The Journal of Dress History
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Portrait of Empress Josephine as Queen of Italy, Andrea Appiani, 1807, Oil on Canvas, 98.5 x 74.5 cm, Chateau de Malmaison, Rueil-Malmaison, France, M.M.2003.2.1 © Wikimedia Commons.

The Journal of Dress History

Volume 7, Issue 2, Summer 2023

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Editor's Letter

As the editorial team finalize this issue, I am on my summer break in Tbilisi. Inevitably, it is raining. Travel, especially overseas, often provides occasion for me to reflect upon on and to critique the extent to which there exist similarities and nuances in the appearance and dress of different global communities and cultures. On this trip, I was struck most by the uniforms of the people in my hotel, which seemed to appropriate the dress of twentieth-century European waiters, maids and bellboys, as they are conventionally imagined in Hollywood films. Neat, professional and pleasant to observe, the clothing jarred with the hotel's very contemporary architecture, which featured rough concrete walls and exposed overhead cables and pipes. It was a curious sight.

The sartorial travels in this Issue start, tangentially, with a reflection on uniforms, in Pat Poppy's article about seventeenth-century aprons. In articles by Kristina af Klinteberg, Katarina Nina Simončič and Therese Holmgren we travel from England to France, Crotia and Sweden. I would like to extend my thanks to our article authors, and to Doris Domoszlai-Lantner and Liam Revell, who have recently joined the editorial team.

Travel that you can participate in directly is facilitated by our review of five international dress and fashion exhibitions. If figurative adventures have a stronger appeal, our book reviews section might be a priority. Recognizing that we want to feature books that will be of most interest to our membership, we are keen to know what about the tomes that have become your trusted companions and old favourites: What are your must-haves books? What titles can you not do without? Which of your books would you recommend to fellow members? Shelley Tobin, our Book Reviews Editor, would like for you to nominate your most well-loved volumes and send a 250-word synopsis, stating the title, when you first discovered the book, and why you cannot do without it, to books@dresshistorians.org. We shall publish some of your commentaries in future issues.

I hope your summer remains dry.

Enjoy the issue.

Benjamin Linley Wild

Aprons for men and women in the Stuart Period: practical garment and fashion accessory

Pat Poppy

Abstract

This paper is an examination of aprons during the long-seventeenth century, 1603-1714. The study of dress history has traditionally examined mainly elite clothing, although this is changing.[1] At least in part this vacuum has been caused by a perceived lack of source material, especially in terms of imagery and surviving garments, but there is a wealth of documentary and other material which can be mined for information. Aprons are a garment that were worn by all social classes at some point in their lives, functioning as both a protective garment and, for those with some wealth, as a fashionable accessory or a symbol of status. The ownership, usages, prevalence, fabrics, colours and costs of aprons are described through their appearance in a range of sources, both in written records, such as wills and probates and in illustrations, ranging from woodcuts to portraits. Changes in how the use of aprons as a fashionable garment waxed and waned are assessed. Aprons were also worn throughout the period by men in certain trades, for whom the protective element was important.

Introduction

The main Oxford dictionary definition of an apron is: "An article of dress, originally of linen, but now also of stuff, leather, or other material, worn in front of the body, to protect the clothes from dirt or injury, or simply as a covering." The first usage of the word in English, where it appears as napron, is in the early fourteenth century.[2] A database has been created by the author, with the ultimate aim of producing a book on Stuart clothing. The database contains over 23,000 references to clothing from wills, probate inventories, household accounts, etc., ranging in date from 1603 to 1714, there are over four hundred mentions of aprons. A further database of English illustrations of people wearing aprons, ranging from the woodcuts of broadside ballads found in the English Broadside Ballads Archive, plus other prints and portraits has also been created.[3] In the Stuart period aprons were worn by children, and in adulthood by women of almost all social classes, though at the level of the gentry and nobility, this depended if on them being a fashionable accessory, as indicated by their presence in elite portraiture. Most men ceased to wear aprons when they reached an age to be breeched, but in adulthood men apprenticed and practising in a variety of trades wore them as a protective garment. Aprons were a common item of clothing and in his 1688 *Annual Consumption of Apparell*, Gregory King indicated that he believed over three million aprons, and the far less common night rail, were being produced every year in England, with a total value of £450,000.[4]

Aprons for children

Aprons were worn by boys and girls once they had left swaddling clothes and had been placed in short coats. A nursery dialogue in Peter Erondell's 1605 work *The French Garden for English Ladyes and Gentlewomen to Walke In"*, has "Let him have his gathered apron with strings, and hang a muckminder to it."[5] After boys reached the age to be breeched aprons were worn only by girls. Among the nobility and royalty the young might be painted wearing their aprons, as in Anthony Van Dyck's 1635 painting of the three eldest children of Charles I, where both Princess

[1] See for example: Margaret Spufford and Susan Mee, *The Clothing of the Common Sort 1570-1700* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017). Danae Tankard, *Clothing in 17th-Century Provincial England* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020).

[2] Oxford English Dictionary. "apron, n.". *OED Online, Oxford University Press, March 2022.* [Cited: 16 March 2022.] www.oed.com/view/Entry/9949.

[3] University of California at Santa Barbara, Department of English. English Broadside Ballads Archive. [Cited: 24 March 2022.] https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/.

[4] N. B. Harte, "The Economics of Clothing in the Late Seventeenth Century," *Textile History* 22, (1991), 277-96.

[5] Anne Buck, *Clothes and the child.* (Bedford : Ruth Bean, 1996), 60.

Mary and James, Duke of York are in skirts with aprons, while their five year old elder brother Prince Charles is in his breeches. Van Dyck had painted a similar portrait of the three children earlier that year for the Queen's sister, but the King had been "*faché contre le painter Vandec*" because the five-year-old Prince Charles had been painted still wearing skirts.[6]

Figure 1. Anthony Van Dyck. The Three Eldest Children of Charles I, Nov 1635-Mar 1636. RCIN 404403. Royal Collection Trust / © His Majesty King Charles III 2023.

Among people of a lower social standing, probate accounts, made when parents had died and those in charge of the children had to account for any monies spent, often contain references to the provision of aprons. In 1610, five shillings is laid out for cloth to provide Marie Chippinhurst with "apernes and quoifes."[7] In the middle of the century, in Cheshire, the daughters of Edward Harpur are provided with many aprons over a number of years, a typical entry being "for 3 yards and 3 quarters linen, and for tape for 4 aprons for 4 daughters 7s 5d."[8]

Girls attending charity schools were also provided with aprons. At Christ's Hospital, the original "blue coat" school, so called because the uniforms were traditionally a blue colour, the girls were provided with aprons from its foundation in 1552. By 1717 the governors were ordering "a

[6] Anthony van Dyck, The Three Eldest Children of Charles I, Nov 1635-Mar 1636, Royal Collection Trust. RCIN 404403. [Cited: 20 March 2022.] https://www.rct.uk/collection/search#/4/collection/404403/the-three-eldest-children-of-charles-i.

[7] I. Mortimer, ed., *Berkshire probate accounts 1583-1712*, Berkshire Record Series, 4 (1999), 73.

[8] C. B. Phillips, and J H. Smith, *Stockport Probate Records 1620-1650*, Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 131 (1992), 266-98.

sufficient supply of green say to be made into aprons for the use of the Maiden children at Hertford."[9] When girls in the charge of the parish reached an age to enter into an apprenticeship, aprons might be among the garments provided for them. In 1632 the parish of St Sepulchre in London provided, among the clothes for a parish girl entering an apprenticeship, "two green aprons and two blew aprons 7s. 6d."[10]

Aprons as a fashion item for women of the gentry and nobility

At the level of the gentry and nobility, aprons were often more of a fashion item than of practical use. The fact that these aprons were not a protective garment is shown when Stephen Glosson wrote of aprons in 1596 as:

> so finely fringed,...so quaintlie cut, so richlie wrought:
> Were they in work to save their cotes,
> They need not cost so many groates.[11]

Such aprons appear to have been fashionable in the first quarter of the seventeenth century. In 1622 the household accounts of the Howards of Naworth Castle record the sum of eight shillings being spent on a single apron for Mrs Elizabeth.[12] In 1630, Dame Elizabeth Freville left two laced aprons in her will.[13] While these embroidered or lace aprons were fashionable, some women had their portraits painted wearing them; the best known probably being the *c.*1620 portrait in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, of Margaret Layton (d.1641), wearing her embroidered jacket and almost transparent embroidered apron.[14] Another example, also painted by Marcus Gheeraerts the younger (1561-1635), is of Mary Hawtrey, Lady Wolley (1587–1638). Her apron seems to be an almost transparent fabric with insert panels of needle made lace, similar to that of Layton's.[15] A few of the most decorated, costly aprons survive, mainly because of the lace.

[9] Phillis Cunnington, and Catherine Lucas, *Charity Costumes of Children, Scholars, Almsfolk, Pensioners.* (London : Black, 1978), 102.
[10] Ann S. Saunders, "Provision of Apparel for the Poor in London, 1630-1680," *Costume* 40 (2006), 23.
[11] Stephen Glosson, *Pleasant Quippes for Upstart Newfangled Gentlewomen.* (London : Richard Johnes, 1596), 10.
[12] G. Ornsby, ed., "Selections from the Household Books of the Lord William Howard of Naworth Castle," *Publications of the Surtees Society* 68 (1878), 189.
[13] H. W. Wood, ed., "Wills and inventories from the registry at Durham, part 4, [1603-1649]" *Publications of the Surtees Society*, 142 (1929), 225-9.
[14] Marcus Gheeraerts, (The Younger). Margaret Layton, c.1620. Victoria and Albert Museum. https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O69443/margaret-layton-formerly-laton-oil-painting-gheeraerts-marcus-the/
[15] Marcus Gheeraerts, (The Younger). Mary Hawtrey (1587–1638), Lady Wolley. The Chequers Trust. https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/mary-hawtrey-15871638-lady-wolley-56129

Figure 2. Early seventeenth century Italian apron. Accession no. 38.19.9. Metropolitan Museum New York.

By the middle of the seventeenth century the fashion for the gentry and nobility to wear aprons seems to have passed. Analysis of the Wenceslaus Hollar engravings – the *Ornatus muliebris anglicanus* of 1640, his four seasons of 1644, and the English plates from his *Theatrum Mulierum* and *Aula Veneris* of 1643 and 1644 respectively - show only ten of the fifty women depicted wearing aprons. Only four of the twenty six *Ornatus* engravings have aprons, and only five of the sixteen *Theatrum Mulierum* and *Aula Veneris*. Of these, none of the women wearing aprons are described as noblewomen; one is a gentlewoman, but the others are a London craftsman's wife, the daughters of a London citizen and a London merchant, a village or countrywoman.[16] The extensive household accounts of the Earl and Countess of Bath, which cover the period 1639 to 1654, have only three purchases of aprons; two for a young female servant and one for a male servant, there are none purchased for the Countess herself.[17] Likewise, the accounts of the Marquis of Hertford in 1641-2 show aprons being purchased for the children, but not for the adult female members of the household.[18]

Aprons do start to reappear as fashionable items towards the end of the century. In 1673, the gentleman James Master "paid for a lace't apron for my wife £3 10s."[19] This was a considerable sum of money at a time when a serving maid might receive a wage of only two or three pounds a

[16] Wenceslaus Hollar, Wenceslaus Hollar Digital Collection. University of Toronto Libraries. [Cited: 2022 March 22.] https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/content/wenceslaus-hollar-digital-collection.
[17] Todd Gray, *Devon Household Accounts 1627-59. Part 2.* Devon and Cornwall Record Society, new series 39 (1996), 71 & 268.
[18] F. C. Morgan, "Private Purse Accounts of the Marquis of Hertford, Michaelmas 1641-2" *Antiquaries Journal* 25 (1945),18 & 23.
[19] S. Robertson, "The expense Book of James Master 1646-1676 [Part 4, 1663-1676]", transcribed by Mrs Dallison. *Archaeologia Cantiana* 18 (1889), 147.

year. In 1676 the widow Ann Searle ~~left~~ had "an apron with two seaming laces."[20] The re-emergence of the fashion for aprons going into the eighteenth century is shown in Beau Nash's comment on the Duchess of Queensbury wearing an apron at a ball in 1721, 'None but Abigails appeared in white aprons'.[21]

Aprons for women of the common sort

Like the girl entering an apprenticeship in London, aprons could be provided for the very poorest by the overseers of the poor. In 1692, blue linen for aprons was among the items provided for Widow Toddsworth.[22] While poorer people tended not to have probate inventories or wills, there are some examples. In Cheshire in 1604, spinster Anne Walmeslie, whose goods at her death totalled only 12s. 6d., owned "one ould apperan 6d."[23]

Slightly further up the social scale, large numbers of women were in service across a wide range of households with different levels of income. A tradesman, husbandman or yeoman might employ one or two female servants, while a gentry household had half a dozen or more.[24] These women would all have owned aprons. In 1620 Elenor Ell, who is described as a maidservant, had both a green and a white apron, and in 1618 Anne Large, servant to a shoemaker, owned three aprons.[25]

Women working in wealthier households might be offered a better type of apron in exchange for doing certain tasks for their mistress. In the play, The Shoemaker's Holiday, Sybil the maid is offered by her mistress Rose Otley, among other clothing accessories, "my cambric apron," if she will find out whether Rowland Lacy has gone to France.[26] A social hierarchy to aprons can be seen in the *c.*1670 painting of The Tichborne Dole by Gillis Van Tilborch. The painting depicts three social categories, on the right the female the poor recipients of the dole are wearing aprons. In the centre of the painting the members of the family, with the exception of a girl child, are not wearing aprons. The servants on the left of the painting are divided, the female upper servants are obscured by the male livery wearing servants in front of them, while the lowest female servants, in front of the house, wearing aprons. It is probable that aprons were worn by the servants in wealthy households, as illustrated by the image of a maid that features on a dummy board from the 1620s in the Victoria and Albert Museum. She wears a plain apron and carries her broom, but her cuffs, falling ruff and coif are all trimmed with lace.[27]

Most women are described in their probates as either a widow or a singlewoman, so it is difficult to assess their status, though the value of their estate may give an indication. Sometimes it is possible to identify if a woman is the widow of a tradesman, husbandman or yeoman. In 1628, Christian Debbedge, the wife of a yeoman, left her sister a white apron in her will.[28] In 1638 the widow Jane Barnard had an estate valued at just over £22, her inventory includes five aprons

[20] Victoria County History: Hampshire. Nately Scures Probate Material 1661-1680. [Cited: 26 Feb 2022.] https://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore/sites/explore/files/explore_assets/2016/10/07/anne_searle_widow_1676_prob_11-350-46.pd.

[21] Elizabeth Spencer, "'None but Abigails appeared in white aprons': The Apron as an Elite Garment in Eighteenth-Century England" *Textile History* 49, no.2 (2018), 164-90.

[22] Spufford, and Mee, *Common Sort*, 55.

[23] C. B. Phillips, and J. H. Smith, eds., *Stockport probate records, 1578-1619*. Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire 124 (1985), 38.

[24] Jane Whittle and Elizabeth Griffiths, *Consumption and Gender in the Early Seventeenth Century Household.* (Oxford : OUP, 2012), 214-8.

[25] E.R.C. Brinkworth and J.S.W. Gibson, eds., *Banbury wills and inventories. Pt.1, 1591-1620.* Banbury Historical Society. 13, (1985), 3. and E. and S. George, eds., *Bristol probate inventories, Part 1: 1542-1650*. Bristol Records Society publication 54 (2002), 29.

[26] Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*. 1600. [Cited: 20 March 2022.] https://emed.folger.edu/sites/default/files/EMEDWorkshop-ShoeHol.pdf.

[27] Woman with broom dummy board. Victorian and Albert Museum. https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O136639/woman-with-broom-dummy-board-unknown/

[28] M. Allen, ed. "Wills of the Archdeaconry of Suffolk, 1627-1628" *Suffolk Records Society* 58 (2015),103-4.

together worth 10s.[29] Images in woodcuts depicting rural situations often show women wearing aprons. There are two images of milkmaids from the middle decades of the century, both wear aprons and carry their milking pail on their head. One, The Milke Maids Life [EBBA 30170], depicts a very plain apron, while the second, The milkmaid's resolution [EBBA 30790], has her dressed in an unlikely fashion, wearing her hair loose, a patterned jacket and a lace trimmed apron and kerchief, all more indicative of a higher status woman. Of the two women in Hollar's engravings who might be considered "common," the kitchen maid figure does not wear an apron, while the countrywoman does.

Examination of the various sets of Cries of London that were published throughout the Stuart period give an idea of how common apron wearing was among this group. The first set is from the first quarter of the century and is in the Pepys Collection at Magdalene College, Cambridge, it comprises twelve figures; the six female figures all wear aprons. The second set, entitled The Common Cryes of London, was first published in 1640 and reprinted by John Overton in 1665. The figures for this are very sketchy, but ten of the eighteen women appear to be wearing aprons. In the third set, in the British Museum, which dates from *c.*1650, all three women wear aprons. The fourth set is taken from two sources that overlap, the examples in the British Museum have been attributed to Robert Pricke, the set with overlapping images is in the Bodleian Library. Some images here do not appear in the British Museum set. These sets have forty figures between them, sixteen of whom are women, and all wear aprons. The final set is Marcellus Laroon's Criers and Hawkers of London published in 1687, this has seventy three figures, thirty one of whom are women, and twenty three of these women wear aprons, those who do not can be characterised in the main as not being tradespeople; for example, there are two of the "famous Dutch Woman", a rope dancer who wore breeches, and a procuress and a courtesan. The history and content of the Cries of London has been examined by various historians, especially Sean Shesgreen.[30]

Aprons for men

Tradesmen were the main male wearers of aprons, the term apron-men was often used for them. In Shakespeare's Coriolanus (Act4, Scene 6), Menenius Agrippa says "You have made good worke, You and your Apron men." In most cases, aprons worn by men were made of similar materials to those worn by women. For the dirtier, heavier trades, the aprons were of leather. In Shakespeare's Henry VI part II John Holland, an armourer, comments that "the nobility think scorn to go in leather aprons," and Peter, his apprentice, says, "Here, Robin, an if I die, I give thee my apron: and, Will, thou shalt have my hammer." This association continues across later centuries as well. In one of his first essays the young Benjamin Franklin writes that "the Generality of People" were unwilling to judge what they read until they knew "who or what the Author of it is, whether he be poor or rich, old or young, a Schollar or a Leather-Apron Man." Franklin and his father were printers, and when Franklin formed a club in 1727 it was originally called the Leather Apron Club; the political connotations of this have been examined by several writers.[31] Beyond tradesmen, certain army units were issued with aprons. When the Royal Fusiliers were first formed in 1685 out of the existing men at the Tower of London working under the Master-General of Ordnance, a company of 100 men were issued with 100 aprons. While the main purpose of the Fusiliers was to guard the artillery, they included a company of miners, who worked at undermining defences in

[29] Francis W. Steer, *Farm and Cottage Inventories of Mid-Essex 1635-1749.* (Chichester : Phillimore, 1969), 80.
[30] Sean Shesgreen, *The Criers and Hawkers of London, engravings and drawings by Marcellus Laroon.* (Aldershot : Scholar Press, 1990); Sean Shesgreen, *Images of the Outcast: The Urban Poor in the Cries of London* (New Brunswick : Rutgers University Press, 2002).
[31] S.P. Newman, "Benjamin Franklin and the leather-apron men: the politics of class in eighteenth-century Philadelphia" *Journal of American Studies* 43, no. 2, (2009),161-175;
Allan Kulikoff, "Silence Dogood and the Leather-Apron Men" *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 81, no. 3, (2014), 364-74.

sieges, and they worked with the artificers, that is the carpenters, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, and other tradesmen who supported the Ordnance.[32]

Which tradesmen wore aprons?

Analysis of the sets of Cries of London show a far smaller proportion of men wearing aprons. Only one of the six men in the Pepysian set has an apron; only one of the 19 in the 1640 set; four of the nine in the 1650 set; four of the 24 in the 1655 set, and 11 of 42 in the Laroon set of 1687. The various Cries of London series had been around for many years before the seventeenth century and they often plagiarised one another, but there are differences, for example, a late-sixteenth century mat seller doesn't have an apron, the early and mid-seventeenth century ones do, and the 1687 Laroon version does not. These are all men who go out to sell their trades. In the anti-leveller broadsheet of 1647 These Tradesmen are Preachers, nine of the twelve men depicted are wearing aprons. These are men with workshops who generally did not travel out to work, including a smith, a saddler, a confectioner, and a soap boiler.[33]

Some men left aprons in their probate inventories. In 1638 Anthony Hatt, a barber left "3 aprons and other shopp instruments..." in his inventory.[34] In 1632 another barber, William Turner, has listed among other things "two ould shearen clothes two ould towelyes and one ould apren".[35] Randle Holme in his *Academie of Armory* of 1688 writes that "A barber is always known by his cheque parti-coloured apron; it needs not mentioning; neither can he be termed barber (a poller or shaver as anciently they were called) till his apron be about him."[36]Those who worked in brewing, and in the making and sales of beers, wine and spirits often wore aprons. In 1616 Thomas Ablestone, a vintner left "1 shirt, 1 aporne, 5s" in his probate inventory.[37] The 1641 pamphlet The Lamentable Complaints of Hop the brewer and Kilcalfe the butcher, show both men in aprons.[38] These aprons are probably fabric, but in heavier duty trades, such as metalworking, leatherworking and the building trades they are more likely to be leather. In Shakespeare's Julius Caesar, when a commoner says that he is a carpenter, Marullus asks him, "Where is thy leather apron and thy rule?" An example in the building trade is Isaac Smith, a mason who in 1646 left "2 ould apornes, ... with other implymentes."[39] Labouring men also wore aprons, Holme describes them thus: "a Labouring Man with a Spade on his right shoulder, a Staff in the other hand, and an Apron before him, all proper. These kind of persons are such as work for Day Wages, either with Spade, Shovel, Mattock, Axe or Trowel, &c."[40]

Number of aprons owned

Most women, and the type of tradesmen who required an apron, appear to have owned one or two aprons. A barber leaving three aprons, and a mason with two have already been mentioned. John Dale, a Wiltshire yeoman, had four aprons in 1682.[41] Sometimes, for women, the difference

[32] Cecil C. P. Lawson, *The History of the Uniforms of the British Army, Vol.1: From the beginnings to 1760.* (London : Norman Military Publishing, 1940 (1962 rpt)), 163.
[33] These Tradesmen are Preachers in the City of London. Granger Historical Picture Archive. 1647. [Cited: 24 March 2022.]
[34] Lorelei Williams, and Sally Thomson, *Marlborough Probate Inventories 1591-1775.* Wiltshire Record Society 54 (2007), 85.
[35] J. H. Wilson, ed., *Wymondham Inventories: 1591-1641.* Creative History from East Anglian Sources 1 (1983), 29-30.
[36] Randle Holme, The academy of armory. 1688. [Cited: 31 March 2022.] https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A44230.0001.001?rgn=main;view=fulltext, 127.
[37] Brinkworth and Gibson, *Banbury wills*, 213-14.
[38] The Lamentable Complaints of Hop the brewer and Kilcalfe the butcher. 1641. [Cited: 24 March 2022.] https://archive.org/details/lamentablecompla00np/page/n1/mode/2up.
[39] D. G. Vaisey, ed., *Probate inventories of Litchfield and district 1568-1680.* Historical Collections for a History of Staffordshire, Fourth Series. 5 (1969), 73.
[40] Holme, *Academy*, 71.
[41] Williams and Thomson, *Marlborough Probates*, 165

between working aprons and aprons worn for show could be indicated. In her 1686 will Elizabeth Fry leaves "one Holland apron, two work hankesteres my work days' aprons and all my head linen," from which it is assumed that the holland apron was kept for best.[42] In 1613 Alice Claxton left her daughter her "best smocke and apron."[43] In 1662 Judah Lea, a widow whose estate is valued at only £7 0s 8d, owns two linen and one green apron.[44]

People with more money had a greater number of aprons. Sarah Kitchen, a singlewoman, with an estate valued in 1672 at over £460 had nine aprons.[45] Earlier in the century in 1617, Elizabeth Blakeborne also owned nine aprons, three of which were declared to be old, one of flaxen cloth and one black, three were considered important enough to be mentioned in her will, with her best apron being given to her sister in law.[46]

Styles

Aprons are sometimes depicted as an ungathered, rectangular piece of cloth, and sometimes as gathered at the waist. They are tied with apron strings, the Hertford account in 1641 has a payment "for tape to make the ladies apron strings."[47] The strings for men's and women's aprons could be tied at the back or at the front, for example both the male and female sellers of Poor Jack (salted, dried fish) in Laroon's Cries tie their aprons at the front, as do a further eight of his criers.

Pockets were another option for aprons. The early set of Cries of London in the Pepys Collection depicts two out of the six women wearing aprons that may have had pockets. Pockets are much clearer in the Laroon engraving, where it is obvious that the apron of his ballad seller A Merry New Song has pockets. When Holme writes of anglers he says they should have "An Apron with several Pockets to place the Anglers Implements in Order."[48]

[42] Victoria County History: Hampshire. Mapledurwell Probate Material 1681-1700. [Cited: 28 Feb 2022.] https://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore/sites/explore/files/explore_assets/2013/03/26/will_inventory_of_elizabeth_fry_hro_1686a-030.pdf.

[43] J A. Atkinson, et al eds., *Darlington wills and inventories 1600-1625.* Publications of the Surtees Society, 201 (1993), 130.

[44] Beverly Adams, ed., *Lifestyle and culture in Hertford wills and inventories for the parishes of All Saints and St. Andrew 1660-1725.* Hertfordshire Record Publication, 13 (1997), 104.

[45] E. and S. George, eds., *Bristol probate inventories, Part 2: 1657-1689.* Bristol Records Society publication, 57 (2005), 64.

[46] M. Presland, ed., *Angells to Yarnwindles: the wills and inventories of twenty six Elizabethan and Jacobean women living in the area now called St. Helens.* (St Helens : St. Helens Association for Research into Local History, 1999) 42.

[47] Morgan, "Marquis of Hertford," 23.

[48] Holme, *Academy*, 103.

Figure 3. Marcellus Laroon. A Merry New Song. 1688. © The Trustees of the British Museum. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

The bulk of fabric aprons were without bibs, and fell from the waist, though for small children there could be a bib that may, or may not, have been attached to the apron. Some men's aprons did rise above the waist, and might be pinned or buttoned to the doublet to form a bib. This style

was frequently associated with shoemakers and cobblers.[49] An illustration of Robin the Cobbler in the 1655 pamphlet *The Witch of the Woodlands* shows him wearing an apron buttoned to his doublet in a point, as does the apprentice pharmacist in Cornelis de Man's c.1670 painting.[50]

Figure 4. Cornelis de Man (1621–1706), Collective portrait at the apothecary's in Delft. *c.*1670. ID No. M.Ob.22 MNW. National Museum Warsaw.

The shoemaker in *These Tradesmen are Preachers* has an apron bib that runs straight across at chest height. Some of these depictions may be of leather aprons, as they were often made from a whole skin and one or two corners could be pinned or buttoned up, but it is often impossible to tell from illustrations whether an apron is fabric or leather.

Aprons could be worn loose or with one corner tucked up as in the dummy board in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which has already been mentioned. Tucking an apron up in this manner prevents the wearer stepping onto the bottom of it when they stoop. The famous 1686 portrait of the "necessary woman" Bridget Holmes, in the Royal Collection, also shows this way of wearing an apron. Sometimes both corners of the apron could be tucked up to make one large pocket, as in Laroon's female London Gazette seller, or his male Buy my fine singing glasses.

[49] Phillis Cunnington and Catherine Lucas, *Occupational cosume in England.* (London : Black, 1968) 329.
[50] Laurence Price, *The Witch of the Woodlands: OR, The Coblers New Translation; Written by L. P.* (London : John Stafford. 1655).

Figure 5. John Riley (1646-91). Bridget Holmes (1591-1691). 1686. RCIN 405667. Royal Collection Trust / © His Majesty King Charles III 2023.

Materials

The fabric of approximately one hundred of the aprons in the author's database is known. The distribution is: 53% linens, canvas and, at the end of the century, cottons; 30% wool based fabrics, 8% silks, 7% the mixed fabric linsey woolsey, and 2% are of leather.

The linens range from the coarsest of cloths to the finest. Two are described as harden, as Markham explains, "That which comes from the flaxe being a little towed again in a paire of wool cards, will make a course harding."[51] Three aprons in another heavy duty fabric, canvas, were owned in 1609 by Richard Mascoll, a butcher.[52] Thirteen percent of the aprons are described as linen, with 25% of all the aprons being of the usually finer quality holland, although five are specified as coarse holland, and one is fine lawn. Holland comes in many qualities. In the Stuart period its prices ranged from 15d. to 89d. per yard.[53] In 1650, calico appears in the Harpur accounts, "for 2 yards of calico to make Anna and Sarah two aprons 2s 8d."[54] By 1704 muslin is being used, as Ann Taylor has no less than five muslin aprons listed in her inventory, they were also being sold ready made by salesmen; in 1717 Edward Sackley of Kent had 2 muslin aprons in stock at 6 shillings each.[55]

Of the wool-based fabrics the most common used for aprons was say, of which 21% of all the aprons are made. Say is a light weight twilled woollen fabric. Where say appears in the database as a garment it is almost always for aprons, with only two petticoats and one bearing cloth listed as using the fabric. Five aprons are described just as woollen, two were serge, one stuff and one worsted.

The silk aprons comprise three silk and five taffeta. The owners of these garments were not necessarily gentry. In 1624 a yeoman left to the wife of a friend, his late wife's " best hat and silk apron with a silk girdle."[56] In 1630 a Hampshire clothier had "one old riding hood, a taffeta apron and a black box to carry writing in, 3s." in his inventory.[57]

Linsey woolsey appears in the database both for finished aprons, four being left in Suffolk wills, and as fabric, Rose Parker, the widow of a Stratford-upon-Avon butcher, leaving "one peece of linsey for an apron"[5859] Linsey woolsey as the name implies is a mixture of linen and wool.[60]

Of nine men for whom we have aprons in their wills or probate inventories, two are specified as having leather aprons. In 1632, in Suffolk, George Keritch a single man, bequeathed his brother in law "my leather apron and my hedging gloves"[61] While in 1621 the mason John Cheetam of Stockport listed a barmskin, which the Oxford English Dictionary describes as a dialect term for a leather apron.[62]

Colour

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[51] Gervase Markham. *The English Huswife.* (London : J. Beale for R. Jackson, 1615) 97.
[52] George, *Bristol, Part 1*, 8
[53] Spufford, Margaret. "Fabric for seventeenth century children and adolescents' clothes" *Textile History.* 34 (2003), 47-63.
[54] Phillips and Smith, *Stockport 1620-1650*, 268
[55] E. and S. George, eds., *Bristol probate inventories, Part 3: 1690-1803.* 2008. [Cited: 17 September 2021.], 50-2.; Margaret Spufford, *The great reclothing of rural England: petty chapman and their wares in the seventeenth century.* (London : Hambledon Press, 1984), 221.
[56] M. E. Allen, ed., *Wills in the Archdeaconry of Suffolk 1620-1624.* Suffolk Records Society, 31 (1988) 387.
[57] Victoria County History: Hampshire. Basingstoke Probate Material 1631-40. [Cited: 28 Feb 2022.] https://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore/sites/explore/files/explore_assets/2015/01/20/will_inventory_of_john_smith_clothier_hro_1638b-75.pdf.
[58] M. E. Allen, ed., *Wills in the Archdeaconry of Suffolk 1625-1626.* Suffolk Records Society, 37 (1995), 119, 129.
[59] J. Jones, ed., *Stratford-upon-Avon Inventories, Part 2: 1626-1699.* (Stratford-upon-Avon : The Dugdale Society, 2003), 40-1.
[60] University of Manchester. The Lexis of Cloth and Clothing Project: Linsey-woolsey. [Cited: 28 Feb 2022.] http://lexissearch.arts.manchester.ac.uk/entry.aspx?id=3066.
[61] Nesta Evans, ed., *Wills of the Archdeaconry of Sudbury 1630-1635.* Suffolk Records Society, 29 (1987), 189.
[62] Phillips and Smith, *Stockport 1620-1650*, 154-5.

Aprons are often assumed to be white. Only sixty-nine aprons in the database specify colour: twenty-five are white, twenty-nine are green, eight are blue, six are black and 1 is murrey. While none of the twenty-five white aprons state a fabric, there are a further forty-five linen, holland or muslin aprons which have no colour given, but were presumably the natural cloth, either bleached or unbleached. Of the twenty-nine green aprons, six are of say and one of serge, but the others don't give a fabric. Say is most often associated with both aprons and the colour green, with two chapmen, two grocers and one mercer having green say in their stock. Two of the blue aprons are of calico, and one of linsey woolsey. The murrey apron was made of serge; murrey was the colour of mulberries, a dark red or purple-red colour.[63]

A lack of English genre painting at this date means that there are no English depictions of coloured aprons, but they do appear in Dutch genre paintings. For example, in David Teniers (1610-90) painting in the National Gallery An Old Woman Peeling Pears, *c.*1640, the subject wears a blue apron. In Adam Willaerts painting Ships off a Rocky Coast, in the Rijksmuseum of 1621 a woman wears a green apron.

Figure 6. Woman in a green apron. Adam Willaerts. Detail from Ships off a Rocky Coast, 1621. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Values

King's valuation of aprons over a year, assuming three million were produced, gives an average spend of 3s. per apron.[64] The values given for aprons in the database range from 3d. to the extreme outlier of £3 10s. paid by James Master in 1673.[65] At that price the lace must have been considerable as the next highest amount paid was the 8s. already mentioned in the Naworth Castle accounts.

In the early years of the century there are many aprons appraised at about 6d. each, but by the end of the century few are appraised individually. Many aprons seem to have taken one yard

[63] University of Manchester. The Lexis of Cloth and Clothing Project: Murrey. [Cited: 28 Feb 2022.] http://lexissearch.arts.manchester.ac.uk/entry.aspx?id=3335.
[64] Harte, "The Economics of Clothing," 277-96.
[65] Robertson, "James Master, Part 4," 147.

of fabric to make, and prices are sometimes given for the fabric. In 1665 the chapman Oliver Jones has in his stock, "five yards of stuff for to make aprons with at ninepence the yard."[66] In 1622 the probate accounts of Richard Smith, shepherd, have "for cloth to make Margaret Smith two aprons, 11d."[67] To the cost of the cloth itself must be added several other costs, for example apron strings and if made outside the house the cost of making. The Harpur accounts have several mentions of aprons: in 1653 "for cloath pro 2 aprons making and stringinge pro Debora 1s 4d," in 1652 tuppence was laid out "for a pair of apron strings"[68]

Conclusion

Aprons were owned by most women at all social levels from their childhood to old age. There is a subtlety in the way women in the early modern period viewed their clothing, and aprons provide an excellent study of this. Most women, whatever their social status, would have more than one apron, and differentiate between them, having both best and work day aprons. Among elite women aprons were only worn when it was fashionable to do so, ornamented with expensive lace or embroidery, they were not a protective garment, but a signifier of what the owner could afford. For men aprons were an item of protective clothing to be worn when their trade necessitated, and sometimes signalling to others what trade they represented. Aprons were available at a wide range of prices, being regarded as a necessary item of clothing, to be provided to those in receipt of parish relief, while among the elite they might be purchased for more than an ordinary woman would earn in a year. Mostly, but not exclusively, the textile aprons were white, with better quality white linens, such as holland, being used for best, while undyed or green aprons were work day items.

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[66] Spufford, *Great Reclothing,* 161-2
[67] Mortimer, "Berkshire," 114.
[68] Phillips and Smith, *Stockport 1620-1650*, 279, 277

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Biography

Pat Poppy is an independent researcher and retired academic librarian, with an interest in late medieval and early modern clothing and textiles. She is a member of the Costume Society editorial board, and newsletter editor for the Medieval Dress and Textile Society. She has published several articles in peer reviewed journals, most recently The Clothing Accessory Choices of Rachel, Countess of Bath, and Other Mid-Seventeenth-Century Women (*Costume*, 2020, 54:1, pp. 3-29). She is currently working on producing a database of clothing in seventeenth century wills and inventories for a future publication by The Tudor Tailor group.

Secret Messages in a Napoleonic Headdress: Hidden Identities in Empress Josephine's Pearl and Cameo Diadem

Kristina af Klinteberg

Abstract

The Napoleonic era was a boom time for the manufacturing and wearing of jewellery, making this period a pivotal time for gems in fashion, with Empress Josephine heralding the Neoclassical style *à la mode*. This article studies the identities of two figures depicted in Empress Josephine's pearl and cameo diadem from 1809. First, it focuses on the mythological figures portrayed and next on whether they could be an allegory for people of the time. This article proposes that the previously misinterpreted motif is Venus and Cupid, an allegory linking Venus/Josephine to Mars/Napoleon. The introduction of materials previously unknown to the public also assists in solving the riddle of Cupid's presence. This figure can be interpreted as an important historical personage, linking Napoleon and Josephine, even if the final portrait of the Empress wearing the diadem omits him from the cameo. The process of identification follows Panofsky's method of analysing art. Where no written materials are available, Hermerén's theories on allegories and Auslander's solutions using visual comparisons have provided the main framework.

Introduction

On the basis of humankind's wish to wear jewellery to distinguish themselves from others, it would be natural to want these pieces of precious material to express a sense of uniqueness. Moreover, jewellery with a provenance may possess its own identity, and the person wearing it may be a well-known public figure. This study focuses on a magnificent headpiece, a pearl and cameo diadem, that meets these criteria. Commissioned in 1809 by Napoleon (1769–1821), the diadem was a gift for his first wife, Empress Josephine (1763–1814). The only extant image of Josephine wearing it is a portrait painted after their divorce.

Through inheritance down the Empress's family line, the pearl and cameo diadem is now in Stockholm, owned by His Majesty the King of Sweden, Carl XVI Gustaf (Figure 1).[69]

[69] Josephine de Beauharnais' son Eugène had a daughter Josephine (1807–1876), named after her grandmother, who married Crown-Prince Oscar of Sweden (1799–1859). She brought many pieces of fine jewellery to her new country, including the cameo parure.

Figure 1. *The Cameo Diadem*, Nitot et Fils, 1809, Cameos, Pearls, Gold, Photographed by Lisa Raihle Rehbäck, Courtesy of His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden, © The Royal Court, Stockholm, Sweden, No Accession Number.

During the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, it has been worn at royal weddings and Nobel Banquets, and in these contexts, it has been seen worldwide in the media. The parure, consisting of the diadem and matching pieces, has also been depicted on Her Majesty the Queen in a gravure for a stamp and is, therefore, known beyond formal occasions (Figure 2).

Figure 2. *Postage Stamp,* Bo Larsson, Jonas Ekströmer, Lars Sjööblom, Czeslaw Slania, 2003, Gravure from a Photograph of a Portrait, Printed by Posten Frimärken, Stockholm, Sweden, © PostNord Sverige AB,
Photographed by Kristina af Klinteberg, 22 April 2022.

The cameos are set centrally in the diadem, and each cameo shows different figures, real or mythological, about whom little information is available (Figure 1). The cameo worn in the front, in particular, has been the focus of interest for historians, not only for its prominent placement but also for its depiction of two interacting figures. Cameos were fashionable during the Empire period (1804–1814), and Napoleon favoured them as a medium linking him and his empire to his role models from the Roman Empire. They also offered the opportunity to show mythological portraits and utilise allegories connecting the imperial family to the fashionable stories of the Roman gods. In 2010, on the day of Crown Princess Victoria's wedding, a short press release from the Swedish Royal Court related that, "The tiara is made of gold, pearls and cameos. The central cameo depicts Cupid and Psyche from Greek mythology."[70] It is a mistake concerning this iconographic interpretation of the cameo that opens up questions for this study.

The Cameo and Depictions of the Imperial Family in the Visual Arts

As a result of the increasing interest in Josephine de Beauharnais, the original owner of the diadem, and her influence on art, politics and the creation of the imperial image during her reign as Empress of France, previously neglected material has been reappraised. By analysing this material and further interrogating familiar sources, more information emerges concerning the identities of the figures in the central cameo. This is prerequisite enough to put this cameo and its motif under the magnifying glass to reidentify the characters and determine whether this motif could be an allegory relating to historical personages hiding behind the mask of mythological personae.

To analyse an item such as this diadem, often the choice is to either engage in a theoretical discussion from the point of view of the owner or its viewers, where the provenance of the object and use are essential factors, or to put the artwork itself in the spotlight to compare it to other artefacts that, for various reasons, are suitable to the given context.[71] Sometimes, a dualistic approach is beneficial. In this study, the method is restricted to mainly studying the item, its motif and history, and through its connections to the imperial family, assess early modern image building as an exercise in public relations. This approach does not overlook the relationship of the object to the world––a grand headdress like this will always have the function of conspicuous display.[72]

As a general rule, symbols and allegories vary and change over time: they are born, flourish, gain new meanings, and sometimes fall into oblivion.[73] Two hundred years ago in France, during the Napoleonic era, Roman mythology was well known to the cultural and powerful elites, but much of its symbolic content has been forgotten today. For that reason, this study will treat two different time periods: the first, when the cameo was carved, and interest in mythology was very much alive in Parisian society, and the second is the contemporary period, where Roman mythology and its symbolism enjoy limited comprehension. This phenomenon accords with the passing times and also with the fact that this piece of jewellery has left its original context and lost the sentimental value it might have had to those who possibly translated the cameo portraits from the faces or actions of loved ones.

The image in the cameo will have to be compared to the artistic conventions of its time and culture to be read and interpreted in a way that would be possible and plausible for the diadem's audience in the period in question. The approach taken is to juxtapose the objet d'art with other

[70] Kungahuset [Swedish Royal Court], "Bruden" [The Bride], Swedish Royal Court Press Release, 19 June 2010, https://www.kungahuset.se/specialwebbsidor/temasidor/kronprinsessparetsbrollop/brollopsdagen/bruden.4.40e05eec12926f2630480001694.html, Accessed 20 November 2021.

[71] Leora Auslander, "Beyond Words," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 110, Issue 4, 2005, p. 1018.

[72] Giorgio Riello proposes three approaches to artefacts in the historical study of dress and fashion. The first, relevant to this article, is situated in an art historical study where artefacts, according to Riello, are "central to the analysis of different periods and themes." Giorgio Riello, "The Objects of Fashion: Methodological Approaches to the History of Fashion," *Journal of Aesthetics and Culture,* Volume 3, Issue 1, 2011, p. 1.

[73] Göran Hermerén, *Representation and Meaning in the Visual Arts: A Study in the Methodology of Iconography and Iconology,* Läromedelsförlagen (Norstedt), Stockholm, Sweden, 1969, p. 79.

artefacts from the same period to find the iconological content the composition in the cameo ought to have possessed when created.[74]

Setting the Scene

The headdress in question, Empress Josephine's pearl and cameo diadem, is a piece of jewellery for a lady, made in Paris around 1809 using gold, pearls, and agate cameos by the jeweller Nitot et Fils, today known as Chaumet.[75] Napoleon commissioned the piece for his first wife, Josephine, during the last year of their marriage and likely gifted it to her on the occasion of a trip to Strasbourg. The Emperor and the Empress ordered many splendid parures and pieces of jewellery, and Nitot was the jeweller they favoured.[76] During this period, many designs from the House of Nitot show a similar style to the diadem: palmette shapes framing cameos with antique motifs. The parures were worn at court functions and banquets, not only in the evening and at night but also during the day. The Empress was the style icon of France, and the rest of the highest echelons followed her *beau ideal*.[77] Lavish jewellery, which underlined an elevated dress code and enhanced the Emperor's partiality for ceremony, was highly sought after.[78]

Since the only known depiction of the Empress wearing the diadem is the last portrait ever painted of her dating from 1814, the year of her death, the provenance of the headdress has been questioned (Figure 3, Figure 4 and Figure 5).[79] In the portrait of the Empress, the central cameo shows only one figure, a head in profile, and not the two figures set in the diadem today.[80] However, since the oval in the miniature measures only a few millimetres, thus restricting what can be painted, and as jewellery can be replicated realistically or in stylised form, I believe that the argument against provenance is weak.[81] Additionally, an older painting has been recently found showing the headdress. These portraits will be discussed later.

[74] In this study, identification followed the three levels of Panofsky's method for analysing art. The first level, the pre-iconographic analysis, is a rudimentary understanding of an artefact where viewers identify what they see without reference to outside sources. The second, iconographic analysis, established connections between the artefact and, whenever possible, known stories or characters. The third level, iconological analysis, consists of deciphering meaning at a historical and cultural level. The first and second-level analyses are based on the study of primary sources at the Bernadotte Library at the Royal Palace in Stockholm.

[75] Karine Huguenaud, Chaumet (Nitot et Fils), email message to author pertaining to documents held by Chaumet associated with the diadem, 29 January 2020.

[76] Bernard Morel, *Les Joyaux de la Couronne de France: les Objets du Sacre des Rois et des Reines Suivis de l'Histoire des Joyaux de la Couronne de François Ier à Nos Jours* [The French crown jewels: The Objects of the Coronations of the Kings and Queens of France, Followed by a History of the French Crown Jewels from François I up to the Present Time], Fonds Mercator, Anvers, Belgium and Paris, France, 1988, p. 254.

[77] Diana Scarisbrick, *Bijoux de Tête--Chaumet, de 1804 à Nos Jours* [Timeless Tiaras--Chaumet, from 1804 to the Present], Assouline, Paris, France, 2002, p. 200.

[78] Clare Le Corbeiller, "Jewels of the Empire", in *The Age of Napoleon: Costume from Revolution to Empire 1789-1815,* Katell Le Bourhis, Editor, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, United States, 1989, p. 119.

[79] Göran Alm "De Kungliga Smyckena [The Royal Jewels]", in Kay Bond and Göran Alm, *Drottningens Silvias Festklänningar och de Kungliga Smyckena* [Queen Silvia's Formal Dresses & the Royal Jewels], Atlantis, Stockholm, Sweden, 2006, p. 140.

[80] There are two very similar paintings; one is in the Wallace Collection in London, the other is in Château de Malmaison, Paris.

[81] Huguenaud, op cit.

Figure 3. Detail, *The Empress Joséphine,* Ferdinand-Paul-Louis Quaglia, 1814, Watercolour on Ivory, 11.2 x 8.8 cm, Courtesy of The Trustees of The Wallace Collection, © The Wallace Collection, London, England, M288.

Figure 4. *The Empress Joséphine,* Ferdinand-Paul-Louis Quaglia, 1814, Watercolour on Ivory, 9.6 x 7.8 cm, © Musée National des châteaux de Malmaison et Bois-Préau, Rueil-Malmaison, France, No Accession Number, Photographed by Kristina af Klinteberg, 19 January 2022.

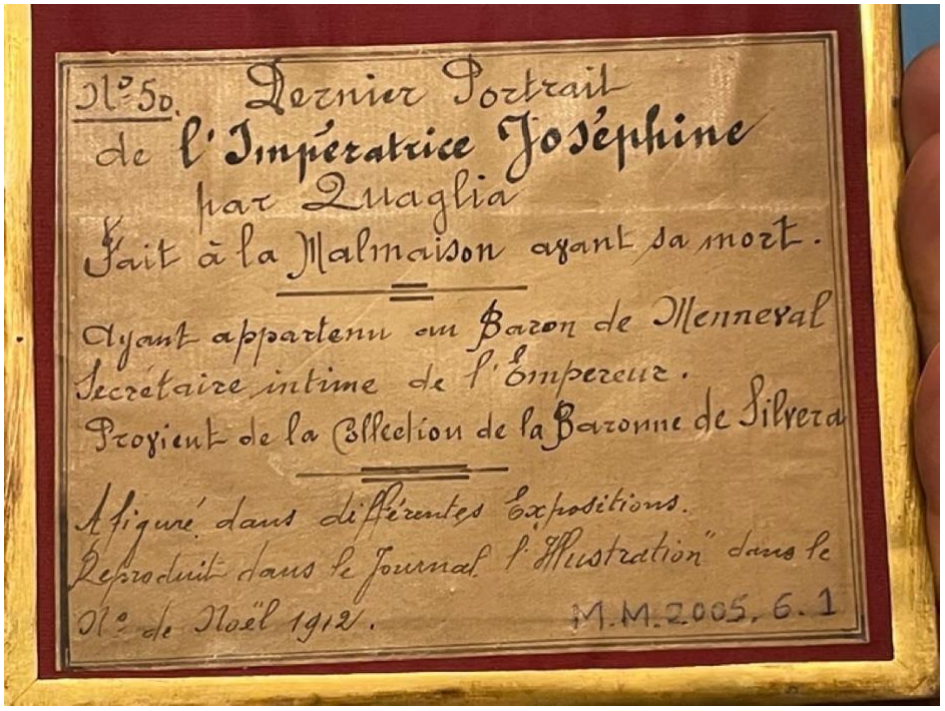

Figure 5. Reverse Side of Portrait, *The Empress Joséphine,* Ferdinand-Paul-Louis Quaglia, 1814, Watercolour on Ivory, 9.6 x 7.8 cm, © Musée National des châteaux de Malmaison et Bois-Préau, Rueil-Malmaison, France, Photographed by Kristina af Klinteberg, 19 January 2022.

The Neoclassical style, often associated with Napoleon Bonaparte, was not new at this time, having developed during the *ancien régime* under Louis XVI (1754–1793) and continued evolving during the French Revolution and the First Empire.[82] The implied references to Ancient Greek democracy and the Roman Republic reflected, to some extent, the ideals of the Revolution. Even during the suppression of Christianity, Neoclassical polytheism was valued, and artists, as well as craftspeople continued to develop the style to perfection.

The portraits in the cameos may have been intended as depictions of actual or mythological figures. However, what use would there be in making each cameo different, or carving them at all, if their imagery was indecipherable to contemporary observers? Some knowledge of the symbolism was necessary, to the client in particular, to avoid having spectators reading into it messages unknown to the wearer. The jewellery firm Chaumet tells, in a book from 2019, that the couple in the medallion represents Cupid and Psyche from antique mythology,[83] as does a 2010 press release from the Swedish Royal Court.[84] However, the story depicted in the cameo is not told in ancient Greece, not even substituting Cupid with his Greek name Eros. The tales of Cupid/Eros and Psyche are about two young adults in love, whereas this picture shows an adult woman and a child. Therefore, it is not just a question of names or mythological references. Who could they be? This is the first question that needs to be addressed.

Furthermore, it is possible to question whether cameos were considered inferior at the Napoleonic court and simply a substitute for finer gems like rubies, sapphires, emeralds and diamonds. The tradition of carving cameos of notable Roman men in profile, emperors, for example, had never been completely forgotten. The Neoclassical style first emerged under the French monarchy during the second half of the eighteenth century, anticipating the Empire style.

[82] Diana Scarisbrick, *Portrait Jewels: Opulence & Intimacy from the Medici to the Romanovs,* Thames & Hudson Ltd, London, England, 2011, p. 162.
[83] Suzanne Tise-Isoré, Editor, *Chaumet in Majesty: Jewels of Sovereigns Since 1780,* Flammarion, Paris, France, 2019, p. 13.
[84] Kungahuset [Swedish Royal Court], op cit.

The cameo's manner of portrayal suited Napoleon well since it cleverly linked him and the imperial family to the tradition of depicting powerful Romans. For his coronation in Paris on 2 December 1804, a crown was made, and numerous antique and mediaeval cameos, borrowed from the Louvre––at the time called Musée Napoléon––were attached to a golden structure similar to the lost crown of Charlemagne (Figure 6).[85] If cameos were prestigious enough to be employed for this purpose, they had a rightful place anywhere else in his new empire.

Figure 6. *Napoleon's Crown*, Martin-Guillaume Biennais, Nitot et Fils, 1804, Cameos, Intaglios, Velvet, Embroidery, Silver-gilt, Photographed by David Liuzzo, 6 March 2009, The Louvre, Paris, France, MS91, © Wikimedia Commons.

The Emperor and Empress were crowned King and Queen of Italy in Milan six months later. A solemn portrait of the Queen, a *portrait d'apparat* from 1807 (Figure 7), was painted by Andrea Appiani (1754–1817). Beside Her Majesty is the regal insignia: a crown with an orb and a Christian cross at the top where the half-arches meet and a similar crown behind. It is there as a symbol of her position. The jewellery she wears for the occasion is composed of cameos set in an abundance of pearls, rubies and diamonds. The carved motifs are mainly figures representing a message of Napoleon's triumphs on the battlefield, but, in the middle of the diadem and the belt, there is a male head in profile––it is the Emperor himself, confirming his status twice.[86] The carvings tell stories; they communicate and persuade observers of the legitimacy of the new ruler to his people in a country used to this symbolism and rhetoric from the time of the Roman emperors and onwards. Using cameos, Napoleon chose to link himself to history and seek to consolidate his position. The cameo carvings speak with a clear and dignified voice, even in the painting, where the artist portrays them with meticulous detail.

[85] Silvia Malaguzzi, *Bijoux, Pierres et Objets Précieux* [Jewellery, Stones and Precious Objects], Hazan, Milan, Italy, 2007, p. 183.
[86] Scarisbrick, 2011, op cit., p. 222.

Figure 7. *Portrait of Empress Josephine as Queen of Italy*, Andrea Appiani, 1807, Oil on Canvas, 98.5 x 74.5 cm, Chateau de Malmaison, Rueil-Malmaison, France, M.M.2003.2.1, © Wikimedia Commons.

Napoleon encouraged Josephine to wear cameos not only on solemn occasions. By 1805, the fashion for wearing cameos was established enough to be confirmed in the *Journal des Dames*, which advised its readers that a lady should wear cameos set in her belt, necklace, bracelets and headdress.[87] These gems became so popular that dignitaries gave them as gifts; Pope Pius VII (1742–1823) seems to have given Empress Josephine cameos more than once, and the Empress herself gave cameos to Tsar Alexander of Russia (1777–1825).[88] Napoleon founded a gem carving school and workshops in Paris to secure the supply and possibly control the motifs depicted on French cameos.[89] These facts bear witness to the importance attached to these gems, their messages, and the care that went into their production. To think that a diadem made for the Empress herself, gifted by the Emperor, realised by the finest jeweller, could have arbitrarily chosen cameos and carved motifs would, in my opinion, demonstrate a neglect of historic context. Therefore, there is a story to tell––maybe more than one.

Cupid and Venus

What is the identity of the woman and little child with wings depicted in the cameo, if not Cupid and Psyche? While the little putto reaching for the bow and arrow is arguably Cupid, who is the grown woman represented depriving him of his well-known attributes? What the cameo depicts is

[87] Clare Phillips, *Jewels & Jewellery,* V & A Publishing, London, England, 2008, p. 68.
[88] Kate Williams, *Josephine: Desire, Ambition, Napoleon,* Hutchinson, London, England, 2013, p. 293.
[89] Tise-Isoré, op cit., p. 54.

not a playful game between lovers but a scene of education or well-deserved rebuke. Are there any known stories and motifs about something similar? During the mid-1700s, a fresco was discovered at the excavations of Villa di Arianna in Stabiae, near Pompeii, with a scene often reinterpreted for the growing market of art connoisseurs (Figure 8). It represents a saleswoman showing little winged putti to potential buyers, women needing a cupid to bid on their behalf to secure a love match with an eligible candidate. This scene, known as *The Cupid Sellers*, shows a lady to the right offering a cupid putto to reluctant women for inspection. Here, women and putti are present, but there are too many characters, and their actions differ from those of the elusive Cupid on the cameo.

The solution proposed is simple: the scene depicts Cupid and his mother. The woman shown naked, in heroic nudity, is the divinity Venus of Roman mythology, usually portrayed as a sensual adult woman depicted either naked or sometimes wearing a sash draped over her genitals as her only covering. Cupid was the illegitimate love child of Venus, the goddess of love, and Mars, the god of war. On the basis of these mythological characters' attributes and symbols, it is possible to conclude that the pair immortalised in the central cameo of the diadem are most definitely a mother and her child, Venus and Cupid. The scene has been illustrated many times, for example, by Antoine Watteau (1684–1721) in his painting *Venus and Cupid* from circa 1715 (Figure 9).

Figure 8. *Venditrice di amorini* (The Cupid Vendors), Artist Unknown, First Century AD, Fresco, 117 x 140 cm, National Museum of Archaeology, Naples, Italy, No Accession Number, © Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 9. *Cupid Disarmed*, Antoine Watteau, circa 1715, Oil on Canvas, 47 x 38 cm, Condé Museum, Chantilly, France, PE 369, © Wikimedia Commons.

Having identified the motif as Venus and Cupid, a mother and her child, the question remains whether this scene can be interpreted as an allegory of living individuals from approximately 1809 when the cameo was set in the central medallion of Empress Josephine's diadem. This question concerns the iconological level of a picture, the third level of Erwin Panofsky's model for reading the contents and meanings in art.[90] In this case, I suggest that learning more about how the imperial couple used art and its figurative language to communicate their personalities and qualities may provide the key to the mystery and explain how a cameo featuring Roman gods could fit into such a tradition and strategy.

[90] Hans-Olof Boström, *Panofsky och Ikonologin* [Panofsky and Iconology], Karlstad University Press, Karlstad, Sweden, 2007, p. 12.

Art and Image Making in the Hands of Napoleon and Josephine

The Emperor and the Empress were anxious to communicate and confirm their status and position through visual splendour and princely magnificence within a geographic and historical perspective. Napoleon understood the potential of propaganda, demonstrating in-depth knowledge of how to use ancient and new symbols to create a magnanimous image of himself as a legitimate ruler. Not only did he link himself to the old French kings, as with the "Crown of Charlemagne" manufactured for his coronation, but he also incorporated Roman traditions from Italy, an area he had conquered, as epitomised by his gold coronation wreath.[91] Having become the ruler of the Italian regions, he took their symbols as his own.

When promoting himself to the title of Emperor, an entire system of symbols was ordered and created, which in many ways represented a variation of the apparatus employed by the recently abolished French monarchy.[92] The idea of grand jewellery as an extension of regalia was an obvious way of communicating the wearers' elevated position to spectators. Furthermore, many fine artists had been hired, even before Dominique-Vivant Denon (1747–1825) was appointed director of the image of the First Consul-turned-Emperor. Starting from the Italian Campaign of 1796–1797, numerous portraits glorify Napoleon by depicting him as a true hero. The compositions often show Napoleon in the centre, conveying an expression of classic beauty and dignified calm, which recall expressions from Roman antiquity and the traditional iconography of Christ. Some of these large paintings by Antoine-Jean Gros (1771–1835)–now in the Louvre–were exhibited in the salons of 1804 and 1808.[93] Through the clever commissioning of artworks, Napoleon adopted a profile of both hero and redeemer of the nation and brought his triumphs from the battlefield into central Paris to establish the image of himself as a valid leader of the French Empire.

From this position, it was a short step to connect Napoleon's character, qualities and achievements to those of the Roman god Mars. In contrast, there were no options for finding links between Josephine, as an empress, and ancient political or martial powers. However, as a far more popular person to the people in France than her husband usually was, she represented a symbol of love and care for the nation.[94] Having both a son, Eugène (1781–1824), and a daughter, Hortense (1783–1834), from her first husband Alexandre de Beauharnais, Josephine was already linked to motherhood and family. Venus was, therefore, the Roman goddess Josephine seemed to be naturally connected to. The fact that Mars, the god of war, who was also an admired peacemaker, and Venus, the goddess of love, had a passionate relationship resulting in their illegitimate love child Cupid, is significant since the imperial couple longed for a child and an heir to the crown.

Napoleon adopted the loyal de Beauharnais children, and they became part of a bigger family picture when the Emperor placed his closest relatives on thrones all over Continental Europe. Eugène was appointed Viceroy of Italy, and Hortense was married to Napoleon's younger brother Louis (1778–1846), King of Holland between 1806 and 1810. Her marriage to Louis made Hortense a queen, a title she is often referred to, and her importance to the imperial throne of France will be discussed further in the article.

Napoleon and Josephine commissioned numerous portraits and miniatures. Many of these were gifted to prominent people or loyal officials, helping to build and spread the image of the imperial couple. A well-known portrait of the Empress as Venus, an allegory connecting her to the Roman ideal, was painted by Andrea Appiani (1754–1817) as early as 1796 when Josephine resided in Milan during Napoleon's Italian Campaign (Figure 10).[95] Although this is an unusually well-dressed Venus, the work's title indicates the attempted allegory. At the left of the painting, a statue is visible, which represents Cupid holding a bow in his right hand. The mythological tales and iconography of these Roman gods were well known at the time, and their relationship was common

[91] Morel, op cit., p. 253.
[92] Magnus Olausson, Editor, *Härskarkonst Napoleon, Karl Johan, Alexander* [Staging Power: Napoleon, Charles John, Alexander], Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden, 2010, p. 229.
[93] Ibid, p. 127.
[94] Williams, op cit., p. 219.
[95] Silvestra Bietoletti, *Neoclassicism and Romanticism,* Sterling, New York, United States, 2009, p. 64.

knowledge. The sensual Josephine in the role of Venus was only a repetition of already known patterns and immortalised her image as a superior divine figure on canvas.

The representation of Napoleon as Mars was a similarly popular theme. Between 1802 and 1806, the sculptor Antonio Canova (1757–1822) executed a 345 cm statue in marble of Napoleon as Mars (Figure 11). The heroic nudity of the figure, combined with a few typical attributes, makes deciphering the symbolism easy for an educated observer. Originally held in the Musée Napoléon, this monumental piece today resides in Apsley House, London.[96] Numerous paintings and engravings also exist showing Napoleon in situations related to war and peace. The Code Civil, or *Code Napoléon*, from 1804, is sometimes referred to as his greatest and most lasting triumph and, therefore, the peace–making side of Mars is as relevant in association with Napoleon as the victorious and conquering aspects of the god of war.

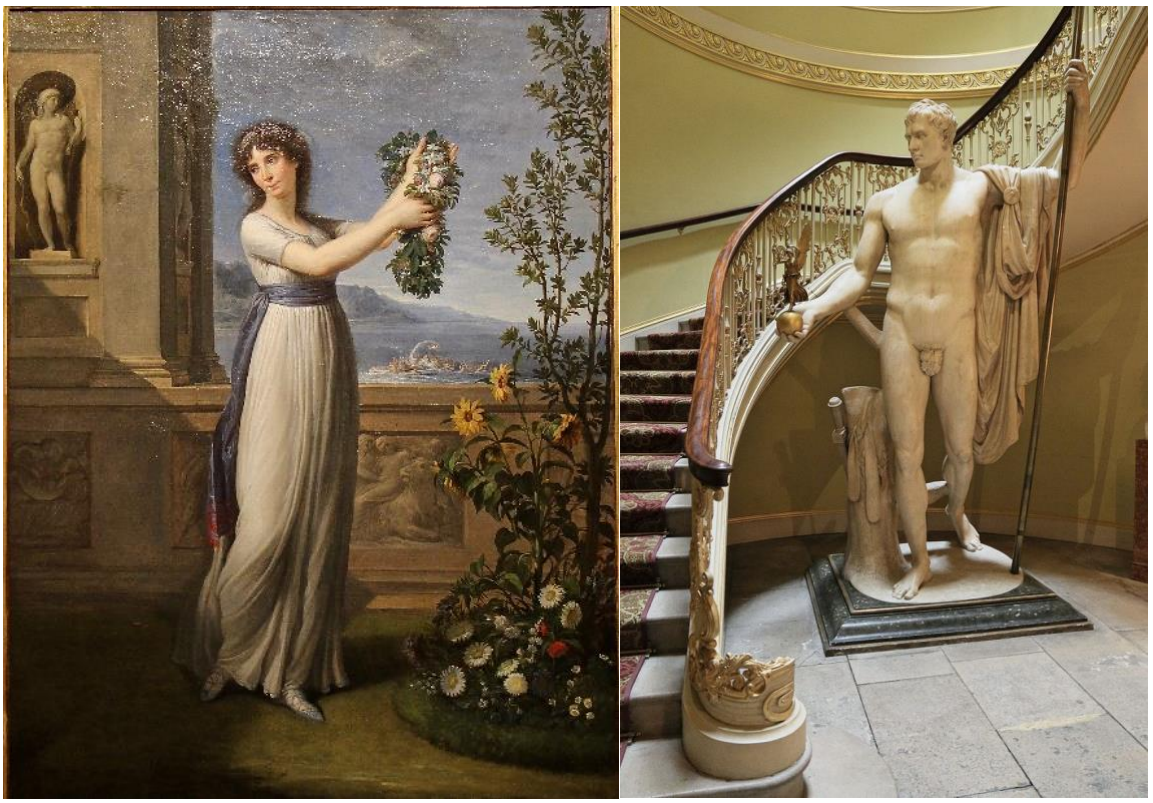

Figure 10. *Josephine as Venus*, Andrea Appiani, 1796, Oil on Canvas, 98 x 73.5 cm, Private Collection, No Accession Number, © Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 11. *Napoleon as Mars the Peacemaker,* Antonio Canova, 1802–1806, Carrara Marble, 325 cm, Photographed by Jörg Bittner Unna, Apsley House, London, England, No Accession Number, © Wikimedia Commons.

In portraits of Josephine, who had a keen interest in botany, flowers and plants are recurring symbols. In an informal portrait painted by Antoine–Jean Gros in 1809, she holds, in her hand, a letter from her son Eugène, whose marble bust is visible at the left of the image (Figure 12). In a pot decorated with the letter "J" for Josephine, there are hydrangeas, in French called *hortensias*, symbolising her daughter Hortense, at the time the Queen of Holland (1806–1810). In the study made by Gros for this portrait, her belt is showing. According to the current fashion, she is wearing

[96] Alessandro Guadagni, "Le Marbre Blanc de Carrare à l'Époque de Napoléon [White Carrara Marble in the Age of Napoleon]," 2016, https://www.napoleon.org/histoire-des-2-empires/articles/le-marbre-blanc-de-carrare-a-lepoque-de-napoleon/, Accessed 15 February 2020.

cameos on the front of the belt (Figure 13). There are three of them carved with the heads of Eugène, Napoleon and Hortense. Josephine is wearing these cameos, representing the entire family bar herself, close to her heart, and may have intended to incorporate them in the painting this way.[97]

Figure 12. *Portrait of the Empress Josephine,* Antoine-Jean Gros, 1809, Oil on Canvas, Photographed by Jean-Pierre Dalbéra, 9 July 2011, Musée Masséna, Nice, France, No Accession Number, © Wikimedia Commons.

Figure 13. *L'Impératrice Joséphine* [The Empress Josephine], Antoine-Jean Gros, 1809, Oil on Canvas, © Musée National des châteaux Malmaison et Bois-Préau, Rueil-Malmaison, France, M.M.40.47.6874. Photographed by Kristina af Klinteberg, 19 January 2022.

The Bonapartes, Cameos and Possible Allegories

The main dilemma overshadowing the marital happiness of Napoleon and Josephine was the lack of an heir. This problem was crucial to Josephine's position as Empress, and she had to find other ways to justify her presence at the Emperor's side. A strategy of displaying a solemn and imperial identity was manifested through art by establishing connections to mythology, allegories and historical links of other sorts. The children from her first marriage procured some opportunities to build a dynasty. Her son, Eugène, was appointed Prince of France at Napoleon's coronation in 1804, but he had no claim to the throne. Her daughter, Hortense, had to accept an elaborate plan to provide the imperial couple with a solution as close to a shared heir as the imperial couple could

[97] Carol Solomon Kiefer, *The Empress Josephine: Art & Royal Identity,* Mead Art Museum Amherst College, Massachusetts, United States, 2005, p. 10.

hope for. Hortense was married to Louis, a younger Bonaparte brother who became King of Holland (1806–1810). This royal couple succeeded in having three boys, who led the order of succession before the birth of Napoléon François Joseph Charles Bonaparte (1811–1832), Napoleon's son with his second wife, Marie Louise of Austria (1791–1847). To Josephine, who never had any children in her marriage to Napoleon, her daughter's sons with the younger brother of the Emperor served as substitute heirs and legitimate links to the throne. Of these boys, Napoléon-Charles (1802–1807), Napoléon-Louis (1804–1831), and Charles Louis Napoléon (1808–1873), only the youngest survived to become emperor. This was during the Second Empire (1852–1870) when he became Napoleon III (President 1848–1852, Emperor 1852–1870).

In 1807, the family went into mourning after the death of Napoléon-Charles, the eldest of the boys, at five years of age. At this time, Josephine was still married to the Emperor. Her grief has been portrayed in an intimate painting, possibly made for the closest family members. Examined in this context, this piece of art provides a conclusive answer to the question of the hidden identities. The portrait, an allegory painting from 1807 made to look like a cameo, was produced by Louis-Bertin Parant (1768–1851), an artist acclaimed for his talent for paintings which simulated cameos close to perfection (Figure 14). The reason for commissioning such a painting might have been twofold: cameos have often been chosen as mementoes of loss and passed between generations within the family. In this particular case, the painting portrays alabaster-coloured figures producing the characteristic impression of Roman mythological sculptures, looking as if they had been fashioned in durable marble to survive for centuries to come.

Figure 14. *Portrait of Empress Josephine Imitating a Cameo,* Louis-Bertin Parant, 1807, Graphite and Sepia Wash, 22 x 17 cm, © Bibliothèque Thiers, Paris, France, Inv. T 214 (863) (DM446), Photographed by Kristina af Klinteberg, 20 January 2022.

This painting shows Josephine using her hands to protect a hydrangea, symbolising her daughter Hortense, whose eldest son, Charles-Napoléon, died the same year.[98] The recently deceased boy is presented following the Christian convention of depicting a deceased child with wings, as a symbol of the soul and the genius of death. Besides the fact that a winged boy is visible to the observer despite his death, the entire composition is marked by an element of surrealism. The Empress' dress is revealing; diaphanous fabric flows freely around her figure, displaying a naked body underneath. This depiction of Josephine is far closer to an ethereal Venus in her nudity than

[98] Solomon Kiefer, op cit., p. 12.

the portrait by Appiani painted eleven years earlier, where the Empress also poses as the Roman goddess.

The child here looks down at a withered hydrangea bud in his hand while the woman looks away, possibly towards the horizon. Neither looks at the other nor the viewer, as if unable to see anyone else, separated as they are by life and death. This painting is neither a magnificent portrait of the Empress promoting her position or image nor an intimate miniature of the popular Josephine to be presented to someone to remind of an alliance or friendship. It is a personal, even private, motif; the story of a mother's care for her daughter and grief for a dead grandchild. It was probably only intended for her closest circle of intimates. However, it has also fulfilled the function of display, as testified by the visible marks of time. The family was aware of this portrait manifesting affliction and distress, whose unusual setting invites several questions. If this painting was meant for private eyes only, why would it be given the form of an allegory? Is it part of the artist's style which suits the impression of a cameo? Or could it maybe be a study for a future, genuine stone carving, a three–dimensional cameo, where some of the details would have to become even more simplified in their incision onto the layers of agate by a lapidarist?

The painting remains an enigma. Without guiding text or an explanatory title, the subject could easily pass as Venus and Cupid, especially as the Empress had previously been portrayed as Venus accompanied by Cupid. It would be rather unsuspecting to think the choice of subject a mere coincidence when Napoleon and Josephine, an image–savvy couple who did not leave any artistic expression to chance, commissioned the artwork. They were far too conscious about how they were represented, and their advisors and hired artists worked dedicatedly to uphold the image and visual communication desired by the Bonaparte family.

In 1809, two years after Parant's portrait of Charles–Napoléon and his grandmother was painted, Napoleon presented Josephine with the pearl and cameo diadem that is the focus of this article. Visible in the middle front of the headdress is the cameo of Venus and Cupid set in an oval of 25 fine pearls (Figure 15). Napoleon cared greatly for cameos and chose them for inclusion in the principal insignia for his coronations in Paris (1804) and Milan (1805). He had founded ateliers for their making in Paris, and he was happy to receive excellent examples from the Italian peninsula, from his sister Caroline Murat (1782–1839) in Naples, and the Pope.[99] He had most certainly seen both the Venus painting of Josephine by Appiani from 1796 and the little mourning painting, in cameo style, by Parant from 1807, where his and Josephine's joint heir and successor to the throne is portrayed with wings. With himself often linked to Mars and Josephine to Venus, Cupid––in mythology Mars and Venus's illegitimate child––completes the picture of the successful imperial couple. Since he is Josephine's grandson and Napoleon's nephew, Cupid/Napoléon–Charles is the legitimate heir, even if not born within their marriage, and he likely represents the best link to the symbolism found in the allegory.

[99] Phillips, op. cit., p. 68.

Figure 15. *The Cameo Diadem,* Nitot et Fils (Diadem), Giuseppe Girometti (Central Cameo), 1809, Cameos, Pearls, Gold, Photographed by Lisa Raihle Rehbäck, Courtesy of His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden, © The Royal Court, Stockholm, Sweden, No Accession Number.

When comparing the painted cameo to the real one in agate, the different actions performed by the child stand out. In the diadem, he reaches out for his apparatus, consisting of a bow and arrow. The completely nude Venus has disarmed him, depriving him of his legendary powers. The women in the cameos share a striking resemblance: they have the same body type, and the hair gathered in a ponytail shows a remarkable similarity. Such a simple hairstyle is rare in portraits of Josephine, but here the two portrayals show similar characteristics. It would be unlikely for Josephine and her husband to commission and own these two pieces and put one of them in the very centre of a prominent headdress, made to be seen at formal occasions in a solemn atmosphere, and not be aware of the concordance between the two in motifs and shapes. After all, Josephine was Napoleon's own Venus.

Even if the cameo was made originally as a mythological motif, Napoleon could hardly miss its likeness to the Parant painting when having it mounted in the diadem, and Josephine could scarcely have worn it without noticing the correspondence in form and style. Since they had only a few years earlier attached great importance to the central position of a cameo in the diadem worn in Italy for the coronation, in all likelihood, the figure or scene in this instance would not have been an arbitrary choice. However, Venus, as a representation of the wife of Napoleon, could probably have been worn by the Empress only if it had been a gift from the Emperor, and also––which would have been the case––if it were not an actual portrait of the lady herself, but rather an allegory. For Josephine to wear her own image as a portrait in a cameo might not have been *comme il faut*. In the coronation cameos worn in Italy, it was Napoleon who had been depicted (Figure 7). In the belt worn in the Gros portrait (Figure 13), it was Napoleon and the children, the entire immediate family except for Josephine. In this case, introducing an heir rendered it an acceptable compromise. A couple of years after the death of Hortense and Louis' eldest son, the allegory might come alive again: Charles–Napoléon had two younger brothers, both with Napoléon as a second name, who could succeed Napoleon as emperor. Therefore, Cupid could represent either boy, the eagerly

awaited successor to the throne related to the French imperial couple, often analogised as Mars and Venus.

Documents related to the Cameo tiara from the jeweller Chaumet express doubts about whether this is their original piece since the miniature painting of Josephine wearing it shows a different central cameo.[100] The miniature is the last portrait made of her, painted just before her death in May 1814. The medallion in Quaglia's watercolour (Figure 3) only measures a few millimetres of the total dimensions of 11.2 x 8.8 centimetres; therefore, the painter may not have considered all the details. Another miniature portrait depicting Josephine's daughter Hortense reappeared a few years ago (Figure 16). This painting was made two years earlier, in 1812. In this artwork, while fewer details are represented overall, the central cameo has been given as much attention as possible within such a small enamel piece (8 cm x 6.5 cm), and the silhouettes of Venus and Cupid are clearly visible.

Figure 16. *Portrait of Hortense de Beauharnais, Queen of Holland,* L. Thomasset, 1812, Enamel, 8 x 6.5 cm, Dorotheum Auction Catalogue, 24 April 2007, © Dorotheum, Vienna, Austria, No Accession Number.

Why would the importance of this cameo be more significant to Hortense in 1812 than to her mother Josephine in May 1814, a month after Napoleon's first abdication? The answer follows the argument previously articulated in this article. If the cameo told the story of Hortense's mother and her own son as an heir to Napoleon's legacy, she would have wanted to immortalise them with respect and love. To Josephine, two years later, it might have seemed impertinent to insist on depicting herself in the cameo and her grandson, no matter how dear, as a dynastic heir since there was no longer a throne to inherit. Napoleon's dethronement transformed not only the Bonaparte family but France, its constitution, and the rest of Europe forever. Knowing the former Empress's perspicacious instinct for allegories in art, this subtle change, if deliberate, is a testimony from her last living days, which also marks the end of an era.

[100] Huguenaud, 2020, op cit.

Conclusion

The Bonaparte family were aware of the power of the visual arts as a medium of mass communication. They understood how to employ classical Roman imagery, in general, and the mythology in allegories to promote themselves. The use of cameos in the coronation crown is an example of their recycling of classical style, while depicting the Emperor as Mars is an example of allegory. Considering the familiarity with this practice of visual similes and comparing it with other examples of fine art from the time, it is instinctive to interpret the figures portrayed in the central cameo of Empress Josephine's diadem as Venus and Cupid, with the woman representing Josephine and the child one of the imperial couple's chosen heirs. However, this reading of the allegory becomes less apparent after Napoleon's remarriage in 1810 and his fall from grace in April 1814. Consequently, the miniature portrait of Hortense from 1812, wearing her mother's diadem, displays the contours of the mythological motif in the front––confirming the provenance of the Bernadotte diadem––while the one of Josephine from May 1814 neglects it. Interpreting the cameo's iconography correctly today should only be welcome since a mother's love for her child or grandchild conveys a sense of selfless admiration always needed to ensure a promising future for new generations. This sentiment, expressed in the centre of a headdress used for royal weddings, communicates hope and confidence while paying homage to earlier generations and their lasting visual heritage.

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Biography

Kristina af Klinteberg holds a BA and MA from the Universities of Lund, Linköping and Uppsala in Sweden, and a postgraduate diploma from London College of Communication/London University of the Arts, UK. She published a book on the cultural history and the use of jewelled headdresses, *Smycken som huvudsak* in 2018 (Kulturhistoriska Bokförlaget, Stockholm). After numerous years working in a different field, she returned to university to continue her studies in Art History. Her studies on jewelled hair ornaments in art range from 1400 Florence to 2010 Stockholm. In 2023, Kristina upgraded her short master to a long master; the thesis focussed on the different types of headdresses and their symbolism within the *Life of Marie de' Medici Cycle* by Peter Paul Rubens at the Louvre.

The Contribution of Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg (1854–1918) To the Understanding of Lace Production in Dalmatia in the 16th and 17th Century[101]

Katarina Nina Simončič

Abstract

The focus of this article is the contribution of Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg to the knowledge about lace production in Dalmatian from the 16th to the 17th century. Her book *Dalmatia and its folk art* from 1912, which contains footage of textile and lace artefacts from Dalmatia, makes a valuable contribution to the archives as it bears witness to the existence of certain objects which are no longer preserved. In retrospect, the contribution of Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg, in terms of collection and documentation accompanied by the author's fieldwork observations, is a valuable reminder of the fragmented nature of Croatian history and lace-making tradition in Dalmatia. The article draws the attention to several key issues in the earlier production of textiles and lace in Dalmatia, precisely in the period between the 16th and the 17th century. Firstly, the lace artefacts from that period in Dalmatia are very rare. Secondly, it points out that researchers should be aware of specific historical circumstances that influenced the culture and lace production in Dalmatia. Finally, one of the most important facts is that large quantities of Dalmatian lace were launched to the European market under foreign names through centuries.

The following sections will attempt to revisit the contribution of Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg, and complement it with recent findings and notes on preserved monastery collections of lace in Dalmatia, with the aim of emphasizing the importance of lacemaking in Dalmatia in the 16th and 17th century for the needs of both local and international market.

Introduction

Dalmatia, situated at the crossroads of important trade routes through which strong cultural influences from both the East and the West were transmitted and assimilated, was a fertile ground for the artistic production of synergistic expressions imbued with autochthonous characteristics. Fernand Braudel expresses the specificity of this region in an extraordinary way. In his book on the Mediterranean, he gives an insight into the political and commercial relations of Dalmatia in 16th and 17th centuries, highlighting the cultural, artistic and technological aspects, but also addressing everyday life and, consequently, textile production.[102]

Since the 16th century, needle lace was produced in Dalmatia in the monastic communities of some coastal towns and on the island, while bobbin lace started being produced in the 17th century. In addition to the predominant ornamental patterns that came from the West through trade, the monasteries also developed their own patterns. In Dalmatian archives, lace and lace decorations are very often mentioned in the dowries and inheritances of citizens; they are also mentioned in trade records.

Unfortunately, too little space is given to the role of lace-making in Dalmatia in the context of the European historical trends of lace-making. One of the reasons for this is that it is very difficult to compare lace products from Dalmatia with those from the leading European production centres, as there are few examples of Dalmatian lace from the 16th and 17th centuries. However, archival data and rare preserved fragments of this material culture give us a partial insight into their importance.

[101] The topic was first discussed in an oral presentation at the *New Research in Dress History,* International Conference in London (7–13 June 2021).

[102] Fernand Braudel, *Sredozemlje i sredozemni svijet u doba Filipa II,* [The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world at the time of Philippe II], Antibarbarus, Zagreb, Croatia, 1997.

Historical Context

Dalmatia is a part of Croatia, opposite to Italy. It is a narrow belt of the east shore of the Adriatic Sea, stretching from the island of Rab in the north to the Bay of Kotor in the south. This geographical position is very important for understanding the interaction of different cultures in this area. After the fall of the medieval Kingdom of Croatia in 1102, its cities and lands were often conquered by, or switched allegiance to, the kingdoms of the region during the Middle Ages. For example, the Hungarians, who could not take Croatia by force, signed a treaty in 1102, according to which the Croatian kingdom was annexed to Hungary. From that moment on, a Croatian-Hungarian state was created, in which Dalmatia had its own administration and elements of statehood.[103] After the last of the first Croato-Hungarian dynasty died (the Arpad), the Croatian Šubić princes brought Charles Robert of the French Anjou dynasty to the throne. King Charles and his heir Louis, crushed the Croatian and Hungarian nobility and created a strong state. Louis defeated Venice and, with the peace of Zadar in 1358, returned the entire Croatian Adriatic coast under his rule while also placing Croatian Dubrovnik under his protection. After his death, a period of anarchy and civil war began, during "one of the Anjou sold a part of Dalmatia to Venice in 1409".[104] The longest-lasting rule was that of the Republic of Venice, which controlled most of Dalmatia between 1420 and 1797, except for the small but stable Republic of Ragusa (1358–1808) – present day Dubrovnik – in the south. For centuries the Republic od Dubrovnik recognised the rule of Constantinople, the Croat-Hungarian state and Turkey, but in reality it was independent and traded from the Levant to Great Britain, states Pavličević.[105] Dubrovnik was a center of Croatian culture, literature, art and also lace production. Due to special geopolitical conditions, Dalmatia was located in the middle of intensive trade routes between East and West and tried to become part of the global market with its products.

An important role was played by the production of lace, with which sericulture was closely associated. Throughout history, some Dalmatian cities such as Dubrovnik, Split and Zadar tried to devote themselves to silk production, but under the patronage of Maria Theresa of Austria (1717–1780) it flourished along with lace production. At the time of the establishment of the Kingdom of Dalmatia, the Austrian government became involved in this branch of the economy. The Kingdom of Dalmatia was a crown land of the Austrian Empire (1815–1867) and Austria-Hungary (1867–1918). While the Austrian power in Northern Italy was gradually fading away, in Dalmatia they tried to strengthen the production that characterised those regions.[106] With the Austro-Hungarian compromise of 1867, Dalmatia remained in the Austrian part, separated from Croatia and Slavonia, then in the Hungarian part. Dalmatia was legally an integral part of the Triune Kingdom of Croatia, Slavonia and Dalmatia, although the actual unification of Dalmatia with Croatia and Slavonia never took place. Since 1861, the Kingdom of Dalmatia had its own parliamentary assembly, the Dalmatian Parliament, with its seat in Zadar. It was headed by a governor appointed by the emperor and king, as in the other crown lands of the Austrian part of Austria-Hungary. This situation was maintained until 1918, when the Austro-Hungarian Empire fell.[107]

At the end of the 19th century, there was considerable interest from Vienna, as the centre of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, for archaeological and historical monuments in Dalmatia. The interest in archeological sites and folk art performed the ideological task of getting to know each other and connecting the subjects of the monarchy with the representations of the cultural peculiarities of each country. They emphasised the strength of the Empire by promoting the idea

[103] Dragutin Pavličević, "A review of the historical development of the Republic of Croatia," *GeoJournal*, Volume 38, Issue 4, 1996, p. 382.
[104] Pavličević, op cit., p. 383.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Šime Perićić, „Svilarstvo Dalmacije u 19. stoljeću," [Silk production in Dalmatia in the 19th century], *Radovi Zavoda za hrvatsku povijest Filozofskoga fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu*, Volume 15, Issue 1, 1982, p. 108.
[107] Pavličević, op cit., p. 384.

of unity in diversity.[108] Viennese ethnography, which was becoming increasingly popular, was considered a state-building science, and thus research on the "living past" and "authenticity" sought to emphasise ethnographic colour as an indicator of the stability and unity of the state.[109] Dalmatia is presented as an Austro-Hungarian country with a rich history, literature and art but also, from a modern perspective, it was characterised as a very backward culture.[110] One of Vienna's fundamental goals about Dalmatian rule was the promise of economic development, if the Dalmatian representatives in the Imperial Council supported the government and renounced their efforts to unite with the rest of Croatia.[111]

Dalmatien und seine Volkskunst (1911) by Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg

The Austrian writer and collector Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg (1854–1918) published a book in Vienna in 1911 entitled *Dalmatien und seine Volkskunst* (Eng. *Dalmatia and its folk art*). It is significant that this volume was dedicated to Princess Maria Josepha of Saxony, mother of Emperor Charles I of Austria and a great patron of lace production in Dalmatia. In the decade preceding the publication of Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg's book, Archduchess Maria Josepha often visited the Brijuni Islands and became the aristocratic patroness of the so-called Dalmatian folk art.[112] Owing to her interest, the *Society for the Promotion of the Lace and Domestic Industry in Dalmatia* was founded, which organised a series of exhibitions in Europe. As results of that promotion, a very popular handicraft studio was opened in Vienna in 1909. An exhibition of *Dalmatian lace and embroidery*, opened on 22 May 1905 at the Austrian Museum of Arts and Crafts in Vienna, aroused interest with the exhibition of shirts, scarves and lace from church treasuries. The professional management of the exhibition was provided by Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg.[113]

The book from 1911 was republished in Croatian and Italian in 1912, supplemented with the introduction and notes by Croatian historians Don Frane Bulić and Vinko Lozovina, who expressed a certain amount of criticism of the first issue, mainly regarding the author's insufficient understanding of historical influences and connections.[114] Their text is accompanied by many photographs of artefacts from the Dalmatian area with detailed descriptions in Croatian, German and Italian. The book was preceded by the author's account of her extensive travels in Dalmatia, in which she enjoyed the support of Viennese high society, during which she established contacts with local collectors and experts. In her introduction, Bruck-Auffenberg emphasised that she focused the attention of these circles on the laces from Dubrovnik (*Pont de Raguse*) around 1890 and began her work on their preservation.[115] At the time of writing, she was the secretary of the *Society for the Promotion of the Lace and Domestic Industry in Dalmatia* and advocated for the patronage of Archduchess Maria Josepha. She participated in the organization of exhibitions,

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[108] Branka Vojnović Tražívuk, „Dalmatinska narodna umjetnost u Austro-Ugarskoj monarhiji početkom 20. stoljeća," [Dalmatian folk art in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy at the beginning of the 20th century], *Studia ethnologica Croatica*, Volume 18, 2006, p. 282.

[109] Elke – Nicole Kappus, "Način gledanja: Etnografski pogled II. Putovanje u živu prošlost...Etnografski pogled na Istru," [Viewing method: Ethnographic view II. A journey into the living past...An ethnographic view of Istria], *Istra: različiti pogledi*, Etnografski muzej Istre, Pazin, Croatia, 2002, p. 41–44.

[110] Ivan Pederin, "Car Franjo I. prema Dalmaciji i Boki: (1797-1806)," [Franz Joseph I of Austria towards Dalmatia and Boka: (1797-1806)], *Anali Zavoda za povijesne znanosti Hrvatske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti u Dubrovniku*, Volume 42, 2004, pp. 185–206.

[111] Ivan Pederin, *Jadranska Hrvatska u austrijskim i njemačkim putopisima*, [Adriatic Croatia in Austrian and German travelogues], Nakladni zavod Matice hrvatske, Zagreb, Croatia, 1991, pp. 219.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Stanko Piplović, "Marija Jozefa: zaštitnica narodne umjetnosti Dalmacije," [Marija Jozefa: patroness of Dalmatian folk art], *Ethnologica Dalmatica*, Volume 9, 2000, pp. 141–142.

[114] Origin. *Dalmacija i njena narodna umjetnost* (engl. *Dalmatia and its folk art*).

[115] Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg, *Dalmacija i njena narodna umjetnost: uzorci (šare) i starinske umjetničke tehnike, upotrebljavane negda u narodu i crkvi : čipke, vezovi, ćilimske tkanine, nakit, narodna nošnja i druge stvari, koje dalmatinci nose i izradjuju*, [Dalmatia and its folk art: patterns (patterns) and ancient artistic techniques, once used by the people and the church: lace, embroideries, carpet fabrics, jewelry, folk costumes and other things that Dalmatians wear and make], Kunstverlag Anton Schroll and Co, Vienna, Austria, 1912, p. 2.

especially the so-called *Dalmatian folk art in Berlin*, which she presented in the magazine *Adria*.[116] According to her own account, her visit to Dalmatia was prompted by the discovery of the *alba* with 16th-century lace decoration from 16th century in 1900, held in the Franciscan monastery on the Island of Čiovo near Trogir (Figure 1).

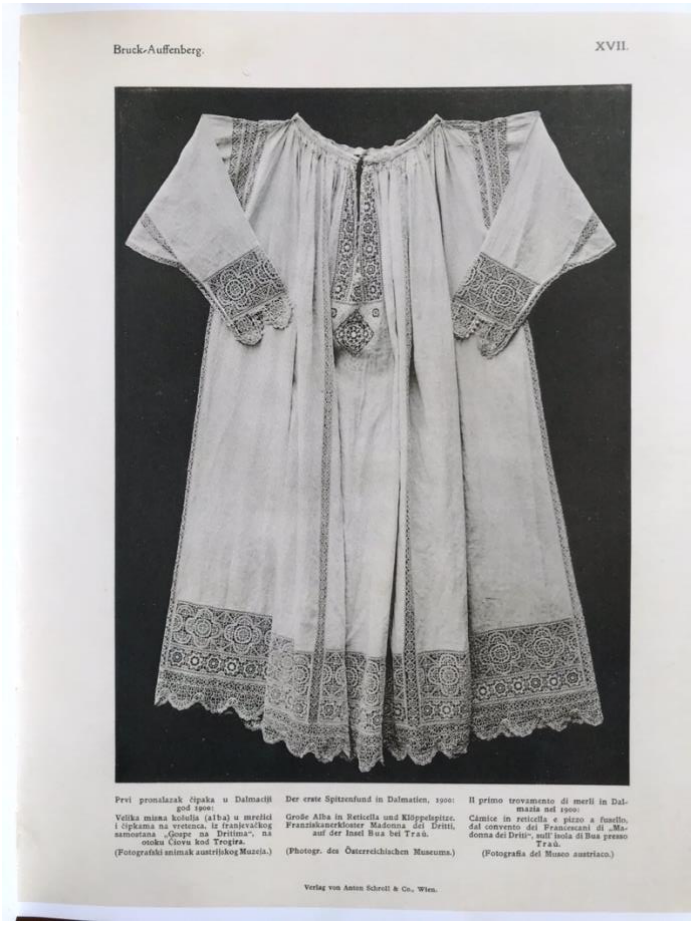

Figure 1. The alba with an original reticella from 16th century, Monastery of Drid on the Island Čiovo near Trogir, Illustration from Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg. *Dalmatien und seine Volkskunst* (*Dalmatia and Its Folklore Art*), Table XVII, Kunstverlag Anton Schroll and Co., Vienna, Austria, 1912.

Then, in the autumn of 1904, she embarked on a journey during which she photographed over 340 different lace patterns and displayed them in Vienna (Figure 2).[117] One of the photos Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg took, was that of an *alba* from the 16th century. In 1904, a shirt was borrowed for the exhibition to the Museum for Applied Arts in Vienna. The shirt from the 16th century was the work of nuns from a Benedictine monastery in Trogir. It was made of fine linen with rich lace trimming on the sleeves, around the neckline and the bottom hem, as well as on all the seams on the shirt. It was needle point lace, that was the early *reticella* sewn onto the linen foundation. The motif of the pattern testifies to its age – a gothic square characteristic of the early Renaissance *reticella*, which some authors refer to as the *Dalmatian point*.[118] According to Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg, she saw similar shirts or altar cloths with the same trimming in the convents of Zadar, Rab, Visovac, Hvar, as well as in Boka Kotorska. Unfortunately, the *alba* featured in the photograph does not exist anymore, having disappeared in a fire in 1949. All that is left of the garment with *reticella* lace is a photograph – a pictorial witness of Dalmatian lace production in the 16th century.[119] The photograph of the *alba* made by Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg was used by Ljubo Karaman (1886–1971), a famous Croatian art historian and conservator, within his book *Art in Dalmatia from 15th- 16th century* published in 1933. Like Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg in 1910, Ljubo Karaman considered textile production to have the same artistic value as expressions in architecture, painting and sculpture. For this reason, he included the photograph of the shirt (*alba*) in his study featuring the most significant Croatian Renaissance works of art.

[116] Pederin, op cit., pp.142, 235.
[117] Bruck-Auffenberg, op cit., p. 3.
[118] Nerina Echkel and Marijana Gušić
[119] Marijana Gušić, „Bijeli tekstil u crkvi sv. Stasija u Dobroti Boka Kotorska," [White textiles in the church of St. Stasija in Dobrota Boka Kotorska], *Glasnik cetinskih muzeja*, Volume XIII, 1980, pp. 54–82.

Historical Sites and Preserved Artifacts of Dalmatian Lace

In her book, Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg traced the first known decorative textile creations in archaeological finds in graves from the 9th and 11th century in Biskupija, near Knin. Fine meshes of gold and silver threads, as a common ornament on noblemen's clothes of that period, were made by using *macrame* and *filet* techniques.[120] An example of the late medieval Levantine ornaments is the belt in a silver case containing the relics of St. Simon in Zadar. The lace was sewn onto the silk foundation and it consists of octagonal stars made in round *macrame*, while inscription at the bottom reports that it was made in the 1480s.[121]

However, several lace artifacts from the 16th and 17th century have been preserved in the Dalmatian area. The lace collection in the Benedictine Sisters of Saint Mary Monastery in Zadar consists of 58 pieces. These are not selected items of the production of that time, but pieces of a rich lace inventory saved by chance in the last moment, hidden in a box in a bunker along with other church valuables and thus saved from fire and destruction during the Second World War. Along with the lace, many patterns and lacemaking tools disappeared in the turmoil of war. What was saved, except for one needlepoint lace, are samples of bobbin lace, taken off sacral vestments from the 16th to the 18th century.[122]

Going through the list of monastery and church treasuries in the Dalmatian area, following the steps of Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg, it is possible to find a few more examples of church robes, which provide important information for comparison and analysis. The Franciscan Monastery in Hvar was in possession of twelve *albas* richly trimmed with lace from the 16th and 17th century. Unfortunately, only two have been saved. One, fairly damaged, has rich bobbin lace trims, which indicate that it was made at the beginning of the 17th century. The other is similar to the shirt from Trogir in its size, cut, and the placement and the technique of trimming, which confirms Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg's assertion that such shirts could be found in church inventories along the Adriatic coast. It is made of fine linen, trimmed with needlepoint lace around

Figure 2. Dalmatian lace examples, Illustration from Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg. *Dalmatien und seine Volkskunst* (*Dalmatia and Its Folklore Art*), Table XVIII, XIX, XXIV, Kunstverlag Anton Schroll and Co., Vienna, Austria, 1912.

[120] Magdalena Dragičević, "Četiri fragmenta tekstila iz starohrvatskih grobova," [Four textile fragments from ancient Croatian graves], *Starohrvatska prosvjeta III*, Volume II, 1981, pp. 191–199.

[121] Marijana Gušić, „Profani tekstil u raki sv. Šimuna," [Profane textiles in raka st. Simon], *Radovi Sveučilište u Splitu – Filozofski fakultet*, Zadar, 1983, pp. 229-268.

[122] Nerina Eckhel, *In Honour of a Hand, Lacemaking in Croatia*, Etnografski muzej, Zagreb, 2012, p. 18.

the neckline, on the sleeves and on the bottom hem. This is also the early *reticella* sewn onto linen foundation, with many recognisable *paški teg* motifs (*mendulica, kolumbar, ročelica, listacić* and others). Narrow stripes of bobbin lace can be found lengthwise on the seams on the linen part of the shirt.[123] Lace artefacts from the 16th century unfortunately do not exist on the Island of Pag, but the typical *reticella* with geometrical motifs from that period is still incorporated into traditional culture. Certain motifs possess a particular charm, and the complete impression is that of transparency because of the tiny circlets on the edge called *zubcići*. In the year 1601, the Venetian Cesare Vecellio published a pattern book including a lot of motifs, in which Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg recognised the motifs from Pag[124]. Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg pointed out the use of tiny circles (zubzići) which can be found nowhere else used together with original *reticella* (Figure 3, 4).

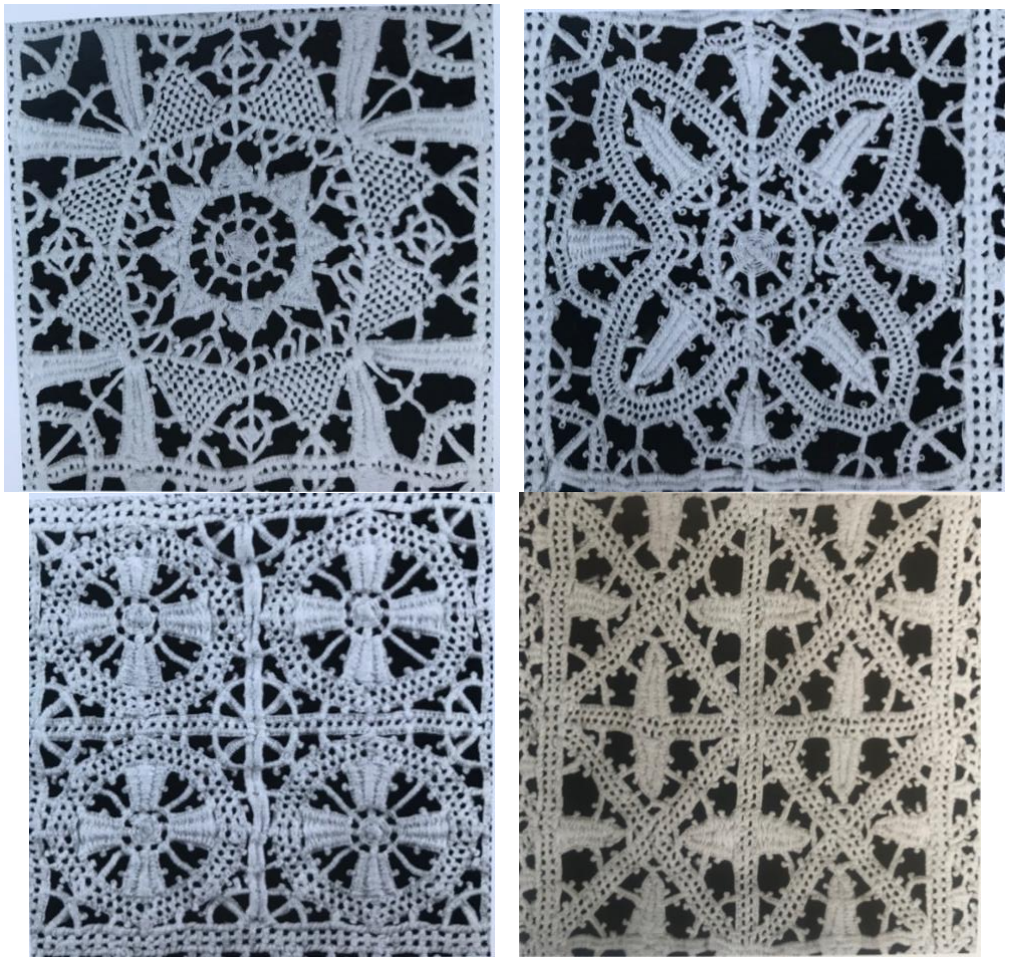

Figure 3. Lace *reticella* from island Pag with the tiny circlet on the edge called *zubcići*, Illustrations from Nerina Echkel, *Paška čipka*, [Pag lace], Etnografski muzej Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia, p. 15.

[123] Ibid, op cit., p. 25.

[124] Cesare Vecellio, *Corona delle nobili et virtuose donne. Libro primo nel qual si dimostra in varii dissegni tutte le sorti di mostre di punti tagliati, punti in aria, punti a reticello... 8a impressione.*. Venetia, Italy, 1601, https://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb35284985q, Accessed 18 November 2022.

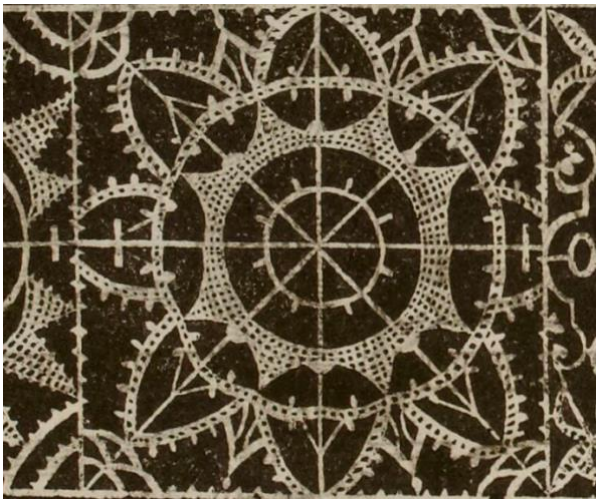

Figure 4. Motif from Cesare Vecellio, *Corona delle nobili et virtuose donne. Libro primo nel qual si dimostra in varii dissegni tutte le sorti di mostre di punti tagliati, punti in aria, punti a reticello... 8a impressione..* Venetia, Italy, 1601.

Other lace artefacts from the 16th century are kept in Boka Kotorska. Laces from St Stassio (St. Stosija) Church in Dobrota and in the cathedral in Kotor provide an important material, which enables comparative studies and the dating of Dalmatian heritage (Figure 5). These examples bear ornaments made by using both lacemaking techniques and can be dated to the period from the 16th to the 18th century.[125]

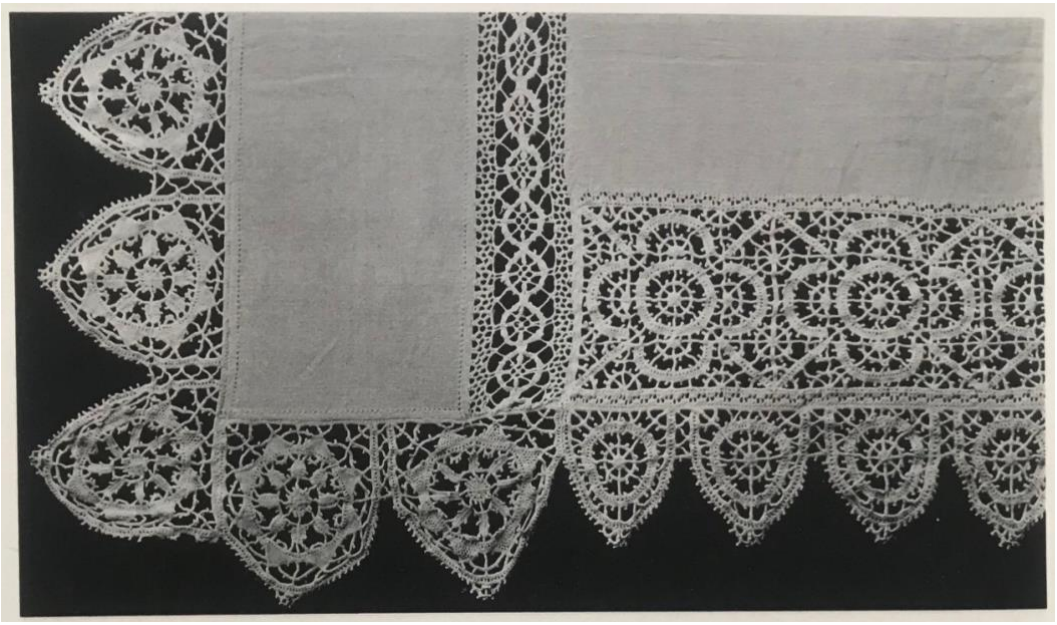

Figure 5. Needle lace, 16th century, St. Stosija, Dobrota, Boka Kotorska, Illustration from Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg. *Dalmatien und seine Volkskunst* (*Dalmatia and Its Folklore Art*), Table XXI, Kunstverlag Anton Schroll and Co., Vienna, Austria, 1912.

A particularly important locality that Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg also discussed is Dubrovnik, where lace production is mentioned in archival records from the 15th century. Beside its production, the Senate of Dubrovnik Republic issued very strict sumptuary regulations, among which lace

[125] Gušić, 1980, op cit., p. 56.

decoration is also mentioned. According to Gušić, who researches inventory lists of Dubrovnik from the 16th century, very fashionable was the collar named *čihorica*, made in *reticella.*[126] Women of Dubrovnik most frequently used the needle point technique. The same technique was most probably applied in the case of the famous *point de Raguse*, mentioned in the edicts by the French minister Colbert in the 17th century, as one of the most beautiful and finest laces, competing on equal terms with Italian and French laces. As a very exceptional kind of lace, *point de Raguse* is mentioned in a mocking song called *Revolte de Passements* in 1660, where different kinds of lace take part in a discussion, in which *point de Venise*, as the first among them, is trying to get rid of *point de Raguse* because of its splendour and refinement.[127] After the earthquake in Dubrovnik in 1667, lace making was not restored, and therefore the term *point de Raguse* remained in use to mark the centre where both needle lace and bobbin lace were produced. Unfortunately, the few miraculously preserved specimens cannot be used to precisely define the stylistic characteristics of the Dubrovnik lace during the two centuries of its existence. The oldest dated example of lace making is bobbin lace band, which is preserved on the altar cover in the church "Gospa od Šunja" (Our lady of Šunj) on the island of Lopud, near Dubrovnik, from around the year 1500.[128]

In Dalmatian inventories of the 17th century, lace is commonly mentioned as an ornament on aprons, men's suits, women's dresses and necklines. It was mainly made in needle, bobbin and knotting techniques. It was a favourite pastime of local women along the Dalmatian coast; pillows for making bobbin lace are therefore commonly mentioned as a dowry asset.[129] Female members of the upper classes applied decorative lace, most often made of gold and silver threads, to the front and back of their jackets.

The Role of Monasteries in Dalmatian Lace Production

Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg emphasised the very key historical role of monasteries as manufacturing centres of intensive lace production. Her findings were also confirmed by archival records. In the 17th century, the demand for lace products grew, and archival records mention the presence of Dalmatian lace on intensive traveling routes, especially focused on the Italian market. Lacemaking was practiced by female members of the middle classes and aristocratic women, who were taught the basics of needlework as a part of their education and, therefore, they were able to devote themselves to more sophisticated techniques of lacemaking. In the 16th century, lacemaking also flourished in convents, especially in monasteries of Dubrovnik, Kotor, Trogir, Zadar, Korčula, Hvar, which survived through the following centuries and developed owing to earnings they made from the sales (Figure 6).

[126] The term "*čihorica*" used in Dubrovnik is equivalent to the Italian term "*lattughe*", and it denotes large circular collars resembling lettuce leaves. Marijana Gušić, "Pont de Raguse – Dubrovačka čipka," [Pont de Raguse – Dubrovnik lace], *Zbornik Balkanološkog instituta SANU*, Volume 20, 1984, p. 296.

[127] Nerina Echkel, *Paška čipka,* [Pag lace], Etnografski muzej Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia, 1998, p. 8.

[128] Gušić, 1984, op cit., pp. 291, 309.

[129] Nevenka Božanić – Bezić, "Hvarske i viške u svjetlu arhivskih izvora od 16. do 18 stoljeća", [Archival records about Hvar and Vis from the 16th – 18th century], *Prilozi povijesti otoka Hvara*, Volume X, 1997, pp. 101–109.

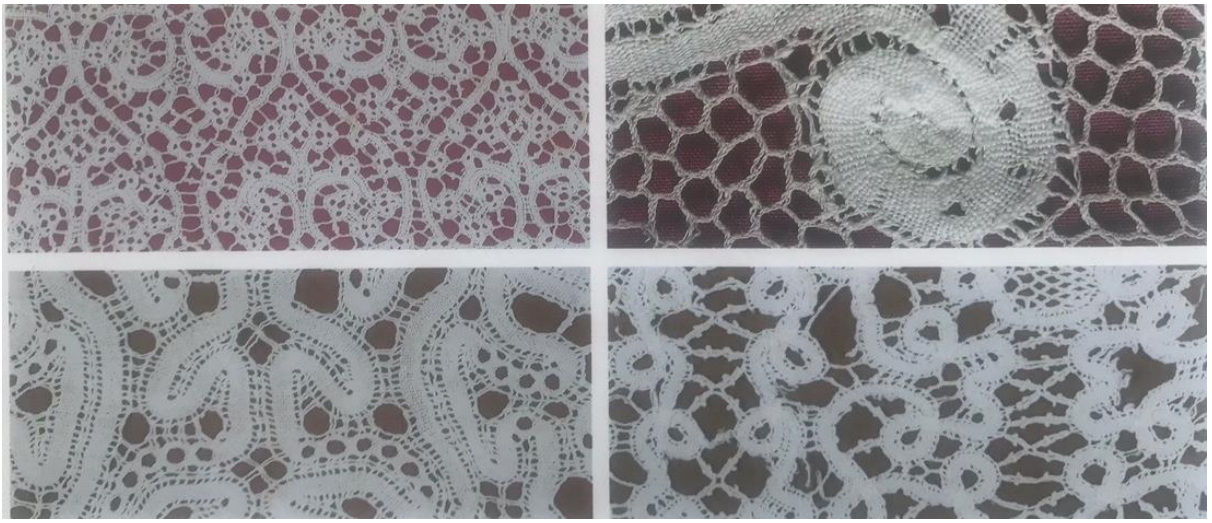

Figure 6. 16th- and 17th-century Bobbin Lace, Benedictine Convent of St. Mary, Zadar and Permanent Exhibition of Church Art (SICU) Benedictine Convent of St. Mary, Zadar, Illustration from Nerina Eckhel, *In Honour of a Hand, Lacemaking in Croatia*, Etnografski muzej, Zagreb, Croatia, 2012, pp. 17–18.

The practice of lacemaking on the Dalmatian territory – particularly on the island of Hvar –was spread with the arrival of the Benedictines, who transferred their knowledge and skills to the indigenous population.[130]The intensive manufacture of high-quality lace in Dalmatia dates to the 16th century, connected primarily to the territories of Dubrovnik, Boka Kotorska and the Dalmatian islands.[131] Women's convents were sites of intensive manufacture of expensive lace intended for the foreign market and the local nobility.[132] This practice was also an important source of income, since the nuns of certain orders were prohibited from leaving the premises of the convent and would receive orders via external mediators. Archival records document an extensive production of lace in Dalmatia throughout the 16th and the 17th century, which was sold in larger European capitals as Venetian lace, a fact which greatly compromises scholarly attempts to trace the use of Dalmatian lace in fashion of other European capitals.[133]

The discipline and isolation of monastic life left plenty of time and peace for this demanding handicraft. Nuns would often teach lacemaking, so in certain places, they were the initiators of this skill among the local population who also had benefits from the production and sale. Archival records also mention a certain number of tertiaries, the so-called *picokare*, members of the Third Order and loyal to a particular convent.[134] *Picokare* were women who had not taken solemn vows but were nevertheless sworn to purity and absolute loyalty to their faith.[135] According to Gušić, the

[130] Marijana Gušić, "Proučavanje čipkarske proizvodnje na Hvaru", [Research of lace manufacture on island Hvar], *Ljetopis JAZU,* Volume 67, 1960, pp. 226-238. Benedictines arrived to the island of Hvar in 1664. Grgo Novak, *Hvar kroz stoljeća*, [The Island of Hvar through centuries], Narodni Odbor Općine, Hvar, Croatia, 1972, pp. 130–133.

[131] Marijana Gušić, "Uz pitanje dubrovačke čipke", [The question about history of Dubrovnik lace], *Anali Historijskog instituta u Dubrovniku*, 1952, pp. 331-340.

[132] Church collections, i.e. lace artifacts preserved in Kotar-Dobrota, Hvar and Zadar, presently give evidence to the delicacy of lace ornaments available on Dalmatian markets from the 16th to the 19th century.

[133] Nevenka Božanić – Bezić, „Prilog istraživanju čipke u Dalmaciji", [Contributions about research of the lace from Dalmatia], *Središnji čipkarski tečaj u Beču*, 2002, pp. 60-72.

[134] Marijana Gušić, „Zbirka čipaka sv. Marije u Zadru", [Laces from church museum of Saint Marija in Zadar], *Radovi Zavoda JAZU*, Volume VI-VII, 1960, pp. 81-96.

[135] "Picokara", from the Italian word *bigio,* meaning *gray,* signifying *modest dress* (it. *bizzocara*). Petar Skok, *Etimologijski rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika*, [Etymological dictionary of the Croatian or Serbian language], Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, Zagreb, Croatia, 1971, p. 653.Nevenka Božanić – Bezić, "Tragom

term could also be derived from the Venetian word *pici,* meaning lace.[136] The *picokare* women manufactured the lace in the texture of delicate tulle. It is known that the monasteries maintained a connection with one another in the way of organizing daily life and production activities, and even in handicrafts. The production of lace, but also of the other textile expressions and embroideries pleased high demands of fashion markets for the West, and the monasteries followed them. For example, the nuns of St. Marija in Zadar were engaged in collecting pearls and making precious decorations for clothing in the 13th century.[137]

Domestic practices of lacemaking tended to imitate the technique and style of the lace made in convents, and so produced lace would later be applied to garments and attires. In the archive records, women from the islands of Hvar and Vis and women from Dubrovnik and Kotor and their surrounding areas are often mentioned as particularly crafty in lacemaking and embroidery.[138] Lace is frequently mentioned in the inventory lists of the deceased both noblemen and commoners, which gives evidence to the assumptions that lace was not imported in larger quantities as it was extremely expensive in the European capitals at that time but was rather homemade by local women and maidens.

The Problem of Attribution

Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg proposed a very bold hypothesis by claiming that Venetian laces actually originated from Dalmatian ones, and she argued that the ultimate proof of their Slavic character can be observed in metal thread laces on old Croatian coats of arm.[139] This assimilation of the lace in Venetian culture was mainly supported by intensive trade routes between Dalmatia and Venice throughout history. Bruck-Auffenberg further argued that major exploitation of Dalmatian lace occurred in the 16th and 17th century, when merchants intensively purchased lace from Dalmatian convents and sold it under a foreign and more attractive market name. Croatian ethnologist Marijana Gušić, who dedicated most of her research to the origin of lace, also shared this belief. According to Gušić, during the period of Venetian reign (from the 15th century) the products from Dalmatian area were sent to the market as *point de Venise*, since Venice could not meet the growing demand for lace through its own production. Evidence of this are the Baroque bobbin laces and the Roselino needle lace patterns found in the monastery of Badija on the island of Korčula, which have never been processed and analysed in a study as a contribution to the knowledge of the historical Dalmatian lace production. The information about its existence appears only in Belamarić's article dedicated to the historical-artistic analysis of the church and monastery on the island of Korčula.[140] Unfortunately, from the period after the 18th century, when the lace production stagnated, the "plunder of appreciation" of our complete cultural treasures has been continued by numerous collectors as well as different political functionaries living and working in Croatia. There

renesansno-barokne čipke u dalmatinskim samostanima," [Renaissance and Baroque laces in Dalmatian monasteries], *Godišnjak grada Korčule,* 1999, pp. 109–117.

[136] Gušić, 1960, op cit., p. 326.

[137] Eduard Perićić, „Samostan svete Marije u Zadru od njegova osnutka do danas," [The monastery of St. Mary in Zadar from its foundation to the present day], *Kulturna baština samostana sv. Marije u Zadru*, 1968, pp. 56–57.

[138] Nevenka Božanić – Bezić, "Tradicija čipkarske tehnike na otocima Hvaru i Visu od XVII stoljeća do danas" [Tradition of lace making on the islands of Hvar and Vis from the 17th century until onward], *Makedonski folklor*, Volume XVIII, No. 35, 1985, pp. 101–106. Nevenka Božanić – Bezić, «Prilog dubrovačkom umjetničkom vezivu XVI. stoljeća» [Contributions about Dubrovnik embroidery from the 16th century], *Prilozi povjest umjetnosti u Dalmaciji*, Volume 14, 1962, pp. 153–164.

[139] Bruck-Auffenberg, op cit., pp. 30–33.

[140] Joško Belamarić, „Franjevačka crkva i samostan na Otoku (Badija) kod Korčule," [Franciscan church and monastery on the island (Badija) near Korčula], Prilozi povijesti umjetnosti u Dalmaciji, Volume 23, No. 1, 1983, p. 189.

are numerous lace exhibits in various museums and private collections all over Europe, bearing attributions such as "Venetian", "Austro-Hungarian" and "Greek".[141]

Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg also addressed the problem of collectors, who had a practice of purchasing Dalmatian lace and renaming it as Venetian or Greek products. As an example, she mentioned the baron and baroness von Lipperheide, collectors of historical artefacts, whose interest was at a certain point focused on Dalmatian lace. They were the publishers of the Berlin-based fashion magazine *Illustrierte Frauen-Zeitung*, where they issued a piece dedicated to the beauty of Dalmatian embroidery and lace in 1880.[142] According to Jelica Belović-Bernadzikowska, they purchased the lace for their collection from the merchant Feliks Lay from Osijek, who presented the lace as Venetian.[143] We should also note that the trade of Dalmatian handicrafts was extremely well developed at the end of the 19th century, particularly among merchants from Italy, Istanbul, Trieste and Rijeka, thus decreasing the true value of Dalmatian textile and lace products among local people, who inherited the lace from their ancestors.[144] Especially common was the trade of historical lace, which was preserved in monasteries and later sold as Venetian or Greek lace, thus fetching high prices on the market. A certain Roman lace merchant was famous for selling this lace in New York, along with the certain Jesurin, allegedly from Split or Dubrovnik, who was the founder of Venetian lace trade.[145] Instead of this unfair practice, Bruck-Auffenberg advocated trade control through organised production and emphasised the potential benefits of lace production for the local people. She therefore named certain local mediators, merchants and peasants, who managed to capitalise on their products. However, she mostly valued associations that made an effort to organise production and placement of novelty items made in ancient techniques. As an example, she described the activities on one such association that organised the production of lace on the island of Pag, which kept records of orders and invoices, and the collection of patterns. The orders came from well-known, prominent individuals, and the products were manufactured entirely in line with their taste. This is how certain new products emerged, such as a decorative fireplace element, a novelty item listed in the inventories of many bourgeois households, with applied motifs made in ancient lacemaking techniques.[146]

Conclusion

Apart from some Croatian researchers who tried to shed light on the domestic cultural treasure at the end of the 19th century, the Viennese writer Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg is to be thanked for her amazing contribution to the promotion of Dalmatian cultural values in that period. Before the World War I, the number of travellers to Dalmatia increased significantly across all social classes; they were no longer only members of aristocracy and higher social classes, but also citizens in various professions such as hunters, journalists, photographers, reporters and painters.[147] The book *Dalmacija i njena narodna umjetnost* (Dalmatia and its folk art) was intended precisely to appeal to this wide range of passionate admirers of historical folklore arts who could be inspired to travel and discover the less known parts of the Empire in their pursuits. Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg, however,

[141] Tina Frauberger, *Handbuch der Spitzenkunde – Technisches und Geschichtliches über die Näh-, Klöppel- und Machinenspitzen*, [Handbook of lace customers - technical and historical information about sewing, bobbin lace and machine lace], Seemann Verlag, Leipzig, Germany, 1984, p. 227.

[142] Bruck-Auffenberg, op cit., p. 41

[143] Jelica Belović-Bernadzikowska, *Građa za tehnološki rječnik ženskog ručnog tkanja*, [Materials for the technological dictionary of women's hand weaving], Zemaljska štamparija, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1898; Jelica Belović-Bernadzikowska, *Srpski narodni vez i tekstilna ornamentika - originalna monografija na osnovu istorijskih dokumenata*, [Serbian folk embroidery and textile ornamentation - an original monograph based on historical documents], Matica Srpska, Novi Sad, Serbia,1907. Branka Vojnović Traživuk, „Dalmatinska narodna umjetnost u Austro-Ugarskoj monarhiji početkom 20. stoljeća," [Dalmatian folk art in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy at the beginning of the 20th century], *Studia ethnologica Croatica*, Volume 18, 2006, pp. 281–298.

[144] Bruck-Auffenberg, op cit., p. 2.

[145] Ibid, op cit., p. 20.

[146] Vojnović Traživuk, op cit., p. 292.

[147] Pederin, op cit., p. 248.

had managed to recognise the importance of Dalmatian handicraft heritage in advance and foresee its future significance for tourism. Owing to her work, it is possible to learn of several key elements for the understanding of Dalmatian history at the beginning of the 20th century, traditional lacemaking in Dalmatia in the 16th and 17th century, and the role of merchants and collectors in transforming the origin of lace. Along with the photograph of the shirt with lace decorations from the 16th century, which was destroyed in a fire, another valuable contribution of Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg is a photograph of Dubrovnik lace (*Point de Raguse*), which was mentioned as a luxury product in French sources from the 17th century. However, the production of lace in Dubrovnik is still covered under the veil of secrecy, especially after the major earthquake in 1667. The Book of Lace Patterns with 64 drawings from the Island Badija near Korčula and Dubrovnik - dated to the beginning of the 17th century, can assist future researchers in the discovery of the specific elements of beauty in *point de Raguse.*

Today, 120 years after Natalie Bruck-Auffenberg made a photography of the *alba* with *reticella* from 16th century in Trogir, the tradition of lace production is still the source of much inspiration in various media. Furthermore, there are young people who continue to produce lace according to old templates from the 16th to 18th century and thanks to many associations, traditional production of lace is still nurtured, representing an important part of folk art. Thanks to the contribution of Croatian researchers, especially the work of ethnologist Nerina Echkel in 2009 under the name "Lacemaking in Croatia", the art of lacemaking in Pag, Lepoglava and Hvar was inscribed in the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

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Biography

Katarina Nina Simončič received her PhD in Fashion History from the Department of Art History, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. She is an Associate Professor of Fashion History at the Department of Fashion and Textile Design at the Faculty of Textile Technology, University of Zagreb. Her teaching activities include the relationships between the genres of portrait painting, printmaking, photography and fashion artefacts from the 16th to the 20th century. Her research focuses on the reconstruction of Croatian fashion history through archival documents, artefacts and visual sources.

The story behind the seams:
A case study of two dresses from Alingsås Museum, Sweden

Therese Holmgren

Abstract
This article studies two dresses worn as wedding attire in 1921 from Alingsås Museum. The dresses were measured for patterns and construction details were documented. The case study provides the basis for an analysis of clothing construction in the 1910–1920s in Sweden. The construction of the dresses shows typical seams and techniques used in the period with the presence of both machine and hand sewing. Research into the identities of makers and wearers connected to the dresses reveals new information about their provenance as well as the life of a few inhabitants of Alingsås in the early 1900s. The study and documentation of clothing is thus presented as a research methodology able to connect material and immaterial heritage.

Introduction
There are 27 220 objects listed under the term "costume" at Digitalt Museum.[148] All of those costumes have once belonged to someone, been worn, liked, taken care of or been discarded. What are the stories behind them? Focusing exclusively on sartorial aesthetics represents a superficial way to study textile collections, entailing the risk of neglecting their historical context. The aim of this article is to show what two dresses held within the collection of a Swedish municipal museum can reveal about the history of that region and its inhabitants, and how such heritage can be preserved through an object case study. Clothing is designed following the aesthetic and artisanal norms of the contemporary period, which are reflected in the choices of cut and material.[149] There are research gaps in Swedish dress and fashion history that need to be highlighted and researched further.[150] The study of objects can provide information that could not have been gathered through the analysis of written sources alone. Sartorial artefacts can help the researcher discover information about how they have been experienced through wear and tear, what making techniques were used as well as uncover new details about the social context they belonged to and the individuals who made and wore them.[151] Clothing has played an important role in people's lives in the past as well as today, as it represents an essential part of people's everyday lives as well as a status symbol and a social marker. Examining garments preserved in museums beyond their superficial appearance can provide us with a broader perspective on their historical context.

The garments in the following case study are two dresses dating from 1921 preserved in the collection of Alingsås Museum in Sweden. They are today in quite poor condition with tears all over the silk textiles. The dresses would require extensive conservation to stabilise the fabrics, which

[148] "Costume," https://digitaltmuseum.se/search/?aq=topic%3A%22dr%C3%A4kt%22+type%3A%22Thing%22, Accessed 18 November 2020.
[149] Ingrid Mida and Alexandra Kim, *The Dress Detective: a practical guide to object-based research in fashion*, Bloomsbury Visual Arts, London, England, 2018[2015], p. 16.
[150] Dirk Gindt and Louise Wallenberg, Editors, *Mode: en introduktion: en tvärvetenskaplig betraktelse*, Raster, Stockholm, Sweden, 2009, p. 16.
[151] Karin Tetteris, "Att forska på föremål – en kort handledning," in, *Fråga föremålen: handbok till historiska studier av materiell kultur*, Anna Maria Forssberg and Karin Sennefelt, Editors, Studentlitteratur, Lund, Sweden, 2014, p. 225; Marie Ulväng, "Textilbadet – kläder och konsumtion," in *Fråga föremålen: handbok till historiska studier av materiell kultur*, Anna Maria Forssberg and Karin Sennefelt, Editors, Studentlitteratur, Lund, Sweden, 2014, p. 91.

would result in a very costly as well as invasive intervention.[152] Engaging in an object case study and thoroughly documenting the history and the materiality of the garments offers a different approach to preservation of the objects that does not need to be as costly or as intrusive.

This article will focus on three research questions investigated through the study of secondary literature, archival research and a case study of extant garments.[153] First, it considers what a surviving garment in a museum collection can tell researchers about construction techniques used in the 1910–1920s. Secondly, it investigates who were the individuals connected to the dresses in the case study. Finally, it discusses how an object case study of a costume can represent a method of preservation.

The researcher and interpreter of an object in a case study is endowed with an individual background that informs how and what that person looks at and sees.[154] I have a background as an educated seamstress and several years of experience sewing historical and historically inspired clothing. This means I have a previous understanding of the cut and construction of clothing from different time periods. My earlier education and experience have been important in the case study since they allowed me to discern the construction and techniques used for making the garments. This type of study gives me an opportunity to study costume up close to learn more about different time periods and deepen my knowledge of historical sewing techniques.

In their 2014 volume gathering studies of items preserved in museum collections, Forssberg and Sennefelt argue that object-based research can reveal how artefacts have historically shaped humans and vice versa. The study of material culture interconnects with the study of history, embracing a broad interdisciplinary perspective and employing different research methodologies. Material, visual and textual sources ought to be researched together in order to uncover new information about artefacts and provide a fuller narrative of their history.[155] A material analysis in particular can give the researcher a more intimate insight into the individuals connected with the object studied and its socio-cultural context.[156]

Mida and Kim discuss more specifically how the study of clothing is crucial to learn more about the clothes, the people and their context, stating that garments and material objects can sometimes be seen as more truthful in their telling of history than written texts.[157] They argue that the study of extant garments, previously dismissed *"as no more than a cataloguing exercise"*, gives more information and depth to research about dress and fashion since it shows the history of the garment through alterations, choices of cut and the status of the wearer.[158] To carry out the material analysis of a garment, they devise a research structure divided into three distinct steps, namely "Observation, Reflection and Interpretation". The observation phase is meant to unravel details about the garments and give information for a thorough description. After having observed and examined the garment, it is necessary to reflect on the findings considering how an observer interprets the garment and what biases can be uncovered.[159] During the reflection phase, it is also important to gather further information about the garments' provenance before moving on to the

[152] Informator 1.
[153] Further research into local archives and libraries has not been possible during the time of writing this article due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
[154] Mida and Kim, op cit., p. 78.
[155] Forssberg and Sennefelt, op cit., pp.12–13.
[156] Ibid, p. 15.
[157] Mida and Kim, op cit.
[158] Ibid, pp. 12, 20, 76.
[159] Ibid, p. 29.

last phase of interpretation. The interpretation phase entails bringing the findings of the research together. An important aspect of researching garments is to take the time to look carefully at the object and document every detail through drawing, taking notes and photographing, all of which are complementing parts of documentation for the case study as well as further research.[160]

Focusing on case studies is a common practice within heritage studies.[161] Perspectives on what heritage is have evolved from the original meaning of collecting and heritagisation towards a broader and more inclusive sense, involving the inclusion of intangible heritage such as knowledge, skills and craftsmanship.[162] Tangible and intangible heritage must be examined together in order to provide a fuller account of the past, especially when the study of textiles and clothing is concerned.[163] Women play an important role in the creation and preservation of intangible heritage yet skills and knowledge traditionally regarded as 'feminine' are at risk of being overlooked and marginalised in a male dominated field.[164]

Clothing production in Sweden during the early 1900s

Historically garments were sewn by hand until the 1850s when the sewing machine revolutionised clothing production.[165] Unlike today, clothing was typically more expensive due to the high cost of the fabric and other materials employed.[166] From the mid-1800s, women's clothes were mostly made by other women. Seamstresses worked primarily from home but could also visit customers to sew clothing at their home. Working as a seamstress was not a very well-paid occupation and sometimes entailed long workdays. Until the mid-1800s, most garments were sewn to order whereas closer to the 1900s more and more clothing was available ready-made,[167] which represented the start of today's clothing industry.

Sewing and fashion workrooms were quite common in larger towns in the early 1900s, such as Birgittaskolorna and Augusta Lundin[168], whereas in Stockholm there were over 100 workrooms. In the workrooms, several seamstresses worked at different stations specialising on specific parts of the sewing process.[169] The workrooms were usually decorated to resemble a domestic interior symbolising the contemporary idea that a woman's workplace was in the home.[170] Around the 1910–1920s, working as a seamstress represented one of the most common professions for a woman in Sweden.[171] Just a few years later, at the end of the 1920s, the ready-made clothing industry expanded quickly and reduced the number of self-employed seamstresses.[172]

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[160] Ibid, pp. 36–37.
[161] Sørensen, Marie Louise Stig and John Carman, Editors, *Heritage Studies: Methods and Approaches*, Routledge, London, England, 2009, p. 20.
[162] Laurajane Smith, *The Uses of Heritage*, Routledge, Abingdon, England, 2006, p. 107.
[163] Rodney Harrison, "What is Heritage?," in *Understanding the Politics of Heritage*, Rodney Harrison, Editor, Manchester University Press in association with the Open University, Manchester and Milton Keynes, England, 2010, p.9; Anna Reading, "Making Feminist Heritage Work: Gender and Heritage," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Contemporary Heritage Research*, Emma Waterton and Steve Watson, Editors, Palgrave Macmillan, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, England, 2015, p. 402.
[164] Reading, op cit., pp. 406–407.
[165] Britta Hammar and Pernilla Rasmussen, *Kvinnligt mode under två sekel*, Signum, Lund, Sweden, 2001, p. 9; Maria Carlgren, *Birgittaskolorna: modeateljéer och sömnadsskolor mellan tradition och förnyelse*, Makadam, Diss, Göteborgs Universitet, Göteborg, Sweden, 2016, p. 98.
[166] Ulväng, op cit., p. 92.
[167] Hammar and Rasmussen, op cit., p. 37.
[168] Carlgren, op cit., p. 11.
[169] Ibid, p. 59.
[170] Ibid, p. 50.
[171] Ibid, p. 59.
[172] Ibid, p. 62.

When the sewing machine became more common, seamstresses more often worked from home in their own set-up studio instead of working in the customer's home.[173] Despite its popularity and the fact that it had been in use for 60 years, Carlgren states that the sewing machine was still criticized in the 1910s. Hand sewing was still seen by some critics as the most practical and strongest sewing technique. However, the use of the sewing machine seems to have been more common for long, straight construction seams, keeping hand sewing for the finer sewing.[174] Gwen nevertheless stated in 1916 that sewing machines, both hand turned and treadle machines, were easy to use and made the sewing more proficient.[175]

Even though there were a lot of professional seamstresses during this time it was also common for women to sew their own clothes.[176] Magazines specialized in clothing patterns enabled women to sew at home, providing a few patterns and descriptions but also sketches of several other styles that could be ordered by post. These magazines also contained advertisements for sewing machines. Sometimes they included short instructions for specific sewing details, however there were no instructions on how to sew entire garments together.[177] Since sewing was a more wide-spread knowledge in the early 1900s then it is today, such information was not as necessary.[178]

Sewing manuals were published separately and could complement the patterns. Such was the case of *Gwens book for the home* (Gwens bok för hemmet)[179] and *The home encyclopaedia – Sewing, Handicrafts, Amateur art* (Hemmets uppslagsbok – Sömnad, handarbete, amatörkonst) published in 1917. The latter is a compilation of three books with one focusing on sewing written in 1915.[180] The preface of the *Illustrated sewing book for Swedish homes* (Illustrerad sömnadsbok för svenska hem) stated that it is better to learn to sew one's own garments than to buy ready-made ones from a store. It is a comprehensive book with instruction for most aspects of sewing, including instructions for materials, tools, construction, cut and assembling of the garments.[181] The sewing instructions start with the measurements,[182] move on to how to change a pattern to fit the measured size[183] and then on to sewing the base lining to fit the chosen style of garment on top.[184] Nordfeldt writes that the instructions are provided after the most common way of putting a garment together but that the most important part of sewing is to make the garment fit properly regardless of the method.[185] The instructions include both machine and hand sewing,[186] showing that both techniques were taught and used.

[173] Ibid, p. 50.
[174] Ibid, p. 98.
[175] Gwen, *Gwens bok för hemmet*, Norstedt, Stockholm, Sweden, 1916, pp. 87–88.
[176] Carlgren, op cit., p. 47.
[177] Allers mönstertidning, "n:r 17 38:de årg. Journal för toalett och dam-handarbete. 11 september 1919," *Allers mönster-tidning: journal för toalett och damhandarbete*, Allers mönster-tidning, Helsingborg, 1899-1944; Allers mönstertidning, "n:r 2 40:de årg. Journal för toalett och dam-handarbete. 26 januari 1921," *Allers mönster-tidning: journal för toalett och damhandarbete*, Allers mönster-tidning, Helsingborg, 1899-1944.
[178] Carlgren, op cit., p. 47.
[179] Gwen, op cit.
[180] Erik Folker, Oskar Heinrich Dumrath and Aina Kellnert, Editors, *Hemmets uppslagsbok: den bästa rådgivaren för varje hem av fackmän på olika områden*, Nordiska Bokförlaget, Stockholm, Sweden, 1915-1917.
[181] Aina Nordfeldt, *Illustrerad sömnadsbok för svenska hem uppställd med hänsyn till allt, vad som rör klädsömnad och linnesömnad för kvinno- och barnkläder, och efter bästa in- och utländska förebilder inom teori och praktik för svenska kvinnor och skolor*, Nord. Bokf, Stockholm, Sweden, 1915.
[182] Ibid, p. 37.
[183] Ibid, p. 43.
[184] Ibid, p. 81.
[185] Ibid, p. 104.
[186] Ibid, p. 121.

Alingsås during the 1910–1920s

Alingsås was grated city privileges in 1619 by King Gustaf II Adolf.[187] In 1920 there were 6017 people living in Alingsås, the number having almost doubled since the turn of the century. It was a city in expansion.[188] The development of industry and the opening of new businesses represented important contributing factors to the increased population.[189] Alingsås was home to a few historical textile manufacturers and industries starting with *Alingsås manufacturing works* (Alingsås manufakturverk), which was founded in 1724[190] and closed in 1847.[191] This was shortly followed by *Alingsås cotton weaving joint-stock-company* (Alingsås bomullsväveri AB) in 1862.[192] *Alingsås Linen factory joint-stock-company* (Alingsås Linnefabriks AB) was established in 1900 and enjoyed its business peak in the late 1910s.[193] This was the setting in which the garments considered in this article's case study were produced.

A local example of a manufactory who employed seamstresses was *The Ready-made clothing joint-stock-company Oscar Molander* (Konfektionsaktiebloaget Oscar Molander) established in Alingsås in 1907. The garments were initially cut out at the factory and then handed out to local tailors who sewed the garments. When completed, they were returned to the factory to ensure quality control and undergo the finishing stages. This was a standard working process at the time. However, soon afterwards the company advanced their workflow to a more modern factory-like procedure, starting to produce more and more in-house garments in the 1910s. They had electrical sewing machines by 1910, as well as electrical cutting tools and a buttonhole machine.[194] Most of the workers in the factory were women. During the early 1900s, most of the fabrics used in the factory were manufactured in Sweden. The styles they designed and made during this time were inspired by fashion magazines.[195]

Case study

Documenting and researching the cut of garments is an important aspect to find out about their construction and style. Moreover, since a garment carries a "material memory" of its history, learning about the size and structure can tell us about its use as well as the wearer's physique.[196] Thanks to the information uncovered through the case study and the documentation, it will be possible for the museum to pursue further research and enhance the quality of future exhibitions.[197] Two dresses from Alingsås Museum, Sweden, have been studied by taking patterns from them to learn about their construction. As I have previously worked at that institution, I was already familiar with their collection and had identified the two dresses I wanted to study. I contacted the curator and archivist a month beforehand for help with getting information from the database. The

[187] Axel Johanson, Editor, *Alingsås, staden vi bygger: Alingsås 350 år : 1619-1969 : anteckningar vid ett jubielum*, Utg., Alingsås, Sweden, 1969, p. 46.
[188] Ibid, p. 89.
[189] Ibid, p. 221.
[190] Ibid, p. 34.
[191] Gustaf Holdo Stråle, *Alingsås manufakturverk: ett bidrag till den svenska industriens historia under frihetstiden*, Stockholm, Sweden, 1884, p. 309.
[192] Johanson, op cit., p. 229.
[193] Ibid, p. 242.
[194] Ibid, p. 244.
[195] Ibid, p. 246.
[196] Mida and Kim, op cit., pp. 45, 62.
[197] Informator 1.

garments chosen are a wedding gown[198] and a second day-dress (annandagsklänning)[199]. Second day-dresses were traditionally worn in Sweden by the brides on the day after their wedding[200] or at the church service the weekend after the wedding.[201] Second day-dresses were traditionally blue[202] as is the case with the dress from Alingsås Museum.

Wedding dresses are not uncommon within the collection of Alingsås Museum, and a few others are preserved with a record of names connected to their history, which makes it easier to research the identity of both wearer and maker.[203] However, the fact that both the wedding dress and the second day-dress were preserved together is not a common occurrence at the museum. The garments chosen for this case study were partly selected because of their fragile condition and the fact that the silk fabric will continue to deteriorate making them harder to handle with the passing of time.

The curator sent the accession numbers and the catalogue cards for the two dresses, which contain the name of the people who had worn the dresses as well as those who had made them. Both dresses were donated to the museum in 1932 by the same person. In addition to the dresses, the museum holds also a pair of silver shoes, silk stockings and a veil that was originally worn with the wedding gown. The catalogue card reports that the woman who had donated the garments to the museum, Mrs Öhrn, wore the dresses at her wedding in 1921. It is also stated that Hildegard Segerberg from Alingsås, had sewn the dresses. With the help of the curator and archivist I was able to uncover more information on who the women from the catalogue cards were by carrying out further research in the Alingsås Museum's records as well as the National Archive (Riksarkivet). To measure the dresses and take a pattern from them, I used an angle ruler, measuring tape, angle ruler with a 1:4 scale measurement, graphite pencil, eraser, drawing paper in A4, vinyl gloves and a notebook. The handling of the dresses was done wearing vinyl gloves to protect the textiles from potential grease and dirt from my hands, in accordance with the museums policy. Both of the dresses are fragile with tears in the fabric and loose decorations which required them to be handled very carefully to prevent further damage. I was assisted by another pair of hands in handling both garments, which was essential to avoid exercising any stress on the light silk fabrics. Special care had to be taken handling the points where lead weights were sewn into the fabrics.

[198] AM1506.
[199] AM1507.
[200] Britta Hammar, "Om bruddräkter," *Kulturen*, 1993, p. 119.
[201] Lars Bondeson, *Seder och bruk vid bröllop*, Verbum, Stockholm, 1988, pp.118–119.
[202] Gunnel Hazelius-Berg, 'Brud och brudgum i deras högtidsskrud', *Fataburen: Nordiska museets och Skansens årsbok. 1969*, Nordiska museet, Stockholm, 1969, p. 167.
[203] Informator 1.

All the pieces in the construction of the dresses were measured with the angle ruler and measuring tape and then transferred to the paper with help from the 1:4 scaled angle ruler. This process produces a pattern of the dresses which shows how the construction originally looked before it was sewn together. The construction observations included such matters as the use of fabric, the type of seams present and the variety of closures were documented in the notebook during the process.

Figure 1. Wedding gown, 1921, Alingsås Museum, Sweden, AM1506, © Therese Holmgren

Observation phase

The wedding gown (AM1506) consists of a base bodice lining with two back panels and two front panels sewn from thin crème coloured cotton fabric and two side facings in crème coloured silk satin. It features an insertion both at the front and at the back made from lace and a layer of silk chiffon, both also crème coloured. The sleeves are likewise made from lace and silk chiffon. Over the lining bodice there is a looser fitting bodice made from crème coloured silk satin. The skirt consists of two panels and is decorated with four bands, all from crème coloured silk satin. The gown is decorated with glass beads sewn on to the edges of the neckline, armholes and the bands on the skirt (Figure 1).

Figure 2. Snap Buttons at the Front of Wedding gown, 1921, Alingsås Museum, Sweden, AM1506, © Therese Holmgren.

While the main construction seams were sewn with a sewing machine, the construction of the garment involved a lot of hand sewing as well. The bodice lining shows machine sewn darts, shoulder seams and side seams. The side seams are done with French seams. The facings are sewn in the same shoulder seams as the lining and then it hangs loose except for the waist and sleeve seam. The sleeves were also sewn by machine. On the back of the lining the insertion has been sewn by hand to the lining, the front insertion instead has been sewn to the lining on one side but left open to close with snap buttons on the left-hand side (Figure 2). The over bodice has been pleated and hand sewn loosely to the lining at the side seams and the waist. In the neckline and armholes there is a machine

sewn facing that is held down on the inside by the beading 1.5 cm from the neckline and the beading goes all around spaced by 0.5 cm.

The decorative bands were sewn by machine on the inside and then turned right-side out, adding a metal weight at the tip. The beading is sewn right at the hem edge with two beads with 0.5 cm in between and one bead every 0.5 cm 1.5 cm from the bottom edge. At the waist the bands are gathered and loosely sewn to the bodice and skirt (Figure 3). The skirts side seams are sewn by machine, but the seam allowance is whip stitched to prevent fraying and the wide 7.5 cm hem is hand sewn.

Figure 3. Decorative Bands at the Waist of Wedding gown, 1921, Alingsås Museum, Sweden, AM1506, © Therese Holmgren.

The second day-dress (AM1507) consists of a base bodice lining with two back panels and one front panel from thin crème coloured cotton fabric. The outer bodice has two back panels and one front panel, sleeves and stomacher made from a blue silk satin fabric. The skirt has one front panel and two back panels in the same fabric. The dress is decorated with bead and sequin appliques around the neckline, on the tip of the sleeve point and on the centre front of the stomacher. There is also a beaded trim around the edge of the sleeves and a bead tassel at the tip of the sleeve point. On the stomacher there are six fabric covered buttons. The dress also has a waistband and a bow in the back made from blue silk satin fabric (Figure 4).

Like the wedding gown, the second day-dress is also sewn by machine in the main construction seams with additional hand sewing elsewhere in the garment. The bodice lining has machine sewn darts that have been stitched down to the bodice with an additional top stitch. It has French seams at the side seams and a boning channel at centre front with a 16 cm long metal bone in the lining fabric. At centre back the lining has been turned twice and stitched down by machine, it closes with eight altering hooks and eyes sewn on by hand (Figure 5). The shoulder seams are sewn with both the lining and outer fabric in the same seam, with the seam allowances turned in towards each other and sewn by hand. The outer fabric of the bodice's side seams is sewn by machine. At the front of the outer bodice the stomacher is held in place by the neckline seam and the buttons sewn on through the lining. The neckline has a 1.5 cm machine sewn facing from the blue/grey silk satin which is covered on the inside by lace that has been hand stitched down. The neckline on the outer fabric is trimmed with sequin appliques sewn on by hand. At centre back the outer fabric has been folded in and prick stitched by hand and closed with five snap buttons. The waist of the outer fabric is gathered and sewn to the lining by hand.

Figure 4. Second Day-Dress, 1921, Alingsås Museum, Sweden, AM1507, © Therese Holmgren.

The sleeves were probably sewn on to the bodice by machine, but this is now hard to see because of wear and tear resulting from use and mending. The lengthwise seam of the sleeve is sewn by machine with the seam allowances whip stitched to prevent fraying. The bottom of the sleeve has a wide facing that was sewn by machine and then turned right-side out and prick stitched by hand. At the bottom edge of the sleeve there is beading and at the tip of the sleeve point it has a bead tassel and a sequin appliqué, all of them sewn on by hand.

Figure 5. Closures at the Back of Second Day-Dress, 1921, Alingsås Museum, Sweden, AM1507, © Therese Holmgren.

The skirts lengthwise seams were sewn by machine with the seam allowances whip stitched to prevent fraying. It has a substantial hem of 15 cm that is hand sewn and there are traces of previous seams indicating that it has had a different length at some point. The skirt is gathered and sewn on by hand to the lining right below the bodice outer fabric. This is covered by the pleated waistband that is sewn down by hand. At centre back there is a bow made from the blue silk satin fabric sewn by machine that is decorated with hand sewn fabric decorations at the hem (Figure 6).

Reflection and Interpretation phase

As previously discussed, during the early 1900s it was common for seamstresses to work from their own homes.[204] It is hard today to determine where Hildegard Segerberg worked in 1921, when she made the dresses examined in this case study. She might have sewn the clothes fully or partially from her own home, a studio or at the Öhrn family's home. Both dresses show the modern use of sewing machines but also the tradition of still using a lot of hand sewing.[205] Following the structure of looking at garments outlined by Mida and Kim[206] it has been possible to document more information about these items. Both dresses are based on a partly separate lining bodice that was made out of a light crème coloured, thin cotton fabric. It was common to base the garments on a separate bodice lining and build the outer fabric on top of that. The most common colour for the lining was white.[207] The lining and outer fabric could sometimes be attached in the same seam at the shoulder and or side seams. This also includes separate closures for the lining and outer fabric.[208] On the wedding gown the bodice lining has facings sewn on that are connected only at the shoulder seams and the second day-dress also has the lining and outer fabric sewn together at the shoulder seams. The second day-dress has separate closures at centre back for the lining and outer fabric, closing with alternating hooks and eyes in the lining which was a common technique to help keep the garment from unhooking.[209] The outer fabric closes with snap-buttons which was also a common closure method during this time.[210] The wedding gown closes at the front with snap buttons in the lining bodice, although it was most common with closures at the back of evening dresses.[211]

Figure 6. Back of the Second Day-Dress With the Decorative Bow, 1921, Alingsås Museum, Sweden, AM1507, © Therese Holmgren.

The lace on the wedding gown is backed with chiffon. This was a common practice and according to Gwen lace should always be lined with chiffon otherwise it would sit against the skin.[212] Lead weights were put at the hems of evening and ball gowns to create the right drape in the skirts,[213] as was probably the case with the weights sewn into the hem of the decorative bands on the wedding gown. The second day-dress has a metal bone at the centre front that is 16 cm long. This type of boning was sold in pre-

[204] Carlgren, op cit., p. 50.
[205] Ibid, p. 98.
[206] Mida and Kim, op cit.
[207] Gwen, op cit., p. 98.
[208] Nordfeldt, op cit., p. 81.
[209] Gwen, op cit., p. 97.
[210] Nordfeldt, op cit., p. 9.
[211] Ibid, p. 389.
[212] Gwen, op cit., p. 103.
[213] Ibid, p. 114.

cut lengths during this period, one of the specific lengths being 16 cm. The metal boning during this time could be silver steel (silverstål), *Herkules-bodice-bone* (Herkules-livfjäder) that was made from hardened steel or you could buy boning made from aluminium.[214]

Both dresses include unlined skirts with the side seams sewn on machine and then the seam allowances have been finished with a whip stitch. Fabrics that frayed easily were commonly covered with whip stitches on the edges.[215] This shows that both the dresses are constructed using techniques common in the early 1900s in comparison to the sewing instructions[216] but also show some signs of individuality in the choices of closures. Similar studies of more garments from this period is necessary to draw more definite conclusions on this issue. Both garments are well made and show a considerable level of craftsmanship. The seamstress, Hildegard Segerberg, alternated the use of a sewing machine with hand sewing based on which technique was most fitting for that particular part of construction.

Archival research has revealed further information about the individuals connected to the dresses examined in the case study. There was only a surname for the woman who had worn the dresses, Öhrn, and her maiden name, Sjöstedt, in the museum accession documentation. When the museum curators did some research, they found the wedding pictures of a woman wearing the wedding gown and a man named Eber Öhrn (Figure 7). Further investigation at Riksarkivet showed that he was married to Rosa Linnéa Öhrn, born Sjöstrand (1897–1981). This shows that the maiden name of the woman who wore the dresses as her wedding attire in 1921 had been wrongly recorded. Rosa Linnéa's father, Carl Gustaf Sjöstrand, was a tailor and her mother Emma Karolina, born Lindberg, a trader. Rosa Linnéa was born on the 17th of December 1897 in Alingsås.[217] She married Eber Vilhelm Öhrn (1895–1951), an apothecary, in 1921 and in 1930 they lived in Alingsås at kv. Rönnen 2b[218].

The seamstress who made the dresses was named Hildegard Kristina Segerberg and she was born 1874 in Falköping, Sweden. In 1930 she lived at Kv. Kämpen 7,8 in Alingsås. Her profession was as a seamstress, and she was unmarried living with her two sisters Ida Turinna (born 1876 in Falköping) and Irma Margareta (born 1906 in Sätila) who was working as a telephone operator. Also living with them was a woman named Mary Linnéa Edberg who was working as a sales assistant.[219] Working as a seamstress in Alingsås was not an uncommon profession in the early 1900s due to the development of ready-made clothing industry.[220]

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[214] Nordfeldt, op cit., pp.7–8.
[215] Ibid, p. 149.
[216] Gwen, op cit.; Nordfeldt, op cit.
[217] "Rosa Linnéa Sjöstrand, 1900,"
https://sok.riksarkivet.se/folkrakningar?Efternamn=Sj%c3%b6strand&Folk1860=false&Folk1870=false&Folk1880=false&Folk1890=true&Folk1900=true&Folk1910=true&Folk1930=true&Lan=15&AvanceradSok=true&page=22&postid=Folk_110123188&tab=post#tab, Accessed 18 November 2020.
[218] "Eber Vilhelm Öhrn,
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[220] Johanson, op cit., p. 244.

Figure 7. Rosa Linneá and Eber Vilhelm Öhrn, Kaleb Torin, 1921, © Alingsås Museum, Sweden.

Conclusion

All tangible objects have intangible aspects to them as well and case studies represent an effective way of researching their heritage.[221] Through the case study focusing on two items preserved within the collections of Alingsås Museum, this article has explored what surviving garments such as these can tell us about clothing construction techniques used in Sweden in the 1910–1920s.

Documenting the garments' cut, construction and materials results in a deeper understanding of these artefacts beyond that which can be obtained from a superficial visual and material analysis. In the construction there are traces of intangible heritage that is materialised in the choices of seams, materials and cut; all elements which differ from contemporary clothing making techniques. Taking patterns is a way of both discovering and preserving essential information about the garments' cut and shape, which would be inaccessible once the dresses can no longer be handled due to their increasingly fragility. The patterns and construction documentation, which will be preserved at the museum, also make it possible to produce reconstructions that can help showcase the construction as well as the shape and style of the garments as they would have looked in their original state.

This case study has also revealed more information about the provenance of the dresses beyond the brief information available in the museum database, by establishing the precise identity of wearers and makers. A better knowledge of garments' construction details can offer more information about the people connected to them and their surroundings. This binds together the material heritage in the clothing with the immaterial heritage in the craft and personal history of the connected people. Further research into other garments and the people connected with their wearing and making holds the potential to unearth new information about the lives of seamstresses and more generally women in Alingsås during the early 1900s.

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[221] Sørensen and Carman, op cit., p. 20.

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Digitalt Museum

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Museum objects

AM1506, Alingsås Museum, Sweden.
AM1507, Alingsås Museum, Sweden.

Informants

Informator 1: Frida Lönnberg, Object Curator, Alingsås Museum. Meeting 25 November 2020.

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Biography

Therese Holmgren holds a master's degree in conservation from Gothenburg University. Her main focus is craft science and has previously published studies of eighteenth-century clothing preserved in museums in Västergötland, Sweden. She is currently working as a Collection’s Developer at Bohusläns Museum, Sweden.

Zampatti Powerhouse, Powerhouse Ultimo, Sydney, Australia, 24 November 2022 – 11 June 2023, Free admission.

Zampatti Powerhouse is the first retrospective to be held of Australian fashion icon, businesswoman, and designer Carla Zampatti (1938 – 2021). Presented by the Powerhouse Ultimo, it is a collaboration between a multidisciplinary team from the Powerhouse, including Curator, Roger Leong; Assistant Curator, Tuan Nguye; and external creative partners, comprising of Creative Director, Tony Assness; Creative Hair Director, Alan White; Fashion Stylist, Peter Simon Phillips; and Exhibition Designer, Andy McDonell.

Before Zampatti's untimely death in April 2021, she had been in negotiations with the museum to stage an exhibition of her life and work and *Zampatti Powerhouse* is the result of these original discussions. The exhibition was developed with the support of Zampatti's family, including her daughters Allegra Spender, an Australian politician, Bianca Spender, an Australian fashion designer, and her son Alex Schuman, the Chief Executive Officer of Carla Zampatti Pty Ltd. The exhibition showcases over five decades of material from her career and is presented thematically rather than chronologically. The sections, emblematic of her sartorial style and signature silhouettes, comprise *Early Work*; *Laser and Blouson*; *Professional*; *Graphic*; *Jumpsuit*; *Hot House Florals*; *Black, Red and Cream*; *Animal*; *Princess*; *Carla's Wardrobe*; and *Goddess*.

The exhibition features 100 outfits that are predominantly sourced from Zampatti's own archives and estate, as well as from private and public collections including the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Curator Leong notes in the accompanying catalogue that "while the Carla Zampatti brand generously lent a significant number of garments to the exhibition, Powerhouse depended on the 'accidental' archives of women who wore her designs over the decades and kept them in their wardrobes or in suitcases and boxes."[222] A call out to women to donate or loan their vintage Carla Zampatti pieces was made in early 2022, and over 200 women responded including celebrities, politicians, and influential women leaders from the corporate, academic, and not-for-profit sectors. The exhibition includes a selection of these garments from a zigzag-patterned mini dress (1967) worn to a dance and a *Midnight Duchess* gown (1995) in wool crepe bought for a 21st birthday, to a *Como* jacquard coat (1970) that made the owner feel like a "million bucks."[223] Significant in the lives of many women, Zampatti was renowned for designing immaculately tailored clothes that framed and empowered her customers at all stages of their lives and careers.

As a post-war Italian immigrant, Zampatti and her family moved to Western Australia in 1950 and settled in Bullfinch, a small goldmining town. Although she was not to finish school, her interest in fashion had been sparked by a childhood visit with her mother to a dressmaker, and in her early 20s, she moved to Sydney to establish her career. She produced her first fashion collection in 1965 using the 'ZamPatti' label, and by 1970, she had relaunched her brand as Carla Zampatti Pty Ltd. Her first boutique opened in 1972 in Sydney's Surry Hills and over the next three decades expanded across the country and into America, opening boutiques in Manhattan and Washington DC. Although her attempts to break into the American market ultimately failed, she was heavily influenced by American minimalism and its modern clean lines. She attracted a devoted and influential clientele and was regarded by many as a pioneer not only for migrants but also as an advocate for women who were working full-time and juggling their families and careers. More broadly she was known as an entrepreneur, a lifelong supporter of the arts, and a philanthropist.

The exhibition, however, does not reflect on or celebrate this aspect of her life. Instead, visitors are treated to a visually arresting display of static mannequins on dark plinths punctuated with minimal labelling. With the emphasis on the garments and the exhibition display to the exclusion of almost all interpretation, it poses an interesting dilemma for visitors who are left to wonder if they have entered a museum exhibition or a high-end fashion boutique. There is no

[222] Lauren Sams, "At Home with Carla," *Zampatti*, Powerhouse Publishing, Sydney, Australia. 2022, p. 40.
[223] Ibid., p. 48.

attempt to critically examine the full breadth of her career nor to explore her approach to fashion and the techniques, design processes, and inspirations that underpinned her collections. The exhibition is described in the press release as "encapsulating Zampatti's trailblazing career, "[224] but other than referencing its longevity, there is no contextual information to explain how her design practice impacted the evolution of Australia's fashion industry nor how it sat within the canon of her contemporaries. How were her aesthetics and business fashioned by the time and place in which she worked? What were some of the challenges she faced as a woman in the industry?

While some of the stories of her collaborators, friends, and customers are captured in two immersive custom-built audio-visual pods, they provide the audience with genuine, if limited, insights into her life and career. Telling the story of clothes through the lens of the wearer is not new and has been done before successfully by the Powerhouse in their 2017 exhibition *Love Is: Australian Wedding Fashion*. But in this instance, the lack of biographical information and context for Zampatti's work leaves the viewer with the uncomfortable feeling that perhaps the Powerhouse thought there was nothing to interrogate.

Fashion exhibitions, like *Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams* (2018) at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris or *Jeanne Lanvin* (2015) at the Palais Galliera, Paris, succeed when there is a balance between the curatorial voice and the scenography. "In the museum sphere," writes Joanne Entwistle author of *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress and Modern Social Theory* (2000), "fashion must be understood as something more complex."[225] In this case, however, the critical curatorship that we have come to expect from fashion exhibitions has been overridden by the performative aspects of the scenography and the creative direction, rendering a powerful and important figure, like Zampatti, to little more than a mannequin on display. At best, the exhibition is visually compelling; at worst, it trivialises her considerable contribution to Australia's fashion industry by assuming that the audience is only interested in the spectacle and not capable of appreciating a more in-depth analysis of her practice. The two, it should be said, are not mutually exclusive.

For those visitors who are not familiar with her work, there is little else to do but covet the jumpsuits and ballgowns or alternatively purchase the accompanying catalogue which goes some way to addressing these issues. "As long as museums are not just about entertainment or tourism or city branding, if they are actually centres for intellectual reflection, then they will remain relevant,"[226] writes curator Daniel Birnbaum. With the Powerhouse Ultimo dropping the word 'museum' from its title in a recent rebrand, perhaps what we are witnessing, as was proposed in 1947 by radical museum director and theoretician Alexander Dorner (1893-1957), is that "the new type of art institute cannot merely be an art museum as it has been until now, but no museum at all. The new type will be more like a power station, the producer of new energy."[227] Ultimately, it will be the audiences who decide.

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Biography

Dolla Merrillees is an experienced director, curator, writer, and cultural producer. Merrillees is the Director, Western Sydney Creative-Western Sydney University, and was the former Director of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney.

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[225] Melchior, Marie Riegels, "Introduction: Understanding Fashion and Dress Museology," in Marie Riegels Melchior and Birgitta Svensson, Editors, *Fashion and Museums: Theory and Practice*. Bloomsbury, London, England, 2014, p. 3.

[226] Daniel Birnbaum,"The medium that might kill all other media," in András *Szántó, Editor, The Future of the Museum: 28 Dialogues. Hatje Cantz, Berlin, Germany, 2020, p. 264.*

[227] *András Szántó,* "Ambition and Anxiety: Reimagining the Art Museum," *The Future of the Museum: 28 Dialogues. Hatje Cantz, Berlin, Germany, 2020, p. 16.*

Dress on left: Orlando Dugi (Navajo), *The Red Collection-Look No. 2.*, 2015-16, Dress on Right: Orlando Dugi (Navajo), *Lillie Dress*, 2018, IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico, 2022, Photo by Emily Mayagoitia.

Art of Indigenous Fashion, IAIA (Institute of American Indian Arts) Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, Santa Fe, New Mexico, United States, 19 August 2022 – 8 January 2023, Tickets $10.00 USD.

The exhibition *Art of Indigenous Fashion*, curated by guest curator Amber-Dawn Bear Robe (Siksika Nation) at the IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts (MoCNA) in Santa Fe, New Mexico, United States, offers insights into the approaches and perspectives of Indigenous designers beyond the visual and material qualities of their work. MoCNA is the United States' only museum for exhibiting, collecting, and interpreting the most progressive work of contemporary Native artists and is solely dedicated to advancing the scholarship, discourse, and interpretation of contemporary Native art for regional, national, and international audiences.

Indigenous designers have been fashioning clothing and personal adornment for ages and can often be considered the original haute couture artists of the Americas as, historically, Indigenous garments were one-of-a-kind and custom made. Over twenty leading contemporary Indigenous designers from Canada and the United States were brought together for this show. MoCNA states in their promotional materials that "[Through the blend of] art and fashion, some designs pose critical questions about culture and identity, reflecting the power of visual representation while reminding the viewer that museum collection classifications do not bind native art, culture, and dress. Loosely organized by period and theme, specific designs broach historical and contemporary issues. Some designers use fashion as a platform for social activism, and some designs may challenge the viewer's notion of 'Indian style.'"[228]

As a visitor initially walking to the exhibition space, one is greeted by a black centre wall highlighting three mannequins wearing masks and contemporary fashion. The visitor may choose to either walk right or left of this centre wall leading into the larger exhibition space. However, the exhibit does not present a specific path that must be followed by the visitor even though there is loose organization. Immediately, the visitor can tell that each object is meant to provide a story; one that is not linear or rigid in nature but rather free flowing with time and change. The layout of the space reflects this by allowing the visitor to move at their own pace and glide from piece to piece with ease.

The overall design of the exhibition space does well to highlight the items on display. The walls are white and provide minimal distraction, thus, allowing the dress, accessories, and accompanying artwork to shine. With that in mind, many of the walls have large round mirrors behind some of the presented pieces so visitors might also appreciate the posterior detail of

[228] IAIA Museum of Contemporary Native Arts, 'Art of Indigenous Fashion,' 2022. https://iaia.edu/event/art-of-indigenous-fashion/. Accessed 4 January 2023.

individual garments. In addition to mannequin displays, there are also fashionable accessories on pedestals covered by casings in the centre of the large exhibit room. This method of display offers visitors an opportunity to walk around and appreciate the finer features and minute aspects of each piece.

A variety of mannequins are used throughout the exhibit. While they are all different, some with and without heads, some with wigs, and others completely limbless, they are very effective in displaying their corresponding fashion piece and/or accessory. Each mannequin is in a neutral colour of black, cream, or metallic copper and silver, enabling the colour to compliment the piece on display.

The placement of the text panels throughout the exhibit is also efficient and accessibly inclusive. Most of the text panels, when not on the wall, are free standing next to their respective garment and allows those who are differently abled to access the text without strain. There are no typographical errors of any kind that would compromise the exhibition as a whole. Each text panel provides tombstone information as well as artistic and/or historic context for the visitor, creating an inclusive and educational environment for all who come into the space.

Lighting is installed in an effective manner which successfully highlights each piece without any glare or shadow on the text and does not detract from the overall visitor experience. However, it does not provide any form of additional sensory effects. While no touching materials are available, visitors can listen and watch three small videos that accompany varied artworks throughout the space. Two videos highlight their corresponding garments and artist, while the other video is a behind-the-scenes look at one of the artist's creative processes. Overall, the visitor can confidently walk through the exhibit without being overstimulated and is able to appreciate all visual components. It should also be noted that there are no docent-led tours of the exhibition.

Each garment, accessory, and photographic image inside the exhibit not only collectively work to create a delectable visual experience but also have the power to stand within their own autonomy. One garment flawlessly exemplifies the mission of *Art of Indigenous Fashion*: *Kill the Indian, Save the Man* by artist, Sho Sho Esquiro (Kaska Dena/Cree) is a cashmere wool dress created in 2021. A quote by Captain Richard Henry Pratt (1840-1924), for which the dress is named after, is abstractly rendered on the front of the dress and can only be seen reflected back at the wearer when one looks into a mirror. Pratt is historically responsible for the assimilation agenda put in place in residential and boarding schools for Native children, and Esquiro addresses the harmful effects of these policies. The dress is displayed on a mannequin looking into a full-length mirror along the wall. The back of the mannequin showcases a pair of black seed beaded angelic wings, which the viewer can see immediately. Such a presentation prompts onlookers to place themselves beside the embroidered quote allowing for contemplation and internal reflection. This reflective theme can be seen throughout the entirety of the show and lends itself to the continued conversation of Indigenous representation.

This exhibition does exactly what it set out to do. Through the display of contemporary Indigenous fashion, the show tastefully touches on subjects relating to gender identity, decolonization, race, environmentalism, and cultural representation. *Art of Indigenous Fashion* is relevant to today's world in that it is the fashion of the original American people both past and present. "From tradition to runway, Indigenous cultures are continually shifting, responding to the land and modern environment."[229] There is a story to be told within each piece on display, and this exhibit articulates each narrative effortlessly to the visitor. While this exhibition has ended, it becomes clear that MoCNA has much to offer in way of challenging the public's understanding of what Indigenous art, identities and styles are.

Art of Indigenous Fashion represents significant developments regarding research into the history and understanding of Indigenous culture and representation. Readers of *The Journal of Dress History* would have enjoyed this exhibition (and would enjoy any other fashion related one

[229] *Art of Indigenous Fashion* exhibition text panel.

put on at MoCNA) as the curatorial style was accessible and original, and presented multiple narratives in a free-flowing and inclusive space.

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Biography

Emily Mayagoitia is currently an art history instructor and academic advisor at Wichita State University and Missouri Western State University. She was born and raised in Wichita, Kansas and obtained her Bachelor of Arts in art history and anthropology from Wichita State University, developing her love for theory within the field. After graduating, Emily decided to go overseas to Scotland and obtain her Masters of Letters in Art History: Dress and Textile Histories from the University of Glasgow. In November of 2018, she graduated and moved back to Wichita where she enrolled at WSU to pursue graduate certificates in Museum Studies and Non-profit Management. She is currently working to acquire her second master's in arts leadership and management. Her current research interests include the use of eighteenth-century dress within portraiture, the value of historical costuming and interpretation in living history/house museums as well as the importance of DEAI within art museum display and development.

Display of the Desired theme. Bata Shoe Museum, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. August 2022. Photograph by the author.

The Great Divide: Footwear in the Age of Enlightenment, curated by Elizabeth Semmelhack, Bata Shoe Museum, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 12 August 2020 – 28 March 2023, Tickets $14 CAD.

Like many fashion exhibitions and museums over the past three years, the duration of *The Great Divide: Footwear in the Age of the Enlightenment*, on display at the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto, Ontario, was greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The museum was obligated to follow public health restrictions that resulted in many closures and re-openings as well as a prolonged run time for this exhibition — the exhibition was originally set to close in February 2021, but was extended until February 2022, and was extended again until March 2023, when it eventually closed.

The exhibition was curated by Elizabeth Semmelhack, the Director and Senior Curator at the Bata Shoe Museum, who has been in this role since 2021 but has been working at the museum in different capacities for over twenty years. The exhibition design was completed by Arc + Co, an award-winning, Toronto-based design company.

The premise of the exhibition was to shed new perspectives on the Enlightenment era: a period in European history between 1685 and 1815 that contained "rigorous scientific, political and philosophical discourse."[230] Matthew White, a Research Fellow in History at the University of Hertfordshire, explains that, "[In this era], centuries of custom and tradition were brushed aside in favour of exploration, individualism, tolerance and scientific endeavour, which, in tandem with developments in industry and politics, witnessed the emergence of the 'modern world.'"[231] Within the substantial changes taking place throughout this time, divisions and distinctions between men and women, children and adults, and Europeans and 'Others' were brought to the forefront and were codified through various objects including footwear. It is these divisions that the exhibition aimed to explore by way of displaying a selection of Enlightenment era footwear worn by men, women, and children.

Upon entering the gallery, located on the top floor of the museum, visitors were thrust into a colourful exhibition with colours of blue, red, green, orange, and yellow painted on the walls with each colour being paired with a respective section of the exhibition; there were six thematic sections: Privilege, Pleasing, Desired, British Empire, Liberté, and Future/Modern. Other initial observations included seeing Enlightenment era paintings printed onto the walls; dimmed lights, presumably to accommodate object conservation; and an abundance of shoes. The exhibition took place in one room with three temporary walls erected in the middle of the room. Thus, the recommended route guided the visitor in a clockwise rectangular path around the erected walls first and then into the small gallery within the erected walls second.

Within each section, items of footwear were selected to best correlate to the discussed theme. For example, at the back of the gallery in the Desired section, shoes made for the European market containing influence from countries outside of Europe, like China, Mexico, and Persia,

[230] Matthew White, "The Enlightenment," *Discovering Literature: Restoration & 18th Century*. British Library. 21 June 2018. Accessed 24 February 2023. https://www.bl.uk/restoration-18th-century-literature/articles/the-enlightenment#:~:text=The%20Enlightenment%20%E2%80%93%20the%20great%20'Age,the%20Napoleonic%20Wars%20in%201815.

[231] Ibid.

were on display. The aim of this section was to educate visitors on the importance and desire that exoticism had on upper class Enlightenment women and society as well as showcase the divide between the different cultures. One remarkable object was a late eighteenth-century English pair of women's shoes whose shape was influenced by Chinese lotus shoes, but its red colour, and exaggerated toe shape was influenced from northern India and parts of Western Asia. In the Pleasing section, an area dedicated to discussing how women's fashion and footwear were geared towards 'pleasing' men, a pair of green and dark cream high-heeled shoes made with silver thread detail and a Louis XIV heel worn by an upper-class woman was shown. This high heeled pair of shoes, a uniform of femininity and daintiness at the time, signified the growing impracticalities of upper-class women's footwear by making them unable to work and walk properly and in turn, made upper class women into objects to be desired by men. Thus, creating a further division between the roles of Enlightenment era men and women.

In addition to the footwear displayed, other types of objects provided additional historical context about the Enlightenment era. A frame of Indian red and white chintz displayed in the British Empire section contributed toward the text panel explaining the history between the British East India Company and their fight for control over East Indian trade. A printed diagram of the layout of a slave ship aided in the explanations regarding Britain and the Atlantic slave trade. And in the Liberté section, which discussed slavery and the French and Haitian Revolutions, a pair of sweetmeat dishes were featured aiding to the description of the role the French, British and Dutch had in increasing their sugar production by using African slave labour. All these items are symbolic of the historic divisions between different cultures, race, and power.

The final section, titled Future/Modern located within the installed walls, deviated from Enlightenment era objects by showcasing footwear between 2000 and the present day, including a single rainbow-striped croc, a single flat shoe by Ivanka Trump's fashion brand, a red stiletto, and a pink and white sneaker. In this area, Semmelhack raised issues to visitors by printing questions on the wall regarding the shoes on display. Some of the questions were: "Do any of these shoes use ideas that belong to a specific culture? Are any of these shoes gendered? If you wore these shoes, would you be criticized? Under what conditions do you think these shoes were made?"[232] Despite the attempt at trying to connect these modern-day shoes to the divisions of the Enlightenment era by asking questions surrounding culture, gender, and conditions in shoe manufacturing, this section fell short in achieving that discourse as there were no other text panels that flushed out or compared modern-day societal divisions to Enlightenment era societal divisions.

Throughout the exhibition, there was a noticeable inclusion of lesser-heard voices and topics within the written narratives. For example, reading about Indigenous history and the colonization of Canada and America within the Privilege and British Empire sections was refreshing, as this history can often be ignored when talking about the Enlightenment era. Additionally, tackling topics like slavery and oppression provided a realistic and decolonized telling of Enlightenment history. There was also one display case that intentionally contained no object, highlighting all the untold and lost stories of those in that era.

Despite the on and off again start at the beginning of its run, *The Great Divide* offered a much-needed discussion on the divisions within the Enlightenment era while also providing a visual feast of eighteenth-century footwear.

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Biography

Caroleen Molenaar is a freelance editor with a background in music, fashion history, and museums. She has completed a BMus in Flute and Music Theory at McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada, a BA in Fashion and Dress History at The University of Brighton, England, and an MA in Museum

[232] Text Panel, Future/Modern section, *The Great Divide*, Bata Shoe Museum Toronto, Ontario.

Studies at The University of Leicester, England. Additionally, she has been a Digital Communications Assistant for the ADH between 2020 and 2022 and has been the Exhibition Reviews Editor since July 2022. Her dress history interests include Canada's fashion history, sustainable fashion practices, and the role and display of fashion in museums.

Designing Women: Fashion Creators and Their Interiors, curated by Patricia Mears, Museum at FIT, New York, New York, USA, 30 November 2022 – 14 May 2023, Free admission.

Fashion designers' relationship to fine art has been explored in numerous exhibitions, however, the link between visionaries of dress and their interiors has been considerably less examined — that is until the creation of the exhibition *Designing Women: Fashion Creators and Their Interiors* at the Museum at FIT, New York. Featuring approximately seventy garments spanning the 1890s through 1970s from the museum's permanent collection, *Designing Women* was the first exhibition to explore the connection between these disciplines. Open from 30 November 2022 through 14 May 2023, the show was curated by the museum's Deputy Director, Patricia Mears, whose previous cross-disciplinary exhibitions include *Ballerina: Fashion's Modern Muse* (2020).

In today's commercial climate where luxury fashion houses, such as Dior and Hermès, are increasingly conceived as lifestyle brands whose emporium-like boutiques are an extension of their heritage and identity, *Designing Women* was paradoxically novel in revealing that this concept was far from new. The exhibition's breadth in showcasing forty female designers was both its strength and weakness. A handful of designers, such as Coco Chanel, Elsa Schiaparelli, and Anna Sui were universally recognisable, while many, including French milliner Jeanne Tachard (who acquired the Parisian millinery house J. Suzanne Talbot in the early 1900s), Irish designer Sybil Connolly, and Russian-Georgian designer Princess Irene Galitzine, were far from household names today. Fascinatingly, the legacies of the interior designers occasionally outshined those of the fashion designers with whom they collaborated. For example, American ready-to-wear designer, Mollie Parnis Livingston turned to Billy Baldwin (whose clients included the Kennedys, Greta Garbo, and Diana Vreeland) to design her Park Avenue apartment's pink salon.

Staged in the museum's modestly scaled Fashion & Textile History Gallery, as opposed to the lower-level galleries, *Designing Women* primarily relied on small reproductions of photographs of the garments' corresponding designers' homes, salons, and stores to illustrate the aesthetic connection between the designers' fashions and interiors. With the exception of a few larger-scale images hung beside certain looks, these photographic reproductions were placed next to the garments' object labels and descriptions; the vast majority of these interior shots only included credits, not captions, making it unclear in certain instances which space (i.e., a designer's home versus boutique) was pictured.

A few walls displayed new drawings created exclusively for the exhibition by artist and FIT Adjunct Associate Professor of Illustration, Bil Donovan. His watercolour-like illustrations featured mannequins wearing dresses composed of decorative furnishings, such as benches, framed pictures, and clocks — the fashion and furnishing combinations correlated to pairings in the exhibition, such as Juliette Mathieu-Lévy of Jeanne Tachard millinery and her apartment by architects and designers, Eileen Gray and Paul Ruaud. While the drawings added touches of beauty and whimsy throughout the show, given the spatial limitations, the wall space could have been better allocated to additional archival interior photography.

The show was organised chronologically charting the nineteenth century rise of "great lady decorators," such as Elsie de Wolfe and Rose Cumming, who put a modern twist on French rococo interiors, to mid-century designers, such as Elsa Peretti and Mary Qaunt, that fully embraced clean-lined, modern, and avant-garde spaces. The first sections of the exhibition relied on the aesthetics of the garments to illustrate how fabrics were used in dress and interiors, with the more concrete examples of designers and their homes and salons dating from the early 1900s. One of the most thoroughly explored examples was Jeanne Paquin. Situated with a Paquin circa 1902 afternoon dress and an 1897 cape were Henri Gervex's painting *Five Hours at the House of Paquin* (1905) on the wall, as well as two photographs, presumably of models and clients in her classical, elegant salons.

Two other designers with multiple interior images to reference were British Lady Duff Gordon, known as Lucile, and French Jeanne Lanvin. Images of Lucile's New York showroom included a private "Rose Room" salon, furnished like the boudoir of a private home to complement

the designer's lacy lingerie and tea gowns. Lanvin's home, designed by French furniture maker and interior designer, Albert Armand Rateau, was pictured, featuring images of her bedroom, which took its rich "Lanvin" cobalt blue and gold colour scheme from French medieval cathedrals — the room is preserved in its full capacity at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. Other images revealed her home was filled with objects by Swiss and French artist and interior designer, Jean Dunand, who also created lacquer portraits of Schiaparelli and lading French milliner, Madame Agnès.

The exhibition's descriptive texts illuminated talents, like Dunand, as well as French interior designer Jean-Michel Frank, who worked with Schiaparelli and Madeleine Vionnet, both fixtures amongst top fashion designers of their day. Because the exhibition tended to give fashion designers the focus, it would have been beneficial to have an accompanying catalogue that provided profiles or more context about these figures from other disciplines who worked extensively and innovatively in sartorial spaces. It was this textual brevity, as well as the choice to represent so many designers, that made the exhibition feel more like a survey, when the subject was, indeed, worthy of a larger, more comprehensive exhibition. It seemed a missed opportunity to not have included any extant furnishings, though this was undoubtedly the product of limited space. While the Fashion & Textile History Gallery is a purist, unfussy space that privilege the garments and accessories on view, it does not allow for the *mise-en-scène* that would take a show about interior decoration to the next level.

While the show's subject was novel, and Mears' ambition was commendable, perhaps, a more focused approach would allow for a better balance between fashion and interiors given the venue. Focusing on five designers rather than forty may have allowed for more built-out environmental vignettes, where even if extant furnishings were not possible, at least larger reproductions could be. This would ensure designers, like Lucille, Schiaparelli, and later Biba-founder Barbara Hulanicki, whose interiors were such a strong part of their visual identity, to shine. In certain instances, such as Tracy Reese and Diane von Furstenberg, the short exhibition texts read more like biographies about their philanthropic endeavours than about their connection to interior design, therefore, diluting the exhibition's overarching goal.

A more focused show would also help resolve the inconsistencies with how much weight each fashion designer was given. The show benefitted from Anna Sui, a living designer, who in addition to her large portrait on the wall, was the only one to have a video tour of her eclectic home playing in the exhibition. In the case of historic designers, where such technologies were not available, presenting more photographic evidence of their interiors would have provided a solution. Another key issue was the discrepancy between private versus public space. Schiaparelli and Vionnet were among the few whose accompanying interior images included their homes and workplaces, while most designers only had one or the other. In certain accounts, such as African-American dressmaker Ann Lowe and illustrator and designer Muriel King, the text descriptions seemed more observational and tenuous: Lowe's, for example, read: "Although her salon was modest, its clean lines and minimal furnishings were similar in style to that of another fashion classicist, Madame Grès." One wondered what Lowe's actual intention (artistic versus utilitarian) behind the space was, demonstrating how more primary sources, especially shedding light on the designers' perspectives, would have enriched the exhibition's connections between dress and interiors.

As *Designing Women* was the first exhibition to examine the connection between fashion and interior design, it will likely spawn further explorations into this stimulating subject matter. Despite its size and scope being its inherent limitations, the show should be respected and admired for paving the way for more interdisciplinary conversations that demonstrate fashion's immense cultural influence beyond the runway and store.

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Biography

Stephanie is an award-winning arts and culture journalist and independent fashion historian based in New York City. She received her master's in NYU's Costume Studies programme in May 2019, and she is currently a freelance writer for *Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, Architectural Digest*, *Artnet*, *The Art Newspaper*, Christie's, and The European Fine Art Foundation (TEFAF). She is the co-author of *Inside: At Home with Great Designers* (Phaidon) and has also conducted research for the CFDA's and Booth Moore's *American Runway: 75 Years of Fashion and the Front Row* (Abrams), and *New York Times* bestselling author M.J. Rose. With a particular penchant for dress in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century society portraiture, Stephanie is most passionate about the intersection of fashion, art, and design.

Display around the swimming pool in the *Italo Pop* gallery. Groninger Museum, Groningen, Netherlands.Photo © Siese Veenstra, 2022.

Gianni Versace Retrospective, Groninger Museum, Groningen, Netherlands, 3 December 2022 – 7 May 2023, curated by Karl von der Ahé and Saskia Lubnow (Agence NC, Paris), Tickets: adults €20, students €10.

Gianni Versace was a star. He clothed stars and made stars. Some journalists called him an ordinary kitsch king, but perhaps there is no need to make such a judgement instead of stating that he was a phenomenon. Today, almost twenty-six years after he was murdered, he is still famous for his ultra-glamorous creations and spectacular and theatrical costumes. Some people become famous after they are murdered, but Versace was already famous long before the dramatic shooting in 1997 where he lost his life.

Versace was born in 1946 in Reggio di Calabrio, a seaport in the far south of Italy. His father was a salesman. His mother ran a dress shop. It was in this shop that the young Gianni learned to play with textiles. He had an older brother, Santo, and a younger sister, Donatella. Both were later active in the fashion company started by Gianni — Santo became the financial expert. After Gianni's death, Santo remained associated with the company, which came under the management of Donatella.

The development of the fashion house was incredibly fast. When he was twenty-seven years old, Gianni settled in Milan. He received countless awards for his collections, and within a few years, he was world famous. From the beginning of his career, he never designed *haute couture* but focused on the broad class of the newly wealthy who could afford conspicuous consumption. In the early nineties he emigrated part-time to the USA, where a large part of his target group was waiting for him.

Looking back at his work, one sees that his style has clear characteristics: overt sexuality, multicoloured baroque patterns, classical influences, the use of materials like leather, and elements of "bondage" such as straps and buckles far beyond their normal sphere of use. He invented "oroton," a fabric of light metal mesh, that he manipulated until the weight was so low that it could be wrapped on the body like classical drapery.

Two fashion specialists, Karl von der Ahé, an art historian, and Saskia Lubnow, who studied fashion design and brand management, spent the last five years deeply researching and studying the life and work of Gianni Versace. Under supervision of the Parisian exhibition design studio Agence NC, they planned several Versace exhibitions: first at the Kronprinzenpalast (2018) in Berlin, Germany, then at the Textilmuseet (2020) in Borås, Sweden, and most recently at the Groninger Museum in Groningen, Netherlands. Also planned is an exhibition in Lisbon, Portugal, but no definitive information has been released. For an overview, visit dreamrealizer.de.

This retrospective was organized independent of the company Gianni Versace S.r.l. and the Versace family, as indicated by a disclaimer in the exhibition. The museum explained that Karl and Saskia have been researching the work and life of Gianni Versace for five years and have built up an extensive network of private lenders, who, among others, were colleagues or partners of Gianni Versace and were also involved in this exhibition.

The opening display in the Groninger Museum was a three-dimensional replica of a photograph taken from the back of Versace's book *Do Not Disturb* (1996) of model Claudia Schiffer. Claudia (replaced by a mannequin in the exhibition) was nude, except for a Versace baroque-patterned blanket clutched in her hands. A deliberately tense relationship between clothed and undressed was characteristic for Versace's work. Versace had a particular attention to male beauty in the form of a preference for tight male clothing, underwear, and swimwear. Perhaps this

had something to do with his own homosexuality, but it can also be linked to his origins in the south of Italy, *Magna Graecia*, where people still looked at things with classical eyes.

The display of nude in the exhibition remained largely invisible because of the use of plastic-coloured mannequins, though, the poses of the mannequins contained turned necks and rhetorical gestures of the arms radiated joy. More than 200 colourful garments were draped on very rhythmically formed woman- and- man-like dolls. Versace had a fondness for bright colours, especially green, yellow, and bright red. He used the colours in abstract printed fabrics, sometimes combined with animal motifs, from butterflies to tigers.

Most of the pieces of dress on display were from private collections, but one item came from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York: a copy of a dress worn by Princess Diana when she appeared on the cover of *Harper's Bazaar* in 1997. With that photo the magazine paid homage to "Lady Di" after her sudden death two months after she attended the funeral of Versace.

The exhibition in Groningen was grouped thematically. One theme was *Italo pop,* a remembrance of the eighties and nineties in Italy. A complete room contained a kind of a swimming pool (without water...) around which were grouped chairs with mannequins in Versace swimwear. Surrounding the chairs were other mannequins set on plinths dressed in multicoloured dresses bathing in neon light. This arrangement typified the time when Versace achieved his first great successes in Milan.

Another room, with the theme of *Pop Culture*, highlighted the relation between Versace and popstars like Madonna, Elton John, Sting, and Prince. The stars themselves were present in the form of life-size photos showing them wearing their Versace clothes. Versace increased their fame, and they increased Versace's fame. The same can be said of the top models with whom he worked: Naomi Schiffer, Cindy Crawford, Linda Evangelista, and Naomi Campbell. They were all present in this exhibition depicted in photographs or by their exhibited clothes made especially for them. Part of this room was also dedicated to pop-art artist Andy Warhol, with whom Versace had an extraordinary relation. Warhol wanted to knock down the wall between art and commerce. Versace knocked down the wall between high fashion and commercial ready-to-wear. He made several dresses with motives derived from Warhol's screen printings of Marilyn Monroe and James Dean, also on view.

Ample room was given to an event that caused a storm in the media: the dress in which Elizabeth Hurley appeared with actor Hugh Grant at the premiere of *Four Weddings and a Funeral* (1994). The dress was made of loose patches held together by oversized gold-plated safety-pins. Versace's design was a nod to punk that was fashionable on the streets at the time. This dress created so much attention that ever since then, it is known in fashion history as 'That dress.' The dress was shown in the exhibition (in a glass case, just as the dress of Lady Di), next to photographs of the 1994 premiere.

High walls in the exhibition were covered top to bottom with silk scarfs and shirts. They reflected the sheer breadth of motifs and pattern repeats used by Versace, from simple white dots on blue to a gorgeous golden baroque interplay of lines on a black background.

From 1993 on, Versace used the head of Medusa, a Greek mythological creature, as a trademark. Versace said he remembered this head from the floor of the ruins in an area of Reggio Calabria where he played as a child — but maybe that's also a myth. One could presume that he used Medusa as a logo because she made people fall in love with her. In mythology, Medusa was a victim of male vice but also a temptress: anyone who looked at her was turned into stone. In the exhibition her face was everywhere: on handbags, on buttons, as a belt buckle, as a pendant, and as a print on shirts and scarfs. The face also appeared as a mosaic on the floor of Versace's villa in Miami, which was styled as a Renaissance palace.

The exhibition gave sufficient room to images of the interiors of several of Versace's houses, all lavishly furnished and decorated in the style he created for himself: a mixture of restrained classic and excessive baroque, with simple white columns coupled with carpets in bright colours and opulent designs. The same contradiction in his clothing designs made him famous. It's a pity we'll never know how his designs would have developed if he hadn't been killed.

Catalogues under the title *Gianni Versace Retrospective* (2023) were published in both Dutch and English by W-Books, Zwolle and are priced at €39. The museum also made a playlist on Spotify, including music by The Doors, Elton John, Ella Fitzgerald, U2, Radiohead and many more, that puts you in the front row of a Gianni Versace fashion show!

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Biography

Hendrik van Rooijen has a degree in History of Art from the University of Amsterdam. He is an independent dress historian, specializing in the relation between power, clothing, and colour, especially purple and black.

London Couture and the Making of a Fashion Center, Michelle Jones, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England, 2022, Appendix, Archival Sources, Notes, Index, 61 Black–and–White Illustrations, 320 pages, Hardback, $30.00.

This book by Michelle Jones focuses on the role that designers played in the construction of the London couture industry from the beginning of the First to the end of the Second World War. Many books discussing the story of Paris couture have been published in recent years. They describe the birth and rise of French haute couture, covering the history of designers such as Charles Frederick Worth, Coco Chanel, and Pierre Balmain. At the beginning of the 1930s, Paris was considered the cradle of style, and Paris-based couturiers its dictators. At the same period between the wars, the London couture industry began to emerge, with French fashion houses being the inspiration for their work. London mirrored the *Chambre Syndicale* established in France in the 1860s creating a new organisation to protect the interests of the British fashion industry. Known as the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers, It was not officially established until 1942.

This book is unique as it deals with the birth and rise of London's bespoke fashion industry. *The London Couture: British Luxury 1923-1975* by Edwina Ehrman (published in 2015), similarly describes London's developments, but as the title infers, it covers a much longer period. A major strength of Michelle Jones's book is that it shows the events in a detailed chronological sequence almost year by year. The author takes the time to point out multiple historical and social connections.

An interesting example concerns the connection between charity balls and fashion marketing. Jones describes the importance of these fundraising events in the 1930s and notes how influential the dresses worn at these events were themselves. It soon became essential for couture houses to dress the most prominent or famous "celebrities" at this time, and the book follows the success stories of some of these dresses through the publications of British Vogue and Harpers' Bazaar, both reported about different important social events and the dresses worn at them.

The book follows a chronological structure and is divided into four chapters, each having multiple shorter sub-chapters. These give equal weight to the development of the London couture industry. Chapter 1 examines London couture houses and explores how Mayfair court dressmakers became Mayfair couturiers. It also discusses their aristocratic clientele and their importance to these houses. Besides the commercial aspects, it shows a timeline of the social and political factors that contributed to the establishment of the identity of the London couturiers. Chapter 2 focuses on the second half of the 1930s when designers began to collaborate. The Fashion Group of Great Britain brought London couturiers together facilitating their entry to the American market. Two more organisations, the British Colour Council and the Collaborative Fashion Show were playing an equally important part in paving the way to the American market. Chapter 3 analyses the war years and the establishment of the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers. The end of 1940 marked the fall of France and Paris was occupied. This was "London's opportunity to shine" according to *Vogue* in September 1940. This gave fashion houses a chance to work together, and to show the world what London had to offer. In 1942, the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers (INCSOC) was established, but it was not a smooth ride for all. This chapter gives an insight into the operation of many couture houses disrupted by the war, and shows how they overcame disruption. During the war years, no new businesses were allowed to open, which substantially influenced and changed fashion and the way ladies chose their dresses, giving more focus to comfort and less interest in evening dresses. Chapter 4 considers post-war reconstruction from 1946 and emphasises the function and role of the INCSOC In these years. Fashion business

revived in France and became very active again. Coco Chanel was out of sight and a new designer, Christian Dior launched his first collection in 1947. At the same time in London, creative design once again became a political priority due to the need for export revenue. This chapter deals mainly with the continuation of post-war collaboration and protectionism. It focuses on film costume designs and the rise of Norman Hartnell (whose famous clients included Queen Elizabeth II and members of the Royal Family), telling the fascinating story behind the famous photos of a Royal wearing a Hartnell dress that were then circulated in newspapers all over the world.

Michelle Jones successfully presents the chronological structure of the development of the London couture industry in this book. At times, it is complicated to follow all the names and titles of the magazines, but there are almost 60 pages of notes supplying this information. It is an extremely detailed and thoroughly written work that will definitely serve as a very entertaining and informational read for all who are interested in fashion history, particularly in its London chapter. Through a series of case studies of collaborations and events, the reader will get a broader view of the overall development and survival of the London couture industry, which was driven not only by the designer-members themselves but also by what social and cultural stipulations, competitors and their clients allowed them to achieve.

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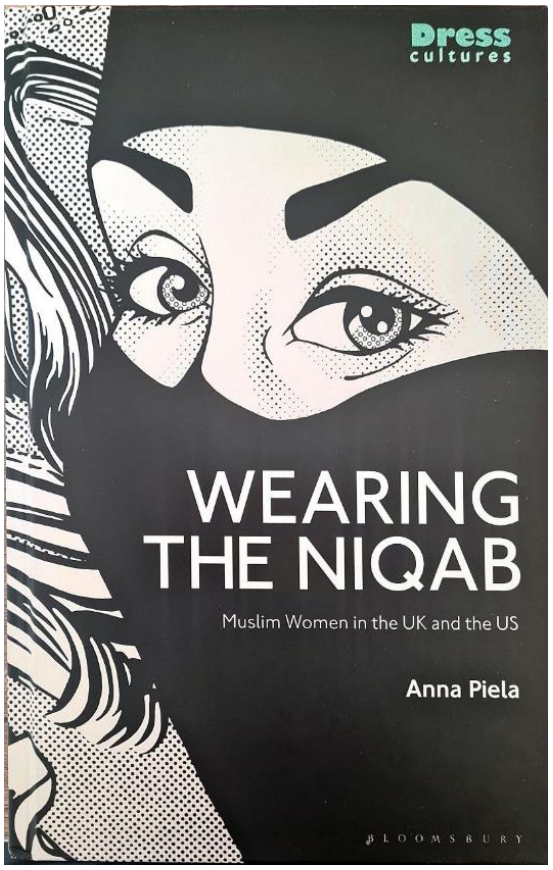
Biography

Krisztina Árpási graduated with a Master's degree in Economics in Hungary. She worked as a coach and result consultant in the bank sector before moving to Switzerland. Her scientific interests focus on the topic of female decision-making; in addition to this, she runs a website about fashion history, and she has recently established her own brand that produces silk scarves.



***Wearing the Niqab: Muslim Women in the UK and the US*, Anna Piela, Bloomsbury, London, UK, 2021, List of illustrations, Acknowledgements, Introduction, Sources, Index, 177 pages**

The issue of hijab or niqab has never caused such heated discussions as in the last 200 years. For example in the country where I was born and live now, Uzbekistan - after the collapse of the Soviet Union, religion began to actively return to the public space, and the issue of women's headcovers again turned out to be relevant and political. Unlike our predecessors, for many ethical Muslims, headcovers are no longer the clothes of a mother and grandmother. These are clothes implying observance and adherence to religion.

If we look at the niqab phenomenon from different angles, we will see that the veil is not a part of exclusively Islamic culture, it was spread before Islam. In addition, it is associated with a woman's freedom and her high social status. Or does it suppress a woman's will? --It's hard to say. On the one hand, women's capes covering the body isolate them from the rest of society, it is a symbol of their seclusion. Wearing a burqa is usually demanded by supporters of the most conservative forms of Islam, who believe that the role of women in society is limited to caring for the family. In such communities, women may indeed be forced to wear burqas and often the initiative comes from older women. In some countries, the appearance of a woman on the street without traditional clothes can directly threaten her life and health — in such a situation it is difficult to talk about a voluntary choice.

On the other hand, many Muslim women voluntarily wear this garment, guided by deep religious views. In addition, at one time the burqa was considered the clothing of women from wealthy families, that is, it was in some sense a symbol of wealth and influence.

Anna has done a great job writing her book. Interviewing women of different nationalities with different narratives. Anna managed to demonstrate that all interviewed found in their religious garments some kind of shelter, and protection. Geopolitical issues also affected their daily life. But the case of Nabila, a British Muslim and one of the Salafi participants, where the author reveals how Nabia's opinion was framed with Salafi perspectives, like wearing a niqab is mandatory. However, this opinion is biased and unscientific. It oversimplifies this problem, thereby leading people away from its thorough investigation. Anyone who is familiar with the sources of knowledge and the opinions of scientists will not argue on an issue on which there is no unanimity among scientists. I mean here is the question of the permissibility of opening a woman's face or the obligation to conceal both the face and the hands. Muslim scholars of the past, including jurists, Qur'an interpreters, and hadith scholars, disagree on this issue. This discrepancy is due to the difference in their approach to the interpretation of religious texts on this issue, and especially the lack of a specific and clear text about it.

These individuals - Sadiyah, British Pakistan, Selina, British Indian, Asma African American all took their own decision based on Quranic ayah, verse 24:31:

By Valeriya (Iman) Prokhorova

Tell the virgins that they believed (in God), To lower their eyes, And keep their chastity, And not to flaunt their beauties, Apart from what (usually) should be visible. And let them throw a shawl over their chests And show off their beauties, Except their husbands, their fathers, The fathers of their husbands, and their sons, And the sons of their husbands (from previous marriages) Or their brothers, or their nephews From their brothers and sisters, Their servants, or girlfriends, Or those who are owned by right hands, Or male servants, Deprived of carnal desires, Or small children, That women's nakedness has not yet been recognized. And let them not kick the floor, To reveal those of their beauties Which are hidden (by their clothes). O you who believe! Turn your face to Allah in repentance, so that you may know bliss.

I was very impressed with Aisha, a British Pakistani, and how she purely explained her opinion on how she wants to be close to God, ...it is not compulsory to cover your face. If Allah tells you to cover your head and you're doing that you become closer to Him, but why not be much closer if you cover your face? From this point of view, I would say how deep she dives into each word of the Quranic verse, and how is this important to her. I would recommend Piela's book to those readers who wish to deepen their knowledge in the relevant area. This book may also serve as an anthropological resource, as it was enriched with live interviews, statements, and facts.

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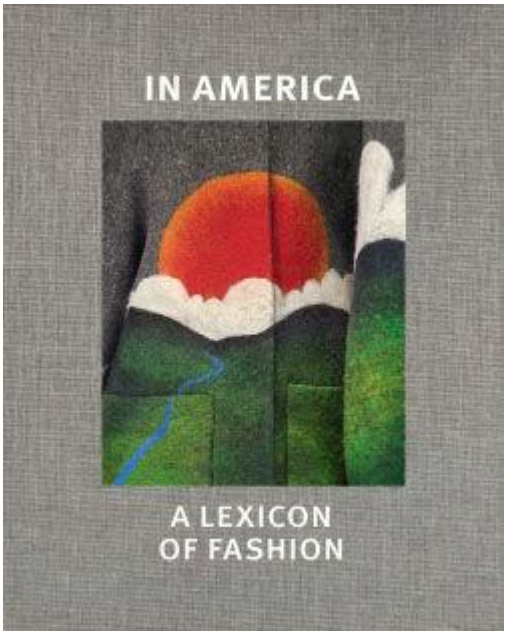
Biography

Yulduz Gaybullaeva PhD is Deputy Director of the Center for the implementation of educational programs of Webster University in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.



Andrew Bolton, *In America: A Lexicon of Fashion*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Distributed by Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2022, Acknowledgements, Selected Readings, Index of Designers, Credits, 236 Colour Illustrations, 272 pages, Hardback, £35.

This book offers a fresh perspective on American fashion. Over eight decades, it explores the expressive qualities of the designs of both the pioneering and the emerging designers of American fashion. The lexicon is organized according to a collection of words that define the emotional qualities of clothing : nostalgia, belonging, exuberance, joy, sweetness, fellowship, optimism, strength, desire, spontaneity, comfort, reverence. Each garment illustrated is discussed in the light of this vocabulary. It is straightforward, yet very sophisticated and thought-provoking, as well as enjoyable.

In such an arrangement, common themes emerge. American sportswear, for example, can be traced from the pioneering work of Claire McCardell. Her iconic Popover dress (spontaneity) could be worn as a swimsuit cover-up or as an evening dress. It is a versatile dress that encapsulated Claire McCardell's key tenets of ease and movement. Forty years later, Donna Karan introduced her 'Seven Easy Pieces' (spontaneity/conviction). This was a collection of coordinated separates: trousers, bodysuit, skirt, jacket; they could be combined and worn on various occasions, day and night. The garments were interchangeable and complemented each other; a veritable wardrobe of classic pieces.

More prominence could have been given to sportswear, what the late Richard Martin characterized as an American 'invention', in an exhibition he curated at the Met in 1985 entitled *All-American, a Sportwear Tradition*. He followed it up in 1998 with *American Ingenuity: 1930s-1970s*, which he described as the 'Golden Age' of American sportswear. However, a new generation are wonderfully showcased with their functional and aesthetic vision. One of the most creative and innovative to highlight is Conner Ives. He designed an extraordinary suit made from a reconstituted blanket felted with a painting featuring a landscape with a rising or setting sun (reverence). An influence was folk art. It was beautifully photographed and graces the cover of the book.

This sumptuously-illustrated book is erudite but accessible, and has opened up the theme of studying fashion in a new way. Its natural readership will be dress historians of American fashion, but the quality of the illustrations and the well-written text could have appeal for a wider readership, for example, those interested in the interaction of fashion and art. In addition to the splendid publications of Richard Martin, a complementary read should also include Roland Barthes's insightful *Système de la mode*, which considers the semiology of the fashion magazine. Perhaps some fashion illustrations from the excellent library of the Met's Costume Institute could have been included to further enrich this enticing subject.

In America: A Lexicon of Fashion was published in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name. There is also a *Guidebook* to another exhibition which took place across the American period rooms in the American Wing of the Met. It had as purpose to set the scene, so to speak, for *In America: A Lexicon of Fashion*, by providing excellent historical context on the evolution of American fashion. So while *In America: A Lexicon of Fashion* is a scholarly dictionary of American fashion, *In America: An Anthology of Fashion* is a series of vignettes that bring American fashion to life.

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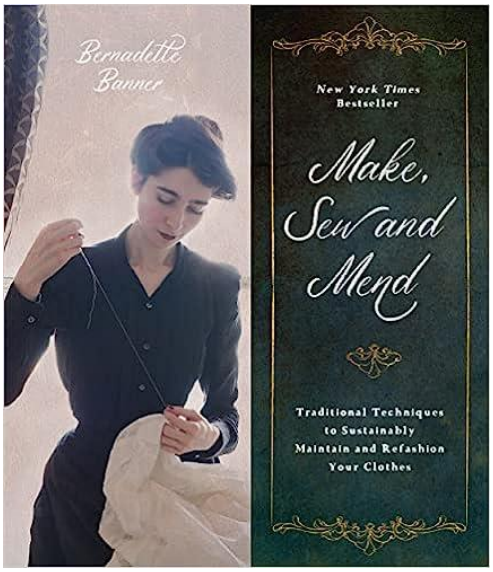
Biography

Dr Alice Mackrell received her MA in the History of Dress with Distinction and her Ph.D in the History of Art, both from the Courtauld Institute of Art in London. She is the author of *Art and Fashion: the Impact of Art on Fashion and Fashion on Art*. She has contributed essays to the *Macmillan Dictionary of Art* and to *The Phaidon Fashion Book*.



Make, Sew and Mend: Traditional Techniques to Sustainably Maintain and Refashion Your Clothes, **Bernadette Banner, Page Street Publishing Co., Salem, Massachusetts, 2022, Acknowledgements, 154 Colour Illustrations, 200 pages, Paperback, £18.99.**

American YouTuber, costume historian, and educational content creator Bernadette Banner has given her audience a well curated and beautifully written debut book with *Make, Sew and Mend: Traditional Techniques to Sustainably Maintain and Refashion Your Clothes.* Part historical reference material and part instruction manual, Banner's work is honest, thoroughly researched, and straightforward. Her voice comes through clearly in her writing, and her fans will be delighted by her quick wit and wonderful turn of phrase.

Banner began her career in costume design on Broadway after completing studies in theatrical production at New York University. After working with the School of Historical Dress in London her focus turned to historical costuming and reconstruction. Her studies focus mainly on the period of 1890-1914, researching clothing construction methods that predate the use of the electric sewing machine. In 2018 she created a YouTube channel to document her studies, and, to date, her channel has an audience of over 1 million subscribers.

Weaving stories of inspirational style makers throughout, Banner's *Make, Sew and Mend* begins by covering the history of sustainable fashion and introducing the reader to her journey in hand sewing research and methods. The initial chapter covers topics including choosing the right fabric for your sewing project and identifying fiber content and instructs how to prepare and cut your fabric. The concise writing and accompanying photographs of pinning, piecing, and stitching provide an in-depth how-to for readers eager to begin or continue their own hand sewn projects. Later chapters evolve into more advanced historical techniques such as binding, finishing, gathers, and pintucks. Researchers of dress history will be highly impressed at how these seemingly simple hand sewing methods create such detailed works of fashion art. Final pages are dedicated to a brief glossary and a thoughtful, heartfelt conclusion which encourages her readers to embrace their "particular brand of weirdness" and urges clothing choice as a method of self- expression, while also examining the differences between being an item's caretaker versus being a consumer. Textiles, she argues, fall into the "caretaker" category, rounding out the thesis that the information and instruction contained in her work seeks to enable readers to assume their caretaker role in a garment's lifecycle.

Banner herself admits that purchasing sustainable fashion- those using high quality materials and fairly paid wages to producers- can come with a hefty price tag. While she offers refashioning, repurposing, thrifting, and even trading clothing as an alternative to purchasing new items, she doesn't always adequately address that some of the materials used to do so in an historically accurate manner -such as antique sewing machines and antique or vintage sewing notions- could become quite pricey. One would hope this does not turn away those interested in learning Banner's craft and if she were to address this issue somewhat it may be less alienating to a beginner who may only have access to inexpensive easily purchased materials and supplies. She could easily turn this into an additional instructional moment on how and where to find antique and vintage sewing accoutrements. Readers new to her visual and written work would greatly benefit from such a tutorial.

It is slightly ironic that Banner's popularity has been achieved through online venues as she demonstrates sewing techniques that require no technology at all. Her unique personality and writing style -like her YouTube videos and popular Instagram page- speak to the curious beginner

and accomplished sewist alike. Her clear instructions are empowering, and the work left me with a fresh perspective and new hobby that speaks to all my interests in fashion, history, handmade goods, sustainability, and vintage and antique items. Readers with these and other sewing- and history-related interests will find something that appeals to them in *Make, Sew and Mend*. All are welcome in Banner's enchanting historical world.

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Biography

Kelly White is a freelance historian, researcher, and writer with interests in dress history, cultural history, and material culture. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in American History from Mary Baldwin University and a Master of Arts in American History from American Military University. Her scholarship focuses on American 19th and 20th century dress history and material culture, particularly how clothing and accessories demonstrate the social customs and economics of a time period. She is currently researching the effects of Victorian mourning customs including dress, sentimental jewelry, and burial practices on the evolution of small local businesses in America.