

TEXTILE RESEARCH CENTRE LEIDEN

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2014



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Chairman's Comments

Once again, TRC's Annual Report for the year 2014 shows an amazing host of activities for a small organisation like TRC. The activities range from courses, exhibitions and workshops, as well as special days such as those celebrating the British author, Jane Austin. There is also an increasing number of projects associated with the TRC, both in the Netherlands and abroad. The wide range of work presented to the world public by the TRC's website and Facebook is especially worthwhile mentioning. The TRC truly is an international centre for the study of textiles and dress.

The secret behind this imposing performance is revealed in Tineke Moerkerk's contribution about the volunteers in this report. "We never know what will happen, but we do know that it will be interesting and challenging." This unbridled enthusiasm also creates a stubborn (Yorkshire?) attitude that helps to overcome a range of difficulties and situations, large and small. As the commercial world keeps stressing, these are challenges, not problems! The TRC really is getting very handy at facing head on a wide range of challenges.

This mood is contagious. Every visitor visiting Hogewoerd 164, either for the first time or for a repeat visit, feels this enthusiasm, shares it and when leaving for home wants to keep it in his or her heart and help to convey it to all their friends.

However much beauty and specialist knowledge you may find at the Centre, this spirit is its most precious treasure.

The Board, too, is very grateful for this and wishes to thank everyone who keeps it alive.

Prof. Lammert Leertouwer

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. The most important part of our work is the building up and study of a textile and dress collection. These garments are available for research and exhibition purposes.

The Board

The board is currently made up of the following:

Chairman: Prof. L. Leertouwer

Treasurer: Prof. J. Bintliff (retired September 2014)

Secretary: Dr. K. Innemee

General board members: Prof. R. Bedaux (retired September 2014), Mrs. V. Drabbe, Prof. B. ter Haar Romeny and Dr. G. Vogelsang-Eastwood

International Advisory Board

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

Permanent staff

Dr. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood continues as the director of the *Stichting*. She is a specialist in Near Eastern textiles and dress. In addition, there is Ms Else van Laere who looks after the financial administration and shop. The volunteers include: Ms. Shelley Anderson, Mrs. Marleen Audretsch, Dr. Anna Beerens, Mr. Koen Berghuijs, Mrs. Angela Driessen-de Laat, Mrs. Naoko Kikuchi, Mrs. Tineke Moerkerk, Mr. Christopher Ng, Ms. Martine de Nijs, Ms. Irene Tiendalli, Mrs. Riet van de Velde and as a general 'sounding board,' Mr. F. Popp.

In addition, the TRC also worked with students from Leiden University, namely Roos Monk, Jasmijn Nobelen and Merieke Roosenboom. We also worked with Wolfgang Keller, *Charity Events*, a marketing and international events organiser (Netherlands).

The TRC: Volunteers

Tineke Moerkerk

In 2014 our team of volunteers grew with the addition of several volunteers who all live in the Leiden region, as well as students from Leiden University.

Every Monday and Wednesday mornings we have a meeting about what has happened over the last few days and what kind of surprises can be anticipated (or not) during the week. We never know what is going to happen, but we do know it will be interesting and challenging. Especially as the TRC is growing so rapidly.

As volunteers, we are responsible for a wide range of tasks that help and support the activities of the TRC. There are many jobs to be carried out and they never seem to come to an end! Such as cataloguing objects and books, sorting out, photographing, assisting with the preparing of exhibitions, welcoming guests, giving guided tours, answering questions, helping with courses, working in the shop, helping with the library, fund raising, acting as models if necessary, and generally talking about the TRC to the outside world.

We are constantly surprised by the range of objects and books that come in, by how generous people are, and by the potential of the TRC in general. All of these activities are making the TRC into an important centre for the study of textiles and dress within Leiden, the Netherlands and internationally.

We, the volunteers, carry out this work with enthusiasm and dedication. Basically, we enjoy working at the TRC, not just because textiles and dress appeal to us, but also because we think that the TRC is making a valuable contribution to research in this field. But if we are absolutely honest, then I would say, we like working at the TRC because we learn a lot, it is seldom boring and we have a good time. What more could you wish for?

TRC Gallery

The TRC Gallery is used to hold temporary exhibitions about textiles and dress. These exhibitions are free of charge, in order to attract as wide a range of people as possible.

In 2014 three exhibitions were held at the TRC Gallery:

- *The Silhouette of Africa: Colours and patterns of textiles from sub-Saharan Africa (January-May 2014).*
- *Weaving the World: 7000 years of handwoven textiles in one exhibition (May-September 2014).*
- *Renewed from Afar: Modern bobbin lace inspired by the collection of the Textile Research Centre (September-December 2014).*

Further details about these exhibitions can be found below.

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Guided Tours of TRC Exhibitions

Every Wednesday and Thursday afternoon at 14.00 there is a guided tour of the current, TRC exhibition. These are becoming increasingly popular with visitors and we sometimes have ten people in a tour. This may not sound many, but ten very interested people means lots of questions, so some of the tours take much longer than expected! But this is the TRC and we encourage questions and interest.

TRC Shop

The activities of the TRC are also supported by the TRC shop. The shop sells items relating to dress and textiles, including new and second hand books, and particularly objects relating to textile production such as fibres, hand spindles, small items of weaving, and so forth. In addition there are textiles, garments, bags and jewellery from various countries around the world. There is also a growing collection of postcards, based on items in the TRC collection. These postcards are currently only available from the TRC. The shop now also includes a wide range of beads suitable for embroidery and for Dutch regional dress (*klederdracht*). They include very fine seed beads, as well as metallic coloured beads and mourning beads.

Many of the items for sale in the shop also appear in the TRC's webshop (see below). The shop is managed by Mrs. Else van Laere.

TRC mini-publications

As a result of the request for more information about exhibitions and for copies of exhibition text boards, the TRC started in 2011 to produce a series of mini-publications for each exhibition. Most of these booklets are in Dutch and are based upon the texts available to the public with each exhibition, with added photographs. By the end of 2014 the following titles were available, with many more planned for 2015.

- *Over kant gesproken* (2014)
- *Het weven van de wereld: 7000 jaar handgeweven textiel* (2014)
- *Silhouet van Afrika: Kleur en Kleding kleding* (2014)
- *Wat is Borduren?* (2013)
- *Meer dan de Chador: Kleding uit de bergen en woestijnen van Iran* (2013)
- *Goed geklede voet* (2012)
- *Lotusschoenen en een gelukkige toekomst* (2012)
- *Hoofd-zaken: Hoofdbedekkingen en haardecoraties voor vrouwen* (2012).
- *Voor de draad ermee! De wereld van het spinnen* (2011).
- *Spinners op merklappen* (2011).
- *Cheongsam! Glamour en geschiedenis verenigd in een kledingstuk* (2011).
- *Mooi gekleed Afghanistan* (2011).
- *Borduurwerk in de Arabische wereld* (2011).
- *Prins voor één dag – Turkse besnijdeniskleding* (2011).
- *Badla – Borduren met zilverdraad* (2011).
- *De Thob'Ubb: de langste jurk ter wereld?* (2011).
- *Oya – Turkse kant: een springlevende traditie* (2011).
- *Kanga's: Een kledingstuk voor vrouwen uit Oost-Afrika* (2011).

It is the plan to also publish these mini-volumes in English.

The TRC's Website

The Stichting has its own website, www.trc-leiden.nl, which was designed by Joost Kolkman (<http://www.joostkolkman.nl>). 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, and short items of current interest. The website information is given in both Dutch and English.

The website is kept up-to-date by Willem Vogelsang who, throughout 2014 (and 2015) has been continually adding new items, removing old items and working on the TRC's big project for 2014, TRC Needles (see below).

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TRC and Facebook

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. 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.

The TRC also has a QR code, which links directly to the TRC website:



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TRC, Pinterest and Twitter

Roos Monk, one of the TRC students, has established both Pinterest and Twitter pages for the TRC.

Pinterest features images of textiles and garments from the TRC's collection, while the Twitter feature gives short texted information about latest events, and so forth. Please feel free to sign on to either of these initiatives.

Textile Moments

The TRC has its own blog page called *Textile Moments*. This page is used by members of the TRC or indeed anyone else, who has had a WOW! moment with regards textiles, clothing, exhibitions, pictures, and so forth. They can send it in and share it with

other textile enthusiasts. Items in 2014 ranged from visits to Greece and traditional textiles and dress, to seeing exhibitions in various museums, as well as items about specific and unusual items to the TRC collection.

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TRC and YouTube

Thanks to the help of Andrew Thompson (*RESTORIENT*, Leiden), various exhibitions held at the TRC have been recorded in the form of YouTube films. These films can be found via the TRC website or the TRC's Facebook.

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Database and Digital Catalogue

In addition, the TRC is now in a position to make an on-line catalogue of its textile and dress collection. The aim is to have a basic catalogue available by the end of 2015 and from then onwards various parts of the collection will be made available to the general public. As there are over 10,000 items in the TRC collection it will take some time before the majority of the collection is on-line, but it will be worthwhile!

The Library

Over the years the TRC has built up a collection of over 1500 books relating to textiles and dress. Most of these books were catalogued in 2014 thanks to the efforts of various volunteers, especially Martine de Nijs and Marieke Roozeboom. The library is divided into the following sections:

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

The aim is to have the catalogue on line during the summer of 2015. New books to the library will then be added automatically to the on-line catalogue as they are registered.

Donations for the library are always welcome!

Throughout 2014 the TRC was also given donations of books. In some cases these were duplicates and the donors kindly agreed that these might be sold in the TRC shop (see above) in order to support the activities of the TRC.

Especial reference should be made to a collection of Russian books about Russian and Central Asian textiles. These were given by Mr. Bernard Kleikamp (Leiden).

In September we were given an unusual donation of books, namely two series of Japanese books about silk textiles from the Victoria and Albert Museum, London and the Textile Museum, Lyons, France. This donation also included a series of 1990s textile sample books produced by Trend Union, which were used to forecast trends within the fashion and design world.

Recommended books

There are many books on textiles, clothing and accessories and related subjects now available, and we are often asked to recommend books for students, academics and the general public. So in 2014 the TRC started a webpage ('Books showcased') with an annotated list of some recent acquisitions for our library that we feel will be of interest to 'textile' people. Some of these books will be of general interest, others intended for specialists. Not all books will be new to the market, but they will form an important part of the TRC's ever expanding library.

This list of recommended books will be cross-referenced to the proposed on-line catalogue of books in the TRC library (summer 2015).

Acquisitions, Purchases and Gifts

The TRC now regards it as normal for people to pop in every week with items for the collection. If something does not come in during a week we get a little concerned!

It was clear at the beginning of January 2014 that many people were tidying up their homes, as on each

day for the first two weeks of the month donations came in for the TRC collection! These included various collections of samplers made in the 1900-1920 period by Dutch schoolgirls. It is interesting to see how they were taught and the levels they achieved. It is also very nice to have names and in some cases photographs of the girls, as the story behind the object is often as important as the objects themselves.

Another gift in early January was a collection of textiles from Indonesia, dating to the early part of the 20th century. These pieces come from various islands and are decorated in woven, ikat and batik techniques. They are of a very high quality and their condition is amazing. The gift also included some ikats from Ecuador. These textiles belonged to the Dozy family, who had given items to the TRC earlier.

As an intriguing detail, a direct ancestor of the current Dozy family, Prof. Reinhart Dozy (Leiden University), published in 1848 the first dictionary of Arab clothing! A work that the TRC is planning to update in cooperation with various academic bodies in the Middle East. More details about this project will appear in a future issue of the TRC newsletter.



An early 19th century 'ring' cushion (TRC 2014.1060a).

There is an early 19th theme in the next two items donated to the TRC. First of all the TRC was given a small embroidered box, with four embroidered ovals inside. One of the ovals had the word *bruid* ('bride') and another *bruidegom* ('bridegroom') embroidered

on to them. It turns out they were used at a wedding in 1827, and then re-used for a wedding in 1903.

What exactly they were used for is not certain, but the size of the ovals does suggest that they might have been used for wedding rings. The embroidery is worked in floss silk and silk chenille thread, with applied, 3-dimensional flowers in very fine silk; all stitched onto a satin silk ground. The box lid is also decorated in the same manner, although sadly it is now in a much poorer condition. What memories and stories are stored in these pieces

The second intriguing donation came into the TRC in late May. It consists of a very large christening veil made from a white, embroidered net lace.



Early 19th century christening veil (TRC 2014.0831)

The veil is unusual for several reasons, but most notably because it was given by Anna Paulowna (1795-1865), daughter of Tsar Paul I of Russia, and the wife of the later King Willem II, to Maria Petronella s'Jacob-Rochussen (1792-1848).

The veil was probably given to the s'Jacob family following the birth of her daughter, Jeanne Josein Antoinette s'Jacob (1821-1910) in Brussels. At the time, Maria Petronella's husband, Frederik s'Jacob (1775-1831), was the *Secretaris van de Raad van State* and closely related to the Royal court.

The veil was given to the TRC by Mrs. V.P. Loeliger-Salomonson, a descendant of the s'Jacob family. Mrs. Loeliger-Salomonson wore the veil, as a bridal veil, at her own wedding to Emil Loeliger in 1954.

The summer of 2014 also saw the arrival of a group of spinning and weaving equipment that was

collected by the famous textile archaeologist, Grace Crowfoot, in the early 20th century. She and her family lived in Egypt, Palestine and Sudan and it was during this period that ‘Molly’ learnt about spinning and weaving and established textile archaeology as a serious, academic subject in Britain. Her work was continued by her equally famous daughter, Elizabeth Crowfoot.

And for something totally different, May also saw the arrival of some modern Uzbek garments thanks to the help of Dr. Willem Vogelsang:

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Some modern Uzbek garments

In May 2014 I attended an international conference in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, at the kind invitation of the Uzbekistan Embassy in Brussels/The Hague. I told someone about the work of the TRC and at the end of the conference I was given a beautiful collection of local clothing by my host, Mr. Mahmoud Husanovich Babajanov (deputy chairman of the association “Uzpahtasanoat”).



Uzbek chapan with gold work embroidery (TRC 2015.0176)

The collection included three women’s dresses of ‘atlas’ (ikat) weave; a gold embroidered cap for a woman (*doppe*); a hand embroidered and sleeveless *chapan* for a woman; a hand embroidered *chapan* for a man (with long sleeves); a pointed cap (*doppe*) for a man; and a hand

embroidered kamarband (*bel karz*) for a man. The garments are locally produced and some are embellished with goldwork embroidery. They form a great addition to the TRC collection and to the material currently being collected by the TRC for future exhibitions.

There were other many other items added to the TRC collection during 2014 and we would like to thank everyone for their thoughtfulness and help in building up the TRC into an international level research institute.

The TRC is a Cultural ANBI

On the 12th April 2012 the TRC was provisionally recognized as a cultural ANBI (“Culturele ANBI”) – this is potentially important news for any Dutch tax payers. It means that individual gifts can be claimed back for 125% for a private person and 150% for a company. More information is available at the Dutch tax site:

http://www.belastingdienst.nl/wps/wcm/connect/bldeontentnl/belastingdienst/zakelijk/bijzondere_regeling/en/goede_doelen/algemeen_nut_beogende_instelling/en/culturele_anbi/_culturele_anbi

The status of *Culturele ANBI* was officially recognized by Brussels in March 2013. This means that any donations to the TRC made from January 2013 onwards are tax deductible at the rates given above.

Exhibitions and Displays

During 2014 the TRC organised a number of displays and exhibitions on the theme of textiles and dress.

All of the TRC exhibitions are also available for loan to suitable venues, both within the Netherlands and internationally. If you are interested in having further details about TRC exhibitions then please see our website www.trc-leiden.nl or contact the TRC at info@trc-leiden.nl.

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The Silhouette of Africa: Colours and patterns of textiles and garments from sub-Saharan Africa
(5th February 2014 – 15th May 2014)

The vast continent of Africa is home to a wide range of cultural and ethnic groups, many of whom have their own styles of traditional textiles and garments. For thousands of years these have been used to identify the group and as an important means of indicating a person's social and economic status, and their role within such a particular group. But these textiles also reflect ideas about colour, patterns and iconography, as well as religion and spirituality.



Detail from dress with an image of Africa in batik. TRC collection.



The aim of the exhibition was to give a feel for this diversity by focussing on various types of garments and textiles from various parts of sub-Saharan Africa. In doing so, emphasis was placed on types of fibres used for specific garments; on some specific dyeing

techniques, and on some of the silhouettes created by the garments and outfits worn by both men and women. Overall, many changes in the use of local and imported textiles have taken place in the 20th and early 21st centuries, and these are reflected in the garments. As a result, there have been some dramatic changes in the fibres used, the dyeing techniques, and the silhouette of Africa and Africans.



The exhibition was co-produced with Paul Spijker (Toguna Art), a specialist in African textiles and artifacts.

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Weaving the World: 7000 years of hand woven textiles in one exhibition!
26th May 2014 – 23th September 2014

The exhibition was especially set up for the national *Week van het Weven* (27 May – 1 June 2014). It was produced in conjunction with 16+ a Dutch weaving group who specialise in using sixteen or more shafts on their looms.



Woman from Lima, Peru, with backstrap loom. Photo: Jefke van Iterson 2014.

The exhibition included some of the oldest textiles in the world. They form part of the TRC collection and come from Çatal Hüyük (Turkey). These tiny fragments are about 7000 years old, and what a story they tell about the long history of hand weaving.

Other unusual items on display include textiles that were originally wrapped around the Dead Sea Scrolls, examples of Coptic tapestries from Egypt, as well as medieval and Renaissance velvets and silk woven textiles. All of them are hand woven!

The exhibition also includes textiles and handlooms from Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Middle East, including a Bedouin loom from Jordan, as well as a replica of a warp-weighted loom of the type used by the ancient Greeks, Romans and Vikings. Some of the looms on display could also be used by the general public.

The exhibition contained the weaving equipment and some woven textiles of one of the *Grandes Dames* of textile archaeology, Grace Crowfoot (1877-1957), who lived and worked in the Middle East between 1909 and 1937. She was one of the first to reconstruct some of the textiles found in the tomb of Tutankhamun, and to do so, she constructed a simple frame. Both the frame and one of the replica textiles woven by Grace Crowfoot could be seen in the exhibition.

As noted above, part of the exhibition was dedicated to the work of **16+**, a group of Dutch weavers who specialize in using looms with sixteen or more shafts. The textiles produced by this group are very varied, from small to large items, some of them are even woven with copper threads. These pieces are new and especially woven for the 'Week van het Weven'.



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**"Renewed from Afar
Modern bobbin lace inspired by the
collection of the Textile Research Centre"
7th October - 18 December 2014**

This was a joint exhibition with *Experikant*, a Dutch lace group who are involved in the production of lace as a modern art form. The room was divided into modern examples of lace on one side of the Gallery

and more traditional forms on the other. The traditional forms came with the question – What is Lace? A question that was not so easy to answer and which various people have very different ideas about. The most piquant is that lace should be transparent, which opens up many more questions.



The exhibition displayed the work of a group of Dutch lacemakers, called EXPERIKANT, which is engaged with the production of modern lace. The old craft is thereby translated for modern times. All the members of the group have followed the traditional schooling of lace production. Now they design their own work and in doing so they make use of many different materials. For this exhibition they were inspired by the large collection of textiles and dress of the TRC. The choice of items was very diverse: a beautiful skirt, a tie on a kimono, a belt, a typical form of headdress or a head covering. These items were 'translated' into bobbin lace.



Fezzes made out of bobbin lace. Lacemaker: Nel Butter.

This very colourful and three-dimensional exhibition showed the 'original' item from the TRC collection, and the modern bobbin lace 'translation'. With each group of textiles there was a workbook with a description of the production process.

The exhibition of modern lace was accompanied by a display, on the other side of the Gallery, of different traditional laces organised by the TRC itself, which

were grouped together under the heading "What is lace?". The display contained a series of examples, including pieces made of needlelace, net lace, embroidered lace, knotted lace, knitted lace, and last but not least, of crocheting and tatting. The actual examples were all described in text boards, that together told the long and fascinating history of lace, in all its forms and techniques.

TRC Projects

The TRC is involved in a variety of different projects concerning textiles and dress from around the world. In 2014 the main projects were:

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TRC Needles: The TRC digital encyclopaedia of decorative needlework



Detail from an appliqué panel from Cairo (TRC 2013.0442).

For thousands of years men and women have made, worn, traded, and admired various forms of decorative needlework, from small daintily embroidered handkerchiefs to giant gold embroidered texts that bedeck the *kiswah* in Mecca. Decorative needlework was and remains a feature of life throughout the world.

The Textile Research Centre (TRC) set up in 2014 a digital encyclopaedia called *TRC Needles*, which covers this enormous field of human creativity, focussing in particular on appliqué, beading, darned knotting, embroidery, needle lace making, passementerie, patchwork and quilting. The encyclopaedia includes information about different

forms from all over the world, from the Americas to Asia. It looks at the earliest surviving examples from ancient Egypt to present-day forms, with an emphasis on handmade examples rather than industrially produced items.

TRC Needles includes references to tools and materials, to iconography, the uses of decorative needlework, to influential people and makers, historical examples, relevant institutions, paintings or similar imagery that depicts decorative needlework. The encyclopaedia also discusses relevant references in various forms of literature, as well as relevant details relating to economic and social history.

TRC Needles came on-line in September 2014 and since then hundreds of entries have been added. These entries have been written by various specialists around the world as well as a team from the TRC itself. Access to information and (free) images have been provided by a number of museums including the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, the British Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum, both in London, ULITA in Leeds, etc.

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Coptic Identity

Tineke Rooijackers

PhD thesis: *Dress Codes: A comparative study of dress and religious identity within the Coptic community in past and present* (to be completed in 2015)

Through dress we convey silent messages about our identity, thereby visualizing and reinforcing a sense of community. My research investigates the connection between religion and dress, or more specifically; the role of dress within the creation, confirmation and renegotiation of religious identity.

To discuss this general topic, a specific case study is examined in detail: that of the Coptic community. Issues of dress and identity are investigated both at its origins in the past and in the present.

Past dress codes are examined through ancient textiles, images and texts, while present Egyptian and diaspora communities are studied through in-depth interviews and the documentation of markers of religious identity. By comparing the past and the present, changes within dress codes can be examined, but also the influence of different receptor societies

on religious identity and its accompanying dress codes, how history has shaped present ideas of identity, and how history and a notion of continuity, visualised through dress and art, is used to maintain a sense of community.

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Dutch and European lace caps

Ms. Riet van de Velde

The TRC has an extensive collection of Dutch lace caps, and also examples from other parts of Europe. They date from the mid-19th century to the present day. They represent an important garment worn by girls and married women throughout Western Europe. These caps were used to give information about the marital, social, regional, religious and indeed economic status of the wearer.

The TRC collection is being catalogued and photographed so that a detailed description of their construction, appearance and use can be presented to the general public. In addition, Dutch lace caps are often described according to their regional origins – Rijnland, Volendam, Zeeland, and so forth, but seldom with reference to the use of lace caps in urban and regional forms from other parts of Europe.

In early 2014 we were offered a group of lace caps dating from the late 19th and early 20th century by Jankees Goud, a specialist working in Zeeland. In order to purchase these caps we had a ‘Sponsor a Cap’ in which friends of the TRC could sponsor a particular cap. Thanks to the help of everyone, we were able to raise the 780 euros that was needed very quickly.

The ultimate aim is to have the TRC's collection digitally available so that it can be used by researchers elsewhere to identify and discuss similarities and differences. This project will be of particular interest to social historians.

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Encyclopedia of Embroidery from the Arab World

The exhibition *What is Embroidery?* ran parallel to the working on *The Encyclopedia of Embroidery from the Arab World*, compiled by Gillian Vogelsang, director TRC, with the help of many others. The book will be published in January 2016

by Bloomsbury in London (ca. 750 pp., with some 500 photographs plus line drawings).

This monumental work includes 45 separate articles about the techniques, decorative forms and uses of embroidery from Morocco in the west to Iraq in the east, from the period of Tutankhamun in ancient Egypt to the present day.

The complete manuscript with photographs of TRC items taken by Joost Kolkman and drawings by Martin Hense, was sent to Bloomsbury at the end of 2014.

TRC Courses and Workshops

2014 saw the development of a wide range of courses and workshops that will be built upon over the next few years. The main item in this respect is the establishment of the Wednesday workshop series.

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A Batak afternoon at the TRC 15th June 2014



The afternoon of the 15th of June was dedicated to a film screening and a presentation of a new book by the anthropologist, Sandra Niessen, about the weaving traditions of the Batak in North Sumatra, Indonesia. Some forty people attended the afternoon and enjoyed, not only watching the film, but also discussing the Bataks and their culture with the author. And above all, they visited the new exhibition on weaving products and weaving techniques from all over the world. The photograph shows Sandra Niessen talking with some of the visitors. The orange

coloured lady in the foreground is a mannequin with an orange coloured *burqa* from Afghanistan..... (see below).

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Workshop: Gold Thread Embroidery 7th March 2014

One of the more intriguing and spectacular forms of embroidery is that which uses gold and silver threads. This technique has been used in different forms, from Japan to Europe, for hundreds of years. In Europe it is particularly known for its use for festive and ecclesiastical garments. In the Middle East it is often associated with women's clothing.



The design chosen for the workshop was a floral sprig inspired by an early 20th century Greek dress in the TRC collection (TRC 2004.0103). In the end two workshops took place on Friday 7th March 2014, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon. Both workshops were filled very quickly and we had a waiting list of applicants.

The instructor was Ms Ulrike Mullners, a professional embroideress.

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Three-Day TRC Course: Basic Middle Eastern and Central Asian embroidery techniques and identification 20th -22nd June 2014

For the purpose of this course, embroidery was defined as the art of decorating a piece of cloth, whereby a needle and thread are an essential, but not necessarily the only elements used to create a design or pattern. This means that stitching and other techniques, such as appliqué and patchwork, also

come under the umbrella term of embroidery.

Most people have heard of embroidery, especially cross stitch samplers. However, the history of embroidery is much more complex than the cross stitch.



Detail of heavily embroidered, woman's trouser cuffs, Oman (TRC 1999.0005).

The course looked at the general history of embroidery and embroidery techniques, with an emphasis on Middle Eastern and Central Asian forms. The TRC's extensive collection of embroidery was used to illustrate the various forms discussed.. Each day included practical elements to illustrate the various points discussed. Participants came from various backgrounds, including several people from the British Museum, London.

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Workshop: Gold thread embroidery from the Middle East and Central Asia, 23rd June 2014

In connection with the 3-day course just described there was also a 'special' workshop on gold thread embroidery based on Middle Eastern and Central Asian examples in the TRC collection. The instructor was Ms Ulrike Mullner, who ran the earlier gold thread embroidery workshop on the 7th March 2014.

As indicated by its title, the June workshop paid special attention to embroidery forms from the Middle East and Central Asia, and immediately following a three-day course on embroidery. The workshop included various techniques that were and are used in this vast region. In order to illustrate her talk, Mrs. Mullner used various examples from the TRC collection.

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Bayeux Tapestry workshop 12th and 13th November 2014

On the 12th and 13th November Prof. Gale Owen-Crocker (Anglo-Saxon Studies, Manchester University, England), kindly agreed to give a workshop on the embroidery techniques used to create the world-famous medieval Bayeux Tapestry. The tapestry (which is actually an embroidery not a tapestry) depicts the story of the Norman conquest of Britain and the Battle of Hastings in AD 1066.

Prof. Gale Owen-Crocker's workshop included a talk about the history of this famous 11th century AD embroidery and at the same time the participants were given a chance to try out various forms of couching and laidwork techniques associated with the Tapestry. Three different designs were chosen that allowed the participants to try easy, medium and difficult levels of technical knowledge.

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Embroidering Tutankhamun's Tunic Workshop 26th November 2014

The 26 November marks the anniversary of the opening up, by the British archaeologist Howard Carter, of the tomb of Pharaoh Tutankhamun. On this day in 1922, he had his first glance of the rich collection of objects that have ever since fascinated the world. Nowadays, Tutankhamun (he died c. 1323 BC) is world-famous for the gold, jewellery, even his beds, which were found in his tomb, but less well known are the textiles and garments that were placed with the pharaoh for his afterlife. Apart from very highly decorated tunics, there were also 124 very simple loin cloths, and two pairs of socks. Tutankhamun and his wife. Gold and enamelled panel from the back of one of his thrones.

The workshop looked at various aspects of the textiles and garments from the tomb, looking especially at their embroidered decoration. In order to emphasise the more hands-on approach, the workshop gave all participants the chance to try out various forms of decorative needlework, using the techniques associated with specific finds from the tomb.

In particular, the participants were encouraged to embroider with linen thread, and to recreate designs

that were used on a small, but very elaborate tunic worn by the king when he was about eight years old.

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Wednesday Workshops

In 2014 the TRC started to experiment with various types of workshops and we found that having a three-hour workshop with lectures/talks and a practical, work best for us and our guests. The first workshop in this series was the one by Prof. Gale Owen-Crocker about the Bayeux Tapestry. The second was Embroidering Tutankhamun's Tunic.

It was decided that from 2015 the last Wednesday of every month would be dedicated to a Wednesday workshop on a wide variety of subjects.

In addition to the Wednesday workshops there were also a number of other workshops that looked at both practical and more theoretical aspects of textiles, especially decorative needlework.

Other Activities

In addition to the exhibitions and research projects, the TRC was involved in a variety of other activities and events. Some of these were social, such as welcoming visiting groups (including the Red Hat Ladies!), open days, helping national newspapers, giving lectures in Cairo, to mention just a few items.

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Teaching in Saudi Arabia

Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood

Thanks to a kind invitation of the *Saudi Heritage Preservation Society*. I was able to take a 6-day trip to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in order to give a workshop on the history of embroidery from around the world to a large group of Saudi women and talked with various specialists about the role and types of embroidery in Saudi Arabia.

It is very clear that the love of embroidery is very deep in the 'Kingdom' and they have a long and varied tradition of this technique. It is literally one of the hidden gems of Saudi life!

There are various groups recording the many forms of embroidery to be found throughout this vast country. At the moment this information is only

available in Arabic, however they are actively translating the books into English. We will let you know when they appear, as these volumes will be worth having in any embroidery library.

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Textile Conference and visit to *Tiraz*, Amman, Jordan

25th – 31st March 2014

Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood

Thanks to the Centre for Textile Research, Copenhagen University, I was able to attend and give a paper at a textile conference in Amman, Jordan, organised by the Centre for Textile Research and the Jordan Museum, Amman. The paper was about embroidery, what it is, how to approach it as a historian, and what the main types were in the Middle East.

There was also an opportunity to see the *Tiraz*, the new home of the Widad Kawar collection, which is involved in displaying, recording and preserving various aspects of Palestinian history and material culture. Although the Centre was not yet open to the general public, when it does it should be regarded as a must for any textile lover

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Meetings in Egypt

Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood,

In December 2014, I had the chance to go to Cairo for several visits in order to see various institutions and meet colleagues there.

I attend a conference about science and archaeology (organised by the German Archaeological Institute, Cairo), as well as giving a lecture about the textiles and garments of Tutankhamun at the Grand Egyptian Museum, Giza. The conference was held in Cairo and Aswan, which made the logistics difficult, but on the other hand we were able to talk with many more people.

At the end of the visit I was also able to visit the Street of the Tentmakers in Cairo, in order to collect various items that had been ordered from the craftsmen there for inclusion in the 2015 exhibition about the appliques from the Street.

Other Activities

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Jane Austen Day

13th September 2014 and two *Regency*

Dress making workshops,

Saturday 16 and Saturday 23 August, 2014

On Saturday 13th September the Jane Austen Centre in Bath (UK), held a Guinness Book of Record World attempt at the greatest number of people wearing Regency clothing.



Jane Austen (1775-1817), as portrayed by her sister Cassandra.

In order to support this amazing and fun event, and who does not know Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, the TRC organised a special Jane Austen Day, on Saturday 13 September, from 13.00-17.00 hrs. The celebrations included a special open day for people to see the current exhibition and a special display of late 18th, early 19th century textiles (one day only!). Visitors also had a chance to see a recent and very special donation to the TRC, namely a tulle lace veil given by the Russian princess, Anne Paulowna, wife of King Willem II, to a Dutch lady in 1820 (see above).

There were also various talks about Regency period fashion and clothing, including a lecture by Dr. Anne Beerens on fashion in the Regency period. Last, but by no means least, there was a Regency High Tea provided by the TRC. The High Tea was free for any visitor who came in Regency style clothing.

In order to encourage people to come in style, the TRC and the Handwerkstudio Leiden, organised two workshops, on a Saturday afternoon, 16 and 23 of Augustus, from 13.00-16.00.

The workshop participants, under the guidance of the professional seamstress, Liz Chaipraditkul from the Leiden Handwerkstudio, were able to make their own Regency dresses. Each workshop lasted three hours.

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A Bright Orange *Burqa* from Afghanistan for the TRC. Football is Everywhere!

Willem Vogelsang

We could not resist the temptation. With the world championship football in Brazil having just started and the Dutch team playing unexpectedly well, and the streets in Holland turning orange with flags, banners and whatever people can find, we at the TRC remembered the gift of an orange *burqa* from Afghanistan, in 2006.

At that time, early in the year, I had joined a Dutch military task force in northern Afghanistan. I talked with some of the soldiers, who had just ordered three bright orange *burqas* from the local tailor, not exactly a colour very popular with Afghan women. "Why did you order them?" "Well...., we will wear them when we are back in Holland this summer and when we watch the world championship football in Germany."



Football is everywhere. A bright orange burqa from Afghanistan in the TRC window (TRC 2006.0032).

I asked them to order one for me as well, which they apparently did, since a month later, back at the Museum in Leiden where I was then working, I received a parcel from the Dutch Ministry of Defence with three headachy-orange coloured *burqas*. You will understand, when the Dutch team beat the Spanish in the opening match, the orange *burqa* of the TRC simply had to be brought forward again. Unfortunately the Dutch lost the next round and the orange *burqa* equally quickly vanished from the window.

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TRC Leiden, Intensive Textile Course

The TRC's intensive textile course was held three times in 2014, namely on the 17th – 21st March; 12th – 16th May and the 13th -17th October. Participants for the courses came from a variety of countries including Britain, France, the Netherlands, Spain and the USA.

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Archaeological Textiles (January 2014, Leiden University)

In January 2014 Dr. G. Vogelsang-Eastwood gave a practical about textiles to the first year students from the Department of Archaeology, Leiden University. There were nearly 90 students, which meant that the practical session had to be divided into three. Nevertheless, the chance to learn basic spinning and weaving techniques proved to be very popular.

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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