

An early fourteenth century illustration from the great English *Holkham Bible* shows Christ in the center circumscribing the visible universe by use of a compass. It is interesting to note that the fourteenth century artist... placed the realm of Satan entirely outside the created Universe, ...indicated by the circle which the Son's compasses inscribe upon space: in the upper segment we see Satan seated upon his throne and honored by the rebel angels or deplored by faithful angels, whereas in the segment beneath we see the flaming jaws of Leviathan which represent Satan's kingdom in Hell. Milton's placing of Hell entirely outside the Universe⁴⁷⁵ has often been remarked upon as one of his most brilliant metaphors, as indeed it is, but the way was prepared for it by the visual arts.⁴⁷⁶

In early Christian contexts, the symbols of the square and the circle or compass evince the conceptual tie between altar cloths, temple veils, and sacred clothing. For example, patterns with variants of these symbols appear on portrayals of altar cloths and temple veils in the churches of St. Vitale and St. Apollinare in Classe in Ravenna,⁴⁷⁷ and in a strikingly similar depiction of the Tabernacle in the *Pentateuch de Tours*.⁴⁷⁸ In his catalogue of textiles from Greco-Roman times found at Egyptian burial grounds, Kendrick notes the prominence of the symbol of the square in various contexts, including clothing, and explicitly links these decorations to the Ravenna mosaics:

An outstanding feature of the decoration of a number of large cloths... is the characteristic border composed of four ornamental right-angles. This ornamentation would be very suitable for floor-coverings; and it is easy to show that it was applied to curtains and hangings; but that it was also used on cloaks is made clear by the decoration of certain mummy-cases, where it is seen on the shoulder. Early altar-coverings, as represented in mosaics and illuminated manuscripts, often had this form of decoration, and it is also to be found quite frequently in reliefs and stone carvings. The resemblance to the Greek letter *gamma* has given to cloths thus ornamented the name of *gammadion*, *gammadije*, or *gammidae*....

With regard to the form and decoration of the garments, comparisons with representations in mosaics, paintings, and carvings prove conclusively that those worn in Egypt were not peculiar to that country... The early Christian monuments of the city of Ravenna, as would be naturally expected, provide abundant material for comparison with the Egyptian stuffs....

The two famous mosaics in the church of S. Vitale, representing the Emperor Justinian (d. 565) and his queen Theodora, with attendants, are a very valuable record of the costume and ornaments of the time... The tunics and mantles of the women on the Empress's left have square, star-shaped and circular panels, and some are covered with small diaper patterns...⁴⁷⁹ A mosaic in S. Vitale, representing the Sacrifices of Abel and Melchizedek, shows an altar-covering with angular ornaments, and a large eight-pointed star in the middle. Numerous ornamental details of the mosaics at Ravenna also resemble in a remarkable way the more elaborate patterns of the stuffs from Egypt... It should also be remembered that, although none of the Ravenna mosaics are earlier than the fifth century, many of the ornamental details were survivals of patterns used at an earlier date.⁴⁸⁰

In a Hellenistic Jewish context, Goodenough discusses the appearance of *gammadia* at Dura Europos. These symbols were not only depicted in murals of holy figures, but also were found in a cache of white textile fragments discovered at the site that "may well have been the contents of a box where sacred vestments were kept, or they may have been

475 Cf. the concept of "outer darkness" (D&C 101:91, 133:72-73).

476 R. M. Frye, *Paradise*.

477 See *Figures* E20-1 and E20-2, p. 573.

478 See *Figure* E53-3, p. 671.

479 = repeating small patterns, e.g., interlocked diamonds.

480 A. F. Kendrick, *Textiles 1*, pp. 32, 36, 37, 38-39. Thanks to Bryce Haymond for pointing out this reference.