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 **Jacques Coeur's strange carpet**

Welcome, [Filiberto Boncompagni](#).

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 January
20th, 2012,
03:24 PM

#1

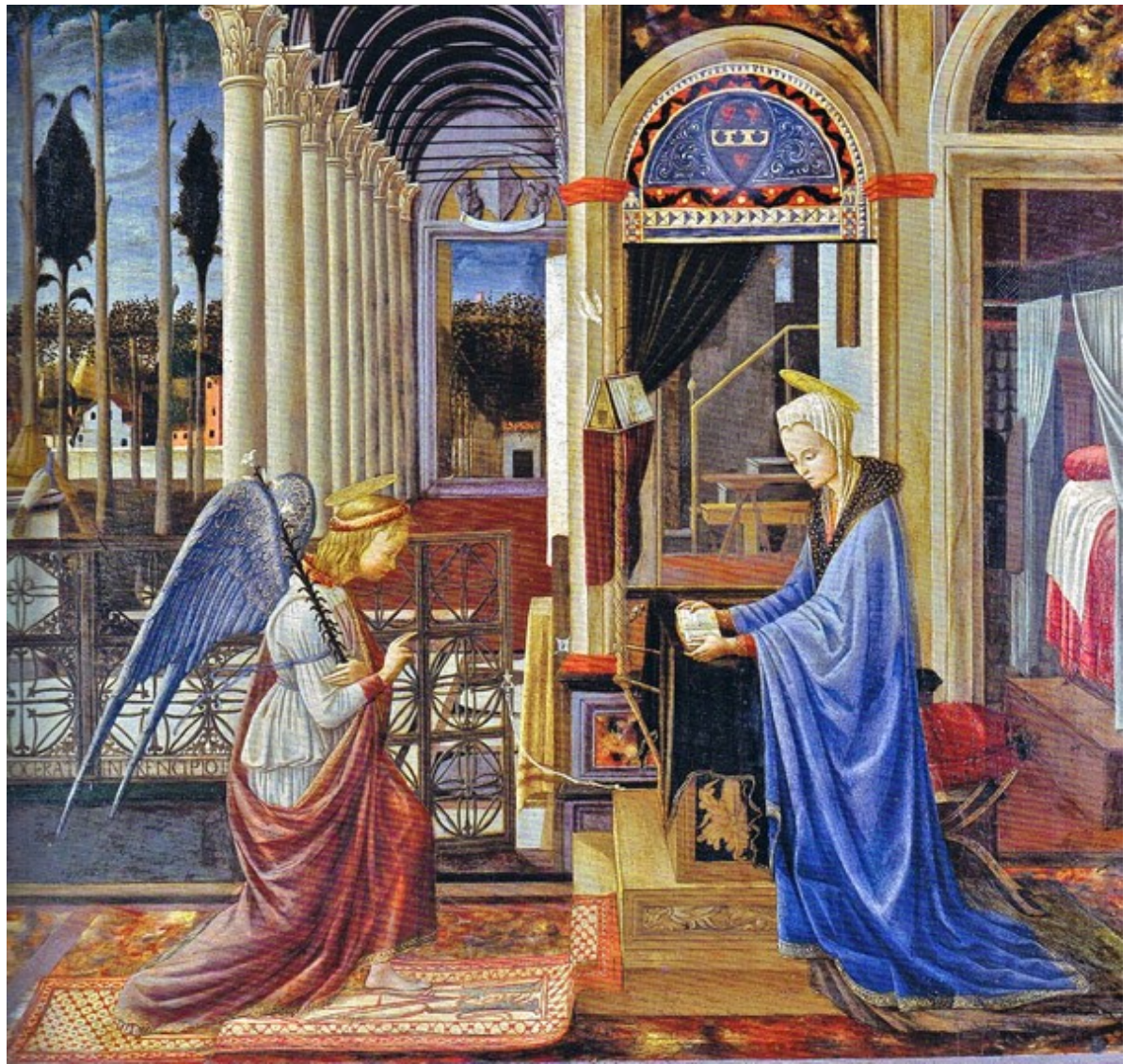
[Pierre Galafassi](#)
Members

 Jacques Coeur's strange carpet

Hi all,

Join Date: Oct
2009
Posts: 54

This painting by Fra Carnavale (1448, «Jacques Coeur's Annunciation», Munich) shows an extraordinary, long and narrow «animal rug». FIG 1 and 2





The carpet features an ivory field background and a red border. In the middle of the field, a narrow rectangular medallion contains a puzzling geometric motif (a lozenge which itself encloses another narrow rectangle, both ivory-shade and none being filled). On top of the lozenge two slender, long-tailed "rampant" blue beasts face each other. The rug

pattern seems to be symmetrical, thus, another pair of beasts is probably hidden under the angel's train.

The rectangular medallion is enclosed into a kind of «chain-mail» pattern, drawn in red on the white background and each «mail» contains a small blue «comma» motif (too small to tell, but it could be, perhaps, one of the earliest boteh motif on rug).

«Chain-mails», «wrought irons» and interlaced patterns were rather common in Spanish rugs, even as late as the seventeenth century. An Al-Andalus origin of the rug is a possibility.

A pair of animals or chimaeras facing each other, (quite often with a tree of life in between them) was a ubiquitous medieval- and Renaissance motif, probably imported from Asia (see Yohann's thread «A contribution to animal rugs) and Filiberto's thread «What are those?». In the latter, Filiberto even shows a picture of the (fourteenth century) inlaid marble floor of the church of San Miniato al Monte which features nearly identical pairs of lions and griffins.

The «facing pair of beasts» motif was also used extensively on coat of arms. For example the pair of lions on Henri II- and (early) Richard I arms.

Note: Jacques Coeur, the fellow who commissioned this painting and probably owned the rug, was, at the time, perhaps the richest man in France. A banker and businessman, he made part of his huge fortune in import-export activities, trafficking with the middle East and Spain, among other markets.



February
27th, 2012,
08:13 PM

#2

[Pierre Galafassi](#)
Members

Join Date: Oct
2009
Posts: 54



The red and white «chainmail» pattern of Jacques Coeur's rug finds its nearly identical counterpart in the textile (or rug) spread on top of an animal rug (two anorexic birds around a tree of life) in a contemporaneous painting by S. di Pietro. This painting gives a better view of the motif: The weaver's inspiration might be peacock's tail feathers, rather than a chain mail.

I can't remember having seen this motif in any extant rug, does anybody?.



S. Di Pietro, 1455, Coronation of the Virgin, Yale Univ.
Regards
Pierre



February 28th, 2012,
09:30 AM

#3

[Filiberto Boncompagni](#)
Administrator

Join Date: May 2008
Location: Cyprus
Posts: 80



Hi Pierre,

Perhaps we should try searching in European Renaissance
textiles...
Regards,

Filiberto



February 28th, 2012,
05:44 PM

#4

[Filiberto Boncompagni](#)
Administrator

Join Date: May 2008
Location: Cyprus
Posts: 80



...which I did and found absolutely nothing even vaguely
similar.
Could they be Spanish (Moorish) textiles? ???
Regards,

Filiberto



February 28th,
2012, 09:44 PM

#5

[Pierre Galafassi](#)

Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 54



Quote:

Originally Posted by **Filiberto Boncompagni** 
Could they be Spanish (Moorish) textiles?

Quite possible.
One can find quite easily examples of Al Andalus silk brocade featuring peacocks when browsing the net.





In Asia, (especially India) peacocks had a significantly higher status than chicken and their feathers were often linked with royalty. (see the Indian Peacock Throne filched by Nadir Shah).



May 24th, 2012, 04:31 PM

#6

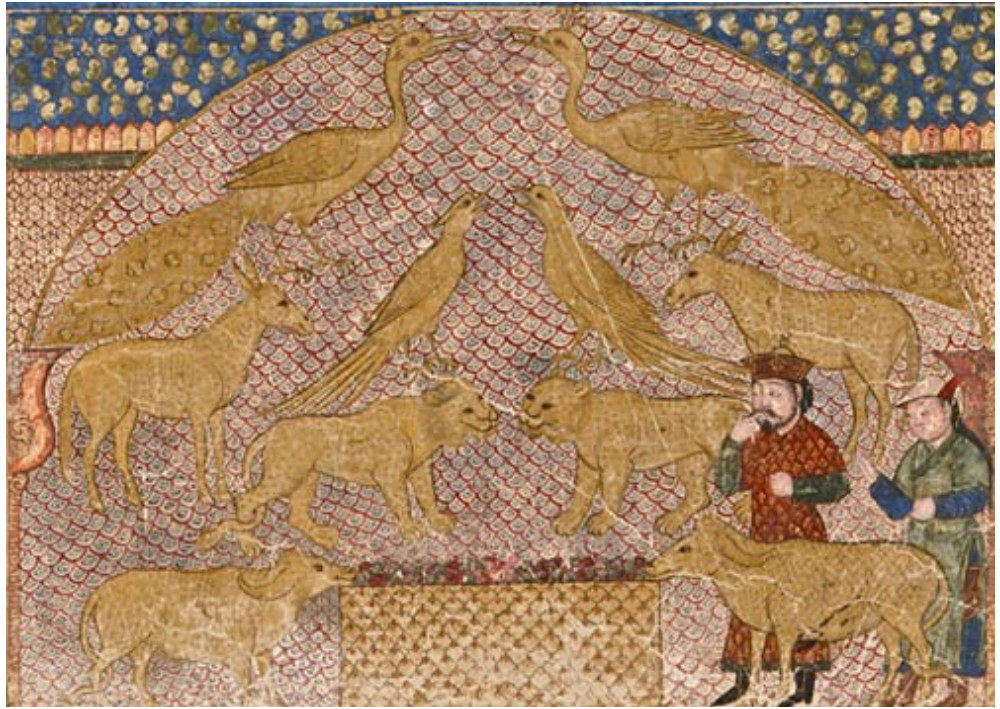
[Pierre Galafassi](#)

Members

Join Date: Oct 2009
Posts: 54



Hi all,
The fourteenth century Ilkhanid miniature below shows a peacock-feather motif very similar to the motifs in di Pietro's and Fra Carnevale's paintings.



1330-1340. Il-khanid period. Tabriz school. Bahram Gur in the treasury of Jamshid. Freer Sackler

regards
Pierre



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