

## How South Asian Textiles Document Global Exchange

**Image no: 1**

**Caption:** *Textile Fragment*, 13th–14th century, Cotton, plain weave; block-printed and/or painted, mordant dyed, 21.6 x 14.3 cm, 30.112.24, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, V. Everit Macy Gift, 1930.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/448518>

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**Image no: 2**

**Caption:** *Textile with Blue and White Pattern*, 13th–14th century, Cotton, plain weave; block-printed, resist dyed, 16.8 x 25.4 cm, 30.112.41, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, V. Everit Macy Gift, 1930.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/448535>

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**Image no: 3**

**Caption:** *Textile Fragment*, 13th–14th century, Cotton, plain weave; block-printed, mordant dyed, 29.8 x 24.8 cm, 30.112.32, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, V. Everit Macy Gift, 1930.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/448526>

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**Image no: 4**

**Caption:** *Textile Fragment*, 15th–16th century, Cotton, plain weave; painted and/or printed, mordant and resist dyed, 9.5 x 20.3 cm, 30.112.27, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, V. Everit Macy Gift, 1930.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/448521>

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**Image no: 5**

**Caption:** *Palampore*, c. 1725 - c. 1750, Chintz, 329 x 243 cm, BK-1971-118, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Purchase 1971.

**Link:** <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.350630>

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**Image no: 6**

**Caption:** Detail, *Kalamkari Hanging Depicting Wedding of Krishna and Rukmini*, late 19th century – early 20th century, Cotton, natural dyes, 215 x 458 cm, TXT.00036, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no: 7**

**Caption:** Detail, *Kalamkari Rumal*, c. 1640–50, Cotton; plain weave, mordant painted and dyed, resist dyed, 81.3 x 88.9 cm, 28.159.3, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Rogers Fund, 1928.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/448214>

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**Image no: 8**

**Caption:** *Kalamkari Hanging with Figures in an Architectural Setting*, c. 1640–50, Cotton; plain weave, mordant-painted and dyed, resist-dyed, 254 x 198.1 cm, 20.79, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of Mrs. Albert Blum, 1920.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/447118>

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**Image no: 9**

**Caption:** Detail, *Petticoat panel*, third quarter 18th century, Cotton, painted resist and mordant,

dyed, 85.4 x 171.5 cm, 1992.82, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, Friends of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts Gifts, 1992.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/229993>

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**Image no:** 10

**Caption:** Detail, *Kashmir Shawl*, 20th century, Wool, cotton, 194 cm x 89.5 cm, TXT.01037, Museum of Art & Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no:** 11

**Caption:** Detail, *Palampore*, first quarter of the 18th century, Cotton (painted resist and mordant, dyed), 113.2 x 182.9 cm, 2010.337, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, Fernando Family Trust Gift, in honor of Dr. Quintus and Mrs. Wimala Fernando, 2010.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/75909>

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**Image no:** 12

**Caption:** Detail, *Imitation Kalamkari Hanging*, 20th century, Cotton, natural dyes, 95 x 68 cm, TXT.00785, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no:** 13

**Caption:** *Ceremonial cloth and sacred heirloom [mawa or ma'a]*, 18th century, Textile, handspun cotton, natural dyes, mordants, 105.9 x 487 cm, 155655, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.

**Link:**

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Traded\\_to\\_Toraja\\_people,\\_Sulawesi,\\_Indonesia\\_-\\_Ceremo](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Traded_to_Toraja_people,_Sulawesi,_Indonesia_-_Ceremo)

[nial\\_cloth\\_and\\_sacred\\_heirloom\\_\(mawa\\_or\\_ma%27a\) - Google Art Project \(717267\).jpg](#)

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**Image no: 14**

**Caption:** Detail, *Fragment of Mawa' or Ma'a (Sacred Heirloom Textile)*, late 14th or 15th century, Cotton, plain weave; block printed resist and mordant dyed, 121.9 x 94.5 cm, 2011.271, Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois. Belle M. Borland Estate; Marie Walters Endowment Fund; The Christa C. Mayer Thurman Textile Endowment.

**Link:** <https://www.artic.edu/artworks/212379/fragment-of-mawa-or-ma-a-sacred-heirloom-textile>

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**Image no: 15**

**Caption:** Detail, *Ceremonial Cloth and Heirloom Textile with Row of Female Musicians*, 17th century, Mordant and wax resist (batik) block printing and painting on plain-weave cotton, 103.51 x 302.9 cm, M.2005.10, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California. Costume Council Fund.

**Link:**

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ceremonial\\_Cloth\\_and\\_Heirloom\\_Textile\\_with\\_Row\\_of\\_Female\\_Musicians\\_LACMA\\_M.2005.10\\_\(1\\_of\\_3\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ceremonial_Cloth_and_Heirloom_Textile_with_Row_of_Female_Musicians_LACMA_M.2005.10_(1_of_3).jpg)

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**Image no: 16**

**Caption:** *Celestial Performers: Folios from a Kalpasutra Manuscript*, c. 1490, Ink and opaque watercolor on paper, 11.4 x 29.2 cm, 1977.41, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, Margery and Harry Kahn Gift, 1977.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/37836>

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**Image no: 17**

**Caption:** Detail, *Embroidered Kashmir Shawl*, 20th century, Pashmina wool, silk, 296 x 128 cm, TXT.02085, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no:** 18

**Caption:** Detail, *Shikargarh Brocade*, 20th century, Silk, gilt metal yarn, 242 x 143 cm, TXT.00156, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no:** 19

**Caption:** Detail, *Mughal Flower Carpet*, early 20th century, Cotton, wool, 416 x 319 cm, TXT.00677, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no:** 20

**Caption:** Detail, *No 2 Paisley Pocket Square Silk*, 2017, Wikimedia Commons.

**Link:** [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:No2\\_paisley\\_pocketsquare\\_silk\\_detail\\_back.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:No2_paisley_pocketsquare_silk_detail_back.jpg)

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**Image no:** 21

**Caption:** Shaun Wong, Detail, *Pretty Green Paisley Shirt*, 2015, Flickr. [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/)

**Link:** <https://flic.kr/p/rAkjrD>

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**Image no:** 22

**Caption:** Detail, *Persian Silk Brocade*, 20th Century, Silk Brocade with Golden Thread, Wikimedia Commons.

**Link:**

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Persian\\_Silk\\_Brocade\\_-\\_Paisley\\_-\\_Persian\\_Paisley\\_-\\_Abdollah\\_Salami\\_-\\_1939.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Persian_Silk_Brocade_-_Paisley_-_Persian_Paisley_-_Abdollah_Salami_-_1939.jpg)

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**Image no:** 23

**Caption:** Detail, *Sheet with overall paisley pattern*, 19th century, Relief print (wood or metal), 25.8 x 21 cm, 40.21.90, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1940.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/823747>

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**Image no:** 24

**Caption:** *Kalamkari Prayer Mat*, late 19th century, Cotton, natural dyes, 59 x 36 cm, TXT.00039, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no:** 25

**Caption:** Detail, *Palempore*, c. 1750 - c. 1775, Cotton chintz, 339.0 x 227.0 cm, BK-1980-801, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Donation from the Twickel Foundation.

**Link:** <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.21264>

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**Image no:** 26

**Caption:** Detail, *Kain Sembagi*, 18th–19th century, Cotton, natural dyes, 242 x 109 cm, TXT.00071, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no: 27**

**Caption:** Detail, *Sarasa with Figures, Birds, and Fantastic Animals*, late 17th–early 18th century, Cotton (painted resist and mordant, dyed), 69.9 x 34.9 cm, 2010.56, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, Friends of Asian Art Gifts, 2010.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/74423>

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**Image no: 28**

**Caption:** Detail, *Kalamkari*, mid 19th century – mid 20th century, cotton, natural dyes, 123 x 81 cm, TXT.00061, Museum of Art & Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no: 29**

**Caption:** Detail, *Dodot Lampong*, c. 1700, Cotton; plain weave; drawn resist, painted mordants, dyed, 321.5 x 228.7 cm, 2000.27, Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio. John L. Severance Fund.

**Link:** <https://www.clevelandart.org/art/2000.27>

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**Image no: 30**

**Caption:** Detail, *Dodot Ceremonial Textile*, late 18th century – 19th century, Cotton, natural dyes, 311 x 223 cm, TXT.00881, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no: 31**

**Caption:** Detail, *Matahari Ceremonial Cloth*, late 18th century – 19th century, Cotton, natural dyes, 275 x 223 cm, TXT.00886, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no:** 32

**Caption:** Detail, *Ceremonial cloth and sacred heirloom [dodot] with floral chintz design*, cotton, block printed, batik and mordant dyes, two stitch-joined panels, 18th century, 264.0 x 109.0 cm, 20083A44, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide.

**Link:**

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ceremonial\\_cloth\\_and\\_sacred\\_heirloom\\_\(dodot\)\\_with\\_floral\\_chintz\\_design\\_-\\_Google\\_Art\\_Project.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ceremonial_cloth_and_sacred_heirloom_(dodot)_with_floral_chintz_design_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)

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**Image no:** 33

**Caption:** Detail, *Dodot Ceremonial Textile*, 18th century – 19th century, Cotton, natural dyes, 321 x 233 cm, TXT.00884, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no:** 34

**Caption:** Detail, *Sarasa Fragment*, 18th century, Cotton, natural dyes, 9.1 x 8.6 cm, TXT.02009, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no:** 35

**Caption:** Detail, *Tea Ceremony Sarasa*, 17th century or 18th century, 28 x 28 cm, Wikimedia Commons.

**Link:** [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tea\\_ceremony\\_sarasa.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tea_ceremony_sarasa.png)

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**Image no: 36**

**Caption:** Detail, *Sarasa with Small Rosettes*, 18th century, Cotton (painted resist and mordant, dyed), 218.8 x 34.9 cm, 2010.57, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, Friends of Asian Art Gifts, 2010.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/74424>

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**Image no: 37**

**Caption:** Detail, *Painted Cotton with Celestial Deva Design in a Trellis Pattern*, late 18th–19th century, Painted and mordant-dyed cotton, 129.5 x 104.1 cm, 2009.177, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, Friends of Asian Art Gifts, 2009.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/75306>

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**Image no: 38**

**Caption:** Detail, *Floor Covering or Hanging (Pha Kiao)*, 18th century, Cotton (painted resist and mordant, dyed), 210.8 x 109.5 cm, 44.71.2, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of Mrs. Huntington Norton, 1944.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/69670>

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**Image no: 39**

**Caption:** Detail, *Chintz (India)*, 18th century, Cotton, 55 x 41 cm, 1973-51-48, Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, New York. Gift of Josephine Howell.

**Link:** <http://cprhw.tt/o/2CHZV/>

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**Image no: 40**

**Caption:** Detail, *Textile (India)*, 1700–1750, Cotton, 99.1 x 61 cm, 1952-113-1, Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, New York.

**Link:** <http://cprhw.tt/o/2CfNk/>

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**Image no:** 41

**Caption:** P. Cos, *Illustration of a tulip (from Verzameling Van Een Meenigte Tulipaanen)*, 1637, Wikimedia Commons.

**Link:** <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tulipomania.jpg>

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**Image no:** 42

**Caption:** *Fragment of Chintz with Hummingbirds*, c. 1750, Cotton, chintz, 68 x 45 cm, BK-KOG-2609-A, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. On loan from the Koninklijk Oudheidkundig Genootschap.

**Link:** <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.307712>

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**Image no:** 43

**Caption:** *Chintz fragment with tulips and insects (reportedly found in Japan)*, c.1700-30, Cotton, 13 x 20 cm, Karun Thakar Collection, Wikimedia Commons.

**Link:** [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chintz\\_fragment\\_with\\_tulips\\_and\\_insects.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chintz_fragment_with_tulips_and_insects.JPG)

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**Image no:** 44

**Caption:** *Kalamkari Palampore*, mid 18th century – mid 19th century, Cotton, natural dyes, 288 x 224 cm, TXT.00068, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no: 45**

**Caption:** *Palampore*, 1700-1740, Cotton plain weave, painted and dyed, 316.23 x 226.06 cm, M.2012.73, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California. Gift of the Costume Council in memory of Mary Hunt Kahlenberg.

**Link:** [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palampore\\_LACMA\\_M.2012.73.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palampore_LACMA_M.2012.73.jpg)

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**Image no: 46**

**Caption:** *Dolls' house of Petronella Dunois*, c. 1676, Wood (plant material), oak (wood), ebony (wood), cardboard, chintz, silk, gilding (material), 200 x 150.5 x 56 cm, BK-14656, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. Donation from Mrs. ASM van Tienhoven-Hacke.

**Link:** <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.250580>

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**Image no: 47**

**Caption:** *Woman's Jacket*, 1810 - 1820 and/or 1750, Cotton, chintz, 57 x 32 cm, BK-BR-609, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. On loan from M.A. Kuiper-Heuvelink, Amsterdam.

**Link:**

<https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/search/objects?q=chintz&p=5&ps=12&st=Objects&ii=3#/BK-BR-609,48>

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**Image no: 48**

**Caption:** *Housecoat*, c. 1760 - c. 1780, Cotton, chintz, 144 cm, BK-NM-5546, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

**Link:** <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.3297>

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**Image no: 49**

**Caption:** *Two Baby's Jackets*, Cotton, silk, chintz, BK-KOG-55, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. On loan from the Royal Archaeological Society.

**Link:** <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.323119>

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**Image no: 50**

**Caption:** *Robe à l'Anglaise*, 1785–95, Cotton, baleen, 2009.300.647, Brooklyn Museum Costume Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of the Brooklyn Museum, 2009; A. Augustus Healy Fund, 1934.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/159201>

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**Image no: 51**

**Caption:** Detail, *Kalamkari Prayer Mat*, 20th century, Cotton, natural dyes, 110 x 88 cm, TXT.00040, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no: 52**

**Caption:** Detail, *Chintz bedspread with white ground with large serpentine trunk with medium-sized flowers*, 1700 - 1800, Cotton, chintz, 260 × 210 cm, BK-1968-78, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

**Link:** <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.346123>

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**Image no: 53**

**Caption:** Detail, *Painted Cotton with Celestial Deva Design in a Trellis Pattern, late 18th–19th century*, *Painted and mordant-dyed cotton*, 129.5 x 104.1 cm, 2009.177, The Metropolitan Museum of

Art, New York. Purchase, Friends of Asian Art Gifts, 2009.

**Link:** <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/75306>

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**Image no:** 54

**Caption:** Detail, *Sacred Heirloom Textile (mawa or ma'a)*, 1301–1500, Cotton, plain weave; block printed resist and mordant dyed, 488.95 × 95.57 cm, 2008.667, Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois. Purchased with funds provided by the Alsdorf Foundation; James and Marilyn Alsdorf Acquisition Fund.

**Link:** <https://www.artic.edu/artworks/194713/sacred-heirloom-textile-mawa-or-ma-a>

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**Image no:** 55

**Caption:** Detail, *Tea Ceremony Sarasa*, 17th century or 18th century, 28 x 28 cm, Wikimedia Commons.

**Link:** [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tea\\_ceremony\\_sarasa.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tea_ceremony_sarasa.png)

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**Image no:** 56

**Caption:** Detail, *Dodot Ceremonial Textile*, 18th-19th century, Cotton, natural dyes, 321 x 233 cm, TXT.00884, Museum of Art and Photography, Bengaluru.

**Link:** N/A

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**Image no:** 57

**Caption:** *Room with five dressing gowns in a display case on the left, Sits from India*, c. 1 Jan - 19 Feb 1995, photograph, HA-0011640, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

**Link:** <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.HARCHIEF.11640>

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**Image no:** 58

**Caption:** *Room with a palempore on the left and a showcase on the right, Sits from India, c. 1 Jan - 19 Feb 1995, photograph, HA-0011638, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.*

**Link:** <http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.HARCHIEF.11638>

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**Image no:** 59

**Caption:** *Ceremonial furnishing cloth [pha lai yang], 18th century, Handspun cotton, natural dyes and mordants, 93.3 x 292.5 cm, 111705, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.*

**Link:** [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Traded to Thailand - Ceremonial furnishing cloth \(pha lai yang\) - Google Art Project.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Traded_to_Thailand_-_Ceremonial_furnishing_cloth_(pha_lai_yang)_-Google_Art_Project.jpg)

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These fragments recovered from Fustat in Egypt date back to the 14th century, and are among the oldest physical remnants of textiles that have been attributed to India. The motifs and patterns we see on these fabrics reflect the age-old block-printing and dyeing traditions practiced in the subcontinent.

Most ancient fabrics in India have decayed with time due to the country's harsh climate. Fragments like these that have survived in other parts of the world, fill important gaps in our knowledge, shedding further light on the subcontinent's historic trade, and the longevity of its textile traditions.

Through the course of time, India's painted and printed textiles have permeated cultures globally, from remote islands in Southeast Asia to European homes. Featuring vivid imagery, these have documented historical interactions and cross-cultural exchange, spread designs to the world and reflected the expertise of the region's artisans.

### **Narratives of Exchange**

Traditionally, painted textiles made using the Kalamkari technique, served religious functions and featured imagery inspired by epics such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Around the 17th century, the same artisans who made these, also began to create pieces that explicitly portrayed the various cultural interactions of the time.

We can see this illustrated in this elaborate wall hanging that features a cast of characters, each dressed in costumes that reflect diverse regional backgrounds. If you look closely, the women in the lower panel appear to be dressed in saris, whereas, the male figures to their left, are portrayed in European clothing.

A few other surviving pieces also feature such interactions between people of different cultures, as we can see here. These depictions enable the textiles to function as historical documents of exchange.

### **Carriers of Culture**

Over the centuries, Indian trade textiles have been instrumental in disseminating visual culture to foreign shores through the designs and motifs they featured. We see this, for instance, in the context of fabrics exported to the Toraja community in the remote Sulawesi islands in Eastern Indonesia. Some of these took on ceremonial functions and came to be known as Maa' cloths in these islands. They often shared visual similarities with religious or mythological imagery popular in India. As we can see here, the procession of celestial female dancers resembles the sensual figures depicted on the margins of Jain manuscripts made in Gujarat. One can only wonder if these textiles also carried along the stories and symbolism associated with their imagery as they travelled the world.

Pashmina shawls, brocades, carpets and other fabrics exported from India also played a significant role in popularising motifs. Many of these designs have become commonplace, inspiring regional variations globally to this day.

### **Catalysts of Innovation**

The historic interactions that took designs from the subcontinent to the world also brought inspiration from other cultures. Indian textiles were greatly influenced by imagery from neighbouring Central, Western and East Asian regions. These contributed towards the ever-expanding lexicon of block-printed and painted designs.

Through these exchanges, artisans in the country also became attuned to the distinct tastes of individuals and communities in various parts of the world. They used this knowledge to develop customised designs for markets ranging all the way from Armenia to Thailand to Western Europe. This resulted in a diverse range of textiles that displayed unique characteristics, and even acquired local names in the regions they were exported to. Let's look at a few examples:

### **Javanese & Sumatran Islands**

Some of the textiles made for the Javanese and Sumatran islands in western Indonesia were painted in rich shades of red, featuring solid diamond or circular

shapes surrounded by dense patterning. They were typically used as ceremonial hip wrappers by members of the royal court.

### **Japan**

In Japan, painted and printed fabrics from India were widely known as Sarasa. These were often stitched into pouches for utensils used in traditional tea ceremonies. They often featured discs and rosettes inspired by Japanese Buddhist iconography, such as the lotus or the wheel.

### **Thailand**

Textiles made for the Thai market were mostly used by nobles and royals. They typically featured figural depictions of Hindu deities and other divine beings, set within a trellis or a grid. If you look closely at this hanging, for instance, the repeating figure of the Hindu god Brahma, is framed by celestial nymphs and rosettes.

### **Europe**

Textiles made prominently for the English, Dutch and French markets featured sprawling floral designs painted on white backgrounds. These stylised patterns were rendered with delicate white outlines and rich details in many colours. Some of them interpreted European botanical illustrations, floral embroidery and patterned silks, while others reflected the artisans' own imaginations.

These were widely used in interior decoration, most commonly in the form of Palampores – bedspreads that were often hung as wall decor. In this Dutch dollhouse from the 17th century, the room completely covered in the red patterned fabric gives us a sense of how these textiles were used in wealthy homes.

They were also popularly stitched into European or Anglo-American attire such as coats, gowns and petticoats, which were worn by people of all classes.

It's fascinating to see how the same materials, techniques and colours were used to produce fabrics that were so different from each other, and from the ones made for domestic markets. The diversity we see even through this small selection of trade textiles, illustrates the creative range of India's artisans.

Shaped by cultural exchange across time, India's textiles are embedded in a global history. A majority of these can be found in museums and private collections around the world, where they continue to reveal new connections and insights about the past. Their enduring presence outside the country's borders pushes us to reimagine the meaning of geographic and cultural boundaries, expanding the definition of Indian textiles.

### **Bibliography**

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