

# TEXTILE RESEARCH CENTRE LEIDEN

## ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2011



*Guests at the opening of an exhibition about Dutch and Jordanian/Palestinian headgear, Amman, Jordan (May 3011)*

Textile Research Centre  
Hogewoerd 164  
2311 HW Leiden, The Netherlands

info@trc-leiden.nl  
www.trc-leiden.nl

## Chairman's Comments

This annual report bears witness to TRC's steady and apparently unstoppable growth. All of its activities have expanded.

We welcomed nearly 1500 visitors in 2011, a remarkable score for such a small institution, that has no funds available for large-scale promotion programmes. So, we can only explain this success by mouth-to-mouth recommendations: everyone who finds the way to Hogewoerd 164 goes through an unique experience which she or he is eager to share with friends and acquaintances.

Donations – in cash and *in natura* – flourished. We are very grateful for this support, even though the growth of the collections creates new challenges, as TRC's space for storing and conservation is limited.

We had an unexpected opportunity to solve this problem, when our neighbour at Hogewoerd 162 was willing to rent a sizeable part of his property to TRC at a very moderate price. The harsh cultural climate and the economic situation in this country took their toll, as we were unable to raise the necessary funds.

There is hope, however, that in the future we might be able to overcome these difficulties as the inland revenue have given the TRC a cultural ANBI-status, which means that gifts to TRC are tax-deductible at a very high rate.

My favourite item in this report is Mr. Koen Berghuijs' view on TRC, where he worked as a research student. He learned how a constant lack of time and budget makes for a stressful job. When, however, everybody is willing to do what is necessary, be it acting as a courier or clothing mannequins with ill-fitting cheongsams, amazing results can be scored and hard work brings great fun.

That's the spirit!

On behalf of the Board, I offer my heartfelt thanks to everyone – volunteers, donators, staff and visitors, who contributed to another year of great fun for TRC.

Prof.dr.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
- Secretary: Dr. K. Innemee

General board members: Prof. R. Bedaux, 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), Dr. Angelo Geissen (Cologne, Germany); Prof. Michael Hahn (Leeds University, England), Prof. Anne Morrell (Manchester, England), Mrs. Layla Pio (Amman, Jordan), Mrs. Widad Kawar (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 are a number of other staff members who are helping with the collection, namely, Dr. Anna Beerens, Mrs. Riet van de Velde and Mrs. Else van Laere.

Dr. Anna Beerens' and Mrs. Riet van de Velde's work includes cataloguing and maintaining all of the collection. In particular, Dr. Beerens is responsible for the Japanese collection, while Mrs. van der Velde looks after the Dutch collection. They are helped at regular intervals by Mrs. Angela Driessen-de Laat.

In 2010 a number of additional volunteers started work with the TRC. These include Mr. Koen Berghuijs, Mrs. Caroline Brasjen-Mudde, Miss Ellen Hartkamp, Mrs. Clare Loeff, Mrs. Tineke Moerkerk, Mrs. Marleen Audretsch and as a general 'sounding board,' Mr. F. Popp. In addition, the TRC included a student from Amsterdam University, Ms. Noor

Kramer (Dept. of Archaeology), who had a three month work experience place with the TRC.

\*\*\*\*\*

### TRC's 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday

On Monday, the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2011, the TRC was exactly 20 years old. In order to celebrate this momentous occasion there was a small party at the TRC which was attended by past and present Board members, friends of the TRC, as well as visitors to the TRC who knew nothing about the event, but were dragged into the festivities. There was an open house from 12.00 until 14.00 with an excellent buffet provided by the volunteers.

We look forward to the next 20 years, which is bound to be full of surprises and unexpected twists, but most of all interesting people and events!

\*\*\*\*\*

### Zambian School Uniforms

When the TRC moved into its present home on the Hogewoerd, Leiden, we were asked to help raise funds for 350 school uniforms for boys and girls in Itumbi village, Zambia. *€3 equals one child to school* was a challenge that the TRC could not resist!

The money was needed to buy the cloth and three sewing machines, to organise sewing lessons and the actual making of the uniforms was quickly raised, thanks to the generosity of the *Rotary Club*, Leiderdorp, several substantial private donations and numerous smaller ones.

In January 2011 work commenced on production of the uniforms. On the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2011 the school was officially opened and we are delighted to announce that the children now have their uniforms and are attending their newly built school.



*Local ladies busy making the school uniforms*



*Children at the opening of the school in their new uniforms on the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2011.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Volunteers

Tineke Moerkerk

In 2011 the running of the TRC was able to take place due to the invaluable aid of its numerous volunteers. A few thoughts on this work is given below by Tineke Moerkerk, who has been at the TRC for several years now.

\*

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! Such as cataloguing objects (fragile to very solid items!), and books, sorting out, photographing, recording, assisting the preparing of exhibitions, welcoming guests, giving guided tours, answering questions, 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, how generous people are, and the potential of the TRC in general.

Every Monday we have a small 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 now known both nationally and internationally.

As volunteers we enable its visitors, who come from many parts of the Netherlands as well as the rest of the world, to enjoy and learn about textiles and dress and their related uses and customs.

We 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, as well as to Leiden in general. 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 fun! What more can you ask for as a volunteer?

\*

## The TRC: A students perspective

Koen Berghuijs

After a fascinating lecture and an interesting practical given by Dr. Vogelsang-Eastwood, I volunteered at the TRC at the end of January 2011. Since then, I have been involved into dressing up mannequins with tight fitting cheongsams, bringing boxes containing Dutch lace caps to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague, as well as sewing hair clamps, beaks, claws, combs and bun scrunchies onto exhibition panels. From April onwards, we started working on the exhibition about hand spinning. It was my job to arrange for a loan agreement with the National Museum of Antiquities (RMO) in Leiden, and to contact several people and institutions about lending some of their objects for the exhibition, including spinning wheels, distaffs and spindle whorls. Gradually, I became more interested in the subject of spinning, and Dr. Vogelsang-Eastwood most kindly offered me the opportunity to organise a great part of the exhibition itself. I learned how to present objects in a gallery, how (not) to write text boards and how to guide visitors. This all proved to be much more difficult, time-costly and sometimes more stressful than it appeared, and yet extraordinary instructive and – above all – fun! Next to gaining experience in the field of curatorship, I was introduced to the world of archaeological textile analysis through attending the Intensive Textile Course, as well as through examining textile, basketry and netting impressions on pottery. As a result of the latter, I am writing my BA-thesis on a similar subject. I am most grateful to the TRC, its volunteers, and in particular to Dr. Vogelsang-Eastwood, for everything I have learned from them. I hope to continue helping and learning at the TRC over the next year as well.

\*\*\*\*\*

## TRC visitors

Throughout 2011 the TRC has had a number of national and international visitors from a variety of countries including Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Columbia, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines, Russia, Spain, South Korea, USA, the UK and so forth. The fame of the TRC is certainly spreading!

But perhaps the general interest in the work of the TRC can be better judged by the fact that the number of visitors to the TRC Gallery has increased significantly in 2011. Many of the people heard

about the TRC via various newspaper and magazine articles (local, national and international), and the TRC's website. But most seem to have heard about the TRC come through word of mouth. And this is surely the best form of publicity!

\*\*\*\*\*

## Literally a World of Dress

Because of the increased interest in the work of the TRC it was decided during the February 2004 Board Meeting of the TRC, that the TRC would encourage the study of dress from throughout the world, while continuing our specialisation in Middle Eastern dress. The importance of this aspect of the collection is reflected in the number of projects that have a Middle Eastern theme, such as the Arab embroidery and Saudi Arabian dress projects, and the Coptic liturgical and monastic dress project.

In 2006 the 'world' side of the collection was increased with the decision to include Dutch regional dress (see below). Currently there is a discussion within Dutch museums whether ethnographic museums should include Western as well as non-Western cultures. Is it acceptable to only study the cultures of others, without looking at our own cultural background as well? At the TRC we are firmly of the belief that artificial boundaries between various cultures should be ignored. As people travel around the world so do clothing ideas, therefore, not to look at one's own country and culture, just because it is based in the West, seems an outdated approach.

\*\*\*\*\*

## 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 2011 three exhibitions were held at the TRC Gallery: *Well-Dressed Afghanistan*, *Cheongsam!* and *The Spinning World*. More details about these exhibitions are given below.

In addition, several small, window displays were created, notably *Feestrok* (May 2011). Again, further details about these displays are given below.

The TRC was also involved in preparing and setting up an exciting exhibition about Dutch lace caps and Jordanian/Palestinian embroidered headgear in the National Gallery of Fine Arts, Amman, Jordan,

in May 2011. This exhibition took place under the auspices of the Holland Festival organised by Dutch Embassy in Amman. Again, further details about this exhibition are given below.

\*\*\*\*\*

## 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 (especially from India), 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 an ever-growing collection of postcards, all 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.

In addition there is a section called 'collection care,' which includes acid free paper, acid free boxes, and so forth. These are items that are not easily available for individual collectors.

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.

According to Mrs. Van Laere the sales in the TRC shop have grown sharply in 2011. In comparison to 2010 there has been a 23% growth in sales in the TRC shop and internet shop. Sales via the internet are mainly more expensive books, while the sales in the shop are of a wide range of items.

As a result of the request for more information about exhibitions and copies of exhibition text boards, the TRC started in 2011 to produce a series of mini-publications for each exhibition. These booklets are based upon the texts available to the public, with added photographs. There is now a range of titles available from previous TRC exhibitions.

\*\*\*\*\*

## The TRC's Website

The Stichting has its own website, [www.trc-leiden.nl](http://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.

In 2011 several new sections were added to the website, including more details about the library and recent acquisitions of books.

In addition, thanks to a generous gift from the *Dr Hendrik Muller Vaderlandsch Fonds* 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 in 2012 and from then onwards various parts of the collection will be made available to the general public.

As there are over 7,000 items in the TRC collection it will take some time before the majority of the collection is on-line, but it will be worthwhile!

\*

## Database and Digital Catalogue

Caroline J. Brasjen-Mudde

As an active research institute, the TRC is coping with an ever expanding collection of textiles and dress. In order to make it accessible it is necessary that there is an appropriate database in which the objects are recorded with their characteristics, photographs, and storage information.

This is an on-going process that is getting more and more refined as the TRC gains more experience. There has been already a good start with this project, but describing and photographing circa 7000 objects is a time-consuming job!

Currently, the database is mainly used by the staff of the TRC while working on a research project, an exhibition or when handling an object needed for study by a student or visitor. It is the long term wish of the TRC to make the database digitally accessible in the near future (see above).

There has already been contact with various institutions to see how this can be done and adapted to the specific needs of the TRC. It would appear that the TRC is somewhat of a pioneer with respect to the specialist subject of textiles and dress as there are very few digital databases for this particular subject: most digital databases are part of much larger and general collections.

The TRC is a research centre that offers specialists the opportunity to see and study the textiles. This requires the TRC staff to have a broad acquaintance with the actual collection in our storage, so we can help people who are interested in

specific subjects and do not live nearby. This also means that the creation of a digital catalogue is essential so we can help as wide a range of people as possible.

\*\*\*\*\*

## 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 2011 thanks to the efforts of various volunteers. The library is divided into the following sections:

- 1 General reference books
- 2 Museum collections, displays, conservation and so forth
- 3 Textile techniques
- 4 Textiles, fashion and dress theory
- 5 Regional,
- 6 Dutch regional

Donations to the TRC library included a generous gift of books by the Danish National Research Foundation's Centre for Textile Research The SAXO Institute, University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

### Donations for the library are always welcome!

Throughout 2011 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.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Grants and Donations

2011 has seen several donations, by name and anonymously which deserve a special word. Some people wish to remain anonymous, but their help is noted here!

The TRC would also like to thank *Fonds 1818 (A Spinning World exhibition)*, the *Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds Zuid Holland (Cover your Head! Exhibition)*, and the *Dr. Hendrik Muller Vaderlandsch Fonds* (digital catalogue) for their continual support of the TRC. Without the aid of these funding bodies, the exhibitions and work of the TRC would be much more limited.

In addition, the support of Pepin van Roojen,

from Pepin Press, Amsterdam, should also be recognised. His obsession with and love of textiles is as great as those found at the TRC.

Without the support of these groups and the numerous donations made by private individuals, the work of the TRC would not be possible.

Many thanks to everyone!

\*\*\*\*\*

## The TRC is an ANBI

The TRC is registered with the Dutch tax authorities as an ANBI (*Algemeen Nut Beogende Instelling*). This means that it is possible to make annual donations (for a minimal period of five years) to the TRC and declare it on income tax forms. For more information about ANBI donations, please visit the tax website at:

[http://www.belastingdienst.nl/particulier/giften/giften.html#P0\\_0](http://www.belastingdienst.nl/particulier/giften/giften.html#P0_0)

In order to organise an ANBI donation it is necessary to contact the TRC's solicitors (*notaris*), namely, Roes and De Vries, Postbus 11290, 2301 EG Leiden, tel: 071-5233636; email: [info@roesendevries.nl](mailto:info@roesendevries.nl)

One-off donations, for which no registration is needed, are also tax-deductible, but at a lower rate. A letter of thanks from the TRC will suffice.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Acquisitions, Purchases and Gifts

2011 has seen a major change in the collection of the TRC. Prior to the move to the new premises on the Hogewoerd, gifts of garments were occasional. As with 2010, it has become normal for people to pop in every week with items for the collection. There were even several parcels that arrived in the post from unknown donors.

During 2011 over 500 items were added to the TRC collection. This means that the TRC garment and textile collection now includes over 7,000 items. More importantly it is gaining both geographical and historical depth.

In previous newsletters we have been able to name many of the people who have given us items. This is no longer feasible – the list is too long! For all the gifts we are grateful, and a big word of thanks to everyone who was so kind and generous.

In order to give an impression of the range of objects received it was decided that highlights would

be mentioned.

In January the TRC was given various items including a lace cap from Katwijk, Netherlands, and garments from Indonesia and Japan.

In February the TRC was given a number of outfits from India, Africa and Nepal. The latter was from one lady who had been given complete outfits as gifts. Various garments of Dutch origin from the 1900s and 1930s, as well as some modern items from Uzbekistan were also given at the same time.

March saw the arrival of some embroideries from China, one piece is believed to be several hundred years old. In the next month we were given several blouses from Germany that dated to the 1930s, plus a black evening dress made from parachute silk from the 1940s – the dress was dyed black rather than being made from a black silk. Various items of spinning and weaving equipment were also donated in March and some of them were on display in the spinning exhibition that opened in August (see below)

In September the TRC was given a small collection of *ikats* from the Indonesian island of Flores. These pieces were all given to the donor in 1990s but are much older family pieces. The island has a strong Catholic population and one of the textiles is a wall hanging depicting the Virgin and Child. Other pieces include dragons.

Following the *Question and Answer* day at the TRC at the end of October (see below), the TRC was approached by various people about individual items and small collections of textiles and clothing. In particular we were contacted by one lady with some textiles and embroidery belonging to her daughter. Intriguingly, it turned out that her son had had a shop in the same building as the TRC Gallery (Hogewoerd 164), but in the 1970s! The TRC was also approached by Mrs. Van Gerwen about a very unusual donation of European textiles. More details about the Van Gerwen collection is given below.

October, November and December saw the arrival of numerous individual or small groups of textiles and clothing items, from all around the world, including Azerbaijan, Jordan, Lebanon, Guatemala, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan. These came as a result of a call for help with the TRC's exhibition about women's headcoverings and decorations. The *Ambassadors Spouses Association*, The Hague, replied with great generosity (see below).

Many other items also came into the collection during 2011. Gradually the gaps in the TRC collection are vanishing. Many thanks to everyone who so kindly thought about us. Your help is greatly appreciated.

As a direct result of an article in the Dutch

national newspaper the *Trouw* (Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October), about a *Question and Answer Day* at the TRC Gallery, the TRC was approached by Mrs. C. van Gerwen about the potential donation of a collection of European textiles from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (see below). These pieces formed part of the collection of the van Gerwen-Lemmens Museum, Valkenswaard, which closed in 2008. Following a visit to Valkenswaard on the 12<sup>th</sup> November, Mrs. Van Gerwen very kindly gave over 100 textiles to the TRC.



A 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century European silk textile (van Gerwen gift).

The majority of the textiles date to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The collection is mainly made up of woven pieces, including velvets, brocades and damasks. In addition, there are a few printed and embroidered pieces. There were also several, very rare 'Coptic' silk embroideries dating from the sixth to the seventh centuries AD. These include scenes depicting what appears to be Christ and various saints.

In addition to donations, a number of pieces were purchased by the TRC as part of specific projects and fieldwork. These included several Chinese garments for the *Cheongsam* exhibition; spinning equipment for the hand spinning exhibition and headgear for the *Cover Your Head* exhibition which will start in January 2012.

### Purchases

Various items of embroidery were purchased in 2011, notably three beautiful dresses from Yemen. All of these are being used as part of the *Embroidery in the Arab World Project*. Further details about all of these projects are given below.

Thanks to the kindness of the *Fonds 1818* it was possible to purchase a range of natural and artificial fibres, spindles and whorls, as well as distaffs for the TRC exhibition on hand spinning. In particular we

were in a position to acquire a Russian L-shaped distaff – one of those object that are known from photographs, but seldom ever seen.

Later in the year and thanks to the generosity of the *Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds Zuid Holland* the TRC was able to purchase a number of item towards its January 2012 exhibition on women's headgear. The items acquired included some amazing Chinese headdresses for Dong, Han and Miao women, as well as a temple dancer's headdress from Thailand.

The Dutch regional dress collection was also expanded by the addition of various forms of headgear including lace caps, notably from Terschelling, West Friesland and Zeeland. Attention was also paid to completing various outfits such as the addition of a Sunday cloak for a woman from Scheveningen.

\*

### Gift historical textile samples from the Collection Van Gerwen-Lemmens

Caroline J. Brasjen-Mudde

In November, the TRC was delighted with an offer of a collection of historical textile samples from the heirs of the formerly Museum Van Gerwen-Lemmens in Valkenswaard (Netherlands). From the beginning it was clear that this gift was of tremendous historical value and would add a new dimension to the research of European textiles at the TRC.

As noted earlier (see above), the collection includes a range of different types of velvets, woven silk (drawloom and jacquard forms), as well as some painted and embroidered pieces. Many of the pieces have never been displayed to the public and will be of great interest to all those interested in textile history and technology. The condition of the greater part of the textiles is remarkably good and after consulting Ms. Renée Lugtigheid (Dept. of Conservation, Amsterdam University) it was decided to exhibit part of the collection from September 2012 until November 2012.

For many people this will mean a first actual experience of textiles which they recognize from images in catalogues and books, but have never had the chance to see.

This collection has a story to tell about the way the pieces were made, used and treated in the far past, as well as how they survived, were later made part of a collection and even stored. Some pieces were put together out of little fragments in order to



reconstruct the original pattern, others show evidence of having had various uses such as stool covers, wallpaper and possibly even, bed coverings. It is indeed this other part of the story about these wonderful textiles that we want to communicate in the forthcoming exhibition.

It is the intention of the TRC to exhibit the textiles with a fully illustrated catalogue. In addition, I am also planning a PhD project about ecclesiastical garments from the medieval period up to and including the 18<sup>th</sup> century using many of the van Gerwen textiles as a basis for my research. More details about this work will be made available in 2012.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Exhibitions and Displays

During 2011 the TRC was involved in a number of displays and exhibitions on the theme of textiles and dress. The TRC also produced some digital exhibitions in order to reach a wider audience. Several of the exhibitions took place in other venues, but two occurred in the TRC's new premises on the Hogewoerd, Leiden.

All of the TRC exhibitions are 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](http://www.trc-leiden.nl) or contact the TRC at [info@trc-leiden.nl](mailto:info@trc-leiden.nl).

\*\*\*\*\*

### Well-Dressed Afghanistan

TRC Gallery

(5th November 2010 – 23rd March 2011)

This large TRC exhibition of Afghan clothing was set up in order to introduce the visitors to an aspect of Afghanistan that amidst the turmoil and violence now dominating the country, has long been neglected. For hundreds of years Afghanistan has been at the crossroads between Asia, India and the West. During all that time, Afghanistan changed its name many times, but one thing that has not changed is the love the Afghan people have for colourful clothing, jewellery and embroidery.

The materials, designs and colours used by the Afghans for their clothing reflect the central and strategic location of their country. This aspect is found among all the people. The main ethnic groups

in Afghanistan are the Baluch, Hazaras, Nuristani's, Pashtuns, Tajiks, Turkmens, and Uzbeks. Each group has its own special way of living and its own history and background, which are reflected in their traditional dress. Some of these garments are relatively plain, others are decorated with woven, dyed and embroidered patterns in bright colours. Some garments are made of silk, others of heavy felt reflecting how cold the temperature can be at night in the mountains.



Two views of the TRC Afghan dress exhibition.

The exhibition included over 30 outfits, plus other garments and accessories, for men, women and children. There is also an unusual outfit for *buzkashi*, the aggressive game of 'polo' played by Afghan men on horseback. In addition there is the opportunity to see and try on a *chadari* (*burqa*), the (in)famous Afghan veil for women. Also on display is a series of photographs taken by the Dutch photographer, Hans Stakelbeek, who spent many times in Afghanistan on behalf of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The organisation of the exhibition was supported by Dr Willem Vogelsang, former curator Southwest and Central Asia of the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden, and since June 2008 working in Uruzgan, Afghanistan.

The exhibition was opened on the 5th November

2010 by H.E. the Honorary Consul for Afghanistan in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, Mr. Ehsan Turabaz. The opening was attended by over 85 people, many of whom stayed to enjoy an Afghan meal.



*Podium with a selection of chadari and burqa's from Afghanistan and Pakistan respectively.*

On the 13th March there was a joint *Stichting Afghaans Huis* and TRC *Naroz* party at the Gallery. *Naroz* is the Afghan/Iranian New Year. Afghan snacks, music and henna decorating were provided by *Afghaans Huis*, while Dr. W. Vogelsang presented a talk (several times) on 19th century Afghanistan, and Dr. G. Vogelsang-Eastwood took various groups on guided tours of the exhibition. It was a great way to end the exhibition.

The exhibition was closed on 23rd March. Should anyone be interested in hiring this exhibition please contact the TRC at [info@trc-leiden.nl](mailto:info@trc-leiden.nl)

\*

***Cheongsam!***  
**Glamour and history combined in one garment**

(TRC Gallery 29th March 2011  
– 17th August 2011)

There are a number of garments throughout the world that have become icons, notably the Japanese kimono, the Afghan *chadari*, the Indian sari and the Scottish kilt. To this select group belongs the Chinese cheongsam.

The cheongsam is regarded as the 'standard' dress for Chinese women from the 1930s until the 1960s. During this time it was popular in China's main cities such as Shanghai, as well as Hong Kong, Taiwan and among the Chinese diaspora throughout the world. Nowadays, the cheongsam is often described as being a tight, body hugging dress with a mandarin collar with fancy, braid buttons (frogs). But this

garment is much more than this. The history of cheongsam is a mirror to the many and varied economic, political and social changes that took place in China throughout the twentieth century.



*Poster from the 1930s depicting two modern Chinese girls wearing cheongsam.*

It is also a garment that has been influenced by and is currently influencing various fashionable trends in the West. In 2010 the fashion houses of Karl Lagerfeld and Chanel included cheongsam's in their collections. The Lagerfeld example was included in his spectacular fashion show held on part of the Great Wall of China itself. The Chanel examples were in their pre-Fall fashion show held in Shanghai, and versions were later included in the La Chaneophile by M.I.S.S. collection.

*Embroidered cheongsam from the 1970s.*

At the Oscar ceremonies of spring 2010 the famous Australian actress Nichole Kidman walked down the red carpet wearing a cheongsam style dress designed by Dior. Other Hollywood celebrities that have recently worn cheongsam include Celine Dion, Madonna, Kylie Minogue and Paris Hilton.



The exhibition looked at the history of the

cheongsam, the various styles that developed in the 20th century, why the cheongsam vanished from main land China, and its recent revival in China and the West. The exhibition presented a feast of colour, forms, decoration and details in the form of over forty woven, embroidered, printed garments for respectable ladies ... and the not so respectable!

The exhibition is produced in conjunction with Pepin Press, Amsterdam

\*

### *Feestrok*

(TRC Gallery, 27th April – 16<sup>th</sup> May 2011)



*Detail from the TRC's feestrok*

On the First day of the Christmas Holidays (2010) the TRC was given an anonymous donation, but very special donation. It was a 'Feestrok,' ('Festival skirt'), also known as a 'Bevrijdingsrok' ('Liberation skirt), from 1948. It, along with many other similar skirts, was made to celebrate the liberation of the Netherlands in May 1945.

The idea of the *feestrok* originated in 1943, when Mrs. Mies Boissevain-Van Lennep (1896-1965), who was a member of the Dutch resistance against the Germans, was arrested and held in a Nazi prison. In secret she was given a shawl (*lappendasje*), which was made from many pieces of small textiles from the clothing of family and friends. When she was released following the liberation of the Netherlands in 1945, Mrs. Boissevain-Van Lennep, together with a group of other women took up the initiative to make a design a garment that was to symbolise: unity in diversity; new from old; building from the broken, one garment makes unity.

In 1947 a national programme was set up to make the 'festival skirt' in conjunction with the International Information Centre and Archive for the Women's Movement (*Internationaal Informatiecentrum en Archief voor de Vrouwenbeweging, IIAV*). About 4000 *feestrokken* were eventually made and registered by women throughout the country.

In order for a skirt to be officially registered, it had to be made up of pieces of colourful patches deliberately sewn onto an old skirt, whereby the old skirt vanished and a colourful 'new' garment was created. At the front of the skirt, near the hem, there had to be a triangle in which *5 mei 1945* (5th May 1945) was embroidered.

### *Mrs. Slavekoorde and her feestrok*

Some skirts also included other dates relating to family or national events, or when the skirt was worn on a *bevrijdingsfeest* ("liberation day").

Each skirt was registered and the name, address and date of birth of the maker included, both in a national archive and on individual cards. The skirt was stamped and given a special number, which was stitched onto the skirt itself. Once a skirt had been accepted and registered then it could be worn on the 5th May anniversaries (*bevrijdingsfeest*), *Koninginnedag* ("Queen's Day") and other important Dutch national holidays. There was even a *feestrok* song composed by Elisabeth van Maasdijk:



*Vlecht in Uw rok het patroon van Uw leven  
Vrouwen en meisjes van dorp en van stad  
Lichtend symbool van het vrouwelijk streven  
Draagt het verheugd, als de bloem draagt haar blad.  
Eenheid in veelheid van lijnen en kleuren,  
Vormt met Uw rok het saamhorig verband,  
In het geheel van historisch gebeuren,  
Tooit het ontwerp met Uw hart en Uw hand.  
Stempelt Uw rok met het merk Uwer dagen,  
Voert dat wat was en wat IS in Uw Vaan.  
Heden-Verleden, blijmoedig gedragen,  
Sierre Uw kleed, Uw gezin, Uw bestaan.*

During Queen Wilhelmina's fiftieth and last jubilee in 1948, the queen was serenaded with this song by about 1500 women, all of whom were wearing a *feestrok*.

The *feestrok* donated to the TRC came complete with its *feestrok* registration card. From this card it is known that the skirt was registered to, and presumably made by, Mrs. S.M. Slavekooorde, Dorp 235A, Kesteren, which lies to the northwest of Nijmegen.

According to the registration card, Mrs. Slavekooorde was born on the 19th April 1915. The skirt was given the number 1964, and this number, as required, was stitched to the skirt itself (see the photograph to the right). As is required for a *feestrok* the garment is made out of numerous, colourful patches sewn together with orange thread. Along the front hem, as can be seen in the above photograph, is the inscription *5 mei 1945*.

The official version of the *feestrok* was joined in the display by an unofficial skirt made in 1947 by the mother of Mrs. M. Veltkamp-Capel, Leiden. The skirt was made from strips of cloth machine sewn together. It looks like a *feestrok* from a distance, but it was never registered.

As a result of displaying these two skirts, several people have been in contact with the TRC about official and unofficial *feestrokken* and related garments from the Second World War, which are still in the possession of their families. It is obvious that there are lots more stories to come!

\*

### Dutch Lace Caps and Jordanian/Palestinian Embroidered Headgear

National Museum of Fine Arts, Amman Jordan; 11th  
May – 8th June 2011

Part of the TRC's Dutch lace cap collection were on display in the *National Gallery of Fine Arts*, Amman, from the 11th May until the 8th June. The event formed part of the *Holland Festival* that was organised by the Dutch Embassy in Amman. In particular, by the hard work of Mrs. Heleen van der Beek.

A selection of lace caps from the TRC collection was placed on display together with Jordanian and Palestinian embroidered headgear from the famous Widad Kawar collection, Amman.



*The exhibition was officially opened by Princess Nafa`a bint Ali.*

*TRC volunteer Anna Beerens working on part of the*



*Dutch exhibition.*



*Part of the Palestinian section of the exhibition (Widad Kawar collection).*

The complete exhibition consisted of nine fully dressed figures, and at least thirty lace and embroidered caps, showing a stunning contrast between the white lace caps and gold jewellery (replicas!) from Holland, and the multi-coloured caps and silver jewellery from Jordan and Palestine. These garments were on loan from the Widad Kawar Collection, Amman. Mrs. Kawar helped to set up the exhibition which made sure that these items were correctly worn and displayed.

The exhibition was officially opened by Her Highness, Princess Nafa`a bint Ali.

This exhibition was made possible due to the help of Mrs. Widad Kawar and the sponsorship from the Dutch Embassy, Amman, Jordan and *Royal Jordanian Airlines*.

\*

Part of this TRC exhibition was on show in the Leiden city hall in 2007; since then, the collection of Dutch traditional dress has increased significantly, and is now a valuable resource for students and others who are interested in this field of Dutch cultural history.

Many of the Dutch items will be on display in the TRC Gallery from between January and May 2012, as part of an exhibition about how women around the world cover and decorate their head and hair.

\*

### **“Voor de draad ermee!”**

(25th August 2011 – 18th January 2012)

Until comparatively recently most textiles were made from a thread that had to be hand spun. For thousands of years in many parts of the world, different techniques and tools were developed in order to spin threads and in many places these forms are still in use. In this TRC exhibition “*The Spinning World*” (*Voor de draad ermee!*) was dedicated to the subject of hand spinning. The TRC exhibition was intended to give an impression of the many different techniques and working methods to be found in different parts of the world in order to spin thread. In addition, there were spindles, spindle whorls, distaffs, spindle wheels, spinning wheels from many countries. The exhibition included ancient spindle whorls from Afghanistan, Palestine (with thanks to Mrs. Widad Kawar), and Peru (thanks to Mrs. Ien Rappoldt). In addition, and, with grateful acknowledgement to the National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden (RMO), there were also spindle

whorls from the ancient city of Troy. Also on display were whorls from the Leiden region dating from the Iron Age, Roman Period and early Middle Ages (thanks to the Dept. of Monuments and Archaeology, Leiden Council (*afdeling Monumenten & Archeologie Gemeente Leiden*)).



*A shepherd from Ramallah with a spindle (ca. 1919; Library of Congress photographic archive).*

The exhibition included a range of distaffs from various European countries including an intriguing L-formed distaff from Russia.

Naturally, there were also spindle wheels and spinning wheels on display. These included the so-called ‘Great Wheel’ (northern Europe) and a ‘box charka’ (India), which became international known through the actions of Mahatma Gandhi. There were also spindle wheels from Burma, and various types of European spinning wheels.

The emphasis in the exhibition was on the spinning of various fibres, both well-known forms and more ‘exotic’ types. The fibres on display included cotton, flax, silk, wool, as well as alpaca, camel, llama, maize, milk, ramie, soya and yak hair. In the tradition of the TRC, visitors were invited to try different types of fibres using traditional and modern spindles and wheels. In this manner it was possible for beginners as well as experienced spinners to try a range of new forms and fibres.

The exhibition was created by the TRC in conjunction with the Dept. of Monuments and Archaeology, Leiden Council (*afdeling Monumenten*

& Archeologie Gemeente Leiden) and with the help of the National Museum of Antiquities, Leiden (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden). Financial support was provided by *Fonds 1818*.

The exhibition was developed by one of the TRC volunteers, Mr. Koen Berghuijs (Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University).

It was originally announced that this exhibition would cease on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2011. However, there was a booking of c. 90 (!) people for the first week of January 2012, so it was decided to extend the exhibition until the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2012. The TRC would like to thank the loan institutes and individuals for allowing various objects to remain at the TRC for a little longer than was originally planned.

\*

### **Cover Your Head! Women's head and hair coverings and decoration**

31<sup>st</sup> January 2012 – 30<sup>th</sup> August 2012



*Katwijk lace cap and jewellery (private collection)*

Much of the latter half of 2011 was spent preparing the next TRC Gallery exhibition, which will open in January 2012. The exhibition was prepared with the help of the *Ambassadors Spouses Association*, The Hague.

The concept of women's headcoverings attracts a lot of attention especially in the media, especially in the Islamic world, but little is said about the actual and highly diverse ways that women and girls from all religions and backgrounds bedeck their heads and hair. On display will be over 50 examples of traditional Dutch lace caps and headcoverings from the four corners of the country, and 101-plus modern

and traditional ways of covering and decorating the head and hair worldwide. There will be individual items, as well as complete outfits that help to show how a well-decorated head is an important matter both for the wearer and society.

In the exhibition will be possible to see many different forms of head and hair attire including items made of beads, cloth, embroidery, feathers, furs, rainbow colours, shells, even human hair. Some of the items on display are elaborate constructions that simply make you wonder how they could ever be worn, let alone while walking or dancing.

The exhibition includes outfits and headgear kindly provided by various embassies in The Hague. In particular the TRC would like to thank the Embassies of Azerbaijan, Cameroon, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Sudan.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Loans**

In November 2011 the Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam opened an exhibition about death, mourning and remembrance called *De Dood Leeft (Death Lives; until the 26<sup>th</sup> August 2012)*.

Various items belonging to the TRC collection were used in this exhibition including a widow's sari from India; a mourning kimono from Japan and a mourning chador from Iran.

More details about the exhibition can be found at:

<http://www.tropenmuseum.nl/-/MUS/66736/Tropenmuseum/Tentoonstellingen/DeDoodLeeft> ).

\*\*\*\*\*

### **TRC Mini-Publications**

The TRC is regularly asked for copies of the information provided on its exhibition text boards/ So in 2011 it was decided to publish the information in the form of booklets with colour illustrations of objects from the particular exhibition. To date all of the booklets provide the Dutch text, but English editions are being planned. The following titles are available: *Badla; Cheongsam; Kangas van Oos-Afrika; Thob`Ubb; Mooi-Gekleed Afghanistan; Oya; Turkish kant and Prins voor een dag; Spinners op merklappen: Spinmotieven op Nederlandse merklappen and Voor de draad ermee! De wereld van het spinnen.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## Other Activities

In addition to the exhibitions, the TRC was involved in a variety of other activities and events. These included:

\*

### Question and Answer Day

On Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2011, the TRC had an open house with various specialists who were willing to answer questions about textiles and clothing from around the world.



*Specialists at the TRC's Question and Answer Day examining a group of objects from Yemen.*

The specialists included Els de Baan (European textiles and fashion), Anna Beerens (Japanese textiles and clothing), Ineke Borgardijn (lace), Rene Lugtigheid (conservation and storage), Sigrid van Roode (Middle Eastern jewellery), Paul Spijker (African textiles and clothing), and Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood (Middle Eastern textiles and dress).

Thanks to this event being the main 'tip' for a day out in the Dutch national newspaper *Trouw*, over 70 people came to the TRC. Some came from as far away as Brabant and Limburg. The TRC visitors brought a wide range of textiles, garments and accessories. Some visitors from Leiden even went home and re-appeared with more objects for the specialists to comment upon.

It is the intention to hold a similar event in 2012. Further details will appear in due course on the TRC's website.

\*\*\*\*\*

## TRC Projects

2011 was particularly noted for the decision to expand on its Embroidery from the Arab World Project and the work with Berg Publishers, Oxford (now part of Bloomsbury Press, London)

\*

### *Encyclopaedia of Embroidery from the Arab World*

Embroidery has played a role in the social and cultural life of communities, and has influenced their economics and politics. And the Arab world is no exception.

The Arab world is a vast and complicated area. It stretches from the Atlantic Ocean (Morocco) in the west, to Iraq in the east, and from the Mediterranean in the north to the Horn of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and the Indian Ocean in the south. It thus basically consists of North and East Africa (Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Somalia), the Eastern Mediterranean (Jordan, Israel/Palestine, Lebanon, Syria), the Arabian Peninsula (Saudi Arabia, Gulf States, Oman and Yemen), and Iraq.

The term 'Arab world' is something of a misnomer, since it is far from homogeneous. It includes numerous different cultures that were brought together by Islam in the seventh and eighth centuries A.D. With the spread of Islam came the Arabic language, which became the lingua franca of all of the Arab lands and nowadays is spoken by approximately 360 million people. Many of these countries include other ethnic, cultural and religious groups, such as the Berbers in Morocco, the Jews in what is now Israel, and the Kurds in Iraq.

Following the publication of the book *Embroidery from the Arab World* (Primavera Press, 2010) and the TRC exhibition with the same name, the decision was made to take this subject another step forward. The extended project is looking at the role and forms of various kinds of embroidery in the Arab World: past, present and future. It will include a very wide range of objects including decorated garments and accessories for men, women and children, as well as household items, such as curtains, cushions, tent dividers, animal trappings, and so forth.

Themes within the research include iconography, colour, symbolism, uses and the social role of embroidery. In addition, attention will be paid to materials, equipment and techniques. The future of

embroidery will be represented by examples by modern Arab artists who use it as their creative inspiration or main technique. In addition leading Arab fashion designers will be asked for examples of their work that include regional forms of embroidery.

This project is being carried out by Mrs. Widad Kawar, (Amman, Jordan), Mrs. Layla Pio (Amman, Jordan), and Dr. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood. Dr. Meriem Chida (Washington State University), Mrs. Nettie Adams and Mrs. Marjorie Ransom are providing advice and help with various aspects of the work.

\*

### Kimono prospects

The previous annual report expressed the intention to apply for funding so as to enable Dr Anna Beerens to conduct a more fundamental investigation into changing attitudes towards kimono. However, since the earthquake and tsunami of March 2011 the situation has changed dramatically. Apart from a general sense of gloom, the disaster that struck Japan at the time has brought about a certain reticence on the side of providers of grants and subsidies. This has made it much harder to obtain funding for research in Japan. The TRC, therefore, had to consider a change of tack and devise a strategy that would lead to rewarding and fruitful results, even if it meant shelving, for the time being, the idea of on the ground anthropological research.

Dr Beerens and Dr Vogelsang decided to shift the TRC's attention to organizing an exhibition about traditional Japanese dress 'for every occasion'; an exhibition that will include the kimono men, women and children would wear for important events in their lives, for all kinds of festivities, to express the passing of the seasons, to take part in traditional pastimes such as tea ceremony, or to relax during a hot summer evening. Whereas previous exhibitions, in the Netherlands as well as elsewhere, presented kimono as an object of art, the TRC's focus will be on the social aspects. Many items for the exhibition may be bought on the internet; Mrs. Ogawa and Mrs. Karthaus-Tanaka (who have helped the TRC with kimono matters on earlier occasions) have already promised their support.

Putting together this exhibition will provide a learning process that will, in due course, benefit scholarly research. Moreover, this change of strategy would enlarge the possibilities to apply for funding. In the coming months this new project will be further developed and integrated into the exhibition schedule of the TRC.

### Dutch regional dress (*streekdracht*) at the TRC

Anna Beerens and Riet van der Velde

In 2006 the TRC decided to set up a collection of specimens of Dutch regional dress. The reason seems clear: the study of dress and identity should 'begin at home'. In the past five years, the collection has grown considerably through purchases and donations. We are grateful to many kind and knowledgeable *streekdracht* enthusiasts who were not only prepared to answer questions about minute details, but also to help us out with major projects such as the Dutch lace caps exhibition of 2007 and this year's exhibition in Amman (Jordan). The well-known Dutch dress specialist Herman Roza, who was one of the first to be involved, passed away in 2008. *Streekdracht* authority Puck van der Zwan (Urk) has been gravely ill, but he is now much better and as enthusiastic and helpful as ever. In 2011 the TRC came into contact with the collector Jankees Goud (Yerseke) who has also promised his support.

A very successful lecture/demonstration with Dutch *streekdracht* for members of a Leiden association of Turkish women in 2010 confirmed our ideas about the potential of our *streekdracht* collection for the wider discussion concerning female head covering and the (perceived) oppression of women. Amazement at the fact that some Dutch women used to wear no less than three caps at the same time (voiced by the Turkish ladies in Leiden *and* by visitors to the exhibition in Amman) put things very much into perspective. This seems a topic to (carefully) develop.

In the final months of 2011 much work was devoted to the Dutch caps (and some of the matching outfits) as they will play a major part in the exhibition 'Cover your head!' that will open on January 31<sup>st</sup> 2012.

The rather explosive growth of the Dutch regional dress collection and its somewhat unexpected popularity has created something of a backlog in cataloguing. In addition, there is still much to learn about traditional ways to take care of caps and clothes and to fold and store items in the correct manner. Bringing our *streekdracht* catalogue up to date will give us the opportunity to draw up a list of items we need for complete outfits. It will, no doubt, also increase our expertise. We are delighted that a subject that was long considered decidedly 'un-cool' is now finding so much appreciation.

\*\*\*\*\*



## Lectures and Workshops

Throughout the year members of the TRC have given talks, lectures and workshops on various aspects of dress and the TRC's collection. The main difference is that many of these courses are now given at the TRC on the Hogewoerd and not just at external venues. The TRC intensive textile course was presented for the first time in several years in October 2011. The course is a mixture of theoretical and practical elements, with an emphasis on trying out the various techniques, on holding and examining fibres, textiles and finished items 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 at a textile from virtually any historical period or culture and be able to understand it.

Between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> October the TRC's one-week intensive textile course for beginners was attended by participants from Denmark, England, America and Germany.



TRC Leiden, Intensive Textile Course, October 2011

### Course content

The course was broken down into the five main elements of a textile: fibre, colour, yarn, woven and non-woven forms, and decoration.

#### Day 1: Fibre identification

*Theory:* Introduction to the different types of textile fibres (plant, animal, fur, mineral, artificial, and synthetic).

*Practical:* Basic fibre identification using senses, burning, staining and microscopic techniques.

#### Day 2: Spinning and yarns

*Theory:* Preparation and spinning of main types of natural fibres; the basic spinning techniques: hand spinning; wheel (spindle, spinning); machine spinning.

*Practical:* Hand spinning and wheel spinning; identification of the main types of spun yarns.

#### Day 2 (late afternoon): Dyes and dyeing:

*Theory:* Introduction to the main types of plant, animal, mineral, synthetic dyes and dyeing techniques.

#### Day 3: Weaves and weaving

*Theory:* Introduction to the main types of hand and machine looms (flat, vertical, backstrap, treddle, warp-weighted, draw, jacquard, etc); introduction to the main types of weaves and finishes).

*Practical:* Identification of the main types of weaves; drawing a simple weave graph; working with different types of simple looms to reconstruct the weaves just looked at.

#### Day 4 (morning): Weaves and weaving (cont.)

#### Day 4 (afternoon): Non-woven materials

*Theory:* Introduction to the main forms of non-woven materials: leather, felt, knitted, crochet, braids, laces, etc.

*Practical:* Identification of the basic non-woven forms; basic felt making.

#### Day 5: Decorative techniques

*Theory:* Introduction to the main forms of decorative techniques: (a) printed (batik, block, plate, roller, screen; computer); (b) applied (appliqué; embroidery; braids, bands and tassels; sequins, spangles, beads; etc);

*Practical:* Identification of the basic forms of decoration.

\*

### Short report by

**Dr. Mary Harlow, Birmingham University**

I have just returned home from the five day textile course. It is described as intensive and it is, but in the most positive and inspiring way. There were between seven and eight participants over the week and we were all pretty much beginners in terms of textile techniques. The course is very much focussed on the practical application of techniques and skills. The first day found us identifying different textile fibres, by touch, sight, smell and by listening to them. We did elementary experiments in chemical reaction, burning and using the microscope aimed at teaching us how to identify fibres – as many of us were researchers in historical and pre-historical periods even this short session will improve our ability to identify archaeological textiles.

Days 2 and 3 were spent learning the skills of spinning and weaving. We practiced spinning with different types of yarns, different spindles and with

spinning wheels. At the end of the day we set up pre-mordanted wool samples into a series of plant dyes which were left over night to steep. In the morning we arrived to a range of 28 colour shades from seven dyes – just a small sample of what could be produced without the use of synthetics. We learnt weaving by setting up our own small looms, understanding weaving diagrams and examining different types of weaving patterns. Weaving continued into the 4<sup>th</sup> day – partly because we were rather ‘mixed ability’ but also because it was one of the key elements for those of us taking the course. We were challenged by having to identify a weave pattern, draw it and then re-weave it on our tiny looms. In the afternoon we moved to non-woven materials, looking closely at leather and finally ending the day making felt. On the last day we looked at decorative techniques – different types of embroidery, printing, use of beads, metal and glass etc.

While this description is a very succinct report of the course curriculum it does not capture the essence of its success which is due both to Gillian’s enormous and wide-ranging knowledge, and also her generosity with the textile collection; and her anecdotes about how some items come to be part of collection. Every technique was demonstrated with actual examples, many we were allowed to touch (and listen to – although the burning technique was not allowed!) and occasionally even try on. We saw literally hundreds of pieces from fragments of ancient Coptic textiles to decorated saris, exquisitely decorated garments from various parts of the Middle East and North Africa. Any confusion in understanding the shape of the garment, the function of a weave, or simply an expression of curiosity was answered by the production of a garment – and usually more than one.

We took in a huge amount of information in a very short time and it was enhanced by the privilege of being able to experience the techniques in the clothing collection in a relaxed environment which encouraged discussion. It will also be further embedded by re-reading the stack of hand-outs and samples we were given to clarify terminologies and techniques.

The course was also helped along by constant supplies of tea, coffee and cakes, the endless good humour of Gillian and Koen, the delightful student helper (and expert spinner), and the group – who clearly all enjoyed and were inspired by the whole experience. I would recommend it to anyone with an interest in textile identification – but be aware that once your eye is trained shopping will be a far more critical and difficult activity!

\*

The course will be repeated on the 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> May 2012 and on the 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012.

If there is a group booking of between six and eight people it would also be possible to repeat the course on another date. If you are interested please contact the TRC at [info@trc-leiden.nl](mailto:info@trc-leiden.nl)

\*

In addition to the intensive textile course, the TRC also gives a number of other lectures and workshops on the theme of textiles and dress. As will be seen, these include a wide range of subjects.

\*

### **Archaeological Textiles (January 2010, Leiden University)**

In January 2011 Dr. G. Vogelsang gave a lecture about textiles to the first year students from the Department of Archaeology, Leiden University. There were over 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. Several students became TRC volunteers following the lecture and practicals.

With respect to the practicals, these were held for the first time at the TRC Gallery. All of the equipment, plus tea/coffee were on hand, which made it both interesting and fun.

\*

### **PRAE: Workshop Textiles (30th January 2011)**

A group from PRAE (a sub-group of VAEE: *Vereniging voor Archeologische Experimenten en Educatie*) held their textile practical day at the TRC in January. A group of 20 people all of whom were busy with archaeological textiles in some form had demonstrations and workshops in a variety of subjects including medieval headcoverings; plaiting, making cords, embroidery and flax spinning.

\*

### **Workshop: Chinese Embroidery (18<sup>th</sup> June 2011)**

An intriguing workshop on Chinese embroidery was held by Ms. Ien Rappoldt at the TRC. The emphasis of the workshop was on the styles from the southwest

of the country. The workshop looked at how small girls learn, step by step, all the techniques required to decorate their clothing.

Examples of Miao and Dong embroidered garments were on display during the workshop and attention was paid to the minute details of the work, from how to prepare the silk thread to binding horsehair with silk which forms the basis of various types of cords.

\*

### What is Dress?

The basic question, what is dress? Is the theme of this lecture and includes examples of men and women's clothing and accessories from various groups throughout the world. This lecture was given to various groups in 2011 including members of *PUM: Netherlands Senior Experts*.

\*

### Kimono activities

Dr. Beerens presented several demonstrations during 2011 about the different type of kimono worn in Japan and their social context. In addition, a demonstration was given about how a woman's kimono is 'constructed' and the complex nature of the cushions, padding, belts and strings, which are used to give the kimono its straight lines. This lecture, for example, was given to the Alkmaar quilters in March and a group in Leiderdorp in October, as well as at the TRC Gallery.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> March, for example, Dr Beerens' kimono lecture was part of the annual festive gathering of the Weefkring Alkmaar. The lecture was attended by an enthusiastic audience of almost a hundred weavers. The fact that the kimono could actually be touched and examined after the lecture was greatly appreciated.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> October Dr Beerens held the kimono lecture for about fifty ladies of the former Leiderdorp branch of the Nederlandse Vereniging van Huisvrouwen, which had recently become an independent society. The lecture was extremely well received.

Unfortunately, the kimono workshop scheduled for the 6<sup>th</sup> November fared less well, because a number of the prospective participants did not show up. As it was impossible to carry out the intended program, Dr Beerens and Mrs Ogawa improvised a meeting that left those who were there happy and contented.

### Veiling lectures

The most popular lecture and demonstration given by the TRC remains its veils and veiling lecture. This is a one to two hour lecture with demonstration that allows the public to try on various types of well-known forms of veiling for women.

The lecture traces the use of head, face and body veils from about the third millennium BC to the present day and looks at them from historical, social, gender and religious aspects. such as the annual weaver's guild meeting, Deventer, on the 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1<sup>st</sup> October for the *Nederlands Genootschap van Tolken en Vertalers* (NGTV), Amsterdam;

\*

### Guided Tours of TRC Exhibitions

Every Wednesday afternoon at 14.00 there is a guided tour of the current, TRC exhibition.

During the exhibition *Well-Dressed Afghanistan* various lectures and guided tours of the exhibition were given by Dr. G. Vogelsang-Eastwood and Dr. W. Vogelsang. The last mentioned is a specialist in Afghan history and culture and co-curator of the exhibition.

Some of the tours were given by Dr. G. Vogelsang-Eastwood, but during the *Cheongsam!* Exhibition, Mrs. Marleen Audretsch gave the talks. She is very knowledgeable about China and Japan and became fascinated by the symbolism on the Chinese dresses.

The tours of *The Spinning World* exhibition were conducted by Dr. G. Vogelsang-Eastwood and Mr. Koen Berghuijs. Mr. Berghuijs was particularly adept at giving demonstrations on the Indian spindle wheels and the North European Great Wheel.

Various groups booked special conducted tours, especially on Thursdays and Fridays. These groups included specialists from various Dutch quilting, spinning and weavers foundations, as well as various pensioners groups, art historians, international women's groups from The Hague, and general members of the public.

During the period of the spinning exhibition there were various workshops about the preparation of wool and flax and basic spindle spinning given by Mr. Anton Reurink.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Private events

In addition to the lectures and workshops noted above, the TRC also hosted a number of private events. These were organised by various outside individuals or groups who wished to have specific lectures or themes.

For more information about such private lectures or workshops please contact the TRC at [info@trc-leiden.nl](mailto:info@trc-leiden.nl)

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:

*Stichting* Textile Research Centre  
Hogewoerd 164, 2311 HW Leiden  
The Netherlands

071-5134144  
06-28830428

ING Bank account no: 2982359

[info@trc-leiden.nl](mailto:info@trc-leiden.nl)  
[www.trc-leiden.nl](http://www.trc-leiden.nl)

\*\*\*\*\*



*Detail of a slipper from Vietnam  
(c. 1900; TRC collection)*