

ASIAN ART  
**connections**

A RESOURCE FOR EDUCATORS

FALL 2005

STYLE AND  
IMPERIAL COSTUMES FROM OTTOMAN TURKEY  
STATUS



THE ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY  
OCTOBER 29, 2005-JANUARY 22, 2006



Smithsonian  
Freer Gallery of Art and  
Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

# exhibitions

THE FREER GALLERY OF ART AND ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY at the Smithsonian Institution together form the national museum of Asian art for the United States. The Freer Gallery also houses a collection of American art from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the world's most important collection of works by James McNeill Whistler.

## FREER CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

Virtue and Entertainment:  
Chinese Music in the  
Visual Arts  
THROUGH MARCH 26, 2006

Artists of Edo 1800–1850  
NOVEMBER 19, 2005–MAY 29, 2006

Freer and Tea:  
100 Years of *The Book of Tea*  
NOVEMBER 19, 2005–MAY 29, 2006

Pretty Women: Freer and  
the Ideal of Feminine Beauty  
THROUGH JULY 16, 2006

## SACKLER CURRENT EXHIBITIONS

Gold: The Asian Touch  
THROUGH FEBRUARY 19, 2006

Perspectives: Mei-ling Hom  
THROUGH MARCH 12, 2006

Hokusai  
MARCH 4–MAY 14, 2006

## ONGOING EXHIBITIONS

Ancient Chinese Pottery and Bronze  
Art for Art's Sake (American)  
Arts of the Indian Subcontinent and  
the Himalayas  
Arts of the Islamic World  
Black and White: Chinese Ceramics from  
the Tenth to Fourteenth Century

Buddhist Art  
Charles Lang Freer and Egypt  
Japanese Screens  
Korean Ceramics  
The Peacock Room  
Small Masterpieces: Whistler Paintings  
from the 1880s  
Vietnamese Ceramics from  
the Red River Delta

## ONGOING EXHIBITIONS

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Fountains of Light: Islamic Metalwork  
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Luxury Arts of the Silk Route Empires  
Sculpture of South Asia and the  
Himalayas

## TOURS

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ARTS OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD  
30 students, grades 7–12, 1 hour

THE RELIGIONS OF ASIA:  
HINDUISM, ISLAM, AND BUDDHISM  
45 students, grades 6–12, 1 hour

HOW TO LOOK AT ASIAN ART:  
PROCESS, FUNCTION,  
AND MEANING  
60 students, grades 3–12, 1 hour

INTRODUCTION TO  
JAPANESE ART  
45 students, grades 3–12, 1 hour

THE ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY  
OF ANCIENT CHINA  
45 students, grades 3–6, 1 hour

SURVEY OF CHINESE ART  
45 students, grades 7–12, 1 hour

THE ART OF BUDDHISM  
30 students, grades 7–12, 1 hour

THE ART OF HINDUISM  
30 students, grades 6–12, 1 hour

ANIMALS IN ASIAN ART  
45 students, grades K–3, 45 minutes

THE PRINCESS AND  
THE PEACOCKS  
20 students (with at least 3 chaperones),  
grades K–3, 45 minutes

CHARLES LANG FREER,  
COLLECTOR  
60 students, grades 9–12, 1 hour

# TEACHER RESOURCES 2005-2006

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## Free Semiannual Newsletter

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Create your own exhibition using  
objects from the Freer and Sackler  
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#### ASIAN ART CONNECTIONS: RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

[www.asia.si.edu/education/  
ConnxsFall03.pdf](http://www.asia.si.edu/education/<br/>ConnxsFall03.pdf)

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[www.asia.si.edu/education/  
ConnectionsFall2004.pdf](http://www.asia.si.edu/education/<br/>ConnectionsFall2004.pdf)

#### THE ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY OF ANCIENT CHINA: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

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#### THE ARTS OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

[www.asia.si.edu/education/islam.pdf](http://www.asia.si.edu/education/islam.pdf)

#### DEVI: THE GREAT GODDESS (HINDUISM)

[www.asia.si.edu/education/  
devi/index.htm](http://www.asia.si.edu/education/<br/>devi/index.htm)

#### JAPAN: IMAGES OF A PEOPLE

[smithsonianeducation.org/  
educators/lesson\\_plans/japan\\_images\\_  
people/index.html](http://smithsonianeducation.org/<br/>educators/lesson_plans/japan_images_<br/>people/index.html)

#### PUJA: EXPRESSIONS OF HINDU DEVOTION

[www.asia.si.edu/education/  
pujaonline/puja/start.htm](http://www.asia.si.edu/education/<br/>pujaonline/puja/start.htm)

## Teacher Resources for Sale SACKLER GALLERY SHOPS

All teacher resources listed below are  
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202.633.0535, or by fax at 202.633.9838.  
In addition to Freer-Sackler publications,  
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### NEW!

#### THE ARTS OF JAPAN: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

Appropriate for grades 4–12, \$20

#### THE ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY OF ANCIENT CHINA: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

Appropriate for grades 3–12, \$20

#### THE ART OF BUDDHISM: A TEACHER'S GUIDE

Appropriate for grades 4–12, \$20

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Appropriate for grades 4–12, \$20

#### SILK ROAD RESOURCE PACKET

Appropriate for grades 4–12, \$12

## Video

#### PUJA: EXPRESSIONS OF HINDU DEVOTION

This award-winning video introduces  
Hindu worship through moving images  
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Appropriate for grades 3–6

Join Chi the chimera as he introduces  
viewers to ancient Chinese civilization  
through objects from the Freer and  
Sackler collections. \$10

## CD

#### SILK ROAD STORIES

An audio CD of stories told by Freer and  
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# STYLE AND STATUS

IMPERIAL COSTUMES FROM OTTOMAN TURKEY



OCTOBER 29, 2005–JANUARY 22, 2006

Distinguished by their bold designs, breathtaking colors, and technical complexity, Ottoman imperial silks are among the most extraordinary works of art ever produced. For the first time, this exhibition presents more than sixty of the world's finest and most luxurious Ottoman royal robes and textile pieces from the collections of the Topkapi Palace Museum in Istanbul, the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, and other institutions. These vibrant silk textiles were fashioned into clothing for adults and children, furnishings, and movable architecture, such as floor covers. In addition, they denoted rank and privilege and played important economic, political, and ceremonial roles during the Ottoman Empire (1342–1924). Most raw silks came from neighboring Iran, which from 1501 to 1722 was under the control of the Safavids, the Ottoman's most persistent political, military, and ideological rival. By the late fifteenth century, Bursa in northwestern Turkey was the main center of the Ottoman silk industry, and as a result was one of the richest cities in the world. Both raw and woven silk, including velvets and brocades, as well as cloths of gold and silver thread, were exported to Europe, the Balkans, and to Russia—the Ottoman Empire's largest market. Some exported fabrics were fashioned into ceremonial robes or hangings, but most became luxurious items for use in churches outside the Ottoman Empire. The artistic influence of Ottoman textiles had a profound effect on European design, inspiring nineteenth-century English designer William Morris and other artists to incorporate Ottoman motifs into their textiles and wallpapers.



# Classroom Activity STYLE AND STATUS

## PART I

Would you wear shorts and a T-shirt to a wedding? A floor-length beaded gown to a rock concert? A bathrobe to work?

When we get up in the morning, we all make decisions about the clothes we will wear that day. How do we decide what is a good choice? Some factors might be the weather, our mood, even what has been washed in the laundry recently. Equally important are knowing where we are going and who we will see.

What are you communicating with the clothes you wear? What do your clothes say about you? Using this chart, think about the clothes you wear in different situations and why.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?	WHO WILL YOU SEE THERE?	WHAT WOULD YOU WEAR?	WHY WOULD YOU WEAR THAT?
THE OFFICE	BOSS, COWORKERS	A SUIT	SUITS ARE ACCEPTED OFFICE CLOTHING; THEY SHOW YOU ARE SERIOUS ABOUT YOUR WORK.
TO SIT FOR A YEARBOOK PHOTO			

## PART II

Look carefully at the piece of clothing on the poster. Describe it in detail.

### A) LOOKING

- What is the overall shape?
- What colors and shapes do you see?
- How big is the decoration?  
(Compare it to the size of the robe overall.)
- Can you tell from what kind of fabric it is made?
- Does it look like anything you have seen before?
- What other things do you notice about it?

### B) INTERPRETING

- What does the design look like to you?
- What does the design look like from a distance?
- What does the design communicate?
- Who might have worn this and why?
- Where would they have worn it?

### C) EXPLORING

- What kinds of questions do you have about this piece of clothing?

## PART III

### FEATURED OBJECT

#### Robe

Turkey, Ottoman Empire, 17th century

Satin with satin inlays

Length 166 cm

Topkapi Palace Museum, Istanbul 13/486



This long-sleeved ceremonial robe may have been worn by Sultan Ibrahim (reigned 1640–1648). It is made from heavy white satin decorated with a dark red satin design of three crescents and single tiger stripes.

The three-circle design is called *çintemani* (pronounced chin-teh-ma-nee), which means “auspicious jewel.” The *çintemani* was a popular motif for Ottoman robes because it was believed to bring good luck and to ward off the evil eye. Tiger stripes symbolized bravery and strength to the Ottomans. This bold and original design repeated on textiles and objects also served as a “logo” that identified the Ottomans and the works related to them.

#### WHY WOULD SOMEONE WEAR THIS ROBE?

In the Ottoman court, luxurious silk robes were important symbols of rank and identity. For foreign visitors and Ottoman citizens alike, these robes communicated the wealth and power of the Ottoman Empire and the sultan (leader). The quality and design of a robe was directly related to the wearer’s rank in the strict hierarchy of the Ottoman court.

**Can you tell the rank of important leaders in American society today by the clothing they wear? If so, how? If not, why do you think that is the case?**

#### ON WHAT OCCASION WOULD THE SULTAN WEAR THIS ROBE?

Ceremonies were an important part of life and ritual in the Ottoman court. Everything from the sultan’s trip to the mosque every Friday to the first day of lessons for a young prince was cause for a ceremonial event worthy of the finest clothing. Often the sultan and members of the Ottoman court put on dazzling displays by wearing

brightly colored robes like this for an official procession.

**Imagine yourself watching an Ottoman court procession. What would it look like? Describe what you might see, hear, and smell.**

#### HOW WAS THIS ROBE WORN?

Ottoman court robes were worn in several layers (see image of Suleyman’s procession). While this was probably a helpful way to keep warm during the cold winters in Istanbul, the most important reason was because it gave the sultan and his court the opportunity to show off many pieces of expensive clothing at one time. A sleeveless or short-sleeved robe would have been worn over a long-sleeved robe like this one. The very long sleeves of this robe would have been pushed up to free the wearer’s hands.

**If you could design a piece of clothing that told others about you, what would it look like? What would it reflect about you?**

### OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1342–1924)

The Ottomans, who were Muslims, ruled first from Bursa and then moved to Istanbul in what is now Turkey. At its height in the sixteenth century, the powerful empire extended to the west as far as present-day Hungary and included all of North Africa.

### SILK

Silk is made from the fibers of thousands of silkworm cocoons. Fibers are unwound from the cocoon and spun into thread, which is then woven into a durable, lightweight fabric. Introduced originally from China, silk was, and still is, highly valued. During the Ottoman Empire, only the sultan (the ruler of the Ottoman Empire), members of the court, and the wealthiest of citizens wore silk. It was considered the most precious of all fabrics.

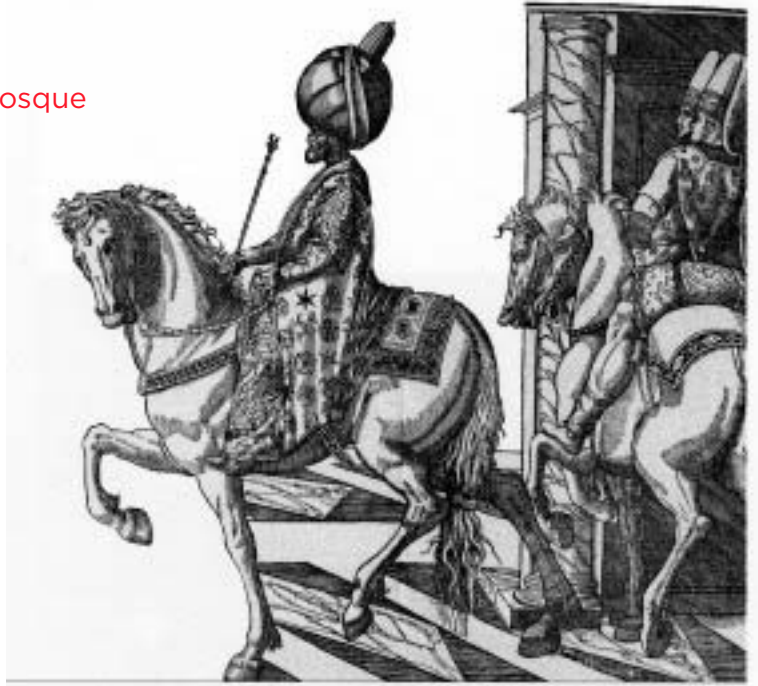
Most raw silk used by the Ottomans was produced by their greatest rival, the Safavids of Iran, whose dynasty reigned from 1501 to 1722. A center of silk production thrived in Bursa, located in northwestern Turkey, by the fifteenth century. Silk fabrics that were in high demand in Europe, the Balkans, and especially Russia were exported from Bursa.

## Suleyman the Magnificent Goes to the Mosque

Anonymous woodcut from a suite published in Venice by Domenico de' Franceschi, 1568

As reproduced in *Ipek: The Crescent and the Rose*

This woodcut print illustrates the weekly procession that Sultan Suleyman (1494–1566), known as Suleyman the Magnificent, made with the Ottoman court to Friday noontime prayers at a mosque in Istanbul. Suleyman was the most powerful Ottoman sultan. Under his rule, the empire expanded to the greatest size in its history.



Nurhan Atasoy, et al. *Ipek: The Crescent and the Rose*. Edited by Julian Raby and Alison Effery. London: Azimuth Editions, 2001, p. 29

## PART IV

Grand processions may seem like something of the past, but the same kinds of events, where people go to be “seen,” are still held today. For example, have you ever watched the Academy Awards as celebrities “walk the red carpet” and pose in their finest clothes? How is that similar to the way the Ottomans used clothing in their ceremonies at court? How is it different? On what other occasions do people “dress to impress”?

### ROBES OF HONOR (*HIL'AT*)

As ruler of the vast Ottoman Empire, the sultan enjoyed the exclusive privilege of presenting beautiful silk robes as a way to bestow honor on visitors, diplomats, and members of the court. These robes were called *hil'at*, or robes of honor. The quality and beauty of the robes, as well as the number given, indicated the relationship between the sultan and the recipient. These robes functioned much like medals or awards that are given today, for example, to those who have served the military or the community.

Foreign diplomats paid close attention to the quantity and designs of robes they received because it signaled whether their country was in the sultan's favor. Fur-lined robes were especially valued. The sultan also gave robes to officials within the Ottoman court to mark a promotion, celebrate a special occasion, show favor, or thank someone for dedicated service. At the same time, a person could be sure the sultan was displeased if a robe was made of less costly material—or if he received nothing.



# ImaginAsia

In our popular family program, children ages six to fourteen accompanied by an adult use an activity book to explore an exhibition and then create a related art project to take home. Family programs take place on the dates and times listed

at [www.asia.si.edu](http://www.asia.si.edu) and do not require a reservation. Upcoming offerings include special programs related to *Style and Status: Imperial Costumes from Ottoman Turkey*.

## VISITOR INFORMATION

**Freer Gallery of Art**  
Jefferson Drive at 12th Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20560-0707

**Arthur M. Sackler Gallery**  
1050 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20560-0707

### Hours

10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily;  
closed December 25  
Admission is FREE to the museum,  
exhibitions, and programs

### Information

[www.asia.si.edu](http://www.asia.si.edu)  
202.633.1000  
202.357.1729 TTY  
Information desks open  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Food Service

For information on food services at the Smithsonian, please visit [www.si.edu/dining/default.htm](http://www.si.edu/dining/default.htm)

### Transportation

Ride the Metro's orange or blue line to Smithsonian Station. Parking on the Mall is extremely limited.

### Library

The museum's noncirculating research library specializes in Asian art as well as American painting at the turn of the

twentieth century. It is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, except for federal holidays.

### Accessibility

Accessible entrances to the Freer and Sackler Galleries are located on Independence Avenue. Wheelchairs are available at the guard's desk at each museum entrance. Information is available in large type or Braille and on audio-cassette or disk.

Smithsonian Institution  
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Arthur M. Sackler Gallery  
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