

Book XI.
Title IX. (VIII.)

Concerning all purple vesture and embroidered in gold and concerning dyeing with the Sacred Purple.
(De vestibus holoveris et auratis et de intinctione sacri muricis.)

11.9.1. Emperors Valentinian, Valens and Gratian to Archelaus, Count of the Sacred Treasury.

We prohibit the weaving and making for private use of gold and silk borders on men's clothing, inlaid with gold, and we direct that they shall only be made by our weavers.¹

Promulgated at Marcianopolis July 18 (369).

C. Th. 10.21.1.

11.9.2. Emperors Gratian, Valentinian and Theodosius to Florus, Praetorian Prefect.

No man shall have gilded borders either on his tunic or his linen vestments, unless that right is granted him by reason of his services in the imperial government. Whoever fails to lay aside a prohibited garment and one not becoming to his station will be punished by no light punishment.

Given at Constantinople March 30 (382).

C. Th. 10.21.2.

11.9.3. Emperors Theodosius, Arcadius and Honorius.

We do not permit woolen cloth, stained with an adulterated dye, to imitate the sacred purple; nor do we permit silk first colored rose-red to be afterwards dyed in any other color, but we do not deny the right to dye uncolored cloth with any color. Those attempting violation, will receive capital punishment.

11.9.4. Emperor Theodosius to Maximinus, Count of the Imperial Exchequer.

All persons of both sexes and of every rank, business, profession or birth must refrain from possessing vestments reserved for the emperor and his house alone. 1. Nor shall any one weave or make in his home silken cloaks or tunics, dyed with purple without the admixture of some other color. 2. Let all tunics and cloaks dyed through and through with the blood of the purple fish be produced and delivered. No warp shall be made tintured with purple, nor shall supporting thread of the same dye run through with the rattling shuttle make the wool. Men's vestments, wholly purple shall be immediately produced and turned over to the treasury. 3. Nor need anyone complain that he is not paid for them, because immunity from punishment suffices. 4. Let no one, by concealment of that kind run into the snares of this new constitution, as he will run the risk similar to that of treason.

Given January 16 (424).

C. Th. 10.21.3.

¹ [Blume] See C. 4.40.1 and 2, and law 4 of this title.

Note.

New regulations as to the wearing of silken garments were made by this law. It may be noted how the emperor warned his subjects not to expect any compensation and that they might be thankful that they were not punished for having done something in the past which was only forbidden by the instant law.

11. 9.5. Emperors Theodosius and Valentinian to Apollonius, Count of the Imperial Exchequer.

Although (unlawful) traffic in purple,² is prohibited in innumerable constitutions, we also forbid it by a new threat and we direct, therefore, that the seventh from the bureau of shorthand men (exceptores), the sixth from the bureau of fixed taxes, the fifth from the bureaus of accountants (tabularii), shall be sent for a fixed time to the dye-house of Phoenicia, so that every fraud may be prevented by their care, under fear of losing the hoped-for emoluments after long and hard service, and under fear of a fine, also, of 20 pounds of gold if they fail in their duty.

Given at Constantinople March 8 (436).

C. Th. 10.20.18.

Note.

Reference here is made to the fraud of using dye for private parties, either by dyeing articles in the imperial dye-house or by letting the purple dye be taken away from there.

² [Blume] meaning that the silk threads of others should not be dyed there or the purple dye taken from there. Goth.