


Table cover - commemorating the Teschen Peace

Textile and Costume Collection

Accession Nr.:	19607 
Place of production:	Upper Lusatia
Materials:	linen warp yarns; red silk weft
Techniques:	damask weaving
Dimensions:	length: 107 cm width: 86 cm

"Peace" tablecloths have both historical and cultural significance among the 18th century pictorial damasks. This one commemorates the Teschen Peace, which ended the Bavarian war of succession on 13th May, 1779- In the centre are the half-length portraits of the ruling princes, surrounded by laurel wreaths. Behind them is an obelisk, with the names written on the two sides: *Joseph / der Kaiser* (Joseph II. the Holy Roman Emperor), *Fridericus / der König* (Friderick II. King of Prussia), *Fridericus Augustus / der Chur / Fürst* (Friderick August, prince-elector of Saxony). A roll of paper with the inscription PAX TESCHEN, and the German book of laws with the inscription LEGES GER/MANIAE appear at the foot of the obelisk. The whole decoration is placed upon a cloud, with sunrays below. An inscription is written under the cloud: "Die froh erlebte Friedens Zeit / am 13- May 1779." — "The time of peacemaking joyfully lived through." Various scenes, separated by rocaille motifs, decorate the sides. In the corner, a cloud above the inscription *Ver/einigung* (agreement) holds a naked female figure under a tree. The figure holds a mirror and a spray of roses. A special technical feature of damask weaving is the symmetrical weaving technique — in this case, it can be seen both on the inscription and on the opposing figures. The middle of the top and bottom borders show the inscription *Beständigkeit* (permanence), with a female figure in helmet below. She stretches her hand into a sacrificial fire, while with the other arm she embraces a column. The two side borders are also decorated with sacrificial scenes. Under the inscription *Opfer Gott danck* (a sacrifice to God), we can see a vine and a head of wheat, representing bread and wine. Between the sacrificial altars are two female figures: one bringing presents in a horn of plenty, the other presumably the goddess of Victory. The latter holds a palm leaf and a shield, decorated with the coat-of-arms of the prince-elector of Saxony in one hand with the other she distributes the offerings in the sacrificial fire. The first versions of tablecloths commemorating peace were made on the occasion of the Dresden (1745) and the Hubertusburg Peace (1763). The decoration is rich in allegories, usually glorifying the hailers of the time, whose epoch-making agreement would bring prosperity to the provinces and a new "Golden Age". Braun-Ronsdorf supposes that the patterns for these tablecloths were also made after the sketches of Heinrich Ollbrich. A similar tablecloth can be found in Krefeld, Gewebesammlung.

Literature

- Szerk.: Pataki Judit: *Művészet és Mesterség. CD-ROM*. Iparművészeti Múzeum, Budapest, 1999. - textil 31.
- Szerk.: Szilágyi András, Péter Márta: *Barokk és rokokó. Az európai iparművészet stíluskorszakai*. Iparművészeti Múzeum, Budapest, 1990. - Nr. 6.41. (László Emőke)

