



Textile Research Centre, Leiden

Newsletter Spring 2013

Textile Research Centre,
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The cold weather is not putting people off from coming to the TRC's latest exhibition about regional dress from Iran! The last few weeks have seen many visitors with a wide range of backgrounds and nationalities - literally Bolivia, via England to Japan. What has struck the visitors to the exhibition is that Iran has a colourful and diverse clothing tradition that is in such contrast to the image of Iranian dress given in the media. Visitors are now considering Iran in a very different way and looking beyond the politics of Tehran. And that is the power of textiles and clothing.



Impression of the Iran exhibition, TRC Gallery. Photograph: Andrew Thompson.

The exhibition *Beyond the Chador: Dress from the Mountains and Deserts of Iran* will run until 30 May. The TRC Gallery is open every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, between 10.00 and 16.00 hrs. Entrance is free, but donations are welcome. Every Wednesday and Thursday there is a guided tour, from 14.00 - 15.30 hrs. Fee: €7.50 pp.

Five-day Intensive Textile Course

Only three places still available. Register now!

Between Monday 13 and Friday 17 of May, 2013, the TRC will organise, for the sixth time, its very popular five-day course about textiles and all that goes with them. The course, which is being given in English, looks at the process of making a piece of cloth, from the preparation of the raw fibres to the embellishment of the end product. The participants will learn about the theory and practice of fibre identification, spinning, dyeing, weaving, and decorative techniques such as printing and embroidery. The course is very much hands-on and the students are encouraged to try out the wide range of techniques that are being discussed. They can use the many facilities and the wide array of textile equipment of the TRC. This means that they will use microscopes and staining techniques for fibre identification. They will be introduced, and asked to use, hand spindles and spinning wheels. They will also apply natural dye stuffs and mordants to produce dozens of different colours. They will also be introduced, and asked to try out, many forms of weaving. Students may bring pieces of textiles that they would like to discuss during the course.

This five-day course is given twice a year, and has already attracted students from around the world. The course is given by Dr. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood (PhD Manchester, UK), the director of the TRC. The group of students is always limited to eight people, in order to ensure the greatest benefits to the participants. **For the May course, three places are still available.** If you wish to attend the course, please contact the TRC as soon as possible (info@trc-leiden.nl). For further information, [click here](#).

Other courses that will be given by the TRC in the near future are listed below. Please click on the title for more information.

- Weekend workshop on **Iranian Textiles and Dress Throughout the Ages**, 27th- 28th April 2013
- Three-day course, **Identification of Painted and Printed Textiles**, 17-19 June 2013.
- Three-day **Embroidery Identification Course**, 12-14 August 2013

New exhibition: *What is Embroidery?*

The TRC is very busy with preparing the next exhibition, namely *What is Embroidery?* It will open on Wednesday, 5 June. The term embroidery is being used in its broadest 'umbrella' sense. The exhibition will include (among others) historical and modern examples of free and counted thread forms, as well as appliqué, couching, drawn and pulled thread work, patchwork, quilting and smocking. But it will also tell about Ms Henrietta Braunstahl (1885-1983), who in 1904 received a certificate to teach handwork from the *Industrieschool voor Meisjes* in The Hague. The exhibition will include her certificates, but also samples of her embroidery, school books, water colours, photographs, and so forth.

If you don't know what all these embroidery terms, such as appliqué, couching, drawn and pulled thread work, patchwork, quilting and smocking, mean exactly, then come and have a look. If you do, then there will be many items on display that will surely inspire you to explore further the amazing world of embroidery!

Encyclopedia of Embroidery from the Arab World

The exhibition *What is Embroidery?* runs parallel to the completion of *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 2014 by Berg/Bloomsbury in London (ca. 750 pp., with some 500 photographs plus line drawings). This monumental work includes over forty 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.

Support the TRC!

All of our activities would not be possible without financial support to run the basic costs of the TRC. Although our work is carried out by volunteers, the rent still has to be paid, gas and electricity bills have to be covered, and sometimes we are offered textiles we simply cannot refuse. We really need your help and support to run the TRC. Please transfer your donation to **bank account ING 2982359**, under the name of *Stichting Textile Research Centre*.

For Dutch tax payers, donations to the TRC **are highly advantageous**. The TRC is an officially recognised ANBI organisation (*Algemeen Nut Beogende Instelling*), and within that structure the TRC is also recognised as a *Culturele Instelling* ('Cultural organisation'). Financial gifts are therefore tax deductible, up to 125% for individuals, and 150% for companies. [Please click here for more information](#).

Some Recent Acquisitions



Thanks to a generous donation from a good friend of the TRC we have been able to acquire four pieces of recent work produced by the artists of the 'Street of the Tentmakers' in Cairo, Egypt. They are amazing pieces of appliqué that show the skill, ingenuity and imaginations of a traditional craft form that goes back for at least 1000 years, always in the same street, in the *Khan al-Khalili* suq of Cairo. These pieces and their history are so intriguing that the TRC is seriously considering staging an exhibition on the theme of their work in a few years time.

Egyptian appliqué panel depicting the story of Goha and the donkey (TRC recent acquisition).

In the meantime, some of the pieces will, of course, be included in the *What is Embroidery?* exhibition, on show in the TRC Gallery from 5 June 2013 onwards, and they will also be described and illustrated in the *Encyclopedia of Embroidery from the Arab World*, due to be published in 2014 by Berg/Bloomsbury in London, and edited by Gillian Vogelsang, TRC.



Two Egyptian appliqué panels recently acquired by the TRC.