



Kostuum

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SUMMARIES

Pearls set in gold

The inventory of jewels and trinkets of the Countess Jacoba of Bavaria

Lenie van der Hoek

Several inventories have survived from medieval times. Relatively unknown is the inventory of Jacoba of Bavaria (1401-1436), Countess of Holland, Zeeland and Hainaut. The inventory, made after her decease, includes jewellery, loose precious stones, ornaments and minerals. There are also all sorts of crockery, as well as religious objects and items not belonging to the said categories. This article describes only those jewels worn as ornaments, or attached to clothing or headdress. The different functions of jewels are also discussed.

The jewel's function as a present was very important. High-ranking persons needed to be generous with presents, since giving and receiving had everything to do with social relationships. It was a way of forging, maintaining and strengthening bonds, both with business relations and with relatives, with whom there was often also a business relation. Reciprocity was very advisable here.

Of course precious stones were also worn as jewellery. One could demonstrate one's power and social position by this and women could accentuate their physical qualities by their jewels. The most beautiful and

precious ones served as eye-catchers, whereas the lesser quality ones were used to ornament clothing, often in beautiful patterns.

A third and not unimportant function was the economical one. Costly objects from precious metal were a good investment, which could be sold in emergencies or pawned to finance an army. In the case of Jacoba of Bavaria this was primarily necessary in the Hook and Cod Wars and the wars with her relatives, who disputed her ownership of her realm. In the end she had to concede to her cousin Philip the Good. Meanwhile the most beautiful pieces had been sold, mostly after having been dismantled in order to get the highest price for the precious stones and the enamel work.

Pearls were used in different fashions. The best and biggest were for example used as pendants on chains, or made into brooches or mantle pins. The lesser quality ones were used to sew onto clothing or, as ornamental borders, on headdress and sleeves. Broken jewellery was repaired or kept for its intrinsic value, but also as a raw material for new pieces.

In Jacoba's jewel case we find all sorts of precious and semi-precious stones as well as pearls, the latter sometimes with their weight mentioned. Then there are golden necklaces, '*voorsnoeren*' (chains, richly ornamented with precious stones and pearls) and many rings, the donor of which is sometimes mentioned. Her *voorsnoeren* were richly decorated with precious stones and pearls. Jacoba had several '*tafelkijn*' (or *tablet*, a square, flat pendant) pendants with saints depicted in or on them. Her rings had rubies, emeralds or diamonds.

A number of '*webben*' (woven girdles) are also considered as belonging to the jewels, undoubtedly due to the silver or gold embossments they are decorated with.

The full inventory of jewels and trinkets is added as an appendix.

The clothes of a Dutchwoman cross-dressing as a man ca. 1610

Geeske Kruseman and Letja Feis

The subject of this article is the clothing worn about 1610 by a Dutchwoman whose livelihood depended on successfully passing for a man.

The female transvestism which arose in the Netherlands during the upheavals of the late 16th and early 17th century was essentially motivated by grim poverty. At the time, the unemployed working-class woman dead-ended in spinning for a starvation wage, or in a whorehouse; while the man, with better prospects to begin with, could if all else failed enlist in the army, or in the fleets of the new-born colonial era, earn a living, see the world. A fascinating study of documented cases of women living as men has been published by R. Dekker and L. van de Pol as *Vrouwen in mannenkleren* (available in German as *Frauen in Minnerkleidern*, out of print in English as *The Tradition of Female Transvestism in Early Modern Europe*).

The present authors, whose main research interest is what the Dutch wore in the 16th-17th C., could not encounter this without asking WHAT, exactly, the cross-dressers might have worn. What were their garments, as women and as men respectively? How did the garments interact with the body? How might the choice, construction and appearance of the clothing help their disguise?

Since these questions, in our view, demand experimental data, we picked a time (about 1610), a place (the province of Holland) and a person (a working-class woman seeking the better wages of a craftsman) to focus on, and set to work to research, make, and wear her clothes.

Our choice of parameters enabled us to make good use of the new raw material becoming available just then (2009) for this particular space-time frame, notably the Avercamp exhibition (Rijksmuseum, English catalogue available) and several groundbreaking publications (Pietsch and others) on extant garments, allowing a multi-disciplinary approach.

We studied paintings, drawings and prints (by Avercamp and others) to reconstruct what the clothing of working-class women looked like, and what garments it included. Items in museum collections and archaeological finds provided data on fabrics, stitching and cut. Some academic publications on theoretical aspects of dress shed useful sidelights.

Since our findings are drawn from these raw data, not from published costume histories, length constraints exclude from this article most of the detailed evidence and reasoning behind the reconstructions — we hope to remedy this in future.

Lace from Mechlin

Ad Timmermans

During the history of lace-making several distinct types of lace came into being, differing both in technique and look. This article concerns the birth and history of Mechlin lace, which is first mentioned in 1467, Mechlin being the first city connecting its name to lace. The term 'Mechlin lace' is also seen in the 16th and 17th centuries, but in that era Mechlin differs in style nor technique from laces produced elsewhere in Flanders, so the term can't be considered as referring to a type of lace.

Mechlin laces do differ in quality from the other Flemish laces though: hence the term is indicative of a certain quality. Until the French revolution the most beautiful laces were made in the city's beguinage and the Beguines were of great importance for Mechlin as a centre of lace.

At the beginning of the 18th century the technical development of the art of lace starts expanding enormously. Each of the most important Flemish centres of lace accentuates different aspects of the new technical possibilities. They all develop their own technique, and thus the unique external features related to this.

The first Mechlin laces distinguish themselves only by the thick, shiny thread around the patterns executed in cloth work, with characteristic nuances inside them. Within the patterns a great variety of ornamental grounds is applied. The lace as a whole is a continuous thread bobbin lace. The Mechlin hexagonal open net ground doesn't come into being until 1720.

Mechlin lace is technically very complicated and it might take a good lace worker ten years to master the technique. The best workers had up to 1500 bobbins on their pillow. The thread was extraordinarily fine and all this together made the lace particularly labour-intensive and very expensive.

From the time of its creation Mechlin lace was very popular. The English poet Edward Young crowned it as 'The Queen of Lace' in his book *Love of Fame the Universal Passion* (1725-17827). The lace kept adapting perfectly to whatever was described by fashion.

The lace industry as a whole suffered enormously from the French Revolution, but Mechlin was lucky with a few important orders from Napoleon, which put the city back on the map as a lace centre.

After 1830 fashion changes very much at the expense of Mechlin lace, making its production decrease steadily. Other lace centres take over a considerable part of the production. The Mechlin lace workers are exploited by the lace bosses, and thus they bury their own industry together with the undisputed queen of laces.

From that time Turnhout will be the most important centre for Mechlin lace, although production there gradually decreases as well. After the Great War Mechlin lace appears no longer to be profitable and is replaced by Paris lace, which makes the curtain fall definitively for the queen of laces.

Royal dress at the The Hague Court

The bridal wardrobes of three Princesses of Orange from the 18th century

Trudie Rosa de Carvalho and Madelief Hohé

Using three bridal wardrobes for an example, the authors allow the reader a small insight into the royal dresses of three prominent Princesses of Orange: Carolina (1734-1787), Wilhelmina of Prussia (1751-1820), and her daughter Louise (1770-1819). This makes this article a valuable addition to Madelief Hohé's article 'French fashion at the The Hague Court: an insight into the wardrobes of

Princess Wilhelmina of Prussia and Princess Louise of Orange-Nassau', in *En Vogue! Mode uit Frankrijk en Nederland in de achttiende eeuw*.

The trousseaus of Carolina and Louise were put together in The Hague, Princess Louise's being a much more extensive one than Princess Carolina's. This might be because Louise was the daughter of the Prussian Princess Wilhelmina. The latter's trousseau, put together in her homeland, was the richest of the three, fully according to her status as a Princess of Prussia.

The three brides received not only dresses worn during the wedding day and the other festivities this included. Amongst others they also received a full wardrobe of under- and outer clothing and day- and nightdress, as well as valuables, linen, furniture, textile for interior decoration and so on. The special category of dress worn at the *coucher et lever* around the wedding night is further explained, for bride as well as groom. This 'bridegroom's clothing' is lacking in Princess Wilhelmina's wardrobe though: it may not have been a usual custom in Prussia. Jewels were inextricably linked to the official court dress, but were only included in the trousseaus of Wilhelmina and Louise.

Bride as well as groom wore silver brocade dress, and silver was also worked into the dress for and around the wedding night, together with costly laces. The garments of the nearest relatives and those of the bridesmaids had a lot of silver and gold as well. The wedding dresses were characterized by an archaic cut going back to the 17th century, the boned bodice and the court train from the same material distinguishing them from other court dresses.

The terminology used in the trousseaus aren't all clear to us nowadays, but sometimes additional information, gleaned from invoices or letters, may add to our understanding of them. Although the categories of dresses in the three trousseaus are described in different terms, they sometimes share mutual links. This is mainly the case for the *robes de cour* and the other ceremonial court dresses with a train (described in the trousseaus of Carolina and Wilhelmina), most of them *robes à la française*. But the description of the less formal gowns shows differences. There are no *robes à l'anglaise* in the wardrobes of Carolina and Wilhelmina, since these came into fashion only after 1775. Louise's wardrobe from 1790 includes the more modern types of dress such as the *chemises* and other garments of a simple cotton, the *lévites* (dresses for informal occasions) and relatively more, and different, informal garments. Only the traditional wedding dress resembles the *robes de cour* from Carolina's and Wilhelmina's eras.

The article also deals with several other aspects from the trousseaus, such as underwear, negligé dress, mantles and accessories, fabrics, crinolines and corsets. The full inventories of the trousseaus may be found in three appendixes, written respectively in Dutch (1760), French (1767) and German (1790).

War lace

Belgian lace for the homeland

Elly de Vries

This year (2014) the Great War is commemorated in many European countries. It knew millions of dead, both among soldiers and civilians. The Netherlands remained neutral, but Belgium was invaded by Germany, and Great Britain became also involved in the conflict. More than a million Belgians fled to the free Netherlands.

In Belgium the production of handmade lace had already decreased before the Great War. The first lace machine dates from the 18th century and in 1808 John Heathcoat from Loughborough (England) launched his tulle machine. The machines improved steadily and handmade lace became more and more replaced by the machine-made product. In many families, particularly in Belgium, women and children made lace, as a much needed additional income which decreased dramatically as the much cheaper machine-made lace gained more ground.

Early in the 20th century attempts were made to defuse this lace crisis. In 1908 the society *Les Arts de la Femme* was founded in Brussels. Under protection of the later Queen Elisabeth (1876-1935) a lace school was founded which would focus on the artistic character of the motifs. In 1909 'De Kantbloem' was founded in Antwerp; one year later this school was incorporated into *Les Amies de la Dentelle*, founded by a group of aristocratic ladies. The aim was to improve the quality of the lace. Well-known artists such as Fernand Khnopff and Isidore de Rudder were invited to design lace patterns, and the committee members paid for the scarce yarn. The lace workers were paid for their work, which gave them a small income.

In that period war lace came into being in Belgium: it is not a new lace technique but a type of lace. Needle lace and Parisian ground were very popular and often showed animals and hunting scenes. The patterns designed by the artists were mainly based on scenes inspired by the war. By way of a thank-you symbols of the countries offering help were used, for example the eagle for America, the chrysanthemum for Japan, the crossed shield for Italy, the mirrored letter C for Serbia and the unicorn for England.

The Dutch Queen Wilhelmina received a lace scarf from the Committee of Belgian Fugitives, because she offered them shelter during the Great War. In the centre there are tulips and hyacinths, representing the Dutch national flowers. The borders with lily-of-the-valley symbolize the return of happiness. At the bottom the royal escutcheon and the motto 'Je Maintiendrai' are surrounded by oak leaves which 'the children of Holland' dance around, 'richly strewn flowers over their sister kingdom', represented by the escutcheons of the Belgian provinces. In the scallops of the lower border the crowned monogram of Queen Wilhelmina is depicted as well as the years 1914 and 1915.

Fashion house Worth is back!

Els de Baan

Almost a century after the foundation, in 1858, of its first couture house, Worth closes its doors in 1956. However, from 2010 the Paris catwalk suddenly features small-scale couture collections by Worth again. Although foreign fashion magazines such as *Vogue* and *Elle* make much of this, the Dutch press doesn't spend any words on the curious revival of this fashion house, although it used to be very popular with Dutch journalists in the past.

From the 1880's the Englishman Charles Frederick Worth (1825-1895) receives a lot of attention in numerous Dutch newspapers and adverts. His fame as the founder of haute couture keeps resounding even after his death. His two sons, Gaston (1853-1924) and Jean-Philippe (1856-1926), run the house around the turn of the century; two of his grandsons, Jean-Charles and Jacques, as well as two great-grandsons, Roger and Maurice, will follow their footsteps in turn.

In Dutch newspapers Worth is depicted in non-verifiable, sometimes strange stories of an eccentric and unconventional character, a dictator with specific talents and taste. His status as highly-esteemed tailor of the Empress Eugenie enables him to ask enormous prices, which the papers love to write about. At the same time they speak with respect about his business with over 1200 employees.

After his decease fashion house Worth still receives a lot of attention in the Dutch press, and Maison Worth's collections are shown frequently in the Netherlands. Even in the Dutch East Indies people were well-informed about the last news from Worth.

The business of the Englishman going to Paris and making a furore there is back in English hands now, under the umbrella of the company of businessman Dilesh Bhogilal Mehta, established in Watford (Herts). From 1999 he gives a boost to Worth's perfume lines. The Italian Giovanni Bedin is given the role of designer, and in January 2010 the company launches its first Worth summer couture collection during the Paris Fashion Week. According to the fashion house the 'modern, body-conscious evening dresses are inspired by the sculptured silhouette of the crinoline'. However, neither are the garments very fashionable, nor do they connect with the contemporary spirit, and they lack creative refinement.

In his time Charles Worth was closely associated with the Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture in Paris, the organisation for the protection of fashion designers. The present 'House of Worth' has not been admitted and maybe the entrepreneur will put a full stop to the business, as no collection was shown either for winter 2013-2014 or for spring/summer 2014: a bad omen.

In retrospect the Dutch press may rightly have ignored the revival of this fashion house, once so praised, in our media...

'Sometimes I wonder: whoever has thought this up?'

The black and white mourning dress of Staphorst and Rouveen

Johan de Bruijn and Jacco Hooikammer

This article focuses on the black and white mourning dress of Staphorst and Rouveen, two neighbouring villages in the Dutch province of Overijssel. This is a less known variety of the regional costume, which has only two distinctive parts: the weekday apron and the weekday cap. For other days parts from the heavy and light mourning will be combined.

Although it is a really distinctive manifestation of mourning, outsiders will often see it as a hybrid of heavy and light mourning. The black and white is worn for eight weeks after the decease of uncles, aunts, nephews and nieces. After the death of great-grandparents and great-grandchildren this is a period of sixteen weeks. Black and white will always be followed by an eight weeks' period of light mourning. The combination of garments makes some people wonder who has thought this up. The question has become impossible to answer, and neither can it be found out any longer at what time this variety of mourning was introduced.

The black and white mourning dress is most evident in the weekday clothes, whereas on Sundays the dress is practically the same as in heavy mourning. As is the case in all aspects of regional costume, this particular dress is subject to certain rules. However, the rules are not set in stone: wearers may sometimes decide to deviate from the duration of mourning in mutual consultation. This has mainly to do with the fact that the black and white is worn after the death of people who were particularly dear to the wearer.

It looks as if people are going more and more easy on the black and white in the past few years. There are even women who have abolished it completely, both from considerations regarding fashion and by changes in the village society. People aren't willing any longer to mourn for persons they have hardly, or not all, known. And so there comes an end to a variety of mourning which, even for the people of Staphorst and Rouveen, is 'pretty complicated'.