

Antependium

Furniture Collection

Accession Nr.: 51.1294.1 

Date of production: 18th century

Place of production: Southern Poland (presumably); Hungary (presumably)

Materials: leather

Techniques: gilded; painted; pressed

Dimensions: height: 67,5 cm
width: 224 cm

This leather antependium or altar hanging has an unusual material for an item of church furnishings. It is adorned with gilded stems and leaves in relief, and painted flowers and fruits. In the centre, the Madonna enthroned in the clouds with a rosary in her right hand, and at her left knee stands the child Jesus, dressed in gold, with a globe and a flower bouquet. The leather hanging is of oriental origin. The main centre of manufacture was the city of Ghadames in North Africa. In the 11th century, the Moors spread it to Hispania, where the Caliphate of Cordoba, mainly the city of Cordoba supplied Europe with gilded and silvered leather. In the 17th century, Flanders joined Spain as a major centre. Expensive leather hangings adorned the walls and furniture of many aristocratic homes. The durability of painted, gilded leather led to its use among church paraphernalia too. The techniques are well known from contemporary guild regulations and recipe books. After careful preparation, the leather was gilded, embossed, punched and painted. Several pieces of leather were joined together to achieve the required size. This antependium is made from three pieces sewn together.

In Hungary, in addition to leather hangings, there are many leather chasubles in secular and church collections, and the Museum of Applied Arts holds another antependium, nine chasubles, three stoles and seven maniples. These were almost certainly made in Hungary, but there is a suggestion that the piece displayed here was made in Poland, since it was purchased by an antiques dealer in Galicia in the early 1880s.

Literature

- Szerk.: Horváth Hilda, Szilágyi András: *Remekművek az Iparművészeti Múzeum gyűjteményéből. (Kézirat).* Iparművészeti Múzeum, Budapest, 2010. - Nr. 68. (Nagy Györgyi)
- Szerk.: Miklós Pál: *Művészi bőrmunkák. Az Iparművészeti Múzeum gyűjteményei.* Magyar Helikon, Budapest, 1979. - p. 116., 1. kép (Koroknay Éva)
- szerző: Petneki Áron: *Lengyel műkincsek magyar gyűjteményekben.* Iparművészeti Múzeum, Budapest, 1978. - Nr. 97.

