English Tapestries "After the Indian Manner"

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ENGLISH DECORATIVE ART in the second half of the seventeenth century includes many works that show a deliberate intention to imitate oriental imports, indifferently described at the time as "Indian," "Chinese," or "Japan." A well-known instance is documented by an inventory of Kensington Palace taken in 1697, which includes "Seven peices of Tapistry hangings with India ffigures 9 foot deep." In an inventory of 1699 this set is mentioned as hung in the "previe chamber."[1] These tapestries had been supplied by John Vanderbank, "yeoman arras-maker" of the Great Wardrobe (a department of the royal household) in 1690, 1691, and 1696; they were said to be "designed after the Indian manner."[2]

This royal set has not been identified, but it has been assumed for many years that its designs must have been similar to those of a number of unusual tapestries, some of them signed by Vanderbank, of which at least fifty individual pieces are known. Most of these have dark grounds, usually black or brown, with brightly colored exotic figures, buildings, and vegetation placed on little islands, scattered as if floating over the entire surface of each piece; the motifs are tiny at the top and increase in size as they near the bottom. One tapestry of this type in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Figure 1) is inscribed: IOHN VANDREBANC FECIT.[3]

Most of the motifs of the Victoria and Albert tapestry reappear on a piece in the Yale University Art Gallery (Figure 2), one of a set of four.[4] Several other similar tapestries are known.[5] An appropriate name for this grouping of motifs might be *The Harpist*.[6]

1. Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, "Documents on the Furnishing of Kensington House," *Walpole Society* 38 (1960–62) pp. 21, 50.

2. W. G. Thomson, *Tapestry Weaving in England* (London, 1914) p. 143. Nine pieces in all are listed. The first four were made for the Withdrawing Room at Kensington Palace. For Vanderbank's origin and career see ibid., pp. 139–147. A more complete account of the "Indian manner" tapestries made for Kensington Palace is given by Wendy Hefford, "'Bread, Brushes, and Brooms': Aspects of Tapestry Restoration in England, 1660–1760," *Acts of the Tapestry Symposium, November 1976* (San Francisco, 1979) p. 70.

3. A. F. Kendrick, *Catalogue of Tapestries* (London, 1924) no. 5.

4. William Tappan, "The Tapestries of Elihu Yale," *International Studio* 82 (1925) p. 210, illus. The piece is here given the title "The Promenade." The sale of Yale's collection after his death in 1721 took forty days and included more than 10,000 items in 3,600 lots; "India Japan Cabinets" were listed, but no tapestries (Hiram Bingham, *Elihu Yale* [New York, 1939] p. 313). The tapestry set is believed to have been inherited by his daughter.

5. A reduced version of much the same combination of motifs makes up the right side of a tapestry sold at Sotheby's, July 27, 1969, no. 25, and a reversed example was in the James W. Barney collection, sold at Parke-Bernet, May 8, 1948, no. 134. Another reversed example with an elaborate border very like contemporary Beauvais designs is owned by Sir Alfred Beit, Russborough, Ireland; it was formerly at Melville House, owned by the earl of Leven and Melville, and was sold with a companion piece, also now in the Beit collection (Figure 8), at Christie's, Nov. 19, 1959, no. 143.

6. This conspicuous figure is also found in the set that covers the walls of the Tapestry Room of The Vyne, Hampshire, owned by the National Trust, and is among the fragments at Hopetoun House, West Lothian, owned by the marquess of Linlithgow.

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1. *The Harpist.* Wool and silk tapestry. English, late 17th–early 18th century. London, Victoria and Albert Museum (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum, crown copyright)

Though all the versions are basically similar, they vary in size and format. Motifs have been added or omitted rather freely. Vanderbank had clearly found a formula that could easily be adapted to suit his client's requirements.

This flexibility of design is implied in a letter from the architect Hawksmoor to Lord Carlisle, dated July 2, 1706. The writer gives the dimensions of three tap-

estries that are to be hung "in my Lds Bedchamber" at Castle Howard and says that the room is to have "a basement of Wainscot 2 feet 6 inches or three foot from the floor having a proper moulding to keep the hangings from Injury" and "a coveing and small Entablement next ye ceiling above." After stating the dimensions of the tapestries, he concludes: "These are ye Neat measures between wood and wood, what Mr.

2. *The Harpist.* Wool and silk tapestry. English, late 17th–early 18th century. New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of Edward S. Harkness, BA 1897 (photo: Yale University Art Gallery)

Vanderbanc will allow on all sides for nailing, he can best judge."[7] Tapestries were no longer the easily movable objects they had been even a hundred years before; similar precise instructions about dimensions must have been given to Vanderbank by many of his customers. The great advantage of the "Indian manner" designs was that the motifs could be arranged to form compositions of any dimensions required. The tapestries of the Yale set show signs of having been heightened by the addition of strips at the top, and Vanderbank was paid for enlarging the tapestries he had supplied to Kensington Palace in 1691 and 1696.[8]

Though Vanderbank made other kinds of tapestry, three "Indian" pieces at Castle Howard correspond fairly closely to the dimensions given by Hawksmoor in 1706;[9] two other, very narrow pieces have a different border and may have been ordered later, perhaps as *entrefenêtres*. Other sets for which an approximate date can be given include the Yale pieces, believed to have been made for Elihu Yale after his return from India in 1692 and before his death in 1721. Two panels (later joined) formerly owned by Sir Walter Blount at Mawley Hall, Kidderminster, have the arms of the fourth Baron Aston of Forfar and his wife, who were married in 1698; she died in 1723.[10] The tapestries were presumably made between these dates.

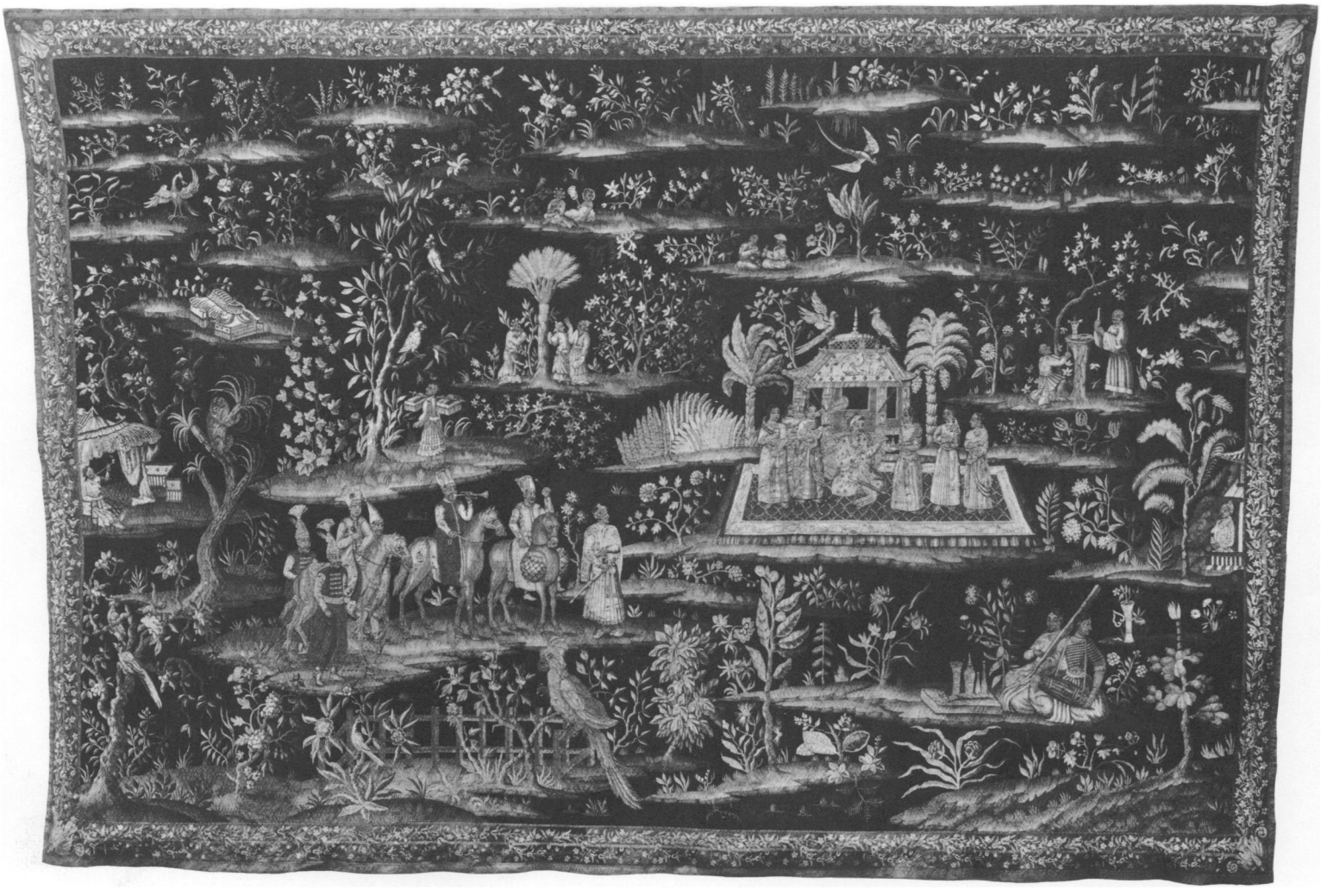
7. Kerry Downes, *Hawksmoor* (London, 1959) p. 237, no. 15 in list of letters. I am indebted to Mr. Downes for the transcription of the pertinent portion of this letter and to Mr. George Howard for permission to quote from it.

8. Thomson, *Tapestry Weaving*, p. 143.

9. They are hung on the Grand Staircase (Geoffrey W. Beard, "Castle Howard, Yorkshire Home of Mr. George and Lady Cecilia Howard," *Connoisseur Year Book*, 1956 [London, 1956] p. 4, fig. 1). Vanderbank also supplied "Teniers" tapestries that are still at Castle Howard.

10. Sold at Christie's, July 7, 1932, no. 118. H. C. Marillier, *English Tapestries of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1930) p. 34.

3. *The Concert.* Wool and silk tapestry. English, late 17th–early 18th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. George F. Baker, 53.165.1



With the deliveries at Kensington Palace starting in 1690, a range of dates is thus provided that can be associated with the tapestries; it seems probable that most of them were made by Vanderbank while he was yeoman arras-maker at the Great Wardrobe in Great Queen Street, Holborn, that is, from 1689 until his death in 1717. However, some may have been supplied by his widow before her death in 1727, or by their son Moses, who held the Great Wardrobe post until 1730.[11]

Very few "Indian manner" tapestries have found permanent homes in museums and many are known only from their appearance in sales. Arbitrary titles have been given to certain combinations of motifs. The grouping most frequently found has been called *The Concert*. The example in the Metropolitan Museum (Figure 3)[12] has a companion piece, *The Toilet of the Princess* (Figure 4). This occurs in other versions,[13]

11. *Survey of London:* XXXIV. *The Parish of St. Anne Soho* (London, 1966) app. 1, "The Soho Tapestry Makers," p. 515. An older son, John (1694–1739), was a painter.

12. Two others, with reversed compositions, are at Yale University, one in the Elihu Yale set and another acquired later (M.T.J.R. [Margaret T. J. Rowe], "An Important New Tapestry," *Bulletin of the Association in Fine Arts at Yale University* 10, no. 1 [Nov., 1941] pp. 1, 2). There is one in the set at The Vyne and a very wide version, in which the house with a man behind a balustrade appears complete, was in the Mrs. Evelyn St. George collection sold at Sotheby's, July 25–26, 1939, no. 101. This has the same border as the pair in the Beit collection. The London dealers Harris and Sons owned one, in a set of three pieces, in 1950, possibly the set sold at Sotheby's, Mar. 17, 1950, no. 141. Another set of three sold by Lady Sackville at Brighton, June 25–July 3, 1923, nos. 1280–1282, also included a *Concert*.

13. It is found, reversed, in the Yale set and the motifs of the right side were used for the left side of a tapestry sold by Weinmüller, Munich, Dec. 9–10, 1960, no. 377 (Heinrich Göbel, *Wandteppiche:* III. *Die germanischen und slawischen Länder* [Berlin, 1934] II, pl. 150a. As owned by Otto Bernheimer, Munich).

4. *The Toilet of the Princess*. Wool and silk tapestry. English, late 17th–early 18th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. George F. Baker, 53.165.2

5. *The Palanquin.* Wool and silk tapestry. English, late 17th–early 18th century. New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, Gift of Edward S. Harkness, BA 1897 (photo: Yale University Art Gallery)

6. *The Tent.* Wool and silk tapestry. English, late 17th–early 18th century. The Art Institute of Chicago (photo: courtesy The Art Institute of Chicago)

and some of its motifs are also seen in other groupings; the tripartite openwork facade, for instance, partly visible on the far right of Figure 4, appears in its entirety in Figure 2, with a man dancing on the oriental rug under it.[14]

The fourth tapestry in the Yale set is called *The Palanquin* (Figure 5); a wide version was sold at Christie's, May 15, 1952, no. 168. The Chicago Art Institute owns yet another combination of motifs, which might be called *The Tent* (Figure 6);[15] another version is now in the Davids Samling, Copenhagen.[16] Christabel, Lady Aberconway (who died in 1974), owned a small version, previously in the Victor Maclaren collection, showing only the tent and the islands immediately above and below it (Figure 7).[17] A piece in Sir

14. Other motifs of the *Toilet* occur on tapestries in the Barbican House Museum, Lewes; the Linlithgow collection; and in Sotheby sales of May 29, 1964, no. 69, and Dec. 10, 1965, no. 30.

15. Christa Charlotte Mayer, *Masterpieces of Western Textiles from the Art Institute of Chicago* (Chicago, 1969) pl. 32. From the A. M. Legh collection, Adlington Hall, sold at Christie's, Mar. 14, 1929, no. 91.

16. From the collection of Col. John Harvey, Ickwell Bury, Biggleswade, sold at Knight, Frank and Rutley, London, Nov. 11, 1927, no. 5. It was sold again at Christie's, Nov. 27, 1975, no. 117, and at Sotheby Parke Bernet, Feb. 18, 1977, no. 128.

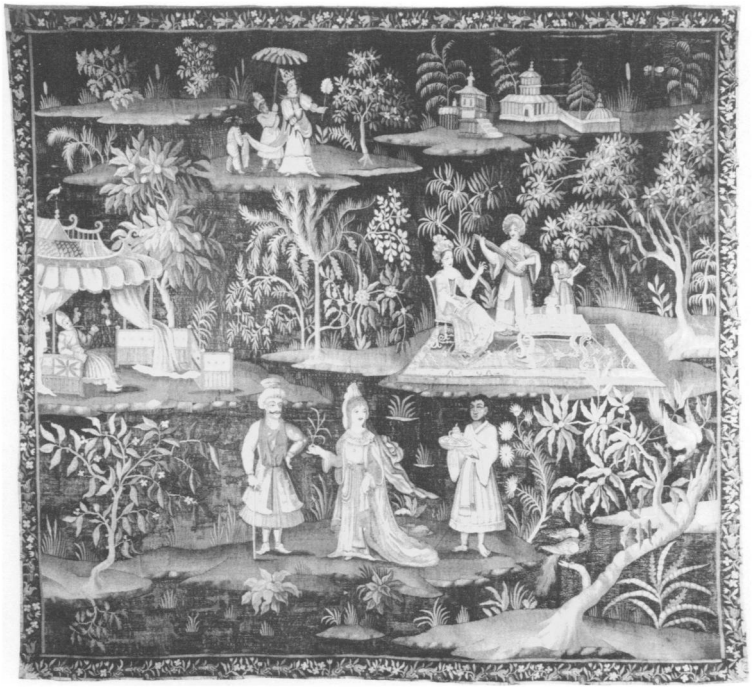
17. W. Gordon Hunton, *English Decorative Textiles* (London, 1930) pl. 43. As owned by the Hon. Victor Maclaren. The group of "Indian" tapestries in these collections do not all belong to the same set. They are now in private collections in Great Britain.

Alfred Beit's collection has been called *The Tea Party in a Garden Tent* (Figure 8). No repetition of all the motifs in this arrangement is known, but several of them are found in other combinations.[18]

18. The man in a chariot drawn by leopards on the upper left appears in Figure 22; the man on the upper right sitting at the opening of a long tent and smoking a pipe is seen, reversed, in Figure 3, and, enlarged and reversed, in Figure 9. The four-pole palanquin recurs, reversed, on a tapestry in the Maclaren–Aberconway group, which also has a most unusual motif of a man riding a flying dragon (Hunton, *English Decorative Textiles*, pl. 41); the border is the same as that of the Chicago *Tent* (Figure 6). The four-pole palanquin is also seen on a companion piece to this *Tent*, formerly in the A. M. Legh collection, Adlington Hall (Thomson, *Tapestry Weaving*, fig. 43). This tapestry was lent to the exhibition "Three Centuries of English Silver" at the Los Angeles County Museum by French & Company in 1950 (*Los Angeles County Museum: Bulletin of the Art Division* 3, no. 3 [Fall, 1950] no. 239, fig. 18).

7. *The Tent.* Wool and silk tapestry. English, late 17th–early 18th century. Location unknown (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum, crown copyright)

8. *The Tea Party.* Wool and silk tapestry. English, late 17th–early 18th century. Russborough, Ireland, Sir Alfred Beit Collection (photo: courtesy Christie, Manson & Woods, London)



9. *Couple with a Servant.* Wool and silk tapestry. English, late 17th–early 18th century. London, Mallett & Son (photo: courtesy Mallett)

Couple with a Servant could be the title of a tapestry owned by the London dealers Mallett and Son in 1978 (Figure 9); the same grouping of motifs makes up the left side of a tapestry sold at Sotheby's, June 27, 1969, no. 25. Yet more motifs appear on a tapestry from the L. V. Hart collection, sold at Christie's, November 12, 1964, no. 162, and November 29, 1979, no. 107 (Figure 10); its title might be the *Couple Under a Canopy*.[19] The border is like that of a second version of the *Concert* at Yale. But the chief interest of this tapestry is that it is a reduced version of one formerly in the Maclaren and Aberconway collections with a signature, "M. Mazarind," a weaver otherwise totally unknown.[20]

The signed Mazarind tapestry has a distinctive border of small teapots, cups, and vases, with red-tongued blue dragons and twisting birds at the corners, all very Chinese; it is also found on the Copenhagen and Maclaren–Aberconway versions of the *Tent* (Figure 7). But the Chicago *Tent* (Figure 6) has almost the same border as the Metropolitan Museum pair (Figures 3, 4). Until more information comes to light about Mazarind (even his name is puzzling), any interpretation of these facts must remain extremely tentative, but he was evidently closely connected with Vanderbank and, like him, was probably not English.[21]

In all, some forty motifs can be counted on the dark-ground "Indian manner" tapestries, not includ-

19. Some motifs are found elsewhere, such as the two standing musicians and the two women by the zigzag fence, both, reversed, on the Yale *Palanquin* (Figure 5), and the monkey sitting in a tree in the lower right corner, which is also, reversed, in the Metropolitan Museum *Concert* (Figure 3).

20. Hunton, *English Decorative Textiles*, pl. 44.

21. There were a number of foreign tapestry weavers working in London in the early eighteenth century. When Joshua Morris was the defendant in a lawsuit brought against him by Hogarth, whom he had refused to pay for a cartoon, he said that he employed "some of the finest hands in *Europe* in working tapestry, who are most of them foreigners, and have worked abroad as well as here." He called witnesses "to prove that the painting was not performed in a workmanlike manner, and it was impossible to make tapestry by it"; their names are given as "*Mr. Bernard Dorrider, Mr. Phillips, Mr. De Friend, Mr. Danten*, and *Mr. Pajon*" (perhaps a misprint for Pajou). These were presumably weavers, perhaps men working for Morris; some of the names do not sound English (John Nichols, *Biographical Anecdotes of William Hogarth* [London, 1782] p. 23, note). Hogarth won his case.

ing islands with plants only; they are usually arranged, as in most of the examples listed above, in fairly consistent relationships. At least six types of borders are known, the most usual being variations of the central rod with twisting sprays seen in Figures 3, 4, and 6.[22]

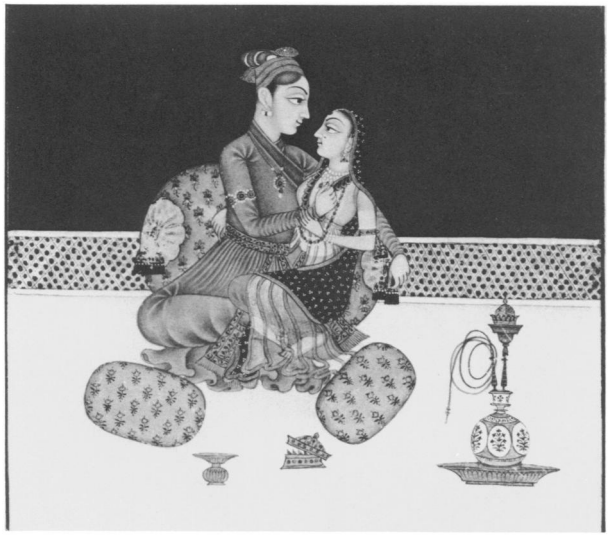
It has long been recognized that the general scheme of these tapestries is taken from Chinese lacquered screens (Figure 11), which were imported into England in large numbers during the second half of the seventeenth century. They were sometimes used as wall-coverings; John Evelyn wrote in his diary on July 30, 1682: "Went to visit our good neighbour, Mr. Bohun, whose whole house is a cabinet of all elegancies, especially Indian; in the hall are contrivences of Japan Skreens, instead of wainscot; . . . The landskips of the skreens represent the manner of living, and country of the Chinese." The quotation shows that the words "Indian" and "Chinese" had no very exact meaning at this time; "Japan" referred to the varnish or lacquer of the screens. The dark grounds, the scat-

10. *Couple Under a Canopy.* Wool and silk tapestry. English, late 17th–early 18th century. Location unknown (photo: courtesy Christie, Manson & Woods, London)

11. Screen, lacquer. Chinese export, late 18th century. Location unknown (photo: courtesy Sotheby & Co., London)

tered motifs diminishing in size toward the top, and some of the buildings of the tapestries are clearly derived from the screens. But the lighthearted insouciance of the screens, with their delicate boats and bridges and complete disregard of supports for plants and people, is very different from the solidity of the floating islands on the tapestries. Other Chinese features can be identified, such as the flowers in the borders of the signed tapestry in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Figure 1) and the chinaware in those of the Mazarind pieces (Figure 7). Some of the figures also are Chinese, usually the smaller ones; examples are the group of musicians at the right center

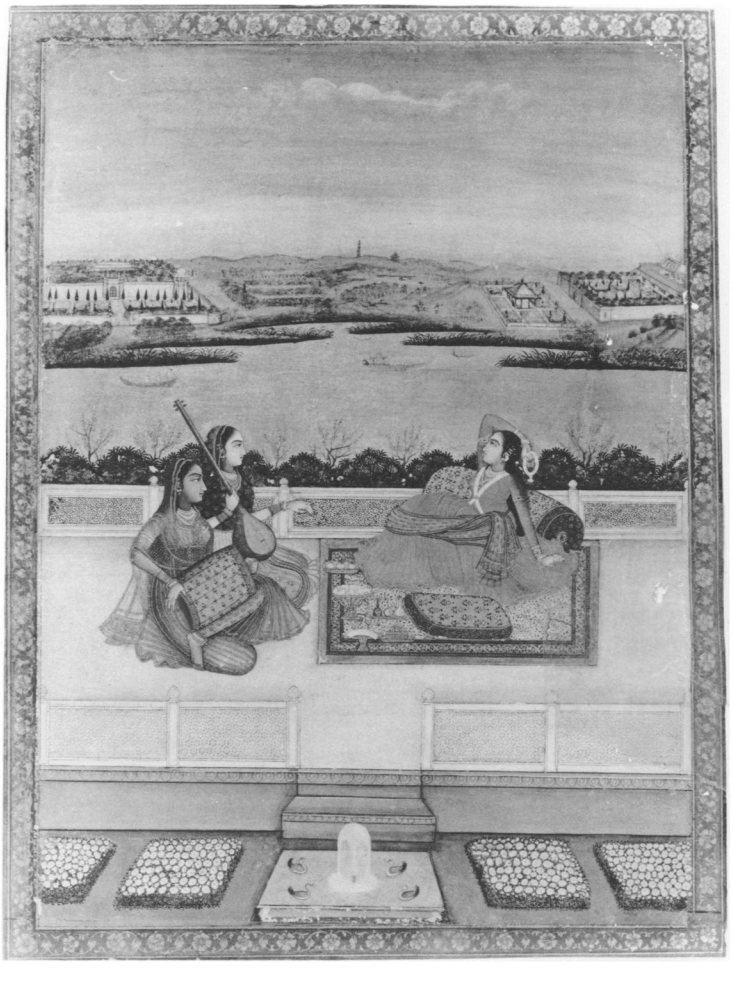
22. Tapestries not so far mentioned are or were at Godmersham Park (Christopher Hussey, "Godmersham Park, Kent: II. The Home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Tritton," *Country Life* 95 [1945] p. 335), in the Maclaren–Aberconway group (Hunton, *English Decorative Textiles*, pl. 42), and in several sales. All contain motifs found elsewhere, as well as less usual ones. A tapestry in the same style, including the figure of the harpist, sold at Sotheby's, May 7, 1976, no. 59, was described as Brussels, late 19th century. Another modern reproduction was sold at Sotheby Parke Bernet, June 1, 1967, no. 30, and a set of four at the same auction house, Dec. 9, 1978, no. 476.



12. *Lovers on a Terrace*, detail. Painted miniature. Indian (Bilaspur), 1750–60. London, Victoria and Albert Museum (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum, crown copyright)

13. *The Concert*, detail of Figure 3

14. *Musicians and a Girl.* Painted miniature. Indian, 18th century. Private collection (photo: Helga Photo Studio, courtesy Doris Wiener Gallery, New York)



of the *Toilet of the Princess* (Figure 4) who play Chinese instruments, including a chime gong.[23] There is, however, a curious lack of some typical chinoiserie motifs. There are no pagodas, rocks with holes in them, junks, willow trees, or wavy clouds, and few zigzag fences, dragons, or phoenixes, all of which would become very common in English eighteenth-century chinoiserie.

It is clear that Indian works of art also provided models for some of the figures. Like the screens, such works of art, including small paintings, are known to have been imported into Europe in the seventeenth century; Archbishop Laud owned an illustrated Indian manuscript[24] and Rembrandt's drawings after Indian miniatures are well known. The seated man clasping a woman on the left in the *Toilet of the Princess* (Figure 4) is an Indian subject (Figure 12).[25] The

23. Information from the late Edwin M. Ripin.

24. H. J. Stooke and K. Khandalavala, *The Land Ragamala Miniatures* (Oxford, 1953). Several instances of Indian miniatures copied in European prints are given in Partha Mitter, *Much Maligned Monsters: History of European Reaction to Indian Art* (Oxford, 1977) pp. 68–72.

25. For a Mughal version of the subject, see Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Catalogue of the Indian Collections in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (Boston, 1923–30) VI, pl. 36. I have not been able to illustrate the Indian parallels with examples that could have been in England in the 17th century. Later specimens, however, are sufficiently like the figures on the tapestries as to suggest that they are still close to earlier versions.

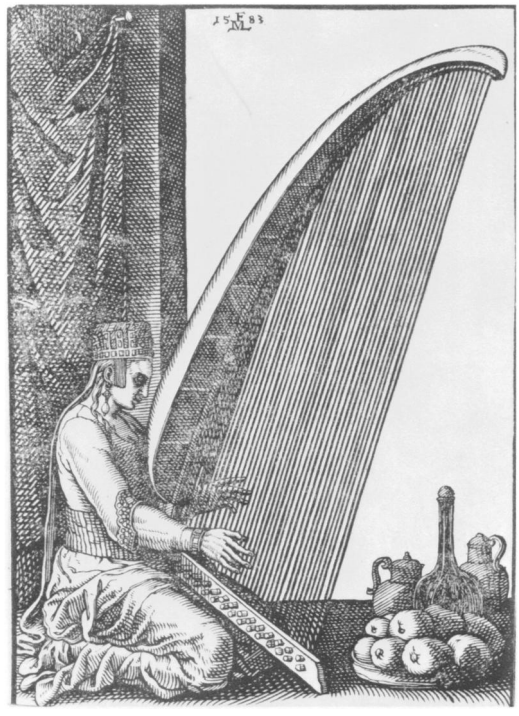
15. *Sarabhoji, Rajah of Tanjore, in Procession.* Painted miniature. South Indian (Tanjore), ca. 1800. Cambridge, Mass., Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University, Purchase, Alpheus Hyatt Fund (photo: Fogg Art Museum)

16. *Indian Prince, perhaps Zulfigar Khan.* Painted miniature. Indian (Mughal), 17th century. London, Victoria and Albert Museum (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum, crown copyright)

woman wrapped in a sari with a baby in her arms and holding a child by the hand near the center of the same tapestry also appears to be Indian. The two seated girls playing a two-ended drum and a *tambura* in the *Concert* (Figure 13) are seen in a Mughal miniature (Figure 14); so is the prince sitting on a rug under a canopy with female musicians and dancers on either side of him.[26] The palanquin (Figure 5), with its tied-up curtain and tassels, is of the same type as one in a much later miniature in the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge (Figure 15);[27] even the costumes of

26. *Muhammad Shah Entertained by Musicians and Dancers*, Kasturbhai Lalbhai collection, Ahmedabad (Stuart Cary Welch, *The Art of Mughal India*, exh. cat. [New York, 1963] pl. 77).

27. Stuart Cary Welch, *Room for Wonder*, exh. cat. (New York, 1978) no. 74.



the riders are very similar. Standing men of obviously high rank (Figures 1, 2) can be compared to portraits of Indian rulers (Figure 16).[28]

In the *Harpist* (Figures 1, 2), however, the enormous instrument and its kneeling player may be Turkish; a similar harp was recorded in Turkey by Melchior Lorck (or Lorich) in 1583 (Figure 17).[29] The group of horsemen and attendants in the *Concert* (Figure 18) are Turks; the kettledrums played by one

28. An even closer parallel is with the figure of the Emperor Aurengzeb in F. Valentyn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën* (Amsterdam, 1724–26), which was certainly copied from a miniature (Mitter, *Much Maligned Monsters*, fig. 39).

29. E. Tietze-Conrat, "A Revival of Melchior Lorich," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, ser. 6, 31 (1947) p. 82, fig. 2.

17. Melchior Lorich, *Turkish Harpist*, 1583. Woodcut. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Department of Prints and Photographs, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 32.86 (fol. 8v.)

18. *The Concert*, detail of Figure 3

19. Carpet, detail. Wool. Indian, 1605–27. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 17.190.858

of the riders are Turkish, though his companion's trumpet is European.[30] The horsetail dangling from the neck of one of the steeds is the Turkish *wuntshuk*,[31] though it is also found in Mughal miniatures.[32]

Some figures are European, such as the strolling ladies with a deer in the London *Harpist* (Figure 1) and the lady wearing a *fontange* headdress (fashionable in the 1690s) in Figure 9. The table and chair in this tapestry are also European, as are the chairs in the Beit *Tea Party* (Figure 8). The vegetation in all the tapestries is less easy to account for, but parallels to some of it can be found in Indian carpets (Figure 19); the palms and the trees with birds in them, however, are less realistic in the tapestries (Figure 20) than they are in the rugs.

It has been suggested that the designer of the tapestries was Robert Robinson (fl. 1674–1706).[33] A room with painted panels signed by him and dated 1696 is in Sir John Cass's Schools, Duke Lane, Aldgate, London, and stylistically similar panels are in the Victoria and Albert Museum. One of those (Figure 21) shows a chariot rather like a motif in the Beit *Tea Party* (Figure 8) and in a tapestry sold at the Kende Gallery, New York, on October 16, 1943, no. 208, and owned by the Sternberg Galleries, London, in 1971 (Figure 22).[34] But the resemblance is not very close. Both chariots may, in fact, have been imitated from a Chinese original; a similar vehicle, drawn by lions, is seen on a lacquer cabinet once owned by Sir James Horlick.[35] The general style of the paintings—vaporous and dreamy, but basically rational—is far from the clear-cut, naive illogic of the tapestry designs.

Vanderbank also made a somewhat different type of fantastic tapestry that should perhaps be described as "chinoiserie," rather than "Indian." There is a pair

30. Information from the late Edwin M. Ripin.

31. Information from Dr. Helmut Nickel.

32. British Museum, Prints and Drawings Gallery, *Paintings from the Muslim Courts of India*, exh. cat. (1976) nos. 21, 22a.

33. Edward Croft-Murray, "An English Painter of Chinoiserie," *Country Life Annual* (1955) pp. 174, 177, 179.

34. The motif is also found in the Lewes and Godmersham Park sets.

35. H. Avray Tipping, "Marqueterie and Lacquer Furniture in Sir James Horlick's Collection," *Country Life* 49 (1921) p. 531, fig. 3.

20. *The Concert*, detail of Figure 3

21. Robert Robinson (fl. 1674–1706), Wall panel. London, Victoria and Albert Museum (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum, crown copyright)

22. Tapestry, detail. Wool and silk. English, late 17th–early 18th century. Private collection (photo: courtesy Vigo-Sternberg Galleries, London)

23. Chapel Ante-Room, Belton House, Lincolnshire, owned by Lord Brownlow (photo: National Monuments Record, crown copyright)

24. Chinoiserie tapestry. Wool and silk. English, late 17th–early 18th century. Weston Park, Shropshire, Earl of Bradford Collection (photo: courtesy Victoria and Albert Museum)

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25. Chinoiserie tapestry. Wool and silk. English, late 17th–early 18th century. Private collection, England (photo: *Country Life*)

26. Chinoiserie tapestry. Wool and silk. English, late 17th–early 18th century. Private collection, England (photo: *Country Life*)

27. Chinoiserie tapestry. Wool and silk. English, late 17th–early 18th century. London, Victoria and Albert Museum (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum, crown copyright)

of the type at Belton House, Lincolnshire, owned by Lord Brownlow (Figure 23); one is inscribed JOHN VANDERBANC FECIT and Vanderbank's bill for the two has been preserved.[36] The grounds are dull yellow and the islands and figures are much more three-dimensional than those of the "Indian" tapestries, casting conspicuous shadows. The borders are markedly Chinese; a very similar design was used for a combined *Toilet* and *Harpist* tapestry sold by Weinmüller in Munich in 1960. The motifs in the tapestry on the right in Figure 23 reappear in a piece owned by Lord Bradford at Weston Park, Shropshire,[37] which is inscribed *J. Vandrebanc in Great Queen* (Figure 24).[38] The ground is pale brown. A third version of this tapestry (Figure 25) is in another private collection in England, which contains a companion piece (Figure 26) and a narrow panel with a palace, a sage, and a boy writing. The colors of this set are particularly brilliant: in the lion hunt of Figure 25, for instance, bright red blood pours from the victim; the person-

36. Alma Harris, *Belton House* (Norwich, 1979) n.p. This bill has not been available for study and its date has not been recorded.

37. *Weston Park, the Shropshire Home of the Earl of Bradford* (Derby, 1974) p. 21.

38. The tapestry has been cut on the right and the border replaced or added, presumably losing the word "Street" at the end of the inscription. A letter from Vanderbank to Lady Mary Bridgeman is at Weston Park; it is dated 1682 and is an apology for not having finished a tapestry. Vanderbank did not become arras-maker to the Great Wardrobe in Great Queen Street until 1689, so, unless the weaving of Lady Mary's tapestry suffered a further and inordinate delay, the letter must refer to a tapestry that has not survived, rather than to the chinoiserie piece now at Weston Park (G. W. Beard, "Tapestries by John Vanderbank," *Country Life* 110 [1951] pp. 653, 654). The Great Wardrobe moved to Great Queen Street in 1685, the yeoman arras-maker in charge being Thomas Axton; the names of his assistants are known (Thomson, *Tapestry Weaving*, p. 139). Vanderbank is believed to have been in London from 1680 to 1683, but the location of his workshop is not known. It is possible that it was in Great Queen Street in premises other than those later used by the Great Wardrobe or even in rooms taken over by the royal enterprise in 1685, but there is no evidence to support this theory.

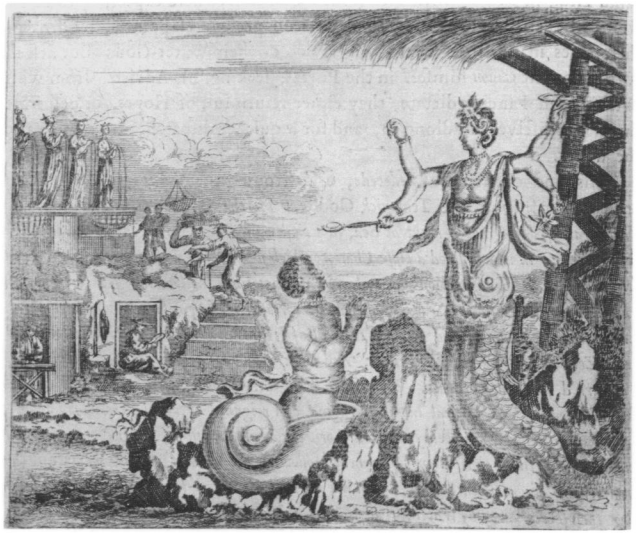
age at the lower right, rising from a great yellow fish, wears a pink, yellow, and red scarf over his red robe. A small panel, probably a fragment, owned by Mr. H. B. Powell, Alton, Hampshire, includes the man on horseback on the bridge, the man in a litter, and the man with two baskets on a carrying pole seen on the right side of Figure 26. They are shown in a landscape rather than on islands, but the sky is dark. A tapestry in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Figure 27)[39] includes the girl holding a flowering branch seen at the upper left of Figure 24 and the lower left of Figure 25.[40]

The most conspicuous motifs on the tapestries of Figures 23 to 26 are taken from illustrations in the English edition of Arnold Montanus's *Atlas Japannensis*, first published in Holland in 1669. The English translation by John Ogilby appeared in the following year with the subtitle: *being Remarkable Addresses by way of Embassy from the East-Indian Company of the United Provinces, to the Emperor of Japan*. The Dutch envoys, according to the text (page 36), were in Japan in 1641. On the left in Figure 23 (right-hand tapestry) and Figure 24 and in the center on Figure 25 is a

39. Kendrick, *Catalogue*, no. 6.

40. Paintings showing motifs from both types of tapestry have been on the art market. One in New York in 1930 was described as: "Soho tapestry cartoons made into a four-fold screen. Oil on canvas." The figures are of the "chinoiserie" type and the border, with affronted birds, is close to that of the combined *Harpist* and *Toilet* sold at Weinmüller, Munich, in 1960 (see note 13) and the Belton House set (Figure 23; George Wingfield Digby, "English Tapestries at Burlington House," *Burlington Magazine* 97 [1955] p. 388; a reproduction from an unidentified source is in the Marillier Archive at the Victoria and Albert Museum). A smaller painting with a different border combines the swans, deer, parrot, and harpist from Figure 1 with the horseman and his follower from Figure 27; it was in London in 1968. A chinoiserie tapestry was owned by the Paris dealer Schutz in 1927. It contains several of the usual motifs of these tapestries, with the addition of a coat of arms in the upper border (Emile Bayard, *L'Art de reconnaître la tapisserie* [Paris, 1927] fig. 66).

28. *The Japanese Lady-of-Honor's Chariot.* Print from Arnold Montanus, *Atlas Japannensis* (London, 1670) p. 133. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas J. Watson Library



29. *The Idol Canon.* Print from Montanus, *Atlas Japannensis*, p. 94. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas J. Watson Library

chariot drawn by a pair of oxen; this is copied from the print on page 133 of Montanus (Figure 28) illustrating the account of a journey by the Japanese emperor's niece:

she had also many Ladies of Honor that attended her, sitting in Chariots drawn by Oxen and Horses, which were led by some of their Servants, with Reins made of Gilded Chains; the Chariot having two Wheels, near which were steps like a Ladder to enter the Chariot, which as ours hath four, theirs have eight Angles, every corner above adorn'd with a Dragon Couchant; the outside of the Coach curiously Painted and Gilt in several Panes, with a frame neatly Carv'd, are Pannel'd with several Pictures.

Except that the artist was unable to conceive an octagonal chariot, the print is close to the description and the tapestry rendering follows it fairly exactly, though in reverse.

The strangest group is that of the worshiper and idol at the bottom of the tapestries (Figures 23 [right], 24, 25). The corresponding print is found on page 94 of Montanus (Figure 29) and is described as:

the Idol *Canon*, who, according to the Relation of the *Bonzi*, or Japan priests, liv'd two thousand Years ago, and created the Sun and Moon. The image appears from the middle upwards as if rising out of the Jaws of a Fish: On his Forehead sticks a Flower: From each Elbow-joynt come two Arms; one erected, with a Ring on the Middle-finger; the other pendent, holding a Flower between his Fingers. That Right-hand which he holds aloft is clinch'd; the lowermost holds a Scepter: About his Arms, Neck, and Middle hang Strings of Pearl: Before him stands the Figure of a Youth, appearing from the middle upward out of a great Shell; who with Arms erected, prays to *Canon*; having a Scarf ty'd about his Middle, of which the ends hang over: . . . The Mythologie of . . . the Figure in the Shell, the Bonzies refus'd to declare.

The "Idol Canon" is presumably the deity Kannon. The tapestry designer has left out the scene in the background and added a large palm to the unexplained zigzag structure behind the idol. The groups in Figures 23 (right) and 24 also include prone worshipers, perhaps adapted from an illustration in Athanasius Kircher's *China Monumentis*.[41]

The rickshaw or sedan chair on the right in Figures 23 (right) and 24 comes from Montanus's illustration of the procession of the Japanese empress (page 190; Figure 30). The description reads:

The whole Procession was clos'd by the several Maids of Honor, carry'd in little two-Wheel'd Chariots, which as

41. Edith A. Standen, "The Story of the Emperor of China: A Beauvais Tapestry Series," *MMJ* 11 (1976) p. 109, fig. 10. See also Figure 37.

30. *The Japanese Maid-of-Honor's Chariot.* Print from Montanus, *Atlas Japannensis*, p. 190. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas J. Watson Library

31. *The Japanese Priest.* Print from Montanus, *Atlas Japannensis*, p. 107. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas J. Watson Library

the Print represents, are shod at the ends with Plates of Silver and Gilt: the Spokes of Cedar, Carv'd and gilt, the Fellies of the Wheels shod also with Copper; the Seat in the Stern, fitted to hold one in great State, spread with Tapistry, which hangs down betwixt the Wheels; the empty part before fashion'd like an Oval, is open, she having a stately Canopy over her, defends her from Rain and the Sun, and when she pleases, she draws her ty'd-up Curtains to keep off the Wind, being driven along by a lusty Man, with two Poles athwart his shoulders.

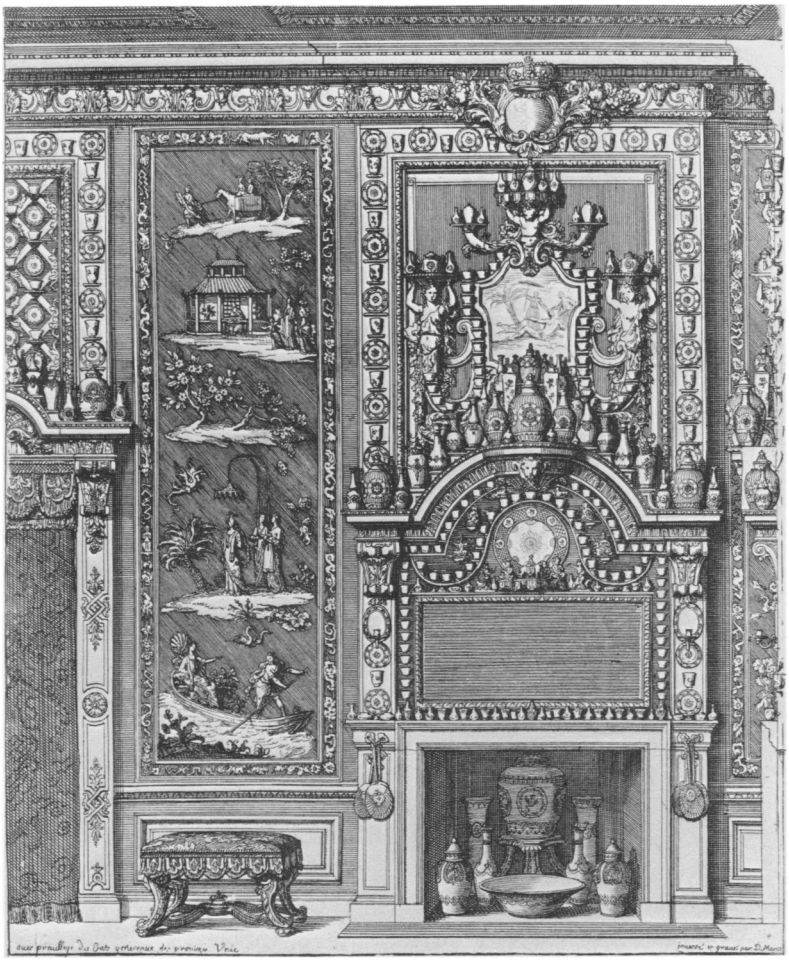
The tapestry in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Figure 27) includes another Montanus illustration (page 107), one of the "*Japan* priests" (Figure 31):[42]

which perform their Duties in the Temples, and serve as Chaplains in Noble-mens Houses, as we said; their Hats are made of fine Straw with broad round Brims, the Crown like our Scull-caps, fitting just the Mold of their Heads: their Coats, which are very wide, hanging down to their Heels, of several colours, and are Selvidg'd with white: their Girdles, which are broad, and stuff'd full of Cotton, serve them in stead of Packets for their Books and Memorials; which they use chiefly in their publick Devotions: . . . In the right Hand they carry a thick Cord, roll'd up like a Spindle; in the left, a Copper Basson, Engraven with Images, representing the *Japan* Idols: on which Basons they strike with great force with the knotted Rope.

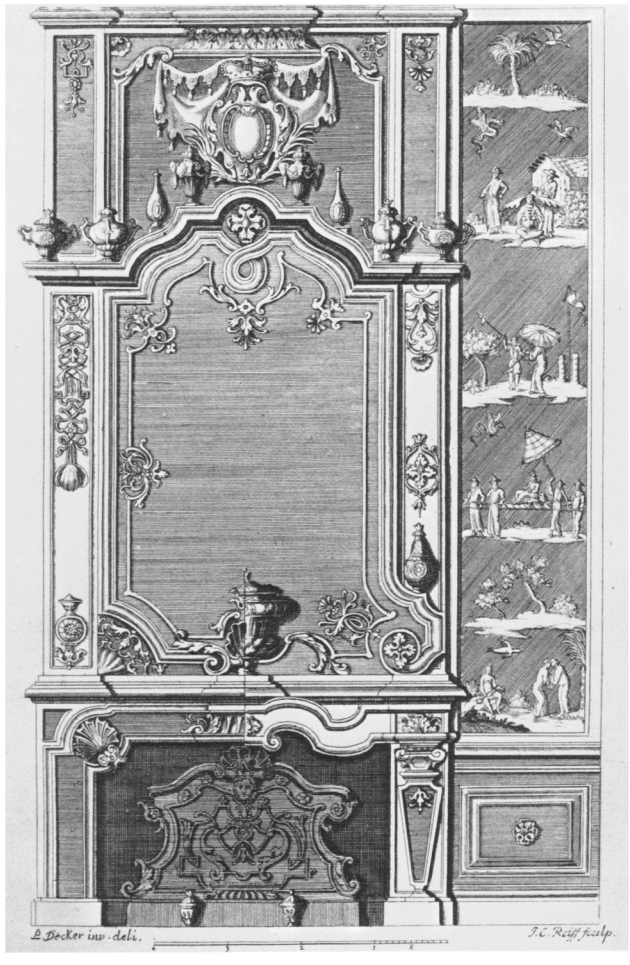
The tapestry designer simplified his model, omitting the book in the girdle and changing the object in the priest's hand; the altar, however, is accurately copied.

No sources have been found for the motifs on Lord Brownlow's second tapestry (Figure 23, left), but figures close to some of them appear in an illustration in Daniel Marot's *Nouvelles Cheminées*, published in Amsterdam in 1712 (Figure 32). On the wall to the left of the fireplace in this design is a panel with a chinoiserie border and figures. At the top of this panel and in the upper part of the tapestry is a man leading a beast of burden with large panniers; people sit on these in the tapestry, on the animal's back in the print. Lower down in the panel is a group of three women on an island, two of them holding a parasol over the third; a similar group appears in the tapestry under the animal with the panniers. At the bottom of both tapestry and print is a boat with one person poling and one seated; the designs are not the same, but there is a certain general resemblance. The panel shown in the print, which must be about twelve feet high, is always considered to be a leaf of a Coromandel screen, but it is not impossible that it represents a Vanderbank tapestry, perhaps even one in Kensing-

42. This derivation was pointed out by Helmut Börsch-Supan (*China und Europa*, exh. cat., Schloss Charlottenburg [Berlin, 1973] no. K96).



32. Daniel Marot, *Design for a Fireplace*. Print from *Nouvelles Cheminées* (Amsterdam, 1712). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Department of Prints and Photographs, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 30.4(43)



33. After Paul Decker the Elder (1677–1713), *Fireplace and Panel*. Engraving. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Department of Prints and Photographs, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 60.703.11(1)

ton Palace; there is a king's crown above the chimneypiece, though the medallion beneath it that would have held the royal arms is blank. The title page of the *Nouvelles Cheminées* says that Marot was "Architecte des appartements de sa Majesté Britanique," though it adds that the *cheminées* were "faittes en plusieurs endroits de la Hollande et autres provinces." One other fireplace is shown between narrow pictorial panels, probably tapestries, representing purely European woodland scenes.[43] Chinoiserie, indeed, is hardly found elsewhere in Marot's work. If the wall-panel in Figure 32 is a reminiscence of one in Kensington Palace, the set there might have been like the chinoiserie tapestries with their usually light grounds (Figures 23–27), rather than the dark-ground "Indian" pieces (Figures 1–10). A recent publication of the Marot print stresses the point that the figures on

43. P. Jessen, *Das Ornamentwerk des Daniel Marot* (Berlin, 1892) pp. 145, 150. Marot is known to have been in England from 1694 to 1698 (Arthur Lane, "Daniel Marot: Designer of Delft Vases and of Gardens at Hampton Court," *Connoisseur* 123 [1949] p. 23). Another chimneypiece in Marot's book is inscribed "cheminée à l'angloise" and also includes a royal crown (Peter Thornton, *Seventeenth-Century Interior Decoration in England, France and Holland* [New Haven/London, 1978] pp. 67, 78, 406, pl. 74; the book is presumed to have been published in the 1690s and the chimneypieces to be perhaps in palaces in England as well as Holland).

the panel are not taken from travel-book illustrations.[44]

This independence from the travel books is in marked contrast to a very similar print of a fireplace and a chinoiserie wall-panel (Figure 33). This engraving after Paul Decker the Elder of Nuremberg (1677–1713) would seem to be derived from Marot,[45] but all the figures in the wall-panel are Chinese, taken from Johan Nieuhoff's illustrated book on the Dutch ambassadorial mission to China in 1655–57; the first edition was published in Amsterdam in 1665.[46] Decker made several other chinoiserie prints showing figures on islands, many of them also taken from Nieuhoff.

Vanderbank does not seem as a rule to have used the travel-book motifs on his dark-ground "Indian" tapestries, but he did put two on one piece of an otherwise typical "Indian" set. This is at The Vyne, Hampshire. There are now eight pieces, covering most of the walls of the Tapestry Room; they were hung here in the nineteenth century, having been much cut in the process.[47] To the right of the fireplace is a standard version of the *Concert* (Figure 34), though shorter than the example in the Metropolitan Museum (Figure 3). In the overdoor panel are the prince and his attendant from the *Harpist* (Figures 1, 2), and other motifs of this subject and of the *Tea Party* (Figure 8) appear on tapestries further to the left and on the window wall.[48] But between one of the windows and one of the doors (Figure 35) is the "Idol Canon" with its worshipers (Figure 29) and the "Japan Priest" (Figure 31). A similar mixture of "Indian" and chinoiserie motifs is found on a dark-ground tapestry that was part of the Maclaren–Aberconway group.[49] The appearance of motifs from dark-ground "Indian" tapestries on light-ground chinoiserie pieces is also uncommon. Some are seen in Figure 26 (lower left), namely the two European ladies with a deer between them from the signed Victoria and Albert Museum *Harpist* (Figure 1), and the boy climbing a palm tree, encouraged by a man standing below, from this and other versions of the same subject (Figures 1, 2).

Another manufacturer adopted Vanderbank's idea of dark grounds and figures on islands for at least one set of tapestries. This was I. Morris, who signed three pieces of a set of four formerly owned by Viscount Sidmouth; they were at Erleigh Court, near Reading in 1912[50] and were sold at Sotheby's, November 23, 1979, nos. 2–5. The weaver is usually identified with Joshua Morris of Soho, whose tapestries were sold at auction in 1726 and who was involved in a lawsuit with Hogarth in 1728; his signed works are mostly arabesques.[51] In the widest panel (Figure 36), the Chinese temple is taken from the similar building in the Beauvais tapestry of the *Emperor on a Journey* in the Story of the Emperor of China series (Figure 37).[52] Another piece in the set includes the group of men with enormous blue-and-white vases behind

44. *China und Europa*, no. J15: "Der Wandabschnitt zwischen Tür und Kamin ist mit einer grossen, über dem Sockelpaneel bis zum Deckengesims reichenden Lacktafel verkleidet. Einzelne Landschaftsinseln übereinander, darunter auch ein Nachen auf einem Gewässer, sind mit chinesischen Personen, einem Gebäude sowie Bäumen und Tieren belebt. Diese Motive entstammen offenbar nicht der Reiseliteratur der Nieuhoff oder Dapper, sondern wurden direkt von importierten Lackmöbeln übernommen. Das gleiche gilt von der aus amorphen Ornamentformen, Blumen und Tieren gebildeten Umrahmung dieser Tafel" (Tilo Eggeling).

45. This possibility has been suggested by Eggeling (ibid., no. J14b).

46. The groups from top to bottom of the panel show priests, a peasant with a parasol, a Peking litter, and beggars (Otto Pelka, *Ostasiatische Reisebilder im Kunstgewerbe des 18. Jahrhunderts* [Leipzig, 1924] pls. 30, 27, 21, 31). Reminiscences of travel-book illustrations occur even in Boucher's designs for Beauvais chinoiserie tapestries, first woven in 1743. An instance is the palanquin of Figure 30 found on the *Chinese Fair* tapestries in Minneapolis, Cleveland, and Amsterdam.

47. *The Vyne, Hampshire* (n.p., 1973) pp. 7, 29.

48. H. Avray Tipping, *English Homes, Period II* (London, 1924) I, p. 107, pl. 122. The seated man with huge vases behind him in the lower left of Figure 8 is visible in the tapestry on the window wall.

49. Hunton, *English Decorative Textiles*, pl. 44.

50. H. C. Marillier, *English Tapestries of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1930) p. 34.

51. Ibid., p. 8, n. 1; the identification has been questioned by Adolph S. Cavallo, *Tapestries of Europe and of Colonial Peru in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (Boston, 1967) I, pp. 166–168. See also note 21 above.

52. The temple has been associated with one in a print by Fischer von Erlach in his *Entwurf einer historischen Architectur* (Vienna, 1721) and similar pagodas in Aubusson tapestries (Anna G. Bennett, *Five Centuries of Tapestry from the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco* [San Francisco, 1976] no. 71, figs. 75, 76). But the Beauvais tapestry is too early to have been copied from Fischer von Erlach and the English tapestry repeats its design very exactly, even including the Jesuit astronomer in the same pose on the steps and the palm tree behind the temple (Standen, "Story of the Emperor of China," p. 106, n. 10). Fischer von Erlach's building is taken from the illustration of the Sinkocien pagoda in Johan Nieuhoff's book on China; this and the German print lack the statues in the pagodas of the Beauvais and English tapestries (Pelka, *Ostasiatische Reisebilder*, pl. 20, fig. 39).

36. Chinoiserie tapestry. Wool and silk. English, 18th century. Formerly Lord Sidmouth Collection (photo: courtesy, Christie, Manson & Woods, London)

FACING PAGE:

34. Tapestry Room, from northeast. The Vyne, Hampshire, owned by the National Trust (photo: National Monuments Record, crown copyright)

35. Tapestry Room, from southwest. The Vyne, Hampshire, owned by the National Trust (photo: National Monuments Record, crown copyright)

37. *The Emperor on a Journey*, detail. Wool and silk tapestry. French (Beauvais), late 17th–early 18th century. Paris, Gallery Dario Boccara (photo: Gallery Dario Boccara)

them found on "Indian" tapestries at The Vyne, in the Beit collection (Figure 8), and at Godmersham Park, Kent; other figures are reminiscent of motifs in the light-ground chinoiserie tapestries. The white-ground borders, with particularly beautiful naturalistic flowers, are found on other Morris tapestries.[53] Though chinoiserie continued to be fashionable in English ceramics, furniture, silver, woven and printed textiles, and other decorative arts until it reached a climax in the Brighton Pavilion, it is not known to have appeared again in English tapestries.[54]

53. Cavallo, *Tapestries of Europe*, I, p. 166. The author says that the designer was "familiar with the latest fashion in French tapestry design."

54. A number of tapestries in Continental collections have small chinoiserie figures on islands on dark grounds with none of Vanderbank's motifs; they are known to be Flemish and thought to date from 1720 to 1730 (Luisa Hager, "Wirkteppiche aus der Werkstatt des J. de Vos mit Chinesenszenen," *Artes Textiles* 5 [1959–60] pp. 45–46); *China und Europa*, no. L31). The Soho tapestries at Erddig Park in Wales are garden scenes with figures in vaguely oriental costume, not chinoiseries (Gervase Jackson-Stops, "Erddig Park, Clwyd: II," *Country Life* 163 [1978] p. 972, fig. 6, "The Tapestry Room," part of one tapestry visible).