Textiles, Carpets and Costumes

By Michael Franses

Key Features:

· A catalogue of the 300 textiles, carpets and costumes showing the splendour and diversity of textiles art from the Islamic lands

The Collection includes more than 250 textiles, embroideries, carpets and costumes from across the Islamic lands dating from the 6th to the 19th centuries.

This volume is in two parts, the first covering early Central Asia, Iran and Egypt, the Ottoman Empire and North Africa; the second covering later Iran and Central Asia, as well as India.

The earliest textiles, of c. 6th-century date, show Sasanian influence, while a group of Abbasid and Fatimid tiraz bands represent the emergence of an alternative tradition. More outstanding artistically are the Safavid and Ottoman gold brocades and velvets, and individual pieces such as a section of a silk and silver chasuble from Ottoman Bursa. A beautiful group of woven silks from Sultanate and Mughal India is of particular importance.

The 'classical' carpets include examples from Mamluk, Safavid, Ottoman and Mughal royal workshops. Notable among the Ottoman carpets is a spectacular star Ushak. The Iranian carpets include a 16th-century Kashan medallion type in near perfect condition.

The Collection is particularly rich in costumes, not often represented in other collections. These range from Ottoman shirts painted with talismanic inscriptions to the famous Kashmir shawls to some spectacular ikat coats and embroidered mantles from 19th-century Central Asia.
The Dyer's Handbook
Memoirs of an 18th Century Master Colourist
By Dominique Cardon

Key Features:
· A unique document, an incredibly rare survival
· Of interest to historians, students of the history of fashion and design, and modern designers
· Contains information allowing the reproduction of colours authentic to the 18th century

Persian blue, pomegranate flower, spiny lobster, wine soup, pale flesh, dove breast, golden wax, grass green, green sand, rotten olive, modest plum, agate, rich French gray, gunpowder of the English...these are just some of the colour names of old fabric to fire the imagination. The Dyer's Handbook concerns a unique manuscript from the eighteenth century; a dyers memoirs from Languedoc, containing recipes for dyes with corresponding colour samples. It is an exceptional document, hugely rare and of great significance not only to textile historians but dyers and colourists today, as thanks to the information in the manuscript the colours can be reproduced exactly, with the same ingredients, or reproduced using modern techniques by matching the colour samples.

To the English translation of the text, together with facsimile pages reproduced in colour from the original manuscript, are added essays meant to situate it in its historical, economic and technological contexts. For those historians who have long been fascinated by the change in scale and the amount of innovation that occurred in woollen cloth production in Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries, The Dyer's Handbook brings first-hand insight into the daily preoccupations and tasks of a key actor in the success story of the Languedocian broadcloth production specially devised for export to the Levant. Even non-specialists may be interested in understanding the clever management and technical organisation that made it possible for the author to produce, dye, finish, pack and export up to 1,375 pieces of superfine broadcloth per year, representing nearly 51 km of cloth.
Iconic Costumes
Scandinavian Late Iron Age Costume Iconography
By Ulla Mannering

Key Features:
· Develops our knowledge of clothing traditions in Europe
Over 160 images, most in colour

· Useful as a sourcebook for those interested in textiles, costume and the history of design

This richly illustrated book presents a selection of the rich and varied iconographic material from the Scandinavian Late Iron Age (AD 400-1050) depicting clothed human figures, from an archaeological textile and clothing perspective. The source material consists of five object categories: gold foils, gold bracteates, helmet plaques, jewellery, and textile tapestries and comprises over 1000 different images of male and female costumes which are then systematically examined in conjunction with our present knowledge of archaeological textiles.

In particular, the study explores the question of whether the selected images complement the archaeological clothing sources, through a new analytical tool which enables us to compare and contrast the object categories in regard to material, function, chronology, context and interpretation. The tool is used to record and analyze the numerous details of the iconographic costumes, and to facilitate a clear and easy description. This deliberate use of explicit costume shapes enhances our interpretation and understanding of the Late Iron Age clothing tradition.

Thus, the majority of the costumes depicted are identified in the Scandinavian archaeological textile record, demonstrating that the depictions are a reliable source of research for both iconographical costume and archaeological clothing. The book contributes with new information on social, regional and chronological differences in clothing traditions from ca. AD 400 to the Viking Age.
Textile Production in Classical Athens

By Stella Spantidaki

Key Features:
· Presents a detailed consideration of the historical and social context of textile production in classical Athens

· Examines and discusses evidence for the equipment, materials, processes and techniques employed at each stage of the full production sequence

· Discusses the organisation of production and trade

Textile technology is older than any other ancient craft and is an instance of cognitive archaeology that provides vital information about society. In ancient Greece, textiles were considered among the principal and most fundamental cultural expressions. Athena, the goddess of the city, of intelligence and of skill was also the patron goddess of weaving. She taught the craft of textile production to women thus making them conduits of civilisation. During Classical times, textile production was a fundamental part of the economy and was practised also by men in both the domestic and artisanal spheres. The resulting technological sophistication is reflected in depictions of discrete or elaborate patterns, in the rich diversity of textile implements and in the variety in the quality of the extant textiles. In Textile Production in Classical Athens Stella Spantidaki provides the first synthesis of the available evidence from textual, iconographic and archaeological sources on textile production in 5th and 4th century BC Athens, employing an interdisciplinary perspective that sets the frame for future research in the field. As such this study is of special importance for textile specialists, ancient history scholars, historians of technology and students and will lead to a better understanding of ancient Greek textile production and Classical Athenian society.

Presents a detailed consideration of the historical and social context of textile production in classical Athens; Examines and discusses evidence for the equipment, materials, processes and techniques employed at each stage of the full production sequence; Discusses the organisation of production and trade.

About the Author:
Stella Spantidaki is an honory Research Fellow at University College London where she is currently working on a collaborative project researching textile production in Iron Age Greece as part of a major research programme exploring the role of textile production and consumption in the formation of early states, using the example of Mediterranean Europe.