

Sixth Century Byzantine Clothing Project

**Hidden Mountain XXXII
Arts & Sciences**

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The Byzantine Empire; a Bit of Background

After Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity he relocated his government from Rome to the city of Byzantium, (modern day Istanbul) in 330 A.D, he renamed the city Constantinople. Byzantium had originally been part of a unified Roman Empire, but it soon divided into Rome in the west and Byzantine in the east. Byzantium became a center where Roman (Western), Persian, and Oriental influences merged.

The Byzantine Empire was a religious state. The emperor and empress were not only the rulers, but were also considered God's representatives on earth. "Their magnificent jewels, robes, and crowns were intended to give them a majestic and saintly appearance" (Rowland Jr.).

Constantinople soon became known as the fashion capital of Europe. The elaborate silks were used as an alternative currency, often portions of salaries (or debts) were paid in fine fabrics (Cavallo).

Fabric:

New weaving looms were designed in the third century that used shuttles. These shuttles allowed rich brocades to be made. In the 6th century Emperor Justinian brought silk manufacturing to Constantinople. As a result elaborate silk damask fabrics with jewel tone colors and gold appeared (Tierney). Of the five basic weaves used in Byzantium, tabby, twill, damask, lampas and tapestry – the most

important was the weft-faced compound twill called *samite*. (Monnas). Between the 4th and 12th centuries samite was used for all ceremonial affairs. It was used in military uniforms to display their wealth. (MUTHESIUS)

These silks were powerful political weapons of the Byzantine Empire. Diplomatic gifts of Byzantine silks cemented alliances with the Franks. Byzantium granted silk-trading concessions to the sea powers of Venice, Pisa, Genoa and Amalfi to secure naval and military aid for Byzantine territories-(Monnas)–In addition to woven dress and furnishing fabrics, Byzantine workshops were also known for woven tapestries and richly embroidered textiles with decoration that often included figurative scenes and religious symbolism.

During this period though, most clothing was still made with cotton, linen and wool (Jeffreys)

Pearls and Precious Stones

Gem stones were used extensively on clothing, even more so were pearls. Pearls were used in perfusion because of their easy availability through trade with the East, mostly India and the Persian Gulf. “Pearls were the favorite ornaments of the aristocracy” (History of the Discovery and Appreciation of Pearls - the Organic Gem Perfected by Nature). It was during this boom in trade, manufacturing and design that the concept of “costume jewelry” was created. Bits of colored glass were added to garments when real jewels were not available or affordable (Cavallo).

Designs and Motifs

There were several designs that predominate in Byzantine arts and fabrics. Animals and humans, representations of the season and vine scrolls, borrowed from classical and pharaonic art, with Christian crosses added by the Byzantines (Design Motifs in Byzantine Art - The Met). The purpose of Byzantine art was to glorify the Christian religion and to express its mystery. Byzantine art is filled with a kind of spiritual symbolism--things on earth are meant to stand for the order of heaven.

The Basilica of Ravenna shows vines on the sarcophagi and chancel reliefs. These vines represent John 15:3 in the Bible, the parable of the vine (Ratliff). While rondels with facing animals, and geometric patterns were common in Byzantine fabrics, so were vines. Vines were used to decorate many monuments in Constantinople, as well textiles (Brandie Ratliff).

This Project

This is a complete outfit based on the styles worn by Empress Theodora and other noble women of the 6th century in Constantinople. It is taken, in part, from a mosaic in the Basilica San Vitale in Ravenna, Italy of Empress Theodora, as well as from a bust found in Milan Italy, presumed to be of Empress Theodora. It is not intended to be an exact replica, but in the style of the clothing worn at that time



Figure 1. Empress Theodora; the Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy circa 540



Figure 2. 1931 Illustration of Empress from Basilica of San Vitale

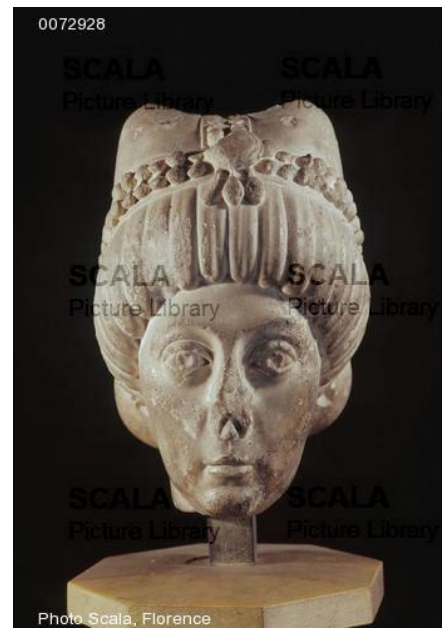


Figure 3. Ascribed to the Theodosian Period, at the Castello Sforzesco, Milan, Italy

There are five main parts to this project, (the tunica, the dalmatic, the chlamys, the maniakis and headwear), as well as accessories. Each will have its own section in this report.

The Tunica



The Tunica

The tunica was a short T-shaped garment worn by men and children, women wearing a longer version. Most frequently, the tunica was made from un-dyed wool, which was the most common material for clothing. The wealthy Byzantines preferred to use finer fabrics such as silk, cotton and linen (Corbin). Weaving techniques include tapestry and *tabby* (plain weave). Tunicas were usually a plain white fabric with clavi as decoration. They would have worn an overdress, called a dalmatic, over this.

The tunica was often woven to shape. When sewing was needed, it was usually done to lengthen the sleeves in a fabric that was not wide enough to allow for a single cut. The seams of the sleeves (and nearly all other seams) were covered with a strip of embellished fabric. (Munroe). Early tunicas would have been roughly rectangular as in figure 4. Tailored tunics with a trapezoidal shape and long narrow sleeves (figure 5) first appeared in the 5th century (Dawson).

The tunica was the inner most layer of clothing for the upper class, and the only layer for the peasants. For special occasions, if one could afford it, they would also have overdresses decorated with colored glass and embroidery or other fabric trim. The neck would have been high, usually and oval or boat neck style, although square necks (figure 6) were also used. Tunicas would always have clavi sewn to them.



Figure 4. 3th – 6th century Egyptian tunic, Metropolitan Museum of Art



Figure 5. 7th century tunic, Metropolitan Museum of Art



Figure 6. Square neck line

Clavi

Clavi were tapestry-woven wool appliques with figural and floral motifs done using subtle colors. They were either squares or circular roundels placed toward the hem, cuffs, and collar of the garment and long strips placed vertically from the shoulders downward. These were costly, and were often recycled and rest itched onto new clothing when the garment became worn. (Munroe). The designs on the clavi could have been animals, plants, humans, or geometric. Religious symbols were also used. Figures 7 and 8 are examples

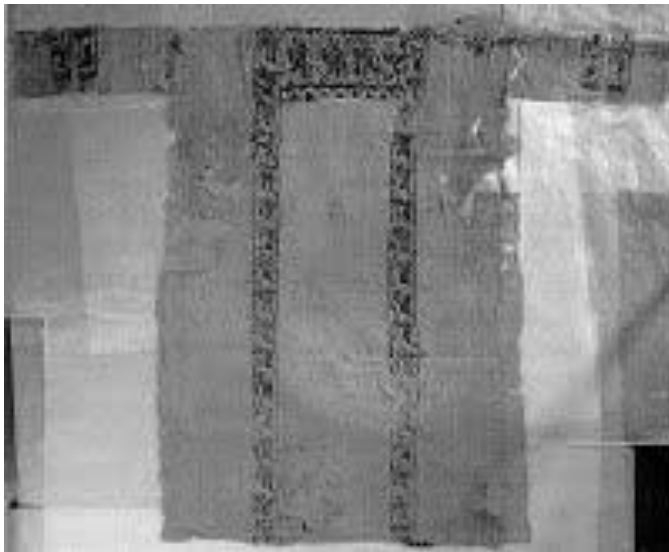


Figure 7. 4th – 5th century, animals and armed men



Figure 8. 4th – 7th century, dancers and vines
The Walters Museum

The Process

This tunica was made of white cotton. It was cut out on the floor, folding the fabric length wise so it would have one main piece, and then folding it sideways before cutting. Arm extensions were also cut. It is a simple T-tunic, with long narrow sleeves and a trapezoidal shaped body, as was done in the 6th century. A square neck opening was also cut out. Figures 9 & 10 (Brandenburgh)

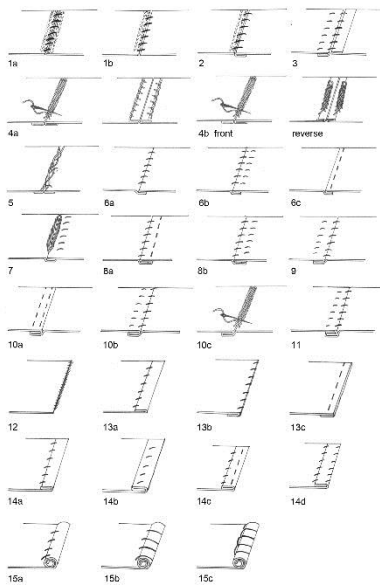


Figure 9. Main piece of the tunica



Figure 10. With arm extensions

The arm extensions were added with a French seam. While whip stitch and running stitch were the most common seams of the time, many others were used including variations of the French seam. (Brandenburgh). See figure 11.



Another variation is seen on the Manazan Caves shirt, see figure 12, (a Byzantine shirt found in the caves in present day Turkey) where a French seam is used, except that one side of the seam is not cut back before folding in the raw edges and sewing them down. The method is shown in figure 13 (Beatson). The seamed used for this tunica was, however, done using a sewing

Figure 11. Netherlands; Journal of Archaeology in the Low Countries, 5th century seams
 ting this project
 finished on time.

After the arm extensions were sewn on, the vertical clavi were sewn down.



Figure 12. Byzantine mummy of a 17 year old girl, 6th-7th century, at the Karaman Museum, Turkey

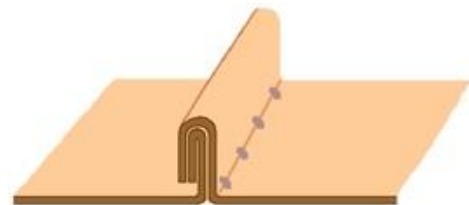


Figure 13. Variation of a French seam from the clothing of the Karaman mummy, Turkey. (Beatson)

A commercial trim was used for the clavi, rather than a hand embroidered piece.

It has a geometric pattern (almost a Greek key – that was very popular) and so was

strongly reminiscent of Byzantine patterns. Although a modern trim, it made a good substitution.



Figure 14. Vertical clavi added



Figure 15. Close up of clavi with narrow area followed by points

The two vertical strips ran in one continuous piece up the front, over the shoulders and down the back and were hand sewn down. Toward the ends the clavi was folded in to make a narrow section, followed by a point, in keeping with the designs of the time. See figure 14 and 15. The tunica was then folded at the shoulders, and the side seams sewn with a French seam.

The square neck opening was faced with the same white cotton, attached by machine at the inner seam, and then hand sewn in place. This should have been done prior to sewing the side seams – it would have been much easier to work with a flat piece of fabric, but due to lack of forethought it was not, as a result the square neckline is not as square as it should be. The neck then had clavi added by hand. Figure 16

Lastly the arm seams were covered by two rows of the same clavi fabric. This could have been more easily accomplished before sewing the side seams, but there was the risk of the ends not meeting up exactly, so they were instead hand sewn on after the seams were done. To keep the sleeve open, and prevent accidentally sewing through the back side of the fabric, a tall metal coffee mug was inserted into the sleeve, keeping it open. Figures 17 & 18



Figure 16. Neck faced and clavi added



Figure 17. Sleeve with coffee mug inserted prior to sewing



Figure 18. Seams matching at seam line.

The arm openings and hem were then sewn in place by hand.

The Dalmatic



The Dalmatic

The Dalmatic is the overdress worn by anyone with the means to do so. It was made of linen, wool or, for the wealthy, elaborately woven silks brocades covered in pearls and gem stones. Shape wise the dalmatic was almost the same as the tunica, a basic T-cut, but with wider sleeves. The sleeves were usually lined so that seams were not seen. Despite the modest cut of the clothing, they were anything but simple.

For the wealth and nobility they were made of the most expensive fabrics and covered in gold, gems and pearls. Gem stones were used extensively on clothing, even more so were pearls. Pearls were used in perfusion because of their easy availability through trade with the East, mostly India and the Persian Gulf. “Pearls were the favorite ornaments of the aristocracy” (History of the Discovery and Appreciation of Pearls - the Organic Gem Perfected by Nature). It was during this boom in trade, manufacturing and design that the concept of “costume jewelry” was created. Bits of colored glass were added to garments when real jewels were not available or affordable (Cavallo).



Figure 19. – 22 Mosaics from San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy c. 546.

Figures 19-22 show the extensive use of pearls on Byzantine clothing of the nobility.

The Process

This dress was cut out of gold linen on the floor using the same pattern as for the tunica, except the sleeves are wider. Linen was used as a fabric that was widely in use in 6th century Byzantine. For such a “fancy” dress it should have been made of silk, but it was too expensive at this time.

The side seams were sewn from hem to wrist using French seams. Next the imitation silk trim fabric was added. Trim was hand sewn to the lower edge of the garment, and over the seam where the arm extensions were added. At the lower edge 8 vertical strips were sewn on too. Pearls were added to the hem area at various points. Figure 23 and 24. The pearls were sewn onto the trim fabric before it was sewn to the dress to keep the inside of the dress free of threads, and to reduce the chance of internal threads being caught and causing the pearls to dislodge. Figure 25.



Figure 23. Trim on hem and arms



Figure 24. Pearls on trim

The only threads seen on the inside are from sewing the trim fabric on. Figure 25. The neckline was then hemmed. No facing was used since the linen was loose enough to easily turn under.



Figure 25. Inside the dress with no pearl threads showing.



Figure 26. Neck line turned and hemmed

Lastly the sleeves were lined with red linen from the wrist to the seamline. This insures that all visible seams are covered since the sleeve is wide and the inside can be seen. Seams are seen since the sleeve is wide. Rows of pearls will be added on all the edges of the gold trim, and three rows around the neck in the future.



Figure 27. Red lining added to inner sleeve.

The Chlamys



The Chlamys

The chlamys is the outer most layer of clothing. It is an ankle length mantel of semicircular shape, fastened on the right shoulder with a fibula (pin). It is worn only by dignitaries; others wore the trapezoidal mantel called a paludamentum. The chamys could have a rectangular “tablia” on the front, which was a symbol of rank. The tablia could only be worn by men of the upper class or the empress (Maguire).

During this period the chlamys was very ornate. It had extensive gold embroidery and was covered with jewels and pearls. The fabric was usually exotic brocaded silk for the nobility and wealth. It could be decorated with a variety of motifs. When a chlamys is made of a solid color, it was lavishly decorated with pearls and gems.

Procedure:

The fabric was chosen because it met two requirements, it was of a fabric available during 6th century Byzantine, and it had a design consistent with their motifs – that of vines for biblical representation of Jesus’s parable of the vine.

It has a border of another vining pattern along the bottom, sides and neckline. This border was made of a synthetic fabric instead of the silk that would have been used (due to availability of a silk with an appropriate pattern and the high cost of silk). It is lined with contrasting red linen. Since it was a solid, the red side has a border of three rows of pearls and gold thread along the bottom and sides. This is a purchased trim that is hand sewn to the fabric. In period the pearls would have been hand sewn individually, (this was a trim I had on hand for several years and it seemed appropriate

to the project. I would have done the pearls by hand, but due to the deadline for this project I knew I could not do so. .

To cut the fabric, it was laid out on my kitchen floor, folded in half. A long ruler



Figure 28. Cutting the fabric

(actually two taped together to make it long enough) was used as a protractor to ensure a true semicircular shape. Figure 28. The red fabric was also cut the same way, and the two pieces were basted together at the neck, along the sides and in five vertical lines radiating from the neckline.

These were hung for 24 hours by the neck edge

to allow the fabrics to stretch from their weights. This was to keep them from shifting position when moved to a vertical position. The blue fabric was stay stitched at the bottom due to its loose weave. Figure 28.



Figure 29. Stitched near hem to keep from slipping



Figure30. Blue fabric stretched longer than the red in some area

As expected the more loosely woven and heavier blue fabric stretched more. Figure 30. Figure 31 While still hanging, the two pieces were basted together about two inches above the bottom edge to keep them in relative position when laid down. Figure 31.



Figure 31. Restitched at the bottom



Figure 32. Rehung

This excess blue fabric was then timed off making the two sides the same length. The bottom basting was removed and they were hung for another 24 hours. Figure 32. When no more stretching occurred, the two sides were sewn together along the bottom and side edges. This was machine done to ensure a strong seam, and due to time constraints. The chlamys was then turned so the right sides were on the outside.

The trim was first basted, and then hand sewn to the outer and inner sides. Figures 33 & 34.



Figure 34. Trim stitched to the outside



Figure 34. Trim stitched to the inside

Where the trim had to be joined every effort was made to match the pattern. Figure 35.



Figure 35. Trim matched at joints

Finally it was ironed to keep the seams in place.

To do this a long ruler was inserted between both pieces through the neck opening and used to push the bottom seam so it would crease at the sewing line, as this was done the seam was pressed into place with a steam iron. Figure 36 (In retrospect, this should have

been done before the trim was added, it would have

made it easier, as it was the seam had to be spread by hand as the trim was stitched down).



Figure 36. Ironed with the help of a ruler

The Maniakis



The Maniakis

The maniakis was a detachable collar. These were highly decorated with gold embroidery, jewels and pearls. They were derived from the Persian collars (Yarwood). All women could wear them, but the Empress only could wear a large and highly decorated one.

The Process

A collar shape was cut from both the gold linen and the gold imitation silk. A fusible interfacing was added to the back of the gold fabric due to its very thin nature. Figure 37. In Byzantium it would have been a heavier silk and no interfacing would have been needed. Gold linen was sewn to the collar at the top curve and next pearls and gyms added. Figure 38.



Figure 37. Fusible interfacing



Figure 38. Pearls added

The collar lining was folded over to cover the right side of the collar and the bottom curve and one end were sewn, then and the collar was turned right side out. The seams forced open with a small ruler (as for the chlamys). Then a row of pearls was added along both curved edges. Figure 39.

Finally a pearl was sewn to the back of the neck along with a tatted loop so the collar could be buttoned.



Figure 39. Collar turned and pearls added to curved



Figure 40. Button and loop

Buttons of many types (shank one hole, two hole and four hole were known). Although they were mostly used for decorative purposes there were sometimes used as clothing closures. (Davidson). Figure 41.



Figure 41. Byzantine buttons
from Davidson's book

The Headwear



The Headwear

There was a variety of headwear for women in 6th century Byzantine. Most woman of the common class wore a head scarf.

The *mophorion* was a scarf that covered the hair of the head and reached below the level of the shoulders. While it was often worn, it was not a requirement (The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium). The Empress is usually not shown wearing one.

The Nobility wore a *turban-like hat* with a close fitting cap under it that caught the hair at the back. It was not a turban of winding cloth, but rather a large roll – shaped like an inner tube, most often made of silk. It was covered in pearls, gold and jewel and colored glass (Wilcox). Hair was hidden under the cap and could not be seen. Commoners would wear just the cap, often with a rolled up brim to mimic the elite version (Johnston). For nobility, often a *stemma* was worn over it.

The *Stemma* was a crown. It could be a round metal crown that is often thought of as a crown, covered in jewels, but more often in the 6th century, it was a diadem worn over the turban style hat. Emperor Constantine I adopted the diadem from Alexander the Great. It was a leather strap and fringe on the sides. It tied in the back. Fashion (The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Clothing Through World History: Prehistory to 1500 CE) Emperor Justinian and Empress Theodora continued this style, adding elaborate jewels; the fringe was replaced with *prependoulia.*, *dangling strands of pearls and jewels* (Brown).

On the bust at Castello Sforzesco, and the mosaic of Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna, Italy, the head roll hat, cap and diadem can be clearly seen with its two rows of pearls and a central jewel. The jewel has three hanging bits. This is tied at the back of the head with a square knot (Munroe). Figures 42-44.

Figure 45. . In the Castellon Sforzesco



Figure 42. In the Castellon Sforzesco



Figure 43. In the Castellon Sforzesco

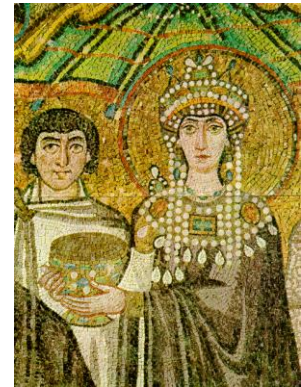


Figure 44. Mosaic in the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna, Italy

On the statue the prepeudoulia are missing, but the indentations of where they previous had been is clearly seen in figure 45.



Fig

For this project headwear such as that seen on the statue was made, consisting of four parts; a turban roll, a “heart shaped” hat, an under cap and a stemma.

Part 1

The cap

Not much information was found regarding caps, other than the brim was often rolled up, nor is it possible to clearly see what the caps might look like in the mosaics of the time. However, the statue seen in figures 42, 43 and 45, attributed to Empress Theodora, shows some kind of cap (under the roll) that catches the hair – it can be seen budging at the neck edge as if full of hair. This brought the St. Bridgett cap to mind. While there is no literature to support this style as used in Constantinople at the time, it makes sense that it might have been used (or something very similar, considering the far reaching trade of the Byzantines.

The Process

Using gold linen a St. Bridgett's cap was made, all hand stitched. The front portion of the cap was intentionally made a bit longer to allow it to be worn rolled up, if not worn with the head roll, or folded back when used with the roll

The cap was cut out of gold linen and the two pieces hand sewn together with the seams being turned under and stitched down. Figure 46. The base line of the cap was gathered with two rows of hand stitching pulled tight and the band sewn on – going around the top, sides and bottom gathered areas. Figures 47-48

Lastly extensions were added to the band to make the ties. This was done by sewing the extra length at a 45 degree angle. Figure 49. This angle means less bulk in

the seam, and a stronger joining because there is at least an inch of spiraling overlap at the joint, the arrows on figure 50 shoes this overlap area.



Figure 46



Figure 47



Figure 48



Figure 49

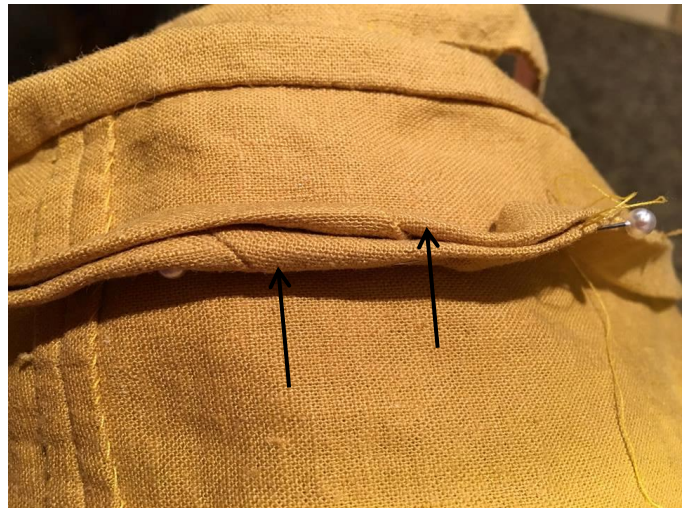


Figure 50



Figure 51



Figure 52

Figures 51 and 52 shows the finished cap, and how it mimics the statue of Empress Theodora when catching hair at the nape of the neck

Part 2

The hat

It was difficult to determine the shape of the hat. It can be seen in the mosaics, but is not well defined. Only after viewing the statue (figures 20 & 21) was the shape determined. No patterns or recreations of this item could be found in the literature. Many unsuccessful (8) attempts were made to copy the shape mostly using variations of the two patterns (figure 53 & 54) in an attempt to achieve the heart shape seen in the sculpture.

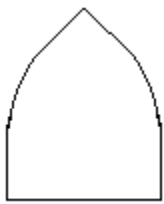
The Process

Figure 53

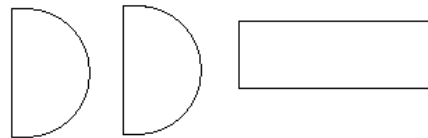


Figure 54

Reinspecting the bust finally brought some insight after recallin that the Byzantines would cover all seams with trim. Looking at the sculpture, it was noticed the pearls on the heart shap part of the hat might deliniate seams. A pattern was made of five pieces – each outlined by pearls on the sculpture, see figures 55 & 56.

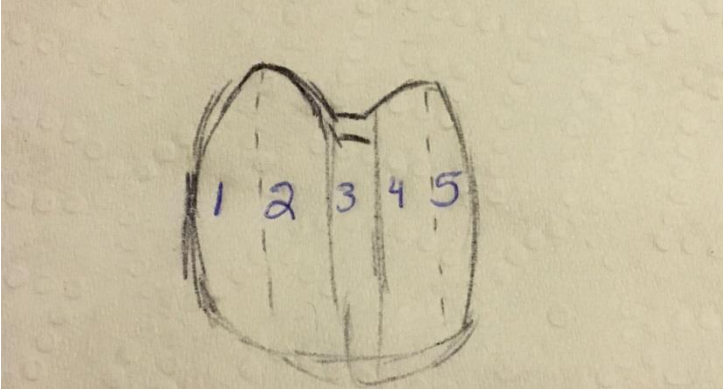


Figure 55

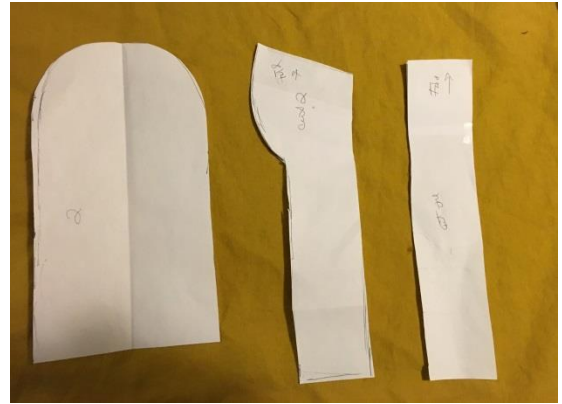


Figure 56

This pattern resulted in a good likeness of the hat. Figure 57. This was then made using a commercial fabric stiffener. While this is a modern material, a similar stiff fabric, such as cotton, canvas, or perhaps heavy felt would have been used. When sewing the parts together, the seams were overlapped rather than held face to face as is more common. This was done to give a “soft” effect to the seams rather than a sharp one. See figure 58.



Figure 57



Figure 58

This framework was then covered with red linen using the same pattern, figure 59. The ears were stuffed with quilt batting. In the 6th century it would have been held up with wires, or stuffed with straw or wool, since these were common stuffings for clothing and armour (Ffoulkes).



Figure 59

Next it was decorated with a rows of pearls at each of the seams, figure 60.



Figure 60



Figure 61

After trying it on, the correct height was determined. The red covering was folded back and the inner frame was trimmed to size. Figur 61. The red cover was then pulled to the inside and tacked to the framework

Next an inner lining “cap” was made, both to help keep the hat on the head securly (it can’t sliikde down too far) and to keep the stuffing in place. This cap was made like an old fashioned beanie, fig 62 & 63. The cap was not as good a fit as it could have been, but serves the purpose and the use of more fabric to redo it was decided against.



Figure 62



Figure 63



Figure 64

This cap was all hand sewn. The inner seams wre turnedunder and stitched in place, then it was sewnto the inside of the the hat. Fig 64.

Part 3

The Roll

The roll could be made in two ways, the first method was to make a long tube, stuff it from the ends and then sew the ends together. The second way was to make a roll by scrolling the fabric up from the long side. The first method was tried, but gave a very hard and lumpy roll. See figure 65. This was taken apart and the fabric reused to make one using the second method.



Figure 65 Lumpy roll with decorative bands pinned to it

The Process

A rectangular piece of the gold “silk” was cut, about 40 inches by 18 inches. It was lined with a piece of the gold linen for added strength. On top of this was laid some quilt batting. Most likely wool or straw would have been used, as mentioned in the hat construction part of this report. This was then rolled up like a “jelly-roll cake” into a tube that was stitched close along the long side with a whip stitch. Figure 65.



Figure 65 Lumpy roll with decorative bands pinned to it

The roll was set aside and 6 decorative bands were made. These were strips of the red linen cut about 10" long and 2 inches wide (after folding both long edges under by half 3/4 inch each. These had rows of pearls sewn to each long side, and gems and pearls sewn to the center. Figures 66 & 67



Figure 66



Figure 67

The long roll was then measured around the hat to determine the circumference needed. Using that measurement the roll was divided into 6 equal sections. The decorative bands were hand sewn onto these divider lines, figure 68. The seam marks for the red bands were matched with the seam marks of the long band so the place where the two ends of the roll were joined was under one of the red bands.



Figure 68

The jewels were not were centered opposite to the long seam, but so that the lower most gem was on the underside of the roll. This was done so they could be seen when the hat was worn pushed back on the head. Finally the two ends were sewn together by slightly inserting one end into the other, and stitching them together. Fig 69.

The roll can now be worn alone, with the cap only, or with the cap and hat.



Figure 69 Roll with hat

Part Four

The Stemma

A stemma was made based on the statue and mosaics of Empress Theodora. It was made out of imitation leather rather than real leather (The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Clothing Through World History: Prehistory to 1500 CE) as it would have been in her time. It ties in the back as did the ones worn by Empress Theodora and Emperor Justinine. The decorations were taken from the statue.

The Process

A strap measuring about 40 inches by 4 inches was cut from a piece of imitation leather. In order to get the length needed it was pieced at two points, and top stitched together. Figure 70.

Then the central gem, with three pendants was added, and the two rows of pearls. Figure 71.



Figure 70



Figure 71

It was difficult to get the pearl rows straight. In previous portions of this project the pearls were sewn onto the straight edge of pieces of fabric which served to give an even row of pearls. This time the pearls had no edge to go by. After a bit of trial and error, gravity was found to be the most useful tools for keeping the rows straight. The strap was hung over a pillow and allowed to dangle as the pearls were sewn down.

Figure 72.

Next the lower half of the leather was folded up to the back, and the two sides stitched together with a running top stitch. The ends (past the pears) were made very narrow to use as ties. Fig 73



Figure 72



Figure 73

Prependoulia; three hanging rows or pearls were hung on each side near the ear area. Figure 74.



Figure 74. Stemma with prependoulia

Other Bits and Pieces; Cuffs, fibula, belt, earrings, shoes, bracelet, ring

1. Removable cuffs

Jeweled and embroidered cuffs were often added to the sleeves (of the tunica) and would be seen under the dalmatic sleeve (Rautman) . They were detachable and could easily be changed from one garment to another. These could be very ornate and were often “Pearl decked” (Eastmond), see Figure 75. Cole says there was considerable variety in the cuffs added to the tunica, but they consisted mostly of wavy, leafy stems (Cole).

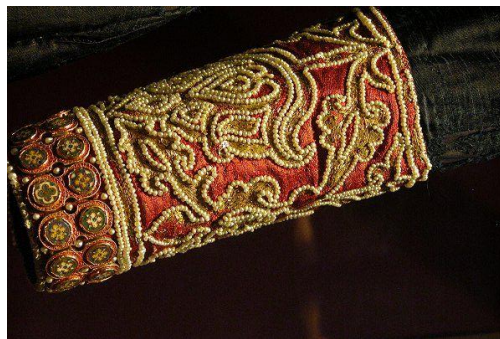


Figure 75.10th century, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Italy

Process

Cuff shapes were cut from the gold “silk”, they were made with a fold at the top of the cuff so each cuff was made of one piece of fabric. Fusible interfacing was added for strength and then a piece of glued reinforced canvas was used as a stiffener. Latex glue was used rather than the rabbit type glue of the middle ages. (Ball). Figure 76



Figure 76.

The canvas was hand stitched in place with a running stitch near the top edge and then pearls and jewels were sewn onto the cuff, with the pattern being reversed on the two cuffs – mirror images so there is a left and a right cuff.

The fabric was then folded along the top edge and the side seams hand sewn together. Finally row of pearls was added at the top edge and the bottom edge of each cuff. As the pearls were added to the bottom edge, that seam was sewn closed too.

Figure 77.

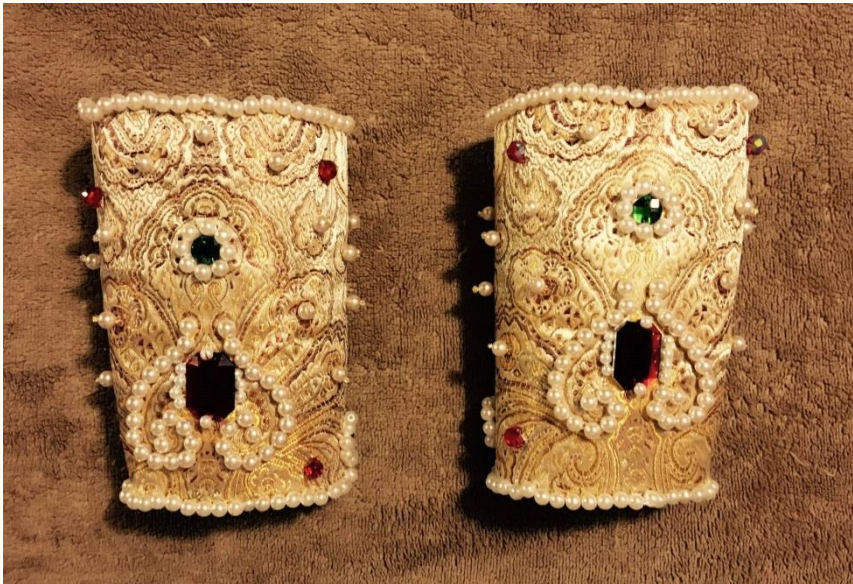


Figure 77. Finished cuffs

These cuffs are a bit more stiff than necessary; omitting the glue would probably have made a better pair.

2. Fibula

The fibula was a carry-over from Rome. It was both functional and a symbol of status. Lower class people had fibulae of brass while upper class had silver or gold, often encrusted with jewels. In Byzantium, the fibular was often bestowed upon lesser dignitaries by the emperor, as was the custom in Rome (Ball)

A fibula would have been used to hold the chlamys closed at the shoulder. After not finding one that had the look of a Byzantine fibula, one was made.

Process

A jeweled belt buckle was found (on Esty) that had the appearance of Byzantine jewelry, figure 78. The center bar was removed and a plug of wood inserted in the central opening, figure 79.



Figure 78. Jeweled belt buckle



Figure 79. Bar removed and plug added.

In the front of the buckle another jewel was glued into the now wooden center, It was a shade too small so a ring of pearls was added to hide that space, figure 80. From this plug three jewel pendants (actually pearls and colored glass, in the tradition of Byzantine costume jewelry) were hung, figure 81. A stickpin was glued to the back of the wooden plug.



Figure 80. Center jewel and pearls



Figure 81. Pearls a glass beads hung.

It resembles the fibula worn by Emperor Justinian in the mosaic at Ravenna, Italy, figure 82.

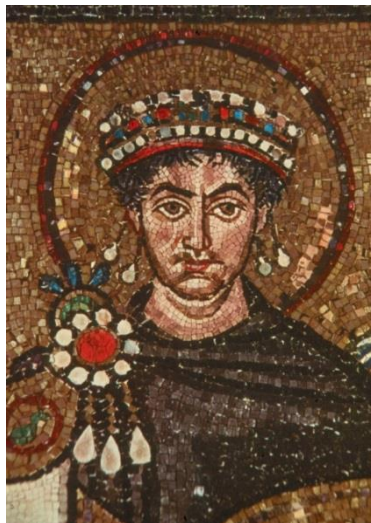


Figure 82. Emperor Justinian's fibula, Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna, Italy

3. Earrings

Earrings were worn extensively in 6th century Byzantine. Many examples exist in various museums. One such pair, at the Metropolitan Museum in New York is shown in figure 83. These 6th century earrings were made by a technique where the design is created by making openings in flat metal surfaces. This technique was one of the more innovative jewelry-making methods used in Early Byzantine styles, a process that peaked around 600 A.D.



Figure 83. Replica 6th century Byzantine earrings at the Metropolitan Museum



Figure 84. Personal collection, modern

Earrings for this outfit are from a personal collection, not antique, but of a very similar design are seen in figure 84.

4. Belt

The Dalmatic was often made long and belted at one of three levels, under the bust, at the waist, or over the hips, and the excess fabric hung over the belt. Often the belts were made of plaques of gold, chased and set with stones hinged together (Lester). One such example can be found at the Metropolitan Museum where it was reassembled from the original pieces, figure 85.



Figure 85. Girdle with Coins and Medallions, ca. 583, reassembled after discovery; Byzantine. Metropolitan Museum

A belt of similar hinged plaques was obtained and added to this outfit, figure 86.



Figure 86. Modern hinged plaque belt

5. Bracelet

Wide, cuff style bracelets were common in Byzantium. The gold and jeweled bracelets often were two halves joined by pins inside hinges. (Evans). Many can be found in museums, such as figure 87 at the Walters Museum.



Figure 87. Walters Museum, late second century

A hinged wide cuff bracelet was found that closely copies the Byzantine ones and is presented here for this project, figure 88.



Figure 88. Modern bracelet, similar to Byzantine style

6. Finger Ring

Sixth century carnelian rings have been found in Cyprus, Greece. Since Cyprus is the birth place of Empress Theodora, and part of the Empire at that time (Antoniadou), and considering the extensive trade system that existed then, it is easy to extrapolate that such rings made their way throughout the Byzantine Empire (Kunz). They could be simple stones, or carved with figures, see figures 89 & 90.

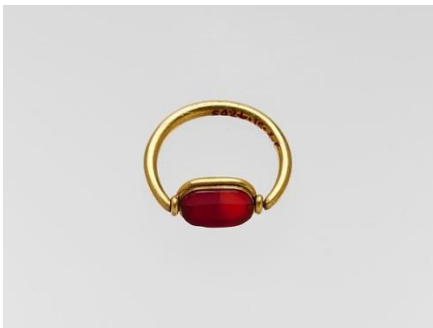


Figure 89. 5th century carnelian, Cyprus, Metropolitan Museum



Figure 90. A Byzantine gold ring with a red stone, ca. 5th-6th century A.D.

For this project a ring from a private collection is available, purchased at the Siege of Glengary, 2015, see figure 91.



Figure 91. Contemporary carnelian ring purchased at the Siege of Glengary, 2015.

7. Footwear

Footwear could be low boots, sandals (Roman style) or leather slippers. They were often highly decorated with embroidery, jewels or applique (Garland).

Interestingly, Byzantine shoes were did not have heels (Costume History/Byzantine), figures 92-93.



Figure 92. Byzantine 4th century, Egypt



Figure 93. Byzantine woman's burial shoes, Victoria and Albert Museum

While making Byzantine style shoes was not possible, a pair was located on internet at Jaypore The are an embroidered slipper with no heel.



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