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THE BULLETIN OF THE NEEDLE AND BOBBIN CLUB

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FRONTISPIECE

CUSHION COVER, FROM THE TOMB OF QUEEN BERENGUELA (d. 1246 A.D.),
HISPANO-ISLAMIC, XIII CENTURY. (NO. 62.)

THE TEXTILES FROM LAS HUELGAS DE BURGOS

*A Review of the Original Publication with Some Additional Notes*¹

by

DOROTHY G. SHEPHERD

AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION to our knowledge of the history of weaving has been made by the recent discovery of the almost incredible collection of textiles in the royal tombs at Las Huelgas, near Burgos, Spain. The results of these finds were published in 1946 by Don Manuel Gómez-Moreno.

The Cistercian convent of Santa Maria de las Huelgas at Burgos served as a mausoleum for the members of the royal family of Castile from the time of its foundation in 1187 by Alfonso VIII and his wife, Eleanor of England, until into the sixteenth century. The deceased were placed in wooden coffins, which in turn were contained in stone sarcophagi, and these were placed in the choir, the aisles, and porch of the church. In 1944, working with the authority of the government and the cooperation of the present religious community, Sr. Gómez-Moreno undertook a detailed and scientific examination of the contents of these sepulchres. The results of this study are contained in the volume under consideration.

Interesting, though saddening, is the account of the condition in which the tombs were found, and of the destruction and havoc resulting from repeated plundering of their contents. The most disastrous occasion occurred when the French troops were lodged there during the Napoleonic invasion; the soldiers amused themselves by opening the tombs, looting that which was of value, and throwing the remainder of their contents about the church. The subsequent attempt to restore order only added to the confusion, since much of the material which could not be properly identified was not returned to its original place. This general

¹ Manuel Gómez-Moreno, *El Panteon Real de las Huelgas de Burgos*. Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas. Instituto Diego Velásquez (Madrid, 1946). The additional notes are the result of the present writer's study of the material during several weeks spent at Las Huelgas in 1949 before the textiles were permanently installed in cases in the cloister museum.

account of the condition in which the tombs were found by Gómez-Moreno is followed by a meticulous description of each tomb at the time it was opened with careful documentation of each object found therein. Much of this material is well represented in the illustrations appended to the text.

The only tomb that had remained undisturbed, that of Fernando de la Cerda (great-grandson of Alfonso VIII), who died in 1275, gives an idea of the wealth that must have originally been contained in the other tombs. The coffin inside the sarcophagus was covered with a rich gold and silk fabric (Plate XIII) decorated with gold and silver ribbons and galloons, and fastened with silver nails; it was lined with other rich fabrics of Moorish origin. Placed under the head were four pillows with rich covers. The mummified body was dressed in three garments cut from the same rich fabric (Plate XIV) and two of them had fur linings. Underneath were breeches of linen held with a leather belt. An embroidered cap enriched with precious stones was still on the head. The right hand was placed on the hilt of a sword; silver-plated spurs of Moorish decoration and origin were also found. Of the women's tombs, the best preserved was that of Leonor, daughter of the founders, and wife of Jaime I of Aragon; she died in 1244. It presents the feminine counterpart of the riches already described in the tomb of Fernando de la Cerda.

More than half of the book is devoted to a description and an analysis, piece by piece, of some eighty-one examples of textiles, embroideries, and knitting found in the tombs, and it is here that the real contribution of the work lies. The main divisions are: the woven fabrics, broken down into a number of groups, the ribbons, orphreys, and galloons; and the embroideries, with which group have been included the tapestries. The reader is greatly handicapped in understanding the complicated and, at times, quite unclear technical terminology. The author prefaces his study of the textiles by saying that special attention will be given to the matter of technique which he considers to be more definitive than a study based on artistic considerations alone; however, one cannot but wish that he had adopted a more generally accepted system of classification and technical description or, at least, that his own method were more logically developed and clearly explained. The main problem is that he fails to make a distinction between the different functions of the warps and the wefts and as a result one is often left without a clear idea of the technique involved. There is no need to discuss further the author's system of classification; it is only important to define his terms according to others of more generally accepted usage. Accordingly, in the description of the

textiles to follow, I have used the terminology of Nancy Reath,² which, while admittedly not perfect, at least provides a common language understandable by all.

In treating the textiles individually, Sr. Gómez-Moreno first discusses those of *lienzo*, i.e., cloth weave. It is within this group that the main problem with respect to classification lies. Based on the length of the float of the weft he defines three different techniques: *tafetán corto* (short taffeta), *tafetán largo* (long taffeta), and *tafetán mixto* (mixed taffeta). The "short taffeta" which we may define as a Simple plain cloth weave provides no difficulty. The "long taffeta" Sr. Gómez-Moreno describes as a weave in which the weft passes over more than one warp at a time; however, since no distinction is made between primary and secondary warps and wefts the author has combined in this one class three different techniques: Plain compound cloth; Fancy cloth; and Fancy compound cloth. His "mixed taffeta" is also a Plain compound cloth but it differs from the one mentioned above. He has divided the cloth weaves into three groups on the basis of style: Classical Arab, Nos. 1-14;³ Mudejar, Nos. 15-20; and Christian, Nos. 21-33.

The Classical Arab group are all Plain compound cloth weaves, but there are actually two different techniques and a number of variations involved. In the group represented by Nos. 1-8 there are two sets of warps and wefts; the main set combining to form a basic fabric in Simple cloth weave and the pattern is formed by the secondary, or pattern, wefts bound down by the secondary warps. This is Sr. Gómez-Moreno's "mixed taffeta" class. Nos. 9-14 are also Plain compound cloth weaves, but there is only one set of wefts which combine with the main warps for both the background and the design. A secondary set of warps functions only as interior warps to lengthen the float of the wefts and to strengthen the fabric. This is one of the groups included in Gómez-Moreno's "long taffeta" class. No. 5 (Plate I) actually combines the two techniques.

Within the first group, Nos. 1-8, although actually they are all basically the same weave, there is a great difference in the manner in which the technique is handled and in other considerations, such as colors, texture, and design. They represent works of different looms, or weaving

² Nancy Andrews Reath and Eleanor B. Sachs, *Persian Textiles* (New Haven, 1937); or Nancy Andrews Reath, *The Weaves of Hand-loom Fabrics—A Classification with Historical Notes* (The Pennsylvania Museum, Philadelphia, 1927).

³ Throughout the following text the numbers by which the textiles are identified, e. g. No. 9, are the catalogue numbers assigned to them in Sr. Gómez-Moreno's book beginning with p. 46. Plates refer to illustrations in this BULLETIN.

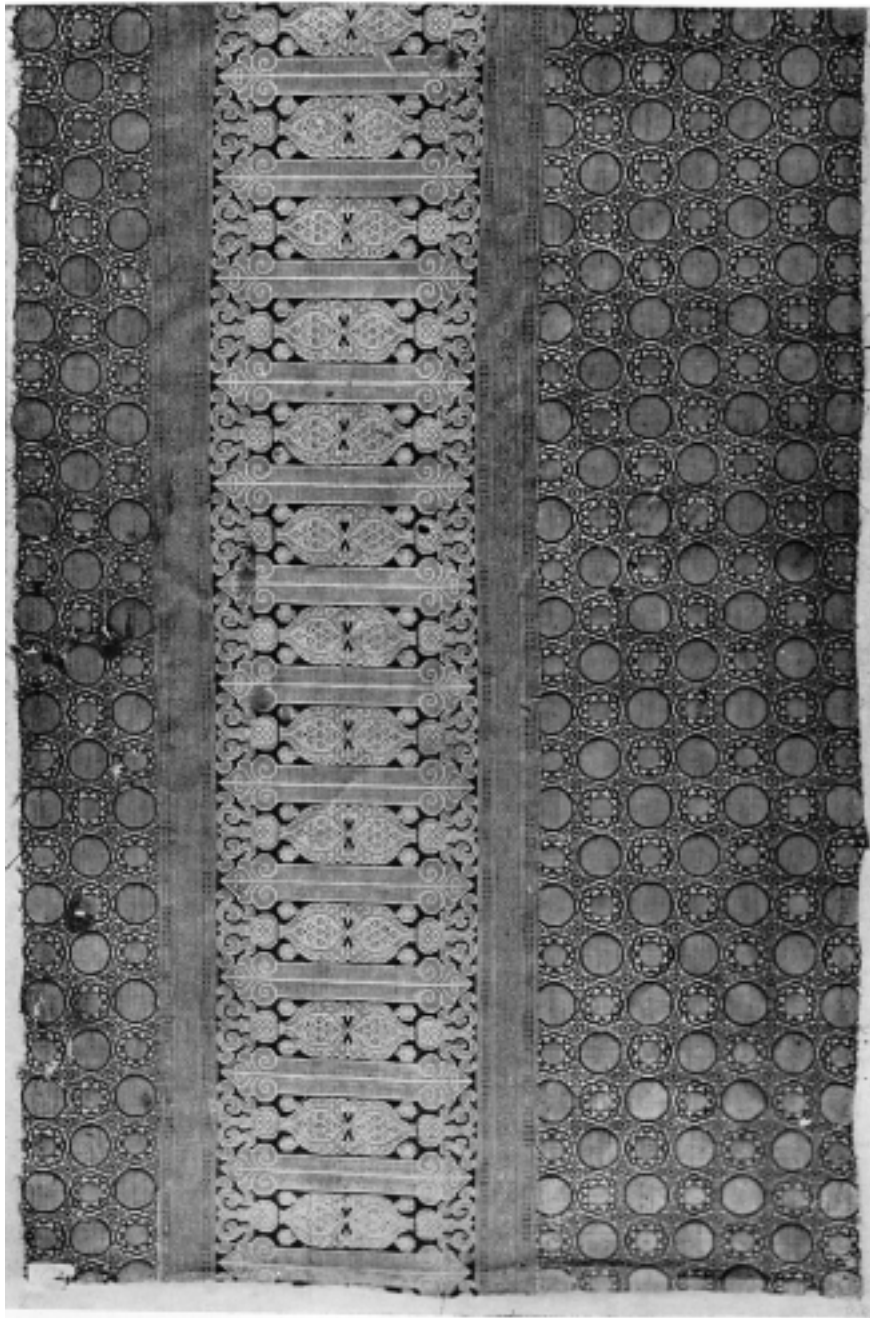


PLATE I

TWO TEXTILES JOINED, FROM THE TOMB OF SANCHE, SON OF ALFONSO XI (d. 1343), HISPANO-ISLAMIC,
XIII CENTURY; PROBABLY DID NOT ORIGINALLY BELONG TO THIS TOMB. (NOS. 4 AND 5 JOINED.)

centers, and perhaps different dates too. The two textiles, Nos. 4 and 5 (Plate I), are among the most interesting in the group for in these two there can be seen a clear relationship in technique as well as colors with earlier Hispano-Islamic textiles, such as those from the tomb of St. Bernard Calvo at Vich.⁴ The ground in all is the same ivory cloth formed of paired warps and single wefts with the design in extra wefts of red and/or green, and the gold brocading thread in all is tied down in the same "honeycomb" fashion.⁵ In No. 5, of which only the border is visible in the photograph, the ground fabric being concealed in the seam which joins it to No. 4, there is the same change in the weave from the ground to the border that occurs in the "lion strangler" piece from Vich.⁶ In the borders of both of these silks, the main and the secondary warps of the main fabric are rearranged, without regard to their previous function, to form main and *inner* warps and only one set of wefts is used to form both the background and the design. The borders then are the same technique as the second group, Nos. 9-14. No. 3 (Plate II) is very closely related to the above fabrics with the difference that here the main warp is single. The ground is the same ivory, the design red and the disks and rosettes filled with brocading in the same honeycomb fashion. The two silks, No. 1 (Plate III) and No. 6, are related in technique to the previous examples but there are differences that set them apart. There are a number of similar fabrics that have been found in Spain and all are characterized by Simple plain cloth grounds with the pattern in the same color as the ground and by the fact that the gold brocading wefts are tied down in the same manner as the other pattern wefts and not in the honeycomb fashion seen in the examples above. Clearly these two variations are the products of different, though probably contemporary, schools or workshops. No. 8 is different from all of the foregoing examples of this group in that the pattern wefts instead of being bound down by the secondary warps are bound down by the *main* warps, though only on the face, and they are left in loose floats on the reverse.

The technique of the second group, which Sr. Gómez-Moreno has included under the heading of Classical Arab, has been described above. This is actually the same technique as that which has long been known in the famous silks from the tomb of Don Felipe and his wife, found at

⁴ Otto von Falke, *Kunstgeschichte der Seidenweberei* (Berlin, 1913), Figs. 187 and 189.

⁵ Cf. my article, "The Hispano-Islamic Textiles in the Cooper Union Collection," *Chronicle of the Museum for the Arts of Decoration of the Cooper Union* (December, 1943), p. 367, in which I have discussed this unusual technique.

⁶ Von Falke, *op. cit.*, Fig. 187.

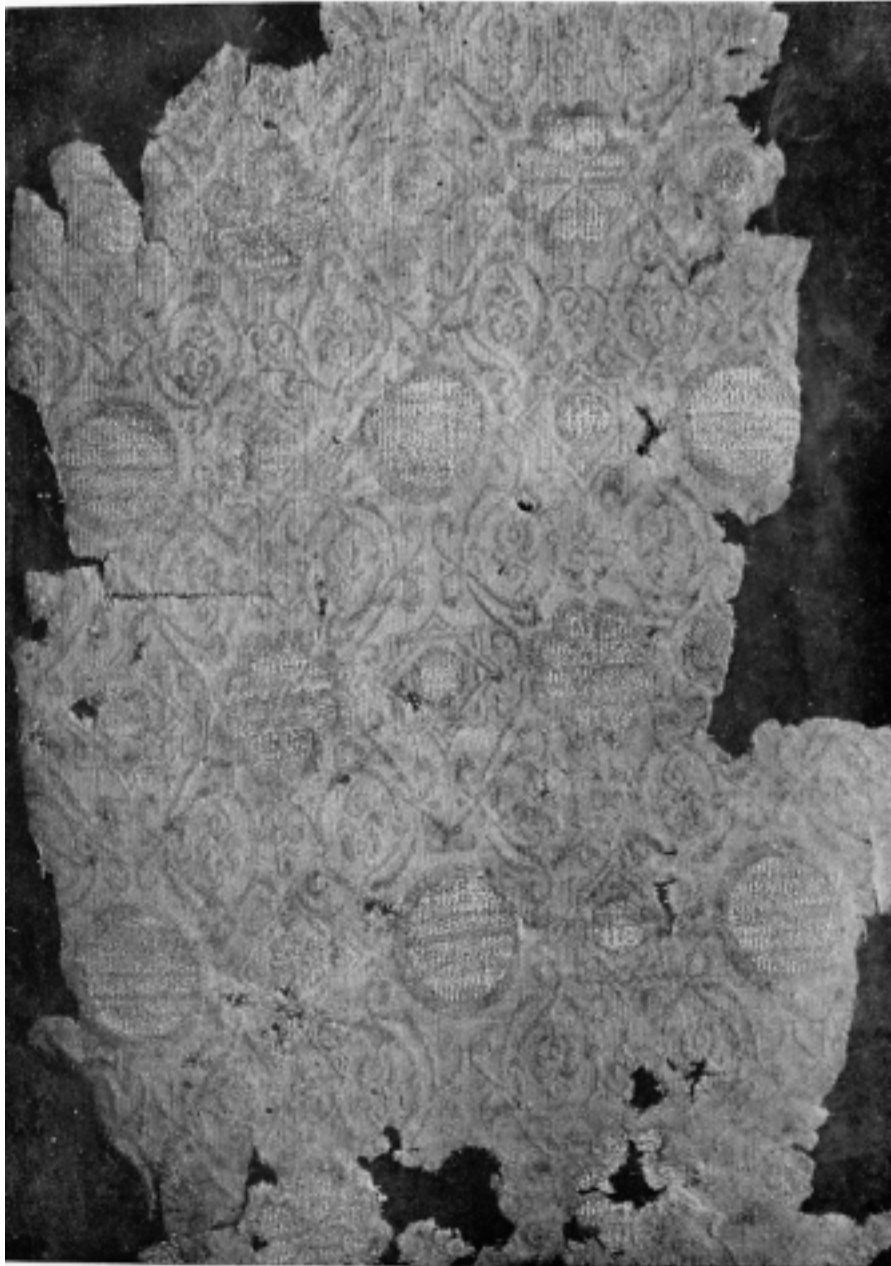


PLATE II
FRAGMENT, FROM AN ANONYMOUS TOMB OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY,
HISPANO-ISLAMIC, XIII CENTURY. (NO. 3.)

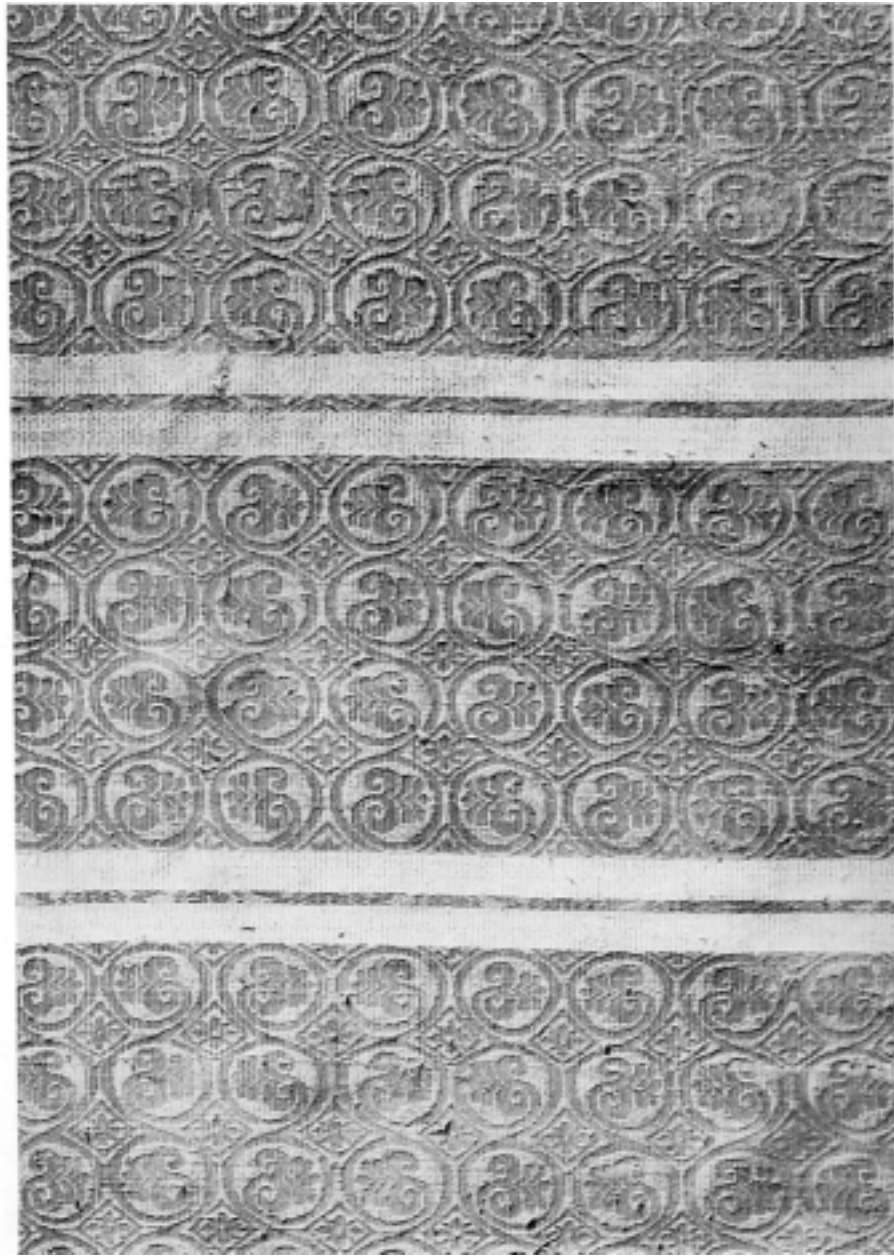


PLATE III

DETAIL OF A TEXTILE, FOUND IN THE TOMB OF SANCHE, SON OF THE FOUNDERS
(d. 1181), HISPANO-ISLAMIC, XII-XIII CENTURY. (NO. 1.)

Villasirga.⁷ Like the Don Felipe fabrics, they are characterized by all-over designs of geometric interlacery cut through by wide horizontal inscription bands. The colors most used are red, green, yellow, blue, white and gold. The gold weft is not brocaded but functions just like the other wefts. No. 7 (Plate IV) rightfully belongs with this group as it is basically the same weave, though the alternate, white, diamonds are woven in double cloth. It is exactly the same technique as that in the vestments from the Cathedral of Lerida,⁸ now in the Barcelona Museum, in which certain limited areas are woven in double cloth. No. 10, nailed in the form of a cross on the top of a coffin, is only a piece cut from a large silk; one can still see the pencil stripes that are part of a border, such as those on the other silks of the group. The colors are very close to those of the Lerida silks. No. 11 (Plate V) was used for two complete garments and the similarity between this silk and those from Villasirga is especially marked. The form of the inscription band is almost identical and the colors of very similar tonality. No. 12 (Plate VI) is especially interesting because in it the gold weft has been omitted and here we see a link between these rich gold and silk fabrics and another later group in which there is no longer the use of gold. Grouped together with this series is No. 14 which has no counterpart among the Hispano-Islamic group. It is surely considerably later than the rest of the group and belongs to a different center; it is probably Mudejar work as the design of eagles and castles suggests.

The next two groups, Nos. 15-20, and Nos. 21-33, the Mudejar and the Christian, were separated by Sr. Gómez-Moreno on the basis of style. Those which, according to him, show an affinity with Islamic design he has classified as Mudejar, and those which reveal no characteristic Islamic motifs he regards as Christian productions. Unfortunately, I must disagree completely with his attributions. On the contrary, I assign his first group (the Mudejar) to Arab weavers, and his second group (the Christian) to Mudejar weavers, who of course, as the term implies, were working for Christians and no longer producing thoroughly Islamic designs. In the main these two stylistic groups correspond to two different techniques. The first are Simple fancy cloth weaves, some of which are cut through by horizontal bands with inscriptions or geometric motifs in extra wefts. These last are identical in design and technique, though with

⁷ Florence Lewis May, "The Hispano-Moresque Brocades from Villasirga," In *Notes Hispanic*, New York, The Hispanic Society of America, Vol. 3, 1943, pp. 119-134.

⁸ Pedro M. de Artiñano, *Catálogo de la Exposición de Tejidos españoles* (Madrid, 1917), No. 51, Laminas VIII-X.



PLATE IV
PART OF A GARMENT, FROM THE TOMB OF FERNANDO, SON OF ALFONSO X,
HISPANO-ISLAMIC, XIII CENTURY. (NO. 7.)



PLATE V
DETAIL OF A GARMENT, FOUND IN THE TOMB OF LEONOR, QUEEN OF ARAGON.
(d. 1244), HISPANO-ISLAMIC, XIII CENTURY. (NO. 11.)

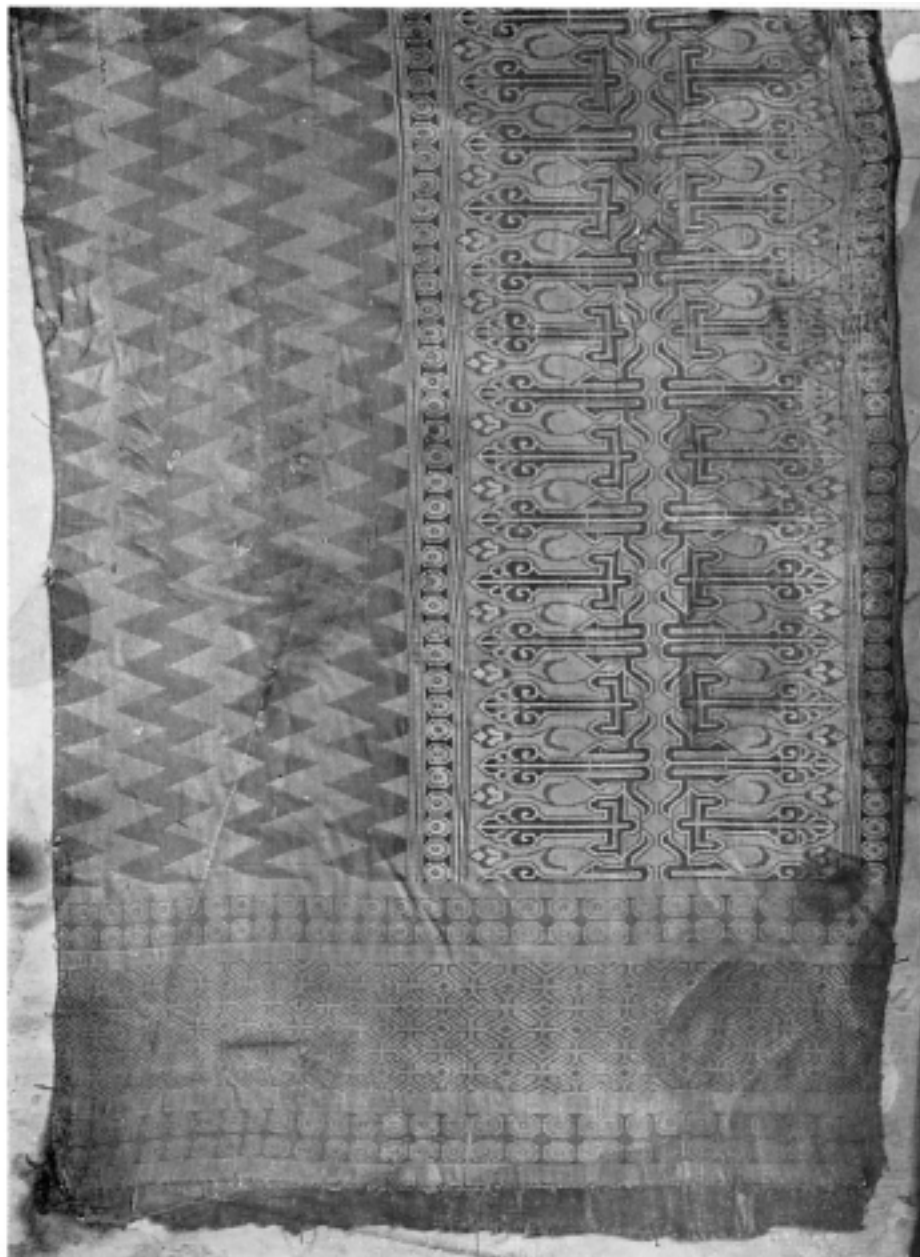


PLATE VI
DETAIL OF TEXTILE FORMING CUSHION, FROM THE TOMB OF LEONOR, QUEEN OF
ARAGON, HISPANO-ISLAMIC, XIII CENTURY. (NO. 12.)

variations in color, to the well-known blue and gold striped inscription silk from the tomb of Don Felipe;⁹ they clearly must have been produced in the same workshop. That No. 20 (Plate VII) is almost exactly the same as the Don Felipe silk, not only in the main body of the fabric but also in the wide and very complex ornamental border, can be seen by comparing it to the large piece of the latter fabric in the Brussels Museum.¹⁰ That these silks must be Hispano-Islamic and not Mudejar is proven, I believe, by the rich tapestry panel in No. 17 (Plate VIII). Sr. Gómez-Moreno has treated this as a separate fabric (No. 61); apparently he failed to see that, though the warps are badly broken at the point of juncture between the two different techniques, enough unbroken warps are preserved to show it is actually one continuous fabric with the main ground interrupted by the tapestry panel. Furthermore, a careful examination of the similar tapestry squares on one of the Lerida dalmatics¹¹ shows a fragment of this same kind of Fancy cloth weave with bands of inscriptions still joined to it; the same warps serving for both tapestry and Fancy cloth areas. No one, I believe, would ever doubt that these tapestry panels were the work of Arab weavers. That No. 19 may also be from the same group is not precluded by the form of the inscription which is written in a summary and decorative fashion and in reverse. We have already seen in No. 5 (Plate I) that Arabic inscriptions imperfectly written may well be found on Hispano-Islamic textiles.

The technique of the second group, Nos. 21-33, differs from that of the first by the addition of an extra weft in the ground fabric. It may be described as a Fancy compound cloth weave. The textiles in this technique from Las Huelgas are only a few from a very large series of the same type which are scattered throughout other collections in Spain as well as the rest of Europe. They are all characterized by an all-over pattern of tiny diamonds (or variants of it) and superimposed patterns, most commonly of eagles, lions, castles, and fleurs-de-lis. These designs show the same admixture of Christian and Islamic motifs that we find in other Mudejar decorative arts, and I believe they must be regarded as products of Mudejar workmen rather than Christians as Gómez-Moreno proposes. At least we can say that the style is definitely Mudejar. The most interesting of the group are: No. 27 (Plate IX) with castles brocaded in gold on shields; No. 31 (Plate X) with an unusual motif of cauldrons cer-

⁹ May, *op. cit.*, Fig. 6.

¹⁰ Isabelle Errera, *Catalogue d'Ettoffes Anciennes et Modernes* (Brussels, 1927), No. 17.

¹¹ Barcelona Museum, No. 5202.



PLATE VII

DETAIL OF TEXTILE USED FOR LINING OF THE COFFIN OF FERNANDO DE LA CERDA,
GREAT-GRANDSON OF THE FOUNDERS (d. 1275), HISPANO-ISLAMIC, XIII CENTURY.
(NO. 20.)



PLATE VIII

DETAIL OF TEXTILE FORMING A CUSHION IN THE TOMB OF QUEEN ELEANOR
(d. 1214), HISPANO-ISLAMIC, XIII CENTURY. (NO. 17.)

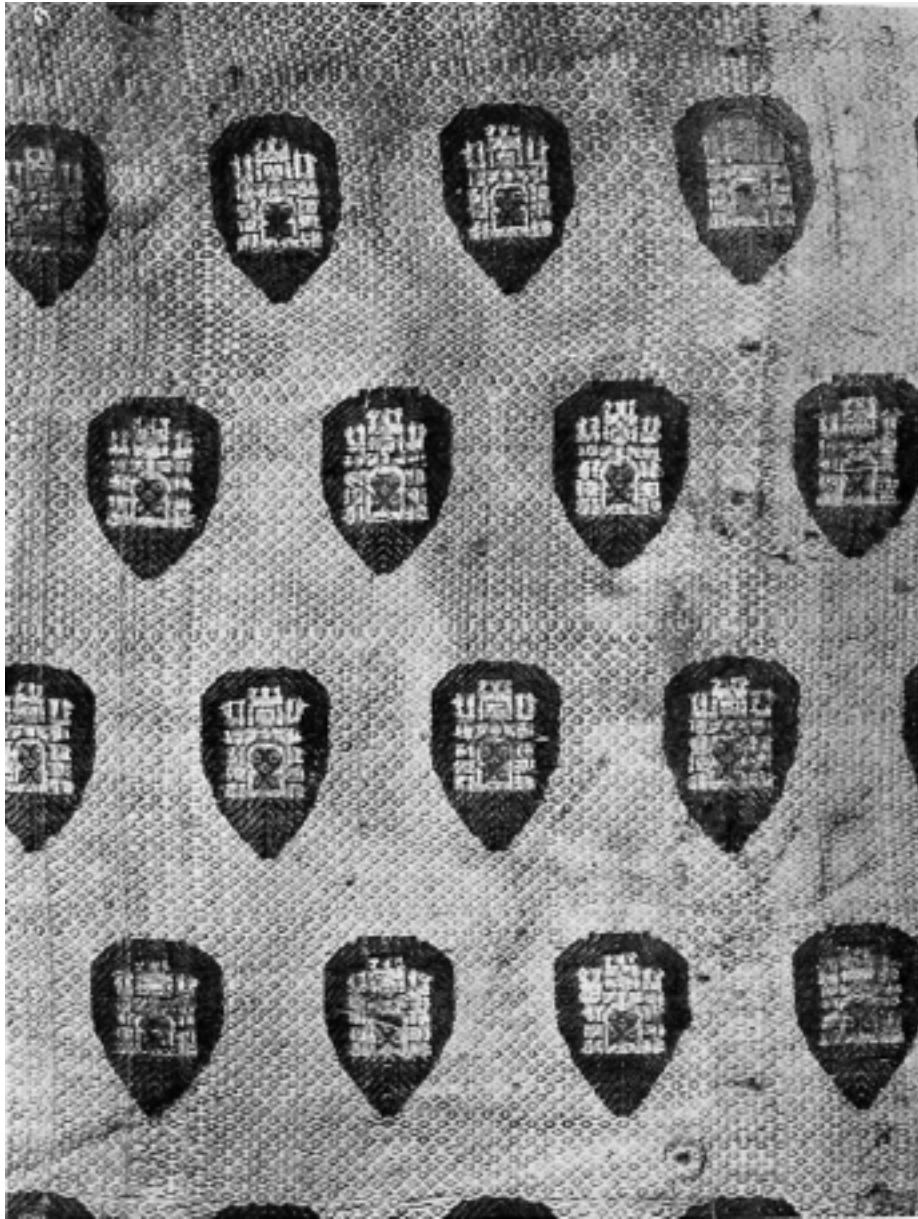


PLATE IX
DETAIL OF A TEXTILE FROM THE TOMB OF ALFONSO VIII (d. 1214),
MUDEJAR, XIII CENTURY. (NO. 27.)

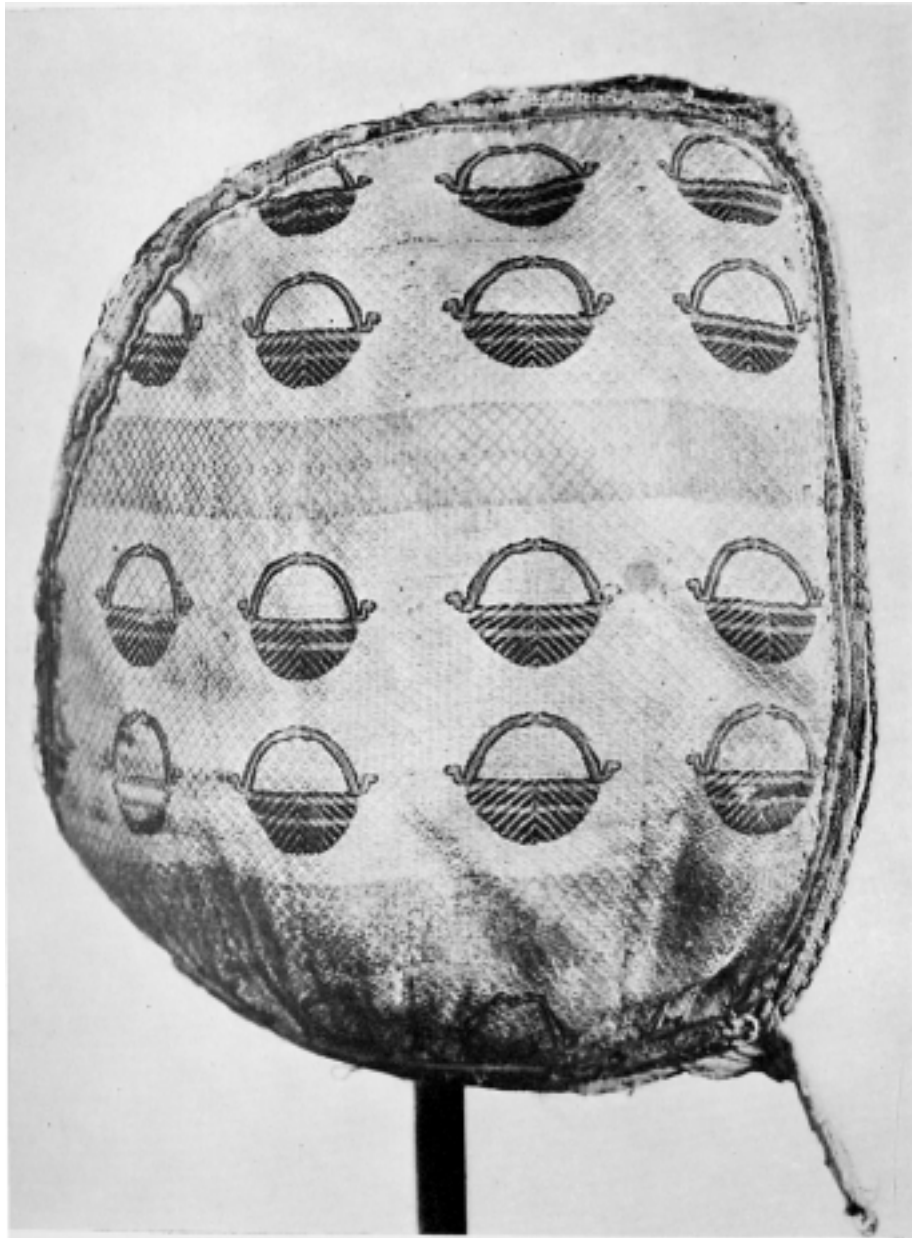


PLATE X

BONNET, FROM THE TOMB OF ENRIQUE I, MUDEJAR, XIII CENTURY;
PROBABLY DID NOT ORIGINALLY BELONG TO THAT TOMB. (NO. 31.)

tainly taken from the armorial of the Guzman family. Fleurs-de-lis and birds are found on others; and finally No. 33 has a design of interlaced stars and circles and a horizontal band in characteristic Islamic style, especially in the narrow band with groups of two and four disks exactly like those on the silk of Don Felipe and the related group.

All of the twill weaves which Sr. Gómez-Moreno describes are Plain compound weft twills and conform to the well-known type in which groups of inner warps occur between each main warp and in which the main warp passes over one weft and under two while the weft passes under one and over two main warps and three groups of inner warps. Perhaps the most interesting single textile in the entire collection is the large cloth, No. 34 (Plate XI), which lined the coffin of Maria de Almenar. Its pattern is composed of large roundels (66 cm. in diameter) enclosing pairs of addorsed regardant lions and the medallions in turn are enclosed within a rectangular frame and there is an inscription border at the top. The fabric preserves almost the complete loom piece with both selvages and the beginning of the piece at the top. It is a Plain compound weft twill with triple inner warps. The main ground is deep red; the ground within the medallions alternates, being medium blue or chartreuse; the lions, the roundel frames and the enclosing rectangular frame combine yellow, red, black and white. The heads of the lions are brocaded in gold and the large Cufic inscription at the top has gold letters on a dark blue ground. Sr. Gómez-Moreno has pointed out the relationship between the inscription in the roundel frames and that of another Hispano-Islamic silk with gazelles in Berlin.¹² Though completely different in technique and scale, there is an obvious relationship that shows the continuity of Hispano-Islamic design even among textiles differing widely in technique.

All of the group Nos. 37-43, to which must be added No. 35, are characterized by the use of coarse linen warps and linen for the core of the gold thread. All, except No. 38, are identical in technique and similar in design to a large number of textiles preserved in European collections, which von Falke and others following him have called "half-silks" and assigned to workshops in Regensburg. Of the Burgos pieces, five have been preserved in rather large fragments, in fact No. 41 is a complete loom piece, and in each of these there is a horizontal band with a pseudo-Cufic inscription which cuts arbitrarily through the main all-over design. Sr. Gómez-Moreno notes their similarity to the piece of the cope of Abbot

¹² Von Falke, *op. cit.*, Fig. 191.

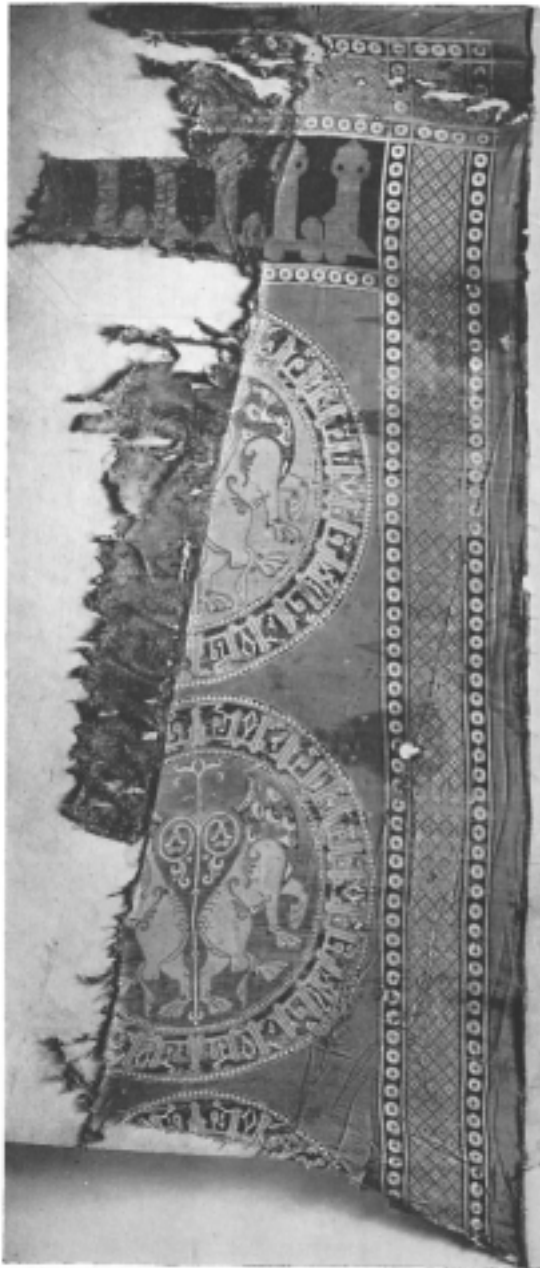


PLATE XI

DETAIL OF TEXTILE USED AS LINING OF THE
COFFIN OF MARIA DE ALMENAR, HISPANO-
ISLAMIC, XIII CENTURY. (NO. 34.)

Biure which has a similar pseudo-inscription band.¹³ He believes that the presence of these inscriptions on the textiles is an absolute guarantee of Spanish origin, and he notes the similarity in the general arrangement of all-over designs cut through by horizontal inscription bands to authentic Hispano-Islamic textiles found together with them in the tombs at Burgos. He believes that these silks must be the products of a Christian workshop in Spain. He, at the same time, accepts the presence of a "Nordic" workshop (presumably Regensburg) which was working in the same technique. I agree with Sr. Gómez-Moreno that these "half-silks" are the products of a workshop in Spain, but I believe that it must be a Mudejar, and not a Christian workshop, and I do not accept the fact that there was another shop in the North working in the same technique. The similarity in technique, design, and colors between the various examples of this group are too great to make it possible to separate one from the other; furthermore, there is absolutely no evidence pointing to Regensburg as the center where these "half-silks" might have been woven. Von Falke himself points out that, aside from the thirteenth century reference of Wolfram von Eschenbach to precious *zendel* fabrics of Ratisbon, "nothing of importance is contained in literary documents about this question."¹⁴ He goes on to speak of large quantities of half-silk fabrics, which must be attributed to Regensburg because, as he says: "A woven altarpiece in Ratisbon serves as a base to fix their provenience."¹⁵ However, unfortunately for his theory, the fact is that the Bishop Heinrich altarpiece¹⁶ on which he based his theory is not a half-silk. Therefore, whether this silk was made in Regensburg or not is of no consequence in considering the provenance of the half-silks. On the other hand, all of the evidence points toward a Spanish provenance. If the presence of pseudo-Arabic inscriptions and the similarity of the general design to Hispano-Islamic textiles found side by side with the Burgos half-silks is not enough to assure Spanish origin, there is further evidence, which to me is conclusive, to be seen right in Las Huelgas. The ceiling of the cloister of San Fernando is decorated with carved stucco panels done by Mudejar workmen between 1230 and 1260 A.D.¹⁷ In these stucco panels are to be found motif by motif all of the elements of

¹³ Dorothy G. Shepherd, "A Thirteenth-Century Textile," *The Bulletin of The Cleveland Museum of Art* (June, 1948), pp. 111-112.

¹⁴ Von Falke, *Decorative Silks* (New York, 1921), p. 28. Cf. Fig. 249.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ Sigrid Flamand Christensen, "Ein Frühwerk Deutscher Textilkunst," *Das Münster* (1950) Heft 1 & 2, pp. 77-83.

¹⁷ Leopoldo Torres Balbas, *Arte Almohade, Arte Nazari, Arte Mudejar in Ars Hispaniae* (Madrid, 1949), p. 370.

the designs of the textiles, peacocks, eagles, griffons, leafy scrolls, geometric interlacery, castles, stars and inscriptions, in fact the whole repertoire of Mudejar ornament. On Plate XII is reproduced a detail from one of these panels to be compared with a detail of textile No. 41 (Plate XIII). This is only one of innumerable such comparisons that could be made. Furthermore, No. 35 (Plate XIV), which for some reason Sr. Gómez-Moreno failed to note was a half-silk like the others, is identical in technique to them, and in it we have an unquestioned Spanish motif in the lions and castles on shields, which was the armorial of the kings of Castile. This silk comes from the tomb of Fernando de la Cerda, one of the princes of the house of Castile, who died in 1275, fifteen years after the stucco ceilings were completed. As for the large number of half-silks in European collections, which von Falke ascribes to Regensburg, in my own recent study I found that many of these actually have pseudo-inscriptions like those on the textiles found in Spain, as for example the dalmatic at Ambazac.¹⁸

The twill weaves (Nos. 44-46) come from the fourteenth-century tombs and all were imported from the Far East. They belong to a group of Chinese textiles well represented in other European treasures, notably that of Danzig.

After the first two major groups of textiles, the cloth weaves and the twills, there follows in Chapters VI, VII, and VIII a discussion of three separate groups of textiles which, though technically belonging with the cloth weaves, the author has set aside, apparently because of their lack of pattern. He treats them separately as striped fabrics, plain fabrics, and cendals. Especially interesting is this last group of fine, loose, plain linen cloth, woven in narrow strips and pleated. That these were used for feminine head-dresses can clearly be seen by comparing them to head-dresses in contemporary sculptures, especially in the thirteenth-century cloister of the Cathedral of Burgos.¹⁹

The tapestry weaves, which curiously are included within the general classification of embroideries, are well represented among the Burgos material. Except for the Gothic tapestry, No. 66, an import from the North, all others are purely Hispano-Islamic in character, woven in polychrome silks and gold. One large panel (No. 61) from a cushion in the

¹⁸ Von Falke, *Kunstgeschichte der Seidenweberei* (Berlin, 1913), Fig. 309.

¹⁹ Ruth Matilda Anderson, *Pleated Headdresses of Castilla and Leon (12th and 13th Centuries)*. In *Notes Hispanic*. New York, The Hispanic Society of America, Vol. II (1942), pp. 51-79.



PLATE XII

DETAIL OF A STUCCO PANEL FROM THE CEILING OF THE CLOISTER OF SAN FERNANDO, IN THE CONVENT OF SANTA MARIA DE LAS HUELGAS, 1230-1260 A.D.
(Photo. Moreno)



PLATE XIII

DETAIL OF A TEXTILE COVERING THE COFFIN OF FERNANDO DE LA CERDA
(d. 1275), MUDEJAR, XIII CENTURY. (NO. 41.)

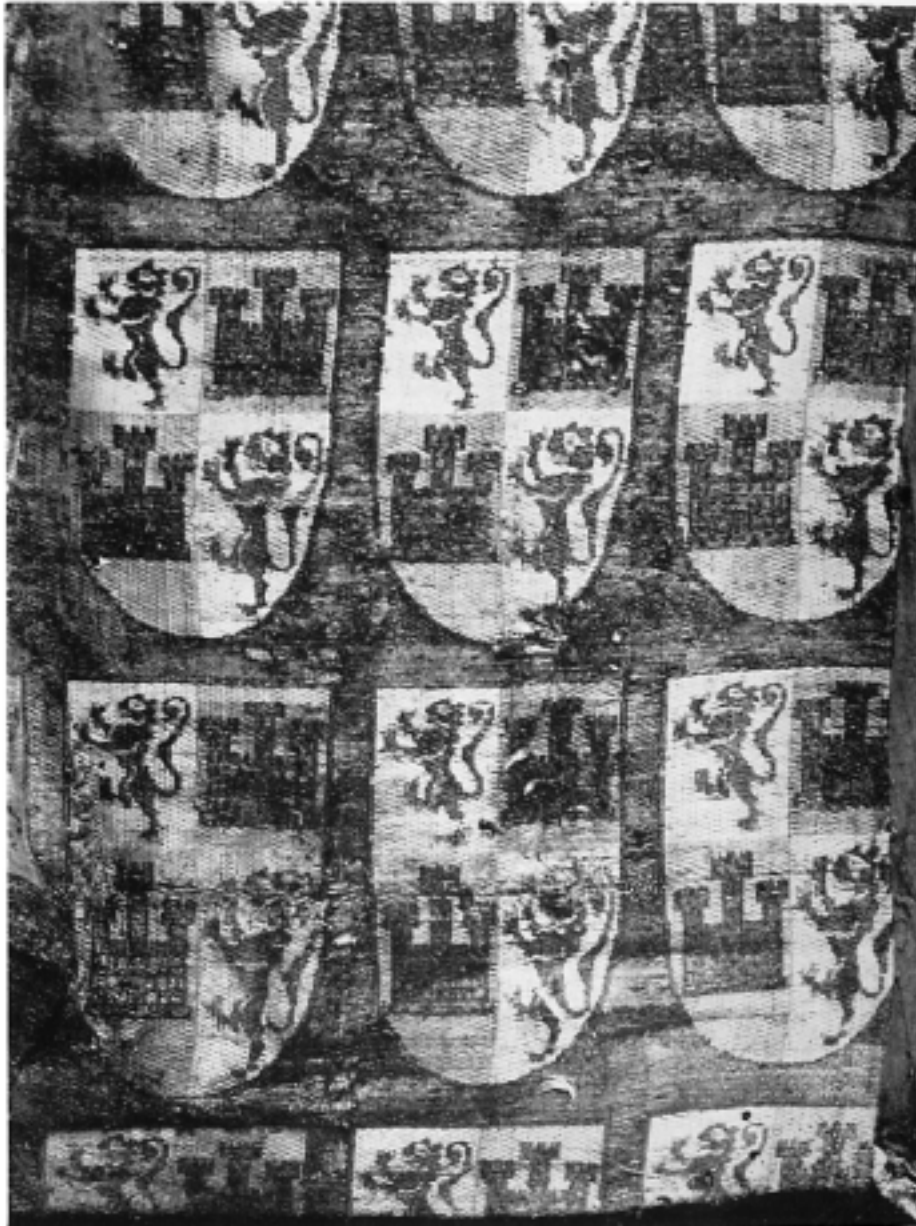


PLATE XIV
DETAIL OF THE FABRIC USED FOR THE GARMENTS OF FERNANDO DE LA CERDA
(d. 1275), MUDEJAR, XIII CENTURY. (NO. 35.)

tomb of Queen Leonor, has been dealt with above under the discussion of No. 17 (Plate VIII). The most important example among the tapestries is the large cushion cover from the tomb of Queen Berenguela, d. 1246, No. 62, (Frontispiece). Woven into a plain red taffeta ground are two horizontal tapestry bands with Arabic inscriptions and a large central medallion around which are placed four interlaced stars. The central roundel has a border containing an Arabic inscription and within it are a pair of female figures either side of a tree of life. They recall other Spanish examples of this motif and are of themselves perhaps the most beautiful and best preserved examples known. Sr. Gómez-Moreno points out the resemblance of this textile to the well-known tapestry with pairs of drinking ladies in the Cooper Union Museum²⁰ in New York and several other fragments, apparently originally a single textile, from the thirteenth-century tomb of Bishop Gurb in the Cathedral of Barcelona, and now divided between the Campmany collection in that city and the Cooper Union Museum.²¹ The drinking ladies are also to be compared with the same subject on a woven silk of Granada type²² and the border of the great silk in the Hispanic Society of New York.²³

The importance of these discoveries at Las Huelgas can scarcely be over-emphasized. They not only provide us with extensive documentation on the thirteenth-century textile industry in Spain, but provide also the links which connect this period with both the earlier and later phases. These new finds, together with other recent discoveries in Spain, should make it possible to write for the first time a history of Hispano-Islamic textiles reaching back at least until the beginning of the twelfth century. For earlier periods similar documentation is still lacking, though this yet may be provided by further discoveries such as those at Las Huelgas.

²⁰ Dorothy G. Shepherd, "The Hispano-Islamic Textiles in the Cooper Union Collection," *The Chronicle of the Museum for the Arts of Decoration of the Cooper Union*. (December, 1943), Fig. 16.

²¹ Inventory No. 1902-1-218.

²² Joseph Breck, "A Hispano-Moresque Textile Fragment," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* (1929), XXIV, No. 10, pp. 253-4.

²³ No. H909. Cf. Florence L. May, "Textiles," in *Hispanic Society of America Handbook of Library and Collections* (New York, 1938), p. 275.

NOTES ON THE COSTUME OF WOMEN OF THE
COURT AND HIGHER CLASSES IN RUSSIA IN
THE XVI AND XVII CENTURIES

by

EUGENIA TOLMACHOFF

THE HISTORY OF RUSSIA as a political state begins about the tenth century, but little or nothing is known about Russian costume of that time. Late in the century Prince Vladimir of Kiev, known as Vladimir the Saint, after conquering Khersonesus, the ancient Greek colony closely related to Byzantium, married a Byzantine princess and, adopting the Christian religion, introduced that faith into Russia. From Byzantium Prince Vladimir brought priests, monks, church vessels and, also representative of this new religion, icons, or religious paintings which in Byzantium constituted the prevailing form of the painters' art. It is from these icons, and later the illuminated manuscripts developed in a Christian religion civilization under Byzantine influence, that the first knowledge is gained of early Russian costume (Plate II).

During the period of the first Russian princes,¹ the Byzantine emperors, upon numerous occasions, sent to these various rulers valuable gifts, generally rich garments, often their own imperial robes. It was a type of presentation that was customary at the time and one that continued into the Moscow period.² In this way the apparel of Russian princes and their courts was affected, differentiating it inevitably from that of the ordinary Russian.

There is no doubt that Byzantium had great influence on the dress of women of the wealthy classes. Ladies of high rank, especially, were eager to adopt this new style of clothing and some of their dresses were even made of Byzantine materials. Once established, the style remained virtually unchanged; for formal wear it was preserved all through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, up to the time of Peter the Great who reigned

¹ From the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries Russia consisted of a number of small principalities, each ruled by a prince under the leadership of the prince of Kiev.

² So-called because in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries all the Russian principalities were finally united under the rule of the Moscow grand duke who was called Grand Duke of all Russia.



PLATE I

MARIA ILINISHNA, FIRST WIFE OF CZAR ALEXIS MIKHAILOVICH (1629-1676). SHE WEARS A TELOGRÉIA AND SHOULDER COLLAR OF FUR, AN UBRÚS (UNDER THE CROWN), AND A JEWELLED COLLAR AND CARRIES A SHIRINKA.



PLATE II

FOURTEENTH-CENTURY EMBROIDERED PORTRAIT OF PRINCE VASILI OF MOSCOW AND HIS WIFE, PRINCESS SOPHIA, WORKED ON BLUE SATIN IN SILK, GOLD AND SILVER. THE PRINCESS WEARS A KIND OF SARAFÁN OF SILVER BROCADE WITH AN ALL-OVER GEOMETRIC DESIGN IN RED SILK FRAMED IN GOLD, AND A CLOAK.

from 1682 to 1725. Fashions at this time changed very slowly, and when they did at all, it was only a matter of ornamentation or some small detail. Basically the dress remained the same.

There are very few sources that give a clear idea of the costumes of old Russia. Most of them are descriptions by foreign travelers who visited Russia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: Adam Olearius, mathematician and librarian of the Duke of Holstein, whose book *Travels in Moscovia*, published in 1647 in German, proved so popular that it was translated into several languages; Sigismond of Herberstein, Austrian ambassador during the rule of Vasili III, Prince of Moscow (ruled 1505-1533); Giles Fletcher, an English diplomat who went to Russia in 1588; Bernard Tanner, a German traveler attached as *gentilhomme interprète* to the Polish embassy and who lived in Moscow in 1588, and various Englishmen who visited Russia in the sixteenth century.

Their memoirs, often with good illustrations, and the reports of various embassies and trade missions contain a great deal of useful material. Foreign ambassadors, as well, staying in Russia, had the opportunity of seeing Russian women of the court and aristocratic circles upon state occasions, and of observing their luxurious and beautiful dresses. The splendor of Russian court costumes, indeed, was a matter of comment as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century. It is true that foreign descriptions of Russian dress of that period are sometimes exaggerated and not always correct, but still they give a good amount of useful information. In addition, there are contemporary inventories appearing after the death of persons of note, and portraits, made in Europe, of Russian ambassadors of that period, though such portraits, naturally, provide information about men's wear only.

Women's clothes at this time consisted of a succession of long, loose garments. Indeed, of the outstanding characteristics of women's clothes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries one was this simple, loose cut without any indication of a waist line; the other was the richness and variety of their decoration. This was true particularly in the case of costumes for important occasions such as weddings, religious services and receptions for ambassadors; embroidery on brocade, gold and silver lace, pearls, precious and semi-precious stones and buttons in great variety made of the same gold, silver and jewels that ornamented the dresses. These buttons were sometimes of great size, "large as an egg," to quote one of the foreigners of the times.

A characteristic of these luxurious clothes was a noticeable — and cal-

culated — stiffness. Embroidery on brocade, itself of a rich and heavy quality, contributed to this effect and when to this was added the amount of jewels used, especially pearls,³ which were employed in profusion, the result was a dress so unyielding in line that it could stand alone.

All the materials used for these splendid costumes, velvets, patterned silks, satins and brocades, were imported.⁴ Silks, plain and figured, came from Italy, Turkey, Byzantium and China, beautiful soft velvets from Spain and figured velvets from Persia, often with Arabic characters for a pattern. In 1555 Ivan the Terrible (Ivan IV, 1530-1584) gave permission to English merchants to export goods free into Russia and this increased the entry into the country of fabrics from abroad.

The materials imported in the greatest number were of Greek, Persian and Chinese origin. Persian and Turkish figured velvets were used generally for men's wear, while for women light, monotone Chinese silks were the favorites in red, blue, yellow, purple and crimson.

Costume occupied a prominent place in the life of old Russia. It can be seen, carefully delineated in contemporary icon paintings in which colors are given the most careful attention, in frescoes and in illuminated manuscripts. Moreover, Russian czars gave costly garments and splendid furs as a reward or a special mark of attention (Plate III). The resplendence of Russian costume no doubt was due to a great extent to the numerous workshops attached to the czar's court and the households of Russian noblemen, and also to the fact that the women, cut off from any outside interests, had ample time to exercise their talents in needlework.

At home, because of their secluded existence, women wore simple clothing, though its decoration, executed with skill by its wearers, often gave it an air of luxury. The first of the garments worn in domestic environments was a shirt of white linen with short sleeves and reaching to the ground. It was finished at the top by a low, round neckline slightly gathered with a small opening at the front. Over this shirt was worn a second one, generally of colored silk embroidered or otherwise decorated. This outer shirt had long, narrow sleeves, cut much longer than the arm,

³ Pearls, widely used for decoration in Russia, came from India and the island of Ormuz in the Persian Gulf by way of the Sea of Azov, also through Feodosia, the ancient Kaffa, a seaport in the Crimea. They came also from Holland and western countries through the city of Novgorod. Some pearls were found in northern Russian rivers and the lakes of the Archangel, Novgorod, and Olonetz provinces.

⁴ Up to the seventeenth century Russia itself had no weaving industry of any consequence. The only materials made in Moscovite Russia were linen, wool, and cotton so that the demand for foreign fabrics in these two centuries was always great. In time factories to meet a wider demand were set up in Russia with the aid of foreign workmen. There were French silk weavers in Russia as early as the beginning of the eighteenth century at the time of Peter the Great.

that could be pushed up over the arm in folds. Such sleeves were embroidered sometimes in gold and silver and ornamented with galloon or pearls. Over the shirt a belt was worn. This was the simplest type of indoor dress; it was never worn in public, but was entirely private in character, for to have displayed it outside the house, especially the belt, the symbol of chastity, would have constituted a grave offense.

Over this under-costume were worn various types of garments. One of them was the *sarafán* which was a straight garment, widening slightly toward the hem, made either of homespun linen or of silk or some similar fabric. This dress was sleeveless, made with a low neckline either round or square. It was decorated down the length of the front with gold braid or buttons (Plate IV). To this garment might be added for warmth a short, full jacket called a *dushegréia* made of silk or velvet with a straight front and a back with a set-in piece which fell a little below the waist in heavy folds (Plate V).

Or, instead of a *sarafán*, there was another long, loose garment, the *létnik*, reminiscent in style of the robes of the Byzantine princesses (Fig. 1). Worn both indoors and out, this was closed in the front and as a result, like many other clothes of the time, it had to be put on over the head. Its most noticeable feature was the size and shape of its sleeves which hung nearly to the ground. So wide were these sleeves at the lower edges that their breadth equaled half their length. They were finished with stiff, wide borders of either velvet or satin differing in color and material from the garment itself, and ornamented with embroidery, pearls and precious stones. To keep their shape they were stiffened on the reverse side with glue. Their decoration, which might be of the most elaborate character, showed to best advantage when the wearer held her hands folded in front of her, thus insuring an unbroken surface for the pattern. *Létniks* were made of cotton or silk and brocade.

Another type of *létnik*, noted by the English traveler Fletcher in his sojourn in the late sixteenth century in Russia, and very similar to its prototype, was the *opáshen* or *ohaben*, except that this garment opened down the front and had long, narrow sleeves that hung to the ground (Fig. 2). It was often made of wool decorated with stitching, but for the more formal type of garment, made of silk, satin or brocade, and lined with silk, gold or silver lace was used. It was fastened with buttons of gold or silver-gilt, red was its favorite color and a fur collar sometimes was attached so large that it fell to the waist. It is a type of garment that is said to have been worn as early as the fifteenth century.



PLATE III
BARON SIGISMOND OF HERBERSTEIN WEARING A ROBE PRESENTED TO
HIM BY THE CZAR.



PLATE IV
YOUNG WOMAN WEARING A SARAFÁN.



PLATE V
WOMEN WEARING DUSHEGRÉIAS AND KIKAS.



FIG. 1
LÉTNÍK.

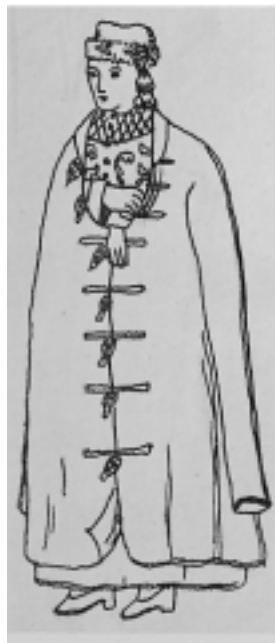


FIG. 2
OPÁSHEN.



FIG. 3
SHOUBA (SHOWING HEAD-
DRESS AND UBRÚS).

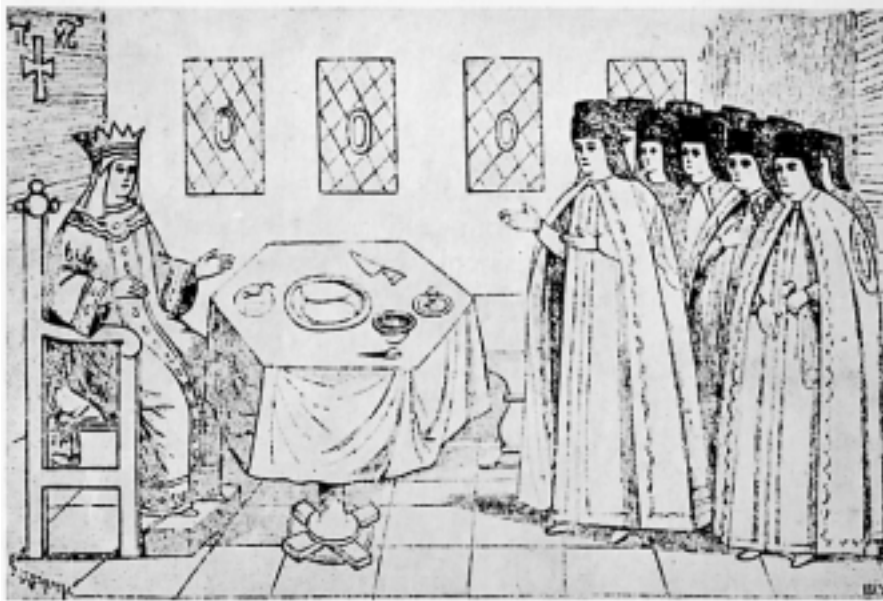


FIG. 4
 KAPTURS WORN BY LADIES IN ATTENDANCE UPON EUDOXIA, WIFE OF THE FIRST
 ROMANOV CZAR, MICHAEL FEODOROVICH (REIGNED 1613-1695).



FIG. 5
 EUDOXIA, WIFE OF CZAR MICHAEL FEODOROVICH, WEARING A
 CROWN WITH A CROSS, A KIND OF OPÁSHEN, BARMY AND HOLD-
 ING A SHIRINKA. SHE WAS THE MOTHER OF THE SECOND
 ROMANOV CZAR, ALEXIS, BORN IN 1629.

Another outdoor garment, but which opened in front, was the *telo-gréia*, again with sleeves which hung to the ground, but with an opening at the top of the sleeve through which the arm might be passed. Often these sleeves were thrown back over the shoulder or they might, at other times, be crossed at the back. The collar, the front of the coat and the lower edges were ornamented with gold or silver lace. This *telo-gréia* was made of such heavy fabrics as wool, heavy satin or brocade and appears often in pictures of Russian women of the court and social classes (Plate VI).

Of almost the same appearance was the *shouba*, except that it had sleeves of wrist length without an opening at the top. This garment was an important item in the formal attire of Russian czarinas and princesses. Although basically an outdoor coat, there were times when it was worn indoors on such notable occasions as formal dinners and weddings.⁵ When used in such capacity it was open all the way down the front and fastened with a row of decorative buttons. Ordinarily it was made of wool materials of various colors but for formal occasions it was made of heavy silk or velvet without decorations except upon occasions of extreme formality when a short fur shoulder cape, or deep collar, coming only to the tops of the shoulders, was added to it (Fig 3 and Plate I).

The last of these outdoor coats was the *kortél*, which was strictly a winter garment.⁶ Sometimes it was made of fur-lined taffeta or heavy silk; sometimes, on the other hand, it was made of fur alone. In that case the favorite furs were sable, ermine, marten and squirrel. Sometimes this coat was worn in reverse with the fur inside and the skin outside when, in such case, the skin was covered with silk and ornamented with pieces of different materials richly worked with silk and gold.

Foreigners who visited Moscow in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries noted the beauty of the Russian women but they were shocked by the manner in which they painted their faces. This was done to an exaggerated extent; women covered their faces, necks and sometimes even their hands with thick layers of white, and used an excessive amount of rouge on their cheeks and lips with black on their eyebrows and lashes.⁷

⁵ It was a custom during the wedding ceremonies at court for the bride and all the women taking part to wear a *shouba* and a yellow *létnik*; the day after the wedding these latter were changed for white *létniks*.

⁶ In its cut it was very much like the *létnik*.

⁷ According to Zabelin (Ivan Zabelin. *Home Life of the Russian Czarinas in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Moscow, 1869), this fashion was brought to Russia from Constantinople by Princess Olga (890-960), grandmother of Prince Vladimir of Kiev, who had gone to Constantinople in 957 to plead for autonomy of the future Russian church.



PLATE VI

THE CZARINA MARTHA AT THE DEATH BED OF HER HUSBAND, CZAR FEODOR III (1661-1682), WEARING A TELOGRÉIA AND SHOULDER COLLAR. STANDING NEXT IS PRINCESS SOPHIA, SISTER OF CZAR FEODOR, HER HAND ON THE SHOULDER OF HER HALF-BROTHER, PETER, LATER PETER THE GREAT.

Olearius, in his *Travels in Moscovia*, made note of the tendency of Russian women to paint heavily, but he lacked the knowledge of the principle that underlay this curious custom, the instinct of the Oriental to conceal woman's countenance from public gaze, effected elsewhere by the use of a veil. Thus, to the Russian, a thick coat of paint allayed in some measure this innate distrust of any scrutiny by outsiders.

This heavy makeup, however, was deemed necessary by contemporary fashion, so much so, that it was not considered proper to appear in public without it. Moreover, a box with all the implements necessary for such use was sent, among other gifts before the wedding, by the bridegroom to the bride.

With this white skin, red lips and black eyebrows, designed to emphasize the contemporary ideal of feminine beauty, women's head-dress and accessories were meant to harmonize. First there was a head covering, a small fitted cap of light silk or cotton, called a *povoimik*, which entirely hid the hair, as married women, by a strict rule, were not allowed to show what generally is regarded as an attractive feature. To the back of this cap was attached a piece made of the same material which entirely concealed the head and neck beneath. Over the cap was worn as a head band, a wide strip of white linen or red silk embroidered in silk or gold and silver and decorated with pearls. This head-dress, called an *ubrús*,⁸ was wound around the head, with its embroidered ends hanging down on either side of the face and fastened with jeweled pins made for the purpose (Plate I and Fig. 5). Sometimes this head-dress was replaced by another, a net cap made of silver, gold or silk thread, bordered with a taffeta or satin band, white or crimson, richly embroidered in silk and gold. Often there was a *ruče* attached to the cap, visible under the head-gear that surmounted it.

These decorative arrangements were viewed in the following fashion by the English traveler Fletcher who, it will be remembered, was in Russia in 1588. He says:

“The noble women wear on their head a kerchief or cap made of taffeta, usually red, and over it a band called *ubrús*, mostly white. Over the *ubrús* is worn a kind of hat made of golden brocade, trimmed with fur and decorated with pearls and semi-precious stones, but lately they stopped using pearls because lower classes (merchants' wives) started wearing pearl

⁸ The Russian name *ubrús* means a towel. It was also used as icon cover, laid over the top of the icon hanging down at either end.

decorations. They all wear earrings, two inches long, made of gold, with rubies, sapphires, and other precious stones. In summer they often wear a kind of cloak, or cape, of very fine linen, tied under the chin with two long strings with tassels. This cloak is covered all over with fine pearls. When going out or on horseback, they wear white hats with colored straps. Their necklaces are made of pearls and precious stones.” (Plate VIII.)

Certain historical documents still preserved in Russia show women wearing over the *ubrús* the hats presumably referred to by Fletcher, and descriptions of such hats can be found in the inventories of the belongings of Russian czarinas. Hats of this kind had round crowns and brims about three-quarters of an inch wide.⁹ Covered on the outside with a preparation of white lead and glue to give them a lustrous finish, they were lined with brocade and satin and decorated with cords of colored silk or pearls or with ribbons embroidered in silk. When worn by women of high station they were decorated with pearls and jewels.

A distinctive type of head covering for married women was the *kika* (see Plate V) which at weddings was another of the groom's gifts to the bride. It was a hat with a high front which varied greatly in shape and height, sometimes with vertical side pieces, and one which is seen constantly in representations of Russian married women. *Kikas* were adorned with some type of decorative trimming, or with the familiar pearls and jewels. Often they were finished with strings of pearls which hung on either side of the head and which usually were matched by a wide pearl necklace made of several strings of pearls with which were combined such stones as topazes and emeralds. At the back was the customary strip of velvet or fur, generally sable.

Russian czarinas had *kikas* of an elaborate and beautiful nature. One of them is described: “A *kika* of purple satin, embroidered in gold with plant motifs and decorated with rubies and sapphires and strings of pearls. On the back, black velvet embroidered in gold.” According to Zabelin, the *kika* came from Byzantium where it was worn not only by princesses but also by emperors, as may be seen on Byzantine coins where strings of pearls are seen hanging down on either side of the face. This head-gear is said to have been worn also in the Greek colonies of the

⁹ When a Russian czarina or a lady of the court was riding in a carriage, her women attendants followed the carriage astride on horseback, wearing wide-brimmed felt hats.

Cimmerian Bosphorus, and in 1864 a similar *kika* was found in the tomb of a prince¹⁰ during the excavations on the Taman peninsula.

Besides this head-dress with its pearls, there were also winter hats worn by all classes: the only difference was the material. The crowns were of different shapes; they might be rounded, cone-shaped or cylindrical, with fur brims which, in the case of married women, were wider in the back, to cover their hair.¹¹ Occasionally these brims varied and were made of silk or brocade and decorated with gold embroidery and pearls. Unmarried women, too, wore these high fur hats, cylinder shaped, but without brims and slightly widening toward the top, very much like men's hats of the time.

And finally there was the winter hat called *kaptur* (Fig. 4) which perhaps was the simplest of all these various head coverings. This hat was worn only by married women and widows. It was a type made in a variety of furs including sable and beaver, straight and box-like, in the shape of a low cylinder with the usual three straight pieces of fur attached on the sides and back. As a variation it was occasionally made in heavy silk or brocade, fur-lined and fur-trimmed, and sometimes decorated with gold lace and pearls.

The *korúna* or crown is a head-dress that can be traced back to the era of the early Russian princesses and which, through some evolutions, became the crown of the Russian czars and emperors worn on occasions such as coronations, up to the twentieth century.

In the fifteenth century it was a stiff, straight band made of heavy ribbon embroidered with gold and pearls, in the center and narrowing toward the ends, held together usually with strings or with wide ribbons hanging down the back. This band, when it was covered with pearls, was called a *venéztz* or wreath. A variety of this circlet, made of openwork metal, either gold or silver, was the head-dress of unmarried girls who wore it with hair loose. It was a type of crown that existed even before the sixteenth century and was the indispensable head-dress not only of the young princesses from the time of their childhood, but also of the czars' brides.

The type of *korúna* worn in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the princesses and czarinas was of a more formal character. It was made of a scalloped gold or silver band to which were attached narrow strips, also silver or gold, joined at the top of the head with a finial, which might

¹⁰ Date unknown.

¹¹ According to the custom of that period, the bride, the morning after her marriage, came out of her bedroom wearing this kind of hat.



PLATE VII
LADIES OF A RUSSIAN HOUSEHOLD BRINGING IN WINE TO A FEAST.
THE FIGURE ON THE RIGHT WEARS A LÉTNIK.

be an elaborate plaque, or a precious stone. The czarinas' were ornamented with large sized pearls and jewels except for especial occasions when they were surmounted, like the czars', by a gold cross (See Fig. 5). Some of these early crowns are still preserved in Russian museums.

While in old Russia custom forbade married women to show their hair, no such dictum operated in the case of unmarried girls. They could wear it loose like the young princesses with their silver wreaths, in curls, or in braids into which gold threads or strings of pearls could be twisted.

As for women's footwear throughout these two centuries, it was very much like the men's. They wore low shoes and high boots which reached half way to the knee, both very decorative. Both types were made of morocco leather, velvet or satin, often elaborately embroidered, especially the toes and heels, in silk and even pearls, and decorated as well with gold lace. Sometimes, again like the men's, the toes were turned up like those of Turkish slippers. One change in fashion was the matter of heels. Women's footwear in the sixteenth century was flat, but by the seventeenth there were heels, sometimes so high as to make walking an awkward matter.

As to stockings, they possessed a character all of their own. Knitted stockings were rarely used. For the most part stockings were made of silk or wool materials; winter stockings were fur-lined. Sometimes women wore over their shoes what was called a stocking but which was in reality a cover of morocco leather without any sole. Sometimes, in place of a shoe, women wore this same kind of foot covering, but made with a light sole, and used it in this form for indoor wear like bedroom slippers.

Unlike men, women seldom wore gloves; mittens were used a great deal more frequently. Even in czarinas' inventories gloves are scarcely mentioned. While women of the lower classes wore in cold weather the same mittens as did the men, those of the higher ranks drew their hands inside their long, loose sleeves, or carried muffs. Very much in fashion were muffs narrow in shape, made of silk or brocade, lined with fur and decorated with embroidery, gold lace and even pearls.

Among the important accessories of women's clothes was the *shirinka*, or handkerchief, such as is seen in women's hands in so many pictures. (See Plates I, VI, Endpiece.) The *shirinka* was the size of man's handkerchief or larger and made of some fine material, generally white taffeta; its purpose was purely ornamental. It was embroidered in a most elaborate fashion in silk and gold, the border often worked in pearls, sometimes finished with fringe with tassels at the corners. For a woman the *shirinka*



PLATE VIII
SUMMER CAPES OF FINE LINEN ORNAMENTED WITH PEARLS.

was necessary, not only as an accessory, but as a proof of the skill of the wearer in the art of needlework. Some of these embroidered squares are mentioned in the inventories of the *czarinas*: "A *shirinka* of fine Turkish muslin embroidered with plant motives in silk and gold and silver thread." Another accessory was a kind of standing collar (sometimes termed a necklace) embroidered in pearls and jewels. It was not a part of the dress but was attached to it by buttons made for the purpose. When going out women of the court circle carried staves or maces with ornamental handles, and in summer light parasols. In warm weather round feather fans were used. For formal public appearances such as religious ceremonies, a kind of canopy was carried over the *czarina* by four court ladies who were in attendance. (Endpiece.)

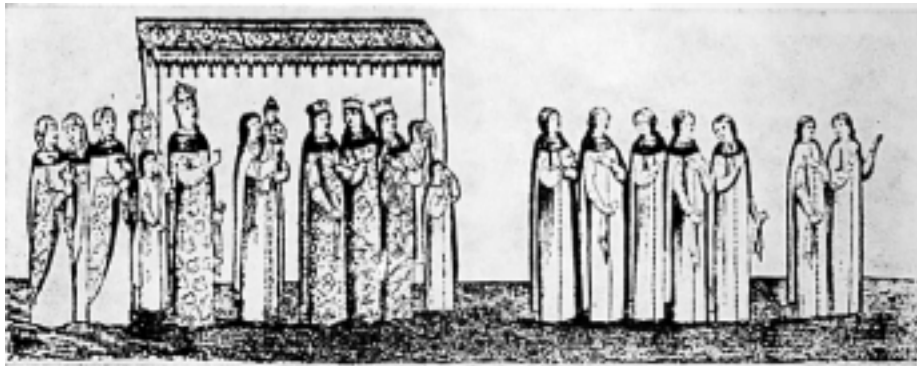
In appearance the formal ceremonial attire of a *czarina* did not differ to any marked degree from that of a *czar*. Like all court robes that had a certain ritualistic purpose, the dress of the *czarina* preserved intact the cut and appearance of that of the Byzantine court, an inner garment with long, narrow sleeves finished by elaborately ornamented cuffs, and an outer robe very much like the *opáshen* but with shorter and wider sleeves. The *czarina* wore also, on occasions of great state, a *diadema* or necklace made of pearls and precious stones. On her head was a crown richly ornamented with jewels surmounted generally by a large jewel, but on exceptional occasions with a cross.

A significant item of the *czarina's* attire, as an unquestioned attribute of her rank, was the *barmy* (Fig. 5) which, with the crown and *diadema*, was invariably worn during formal ceremonies. This was a round collar covering the shoulders, made of brocade or heavy silk embroidered in silk and gold and decorated with pearls and precious stones. The *barmy* worn for religious ceremonies was embroidered with images of saints or applied with miniature icons of openwork metal. Besides *czars* and *czarinas* only high church dignitaries were entitled to wear this emblem. Many of these collars are still preserved in the Moscow Armory Museum.

A vivid picture of one of these early *czarinas* has been given by an English bishop who visited Moscow in 1588-1589 and who described the attire of the *czarina*, the wife of *Czar Feodor* (1557-1598) on the occasions of the reception of an ambassador:

"On her head the *czarina* wore a dazzling crown, very skillfully made of precious stones and pearls and consisting of twelve sections (in reminiscence of the twelve apostles). Her

crown was covered with carbuncles, diamonds, topazes, and large beautiful pearls, as well as large amethysts and sapphires. On each side of the face, attached to the crown, hung strings of precious stones, mostly emeralds, so large and perfect that this crown must really be priceless. The czarina's garment, with long sleeves covering most of the hand, was made of a heavy silk fabric and decorated with very elaborate trimmings. It was embroidered along the hem with pearls and jewels of the finest quality, among them dazzling carbuncles. Over her dress the czarina wore a kind of mantle or cloak of very fine material, with long sleeves. Although very simple and unpretentious at first sight, this garment in fact was extremely beautiful and very costly since the entire surface was covered with sapphires, diamonds, and other precious stones in great number."



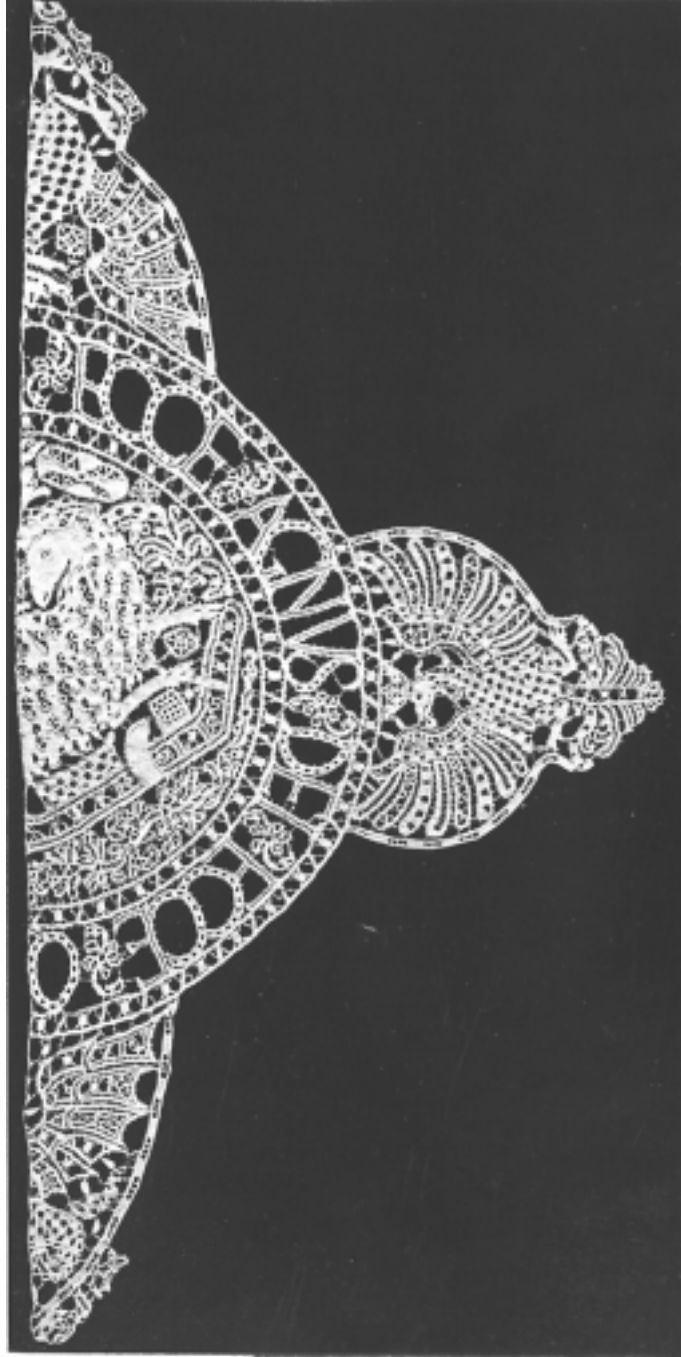
ENDPIECE

CZARINA MARIA ILINISHNA, FIRST WIFE OF CZAR ALEXIS MIKHAILOVICH (1629-1676)
WITH ATTENDANTS WEARING (CENTER AND RIGHT) TELOGRÉIAS AND (LEFT) LÉTNIKS,
LEAVING WITH YOUNG CZAROVITCH FOR A RELIGIOUS CEREMONY.

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NOTE. Unless otherwise indicated, all the books and the articles listed above are published in Russian.



PART OF A CHALICE VEIL OF NEEDLEPOINT LACE, ITALIAN, EARLY XVII CENTURY, WITH THE EAGLE AND THE GRIFFON, ARMS OF THE GREAT BORGHESE FAMILY OF WHICH POPE PAUL V (POPE FROM 1605 TO 1621) WAS A MEMBER. IT WAS HIS NEPHEW, CARDINAL SCIPIO BORGHESE, A PERSON OF GREAT WEALTH AND LUXURIOUS TASTES WHO BUILT THE VILLA BORGHESE, NOW A FAMOUS PICTURE GALLERY. TO ONE OF THESE PRINCES OF THE CHURCH THIS LACE MIGHT ONCE HAVE BELONGED. ACQUIRED BY THE COOPER UNION MUSEUM FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE LATE MRS. GINO SPERANZA.



CLUB NOTES

Through the courtesy of Mrs. Frank B. Rowell the first meeting of the Club for 1951 was held in the Small Ballroom of the Colony Club, 51 East 62nd Street on Friday afternoon, January twenty-sixth at the usual hour of three o'clock, where Mrs. L. Earl Rowe, Curator of the Hobart Moore Memorial Collection of the Yale University Art Gallery, spoke on the fine and interesting weaves that she had seen on her recent visit to Spain.

On February 27, through the kindness of Mrs. A. Victor Barnes the Annual Meeting was held at her apartment at 10 Gracie Square. After a short business meeting Mrs. Florence Edler de Roover of Wells College, Aurora, New York, spoke on the subject, Lucca, Medieval City of Silk, and the beautiful textiles that it produced.

The Brooklyn Museum invited Club members to visit the Museum's collections of nineteenth-century costumes and Peruvian and Coptic textiles on Thursday, April the fifth, with a talk by Mrs. Michelle Murphy, Curator of Costume, on Historic Techniques and their Use in Contemporary Design.

A pleasant procedure was followed at the March meeting on Thursday, May third, when at the kind invitation of the Van Cortlandt Museum Committee of the National Society of Colonial Dames, Club members visited the historic Van Cortlandt house where were shown, besides the beautiful old house itself, fine silver, china and glass used for eating and drinking in the eighteenth century.

Through the courtesy of the Misses Wing the Club was invited to meet at the York Club, 4 East 62nd Street, on Thursday, November fifteenth, at three o'clock, to hear Miss Hannah E. McAllister, Assistant Curator of the Department of Near Eastern Art of the Metropolitan

Museum of Art, who spoke on her recent travels in the Near East and the variety of ancient textiles that she saw.

On December the tenth members were invited to the Metropolitan Museum of Art to see the fine laces bequeathed to the Museum by the late Mrs. Edward S. Harkness. The exhibition, which contained many fine pieces, was shown by Miss Edith A. Standen, Associate Curator in charge of the Textile Room, who gave an informal talk on the history and merits of various of the outstanding examples.

It is with sorrow that we record the death, on April 14th, 1951, of Miss Gertrude Whiting, who, with Miss Frances Morris, was the founder of the Needle and Bobbin Club, and its President for the first five years of its existence.

From her youth, Miss Whiting was interested in all forms of needlework and especially the art of lace-making. Her constant effort was to use her knowledge for the benefit of others, whether in furthering welfare work along the lines of her interests, or, as in the Needle and Bobbin Club, fostering the study and appreciation of these arts from a cultural viewpoint. Miss Whiting was made a Fellow for Life of the Metropolitan Museum of Art after presenting it with a remarkable sampler of her own making of a hundred and forty-five different patterns of bobbin lace together with its many types of net grounds and filling stitches. She was the author of "A Lace Guide for Makers and Collectors" and "Tools and Toys of Stitchery" as well as of many articles in this Bulletin.

In a journey to India in 1928 she visited industrial schools in that country and as a result formed an organization known as The Whiting India Guilds, Inc. which enabled the young women of these schools to sell their product in this country by helping them to adapt their native arts to forms that would be marketable here, and for which she found outlets. In 1940 she was made a Fellow of the British Royal Society of Arts for her service in this work which she continued to carry on until her death.

THE NEEDLE AND BOBBIN CLUB

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