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Robyn Maxwell
National Gallery of Australia

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FROM THE ANCESTORS OR THE PORTUGUESE: EXOTIC TEXTILES IN FLORES AND THE SOLAR ARCHIPELAGO (abstract only)

ROBYN MAXWELL
Dept. of Asian Art, National Gallery of Australia
GPO Box 1150, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia

Throughout the eastern Indonesian island of Flores and the neighbouring Solor archipelago, village treasuries usually contain considerable numbers of highly valued textiles and some items of costume. These consist predominantly of important local products clearly made within the particular village or district.

Other heirloom textiles have been acquired from outside the local regions in the distant or not-so-distant past. These exotic heirlooms are often awarded a special place in the hierarchy of textiles found throughout Flores, Solor and Lembata and, where possible, examines local histories and myths associated with the origins of particular objects or types of cloth.

Further, an examination of the place and significance of exotic cloth in various local ceremonial contexts will focus on relationships between local and "foreign" textiles. Such an analysis may shed light on the history of textiles in the Flores region and the impact of exotic textiles on local textile design, meaning and usage.