BARBARA KARL

EARLY MODERN EUROPEAN COURT FASHION GOES GLOBAL

Embroidered Spanish Capes from Bengal

ABSTRACT

Early modern India was an economic core region that produced manifold textiles for export. During the sixteenth century, a new customer—Portugal—entered the stage and expanded its influence from the city of Goa. From the early years of their presence, the Portuguese purchased and commissioned textiles, among them pieces of costume. Very few survive; the largest group comprises embroidered Bengal capes tailored in the Spanish style. By providing European printed and tailored material as models for professional Bengal craftsmen to follow, the Portuguese merchants created a novel product. The textiles were deemed valuable and rare, and they were included in various travel accounts, letters, and inventories, enabling us to trace their places of production and their reception. They also shed light on the intercultural circumstances of Portuguese colonial life and fashion.

During the sixteenth century, close familial relationships among European monarchs resulted in King Philip II of Spain (r. 1556–98) inheriting the Portuguese throne after the death of the last Avis king, in 1580; subsequently, Portugal was ruled by the Spanish kings from Madrid, in a personal union, until 1640, and the Habsburg Empire truly girdled the globe. The bridgeheads and territorial possessions of the Portuguese seaborne empire along the African and Asian coasts (up to Macau) remained under the control of the Portuguese kingdom, which was ruled by viceroys; yet another viceroy ruled over the Portuguese Estado da Índia (Portugal's overseas dominions in India) from its capital, Goa.¹

Spain's political and cultural dominance, not only on the continent but also in its colonial peripheries in America and Asia, is reflected in the spread of the fashion of the Siglo de Oro—the Spanish Golden Age—from the center, Madrid, to the courts of Europe and beyond; the Spanish court became the most influential trendsetter in European fashion from roughly the second third of the sixteenth to the first half of the seventeenth century. This phenomenon was explored in the recent two-volume *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe* and will be one of the threads running through this study.²

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According to Carmen Bernis, the main elements of male Spanish court dress were the hose and the doublet, which included stiff elements and padding, shaping and exaggerating the body and inhibiting its natural movements.³ Additionally, coats and capes were worn as outer garments; a white linen ruff, varying in size according to time period, and a hat usually completed the picture of the perfect Spanish courtier.⁴ This ensemble, mostly in black, was worn together with the emblem of the chivalric Order of the Golden Fleece by the Habsburg holy Roman emperors and by Spanish kings, including Charles V (r. 1516–56) and Philip II; the style became known as the “Habsburg uniform.”⁵ While during Charles V’s reign men preferred wide coats, from the period of Philip II capes were worn more widely. With the expansion of the Iberian (Spanish and Portuguese) sphere of influence, this specific cape traveled. For instance, it was part of the official dress of the viceroys and governors of the Estado da Índia who resided in Goa; these men combined it with the cross of the Order of Christ of the royal Portuguese Avis dynasty (1381–1580). This dress was seen as a sign of allegiance to the sovereign.

The transfer of courtly fashion, namely the Spanish cape (fig. 1), to Asia—or, rather, to the parts of Asia dominated by the Portuguese—is well documented in the portraits of Portuguese viceroys reproduced in the three-volume historical work *Asia Portuguesa*, published between 1666 and 1674 by Manuel de Faria e Sousa (1590–1649). He was a Portuguese nobleman, a member of the Order of Christ, a poet, and a historian who spent most of his life in Madrid. The publication provides a closer view of the development of viceregal fashion in Portuguese Asia and illustrates that fashions at the dominating court were followed closely in Goa.⁶ While the early viceroys and governors are shown in black Spanish coats with sleeves typical for the period of Emperor Charles V, many from the period of the Portuguese King Sebastian (r. 1557–78) are depicted wearing the black capes that were favored during the reign of King Philip II, a cousin of King Sebastian. As Faria e Sousa’s book demonstrates, the adaptation of the cape as part of courtly fashion in Goa predates the unification of the Iberian kingdoms.

FIGURE 1. Cape, Bengal, last quarter of the 16th century. Cotton, tussar silk in chain stitch, 116 cm

The short Spanish cape thus became a characteristic piece of European courtly dress during the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century; the garment was integral to male fashion.⁷ Bernis identified different types of capes in her study of Spanish fashion, including semicircular *capas* (with hoods) and *herreruelos* (featuring only a collar). The latter type is the most relevant to this study. Furthermore, she describes the *tudesco*, a cape with sleeves, and the most luxurious version, the *bohemio*, forming almost a full circle, lined and made of the most precious fabrics.⁸ These capes were not always black but were made in many different colors; they were worn not only by kings and viceroys but also by members of the socioeconomic classes who could afford them. This study explores Spanish capes produced in the East Indian province of Bengal, with which the Portuguese held profitable trade relations. These pieces of costume represent fascinating combinations of Indian materials and techniques and European dress cuts and decorative motifs; today, they survive in museum collections in Europe and North America. The study initially considers fashion and society in Portuguese Goa in order to provide a political and socioeconomic context, focusing on pictorial and written sources to explore the ways in which clothing reflected the development of the rather hybrid identity of Portuguese colonial society. It then turns to the production of Bengal capes, which combined European and Indian elements and were custom-made for this society.

Fashion in Goa: Between Tradition and Hybridization

Owing to the lack of space on ships arriving from Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, officials, soldiers, missionaries, and merchants arrived in Goa with very few items of clothing and objects for interior decorating. Apart from what travelers took with them, European decorative textiles and dress were brought to India only on a limited scale, to clothe the elite and as gifts for local potentates. Portuguese settlers, although located mostly along the coast, soon discovered the importance and great variety of Indian textiles, not only for trade but also for their own needs. India had an incredibly rich textile tradition and was then one of the most important producers of textiles worldwide. Its productions included various types of textiles, which were vital for anyone who wanted to participate in intra-Asian trade.⁹ Soon after the European newcomers arrived in the early sixteenth century, they began to dress in Indian textiles.

Goa was home to an increasingly mixed, albeit hierarchically structured, society. The highest strata of society, viceroys and high administrators staying for a limited time, did not put down roots in Goa, leaving their families in Portugal. Among the permanent population, ethnic and socioeconomic criteria played an important role in social hierarchies; wealth helped one climb the social ladder. Additionally, people of Portuguese descent, especially those born in Portugal, were held in higher regard than those issuing from mixed marriages. Due to the lack of Portuguese women, intermarriage with local women was encouraged from the beginning of the colony. These women—often widowed high-caste women or women from Japan, China, Java, and Bengal—brought to their new families their own customs, especially concerning food and dress.¹⁰ Several of these *casado* (married) families rose to wealth and local importance, forming a mercantile upper class. *Casados* and the clergy were installed in Goa more permanently. Members of the international merchant community—Italians, Germans, or Gujaratis, the latter living in separate quarters of the city—stayed in Goa mostly for limited time periods, just as the officials sent from Lisbon did.¹¹

The social life of wealthy Goan society was divided into rare official appearances and private life; dress was chosen accordingly. While official sorties reflected the social status of the

individuals who participated in them—who maintained European dress traditions for these occasions—private life showed a high degree of adaptation to local circumstances. The Dutchman Jan Huyghen van Linschoten (1563–1611), who was in Goa from 1581 to 1587 as the secretary to the local bishop, provides important clues on social life in his book the *Itinerario*. He was surprised by the locals’ cleanliness, stating that the Goan Portuguese change dress and wash every day—unlike Europeans. While walking the streets of the capital, upper-class men were usually accompanied by servants or slaves carrying umbrellas that both were a sign of status and protected them from the sun.¹² Van Linschoten also described the wealthy *casado* wives on the occasion of their rare appearances in public: “When they go to church . . . they put on very costly apparel, with bracelets of gold and rings . . . Jewels and pearls . . . clothes of Damaske, Velvet, and cloth of gold, for silke is the worst [they] can weare.”¹³ He does not specify whether these textiles came from Europe or from India. Technically, both scenarios are possible; however, given the public nature of the appearances that Van Linschoten describes, it is more likely that the women wore dress imported from Europe to stress their social status through a visual alliance with their home country (or that of their husbands). Carletti confirms these observations: “Outside [the Portuguese in Goa] dress the Portuguese way.”¹⁴ These writings are corroborated by contemporary depictions, such as those in the Codex Casanatense 1889, dated to the 1540s, an important pictorial source for Goan society.¹⁵ It illustrates colonial Portuguese women wearing clothes that followed the fashions of the Spanish court. The album was made too early to show Spanish capes; the Portuguese Goan gentleman depicted on one of its folios wears the coat characteristic of the time of Charles V.

However, not everyone could don what he pleased. In Europe, sumptuary laws, or *pragmáticas*, limited the use of certain precious materials to the highest classes of society, in order to visually reflect social hierarchies.¹⁶ While the cuts of courtly garments were largely maintained, the materials changed considerably as fashions descended the social ladder. (Additionally, most people of the lower classes could not afford the materials used by those of higher social status.) While a king or viceroy wore capes of heavy black Italian silk velvet embroidered with gold, a wealthy and fashionable merchant wore one of wool. Such European rules were transposed to the colonies. However, because most of the high aristocracy stayed in Portugal, and because of the presence of natives from India, the situation was less rigid for “pure-blooded” Portuguese in colonial Goa, where the social order was more permeable and included a strong mercantile elite. This permeability is quite characteristic for frontier societies.¹⁷

Examples of this less rigid, albeit visible, hierarchy and its reflection in dressing habits were the Portuguese soldiers (*soldados*) who went to India. Their numbers are difficult to determine. The soldiers’ passage to India was paid by the king; their return was not. Only a few made fortunes, many “went native,” but most were poor and perished in service or from disease.¹⁸ Nonetheless, their status as “pure-blooded” Portuguese enabled them to dress more exclusively in Goa than they would have been allowed in Lisbon. Many could not afford to do so, but to maintain appearances they shared silk clothing they thought befitting their rank. According to Van Linschoten, the soldiers lived together in groups of ten to twelve and shared a slave or a local servant:

They have amongst them all one or two good suites of apparel, [all] of silke as the manner is there, and when one goeth abroad, the others stay at home, for in the house they have no neede of clothes (but sit whosoever they bee) in their shirts and a paire of linen breeches and so [as it were] naked by [reason of] the great heate, for if some of them . . . goe out twenty times on one day,

they must so often lend him their apparel, and he must [likewise] put off his clothes, as often as he commeth home againe.¹⁹

Portuguese officials and merchants are depicted on a series of Japanese screens, usually made in pairs, from the seventeenth century; screens of this type were called *biombos* by the Portuguese and were produced mainly for the Japanese market. As a painting on one such screen (fig. 2) illustrates, hierarchies within the Portuguese ruling elite remained visible despite their distance from home and a more permeable social order. This particular set of screens shows a caravel and the unloading of merchandise on one and the reception of Portuguese officials and merchants in a Japanese city on the other.²⁰ The Portuguese travelers are rendered in great detail, with their dress reflecting their status. According to Madalena Garcia, just as at the Spanish court, noble colonial Portuguese apparel consisted of hose and a doublet, cape, hat, ruff, handkerchief, arms, and jewelry. Additionally, a slave or servant would carry an umbrella, an important sign of distinction in Asia.²¹ On the *biombo*, now at the Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon, the general captain (*capitão-mor*) of the ship and the accompanying noblemen (*fidalgos*) are dressed in black with capes of the same color. As the official emissary of the king, the captain was required to fulfil his duties dressed correctly, despite the summer heat.²² Whether Portuguese high officials wore the more appropriate and valuable (but heavy) velvet capes or lighter, less costly silk capes at such occasions cannot be determined from the images, although velvet did reach Japan through Portuguese traders traveling to the islands from the 1540s—and was popularized in Japan by the Portuguese.²³ The merchants depicted on the screen are dressed similar to *fidalgos*, although they do not wear weapons, and their dress, including the Spanish cape, was often more colorful than that of the *fidalgos*. Servants and slaves were dressed more simply; on the screen, none of them wears a cape.²⁴ In the context of the screen it becomes clear that clothing reflected hierarchies that were understood by Japanese painters; the screens also confirm that Spanish capes, hats, weapons, jewelry, and umbrellas were the most obvious markers of status.

Fashions changed and were adapted as they traveled.²⁵ Apart from a culture they hardly understood, and an overwhelming quantity of novel flora and fauna, among the many challenges the Portuguese encountered in India were an array of deadly tropical diseases and a very different climate.²⁶ Some centuries after the Portuguese, British colonists in India suffered similarly from the extreme climate and were forced to find suitable solutions. What is characteristic for both groups is that, in terms of their official appearance, they stuck to their traditional dress in order to stress their identities and maintain a traditional social hierarchy. In the well-documented British case, Indian tailors frequently would copy dresses that were brought from England, very often in lighter Indian fabrics.²⁷ Spanish courtly fashion was tailored of heavy, precious (mostly silken) fabrics, often embroidered with gold and silver; such garments were padded and lined. These fabrics were difficult to wear during a Madrileño summer and almost impossible to bear in the Asian tropics. Despite the high temperatures and humidity, the Portuguese viceroys and the aristocratic functionaries in Portuguese Asia donned heavy-looking coats and capes, as shown in their portraits—such as those published in Faria e Sousa's book, mentioned above. These were very probably made of heavy silk weaves or velvets. However, adaptations were made so that their wearers could better cope with the heat: in his report to Grand Duke Ferdinando, Francesco Carletti, a Florentine merchant who traveled the globe at the end of the sixteenth century, remarked: "[In Goa the Portuguese] wear . . . a cape after the Spanish fashion but without lining."²⁸ Courtly Mughal painters also depicted Portuguese men

FIGURE 2. Kano Naizen, or School of Kano, Screen (*biombo*), Japan, 1593–1601. Tempera on paper, gold leaf, 178 x 366.4 cm

with capes, hats, and weapons during the second half of the sixteenth century. In these album paintings, the cape's light drapes suggest that it was an unlined cape, a *herreruelo*, confirming Carletti's observations.²⁹ Additionally, men donned lighter and wider silk trousers, and woven cotton became an important material used in clothing.³⁰

While the wealthy revealed their official Portuguese identity on the streets of Goa, at home they turned to local fashion, which was more appropriate for the climate. Van Linschoten remarked about the women:

Within the house they goe bear headed with a wastecoate called Bajú [a short shirt reaching down to the hips], that from their shoulders covereth [their] navels, and is so fine that you may see all their body through it, and downewardes they have nothing but a painted cloth wrapped three or foure times about [their] bodies. These clothes are very faire, some of them being very costly [wrought] with [loome worke, and] divers figures and flowers of all colors.³¹

Carletti—a great admirer of Goan women—specifies that at home at least some of them dressed according to Indian fashion from the region of Malabar, in painted cotton with golden embroideries.³² According to Carletti, the textiles worn at home were Indian: fine cottons likely from Bengal.³³ Wealthy Portuguese men, too, he wrote, dressed more simply at home, in shirts and wide silk trousers; the latter were also suitable for wear outside.³⁴ The use of different types of dress reflects an ethnically mixed *casado* society that partially adapted its ways of living in Goa. This practice also reflected the de facto power structure, as well as the role of women in this society. Their mostly Asian fashions dominated the interior, while the fashions of their Portuguese husbands were prominent outside the home, stressing the latters' Portuguese identity.

The wealthy classes were not alone in donning Indian textiles; coarser Indian cottons of different qualities were worn by Goan slaves and servants.³⁵ When looking at the well-known painting from the sacristy of São Roque in Lisbon, of Francis Xavier preaching in Goa, one sees the types of simply patterned Indian textiles worn by Goan lower-class people on those sitting in front of the preaching Francis Xavier; behind them, elite Portuguese men are depicted wearing the Spanish cape.³⁶ From the written and pictorial sources, we deduce that cotton, a material until then little known to Europeans, altered colonial Portuguese dressing habits; it soon replaced linen, which had been brought from Europe to tailor undergarments. Merchants imported the novel cotton fabrics to Europe; in 1606, for instance, Carletti returned to Florence from India and showed a fine Bengal cotton shirt to Grand Duke Ferdinando de' Medici.³⁷ The success story of cotton, begun by members of Portuguese colonial society who exported it to Lisbon, continued during the following centuries and went on to transform aspects of European textile production.³⁸

The illustrated version of Van Linschoten's *Itinerario*, from 1596, provides an additional glimpse into Portuguese Goan fashion and nicely sums up the relationship between fashion and social status. The prints were not made in India, but Van Linschoten himself advised the engraver Jan van Doetechum, who prepared them.³⁹ Most famous is the engraving with the view of the market of Goa, which, like the *biombos*, clearly divides individuals according to status: an elegant Goan lady is carried in the closed palanquin in the foreground (she is invisible); the noblest men are accompanied by their umbrella holders or ride their horses; other high-ranking men are shown with hats and capes (in different colors and of various lengths), and some of them have weapons. The servants holding the umbrellas wear hats but not capes;

some slaves are almost nude. Local Indians are shown wearing their traditional dress; the men in turbans are probably Iranian or Arab traders doing business. When observing this image, one concludes that the less visible a person is (for instance, the woman in the palanquin), and the more textiles and accessories cover him or her, the higher his or her rank is; the more informal the situation, the more likely local fashion was worn.⁴⁰

The Capes

In the Portuguese Asian context, Spanish capes were donned not only on Japanese *biombos* and in Mughal album paintings but also in depictions of the Portuguese on Bengal brick temples, ivory caskets from Ceylon, furniture from Gujarat, painted cottons from the Coromandel Coast, and embroidered textiles from Bengal. Indian artisans either copied from European prints or illustrated Portuguese colonial society from life. Images chronicling this society and accounts describing it are the most important sources for understanding fashion in this milieu. To my knowledge, very few pieces of fashion worn by Europeans in India during the period in question survive. The few surviving silk embroidered cotton capes from Bengal are rare exceptions; somewhat surprisingly, most other surviving pieces of dress from around 1600 are from Bengal as well: a tunic, embroidered ecclesiastic vestments, and a few handkerchiefs.⁴¹ None of them can be clearly identified in the artistic depictions mentioned above. While Spanish capes can only generally be categorized as an integral part of colonial elite dress in the images discussed above, some of the embroidered Bengal capes can be identified in written sources that complement the pictorial sources and provide additional evidence for dating and contextualizing the surviving textiles.

The Bengal provenance of the capes is quite certain.⁴² Bengal was not part of the official Estado da India, but it housed a small Portuguese merchant settlement in Hugli from the 1580s on. Embroidery production in the region was considerable in terms of volume, and the products were adapted to the needs of the Portuguese newcomers. Most famous were large (about two and a half by two meters) embroideries used for various decorative purposes; called *colchas* (quilts or decorative hangings), they are very similar in material, technique, color scheme, and style to the capes on which this study focuses.⁴³ Among others,⁴⁴ Van Linschoten provided important information on Bengal embroidery production and on the various types of textiles, including pieces of dress (mantles), that were exported from there to Goa and then to Lisbon:

It is yealowish, and is called the herbe of Bengalen [*tussar silk*], wherewith they so cunningly stitch their coverlits and pavilions [for beds] pillowes, carpets, and mantles, therein to christen children women in childbed use to doe, and make them with flowers and branches, and personages, that is wonderful to see, and so finely done with cunning workmanshippe, that it cannot be mended throughout Europe.⁴⁵

The inventory of the eighteenth viceroy of the Estado da India, D. Francisco da Gama, Conde de Vidigueira (1565–1632, viceroy from 1597 to 1600), attests to the presence of silk-embroidered cotton capes from Bengal in aristocratic colonial households; among other Indian decorative textiles, a cape from Bengal is listed: “a carpet from Agra . . . and a white *colcha* . . . and two pieces [of cloth] from Balagate and a combing cape from Bengal.”⁴⁶ The term “combing cape” hints at the garment’s use in the domestic context (we will encounter it again later); in his official capacity, the viceroy would have worn his black silk clothes.

Another very early source refers to the use of Bengal capes in a more bourgeois context: as early as 1578, the Florentine merchant Filippo Sassetti wrote of a cape very likely from Bengal (for no other Indian textiles with this combination of color, material, and excellent technique survive from the period) that he saw in Lisbon: “I saw in the house of a pilot of India [*piloto d’India*] a cape to put around the neck of a woman, of white fabric embroidered with yellow silk, where you think that there are a hundred million stitches; a very novel thing to see, and for which he asked up to forty ducats.”⁴⁷ Sassetti’s description demonstrates that Bengal capes found their way to Europe at least from the 1570s, brought by officials and merchants (in this case a *piloto d’India*) as exotic and novel souvenirs or as exclusive merchandise, and that they were also worn by women. Novelty and rarity were two key elements—in addition to, of course, high value—that rendered an object desirable and fashionable. How rare the capes were is difficult to determine, as export numbers for Bengal capes are rare; export estimates for *colchas* from Bengal to Lisbon go into hundreds of pieces per year.⁴⁸ We may therefore assume a considerable number of cape exports as well.

A few years after first mentioning an Indian cape, the same Sassetti, by then in Goa himself, sent a Bengal cape together with two capes from China, Bengal *colchas*, and other novel and rare things to his sovereign, Francesco de’ Medici, who had given him funds to purchase *galanterie* in India: “A cape [*mantellina*] from Bengal embroidered with hunting scenes [*de montaria*] . . . [and] pearls and some rubies (this embroidery is not finished but some embroiderer can finish it in little time).”⁴⁹ Because of the valuable material used, the cape’s cost was double that of the other two capes, from China, which were embroidered with silk and gold.⁵⁰ Hunting scenes reflecting the leisurely lifestyle of the wearers of these capes were a characteristic of Bengal export embroidery on *colchas*, curtains, and capes, and they appear on some of the surviving pieces. Sassetti’s letter is, however, the only source indicating that Bengal capes were, at least occasionally, endowed with precious stones (probably from Burma) and pearls, significantly enhancing their value and indicating that Bengal dress production was far more varied than the surviving objects relay (no Bengal textile of this kind has surfaced thus far). An interesting detail is that the cape was not finished when it came into Sassetti’s possession; it could easily be adapted to its future owner’s size.

The Chinese and Bengal capes sent by Sassetti arrived in Florence, where apparently they were not worn but recontextualized as exotic rarities in a new setting.⁵¹ They were kept in the Casino di San Marco, where Grand Duke Francesco had established his court workshops—and which also served as a storage house for the court. The 1587 inventory mentions the three capes together. Their description in the letters is far more detailed than in the inventory, where all three were located to “india”; the mention of an Indian coat with pearls indicates that it is the Sassetti piece.⁵² It is possible that the rubies mentioned by Sassetti either were too small to be noticed by the person compiling the inventory or, as often happened, had been removed from the garment and reused elsewhere.

The Bengal cape sent to the Medici by Sassetti was not the only one to enter a European princely collection. The ruling dynasties of Portugal, Spain, and Austria were closely related. In order to maintain good relations, they exchanged not only brides but also many gifts. Among other exotic items, textiles were often given.⁵³ In 1594, for instance, Archduchess Maria of Austria (1528–1603), the widowed empress who had retired to Madrid, sent “a colcha with yellow embroidery with a small cape worked in the same manner” to the imperial court in Vienna; in view of the description, both were probably from Bengal.⁵⁴ Additionally, in 1592, Ferdinand II of Tyrol, her cousin, had received “four colchas, three of Portuguese India and the other made in

Castilia" from Madrid.⁵⁵ Today, a Bengal *colcha* and a Bengal cape, both with yellow embroidery, survive in the Ambras collection of Ferdinand II (see fig. 1). They were first mentioned in the inventory of 1596: in cupboard no. 17, the *variocasten* (cupboard of various things), are listed a monochrome yellow *colcha* and a Bengal cape "*wie ain harmäntele*" (like a combing or hair cape).⁵⁶ The inclusion of cape and *colcha* in the archduke's famous *Kunstammer* is revealing, as only the most valuable, most novel, and rarest items then available were integrated into this nucleus of Habsburg collecting. In such systematically compiled collections, these exotic textiles were part of a cosmic system *en miniature*: the world as viewed by a perfect Renaissance prince. There, they represented the riches of their region of origin as *pars pro toto*.⁵⁷ In the *variocasten*, the cape was stored in a box together with other textile items, mainly from the Ottoman Empire. Many of those that are described survive, and the descriptions suggest that they were all made of a material that seems to have fascinated the archduke—and which explains why they were grouped together—cotton. Ferdinand II's *Kunstammer* illustrates that by the late sixteenth century pure cotton fabrics were perceived as rarities in parts of Europe.

Returning to Portugal, Indian capes appear in another type of document: in 1609, a new set of sumptuary laws was issued by King Philip III (r. 1598–1621). Consequently, in 1610 a *Livro dos Registos* was drawn up in the city of Porto, listing all luxurious household items and pieces of costume that were effected by the laws, as well as their owners.⁵⁸ As laid out by Hugo Miguel Crespo, this book provides a rare glimpse into what was considered "luxury" in the city at that time. In addition to textiles of gold, silver, and silk, several from India and China appear in the list. Among these are four Indian capes, probably from Bengal and Gujarat, and a few Indian *colchas*.⁵⁹ The capes' presence in this list characterizes them as luxurious objects, perhaps because the intense yellow *tussar* silk embroidery imitated gold, which not everyone was permitted to wear—that is, if the *pragmáticas* were followed.

The Surviving Capes

The surviving capes to be discussed below are dated to the second half of the sixteenth and the first third of the seventeenth century, the Golden Age of Spanish court fashion, which literally girdled the globe. There are close parallels between cape production and *colcha* production in Bengal, with both peaking during the same period. Garments from both traditions were commissioned by Portuguese merchants and were produced in related workshops in the Hugli region, probably by the same embroiderers and often with the same materials and using the same techniques as well as comparable motifs: hunting scenes and courtly scenes from daily life. The cotton used for the foundation of the embroidery probably came from the region's capital, Dacca, a famous center of cotton weaving; *tussar* silk, used for the embroidery, is a famous Indian wild silk from Bengal.⁶⁰ Portuguese trade with Bengal was dominated by private merchants, who commissioned the textiles from specialized local embroiderers, about whom virtually nothing is known; it is clear, however, that the Portuguese depended heavily on local intermediaries in all of their transactions.⁶¹ This study focuses on two types of capes, the light *herreruelos* and the somewhat stiffer semicircular capes or mantles.

Of the first type, eight pieces were investigated for this study; five of them survive in their entirety, three only as fragments.⁶² Each consists of elongated trapezoidal panels embroidered together in lace stitch and united by a standing collar that closes around the neck; some still have cords attached to the neckline. The main stitch used is chain stitch; the foundation material is a tabby weave cotton or linen. While the chain stitch was very common in India, lace stitches sewing together two seams of a garment were at the time characteristic to European

dressmaking and a precursor to the development of lace.⁶³ This detail raises the question of where the individual panels were sewn together—in Bengal, or in Goa or Lisbon (by European embroiderers). Moreover, if the garments were constructed in Bengal, from whom did the Indian craftsmen learn these stitches—or, did they already know them? As mentioned earlier, Sassetti purchased an entire cape directly from Bengal; it is thus very probable that the capes were not only embroidered but also sewn together there. The second question is more difficult to answer, but a parallel can be drawn to furniture-making, a field in which Indian craftsmen learned European techniques from European models.⁶⁴

The length of each cape's individual panels is about one meter; their breadth varies. Within the group studied, the individual panels are of roughly the same size, which suggests commissioned production for a larger market. It seems that the capes were not made to measure for each individual client, which would have been a difficult task—most potential wearers lived far from India. Apparently, the panels were prepared before being sewn together. The concept of buying a ready-made piece of clothing was quite rare, albeit not unknown, in Europe at the time. The notion was quite common in India, however, where embroidered Spanish capes were not the only ready-made garments available. Some types of traditional Indian dress, namely saris and dhotis, which were not sewn but wrapped around the body, could easily be ready-made—and in fact were. This concept of the ready-made garment was adapted to the Spanish capes for export.

Spanish capes were not part of the vocabulary of sixteenth-century Indian fashion; their cut was adapted in Bengal either from European capes brought to India by Portuguese merchants or from books on dressmaking, such as those presented by Carmen Bernis in her seminal study of Spanish fashion, which stresses the importance of printed material, such as contemporary pattern books, in the diffusion of knowledge (in the form of patterns and techniques). In particular she mentions the *Libro de geometría, práctica y traça, el qual se trata de lo tocante al officio de sastre* by Juan de Alcega.⁶⁵ According to Bernis's differentiation of Spanish capes, the light semicircular capes, or *herreruelos*, correspond to the shape of the most mature Bengal capes.⁶⁶ What becomes clear from her discussion, however, is that in the books on dressmaking she studied, these capes were usually made of two or more widths of fabric sewn together to avoid the loss of valuable material. The Bengal capes feature a different cut, consisting of elongated trapezoidal panels sewn together to form the shape of a semicircle (or less). A question arises as to how this more refined cut, characteristic to all Bengal capes, was developed. Their basic cut is not all that different from that of a European cape today in the Victoria & Albert Museum, which was analyzed by Janet Arnold. This cape uses recycled fabric and consists of panels that are not as uniform as those of the embroidered Bengal cotton capes.⁶⁷ It is most likely that the basic cut of the Bengal panels was developed in Europe, and that capes brought to Bengal complemented the books on dressmaking. The end results represent the combined forces of European and Bengal specialists, with the former providing the shape and the latter adapting it to new materials and techniques.

Thus, we take the stylistic development of the capes' decoration as a means to date them: the greater the number of European elements included, the later the date of the cape. At the same time, however, we must remember that the capes were produced with particular qualities as long as they sold well, which renders precise dating difficult. The type of cape represented by the Ambras piece is the oldest (see fig. 1).⁶⁸ This cape is the only example that can be traced to a document, which provides a *terminus ante quem* for its production: the above-mentioned 1596 inventory of the Ambras *Kunstammer*, where it was preserved

among other rarities; the garment's possible itinerary through the Habsburg gift network also was discussed above. This cape consists of sixteen cotton panels, forming roughly a third of a circle, as described in detail by Leonie von Wilckens.⁶⁹ Each panel is embroidered with *tussar* silk and features a lower border of geometric designs dominated by an elongated pointed cartouche, for which models can be identified in Islamicate as well as European material culture of the time. Comparison to a tunic from Bengal now in Gotha, probably the earliest surviving example of Bengal embroidery in Europe, suggests that this style of decoration was part of the repertoire of forms coming from the Bengal sultanate.⁷⁰ The two outermost panels of the Ambras cape feature the same border design along their outer edges, delineating the piece; the collar boasts small geometric rosettes, and cords as well as a tassel, both of *tussar* silk, survive. The Ambras inventory designates this cape as *harmäntele*, specifying it as a hair (or combing) coat, just as in the inventory of Francisco da Gama, which suggests its assumed original use in the elite domestic context and refers to a type of dress the archduke knew from his own experience. This identification is unsurprising, as the above-mentioned Van Linschoten quote describes members of colonial Goan society dressed in silk while promenading. A fine cotton cape like this one, albeit embroidered in silk, thus was suitable for use within an elite household, probably as an accessory for the daily toilette of a Goan *casado* woman.

A cape from the Museu Nacional do Traje (fig. 3) represents a further stylistic development. While the example in the Ambras collection features a European cut and stylistically Bengal embroidery, this embroidered cape consists of eight slightly broader cotton panels; hunting scenes with Europeans are depicted on the lower part of each panel. Bengal capes with hunting scenes were first mentioned in Sassetti's letter from 1584, suggesting a date for this group in the last third of the sixteenth century. The Europeans—probably Portuguese, identifiable by their clothing—carry muskets and swords and are framed by narrow guard stripes that include simple vegetal scrolls. These scrolls also frame the rest of each panel, but

FIGURE 3. Cape, Bengal, first third of the 17th century. Cotton, tussar silk in chain stitch, 101 cm

the remaining upper space is left blank. The two outermost panels are designed as the others and do not frame the cape. Three fragmentary embroidered cotton panels in the Metropolitan Museum of Art fall into the same category but feature more detailed hunting scenes, including dragons and winged snakes, covering the entire cotton panels.⁷¹ The borders of these trapezoids feature fine flowers and small animals, the former reminiscent of Mughal architectural decoration.⁷² The cape fragment consisting of five panels and fringes in the Victoria & Albert Museum is also part of this group.⁷³ Its *tussar* silk embroidery features a more traditional Bengal style and includes peaceful as well as fighting animals and hunting scenes that entirely cover the individual panels, each of which is framed by guard stripes, including delicate rosettes. Interestingly, its foundation material is linen, not cotton.

The hunting scenes depicted on these three capes illustrate the elite society that purchased and wore them. The fantastic figures stress the hunters' bravery, and the setting may represent the unknown—and, to Europeans, frightening—wilderness of the Ganges Delta, which amazed foreign authors of travelogues, many of whom thought that unicorns inhabited the vast forests. Pyrard de Laval mentions this suspicion in his report on Bengal: "[there are] rhinoceros and some say unicorns too, which are said to be found in this land [Bengal] only!"⁷⁴ Whether these embroidered hunting scenes in *tussar* silk were for domestic use or enough silk was employed to qualify them to promenade in the streets of Goa is another matter, about which we can only speculate at this point.

The third group, consisting of four capes, represents the most mature form of this type of dress made in Bengal and dates to the first half of the seventeenth century (fig. 4). According to museum documentation, most of the capes discussed thus far had cotton foundations and embroidery in *tussar* silk. At least two of the capes in this group (as well as one mentioned above) have very fine linen foundations; the embroidery remains in *tussar* silk.⁷⁵ Bengal was famous for cotton, not linen, which was imported from further afield, perhaps from Europe. The most plausible explanation for the—economically rather useless—import of linen is that linen is a more robust material than cotton. The linen used in the capes is of superior quality, very fine and dense; in looking at the fabric only superficially, one might take it for cotton. Through its merchants, Spanish Portugal had access to fine Dutch linen, then among the best in Europe, as this region was part of the Spanish Habsburg dominions. Although India abounded in textiles, it was not unusual at that time to ship some textile material to India for further processing; Carletti reports that some types of silk thread were imported to Gujarat from China.⁷⁶ Embroiderers could have traveled, too, and produced the capes elsewhere, but that scenario is surely a more complicated version; transporting textiles is far easier than transporting human beings. If durability were a reason for the use of linen, the next question would be whether linen was needed because the cape was not only used in the domestic context but also was worn outside and thus exposed to sun and rain. The all-over decoration of the capes and their semicircular cut, making them real *herreruelos*, support this assumption.

Three of the four textiles survive in their entirety; one was transformed into an antependium.⁷⁷ The capes are very similar, in terms not only of size but also of decoration. They are the most sumptuous capes of Bengal production to survive and were surely among the most valuable examples (capes with precious stones, as described above, did not survive). The imported foundation material (linen), the denser embroidery, and the higher quantity of panels (eighteen to twenty) indicate that the capes were more expensive than those discussed thus far. They were very probably produced later than previous examples were, during the first half of the seventeenth century. The individual trapezoidal panels that compose the capes are similar

FIGURE 4. Cape, Bengal, first third of the 17th century. Cotton or linen, tussar silk in chain stitch, 103 cm

to such a degree that they are almost interchangeable; it seems that they could be prefabricated in large numbers and then sewn together into capes by a tailor whenever needed. The uniformity of the individual trapezoidal panels is evidence of a high degree of customization for the garments made from these textiles. This customization suggests the presence in Bengal of very well-organized workshop structures able to produce large quantities of embroidered garments for the Portuguese—and surely many more Spanish capes were produced in Bengal and exported from the region than survive today.

The individual panels are decorated as follows: the lower part of the trapezoid features a marine being—a mermaid, merman, or hybrid figure (half-stag, half-fish). Some hold fish in their hands; others play string, wind, or percussion instruments, evoking musical harmony as well as the dangers of the sea, braved by the Portuguese when crossing the oceans. The figures can be likened to mythological sirens and could refer to the Ulyssean dangers of the sea; accordingly, they were often shown in depictions of the sea during the sixteenth century—Bengal *colchas* frequently include similar figures in their borders. In the context of Portuguese expansion and its artistic and literary production, marine scenes not only represent the hazards of traveling by ship but also compare the Portuguese navigators to such ancient models as Ulysses; the Portuguese seaborne empire was viewed at the time to be in line with the great empires of antiquity. According to this perspective, the Portuguese even outdid their forebears by establishing an enduring new empire, bringing every known continent under Portuguese Christian rule. Sixteenth-century Portuguese historiographical works by Gaspar Correia and João de Barros, to name only two, join Luís de Camões's great epic on Portuguese maritime expansion in representing examples of this interpretation—and, in fact, in molding it. In *Os Lusíadas*, Camões repeatedly compares the deeds of the Portuguese with those achieved in antiquity, emphasizing that the Portuguese were the new Romans and Israelites.⁷⁸ It is likely that the Portuguese commissioners had this trend in mind when assembling the visual program of the *colchas* and the capes.

While the mermaids can be interpreted against the background of Portuguese expansion, the double-headed eagles placed above the maritime scenes suggest a dynastic reading: it is difficult to imagine that in the Iberian context of the time period the crowned double-headed eagle would have been understood as anything but a symbol for Habsburg rule, which included Portugal.⁷⁹ Officially, the double-headed eagle was not part of the blazon of Spanish kings after the death of Charles V in 1558, when the imperial symbol passed on to the Austrian Habsburgs; however, the motif was soon replaced by the eagle of San Juan of the *reyes catholicos*. Spanish queens and archduchesses continued to wear jewelry in the form of a double-headed eagle; after all, the symbol remained in the family.⁸⁰ In many fields of the colonial and folk arts, the double-headed eagle continued to be understood as a symbol for the Spanish Habsburgs; in some cases, it was indigenized.⁸¹ A striking parallel in propaganda fashion from roughly the same time period is found in bobbin lace: at least two fragments of scalloped lace (one attributed to Milan, the other to Holland, dated to about 1620–30), probably originally part of a collar, survive in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.⁸² The scallops include large double-headed crowned eagles that explicitly demonstrated their wearers' allegiance to the Habsburg Dynasty—just as the capes did. The politically charged pictorial program of Bengal *colchas*, which repeatedly feature the crowned double-headed eagle and were commissioned and produced parallel to the capes in related workshops, are additional evidence for this reading and support the dating of these capes to before 1640, when Portugal again became independent. Using this dynastic symbol would have been nonsensical after the rise to power of the Braganza

Dynasty in Portugal, despite the fact that, as Pedro Cardim has pointed out, the Braganzas used most other elements of the Habsburgs' political iconography in order to stress continuity.⁸³ Above the crowned double-headed eagles in the cape's panels, two undulating scrolls intersect as they wind upward, issuing simplified acanthus leaves and flowers; three or four pairs of birds rest in them. The scrolls narrow at the top of the trapezoid and are accompanied by guard stripes, including undulating vine scrolls, on each side.

In light of the dynastic reading of the capes and allusions to the dominance of the seas by the Portuguese under Habsburg rule, a question arises concerning the contexts in which the capes were worn. The capes of group one and two, discussed above, were all much smaller and less decorated; these form half-circles and are truly sumptuous. The amount of silk used in them quite certainly qualified them as suitable to be worn by a gentleman or gentlewoman on the streets of Goa or Lisbon. However, the Bengal *herreruelos* were not precious enough to qualify as courtly fashion—even if they were inspired by it. Rather, they were worn by the aspiring classes, perhaps in order to circumvent sumptuary laws (due to a misunderstanding, *tussar* silk was believed to be spun from an herb; hence it was not considered true silk). The garment's presence in the list of the above-mentioned *Livro dos Registos* would hint at a strategy to circumvent sumptuary laws. The crowned double-headed eagle stresses the wearer's allegiance to the Habsburg Dynasty; a truly adequate occasion for wearing such a cape would have been an official event, such as the entry of a viceroy to Goa or of a Habsburg archduke or king to Lisbon. Perhaps the wearers carried one of the *colchas* bearing a political message with them. In such a context, the capes would perfectly enhance the eulogizing political program characteristic to such occasions.⁸⁴

Two capes or mantles discussed here are of a different nature but share place of origin, commissioners and makers, material (cotton and *tussar* silk), and techniques employed (tabby weave, chain stitch, knot and running stitches) with the capes discussed earlier. In terms of technical composition, they are very similar to the Bengal *colchas*, consisting of at least two layers of cotton fabric sewn and densely quilted, thus providing a stable foundation for the embroidery. They are today in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 5) and the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, New York.⁸⁵ Both are semicircular and measure little more than two meters in diameter. Their cut and basic decorative structure, with a broad border

FIGURE 5. Cape or mantle, Bengal, late 16th–early 17th century. Cotton, tussar silk in chain stitch, 100.3 cm

surrounding the entire cape, are comparable to those of a somewhat smaller European cape, said to have been made for a dwarf, from the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, dated to 1600–20 and analyzed by Janet Arnold.⁸⁶ The decoration of the fields, however, is typical for Bengal export production.

The cape from the Metropolitan Museum features elegant hunting scenes, including Portuguese men (recognizable by their hats) and locals on horseback and on foot, with bows and arrows, in the large outer border, accompanied by guard stripes featuring a geometric pattern as well as a smaller border with a line of gazelles hunted by beasts of prey. The innermost two quarter-circles feature the most exclusive of hunts—on elephants, directed by locals who are accompanied by Portuguese on horseback. Between the two shapes are two Portuguese men and two women (wearing European-style dress), facing each other in what appears to be a dance; they are separated by a guard stripe with roundels. Similar scenes also appear on Bengal *colchas*.⁸⁷ The cape from the Cooper Hewitt is very similar in organization but includes one additional narrow border on the edge, showing small mammals. The large surrounding border again features hunting scenes, with both Portuguese men and locals on horseback as well as elephants and trees with generously extended branches that are home to birds and small mammals. The third border includes undulating vine scrolls with large animals and a winged (?) snake. The two circular segments illustrate staged animal fights, watched by small-scale human figures. The center forms a rectangle, which is dominated by a tree that features pointed ovals and two branches issuing leaves; it is inhabited by birds. The people depicted on these capes again reflect the high social status of colonial Portuguese buyers.

The mantles are quite stiff and are a bit smaller than the unlined capes discussed earlier. A question arises as to whether they were worn by adults, as there are no collars or cords attached that would fix the capes around the neck. The most likely wearers of these capes were small children, as is stressed by Van Linschoten in describing among Bengal embroideries “mantles, therein to christen children women in childbed use to doe, and make them with flowers and branches, and personages.”⁸⁸ Several pages later, the author describes a scene that includes this use, which he probably witnessed: baptisms were among the rare occasions when elite Goan women left their homes. Accompanied by costly objects, music, horses, and a group of people dressed for the occasion, the mother, midwife, and child would arrive at the church in two palanquins: “the child, covered with a costly mantle, made for the purpose.”⁸⁹ It is quite plausible that the capes or mantles from the Metropolitan Museum and the Cooper Hewitt were used for such occasions; their size as well as their lack of collars and cords support this possibility. The then still brilliant embroidery in *tussar* silk would have glowed like gold alongside the candlesticks and salvers of real gold, while the supple cotton would have provided a more comfortable cover for the child than one embroidered in heavy gold.

Conclusion

Through the example of the Spanish cape, this article has explored fashion as a sign of the global spread of Spain’s cultural and political dominance during the time of its personal union with Portugal, from 1580 to 1640. With the Iberian expansion, a diverse group of people traveled—from west to east and vice versa—carrying with them not only their clothing culture but also social behavior, such as hierarchical structures, to their new cities. The article also has shed light on the increasing hybridization of the structures these travelers brought along, as Europeans were forced to integrate multiple novel elements into their rigid social concepts. This process is reflected in the clothing culture that they transposed from Europe to India,

which was adapted to the tropical climate and was aided by intermarriage and by the astonishing variety and quality of textiles then available in India, which introduced the Portuguese to pure cotton fabrics, a novelty to them.

This social and political *mélange* is reflected in a group of Spanish capes made in Bengal for the wider Iberian market. In order to create these hybrid pieces of fashion, the Portuguese commissioners engaged in dialogue with local craftsmen, which is reflected in capes combining European forms with Bengal materials and techniques. The use of fine linen (very probably from Europe) in cape production made logistics more complex than could have been imagined previously. This process of hybridization turned the capes into novel and desirable pieces of fashion and opened them to a wider group of future Iberian consumers. A strong political message is conveyed by many Bengal embroideries and by the later capes, making possible their dating and reflecting political spheres of influence, imagined rather than real (Bengal was not part of the *Estado da Índia*), stretching from Madrid to Bengal.

Originally made for Portuguese colonial society, the capes, among other Asian textiles, soon found their way to Europe as exotic merchandise. Exoticism seems to have grown with distance; capes that would have been worn in Goa and Lisbon became dynastic gifts and consequently were integrated into princely collections. In light of their rarity and novelty, and their role as evidence of the vast spread of the Habsburg domain, they were deemed prestigious enough to be included in the princely microcosm of the famous *Ambras Kunstkammer*.

In the wider context of increasing European presence, not only across the Asian seas but also in some areas of territory along the coasts, the Bengal Spanish capes mark one of the early instances in which Europeans directly commissioned comparatively large numbers of customized pieces of fashion destined for the wider Iberian market in Asia. This collaboration happened more or less at eye level, with the Portuguese merchants, who inhabited but a small merchant community unprotected by the official *Estado da Índia*, at the less powerful end and heavily dependent on local structures. Somewhat ironically, Portuguese expansion carried courtly Spanish fashion to parts of colonial Portuguese Asia, thus delineating the Habsburg-dominated empire's influence. Among the results of this movement of people, materials, and ideas (in the form of prints) across the globe were the novel Spanish capes made in Bengal for the wider Iberian market.

BARBARA KARL, PhD (University of Vienna), 2004, is director of the Textile Museum St. Gallen in Switzerland. Her main areas of expertise are Indian textile production for the Portuguese during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, cultural and material exchange between Europe and the Islamic world during the early modern period, and the history of collecting. Her publications include two books, *Embroidered History: Indian Textiles for the Portuguese Market of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (2016) and *Treasury—Kunstkammer—Museum: Objects from the Islamic World in the Museum Collections of Vienna* (2011), as well as various articles in journals and edited volumes.

Notes

- 1 A. H. de Oliveira Marques, *História de Portugal: Do Renascimento às Revoluções Liberais*, vol. 2 (Lisbon: Editorial Presença, 1998).
- 2 José Luis Colomer and Amalia Descalzo, eds., *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe* (Madrid: CEEH, 2014). The black color prevalent in Spanish fashion was itself the result of geographic expansion, as dyestuffs from the New World, namely logwood, enabled better dyeing results than were previously possible. See José Luis Colomer, "Black and the Royal Image," in Colomer and Descalzo, *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe*, 77–112.
- 3 Carmen Bernis, "La moda en la Espana de Felipe II a través del retrato de corte," in *Alonso Sanchez Coello y el retrato en la corte de Felipe II*, ed. Santiago Saavedra (Madrid: Museo del Prado, 1990), 65–111; and Amalia Descalzo, "Spanish Male Costume in the Habsburg Period," in Colomer and Descalzo, *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe*, 18.
- 4 Descalzo, "Spanish Male Costume in the Habsburg Period," 20.
- 5 Colomer, "Black and the Royal Image," 77; and Descalzo, "Spanish Male Costume in the Habsburg Period," 19, 20.
- 6 Manuel de Faria e Sousa, *Asia portuguesa*, vol. 1 (Lisbon: Officina de Henrique Valente de Oliueira, 1666); Manuel de Faria e Sousa, *Asia portuguesa*, vol. 2 (Lisbon: Officina de Antonio Craesbeeck demello, 1674); and Manuel de Faria e Sousa, *Asia portuguesa*, vol. 3 (Lisbon: Officina de Antonio Craesbeeck demello, 1675). It remains an important source, although it was published posthumously (by his son) and during a period of political transition, from Habsburg (ruling Portugal in a personal union from 1580 to 1640) to Braganza (after 1640) rule.
- 7 Carmen Bernis and Amalia Descalzo, "Spanish Female Dress in the Habsburg Period," in Colomer and Descalzo, *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe*, 48.
- 8 Bernis, "La moda en la Espana de Felipe II a través del retrato de corte," 75–79.
- 9 James Boyajian, *Portuguese Trade in Asia under the Habsburgs* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Janet Abu Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); and Ruth Barnes, Rosemary Crill, and Steve Cohen, *Trade, Temple and Court: Indian Textiles from the Tapi Collection* (Bombay: India Book House, 2002).
- 10 Francesco Carletti, *Reise um die Welt 1594*, trans. and ed. Ernst Bluth (Wiesbaden: Erdmann Verlag, 1966), 257. On Goan society, see Célia Cristina da Silva Tavares, "Sociedade colonial no oriente português," *Revista Ultramares* 5 (2016): 12–34; A. J. R. Russell-Wood, "A sociedade Portuguesa no ultramar," in *Historia da expansão portuguesa: A formacao de um Império*, ed. Francisco Bethencourt and Kirti Chaudhuri (Lisbon: Circulo de Leitores, 1998), 1:266–79; and A. J. R. Russell-Wood, "Ritmos e destinos de Emigração," in *Historia da expansão portuguesa: Do Índico ao Atlântico*, ed. Francisco Bethencourt and Kirti Chaudhuri (Lisbon: Circulo de Leitores, 1998), 2:114–92.
- 11 Carletti, *Reise um die Welt 1594*, 251.
- 12 Arthur C. Burnell and P. A. Tiele, eds., *The Voyage of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies: From the Old English Translation of 1598*, 2 vols. (London: Hakluyt Society, 1935), 1:193, 212.
- 13 Burnell and Tiele, *The Voyage of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies*, 1:206.
- 14 Carletti, *Reise um die Welt 1594*, 262.
- 15 A journal published by CHAM (Centro de História de Além Mar), Lisbon, recently dedicated an entire issue to the Codex Casanatense 1889: *Anais de história de além mar* 13 (2012).
- 16 Hugo Miguel Crespo, "Trajar as aparências, vestir para ser: O testemunho da pragmática de 1609," in *O luxo na região do Porto ao tempo de Filipe II de Portugal (1610)*, ed. Gonçalo Vasconcelos e Sousa (Porto: Universidade Católica Editora, 2012), 93–148; and Ruth de la Puerta, "Sumptuary Legislation and Restrictions on Luxury Dress," in Colomer and Descalzo, *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe*, 209–32.
- 17 Russell-Wood, "A sociedade Portuguesa no ultramar."
- 18 Russell-Wood, "A sociedade Portuguesa no ultramar."
- 19 The book was first published in 1596 in Dutch; only two years later, it was translated into English and German. This study quotes Burnell and Tiele, *The Voyage of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies*, 1:200.
- 20 Alexandra Curvelo, *Obras-Primas dos Biombos Namban* (Paris: Ed. Chandeigne, 2015).
- 21 Madalena Farrajota Ataíde Garcia, "O traje português nos biombos namban," in *IV Encontro de museus de países e comunidades de língua portuguesa*, ed. Comissão portuguesa do ICOM (Macau: Comissão portuguesa do ICOM), 204–9; a slightly different version is in Madalena Farrajota Ataíde Garcia, "Traje português nos biombos namban," in *Traje namban*, ed. Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (Lisbon: Instituto Português de Museus, 1994), 50–62.
- 22 Maria D'Oliveira Martins and Alexandra Curvelo, eds., *Encomendas namban: Os portugueses no Japão da idade moderna* (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 2010);

- and Maria Helena Mendes Pinto, *Biombo namban* (Lisbon: Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, 1988).
- 23 Farrajota Ataíde Garcia, "Traje português nos biombo namban," 199–216, especially 204.
 - 24 Farrajota Ataíde Garcia, "Traje português nos biombo namban," 209, 210.
 - 25 This question has been asked previously: Isabel Alvarado, ed., *Colonial Fashion: What Happens to Fashion When It Travels?* (Santiago de Chile: ICOM—International Costume Committee, 2008). The question was also explored in the conference "Dressing Global Bodies" at the University of Alberta, 2016.
 - 26 Partha Mitter, *Much Maligned Monsters: A History of European Reaction to Indian Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
 - 27 Alexandra Kim, "A Passage to India: British Women's Clothing in India 1880–1939," in Alvarado, *Colonial Fashion*, 76–80.
 - 28 Carletti, *Reise um die Welt 1594*, 267.
 - 29 See Victoria & Albert Museum, London, IM 386–1914; Museum für islamische Kunst, Berlin, I 4601 f. 39; and Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, Estampes, Od. 49 rés. 4°, n.° 34.
 - 30 Carletti, *Reise um die Welt 1594*, 267.
 - 31 Burnell and Tiele, *The Voyage of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies*, 1:206.
 - 32 Carletti, *Reise um die Welt 1594*, 260.
 - 33 Carletti, *Reise um die Welt 1594*, 267.
 - 34 Carletti, *Reise um die Welt 1594*, 267.
 - 35 For an overview, see Maria João Ferreira, "Asian Textiles in the *Carreira da Índia*: Portuguese Trade, Consumption and Taste, 1500–1700," *Textile History* 46, no. 2 (2015): 147–68.
 - 36 António Meira Marques Henriques, *São Francisco Xavier: Vida e lenda* (Lisbon: Museu São Roque, 2006), 42, 43.
 - 37 Carletti, *Reise um die Welt 1594*, 267.
 - 38 Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: The Fabric That Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
 - 39 Jan Huyghen van Linschoten, *Itinerario: Voyage ofte Shipvaert . . .* (Amsterdam: Cornelis Claesz, 1596), 44, 45.
 - 40 For the question of status related to the quality and quantity of textiles owned, see, for example, Annemarie Stauffer, "A Purchase List from the Court of Charles the Bold from 1473," in *Inventories of Textiles/Textiles in Inventories: Studies on Late Medieval and Early Modern Material Culture*, ed. Thomas Ertl and Barbara Karl (Vienna: Vienna University Press, 2017), 111–26.
 - 41 Exact technical investigation of the individual pieces has yet to be carried out. Ecclesiastic vestments: Museu do Oriente, Lisbon, FO 1137 (Alb); Ducal Museum, Gotha (tunic, probably made for the local Bengal market), published in Friedrich Sarre and Fredrik R. Martin, eds., *Die Ausstellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst in München 1910* (Munich: F. Bruckmann A. G., 1912), vol. 3, plate 211, cat. no. 2430; and Museu Nacional do Traje, Lisbon, 15988 (Alb) (said to be of linen). Capes: group one, made as if of one piece, lined: Cooper Hewitt Museum, New York, 1951-41-1; and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 23.203.1; group two, capes made of individual trapezoidal sections sewn together: Musée Cinquantenaire, Brussels, 1976.2963; Victoria & Albert Museum, London, T1016–77; two capes at Museu Nacional do Traje, Lisbon, 4130 and unknown; and Ambras Castle/Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, PA 511. Three more fragments of a cape are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art; another cape fragment is in the Victoria & Albert Museum (T 1016–77); and a cape transformed into an altar frontal is in the National Museum of Finland, Helsinki, H 589. The cape from Ambras was published and discussed in Leonie von Wilckens, "Ein 'Haarmantel' des 16. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift für Waffen und Kostümkunde* 22 (1980): 39–44. A seemingly Bengal embroidery on velvet survives: Masako Yoshida, "The Embroidered Velvet Jinbaori Jacket Purportedly Owned by Toyotomi Hideyoshi: Its Place of Production, Date, and Background," *Bijutsushi (Art History)* 59, no. 1 (2009–10): 1–16; and a *jinbaori* (battle jacket) survives in the collection of Matsuzakaya Co., Ltd, in Nagoya: Tokugawa bijutsukan, *Fashion of the Warring States Era: The Aesthetics of the Samurai* (Nagoya: Tokugawa bijutsukan, 2009), nos. 88, 101.
 - 42 For the attribution of these capes and *colchas* to Bengal, see John Irwin, "Indian Textile Trade in the 17th Century, Part 3, Bengal," *Journal of Indian Textile History* 3 (1957): 59–74.
 - 43 The Portuguese and Spanish word "*colcha* (*colja*)" has a Latin root: "*culcita*," meaning "mattress" or "pillow." One also finds "*colxa*" and "*colches*" in historical Portuguese records. The *Vocabulário português e latino* by Raphael Bluteau defines "*colchas*" as thin bedcovers with quilted layers of cotton. The term "*colcha*" was also used, in the inventories of Portuguese households and in the records of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century merchants, to designate embroidered quilts and hangings from Bengal. See Raphael Bluteau, *Vocabulário português e latino* (Coimbra: Collegio das Artes da Companhia de Jesu, 1712); Irwin, "Indian Textile Trade in the 17th Century, Part 3, Bengal"; John Irwin and Margaret Hall, *Indian Embroideries: Historic Textiles at the Calico Museum*, 2 vols. (Ahmedabad: Calico Museum of Textiles, 1973); and Barbara Karl,

- Embroidered Histories: Indian Textiles for the Portuguese Markets during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2016).
- 44 See Karl, *Embroidered Histories*, 27–50.
- 45 Burnell and Tiele, *The Voyage of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies*, 1:96.
- 46 Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, Reservados, Código 1986, fl. 73v.
- 47 Vanni Bramanti, ed., *Lettere di vari paesi 1570–1588 di Filippo Sassetti* (Milan: Longanesi, 1970), 219, letter to Baccio Valori from Lisbon, October 10, 1578.
- 48 Barbara Karl, “‘Marvellous Things Are Made with Needles’: Bengal Colchas in European Inventories, c. 1580–1630,” *Journal of the History of Collections* 23, no. 2 (2011): 301–13; and Karl, *Embroidered Histories*, 55.
- 49 Bramanti, *Lettere di vari paesi 1570–1588 di Filippo Sassetti*, 396, letter to Francesci de’ Medici from Cochín, January 22, 1584. On the exchange, see Barbara Karl, “Galanterie di cose rare: Filippo Sassetti’s Indian Shopping List for the Medici Brothers,” *Itinerario: International Journal on the History of European Expansion and Global Interaction* 32, no. 3, (2008): 23–42.
- 50 Letter to Francesco from January 22, 1584, quoted in Adele Dei, *Lettere dall’ India 1583–1588* (Rome: Salerno Ed., 1995), 55. Original document with another date (presumably a copy): Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Mediceo del Principato 765, fols. 1–6.
- 51 Peter Mason, *Infelicities: Representations of the Exotic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 1–6, 64–90.
- 52 Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Guardaroba Medicea 136, fl. 139 v.
- 53 See, for instance, the publication of Habsburg records that illustrate the exchange of exotic goods within the Habsburg family network: Annemarie Jordan Gschwend and Almudena Pérez de Tudela, “Luxury Goods for Royal Collectors,” in *Exotica: Portugals Entdeckungen im Spiegel fürstlicher Kunst- und Wunderkammern der Renaissance, Jahrbuch des kunsthistorischen Museums Wien*, vol. 3, ed. Helmut Trnek und Sabine Haag (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2001), 1–127.
- 54 AGS, Cámara de Castilla, Valladolid, Libro de Cédulas de Paso, no. 363, fol. 149v. Madrid, May 2, 1594, quoted in Jordan Gschwend and Pérez de Tudela, “Luxury Goods for Royal Collectors,” 81.
- 55 Archivo Historico Nacional, Madrid, Consejos, libro 2394, fol. 55v. Letter to the viceroy in Valencia, Montejó, June 18, 1592, quoted in Jordan Gschwend and Pérez de Tudela, “Luxury Goods for Royal Collectors,” 78.
- 56 Wendelin Boeheim, ed., “Urkunden und Regesten aus der k.k. Hofbibliothek: Inventari über das fürstlich gsclosz Ombras sambt den rüst- und kunstcämern, Regeste 5556,” *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 7, no. 2 (1888): 307. The cape was first published in Wilckens, “Ein ‘Haarmantel’ des 16. Jahrhunderts,” 39–44. See the catalogue Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, *Exotica: Portugals Entdeckungen im Spiegel fürstlicher Kunst- und Wunderkammern der Renaissance* (Milan: Skira, 2000), 216–18.
- 57 See, for example, Harriet Roth, *Der Anfang der Museumslehre in Deutschland: Das Traktat “Inscriptiones vel Tituli Theatri Amplissimi” von Samuel Quiccheberg* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2001); and Oliver Impey and Arthur MacGregor, eds., *The Origins of Museums: The Cabinet of Curiosities in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).
- 58 Crespo, “Trajar as aparências, vestir para ser,” 93–148.
- 59 Crespo, “Trajar as aparências, vestir para ser,” 124, 134.
- 60 Thomas Wardle, *Handbook of the Collection Illustrative of the Wild Silks of India, in the Indian Section of the South Kensington Museum* (London: George E. Eyre and William Spottiswoode, 1881); and Irwin, “Indian Textile Trade in the 17th Century, Part 3, Bengal.”
- 61 Irwin, “Indian Textile Trade in the 17th Century, Part 3, Bengal”; and Karl, *Embroidered Histories*, 74–80.
- 62 A detailed technical analysis has not been possible thus far.
- 63 Santina Levey, *Lace: A History* (Leeds: Victoria & Albert Museum in association with W. S. Maney & Son, Ltd., 1983), 4, 5.
- 64 Bernardo Ferrão, *Mobiliário português dos primórdios ao maneirismo*, vol. 4 (Porto: Lello & Irmão Ed., 1990).
- 65 Bernis, “La moda en la Espana de Felipe II a través del retrato de corte,” 66, 67; and Juan de Alcega, *Libro de geometría, práctica y traza, el qual se trata de lo tocante al officio de sastre* (Madrid: Guillermo Drouy, 1589). See also Femke Speelberg, *Fashion & Virtue: Textile Patterns and the Print Revolution 1520–1620* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015).
- 66 Bernis, “La moda en la Espana de Felipe II a través del retrato de corte,” 75–79.
- 67 Janet Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion: The Cut and Construction of Clothes for Men and Women c. 1560–1620* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985), 36, 96. Victoria & Albert Museum, 832.1904, probably made of an old garment.
- 68 The development of Bengal *colchas* is comparable; see Karl, *Embroidered Histories*, 80–97.
- 69 Wilckens, “Ein ‘Haarmantel’ des 16. Jahrhunderts,” 39–44.
- 70 Sarre and Martin, *Die Ausstellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst in München 1910*, vol. 3, plate 211, cat. no. 2430.
- 71 Metropolitan Museum of Art, Islamic Department, 08.108.4a–e.

- 72 See, for example, Ebba Koch, *The Complete Taj Mahal* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2007).
- 73 Rosemary Crill, *Indian Embroidery* (London: V&A Publications, 1999), 16, 39.
- 74 François Pyrard de Laval, *The Voyage of François Pyrard de Laval to the East Indies, the Moluccas and Brazil*, vols. 1–2 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1888), 331.
- 75 Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga (MNAA), 4620 and Museu Nacional do Traje (MNT), 4130. The MNAA cape is ten centimeters longer than the cape in the MNT. Both are published in Jay Levenson, ed., *Encompassing the Globe: Portugal e o mundo nos séculos XVI e XVII* (Lisbon: Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, 2009), 268, 269. Also see online documentation by Maria Helena Mendes Pinto at: <http://www.matriznet.dgpc.pt/MatrizNet/Objectos/ObjectosConsultar.aspx?IdReg=45357> and <http://www.matriznet.dgpc.pt/MatrizNet/Objectos/ObjectosConsultar.aspx?IdReg=280625>, accessed March 30, 2016.
- 76 Carletti, *Reise um die Welt 1594*, 249.
- 77 Antependium: National Museum of Finland, Helsinki, H 589; this is the only example that includes fringes. Capes: see note 75 and Musée Conquante-naire, Brussels, 1976.2963, in Galerij ASLK, *Via Orientalis* (Brussels: Europalia, 1991), 141 (the catalogue provides a different inventory number, 2598, but it is the same piece). This is the only example that includes a passementerie border on the edges; it is very different in style and perhaps was added later.
- 78 Luís de Sousa Rebelo, “Language and Literature in the Portuguese Empire,” in *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion 1400–1800*, ed. Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 358–89.
- 79 For the symbol in general, see Hildegard Kretschmer, *Lexikon der Symbole und Attribute in der Kunst* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 2011), 20–23.
- 80 See, for example, the portrait of Queen Anna of Spain by Antonis Mor, 1570, Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, GG 305. Anna was the daughter of Emperor Maximilian II.
- 81 For Mexico, see A. Gómez Martínez, “El águila bicéfala y la configuración mitológica, otomí de San Pablito,” *Estudios de cultura Otomame* 8, no. 1 (2015): 121.
- 82 Levey, *Lace*, figs. 122, 126 (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 20.186.354 and 56.25). For another politically charged lace coverlet including the imperial blazon, see Levey, *Lace*, fig. 115 (Victoria & Albert Museum, 870–1880).
- 83 Pedro Cardim, “¿Una Restauração visual? Cambio dinástico y uso político de las imágenes en el Portugal del siglo XVII,” in *La historia imaginada: Construcciones visuales del pasado e la Edad Moderna*, ed. Juan L. Palos and Diana Carrió-Invernizzi (Madrid: CEEH, 2008), 185–206.
- 84 Ioan Baptista Lavanha, *Viaje de la catholica real magestad del rei D. Filipe III. N.S. al reino de Portugal—relacion del solene recebimento que en el se le hizo* (Madrid: Thomas Iunti Impressor del Rei N.S., 1622); and Karl, *Embroidered Histories*, 215–27.
- 85 The piece in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (23.203.1) was part of the important exhibition *Interwoven Globe*: Amelia Peck, ed., *Interwoven Globe: The Worldwide Textile Trade, 1500–1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 147. Cooper Hewitt Museum, 1951–41–1. See *Cooper Union Museum Chronicle* 2, no. 5 (June 1953): 137.
- 86 Arnold, *Patterns of Fashion*, 35, 95.
- 87 Comparable to some embroidered Bengal *colchas*: Karl, *Embroidered Histories*, 80–97.
- 88 Burnell and Tiele, *The Voyage of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies*, 1:96.
- 89 Burnell and Tiele, *The Voyage of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies*, 1:198, 199.

Figure Credits

Figure 1. Cape, Bengal, last quarter of the 16th century. Cotton, *tussar* silk in chain stitch, 116 cm. Kunsthistorisches Museum/Schloss Ambras, 511. © Kunsthistorisches Museum/Schloss Ambras

Figure 2. Kano Naizen, or School of Kano, Screen (*biombo*), Japan, 1593–1601. Tempera on paper, gold leaf, 178 x 366.4 cm. Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, 1641 Mov. © Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Direção-Geral do Património Cultural / Arquivo de Documentação Fotográfica (DGPC/ADF), Luisa Oliveira/José Paulo Ruas

Figure 3. Cape, Bengal, first third of the 17th century. Cotton, *tussar* silk in chain stitch, 101 cm. Museu

Nacional do Traje, 4131. © Museu Nacional do Traje, Direção-Geral do Património Cultural / Arquivo de Documentação Fotográfica (DGPC/ADF)

Figure 4. Cape, Bengal, first third of the 17th century. Cotton or linen, *tussar* silk in chain stitch, 103 cm. Museu Nacional do Traje, 4130. © Museu Nacional do Traje, Direção-Geral do Património Cultural / Arquivo de Documentação Fotográfica (DGPC/ADF), Carlos Monteiro

Figure 5. Cape or mantle, Bengal, late 16th–early 17th century. Cotton, *tussar* silk in chain stitch, 100.3 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Islamic Department, 23.203.1. © Metropolitan Museum of Art