

Late period Ottoman headwear, consisting of a hat (kavuk) and turban.



Mehmet II
Gentile Bellini, c. 1480

The kavuk was a hat of felt or wool around which was wrapped a turban, or sarik. The kavuk hats came in many shapes, such as the kavuk selimi - a conical cap, flat on top, that could be up to 65 cm high [1].

Construction

My husband wanted a tall cap and large turban, in a late-period Ottoman style, but was concerned about the weight and structure of the piece. He wanted it as light as possible while still being formed enough to be comfortable.

Not having access to hat forms or materials to make a felt hat, I decided to go for a modern frame hat that would mimic the shape and style of the kavuk selimi. I first made a mock up of the hat out of poster board to check size and height. It is a conical hat with a flat top, angled slightly towards the back of the head.. He decided to go with a height just lower than the doorways in our house.



Tall Cap Mock-Up

Once I had a pattern, I made a hat form out of hat buckram (a glue-infused canvas), and then covered that in felt, and then again in cotton velveteen. I used hat wire along the brim to help the cap hold it's structure. The inside is lined in linen. I also added a hatband of felt because the finished hat was just a little too large.



Finished hat

Once the hat was completed , I started work in the turban. Historically, this would have been made from countless yards of cotton fabric [2]. Since this wearer

has not been accustomed to that amount of weight on his head, I looked for a lighter solution.



Suleiman the Magnificent, 1557 (engraving) by Lorck, Melchior (c.1526-88)

My turban is made from a doughnut shaped pillow, padded with polyester fibre-fill. Around this, strips of cotton have been wound to mimic the winding of a cloth turban. I then added feathers and a brooch to spruce things up.



Ottoman hat

The Final Verdict

It is incredibly hard to document a project after the fact.

My husband wanted a Ottoman hat - something flashy - to wear to Coronation. So with very little time to complete the project, I looked at some pictures and tried to make a hat as best I could with very little knowledge of Turkish hats, or of hat making in general. Bearing that in mind, I think it turned out nicely.

Were I to do it properly, I would have done more research into the pleated, conical hats that appear so commonly in the later period paintings. To internet has

proven less than useful in finding more information in what these hats exactly were, or how they were constructed - so I also learned that if my husband wants a more authentic hat, he should help with the research. Or at least, get me the books I'd need.

References

- [1] "Islam in India and Pakistan - Annemarie Schimmel - Google Books." *Google Books*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Mar. 2013.
<http://books.google.com/books?id=r5cfAAAAIAAJ&dq=Islam+in+India+and+Pakistan&source=gbs_navlinks_s>.
- [2] Quataert, Donald. *Consumption studies and the history of the Ottoman Empire, 1550-1922 an introduction*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000. Print.
- [3] era. "Ottoman clothing - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia." *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*. N.p., n.d. Web. 20 Mar. 2013.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman_clothing>.