

# The Study of Italian Velvet

## 14<sup>th</sup> Century-17<sup>th</sup> Century

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this study is to document an unidentified velvet fabric which is located in the Museum. The investigation was conducted by analyzing color, weaving technique, pattern of the study object. To identify the origin of the object, many references about color trends, construction methods and patterns were accessed. Two comparative objects which were dating from 1600 to 1699 in the Museum of F.I.T. were selected since they are similar to the study object. The results of this study can be summarized as follows:*

*(1) The type of this study object is "cut and voided velvet". It is obtained establishing the motif as areas of cut pile so as to form a pattern, while leaving other areas of the grounded weave without pile. Two flowers and two tulips with S curved stems are composed as one unit in the vertical direction.*

*(2) The colors used in this study object, which are ivory, smoke blue, medium orange, and yellow, are part of a new trend color in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.*

*(3) The vertical undulating stripe patterns are also of significance in this fabric. They seemed to be contemporary with the serpentine line which was common since the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the vertical stripes pattern which appeared from the 16<sup>th</sup> century.*

*(4) The stylized tulip patterns of this study object began to appear in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The stems and leaves of this patterns are less sinuous than the floral motifs of the later 17<sup>th</sup> century.*

*Therefore, the study object is dated to early in 17<sup>th</sup> century because of the color combination, stripes, stylized tulips, leaves, and stems are showing the characteristics of this period.*

**Key Words :** *Italian velvet, cut and voided velvet, Ciselé velvet, tulip pattern, vertical stripes, 17<sup>th</sup> century*

## I . Introduction

As a symbol of wealth and nobility, velvet has been used in dress and furnishing and is regarded as the most luxurious fabric. The weaving technique of velvet has been developed in Europe since it was invented in China during the Western Han Period (206B.C-A.D.9). Due to the fact that the public loved this fabric, increasing demand caused high prices, because of the complex tech-

nique of weaving luxurious velvet.

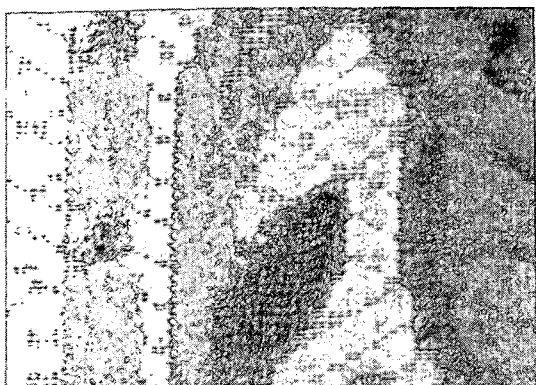
In this study, a piece of velvet fabric (Fig. 1) in the Museum of F.I.T. (Object No. P86.54.262) and two comparative objects (Objects No. P86.54.223, P86. 54.260) were selected. Because the date of the object is unknown, I studied the history of velvet, different types of velvet, techniques, and changes in velvet designs from the 14<sup>th</sup> century to the 17<sup>th</sup> century to figure out the origin and date of this object. During the research, standard references about velvets and art history were used.

## II. Case Study

The object of this case study is a cut and voided velvet fabric which is in the Museum of F.I.T. (Fig. 1, 2). Cut and voided velvet is formed by covering pattern area with cut pile and leaving the ground weave uncovered elsewhere. In the catalog record, it is listed as being made in Italy and the date range is not known.



<Fig. 1> Cut and Voided Velvet<sup>1)</sup>



<Fig. 2> Details of Figure 1<sup>2)</sup>

This fabric measures  $22\frac{7}{8}$  " wide and  $8\frac{1}{4}$  " high. This fabric is velvet with meandering floral motif within four vertical bands layout, each band measuring  $5\frac{1}{2}$  " wide and each is outlined by a meandering stripe. There are two selvages extant in same direction as the vertical stripe pattern. The floral design is simple, the motifs are stylized. This undulating striped patterns appeared in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Fig.27, 28, 29) and became major designs in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Fig. 30, 31). In

order to support the hypothesis that dating study object to this period, I chose another velvet fabric which has vertical stripe layout dated in 1660-1699 at the Museum of F.I.T. (Fig. 5).

### 1. Color and analysis

The color used in the background of study object(Object No. P86.54.262, Fig. 1) is ivory and the floral motif is multicolored although the red is common throughout. From the left both outlining stripes are colored in smoke blue and medium orange. Tulip is outlined with smoke blue and medium orange colored inside of petal. There are four petals flower above the tulip, each petal is divided into three parts. From the outside of petal, smoke blue, medium orange and smoke blue alternate. Below the tulip there is another flower, that is to the upper one, rendered in opposite color to the top one. In second row from the left, the color combination is changed to yellow instead of smoke blue, but the medium is not changed. In the third row, the smoke blue has been replaced with natural brown and in the fourth row changed natural brown with off white. The medium orange remains as the major color of the floral motif, and returns in the first, second, and third rows.

Based on the research of the color developments in textile history, it is not difficult to propose that this object was made in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The evidence supports this. Some examples, which are dated to the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, show similar color combination(Fig 17, 18, 28). This opinion is supported by Rosalia Fanelli, author of *Five centuries of Italian Textiles: 1300-1800*, in which she states, "In the 17<sup>th</sup> century new colors come into existence: salmon pink, lime green, lemon yellow, turquoise blue "<sup>3)</sup> and she cited historical examples.

### 2. Analysis of the structure and patterns

Velvet is defined a fabric with pile created by a sup-

plementary warp. This object (Fig. 5) is constructed with the method of cut pile pattern and floating supplementary weft in the background. The type of this velvet is called "cut voided velvet". It is obtained establishing the motif as areas of cut pile so as to form a pattern, while leaving other areas of the ground weave without pile. When observing historical examples of this kind of velvet and references in art, the structure of this silk velvet is simple as a technique. The background of this object has a supplementary floating weft. Floral and stripe motifs are constructed with one pile height. The ivory floating weft in the background is making diagonal lines over all and give luminosity. Even though the pile in floral areas has one height, polychromy is achieved through three dimensional effect on this object.

This velvet have vertical eight outlining stripes which make four vertical bands. In each row, the tulip and the four petalled flowers are connected with S-curved stem. This is a fragment, so the size of the repeating floral pattern unit cannot be measured. However, it is possible that its height can be circa  $10\frac{3}{8}$ " because the polychrome color combination of four petalled flowers above and below the tulip is in opposite colors. With this fact, the tulip which is not shown in this object could be oriented and have opposite color match. This is a frequently used device to expand in color on basically simple patterns. I could therefore assume that two flowers and two tulips with S-curved stems are composed as one unit in the vertical direction.

### III. Comparing Objects

Since the date of my object (Object No. P 86.54.262) is not known, I chose two comparative objects (Object No. P 86.54.223-Fig.3 and P 86.54.260-Fig.5) in the Museum of F.I.T. to research my object. The reason why I chose the comparing object 1 (Fig. 3) is that this velvet has small scale floral pattern units with S-curved

stems and leaves, and the ivory floating supplementary weft threads in background. These features are similar to my object (Fig. 1). The second choice of comparative object (Fig. 5) has a similar repeating floral motif within the vertical stripes layout as in my object (Fig. 1).

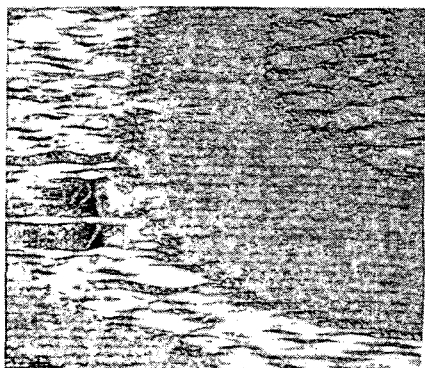
#### 1. Comparing Object 1

This comparative object 1 (Object No. P.86.54.223) (Fig. 3) was made in Italy and is dated to 1600-1625. This is a ciselé velvet located in the Museum of F.I.T. Ciselé velvet is said to have originated in Venice. This velvet has patterns in uncut and cut pile in order to create different shades. This is due to the different heights of these two areas with light effect. Uncut pile area is higher than cut pile area, so it gives the three-dimensional effect. If we see the object 1, especially in the floral pattern areas, the uncut pile is located in the center of the flower motif, so the three-dimensional effect is created.

This ciselé velvet has small scale floral motifs with S-curved stems in brown color. The floral motifs are pomegranates and small tulips with leaves. There is one selvage extant. Pomegranate flowers are in several sizes and are displayed along the S-curved stem and leaves, and sprigs with small tulips are arranged between the pomegranate motifs.



<Fig. 3> Comparing object 1: Ciselé velvet<sup>4)</sup>  
Italy, ca. 1600-1625.



<Fig. 4> Details of Figure 3<sup>5)</sup>

### 1) Color and analysis

The color of the floral motifs is brown and the background is in ivory color. The pomegranate in the center of fabric seems to have different color inside and outside, but it is the effect of cut pile, uncut pile, and without occupying the pile. In the center of the pomegranate the color appears light brown, and in the outside of the flower it looks dark brown color. Between the outer part of cut pile area and the uncut pile area, medium brown color rendered with small pile on the ground weave. Two petalled tulips above the pomegranate have the same color combination from the outer part to the inner part as the pomegranate. The medium brown also make the outline of all motifs in this fabric.

This color combination is applied in other small pomegranates, small tulips, stems, and leaves. So three kinds of brown color are seen in the floral motifs. The color of the background is ivory; this color is made by the ivory floating supplementary weft silk threads in the background weave. This supplementary weft threads make small diamond patterns in brown color all over the background.

Comparing many references on the color trends of silk fabrics, I found that this sober, brown color is another characteristic in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. While Fig. 17, 18, 26, and 28 shows colorful trend in this period, Rosalia Fanelli wrote this color trend as "A Second group ap-

pears of more sober colors such as dark red, dark brown, dark green, and black. Black had become the established color of Spanish domination."<sup>6)</sup>

### 2) Analysis of the structure and patterns

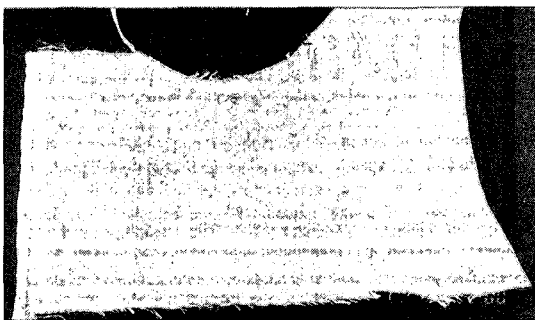
Ciselé velvet is constructed with the uncut and cut pile in pattern areas and simple weaving in background. This comparative object 1 is constructed with the method of cut and uncut pile patterns and floating supplementary weft in the background. It is obtained establishing the motifs as areas of cut and uncut pile so as to form a pattern, while leaving the ground weave without pile. This construction method gives a more three-dimensional effect to the fabric when it is compared with my object (Object No.P86.54.262). The reason for this three dimensional effect is that the heights of pattern areas are varied. There are four heights in the floral patterns. In the center big pomegranate flower is outlined with small uncut pile loops, and the stylized petals are constructed with cut piles. And in the middle parts of flower, small uncut pile loops cover the ground weave partly. Predominantly, the center area has the big uncut pile loops and small uncut pile loops alternately. So these different heights of pile make the flower patterns looks more three dimensional.

This velvet has more elaborated curve line than my object. The sinuous stems bear big pomegranate flower, leaves, and small pomegranate. Above this, the small twig bearing tulips are seen. This pattern style is more naturalistic and dynamic than my object (Object No. P.86.54.262). Although the pattern repeating is not seen in this fragment of velvet, one thing that I assure is the disconnection between each flower stem. Above the big pomegranate flower, another meandering stems bearing small pomegranate and leaves appeared from the right selvage. This motif will be repeated in the left direction, because the same flower motif is seen at the upper part of the velvet. This assumption is supported by Peter

Thornton, author of *Baroque and Rococo Silk*, in where he states, "The pattern consists of rows of closely spaced but isolated motifs, those in each row being made to lean alternately to the left and to the right. This kind of pattern was in vogue during the first decade of the seventeenth century."<sup>7)</sup> And also several velvet examples show these types of pattern trend (Fig. 17, 18, 26).

## 2. Comparing Object 2

This second comparative object (Fig. 5) is also located in the Museum of F.I.T. (Object No. P 86.54.260). It was made in Italy during 1660-1699. Since this velvet has stripe patterns similar to study object (Fig. 1), it is a good example to compare these two objects. This is a velvet fabric with floral patterns within vertical stripes. It has one selvage extant and the condition is poor. On the right part of this fabric lost most of pile loops, so it is



<Fig. 5> Comparative object 2 : Ciselé velvet with pattern in vertical stripe <sup>8)</sup> Italy, ca. 1660-1699.



<Fig. 6> Details of Figure 5<sup>9)</sup>

hard to examine the pattern in this area.

### 1) Color and analysis

The main color of this velvet is brown, but it appeared in three kind of shades; light brown and dark brown in patterns, medium brown in the background weave. In the floral and stripe patterns, these two light brown and dark brown are created by constructing different height piles. The central stylized floral motif has petals outlined by small uncut pile loops. Inside each petal there is higher uncut pile loops than in the outline. This technique gives the effect of different color although the color of the both uncut pile loops are same. The background is in medium brown color. Between vertical floral motifs, there are three stripes having same color combination as the floral motifs. The outer part of the stripe is dark brown and the center part is in light brown.

### 2) Analysis of the structure and patterns

The comparative object 2 (Fig. 5) is constructed with the method of uncut pile loops and simple plain weave background. The floral and stripe patterns have two different heights of uncut pile areas. The outlines of the motifs are constructed with small uncut pile loops, so it is lower than the center part of the motifs which are constructed with high uncut pile. This construction method is obtained by using two sizes of rods to make different size of pile loops. The background is just simple plain weave using the white silk weft threads and brown warp threads.

This velvet fabric has vertical outlining stripes which make the three vertical bands as my object (Fig. 1). But it has one more stripe between the bands. Each stripe is outlined with small uncut pile loops at both side and filled with bigger uncut pile loops in the center part. This method of construction is same as in the part of the floral motifs which are inside of the stripes. The floral mo-

tif is laid between symmetrically paired and stylized branches. Below and above the flower, other stylized branches are laid symmetrically. The patterns repeat is based upon a central floral motif with symmetrically stylized branches and other branches below the center floral motif.

If we see the only symmetrical composition of motif, it is not new a style in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. From the Renaissance period, this kind of symmetrical floral pattern is common (Fig. 20, 21, 22-B, 31). But two different styles are seen in this object; one thing is using the vertical stripes instead of diaper pattern, other is each floral pattern unit is isolated without connection. According to Peter Thornton's research about the pattern in 17<sup>th</sup> century, "The lace-pattern have a pattern with a point repeat; that is, they are composed symmetrically about a vertical axis. Basically these patterns consist of a central floral motif surrounded by a frame of some diaper-patterns which often resembles lace or net."

<sup>10)</sup> And he states this pattern type is seen in the velvet ranged from about 1690 to about 1730. In my research about this comparing object 2, the stripes are laid between two stripes instead of diaper-pattern since the vertical stripe pattern was in common from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.

In addition to these comparative objects (Fig. 3 and 5), I researched the history of velvet and pattern with the standard references. It covered the time period from the 14<sup>th</sup> century to the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Italy.

#### IV. History of Velvet

The first velvet was made in China during the Western Han Period (206B.C-A.D.9) and Ibn Battuta, who reports on the manufacture of "damasked velvet fabrics" in the city of Zayton (today Quanzhou), confirmed this fact. It is assumed that Persian exiles introduced the velvet technique into Venice because of the

crossroads of East and West.<sup>11)</sup>

Even though the exact origin of the velvet is debatable, it is thought that the weaving technique developed in Persia during the 11th or 12th century. In Europe the first figured velvets were made in Italy and Spain during the 14th Century. The weaving technique of velvet needs complex skill, so skillful technique for weaving velvet and silks were made in Venice during the early 14th century.<sup>12)</sup>

#### 1. The 14<sup>th</sup> Century

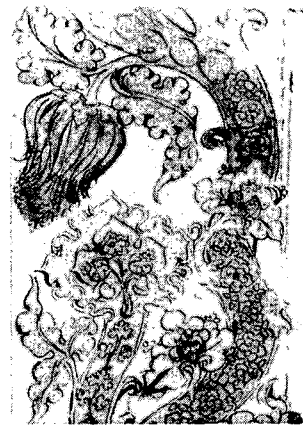
From the thirteenth century to the fourteenth century, plain velvets were developed into figured velvet. At first, it had stripes or checks and floral patterns in gold appeared by the middle of the century. Various patterned velvets were woven in the Lucchese by 1376 European aristocrats wore these expensive velvet. As an example, Richard II of England (1376-1400) bought a lot of velvets which include a piece woven in two heights of pile which were fashionable during the fifteenth century.<sup>13)</sup>

#### 2. The 15<sup>th</sup> Century

According to the development of complex weaving skills, weavers could create various designs. Venice became the most important manufacturing city because its *Byzantine colorful taste created the splendor of fabrics with gold*. In this way, Venice influenced the European Renaissance. A number of the great Italian Renaissance painters, Massaccio, Andrea del Castagno, Domenico Veneziano, and Pisanello (Fig. 7) painted luxurious velvet. And also in many of Flemish paintings, such as that drawn by Jan Van Eyck (Fig. 8) and Memling (Fig. 9), velvet was a fondness at that time. The painters also designed and committed to the weavers. As an example, in Pisanello's drawings in the Codex Vallard in the Louvre (Fig. 10), a lot of pattern with modification and



<Fig. 7> Pisanello, Portrait of a Lady, 1438-1440, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.<sup>14)</sup>



<Fig. 10> Pisanello, Ornamental motive for fabrics, 15<sup>th</sup> century, Paris, Louvre<sup>17)</sup>



<Fig. 8> Jan Van Eyck, The Madonna of Canon van der Paele, detail: St Donation's chasuble, 1436. Musee Communal, Burges<sup>15)</sup>



<Fig. 9> Hans Memling, The Descent from the Cross, ca.1475. Capilla Real, Granada<sup>16)</sup>



<Fig. 11> Petrus Christus, The Legend of St Eligius and St Gadeberta, 1449, Courtesy Robert Lehman Collection, New York.<sup>21)</sup>

variations were seen and continued during the Renaissance period.<sup>18)</sup>

As mentioned earlier ciselé velvet was invented in Venice. It has complicated texture that was from cutting the pile loops on the fabric warp (Fig. 11, 12). Its character is a shining effect between the pattern and the woven fabric.<sup>19)</sup>

During the fifteenth century Italian developed more intricate velvet weaving technique that was using gold weft loops (Fig. 13). Allucciolate and riccio sopra riccio(loop over loop) are developed from that technique.<sup>20)</sup>



<Fig. 12> Dirk Bouts (ca. 1415-1475) The Justice of Otto. The Ordeal by Fire, detail: Courtiers, 1470-1475. Musees Royaux des Beaux-Arts, Brussels<sup>22)</sup>



<Fig. 13> Ciselé velvet with pomegranate motif inside large medallion, details. 15<sup>th</sup> century, Musée des Arts de la Mode et du Textile (collection UCAD), Paris<sup>23)</sup>

### 3. The 16<sup>th</sup> Century

The Venetian prosperous silk weaving went into decline because other Italian cities entered into competition. This led to decrease of active looms in Venice from ten thousand to only three thousand by the end of the sixteenth century. New industry began to move to the French city of Lyon because of their development of silk weaving.<sup>24)</sup>

A lot of flourish silk industrial cities in Italy was known for their own characters. Genoa made ciselé velvets that have patterns of tulips, carnations, and hyacinth

on yellow silk. The figured linen altar cloths embroidered in turquoise-blue cotton were produced in Perugia. But a number of velvet weavers in Milan move into Lyon because French king Francois I offered a special right.<sup>25)</sup>

In style, Antonino Santagelo in his book *A Treasury of Great Italian Textiles* states "Variations, replicas, and copies of all sorts are very common and were made in various places, especially in Spain. But it is only in the original velvet version, where the meanders of rich silk pile are edged with gold and silver, that one finds the same unity of style and harmony of effect as in Bronzino's painting.<sup>26)</sup> As a result of research about pattern of 16<sup>th</sup> century, it is possible to assume that the velvet of 16<sup>th</sup> century is more three-dimensional (Fig.14, 15). Santagelo explains the reason of this in his book, "The plant ornament, enriched with interlace and curvilinear cartouches in the shapes of shields, exhibits a range of color-reds, violets, greens- not only because of the dyes, but also because of the varied incidence of light on the lustrous pile. As a result, the pattern seems to break away from the flat surface of the textile, giving an impression of depth and of luxuriant growth. Toward the end of the century, a clear distinction began to be made between furnishing patterns and dress patterns."<sup>27)</sup>



<Fig. 14> Genoa ciselé velvet, 16<sup>th</sup> century, Georges Le Manach archives, Tours<sup>28)</sup>





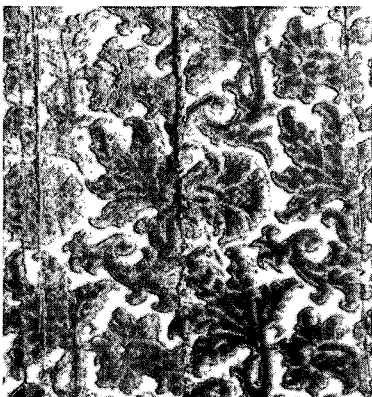
<Fig. 15> Fragment of border for furnishings. Silk. Ciselé voided velvet. Italy. 16<sup>th</sup> century, Museo del Tessuto, Prato<sup>29)</sup>

#### 4. The 17<sup>th</sup> Century

During the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there was a radical change in the European silk industry. Before 1666, French Louis XIV's minister Jean Baptiste Colbert (1619-83) had ordered Italian silk for French royal household. But after 1666, he supported the French silk manufacturing industries, so no more Italian silks were imported.<sup>30)</sup> His special supporting of silk industries made both Tours and Lyons as chief cities of



<Fig. 16> Fragment of border for furnishings. Silk. Ciselé voided velvet. Italy, 17<sup>th</sup> century, Prato, Museo del Tessuto<sup>31)</sup>



<Fig. 17> Genoa, ca 1620-1630 Red figured velvet, cut and uncut pile, on an ivory-coloured satin ground<sup>32)</sup>



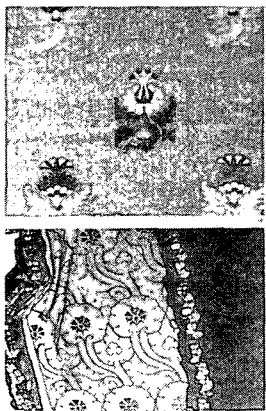
<Fig. 18> Venice, Genoa or Florence ca. 1620-1630 Pale blue figured velvet, cut and uncut pile, on a white satin ground<sup>33)</sup>

the industries in Europe. Furthermore, imported foreign silks were prohibited. These facts may have led the French silk industries to make new products of silks and to develop the weaving technique. From this period, new silk design was introduced in each year.<sup>34)</sup>

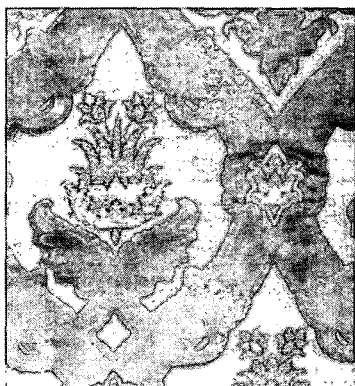
#### V. History of Patterns

The floral motifs were the main design. Among them, pomegranate is the prominent motif with variations (Fig.19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25). The variations of the pomegranate motif were based on the use of ogival lines, bearing pomegranate design in center (Fig.20). In the variations of the pomegranate motifs, Fanelli categorized the three basic compositional structures of the pomegranate pattern of the 15<sup>th</sup> century: Ogival network (Fig. 22. IA, B), horizontal rows of lobate palmettes on bifurcated stems (Fig. 22. II), and vertical serpentine compositions (Fig. 22. IIIA, B).<sup>35)</sup>

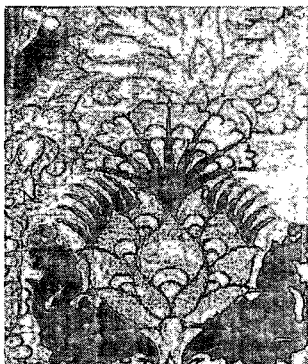
One of the characteristics of the pattern designs in the 16<sup>th</sup> century is a geometric form in composition of the floral motifs. The compositions of these forms are varied. The motifs are usually repeated without connection between them (fig.26) and make the rows, so each pattern motif is arranged as a element of the lines.



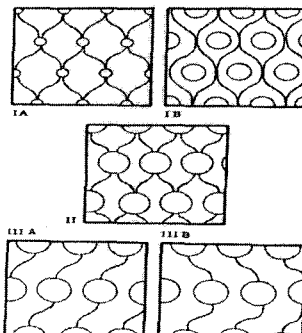
<Fig. 19> Above: Cut voided polychrome velvet. Satin weave ground, Venice, ca 1420. Florence, Museo Nazionale-Bargello. Below: Doantello. The Cosica tomb, 1425-28: Detail of motif incised and painted on the interior surface of the marble baldachin. Florence<sup>36)</sup>



<Fig. 20> Silk cut pile on pile velvet with brocading and boucle wefts. Venice, First half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Givici Musei Veneziani d'Arte e di Storia<sup>37)</sup>



<Fig. 21> Ciselé velvet with pomegranate motif. 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>38)</sup>



<Fig. 22> The three basic compositional structures of the pomegranate pattern. Italy, 15<sup>th</sup> century<sup>39)</sup>



<Fig. 23> Rogier van der Weyden(1399-1464) The Holy Family, 1435-1438, Capilla Real, Granada<sup>40)</sup>

This each floral motif element is usually formed with isolated S-curved branch. But the tendency of the using of this motif was diminished from the second of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

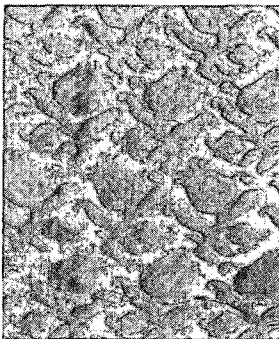


<Fig. 24> Hans Memling, The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine. 1479. Memming Museum, Bruges. Saint Catherine's gown is made from A pomegranate flower velvet similar to the one used for the throne canopy.<sup>41)</sup>



<Fig. 25> Cut voided velvet, brocaded. Florence, about 1480. Prato, Museo del Tessuto.<sup>42)</sup>

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the tendency of using the central axial composition with a floral motif in a symmetrical form remained and transformed into more soft style and decorated style of the 18<sup>th</sup> century with the so-called ((lace patterns)). The exotic ((bizarre)) designs and the ((chinoiserie)) motifs were created with serpentine lines from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. These motif became popular and about mid century the serpentine lines are continuously designed.<sup>43)</sup>

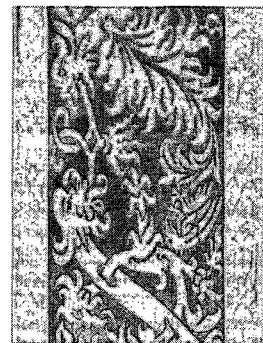


<Fig. 26> Red figured velvet, cut and uncut pile, on a yellow taffetas doublete ground, weft patterned with gilded silver lamella. ca 1610-1625. Genoa or Florence<sup>44)</sup>

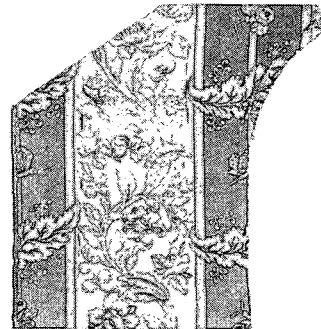
Isolated springs with two tulips and two different sized leaves are arranged in a chequered pattern, with alternated left/right orientation of all its elements.

From the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, striped patterns became an important part in the design of velvet. This

pattern combined with floral motifs which were composed with S-curved stems or symmetrically arranged floral motifs (Fig. 27, 28, 29). According to Peter Thornton, "Stripes, incidentally, seem to have been in vogue in the 1660's."<sup>45)</sup>



<Fig. 27> Rectangular fragment of border for furnishings and interior decoration. Tuscany, 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>46)</sup>



<Fig. 28> 17th century Italian textile patterns Based on a central floral motif with Symmetrically paired curved volutes Branches. Prato, Museo del Tessuto<sup>47)</sup>



<Fig. 29> Rectangular fragment. Silk. Lampas. Tuscany, 16<sup>th</sup> century. Prato, Museo del Tessuto<sup>48)</sup>



<Fig. 30> Rectangular fragment of border for furnishings. Italy, 1550-1650. Prato, del Tessuto<sup>49)</sup> (Left)

<Fig. 31> 17<sup>th</sup> century Italian textiles with vertically striped patterns incorporating Museo del Tessuto.<sup>50)</sup> floral motifs. Prato, Museo(Right)

However, striped patterns were rare during the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Rosalia Bonito Fanelli states this phenomenon as “Due to the preference in rococo art for a profusion of floral motifs in ample symmetrical compositions or in serpentine lines. At the mid-century, though, there is a turning towards a restructuring of floral patterns into vertical lines- sometimes accompanying the rectilinear divisions and other times intentionally contrasting with them. Finally, with the growth of the influence of neoclassicism from the 1780’s onwards there is found a more sober structuring of elements and ‘classical’ motifs are incorporated into the striped patterns.”<sup>51)</sup>

## VI. Conclusion

During the investigation of the weaving techniques and pattern styles used in the objects (The Museum of F.I.T. Object No. P.86.54.262, P.86.54.223, P.86.54.260), I became aware of the devotion for creating new types of velvet throughout the history. In my point of view, velvets are not only works of art but are also mathematical creations. The weaving technique used in my object is simple; cut and voided velvet, and two oth-

er comparing objects are ciselé velvets dated to the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Since the date of study object is not known, choosing the other objects made good sense. One of these object has small scale floral pattern units with S-curved stems and leaves, and the ivory floating supplementary weft threads in the background such as study object. The second comparative object has vertical stripe patterns that resemble study object.

With narrowing down the time period into the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the conclusions of my studies can be summarized as follows.

The weaving technique of the object is simple and not significant.

The color used in this velvet is part of a new trend color in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

Although the weaving technique and the pattern style are simple when it is compared with two other objects, the color combination made this velvet looks more elaborate than them.

The vertical undulating stripe patterns are also of significance in this fabric. They seemed to be contemporary with the serpentine line which was common since the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the vertical stripes pattern which appeared from the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

As to the historical examples of velvet, the stylized tulip patterns of this object began to appear in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. The stems and leaves of this are less sinuous than the floral motifs of the later 17<sup>th</sup> century such as comparing object 2.

Therefore this museum object(Fig. 1) is believed to be dated to early in 17<sup>th</sup> century based on the color combination, stripes, stylized tulips, leaves, and stems are showing the characteristics of this period. From this study, I learnt how to approach a museum object and have been able to obtain the methods for other studies in the future.

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