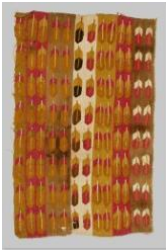


LIGHT BEHIND UNFINISHED TRACES
captions and comments of the works that inspired
MARIANA CASTILLO DEBALL



Tunic fragment

Peru

Inca culture

1400-1532

camelid fiber [weft], cotton [warp], tapestry

60 x 38 cm

Milano, MuDEC – Museum of Cultures, inv. PAM 154

The fabric fragment depicts a series of feathers that were often applied in highly prestigious ceremonial textiles, intended for Inca or provincial elites.



Fragment of fabric

Peru, South Coast

Paracas culture, Ocucaje style

410-200 B.C.

cotton, plain weave, direct painting

126 x 81 cm

Milano, MuDEC – Museum of Cultures, inv. PAM 1217

Ceremonial mantle with hand and dot decorations made with a purplish dye of animal derivation, probably the secretion of the shellfish *Concholepas concholepas* (Peruvian tolin).



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Fragments of a tunic

Peru, South Coast

Huari-Tiahuanaco Culture

600-1000 A.D.

camelid fiber [weft], cotton [warp], interlocked tapestry

60,5x53,2 cm e 61,1x52,8 cm

Milano, Mudec – Museum of Cultures, invv. PAM 1218a, PAM 1218b

The two fragments of the same tunic, woven for members of the male elites, are divided into two vertical decorative registers and show winged figures with zoomorphic staffs, resembling those flanking the “God of the Staffs” in the Sun Gate of Tiahuanaco, Bolivia.

In the right fragment (with reference to the viewer) the figures appear, from top to the bottom, in the same order as in the Sun Gate: anthropomorphic-headed figures, ornithomorphic-headed figure (condor), anthropomorphic-headed figure. Unlike on the monument, here the anthropomorphic heads seem to assume rather pardianthropic (or llama) characters and the ornithomorphic heads look to the right. In the registers of the left fragment, both the series and the direction of the characters are reversed.

This fabric represents an excellent example of how the stylistic features of Huari-Tiahuanaco art rest on prevalent iconographic motifs through processes of stylization, geometrization and distortion of striking modernity.



Female manta

Peru, Cusco, Pitumarca area

Quechua Population

19th century

alpaca fiber, complementary wefts and warps

85 x 98 cm

Milano, Mudec – Museum of Cultures, inv. PAM 1441

The female manta was placed over the shoulders and usually fastened with a pin. This one is composed of two pieces joined lengthwise. The background warp alternates light brown to dark brown and the decoration is made of five strips of stylized patterns per piece. There are decorative motifs in natural hues that reproduce the potato flower (papa tika), the stylized shape of the river with a zigzag course (mayu q'enqo), and other geometric motifs typical of the decorative tradition of the Cusco Sierra.



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Fabric fragment

Peru, South Coast

Paracas culture, Ocucaje style

400-200 B.C.

camelid fiber, plain weave, tie-dye

94 x 75 cm

Milano, Mudec – Museum of Cultures, inv. PAM 1223

Fragment of fabric composed of two pieces of dark brown wool, joined in the direction of the longest side, knotted to obtain a diamond decoration and finally dyed, making the decorative pattern evident, in the colours red, beige, orange. The diamond decoration, typical of the Paracas-Ocucaje style, extends across the entire width of the fabric, overcoming the technical difficulty, inherent in Andean weaving and particular in the use of the belt loom, of obtaining pieces of fabric greater than a certain width. The fabric is finished at the upper and lower ends with polychrome bangs of twisted threads sewn to the end of the fabric.



Mantle (?) fragment

Peru, South Coast

Nasca-Huari Culture

600-700 A.D.

camelid fiber, plain weave, discontinuous warp and weft pieces reassembled, tie-dye

103 x 155 cm

Milano, Mudec – Museum of Cultures, inv. PAM 1213

Compositions of the size and quality found in this fragment of a mantle are quite rare. Around the 7th century AD, the influence of the important Huari group became one of the most characteristic features of the artistic manifestations of a large area of the southern coastal of Peru, especially in the Nasca area. Local textile production gives rise to a hybrid style. Tie-dye decoration mixes two different techniques to achieve two different decorative patterns, circles and diagonals, which alternate in the composition creating an extraordinary rhythm of shapes and colours.



Fragment of a female skirt

Peru, South Coast

Cultura Nasca

100 B.C. - 100 A.D.

cotton, plain weave, direct painting

50 x 44 cm

Milano, Mudec – Museum of Cultures, inv. PAM 1211

This fragment of a female skirt is decorated with human figures and is an important evidence of agricultural practices in the Nasca culture. Dated between 100 B.C. and 100 A.D., it illustrates peasants with the typical white conical headdress holding some edible plants, among which it is possible to recognize chilies, lucume, jiquimas. Alternating with the peasants in the rows are figures wearing the mask of the supreme deity nasca, probably priests who supervised the harvest. This may be a depiction of an agricultural ritual in which the peasants brought as offerings the fruits of the fields.

The fabric, with the characters (based on a unique model but depicted with small variations) arranged in dense horizontal lines, is painted in the particular Nasca interpretation of *horror vacui*, a style peculiar to painted canvases of the ancient culture. Two large fragments of the same skirt are preserved at the Textile Museum in Washington and the Metropolitan Museum in New York.



Tunic fragment

Peru, South Coast

Ica Chíncha Culture

900-1470

camelid fiber [weft], cotton [warp], tapestry

37 x 110 cm e 25 x 54 cm

Milano, Mudec – Museum of Cultures, invv. PAM 1338, PAM 1280

This tunic fragments are decorated with lively bird and ray motifs in rectilinear and zoned styles. Fabrics were of such importance in the Ica Chíncha culture that the same decorative figures and geometric patterning were also repeated in ceramics.



Fabric fragment

Peru, South Coast

Nasca-Huari Culture

100-700 A.D.

camelid fiber, discontinuous wefts and warps

44 x 32 cm

Milano, MuDEC – Museum of Cultures, inv. PAM 1308

This fragment, probably part of a male shirt, is made in discontinuous wefts and warps, a very complex technique that allows for completely double-faced fabrics.

The particular type of technique, which is especially attested at the end of the Nasca tradition and during the Huari rule in the southern coast area, allows the manufacture of extremely light and visually striking textiles: in this case the pattern present is a typical two-tone scaled pattern.

Most of the pre-Hispanic textiles come from the southern coast of Peru – and not from the humid mountain/Andean region- as its extreme aridity it's ideal for the conservation of organic materials. Many Peruvian textiles from this area still conserve vivid colours.



Fabric

Japan

post 1876 [Meiji era]

textured fabric with additional silk wefts

150 x 136 cm

Milano, MuDEC – Museum of Cultures, inv. GIAP 660

This Japanese fabric features a series of four vertical bands sewn together and mounted on a wooden panel. The brown background is decorated with an ochre-coloured three-stripe motif (*yose jima*) on which rests a series of stylized chrysanthemums in polychrome lozenges (green, white, yellow, blue), arranged in horizontal, parallel but diagonally staggered rows.

The chrysanthemum (*kiku*) is a very important flower in the Japanese imagination: it is traditionally a symbol of longevity and is associated with autumn. Since the 12th century the chrysanthemum has also been the emblem of the Japanese imperial family, and for this reason it is recognized as a national flower.



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Cloth fragment

France, Lyon

1700-1705

Damask brocade

64,5 cm x 36,5 cm

Como, Fondazione Antonio Ratti, n cat. AS 135

Damask weave with metal brocades, gold or silver decoration on a background in brilliant tones of a single colour, and, above all, decorative elements so stylized or modified as to be illegible, are typical features of the operated silks created in Lyon, Venice, and, in smaller quantities in Spitalfields, in the years 1700-1715.

Referred to by the term *bizarre* by Thornton, these silks were the result of the demand for novelty triggered during the 17th century by the various East India Companies importing products from the Far and Middle East and resulting in an obsession with the exotic. Exotic which, insofar as it is distant and unknown, must also be incomprehensible and which results in designs that represent the copying of decorative elements (from lacquerware, porcelain, textiles) that were already highly abstracted from a reality that was often totally unknown in the West (for example, the carp fish).



"Messa in carta"

Como, Studio Gualdo Porro

1935-1939

Mass in paper and fabric for ties

10,5 cm X 16 cm

Como, Fondazione Antonio Ratti, cat. MC 4 64392

The pattern for weaving, known in the jargon as "messa in carta" (literally "put on paper") constitutes the embryonic stage of the birth of a fabric: the graphic representation on squared paper of the weaves and design effects of a worked fabric, where each square represents the binding points of the warp threads with those of the weft. Through this fascinating design the final pattern of the fabric will come to life.

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