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Object ID

2004.9.9.A

Object Name

Shoe, Tsarouxia

Material

Cotton; Leather

Access Points

Personal Artifact
Pom Pon
Red Leather
Sequins
Tsarouxia
Tsarouxia Shoe
White Leather

Object Description

Children's Evones shoes. Red leather with whit trimming and black sole. Pom pon is white, red, and blue. The shoe's opening is embellished with nine sequins.

Origin

Tsarouxia is a type of shoe, which is typically known nowadays as part of the traditional uniform worn by the Greek guards known as Evzones. Tsarouxia shoes are typically made of a number of pieces of stiff leather hand-sewn together and have a characteristic pointy nose, usually covered by a large woollen pompon. The latter was a relatively late addition, originally a way of making the shoe nose waterproof, but increasingly became an essential feature for their decoration. Their origin is obscure and goes back to the Byzantine times, with influences from styles imported by neighbouring tribes, including the Turks. Originally, various types of similar shoes were worn all over the Balkans, but tsarouhia are mainly associated with the Greeks. They were the most common footwear worn by both urban and rural Greeks, mainly men, but also many women. After the Greek Independence in early 19th century, their use was limited to isolated rural areas and nomadic populations, seen by westernised

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urbanites as sign of uncouthness and backwardness. In a version with reinforced sole, they remained the issue boot for the Evzone units well into the 20th century, though after First World War were gradually replaced in active service by the standard laced boot. Tsarouxia provided a clear link with the origin of the Evzone uniform in the traditional Greek costume, and the fact that Evzones were largely enlisted from rural mountainous regions of Greece. Nowadays are almost exclusively used by the Presidential guard and in various traditional festivals and dances along with other traditional Greek garments.

Citation

Shoe, Tsarouxia, *National Hellenic Museum*,
<https://collections.nationalhellenicmuseum.org/Detail/objects/>. Accessed 01/26/22.