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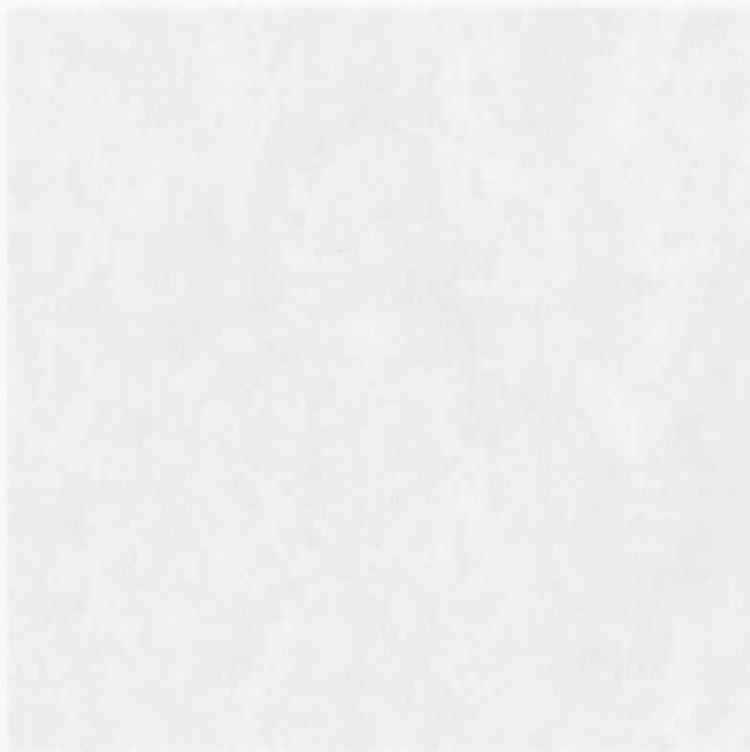
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From Court to Convent: A Silk Embroidered Sampler from Colonial Mexico

by
Bobbie Sumberg

Silk appears frequently in many Mexican textiles and garments such as rebozos, skirts, and huipils or blouses. In this paper I discuss a different tradition, that of sampler embroidery in the urban style.

Yrene Escandon was reported to be a lady in waiting for Empress Carlotta, who reigned in Mexico with her husband Emperor Maximilien from 1863-1867. During this time and before entering a convent after her service she and some friends embroidered a sampler replete with floral, religious, animal, and bird motifs. Using this remarkable piece in the collection of the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe I will present a brief history of samplers in Mexico. I will then discuss the use of motifs in this piece and where they originated, and the sampler's style as it relates to indigenous and colonial influences.



The sampler was made in 1863-1867, during the reign of Empress Carlotta and Emperor Maximilian. It is a silk embroidery on a light-colored fabric, featuring a variety of motifs including floral, religious, animal, and bird designs. The sampler is a rectangular piece, approximately 100 cm x 110 cm, and is made of silk thread. It is a remarkable piece of embroidery, reflecting the influence of both indigenous and colonial styles.