



SILK FRAGMENT WITH HORSES

Sogdiana, 8th–9th century Silk
INV. 80a

The blue and yellow silk fragment was originally part of a larger silk fabric. Another fragment of the textile is held at the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin.

The fabric was decorated with medallions framed with stylized feathers, which contained horses above lions. The pattern of the silk in Essen shows the lower left quarter of one of these medallions: from the main motif, a leaping lion and the hooves of a horse have been preserved.

The silk was manufactured in Sogdiana in central Asia. Several characteristics, including the stepped contour lines, are typical of this region. The silk fragment has probably been used since the late 19th century to wrap the Engelbert relic bundles contained within the wooden casket.