

# The Agency of Textiles as Cultural Intermediaries in the Intercultural Exchange System of the Fourteenth Century, with Emphasis on Iranian and Italian Fabrics.<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

The change in global exchanges after the Mongol conquests and the intensification of political, economic, and cultural relations transformed textiles into global artifacts and a factor in cultural dynamics in this regard, textiles, as Visual Activist, are considered a material platform for intercultural exchanges. The present study analyses the position of textiles in the system of intercultural exchanges in the fourteenth century, using a historical approach and from this perspective, it examines textiles as cultural mediators in the configuration of international relations.

The aim of this research is to examine the position of textiles in global exchanges of textile designs and motifs, with an emphasis on Iranian and Italian fabrics in the 14th century, in order to answer the questions of what designs and motifs were shared between Iran and Italy through textile exchange during the period under study? what impact have these exchanges had on textile design styles internationally?

The studied samples were selected based on visual and structural similarities, including the use of common motifs, patterns, and designs from Iranian and Italian textiles in the 14th centuries. The sampling was non-random and purposeful, and the samples were selected from textiles preserved in prestigious textile museums and collections around the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Cleveland Museum of Art in Cleveland, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and the Cooper Hewitt Collection of the Smithsonian Design Museum in New York.

The results of the study show that global textile exchanges during the studied period provided the basis for intercultural exchanges of motifs and the creation of a common transcultural set of motifs and designs across a wide geographical area from Central Asia to Italy. Intercultural exchanges of visual vocabulary led to the formation of a global visual taste, a common visual language, the emergence of international styles, and ultimately the production of cosmopolitan textiles. This international style, which was a combination of Islamic, Chinese, and Italian decorative elements, includes a variety of designs. The most important motifs exchanged and shared in global textiles within the framework of this international style included animal and zoomorphic motifs such as phoenixes and birds similar to pheasants, strange and fantastic composite animals, and plant motifs including lotus flowers, grape leaves, and the twisting stems of plants such as vines. One of the important features of this style is the dynamic and vibrant combination of animal and plant motifs, which is considered one of the unique characteristics of the international style of the 14th century.

**Keywords:** cosmopolitan textiles; cultural intermediaries; intercultural exchanges; international style.

## 1. Introduction.

The potential for movement and mobility of portable arts, including textiles, allows these artifacts to be transported from their original context, beyond geographical and cultural boundaries, and to pave the way for intercultural encounters and interactions. Hoffman, quoting Igor Kopytoff, states that "Portability and circulation highlight the active" lives of objects" their openness and permeability; how

objects referred to and merged with their makers and users, the people and cultures that exchanged them, and the relationships that they define".<sup>1</sup>

Artifacts in general, and patterned textiles in particular, contain implicit evidence that acts as a factor in the connecting and strengthening of intercultural networks during intercultural exchanges. The importance of textiles in international exchanges during the period under study (the 14th century) draws

<sup>1</sup> This article is an excerpt from the first author's doctoral dissertation titled: The Position of Islamic Textiles in Intercultural Exchanges of motifs with Emphasis on Iranian and Italian Fabrics in the 14th to 17th Centuries.

our attention to their transitive and metamaterial interrelationships as vectors of intercultural connection, transmission, and exchange.

The present study intends to examine the position of textiles in intercultural exchanges based on the configuration of international relations in the fourteenth century. This study focuses on the function of textiles in intercultural exchanges by examining how textiles were exchanged in the context of military, political, diasporic, and commercial relations. And from this perspective, it attempts to answer the questions: What impact have these exchanges had on textile design styles at the international level? What designs and motifs were exchanged between Iran and Italy through textiles during the period under study?

## 2. Methodology

The present study is a qualitative study with a historical approach that analyses the position of textiles in the intercultural exchange system of the fourteenth century. The sampling method for research samples is non-random and purposeful. The studied samples were selected based on similarities in visual structure, including the use of common motifs, similar patterns and designs, and technical commonalities, including weaving techniques and Fiber materials (Figure 1). In order to ensure the authenticity of the research samples, they were selected from textiles preserved in the most prestigious museums and textile collections in the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Cleveland Museum of Art in Ohio, the

Victoria and Albert Museum in London, and the Cooper Hewitt Collection of the Smithsonian Design Museum in New York.

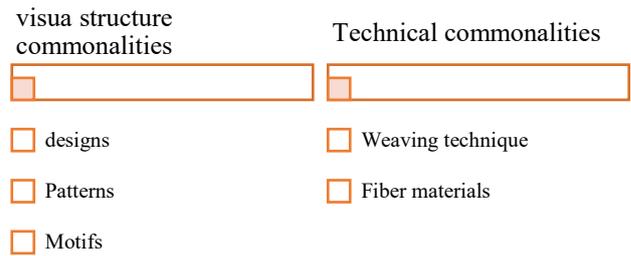


Figure 1. Criteria for selecting research samples.

In order to answer the research questions, in the first step, focusing on historical studies, the position of textiles in the international exchange system in the fourteenth century will be analysed. Then, by analysing the research samples technically and visually, a comparative study of the visual structure of the research samples, including designs, patterns, and motifs, is carried out. In order to more accurately analyse the study samples, a linear analysis of the repeating pattern unit in each fabric design is presented.<sup>ii</sup> Figure 2 shows the stages of conducting the research.

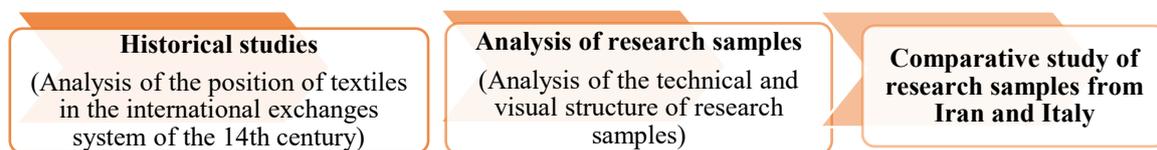


Figure 2. Research steps.

## 3. Theoretical/conceptual framework.

### 3-1. Culture, communication and intercultural exchanges.

‘Culture is a by-product of human interaction in society, and this relationship is very complex. Hall (1959) equates culture with communication: “Culture is communication and communication is culture”. Culture is a natural by-product of human interaction in society and the relationship is very intricate. Cultures are shaped through communication; also, by interactions made through cultural characteristics like roles, norms, rituals, laws are created and shared with others’.<sup>iii</sup> ‘Placing communication at the centre of culture’s definition, Habermas examines symbolic activities as well as the relation between these activities and their symbolic environment. According to Habermas, with communication arises the transfer and renewal of cultural information, the emergence of social integration and grouping, personal identities and identifications. Culture and communication are

concepts with deep relations between each other. For this reason, they affect each other’.<sup>iv</sup> According to Umberto Eco’s principles, ‘all cultural processes are communication processes, crossed by a multitude of subcodes, decodable through extra- and inter-semiotic conditions and occasions’.<sup>v</sup>

Intercultural exchanges occur as a result of intercultural communication. This is a two-way process. Cultural exchange has always been an essential part of the development of societies. According to Blommaert (1998) ‘culture is rarely unified, and new contexts generate new cultures and new forms of intercultural communication’.<sup>vi</sup> ‘Without media and communication, it is not possible to pass the characteristics of culture from one place to another. In other words, culture is shaped through communication; communication is created and transmitted by the culture’.<sup>vii</sup>

### 3-2. patterned textiles as cultural intermediaries (in the position of cultural object and cultural medium).

In general, culture is divided into two areas: non-material culture and material culture. Intangible culture is the intangible and subjective part of culture that cannot be measured by quantitative standards. Some aspects of non-material culture, including customs, beliefs, and traditions, are intellectual works and are primarily subjective and qualitative in nature.

Material culture refers to the set of tangible and tangible phenomena that can be calculated and examined using quantitative and scientific criteria and include visible objects that are made by different cultural groups and have the ability to be transferred to other cultural groups.

‘The study of material culture is primarily the study of objects in order to gain a better understanding of people and their environment, past and present, through artifacts’.<sup>viii</sup> To be more precise, ‘The study of material culture is the study of how objects are produced, used, distributed, researched, interpreted, displayed, reconstructed, collected, and imitated. The material culturalist’s approach requires an understanding of the processes of production and manufacture as well as the artifact’.<sup>ix</sup> In fact, it can be said that ‘The study of material culture involves tracking the status and deployment of material within a broader cultural framework; it determines the biography of a single object and then ascertains how it circulates and becomes associated with other things, too’.<sup>x</sup> ‘Attention to global exchanges and material culture illuminates the influences that flowed from region to region, from people to people’.<sup>xi</sup>

Textiles are an important aspect of material culture. They are primarily considered as cultural objects. Since patterned textiles carry cultural meanings, they are also considered cultural mediators, transmitting visual values from one culture to another. ‘In this regard, a

textile surface can be seen as a screen of knowledge and practice. The imagery depicted on it may have originally communicated a specific meaning but would be flexibly understood in each subsequent social context. This dual nature -material and visual- enables the transcultural circulation of [textiles]. Not only can a piece of [fabric] be studied as a form of visual culture, but it can also act as a kind of telescope through which we can observe cultural interactions, especially between [international] powers. Textiles are a medium for material culture because of their three-dimensional nature, but because of their two-dimensional surface they can also be placed in the realm of visual culture’.<sup>xii</sup> ‘The notion of visual culture also refers to a specific terrain of human cultural production, namely to the universe of visual languages and objects. Within this framework, a given community or population’s visual culture is understood as a system of pictorial and graphic creation, of visual grammars and their forms of communication. It also includes the social, cultural and symbolic relations established under the construction and sharing of visual goods’.<sup>xiii</sup>

Two important characteristics of patterned textiles, namely the fluidity and Portability of visual vocabulary, bring up studying them in an intermediate space, between the two domains of material and metamaterial culture. At the first level, textiles as object must be examined within the realm of material culture, On the other hand, the visual values that these textiles carry with them place them in the position of a medium and highlight their metamaterial characteristics. Therefore, the study of textiles is a combination of material cultural studies, visual analyses, and metamaterial influences (Figure 3). The study of styles, designs, and motifs is important for understanding the real and symbolic functions of textiles.

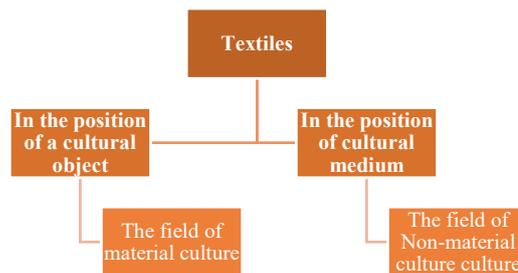


Figure 3. The dual function of patterned textiles in the field of intercultural communication (Source: Author).

#### 4. Discussion

In order to explain the function of textiles in intercultural exchanges, the position of textiles in international relations must first be examined in order to evaluate the intercultural transmission of motifs.

##### 4-1. Platforms for intercultural communication and the position of textiles in the international exchange system.

Various military, diasporic, political, and commercial contexts can be considered as the most important platforms for intercultural communication. Textiles in each of these fields have become a very important factor in intercultural exchanges and have had an important place in cultural transmission. In the context of military factors, textiles as booty; In the context diasporic factors, textiles were considered as a factor for forced or non-forced migration of artists and artisans; In the context political factors, textiles were

considered as diplomatic gifts; and in the context commercial factors, textiles were considered as a major

factor for intercultural transfers as an important trade commodity (Table 1).

Table 1. Platforms for intercultural exchanges through textiles (Source: Author).

Fields	How to transfer and move textiles designs and motifs
Military factors	The transfer of designs and motifs by moving textiles as booty from the source culture and adapting or imitating them in the destination culture.
Diasporic factors	Transfer of designs and motifs by immigrant artists and artisans.
Political factors	The transfer of designs and motifs by moving textiles as diplomatic gifts and adapting or imitating them in the destination culture.
Trade factors	The transfer of designs and motifs by moving textiles as trade goods and adapting or imitating them in the destination culture.

4-1-1. Military and diasporic factors: Textiles as booty and a factor in the migration of artists and artisans.

The movement of textiles as booty and the migration of artists and artisans, whether forced, resulting from wars and conquests, or unforced and voluntary, through the creation of new settlements or the movement of nomadic communities, led to the circulation and transfer of techniques, materials and Visual vocabularies. ‘The mobility of skilled workers, whether enforced or spontaneous, was a primary factor in cross-cultural transfers and the diffusion of industrial technologies’.<sup>xiv</sup> In this way ‘weaving technique may have originated in one geographic region and a pattern in a separate one’.<sup>xv</sup>

One of the largest examples of the transfer of artists and craftsmen in history occurred during the Mongol era. ‘As the nomadic Mongol warriors became imperial rulers, they adopted many aspects of the sophisticated textile culture in conquered Islamic lands and [...] spared skilled weavers—both Muslim and Chinese—from the sword, distributed them as booty, and transported them to new workshops scattered across the empire. [...] For example, it is known that Artisans from Herat and China worked together in Mongolia. The cultural mix among the imperial elite and the craftsmen working for them resulted in a rich and

distinctive blend of Islamic and Chinese techniques and patterns’.<sup>xvi</sup> ‘The rich hybrid decorative repertory of ‘Tartar cloths’ was the result of forcible transfers of artists and weavers across Asia from one cultural zone of the Mongolian empire to another’.<sup>xvii</sup>

4-1-2. Political factors: Textiles as diplomatic gifts.

The exchange and transfer of exquisite objects as diplomatic gifts has been common throughout history. Gift-giving and offering have always been an essential part of human political and social life in various societies. In his book "A Treatise on Gifts" (1925), French sociologist Marcel Mauss distinguishes two types of exchange systems in the world: One is a system of exchange based on the rules of trade, or in other words, supply and demand, and the other is a system based on gifts (Figure 4). He believes that gift-giving lacks any formal or legal logic and is a custom based on the circulation of gifts to distribute political and social power. According to Mauss, a gift involves three tasks: giving, receiving, and compensating. Giving is a voluntary act that is not the same as economic exchange, and a gift is a tool that serves to maintain and respect social relations.<sup>xviii</sup> In historical studies of material culture, the importance of gifts and offerings is very important, especially from the point of view of their political function.

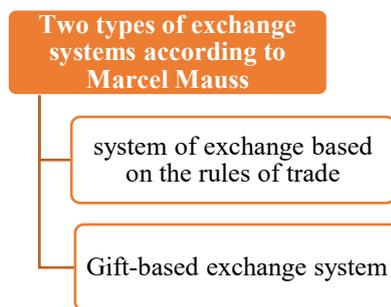


Figure 4. Two types of exchange systems according to Marcel Mauss. (Source: Author)

Does the gift giver have any expectations from the gift recipient in return for the gift? It seems that, especially in the case of diplomatic gifts, there is a certain expectation from the gift-giver towards the gift-recipient. ‘Every gift comes with obligations, that gift

and obligation form part of a unified system, and that this gifting system affects many other aspects of culture’.<sup>xix</sup> The most important motivations for exchanging textiles as diplomatic gifts include those listed in Table 2.

Table 2. The most important motivations for exchanging textiles as diplomatic gifts (Source: Author).

<b>The most important motivations for exchanging textiles as diplomatic gifts</b>	1- Expression of power;
	2- Showing generosity;
	3- Showing goodwill, friendship and unity;
	4- Expecting loyalty and strengthening relationships;
	5- As a reward and badge of honor;
	6- Boasting and showing off artistic and technological abilities;
	7. Creating the ground for trade exchanges.

Textiles were used as one of the most important diplomatic gifts in various historical periods, including the late antiquity period at the courts of great empires such as the Sasanian and Byzantine Empires. In later periods ‘The portability and high status of textiles within the dominant Byzantine and Islamic cultures assured their significant mediating role in the exchange between all the affiliated cultures. A common [visual] vocabulary provided a visual link between the courts and facilitated comprehensible and transferable communication. Gifts given from one ruler to another were inscribed with a shared vocabulary of power and prestige. Possession of the object implied participation in that power, as well as delineations of allegiance, alliance and hierarchy’.<sup>xx</sup> Sometimes these objects served as a medium to expand relationships and bonds between courts.

‘In all medieval civilizations the rulers’ display of luxury in textiles, especially sumptuous silken ones, was a manifestation of power. [...in fact], costly textiles were markers of social status, and their exhibition stimulated emulation among the elite and at lower ranks of society, [and] through them, they began to try to gain acceptance, social status, wealth, or power’.<sup>xxi</sup> In Islamic societies during the Middle Ages as well ‘textiles due to their logistic and stylistic flexibility, entail almost limitless potential for communication [and] therefore can be a powerful means of communication in any given society. [they] help(s) reproduce social groups to reproduce themselves. However, when it comes to inscribed textiles in the Islamic context, usually embedded in complex patterns of social strategies [and] is understood cultural code’.<sup>xxii</sup>

‘The Mongols also employed silks as diplomatic gifts. Richly woven textiles in particular from eastern Mongol regions were traded in great quantities with the Ilkhanate territory, the Mamluk realm and Europe’.<sup>xxiii</sup> ‘Westerners were undoubtedly impressed by "Tartar" silks arriving as gifts. Some of these textiles indeed reached the West with Mongolian diplomatic missions or were exhibited by them’.<sup>xxiv</sup> ‘Between 1265 and 1308

the *Ilkhanid* rulers of Persia in Tabriz sent at least nine embassies to the Holy See and to several European kings; [...] Ambassadors customarily carried letters and gifts, at that time principally luxury textiles’.<sup>xxv</sup>

The use of textiles as diplomatic gifts, in addition to their political and cultural functions, was also considered as part of a commercial strategy; meaning that courts, by showing off their technological capabilities in textile production, also provided opportunities for commercial and trade exchanges.

#### *4-1-3. Economic factors: Textiles as an important commercial commodity.*

Trade was the main ways of exchanging fine textiles in the 14th century. Merchants, more than any other factor, contributed to the widespread dissemination of these textiles. The 14th century AD marks the beginning of a period known as the "Age of textile". In the years between 1400 and 1800, known as the "Age of textile" intensifying political, economic, cultural, and colonial ties transformed textiles into global artifacts.<sup>xxvi</sup> This period coincides with the emergence of the phenomenon of the "commercial revolution", the beginning of which coincides with the *Pax Mongolica* in the 13th and 14th centuries AD. In the 14th century, with the intensification of trade between East and West (especially Italy as the gateway to the West), textiles were factor in cultural dynamics that became a material platform for expressing identity and Cultural specificity for consumers. This in itself became an important factor in increasing demand and, consequently, increasing trade in fine textiles. During this period, the textile industry, unlike in the past, was not limited to courtly customers but had strong ties to the global economy in general.

As the exchange of textiles increased, so did the transfer of visual values and cultures. In fact, it can be said that trade was more than just an economic infrastructure, but also a factor in cultural exchange. Thus, it can be argued that intercultural exchanges developed more in line with trade networks (Figure 5).

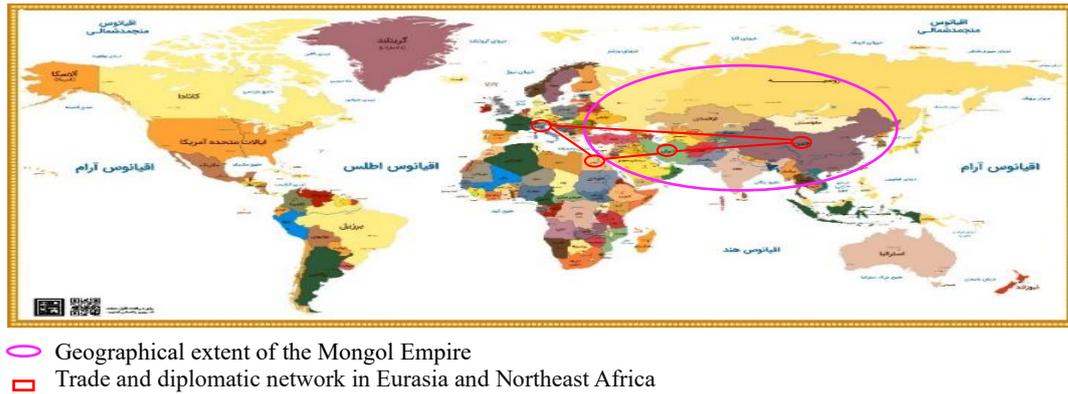


Figure 5. Trade and diplomatic network in the geography of Eurasia and North Africa in the 14th century AD (Source: Author). (Map source: URL17).

‘Three times in premodern history trade between the far East and far West had been pursued, despite very different historical conditions and the vast distances between them: during the Han dynasty, under the first *Pax Sinica*, during the Sui-Tang period, with the second *Pax Sinica*; and finally, during the Mongol period, with the establishment of the *Pax Mongolica*’.<sup>xxvii</sup> ‘The period of openness between East and West that has come to be called the *Pax Mongolica* offered European merchants an opportunity to offset disruptions in commerce with Syria and Egypt resulting from the papal embargo. In addition, the elimination of Arab middlemen increased the profitability of the most valuable, easily transportable Asian imports’.<sup>xxviii</sup> ‘Western merchants penetrated deep into Mongolian territories from the 1250s in order to bypass intermediaries and reach production and trade centres in Inner Asia’.<sup>xxix</sup> ‘The *Pax Mongolica* brought an influx of influential "Tatar" textiles into Italy about 1300 and left its mark on fourteenth-century Italian art’.<sup>xxx</sup>

‘Before the Mongols, the four Crusades had already given the four Italian Maritime Republics opportunity to establish their own colonies in Eastern territories, from which to trade textiles and other luxury objects’.<sup>xxxii</sup> But ‘the Mongol domination of Asia from the 1240s to the 1360s provided new opportunities for East-West trade. During the Crusades, European merchants had rarely penetrated into Muslim territories beyond the Christian-occupied lands along the Syrian coast and Byzantine outposts on the Black Sea’.<sup>xxxiii</sup> ‘Mongolian rule over vast territories in eastern Europe and Asia opened new markets to Western trading, furthered an increase in the range of traded commodities, and enabled the penetration of Western merchants deep into the Eurasia continental hinterland. as a result of these developments, the full integration of the commercial networks of the Mediterranean, the Black sea and the continental mass of Eurasia was achieved by the second half of the thirteenth century his integration was to last two centuries’.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

‘European demand for the finest central Asian and Persian fabrics soared despite the development of a silk

industry in Italy. The weavers in Lucca, who could not yet equal the quality and variety of Oriental cloth, also needed supplies of fine raw silk from the Caspian region, for which the major emporiums were Tabriz and, for several decades at least, the new capital of *Sultaniyya* built by *Uljaitu* between 1305 and 1313, southeast of Tabriz. Italian capital investment in East-West trade shifted significantly from the eastern Mediterranean to the Black Sea and Persia’.<sup>xxxiv</sup> ‘Tabriz was spared by the Mongols and replaced Baghdad, sacked by them in 1258, as the main Western Asian crossroads’.<sup>xxxv</sup> ‘Tabriz served as capital of the Il-Khans, or Mongol rulers of Iran, from sometime between 1265 and 1282 until 1304. It was a major inland crossroads with a cosmopolitan population, which fulfilled a pivotal role in the fusion of various artistic trends, as well as in the circulation and diffusion of goods. The Italian merchants residing in Tabriz from the 1260s to the 1330s, mainly Venetians and Genoese, were clearly involved in the silk trade’.<sup>xxxvi</sup> ‘Genoa and Venice were the main importers, intermediaries, and distribution centres of oriental silks in the West’.<sup>xxxvii</sup> ‘From the second half of the thirteenth century onward, silks manufactured in Mongolian territories reached multiple locations in the West extending from Italy to the Iberian Peninsula, England, Scandinavia, and the Baltic region’.<sup>xxxviii</sup> ‘In order to safeguard or enlarge their share of the market, merchants aggressively promoted the Western consumption of oriental textiles by varying their imports and offering from time-to-time new types of fabrics to potential customers. These successive waves of imports shaped new market demand and generated periodic changes in taste and fashion’.<sup>xxxix</sup>

**4-2. Global exchanges, the creation of a common inter-elite Visual *Koiné*, and the formation of an international style in textile design.**

Throughout history, societies have tended to communicate through material artifacts. Among material artifacts, portable objects have had greater potential for agency in intercultural communication due to their portability. These artifacts often carried visual codes that were understood by different social groups. Meanwhile, Luxurious and patterned textiles, in addition to having symbolic functions and the ability

to transmit visual information, had political and commercial values in the international exchange system, which led to their widespread distribution

worldwide and consequently increased their importance as cultural intermediaries (Figure 6).

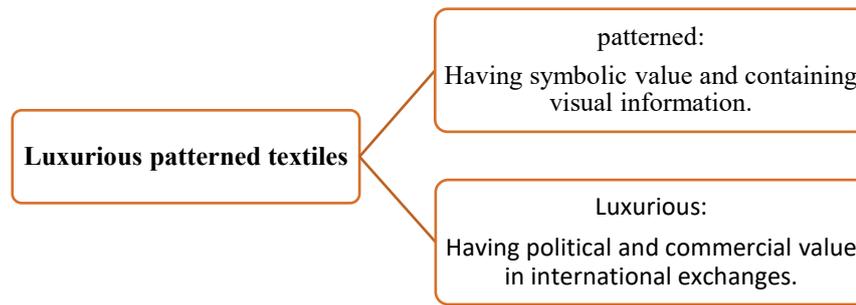


Figure 6. Functions of patterned and Luxurious textiles in intercultural exchanges (Source: Author).

‘Textiles were the prime luxury medium for the circulation and exchange of the shared vocabulary of the international court culture’.<sup>x1</sup> ‘With the movement of textiles and related materials, images crossed cultural and territorial borders and became part of a common imagery patronized by different kingdoms’.<sup>x1i</sup>

In different periods, the use of textiles with specific visual structures and vocabulary as visual codes for identifying and expressing the specific identity of elites has been significant among the upper classes and the court, ecclesiastical, and social elites. This phenomenon can be observed from prehistoric times to the contemporary period. For example, in prehistoric times, as seen on Assyrian reliefs from *Nineveh* and the *Til Barsip* paintings, and Bronze Age Aegean wall paintings, motifs of textile were considered visible symbols of power and wealth in royal or religious contexts in various cultures of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East.<sup>x1ii</sup>

Emphasizing the special role of luxury textiles in constructing elite identity, Oleg Grabar states that these textiles allowed consumers to distinguish themselves as part of the global elite. Grabar called this process a common culture of objects<sup>x1iii</sup> Through a shared material and visual culture, the courts became familiar with each other's signs and modes of discourse and were able to express power in ways that were understandable to all courts.<sup>x1iv</sup> This matter ‘according to Cormack— formed a "special, coded, common language between courts”’.<sup>x1v</sup> Perhaps this intercultural visual language could be called a Common shared Visual *Koiné*. ‘In linguistics, a *Koiné* language or dialect is a standard or common dialect that has emerged as a result of contact, mixing, and often simplification of two or more mutually intelligible varieties of a language’.<sup>x1vi</sup> Visual *Koiné* arises as a result of intercultural encounters and exchanges of material and visual culture and is used by cultural groups to express mental models. ‘When people communicate with each other and otherwise shape their environment, their mental models leave observable traces in the form of physical artifacts and representations, including ephemeral traces such as speech and non-verbal gestures’.<sup>x1vii</sup>

In late antiquity, textiles and the decorative motifs they carried had political and social significance and became important symbols of power and wealth.<sup>x1viii</sup> Meinecke (2020) considers the patterns and motifs used in luxury goods, including precious silk textiles, as "marker of elite culture". She presents "medallion-style textiles" as one aspect of these markers that were imitated among the elite, across a wide geography in the late ancient world, from Iran to the late Roman-Byzantine Empire, China, Central Asia, Egypt, and elsewhere. ‘The appropriation of artefacts and iconographic motifs from a cultural sphere other than patron’s own was crucial in the construction and consolidation of royal and elite identities of sovereigns and dynasties who had access to the portable luxury items. Whoever used these objects and appropriated images could present himself as partaking in a globalized elite culture. For a sovereign, this meant that he could represent himself – to the population of his empire, an internal audience – as a cosmopolite ruler who controlled "the other’s" marks of kingship and was thus superior to his rivals’.<sup>x1ix</sup>

‘During the Middle Ages, the trade of weavings between East and West was mostly limited to Central Asia as the farthest Eurasian contact zone. Those Asian textiles that reached Europe’s noble and ecclesiastical courts carried unknown foreign patterns or scripts in gold that were seen simply as decorative yet generated astonishment and curiosity about Eastern lands. They were used for lavish clothing and also as prototypes for local production’.<sup>1</sup> The use of inscriptional decorations throughout Islamic geography and even in some European textiles in the Middle Ages, used by the nobility and ecclesiastical elite, were considered inter-elite visual codes. ‘During this period, a courtly culture with a shared taste for luxury and visual display prevailed and the courts vied with one another within the same definitions and criteria for luxury and the exotic. [In European courts] Foreign objects enjoyed a higher status than local ones, and those from exotic Eastern empires were held in highest esteem as paradigms of imperial luxury and grandeur. Not surprisingly, the shared perception of exoticism among the courts often resulted in a production of works which were indistinguishable from one court to another. There was an underlying logic for the shared

vocabulary of luxury. A common vocabulary provided a visual link between the courts and facilitated comprehensible and transferable communication'.<sup>li</sup>

During the *Pax Mongolica* Period in the 13th and 14th centuries, with the expansion of political and commercial relations, the use of common vocabulary and visual structure in global textiles increased. 'The (growing) flow of Oriental silks to the West gained additional impetus and underwent a change in character marked by the appearance of new types of fabrics called *panni tartarici*, *dras de tartais* or *tartaires* in Western sources. These appellations point to the Mongols, yet in fact "Tartar cloth" was a generic name applied to a large and varied group of silks woven in Mongol ruled territories of Central Asia and the Middle East with a long tradition of silk weaving'.<sup>lii</sup> 'From the sources studied at the Vatican, it seems clear that the popular "Tartar" textiles referred to a variety of weaving structures (especially those in gold) produced in the vast Eurasian area'.<sup>liii</sup> 'The name covered previously unknown types of fabrics made of silk interwoven with gold, or cloths of gold, as well as patterned and plain silks, regardless of diversity among them in technical features and decoration. Many of the patterned silks combined in a dynamic and dramatic fashion Chinese, Central Asian and Islamic motifs and patterns that distinguished them from silk textiles manufactured in the Far East, the West, earlier Islamic silks, as well as contemporary silks woven in Mamluk Egypt and Syria'.<sup>liv</sup> 'It is still a suitable term today to describe various Asian products, precisely because the Mongol ambit was the origin of a new and substantial homogeneity in technical and decorative solutions, characterizing the sumptuary textiles of the time'.<sup>lv</sup> 'These silks generated an evolution in taste and clothing fashion that rapidly spread from Italy to the entire Christian West. Their colours and patterns ensured their success, and their social functions promoted their broad diffusion in courtly circles, the urban elites, and the high clergy'.<sup>lvi</sup> Also 'the massive sale [of these textiles] confirms the existence of a new fashion trend among the upper ranks of Italian aristocratic urban society'.<sup>lvii</sup>

'The growing wealth of the European elite during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries created a huge demand for luxury imports, gradually encouraging the development of competitive local products'.<sup>lviii</sup> 'The success of Tartar silks prompted Lucchese and Venetian entrepreneurs and craftsmen to borrow the motifs, designs and weaves of these textiles, and compete with them by the manufacture of imitations. The distinction between genuine Oriental silks and Italian imitations was sometimes difficult. manufacture of cheaper imitations of Oriental silks, which nevertheless retained their high quality and, thanks to their attractive prices, must have enjoyed a fairly broad diffusion'.<sup>lix</sup> 'In both Lucca and Venice, the silk-weaving industry was poised for the great surge in development that occurred about the second quarter of

the fourteenth century. Paintings, inventories, and datable vestments and burial cloths document the tremendous demand for luxury fabrics that fuelled this development, as well as elite taste for new Oriental fabric designs that the traditional compartmented animal patterns could no longer satisfy'.<sup>lx</sup> 'Extant silks that can be fairly well dated and Western paintings convincingly reflect the declining import of Oriental silks to the Latin West and the concurrent growing dominance of Italian silks in Western markets and fashion from the second half of the 14th century, and especially during the 15th century'.<sup>lxi</sup> By the end of fourteenth century Italy had become a net exporter of silk fabrics that offering tissues in return buying raw silk in the Middle East.

'There was yet another facet to the growing diffusion of Italian silks in the second half of the 14th and in the 15th century. Some of their motifs and designs were absorbed within indigenous patterns adorning silks produced in the Near East and even in China, partly to compete with imported Italian silks'.<sup>lxii</sup> 'Some Italian designers and weavers also proceeded beyond the appropriation of Oriental visual elements. They integrated them within indigenous patterns or were inspired by them to produce highly imaginative new ones'.<sup>lxiii</sup> 'While Italian imitations borrowed the names of Oriental silks, they partly differed from them in the composition of the weave, in the texture and in the quality. In the course of the 14th century, Italian designers proceeded beyond the reproduction of motifs and designs appearing on Oriental silks and their integration within their own indigenous patterns. Central Asian silks were pivotal in the transmission of Chinese motifs and patterns to Italy, which inspired the creation of highly imaginative new designs frequently using palmettes, flowers, fantastic animals and birds in the second half of the 14th century. Thin addition to aesthetic considerations, these developments were clearly motivated by the desire of Italian silk entrepreneurs and weavers to counter the import of Oriental silks and enlarge their own market share in the Latin West. Beyond that goal, the production of the new types of Italian silks and velvets enabled Western merchants to compete with Oriental silks in the Islamic and Mongol East, as we shall see below'.<sup>lxiv</sup>

By combining Chinese, Central Asian, Islamic, and Italian motifs in new combinations, different designs were formed in textile design that were significantly different from previous designs. One of the common designs in 14th century textiles is asymmetrical patterns with dynamic and lively combinations of zoomorphic animal motifs such as the phoenix and plant motifs such as the lotus (Figure 7). This design, which clearly shows the influence of Chinese textiles, was very common across Eurasia, especially in Iranian and Italian textiles. In this composition, animal motifs, previously confined to medallions, float freely throughout the design.



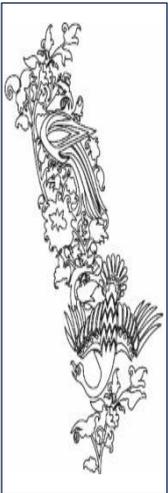
Figure 7. Silk fabric with gold thread, *Lampas* weave, 13th-14th century, Central Asia, mixed design of plant and bird motifs (phoenix), New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Object No. 1973.269.

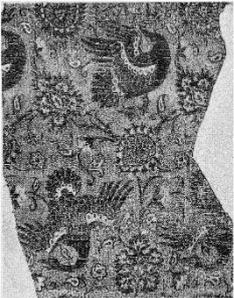
The fragment of textile in Figure 7, which is a 13th-14th century textile classified in the Central Asian woven category, appears to have been woven in Iran. Although its free-form design is similar to the style of Italian textiles of this period, ‘there is no evidence of similar birds in Italian textiles before this’.<sup>lxv</sup>

This design, which spread throughout Eurasia through Ilkhanate textiles, was imitated in many textiles of the period. ‘Between the 13th and 15th centuries, many woven textiles were decorated with

phoenixes. The presence of this bird became part of complex compositions made of different elements. Both Asian and Italian workshops produced a great quantity of *lampas*<sup>lxvi</sup>, diapers (a woven pattern consisting of a small repeating design, often of diamonds) and brocades with golden lying or standing phoenixes or similar birds’.<sup>lxvii</sup> Similar patterns of birds floating among vines and water lilies were used abundantly in Iranian and Italian textiles during this period (Figure 8 to 10 in Table 3).

Table 3. Technical and visual analysis of study samples.

	Research sample	Linear analysis and details repeating pattern	Technical features		Visual features			Subscriptions
			material	Weaving technique	Composition	Pattern	Motifs	
Iran			Silk and metal thread	Lampas	Dynamic	Alternating repetition of a repeating pattern	Phoenix - twisting vines and lotus flowers	Similar technical features and common visual characteristics: combination of bird motif and plant motifs, dynamic and moving composition
	Figure 8: fragment of silk fabric, Eastern Iran, 14th century, Cleveland, Cleveland Museum.							

							<p>Pheasant-like birds - floral and scroll motifs</p>	
<p>Figure 9: fragment of silk fabric with silver threads, Iran, 14th century, Kunstgewerbemuseum, Berlin, Object No. 62.90.</p>								
<p>Italy</p>							<p>Pheasant-like birds - floral and scroll motifs</p>	
<p>Figure 10: Gold-woven silk, Italy, 14th century, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Object No. 12.55.1.</p>								

Once designers in Italy discovered the beauty and vitality of foreign designs, they began creating patterns that either imitated Chinese and Islamic textiles or were closely based on those designs'.<sup>lxviii</sup> 'Once this happened, Italian silk design was revolutionized. Whereas elsewhere foreign designs were sometimes copied or isolated motifs were incorporated into

traditional designs, Islamic and Chinese silks sparked the imaginations of designers in Italy, resulting in silk designs of unpriced imagination. The first step away from traditional patterns was the ogival grapevine design seen in Figure 28. The ogival pattern, as has already been observed, belonged to the international repertory of the period; but the grape leaves were an Italian innovation'.<sup>lxix</sup> (Figure 11).

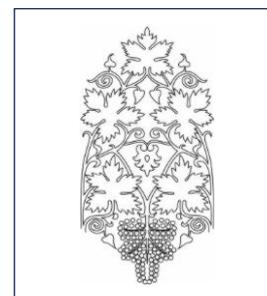


Figure 11. *Lampas* silk, Italy, 14th century, Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art, Object No. 1919.29.

The phenomenon of intercultural exchanges, especially in the field of visual culture and the transfer of motifs, is a reciprocal process. As mentioned earlier, with the growth of the Italian silk weaving industry 'From the fourteenth century onward a growing volume of Italian silks reached Mamluk Egypt and Syria and the Mongol territories, where they competed

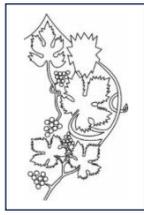
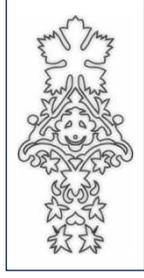
with locally-produced textiles and contributed to a contraction of their production and export. In response, various Middle Eastern and Central Asian weavers integrated motifs and designs borrowed from Italian silks into their own ornamental compositions'.<sup>lxx</sup> 'Designs of grapevines in numerous variations continued to be woven in Italy through the second half

of the century and, as has already been noted, were copied by Asian weavers'.<sup>lxxi</sup>

Italian motifs influenced oriental textiles; although this adaptation was limited to a few patterns, its influence is clearly visible, such that it is sometimes very difficult to distinguish Iranian and Italian fabrics from each other. For example, there is a great similarity between Figure 12, which is attributed to Iran or Iraq, and Figure 13, which is related to Italy (Table 4). Fabric No. 12 'was long attributed to Italy. Its weave structure, with one warp but two wefts (one for the ground and one for the design), differs from Italian Gothic silk *lampas* weaves, which have two warps and two wefts. Also different is the selvage consisting of bundles of warps instead of the linen cords that consistently complete the selvage edges of Italian

fourteenth century silks. The weave structure of this fragment is known prior to the Mongol conquest in both Chinese and Near Eastern silks. On the other hand, [its design structure], which has no borders, as is commonly seen in Chinese [designs] of this period, is more similar to the edges of some Near Eastern textiles. Further contributing to the difficulties of determining the provenance of this textile is that its pattern is woven entirely of silk and therefore has none of the important information that can be obtained from the composition of gold or silver thread. Wherever it may have been woven, the silk probably intended for the Italian or European market-made its way along the trade routes into Europe and, eventually, to the treasury of St. Ursula's church in Cologne where a large piece is still preserved'.<sup>lxxii</sup>

Table 4. Technical and visual analysis of study samples.

	Research sample	Linear analysis and details repeating pattern	Technical features		Visual features			Subscriptions
			material	Weaving technique	Composition	Pattern	Motifs	
Iran			Silk	tabby	Dynamic	Alternating repetition of a repeating pattern	Plant motifs: grape leaves, vine branches, animal motifs: similar to a lion's face	Using common plant motifs and similar animal motifs
	Figure 12: Fragment of silk fabric, Asia, probably Iran or Iraq, second half of the 14th century, Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art, Object No. 1943.51.							
Italy				Lampas				
	Figure 13: Lampas silk, Italy, second half of the 14th century, Berlin, Kunstgewerbemuseum, Object No. 99.32.						Plant motifs: grape leaves, vine branches, animal motifs: lion face	

The similarity of two fragments of fabric 14 and 15 in Table 5, in terms of technical characteristics including material and type of weave, structure and composition, as well as the use of common motifs

including plant elements such as vine branches and grape leaves, and even the pattern of repeating unit-patterns, confirms that the two fabrics follow a common style. However, the shape of the leaves in

oriental silk, as well as the decoration of the centre of each leaf, is different from the way grape leaves are displayed in Italian silk. This type of design structure

and the use of plant motifs such as ‘grape leaves as well as other small types of foliage can be undoubtedly attributed to the fourteenth century’.<sup>lxxiii</sup>

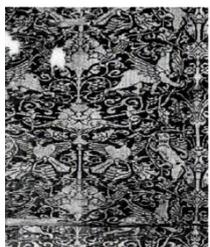
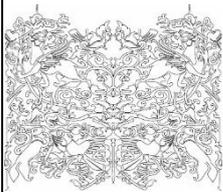
Table 5. Technical and visual analysis of study samples.

	Research sample	Linear analysis and details repeating pattern	Technical features		Visual features			Subsections
			material	Weaving technique	Composition	Pattern	Motifs	
Iran			Silk	Lampas	Dynamic	½ lengthwise	Vine branches and grape leaves	Use of common plant motifs, similar unit-pattern, common pattern for repeating unit-patterns, common technical features including similar material and weaving technique
	Figure 14: Fragment of silk fabric, Near East, probably Iran, 14th century, Ohio, Cleveland Museum of Art, Object No. 1926.509.							
Italy			Silk	Lampas	Dynamic	½ lengthwise	Vine branches and grape leaves - Bird	
	Figure 15: Fragment of silk fabric, Italy, second quarter of the 14th century, Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art, Object No. 1971.75.							

Designs consisting of zoomorphic and fantastical animals combined with symmetrically arranged plant motifs in regular patterns are other common designs in the International Style of fine textiles of the 14th century (Figures 16 and 17 in Table 6). Using a busy composition and utilizing all the compositional space are important features of this type of design. Despite the symmetrical shape of the unit-patterns and their regular repetition, the use of winding plant motifs and the form of animal motifs has given a certain dynamism to the composition.

Comparing two pieces of fabric, numbers 16 and 17, despite the similarity in the type of structure and overall composition of the design, there are differences in the type of motifs used. In the example attributed to Iran (Figure 16), its intricate design includes paired griffins, foxes, and birds arranged among scrolls of vines and palm trees. In the Italian example (Figure 17), vine stems and grape leaves are substituted, and the zoomorphic animal motif is similar to European heraldic emblems. This motif, combined with the plant motifs of grape stems and leaves, which are important motifs in Italian textiles, form the fabric design.

Table 6. Technical and visual analysis of study samples.

	Research sample	Linear analysis and repeating pattern	Technical features		Visual features			Subscriptions
			material	Weaving technique	Composition	Pattern	Motifs	
Iran			Silk	Composite weave	Dynamic (despite symmetry in the repeating pattern)	Alternating repetition of the unit - repeating pattern	Zoomorphic and natural animals, plant motifs	Use of zoomorphic animal motifs, combination of animal and plant motifs in a dynamic and vibrant combination, symmetrical unit-pattern, similar pattern in the repetition of the repeating unit-pattern.
	Figure 16: Silk of mixed weave, Iran, 13th-14th century AD, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Object No. 31.11.			4&1 satin and weft faced plain weave (Lampas)				
Italy								
Figure 17: Silk, Italy, 14th century, New York, Cooper Hewitt Museum, Object No. 18130575.								

The great similarity of the Iranian sample (Figure 16) with the samples of fabrics attributed to Egypt and Syria (Figures 18 and 19), which belong to the 13th century AD, shows the precedent of using this type of

design in Islamic textiles. The similarity of the motifs, designs, and techniques of these two fabrics to the previous textile traditions of eastern Iran may indicate the migration of artisans from the east to the west in response to the Mongol expansion.



Figure 18 (left). Silk, attributed to Syria, 13th century, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Object No. 47.15.

Figure 19 (right). Silk, Egypt, Ayyubid period (1171-1250 AD) Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Object No. 31.11.

Some 14th-century fabrics attributed to Iran and Italy are quite similar. For example, research samples 20 and 21 (Table 7) have identical technical and visual characteristics. The design of these fabrics represents one of the most important examples of multicultural patterns, combining Islamic, Chinese, and Italian designs. The design of these fabrics includes balanced patterns of flowering vines and curved branches that enclose an ogival medallion containing symmetrically paired animals. The symmetrical pair of animals placed

inside the medallions are rabbits standing on their hind legs. Symmetrical animals in geometric grids are common motifs in oriental designs from previous periods (Figure 22 and 23). The use of these patterns in the East has a long history. The ogival lattices are also derived from oriental patterns, and the lotus flowers at the ends of the surrounding vine tendrils are inspired by Chinese patterns, while the grape leaves between the medallions are taken from Italian motifs. The overall design, despite its symmetrical balance, has a dynamic composition.

Table 7. Technical and visual analysis of study samples

	Research sample	Linear analysis and details repeating pattern	Technical features		Visual features			Subscriptions
			material	Weaving technique	Composition	Pattern	Motifs	
Iran			Silk	Lampas	Static	½ lengthwise	Animal motifs including two symmetrical rabbits, plant motifs, ogival medallions	Completely identical technical and visual characteristics
	Figure 20: fragment of silk fabric, Near East, probably Iran, 14th century AD, Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art.							
Italy			Silk	Lampas	Static	½ lengthwise	Animal motifs including two symmetrical rabbits, plant motifs, ogival medallions	Completely identical technical and visual characteristics
	Figure 21: fragment silk fabric, Italy, 14th century, New York, Cooper Hewitt Collection. Object No. 18130551.							



Figure 22 (left). *Lampas* silk, Near East, Iran or Iraq, 14th century, Ilkhanid period, Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art. Object No. 1945.34.

Figure 23 (right). Silk, 1004–1260 AD, Iran or Iraq, probably Ray, Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art. Object No. 1939.506

The similarity of two fragments of textile, numbers 20 and 21, with another fragment attributed to Egypt (Figure 24) raises questions about the reasons for the complete similarity of these three pieces of cloth; Although the complete similarity of these three fragments casts doubt on their distinctiveness and local

production, their distribution across a geographical area as vast as Eurasia confirms the popularity of such designs. All three fabrics appear to have originated from a common geography and have been transported as trade goods or diplomatic gifts, or to have been woven by immigrant artists and craftsmen from a common origin.



Figure 24. *Lampas* silk, Egypt, 14th century AD, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Object No. 46.156.41.

Table 8 also presents two other identical fabrics from Iran and Italy dating back to the 14th century. Here too, we are faced with a multicultural design consisting of Eastern and Italian motifs and elements. While the phoenixes are inspired by Chinese patterns, the floral motifs, including vine branches and grape leaves, reflect Italian patterns. In this design, despite the symmetrical unit-pattern, the combination of vibrant animal motifs and the form of plant motifs has created a very dynamic and vibrant composition.

The combination of exotic birds resembling eagles or the legendary Chinese Fung Huang and plant motifs such as grape leaves in a dynamic composition was one of the most popular and widely used designs in 14th century textiles. Birds, often depicted in pairs and symmetrically, often have an active posture. Both

fabrics are woven from blue silk using the *lampas* technique and the design is created with gold weft. The pattern of formation of the unit-pattern is vertical symmetry and the repetition method of the unit-pattern is in the form of  $\frac{1}{2}$  length. Despite the regular repetition of the unit-pattern, the overall composition of the design is dynamic. As previously stated, the exotic birds and grape leaves in this composition belong to a style of design that emerged at the beginning of the 14th century; A style in which birds and animals previously trapped in medallions were freed and freely combined with other design elements, depicted in active poses. They were often placed in pairs facing each other. Grape leaves are also among the important plant motifs of this style.

Table 8. Technical and visual analysis of study samples.

	Research sample	Linear analysis and details repeating pattern	Technical features		Visual features			Subscriptions
			material	Weaving technique	Composition	Pattern	Motifs	
Iran			Silk	Lampas	Dynamic (despite symmetry in the repeating pattern)	Alternating repetition of repeating pattern	Animal motifs including birds, plant motifs including grape leaves and twisting vine stems	Completely identical technical and visual characteristic
Figure 25: fragment of silk fabric, Iran, 14th century, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, Object No. 770-1894.								
Italy								
Figure 26: Silk fabric, Italy or Spain, 14th century, New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Object No. 46.156.43.								

Here too, the complete similarity of the two pieces casts doubts on their geographical attribution. According to the analysis of the metal thread of the cloth attributed to Iran, which was carried out in April 2008 by Raman spectroscopy and showed the use of pure gold, it seems that the Iranian example was produced by one of the Mongol workshops in the east.<sup>lxxiv</sup> Given the correspondence between the Italian sample and the sample attributed to Iran, it seems that both fabrics have the same origin. The common design and pattern of the two fabrics indicate their belonging to the International Style of the 14th century.

**Conclusion**

The intensification of textile exchange in the 14th century, following increased political, economic, and cultural relations, presented textiles as global artifacts and visual actors, placing them in the position of objects and transcultural mediators across the vast Eurasian region. The transformation of these objects

into a material platform for expressing identity and uniqueness for consumers became an important factor in increasing demand and, consequently, the trade in fine textiles. During the Middle Ages, the visual culture of the political elites of the Islamic world, especially in the field of textiles, was noticed and imitated by the ecclesiastical elites of Europe. These exquisite fabrics, which entered Europe in large quantities during the Crusades, increased the desire of not only the church elite but also the feudal nobility to use these textiles. In the late Middle Ages, and especially in the 14th century, the demand for exquisite textiles was so global that they became a major component of international trade and a major factor in artistic transmission. From this period onwards, with the emergence of a new class of urban wealthy people in Italy, which was the result of the development of the industry and international trade in textiles, and following their desire to introduce themselves as urban elites, the textile industry, unlike

in the past, was not limited to courtly customers; but had a strong link to the global economy.

In the 14th century, Italy's unique geographical and strategic location as a gateway between the East and Europe, and Italy's close political and commercial ties with the Ilkhanate and West Asia, Byzantium, and Egypt, facilitated access to Eastern and Islamic textiles even more than before. The Italian city-states were at the centre of trade routes to northern Europe, the remnants of the Byzantine Empire, and the Mongol Empire, which stretched from China and Central Asia to Ilkhanate Iran. They distributed silk textiles from the East and also established their own silk industry. This led to the flourishing of the Italian textile industry and had its greatest impact on the dynamic beginning of the leap and development in the Italian textile industries to the point where Italian textiles entered the arena of international competition. In this way, the one-way flow of Italian textiles being influenced by Eastern textiles became a two-way process, and Middle Eastern weavers borrowed some Italian motifs and designs in their decorative compositions. Based on what was stated, in order to answer the research questions of what designs and motifs were exchanged between Iran and Italy through textiles in the 14th century and what impact did these exchanges have on textile design styles at the international level, It can be said that international textile exchanges in the fourteenth century led to the creation of a common, cross-cultural collection of motifs and designs in a wide region from Central Asia to Italy. The formation of a cosmopolitan visual taste and the emergence of an international style in textile design are consequences of these intercultural exchanges. This international style, which was a combination of Islamic, Chinese and Italian decorative elements, includes a variety of designs. The most important motifs exchanged and shared in global

textiles within the framework of this international style included animal and zoomorphic motifs such as phoenixes and birds similar to pheasants, strange and fantastic composite animals, and plant motifs including lotus flowers, grape leaves, and the twisting stems of plants such as vines. One of the important features of this style is the dynamic and vibrant combination of animal and plant motifs, which is considered one of the unique features of the International Style of the 14th century.

Among the diverse designs of the 14th century International Style, some of which were mentioned in this study, the symmetrical design of the ogival medallions enjoyed great popularity in international textiles during the 15th and 16th centuries, especially in Italian, Iranian, and Ottoman fabrics. Investigating the causes of the decline of the International Style with its diverse designs and the reason for the great popularity of the ogival medallion design in international textiles since the late 14th century and especially during the 15th and 16th centuries is a topic that is suggested for future research.

Among the diverse designs of the 14th century International Style, some of which were mentioned in this study, the symmetrical design of the ogival medallions enjoyed great popularity in international textiles during the 15th and 16th centuries, especially in Italian, Iranian, and Ottoman fabrics. Investigating the causes of the decline of the International Style with its diverse designs and the reason for the great popularity of the ogival medallion design in international textiles since the late 14th century and especially during the 15th and 16th centuries is a topic that is suggested for future research.

## Endnotes

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<sup>ix</sup> Ibid., p. 288.

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<sup>xi</sup> B. Lemire and G. Riello, 'East & West: textiles and fashion in early modern Europe', *Journal of Social History*, (2008), p. 887.

<sup>xii</sup> Gasparini, *Transcending patterns*, pp. 4-5.

<sup>xiii</sup> Campos., Pinho and Sarmiento, *Popular and visual culture*, p. xii.

<sup>xiv</sup> D. Jacoby, 'Cross-Cultural Transfers of Industrial Technologies in the Later Middle Ages: Incentives, Promoters and Agents', in *Union in separation: diasporic groups and identities in the Eastern Mediterranean (1100-1800)*, (Viella historical research; 1, 2015), p. 503.

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- <sup>xxiii</sup> H. Persson, 'Chinese Silks in Mamluk Egypt', in *Global Textile Encounters*, ed. M. L. Nosch., Z. Feng and L. Varadarajan (United Kingdom: Oxbow Books, 2014), p. 116.
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- <sup>xxxi</sup> Gasparini, *Transcending patterns*, p. 126.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Mack, *Bazaar to Piazza*, p. 16.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> D. Jacoby, 'Western Commercial and Colonial expansion in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea in the late Middle Ages', *Rapporti mediterranei, pratiche documentarie, presenze veneziane: le reti economiche e culturali (XIV-XVI secolo)*, eds. A. Sopracasa and G. Ortalli, (Venezia: IVSLA, 2017), p. 22.
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more weaves. Additional colours of silk or gold and silver threads were often added as brocading (Supplementary) wefts.

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### Figure References

Figure 3: The dual function of patterned textiles in the field of intercultural communication. Source: Author.

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Figure 5: Trade and diplomatic network in the geography of Eurasia and North Africa in the 14th century AD.

Source: Author. Map source:

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Figure 6: Functions of patterned and Luxurious textiles in intercultural exchanges. Source: Author.

Figure 7: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Object No. 1973.269.

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Figure 8: Cleveland Museum, Cleveland, Object No. 1985.4. Image source:

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