

PROCEEDINGS OF
THE 1ST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
CULTURE COSTUME AND DRESS
10-12 MAY BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY



BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

CC&D

EDITED BY ANNE BOULTWOOD AND SIAN HINDLE

CULTURE COSTUME AND DRESS

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CULTURE COSTUME AND DRESS

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ACADEMIC

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Preface

It is over a year since we began planning our first multi-disciplinary conference on dress and its implications for culture. Our intention was to bring together scholars from different academic backgrounds who shared an interest in dress, but had limited opportunity to engage across the subject divides. Those who study dress often find themselves in a minority within their own discipline, which is not only isolating, but can also make it difficult to keep up with developments in the field. The conference, therefore, allowed people to share their research with a wider audience, to find synergy with a broader academic base, and to participate in a wider debate.

We were drawn to the idea because dress, in so many ways, is fundamental to human experience. Even in societies that disregard the need for warmth or modesty, from earliest times, there has been a desire for adornment. This desire has inspired individuals and motivated societies. It has generated powerful emotions and fueled the extremes of fashion. Little wonder then, that it has resonance for such a wide range of disciplines. There is a tendency to assume that research around clothing is largely confined to fashion theorists and costume historians. In reality, it has implications for all disciplines that concern themselves with the human condition. The conference attracted delegates from around the world, but more importantly, from a wide range of subjects: art, art history, fashion, costume, social sciences, cultural history, costume for performance, and others, were all represented.

The main concerns of the conference were the nature of dress, its enduring relevance, and the impact of culture on the wearing and depiction of clothes. The term *dress*, as opposed to fashion or clothing, was chosen because it embraces the spectrum of human adornment that also includes jewellery, tattooing and other ways of augmenting identity and the experience of self. On an individual level, we use dress to create a persona that we present to the world: perhaps that we are fashionable, or intellectual, or creative – or perhaps that we don't care about clothes, and in the process, we also construct a version of our own self. It is this power of dress that lends it authority in society. The sumptuary laws of the past, for example, allowed the powerful to distinguish themselves from the masses; fashion has the capacity to render ridiculous the unfashionable; and dressing *too young* is frowned upon. Their efficacy depends on our tacit acceptance of their significance. In our cultural activities, we reference this significance: authors, artists, film-makers, all use clothes to create a character, or depict a state of mind. Often the depiction is so subtle that we, the audience, are hardly aware of it, yet it influences our perception and contributes to our understanding.

All of these issues were explored in the conference. A wide range of papers, representing the full scope of arts and humanities, provided the focus of discussion, making CCD2017 a true forum for cross-disciplinary debate. The papers included here reflect that spirit of collaboration, which we hope will inspire further discussion and stimulate future cross-fertilisation of thoughts and ideas.

Anne Boulton
July 2017

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Dr. Anne Boultonwood (Chair)

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Dima Saber

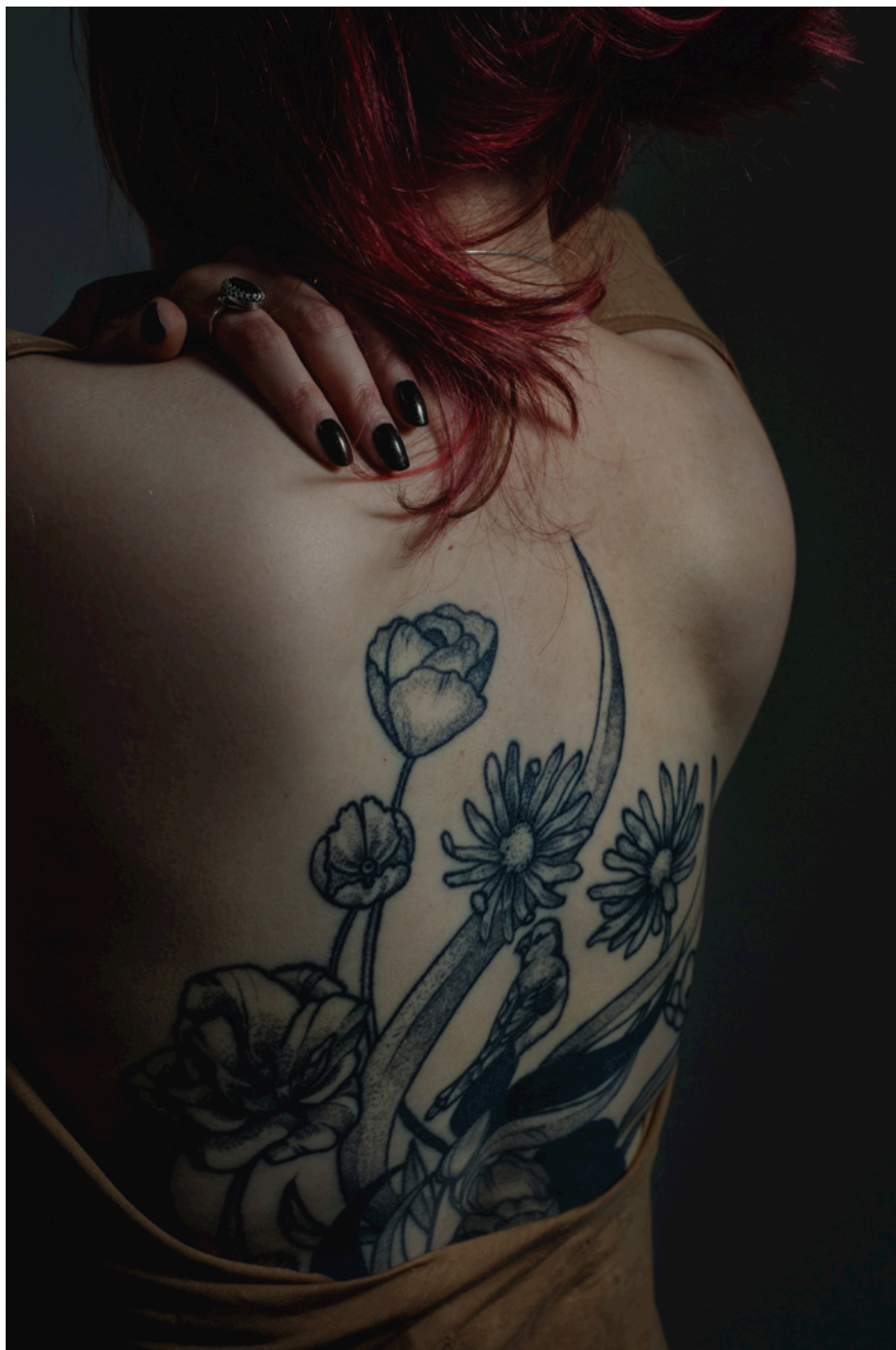
Dr. Serena Trowbridge

EXHIBITS

Reveal, Conceal

Natalie McCreesh and Mark Howe
Sheffield Hallam University

There are many reasons people chose to become tattooed however one overriding theme is love. This can be romantic love, familial love, friendship, happiness in love and heartbreak. Tattoos are a visible means of expressing such powerful feelings however the true meaning is known only to the wearer. We might presume a heart shape relates to love, but we do not know the depth of meaning, or what compelled the wear to have these feelings permanently inked onto their skin. This project set out to collect tattoo stories relating to love, in gathering the stories the meaning behind the tattoos were revealed. This concept was further explored through clothing where the raw emotion behind the tattoo was stitched and heat branded into the worn garment revealing concealed feelings and emotion. Leather jackets were chosen as a protective form of clothing, protecting the wearer from the elements but also society. Tattooed women are often subject to street harassment, these harsh words were tattooed onto the petals of roses to symbolise the attack on the pure original notion of a tattoo gained for love.



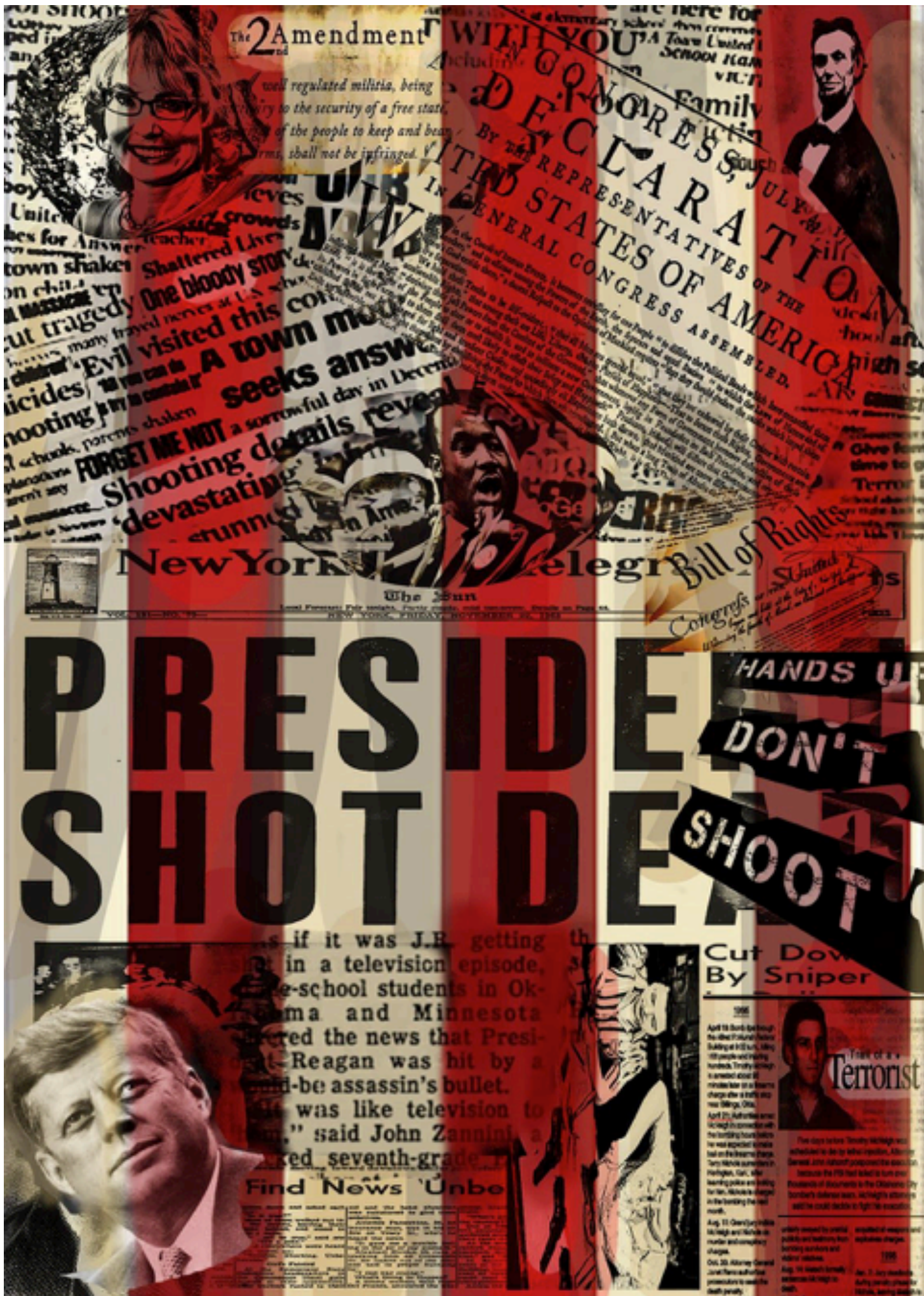
Assassins

Caitlin Quinn
University of South Dakota

The costume for “The Proprietor” in the University of South Dakota’s production of Assassins was the symbolic piece that introduced the concept for the production: an examination of gun culture in America and the infamy sought by perpetrators of gun violence. The inspiration for the Proprietor was the character of Uncle Sam as characterized in American political cartoons and propaganda. The exaggerated height of Uncle Sam was recreated by having the actor walk on stilts, raising them an additional 26” off the ground. The pant fabric was custom designed and printed to look like the distressed stripes of the American flag. The newsprint over the stripes is from historical and modern day shootings in America. The concept behind the fabric was to tie together the past and present for the audience while focusing on the motive of the shooters: notoriety. The newsprint on the pants do not mention any of the shooters by name, so the dream of recognition remains as elusive as the American Dream. The rest of the costume further reinforces the concept. The vest was cut from a vintage-washed blue fabric with gold stars to represent the American flag. The Proprietor’s porkpie hat and henley were references to the carnival-barker aspect of the Proprietor / Uncle Sam character - who aggressively urges the the American public to buy into the American Dream. The prominent belt and gun holster are a constant visual reminder of one of the central themes of the play: America’s obsession with guns.



The Proprietor Costume



Custom designed fabric for the Proprietor's pants

Conversations on Wearing: Practice at Play

Natalie Garrett Brown, Coventry University
Zoe Robertson, Birmingham City University
Amy Voris, Manchester Metropolitan University

We offer a mobile intervention, involving a trio of artists and wearable objects which is designed to inhabit pathways of flow and transition amongst the conference public spaces. The objects will be selected from an existing collaborative project flockOmania or will showcase new objects currently in a developmental stage titled gather.IN. Flexible in duration and location this intervention will offer conference delegates an opportunity to witness or participate in a performance as it evolves through a structured movement improvisation with the wearable objects. Through this intervention we intend to deepen and develop our engagement with a central theme of our shared improvisational structure related to the notion of 'wearing'. This intervention will serve to bring our current project into dialogue with new materials and objects that will inform our next phase of collaboration. Within the wider community of the conference, we are specifically interested to explore the known and unknown, spoken and unspoken rules of play that underpin our existing collaborative practice. Revisiting the existing performance scores, which posit bodily engagement with objects as a continuum between 'wearing as merging' and 'wearing as conversation', this intervention will open up a space for us as artists to further interrogate our collaborative dialogues on practice.





M(eat) et al

Rachael Colley
Birmingham City University

Throughout its 60 year history the art jewellery field has been creatively interrogating jewellery's craft traditions and its role as social signifier. Den Besten's (2014) recent manifesto for contemporary jewellery invited art jewellers to re- 'Focus on the "why" and "how" of jewelry, on people and jewelry'. Through practice-led research I am investigating the public's response to the crafting and transformation of food-stuffs, including the flesh of meat and fruits, as materials with which to create a collection of jewellery and decorative wearable artefacts titled M(eat) et al. There are several art jewellers who explore alternative organic, animal and human matter in their creative practice, such as Marta Mattsson, Eunmi Chun and Stefan Heuser; however, few have gone on to study and analyse the subsequent impact of their designs on the wearer/consumer. In Hindle's Strange Pleasures study (conducted in 2014), where members of the public were invited to experience and engage with a range of art jewellery examples, a participant selected my work to interact with. She stated that 'it was almost like that weird attraction/revulsion thing' (Hindle, Colley, Boulton, 2016 p.304), evidenced threads around abjection (Kristeva, 1984) and body boundary (Rozin et al, 1995) that occur due to the material make-up of the jewellery. As a result of this study, I am exploring ways in which to more effectively promote and exhibit M(eat) et al alongside a developing complementary collection of Ambiguous Implements, to enable an immersive and experiential presentation to the public that more directly questions body boundary.



Balsa'd bacon 2016

300 x 250 x 30 mm

Bacon, balsa wood, copper, leather, butchers' twine
made with denatured organic materials



The Untanny 2016

410 x 410 x 30 mm

Beef, leather, walnut and copper
made with denatured organic materials

Sensible Space

Sabine Roth
Birmingham City University

Project in collaboration with Cameron Bowen/Design Products at Royal College of Art, July 2015
Photographer: Juuke Schoorl

Our future is driven by innovation and technology. The living environments and life qualities are changing. Although technology has and will have increasing power and influence over our daily life, there is no guarantee that it will automatically improve the quality of our life. This project is about personal space. How we perceive our personal space and how in daily life our 'available' space is changing. Personal space refers to an area with invisible boundaries surrounding a person's body. It is an emotionally charged zone around each person. Personal space can be seen as an invisible bubble that accompanies us wherever we go and that may expand or shrink, depending on personality and cultural background, as well as the physical settings. It is not static at all. As we change and adapt, we change the environment around us, too. The aim of the project is to detect the changing properties of personal space, to visualize this psychological construct, which refers to a physical distance or boundary that we attempt to maintain between ourselves, and the people around us.





Interfashionality - 3D Printed Chinese Qipao

Mingjing Lin
Royal College of Art

Qipao is a traditional Chinese dress that was, originally, designed as wide and loose. The shape of the garment changed from the 1920s when Shanghai became the center of Eastern trade and local tailors continued shaping, using ironing rather than darts. Prof. Li from Tsinghua University has recently completed extensive research into the history of qipao and compiled his finding in his new book, *Enduring Fragrance-Exhibition of Cheongsam Culture* that crucially explores the social, cultural and technical histories.

Digital fashion seeks both the technical and conceptual innovation. 3D Printing is one of them. Similar to the Qipao history, the specific tailors' skill of making and ironing techniques differentiates the understanding of body, dress and the space in between. This speculative and collaborative research, Inter-fashionality, asks how traditional knowledge of the Qipao can be interpreted through new techniques of 3D printing, in order to celebrate the innovation made possible by mechanical system and to reconsider the traditional handcraft knowledge under digitization.

Mingjing Lin a PhD researcher at RCA School of Material explores how 3D printing enables new form of customization, bespoke manufacture and mass making. With cultural exchange as the core of the project, the new garments echo tradition in the way they are both sustainable, as they follow a continuous pattern there is little waste. And inspired by "one-piece" concept and Chinese ironing technique, the new designs are printed by SLA and FDM technique and fitted to the body, which creating beautifully interactive movement between garment and dancers.





KEYNOTES

Deirdre Murphy, Senior Curator, Historic Royal Palaces



Biography

Deirdre Murphy is senior curator at Historic Royal Palaces, with special responsibility for the Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection. As well as curating exhibitions and displays at Kensington Palace, she has also worked with collections at the Gallery of Costume in Manchester and the textiles and fashion collections at the V&A. Deirdre studied History of Dress at the Courtauld Institute of Art. She lectures regularly on fashion history, museum interpretation and curating at London College of Fashion, Central Saint Martins and Leeds University. She has published articles in a range of scholarly publications, and has contributed to several Historic Royal Palaces books. Deirdre is Chairman of the Costume Society of Great Britain.

Matters of National Importance: the Culture of Fashion at the Court of Queen Victoria

Queen Victoria sought to influence the culture of fashion in public and at court. This illustrated lecture will demonstrate how, at Parliament's urging, her public support of the British textile manufacturing industry saw the royal family emerge as ambassadors of a campaign to buy British. The fancy dress balls she hosted with Prince Albert formed part of a long-term public relations exercise to depict her as a supporter of British industry. At court, the young Queen stage-managed a more localised fashion culture. She directed her public appearances with an expert eye, portraying herself, the protagonist, amid a cast of characters and extras. After Prince Albert's death, the Queen's 'Widow of Windsor' image brought new sophistication to her tendency to shape what other people wore. The court, descended into shades of black, grey, mauve and white, was at once a product of the Queen's talent for creating impactful mise-en-scene and a mirror of her grief.

Dr Catherine Spooner, Reader in Literature and Culture Lancaster University



Biography

Catherine Spooner is Reader in Literature and Culture at Lancaster University and co-President of the International Gothic Association. She has published widely on Gothic literature, film and popular culture, with a particular emphasis on fashion and dress. Her first book, *Fashioning Gothic Bodies*, traced the relationship between Gothic and clothing from the eighteenth century to the present and she has continued to write extensively on this topic, with highlights including chapters in the BFI's *Gothic: The Dark Heart of Film* and the Victoria and Albert Museum's *Alexander McQueen*. Subsequent books include *Contemporary Gothic* and three co-edited essay collections, most recently on the TV series *Twin Peaks*. Her latest book is *Post-Millennial Gothic: Comedy, Romance and the Rise of Happy Gothic*, published by Bloomsbury in February 2017.

White Dress: A Gothic Cultural History

Edith's elaborate white nightgowns in Guillermo del Toro's *Crimson Peak* (2015) deliberately position her in a long line of Gothic heroines. Contrary to popular expectation, women in white, rather than women in black, dominate Gothic texts from the eighteenth century to the present. From Miss Havisham's wedding dress, to Rebecca's ball gown, to the Bride of Frankenstein's shroud, to the nightgowns of Hammer's female vampires, the white dress has become an iconic garment. This paper will unpack some of the cultural and historical associations of the white dress. It will argue that Gothic offers a very particular challenge to the iconography of whiteness, and that is, that it seldom allows the white dress to stay white. If the white dress is an over-determined garment that already carries a heavy freight of meaning, then over the course of the Gothic story, it frequently becomes stained, marked and torn in a variety of inventive ways. Drawing on a broad range of texts including Dickens's *Great Expectations* (1861), Le Fanu's *'Carmilla'* (1872), *Crimson Peak*, nineteenth-century art and contemporary fashion photography, this paper demonstrates that the white dress in Gothic is not a static or universal image but a vehicle for narrative; it is a blank page on which the story of the heroine's body is told.

Dr Mary Harlow, Associate Professor in Ancient History University of Leicester



Biography

Mary Harlow is Associate Professor in Ancient History at the University of Leicester. She came to Leicester after a period at the Centre for Textile Research at the University of Copenhagen (2011-13). Her research interests range from dress in the Roman period to age and ageing in Antiquity. Her recent published works include the edited volumes: *Greek and Roman Dress. An Interdisciplinary Anthology* (Oxbow Books, 2014) and *A Cultural History of Dress and Fashion in Antiquity* (Bloomsbury 2016).

Dressing and Difference: Fashion in Ancient Roman Culture

Is it possible to talk about fashion in a world where the basic wardrobe, for both men and women – the tunic and mantle – remained relatively static for close on a millenium? Is it possible to re-define modern notions of a fast-paced, mass produced and media-led industry to suit the production and availability of clothing and textiles in the Roman period? This paper will examine these questions, looking at Roman responses to changes in dress, textiles, colours and accessories and discuss whether the anxieties they voiced are useful to any discussion of 'fashion'.

Professor David Roberts, Dean of the Faculty of the Arts, Design and Media, Birmingham City University



Biography

David Roberts is Pro Vice Chancellor and Dean of the Arts, Design and Media at Birmingham City University. He has held academic posts at the Universities of Bristol, Kyoto, Osaka, Oxford and Worcester. His monographs have been published by the University Presses of both Oxford and Cambridge, including his most recent study, *Restoration Plays and Players* (CUP, 2014). He has also written for leading journals including *Shakespeare Quarterly*, *ELH*, *The Review of English Studies* and *Cambridge Quarterly*.

A National Teaching Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, he also maintains a profile in educational publishing. His latest title, *Games for English Literature*, was co-authored with Izabela Hopkins and published by Libri in 2016. Currently he is writing a biography of the dramatist George Farquhar and trying to complete his second novel.

Shakespeare and the Fashion-Mongers

Playwrights and actors trade in illusion: they draw audiences into thinking that pretence is the real thing. But Shakespeare also liked reminding us that acting is only pretending, and that it's not only actors who pretend. In the words of Jaques from *As You Like It*, all the world's a stage.

What does that mean for Shakespeare's presentation of clothes and, more broadly, the idea of fashion? His actors wore real materials that were often recycled from the wardrobes of noble patrons, but they also paraded fakes. The question of what was real and what was not was alarming for a society with rules about who could wear what (the so-called sumptuary laws), and a vocal religious minority who believed any kind of pretence was immoral. Playing on those fundamental social anxieties, Shakespeare also dwelt on the question of how clothes signify gender, making comedy out of women dressing up as men - except the actors who did it were boys.

Shakespeare's interest in clothes changed over the course of his writing career. Toying with social mobility gave way to probing the relationship between clothes and emotions or identity (*Hamlet* and *Richard II* in particular); then to a fascination with unclothing either through literal nakedness or death (*King Lear*, *Timon of Athens*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*); and finally to a transfiguring of clothes as semi-magical (*The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*). In the word 'fashion', here analysed using corpus technology, he concentrated a wide range of meanings and discursive cruxes.

Professor Tim Wall, Associate Dean for Research Birmingham City University



Biography

Tim Wall is Professor of Radio and Popular Music Studies and Associate Dean for Research at Birmingham City University. He was formerly an AHRC Knowledge Transfer Fellow and worked on collaborative projects with the BBC and other organisations involved in creative and cultural practice. His work is broad and interdisciplinary, drawing on traditional scholarly method and practice-based approaches with a strong emphasis on engagement and impact.

Pauline Rushton, Curator of Costume and Textiles Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool



Biography

Pauline Rushton is the head of the Decorative Art Department at National Museums Liverpool, where the collections include ceramics, glass, metalwork, jewellery, furniture and musical instruments, dating from the medieval period to the present day. Her specialist field is costume and textiles and she curates a collection of more than 20,000 items covering 300 years of fashion history. Her publications include works on 18th century dress, 19th and 20th century bridal wear and costume from the 1920s and 1930s.

Pauline is also curator of Sudley House, formerly the home of the Holt family, Liverpool ship owners and merchants. The house is unique as it retains the only surviving Victorian merchant art collection in Britain still hanging in its original location.

Mrs Tinne's Wardrobe

Mrs Tinne's wardrobe provides us with a snap-shot of changing fashions, as worn by a middle-class woman in Liverpool between the two World Wars. This unique collection, numbering more than 750 items, once belonged to Emily Margaret Tinne (1887-1966) who married into a wealthy family of sugar merchants and ship-owners. She is one of the earliest known examples of the shopaholic and her collection is probably the largest wardrobe of clothes belonging to one person in the UK. Emily had many of her clothes made for her by a local dressmaker. She also bought hundreds of items from Liverpool's best-known shops and department stores.

This paper will set her collecting into its wider context of fashion and the shopping experience in 1920s and '30s Liverpool.

PAPERS

Dressing and Difference: Fashion in Roman Culture

Mary Harlow

When we imagine Roman clothing our ideas tend to be filtered through a range of prisms, dependent on our own cultural experience of the ancient world. This might be the sculpture and paintings surviving from antiquity, it might be nineteenth-century history paintings in art galleries, it might be glamorous Hollywood versions, or those of computer gaming, or those of re-enactors. Each of these filters puts their own spin on the idea of Roman clothing and it is very often difficult, not to say disappointing, to look at the reality of Roman dress as made and worn in antiquity.

The Roman empire at its height covered most of current Europe, North Africa and part of the modern Near East, it encompassed many peoples and many cultures, and over the time of its influence – six centuries at a conservative estimate – it saw many political, cultural and economic shifts. It is impossible in a short paper to talk about all the clothing cultures which were part of the Roman world, so here I will discuss a question which still raised debate among ancient historians – but may not among dress/fashion historians: can we talk about fashion in a wardrobe where there was little change for over four hundred years? And can we answer such a question given the surviving evidence?

The evidence for the ancient wardrobe comes from three bodies of material: archaeological remains, visual representations and literary/documentary sources. For antiquity these three elements are often aligned to create a composite image of a general 'Roman' dress but they need to be nuanced and problematized in order to think about the realities of clothing the body. We face the Barthesian problem that the various types of evidence do not speak the same language but together they produce a semantics of dress which can be used to think about the relationship between representation and reality, between dress, status, gender, ethnicity etc. Material remains of clothing survive primarily in the hot, dry conditions of ancient Egypt and surrounding areas, and occasionally in burial contexts where environmental conditions were favourable. This means that many of the complete or partial garments which survive come from a relatively limited cultural areas of the Roman world. However, on a more positive note, the tools used to make this clothing remained relatively static for many centuries so it is possible to discuss the clothing, at least of the Mediterranean Roman world, with some confidence. The main raw material of the ancient wardrobe was linen or wool. Very little cotton has been found used for clothing and even less

silk – although silk was an obsession of ancient writers. The survival of many textile tools allow us to make some judgements about the range of textiles that could be produced. Spindle whorls and loom weights of many different sizes and weights have been found across the empire. Depending on the available tools and the experience of the spinner, yarn of varying qualities could be produced. Examination of surviving textiles demonstrated the ability to spin extremely fine yarn if necessary, as well as the skill to produce hard spun warps. Careful warp spinning was essential for the warp-weighted loom where the tension was created by attaching groups of warps to clay or stone weights. The warp-weighted loom has a very long history, having been in existence in prehistoric times and still in use in Scandinavia in the early twentieth century (Barber 1991; Hoffman 1964). Nowadays such looms are still worked but more often in the context of museums (Fig. 1).



Figure 1 Replica warp weighted loom in Sangalandet Lejre, Denmark.

One significant point to understand about ancient clothing is that it was made to shape on the loom (Granger-Taylor 1982). It was not cut from a bolt of cloth. Weaving-to-shape imposes a particular dynamic on the production of clothing. This means

that from the very outset, when the quality of raw material was assessed, the final garment would be in the minds of all those processing the flax/fleece. Yarn was spun and the loom set up to create a particular garment. In domestic production, which probably made up the majority of clothing for the mass of population this dictated choices from the very beginning: should yarn be spun tightly or loosely, did it require dyeing (usually done in the fleece in antiquity) etc. The shapes which made up the Roman wardrobe were relatively simple rectangles or semi-circles, all of which could be made to shape on the loom. These simple shapes did not dramatically change with the introduction of the upright two-beam loom in early centuries CE, although the desire for increasingly tapestry decorated garments may have been a result of this change in technology (Fig. 2). Roman clothing was also constructed with very little sewing – tunics might be sewn up the sides – and was worn by being draped and wrapped around the body. Close fitting or cut-to-shape clothing was deemed very un-Roman by Latin authors who marked their own identity by wearing the wrapped toga. The apparently simple construction of Roman clothing may also be used to argue against any sense of fashion, but it was the body beneath it and the way it was worn that created a sense of style. And despite the fact that clothing might appear unisex on the loom, the Romans felt very strongly that men and women should appear differently and that certain clothes and textiles were suitable only for one sex.



Figure 2 Beam loom, Forum of Nerva.

Gender difference was carefully expressed in the visual culture of the Roman world, and the statues and wall paintings of antiquity provide a catalogue of clothing types. Visual evidence is by far the most influential source for ideas of the Ro-

man wardrobe but we need to remember that images were often produced to fit iconographic programmes or to represent ideals rather than realities (Larsson Lovén 2014, 2017). Over several centuries elite men and women tended to be represented in a relatively limited range of styles. Men were represented in toga or in military garb depending on the context, while female statuary tended to conform to idealised notions of modest womanly behaviour by being produced in a constricted repertoire known as the pudicitia (modesty) pose or Small and Large Herculaneum women types (Trimble 2011, Fejfer 2008).

With written evidence we are on a far more secure ground in that the context and genre of a source can often give strong clues as to the nature of both its content and its audience. Papyrus letters, accounts, dowry and pawnbrokers lists from Roman Egypt reveal insights into textile production and the intrinsic worth of clothing as part of household wealth. The extract from the letter below from a customer to two women, perhaps members of his family, illustrates some of the economics behind textile production but also the choices necessary:

Even without writing to you, I imagine you have begun to think about my clothes now that my father's are finished (?), since you know my wishes and that you are making them for a person of distinction? And so I am writing to you in order that when you are working on them you make the thread for the weft very much finer, because I have discovered a thread for the warp at 8 drachma the stathimon [ancient weight] and it is very fine... When you are engaged on spinning them, let me know and I will do what is necessary...P.Mert.III 114 (end of 2nd century CE; cited and adapted from Gällnö 2013: 166).

Other types of written evidence, such as the high literature that form the argument for the rest of this paper were written by a small group of upper class men, primarily for an audience of their own class and those who shared their cultural background and education. They express a shared view of their own culture and perpetuate this view across many centuries and arguably into the modern world. This writing reflects the world that elite men lived in and their views on how the world should work. They reflect the gendered and patriarchal masculine world that dominated in antiquity and in this literature women tend to be highly stereotyped.

The consistency of the visual images, the nature of the written images, the scarcity of actual remains and, more significantly, the apparent sameness of the Roman wardrobe over several centuries have led many scholars to think that it is not possi-

ble to talk about fashion in antiquity in any meaningful way. Today fashion, in its many forms, is in the eye of the beholder. We live in a world – in the west at least - where all types of dress and appearance are acceptable. In modern terms fashion has as much to do with life-style choices and expression of individuality as it does with media representation and haute couture. Early versions of fashion theory were responses to industrialisation and its impact on economics and consumption (e.g. Theodore Veblen, George Simmel), now they address globalisation, cultural and social change as well as identity, ethnicity and consumerism. On the surface these theories appear not to be relevant to the much slower pace of production in antiquity but this does not mean they should be disregarded, on the contrary, they are very useful ‘to think with’. Moreover, in fashion discourse today we still find some of the tropes used in Roman moralising discourse.

The rest of this paper offers two brief case studies where I would argue fashion plays a key part in self representation of two groups of individuals – Roman emperors and Roman women (Fig. 3).



Figure 3 Augustus and family in togas on the Ara Pacis c.13 BCE.

The visual representation of Roman emperors conforms to the iconographic traditions of their time. They are almost invariably portrayed in the iconic toga – a garment the Romans themselves thought defined their place in the world: they were the gens togata born to rule the world (Virgil, Aeneid 1.282) – or they wore military uniform. More extravagant emperors might show off their divine associations with attributes of certain deities and often, after death, emperors would be depicted naked or semi-naked, demonstrating their own new

found divinity. Across the empire, togate statues replicated the ideals of power, authority, citizenship and masculinity to an audience for most of whom would never set eyes the emperor would ever be a distant figure. Visual images showed the politically and acceptable face of power in an iconography that also expressed conformity with the visual expectations of the wider population of the empire.

Latin authors were very adept at using clothing to describe character and with emperors they had a field day. Criticising the way an emperor dressed became a way of criticising his ability to rule. In imperial literature the literary trope that ‘good’ emperors would dress appropriately was set very early in texts. Augustus, the first emperor, is known for his moral legislation which attempted, among other matters to enforce a dress code for the senatorial elite who were to wear their togas when in the forum, and in the theatre. He is also remembered for being dressed in home-spun clothing himself and always to keep a toga at hand in case anyone wished to see him (Suetonius, Aug. 71). This modest and less than showy behaviour contrasts him with his ancestor and predecessor, Julius Caesar. Caesar’s arrogant character was the subtext to the description of his physical appearance recorded by Suetonius:

He was somewhat fastidious in the care of his person, being not only carefully trimmed and shaved, but even having superfluous hair plucked out... While his baldness was a disfigurement which troubled him greatly, since he found that it was often the subject of the gibes of his detractors. Because of it he used to comb forward his scanty locks from the crown of his head, and of all the honours voted him by the senate and people there was none which he received or made use of more gladly than the privilege of wearing a laurel wreath at all times. They say too that he was fantastic in his dress; that he wore a senator’s tunic with fringed sleeves reaching to the wrist and always had a belt over it, though rather a loose one; and this they say, was the occasion of Sulla’s mot, when he often warned the nobles to keep an eye on the ill girt boy (Suetonius, Julius Caesar 45).

Julius Caesar not only spent too much time caring about his appearance but also wore long sleeves, both attributes which smacked of effeminacy in the Roman mind. This early appearance of the comb-over might also remind us that ridiculing an individual’s hair style is alive and well in today’s political satire.

The literary practice of describing the inability of an emperor to rule properly in the eyes of senatorial writers continued through the centuries. There are many examples of emperors, known to posterity as politically disastrous who were, in the eyes of their contemporaries, also wardrobe disasters. Caligula (ruled 37-41 CE) for instance, wore clothing that was described as ‘not of his country or of his fellow citizens, not always even of his sex’ and ‘he often appeared in public in a decorated cloak covered with precious stones... sometimes in silk, and sometimes in a woman’s robe’ (Suetonius, Gaius 52). He was also ridiculed for tripping over the trailing edge of his toga as he left the theatre in a temper – even when he could dress correctly to could not wear the garment with dignity. Nero, likewise, could not behave with sartorial correctness: ‘He often appeared in public in an unbelted synthesis and slippers, with a handkerchief around his neck’ (Suetonius, Nero 51). Nero’s outfit was acceptable in private but not in public. As we progress through time this rhetorical use of dress becomes ever more extravagant. By the mid-third century CE, emperors were changing on average every three years but still their wardrobe remained of interest to senatorial historians, often alternating badly dressed emperors with more sartorially controlled ones (Harlow 2005). Often these emperors are also young men, so a criticism of youthful rulers may also play as part of the sub-text.

My argument would be that these emperors, at the top of the social and political hierarchy, with the power to exploit all the resources of the empire were deliberately pushing boundaries in attempting to differentiate themselves from the mass of senatorial courtiers. They could afford to dress in the best textiles and chose to do so. The commentators, on the other hand, were expecting the emperor to be *primus inter pares* (first among equals) – with themselves as equals and they possessed an accepted uniform of citizenship, authority and masculinity in the toga. They did not approve of looking different.

To support this argument of equating difference with fashion I want to briefly mention a famous historical debate concerning women’s appearance. This is recorded (invented?) by the historian Livy in the late first century BCE, recalling an event of 195 BCE. The story goes that the women of Rome demonstrated in the streets against a law which prevented them from wearing gold and purple. The argument is expressed, of course, through the voices of competing males. Cato argues that when all women dress the same, rich and poor look alike but the women, he says complain: ‘why should they all look alike, why should upper class women not be conspicuous in the wearing of gold and purple, they wish to differentiate themselves from poorer women’. His argument is an economic

one: rich women will want to own what others have and poorer women will bankrupt their husbands by spending money trying to emulate richer women (perhaps Veblen and Simmel knew their classics?). The counter argument, given by another man, states that there is no good reason to deny women access to gold and purple. Moreover – and this is key to Roman attitudes to women and their place in society – ‘as women have no political offices, no triumphs, no priesthoods, no decorations or spoils of war, their badges of honour, their insignia are elegance of appearance, adornment and apparel. It is part of the natural order that women adorn themselves.’ (Livy 34.7). The tropes expressed by Livy – expense, adornment, jealousy, potential for deception – are found in discussion of women’s appearance and behaviour across antiquity but the debate also exposes the need for difference, for novelty and I would argue gives fashion a place in the consideration of Roman social relations (Fig. 4).



Figure 4 Women on the Ara Pacis.

Figure 4 Women on the Ara Pacis.

In conclusion, I would argue that the Roman empire with its vast array of clothing cultures undoubtedly created fashions, change was slow but it came in new textiles, new dyes, new ways of wearing traditional clothing but also in the ways in which those who had the resources and the social capital to afford (socially and economically) to look different.

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Mrs Tinne's Wardrobe: A Liverpool Lady's Clothes 1910-1940

Pauline Rushton

Mrs Tinne's wardrobe provides a snapshot of changing fashions, as worn by a middle-class woman in Liverpool between the two World Wars. This unique collection, numbering more than 700 items, once belonged to Emily Margaret Tinne (1887-1966) who married into a wealthy family of sugar merchants and ship-owners. Her collection is probably the largest wardrobe of clothes belonging to one person in the UK. This paper sets her collecting into its wider context of fashion and the shopping experience in 1920s and 1930s Liverpool. It also poses the question: was Emily Tinne an early sufferer of Compulsive Buying Disorder?

The National Museums Liverpool (NML) own the Tinne Collection, a unique collection of clothing that once belonged to Mrs Emily Margaret Tinne (1887-1966), a Liverpool doctor's wife. At more than 700 items it is probably the largest wardrobe of one person's clothes in a British museum. The collection was donated to NML by Emily's youngest daughter, Alexine Tinne (1923-2011), in three separate groups. In 1967 she donated 509 items; in 2001 she gave a further 162 items and in 2003 the final 33 pieces. Emily's wardrobe has been the subject of three exhibitions, in 2006, 2009 and 2012, and a publication (Rushton, 2012).

The collection represents all areas of clothing from the period between 1910 and the early 1940s, including daywear, eveningwear, outdoor wear, underwear, swimwear, shoes, hats, gloves, stockings, jewellery, accessories, dress patterns and lengths of fabric. Babywear and clothes belonging to Emily's six surviving children are also included, as are the working clothes of Emily's servants, many of them unworn.

The significance of the collection lies not just in its size but in the range of material represented within it. It includes both the special and the everyday, a mixture not frequently encountered in many other museum costume collections. It also provides us with a snapshot of the lifestyle of an upper middle-class Englishwoman living in a major city between the two World Wars. But while the collection reflects what many middle-class women wore – much of it not especially fashionable – it is atypical in terms of its size because no other middle-class woman is likely to have owned so many clothes.

(1) In fact, Emily Tinne probably owned in excess of 1,000

items since not all of the garments and accessories retained by her family were actually collected by NML. Some items were in too poor a condition to be accepted, while others were given away to individuals and organisations some time after Emily's death in 1966.

But perhaps most importantly, because there are multiples of some garments and many items have clearly never been worn and still retain their original sales tickets or packaging, this is arguably the wardrobe of someone who might be described as a shopaholic. This aspect of the collection will be explored in more detail below.

So who exactly was Emily Tinne? She was born Emily Margaret McCulloch in Calcutta in August 1887, the daughter of Scottish Presbyterian missionaries, the Reverend William McCulloch and his wife Helen Paterson. Emily spent her first few years in India before being taken home, at the age of four, to Edinburgh, the family's native city, to be raised with her siblings by her mother's unmarried sister, Emily Paterson. She did not see her parents again for many years, for they did not return from India until the 1920s.

Aged about 11, Emily was sent with her sister to be educated at Walthamstow Hall, a school for the children of missionaries, in Sevenoaks, Kent. It was a rather Spartan upbringing, with very few clothes or luxuries. After leaving school, Emily trained as a domestic science teacher in Edinburgh and taught at several schools, including one in Edinburgh and another in Shropshire. From her late teens onwards, she often visited and stayed with her mother's brother, William Brogdon Paterson, a surgeon who had moved to Liverpool from Edinburgh during the 1890s. She had a rather peripatetic upbringing, moving between the houses of her two relatives. Later in life she remembered that 'I had no home I could exactly count on, & I just had to put up with what came. It was pretty hard.'

(2)

Through her uncle William she met her husband, Philip Frederic Tinne (1874-1954), a GP. The two men moved in the same medical circles and lived near each other in Liverpool's southern suburb, Aigburth. Emily and Philip married in July 1910 when Emily was 23 and Philip was 36. As convention of the time dictated, Emily gave up her teaching career upon marriage and became a homemaker.

Philip was a member of one of Liverpool's wealthiest merchant families. The Tinnes were originally from The Hague

(1) For a more typically-sized wardrobe, representative of an upper middle-class woman, see Bill, K., 1993, Clothing expenditure by a woman in the early 1920s, *Costume*, 27, 57-60.

(2) Letter from Emily to her son Ernest, 29 July 1942.

and had made their fortune in sugar plantations in Demerara, Dutch Guiana, based on slave labour. Philip's great-grandfather, another Philip Frederic Tinne, had settled in Liverpool in 1813 and co-founded Sandbach, Tinne & Co to import sugar, molasses, coffee and hardwoods. The company also built a fleet of sailing ships that transported cargoes and, following the abolition of slavery, indentured labourers around the world.

As an indication of the scale of the family's wealth, when Philip's grandfather, John Abraham Tinne, died in 1884, he left £121,000 in his will, the equivalent of some £9m in today's money. When Philip's own father, John Ernest Tinne, died in 1925 he left £161,000, or around £6m in his will. Philip did not work in the family sugar business but he owned shares in it, as well as a range of other investments in stocks and shares, from both of which he was paid regular dividends. He also benefited financially from a number of family Trust funds. This range of income, from several different sources, allowed the Tinnes to enjoy a lifestyle well beyond that provided by the average GP's salary. It also allowed Emily to embark upon a life as a serial shopper.

Between 1911 and 1929, Emily had seven children, one of whom died in infancy. They had a very comfortable middle-class upbringing. While the two surviving boys were educated at Eton, the four girls went to private schools in Liverpool. Emily made many of their clothes herself, some of which survive in the collection.

In the early days of their marriage, the Tinnes had about six servants at any one time, including maids, nursemaids, a cook, a butler and two gardeners. Some of the servants' working clothes, including caps, aprons and overalls, many of them unworn, also survive in the collection.

Where and how did Emily acquire all her clothes? They fall into two distinct groups; bespoke and ready-made. Some of Emily's clothes were made to order for her by a local dress-maker, Mrs Taylor, who lived next door to Clayton Lodge, the Tinne family home. A selection of paper patterns used by Mrs Taylor still survive in the collection, dating from between 1915 and 1940, together with a number of unused lengths of dress fabric, mainly silk velvets. The paper patterns are useful for a number of reasons. They show Emily's taste in clothes, since some are marked with a cross to indicate which ones were made up. They also show how Emily increased in size, with seven successive pregnancies, from the equivalent of a modern size 10 to the equivalent of a size 16 or 18.

To acquire ready-made clothes, Emily shopped at Liverpool's high-class ladies' outfitters, in its many department stores and at individual shops across the city. There was a well-known but unacknowledged pecking order among the shops, as in most major cities of the period, and Emily shopped across the whole spectrum. Due to the fact that many of her clothes were unworn and often retained their sales labels it is possible to trace exactly where Emily shopped and, when shop labels are absent from the collection, where she probably did not.

One of Emily's favourite shops was Cripps, Sons & Co., in Liverpool's Bold Street. Founded in 1836 as a shawl importer and manufacturer, it was regarded as the premier ladies' outfitter. Located in a street that was known during the late 19th and early 20th centuries as the 'Bond Street of the North', Cripps' was patronised by the city's 'carriage trade', the wives and daughters of the city's merchant elite. It employed the 'vendeuse' system in which sample garments were brought out for the customer's examination and approval before they were measured up for their own bespoke versions.

By contrast, the Bon Marché department store, founded in 1879 by Welshman David Lewis to cater for customers of all social classes, was also one of Emily's regular shopping destinations. She also shopped in David Lewis's other department store, founded in 1856 and named after himself, initially to sell boys' suits and aimed primarily at working class customers.

Independent stores, often known as Madam shops, also appealed to Emily. Liverpool's best-known example of this type of business model, Madam Val Smith, located in Church Street, was originally founded as a millinery business in 1893. It gradually branched out into other areas such as accessories, underwear, blouses and skirts.

Emily's taste in daywear was typically muted – she liked soft shades of blue, grey, green, brown and red, and subtly-coloured floral prints. If she wasn't especially fashionable she knew what suited her and wore clothes that were appropriate for her age and social status. Her dress styles and shapes can be seen to change over time, from the slim Edwardian designs of her early marriage, through the drop-waisted styles of the 1920s, to the more tailored and fitted outfits of the 1930s.

For evening wear, Emily favoured darker tones, especially black, with occasional flashes of colour. This may be because such dark shades can be very slimming, especially after seven pregnancies. Her evening wear includes a number of

'fantasy' dresses from the mid-1930s, bias-cut, of satin-backed crepe with applied sequins, beads or diamanté. They appear more suited to a Hollywood diva rather than a provincial doctor's wife and one can only speculate about why she bought them.

Emily had many examples of outdoor garments, including long capes, shoulder capes, shawls and stoles of every description but this part of the collection is dominated by coats. The vast majority of Emily's coats are either trimmed with or made entirely of fur of some description. Many of the skins found most commonly in the 1920s and 1930s are represented, ranging in size from moles up to antelopes and including rabbit, squirrel, chinchilla, sable, mink, fox, beaver, seal, nutria (coypu) and Persian lamb. Emily probably owned at least 20 fur coats as there are more than a dozen in the collection and it was not possible to collect every fur she possessed due to the poor condition of some items.

The collection includes several hundred accessories. Rather disappointingly, Emily's surviving shoes are quite mundane. They are of excellent quality, but there are no glamorous evening shoes of gold or silver kid leather or metallic brocade, as one might expect her to have owned to complement her evening wear. But if decorative evening shoes are lacking, then perhaps more exciting, due to their relative rarity, are the surviving pairs of everyday shoes that Emily probably wore to go about her shopping in. These were usually discarded and do not often make their way into museum collections.

Emily was much more interested in hats than shoes. There are 105 hats in the collection but she originally had many more, perhaps 150, including such rarities as a sealskin motor-ing bonnet with long silk chiffon veil. Emily's hats reflect changing millinery styles over the years, ranging from the feather-trimmed glossy black silks and velours of the period between 1910 and 1920, through natural straws and fitted cloche hats of the later 1920s to the smaller, neater shiny straws of the 1930s.

Her other accessories are many and varied and include numerous examples of gloves, stockings, jabots, hair ornaments, false hair pieces, hatpins and costume jewellery.

Where was such an enormous number of garments stored? Initially, Emily's clothes were kept in the wardrobe in her bedroom. Subsequently they were stored in her en suite bathroom, and probably in what Philip refers to in his letters, in

triguingly, as 'Mummie's secret room', (3) which she kept locked, next to her bedroom.

She also stored clothes in the large cottage in the garden, known as Jasmine Villa, where the children had originally had their schoolroom, and where the servants lived in the 1920s and early 1930s, before they began to live-out.

In 1939, at the outbreak of war, Emily packed virtually everything she owned into more than 60 tea chests and stored them in the cellar of Clayton Lodge, where they remained untouched until just after her death in 1966. When Alexine began to downsize, with a view to moving to a smaller house, she re-discovered them and offered the collection to the museum. It was the War, and, from 1941 onwards the introduction of clothes rationing, that finally brought an end to Emily's incredible shopping expeditions. There is some documentary evidence that she started again just after the War, on an occasional rather than systematic basis, acquiring clothes and fabric on the black market, although this did not continue.

What then was Emily's motivation for buying so many clothes? Was she a shopaholic? Definitions of the word vary, and not all of them include the element of compulsion that is associated with the phenomenon.

The Cambridge English Dictionary simply defines a shopaholic as 'a person who enjoys shopping very much and does it a lot: a person who enjoys shopping very much and does it a lot: a person who enjoys shopping very much and does it a lot'.

The Collins English Dictionary goes further, describing them as 'someone who greatly enjoys going shopping and buying things, or who cannot stop themselves doing this'.

The Oxford English Dictionary is more explicit, describing them as 'a compulsive shopper'.

But the word 'shopaholic', first used in the 1980s, is quite flip-pant and it is possible that Emily was suffering from a clinically-recognized condition, Compulsive Buying Disorder or CBD. Today, clinical psychologists acknowledge the condition and categorize it in a number of different ways. Some see it as an aspect of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), others view it as an Impulse-Control Disorder (ICD) (Black et al, 2010, 183).

The diagnostic criteria for CBD, as posited by McElroy et al in 1994, are generally accepted. Symptoms include an over-

(3) Letter from Philip to his daughter Alexine, 19 January 1940.

riding preoccupation with the idea of shopping, and the obsessive buying of items, often resulting in distress, debt and the breakdown of personal relationships. At the moment of purchase, the sufferer achieves a momentary 'high', as in other addictions, followed by feelings of guilt, shame and depression immediately afterwards. Secrecy about the behavior, and repetition of that behavior in order to experience the 'high' again, are also common (Black, 2007, 15-16).

In the case of clothes-related CBD, sufferers typically buy multiples of items, and secrete them away, unopened and with price tags still attached (Black, 2007, 16). The intention to acquire, rather than wear, the garments is the primary motivator.

The causes of CBD are believed to lie in the sufferer's early life experience. Feelings of detachment, low self-esteem and a poor sense of identity are common in those affected (Lejoyeux et al, 2011, 1). The condition develops in some people in response to these factors, which themselves may be the product of dysfunctional early relationships. CBD-related behavior momentarily produces feelings of well-being and self-validation before pitching the sufferer back into the same negative cycle.

Does Emily Tinne fit this description? It can be seen how she bought clothes in excessive numbers, in multiples of the same styles, how garments were never worn and retained their sales tags, and even how they were secreted – in 'Mummie's secret room' in Philip's description, in the cottage in the garden and finally in the cellar. It is worth adding here that she stockpiled other materials in the cellars at Clayton Lodge, including stationery, bars of soap and china tea sets. In addition, she had, by her own admission, a disjointed, rootless upbringing, separated at an early age from her parents and raised by relatives who loved her but were often absent from her life for long periods.

All these factors and behaviors, it could be argued, point to Emily possibly having had Compulsive Buying Disorder, at least to some degree.

But what evidence is there for what Emily herself thought about her behavior? The extraordinary Tinne family archive of more than 1,300 letters in nine bound volumes, covering the years between 1923 and 1951, is revealing. The majority of the letters were written by both Philip and Emily to their eldest son, Ernest, beginning when he went away to prep school in Shrewsbury in 1923. They provide a wonderfully detailed insight into the lifestyles of the entire Tinne family during this

period. But what is not explicitly included in the correspondence is any significant reference to the excessive nature of Emily's shopping habits. Perhaps her behavior was so well-established and indeed normalized within the family as to be considered unworthy of comment.

There is however, one exception, in the form of a letter from Emily to Ernest, written just before he was about to marry his fiancé, Bay. Looking back on her earlier life, Emily recalled,

'I bought a lot of very useful things when I had the spending fever on. The girls have had the benefit now because they have not had to spend all their [clothing] coupons on materials... You need not tell Bay about my extravagance. It was greatly a matter of health I think. Many women go a bit queer in the head for a year or two and recover. I have recovered pretty well I think. Anyway, much of what I bought has come in useful and I always bought bargains and now they are doubly so. The price of things just now is colossal and I have not spent a penny on clothes or household things for years.' (4)

Emily appears to be self-diagnosing, at least in contemporary terms, with what might now be described as a mental-health issue. She feels that she has recovered from it, while at the same time she justifies her resulting behavior on the grounds of economy. She displays a certain level of self-awareness and understanding of her earlier actions and their causes, although her spending continued for several decades, not 'a year or two', as implied in her letter.

For most people who experience it, the outcomes of CBD are only negative. Spiralling debt and broken relationships are generally the consequences. The treatments for it may involve a mixture of medication, to deal with any underlying depression, and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to tackle the feelings of compulsion (Black, 2007, 18).

If she was suffering from CBD, Emily's case was different in terms of the outcomes. Debt, and the distress it causes, was not an issue thanks to the Tinne family fortune, which was able to absorb the consequences of her addictive buying. Her relationships, especially with her husband, appear to have been unaffected, probably because he was remarkably tolerant as well as solvent.

Similarly, rather than the modern remedies of medication or CBT, the outbreak of war in 1939 and the resulting rationing of

(4) Letter from Emily to her son Ernest, 29 August 1944.

clothes and fabrics were sufficient to 'cure' Emily of her addiction, or at least to force her to suppress it. After the war, except in a couple of instances, she appears to have completely lost the urge to shop for clothes. The enforced break in her habit seems to have been instrumental in bringing about this change. The power of external forces to bring about such a halt to CBD has been acknowledged (Black, 2010, 18).

Emily's situation warrants further research, but no matter what reasons or motivations she might have had for buying clothes in such numbers and over such a long period of time, the unintended result is a wonderfully varied and unique collection.

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COSTUME AS CHARACTER

Costume in Literature: What do Television Adaptations of Modern Literature 'write' on the Body Via the Clothing Used as Costume?

Liza Betts, University of the Arts

Abstract

This presentation/paper explores visible representations of the modern working class via television adaptations of modern literature. The focus here is how costume often communicates socially sanctioned class positions despite the possible intentions of the author.

The presentation/paper will foreground industry practices concerning the use of ordinary clothing as costume; discussing the compromises inherent in the practice. It will touch upon the complex relationship between notions of the 'ordinary' and the working class. It analyses the use of 'ordinary' items of clothing re contextualised as 'costume' in television drama using the work of Henri Lefebvre (1969, 2005). Particular aspects of Lefebvre's work that are relevant to screen clothing in this context and its subsequent representation of the working class are; firstly the idea of paradox and tension, next the notion of information redundancy and lastly Lefebvre's idea's around 'contestation'. This presentation/paper is a development of work that explores how these ideas can be applied directly to the articulation of the working class via small screen costume.

The broader aims are; to examine what if any influence costumed representations of the working class have upon existing notions of class identities and to consider what may or may not be the underlying political, cultural or social ideologies underpinning the representations discussed.

This project is informed by a research degree currently being undertaken at the University of the Arts, the outcome of which will add to the newly emerging literature around television costume (Warner, 2013). The research considers and integrates both theory and creative practice and positions the subject of costumed screen representations of the working class firmly within the field of cultural politics.

Keywords

Costume, Representation, Class, Television, Contestation, Paper

This paper or presentation will discuss the costuming of a populist crime novel which was adapted for television viewing. The novel is by prolific and successful author Martina Cole and the particular work we are looking at is 'The Take' which was published in 2005 and adapted for Sky TV in 2009. The story centres on the criminal exploits and development of the Jackson family and is based in East London. What makes this work particularly interesting in this context, is the understanding that Martina Cole 'Tells it like it is'. I think the screen adaptation does the same thing – although perhaps not in the way the publicists intended with the tag line.

My research centres on the use of 'ordinary' clothing which is formatted into a screen costume then naturalised as clothing again (Baert, 1994). These items are more often than not bought or hired and the purpose of them is to help create a visual identity for a screen character. In order to do that and for the result to be 'accepted' as a form of 'realism' by the eventual viewers the suggested ethos is that the designer would need information about a characters 'identity' in order to reflect that identity via the clothes worn on screen.

What I'm interested in looking at is the wider ideological structures that might actually govern this ethos and how these are made visible via the clothing choices and the representations they result in.

The modern working class is inextricably linked to notions of the ordinary (Bell, Hollows & Stewart, 2005) and both are linked to Bourdieu's idea of a 'negative essence' (Bourdieu, 2003). The idea of a negative essence is relevant here via two aspects of how social class is understood and also how the idea of identity is often conceptualised. The first aspect of class where a 'negative essence' is present is in modern perceptions of class identity. Particularly how the modern working class (often relabelled as the underclass) are seen as lacking an appropriate or acceptable identity or the means with which to obtain one (Haylett, 2000, Reay, 2005, Skeggs, 2005). The access to such acceptable identities is managed through judgements of taste and behaviour. Those that are unable to access, articulate or understand the boundaries of acceptable taste and behaviour will display a lack of taste (Lawler, 2005) or where some level of understanding does exist, the negative feeling of shame (Sayer, 2005). The second aspect of social class to which this idea of a negative essence is relevant is class as a collective gathering or movement and the notion of class ambivalence (Payne & Grew, 2005 Reay, 2005 Skeggs, 2005). This can also be understood as the lack of a contemporary collective class identity or consciousness. Finally, as

Stephanie Lawler has written, identity is often only considered when there is a lack evident, an identity crisis for example. As a result this sense of a lack is measured against what is considered normative or ordinary rendering both undertheorized (Lawler, 2014). For example, extreme examples of supposed class identities are represented as the expense of those considered more normative. In relation to the working class, documentaries such as 'Benefits Street' (2014-Present, dir's Turner, Reid) or drama's such as 'Shameless' (2004-13, Created by Paul Abbott) are examples.

The representation of clothing worn by the working class on the small screen is where to paraphrase Marcuse; the pleasure of clothing choice is judged according to the structure of power and the judgement of taste applied accordingly (Marcuse, 1964). Within the everyday, style, choice and taste are consciously negotiated and managed for both men and women. The positions they make their choices from may not be of their choosing, but there are choices made according to an idea of taste and a notion of style; not necessarily confined to or defined by, a class position or financial considerations.

So what are the acceptable frontiers of class specific dressing? We know that these frontiers do exist; they rely on sufficiently consistent meanings that we all have access to and manifest themselves via stereotypes. As Tseelon commented in 2001, we can only talk about what we know and what we know and what we see on TV are two very different things. When we view something we have no actual experience of, organised criminality for example, we are inclined to rely too heavily on the representation presented to us. The use of incongruous stereotyped representations of the 'ordinary' as sameness, is still a stereotype and a powerful one that has political, cultural and social implications. The differences that exist within the ordinary have been managed in a negative way, especially via television representations. Equally the preference for replacing a nuanced idea of the ordinary with the extra ordinary is equally dangerous. The clothing these groups of people are seen to wear reinforce structures of judgement via the expression of taste – or a lack of taste. Here Freddie Jackson's wardrobe is an example. There is little detail in the novel, what appears on screen however seems to be a conflation of stereotyped low level criminals, the use of fabrics, prints and accessories articulating an accepted notion of 'poor taste'.

There seems to be a dichotomy that exists whereby on the one hand is the myth that is 'commonality'; the everyday's inherent diversity has been obscured in favour of a homoge-

nised whole. Within the media or television representation more specifically, it has become too easy to misrepresent or characterise the ordinary as something banal and bland. On the other hand class on TV is often abstracted and the extra ordinary examples presented as ordinary; the working class here are seen as exotic low life much the same as the slum fiction writers viewed the people they wrote about at the turn of the last century.

Michael Carter states in 'Stuff and Nonsense' 2012 that; when dress is used as communication there is always surplus left over from the message. Whilst David Cannadine writing on class stated that; 'the relationship between perception and structure is where class can be properly understood' (1998 P23). Or rather what's omitted rather than what's included is where meaning occurs – the spaces in between or the surplus left over from the message. Here the gaps or spaces are omissions of any kind of sartorial diversity or understanding of conventions of 'taste'.

Henri Lefebvre's 'The Explosion: Marxism and the French Upheaval' (1969) and 'The Practice of Everyday Life' (2005), first published in the early 1980's provide an exploration of the everyday and between them posit several ideas that can be applied directly to the articulation of the ordinary or class identity via screen costume. In particular; the idea of paradox and tension, the notion of information redundancy and the idea of individual moments of contestation.

Lefebvre's (2005) overarching hypothesis of the everyday explores the notion of manipulation versus notions of choice that exist within the complex relationship between lived experience, daily life and reality. He describes the everyday as, a site where micro decisions and adaptations take place within the macro, thus resulting in a micro sociology or psychology (2005, p4). The point at which an individual decides on a course of action or resolves or adapts to a situation or for our purposes, makes a clothing choice is influenced by the social, local and global or macro landscape of which they are a part. However the decision, action, resolution or conclusion often happens within arguably the most local or private space of the mind; the micro. The result is then played out often in a very subtle way through bodily practice such as dress choice thus becoming part of the macro once more. The question here is; are or can these micro decisions be represented on the small screen?

Lefebvre's ordinary where such decisions take place is a site of ambiguity wherein a series of tensions and paradoxes are played out. Here the focus will be on the tensions between

fragmentation and homogeneity, difference versus distinction and the abstract versus the concrete. This is alongside his idea of social voids or spaces which provide an environment for acts of contestation (1969)

To begin with, for Lefebvre 'Distinction' has very clear attributes, it is an abstract principle of classification that is founded on the 'real' of what has been accomplished or historical experience. It is a means of separation; a way of stating 'I am not like you'. Distinctions are possible to detect via objects such as clothing and distinctions between the characters are visible through their dress. Distinction positions its subject within a linear hierarchy via a system of classification which assumes objectivity when in fact; 'classifications intervene and modify objects' (2005, p114). To analyse is to classify by using the signs by which people distinguish themselves from one another. This classification or ordering happens in relation to the one who is ordering;

'thus we end up situating social groups exclusively by strata and layers, in a hierarchy acknowledged and sanctioned by ideology, taking little, if any account of the major vertical and horizontal division with which the society under consideration is shot through' (2005, p115)

Difference on the other hand is about connections rather than separations. Lefebvre states that differences derive from particularities which are biological realities, a 'given' such as sex, ethnicity, size and so on. Differences emerge as a result of the continued struggles when particularities confront each other. Differences are therefore created within the social world, or the social voids that exist for some. Difference does not exist in isolation but as part of a 'whole'. Lefebvre discusses the idea of an uneven development across social experiences. This uneven development precipitated by the existing class structures and capitalist hierarchies create 'differences' between experiences and the formation of identities. These differences in turn create what he terms – lags, distortions, or disassociations (1969). Lawler also considers the connectivity of difference with regard to the formation of identity. Specifically she comments on the systems of inequality that exist and how they produce some identities that are more valued than others (Lawler, 2014).

For Lefebvre, a 'Void' is created as a result of the 'lags' he discusses. When lags that are latent become visible within these voids, contestation takes place as a reaction. The void is created by ideological and political power and is filled with contestations. Contestation is born from negation – it has a negative

origin – it begins with a lack (1969). This idea of a lack can be applied in many ways here – a lack of class 'taste' for example. When individuals articulate the subtle nuance of identity via clothing choice this is where contestation is evident in the language of clothes. This idea of contestation is linked to the notion of spontaneity. Moments of contestation are unplanned, they are instinctive, and they often defy explanation. Spontaneity requires conditions and has meaning – here the conditions that precipitate spontaneous contestation are created within the lag between reality and representation (1969). This can be evidenced within clothing choice in the context of the everyday but is absent from clothing representations.

Clothing here is very deliberately used to distinguish Freddie and Jimmy from each other and both from 'acceptable' society. We know from very early on that Freddie will not be successful because of the clothing he wears, it displays a sense of hedonism and a lack of perceived taste or control in choice. Strong checks and prints, increasing amounts of jewellery, the use of particular fabrics such as leather are examples of this. Freddie might be 'read' as articulating a moment of contestation but the fact that he achieves this via the articulation of a lack of taste is significant. Both men therefore display how many believe the working class dress; badly, as either criminals or aspirational consumers.

Moving on, Lefebvre states that; 'homogeneity no more abolishes fragmentation than aiming for coherence suppresses contradiction' (2005,p146). He continues that we are all subject to certain homogenizing factors such as law and order, space management, clock time etc. He goes further to describe the media as a homogenizing factor, referring to the form (not content) as reflecting a uniform attitude of viewers who sit passively before the flow of information. If as Lefebvre states, the world of commodity (of which items of clothing are surely a part) is a system of equivalents, then the search for consistency, cohesion in behaviour and conditioned reflexes must be a determining factor. That said, then stereotyped representations are surely an inevitability? Tension arises between homogeneity and fragmentation or costume and clothes as;

'...the tendency to appeal to knowledge bound up within the norms produced by the world of the commodity is reductive of lived experience' (2005,P85).

Or perhaps costume cannot possibly hope to reproduce the 'real' of lived experience therefore it must be a reductive construction.

Most of us understand the lives represented here via a conflation of screen representations which refer to normalised mas-

culine ideas and the long history of dangerous men and their perceived taste in clothing (Bruzzi, 1997). The irony here is that Freddie Jackson appeals to our established view of tasteless and ostentatious display of wealth and style, established through media representations. Whilst we still remain unable to divorce ourselves from our fascination with the perceived style of actual criminals. Yet another film about the Kray's, 'Legend' (Director: Brian Helgeland) which was released in 2015 and coincidentally also stars Tom Hardy precipitated another rash of exhibitions and discussion around the clothing the Kray twins wore. Both examples position the use of colour, print and check very specifically.

So for the final example of where Lefebvre's work is relevant here. The idea of 'the fictitious v the real or abstract v concrete' and the resulting ambiguity. This section will also briefly touch upon Lefebvre's notion of information redundancy.

The real here has changed for Lefebvre from the classical sense of something solid, being, independent of all subjectivity to a real that depends on a choice, a decision (2005p162). These choices and decisions move and transform the real into a 'production' whose function, form, structure and material have been predetermined. The produced object is then assigned a signification connected with a use, it then enters into multiple networks, passes through the market and whilst on the verge of being absorbed into language and signs crosses through into 'abstraction'. As Lefebvre states; 'The abstract is not the duplicate of something concrete, but the abstract and the concrete are inseparable, and their unity makes up the everyday' (2005,p163).

How does this apply to costume? If the 'real' is a complex production, its representation on screen is a re- presentation of this complex production. This must surely raise the question 'how real, can a costume hope to be?'

To explain further, we must briefly look at the concept of information redundancy (2005,p139). Here Lefebvre explains that if all signs (messages) are known and repeated then infinite redundancy is attained. If however information is maximal i.e. where signs (messages) are infinite and of equal probability (lived experience) then redundancy is minimal. This I feel is the root of the distinction between costume and 'reality'.

Jackie Jackson is an example of this. Throughout the book despite her deterioration into alcoholism her clothing remains a site of stylistic expression. The action at the opening of the book sets the scene of Freddie Jackson's homecoming party after a stretch in prison. His wife is described as looking ele-

gant whilst wearing a long black skirt with a blue top. The costume worn in this scene differs significantly. Later in the book at her sister's wedding Jackie is described as wearing a flattering powder blue Ozzie Clark trouser suit. In the adaption she wears a slinky peach silk sleeveless dress. Television production is a collaborative process and no doubt the script writer, director, costume designer and actress all had an input into what Jackie would be wearing in these scenes – changes like this occur all the time. But I think there is more going on here. I think Jackie is an example of Lefebvre's infinite redundancy – her absorbed signification has crossed through into abstraction. If the drama had unfolded with Jackie retaining a stylistic integrity the audiences would have felt her deterioration less believable – such is the power of representations.

To conclude. The language of clothing is used by television in order to articulate a class position. This is more often than not a fabrication based on an understanding from a middle class perspective. What these clothing representations actually do is make visible the structures at play behind the representation of class.

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Estragon's Boots

Paul Brownbill: Department of Dance and Drama, University of Wolverhampton

Abstract

In a play in which famously, "nothing happens – twice", (Vivian Mercier 1956) the 22 stage directions in Waiting for Godot requiring business with items of costume may seem excessive. But one ignores Beckett's stage directions at one's peril. These manipulations of costume items, mainly boots and hats, go beyond simple physical comedy and signifiers; they are vessels for Beckett's ideology.

This paper proposes that costume items in Samuel Beckett's, Waiting for Godot, serve to underpin the wider issues of the plays. Lucky can't think without his hat; Estragon, at the end of act 1, leaves his boots for someone with smaller feet to wear and be happy with - they are in effect a legacy, a metaphorical world once inhabited by an aging tramp, now left for another generation. If there is evidence of multiplicity in Beckett's work, complexities of time, intertextuality, and language itself, then the multiplicity of the function of costume must be considered alongside. Seldom do we reflect on costumes for their contents.

Characters can be seen shaking their boots and hats only to be disappointed at the lack of anything tangible this produces - so what do they, and through them, we, expect - like a magician, to be able to pull Godot out of a hat perhaps? Symbolic, emblematic and at times grotesquely carnivalesque, I propose that these allusions in action are mirrored in the costume.

*"We can easily miss how efficiently the metaphysical has been embedded in the seemingly pathetic".
(Brater: 2011)*

Key Words: Becket; Vessels; Costume; Containment

Empty Vessels

*"Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it's awful!"
(Estragon in WFG: p41)*

Van Gogh was rather fond of the imaginative possibilities of old boots, and he painted or drew them on a number of occa-

sions. We can, most of us, conjure up an image of a pair of Van Gogh's boots. I use this image to begin this article because I think what interests us as much as anything else in the pictures of Van Gogh's boots is the fact that they were his, and so are in essence *inhabited* with all those things that represent our understanding, knowledge and appreciation of the artist.

I suggest the same is true for Beckett's characters in *Waiting for Godot*.

In a play in which famously, "nothing happens – twice", (Vivian Mercier 1956 p5) the 22 stage directions in *Waiting for Godot* requiring business with items of costume alone may seem excessive. But attention to Beckett's stage directions for costume cannot be ignored nor taken at merely face value. To do so would not necessarily be misinterpretation, but rather missed interpretation.

These manipulations of costume items, significantly boots and hats, go beyond simple physical comedy and character signifiers; they are vessels for Beckett's ideology.

There is evidence of multiplicity in Beckett's work, complexities of time, intertextuality, language itself, then the multiplicity of the function of costume must be considered alongside these. Whilst the basic functions of costume are familiar, signifiers of period, status etc, and ones that we decode quite readily, seldom do we reflect on the costumes for their contents.

Human consciousness of course is all, but the consciousness by which people are aware of their individual existence is continually at risk from bodily failure or mental breakdown. When this breakdown is accentuated by an item or items of costume, the costume becomes a catalyst, an agent provocateur in identifying this breakdown and as such ceases to be something that is simply worn or indeed worn simply. Describing the actor Nicol Williamson's performance in the 1964 Royal Court revival, overseen by Beckett, Fletcher said that Williamson's agilely shambling, half run, half walk and his confident assertions were followed immediately by doubts and qualifications and brief but total collapses; in such moments he stood absolutely forlorn in broken bowler and ragged trousers (Fletcher: p42). If the hat is seen as a stopper or containing device, as shall be suggested later, and the trousers a mere flimsy layer between existence and vulnerability, then the broken bowler that permits escaping thought, and trousers that are always teetering on the brink of a fall, make the collapse of the character tangible, and real.

Boots and Hats

“There’s a man all over for you, blaming on his boots, the fault of his feet”. (Vladimir in WFG: p11)

Early reception to Beckett’s work was characterised by a sustained attention to nothing; observations that are drawn from the very opening line of the play in which Estragon, struggling to remove his boot, and failing, claims that there is nothing to be done. Nothing to be done in terms of getting the boot off? Nothing to be done in terms of what is there to do? If however the line is delivered to the boot, and not to Vladimir who stands and watches, then Estragon projects his spiritual suffering onto his boot and foot and allows his inner pain to remain concealed. If the boot is not removed, the pain and suffering that the boot contains, remains similarly concealed. Frequently seen as a comedic gesture, the struggle with the boot is one that leaves Estragon physically and mentally exhausted – we need to ask why so exhausted, when all he is doing is trying to remove an item of costume? As Brater says: “...boots, come in for special treatment” (Brater: 2011 p5).

As Estragon’s pain intensifies, he asks for help in removing This bloody boot he asks Vladimir if he himself hasn’t suffered from the same problem, again projecting his increasing inner pain onto the boot: “Taking off my boot. Did that never happen to you?” (WFG p10). Vladimir’s response is one of philosophical consideration, underpinning the idea that the boot is now becoming more than just an item of costume. Suffering he says is a daily condition, but, he uses Estragon’s boots for his generalisation “Boots must be taken off every day. I’m tired of telling you that”(WFG, p10).

When it finally happens, the removal of the boot symbolises a release from pain, some sort of purgatory action that temporarily relieves the wearer of spiritual pain like a confession temporarily releases the guilty from sin. The boot here therefore becomes the vessel for the thought that there is in life a daily pattern of pain and the release from it by some spiritual means ...here the boot is that removal. For Estragon, the plea to Vladimir that follows is for him to help me is more than the easing of the physical pain from a long day of waiting; the boot, to be separated from the body renders the line nothing to be done with a sense of loss rather than one of functionality.

When Estragon finally succeeds he searches in a puzzled way for foreign bodies which might be lodged inside but can find....nothing. While he is engrossed in this Vladimir removes his hat and feels around the inside also finding nothing. These two simple actions are repeated throughout the play and seem to echo the characters fruitless search for Godot.

As well as being a well known music hall gag, it is as if hats and boots are vessels for something that cannot quite be fathomed. Far from being comedy props, the emptiness of the costume reflects the emptiness of the environment and the emptiness of the existence of Vladimir and Estragon. The fruitless search and the void that is waiting to be filled by Godot is amplified by this costume emptiness; an emptiness that is not filled by the simple wearing of the item. At one point both men exclaim histrionically “Hurts? He wants to know if it hurts!” (Estragon and later Vladimir: WFG p10). What hurts? the pain that is contained by boot and hat or the fact that there is nothing of substance in either of these containers.

In his own notebook Beckett indicates that the two actions of searching in boot and hat should echo one another. On a page entitled *Inspection hat/boot* he noted 1 boot 3 hats, indicating where Estragon’s painful examination of his boot explores a theme. Vladimir’s repeated search of the hat builds on this. Beckett developed the idea in precise notation.

1 Zuck (Shrug). Look. Shake

2 “ + Look. Finger. Tap. Shake. Look

3. “ ++ Look. Finger. Blow. Tap. Shake. Look

(Theatrical Notebook p329)

Perhaps then these items are containers of memories, physically imprinted maybe in the inners of the boot and hats. But the desperate unreliability of memory is emphasised in act two when Estragon, less certain and less interested in the past than Vladimir, can’t recognise his boot in the middle of the stage.

Xerxes Mehta describes the central performance dilemma of these play thus.... “the bedrock purpose of Beckett’s final body of work is to expose the nakedness and terror of human existence by exposing naked and terrified human beings on stage” (In Bradby: p161).

The state of nothingness, and indeed nakedness can be clearly seen in this example:



The interesting thing in this posed photo is not just the lack of costume, which of course, could be argued as being a costume in itself: but if a naked Vladimir and Estragon are an embodiment of the nothingness of the play, or a literal expose of the nakedness of human frailty then is it not significant that this representation of nothingness still retains the boots and hats. At its simplest level, the minimal costuming may help the audience/viewer to retain an identification of Vladimir and Estragon. However, in terms of costume as containers, the base and lid of the boots and hats illustrate a notion of containment.

A contrasting view appears in the Shiller theatre production, 1975 directed by Beckett himself. John Fletcher in his book *Samuel Beckett* suggests that the major symbolic innovation was that of the costuming of Vladimir and Estragon. They each wore half of the other's suit; in the production designed by Matias Henrioud – Matias, the costume design according to Bradby “ made a strong visual statement about the interde-

pendence of the two pairs of characters” (Bradby in Gontarski: p339). Especially clear in the characters of Vladimir and Estragon. Vladimir is going to wear striped trousers which fit him with a black jacket which is too small for him; the jacket originally belonged to Estragon. Estragon on the other hand wears black trousers which fit him with a striped jacket which is too big for him. It originally belonged to Vladimir. In the second act this arrangement was reversed.

Beckett and Matias developed a leitmotif of complementary costumes for Pozzo and Lucky. Pozzo's trousers and Lucky's waistcoat made from the same checked material while Pozzo's jacket was dark grey matching Lucky's trousers. In this way costume is seen as stressing the interdependency of Pozzo and Lucky rather than emphasising Pozzo's superiority as is common in more recent productions. This expression of status through costume is of course normal and one of the prime functions but in demonstrating interdependency, Beckett was using these costumes as a vessel for that very theme of interdependence, the garments were a metaphor for the state whereby one character cannot live with the other but similarly cannot live without him; a state of affairs that was later to be exploited in the characters of Nag and Nell in *Endgame* and was indicative of Beckett's own relationship with his wife Nag and Nell are constrained by dustbins, arguably wearing their containers which, shell-like were their homes – as none of the characters in *Godot* have identifiable residences it could be argued that their costumes are also their homes – they have what they stand up in, or fall down in.

The three hats for two heads routine used by the Marx Brothers in *Duck Soup* and on numerous occasions in Laurel and Hardy films, features as a moment of light relief. All four wear bowler hats in act 1 but the later significance of the hat in *Godot* goes way beyond the comedy prop and the character signifier. The hat swapping routine is a complex one that leaves Vladimir in possession of Lucky's source of eloquence. “He can't think without his hat” (Pozzo: WFG page 41). In Lucky's ‘think’ scene where he pours out a non-stop, rapid fire monologue, he so agitates the other three that they set about him and he is only silenced by the removal of his hat – what does this say about that costume?

Lucky can't think without his hat – this is on one level comic, because we have just seen the other three cannot think with their hats, but Lucky's thinking is abruptly terminated by the removal of his hat and Such is the prestige of Lucky's hat that Vladimir adopts it as his own and as a result is able to think clearly and becomes articulate. Vladimir's eloquence – is owed no doubt to Lucky's hat.

The hat is also used to convey theatrical time scales – When Vladimir, after only a few minutes in real time, says of Luck’s discarded hat *I’ve been here an hour an never saw it* – Beckett is using an old dramaturgical trick for suggesting that more time has elapsed than actually has.

Trousers

Vladimir: Pull on your trousers.

Estragon: You want me to pull off my trousers?
(WFG page 94)

At the end of the play which throughout balances existential anguish against bowler hatted comedy the two men have just botched an attempt at suicide: their hanging rope has snapped; the rope, of course, also serves as the belt holding up Estragon’s trousers, again, it is then a piece of costume, with a significance beyond the comedic. At a time when all hope even of death has evaporated, at that precise point the victim’s trousers fall around his ankles.

Pull on your trousers says Vladimir: in what MAY be described as fine music hall style, Estragon responds, but if we see the costume not as the vehicle for comedy but as that container for hope and all that is possible, in death or life; the very be-all, end-all and holdall: and that at this point rather than Estragon letting them down, they have let him down, then Estragon’s response seems not to be that funny when he says *You want me to pull off my trousers?*

Trousers fall about his ankles even at the desperate end of the play the clowning continues – or does it? There is a conflict between the circus fun of the dropping of Estragon’s trousers and the intense sadness at the end of the play. To be able to see the funny side of one’s predicaments is a way of coming to terms with them but, a greater significance in the reading of the costume, provokes a very different response. Whilst visually funny, the dropping of the trouser is according to David Bradby;

“A disaster that had been threatening to happen throughout the act – “ (Bradby: p120).

The trousers fall because the rope, the rope that was to be use to hang themselves with, lets reveal that awful truth that the container is not reliable and leaves a vulnerable and exposed body

There is of course the often asked question of who is Godot or what does Godot mean? To which Beckett replied in one of his letters to the American director Alan Schneider “If I knew I would have said so in the play”. He went on to say “The key to word in my plays is ‘perhaps’ (Beckett in Harmon: p486).

In attempting to answer who or what is Godot then, perhaps it is worth remembering that the play was originally written in French, *entendent Godot*, and perhaps it is worth pondering the fact that the French slang for boots is godillot.

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Character vs. Croquis:

The Fashion Figure Problem in Costume Design

Caitlin Quinn, The University of South Dakota

Abstract

In costume design, the rendering is the picture that is worth a thousand words to the director. The costume designer must render an artistic interpretation of a costume that represents both the character and the actor portraying the character. This differs from the purpose of fashion illustrations, which exaggerate proportions to “represent a statement of an ideal rather than an actual body shape” (Hopkins 2010). When working on a theatrical production, the director and designer must see how the costumes will fit the actor and the character the actor portrays. Therefore, rendering an “ideal” form instead of a realistic one does not give the director or designer accurate information, and can lead to a disconnect between rendering and realized costume. Many students new to costume design rely on tracing croquis, an outline of the human form, rather than drawing figures which match the actor’s proportions or reflect the character’s personality. This method makes, “beautiful, elegant images, but the costumes constructed from them for a real body unfortunately, look significantly different from the rendering” (Appleton and Lyons 2016). In this paper, I focus on how the use of the modern idealized fashion illustration style in costume rendering creates issues for the production team. I look at the allure of fashion illustrations, the harm it causes to the production vision and actor self-image, and how costume designers can address the problem in their renderings.

Keywords: Costume, Rendering, Design, Figure, Fashion

When an actor walks on stage, before saying a word, the costume reveals information about the character to the audience. Long before the actor fully brings the character to life, the costume designer creates a rendering (a sketch) used to communicate the designer’s vision of how the character, via the actor, will be visually presented to the audience. Like a business person pitching their product, the costume designer is selling their idea of how to transform the actor into a given character. Similarly, a fashion illustration represents a fashion designer selling their idea for a new garment. The difference is that the model drawn in a fashion illustration acts as a neutral hanger for the clothing, as will the eventual runway or catalogue

model. Whereas the actor is a dynamic inhabitant of clothing projecting a character to the audience. The idealized fashion figure is “a tall (...) slender, athletic young woman. She has a small bosom and broad shoulders, so clothes hang easily over her lithe silhouette (...) her face, hair and body have a natural look” (Tate and Edwards 1982). The figure is not representing a character with a distinct personality, but an aspirational body for the consumer. Actor’s do not always conform to the “ideal” body type, but rather an appropriate type for the character. “Actors come in all shapes and sizes. In fact, body type is often an important factor when it comes to casting decisions. Theatre, film and television need a wide variety of types of bodies, so vive la difference!” (Breese 2013). The perpetuation of the fashion illustration style in costume rendering may lead to miscommunication with directors as to what the final costume will really look like on the performer’s body. It may also affect the design of the costume if drawn to flatter a body type different from the actor, which would lead to discomfort for the performer. Whereas the costume rendering that successfully synthesizes actor and character is a true vision of the design for director, costumer, and actor.

One of the most common fashion illustration tropes to infiltrate costume rendering is the use of croquis, which are stock body outlines that the designer traces and draws clothing onto. Popular in fashion, croquis can be described as, “faceless, doll-like, almost androgynous fashion illustration figures [that] express the same effect in providing an instructional model for students” (Danielson 1989). Croquis are a convenient crutch for students learning how to draw, but the figures are often distorted, with elongated legs, tiny waists, and sexualized body positions. Unlike the character figures used in costume rendering which, “enhance and adorn the costume designs, and they communicate with the director, actor, other designers, and the production team” (Tan, 2010). The figures used in fashion illustration adhere to the fashion figure ideal. When using the human head as a unit of measurement, the fashion figure is at least 9 or 10 heads tall while that average human is around 7.5 heads tall. The elongated figures of the fashion sketch are also impossibly thin (woman) or fit (man), to mimic runway models (Hopkins, 2010). Many croquis templates that can be found readily online also represent the ideal fashion body – tall and thin. In a Google Image search for “Costume Design Croquis” (performed 02/13/2017) the first 25 images were all well over 8 heads tall and overwhelmingly thin. The croquis method makes “beautiful, elegant images, but the costumes constructed from them for a real body unfortunately, look significantly different from the rendering” (Appleton and Lyons: 40). If using the correct scale, croquis are a useful tool for beginning designers to get comfortable drawing the human form. However, there is the danger of becoming too depend-

ent upon them and not adjusting for the unique proportions of each actor. Fashion illustration style croquis are most ubiquitous and especially alluring to students learning how to draw because of how well clothing hangs off the tall, thin forms. Beginning in the 1980s, fashion croquis moved away from the standard 7.5 heads stature and students who were learning how to draw figures were introduced to the fashion croquis before the mastering the realistic human proportions. Croquis were “scaled to incorporate as many as 10 head lengths. (Fashion) students were no longer led into cautious progression to the joys of the more stylized, exaggerated, exotic interpretations. (...) the rites of passage in fashion illustration had seemingly become accelerated” (Danielson, 41). The lack of body diversity continues to accelerate in the fashion industry as the sketches reflect the uniform size of modern models. In 2016, only six plus-size models walked the runway during fashion week in New York, London, Paris, and Milan (Andrew 2016).

The main purpose of a costume rendering is visual communication of the design to the production team, which includes the director. A secondary purpose is to act as a working blueprint for the construction of the costume, and a tertiary purpose is to present the actor with an image of how their character will be dressed. A costume rendered using a fashion illustration style croquis may cause confusion for the first point of communication: the production team. The costume designer must strive to produce the costume presented to the director in the final renderings. “Final renderings are based in contract and must be honored by all parties; however, with mutual agreement, final designs are sometimes modified when the realization of such designs is directly affected by (...) an overall change in the approach to a particular character approved by the director” (Mertz 2017). In a costume rendering, the figure is integral to the design, as it represents both the actor and the character, with the costume acting as the visual bridge between those two realities. Onstage, the actor’s movement and voice transform them into the character, but as a drawn image on the page, those characteristics are not evident. The costume designer is challenged to present a complete character through clothing design and figure position. The more accurately the rendering reflects the actor’s body shape and the character’s attitude, the more clearly the production team can see the transformation from actor to character. In her book *Character Costume Figure Drawing*, Huaixiang Tan explains her rendering process:

“When I create costume designs, I try not only to illustrate the costumes, but also to portray a completed characterization. [...] People say that we should not judge a person by his or her appearance, but when an

actor appears on stage, his or her appearance becomes significant. The character’s body language reflects the soul and spirit of the character...” (2010, p. vii).

A costume that is rendered on a fashion croquis in a neutral position will not convey the correct proportions or character. In the fashion world, runway models have longer and thinner proportions than the average person, but when compared to the idealized figure in the fashion sketch the differences are striking (Merz, 2016). An anti-anorexia ad campaign by Star Models titled “You are not a sketch” highlighted this harmful practice by showing that “fashion sketches brought to life are no more than skin and bones. The scary-skinny models featured in the (...) ad campaign show what women would look like if their proportions matched those used in designers’ sketches” (Murray, 2013). Designers often are inspired by the fashion world for shows “where the characters are wealthy, urban, modern people. It is these [contemporary] shows where Vogue becomes a logical source of research” (Merz, 2017). The perpetuation of the fashion illustration in the costume world may lead to miscommunication with the production team as to what the final costume will look like on a body with non-elongated proportions. Whereas, the costume rendering that successfully synthesizes actor proportions and character style is a true vision of the design for the production team.

If the costume designer has rendered a design on a fashion figure and it has been approved by the director and production team, the design is then built for the actor. Here is where the miscommunication of body proportion laid out in the rendering affects the designer and the actor. When the costume is created, the actor’s true proportions are considered. This would mean significant deviations from the rendering if a 10-head size figure was used, since that is beyond standard human proportion (Sheppard 1992). Then, “costumes sketches are usually presented to the actors during the rehearsal process, and are also on display during the fittings. Many actors find the costume to be an intrinsic part of their characterization, and seeing the sketch is part of that process” (Mertz 2017). At the first fitting, changes to the design may need to be made if the costume does not flatter the actor’s body or enhance the character as it did the rendering. The more the rendering deviates from the actor’s true proportions, the more adjustments will need to be made. If the adjustments involve major re-designs, this is breaking the contract made with the production team when the designs were approved, which restarts the approval process. Sometimes, the director is unwilling to support a redesign. In her book *Costume: Performing Identities Through Dress*, Pravina Shukla described an experi-

ence costume designer Rafael Jaen had with idealized renderings and real actor bodies:

“Once he met the actor, he realized that she did not actually resemble the celebrity and that the costume he had sketched would be wholly wrong for her. But by this stage in the process the director of the play had become attached to Rafael’s original design. Rafael noticed that the actor herself was uncomfortable with being asked to wear such a revealing costume that (...) would flatter only someone with a toned body” (2015, p. 217).

It is also important that the actors see themselves as the character and not an idealized version of themselves wearing the character’s clothing. “Fittings can be disarming. [actor] Lewis Wheeler said that a fitting can be an uncomfortable experience precisely because the actor will be physically confronted with the costume designer’s version of his or her character” (Shukla 2013). An actor may be more comfortable and confident when first trying on their costume if they more closely resemble the rendering. A costume that is rendered on the ideal fashion figure that is 10 heads tall and slim will have a different look on the body when the garment is constructed for an actor that is 7 heads tall with less a fit build (Merz 2017). Seeing a sketch with idealized proportions sets up unrealistic expectations for the actor when they put on the realized costume. The effect of an idealized rendering on an actor is similar to garments seen on runway models in the fashion industry and then on real bodies in the fitting rooms of retailers: disappointment (Diedrichs and Lee, 2010). Not changing the body proportions for each figure saves time, but sacrifices an opportunity for the designer to sell the director a true vision for the character as portrayed by that specific actor. “The actors cast in a show (...) will hopefully be in good shape and know how to wear clothes, but they are still human beings, and, as noted, part of the goal of the costume sketch is to work out the proportions of clothing in relation to the body on which it will be seen” (Merz, 2017). Costume designer Rafael Jaen describes his attention to the body in the rendering part of the process: “I do as much as I can to get a sense of who is this person physically, because that is what I am working with. And it’s part of the design. You know the costume is not going to work in telling lies” (Shukla, 2015). A figure that does not similarly reflect the proportion of the actor or the attitude of the character will misrepresent how the final product will look. At which point the director may have their heart set on a lie.

Realistic costume rendering rather than fashion illustration gives the production team, designer, and actor, an accurate idea of the how the performer will visually transform into the

character rather than just a drawing of the clothing on an idealized croquis. The costume design process does not stop on the page. The rendering is transformed into fabric and onto flesh and blood when the actor take the stage. The costume will most closely adhere to the designer’s and director’s vision if the actor’s body is presented as part of the design and not simply a hanger for the costume.

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Flat-caps and Flat Vowels: Costuming Northerners in British Cinema

John Clinch, PhD candidate, Queen's University Belfast

Abstract

This paper will examine the relationship between costume and regional identity in cinematic representations of the North of England produced between the 1930s and the 1970s, exploring how film both reflected aspects of the region's dress sense and also perpetuated popular cultural stereotypes linking the North with particular items of clothing such as flat-caps and shawls.

*In British films of the thirties and forties such as *The Stars Look Down* (1939), *Love on the Dole* (1941) and *Hard Steel* (1942) the flat-cap was used to give a visual sense of collective identity to the Northern working-class, and also to denote individual male characters as working-class 'everymen.' In later films and television programmes the cap became more closely associated with older male characters, a cinematic shorthand which functioned to draw a generational dividing line between Northerners. As a traditional item of Northern female dress, the shawl also featured in a number of films produced during the same period, where its use was similarly associated with the working-class.*

Through analysis of imagery from several films, this paper will consider the ways in which costume was recurrently used as part of the construction of Northern identity in British cinema.

Keywords: Flat-cap, cloth cap, North, Northerner, shawl.

This paper explores the relationship between costume and regional identity in British cinema of the twentieth century, arguing that costuming choices were of fundamental importance to the construction and perpetuation of representational links between the North and the English working-class. This topic constitutes one strand of my doctoral research into representations of the North of England in British cinema produced between 1937 and 1958. My thesis argues that during this largely overlooked period 'Northern-ness' in British cinema was represented through extensive location-shooting, a recurring focus on urban-industrial topography and the use of specific Northern character types, in whose construction costuming selections played an integral part.

Cinematic depictions of the North from the 1930s onwards followed a long lineage of cultural representations – in the form of travelogues, stage plays and novels – which shaped the North and Northerners in terms of what P.J. Taylor (2001, p. 135) describes as England's 'internal Other', separated from London and the South-East of the country by its status as an industrial monolith with an overwhelmingly working-class population (Russell, 2004). During the course of my research, I have found that British films often use costume as a vital component in the representation of Northern working-class identity, with the flat-cap (or 'cloth cap') in particular making recurrent appearances. (See. Fig 1)



Figure 1 The classic flat-cap in *Love on the Dole* (1941).

Defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED Online, 2016) as 'a round cap with a low, flat crown, worn in the 16-17th century by London citizens', over time the flat-cap has become much more closely associated with working-class men in the North than in any other British region. Perhaps the most convincing explanation of the factors underlying this symbolic appropriation is offered by the historian Dave Russell (2004, p. 270), who argues that cultural associations of the cloth cap with the North in the latter-half of the twentieth century were part of a process through which the region had been 'claimed for and associated with a distinct version of the past'. In this process 'symbols which were once signifiers for the working-class nationally' became almost exclusively associated with the North, enabling easy stereotyping of the region 'throughout the culture and not just in the work of comedians and novelists' (Russell, 2004, p. 270).

Alongside depictions of Northerners produced in other visual media - such as the 'Andy Capp' cartoon character who ap-

peared in *The Daily Mirror* from 1957 – cinematic and televisual representations of Northerners have played a major part in this stereotyping process, repeatedly using the flat-cap as a key aspect of costume for Northern working-class characters (Russell, 2004, p. 270). Of particular interest here is the way in which the symbolic meaning of the flat-cap is seen to undergo a subtle change over time.



Figure 2 Protesting workers in *The Stars Look Down* (1939).

In Northern-set films of the thirties, forties and fifties, which depict both the struggles of the unemployed and the labour conditions of workers in industries such as cotton milling, mining and shipping, the flat-cap is used to create a visual sense of collective identity among members of the Northern working-class. This sense of collectivism is particularly apparent in *The Stars Look Down* (1939) and *Love on the Dole* (1941), two films which feature scenes showing large crowds of working-class men gathering to protest against the decisions of the ruling industrial elite. (See Fig. 2 & 3)

An early film of Carol Reed, who would later go on to direct such seminal texts of British cinema as *Odd Man Out* (1947) and *The Third Man* (1950), *The Stars Look Down* centres upon the efforts of North-Eastern school-teacher David Fenwick (Michael Redgrave) to prevent a mining disaster in his home-town of 'Sleescale.' Early scenes in the film depict striking miners making their way en-masse down a cobbled street lined with back-to-back terraced houses, and then gathering outside the pithead to debate whether or not to break their strike and return to work. (See Fig. 4, 5 & 6)



Figure 3 Unemployed men in *Love on the Dole* (1941).



Figures 4, 5 and 6 Strikers gather in *The Stars Look Down*.

Particularly interesting in the misé-en-scene of these shots is the sheer number of flat-caps covering the heads of the men, obscuring their individuality and subordinating it to the sense of a collective working-class cause, against a backdrop of such typically Northern milieus as the cobbled street and the pit-head.

Similarly, in the Salford-set adaptation of Walter Greenwood's bestselling novel, *Love on the Dole*, ranks of unemployed men are framed standing together and listening to firebrand political speeches at a protest march prior to a violent clash with police. (See Fig. 7)



Figure 7 A protest march in *Love on the Dole*.

Again the preponderance of flat-caps in this image testifies to their importance in terms of a visual invocation of the solidarity of the Northern working-class. As argued by Stuart Rawnsley (2001, p. 8), 'solidarity both at work and in the community' were key components in constructions of the Northern working-class, alongside the qualities of independence and dignity of labour.

The flat-cap is particularly noticeable in crowd scenes, yet its function is not limited to depictions of mass disaffection or of the workforce. Across various films of the thirties, forties and fifties the cloth cap features as a quintessential item of clothing for the working-class Northern everyman. (See. Fig. 8)



Figure 8 George Formby's 'Everyman' uncle wearing a flat-cap in *Turned Out Nice Again* (1941).

Throughout the George Formby vehicle *Turned Out Nice Again* (1941), the central character's uncle wears a cloth cap. Viewed together with his struggle to find work – an aspect of representation which would likely have resonated with Northern working-class audiences in 1941- the cap functions to emphasise the character's everyman credentials.

Similarly, in the 1954 comedy *The Gay Dog*, the central character Jim Gay, is seen wearing a flat-cap in several scenes. (See. Fig 9)



Figure 9 Wilfred Pickles wearing a flat-cap in *The Gay Dog* (1954).

This text represented Yorkshire-born Wilfred Pickles' first film role, but at the time of its release he was already a household name both in the North and the rest of the country thanks to his wartime news-reading for the BBC and the success of his radio quiz show, *Have a Go!* (Russell, p. 140). In *The Gay*

Dog, alongside the narrative characterisation of Jim as a miner with a passion for greyhound racing, the flat-cap works to provide visual affirmation of his social status as a member of the Northern working-class, while also evoking the earthy, everyman persona beloved of Pickles' radio audiences.

In films of the thirties, forties and fifties flat-caps are shown being worn by Northern working-class males of all ages. In later decades, however, there is a notable shift, and the cap starts to become associated more exclusively with older characters. In John Schlesinger's *A Kind of Loving* (1962), one of the British New Wave films produced between 1958 and

1963, there is the strong sense of a social and ideological gap between the main character's generation and that of his father. When Vic Browne arrives home from his office-job, he finds his father polishing a brass trumpet. Vic asks 'Where's me tea?', to which his father replies: 'White-collar workers don't get tea, you want to have a day's work done before you get tea' – one of a number of references which he makes during the film to the differences of life in the North of the 1960s to that of earlier decades, with particular reference to employment opportunities and the modernisation of Northern landscape. Toward the end of the film Vic goes to talk with his father about problems within his marriage. (See. Fig 10)



Figure 10 Vic's father in *A Kind of Loving* (1962).

The use of a flat-cap here appears a deliberate attempt to align the older man's appearance with his attitude as expressed in this scene – one of disgruntlement at his son's immaturity and selfishness - and to provide a layer of visual differentiation between father and son suggesting that they are separated as much by their generational outlook as their age difference. In the same film, when Vic and Rita are having an intimate encounter in a public park shelter, a reverse angle shot shows a passer-by peering over at them disapprovingly. (See Fig. 11)



Figure 11 Passer-by in flat-cap in *A Kind of Loving*.

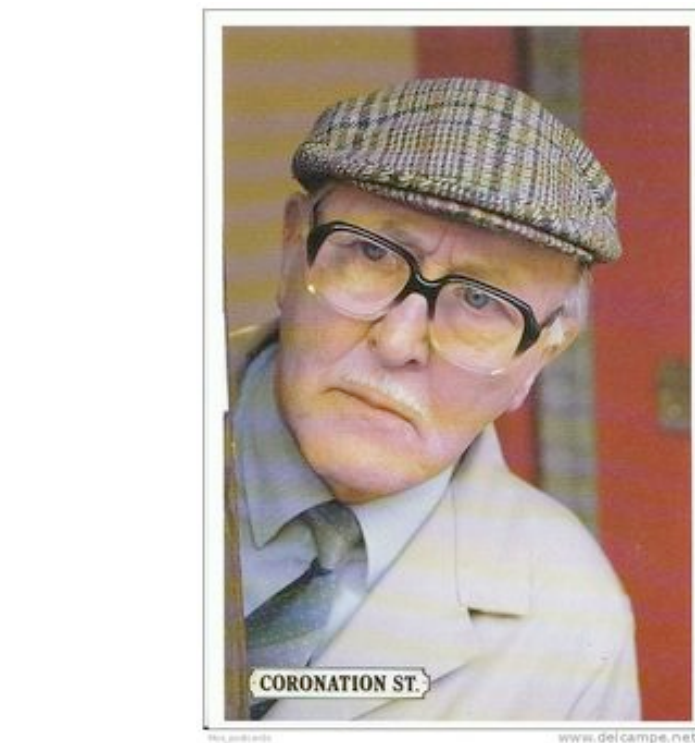
It is hardly a coincidence that the passer-by is wearing a flat-cap as he walks by with his dog. Viewed with regard to its use of costume, *misé-en-scène* and tone, the shot is suggestive of an older generation's distaste for the greater sexual permissiveness of the 1960s.

Another text which examines generational differences in a Northern setting is *Spring and Port Wine* (1970). (See Fig. 12)



Figure 12 James Mason wearing a flat-cap in *Spring and Port Wine* (1970).

As in *A Kind of Loving*, the male head of the family's wearing of a flat cap functions to associate him with aspects of Northern-ness which are fast disappearing within a changing society. Along with his careful budgeting for household expenditure and vividly-recalled memories of encountering the Jarrow hunger marchers during the 1930s Depression, James Mason's character's wearing of a flat-cap positions him within an older generation struggling to come to terms with what is perceived as great moral laxity and permissiveness in the 1970s. In terms of television, it would seem telling that the principle wearers of flat-caps in *Coronation Street* during the 1960s, 70s and 80s were Albert Tatlock and Percy Sugden, the notoriously grumpy elder statesmen of 'the Street' (Randall, 2013). (See Fig. 13 & 14)



Figures 13 and 14 Albert Tatlock and Percy Sugden in *Coronation Street*.

Through the association of older characters with flat-caps in these films and programmes, filmmakers and television producers were able to reinforce ideas related to changes within the Northern working-class during the twentieth century.

While flat-caps were frequently used to identify Northern working-class men in British cinema and television, other items of costume were sometimes employed in the representation of Northern women. *Love on the Dole* features Salford women wearing shawls over their heads and shoulders. (See Fig. 15)



Figure 15 Women in shawls in *Love on the Dole*.

In *Fame is the Spur*, a 1947 film charting the life and times of fictional Labour politician Hamer Radshaw, shawl-wearing Northern women again feature, appearing in the audience of a public meeting as Radshaw gives a speech decrying the capitalist industrial system. (See Fig. 16)



Figure 16 Shawl-wearers in *Fame is the Spur* (1947).

Richmond (2013) notes that the shawl was distinctive to the North, with Southern women typically favouring a hat or a bonnet and jacket.

A female character wearing a shawl, together with clogs, is also seen in Bernard Vorhaus's 1937 comedy *Cotton Queen*, a film which is particularly interesting in its use of costume as a means to examine issues of stereotyping and Southern assumptions of what it means to be a member of the Northern working-class. (See Fig. 17)



Figure 17 A shawl in *Cotton Queen* (1937).

Cotton Queen's plot concerns two squabbling Lancashire cotton mill-owners who have to put their differences aside and come together to fend off Japanese competition in the textile trade. In a sub-plot, a niece of one of the mill-owners arrives from London and begs her uncle for a job in his cotton mill. Mary's stylish outfit and Received Pronunciation mark her out as an upper-class Southerner. She wishes to work in the mill to observe day-to-day life in the North before writing 'the great Lancashire novel', and when her uncle refuses her request, she decides to try and secure a position in his rival's mill.

Clothes and their cultural associations are of great importance in this scene, both within the film narrative itself and also in terms of the wider issue being addressed – that of the Southern metropolitan tendency to stereotype the North in terms of working-class backwardness and Other-ness, a socially and culturally-inscribed process dating back hundreds of years (Russell, 2004. pp. 24-39).

In summation, it can be said that through recurrent use, British films and television programmes of the twentieth century

contributed to the construction of popular stereotypes linking aspects of dress with the North's broader cultural identity as a land of the working-class. It can also be identified that items of clothing associated with regional identities are subject to subtle shifts in meaning, as the use of the flat-cap in pre and post-1960s films and television programmes illustrates.

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COSTUME IN ART AND LITERATURE

Dress and its Significance in the Decorative Mural Cycle of the Piccolomini Library (1502-8), Siena Cathedral

Susan J. May, Birmingham City University

Abstract

Opening directly off the massive, romanesque interior of Siena cathedral, the renaissance Piccolomini Library shimmers like a bejewelled casket. Its vault and walls are enlivened with intricate, colourful frescoes by Bernardino Pinturicchio and his workshop. The main component of the painted scheme is a commemoration of the life of the patron's uncle, Pope Pius II (1458-64), presented in ten, large narrative murals. In keeping with early-renaissance naturalism, great attention is paid to the careful depiction of contemporary dress. Focusing on a small selection of the murals, the aims of this paper are to examine the various modes of sartorial elegance represented there and to consider the role that dress plays in communicating meaning within the decorative programme. Using visual analysis in combination with studies of the history of dress, local Sieneese socio-economic context, papal politics and the dynastic agenda, it is demonstrated that the representation of costume plays an important part in the frescoes. It underscores the role of rhetoric, and in particular epideictic oratory, in the mural scheme, elucidates attitudes to local sumptuary laws, and reinforces the celebratory crescendo with which the narrative of Pius's life closes. It will be shown, moreover, that this culminating triumphalist message is rather more optimistic than was actually the case!

Keywords: Piccolomini Library; Pope Pius II; Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini; Cardinal Francesco Todeschini Piccolomini; Bernardino Pinturicchio

Analyses of the narrative episodes from the life of Pope Pius II (Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini) on the walls of the Piccolomini Library in Siena (Fig. 1), painted by Bernardino Pinturicchio in the years 1502-8, consider them in the context of the historical events of the period, of papal diplomacy and of humanist culture, some writers highlighting a departure from traditional library decoration, others analysing the relationship between the images and their inscriptions. Within the limitations of this paper, its aims are to examine a small selection of the frescoes to consider the role that dress plays in communicating meaning within the decorative programme. Using visual analysis in combination with studies of the history of dress, local Sieneese socio-economic context, papal politics and the

dynastic agenda, it is demonstrated that the representation of costume plays an important part: it underscores the role of rhetoric, and in particular epideictic oratory, in the mural scheme, elucidates attitudes to local sumptuary laws, and reinforces the celebratory crescendo with which the narrative of Pius's life closes. It is shown, moreover, that the culminating triumphalist message of his legacy as shown in the frescoes is rather more optimistic than historically accurate.

The mural decoration is, to put it bluntly, art as ideology. It would be overstating the case, however, to interpret it as the falsification of history. The mural programme is, quite literally, rhetoric, a visual exposition of a revival of an oratorical form sanctioned by the ancients and in common usage at the papal court: it is a construct, but one which was understood and culturally endorsed. Not only is Pius depicted as an orator - as we shall see - on the library walls, but the whole cycle was conceived as a visual 'oration' to the deceased pontiff (Green, 2005, 166-8). Epideictic oratory was a form of rhetoric which the patron of the library, Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini, nephew of the deceased pope, actively sought to revive at the papal court (May, 2006, 48-59). It worked by striving to conjure images in the mind of the listener through colourful description. To conceive of a permanent, visual 'oration' to his uncle was no great mental leap for Pius's nephew, but a natural development of one of the topoi of contemporary culture. The narrative istorie on the library walls are a visual epideictic 'oration' on the virtues of this pontiff, composed to convince of their truth.

Of necessity, this study is selective. In turning our attention initially to the second istoria in the series, The Embassy of Aeneas Piccolomini to James I of Scotland (Fig. 2), the ecclesiological circumstances that brought Aeneas Piccolomini to Scotland are beyond the scope of this paper: focus is trained instead on the frescoed image and the role that it endows to costume. Centre stage on an elevated dais sits the enthroned Scottish king, bearded and dignified, listening intently to Aeneas who appears on the left. Ranks of Scottish courtiers sit on benches running horizontally behind the monarch. Sundry other figures listen in rapt attention on either side of the king. A richly patterned, oriental carpet covers the steps rising to the throne. Behind the courtiers a tripartite arched loggia opens out onto an extensive landscape, a minutely rendered, 'fairytale' panorama rising out to the sides from a central, fjord-like estuary. This could hardly be further from Aeneas's own recollection in his memoirs of the Scottish landscape: 'a cold country where few things grow ... for the most part barren of trees', the most appealing feature of this northern land its 'lusty' women (Piccolomini, 2003, 23-4).

The effect of the *istoria* is dazzling, from the enchantment of the distant landscape with its gothic spires, to the richly appointed, porphyry-columned and gold-studded interior. The assembly comprises an extraordinary range of colourful types, from ascetic clerics to red-headed, thick-bearded, Germanic folk, from turbaned orientals to bare-headed negroes (Karababa, 2017). Materials include velvets, wool, silks, gauzes, brocades, feathers and gold. Writers have perceived in these scenes signs of worldliness unsuitable to an artwork in a cathedral precinct and commissioned by a cardinal. The opulence, however, is a foil. It is a backdrop against which is to be seen the sober figure of Aeneas the 'orator', as he is termed in the Latin inscription below the fresco. Wearing a red, Roman style tunic and green sandals, he has a voluminous, plum-coloured cloak, a *pallio*, wrapped around him in the classical manner (Raspini, 2003, 107). His long, brown locks cascade across his shoulders while he enumerates his arguments on graceful fingers. The restrained, timeless elegance of Aeneas proclaims his integrity and genuineness, and sets him apart from the courtly pomp and material luxuriance that surround him. This is an example of *sunthesis*, the contrast that is required by the rules of epideictic oratory, here sobriety in opposition to ostentation (McManamon, 1976, 21).

The idea that Aeneas's oratory is an art form in the ancient classical tradition is reinforced by the figure directly behind him. Elderly, balding, with straggly, grey hair and short, bushy beard, this man dressed in a loose, white robe is the type of an ancient philosopher, a precursor to the figures of Plato and Aristotle in Raphael's *School of Athens* (Raspini, 2003, 108). With his hand on his heart whilst he looks imploringly, visibly moved, toward the king, the old Roman conveys the veracity and sagacity of the speech silently issuing from the lips of Aeneas, and his consummate skill as an orator. The hours-long attention with which Aeneas's speeches were met, and of which the immodest author misses no opportunity to remind the reader in his autobiography, is captured in this *istoria*: the audience's concentration is palpable (Piccolomini, 2003, 135).

For humanists, the model to be used to encourage fellow citizens to live a moral life without withdrawing from the world was the ideal of the ancient orator who expressed his *humanitas* with eloquence. Through the power of oratory the will of men could be persuaded to moral action (D'Amico, 1988, 349). In his eulogy preached in Siena on the first anniversary of Pius's death, Giannantonio Campano praised him for his eloquence (Campano, 1502, 99v). Domenico Dominichi in his *Oratorio de eligendo pontifice* compared Pius to Cicero, claiming that the former surpassed in eloquence both the men of his own age and the greater part of antiquity: he had the persuasiveness of Isocrates, the subtlety of Lysias and the force

of Demosthenes (Dominichi, 11v-12r). Pius's skill as orator is here underscored by his appearance, in contrast to his cinquecento courtly audience, wearing timeless, classical attire.

Turning to the fifth *istoria*, The presentation of Leonora of Portugal to Emperor Frederick III (Fig. 3), Aeneas Piccolomini recounts in his autobiography that in the jubilee year (1450) he was sent by Emperor Frederick III to Naples to meet with Alfonso, King of Aragon and Sicily in order to arrange a marriage between the emperor and Leonora, Alfonso's niece. Aeneas successfully negotiated the contract, as well as safe passage through Italy for the emperor the following year, when he would come to Siena to meet his future bride and be crowned in Rome by the pope (Piccolomini, 2003, 95-115). Here, for the benefit of Sieneese visitors to the library, a degree of topographical exactitude has been sought. Showing the action where it actually took place, Pinturicchio gives us a background view of the *Porta Camollia*, the city walls and the bristling towers of Siena, including its unmistakable cathedral and the shell of the *duomo nuovo*. The foreground action is disposed in a circle around the commemorative monument which was erected *in situ* in 1452 (modern dating), a month after the event had actually taken place.

The throng, mounted and on foot, includes a number of portraits, figures who may be identified from Pius's autobiographical *I commentarii*, as well as contemporaries of the patron. Included in the Sieneese welcoming party in the foreground (Fig. 4) are likenesses of Alberto Aringhieri, of the patron's brother Andrea Todeschini Piccolomini and of his wife Agnese di Gabriele Francesco Farnese. Aringhieri, *operaio* in charge of cathedral works during the library construction and decoration, is dressed in black with a Maltese Cross upon his chest, as a Knight of Rhodes. The patron's brother stands next to him, also in black dress and cap. In front of him is his wife Agnese, wearing a white bodice with dark horizontal lacing, looking out at the viewer (Nevola, 2003, 583-94).

The three main protagonists, meanwhile, are lavishly endowed with gold leaf to highlight their importance. The composition relies on the iconography of marriage, following the usual placement behind the couple of the officiating minister and the main focus on the hand gestures. Contemporaneous *spozalizio* scenes revolve around the placing of the wedding ring on the finger. This composition, not yet a marriage, reverts to the classical form where the couple hold right hands, the *dextrarum iunctio*, as seen in antique sculpture. Aeneas, as Bishop of Siena, rests his hand lightly on Leonora's shoulder in a gesture following the antique and, with down-turned glance, solemnly draws the couple together. Frederick steps forward, the left patten protecting his golden shoe falling away

from his foot in a pleasing detail of observation. Gazing directly at Leonora and holding her shoulder, the emperor 'takes possession' of his betrothed.

Apart from a Dominican nun pictured in the penultimate *istoria* of the library series, it is notable that this is the only image in which women are prominently featured. In this mural, the small retinue of ladies-in-waiting, comprising a nun, a small girl and five other women, clusters behind Leonora, whose tilted head and downcast eyes connote modesty and submission (Berdini, 1998, 567). This group of women reflect the paternalistic infrastructure of renaissance society. The role of Eve in Original Sin had only served to worsen a pre-existing inequality in the eyes of the Church Fathers, since woman had been created not from dust in her own right but from Adam's rib (Genesis 2:22). This patristic tradition was melded together by Thomas Aquinas with the complete biology that he found in Aristotle, which gave a 'scientific' basis to androcentric anthropology. In his *Summa theologiae*, there are two possibilities for women, marriage or religious life. Of the two, the latter, involving sexual abstinence, is preferable because all human action, thought and love should be directed to God, and because sexual activity involves a loss of rational control: continence promotes the recovery of the state of human nature before the Fall (McLaughlin, 1974, 222). The women in this *istoria* are accordingly shown to be married, poised for marriage or wedded to Christ.

Many of the individuals in this image, as at the court of James I of Scotland, are clad in ostentatious dress and rich materials. For men, fine dress was a status symbol as well as a sign of self-esteem and respectability (Richardson, 2015). In a letter of 1513, Machiavelli wrote that before entering a library for long and happy hours of study, he removed his muddy, everyday clothes and dressed himself as though he were about to appear before royalty: 'Then decently attired, I enter the ancient courts of the great men of antiquity who receive me with friendship' (Rice, 1970, 66). For the male, who functions through higher reason or *sapientia*, dress thus indicated intellect (Nelson, 1958, 72-3). Women, on the other hand, who were considered to attain only lower reason or *scientia*, were thought to dress finely only in order to tempt men, indicative of their sensual appetites, lack of self-control and predisposition to vice (Clifton, 1999, 645).

From the end of the thirteenth century, sumptuary laws were frequently enacted that imposed limits on display and regulated the dress of men and women. These served as a means to weaken the power of noble clans that dominated early political life in Italian cities, however the brunt of regulations fell upon the *ornamenta mulierum* (Hughes, 1983, 66-

99). Innumerable writers from Saint Jerome (347-420) in the early church to San Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444) railed against ostentation in women as indicative of their vices of vanity, pride and lechery. In this *istoria* we are treated to a fashionable display of ruffs, bodices and detachable sleeves. On occasions such as this - visits of royal or dignified persons - the Sienese enjoyed indulging in lavish celebration and women were granted a few days' relaxation of certain clauses of the sumptuary law. A few silken garments were in any case allowable provided they were made from cloth manufactured in the city. Andrea Piccolomini's wife Agnese (appearing behind Leonora) is pictured within the limit of wearing a maximum of three gold rings; even the bride-to-be abides by Sienese legislation that allowed women to wear on their heads at most one unadorned garland of silver weighing no more than two ounces. Saint Thomas had conceded that female display was usually not a sin so long as it was employed in the pursuit of a husband (Hughes, 1983, 74-9).

Sumptuary regulations on design, colour, cut of the cloth, embroidery and ornamentation were naturally unwelcome by women, as well as by their tailors. On the actual occasion of Frederick and Leonora's visit to Siena in 1451, they were entertained with a recitation in Latin by Battista Petrucci, daughter of a professor of rhetoric. As appreciation, Leonora had enquired of Battista how she would best be rewarded: Battista replied that she wished for permanent exemption from Sienese sumptuary regulations, a wish that the city government ultimately, though reluctantly, granted (Malavolti, 1599, 38v). In representing the historic occasion of the couple's visit in this fifth *istoria*, Pinturicchio was at pains to ensure that the painted women remain within the parameters of propriety demanded by the rigorous sumptuary controls that were imposed on real women.

Pius opens the last, unfinished book of his memoirs by informing his reader that, in accordance with his various political manoeuvres, not only the Church of Rome but almost all of the peninsula was enjoying the sweetness of peace. He was resolved nonetheless to proceed with his long-attempted plan to push back the Turks, following the Fall of Constantinople, by leading a crusade in person (Gabel, 1960, 237-8, 375-6). Delegating government of the Church and Rome to Cardinal Francesco in his absence, Pius departed for the port of Ancona, arriving on 19 July 1464. Some Spanish and French crusaders were already there but nothing could be done until the arrival of the Venetian fleet. The pope however, prematurely old and crippled with gout, succumbed to a fever. On 12 August sailed in the eagerly awaited Doge, followed into the harbour by his fleet of twelve galleys. Three days later

Pius died. The Doge returned to Venice. There was to be no crusade (O'Brien, 2015, 98-103).

Unlike Raphael and his assistants in the later Battle of Ostia (1515-17) in the Stanza dell'Incendio of the Vatican Palace, Pinturicchio could not in all sincerity present the climactic image of the library series as a naval victory. A solution was found, not by illustrating an alternative episode from the pope's life, but instead by formulating an iconic construct, showing representatives of east and west unified under the supreme authority of the Church, the Roman pontiff, in the setting of Ancona, intended port of departure for the crusade and place of Pius's death. Expectations were high at the end of the quattrocento for the final fulfilment of the Johannine prophecy: 'So there shall be one flock, one shepherd' (John 10:16). A visual manifestation in the final istoria of the accomplishment of spiritual and political harmony would strike an optimistic note for the Sieneese populace and could not fail but to enhance the posthumous reputation of Pius II.

The tenth and final narrative, then, Pius II at Ancona (Fig. 5), shows the town of Ancona rising up the headland at right, a schematised depiction of Monte Grasco crowned by the cathedral church of San Ciriaco. Below, the shields of the galley anchored in the port bear the Piccolomini stemma: sailors climbing the mast and rigging prepare for departure. The open sea is speckled with the white sails of the incoming Venetian fleet. In the centre of the composition, held aloft in the sedia gestatoria, Pius gravely looks down to the group on the left while pointing to two resplendent, exotic figures on the right. Of these, the turbaned, standing male seen in full frontal view, hands on hips and wearing a shimmering violet-tinged, golden kaftan, is identified as Djem Sultan, Ottoman pretender and erstwhile hostage of the pontiff. In actuality belonging to a period after the lifetime of Pius, the tall, striking figure of Djem was familiar to those of Cardinal Francesco's generation, having become a fashionable personality at court, living more like a guest than a prisoner (Setton, 1978, 551). In front of him is a kneeling, bearded figure in equally opulent, oriental dress, identified as Asan Zaccaria, deposed prince of Samo. To the left of the pope is another fallen potentate: wearing a high crowned, wide brimmed blue hat, blue robe and a broad golden chain is the person of Thomas Paleologus, deposed despot of Morea. Kneeling before the pope to the left, in golden, minever-trimmed, brocaded damask is the Venetian Doge Cristoforo Moro, his hat held by the young page behind him (Raspini, 2003, 138). The portraits of the sovereigns previously deposed by the Ottoman Empire, shown together in a unified group beneath the pope, implies the restitution to them of their territories. The inclusion of the Turk in the person of Djem Sultan foretells peaceful co-

existence, supporting a popularly held view that the Mohammedans would convert to Christianity. The balance and stability of the new order is conveyed by the pyramidal composition, whilst the pointing gesture of Pius towards the Turk reiterates once and for all what the istorie and inscriptions have already made clear: that as defender of the unity of the Church and protector of the Christian faith the life of Pope Pius II was devoted to the cause. The crusade, in truth, was dogged by problems and dissension far too complicated to explicate in this paper. Historians working on diplomatic correspondence from these years observe that it evinces jealousy, self-interest, myopia and disingenuousness, all disguised by an ingeniously 'fine art of courteous prevarication': all agree that the crusade was doomed to fail (Setton, 1978, 245-268).

In summary, the acute observation of the natural world in which early renaissance artists revelled extended as much to sartorial exactitude and textural description as it did to anatomy, physiognomy and landscape. This paper has sought to demonstrate the range of meanings that Pinturicchio could convey through the representation of dress, from the contrast of sunkrisis required of epideictic oratory witnessed in The Embassy of Aeneas Piccolomini to James I of Scotland, through the display of material culture and its gendered connotations in The presentation of Leonora of Portugal to Emperor Frederick III, and to the facility of costume to convey rank and geographical provenance in Pius II at Ancona. Ultimately the Piccolomini Library proclaims that the twenty-first century does not hold a monopoly on the power of the image.

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Figure 1 Interior of the Piccolomini library, Siena cathedral, decorated in fresco by Bernardino Pinturicchio, 1502-8, looking towards the entrance.



Figure 2 The second *istoria*: *The Embassy of Aeneas Piccolomini to James I of Scotland*, Piccolomini library.



Figure 3 The fifth *istoria*: *The Presentation of Leonora of Portugal to Emperor Frederick III*, Piccolomini library.



Figure 4 The fifth *istoria* (detail), *The Presentation of Leonora of Portugal to Emperor Frederick III*, Piccolomini library.



Figure 5 The tenth *istoria*: Pius II at Ancona, Piccolomini library

Pictorialism and Sartorial Symbolism: A Poetic Response to Modernity at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Alicia Mihalic, University of Zagreb

Abstract

With its focus on the achievement of painterly effects in photography, the international Pictorialist movement sought to employ various techniques and aesthetic approaches in order to capture images of landscapes and delicate feminine beauty within perfectly composed atmospheric settings. Facing the turn of the twentieth century, a time when the development of new media was closely linked to the demand for accuracy of recordings as well as to the industrialization of the society as a whole, the work of Pictorialist artists represented, at the same time, both an avant-garde and a conservative response to progressive photographic tendencies. In accordance with such values, the Pictorialist representation of human figure required the use of accompanying dress forms with the ability to convey idyllic elegance, innocence and performativity of its subjects. Through the analysis of intersections between dress and photography as related aspects of visual culture, the aim of this paper is to employ an interdisciplinary approach in order to reconsider particular sartorial forms of creative expression. Questions will be raised regarding certain departures from the restrictive conventional fashions as well as elements related to the presence of historical revivalism. Further on, the study will contextualize certain extensions of nineteenth-century concept of Artistic Dress and refer to sartorial expression of Pictorialist photographers from the aspects of marginal clothing discourses and anti-fashion.

Keywords: Pictorialism; dress; femininity; photography; body

As a form of aesthetic expression developed at the end of the nineteenth century, the softly focused camera approach of Pictorialist photographers aimed to establish a link between painting techniques and photography as a relatively new, but increasingly accessible technological medium of the day. At the time when the camera was praised for its ability to mechanically document reality and particularly linked to scientific and commercial projects, the Pictorialists manipulated their images in order to achieve media hybridization and elevate their work to the rank of fine art (Warner Marien, 2006: 96; Simonson, 2013: 152). Based on the iconography of past art forms, the artistic nature of their photography was generated through experimentation with a wide range of labour-intensive develop-

ing processes, such as homemade emulsions, platinum printing and gum bichromate. In addition to a unique use of light, these experiments allowed the artists to manipulate prints and render sentimental representations of atmospheric landscapes, elaborate tableaux vivants and romanticized pastoral scenes - an interest shared with many contemporary Symbolist painters (Fryer Davidov, 1998: 52).

Pictorialists' emphasis on nature accompanied with recurrent idealized images of female figures offered a particular view of clothed bodies. Visions of biblical, historical or mythical subjects were achieved by transforming the sitters with the aim of conveying various meanings, thus employing clothing as one of the most important vehicles in constructing ideals of feminine purity, vulnerability and sensuality. A distinctive style of costume consisting mainly of light-coloured flowing dresses as depicted in Clarence H. White's triptych *Spring* (1897) added to the overall dreamy impression and connotated the desired romantic effect. While such employment of sartorial expressions represented a stark contrast to restrictive late Victorian and turn-of-the-century fashions, the use of alternative clothing discourses should not come as a surprise taking into account that visual codes promoted by Pre-Raphaelite painters acted as an important source of inspiration for the Pictorialist movement (Wells, 2004: 257). Although Pictorialist photography became adopted by various international associations in Europe and the United States between mid-1880s and 1920s, experiments with similar techniques appeared almost two decades earlier in the work of the British photographer Julia Margaret Cameron. Her close relationship with the Pre-Raphaelite circle is reflected in her aim to pursue poetry and beauty by applying rules of pre-Renaissance iconography and addressing carefully staged religious, mythological and historical narratives (Warner Marien, 2006: 96).

In addition, it can be noted that the majority of Cameron's work exhibits a presence of similar alternative sartorial discourses employed by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and later on adopted by female members of their extended circle. Loose, simple-cut gowns made of light-weight, clinging fabrics whose absence of structure increased freedom of movement were not only specially designed for preparation of particular scenes, but were reported to have influenced the clothing worn by painters' models and friends (Wahl, 2013: 3). Such garments disassociated from the rigid principles of nineteenth-century female fashions and embedded a revival of historical styles that enabled nostalgic glimpses of idealized past as well as individualistic approaches to dress. In her extensive study *Health, Art and Reason*, Stella Mary Newton discusses the developments of Pre-Raphaelite Dress along the lines of dress reform movements that arose during the sec-

ond half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century (Newton, 1974: 27-35). Both artistic and medical arguments regarding harmful health practices and conventions of current fashions were employed in order to express concerns about the unhealthiness of contemporary heavily-layered clothing which not only restricted movement, but unnecessarily strained the body through the use of corsets and other silhouette shaping garments. Adoptions of clothing styles similar to those designed for painterly representations and inspired by classical, medieval and Renaissance fashions in everyday wear are analyzed in the works of Patricia A. Cunningham (2003), Kimberly Wahl (2013) and Elizabeth Wilson (2003) and discussed in the light of their later developments as Artistic or Aesthetic dress.

A significant part of garments presented both in Cameron's portraits and staged tableaux vivants relate to the characteristics of Pre-Raphaelite Dress. Similar to other Pictorialist artists, Cameron usually relied on close friends, family members or servants as sitters whom she dressed in soft, graceful and drapable garments with the potential to evoke eternal and romantic principles of beauty. Her depictions of Pre-Raphaelite model and painter Marie Spartali Stillman as Tennyson's Imperial Eleanore and Hypatia (1867) demonstrate the capacity of clothing to convey identities of mythological and classical characters while Stillman's portrait (1871) is considered one of the most representative examples of Aesthetic Dress worn by artists, art patrons and female audiences who "strategically mobilized clothing as a signifier of artistic sensibility and authority" (Wahl, 2013: XIV). Costumes presented in both photographs clearly challenge dominant cultural norms of their time thereby acknowledging Diana Crane's indication of the value of nineteenth-century dress when studying relationships between marginal and hegemonic clothing discourses. In her book *Fashion and Its Social Agendas: Class, Gender and Identity in Clothing*, Crane analyzes the symbolic boundaries of clothing understood as a form of non-verbal resistance. Since clothing discourses of a particular era incorporate both those groups that perpetuate conformity with the prevailing notions of status and gender roles as well as the groups that "express social tensions" by introducing new forms of clothing behaviour, sartorial opposition can be administered through alternative forms of dress which occupy a distinctive position within the public space of fashion (Crane, 2000: 100).

Such alternative approaches are supported by more marginal parts of the society consisting, for example, of intellectuals and artists, and make particular aspects of Julia Margaret Cameron's photography interesting when it comes to visual analysis of influential artistic challenges to contemporary dress forms. However, due to photographers' theatrical ap-

proach to their subject matter, a significant part of Pictorialists' work represents staged costumes rather than everyday clothing, which leads us to consider Lou Taylor's teachings regarding the suitability of artistic photographic images for dress history research. According to Taylor, when considering nineteenth-century photographs as analytical tools, artistic photography may act misleadingly in the sense that, by losing its touch with reality, it remains interesting because of its aesthetic qualities, but not as a legitimate source of study (Taylor, 2002: 160).

A great part of the work of Pictorialist artists was marked by theatrical display of sitters and thus heavily reliant on costume in order to convey elements of masking and play. As previously stated, sartorial modes of expression with the potential to enable such picturesque renderings of life included loose and comfortable, almost vaporous dresses, soft textiles and veils that allowed unrestricted movement of the body and contributed to the atmospheric nature of Pictorialist camerawork. In a time when fashion peaked as a form of symbolic communication that had the potential to convey messages about the social status of its wearer and impose an etiquette determining which garments were considered appropriate for various occasions and parts of the day, such alternative clothing discourses remained within the range of current interests in health and dress reform movements and the rise in physical self-consciousness at the end of the century (Kendall, 1984: 125). As Anne Hollander stresses in her critical study *Seeing Through Clothes*, we should remember that portrayals of the body are always closely related to current sartorial codes of a particular historical period and, therefore, observe and study garments "as paintings are seen and studied – not primarily as cultural by-products or personal expressions, but as connected links in a creative tradition of image-making" (Hollander, 1980: xvi).

These important roles within the imagery of a specific art movement highlight the significance of dress forms selected by Pictorialist photographers for their potential to connote fantastic and dreamlike scenarios in a world of increased mechanization and industrialization as well as to act as a vehicle to sartorial freedom. Recurrent depictions of the mother and child relationship within the work of Pictorialists, and especially within the art of the American photographer Gertrude Käsebier, represent the mother as an ideal figure and an embodiment of family values in the age of rapid societal changes (Fryer Davidov, 1998: 65). A vision of motherhood accompanied by a biblical reference is presented in Käsebier's platinum print *Blessed Art Thou Among Women* (1899) in which feelings of female purity and domestic environment are conveyed through paleness and transcendence of the gown as

well as its lack of boning and structure. In addition, the draping of the dress and the title itself complement the image of Annunciation set against the background wall. Since the portrait represents Käsebier's friend Agnes Lee, a poet and writer of children's books who was at the time married to the artistic photographer Francis Watts Lee, Glaze indicates that the use of such symbolism can be associated with family's dedication to Christianity as well as their support of the Arts and Crafts movement which encouraged rational Artistic Dress during the mid 1880s and 1890s (Gaze, 2011: 400; Cunningham, 2000: 11).

Similar departures from modern urbanization can be seen in images that present meadows, forests and lakes as leisurely environments in which female figures appear in union with simplicity and pastoral ideals. As Maria Morris Hamburg points out, images of women gathering flowers and fruit represent a recurrent subject in Pictorialist photography (Morris Hamburg, 1993: 338). Such themes can be seen in Clarence H. White's *The Orchard* (1902) and are recurrently present in the work of Constant Puyo, one of the initiators of the Photo-Club de Paris. Examples are found in his gum bichromate prints *Au Jardin Fleuri* (1899) and *Juin* (1899) in which a spirit of community and enjoyment of life is expressed through a flowing arrangement of softly-draped garments while the connectedness with nature is accentuated by flowers worn as romantic hair ornaments.

Even though trends in mainstream fin-de-siècle fashion expressed a tendency for lighter and softer garments accompanied with an abundant use of lace and crochet as well as a fondness for pale pastel tones, rigid corsetry remained the norm. The fashionable line formed by the S-shaped corset that pushed forward the bust and pulled back the hips defined a silhouette covered by long skirts, narrow-sleeved blouses, high wired collars, gloves and hats (Boucher, 1967: 400; Laver, 2012: 216-224; Ribeiro and Cumming, 1989: 196-199). Since such garments disabled movement and especially restricted work and sport activities, many performers, actresses, opera singers and dancers tried to find means to improve current dress and encourage the acceptance of a healthy body in its natural form. As observed by Elizabeth Kendall in her study *Where she Danced: The Birth of American Art-Dance*, American Pictorialists often explored the relationship between the human body, its gestures, rhythms and mobility (Kendall 1984: 124). This rendered dancers such as Isadora Duncan and members of the Denishawn Company as ideal Pictorialist subject matter. Early twentieth-century depictions of dance can be found in the work of Edward Steichen, Anne Brigman, George Seeley and Clarence H. White. Kendall further indicates that among the Californian artistic community of the

time, Aesthetic Dress was regarded as a sort of uniform that liberated the natural body through its Ancient Greek and Pre-Raphaelite inspiration and thus made its way into the wardrobe of the artistic family of Isadora Duncan. As an avid proponent of dress reform herself, Duncan often designed her own dance costumes by joining scraps of silk with cords or elastic bands (Koda, 2003: 27). Edward Steichen's images of Isadora and Therese Duncan taken at the Parthenon capture the dancers in modernized versions of classical Greek dress. The series manages to present graceful and unhampered kinetics in unstructured chitons with high waistlines that increased the performers' comfort and mobility and allowed them to express their philosophy of freedom.

Whether Pictorialists depicted other artistic and progressive colleagues or transformed sitters in order to stage painterly narratives, their desired ideals of ethereal femininity were achieved through appropriation of body coverings as important sources of semiotic reading. While sartorial expressions of prominent members of the artistic community such as Spartali Stillman, Lee and Duncan were related to their own interests in wider dress reform and artistic movements, other garments are known to have been thoughtfully arranged for photographic construction of meanings of which examples can be found in George Seeley's *The Burning of Rome* (1906) where costumes similar to those of classical Antiquity were prepared by the photographer's mother. As two intertextual strategies with the ability to produce images of the clothed body (Calefatto, 2004: 83), discourses of dress and photography intersect in the work of Pictorial artists and can be discussed as both avant-garde and conservative at the same time. Whereas Pictorialist imagery departed from the overall mechanistic progress of the medium rendering unique prints that challenged Walter Benjamin's notions regarding the loss of aura in modern photography (Benjamin, 2009: 435), their attitudes towards dress principles moved away from the rapidly changing influence of fashion towards a distinctive style of costume that referenced historical inspiration and disassociation from mainstream values. The aim of this paper was, therefore, to indicate these simple, but highly complex attitudes of photography and dress as inter-semiotic practices and offer an overview of the Pictorialist employment of social and aesthetic functions of sartorial codes within their own creation of a painterly vocabulary and perspective on the artistic role of photography.

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'Faded silk' or 'fresh splendour': The Construction of Female Identity Through Dress in Tennyson's 'Geraint and Enid'

Dr Serena Trowbridge, School of English, Birmingham City University

Abstract

Tennyson's poem 'Geraint and Enid' is part of a larger work, Idylls of the King, which explores the Arthurian myths and demonstrates the Victorian fascination with the medieval period. Appearance and dress is constructed in the poem as a way to understand conventional gender roles, as well as class and status. However, the preoccupation with Enid's appearance and dress goes further than this and her clothing and changes of dress indicate her anxieties about her marriage and her attempts to construct her own identity, which my paper will discuss. The body is thus figured as a site for the creation or recreation of identity, which here is carried out within the strict boundaries of gender roles. The poem's focus on dress can be read through social history, and as a psychological study of the construction of a public and private identity, both of which approaches I will discuss.

As Marilyn Horn points out in her study of clothing, dress is more than a primary need; it also meets social and emotional needs, and we see these clearly in this poem. We have an intimate relationship with clothing as part of a web of social signifiers, including 'occupation, role, self-confidence, and other personality characteristics'. Ultimately, what both poem and paintings tell us is that there are assumptions about dress: that it has a moral dimension, and that it can reflect character, subtly illuminating aspects of female identity which are not so easily expressed in words.

Keywords: Dress; Literature; Tennyson; Painting; Poetry

Tennyson's poems 'The Marriage of Geraint' and 'Geraint and Enid' are part of a larger work, *Idylls of the King* (1859-85), which explores Arthurian myth and demonstrates the Victorian fascination with the medieval period. The story of Geraint and Enid comes originally from Welsh folklore, via a range of medieval sources (in which Geraint is sometimes known as Erec, but Enid's name does not change). The story of Erec and Enid is similar to Tennyson's later retelling; the emphasis on clothing to construct Enid's character is different but still distinctly present in the medieval versions.

The opening of 'The Marriage of Geraint' launches into the relationship of Enid and Geraint, after they have met. It is clear from the beginning that the poem is concerned with bodies and their purposes; Geraint is 'brave', a warrior prince whose physical strength reflects his adherence to chivalric values, and whose value as an Arthurian knight is in his ability to fight and uphold the rule of his king. Meanwhile, Enid is presented as a passive wife, almost a plaything or a doll, whose body must be clothed to her husband's liking. In the early part of the poem, we are told how Geraint liked her to dress in bright colours:

...so loved Geraint

To make her beauty vary day by day,

In crimsons and in purples and in gems. (8-10)

Enid enjoyed pleasing him so, to make up for the fact that she was poor and poorly dressed when he first met her, she

...daily fronted him

In some fresh splendour (13-14)

The Queen, Guinevere, often dressed Enid herself – which was a sign of royal favour and friendship, and also of gratefulness to Geraint, but this backfires because the women, seen as physically close, are both tainted by the rumours about Guinevere's infidelity with Lancelot. This suggests a mistrust of the physical closeness of women, and an anxiety about women's morality when unpoliced by men, and indeed this mistrust causes Geraint to become closer to his wife, appearing effeminate in the eyes of others as he abandons his knightly quests to remain beside Enid. The indication here is clearly that women's bodies are in some ways unruly and must henceforth become a focus of masculine control. It is worth noting, however, Linda Hughes's argument that in *Idylls of the King* Tennyson is constructing an argument that 'only in relation to women, and by sharing part of their nature, could men hope to be real and true men' (1986: 61).

One night she watches him sleep and muses on his mistrust, and describes him without clothes, giving a clear sense that for the male it is the unadorned body which matters, which she admires, and which consequently gives him value as a man – a warrior and a husband. She is afraid 'his force/Is melted into mere effeminacy' (106-7) by his uxoriousness – and medieval advice books for men warn them against effeminacy at all costs, especially in dress. He mishears her comments and believes she was confessing her guilt, so to test

her, he says they must ride into the wilderness, and asks her to 'put on your worst and meanest dress' (848).

Enid then recalls meeting Geraint, when he was on a quest to avenge an insult to Queen Guinevere, who tells him that as a reward she will dress his bride, when he finds one, and 'clothe her, for her bridals, like the sun' (1230). Geraint arrives at the home of a knight, Yniol, whose family have fallen on hard times; this is indicated by their clothes, which demonstrate the family's previous wealth whilst making apparent their relative poverty, in the good-quality but aged fabric. In fact he first hears Enid's voice, of unparalleled sweetness, and Tennyson suggests that from such sweetness one might imagine the beauty of the speaker. This is one of many indications of the significance of the physical body in the poem; her voice embodies her (and is compared to a bird's, and thus her 'plumage' and bright colours are also to be imagined) but in fact the poorly dressed girl does not disappoint, because of her beauty. The site of the female body is thus constructed in the imagination of the male before she is physically present.

Enid recalls how Geraint loved her despite her poverty, and her faded silk dress stands to her as a token of their love, which needed no dressing up. Though she had been ashamed of it, now she keeps it reverently, and it is clear that the faded silk is an object to be cared for, with the sprigs of flowers to keep it smelling sweet. The dress is a tangible reminder of their love, a real thing which stands in for the emotions she felt, as well, perhaps, as for her own earlier youthfulness and hopes for the future. As Bill Brown points out, writing about 'thing theory' (2004), we easily forget about things and their significance in the culture of everyday life, but this dress is just such a thing. There are a number of questions we might ask about it: the economic: where did she get it from, who made it, who paid for it? and the cultural: what did it actually look like, what did the costly – if now shabby – fabric suggest in terms of social standing? And what about identity: was it a dress which was unusual, which reflected Enid's personality in some way? These are mostly subjects for conjecture, especially as we are talking of a medieval myth filtered through a Victorian perspective, but what we do know is what the dress meant to Enid. She wore it at a happy time of her life, and though in the poem she must put it on again at a sad time, nonetheless it is a reminder that all may be well again. It strikes the reader that she is in many ways more comfortable with this dress, and its connotations of love, domesticity and happiness, than with the expensive and elaborate clothes she wore at court. It is at this moment in the poem that Enid becomes more than a doll to be dressed up and displayed by her husband and the Queen. Of course, she wore this dress

before she met Geraint, too, at a time when she was her father's property rather than her husband's.

Although female dress, historically, is usually related to male status and possession, nonetheless at this stage in the poem she constructs her own identity by relating to the dress: as a mature woman, now, who must and will obey her husband, whilst retaining the autonomy to have regrets about the turn her marriage has taken. The dress, rather than becoming a thing to adorn the body and present her socially as male property, becomes the repository for memory and a site of the creation of individual female identity. Consequently, the faded silk allows her to express sadness, love and nostalgia. As Marilyn Horn points out in her interdisciplinary study of clothing, dress is more than a primary need; it also meets social and emotional needs, and we see these two clearly in this poem. We have, Horn suggests, an intimate relationship with clothing as part of a web of social signifiers, including not only status but also 'occupation, role, self-confidence, and other personality characteristics' (1981: 2). Moreover, she emphasises that 'clothing is a tangible and observable phenomenon that is important to the concept of self and the development of personality. It is often a symptom of suppressed needs and desires, and the analysis of dress can lend insight to a number of hidden psychic problems' (1981: 4).

The phrase 'faded silk' to describe her old dress is repeated throughout the poem. 'Faded' offers connotations of age and wear, but also love, and not beyond the point of usefulness. It suggests, rather, a comforting sign of familiarity, a picturesque attribute. Silk was a costly fabric which only the very wealthy could afford to buy, since it would have to be imported, indicating the lost wealth of Enid's family. Even the wealthiest women would only have had one or two silk dresses, and consequently would wear them for a long time. The 'faded silk', then, suggests a romantic, nostalgic lost but lingering grandeur, containing the emotional remnants of past love and youth. However, for the Victorian reader, the anguish of wearing such an old dress would be familiar; Langland reminds us that 'Details of dress, always associated with status, took on increasing subtlety as indicators of class rank within the middle classes' during the nineteenth century. (1995: 34)

When Enid and Geraint are to travel to Camelot to be married, she recalls, she had wished she had time to make a new dress, or that she could recover a dress which her mother had given her in wealthier days, which had been stolen:

And Enid fell in longing for a dress
All branched and flowered with gold, a costly gift
Of her good mother, given her on the night
Before her birthday, three sad years ago (630-33)

As Ranum points out, 'Both Enid and her mother have internalized the values of what had become an important part of women's work. ... Enid's mother verbally links domestic ideas of women's clothing with heroic feats and masculine conquest.' (2009: 249) The clothes they wear become the woman's armour. She imagines the women of the court, with their beautiful clothes and worries that she will discredit her husband by being poorly dressed – a moment which makes her seem very human as she worries about her clothes, as well as being uncertain about her status, a concern which vanishes with her marriage; but Geraint and her father manage to recover the dress. The implication here is that clothes are important, for status, and that no matter how beautiful, she will be still more beautiful – and consequently more valuable to her husband – if dressed well. This is the projection of others onto Enid, however: once again, the female body becomes the site for the display of wealth and power, as though she were a kind of trophy; the poems move back and forth between the projection of adornment, and thus identity, onto Enid by others, and the interiority of the character as she constructs her own identity. As Christopher Breward points out, medieval dress (as well as later fashions) demonstrate 'the existence of a strong relationship between perceptions of fashion and social expectations of femininity, prioritising the woman's status as keepers of the household and visible symbols of patriarchal wealth and standing' (1995: 29). This is the basic structure within which Tennyson writes, aligning the purposes of medieval dress with that of the Victorian period. The nineteenth century often idealised the Middle Ages, and this included a vision of medieval dress as more simple, less about showing off the female body and more about morality (not that this was necessarily true, but it is an idealisation that found its way into aesthetic dress later in the century).

This sense of status as his wife, dressed for court in the dress her mother gave her and later dressed by the Queen herself, is therefore undermined when Geraint asks his wife to put on her 'worst and meanest dress' (848). This is clearly intended as a humiliation for her; he is angry at her supposed infidelity, and thus he demands she dress as a shamed, low-status woman. That she responds by obeying and recalling with tenderness the past role of the 'faded silk' is perhaps a small act of rebellion on Enid's part. This dress played a large role in their relationship: when they first met, she had carried bread to him in her veil, and when, on their journey, Geraint is in-

jured, she uses the same veil to bind his wounds, in 'Geraint and Enid':

And tearing off her veil of faded silk
Had bared her forehead to the blistering sun,
And swathed the hurt that drained her dear lord's life.
(514-16)

Geraint rests, when unconscious, at Earl Doorm's house, where

there fluttered in,
Half-bold, half-frighted, with dilated eyes,
A tribe of women, dressed in many hues (595-7)

These women are portrayed as little more than a harem, with no individuality or autonomy. Their bright colours should have implied status and self-confidence, but instead they are framed in the poem as indicative of submission to male power. Earl Doorm suggests to Enid that by dressing her poorly, Geraint does not deserve her. This description is one of seductive beauty, of a dress meant for being looked at, not for movement and action as her faded silk has proved to be. The dress Doorm shows her, with the thick encrusting of jewels, would cause her to fade into the background of richly-dressed women, restricting her by encasing her body as though it were a prison. Unsurprisingly, Enid is aware of this, and responds:

In this poor gown my dear lord found me first,
And loved me serving in my father's hall:
In this poor gown I rode with him to court,
And there the Queen arrayed me like the sun:
In this poor gown he bad me clothe myself,
When now we rode upon this fatal quest
Of honour, where no honour can be gained:
And this poor gown I will not cast aside
Until himself arise a living man,
And bid me cast it. (697-706)

Here, the old dress becomes a symbol of her resistance to male power. While her husband is unconscious, Enid is essentially alone at the mercy of a man known to prey on women, and she uses her dress, of which she was once ashamed, to provide herself with a dignity, almost like armour, to protect her virtue. It becomes a symbol of her strength, her virtue, and her independence. Though she is obedient to her husband in many things, she defies him when he requests her not to speak, in order to warn him of danger, and in this disobedience she demonstrates not only her love for her husband but also her autonomous mind and independent charac-

ter. It is in her insistence on retaining this faded silk, with all its associations, that her strength of character and determination are made apparent to the reader.

At the end of the poem, when Enid and Geraint return to Camelot, it seems that all is restored, when

the great Queen once more embraced her friend,
And clothed her in apparel like the day. (946-7)

This is, at least, toned down from being dressed 'like the sun' when she first arrived at court. Geraint still mistrusts Guinevere, but his suspicion does not spread to his wife, and in time they are rewarded with a happy marriage and many children. Despite this conventional closure, however, with Enid's 'faded silk' replaced with the 'fresh splendour' that the Queen dresses her in, Enid has displayed her own character, tested in a moral battle which parallels her husband's knightly battles. Enid's true self, it seems, is aligned with the old dress which she feared would shame her husband; instead, the dress reflects her true value and self-worth, demonstrating that appearances can be misleading, and that it is in the shabby old clothes that her inner beauty may best be displayed. Tennyson adds, then, an interior, emotional dimension to the clothing as a way of constructing a personal, not social, identity for his heroine. His poem also plays to Victorian concepts of morality concerning dress: concerns about vanity, immodesty and pride are undermined by the eventual demonstration of the strength of the 'faded silk' over 'fresh splendour'; the old and comfortable dress resonates with Enid's fidelity when compared with the 'fresh splendour' sought by the unfaithful Queen.

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Fashion and the *Poveri Vergognosi*: The Shamed Poor of *Quattrocento* Florence as Emissaries of Honour, Virtue and Respectability.

Hughes Johnson

The image of a woman modestly dressed to attend only to the concerns in the private realm would never have been valued by a patriarch to visualise family honour.(1)

This short statement from Carole Collier Frick's scholarly and highly illuminating publication, *Dressing Renaissance Florence* may well ring true when applied to Domenico Ghirlandaio's fresco decoration of the Tornabuoni chapel in the Dominican church of Santa Maria Novella, as the dominant female figures evident in several of the scenes are patrician women dressed in the finest cloth that money could buy.(2) Nevertheless, this paper will argue that the concept of family honour during the *Quattrocento* was not exclusive to the ruling classes, nor was the visualisation of such an ideal restricted to patrician models.

Founded in 1442 by Antonio Pierozzi (1389-1459), Archbishop of Florence, better known today as Saint Antoninus, and aided by the munificence of Cosimo 'the elder' de' Medici (1389-1464), the lay confraternity of the Buonomini di San Martino brought relief to those who were considered too honourable to beg for themselves. Their oratory is situated half-way between Florence's Piazza della Signoria and the Duomo. Historically a private space given over to the activities of the twelve good men, the oratory has only recently been opened to the public for viewing.

The oratory's fresco decorations (which I believe were executed in tandem with the Tornabuoni Chapel murals) consist of a cycle of ten painted lunettes depicting two scenes from the life of Saint Martin, the remainder illustrating acts of charity performed by the Buonomini, based on the seven Corporal Works of Mercy. The depictions appear barely to have been mentioned in art historical circles, let alone analysed to any degree, despite the cursory acknowledgement of scholars since the nineteenth century. This is not to say that the painted decorations attributed to the workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio are unimportant, but simply that in connoisseurial

terms they are not of the same quality as Ghirlandaio's paintings within the Tornabuoni chapel. They do however perform a similar function although, where the Tornabuoni chapel frescoes associate concepts including piety, family honour and civic pride with the ruling classes, the Buonomini frescoes employ the shamed poor as virtuous models to communicate strikingly similar ideals.

Here we see the Buonomini's *Giving Food to the Hungry and Drink to the Thirsty* fresco. Set within the confraternity's own oratory, the scene shows a typical Wednesday's activity during the late *quattrocento*. Present are five Buonomini, dressed in red and black who have been represented dishing out wine and bread to four beneficiaries.

Focussing on the female beneficiary it is clear that she is over seventeen years old and has likely been married, given that she is wearing a full length cloak while out in public. The mantle or *fuori* covers her gown and is capacious enough to convey the idea that it was expensive. Its colour, which originally would have been black or dark, also suggests that she is now a widow. If we refer briefly to the 1473 Florentine statutes governing funerals we learn that widows were at liberty to wear their mourning cloaks indefinitely. Her left foot is just visible from beneath the cloak and she appears to be wearing leather soled hose that were often custom made and therefore an expensive piece of apparel. They lacked, however, the high fashion status of the platform clogs or *chopine*, often donned by contemporary patrician women and thus appear to be a more suitable choice of footwear for a widow or a matron.

On her head she wears a white cowl, or *cappucco*, which would perhaps allude to her honourable nature since female integrity during the fifteenth century was partly dependent on a woman's body, and often on her face as well, being covered or concealed when in public view. Without attempting to merge the Buonomini female into the genre of donor portraiture, this woman is not unlike a Renaissance benefactress with regard to her demeanour

Clearly she is not kneeling in prayer like the figure of Nera Corsi depicted in the Sassetti chapel murals, however, her subdued, customary dress affords her a similar measure of humility to the genuflecting wife of Francesco Sassetti.

According to the Renaissance polymath Leon Battista Alberti, proper reverence also relied on a woman's "self-restraint" and on her "air of discretion." If we thus examine the facial expression of our anonymous woman it is clear that in this respect she conforms to Alberti's view. The artist has ensured that she is neither making eye contact with the brother serving her nor

(1) C. C. Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence: Families Fortunes and Fine Clothing*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, p. 209

(2) Rembrandt Duits, 'Figured Riches: The Value of Gold Brocades in Fifteenth-Century Florentine Painting', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 62, 1999, discusses the worth of gold brocades during the Renaissance.

with the painting's viewer. Her eyes are downcast in a modest manner and her face has an air of serenity about it. She is a paradigm of modesty like Francesco da Barberino's archetypal young widow who, we can imagine, eschewed cosmetics and "washed in water and wore a veil." An example of pious beauty, her fairness is encouraged only by her plain guise and devotion. Furthermore, simply that she is present within the oratory, loaded down with bread and wine, would suggest that her absent husband is (for whatever reason) unable to "stock the [family] cupboard"⁽³⁾ for her so she has resorted to charity in order to carry out a traditionally masculine chore while remaining an "exemplar of virtue," not unlike the mantled patrician females in Ghirlandaio's Tornabuoni Chapel frescoes.⁽⁴⁾

Moving on to another of the Buonomini frescoes, we now become privy to the initial visit made by two members of the confraternity to the home of a family whose poverty and therefore vulnerability has been brought to their attention. This type of young family were the exact demographic which made up the majority of Buonomini beneficiaries during the confraternity's first thirty years of activity⁽⁵⁾ and the absence of even cheap or ephemeral household decorations suggest that this family have nothing that they can sell or pawn.

Their only recourse now is to accept help from the Buonomini. In these situations, where family members were perhaps physically well and able, albeit they found themselves on the threshold of disaster, the confraternity would make financial bequests that detailed nothing of what was purchased with the money. The records simply state that the amounts given were for "their needs."⁽⁶⁾

Despite relying on the Buonomini's charity, the women depicted in this fresco are uncommon, possibly unique examples because not only are they shown dressed to go about their daily domestic duties, but they are simultaneously conducting themselves with a virtue and decorum that allows the viewer to appreciate their honour undeterred by their ragged appearance. According to Alberti and Saint Bernardino of Siena (1380–1444), a good wife took care of the home and "details of housekeeping should [be committed] entirely into [her]

hands." Furthermore, there should be "no household goods of which [she] had not learned both the place and the purpose". Accordingly, in the Buonomini fresco we are privy to this female domain.

Central to the composition stands the matriarch of the household, dressed in a patched green gown, worn hose, and a veil. Her appearance, despite its shabbiness, is not dissimilar to other coeval depictions of honourable matrons, although the colour of her aged garment alludes to times past. That her dress is green signifies the theological virtue Hope and reminds the viewer that this old garment was perhaps purchased when the woman was younger. Likewise, the colour assures us of her former youthful chastity as green had been a colour associated with virginity at least from the time of Dante. This leads us to believe that her "integrity, purity and the character of the perfect mistress of the household" is simply overshadowed by temporary poverty. Moreover, her stance and pose reflect a degree of familiarity and assurance regarding the running of a household. Her feet are parted squarely, more akin to the Renaissance depictions of male public servants who, because of the "grave moral weight" that they carry, must be shown standing sure and firm. She is also looking directly at the notary while pointing out something that may be of interest to him. Alberti stated quite clearly that "the woman's character is the jewel of her family" and while the Buonomini matriarch may have lost some of her lustre, her dominant position at the centre of the composition reassures the viewer that she is the virtuous gem that crowns this perhaps temporarily jaded scene of domesticity.

Her daughters too, who seem to be conversing quietly just outside the doorway at the back of the room, appear to be reflections of an honourable upbringing. Both are dressed for chores in day gowns and headscarves and their downcast eyes and "honest and moderate" expressions conform to the Renaissance ideal of female propriety, notwithstanding their heavily patched garments. The two female siblings are, however, depicted standing at the edge of a portal and although

⁽⁶⁾*Entrata e Uscita 1478-1482*, unpaginated, (1.2.1.0.2.), ABSM reads:

'Poveri detti adi detto β venti dati a figlio di benedetto donto barbiere... san po gattolini p [per] loro bisogni di licentia di giuliano caferucci et mia p[per] uno'.

See also *Entrata e Uscita 1478-1482*, unpaginated, (1.2.1.0.2.), ABSM, which reads:

'Poveri detti adi 13 di detto y dua β cinque dati a nanni di... e a ma Xntonia di... e a ma piera di... τ carmaldoli β15 p[per] uno di licentia di franco miniatore...'

See also *Entrata e Uscita 1478-1482*, c. 131verso, (1.2.1.0.2.), ABSM, which reads:

'Poveri detti adi 23 di detto [y 17 β 5] dati agnolo peruzi p [per] suoi bisogni p[per] partito di tutti'.

⁽³⁾L. B Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, trans. R. N. Walkins, Columbia, University of California Press, 1969, p. 26. For more on the father being the provider of food see p. 242.

⁽⁴⁾C. C. Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence: Families Fortunes and Fine Clothing*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, p. 210 discusses mantled women.

⁽⁴⁾L. B Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, trans. R. N. Walkins, Columbia, University of California Press, 1969, p. 36 for a father's duties.

⁽⁵⁾A. Spicciani, 'The 'Poveri Vergognosi' in Fifteenth-Century Florence: The first 30 years' activity of the Buonomini di San Martino', in T. Riis (ed.), *Aspects of Poverty in Early Modern Europe*, Florence, Badia Fiesolana, 1981, p. 119.

they may at present be free from vice, poverty could well entice them through this symbolic opening and into a world of corruption. Archbishop Antoninus, advised women not to stand “murmuring in the doorway” because gossip and dawdling were seen to be a spiritual threat to them.

Returning once more to a scene set within the Buonomoni oratory, the fresco entitled *Clothing the Naked*, shows the raised carrel that, in a previous image, was piled high with bread; now, has been moved to another part of the oratory where it has become a station for the distribution of cloth and garments. In this semblance of realistic space, the artists have depicted a Procurator and his helper allocating lengths of linen and apparel while another brother sits and records what has been and what will be administered to the six various beneficiaries. The cloth shown in the fresco painting, were it real, could well have come to the confraternity as a donation, much like the one that Lorenzo de’ Medici made in 1478. Although the original purchase receipt has not been located, there is however an entry in the Buonomini ledgers that records an amount of money, received from the bank of Lorenzo de’ Medici, which paid for the duty and transportation of ten bolts of cloth.(7)

The first recipient of alms that we will consider in this image is the young lady to the right of the composition who seems to be accompanied by an older male relative, perhaps her father.

Although this bearded gentleman is dressed in Florence’s “civic uniform” not unlike the Buonomini, we cannot consider him to be one of their number given that he has a protective arm around the shoulder of the female beneficiary, an unthinkable gesture if performed by a stranger (8). Perhaps, then, the young lady has been accompanied through the Florentine streets by a close member of her male kin so that she might collect a gown or a cape from the Buonomini in anticipation of winter, as various girls are recorded to have done in the summer of 1488.(9) Some beneficiaries of the Buonomini’s charity however did not attend the oratory in order to benefit from new clothes, even if the painting is a true representation of this particular activity. For instance in February 1479, an amount of money was entrusted to a Madonna Benvenuta di Lazero in order for her to purchase firewood and have a winter overdress made.(10) Returning our attention to the girl in the painting however, we notice that she wears a dress, or gamura, and on top of this she is sporting a *cotta*, that is, a sleeveless overdress, often worn by women during the summer.(11) The fact that she is not wearing a long cloak in public also suggests that she has not yet reached her age of majority.(12) Evidently, the young lady is well dressed as her hose and gown show no signs of wear and her sleeves are slit to reveal the fine linen *camicia* that she dons as an undergarment – a practice that became fashionably popular during the mid *Quattrocento*.(13) Her hair, too, is styled in a manner that attests to her middle-class status, as her forehead is customarily bare while the majority of her elaborately curled hair

(7) *Entrata e Uscita 1469-1478*, c. 8 verso, (1.2.1.0.1.), ABSM. ‘Da Lorenzo detto adi detto h trenta y dua β dieci...avemo p[per] lui dal bancho suo reco domenico mazinghi sono p[per] la gabelle et porto di peze dieci di panno bisullo sicomperono p[per] lui...’

(8) L. Sebreondi, ‘The Congregation and the Fresco Cycle’, in J. M. Bradburne, (ed.), *Hidden Voices: Discovering the Buonomini di San Martino*, Florence, Giunti, 2011, p. 84 also maintains the theory that the elderly gentleman is not one of the Buonomini although she does not elucidate why. Nevertheless, in her article, ‘Clothes and Teenagers: What Young Men Wore in Fifteenth-Century Florence’, in K. Eisenbichler, (ed.), *The Pre-Modern Teenager, Youth and Society 1150-1650, Essays and Studies I*, Toronto, Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2002, pp. 27–51, she does mention that the old man is probably from one of the more lofty social echelons as he wears a black cloak (*lucco*) that was ‘reserved for the higher social classes’. Kent, ‘The Buonomini di San Martino: Charity for “the glory of God, the honour of the city and the commemoration of myself”’, in F. Ames-Lewis (ed.), *Cosimo ‘il Vecchio’ de’ Medici, 1389-1464: Essays in Commemoration of the 600th Anniversary of Cosimo de’ Medici’s Birth*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992, p. 56 mentions the Buonomini as sometime recipients of their own charity. Correspondingly, if the elderly gentleman is one of the brothers – he is actually embracing the concept of charity and shielding it with his cloak, which is perhaps related to the protection that *Madonna della Misericordia* accords. Also, as Sebreondi suggest in her aforementioned article, the old man likely represents one of the ages of man and one of the three social classes – the wealthy. See also Ginevra N. di Camugliano, *The Chronicles of a Florentine Family 1200-1470*, London, J. Cape, 1933, p. 142, for a short discussion on the colors associated with the three theological virtues. The colour red appears in the tricolor dress worn by Beatrice when she appeared to Dante in Purgatory and can signify either charity or love.

(9) The Buonomini ledgers from June 1488 record that Lisa daughter of X was given a gown costing 12β and in September of the same year, Girolamea, daughter of y was given more money towards paying for a cloak. ‘Suo manto ... piu monette ... pezo dello debito’. Due to water damage the pages on this section of the ledger are not numbered. Likewise, in March 1478, the daughter of the San Bartolomeo baker was given a new gown. *Entrata e Uscita del Proposto March 1479-1481*, (1.2.4.0.1), ABSM. In April 1478 Madonna Manetta from San Piero Gattolino was also given an overdress. *Entrata e Uscita 1478-1482*, c. 130 recto, (1.2.1.0.2.), ABSM.

(10) *Entrata e Uscita 1478-1482*, (unpaginated) (1.2.1.0.2.), ABSM reads:

‘poveri detti adi 12 di detto β trenta fidieron a ma benuenuta di lazero sta . . . p[per] uno soma si legne e maniffatura d una cioppa a licentia di fanco miniatore...’.

(11) C. C. Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence: Families Fortunes and Fine Clothing*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, p. 309.

(12) *Ibid.* p. 154. See also L. Sebreondi, ‘Clothes and Teenagers: What Young Men Wore in Fifteenth-Century Florence’, in K. Eisenbichler, (ed.), *The Pre-Modern Teenager, Youth and Society 1150-1650, Essays and Studies I*, Toronto, Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2002, pp. 27–50. Sebreondi makes the distinction between ‘*robe larghe per di sopra* (loose garments worn on top)’ and ‘*vestu stretti per di sotto* (tight garments worn underneath)’.

(13) C. C. Frick, *Dressing Renaissance Florence: Families Fortunes and Fine Clothing*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002, p. 192.

is arranged beneath a small *cappellina*, a type of headgear commonly worn by both girls and women during this period.⁽¹⁴⁾ Not quite the “icon of female perfection,” a status that Paola Tinagli accurately accords the young Tornabuoni women in the choir frescoes of Santa Maria Novella, the Buonomini female is nonetheless a virtuous young woman.⁽¹⁵⁾ She has managed to refrain from showing any sign of impropriety as far as her clothing and behaviour are concerned and appears to the viewer as chaste and “perfectly balanced” in spirit, and not at all “vain and foolish.”⁽¹⁶⁾ Furthermore, her gaze acts as evidence of her purity, which according to Alberti was “part of the dowry [a mother] passes on to her daughter.”⁽¹⁷⁾ Accordingly, then, the girl’s face is beautiful in its serenity and her chaste eyes are downcast in what would be considered a respectable pose.⁽¹⁸⁾ Likewise, the blush on her cheeks adds to the outward appearance of innocence while simultaneously suggesting that such a fine specimen of virtue, fashioned in part by her parent’s honour, will inevitably become a good wife.⁽¹⁹⁾ If indeed she is not married already. I suspect that she may be, given that her hair has been depicted as decorously bound and not falling loose. Perhaps her aged companion is not her father then, but her ailing husband?

Two other female beneficiaries are also present in this scene. Although they are partially obscured by the gentleman in the yellow doublet,⁽²⁰⁾ we can still determine that the pair comprises a mature, mantled woman and a nubile young girl who are being given a length of linen cloth by one of the brothers.

It is unfortunate that this particular part of the mural has deteriorated with time and much of the original colour is missing from around the head and torso of the young girl. What is striking, however, despite the decay and the less than dextrous

execution of the figure, are the similarities between her appearance and that of the woman considered to be Ludovica Tornabuoni in *The Birth of Mary* fresco in the Cappella Maggiore in Santa Maria Novella. While I am not for a moment suggesting that the figure in the Buonomini fresco is Ludovica Tornabuoni, I would like to suggest that Ghirlandaio may well have allowed either compositional ideas from workshop pattern books or even cartoons that were designed for previous fresco cycles to be re-used and adapted to fit this particular project.⁽²¹⁾ The similarity between the two women is striking – they share the same hairstyle, analogous long, curved noses, thin lips, and chins that jut out in an identical manner. What they do not share, however, is the same artistic hand.⁽²²⁾ Notwithstanding the differences in location and social status, both Ludovica Tornabuoni and our anonymous young beneficiary are meant to convey a uniform message. These women, then, not only accord to the fifteenth century notion of “fashionable beauty” with their blond locks, plucked hairline to reveal high foreheads, and pale skin, but they are also paradigms of virginity.⁽²³⁾ Both are included within their respective frescoes in order to visually articulate a specific “component of the city’s honour” – the virtue of its women.⁽²⁴⁾ Ludovica Tornabuoni’s presence in the choir frescoes of Santa Maria Novella attests to this as she is representative of Florence’s nubile yet chaste female “capital” that, like any other asset, could be traded and exchanged.⁽²⁵⁾

(21) This theory derives mainly from my study of the Buonomini frescoes in relation to Ghirlandaio’s Santa Maria Novella paintings. Of particular interest is his rendering of the *Birth of Saint John the Baptist* in the Tornabuoni/Tornaquinci chapel (Fig. 74). There are though other motifs that are apparent from Ghirlandaio’s earlier works, for example the Santa Fina frescoes (Figs. 75 & 76). Similarities between objects and groupings within this cycle and the Buonomini cycle suggest the continued use of workshop pattern books. Also M. O’Malley, ‘Finding Fame: painting and the making of careers in Renaissance Italy’, *Renaissance Studies*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2010, p. 9 mentions how Perugino perhaps used drawings made from existing cartoons in order to fulfill commissions executed for moderate fees. Perugino, of course, also worked on several prestigious commissions with Ghirlandaio including the Sistine Chapel and the Sala dei Gigli.

(22) Giuseppe Marchini, ‘The Frescoes in the Choir of Santa Maria Novella’, *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 95, no. 607, 1953, p. 20. The evidence of many hands, some of very poor quality has been noted by Marchini in the Tornabuoni chapel.

(23) P. Tinagli, *Women in Italian Renaissance Art: Gender, Representation, Identity*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1997, p. 70. in D. A. Brown, (ed.), *Virtue and Beauty Leonardo’s Ginevra de’ Benci and Renaissance Portraits of Women*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2001, pp. 12–13 also discusses female paradigms, virtue and how concepts of female beauty during the Renaissance were often derived from literature.

(24) Judith Bryce, ‘Performing for Strangers: Women, Dance and Music in Quattrocento Florence’, *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 54, no. 4, 2001, p. 1083.

(25) *Ibid.* pp. 1083–84.

(14) *Ibid.* p. 304. See also Joanna Woods-Marsden, ‘Portrait of the Lady 1430-1520’, in D. A. Brown, (ed.), *Virtue and Beauty Leonardo’s Ginevra de’ Benci and Renaissance Portraits of Women*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2001, p. 65 states that virgins were portrayed with mostly loose hair while married women had theirs decorously bound’. She also maintains, on p.67, that a plucked hairline made a cultivated appearance.

(15) P. Tinagli, *Women in Italian Renaissance Art: Gender, Representation, Identity*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1997, p. 67.

(16) L. B Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, trans. R. N. Walkins, Columbia, University of California Press, 1969, p. 213.

(17) *Ibid.*

(18) *Ibid.*

(19) L. B Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, trans. R. N. Walkins, Columbia, University of California Press, 1969, p.211.

(20) This type of garment was the sort of thing provided to needy young men, according to their records. *Entrata e Uscita 1478-1482*, c. 129 recto (1.2.1.0.2.), ABSM show how a man from San Piero Maggiore had a *farsetto* and a shirt purchased for him by the confraternity.

Furthermore, Ghirlandaio and his contemporaries acknowledged the idea that outer beauty reflected inner morality. His earlier portrait of Ludovica's sister-in-law, Giovanna, which was probably used to aid the artist's depiction of her in the Tornabuoni chapel, bears the inscription, "O that it were possible to reflect morality in a painting, for if it were then this would be the loveliest picture in the world."⁽²⁶⁾

Accordingly, then, the young female in the Buonomini mural is an investment in the making and her worth, already evident from her apparent rectitude, will increase with assistance from the confraternity who will provide her with clothes and, in so doing, retract the veil of poverty that obscures her virtue so that she, too, can be seen as credible an example of female family honour as her patrician counterpart.⁽²⁷⁾

Furthermore, as women and girls are present in all but two of the Buonomini frescoes (based on the Seven Corporal Works of Mercy and the Buonomini's own good works), yet in reality would only have made up around one fifth of those individuals who were helped by the confraternity, the messages they are given to convey, by their charitable patriarchs and the artists who painted them, must indeed be significant.⁽²⁸⁾ "The space [that these ordinary women] occupy and the air they breathe has all the properties of an everyday world."⁽²⁹⁾ Their role, however, as emissaries of virtue and respectability, expressed as it is by non-patricians depicted in both public and private settings, is unique, innovative, and highly informative.

(26) See J. Manca, 'Moral Stance in Italian Renaissance Art: Image, Text and Meaning', *Artibus et Historiae*, vol. 22, no. 44, p. 53 for the inscription on Domenico Ghirlandaio's *Portrait of Giovanna Tornabuoni*. G. Marchini, 'The Frescoes in the Choir of Santa Maria Novella', *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 95, no. 607, 1953, p. 320 is helpful with regard to Ghirlandaio's use of existing panel paintings as a guide for portraits in the Tornabuoni chapel frescoes.

(27) L. B. Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, trans. R. N. Walkins, Columbia, University of California Press, 1969, p. 250.

(28) J. Henderson, *Piety and Charity in Late Medieval Florence*, London University of Chicago Press, 1994, pp. 389–390.

(29) M. B. Becker, 'Aspects of Lay Piety in Early Renaissance Florence' in C. Trinkhaus and H. A. Oberman (eds.), *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion: Papers from the University of Michigan Conference*, Leiden, Brill, 1974, p. 192.

CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Unveiling the Narrative of the White Bridal Dress

Elizabeth Fischer, Iulia Hasdeu

Introduction: the recent controversy over the Islamic veil in Europe

The spring of 2016 saw an outburst of media coverage over the accusations made by the French minister of women's rights Laurence Rossignol against the Italian designers Dolce & Gabbana's "modest fashion" collection of couture *hijabs* and *abbayas*. The Minister declared that it was "irresponsible" in "encouraging the confinement of women's bodies" ("*la promotion de l'enfermement du corps des femmes*"). The fact that the collection had been advertised on the brand's Instagram account only rather than on its official website, as specifically directed to the Arab market, was completely overlooked. The outrage and media buzz generated in France by this "modest fashion" initiative illustrate how much of the public debate on veiling in continental Europe actually targets the intersection between norms of race/ethnicity and those of sexuality/body. The contemporary post-nine-eleven 2001 political context has been characterized by a clash of politics, specifically islamophobia in the face of the enforcement of "laïcité" - i.e. secularity or the separation of Church and State - especially in France and French-speaking areas of Europe such as in Switzerland. In this context, these norms are clearly asserting a contemporary hegemonic type for femininity and the feminine, operating by the exclusion of certain body types - including facial types and body sizes - and forms of dress (Mernissi 2001, Chollet 2012). As we shall try to illustrate, this is but one manifestation of a political context in which discourses on human rights and gender equality are used to draw up and enforce an ideally homogenous society, founded among other elements on gender and racial hierarchies, which excludes those that do not fit into or adhere to the required socio-political profile (Bilge 2010).

By the beginning of 2000, the Muslim veil was widely depicted in Europe as an "ugly and nasty" outward sign of the men's domination over women. Such was the case in the movie *Submission*, in which a transparent burqa is a central piece of the film's visual construction criticizing the treatment of women by Islam. Written by Somalian-born Dutch politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali, icon of Muslim woman's emancipation in the Netherlands, it was produced in 2004 by the controversial film director Theo Van Gogh, well known for his anti-Islam positions. In France,

the Iranian-French writer and essayist Chahdortt Djavann published *Bas les voiles* (1) (2003) and became a fierce advocate against veiling, invited to numerous television and public debates. In 2005 the French government reinforced the law of "laïcité" (secularity) with an article banning the display of "conspicuous religious signs in schools and the public space" which specifically addresses the veiled Muslim woman. Since then, many veiled French girls have been sent back home from schools on the basis of this law. Former President Sarkozy declared in a parliamentary address on June 22, 2009, that the *burqa*, which covers women from head to toe, is "a sign of subjugation, of debasement" and as such, is "not welcome on French territory". In 2010, the French National Assembly passed a law prohibiting "the dissimulation of the face in the public space" - though its application affects only a very small percentage of women, no more than about one thousand women, that is 0.1 percent of the Muslim population on French territory (Joppke 2010). Several European countries followed suit in adopting or trying to pass anti-burqa laws, among them Belgium (the first country to pass an anti-burqa law), Switzerland (2), Italy, even though the percentage of women wearing covered dress is very low and that seasonal tourists from the Gulf regions form the bulk of these in certain instances.

The European discourse that the Islamic veil's cultural meaning is that of women's implicit or explicit submission to male authority fallaciously suggests that, on the contrary, European dress universally expresses women's liberated status (Scott 2010; Abu-Lughod 2013). This universalistic assumption is belied by the fact that women still earn around 16% less than men in most European countries, to give just one example (3). In line with the critique of European universalism which tends to systematically stigmatize the Muslim veil our paper examines female veiling in Western customs. Historical and cultural arguments provide elements to reconsider the submission of women in Western society through religious dress. More par

(2) Each Canton in Switzerland can legislate independently; as yet there exists no federal legislation on the subject. In June 2016, the Canton of Ticino passed legislation prohibiting the wearing of the veil in public. The Ticino tourist industry opposed the ban on the veil, as the luxury sector depends on the rich Arab and Gulf clientele. A mere 2,1% of the tourist population is concerned by the wearing of the veil. The Swiss-German Canton of Glaris voted against the ban by popular vote on 6 May 2017. In both instances, the anti-veil laws were submitted by right-wing nationalist political parties. See <https://www.letemps.ch/suisse/2016/07/01/salafiste-nora-illi-defie-lo-i-tessinoise-antiburqa>

(3) Commission européenne - Direction générale de la Justice (2014), *Éliminer l'écart de rémunération entre les femmes et les hommes au sein de l'Union européenne*, Luxembourg: Office des publications de l'Union européenne. See also http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/gender-pay-gap/index_fr.htm

(1) The title literally means *Veils off*.

ticularly, we wish to focus on the aesthetical and social survival of the veil in the whitebridal dress of the Western wedding ritual. Indeed, in contrast to the above shortly presented public debate and objections to the Muslim veil, there exists a real blind spot in European/Western society on the survival of the veil in social rituals and religious customs.

A religious tradition inherited from the Mediterranean

The three major monotheistic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – took up a secular veiling practice, present all around the Mediterranean basin, which marked the submission of married women to their husband and the male members of the inner family circle (Briel 2006). The veil signalled the respectability of the woman as well as her status; it acted as a form of protection. In contrast, slaves and prostitutes were not allowed to wear the veil. Roman matrons wore a head covering over their hair, down to their shoulders and covering their ears. The head veil symbolized the recognition of the rights of the *pater familias* over his wife, much as in the all areas of the Mediterranean which kept up the custom of veiling woman in public, whatever the prevailing religion. The Roman vestals were also veiled to mark their condition of consecrated virgins, who were separated from the rest of the world, mystically married to Vesta, hence not available for men. The Latin verb *nubere* means “to cover, to cover the head with a veil”, hence “to get married” for a woman, who literally and figuratively “dons the veil” (4). The veil functions as a symbolic separation of the female individual and her body, cut off from her family and background. The newly wedded woman must leave her family behind to integrate that of her husband. Early Christians adopted the Roman custom of covering sacrificial objects and of veiling women during the wedding ceremony and imposing head covering in public to married women (5).

The wearing of the veil does not figure as an explicit religious prescription in the Torah or the Coran. However the New Testament does so explicitly in Saint Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians (6). Saint Paul equates the veiling of women with their ontological inferiority to men, deliberately planned by God in the apostle’s view (7). If man “is the image and glory of

God » (v. 7) he need not cover his head. On the other hand, “woman is the glory of man” (v. 7) and was created from and for man (v.9), so “for this reason a woman should have a sign of authority on her head” (v.10). Thus Christianity was the first of the three major monotheist religions to impose the veiling of woman on the basis of strictly religious reasons and theological arguments.

The long-standing tradition of head covering for women in certain parts of Europe has evolved little over time. It lives on in the rituals of marriage and mourning, in the taking of the veil for monastic vows and in nun’s daily wear, in regions where women are required to cover their heads when entering a Church or for confession and prayer. Women wearing veils and headscarves in public space, whether they are Jewish, Christians or Muslims, are still found in the Mediterranean areas and in rural Central and Eastern Europe. In all fundamentalist religious circles, women are required to cover their body and head. The stability or renewal of these customs is closely connected to religious revivals, as well as nationalistic trends which typically reinforce gender differences. In present day Christian orthodox Russia, modest fashion designers are very active and even organize catwalk shows to advertise this modest attire.

The Catholic celebration of purity

The long white wedding dress and veil embody a tradition that harks back to the custom of veiling women as a mark of their submission to the authority of men and in assigning them first and foremost to the role of begetting children. The special, often exceptional, dress specifically made for the bride on her wedding day, with its traditional long cut, heavy layered skirt and train, worn with veil, tiara and fancy shoes (usually high heels covered in delicate fabric), complete with a bouquet of flowers, hasn’t changed fundamentally since its appearance among privileged circles during the 19th century. If the veil harks back to antique traditions, the colour white marks is of a more recent origin, rooted in religious Catholic rituals of first communion and confirmation during which young girls wore long white dresses and a veil. The colour white and the veil symbolically represented the virginity of the bride upon marriage (8), linked to the dogma of Immaculate Conception, proclaiming the Virgin Mary’s purity by papal bull in 1854. The Virgin as figure of abnegation henceforth set the model of conduct for the women of the bourgeoisie, as well as aesthetic model in the wearing of the veil for the marriage ritual so fun

(8) In some monastic orders, the nuns wore wedding dresses for the taking of the veil ceremony in the 19th century.

(4) « Nubile » and « nuptials » derive from the latin *nubere*.

(5) The *velatio* which occurred during the wedding ceremony at times also included the husband. It was done by holding a width of cloth over the heads of husband and wife at a given moment during the marriage rite. It has survived in various wedding traditions. However, only the bride is veiled during the entire ceremony.

(6) St Paul, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, chapter 11

(7) *Ibid.* v. 3 “But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and a husband the head of his wife, and God the head of Christ.”

damental to 19th century society (Zazzo 1999). It also set an unattainable benchmark of purity for every woman and mother, creating a permanent double bind for the female sex.

Each spring, heralding the summer wedding season, the main fashion magazines dedicate special issues to bridal wear and celebrations. Several revealing elements emerge from the analysis of these publications. A quick survey of some 200 pages in recent marriage catalogues shows the following distribution:

- 187 pictures of women (alone) wearing the traditional long wedding dress, 2 in mini-skirts and 2 in pant suits; the colour of all the outfits is white;
- 9 pictures of bride-grooms (alone);
- 11 pictures of wedding groups or friends;
- 16 pictures of couples;
- 1 single picture of a gay couple.

The sociologist Erving Goffman's concept of "gender display" was used to analyse this cluster of images. Women in wedding dress are hyper-ritualized as sweet, childish, innocent, obedient, genuine, alienated as in almost 70% of feminine characters in advertisements (Goffman 1976). In the photographs of brides on their own, they stand hesitantly, their gaze is seductive or downcast; in the pictures of couples all the brides are less tall than the bridegrooms who protectively clasp them to their chest. The all over picture does not deviate from the traditional gender hierarchy of a heterosexual society dominated by white men.

The majority of wedding dresses advertised by the magazines and websites dedicated to wedding preparations fall into the traditional category of a dress that does not follow fashion in its main structure and that is worn with a veil. Today's wedding dress recycles the cut of 19th century female dress, with bustle and train or even crinoline bell-like shapes; the corsage recalls the corset, for example with lacing at the back reminiscent of the physical restrictions imposed on the female body. The conservative unfashionable wedding outfit extolled at length by magazines is a long-standing tradition, attested in historic as well as contemporary aristocratic and high-class circles. The specific whale-boned bodice (called *corps* in the 18th century) worn by French queens on their wedding day for centuries was much more constraining than the normal bodice. The Queen was expected to wear it thereafter on all state occasions, signalling her status as model for all women and mothers in France and mother of the French crown-

prince. As was customary, before Marie Antoinette stepped into France in order to marry Louis-Auguste, future King Louis XVI, she was stripped naked of her native Austrian clothing. Only after she clothed herself in entirely French attire could she enter her new homeland (Weber 2007). The fact that aristocratic brides-to-be had to and still must adopt the dress of their husband's family and country, and never the contrary, emphasizes the bride's submission to male authority, further testifying that women's wedding attire embodies gender and sexuality issues and that the veil marks a separation. Bridal attire symbolizes genealogy as well as family and political alliances, along with the celebration of prestige and official pomp. By wearing a stately outfit that is outside the boundaries of fashion, the brides of the ruling classes assert the continuity of their lineage and that of the family they are entering. The wedding veil and dress signify that this continuity is entirely dependent on the bride's capacity to give birth to healthy children, accentuating the importance of the purity and fertility of her body in the ritual.

Veil, belt, garter, flower garland, bouquet are accessories that signify the closing and opening of the bride's body, her passage from virginity to fertility and reproductive sexuality. Each accessory encloses the woman's body and, during the marriage rite, is opened, undone or shared and given away in the case of the bouquet. The bride's wedding attire, symbolically enacting the opening of her body, celebrates and manifests her ability to fulfil her reproductive task (Zazzo 1999) while the colour white symbolizes her purity and virginity.

The more things change, the more they stay the same

The bride's wedding dress is a custom-made or specially bought garment. The search for the right outfit is a time consuming occupation. Most often, it is a dress to be worn only once. It must single out the bride as the most beautiful woman of the day and show her to her best advantage (Maillochon 2016). In contrast, the bridegroom's formal wedding suit is not a special outfit but just one of his good suits or best suit. In the case of State and princely weddings, the bridegroom wears military uniform in full regalia, underlining the distinct role allotted to each gender in Western society. The outfits of Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt for their 2014 wedding provide a telling example of the gendered dichotomy embedded in wedding clothing. Jolie's custom-made veil was embroidered with drawings made by the couples 6 children, explicitly linking her to notions of fertility and motherhood. Pitt wore a suit he had already worn and even had to borrow a tie on the spot from his eldest son for the formal photo session.

The magazines and websites dedicated to the wedding ceremony emphasize the preparation of the woman's body months ahead, prescribing diets and exercise routines in order to lose weight, as well as regular sessions of massaging, skin care, tanning, manicure, pedicure, hairdressing and more. The main part of the pre-wedding schedule is spent on shaping the bride-to-be's body. Nothing of the kind, or very little save a good haircut and shave the day before the ceremony, is expected of men (Maillochon 2016).

Very little thought and advice, if none at all, is provided on the meaning of a lifelong engagement and no time is scheduled for the couple to reflect together on their impending union and on how to lay the groundwork for the ups and downs of married life. (Maillochon 2016) Once again, the main emphasis of the intense pre-wedding preparations is set on the bride, reducing her to a body. This shows that her body is at stake in the social ritual of marriage: it must prove its pliancy in the face of physical transformation such as will be endured with pregnancy and birth during female married life (Verdier 1979).

However common contemporary '*de-mariage*' ("un-marriage") social practices (Théry 1993) such as partnership, cohabitation, and divorce have become, and deeply challenge the modern norm of marital union, the interest in and wearing of the traditional white wedding outfit hasn't abated (9). Artists such as Robert Gober, Gotscho, Zoe Buckman (10), iconic movie characters like Beatrix Kido (11) have repeatedly challenged the traditional heterosexual gendered model of marriage. In the 1960's, show business figures challenged the tradition, like Catherine Deneuve who wore a short sleeved little black dress for her wedding to photographer David Bailey in 1965. Nevertheless, from *haute-couture* designers to *fast fashion*, from the major European museums to popular open-spaces exhibitions and wedding fairs, from royalty and pop stars to the middle and lower classes, the white veiled wedding outfit reigns supreme, resulting in highly gendered practices and representations. To sum up, even though social customs change, the wedding dress stays the same: a royal-like scenography transforms the bride into a one-day princess, whose body extolls traditional norms of femininity, a fairy tale recreation as the stage for social achievement and class aspiration, a ritualized symbol of the fertile female body to be conquered and possessed by man.

Conclusion: woman's body is a battleground

During the last fifteen years in Europe, especially in the French speaking areas, a political crusade has been conducted against so-called 'religious signs' in public spaces. This crusade specifically targets the "Islamic veil" disregarding its various forms (*hijab*, *abbaya*, *chador*, *burqa*), colours, national, regional and personal style, oblivious to the diversity contexts and meanings in its wearing (urban vs rural, public vs private, private vs secular,...). The debate also evades other types of religious signs and male facial covering (hats or facial hair), and conveniently omits Christian veiling practices, or the wigs worn by Orthodox Jewish women in order to hide their natural hair. Therefore, it abusively uses the argument of gender equality to point out the Islamic veil as symbol of the masculine domination over women.

The term "crusade" is expressly used here as an appropriate way of framing the conflicting discourses and doublespeak surrounding the concept of secularity prevalent in Western democracies, as the few following examples demonstrate. While conducting the war in Afghanistan in order, among other motives, to liberate women "White men save Brown women from Brown men" in Spivak's words (1993), the G.W. Bush administration established close ties with the Methodist and Baptist lobbies promoting anti-abortion laws, in fact denying women control over their own body, whereas NGO's working to implement contraception programs to empower women, suffered severe cut backs. The 2004 papal letter to the bishops (12) stigmatised the feminists as adversaries of men and recalled that as John Paul II had written, "it will redound to the credit of society to make it possible for a mother – without inhibiting her freedom, without psychological or practical discrimination and without penalizing her as compared with other women – to devote herself to taking care of her children and educating them in accordance with their needs, which vary with age" (13), asserting that women's primary task is that of bearing and rearing children. None of these Christian attacks on gender equality, more specifically on women's rights, were criticized by leading politicians who did not hesitate to censure in the same breath Islamic discourses of similar nature (Coene and Longman, 2010).

One of the main consequences of this double language is that

(9) A majority of independent small scale fashion designers make a good part of their turnover thanks to the traditional wedding dress market – survey conducted in Geneva in 2017 by the authors.

(10) Robert Gober, *The Heart Is Not a Metaphor*, installation 2014-2015; Gotscho, *Wedding – No way out*, 1992, Zoe Buckman, *Let Her Rave*, 2017.

(11) Main character played by Uma Thurman in *Kill Bill* directed by Quentin Tarantino, 2001.

(12) Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Collaboration of Men and Women in the Church and in the World.

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/10/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20040731_collaboration_en.html

(13) Encyclical Letter *Laborem exercens* (September 14, 1981), 19: AAS 73 (1981), 627. Both the Catholic Church and the religious lobbies close to the G.W. Bush administration equally contested gay rights and gay marriage in parallel to their anti-feminist discourses, thus reinforcing the heterosexual gendered hierarchy.

the concept of “sexual democracy” as defined by Fassin (2010), i.e. gender equality and freedom of sexualities as core democratic principles in Western states, becomes a means of promoting the idea of a “sexual clash of cultures” (Fernando

2013). In other words gender equality is used as a convenient reason to stigmatise and exclude: « If sexual democracy is about sexual freedom and equality between sexes, its application to the exclusion of “others”, that is, its racialisation can eventually transform these lofty ideals into a practice that hinders sexual liberty by racializing sexual discrimination. » (Fassin 2010:523) This “othering the Other” takes the form of the «boundary patrolling» currently redefining Western citizenship, as stated by Bilge (2010:198): « our era is witness to a new political movement in which liberal discourses on human rights, more specifically women’s and homosexuals’ rights, are used to reassert the *Kulturation* and to draw up a political profile of the individual who is qualified (or not) to be part of it. »

In this light, the mainstream public discourse about the Islamic veil in Europe is the expression of the reconfiguration of the contemporary hegemonic national (Euro-Atlantic) gender-class-race system within the neo-colonial context. Since “unveiled” icons like Ayaan Hirsi Ali or Chahdortt Djavann are both muses and allegoric representations of these new politics, the “veiled” feminine figures are made to stand as metonymic figures for anything perceived as Muslim or Islamic, whether minarets or terrorists. The veil is even figuratively used to symbolize anything Muslim as a threat to Western values, as is abundantly clear in recent Swiss media and right-wing nationalist political campaign posters (Parini 2012). This abusive over-use of the Muslim veil, shown only in its black form, is grounded in a purely biased and gendered interpretation of its use all the while reinforcing this partial interpretation.

Our on-going research intends to “dis-cover” the daily, ritual, social and ceremonial diversity of practices of the Islamic veil, to look at it as *dress* instead of symbol, while rethinking the white bridal veil as sign (instead of dress) of a patriarchal system in which the submission of women is taken as a given whether for theological or socio-cultural reasons. By considering parallels and common features shared by the *white* and *non-white* veil, we support the critical analysis sketched below. Instead of pointing out who might be the worse oppressor, constructing a hierarchy between “them” and “us” playing into the hand of “the otherness of the Other”, it is surely more productive and consistent to recognize that women’s bodies are invariably at stake in civilizational anxieties (Rey 2005:205). “Woman’s body is a battleground” to paraphrase

Barbara Kruger’s poster *Untitled (Your body is a battleground)*, produced for the 1989 Women’s March on Washington in support of reproductive freedom. That year was marked by numerous demonstrations protesting a new wave of anti-abortion laws chipping away at the 1973 Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision. The work is a close-up of a woman’s face, disembodied, split in positive and negative exposures. It marks a stark divide, which can be interpreted as the double bind women come up against in our “sexual democracy”. By uncovering the blind spot on the narratives symbolized by the white bridal veil in Western society, we aim to show that Fassin’s concept of “sexual democracy” is not only about immigration laws and policy practices, selecting the qualified people for the gender equality, but also about the esthetic (post/neo)-colonial supremacy of the *white* veil on the *colored (dark)* one.

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Dressed to Help: Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service

Camilla Maria Ravani, National Maritime Museum London

Abstract

In 1884, after a committee decided that improvements were needed to nursing care in the Royal Navy, a uniformed Naval Nursing Service was introduced for the first time. In 1902, Queen Alexandra became President of the Nursing Staff and in her honour, the Naval Nursing Service was renamed Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service.

From the very beginning uniforms played a major role in defining the QARNNS. Focusing on the QARNNS uniform collections from the reign of Queen Victoria to the 20th century held at the National Maritime Museum, this research illustrates how the uniforms tell us a great deal about women's clothing, medical care, the navy and society.

This research explores the themes of women's rights and individuality through the prism of nurses' uniforms. Who decided what women should wear and why, as well as how did the decision making over nursing uniform change over the period of study?

Changes to uniform coincided with major societal changes such as the rise of the women's suffrage movement, the work of women during wartime and the changing world of fashion, all of which resulted in a more practical style of women's dress and lasting changes to perceptions of women and female identity.

Keywords: Naval uniform; Societal changes; Female identity.

During the 19th century women were largely excluded from public and professional life. The prevailing social idea was that women and men occupied separate social spheres. The woman's sphere revolved around the home, rearing children and supporting caring for the husband domestically. This had begun to be challenged as early as 18th century by Mary Wollstonecraft and by the early 20th century these ideas were gaining wider traction. Nursing was seen as an area within the woman's traditional sphere, but, as we shall see, through its increasing professionalisation, assisted by the introduction of uniforms, the role of the woman in the work place was changing.

The end of the 19th century saw the reorganisation of the hospital's nursing staff. A demand for nurses led to the decision to introduce female nurses on the staff of naval hospitals. The female nurses were, for the first time, trained Sisters. One of the first training school was the St. Thomas Hospital. The training lasted for one year and was combining theory and practical work.

In 1884, the first Naval Nursing Sisters were established in the Royal Naval Hospital of Plymouth and Portsmouth. The minimum entry age was 30 for the Head Sister and 25 for the Sister. The age of retirement was 60. The Regulations for the female nursing staff in the Royal Naval Hospital at Haslar, in Portsmouth, and Plymouth issued under the authority of the Lords Commissioner of the Admiralty, also highlight the salary, the accommodation, duties, working hours, responsibility, and uniforms.

The new trained female nurses made a great impression from the start and a good improvement on the old system of nursing by men alone and the service rapidly expanded to other naval hospitals.

From 1902 Queen Alexandra of Denmark, wife of King Edward VII, became the patron of the naval nursing staff and in her honour the service was renamed Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service (or QARNNS). The Queen dedicated a lot of time on the service, she was mainly responsible for redesigning the uniform and she was keen to appoint personally every nurse who passed the probation period. The period of study, between 1902 and 1925 has revealed many memories recorded by the nurses regarding the moment where they were appointed by the Queen. She was interested in the details of the uniform, many of which she personally altered. In 1920 one nurse was asked to go to Marlborough House where she met Queen Alexandra who took her cape and said "This pretty uniform, you know I chose it, I do hope you like it and I hope it will not be altered".

Just before the First World War a reserve system was also founded. As highlighted by Kathleen Harland in *A History of Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service*, during the First World War nursing sisters continued to serve at the same establishments as before the war such as the Royal Naval Hospital in Haslar, Plymouth, Chatham, Portland, at the Royal Marine Infirmary at Deal, at the Royal Naval Cadets' sick quarters at Osborne and Dartmouth and the Sick Quarters at Shotley. With the war the replacement of male staff with women nurses meant that women would also serve on Hospital Ships to assist the wounded, sick and shipwrecked.

During the 20th century the QARNNS service kept growing in number and ranks, and specially between the interwar period a structure that included just the Head Sister and the Sister developed in complexity. The introduction of new ranks created new uniform and the demand of more nurses during the Second World War affected the quality of material used, something which will be discussed in more detail later on in this paper.

The National Maritime Museum holds QARNNS uniforms from the reign of Queen Victoria to the 20th century. The collection consists of over 100 uniforms and most of the uniforms were donated to the Museum by retired Sisters. The collection contain a good selection of objects, including uniforms as well as accessories from almost every decades which give a good overview on how the uniforms evolved during the time.

The importance of these collections to the history of nursing and women's dress cannot be stressed enough. When set against the context of the history of the QARNNS and source material related to earlier uniforms, these uniforms help us to improve our understanding of the importance of women during war, and allow us to discover the people behind the uniform. QARNNS uniforms, have the potential to tell us a great deal about women's clothing, medical care, the navy and society. These collections allow us to see the broader changes in style of nursing uniforms and looks at the influences on these changes, such as the rise of the women's suffrage movement.

Through three case studies, this paper looks at specific changes in the early history of QARNNS uniform and how these changes effected women in the period.

1. From the regulations for the female nursing staff in the Royal Naval Hospitals of Haslar and Plymouth published in 1884 the QARNNS uniform was a grey serge gown with apron, white caps collars, bonnets with grey ribbons and veil. The cape was navy blue and a Geneva Cross was worn on the right arm above the elbow. One winter and summer cloak were also provided. The Red Cross on a white background was the original protection symbol declared at the 1864 Geneva Convention. The idea of the design came from Dr. Louis Appia, a Swiss surgeon, and Henri Dufour, founding members of the International Committee.

After suggestions from Queen Alexandra regarding the fabric, a navy blue linen and scarlet cashmere cuff were issued. A white handkerchief cap with an embroidered naval crown in the corner was substituted for the old style muslin one. The original cap with ribbons coming down behind the ears tied

under the chin was soon substituted for an handkerchief style veil. The new cap still kept the nurse's hair up and out of her face but It was also more practical. The nurse's cap was derived from the nun's habit. The long cap was first adopted, in order cover all the nurse's hair. Later a short one who sits on top of the nurse's head was introduced.

The mess dress (Fig. 1) is a navy blue silk costume with pleated bodice, plain skirt, scarlet cuffs and matching belt. The dress is to be worn together with navy blue cape and white veil. The buckle, chosen personally by Her Majesty Queen Alexandra, depicts a crown and an anchor with laurel wreath and was taken from a design she saw worn by a midshipman called Charles E. Wilson.

The veil had an embroidered naval crown in the corner to mark the royal patronage of Her Majesty Queen Alexandra.

A document from the QARNNS archive says that to mark the patronage of Queen Alexandra, the rectangular black cloth badge, worn on the right side of the shoulder cape has three embroidered sections: a red Geneva Cross on white background whiten a gold circular border; Queen Alexandra's monogram made by two A's interlocking an anchor and cable erect; a representation of imperial crown. While Sisters were meant to wear what was essentially the same uniform, rank could be discerned by the badge. Uniform worn on state and ceremonial occasions or official entertainment were provided at the nurses own expensive.

At the beginning of the First World War naval Sisters joining hospital ships had in their bags waist length capes of grey opossum fur and little muffs of the same as a gift of Queen Alexandra. But they proved very uncomfortable so by 1917 hats and coats were worn by all Sisters as outdoor uniform.

Queen Alexandra held very definitive views on the uniform and still today the modern ward dress is based on her first design. She was always elegantly dressed using finest fabrics and she applied her knowledge, style and passion for fashion to design the new QARNNS uniform. It is only since 1997 that QARNNS men and women wear the same ceremonial uniform.

2. The inter-war period saw a major development in the service and a rearrangement in the structure: introduction of the rank of Head Sister-in-Chief in 1927, who was renamed Matron-in-Chief in 1935 and the institution of the rank of Senior Sister in 1936. The number of nurses did not significantly increase, from 81 in 1919 to still only 87 in 1938, but importantly, the proportion of Matrons and Superintending Sisters



Figure 1 Queen Alexandra Royal Naval Nursing Sister Service uniform. NMM Collection, UNI0851.

increased. Regular sisters were used to fill the gaps in the newly opened hospitals.

Following the institution of the rank of Head-Sister-in-Chief in 1927, it was necessary to create its own rank distinctions and an additional uniform for hospitals visits and inspections. The new uniform was a three piece costume: dress (jacket and skirt) and coat. First outdoor uniform for Matron-in-Chief was laid down 1927 and updated in 1935. Between 1942 and 1943 Matron-in-Chief was appointed to staff of Medical Director General Navy at the Admiralty.

The post of Head Sister was introduced in 1927 for the necessity to assume responsibility for general administrative duties of the service. Duties included inspection of nursing organisation of the home hospital and establishments; and assisting in the recruitment process plus general supervision over retirements and resignation. The first Matron-in-Chief was Miss H. Keenan, CBE RRC, who was serving at Chatham, where she remained. At the beginning she was acting as Matron-in-Chief and at the same time carrying out same duties as a Matron. Some doubt about having two posts under the same person started the slow process to move the Matron-in-Chief at the Admiralty.

Matron-in-Chief uniform consists in long sleeved double breasted jacket with brass buttons. The rank of Matron-in-Chief is shown by two gold piping around the embroidered sections.

The uniform has a medium length A-line skirt, in navy blue colour. The uniform was made by Boyd Cooper, a specialist tailor manufacture for nursing profession, established since the 18th century.

3. As noted by Carol Harris in *Women at War in Uniform* under half a million women served in Britain's forces in the Second World War. The duties limited at the beginning increased during the war. Women were serving on the home front and abroad and they took harder physical work so clothes and shoes emphasised comfort rather than fashion. Also just before the Second World War the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) reformed and many women were called to volunteer in order to free man from essential work. Women were taking on civilian work. The uniforms changed drastically to reflect their changing role. Traditional dress and starched aprons were impractical on the front and specially in tropical locations.

As the sisters were relocated abroad in hot countries it became necessary to introduce tropical uniform. It consists of a white knee length dress, white drill with a square necked bod-

ice and short sleeves, piped with red with pockets. Between 1939 and 1945 the tropical white dresses and tippets proved to be cooler, more easily laundered and more practical. The original Panama hat was replaced by a white felt hat owing to the difficulty of obtaining the straw during the war.

However, the many changes to the design are also reflective of limited access to supplies uniform to distant stations, like in the Pacific. This meant that nurses serving on Pacific bases had to adopt different uniform.

The most obvious example is the introduction of the Khaki uniform during the Second World War. The practical changes included a change to tropical wear of white pique dresses and capes still worn for off duty and ceremony. The ordinary uniform worn in the evening or off duty or Sunday division or church no longer required to wear caps, collars or aprons.

It was in this period that Sisters were appointed to aircraft carriers, reflecting the increasing importance of the QARNNS to naval operations. An increasing importance of the QARNNS was simultaneously met with practical changes to the uniform. Where previously impractical for crowded hangars, the new khaki slacks and shirt issued by the Suppliers Officer enabled even greater possibilities for practical work. Sisters in air evacuation unit were supplied by Australians Air Force Nursing Service. The badge of QARNNS worn on shoulders and cap.

The practice to wear khaki in wide scale use ended in the late 1940's with the return of peacetime conditions of service although it continued to be worn by specialists units.

Conclusion:

Firstly: the uniforms enabled professionalisation of nursing.

Secondly, designing the uniform allowed women to an active role in public life in an area that was acceptably considered to be within an area of women's knowledge, namely clothes design. This at first limited aspect of female agency was later extended beyond the traditional sphere of simply women's clothing, to break new ground in the acceptance of women making bigger decisions in the context of nursing and medical treatment.

Uniform allowed the role of nurses to be to some extent defined on their own terms.

Through designing practical uniforms, the QARNNS women were able to take on more practical roles, such as working on hospital ships and on the planes to transport wounded.

The uniforms themselves became a symbol of women's new found position within a professional and public sphere.

Uniforms not only allowed a visual recognition of the hierarchical structure of QARNNS, where women occupied new found positions of power such as running wards, inspecting and supervising hospitals, recruiting new sisters, and be invited at meetings at the Admiralty.

The image of the professional, uniformed QARNNS nurses had a broader effect on the perceptions of women both in the work place, and in more practical and public roles in society.

Uniforms were often both means and the solution in forging the professional role of the QARNNS nurses.

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Making the Unseen Seen: 'The Kate Elizabeth Bunce Collection'

Louise E P Chapman, Birmingham City University

Abstract

When, in 2012 I uncovered an archive of dress in the cupboard of the fashion department at Birmingham City University, a journey of transition from 'unseen' to 'seen.' was begun. The Birmingham School of Art Dress Archive consists of two collections; with only one part to date, having proven provenance.

*The discovery of that provenance to Kate Elizabeth Bunce, the Birmingham Pre-Raphaelite artist has increased the archive's public significance and moved it into now being a 'seen' public collection. This paper considers whether through the application of cataloguing and accessioning the collection it has transitioned from, as Susan Pearce in *Interpreting Objects and Collections* (2012) writes - passive to active, and whether this is problematic to its relationship with the viewer, and in this case researcher.*

As a collection of worn dress that evidences the wearers mark, is the intimacy of the founding moment lost and therefore compromised once the collection becomes public? As Walter Benjamin writes, does the object lose its auric power once it becomes public? Does worn dress that evidences the wearers mark 'supercharge' the objects, and therefore increase its auric power?

The excitement of sharing this extraordinary 'find' is palpable which, it could be proposed, problematizes the researcher/object relationship. Considering the relationship between researcher and object, unseen and seen, this paper explores the transition of the Kate Elizabeth Bunce collection into the 'seen' public domain.

Key Words: Art; dress history; material culture; Kate Elizabeth Bunce

As a material object, dress as an artefact is 'auric' in its reach. Dress is both private and public, intimate and performative.

This paper is discussing a collection of dress bequeathed by Kate Elizabeth Bunce, confirmed in 2015 with an entry in one of the School of Art Management Sub-Committee's minute books for 1927-28 and recorded in the Art and Design ar-

chives at Birmingham City University as, *RESOLVED* '...that the best thanks of the Committee be sent to the Executors of the late Miss K. Bunce for giving the Central School of Arts & Crafts various artists' materials and apparatus: costumes, fabrics and pottery'. At that precise moment the collection transitioned from the 'private' Bunce home into the 'public' space of an art school, however this was a very specific public.

For more than 30 years, the collection had been secreted away in a cupboard within the school of fashion at Birmingham City University in the old Gosta Green campus. Its movement through the institution is fragmentary, with rumours of it being stored in the library for some time and then being offered to the school of fashion, its ebb and flow through private and public, seen and unseen brings the collection to where it exists now.

The collection consists of worn feminine dress extending over 150 years and several generations, with the earliest item dating from 1775. The current hypothesis is that the collection was owned by the Bunce family, gathered as a collection of worn dress in the family home and donated in 1927 after Kate's death. There is ambiguity surrounding the collection as there is no documentation found to date that evidences that the dresses were actually worn by the Bunces; but, the labels suggest that some of them were owned by the Bunces. The preservation of these selected dresses establishes the Bunce home as an 'accidental archive' (Hunt, 2014) which was then transferred to the School of Art (now Birmingham City University).

For six weeks in the summer of 2012, I studied the collection piece by piece, photographing, accessioning, and cataloguing what had been discovered; each time, opening another box and experiencing Derrida's 'founding moment' (Derrida, 1996) multiple times. The labels on the boxes were enticing - for example - 'court dress 1890', and each time I was unsure of what the discovery would be, was it a court dress from 1890?

To be in contact with an object means to be moved by it - to have the pressure of its existence brought in to relation with the pressure of our own bodily existence. (Stewart, 1999)

The physical presence of the dresses with the smells and sounds, then, the sense of discovery and that 'founding moment' with each new opened box was powerful, intimate and mysterious. The unwrapping of the tissue, and pulling out of each dress was sensual, exciting, but also moving. The atmosphere of tranquillity and study in the empty classroom, allowed me to imagine the history, owner and wearer of the items; not knowing at this point the provenance. The lack of

documentary evidence allowed me to fill the absence of knowledge with imaginative possibilities - the 'viewing or sensing' (Ash, 1988) of the clothing developed an intimate knowledge of the dress between me - the viewer/researcher, and the thing - the dress (es.) My intervention with the collection was intimate, private, unseen and for some time, my very own secret.

Gaston Bachelard in his text *The Poetics of Space* (Bachelard, 2014) discusses drawers, wardrobes, boxes and chests, returning to the intimacy and secrets that these spaces allow. The collection when discovered, was in a secreted space, a room forgotten and unfrequented, within large floor to ceiling wardrobes and drawers and within that 'space' was found, the labelled and ordered archive boxes. Their intimate space was secrecy layer upon layer and in breaking open these intimate spaces, their secrets and intimacies were slowly revealed. From that secret space I moved them to a more public space but, as this other place was free of its public (students) it remained a space where I was free to continue to imagine the possibilities of the owner, wearer and the possible narratives.

Russell W Belk in his paper *Possessions and the Extended Self* discusses the process of 'contamination' in relation to our attachment to objects and how they '...are seen to attach to us through physical contact or proximity.' (Belk, 1988). Referencing Goffman's 'six modes of interpersonal contamination' Belk examines the self-extension that occurs when collecting objects with two being particularly pertinent to my contact with the collection '...2. Touching and bodily contact, 6. Bodily excreta- corporeal excreta with evidence of the wearer on the garments seen through the perspiration marks, and markings left by the body...' (Belk, 1988)

Through my contact with the dresses, it could be said that I was contaminated by their physical proximity and the physical evidence of the previous wearer through the marks of wear. Igor Koptoff in his paper *The Cultural Biography of Things* discusses the biographical possibilities of an object and maintains that things have biographies (Koptoff, 1986). Dress is often worn and re-worn and, as such, may have many biographies that we are unaware of but can begin to imagine through these marks.

On finding the collection, and through my intervention of accessioning, cataloguing and photographing, my relationship with the objects transitioned. After 30 years of being unseen, the items becoming public and active transformed, possibly even transferred that intimacy to a public 'seen' realm. On finding the collection, and through my intervention, it again became public and active, transitioning into the public 'seen'

realm. In *Archive Fever* Derrida acknowledges the first archivist's role, 'The first archivist institutes the archive as it should be, establishing it, reading it, interpreting it and classing it.' (Derrida, 1996) However as a collection bequeathed to an art school, it was not subject to any archival collection strategy at the point of donation and as such, it was freer from hierarchical and authoritarian constraints that can problematise museum collection concerns.

Kathryn Harvey in her paper *From Bags and Boxes to Searchable Digital Collections at the Dalhousie University Archives* (Harvey 2006) asks 'Why donate to archives?' suggesting that, 'Some people donate on their own initiative, believing their papers worth preservation for generations to come; some do so in the knowledge that they can receive a tax receipt for the monetary value of the donation. Others receive encouragement from archivists, whose dedicated goal is to preserve the historical record at least of a cross-section of society.' (Harvey, 2006) The questioning of a rationale for the donation is valuable as it allows for an assessment of the reasoning for Kate to bequeath the collection to her School of Art.

In their paper *Collectors and Collecting* (Belk, et al., 1988) discuss the 'curatorial act' of labelling and how the collector (as opposed to the hoarder or acquirer) is interested in the collection as an assemblage of specific objects. The deliberate labelling of the garments suggests that somebody wanted 'us' to know that they were from the Bunces, perhaps wanting their act of benevolence to be visible and 'seen'. Kavanagh writes in *Dream Spaces* that curators make history by deciding what to collect and what to ignore (Kavanagh, 1999). Belk et al write that, '...many collections are discovered by their creators long after the materials have been gathered and that the collection began as 'seed objects' (Belk, et al., 1988). Possibly Kate added her own and her sister Myra's dress or it may be that some of the dress was given to Kate, making the collection a hybrid. The accidental archive in the Bunce home and Kate's interaction with it to build on the collection that would then be bequeathed to the very institution where she studied, must have felt like a noble and philanthropic act in a time when collecting and taxonomy was an acceptable (pre-) occupation.

Arjun Appadurai in his text *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* reminds us that there are '...classes of culturally valued singularities (such as works of art and designer-label clothing). (Appadurai, 1986). When looking at a dress with provenance attached, we can place it socio-politically, if the dress has a well-known name attached to it, it has the biography of that name imbued in to it. Richard Sennett writes in his text *The Fall of Public Man* (Sennett,



Figures 1 - 3 c1880's Walking Dress in lavender silk



Figure 4 c1845 'Honeysuckle' print figured silk day dress



Figures 5, 6 & 7 L-R: c1912 Ladies Silk Dress in silk and velvet; late eighteenth Century cotton lawn cap; c1840-50 Silk child's dress



Figures 8, 9 & 10 L-R: Late nineteenth century silk organdie/gold metal lace sleeve; Late nineteenth century velvet cutwork sleeve; Eighteenth century cotton lawn cuff

1975) that the cult of celebrity has impacted on the boundary between private and public, the discovery of provenance is considered as essential in any discovery of a collection, it is what museums strive to secure with any donation. The boundary of public and private, seen and unseen is pertinent when studying a collection of a commodified object such as dress. Igor Koptoff in his chapter *The Cultural Biography of Things* discusses the life cycle of commodities and how the object evolves as it 'moves' through that cycle, further distancing itself from the moment of purchase. (Koptoff, 1986)

Susan Pearce discusses the transition of objects in terms of '...social action, the point at which an object passes from 'rubbish' or 'transient' to 'durable' lies in the act of collecting; it is this which produces the transformation of material into the heritage mode.' (Pearce, 1992). Dress passes through all of these transformations as a consumable commodity, it is reborn, reused and repurposed. The collection has now transitioned in to the Pearce's 'heritage mode' and has now become a collectible, visible and culturally valuable object. In finding the provenance, the collection transitioned, in my own mind to no longer being something intimate and private, but a collection of public concern and interest. (Objects) '...have the power, in some sense, to carry the past into the present by virtue of their 'real' relationship to past events...' (Pearce, 1992) and also to past people. Consider the example of

the lace sleeves shown right - lace became collected in the late nineteenth century, driven by the mechanisation of the manufacture of lace, in contrast with the craft of handmade lace, so the activity of collecting lace as an object of interest became a past time in the late Victorian period.

In Scott Magelssen's paper, *Living Museums and the Construction of the Real Through Performance* he discusses the living museum as a real encounter seeking the true history of the encounter, the visitor seeking an '...authentic encounter with the past...' The 'true history' 'of the garments when in a private 'founding space' with the marks of wear and evidence of past lives, is hidden in the very fabric of the garment. (Magelsson, 2004) The collection with its marks of wear, and its 'real' connection to an artist that studied at the Birmingham School of Art adds to its value culturally and socially to the university as an institution. The socio-cultural value to Birmingham City University is likely greater than it might be if it had been discovered at, for example the London School of Economics. This value is added in 'the place' and the location of the garments discovery. Kate Bunce was a well-regarded artist in the Pre-Raphaelite movement, she studied at the Birmingham School of Art, working in Birmingham until she died. As a person with proven artistic merit and possessing an artist's aesthetic, by retaining the garments in her collection in order to bequeath the clothing to the school where she

trained, it could be proposed that Kate was curating an identity of the Bunces prior to her death. The reality of this proven history is as Pearce writes, '...fundamental to the impulses we know as the collecting process, and equally fundamental to both the process of curatorial effort and of exhibition.' (Pearce, 1992)

To conclude, the collection appears to have been retained as an accidental archive within the private domestic space of the Bunce home with the collection being built over several generations of feminine dress. It could be considered that the collection began as 'seed objects' that were then developed and built upon by the Bunce family. With the application of labels on the garments the collection appears to have been deliberately collected and curated suggesting that somebody wanted the items to be 'seen' as having provenance to the Bunces and Kate's donation suggests that she envisioned the garments being studied within the school.

For many years the collection was unseen, held within a public space in the school of fashion until its rediscovery by me in 2012 when it became active again. My own relationship with the collection has been developed through my contact with the objects, producing a contamination or a 'contagion' between the viewer (me) and the object. However the cultural value of the collection with its provenance to Kate Bunce immediately makes the collection more visible, more 'seen' and with this new visibility it has removed some of the intimacy of my own relationship with the garments. With the transition from unseen to seen, and through the process of accessioning and cataloguing, the process has distanced me from the intimacy of the founding moment; establishing my role as the first archivist; as the reader, establishing figure and interpreter of the collection and therefore changing my relationship with the collection as a now visible assemblage.

Through the process of cataloguing, accessioning, being photographed, discussed, the focus of a continuing research project, it has changed from a secreted collection to a collection of international significance and the objects have, since their discovery, been used as valuable teaching and study aids on the BA Hons Fashion Design and Design for Performance programme and have, I hope, been used for the exact purpose that Kate intended for her donation.

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List of Figures

Birmingham School of Art Dress Archive (BSADA)

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Fig. 4

2012.2025 c1912 Ladies Silk Dress in silk and velvet

Fig. 5

2012.2029 Late eighteenth Century cotton lawn cap

Fig. 6

2012.2122 c1840-50 Silk child's dress

Fig. 7

2012.2017 Late nineteenth century silk organdie/gold metal lace sleeve

Fig. 8

2012.2015 Late nineteenth century velvet cutwork sleeve

Fig. 9

2012.2016 Eighteenth century cotton lawn cuff

Fig. 10

Interwar Tweed: The Cultural Capital of Cloth

Connie Karol Burks, Victoria and Albert Museum

Abstract

Using the example of tweed, this study demonstrates the varying levels of cultural capital that can be embodied by a particular textile, and how, through a close examination of its materiality and public presentation, these features can be identified and explored in order to achieve a better understanding of the significance and influence of textiles within society.

Hailing from the humble beginnings of homemade rural clothing, tweed was appropriated in the 1800s by the upper classes for distinctive and exclusive sportswear. During the interwar years, however, the tweed suit became something of an everyday uniform for men and women of all classes; a symbol of the move towards the democratisation of fashion. As wearing practices evolved, tweed suggested multiple immaterial identities depending on the wearer, embodying a series of conflicting connotations that reflect changes in the contemporary culture. These societal shifts had significant effects on the nature of the textile that be traced through a close examination of the materiality and manufacturing practices of the cloth.

Framed by theories of novelty and authenticity, this paper uses evidence in mill archives and print material alongside a close examination of the fabric itself to explore the responsive relationship between fashion and society.

Key Words: textiles, class, authenticity, manufacture, trademarks

The popularisation of the textile christened 'tweed' occurred in the mid-nineteenth century when it was adopted by English aristocracy to wear on their Scottish estates. The dense woollen twill cloth was ideal for sporting activities, providing warmth, protection and camouflage.

Peasant crofters had been wearing their hand-woven woollen cloth for centuries, but it was only once this textile was transposed into an aristocratic setting that it found the label 'tweed' and gained subsequent status. This textile with a historically low status was taken out of the working field and into leisured landscapes of the upper classes.

Tweed did not remain the preserve of aristocracy for long. The end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century saw tweed garments being worn not only in the countryside but increasingly in urban settings, by both genders for 'morning, travelling, sporting and working wear' (Anderson, 2006, p.175), leading to demand for lighter-weight, softer tweeds. By the late 1920s, as sartorial codes relaxed, the tweed suit was an important part of everyday dress for many people across all classes.

Historians and economists often cite the interwar years as a period that saw the 'democratisation of things' (Błaszczyc, 2000, p.1) and in particular an increased democracy of fashion made possible by the boom in the production of fashionable ready-made clothing. Tweed is often cited as a symbol of this. Fashion historians Patricia Mears and G. Bruce Boyer (2014) credit specifically the 'tweed weekend suits in small checks and muted plaids' as 'something of a great leveller across the classes' (p.32).

Tweed can be a particularly poignant example of an increasing democratisation in this period, given its previous connection to elite sporting activity. It was a popular choice for those participating in outdoor activity from any level of society. Tweed's cross-class adoption, therefore, can be linked to the societal shift in leisure time for an increasing portion of the population. The working classes were enjoying a greater amount of leisure time than ever before. Taking part in an outdoor leisure activity - or simply spectating - was in itself a crucial part of creating one's identity and proclaiming one's status as a (sometimes) leisured citizen; hiking and rambling became mass working-class activities during the 1930s, as did cycling (Lowerson, 1980). Outdoor pursuits and sports were now seen as an important part of a modern, healthy, active lifestyle. To participate in outdoor activities, and wear the necessary (tweed) sporting garments, also signified one's modernity (Skillen, 2012).

As cautioned by fashion historian Laura Ugolini, however, the idea of a democracy of dress should not be overstated; 'dress remained an important indicator of status and identity' (Ugolini, 2009, p.300). Looking more closely at the production and materiality of tweed, rather than simply focusing on the wearing practices in this period, certainly upholds this argument. As the wearing of tweed spread, a distinct divide in production emerged between high-end manufacturers (mainly in Scotland) and middle and low-end manufacturers (mainly in Yorkshire). Raw materials, manufacturing techniques and marketing diverged into two very separate arms of the tweed trade that are too often lumped together or simply discussed in isolation of one another.

This divide began as early as the 1850s when the Yorkshire woollen mills first picked up on the upper-class trend of tweed being bought by London merchants from Scottish mills. Yorkshire manufacturers began to offer their own tweeds at lower prices. Clifford Gulvin estimates that by 1906, three-quarters of the 'Scotch Tweeds' sold in Britain were in fact woven in England (Gulvin, 1973). As the use of tweed widened, its characteristics adapted to the consumer demands of its varying markets. The interwar years saw an acceleration of this trend.

The production of ready-made suits relied on a supply of cheap cloth. Leeds in West Yorkshire was a hub of production for ready-to-wear and semi-tailored factory made clothing. Its proximity to the textile mills of West Riding gave a local supply of bulk-produced, cheap cloths, which made these affordable suits possible (Crump and Ghorbal, 1935), and the archives of several Yorkshire mills contain orders from key establishments such as Montague Burtons and Hepworths (Kirklees, WYK1091).

Yorkshire mills used a large proportion of mungo and shoddy (recycled wool), to provide the cheap cloth that went into the ready-made trade. By 1914 two-thirds of the wool processed in the Yorkshire mills was low cost, recycled, waste wool (Jenkins and Malin, 1991).

Trade journals and regional industry publications illustrate how important the use of shoddy was to the spread of the wool suit; writing in the Huddersfield Textile Society Journal, one mill owner stated that wool clothing 'would have been almost double in price were it not for the employment of shoddies and wastes' (Leather, 1920, p.16). Another Huddersfield producer, C. R. Spedding (1930), proclaimed that without shoddy:

'the working man of today would have been compelled to wear fustian, or cotton cord, instead of the serviceable, durable, stylish fabrics that are available to him, patronised by all classes' (p.69).

The 'serviceable' nature of the cloth mentioned by Spedding was important. For many consumers, their suit would be the one smart outfit they owned and so it was important that it was versatile and durable. When a representative from Montague Burton's, came to visit the Huddersfield Textile Society he reminded the manufacturers that 'the most serviceable design or style is always the best seller' (Ralph, 1936, p.17). Ralph went on to explain that Burton's customers seek cloths that are 'quiet, dignified, refined' in pattern, of a dull colour and 'one that will not easily show dirt', as well as being suitable for both summer and winter. Similarly, an advert for tweed suiting in 1931 mentions in particular the cloth's 'subdued colourings'

which will give 'unlimited wear' (Berwickshire News, 1931, p.6), underlining the practical requirements of the working class consumer. Examination of surviving sample books from Yorkshire mills supplying multiple tailors at the time underline this preference for dull, dark, muted colours and minimal patterns (Kirklees, WYK1091). Likewise, despite enthusiastically worded descriptions of the cloth, the choice on offer in many Burton's catalogues is, with minimal exceptions, limited and monotonous (Leeds, WYL1951/192). These simpler styles incurred less expenditure on both design and weaving.

Nevertheless, even at the low-end of the market the perceived identity of a textile was still important, however plain: a training manual for staff in the Montague Burton archive recommends new recruits to 'strive to understand the history, properties and worth of the cloths you sell' (Leeds, WYL1951/252).

Homemade garments also remained an important part of the wardrobes of many middle and lower class women who enjoyed a growing variety of fashionable dress patterns becoming available in magazines during the period (Hackney, 1999). As the tailored tweed suit became an important part of women's wardrobes in the 1920s, knitted incarnations emerged alongside the woven counterparts, created both in factories and in pattern form to be knitted at home, such as a 1936 Stitchcraft pattern for a suit of 'Knitted Tweed' (British Library, W. P. 12165). This opened up the prestige of a 'tweed' suit to even the least affluent women. Even though the knitted textiles had almost nothing to do with even the loosest definition of tweed, manufacturers of garments and dress patterns applied the term to certain garments in order to attach the desirable connotations embodied by the term tweed.

These desirable identities included the historical link with the landed gentry enjoying elite sporting activities on their Scottish estates. For example, an advertisement for ready-made tweed suits by Dorville in 1933 proclaims the garments suitable for every woman, 'whether they are going to Scotland or not' (Vogue, 1933, p.12). Similarly, the tweed garments advertised in the Montague Burton catalogues throughout the 1930s invariably illustrate the wearer in the countryside, enjoying the more elite sporting activities such as motoring and golf (Leeds, WYL1951/192).

For the high-end consumer, one way for a bespoke suit to stand out from the thousands of mass-produced suits was with a superior choice of cloth. Here, a Scottish provenance became key.

Scottish tweed promoted a natural superiority of design and quality in an attempt to separate it from the Yorkshire-woven

equivalent. Scottish producers stressed their use of only new wool, collectively and steadfastly rejecting the use of recycled wool (Gulvin, 1973). A 1930 advertisement for the Highland mill Kynoch of Keith describes their cloths as 'exclusive', 'expensive' and 'elusive', stressing their elite appeal (Men's Wear, 1930, p.230). The Scottish trade accounted for a relatively small volume of production that maintained itself by charging high prices, but could guarantee its customers a level of exclusivity and originality as mills tended to produce a wide range of designs in short runs.

In contrast to the pattern books from Yorkshire mills catering to the lower-end of the market, those from Scottish mills contain an extensive assortment of tweeds incorporating an array of different structures, patterns, colours and fancy yarn types (Galashiels, RAS; PA). These 'novelty' tweeds offered their discerning consumers a balance between newness and tradition; promising sartorial style alongside refined respectability.

During the interwar period, tweed became the ideal sartorial tool for the upper classes to display these notions of luxury without veering into vulgarity. French sociologist Gilles Lipovetsky (1994, pp.59-65) describes how the 1920s saw overt displays of wealth replaced by a vogue for 'discretion'. Tweed, undoubtedly, was ideal for this trend. Its reputation as being durable, practical and functional meant that however costly the suit that it constituted, wearers couldn't be accused of ostentation. As Lipovetsky stresses however, 'luxury did not disappear', but instead had to adopt rather more discreet ways of manifesting itself. Wealthier, dress-conscious buyers could subtly distinguish themselves by choosing a more exclusive variety of tweed; trademark-stamped Scottish or Harris tweed in a new design of which a limited amount was produced.

The trouble was however that consumers were usually unable to differentiate between a tweed woven in Scotland and that woven in Yorkshire; as evidenced by reports of 'imitation' tweeds woven in Yorkshire being sold as Scottish (Galashiels, RAS). Mills and merchants selling Yorkshire tweeds often gave their cloths Scottish-sounding names (Anderson, 2006), and the title of 'Scotch Tweed' did not necessarily mean the cloth was woven in Scotland.

Several Scottish manufacturers began to offer a selvedge on their cloth stating its origin (Galashiels, RAS). This type of selvedge required a jacquard attachment to be added to the loom, which also added to the weaving time, making the production of the cloth even more expensive. Nevertheless, the practice was reportedly a success, with one manufacturer declaring 'the results are undoubtedly justifying the efforts' (Textile Manufacturer, 1934, p.488). The addition of a

selvedge-weaving jacquard attachment is an interesting example of the implementation of new production methods that were geared towards adding social value to the cloth rather than material value or improved manufacture. This suggests that the branding of tweed was of equal or higher importance to its material construction.

Some Scottish producers felt that an official method of verifying origin and quality was necessary. Establishing a trademark would address the issue of so-called 'imitation' Scotch tweeds. In February 1918 the Scottish Woollens Trade Mark Association Ltd (SWTMA) was registered (Daily Record, 1918). By 1920, the association counted thirty-eight Scottish manufacturers as members (Yorkshire Post, 1920), representing just under half of the firms making up the Scottish industry (Pattison, 1946). The trademark stamp signified that the cloth had been woven in Scotland with only pure new wool – no cotton or waste wool.

The trademark sought to enable the public to distinguish Scottish cloths and understand their higher prices. On his discussion of authenticity, cultural anthropologist Brian Spooner (1988) links the idea of authenticity with provenance and national or cultural identity, suggesting that a textile's 'criteria of authenticity' is dependent on 'the supply of information' about them (p.196). This value is outwardly 'projected onto objects' and thus can only be judged when the audience has the knowledge to recognise an object's apparent authenticity (p.226). Thus, in order to prompt the public to distinguish between so-called genuine 'Scotch Tweed' and the 'imitation' made in Yorkshire, the Scottish manufactures had to disseminate instructions on how a consumer could recognise Scotch tweed's superiority. In 1924, the SWTMA released a short film explaining the trademark and how the public could ensure that they only bought trademarked cloth.

Perhaps in reaction to the SWTMA and the comparable Harris Tweed trademark, in the 1930s, Montague Burton introduced the trademarked 'Laird' tweed, rather tellingly described as 'Scotch-branded Tweeds' (Leeds, WYL1951/192); a baffling phrase supposedly aiming to suggest Scottish provenance without explicitly stating it. The trademark stamp and name were obviously designed to attach connotations of exclusivity and a Scottish and aristocratic identity, even though the cloth itself was almost certainly woven in Yorkshire.

Further to this idea, in order for a product to be considered an 'authentic' version of what it is being presented as, 'inauthentic' versions have to exist in order for the authentic to be defined in contrast; as cultural sociologist Richard A. Peterson (2005) asserts, questions of authenticity typically appear once

'authenticity has been put in doubt' (p.1083). In one sense then, the prevalence of Yorkshire-woven tweeds in fact strengthened the Scottish producer's presentation of their own output as a genuine and 'authentic' version.

Whilst the lower parts of the trade benefitted from the elite associations perpetuated in the marketing of tweed, the higher end of the trade could define their products – with relation to authenticity, exclusivity and novelty – in contrast to the lower markets.

Democratised and yet still elite, instantly identifiable but ever responsive to technical and social influence, the different manifestations of tweed reflected identities of its wearers. It was not a homogenous product with a static identity or materiality. Interwar tweed production comprised of simultaneous, divergent markets and thus the look and feel of tweed can to some extent reveal the social setting within which it was worn, and the cultural capital that it represented.

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Culture through the costumes from Asia: a process of exchange or appropriation?

Donatella Barbieri, London College of Fashion

Extended Abstract

Considering costume an active and sophisticated agent in the making of performance, a re-articulation of the performer's body, a material embodiment of human experience and a site of artistic expression, this paper focuses on notions of cultural exchange (and sometimes cultural appropriation) that can be enacted in the dialogue between East and West through costume. From a device - constructed out of exotic veils and 'fleshings' - to disclose the female body in nineteenth century stagings of the colonialisised East, to a means through which female dancers have devised their own dances at the turn of the century. From being a crucial agent in the renewal of Western theatre-making in the twentieth century, to the frame through which the complex meanings of classical texts could be explored by both Asian and European practitioners. And, more critically, in the on-going claiming of an active role in a globalized theatre, the performance costumes that come from specific Asian communities are central to a definition of costume as a transformative force not only in performance but also in culture.

Initially borrowed from the East in order to re-devise affective performance in the West, the costumes discussed here extend the bodies and the sensory presence of the actors in a performance that addresses audiences of an increasingly globalized theatre. Equally, for contemporary practitioners from Asia, a relationship to ritual performance and myth has marked out a space for experimental and performative expression through costume that goes beyond the required transformation of appearance expected by the narrative role of performance costume. The non-naturalistic, explicit artificiality of these forms produces emphatic bodies, whose voluminous, sensuous, powerful, and dynamic presence dramatises states of being beyond a description of character.

This creative impetus is afforded by a context of performance in which the meeting of tradition and innovation, past and future, local and global have given rise to the hybridity and ambiguity that generate renewal. By their indebtedness to traditional practice, the productions included in this presentation, while not being specifically rites, generate nonetheless - partly through costume - a liminal, in-between state, which may be considered, to borrow Victor Turner's term, thresholds (1982) into previously unimagined futures. Some of these per-

formances, I will argue, by exposing a becoming, a transformation, may also build a social preparedness for what is to come.

If this presentation emerges from the need to advance the debate on costume as a re-claiming, critical in cultural regeneration, it also detects it as a vehicle of cultural appropriation, while questioning the terms in which a change of costume can be framed as a globalised cultural exchange. Building on the research presented in my forthcoming book *Costume in Performance: Materiality, Culture and the Body* (2017), performances that emerge from appropriations and re-appropriations of traditional Asian practices are discussed through the lens of costume in the de-colonising terms defined by Rustom Bharuka (1993), in his countering of ideas proposed in debates around intercultural performance.

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FASHION: INNOVATION AND COMMERCE

In Search of a Definition for Innovation in Experimental Fashion

Nataliya Rozhin, Professor Colin Gale, Birmingham City University

Abstract

A major challenge in experimental fashion is to define innovation in the field. This challenge offers an opportunity for comparative analysis and triangulations. Pieces of experimental fashion may not have any resemblance either to fashionable clothes or the human body. Dramatic pieces of experimental fashion may be considered as situated at the boundary of fashion and fine arts.

This paper addresses a problem of defining innovation in experimental fashion by analysing two awards launched by professional bodies to promote and support experimentalism in fashion. These are the British Fashion Council awards (BFC awards), and Han Nefkens awards (Nefkens awards) based in the Netherlands.

Selection criteria and selection processes were compared to track significant signposts for defining innovation in experimental fashion from the professional bodies' point of view. Comparison between the two awards revealed a distinct contrast in effect, in which the BFC awards show evidence of business orientation and commercial fashion styling in contrast with the arts orientation and emphasis on dramatic impact of commissions in exhibitions for the Nefkens awards. Cross referencing analysis of this complex field brings together interpretations of innovation in experimental fashion and assists in finding ground for further theoretical enquiry.

Keywords: Innovation, experimentalism, experimental fashion, gatekeepers.

Introduction

This paper investigates how gatekeeping organizations in the fashion world shape views about experimental and innovative fashion. What we see presented as experimental on the catwalk, in exhibitions, and in news media, becomes a foundation for what is subsequently judged to be innovative. Kant (1790) argued that formation of new knowledge is based on our previous knowledge, and this concept has been used in investigating the way the selected gatekeeping bodies form,

or seek to form, opinions about what counts as innovation in the context of experimental fashion. I present an analysis of tensions in experimental fashion using examples from two clusters of fashion awards:

- Two of the British Fashion Council's awards:
 1. *NEWGEN* award;
 2. *British Fashion Council/ Vogue Designer Fashion Fund*.
- The *Han Nefkens Fashion Awards* scheme is sponsored by the Han Nefkens H+F foundation:
 1. Fashion exhibitions at Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, in the Netherlands;
 2. Han Nefkens Fashion on the Edge, biennial award.

Both award clusters are important events and sources of funding in the fashion world. This article aims to examine how official bodies affect representation of the experimental in fashion design and present a typology of experimental fashion based on the view of two professionally recognised expert bodies in the modern fashion system.

The term 'experimental', was selected to describe fashion which experiments with design categories such as shape, volume, and fit as well as aesthetic ideas. These are the 'show stoppers' of catwalk shows and often get a reaction of outrage, shock, or thrill from the public. They are ". . . much beloved by some sections of the media because of their news value" (Naylor, 1975:100). 'Experimental' is borrowed from the field of film studies and preferred over the art term 'avant-garde' to avoid association with progressive notions of history (Granata, 2017:4). Mainstream, conventional, or commercial fashion is used as a contrasting descriptor for ready-to-wear clothing. Commercial fashion has to be wearable, has a fitting range, and must conform to life cycle processes which includes cleaning and storage. In contrast experimental fashion, whilst it may explore ideas of the body, and is displayed on models or dress forms, does not have to make these compromises and instead can be designed for dramatic effect.

The *NEWGEN* BFC award for new designers was instituted in 1993 and since 2001 has been supported by Topshop. Recipients are funded to present their collection in a wide variety of formats to industry experts and the public, and some collections are selected to sell in the flagship branch of Topshop. Most winning designer receives funding over several sea-

sons, and may show their work in exhibition, catwalk, or installation.

The *BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund* was launched in 2010 with the aim of recognizing new brands which were ready to expand to a global market. A group of between five and nine shortlisted designers are selected and one eventual winner receives £200 000 and in addition business mentoring to help advance the brand in the international market. To win, a designer has to convey a strong business case and show steady growth in profits alongside a list of stockists and letters of support.

The *Han Nefkens Fashion Awards* are a collaboration between Han Nefkens, a writer, benefactor and art activist, and José Teunissen, fashion curator and theorist. Since 2006 these comprise an exhibition, and since 2008 also a biennial prize, for exceptional work by a designer working at the cutting edge of fashion and art. Prize money of € 25 000 is awarded, of which € 15 000 is intended for a commissioned work for the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen. The intention is explicitly to support experimentalism in fashion, exploring a boundary between fashion and art (Nefkens, 2015) and to put fashion in a broader map of artistic cultural context. The Nefkens Foundation in their statements promote a view of fashion as an art form (H+F foundation, n.d. a.). The Nefkens award is a philanthropic initiative, aiming to create pieces of experimental fashion with curatorial qualities (Boijmans Van Beuningen, 2009). Catalogues published alongside the exhibitions contextualise the exhibits with commentary by academics and curators.

Methodology

Official statements from both bodies, and details of application procedures, selection process, presentation modes, and composition of the selective bodies were elicited from materials made available to the public by the BFC and Nefkens. These comparisons were enriched using press releases, Vogue publications, and exhibition catalogues. For case studies to illustrate key aspects of the Nefkens awards, I have chosen two of the most prominent exhibitions organised under this award scheme:

1. *The Art of Fashion: Installing Allusions (2009-2010)*, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, curated by José Teunissen and Judith Clark.
2. *The Future of Fashion is Now (2014-2015)*, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, curated by José Teunissen.

These two exhibitions demonstrate some curatorial interpretations of the subject, and are used to demonstrate how experimental fashion can be presented within the fashion world.

Results and Discussion

The institutions studied share a commonality in their artefact-based approach in displaying experimental fashion, and in their gatekeeping roles in the fashion world. Whichever designer is chosen, the message will be that the designer is creative and innovative. The institutions have their own capital of prestige which they use to attract publicity but there are also significant differences in their approaches, such as in application procedure.

The BFC *NEWGEN* awards govern which graduate designers are seen as upcoming talent, and this new talent is essential to the business success of London's fashion business. Caroline Rush, Joint Chief Executive of the British Fashion Council commented,

'*NEWGEN* is an essential element of the British Fashion Council's designer development and showcasing programme. This season we have an incredible wave of original, innovative and talented emerging designers who will, without doubt, support London's reputation as a creative capital.' (BFC press release, AW 2010).

Since Topshop supports winners through showing collections in the Boutique space at its flagship store in Oxford Circus, in selected stores nationwide, and on their website, the potential candidate has to fit within the brand's image, or enhance the brand's innovative reputation. This may oblige designers to choose a commercially successful collection to win exposure which could be seen as undercutting the experimental aspect of the BFC *NEWGEN* awards' aims.

The winners of the *BFC/Vogue Designer Fashion Fund* award have all previously been *NEWGEN* winning designers which shows the close artistic relationship between these two BFC awards. All shortlisted designers are from the ready-to-wear sector, and all have been required to present collections on catwalk.

The BFC Designers' Fund winning designer in 2012, Jonathan Saunders, showed consistent growth of his brand in subsequent years, each year gaining industry recognition (Boyes, 2011). However his brand rapidly closed in 2015 with the final collection of ready-to-wear shown SS 2016. The final collection did show signs of strong Eastern influence, with strong

references to traditional Chinese dress and bold contrast colours (Figure 1 (b)). This could be interpreted as evidence that his brand had adapted in order to attempt expansion into the Chinese market.



Figure 1 a Winning collection *BFC/Vogue Designer's Fund*, Jonathan Saunders SS 2012.

The Nefkens awards have received much praise and attention. Designs from the first exhibition by Viktor&Rolf, Walter Van Beirendonck, and Hussein Chalayan were praised, as: "...making a spectacle . . . they are made extraordinary", "...masters at evoking complex imaginary worlds . . . they question the codes of these imaginary worlds" (Teunissen, 2009:7). The spectacular and narrative characteristics of these pieces of experimental fashion have thus been considered of primary importance, signposted in numerous academic publications by art historians and curators in reference to the exhibitions (Quinn, 2003; Karaminas, Geczy, 2012; Evans, 2012, Koda, 2012; Granata, 2017).

In the exhibition of 2014, *The Future of Fashion is Now*, the relation between fashion, art and the body were assigned a separate chapter: 'The (Re) Definition of the Human Figure' (Boijmans Van Beuningen, 2015). Among other designers, the exhibition featured a previous winner of the Han Nefkens Fashion on the Edge Award, Rejina Pyo. Her collection was praised for its sculptural qualities and questionable wearability. It was commented the same year that ". . . designers abandoned the principle of a wearable collection and went in search of the boundaries of fashion", (H+F foundation, n.d.,b.)



Figure 1 b Final collection, Jonathan Saunders SS 2016.

Application procedure

The Nefkens award begins from the starting point of the boundary between fashion and art, and as such the experimental qualities are central. The use of external scouts for the Nefkens award may be seen as widening the field. The Foun-

dition is looking at collections around the world for designers they could work with. Chosen designers must then provide a list of collections, exhibitions, and publications, which resembles the procedure for award entries in the wider arts world. In contrast the BFC awards requirement of a business case makes the commercial qualities of the designers' work central. Commercial success in fashion, manifested by popularity with a consumer, however means successful distribution channel. The two award-granting institutions thus show different approaches to their intellectual capital. The BFC awards show strong business capitalisation, and Nefkens use curatorial capitalisation typical of the arts world with a focus on dramatic, spectacular effects.

Selection panels

Fashion magazine editors are powerful figures in the industry and feature on both award clusters' selection panels. The illustrious selection committee for BFC awards varies each year and comprises key gatekeepers: top managers in the fashion business, fashion media editors, buyers, and fashion consultants (Table 1). The number of buyers in the selection panel for the BFC awards is significant and clearly demonstrates the business focus of the award: "Matchesfashion.com [buyers] can actively shape the fate of various labels. British designers

have, in particular, benefited from the Matchesfashion.com effect," said Ruth Chapman (Armstrong, 2015).

The selection process for the Nefkens award has two stages. During the first stage, international scouts propose designers. In the second stage a mixed jury selects designers for the exhibition and a winning designer for the prize. A representative example of a judging panel for the Nefkens awards comprises Viktor&Rolf (fashion designers and previous awardees), the editor of the Dutch Vogue, Vassilis Zidianakis (Artistic Director of ATOPOS Contemporary Visual Culture nonprofit), alongside Nefkens and Teunissen (H+F Foundation, n.d., c.). This composition leans towards the arts world, and all members have a focus on the boundary between visual design and fine arts. This presents a contrast to the BFC award juries in which perhaps only one member is a trained designer, and the other members' expertise is in the commercial qualities of the designers' brands under consideration. The composition of the Nefkens panel is probably a factor in the success of the Nefkens awards in showing innovative fashion with experimental qualities.

Table 1. The NEWGEN selecting committee SS15

Table 1. The NEWGEN selecting committee SS15	
	BFC Managers
1	Sarah Mower MBE, BFC Ambassador of Emerging Talent (Chair)
2	Anna Orsini, British Fashion Council, Strategic Consultant
3	Caroline Rush, British Fashion Council, CEO
4	Laura Hinson, British Fashion Council, Showcasing Manager
5	Narmin Mohammadi, British Fashion Council, Head of Showcasing
	Editors
	Alexander Fury, The Independent, The Independent on Sunday and i, Fashion Editor
1	
2	Francesca Burns, Fashion Editor, British Vogue
3	Melanie Rickey, Grazia, Pop and Ponystep Contributing Editor
	Rebecca Lowthorpe, ELLE, Assistant Editor
	Buyers
1	Kate Phelan, TOPSHOP, Creative Director
2	Sheena Sauvaire, Chief Marketing Officer, TOPSHOP
3	Madelaine Evans, TOPSHOP, Head of Buying
4	Laura Larbalestier, Browns, Buying Director
5	Stavros Karelis, Machine A, Founder and buying director of independent concept store
6	Ruth Chapman, Matchesfashion.com, Co-Founder, a luxury, multimillion-pound online store.
	Fashion
1	Laura Burlington, Fashion Consultant
2	Mary Katrantzou, designer , Founder and Creative Director
3	Susanne Tide-Frater, Fashion Consultant.

Table 2. The BFC Designer Fund award shortlisted participants

Designers	Market segment
Angel Jackson	bags, accessories, edgy
Erdem (winner, 2010)	ready-to-wear
Christopher Kane (winner, 2011)	ready-to-wear
Clements Ribeiro	ready-to-wear
E.Tautz, menswear	ready-to-wear, tailoring
Marios Schwab	ready-to-wear, evening wear, classic
Jonathan Saunders (winner, 2012)	ready-to-wear
Nicholas Kirkwood (winner, 2013)	shoe designer
Richard Nicoll	ready-to-wear
Charlotte Olympia	shoes, handbags and accessories
OSMAN, Osman Yousefzada	ready-to-wear
Peter Pilotto (winner, 2014)	ready-to-wear
Mary Katrantzou (winner, 2015)	ready-to-wear
Meadham Kirchhoff	ready-to-wear, edgy
Roksanda Ilincic	ready-to-wear, edgy
Zoe Jordan	ready-to-wear
Emilia Wickstead	ready-to-wear, occasion wear
House of Holland	ready-to-wear, edgy
Holly Fulton	ready-to-wear, luxury, occasion wear
Michael van der Ham	ready-to-wear, luxury, occasion wear, edgy
Mother of Pearl	ready-to-wear, luxury womenswear brand
Sophia Webster (winner, 2016)	shoes, handbags and accessories, luxury brand
Prism	eyewear, accessories

Awardees

The winners of the BFC Designer Fund award were all drawn from ready-to-wear segment (Table 2), the world of commercial fashion which in this article I am contrasting with experimental or curatorial fashion. In contrast, Nefkens award 2009 exhibition curators Teunissen and Clark claimed that they did not “. . . interfere with the designer’s concepts or . . . seek to steer the project in particular directions” (Boijmans Van Beuningen, 2009:10). However, the panel were responsible for selecting the awardees. The designers chosen were in many case already international stars, making it possible to capitalize on the cachet of these designers in the museum context.

Conclusion

The BFC awards shows a strong business direction, and no mechanism or structure is apparent to represent an alternative to ready-to-wear. The successful business of ready-to-wear brands is presented as innovation. The fashion of London must look innovative, but the range of this innovation is limited by the business orientation of commercial fashion, the demands of fitting the idealised body, and functioning as clothing, hence innovative strategies in styling are adopted to convey experimental flair rather than radical experimentation.

Bradley Quinn’s (2002) points in his critique of an exhibition of fashion curated by Claire Wilcox at the V&A museum, *Radical Fashion*, appear to still be relevant in relation to the achievements of the BFC awards. Quinn argued that contemporary fashion required range of different visual formats to correctly represent the concepts of the designers, especially conceptual designers (Quinn, 2002:445). The limitation of formats presentation available to shortlisted entrants for the BFC/Vogue Designers’ Fund award (catwalk only) may thus act to limit the experimental qualities of the designs exhibited. The BFC NEWGEN award appears to be the most experimental of the BFC’s awards, and the range of formats allowed for presentation may contribute to this. This variety of formats is more similar to the wide range available to the Nefkens award winners. The philosophy behind the Nefkens awards, to put fashion in a broader map of artistic cultural context, gives fashion designers artistic licence (Esaak, 2017) to work with any subject and not be limited to conventional standards of beauty or style, as well as allowing a range of presentation formats.

In theory, experimental fashion has potential to innovate more intimate relationship with the body, as the body is not forced to fit the ideal body of commercial fashion. Experimental fashion can be an explorative journey through dressed body aes-

thetics: an exploration of the possibilities of a dressed body, which is a universal human condition. However, outside of this universal potential in experimental fashion, the realities and details of the process used by these two institutions’ fashion awards affect what the public will see as experimental.

Experiments in design are a professional skill of designers, but I argue that these have two distinct forms. Design development describes improvement in any criterion relating to commercial production; whereas what I am calling experimental design puts fashion into its broader cultural context and brings it closer to the art world. The ability of the designer to resonate with the broader cultural context may be what makes the designer ground-breaking (Gardner, 1993). In the absence of other defining criteria for innovation in experimental fashion, the viewer may be offered freedom of interpretation, but this also leaves open the potential for manipulations and abuse of the term by gatekeepers, who are responsible for showcasing this connection with the broader cultural context. These awards show contrasting ways of capitalizing on fashion innovation and experimentalism, and contribute to construction of opinions about what is considered new in fashion design, and thus affect what we will see in future.

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3D Printed Dress Towards the Ambivalent Fashion

Mingjing Lin, Royal College of Art

Abstract

This paper will firstly contextualise the relationship between fashion and technology based on the discussion of 'fashion and modernity' by fashion historian Elizabeth Wilson. It will further explain how technology developed to the computational knowledge, as we know today, and how digital technology affects our understanding of fashion. In addition to this, this paper will introduce the history of 3D printed fashion and, by examining some of the pioneering practices, the paper states 3D printed fashion as an ambivalent concept. Instead of having a solid conclusion, the question raised to current practitioners is how technological innovation responds to the ambivalent nature of digital fashion.

Key words: 3D printing; fashion; ambivalence

Fashion is an ever-changing and never-stationary notion (Loschek, 2009). The industrial revolution underpins fashion as an ambivalent concept including both daily wears for ordinary people and avant-garde designs. The former focuses on how fashion serves the fundamental clothes functions, whilst the later emphasizes on how fashion translates the conceptual newness: the innovation, novelty and even grotesque, beyond the materiality of fabric and the nature of human body. This concept, influenced by modernization, can be found through many of the contestable applications: wearable technology, smart dress and techno-fashion, to name a few. 3D printed fashion is one of them.

I. Fashion and technology

The relationship between fashion and technology has been long discussed in academia. On one hand fashion is an explicit reflection of socially innovative changes. Historically, Elizabeth Wilson firstly formulated fashion as a social concept was developed with technological inventions. She argues there is an inseparable relationship between fashion and modernity. Fashion and modernity were further discussed by a number of scholars. In the book *Fashion and modernity*, Evans and Breward read 'modernity' as the technical improvement, differently from 'modernism' or 'modernisation' from Mar-

shall Berman's work. Elisabeth Wilson and Joanne Entwistle further developed the concept of fashion and modernity with respect to body by stating that fashion as a social, spatial and bodily practice is influenced by technological innovation to many degrees.

Throughout the industrial revolutions, many cases showed the interwoven relations among fashion, textile and technology development. The first Industrial Revolution started from the textile industry during the late 18th century. These technological innovations laid the foundations for the computational knowledge as known today. The first form of 'computer' - Joseph Marie Jacquard's loom in 1880 to some extent - predicated the inseparable relationship of computational knowledge and creative industry over the following centuries.

With the social progression, Digital Revolution (from the late 1950s to the late 1970s) saw the transitions from mechanization to digitization. Digitalization paved the way of for the newness of fashion. Designers endeavored to make changes by adapting various technologies. As Jane Harris and Sarah Clark stated in the book, *Digital Vision for Fashion and Textile-Made in Code*, at the pre-developed stage of digital art (from the mid-60s' to the late-90s'), designers and artists tried to find out the 'appearance' of the computations and how it could be applied to their work. Eley Kishimoto designed the graphics for Hussein Chalayan's *Painting* in his 1996 Spring/Summer collection, and Alexander McQueen designed the circuit pattern for Givenchy in the 1999-2000 Autumn/ Winter catwalk. With computers' popularization, designers sought various adoptions of technology and they were specifically interested into the transformation between digits and material, 2D and 3D, the illusory images and the real world. Philip Delamore used 3D software to engineer images for print and surface decoration. Mary Katrantzou created the fusion of 2D image and 3D object by ink-jet printing. There have always been concerns about the 2D and 3D interconversion, and technology mediates the fantasy and reality within fashion.

The question is that how does modern technology challenge the transformation between 2D digitization and a 3D real world, especially with the progression of the cutting-edge technologies?

II. 3D printed fashion

The early form of 3D printing, known as additive manufacturing, was developed during the 1980s, and 3D printing was originally used as a rapid prototyping method in product design or architecture. In 2008, when an important FDM tech-

nique expired, 3D printing then stepped into the commercial level within a relatively short time (Lipson and Kurman, 2013). No longer a laboratory experiment, 3D printing now covers several realms, including fashion, jewelry, medical and dental products, architecture, industry design and even aerospace. Scholars Rifkin, Marsh, Lipson and Kurman, 2011; 2013; 2013) defined 3D printing as a manufacturing method that is a driving force behind the Third Industrial Revolution. Although the concept of the ' Third Industrial Revolution ' is arguable, 3D printing indeed gains growing attentions these days.

In fashion, the early form of 3D printed fashion was starting from textiles design. Freedom of Creation (FOC) in 2005 created the linking structure. It could be considered as fabric or textile. It was not until the 3D-printed haute couture by Dutch designer Iris Van Herpen, 3D printing attracted the media's attention. Since fashion is a concept of trends and popularity, and is a phenomenon in which the avant-garde influences all fashion culture, real 3D printed fashion starts from Iris Van Herpen.

III. 3D fashion and its ambivalence

Ironically, those printed dresses are still not fully acceptable to the majority. Some designers are embracing the changes of the technology and getting inspired by those changes, whilst some are inherently not. For instance, FOC designed the fully flexible linking structure and print the whole garment even the fastening details back in 2005, and they brought up this concept that the future garment could be printing all by machines. However, these days, other fashion designers still manually sew the 3D printed assemblies, especially those designs that are close to the body and related to body movement.

And another aspect is the concept or the feeling those 3D fashion expressed. It seems that some 3D fashion designers tend to put 3D printing and future fashion in a situation where human being are fighting with the technological progression. But at the same time, the conflicting opinion shows up as well. Some designers turn 3D printing as a pleasant tool. Danit Peleg designed the beautiful flexible dress by using soft filament-filaflex and auxetic structure and even posts every single process of making online. These designers think 3D printing should be more accessible and fun.

Fashion is a hybrid notion, same as to digital fashion. And the conflicting and ambivalent concept could be found in many aspects of 3D printed fashion. These facts triggered the ques-

tions: what kind of attitude should we have towards 3D printing in digital fashion? It is not only questioning the design process, method and tools, such as how to design the 3D garment and how to use technology in fashion, but also challenging our opinions towards digital technology, digitalization, the progression of our society and our understanding of the future.

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Smart-tech Dresses, Haute Technologie and Cultural Identity: The Place of Smart Tech Dresses in the Future of the Fashion Industry

Paulina E. Sikorska, University of Southampton

Abstract

The technological developments that can be observed in many aspects of human life are now making inroads into the fashion industry. All components of a smart dress, ranging from the standard (such as the types of fabrics used or its shape), to the technical (such as the type of sensors that are put into it), ought to be combined in such a way as to create a piece of fashion that is 'wearable'. Traditionally, fashion, being the mirror of society, has reflected the particular characteristics that indicated the owner's cultural background, class, wealth and taste. However, the introduction of smart clothes means that the cultural element of the dress and its geographical attachment (i.e. the Western/ethnic type of dress) is vanishing. Having said that, the marriage of fashion and technology is proclaimed to be 'the next generation of fashion and electronic products'. This paper aims to discuss the place of the smart dress in fashion, as it is hard to define it due to its having characteristics that belong both to the haute couture and prêt-à-porter categories. The main goal for the designers and high tech companies should be to make smart dresses more functional, the electronics embedded in them should be more practical, with unique styles that the customer can choose from. Smart dresses should stop being just fancy gadgets and become more diverse allowing the customers to recognize the style of Dior and distinguish it from Chanel's.

Keywords: Smart tech dress; Technology and fashion; Haute couture; Prêt-à-porter; Fashion Trends

A smart tech dress is a subcategory of smart clothes and it can be defined as capable of 'sensing stimuli from the environment, and then reacting or adapting behaviour to the circumstances' (Ariyatun et al., 2005, p. 199). If a dress is 'an assemblage of modifications of the body and/or supplements to the body' (Roach-Higgins and Eicher, 1992, p. 1), then the introduction of intelligent sensors 'woven into the clothing material' (Alex Hanuska et al., 2016, p. 3) will transform it into a smart dress.

The type of dress that we wear is 'intimately linked' with our identity (Julia Twigg, 2009, p. 1) as it 'display[s], express[es]

and shape[s] identity' (Julia Twigg, 2009, p. 1). This can be seen in the entertainment industry (i.e. Lady Gaga's Meat Dress that signifies her expression of self-otherness) (DiLonardo, 2011, p. 1), tribal communities (i.e. Western fashion has not yet reached full acceptance and recognition among African countries) (Maynard, 2004, p. 27) or in the workplace (i.e. the role of a uniform in establishing a professional identity (Timmons and East, 2011, p. 1035) As a matter of fact, Western types of clothes are worn in certain situations even in some indigenous communities (Dahl, 2012, p. 172).

Castells defines identity as the 'people's source of meaning and experience' based on cultural attributes, which thus becomes 'a fundamental lever of social change' (Abdelnour-Nocera et al., 2016, p. 65). It may be argued that a dress, or any type of clothing for that matter, can no longer adequately describe the wearer's identity. Tomlinson illustrates that point by giving the example of Chinese students who prefer to wear European or American brands over their national ones (Tomlinson, 2003, p. 276).

Globalization of fashion and moving away from "national" clothes. Chida uses Levi's, Calvin Klein or Maxmara as examples of the world dress while emphasizing that, at the same time, in Tunisian culture women tend to wear these brands in addition to their ethnical dresses (Chida, 2006, p. 10). Having said that, the smart tech dress seems to be more international, unlike the world dress that is not rooted in any particular history or culture and is in fact cross-border (Chida, 2006, p. 12). On the one hand, it may be claimed that the application of local customs will help smart tech dresses to incorporate the style of a particular culture. On the other hand, adopting a more cross-border and universal approach may be a better choice as smart tech dresses will most likely not be affordable, desirable and admired by every culture.

However, the main challenge for the smart tech dress today lies mainly in its classification in fashion. The combination of fashion and technology embedded in a single dress means that a smart tech dress is extremely difficult to classify as it does not fully belong to either haute couture or prêt-à-porter. There is no doubt that the smart tech dress, unlike any other type of smart clothing (i.e. intelligent jackets or socks), looks more like haute couture, although it would be more correct to say that it is a combination of haute couture and haute technologie, however some lifestyle brands, such as Tommy Hilfiger or Ralph Lauren, may very well accommodate a smart tech dress as prêt-à-porter. In order to do so, smart tech dresses and any other types of smart clothes have to meet certain conditions to enter the market, i.e. be "fashionable and

comfortable to wear as well as be washable, easy to handle and easy to power”(Uhlig, 2012, p. 6).

There is also a range of economic incentives that may encourage both high-tech companies and fashion houses to invest in smart clothing in general, and smart dresses in particular. It is important to note that, in accordance with the IDTechEx report, the value of wearable technology in 2016 was 30 billion dollars and this is estimated to increase to 40 billion in 2018 and to 150 billion by 2026 (ReportBuyer, n.d.). That said, the impact of fast-growing Internet technology in the form of the Internet of Things, which is closely related to smart-tech dresses and the dissemination of data, might also act as an additional incentive for the industry. The revenue forecasts claim that IoT will reach a value of 7.1 billion dollars by 2020 compared to 1.9 billion in 2013 (Lund et al., 2014). Unfortunately, wearable technologies are still underrated in terms of financial investment and some researchers, such as Tran Vu Anh Khoa, argue that more money should be invested in wearable smart technology (Tran Vu Anh Khoa 2015, p. 45).

Despite the technological and practical challenges of smart clothes and smart dresses in particular, a gradual improvement can be seen in terms of smart dresses being featured at fashion shows. The designer Hussein Chalayan, who has been collaborating with Intel to bring the technology to the Spring/Summer Fashion Week Show 2017, is an example of this trend. It may be true that in the light of future developments combining fashion and technology the stylist or a designer will indeed be “more dependent on the Cisco Systems, rather than Chanel”(Chunyan and Hu, 2015, p. 199)

Due to being in the early stages of development, smart tech dresses ought to be classified as a separate category until technology and fashion are fully integrated. Smart clothing is indeed predicted to be ‘the next generation of fashion and electronic products’.(Ariyatun and Holland, 2003, p. 9). However, the electronics should be practical in function. They should get along well with the customer’s fashion preference and current fashion trends (Ariyatun et al., 2005, p. 210). Having said that, more research should be made by corporations interested in the merger of fashion and technology in order to offer a more business-oriented approach to smart dresses. Academic research centers, on the other hand, should focus more on research and the use of fashion studies and the history of fashion (Ariyatun and Holland, 2003, p. 9).

As the author argues in her paper on the place of smart clothing in the contemporary world (Paulina Sikorska, 2017), smart clothes should be differentiated from one another and have different characteristics. Socks, jackets and dresses are differ-

ent types of garments and should be treated as such, regardless if they are marketed as smart or intelligent. The same should apply to smart dresses that may be treated ab initio as something that does not belong to the mainstream or haute couture as it possesses the characteristics of both. Designers should develop a wide range of smart dress styles enabling the customers to choose the ones that suit their fashion preferences, and thus make smart dresses more than just a fancy gadget. Smart tech dresses should possess distinct characteristics. Despite being classified as part of the smart tech dress category, customers should nevertheless be able to clearly see the difference in style between them, much like they can distinguish between a Dior and a Chanel dress.

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FASHION CONSUMPTION

(Un)Dressing Motherly Consumption Practices

Anna-Mamusu Sesay, Design School Kolding

Abstract

A growing body of literature investigates the relationship between motherhood and consumption, emphasising the importance of consumption practices in establishing a motherly identity. The dominant perspective towards consumption found in those studies links consumption to market activity, thereby reducing it to be taking place within the commercialised spheres of the market. In this paper I am working with a definition of consumption as the “use of material possessions that is beyond commerce” (Douglas and Isherwood (1979, p. 37), which allows for a more holistic understanding of how things are being consumed by people. Drawing on empirical data collected through wardrobe studies as well as informal interviews, in this paper I am discussing how studying the consumption of baby clothing can contribute to our understanding of kinship ties. In discussing one specific case from my fieldwork I will explain how one of my informant’s baby’s wardrobe became the site for conflict but also a means to establish a “joking relationship” between to sisters-in-law. The aim of this paper is to demonstrate the richness of the empirical field that dressing one’s infant encompasses and to highlight that the socio-cultural complexities that relate to it go beyond market relationships.

Key Words: consumption; motherhood; baby clothing; kinship

Introduction

In recent years a growing body of studies has examined the relationship between motherhood and consumption, combining diverse fields such as sociology, anthropology, marketing as well as cultural and consumer studies. These studies demonstrate how through their first child, women enter “an ever-expanding consumer world of specialist goods and niche marketing, providing products for every stage of the maternal experience (Thomson et al., 2011, p. 197). As such, becoming a mother is often linked to transitional or liminal consumption, through which this new status is being somehow negotiated. Within this realm of literature it is the focus on what might be called a “re-entering” into the capitalist marketplace dominating Western consumer culture as a whole, from a new, often not yet fully established position, namely that of “mother”. Although the insides gained through a conceptualization of

motherhood and consumption in relationship to repositioning within the marketplace has helped to shed light on “one of the great under-told stories in consumer culture” (Cook 2013, p. 75), this focus seems to neglect aspect of consumerism which fall outside the commercialized spheres of the market.

Douglas and Isherwood’s definition of consumption as “a use of material possessions that is beyond commerce” (1979, p. 37), and which can be seen as “the very arena which culture is fought over and licked into shape” (ibid., p. 57) invites us to investigate how different practices of consumption relate to broader socio-cultural complexities as it places consumption at the very core of value production within society. Taking this broad definition of consumption as a starting point has brought about numerous insightful studies that investigate the valuation processes involved in motherly consumption. Clarke (2007) e.g. analyses how children’s birthday parties function as spaces to negotiate different normative roles of motherhood, while Wozniak (2004) demonstrates how through consumption objects kinship relationships between foster mothers and the children they take care of are being established. What these studies have in common is an understanding of consumption as a key practice in negotiating and establishing a motherly identity.

In my on-going Ph.D. project I am focusing on motherly consumption practices in relationship to baby clothing. During the course of 10 months fieldwork I am following five first time mothers in Denmark in order to understand the position that the consumption of baby clothing has within the establishment of their new roles as mothers. One of the key methods I am applying are wardrobe studies. With a recent shift within fashion studies towards a focus on seemingly mundane, everyday dressing practices in contrast to the novelty and fastness of change often associate with fashion as a system, wardrobe studies have become a useful methodological approach towards understanding the micro politics of identity making played out during daily dress practices. Generally speaking, wardrobe studies can be defined as taking “an inventory of clothes in a wardrobe” (...) where “the goal is to look at the relationship between the individual item of clothing and the larger material totalities” (Klepp and Bjerck, 2014, p. 375). In an review on recent directions towards the contextualization of “the wardrobe” Skov (2011) distinguishes three different approaches, namely as “mental”, “social” and “physical” space. Those three categories are not separate from each other but should rather be understood as empirically interrelated. As such, the wardrobe is “a space in which the mental, social and physical intersect” (ibid., p. 15).

Stepping into the Baby's Wardrobe

As Klepp and Bjerck (2014, p. 377) point out "wardrobes by their very nature are changeable and complex and therefore hard to pin down". What is true for wardrobes in general, becomes even more true within the case of a baby's wardrobe: within the first two years of their life, children outgrow on average eight clothing sizes, from a new-born size 50 till size 92 by the age of two. To account for this rapid change within the assemblage of clothes, I am taking inventories of the clothes present in my informants' babies' wardrobes in intervals of several weeks. These snapshots are interesting tools to trace changes, but also continuities within the wardrobes under observation. To work analytically with these huge amounts of inventory data, I organize the different items into five categories I identified as being important. These are not the emic categories by which my informants organize their babies' wardrobes but rather etic conceptualizations applied by me. The categories I identified are: purchases, gifts, inherences, loans and hand-made items. Those categories are by no means exclusive to one another, rather, they intersect, in the case of some items, on multiple levels. This means that a piece of clothes can e.g. be a hand-made gift. Further does every category consist of several sub-categories, meaning that purchases can e.g. be bought newly or second hand. A categorization like this is useful as it allows for an in-depth analysis of the specificities regarding valuation processes, embedded within each of these categories. In the following, I want to give an example from the field, discussing some of the social aspects related to one specific piece of clothing. In it, the interrelatedness of my analytical categories becomes evident, as the piece is at once inherited, hand-made and to some degree a loan. At this point, I won't go into a discussion of the implications of the intersection of these categories; rather, I will be focusing on aspects of the social spatiality of the wardrobe, connected to kinship relationships.

M. invited me to join her and her sister-in-law I. for what they call a clothing swap. Having both given birth to girls four months after each other, they established a clothing sharing practices, where they would meet up and go through bunches of clothes they both had acquired individually. M. as well as I. apply a clothing acquisition strategy, which can be defined as pragmatic. They had collected huge amounts of baby clothes through Facebook give-away groups like sharing circle as well as through their professional and personal networks. As such they had gathered multiple bags of clothing, ranging from small sizes up to 2 years. During an informal interview I conducted with both of them, they told me that they couldn't imagine having to acquire every piece of their daughters' wardrobe individually, emphasizing the amount of time that would

take. With M.'s daughter Nina being born in December 2015, and her cousin Benja following in March 2016, the initial idea of the clothing swap practice was that Nina would use the clothes first and then pass them on to her younger cousin Benja, once she outgrows them. What started as a convenient idea was disrupted by the fact that Benja grew overproportionately, which led to a situation where she would use the same size as her four months older cousin, Nina, by the age of six months. Therefore, M. and I. had to reassess their swapping practice, leading them to divide the clothes they had collected between them. Where ownership towards clothing wasn't an issue beforehand, the new situation had created a context wherein they had to re-negotiate the entitlement to the clothes they had collected and shared. During a coffee meeting with me, M. uttered her slight annoyance and frustration with her sister-in-law, who had made a claim on all pants in the size both girls would wear at that time. I.'s claim was based on the fact that all the pants came from a bag she had acquired and as such she felt they belonged to her. For the sake of good family relationships, M. didn't want to fight about these pants and just let I. have them, while she bought new pants for her daughter Nina.

M.: "I think she was a bit silly, we could have definitely shared. But I didn't want to fight with her over some stupid pants."

A.: So what did you do?

M.: Well, I just let her have them and bought some pants for Nina in Føtex. (1)

A few weeks after the pants incident, M. and I. had scheduled a new clothing swap session, where they wanted to go through a bag of clothes M. had been given by her mother-in-law. The bag consisted of mainly hand-made, woollen items in different sizes, such as vests, a few sweatshirts, socks and gloves. The clothes had been worn by I. and her older sister as well as brother (M.'s husband) when they were children and had been kept by their mother to be passed on once they had children themselves. Between all the woollen items, there was also a cotton set, consisting of a pair of trousers and a sweatshirt, which had been sewn for I. by her mother and painted upon by her older brother (Fig. 1). It was this specific item that brought about a discussion between M. and I. concerning who should inherit it. When I. first found the set, she excitedly remembered herself running around in it in her parent's house. This emotional reaction caused M. to feel that I. should have the set as she felt she didn't have any emotional bond to it. I. on the other hand felt that Nina was also

(1) A Danish supermarket chain.

entitled to inherit it, as she thought her older brother, who had painted the set would as well very much enjoy seeing his daughter in it. The two also tried to reconstruct when exactly the set was made. M. suggested that her husband must have been around eight, as that is the number of years that separate him from his youngest sister.



Figure 1

Although this was a valid argument, I. somehow couldn't believe it as she felt the drawings on the set looked as if a much younger child had made them. This observation caused some laughter on both sides, as M.'s husband is known in his family as being slightly nerdy and having been bad with e.g. sports his entire life. His bad drawing skills seemed to be just another point of proof for his bad motoric skills in general. In the end it was decided that M. would keep the set and ask her husband about his attachment to it; if he liked it, she would keep it for Nina, otherwise Benja would inherit it.

There are some interesting aspects I want to focus upon. What struck me first of all was the time spent by M. and I. to go through the huge amounts of clothing they acquired, especially as both stated that they rather don't want to spend time on the assemblage of their daughters wardrobes. The clothing swap I took part in was just one of many and I learned that clothes had been transported from one home to another, sorted through and stored away in several instances. Nevertheless, although time consuming, the clothing swap also provided the two sister-in-laws with an opportunity to spend time together and bond over their new role as mothers. Before and even during their pregnancies, M. and I. hadn't really spent time, just the two of them. Although she liked I., M. always felt closer to her husband's other sister, who is about the same age as herself and resembles herself much more personality

wise. Nonetheless, M. also uttered her excitement about actually spending more "alone time" with I. and getting to know her better. As Woodward (2007, p. 6) argues, wardrobes function as means to manage diverse and multiply kinship relationships as "particular relationships are embedded in items of clothing". M. and I.'s clothing swap practices is a good example of how clothing can function as a means to manage relationships as it highlights the potentialities of conflict but also bonding. As the pants incident demonstrates, embedded into M. and I.'s relationship is potential conflict, and it got highlighted when M. felt she couldn't call her sister-in-law out on her silliness regarding keeping all pants for herself. Nonetheless, the hand-made set, painted by her husband, helped in establishing what can be called a "joking relationship" between the two. Defined as "a relation between two persons in which one is by custom permitted, and in some instances required, to tease or make fun of the other, who in turn is required to take no offence" (Radcliffe-Brown 1940, p. 195), joking relationships are regarded as a means to establish social order within complex kinship relationships. Between M. and I. "the joke" is not placed between the two sister-in-laws but rather on the person that connects them by kin, M.'s husband. As such, the set helped in erasing potential conflicts and claims over inheritances as it allowed for establishing a bonding relationship embedded in a joke.

The length of this paper doesn't allow for an in-depth discussion of the issue at hand. Rather, it is meant to provide a first glimpse into the complexities embedded in my informants' babies' wardrobes. As I have demonstrated, focusing solely on commercialised spheres of motherly consumption, which connects mothers to the market, only tells one side of the consumption story. Through looking at my informants' babies' wardrobes other aspects of consumption and hereto-related processes of valuation become evident. In this paper I touched upon kinship relationships that become negotiated through items within my informants' baby's wardrobe. The analytical categorization of wardrobe items as purchases, gifts, inheritances, loans and hand-made items helps in zooming into the specificities of valuation embedded into every category and can thereby provide a more nuanced picture of motherly consumption in relationship to baby clothing.

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Dressed and Undressed: Neo-classical Fashion in the Palais-Royal

Dr. Gillian Crosby, Nottingham Trent University

Abstract

After the French Revolution the pleasure gardens of the Palais-Royal in Paris became a haven of gambling dens and prostitution. With the adoption of the neo-classical style of dresses made entirely of fine muslin by the fashionable Merveilleuses, prostitutes were able to copy the latest fashion easily, either through second-hand clothing or their own creations. These women used the dresses to their advantage to pass in better circles and, on a practical level, to facilitate their assignments. This paper examines the phenomenon of the brief period of time when wealthy women wore the same fashion as prostitutes, focusing on contemporary commentary related to social mores and morality.

Keywords: Palais-Royal; neo-classical; prostitutes; Merveilleuses; morality.

Before the French Revolution the gardens of the Palais-Royal, ancient home of the dukes of Orleans, were the most fashionable place in Paris for the wealthy to stroll, visit the Opera or enjoy the theatre. The buildings contained 'vast and superb apartments with a view over the gardens, occupied by different wealthy individuals' (Mayeur de Saint-Paul, 1788). The boutiques and coffee houses under the arcades were also a place to shop, conduct financial transactions and, increasingly, to gamble. By the end of the eighteenth century the Palais was known for the quantity of gaming rooms it housed, and the restaurants and salons where the clients of these establishments could amuse themselves. It was however, a place of contradictions, where the presence of the moneyed elite attracted 'prostitutes, considered an ornament, but also a source of indecency' (Des Essarts, 1789). An anonymous pamphlet called *The Englishman's Mentor* described the 'fashionable dissipation and vice of Paris' at the Palais-Royal', saying:

'There does not exist under the whole canopy of heaven, a place that can vie with the *Palais-Royal*. Here is to be found all that the most depraved appetite can desire... Industry and pleasure have here alike established their headquarters, but the grand arbiters

in this enchanted spot are debauchery and vice'. (*The Englishman's Mentor*, 1819.)

This reputation for licentiousness after the Revolution came mostly from English men visiting Paris. It is a time-honoured fashion to insult the women of an enemy country as loose-moraled, that being the ultimate condemnation of the society as a whole, suggesting widespread corruption. As Aileen Ribiero (2003) noted, 'Anything French in the way of dress or pleasures was greeted with a kind of horrified relish'. Indeed, the description of the pleasures of the ladies of dubious quality of the Palais could be said to be somewhat too detailed to be entirely censorious. There was indeed though, some truth in the description. In 1787 the Paris police estimated between sixty and seventy thousand 'women of pleasure' were working in Paris, and in winter the arcades of the Palais-Royal were teeming with girls who returned to town from their summer haunts of the Bois de Boulogne and the woods at Vincennes (Béraud, 1839). Prostitutes were free to work, and the government even offered medical visits. However, they were considered a threat to be carefully watched, like beggars and counter-revolutionaries. To this end, a new police department was created in 1795 to monitor these 'dangerous classes', and it made frequent raids on the Palais-Royal and other areas of disrepute.

The proximity of the prostitutes to the well-to-do germinated their imitation of fashionable clothing. In the most exclusive salons the 'grand courtesans' paraded in great style. The writer Louis-Sébastien Mercier (1788) called them 'vice embellished' in their 'most precious jewels and the richest of fabrics', noting with amusements that the *grandes-dames* of society were sometimes mistaken by the police for the prostitutes, who could find entry to the salons due to the similarity of their clothing. In the less exclusive gaming rooms, a second type of prostitute began to dress in the imitation of the neo-classical style adopted by the *Merveilleuses*, the 'bright young things' of their day. With their male counterparts, nicknamed *Incroyables*, they socialised frantically as a reaction to the end of the Reign of Terror in 1794, dressing and behaving in outlandish fashion and gaining notoriety for a 'louche' lifestyle. The adoption of their style was no coincidence. One madam of the Palais was known for teaching pretty young girls to imitate the ladies as closely as possible, 'to dress themselves in the same way; use the same gestures and language' so they could pass easily within the society salons (Rétif de La Bretonne, 1790). Finally, at the lowest end of the social scale, there were the *grisettes* or 'public girls' who beckoned passers-by from the windows of their rented rooms in the Palais by day and from their doorways at night but, increasingly, started soliciting men in the arcades in daytime (Ar-

chives de la Police, 1795). They were said to be 'dressed, or rather *undressed*, in the height of fashion, appearing in a state of almost absolute nudity' (De Launay, 1790).

Queen Marie-Antoinette is credited as having started the fashion for wearing the 'indecent' cotton chemise, immortalised in the portraits of Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, and her state of *déshabillé* was censured as an indication of her corruption. Yet this garment, voluminous and pleated, was worn over corsetry and petticoats. During the Revolution, ordinary women were equally daring in their dress, loosening their corsets and raising their skirts as they took part in the insurrections which destroyed the *ancien régime*. Their disregard for convention gave them more freedom of movement, but was also a rebellion against the stiff, regulated fashions of the hated aristocracy. Revolutionary women's dress was not imitated, but it paved the way for a new mood in feminine clothing.

A major catalyst for the change in dress was the idealisation of the erudite and cultured societies of classical antiquity, the embodiment of republican supremacy. Neo-classical dress symbolised the sweeping away of the old corruption and the excesses of sumptuous silk dresses and unnecessary decoration. The white marble folds and high waistlines of the clothing represented on classical Greek statues were interpreted in fine transparent cotton or linen. The garments were more freely following and revealed the true silhouette of the body. It was this which raised eyebrows, rather than the low décolleté, which had long been a feature of *ancien régime* clothing. Both at court and in the costumes of the middling and working classes, the breasts had been pushed up by boned stays and hidden only with a transparent *fichu*. It was the emphasis on the slimness of the hips and the glimpse of the outline of the legs which was daring and new, after so long with the body being corseted and padded into an exaggerated idea of voluptuousness through a tiny waist, large posterior and a sea of skirts which revealed only the feet and ankles. As in other periods when women adopted more 'masculine' lines, the style indicated female independence and was therefore threatening.

The new garments were just as much a statement of wealth as the preceding fashions, however, as the most expensive fine cottons were still not produced in France. In 1762 the *Dictionnaire de commerce portatif* had noted that 'almost all cotton cloths come from the Indies and the Levant: they are also made in France and elsewhere, but in small quantity'. By the 1790s a number of new establishments around Rouen were successfully making *mousselines*, which were either cotton or linen muslins, suggesting weavers were perfecting their ability to make the lightweight but strong warps required. They still

could not match the gossamer-fine Indian cloths, which Baines in his *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain* noted 'might be thought to be the work of fairies or of insects, rather than men'. He observed that nothing as fine had yet been produced mechanically that matched the 'manual dexterity of the Oriental', citing the seventeenth-century French traveller Tavernier, who remarked upon calico 'so fine that when a man puts it on, his skin shall appear as plainly through it, as if he was quite naked' (Baines, 1835, pp. 56-57).

The French relied upon the innovations of the English cotton pioneers to perfect their looms and processes, and these were infrequently available during the turbulence of the Revolution, and then during the Napoleonic wars. The middle classes however, wore linen, finer than it had been but less transparent or flowing, and it was probably these garments which were sold on to the 'women of lax morals'. They were still costly. 'Many of these girls are obliged to do without the first necessities of life to buy something to adorn themselves, because they are persuaded that they will be paid more [by their customers]...', wrote a contemporary commentator (Mayeur de Saint-Paul, 1798). The prostitutes' dresses were far more transparent, lacking the nude-coloured underwear and 'long tight pants of pink silk, hugging the body' which to some extent protected the *Merveilleuses*' modesty (Racinet, 1888, p.589). It has been suggested that those ladies' undergarments were a sort of soft *corselette* covering the torso and hips, and sometimes more than one layer of muslin in the dress would have further reduced the transparency. Nonetheless, cartoonists suggested they flirtatiously showed more of their bodies than could be considered modest, not least with the mania for dancing wildly. With their hair coiffed in short curls *à la Titus*, sleeveless gowns, and their legs exposed as they spun like tops, one author commented that 'the women's attractions are barely veiled'. These scanty outfits were accused of causing the death of young women from pneumonia in the harsh winter of 1801 due to the 'epidemic of French fashions' (Ibid, pp.590-91). Following this fashion for simple, classical dresses clearly had a practical side for the prostitutes, making the body both alluring and easily accessible.

Second-hand clothes sold by *fripiers* were the main source of fashionable clothing, bought or stolen from the wardrobes of the wealthy, and passing through many hands as it moved down the social scale. These garments would more likely be yellow than white by the time they reached the prostitutes. The Palais-Royal's covered arcades at least allowed a less muddy surface underfoot which helped in keeping the dresses cleaner, but one petition to the police that women be chased from the Palais 'in their soiled night clothes' suggests that keeping their dresses looking pristine was a challenge. In-

deed, even for the ladies they mimicked, wearing the 'simple' classical style was less than easy, requiring multiple gowns, frequent laundering and also better personal hygiene once the body was so exposed. They at least had pleasant undergarments and delicately embroidered silk stockings. If the poorer women had stockings at all they may have been linen, wool or even hemp. Having no corset, their breasts were not thrust upwards as they were in upper-class women's robes, but some cartoons show women with their breasts completely on show above the high waist.

The availability of the fabric, the reduced amount of cloth required, and a simplicity of design which required less skill from a seamstress, all facilitated the making of neo-classical style dresses by poorer women. Second-hand dresses bought by the *grisettes* were no doubt worn out and ill-fitting. They would be altered by the women themselves, considering that many were *couturières*, a profession, like actresses or dancers, considered to be loose-moraled:

'In recent years a multitude of fashion-sellers, seamstresses, laundresses and other *grisettes* of this type have begun to ply the same trade exclusively permitted to the girls of pleasure, vulgarly called hookers'.
(De Launay, op. cit).

Of a list of 162 known prostitutes in the Palais-Royal in 1790, sixty-three were listed as *marchandes de modes*, seamstresses and different types of needlewomen related to the fashion trades. The number of women in these trades in the second half of the eighteenth century had grown enormously due to the fashion for ribbons, trims and *falbalas* of all kinds. The trades were notoriously badly paid and many girls 'awaited the moment when they could throw down their needles and escape the slavery' (Mercier, op. cit.). With the disappearance of their aristocratic clientele, work became scarce, and for many of the women there was no option except prostitution.

The prostitutes then, were for the first time dressed quite similarly to their betters, in antique-style chemises, ironically intended to suggest purity. The outrageous dress and behaviour of the *Merveilleuses* in the Palais-Royal salons only lasted a short time: their loose, free gowns were emblematic of the frenzied social period of the *Directoire*. With the establishment of the *Consulat* in 1799, Napoleon advocated a more regal classical style at his court, where the silhouette remained similar, but the chemise was covered with a silk robe and train. This still showed a low décolleté, but the style was more decent and matronly. A more sober mood came over the court, and women's freedom to move around in society freely, and to

behave and dress as they liked, was once again curtailed. Under the Empire, luxuries became *de rigueur* once again, and in Josephine's court the new styles became as lavish as those prior to the Revolution. The richest fabrics returned and were decorated with expensive embroidery and jewels. Gradually corsetry and more restrictive styles returned, and the neo-classical freedom in dress ended, for princesses and prostitutes alike.

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The Shift Dress as Cultural Meaning

Dr Elizabeth Kealy-Morris, University of Chester

Abstract

This paper will offer a historic analysis of the shift dress as essential to the middle and upper-middle class American woman's wardrobe and its lasting influence on American sportswear and the collections of luxury brands as a signifier of understated feminine youthful health through movement.

This paper will argue that the shift dress's key place in the American woman's wardrobe reflects the unique historical and cultural influences on American dress from the birth of the new democratic nation in the eighteenth century to the dominance of New York City's ready-to-wear sportswear industry in the mid-twentieth century.

The shift dress can be traced back to the 1920s chemise. Dresses of that era, particularly those of Coco Chanel, featured exposed legs and arms, simple cuts, loose shapes and little waist definition. This was a move away from corsets and offered women both style and ease of movement. It became a staple of the American woman's wardrobe in the 1960s and signified a new trend in women's clothing as the garment promoted independence, modernity, a redefinition of the female shape, and concurrent ideological expectations of the female form.

Key Words: shift dress; ready-to-wear; American sportswear; Claire McCardell; modernity

This paper will suggest that the 'American Preppy' feminine silhouette has been influenced by the American myths of 'pioneering spirit', athletic bodies honed through discipline and hard work and clothes with elegant simplicity that allow the healthy body to move freely. This paper will analyse the legacy of the shift dress as a key wardrobe staple for middle and upper-class American women to enable understanding of the enduring influence of the rise of sportswear in 1930s and 1940s America. This 'American Look' (Webber-Hanchett, 2003) can be seen today in the ready-to-wear collections of Victoria Beckham, Calvin Klein, Donna Karan and J Crew.

This paper will discuss the development of the American expectation of the female corporeal form which is rooted both in the origins of the country's independence from Britain and the

rise of American fashion design and industry at the turn of the twentieth century. A number of authors write of the rise of New York's fashion industry in opposition to Paris' previously near monopoly of trade from the turn of the twentieth century to expanding its own brands, style and industry with Paris otherwise occupied after invasion by Germany during World War II (Arnold, 2008, 2009; Breward, 2003; Breward & Evans, 2005; Campbell Warner, 2005; Kirkland, 1975; Mendes & de la Haye, 1999 & 2010; O'Hara Callan, 1998; Rennolds Millbank, 1989; Tomerlin Lee, 1975). Breward (2003) notes that the rise of New York fashion might be seen as a response to the ever-evolving social and cultural demands on clothing made by American consumers since the early Revolutionary period when difference was sought from imposed English taste.

The fiercely Protestant domestic philosophy current amongst elite colonial women favoured the simplicity of homespun goods, viewed the thrifty use of materials as a necessary condition for self-sufficiency and cast any ostentation in dress as morally suspicious (Breward, 2003, p. 197).

In the late nineteenth century Parisian style was once again observed and 'shoddy' American goods rejected following a period of prosperity after the American Civil War. By the 1920s a growing consumer confidence in the American way of life and the increasing trade in ready-to-wear clothes created through mass production and mass consumed in the now widely-established department stores rather than Parisian artisanal haute couture (Breward, 2003). All of these factors buoyed the development of a New York fashion identity and the sensible, affordable and practical clothing produced by the New York fashion industry matched well the informal and active nature of modern American life.

While Parisian couture brands Chanel and Patou created sport-inspired fashions for the young elite, "it was American ready-to-wear designers who crystallized the ideal of streamlined, simple styles for middle and working class women" (Arnold, 2008, p. 343).

Druesedow (2010) writes an excellent survey of the history of the ready-to-wear market from cottage industry to factory production noting that, "innovations in transportation, communication, and technology have been major forces for change throughout the history of ready-to-wear clothing production" (p.595).

The separates of blouse and skirt as well as the shirtwaist dress emerged as the clothing of choice for the popularised 'Gibson Girl' and was seen throughout advertising during the

early years of the twentieth century (Breward, 2003). This flexible style allowed for mixing and matching of coordinating garments to make several ensembles from a few staple pieces. This was in stark contrast to the Parisian style of one dress defining an ensemble. Arnold (2008, 2009) notes that by the 1930s New York sportswear was increasingly marketed on its differences from Parisian couture. By 1950 New York became the principle centre for inspiring the fashion desires of fashion-conscious American women, “its starkly functional, self-consciously smart product carried the traces of two hundred years of evolution” (Breward, 2003, p. 197).

Lifestyle changes had taken place in the 1920s that led to changes in perceptions about the moving body and its adornment. Skirts were shortened, exposing legs, and restrictive female undergarments were minimised to enable the body to move more freely and naturally. In the early 1930s French courtier Madeleine Vionnet’s innovative construction techniques, developing the bias cut (Fig.1), created a daring and revealing silhouette.



Figure 1 *Madeleine Vionnet. Example of a dress cut 'across the bias', silk, 1929.*

Campbell Warner (2005) notes that three key developments influenced the rise of The American Look in women’s fashion in the 1930s. The clothing initially designed specifically for sport broadened into sportswear; Due to advances in print technology fashion magazines could exploit photographic techniques in representing fashion narratives “promoting the new ideals of beauty that were closely connected to the lithe, sporting look” (pp.79-80); and the role the Hollywood played in promoting new fashion products to the public. Arnold (2009) suggests these developments glossed over “differences in class, ethnicity, and status ... in favour of a coherent vision that uses discrete good taste and simple silhouettes to construct an American ideal” (p.113).

Claire McCardell: Designing ‘The American Look’

The legacy of key influential New York designers Claire McCardell, Mildred Orrick, Norman Norrell and Mainbocher has been written by many (Arnold, 2008, 2009; Breward, 2003; Kirkland, 1975; Mendes & de la Haye, 1999, 2010; O’Hara Callan, 1998; Rennolds Millbank, 1989; Tomerlin Lee, 1975). This paper references the work of arguably the most influential of the New York sportswear designers, Claire McCardell.

McCardell (Fig. 2) studied at Parsons School of Art in New York and Paris from 1927 to 1929. Along with her contemporaries, most notably Mildred Orrick, she was interested in creating clothes that offered women freedom of movement inspired by the popular modern dancers Isadora Duncan and Martha Graham. According to Breward (2003) her unpretentious, wearable collections captured the spirit of American sportswear; O’Hara Callan notes that McCardell in fact “drew up the blueprint” (1998, p.160) for this market. Concentrated in mid-town Manhattan, the ready-to-wear industry was fully integrated into mass production, mass merchandising and mass consumption through the retail trade by 1931 when McCardell joined the manufacturer Townley Frocks as a designer.

McCardell combined a nostalgic American prairie style with the use of everyday working wear fabrics of cotton plaid, denim, wool, and jersey to create an unpretentious casual American style based on comfort, ease and flexibility (Figure 3). She introduced innovative wraps, hoods, fasteners, and belts for their visual appeal and flexibility (Figure 4). Her unlined and unpadded designs in everyday work wear materials were in stark contrast to the formal and constrained femininity of Dior’s post-war ‘New Look’ (Yohannan & Wolf, 1998; Breward, 2003).



Figure 2 McCardell in Vogue wearing a 'future dress', 1945.



Figure 3 McCardell contrast stitch halter and skirt, both in cotton, Harper's Bazaar, 1944.

McCardell's designs were the trademark of what came to be celebrated as 'The American Look' (Figure 5) through marketing campaigns led by Dorothy Shaver at the upscale department store chain of Lord and Taylor during the late 1930s and mid 1940s (Breward, 2003; Druessedow, 2010, Webber-Hanchett, 2003; Yohannan, 2010; Yohannan & Wolf, 1998). 'The Shaver Touch' (Webber-Hanchett, 2003, p.80) as it came to be known, promoted not only the American ready-to-wear industry but also the key tenets of modernism: that form should follow function.

Style as signifier of identity

This section will consider the ways in which clothing and dress are cultural phenomena that communicate meaning and enable the construction of identity through this communication. I will use the semiotic model of communication broadly (Fiske, 1990) and the functions of fashion in particular (Bar-

nard, 2002; Barthes, 1983, 2004) to analyse the sartorial expectations of upper and middle-class American culture represented in the shift dress.

The semiotic model argues that communication is a social interaction and requires negotiation between individuals which, in turn, establishes them as members of a cultural group. Barnard (2002) suggests that "fashion and clothing are often used to make sense of the world and the things and people in it...they are communicative phenomena" (p.32). Communication is a social interaction constituting an individual as member of a cultural group, but it is through the social interacting, here I focus on acts of dress and style, that the individual becomes a member of the group. In this way the semiotic model concentrates on the negotiation of meanings rather than the receiving of messages. The production of meaning is a result of negotiation between senders, readers, their cultural experiences, and clothing. However, Barnard (2002) reminds us that communication is not a neutral cultural activity, and power



Figure 4 McCardell, 'The String Bean' shift dress, Harpers Bazaar, 1953



Figure 5 "You can thank your ancestors for The American Look", Lord & Taylor advertisement, Vogue, 1945.

struggles can play a role in negotiating meaning between readers.

Barthes (1983, 2004) was interested in the ways in which fashion collapses its signifier (the garment or accessory) into a dominant signified (new, trendy, season-focused, must-have), which he termed 'the rhetoric of fashion' (1983). This, he claims, is because "fashion is tyrannical and its sign arbitrary (therefore) it must convert its sign into a natural fact or a rational law..." (Barthes, 1983, p.263). Through the collapsing of the signifiers of a garment into a set of overriding signifieds, then, all that is left is myth of what cultural meaning the garment communicates and negotiates about the wearer to wider culture.

The shift dress as cultural meaning

The shift dress is a key style worn by middle and upper-class American women and their daughters and remains a wardrobe staple dating back to the 1960s. This paper proposes that although it resembles similar European-initiated dress designs, such as the chemise, the sack dress and the mini-dress, the origin of the shift dress in America is in the development of American sportswear collections off the tennis court, beach and field in the 1930s and as such can be read as a American cultural product.

The shift dress can be traced back to the 1920s chemise. Dresses of that era, particularly those of Coco Chanel, featured exposed legs and arms, simple cuts, loose shapes and little waist definition. This was a move away from corsets and offered women both style and ease of movement. The shift dress is short and straight with a simple line; it hangs loose on the body from the shoulders and is held together by side panels. The dress is often sleeveless with a short hemline; the neckline is high, typically with a boat-neck collar.

The garment promotes independence, modernity and a redefinition of the female shape. The design is at once feminine and androgynous, youthful and ageless. It allows women to dance, move and work at liberty and it unites style and comfort. The cut allows a loose fit and is all about mobility, exposure, casual ease, and understated style. The dress favours women with small busts, slim frames and long legs.

In Europe the modern shift dress evolved in the early 1960s from the 1950's sheath dress, labelled 'the sack dress' by disapproving journalists who disliked the waist-free silhouette (Mendes & de la Haye, 2010), seen in the 1957 collections of Dior ('The Spindle Line') and Balenciaga ('The Sack Line').

One of the first recognisable shift dresses was Yves Saint Laurent's 1965 'Mondrian Collection' cocktail dress (Fig.6) inspired by the abstract paintings of the Dutch De Stijl artist Piet Mondrian.



Figure 6 Yves Saint Laurent for Dior, cocktail dress, Mondrian Collection, 1965.

The modernist avant-garde and youth culture inspired fashion of post-war Europe (Figures 7 & 8) had a limited audience in conservative America where "functional clothes had always had the widest appeal" (Mendes & de la Haye, 2010, p.184). American ready-to-wear translations of the 1950s European chemise, sack and shift dresses surged with the sartorial inspiration of Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy as First Lady from 1962-4 (Figure 9). Since this time the shift dress has been worn by all generations of American middle and upper-middle class women. In America the cultural meaning of the shift dress, borne from its origins in functional ready-to-wear day-wear and sportswear, is one of ageless health through physical activity.

The shift dress was further embedded into popular culture by the socialite Lilly Pulitzer, who sold her 'Lilly Dress' at her orange juice bar in the upmarket resort of Palm Beach, Florida (Figure 10) (Banks & de La Chapelle, 2011). The Lilly Dress is noted for its bright colours and playful fabrics and remains a summer staple for female residents, young and old, of upper-



Figure 7 Mary Quant (Ginger Group), Mini Dress, wool jersey, 1966.



Figure 8 Paco Rabanne, mini dress, leather linked by metal studs, 1968.



Figure 9 Donald Brooks (Townley Frocks), pink silk shantung, worn by First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy on a state visit to India, 1962.



Figure 10 Lily Pulitzer (left) at her orange juice shop in Palm beach. Both she and her friend are wearing 'The Lily' shift dress, date not cited.

middle class American towns and resorts. Banks and de La Chapelle (2011) write that “Lillies are an eternal reminder that ‘its always summer somewhere’”(p. 168). The caption to the photograph (Fig. 11) of women and their daughters at pool-side in Palm Beach (p.85) reads, “Ladies in Palm Beach decked out in their Lilly Pulitzer shifts look as youthful as their daughters” (Salk, pp.104-5).

The shift has evolved to allow for a choice of silhouettes from unfitted loose dresses to more body-conscious, figure-hugging styles. Though updated, it continues to signify understated feminine youthful health through movement.

A semiotic analysis of the shift dress as a sartorial sign producing negotiated cultural meaning would suggest its signifiers are garments of natural fibres worn by women, which has a high-scooped neck, loose without a waist, nor external restraint at the waist, short in length, exposes all limbs to sight, and is sometimes brightly coloured. The dress therefore signifies youthful, active, healthy female bodies, confidently soaking up the sun with their limbs exposed. The sign: ‘shift dress’ loses the signifier of ‘cotton comfort for warm climates’ to gain the signified ‘stylish piece of clothing to wear by youthful, healthy, women who visit upscale resort towns in the summer’. Instead the signifiers of ‘feminine youthful confidence

through healthy activity’ collapse into the signified meaning (‘this is a garment for summer’) through the fashion rhetoric. Therefore the signified, connoted, and negotiated cultural meaning communicated about the shift dress is that the wearer of the dress takes on the signifiers herself: she is full of feminine youthful confidence through the healthy summer activity she engages in at expensive resorts. We see confirmation of this in the wearing of a shift dress in the former First Lady Michelle Obama’s first official photograph in the role (Fig. 12).

Conclusion

This paper has focused on the development of the American expectation of the female corporeal form which is rooted both in the origins of the country’s independence from Britain and the rise of American fashion design and industry at the turn of the twentieth century. This paper discussed how it is in the rise of the New York sportswear industry in the 1930s and 1940s that inspired American fashion’s sports-conscious, body-conscious styles which can be seen in the designs of Townley Frock’s Claire McCardell and the rise of the shift dress as an essential garment for the American middle and



Figure 11

upper class woman's wardrobe. It is testament to the legacy of McCardell, her contemporaries, and the public relations genius of Dorothy Shaver at Lord and Taylor that this minimalist, functional and wearable style continues in the collections of Victoria Beckham (Figure 13), Calvin Klein, Ralph Lauren, DKNY, and J Crew.



Figure 12 Michelle Obama's first official portrait as First Lady wearing Michael Kors, 2009.



Figure 13 Victoria Beckham, fruit pattern shift dress, s/s 17.

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This Old Thing? Young Consumers' Engagement

with Clothing Longevity

Rachel Currah, Nottingham Trent University

Abstract

In recent decades, the advent of fast fashion has changed our relationship with clothing. Low prices and fast turnarounds, characteristic of fast fashion, have led to the devaluing of clothes amongst consumers. This shift has been encouraged by marketing and branding and is reflected across culture by the fetishisation of consumption.

Because fast fashion causes vast environmental and social damage, it is important that we find ways to slow down and re-imagine a sustainable future for fashion. Clothing longevity has been identified as a significant means of reducing the overall impact of the fashion industry (WRAP, 2012). Therefore, it is crucial that we understand consumers' relationships with their clothes and their interactions with clothing longevity.

This paper draws on new empirical research, based on surveys and a focus group, to investigate young consumers' engagement with clothing consumption. It explores factors which lead these consumers to keep their clothes for a long period, as well as the value they place on clothing longevity. Some show dissatisfaction with the speed and obsolescence of fast fashion, whilst a small number make the link between keeping and valuing clothes and having a strong sense of self, a quality that is desirable in the contemporary search for authenticity. The research provides valuable insight into the potential for more young people to keep their clothes for longer, and indicates ways in which longevity can be encouraged at various stages of the garment lifecycle.

Keywords: Longevity; sustainability; consumers; clothing

Introduction

The advent of fast fashion over recent decades, characterized by cheap clothing and fast turnarounds, has altered our relationship with clothes. Taplin explains that 'what started as a business strategy designed to speed throughput, reduce inventory and lower operational costs has become a life style choice for many consumers' (2014: 81). Consumption itself has become fetishised (Fig. 1), and the culture for speed and low prices has devalued clothes.



Figure 1 'Whoever said money can't buy you happiness didn't know where to shop' fast fashion marketing message in New Look, Nottingham (2017).

Meanwhile, complex, far reaching clothing production is causing vast environmental and social damage. Fashion is second only to the chemical industry in its levels of pollution (Textiles, Environment, Design, 2016). It damages eco-systems; pollutes land, rivers and seas; generates huge amounts of waste; and enables social injustice by putting people in developing countries in situations of modern slavery (Allwood et al., 2006). Market research provider, Passport, says that we are 'moving further toward over-consumption and excess waste' (2016), an entirely unsustainable shift. It is clear that we need to slow down and make significant changes to enable a sustainable future.

Clothing longevity has been identified by WRAP (2012) as the most significant way of reducing the overall environmental impact of clothing consumption (Langley, Durkacz and Tanese, 2013). By reducing clothing consumption, instead keeping and valuing clothes, we can start making positive change towards a sustainable future. Longevity is, in theory at least, very easy for consumers to engage with. Therefore, it is important that we understand consumer perceptions about keeping and valuing clothes, in order to investigate the potential for increasing clothing longevity.

This study begins by exploring young consumers' attitudes towards fast fashion and clothing longevity. It goes on to examine their current practices, and the potential for designing longevity into clothing. Finally, it explores the potential for authenticity to encourage longevity; authenticity is a characteristic highly valued in contemporary culture, and one that

aligns with longevity. A literature review around clothing sustainability and longevity contextualizes this research within contemporary culture.

Methodology

Initial qualitative research took the form of a questionnaire with 140 respondents (41 aged 16-25), exploring perceptions of sustainability in fashion across both genders and a broad range of ages. A second questionnaire with 76 respondents (38 aged 16-25), gleaned more detailed insights into the area of clothing longevity. Questionnaires were internet based, mostly eliminating interviewer bias and eliciting more honest answers than face to face methods (Phellas, Bloch and Seale, 2012: 190). Open-ended questions allowed respondents to articulate their true feelings to gain a clearer idea of perceptions about sustainability and longevity.

To support these findings, a focus group enabled more in depth discussion with a purposive sample of five 16-25 year olds. This is identified as a group with strong participation in fast fashion (Morgan and Birtwistle, 2009: 190; Langley, Durkacz and Tanese, 2013: 8). They are therefore difficult consumers to engage with slower, more sustainable consumption habits. The influence of socio-economic status, though potentially significant, is not considered in these findings, and there is scope for further research into this area. When discussing my research, unless specified, I will be referring to the second questionnaire and the 16-25 age group.

Attitudes

Over recent decades, there has been a cultural shift towards a system of fast fashion, characterized by fast cycles and cheap clothing. Most high street stores come under this mode of production and consumption: it is the most prevalent form of fashion today and the antithesis of sustainability, largely due to the staggering amounts we consume. It is widely noted that most young consumers gain great pleasure from fast fashion (Kim, Choo and Yoon, 2013: 245; McNeill and Moore, 2015: 213). In the search for one's 'true self', consuming fast fashion is a quick, low cost, low commitment way to explore identity.

Despite this, McLaren et al. (2015) found that young consumers 'expressed feeling trapped by the cheap, fast system of short-life garments, which 'obliges' them to buy new' (232). This concurs with my findings, suggesting that changes to-

wards slower consumption may be welcome for shoppers. The majority of young consumers expressed that they do not enjoy quickly changing trends, and would prefer society to be less trend driven. The dissatisfaction with the speed and obsolescence of fast fashion indicates significant potential to increase longevity adoption amongst young consumers.

Furthermore, Langley, Durkacz and Tanese (2013: 10), and Hein (2007 in Hethorn and Ulasewicz, 2008: 41) found that consumers value longevity; they are willing to pay more for sustainably produced items, or those perceived to be longer lasting. Moreover, most consumers said they begin to value clothing items more once they have had them for a long time. What starts as longevity due to quality, comfort or similar, becomes a deeper more sentimental connection; a higher value is brought on by longevity itself. This is perhaps enhanced by peoples' experiences whilst wearing their clothes, and the idea that older pieces offer a more honest and comfortable reflection of identity. The findings that young consumers value and enjoy clothing longevity, coupled with evident dissatisfaction with fast fashion, indicates great potential for increased longevity adoption by this group.

Practices

There is, however, an incongruity between consumers' attitudes and practices. Though Hethorn and Ulasewicz state that 'people have a desire to make socially responsible choices regarding the fashion they purchase' (2008: xix), others have observed a failure to translate convictions into actions (McNeill and Moore, 2015: 213; Mintel, 2016: online). Sustainability remains very low in consumer priorities. Ritch's assertion that consumers 'require a stronger steer on sustainable implications' (2015: 1176) was supported by focus group findings. Though some consumers make the link between sustainability and clothing longevity, and want to engage, they often find it difficult to do so.

Whilst it is clear that not all participate in the throwaway culture of fast fashion, many do consume very quickly, encouraged by cultural pressure promoting fast fashion values. Lee explains that 'the art of dress is quite frequently built on the opinions of others' (2003: 9). It is not a true reflection of the self, but much more complex due to the 'deeply social nature of fashion: what one person chooses to wear, and to wear for a long time, is also affected by the decisions and actions of others' (Fletcher, 2016: 144). This is evident in the pressure to keep up with trends that many acknowledged, which inevitably impacts on the longevity of their clothing.



Figure 2 Old worn shoes are culturally more valuable and attractive than other old clothing items (2017).

For young consumers buying clothes, longevity is not often a consideration, with the exception of coats and shoes (fig. 2). Focus group participants attributed this desire for longevity to the idea that these items are less dictated by fashion. However, I would argue that price considerations along with personal experiences of growing up with coats and shoes needing to last, has influenced their views. Quickly changing fashion pieces are seen as disposable, whilst experience says that coats and shoes are not, therefore coats and shoes are assumed to be less influenced by fashion. Because these experiences are widespread, the views associated with them—that certain items should last but others should not—are reflected across culture. Similarly, a gradual widespread shift in perceptions and behaviours could make other slow modes of consumption more acceptable and normal. Until this happens, young consumers may struggle to engage with clothing longevity, despite evident negative feelings towards fast fashion.

Design Potential

It is clear that it is important to encourage clothing longevity in order to make fashion consumption more sustainable. The extent to which a designer can encourage longevity is open to debate. Fletcher questions whether longevity can be designed: 'although a designer can certainly elicit within users an emotional response to a given object, the explicit nature of the response is out of the designers' control' (2016: 166). This was evident in young consumers' lack of interaction with longevity when purchasing: though many consider longevity, it does not often influence their buying. The designers' ability to promote longevity at purchase is therefore subjective. However, longevity can also be taken on during use, irrespective of whether it was considered at purchase.

McLaren et al. propose that designers can influence longevity, by enhancing clothing's 'emotional durability and exchange potential' (2015: 233). This is supported by research findings that quality, appearance, fit and comfort are the most common contributors to clothing longevity, all qualities that can be designed. Sentimental reasons, that would fall outside of a designers' control, were less common. Designers clearly have a high degree of control over clothing longevity. Though often subjective, by considering areas such as comfort and quality, a designer puts characteristics in place that can influence a consumer to increase the longevity of their clothing.

Authenticity

As well as design, the powerful appeal of authenticity in contemporary culture could lead to behaviour change if linked to longevity. In contemporary culture, 'the making of identity is increasingly related to what we buy' (Ward, 2010: 156). People are encouraged to consume, using goods as 'building blocks' (Chapman, 2001: 9) to explore and establish their identities; this is part of the appeal of cheap, fast fashion. Paradoxically, in a world surrounded by fakes – unnatural food, manufactured experiences, virtual reality – we also crave authenticity (Baudrillard, 1983 in Ward, 2010: 96; Boyle, 2004; Lewis and Bridger, 2010: 10). Baudrillard suggests that 'in an attempt to compensate for the fading of the real, we make a fetish of the supposedly authentic' (Ward, 2010: 96). Boyle defines authenticity in various forms as ethical, honest, sustainable, rooted and human; he says 'anything that undermines the way we live or upsets the planet's systems is not authentic' (2004: 19). A browse through market research intelligence websites, Mintel and Passport, shows the increased importance of authenticity. It is widespread across areas from beers, juices and organic foods, to eating out and travel. In

fashion, authenticity's appeal is seen in examples including All Saints' sewing machine shop windows, and the vintage trend. Many manifestations of authenticity's appeal are, albeit, a veneer.

For an individual, authenticity sees confidence and a strong sense of self as desirable qualities, ideas at odds with the mix and match identity experimentation consumers are often encouraged to pursue. In this respect, keeping and valuing clothes over a long period could suggest self-assuredness, confidence and integrity, all attractive traits of authenticity. Only a handful of young consumers made links between authenticity and clothing longevity. One respondent who said 'having my own style contributes to why I keep clothes for a long time' (questionnaire 2, respondent 25), sees longevity as a product of her individuality and style. By appealing to consumers' desire for authenticity, there is scope to promote longevity.

Authenticity's attractiveness has great potential to change consumers' behaviour in favour of longevity. Though design for quality, comfort or fit may encourage gradual behaviour change, authenticity could promote longevity with greater power and momentum, because it is actively sought by many consumers. Moreover, current marketing of authenticity is often forced or fake: All Saints' sewing machine shop windows are a manufactured spectacle; meanwhile, the highly collated offerings of vintage shops can remove the risk and creativity that initially appeals about the vintage trend. Keeping and valuing clothes, therefore, could be promoted by marketers and designers as a more genuinely authentic fashion experience. Hiut Denim's History Tag is one example of combining the appeal of authenticity and longevity. Each pair of jeans contains a unique number, which customers are encouraged to use to log their experiences in their jeans, thereby adding value to the product and to longevity itself through authenticity. If young consumers make the link between clothing longevity and authenticity, it could mark the beginning of a move towards slower consumption and away from the wholly unsustainable system of fast fashion.

Conclusion

There is clear scope for increasing clothing longevity amongst young consumers, evident in their dissatisfaction with fast fashion, and the enjoyment most feel from keeping and valuing clothes. Though all interacted with fast fashion to some extent, many displayed willingness to engage with longevity. However, dress is 'often an expression of how we want others to see us' (Lee, 2003: 9), making it difficult for some consum-

ers to slow their consumption. Despite frustration with the speed and obsolescence of fast fashion, cultural pressure leads many to maintain current habits. It is, therefore, necessary to alter perceptions of clothing longevity to make it acceptable and desirable. This is highly important due to the unsustainable nature of fast fashion.

Fletcher questions the degree to which a designer can influence longevity, rightly saying that 'the most powerful actant... is not the product, but the user' (2016: 166). However, there is scope for the design of products to influence longevity. By focusing on areas of quality, appearance, fit and comfort, longevity adoption can be encouraged, making engagement more normal and acceptable for young consumers.

Authenticity, an increasingly desirable trait in contemporary culture, also wields powerful potential to increase clothing longevity. By promoting ideas of keeping and valuing clothes as an authentic interaction with fashion and ourselves, designers and others can promote sustainable behaviour in an appealing way. Ideas of longevity align with those of self-assuredness, confidence and style that are highly desirable in the search for authenticity. If longevity was seen as an authentic and sustainable mode of consumption, it would hold great appeal for young consumers, many of whom 'require a stronger steer' (Ritch, 2015: 1176) and feel frustrated with fast fashion. More research into possible ways of engaging consumers with ideas of authenticity and longevity is necessary in order to harness the potential to slow young consumers' fashion consumption towards a sustainable future.

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INSIDE OUT: THE ACTOR'S EXPERIENCE

The Costumed Body

Iztok Hrga, University of Ljubljana

Abstract

The relationship between performing body and costume design is very complex and costume can be analysed as a means of giving bodies context, as a craft or an artistic conceptual outcome, as an active agent, a material body or an archived object. Costume represents a bridge between the performer's body, scenographic environment and the audience. In the eye of the spectator costume is perceptually indistinguishable from the performer but design elements also perform without and despite human body. Costume is a body that can be taken off, the immortal component of the character. Costume as an archived body serves as the most authentic material document of a past theatre event.

This paper is my intent to synthesize some of the most important writings on the subject, give voice to creators that participate in the process of making the costumed body and answer several of the questions that in my work as a costume designer I ask myself on a daily basis.

Is costume part of the performer or the scenic space? Where's the border between the performer's body and his character? What's the relationship between performer and costume designer in the process of character creation? Can costume design be an agent for a creation of a character on a somatic level? What is dramaturgy of costume designer? When does a costume become a disguise and diseased? How does a spectator perceive a costumed body? Does embodiment of a character happen in the moment of putting on a costume in a dressing room? Why some performers get fussy and superstitious about their costumes? Can playing otherness, crossdressing and nudity still be subversive? The character stays trapped as a ghost within the costume when the show is over?

Key Words: costume, designer, performer, spectator, memory

Costume

In 1928 Elizabeth Goepf wrote that costume may be regarded as theatrical or as social and that it should have a philosophy of its own (Goepf, 1928: 396). The costumed body reaches well beyond drama and over past century has ex-

tended its cultural influence through films, television and internet, advertising, museums, live entertainment and political activism. According to Donatella Barbieri 'costume contains several different performances, inscribed into it through the work that made it' and is 'marked with a creative process which mediates between performance, its crafting, the body and the gaze of the audience' (Barbieri, 2012). Sofia Pantouvaki suggests that 'costume design is perceived today as performative act(ion) in which costume becomes a generator of performance, and a tool for storytelling and for creating experiences with multi-layered interpretations' (Pantouvaki, 2014:180).

Costume conceived as 'situated bodily practice' (Entwistle, 2000: 10) can be a site for creation of meaning and communication, whether that be a narrative, a concept, an emotion or a character. Many designers, artists, makers and performance-artists don't base their work on script led design, but on the relationship between performing body, material, movement and observer. By redefining what the costumed body can be, they are merging the boundaries of theatrical performance, fashion and contemporary art. There are multiple platforms like Critical Costume, Studies in Costume & Performance or Inter-disciplinary dedicated to new academic thinking and practice-led research based on idea of costume as 'a means of critically interrogating the body in/as performance' (Hann and Bech, 2014: 4) and new terms have emerged such as devised costume, conceptual fashion and wearable art.

Today the connections between fashion and theatre are multiple, from the design of costumes for the stage, the dramatic potential of fashion shows, the performative aspect of wearing clothes of popular subcultures, to 'exploitation of the 'star' system for the commercial purpose of launching new clothing styles' (Troy, 2004:81). Contemporary visual culture is replete with fantastic imagery of amorphous, bizarre, hybrid, grotesque bodies, avatars, which are defined by transgression of borders, by provocation, parody, carnival humour and porn or horror aesthetics that are redefining our perceptions of beauty and ugliness. Two of the most interesting phenomena of costume application outside the theatre context are cosplay and use of characters in fashion, new art forms founded on fascinating creativity and innovative responses using unconventional materials and processes to replicate objects and clothing that do not actually exist.

The body is the centre of the costume research by definition. Some artists explore the objectification of the body from a historical, sociological, political and a gender perspective, others extend their focus to new conceptual and experimental approaches like commitment to sustainable, environmental

friendly design and production practices. Some, besides investigating material, aesthetic and somatic experience, base their work on exploring key elements related to costume: time, space, movement, light, sound that give identity to an otherwise inanimate object and others open new horizons by integrating traditional visual languages with digital arts aesthetics, wearable technology, interactive interfaces, immersive and projected costume.

Dorita Hannah states that 'design elements not only actively extend the performing body, but also perform without and in spite of human body (Hannah and Mehzoud 2011:103). Costumed body can function as a moving scenic element, that changes as time passes. Like settings and lighting, costume too can drift between categories. It takes up space and receives light, so its limits never are totally clear. Light can also be made to appear solid and can define and sculpt space as effectively as more resistant materials.

Some designers experiment with immaterial and disintegrating costumes, made with projections, smoke, gel, balloons, bodily fluids, hair, garbage. By examining performative qualities of alternative materials they are questioning the spatial and temporal limits body-costume and costume-scenography. One of the more interesting projects that explore the ephemeral nature of costume as event is The scenographic costume created in 2013 by scenographers Christine Hatton and Sidsel Bech. The object of a costume physically exists, but what makes it scenographic is its existence within time, space and interaction with audience only during a performance.

Embodied technologies in big stage entertainment events are employed to enlarge the visual experience and expand celebrity's expressiveness and can transform performance on both large stage scale as well as on the intimate relational scale of the costume. Laser Jacket, created by Moritz Waldemeyer in 2009 makes singer Bono 'be able to project his own light onto thousands. It provides an interactive and personal element to the show whereby individual members of the audience are literally connected to Bono for an instant through a single laser beam. This creates an electrifying sense of the performer reaching out to his audience audibly, visually and spiritually' (Fairs, 2010).

Designer

Today costume designers avoid conventional rules of characterization and prefer to develop their own aesthetic and dramatic language. Argentinian set and costume designer Cecilia Zuvalde states that 'in a moment, when we just make a hiper-

realistic description, we eliminate all the poetical possibilities, that a costume offers' (Zuvalde, 2010: 4). Her colleague Gabriela Aurora Fernández defines a costume designer, just like a director, as an eraser of imprints, "whose objective is double, on one side helps a spectator believe in fiction and on the other helps an actor by disguising him, allows him to believe stronger in a lie and play within it unpunished. Disguise erases the marks of an actor. Progressively, as one (actor) disappears the other (character) can appear' (Fernández, 2010: 10).

Venezuelan-Spanish costume designer Mariaelena Roqué describes herself as the creator of characters and claims that performer in his character is a central element on stage and his body is an essential part of scenography. She uses a performer to liberate the movement and emotion trapped within a costume. She considers herself a contemporary artist and believes that costuming is not about literal recreation of clothes and historical eras. There must be some conceptual proposal and aesthetic sense. Conception and in depth construction of characters is what guarantees that costume becomes more than just a masquerade (Maymó and Roqué, 2006: 33).

Badly conceived costume design can be perceived as a disguise and consequently the work of a performer as bad acting. But what is good design and where is the frontier between costume and disguise? Theatre lecturer and researcher Aoife Monks cites Samuel West, actor and director who says that 'the costume should be clothing rather than costume', meaning that actors should wear ordinary clothes, because the awareness of specifically designed costume represents 'a potential threat to the sanctity of stage illusion' (Monks, 2010: 10).

Some productions are so impersonal that almost any kind of script could be performed on almost any set with whatever costume. When design is absent, audience find to miss it. Yet modern dress productions may seem taken for granted and dull, by contrast historically accurate costumes can distance a spectator, because hidden nuances of power relations, status and subculture are not that easily understood as in modern dress. Extreme costumes can become gratuitous and inhibit a spectator's imaginative journey. In 1955 Roland Barthes wrote that when a costume becomes an end in itself it becomes condemnable, it becomes sick. He divided the diseases of costume in three categories: hypertrophy of the historical function, hypertrophy of a formal beauty, and hypertrophy of sumptuousness. He said that 'the good costume must be material enough to signify and transparent enough not to turn its signs into parasites'. [...] we must see it but not look at it' (Barthes, 1979: 206-209).

Work of a designer is rarely seen and understood beyond its decorative surface. Dramaturgical design is still barely recognised. For Australian set and costume designer Stephen Curtis designer's work is 'making meaning in the production by exploring and exploiting the visual value of every element on-stage. The emphasis may shift with each generation, but it is not decorator or dramaturg, but decorator and dramaturg: the synthesis of image, aesthetics and meaning' (Curtis, 2016: 7). Collaboration is what defines how theatre is made, by bringing the best of multiple creative contributions together into a coherent expressive whole and Curtis states: 'Our roles are clear and everyone knows what they are there to do; at the same time, there is a remarkable fluidity and overlap between roles where creative give and take is the order of the day' (Curtis, 2016: 19).

Sometimes it is hard to distinguish clearly between what is achieved through the performer's body and what through the design of his costume. Is it the performer who activates the costume or is it the costume that determines his bodily gestures? Costume designer Tina Bicat explains: 'The thing I'm really good at is making performers trust me and making costumes for them that gives them something they didn't expect to find in their own performance. [...] Anything that gives actors better experience is what you're there for. You can see the same affect if you give somebody a corset: it may be underneath the clothes and the audience can't see it, but it makes the way someone stands and moves completely different' (Maclaurin and Monks, 2015: 131, 132).

Costume designers Jessica Bugg and Sally E. Dean have each devised an original way of creating costumes in workshops through collaboration between costume designers, performers and materials itself. Bugg says that 'it's the shared understanding of the body and clothing that can connect designer, wearer and viewer on an experiential level' (Bugg, 2012). For Dean aesthetics and movement of the performance work arise from the somatic experiences of wearing the costume and not from its pre-established design. "Somatic costumes' aim to facilitate multi-sensorial experiences that change our relationships to ourselves, others and environment. [...] This approach has the potential to not only instigate new ways of moving, being, perceiving, creating, teaching and performing, but to also foster social-cultural understanding' (Dean, 2014: 81).

Performer

For a performer, a costume is an additional instrument, equal to his body, voice or gesture, but the only one that he didn't

create himself. Performer's work is made possible by the skill and knowledge of other designers and makers at the theatre and he is the final worker in the realization of a costume. Monks suggests that the actor's body is, 'after all, a series of practices rather than a finished object. Actors practice their own bodies by wearing and using costume - and their bodies are also worn and used by costumes' (Monks, 2010: 33). The illusion of individuality and transcendence produced by the virtuoso actor 'turns out to be comprised of logistical struggles, accurate timing, collective repetition and hard work. Costume constitutes both the obstacle and solution to this process' (Maclaurin and Monks, 2015: 80).

There is a big difference between rehearsing with or without costume. French actor Denis Podalydès articulates: 'When it arrives, the costume sometimes kills all the previous labour. When the costume doesn't fit, nothing works. It happened to me that I suddenly had the impression of finding myself within a cartoonish character. On the contrary, there are costumes that give you wings and encourage all the imaginative work of rehearsals' (Fauque, 2011: 18). First fittings are extremely delicate moment and often a part of a costume is discarded as impractical. Every costume must satisfy its wearer, but some star actors can be just vain and been known to rip a costume apart. Sometimes actors loath their costumes, hats and wigs are particularly likely to disappear after the first night.

Spanish writer and theatre director Santiago Sans jokes about the actors that complain about their costumes. He implies that it is not the actor that gets disguised but the character that gets dressed. 'Whether they need that dress or not, they should ask the character. If the character is freezing, he must put on a coat, what can we do, even if that makes the actor sweat' (Sans, 2000: 22).

When asked about who she feels most responsible to, Tina Bicat answered: 'I think it's a balance. I think all the time you're balancing what the audience will get from it, what the performers can give, and what the director wants them to give, which is what the story wants them to give. The mirror in my workshop lets me see it from both sides: that's why I work in the mirror all the time. The mirror stands in for the audience's gaze' (Maclaurin and Monks, 2015: 131).

Spectator

'What Pavis calls the 'kinaesthetic experience' of actors when they move on stage is made up of their sense of movement, weight, balance, rhythm and tempo, and although this experience resides in the actor, these qualities are transmitted un-

consciously to the spectators' (McKinney and Butterworth, 2009: 124). 'Seeing something on stage is inevitably linked with embodied understanding or memories of actual bodily experience, so the appearance of a long velvet coat might also evoke an understanding of what it feels like to touch it or how it feels to wear it and move it' (McKinney and Butterworth, 2009: 170).

The actual transition from one physical and psychological state to another happens in a dressing room, but the moment a performer enters the stage his costume becomes subject to interpretation, simplification and abstraction in the eyes of a spectator. Bodies, voices and clothes in movement distract spectator's attention. He has to work hard (not) to differentiate the actor from his costume. His attention constantly slides between the features of the performer and the features of his character. Monks states that when spectator looks at a costumed actor on the stage, he sees many actors and many costumes at once and can perceive actor's body as 'working body', 'aesthetic body', 'self-expressive body', 'character's body', 'sensate body', 'historic body'. 'Indeed, sometimes it's the tensions between these bodies that produce the meaning of the performance' (Monks, 2010: 25).

The most obvious work that costume does onstage is to create cultural and historical environment for the spectators, but for theatre artists costume may also serve as a means to highlight or critique socially and theatrically constructed nature of the world, stereotypes of idealized or denigrated bodies, hierarchies of fashion and star systems, and question gender, age, class and racial power structures embedded within it. Costume can offer new visions of embodiment and mediate how the audience might read bodies on the street. Actors and dancers teach us what and how to wear. They often stand in for canons of beauty, fantasies, sexual desires and anxieties of certain social moment.

Nudity is a way of dressing and what makes it spectacular is not the absence of clothes but the presence of dress in the act of taking it off. Spectator thinks that nudity might break down the ultimate theatre illusion and will see the actor as who he really is, but his naked body is just another manifestation of costume onstage. Monks (2010: 101) determines that there's no secret revealed, actor's body is not exposed but redesigned through the act of undressing, dressed with another dress, dress of nudity, skin dress or dress combined of traditions of the nude human figure.

In theatre, masking is not just a cover or a disguise and cross-dressing is not just the way to imitate the opposite sex, they are both a powerful tool for deconstructing imposed binary

categories and can offer new insight and reflection about otherness. Camp and drag are forms of performative transvestism with their own ideology and aesthetics that theatralise and mock the stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. Its political incorrectness is as subversive on as off stage. Like other social phenomena bordering the performative, masquerade, uniforms or cosplay, they challenge 'the concepts of authentic identity by suggesting the possibility of becoming, rather than merely delineating, the other' (Kaiser, 2001).

Memory

'Costume is a body that can be taken off' (Monks, 2010: 11). When removed, character's corporeality, identity and memory literally stay within costume. Gestures, smells, liquids and sweat marks persist in the form of wrinkles, wasted edges, indentures of knees and elbows. Actor's body is a living component of character and costume is character's inert part. Yet, when the show is over, the costume, as the only physical remnant of the character, becomes its immortal part.

When actors play roles of immaterial ghosts, absent or invisible entities, costume represents their carnal presence. It acts as an autonomous object with some kind of half-life, not being a thing but neither being an actor. In a way, every costume is possessed by characters of each and every representation. Many companies reuse or recycle their costumes and many performers have a very special, almost superstitious or fetishized relationship with certain pieces, which they believe are enchanted.

A curtain call too is a phantasmal moment. Actors come out to bow like some ambivalent figures, they are no longer in role, but still wear their costumes. Monks (2010:136) says that, when actors bow, the spectator imagines that they will reveal themselves like they truly are, that he would finally understand the mystery of acting, that he would see the suture between the actor and the illusion, but what he sees is not the actual actor, just another action.

In a dressing room or in a museum, a leftover costume is a body without a body, resembling a dismembered being. Monks claims that when we look at a costume in the archive we still see the performer, but this time without flesh or voice and realise what we saw onstage 'was not so much an actor, as the enactment of costuming; the peculiar conflation between flesh and dress and presence' (Monks, 2010: 140). Before our eyes the costume transforms itself into 'a memento of loss rather than being a reliable piece of evidence' (Monks,

2010: 142). And she wonders: 'Perhaps all costumes are for ghosts in one way or another' (Monks, 2010: 141)?

Theatre is an ephemeral artistic form. Once the show is over the physical work doesn't exist anymore. Photos and recordings of costumed performers represent only the visual elements of a certain moment of the show. Over the last decade, costumes have started to be archived and showcased in museums. Frozen in time, costumes can be seen, experienced and studied in details that could not be appreciated during the action onstage. Costumes as a literal material memory of the show, worn and worked out by performers, act as a metaphor of what has pass away.

Costume designer Mariaelena Roqué puts a strong emphasis on display and retrospectives of her costumes especially in institutions dedicated to performance and textile art. The exhibitions of her creations are conceived like conceptual art or body actions that generate different reflections about the transience of the body, deathliness and haunted nature of live performance. Reality in her exhibitions, a kind of theatre shows themselves, equals loss. For her a character's body is a costume itself. She claims that a hollow actor, full of death is represented by his mortal remains - costumes in human form, objects-corpses that speak predominantly of fugacious nature of theatre (Bataillon, 2010: 41).

Conclusion

With this paper I tried to demonstrate that there is a potent critical theory in the making. A costume theory, somewhere in between fashion theory and performing arts theory, that unites as much as separates the two. Costume, costuming and thinking about costumed body designate more than just costume design and we may need a new word to define it. If there is fashion and there is scenography, why can't there be costumography?

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Dress as Archetype: Costumes in the Performance Art of Het Wilde Oog.

Marta Kargól, Independent scholar

Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to analyse how archetypes of dress are used as costumes in performance art. I will focus on the 'archetype' because this concept allows going beyond the materiality of dress and provides insight into narratives of culture. The archetype is a symbol that represents typical patterns of human nature and a basis for general cultural motifs. Het Wilde Oog is a Dutch theatre atelier initiated by the artists Hans Lemmerman and Inge van Run. For about fifteen years they have been working with three women from the remote village of Spakenburg. These women wear local, traditional dress on a daily basis. Het Wilde Oog made these ordinary women into performers and explored the meaning of their daily outfits as archetypes. In their performances, they introduce other cultural symbols, such as buildings, pieces of art, and Dutch traditions.

Key words: Performance Art, Traditional Dress, Archetype, Netherlands

'Our images bear witness to love: love as a force and as engagement in the aggressive world. The women in traditional dress contain a healing power in themselves. This is the archetype.'

[Hans Lemmerman]

Sixteen years ago, Dutch artists Hans Lemmerman and Inge van Run met three women from the village of Spakenburg – Corrie, Wijmpje and Hendrikje Koelewijn – and decided to turn them into performers. The two artists established a theatre group called Het Wilde Oog (The Wild Eye) and chose for the group's motto: 'To look wild and to think flexibly'. By that time, the three women were among the last in the Netherlands who still wore traditional dress every day. Spakenburg is a remote village in the province of Utrecht, in which most of inhabitants are firmly attached to tradition and religious values. A visual confirmation of this attitude is the local traditional dress that is worn, to this day, by a group of several hundred women. The traditional costumes of Spakenburg are, above

all, daily outfits expressing a local identity. In contrast, Lemmerman and van Run invite artists and designers to interfere with the structure and form of the traditional dress. By doing so, they expand a message hidden in it and add new layers of meaning. Thus, the dress becomes more than theatre costume: it is transformed into a work of art.



Het Wilde Oog, 'Diva's and Frans Hal

This paper aims to show the meaning of traditional dress in the context of Het Wilde Oog's performance art. It is especially intriguing to observe how the cultural content that is hidden in dress changes when it is taken out of the context of daily life and included in a piece of art. I focus especially on the concept of the 'archetype', which term is not chosen arbitrarily: Lemmerman and van Run themselves call their artistic process 'the quest for archetypes'. They refer to the definition of archetype that was given by Dutch theatre docent Annette de Vries, who introduced it in her theatre and artistic thoughts. De Vries defines an archetype as a 'human primary idea that stays in the collective unconscious' (Vries de, 1994, p. 25).

This article consists of three parts. The first part reflects on traditional dress and its role within Dutch contemporary culture. The second part clarifies the role of the traditional dress of Spakenburg in general, and, more specifically, the role of the three women wearing this dress as a crucial component of the art of Het Wilde Oog. The last part of this paper focuses on the archetypal meaning of dress and the way it changes when transferred from daily life into performance.

The reference material includes interviews with the artists, private notes by Hans Lemmerman (Lemmerman, 2017), articles and news about Het Wilde Oog published in Dutch newspapers and, last but not least, field studies and visual sources, such as photographs that are records of performances and the final product of the creation process. Also used were some phrases from the book titled *Van Kniertje tot Diva*

(Van Kniertje tot Diva, 2015), with monologues written for the three women from Spakenburg.

Costume and the Dutch culture

Regional dress constitutes a very important part of Dutch national heritage, which has its roots in the 19th-century process of nationalization of the peasant culture (Jong de, 2007). In the past, many types of dress could be found in different regions or villages in the Netherlands, but only in a couple of them has the dress survived as a daily outfit into the 21st century. One of these places is the village of Spakenburg, where, according to research done in 2004, approximately 440 women wore traditional dress. However, that year the youngest of the women was 52, and most of others were in their seventies, eighties, or nineties, so the number of women wearing traditional dress decreased rapidly in the following years (Kramer, 2004). Therefore, the last moments when traditional dress can still be considered a living tradition are upon us. Lemmerman is aware of this, and calls it 'a turning point in Dutch history' (Lemmerman, 2017).

The fact that these several hundred women, alone in all the country, persist in wearing their dress in the modern world evokes the interest of anthropologists, tourists, and, last but not least, artists. Some of the artists and fashion designers consider their art as a way to preserve this material heritage. On the other hand, for many of them this aspect is of secondary interest. They find in traditional dress limitless layers of meaning. The dress has materialized the past, and is a tangible attachment to tradition and disappearing values, as well as the community (Kargól, 2015, p. 88–93). In contrast, common people outside of these villages often associate traditional dress with backwardness and assign negative traits to it. In the press, costumes often represent primordial ('oer') and typical Dutch culture (Otter, 2009, p. 26-27). For Lemmerman, Spakenburg traditional dress is ultimately a symbol of 'the world that is disappearing' (Lemmerman, 2017).

The dress from Spakenburg consists of a long skirt, an apron, and a blouse with short sleeves. The most characteristic part of the outfit is the so-called kraplap, a breast cloth made of stiff, starched cotton. The kraplap is decorated with floral and geometric motifs. The central, red part of it always remains the same, but the colours of the side parts can range from white to a variety of shades of purple, including a very dark purple (Nieuwhoff, Diepraam, and Oorthuys, 1985, p. 60-62). These different shades correspond to the stages of mourning. In the community of Spakenburg, mourning was worn for

members of the extended family, so the 'out-of-mourning dress' was rather rarely seen on the street (Lamers-Nieuwenhuis, 1991; 90-97). A monologue, 'For Corrie', by the Dutch playwright Gerardjan Rijders, is included in the book *Van Kniertje tot Diva* and reflects on this: 'I am in mourning. I am actually always in mourning. I don't even know anymore why I am in mourning' (Van Kniertje tot Diva, p. 77). This mourning aspect of the traditional dress culture is a returning motif in *Het Wilde Oog's* performances. The artists are fascinated by the different forms of garments and, in particular, by their ability to convey a personal message.

Costume in the performance art of *Het Wilde Oog*

The meaning of traditional dress in the art of *Het Wilde Oog* cannot be separated from the life narratives and personalities of the three women. It is worth mentioning that the three cousins from Spakenburg had never before had any affiliation with art, although they were very conscious of their role in preserving traditions. Working with *Het Wilde Oog* meant for them leaving the boundaries of their own community and discovering the world of modern art (Eversdijk, 2012). They became at the same time performers and works of art. Lemmerman writes about this in his notes: 'These women do not match the expectations of society: they reflect the life that is almost disappearing, they also appeal to a time when ideals were important. They are icons of style in the last age of traditional dress. The women are crystal clear in their tradition. Literally and figuratively. The viewer experiences this as archetypal' (Lemmerman, 2017). It is this authenticity and faithfulness that make the women so special for *Het Wilde Oog*. 'As soon as they are a part of art, they become timeless' (Lemmerman, 2017). Even though these ladies are taken out of their daily context, they still evoke traditional associations, because 'they embody the past and their community' (Lemmerman, 2017). The art of *Het Wilde Oog* is meant to add extra layers of meaning to the historically and sociologically determined roles of women.

Het Wilde Oog is especially fond of the costume of Spakenburg, and, above all, of 'the starched kraplap, which covers the upper body and is a kind of necklace' (Lemmerman, 2017). The artists consider them as powerful images in which the women wrap themselves. The images express their individual and group identity. As a part of the performance, the costumes always belong to someone. Even when the kraplap appears as an object not necessarily worn by a person, it carries a memory of an unknown individual to whom it used to



Het Wilde Oog, 'From Kniertje to Diva'.

belong in the past. This aspect is very explicitly brought forward in the project *Van Kniertje tot Diva*. In the performance art project *Corrie and Joseph*, an artistically re-created kra-plap becomes somehow an energy field that has the ability to heal wounds. For this reason, it should be awarded to someone who deserves it. Het Wilde Oog realizes that we are witnessing the last chapter of the history of traditional dress worn in daily life. In her monologue in *Van Kniertje tot Diva*, written by Pauline Mol, Hendrikje is asking: 'where will we lay our aprons, our patches, our treasures? Who will adopt them? Who will put them on?' (*Van Kniertje tot Diva*, p. 43). Lemmerman calls the dress 'a frozen history' (Lemmerman, 2017). Yet, the costumes, as frozen history, have their continuation by being a part of the present performance. The art gives them a kind of afterlife.

Next Page: Het Wilde Oog, 'Diva's in the Soestdijk Palace'.

Costume as archetype

The aforementioned Annette de Vries gives, in her book *De Afstand Naar de Maan*, interpretations of the archetype theory of the famous psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung, and hence explains how it could possibly be applied to theatre art (Vries de, 1994, p. 17-27).

The topic of archetype is a significant subject of life. Hidden behind the dress from Spakenburg are primary ideas such as the past, traditional values, heritage, and identity. According to de Vries archetype is *recognizable and accessible to everyone* (Vries de, 1994, p. 25). Dutch regional dress belongs to the canon of national symbols. The dress survived until the 21st century, but only in remote communities, and for that reason it embodied the conservative attitudes of their members.

Lemmerman, in his notes, also discloses his thoughts on archetypes. In his definition, Lemmerman replaces *recognizable* with *perceptible*. For him, the perception of Spakenburg and



Medea
Maria Magdalena
Marieske van Nieuwergen
Madame de Pompadour
Mala Hari
Mutter Courage
Marilyn Monroe
Maria Callas
Moeder Teresa
Majoor Boshardt
Madonna
Maxima
Mega Mindy

the women wearing traditional dress is more about seeing and feeling than about the common knowledge or connotations about the village and its inhabitants that are pervasive in Dutch society. 'Archetype is as much about heart as about mind' (Lemmerman, 2017). For example, as mentioned earlier, one of the most important messages expressed by traditional dress was the state of mourning. However, people do not always recognize the precise stage of mourning; rather, they can instinctively feel the message hidden in a dress. A dark dress, such as strong violet hue of *kraplap*, is often associated with grief.

Furthermore, an archetype is not unilateral (Vries de, 1994, p. 25). Likewise, the meaning of traditional dress is definitely not one-sided. Some people regard such costumes as remarkable traditions. For others, the conservative attitude of women who have never stopped wearing their traditional outfits is seen as a negative. The next quality of an archetype is that it expresses itself in symbolic language, but can also disguise itself in an everyday realistic shape (Vries de, 1994, p. 25). Het Wilde Oog sees traditional dress as a symbolic item, or even as a magical one, because it belongs to a disappearing world. However, in its original context the dress is simply part of daily life.

For the artists of Het Wilde Oog, women in traditional dress are archetypal images of women, such as the Madonna. In the performance that took place in the Soestdijk Palace, the former residence of Queen Juliana of Orange, the women paid homage to female icons such as Medea, Maria Magdalena, Mata Hari, Marilyn Monroe and Mother Theresa. Yet, the women from Spakenburg are themselves icons. They represent in themselves the archetype of a strong and faithful woman who knows suffering too. The tradition, which they wear on and in themselves, ennobles them, and makes them belong to this fellowship of distinguished women.

The dress in performance does not lose its primary meanings because associations attached to it are strongly rooted in the mindset of the Dutch. Het Wilde Oog plays a great deal with the content of culture commonly known in the Netherlands, but also with that which is recognized abroad as typically Dutch. Lemmerman writes: 'Het Wilde Oog is looking for those images that will settle in the collective memory and become part of visual culture. Archetype is about revealing and activating. A feature of archetypes is that they make an appeal to inner images. Inner images are strong – they have ambiguity, are still open' (Lemmerman, 2017). Thus, the meaning of traditional dress within art is a fusion of primary ideas hidden behind the dress and new connotations. These new meanings occur when we put the traditional dress together

with other symbols belonging to Dutch canon of visual culture, such as architecture (e.g., Schröderhuis in Utrecht, designed by Gerrit Rietveld, or the Soestdijk Palace) or art (e.g., Mondriaan, Armando). The juxtaposition of these pieces of art and traditional dress creates a constellation of primary images.



Het Wilde Oog, 'Hendrikje with Mondriaan'.

Het Wilde Oog also references pieces from this international history of art. In one of their performances, Corrie is walking in front of Daniel Libeskind's work *Polderland Garden of Love and Fire* (1997). Lemmerman describes it as follows: 'Corrie with her stroller walks past Libeskind's work and we capture the sacred moment, the moment when the archetypal comes into the picture, when images merge or collide' (Lemmerman, 2017).

Further, Het Wilde Oog refers to Dutch history, such as that of the former Zuiderzee, which was a bay of the North Sea before it was closed off by a dam (the so-called Afsluitdijk) in the first half of the 20th century. On the land, which was subsequently reclaimed by means of polders and drainage, the Dutch built the twelfth province, Flevoland (Mersbergen van, 2007). In the project *Divas in Flevoland*, the three women appear in a landscape typical of this province, but where, instead of traditional windmills, only modern turbines can be seen. The landscape with turbines refers to development over time and looks into the future. Women from Spakenburg, a village that also belonged to the Zuiderzee area, are, in this context, a last link to the past. In this image, the past and the present day are contrasted and embodied by cultural symbols. Likewise, in *Spakenburg Fashion* new outfits inspired by traditional dress from Spakenburg were accompanied by the turbines, instead of windmills (Lemmerman, 2009, p. 78-88). In this project, traditional dress stands also for sustainability, to which Lemmerman assigns an archetypal energy. Yet, the archetype occurs again in the collision of two images.



Het Wilde Oog, 'Diva's in Flevoland'.

Final remarks

Traditional dress is archetypal because it evokes certain emotions and associations, such as the past, traditional values, heritage, and identity, that are connected with the cultural heritage. This article has elaborated how traditional dress has been transformed into a piece of art in the performance art of Het Wilde Oog and, consequently, in this new form has been added to the canon of art history. This canon consists of images and objects that are universally recognizable, and these particular images speak to the Dutch collective unconscious. The most important feature of an archetype is that it is open and multifaceted. Likewise, the performance art of Het Wilde Oog is open to different interpretations. Traditional dress itself has different meanings in its natural environment, which do not entirely disappear when the dress is taken out of this environment and set in a new context of other images. On the contrary, it is enriched with new content. Yet, this is not the end of this quest for meanings. Eventually, the viewer will add his or her own layers too, by recalling his or her own inner images.

Even though the images are rooted in the collective unconscious, they can vary widely, as they arouse various associations. Traditional dress disappearing from daily life is archetypal in itself. The archetypal image of the costumes within the performance art is inverted and uprooted from its reality, and at the same time it is strengthened. The viewer experiences it as collision of two notions: dress as heritage and dress as piece of art.

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Coping with Costume

Nicholas Arnold, Adam Mickiewicz University

Abstract

Both theatre practitioners and the wider world share the view that the basic function of theatrical costume is to indicate role. Where costuming for the theatre differs fundamentally from daily life is that it is not only a constant and repeated process, but also an arbitrary and unstable one, imposed by the nature of the activity itself. It is thus not normally under the control of the performer and consistently entrains considerable physical and psychological challenges.

This paper illustrates this and considers the strategies which confront and engage with the problems inherent in continual “skin-changing”.

Keywords: Costume; Theatre; Acting

Both theatre practitioners and the wider world share the view that the basic function of theatrical costume is to indicate role – socially, economically, culturally, and even psychologically (see e.g. CALAFATO, 2004). Polonius in Hamlet is thus repeating a perception so ancient as to have already long been a cliché when he says “...the apparel oft proclaims the man”(SHAKESPEARE, 1601). Where costuming for the theatre differs fundamentally from daily life, however, is that it is not a cyclical and sometimes intermittent process. It is a permanent condition, constant and repeated, and yet also arbitrary and unstable; imposed by the nature of the activity itself, rather than tied to social and economic position, the variety of social roles, or chronological progression through a culture. It is not commonly under the control of the performers themselves, and consistently entrains considerable physical and psychological challenges.

One of my concerns is the study of performance practice from the perspective and via the experience of the practitioner. In terms of costume, therefore, the question is not “how the performer is to appear”, but rather “how the performer is to appear” – that is to say, not what the costume designer, costume-maker, director, audience, critic and so on, conceive, aim to produce, imaginatively envisage, interpret or judge of the performer in costume, or of the costume itself, but rather how is the performer to carry, cope with and manage their costume? The term “managing” or “learning how to manage” a

costume is often used in professional practice as a portmanteau term covering the spectrum of physically wearing it, moving in it, manipulating it in relation to any technical requirements, finding the part it plays in presenting the role which has been developed in rehearsal, and overall making it part of the performance. Traditional theatrical conservatoire syllabi would actually include classes in managing certain types of costume. It is a constant undercurrent of the actor's task, one whose existence only gets the very briefest of occasional acknowledgments (see e.g. Green 1966), and yet in conventional theatre costuming is pivotal in the sequence of focusing rituals which are the nightly preparation for performance.

In the dressing-room the performer takes off their clothes – removing that element of quotidian identity. You might shower, in what is, perhaps a further, “ritual” cleansing. The costume is taken down from its rail, where it hangs, anthropomorphically, pregnant with a purpose all of its own. A costume on its hanger is coherent in both outline and identity – a complete “other”. As long as the costume hangs there, it issues a challenge. It dares you to make it your own; to deny its identity until you have taken it over.

The first task, then, is to take it off its hanger, piece by piece – to dismantle it in preparation for re-assembly which, as you begin to put on what is now “your” costume, becomes the raw material for a choreography which will lead systematically towards a full manifestation of the performance persona – a choreography which is the process and ritual of costuming.

Just like the priest who is robing for mass, the costume is put on in a prescribed order. We do not do this because of sacred injunctions, but pragmatically, because of the nature of the individual bits and pieces. But priestly vestments are also “suits of clothes” – the various practical purposes of each item determine the robing process just as firmly as does the associated dogma. The specific nature of a costume – priestly or performative – insists on a certain process. With each gesture, with each garment, we are moving towards performance. And the rhythms thus established may be counterpointed by the voice of the Stage Manager, counting down the time to “Beginners”. Thus putting the costume on turns the performer towards the future, to activity yet to come, while providing a space and a time in which to frame and focus.

But this dynamic has been entrained long before this. In rehearsal you imaginatively ‘clothe’ yourself – whether or not you have seen any designs there may be for your costume.

What you will wear needs to be physically prefigured. Stance, gait, mobility, will all be trialled and this will, in turn, contribute to the nature of the performance identity. All this happens in a vacuum, before the “real” costume can be worn. Again, this is only occasionally recognised in the literature – because there is so little literature. There is a very sweet little book (produced at the end of the Nineteenth Century and still being recommended today), which, among other advice, suggests that in wearing male Tudor costume: “A satisfactory position for informal conversations (and one incidentally which gives a sense of ease to the inexperienced) is to stand with one foot on a raised object such as a stool or a tree-stump, with one hand on the raised knee and the other on the hip” (CHISMAN & RAVEN-HART, 1896).

By contrast, when devising, you may be concentrating on the discovery and development of performance material and performance structure; and it is this which may shape the physical characteristics of the performance. The aesthetic of the piece may determine your costume, or you may hunt at random, seeking to reconcile a blank mind with a sneaking subconscious understanding of what is required, through the sudden chancing on the right thing in a “Eureka Moment” – like Charles Laughton desperately searching for an emotional and behavioural key when preparing to play the Emperor Claudius, and finding it in the abdication speech of Edward VIII (CALLOW, 1987).

It has to be said, at this point, that much devised work also reveals – indeed often deals with – the superficial and fugitive nature of identity. You cannot be looking for the “keys” to complex character when the performance reveals just how easily character and personality are assumed and discarded.

Forced Entertainment illustrated this in practice twenty-five years ago in *Emmanuelle Enchanted* (1992) – but their famous parade of role-determining cardboard signs needed to be accompanied not only by appropriate physical personae, but also by the right costumes, with the performers furiously wriggling into and out of different ones at the side of the stage.

But when the “real” costume – made, found, adapted, bricolaged – is finally first put on, it forces a reappraisal of the performing self. What takes place at the costume parade is like the parallel process of “walking the stage” once the fit-up has been completed. What were previously lines taped on the floor of the rehearsal room have become walls, doors and fur-

niture – and are sometimes seriously at odds with the imaginary world which has previously directed the performer’s behaviour.

Putting the costume on produces a similar psychic shock – the transition from the ideal to the real. The imaginary and the imagined must now give place to realities. The realities of unexpected colour; of weight and texture. The fall of the garment and the feel of the material. Unfamiliar roughness and unexpectedly sensuous touches; and – and sometimes above all – smell.

If the costume is new-made, it will carry the smells of new, unworn fabrics, dressings, stiffeners, conditioners. But these smells are as unlike the smells of shop-bought clothes as the smell of a new stage-set is unlike the smell of a new house. If, by contrast, the costume is from a stage or film hire collection, it can be like putting-on someone else’s shoes – and Harriet Walter’s book on acting uses this as a metaphor (see WALTER, 1999) – difficult and disturbing contours, textures, and again...smells. And there is a sense of trespass – somehow to be propitiated. The old costume will have been cleaned – but traces of sweat and ingrained make-up mix with detergent and fabric-freshener to create a unique and quite disturbing smell – which conjures up unknown performers and performances.

Old costumes are thus as unfamiliar as new costumes, but their strangeness is a physical embodiment of their performance history. They sit and move on the body as if for other “ghost” bodies – the previous wearers. Unlike brand-new costumes, they have been rubbed and chafed and worn and softened. They have slid into contours which tell us about their past and they must be turned towards the future. Remoulding them for the current performance becomes yet another necessary process.

These costumes have been specially made for performance. But if the costume is assembled from street-wear, nevertheless the same thing applies: each item imports its mundane, its quotidian history, which encroaches upon and modifies its new, performative purpose. Each new addition to the costume ensemble involves reappraisal and acceptance – and putting on such a costume re-awakens the memory of the journey which has been made in its creation. So for all costumes, the pre-performance history is present and participant in the ritual of costuming.

Thus costuming, its practicalities charged with significance, marks, and is, the transformative journey between “self” and “other-self”, between the quotidian and the performative.

As a process it inevitably becomes a ritual sequence of pivotal significance in the journey towards the performing moment, as well as informing and affecting the performance itself.

Clothes are, after all, the zone where the physical self and the outer world come together, and they are also the product of that coming together. They represent this boundary and also express its tensions and complexity. They are both liminal and central. They exist in intimate proximity to the human body, and are simultaneously utterly irrelevant to its functioning. Clothing is an inanimate representation of the human form but becomes simultaneously and necessarily the outer expression of an inner identity.

If all this is the case, there is thus the immediate possibility or risk of an elision or transference whereby the clothing replaces, and thus becomes, the person. Brecht's street hawker could put on a hat and scarf and become a different person – and tell us something about that person (BRECHT, 1935). Costumes can even manifest character while still un-worn. Tutankhamun's funerary mask tells us more about him and his culture than does his shrivelled body.

You could say that this is old news (see e.g. MONKS, 2010). But if we look at it from the perspective of the performer, it is all these resonances, all this dynamic influence, which have constantly to be dealt with. Not because there needs to be a conscious acknowledgement of this accumulated weight of folklore and symbolism, but because that very accumulation and its weight is due to the power of clothing. The performer has to deal with this. The task can sometimes be exhilarating, sometimes crushing

Some costumes are found to be easy to wear (for psychological as well as physical reasons) and some seem to fight against their wearer. This is often because designers – although warned against this in their training – frequently design costumes as fashion-plates, emphasising their ostensive qualities. This is not how the majority of people wear their clothes, and inhibits the performer's interpretative task.

Antagonistic costume, which seeks to dominate its wearer and force them to its will, is not just a subjective element within the world of performance, it is a reality. An excellent example of this is the "Mother Hubbard", the sack-like, floor-length dress which 19th century missionaries in the South Seas forced their female converts to wear. Conscripts into the armed services describe the issue of uniforms which do not fit and are made of harsh and uncomfortable material.

Primo Levi writes of the transformation of new concentration-camp inmates through their uniforms: not only did the uniforms signify that the prisoners were dead men walking – they were actually designed to kill them (LEVI, 1959). For an example of a gender-wide piece of antagonistic clothing, we need look no further than the corset. And when tights replaced stockings and suspender-belts in the 1960s, women all over the world could be heard saying "Thank heavens for that: I was so uncomfortable!"

The existence of real antagonistic costume is paralleled in mythology and dramatic fiction, which gives us the poisoned shirt of Nessus, the poisoned dress given by Medea to Glauce, the wonderful poisoned dress in the film *Elizabeth* (1998), the urban legend of the poisoned wedding-dress – and an episode of *CSI New York* (2005).

By the same token there are clothes and costumes which are good to wear. Putting on evening-dress – white tie and tails – is quite a rush. The high-cut jacket makes your legs look and feel longer and the trousers have a lengthening stripe down the side; the nipped-in white shirt-front makes your waist look narrower; the wing collar makes your neck look longer. It is also, for formal dress, supremely comfortable – nothing gets in the way. You both sense it, and have it confirmed by the mirror. You reach out for your silver-topped cane, and "Bingo!" – you are Fred Astaire.

But what is it that is turning you on (or off)? Have you subdued the costume, found its identity, or has it taken you over? A colleague once told me that, coming from a working class home and suddenly thrust among the "Hoorays" at Cambridge, he found himself physically – because morally – unable to attend any event which required the wearing of 'black tie'. He couldn't bear to put it on.

Popular performance histories are full of stories, from Chaplin downwards (LYNN, 1997), of the magical moment when the "right" costume is suddenly found and becomes the touchstone for a performance. All performance anecdote is fond of the "magic bullet" moment, but the great majority of those concerning costume seem to come from film, where rehearsal is absent or limited, and there are no painstakingly developed interpretations ready to be upset by the introduction of a new and problematic element. Instead, the interpretation is found through and pivoted on the costume. Stage performers tend to be split as to whether the introduction of the costume element is a last-minute problem or an exciting new challenge.

When considering this, it is worth remembering that the default response of theatre practitioners to technical or artistic problems is to say: “we’ll make it work”. This must be set against the response of dancers: “not if we might be injured”, and particularly musicians (partly because of their powerful union): “we won’t work under these conditions”. So we see the potentially negative aspects of the independence and power of costume transformed by the rhetoric of theatre practice into displays of professional virtuosity – at least in theory.

So how do performers “make their costumes work”? As I have already suggested, there is no rubric: performers develop their own range of strategies, and use them depending on the circumstances.

If the designs are available, you can be forewarned if they incorporate elements which are at odds with the performance as it develops. This then becomes a part of mentally realising the costume in rehearsal.

Make friends with wardrobe – the centre of the theatre’s daily routine. Make someone a coffee, iron your own shirt, and you may have much greater access to your costume as it is being made or developed, without the interference of designers or directors.

Practice as much as possible after the costume becomes available, obviously – although this is normally tightly constrained by the logistics of the production schedule.

As part of the nightly performance preparation, many performers can be seen gazing intently at their costumed reflection in the dressing-room mirror, internalising the image – we all perform a brief sketch of the same routine whenever we try on new clothes.

Finally, it is possible to perform “beyond the costume”, just as it is possible to act “beyond the words”. Let me gloss what sounds like classic “luvvie-speak”:

A contemporary audience will understand little of the semantic detail of a Shakespearean text in performance. But a performing company which understands the same text in depth will be able to convey all its nuances, not only through clarity, fluidity and vigour of speech – I recommend Propeller Theatre (1997-) as an excellent example – but by the percolation of this understanding into the entire physicality and interpersonal dynamics of the performance. By the same process, an unhelpful costume can be ignored and any irrelevant semiotic freight it carries dissolves, if the performance functions at a more holistic level.

The willingness of the performer to accept and address these questions and problems of costume is even more remarkable when we realise that the term “costume” is indefinite and protean and will mean different things to different people within the performance context.

This is illustrated perfectly at the costume-parade itself. This is notionally or ideally the event which illustrates the progress of the costume from sketch to performance, but it is a field of multiple aspirations. The designer will be looking for what has been conceived. The wardrobe department for the cut and the fit. The director will be expecting the dynamic renderings which appeared in the costume sketches. The reality is the actors standing in a patient line at the front of the stage. Performers are not trained mannequins, who know how to show off clothes. Their job is not to show costumes, but to inhabit them within the dynamics of the performance. The costume-parade is in many ways the worst place for performers to begin to relate to their costumes. I have heard a very experienced wardrobe mistress saying that performers at costume parades had to be treated “like frightened horses”. They can’t wait for it to end, so that they can begin to use the insufficient time available to really start the process of learning how to manage their costumes.

The costume parade is a clear illustration that the term “costume” is not holistic. It is fractured, its connotations are multiple. And when the performance is over, and the costume is back again on its hanger, on the rail, it regains an independence and integrity which perhaps it never lost – and so the process must begin again the following night. And so on.

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JEWELLERY AT THE BOUNDARY

Dreaming Time

Professor Jivan Astfalck, Birmingham City University

Abstract

Body adornment, like other emotionally invested fictions are not only complex ideas whose components derived from investments in material, technique and skill, but often relate to previous experiences and emotional investments, which are then combined in new and unexpected ways. They derive from a complete shift in the referential status that takes place in the transition of images as replica to images as fiction. The new combination might have no reference to the original from which the image could be copied, but maybe has traveled across time and cultures, becoming a kind of 'narrabesque', extending even the complexity of ideas like the palimpsest.

This denial of the primacy of the original opens new possibilit-

ies of referring to reality, it allows for intervention and discovery similar to the operation of metaphor in language, where the metaphorical quality allows the image to give shape and contour to meaning and furthermore, actually participates in the invention of meaning. The passionate investment of meaning is nowhere as potent and dynamic as in objects, which sit on the demarcation line where body meets world. This is by no means an arbitrary doing, but entails that all narrative, all image, are a certain call to order or a re-ordering, albeit with infinitely more complex possibilities. Narratives can carry us beyond the oppressive order of our existence to a more liberating and refined order, they offer a space were utopian ideals can be played out and explored, where hope can have a place again and where wearable objects are magic.

Key Words: meaning; metaphor; utopia; crafted object; wearable art



Part One

In Freud's view, dreams are mostly forms of 'wish fulfillment', attempts by the unconscious to resolve a conflict, a disturbance or an inconsistency, whether recent or something from different stages of one's past (Freud, S., 1900). And if we are, in addition, to accept the idea of a collective unconscious, than this past is of unfathomable complexity. However, because the thoughts in the unconscious are in an unruly and often disturbing form, a 'censor' (for the lack of a better word) in the preconscious will not allow it to pass unaltered into the conscious. The resulting image, dreamed and sometimes remembered, is usually an image of staggering depth, layered, often containing multiple, if not conflicting, meanings and often is of incredibly creative visuality. Dreaming, in maybe more animist narratives, in many art forms of different times and cultures, is on the other hand understood as the 'timeless time' of formative creation and perpetual creating (Article-ID: WHEBN0015562544). It is a state of mind which not

only happens at night, but is a 'being in the zone' which for many artists is the realm where ideas and images come from. It is also a state of mind fiercely yearned for by many artists when for one reason or another they cannot have enough of it... shamans learn and train to walk the dreams... artists learn to channel the rough flow of image into tangible objects.

Differentiating accounts of psychoanalytical theory regarding Freud's idea explore the complexities adherent to all 'good' ideas, but please bear with me... I am not in the business of interpreting dreams or images... I am in the business of creating images! While, in preparation for this paper, I started thinking in terms of Forster's quote from *Aspects of the Novel* (Forster, E.M., 1927) *how can I tell what I think till I see what I say?* I realised that I needed to re-phrase this famous sentence into *how can I know what I feel till I see what I think* as more accurate in terms of the creative and imaginative working process I am going to speak about here.



© Jivan Astfalck, *Ideas in Transition*: the ordering of materials

Kundera too speaks about this when he says in his book *The Art of the Novel* (Kundera, M., 1986)

Imagination, which freed from the control of reason and from concerns for appearing true, ventures into landscapes inaccessible to rational thought. The dream is only the model for the sort of imagination that I consider the greatest discovery of modern art.

Ricoeur, in *Reflection and Imagination* (Ricoeur, P., 1991), offers the most comprehensive insight when he says that fictions are not only complex ideas whose components derived from simple images or previous experiences, which are then combined in new and unexpected ways. They derive from a complete shift in the referential status that takes place in the transition of images as replica to images as fiction. The new combination might have no reference to the original from which the image could be copied, but maybe has traveled across time and cultures, becoming a kind of 'narrabesque' (my word: linking narrative with arabesques), extending even the complexity of an idea like the palimpsest in visual culture. This denial of the primacy of the original opens new possibilities of referring to reality, it allows for intervention and discovery similar to the operation of metaphor in language, where the metaphorical quality allows the image to give body, shape, contour to meaning and furthermore, actually participates in the invention of meaning. This is by no means an arbitrary doing, but entails that all narratives, all images, are a certain call to order or a re-ordering, albeit with infinitely more complex possibilities. Narratives can carry us beyond the oppressive order of our existence to a more liberating and refined order, they offer a space where utopian ideals can be played out and explored, where hope can have a place again and at times where there is a 'happy ever after'. Jewellery of this kind is magic, it consists of layers of formed material, narrative, thought, histories, and embedded emotion. Often oscillating between deconstruction and then again attempts of reconstruction, containing themes of recurrence and memory. These works stand in stark contrast to Modernism's ideal of the purified form and autonomous object. Jewellery pieces such as these allow forms of the past to re-emerge and to co-exist, sometimes as fragments or ruins, alongside a riot of other references (including those of modernism), while searching for new representation, identity and meaning.

Part Two



© Jivan Astfalck, **White Lies**: paper & cotton & steel

White cotton embroidery on white paper, each carrying one of the Thesaurus words, which came up when I searched the word 'woman', offering image and narrative instead of theorized cognition...

Here they are:

Circe, in a painting by John William Waterhouse, 1892



Young Meiji-era **Geisha**



Crone (power)



Amazon, wearing trousers and carrying a shield with an attached patterned cloth and a quiver. Ancient Greek Attic white-ground alabastron, c.470 BC, British Museum, London



and...



... **Lassie**, a term which plays on the Scottish word 'lass', which means a girl or young woman, sometimes meaning a sweetheart. But when I first heard it, fresh in the UK many



© Jivan Astfalck, *White Lies – Sibyl*: paper, cotton, wool, aluminium, gold

years ago with very little English, I thought they meant 'Lassie' the famous dog of the American TV series, which I loved so much as a child.

I exhibit the work with a golden twist, a pure gold necklace, which when worn and because of the properties of the metal, will never behave the way we expect a necklace to behave when worn, but the gold, used like this, will always resist orderly 'wearability' and conformity.

I have come to understand the dialectic between composition, material exploration and aesthetic decisions in the making of creative work, as a search for meaning, which emerges from the change in the referential status of the object, wearable and directly sitting on the body, or referring to the body by implication. Body-related and idea-based art is distinct in this respect since the body, in its physical and metaphorical existence, is always referenced and implies exploration of identity and meaning. Donzelmann writes in the catalogue to my project *Love Zoo* (Donzelmann, B., 2005)

a work of crafted material such as this is not only a valuable object in terms of the skill, beauty and materially quantifiable worth - all of which might be translated as 'proper' values - proper in the sense of belonging to the object itself, objectively as its own properties. Here what is important is that the object is acknowledged, and in fact embraced, as an object of non-proper values - of values, which find their source in emotional and psychological investments.

An image or object can, in this context, communicate compounded content with immense speed, while presenting the viewer with a variety of levels, standpoints, contradictions and conflicting value judgements.

Consider for example the image on the next page:



© photo credit: Jivan Astfalck **Barca** 2004

The psychoanalyst (Freud), the writer (Kundera), the philosopher (Ricoeur) would need a lot of time, both in the activity of writing, as in the experience of reading, to bring the narrative of such an image into the linearity of language. I accept the importance of the linguistic function, but to my mind not enough attention is brought to that function which is active in the creation of new meaning in visual fictions and inventions. This cannot succinctly be described by 'aesthetic function' alone, because of the dynamics of invested emotions and embedded meaning.

And to complicate matters further, there is the very fact that as the viewer, wearer or creator, we are always already part of the image!

In our contemporary culture we might regard any attempt to re-connect with a personal or cultural point of origin as nostalgic; we find ourselves much more in a world of shifting, flexible frameworks in which our origins, bonds, traditions, our sentiments and dreams, exist alongside other stories, other frag-

ments of memory and traces of time. The ambiguous nature of the notion of the author, the narrative incompleteness of life, the entanglement of life histories in a dialectic of remembrance and anticipation all add to the way in which we apply fiction to life. The artist, the storyteller, the dreamer is a voyager, a person on a journey wandering or more likely meandering through the world of appearances where the abandonment of an inherited and often repressive identity becomes a new identity. Because of the elusive character of 'real life' I use the help of fiction, a narrative invention and construction, to deal with imaginary and real events and to organise my experience of it. I like to rethink our ideas of tradition and the status of objects in a way that allows me to perceive the old and tired clichés in a new way, full of possibilities.

I am interested in creative work which maps out the demarcation lines where body meets world, a place or idea of a place, where narratives are invested in objects, in clothes, jewellery and body-art, with the aim to negotiate that gap, complexity, confusion or conflict in relation to private and subjective mental experience.



© photo credit: Werner Prall, *Naples*, 2012





© Jivan Astfalck, *The Resilience of Weeds*: silver & piece of the Berlin wall

Part Three

We might think of ourselves as being heroic,



reaching imaginary heights, fighting monsters, seeing our nose grow... when more often than not we are caught in history... not eagles, but chicken...



and when it comes to it, we eat each other...



I collected the vertebra bones of three chickens, which we had eaten (with great pleasure) over many weeks. The bones were cooked for a period of seven hours to remove all fat and were then bleached to achieve an almost paper-like consistency.



© Jivan Astfalck, **ChickBONES**: chicken bones, artificial pearls and pure gold

The ambivalence between beauty and death represented in the necklace refers to one of the oldest pre-occupations in body decoration, where materials from plant or animal sources are thought of as having magical properties, which extend way beyond the aesthetic qualities of the piece, are narrative, and of transcendental character. These materials are thought to be symbolically assimilated when wearing or eating into one's own body.

Here a very impressive example:



Photo credit: Jivan Astfalck, National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.



Lamas at Talung in Sikkim, East India, Johnston and Hoffman, Photograph, 1897, Royal Geographical Society.

I came across this amazing body decoration made of human bone in the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen. Because of the lack of information provided by the museum I only found out years later, when I visited the completely mind-blowing exhibition *Tibet's Secret Temple* at the Wellcome Collection in London, what this piece is. And there I also encountered the historical photograph of two male Lamas at Talung in Sikkim, East India, 1897, wearing similar bone ornaments.

The Tantric Buddhist lama would wear a full set of 6 bone pieces. The 6 types of bone ornaments are said to symbolise the six 'boundless perfections' (paramitas) that a Bodhisattva must embody in order to enlighten all beings: generosity, ethics, patience, diligence, meditation and wisdom. Ornaments of human bone signify hidden dimensions of the body and the universe, and are worn by highly accomplished lamas to perform Tantric rituals of invocation and transformation. The net-like design of this bone apron with attached wristbands represents the interconnected channels and energetic nodes of the subtle body as indicated by the strings of bone beads and the dancing figures and energy whorls carved into the individual

bone plates. The pieces signify mastery over life and death, as well as change and becoming. Originally, they would have been worn against bare skin, but bone ornaments used in monastic ceremonies were normally worn on the outside of ornate brocade robes as seen in the photograph.

I, on the other hand, chose a chicken, not an eagle nor a human (and not just because it would have gotten me into severe trouble). The chicken offered an amusing twist to the pomposity of appropriated cultural meaning and offered a linguistic link to the term 'chick', an endearing (if patronizing) synonym for girl or doll, while referring to the all-consuming and devouring nature of romantic assimilation.

Evocatively Angela Carter (Carter, A., 1982) writes:

I think it was Rilke who lamented the inadequacy of our symbolism – regretted so bitterly we cannot, unlike the (was it?) ancient Greeks, find adequate external symbols for the life within us – yes, that's the quotation. But, no. He was wrong. Our external symbols must always express the life within us with absolute precision; how could they do otherwise, since that life has generated them? Therefore we must not blame our poor symbols if they take forms that seem trivial to us, or absurd, for the symbols themselves have no control over their fleshly manifestations, however paltry they may be; by nature of our life alone has determined their forms.

This is interesting !

How can I know what I feel till I see what I think

The emphasis is on emotionally invested and creative work (in whatever discipline), which can be dreamed to map out, I repeat, the demarcation lines, where body meets world, a place, or idea of a place, where narratives are invested in art with the aim to negotiate that gap. The aim would be to achieve an imagery of the unconscious and address symbolisation by using visual metaphors to cross-map emotional investments conducive to new creative articulation and representation.

And so to finish, I would like to offer one of my most favourite quotes from Louise Bourgeois (Bourgeois, L. in Beckley, B. & Shapiro, D., 1998):

Beauty is a series of experiences, it is not a noun. People have experiences. If they feel an intense aesthetic pleasure, they take that experience and project it into the object. They experience the idea of beauty, but

beauty in and of itself does not exist. To put it another way, experiences are sorts of pleasures that involve verbs. The fallacy occurs in taking the experience 'I like x' and referring to 'x' as beauty. ... In fact, beauty is only a mystified expression of our own emotion.

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Circé

John William Waterhouse, 1892

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Circe_Invidiosa

Geisha

young Meiji-era Geisha

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/okinawa-soba/4426773216>

Amazone

wearing trousers and carrying a shield with an attached patterned cloth and a quiver. Ancient Greek Attic white-ground alabastron, c.470 BC, British Museum, London

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazons>

Crone:

<http://doc-avalon.tumblr.com/post/30427123268/crone-quotes-everything-everything-everything>

Lassie

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9c/Lassie_portrait_1956.JPG

Lamas at Talung in Sikkim, East India, Johnston and Hoffman, Photograph, 1897, Royal Geographical Society

<http://www.hali.com/news/tibets-secret-temple-welcome-collection-london/>

An interpretation of Bedouin Shabook: From Tanning to Contemporary Jewellery.

Amal Al-Ismaili

Abstract

This practice-based research aims to develop new interpretations of traditional Omani Bedouin crafts to inform the production of contemporary jewellery.

The research describes traditional Bedouin methods used for leather tanning (using plant materials such as Galqa and Qarat), the production of leather thread for weaving, and weaving techniques used in the production of Shabook (headpieces), Hebla (leather belts), and traditional homemade decorative trims (Talli, Sim and Suffah) as observed in field work with settled Bedouin craftspeople.

The research describes a co-creation workshop with a group of settled Omani Bedouin in North Eastern Oman. The workshop participants had expertise in a variety of traditional weaving techniques. The participants collaborated in the weaving of modular elements that were combined to form a neckpiece. Through reflective analysis, the issue of hybridity is examined to form a link between the past and the present in the creation of contemporary Omani jewellery.

Keywords: Oman, Identity, Bedouin, Shabook, Contemporary jewellery.

Introduction

This practice based research aims to develop new interpretations of traditional Omani Bedouin crafts to inform the production of contemporary jewellery. In this project, craft methods such as leather tanning, the production of leather thread, and traditional weaving techniques were explored in a co-creation workshop with a group of settled Bedouin craftspeople in North Eastern Oman. These were then used to produce 'new forms' of jewellery in collaboration with the workshop participants.

In this project we focused on weaving techniques related to *Shabook* (headpiece, see Figure 3), *Hebla* (leather belts, see Figure 4) and decorative trims called *Talli*, *Sim* and *Suffah* (see Figure 5). *Shabook* has also been referred to as *Shabkah* (or *net* in English) in previous studies (Richardson & Dorr 2003; Morris & Shelton, 1997). During the workshops, the

Bedouin women explained that *Shabook* was actually derived from "*entanglement*" in Arabic, a reference to the complex weaving technique. *Shabook* is a head dress which completely covers the hair with a coiffure of plaited, whorled leather. It is produced from leather and studded with silver as an adornment by Bedouin. The leather is normally studded with silver discs produced by male silversmiths while work related to weaving and stitching the discs to the product is undertaken by women. *Hebla* (see Figure 4) is the term that the Omani Bedouin use to refer to the leather belt worn on the waist to secure the loincloth. It is produced using up to eleven twisted leather threads. *Talli*, *Sim* and *Suffah* are traditional homemade trims which contain a narrow strip of foil which is surrounded by a framework of braided threads and used on the most heavily embellished parts of women costumes. The *Suffah* is also used for embroidery (there is no reference to this in the literature) and date-collection baskets (Richardson & Dorr, 2003).

What is traditional Bedouin jewellery? Perry suggested that jewellery worn with traditional, national or regional costumes could be classified as traditional jewellery (Perry, 2013). Both Ross (1978) and Forster (1998) defined traditional Bedouin jewellery according to its main material which was silver. Morris and Shelton (1997) assert that the Bedouin bought the silver components from settled male silversmiths. Other components, such as the leather parts of the *Shabook*, were produced by female Bedouin craftspeople. Although traditional Bedouin jewellery in Oman has remained the same for centuries (Richardson & Dorr, 2003, Mongitti, et al, 2011), it is in danger of vanishing due to the discovery of oil and the subsequent change in lifestyle within Oman. Additionally, changes in fashion, and a rise in the price of silver internationally, have encouraged traders to buy antique silver jewellery from Bedouins as a scrap commodity (Morris & Shelton, 1997), contributing to the decline of traditional jewellery.

The meaning of *Contemporary Jewellery* varies between country and culture. In this project I use the definition of Wallace et al. (2007): Contemporary Jewellery is a rich craft discipline that seeks to extend concepts of jewellery by embracing new, and reinterpreting old materials, processes and perspectives, whilst challenging preconceptions of jewellery and its role in society.

Method

The research describes a co-creation group comprised of one settled Bedouin man and four settled Bedouin women, one of whom had been born as a nomadic Bedouin. *Nomadic Bed-*

ouin are Arabs who migrated into the desert during the rainy winter season. *Settled Bedouin* are Arabs whose migration status changed from nomadic to settled due to new national borders limiting the free nomad mobility (Scholz, 1980).

For this research study, a workshop involving five participants, including one settled Bedouin man and four settled Bedouin women, was organised. One of the women had been born a nomadic Bedouin. All participants were skilled in traditional crafts, and they cooperated together to produce the leather and then cut and weave it. The workshop ran from 1st of August to 31st of August, 2016.

The group participants were interviewed (using photo elicitation) to explore their relationship with traditional Bedouin crafts. Photo elicitation is a technique widely used by visual researchers by inserting a photograph into a qualitative interview (Harper, 2002). In my field research, I showed photographs of traditional Omani jewellery, including *Shabook*, to the participants. It was observed that the settled Bedouins within the team had little or no knowledge of Omani traditional jewellery, whereas the formerly nomadic Bedouin was familiar with the jewellery and had knowledge of *Shabook* too. Thus, she was able to transfer knowledge and skills related to *Shabook* to the rest of the team.

Co-creation is the joint, collaborative, concurrent, peer-like process of producing new value (Brunner, 2016). Within design, it provides the prospect of extensive change occurring, as it alters the tools, methods and nature of design (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004). Through co-creation, people can be inspired by the influence of others and benefit from a collaborative collection of different ideas.

It was important in my project to identify specific people, with a range of skills, who I wished to contribute to the project and to create an informal atmosphere of trust between these participants. As a group, we eventually agreed to implement leather within our work and enhanced our collective skills regarding this. The group collaborated in reinterpreting traditional weaving techniques and materials to produce a series of modular elements, which were combined in the production of a contemporary jewellery neckpiece and then presented at a one day exhibition.

Research Workshop

Craft process

This investigation of traditional Bedouin process involved the use of animal skin for tanning. Leather produced from tanning was used to make a leather thread which was subsequently woven using traditional techniques (*Suffah*, *Talli* and *Sim*; see Fig. 5) to produce a series of modular elements.

Tanning

As part of this research, a traditional technique of the tanning process was used that is in danger of vanishing due to a lack of contemporary demand (I have not found previous documentation of this process in the literature). The expert woman who did the tanning is now very old and none of her family have knowledge regarding the process. The process is described below:

A specific desert plant called *Pergularia Tomentosa* (*Galqa*), is ground using stone while it is still fresh, as shown in Figure 6. The plant becomes watery and sticky due to the milky sap which is emitted from its leaves. By using the ground branches of *Galqa*, the kneading process is applied to the outer skin surface (for almost half an hour) in order to remove the hair from the inner skin. The whole skin is then soaked with water inside a plastic container with the same *Galqa* branches for one night. It is important to note that these branches function as a chemical and must be applied for one night only, as a longer duration of time risks damaging the skin. Surprisingly, the *Galqa* allows the skin hair to be easily torn out by hand.

The kneading process is again repeated using a different plant called *Acacia Nilotica* (*Qarat*), as shown in Fig. 7, to further manipulate the skin. The clean skin (without hair) is then washed and filled with ground *Qarat* mixed with salt. The skin is energetically pounded as shown in Fig. 8 to smooth and colour it in order to produce the final quality of the leather. The kneading is then completed by removing the *Qarat* mixture from the skin before it is allowed to dry for a couple of days.

Leather Thread

After tanning, the dried skin (see Fig. 9) is cut to form the leather thread, which is obtained by simply cutting the leather into thin strips. This process requires its own skill, as the skin is still hard and needs to be regularly softened by slightly wetting it with water, as shown in Fig. 10. An additional complication is that not all of the leather is of the same hardness, while the resulting threads need to be continuous and tight without

any loose links. In the workshop, although the group worked together, they were encouraged to choose their preferred leather because, after tanning, leathers are naturally different in texture, colour, and smell.

Weaving

The leather threads produced were then rolled up to be used as raw materials for the weaving, as shown in Fig. 11. In the workshop, all participants were encouraged to create objects based on their own weaving skills. One individual from the group, who was an expert in leather weaving skills based on *Hebla*, led the others into transforming *Suffah*, *Talli* and *Sim* by weaving them using the leather thread rather than the original materials, such as palm leaves and coloured wool, that had traditionally been employed, as shown in Fig. 12.

Co-creation

The team members possessed skills relating to the weaving of *Suffah*, *Talli* and *Sim* from traditional homemade trims and braided threads. Through interaction and discussion, such as overcoming an initial contention regarding the use of leather, the team was provoked to employ the same material used for *Shabook* with their weaving skills to produce contemporary jewellery. This is interpreted in this workshop as a connection between the past (i.e. *Shabook*) and the present (i.e. necklace).

The objects woven by the group (see Fig. 13) were finally combined together in order to hybridise the different crafts in the production of the necklace as shown in Fig. 14.

One-day exhibition

Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha are the only two Muslim celebration events during the year. In Oman, most women wear their jewellery during these events. I displayed the necklace during Eid Al-Adha in December after the workshop finished at the end of August. I presented the work in the same house where we did the workshop. I hung the necklace on the wall so as to create a natural atmosphere in which it could be 'tested' and 'felt' by those attending. In earlier visits to settled Bedouin women, I had noted how some of the women stored and displayed their jewellery collection by hanging them on the wall.

Reflective Analyses

There is a long tradition of hybridity within Omani jewellery, where women would build their jewellery collection through

the combination of elements over time. This is evidenced in the modular construction of neckpieces such as the *samt* necklace where a variety of coins (Maria Theresa Thalers, Saudi Riyal and Indian Rupees) were strung on necklaces.

In the co-creation workshop, we endeavoured to develop a new form of hybridity. By utilising all the available participants' skills, we combined the crafts of *Sim*, *Talli* and *Suffah*, with a chain of *Hebla*, to create the final synthesis jewellery, in a new manifestation of craft hybridity. This design clearly replicated the traditional *Hebla* and other crafts (*Sim*, *Talli* and *Suffah*) by using traditional materials (leather thread employed in *Shabook*) and occupied a gap between traditional and contemporary forms of expression.

The exhibition showed a shape of jewellery unfamiliar to the audience, but there was no rejection or objection to the necklace. The work created interesting conversations and each member of the audience had their own perspectives or opinions about the items. One of the opinions was the necklace related to the traditional silver necklace (*samt*). That opinion which was related to the traditional silver necklace (*samt*) can be perceived as a continuation of the sense of traditional jewellery in modern design. This acceptance was meaningful in that the items seem to not disrupt the existence culture, and was accepted by the audience touching and wearing them. Additionally, the form, shape, colours, smell, and texture made the items possess a 'sense of heritage' or classic feel to them. The most precious thing relating to this exhibition was that through this work I could provide the group with a sense of pride when they saw their designs receiving significant attention and being worn by others during the exhibition.

Conclusion

By re-visualising the *Shabook*, it was possible to use the same material (i.e. leather thread) in order to represent it in a new way (i.e. in the form of a necklace). Through a co-creation group a variety of craft skills, such as leather tanning and weaving techniques, were connected together to produce a contemporary form of jewellery.

The traditional Bedouins' jewellery has been in danger of vanishing as evidenced by the advanced age of the woman who created the leather for the *Shabook* through the traditional tanning process and the fact her family were unaware of the precise details of the process that she followed; modern forms of tanning do not produce the same unique quality and colour of leather suitable for *Shabook*. This project shows that by using the traditional *Hebla* as a chain, it is possible to connect other



Figure 1 (a) *Pergularia Tomentosa* (Galqa), (b) *Acacia Nilotica* (Qarat)



Figure 3 (a) Shabook (front), (b) Shabook (back)

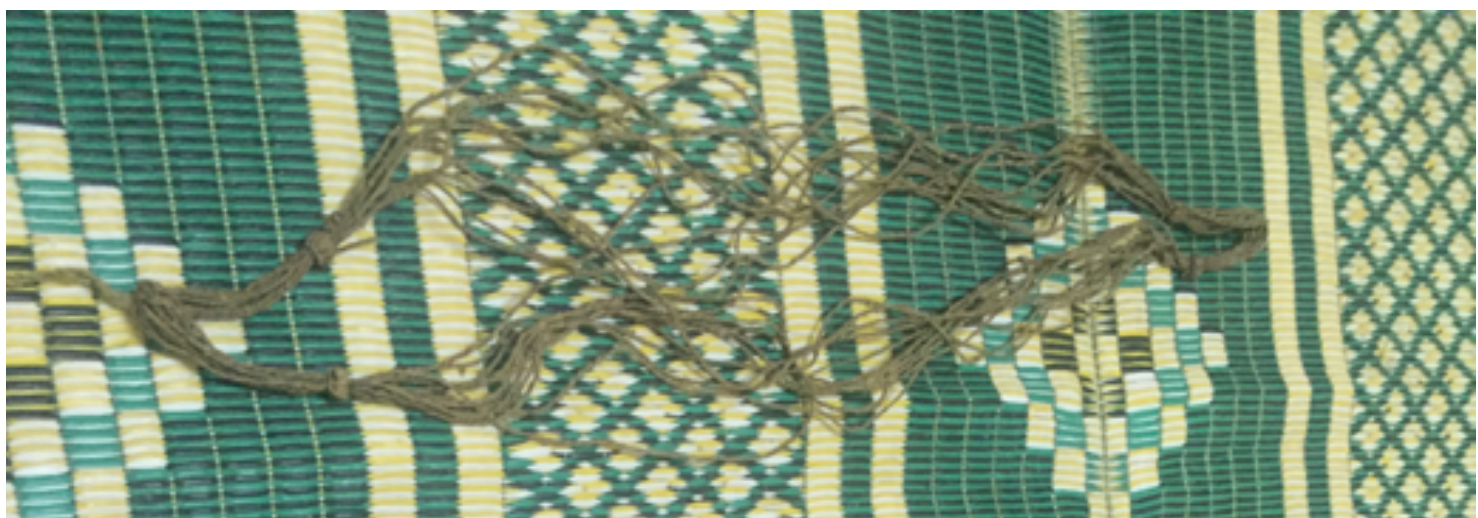


Figure 4 Loincloth secure (Hebla)



Figure 5 Left to Right: (a) Suffah (from cloth threads), (b) Suffah (from date palm leaves), (c) Talli, (d) Sim(Qarat)



Figure 6 Grinding *Galga*



Figure 7 Ground *Qarat*



Figure 8 Pounding animal skin



Figure 9 The dried skin
(leather)



Figure 10 Cutting leather to thread



Figure 11 Leather thread



Figure 12 Left to Right: (a) Suffah(leather only), (b) Suffah(leather with date palm leaves), (c) Talli, (d) Sim



Figure 13 The outcome of weaving



Figure 14 (a) and (b) contemporary necklaces

traditional forms of weaving together into a new product to form a link between the past and the present. This indicates the value of hybridity, and our endeavours to ensure that heritage is preserved within the progression of modern society.

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All photographs the author.

M(eat) et al: Art Jewellery as a Means to Explore Body Boundary?

Rachael Colley, Birmingham City University

Abstract

Throughout its 60 year history the art jewellery field has been creatively interrogating jewellery's craft traditions and its role as social signifier. Den Besten's (2014) recent manifesto for contemporary jewellery invited art jewellers to re- "Focus on the "why" and "how" of jewelry, on people and jewelry". Through practice-led research I am investigating the public's response to the crafting and transformation of food-stuffs, including the flesh of meat and fruits, as materials with which to create a collection of jewellery and decorative wearable artefacts titled 'M(eat) et al'. There are several art jewellers who explore alternative organic, animal and human matter in their creative practice, such as Marta Mattsson, Eunmi Chun and Stefan Heuser; however, few have gone on to study and analyse the subsequent impact of their designs on the wearer/consumer. In Hindle's 'Strange Pleasures' study (conducted in 2014), where members of the public were invited to experience and engage with a range of art jewellery examples, a participant selected my work to interact with. She stated that "it was almost like that weird attraction/revulsion thing" (Hindle, Colley, Boulwood, 2016 p.304), evidencing threads around abjection (Kristeva, 1984) and body boundary (Rozin et al, 1995) that occur due to the material make-up of the jewellery. As a result of this study, I am exploring ways in which to

more effectively promote and exhibit 'M(eat) et al' alongside a developing complementary collection of 'Ambiguous Implements', to enable an immersive and experiential presentation to the public that more directly questions body boundary.

Keywords: art jewellery; meat as jewellery; material transformation; body boundary; abjection

Art jewellery

In his essay *Material Typographies*, Forrest (2014) states that 'craft can be imagined as a cultural prosthetic' (Forrest, 2014, p.39) and goes on to describe 'craft as one of the most important drivers in material culture' (Forrest, 2014, p.40). Throughout its 60-year history the art jewellery field has been creatively interrogating jewellery's craft traditions, its connection to the wearer and its role as social signifier.

'The work of certain jewellers can be read as engaging with definitions and critiques of the body which reinvigorates the possibility of the applied arts as critical practice, rather than merely a supplementary, decorative one' (Sandino, 2002, p.107).

The use of organic materials in art jewellery, as well as themes around abjection, are evident in the work of Marta Mattsson (*Rebirth/Skin* collection, 2010), Eunmi Chun (*Flora & Fauna* solo exhibition, 2014) and Stefan Heuser (*Fisherman's Ring*, 2010) (figure 1).



Figure 1 Marta Mattsson, brooch in calfskin and silver from *Rebirth/Skin* collection, 2010 (left), Eunmi Chun, Polar Bear pendant, cowgut and silver, *Flora & Fauna* solo exhibition at Ornamentum, 2014 (centre) and Stefan Heuser, *Fisherman's Ring*, breast milk, resin and metal, 2010 (right).

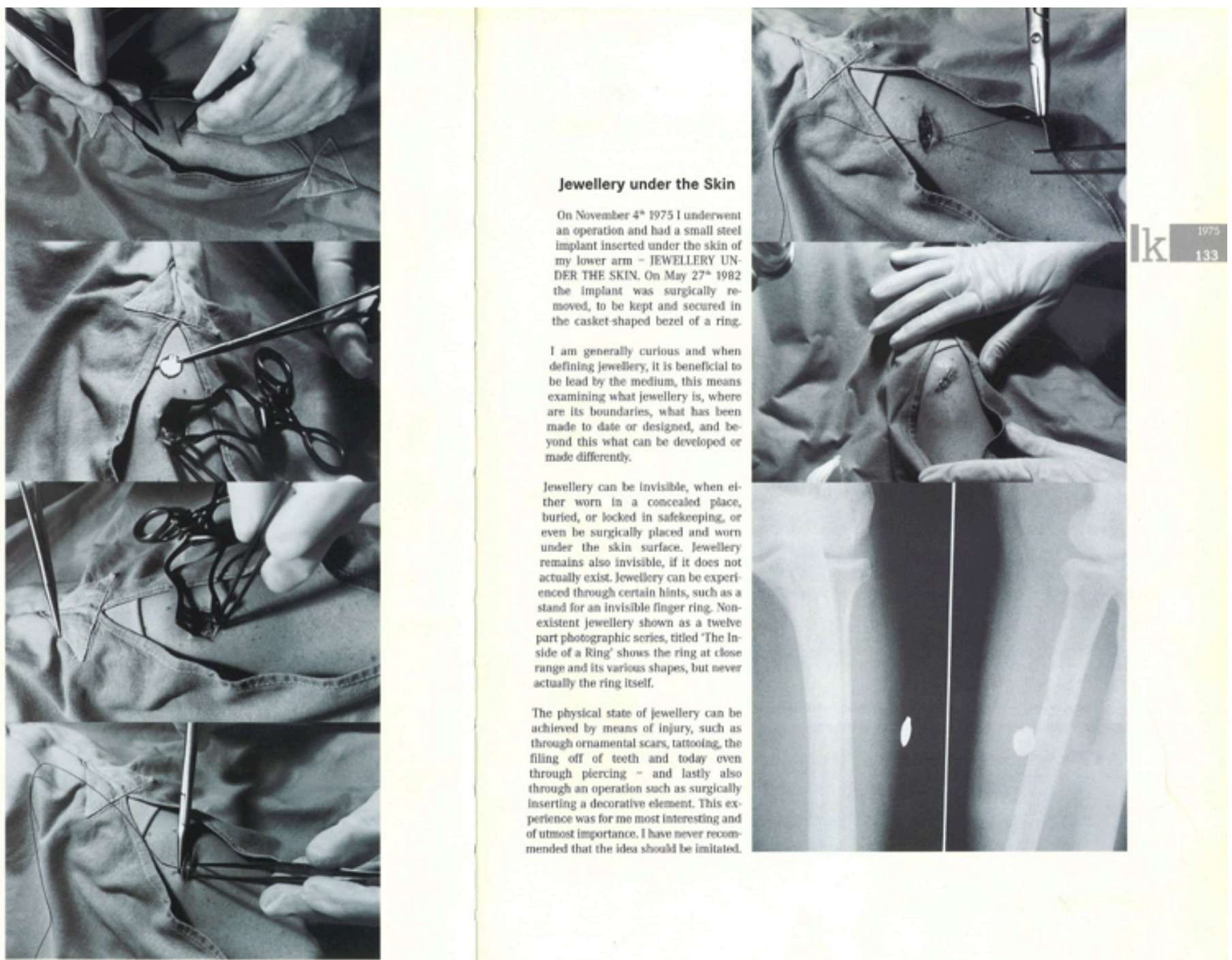


Figure 2 Peter Skubic, *Jewellery under the Skin*, steel implant, 1975

On November the 4th in 1975 Peter Skubic 'performed' *Schmuck unter der Haut (Jewellery under my Skin)*, which can be described as an art jewellery act (figure 2). Skubic had a surgical steel implant inserted under the skin of his lower arm for seven years, after which it was removed and set into a ring; siting the jewellery on both sides of the skin. Christoph Zellweger's *Foreign Bodies* (2007) publication and collection of the same name feature a range of pieces with highly polished stainless steel surfaces that have been inspired and informed by surgical implants. Zellweger has also created leather holsters for hip replacements, performatively representing them through contextual imagery as external wearables that mirror the wearer's hip position, marking 'an externalisation of the inner body, of that abjection which has formerly been hidden' (Sandino, 2002, p.107).

The relationship art jewellery has to the wearer has been a constant strand of exploration that runs throughout the field's history. Since the early 2000's some more pointed issues have been raised regarding art jewellery's apparent disconnection with the body, as the traditionally pivotal site for the work. Staal's (2005) *manifesto for the new jewellery* comments on the fact that contemporary jewellery has shifted away from 'its actual calling: as an accessory that ultimately expresses the aspirations and achievements of the wearer'. Den Besten's (2014) more recent manifesto for contemporary jewellery invited us, as a field, to re- 'focus on the "why" and "how" of jewelry, on people and jewelry'. As requested, certain aspects and areas of the field of contemporary, or art jewellery, are currently reconsidering various forms of engagement with the public sphere, with the wearer re-presented as the central fo-

cus of art jewellery practice. The seminar *'Re-Public jewellery – Social Potential in Contemporary Jewellery'* took place during Munich's annual Jewellery Week festival in 2015 at Galleri Handwerk. Gali (2015) explains that 'the seminar's intention, as part of a larger project, is to return jewellery art to its natural habitat', that of public space, as opposed to the white cube, with the hope of rekindling the relationship between the wearer and the work. Hindle's *Strange Pleasures* study (conducted in 2014) also uncovered possibilities for public interaction and 'play' at the hands of the wearer, stating that 'the art jewellery that they explore during the study points to how the wearing of adornments can constitute a leisure experience that is one of freedom and play' (Hindle, Colley, Boulwood, 2016, p.310). The study observed the invited group's varied responses to the range of art jewellery they were invited to interact with. The selection included *Doggy Dodger* (figure 3), a brooch from my 2010 *Subdivision* collection. This piece, constructed mainly from CNC milled roast beef, was selected by one participant who found its material make-up intriguing. It was both pleasing and useful to receive intuitive, thoughtful reflections from an individual who stated that the piece aroused 'that weird attraction/revulsion thing' (Hindle, Colley, Boulwood, 2016 p.304). After having handled the piece the participants began to reflect on the nature of their own flesh and the moments it seems to be out of their control (in adolescence, pregnancy, etc.), as 'memories were evoked of being reduced to their bodies' (Hindle, Colley, Boulwood, 2016 p.308). The participants physical interaction with and exploration of this piece highlighted the fleshy material's subtle, tacky reanimation, an almost imperceptible reaction that occurs in response to changes in temperature and moisture levels due to bodily contact; thus, wearing brings a far less controllable dynamic, breathing 'life' into the artefact. However, the degradable material's limited lifespan also highlights the fleeting and complex nature of human existence and the passing of time, suggesting the ultimate end that conventional jewellery circumvents through its endurance.

Developing collections: M(eat) et al and Ambiguous Implementations

Food is a far-reaching language that both reinforces and transcends class boundaries and enables more fluid cross-cultural communication. It is more than likely that participants have already had first-hand experience of the materials, although those interactions have tended to occur through their consumption of food, rather than through their consumption of luxury goods such as jewellery. Over the past eight years I have experimented with a range of organic, food-based



Figure 3 *Doggy Dodger (chewed a roast)*, *Subdivision* collection 2010 (CNC milled British roast beef, gold-plated silver and stainless steel)

materials, with the aim of using them to create intriguing outcomes. As materials, food-stuffs awaken the senses, with the more visceral of these tending to initiate instinctive 'gut' reactions from those experiencing them. Through practice-led research I have attempted to re-appropriate, control, craft, denature and transform these materials, fashioning them into art jewellery. I have responded to the findings of Hindle's *Strange Pleasures* study (conducted in 2014) and continued to develop my use of food-stuffs, including the flesh of meat and fruits, as materials with which to create a collection of art jewellery titled M(eat) et al.

As the title suggests, *M(eat) et al* combines a mixture of meaty or fleshy organic materials with a series of 'others'. It is generally these 'others' that provide varying degrees of stability and structure, enabling secure methods of connection and attachment to be built into the designs. Materials such as metal, wood, fabric and leather are additional materials I tend to favour when designing and creating my work. I spend a lot of my time testing and experimenting in order to transform the materials I have selected, thus creating a range of initial primary research tests that form the basis of my investigation. Denaturing processes and forms of digital manufacturing have been researched and utilised to underpin the techniques and methods I have developed. The processes used to manipulate, craft and transform these fleshy foods have been refined through the testing and problem-solving of a range of

equipment and tooling, which I, mostly, design and create myself.

Having been born and raised in Sheffield, cutlery and the use of steel tooling are particularly relevant to my practice: I have always found the city's industrial heritage fascinating and inspiring, with members of both sides of my family having worked in the Sheffield steelwork and cutlery trades. Aunt Mabel applied knife handles, Uncle Arthur was a little mester (self-employed craftsman working from a small workshop) and my Auntie Vic was a buffer girl (polisher in the cutlery trade). In the summer of 2015, during Nottingham Trent University's *Summer Lodge* residency, I began collaborating with the cross-disciplinary artist Nuala Clooney and developed a series of two-fingered, double-lobed copper spoons. This initial foray into experimental cutlery has developed to form a collection of *Ambiguous Implements* for eating, to be displayed alongside *M(eat) et al* collection. This complimentary juxtaposition aims to highlight the somewhat indefinable, nebulous body boundary through the presentation on the body of skin-like jewels alongside the complimentary use of 'bodily' tools for eating that serve-up edible, nutritious materials that then cross the body's internal/external threshold. In order to indicate both visual influences and the various underpinning personal narratives, *M(eat) et al* neckpieces and the two-fingered spoon series from the *Ambiguous Implements* collection have been documented, using double exposure film photography, in and around the run-down industrial areas of Sheffield (figures 4, 5 and 6).

The *M(eat) et al* collection seeks to defamiliarise flesh, utilising denaturing processes to transform and partially stabilise the materials used. The desiccated nature of the materials also references inspiration from the historical contexts of wearable relics, mourning jewellery and memento mori more generally, reinterpreting the significance of corporeal interaction as a

means of providing a physical connection or open line of communication (May, 2015, p.49) between the wearer and the 'Other' (Kristeva, 1984, p.10). As discussed earlier, due to the Maillard reaction (a chemical reaction between amino acids and sugar in foods when heated) and the caramelisation of sugars in the materials, they tend to subtly reanimate when their immediate environmental conditions change, due to wearing or other factors. *M(eat) et al*'s two initial neckpieces, *Balsa'd bacon* and *The Untanny*, are intended to be worn directly next to the skin, juxtaposing human flesh with consumable flesh, with the aim of exploring the notion of 'society threatened by its outside' (Kristeva, 1984, p.71). They are designed to encourage a reactive response, communicating material connections to the wearer regarding their bodily make-up. All of the pieces within *M(eat) et al* will, due to their material's composition, have varying lifelines and will degrade over time. Wearing destabilises them further, increasing their risk of damage, decay, destruction, decomposition and - given the materials used - a kind of 'death'. Through the wearing of this time-sensitive jewellery collection each participant is challenged to consider commonalities of aging and death that are relatable, in that, along with the consumption of food, they are embedded in everyone's narrative. I will continue to simultaneously develop these collections of jewellery and tools for eating, utilising this work and their interactive presentation and display to explore 'corporeal orifices' and 'the differentiation of proper-clean and improper-dirty', investigating what 'shapes the body into a *territory* having areas, orifices, points and lines, surfaces and hollows' (Kristeva, 1984, p.71-72). When displayed alongside one another, these collections aim to more directly highlight body boundary (Rozin et al, 1995) by prompting similar questioning and discussion to those engaged in by the *Strange Pleasures* participants.



Figure 4 *Balsa'd bacon*, *M(eat) et al* Collection 2016 (denatured bacon, balsa wood, copper, leather and butchers twine)



Figure 5 *The Untanny, M(eat) et al Collection 2016* (denatured beef, leather, walnut and copper)



Figure 6 *Two-fingered spoon, Ambiguous Implements Collection 2016* (press-formed copper)

I intend to respond to the need to find engaging, interactive ways of enabling art jewellery to more openly involve the public by undertaking a deductive approach to research, as the jewellery and tools for eating that I produce will be used as a means of testing hypotheses. During 2017-18, I will be collaborating with Nuala Clooney and the curator and editor of *FEAST* Journal Laura Mansfield to present an Arts Council England funded national touring exhibition. This series of exhibitions and events will enable me to present these collections across a range of public contexts, such as interventions, workshops and meal events. I propose to combine the 'active' presentation and wearing of *M(eat) et al* collection by 'setting' it, not with precious gemstones, but as an integrated part of the set table. The emphasis on play and the participant's freedom to explore identity in Hindle's *Strange Pleasures* study may also resonate with this form of presentation. There are well-established social structures surrounding 'dressing-up for dinner'; however, they could traditionally be considered as rather more formal than as a playful form of identity exploration. Rich (2003, p.49) states that 'a dinner party was as much an opportunity for display as it was a risk of social embarrassment. The setting for the meal was judged by the guests and if found lacking could have an effect on that most highly valued of bourgeois possessions: reputation'. The use of indistinct or confused tools - *Ambiguous Implements* - for eating aims to subvert etiquette, as they are designed with the intention of questioning modes of interaction and to reintroduce a form of 'play'. The juxtaposition of the original, or raw materials alongside those that have been manipulated and transformed indicates the nature of the jewellery's material make-up. The sensory interaction and consumption of these materials also sets the context for exploring themes around abjection; enabling a more immersive, experiential and questioning presentation to the public. The events will be documented through photography and audio-visual recordings, as well as through a series of questionnaires and interviews in order to effectively capture information that will enable me to thoroughly explore, analyse and evaluate the participant's experience of art jewellery as a means to explore body boundary.

Conclusion

I am in agreement with Den Besten (2014) and Staal (2005): art jewellery has divorced itself from the wearer and should aim to re-focus on the connection jewellery has with people, and those who choose to wear it. However, there are several practitioners, such as the art jeweller Zoe Robertson (*flockO-mania* series, 2015-present), who are actively seeking to engage the public by inviting them to interact with their work

more directly in an exhibition context. Through my continued practice-led research I intend to explore the extent to which art jewellery with a food-based content, when presented alongside food and tools for eating, has the potential to create a new bodily experience for the participant.

Throughout 2016-17 I have continued to work with the cross-disciplinary artist Nuala Clooney to lead a series of *Ambiguous Implement* interventions. The first of these was held at the *In Dialogue* symposium at Nottingham Contemporary, where participants were invited to explore the boundaries of the body and taste by consuming flavorsome morsels from purposely designed tools for eating, enabling the consideration and observation of those close interactions and alliances of the adorned table and adorned partaker. As stated previously, during 2017-18 I will be collaborating with Clooney and Mansfield to present a touring exhibition titled *Ambiguous Implements*, featuring work from a range of designers. This exhibition series will be supported by additional events, such as interventions, workshops, talks, meals and other engagement opportunities that will enable me to continue the development of my practice-led research. The *Ambiguous Implements* touring exhibition will launch in July 2017 at the Roco Co-op in Sheffield.

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NATIONAL COSTUME

The Qiang Ethnic Dress: Historical Truth or Fiction at Present?

Gaopeng Zhang, Sichuan University; Professor Colin Gale, Birmingham City University

Abstract:

The Qiang are one of the ethnic minorities of China with a population of 300,000 distributed throughout the Southwest of China and believed to have 3000 years of history. Qiang ethnic dress has been noted as a particular aspect of their ethnic identification, but its unusual variety has not been analysed systematically. This study focuses on the various forms and styles of Qiang ethnic dress and the historical and cultural causes which have developed its style and appearance. A field research method has been used to identify and distinguish the various Qiang ethnic dresses of different regions. By examining historical remains and archives relevant to the research and comparing with the Qiang neighbours' dresses, this study discusses how Qiang ethnic dress has been constructed historically and culturally and how it has developed its current features. It can be found that there are nine styles and sixteen items of Qiang ethnic dresses and supplements distributed among different regions. Combining the relevant achievements of historical study, it can also be concluded that why some elements of Qiang ethnic dresses imitate Han or Tibetan styles is the result of the Qiang people trying to affiliate to more strong Han or Tibetan ethnic groups during different historical periods. The variety within Qiang ethnic dress is used as a significant ethnic identifier as a result of the struggle for scarce resources between Qiang ethnic sub-communities. Since time immemorial, Qiang ethnic dress has been and still will be rebuilt instrumentally along with the economic and social development.

Keywords: Qiang ethnic minority; ethnicity; ethnic dress; ethnic identification; symbolizing

Introduction

Ethnic dress is defined as body modifications and supplements which are used to express individual ethnic identity. The body modifications include aspects of taste, smell, sound, and feel and the body supplements include clothing, jewellery and other accessories (Eicher, 1995, p. 1). Ethnic dress is often regarded as a visual and sensory aspect of ethnicity to be used as a marker of ethnic identity to express an identification with a particular ethnic sub-group and in order to strengthen ethnic consciousness and solidarity. Ethnic dress is popularly assumed to be traditional, uniform and stable, inherited from ancestors. However upon close inspection ethnic dress seems more complicated and volatile than is commonly supposed. The Qiang – one of the ethnic minorities of China – traditional ethnic dress is a typical example.

The Qiang are an ethnic minority in China comprising a population of 300,000 spread across Southwest China and believed to have existed for 3000 years. Formal identification of the Qiang ethnic group began in the 1920s and was finished in 1953. As a vital aspect of ethnicity, Qiang traditional ethnic dress always attracts the attention of scholars from a variety of disciplines because of its regional variety and deeply cultural characteristics. The Qiang traditional ethnic dress is often confused with Han Chinese, Tibetan or Yi ethnic dress even during the process of Qiang's ethnic identification. So this paper focuses on the questions relating to what the Qiang traditional ethnic dress is, whether Qiang ethnic dress as a cultural heritage is truly ancient or is more artificial and recent and why the Qiang ethnic dress seems to have such variety. The paper thus concerns issues about origin, development and identification of Qiang ethnic group and the nature of the ethnicity.

The first target of this paper is to examine the types and styles of dress worn by Qiang peoples in terms of cultural characteristics based on fieldwork and to provide categorisation. Continually, the explorations about the historical and cultural resource of Qiang ethnic dress are based on examining historical remains and relevant archives. The paper then proceeds to argue what are the historical, social and cultural background and cause of the formation and development of Qiang traditional ethnic dress. Finally, a prediction of the development of Qiang ethnic dress in the future is made based on the observation of modern Qiang ethnic dress. The contributions of this study are to represent the cultural characteristics of the Qiang ethnic dress systematically and comprehensively, to reveal the general rule of the formation and development of ethnic culture as well as the nature of ethnicity and its operation.

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The Variety of Qiang Ethnic Dress

The Qiang ethnic minority, who call themselves "Erma", are mainly distributed in the counties of the Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province. They include Maoxian, most of Wenchuan, the east of Lixian, the south of Songpan and the northwest of Beichuan. A few Qiang are scattered in Heisui, Danba and other places. The area of Qiang distribution is about 38,631 square kilometers. Geographically, the area where Qiang inhabit is located in the east margin of the Qinghai Tibetan Plateau in the southwest of China. There are many high mountains and deep valleys inside with steep terrain. The Qiang people live in the villages scattered in the different mountains and valleys. The Qiang tribes located in different regions gradually formed localised cultures and caused variations in the Qiang ethnic dress. Nevertheless, Qiang traditional ethnic dress can be divided into male and female clothing in terms of gender and be subdivided into basic garment and modifying accessory based on the function. Basic garment is essential clothing which is necessarily worn in everyday life or is popular with all Qiang people. Modifying accessory is a supplement worn for body decoration or to represent regional distinction.

For Qiang male dress, the basic garment includes a gown, cloth belt, trousers, embroidered shoes and sheepskin vest (Fig. 1). The gown is made of cloth of undyed hemp, dark blue or black cotton or dark wool and is of calf length. It has a standing collar, a right-directed curved opening, long sleeves and slits on both sides at the bottom. The edges of neck, curved opening, sleeve cuffs and hem are generally ornamented by bands woven or embroidered. The width of the hem is a little wider than the upper in order to be convenient for the wearer's action. While wearing, the curved front overlap of gown is fastened with toggles on the right and the gown is normally bound up on the waist by a cloth belt. The embroidered shoes are made of cotton cloth for the cover and hemp for the soles which are beautiful and durable. The motif and stitch of the embroidery are various based on the different regional varieties. The sheepskin waistcoat is classified as a basic garment because of its popularity amongst all the Qiang even though it is not essential clothing. It is made of sheep skin with the hair left on. It can be worn with the hair turned inside in cold weather and turned outside against the rain. Besides the basic garment, the modifying accessories for men include cotton turban, Guodu (waist pocket), puttees and Tibetan robe. The first three items are popular and uniform around all the Qiang distribution area. The turban is a headwear which is normally made of black or white cotton cloth and wrapped around head by Qiang people. The puttees are made of undyed hemp or woolen cloth which are often

wrapped first the feet and then around the legs up to the knees. The Guodu (waist pocket) is a kind of accessory with triangle shape and embroidered ornament. It is always used as a bag which is wrapped through its double bands around wearer's waist to store some personal effects. As with the embroidered shoes, the motif and stitch of the embroidery on the Guodu (waist pocket) are delicately varied among different regions. Tibetan robe is a particular garment which is only worn in the northwest of the Qiang distribution area near to Tibetan neighbors. The Tibetan robe is made of undyed woolen cloth and is often worn in cold weather. Its length always reaches near the knees with long sleeves and a standing collar which is linked with the diagonally long opening. The edge of the collar, sleeve cuffs and the opening are often ornamented with multicolor cotton cloth. The Tibetan robe is generally worn with the left opening overlapped the right one without fastened and bound on the waist by a cloth belt. Sometimes, the right sleeve is taken off and draped on the wearer's back according to the weather condition.

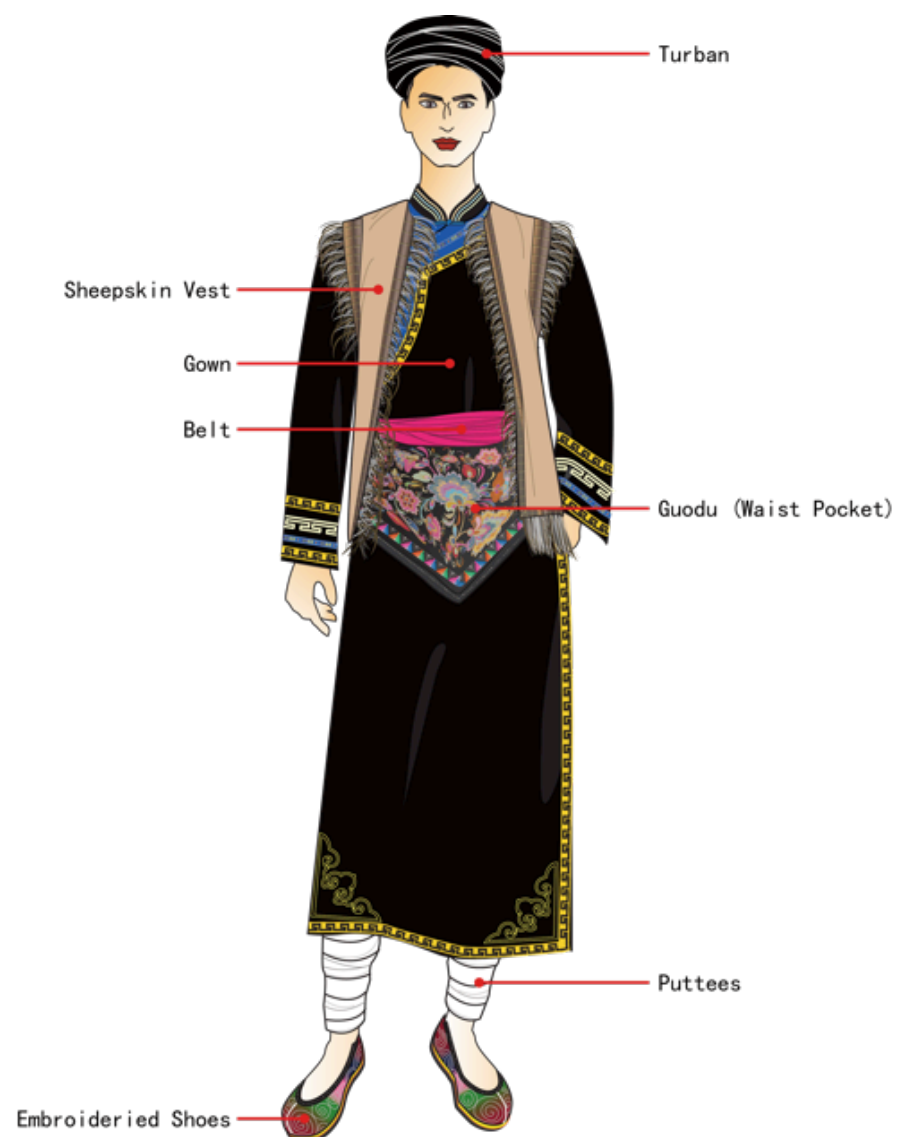


Figure 1 Qiang male ethnic dress.

The basic garment for Qiang women is almost the same as the mens except it is more colourful and decorative. With regard to the Qiang female modifying accessories, they normally include headwear, apron, cuffs, ribbon, sachet, lady's companion and jewellery (Figure 2). They vary by geographical area, especially the headwear and apron. Most Qiang women wear turbans which are wrapped around their heads and only residents living in the northwest of the Qiang distribution area near the Tibetan neighbors favour wearing a veil to cover their heads. For the turban worn by women, the shapes are much more varied than those for men, with embroidered ornamentation. Besides the headwear, aprons which Qiang women like to wear also vary by region. Qiang women often wear an apron in order to keep the body and other clothes clean during work. The apron is generally made of black or dark blue cotton cloth and there are two types. One type is a full-body apron and another is half-body apron. The full-body apron can cover the chest, abdomen and knees with its length reaching to the calves. It is normally popular in the east of the Qiang distribution area. The half-body type apron only covers the body below the waist. Qiang women usually embroider the apron and due to its large format the themes, patterns, colors and stitches of embroidery vary widely by region. For instance, the cross stitch is popular in the southern region of the Qiang, multicolored satin embroidery is popular mainly in the eastern region, while chain stitch is only discovered in Weimen and nearby in the central area of Qiang.

Based on fieldwork, it can be found that Qiang ethnic dress is very varied among different regions even though the Qiang population is not that large and the regional distribution area is not too big. In some cases, there are some great differences among the dresses which are popular in some adjacent villages just separated by river and mountain. But if ignoring the details, the Qiang distribution area can be divided into three cultural districts according to the main cultural characteristics of Qiang ethnic dress. In general, Qiang ethnic dress contains many Han Chinese or Tibetan ethnic dress elements, the turban and apron are popular amongst the Han Chinese who live in the west of Sichuan. While the veil and Tibetan robe are common in Tibetan ethnic dress. So the overall characteristics of the Qiang ethnic dress can be summarized as regional diversity of dress style and pluralistic dress culture. According to the category of ethnic dress with different ethnic characteristics, the area where Qiang inhabit can be roughly divided into the southeast, centre and northwest cultural regions of Qiang dress (Figure 3). The dress style in the southeast region (the green area in Figure3) is similar to the Han Chinese dress and the dress style in the northwest region (the pink area in Figure3) follows the Tibetan dress. Between them, the style of dress in the centre region (the yel-

low area in Figure3) is more ambiguous and complex. In each dress cultural area, Qiang ethnic dress can be further subdivided into nine types based on the dress color, texture, embroidery patterns and method of wearing a headdress as well as its shape, styles of apron and other details of differences (see Table 1).



Figure 2 Qiang female ethnic dress.

Qiang distribution area can be divided into three cultural districts according to the main cultural characteristics of Qiang ethnic dress. In general, Qiang ethnic dress contains many Han Chinese or Tibetan ethnic dress elements, the turban and apron are popular amongst the Han Chinese who live in the west of Sichuan. While the veil and Tibetan robe are common in Tibetan ethnic dress. So the overall characteristics of the Qiang ethnic dress can be summarized as regional diver-

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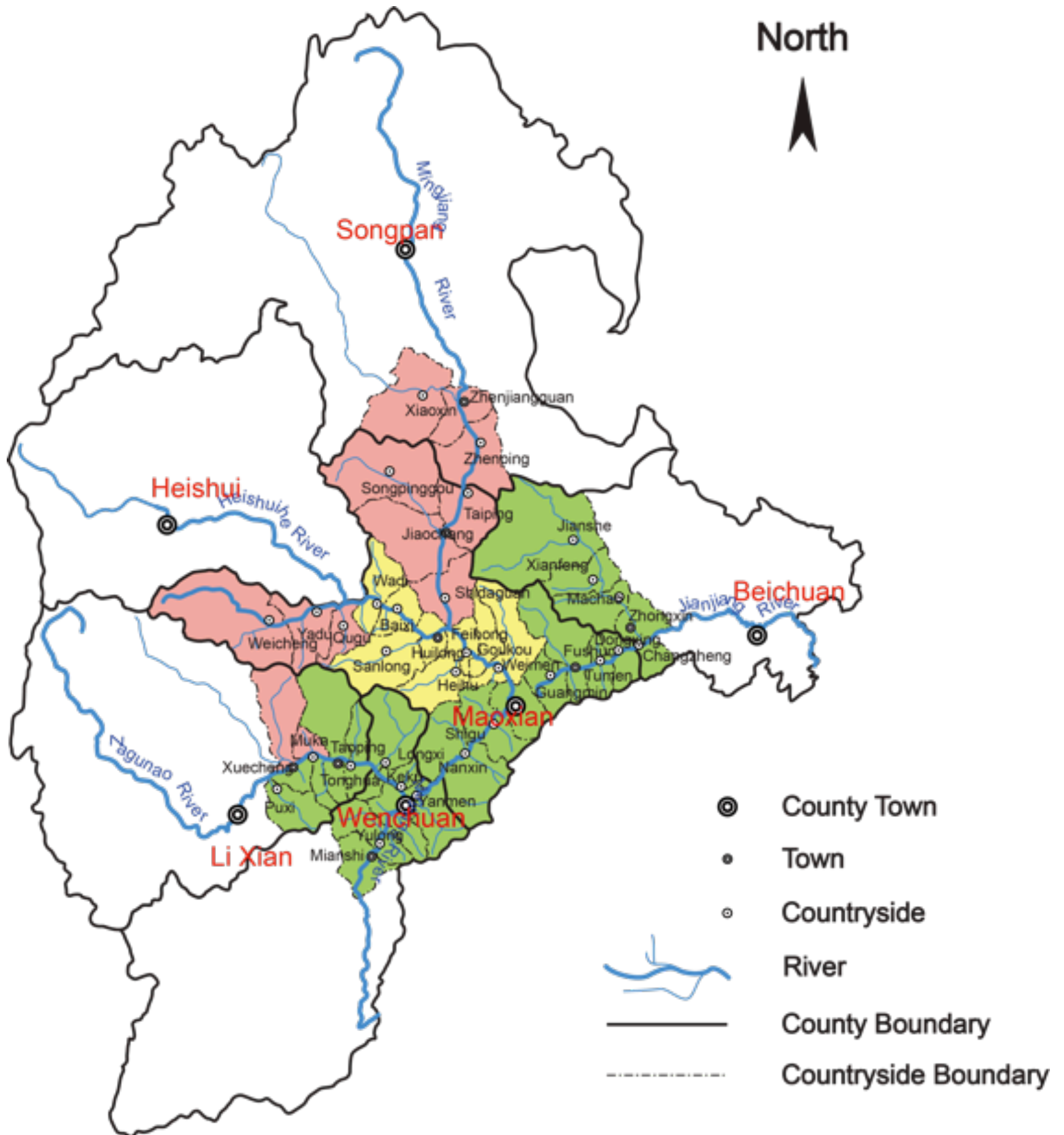


Figure 3 Distribution of Qiang people.

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The Historical and Social Resource of Qiang Ethnic Dress

There is a close link between the dispersed society of Qiang and the natural environment where the Qiang people live. The settlements of Qiang people are located in the upper reaches of the Minjiang River where there are a lot of high mountains and lofty hills. The area is divided into natural and relatively independent spaces by the mountains. The streams originate in the mountains along the deep valleys and merge into the Heishuihe River and Zagunao River and at last into the Minjiang River. The root-shaped water system is the ecological basis for the residents of Qiang. Most Qiang people live on the high mountains or in the deep valleys and build up series of independent natural villages.

In addition to the natural ecological environment, the historical development and social environment of the Qiang has also affected the formation and development of the cultural characteristics of Qiang ethnic dress. It can be dated back to the Qin and Han Dynasty (221 BC – AD 220) for the ancient central government set up counties at the upper reaches of Minjiang River where the Qiang people lived. From then on, there were systems of local administrative management. Up to the Tang Dynasty, with the rising and extending of the Tibetan power from the west to the east, the central government control on this domain from Han Chinese had been impacted and weakened. This situation continued until the Song Dynasty. From the Yuan Dynasty, the central government had begun to apply the Tusi (chieftain) administrative system in this area. The Tusi administrative system is a management method in which the local chieftain was employed as a local official and it was hereditary. This system was continued and improved in the Ming Dynasty and made the relationship between the central government and local authorities more intimate. During the Qing Dynasty, the Tusi system was replaced by a centrally-appointed nonhereditary official rule (named as “bureaucratization of native officers”). Even though this administrative reform strengthened the central regime of Qiang area, this policy did not completely eradicate the Tusi system. Until before the founding of People's Republic of China, the residual forces of Tusi still existed. The social organization and structure of Qiang area was still as a tribal community.

Due to the relative scarce resources of Qiang area, as well as the tribal organization and relatively independent and dispersive structure of Qiang society, the different group communities of Qiang (normally one or several villages distributed in different areas) always competed or even conflicted with each other in order to seize and occupy the limited economic and political resource (Ran, et al., 1984, pp. 246, 253). After a long period of dispute among various group communities, the Qiang tribe gradually formed a well-defined structure, with independent resources and the scope of ethnic identity and social political rights. As a visual marker of different group communities, Qiang ethnic dresses were always used to distinguish tribal symbols and represented to be colourful, distinctive and regional. The most typical example are headdresses worn by Qiang women living in Heihu. This particular headdress related to mourning is said to be a memorial for their historical hero. According to the tribal legend, there was a local leader leading the people of the tribal community to resist foreign aggression. He was killed in a battle. The women in the tribal community wore the white cloth to mourn him in perpetuity. Then it evolved gradually into a unique local custom and the special headdress was inherited as a distinctive symbol of Heihu. Even though the truth of the legend cannot be confirmed, at least it examples the cruelty of the conflict between the different Qiang tribes and the significance of ethnic dress in identification of ethnic groups.

From the view of cultural geography, Qiang area is to the east of Tibetan area and adjacent to the west of Han Chinese area. On the one hand, because of being at the edge of Chinese culture, the Qiang have been relatively disadvantaged in production technology, social politics and economic development compared with the Han Chinese. Under the control of the Han Chinese central government tightly or loosely throughout history, Qiang people always tended to affiliate with Han Chinese culture. Qiang traditional ethnic dresses were affected by Han Chinese costume in different periods. It is not difficult to find the traces of Han traditional costume in Qiang ethnic dresses. For instance, the female waistcoat popular in Puxi villages resembles the waistcoat worn by Han Chinese during the later period of Qing Dynasty. Some scholars have also found the ‘Chinesizing’ phenomenon of Qiang people while they undertook investigation in the Qiang area during 1930-40s in the period of the Republic of China. It was almost impossible to distinguish and identify who was Qiang just according to the features of Qiang clothing because there was almost no difference with Han Chinese (Graham, 1958, pp. 20-21). On the other hand, in the Sui and Tang Dynasties, the Tibetan power rose and extended to the east and the Qiang area was on the disputed border between the Han Chinese and the Tibetans. Parts of the Qiang area were occupied and

ruled by the Tibetans. The Qiang culture was thus impacted and influenced by Tibetan culture. As a result, Qiang ethnic dress absorbed some elements of Tibetan dress. Beginning in Yuan Dynasty to Ming and Qin Dynasty, the Tusi system was applied in the Qiang area. As some Tusi being Jiarong Tibetan, these tribes of the Qiang people were affected to some degree (Ran, et al., 1984, p. 223). They wore Tibetan dress to mark their tribal identity. The custom was preserved until today. The women living in Weicheng, Qugu, Yadu counties and the Jiuzi village still wear Jiarong Tibetan costumes as these Qiang areas have historically been ruled by Tibetan Tusi.

Above all, Qiang ethnicity represents a merging between Han Chinese and Tibetan costume through the interaction of the Qiang with Han Chinese and Tibet because of the internal relative dispersed and independent social structure. The Qiang ethnic dress is similar to Han Chinese in the southeast, to Tibetan in the northwest and with both influences in the centre of the Qiang area.

The Symbolizing of Qiang Ethnic Dress

The development of Qiang ethnic dress went into its new era along with the evolution of Chinese society, politics and culture during the early half of the 20th century. After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Chinese government began to carry out large-scale ethnic identification in order to promote and safeguard national unity. In 1953, the Qiang had been identified as an ethnic minority according to objective cultural characteristics (including Qiang ethnic dress) combined with historical records and the individual subjective intention (Huang and Shi, 1994, p. 148). The ethnic minority status of Qiang was officially established and the Qiang became one of the 54 ethnic minorities in modern China. At the same time, the nature of Qiang ethnic dress became fixed and has become the Qiang traditional costume, a historical memory and an aspect of ethnicity of the Qiang ethnic minority.

As criterion of ethnic identification and differentiation, ethnicity is relatively objective and stable. At the same time, it is also in evolution along with the development of society, economy and culture because of the need to pursue political rights and economic benefits. The evolution of modern Qiang ethnic dress is one of the evidences for this argument. The Chinese government has begun to implement the "ethnic equality" policy since 1949. It makes ethnic identity and ethnicity more and more important. In this context, the "ethnicization" is a significant development of Qiang ethnic dress in recent years, especially since the 1980s. The Qiang traditional dress becomes

more and more unique and distinctive while the Han Chinese traditional costume is disappearing. The specific performance in the traditional Qiang dress includes the feature of colour, decoration, texture and other elements. For example, the colour of the gown worn by Qiang women has now been extended to include the use of red, yellow, green and blue from black or dark blue in the old days. In some areas, the brocade has even been used to make gowns. It makes the gowns extremely splendid. And some large colourful embroidery patterns along the edges of opening, hem and cuffs have also been used instead of fretwork ornaments. Other examples are some kinds of headwear worn by some Qiang women. The veil popular in northwest cultural region is used to cover a woman's head through only a few layers of soft and folded scarf were used in the past. Now it incorporates stiffeners, creating a towering erect embroidered veil. For the turban worn by women living in Weimen county, its shape has become more and more regular and large. Not only that, the male clothing also has a lot of changes. For example, with the sheepskin waistcoat worn by men, the shoulder developed wing shaped ends with broad high tilt changing from a plain and dull style in the past. And the male turban has evolved into a kind of hat made of foam covered cloth outside to imitate the wrapped head shape. Some of these changes mean the Qiang traditional ethnic costumes are losing their original wearing function, and become instead the symbols of Qiang ethnicity.

Along with the recent development of Qiang society, politics, economy and culture, Qiang ethnic dress has gradually lost the practical function of daily life and the function of it as a mark for narrow ethnic distinctiveness and identification, and has become a kind of abstract cultural symbol. With the improvement of living conditions and living standards, Qiang people's lifestyle has also gradually changed. Qiang traditional ethnic dress has begun to gradually fade from the Qiang people's daily life, and appears more in some festive or ceremonial occasions, and its styles are becoming more vivid and exaggerated. The Qiang traditional ethnic dress will gradually become the external symbol of Qiang ethnic identity to the foreigner and within the community the tangible object carrying on individual psychological attributions and emotions to the ethnic group.

Table 1 Cultural Area of Qiang Ethnic Dress (continued)




Cultural Region \ Style		Qingpian	Longxi	Puxi
Southeast Area	Image			
	Costume Marker	Female: Full-body apron with satin stitch embroidery	Female: White turban, apron with full cross stitch embroidery	Man: Gown made of undyed hemp Female: Turban embroidered at the ends to sculpt tiger ear-like shape, apron with full cross stitch embroidery

Table 1 Cultural Area of Qiang Ethnic Dress (continued)







Cultural Region \ Style		Weimen	Sanlong	Heihu
Centre Area	Image			
	Costume Marker	Female: Turban made of white cloth wrapped as a compass-like shape, apron with chain stitch embroidery at the bottoms	Female: Pink coloured gown, Turban embroidered at the ends	Female: Mourning headwear

Table 1 Cultural Area of Qiang Ethnic Dress (ended)

Style		Qugu	Diexi	Taiping
Cultural Region				
Northwest Area	Image			
	Costume Marker	Female: Veil, no apron	Female: Full-body apron with chain stitch embroidery	Male: Tibetan gown Female: Apron with full cross stitch embroidery

Conclusion

With the analysis of the culture characteristics of ethnic Qiang dress, it can be concluded that there is a close relationship between ethnic dress and the system of ethnic identification and differentiation. Based on the relative scarcity of natural resources, Qiang people have had to build up a system of ethnic identification and differentiation for dispersed and relatively independent ethnic groups, in order to facilitate the competition for limited life, social and political resources. Qiang ethnic dress is used to show their ethnic identity and ethnic boundaries. This situation promoted Qiang ethnic dress to become highly varied throughout its distribution.

In the geographical space, Qiang is located between Han Chinese and Tibetan. In the history, Qiang was often drawn into the Sino-Tibetan struggle and had to balance between these two powerful ethnic groups in different historical periods. On the psychological and emotional affiliation of Qiang people, it shows a transitional situation from tending to Han Chinese in the southeast to tending to Tibetan in the northwest of the Qiang area. In this context, Qiang people around various regions absorbed the cultural elements of Han Chinese and Ti-

betan in different degrees and created their own modern ethnic dress based on their traditional culture.

With the mutation of Chinese social and political structure in 1949, Han Chinese traditional costumes became rapidly modernised and globalised. The Qiang ethnic dress initially believed to be similar to the traditional clothing of Han Chinese appeared to be unique and exotic. In the process of ethnic identification carried on by Chinese government and after then, the Qiang traditional ethnicity became fixed and the Qiang's historical memory of traditional culture. The Qiang traditional ethnic dress becomes a cultural root and reference for its further development. In the modernising progress of Qiang society, Qiang ethnic dress has become more artificial, on one hand, become a kind of cultural tool to show the history and culture of Qiang for political purpose and economic benefit. On the other hand, Qiang ethnic dress needs to preserve the traditional culture and can be accepted by individuals as a tie of ethnic ascription. Otherwise gradually it will no longer be part of Qiang people's daily life and would become a symbol with no real life basis and would eventually disappear.

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Why does England not have a National Costume? Dress, Englishness and the Folk Dance Revival

Chloe Elizabeth Middleton-Metcalf, University of Roehampton: TECHNE

Abstract

Why does England not have a national costume? This essay answers the question by analysing the costumes of English folk dancers in the early twentieth century. By examining the clothing choice of two leaders of the early folk dance revival, this paper argues that compared to the romantic historicised costume selected by Mary Neal (1860-1944), the choice of modern clothing by Cecil Sharp (1859-1924) complemented wider patterns of English nationalism.

This paper explicates how the concept of Britishness affected attitudes towards the possibility of an overtly English folkloric identity and specifically the creation of explicitly rural, historicised, sartorial representations of Englishness. Instead of English folklore, British institutions from regulated sport to monarchy were endowed with notions of nationhood. This wider form of nationalism was an implicit motivating factor for Sharp's emphasis away from 'Merrie England' towards a modernist representation of folk dance. Sharp de-railed Neal's hitherto successful attempt to use romantic, historicised costumes for folk dance performance. In the process, Sharp prevented the establishment of a costume idiom which, given time, might have become accepted as English national dress.

Keywords: National, Costume, England, Folk, Dance

In 2014 a letter to *The Guardian* asks, tongue in cheek; 'England has no consistent national dress, other than John Bull costume, which is hardly worn. If we wanted to create one, what should it be?' (Cockayne 2014:15). Sir David Starkey in *England my England* reassures the reader that H.G.Wells 'once said that it was the glory of England to have no national dress'. He then eludes to a probably apocryphal attempt at national costume with a Van Dyke collar 'imagine the horror of it' he concludes (2005:15-17). This essay considers a road that was never taken, a national dress for England based on the clothing of the rural working poor of the early nineteenth century, by examining the costume choices of the two competing protagonists of the Edwardian folk dance revival: Cecil Sharp (1859-1924) and Mary Neal (1860-1944). This essay focuses on the costumes worn by folk dancers. Whilst not nec-

essarily equating to national costume, there is a recognised connection between sartorial and choreographic representations of nationality, especially in a folkloric context (Shay 2002). This can be seen in Wales with the presentation of folk dance in variations of national costume, kilt wearing in competitive Highland dancing in Scotland and, in Ireland, the use of Celtic dress in dance costumes to support the work of the nationalist Gaelic League (Cullinane 1996).

The link between English folk dance, particularly morris dance and national costume has been recognised at a popular level. Over footage of The Beaux of London City morris dancers at Paddington station the sardonic voice of Vivian Stanshall quips: 'I suppose this is our national costume. It's jolly anyway and jollity should be encouraged, perhaps given a grant' (One Man's Week, 1975). In the early twentieth century Sharp and Neal actively and successfully pushed for morris dancing to be recognised as the English national dance. This essay argues that Neal created costumes for her male and female (morris) dancers, which in their complexity and romantic nature had the potential to become national dress. However, Neal's influence was curtailed by Sharp who promoted a very different costume aesthetic, one that was arguably too modern to become national dress. I argue that Sharp's choice complemented the broader pattern of English nationalism – bureaucratic incorporation (Smith [1998]2003). That is the investment of Englishness in notions, institutions, projects and symbols such as: Britishness, monarchy, empire and sport.

This essay at no point attempts to argue that national costume represents an unbroken tradition of clothing in one particular country. Following contemporary critique of both nation and folklore it acknowledges the inherently constructed nature of the concept of national dress (Anderson 1991, Taylor 2002:213). However, this essay goes further than the authors of *The Englishness of English Dress* to contest the notion that it was early industrialisation which prevented England from having a national costume (Beward et.al 2002). This essay builds upon the analysis of the historical sociologist Antony Smith (1939-2016). Smith identifies two different types of nationalism stemming from two distinct approaches to nation building. Bureaucratic incorporation, which can be found in nations such as Britain and France and vernacular mobilisation which involves the conscious use of ethnic material ([1998]2003:193-194). Whilst such binaries rarely accurately represent the complex hybridity of national identity, Smith's analysis does provide a basic framework for interpreting English nationalism. This can be compared to the vernacular mobilisation model seen in England's geographic neighbours, which arguably led to a general 'Celticising' of all forms of British folk-art (Chapman 1992:117).

In 1905 Mary Neal, paid a visit to Cecil Sharp to gather some English songs and other musical material to use in a philanthropic organisation that she ran in London, mostly for young working-class seamstresses, called The Espérance Club. Overjoyed at the keen response ('They were perfectly intoxicated by the music'), Neal then proceeded to look for traditional dances which the club could learn (Neal in Karpeles 2008:69). Cecil Sharp facilitated a meeting between Neal and William Kimber (1872-1961) a traditional dancer from a morris team in Headington Quarry in Oxfordshire.

The Espérance Club's performers were popular. By 1910 they had visited, demonstrated or taught dances in every county in England but two, inspiring the formation of new groups who often copied their style (Neal 1910:2). Of the presentation of dances Neal wrote: 'the idea is a village festival on a village green at holiday time, of course no two people would be dressed alike' (1910:14). For the women she advocated a costume which referenced early nineteenth century rural, working-class dress: A tailored bodice, full skirt, apron, and

sunbonnet (Fig. 1). Neal is open about her creation of this costume: 'As there is no traditional dress for women morris dancers, I will describe that which has been made popular by the Espérance girls' (1910:14). The costumes of these young women, particularly the use of sun bonnets, would have been widely recognised in Edwardian society as a symbol of pre-industrial, rural England (Worth 1998&2002). Neal's choice reflects the sartorial sentimentality of her time. Examples of which can be found in the depictions of country life by photographer Henry Peach Robinson (1830-1901), the painter Helen Allingham (1848-1926), and the Kate Greenaway style smocked dresses available to buy in the 1880s from Liberty, the London department store (Buck 1983, Payne 2002, Marshall 1981).

Neal's costumes for the male dancers were based upon clothing worn by traditional teams. That is, teams of mostly working-class morris dancers from the South-Midlands (Chandler 2002). Regarding the clothes of traditional teams she notes sadly that their costumes had fallen 'on somewhat evil



Figure 1 'Shepherd's Aye' from the Esperance Morris Book Volume One 1910.

days' when compared to accounts of morris dancers from the seventeenth century (Kidson and Neal 1915:139). Neal shows a distinct inclination towards flamboyant costuming methods whilst keeping within the idiom of the traditional dancers with whom she knew and worked:

I think that for present day performance one must either adopt the least objectionable form of present-day holiday dress, which is usually white flannel, add as much colour as possible in ribbons and sash and leave it at that (ibid: 140).

Her men's costumes used the Bidford team from Warwickshire as a model (Fig.2) (ibid:14). Ironically the authenticity of the Bidford team was later questioned when it was realised that it was mostly the creation of pageant organiser and 'Professional Old English Revivalist' D'Arcy Ferris in 1886 (Judge 1984:448). Neal's male costumes were even more decorative than the Bidford morris. She writes:

But it may be taken for granted that the more colour that can be introduced into the dress the better, as in old days there was a rivalry amongst the women as to who could send her man out to dance the morris decked in the brightest colours (1911a:14).

In 1907 Punch published a cartoon which depicted The Esperance Club in full attire under the caption 'Merrie England Once More'. This cartoon acted as a catalyst in the souring of Sharp and Neal's relationship, underscoring Neal's successful, but somewhat romantic approach to dance and costume (Boyes 2010:81). There was increasing competition for who would head the folk-dance movement, an acrimonious dispute which was later largely simplified and symbolised to be between Sharp's 'technique' and Neal's 'spirit' (Judge 1989:545-546). The final nail in the coffin of Neal's ambition was Sharp's formation of the English Folk Dance Society in 1911 (Schofield 1986).

Sharp's costume choice deliberately moved away from



Figure 2 'Bean Setting' from the Esperance Morris Book Volume One 1910.

pre-existing stereotypes of rural dress towards a modern aesthetic. He deliberately aimed to make the dance contemporary and free from anachronism (Pakenham 2011:30, Judge 1989:551-559). The male costumes of the English Folk Dance Society's display team appear to have based on the simplest of traditional morris team costumes – that of Headington Quarry (Oxfordshire) but without the headwear (cricket caps). Theatrical designer Norman Wilkinson (1878-1971) was asked by Sharp to create male and female costumes for a 1912 production of *Folk Dances* at the Savoy Theatre. However: 'the men's white shirts and trousers he accepted as the right basis needing only some extra colour' (1975:141).

The costume of Sharp's male team consisted of: White shirt, white flannel trousers, baldrics (1), and bell pads, decorated with ribbons and strapped to the shins. Sharp's men did not wear hats of any sort and wore flannels, which were contemporary sporting attire. In general, Sharp's stripped back approach contrasts with the attitude of traditional morris dancers. Joseph Druce (1830-1917) recounted that the trousers worn by his team were: 'As white as curd made of Jane, fluffy, as white as doe skin trousers such as navys use, but thinner. What officers wear' (in Sharp MS). In comparison Sharp's

costume choice strays away from dandyism towards organised sport, which had the advantage of being both masculine and middle-class. 'The dress of the men' Douglas and Helen Kennedy later recalled 'was equally athletic being that of the cricket pitch and tennis court, the bells and crossed baldrics being the only traces of traditional practice' (Kennedy and Kennedy 1961:2). The women's costumes designed by Norman Wilkinson were of: 'a light blue material' which was 'made up into a high-waisted long-skirted dress, with the waist-band carrying [cherry] coloured ribbons and rosettes' (Fig. 3) (Kennedy 1975:141, Pakenham 2011:30&53). However, the main proportion of Sharp's female adherents did not wear the blue dresses designed for the handpicked demonstration team. For the majority, gym pinafores were seen as appropriate for public display as well as for practice (Thompson 2001:165).

The masculinised and modernist presentation of Sharp's dancers arguably created a representation of English folk which was more palatable to the intellectual elite, particularly the Board of Education, of which Sharp was made an inspector in 1909 (Gammon 2008). The move away from 'Merrie England' towards a subtler form of nationalism epitomises England's wider approach to overt patriotism. Briefly the situation could



Figure 3 Sharp's demonstration team. Visit to Bayonne, France in 1927. With permission from the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library.

(1) A baldric is made up of two pieces of thin fabric or ribbon placed on the shoulders of the wearer. These pieces cross at the centre front and centre back of the chest and are stitched together, or tucked into the waistband of the wearer.

be compared to its Celtic neighbours. In Ireland dance costume were used by the Gaelic League deliberately to represent Irishness in contrast to the hitherto dominant Anglo-culture (Cullinane 1998, Robb 1996). In Scotland the invention of national dress can be traced back to a wider display of cultural pageantry for the 1822 visit of George IV which was largely designed by novelist and poet Sir Walter Scott (Trevor-Roper 2010, Tuckett 2009, Chapman 1995). In Wales both the English tourist market and wider cultural patriotism, epitomised through competitive Eisteddfods, had considerable impact on the eventual creation of national dress (Lewis 1994, Stevens 2004).

By contrast England, arguably had no 'other' in which to define herself (Smith 1999:73). Indeed the concept of Britishness, nurtured since the early eighteenth century to stabilise the union with Scotland, continued to be influential in consciously sublimating a distinct English identity within a wider British one (Colley 1992, Aughey 2007). This is symbolically represented in the flag of choice for England, the Union Jack, formed from the emulsification of the cross of St George with the saltire of St Patrick and Cross of St Andrew. Sharp's folk costumes suited the generally subtle nature of English patriotism. Where the myths of the nation were not founded upon folklore but on institutions. The locus for national pride and identity lay in the concept of parliament, monarchy, democracy, Britain and empire (Easthope 1999, Doyle 1986, Smith 1999:72). Sharp's use of sports attire aligned with other symbolic identifications of middle-class Englishness particularly the public school, the cricket pitch and the concept of the Gentleman (Newman 1997).

Between 1905-1911 Neal created and promoted an elaborate costume for folk dance which could have become a form of English national dress. Rivalry and ambition for a less historical presentation of Englishness, resulted in the early curtailment of any such creation. Bonnets were replaced with sporting attire in a move which followed the wider trend of English nationalism towards institutionalisation and away from ethnic, historicised presentations of nationhood. Taking the case of clothing in the English folk dance revival, I have argued that England's lack of national costume should not be put down to early industrialisation. It is political and social climate which plays the decisive role in the success or otherwise of any type of national dress.

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Clothing and Its Cultural Significance

Doreen Cudjoe & Frank M. Kwadzie, Methodist University College, Ghana & University of Ghana, Accra City Campus.

Abstract

This paper examines costumes related to the Yam festival of the Asogli's in the Volta Region of Ghana. Records demonstrate that Ghana has over 50 ethnic groupings whose common values and institutions represent its collective national heritage. These ethnic groups have unique cultural traditions that project their distinct identity and pride of which clothing is part. Clothing has numerous functions including protecting the body from the weather, as a modest cover for the body or for adornment. Ghanaian traditional costumes are more than a mere outfit worn to cover the body. Its significance lies in a complex communication system that conveys gender, social or marital status as well as strengthening of societal values. Although costume has a relevant position in the celebration of the Asogli Yam festival, a study of literature on the subject revealed that it has been given minimal attention. This therefore necessitated the study into the various costumes bringing to bear its importance using interviews, Secondary data and participant observation. The paper reveals unique costumes that depict position, occupation, believes, mood and rank of chiefs and people on the different days and occasions during the celebration. This is done through a description of the various activities of the festival, thus contributing to the preservation and propagation of Ghanaian culture.

Key Words: Culture (1); Clothing (2); Ancestors (3); festival (4); Asogli State (5)

Introduction:

A society's culture is made up of its religious practices (rituals), economic activities (trading), agricultural activities (farming), and, social events (rites of passage, festivals). Culture as defined in The Cultural Policy of Ghana is "the totality of the way of life evolved by people through experience and reflection in the attempt to fashion a harmonious co-existence

with [their] environment" (2004:2). This definition clearly underscores the fact that a nation's culture is transferred to its people from generation to generation, in a bid to preserve their identity and values. Clothing is a strong representation of the culture of a people. Adorning oneself supports the individual in his life endeavours to speak as a unique individual and provides him a way of expressing, reinforcing, initiating or camouflaging mood. It can be used to indicate social roles, to establish social worth, as a symbol of economic status, as an emblem of political power or ideological inclination, as reflection of magico-religious condition, as reinforcement of believes, customs, and values (Roach & Eicher, 1979).

It is clear from Roach & Eicher's statement that clothing is a true mode of a person's identity. Costume undoubtedly serves as a powerful agent for the transmission of knowledge and values across ethnic, national and international boundaries. Gillette rightly noted that, "what a person wears, and how it is worn, says a great deal about that person and the society in which he or she lives" (1992:387).

Traditional Ghanaian societies have unique costumes which aid in identifying rank, status as well as the strengthening of societal values. A society's clothing is an informant of their cultural values, religious beliefs and the climatic conditions of their environment.

Horn reminds us that factors that contribute to "diversity of costume include the effects of the natural environment, the supply of raw materials, the technical skills of the people, moral standards and religious values as well as aesthetic and political ideas" (1968:33). Accordingly, clothing choice of a particular group of people is a conscious choice taking into consideration their natural habitat. In Ghana, Costumes are key cultural agents during festivals. Societies that celebrate festivals regard such activities as the carriers of culture ensuring that their ultimate values and traditions are attained. According to Mbiti, festivals and rituals fulfil African life and for that matter, without them life would be uninteresting; rituals and festivals are religious ways of implementing the values and beliefs of society (1991: 143). This means that the essence of life in Africa lies with rituals and festivals. Festivals provide the avenue for exposing and transmitting tradition. It also provides an avenue for a boost in the clothing industry as everyone dresses in their best costume to make a beautiful statement of their tradition. They promote tourism; as visitors come to see the artistic development and rich culture of the people. Some of the things give dual advantage, thus income for the society and a boost of the African's image abroad (Gadzekpo, 1978). These points out the economic benefits that societies stand to derive from the celebration of festivals.

(1) The General way of life of a people.

(2) Anything worn on the body. Dress, accessories, headdress, body paintings etc.

(3) The spirit of dead people who led good lives in the society.

(4) Religious or joyous occasions and other celebrations.

(5) An amalgamation of towns and villages (Ho, Kpenoe, Takla and Akoepe)

Among the many festivals in Ghana is the Asogli State Yam festival celebrated by the Asogli's in the Volta Region of Ghana.

The Asogli State Yam Festival

The Asogli state comprises of four traditional set-ups: Akoefe, Ho, Kpenoe and Takla. They are descendants of Togbe Kakla, the man who masterminded the escape of ewes from Notsie in the 17th century.

Oral tradition has it that a hunter on his expedition discovered a crop during famine, instead of eating the entire tuber; he preserved the head in his room. When he later went back for it, to his dismay the tuber had germinated. He was advised to put it back into the soil which later grew bigger. That was how yam cultivation in Asogli State started. Farming remains the major economic activity of the people in addition to bead making, *kete* (6) weaving and blacksmithing.

The Asoglis celebrate the Yam Festival annually to acknowledge the providence of God for his guidance and abundant provision.

The festival is characterised by various activities and costume plays a significant role.

First among the events is *Asafo* (7) procession day. This ritual is performed in honour of brave ancestors and chiefs. The warriors are usually clad in dark red or reddish brown smock called *adewu* and togas with a hat of the same colour. Mama Agblatsu III explains that the colour of the *adewu* (hunting smock) is described as blood stained due to the nature of hunting and war. It is most suitable because it withstands the dirt from activities such as hunting and farming. It also disguises them in the forest and their farms during hunting expedition. Today, many people including women join in the procession clad in red, black or brown attire but in the past, it was restricted to only red (See Fig. 1).

After the procession is a memorial, held in memory of their great ancestors, chiefs, and community leaders. Participants drape cloth in black or brown colours. This colour traditionally represents decay, agony, despair and solemnity and associated with mourning. Costume for this day is restricted to draperies to represent an enactment of the clothing style of the past (See Fig. 2).

Chiefs, citizens and elders embark on a pilgrimage to Notsie (8) to participate in *Agbogboza* (9). They dress in their best *kete* accessorised in *dzonu* (10). *Dzonu* are the major accessories used by the Asoglis. They are worn around the neck, arm, wrist, waist and ankles for beautification and or protection against evil spirits. According to Mama Agblatsu III, "Beads represent our wealth that is why beads are the major component of our accessories". (See Fig. 3).

Upon arrival from Notsie, a day known as *Vovlowofe nkeke* (11) is set to serve the ancestors and departed compatriots. Togbe Kotoku XI explained that it is a very important day reserved for feeding the departed. The traditional priest and chiefs of all divisions participate in this ceremony. The priest wears white cloth tied around the waist with a bum at his loin area. His chest is bare and he is barefoot. This drapery style symbolizes his readiness as an intercessor for his people. The colour white connotes purity. The chiefs wear white cloth draped on the left shoulder. The cloth is draped over the left shoulder leaving the right bare because it is perceived that most people are right handed (See Fig. 4).

The next ritual is *Nubabla* (Cleansing ritual). *Nubabla* is performed to cleanse the Asogli state. All chiefs go through the cleansing rituals performed by traditional priests using powerful herbs. The clothing for this ritual is the *Adewu*. This outfit is sacred and restricted to the brave and *asafo* men only. The *Adewu* is representative of bravery and determination.

Teyuyru (hailing of the new yam) is celebrated the next day. It signals the official lifting of the ban on entry of the new yam into homes. The new yam is brought into all divisions of Asogli State and hailed amidst merry-making. There is no specific way of dressing, participants; mostly youth wears colourful casual outfits of various kinds.

Dzawuwu (Feasting of the new yam) begins the following day. According to Mama Agblatsu III the ancestors are served first the new yam to show reverence before living being tastes it as custom demands. The chiefs receive their first bite of *Bake-bake* (12) as part of their customary rite. The rest of the mashed yam is eaten as a communal meal, a symbol of unity and reconciliation of families, and the entire community. They wear cloth with white as the dominant colour signifying peace, victory and freedom from hunger (See Fig. 5).

(8) Present day Togo.

(9) Yam festival, celebrated in Togo.

(10) Traditional ewe beads.

(11) All souls day.

(12) Mashed boiled yam. Sometimes mixed with palm oil.

(6) A long strip woven fabric stitched together made by ewes.

(7) Warriors



Figure 1 Asafo men wearing adewu.
(Sourced from Asogli State Library)



Figure 2 Members of Asogli state in black and brown cloth at a memorial service.
(Sourced from Asogli State Library)



Figure 3 Paramount chief of Asogli state (middle) with chiefs of Togo during *Agbogboza*.
(Sourced from Asogli State Library)



Figure 4 A traditional priest, attendants and divisional chief performing *vovlowofenkeke* ritual.
(Sourced from Asogli State Library)



Figure 5 Queen mother in *Kaba* and *slit* with headgear tasting *Bakebake*.
(Sourced from Asogli State Library)



Figure 6 Paramount Chief and members of Asogli dressed in various sport outfits.
(Sourced from Asogli State Library)

Sporting activities are included in the celebrations. The citizens engage in a tennis tournament, health walk and soccer tournaments. They also perform bicycle racing competition and climb the *Galenku* or *Adaklu* Mountains. The clothing for these activities comprises various sports attire as shown in Fig. 6.

The festival includes a beauty pageant. Contestants are quizzed on the culture of the Asogli state. They exhibit their talent by re-enacting the cultural activities of the state. During their talent exhibition, they wear appropriate traditional costumes for the various performances. They wear modern dresses made with African fabric for the crowning ceremony (See Fig. 7).

A night is set for cultural display. The history, traditional structure, and customs of the community are explained amidst musical performances. Female dancers dress in multi-coloured loincloth, one tied around the waist to knee length to ease movement of the legs and the second tied across the bust freeing the shoulder and hands for easy usage.

Next is the celebration of farmers. A contest is held to identify the biggest yams harvested and awards are given to deserving farmers. This is done to appreciate their hard work and encourage others to venture into farming, which will benefit the community and the nation as a whole. They dress in various clothing including trousers, smock, loincloths draped over skirts, blouse and T-shirt (See Fig. 8).

On the eve of the grand durbar, chiefs and elders sit in state dressed in colourful traditional clothes to receive homage from chiefs, religious leaders, citizens and well-wishers from other parts of the country and world at large (Fig. 9).

The final and most flamboyant aspect of the festival is a durbar which marks the climax of the celebrations. All divisions of Asogli state converge and walk in a royal procession to the durbar grounds. The *Agbogbomefia* (paramount chief) must be distinct in dress during the grand durbar. It is unacceptable for any other chief to wear the same or similar cloth. In view of this, some elders are appointed to ensure the avoidance of any clash. The colours of his costume are usually golden yellow signifying royal status and wealth, green signifying newness and red which denote the power and his energetic attitude towards development. He wears brown/black male *fia-forkpa* (13) to represent his modest nature and colourful beads. He has clean shaved hair as required of a traditional leader in the Asogli state (See Fig. 11). Young maidens participate in the royal procession carrying pans filled with clothing

items to display the wealth of the state. Some of these items include cloth, myrrh, beads, sandals etc. According to Mama Agblatsu III, in the past, maidens wear beads around the waist with a piece of cloth draped through the beads in between their legs to cover their pubic area leaving their upper body and thighs bare, known as *agormegodui*. Later, it changed to a loincloth draped around the waist leaving their bust bare. Presently, the cloth has been extended to cover the bust. Some also dress in the *agormegodui* wearing shorts and strapless top to cover the pubic area and the breast respectively. These changes are associated with modesty and modernity. They wear beads on their wrist, waist, knees, and ankle and around the neck. They make linear and circular body designs with myrrh. The designs are made on the uncovered parts of their body except their faces. The spherical body designs represent the presence of God in the state while the linear ones signify the maiden's uprightness. Various kinds of *kete*, beads, hairstyle, and body designs are on display during the durbar by both chiefs and people. This is the time to display the different aspects of the rich clothing of the Asogli's. The display of rich and beautiful costumes adds colour to the celebration. Various cultural groups and masquerades also display interesting costumes, mostly identical which denotes their various affiliations as well as inform the people on the need to be united. (See Figs. 10, 11).

Traditional costumes are relevant in every aspect of human activity indeed. It is a core representation of a people's identity as well as contributes to economic development. Having examined these, it is apt to state that costumes are a way of implementing the cultural values and beliefs of every society.

The paper has specifically described the Asogli Yam Festival and the relevance of costume for both aesthetic and as a tool for the preservation and propagation of Ghanaian culture.

Researchers must explore this subject for festivals and the life cycle ceremonies of other ethnic groups in Ghana to add to the few works on Ghanaian traditional costume.

(13) Native royal sandals.



Figure 7 Contestants of beauty pageant.
(Sourced from Asogli State Library)



Figure 8 Farmers of Asogli state in various attire.
(Sourced from Asogli State Library)



Figure 9 Paramount chief and queen mother cheering guest performers on.
(Sourced from Asogli State Library)



Figure 10 Maidens wearing *agomedodui*.
(Sourced from Asogli State Library)



Figure 11 Paramount Chief in colourful kente.
(Sourced from Asogli State Library)

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Elite clothing in the Principality of Transylvania in the 17th century

Éva Deák, Institute of Ethnology, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Abstract

The paper examines the Transylvanian elites' representation of their individual as well as group identity through clothing in the 17th century. The male attire displayed Oriental characteristics, while the women's garments were closer to the Western fashion. Colorfulness was one of the most important characteristics of the appearance of the elites. Sources include the preserved articles of clothing and textiles from the period. Visual sources comprise the second group of sources: paintings, engravings, printed and hand-painted costume books. Contemporary descriptions, historical works, memoirs, letters and diaries as well as normative sources: sumptuary laws of the country, individual cities and counties, and the pricing regulations passed by the Transylvanian Diets were also studied.

Keywords: Principality of Transylvania; elite clothing; textiles; sumptuary laws; 17th century

The proverb, "clothes make the man" or "*Kleider machen Leute*," also exists in Hungarian, word for word: "*ruha teszi az embert*." One cannot overestimate the importance of clothing today as well as in the course of history. It plays a crucial role in fashioning the image of individuals as well as of different social groups.

Clothing discloses information about its wearer at a glance and just as it does today, it played a complex role during the late Middle Ages and the Early Modern period. It is a manifestation of social and cultural values formulated according to social conventions and practices; clothes would vary according to occasion, indicate gender, marital status, and age, as well as being from a certain ethnic group or region. One of the most important tasks of clothing is to indicate the social status of the person who wears it.

In the Early Modern Era the social status of the elites were expressed in a variety of subtle ways, including title, lifestyle, the knowledge and use of etiquette. By these means the privileged groups tried to differentiate themselves from the lower classes and maintain their internal stratification at the same time. A primary indicator of a person's social status was her or

his appearance and surroundings, of which clothes constituted the most striking element. Clothing embodied an entire series of status signals: the quality of the clothes, the richness of ornamentation and jewelry, diversity of the accessories, which all helped to identify the social rank of the wearer. Fashion expressed not only actual status or occupation of people but also their ambitions.

The paper examines social representation in terms of clothing. Sources include the preserved articles of clothing and textiles from the period. Visual sources comprise the second group of sources: paintings, engravings, printed and hand-painted costume books. Contemporary descriptions, historical works, memoirs, letters and diaries as well as normative sources: sumptuary laws of the country, individual cities and counties, and the pricing regulations passed by the Transylvanian Diets (ed. Szilágyi 1875-1898) were also studied.

The Principality of Transylvania in the Early Modern Period

Transylvania was part of the Hungarian Kingdom during the Middle Ages. The Ottoman expansion in the region resulted in a tripartite division of the Hungarian Kingdom, whereby Transylvania became a vassal of the Ottoman Empire. The new country was rather independent in its home affairs, however, it was subordinate to the Ottoman Empire in foreign affairs and had to pay an annual fee to Constantinople from the second half of the sixteenth century until the end of the seventeenth century.

The 17th century is one of the most eventful times in the history of the Principality of Transylvania. The reign of Prince Gabriel Bethlen (1613-1629) and his follower George Rákóczy I (1630-1648) is remembered as the "Golden Age of the Principality". It was a prosperous period in terms of economy and culture, and during the Thirty Years' War the international significance of the country also increased. After the unsuccessful Polish military expedition of Prince George Rákóczy II (1648-1660), the country's territory became considerably smaller and at the same time its annual tribute increased. The reign of the new prince, Michael Apafi (1661-1690) brought a period of relative tranquility. At the end of the century the liberation of Hungary from the Ottoman occupation resulted in the gradual integration of the Principality of Transylvania into the Habsburg Empire.

The major ethnic groups living in Transylvania were Hungarians, Romanians and Germans. The nobility was mostly Hungarian. The resident citizens with full civil liberties in the towns were mainly Germans. These Saxon towns were important

economic factors in the Principality, and controlled the Eastern trade routes. The *natio Saxonica* enjoyed wide political, administrative and jurisdictional autonomy as well. There were four accepted religions (Catholicism, Lutheranism, Calvinism and Unitarianism) in the country; the Greek Orthodox religion was not officially acknowledged but tolerated (Makkai 1946).

Elite Clothing

Appearance was an important aspect of the Magyar identity. The male attire displayed Oriental characteristics, most similar to the clothing of Polish noblemen in the region (Gervers 1982; Gáborján 1986; Turnau 1991). Its main elements were a short undercoat (*dolmány*) worn over a shirt and a long overcoat (*mente*) that reached to the knees. The coats were decorated with large buttons of gold or silver and precious stones; the Magyar-style cap featured an aigrette, a tuft of long upright plumes. Tight-fitting hose accompanied this outfit, worn with slippers or more often with boots.

While Oriental characteristics were of primary importance in men's clothing, women's fashions were closer to their Western models, dominated primarily by the Italian and Spanish styles, later by the French fashion. Noble women wore a tight bodice with a shirt and a bell-shaped skirt with an apron. Their footwear was mainly shoes, sometimes boots or slippers.

The same textiles and decorations were used for clothing both sexes. Silk fabrics were popular among the elite, especially taffeta, atlas, velvet and damask. The finest broadcloths were *gránát* and scarlet. Embroideries with silk yarn and gold or silver threads decorated both women's and men's attire. Patterns were influenced both by Western European, predominantly by Italian Renaissance designs, and by Oriental, mainly Turkish motifs.

The quality of materials and richness of decoration in the garments depended primarily upon the rank of the wearer and the importance of the occasion. Costly fur was another indicator of status, and used most often as lining. Lynx was among the most expensive animal skins, and various species of marten were also highly valued. Noblemen and soldiers occasionally wore whole animal skins thrown loosely over one shoulder: most frequently wolf hide. Aristocrats preferred to wear leopard or lynx.

Colorfulness was one of the most important characteristics of the appearance of the elites in Early Modern Hungary and Transylvania. As Edward Brown, a seventeenth-century English traveler, recorded in his travelogue: "The Hungarians de-

light most in Colours, wearing blew, yellow, green and purple Cloth; and it is rare to see any one in black; the Priests themselves being habited in long Purple Garments." (Brown 1673:22)

Because of their scarcity and price, the best dyes that produced the most beautiful and colorfast results were used for luxury materials. From the late fourteenth century on, however, black became the fashion characteristic for many parts of Western Europe. Apparent examples include the court of Philip the Good of Burgundy (1419-1467), or the Early Modern Spanish court (Braudel 1988:317-318; Huizinga 1996:326; Pastoureau 2008:100-105; Piponnier & Mane 1997:73). At the same time both Constantinople and Italy were important centers of textile production, famous for their polychromatic textiles. Transylvania's strong economic ties with these centers in all probability affected the extensive use of colors in the attires, primarily that of the elites.

The acquisition of clothes

The purchase of clothing required significant financial efforts even in case of the elites. Articles related to apparel composed a significant part of their owner's wealth. Although cut and style was considered important in terms of prestige and status, the financial value of clothes was foremost determined by the value of the materials used. Clothes were enlisted as the bride's dowry, included in the Last Will and Testament, and often carefully registered. Articles of clothing or materials were used as a means of payment (part of a wage, or when paying a huge sum e. g. ransom) or pawn. Cloths were regularly given as presents at diplomatic occasions.

Buying fashionable articles of clothing, fine materials or fur was not merely a question of money for the Transylvanian elites. The cloths typically used by the upper classes, velvet, damask, satin, taffeta were not produced in the country, these were imported primarily from northern Italy, most often from Venice, as well as from Constantinople. English broadcloth played an especially important role; other broadcloths were imported from Nuremberg, Silesia and Moravia. The most popular medium quality broadcloth was the fajlandis, a material imported from England or made in the quality of the English broadcloth.

Another popular type of woolen fabrics was the kersey (Endrei 1974:91; Pach 1994a, 1994b; Székely 1968). Its more moderate price made it available for non-elite groups as well. The textiles produced in Transylvania were inferior to the above materials in quality and belonged to the lower price

categories. The best broadcloth, produced in Saxon cities e. g. Braşov (Brassó, Kronstadt) and Sibiu (Nagyszeben, Hermannstadt), cost considerably less than the medium quality English broadcloths, and about the same amount as the worst Silesian kersey. Anabaptists from Moravia, settled in the country with collective privileges, produced the highest quality textiles: even the lesser quality of it cost more than the best broadcloth made in the Transylvanian Saxon cities. However, when comparing their prices to the imported textiles, the best broadcloth produced by the Anabaptists was only at about the price level of the best English kersey.

Luxury items were often difficult to obtain. Although they were imported by local merchants, the demand was usually greater than the supply. “There are often goods, which are brought from a great distance, one can hardly obtain them and would hardly divest oneself of it, and cannot obtain it here even for triple the price,” stated the Transylvanian Diet in 1625 and punished severely those artisans who wasted such rare materials because of incompetence (ed. Szilágyi 1875-1898:vol.8:300).

One of the price regulations, the ordinance of 1625, not yet regulated the prices for the luxury textiles, only mentioned future plans for it. However, it already forbade merchants to give up their profession because of the pricing regulations under penalty of losing their property. This prohibition was repeated in 1626. Moreover, the Prince ordered merchants to bring “not only goods for the lower orders” but also the finest materials in great quantity, as well as other goods and materials “much in demand among us,” meaning primarily the nobility. To make this order more specific, a long list of the preferred materials was attached: cloth of gold and silver, velvet, damask, atlas, taffeta and other silk materials, scarlet, *gránát*, *fajlandis*, say, *czimmazin* (broadcloth of good quality) *boroszlói* (broadcloth of Wrocław), *fodorigler* (broadcloth of Jihlava). The merchants were ordered to bring the best of these materials and “other different goods and materials” needed in the country (ed. Szilágyi 1875-1898:vol.8:349-353,379-387,435-441).

Aristocrats could afford to send trustworthy servants into large commercial centers (Venice, Constantinople, Vienna or Krakow) for making purchases on a larger scale. Members of the smaller nobility often had to wait for the possibility to ask a trustworthy acquaintance to buy the desired materials or articles of clothing. Another obvious possibility was to buy these items personally while at a diet, a military campaign or during a diplomatic mission. Since male members of the family more often traveled inside and outside Transylvania than women, they had more opportunity for shopping. While many present-

day husbands would get confused in a situation when they have to buy materials for their families' clothes, men of Early Modern Transylvania handled these situations naturally and with ease.

Men were expected to participate in the process of dressmaking and taking care of clothes to a great extent. 17th century historian Mihály Cserei commented on Prince Michael Apafi (1661-1690) pejoratively, that although he was a man he “did not have any inclination to take care of horses, weapons, costumes and economics.” (Cserei 1983:221)

Sumptuary laws in Early Modern Transylvania

Preachers and intellectual thinkers of the Early Modern era criticized luxury and fashion changes on the basis of moral considerations. A pejorative tone was typical of both Catholic and Protestant preachers – similar to ancient philosophers and medieval ecclesiastics (Klaniczay 1982). Sumptuary laws, however, regulated the outward expression of social differences with the possibility of applying sanctions. Accurate stipulations were enacted in Western Europe from the Middle Ages (Hunt 1996:24-27; Kovesy Killerby 2002; Bulst 1988; Hampel-Kallbrunner 1962:7-10; Ribeiro 1986); in the Principality of Transylvania clothing ordinances became more numerous only in the Early Modern period. Statutes were issued primarily by counties and the free cities; a few resolutions of the Transylvanian Diets are known from the seventeenth century. The language of county ordinances was Latin or Hungarian; that of the cities was German or Hungarian.

With the help of more detailed laws one can follow the hierarchical order of a community. The most detailed ordinances were issued by Saxon cities in eighteenth century Transylvania. The *Kleyder und Policey Ordnung* of Sibiu from 1752 classified residents into nine classes. It specified suggested and prohibited materials, garments and colors in the fullest details and concentrated on elements that were allowed. Rules were the shortest for top class, the supreme officials: moderation was left to their own “prudence and decision” (“*eigenen Prudence und Ueberlegung*”); the longest and most detailed instructions relate to the lowest classes (eds. Kolosvári & Óvári 1885:616-626).

Characteristic elements of the Saxon ladies wear repeatedly appear in the regulations and the costume pictures as well. The typical Saxon wrinkled boots and the pleated black cape (*Krause Mantel*) is also often displayed on the pictures. The distinctive black velvet hat (*Samtborten*) was primarily worn



Figure 1 A Captain of the Hungarians, end of the 17th - beginning of the 18th century. The true and exact Dresses and Fashion of all the Nations in Transylvania.



Figure 2 Clausenberg, 1617 (Braun & Hogenberg 1617).



Figure 3 Habit of a Hungarian (Brown 1673).



Figure 4 Young Saxon Man and Woman, end of the 17th - beginning of the 18th century.
Habitus variarum Nationum in Regno Transylvaniae occurrentium utriusq. sexus humani patent.

by girls. Simple and expensive versions of the chest ornament are often depicted.

A resolution of the Transylvanian diet, although rectified certain abuses, reinforced the ban on wearing boots and trousers of colorful broadcloths by peasants in 1666. The article is especially interesting because it contains rare data relating to the enforcement of the law:

We see a lot of damage of the poor also from the fact that at some places the officers did not publish [the law] legitimately among the poor, that they must not wear boots and gowns made of colored broadcloths, but the poor were significantly fined; therefore We ordered, with Your Excellency's consensus, that in those places where the article was not published by officials or by notes in each village, being not enough if they announced it in cities, those who suffered damages for wearing boots and painted broadcloth trousers should be compensated in all places within a fortnight from the end of this diet.

At the end the same law also contained a rather long list of exceptions: Saxon peasants were exempt and allowed to wear broadcloth garments, pants, hats and boots, especially those living in the Saxon territories or in Máramaros county. Personal servants and *libertinus* of the nobility were also allowed to wear those items (ed. Szilágyi 1875-1898:vol.14:183-184).

Conclusions

People were expected to dress according to their social standing. Dressing above one's social position was not only morally condemned but also regulated in sumptuary laws. Pictorial sources such as costume books are visual representations of the expected social differences.

Obtaining luxury items was not trivial even for members of the elites in Early Modern Transylvania. Men were also expected to be able to purchase materials for the clothing of their family and household, then order and supervise the process of dress-making. In addition to their high worth in social prestige, the financial value of fine clothes and jewels was a significant factor. They were bequeathed, pawned when in need, occasionally even used as means of payment.

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PERFORMING BODIES

Conceal, Reveal: Tattoos and the Dressed Body

Dr Natalie C. McCreesh, Senior Lecturer, Sheffield Hallam University

Abstract

Tattooing, though a permanent modification of the body is subject to fashion trends in the same way as less permanent methods of self-expression such as fashionable clothing. Yet both are used in combination as means of forming personal identity. When we dress our bodies we are choosing a version of ourselves to present. We may choose to present ourselves in alternative ways with regards to the different situations we may find ourselves in throughout that day. For work, socialising, sport, we may wear different garments due to practicalities of use. There will however always be a choice and some control over our outwards appearance. This study intends to evaluate how tattooed women and men choose to display their personal identities through dress and appearance. The early stages of this research involves a series of interviews and wardrobe analyses with tattooed individuals to discuss self identity, aspects of the self, the public / private body, continuing identities and identity constraints with regards to clothing and appearance. Though tattoos are permanent their meaning can be transient, changing and evolving with personal identity. Along with garments in the wardrobe tattoos can have periods of favour where they are chosen to be on display, in contrast they can also be seen as something of regret and chosen to be concealed. Over long periods of time and even on a daily basis, individuals have an evolving relationship with their tattooed bodies and the clothing they use to reveal and conceal it. In this short paper I will focus on the theme of protection, in the form of concealing clothes, healing tattooed skin and conceptual art.

Keywords: *Tattoos, Women, Fashion, Body, Gaze, Feminism*

Introduction

As a somewhat heavily tattooed woman I never imagined the impact becoming tattooed would have on my life at the start of my tattoo journey. I certainly didn't envision my research topic being led by tattoos, nor my first thought each morning as I dressed being led by the perception of my tattoos from others. Having now lived more years of my life with tattoos than without, the difference in having a tattoo (one or two small tattoos) and being tattooed (large scale tattoos covering a full limb or

area) became apparent in levels of what the general public finds acceptable for a woman. General conversations with friends who had similar experiences to my own led me to formally research the topic both academically and creatively. Initially this research set out to look at the relationship both tattooed men and women have with their clothes. Through a series of interviews however gender differences became apparent and the research presented here focuses on tattooed women. Interviews were carried out face to face, via email and through social media and are currently on going. The numbers allocated to each interviewee here are for clarity and continuity in this paper.

Clothes as Concealment

Many of the female interviewees admitted to being touched on their tattoos without permission and receiving verbal harassment.

'I am at the bar, its so busy and crowded, my group of friends are all sitting down saving our table. I am surrounded by a group of men having to pretend I can't hear their lurid conversations. I am wearing a strapless dress, the very top of the tattoo on my back is visible, its only the outline at this stage. Suddenly I feel a hand try to pull down the back of my dress, I scream, turn around and one of the men is yelling at me to calm down, he only wanted to see how far my tattoo went – he's nudging his mates, go on love show the lads. Fortunately another man, I don't know if he is with them or not, drags him off and tells him to stop acting like an idiot. I go and sit in the toilets and have a bit of a cry, touch up my make up, before returning to the girls, I don't mention what happened' (Interviewee 1).

Choosing to display yourself as a woman in a non-stereotypical way is considered aberrant.

'Modified women often received the criticism like "You're such a pretty girl, why would you do that to yourself?" [Tattooed women] are deviant in their gender presentation, and this transgression justifies public comment' (Beverly Yuen Thompson, 2015:167).

Being viewed as deviant creates two negative viewpoints for heavily tattooed women, they are demonised but they are also fetishized. Swami and Furnham in their 2007 study state *'While men see tattooed women as less attractive, they also see them as more promiscuous'*. This narrative was continued

by Guéguen (2013) *'when men saw the woman with the tattoo, they judged her as less athletic, less motivated, less honest, less generous, less religious, less intelligent and less artistic'*.

In a response to these stereotypical views and unwelcome actions many heavily tattooed women find their clothing often fulfils another purpose - that of protective barrier from the male gaze (Mulvey, 1975).

'Countless nights out this has happened to me to the point I've got super uncomfortable/don't feel safe and have to leave. Guys have grabbed my arm pulling me back to see what's there and [pulling the] back of my top to see back tattoos. I don't mind if someone wants to see a certain tattoo but [they should] ask I don't appreciate being pulled about like a showpiece' (Interviewee 2).

'My summer outfit consists of a tank top, shorts or a skirt. And my boyfriend. If my boyfriend can't be with me, I will sweat it out in jeans and a jacket to avoid any comments like . "Hey tatty, can I get your number?"' (Thirsk, 2016).

'I always find summer an uncomfortable time of year...I'm less able to cover up and blend into the crowd with my usual 'security blanket' of winter coats, jeans and scarves...if I'm going anywhere on my own, for my own comfort and self-awareness, I will always have to wear a cardigan, jacket or jumper to cover it [her tattoo], no matter what the temperature' (Thirsk, 2016).

Here identity through dress is altered and shaped by the male gaze. The tattoos are concealed in situations the women feel they will draw unwanted attention from men. Having to wear garments that cover the arms and legs such as trousers, jeans and jumpers – even when these garments are unsuitable for the climate causing physical discomfort. As well as being uncomfortable the women are constructing alternative identities, one identity protected from the male gaze and another identity when unprotected from the male gaze.

'It is a means of constituting the identity of the gazer by distinguishing her or him from that which is gazed at. At the same time, the gaze makes us aware that we may be looked at, so that this awareness becomes part of identity itself' (Mirzoeff, 2009:171).

Protection from the male gaze may come from concealing the tattooed body with garments or by surrounding oneself with protective people, such as a group of female friends (so long as they outnumber the men) or another male. The group of friends offers to obstruct or reflect the male gaze by numbers, the more females gazing back at the male fragments the power of the gaze. Whilst the presence of another male signals to the gazing male that the tattooed female in his presence is under his protection (this could also read ownership).

'I never even considered that I wouldn't be seen as feminine because of my tattoos. In fact I find I can dress more feminine now I have tattoos. I recently bought a white floaty dress, something I would have felt a little silly, too pretty, wearing before but I think it looks cool now. I actually got harassed, very aggressively by two men last time I wore that dress because clearly wearing a short dress and having tattoos means I'm a slut right. It was upsetting, and I'm never sure what they feel they will achieve by yelling at me in the street but what they don't realise is that my tattoos are my armour' (Interviewee 3).

The notion that tattoos could act as armour or protective talismans is even more potent considering the negative connotations they have been given under the male gaze. When discussing the motivations for the tattoos of some of the participants many of the themes centred around self-healing:

'I also have a noose on the same arm, which I got as a motivational love tattoo, I was in a terrible place last year and tried to take my own life and suffered badly with my depression so having this tattoo and being able to see it reminds me to love myself, cause I broke the noose and was brave enough to carry on' (Interviewee 4).

'I think tattoos have affected both the way I dress, and the way I feel about my body. I've been struggling with anxiety and eating disorders for over 10 years, which made me really aware and self-conscious about the way I look. Since my [tattoo] sleeves have started coming together, I feel more confident to show them, and very rarely wear [clothing with] sleeves, and I've now got an impressive collection of black vests' (Interviewee 5).

Protection

Thus tattoos can be the source of perceived protection as 'armour' but also the very thing that the wearer needs to conceal to protect them from the negative gaze of others. The tattoo

itself must also go through a stage of protection whilst it is healing to avoid infection and damage.

Many of the interviewees discussed having their tattoos touched without permission, perhaps the images on the skin look tactile, for those without tattoos they may wonder how they feel, how they change the skin. For the most part tattooed skin once healed feels the same as any other part of skin. When the tattoo is fresh then it is technically an open wound and is treated as such to keep it clean and promote healing. Directly after the tattoo has been made it is wiped, cream applied and it is covered in cling-film wrapping. The wrapping prevents dirt or clothing fibres adhering to the tattoo. The wrapping is generally left on for a few hours (time differs depending on artist preference). Once the wrapping is removed the tattoo feels sticky as it is covered in ink, plasma, blood and possibly cream or lotion if this was used. After the first wash the ink, plasma and blood is washed away leaving a sore wound that again may or may not be covered with a protective layer of cream. Some choose to rewrap their tattoo in cling-film to keep it protect whilst sleeping or prevent clothing rubbing. Without cream the tattoo will scab and become hard, with cream it will 'wet heal' remaining moist to the touch. As the tattoo heals the scab layer will flake away leaving a shiny, dry layer of skin, over the next few weeks the tattoo will fully heal and return to feeling the same as the rest of the skin. In some cases there is some scarring to the skin and the tattoo can remain raised. Tattooed skin can also be more sensitive to heat and raise if hot or irritated in some way.

'I'd just had part of my [tattoo] sleeve done the day before, I was wearing a vest and my arm was coated in a thick layer of Bepanthen [cream sold for nappy rash but also used for tattoos], this girl in the shop reaches out to touch it! Can you believe that, it looks gross, it's a seeping wound, why would you want to touch that?' (Interviewee 6).

Here the interviewee had protected her tattoo with cream, but also felt the need to protect it from another person.

The theme of protection was explored further through creative practice in a series of art installations. The first *'Reveal, Conceal'* is a collection of portraits featuring some of the interview participants both male and female. The tattoo portraits were taken somewhat anonymously with the focus being on the garment draped to reveal the tattoo/s. Warm, ochre coloured garments in browns, beige and dusky pink were chosen to form a uniform colour pallet which still allowed for individuality to each subject. The photographs show tattooed women in strong poses, choosing to reveal their tattoos (Reveal, Con-

ceal' 2016, Costume & Fashion in context & practice, Huddersfield University in collaboration with photographer Mark Howe).

A series of words and phrases gathered through the interviews were tattooed onto the petals of roses (*'Les Fleurs des Mots'*, unpublished, 2017). The words were taken from the interviews and were chosen as they are commonly used in a negative way towards tattooed women. The tattoos on the petals were created by hand using a tattoo needle and ink. Where the petals were undamaged the ink held well in the petal membrane, however in areas of damage the ink leaked out blurring the letter. The roses were photographed in two stages, first when the flowers were fresh and fully in bloom directly after tattooing, secondly when they had shrivelled and died. As the blooms shrivelled the words were mostly obliterated by decay, in others the words remain clear to read however the stark contrast of the words that existed on the fresh blooms is no longer so, now the power of the words are lost and enveloped in the beautifully wilted petals. The rose photos when dispersed with the portraits evoke a new reading - the words forced onto the petals as they are forced onto tattooed women. The combined images will be displayed as part of the *'Cabinets of Costume'* exhibition as part of CCD2017, Birmingham City University, 2017.

The protection theme in tattoos and clothing was considered further with a series titled *'Wunderkammer Jackets'*. Photographs of tattoos and their meanings were collected throughout 2016 by student contributors. Many of the meanings attached to the tattoos related to love, romantic love, heart-break, divorce, death and so on. Tattoos with such personal meanings to the wearer, yet tattoos which had been brandished in a negative way by others:

'I used to be in a very bad place mentally, when my friend realised how bad she gave me a small black band on my wrist to remind me that there will always be people around me who care. I wore it every day until it broke, so I thought it would be easier to get something a little more permanent to remind me of that whenever I was feeling down' (Interviewee 7).

'The butterfly represent the butterfly project and it's in honour of my friend who sadly committed suicide' (Interviewee 8).

'On a holiday to Zante with my girlfriend, we saw a tattoo shop. We had both talked about them before but hadn't [got any]. [The word] 'You' referred to her, but I also liked what the word represented and its importance 'I love you' etc. It was an expensive

three letters on my hip (so my parents wouldn't know) but still carries a lot of importance to me and our relationship' (Interviewee 9).

'I had this tattoo done in memory of my first born who only lived 16 days. He was really poorly when he was born as we had found out he had a hole in his heart towards end of pregnancy. Unfortunately, he went into distress during labour and developed a diaphragmatic hernia too. This put loads of extra pressure on his heart and he also went into renal failure. He was rushed to Sheffield Children's Hospital at just a few hours old then a few days later to Nottingham City Hospital for surgery. He had surgery at 15 days but kept losing blood and his heart finally gave up the next day. The tattoo was done in his memory and both me and my then husband had it done together. The picture came from a little story book in the relative's room with baby poems in it. I had it redone two years ago to celebrate what would have been his 21st birthday' (Interviewee 10).

Protection theory (Flügel 1930) considers clothing as protection from physical danger; today such items could be steel-toecap boots and crash helmets. The leather biker jacket was chosen for the 'Wunderkammer Jackets' due to its role in both protective clothing and popular fashion. A leather biker jacket could be worn to protect a motorcycle rider it could also be worn to protect the wearer from unwelcome gaze. Wearing a jacket would however conceal the tattoos of the wearer. To challenge this concept the meanings of a selection of interviewee tattoos were heat-branded onto the leather; the tattoos themselves could be concealed and protected yet their meaning was still exposed. Juxtaposed with the text were Polaroid photographs taken from the 'Les Fleurs des Mots' series scrawled across these in marker were the offensive words and phrases also used to tattoo the flowers. The jacket protects the tattooed wearer whilst reflecting back the negative gaze. The first 'Wunderkammer Jacket' will also be displayed as part of the 'Cabinets of Costume' exhibition.

This research is still on going; changing and evolving much like the perception and interpretation of tattoos.

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Fatima: Performing – Becoming – Failure

Jakub Ceglaz, Birmingham City University

Abstract

In this paper, I would like to present my practice-led research that allowed me to develop a performance works under the name of Fatima and its relationship to the concept of “failure”. As an artist and a PhD researcher I am working on renegotiating the value of “subjugated knowledges” (Foucault, 1975) in relation to the emergence of Queer Theory. Fatima is a series of performances that engages with the queer becoming in relation to the dress/drag being inhabited by the appearance of the normative male body and the practices of making which never arrive at the supposed “finitude”. Those works sensually challenge the normative attitude and tendencies by delivering a body that unsettles the formative systems of production of art, identity and knowledge. I will be discussing these processes (wearing/becoming/failing) by engaging with the palimpsestic and palimpsestuous materiality through the emergence of a “logic of sense” (Deleuze, 1990), which allows for the layered matter (palimpsest) to become a temporal and spatial, non-hierarchical dimension.

Keywords: *queer; failure; performance; palimpsest*

Few years ago, as I was visiting my friend in Belgium, I decided to rummage through her wardrobe. This act was nothing more than an enactment of curiosity on boredom that overtook my body while waiting for the meeting regarding a publishing project that I was involved in. As I opened her closet, I noticed a dark grey, crinkled dress – it stood up from the rest of the clothing as it was rolled and casually thrown in the back corner of the top shelf. Later, I found out that it was a gift from her mother, and she didn't know what to do with it. This dress wasn't in any shape and had nothing special going for it. It didn't have any detail, or wasn't particularly a 'sublime' or 'beautiful' object, it was – for lack of other words – just weird. It is in this weirdness that I found a form of attraction and almost irresistible urge to put it on.

Thinking about this situation now, with all the baggage of the practicing of *Fatima*, I started to be intrigued by the way that this form of irresistible attraction, or a form of attunement, became a type of subversion of the concepts of art, identity and knowledge.

Contemporary Queer Theory, as presented in the recent special issue of *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* (2015), starts to question its own field parameters. The main problem, that is raised in this edition, arises in an understanding that Queer Theory appears to be placed as an opposition to what one could consider as normal or supposed. What we are left is a suspended question: *How can queer theory proceed without primary allegiance to antinormativity?*

This question is especially important in dealing with, and performing as *Fatima*. After all, *Fatima* might be just a form of an embodiment of 'a-man-in-a-dress' - dressed-up body that just doesn't do much in relation to producing a meaning. But, it is through the to focus on those 'irresistible attraction' and a certain form of a 'failure' that the context of *Fatima* becomes a matter of queer difference. It is through the contemporary discourses on feminism and Queer Theory that one starts to realise what is at stake here, and what *Fatima* might be all about.

Failure

According to Sarah Ahmed 'failure' in relation to the field of queer studies and phenomenology refers to a moment of disorientation (2006:158). She sees the subjugated identities (race, class, gender, sexuality) as those that find themselves at a constant disorientation – standing on a groundless ground – becoming in/through the crisis.

Fatima, a deconstructed identity at failure, constantly attempts at the normative; she sings, dances, plays the trumpet and of course wears a dress. In all those actions, this performative figure destabilises presumption of priori identity, and creates an environment of disorientation, or a spatial configuration of a queer failure. Things in this space do not 'hold together', they do not make sense for the normative gaze. But it is in those failures that *Fatima* is a vital experiment of queer practice. This performance unsettles, maybe even shatters, one's sense of confidence and one's belief that 'to be' one should arrive at finitude – at the end, at the goal.

Instead what we are left with is a reoriented body that does not require a conclusion or does not arrive at the finish line of selfhood. This form of embodiments makes sense only in the constancy of failure and, at the same time, is a product of a crisis that emerges from disorientation. *Fatima* makes the 'here', the ordinary and mundane, into a deviant distortion, and similarly to the subjugated queer body (in a socio-political sense) creates a liveable disorientation that refuses to arrive at the normative. It is because of that, that *Fatima* is a performance, which takes its form from not caring for the finitude

– instead it embraces, what Judith Halberstam would refer to as: “fantastic failures (of) absurd, the silly, and hopelessly goofy” (2011:187).

Becoming

Post-humanist theory that emerges from the writings of Donna Haraway and Karen Barad allows us to think in such structures of disorientating failures. It displaces human/and human-centric understanding of the world, and instead focuses on multiplications of the interactions that body has with nature/technology. Donna Haraway refers to this phenomenon by using the metaphor of the Cyborg (Haraway, 1990; Barad, 2007).

Through this ‘cyborgian’ attitude *Fatima*, instead of being a representation of an identity, becomes a figure of Cyborg. The black dress that *Fatima* wears is nothing else than a technology of becoming and by the interaction with it the body questions the stability of gender and performs an analytic enquiry into the type of interaction with the *techne* – here understood as a knowledge that emerges from the praxis of art/design and craft. (Richards, 2014).

It produces a *desire-machine* that reconfigures the excess as the version of the practice. (Deleuze, 2004). To ‘wear’ then, allows us to renegotiate the queer practices of cross-dressing as those, which are an *agential realism of intra-active phenomena* of disorientation (Barad, 2009). The “intra-action”, as presented by Barad, refers to the way that the matter becomes a matter. Instead of focusing on the prior actions that lead to a certain reaction, Barad’s view of the world, recognises the motion and the phenomena. *Fatima*, becomes a distortion because it exists only in the ‘wearing’, and through the failure to become a stable identity, it becomes a motor of meaning production. *Fatima* emerges from “subjugated knowledges (Foucault, 1975)” and becomes a *subjugated techne* – a practice knowledge of becoming and never achieving finitude of being. This spontaneous transformation changes the sensory experience of space and time by diffracting notion of identity and the self. *Fatima* starts to present with itself another form of practice/knowing that can produce a queer meaning without necessity of binary, transgressive queer. It ‘knows’ because it ‘practices’ always *at the* “edge of illegibility (Haver, 1990)”. The dress/techne changes the body by re-fracturing it even further, all the way to persist in a state of intra-action/phenomena. All the way, to the point in which one cannot ‘go back’ to self.

Therefore, *Fatima* is a diffraction. It is a twist on the supposed causality and that with its failure bends spatiotemporal normativity. The dress becomes a wearable mechanism of knowing and producing the difference. It re-inscribes the body and meaning until one arrives at the queer possibility of a body of queer-iosity.

Performing

Palimpsest is a palaeographic phenomenon that is composed out of layered inscriptions. Throughout history it changed from a form of a matter to a way of describing a layered surfaces and spaces. Because of it, palimpsest provokes methodologies that deal directly with the notions of unveiling and exposing each layer as to find the original meaning and/or truth (Dillon, 2004). We can say that palimpsest describes a way of speaking about a matter of art, by directing attention onto the supposed ‘hidden meaning’, by which it creates hierarchical system of knowing.

Luce Irigaray argues that position, by engaging the feminist discourses with the sensual understanding of exposing oneself. She writes “First do I take off what I have on top, then underneath? Or the other way around? Do I go from outside to inside? Or vice versa?” “...” And because she has always been secretive, she has always hidden everything, and because in this hiding place no one has discovered her, she thinks it will suffice simply to turn everything inside out. To expose herself in her nakedness so that she can be looked at, touched, taken, by someone, by him.” (Irigaray, 1985:78). In her text, she challenges the layered understanding of the matter by inhabiting a body that, similarly to *Fatima*, is a subject to the normative ways of thinking/gazing. The problem raised by both Irigaray and *Fatima* is exactly with understanding that to make sense and produce a meaning, one must move from hidden to exposed position. *Fatima*’s ‘failures’ allow for the body to practice-knowledge that moves beyond palimpsestic methodologies of unveiling. Instead it focuses on the way that the cyborgian performance becomes a phenomenon itself. This offers further understanding of the cyborgian relation – not just as a transformative wearing, but also as ‘wearing’ as ‘caring’, as a form of friendship developed in and through this performance. The dress and the body inhabit dimensionality of care, one becomes res-possible (able to respond) to another. Even supposed shock of exposure of the nude male body, doesn’t produce a sense of transgression. Instead it allows for the deepening of friendship and of care, and of responsibility. As Foucault writes: “I see myself there where I am not (...) I am over there, there where I am not, a sort of

shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself there where I am absent.” (Foucault, 1984:12). The relationship, similarly to the way that Foucault describes reflection, creates a state of multiplicity and plurality in which entangled elements make sense only in the intra-action. In a case of *Fatima*, this intra-action is in the wearing of a dress.

Production of such plurality doesn't allow us to reduce Fatima back to its priori identity, rather it creates a queer enactment, a new law of the space and time, that deals with inhabiting – as making – as thinking. This enactment on meaning becomes a challenge to the palimpsestic layers by making a muddled matter of care and maybe even a type of friendship.

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Wearing Jewellery, Making Meaning: Jewellery at the Boundary of the Self

Sian Hindle, Birmingham City University

Abstract

This paper considers jewellery's role in the constitution of embodied identity. Like clothes, jewellery is worn at the boundary of the body (Astfalck, 2005, Warwick and Cavallaro, 1998); yet, stripped of clothes' function of concealing or protecting, its signifiatory function is foregrounded (den Besten, 2011), and exploring this is the aim of my project. The capacity of jewellery and adornments to carry meaning means they operate as a semiotic system or language which here serves as a surface between discourse and materiality, words and things. I am interested in unearthing the complex ways in which identity is negotiated at the margins of the body, in particular the ways in which self and other are reflected back at each other and – indeed – infused together. Women over 30 are asked to try on and respond to a range of adornments, and their responses are documented using a combination of creative methods and interviews. Drawing is used both as a means of data collection, and as a tool for analysing and reflecting on the insights gleaned.

Resistance to normative, hegemonic meanings can be found in the participants' responses to range of jewellery, notably the art jewellery that provides an opportunity to push against the constrained version of embodiment that the women experience in their daily lives. Analysis reveals what the jewellery means to the women, but also how meaning issues from this surface, at the boundary of the body itself.

Key words: jewellery; embodied identity; drawing

Baerveldt and Veostermans' (1998) concept of the body as a selfing device is a two-fold one in which the individual engages both with the experience of self and creates an identity or outward expression of that self. Both clothing and adornments are involved in this process and allow individuals to cultivate a particular expression of self to project outwards. The location of clothes and adornments at the body boundary, however, brings an element of ambiguity to the already two-fold project of the self, a point that has been highlighted by a number of theorists (Bancroft, 2011, Boulton and Jerrard, 2000, Cavallaro and Warwick, 1998, Entwistle, 2001). The functional nature of clothing means it is complex and overdeter-

mined – it provides warmth and protection; it both covers and conceals, maintaining modesty and highlight those elements that we want to emphasise – and this means that (to some degree) the selection, use and wear of clothing is influenced by something beyond conscious control (Boulton and Jerrard, 2000). Jewellery, on the other hand, is not primarily functional in the same way of keeping us warm and covered, and its signifiatory role tends to be foregrounded more strongly.

Jewellery carries a range of ideas around status, religious belief and social role, and through use and wear these themes are articulated across the entire spectrum from conformity to social norms and mores to their critique and challenge. Traditional precious jewellery often marks the 'spectacle of the everyday' (den Besten, 2011, p.12), asserting status, relationships, remembrance using symbols, such as the wedding ring, that are familiar to us in the West. Fine jewellery, made by hand and with precious materials, is highly conservative, often foregrounding the gems themselves in abstract designs or using figurative forms derived from the familiar motifs of flowers and animals; as Dormer and Turner (1994) note, the familiar frequently lapses into cliché. At the other end of the spectrum, contemporary or art jewellery often challenges and critiques social norms and expectations (Skinner, 2013, den Besten, 2011), including those around the idea of jewellery itself. Since the 1960s, contemporary jewellery has been challenging definitions of jewellery: it is often self-reflexive (Skinner, 2013), engaged in social/political critique (Astfalck, 2005b) and in dialogue with other creative fields (fine art, fashion, performance, dance) (Broadhead, 2005); and in doing so it seeks to extend the vocabulary of meanings that jewellery can communicate (Cheung, 2006).

This paper is concerned with the mechanics by which jewellery communicates, how it delivers its challenging/conforming payload, and what it can contribute to the constitution of the self through its location at the body's boundary. I'm interested in how the inward/outward facing nature our embodied selfing device, adorned with jewellery, contributes to our construction of self. This forms part of my broader doctoral research, which seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Does body ornamentation enable the wearer to articulate aspects of their self or identity?
2. How does body ornamentation operate at the level of body boundary?
3. Does body ornamentation play a role in the constitution of embodied identity?

This is a practice-led project which draws on a combination of interviews and creative methods to gather data about women's responses to jewellery; participants are asked to reflect on their experiences of wearing their own jewellery, before being asked to draw (fig.1) and direct photographs in response to a range of pieces of contemporary or art jewellery. Drawing is then also used as a means to process and analyse the data (fig.2), allowing me to draw insights about jewellery's role in the constitution of embodied identity. Let me begin, however, with some thoughts on the semiotics of traditional-precious and contemporary-art jewellery.

For the wearer, much traditional-precious jewellery is indexical, because it is very often gifted and, hence, points to the giver of the gift each time it is worn (Habermas, 2011). The reciprocity of the gift serves, then, as a feedback loop that foregrounds the interdependency of giver and receiver. The giver of the jewellery is implied in the performance of identity that is engaged through its wear, even if regular wear means

that awareness of the jewellery takes place at the level of habit; it may be that the wearer is more aware when the piece is left unworn, for some reason, and – indeed – several participants spoke of feeling naked without a piece of jewellery that they wore daily. Incorporated within the wearer's body boundary, it becomes part of the self we feel ourselves to be. For the viewer, gifted jewellery – an engagement ring, for instance – may more likely operate on the level of symbol (Habermas, 2011); while there is all kinds of mythology about a vein in the ring finger connecting to the heart, there is little to substantiate this, and the connection between signifier and signified is – to all extents and purposes – arbitrary. Much contemporary jewellery, on the other hand, is iconic. There is often an element of visual play, evoking sometimes quite unexpected forms, and this prompts all sorts of visual associations and connections; a slippage of signifiers occurs, as one sense leads onto another, in a sometimes subversive chain of meaning (Astfalck, 2005a). It appeals to the eye, and this is no accident, as this is a form of adornment that is perhaps more



Figure 1 Participant drawing – Jude wearing Pond's 'Helix Rule'



Figure 2 Researcher drawing – analysis of workshop session.

outward looking than that which is gifted in more traditional ways. It is, however, too simplistic to regard this as a shift to the visual in which materiality is abandoned; what I'm interested here is the interaction of the materiality and meaning, in order to explore the point at which stuff becomes meaningful. This involves considering the highly contingent nature of matter and meaning (Moore, 2007, Nancy, 2008), key to exploring jewellery as both signifying practice and as 'situated bodily practice' (Entwistle, 2001, p.34).

Barrett and Bolt (2013) consider post-structuralism's tendency to reduce meaning to discourse and language, and explore the degree to which signification draws on materiality for its function. Within the social sciences, humanities and particularly the arts there has been an explosion of research which serves as a backlash against the dominance of post-structuralist theory, challenging the 'mute' or 'irrational' nature of matter (Barrett and Bolt, 2013, p.5). When applied to the body, these ideas clearly align closely with feminist theory, which has long argued for an understanding of cognition that draws on embodied processes in a more holistic way than is currently recognised (Wilson, 1998, Shildrick, 1997, Young, 1990).

Of course, psychoanalysis acknowledges that the sense of the self as a spatially bounded totality – cut off from the materiality of its environment – is a fiction, albeit a useful one (Butler, 1993). We imagine that we are surrounded by empty space, as this allows us to indulge our sense that we have clearly defined edges, and – particularly in the West – autonomy and independence. This fiction has been critiqued by thinkers from many disciplines, who argue that our sense of who we are is born out of our interactions with others (Baumeister, 1999) and in dialogue with the objects that form our various worlds (Moore, 2007, Miller, 2010). In paring back the notional 'absence' of language from the 'presence' of the body, we arrive at a dynamic surface that separates matter from discourse, but which is constantly in tension. The degree of tension tells us something about both our bodily limits and the forces acting upon them, and about our systems of signification more generally. It is from this tension, I argue, that meaning is generated.

Two examples serve to illustrate the tension between meaning and matter. While we are all, I suspect, familiar with the idea that jewellery tells stories, sometimes it seems that the weight of the stories is too much for the jewellery, and this payload pushes them beyond use. Exemplifying the overdetermined nature of jewellery is a bangle given to interviewee, Miranda, by her nearly blind mother (fig.3). Miranda noted that it was an out-of-character selection by her mother,

unusual in that it reflected her tastes rather than her mother's rather dated preference for more fussy adornments. However, it was the fact that her mother died very shortly after giving her daughter the bangle that meant that her uncharacteristically well selected gift was imbued with perhaps greater meaning than it could bear and, as a consequence, it was no longer worn. The dynamic tension between matter and meaning broke down under the weight of this force, and it was placed beyond use, kept in storage instead, as Miranda was fearful of it being damaged through wear.



Figure 3 Miranda's 'retired' bangle, given to her by her mother.

Another participant, Mel, spoke of wearing a pendant during a motorcycle tour of South America with her husband (fig.4). Fearful of losing her precious wedding jewellery, Mel had left her rings at home for the trip, but wore instead a skull pendant that had, for her, resonances of her love of heavy metal music and her home city of Birmingham. Just as with Miranda's bangle, it became loaded with significance; in the absence of other adornments to convey meaning through semiotic exchange, the weight of the trip fell onto this single precious adornment. However, in this instance, rather than retiring the object from use, Mel pushed back and asserted the material basis upon from which its meaning stemmed. Observing that a flattened surface was present at the back of the silver skull, Mel interpreted this as a consequence of abrasion on the skull from her leather biker's jacket, a result of the constant shifting of her weight from one side of her motorcycle to the other. To me, with my knowledge of silver as a craft material, it seems

most unlikely that this appeared over such a short time frame (two to three months) over even the most challenging terrain. Nevertheless, it is significant that, for Mel, the memories, associations and feelings associated with her travels became inscribed into the metal form of the pendant itself, capturing something of this momentous expedition on the metal's surface.



Figure 4 Mel's 'live' jewellery – a pendant worn on her motorcycle roadtrip around South America.

Both Miranda's bangle and Mel's pendant are examples of the over-determination of meaning, where the adornments are unable to operate as signs with any degree of fluency because the weight of meaning upon them is too great. The unexpected death of Miranda's mother meant that the bangle is required, not exactly to stand in for her, but to be a tangible reminder of her at a time when her absence is too much to bear. It continues, it must be noted, to serve as a memento of her mother, a material connection with her, but it performs this role from the storage box in which it is now kept; it is picked up and handled periodically when Miranda encounters it when looking through her jewellery collection, but it is essentially 'retired' as damaging it through use would be devastating for Miranda. Mel's pendant is similarly expected to carry the weight of a singular event, but here the wearer celebrates the (largely imaginary) impression the journey has made on the piece; like a palimpsest, layers of meaning are laid down on the surface of the pendant.

The above two examples are from interviews with participants, who were invited to discuss pieces of their own 'live' and 'retired' jewellery (items that are worn regularly, and those that are no longer worn); inevitably, perhaps, the ensuing dis-

cussions located the participants within their familial/social networks, and explored – at times – matters of great emotional weight. Another strand of the research involved participants engaging creatively with a range of contemporary or art jewellery, generating drawings and photographs that document their experience of wearing some very unfamiliar jewellery items (fig.5). In these workshops, the finite nature of the session invoked – in contrast – laughter and play, often triggered by the provisional nature of the identities the participants explored. One such participant, Sally, decided to respond creatively to a brooch, made from dried, compressed beef and entitled 'Doggy Dodger' by Colley (2015). Engaging in a kind of performative identity play, Sally toyed with eating the brooch and she eventually directed me taking a photograph of her without the brooch, but instead with a mouthful of food, as if she had succumbed to temptation and eaten it (fig.6). Sally played for laughs – despite her visceral urge to bite the brooch, she drew laughter from herself and the other women when she said, 'But I'm a vegetarian!' (Sally) – and it was her humour that allowed the transgressive nature of the ideas raised to be dealt with safely. The discussion the four women at the workshop engaged in probed the boundary that separates (edible) animal flesh from (non-edible) human flesh, and held a mirror up to the excess of flesh that is encountered during pregnancy and adolescence. The (imagined) consumption rendered the brooch absent, but the performance created a playful space where the women's embodied experiences could be explored, shared and – ultimately – celebrated.



Figure 5 Workshop participants using drawing to record embodied responses to wearing selected pieces of art jewellery.



Figure 6 Photograph directed by Sally, as if having eaten Colley's 'Doggy Dodger' brooch.

A final example, again from an interview about 'live' and 'retired' jewellery, again highlights how divesting oneself of the stuff of jewellery can open up a space for the self to be re-imagined or re-configured. Deborah, recognising that she had too many possessions, planned to consign several bags of jewellery to charity shops, only to find one bag returned to her as her mother and sister were unable to accept that she had no further need for it. On one level, the jewellery lacked meaning for Deborah; unable to dynamically generate meaning, it became inert matter and was experienced as an obstacle rather than a repository of memory and emotion. Deborah's mother and sister clearly felt differently; indeed, close family often feel entitled to a degree of control over immediate family members, perhaps especially parents over their offspring. This is born out of a sense of knowing who these individual are, and of failing to accept, perhaps, that they may have changed because of their life experiences. I suspect that the inalienable quality the jewellery had for Deborah's mother and sister was because it had become imbued with

the very identity of Deborah, and giving it away was akin to giving away part of herself. Deborah felt differently because she felt she had changed as a person – through her travels, and her experiences – and the jewellery of which she was divesting herself did not reflect the person she was now. In the interview, she described pulling back and reasserting new boundaries, presumably to more accurately reflect her self concept. Eschewing the bag of jewellery sees Deborah seizing control of an aspect of her self and identity, and asserting that she, rather than her mother or sister, has the right to make these decisions.

These are just a selection of instances in which the dynamic that serves as a boundary between matter and discourse is played out. At the extremes, matter is over-determined and overlaid with so much meaning that it becomes unwearable; or, stripped of meaning it becomes empty and void, and as matter it becomes surplus and redundant. Maintaining the tension requires a series of creative acts that is what might be described as curatorial in focus: the matter that structures the boundary of embodied identity is interpreted, framed and synthesised so as to explore both what this means for oneself, and what it might be made to mean to others. Maintaining this curatorial project – the experiencing and creating of BaerVELDT and Veostermans' (1998) selfing device – at once involves nurturing a dynamic, responsive surface in which matter and discourse can co-exist, contingent upon each other. Jewellery is on the frontline of this process, an element of the social skin through which we articulate and constitute ourselves, and this paper (and the broader doctoral research project) touches on some of the ways in which this is played out.

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About the Editors



Anne Boultonwood is Reader in the Psychology of Fashion for the School of Fashion and Textiles at Birmingham City University. Her primary research focus is the role of fashion and clothing in the construction and maintenance of self, and their social and psychological impact. She has extended her early work on body boundary to address its broader implications for self and body awareness, including cultural and gender differences, social interaction, and notions of control.



Sian Hindle has a background in English Studies, with a Master of Research exploring Modernist literature and theories of the self. She is the lead academic for contextual studies at the School of Jewellery, Birmingham City University. Sian's research explores the role that jewellery plays in symbolically marking the boundary of the body, allowing us to tell ourselves and others who we are and how we want to be treated.

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