

Introduction

This document provides an extremely brief overview of hats and headcoverings in Spain c. 1480-1530.

Historical Context: Time and Place

“Hispano-Flemish” is a term most properly applied to the style of art prevalent in Spain in the roughly fifty years overlapping the end of the 15th century and beginning of the 16th century. Another popular art history term is “Isabelline,” in reference to Isabella of Castile, although the time period in question stretches beyond her death and into the reigns of her daughter Juana (called “La Loca”) and grandson Carlos I (Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor). The time period, like the style, is heavily influenced by Spanish involvement in Flanders and the Low Countries.

Contents

Hats and Headcoverings for Everyone.....	2
Hatmaking and Hatmakers.....	2
Hats by Type and Gender.....	3
Terms and Descriptions	
Women’s Headwear.....	3
Men’s Headwear.....	4
Colors, Fabrics, and Embellishments.....	4
Bibliography.....	6
Images.....	attached

Hats and Headcoverings for Everyone

The final, critical piece of the stylish man's outfit was a hat of some sort. Very few men, and virtually no women, are represented in art without some sort of headcovering unless the lack of such a covering is intended to be symbolic; for example, saints, angel, and Mary Magdalene are usually represented *sans* headcovering as a reflection either of their other-worldliness or social disgrace.

Hats also played a significant role in rites of courtesy among men. The removal and flourishing of the hat was a way to honor ones betters or flatter those who were not equal in social stature. Indeed, hats could be seen as the very measure of respect for the social hierarchy, as evidenced by the following quote from Lazarillo de Tormes:

'...I vow to God that if I meet the Count [his neighbor] in a street and he does not take off his bonnet to me, quite off, then the next time I come, I will enter a house pretending to have business there, or cross into another street if there is one, before he gets near me rather than take off my bonnet to him' (Anderson 35).

Hatmaking and Hatmakers

Hats, especially men's hats, were heavily exported from Spain to places as far-flung as Belgium, England, and Santo Domingo (Anderson 35). That they are specifically mentioned in trade records and guild membership requirements indicates that they were probably a primary and well-known product, and that their names, unlike many other fashion history terms, may have been tied to those specific items. Sevillian trade ordinances concerning bonnet making note the steps over which potential bonnet-makers were to be examined in order to progress from apprentice to master. As Anderson notes, the makers were to be tested 'from the beginning with a needle, to the end' of six distinct types of caps (Anderson 39).

The requirements to become a master *bonetero* in Toledo provide evidence for the popularity of knitted hats. Such a person must:

'...know the different kinds of wool and... be able to separate the four parts of a fleece, to know carding combs and the carding process, spinning, the proper shapes of bonnets when they are knitted (enagujados), how to do fulling – cleaning, shrinking, and thickening wool – to block (amoldar) bonnets and make them even (aparejar), to dye in red and black...' (Anderson 39).

In addition, a candidate for inclusion in the Toledo *bonetero* guild was required to submit 'two perfect *gorras*, a blue and a white, and four *bonetes*, a blue, a white, a simple blue, and a simple white' (Anderson 35). The entire process of becoming a *bonetero* took at least eight years and the value of their products is readily discerned through the strict regulations surrounding the trade. All bonnets made by an individual must be marked with their own personal seal, as well

as with the device of the city in which the bonnet was made. Once produced and exported, a bonnet would undergo a rigorous system of inspection, approval, and labelling in order to be sold in any other city.

Hats by Type and Gender

Name	Short description	Gender
<i>Cofia</i>	<i>Camisa</i>	Female
<i>Cofia y tranzado</i>	<i>Saya, brial</i>	Female
“Flemish” hood	<i>Habito</i>	Female
Turban	<i>Gonete, cos, corpecico, saino/sayno/sayuelo</i>	Male or female
Veils	<i>Cofia, cofia y tranzado, “Flemish hood”, turbans, veils</i>	Female
<i>Gorra</i>		Male*
<i>Media gorra</i>		Male*
<i>Bonete</i>		Male

*There are at least two images depicting women wearing a *gorra* or *media gorra*; however, both depict allegorical women.

Terms and Descriptions

Women’s Headwear

- ***Cofia* (“cap”)**
 - Nearly always white
 - Fine linen or silk
 - Two unusual images – *cofia* of net or sheer fabric
- ***Cofia y tranzado* (“cap and braid”)**
 - *Cofia* with braid case
 - Case may be attached separately or all one piece
 - Usually wrapped with cord, braid, bands
- **“Flemish” hood**
 - Primarily worn by Juana of Castile & her court
 - Very short-lived
 - Probably influenced by Flemish fashions
 - Usually shown in black, red, or green lined with pumpkin yellow, blue, or gold
 - May be velvet or wool lined with silk or satin
 - Trims included gold embroidery, gold fabric bands, “fringes of tiny balls”

- **Turbans**
 - Cloth wrapped around itself or padded roll
 - One example is a soft bag, type thing
 - May be leftover Moorish fashion
 - Often shown over loose hair

- **Veils**
 - Not popular on younger women
 - Mostly appear on older women (Isabella of Castile) or saints
 - Sheer or opaque

Men's Headwear

- **Media gorra**
 - "Half cap"
 - Tall crown
 - Partial brim/flap

- **Gorra**
 - "cap"
 - Tall crown
 - Full brim
 - Brim often divided into sections – slitted, crenellated, upturned

- **Bonete**
 - Softer shape
 - Shaped crown
 - Wide brim
 - May have chin strap or cord

Colors, Fabrics, and Embellishments

- Colors: **crimson, black**, tawny, mulberry, green, white, rose, yellow, blue, dark brown
- Fabrics
 - Silks – satin, *cebti*
 - Velvets
 - Fine wools
 - Brocades – silk, cloth of silver/gold, drawn wire
- Linings – velvet, lambswool, ermine, fine wools, sable, marten, cat (not domestic), linen (for items closer to the body)
- Embellishments
 - Trims – metal cording, metal netting

- Embroidery – fantasy beasts, flowers, fruits, vines, heraldic animals, personal mottoes
- Hammered metal pieces – letters, animals, heraldic beasts, pomegranates, wheat sheaves, chain links, door knockers, human figures

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