

Easy, Breezy, Beautiful: Tang Ladies Fashion for your Summer SCA Needs

The Honorable Lady Ouyang Yingzhao • For the Known World Costume and Fiber Arts Symposium 2019



Tang Dynasty China (7th – 8th Century) fashion for court ladies featured flowing skirts and sleeves made of lightweight fabric. It's a style that flatters a variety of body types and is incredibly comfortable. This class will go over the basic wardrobe pieces, including cutting layouts, construction, and fabric options, as well as accessories to complete the look.

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OVERVIEW

Introduction

This handout was written to accompany my class at Known World Costuming and Fiber Arts Symposium in June 2019. The class, “Easy, Breezy, Beautiful - Tang Ladies Fashion for Your Summer Needs,” is focused on giving someone enough information to create a Tang Dynasty women’s outfit appropriate for summer, with respect to the culture and history of the Tang Dynasty. When one is recreating and wearing the historic clothing of a culture one does not have personal ties to, as we often do in the SCA, respect and understanding are vital. It is my hope that there is enough information here to spark some interest in this fascinating period of Chinese history as well as get someone started with some easy summer clothing that doesn’t sacrifice glamour.

There are some topics that, due to the scope of this class, I will only briefly touch on. These include the history of textile technology, textile decoration, women wearing men’s clothing, accessories, and cosmetology.

I am indebted to Þórfinnr Hróðgeirsson (Alec Story), Stella Di Silvestri (Tami King), and Minamoto no Hideaki (Taylor Chen) for their help translating various Chinese and Korean-language sources to clarify, supplement, or bring into question my English-language findings. When possible, I have included the Chinese (and in some cases, Korean) characters for names and other terms.

The Tang Dynasty — A Brief History

The Tang Dynasty (唐朝, tǎng) lasted from 618 to 907 CE and is widely considered the “golden age” of imperial China.¹ China today covers 9.596 million square miles and a variety of climates.² Summer temperatures ranged from 115 degrees³ in Turpan, east of the Taklamakan Desert, 77 degrees on the Tibetan plateaus, 98 degrees in the southeast, and 95 degrees in the northeast and southwest.⁴ The People’s Republic of China currently recognizes 56 different ethnic groups.⁵ The majority ethnic group is the Han Chinese (91.10% in 2010)⁶ — a dominance that has been true throughout Chinese history so much that written accounts can really be read as a history of this ethnic group.⁷ The clothing and associated culture discussed here are those of the Han Chinese during the Tang Dynasty, but China has never been a monolith in terms of culture.

During the Tang Dynasty, the Han majority’s tolerance for foreign influence created a cosmopolitan culture which included a stream of Chinese and Indian Buddhist monks, Turks from the northern steppes and central Asia, Koreans, Japanese, Arabs, Persians, Malaysians, and other Southeast Asian cultures.⁸ Buddhism grew in popularity during the Tang Dynasty, but foreign exchange and influence brought small pockets of Nestorian Christianity, Zoroastrianism, and Judaism.⁹

The Sui Dynasty (581– 618 CE) unified China,

Tang Dynasty China had cultural contact with Europe — via the Roman/Byzantine Empire. There are written as well as archaeological sources that show that China had contact with the Roman Empire from as early as the third century C.E.¹⁰

1 Lewis, M. E. (2012). *China’s cosmopolitan empire: The Tang Dynasty* [Kindle edition]. Harvard University Press.

2 Central Intelligence Agency. (4 Jun 2019). “The World Factbook: China.” *Central Intelligence Agency: Library*. Retrieved from: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ch.html>

3 Fahrenheit.

4 British Museum. (2007). “Geography: Climate.” [Teachersheet]. *Ancient Civilizations: China - Staff Room*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ancientchina.co.uk/staff/resources/background/bg9/home.html>

5 胡鸿保, & 张丽梅 [Hu, H. and Zhang, L.]. (2009). 民族识别原则的变化与民族人口. [Changes in the principle of national identity and ethnic population.] *Journal of Southwest University for Nationalities*, 212(4). Retrieved from: <http://www.sociology2010.cass.cn/webpic/web/sociology/upload/2010/11/d20101122134817793.pdf>

6 “Han Chinese proportion in China’s population drops: census data.” (24 Apr 2011). *Xinhua News (English)*. Archived at: https://web.archive.org/web/20160711022113/http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/china/2011-04/28/c_13849933.htm

7 Roberts, J.A.G. (2001). *A History of China*. Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan. p. 5.

8 Benn, C. (2002). *China’s golden age: Everyday life in the Tang dynasty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 40-42.

9 Fultz, R. C. (1999). *Religions of the Silk Road: Overland trade and cultural exchange from antiquity to the fifteenth century*. New York: St. Martin’s Press. p. 6.

10 Li, Q. (2018). The image of Romans in the eyes of Ancient Chinese: Based on the Chinese sources from the Third C. CE to the Seventh C. CE. V. D. Miha-jlović & M. A. Janković (Eds.), *In Reflections of Roman Imperialism* (pp. 346-369). Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. p. 349

Timeline of Chinese Dynasties, with Reigns of Tang Emperors

Neolithic period (Xia Dynasty)	C. 7000 – c. 1600 BCE
Shang Dynasty	(C. 2100 – c. 1600 BCE)
Western Zhou	C. 1600 – 1027 BCE
Eastern Zhou (includes the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods)	1027 – 771 BCE
Qin Dynasty	770 – 256 BCE
Western Han	221 – 206 BCE
Xin Dynasty	206 BCE – 8 CE
Eastern Han	9 – 23
Three Kingdoms Period	25 – 220
Western Jin	220 – 280
Eastern Jin	265 – 316
Northern Dynasties	317 – 420
Southern Dynasties	386 – 580
Sui Dynasty	420 – 589
Tang Dynasty	581 – 618
Emperor Gaozu	618 – 907
Emperor Taizong	618 – 626
Emperor Gaozong	626 – 649
Emperor Zhongzong	649 – 683
Emperor Ruizong	684
	684 – 690

Zhou Dynasty (Empress Wu)	690 – 705
Emperor Zhongzong	705 – 710
Emperor Shaodi	710
Emperor Ruizong	710 – 712
Emperor Xuanzong	712 – 756
Emperor Suzong	756 – 762
Emperor Daizong	762 – 779
Emperor Dezong	779 – 805
Emperor Shunzong	805
Emperor Xianzong	805 – 820
Emperor Muzong	820 – 824
Emperor Jingzong	824 – 827
Emperor Wenzong	827 – 840
Emperor Wuzong	840 – 846
Emperor Xuanzong	846 – 859
Emperor Yizong	859 – 873
Emperor Xizong	873 – 888
Emperor Zhaozong	888 – 904
Emperor Aidi	904 – 907
Five Dynasties Period	907 – 960
Liao Dynasty	907 – 1125
Northern Song Dynasty	960 – 1127
Southern Song Dynasty	1127 – 1279
Jin Dynasty	1115 – 1234
Yuan Dynasty	1279 – 1368
Ming Dynasty	1368 – 1644

18, 19

but the second and last ruler, Emperor Yang, waged three different campaigns against northern Korea that devastated China's resources and population.¹¹ In response, Li Yuan, the Duke of Tang, rebelled and seized the western capital in 618, declaring his sovereignty as Gaozu, the first emperor of the Tang Dynasty, and spending the next six years fighting rivals and Sui-supporters.¹² Once again unified, China faced a threat from the eastern Turks, which lasted another 6 years, but after that came over 50 years of peace, prosperity, and expansion, thanks to the financial reforms that Emperor Gaozu put in place.¹³ There was a brief interruption of the dynasty when Wu Zeitan seized power from her son and became China's first and only empress ruling in her own right, founding a second Zhou Dynasty from 683 to 690. Even after she was deposed and the

Tang Dynasty restored, further corruption plagued the imperial court until it was finally snuffed out with the ascendancy of Emperor Xuanzong in 712. Emperor Xuanzong introduced austerity measures in response to the corruption that preceded him, and his 44 year-long reign is considered a golden age — with peace, stability, growth in the arts, and benevolence.¹⁴ The An Lushan rebellion (755-763) devastated the empire financially, socially, and left it defenseless at its borders.¹⁵ The rest of the dynasty was plagued with in-fighting and wars with the autonomous provinces, with a 40 year-long period of relative peace following the death of Emperor Xianzong.¹⁶ Then, more economic instability led to more rebellions, and the fall of the Tang Dynasty in 907.¹⁷

11 Benn, C. (2002). p. 1.

12 *Ibid.*

13 *Ibid.*, p. 2-3.

14 *Ibid.*, p. 6-7.

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 9-15.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 16.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 18.

18 *Ibid.*, pp. xxi - xxii.

19 Hanyu, G. (1992). *Chinese textile designs*. (R. Scott & S. Whitfield, Trans.). London: Viking. p. 7.

Sumptuary Laws

On the night of the Lantern Festival in 839, Emperor Wenzong punished Princess Yanan (延安公主), wife of Dou Huan (竇浣), for wearing sleeves wider than 50 centimeters (about 19 ½ inches) and a skirt that longer than 2.65 meters (about 8 ½ feet). Yanan was sent home, and her husband forfeited two months salary.²⁰ Throughout the Tang Dynasty, sumptuary laws were continually enacted in an effort to keep clothing and adornment as a codifier of status, and later to address economic excess and waste.²¹

Sumptuary laws were more extensive for men than they were for women, who were expected to follow the rules that applied to their husband's rank in the nine-grades system in terms of color and fabrics.²² These rankings and their designated dress for various occasions are defined in the "Treatise of Carriages and Dress" which is part of both the New and Old Book of Tang, which are annals of Tang emperors.²³ When women, who were outside of the political structure, violated these laws and were used as examples in these annals, they did so by wearing elaborately dyed, embroidered, or otherwise decorated fabrics.²⁴ But these violations and punishments only elevated a woman's prestige rather than damage her social status.²⁵ The trappings of status were available to anyone who had the means to purchase them.²⁶ To combat this, the state began to regulate the production of luxury goods as a side-road to sumptuary laws.²⁷ At other points during the Tang Dynasty, increases in sumptuary laws were tied to times of economic uncertainty or military action.²⁸ I will include sumptuary laws relevant to the various garments as they are discussed. It should be noted that the same sumptuary laws that lost Princess Yanan's husband two month's salary were not widely enforced due

to outcry — and later, in 839, Emperor Wenzong approved new limits to the lengths of widths of women's clothing, but there is no evidence that these new laws were ever enforced.²⁹

As we seek to recreate the clothing of nobles and other aristocrats, we should be mindful of the laws these garments were subject to - even if they were flouted in favor of shows of extravagant wealth and the new social order. Women could, without censure, wear the colors and fabrics affording to those below her own station, but could not reach above. They more often dressed to their own "likes and tastes", and their imitation of one another within the court (as it is with fashion) spread outside the court to commoners.³⁰ Since SCA Kingdoms may have sumptuary laws based on rank, then, it may be appropriate for us to explore analogues within Tang Dynasty sumptuary laws. There is a big difference between wearing sleeves that are a bit too wide or a skirt that is a bit too long or full versus wearing hair ornaments that are more befitting an Empress than a lesser noble.

Fibers and Fabrics

Given the thousands of years of development in textile technology leading up to the Tang Dynasty, a full discussion of the types of fibers and fabrics available warrants specific attention that is outside the scope of this class.

There were seven principle types of woven silk in the Tang Dynasty: *sha* (纱, tabby woven gauzes) (Figure 1), *hu* (縠, tabby woven crepes), *luo* (罗, lenos), *qi* (葛, patterned tabby), and *ling* (綾, twill) all woven in single colors; and *jin* (锦, brocades and damasks) (Figure 2), *kesi* (缙丝, tapestry weaves), and *rong* (绒, pile or velvets) which were multicolored.^{31,32} There are also a number of Tang Dynasty *juan* (绢, tabby woven) silk fragments with various

20 Chen, B. (2013). *Dressing for the times: Fashion in Tang Dynasty China* (618-907). (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Academic Commons. (doi: 10.7916/D8KK9B6D). p. 12.

21 *Ibid*, p. 168-169.

22 *Ibid*, p. 173.

23 *Ibid*, p. 173.

24 *Ibid*, pp. 173-174.

25 *Ibid*, pp. 176.

26 *Ibid*.

27 *Ibid*, p. 180.

28 *Ibid*.

29 *Ibid*, p. 207.

30 *Ibid*, p. 173.

31 Vainker, S. (2004). *Chinese silk: a cultural history*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press. p. 85.

32 Hanyu, G. (1992). p. 15-20.

applications and printed and dyed designs.³³

While silk was the dominant fiber for textiles, hemp, ramie, and other bast fibers were also available during the Tang Dynasty,³⁴ so linen is a fine substitute for hot weather clothing.

Colors and Patterning

In an effort to better distinguish rank with dress during the Tang Dynasty,³⁷ the color yellow — specifically that derived from cape jasmine/gardenia³⁸ — was reserved for the imperial family. This restriction continued in subsequent dynasties.³⁹ Women had a broad range of colors to choose from without risking censure and punishment with imperial yellow — including other yellows, reds, oranges, blues, greens, and purples,⁴⁰ though as previously noted, they were supposed to be subjected to the same color-coded rank system as their husbands.

Tang Dynasty textile treatments included embroidery (chain stitch, satin-stitch, qiang-stitch, souhe-stitch, zha-stitch, chan-stitch, applique, and couching) (Figure 4),⁴¹ knotted and stitch-resist dyeing (similar to modern tie-dyeing and Japanese shibori methods) (Figure 3),⁴² clamp-resist dyeing,⁴³ block printing,⁴⁴ wax and alkaline resist dyeing (Figure 1),^{45,46} printing or applying gold leaf.⁴⁷ Many of these types of treatments are evident in fabrics used for clothing when comparing extant textile fragments to period depictions of women.



FIGURE 1: Detail of *sha* gauze fabric with persimmon blossom pattern achieved using alkali resist dyeing technique.³⁵



FIGURE 2: Detail of polychrome *jin* silk (Tang Dynasty), from tomb 151 in the Astana Cemetery.³⁶

33 *Ibid*, p. 215.

34 Benn, C. (2002). p. 98-99.

35 Zhao, F. (2012). Silks in the Sui, Tang, and Five Dynasties. In D. Kuhn, (Ed.), *Chinese Silks* (pp. 203-257). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. p. 245

36 *Ibid*, p. 212.

37 Xie, H. & Yan, L. (2019). To explore the changes in dress system affected by imperial politics thinking during Sui and Tang Dynasties. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 281. Atlantis Press. (doi:sschd-18.2019.5). p. 29. Retrieved from: <https://www.atlantis-press.com/proceedings/sschd-18/55912237>

38 Cardon, D. (2007). *Natural dyes: sources, tradition, technology and science*. London: Archetype. p. 309.

39 Xie, H. & Yan, L. (2019). p. 29.

40 Vainker, S. (2004). p. 84.

41 Hanyu, G. (1992). pp. 28-33.

42 *Ibid*, p. 27.

43 *Ibid*, p. 26.

44 *Ibid*, p. 25.

45 *Ibid*, p. 26.

46 *Ash-resist dyeing on green tabby ground*. [Textile fragment]. China National Silk Museum, Hangzhou. Retrieved from: <http://www.wys.com.cn/silk-book/html/contents/chapter/chapter4.htm>

47 Hanyu, G. (1992). pp. 27-28.

48 Zhao, F. (2012). p. 240

49 Zhao, F. (2012). p. 250.

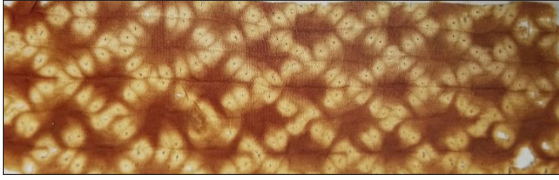


FIGURE 3: Detail of stitch-resist dyed *juan* silk (683), from tomb 117 in the Astana Cemetery.⁴⁸



FIGURE 4: Detail of *qi* silk with 186 ducks in 8 rows, embroidered using split stitch (Tang Dynasty).⁴⁹

General Construction Notes

Fabric Width

Prior to the standardization of textile measures, the dimensions of cloth were based on the width of the loom used and the length it was able to produce.⁵⁰ Some standards existed for cloth that was used for either money or ritual purposes, but these still varied. Real standardization of textile measures came in the Sui (581 – 618 C.E.) and Tang dynasties when the government began collecting taxes in textiles.^{51,52}

Unlike modern textiles, which vary in width but generally range from 45 to 108 inches wide, looms in Middle Imperial China (755 – 1368) were considerably narrower, affecting the way a garment was laid out for cutting and how it was seamed together. Dorothy Burnham lists loom widths from the Han (206 B.C.E. – 220 C.E.) and Tang Dynasties — approximately 50 centimeters (20 inches) and 60

centimeters (24 in) respectively.⁵³ 24 inches wide is not enough to go around the body completely, so the garment must have a seam in the center — the seam in the center back is described in the Book of Rites regarding the proper construction of the *shenyi* (深衣),⁵⁴ and can be seen in other extant garments. An average both of cloth in the Song Dynasty was between 2.135 to 2.0 by 43.75 to 48 *chi* (尺), which, when converted to metric/imperial units, is an average of 13.7 meters by 60 centimeters (15 yd by 24 in).⁵⁵

Seams and Finishes

Because of the rarity of extant garments from the Tang Dynasty, we look to garments from preceding and succeeding dynasties, as well as from cultures influenced by the clothing of the Tang Dynasty, to extrapolate information about seams and finishing techniques. Scholarly efforts tend to pay much more attention to the stitch techniques related to embroidery than to garment construction, so trends in seam finishing techniques are even more difficult to ascertain with any sense of surety.

An analogous source of some importance is *Chimseon: Korean Traditional Sewing (C:KTS)*⁵⁶ which describes the sewing methods for traditional Korean garments, (which were influenced by the Tang and succeeding Chinese dynasties).⁵⁷ It should be noted that this source does not cite any extant garments to support the use of these methods, but that does not necessarily mean they are incorrect. *C:KTS* lists two different types of stitches for joining fabric together, running stitches and backstitches, and two different types of backstitches, backstitch and half-backstitch. The width of backstitches, also called *ondangchim* or *on-bageumjil* (온당침 or 온박음질), is the same as a whole single stitch and looks like a running stitch from the front. Half backstitches, *ban-bageumjil* or *bandangchim* (반박음질 or 반땀침), are made so that the width of the backward stitch is half the size of the whole. From the front, it looks like backstitch as opposed to a running or machine stitch. In terms of strength, backstitch is the strongest, then half backstitch, and running stitch (홈질, *homjil*) is the weakest.

50 Wilkinson, E. (Ed.). (2018). *Chinese history: A new manual* (5th ed.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard-Yenching Institute. p.189

51 *Ibid.*

52 Benn, C. (2002). p.14

53 Burnham, D. K. (1997). *Cut my cote*. Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum. p. 29

54 Confucius. (475 B.C.E. - 221 B.C.E./2018). 深衣 - Shen Yi. (J. Legge, Trans.). *Chinese Text Project*. Retrieved from: <https://ctext.org/liji/shen-yi>

55 Wilkinson, E. (Ed.). (2018). p. 190.

56 Yong-i Y., Yeo-Kyung K., Su-jin S. (2016). Seoul: Korea Craft and Design Foundation.

57 *Ibid*, p. 21.

This does not take into account the various types of basting stitches (시침질, *sichimjil*), which are intended to be removed once a garment is more permanently stitched together.⁵⁸

Looking at extant examples of clothing contemporary to Tang, it appears that most garments were lined. The seams of lined garments are protected by the lining fabric, and as a result, may not have been finished in another way. There are some garments that are classified as unlined, which would have required a seam finishing technique for stability.

Zhao Feng, a curator and researcher at the China National Silk Museum, has written a remarkable volume regarding the textiles and clothing of the Liao Dynasty titled *Liao Textile and Costumes*, in which he discusses the methods of construction and the influence of the Tang Dynasty on Liao garment and textile design.⁵⁹ Liao Dynasty clothing that was unlined was stitched together, usually with Z-twisted silk filament plied with an S-twist using running stitches with a 0.7 centimeter seam allowance,⁶⁰ and the edges were rolled and hemmed.⁶¹ These “edges” are most likely the ends of cuffs and the hems of garments. Zhao notes that, when necessary, “another thread would be stitched 1-2 [centimeters] from the seam.”⁶² It is unclear if this means that the seam allowance was stitched to the garment (as in a clean finish) or if it was a simpler check against the possibility of fraying. Lined garments were assembled either by stitching the shell and lining pieces separately and then stitching them together or by flatlining — where the lining and shell fabric are stitched together and treated as one piece for assembly.⁶³ While the first method is more common in extant garments, a gauze robe from the Liao Dynasty is flatlined.⁶⁴

C.KTS lists five different types of seams, according to how they have been finished: *gareumsol* (가름솔), *hotsol* (홀솔), *tongsol* (통솔), *ssamsol* (쌈솔),

and *gobsol* (곱솔).⁶⁵ *Gareumsol* seams are pressed-open flat seams, primarily used for thicker fabrics or armholes. *Hotsol* seams, which are used for bodice and shoulder seams, are not divided, and are pressed to one side so that the fold is about 0.1-0.2 centimeters away from the stitching.⁶⁶ *Tongsol* seams are French Seams used for curves on single-layered garments, and are stitched 0.6-0.7 centimeters away from the seam line before turned and stitched again to encase the seam.⁶⁷ *Ssamsol* seams are flat-felled seams and are used for single-layered undergarments and patchwork.⁶⁸ Lastly, the *gobsol* method for sheer or delicate fabrics consists of folding the seam allowance just above the first line of stitches (0.2 centimeters), trimming the excess seam allowance away, then folding and pressing the seam once again and a final line of stitching stitched between them before being opened up and pressed from the right side.⁶⁹

The book 時代衣裳の縫い方: 復元品を中心とした日本伝統衣服の構成技法 [*Jidai ishō no nuikata: fukugenhin o chūshin to shita Nihon dentō ifuku no kōsei gihō*, *How to sew traditional costumes-techniques for constructing traditional Japanese clothing*], has construction information related to clothing in the Shōsōin Repository.⁷⁰ This title is in Japanese, and I am currently working to get the relevant pages and diagrams translated to see what can be gleaned from 8th century Japanese garment construction that might be applicable to Chinese garments of the same style.

Closures

The majority of Tang Dynasty women’s clothing was secured on the body by means of ties. To make these ties, sew tubes of fabric and turn them. Alternatively, fold strips of fabric in half, turn under the edges, and sew them shut. Press the ties flat before attaching to garments.

58 *Ibid*, pp. 52-53.

59 (2004). Hong Kong: Muwen Tang Fine Arts Publication Ltd.

60 Zhao, F. (2004). p. 203.

61 *Ibid*, p. 202.

62 *Ibid*, p. 203.

63 *Ibid*, p. 202.

64 *Ibid*.

65 Yong-i Y., Yeo-Kyung K., Su-jin S. (2016). pp. 58-60.

66 *Ibid*, p. 58.

67 *Ibid*, p. 59.

68 *Ibid*.

69 *Ibid*, p. 60.

70 Kurihara, H. & Kawamura, M. (1984). 時代衣裳の縫い方: 復元品を中心とした日本伝統衣服の構成技法 [*Jidai ishō no nuikata: fukugenhin o chūshin to shita Nihon dentō ifuku no kōsei gihō*] Tokyo: Genryūsha.

WARDROBE

Undergarments

The elusive *Hezi* (诃子, hū-tzū) — upper undergarment

Of all the elements of clothing and adornment in the Tang Dynasty that defy investigation, the *hezi* might be the most slippery. To the best of my knowledge, no extant pieces exist. The only recourse is to make some estimations based on the underwear that preceded and followed the Tang Dynasty.

Throughout Chinese history, undergarments had a variety of different names but were generally all very similar in style, consisting of a piece of fabric worn in the front, the majority of which left the back uncovered.⁷¹

The best sources I have been able to locate that describe female undergarments in ancient and Imperial China are *Fantasy Beyond Body: The Civilization of Chinese Underwear in Ancient Times*, by Pan Jianhua zhu, (FBB)⁷² and Fulbright Scholarship recipient Jamie Johns's notes related to her research on the history of breast-binding in China on her unofficial blog, *We Drive East*.⁷³

FBB describes the Tang Dynasty undergarment as a strapless tube top, but depicts what appears to be some sort of tie or belt below the waistline of the garment. This would imply the garment is fastened in some way as opposed to slipped into like a modern tube top⁷⁴. China Daily, an English-language newspaper published in China, has a very cursory overview of the history of undergarments in China that lacks any scholarly sources — it states that the *hezi* was fastened with buttons, similar to the 合欢襟 (*hehuanjin*, Yuan Dynasty).⁷⁵

FBB also claims that a painting of ladies at a palace banquet depicts a variety of undergarment that is similar to the *hezi* but has a halter strap that connects to the band in the front (Figure 5).⁷⁶



FIGURE 5: Detail from 唐人宮樂圖 (*A Palace Concert*), unknown artist, Tang Dynasty.⁷⁷



FIGURE 6: Detail from 唐人宮樂圖 (*A Palace Concert*), unknown artist, Tang Dynasty.⁷⁸

71 Shaorong, Y. (2004). *Traditional Chinese clothing: Costumes, adornments and culture*. San Francisco: Long River Press. p.45

72 潘建华著. [Pan, J.] (2005). 云缕心衣: 中国古代内衣文化. 上海: 上海古籍出版社. [*Fantasy beyond body: the civilization of Chinese underwear in ancient times*.] Shanghai: Shanghai Ancient Books Publishing House.

73 Johns, J. (2010 Oct - 2010 Dec). *We drive east*. Wordpress. Retrieved from: <https://wedriveeast.wordpress.com/>

74 Pan, J. (2005). p. 15

75 China Daily. (29 May 2007). "Secrets of Women's Underwear." *E-ZINE, Editor's Picks: China Daily*. Retrieved from: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/ezone/2007-05/29/content_882585_3.htm

76 Pan, J. (2005). p. 16

77 "唐人宮樂圖 [A Palace Concert]." (618-907). National Palace Museum. Retrieved from <https://theme.npm.edu.tw/selection/Article.aspx?sNo=04000957&lang=2>.

78 *Ibid.*

It is difficult for me to determine if this is an underwear strap or simply a contrasting collar of the lady in Figure 5's shirt, given that her sleeves are also red. There is only one other woman in this painting with a similar strap (Figure 6), but the ends of her sleeves are red as well.

J. Johns discusses Tang Dynasty undergarments twice — once when looking at the history of Chinese undergarments, and once when looking at some criticism of “the little shirt” that seeks to trace the history of breast-binding undergarments. Johns

I have a few experimental hezi in progress, but nothing that I feel comfortable wear-testing at an event yet. To create the right foundation without a hezi, a camisole with an elastic shelf to give you some support works fine. If you're shirt is opaque, any straps will remain hidden. If you go this route, choose a high cotton content camisole.

looks at a chapter in *China's Disappearing Clothing* by Wu Xin,⁷⁹ and comments on one of the pervasive issues in doing research on Imperial Chinese clothing — many Chinese-language sources lack citations or any indication of where the author is getting their information or whether or not it is their own work based on direct

contact with extants. In Wu's work, when she uses a direct quote, she cites the name of the book she is quoting from, but no page numbers.⁸⁰

Wu describes the *hezi* as made of stiff, slightly elastic fabric and not having any belts or ties, because the overgarments had no buttons or ties.⁸¹ She doesn't say that the *hezi* was not buttoned, however, and men's clothing in the Tang Dynasty utilized buttons and loop at least at the collar, so that method of closure was not unknown.

The Yuan Dynasty (1271 – 1368 C.E.) undergarment depicted in *FBB*, a line-drawing after a garment from the tomb of Wangjafen in Xiuping, Gansu Province, has no shoulder straps but is held on with two crossed pieces of satin the go from the top of the bust to the opposite lower corner (Figure 7).⁸² It also has a row of “flower buckles” down the front which presumably allowed the garment to be easily put on and removed.⁸³

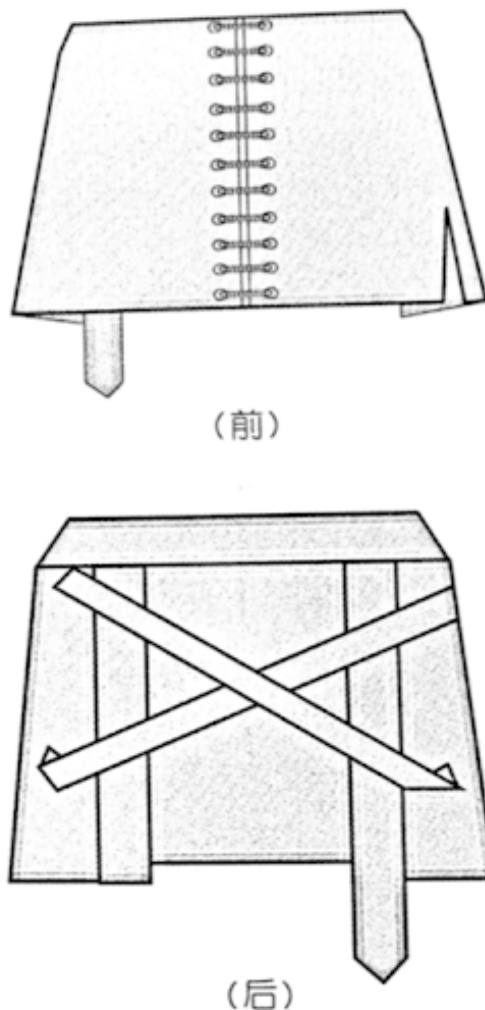


FIGURE 7: Illustrations of 合欢襟 (*hehuanjin*), a Yuan Dynasty undergarment.⁸⁴

The Song Dynasty (960 – 1279) upper undergarment described in *FBB* consisted of a piece of fabric with strips that tied behind the neck at the back (Figure 8). The extant in Figure 8 is made of silk and lined with wadded cotton (presumably for warmth or as an interfacing) and silk.⁸⁵

From all of this, we can surmise that the *hezi* was a tubular garment made of a heavier weight

79 吴欣. (2010). 中国消失的服饰. Shandong Sheng, China: Shandong Pictorial Publishing House.

80 Johns, J. (4 June 2011). “China's Disappearing Clothing.” *We drive east*. Wordpress. Retrieved from: <https://wedriveeast.wordpress.com/2011/06/04/chinas-disappearing-clothing/>

81 *Ibid.*

82 Pan, J. (2005). p. 17

83 *Ibid.*

84 *Ibid.*

85 *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3

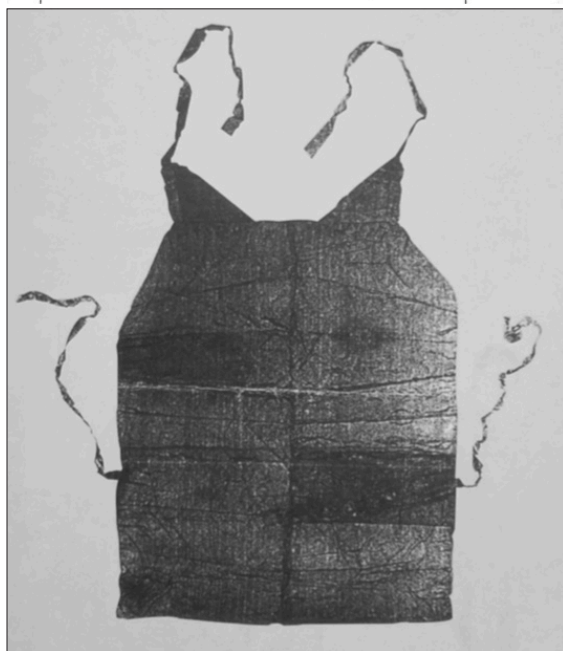
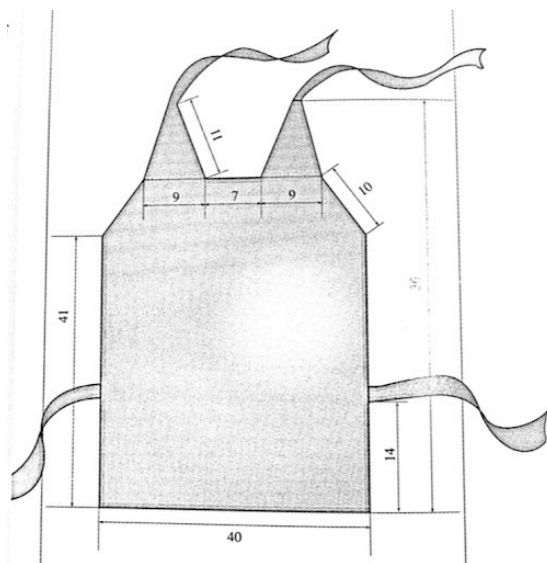


FIGURE 8: Illustration and photograph of extant Song Dynasty undergarment.⁸⁶

silk, potentially lined, and closed with buttons. No artistic rendering of the *hezi* includes these buttons, but the *hehuanjin* (Yuan Dynasty) has buttons

HOW TO MAKE IT

To pattern a *hezi*, take your upper bust and bust measurements, allowing for a center back seam and center front closure. This will determine the width of each piece at the top and the fullest point. Measure from your upper bust to the apex of the bust, then from the apex of the bust to where you want the *hezi* to fall - it should be long enough to cover the stomach. Add a top and bottom seam allowance for finishing these edges, or to accommodate a lining. Have someone help you with your mockup to make sure that it gives you the right shape but adjusting the center-back seam. Attach cloth buttons and loops to the front of the garment to close it. The earliest examples we have of knotted buttons are from the Liao Dynasty (post-Tang).⁸⁷

in the front.

Debunking the 'Hezi-qun'

It should also be noted that it is a popular theory in online hanfu communities, both predominantly Chinese-speaking and English-speaking, that the *hezi* was worn in such a way that it was visible. To support this, the painting *Court Ladies Wearing Flowered Headdresses*, attributed to Zhou Fang (周昉, c. 730–800),⁸⁸ is most often cited, along with the relief carvings and paintings of female attendants and musicians in the tomb of Wang Chuzhi (王處直, 863–923), and murals from the Dunhuang Cave 61 (10th century, post-Tang). The theory holds that the *hezi* was worn either so that the skirt was tied so that the top was visible, or else worn on top of the skirt. Based on the images used to prove this theory, my knowledge of garment construction, and the Chinese-language sources that indicate that women's undergarments were intimate and taboo topics,⁸⁹ I do not believe this is true. Instead, I believe that what others are interpreting as a visible *hezi* is rather an elaborately decorated, curved, or scalloped skirt waistband. Since all of these examples are of High Tang (c. 713–766) or later clothing, when women's self-expression through clothing was arguably at its highest point, it makes sense that skirt waistbands would be elaborate.

Looking at *Court Ladies Wearing Flowered*

⁸⁶ Pan, J. (2005). pp. 2–3.

⁸⁷ Zhao, F. (2004). p. 203.

⁸⁸ There is some debate over whether or not this painting is really by Zhou Fang or was the work of someone else post-Tang Dynasty.

⁸⁹ Johns, J. (4 June 2011). "China's Disappearing Clothing." *We drive east*. Wordpress. Retrieved from: <https://wedriveeast.wordpress.com/2011/06/04/chinas-disappearing-clothing/>

Johns, J. (17 Feb 2011). "History of Chinese Undergarments, Part 1" *We drive east*. Wordpress. Retrieved from: <https://wedriveeast.wordpress.com/2011/02/17/history-of-chinese-undergarments-part-1/>



FIGURE 9: *Detail of Court Ladies Wearing Flowered Headdresses*, attributed to Zhou Fang.⁹⁰

Headdresses (Figure 9), there is a clear seam line below the twisted skirt tie. The skirt tie sits on top of the band, and the seam appears to be between the band and the pleated skirt, thus dismissing the notion that the decorated and curved-edged skirt band is instead an undergarment.

The placement of the skirt waistband is lower in the stone relief from Wang Chuzhi's tomb (Figure 10), covering where this seam would be in some instances and falling below it in others. The skirt waistbands here are scalloped, and again, I see no evidence that they are separate garments worn on top of the skirt. They have been painted a different color, as has the band in a mural from the same tomb, but in the mural (Figure 11), the seam between the skirt and the band is obscured by the woman's hands and the bowl she carries, making this evidence inconclusive.

There are two arrays of women on the south-western and southeastern walls of Cave 61 at Dunhuang. Some women are holding offerings while



FIGURE 10: Relief sculpture from Wang Chuzhi's tomb, 10th century.⁹¹



FIGURE 11: Detail from a mural painting in Wang Chuzhi's tomb, 10th century.⁹²

others are not. Clear images of both are difficult to find online that are not reproductions or artistic renderings, and the image I was able to pull from the digital panorama of the cave is fuzzy. Still, the

90 Zhou, F. (8th century). *Court Ladies Wearing Flowered Headdresses*. [Silk painting.] Liaoning Provincial Museum. Retrieved from: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zhou_Fang_Court_Ladies_Wearing_Flowered_Headdresses_\(46x180\)_Liaoning_Provincial_Museum,_Shenyang.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Zhou_Fang_Court_Ladies_Wearing_Flowered_Headdresses_(46x180)_Liaoning_Provincial_Museum,_Shenyang.jpg)

91 “王處直墓後室浮雕.” [Relief sculpture in the rear chamber of Wang Chuzhi's tomb.] *Wikimedia Commons*. Retrieved from: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%E7%8E%8B%E8%99%95%E7%9B%B4%E5%A2%93%E5%BE%8C%E5%AE%A4%E6%B5%AE%E9%9B%95.jpg>

92 “王處直墓壁畫.” [Tomb painting in Wang Chuzhi's tomb.] *Wikimedia Commons*. Retrieved from: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%E7%8E%8B%E8%99%95%E7%9B%B4%E5%A2%93%E5%A3%81%E7%95%AB1.jpg>



FIGURE 12: Four Lady Offerers Mural, Southeastern wall of Mogao Grotto 61.⁹⁴



FIGURE 13: Screenshot from the digital panoramic view of Cave 61, showing the attendant ladies to the donor's wife on the southwestern wall.⁹⁵

decorative waistband at the top of the skirt is visible on both the figures to the right (Figure 13), and I believe the lower tie on the figure wearing the phoenix crown is not her skirt tie, but additional ornamentation. It should also be noted that the



FIGURE 14: Detail from *A Hundred Horses* [unknown artist].⁹⁷

two rightmost figures in Figure 12 are (from left to right) the mother of a Cao Yuanzhong, King of Guiyi, and the Great Empress of Khotan and daughter of Cao Yinjin. Both of these women are part of the Guiyi royal family, a kingdom subordinate to the Tang and Northern Song Dynasties.⁹³ We might be seeing some Khotanese influence in their clothing.

Ku (袴, kù) and Kun (裪, kūn) — pants with a crotch, and without a crotch

There are two types of pants that served as undergarment layers for the lower body, arguably worn in combination with one another: *ku* (袴, kù) and *kun* (裪, kūn), pants with a crotch and pants without a crotch. There is a pair of pants at the Cleveland Art Museum made of Chinese silk dating to the Tang Dynasty, but they were made for and owned by a Tibetan Prince,⁹⁶ so we rely on paintings and sculptures from the Tang period, extant garments from subsequent dynasties, and art from other cultures to help inform a broader picture of these garments in the context of the Han ethnic group.⁹⁷

The primary period source depicting both pairs of pants, for which I have been able to track down a reputable source, is the painting *A Hundred Horses*, dated to the Tang Dynasty with an

⁹³ "Mogao Grottoes Cave 061." (n.d.). *Digital Dunhuang*. Retrieved from: <https://www.e-dunhuang.com/cave/10.0001/0001.0001.0061>

⁹⁴ Liu Mu-Ching. (2013). "Replication of four patroness on the mural of mogao grotto 61's southeastern wall." 石窟藝術與數位型技整合研究計畫 [The Study of the Integration of Grotto Art and Preservation]. Retrieved from <http://imlab.tw/dunhuang/en/p22.html>

⁹⁵ "Mogao Grottoes Cave 061." (n.d.). *Digital Dunhuang*. Retrieved from: <https://www.e-dunhuang.com/cave/10.0001/0001.0001.0061>.

⁹⁶ Prince's trousers and lining. (8th century). [Garment]. Cleveland, OH: Cleveland Museum of Art. Retrieved from: <http://www.clevelandart.org/art/1996.2.2>

⁹⁷ *A Hundred Horses*. (618-907). [Silk painting]. The Palace Museum, Beijing, China. Retrieved from: <https://en.dpm.org.cn/collections/collections/2016-11-23/4464.html>



FIGURE 15: Detail from *Bathing Horses* by Zhao Mengfu, late 13th-early 14th century.¹⁰³



FIGURE 16: Detail from *Chin'gwang Wang, First of the Ten Kings of Hell* (Koryŏ dynasty, late 14th century).¹⁰⁴

unknown author.⁹⁸ Approximately 100 centimeters from the right edge of the painting, at the bottom edge, a man is depicted putting on his clothing while a horse nickers at him, near the edge of a bathing pool (Figure 14).

He is wearing a *du bi kun* (犢鼻褌, *dú bí kūn*, “calf-nosed trousers”), which is a loincloth like undergarment with two loops for the legs that is wrapped and tied in place⁹⁹ while he steps into the kun.

Based on *A Hundred Horses*, Zhao Mengfu's (1254-1322) painting *Bathing Horses* (Figure 15),¹⁰⁰ and a 14th century Korean painting depicting a man and woman with one of the Kings of Hell wearing only their lower undergarments (Figure 16),¹⁰¹ and a 10th century Chinese painting from Dunhuang showing men in front of one of the Kings of Hell in similar circumstances (Figure 17),¹⁰² the calf-nosed trousers appear to be similar to western European braies.

There are extant pairs of what might be this same garment as the calf-nosed trousers dating from the Liao Dynasty, one of which is included



FIGURE 17: Detail from 繪畫 (Five Dynasties, 10th century), illustration of the apocryphal *Ten Kings of Hell Sutra*.¹⁰⁵

98 *A Hundred Horses*. (618-907). [Silk painting]. The Palace Museum, Beijing, China. Retrieved from: <https://en.dpm.org.cn/collections/collections/2016-11-23/4464.html>

99 “詞條名稱：犢鼻褌.” [Dictionary Entry: Calf-Nosed Trousers.] *Education Dictionary*. Republic of China: Ministry of Education. Retrieved from <https://pedia.cloud.edu.tw/Entry/Detail/?title=犢鼻褌>

100 Zhao, M. (n.d.) *Bathing Horses*. [Painting.] Beijing Palace Museum, Beijing, China. Retrieved from: <https://en.dpm.org.cn/collections/collections/2014-03-31/1373.html>

101 *Chin'gwang Wang, First of the Ten Kings of Hell*. (Koryŏ dynasty, late 14th century). [Painting]. Harvard Art Museum, Arthur M. Slacker Museum, Cambridge, MA. Retrieved from: <https://www.harvardartmuseums.org/art/202112>

102 繪畫. [Painting.] (Five Dynasties, 10th century). [Painting]. British Museum, London, England. Retrieved from: https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=6640&partId=1

103 Zhao, M. (n.d.) *Bathing Horses*. [Painting.]

104 *Chin'gwang Wang, First of the Ten Kings of Hell*. (Koryŏ dynasty, late 14th century). [Painting].

105 繪畫. [Painting.] (Five Dynasties, 10th century). [Painting].



FIGURE 18 (TOP): Liao Dynasty triangle-shaped pants.



FIGURE 19 (ABOVE): Song Dynasty straight-legged pants.

in *Liao Textile and Costumes*, by Zhao Feng, (Figure 18)¹⁰⁶ and another in the China National Silk Museum from the Song Dynasty (Figure 19).¹⁰⁷ Both have ties at the waist, a seamed crotch, and are open at the sides, but the Liao Dynasty pants have triangle-shaped legs,¹⁰⁸ and the Song Dynas-

HOW TO FAKE IT

An adequate substitute for the lower undergarment are Thai fisherman's pants, which are easily sewn or purchased. If purchased, look for 100% cotton. These pants are seamed at the sides and the crotch, with ties that are secured to the center back. The front must be folded in a single large pleat to be fit to the body before tying, and the top is then rolled down to secure the pants.

ty pants have straight legs.¹⁰⁹ Both are short — the Liao Dynasty pants measure approximately 70.5 centimeters long and the Song Dynasty pants are 79 centimeters long — about 30 – 31 inches.¹¹⁰¹¹¹

These outer pants consist of two legs sewn to a waistband, with the back and crotch intentionally left open. I have seen images of what appear to be extant garments similar to the outer pants, but none that I can confidently source or find provenance for. There is an extant pair of outer pants from the Liao Dynasty (916 – 1125) which consist of fabric pleated at the front and back of a waistband that is tied on, with an unseamed crotch, wide legs, and suspenders.¹¹²

As with the *hezi*, I am still experimenting with patterns for lower body undergarments. My plan is to base much of my patterning on the diagrams provided in Zhao's *Liao Dynasty Textile and Costume*: these garments are more the Khitan style than Han, but they enjoyed a close relationship with the Tang Dynasty, which included promises of brotherhood and the exchanging of clothing between officials in

One major aspect of female dress which I am choosing to leave out of this class and discussion, (because it is worthy of its own specific attention) is adoption of cross-gender or foreign clothing styles. Women during the Tang Dynasty were not limited to traditional "female" garments but wore men's clothing¹⁰ and clothing referred to as hufu (胡服, hú-fú, "foreign clothing"), which was adopted from the non-Han Chinese populations to the north and west of the Tang empire.¹¹

106 (2004). Hong Kong: Muwen Fine Arts Publication, Ltd. p. 212.

107 杂宝花罗裙裤. [Plain weave silk underwear with treasured flower pattern]. (Song Dynasty, 960-1279). China National Silk Museum, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China. Retrieved from: http://www.chinasilkmuseum.com/zggd/info_21.aspx?itemid=1846

108 Zhao, F. (2004). pp. 212-213.

109 杂宝花罗裙裤. [Plain weave silk underwear with treasured flower pattern]. (Song Dynasty, 960-1279).

110 Chen, B. (2013). p. 86

111 Ibid, p. 85

112 Zhao, F. (2004). p. 205.

905 CE.¹¹³ During the High Tang and Five Dynasties period, the Khitans captured Han weavers, which further explains how the Tang Dynasty weaving techniques, motifs, and clothing styles are evident in garments and textiles from the Liao Dynasty in Khitan territory.¹¹⁴

Wa (袜, wǎ) — Socks

There are a few extant socks from the Tang Dynasty, but only two for which I can find good provenance or citations. One is a child's sock held by the Guimet Museum which was shared on their (now defunct) Tumblr account (Figure 20). It is described as being a silk damask twill and has two ties attached to the back of the ankle, presumably for tying the sock onto the child's leg.¹¹⁵ The other is a pair of adult-sized white socks made of tabby woven silk and painted with floral designs, excavated from the Astana Cemetery (Figure 21).¹¹⁶

Both of these socks have what appears to be a similar construction - two, possibly four pieces of fabric in the case of the adult socks, sewn with a seam that goes all the way around the top and bottom of the foot, with ties at the back of the ankle to secure the garment on the foot. This is similar to other extant Chinese socks from the Song and Ming Dynasties, as well as socks from late 15th-early 16th century Korea.

Wearing socks in the summer is generally not something we like to do, modernly. There is a mural painting of a Tang Dynasty woman wearing men's robes and red socks with rope sandals, which would make sense given the potential for the rope to irritate the skin (Figure 22).¹¹⁸

I have yet to experiment with patterning Tang Dynasty socks, but I will likely draw from Lady Stella di Silvestri's (Tami King) work on 16th century



FIGURE 20: A child's silk damask sock (618-907), Musée Guimet.



FIGURE 21: Painted silk socks from the Astana Cemetery (Tang Dynasty).¹¹⁷

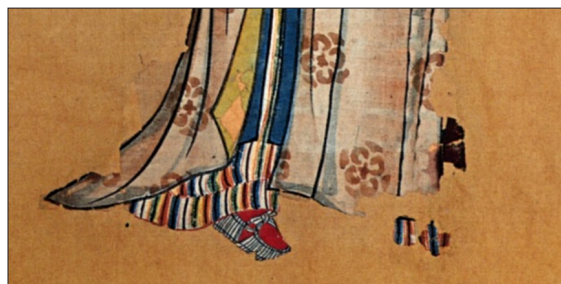


FIGURE 22: Detail from mural painting of a servant girl wearing men's robes, striped pants, rope sandals, and red socks, Astana Cemetery tomb 187 (mid 8th century).¹¹⁹

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 251.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. 251-252.

¹¹⁵ *Chaussette (ou sous-chaussure ?) d'enfant*. (618-907). [Garment]. Musée Guimet, Paris, France. Retrieved from: <https://scareferencedesk.tumblr.com/post/185414095860/museeguimet-chaussette-ou-sous-chaussure> Originally posted 29 Dec 2013 at: <https://museeguimet.tumblr.com/post/71540146821/chaussette-ou-sous-chaussure-denfant-dynastie>

¹¹⁶ Zaho, F. (2012). Silks in the Sui, Tang, and Five Dynasties. In D. Kuhn (Ed). *Chinese silks* (203-257). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. p. 246.

¹¹⁷ Zaho, F. (2012). p. 246.

¹¹⁸ 侍女圖. [Servant Girl.] (8th century). [Mural.] Tomb 187, Astana Cemetery, Turpan, Xinjiang, China. Retrieved from: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anonymous-Astana_Graves_Servant_Girl1.jpg

¹¹⁹ Ibid.



FIGURE 23: Detail of Standing Female Attendant (Figurine). Late 7th - early 8th century, China. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.¹²¹

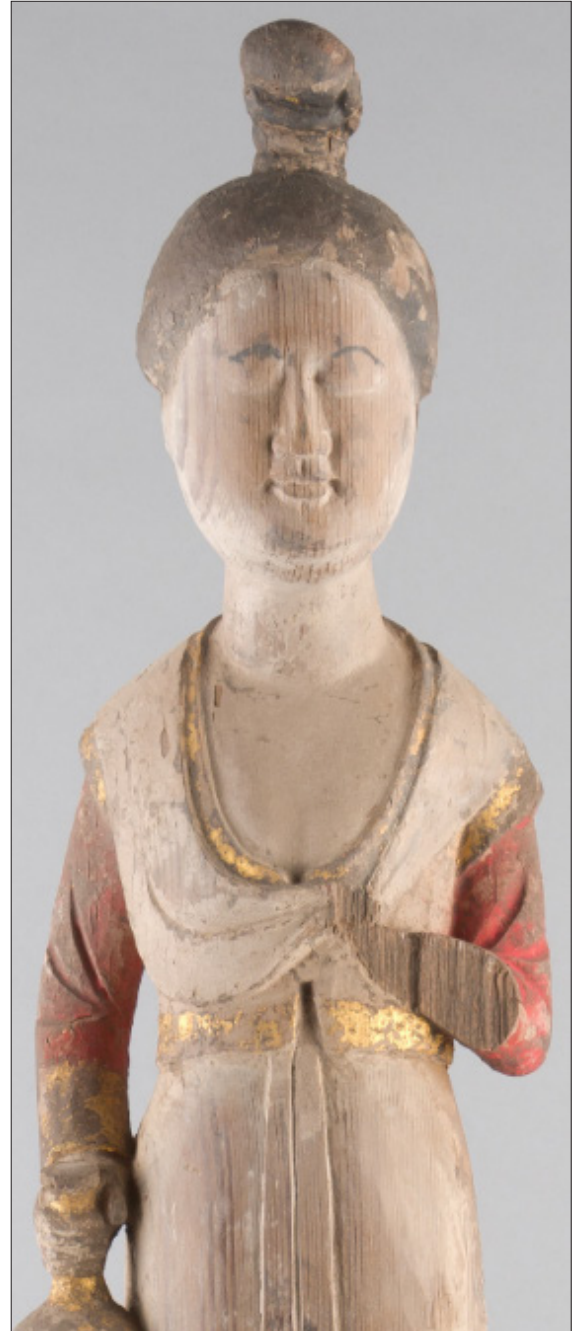


FIGURE 24: Detail of Standing Female Attendant (Figurine), Late 7th - early 8th century, China. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.¹²²

Korean Socks.¹²⁰

Garments

Ru (襦, *rǔ*) — Shirt

The primary upper garment for women in the Tang dynasty was a “small-sleeve short jacket and long skirt with waist fastened up under the arm-pit.”¹²³ Over the course of the Tang Dynasty, the

120 King, T. (2018, Mar 31). How to pattern Beoseon socks. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1763663860622781> [Facebook update]. Retrieved from: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1763663860622781/permalink/1999772653678566/>

121 唐彩繪侍女木俑. [Standing Female Attendant]. (late 7th-early 8th century). [Figurine]. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Retrieved from <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/39770>

122 *Standing Female Attendant*. (late 7th-early 8th century). [Figurine]. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Retrieved from: <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/39761>

123 Zhou, X.; Gao, C. (1987). *5000 years of Chinese costumes*. Hong Kong: The Commercial Press. p. 88.



FIGURE 25: Detail from Duan Wenjie's copy of the south wall mural of Mogao Cave 130, (later half of 8th century). Hong Kong Heritage Museum.¹²⁷

sleeves grew in size and the collar opened up to reveal more of the chest (Figures 23-27).^{124,125} Alternatively, the term 对襟 (*duijin*, *dwā-jīn*, "double breasted") is used to denote the Tang Dynasty shirt, given that the collars do not cross as in other shirt-layers throughout Chinese history. Another type of shirt was the 衫 (*shan*, unlined shirt), which I have only come across in one source which describes it as low-cut.¹²⁶ It is possible that the *shan* is the shirt with the curved neckline that is seen in some tomb figurines (Figures 23, 24). These figures also appear to be wearing the half-arm jacket (半臂, *banbi*).

The shirt is fairly straightforward, being very similar to a basic T-tunic, but without under-arm



FIGURE 26: Detail of female servants from a mural in the tomb of Duan Jianbi (651), with decorated waistlines and cuffs, and one with a striped skirt.¹²⁸



FIGURE 27: Detail from 搗練圖卷 [Court ladies preparing newly woven silk], a Song Dynasty copy of a painting originally attributed to Tang Dynasty court painter Zhang Xuan. Boston Museum of Fine Arts.¹²⁹

124 Chen, B. (2013). p. 75.

125 Shaorong, Y. (2004). *Traditional Chinese clothing: Costumes, adornments and culture*. San Francisco: Long River Press. p. 27

126 Chen, B. (2013). pp. 83, 104

127 Duan, W. (Rev. 2015, Jan 25) Donor portrait of Lady Wang from Taiyuan in worship. [Copy of mural painting]. Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Sha Tin, Hong Kong.

128 Zhang, J. (2014). p. 160.

129 宋徽宗. [Emperor Huizong]. (12th century). 搗練圖卷 [Court ladies preparing newly woven silk.] [Painting]. Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA. Retrieved from: <https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/court-ladies-preparing-newly-woven-silk-28127>



FIGURE 28: Northern Dynasties lined shirt made of plain-weave silk and with tie-dyed pattern of small dots.¹³⁸

gussets or gores. There are no extant shirts from the Tang Dynasty, so we are limited to period depictions including reliefs, murals, paintings, and tomb figurines, though we can supplement this with extant garments from preceding and succeeding periods. Like the skirt, the shirt can be considered a foundation garment. It changed over time, moving from inside the skirt to outside, changing fabrics, and having a variety of accessories paired with it. It could also feature embroidered cuffs or collars and front-openings decorated with patterned trim (Figure 26).¹³⁰ This trim consisted either of embroidery or pieces of brocaded silk.¹³¹

In terms of construction, the shirt likely had a center back seam. The seam in the center back is described in the Book of Rites regarding the proper construction of the *shenyi* (深衣),¹³² and can be seen in upper-body extant garments. The Shosoin Repository has several 8th Century garments with

a notable Chinese influence that have a center back seam,¹³³ and The China National Silk Museum has garments from the Southern Song¹³⁴ and Yuan Dynasties¹³⁵ with this same construction. The China National Silk Museum has one shirt from the Northern Dynasty which appears to be lined, and it is difficult to see whether there is a center back seam (Figure 28).¹³⁶ It may be that the lining does not have a center back seam and the outer fabric does, though this would be odd considering other lined garments have a visible center back seam in the lining. Based on an assumed fabric width of 24 inches, fabric conservation, and an extant shirt from the Northern Dynasty (386-581 C.E.), there was a seam off the shoulder as well as at the cuff.¹³⁷

The Book of Rites calls for a “square-shaped collar”¹³⁹ for the *shenyi*, but given how the garments appear to rest in statuary, as well as on a figurine wearing cloth garments, I believe the

¹³⁰ Chen, B. (2013). p. 83.

¹³¹ Zhang, J. (2014). Thoughts on some grave goods from the tomb of Li Chui. In S. Grieff, R. Schiavone, J. Zhang, Hou, G., & Yang, J. (Eds.) *The Tomb of Li Chui: Interdisciplinary studies into Tang period finds assemblage* (149-168). Mainz, Germany: Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums. pp. 159-160.

¹³² Confucius. (475 B.C.E. - 221 B.C.E./2018).

¹³³ *Hanpi (sleeveless coat) of bast-fiber cloth, No. 2 (Chest, No. 88)*. (n.d.). The Imperial Household Agency: The Shōsōin Repository, Nara, Japan. Retrieved from: <http://shosoin.kunaicho.go.jp/en-US/Treasure?id=0000012786> is an example of one of the “hanpi” items in the Shōsōin collection.

¹³⁴ 小花菱纹罗单衣片. [Part of an unlined shirt made of dupo leno with a damask pattern of small, ornamented lozenges]. (Song Dynasty). [Garment]. China National Silk Museum, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China. Retrieved from: http://www.chinasilkmuseum.com/zggd/info_21.aspx?itemid=1831

¹³⁵ 花卉纹罗袍. [Lined gauze robe with floral pattern]. (Yuan Dynasty). [Garment]. China National Silk Museum, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China. Retrieved from:

¹³⁶ 绞缬绢衣. [Plain weave silk clothing with tied knot dye pattern]. (Northern Dynasty, 386-581). [Garment]. China National Silk Museum, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China. Retrieved from: http://www.chinasilkmuseum.com/zggd/info_21.aspx?itemid=1815

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Confucius. (475 B.C.E. - 221 B.C.E./2018).

necklines for women's shirts were curved. I am only aware of one extant upper garment where the side seams are open and the textile is laid flat to show an angled collar, but it is unclear who wore this garment.¹⁴⁰ Though they are usually displayed and photographed flat, it is arguable that extant upper-body garments from preceding and succeeding dynasties, as well as garments at the Shosoin Repository that show Chinese influence, have curved necklines. A textile fabric dated to the Tang Dynasty recovered from Astana tomb number 206 that appears to be part of an upper garment (either a shirt or jacket) made for a tomb figurine due to its small size, not unlike the two skirts found in another Astana tomb (Figure 32), looks to have a curved neckline (Figure 29).¹⁴¹ Juni L. Yeung translated an article by Hu Jingming, originally posted on Baidu Tieba (an online community that is integrated with a Chinese internet search engine), which was posted to the Toronto Guqin Society's page. The article presents an argument for a curved Ming Dynasty neckline.¹⁴² I have made shirts with both a square neckline and a curved neckline, and I prefer the fit of the latter.

We know that sleeve width, like skirt volume and length, was subject to sumptuary law through the Tang Dynasty. For example, in 826, Emperor Wenzong (文宗, r. 826 – 840) restricted sleeve width to one *chi* and 5 *cun* — or approximately 0.32 meters plus 160 millimeters, which is just under 19 inches.¹⁴³ Sleeve width may be something that can perhaps indicate the social status in paintings and other media — it is logical to surmise that servants would wear more slim-fitting sleeves so as not to have them interfere when working (Figures 23, 24).¹⁴⁴ Based on evaluation of Chinese tomb figurines and frescos, slimmer sleeves were in vogue earlier in the Tang Dynasty (Figure 38); unfortunately the difficult issue of provenance (due to unethical archaeological practices¹⁴⁵ and looting from



FIGURE 29: Fragment of polychrome jin fabric (Tang Dynasty) found in Astana Cemetery tomb 206, Astana, Turfan, Xinjiang. Housed at the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region Museum, Urumqi.^{xxx}

the 19th century¹⁴⁶ through the modern era¹⁴⁷) makes more exact dating for these art objects (and thus clothing trends) problematic.

Based on my experience with this garment, 2.5 to 3 yards of 24 inch wide fabric is more than enough to make a shirt to fit an approximate US women's size 14. This can, of course, be approximated by cutting a standard modern 45 inch wide fabric down to 24 inches.¹⁴⁸

140 “小花菱纹罗单衣片.” [Part of an unlined shirt made of dupo leno with a damask pattern of small, ornamented lozenges]. (Song Dynasty).

141 Zhao, F. (2012). p. 227.

142 Hu, J. (2011, April 11). Understanding hanfu aesthetics mathematically: Curves of a robe. (J. Yeung, Trans.). *Toronto Guqin Society*. Retrieved from: <https://torqugin.wordpress.com/2011/04/11/hanfu-curves/>

143 Chen, B. (2013). p. 84.

144 It should also be noted that figurines with sleeve lengths that cover the hands by a substantial amount are often dancers, and are depicted in dancing poses. See figurines of dancers on the *Silk Road Seattle* website, D. C. Waugh (Ed.). (2007). “Musée Guimet:: China: From the Sui through the Song Dynasties.” Retrieved from: <https://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/museums/mg/mgchinasuitang.html>

145 Haas, H. (2010). Who stole China's China? the legacy of Sir Aurel Stein. Thesis (B.A.). Haverford College, Department of History, 2010.

146 Bowlby, C. (2015, February 2). The palace of shame that makes China angry. *BBC News*, retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-30810596>

147 Falkenhausen, L. (1993). On the historiographical orientation of Chinese archaeology. *Antiquity*, 67(257), 839-849. doi:10.1017/S0003598X00063821

148 The extra 21 inches can be used for smaller projects or trim.

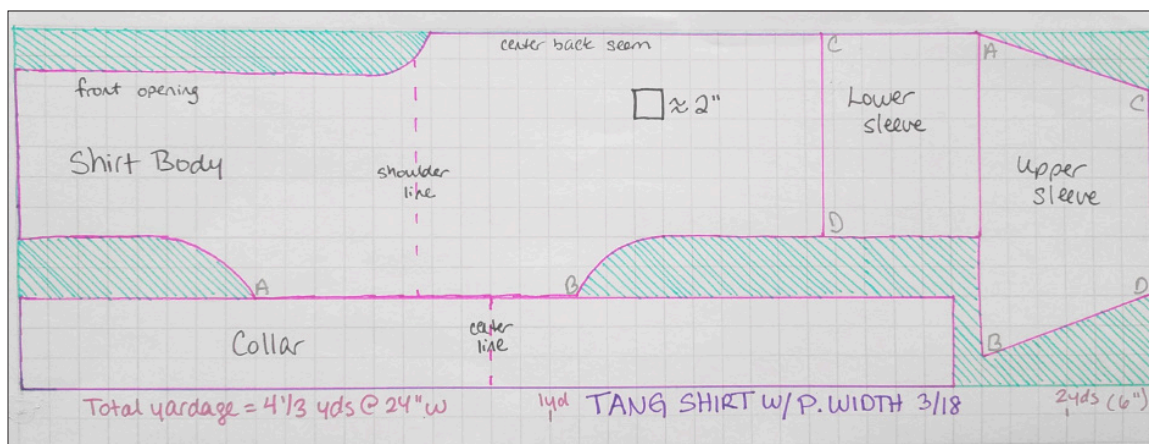


FIGURE 30: My pattern and cutting layout for a *ru* using period fabric widths.¹⁴⁹

HOW TO MAKE IT

To draft this pattern, you will need your bust measurement at its fullest point, shoulder to hip (over the bust), shoulder to underbust (over the bust), back of neck to hip, shoulder point to shoulder point, and shoulder to knuckles/where you want the sleeve to end. Draft the neckline pattern using Hu's instructions¹⁵⁰ — you will need to know the radius of the your neckline circle. Mark the radius along the folded center of the body panel, then shift them back 1.5-2 centimeters. Hu's instructions are for a cross-collared robe, but for a Tang Dynasty shirt where the collar does not cross, you don't need to extend the curve past the 90 degree position. Remember that you'll be attaching a folded collar piece, which will be just approximately

2.5 inches wide.

To assemble, sew the sleeves together and then to the body fabric of the shirt without sewing them into tubes. Sew the center back seam, then hem the body panels and cuffs. Then sew the side seams. Try it on and mark where you want the ties to be — they should be somewhere below your bust and need to be long enough to tie in a secure knot. Lastly, press the edges of the collar in approximately 1/4 inch, then press the entire collar in half attach the collar to the neckline much like you would attach binding, making sure to attach the ties were you've marked. Press the ties toward the front, and if you'd like, hand stitch them to the collar so that they stay in that orientation.

Qun (裙, *chūn*) — Skirt

While no extant, full-sized Tang Skirt is known, there is a Song Dynasty skirt that consists of a panel of fabric (it is difficult to know if it is pieced or a single panel) pleated to band (Figure 31).¹⁵¹ As a method of construction, pleating fabric to a band is logical even in a culture where excessive skirts were seen as status symbols and consequently regulated via sumptuary law, as it would reduce fabric waste. That being said, given that fabric in the Tang Dynasty was 24 inches wide, one will assume that skirts that wrap around the body would need to be pieced together out of multiple panels. As a means of controlling silk usage, the number of panels came to be regulated by sumptuary laws. Striped

skirts, which generally appear to be narrower and worn by women who appear to be servants or handmaidens to higher ranking ladies, could not exceed twelve sections during the early Tang period (618 – 712).¹⁵² It is unclear whether striped skirts were assembled out of fabrics of two different colors, or if the fabric was striped when it was woven or dyed. Emperor Gaozong (r. 650 – 683) reduced the number of skirt panels to seven, and Emperor Wenzong (r. 826 – 840) reduced it even further to five.¹⁵³

If each section of a twelve paneled skirt used the fabric's full width, and we assume there is a 1/4 inch seam allowance, the total width of the widest striped skirt would be 282 inches. Pleated with one

¹⁴⁹ Adding a few extra inches to the bottom edges of this pattern might make the torso fit a bit more comfortable. Doing so means also extending the collar piece by the same margin. Ties for the shirt can be cut from the scraps.

¹⁵⁰ Hu, J. (2011, April 11).

¹⁵¹ Zhou, X. & Gao, C. (1987). *5000 years of Chinese costumes*. Hong Kong: The Commercial Press. p. 123.

¹⁵² Chen, B. (2013). p. 84.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

HOW TO MAKE IT

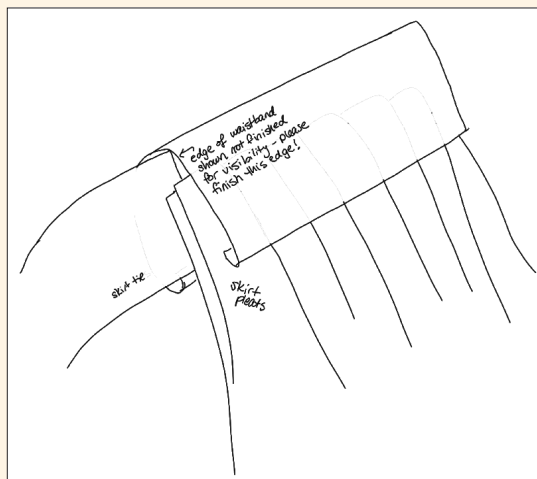
There are two ways to construct the skirt — as a single panel, or as two panels. There is pictorial evidence for a split skirt (Figures 34, 35), but extant skirts all appear to be single panel. In either version, the panel(s) need to be as long as your upper bust to hem measurement. Use period images as a guide - the fullness and length of the skirt was a marker of wealth and status and commonly subjected to sumptuary laws as a result.

For a split skirt, take your bust measurement and divide it by two, then add three inches (for overlap/edge finishing). For a single-panel skirt, you will need your bust measurement multiplied by 1.5 so that the skirt can wrap around the body, then add an inch to allow room to finish the sides. In either case, this will be your waistband measurement. Because the panel(s) are pleated to the waist, take this measurement and multiply it by three for one-inch knife pleats - this is how much fabric you will need. I generally budget 5 to 5 1/4 yards of 60 inch wide fabric for a single-panel skirt or 4 yards for a split skirt. For a single-panel skirt, finish the sides and hem before pleating. For a split skirt, you can hem the panels before pleating if it is easier.

To make the waistband, cut a piece of fabric that is the length of your waistband measurement plus 1/2 and 4 to 8 inches wide. After turning the edges in 1/4 inch, you'll be folding the waistband in half, so your finished waistband width will be half the width of your cut piece minus 1 inch. Press all of these folds. For a split skirt, each waistband will be as long as half of your upper bust measurement, plus 3 inches.

The skirt ties need to be long enough to go around your bust-line, tie, and hang down. For my first skirts, I used poly-satin ribbon. Making your own ties similarly to how you'd make ties for your shirt is ideal - they just need to be much longer. For a split skirt, the ties for the back panel only need to be long enough to reach to the front and tie at your upper bust. The front ties need to be long enough to cross in the back, come back to the front, tie, and hang down attractively. 2-3 yards long should be sufficient. I suggest making them the half width of your finished waistband.

Find the middle of your waistband and the middle of your skirt panel and line them up. Mark the skirt panel in one-inch increments. From the center, pleat the skirt panel using knife pleats so



that all the pleats go in the same direction. Repeat for the other half of the panel, reversing the direction of the pleats. The pleated skirt panel should be the same width as the waistband piece (for a split skirt, half the bust measurement plus 3 inches; for the single-panel skirt, 1.5 times the bust measurement plus 1 inch). Stitch the pleats down.

Each panel will be attached to a waistband piece - so for a split skirt, each panel (front half and back half of the skirt) is attached to a separate waistband piece. Attach the waistband by measuring from the center crease of the waistband to the crease of the folded edge. Measure down from the top edge of the pleats and find this same length. Mark along the pleats so that you can easily align this line with the crease in the waistband. Stitch this line with a backstitch, then press the waistband up and over the top edge of the fabric, hiding the backside of the stitches with the other side of the waistband. Use a blind hem stitch or other invisible stitch to secure the backside of the waistband. Before stitching the sides closed, place the skirt ties in this sandwich of fabric so that they are secure when you finish the waistband sides (See diagram).

For a split skirt, sew the side seams from the hem to about 6 inches from the bottom of the waistband. The two inches of overlap should keep anything from showing that isn't supposed to. If you're planning on making two skirts, as seen in Figures 34 and 35, you can make the split longer.

inch pleats (divide by three) brings the top width down to 94 inches, which would wrap around a 40 inch bust just under two and a half times. For a five paneled skirt, 80, 1/4 inch pleats (each using 3/4 inches of fabric) would be needed to create a skirt that would fit a 40 inch bust. I have yet to experiment with this construction method for skirts, as I have only recently found information in English regard-

ing these sumptuary laws.

In addition to striped skirts, there is visual evidence for polychrome *jin* (錦, compound weave) silk skirts, as well as extant examples of resist-dyed skirts (Figure 32).¹⁵⁴ The Song Dynasty extant skirt is made of printed fabric (Figure 31).¹⁵⁵ Additionally, there are images from Cave 107 in the Mogao Grottoes of Dunhuang, dated to the late Tang Dy-

154 Chen, B. (2013). p. 92.

155 *Ibid.*



FIGURE 31: Printed silk gauze skirt from the Song Dynasty.¹⁵⁷



FIGURE 32: Silk tabby skirt (made for a doll) with resist-printed floral design, from Astana Tomb no. 187, dated 8th century.¹⁵⁸

nasty (c. 827 – 859) of women in skirts with horizontal stripes.¹⁵⁶

Skirts could also be embellished by adding trim (embroidered, or more elaborate fabrics) to the waistband (Figure 26).¹⁶⁰ Princess Li Chui was buried wearing a skirt that had a waistband embroidered with pearls, turquoise and gold flowers, and with small hanging bells.¹⁶¹ Princess Anle (安樂公主, c. 684 – 21 July 710) once commissioned a skirt that incorporated the feathers of a hundred different birds — a skirt which inspired so many



FIGURE 33: Three-colored sancai glazed tomb figurine of a woman grooming herself, wearing a jacket, shirt with contrasting cuffs, and a skirt with a flower motif also reflected in the jacket, (Tang Dynasty). Shaanxi History Museum, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China.¹⁵⁹

156 "Mogao Grottoes Cave 107." *Digital Dunhuang*. Retrieved from: <https://www.e-dunhuang.com/cave/10.0001/0001.0001.0107>.

157 Zhou, X. & Gao, C. (1987). p. 123.

158 Chen, B. (2013). p. 92.

159 三彩梳妆女俑. [Three-colored sancai glazed tomb figurine of a woman grooming herself.] (Tang Dynasty). [Figurine]. Shaanxi History Museum, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China. Retrieved from: <http://www.sxhm.com/index.php?ac=article&at=read&did=10562>

160 Zhang, J. (2014). pp. 159-160.

161 Ma, J. (2014). Excavation and documentation of the Tang Dynasty tomb of Li Chui. In S. Grieff, R. Schiavone, J. Zhang, Hou, G., & Yang, J. (Eds.) *The Tomb of Li Chui: Interdisciplinary studies into Tang period finds assemblage* (9-96). Mainz, Germany: Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums. pp. 58-60.



FIGURE 34: Detail from *A Palace Concert*, potentially showing evidence for the two-panel style skirt.¹⁶⁴

look alike that the local bird population was put at risk,¹⁶² and which was publicly burned in 713 by Emperor Xuanzong as a way of posthumously censoring her extravagance.¹⁶³

Banbi (半臂, *bān-bì*) — Jacket

The *banbi* (半臂) means “half-covered arm” and refers to the short-sleeved jacket that was in style in the earlier half of the Tang Dynasty (Figures 23, 24, 36 – 38).¹⁶⁷ These garments were worn outside of the shirt, and functioned like a vest,¹⁶⁸ but there are some depictions where the jacket appears to be tucked into the skirt (Figure 36).¹⁶⁹ Like the shirt, the jacket had a front opening that tied with a rib-

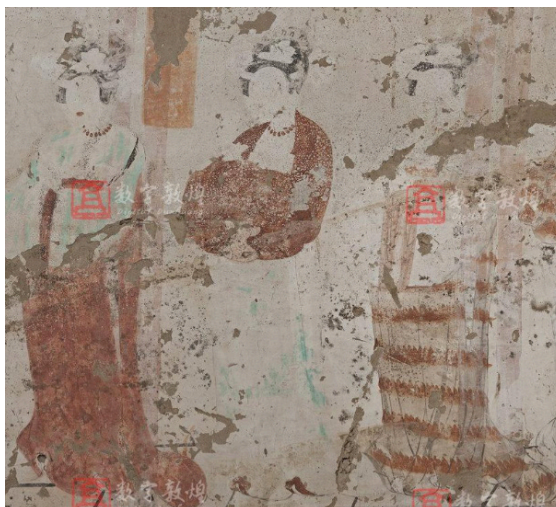


FIGURE 35: Detail of mural on the north wall of Cave 107, showing split-style skirts, as well as a skirt with horizontal stripes.¹⁶⁵



FIGURE 36: Detail of a wooden figurine found in the tomb of Zhang Xiong (d. 633) and Lady Qu (d. 688), Astana Cemetery, wearing a polychrome jin silk jacket woven to scale and tucked into a silk tapestry belt.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Chen, B. Y. (2013). p. 84.

¹⁶³ Benn, C. (2002). p. 98.

¹⁶⁴ “唐人宮樂圖 [A Palace Concert].” (618-907).

¹⁶⁵ “Mogao Grottoes Cave 107.” *Digital Dunhuang*.

¹⁶⁶ Watt, J. C. Y., Jiayao, A., Howard, A. F., Marshak, B. I. Su, B., Zhao, F. (2004). *China: Dawn of a golden age, 200 – 750 AD*. New Haven: CT: Yale University Press. pp. 288-289.

¹⁶⁷ Zhao, X. & Gao, C. (1987). p. 77.

¹⁶⁸ Hua, M. (2011). *Chinese clothing*. New York: Cambridge University Press. p. 32.

¹⁶⁹ Chen, B. (2013). pp. 93-94.



FIGURE 38: Detail from Female Palace Attendants [Mural], from the tomb of Princess Yongtai (永泰公主, d. 701), Shaanxi Museum, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China.¹⁷²

HOW TO MAKE IT

The jacket is not necessary for a summer ensemble, but it can be a nice way to add a little pizzazz to an outfit, or as an option for slightly cooler evenings. To make the jacket, use the same measurements and construction method as the shirt, with your sleeves slightly larger to accommodate layering. Adjust the neckline curve so that the front edges of the collar will touch approximately mid-bust. I made the bottom hem of my jacket about 4-6 inches shorter than my shirt, so that the hem hits me just below my natural waist. You want the ties on the jacket to nip the garment in at your natural waist, or just above it. Use the period images as a guide.

bon (Figure 37).¹⁷⁰

The *banbi* was first worn by “maids of honour,” but the fashion trickled down to commoners.¹⁷³ Strict families did not allow their women to wear the *banbi* at all, and its popularity declined as a result.¹⁷⁴

***Da Xiu Shan* (大袖衫, *dǎ shòu shǎn*) — Large-sleeved Gown**

The *Da Xiu Shan* (女式大袖衫) or large-sleeved gown (Figure 39, 40), evolved out of the Tang Dy-

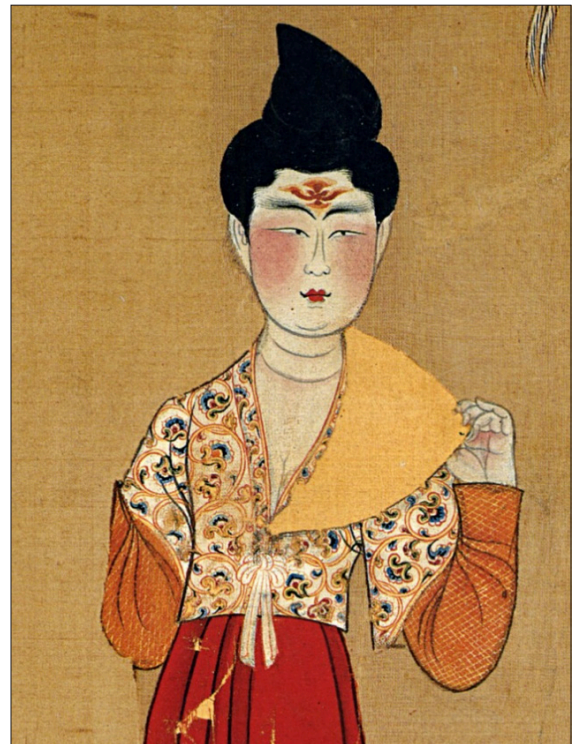


FIGURE 37: Detail of a mural painting of a dancer wearing a *banbi* from the tomb of Zhang Lichen (655-702), Astana Cemetery.¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Zhao, X. & Gao, C. (1987). p. 88.

¹⁷¹ 舞圖. [Dancer.] (c. 702). Tomb of Zhang Lichen, Astana Cemetery, Turpan, Xinjiang, China. Retrieved from: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Anonymous-Astana_Graves_Dancer.jpg

¹⁷² Female Palace Attendants. (7th century - 10th century). [Mural]. Shaanxi Museum, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China. Retrieved from *Virtual Collection of Asian Masterpieces*, <http://masterpieces.asemus.museum/masterpiece/detail.nhn?objectId=11389>

¹⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 77.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid*.



FIGURE 39: Detail from *Court Ladies Wearing Flowered Headdresses* (8th century), showing a woman wearing two layers of skirts, a gauzy large-sleeved gown, and a *pibo*.¹⁷⁷

nasty's primary upper garment, the shirt, or *ru* (襦). The diaphanous large-sleeved gown was a result of women's fashion moving progressively away from earlier Confucian ideals.¹⁷⁵ The shirt belted at the waistline, and the evolution of this can be seen in Zhou Fang's depiction of the large-sleeved gown in *Court Ladies Wearing Flowered Headdresses*, where the gown is tied near the bottom (Figure 39). The large-sleeved gown is also seen in silk paintings in the Mogao Caves and pottery figurines.¹⁷⁶



FIGURE 40: Detail of a painting depicting a bodhisattva leading a noble lady, dressed in a large sleeved gown, a shirt with large sleeves, and a *pibo*, to the Pure Land (late Tang Dynasty), British Museum.¹⁷⁸

HOW TO MAKE IT

While it is not necessary for a summer outfit, the large-sleeved gown can be a stunning ensemble for court, especially when made out of silk gauze. The large-sleeved gown is patterned the same way as the shirt, only with large, angel-wing type sleeves and longer body panels. The side seams on the body panels start at the waist, and the collar turns into the ties between the hips and knees.

This is a transitional garment — it doesn't come into fashion until late in the Tang Dynasty, and the majority of artistic representations of it are from

¹⁷⁵ Shaorong, Y. (2004). p. 27

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ Zhou, F. (8th century). *Court Ladies Wearing Flowered Headdresses*. [Silk painting.]

¹⁷⁸ 繪畫. [Painting (of a bodhisattva leading a noble lady to the Pure Land)]. (c. 851-900). [Painting]. The British Museum, London, England. Retrieved from: https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=6601&partId=1

the Five Dynasties/Ten Kingdoms period or later.¹⁷⁹

Accessories

Pibo (披帛, *pībō*) and *Peizi* (帔子, *pèi-tzū*) — Shawls and Capes

Both the *pibo* and *peizi* were pieces of silk fabric wrapped around one or both shoulders or draped over the arms and across the back, and is evident in depictions of women both period paintings and figurines. The *pibo* was narrower than the *peizi*, and presumably served a more decorative than utilitarian purpose (see Figure 36 and note the apparent decoration of the fabric).¹⁸⁰

There is a folk legend of Concubine Yang Yuhuan in which her cape is caught by the wind and blown onto someone's hat during an imperial banquet.¹⁸² This story would imply that the fabric of the cape was lightweight, though thicker, warmer fabrics might have been used as a protection against the cold in winter months.¹⁸³

HOW TO MAKE IT

The easiest way to make a shawl or cape is to use a piece of 8 momme habotai silk with a hand-rolled hem from a vendor like Dharma Trading Company, marketed for dancers. These can be dyed and are a great way to practice period stitch-resist techniques, such as seen in Figure 36. Use a measuring tape to get a good idea of how long you want your shawl to be - I generally use a piece of silk that is at least 2 ½ - 3 yards long and 12 - 24 inches wide.

Shoes

There are some extant shoes supposedly from the Tang Dynasty, but like with many items discussed here, it is difficult to track down image provenance to confirm dating and details. There is a Chinese book titled *The Study and Appreciation of Chinese Shoes in Past Dynasties* by Luo Chongqi, which discusses the larger history of Chinese shoes.¹⁸⁴

I have as of yet been unable to get the relevant



FIGURE 41: Detail of *Court Ladies Playing Double Sixes* (9th century), attributed to Zhou Fang. Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery.¹⁸¹



FIGURE 42: Detail from *Court Ladies Preparing Newly Woven Silk* showing two different types of shoes.¹⁸⁵

sections for Tang Dynasty translated, so my knowledge is based on what information we have concerning other shoes from previous and subsequent dynasties, as well as paintings and tomb figurines.

179 中國織繡服飾全集. [Corpus of Chinese fabric, embroidery and finery.] (2004). (Vol. 3). Tianjin Shi, China: Tianjin ren min mei shu chu ban she. pp. 368-372.

180 Hua, M. (2011). pp. 32-33.

181 周昉. [Zhou F.] (8th century). *Court Ladies Playing Double-Sixes*. [Painting]. Freer Gallery of Art/Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C. Retrieved from: https://www.si.edu/object/fsg_F1939.37

182 *Ibid.*

183 *Ibid.*

184 (2007). Shanghai: Donghua University Press.

185 宋徽宗. [Emperor Huizong]. (12th century). 搗練圖卷 [*Court ladies preparing newly woven silk.*] [Painting].

HOW TO FAKE IT

For the purposes of summer clothing, a pair of modern ballet flats will suffice if you do not want to make the small investment of time or money to make or purchase a pair of low-profile (meaning without the elaborate upturned toe) shoes or sandals.

Tang Dynasty shoes often featured an upturned toe. This is a feature that can be seen throughout China's history — high-ranking The Terracotta Army soldiers have shoes slightly upturned shoes,¹⁸⁶ as does Xin Zhui (辛追, Xīn Zhūi; died 163 BCE) who died during the Western Han Dynasty.¹⁸⁷ The shape and decoration of these toes on ladies shoes varies from simple to elaborate (Figures 25, 43). Women also wore simpler shoes which appear to have a top-seam that helps give them their upturned toe (Figure 42), as well as straw sandals with socks (Figures 22, 44).

Jewelry

Women's jewelry consisted primarily of gold and silver pins and combs used as hair adornments (Figures 46 – 49), though there are depictions of women wearing beaded necklaces (Figures 12, 13, 35, 45). Hair adornments were either attached directly, or to false hair pieces.¹⁹¹ Looking at paintings *Court Ladies Preparing Newly Woven Silk*, *A Palace Concert*, and *Court Ladies Wearing Flowered Headdresses* provides a good overview of the styles of hair adornments popular in the Tang Dynasty — combs, ornamented pins that sat flush to the hair, artificial flowers, and pins that extended beyond the head and featured dangling beads or



FIGURE 43: Silk shoes with a floral motif and raised toe (Tang Dynasty), from tomb 381 in the Astana Cemetery.¹⁸⁸



FIGURE 44: Hemp sandals from the Astana Cemetery.¹⁸⁹



FIGURE 45: Detail of female figurine sold at Sotheby's, dating from the Tang Dynasty, wearing a beaded necklace.¹⁹⁰

186 Strakova, J. (2007). Description and Characterization of the Terracotta Army footwear. (Diploma thesis). pp. 29-35.

Retrieved from University Tomas Bata in Zlin: <http://hdl.handle.net/10563/3696>

187 Hunan Provincial Museum. (2010). "Silk shoes." Cultural relics from the Mawangdui tombs: Silk. Retrieved from <http://www.hnmuseum.com/hnmuseum/eng/collection/collectionSuccinct3.jsp?columnid=011181c273d8402881ac1181b2bf0008&preid=010d149c6f274028811d-0d1492af0008>

188 中國織繡服飾全集. [Corpus of Chinese fabric, embroidery and finery.] (2004). (Vol. 3). p. 341

189 *Ibid.*

190 Baoping L. (n.d.) A Rare and important sancai-glazed pottery figurine of a court lady, Tang Dynasty. *Sothebys*. Retrieved from: <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2015/important-chinese-art-n09477/lot.272.html>

191 Zhang, J. (2014). p. 150.



FIGURE 46: Silver hairpin, beaten and gilt (Tang Dynasty), Victoria and Albert Museum.¹⁹⁴

FIGURE 47: Silver and gold hairpin, beaten, gilt, and chased (Tang Dynasty), Victoria and Albert Museum.¹⁹⁵



FIGURE 48: Carved and polished jade hair comb top (Tang Dynasty), Royal Ontario Museum.¹⁹⁶



FIGURE 49: Gold hair comb top (2nd half of 7th century), Royal Ontario Museum.¹⁹⁷

pendants that swayed when the wearer moved.¹⁹² Women and men (fifth rank and higher) also wore sets of jade pendants suspended from the waist.¹⁹³

There is a description of hair ornaments worn with ceremonial robes in period texts that outline the number of “trees with blossoms” (树, literally “tree”), presumably hairpins: 12 for the empress, 9 for the wife of the crown prince and other first rank ladies, 8 for the second rank, 7 for the third rank, 6 for the fourth rank, 5 for the fifth rank, and none for lower ranking ladies.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 151.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

¹⁹⁴ *Hairpin*. (618-906). [Silver, beaten and gilt]. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England. Retrieved from: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O41231/hairpin-unknown/>

¹⁹⁵ *Hairpin*. (618-906). [Beaten gold and silver, piercing, chasing]. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England. Retrieved from: <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O41227/hairpin-unknown/>

¹⁹⁶ *Comb Part*. (618-907). [Worked and polished jade]. Royal Ontario Museum, Ontario, Canada. Retrieved from: <https://collections.rom.on.ca/objects/350664/comb-part>

¹⁹⁷ *Comb component with flying birds*. (2nd half of 7th century). [Gold]. Royal Ontario Museum, Ontario, Canada. Retrieved from: <https://collections.rom.on.ca/objects/516790/comb-component-with-flying-birds>

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

HOW TO FAKE IT

Of all the Tang Dynasty sumptuary laws, jewelry, particularly hair adornments, are the easiest for us to translate into an SCA context. Assuming that the Queen is the equivalent of Empress and working downward, that would mean that Duchesses would wear eight hairpins/adornments, Countesses seven, Baronesses six, and Grant-of-arms holding ladies five. Hair adornments, be they combs or pins, can be easily fashioned using straight or u-shaped pins, combs, and various findings found online or at your local craft store. Suitable jewelry can also be found online, but in both cases, having an understanding of the general aesthetic of period pieces will serve you well in making decisions and not appearing overtly modern. No hair ornamentation is also perfectly acceptable.

Cosmetology

Like women's adoption of men's clothing, women's cosmetology is a discussion worth of its own class, if not more. To that, I will keep this section brief.

Hair, including "Adopted hair" (义髻, *hē jǐ*)

Tang Dynasty hairstyles ranged from simple to elaborate, but they were always updos. Women would supplement their own hair with false hair (Figure 50), even wooden wigs (Figure 51).¹⁹⁹ Simple topknots were adopted when women wore the clothing of eastern Turkic peoples, Uyghurs, Tibetans, or Khitans,²⁰⁰ so I'd suggest something a little more elaborate for your summer garb. This could be as simple as placing hair rats or teasing hair at your temples and hairline to increase the volume before sweeping the hair back into a chignon, or surrounding a topknot with false hair pieces. And don't worry about too much sun - there is evidence of parasols during the Tang Dynasty.²⁰¹

Makeup

Cosmetics were essential to a woman's appearance during the Tang Dynasty, as they are mentioned, if only in passing, in nearly every source on Chinese clothing and adornment focused on the period. Basic makeup application consisted of powder, rouge, eyebrows, lipstick, and, depending on the



FIGURE 50: Detail of Ladies in a garden (7th - 8th century), from a tomb mural from the Astana Cemetery, showing a woman carrying a false hair piece.²⁰²



FIGURE 51: Wooden wig from the tomb of Zhang Xiong (d. 633) and Lady Qu (d. 688) in the Astana Cemetery.²⁰³

199 Zhang, J. (2014). p. 150.

200 Chen, B. (2013). pp. 85-86.

201 Zhao, F. (2012). pp. 247-248

202 *Ladies in a garden*. (7th - 8th century). National Museum, New Delhi, India. Retrieved from: <http://www.nationalmuseumindia.gov.in/prodCollections.asp?pid=52&id=5&lk=dp5>

203 Zhang, J. (2014). p. 154.

	Zhenguan Period (627-649)
	The 1 st year of Linde Period (664)
	The 1 st year of Zongzhang Period (668)
	The 4 th year of Chuigong Period (688)
	The 1 st year of Ruyi Period (692)
	The 1 st year of Wansui Dengdui Period (696)
	The 2 nd year of Chang'an Period (702)
	The 2 nd year of Shenlong Period (706)
	The 1 st year of Jingyun Period (710)
	The 2 nd year of Xiantian Period — The 2 nd year of Kaiyuan Period (713-714)
	The 3 rd year of Tianbao Period (744)
	The 11 th year of Tianbao Period (after 752)
	About the 1 st year of Tianbao-Yuanhe Period (about 742-806)
	About the last year of Zhenyuan Period (about 803)
	Late Tang Dynasty (about 828-907)
	Late Tang Dynasty (about 828-907)










The Han Dynasty	
The Wei Dynasty	
The Tang Dynasty	
The Tang Dynasty	
The Tang Dynasty	
The Song Dynasty	
The Ming Dynasty	
The Qing Dynasty	
The Qing Dynasty	

FIGURE 52: Evolution of eyebrow styles in the Tang Dynasty.²⁰⁵

FIGURE 53: Evolution of lip coloring styles throughout Ancient China.²⁰⁶

fashion at the time, other facial or brow adornment.²⁰⁴

These might consist of *mian ye* (面靥, “dimples”), which are small dots on either side of the lips (Figure 25),²⁰⁷ or *huadian* (花钿), which were

various designs painted or ornaments applied to the brow (Figures 12, 27, 34, 36, 37, 42), including paper, silk, gold, or feathers.^{208,209} Some period depictions of women show the “slanting red” style of makeup, which is a curved mark resembling a cres-

²⁰⁴ Zhou, X. & Gao, C. (1987). p. 86.

²⁰⁵ Hua, M. (2010). p. 33

²⁰⁶ *ibid.*

²⁰⁷ “面靥.” (n.d.) In ZDic. Retrieved from <http://www.zdic.net/c/2/29/62290.htm>

²⁰⁸ Gao, C. (2010). p. 186

²⁰⁹ Chu, X. (2011). 唐代女性面部化妆特点. [Tang Dynasty female facial makeup characteristics.] *Journal of Beijing Institute of Education*, 25(4), pp. 65-68.

cent moon or scar that runs from the temple of the cheek (Figure 36).²¹⁰

Over the course of the Tang Dynasty, several different eyebrow (Figure 52) and lip styles (Figure 53) fluctuated in and out of fashion. Eyebrow pigment ranged from blue-black to greenish-blue in color, made from charred willow trees, conch shells, or indigo.^{211,212} Based on period depictions

For summer, I suggest one of the simpler makeup styles. Using modern makeup to achieve period looks is fine — and a lot safer. Remember to prime and set to keep your look lasting all day.

and Figure 53, it would appear that the lips were never completely covered with color.

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210 *Ibid.*

211 Zhou, X. & Gao, C. (1987). P. 86

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ouyang Yingzhao (歐陽 應昭), modernly known as Marti Fuerst, has been active in the SCA since 2011. She is a research nerd and a librarian. She is an administrator on The Eastern Gate, the unofficial SCA Facebook group for Chinese personas/research, and staffs the SCA Reference Desk (also unofficial) on Tumblr at <http://scareferencedesk.tumblr.com>. You can find her on The Book of Faces, on her website at <http://biblionalia.info/leah>, or at fuerstme@gmail.com. Photos of Ouyang by KRB Photography.