

59. The Costume of Pilate in the Boppard Panels



Since, in art, most people wear clothes, fashions and costume can be a fascinating area of study! Artists would use clothing to indicate a person of wealth, high status, part of the general population or someone evil. When the Boppard windows were being designed, anyone who was not Christian would have been a barbarian and therefore not good. In the 'Christ before Pilate' panel shown below, Pilate would not have been seen as a good man. It is interesting to consider how he has been represented.



PILATE FROM THE "CHRIST BEFORE PILATE"
BOPPARD PANEL IN THE BURRELL COLLECTION



A PAGE FROM ALBERT KRETSCHMER'S "COSTUMES OF ALL NATIONS"

[HTTP://COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG/WIKI/FILE:1400-1450,_GERMAN_-_049_-_COSTUMES_OF_ALL_NATIONS_\(1882\).JPG](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1400-1450,_GERMAN_-_049_-_COSTUMES_OF_ALL_NATIONS_(1882).JPG)



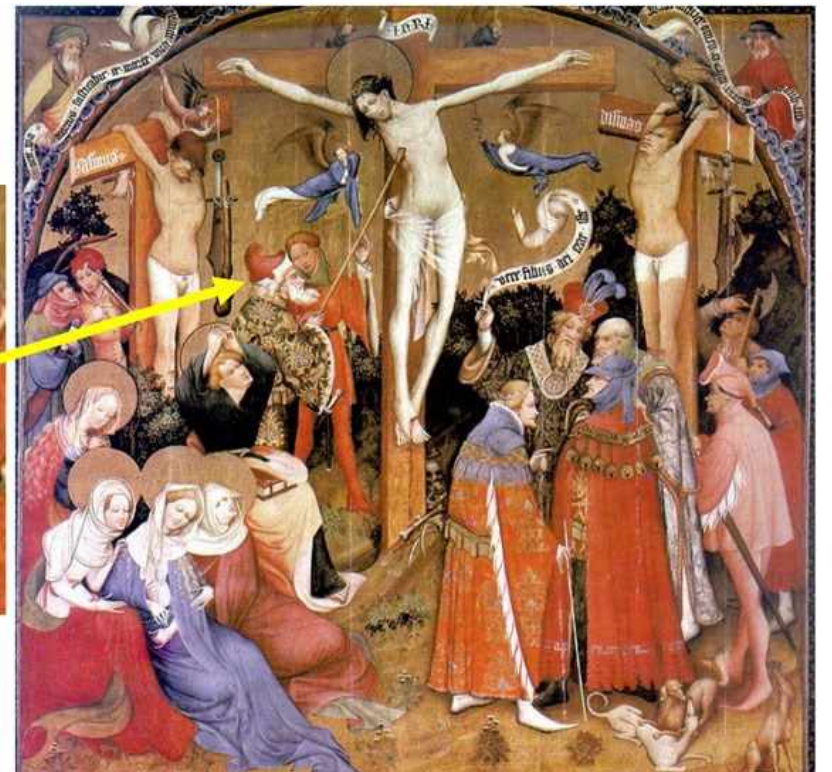
Clearly, he is a wealthy man of high status. There is a possible Turkish influence to his costume, with a fur trimmed gown and pointed hat and pointed beard, as the Ottoman Empire was of great interest in Europe at the time. However, Albert Kretschmer in his "Costumes of All Nations" under 1400-1450 German costume (on the left) shows a similar costume and describes him as a Jew. Albert Kretschmer (1825 – 1891) was a German professor and renowned painter and costumer to the Royal Court Theatre, Berlin.

In the Crucifixion, painted in 1403 by Conrad von Soest who was based in Dortmund in Germany, we see a similarly dressed man with a pointy beard pushing the spear into the side of Jesus on the Cross. According to the Gospel of John (19:31–37), it was a Roman soldier (named in extra-Biblical tradition as Longinus), who stabbed him in the side to check

that he was dead. In this painting, it is not a soldier, but clearly not a Christian. Perhaps this reinforces the idea that the costume represented a Jew or someone from the Ottoman Empire?

We can also compare Pilate's costume with a man in the Stefan Lochner Altarpiece of the Patron Saints of Cologne, in Cologne Cathedral and painted in the 1440s when the Boppard windows were being painted. Would these be Jews or Muslims? Was this style of costume worn by some of the wealthier people around Cologne in the first half of the 15th century?

Any thoughts?



CONRAD VON SOEST'S CRUCIFIXION, 1403

[HTTP://UPLOAD.WIKIMEDIA.ORG/WIKIPEDIA/COMMONS/B/B6/KONRAD_VON_SOEST_CRUCIFIXION.JPG](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/B/B6/KONRAD_VON_SOEST_CRUCIFIXION.JPG)



STEFAN LOCHNER'S ALTAR PIECE OF THE PATRONS OF COLOGNE, 1440S

[HTTP://COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG/WIKI/FILE:STEFAN_LOCHNER_-_ALTARPIECE_OF_THE_PATRON_SAINTS_OF_COLOGNE_-_WGA13341.JPG](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stefan_Lochner_-_Altarpiece_of_the_Patron_Saints_of_Cologne_-_WGA13341.JPG)