just docked. Another reading of these 'ships' is that they are wheeled processional carts and staging platforms that celebrate the successful maritime commerce of the region. The tall, curving flag in the centre of four of the boats could be an Indonesian *umbel*—not a sail but something else that conveys the idea of wind and/or forward motion.

Figure 7. Tapis Raja Medal, DMA 1983.68 (detail). Courtesy of Dallas Museum of Art.

The two wide blue bands, like the brown ones, also have duplicate imagery. Four scenes are worked across the two registers: first on the left in the upper band a curly tailed dragon (*naga*) faces someone riding a tiger, an elaborate decorative structure between them. Accounts from the colonial period refer to Lampung chiefs and their wives being conveyed to a ritual site in small palanquins or wheeled wagons, often in the form of dragon-headed boats (*perahu naga*) with long, curling tails (Schnitger, 1939, 151-153). The man may ride a locally revered tiger spirit associated with ancestral powers, Satatuha, 'Old One'. Second from left, a pair of crudely rendered standing men face each other across a table, one hand raised as if in greeting. They are framed between Western styled chairs (one a rocker). The third scene depicts pairs of birds and *naga* (symbols of the heavens and the seas respectively) flanking a more elaborate decorative structure. Trees flanked by animals and birds are found on many ancient Javanese temples (*candi*); there they denote the Hindu *kalpataru,* an auspicious tree of good fortune. Lastly, in a fourth scene another pair of figures posed frontally on either side of a table, also between a rocking chair and regular chair. The compositions of paired figures and objects turn inwardly, the backs of the chairs or figures are used to frame each scene, a convention of narrative imagery found in first millennium Indonesian art.

The lower blue band has more intricate details; the gold threads are patterned with red tacking threads, and the scenes are switched. The tables covered in tablecloths have mugs and a vase of flowers. The tiger -riding figure wears a small cap (*peci*) and holds a parasol, an accoutrement of nobility, in his left hand. Also, a line of gold threads curves down to the centre structure (now ornamented with birds above and *naga* serpents below) and extends to the curly tailed dragon. This is a motif often found in Raja Medal tapis, along with waving figures and *nagas*, which convey the idea of chiefly figures in a ceremonial procession. In the third scene, the two frontally posed figures seem to hold bottles or jugs, the table topped with a pretty vase of flowers. Two small figures are depicted above the rocker and chair, most likely adults of lesser status—perhaps servants—as scale is often used pictorially to denote status. All four figures wear small red hats. Western styled chairs were used by high status Lampungese when posed for photographs in the early twentieth century and these same aristocratic men also mostly

Figure 8. Tapis Kaca Kuning, 'Mirrored Yellow Tapis' (Saibatin marga). 1983.67. Courtesy of Dallas Museum of Art.

favoured the trousers and jackets of European colonials—recorded here just as we find in photographs of the same period. The *kalpataru* of this lower band is intricately worked, with *naga* serpents at its base, *naga* dragons flanking, and huge birds flying above.

With its bold large-scale imagery, clearly the petite figure of the woman who would have worn it was not a consideration. Instead, her body was meant to display this graphic panorama, which in turn declared her family's wealth and status at the events she attended. That said, there was a practical consideration for this personal dress: the top band of lightly outlined, four-petal floral shapes is most restrained – this is the area that would be wrapped tightly around the wearer's bosom and not visible.

Body enhancement was not an issue for many tapis traditions, at least in contrast to Western concerns for clothes that emphasize a woman's slenderness or voluptuousness. Instead, archival photographs of Lampung women testify to the importance of personal adornments as wealth and identity displays, much like the colonial fashions favored by wealthy Lampung men, which conveyed a similar idea in a different way. Important today is that the non-figure focus enables viewers to see these textiles as more typical

'art,' especially when the side seam is undone and the cloth completely flattened. Viewed like this the dress becomes more of a 'storyboard' than an item of recognizable clothing.

At the very bottom edge, a row of large golden isosceles triangles points downward. This motif, *tajuk*, has many meanings throughout the many island cultures of Indonesia (more commonly called *tumpal*), but it is always associated with auspiciousness, or as one trader remarked to me, 'it has good legs.'

Example 2: Tapis Kaca Kuning, 'Mirrored Yellow Tapis' (Saibatin marga) (Figure 8)

Falling under the broad category of Tapis Kaca, 'Mirror Tapis,' this playful tubular dress/skirt (now opened along the vertical side seam) has a striped ground cloth of deep red, cinnamon-y orange-brown, teal, sage green, and indigo blue (Figure 8). Indigenous plants such as indigo, turmeric, mangosteen, and coconut were used to create this palette of natural dyes, recipes handed down through the generations. The artist of this tapis also purchased or bartered for imported silk floss, wool cloth, gilt lace trim, and metallic wrapped threads to embellish the base cloth.

Each of these horizontal (as worn) bands serves to frame or ground a single register of motifs. The cotton cream ground of the central band was sewn to the silk/cotton striped ground cloth—although it is not clear if this was original to the tapis or was a later addition. Recyling and upcycling were often practised with family heirlooms. Dominating the central muslin band's silk floss embroidery are two pairs of square panels—when worn, two would be visible in the front of the dress and two on the back. Each panel features a multi-coloured banded tree-like structure in the centre. Swirling in curvaceous lines surrounding each tree are colourful, abstracted stick figures, plants, as well as avian and zoomorphic forms that resemble hornbills, chickens, roosters, dragons, monkeys, and composite creatures. The style of these panels is strikingly similar to coastal styles of Dayak, Iban, Mualang, and Buginese peoples of Borneo and southern Sulawesi, peoples known to have frequent interregional contact with Lampung. An antique *kendi*, a ceramic water vessel from Lampung, found in the National Museum of Indonesia's collection, has similar swirled composite creatures on its base, which resemble the Dayak *asu*, a dragon/ dog spirit (Figure 9).

Both the ornamental techniques and the motifs of this tapis evoke the multi-cultural nature of Lampung's historical contacts. Indic, Arabic, Dayak, European, Chinese, and Buginese aesthetics mix easily on this inventive textile. This tapis may also be studied as a perfect 'sampler' of Lampung secondary ornamentations. Hundreds of colourful hand-cut mirror bits and mica have been appliquéd into multi-coloured round, square, and triangular embroidered 'frames,' (a technique locally termed *cermuk*). Colourful appliquéd scraps of felted wool and tiny patches of silk embroidery (*sulam*) are used to fill in organic shapes—abstracted anthropomorphic, zoomorphic and floral forms—that have been outlined in couched metallic wrapped threads (*cucuk*). Additionally, gilt *passementerie*, a lacy European styled-scallop trim, has been appliquéd in four bands to add extra flash when the wearer moved or danced. Still more metallic thread has been added as supplementary weft (*kain brokat*) and the Arabic needleweaving technique is an additional embellishment (Maxwell, 1990, 320).

Figure 9. Kendi adat, Museum Nasional Indonesia 586b, photo by Ridha Kusumabrata.

Balancing the stark contrast of the light cream panels and darker framing stripes with their heavier ornamentation are the beautifully blank cinnamon-coloured bands above and below that are sliced in half with a narrow decorative fillet. The highly fugitive dyes made from turmeric roots created a deep golden colour – now oxidized into this cinnamon shade. Yellow, like gold, is a colour that was associated with protection. Above and below are heavily ornamented stripes that also balance the textile's proportions.

Although there are no details of its specific Lampung *marga* provenance, the colouration and Buginese/ Dayak styles and motifs suggest this tapis was made in a coastal area. A tapis of this type would have most likely been worn by a high status married woman or a young dancer.

Example 3: Tapis Inuh Merah, "Red Ikat Tapis" (Saibatin marga) (Figure 10)

Lampungese iconic boat imagery must compete with bold red and black patterning on a Saibatin *marga* tapis *inuh* (Figure 10). This striking dress was constructed from seven panels joined and seamed to create the standard tubular form of a tapis. Because this tapis has not been opened we can see the front and back of the tubular tapis as intended. The ground cloth of the four largest panels was patterned by the *ikat* resist technique. *Ikat* dyeing requires skillful placements of resists (on the warp threads in this case), dyeing, and repeating this process for a second colour prior to weaving the cloth. Tremendous skill and artistic expertise are required to create such intricate patterning. Viewed sideways, from the weaver's perspective, the warp resists were paired and then split from centre outwards creating a mirror or butterfly effect. Not only did this technique help the precision of the design but it also saved time and effort. The artist then carefully aligned the motifs of each register so that the beautifully undulating patterns also convey a sharp overall presentation, as if the ikat patterning was not just on the warp threads but also on the weft. Three types of tapis inuh may be noted that differentiate how the ikat panels were worked. This one has the long running ikat motifs, a second type is a monochrome ikat of grid-worked motifs, and a rarer third type has large square panels of a single ikat design in each quadrant. No doubt these conventions of composition relate to familial or *marga* traditions within the Saibatin.

Double *ikat* textiles, *patola*, were high status textiles traded from the Gujarat region of India to elite islanders all across the archipelago. The patterning of this tapis recalls these highly valued imports and reflects the sophisticated textile 'literacy' of weavers and dyers and their patrons in the islands. A few surviving *patola* have been found in Lampung—used in the previous century or so for courting events—so it is quite possible that the *patola* were the inspiration for this *ikat* patterning. Conversely, it is also possible that the warp patterns of Indonesia could have inspired the exporters of Gujarat.

The *ikat* patterned panels of this tapis are framed with narrow, plainly dyed striped bands and additional *ikat* bands only wide enough for a single scrolled motif. Note that all these ikat patterns stop abruptly an inch or so before the two sides of the dress—demonstrating that the dyer/weaver was plotting out her tapis construction prior to weaving. In contrast, the solid indigo panels that are seamed between them are completely covered with polychrome silk embroidery, which was created after the tapis was woven and seamed into its tubular form.

Silk floss embroidery (*sulam*) is an ancient Chinese art and the finely worked embroideries of tapis *inuh* suggest a long ago importation of embroidery artists and or embroidered silk textiles to Lampung. As the *ikat* portions of this tapis hint at the aesthetic borrowings between far away west India so does the silk floss embroidery connect Lampung textile artists and elites to China. This tapis expresses Lampung's centrality between these two powerful Asian regions; its extensive coastline borders on the only sea lanes that allowed ships to travel between India and China.

The boats featured in the embroidery on this tapis resemble Austronesian *proa* (in modern Indonesian, '*perahu*'), low sailing ships with their tall double prows. With no sails evident, these boats suggest a series of ships at rest along the coastline. Are those buoys between each ship? Abstracted figures, standing, moving, or seated (centre), are either meant to be aboard each boat or just behind it. They are placed under rooflines, tall parasols, or flags that are adorned with the same multicoloured trims as the ships. No ground cloth is left blank; meandering white forms and roiling lines of white stitchery fill every space. Curiously, the head of each figure is either round or a feathery shape—we are left to wonder about the significance of these figure types. Different ethnic groups? Or perhaps different statuses? The wild feathery headdresses and the simple boat shape also recall Dongson (ancient Vietnamese) renderings of boating figures on the trade bronzes of the early first millennium. Do these embroideries render a long held communal memory of ancestral origins? Another feathery headdress reference might be that of the warriors of Enggano, an island off the west coast of central Sumatra (Gittinger, 1972).

Figure 10 (right). Tapis Inuh Merah, DMA no. 1983.69. 19th century, cotton, silk, natural dyes, silk floss, mica and hand cut mirrors, gold foil, 46 ¼ x 27 ¼ in. Courtesy of Dallas Museum of Art.

Additional embellishments, including delicate needle-weaving in silk and appliqués of a few small hand-cut mirrors add to the sumptuousness of this dress. Although very little is known about who wore these and for what type of ceremony, this tapis demonstrates a fascinating use of diverse techniques and aesthetics.

Conclusion

This is only a brief introduction to the wonderful world of Lampung tapis. In today's Indonesia Lampung tapis traditions are touted throughout the archipelago as one of the most revered and glamorous textile arts, which some brides, starlets, and beauty queens choose to wear, and contemporary fashion designers are busy interpreting. If you are interested in reading more about this fascinating area and its tapis, please see my book, *Wearing Wealth and Styling Identity: Tapis from Lampung, south Sumatra, Indonesia* (Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College: 2009).

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The Buta (Paisley) Motif and Its Use in Azerbaijan Kelaghayi

Valide Pashayeva

Textiles often include motifs and designs whose meanings have been rigorously explored, hotly debated and widely contested by scholars, providing opportunities for endless friendly disagreement and helping to fill the pages of academic journals. The buta motif is one such design. In this article Valide Pashayeva explores its resonance through the centuries in Azerbaijan, showing how designs can emerge and meanings can shift over time. The article concludes with an examination of the use of the design in Azerbaijan's iconic kelaghayi silk headscarves.

The *Buta* Motif

The ornamental art of Azerbaijan is a part of the wider Turkic and Oriental ornamental artistic tradition, and many of the elements inherent in these are also elements of the ornamental art of Azerbaijan. One of the motifs common to both is the *buta* (also boteh, botteh, paisley), which occupies a special place in Azerbaijan ornamental art. This motif, with its asymmetric shape, variety of forms, often very rich internal ornamentation, mysterious beauty, attractiveness and at times simplicity, has appeared in various household items and works of art in different cultures but is mainly found in textiles and carpets (see Figure 1). A *buta* can be geometric, curvilinear, wide and short, narrow and long, decorated or simple. Being one of the most common motifs, the *buta* has always attracted the attention of art scholars; its origin and semantics have been the subject of frequent discussions.

Figure 1. Goradil carpet, Baku group. 19th century. Azerbaijan National Carpet Museum, Baku.

In Hindi-Urdu the word *buta* means 'flower' or 'bunch of flowers.' This was the name of the characteristic motif of Kashmir shawls, which in the process of evolution from the seventeenth century to the first quarter of the nineteenth century was transformed from a shrub with roots and rare flowers into the current motif familiar to us (Irwin, 1973). In the Azerbaijan language this motif is also called *buta*; the word *'buta'* in many Turkic languages means a bud, a shoot, a bunch of flowers.

According to the art scholar L. Kerimov (1983), '*buta'* is the name of a field shrub resembling a thorn or thistle. In the past *buta* shrubs were used to fuel stoves and bathhouses. If you set fire to a *buta*, each of its branches burns separately like a candle, and the flame resembles an ornamental *buta* in shape and therefore this motif is called *buta*. The Iranian scholar S. Parham (1999) explains the word *'botteh'* as a shrub. In his opinion, *botteh* is of exclusively Iranian origin and in the last period of Sasanian art was a symbol of the evergreen cypress and mythologically associated with immortality and eternity. Since the 16th century it has become a symbol of sovereignty and absolute power.

Figure 2. Wooden figurine of a deer. Filippovsky barrow, Orenburg, 4th c. BC. Museum of Archaeology and Ethnography, Ufa, Russia.

There are many other assumptions regarding the origin of the *buta* motif. According to some scholars it is supposed to originate from different fruits, from leaves, or from a developing shoot of a palm tree. There are also opinions that the *buta* is a stylization of the female parrot motif, the mythological sun bird, the peacock, or some generalized bird. According to the 'talisman' theory, the *buta* is a stylized eye motif, a talisman against the evil eye.

In fact, the existence of this ornamental element in ancient times, regardless of whether it had any special name or meaning, is shown in archaeological finds. The oldest of these date to the 6th-4th centuries BC (Figure 2).

The most ancient surviving examples of textiles with *buta*-shaped decorations are silk fabrics from Akhmim in Egypt, which date back to the 6th-8th centuries AD. On these fragments of fabrics *buta*-shaped elements are located on the branches of a tree (Figure 3).

A bronze incense burner with a figure, presumably of the king of ancient Albania, Jevanshir, on horseback, dates back to approximately the same period. Ancient Albania was a state that occupied parts of the territories of modern Azerbaijan, Georgia and Dagestan. Among the decorations of the horse, there are *buta*-shaped pendants (Figure 4).

A bronze jug from the Louvre (Figure 5), made by Azerbaijanian master Osman an-Nakhchivani son of Suleiman in 1190, ends with a *buta*-shaped head.

Also noteworthy are Andean textiles, which have *buta*-shaped motifs and are dated to the period from 1000 to 1476 AD, when the Andean cultures had no contact with Europe or Asia. This means that the motif we are interested in has an independent origin, and in the catalog of the exhibition where these artefacts were shown, it is noted that this motif is a stylized bird.

Figure 3. Textile fragment, silk. Egypt, Akhmim, 7th - 8th c. AD. Textile Arts Museum, Lyon, France.

In our opinion, the motif which is called *buta* in Azerbaijan and which has been used and is used in different cultures, despite the external similarity of the motif, can have different origins and different semantics.

Figure 4. Bronze incense burner. Dagestan, 7th c. AD. The State Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg, Russia.

According to L. Kerimov, the well-known researcher of Azerbaijan carpet art, the *buta* originally represented a flame and is one of the decorative forms which developed in the art of fire-worshipping peoples (Kerimov 1983). The main places where carpets with the *buta* motif were created in Azerbaijan are cities which were once centers of fire worship. In the opinion of art scholar R. Efendi (2001), the *buta* originated from the peacock motif, very widely used in Azerbaijan and itself symbolising the Sun and the God of Fire. Over

Figure 5. Bronze jug. Osman an -Nakhchivani son of Suleiman, 1190. Louvre Museum, Paris

time this motif changed, transforming into the *buta* motif. Among the ancient Turks, the cult of the sun and fire was quite widespread. According to them, fire was an omnipotent deity that itself was born, breathed and changed constantly. The Turks associated the idea of birth, growth, development and life in general with fire. The same ideas are associated with the tree of life also. Since a *buta* shoot is also associated with development, renewal and life, it symbolized both the tree of life and fire. According to the Turkologist M. Seyidov (1989), in the mythological thinking of some Turkic peoples the *buta* symbolizes both the tree of life and fire.

The *buta* shape could be seen as resembling an embryonic plant emerging from a seed, and, with its expanded lower part, an organism that will give birth to new life. This is probably why the *buta* in Azerbaijan is also an inseparable attribute of *Novruz*, a festival very widely celebrated on the day of the vernal equinox. *Novruz* is a holiday for spring, when all nature is renewed, reborn. For this holiday in Azerbaijan a baked pastry called *sheker-bura* (sweetness) is essential, resembling a *buta* in shape and very carefully decorated. In Garabagh a sweet flatbread *fetir-buta* was also prepared, from which the name of the form was taken – *fetir-buta*. Fire is another attribute of *Novruz* in Azerbaijan. On the day of the holiday, and especially on *od chershenbesi* (the Tuesday of fire) – one of four *chershenbes* (the four Tuesdays before the equinox, named after the four elements - water, wind, fire and earth), bonfires are lit. From time immemorial, it was believed that by jumping over the fire, people would be cleansed of everything negative, and renewed. All these beliefs are still alive. There is no doubt that they are connected with the worship of fire, which existed even before Zoroastrianism. It is known that the land of Azerbaijan has been called the 'Land of Fire' since ancient times. This is because *Absheron* (the peninsula where Baku is located) was famous in the Ancient East as a result of natural gas which burns with unquenchable fire there so that after the emergence of pre-Zoroastrian fire worship it became a place of worship; the veneration of the sun and fire in Azerbaijan has very ancient roots that existed long before Zoroastrianism.

In the centre of Baku an ancient tower has been preserved, the Maiden Tower, which was the main temple of fire and the sun. Around it there was a whole complex of related structures, which was confirmed by archaeological excavations. D. A. Akhundov (1986) attributes the date of the creation of the temple to at least the 8th-7th centuries BC. Most interesting, in our opinion, is that from above the top of the eight-storey tower looks like a *buta* (Figure 6). It seems that this form could not have been accidental, and this lends support to the assumption that *buta* symbolizes fire. The emergence of such a motif in Azerbaijan is quite understandable. But this does not exclude other theories regarding the origin of this motif in Azerbaijan and other regions of the world.

Figure 6. Maiden Tower. Baku, 8th-7th century BC.

For the Azerbaijan people the *buta* is more than an element of decoration. In Azerbaijan folk literature, in particular, in fairy tales and *dastans* (*dastan* – a folklore literary work in which events are presented in prose, and separate parts are presented in verse) there is an event called 'the giving of *buta*'. Usually some kind of holy person, a dervish or an unfamiliar old man shows the image of a girl to the hero of the *dastan* or fairy tale in a dream for a moment; he immediately falls in love with her. Giving him the girl's hand, the holy person says that this girl is

given to him as a *buta* and they will soon be together. At the same time, the same happens to the girl. The hero is given to her as a *buta*. But along with this divine love, the hero also acquires the talents of an *ashig* (*ashig* is the man who plays the *saz* – folk stringed instrument, composes poetry and sings). In fact, 'the giving of *buta* is the provision of a divine gift in the form of talent and the birth of a divine feeling of love, a qualitative renewal of the hero's inner world. *Buta* is not given to everyone, but to the chosen ones, the most honest, kind, etc. Having received a *buta*, the hero goes through great difficulties and trials to reach his love, and in the end the lovers are united. Here also the concept of *buta* is associated birth (the birth of a great feeling, talent, and then a family), change, renewal, and life in general.

Thus, we can say that in the mind of the Azerbaijan people, the *buta* is not only an element of ornament, a symbol of something, but also a gift from God, which is awarded to people who are chosen according to their moral qualities, which, overcoming all difficulties and barriers, receive the highest reward - a qualitatively new level of spiritual development. That is why *buta* occupies a special place in Azerbaijan.

But it is necessary to say that naturally, all this semantic load of the motif has long been forgotten and *buta* continue to be used according to tradition. The *buta* has become a decorative element that has aesthetic properties that satisfy the needs of people in an aesthetic ideal. In a number of products of applied art the *buta* is still used widely according to tradition, especially in *kelaghayi*.

What is the *Kelaghayi*?

Kelaghayi is the very light, thin silk scarf which was the basic and most widespread type of headdress for Azerbaijan women over a very long period until the middle of the last century. But during the 20th century due to the changes in women's clothing the need for *kelaghayi* decreased significantly. The production of these goods has gradually decreased and in the 1990s following the collapse of the economic system ceased completely. But in each family the traditional *kelaghayi* of grandmothers were preserved, which attracted the new generation with their beauty, fine material and the possibility of using them as a fashion accessory. Thus, since the beginning of the 21st century there has been a renewed interest in this decorative part of traditional women's clothing and production of *kelaghayi* in small quantities began again in an industrial way. But the decoration of a *kelaghayi* is carried out in the same way as in the handicraft workshops. In 2014 the traditional culture of making and wearing women's silk *kelaghayi* and its symbolism were included on the UNESCO List of Intangible Cultural Heritage (Figure 7).

The *kelaghayi* is of fine plain-weave fabric, approximately square in construction, with a density of ~30 threads per centimetre. To produce it very fine natural silk threads (Nm 310) are used. The warp threads are single, whereas to form a weft thread three filaments of raw silk are twisted together (310/3) with a small Z-twist of 120 turns / m. The size of a finished *kelaghayi* is often 165x165 cm and the weight is about 140 grams [Note 1], i. e. the fabric is very thin and can easily pass through a wedding ring.

Figure 8. Printing the resist on a kelaghayi. Sheki, Azerbaijan, 2014.

For the decoration of *kelaghayi* the resist-printing method is used. The reserve substance, a mixture of paraffin, resin, and solid oil, is applied on the material using wooden blocks, reserving a pattern of the colour of the background (Figure 8). The material is then dyed again. This process is repeated for addition of each colour to the pattern. Until the 1870s the dyes used were natural, including berberis, saffron and madder. These provided the highest quality, durability and beauty. Later they were replaced by chemical dyes. Nowadays the only natural dye using for dyeing *kelaghayi* is *saragan,* or dyer's sumach

(*cotinus coggygria*). This is used for a golden colour, and also for attaining darker colours, for example, red from pink, black from dark blue, and so on (Figure 9).

In terms of decoration there are two types of *kelaghayi*: *kelaghayi yeleni* and *kelaghayi herati or isperek*. The main decorative element of a *kelaghayi yeleni* is the *yelen* (border), a continuous ornamental band that surrounds the edge of the scarf (Figure 10). The main field of *kelaghayi yeleni* is usually plain or covered with small sparse patterns representing motifs such as a pea, or a flower.

Figure 9 (right). Dyeing a kelaghayi. Photograph: Mamed Rahimov © 2010 by M.Rahimov/Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Azerbaijan.

Figure 7 (below) Photograph: Mamed Rahimov. © 2010 by M.Rahimov/Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Azerbaijan.

The Buta (Paisley) Motif in Azerbaijan Kelaghayi

The main feature of a *kelaghayi herati* is the presence of a central medallion (Figure 11). In the corners of the main field quarter parts of the central medallion are often located. Other parts of the field are filled with different motifs in the certain order. Earlier *kelaghayi herati* were usually produced in a brown-golden tones by dyeing with *isperek* (*yellow larkspur* or *delphinium luteum*), imported from Herat, and therefore they are known as *isperek* or *herati*, although since the 20th century other dyes have been used.

The main decoration of *kelaghayi* uses floral and geometric motifs, but sometimes there are figures of birds and calligraphic motifs. The most common motif on *kelaghayi* is *buta*. *Kelaghayi* patterns are without contour lines and precise edges to the motifs are not a characteristic feature of these products. The main attractive features of them are the fine material, vibrant colours and bold printing. Currently *kelaghayi* are used by older women in rural areas as a headdress and by young women as a fashion accessory.

The *Buta* Motif in *Kelaghayi*

As the most common motif in the decoration of *kelaghayi,* the *buta* is used both as the main motif and as an auxiliary motif in the design. The size and internal decoration of the motifs are chosen depending on the function. They can be large or small, decorated or simple.

In *kelaghayi yeleni* repeating *buta* motifs can form the border, or *yelen*. In this case, a small *buta* without internal decoration or with a very simple decoration is used. For this purpose, *buta* can also be used together with other small motifs such as flowers, twigs, and so on. (Figure 12). Sometimes small *buta* are situated in the corners of other types of *yelen* (for example, geometric or floral *yelen*).

Sometimes a single element of a design is located in the corners of the main field of *kelaghayi yeleni, the* so-called *shakh* (branch), which symbolizes the tree of life [Note 2]. Along with stylized plant motifs, it can be differently elaborated variations of *buta,* which is quite consistent with its meaning. Sometimes *buta* and plant motifs are used together (Figure 12).

Figure 10. Kelaghayi yeleni. National Museum of History of Azerbaijan, Baku. Inv. No: 80.

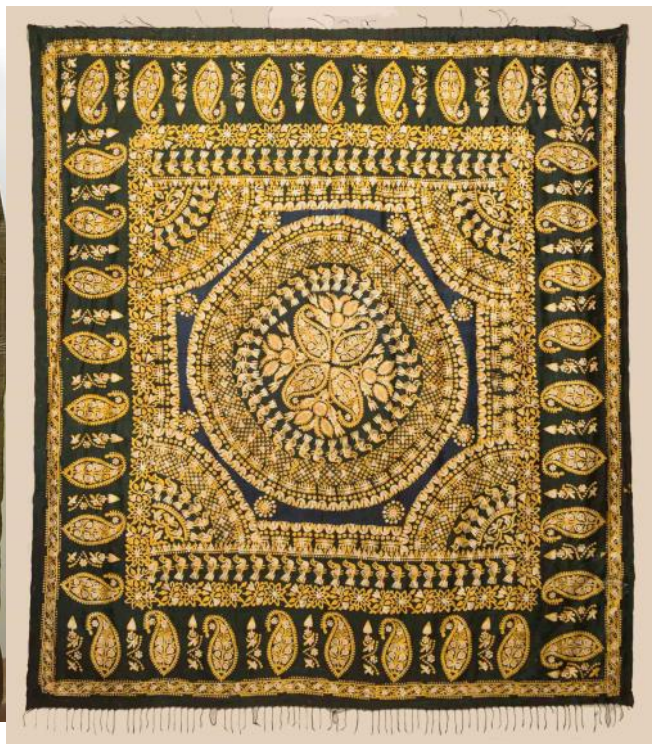

Figure 11. Kelaghayi herati. Azerbaijan National Carpet Museum, Baku.

Figure 12. Kelaghayi herati. Sheki, Azerbaijan (https://www.instagram.com/kalagayici_ziya/).

Although the main field of *kelaghayi yeleni* is usually plain, sometimes it is filled with small motifs such as polka dots, flower or even small *buta* motifs (Figure 10). In this case, *buta* motifs can be arranged in straight rows or in another arrangement. They can contain filling designs or not, in one or more colours.

There are many variants of *kelaghayi yeleni* without *buta* motifs, but it is almost impossible to find *kelaghayi herati* without *buta*, especially among old designs. *Buta* motifs may form *gyobek* – a central medallion of *kelaghayi herati* – and in this case the medallion is usually without an outline. *Buta* can be oriented in one direction, form a sun motif or arranged in pairs, as *kyusyulu buta* (quarreling *buta*) (Figure 13).

In the classical versions of *kelaghayi herati* there are often bands forming a frame around the centre medallion using the same motifs and these may be *buta*. In these bands both large elaborated *buta* and small simple *buta* are used (Figures 14 overleaf). *Buta* are used also in other parts of the main field of *kelaghayi herati* and in different ways (Figure 13).

In *kelaghayi herati,* the *buta* is most often used in the main part of a complex border around the edge of the scarf. For this, large *buta* with internal patterning are usually used. Being located with the wider part towards the outer edge of the border and repeating many times, they form the widest stripe of the border and at the same time usually determine the character of the inner line of the outer strip of the border composition (Figure 13). But there are also examples of *kelaghayi herati* in which *buta* motifs in the main part of the border are located differently (Figure 14 overleaf). For example, one such *kelaghayi herati*, in which rows of repeating *buta* motifs form two almost equal border strips, was used as a piano cover in the Hohe Pappeln House in Weimar, as evidenced by a 1909 photograph (Figure 16 overleaf). In addition, small simple *buta* motifs can also fill the inner or outer narrow strip of the border of *kelaghayi herati (Figure 13).*

Figure 13. Kelaghayi yeleni. Sheki, 19th c. Folk Applied Art Museum, Sheki, Azerbaijan.

Figure 14. Kelaghayi herati. Late 19th century. National Museum of History of Azerbaijan, Baku. Inv. No: 2232.

Buta motifs used in *kelaghayi* are quite diverse. They differ in size, the nature of the lines, the simplicity or complexity of the form, the variety of interior decoration or its absence (Figures 15a and 15b) and all these motifs are used in *kelaghayi* according to their artistic properties. Thus, the *buta* being placed in different parts of *kelaghayi* is one of the main, and maybe the main element of the design of these scarves.

The *buta* motif is widely used not only in Azerbaijan *kelaghayi*, but also in arts and crafts of Azerbaijan in general and in folklore, being a symbolic expression of very ancient beliefs of the people, traces of which are still alive. This is an expression of their mythological views and ideas of the spiritual world, formed on the basis of aesthetic taste and artistic traditions of the people. Despite the fact that over time the semantic load of the motif has been largely lost, it has not only retained its place in traditional art, but also taken a firm place in the work of contemporary artists.

Figure 15a. Buta variants used in kelaghayi: printing blocks.

Figure 15b. Buta variants used in kelaghayi: buta motifs printed on kelaghayi.

Notes

1. For more information about the production technology of *kelaghayi* in modern conditions at the Sheki factory, see Pashayeva, 2011b.

2. The word *shakh* is often interpreted as 'king' because of its similarity to the word *shah*, but this is incorrect. In some Turkic languages and dialects, including Azerbaijani, the word *shakh* means a branch.

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Figure 16. Kelaghayi herati. Photograph of 1909. Courtesy Antje Neumann-Golle.

Asia and Pacific Museum Warsaw

In October last year my research interests took me to Warsaw, where I was lucky to be hosted by the director of the Asian and Pacific Museum, Joanna Wasilewska, and curator Maria Szymanska-Ilnata. In the galleries I was immediately struck by a sense of encounter. Among the exhibits on display are figures in unfamiliar costumes, populating the space and drawing the eye. Within, I became immersed in a space offering glimpses into other cultures in the way that a traveller might be. This impression deepened as I passed through scenes evoking a sense of the Middle Eastern bazaar, a Central Asian nomad's encampment, a Javanese shadow puppet theatre. Along the way, the path was enriched by the colours and textures of textiles. For a textile lover this was refreshing and enticing: most museums tend to limit or even exclude textiles from their displays; here they are celebrated.

Figure 1. Dress, Afghanistan, Pashtuns, 20th century. MAP 8166. Gift from staff of the Polish Embassy in Kabul, 1984.

The Museum began its life in 1973 as the Nusantara Archipelago Museum, established as a place to engage with researchers, writers, explorers of Asia as well as with the objects on display. It was the inspiration of Andrzej Wawrzyniak, a diplomat who had amassed a collection of over 3000 objects, the majority from Indonesia. Wawrzyniak gave his collection to the Polish nation and was the driving force behind the establishment of the Museum as a public institution. He was its first director, a post he held for 40 years. The Museum's collections have been enriched through material gleaned from focussed expeditions as well as by donations from aficionados, Poles living overseas, armchair collectors, researchers and travelling artists.

The change to its present name, in 1976, reflects a broadening of perspective, and the Museum's holdings now embrace collections from Central Asia and Afghanistan, Tibet and Mongolia, India and Nepal, Vietnam, Laos, Burma, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu.

In 2013 the Museum acquired a new building and in 2022 was finally able to present a permanent exhibition representing a selection of 'the best, most interesting, most beautiful exhibits', as the Museum's brochure puts it. The exhibition is aptly entitled 'Journeys to the East'.

The path through the galleries, which takes the visitor as if through Asia itself, starts in the South-West, introducing Islam in the Arab world through a range of artefacts. Archaeological material evokes the deep history of this part of the world, before we are taken through to more recent times by a man's costume from the early 20th century and a woman's from Bethlehem dating from 1970-80. Two paintings from around 1920, one of a female dancer, and the other the distinctive figure of Fath-Ali Shah, ruler of the Qajar dynasty, evoke the costumes of the Iranian court of the 19th century. A decorative hunting carpet from 1930's Iran catches the eye in this part of the gallery.

A few steps further on we find a 19th century Persian style woman's short kaftan of cashmere wool and silk decorated with gold thread and brocaded ribbon. Alongside is a Persian block-printed *kalamkari* cotton hanging, with calligraphic phrases set in cartouches around the border.

Under archways decorated with geometric lattice work there are glassware, metalware and silver jewellery, as well as a display of decorative headwear from Central Asia echoing the colour, shine and abundance of the bazaar.

A discrete area to one end of this gallery is enlivened by film of a sporting Buzkashi in which two teams on horseback from a community in the Wakhan corridor of Afghanistan vie to seize a goat's carcass and carry it off to a designated space. The moving images and sounds bring the space to life and remind us that we are seeing a living culture; this is not a mere pastiche of the past.

Turkmen culture is on display in one long wall case, with felt hats and floor coverings as well as pile weavings and embroidered Tekke Turkmen costumes. As elsewhere in the case these textile items are set amidst other media; jewellery features strongly.

In a case containing Uzbek figures, a silk ikat man's *chapan* is featured, together with a woman's *paranja* (burqa) and *chachvan* (face covering) made of horsehair, and a woman's brightly coloured *munisak* robe. Nearby are costume items from Afghanistan. On the opposite wall a striking Tajik *suzani* leads the way to a scene where two Mongolian figures in costume look across to a complete yurt erected with one side open to reveal the brightly painted furniture within. Plans are under way for the gallery to be further expanded beyond Mongolia, with the journey leading on to India, South-East Asia, China and Japan.

Figure 2. A woman's outfit—paranja and chachvan. Uzbekistan. Early 20th century. MAP 18535/1/2.

The largest display area is devoted to Indonesia, with textiles from Java, Sumatra and Kalimantan (Borneo) especially prominent. Care has been taken to show the batik skirt cloths in the same orientation as they would be worn, enhancing the visitor's appreciation of these textiles as clothing, not just cloth. Much thought has clearly been given to the display of these batiks, with excellent lighting, and the exhibits positioned in such a way that it is possible to get very close and see details of the workmanship. For batik lovers there were, when I was there, three *parang* variants, a *jelamprang* and a *pagi-sore* skirt cloth as well as some wax-printed examples including a stork design. There will no doubt be substitutions as time goes by, as it's not advisable for conservation reasons to leave textiles on display for long periods.

Batik also appears in a case featuring the kris, the Javanese or Malay dagger, once worn ceremonially by Javanese and Malay gentlemen and still today by Balinese men on appropriate occasions. The batik, decorated with a *sidho mukti* design, is displayed on a beautifully dressed mannequin, the lattice structure of the pattern including butterfly, pavilion and *garuda* wing motifs amid the golden brown of Central Java, the edge of the skirt pleated neatly at the front in classic style. On his head is the traditional Javanese man's headdress, *blangkon*, also in batik. These items were the gift of Andrzej Wawrzyniak, and so were other batiks displayed.

One of the most splendid elements in this gallery is the *gamelan* orchestra set out in front of a shadow puppet stage, on which film of a *wayang* performance is screened, seen on both sides as it would be in Java.

Central to a case containing Sumatran material is a bride's wedding costume bought at the local market in Solok, West Sumatra, in 2015. Similar costumes with trousers are used by brides, actors in *randai* theatre and performers of the traditional *tari piring,* the plate dance. The spectacular headdress is older, from the 2nd half of the 20th century, brought back to Poland by Andrzej Wawrzyniak. The jewellery was bought by the present curator in 2015 from a woman living in Solok, who claimed that she had inherited it from her mother.

Nearby is a *songket selendang*, a shawl woven with gold-wrapped supplementary weft, from Palembang in South Sumatra, which belongs to the first collection of Andrzej Wawrzyniak from the 1960's. Alongside this a Lampung *tapis* of the same provenance is displayed, as well as a couchwork ceremonial food cover, also shining with gold, and a North Sumatran *ulos*, inscribed with the words *Selamat Pake*, (a blessing on the wearer) with a tapestry band and fringes.

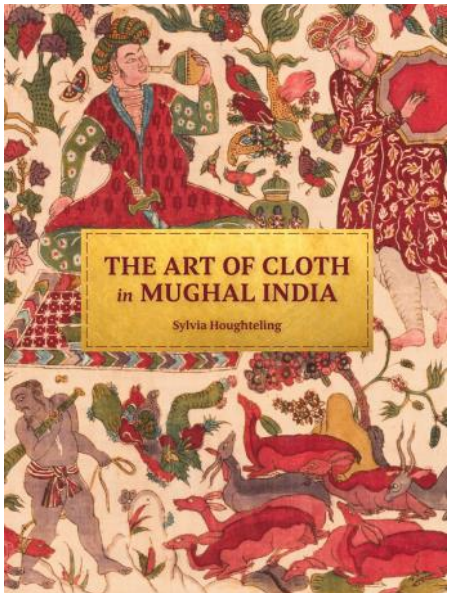
From Borneo there is a *kelambi*, an embroidered bark cloth jacket, the only textile from Borneo on display. And from the Lesser Sunda Islands in the southeast of the Indonesian archipelago are several examples from Flores, from Sumba, from Timor and Timor Leste. Recent acquisitions from Sumba are likely to replace some of the textiles which I saw.

The Asia and Pacific Museum no doubt contains some rare treasures, but this is not the focus of these displays. What they present, and represent, is the richness of Asian culture, the enormous variety of human creativity and patterns of existence, mediated through a rich variety of hand-crafted material which testifies to the skills of their makers.

Fiona Kerlogue

Figure 3. Man's jacket, kelambi*. Indonesian Borneo. Apo-Kayan. 20th century. Bark cloth, painted and embroidered. MAP 1499. Donated by Andrzej Wawrzyniak in 1973.*

*Bark (*fuya *or* kulay kayu*) is still sometimes beaten and used to make clothing in the interior of the island of Borneo (Kalimantan). The festive purpose of this jacket is indicated by the presence of a rust-coloured design*



The Art of Cloth in Mughal India

By Sylvia Houghteling

Princeton University Press, June 2022

Hardback, 280 pages. RRP £55.

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ISBN 13: 978-0691215785

The Art of Cloth in Mughal India, Sylvia Houghteling's debut book, draws and expands on the author's extensive research on Indian textile design, production, and consumption in the early modern world.

The book focuses on the circulation of textiles within South Asia – Hindustan as it was known to the Mughal emperors – over the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Houghteling explores this circulation using the framework of art as distinct from fashion or textile history-based approaches, arguing that during the period of study 'encounters with textiles exceeded routine, utilitarian, or even status-related questions of display,' to take on meaning and value beyond the practical or decorative uses of cloth and clothing. Rather, a proper 'recalibration' of our understanding of the role of textiles in the Mughal era must account for the liminal and intangible alongside the functional. The liminal in the existence of textiles 'within and between the fields of architecture, sculpture, and more ephemeral areas of art, such as garden design and performance'; and the intangible in the meanings conveyed by texture, smell, the transience of colour and the perishability of use, the distance traversed from origins, the symbolisms in design, and the emotions of exchange.

Houghteling takes on this exploration through five broadly chronological chapters. The first chapter focuses on the period of Akbar's reign, looking at the Mughals as inheritors of a 'landscape' of distinctive cloth traditions both literally and imaginatively tied to their places of origin. Chapter two examines one of the earliest surviving Mughal garments, a robe tailored from a Persian figurative silk velvet and thought to have been given by Emperor Jahangir to Raja Rai Singh of Bikaner, exploring the complex messages the gifting of the robe was intended to convey as a case study for the use of textiles as tools of communication. In chapter three, the extraordinary collection of architectural textiles associated with the Amber court serve as the basis of an examination of both how textiles both moved and represented movement, physically manifesting the intangible relationship between mobility and the performance of sovereignty in the Mughal imperial system. The fourth chapter looks at the trade of internationally coveted Machilipatnam kalamkaris, and how their designs 'were not merely decorative' but 'actively take social interactions as their subject matter', acting as contemporary snapshots of diverse peoples – locals and foreigners, patrons and artisans – intersecting with one another. The final chapter follows Indian textiles to Britain, comparing how the kinds of textiles examined in earlier chapters were transformed to take on new meanings abroad.

Each chapter is richly illustrated, in total forming a compendium of some of the most iconic textiles of the Mughal world, and Houghteling's poetic descriptions of these cloths almost belie the intensity of the analysis she has done. In describing the scenes that make up the, now dispersed, collection of painted rumals which once belonged to the Amber court, she bring the vignettes depicting the various leisure activities of court to life, imbuing the reader with deeper understanding through the picking out of

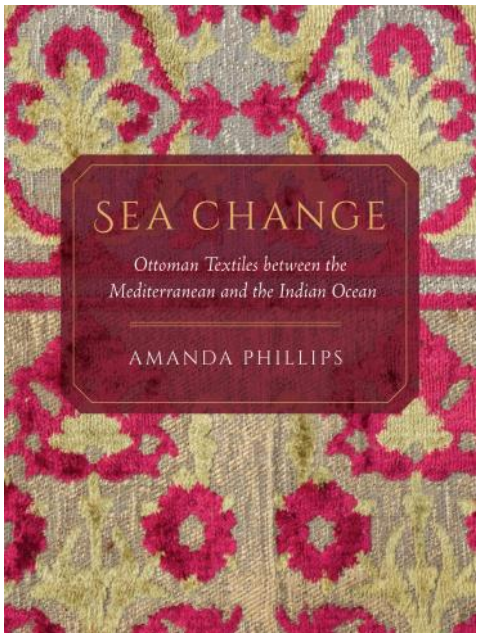
meaningful details: the curly hair of a figure which may signal him as African; the European-style pantaloons on a hunter; the wide moustache of the Persianate nobleman boldly cupping the breast of a servant girl; the contrasts between veiled noblewomen and unveiled courtesans; and sheer the variety of skin tones and styles of dress which reflect the very real diversity of the Mughal world.

This close reading of her material gives the designs of these textiles a substance which can be difficult to grasp when viewing these textiles in gallery spaces, removed from the original settings of their use. By tying together textiles with the wider arts of the Mughal world, she metaphorically re-hangs them in the palaces where they were enjoyed in tandem with the pleasures of wine, food, song and other courtly arts. Her citation of poetry alongside inventories, paintings and architectural plans alongside administrative correspondence and military records, and biographical accounts alongside scholarly sources, gives both colour and heft to her argument that textiles were experienced by the Mughals as a form of art, and their meanings fully understood only by contextualising them within the 'poetic imagination' of the period.

The ephemerality of textiles, which Houghteling consistently compares to fruit, may seem incongruous when analysing pieces that are over 400 years old, but in fact there is no incongruity. It is our experience of them that is ephemeral – the feelings that they evoke dependent on our unique perspectives as viewers, as shifting as the sands of time.

Avalon Fotheringham, Curator, Asia Department, Victoria and Albert Museum.

Rumal (coverlet), cotton mordant- and resist-dyed (kalamkari/chintz), Coromandel Coast, possibly for the Golconda court, c. 1625-50. Length: 89.5cm Width: 62cm. V&A Accession number IS.34-1969.



Sea Change: Sea Change: Ottoman Textiles between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean

by Amanda Phillips

University of California Press, 2021

Hardback, 360 pages RRP £55.

ISBN 978-0-520-30359-1 .

Sea Change: Ottoman Textiles between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean is a comprehensive and meticulously researched examination of the world of Ottoman textiles. The author, Amanda Phillips, is an associate Professor of Islamic Art and Material Culture at the University of Virginia. She is also the author of *Everyday Luxuries; Art and Object in Ottoman Constantinople*. Based on the author's PhD thesis, this new volume offers a rich and insightful exploration of the history of Ottoman textile production, spanning the 13th to the 19th centuries. The author's objective is to treat textiles as primary elements in the artistic, social, economic, political, and religious histories of the Ottoman Empire, and she achieves this through a thorough examination of a range of different types of textiles and their significance in Ottoman textile production, from a transnational perspective.

Phillips's book is divided into three parts, each organized into two sections, and draws upon a wide range of primary and secondary sources, including secondary literature, travellers' tales, and written reports of Sharia court proceedings. The author's in-depth study of the textiles she has researched from a vast range of international collections provides valuable evidence for the decisions made by artisans and workers in the field, while also challenging the belief that written sources tell the whole story. The writing style is clear and concise, making the book accessible to both students and scholars in the field.

Phillips's research and reference to other textile production centres such as Italy, Iran, Egypt, Greece, and especially India, supports the extant visual evidence of changes in fashion and inspirations provided for Ottoman textiles throughout the centuries and vice-versa.

The glossary at the end of the book is an extremely useful resource for readers; the author makes heavy use of proper Ottoman terminology for the material and techniques used to produce textiles. The book is richly illustrated with diagrams of different types of weave structures, draw looms, technical diagrams of weaving techniques as well as details and overall images of textiles and textile fragments. The illustrations also include a number of Iznik tiles and paintings to put in context the design inspirations and use of textiles.

In conclusion, *Sea Change: Ottoman Textiles between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean* is a valuable addition to the field of Ottoman textiles, art history, and Islamic studies. It offers a comprehensive and insightful examination of the history of Ottoman textile production and its significance in the Ottoman Empire and beyond. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in the subject and is highly recommended for scholars and students alike.

Behnaz Atighi Moghaddam

Lampas with roundels of the image of Christ in benedictory pose,1550–1650, Turkey, Bursa, Ottoman period. Silk and gilt-metal thread. 36.5 x 33.7 cm. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Wade. The Cleveland Museum of Art, 1916.1423.

Tentmakers of Cairo

The **Khayamiyya Project**, a joint enterprise of Durham and Edinburgh Universities under the auspices of the Centre for the Advanced Study of the Arab World, has been documenting the social history and daily life of these traditional craftsmen in Cairo through their own words and in graphic depictions of the world in which they live and work. The name of the craft, Khayamiya, tentmaking, indicates the principal use to which these works were put – to enhance the *khayma* or tent. Usually made of cotton with a stitched decorative side, they acted as liners to enhance the shelter and sociability functions of tents. Today, reflecting the nature of a changing economy, the appliquéd pieces are chiefly used on public and official occasions such as political meetings, weddings and pilgrimage celebrations as well as for sale to tourists.

The website for the project can be found at https://www.dur.ac.uk/tentmakers

In the Tentmakers' Bazar the shopkeepers call out: 'No sharge for looking,' as you pass. The moment when you have said that you are not going to buy anything is rather a good time to buy. They put the process down very low to tempt you. They don't mind if do break your word—in this way. Price the same sort of thing at different stalls which are a long way from each other. It helps to give the real price and to show which stall is cheapest. Do not be afraid of giving trouble. Orientals do not mind how much trouble theytake for a prospective customer, or how much trouble they give by asking three times what they mean to take.'

From Sladen, Oriental Cairo: The City of the 'Arabian Nights', 1911, p. 102.

Wally Rundle working at Liberty's, Regents Street, aged 82 in 1980. He joined Liberty's on returning from the First World War and worked there for over 62 years. Photo kindly shared by Walter's son, also Walter Rundle.

A CARPET MENDER

Who is this man? His name is Wally Rundle, a Londoner who served in the 1914-18 war before returning to London and starting at Liberty's where he continued to work as a carpet mender for the next 62 years. Sadly the photo came to our notice too late for us to consult Ron Stewart, who also had a long career at Liberty's. He and Walter must have known one another.

Other questions come to mind and ORTS members may have some answers:

Can you identify the rug and kelim in the photo?

How unusual was it or is it to find skilled mending being done by English menders?

Who are the menders of London today, and if not born here where do they come from?

Where do you find the best menders today?

Do menders specialise in certain types of weaving and how might we find them?

Do you have any good mending stories to share?

Rachel Hamand

Visit to Poland September 2023

ORTS is currently working on organising a tour to Poland for the autumn, probably starting in Warsaw on 4th September and departing from Krakow on 10th, though those wishing to stay longer may do so. We are currently expecting to visit three sites in Warsaw, including the Asia & Pacific Museum, which features earlier in this issue.

Travel from Warsaw to Krakow will be by train, and there will be two museum visits there, hopefully to see textiles in both the National Museum and Wawel Castle (see Turkish tent from Wawel Castle below). From Krakow we will make a full day excursion to Zakopane, where we hope to visit the Tatra Museum to see their carpet collection. After returning to Krakow, the cultural capital of Poland, members will have the chance to visit another museum and explore the city.

The number of spaces will be limited, as there are restrictions on numbers for behind-the-scenes visits.

Precise details of the visit will be circulated nearer the time, once we have had time to firm up arrangements with the various museums.

TALKS

Live talks are held at the University Women's Club, 2 Audley Square, London W1K 1DB, which is a two-minute walk from the Dorchester Hotel in Mayfair.

Numerous buses stop near the Dorchester Hotel, including Buses 13, 16, and 36, which go from Victoria Station to Park Lane and Bus 38, which goes to Piccadilly and stops at the Hard Rock Café bus stop. The nearest tube stations are Green Park and Hyde Park Corner.

Doors open at 6 pm. Please sign your names at reception, and go upstairs to the elegant first floor drawing room, where there will be a pay bar.

Non-members are welcome to attend lectures for £7 a single lecture, students £5.

Lectures are free for members.

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With thanks to Pia Rainey for managing the monthly newsletters

The ORTS journal is published three times a year. Contributions are welcomed from members and non-members. Please send ideas for articles and proposals for book or exhibition reviews to Dr Fiona Kerlogue on editor.orts@gmail.com

The deadline for content for the next issue is June 1st 2023.

Back cover: Detail of a hand-drawn Javanese batik skirt cloth, kain panjang, *on display in the Asia and Pacific Museum, Warsaw. See article on page 22.*