

Kostuum 2021




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SUMMARIES

'But it's nice to have, pleasant for whenever you need it.'

Garments from the collection of the former costumier and rental business Gerlach in the Fries Museum

Anne-Marie Segeren

Gerlach was the name of a costumier and rental business in the Dutch city of Leeuwarden, which ceased to exist in 2000. It was a family business, founded by the actor Albert Bakker, after whose death it was continued by his nephew Albert Gerlach. Albert's son Harry took over in turn.

Upon Harry's death the rental business after ninety years closed its doors forever, because no long-term successor could be found. In 1998 the Fries Museum had the opportunity to buy a small part of the Gerlach collection. This selection consists of original garments and accessories which were not made to serve as fancy dress, but for use in daily life. They are of high quality, although some objects are damaged. Some have hardly or not at all been worn. Most of the garments reveal interesting stories about their past.

In the present article a number of objects are mentioned which show traces of intensive use and have a label or stamp of a dress rental, or even the name of the original seamstress hidden in them.

Protestant folds and catholic beads

Religious differences in the regional costumes of Zuid-Beveland and elsewhere

Jankees Goud

The regional costume of Zuid-Beveland (an island belonging to the Dutch province of Zeeland) was one of the few showing a clear difference between protestant and catholic wearers. The author takes a closer look at this phenomenon, within the framework of 20th-century traditional women's clothing.

After a short, general description of the components of the regional costume, the differences in design between identical garments of protestant and catholic wearers are described. Attention is given to the development of these differences through time, as well as to the question whether causes for these might be found.

By comparing the regional costume of Zuid-Beveland with the costumes of West-Brabant, Het Gooi and Noord-Holland, it becomes clear that in other Dutch regions Catholics also made their religious belief visible, though in a different manner, viz. by wearing certain accessories such as a cross-shaped pendant. The costume of Zuid-Beveland distinguishes itself from this: clear differences came into being through relatively limited adaptations of identical basic shapes of parts of clothing. For example a protestant '*beuk*' or '*kraplap*' (a traditional Dutch breastcloth garment) essentially resembles the catholic one, yet one can see immediately which community the wearer belongs to.

That both religious communities adorned themselves with similar garments, but during the 19th century proved able to attain an ever more recognizable differentiation, may be called unique within the field of Dutch regional costume.

Louis Couperus and fashion

Ileen Montijn

Louis Couperus (1863-1923) was one of the most famous Dutch authors of his time. He wrote successful novels such as *Eline Vere* (1889), and besides that published personal columns and stories, mainly in the The Hague newspaper *Het Vaderland*. He also was a popular speaker. With his precious diction and his refined manner of dressing, he was a kind of national dandy.

Much of his work suggests a lively interest in dress and fashion; this is most evident in his contribution to a slim volume published by a men's fashion store in 1915, at the occasion of the opening of a renovated establishment in The Hague, 'A Meditation upon Male Dress'.

The present article goes into the background of that booklet, as well as into Couperus' ideas about fashion, both male and female. With his strong views and apodictic statements such as 'The man who doesn't know how to put on a cravat will never be elegant', he is part of a tradition begun by Balzac with his *Physiologie de la toilette* [*The Physiology of Attire*] (1830). In autobiographical newspaper columns Couperus presented his preoccupations with fashion with slight self-mockery, knowing that the majority of his audience considered them frivolous – but nevertheless, or maybe even therefore, liked to read his texts. He also wrote about his long stays in cities such as Nice and Genova, where he felt very much at home, visited tailors with his Italian friend Orlando, and observed his fellow men. The passages about female dress in novels such as *Extaze*, *Noodlot* and *Langs lijnen van geleidelijkheid* mirror both Couperus' sensitivity to, and his sharp eye for the fashions of his time. For us, they are still a rich historical source.

Fashion in Colour

Madelief Hohé

The various COVID-19 measures imposed in 2020 brought the worldwide exhibition machinery of museums to a grinding standstill. For the Kunstmuseum Den Haag this meant that the exhibition 'Mode in Kleur' (Fashion in Colour) was to replace the original plans for the autumn of 2020. The exhibition was put together within less than three months and had to meet certain conditions: it shouldn't be too expensive, preferably use as many objects as possible from the museum's own collection (i.e. with just a few loans or none at all), and be covidproof. All of us still had to find out what that meant... But of course it was fantastic, because in this way we were able to realize a project at short notice. In addition it was wonderful to come up with a cheerful theme, since cheerfulness was very welcome in that uncertain and sometimes sad Corona period.

An exhibition about colour was proposed, a theme already on the agenda of the fashion department, but now set into an accelerated pace. Colour is a fascinating phenomenon in a historical fashion collection: there is always discolouration to be dealt with. Colour is also defined by the kind of light falling on it: of course seeing the colour of textile in our well-lighted museum is different from seeing it by candle-, gas- or electric light as in former times.

Unlike animals, humans are able to see most colours and this partly explains our love of art and fashion. Experiencing colour generates emotion in us. A colour entering through

our eyes will get its meaning in our brain. A fashionable colour will never be just a colour. It often carries a message which society, time or a culture endows it with. Thus colour in fashion works as a code we don't know the meaning of, or we know this no longer. The challenge is to break these codes.

The exhibition demonstrated that our classification of colours has changed through history and that mixing colours hasn't always been self-evident. In Western-Europe such colours as green and yellow were long in disgrace, and were given a negative meaning. On the other hand in China yellow was a colour which for ages was a privilege of the imperial family.

One of the conclusions of the exhibition is that the meaning of many colours in the mainly Western-European fashion collection of the Kunstmuseum Den Haag, may be traced back to medieval ideas about the use of colour. Christianity has left its mark on the way we use colour, its influence continuing into the 20th century.

Colour in fashion has never become quite meaningless. We can see this in the choice of colour made by politicians, or in the meaning modern designers give to colour in their creations. Thus even nowadays colour is full of meaning.

More than a refined costume party

Costumes and lace for the Leiden Students' Pageant of 1910

Rosalie Sloof

The Academic Historical Museum in Leiden houses a small but intriguing collection of fancy dress and accessories, covering a period from the second half of the 19th century to 1910. During that period these costumes were worn at the occasion of lustrum festivities of Leiden University, the highlight of which would be a huge, costumed pageant. Students who could afford such festive, be it rather costly, attire, paraded through the city, thereby confirming their social status whilst re-enacting an actual historical pageant. In the case of the 1910 pageant this was the '*Blyde Incomste*' (Joyous Entry) of Stadholder Frederik Hendrik and Queen Henrietta Maria of England in Amsterdam, 1642.

Most of this masquerade clothing was made by expert hands, offering expensive and sumptuous garments to the students, who strived for historical accuracy. The author examined several costumes and lace used in the pageant of 1910, a spectacular event with a great deal of splendour, but also with excessive overruns of budget. In their communal pursuit of pomp and splendour artistic leader and director Henricus Jansen and the masquerade committee's organisers required materials of premium quality. Inspiration and examples of period fashion were found in collections of 17th-century paintings and prints.

The entire dressing-up event of 1910 is well-documented. Several original costume designs are preserved, photographs of participants were published in a memorial album, and national as well as foreign newspapers published full reports on all the preparations. The Leiden city archives also include heaps of invoices from renowned suppliers of luxury articles, not only from The Hague and Amsterdam, but also from Brussels and even Paris.

The greatest care went into the production of accessories as well. At the Dutch Lace Work-school in The Hague, about 125 lace collars and cuffs were made by hand in 17th-century style. For the leading actors, lace for even more sumptuous collars was ordered from Brussels, a number of which were made of needle lace, after original examples.

The very best was also required for dressing the twelve female participants, who represented a first in 1910. Henricus Jansen ordered their dresses from Metz & Co in Amsterdam, the exclusive Dutch agent for Liberty silks imported from London. In 1910 Metz & Co was the place to be for high quality silk fabrics in soft colours. One of these remarkable 'Liberty dresses' was preserved in the collection of the Academic Historical Museum, registered as 'formerly owned by an unknown female student'. By combining the various sources consulted in regard to this investigation, it was possible to trace the gown back to its original owner: Wilhelmina van Oordt, daughter of a wealthy entrepreneur. Thus the history of this 'anonymous' dress could finally be reconstructed. More of these colourful fancy dress stories are waiting to be explored and told.

A French coupe-system at a The Hague Fashion Academy

Roy Verschuren

The writing of this article was instigated by a gift, in 2008, of a box of teaching material for pattern drawing, of Mrs. A. (Aafje) de Ruyter (1902-1983), who lived in the Dutch town of 's-Gravenzande. She followed classes at the The Hague Fashion Academy J. & J. de Graaff; the material is connected with the Paris vocational school of Gaudet and Métairie. In relation to other pieces in the author's collection, this box gave rise to surprising observations and invited the author to further investigation.

The Fashion Academy J. & J. de Graaff was founded by Geertruida de Graaff-de Rooij (1872-1961), probably together with Johanna Wilhelmina de Graaff (1871-?), at the Nieuwe Schoolstraat in The Hague, on the 16th of September 1901. After nine months the school moved to larger premises at Denneweg 27a. After ten years at this address, the vocational school moved to an even larger abode, at Anna Paulownastraat 18a, an elegant street in The Hague's city centre, where 'Ladies from the highest classes, as well as from bourgeois families' visited the school, which was 'recognized as a reliable as well as respectable institution'. In February 1936 it moved to the address Delistraat 39, which is mentioned in the last advertisement known for the school.

The Parisian École de Coupe Napolitano enjoyed its existence as a vocational school during three generations. It was founded by Mr. I. Napolitano in 1871, after which it was led by his sons-in-law Louis Gaudet and Joseph Métairie for more than forty years, and then for another number of years by his granddaughter Marie Marquant-Métairie. The last publication of the École de Coupe Napolitano dates from 1955. The books *Traité Théorique de la Chemise, Caleçon et Gilet de Flanelle LINGERIE pour DAMES* (1920?) and *Traité Théorique des Vêtements de Dames* (1928) were the basis for the teaching material at the The Hague school.

Aafje followed courses in making tailored garments and undergarments for ladies at the The Hague School. Her exercise books for each of these courses are handwritten in calligraphy, with the illustrations and pattern drawings worked out in black and red. A lot of care was given to the working out of these books.

Aafje's workbooks follow the contents of both books of the Parisian vocational school: the sparse illustrations in the text were copied precisely. In her workbook for undergarments some examples for tracing remained unused and were copied as such. The drawn patterns have the exact numbers mentioned in the elaborations of patterns in both

books. Aafje didn't work them out all the way to the end, so she may not have finished her training.

The fact that the Fashion Academy literally copied the French teaching material gives rise to questions: who gave the course at this institution? And had this person graduated from the Paris school, or did he or she just work from the books? Did the Paris school allow the use of their material? And were they aware of this use at all ?

More remains to be discovered.

Lace for the Netherlands

Beveren lace: workmanship, diversity and lace-makers

Nelly de Bruin and Simone Coppieters

The subject of this article is Beveren lace, a continuous thread bobbin lace, which for about 150 years was produced in East Flanders (Belgium). Its origin, characteristics and workmanship, as well as its different variants, are explained in text and images.

The dire poverty prevailing in, amongst others, the Flemish countryside at the end of the 19th century, gave rise to an investigation of this situation. A report, made at the request of the Belgian Government and published in 1902, described the situation at length, and was followed by an actualized edition in 1912. The article gives an insight into the working conditions in the 19th-century cottage industry, the exploitation of the lace-workers, child labour and feudal relations.

Children from poor families were given the chance to visit the so-called 'work-schools' where, beside reading, writing and arithmetic, they would be taught some craft. There were special lace-making work-schools, including the school in Beveren.

Beveren lace, a '*strokenkant*' (literally 'strip lace'), the term used in Dutch regional dress for the strips of lace used to trim caps, offered virtually unlimited possibilities for use in regard to the cap's model and its costs. Since it was used by the female part of the population for the caps of their regional costume all over the Dutch countryside, this lace was exported to the Netherlands. An interview with the son of one of the lace merchants of that time makes clear how the lace found its way to the clients.

The cottage industry doesn't exist anymore. Machine-made lace took its place, and in the end this won the competition with professionally hand-made Beveren lace. Enthusiasts now attempt to preserve the ancient technique by studying and making this lace again.