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SUMMARIES

The collected works of Charles Frederick Worth in the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg

Tamara Korshunova

The year 1995 was the centenary of the death of Charles Frederick Worth, the founder of the eponymous fashion house. Born in a small town in England in 1825, he had to leave school and start work at the age of eleven. In 1845 he moved to Paris, where at first he worked for the firm of Gagelin. In 1857-'58 he started his own fashion house at 7, Rue de la Paix. Worth's creative period coincides with the style period called **Historism in Russia**. Marked by an eclectic interest in the art of many periods and many cultures, this lends itself exceptionally well to the art of dress. It was the fancy of the time that the fashions of bygone eras were being recreated, but these dresses are anything but exact copies: one finds many different style elements in them.

Amongst Worth's clients were aristocratic ladies, rich Americans and famous actresses. Maria Feodorovna, the consort of Czar Alexander III, also ordered dresses from Worth and most of the eighteen Worth dresses now in the Hermitage Museum belonged to her.

A small number of the dresses is described in the article. One of them is an afternoon dress from the 1880s showing a strong influence of late 16th- and early 17th-century portraiture, especially in the sewn-on bows finished with gilt metal points. From the 1880s there is also a fine example of the *tapissier* or upholsterer's style. The dress is of straw-coloured satin with a flowery pattern in muted shades of green and cherry red. The cuffs and hem are of cherry red velvet.

There is a black satin dress with an afternoon and an evening bodice and a detachable

train. The imaginative power of the master shows in the decoration of black lace and black glass bugle beads in a delicate play with the contrast of the texture of the materials. A lilac velvet dress shows the influence of the Art Nouveau in its supple, undraped skirt. The luxuriant sleeves are the last gasp of the historical style. The 'swallow's tail' at the back dates the dress to 1892.

After Charles Frederick Worth's death in 1895 his sons Jean-Philippe and Gaston took over the business. By that time there were many competitors, both in Paris and in Russia, so they did not occupy quite the leading position in the fashion world their father did.

A perfect example of the Art Nouveau style is a dress from the first decade of the 20th century. The material is woven in such a way that the pattern of velvet hydrangeas in hazy colours like pale green, pink, lilac and yellow, contrasts delicately with the gleaming satin. The use of lace in this dress is very imaginative, and used in a most original manner as a decoration on the skirt.

Beard, hat and mark

Dress codes for the Jewish population of Europe

Constance Scholten

In the past both ecclesiastical and secular authorities passed laws on dress for the protection of local trade and sumptuary laws to prevent overspending. They also took measures to mark certain groups such as lepers, prostitutes and non-Christians. Jews were most affected by such rules.

Little is known of Jewish dress before 1100, but it probably differed from that of the rest of the population on the basis of biblical rules forbidding men to cut their beards and the wearing of garments mixing wool and linen. Persecution of Jews during the 11th century led to assimilation in dress by the Jews, which in turn led to laws obliging them to dress in a recognizable manner.

From 1217 all Jews living in England were required to wear a distinguishing mark of white linen or parchment on the front of their outer dress, in the shape of the Tables of the Law. Other marks were, amongst others, a wheel and the Greek letter tau. In Spain, where the Jewish population was fairly influential, the wearing of distinguishing marks was put off until 1348. Then the wearing of a long coat, the *gramalla*, with a yellow wheel, became compulsory for all adult Jewish men and women.

There was also the pointed Jewish hat, which was much used as a distinguishing mark in Middle-European countries. It was often used in pictures to suggest a Jewish context. The pointed hat is abundantly present in Jewish sources as well, whereas the cloth marks are virtually absent. We find no depictions of the hat after the 16th century.

In the beginning many different marks were used, but in time the yellow wheel became the one most frequently used. This became compulsory when children reached the marriageable age: 13 to 14 for boys, 12 for girls. Women were often required to wear a veil with two blue stripes as well. This was considered humiliating, since only men wore prayer shawls with blue stripes.

Punishment for not wearing the distinguishing mark varied from confiscation of all goods and branding to fines and even banishment. In the Netherlands few laws concerning Jewish dress were passed. In the 17th century the Dutch Republic was the first state to do away with distinguishing marks.

Sumptuary laws dictating what different social classes could and could not wear, became more and more detailed as time went by. Jews were not allowed rich dress and sometimes they were required to wear outmoded fashions. The Jewish authorities themselves also passed sumptuary laws though. The basic rule always seemed to be: do not dress like the non-Jews, i.e. do not follow fashion too closely. Too much luxury might lead to jealousy on the part of non-Jews and/or to poverty through overspending. But as the men in authority and their families were usually exempt from these laws, rich dress was widely flaunted.

From the 16th century onward the number of laws concerning dress diminished, until in the 19th century they had disappeared completely, except in Russia. In the 20th century the distinguishing mark made a short but disastrous come-back during World War II. This time it was the Star of David, usually in yellow. The Nazi regime basically followed the rules that had been in use in the Middle Ages, but the aim of these and the punishments for transgression were a lot more grim.

The portrait of Olga Borski-Sillem

Did she pose with her wedding presents?

Hanneke Adriaans

The portrait of Olga Borski-Sillem, now in the Centraal Museum in Utrecht, was painted by J.A. Kruseman in 1834. Olga Sillem (1814-1899) married Jan Borski (1807-1891) in 1831, so her wedding was not far behind her in 1834. Her velvet dress, kashmir shawl, fur tippet and jewellery might be gifts from her trousseau or her *corbeille de mariage*. The *corbeille de mariage* is first mentioned in the 16th century; it was either a basket or a box containing presents from the bridegroom to the bride. If Olga received such a box, no trace of it survives. However, because of its popularity at the time of her marriage, we may assume that she received one.

The presents it may have contained are in the first place kashmir shawls. According to contemporary fashion magazines the number of these expensive shawls in a *corbeille* could amount to 18. A marriage was considered a very good one when the bridegroom gave the bride a *corbeille* of the same value as her dowry. Jewellery was another important component of the *corbeille*, as were lace, fur and accessories like fans. Even dresses are mentioned twice.

The bride was given the same kind of presents by her parents, for her trousseau. This was set out shortly before the wedding. As both the Sillems and the Borskis were very rich, presents like a piano or a carriage may have been part of the trousseau. Olga's sister Henriëtte (1805-1827) received 100.000 Dutch guilders in cash as a wedding gift from her father in 1826.

Olga's elder sister Louise (1808-1896) also sat for her portrait in a velvet dress with lace and net sleeves. At the time velvet dresses, suitable for the theatre or a dinner, were the prerogative of married women. Velvet and sables were a standard combination, but in her portrait Olga may be wearing her sable tippet only to show this present.

Among the jewellery seen in the portrait Olga's long chain or *sautoir* is very interesting. The elegant gesture of the left hand holding the chain is similar to the gesture seen in fashion plates. Olga wears a pair of bracelets set with cameos which, being not identical, might be rare antique ones. Unfortunately none of her jewellery has been preserved.

In conclusion we can say that, although there are two separate passages in the *Journal des Dames et des Modes* mentioning dresses as part of the *corbeille*, we may assume that the velvet dress was a gift from Olga's parents as part of her trousseau. The jewellery, fur tippet and kashmir shawl may well

have been presents from Jan Borski. Wedding presents served to show the wealth of the two families allied by the marriage, and the wife would have to reflect her husband's social standing in her mode of dress.

The clothes of the 'Princess of Zweeloo'

Sandra Y. Comis

In 1952 an early medieval burial ground was excavated in Zweeloo, in the Dutch northern province of Drenthe. Grave 87 contained the remains of a woman of the 5th century A.D. who had been interred with costly burial gifts. The most important item found in the grave was a gilded silver fibula in the shape of a butterfly. On the back of the fibula and of several bronze rings of the girdle some fragments of woven textiles had been preserved in the rust. These fragments were examined in 1977 and 1987. Some fragments of linen were found on the back of two disk fibulae. Other fragments were of wool and found, amongst other places, on the back of the large butterfly fibula.

The woollen fabrics and yarns are similar to others of the same era, but the linen fabric is exceptional. In the Dutch soil almost no linen is preserved, but comparable fabrics of the same date are unknown in the surrounding countries. It must have been a very costly material.

What clothes in the 5th century A.D. looked like, is not known. Most clothes found in excavations in Germany and Denmark belonged to men, but a few cylinder-shaped garments, similar to the Greek and Roman *peplos*, must have been women's clothes. Whether these were indigenous dress, or copied from the Roman overlords, is unknown. The position within the grave of clothes' pins, jewellery, buckles and other dress accessories, can only give indirect clues about the clothing worn at the time.

The disk fibulae found at shoulder level in the grave of the Zweeloo Princess, are indicative of a linen, cylinder-shaped garment. This was usually made from a long rectangular piece of cloth (ca. 150x250 cm), sewn or woven together at the long sides to make a cylinder which was gathered at the shoulders.

The woollen fabric found on the back of the butterfly fibula probably came from a shawl or large mantle: a large cloth which would be draped around the body, held together at the front by a big dress pin.

In 1988 a reconstruction of the linen fabric was made by Mrs. T. Buisman-Czeiky, an experienced damask weaver. It took her three months to weave a piece of 255 cm long, with a width of 140 cm. From this cloth a reconstruction of the garment, now in the Drents Museum in Assen, was made.

The development of the women's dress of Urk

Jolanda de Pater

In *Kostuum* 1994 the author published an article about the men's dress of Urk, a former island in the Zuiderzee, now IJsselmeer, in the Netherlands. The present article sketches the development of the women's dress of Urk from the 17th to the 20th century. The earliest source is the report of a judicial enquiry from 1665. From this we may conclude that Urk women conformed to the dress of Enkhuizen, in the province of North-Holland, at least in the matter of headdress.

We may safely assume that the Urk women's dress did not differ from that of lower class women in the province of North-Holland. Women living in the country dressed in a manner strongly reminiscent of the 16th century, in a skirt and apron with a jacket laced centre front. Over the jacket a separate collar (*kletje*) was worn. From a 1633 engraving we can see that the women of South-Holland, with their closed jackets and caps or hats, dressed differently from the North-Holland women with their short, heavily pleated skirts and folded headscarves. A similar dress was worn in Friesland and by the ladies in North-Holland cities like Enkhuizen. Another North-Holland option was a jacket with a peplum over a laced corset.

Sometimes we find mention of a roll attached to the lower edge of the corset. This made the skirt stand out and probably harks back to the bum roll of the early 17th century, which could be used instead of the farthingale.

The first specific information after 1665 about women's dress on Urk dates from the late 18th century. Both Wagenaar and Le Franq van Berkhey tell us that the women's dress of Urk was similar to that of West-Friesland, the coastal region of the Zuiderzee in North-Holland. By now the women wore cap and *oorijzer* (the metal frame worn inside the cap), but it is impossible to ascertain what shape it had.

Neckerchiefs and aprons of colourful, decorated materials were commonly worn in the 18th century, so it may safely be assumed that they were also worn on Urk. Le Franq van Berkhey's description of Urk women's dress does not indicate any specific Urk details.

Our next source is Bing and Braet's book of plates of Dutch regional dress dating from ca. 1850. It shows that in the meantime the Urk women's dress has evolved quite a lot. Some garments have changed their shape and some traditions have disappeared. An obvious change is that the Urk women's dress is far less colourful now. This is ascribed to several causes, but in fact the change to black occurs in many regions, both in the Netherlands and abroad.

Urk regional dress started to disappear in the early 20th century. The generation born in the 1920s and 1930s adopted civilian clothes. The closing-off of the Zuiderzee in 1932 and the land reclamation around Urk in 1939 brought great changes to the former island; and then, during World War II, fabrics became scarce. All this made Urk men and women discard their traditional regional dress.