

16th c. Ottoman Turkish Hat

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Türkisches Kostümbuch (Turkish Costume Book); Lambert de Vos - 1574

Historical Background

Affectionately known as “The Crab Hat”, this is an example of a hat worn in many miniatures from 16th c. Ottoman Turkey. This example is made of red wool, however other examples show different colors, prints, and fabrics used. These can be seen in white, green, yellow, black, red etc. Red seems to be the most commonly seen color however.

It is very likely that this hat indicated that the wearer had a certain profession, however we unfortunately do not have any records on what profession that may have been. We do know that the style of clothing, and especially the headwear, were typically tied to your rank and position in the Ottoman court. Men wearing this hat are commonly seen close to or behind the Sultan, so it is likely they were some sort of advisor or other attendant. They are also middle to upper class, as the clothing they wear tends to have multiple layers and beautiful fabrics beyond what a common person would wear.

Construction Notes

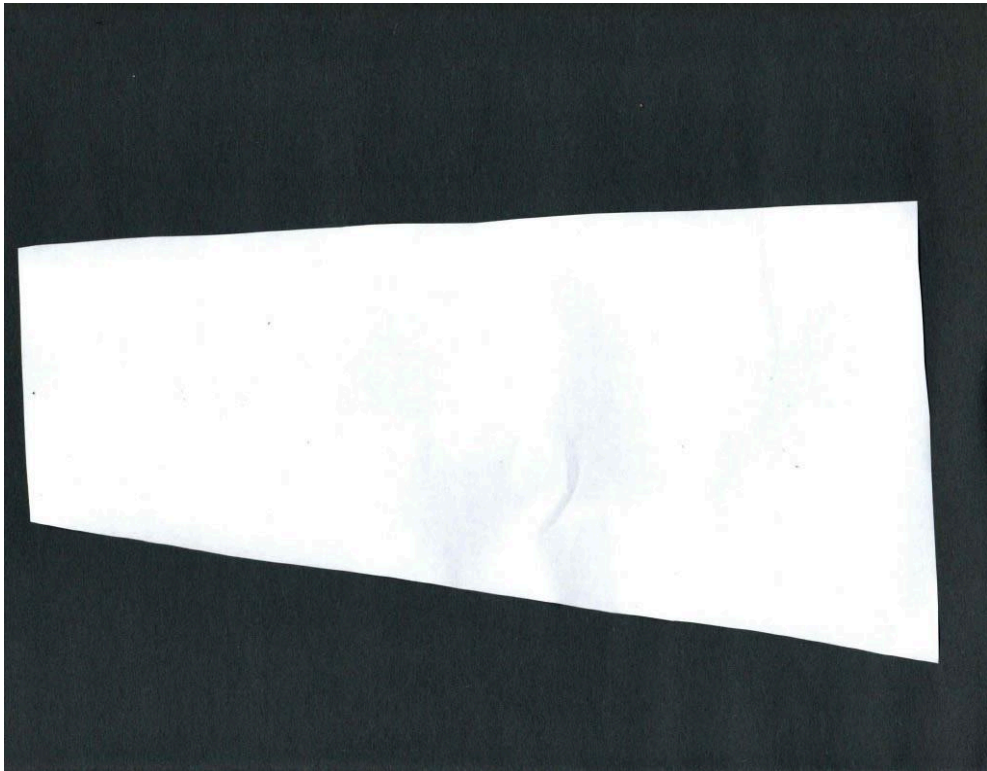
Creating the pattern for this hat came with a number of challenges. I used polyester polar fleece, which is a great analog to wool, to create several mock-ups to get the right fit and look for the hat. This also helped me determine the best way to attach the hat band and the body together.

There are three pattern pieces used for this. A band for the front and back of the hat, the body of the hat, and the circle at the top. I experimented with a couple of different shapes for the bag part of the hat, but finally settled on a slight cone pleated into a circle at the top. We do not have an extant example of this hat, so the patterning is all guesswork.

The band portion of the hat has a small point in the center front and four long “tails” that hang down. This part of the hat was very tricky to sew, and much of it is sewn by hand. It was particularly hard to turn the ends of the tails. Once the main sewing was completed, the inside looked unfinished, so I stitched a hat band inside to finish it, and provide a bit more stability to the band portion.



Band and circle pattern pieces



Main body/bag portion of the hat



Sultan Murad III (Detail) - 1582



Ottoman Sultan (Detail) - Late 16th c.



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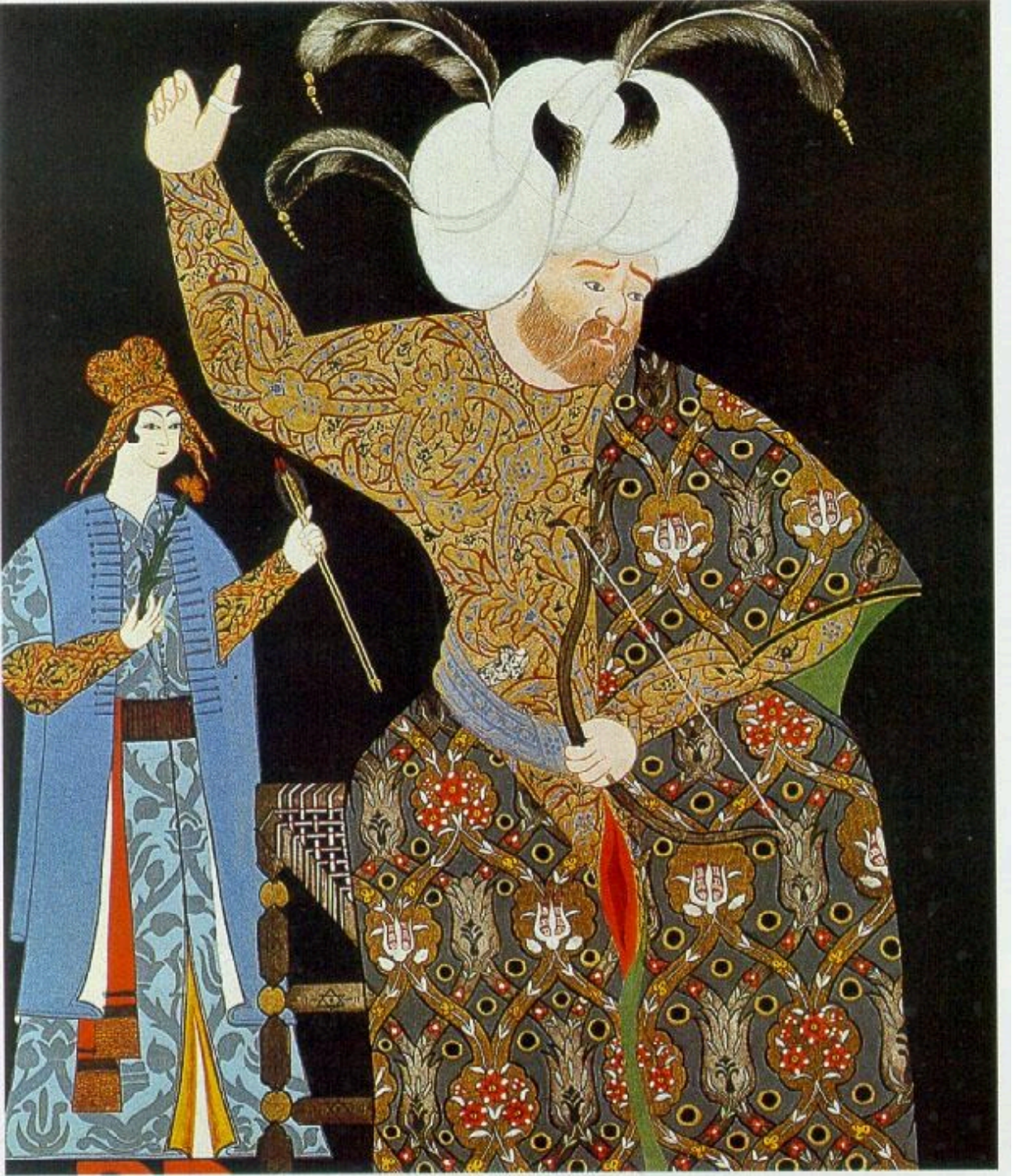
Heinrich Hendrowski (presumed illustrator); European - 1575-1599



Miniature of Selim II - 1570



Courtier and Attendants in a Landscape - 1585-1590



Miniature of Selim II - 1570