

# **A 1571 Spanish Court Gown *of red cutte satin***

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*Gown completed for Southron Gaard Baronial Anniversary March 2007*

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## Introduction

The garment is a woman's court gown of the style worn by the Spanish nobility and royalty circa 1571.

The gown (saya entera) consists of three elements<sup>1</sup>:

- A high collared, closefitting, front opening doublet ("sayeulo")
- Round sleeves ("manga rotunda"), slit horizontally at the elbow to allow the lower arm to emerge from the sleeve gown
- A fitted, trained skirt ("saya" with "falda")

The above elements, and the fabric treatment (slashing or cutting) and the additional embellishment with (gold) trim are typical of gowns in Spanish portraiture from the early 1570s<sup>2</sup>.

This gown is based particularly on the 1571 portrait of Anne of Austria by Alonso Sanchez Coello (Fundacion Lazaro Galdiano, Madrid). I chose this painting as the primary inspiration because I have wanted to make a cutte gown for some time and am particularly fond of the amounts and position of applied trim on this gown. I also like the way it utilizes applied trim, ouches and ribbon ties. However, as the portrait is only ¾ length it has been necessary to refer to other portraits for details regarding the skirt (for example the hem decoration)<sup>3</sup>.



**Figure 1:** Anne of Austria, Alonso Sanchez Coello (Fundacion Lazaro Galdiano, Madrid)

## The Sources

The following extant garments, portraits and documents provided evidence for this project.

There are no **extant Spanish women's garments** from this the 1570s, but there are several women's garments of Spanish origin from early in the following century and beyond. These garments as well as various extant men's and adolescent's garments have been referenced for evidence of construction techniques and materials. (See *Appendix 1: Garments Referenced*.)

While there are no **patterns** available for the exact period of this garment, there are a number of **cutting diagrams** from the following decades. There are two editions of Alcega's cutting book (*Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca* - a book of diagrams showing the most efficient way to cut pattern pieces for numerous different garments from a variety of different fabricwidths) – the well known 1589 edition in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the lesser known 1580 edition referenced in *Alonso Sanchez Coello y el retrato en la corte de Felipe II*<sup>4</sup>. Patterns from both of these editions were consulted in this project. It is important to note that Alcega's book contains cutting layouts rather than to-scale pattern

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<sup>1</sup> For discussion regarding these elements please see *Gowns of the Golden Age: A Survey of Spanish Women's Court Gowns between the years 1560 and 1585*.

<sup>2</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced* for the relevant 1570's portraits.

<sup>3</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced*

<sup>4</sup> J. Alcega. *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor's Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, 1999 and S. Saavedra. *Alonso Sanchez Coello y el retrato en la corte de Felipe* Museo del Prado, 1999

pieces. These diagrams provide useful information on the general shape of pattern pieces while also showing efficient pattern layout information, but should not be used for direct reproduction of the pattern pieces<sup>5</sup>. There is also a later cutting book of Spanish fashions by François de la Rocha de Burguen that was published in 1618<sup>6</sup>. While published significantly later, it corroborates much of the basic pattern shape and pattern cutting information gleaned from Alcega's diagrams with regards to skirts (the skirts are similarly cut on the fold such that both side seams are on the bias)<sup>7</sup>.

Spanish **portraiture** of the 1560s - 1580s was examined for information it can reveal regarding these gowns. These portraits provide information about fabric and fabric treatments, trim placement and general proportions, with some information on construction (such as the hem raising fold, application and placement of tabs etc). (See *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced* and also "*Gowns of the Golden Age: A survey of Spanish Women's Court Gowns between the years 1560 and 1585*" for a wider discussion of the topic.) I have chosen to focus on the portraits of the early 1570s as they are contemporary to the gown being made, but have also looked at gowns of the 1560s and early 1580s because they are similar in style<sup>8</sup>.

Other sources of information include **other extant garments** of either Spanish style or influence, such as the Pfalzgräfin Dorothea Sabina von Neuburg gown as discussed by Janet Arnold, or garments contemporary this gown, for information on plausible construction techniques and materials<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> This is particularly well illustrated by pattern number 66. The sleeve pattern is shown two pieces (to generate sufficient width through piecing) and the seam edge on the main piece is 72% of the size of the corresponding edge on the piece (or 'piece')

<sup>6</sup> F.R. de Burguen. *Geometria y traca perteneciente al oficio de sastres*, 1618. Reproduced, edited and translated by T. Dupuis. *The Renaissance Tailor*. [http://www.vertetsable.com/research\\_b161.htm](http://www.vertetsable.com/research_b161.htm) from the original manuscript housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

<sup>7</sup> This is not surprising as the skirts do not change much between the 1570s and 1620s, the same smooth cone shape with no waist pleating is the basis for skirts of that whole period. However the width of the hem becomes increasingly wide from the 1590s, but that simply requires a different angle on the side seam to accommodate the extra width of the farthingale.

<sup>8</sup> See *Gowns of the Golden Age: A Survey of Spanish Women's Court Gowns between the years 1560 and 1585* for a more detailed discussion of court gowns of this period.

<sup>9</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion: the cut and construction of clothes for men and women c1560-1620*. New York: Drama Book Publishers, 1995. page 114



## *Skirt (Saya*<sup>13</sup>)

I chose a **tailored waistline** such that the gown skirt flares smoothly out from the waist in a manner “produced through skilful tailoring rather than gathers at the waist”<sup>14</sup>. The portrait of Anne of Austria that provides the primary influence for this project shows no evidence of pleats at the front waist at all, and the  $\frac{3}{4}$  view of the portrait allows us to see the skirt for quite some distance around the hips<sup>15</sup>. Similar skirts are seen in a number of other portraits from this and the surrounding periods<sup>16</sup>. One portrait shows a single tuck in the waist (portrait # 21) but the unusual nature of the sleeves suggests it is not a typical gown of this era<sup>17</sup>. Several other portraits (# 3,5,13, 17) show a degree of extra fullness from  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way back (from centre front), but this can be easily achieved through flaring the skirt out from the fitted waist. The front of the skirt on my gown, and a substantial part of the back waist, was therefore cut without gathering or pleating. There are no portraits that show the centre back of these skirts, and Alcega does not mention whether or not the skirt is fitted or in some way pleated into the centre back. Alcega’s back skirt waist patterns generally appear to be slightly wider than the back doublet waist; this could be because this section is designed to be wider or this could be because Alcega’s patterns are not to scale. I chose to fit the centre back of the skirt rather than pleat or gather this area because later Spanish patterns show waist shaping<sup>18</sup> (The side seams are curved inwards towards the waist to smoothly follow the line of the farthingale into the waist without any pleats or gathers. This is the same pattern development I have obtained through trial and error of fitting to match the look of portraiture.) Experimentation with skirt pattern pieces from Alcega have shown that it is possible to achieve the look seen in portraits by carefully tailoring the back of the skirt waist, and no pleating or gathering is necessary. However experimentation did show that it was necessary to add a little extra width (2-4cm) into the back skirt waist for appropriate movement over the farthingale, especially if there are additional petticoats over the hoop skirt. Experiments also showed that this additional fabric is best placed at the centre back where the extra is eased (pleating or gathering is not necessary) into the waist seam with the doublet; the resulting pattern piece is therefore like that shown in Alcega’s diagrams.

The **train (falda**<sup>19</sup>) is based on several examples in portraiture (portraits 26, 27, 32) as well as a number of Alcega’s cutting diagrams (#63, 63a, 64, 66). The length was dictated by a combination of experience and available fabric. Past experimentation with wearing trains has shown that they are frequently stood on, but that a 20cm train is stood on more frequently than a 60cm train, and than anything over 90cm is impractical and unwieldy to wear. For this reason I chose to make the train 80 cm long. The train is cut in one with the back of the skirt, and the shape used in this gown was based on the back skirt panel in

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<sup>13</sup> R.M. Anderson. *Hispanic Costume 1480-1530*, Page 201, and J. Alcega *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Ed. & trans. by J. Pain & C. Bainton. Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, 1999. pages 47-50.

<sup>14</sup> R.O. Landini & B. Niccoli eds. *Moda a Firenze 1450-1580: Lo stile di Eleonora di Toledo e la sua influenza*. Firenze: Pagliai Polistampa, 2005. Page 32

<sup>15</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced*, portrait number 13

<sup>16</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced* portrait numbers: 5 ,6, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 26, 29

<sup>17</sup> Due to the irregular nature of this gown it would, in many scientific analyses, be eliminated from the data pool. However that would blind us to the variation present in portraiture. Indeed, the very unusualness of this garment, especially the waist tuck suggests this gown is the exception that proves the rule with regard to waist treatments in Spanish gowns.

<sup>18</sup> F. de la Rocha de Burguen *Pattern # 116a*, 1618. Reproduced and trans. by T. Dupuis *The Renaissance Tailor* [http://www.vertetsable.com/research\\_b161.htm](http://www.vertetsable.com/research_b161.htm)

<sup>19</sup> J. Alcega. Op Cit. Page 61

Alcega's diagram #63 as well as portraiture<sup>20</sup>. I chose pattern #63 because my fabric is of similar width to the fabric in that layout.

### Skirt pieces (back, front)

This shows a side by side comparison of both size and shape of the Alcega patterns (to the left) and my pattern pieces (on the right).

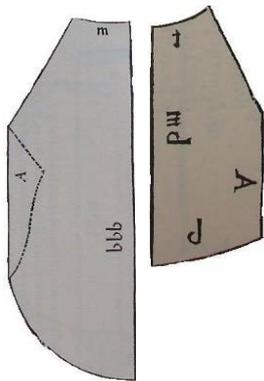


Figure 4: detail from Alcega pattern 63 (left) and pattern 66 (right)

Skirt back on the left, skirt front on the right

As you can see from Alcega's pattern pieces (#63 & #66 respectively) to the left, any width additional to that of the fabric is achieved using *cuchillos*<sup>21</sup>. I used that method too, as can be seen to the right, due to the limited width of the satin fabric used.



Figure 5: pattern pieces for gown. Skirt back (left) and skirt front (right)

The back skirt piece was cut on the fold as per pattern #63. The shape of the train was from Alcega's diagram #63, within the constraints of available fabric.

As can be seen from the pattern pieces above, the relative widths of the waists of the front and back skirt pieces suggests that the skirt is attached to the bodice without any gathering or pleating. (Note that the waist of my back skirt piece is not as narrow as the photograph would suggest – that is an issue with the perspective from which the picture was taken.)

### Doublet (*Sayeulo*<sup>22</sup>)

The doublet **front** on this gown utilises a centre front closure following the examples of portraiture and Alcega's pattern diagrams<sup>23</sup>. Not one of Alcega's gowns are cut such that the front piece is on the fold while 50% of those diagrams show the back piece cut on the fold<sup>24</sup>. Additionally, of the 33 portraits studied in the course of this project, seven clearly show the

<sup>20</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced*, portrait numbers 26,31 Portrait 13 was not referenced because it is only ¾ length and does not show the hem or train of the skirt.

<sup>21</sup> J. Alcega. *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor's Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, pages Page 47. *Cuchillos* is translated as 'godet' (J. Alcega Op Cit page 61).

<sup>22</sup> J. Alcega. *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor's Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, pages. Page 65

<sup>23</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced*, portrait number: 1,2,10,11,18,19,22, for front opening gowns, and cutting diagrams f.63, f.63a, f.64, f.64a., f.66, f66a J. Alcega *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor's Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, pages 47-9

<sup>24</sup> J. Alcega *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor's Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, pages 47-9

centre front of the doublet open to some degree<sup>25</sup>. The remaining portraits show no indication of how or where they open although the trim placement is consistent with those that open centre front i.e. either side of the centre front opening. The final consideration was that a front opening gown allows the wearer to dress themselves with ease and some degree of speed, which is vital in the modern, servant-less world and at busy SCA events. The “Woman’s Doublet” in the Metropolitan Museum of Art<sup>26</sup> (one of the few roughly contemporary extant Spanish women’s garments) fastens down the centre back. However I believe this to be the doublet of an adolescent, and that back opening doublets are features of adolescent and children’s clothing (see *Appendix 1: Garments Referenced* (Woman’s Doublet) for further discussion on this garment).

Hooks and eyes have been used as the **closure**. There is no evidence of how these garments fasten, but the roughly contemporary 1598 Dorothea von Neuberg gown discussed by Janet Arnold that is very similar (it too is a doublet style gown that opens at centre front) is believed to have closed edge to edge using hooks and eyes as there are no eyelets, buttons or other fastenings in evidence<sup>27</sup>. Portraits show no evidence of buttons, eyelets or other fastenings, and also show no evidence of overlap suggesting they too close edge to edge. In order to minimise the visibility of the closure (so that the gown can also be worn open) I have chosen to use hooks and eyes, which allows the majority of the fastenings to be hidden within the garment itself such that just the hook and the edge of the loops are visible.

With regard to the **back** of the doublet, I have also followed Alcega’s diagrams<sup>28</sup> and cut it on the fold.

Alcega indicates that the **back collar** should be cut in one with the back of the doublet, but for women’s clothing, may be cut separately ”Note that you could, if you wish, cut the collar at the back and so it will fit better. Many tailors find that it is usually better to do this as it avoids wrinkles round the back neck-line.”<sup>29</sup>. However none of the doublets in his gown diagrams show an attached back collar, or even collar pieces. For this reason I have chosen to use separate collar pieces – as shown in pattern f.70<sup>30</sup>. Experimentation has shown that a separate back collar gives a better fit and is more comfortable. The **front collar** is shown separate in the jubon (doublet) patterns, and not shown at all in the majority the gown patterns.

I have used **under arm side seams**, in line with multiple patterns from Alcega<sup>31</sup>. Alcega’s diagrams show there are clearly side seams located under the arms (see the two diagrams on the previous page, and the doublet pattern pieces (below). Some people believe is that trim is used to hide seam lines in this period and therefore the seams in this style of gown are often thought to be at the side back rather than under the arm, and sometimes even on the

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<sup>25</sup> Refer Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced, portrait number: 1,2,10,11,18,19,22, for front opening gowns

<sup>26</sup> Refer Appendix 1: Garments Referenced, page 29

<sup>27</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion*. Op Cit. Page 114

<sup>28</sup> Diagrams f.65a, f.66, f.66a J. Alcega *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor’s Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, pages 48-9

<sup>29</sup> J. Alcega *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor’s Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, page 22

<sup>30</sup> J. Alcega *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor’s Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, page 51

<sup>31</sup> cutting diagram numbers: f.63, f.63a, f.64, f.65a, f.66, f.66a. J. J. Alcega *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor’s Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, page 47-9

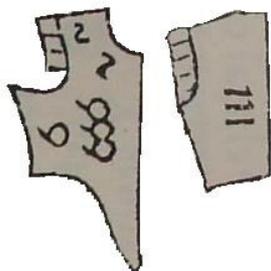
diagonal of the bodice front<sup>32</sup>. However none of Alcega’s patterns shown seams in these places, and portraits without braid in that location, which clearly expose the area, (such as portrait # 10, 19) show no seam line.

As with the Anne of Austria portrait<sup>33</sup> the gown being made has no **waist tabs**. I particularly like the line of Spanish gowns when the bottom of the bodice seam is not decorated with tabs that interrupt the elegant and severe silhouette of the gown.

**Shoulder tabs** have been cut from cabbage rather than as one with the doublet pieces as some of Alcega’s patterns<sup>34</sup> would appear to suggest. The curve of the armhole would not allow square tabs the whole way around as seen in portraiture, as there is insufficient fabric on the inside of the curve to allow the full tabs to be cut – particularly towards the underarm where it is more tightly curved. In order to avoid fraying, the tabs would have to have the edges bound or turned under but portraiture shows this is not the case. The tabs always butt together (eliminating turned under hems) and do not have bound edges. On that basis I made and attached separate tabs that were cut out of the cabbage

The small **collar tabs** on the upper edge of the collar are in line with portraiture<sup>35</sup> and extant garments<sup>36</sup>. Portrait numbers 1 and 2 show looped tabs (the tabs are formed by fabric looped back on itself) while portrait numbers 17 & 18 show standard square tabs inserted into the collar top. As portrait 13 does not show the neck treatment of the upper collar edge, I chose to use looped tabs as I like the look of them.

**Body pieces (front, back)**



The front of the bodice is on the left, the back bodice on the right. Alcega shows the back piece on the fold in #66, which I have copied.

The side seam is towards the back of the underarm area as per Alcega’s cutting diagram (# 66) to the left.



**Figure 6:**  
Detail of Alcega pattern 66

**Figure 7:** Pattern pieces - doublet front (left) and back (right)

I omitted the shoulder tabs in order to ensure more even tabs of a better shape – discussed above. (The tabs are not yet shown on pattern pieces on the right).

The shorter point at the front is reflective of the 1570s instead of the 1589 fashions the book shows. The other variations such as the smaller neckline, curved front, and wide shoulder seams etc are all due to individual tailoring to my body shape.

<sup>32</sup> for example, the work of K. George “Anne of Austria, Queen of Spain, Portrait interpretation” *Karen’s Sewing Korner: the costuming obsession* <http://www.karen.htmlcreators.com/anneofaustria.html>

<sup>33</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced*, portrait number 13

<sup>34</sup> Cutting diagram numbers: 63, 63a, 64, 65a, 66, 66a. J. Alcega *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor’s Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, page 47-9

<sup>35</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced*, portrait numbers 1,2,17,18,22,24,

<sup>36</sup> Refer *Appendix 1: Garments Referenced*, Man’s Doublet (Seventeenth Century)

## Collar pieces

There are no collar patterns given in any of Alcega's cutting diagrams showing dresses of this type. However, there are collar patterns shown in the cutting diagrams for ropas; patterns 70, 70a, 71, 71a and 72. I have chosen to use those collar patterns as they are consistent with the visible collars in portraits.

## Sleeves (*Manga Rotonda*<sup>37</sup>)

To generate the pattern of this horizontally slit sleeve I used a combination of one of a previous pattern, diagrams from Alcega and portraiture (with particular reference to the pale satin 1571 Anne of Austria portrait).

The basic **cuff** shape was taken from one of my previously developed patterns because it has the same shape and size as those seen in the Anne of Austria portrait and Alcega's various pattern diagrams.

The **length** of the sleeve was developed to echo the proportions of this specific portrait<sup>38</sup>. The slit sits just below the crook of the elbow such that the entire inner elbow is hidden by it. The cuff on portrait 13 sits lower than in some of the other portraits (e.g. # 14), such that it sits below the wrist of the wearer.

The **general shape** has been smoothed and evened out from the Alcega diagrams. The curves of the two sides often do not match in the Alcega diagrams which makes for an untidy seam that does not sit flat, so I have corrected that drawing issue (as Alcega is a cutting layout, not accurate draft of pattern pieces) by making both sides of the sleeves even .

### Sleeve pieces (upper, lower)

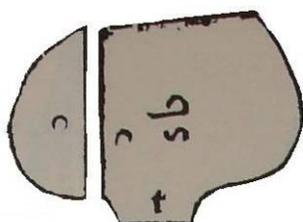


Figure 9: sleeve from Alcega pattern 66

As you can see, I have followed Alcega's method of achieving extra width, through the use of piecing. The use of sleeve pieces was necessary due to the width of the satin being used.

I have neaten up the shape, and used some fitting around the armhole to make it sit better. Initial experiments showed that a degree of shaping was required to make the sleeve sit and allow the wearer to feed themselves. Alcega leaves that area remarkable untouched in his diagram (see #66 to the left)

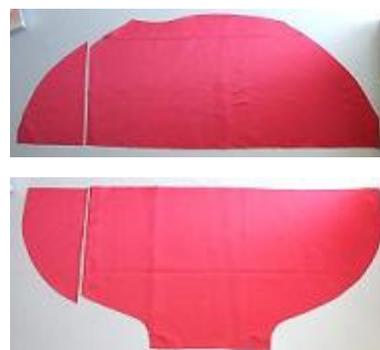


Figure 8: sleeve pattern pieces and added "pieças"

Alcega's sleeves are generally shown as a whole. I prefer to cut my sleeves into the upper and lower portions first, for easier management as the different pieces require different treatment in order to achieve the look in portraiture without being so heavy as to cause the rest of the gown to sit poorly. Specifically, experience has shown that the top sleeve needs fairly stiff, heavy interlining (e.g. canvas) to make it sit nicely open and to keep the back

<sup>37</sup> S. Saavedra. *Alonso Sanchez Coello y el retrato en la corte de Felipe II* (Madrid, Museo del Prado, 1990) Page 89.

<sup>38</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced*, portrait number 13

from collapsing on itself. However, interlining the lower sleeve too makes the sleeves too heavy such that they pull at the shoulder. As the sleeves are clearly slit in portraiture, the tailor must cut them open at some point.

Each of the elements shown above is consistent with the Anne of Austria portrait (# 13) and are also consistent with the majority of gowns of the 1570s. For further discussion on the style of gown and the individual elements see *Gowns of the Golden Age: A survey of Spanish Women's Court Gowns between the years 1560 and 1585*.

Alcega patterns are from a period significantly later than the dress being created so I have picked and chosen from his piecing methods what was appropriate to the portrait that I am interested in. I did not follow one cutting diagram slavishly as none exactly fit my fabric width.

## Cutting Diagram

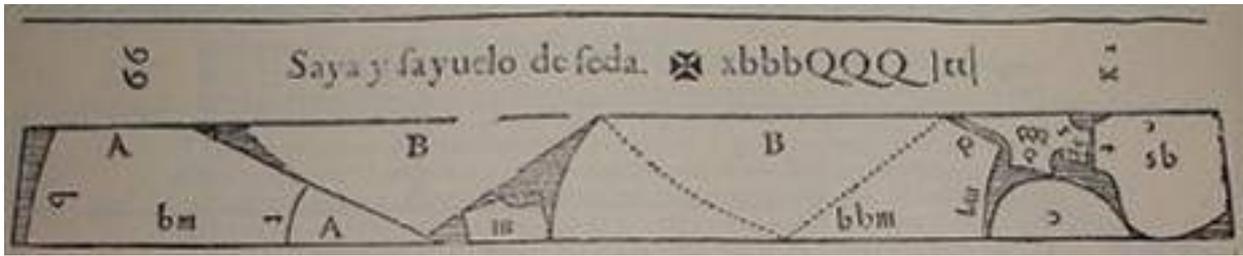


Figure 10: Cutting diagram 66 from Alcega

The above cutting layout of Alcega's (diagram number f.66) is the one I used for inspiration in the layout.

I chose this particular cutting diagram because it appeared to be the most efficient layout when I was placing the pattern pieces on the fabric in line with the various diagrams given in Alcega. I modified the layout slightly to take advantage of available fabric.

This layout also left plenty of medios (cabbage) sized for the likes of collar pieces as well as shoulder and wrist tabs - as you can see from the photograph (right) taken while testing the layouts<sup>39</sup>.

The spare fabric you can see under the back panel of the skirt was used for a train - the size and shape of which was tailored to the available fabric after the other pattern pieces were arranged.

The train shape is a curve as seen in numerous Alcega cutting patterns and also in contemporary portraiture. (Refer: Felipe's Wives, unknown artist, 1573, Hispanic Society of America and Isabel Clara Eugenia, Coello, 1585-8, Museo del Prado, Madrid.)



Figure 11: testing the Alcega layouts

The book off to the left is my copy of the Alcega facsimile that I was using for the pattern piece layout.

<sup>39</sup> J. Alcega *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor's Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, page 61

## Materials:

<b>Outer Fabric</b>	red delustred synthetic satin
<b>Backing Fabric</b>	black tabby weave cotton
<b>Interlining Fabric</b>	olive green, tabby weave cotton duck
<b>Lining Fabric</b>	navy blue tabby weave linen
<b>Trim</b>	gold coloured, synthetic 25mm wide textured ribbon gold coloured synthetic 5mm wide, looped edge braid
<b>Thread</b>	red 100% cotton (for stitching and finishing) gold colored synthetic around a core (attaching braid) red 100% polyester (basic construction and edging) white & grey 100% polyester (basting, quilting and edging)

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To make a cutte gown, satin fabric was required. My preferred fabric for this dress was silk satin (as used in period), but that was not available so it was eventually necessary to resort to synthetic satins.

Sadly I was shopping for the **outer fabric** in one of our colour droughts. I didn't want white as white gowns are hellishly difficult to keep clean - even without people's grubby shoe prints ground into the train. Also, the "wedding tax" added to heavy-weight white and off-white delustred satin lifted such fabric well out of my price range.

With white and off-white removed from the palate, I had to look at other colours that were used in Spanish gowns of this era. I turned to portraiture, which yielded the following:

<b>Black</b>	Isabel Valois, Sofonisba, c1561, Museo del Prado, Madrid Anne of Austria, Mor, 1570, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna Anne of Austria, Coello, 1570-1, Stirling Maxwell Collection, Glasgow Anne of Austria, Coello, 1571, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna Catalina Michaela, Coello, 1584, Museo del Prado, Madrid (among many others)
<b>Red</b>	Isabel Valois, Coello, c1560, Coleccion Varez Fisa, Madrid Isabel Valois, Mor, c1560, Coleccion Varez Fisa, Madrid Unknown Lady sometimes attributed to Coello, 1570s Unknown Man & Wife, sometimes attributed to Coello, c1590 (lining) Unknown Lady by unknown artist, 1590s, Versailles (red & black brocade)
<b>Pale Green</b> <sup>40</sup>	Anne of Austria, Mor, 1570s Anne of Austria, Gonzalez, 1570s, Museo del Prado, Madrid
<b>Brown</b> <sup>40</sup>	Catalina Michaela, Coello, 1583-5, State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

The gowns above are made of silk satin, damask, brocade and velvet. The colour does not appear dependent on the material.

The pale green was not an option because it was unflattering to the wearer and while brown was wearable, it was not in fashion and so not available. That left black or red, and the available fabrics settled that choice.

<sup>40</sup> It is very possible that current colours depicted in portraiture are not representative of the original shade.

A heavy-weight delustrated satin in quite a dark, but rich red was chosen over the competition of flimsy and/or uber-shiny (and therefore un-period) satins in various shades of black and fire-engine red because it was the only fabric available that was heavy enough and closely woven enough to support being slashed. The silk-like lustre of this red satin (reminiscent of the 1580-90 red satin cape of Spanish origin in the Victoria and Albert Museum<sup>41</sup>) confirmed it was by far the best of the available fabrics.

As the de-lustrated satin fabric was to be cut all over the skirt and sleeves, it was necessary to choose a **backing fabric** that would suit the garment and hide the interlining fabric. Extant garments show evidence of slashed garment backed with fabric<sup>42</sup>. I chose to go with black lining because the colour was quite subtle while also adding depth to the slashing. It was elegant and understated such that the occasional flash of a dark backing fabric from an opened slash would not detract from the rest of the gown in the same way that a burst of gold or white would. The cutting itself does not expose the backing fabric (they are simply a single cut in the fabric), but movement of the fabric opens the cut slightly allowing us to glimpse inside it. I was forced to use cotton due to the lack of black linen available, and the unaffordable expense of silk. I considered using more of the blue linen fabric used for the lining, but the colour combination just did not work.

Due to the fact we simply can't get linen canvas, combined with the limited availability of suitable weight **interlining fabric**, it was necessary to choose an olive green, tabby weave cotton fabric (duck) had the weight and body that I wanted for this gown. Interlining is necessary to provide support to the outer shell fabric by taking the strain of a fitted gown. It is also a period technique<sup>43</sup>.

While black **lining** would have been ideal, there simply was not any black linen available during the period I was shopping for and making this gown. The navy blue linen was the next best thing, and will not be seen when the gown is worn anyway. The purpose of lining is to protect the inside of the garment etc, and linen lining can be seen in such period examples as the 1570-80 Woman's Loose Gown discussed in *Patterns of Fashion*<sup>44</sup>.

Synthetic **braids** were used due to the lack of availability and prohibitive expense of proper metal thread options. The wider braid was chosen first because it was the only gold trim of a width like that from the portrait (#13) (between 15 & 30mm) that was a reasonable price (less than \$10/m) available in sufficient quantities (35m - and that emptied two stores of their stock). The narrow trim was picked at a later date to match the gold tone of the wider braid. There was a choice between several flat lurex cords, lurex-edged Christmas ribbons and a loop edged cord braid. I chose the loop edged braid because I liked the detail and delicacy of the trim, and the fact it did not look 'cheap' when combined with the fabric and wide braid.

**Cotton thread** was chosen in light of availability and use in period. (Specifically the Iberian Shirt (where cotton thread was used to embroider a linen shirt<sup>45</sup>) and the probable, earlier use

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<sup>41</sup> Personal notes and photographs from the Victoria and Albert Museum (2003)

<sup>42</sup> J. Arnold. Op Cit. Page 200

<sup>43</sup> J. Arnold. Op Cit. Page 106, 108

<sup>44</sup> J. Arnold. Op Cit. Page 112

<sup>45</sup> Los Angeles County Museum of Arts. [www.lacma.org](http://www.lacma.org). Item # M.89.40.3

of cotton thread in for construction purposes in garment manufacture<sup>46</sup>). This shows the use of cotton both prior to and directly following the target period of the gown indicating that it is not unreasonable to suggest it was also used in such a manner during the intervening period.

While I would have preferred to use linen thread as this is more period, that was not an option for this project as the linen threads on offer proved to be prohibitively expensive, too thick and of an unsuitable colour.

The **synthetic threads** were chosen because my machine cannot use cotton thread. Inexpensive synthetic threads could be used on my machine and were used for basic zig-zagging of edges, heavy quilting (e.g. the multiple layers of canvas stiffening for the bodice point) and basic construction seams etc, or were the thread was not going to be part of the final gown (e.g. the generic white basting threads). The synthetic gold thread was chosen because it matched the trim used.

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<sup>46</sup> “In 1392-5 a Great Wardrobe account records the purchase of 6lb of cotton thread ... and there is some evidence that it was used in making clothes for Richard II.” E. Crowfoot et al. *Textiles and Clothing 1150-1450*. Boydell Press (2001). Page 152

## Tools:

<b>Steel Needles</b>	for hand sewing
<b>Steel Pins</b>	for holding seams and fabric together prior to stitching and pattern cutting
<b>Fabric Scissors</b>	for cutting out the fabric
<b>Sewing Snips</b>	for neatening threads
<b>Sewing Machine</b>	for basic construction
<b>Craft Knife</b>	for making slashes

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**Steel needles** were used due to availability and convenience as they are a tool with which I am familiar and comfortable, and can purchase with little difficulty. The use of steel needles is not inconsistent with what is known about Elizabethan era needles. Indeed, (Spanish) steel needle-making was introduced to England during the eighth year of Queen Elizabeth's reign<sup>47</sup>. This would indicate that steel needles were available in England from 1566, roughly five years before the date of the gown in question.

**Steel pins** were also used due to availability and convenience. As steel needles were available in this period, it is therefore not unlikely that steel pins could have also been used. There is archaeological evidence of copper or copper alloy pins in this period dated to the 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>48</sup>; however copper pins are not available and the only brass pins easily available (lace pins) proved to be too soft for ease of use with the linen fabric.



**Figure 13:** detail of *The Tailor* by G.B. Moroni c 1570 (National Gallery, London)

Modern **fabric scissors** of a style similar to period fabric shears shown in various images were used for cutting the fabric.



**Figure 12:** detail of the woodcut on the cover of the *Tailor's Pattern Book*

**Snips**, very similar in design to those shown to the right were used for cutting and trimming threads.



**Figure 14:** 16th century Italian shears

A **sewing machine** was used for preparation and construction of inner layers that would be not seen on the final gown, such as heavy quilting (for the multiple canvas layers in the doublet point), attaching interlining, and edging the fabric. Machine stitching was also used for a few basic construction seams: the skirt seams, side and shoulder seams on the doublet, wrist, slit and outer curve seams on the sleeve. The wide trim was sewn on using the machine. This was a necessary time and health saving measure, but it also proved necessary as the metallic thread required constant tension such that hand sewing was near impossible. The machine stitching on the trim follows the texture on the ribbon making it nearly invisible. All other sewing and finishing was by hand

<sup>47</sup> Stow, John. *Survey of London and Westminster*, Published 1598. Via "Pins and Needles" *Sealed Knot* and *Stefan's Florilegium*

<sup>48</sup> Oxidation colour (green) would suggest copper or copper containing alloy (e.g. brass). M. Amjar-Wollheim, Marta. *At Home in Renaissance Italy: Art and Life in the Italian House 1400-1600* (V&A Publications, 2006) Page 118

## Trim Placement

Alcega does not discuss trim or trim placement in his cutting diagrams, so it was necessary to turn to portraiture for this information. The trim placement used was consistent with the Anne of Austria portrait (#13) except with regard to the hem. This particular portrait is only  $\frac{3}{4}$  length so it was necessary to consult other contemporary portraits (# 12 and 16) to determine the number of rows of braid to apply around the hem.

Portrait 13 shows the wide braid used everywhere except the tabs, I have copied this. The two trims are similar in the portrait, and the same gold tones. Being unable to purchase similar trim in two suitable widths, I chose to use two trims that matched gold tones.

The trim was applied in the following areas (as shown in portrait 13):

### Doublet:

- centre front from top of collar to waist (on each piece before they are sewn together)
- Diagonally, straight from back waist to point of shoulder
- Diagonally, straight from front waist to point of shoulder
- two rows around wrist
- two rows either side of horizontal sleeve split
- from point of shoulder to neck (along the seam)
- up the neck in seven evenly spaced rows
- narrow braid on shoulder and wrist tabs around 3 sides of tab just in from the edge



Figure 15: detail of portrait 13, showing braid placement

### Skirt:

- two rows down either side of centre front that run parallel to one another.
- At the hem they then turn 90° and continue around the hem of the skirt.



Figure 16: detail of portrait 12 showing the trim on the skirt



Figure 17: detail of portrait 13 showing shoulder tabs

When there is trim on the **tabs** it usually runs either around the edge or just in from the edge on three sides<sup>49</sup>. In one instance the wide gown braid has been used on the tab and covers the whole surface of each tab.<sup>50</sup> I decided to run narrow trim just in from three sides in line with the 1571 Anne of Austria portrait (#13).

<sup>49</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced* portrait number 13,14,19,25

<sup>50</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced* portrait number 7

## Fabric Treatment - the “cuttes”

The heavy delustrated satin used in this garment was specifically chosen because it could support being “cutte” or “slashed”.

By “cutte” or “slashed” I mean the Spanish style of slashing (see right) that consists of bias cuts set diagonally to the centre front and at right angles to one another all over the fabric of the garment as seen in numerous portraits of Spanish women.<sup>51</sup> (These cuttes are larger than pinks but generally less than 10cm long<sup>52</sup>. See below for further discussion of the size of cuttes.)



Figure 18: from portrait 1 showing cuttes on the skirt

This slashing is seen on the skirt and round sleeves, but not the doublet, of the portrait that provides the primary inspiration for this project: the Alonso Sanchez Coello portrait of Anne of Austria in the pale cutte satin gown.<sup>53</sup>

My chosen fabric is sufficiently tightly woven that it frays only slightly when cut across the bias lending itself to this period fabric treatment. Slashes and pinks are discussed in *Patterns of Fashion*<sup>54</sup>.

### Orientation and Placement of cuttes

Careful examination of the cutte gown portraits<sup>55</sup>, showed that:

- the cuttes are not generally seen under the applied braid or decorations, although they very occasionally start under the outermost line of braid
- the centre front cuttes on the skirt normally angle downwards towards the centre braid
- the cuttes on the top part and bottom part of the sleeves generally angle towards the crook of the elbow
- the cuttes are orientated in relation to the grain of the fabric rather than radiating out from the waist on the skirt. (This is sensible as it ensures the cuttes are always on the bias reducing potential fraying and increasing the usable life of the garment.)
- the size and relative positions of cuttes varies considerably. They vary between small and distant (approximately 4-5cm every 8-10cm) and significantly larger and closer together (approximately 8-10cm every 3-5cm).

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<sup>51</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced*, portraits 1, 2, 3, 4, 13, 14, 20

<sup>52</sup> Pinks on a set of red satin sleeves from between the years 1580 & 1600 are described as 1.5mm long. J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion* Op Cit. page 39

<sup>53</sup> A. Sanchez Coello. *Anne of Austria*. Painted 1571. Currently in the Fundacion Lazaro Galdiano, Madrid.

<sup>54</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion* pages 26-9

<sup>55</sup> Refer *Appendix 2: Portraits Referenced*, portraits 1, 2, 3, 4, 13, 14, 20

After considerable experimentation I decided on cuttes that are on the smaller and more sparsely placed end of the scale: 4cm long spaced 8cm apart. This combination was the most suited to my size and shape, and also had the best appearance on the sleeve patterns of all the combinations I tried.

In this gown I have chosen to cutte/slash the skirt and round sleeves, but not the bodice as for portrait number 13. If I had slashed the doublet body, it would have been messy and untidy. There would be only two complete slashes on the front of the bodice as it simply isn't wide enough to fit any more slashes in. Not slashing the doublet while the rest of the gown is cutte is seen in the 1571 portrait of Anne of Austria by Alonzo Sanchez Coello (Fundacion Lazaro Galdiano, Madrid).

## Recreating the Look

Alcega does not cover the topic of fabric decoration such as trim application or pinks and cuttes. However, Alcega does mention the use of "xabon" (soap) to mark out manto patterns<sup>56</sup>. It makes sense that soap may have been used to mark out cuttes.

Because of the lack of cuttes under braid lines, it was necessary to cut out the pattern pieces before slashing the fabric. Marking and making the cuttes at this time was also necessary to position the slashes correctly.

Using careful measurement I set aside the edge fabric where the trim would be places and drew in the centre front line of cuttes at 45° to the edge of the fabric with chalk. I chose to use chalk rather than soap because I am familiar with it and know I can simply brush it off the fabric. I hope to test using soap on a less expensive project in the future.



**Figure 19:** cardboard cutte pattern (please note Grey the cat making sure the ruler doesn't get away)

I had hoped to use a cardboard pattern (refer right) but this proved to be unfeasible. Lining up the already marked fabric with the slots on the pattern required fiddling that caused significant shifting of the underneath fabric, which in turn resulted in the cuttes not being perfectly on the bias. So I resorted to the set-square and ruler approach. By using the set square and ruler I was better able to check the fabric to keep it square as I marked off the cuttes. (The ruler proved to be a magnificent cat magnet with two kitties desperate to help me keep track of it throughout this process.)

With larger pieces it was necessary to secure the fabric to stop it shifting during this process - I found the best way to do this was to stick a pin through the centre of each cutte into the carpet below. As a bonus this method showed up minor misalignments and also meant I could simply sit the metre ruler against the already done pins and start marking.

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<sup>56</sup> J. Alcega. Op Cit. Page 67.



**Figure 20:** cuttes marked and in the process of being opened

It is known that chisels were used for pinking in Spain during the late sixteenth century<sup>57</sup>. The width of these chisels suggests they may have been used for cuttes<sup>58</sup>. It is not known whether tailors used other things, e.g. knives or scissors for making these types of cuttes in period. I chose to use a knife to cut these slashes over a chisel for convenience. While I have found my buttonhole chisel to be very helpful, it does not always cut cleanly along the length of its blade when it is getting dull resulting in pulled threads (which is a real problem with satin and mars the surface) or it taking two attempts to make a cut (which results in a scruffy cutte). Lacking the facilities (and skills) to shape, sharpen and temper such a thing myself, using a chisel would have necessitated numerous trips across town to get the chisel sharpened over the duration of slashing this fabric. By contrast, I can easily change the blade on a craft knife myself.

With the cuttes drawn onto the back of the fabric, I used a very sharp craft knife (against a steel ruler) to cut the slashes on a non-stick cutting board. Each cutte needed to be made in the correct direction to reduce the shredding of the edges of the cuts to a minimum. Experimentation has shown that only one layer at a time can be cut in order to get sharp and straight cuttes. This means every single cutte has to be measured, marked and cut individually. Marking and making cuttes on the skirt and sleeve pieces took approximately 36 hours.

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<sup>57</sup> J. Arnold. *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd* (London: Costume and Fashion Press, 1988) page 187

<sup>58</sup> J. Arnold. *Queen Elizabeth's Wardrobe Unlock'd*. Op Cit. Page 187.

## Construction Method:

Before anything gets put together, I needed to back, interline and stiffen as appropriate each pattern piece:

- **Skirt pieces** - backed with black fabric (Past experience has shown that no interlining is necessary because the farthingale and underskirts provide sufficient support such that the outer fabric does not take any significant strain<sup>59</sup>.)
- **Sleeve pieces** - backed with black fabric
- **Upper sleeve pieces** - interlined with canvas (Previous experimentation has shown that the upper sleeve must be interlined in order to support the shape of the sleeve without collapsing. However interlining the whole sleeve makes the sleeves so heavy they pull the entire body of the gown out of alignment and make it very difficult to wear.)
- **Body pieces** - interlined with canvas
- **Front body pieces** – point stiffened with additional canvas to assist it to sit properly (see below)
- **Collar pieces** - interlined with canvas

The use of heavier fabric interlining is a period construction method as shown by the image to the right where you can see a heavier linen interlining poking through a hole in the lighter linen lining in the body of a 1560 man's doublet<sup>60</sup>.



**Figure 21:** interlining of and English 1560 man's doublet

Like the example to the right, I have used a heavier fabric (relative to the lining and shell fabrics) to interline this garment to provide support to the outer fabric (by providing a strong internal layer so that the more delicate outer fabric does not take the strain of wearing). I have also used interlining to add stiffness to keep the body in shape. For example to keep the front bodice point sitting flat.



**Figure 23:** interlining and added stiffening

Additional stiffening of the front of a doublet is a practice seen just after period.<sup>61</sup> (see right – detail of 1616 English doublet<sup>62</sup>) The point stiffening assists the sit of the garment by making the point sit flat and as similar doublet points are seen regularly before the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century it is not unreasonable to assume this technique was also used in period.



**Figure 22:** stiffening of a 1616 English man's doublet point

I have added two extra layers of canvas to the doublet's point. The stiffening is

<sup>59</sup> Unless stood on.

<sup>60</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion: the cut and construction of clothes for men and women c1560-1620*. New York: Drama Book Publishers, 1995. page 20

<sup>61</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion: the cut and construction of clothes for men and women c1560-1620*. New York: Drama Book Publishers, 1995. page 29

<sup>62</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion: the cut and construction of clothes for men and women c1560-1620*. New York: Drama Book Publishers, 1995. page 29

quilted together before being stitched to the matching canvas interlining. This adds stiffness to make point lie flat but not visible from outside of garment, just like period example shown to the right<sup>54</sup>.

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After cutting out the pieces I would normally allow the skirt, its back and lining to hang separately for several days in order to let them ‘drop’. However upon hanging the pieces it became immediately obvious that the cutte fabric was not going to survive the practice very well.

The cuttes closest to the side seams gaped suggesting they need the support of the backing fabric and lining in order to sit like the portraits. I took the pieces down and put them aside to be backed without ‘dropping’.

In order to counteract any future drop I ran a couple of lines of stay stitching along the side edge of the skirt pieces to minimise the shift along the bias. Alcega’s cutting diagrams clearly show that the bias-to-bias seam was most common in his method of constructing these gown skirts (because all skirt sides are shown on the bias) but he gives no information on how to counteract bias drop. Stay stitching is a simple and fairly effective option that does not intrude on the construction method or finish of the skirt to the same extent that binding or stitching a non-stretch tape along the seam would.

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In order to **interline the fabric** as seen in the preceding page, and also achieve the smooth line seen in the Spanish portraiture of the 1570s, it is necessary to ensure the outer (shell) fabric is backed and interlined smoothly without wrinkles, warping or pulls etc.



Figure 24: the shell, backing and interlining fabrics

This is the method I used.

Each additional layer of fabric was ironed to the satin, one at a time before the whole thing is flipped and ironed from the right side of the fabric.

From right to left you can see the red satin outer fabric, the black backing fabric and the olive green canvas interlining on an upper sleeve piece.

The layers were then carefully pinned at regular intervals all over the piece.

It was necessary to avoid pinning over cuttes as the fabric lacked structural integrity to maintain its orientation relative to the backing fabrics. Consequently it was necessary to pin between cuttes, as can be seen to the right.



Figure 25: the upper sleeve layers pinned together



The pinned layers were then hand basted together with large tacking stitches radiating out evenly from the centre.

The basted layers were then machine sewn together around the edges. I used a large zigzag stitch to edge the pieces because it not only does an excellent job of keeping the layers together, but also eliminates fraying. Machine stitching was a necessary compromise for health reasons, and not unreasonable as it cannot be seen in the finished item

**Figure 26:** basted together and ready for edging

*After this point the shell, backing and interlining fabrics were treated as one.*



**Figure 27:** the outer and backing fabrics sewn together

Any piecing to give extra width (for example pieças for the sleeves or cuchillos for the skirt<sup>63</sup>) and their corresponding pattern pieces were first backed with the backing fabric and then sewn together so that the seam allowance can be stitched to the backing fabric and therefore not visible on the outside of the gown. This technique makes the seam allowance less visible from right side

Once sewn, the seam allowance was carefully hand stitched (using whip stitch) down to the backing fabric to guarantee the seam would permanently lie flat as seen in period examples<sup>64</sup>. The interlining was then applied if required.



**Figure 28:** whip-stitching the seam allowances down for a smooth seam

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<sup>63</sup> These are both terms used by Alcega. J. Alcega. *Libro de Geometria, Pratica y Traca*. Madrid: 1589. Facsimilie: ed and trans. By J. Pain & C. Bainton. *The Tailor's Pattern Book, 1589* Hollywood: Costume and Fashion Press, page 47

<sup>64</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion: the cut and construction of clothes for men and women c1560-1620*. New York: Drama Book Publishers, 1995. page 29



**Figure 30:** pinning the braid to the skirt

At this time I took the opportunity to stitch on as much of the **applied trim** as possible. The combination of the placement of trim and the seam positions on this gown allows nearly all of the braid to be applied to while the gown pieces are laying flat. This was initially done by machine for health reasons, but also proved necessary as the thread used was a machine metallic that required constant tension.



**Figure 29:** doublet back with braid attached

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The construction of the **doublet body, sleeves and skirt** came after applying as much of the braid as possible.

For all machine sewn construction seams (side and front seams of the skirt, side and shoulder seams of the doublet, wrist, slash and outer curve seams of the sleeves) were stitched with right sides together. I then stitched down the seam allowance to the backing / interlining



**Figure 31:** shoulder seam of a mans 1616 doublet showing the seam allowance stitched down

fabric by hand using whip stitch to ensure a smooth, flat and strong seam that is doesn't fray and is not visible from the outside. This is in line with period examples. Refer right: you can see the shoulder seam of a satin doublet treated the same way (the seam allowance whip stitched to the lining fabric)<sup>65</sup>. The arm holes, neck, centre front and waist of the doublet body are then folded under and secured to the interlining by hand using whip stitch.



**Figure 32:** stitching down the shoulder seam allowance to the interlining

The linen **lining** was then constructed using running stitch and with the seam allowances stitched down as above before being hand stitched in place using whip stitch at the neck, centre front and waist. The centre front seam is carefully whip stitched so that the hooks and loops emerge from between the satin outer fabric and the linen lining. At this time the shoulder tabs were hand stitched (using running stitch that does not pass through to the outer fabric) into the upper armholes before the lining edge was folded under and whip stitched in place. Constructing the linen lining and outer layer separately before putting them together with raw seam edges facing each other is consistent with the 1570-80 Woman's Loose Gown discussed in *Patterns of Fashion*<sup>66</sup>.

<sup>65</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion: the cut and construction of clothes for men and women c1560-1620*. New York: Drama Book Publishers, 1995. 1618 doublet on page 29

<sup>66</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion* Op Cit. Page 112

The **skirt** of the backed satin was made up separately from the lining as per the 1570-80 Woman's Loose Gown, and the two were then combined using bias tape and whip stitch. The skirt is hemmed using bias tape in line with the 1562 satin Eleonor of Toledo gown<sup>67</sup>. Running stitch is used to first attach the bias tape to the satin skirt before the fold under is ironed in place. The satin skirt is then ironed (on the black backing) before the linen lining is then laid on the outer skirt (seam allowances together) and ironed. The bias tape is then whip stitched to the linen lining. The waist of the gown was finished by folding the edges under and whip stitching the linen to the backed satin. The skirt is completely sewn up except for a short 15cm gap at the centre front, directly down from the bodice opening. This opening is also hand finished using whip stitch to attach the lining to the outer shell. When the skirt is worn this opening is closed using two or three small brass pins.



**Figure 33:** lining whip stitched to outer at sleeve slit

The sleeves are constructed in the same manner. The outer and lining are constructed separately before being combined at the wrist. The lining is then stitched to the outer at the slit, and tacked into place along the outer curve.

The shoulder, wrist and neck **tabs** are made in the same way, although the neck tabs are a little smaller in line with the proportions of portraits 9, 10, 17 and 18. The tabs are 3.5cm square as this matches the proportions in portrait 13 on the wearer. Using a 5mm seam allowance, the fabric is folded in half and stitched up both sides (always towards the fold to avoid warping the fabric) before the edges are zig-zagged to prevent fraying. The corners are then snipped and the tab is carefully turned inside out before being ironed



**Figure 35:** Wrist tabs



**Figure 34:** wrist tabs emerging from lining (unfinished)

flat. Once ironed the looped braid is whip stitched by hand onto the visible side of the tab. The braid is sewn on just in from the edge of the tab. Due to the strength of the braid it was necessary to round the corners in its application in order to avoid making the thin tabs buckle under the tension.

The decorated tabs are then stitched to the outer fabric before the lining fabric is applied, so that they emerge from between the lining and outer shell.

Once all the elements are completed (collar, doublet, sleeves and skirt) they are whip stitched together. Oversewing (sometimes called over stitching or overhanding) is the technique of using whip stitch to join two pieces of fabric together, "... allowing a flat, or almost flat, surface when the pieces are opened out..."<sup>68</sup>. It can be worked with the two pieces right sides together or with them flat with only the edges in contact<sup>69</sup>. Oversewing the bodice to the skirt is consistent with the small holes found 3mm from the folded edge of the waist in the 1562, satin burial attire of



**Figure 36:** the sleeve attached to the body also showing the shoulder tabs

<sup>67</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion* Op Cit. Page 104

<sup>68</sup> E. Crowfoot et al. *Textiles and Clothing 1150-1450*. (London, Boydell Press, 2001) Page 153

<sup>69</sup> E. Crowfoot et al. Op cit. Page 153

Eleonora of Toledo and also the original stitching holes along the top edge of the skirt in Pfalzgräfin Dorothea Sabina von Neuburg's 1598 gown<sup>70</sup>. I have further followed the example of the 1598 Dorothea gown by allowing the top, centre front corners of the skirt to fold down hang inside the waist<sup>71</sup>. Oversewing the sleeves to the body follows the example of the 1610 Girl's Loose Gown Sleeve<sup>72</sup>. In order to keep things neat, I then whip stitched the lining over the join with tiny stitches.

**Ribbon Ties** were constructed independently and then individually attached to the skirt by hand. The ties were made using 16cm lengths of 25mm wide, double sided white satin ribbon. In order to achieve the most flattering half bow, the ribbons were gathered (to ensure an even distribution of folds into the loop) before being tied and then stitched in place. At this point the ribbon ends were rolled tightly and inserted into the aiglets, where they were carefully stitched in place at the back, out of site.



**Figure 37:** ribbon tie with aiglets as used on sleeves and skirt of gown

We have no information on how this was done in period, but it seems to be a reasonable method as it allows the easy reuse of expensive aiglets once the dress becomes tired. Period aiglets ("puntas" or "cabos") were most often gold and often set with small pearls and gems<sup>73</sup>. One set of 72 aiglets, during the reign of Felipe II, contained one thousand diamonds, while another set contained over 900 rubies<sup>74</sup>. Considering the expense of such sets (and the \$85 it took to purchase sufficient modern aiglets for this recreation) it seems that allowing for the reuse of such baubles is a reasonable assumption.



**Figure 38:** detail of portrait 12 showing a ribbon tie and aiglets

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In order to achieve the correct line this gown needs to be worn over the appropriate undergarments: smock, pair of bodies, farthingale and petticoats. These garments are discussed further in *Gowns of the Golden Age: A Survey of Spanish Women's Court Gowns between the years 1560 and 1585*.

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No pictures of the final gown have been included because I have not yet had the opportunity to debut the dress at an event. Photos of the ensemble will appear after the next local event.

<sup>70</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion*. Op Cit Pages 104 and 114

<sup>71</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion*. Op Cit. Page 114

<sup>72</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion*. Op Cit. Page 123

<sup>73</sup> P.E. Muller. *Jewels in Spain 1500-1800*. (New York, Hispanic Society of America, 1972) page 99

<sup>74</sup> P.E. Muller. Op Cit. page 99

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Muller, P.E. *Jewels in Spain 1500-1800* New York: Hispanic Society of America, 1972

Saavedra, S (ed) *Alonso Sanchez Coello y el retrato en la corte de Felipe II* : Museo del Prado, 1990.

Also various notes and photographs from the displays in the Victoria and Albert Museum (London, England) taken by the author in 2003.

### *Web Based Resources- Extant Garments*

*Los Angeles County Museum of Arts*. <http://www.lacma.org>. d/loaded: 26.2.07

- 1575 Man’s Doublet and Breeches
- Late 16thC – early 17<sup>th</sup> C silk sateen Man’s Jerkin

“Timeline of Art History”, *Metropolitan Museum of Arts*. <http://www.metmuseum.org> d/loaded: 10.2004

- 1580s Women’s Doublet

**Oronoz Photographic Archive** <http://www.aronoz.com/indexenglish.htm>  
d/loaded: 28.2.07

- 1598 Gown of Isabel Clara Eugenia
- 17<sup>th</sup> Century Gown of Isabel Valois
- 17<sup>th</sup> Century Man's Doublet

“Pins and Needles” **Sealed Knot** <http://thesealedknot.org.uk> d/loaded: 1.3.07

**UPM Museum website.**

<http://www.upm.cz/index.php?language=en&page=123 &year=2006&id=56&img=512>  
d/loaded 10.06

- 1616 gown of Margaretha Franciska Lobkowicz

**Victoria and Albert Museum Image Search** <http://images.vam.ac.uk>  
d/loaded: 10.2.07

- 1630-40 pinked satin ensemble – *pinking*
- 1580-90 red satin cape – *use of red satin in spain*
- 1560-69 red cut velvet cape - *more red garments in spain*

Bender, A **La Couturiere Parisienne** <http://www.marquise.de/en/1600/nat/n1.shtml>  
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- 1598 Gown of Dorothea Sabina von Neuburg (images)

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<http://www.karen.htmlcreators.com/anneofaustria.html> d/loaded 06.06

- A portraiture & commercial pattern based interpretation of Spanish doublet construction

Harris, M. **Stefan's Florilegium** <http://www.florilegium.org/> d/loaded: 15.2.07

- Steel needles

Jones, H. **Archaeological Sewing**  
<http://heatherrosejones.com/archaeologicalsewing> d/loaded: 01.05

# Appendices

## Garments Referenced:

### Woman's Doublet

Date	c.1580	
Nationality	Spanish	
Materials	Brown silk velvet (voided), metallic bobbin lace	
Location	Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States of America	
Inventory ID	Jerkin [Spanish] 26.196	
Dimensions	Length: 59.1cm	

Image & data from Museum website

I believe this garment to be a child's or adolescent's garment if the nationality and date of the piece are accurate. This belief is based on several factors:

- **Shoulder Rolls** - which are only seen only in portraits of young children and adolescent girls
- **Back Lacing** – which seems inconsistent with portraiture of adults when so many doublets clearly open up the front, and also Alcega's cutting diagrams, where not one woman's doublet front is cut on the fold.<sup>75</sup>
- **Size** – a difficult measure at the best of times. The length measurement is not conclusive as it is worth remembering that girls can come into their full adult height while still very young. (This garment would have fit me at about age 13.) I would suggest that this was an adolescent girl's doublet that is similar to that worn by the 13 year old Isabel Clara Eugenia in the 1579 portrait by Alonso Sanchez Coello.

However, this garment is still relevant for trim placement, proportions (depth of the front point) and some construction (such as tabs) etc.

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<sup>75</sup> J. Alcega. Op Cit. Pages 47-49

## *Isabel Clara Eugenia's Gown*

Date	1598	
Nationality	Spanish	
Materials	Brocade	
Location	Convente de San Clement, Toledo	
Inventory ID	None noted	
Dimensions	None noted	

Image & data from Oronoz website

Sadly the “ruff” at the neck and the arrangement of the statue makes it difficult to see much of the construction of this gown. It is also likely that the gown was cut apart in and sewn back together in order to fit in on the statue so that any current seam lines and the shape of the garment may not be distorted from the original construction.

There are no waist tabs visible.

## *Isabel Valois' Gown*

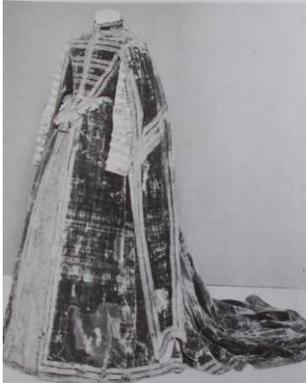
Date	Early 17 <sup>th</sup> Century	
Nationality	Spanish	
Materials	Brocade or embroidered velvet	
Location	Convente de San Clement, Toledo	
Inventory ID	None noted	
Dimensions	None noted	

Image & data from Oronoz website

This garment poses the same difficulties as the Isabel Clara Eugenia garment above.

I suspect this is the gown of the statue of Isabel Valois, since the date of the garment (17<sup>th</sup> C) is significantly after her death (1568). It is difficult to further date the gown without a better image, and without the contemporary accessories. (The gown above is probably also the gown of the statue rather than of the individual.)

## *Pfalzgräfin Dorothea Sabina von Neuburg's Gown*

Date	1598	 <p>Image from: J. Arnold<sup>76</sup> Data from: A Bender<sup>77</sup> and J. Arnold<sup>78</sup></p>
Nationality	German	
Materials	Refer Patterns of Fashions for details <sup>41</sup>	
Location	Private Collection	
Inventory ID	Not Applicable	
Dimensions	Refer Patterns of Fashions for details <sup>41</sup>	

While not a Spanish gown, and dated to 27 years after the target period for this project, this extant garment consists of many of the same elements (a high necked doublet, over sleeves and a trained skirt) suggesting that construction methods and so forth have some degree of relevance.

## **Margaretha Franciska Lobkowicz née Dietrichstein**

Date	1616	 <p>Images and data from Museum Website<sup>79</sup></p>
Nationality	Bohemian	
Materials	Velvet (skirt), hand cut velvet (hanging sleeves) and silk (cuffs and hose)	
Location	Museum of Decorative Arts, Prague	
Inventory ID	Not Applicable	
Dimensions	Not Given	

Described on the museum website as of the style worn by the upper strata of Spanish society, this ensemble is beautifully preserved and gives some information on materials used for such garments.

<sup>76</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion*: Op Cit. page 112-4

<sup>77</sup> A. Bender. *La Couturier Parisienne* <http://www.marquise.de/en/1600/nat/n1.shtml>

<sup>78</sup> J. Arnold. *Patterns of Fashion*: Op Cit. page 112-4

<sup>79</sup> UPM Museum website.

<http://www.upm.cz/index.php?language=en&page=123&year=2006&id=56&img=512>

## *Man's Doublet & Breeches*

Date	c.1575	 <p>Image and data from Museum website</p>
Nationality	Spanish	
Materials	Red silk velvet, metallic braid, brass and leather	
Location	Los Angeles County Museum of Arts, Los Angeles, United States of America	
Inventory ID	M.77.34a-b	
Dimensions	Doublet centre back length: 53.3 cm; Breeches centre back length: 38.2 cm	

The style of the tabs on the doublet and the rosette on the trunkhose suggest these garments date from later than the date stated. Large, overlapping tabs are not seen in the portraiture of the 1570, or even the 1580s.

If the date is correct, this ensemble is further proof of red clothing being worn in the 1570s. Additionally, the opening, buttons, trim placement and shoulder tabs are all of interest and consistent with current theories regarding women's clothing in the 1570s. As such this garment has some degree of relevance to this project.

## *Man's Jerkin*

Date	Late 16thC – early 17thC	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 20px; text-align: center;"> <p>No image available</p> </div> <p>Data from Museum website</p>
Nationality	Spanish	
Materials	Silk sateen with metallic thread brocading	
Location	Los Angeles County Museum of Arts, Los Angeles, United States of America	
Inventory ID	M.63.49	
Dimensions	Front overall: 64.77 x 46.35 cm; Centre back length: 54.61 cm	

This doublet is further proof of satin fabric being used in Spanish fashions of the time (awaiting further information from museum).

## ***Man's Doublet***

Date	Early – mid 17 <sup>th</sup> Century	
Nationality	Spanish	
Materials	Brocade	
Location	Convente de San Clement, Toledo	
Inventory ID	None noted	
Dimensions	None noted	

Image & data from Oronoz website

This doublet clearly shows a centre front opening (closed by buttons) and small tabs around the collar – both elements also seen in portraiture depicting women's clothing in the 1570s.

## ***Man's Shirt***

Date	Early 17 <sup>th</sup> Century	<div data-bbox="1088 1393 1305 1592" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">No image available</div>
Nationality	(Iberian Peninsula)	
Materials	Linen with cotton embroidery	
Location	Los Angeles County Museum of Arts Los Angeles, United States of America	
Inventory ID	M.89.40.3	
Dimensions	None noted	

Data from museum website

This shirt was helpful regarding the use of cotton thread for stitching (awaiting further information from museum).

***Portraits Referenced & Cited***

# <sup>80</sup>	Sitter	Artist	Year	Current Location
1	Isabel Valois	Anthonis Mor	c1560	Coleccion Varez Fisa, Madrid
2	Isabel Valois	Alonso Sanchez Coello	c1560	Coleccion Varez Fisa, Madrid
3	Isabel Valois	Pierre Novelliers	(unknown)	Private Collection
5	Isabel Valois	*	1565	(unknown)
7	Isabel Valois	(unknown)	1570-5	(unknown)
8	Isabel Valois	(unknown)	(unknown)	Toledo Museum do Santa Cruz,
9	Anne of Austria	Anthonis Mor	1570	Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna
10	Anne of Austria	*	1570	(unknown)
11	Anne of Austria	Alonso Sanchez Coello	1570-1	Glasgow Museums & Art Galleries, Glasgow. Stirling Maxwell Collection.
12	Anne of Austria	Alonso Sanchez Coello	1571	Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna
<b>13</b>	<b>Anne of Austria</b>	<b>Alonso Sanchez Coello</b>	<b>1571</b>	<b>Fundacion Lazaro Galdiano, Madrid</b>
14	Anne of Austria	Alonso Sanchez Coello	1571	(unknown)
15	Anne of Austria	(unknown)	1570s	(unknown)
16	Anne of Austria	*	1570s	(unknown)
17	Anne of Austria	Bartolome Gonzalez	1570s	Museo del Prado, Madrid
18	Anne of Austria	Anthonis Mor	1570s	(unknown)
19	Anne of Austria	*	1570s	(unknown)
20	Juana de Pernstein de Aragon	De Mois	1570s	(unknown)
21	Unknown Lady	*	1570s	(unknown)
23	Polexena de Pernstein	(unknown)	1570s	(unknown)
25	Catalina Michaela	Alonso Sanchez Coello	1583-5	State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
26, 27	Filipes Wives	(unknown)	1583	Hispanic Society of America
30	Catalina Michaela	Alonso Sanchez Coello	1584	Museo del Prado, Madrid
32	Isabel Clara Eugenia	Alonso Sanchez Coello	1585-88	Museo del Prado, Madrid

\* *Sometimes attributed to Alonso Sanchez Coello.*

<sup>80</sup> The number allocations do not follow in this list, that is because these numberings were developed for the *Gowns of the Golden Age* article, and I have only included the relevant or cited garments here.

*Portraits Referenced – thumbnails*

<b>Image</b>			
<b>Portrait #</b>	1	2	3
<b>Sitter</b>	Isabel Valois	Isabel Valois	Isabel Valois
<b>Artist</b>	Mor	Coello	Noveliers
<b>Image</b>			
<b>Portrait #</b>	5	7	8
<b>Sitter</b>	Isabel Valois	Isabel Valois	Isabel Valois
<b>Artist</b>	Coello*	Unknown	Uknown
<b>Image</b>			
<b>Portrait #</b>	9	10	11
<b>Sitter</b>	Anne of Austria	Anne of Austria	Anne of Austria
<b>Artist</b>	Mor	Unknown	Coello
<b>Image</b>			
<b>Portrait #</b>	12	13	14
<b>Sitter</b>	Anne of Austria	Anne of Austria	Anne of Austria
<b>Artist</b>	coello	Coello	Coello

<b>Image</b>			
<b>Portrait #</b>	15	16	17
<b>Sitter</b>	Anne of Austria	Anne of Austria	Anne of Austria
<b>Artist</b>	Unknown	Unknown	Gonzalez
<b>Image</b>			
<b>Portrait #</b>	18	19	20
<b>Sitter</b>	Anne of Austria	Anne of Austria	Juana de Pernstein de Aragon
<b>Artist</b>	Mor	Unknown	De Mois
<b>Image</b>			
<b>Portrait #</b>	21	23	25
<b>Sitter</b>	Unknown Lady	Polexena de Pernstein	Catalina Michaela
<b>Artist</b>	Unknown	Unknown	Coello
<b>Image</b>			
<b>Portrait #</b>	26 & 27	30	32
<b>Sitter</b>	Felipe's Wives	Catalina Michaela	Isabel Clara Eugenia
<b>Artist</b>	Unknown	Coello	Coello