

TEXTILE RESEARCH CENTRE LEIDEN

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2022



Woman's embroidered waistcoat from Romania; TRC 2022. 1149c.

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2022 and the TRC Leiden

A word by the Chairman of the TRC Board, Prof. R.B. ter Haar Romeny

The theme of 2021 was flexibility following the various covid lockdowns, but what would the theme for 2022 be? Inspiration? How to work together to increase interest in and knowledge about textiles? How textiles can be used to bring people and communities together? All of these?

More and more people and institutes are discovering the TRC and there are increasing demands upon our facilities, staff and range of teaching possibilities and opportunities. The concept of a Knowledge Centre (rather than a traditional museum), is being pushed, but we are still known as the 'Leiden Textile Museum' by some of the local taxi drivers!

Acquiring Erasmus+ Adult Education status in 2022 was a significant and pivotal moment as it acknowledged the TRC's position as an international educational and skill centre. The potential of this accreditation is something we explored and expanded upon in 2022 and indeed we will continue to do for several years to come.

Europe also comes back in another aspect of 2022. As a result of several large donations of textiles and garments, especially from Central and Eastern Europe, the TRC now has one of the largest and most diverse collections of European textiles and dress in Europe. These, and other donations have meant that the work of the depot staff is getting harder and busier, especially, and not so surprisingly, because we are rapidly running out of space and face various decisions about the nature and the potential future of the Collection! We keep stressing that the TRC Collection reflects a myriad of textile techniques, which is used for its many educational responsibilities, not to mention as an important source of inspiration.

The TRC Blogs have proved especially popular in 2022 and were being put online every few days. These have been written by various TRC members and occasionally others who have visited the TRC or are working on part of the TRC Collection. As a result the blogs cover a diverse range of design, historical, political, social and technical subjects. One thing we have learnt over the last few years is that keeping in touch via the internet is very important and we want to expand on the ways of doing this.

Significantly, 2022 saw a continuing change take place in societies (local, national and indeed commercial) wanting to know about textiles, artisanship and skills. In response, we were able to run the 5-day course on six occasions, as well as workshops on diverse themes such as pre-industrial sewing, tablet weaving, velvet making, as well as embroidery. In addition the TRC presented a series of workshops on bobbin lace making. More workshops on a wide range of subjects are being organised for 2023 and later.

Basically 2022 has been an exciting, busy and challenging year, but one that shows how textiles and dress studies in all their different forms are essential to the understanding of cultures and societies around the world. As well as acting as a source of inspiration for creativity in both the theoretical and practical worlds!

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The Stichting Textile Research Centre, Leiden

The Stichting ('Foundation') Textile Research Centre was established in 1991 with the stated aim of supporting the academic research of archaeological and anthropological textiles and dress, and their presentation to a general public. The most important part of our work is the building up and study of a textile and dress collection. These garments are available for teaching, research and exhibition purposes.

The Board

Per 1 January 2020 the board is made up of the following:

Chairman: Prof. Bas ter Haar Romeny

Treasurer: Prof. Olaf Kaper

Secretary: Dr. Karel Innemée

General board members: Prof. Lammert Leertouwer, Mrs. V. Drabbe and Dr. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood (Director).

International Advisory Board

The International Advisory Board includes: Dr. Ruth Barnes (Yale University, USA); Carol Bier (Berkeley, USA); Prof. J. Eicher (University of Minnesota, USA), Prof. John Fossey (Montreal Museum of Fine Art, Canada), Dr. Dale Gluckman (San Francisco, USA), Prof. Michael Hahn (Leeds University, England, ret), Mrs. Widad Kavar (Amman, Jordan) and Dr. John Peter Wild (Manchester, England).

Permanent staff and volunteers

Dr. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood continues as the director of the TRC. She is a specialist in embroidery and Middle Eastern textiles and dress. For 2022, the volunteers include: Shelley Anderson, Beverley Bennett, Susan Cave, Alice van Duijnen, Rose Groen, Augusta de Gunzbourg, Rebecca Hix, Naoko Kikuchi, Renske Langendijk, Olga Ieromina, Marieke Roosenboom, AJ Salter and Karin Winkel.

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The TRC is a Cultural ANBI

From 2013 the TRC is recognised as a cultural ANBI ("Culturele ANBI"). It means that individual gifts by Dutch citizens are tax deductible for 125% for a private person and 150% for a company.

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In February 2022 we heard that the Textile Research Centre in Leiden has been awarded an Erasmus+ Accreditation in the field of adult education for the programme period of 2021-2027.

We've been on pins and needles since turning in the application on 19 October 2021. Due to the high number of applicants, it took longer than expected to receive the results. We are very pleased that our attention to detail and planning and the overall quality of adult education provided by TRC Leiden was acknowledged and rewarded.

Erasmus+ is the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport. Nuffic, the Dutch organization for internationalization of education, is the Erasmus+ programmes' national agency and is responsible for evaluating the submissions. The Erasmus+ Accreditation is a tool TRC Leiden can use to gain further access to cross-border exchange and cooperation. It is a recognition of TRC Leiden's plan to implement high quality mobility activities, as part of a wider effort to increase the quality of non-formal adult education that our organization provides and to make it relevant to the needs of society at large.

A large part of our plan involves increasing the participation of adults of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds in the education

of textile skills and the concept of dress and identity.

Maria Linkogle

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The TRC and online activities

The TRC has its own [website](#), which was designed and is being maintained by Joost Kolkman and in doing so he is supported by Coen van der Geest. The site carries a wide range of information about the TRC, including its aims, annual reports, donation information, possibilities to loan objects or to hire complete exhibitions, short items of current interest, the library catalogue, the objects catalogue, TRC Needles, the TRC Blogs, etc. The website information is usually given in both Dutch and English.

The website is kept up-to-date by Willem Vogelsang, who throughout 2022 has been continually adding new items, removing old items and working on the TRC's large digital project [TRC Needles](#) (see below).

TRC Collection: Work is progressing on bringing the [TRC Collection fully online](#). By December 2022, over 40,500 objects were included in the catalogue, and the vast majority of them have been described and photographed. It is taking us a little longer than anticipated, but the database is already proving to be an asset to everyone concerned.

TRC Library: Thanks to the hard work of the library team, the [TRC Library catalogue](#) went online in August 2015. By late December 2022, well over 5000 titles are included in the library catalogue, with cross-references, book reviews and recommendations. The library team has worked very hard getting this all ready and the list of books in the collection is being up-dated on a regular basis (more details are given below about the Library). See more below.

TRC Images: We now have another group

working on *TRC Images*, which is a much smaller database that includes the TRC collection of images (postcards, photographs, even stamps) relating to textiles and costume from around the world. If you have any suitable items that you are willing to donate to the TRC please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

TRC Needles: [TRC Needles](#) is a digital encyclopaedia of decorative needlework and has now been online for just over some three years. *Needles* currently includes nearly 3000 entries and more and more information and partners are agreeing to help with the entries and providing information and/or photographs. We range from the modern stitch poetry of Janet M. McDonald Davies (New Zealand) to early archaeological finds of embroidery from China.

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TRC and online presence

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of Shelley Anderson, interest in the TRC on Facebook is growing rapidly and every week brings more and more subscribers to the TRC Facebook page. By the end of 2022 there were more than 13500 followers of TRC Facebook. The site is in Dutch and English and includes news about all the recent developments and events at the TRC, plus some personal comments about items on display or in the TRC collection.

During 2022, Shelley Anderson and AJ Salter also ran Pinterest for the TRC. Pinterest features images of textiles and garments from the TRC's collection and activities.

In 2021 several TRC volunteers started a TRC Instagram page in 2022 this was continued and we now are followed by over 8,300 people. This page is designed to show TRC objects with very short stories.

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TRC Blog: Textile Moments

The TRC has its own [blog page](#) called *Textile Moments*, or more commonly the TRC Blog. This page is used by members of the TRC or indeed anyone else, who has a story to tell about textiles, clothing, exhibitions, pictures, and so forth. Some of the items given later in this report are based on blogs published in 2022.

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The Library

Over the years the TRC has built up a collection of over 5000 registered books relating to textiles and dress. Thanks to the generosity of people there are about another 1,000 books that need to be registered.

Many of these books were catalogued in 2022 thanks to the efforts of various volunteers, especially Marieke Roozeboom and Karin Winkel.

The library is divided into the following sections:

- General reference book
- Museum collections, displays, conservation and so forth
- Textile techniques
- Textiles, fashion and dress theory
- Regional
- Dutch regional

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TRC Gallery

The TRC Gallery is used to hold temporary exhibitions about textiles and dress. Access to the exhibitions is free of charge. In 2022 various events and exhibitions were held in the gallery and further details about these can be found below.

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The TRC Shop

The TRC Shop occupies a small area at the rear of the Gallery. It is not the main business of the TRC, but allows us to sell items that would either not be suitable to keep in the main collection or are duplicates of items we already hold.

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Book sale (8th October 2022)



TRC book fair, 8th October 2022

For the first time ever the TRC held a book sale in 2022. We were initially we were concerned about whether anyone would come. We had put information about the sale on the TRC Facebook pages, on Instagram, on the website, in a special newsletter, etc., but. In the end, we need not have worried!"Alth'ugh officially opening at 10.00 we had visitors by 09.40 and by 10.00 the door was constantly opening as more and more early birds arrived looking for books. We were busy for the rest of the day. All the funds raised during the sale will be spent on the activities of the TRC.

We closed the doors at 15.00 feeling very pleased, happy and tired. It was a great success! We sold a lot of books (more than 300) and had the chance to talk with people and in some cases introduce them to the TRC and at other times to catch up on events with old friends and supporters of the TRC.

We are now planning to have a similar book sale at least once a year and make it a regular feature of the TRC Agenda.

International co-operation

We are pleased to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding for further collaboration with the LDE Centre for Global Heritage and Development. CGHD is a collaborative enterprise of Delft University of Technology, Erasmus University Rotterdam and Leiden University. It focuses on the question how heritage relates to cultural, social and environmental developments and decisions.

In general terms, cooperation will cover the following fields: the setting up of joint research projects and joint publications; organising joint educational and cultural activities; exchange and support of students; exchange of faculty and/or other staff.

The MoU reflects a growing interest from the side of various academic centres for museum and heritage studies in the practical opportunities offered by the TRC for training students and others and for working 'hands on' with actual objects from the extensive TRC Collection.

The MoU was signed on behalf of the TRC by Dr Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood, Director, and on behalf of CGHD by Prof. Pieter ter Keurs, Director.

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Co-operation agreement TRC with Osnabrück University

For sometime now, Prof. Bärbel Schmidt (Osnabrück University) and the TRC have been talking about some of her BA textile students working together on a collection of Dutch and

German regional dress from the TRC Collection. The aim is for the students to help with the identification of the garments, using them as a source of inspiration and then making a booklet and online exhibition about their experience, research and creations. This work is being supported by a grant from the Lower Saxony Ministry for Science and Culture for the development of Dutch-German cultural relationships.



Delegation from Osnabrück borrows garments from the TRC for further study by students of Osnabrück University.

The main problem, however, was the corona crisis, which meant that the students could not come to Leiden to work on a selection of garments. So Prof. Schmidt and her colleague, Lucia Schwalenberg, came to Leiden to discuss the project and to pick out a range of objects that could be borrowed and taken back to Germany for a couple of months. Around the same time, the TRC had an online meeting with some of the Osnabrück students to discuss the work of the TRC and to explain the project and what was being expected.

Eventually, eight garments of regional dress from Germany and eight pieces from the Netherlands were selected, including caps (for men and women), shawls, bodices, aprons, skirts, etc. These items are examined at the University under the supervision of various staff members. This is an experiment for both institutes, as normally objects do not leave the TRC collection, or in this case the TRC building, unless it is for a loan to another research institute, but given the Corona crisis, flexible solutions had to be found.

Once the students have seen and examined the garments they were expecting them to write a 3,000 word report (in German) that includes a description of the garment, present the research into the garment's context (dress and identity, namely the who and what), and how the garment was used (when and why) and in the next stage, how does the item forms a source of inspiration for a 'modern' textile or garment design (inspiration). Finally, there is a summary of the whole process and what it meant for the student.

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TIES (Textiles in Europe Studies)



TIES meeting at the TRC, 8 Oct. 2022

On the 8th and 9th October 2022 the TRC was shut to the general public as we had a brain storming session of TIES, an informal group of textile specialists from various institutes in Germany, Hungary, Spain and of course the Netherlands. We met at the TRC to see how we can work together to strengthen and support textile and dress studies. It proved to be a very interesting and productive two-days with a small group of people discussing their very different experiences and backgrounds, research and ideas for the future in an informal manner, rather than in the setting of a large conference with too many voices, sessions and lobby groups.

We decided that one of the main themes of TIES for the near future will be to work together within the field of archaeological textiles (in the broadest sense of these words) via production and trade to end use. We will

let you know what happens as more details about who, what and why are developed! But I can tell you the initial discussions were really inspiring.

Part of the two-day TIES meeting was held in the *Volkenkunde Museum* with a session held by [ModeMuze](#), a Dutch/Flemish platform for clothing and fashion that is active in putting garments, accessories and relevant information from various museums online. Items from the TRC Collection will also soon be appearing in *ModeMuze* in due course.

The TRC Collection

There are two main factors that make the [TRC Collection](#) a little different from some traditional museum collections. Firstly, it is an active collection and people are encouraged to come and look, photograph and use the items, rather than the objects being stored 'for ever' in boxes. Secondly, we are not concerned with only collecting beautiful items, we are interested in the story behind them. Something that may look 'ordinary' takes on a new dimension when its social, technical and economic context, the story behind the object, is taken into consideration.

To help people understand the diversity of the TRC Collection, the database of the collection has gone online on 1st July 2016. Since then we have added thousands (literally) of items. Not every item is described in great detail nor are there photographs of everything. But every week new and extra details, as well as images were added. By the end of December 2021, there were nearly 37000 objects included in the catalogue, and some 32000 are photographed.

The following descriptions of some of the items added to the TRC Collection in 2022 have been ordered roughly according to subject matter. The descriptions and comments about these objects are intended to give an idea of why these items were accepted into the collection and how

they will be used. Most of the descriptions were also reflected in more detail in the various TRC blogs published in 2022.

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Acquisitions, purchases and gifts: some of the stories behind the objects

The TRC now regards it as normal for people to pop in or contact us otherwise every week with items for the collection or things to appear in the post. But what is the TRC Collection's policy?

Considerable time was spent in 2022 thinking about and defining the nature of the collection, how it is to be used and the collection policy in general. The phrase that most closely catches the 'spirit' of the collection is 'a broad-based encyclopaedic collection', that reflects the diversity of the textiles in general. All of this means we do not specialise in one small area of textile and dress studies, but we reflect textiles and dress in all their glorious depth and width. We thus collect samples of all possible textile techniques, uses, forms of decoration, materials, and all other aspects related to the world of textiles and dress.

Below is a selection of the items donated to the TRC in 2022 and a little about their backgrounds.

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The Amsel Collection of Hungarian and Romanian garments

Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood

At the end of February 2022, the [The Amsel Collection](#) arrived on Sunday from Paris and the TRC Gallery became 'home' to a group of TRC volunteers who have been sorting, tagging, cataloguing and slowly getting the items photographed.

The collection was made by [Prof. George Amsel](#) and his wife Monique during most of their married life. Equally as

remarkable as the items themselves are the detailed and fascinating stories that Monique is sharing with us about the people and crafts they had encountered collecting all of it.

Packed and prepared by TRC volunteer Augusta de Gunzbourg and the owner Monique Amsel for the past few weeks, the items were then transported from Paris to Leiden over the weekend by two other TRC volunteers, Rebecca and David Hix. In it, there were over 700 textiles and garments, mainly from Hungary and Romania.



TRC volunteer processing the large Amsel collection. In the background part of the small pop-up exhibition of Rijnland lace caps.

From the 1960s and '70s onwards, the Amsels regularly travelled to various regions of Hungary and Romania and deliberately collected regional costumes - from various groups such as the Csangos or Hutsuls - that reflect the diversity of Hungarian costume and its diaspora in neighbouring countries. Embroidery is certainly one of the main features of these items: numerous embroidered and beaded dresses, blouses, as well as fleece waistcoats or even belts both for men and women are all represented.

We are in contact with various groups in Hungary about this collection, such as Dr Maxim Mordovin from the Eötvös Loránd University and historian Orsolya Zay, in order to gain a deeper understanding of these items. There will be certainly be

numerous embroidery charts being worked out in the following months, One of the long-term plans is to make an online (and real-life eventually) exhibition about the Hungarian items, as well as a complete catalogue of the Hungarian pieces that will be written in conjunction with Monique Amsel.

Among other miscellaneous items in this wonderful collection: pieces from China, Central Asia, India, Thailand, as well as a group of hitherto unprovenanced textiles. So far, we have handled a lovely early 19th century hand embroidered Kashmir shawl with numerous *buteh* (paisley) motifs, and various examples of *mola* from Panama that complement the mini-exhibition on the same subject that we are currently preparing. There are even some raffia embroideries from the Congo.



Embroidered waistcoat, from the Csango (a mainly Roman Catholic, Hungarian ethnic group in Romania; TRC 2022.0390).

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The Arizona Collection

Gillian Vogelsang

In 2021 we were contacted by David and Bonnie Smith, Arizona, about their large collection of textiles and garments that was looking for a good home. Most of the pieces came from Albania, but other countries, such as China, Egypt, Georgia,

Italy, Japan, Morocco and, of course, the USA, were also represented. Thanks to very generous help with Crowd Funding (see the TRC Annual Report for 2021) funding was raised to bring the collection to the Netherlands. At lunch time we heard that the Arizona collection would be arriving between 13.30 and 14.00 and yes, just before 14.00 a very long van stopped just in front of the TRC. Two moving men and four active TRC colleagues emptied the van within ten minutes. Then came the work of putting away more than half of the boxes (unopened despite the temptation to open everything). The other boxes are in the Gallery and over the next month or so a group of TRC volunteers and students tagged, cataloguing, photographed the items. They then went into the freezers to kill off insects, before they going into special boxes in the depot and made available online.



A bit overwhelming perhaps. Arrival of transport from Arizona, Tuesday 29th March 2022. Photograph by AJ Salter.

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May Suykerbuick and Czech items

Thanks to the help of Frieda Sorber, a colleague in Belgium, in the spring of 2022 we were put in contact with May Suykerbuick in Essen, Belgium. Mrs. Suykerbuick had a collection of over 100 items of Czech textiles and dress and she was looking for a new home for these

pieces, all of which are pre-1980 in date, and many pieces come in fact early 20th century. In May 2022 we picked up these pieces and started the process of photographing and cataloguing them.

It was very apprant that these pieces filled in a gap within our Central and Eastern European collections. It also meant that within a few months, thanks to the Amstel, the Arizona, the Suykerbuick collections and other donations, that the TRC Collection had one of the most diverse range of European (especially central and Eastern forms) textiles and dress in Europe. Something that needs further exploration and presentation on the global cultural ‘market’.

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The Ottow Family donation

Anouk Mansfeld and Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood

At the end of February 2022 the Textile Research Centre in Leiden was contacted by Karin Scheper and Anouk Mansfeld of the University Libraries Leiden (UB), about the proposed donation of a large collection of personal letters, documents, publications, photo albums, as well as furniture, statuettes, textiles and garments. The department *Bijzondere Collecties* of the UB was seriously thinking about accepting many of the items, but not the textiles and garments. Was the TRC interested?

The items originate from a number of families connected to the former Dutch East Indies. Max Velsing was the assistant-resident in Atjeh, Sumatra, after 1918. He was married to Thecla Caspari. Her sister was married to the assistant-resident of Surakarta, in Java. Their daughter was married to Samuel Ottow, also assistant-resident. Most of the items and documents of the Ottow collection, as the donation came to be called, date to the 1920s.



Official hand-over by the Ottow family of documents and textiles to the University Libraries and the TRC.

After the sudden death of Max Velsing, his grieving widow, Thecia Velsing-Caspari, shut down their Indonesian home, shipped everything back to the Netherlands and just about all of it was then put in boxes and left because the memories were too painful. The textiles and garments, for example, were placed in three steamer trunks that were seldom opened again over the ensuing 75 years.

On the Wednesday, 2nd March, I went to the UB to have a look at the textiles and garments and it soon became clear, as the three trunks with textiles were opened by Anouk and Karin on behalf of the library and myself, that there was a lot of potential, especially as it was known who owned the pieces (‘Tante T’ as Thecla Velsing-Caspari is still known in the family), when and where they were acquired (1920s, many in Indonesia) and how many of the pieces were actually used (thanks to the photographs).

Having the context and the story behind an object is extremely helpful when dealing with a single or group of items. It means we can understand them far better than if they were ‘simply’ beautiful or technically interesting items.

Another story that emerged while looking at the textiles and garments was that the pieces were not all Dutch or Indonesian in origin.

The next visit to the collection took place on 21st March when we met members of the Ottow family, including Prof. Annetje Ottow, who is the Chair of the Leiden University Board, her brother Juriaan and sister, Willemijn, as well as UB staff. It was agreed at this meeting that the TRC would be given the textiles, garments and accessories.

The next meeting was on the 24th June when there was a formal signing and hand-over of items both to the UB and the TRC. As part of the event the UBL made a display of photo albums open at the pages where textiles and garments were prominent. To complement the photographs the TRC staged a display of three outfits from the collection, namely a Dutch-style white, afternoon dress, a Dutch-style evening dress in black lace, and a pink, more or less 'Chinese' style outfit. Based on photographs, we know that the latter outfit consisted of a pair of red velvet, Western style shoes with block heels (very 1920s!), embroidered trousers of apparently Indian origin, and a Chinese style skirt and blouse.

As part of the proceedings various speeches and talks were given, including one by Anouk Mansfeld about the photographs, and another by Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood, concerning the textiles and their significance.

Together these facets of the Ottow collection will add more depth and colour to our understanding of life in Indonesia during the 1920s, as well as illustrate artisan textile techniques of the period, and the movement of textiles as part of Asian Globalization.

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A collection of Afghan clothing

Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood

In July 2022 the TRC pick up a collection of garments and textiles that the Aujame family had offered to the TRC Leiden as a donation nearly three years ago – namely just before Covid hit.



Jacket made from off-white, felted woollen cloth decorated around the neck and front opening, shoulder seam and sleeve hems with brown stripes. Nuristan, Afghanistan, 1960s (TRC 2022.1942).

There are 69 items in the Aujame donation, which mainly come from Afghanistan, but there are also some Indian and South American items, reflecting the travels and work of the Aujame family. More specifically, the various Afghan pieces were acquired, in fact, by Luc's parents, [Roger Aujame](#) (1922-2010) and Edith Schreiber Aujame (1919-1998), in the early 1960s. Roger Aujame was an architect and both he and his wife were for many years involved with the UN. Between 1961-1965 they were based in Kabul.



Pair of hand knitted, woollen socks, Afghanistan, 1960s (TRC 2022.1931a-b).

The Afghan items are unusual because we know when they were purchased. In addition, many of the items represent 'everyday'

clothing of the people from what is known as Nuristan, in the mountains east of the Afghan capital of Kabul. This donation therefore fills a gap in the TRC's already extensive Afghan collection and means we can pay more attention to a community in Afghanistan that are often neglected in favour of those living in the main urban centres such as Kabul and Kandahar.

Nuristan is still an isolated part of Afghanistan. Until the late 19th century, it was known as Kafiristan, 'Land of the Heathens' (non-Muslims). When around that time the Afghan Amir Abdul Rahman Khan and the British rulers in India agreed upon a border that would separate their respective dominions, the Afghan rulers were free to occupy Kafiristan and rename it as Nuristan, 'Land of the Light'.

Many of the local people were killed or enslaved, and their pre-Islamic religion, which is related to the non-Islamic religions of India, was suppressed and in the end almost completely wiped out (the Kalash Kafirs in modern Pakistan, just across the border with Afghanistan, are culturally the only relics of this ancient group). But although now converted to Islam, the Nuristanis in Afghanistan, as they were henceforth called, kept many of their traditional customs, including their textiles and garments.



Pair of short, woollen trousers, Nuristan, Afghanistan, 1960s (TRC 2022.1951).

Among the Nuristan items given to the TRC are men's clothing, including a waistcoat ([TRC 2022.1941](#)), two jackets (such as [TRC 2022.1942](#) and [TRC 2022.1943](#)), two sashes ([TRC 2022.1953](#) and [TRC 2022.1954](#)) and baggy, short trousers in hand spun and woven woollen cloth ([TRC 2022.1951](#) and [TRC 2022.1952](#)).

There are also locally made boots that are decorated with metal eyelets on the heels ([TRC 2022.1937a-b](#) and [TRC 2022.1938a-b](#)) and a pair of leather shoes that have soles and sides made out of a single piece of thick leather ([TRC 2022.1933a-b](#)). There is even a pair of brown, woollen puttees ([TRC 2022.1939a-b](#)).



Pair of handmade shoes with both leather and suede elements (Nuristan, Afghanistan, 1960s (TRC 2022.1933a b).

In addition to the Nuristan objects, the TRC has been given a large number of high-resolution scans of many colour photographs and slides taken in the 1960s in Afghanistan. A selection of these images will be put online shortly.



Ten metre long, hand spun and hand woven yurt band. Turkmen, Afghanistan, 1960s (TRC 2022.1926).

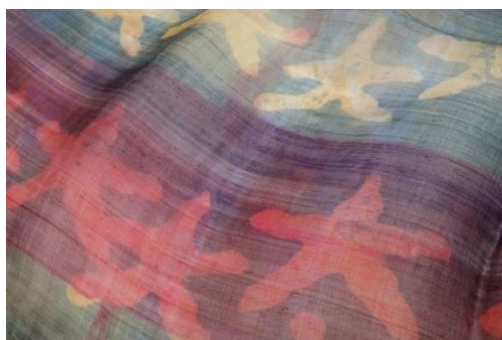
There is also a very long (10 metres) woven yurt band (Turkmen, [TRC 2022.1926](#)), as well as some Indian ikats ([TRC 2022.1920](#) – [2022.1923](#)), again from the 1960s. The latter items add more depth to the TRC's reference collection of ikats from around the world.

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A donation of Philippine textiles

Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood

In July 2022 we were given a donation by Ruurdje Laarhoven, a Dutch academic living in the US, who worked for many years in the Philippines. During her stay in that country she became intrigued with local textiles and deliberately started to collect Philippine pieces dating from the early 20th century onwards.



Detail of a pina (pineapple fibre) cloth from the Philippines, early 21st century (TRC 2021.1358).

The Philippines have a diverse textile tradition that has long been overshadowed by that of Indonesia. We are keenly looking forward to learning more about these textiles and garments.

It is noticeable that one type of cloth from the Philippines is attracting more and more interest, namely *piña*, which is made from pineapple leaves. In this age of growing awareness of sustainability and less dependence on synthetic threads and cloth, could *piña* be one of the 'new' sources of cloth?

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A special donation of a Regency period dress

AJ Salter

In August 2022 the TRC was given an interesting donation was brought to the TRC by Liesbeth Hesselink. She described the donation as some of the clothing that were worn by her grandmother, Quirina Cornelia Jacoba Böhntlingk, née Banning (1886-1984), when she lived in the Dutch East Indies / Indonesia with her husband, between 1914 and 1921. The donation consists of several white cotton blouses of Indonesian origin, and another made of white silk, as well as a long, hand-sewn white cotton dress.

This white dress ([TRC 2022.3163](#)) was described by Ms Hesselink as a plain underdress, but Gillian and I were uncertain due to the high position of the waistline. If this dress was worn underneath a dress typical of the 1910s or 1920s (with a low waistline), then the waistline seam would cut uncomfortably across the chest.



Empire-style dress with chemisette, early 19th century, recently donated to the TRC (TRC 2022.3163).

We therefore started to think this dress may be older than we first thought. The waistline sits only a few centimetres below the hem of the neckline, and this corresponds to a French fashion style known as an "Empire silhouette", which was popular from around

1800-1815 after the French Revolution of 1789.

This style of dress was in complete contrast to the earlier fashion of the late 1700s, which was characterised by a lot of frills and volume. The over-the-top blinding luxury of aristocratic late eighteenth century fashion was strongly discouraged during and after the Revolution and was replaced by the encouragement of ancient virtues and simpler shapes.

The Empire dress was a revival of Greco-Roman styles and started in France, drawing inspiration from comfortable, long and loose-fitting togas and adding a neckline that emphasised the bust. The so-called Regency era in Britain (c. 1795-1837) adapted the Empire style when the fashion gained popularity and spread throughout Europe and America. The Empire/Regency style dresses have become well-known by modern television and film adaptations of Jane Austen novels.

What makes research at the TRC the most exciting is the ability to look up-close and inside a garment to examine the construction. Augusta Gunzbourg and I debated whether this dress was truly from the early 1800s or if it could possibly be a later piece. We landed on dating the dress to c. 1805-1815 for a number of reasons.

One was the sheer quality of the construction. The dress is entirely hand-sewn with beautiful small and regular stitches. There are also multiple sections of small pleats and gathers, such as on the top of the sleeves and at the back of the torso, which would have taken time and dedication to sew.

The correct and complex construction of the garment also lends to its identification as an original garment. The bodice is made up of five panels that would have been well-tailored to the wearer. The hem of the skirt is made up of three sections connected by hand-appliqued lace, although a larger thread and

messier stitches compared to the uniform stitches throughout the rest of the dress might imply the lace was added later.

Gillian Vogelsang was also in contact with Madelief Hohé at the *Kunstmuseum* in The Hague, who confirmed our dating and provided some reference fashion plates and other similar dress examples from the period for us to look at.

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An Iraqi Charuqa outfit

Fatima Abbadi

In March 2022 the TRC entered in the TRC Database an Iraqi festive outfit ([TRC 2022.0914a-f](#)) made by Suzan Sukari in Qaraqosh in northern Iraq, with a unusual and interesting background.



Detail of charuqa, northern Iraq, 2021/2022. The Syriac text is embroidered at the top (TRC 2022.0914d).

It was on the 20th May 2020 when I first talked to Suzan and asked her to prepare a complete Qaraqosh outfit for the TRC and since then a beautiful friendship began. I have learned a lot from her and from what is happening in that far-away land of Iraq. It was beautiful to see how moved Suzan was by the recent visit of Pope Francis to Qaraqosh (March 2021) and how many *charuga* she prepared for that occasion or how, instead of making *charuga*, she started making face masks to protect people from Covid.

There were two years of delay due to many health issues Suzan and her family experienced and also due to the Covid pandemic which hit Qaraqosh hard. Because of Suzan's difficult life story, I felt the need to help her and support her along with the TRC. Suzan embroiders *charuga* as a means of living. It reflects her Christianity, her love for her heritage, her hardship and therefore every piece she produces is unique and timeless. Specific details about the motifs and their symbolism on the *charuga* were published in a TRC blog (see below).

The *charuga* contains an embroidered text in Syriac (see photograph): The translation is: "Fear of God is the beginning of faith." (from *Proverbs* 9:10)



The author dressing a mannequin with the charuga outfit. Photograph by Augusta de Gunzbourg.

On Friday, 18th March 2022, the *charuga* and the rest of the outfit finally arrived at the TRC after a very long journey from Qaraqosh. Thanks to the help of various friends and friends of friends, the outfit travelled through parts of Iraq onto Slovenia, from there the parcel went to Italy and finally the Netherlands.

So, after two years, at the end of the Jordanian Workshop held at the TRC on the 18th March, we opened, along with the participants of the workshop, all the packages that Suzan carefully sealed and

sent to me. I felt so emotional while I was following Suzan's instructions about how to dress the mannequin with all the six pieces that make up the Qaraqosh traditional festive dress.

In every layer there is a piece of Iraq's history and an ancient tradition that needs to be preserved and passed on and which today we have the privilege to see at the TRC of Leiden. We mentioned in a previous blog that it was possible for people to order a *charuga* in order to help preserve this traditional form of embroidery. And I am very pleased to say that there already have been enquiries.

*

A modern outfit from Namibia

Ann Cable

When I mentioned to Gillian, the director of the TRC in Leiden, that I was returning to Namibia for a visit this year, she commented that the TRC had almost nothing from there, and so I started a fascinating journey into the history of a particular style of Namibian dress.



Belt that goes with the dress and cap from Namibia (TRC 2022.3119b).

My husband and I have a very good friend in Namibia, Vincent, who has guided us on all our visits and he and his wife, Jacoline, arranged to have a dress made especially for the TRC. He educated us about the traditions behind it too. In pre-colonial times the various people living in Namibia wore skins, but with the coming of Christian missionaries

in the late 19th century, this was frowned upon. It became the practice to adopt the clothing of the missionaries in your particular region.

Vincent and his family are Ovaherero people and this group adopted the dress of the German missionaries in their area. (Another group, the Ovango, adopted the more embroidered dress of Finnish missionaries.) To make the dress (called *Ohorokova*) their own, the Ovaherero also designed a special, matching hat (*Otjikaiva*) with horns to symbolise the cattle which were, and still are, an extremely important part of their life and economy.

The addition of horns was not to the liking of the missionaries with the symbolism of the devil, but the horns remain to this day and are made from rolled-up newspaper. These dresses are not historical pieces, they are still made and worn with pride today by all age groups. Elderly people can be seen wearing them on the street while out shopping, younger people wear them more for special occasions.



Theolfine Vetumbuavi Mbaha from Namibia making the outfit TRC 2022.3119a-c (2022).

The beautiful, vibrant outfit in the TRC (dress, belt and hat: [TRC 2022.3119a](#), [TRC 2022.3119b](#), [TRC 2022.3119c](#)) was made by

Jacoline's aunt - Theolfine Vetumbuavi Mbaha and needed about 7 meters of cloth and a week's work. Namibia does not have its own textile industry and this material came from Ghana.

There are several important traditions associated with the outfit. The hat must be treated with respect, not dropped or allowed to fall. It is worn with the front just above the eyebrows. The dress must not be worn outside without the hat and the hat must be decorated with bling as otherwise you are considered 'half-naked'. It should be long enough to cover your feet and would be worn with shoes with a small heel to give the wearer the right posture. It needs several petticoats so that the skirt is full. The belt is worn just underneath the bust.



Hat from Namibia that goes with the outfit with dress and belt (TRC 2022.3119c).

More recently some designers have attempted to modernise the dress by making the length shorter and the neck lower but this is strongly resisted. A petition was signed by many demanding that respect should be shown for cultural heritage and traditions and such modern changes should not be considered.

Jacoline and her aunt are so proud and happy that this beautiful dress and the traditions associated with it will be a part of the TRC collection for a wider audience to enjoy, and I am delighted to have been part of making that happen. It was wonderful to be on holiday with a goal of finding something interesting for the TRC Namibia collection.

Educational activities

2022 saw the gradual re-introduction of courses and workshops after the Covid Pandemic.

Bobbin lace classes

Thanks to Gon Hamburg, a lace teacher and member of OIDFA, bobbin lace lessons were given at the TRC. Participants were taught the basic elements of torchon lace.

*

TRC Intensive Textile Course

The five-day intensive textile course is a regular feature of the TRC agenda, and has been organised for almost twenty years. It is taught in Dutch or English by Dr Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood, director of the TRC.



Figuring out how to spin a thread using spindle and spinning wheels. TRC Intensive Textile Course, August 2021. Photograph: Evelyn Valencia

The course is a mixture of theoretical and practical elements, with an emphasis on trying out the various techniques of textile production (spinning, dyeing, weaving), on holding and examining fibres, textiles and finished items, all in order to learn and understand what is happening and why various combinations take place.

The aim is to make textiles less ‘frightening’ and allow people to look and understand a

textile, from virtually any historical period or culture.

In 2022 the TRC’s Intensive Textile Course was run in August, October and November and attracted participants from many parts of the world who especially came to Leiden. They included people from Belgium, England, France, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Poland, as well as the US.

*

Sunday afternoon textile talks

These talks take place on the last Sunday of every month and include formal lectures and informal talks. The aim is to show the diversity of textiles and dress. It will also give people the chance to see any pop-up and larger exhibitions on display at the TRC. Reports on two very different talks are given below.



Mrs. Keijzer-Sarneel showing her Rijnland dress, TRC Sunday Textile Talk, 29 February 2022.

The first Textile Talk took place on the 27th February 2022 and was about the history and types of lace caps worn in the Rijnland region of the Netherlands during the 19th and early 20th century. The talk was given by Annie Keijzer-Sarneel and was about Rijnland lace caps. Annie talked about the various forms of lace caps worn in the western parts of the

Netherlands, near Leiden, in the late 19th and early 20th century.

She also talked about the different types of laces and nets (tulle) used to make them, as well as the daily, Sunday and mourning forms. The talk was illustrated by various examples from the TRC Collection (on blue panels) and items from her own collection, rather than depending on a PowerPoint presentation. The interaction was a great plus point to the talk!

Equally interesting, and this I hope will be a feature of some of the future lectures, Annie came in Rijnland dress. She explained, for example, the stage by stage steps needed to put on the Rijnland headdress, from the black under cap, the metal *oorijzer*, the lace cap and related head jewellery. She made it clear why you needed the various bands and ties in order to create the tight fitting effect. You can read about this sort of headdress in books and articles, but actually seeing someone put it on, and indeed take it off, is so much better.



*Woman wearing a long Rijnland cap, 1870s.
Photographer: Koorenhoff, Muskadelsteeg,
Leiden (TRC 2021.2439c).*

There were nearly twenty people at the Talk, including Nel de Wit. She is the lady who in August 2021 donated to the TRC a photo album (TRC 2021.2439a-z) from the second half of the 19th century (for a separate blog on the album, [click here](#)). The album included many of her ancestors and other family members wearing lace caps of various types. Photographs

from the album, as well as images owned by the speaker had been scanned and then enlarged. They form part of the current TRC pop-up exhibition about Rijnland lace caps.

Another participant at the Sunday textile talk was Bettie Stijnman, who is a lace maker and a specialist in 's Gravenmoer lace. She very kindly re-created (re-made) a flounce of this type of lace used for a Rijnland cap ([TRC 2021.2446](#)) in the TRC Collection. Bettie briefly explained what she did in order to remake the lace (for another blog on this subject, [click here](#)).

*

Appliqués and the Street of the Tentmakers, Cairo

In March there was a Sunday talk about the [appliqué](#) panels made in the [Street of the Tent Makers](#) in the Khan al-Khalili, Cairo, Egypt.

Appliqués have been produced in Egypt since at least the time of the famous Egyptian pharaoh, [Tutankhamun](#), who died in c.1323 BC. His tomb had numerous examples of textiles and garments, including items decorated with embroidery and appliqué.

The production of appliqué (direct and inlay forms) became widespread in the medieval Egypt and were even depicted in illustrated manuscripts of the period.

I have long been interested in the appliqués and indeed bought one when I first went to Egypt in 1983. Since then I have been buying them at regular intervals with the aim of getting a wide range of different types and techniques. Many of these pieces were to be seen in the Textile Talk.

The moment was also used to look at the history of this textile form, such as the direct link with the *Hajj* and the [Kiswah](#), an embroidery that covers the Ka'aba in Mecca (the long attics of

the Street were used for assembling the Egyptian Kiswah in the 17th – 19th centuries). The role of enormous panels in decorating the tents used by pilgrims and others on various religious events was highlighted.



Craftsman at work in the Street of the Tentmakers, Cairo (2014). Photograph: author.

Other subjects discussed during the Textile Talk were techniques (direct appliqué, [inlay appliqué](#)), materials (cotton, woollen forms), and range of designs. The latter include geometric patterns, inscriptions and calligraphy, and Pharaonic Egyptian patterns (very attractive to tourists!). Some of the latter, for example, were directly copied from ancient tomb paintings, while others were inspired by statues and paintings, such as a series of panels with birds, fish, etc. Another group of panels that belong to the historic genre have street scenes based on 19th and early 20th century prints and photographs.

Throughout the talk examples from the TRC's extensive collection of panels were used in the PowerPoint and the actual examples were presented so that members of the audience could examine, take photographs and discuss in an informal manner.

In 2015 the TRC mounted [an exhibition](#) about the appliqués both at the TRC and in the Netherlands-Flemish Institute, Cairo, Egypt. In 2018 [an online version](#) of this exhibition was published. The TRC exhibition includes a range of appliqués, materials, photographs, and over forty panels in a wide range of sizes, colours and patterns. This exhibition is also available

for loan for display purposes to suitable museums and institutes.

*

Romanian embroidery study days

Saturday saw another important step in building up the TRC's European collection. When the [Amsel Collection](#) from Paris, with many Hungarian and Romanian garments, was first unpacked at the TRC a few weeks ago we had several 'walk-in' visitors, one a Romanian Dutch couple, and a few hours later a Hungarian couple. We discussed with both of them our need for further information about objects, confirmation of provenance, and the need for the stories behind. And on Saturday (2 April) there was the first of several meetings.



Discussing Romanian embroideries with a group of specialists, 2 April 2022 (photograph Maria Linkogle).

It was organised by one of the Initial visitors, Liliane Birla, who kindly brought some Romanian friends, including Monica Brinza, who live in Amsterdam, Leiden and Utrecht, and who are involved in textiles, especially embroidery. We had a wonderful few hours discussing our problem pieces, firstly which group did the 'unknown' blouses and garments belong to? How were they worn, when and why.

What did the motifs and colour combinations symbolise?

It was fascinating learning about the construction of the blouses, the different usage of colour (the minimal use of green in embroidery from Romania), the diverse social and cultural groups that create embroidery, but also the different interpretations. For some in the group the use of crochet bands on a blouse was an indication the maker/wearer of the blouse was a 'lazy girl', for others it meant it came from a different region.



Embroidered cloth from Transylvania, Romania, 20th century (TRC 2022.0523).

Several members of the group have kindly offered to come back to add further details to the TRC Collection archive and database. In addition we are working on plans to have an exhibition in 2023 on embroidered blouses from Romania. The exhibition may open on the 24th June, which is national Romanian blouse day! We were also able to make plans for several Romanian study days for next year, on various themes such as Romanian regional dress and embroidery. We also talked with people from the Georgian Embassy about an exhibition on Georgian dress, and the possibilities of a project on the same theme.

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TRC participation in zoom conferences

During 2022 a number of zoom meetings, conferences and talks were participated in by

the TRC director Gillian Vogelsang.

For the last year the TRC Leiden has been cooperating with the indomitable Yasmine El Dorghamy, who is the editor of *RAWI: Egypt's Heritage Review* series, based in Cairo, Egypt. More specifically, we have been working together on vol. 11 of the series, with the title: *Egypt's Costume History* (2021). The project was supported by the Drosos Foundation and a grant from the Dutch Embassy in Cairo.

Many people have helped with this edition of RAWI, which takes the form of an edited volume of articles, photographs of garments, textiles and relevant items, as well as some amazing computer generated images. Those participating include Yasmine El Dorghamy, who also edited the volume, Shireen Ellinger, Azzy Fahmy, Engy Hanna, Sumru Krody, Maria Massakowska-Gaubert, Shahira Mehrez, Lucie Ryzova, Mohamed Abdel Salam, Marian Sardi, Jochen Sokoly, André Veldmeijer, and myself. Illustrations were prepared by Muhammad Mustafa and Haitham Zaki.



This issue of RAWI came out at the end of December 2021 and is beautifully illustrated with texts in both Arabic and English. There are articles about ancient Egyptian textiles, clothing and footwear; dress in Roman and Ptolemaic Egypt, as well as Coptic, Fatimid, Mamluk, Ottoman and modern dress forms. There is also the article by Shahira Mehrez about her outstanding collection of Egyptian regional dress. Copies of the magazine can be ordered [here](#).

In addition to this publication, there was going to be a two-day seminar to be held at the American University in Cairo, which

would explore the fascinating and diverse story of Egyptian dress in greater depth. I was asked to give one, possibly two lectures at the seminar on a subject that has long fascinated me, especially as a result of working as a textile archaeologist at 'Amarna (Pharaonic Egyptian) and Quseir al Qadim (Roman and Mamluk period textiles and dress).



Cover page for the article 'Turbans and textiles. Mamluk Egyptian clothing', by Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood. RAWI 11, 2021, pp. 54-59.

I was supposed to be in Cairo from the 2nd – 9th January 2022 and was looking forward to a little warmth and a glimpse of the sun, as well as taking the chance to see friends and to go down to the Khan al Khalili and to see what was happening in the historic Street of the Tentmakers.

Alas, thanks to Corona and a change in the Dutch governmental rules and recommendations concerning the Covid crisis, it was not possible to go to Cairo. Another of the speakers could not go either, so some of the events had to be held via Zoom, on 10 January. There was an audience of 35 in a large room, with everyone wearing masks, a modern example of a global change in dress codes.

Participants included archaeologists, anthropologists, and just as interesting, film costumiers and fashion designers. The lectures were given by myself (ancient Egyptian dress), Anne Kwaspen, about Coptic period dress, by Dr. Mohamed Abdel Salam from the Islamic Museum on Mamluk dress.

More specifically, my talk was about ancient Egyptian clothing, what it was made from, about the basic types and, in general, about dress and identity, in the past and in the present. A wide range of subjects were discussed in the one hour talk and subsequent questions session, about dress and senses, movement and social status of dress in ancient Egypt!

One interesting question concerned what we can learn today from the ancient Egyptians about sustainable dress – i.e. move away from wasteful, highly tailored garments to more loosely fitting clothing based on squares and rectangles! This is an historic method of making garments that can be traced back for thousands of years in many parts of the world.

To make it a little different, Yasmine divided the audience into five groups and each group was given a different set of film clips to watch and give a critique of the garments portrayed. Some of the films were Egyptian, another Polish, and one from Hollywood (The Ten Commandments, 1956). It was a fascinating exercise in realism versus inspiration. And yes, the Ten Commandments 'won' the prize for the least realistic costumes, very 1950s Hollywood!

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Tutankhamun's wardrobe

On June 18th the Textile Research Centre gave a workshop on pharaoh Tutankhamun's clothing, as part of the Tutankhamun month organised by *Huis van Horus*, a society for Egyptology in the Netherlands and Flanders.

Gallery Events

2022 saw various activities to showcase the diversity and depth of the TRC Collection.

Mapula embroidery from South Africa



Mapula embroidery from South Africa, 2021 (TRC 2021.2542).

A mini-exhibition in 2022 at the TRC included three examples of Mapula embroidery from South Africa that were acquired in 2021. One of the embroideries tells the story of Nelson Mandela's funeral, while another one reflects on what the Covid crisis did to one young man and his family. The third embroidery is totally different and includes different types of local animal life.

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Pop-up exhibition about two donations

The volunteers worked hard in April on the pop-up exhibition about the donation of two collections of European garments. A few pieces went back into their boxes, but I must confess, some more items were added.



Preparing the TRC pop-up exhibition, 24 April 2022

It was lovely to welcome people back to the TRC following the quiet of the Covid period, to let them see what we are doing and why, and most importantly, to see European items from the two collections we have just been given. The items on display included embroidered blouses and shirts, caps, socks, waistcoats, jackets and complete outfits for men and women from Albania, Croatia, Hungary and Romania in southeastern Europe, but also garments from Georgia in the Caucasus.

Nearly 50 people came, and there would have been more if there had been no problems with the train service. There were textile conservation students, old friends of the TRC, family members, textile lovers, and various people who had heard what we are doing and wanted more information. They had the chance to talk with us and we with them, at one point over tea, coffee, biscuits and a home made apple tart.

Visitors also had the chance to see the 'new' quilts that came from Arizona, several of which are mid-19th century in date. Other visitors wanted to see the depot (storage area), and yes there were questions about space and why we have accepted more items. It is simple, we believe in the future and the chance of getting larger premises so we can increase the range of our activities.



TRC pop-up exhibition, 24 April 2022

Yes, the TRC is a *gezellig* (cosy) place, but it is oh so much more. It is an educational centre, a research/study centre, a cultural ark for an important aspect of our joint cultural heritage (namely textiles, clothing and accessories) and a place where textile skills can be learnt and passed down by seeing and handling real objects, rather than putting them behind glass.

The good news was that we decided to extend the exhibition until the end of May 2022. In addition, one of the new student interns, Kelly Wong from Amsterdam University, made a recording of the exhibition, various moments and the people.



YouTube film, Open Day at the TRC, 24 April 2022

More specifically the film is about a pop-up exhibition that she and other TRC colleagues made to celebrate the arrival of two large donations of central and southeastern European textiles and dress.

More short films about people, items, exhibitions and projects at the TRC will soon be coming online on the [TRC YouTube channel](#).

Asia, Africa and European textile links

The theme of the TRC's Gallery exhibition was Asia-Africa-Europe textiles and was held in conjunction with an international seminar week organised by the IIAS, Leiden University. The IIAS week was from the 19th to the 23rd September and looked specifically at Asia-Africa, but the TRC exhibition deliberately looked at the textiles in a much wider context and was opened on the 12th September and lasted until December 2022.



Fragment of a block printed textile using a resist technique, 14th century, from India, excavated at Quseir al-Qadim, Red Sea coast, Egypt (TRC 2020.0239).

The TRC exhibition looked at various aspects of the Asian-African-European trade in textiles, namely:

The medieval trade in Indian cotton textiles with block printed designs that were exported to Africa and Egypt, as well as the Mediterranean. On display were a small group of this type of textiles that date to about 1350 and derive from excavations at Quseir al-Qadim, Egypt. For more information, see [a TRC blog](#) by Veerle van Kersen of 20 February 2020.

The second theme was the George/Madras cotton textiles produced in Madras (Chennai), India, from the 17th century for the West African market where they were known as Georges. These textiles were

also traded by Dutch companies and sent to Suriname and the West Indies, where they are still known as *Madras stof*. On display were so-called plain Georges-Madras (i.e. brightly coloured checks), as well as embroidered Georges on display. For more information on George cloth, see [a TRC blog](#) by Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood on 7 January 2022.



George cloth from West Africa, c. 2022 (TRC 2022.2349). This cloth is named after the British fortress of St George, Madras/Chennai

Then came a section on wrap-around garments called Kangas have been worn by women in East Africa since the late 19th century. Kangas are characterised by having a saying in Swahili that is printed on one edge of the cloth (for instance: "I am not tired yet. I love you very much"). Many of these textiles were printed in India especially for this vast African market, although nowadays kangas are mainly produced in Kenya and Tanzania.

They remain extremely popular as they allow women to express their thoughts and moods via the choice of a suitable saying and colour combination. For more information, see [a TRC blog](#) by Caroline Stone of 3 February 2021.

A tale of two companies looks at Vlisco and Jansen Holland wax prints that are associated with Helmond, a city in the south of the Netherlands, for the last 150 years and remain a staple part of the West African textile market and of clothing for

both men and women. For Vlisco, see also [a TRC blog](#) of 28 April 2013 about a special wax cloth ([TRC 2013.0317](#)) to commemorate the investiture of Willem Alexander as the new King of the Netherlands, on 30th April 2013.



Man's tunic from Mali, early 21st century. It is made from dyed strips of damask woven cloth (bazin; TRC 2008.0272).

The last main section of the exhibition looked at *bazin*, a cotton damask cloth that is generally produced in Europe (the best come from Austria and Germany). They are often printed in Europe or sent to West Africa where many of them are resist dyed in various manners. The display included lengths of bazin cloths and complete garments for men.

TRC Research

As part of strengthening the position of the TRC as a hub for textile studies and technical skills the TRC has started a new rubric and display theme – namely the 'TRC Spotlight'.

This is a means of highlighting a particular textile, technique or textile artist/craft person. We are using part of the workroom for this display and it includes a dedicated showcase and various panels to spotlight different stories and themes. Each display will be on view for up to three months. There will also

be a digital version that can be enjoyed by a wider audience online.



American-Ghanian textile artist, Addoley Dzegede

The first TRC Spotlight pays attention to the American-Ghanian textile artist, Addoley Dzegede, who recently presented at the TRC several workshops and lectures about West African wax resist techniques. Various examples of Addoley's work are currently on display.



Display: TRC Spotlight, Addoley Dzegede.

In 2019, Ghanaian-American artist Addoley Dzegede was an Artist-in-Residence at Osei Duro, a small-scale batik apparel company based in Accra, Ghana. While, because of her interest in the history of Dutch wax prints, Addoley was already using batik techniques in her work at this point, through Osei Duro she learned Ghanaian batik methods from

batik dyer Nana Aboagye, using cut foam stamps.

While in the Makola market, she also found wooden stamps to use for batik. Here you can see some tools she has used or purchased in Makola, as well as experiments she has carried out with the foam and wooden stamps using paraffin and soy waxes.

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Amy Salter and the handling of museum objects

We are very pleased to announce the inclusion of Amy (AJ) Salter's recent MA thesis in the [Leiden University Student Repository](#). AJ Salter has been an intern and volunteer at the TRC since the end of 2021, and she wrote her MA thesis partly on the basis of her work at the TRC.

In her own words:



AJ Salter, intern and volunteer at the TRC, recently submitted her thesis on museum and collection studies.

My name is AJ Salter and I am a Canadian currently living in the Netherlands. I completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a minor in Art History at the University of British Columbia where I focused on textiles and sustainability through the medium of photography. I moved to the Netherlands to pursue personal connections as well as a Masters at Leiden University where I majored in Museums and Collections.

As a lover of textiles I had the pleasure of following an internship during my studies at the Textile Research Centre in Leiden where I am continuing my volunteer research work after graduation. As an international in the Netherlands I appreciate the interdisciplinary work of the TRC and the diverse topics that can be covered by textiles. I hope to continue my research about museum collections and textiles in the Netherlands and maintain my ties with Leiden University and the TRC.



AJ Salter at work at the TRC, Leiden.

Amy's thesis has the title: **Handling Museum Objects: Encouraging Touch in Cultural Heritage Institutions in the Netherlands** (2022). It was presented to, and published by the Leiden University Faculty of Humanities, for the section Museums and Collections. Her supervisor was Dr. M. Keblusek. For a brief summary, see below:

Touch and interactivity are becoming increasingly popular in museums after decades of more traditional museum practices. New approaches to experience culture are being developed. This thesis examines five cultural heritage institutions in the Netherlands and focuses on new practices relating to touching and interactivity with objects, and their display for a general public.

Niel Kotler's 2004 article "New ways of experiencing culture: the role of museums and marketing" provided me with a starting point for a discussion of the position of museums in a cultural framework and for emphasizing the

importance of experiencing objects for educational purposes.



Touching textiles at the TRC: Workshop on the appliqués from the Street of the Tentmakers, Cairo, Egypt, early 2022.

This thesis answers questions about what museums are currently doing with their collections in order to meet the growing public demand for increased accessibility to museum objects and for a deeper understanding of objects within the broader field of cultural heritage.

One of the main themes of the thesis is the question how touching and interactivity contribute to people's appreciation of objects, and which methods the various institutions use to achieve their objectives of improving the public's access to the collections. Each institution is discussed in depth, through an educational and exhibition lens, focussing on how touching and interactivity are applied.

The conclusion of the thesis is that museums are far more open to touching and interactivity than is often assumed, by both specialists in museum studies and by the public at large. The efforts made by museums stress their realisation of the importance of handling and close interaction with objects in order to increase public knowledge and understanding of their collection. These efforts are essential for the preservation of

objects as well as for their associated techniques, stories, cultures, and histories for years to come.

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Current Research in Textile Archaeology along the Nile' Copenhagen, 5-6 December 2022

Dr. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood attended a two-day conference entitled 'Current Research in Textile Archaeology along the Nile' (5-6 December 2022). The conference was organised by the Centre for Textile Research (CTR), part of the Saxo Institute, the University of Copenhagen. More specifically, it was organised by Chiara Spinazzi-Lucchesi. She was invited to be the key-note speaker to round off the first day.

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The TRC and embroidery

In addition to all its many other interests the TRC Leiden is very active in the field of embroidery, as emphasized by the *Bloomsbury Encyclopedia of World Embroidery*, supported by the TRC. The TRC is doing so with the deliberate intention of building up an international centre for the study of embroidery.

The history of embroidery can be traced back via the oldest known examples, namely those found in the tomb of the famous pharaoh Tutankhamun, who died in about 1322 BC, and we may assume that the craft of embroidery is much older. It is used and worn by kings, queens, merchants, bishops, nobility, as well as 'ordinary' men, women and children.

An essential aspect of our plans is to get away from a widespread (Western) misconception that embroidery is solely a women's subject. There are many men, past and present, involved in embroidery! Just think how

influential the medieval guilds were. These institutions included the Worshipful Company of Broderers, which is still very active in London. Not to mention all the men in the Arab world, India, Pakistan, etc., who professionally produce embroidery. It is simply a subject that is much bigger and more diverse than many people recognize or understand.



Embroidered back of a woman's waistcoat, Albania, 20th century (TRC 2022.0943a).

Embroidery studies often focus on the different stitches, but there is also a need to look at the materials, threads and tools used to make the embroideries, literally from the humble needle to the tension frames of varying sizes. And there are the colours, patterns and motifs: they are a source of information about the symbols used and generally understood within a certain community.

What do we want to do in order to make this centre? First and foremost it is necessary to have a representative collection of embroidery from all over the world, which would be a foundation of knowledge about materials, techniques, styles and functions.

The TRC already has a collection of c. 5000 embroidered items, so this aspect of the 'Embroidery Plan' is well on its way. The collection includes Coptic embroideries from the 5th century onwards, as well as many

more modern pieces, from the 18th century onwards. The recent donations of hundreds (literally) of Albanian, Czech, Hungarian and Romanian embroidered garments means we have one of the largest collections of European regional embroidery from that part of Europe.



Belt made from a wide band of leather decorated with stylised floral and geometric motifs worked in coloured stripes of plastic using running and back stitches. There are also metal eyelets. Romania (Siebenburgen), 20th century (TRC 2016.0409).

But there is no point in having a collection if nothing is done with it and it remains hidden away in boxes. It is essential, therefore, to get everything online (open access) for everyone to use and learn from.



Embroidered boots from Uzbekistan, with leather soles, 20th century (TRC 2021.1935a-b).



Woman's dress from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, 20th century (TRC 1998.0032). The dress is made from black cotton and heavily decorated with embroidery on the sleeves.

Availability can take several forms, making everything available online is the first level. We also want to develop online exhibitions on various themes, such as materials, techniques, cultural groups and their specific embroidery (ie Afghan embroidery, Palestinian embroidery, Romanian embroidery). Many of the online exhibitions will be made with the help of relevant groups living here in the Netherlands.



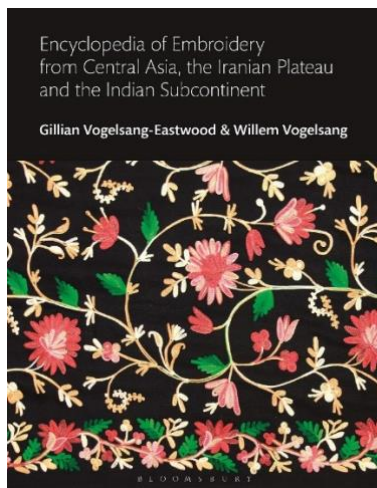
Sampler with a central stylised tree surrounded by floral motifs, all worked on a black ground (some of the black has faded to a brown colour). There is a date of 1852 and the name "AKKES S SCHEEPSMA (TRC 2021.1805)

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Bloomsbury World Encyclopaedia of Embroidery

The Bloomsbury World Encyclopaedia of Embroidery series is written under the aegis of the TRC Leiden and uses a growing number of examples from the TRC Collection for research and illustrative purposes. Outside support for the work involved in these volumes is increasing and coming from both official and 'ordinary' sources, making this a unique reference series.

Volume 1: *Encyclopedia of Embroidery from the Arab World* came out in 2016 and looks at embroidery from Morocco to the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq. This book won three international awards, including the prestigious Dartmouth Medal (2017), which is organised by the American Library Association. As pointed out by Widad Kawar (Amman), one of the Grand Dames of Palestinian and related textiles and garments, it is also the first Middle Eastern embroidery book to have a piece of Jordanian embroidery on its cover.



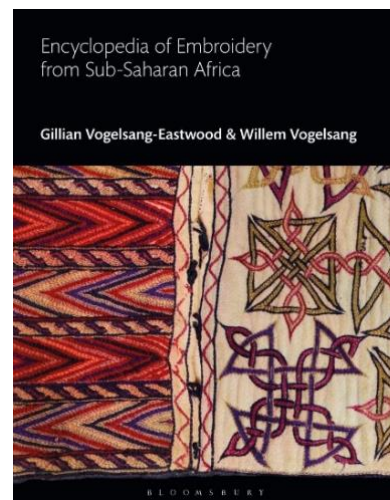
Volume 2: *Encyclopedia of Embroidery from Central Asia, the Iranian Plateau and the Indian Subcontinent*.

Volume 2: *Encyclopedia of Embroidery from Central Asia, the Iranian Plateau and the Indian Subcontinent* came out in 2021. As noted in one review, it is the only embroidery book that links three major groups (and many sub-

groups) of embroidery together. A complicated book to research and write given the wide variety of embroidery types from this vast area, but it was fun exploring cultural, economic and design links some of which go back thousands of years.

Volume 3: *Encyclopedia of Embroidery from Sub-Saharan Africa* will come out in the spring of 2023. It includes embroidery forms from West, Central and East Africa as well as southern African forms. Attention was focussed, for example, on the grand boubou and its many variations, raffia embroidery from the Congo, as well as historic Ethiopian forms of embroidery.

Particular help was been given by Don Johnson and Julie Hudson. Julie is the African curator at the British Museum, London. An especially word of thanks goes to the Museum for their help with respect to information and illustrations for the book



Volume 3. *Encyclopedia of Embroidery from Sub-Saharan Africa*.

Volume 4: *Encyclopedia of Embroidery from Scandinavia and Western Europe* is nearly finished and will be sent to Bloomsbury in 2023. It includes a wide range of archaeological, historical and modern forms from Iceland to Sardinia. It is a large tome that presents some intriguing, inspiring and at times, thought provoking subjects.

We have also started work on volume 5 that is about Embroidery from Central and Eastern European, Russian and the Caucasus. Thanks to three significant donations in 2022 of embroideries and embroidered garments from this part of the world we are in a very good position to work on this volume. We are also in contact with various museums and specialists in Hungary, Romania and Estonia who have agreed to help with information.

In addition a group of Romanian embroiderers living in the Netherlands are going to hold a series of embroidery workshops at the TRC in the spring of 2023. We have also been in contact with the Georgian Embassy in The Hague who have offered to help find funding in Georgia to support a trip to the country to talk with embroiderers and specialists and see embroidery in preparation and use.

In addition, thanks to the help of various people, especially Naoko Kikuchi (Japan) we have started work on the volume 6 that is about Embroidery from East Asia. She is working on Japanese embroidery history. We are also actively collecting examples of embroidery from this area of the world that includes a wide variety of different styles and techniques used for clothing and public display.



Detail of a Japanese metal thread embroidery (mid-20th century, TRC 2018.2534).

As a result of two recent donations of Indonesian textiles and Philippine textiles and garments we have also started work on Volume Seven, which is about Embroidery from Southeast Asia. We have already been in contact with the Philippine Embassy about this volume and the Ambassador, HE J. Eduardo Malaya, who has personally applied for a travel grant for us to go the Philippines to visit museums, talk with embroiderers and specialists there.



Detail of an Indonesian embroidery from the Lampung province, southern Sumatra (Indonesia, early 20th century, TRC 2020.2131).

And in the last few days we are finalizing the contract for the eighth volume, which will be about Embroidery from the Americas. This volume has been particularly helped by donations of Guatemalan and Mexican embroidery by Charles and Carolyn Knobler. In addition, we have recently been talking with some museum directors from Guatemala, Mexico and Peru, who have all agreed to help with this particular volume. More to come about this volume in due course.



Detail of a woman's huipil from Guatemala with embroidered birds (1960s, TRC 2021.1970).

Help needed!

These encyclopedias are regarded as a set of legacy volumes that can be read individually or as a series and that have the express intention of passing on knowledge about embroidery techniques, materials, forms and used for future generations. This has set a high bar for us to aim for! And thanks to the help of many people something rather special is being produced. Needless-to say we need even more help to continue and build upon this inspiring work!

We are always looking for examples of traditional and modern embroidery that can be included in the embroidery series. All the pieces donated will become part of the TRC's extensive and (eventually) comprehensive collection of regional embroidery.

But equally importantly we also need funding to help with research, the purchase of books, equipment and objects, as well as the costs

involved in trips to various countries to see and talk about regional forms of embroidery. Publication costs are covered by Bloomsbury. We are currently looking for €15,000 (per volume) to continue our work for the encyclopedia, please help by making a donation: The TRC is an independent foundation (Stichting) that is exclusively run by volunteers.

Please support us by transferring your donation to: NL39 INGB 0002 9823 59, in the name of: Stichting Textile Research Centre. BIC code is: INGBNL2A.

Since the TRC is a recognised ANBI (Cultural Institution), your donation, if you pay taxes in the Netherlands, is tax deductible for up to 125%. Please add: Embroidery Encyclopedia.

The *Stichting* TRC will be happy to answer any questions that readers may have about our work. In addition, gifts of clothing, books and visual material are always welcome! And anyone wishing to help financially or take part in the activities of the *Stichting* should contact us at:

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