# COCKATRICE

The Arts & Sciences Journal for the Kingdom of Lochac

## AS 56 - Summer (February 2022)

**We're looking for photos of completed or in progress works, as well as articles, documentation, or class notes!**

Please send through anything you'd like to see featured in Cockatrice to editor@cockatrice.lochac.sca.org - **if you're excited about it, we're excited to help you share it!**


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# Contents:



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# From the Editor

Greetings lovely readers of Lochac's Arts and Sciences newsletter, my name is Mathilde Ficke Sitt and I am your new editor. I thought I would take this opportunity to introduce myself a little, as the Plague Times have prohibited events and travel that I might have been able to introduce myself to you in person. My primary interest in the society is costuming with a focus on the latter half of the 16th Century in England. I also have an interest in period cooking, but as someone who is currently working on a mundane thesis in a related area, I find sewing to be slightly more enjoyable as a hobby at this point. I currently reside in the Barony of Rowany and got my start in the College of Saint Ursula, which I'm still pretty involved in. So if you would like to come and say hello to me at Rowany Festival, you'll be able to find me in the Combined Colleges Campsite.

Lord Bjorn Saemundarson has left large shoes to fill in the role as editor, so I hope you will have some patience with me as I figure out all of the modern mundane workings of the newsletter. My plan is to stick to the quarterly schedule, with editions coming out at the beginning of the month (1st May, 1st August, 1st November) and the submission deadline being 1 month before publication (ie. 1st April, 1st July, 1st October). I'm so excited to see what the Kingdom has to offer, and I would encourage you if you're a reader to become someone who submits some of your work.

In this edition we have a wide variety of submissions from cooking, to experimental archaeology, to the bardic arts. Dytryk Lehrer introduces us to a 16th Century conserve (a recipe which I'm itching to try once oranges come back into season), Kaitorix Arvernom asks what is going on with ancient fabric foot coverings, and Shinjo Takame shares with us her entry into the Silk Road category of a recent Kingdom A&S competition with a traditional Japanese story.

I'm very much looking forward to seeing where my time as editor takes me, and us as readers, and if you have something you're working on and excited about I would love to see it so send it through to editor@cockatrice.lochac.sca.org.

Until next time,

Mathilde Ficke Sitt

# Conserve of Oranges

By Dytryk Lehrer

The above recipe is found in a collection of English recipes collated by an individual for which we are only given initials and printed in London in 1591. It covers a variety of recipes for various common foodstuffs and of particular interest is a series of instructions on making preserves in the latter half of the book.

**The original recipe**

*To make Conserve of Orenges. Take Orenges and pare them very thin the red of the out sides away and quarter them in four, and take away the white of the inside, then seeth them in faire water softlye for breaking, ofte change them in warm water til they be lost: as the yelownes dooth seeth away, so weareth away the bitternes, then take them out of the water and lay them in a fair vessell that the water may run away from them, then beate them small with a spoone, and put to every pound of Orenges one pound of sugar, and half a pound of Rosewater, and boile them togither and box them.* (W. 1591 p.87)

**Simplified Redaction**

To make Conserve of Oranges. Take Oranges and slice off the zest, quarter them and remove the remaining pith. Gently boil the flesh until it breaks up, changing the water often to remove bitterness. Strain and mash the oranges. To every pound of orange flesh add a pound of sugar and half a pound of rosewater. Boil these together and store.

**Recipe**

1 kilo bitter oranges
1 kilo cane sugar
500gm rose water

Zest oranges
Remove remaining pith and core
Simmer the flesh in water until softened
Strain off the oranges
Mash the flesh
Combine with the rosewater and sugar
Bring to the boil and reduce until thickened
Store in a clean container.

As the sweet orange was not introduced to Europe until the late 15th century and was quite uncommon during the period this recipe was written I decided to use the bitter seville variety of orange rather than the more common sweet eating orange (Morton 1987 p.134). This is consistent with the original recipe calling for water changes to remove bitterness.

I used unprocessed cane sugar in this recipe as it is the closest approximation available to period sugar available. Sugar in 16th century England would have been imported at an exorbitant price from sugar cane farms in Cyprus and Madeira (Ponting 2000 p.482) Sugar had been imported this way since at least the 13th Century ( Extracts from the Account Rolls of the Abbey of Durham).

The third step of my recipe calls for simmering of the flesh as the original recipe calls to seethe it, a word meaning to 'boil slowly' that fell into disuse in the 19th century. Simmering is the most useful modern word to replace it with (Seething! 2019).

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# Reconstructing a piece of Gallo-Roman footwear

By Kaitorix Arvernom

Background

A few months ago I came across this image of a pair of footwear, photographed by Fuller and Fuller (2008) at the Musée Bargoin in Clermont-Ferrand, France, and identified as Gallo-Roman, from the site of Les Martres-de-Veyre, central France.

I was immediately intrigued, because while these appear to be a type of sock, Romans typically did not wear socks. The ubiquitous nature of wearing only sandals on the feet can be seen on Trajan's column, a marble monument carved with thousands of lifelike depictions of Romans and their enemies, constructed in the second century

CE. In describing the types of figure depicted and their costume, the University of St Andrews School of Classics (n.d.) mention “caligae” [sandals] several times, and never socks. Below is an image from the column of a Roman clearly showing his sandals and his toes uncovered by any fabric.

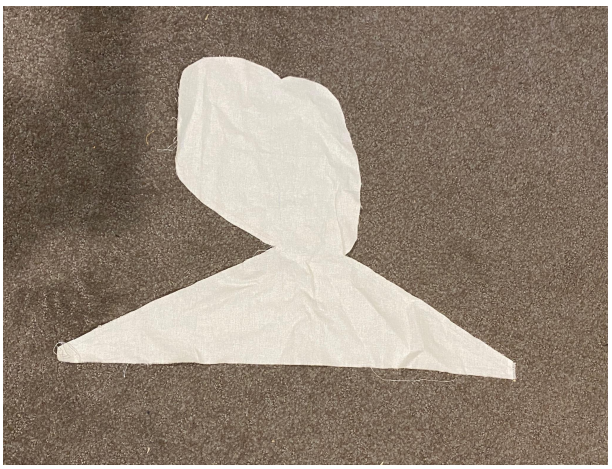
Additionally, there is no Latin word meaning “sock” documented in classical literature.

I visited the website of the museum where the footwear is housed, but unfortunately their collection is not digitised and there were no more images of the footwear. However, they give some indication of material: “La laine en est le matériau dominant” [wool is the predominant fabric (of the textile collection)] (Clermont Auvergne Métropole, n.d.). The museum gives a date range for their entire Gallo-Roman collection (52BCE-476CE), but not the Martres-de-Veyre collection specifically. Nowik et al. (2005) date other textile pieces from the same site to the first and second century CE, so it is possible the footwear also fall into this narrower range.

Construction

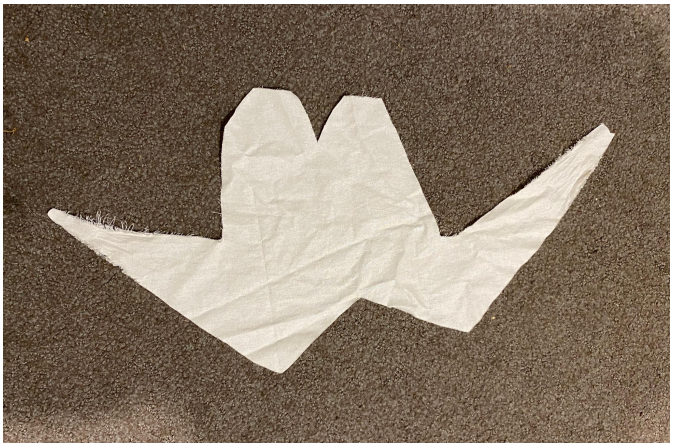
With only a single image to work from, and little clarity about the use of the footwear, I decided to do an experimental reconstruction. I used calico to mock up

what I thought to be a plausible shape of the garment. My first attempt is shown below:



I theorised that one of the oval shapes would fold over the top of the foot and the triangular sections would wrap around the ankle to tie at the back. However, when pinned, this shape did not close satisfactorily, shown in the following image:

In a second mockup, I remedied this by adding a seam line at the back of the ankle and altering some of the other angles.



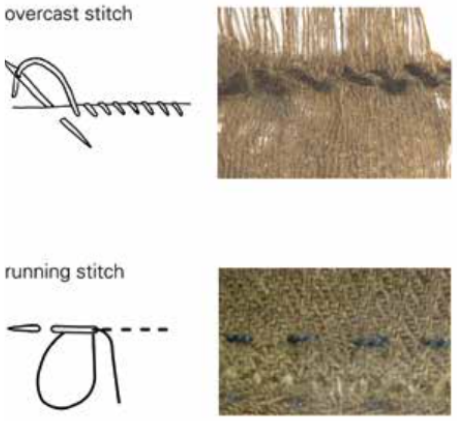
This improved the shape dramatically, though I cut this mockup slightly too small for my foot - a simple fix for the next stage.

For the final product, I used some blue and green wool plaid I had left over from a previous project. As previously established, the original footwear were likely made from wool, so my reconstruction is authentic in this regard. It can be seen from the photo of the original that they are a solid brown colour, so my reconstruction diverges here. While chequered and striped patterns were commonly used by Celtic

peoples earlier in the Iron Age (Grömer, 2016; see Appendix 1), I was unable to find evidence of their continued use in the Gallo-Roman period. This difference in fabric patterning does not concern me, because I was more interested in reconstructing the shape of the garment and considering its uses than creating an exact match. Below are some images of my finished product being worn: untied, closed and from behind.

I was unable to find information about specifically Gallo-Roman stitching methods, so I fell back on techniques documented to the pre-Roman Iron Age, the period immediately preceding the Gallo-Roman culture. I used running stitch for the seams (with the occasional back stitch for extra security) and overcast stitch to finish the raw edges. Below are examples of running and overcast stitch from the Iron Age Hallstatt (Austria) finds (Grömer, 2016, p.220).

These stitches are still in use for hand sewing and embroidery today, and I believe it is likely that they never ceased to be used once discovered. I am therefore confident that these stitches were plausible for the Gallo-Roman period. However, I would like to explore more heavily documented stitching practises in the future, if possible. An image of a seam is shown below.




Potential uses

1. Socks

   I have established that Romans are known to have not worn socks regularly. However, it is possible that this is an exceptional find, or the creation of an individual's whim.
2. Indoor slippers

After trying on my reconstruction, my hypothesis is that these were made to be worn inside, without shoes, to keep the feet warm on hard or cold flooring, while dirtier shoes were left outside.

3. Flooring protection

   Archaeologist and historical interpreter Gidney (n.d.) suggests that the footwear may have been worn over hobnailed shoes to prevent the nails from damaging indoor flooring.

This is by no means a finite list; is likely there are more possibilities surrounding the interpretation of these peculiar footwear which I have not considered.

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https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/trajans-column/the-project/the-human-figure-types/

Appendix 1: Checkered and striped Iron Age textiles

From Grömer, 2016, p.177.

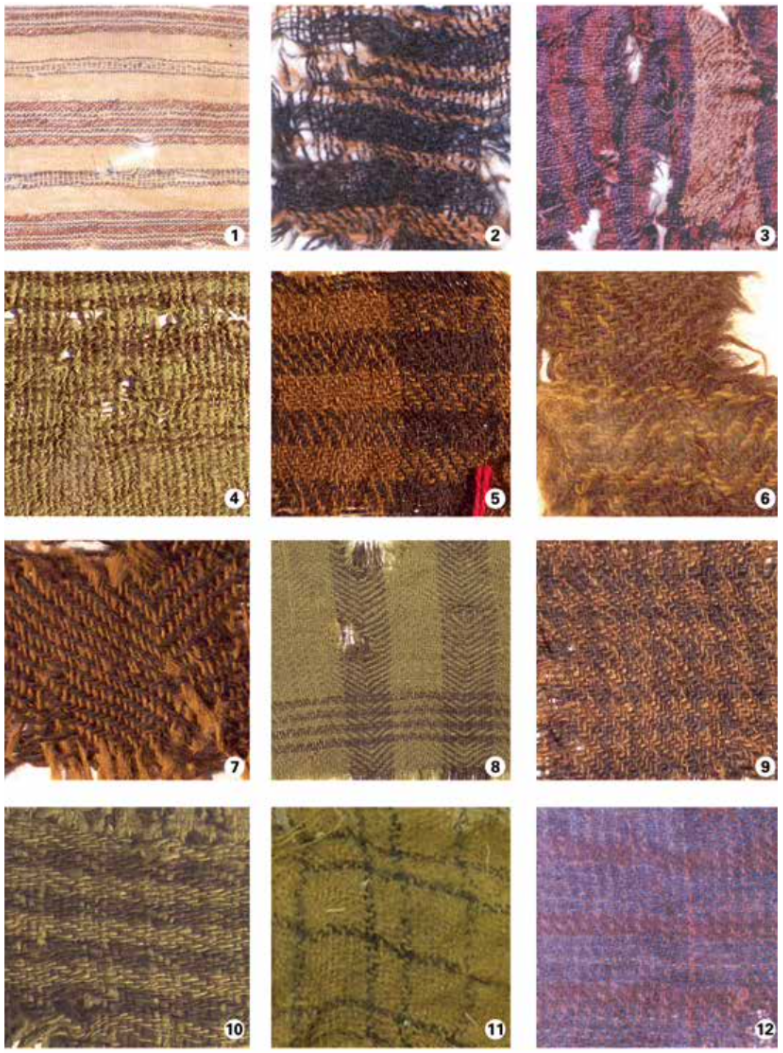

Fig. 99. Checked and striped fabrics from the salt mines Hallstatt (4–10) and Dürrnberg (1–3, 11–12), Iron Age.

# Taketori no Okina no Monogatari

By Shinjo Takame

The Tale of the Old Bamboo Cutter is a traditional Japanese folk tale that has origins in the 10th Century CE. Perhaps one of the earliest works of science fiction, it also has links to other motifs and myths that form part of the cultural exchange between east and west from trade, especially along the Silk Road.

A video of the performance can be found online here:

https://youtu.be/vqvgkwG9rfk

*Taketori no Okina no Monogatari*, or *The Tale of the Old Bamboo Cutter*, is a traditional Japanese folk tale that I have chosen to retell and perform for a modern audience. In order to properly represent the work with reference to the original folk tale as well as Japanese culture and tradition, I have done considerable research into the origins of the tale itself and the context from which it sprang. In the following paragraphs, I will go into this research with special reference to literary traditions and motifs used in the text. Following this, I will do an analysis of my own version of the tale in terms of the changes I made.

The folk tale *Taketori no Okina no Monogatari,* though named after the bamboo cutter, is truly the story of Kaguya-hime. The story details her life as follows. She is found by the eponymous bamboo cutter finds her inside a severed stump of bamboo, he takes her home to raise her with his wife. Though at first she is very small, Kaguya-hime soon grows to normal size and her otherworldliness is apparent. The bamboo cutter also finds gold nuggets inside the bamboo stumps, so she was raised in wealth and comfort. When Kaguya-hime comes of age she is courted by five suitors, all wealthy men of rank. She sets a difficult task for each of the suitors, promising to marry the one who succeeds, but all of them fall short. Kaguya-hime then comes to the attention of the Emperor himself, he attempts to take her into his court but she resists by turning into a shadow and the Emperor leaves without her. After many nights of looking at the moon and weeping, Kaguya-hime reveals to her parents that she is from the moon and soon the people from the moon will come to take her back there. This is met with reluctance by her parents and the Emperor, whom when he hears about this sends soldiers to surround the house to prevent Kaguya-hime from leaving. Nevertheless, Kaguya-hime is taken by the people of the moon, they give her an elixir of life and a robe of feathers. The elixir she has sent to the emperor, after drinking a little herself and then offering it to her parents who refuse. When she puts on the feather robe she becomes without

emotion and mortality and leaves with the moon people. The Emperor has the elixir of life burned atop Mt Fuji, with a poem he wrote for Kaguya hoping the words reach Kaguya-hime. And this is the reason given why Mt Fuji is given its name, which means "immortal" and is the reason that the mountain always has smoke coming out of it.

*Taketori no Okina no Monogatari* has is what is known as a *denki-monogatari*, an "invented tale" dealing with fantastical events. The text also contains a number *wakka* poems, these short poems are from which the modern *haiku* is derived and are missing from most translations of the tale. All these poems are diegetic, composed by the characters in the story as a method for them express emotion. This communication of emotion through poetry was a practise of the aristocrats of the Japanese court of the Heian period.

The origin of the tale and its author is a little unclear, but a clue to when it is written is that in the story Mt Fuji is referred as an active volcano which apparently stopped in 905CE. This puts the composition of the story in the late 9th-early 10th century CE. The story also alludes to several earlier stories and motifs that are drawn from Japanese and Chinese literary traditions as well as from India. The quests that Kaguya-hime sends her suitors on are a good example of this. These link the story to not only China and India but also much further to Central Asia, Europe with trade and travel along the Silk Road and even further to ancient trade in the Indian Ocean.

In the first quest, the suitor is sent to the land of Tenjiki for the begging bowl of the Buddha. Tenjiki is the Japanese word for India, it is translation of Tianzhu from Chinese which is a transliteration from them Persian Hindu which derives from the Sanskrit Sindu, the original name for the Indus River. The begging bowl of Buddha has a long history in Asia but was said to be in India from the 3rd to 9th Century where Chinese pilgrims reported seeing it.

The second quest, the suitor is asked to retrieve a branch bade of gold, silver and jewels from Mt Horai. Mt Horai is drawn from Chinese mythology, called Penglai which is said to be an island mountain to the east, where immortal beings live without pain, winter or want and the trees were of gold and silver with jewels. Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of a unified China of the Qin dynasty, was in search of the elixir of life and sent servants to find Penglai, one of these servants found Japan and named Mt Fuji, Penglai.

In the third quest, the suitor is asked to obtain the flame-proof robe made of the hide fire-proof rats from Morokoshi. Morokoshi is an old Japanese name for China and is of somewhat obscure origin. The hide of the flame proof rats is likely to be asbestos which has been used about since antiquity. Also referred to as the skins of fire-proof salamanders, asbestos' fire-proof properties were known about and there are stories of Persian kings having tablecloths made of asbestos, throwing it into a fire when wine has been spilled upon it and drawing out the tablecloth intact. Marco Polo refers to this in his *Travels* where he visits an asbestos mine in China.

The object of the fourth quest is the rainbow gem which is on the head of a dragon. I have not been able to find reference to a specific dragon with a gem such as this, but there is an association in East Asian mythology of dragons with tide-jewels, brightly coloured gems which are found on the

seashore. These perhaps could be luminescent pearls which can in fact have many colours. There is also an association with dragons and the sea and storms, occurring in several Chinese and Japanese myths.

The object of the fifth quest is a cowrie shell from the nest of a swallow. The cowrie shell is one of the oldest and widest used international currencies, originating from trade in the Indian Ocean. The Chinese character for currency was derived from a stylised depiction of a Cowrie shell. The swallow perhaps links this with its migratory nature, bringing the shell from a far-off land over the seas.

A curious fact I would like to point out is that the fifth quest is often omitted from modern retellings, seen by more modern translators and folklorists as a later addition.

One final motif I would like to discuss in the story is that of the feathered robe that Kaguya-hime puts on. A robe of feathers, a *hagaromo* is something that appears in other Japanese folk tales and it is always combined with a theme of transformation. In the stories *The Crane Wife* and the *Robe of Feathers*, the robe is the means in which the woman who owns it transforms from a human being into a bird, and once this robe of feathers is worn she is free from the cares of human beings, such as an earthly home, husband and child. In *Taketori no Okina no Monogatari*, this robe is given further supernatural qualities, making Kaguya-hime akin to a goddess rather than an animal. There are many stories about women who transform into animals or otherworldly beings in not just Japanese and Chinese mythology, but in the mythology of other cultures including in Europe and North America. Whether this means a motif such as this travels widely or is purely coincidental is undetermined.

In the final part of this analysis, I would like to explain how I approached adapting the story for a modern audience and the reasons behind the choices I made.

The first way I adjusted the story was in terms of length. The text in its oldest form is quite long and meandering, with long speeches of purple prose. To make it easier for a modern audience, I tried to make the text more to the point while still trying to capture its archaic prose style. Another omission I made were the names of the suitors, whom all had their names and ranks mentioned in the original tale. These I chose to omit as I have found from experience that too many names can be confusing in such a short form of story as a folk tale. However, I have chosen to outline the five quests in a short form as I see these quests as a link to the wider cultural context of the story even though their inclusion in the story is inconsequential. Lastly, I have chosen to not include the poems in the text, and I am not alone in this as most adaptations of the story do not include them. *Taketori no Okina no Monogatari* is seen by scholars as a story of proto-science fiction.

Kaguya-hime is a lady who truly comes from another world, and this is something she is not only accepted as, but revered for. Her story has been retold many times as part of Japanese folk lore and into modern times through graphic novels, animation and film. There is something timeless about it, and much to glean from its themes, characters and part of history and culture.

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