

**TEXTILE RESEARCH CENTRE
LEIDEN**

**ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR 2012**



Pair of early 20th century lotus shoes (TRC 2009208a-b)

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Chairman's Comments

The TRC is flourishing, thanks to the indefatigable efforts of our director, staff, volunteers and supporters. Hard work, very often against impossible odds: conflicting timetables, lack of funds, not enough room for storing and showing the treasures of our ever-growing collection.

This Annual Report once again records an amazing number of activities, performed with enthusiasm, inventiveness and, above all, according to the highest standards of professional and scientific accuracy. As a result, the expertise of TRC is acknowledged and consulted by many renowned institutions in the field, at home as well as abroad.

The new Dutch government, however, appears to consider all cultural activity as no longer being a shared responsibility for the state and its citizens, but as a personal luxury, to be paid for by whoever enjoys it. A very worrying trend that can be seen in many countries. One small solace is offered by the Dutch government a new tax law: gifts to some cultural institutions -including the TRC- which can result in extra tax deductions of up to 150% for companies and 125% for private individuals.

In the near future TRC will be even more dependent on private gifts. Due to the financial crisis in Europe, institutional grants are being reduced to even smaller amounts and are much harder to obtain.

Nevertheless, the TRC remains an exercise in survival! We have a lot of worries, but also a lot of opportunities. So, we carry on, with high hopes for the future.

Prof.dr.L.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, USA); Prof. Joanna Eicher (University of Minnesota, USA), Prof. John Fossey (Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 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 staff members who are helping with the collection, namely, Dr. Anna Beerens, Mrs. Riet van der 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 2012 a number of additional volunteers worked with the TRC. These include Mr. Koen Berghuijs, Mrs. Caroline Brasjen-Mudde, Miss Ellen Hartkamp, Mrs. Naoko Kikuchi, Mrs. Clare Loeff, Mrs. Tineke

Moerkerk, Mrs. Marleen Audretsch and as a general 'sounding board,' Mr. F. Popp.

In addition, the TRC included students from Leiden University, Mr. Kyle Harris (USA) and Miss Angeliki Karakonstanti (Greece), both of whom were studying for their MA degree in Arts and Culture (Dept. of Art History), as well as Jesus Rodriguez (Spain), Faryaneh Fadaei (Iran) and Iliyana Bozhova (Bulgaria). We also shared two students with Wolfgang Keller, *Charity Events*, who are studying marketing and international event organisation (Netherlands).

The international nature of the TRC really showed on the 13th November, when working on getting various figures ready for the Iranian dress exhibition, there were students and volunteers from England, Greece, Iran, Japan and the Netherlands. At the tea breaks the conversations covered a wide range of questions about cultural norms from throughout the world. It was so interesting and inspirational!

The TRC: Volunteers

Tineke Moerkerk

In 2012 our team of volunteers was enlarged with volunteers from America, Iran, Japan, as well as from the Netherlands. This year has also seen four students on a work placement who have come from America, Bulgaria, Greece and Spain. Regarding volunteers and students the TRC is visibly becoming more and more international.

Every Monday and Wednesday 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 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 (fragile to very solid items!) and books, sorting out, photographing, assisting with the preparing of exhibitions (ranging from making panels and sewing arms to beheading foam figures), 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. It is becoming an important centre for the study of textiles and dress within Leiden, the Netherlands and indeed internationally.

We also enable the 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. Visitors range from school children to pensioners and many groups in-between. Some come because they are passing by and are intrigued by what they see in the Gallery windows, others because they wish to study particular items or cultures.

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. The TRC biscuit tin is becoming internationally known as a symbol of hospitality, interesting company and as an essential element in national and international discussions about textiles and dress! What more could you wish for?

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TRC visitors

The last few years have seen a steady increase in the number of visitors to the TRC, both in the form of individuals and groups. Visitors are now coming from all corners of the world (literally), including Cameroon, China, Denmark, England, Jordan, India, Lebanon, Russia, Sudan, United States, and Uruguay. On one particularly day we had visitors from Bolivia, Iran, and of course the Netherlands.

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Birthday visit

On the 18th May 2012 we had a visit from Mrs. Smit and her son, which may not sound very noteworthy, but it was. It happened to be Mrs. Smit's 99th birthday and she wanted to visit the TRC's headwear

exhibition as part of her celebrations. Mrs. Smit used to be a seamstress and was very interested in anything to do with clothes and fashion. She thoroughly enjoyed seeing the headgear exhibition as many of the pieces were familiar to her.

In order to mark the day we made sure, in addition to seeing the exhibition, that Mrs. Smit had a posy of flowers from the TRC.



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Group visits to the TRC Exhibitions

The number of group visits to the TRC increased considerably in 2012. These included various school groups, groups of ladies of various nationalities who were learning Dutch under the auspices of the Red Cross (Leiden Branch), as well as a number of Red Hat groups from around the Netherlands (especially during the period of the headgear exhibition), as well as individually organised family and friends groups.



Group of Red Hat ladies from The Hague, who came to the TRC on the 2nd May 2012.

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Visits and future exhibitions

During the year we have also had outside groups and individual visits to the TRC to see if it would be possible to stage exhibitions in the TRC Gallery. Sometimes this is not possible due to the timing or financial reasons. But we feel it is important to encourage interest in textiles and dress in the widest sense of these words.

So in 2012 it was agreed that two groups would be going to work with the TRC on exhibitions to be held at the TRC Gallery, namely *Experikant* and the *Ikatkring*.

Experikant is going to use the TRC collection as a source of inspiration for their work in producing items in lace, but with very modern twists. They will be coming in 2013 to search through the TRC collection for inspiration (not a difficult task!), and then the 'originals' and end products will be on display in an exhibition in 2014.

The second group is the *Ikatkring*. In May 2015 there will be a major textile festival in Leiden, and as part of the week long celebrations the TRC and the *Ikatkring* will be holding an exhibition about ikat from around the world (not just Indonesia!).

Interesting days ahead!

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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.

Some of the tours were given by Dr. G. Vogelsang-Eastwood, but during the Spinning exhibition some were led by Mr. Koen Berghuis. He became particularly adept at giving demonstrations on the Indian spindle wheels and the North European Great Wheel.

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 2012 three exhibitions were held at the TRC Gallery: *The Spinning World*; *Cover Your Head* and *A Well-Dressed Foot*. More details about these exhibitions are given below.

In addition, a new mini-exhibition was organised called *Object of the Month*. Each month a new object was chosen from the TRC collection. These objects have included, among other things, a felt coat (*khorsi*) from Afghanistan, a wedding outfit from northern India. Again, further details about these displays 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, 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.

TRC mini-publications

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. Most of these booklets are in Dutch and are based upon the texts available to the public, with added photographs. By the end of 2012 the following titles were available, with many more planned for 2013 onwards.

- *Meer dan de Chador: Kleding uit de bergen en woestijnen van Iran* (2013)
- *Een 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.

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TRC and Facebook

Thanks to Sergio Klok, *Charity Events*, Leiden, the TRC now has a Facebook page! There will be regular updates concerning TRC activities and events.

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



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Database and Digital Catalogue

In addition, thanks to a generous gift from the *Dr. Hendrik Muller Vaderlandsche Fonds* in early 2012 the TRC is now in a position to make an on-line catalogue of its textile and dress collection. The aim was to have a basic catalogue available by the end 2012 and from then onwards various parts of the collection will be made available to the general public.

As there are over 8,000 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 2012 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 outside of The Netherlands
- 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 2012 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

2012 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!

Particular note should also be made of the generous grants given by two official bodies, namely:

Dr. Hendrik Muller's Vaderlandsch Fonds, with the aim of helping to set up the TRC's digital database so that its collection is open to a much wider, international audience. A basic database has been constructed and is currently being enlarged.

The second grant came from the *Cultuurfonds Leiden*, who provided help to engage Wolfgang Keller, *Charity Events*, Leiden, to professionally help the TRC raise funding within the commercial world, and to increase its profile in general through social media such as Face Book and so forth.

The effects of both of these funds will be seen in 2013. Many thanks to everyone!

The TRC is a Cultural ANBI

On the 12th April 2012 the TRC was officially recognized as a cultural ANBI ('Culturele ANBI'). This is potentially important news for any Dutch tax payer. It means that individual gifts can for a great amount be deducted from annual taxes. The percentage that can be claimed back can go as high as 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/bldcontentnl/belastingdienst/zakelijk/bijzondere_regelingen/goeoe_doelen/algemeen_nut_beogende_instellingen/culturele_anbi/culturele_anbi

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!

During 2012 over 500 items were added to the TRC collection. This means that the TRC garment and textile collection now includes over 8,000 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. Although we have mentioned a few names below, to give a full list is no longer feasible, it is simply too long! For all the gifts we are grateful, and a big word of thanks to everyone who was so kind and generous.

Every week donations have been coming in ranging from a child's baptismal outfit from 1830 – with the name of the woman who had actually made it, to various Chinese garments, including a beautiful, modern Miao skirt. In order to give an impression of the range of objects received it was decided that highlights would be mentioned.

In 2011 and 2012 Mrs. Alison Elliot very kindly arranged a collection of hand and machine embroidered dresses from Yemen for the TRC. These arrived in Leiden at the beginning of June. They are needed as part of the *Embroidery in the Arab World Project*. Further details about this project are given below. It has also been decided that the first exhibition of 2014 will be about Yemen and its embroidery. This will be the first time that a major exhibition about this subject has been held in the Netherlands, and possibly in Europe!

In the first week of January 2012 we were given a small collection of Guatemalan garments by Cynthia Nicholson, who is a former TRC student. She carried out fieldwork in Guatemala in the 1990s. Shortly afterwards came various items including three Balkan blouses dating to the early 20th century; late 19th century headgear for a man probably from the Persian Gulf region, and some lace pillows for making bobbin lace. An unusual gift were three Coptic textiles dating from about the 4-6th centuries AD, by Mrs. T. Huisman, a long term supporter of the TRC. January also saw the arrival of a beautiful Chinese jacket given as a result of the *TRC's Question and Answer Day* held in October 2011. Shortly afterwards we were given a beautiful Chinese

Straits skirt for a Han woman. A truly remarkable garment.

An intriguing item was given in February, namely a towel made from gorse thread – a very hard fibre traditionally used in southern Italy. February also saw the arrival of garments from Cairo, Egypt and Khartoum, Sudan. These were given by separate donors, but complimented each other in building up the collection from this part of the world.

In March the TRC was given a group of textiles, garments and books associated with two family members of Mr. Metz and Mrs. Althoff. The vast number of boxes that arrived included Dutch, French as well as Spanish items and a large number of books, all in all a most welcome addition to the TRC library and collection.

April saw the arrival at the TRC of a large collection of textiles from Indonesia and China. In particular, a collection of textiles that had been the property of Mr. Gerardus Schuitemaker. Mr. Schuitemaker had been a Dutch official in Indonesia in the 1920s and 1930s and some of the garments had been given to him or family members.

Later in the year we were given a collection of Burmese textiles and garments by another supporter of the TRC, Mrs. Shelley Anderson. This gift will help build up an area of the TRC collection that is lagging behind, namely south-eastern Asia.

Because of having an exhibition about footwear, attention was paid in 2012 to this area of the human body. Thanks to the help of various groups and people it was possible to obtain a range of items including Chinese lotus shoes, modern hosiery (suspenders and stockings), Dutch clogs, even a pair of real cowboy boots from Arizona! These were the property of the uncle of one of our students, Kyle Harris.

The exhibition 'Cover Your Hair!' (see below) had been supported by various embassies in The Hague and a range of headcoverings and complete outfits were given by the embassies of Azerbaijan, Cameroon, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Sudan. In particular, the Embassy of Cameroon was particularly generous in that they gave the TRC three outfits. All of which were used in the exhibition.

During 2012 Ms. Tineke Rooijackers, a former TRC student and long time supporter of the TRC, has

given the TRC a collection of modern Coptic dress and accessories. These will be used in an exhibition about Coptic identity to be held in 2013 at the TRC Gallery as part of her PhD presentation. In 2016 the TRC will be holding a much larger exhibition about Dress and Identity in the Middle East, which will include these Coptic pieces and many other items.

These are just a few of the many items given to the TRC in 2012. But it is clear that many people have been very generous and we greatly appreciate all their help and support.

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Exhibitions and Displays

During 2012 the TRC was involved in a number of displays and exhibitions on the theme of textiles and dress.

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 or contact the TRC at info@trc-leiden.nl.

“The spinning world” (25 Augustus 2011 – 18th January 2012)



General view of the TRC's spinning exhibition

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, and 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*).

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 22nd 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 18th 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.

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

January 2012 saw the opening of a new exhibition about women's headgear from around the world. The exhibition was prepared with the help of the *Ambassadors' Spouses Association*, The Hague.

The exhibition was officially opened on the 31st January 2012, by Mrs. Loes Bijl de Vroe (wife of the Chief of Protocol, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague). Speaking with her at the opening was Mr. Jan-Jaap de Haan, deputy mayor of Leiden, and Dr. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood. The opening was attended by over 80 visitors including numerous members of the ASA. The ASA members also very kindly provided a wide variety of 'finger food' from different countries. Both the exhibition and food were greatly enjoyed by all of those attending the opening.

The concept of women's headcoverings attracts a lot of attention 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 were over 50 examples of traditional Dutch lace caps and head coverings from the four corners of the country, and 101-plus modern and traditional ways of covering and decorating the head and hair worldwide. There were individual items, as well as complete outfits that helped to show how a well-decorated head is an important matter both for the wearer and society.



Mrs. L. Bijl de Vroe, Dr. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood and Mr. Jan-Jaap de Haan speaking at the official opening of the Cover Your Head! exhibition.

In the exhibition it was 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 were elaborate constructions that simply made you wonder how they could ever be worn, let alone while walking or dancing.

The exhibition included 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.

A Well-Dressed Foot!

5th September 2012 -17th January 2013

The TRC's spring exhibition was about headgear and this exhibition was about the foot and what people do with their feet. It was based on a small display that the TRC presented at Leiden city hall in 2009. The new TRC version was considerably larger and

certainly more thought provoking, and included footwear from the Leiden area, some of which more than two thousand years old.

various periods in a person's life, from babyhood, via marriage to an (American) pair of foot coverings meant for burial purposes!



A pair of dancing shoes from Afghanistan (TRC collection)

The exhibition included a wide range of footwear for men, women and children from throughout the world, including Afghanistan, Canada, China, France, India, Mongolia, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Turkey, Vietnam, and many other countries.



Japanese geishas in traditional platform shoes (photograph by Andrew Thompson)

Thanks to the Department of Monuments and Archaeology, Leiden Council (*Afdeling Monumenten & Archeologie Gemeente Leiden*), there was a rare chance to see footwear from various archaeological sources in the Leiden region. These shoes date from the Roman and medieval periods and included baby, child and adult versions.



Detail from a Vietnamese shoe dating from the early 20th century (TRC collection).

In addition, there was a section devoted to various types of hosiery (socks, stockings, tights, garters and suspenders), as well as henna patterns for the feet and, of course, foot jewellery. Over 150 examples of footwear were on display.

Lotus shoes

Special attention was paid to the subject of lotus shoes, the form made for Chinese Han women with bound feet. Most of the shoes on display dated to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This part of the exhibition was intended to show the dichotomy of these objects – beautiful items in themselves, but with a story that was difficult to understand or accept.

On display, among other things, were cloth, felt, leather and plastic boots, shoes and slippers, including forms as varied as (smelly) goat leather boots from Afghanistan and delicate lotus shoes from China (less than 9 cm in length for an adult woman). There were many types of footwear to explain the differences between boots, mules, sandals, shoes and slippers. The exhibition also showed footwear for specific occupations, footwear with different decorative techniques, as well as footwear for

Attention was paid in this part of the exhibition to how the feet were bound, the problems that could be experienced, as well as the social and cultural benefits for girls and women and their families. Information was presented concerning how the shoes were made and with what.



Young Chinese girl with lotus feet (Library of Congress image).

A range of different types of shoes were displayed that showed the range of sizes, methods of construction, different forms of decoration and regional variations. There were also lotus wedding shoes, mourning shoes and burial shoes on display.

Other Activities

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

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Arab Morning and Fashion Show

Den Haag, 11th June 2012

Every year the International Women's Association (IWA, Den Haag) organises a thematic event based on one land or culture. In 2012 the IWA in conjunction with ladies from various Arab Embassies and the Ambassadors' Spouses Association organised an Arab morning. The event included a fashion show, Iraqi music, and a wide range of Arab food prepared by the embassies. The event was held at the Plaza Hotel, The Hague.

The fashion show was based upon modern and traditional women's garments from various Arab countries, including Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen. A total of 22 different

outfits were presented.

The morning was hosted by Mrs. B. Klap (chair of the IWA), the guest of honour was Mrs. M. van Loon-Labouchere, Den Haag, and opened by H.E. Mrs. N. Baghli, the Ambassador of Algeria. The TRC input into this spectacular event included help with advice on outfits, supplying some items that were needed, helping with the models and Dr. Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood being the presenter of the fashion show.

The show was great fun and it was fun to watch and totally surprised many in the audience (Arab and non-Arab alike) by the great diversity of styles, colours and texture. The fashion show made it very clear that the subject of Arab dress is totally underestimated by most people!



The models and distinguished guests on the stage, with members of the IWA and ASA seated in the public area.

Question and Answer Day

In 2011 the TRC held a Question and Answer Day that proved very popular. So it was decided to hold another Q&A day on Saturday, 3 November 2012. The TRC was open from 10.00 until 16.00.

During the day various specialists were present to help answer visitors with questions about their textiles and clothing from around the world. The specialists were:

- Els de Baan: European textiles and fashion; Dutch regional clothing
- Anna Beerens: Textiles and clothing from Japan; European textiles and fashion
- Ineke Borgardij: Lace

- René Lughtigheid: Care and storage of textiles and garments
- Sigrid van Roode: Jewellery
- Paul Spiker: African textiles and clothing
- Hennie Stolk: Indonesian textiles
- Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood: Middle Eastern textiles and clothing

There was also the opportunity to see the TRC's current exhibition: *The Well-Dressed Foot*.

TRC Projects

2012 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)

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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 Northeast 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 is 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 are 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.

The project will lead to the publication in 2014. The publishers are Berg, London.

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.

TRC Leiden, Intensive Textile Course

Between the 14th and 18th May 2012 the TRC's one-week intensive textile course for beginners was attended by participants from China, Denmark, England, and the Netherlands. The course was repeated on the 15th – 19th October and included students from England, France, Netherlands as well as Switzerland.

Course content

The course was broken down into the five main elements of a textile: fibre, dye, 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 the 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, and 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.

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Personal report by Shelley Anderson, a May 2012 course participant

"Now I understand how it works," John Styles said, looking with pride at the cotton he'd just spun on an Indian spinning wheel. It was a refrain often repeated by the eight participants in the TRC's Intensive Textile Course, as they made felt, spun, wove and experimented with batik, ikat, and tie-dyeing. The course, held May 14-18, combined theory with hands-on experience.

Participants included two graduate students from China and the UK, a fashion designer from India, and two Dutch business women. The course began by learning to identify fibres using sight, touch, and sound. After staining and preparing slides of fibres for microscopic examination, the group then explored dyes and mordants. Spindles from around the world were distributed the following day and participants tried spinning wool, cotton, and silk, along with more unusual fibres made from milk or soy protein.

The course was enriched by access to the TRC's own collection: 17th century European brocades and velvets, Chinese silks, Tunisian wedding dresses, Dutch prints made for trade in Africa, even 7,000 year-old carbonised linen fragments from Catal Huyuk. "This course gives another dimension and all textile 'people' should do it," said Swedish archaeologist Hedwig Enegren. Styles, Professor of History at the University of Hertfordshire (UK), agreed. "This is a tremendous course. Not only does it take you through every type and stage of making textiles, but it allows you to see and handle examples of all the textiles, from the prehistoric to the modern."

The course was repeated on the 15th – 19th October 2012.

In addition to the intensive textile course, the TRC also gave a number of other lectures and workshops on the theme of textiles and dress.

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Basic Identification of Embroidery 3-day course

The TRC's 3-day embroidery identification course was held on the 10th – 12th December and included participants from Greece, The Netherlands, America, Indonesia and Japan. The course was a mixture of theoretical and practical elements, with an emphasis on understanding and identifying various techniques. The aim was to make embroidery less 'frightening' and allow people to look at embroideries from various historical and cultural backgrounds.

Archaeological Textiles (January 2012, Leiden University)

In January 2012 Dr. G. Vogelsang gave a practical course 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.

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Laptop Students

For several years now, school students who are interested in attending Leiden University courses about the Middle East are encouraged to attend a week of courses at the university. As part of this week a group came to the TRC on the 2nd March to have a morning about dress and identity, veiling and Turkish dress in particular (given by Dr. Hans Theunisson). It gave the future students a chance to see a very different world and to make acquaintance with the work at the TRC.

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

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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