

# The Kashmir Shawl



**The Kashmir Shawl**  
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## Preface

One of the little known treasures of the Yale University Art Gallery is a comprehensive group of Near and Far Eastern textiles that comprises part of the Hobart and Edward Small Moore Memorial Collection of Oriental Art. Although internationally renowned, only small portions of this collection have been exhibited in our gallery in recent years; unfortunately, this lack of exposure has reflected the fact that Islamic and South Asian art have not been emphasized in the Yale curriculum for some time. The present exhibition calls attention to the Kashmir Shawl, a beautiful woven genre—well represented in the Moore Collection—which probably originated on the Indian subcontinent as early as the fifteenth century. The technique for weaving these shawls was slow and laborious, and it is reported that some of the more elaborate examples took a year or more to complete. By the 1820s, the production of the shawls had become an industry, not only in Kashmir but also in the British Isles and France, where the Kashmir prototypes were emulated and, in many cases, transformed. Eventually, the characteristic decorative forms were adulterated by the intrusion of European motifs; moreover, the tradition of meticulous craftsmanship was destroyed by the introduction of new mass-production technologies.

The plans for this exhibition were initiated by Sarah Buie Pauly, of our Education Department, who spent the better part of a year organizing it. Her efforts were aided by a travel fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, which enabled her to visit and study the textile collections of British museums. Mrs. Pauly enjoyed the collaboration of Rebecca Wells Corrie, Research Assistant for Oriental Art. They are the authors of the two catalogue essays, which trace the fascinating story of the Kashmir Shawl from both stylistic and cultural points of view.

Our collection has been augmented for this exhibition by six rare items, including fragments of some of the earliest known Kashmir Shawls, from the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. We are grateful to Veronica Murphy and B. Tyers of the Indian Section for their aid, and to Wendy Hefford and Natalie Rothstein of the Textile Department for their counsel. We are especially grateful to John Irwin, Keeper of the Oriental Department, for consenting to lend these important examples (plates 1-5). Mr. Irwin, whose scholarship forms the basis for much of the material contained in the present volume, is the leading authority on the Kashmir Shawl.

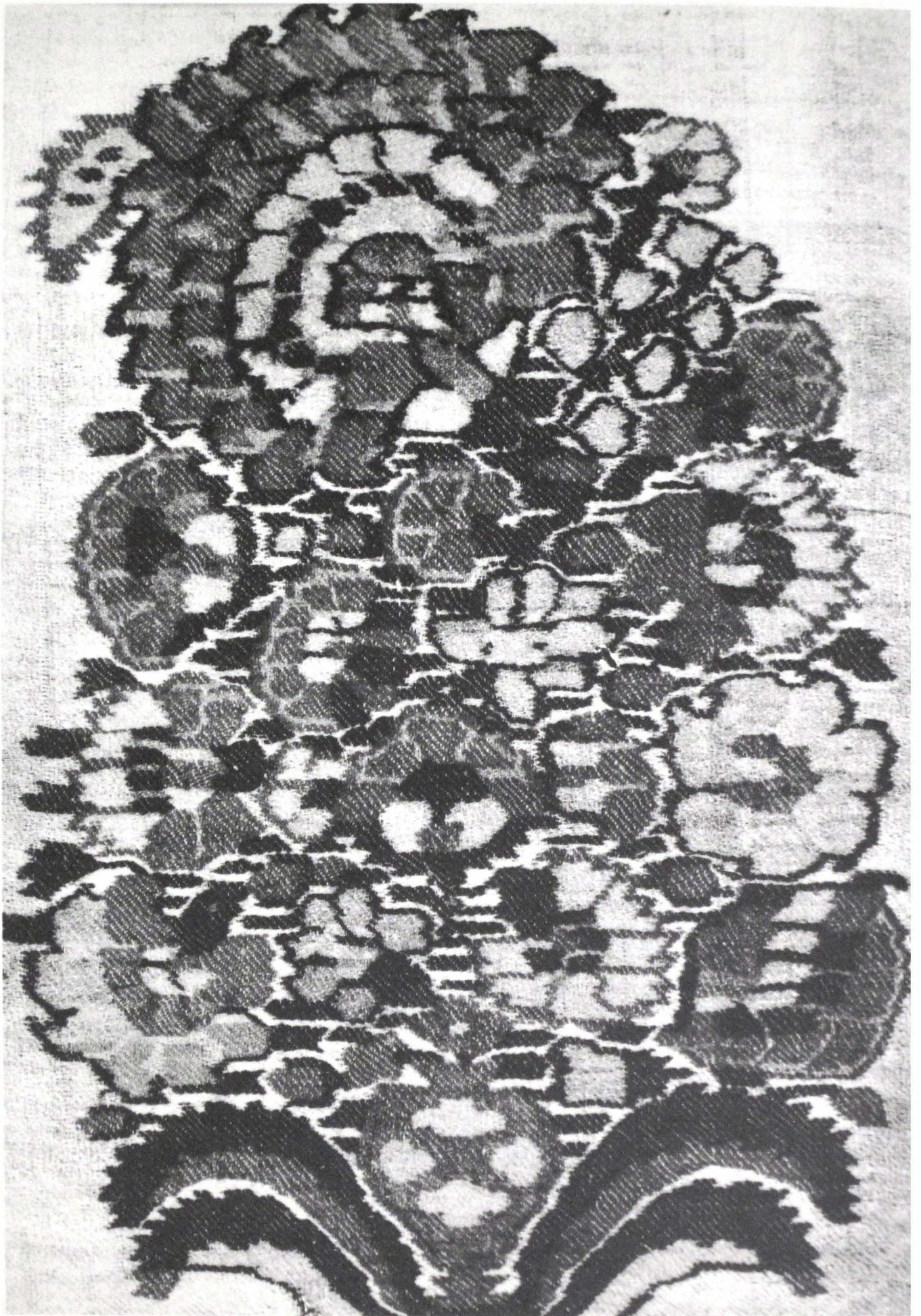
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, has also been a generous lender. Mrs. Pauly was assisted by Jean Mailey and especially by Barbara Teague in the Textile Study Room, and by Marie Lukens Swietochowski in the Islamic Department. We express our

gratitude to the Print Department for numerous courtesies and several key loans. At the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., Irene Emery was very generous in sharing her knowledge and lending important photographs.

Josef Godlewski (Yale M.F.A. '74) is responsible for the handsome design of the catalogue. Most of the Yale textiles were photographed for this publication by Joseph Szaszfai. Robert Soule and his staff handled the intricate installation of the exhibition with their usual skill. June Guicharnaud provided helpful editorial advice at a crucial moment.

It is gratifying to be able to remove these handsome textiles from storage, even for the relatively brief period of this special exhibition. We trust that this is but the first of a series of exhibitions which will make Yale's outstanding textile collections better known to a wider public.

Alan Shestack  
Director





# The Shawl: Its Context and Construction

Sarah Buie Pauly

The valley of Kashmir in the Himalayas—a remote region in north-west India, surrounded by the highest mountains on earth—remained relatively insular for centuries. Internal political upheavals and religious differences often led to bloody conflicts, while famines, droughts, earthquakes, and other disasters affected daily life in Kashmir significantly. Still, trade routes connecting East and West through the mountain passes often brought new peoples, materials, and methods to the valley, whereas techniques, ideas, and even artistic styles from nearby Persia were particularly influential. Indeed, it is likely that Persian expertise laid the groundwork for the production of twill-tapestry shawls in Kashmir as early as the fifteenth century. The Kashmir design genius, however, transformed this distinctive technique into something quite new and exquisite, and unrivaled in design or construction by the contemporary textiles woven on the Indian subcontinent.

Both woven art and cultural document, the resulting shawl has a history which is a product of the interaction of the economic concerns, technical abilities, material resources, and aesthetic sensibilities of Kashmiris during the period of shawl production. In fact, many facets of the culture of Kashmir, changing in response to external pressures, are illuminated by a study of the shawl industry—its technical development, the resulting stylistic changes, as well as European involvement in its manufacture—to say nothing of the striking visual images and various textures of the shawls themselves.

In this exhibition, *shawl*<sup>1</sup> designates the extraordinary product of Kashmir (as well as its Kashmir and European derivatives) first woven as a noble or luxury garment. It was a large rectangular or square shoulder mantle, variously ornamented by the twill-tapestry technique and worn primarily by men in India and later by European women in the nineteenth century. Painstakingly crafted by the highly skilled weavers of Kashmir, it was worn by many generations of a diverse elite which included the Mughal Emperor Akbar the Great (reigned 1556-1605) and his successors, as well as the Empress Josephine of France, Queen Victoria, and their fashionable nineteenth-century contemporaries. Changes in the shawl's ornamentation and construction from the time of Akbar to that of Victoria were the result of complex economic and aesthetic pressures on its production. The shawls in the present exhibition range from early Kashmir examples of jewel-like precision in structure and style to late nineteenth-century machine-woven Paisley products expressive of a more florid sensibility. A most varied collection, this group of shawls bears witness to the evolution of taste and the growth of industrialization in Europe, as well as to the impact of these factors on shawl production in Kashmir.

Although the first mention of shawls in Kashmir dates back to the time of the Roman Empire,<sup>2</sup> and other references point to shawl production in the eleventh century,<sup>3</sup> it is generally agreed that the enthusiasm of the ruler Zain-ul-Abidin (reigned 1459-1470 A.D.) first stimulated the production of shawls woven with the twill-tapestry technique. Having spent seven years as a hostage in Samarkand, the prosperous cultural center of the Mughal Empire under the ruler Amir Timur, or Tamerlane (reigned 1370-1405 A.D.), the prince had been exposed to the finest artists, writers, and philosophers of his time. Upon ascending the throne in Kashmir, he expressed his interest in the arts, especially in textiles, by encouraging the emigration of weavers from Persia and Central Asia to Kashmir.<sup>4</sup> It would seem that these weavers brought the distinctive twill-tapestry technique with them, as no precedents for it can be found on the Indian subcontinent.<sup>5</sup> The industry received further impetus from the personal interest taken by Akbar in the textile arts. According to the *Ain-i-Akbari*, a chronicle written by his court historian, he too encouraged the influx of foreign craftsmen skilled in fine textile work, ordered improvements in the fibers and dyes used to make the shawl, and had a large wardrobe of shawls himself; indeed, he often wore them in pairs (*doshalla*) stitched back to back.<sup>6</sup>

European travelers in the East during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries often made reference to the growing shawl industry of Kashmir. Typical of such commentaries is that of Desideri of Pistoia in *An Account of Tibet 1712-1727*:

. . . most precious and magnificent are the cloths called *scial* in both Hindustan and Persian. These *scials* are cloaks which envelop the head while the ends fall on either side of the body; thus the head, neck, shoulders, arms, breast, the back till below the hips and nearly to the knees are protected. These cloaks are so fine, delicate and soft that though very wide and long they can be folded into so small a space as almost to be hidden in a closed hand. At the same time, although so fine and thin, they not only keep out the cold, but really warm the body; they are therefore much worn in winter. The very fine and large ones are very dear, indeed in the remote regions the price might be called exorbitant.<sup>7</sup>

We have no clear descriptions of the particulars of the shawl industry until the early nineteenth century, when a vivid account of shawl manufacture was written by William Moorcroft, an English veterinarian who traveled extensively through Central Asia from 1819 to 1825, and remained in Kashmir for ten months in 1822-23. He took pains in noting the details of shawl production there, as he

#### Footnotes

1. The word *shawl* derives from the Persian *shal*, meaning a class of woven fabric of fine wool (Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl*, p. 1).
2. Sufi, *Kashir*, I, 562.
3. Chandra, "Kashmir Shawls," *Reports*, p. 7. Chandra cites Kshemendra (990-1065 A.D.), a writer, as discussing a cottage shawl industry in 11th-century Kashmir.
4. *Indian Carpets*, Marg, p. 34a.
5. Reath and Sachs, in *Persian Textiles*, p. 8, speculate that 17th-century Persian examples of the technique may predate any extant Kashmir examples.
6. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, i, 97-99.

7. Desideri, *An Account of Tibet*, p. 73.

hoped to radically improve shawl production at home in England by importing Kashmir shawl designs, Tibetan shawl goats, and even the shawl-weavers themselves. As he described it, the Kashmir industry was a crude factory system complicated by numerous middlemen and specialists, and employing a large percentage of the population of Srinagar, Kashmir's capital; in other words, the industry had grown out of its cottage origins and had fallen into the hands of entrepreneurs. Division of labor was carried to extremes, with scores of people participating directly in the production of one shawl.<sup>8</sup> The weaver himself received no special recognition, for he was of low caste by birth, and though highly skilled, he was paid very little. Designers, or *naqqash*, received more credit for their work and were more highly paid. The real profits from this enterprise went, not to the exploited craftsmen, but to middlemen known as shawl-brokers (*mohkuns*), who bought shawls from the loom-owners (*ustads*) and sold them to interested foreign merchants. The government and its often corrupt officials also took their share (both the weaver and the shawl were taxed at exorbitant rates.)<sup>9</sup> The shawl industry became a big business as the nineteenth century unfolded: demand for the handwoven luxury item made in Kashmir became very intense in both Asia and Europe, resulting finally in numerous changes in the form and content of the prized fabric.

To understand the implications of those economic pressures, we must take as our point of reference the history of the shawl at its artistic peak, with particular emphasis on its fibers, construction, and style. The distinctive fiber used to make shawl-cloth (*pashmina*) was never found locally, but was imported to Kashmir from Ladakh and Western Tibet, then later from herds kept by Kirghiz nomads in Yarkand and Khotan.<sup>10</sup> It is the fine protective inner fleece of a Himalayan mountain goat (*Capra hircus*), found underneath its long coarse outer coat. Short, silky, and soft (one-sixth the diameter of the outer hairs of the same animal),<sup>11</sup> the finest fibers come from the underbelly of the animal. Quality of fleece is said to correspond to the elevation of the animal's natural habitat: the higher (therefore colder) the elevation, the silkier and finer the underfleece. Fibers from the wild goat, which are known as *asli tus* and have always been very rare, must be collected from mountain shrubs against which the animal has brushed during his springtime shedding process. More common, and very likely the substance of most extant shawls, is the fleece of the domesticated goat, which could be combed from the animal's coat.<sup>12</sup> An average yield from the goat was approximately two pounds of wool each year.<sup>13</sup> Although the demand for goat-fleece was always greater than the supply, and its cost was constantly on the rise, the early establishment of

8. These include the broker dealing in wool, the women who separate the fleece, clean it, and spin it, and the men who dye it, make and dress the warp, thread the heddles, draw the shawl pattern, call colors as the pattern is colored in, transcribe the coded guide to weaving (*talim*), weave the shawl, tweeze out imperfections and wash and stretch the woven shawl. For further discussion of these processes, see Moorcroft or Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl*.

9. A duty of 26% was levied on each shawl before it could receive the government stamp necessary for export and officials often took another 25% illegally. See Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl*, p. 9.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

11. Barker, *Cottage Textile Industries of Kashmir*.

12. Mossman, "Design Techniques of Kashmir Handloom Textiles," *Bulletin* L, 37.

13. Sufi, *Kashir*, I, 562.

precedents for selling it only to Kashmir led to the valley's having a virtual monopoly on it in the nineteenth century (later bound by treaties); clearly its availability to Kashmir alone contributed a significant advantage to the region during the heyday of shawl manufacture.

These extraordinary fibers, so aesthetically important to the shawl at its artistic peak, give the textile its characteristic lightness and sheen; in addition, the fine yarn that can be spun from them on the simple *charkha* wheel allows weaving of a very tight gauge (often 80 to 100 warp threads per inch), resulting in woven detail of minute precision. While the delicacy of the goat-fleece fibers creates special effects, it also demands special tools. For example, the pashmina handloom, though in most respects quite a standard and rudimentary horizontal harness loom, was made with several features particularly suited to its task. To minimize the strain placed on the delicate pashmina warp (the web of parallel threads into which the weft was inserted), certain adjustments in loom structure were made. For one, the distance from front beam to heddle-eye was made equal to that from back beam to heddle-eye, so that the strain placed on the warp threads was evenly distributed when the heddles (cords or wires with a central eye through which a warp thread passes) were lifted to form the shed; also, the shed, or tunnel, created in raising the heddles, through which the weft is inserted, was kept as small as possible in order that warp tension be minimized. String heddles were the rule, since they created less friction against the fine yarn than did metal.<sup>14</sup> It may be that the fragility of a pashmina warp first led pragmatic weavers to use a twill weave, with weft threads inserted and floating over and under *pairs* of warp threads (in the 2/2 twill of twill-tapestry), thereby creating slightly less pressure on the warp than does the persistent over-and-under rhythm of a plain weave (in which weft threads pass over and under warp threads in single intervals). Certainly, even if the Kashmir weavers did not intentionally begin to use the twill-tapestry technique as a solution to their technical problems, it surely was a providential means of utilizing the natural characteristics of the delicate fibers to their best advantage.

This twill-tapestry technique (creating shawls known as *kanikar*) is the single most distinctive aspect of the shawl and greatly influences its style. *Twill-tapestry* designates the technique combining a simple *twill* float weave with the method of discontinuous weft threads, which build individual color areas, known as *tapestry*. Tapestry is generally a plain weave technique, with the weft entirely covering the warp. In this instance, however, the "tapestry" aspect of twill-tapestry is simply "the use of discontinuous wefts to vary the weft color and create distinct color areas

figure 1 Shawl, Kashmir. 1750-1800. twill-tapestry technique (detail of plate 5).

14. Barker, "Textile Industries of Kashmir," *Journal of the Royal Society*, LXXX, 315.
15. Emery, *The Primary Structures of Fabrics*, p. 106.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*, p. 81.



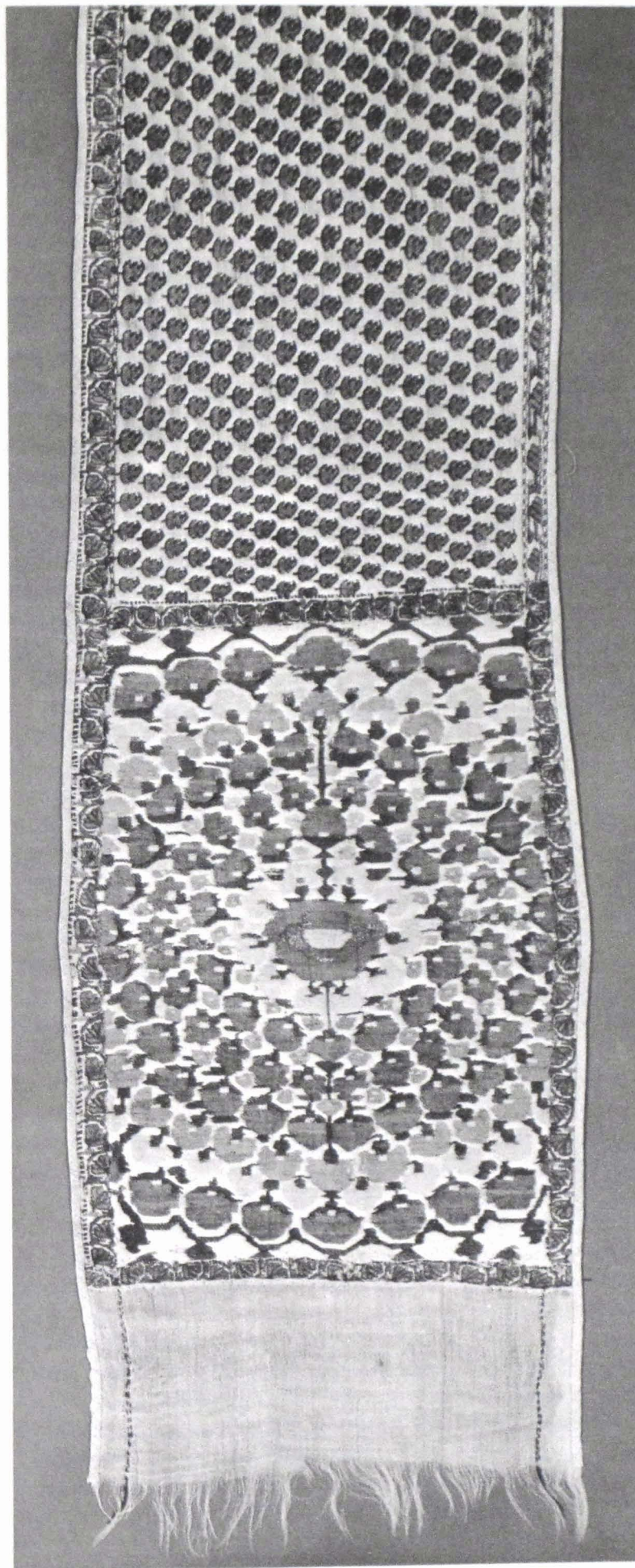
that are identical on the two faces of the fabric."<sup>15</sup> The twill aspect of the technique gives the textile its characteristic "progressive successions of floats in diagonal alignment," and since the wefts pass over and under the same number of warp threads—in this case, two—it is called an *even twill*. The combined use of twill and tapestry techniques means that only one method of joining adjacent weft threads is entirely secure: that of *double-interlocking* (see figures 4 and 5). This joining technique results in a distinctive "ridged transposition of colors on one face"<sup>16</sup> of the fabric; that is, "each color appears in the other color area and a marked ridge is produced on the working face of the fabric."<sup>17</sup>

That practical considerations may have led to the use of twill (or twill-tapestry) in weaving the shawl is open to question, but its impact on decorative forms is not. Example after example will show that floral forms take on a characteristic geometric or angular aspect as they are shaped by the twill-tapestry technique. Note (in figures 1, 2, and 6) that the outline of the floral forms often follows the diagonal created by the twill. Moreover, the geometric shape of each petal is emphasized by the diagonal striping of its interior, as the twill seems to mark off the interior volume for visual



figure 2 Shawl, Kashmir, ca. 1770, twill-tapestry technique, Victoria and Albert Museum, T. 89-1958. (By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.)

figure 3 Sash, pieced from twill-tapestry shawl fragments from Kashmir, late 18th century, Yale University Art Gallery, Hobart and Edward Small Moore Memorial Collection, 1937.5260. Note similarity of sash body and shawl border illustrated in figure 2.



measurement. Indeed, the outlines themselves acquire a jagged geometric aspect due to the diagonal interruptions of light weft threads by dark warp threads, and vice versa.<sup>18</sup> While in plain-weave tapestry, weft threads generally cover warp threads completely and create solid sections of one color, the warp threads are partially visible in twill-tapestry technique—a technical distinction that creates the flickering quality characteristic of twill-tapestry at close range, as color areas are formed by the blending of two colors in the eye.

The dyes chosen for these colors derive from natural sources; traditionally used by the hereditary caste of dyers in Kashmir, they create subtle and harmonious hues. The finest red or crimson was made from cochineal (derived from the insect *Coccus cacti*, imported from Hindustan), while inferior reds were made from kermes or logwood. Indigo was the usual source for blues and purples; carthamus and saffron were used for orange and yellow; black was often made from iron filings; and green seems to have been boiled from baizes and broadcloths imported from England.<sup>19</sup>

The earliest Kashmir shawls were often made of twill-woven pashmina with no decoration, and were dyed or left a natural ivory. Plain shawls such as these, which were woven in Kashmir as a staple good since they could be produced quickly on a harness loom using a shuttle, persisted throughout the history of shawl manufacture. An example from the Yale collection (plate 14) gives a good sense of the fragility and natural color variation of goat-fleece fibers.

Other one-piece shawls woven in the twill-tapestry technique were made with repeating floral or tree-form borders, or with small flower sprigs, stripes, or diapered patterns over their entire surface (see plates 8 and 10). Still other fine early shawls were made in three pieces, with the twill-tapestry ornamented borders carefully sewn onto the plain twill center by the *rafugar* (embroiderer). Not only does the construction of the fabric vary slightly in all of these examples, but it requires the most demanding kind of precision work. Since none of the loom's time-saving devices (shuttles, harnesses, and so forth) could be used in the weaving of twill-tapestry, they imposed no stylistic limitations on the weaver. Yet all of these shawls necessitated the use of individual bobbins for the insertion of each segment of weft thread (hundreds of bobbins were used across the width of a shawl), the linking of each set of adjoining weft threads in the double-interlocking technique, and a change in the pattern or order of weft insertions at each change of the shed—all achieved by hand labor alone. Of course, it is precisely such laborious techniques that make the shawl unique, and

figure 4 Construction illustrates double-interlocking of wefts in the twill-tapestry technique. (Photograph courtesy of Irene Emery.)

figure 5 Reverse side of construction (figure 4), illustrating the distinctive ridge formed by the joining technique. (Photograph courtesy of Irene Emery.)

18. The outlining of forms may reveal a debt to Persian carpet-making techniques.

19. Moorcroft, *Travels*, p. 176.

20. The weaving of a shawl could take 18 months or more (Irwin *The Kashmir Shawl*, p. 2).

21. Suh, *Kashir*, I, 566.

22. This innovation is described as recent in 1821 by Moorcroft, as cited by Irwin in *The Kashmir Shawl*, p. 2.



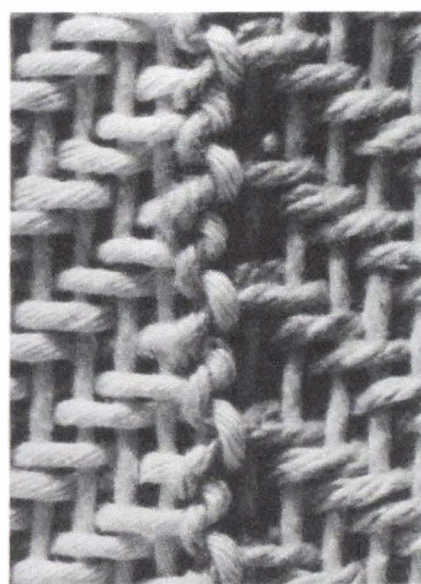
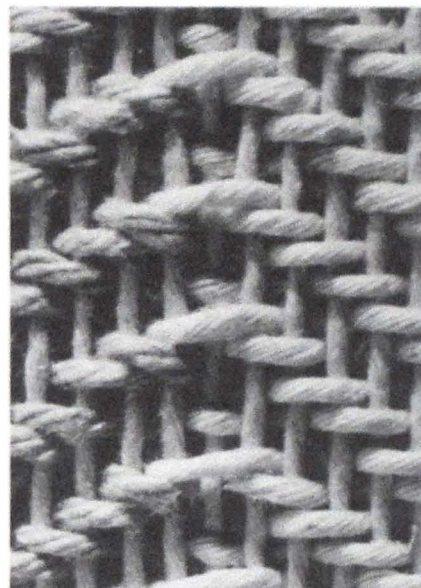
it is the extremely demanding twill-tapestry technique in particular that created the clearly delineated mosaic-patterning of shawl ornament.

These early shawls bear two-dimensional transformations of floral forms, which evolve from naturalistic sprigs to increasingly stylized flattened blossoms with geometric components. Each form is built individually, weft by weft, so that the separateness of structure and color gives each form a depth in the fabric; thus the form not only appears much the same on both fabric faces, but has a resulting inlaid quality, reminiscent of mosaic or enameling. (For examples, see especially plate 9, and also plates 3 and 4.)

Weaving done in the *kanikar* fashion was most time-consuming,<sup>20</sup> and the degree of skill required of the weaver was obviously very high. That Kashmir alone produced large numbers of these shawls was due to the fact that the necessary material could be obtained from neighboring regions, that the requisite technical knowledge had reached Kashmir in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, that a large and specialized labor force was available at extremely low wages, and finally, that certain artist/designers had chosen to pay homage to their own spectacular natural environment as they created design schemes evolving from the shapes and colors of nature, yet which were totally suited to the two-dimensional stylization of the woven textile. The happy result of this set of cultural circumstances was the shawl.

European fanfare and materialism wrought changes in the textile crafts of Kashmir during the nineteenth century. After Napoleon presented Josephine with a Kashmir shawl given him during his Egyptian campaign (1798-1801),<sup>21</sup> not only did the garment become increasingly popular with fashionable European women, but its forms and construction reflected drastic economic changes. No longer geographically or economically isolated, the Kashmir shawl industry in the nineteenth century became bound up with the predilections and methods of the Europeans. If the demands of a large market were to be met, production had to be increased. If demand was to be maintained or increased, consideration had to be taken of the prospective consumer's stylistic preferences. Under these pressures, speed of production became a high priority, with stylistic adaptations following in its wake. In fact, after 1820, design influences originating in Kashmir and Europe became hopelessly intermixed, and since the high standards of quality found in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century *kanikar* shawls were no longer justifiable on economic grounds, shawls of that early exquisite beauty and high caliber were seldom made after 1830.

The first innovation created to reduce production time was the *tilikar* or patched shawl (see figure 7).<sup>22</sup> The weaving of it was

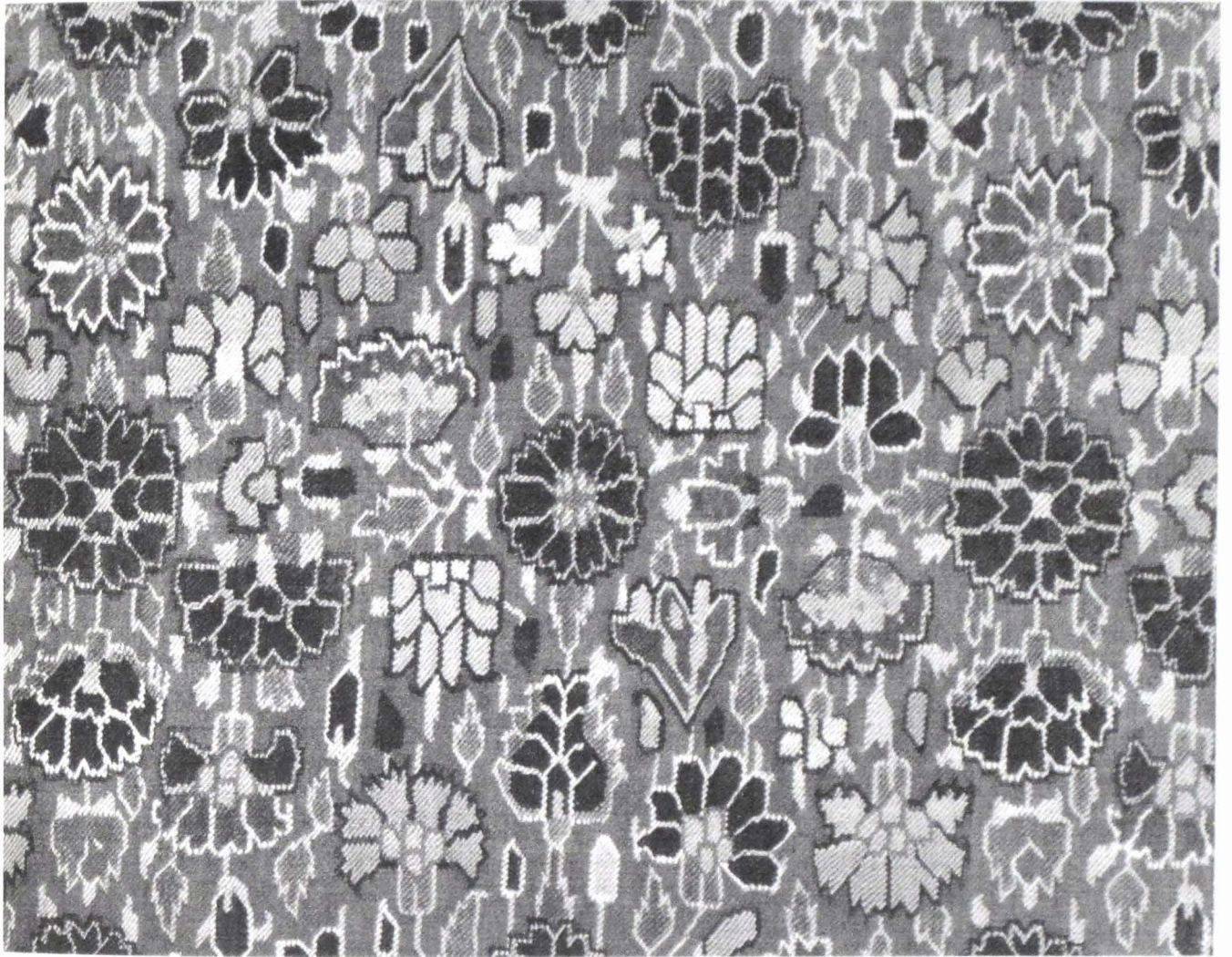


divided among several simple frame-type looms and as many weavers. After strips or irregular pieces were woven in a twill-tapestry technique, the fabric was pieced together by the *rafugar*. Pieced shawls of this sort were made as an effort to shorten the length of production time (not the number of man-hours) in order that demand could be more quickly met. As for design, these shawls very often have a large central motif made up of four identical quadrants which could be replicated in its weaving, yet the rather sudden development of central motif designs with large all-over patterning cannot be satisfactorily explained. It may be that Kashmiri designers meant to satisfy European expectations and preferences for "exotic" or "bizarre" Oriental textiles, or that the designers were already taking the stylistic advice of the French agents who favored the dense all-over designs of their own Jacquard loom-woven shawls, or perhaps that the large all-over design was a practical solution for concealing the junctions of the patchwork pieces on the face of the shawl (such junctions are very obvious on the reverse side). In any case, the form of the shawl was greatly affected by economic factors, if we are to judge from the special technique that was developed in response to economic demands. Clearly, the new means of construction did not lend itself to the same kind of delicate and precise work as the *kanikar* shawls, particularly since so many craftsmen now participated in the assembling of one fabric. In sum, clarity of form gave way to gyrations of swirling vague shapes (see plates 17 and 19), which demonstrate the stylistic impact of this new direction in technique; this abrupt transition in style and construction marked not only the beginning of the shawl's decline as a fine art form, but its rise as a cultural curiosity.

A second innovation, due to the same kinds of pressures, was the *amlīkar* or embroidered shawl (see figure 8). Worked on an undecorated twill-weave pashmina base, the *amlīkar* was embroidered in darning stitches by the *rafugar*, who imitated the appearance of the *tilīkar* or pieced shawl. Again, a large central design is most common in these garments, elaborated with scrolled forms that could be easily worked in an applied technique such as embroidery. Indeed, the fluid arabesque forms characteristic of mid-nineteenth century shawls are best suited to embroidery, which has neither the structural constraints nor the strengths of weaving. As a result, the *amlīkar* shawl was a most profitable branch of the industry, since it was made in less time and by less skilled hands than its woven counterpart.

Though both the *tilīkar* and *amlīkar* shawls were well-received by their intended markets, and while the industry prospered when they were introduced, they fall short of the high

figure 6 Shawl, Kashmir, possibly for the Persian market, late 18th century, twill-tapestry (detail of plate 9)



standards of construction and design established by the *kanikar* shawls of an earlier period. In other words, the pieced and embroidered shawls became malleable reflections of economic impulse. In the second quarter of the nineteenth century, French designers arrived in Kashmir with the intention of bringing increased sophistication and European notions of beauty to the shawl and its makers. Though Kashmiris initially resisted such interference, they were soon won over by the economic advantages of the new situation. Thus, at mid-century, the Kashmir shawl tells the story of its origins and its destiny; visually, it mirrors the Victorian sensibilities of its prospective buyers, whereas the manner and matter of its construction speak of an oppressed primitive industry, economically dominated by Europe.

At the end of the eighteenth century, businessmen and textile manufacturers in Norwich, Edinburgh, and Lyons, aware of fashionable women's increased interest in shawls, thought it would profit them to manufacture the garment in Europe. At the outset they strove to produce shawls that would be "equal in beauty and far superior in strength to the Indian counterpanes,"<sup>23</sup> attempting to follow Kashmir designs closely, to simulate the effect of twill-tapestry technique, and to approximate the qualities of goat-fleece with various combinations of wool and silk. Though the European shawls do not by any means equal those from Kashmir if judged by those standards, many of the early "imitation" shawls have a distinctive beauty of another sort. Norwich, for example, produced some of the finest Kashmir-type shawls, often woven on a silk warp with silk wefts in the plain sections, and using wool for the pattern wefts. Having been a textile center since the seventeenth century, the expertise of its weavers made it possible, in the 1780s, for them to produce the earliest imitation shawls. Shortly thereafter, weavers in Edinburgh used a brocading technique to the same purpose, but manufacture in this technique proved too expensive and was soon curtailed. Finally, both Norwich and Edinburgh weavers made use of the drawloom in the early nineteenth century, and were thus able to replicate the characteristic shawl motifs with relative ease and speed.

However, it was the city of Paisley that was to dominate shawl production in nineteenth-century Great Britain. Taking the lead with an important technical advance in 1812,<sup>24</sup> Paisley managed to produce a large number of shawls at great speed because of an efficient division of labor. In addition, its enterprising manufacturers were not above pirating successful Norwich designs and producing them more cheaply, or lowering standards to cut costs. As the first British center to use the Jacquard loom in the 1830s, Paisley guaranteed its economic supremacy and stylistic flexibility.

23. Said of a prize-winning shawl in 1791 (Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl*, p. 19).

24. The "ten-box lay" coordinated the wefts of five different shuttles.

Although some fine luxury shawls were made in Paisley, most production was geared to a mass market.<sup>25</sup>

Around 1804 French manufacturers began to produce the shawl, and though they “imitated” Kashmir designs for a time, they soon began to innovate in their own fashion. By the 1840s, French designs were influential in all shawl-producing centers, especially since both Kashmir and Paisley weavers often worked with a French pattern-book at their side. Of course, France was the home of the Jacquard loom, and the new design possibilities it created had wide-ranging repercussions.

Again, we find that the components of production of the European shawls—that is, the materials and tools used to create them—had a great influence on the style of their textiles. From the outset, both British and French shawl producers were anxious to match the warmth and softness of goat-fleece, and desperately wanted supplies of the fiber itself. Several abortive attempts were made by both nations to import and naturalize the shawl-goat, with little success.<sup>26</sup> Thus a variety of substitutes was tried over the years, including silk wrapped with wool, Australian wool (“Botany worsted”), silk and Merino wool combined (“Persian yarn”), Spanish flockwool, and all combinations of silk, cotton, and wool in warp and weft, as well as blends of those fibers. With such a variety of materials used, it is impossible to generalize about their influence on style. Yet the nature of the fiber, whether it was finely or coarsely spun, supple or stiff, fuzzy or smooth, had a marked effect on the appearance of each individual shawl.

A more crucial difference between Kashmir and European shawls is the nature of their construction, since the weaving technique that was used largely determined the style. When weaving a twill-tapestry shawl, the weaver has no stylistic limitations imposed on him by the mechanics of the loom, though the weaving process is time-consuming and laborious. While the simple Kashmir loom has no time-saving devices, it in no way impedes the weaver’s free selection of weft insertions; it merely holds the warp taut. On the other hand, while the European weaver may save time, he has not the freedom of the Kashmir weaver and, for the efficiency gained, pays a price in creative possibilities.

Until the advent of the Jacquard loom (first used in Paisley in the 1830s and earlier in France), imitation shawls were woven on a drawloom—that is, a harness loom with an apparatus (monture encasing a comber board) mounted above it, and with cords onto which are tied groups of warp threads that can be pulled by the drawboy in the appropriate order.<sup>27</sup> Tying up the loom (i.e., grouping the warp threads correctly) required great patience and skill. Since the weaver was limited in the number of cords he could

25. The enormous scale of production brought quick rewards, but later served to extinguish fashionable interest in the shawl, and ultimately helped to bring on the demise of the industry.

26. One such English effort, organized by Moorcroft, was thwarted when, after a decision to segregate male goats on one boat and females on another, the ship carrying the females was lost at sea (Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl*, p. 23).

27. Since it is not possible to deal with the drawloom in depth, for further discussion see Hooper, *Handloom Weaving*, or J. F. Flanagan, “Figured Fabrics,” in Singer et al., eds., *A History of Technology*, Vol. III.

tie up, the woven pattern had to be repeated over both the width and the depth of the fabric. Though these repeated sections could be fairly large, the drawloom was incapable of developing a large *single* motif over the face of the entire shawl. Most often, designers followed Kashmir precedents when designing for drawloom-woven shawls, and borders with repeated cone motifs were attached to a plain center.<sup>28</sup> In addition, efforts were made to replicate the angular qualities of the twill-tapestry technique, though the geometricizing of form seems imposed on, rather than organic to, the European motifs (compare figures 9 and 10).

While drawloom shawls were generally Indian in inspiration, shawls made on the Jacquard loom set style rather than followed it. When the Jacquard loom first came into use, the attendant stylistic changes were drastic. French designers, heretofore limited by the technical apparatus of the drawloom, exploited their new total design freedom to the fullest. The Jacquard mechanism replaced the drawboy with a set of perforated cards which could be as long as the designer desired; the holes in the cards allowed hooked needles to engage with harness threads which lifted individual warp threads, and a new set of warp threads could be lifted at each change of the cards. To alter the design of a shawl to be woven on the loom, the set of cards was simply replaced with those of the new design.<sup>29</sup> The unlimited selection of warp threads facilitated by the Jacquard loom enabled designers to create shawls of new complexity and designs on a new scale, making possible the most minute detail and smooth curved forms; and while the scale of detail was reduced, the scale of the designer's conception was enlarged to the point that a single large image could be woven over the entire shawl. Perhaps these flamboyant images, as well as the increasing interference of French agents, were responsible for the sudden shift in Indian shawl designs and motifs. From 1840 on, shawls made in Kashmir were riddled with the chaotic decoration, transparencies, and superfluous detail of mid-nineteenth century European decorative design, which finds full expression in French Jacquard loom-woven shawls.

It is important to note that European shawls, whether woven on the drawloom or the Jacquard loom, were always machine-woven, while the Indian product was always made by hand-manipulated weaving (when not embroidered). This difference is crucial, though subtle and somewhat difficult to make out. As Leavitt says of European shawls, ". . . construction of cloth became limited to what a machine could do."<sup>30</sup> Those limitations are both technical and aesthetic. Though the Jacquard loom overcame the drawloom's limited design range, neither could be used to create the

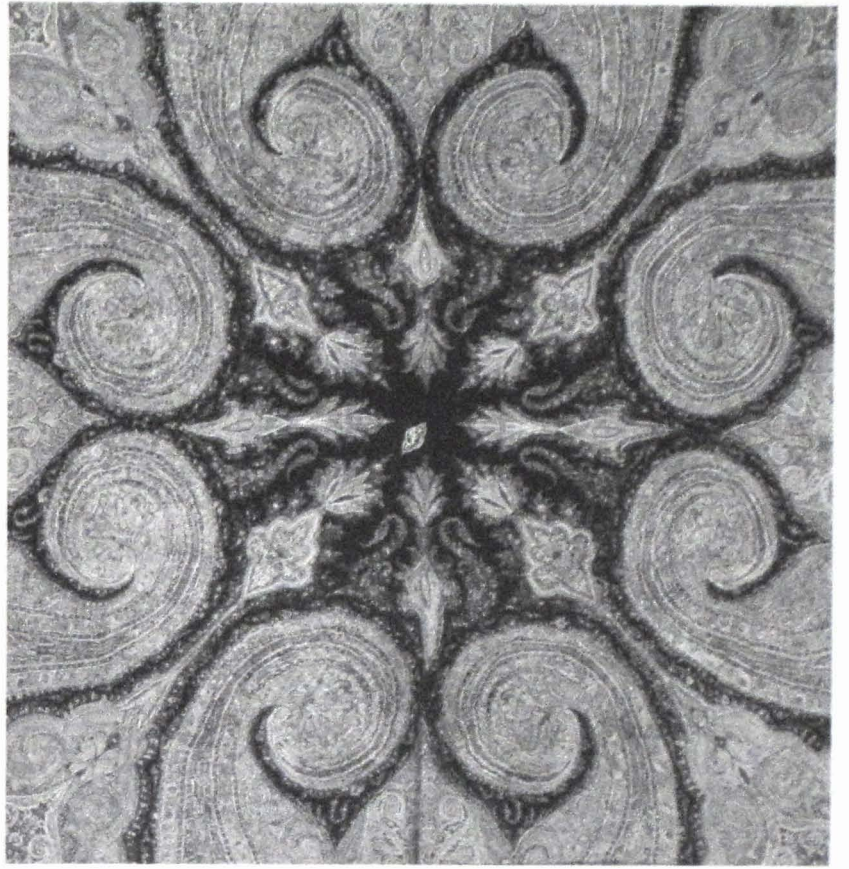
figure 7 Shawl, Kashmir, mid-19th century, pieced construction (detail of plate 17).

figure 8 Shawl, Kashmir, mid-19th century, embroidered (detail of plate 18).

28. Many European shawls of this design were made in three or more pieces and stitched together; the drawloom would be used to weave only the borders, for many of the same design were woven once the laborious process of tying up had been accomplished. Plain centers were woven on harness looms.

29. For further discussion, see W. English, "The Textile Industry: Silk Production and Manufacture 1750-1900," in Singer et al., eds., *A History of Technology*, Vol. IV.

30. Leavitt, "Fashion Commerce and Technology in the Nineteenth Century," *Textile History*, III, 51.



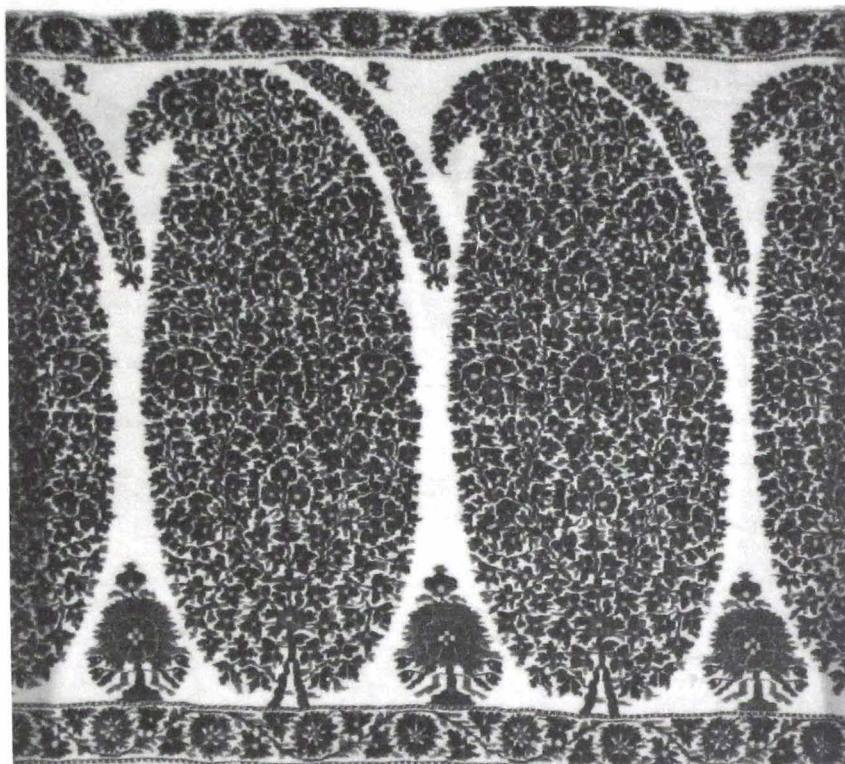


Figure 9 – Shawl border, Kashmir ca. 1800, twill-tapestry technique (detail of plate 6).

Image 10 – Shawl, Norwich or Paisley, 1825-50, machine-woven (Victoria and Albert Museum, T. 203-1969, 18), courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

mosaic-like patterning of double-interlocked twill-tapestry, which can be created only by hand. Not only are outlines of forms crisply delineated (and ridged on the reverse face) when woven in twill-tapestry, while they are flattened and less distinct in machine-woven fabrics, but floating threads cover the back of a machine-woven shawl and, though normally clipped short, obscure the woven construction on that face in a manner antithetical to the reversibility of twill-tapestry. Furthermore, the uniformity, the evenness, the imperturbable sameness and rigidity of forms in a Jacquard loom-woven shawl are its most distinctive shortcomings. The rhythms of a machine are essentially different from those of the human hand, and shawls are a reflection of those rhythms.

Machine-made shawls were produced in vast numbers in the course of the nineteenth century, and as cheaper versions (sometimes even of printed cotton) became popular with the masses, fewer women of fashion were interested in the shawl. Its popularization coincided with the disruption of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71); following that upheaval, the market for luxury shawls made in Kashmir or Europe quite simply vanished. As a result, scores of Kashmiri weavers died of starvation, while most European textile manufacturers merely shifted their production to more profitable goods.





# The Paisley

Rebecca Wells Corrie

Although legend has it that the manufacture of the Kashmir shawl began in the fourteenth century, it is from the reign of the Mughal Emperor Akbar (1556-1605) that we have the first written documentation regarding the production and design of the woolen shawls. The *Ain-i-Akbari*, a detailed account of the organization of Akbar's court, written by his chief advisor Abul-Fazl, records that Akbar personally furthered the production of the treasured shawls and introduced new styles of wearing them.<sup>1</sup> Kashmir came under Mughal rule in 1586, when Akbar at last conquered the country his family had coveted for generations. The Mughals, descendants of the legendary Timur, or Tamerlane, attacked the Indian plains after failure to retain their patrimony at Samarkand, and carved out an Islamic empire which reached from Kashmir to Southern India, establishing a dynasty that lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Kashmir was the summer paradise of the Mughals and remained under Indian control until 1753, when a follower of Nadir Shah, the Persian ruler, won it away from the disintegrating Mughal empire. We gain a sense of the opulent Mughal court from seventeenth-century representations of the enthroned emperors in figure 11, for example—a painting depicting Jahangir, Akbar, and Shah Jahan.

During the period of the great Mughals, from 1556 to 1707, a distinctive artistic climate developed in Northern India. At first culturally dependent on the Persians of Isfahan, the Mughal court gradually developed its own magnificent style of floral ornament, typified by the decoration of shawls and sashes (see figures 12 through 14). In the eighteenth century, Indian floral ornamentation became increasingly stylized, and toward the end of that century mingled with the cypress motif (figure 15), which was common in India and Persia. This combination produced a single ornamental form exhibiting the characteristics of both the cypress and the vase of flowers, which resembled a flowering bush.

At the end of the eighteenth century a second factor began to influence shawl decoration. European trade requirements had long affected the cotton textiles produced in India, but it was not until 1790 that the shawl came into vogue in the West. Somewhat later, European textiles and European versions of oriental motifs influenced the shawl-designers' work, so that by the middle of the nineteenth century a new motif had emerged and the character of the shawl had been transformed.

During the last two decades serious efforts have been made to understand how Indian textile development was influenced by representatives of the European mercantile powers in Asia, and historians have finally begun the task of unraveling three centuries of misconceptions about Eastern textiles and the sources of their

figure 11 The Emperors Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan, with Khan A'zam, I'timud Al-dawlah and Asaf Khan by Bichitr, ca. 1630, The Chester Beatty Library, Dublin. MS. 7, F. 19.

1. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, I, 97-98.
2. Bamzai, *A History of Kashmir*, p. 346. The four major Mughal rulers were Akbar (reigned 1556-1605), Jahangir (reigned 1605-27), Shah Jahan (reigned 1628-58), and Aurangzeb (reigned 1658-1707).



decoration.<sup>3</sup> Curiously, the shawl motif of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has roots spread so extensively through the ancient Near East and India that it has escaped clear definition as a step child of European colonialism. The form now known as the Paisley, which pervades twentieth-century fabric patterns, is often assumed to be an ancient Oriental motif. Yet the motif as we know it now did not exist before the end of the eighteenth century, and the name it bears in the West, the Paisley, is that of a Scottish center for the weaving of imitation Kashmir shawls. In fact, it is now clear that the ornamentation associated with the Kashmir shawl in Western Europe was actually the result of combined Indian, Persian, and European conceptions.

At the beginning of Akbar's reign, the prized shawls would appear to have been absolutely plain, possibly with a narrow border.<sup>4</sup> Shawls produced for Jahangir were also plain, or had a deep border with the geometric pattern common to Indian textiles.<sup>5</sup> Since information on early shawls is limited, the emergence of the floral patterns must be traced by means of the *patka* or sash. Like the shawl, the *patka* was worn wrapped about the body, so that the natural place for ornament was within a deep border that hung in front of the wearer. From the period of Jahangir, when the sashes bore the same geometric pattern as the shawls, to the nineteenth century, when both sashes and shawls bore the Paisleys, the two garments were ornamented in the same way. A row of floral units, or *butas*, often with their tops swaying gently to the right or left (see figure 12), was most common throughout those centuries.

It has usually been assumed that Persian artisans provided the Mughal artists with floral patterns for their textiles. And indeed Akbar, who reigned during the first stable period of Mughal history and wished to enrich the Mughal court, turned to Persia for painters and textile artisans, a policy that was followed by Jahangir. Contemporary with Jahangir's rule in India was the brilliant court of the Safavid Shah Abbas I, with which Jahangir consciously competed. Indian paintings from this period depict sashes, carpets, and other textiles dominated by Persian designs—delicate, meandering arabesques with floral accents (see figure 11), but in the later rule of Shah Jahan, other floral motifs began to dominate the ornamentation of both Mughal architecture and textiles, motifs which were more naturalistic than any that had been used in Persian art.<sup>6</sup>

Recent research suggests that the first intrusion of European art into Indian ornamentation may be ascribed to the Indian copying of floral motifs from herbals, the illustrated books of plants and flowers published in Western Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and brought to the Mughal court by Euro-

3. John Irwin, in his work on the Kashmir shawl and the Indian chintz, has made the major contribution in this area. See Irwin, *Shawls: A Study in Indo-European Influences* and *The Kashmir Shawl*. Irwin draws similar conclusions in two articles: "The Kashmir Shawl," *Marg*, VI (1952), 43-50; and "The Kashmir Shawl, Origin and Technique," *Marg*, VIII (March 1955), 121-38. On the chintz, see "Origins of the Oriental Style in English Decorative Art," *Burlington Magazine*, XCVII (January 1955), 106-14; and "Origins of 'Oriental' Chintz Design," *Antiques*, LXXV (January 1959), 84-87. He has also written, with Margaret Hall, *Indian Painted and Printed Fabrics* (Ahmedabad: Bastikar, 1971); and with Katherine Brett, *Origins of Chintz* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1970). Katherine Brett's other contributions toward solutions of the problems include "Indian Painted and Dyed Cottons for the European Market," in Prata-paditya Pal, ed., *Aspects of Indian Art: Papers Presented in a Symposium at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), pp. 167-71; and "Variants of the Flowering Tree in Indian Chintz," *Antiques*, LXXV (March 1959), 278-81.

4. A miniature from the Diwan of Amir Khosrau Dihlavi dating from about 1595-1600, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, shows a figure wearing a shawl with a delicate border. See Welch, *The Art of Mughal India*, plate 8A.

5. Such a border is found in a sash in a portrait of Shah Jahan, ca. 1620, in Ivan Stchoukine, *La Peinture indienne à l'époque des grands moghols* (Paris: Leroux 1929), plate XXIII.

pean travelers.<sup>7</sup> While the floral motif on the silk border in the Yale University collection (figure 13) does not fit into the repertoire of delicate flowers that characterized early Persian and Indian ornamentation, a comparison of the flower with an illustration of the house leek from the *Commentarii in libros sex Pedacii Discordis* by Andreas Matthiolus, published in Venice in 1554, shows it to have been derived from European models.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the herbal illustrations were the source not only of specific flower motifs but possibly of the extreme naturalism typical of Mughal ornamentation as well. They might also have been responsible for the vestiges of roots found in many textile flowers.

The flowers that appear in paintings and textiles of the Shah Jahan period are of two types. One of the most popular is a delicate single blossom swaying at the top of a stem, with two tiny buds and leaves below; it appears not only on sashes worn by figures in paintings, but also in architecture and as a shawl design during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (plate 1). The ornamentation of one sash in the Yale collection (figure 14) is typical of a group of multi-blossomed forms. Although there are nine full blossoms in each *buta*, or bunch, we are aware of the movement of every one of them against its background, along with the movement of every stem. The single-blossomed forms have the undulating grace of the floral ornamentation of the seventeenth century, a grace that energizes the spatial intervals between the floral groups. The striking contrast between these two contemporary motifs and similar ornamentation on shawls and sashes made after 1700 (figure 12, plates 3, 5) demonstrates the growing density that characterized later Mughal floral ornament. It was not merely an increased number of blossoms that marked the progression of Mughal decoration, but a loss of the attention given to each part, a subjugation of individual parts to the outline. A group of eighteenth-century sashes from the Heeramanek Collection confirms the notion that floral *butas* had become more static and solid.<sup>9</sup>

While this quality may be the result of a resurgence of Persian influence after 1700, it would probably be more accurate to view it as a product of the decay of the Mughal court. The specific interests of the Emperors Jahangir and Shah Jahan had furthered textile design, but simultaneously restricted the variety of Mughal ornamentation. The indifference, indeed the hostility, of Aurangzeb to aesthetic matters hastened stagnation in the decorative arts, making the floral motifs less differentiated, less vital. Since the already limited number of floral patterns lost their individual characteristics, so that specific flowers became less identifiable, a generalized bush emerged, not only in shawl ornament, but in architectural decoration as well.<sup>10</sup>

6. Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (The Islamic Period)*, (Bombay: Taraporevala, 1942), plate LXXX, fig. 2. See also a painting in Gascoigne, *The Great Moghuls*, p. 145, and a brilliant example of a painted architectural niche from the fort at Lahore (Gascoigne, p. 175). Book paintings are illustrated in Gascoigne, p. 219.

7. Basil Gray, "An Album of Designs for Persian Textiles," in Richard Ettinghausen, ed., *Aus der Welt der islamischen Kunst. Festschrift für Ernst Kühnel zum 75. Geburtstag am 26.10.1957* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1959), pp. 217-25; and Skelton, "A Decorative Motif in Mughal Art," in Pal, ed., *Indian Art*, pp. 147-52.

8. Richard G. Hatton, *Handbook of Plant and Floral Ornament* (New York: Dover, 1960), p. 216, fig. 387.

9. M. H. Kahlenberg, "A Study of the Development and Use of the Mughal *Patka* (Sash) with Reference to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art," in Pal, ed., *Indian Art*, pp. 153-66, plates XCIV-VIII.

10. The influence of the physical traits of the twill-tapestry technique must also be taken into account in observing the increasing density of the shawl motif.

The Mughal court was the arbiter of taste for Northern India from the middle of the seventeenth century until the middle of the nineteenth. Thus, although Mughal ornamentation had passed its zenith, generalized bushes derived from seventeenth-century Mughal *butas* dominated the borders of shawls and sashes made in India and Kashmir. During the eighteenth century the dense floral bush came to look so much like the bent-tipped cypress that it eventually merged with it and produced the shawl ornamentation illustrated in plate 4. This type prevailed until the second decade of the nineteenth century,<sup>11</sup> when the motif began to resemble the original cypress design exactly, even though it retained traces of leaves within the cypress shape (see plates 11, 12, 22, 23, 24).

The above illustrates an important principle for understanding the growth of ornamentation, a principle that functions throughout the development of the Paisley. Since ornamental forms are reduced and abstract, it is not difficult to read other forms into them. The eye that is accustomed to certain important motifs will impose them on less distinct forms, making the less distinct motif conform to the dominant shape. This is especially likely if two motifs share a major detail, such as a vase, or if they share symbolic content. Thus, should a relatively new motif such as the seventeenth-century *buta* lose its distinctive characteristics, it might be identified with a familiar shape it already resembles, such as the cypress.<sup>12</sup>

The cypress tree rivaled the flower as the dominant ornamental form in Indian architecture and textile art. Seventeenth- and eighteenth-century mausoleum architecture in India and Kashmir displayed the cypress tree with a flowering design as a major ornamental figure in inlaid wall decoration.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, on Safavid figured textiles and manuscripts the cypress and flowering tree combination had been exceptionally common, and a series of dated carpets, beginning with those from the tombs of Shah Abbas I and Shah Abbas II, incorporated cypress trees decorated with flowers.<sup>14</sup> (For a typical example of Persian cypress ornament from the Safavid and post-Safavid periods, see figure 15.)

Like the cypress, the vase of flowers is found in seventeenth-century architectural ornament.<sup>15</sup> On shawl borders of the eighteenth century, bunches of flowers appear not only with vases but with a dish below the vase and, on either side, a small bowl, at times reinterpreted as flowers or birds—a combination that exactly mimics inlaid wall decoration. In Persian art of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, the cypress, too, had a vase beneath it in representations found in ceramic niches and inlaid decoration.<sup>16</sup> Since the floral *buta* had become more unitary and the cypress had acquired floral ornamentation, it is only natural

figure 12 Sash, India, early 18th century, Yale University Art Gallery, the Hobart and Edward Small Moore Memorial Collection, 1937.5299, detail.

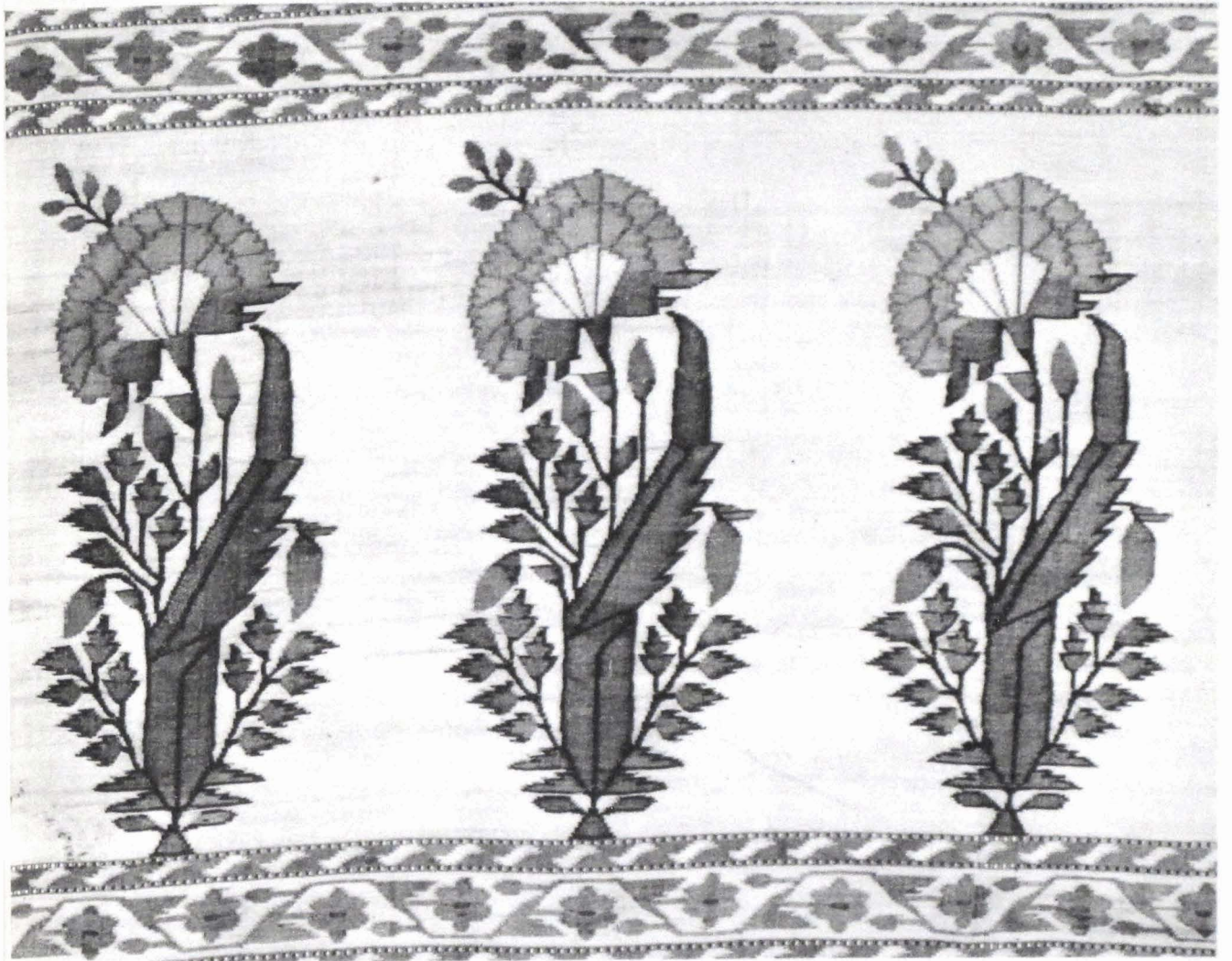
11. Shawls from the paintings of Ingres illustrate the persistence of this type of shawl ornament in the 19th century. See Robert Rosenblum, *Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1967), plates 25, 19, 5 (an early example from about 1805.)

12. Bosch has crystallized this principle, which he names the process of "substitution." See Bosch, *The Golden Germ*, p. 100.

13. Dietrich Brandenburg, *Der Taj Mahal in Agra* (Berlin: Hessling, 1969), plates 63 and 72; Brown, *Indian Architecture*, plate LXXXIX, fig. 2; and Muhammad Wali Ullah Khan, *Lahore and Its Important Monuments* (Department of Archaeology and Museums, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan, 1964), p. 81.

14. Reath and Sachs, *Persian Textiles*, plate 64; Arthur Upham Pope, *A Survey of Persian Art from Pre-historic Times to the Present* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), plates 1258, 1259, 1260; Kurt Erdmann, *Seven Hundred Years of Oriental Carpets* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), pp. 193, 200, and fig. 256.

15. Brandenburg, *Taj Mahal*, plate 72; and Khan, *Lahore*, plates 35, 50.



that the two motifs, frequently depicting vases, be confused. And although the cypress and flower continued to appear separately, shawl designers transformed the flowering bush into a new motif with the cypress outline. A highly developed interpretation of the floral *buta* as a cypress tree may be found on the embroidered border of a silk sash in the Heeramanek Collection in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (figure 16). The dish base corresponds exactly to those on the floral bushes that decorate eighteenth-century shawls, while its outline and swaying tip clearly belong to the cypress format.

In the eighteenth century a series of Persian textiles produced a motif combining the flowering tree and the cypress tree. Typical of this group is a fragment in the Yale collection (figure 17), which should be compared with the British shawl illustrated in plate 23. The design of the shawl includes small meandering flowers that extend beyond the edge of the *buta*, in a manner reflecting the motif shown in figure 17. Plate 23 is one of a type of nineteenth-century shawls that repeats this detail. Similarly, numerous trees, including the one in figure 15, are bordered with a jagged edge sometimes so exaggerated that they seem to derive from the palmette form, traditional in Islamic ornamentation, and many nineteenth-century shawls retain this border in the shawl motif (see, for example, the one illustrated in plate 24). The application of various cypress details to nineteenth-century Paisleys reinforces the argument that the cypress gave shawl ornamentation its essential form in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The design of a carved jade mirror in the Seattle Art Museum (figure 18) illustrates a floral pattern contained within a cypress-like shape frequently called "the mango." This ornament was often used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as the imperial device on a standard carried near the Mughal emperor.<sup>18</sup> Although the form is not bent at the tip like the cypress-*buta*, it not only has the same outline, but similar details, such as the vase-like base and jagged outline. No doubt, familiarity with such motifs encouraged shawl designers to repeat the cypress-*buta* once it had developed.<sup>19</sup>

At the stage in its evolution illustrated by the shawl ornament in plates 4, 6, 11, 12, and 22-25, the shawl motif combined European, Indian, and Persian forms. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a new wave of European influence on shawl design. Jahangir, following his own desires, had chosen to copy the European herbals. In contrast, the new influence was imposed by the dictates of the European textile market. John Irwin and Katherine Brett have written extensively on the instructions

16. An important ceramic niche with a vase and cypress, dated 1351, in a private collection, is discussed in S. Melkian, "The Sufi Strain in the Art of Kashan," *Oriental Art*, XII (Winter 1966), 251-58. Inlaid examples with arabesque interior designs, which seem to foretell the cypress and flower ornamentation, are included in Pope, *A Survey*, plate 544; and Arthur Upham Pope, "Persian Art: Two Interiors Spanning a Thousand Years," *Art News*, XXXVIII (April 6, 1940), 15-28.

17. Pope, *A Survey*, plates 1048B, 1049B.

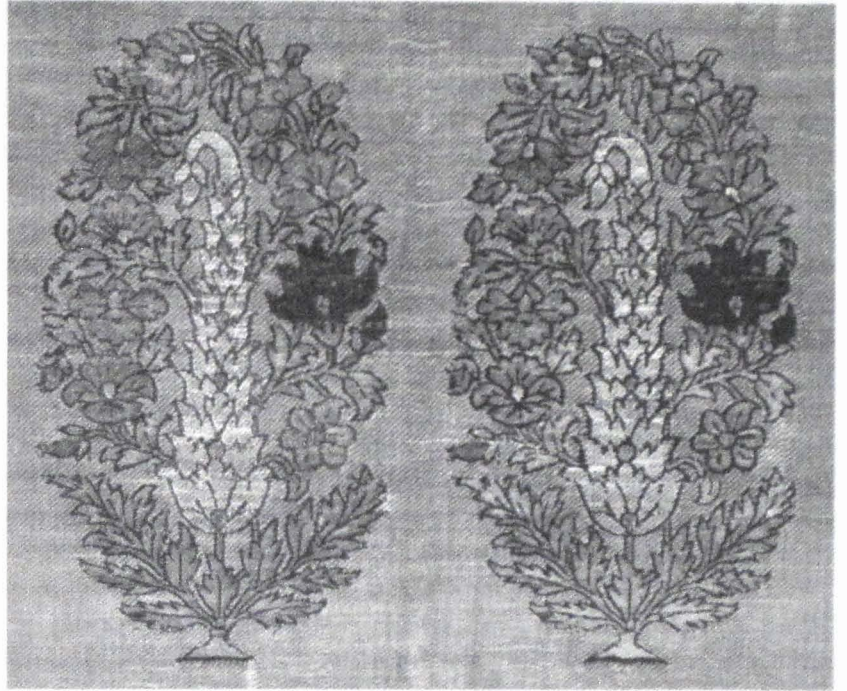
18. F. R. Martin, in *The Miniature Painting and Painters of Persia, India and Turkey from the 8th to the 18th Century* (London: Quaritch, 1912), plate 213, shows a standard with a flower. This ornament also appears on inlaid walls; see Suzanne Hausammann, *India in Colour* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1958), p. 62.

19. Numerous other motifs that resemble the shawl motif may have affected its development or acceptance. They include the flaming halo known from Japan to Turkey, the almond-shaped jewels on the crowns of painted and sculpted figures in Indian, Nepalese, and Tibetan religious art, and the flame-like motifs found in numerous Nepalese and Tibetan paintings. Many of these examples can be dated before the 13th century A.D. 17th- and 18th-century Persian and Indian textiles also bore some leaf-forms with floral interiors.



figure 13 Sash border, India, late 17th century, Yale University, the Hobart and Edward Small Moore Memorial Collection, 1937.5310.

figure 14 Sash, India, 17th century, Yale University Art Gallery, the Hobart and Edward Small Moore Memorial Collection, 1937.5307, detail.



and patterns sent to the seventeenth-century Indians who produced the painted cotton textiles known as chintzes.<sup>20</sup> These two historians have established the fact that much of Indian chintz ornamentation was derived from European design of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. Katherine Brett has isolated one motif that affected the Indian leaf, the cypress, and the Paisley in its full-blown form, probably the first sign we have that European influences were reaching the cypress-*buta*. This “turned-over tip,” as she calls it, first appeared as a development of the European acanthus leaf, and was introduced into Indian chintz patterns, where, since it was misread, it was pictured partially detached from the leaf. It functions as an extended tip on an eighteenth-century flowering tree and cypress, as well as on a nineteenth-century Persian version of the Paisley.<sup>21</sup> This tip is also discernible on the Paisleys in the shawl from the collection of the Metropolitan Museum (plate 20) and on the tree construction near the center of Yale’s shawl illustrated in plate 21. This small European detail filtered into shawl ornament from a separate Indian genre, the chintz, which had been under the control of European entrepreneurs since the seventeenth century. In contrast, alterations in shawl ornamentation were more far-reaching, and developed after European fashion discovered the shawl itself at the end of the eighteenth century, a time when European interference was direct and powerful.

In his outline of the evolution of the Paisley, John Irwin describes the development from the single flower to the Paisley as we know it today as an increasing simplification of an ornamental motif.<sup>22</sup> It is possible, however, to regard the Paisley as the product of a more complex evolution. The contrast between the cypress-like *buta* (plates 4, 6, 11, 12, 22-25) and the fully developed Paisley (plates 15-21, 26-29) is the contrast between a floral ornament whose antecedents are clearly visible and an abstracted form. Perhaps the Europeans treated shawl ornamentation as abstraction—just as they did such elements of ornament as the egg-and-dart, the palmette, and the lotus—without recognizing that the Kashmir form was a very specific motif. Imitations of the shawl made in Paisley and Norwich (plates 22-25) would suggest that the Europeans first copied shawl ornamentation as it appeared in figure 4. Since the abstracted Paisley was found in Kashmir long after European manufacturers had designed their own shawls and had taken control of Eastern production, European designers most likely developed the Paisley and reintroduced it to the East.

One indication that the abstract Paisley was not an Eastern invention is a confusion on the part of Eastern designers over precisely what the Paisley was and how it was to be used. For

20. See Irwin and Brett, *Origins of Chintz*.

21. Brett, “Variants of the Flowering Tree,” *Antiques*, LXXV, 281; Pope, *A Survey*, plate 1049B; and Yale University Art Gallery Accession No. 1937.5184, respectively, are the two examples.

22. Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl*, pp. 10-14.

example, in the chintz-like pattern of a Kashmir coat in the Yale collection (figure 19), we find the Paisley used as a leaf, suggesting by no means its derivation from the flowering bush, and thus hinting that there was a clear break in the development of the shawl motif. Close inspection of the Kashmir coat reveals the use of the Paisley in another format, one that had not been common in the textiles of Persia or India for a few centuries. In the center of the figure are two confronted leaves on a simple tree construction, a pattern which is used all over the coat. While this format had been developed in medieval Islamic textiles, it had been superseded by the naturalistic patterns of the Safavid and Mughal period; however, it has passed into European textile design by way of Italian copies of Islamic patterns, and was one of the standard designs of European orientalizing silks.<sup>23</sup>

A clear example of this motif may be found in a damask bed-hanging which belongs to the Victoria and Albert Museum (figure 20). While the association of the Paisley with the confronted leaf pattern, as in the Kashmir coat, strengthens the hypothesis that the nineteenth-century use of the shawl motif was based upon European ideas of the oriental and exotic, more emphatic evidence is found in figure 20, a European textile from around 1710, for the giant leaf-forms not only resemble the Paisley, but exhibit at an early date the exaggerated and unnatural extension of the leaf-tip, which became characteristic of the Paisley in the nineteenth century.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century a group of orientalizing textiles appeared in Europe, including the "Bizarre" silks, now believed to be of French or English manufacture. In some of these textiles, designers had devised patterns that hooked together in a totally unorganic manner, creating designs in which the leaves were twisted and their tips extended. An important silk of this type shows a repeated leaf-form, abstracted to a simple outline, with an extended, bent tip—a major example of the elaborate and abstract use of vegetation that characterizes the later handling of the Paisley, but which is counter to the often naturalistic and symmetrical Indian and Persian style prior to the nineteenth century.<sup>24</sup> These European textiles also foretold how the Paisley in shawls would be handled in the middle of the nineteenth century. For example, in the later shawls the Paisleys are drawn out and extended into involved patterns, creating elaborate vegetal constructions which contrast greatly with the neat rows of *buta*-forms that date back to around 1800. The same use of sweeping leaf-designs to formulate patterns was highly developed in the early Bizarre silks, as it was in other European textiles from the first half of the eighteenth century.

23. A revival of this medieval form may help to explain why historians have had problems reconciling the great tree of life leaves of the early period and the Paisley—that is, the disappearance of these forms in the middle Islamic period and their re-appearance at the end of the 18th century.

24. Vilhelm Stomann, *Bizarre Designs in Silks, Trade and Traditions* (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1952), plate XXIII. Stomann attributed these textiles to India, but a more convincing argument has been made for their manufacture in Western Europe. In answer to Stomann, see John Irwin's review in *Burlington Magazine*, XCII (May 1955): 153-54; and Peter Thornton, *Baroque and Rococo Silks* (New York: Taplinger, 1965), 95-102. For examples of silks other than the Bizarres, see Thornton, plates 28B, 29A&B, 31A&B, 32A&B, 33A&B. The leaf used in the textile illustrated in Stomann, plate XXIII, may be derived either from Indian chintz leaves or from English crewel work patterns. The Bizarre silks and patterns such as that illustrated in figure 20 probably form a group of orientalizing European textiles from about 1700. The complicated relationship between these designs and Eastern fabrics has not yet been fully worked out; however, this uncertainty does not detract from the theory that they influenced late 18th-century and early 19th-century Eastern textiles.

No doubt European conceptions of oriental motifs transformed the shawl motif into the Paisley. Seeking to improve the shawl and to accomplish the yearly change in style necessary to European fashion, European designers most likely found models in textiles from their own orientalizing period, and identified the shawl motif with earlier European versions of oriental motifs. Moreover, the European predilection for using simplified leaf-forms in elaborate patterns probably encouraged European designers to create more complex designs as their ability to manufacture complicated patterns increased with the new technology.

Possibly, Kashmiri artists imitated early eighteenth-century European patterns in an attempt to satisfy the European market, in which case the Kashmiri designers would have identified the shawl motif with the great leaves of eighteenth-century European textiles. Indian chintzes imitating European silks do indicate that it was a practice to send fragments of European cloth to India as patterns.<sup>25</sup> However, if John Irwin's late date (1830) for the emergence of the crystallized Paisley is correct, then it is likely that the abstracted Paisley was the invention of European designers.

There was another facet of European aesthetic expectations that affected the appearance of nineteenth-century shawls. With the acquisition of techniques which facilitated the manufacture of allover patterns, designers in both the East and the West began to produce the heavy filled-in shawls of the middle nineteenth-century. Alien to Kashmir shawls before then, these shawl patterns resemble nothing more than the famous Persian medallion carpets which Europeans had associated with the East for centuries (see figure 11, plates 16, 20, 21, 27, 28). It is difficult to be certain whether the format in shawls originated in Europe or the East. Since Eastern textile workers produced chintzes which reflected the designs of the great carpets, we can assume that such designs were not viewed in the East as the exclusive province of carpet-weaving. Thus the medallion shawl could have been developed in the East. Even precedents for the formats of square shawls (see plate 17) can be found in Mughal paintings of canopies. But a more convincing argument can be made to the effect that the choice to imitate these other textile formats was Western in origin; for taking into account the development of the Jacquard loom, which facilitated the allover pattern that could be made to look like carpets, plus the European dominance of the Eastern industry at the time the filled-in shawls emerged, one is persuaded that this new shawl type, like the Paisley, was first developed in the West. Thus the format of the medallion shawls furthers the belief that European ideas dominated shawl design after 1830 in both the East and the West.<sup>26</sup>

25. Irwin and Brett, in *Chintz*, p. 33, suggest that the Europeans had sent silk fragments to be copied in India (see fig. 21 and plates 108-12). Plate 116a shows motifs similar to Slo-mann's plate VIII.

26. Compare Erdmann, *Oriental Carpets*, plate 65, with the following: Irwin and Hall, *Indian Fabrics*, plate 13, a clear example of the canopy or coverlet of chintz in a medallion format, and plate 30. Irwin and Brett illustrate this format in plates 75 and 74b, 18th-century examples. It is not remarkable that shawls would resemble canopies, rugs, or hangings. One wonders whether the great 19th-century shawls, as they appeared in the East, were meant as apparel or as hangings, from the very beginning.

In the period following 1790, the intense activity of the European shawl market brought together the recently developed shawl-cypress and European orientalizing textile patterns. At this point no one can say positively who introduced the exaggerated forms—the European merchants, the Kashmiri pattern designers, or the Eastern entrepreneurs who appeared on the scene in the nineteenth century. But the fact is established that the Paisley developed from the integration of Indian, Persian, and European textile ornament, and taken as a whole, the evidence would suggest that the transformation of the shawl-cypress into the Paisley after the first quarter of the nineteenth century was initiated by Western designers.

If the Paisley is in part a European invention, is there any validity to the Western belief that the form is actually a tree of life symbol? The Indian Mughals, like the Persian Safavids, were the heirs not only of Islamic culture but of traditions inherited from Inner-Asia by way of their Mongol ancestors, from the Sasanian rulers of Persia of the third to the seventh century A.D., the Achaemenians of the sixth to the fourth century B.C., and the even more ancient Assyrians and Babylonians. Decorative and symbolic motifs, shared over the centuries by Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and India, appear as late as the twentieth century; and historians have had difficulty understanding which of the ancient references are to be attributed to visual coincidence, which to traditional repetition, and which to conscious revival. Considerable evidence suggests that the political atmosphere of the Mughal court produced a revival of ancient kingship motifs which invited the idea that the Paisley shape was another ancient motif.

Nineteenth-century historians placed heavy emphasis on the continuity of the symbolic content of ornamentation from the most ancient periods to the modern era. As archaeologists uncovered and deciphered the ancient Iranian and Egyptian monuments, fascination with the sources of religious symbols grew. Yet the early writers often erred in their attribution of ancient meaning to modern forms, for they seldom questioned whether the symbolism had followed the form or had been lost in the passing centuries. They assumed that if one form resembled another, it was the same form or its cousin. George Birdwood, who identified the motif he named the “knop and flower” pattern—the alternating bud and blossom ornament—clouded the issues by his insistence on the continuing religious significance of the motif. As he wrote of the knop and flower:

They are the most ancient badges of the Aryan race, but in India

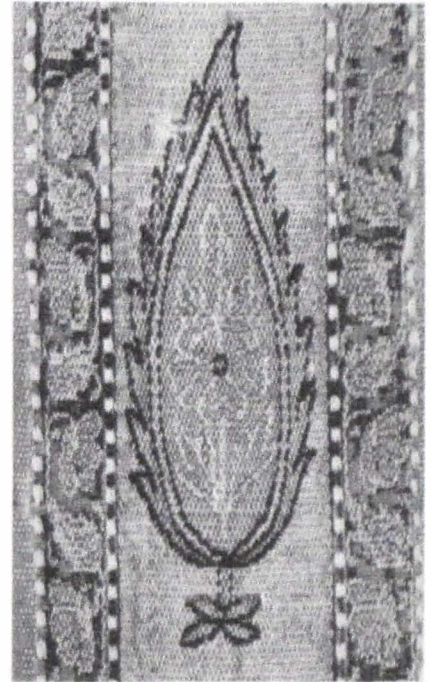


figure 15. Trimmed band, Persia, 17th or 18th century. Yale University Art Gallery, the Hobart and Edward Small Memorial Collection, 1937.4923 detail.



their employment in ornamentation, under the influence of the Puranic mythology, was for ages subordinated to that of the monstrous idol (*swami*) shapes of the Dravidian south; and it was by the Persianized or Arianized Arabs, Afghans, and Mongols (Turkomans), that their use was reintroduced as predominant forms of Indian decoration, wherever throughout Hindustan and the Dakhan, Mohammedanism prevails. They are seen figured everywhere in Oriental art, and we cannot take up a talisman of Egypt, a Syrian silk, an alabastron of Persian perfumes, or a Persian illustrated MS, or carpet, a Cashmere shawl, an Indian jewel, or *Kincob*, any of the great store of these splendid and precious stuffs, and arms, and vessels of wrought gold and silver, herein described, on which we do not find them represented, as the acknowledgement in their original use at least, of the Divine author and Finisher of every good and perfect work.<sup>27</sup>

figure 16 Sari, India 19th century, from the Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, L. 69.24.136, detail.

27. Birdwood. *The Industrial Arts of India*, pp. 343-44

28. Blair. *The Paisley Shawl*, plate 10.

29. Among the numerous studies are Phyllis Ackermann, *Three Early Sixteenth Century Tapestries with a Discussion of the Tree of Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1935); Vol. I; Goblet D'Alviella, *The Migration of Symbols*, first published in 1891 (New York: University Books, 1956); William H. Goodyear, *The Grammar of the Lotus: A New History of Classic Ornament as a Development of Sun Worship* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, 1891); Owen Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament* (London: Day, 1856); and G. Lechter, "The Tree of Life in Indo-European and Islamic Cultures," *Ars Islamica*, IV (1937): 369-416.

In an analysis based on Birdwood's work, Matthew Blair traced the evolution of the Paisley directly from the bud-shapes of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.<sup>28</sup> With questionable method, historians such as Birdwood and Blair often listed the occurrence of the bud-form and the related tree symbol without establishing either the historical context or the iconographical relevance of the motif.<sup>29</sup> Yet these writers made a major contribution: they popularized the concept of the universality of the lotus-form. William Goodyear saw the bud as another variation of the lotus—its closed form—and promoted the theory that the lotus in Indian, Egyptian, and Assyrian art implied the source, the root of life, the generative factor. It became general knowledge that the lotus and the tree of life, with which it is frequently associated, were common to most early religions. The difficulty seems to have been escaping subjective interpretations of the lotus and the tree and their association with the sun. For example, nineteenth- and twentieth-century writers usually insist that the tree of life was strictly a sacred moon or sun symbol.

We are faced, then, with two problems. First, what did the ancient forms actually mean, and second, how long and how far did they travel before they lost their meaning to become simple elements in the decorative repertoire? Two recent studies have helped to clarify the definitions of the tree of life in Indian and Iranian ornamentation. F. D. K. Bosch has explained the functioning of cosmic foliage in the religious art of the Indian subcontinent, and in his study *The Tree at the Navel of the World*, E. A. S. Butterworth performed an invaluable service by illuminating the puzzle around the legends and the visual accessories of the tree of life. "We have maintained," he wrote, "that omphalos, mountain, pillar and tree

were identical in what they symbolized, and that they represented on the macrocosmic scale a channel by which the soul passed from this world to an underworld of some kind or from the underworld or this world to a world of light."<sup>30</sup> He explains that the sun and moon together mark the *axis mundi*—the center of the world—the mystical point at which the sun and moon stand still; that the serpent or beast at the foot of the tree probably represent the primal power that can soar through the channel of the tree;<sup>31</sup> and that the bird found at the top of the tree represents the celestial world.<sup>32</sup>

Butterworth makes a crucial point when he suggests that the tree of life symbolism was the domain of the shamanistic mystic, and he posits that legends in Near Eastern mythology, such as the Gilgamesh epic, may be allegories for the emergence of sacred kingship after the demise of priestly rule and the transfer of shamanistic attributes to the king. Thus, on the Stele of Naramsin from the Akkadian period during the third millennium B.C., the king stands before a mountain below which are two cypress-like trees. Butterworth maintains that this stele of victory represents the king as the one who approaches the *axis mundi*.

The association of the cypress tree with the king in Near Eastern art is confirmed by Geo Widengren's tracing in literary and visual sources the image of the king as the custodian or gardener of the tree of life, which "is watered by the king, who pours out over it the Water of Life which he has in his possession. The Tree of Life constantly needs the Water of Life near which it is growing in the garden of paradise. Just as the garden of paradise has its correspondence in the temple grove, so also has the mythic idea of the Water of Life its cultic counterpart in the water libations of the royal priest."<sup>33</sup>

The kingship symbolism of ancient Mesopotamia continued throughout the Achaemenian and Sasanian eras. Although the tree symbolism is less common, the association of the king with the tree continues. A Sasanian silk of the fifth and sixth centuries in the Yale collection shows two kings on winged elephants, holding the paws of a lion skin that has been incorporated into the tree of life, the top of which is constructed of bud-shaped forms.<sup>34</sup> This silk is part of a series of royal textiles that extends to thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian copies of Islamic silk weaving.<sup>35</sup> A twelfth-century Islamic piece in the Yale collection (figure 21) illustrates the continuity of the elements of the design—the confronted lions at the base of the tree, and the birds above; the tree itself, constructed of a small bud-like form, approximates a cypress shape.<sup>36</sup> The inscription is a dedication "To the excellent, the renowned, son of the dynasty and of the true faith Muhammed ibn Ziyad; may God grant him long life," suggesting that perhaps

figure 17 Fragment of silk and satin stripes. Persia, 18th century, Yale University Art Gallery, the Hobart and Edward Small Moore Memorial Collection, 1937.4748, detail.

30. Butterworth, *The Tree at the Navel of the Earth*, p. 65.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 153.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

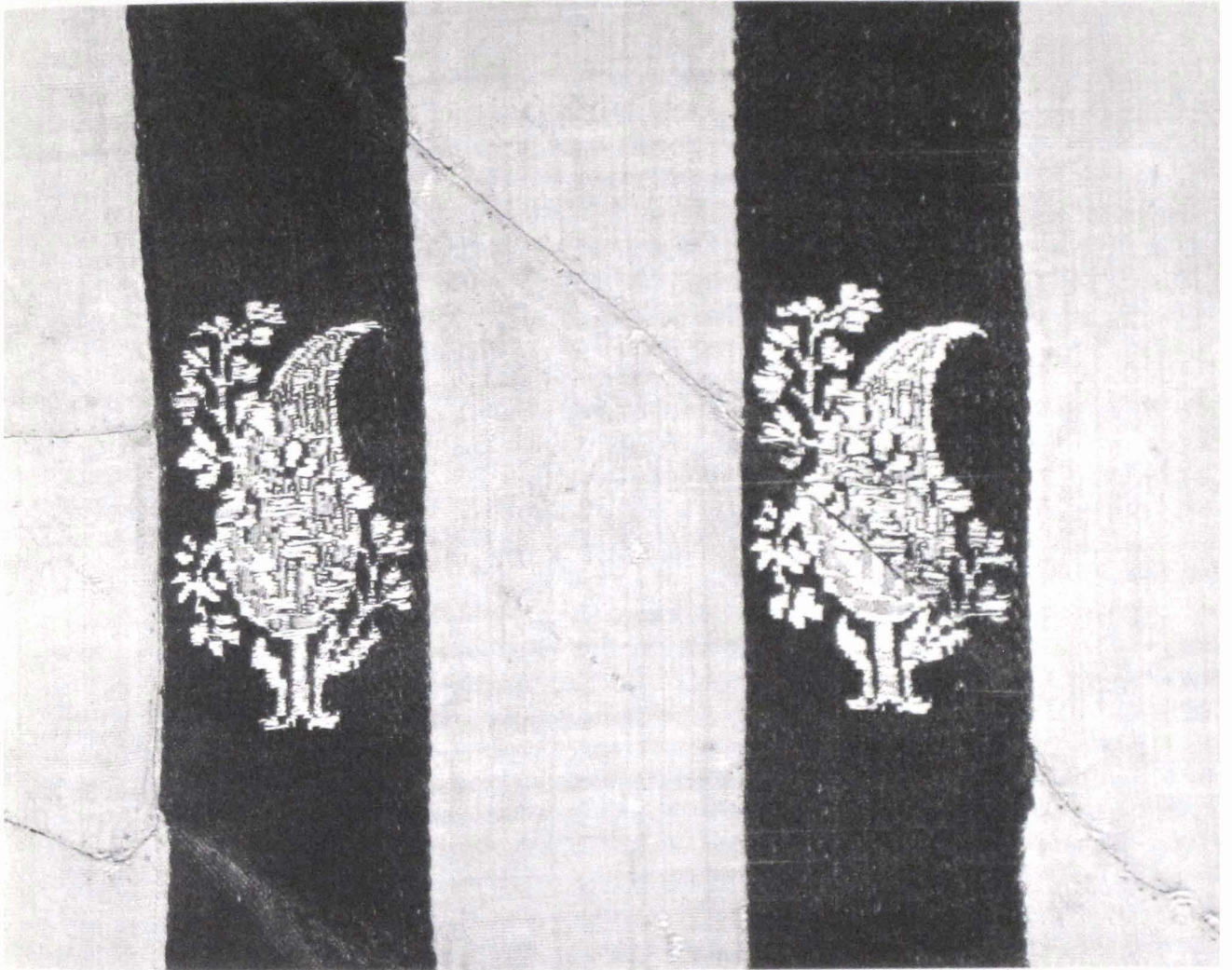
33. Widengren, *The King and the Tree of Life*, p. 15.

34. Phyllis Ackermann, "An Un-Published Sasanian Silk," *Bulletin of the Iranian Institute*, VI (December 1946), 42-50.

35. Pope, *A Survey*, plate 990; Adele Coulin Weibel, *Two Thousand Years of Textiles* (New York: Pantheon, 1952), plates 170, 171, 172.

36. Another example—with two lions and a bird—is a relief from about 1310 on the facade of the Yakutiye Madresseh Erzurum, in Turkey. See Carl F. Riter, "Persian and Turkish Architectural Decoration: the Interchange of Techniques: 11th through 14th Centuries," *Oriental Art*, XIII (Autumn 1969), 194-200, fig. 9.





Islamic art had absorbed the tree, lion, and bird symbolism as a representation of temporal power.

The motif as it appears in the Yale textile reflects the influence of another remnant of Sasanian kingship symbolism. Just below the top of the tree, above the tails of the birds, appear two small wing-like leaves. Maurice Dimand has shown that these pieces of foliage developed from the paired wings that topped the crowns of a number of Sasanian kings (figure 22).<sup>37</sup> During the early Islamic period, in the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock, the stucco reliefs from Mshatta, and later in the Al-Aqsa mosaics, the feathered crown was incorporated into the tree of life, perhaps in an attempt to create a symbol proclaiming the validity of Islamic rule.<sup>38</sup> While these forms became part of the foliage of tree motifs, they remained distinct even in the eighteenth century, and in fact became the type of double-leafed motif in figure 20. The repetition of this initially conscious incorporation of a kingship motif in the tree of life suggests a continuing sense that the forms in question represented a religious reinforcement of secular power. Although the exact meaning of the forms may have been lost or, as Oleg Grabar suggests,<sup>39</sup> never quite caught on, we have evidence that, in the thirteenth century, a vague sense of the connotation of power persisted.

Although the cypress-like tree of life appears frequently in thirteenth-century painted ceramics, there would seem to be a break in the continuity of symbolism following the Mongol invasion of Iran during that century. Perhaps we merely lack evidence, but even so, we cannot assume that the royal symbolism, which had existed for centuries, survived. As I have shown, the cypress form did appear in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but only in association with paradise. And not only is there little evidence that the tree served as a kingship symbol, but the usual iconographic attributes of the royal tree—the gardener, the birds, and the beast—are missing.

The complete tree of life motif probably reappears under the new imperial dynasties of the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries—the Safavids of Isfahan and the Mughals of Northern India. The famous figured textiles of the Safavid period include pieces showing a realistic tree with beasts at its foot, birds above it, and frequently figures holding cups or wine bottles beside it.<sup>40</sup> Since some of these cloths were associated with sacred places, it is possible that the significance of these symbols was known. In India the famous peacock throne of Shah Jahan was crowned by a jeweled tree with a peacock on either side of it.<sup>41</sup> The numerous garden carpets depicting cypress-filled Edens would indicate that in the seventeenth century the association of the cypress with a

37. L'Orange, in his *Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World*, pp. 44-47, provides several examples of the double-wing motif. See also *Sasanian Silver, Late Antique and Early Medieval Arts of Luxury from Iran* (University of Michigan Museum of Art, August to September 1967). Entries 61 and 70 are examples of the double-wing motif mounted with the head of an ibex.

38. For a more extensive discussion of the incorporation of the Sasanian wing-motif into Islamic ornament, see Dimand, "Studies in Islamic Ornament," *Ars Islamica*, IV, 293-337; Oleg Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), pp. 58-61, 72-74; and Henri Stern, "Recherches sur la Mosquée Al-Aqsa et sur ses Mosaïques," *Ars Orientalis*, V (1963), 27-47.

39. Grabar, p. 74.

40. Examples include three pieces illustrated in Pope, *A Survey*, plates 1011, 1029, 1035, all from the 16th and 17th centuries.

41. S. M. Edwardes and H. L. O. Garrett, *Mughal Rule in India* (Delhi: Chand, 1962), p. 234; Tavernier, in François Bernier, *Travels in the Mogul Empire A.D. 1656-1668*, ed. Archibald Constable, trans. Irving Block (Delhi: Chand, 1968), p. 472, describes two trees and one peacock, apparently an error, since it contradicts other contemporary reports. See also Percy Brown, *Indian Painting under the Mughals, A.D. 1550 to A.D. 1750*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), plate XXV, for a portrait of Shah Jahan on the peacock throne.

tree of life in paradise had persisted or been revived. But is it safe to suggest that the cypress was once again considered a symbol of imperial or perhaps sacred kingship? How meaningful was the ancient Iranian symbol in the modern era, or even in the medieval, and to what degree was it a mere mechanical repetition of an old motif, either visual or literary?

We know that the great Mughal emperors had developed a theory of sacred kingship, and the outrage that it provoked among the more rigorous adherents of Islam suggests that it was not universal but rather the product of Mughal imperial development:

Royalty is a light emanating from God, and a ray from the sun, the illuminator of the universe, the argument of the book of perfection, the receptacle of all virtues. Modern language calls this light *farr-i-izidi* (the divine light), and the tongue of antiquity called it *kiyan* (the sublime halo). It is communicated by God to kings without the intermediate assistance of anyone, and men in the presence of it, bend the forehead of praise towards the ground of submission.<sup>42</sup>

Abul Fazl, Akbar's chronicler and theoretician, wrote the above lines, reflecting his and Akbar's belief in the sanctity of the emperor. This imperial grandeur was expressed through symbols that had come down from the Turkoman ancestors of the Mughal rulers. Many of the important kingship symbols inherited by way of the Mongols from the Sasanian kings are documented by the painting schools encouraged by Akbar's patronage. For example, the traditional presentation of a Mongol king, one leg tucked up to his body in the position of royal ease, continued into the period of Akbar's reign. Near the emperor often stand privileged courtiers carrying royal standards—the whisk, arrow quiver, and bow—and other royal attributes found in paintings from Inner-Asia and in Sasanian art.<sup>43</sup>

Certain royal symbols, such as the whisk, are first apparent in Assyrian and Achaemenian art. Even paintings of the king at hunt are a continuation of a tradition that dates back to the Assyrian period. Close confrontations between king and beast are depicted in reliefs at Persepolis, in hunting reliefs on Sasanian silver, and in paintings of the Mughals.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, symbols of the *axis mundi* derived from the ancient Near East are among the motifs shared by the Indians and Persians. Richard Ettinghausen has proposed that the center marking of Safavid medallion carpets indicated the position of the imperial throne at the *axis mundi*.<sup>45</sup> He also suggests that the seventeenth-century emperors were indeed aware of the idea that the enthroned king was seated at the center of the world. Other symbols of the *axis mundi* are illustrated in the triple portrait of Jahangir, Akbar, and Shah Jahan illustrated in figure 11,

42. Abul Fazl, *Ain-i-Akbari*, p. 3.

43. Emel Esin, "Ay-Biligi: The Court Attendants in Turkish Iconography," *Central Asiatic Journal*, XIV (1970), 78-117. Other major articles by Esin in this area should be consulted: "The Hunter Prince in Turkish Iconography," *Asiatische Forschungen*, XXVI, 18-76; and "Turkic and Ilkanid Universal Monarch Representations and the Cakravartin," *Proceedings of the Twenty-Sixth International Congress of Orientalists*, II, 86-132. These articles offer extensive insights into the material which forms the basis for the inherited kingship symbolism of the Mughal rulers, including cup and hunting symbolism and ruler epithets.

44. Erich Schmidt, *Persepolis I: Structures—Reliefs—Inscriptions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), plates 146, 147; Sasanian Silver, plates 1, 8, 9; Brown, *Indian Painting*, plate XLIII, shows Jahangir battling a lion in a painting from about 1623.

including the umbrella carried over the person of the emperor, here a part of the throne itself. Another attribute frequently found in royal portraits of the period is a bird that appears atop umbrellas and thrones, as well as on canopies.<sup>46</sup> In other words, the imperial portraits of the seventeenth century were not merely portraits but were expressions of a concept of kingship, imperial and sacred.

While the Mughals conserved the expressions of universal kingship handed down directly from their cultural predecessors, one begins to detect a distinct change in the use and in the very choice of symbols. It is not certain whether a number of these symbols were merely mechanical repetitions; but there is evidence that the seventeenth-century emperors and their successors were conscious of their predecessors and in fact desired to emulate and identify with them.

The most important transformation began with Akbar. Although his motivation is still a subject of debate, he apparently developed an eclectic religion in an attempt to strengthen his rule over an empire characterized by multiple religious beliefs. At the same time, writers of the period indicate that he genuinely sought a mystical fulfillment not available in Islam. Akbar questioned representatives of major religions, including Christianity, and even provided a forum for religious debate. Finally, he settled on an eclectic faith based for the most part on Indian and Persian Zoroastrianism, which emphasized the sacred quality of kingship.<sup>47</sup>

Badaoni, a contemporary chronicler who vehemently opposed Akbar's religious experimentation, left a detailed if somewhat hostile description of Akbar's innovations. He recorded that Akbar introduced sun and fire worship:

A second order was given that the sun should be worshipped four times a day, in the morning and evening, and at noon and midnight. His majesty had also one thousand and one Sanscript names for the sun collected and read them daily, devoutly turning towards the sun.<sup>48</sup>

At the last he ordered that the sacred fire should be made over to Abu-l-Fazl, and that after the manner of the kings of Persia, in whose temples blazed perpetual fires, he should take care it was never extinguished night or day.<sup>49</sup>

The era of the Hijrah was now abolished and a new era was introduced, of which the first year was the year of the Emperor's accession, viz., nine hundred and sixty-three. The months had the same names as at the time of the old Persian kings.<sup>50</sup>

Badaoni's anger at Akbar's straying from Islam was directed not at

figure 18 Jade mirror-back, India, 17th century. Seattle Art Museum, the Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection, IN 4.3.

figure 19 Coat, Kashmir, 19th century, Yale University Art Gallery, the Hobart and Edward Small Moore Memorial Collection, 1937.5261, detail.

45. Richard Ettinghausen, "The Boston Hunting Carpet in Historical Perspective," in M.S. Dimand, *Persian Hunting Carpets of the Sixteenth Century* (Boston: Museum Bulletin LXIX, no. 356, 1971), p. 71.

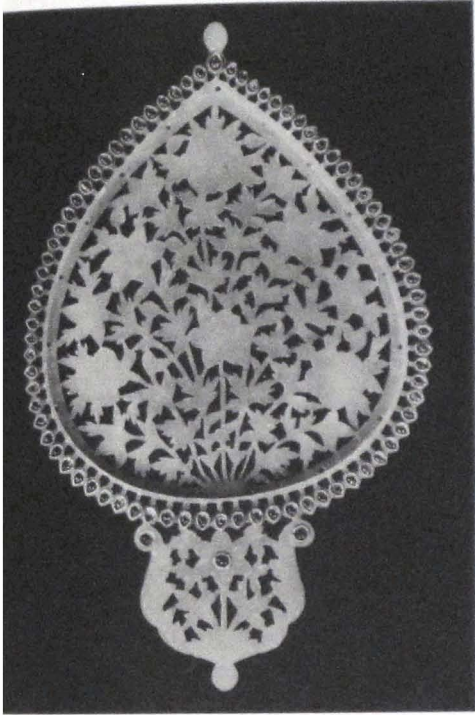
46. An ancient example of the umbrella, from the Achaemenian period, can be found in Schmidt, plates 138 and 139; for a discussion of the umbrella and the bird, see Schuyler Cammann, "Ancient Symbols in Modern Afghanistan," *Ars Orientalis*, II (1957), 5-34.

47. Emmy F. S. Wellesz, *Akbar's Religious Thought Reflected in Mogul Painting* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1952); Ahmad Azziz, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), pp. 168-71; and J. J. Modi, "Parsees at the Court of Akbar," *Journal of the Asiatic Society, Bombay Branch*, XXI (1904), 69-245.

48. Al-Badaoni, *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, II, 332.

49. *Ibid.*, pp. 268-69.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 316.



Zoroastrian believers alone but at Hindu influences as well, some in Akbar's harem itself. However, the final choice of what were perceived to be ancient Persian motifs encourages the idea that Akbar was indeed looking to Zoroastrian and therefore to ancient Persian sources for his religious and imperial prototypes.

The activities of Akbar's son and successor, Jahangir, increase the impression that it was to Persia and the ancient Persians that the Mughals looked for symbols of their greatness. Jahangir continued his father's religion. Moreover, according to Richard Ettinghausen, Jahangir was innovative, for he created a totally new iconographic motif based upon his own religious virtue;<sup>51</sup> and, perhaps influenced by his Persian wife, Nur Jahan, he introduced other motifs. For example, he adopted the name Jahangir (World Seizer), although he had been known as Salim, and changed the name of his son from Prince Khurram to Shah Jahan (King of the World). Despite the presence of universal king titles in Mongol tradition, the assumption of such names at that time is suspiciously reminiscent of the ancient titles of the Iranian kings. Naramsin assumed the title "King of the Four Quarters"; Darius's famous inscription proclaimed the Achaemenian to be "Darius, King of Kings, King of Countries, King of this Earth"; and Albiruni, whose medieval writings were available to the Mughals, recorded that the Sasanians used the epithet "Shahanshah" (King of Kings).<sup>52</sup>

Jahangir also had coinage made depicting the signs of the zodiac, an innovation he claimed was strictly his own, but which clearly showed an adherence to the Persian or Zoroastrian motifs.<sup>53</sup> And he probably introduced other motifs because he believed them to be from ancient Persia; indeed, portraits of Jahangir and Shah Jahan include a string of bells balancing a set of scales,<sup>54</sup> for Jahangir, most likely in imitation of a Persian ruler, had adopted the practice of fastening up at the fort at Agra a "Chain of Justice" made of bells, so that anyone suffering from injustice might seek attention by ringing it.<sup>55</sup>

A religious and political identification with the ancient Persians appears to be not the exclusive, but certainly the major source of validating kingship symbols. Even the name of Darius the Achaemenian was itself a metaphor for an emperor of the period; for instance, a line from the verses on the famous Safavid garden carpet in the Poldi-Pezzoli Museum in Milan states that this carpet was for the "Darius of the World,"<sup>56</sup> and in his memoirs Jahangir refers to Shah Abbas as "bearing the banner of Darius."<sup>57</sup>

Perhaps the most striking example of the identification of the Mughals with the ancients is a group of portraits from the period of Shah Jahan.<sup>58</sup> As Mughal painting developed, the profile view became a formula for portraiture, probably owing to the influence

figure 20 Damask hanging, French or English, ca. 1710. Victoria and Albert Museum, T.58-1937. (By courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.)

51. Richard Ettinghausen, "The Emperor's Choice," in Millard Meiss, ed., *De Artibus Opuscula XL: Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky* (New York: New York University Press, 1961), pp. 68-120.

52. These uses are found respectively in Henri Frankfort, *The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient* (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1954), pp. 42, 214; and Albiruni, *The Chronology of Ancient Nations*, trans. and ed. C. Edward Sachau (London: William H. Allen, 1879), p. 109.

53. Jahangir, *Memoirs of Jahangir*, I, 2-3.

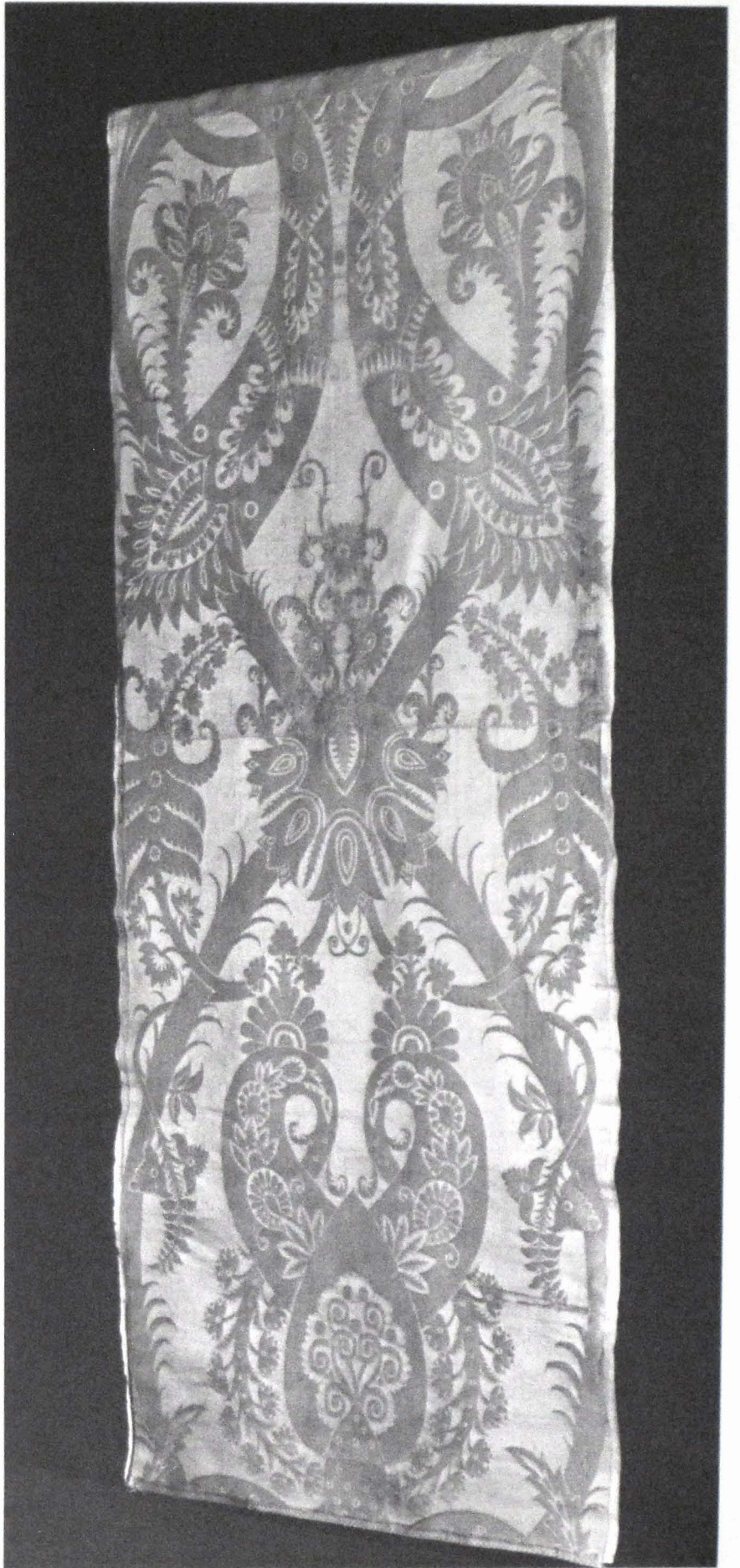
54. Gascoigne, *Great Moghuls*, pp. 145, 153.

55. Jahangir, I, 7.

56. Maurice Dimand, *A Guide to an Exhibition of Oriental Rugs and Textiles* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1935), p. 10.

57. Jahangir, I, 94.

58. The two most important include that illustrated in figure 23, and a portrait of Jahangir from the school of Shah Jahan, in Stchoukine, *La Peinture indienne*, plate XXXIV.



of earlier Indian art. In addition, from the reign of Akbar through the eighteenth century the figures in enthronement scenes were at first in the position of royal ease and then later had both legs drawn up beneath the body. However, a group of paintings exists in which the imperial figure is seated in a throne chair. One example, in the Heeramanek Collection in Los Angeles, portrays Shah Jahan sitting in profile and holding a sword, his hand raised in a gesture of recognition, as two figures approach, their hands clasped before them (see figure 23). Behind the throne is a courtier with a whisk, who touches the edge of the throne-back with his hand. This is not a portrait of a court scene but a ceremonial representation of figures coming into the presence of a deified ruler, an impression which is enhanced by the slightly larger size of the imperial figure and by his great halo. Nothing like these paintings existed before in Mongol art, and they contradict all traditional formulas for royal portraiture.<sup>59</sup> On the other hand, there is a visual similarity suggesting that these paintings are based on ancient Persian reliefs, and it is likely that the Mughals were looking to the Achaemenians, to the great Darius, of whom they were conscious through the Zoroastrian religion and the use of his name as a royal metaphor. Among the Achaemenian reliefs of Persepolis are several depicting sacred monarchs with worshipers before them and the whisk-bearer behind, often with his hand resting on the upper edge of the throne-back;<sup>60</sup> the slightly over-sized king himself holds a staff, as an emperor would hold a sword in Mughal painting. European travelers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have left descriptions of the well-known Persepolis monuments assuring that the reliefs which resemble paintings like that in figure 23 were visible.<sup>61</sup> In a similar imitation of Iranian imperial monuments, Fath Ali Shah, a Persian king of the nineteenth century, commissioned a relief of himself hunting, not far from the Sasanian carved monuments in the Persian hills.<sup>62</sup>

The era of the great Mughals and their successors was not a period in which kingship symbolism faded away, as some historians have suggested. In fact, it is clear that when the Mughals used symbols, they were aware not only of what they meant but occasionally of where they came from. Even in the seventeenth century the Mughal rulers of India and Kashmir had retained many symbols rooted in the ancient Iranian empires.<sup>63</sup> Not content to repeat mere formulas, they consciously drew on sources of kingship symbolism outside their immediate tradition, creating new iconography and resurrecting certain motifs that had fallen into disuse.

In a court which professed sacred kingship, most of the *axis-mundi* symbols belonged to the emperor. They probably in-

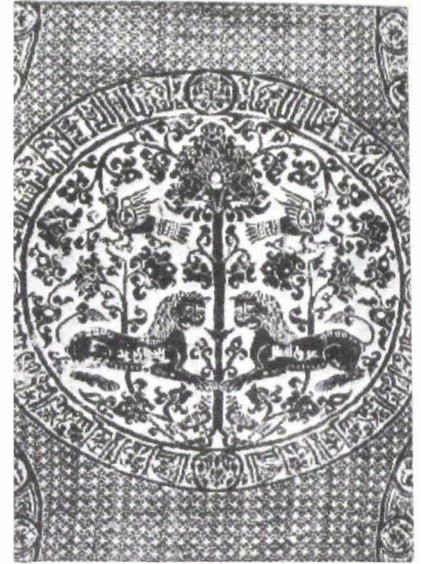


figure 21. Fragment of compound cloth, Persia, late 12th century, Yale University Art Gallery, the Hobart and Edward Small Moore Memorial Collection, 1941.274, detail.

59. Esin, "The Court Attendants," *Central Asiatic Journal*, XIV, 79.

60. Schmidt, *Persepolis*, plates 98 and 99, details of the eastern doorway of the throne room at Persepolis.

61. John Pinkerton, *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in All Parts of the World*, Vol. IX (London: 1811); it includes reports by Pietro delle Valle (1614-ca. 1627), p. 106; William Francklin (1786-87), p. 267; and a combined section of descriptions by Chardin, Tavernier, Thevenot, and other early travelers, pp. 193-94.

62. André Godard, *The Art of Iran*, trans. Michael Heron, ed. Michael Rogers (New York: Praeger, 1965), plate 71.

63. This desire to be associated with the ancient Achaemenians and Sasanians continues to the present day in Iran. See Richard W. Collman, *Nationalism in Iran* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964), pp. 66, 80, 148.



cluded the cypress tree, which was certainly the symbol of tombs and the symbol of paradise, for the cypress, which had never lost its sacred connotations, was used in the period of the Mughals, standing near the person of the emperor in paintings, atop the peacock throne, and decorating a sash worn by Akbar himself (see figure 11).<sup>64</sup> Most likely the association of the cypress with sanctity and royalty applied to representations of the tree in textiles, since it appeared as a holy symbol on carpets and on Indian painted textiles.<sup>65</sup> Thus it is safe to suggest that the cypress-*buta*, as it appeared in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century shawls, carried some royal or sacred connotations. In addition, the shawl motif resembled the mango-shaped royal insignia or standard as seen in figure 18. Undoubtedly this, too, was an *axis-mundi* symbol, for it bears a striking resemblance to the reduced tree-forms in medieval royal textiles (see figure 21). Indeed, the visual similarity to the royal standard probably strengthened the idea that the cypress-*buta* was either a royal or sacred symbol. Thus we may assume that the European historians were correct in saying that the shawl motif from about 1800 was either a tree of life symbol or was descended from one, not a tree of life symbol as they saw it, a moon or sun symbol bearing strictly religious significance, but as it had been used in the most ancient eras—that is, as a symbol of sacred power. It is dangerous, however, to consider all this symbolism as having derived directly from the ancient periods. In part, the existence of ancient meaning should be interpreted as a revival of ancient symbols during the seventeenth century, and not as the persistence of ancient symbols, as nineteenth-century Europeans have implied.

If the cypress-*buta* was in fact a tree of life symbol, however watered down, was Blair correct in calling the Paisley a tree of life symbol? Although descended from it, the Paisley was not always perceived as such in the East. Indeed, the crystallized Paisley caused considerable confusion among those who used it and wrote about it, for it resembled both the mango and the cypress, but was neither one nor the other. The final factor in its development, the influence of Europe, has generally been ignored by historians. Matthew Blair and others have preferred to consider the Paisley as a completely Eastern motif, whereas Eastern writers give it a variety of names such as the mango, almond, or cypress, and see it as a traditional Indian form, possibly a symbol of royal or sacred lineage.<sup>66</sup>

One theory has been that the Paisley was derived from ancient or modern crown insignia, perhaps because it resembles an Eastern turban jewel which had evolved at the same time as the shawl ornament. Originally used to anchor a turban feather, the

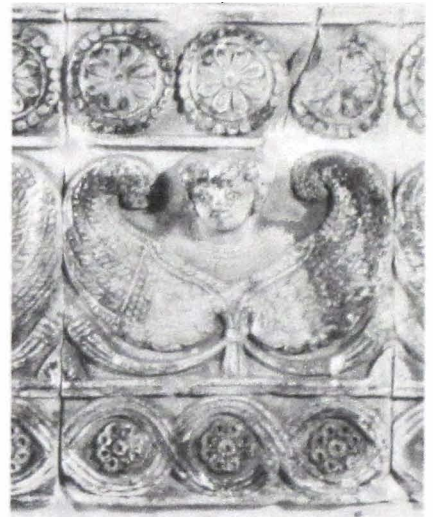


Figure 22. Fragments from the Sassanian Palace at Che' Takhtan, Persia, 3rd to 7th century A.D. Philadelphia Museum of Art, purchased: Museum Funds, 29-132-1, detail.

64. Stchoukine, plate XXVIII. This was much more common in Persian manuscript painting. The literary tradition using the cypress as metaphor for the warrior king or hero is continuous and is documented in Firdausi's *Epic of the Kings*, a medieval literary epic known to the Mughals, which frequently employs metaphors such as Faridun "grew as beautiful as a slender cypress" (*Firdausi: The Epic of the Kings, Shah-nama the National Epic of Persia by Firdausi*, trans. Reuben Levy [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967], p. 17).

65. Irwin and Hall, *Fabrics*, p. 52, plate 20, illustrates a 19th-century painted textile using the Mibrab format, and suggesting the use of the cypress to indicate paradise. This painted textile and a nearly identical one in the Yale collection closely resemble the 1351 ceramic niche mentioned above, n. 16.

jewel was bestowed upon honored courtiers.<sup>67</sup> The *jigha*, as it was called, gradually came to resemble the feathers themselves toward the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>68</sup> At times individuals were portrayed holding the prestigious objects, and by the beginning of the eighteenth century, Indian and Persian rulers were painted with a jewel shaped like the Paisley held in one hand or pinned to their turbans. The same form ornamented the turbans of Middle Eastern rulers as late as the nineteenth century.<sup>69</sup> One writer recently recounted the following legend, based on nineteenth-century Western sources: "He said that the Mughal emperors wore on their turbans a jewelled decoration known as the *jigha*; shaped like an almond which frequently formed the base of an aigrette of feathers. An Andijani weaver copied the shape of the *jigha* in a scarf for the emperor and it became the fashionable design for shawls from then onwards."<sup>70</sup> The fact that the new crown symbol was easily identified with the Paisley would indicate that the shawl motif or Paisley continued to be associated with royalty. Another writer, describing the development of the shawl motif, claimed that he had been told by a Persian courtier that "the device represents the chief ornament of the old Iranian crown, during one of the earliest dynasties."<sup>71</sup> He was probably referring to the Iranian feathered crown motif as seen in figure 22. Indeed, the Paisley does resemble it, but the only clear tradition leading from those crowns to the Paisley is indirect and in textiles. It is most likely that neither the Paisley nor the turban jewel was devised to resemble the ancient symbol, but rather that they were "recognized" as ancient symbols once they had evolved. In an imperial climate disposed to the imitation and creation of ancient symbols, neither the identification of the jewel nor its twin on the shawl ought be surprising. Thus the Paisley, too, was identified as an ancient kingship symbol, not because it was directly from ancient symbols, but because it resembled known ancient forms.

In an environment as iconographically creative as the seventeenth-century Mughal court, it is probable that the tree-shape had regained much of its early kingship significance and was perceived as a religious and imperial symbol, just as it was by the European writers. The religious and imperial connotations of the cypress were probably transmitted when the shawl motif was identified with the tree-shape. However, the subsequent European changes in the form of the cypress-*buta* that produced the Paisley weakened the symbolic association of the shawl ornament with the cypress in India and Kashmir, and the resulting confusion was probably responsible for the variety of explanations in India regarding this single form.

In sum, while the shawl ornament seen in plate 4 may be

66. One recent study of Indian ornament labels various Paisley forms as the mango, almond, pine cone, etc.; although these forms vary in interior design, they all share the same basic outline. See Enakshi Bhavani, *Decorative Designs and Craftsmanship of India; with over 10,021 Designs and Motifs from the Crafts of India* (Bombay: Taraporevala, 1968), plates 36, 38, 58, 70.

67. Abdul Azziz, *Arms and Jewellery of the Indian Mughuls* (Lahore: Azziz, 1947), pp. 112-16.

68. Gascoigne *Moghuls*, p. 186; Martin, *Miniature Painting*, plate 213; and John Irwin, "Heritage of Art in India, the Mughal Period," *Studio*, CXXXV (February 1948), 37-49.

69. Examples are found in portraits of Nadir Shah of Persia (Martin, plate 168), and Farrukasiyal (Stchoukine, plate LXVII). In the 18th century this jewel was held between the fingers, as it was in the earlier form. See Mary Churchill Ripley, *The Oriental Rug Book* (New York: Stokes, 1926), p. 147, for an outline of the development of the jewel.

70. Pearce Gervis, *This Is Kashmir* (London: Cassell, 1954), p. 135. It is, of course, entirely possible that the shape of the *jigha* did affect the appearance of ornamentation in 19th- and 20th-century Eastern textiles.

71. Sidney Humphries, *Oriental Carpets, Runners and Rugs and Some Jacquard Reproductions* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1910), p. 380.

figure 23 Shah Jahan with two Princes and an Attendant, India, Mughal, ca. 1640. From the Nasli and Alice Heeramanek Collection, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, L.69.24.327.



said to have derived from a tree of life or kingship symbol, the Paisley itself cannot; for the distinctive Paisley shape was a textile motif that had evolved in the nineteenth century owing to the influence of European designs on motifs in Persian and Indian art, and in Near Eastern and European eyes acquired the prestige of a lineage reputedly stemming from the most ancient eras. When Western writers called the Paisley a tree of life motif in a purely religious sense, they were mistaken, but they did suggest the association of the Paisley with the cypress, thus indicating the array of Eastern kingship symbols that conferred meaning on a motif which in fact had not appeared until after 1800.

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# Catalogue Plates

## 1 Kashmir

17th century

goat-fleece

twill-tapestry technique

primarily red and green

patterning

14½ x 5¾ inches

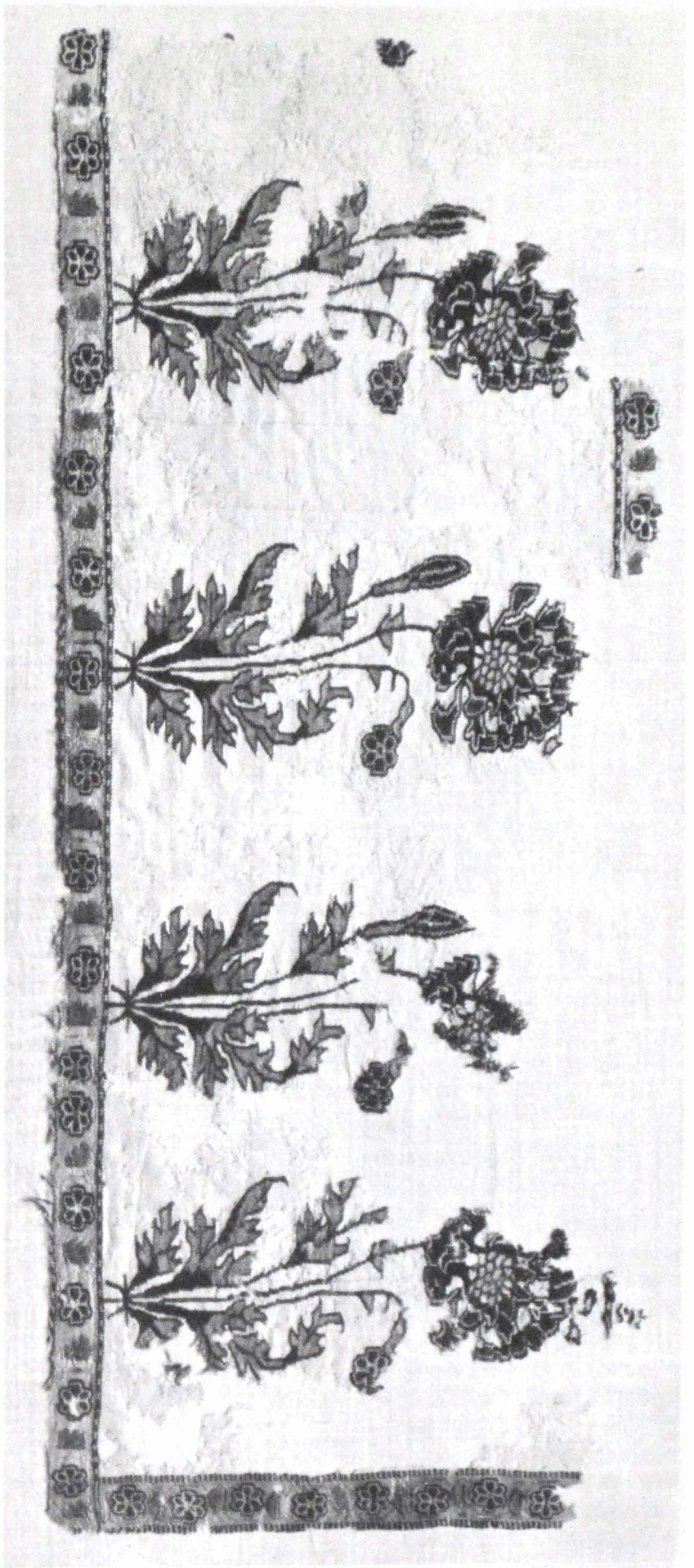
This fragment from a shawl border illustrates the graceful floral motif perfected during the reign of Shah Jahan.

Victoria and Albert Museum

I.S. 70-1954 (Photograph by courtesy of the Victoria and

Albert Museum.)





**2 Kashmir**

early 18th century

goat-fleece

twill-tapestry technique

primarily red and blue

11 x 4½ inches

The *buta* on this shawl fragment, composed of six similar blossoms, resembles textile motifs frequently found in paintings from the later reign of Aurangzeb.

Victoria and Albert Museum

I.M. 48-1924 (Photograph by courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.)



**3** Kashmir  
mid-18th century  
goat-fleece  
twill-tapestry technique  
multicolor  
12 x 8½ inches  
The blossoms on this shawl  
fragment are confined within a  
shrub-like format.  
Victoria and Albert Museum  
I.M. 169-1913 (Photograph by  
courtesy of the Victoria and  
Albert Museum.)



**4 Kashmir**

1750-1800

goat-fleece

twill-tapestry technique

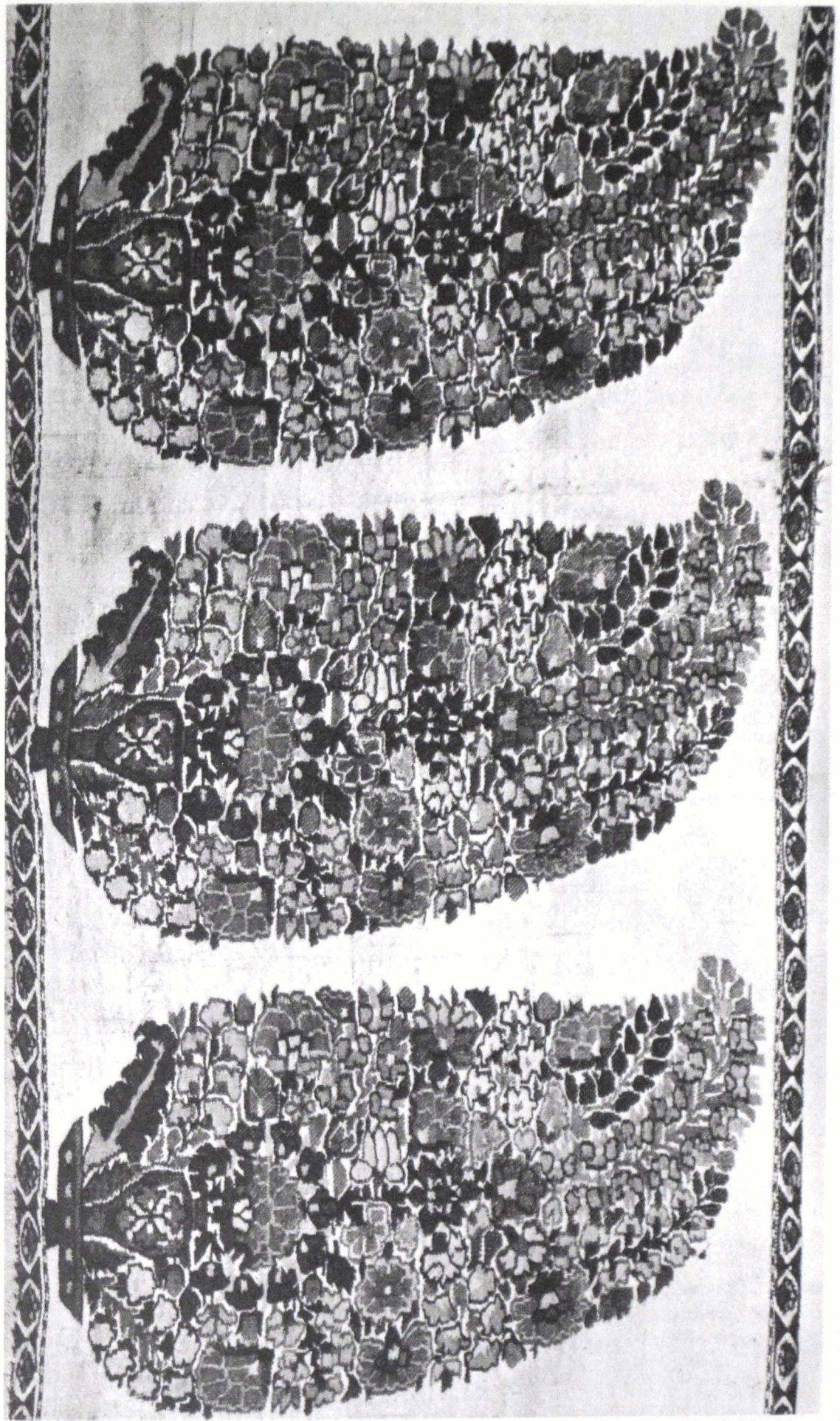
multicolor

47½ x 11 inches

Although the motif on this shawl fragment retains floral details and stands on a vase, its shape approximates that of the cypress.

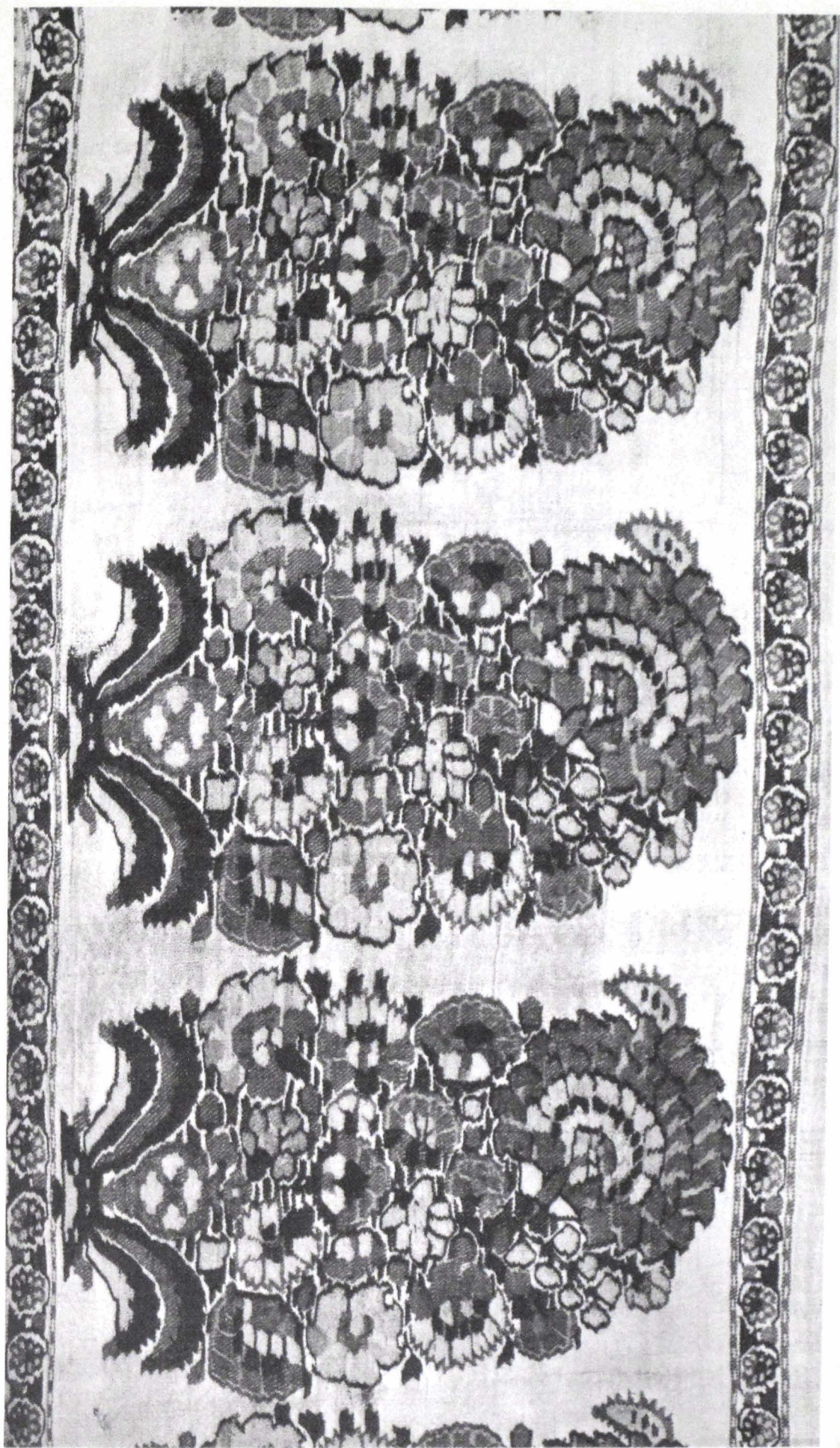
Victoria and Albert Museum

I.M. 302-1913 (Photograph by courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.)

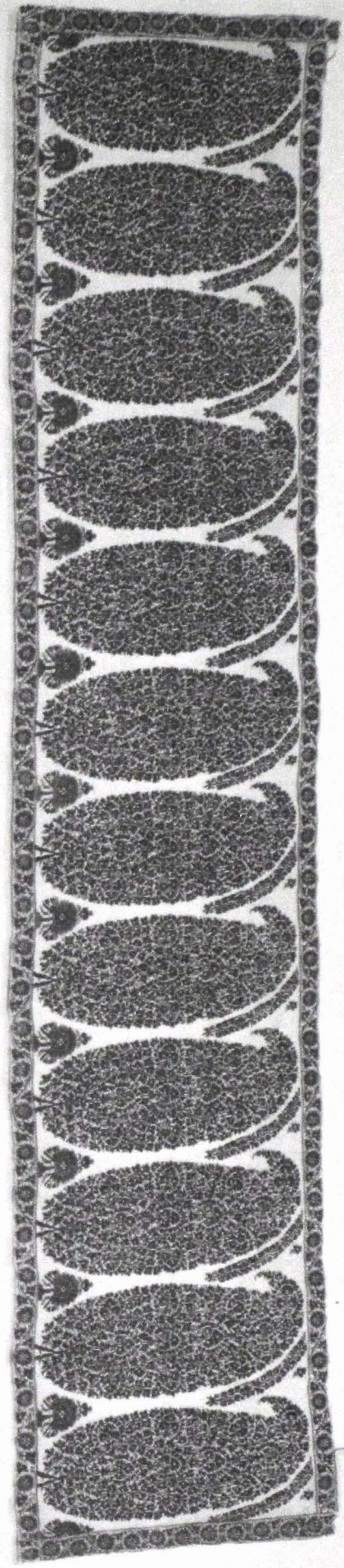


**5 Kashmir**  
1750-1800  
goat-fleece  
twill-tapestry technique  
multicolor  
112 x 52 inches  
The densely constructed *buta*  
on this shawl takes on a  
naturalistic form.  
Victoria and Albert Museum  
I.M. 17-1915 (Photograph by  
courtesy of the Victoria and  
Albert Museum.)





**6** Kashmir  
ca. 1800  
goat-fleece  
primarily red and blue patterning  
50 x 10½ inches  
This combined cypress and  
floral motif, perched on a root  
base, is repeated across a shawl  
border woven in the twill-tapestry  
technique.  
Yale University Art Gallery,  
Hobart and Edward Small  
Moore Memorial Collection  
1951.51.98



**7 Kashmir**

late 18th century

goat-fleece

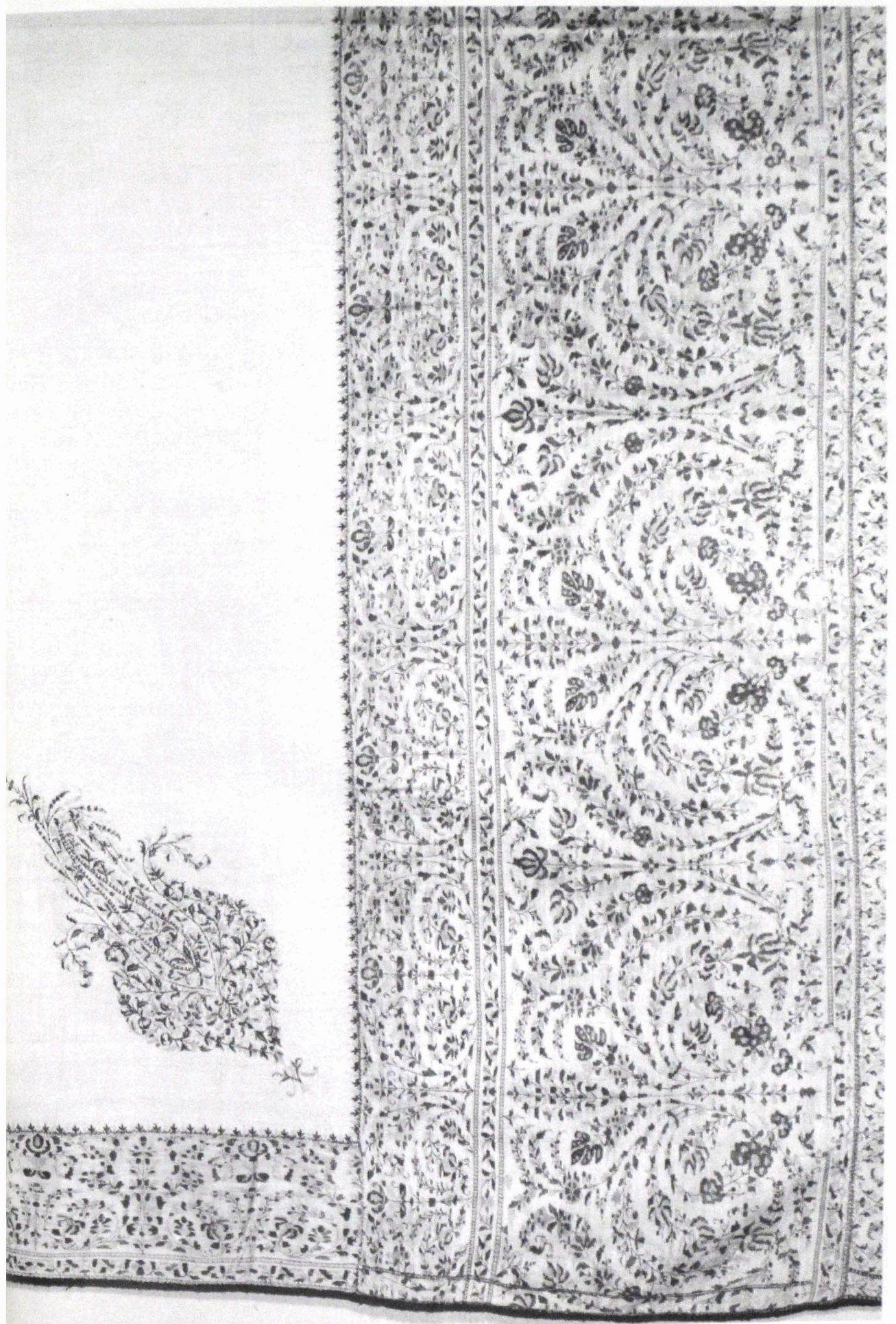
pale pink and olive patterning

120 x 55½ inches

Twill-tapestry portions of the shawl are extremely fine and predate the plain twill sections; the transfer of borders to a new body, and their integration with embroidery, were probably necessitated by wear. The repeated lotus pattern is common to Mughal architectural ornament from the 17th century; the corner motifs are of a later style. Purchased in Kashmir by the former owner.

Yale University Art Gallery,  
Hobart and Edward Small Moore  
Memorial Collection

1937.5263



**8** Kashmir, possibly for the Persian market, or of Persian origin

late 18th century

goat-fleece

118¼ x 53 inches

The alternating pattern of bud and flower recalls Persian designs. The pink and orange flower-forms are worked in twill-tapestry technique on a green latticework.

Yale University Art Gallery,  
Hobart and Edward Small Moore  
Memorial Collection

1937.5256



**9** Kashmir, possibly for the Persian market, or of Persian origin

late 18th century

goat-fleece

multicolor patterning

129 $\frac{7}{8}$  x 42 inches

The dense pattern of typical shawl flowers is given characteristic angularity by the twill-tapestry technique, and the outlining of forms owes a debt to Persian carpet-weaving. Note the distinctive triangular flower which corresponds to a form on a recently discovered Kashmir shawl fragment dated 1700.

(See Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl*, plate 4, top.) Bought in Istanbul by the former owner.

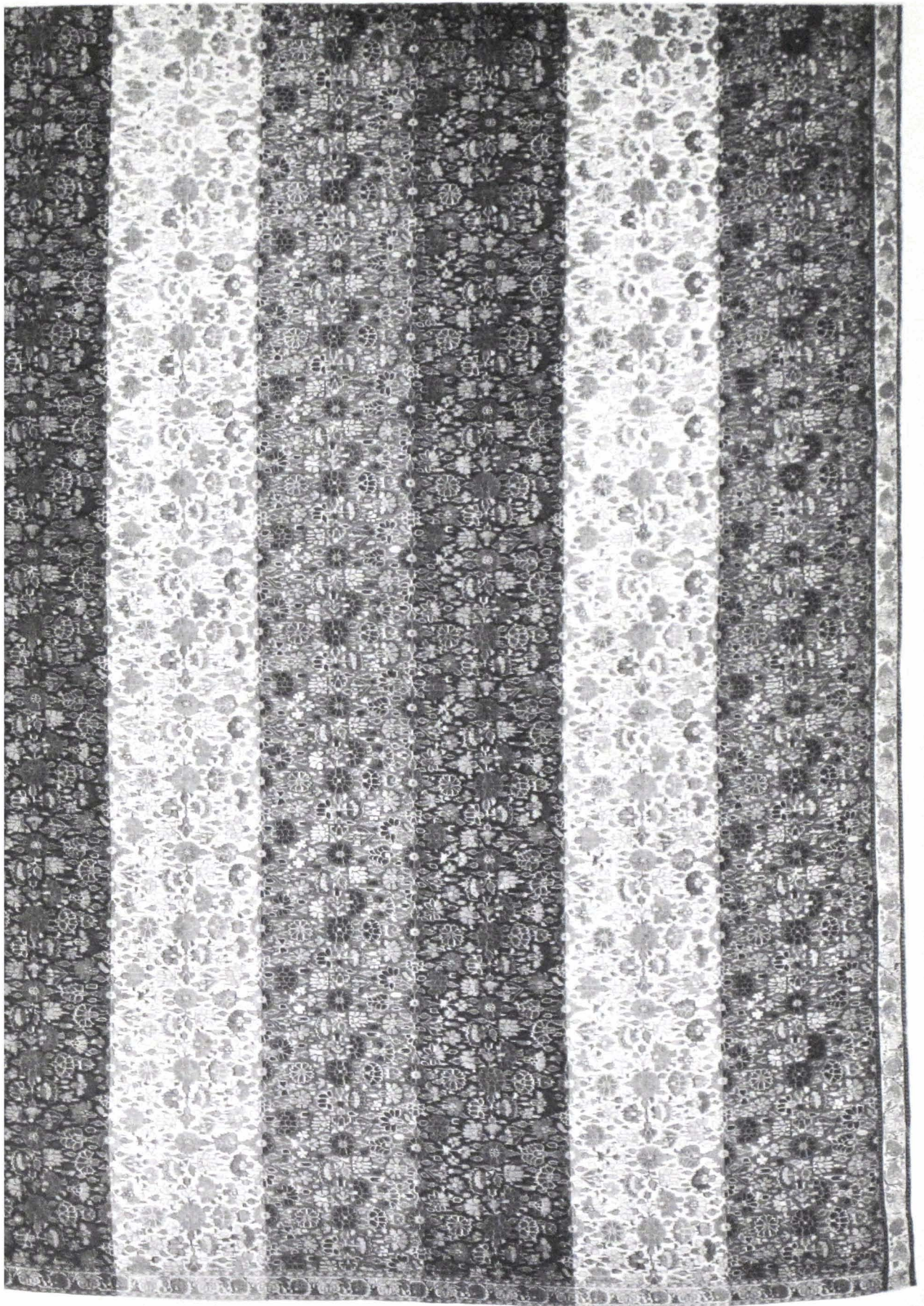
Yale University Art Gallery.

Hobart and Edward Small Moore

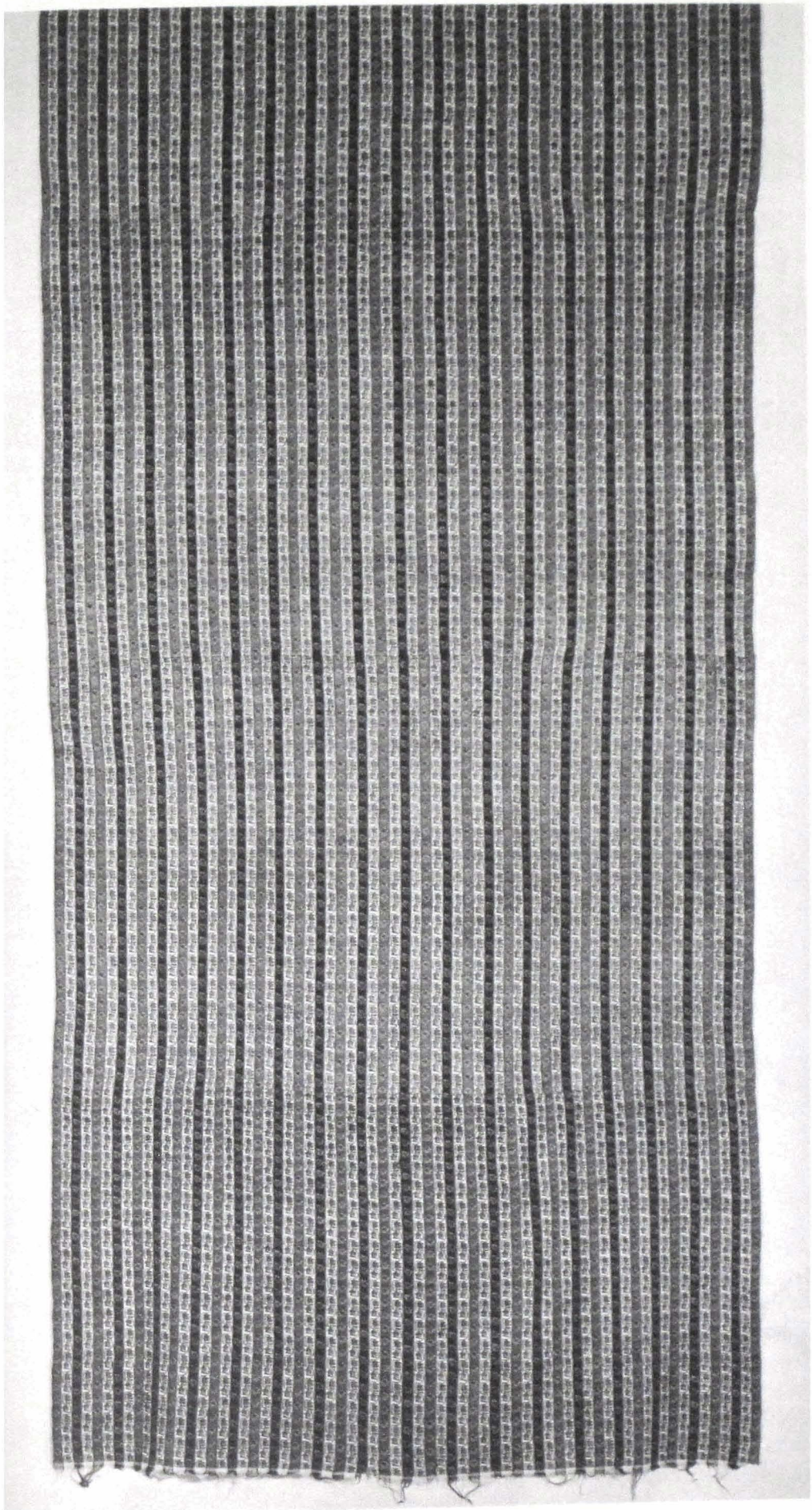
Memorial Collection

1939.640





**10** Kashmir, possibly for the Persian market, or of Persian origin  
early 19th century  
goat-fleece  
twill-tapestry technique  
red and blue patterning  
115¾ x 47½ inches  
The repeated columns of tiny flowers are reminiscent of the ornament of 18-century Persian trimming bands and striped textiles. A similar shawl is worn by the sitter in Ingres' *Portrait of Mme. Panckoucke*, dated 1811 (Paris, Louvre).  
Yale University Art Gallery,  
Hobart and Edward Small Moore  
Memorial Collection  
1937.5258



**11 Kashmir**

early 19th century

goat-fleece

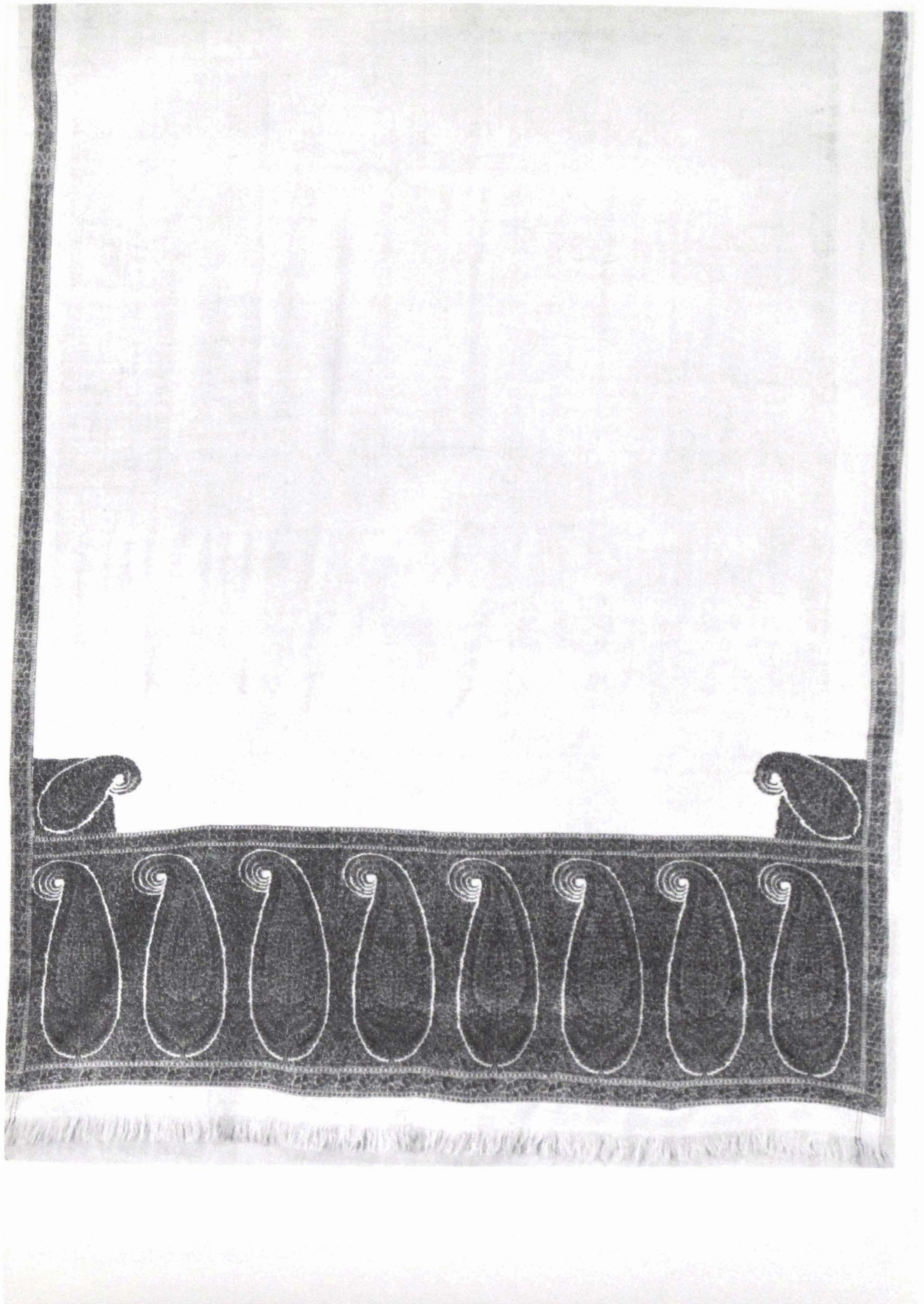
primarily blue patterning

118 x 51 inches

Enclosed within a cypress outline, the lower leaves retain the shape of the Sasanian double-wing motif. Woven in the twill-tapestry technique.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Gift of Clara Livingston Cheesman, 1943.

▲ 43.113



**12 Kashmir**

early 19th century

goat-fleece

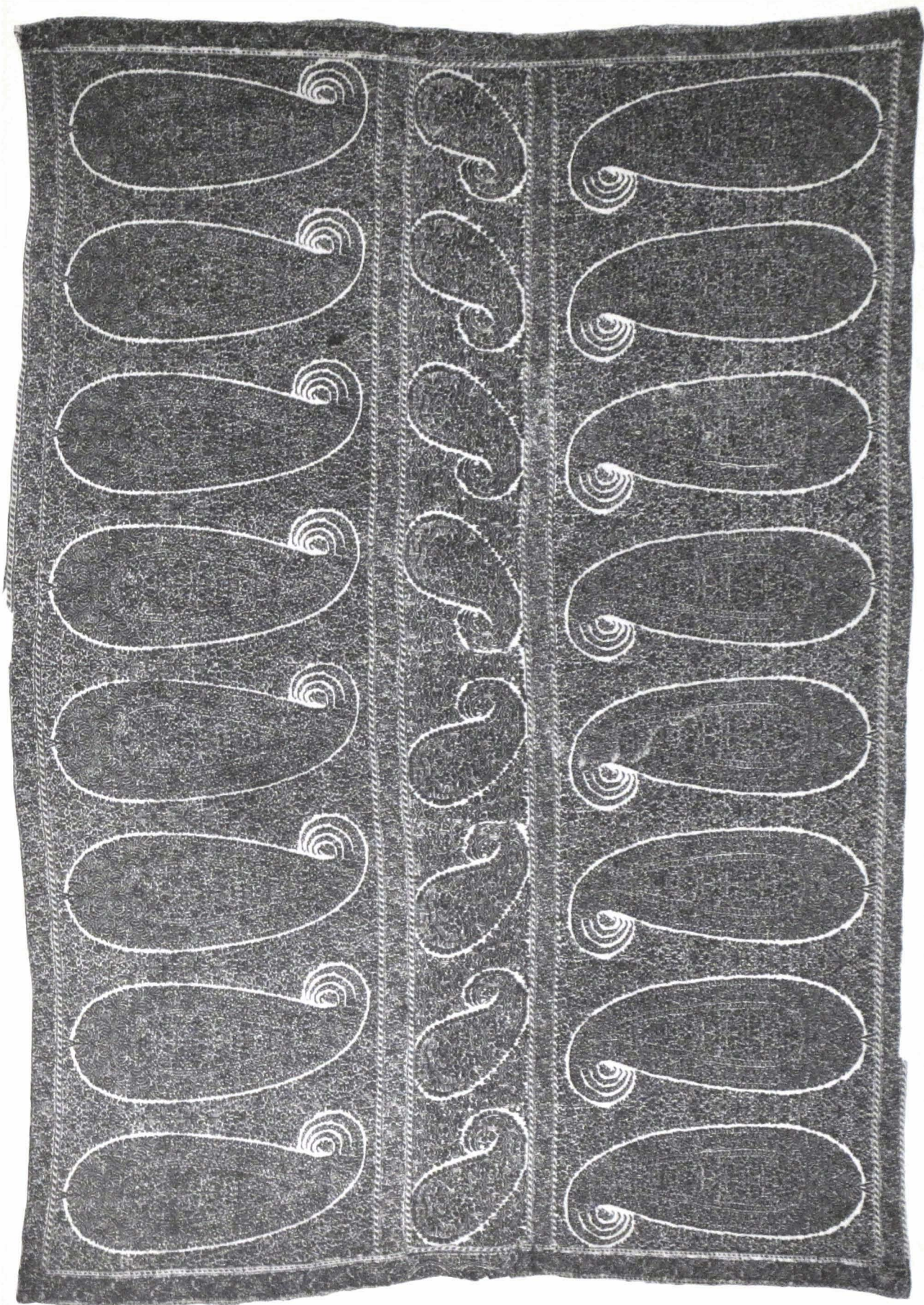
primarily blue

36½ x 53 inches

Like many variations of the cypress, the motif on these borders has both an inner and an outer shell. Woven in the twill-tapestry technique.

Yale University Art Gallery,  
Hobart and Edward Small Moore  
Memorial Collection

i 1937.5257



**13 Kashmir**

early 19th century

goat-fleece

twill-tapestry technique

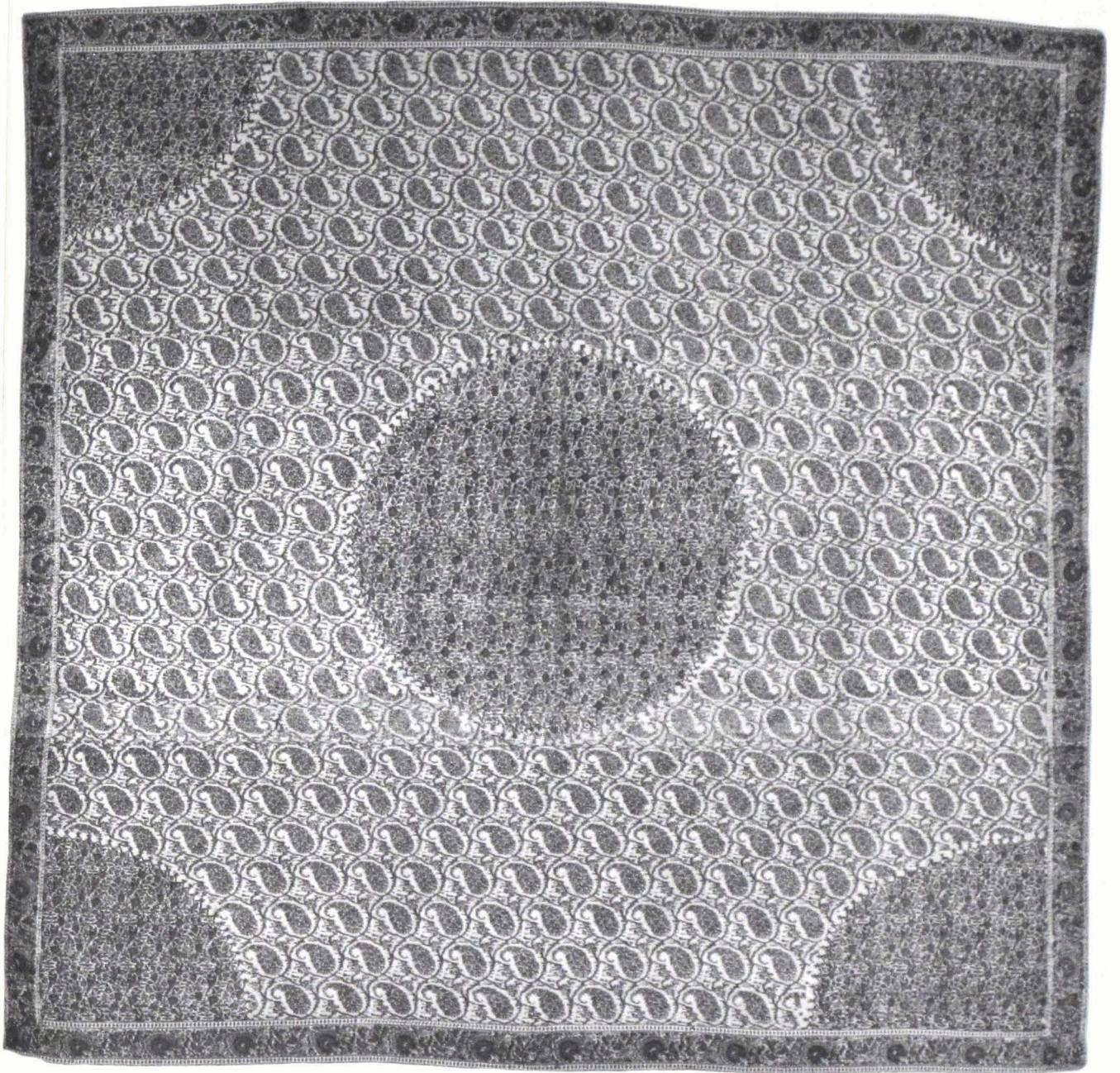
blue and red patterning on a  
saffron ground

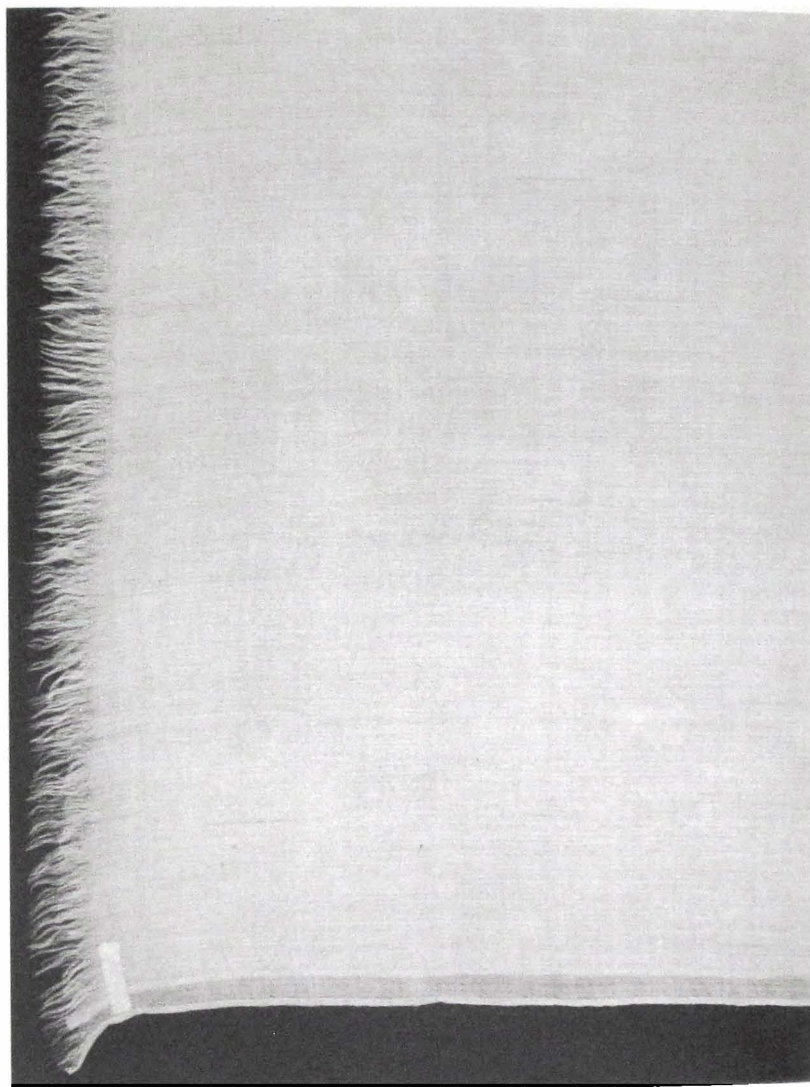
63¼ x 67¼ inches

The central medallion within a field of repeated *buta*-forms portends the emergence of all-over patterning, which dominated shawl design through the mid-19th century. Although the fields differ, the details of this shawl and another *chanddar* shawl in the Victoria and Albert Museum are the same (see Irwin, *The Kashmir Shawl*, plate 15).  
Yale University Art Gallery,  
Hobart and Edward Small Moore  
Memorial Collection

1937.5259







**14** Kashmir

19th century

goat-fleece

white

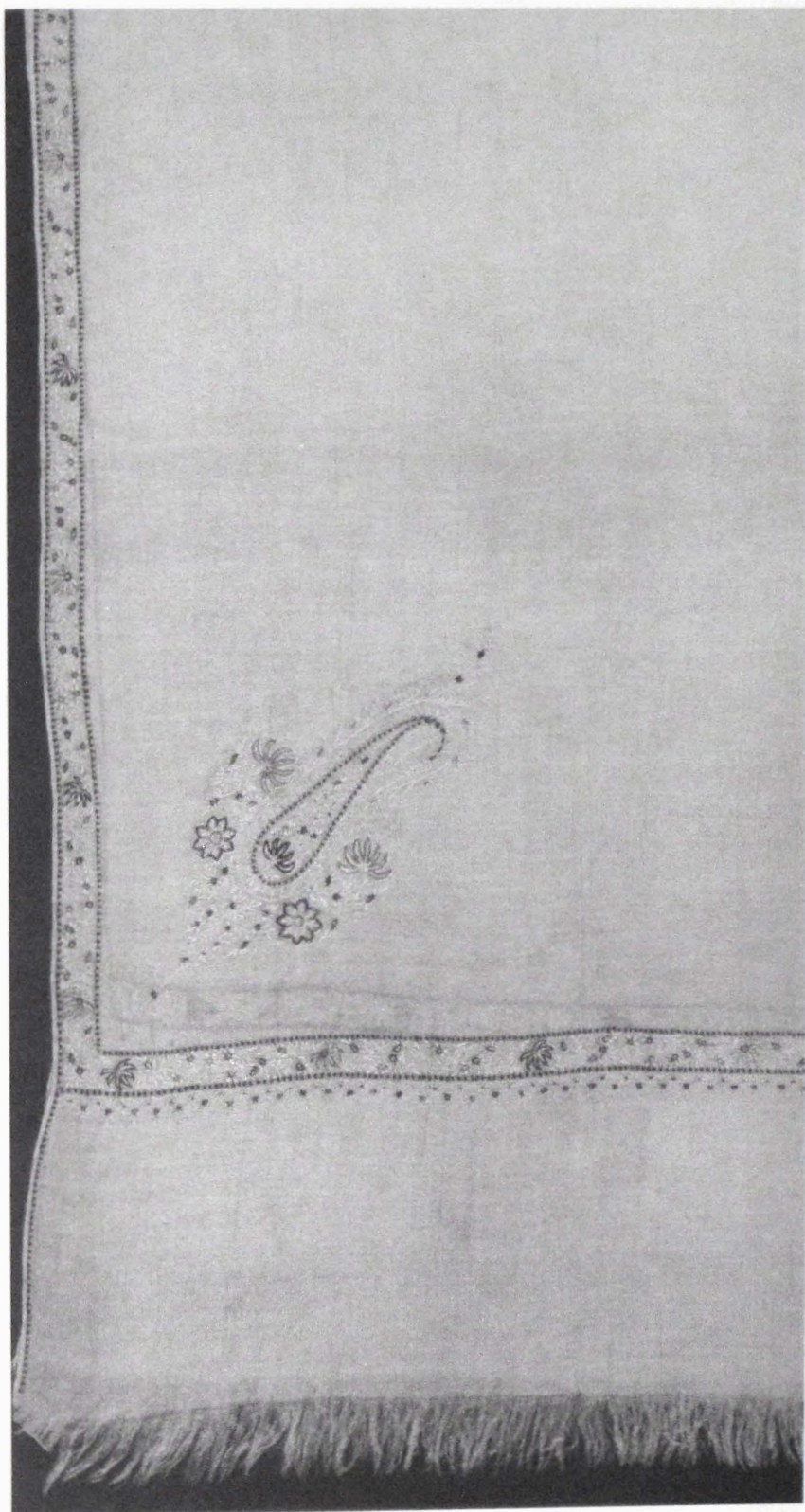
65 $\frac{1}{4}$  x 66 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches

Plain shawls were made throughout the history of shawl production. Woven in a chevron twill.

Yale University Art Gallery,  
Hobart and Edward Small Moore  
Memorial Collection

1937.5252

Kashmir  
19th century  
goat-fleece with silk embroidery  
white  
120 x 56 inches  
Occasionally, plain shawls are  
ornamented with simple silk  
embroidery; shawls of this sort  
were made as late as the 20th  
century.  
Yale University Art Gallery,  
Hobart and Edward Small Moore  
Memorial Collection  
1937.5265



**16 Kashmir**

1820-50

wool

twill-tapestry technique

multicolor

129¼ x 56¾ inches

Made with a black center that was fashionable for mourning, this shawl was woven in one piece on the loom. The eclectic design incorporates French-inspired transparent Paisleys with a border of chintz flowers and medallions enclosing Eastern lotuses.

Yale University Art Gallery,

Gift of Mrs. Jane Van Vleck

1945.121



**17 Kashmir**

mid-19th century

wool

multicolor

75 x 78¾ inches

Although minute Paisleys form the basic ornament of this shawl, the main design reflects the square formats of 17th-century Mughal canopies. A typical example of the patchwork construction technique, this kind of shawl was exported to Western Europe in large numbers.

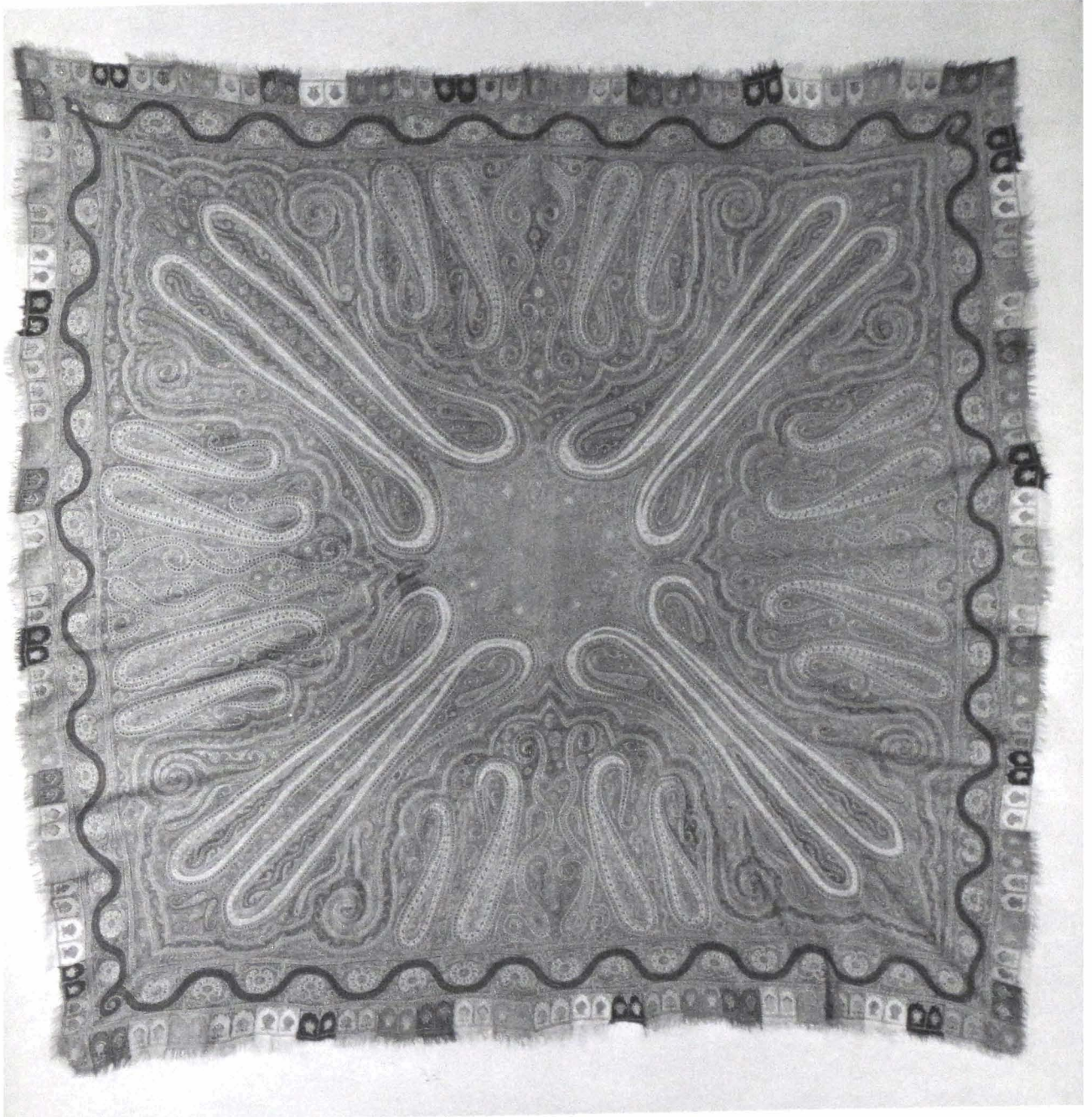
Yale University Art Gallery,  
Bequest of Louise Wallace  
Hackney

1945.433



**18** Kashmir  
mid-19th century  
goat-fleece base and silk  
embroidery  
70 x 68 inches  
This unusual shawl is both pieced and embroidered, so that a sculptural quality emerges from the carefully planned construction. The green twill ground is seamed, resulting in three-dimensional forms (particularly spirals), which are further articulated by pastel embroidery. Dominated by double Paisleys, the pattern is amplified by smaller extended motifs, many ending in split acanthus-forms. The niche border, common to 19th-century shawls, first appears in 18th-century chintz designs. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Harold C. Bradley in memory of Charles R. Crane, 1948.





**19 Kashmir**

mid-19th century

wool

pieced construction

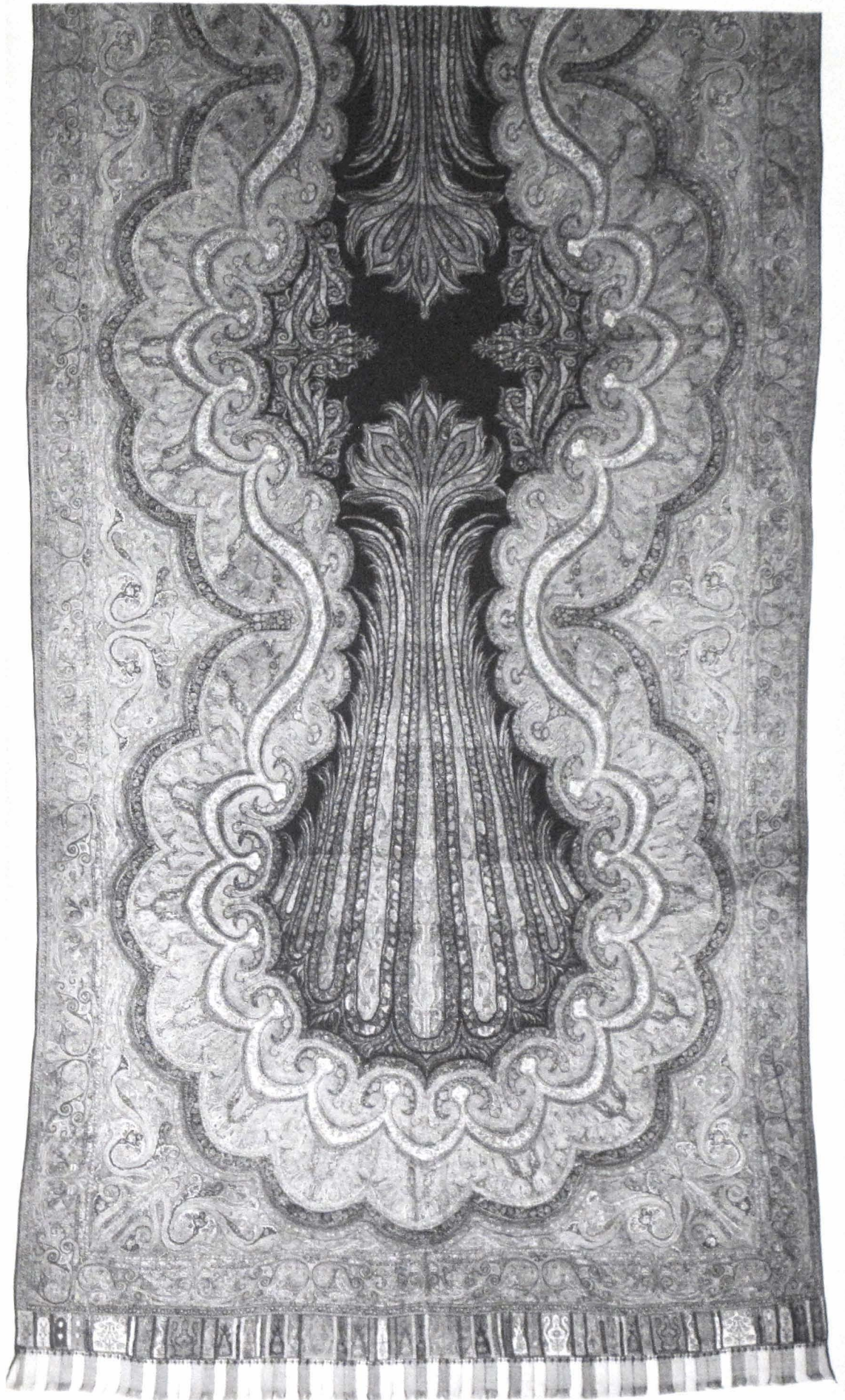
multicolor

144 x 56½ inches

The central design of extended  
Paisleys might have been based  
on Indian decoration, but it may  
also have derived from European  
ideas of tree of life forms.

Yale University Art Gallery,  
Hobart and Edward Small Moore  
Memorial Collection

1939.641



**20** Kashmir  
mid-19th century  
wool  
multicolor  
135½ x 58 inches

This medallion shawl illustrates  
the Paisley with the “turned-over  
tip” derived from chintz leaves.

It is pieced of sections woven in  
the twill-tapestry technique.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Gift of Mrs. John A. Vanderpoel,  
1908

▲ 08.91.2




**21** Kashmir  
mid-19th century  
wool

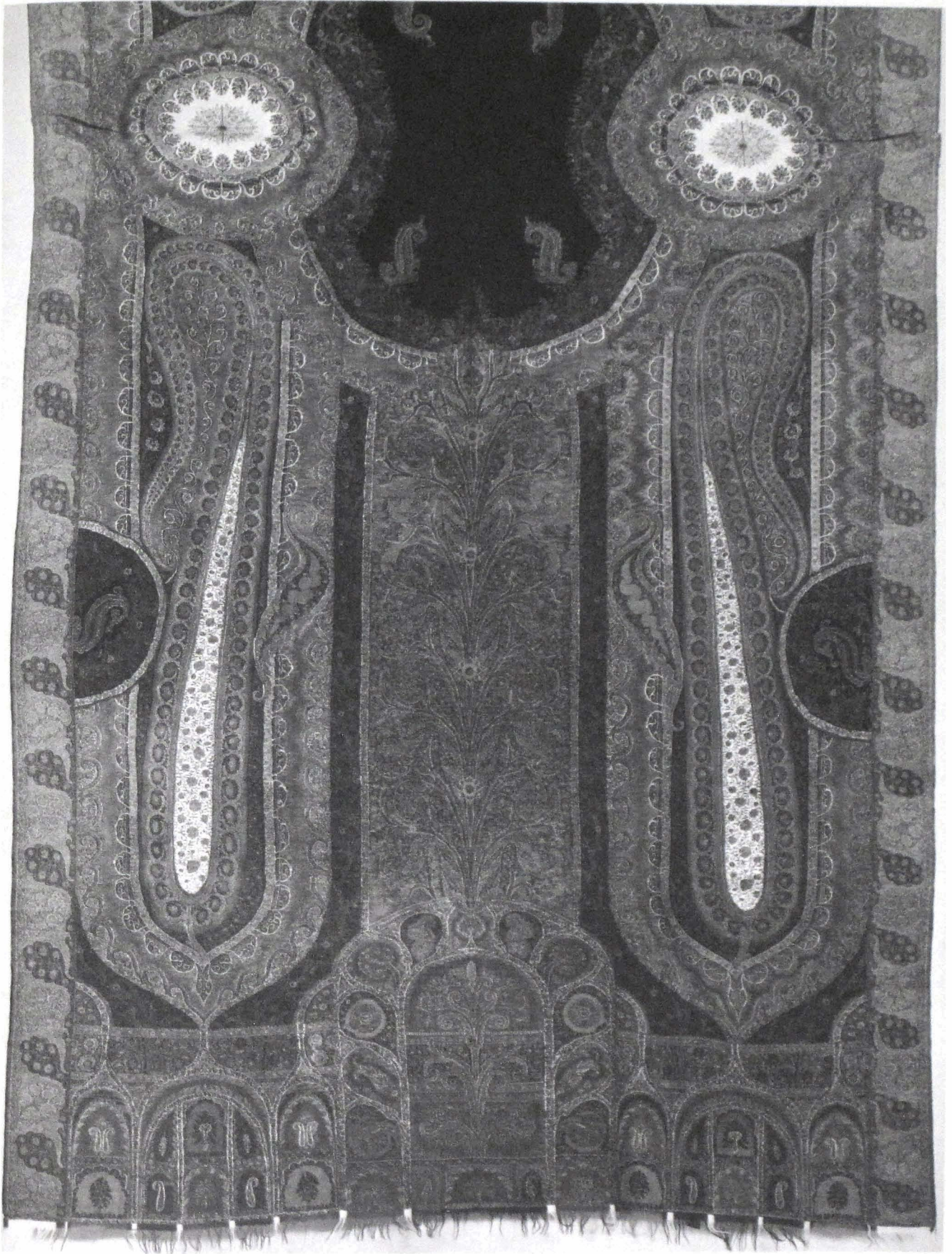
pieced construction  
multicolor

130½ x 57⅞ inches

In this medallion shawl two  
giant Paisleys are combined  
with a tree-form common to  
Persian textiles.

Yale University Art Gallery,  
Gift of Mrs. George St. J.  
Sheffield

 1936.106



**22** Norwich or Paisley

ca. 1820-35

silk with wool pattern wefts

yellow ground

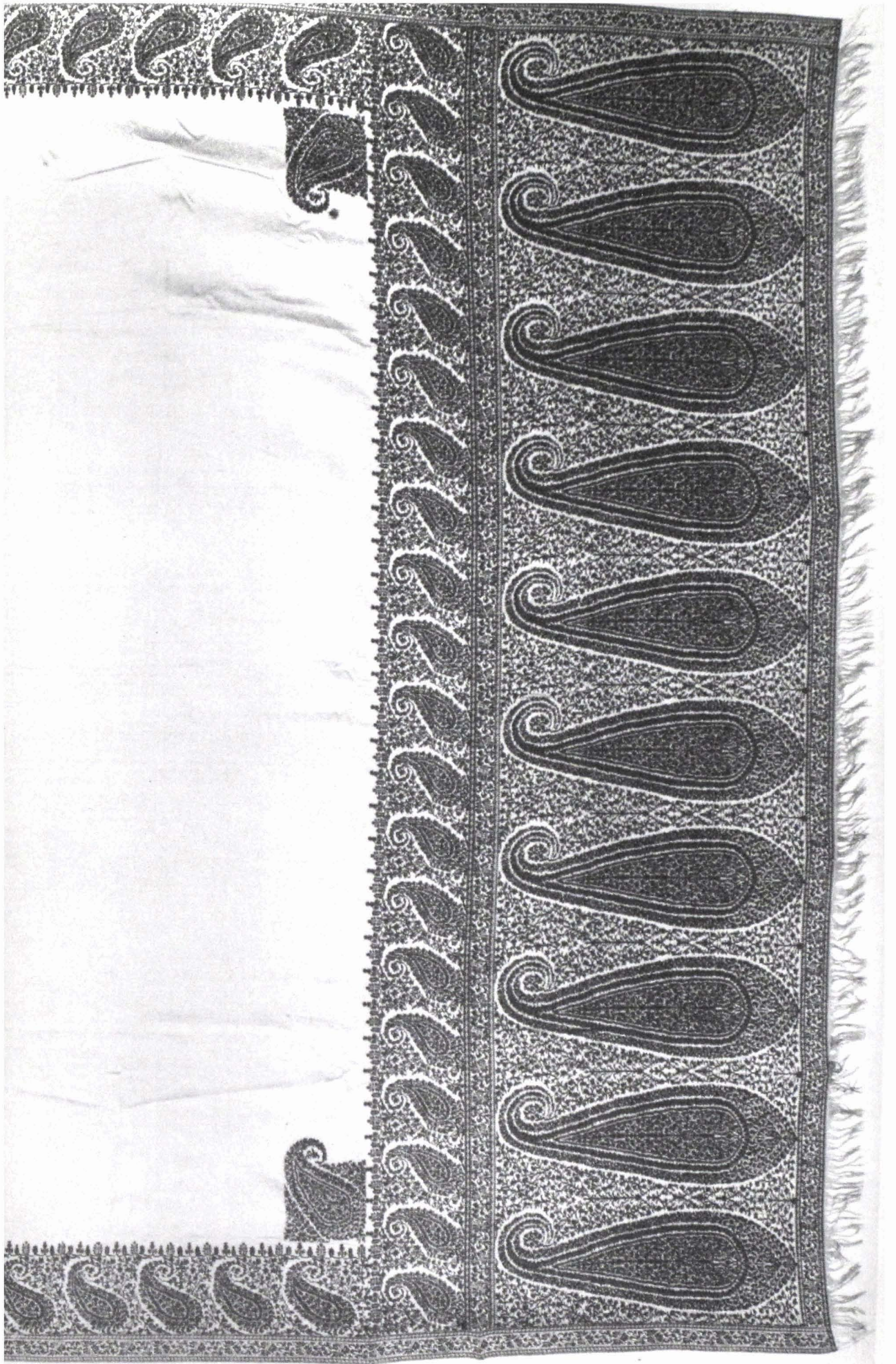
106 x 54 inches

Fashioned on the drawloom, the border pattern of this early British shawl is woven of blue wool wefts on a brilliant yellow ground. The overly refined motif on the border retains the essential elements of the *cypress-buta*, including the leaves and vase.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Gift of Mrs. C. Klingenstein and  
Mrs. M. J. Breitenbach, 1938

38.107.1





**23** Norwich or Paisley

ca. 1820-35

silk with wool pattern wefts

red ground

99¾ x 49¼ inches

Though working with the mechanical drawloom, this shawl's designer imitated the diagonal angularity of hand-woven twill-tapestry in root- and leaf-forms.

Yale University Art Gallery,  
Hobart and Edward Small Moore  
Memorial Collection

1937.5272



**24** Norwich or Paisley

ca. 1820-35

silk with wool pattern wefts

drawloom-woven

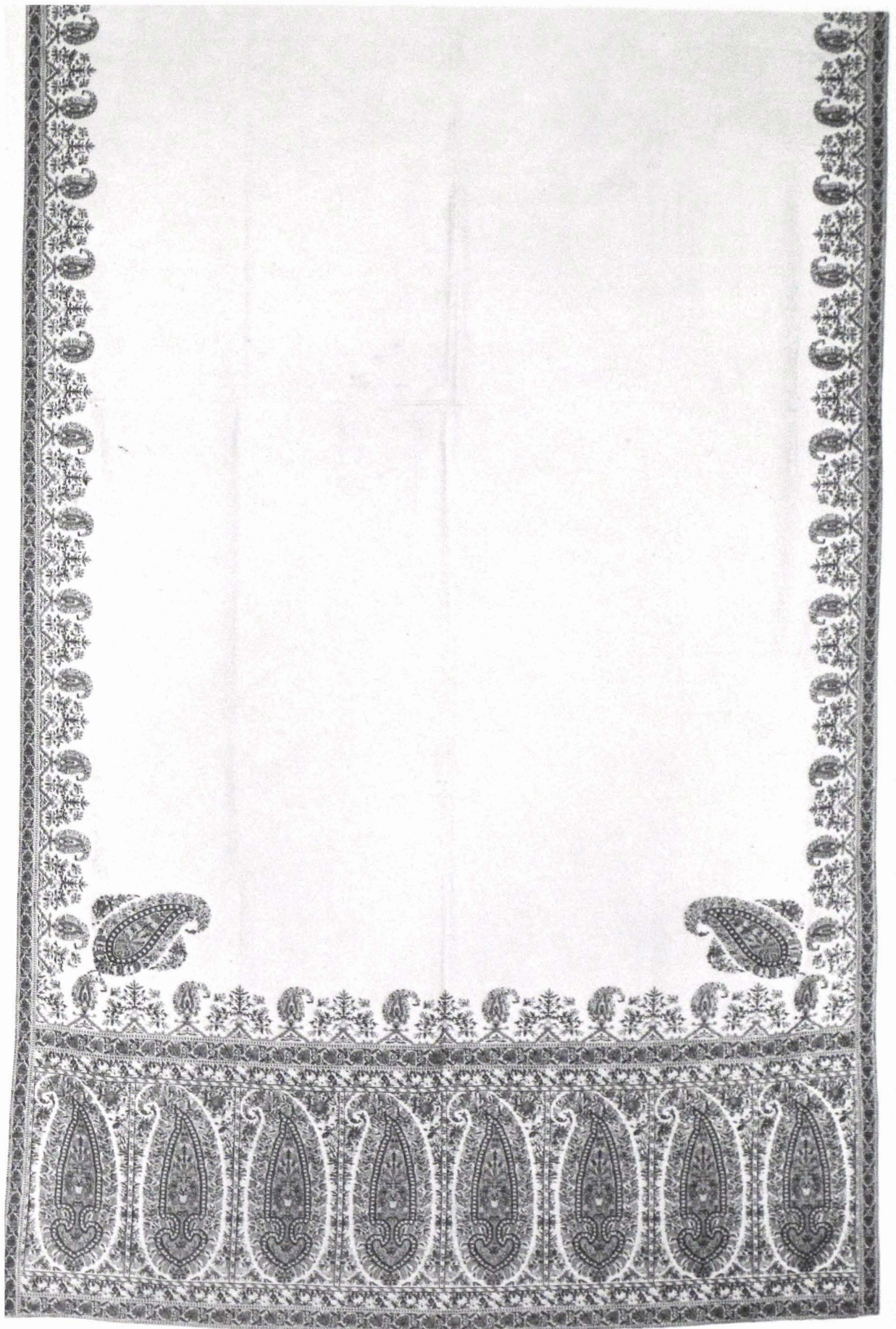
multicolor patterning

109½ x 53 inches

In this British shawl, as in the two preceding it, traditional Kashmir forms are altered by Western sensibilities.

Yale University Art Gallery,  
Hobart and Edward Small Moore  
Memorial Collection

1937.5273



**25 Paisley**

ca. 1830-45

wool

drawloom-woven

red, blue, and orange patterning

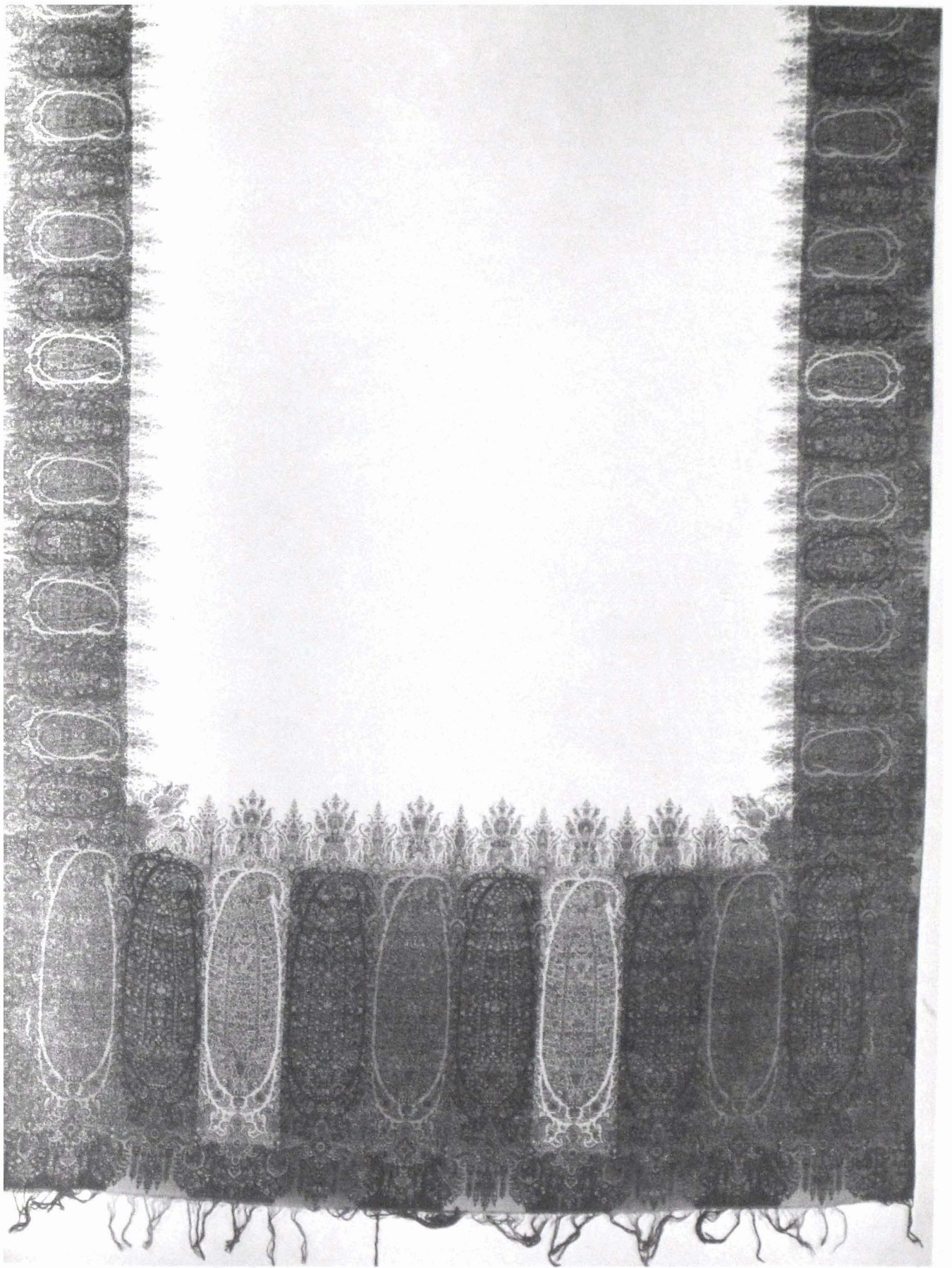
113¼ x 66½ inches

Retaining the details of the Kashmir *buta*, the border of this shawl is embellished with new orientalized ornamentation. Both the dyes used and the interior border design are typical of Paisley during this period.

Yale University Art Gallery,

Gift of Mrs. D. V. Garstin

1949.48



**26 Paisley or France**

mid-19th century

wool

multicolor

144 x 63 inches

Within a border reminiscent of Persian and Indian carpet design, the shawl is dominated by zoomorphic Paisleys. The Jacquard loom allows for the elaboration of the design over the entire body of the fabric.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Gift of Mrs. Lawrence P. Bayne,  
1946

46.136





**27 France**

ca. 1855

wool

Jacquard loom-woven

multicolor

140½ x 64¼ inches

Here, the layering of giant

Paisleys on foliage creates a  
sense of depth.

Exhibited in Paris in 1855.

Yale University Art Gallery,

Gift of Mrs. Albert H. Atterbury

1950.141





**28 Paisley**

ca. 1850-75

wool

Jacquard loom-woven

multicolor

146 x 62 inches

Realistic renderings of lilies, dahlias, peonies, marigolds, irises, and roses ending in a garlanded border mirror Victorian tastes. To achieve variation in ground color, shawl warp webs commonly were stencil-dyed on the loom before weaving; here the center remains white, while the surrounding portions are dyed red.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
Rogers Fund, 1965

65.91.2



**29** France

ca. 1867

wool or silk blend

multicolor

141¼ x 64½ inches

In this pseudo-archaeological parade, much of the ornament is closer to the Greek and Egyptian revival styles of 19th-century Europe than to Persian or Indian designs. Note the minute detail of form and shading made possible by the Jacquard loom.

Said to have been shown at the Paris Exhibition of 1867.

Yale University Art Gallery,  
Gift of Mrs. Marshall Bond  
1954.20.1



**Catalogue and Exhibition Design**  
**Josef Godlewski**



