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SUMMARIES

Changes in men's fashion circa 1660

Some historical facts about the introduction of the rhingrave, innocent and justaucorps

Irene Groeneweg

In the history of dress one of the most striking garments for men is the '*rhingrave* costume', named after the wide petticoat breeches known in France as rhingrave. In costume literature there is confusion about who lent his name to the breeches as well as about the year they came into vogue. The general assumption was this was introduced by Frederik, Wild- und Rheingraf, Count of Salm (1606-1673). This Rhine Count held high positions in the Dutch army and from 1646 onward was governor of Maastricht. The late 17th-century dictionary by Gilles Ménage states that the breeches were named after a Rhine Count who had been governor of Maastricht.

In the 19th century sketches of four versions of the petticoat breeches by Randle Holme were published, two of these dated by him in 1658. Then there is a journal by two brothers from the rich The Hague family Zoete de Laeke, written during their stay in Paris, from December 1656 until mid-1658. The 10 April 1658 entry in the journal mentions that in the French capital the breeches had only been worn for a short while in 1658. The journal also sheds light on who really lent his name to the breeches: the brothers met the two sons of Rhine Count Frederik, at that time both serving in the French army. Although in recent costume literature the youngest, Karel Florentijn, is mentioned as lending his name to the petticoat breeches, this must have been the eldest, Frederik Jr. As heir to his father's title, he was the one referred to as 'Rhine Count' by the Zoete de Laeke brothers in their journal. But neither of the Rhine Count's sons had been governor of Maastricht.

Up till now the doublet worn with the petticoat breeches is called '*innocent*' in Dutch costume literature. This goes back to the monograph on Dutch fashion during the 17th century, published in 1930 by the Dutch art historian Frithjof van Thienen,. He assumed that '*innocent*', a word that had been in use in France before 1643 for a men's garment and which also appears in Dutch sources during the 1650s, referred to the very short doublet that looked like a child's garment. However, the innocent was a soldier's coat. '*Innocent*' must therefore have been a synonym for *justaucorps*, the fitted, knee-length woollen coat at first exclusively worn by soldiers, but soon also by civilians. In the Netherlands this coat was called 'rok'. As late as about 1720 'rokken' from estates might be referred to as '*innocents*' when they were sold. The similarity of the soldier's coat and the garment boys wore until they were breeched, may have led to naming the coat '*innocent*'. Even in the late 17th century a lady's dress, fastening down the front like a men's coat, was called *innocente* in France.

A Dutch almanac for 1784

Galleries des Modes et Costumes français influences Dutch fashion

Dirk-Jan List

Around 1770 publishers were experimenting with the concept of a fashion magazine. The series of prints *Gallerie des Modes et Costumes français* appeared from 1776 to 1787. When the number of instalments of this series decreased in the early 1780s, and the experiment of fashion magazines turned out to be disappointing, the almanacs assumed the role of fashion informant.

This article concerns a special Amsterdam almanac from 1784. Beside sections of commercial information and light reading, this publication had a fashion quire bound into it. It contained twelve small fashion prints with extensive descriptions. This is unique because other almanacs have only a short caption or no caption at all. The Dutch prints follow the French examples down to the smallest detail. Each print shows a woman, man or several children depicted against a realistically detailed background of a room, garden or landscape. This is remarkable, as this technique is only used in fashion prints from about 1835-1840. The text, however, regularly deviates from the French examples.

The publisher copied the prints from the *Gallerie des Modes et Costumes français* of 1780-1782. Because very few instalments were issued in these years, he did not have much to choose from, and the final selection was made very deliberately. The old-fashioned *robe à la polonoise* was not chosen, and neither was the (over-) fashionable *robe à l'anglaise*. On the other hand the *levite*, which resembles the *robe à l'anglaise*, was depicted in three prints. This style was so popular in the Netherlands in 1784 that the well-known novelists Betje Wolff and Aagje Deken mention and describe the *levite* in their novel *Historie van den heer Willem Leevend*. Three of the seven women and one of the two girls are depicted holding a fan, which corresponds with the prints in the *Gallerie des Modes et Costumes français*.

Apparently the small prints offer a cross-section of what the Dutch bourgeoisie considered fashionable. It is questionable though whether in the Netherlands, where modest *fichus* were predominant, the low-cut dresses seen in the prints were worn in such a provocative manner.

Museum displays and costume literature often suggest that women's dress at this time was limited to the robe à la française, robe à la polonaise and robe à l'anglaise, all with wide-set hips. Because of the lack of proper accessories, many preserved dresses are not recognised as levites. Furthermore the fashion of the wide, oval hoops was over, except in court dress. The voluminous silhouette of the skirts of the robe à l'anglaise and the levite was maintained through a modest round hoop or a wide pad worn at the rear, if there would be enough room for this. Museum displays where these dresses are only padded with two small hip pads, show the wrong silhouette. Additional research into this fashion is necessary.

Royally dressed in the costume of the people

National dress as a political statement?

Tjitske Sijtsma-Oma

In the past, members of both the Dutch and the Norwegian Royal House used to wear national costumes at special occasions. Until the early 20th century queens and princesses of the Netherlands would dress in the Frisian or Zeeland costume when visiting those provinces. These days that image has gone. On the other hand both male and female members of the Norwegian royal family will sport one of the many versions of Norwegian regional dress these days.

In both countries regional dress was used to demonstrate national identity and individuality, but in present times the Dutch Royal House will wear contemporary, fashionable dress. Queen Beatrix still represents national unity, but the Dutch Royal House has found alternative ways to express this. During the 19th and early 20th centuries it used national costume also for more specific purposes. The Royal Family wanted to obtain the goodwill of the Frisian people and emphasise the government's bond with the province of Zeeland. In the former case their descent from the Frisian Nassaus may have played a role as well.

After the dissolution of Norway's union with Denmark and, later, Sweden, the emphasis on national symbols increased in Norway. These symbols included the 'bunads', the regional costumes. The Norwegian Royal Family will wear bunads at important national events, but also privately. By wearing different styles of the regional dress, the Royal Family shows its bond with the people of Norway.

It is not clear to which extent dressing-up played a part in wearing regional dress. However, it is clear that the use of traditional dress by the Dutch and Norwegian Royal Families mainly served a political purpose and still does so. With both Royal Families regional dress could be described as 'symbolically rising heritage'.

And so both Royal Houses keep up with trends: the Norwegian Royal Family by wearing traditional dress in these times in which the bunad gains ever more popularity; the Dutch Royal Family by not wearing it any longer, as the Dutch people have almost entirely stopped wearing it.

A glorious dress with a tragic history

Restoration and history of a dress in the Amsterdam Historical Museum

Hillie Smit and Marijke van de Weerd

Recently Marijke van de Weerd retired as a restorer of textiles and costume at the Amsterdam Historical Museum. Her final project was the restoration of an unusual, early 20th-century dress. In this article Marijke van de Weerd documents the restoration of the dress and Hillie Smit records the research into its history.

The dress was incomplete and very fragile in parts. What remained was a beautifully decorated tunic of gold-coloured tulle, a bodice of tulle covered with silk gauze in poor condition, and an altered and enlarged boned cotton lining bodice. The original underdress was missing, only a few blue silk fragments remained.

The beige silk gauze of the bodice was replaced. The original gauze with its many holes was incorporated into the bodice and the holes were filled in with new gauze. The underdress, with a small train, was reconstructed in polyester in the blue colour of the bodice. Finally some research was done into the material of the unusual iridescent spangles which looked like beetles' wing-cases, but turned out to be made from gelatine.

The provenance of the dress was also investigated. The dress was found in an antique chest full of costumes which was donated to the Amsterdam Stedelijk Museum in 1951, together with three family portraits. In 1963 the chest passed into the keeping of the Amsterdam Historical Museum.

Documents show that the objects came from a certain Mrs. Franco Mendes. The portraits were of a married couple named Lopes Suasso, and of Cora Franco Mendes. The only member of the Franco Mendes family who also belonged to the Lopes Suasso family, was Dame Esther Lopes Suasso (1881-1931) who married Benoit Franco Mendes (1869-1944) in 1900. She was the mother of Cora Franco Mendes (1902-1942). Cora is depicted in the donated portrait of a child.

The fairly straight outline of the dress and its rich decoration indicated the period of 1910-1915. At that time Mrs Franco Mendes was around thirty, which would fit in nicely. As a member of the Jewish elite of Amsterdam and the wife of a director of an insurance company, she had a social status which required a certain style of dress. The dress might have been worn for receptions or as an evening dress.

Further research showed that a second donation was made in 1952, of a woman's portrait from around 1915, which was supposed to represent a member of the Franco Mendes family. The combined coats of arms of the Lopes Suasso and Franco Mendes families on the painting firmly indicate that this is a portrait of Esther Franco Mendes-Lopes Suasso, the original owner of the dress now in the Amsterdam Historical Museum.

During World War II all of Esther Franco Mendes-Lopes Suasso's descendants died in Auschwitz between 1942 and 1944. Esther's widower, Benoit Franco Mendes, also died there in 1944.

'And we left the ugliest caps behind'

Women from Staphorst in search of lace, 1960-1990

Johan de Bruijn and Jacco Hooikammer

In the villages of Staphorst and Rouveen, in the eastern part of the Netherlands, a few hundred women are still wearing traditional dress. As part of their Sunday best for church these women cover their heads with a lace cap, locally known as the *toefmusse*. This comes in two varieties: the small cap or *klein mussien*, and the cornet cap, which was introduced later than the small cap. This article

focuses on the lace used for the cornet cap. This cap consists of a crown, a front frill, a back frill, long bands, a ladder and bands which are tied under the chin. Nowadays, only the back frill is made of handmade lace. The front frill consists of machine-made lace, because it is pleated so tightly that the difference can hardly be seen.

Staphorst has known several periods in which it was difficult to obtain enough lace. In this article the authors concentrate on the last period of scarcity. During the 1960s a few women discovered that used lace caps could be bought cheaply in the German county of Bentheim, where traditional costume had become obsolete. In groups of three or four like-minded women they scoured Bentheim. Sometimes they bought dozens of caps, each providing enough lace for three Staphorst caps.

The women made a very good profit selling this lace to less adventurous women in Staphorst. Sometimes a German cap bought for five guilders, was sold for 300 guilders! Some of the interviewed women often travelled to Bentheim, because they found it was well worth the effort. And, of course, they loved the thrill of the chase. However, in the late 1980s it became more difficult to find German caps of good quality. Besides, less lace was needed because the number of women still wearing traditional dress started to decline. Thus Staphorst women stopped buying lace in Germany. The once very expensive lace may now be bought for relatively little money at local auctions.

The new acquisition

Wielent Harms

The author, on the lookout for a Frisian purse frame, either openwork or cast, found a silver one at a flea market. On it are the four evangelists with their attributes and the purse's hook depicts Eve picking the forbidden fruit. The hallmarks were unmistakably 18th-century and the price very reasonable. Trusting his ready knowledge of hallmarks, the author completed the deal, believing this to be a once-in-a-lifetime transaction.

Back home the frame was examined carefully with the aid of a magnifying glass and several reference books: the year letter, the Amsterdam hallmark, the head of Minerva (the assay office mark), and the master's mark: they were all there. Yet in the end it became clear that the purse frame was not 18th-century, but dated from 1914.

The master's mark especially posed some problems. It was traced back to the firm of F. de Groot Boersma in Sneek, in the province of Friesland. Strange as it may seem, this firm obviously used old hallmarks during the period 1909-1949. Closer investigation made clear that around 1900 there was a great demand for old silver. This demand could be met by copying antique objects and providing them with seemingly old, i.e. fake hallmarks. Buyers would not have known what to look for anyway. Especially in England there was a great interest in old Dutch silver. In the last quarter of the 19th century the firm of Van Gelderen in Schoonhoven had already made the so-called *stuivertjesbeugels* (shilling frames) for Scotsmen wearing a sporran to keep their kilts in place.

It was illegal to punch only fantasy hallmarks. At De Groot Boersma they did comply with the requirements though, by punching the year letter corresponding with the year 1914 into the inside of the frame. The master's mark was also punched into the frame and into the hook. Fake or fantasy marks were only punched in after these official hallmarks. De Groot Boersma used hallmarks which closely resembled old guild marks, possibly for commercial reasons. For an antique look the new purse frame was cast in an antique mould, and in this way the buyer was deceived.

Between 1960 and 1980 there was a renewed interest in antique silver in the Netherlands. Because there was very little supply, people got Dutch silver objects from England. These had mostly been cast in antique moulds and were hardly distinguishable from genuine old silver. As many collections are being sold now, a lot of this silver pops up in the trade.

The Frisian purse frame is now the best-documented frame in the author's collection; it still needs a Frisian purse to complete it.

As a result of questions about the photograph of the mould, the author interviewed Mr. Drost, the last silversmith working in Staphorst. Mr. Drost explained about the sand-casting method, a labour-intensive process using moulds, to make, amongst others, silver purse frames.

SPKNBRG, limited edition: Super Cool!

Hans Lemmerman

In Spakenburg, a Dutch village on the shore of the former Zuiderzee, a few women still wear their regional dress daily. Theater Atelier Het Wilde Oog, consisting of the dramatists Inge van Run and Hans Lemmerman, sets this regional dress tradition apart from its usual surroundings by effecting surprising confrontations with contemporary art and design. They organise performances, photo sessions, experiments with unusual combinations of dress, and design new, theatrical costumes inspired by the Spakenburg costume.

In 2007 Het Wilde Oog wondered what kind of style would proceed from the combination of Spakenburg traditional dress with the style of the MTV generation. Commissioned by Het Wilde Oog, costume designer Dorien de Jonge, in collaboration with Yukie Hashimoto from Japan, designed a Spakenburg version of the styles of dress of a group of young people in Tokyo, called 'Fruit'. They create their own individual identity by combining vintage clothes, home-made fashion, haute couture and elements from traditional Japanese costumes, thereby creating a street culture from a collage of styles and influences: from Roy Lichtenstein's pop art to Gothic Lolitas, from tartans to heroic warriors from comics.

Translating this principle to Spakenburg traditions originated 'Spakenburg fashion': exclusive outfits for young people. These are collages of contemporary pieces of clothing, sometimes made of typical Spakenburg dress fabrics, combined with traditional components such as a *kraplap* (shoulder piece), apron strings, wooden shoes or pleated and folded skirts and shawls.

Het Wilde Oog has been collaborating with the Spakenburg sisters-in-law Koelewijn, the 'Spakenburg Divas'. Photographs and video registrations of this collaboration were shown in exhibitions in Spakenburg (2007), and in Japan (2008). Designs made by several Dutch costume designers for Het Wilde Oog were also shown in Japan. Rien Bekkers, for instance, sketched a shirt consisting of twenty crochet undercaps. Judith de Zwart used fabric printed with photographs of Dutch landscapes and Linda Eijssen was inspired by Leigh Bowery's work (wrapping oneself from head to toe in fabrics or motifs). The three Spakenburg Divas each chose a favourite *kraplap* as a starting point for Linda Eijssen to dress them all the way from hat to wooden shoes.

In 2008 the Tokyo Fruit concept was elaborated further. Het Wilde Oog travelled to Tokyo to invite young people to choose an authentic Spakenburg garment to add to their own outfits. At first there was a lot of resistance, but later on some splendid combinations appeared.

Het Wilde Oog continues to research and experiment with heritage and design. Dorien de Jonge made new designs for the 'Corrie and Gerrit' project: Spakenburg women portrayed inside Gerrit Rietveld's buildings. Together with Yukie Hashimoto she transformed the traditional fisherman's jersey from a nearly extinct working garment into a unique showpiece. The collaboration with the three Koelewijn ladies, who are regarded as the Spakenburg avant-garde, remains an important source of inspiration to Het Wilde Oog.