Thursday 24 March 2016

9.00 - 9.30  Registration

9.30 - 9.45  Welcome by Wim Hupperetz (Director of the Allard Pierson Museum)

9.45 - 10.00  Opening words by Bas ter Haar Romeny (FISO, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

10.00 - 10.30  Introduction by Rosita D’Amora and Tineke Rooijakkers

10.30 - 10.45  Coffee break

10.45 - 11.25  Guest Speaker: Annelies Moors (Universiteit van Amsterdam)

Standing Out, Fitting In: Muslim Dress and the Politics of Belonging

11.25 - 12.40  Session 1: The veil?

Chair: Annelies Moors

11.25 - 11.50  Younes Saramifar (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)

Politics of Scarf or Hundred Ways for Not Wearing the Scarf

11.50 - 12.15  Lora Saraslan (Universiteit van Amsterdam)

The Quest(ion) of Veil

12.15 - 12.40  Tal Shenav (The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace, The Hebrew University)

Dress Code and Modern Muslim Role Model – A Case Study of the Animated Television Series ‘Stories of Women in the Quran’

12.40 - 13.40  Lunch break

13.40 - 14.20  Guest Speaker: Reina Lewis (London College of Fashion, University of the Arts)

Marketing Modest Fashion in Turkey: Politics, Identity, Ethnicity, Nation

14.20 - 15.35  Session 2: Veiling communities

Chair: Reina Lewis

14.20 - 14.45  Ruxandra Todosi (Nottingham Trent University)

Depth of Surface in Glamour and in Modesty: Art(ifice), Communication and Introspection through Veils Today

14.45 - 15.10  R. Arzu Ünal (Fatih Üniversitesi)

The Çarşaf: From a National Outfit to a Community Garment

15.10 - 15.35  Alice Leri (University of South Carolina)

Global Trends and Local Meanings: Highlighting Power Dynamics in the Marketplace
15.35 - 15.50  Coffee break

15.50 - 16.30  Guest Speaker: Kristi Upson-Saia (Occidental College)
   (Re)theorizing Modesty: Gender, Religion, and Dress

16.30 - 17.20  Session 3: Women and modesty in early Christianity and Islam
   Chair: Kristi Upson-Saia
   16.30 - 16.55  Kate Cooper (University of Manchester)
      Transvestite Saints, Modesty, and Ancient Violence Against Women
   16.55 - 17.20  Judith Kindinger (FISO, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
      Dressing down the Dressed up: The Phenomenon of Long and Wide Sleeves in the Socio-Political Context of 14th century Mamlûk Egypt
Friday 25 March 2016

9.30 - 10.30  **Clue+ keynote: Suraiya Faroqui** (İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi)
*In Books and Boxes, and Then Out in the Open: Ottoman Clothes as a Research Topic*

10.30 - 10.45  **Coffee break**

10.45 - 12.50  **Session 4a: Male sartorial politics**
Chair: Suraiya Faroqui

10.45 - 11.10  Avner Wishnitzer (Tel Aviv University)
*Mustached, Young Turks: A History of Facial Hair in the Late Ottoman Empire*

11.10 - 11.35  Sivan Balslev (Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem)
*Fake Collars and Fake Westernizers: Dress, Masculinity, and Social Distinction in Early 20th century Iran*

11.35 - 12.00  Gülşen Kaya Osmanbaşıoğlu (Social Sciences University of Ankara)
*The Irony of Clothing Political Leadership in Turkey: Ecevit and Demirel*

12.00 - 12.25  Shoshana-Rose Marzel (University of Haifa)
*The Seventies Turning Point in Israeli Masculine Fashion*

12.25 - 12.50  Kobi Peled (Ben-Gurion University)
*The Poetics and Politics of Bedouin Dress among the First Zionist Watchmen and Shepherds*

10.45 - 12.50  **Session 4b: Depicting status in Byzantine times**
Chair: Henry Maguire

10.45 - 11.10  Mat Immerzeel (Leiden University)
*Who Do We Think They Are? Donor Portraits in the Medieval Middle East*

11.10 - 11.35  Cristina Stăncioiu (College of William and Mary, Williamsburg)
*Sartorial Choices in Eastern Mediterranean Portraiture: 13th-15th Centuries*

11.35 - 12.00  Eleni Bamparitsa (Hellenic Ministry of Culture)
*Dressing Codes in the Late Medieval Peloponnese, Greece: 13th - 15th Century*

12.00 - 12.25  Sophia Germanidou (Hellenic Ministry of Culture)
*The Attire of Peasantry in Byzantine Iconography*

12.25 - 12.50  Andrea Torno Ginnasi (Università degli Studi di Milano)
*Clothes Do Make the Emperor: The Byzantine toupha from Exotic Helmet Ornament to Triumphal Imperial Crown*
12.50 - 14.00  Lunch break

14.00 - 15.55  Session 5a: Powerful hats

14.00 - 14.40  Guest Speaker: Katja Jana (University of Göttingen)
   *Loyal and Elegant Subjects of the Sublime State: Headgear and the Multiple Dimensions of Modernizing/-ed Ottoman Identity*

   Chair: Katja Jana
   14.40 - 15.05  Philipp Wirtz (SOAS, University of London and University of Warwick)
   *Between Turban and Tarbush: Remembering Cultures of Clothing in the Autobiography of Ahmad Amīn*
   15.05 - 15.30  Anaïs Massot (Universiteit Leiden and École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales)
   *Clerical Clothing and the Politics of Recognition during the Ottoman Tanzimat Period: the ‘Affair of the Hat’ as a Case Study*
   15.30 - 15.55  Esther Voswinckel Filiz (Centrum für Reliönsforschung (CERES) Bochum)
   *Sufi Turbans (Tac-ı Şerif) in Istanbul – the Textile and Textual Production of Ritual Headgears at Saintly Gravesites*

14.00 - 16.05  Session 5b: Self-presentation in the ancient eastern Mediterranean

   Chair: Mat Immerzeel
   14.00 - 14.25  Serdar Yalçın (Parsons School of Design, New York)
   *Image vs. Reality: Babylonian Professionals, their Seals and the Issue of Representation in Ancient Mesopotamia.*
   14.25 - 14.50  Jessica L. Nitschke (Stellenbosch University)
   *Identity, Status, and the Meaning of Foreign Styles of Dress in Phoenician Self-Representation*
   14.50 - 15.15  Melanie Wasmuth (Universität Basel and Allard Pierson Museum Amsterdam)
   *Dressing Darius I: Visual Strategies of Incorporating Mutually Incompatible Kingship Concepts*
   15.15 - 15.40  Betty Rame (University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne)
   *Mycenaean Headband: An Identity Sign?*
   15.40 - 16.05  Maria Papadopoulou (University of Copenhagen)
   *Alexander the Great’s Cloak and the Politics of Dress in Hellenistic Egypt*

16.05 - 16.20  Coffee break
16.20 - 17.20  **Keynote: Henry Maguire** (Johns Hopkins University)
*The Politics of Imperial Dress in Medieval Art, East and West*

19.00  **Conference dinner**
Brasserie Harkema, Nes 67, Amsterdam
Saturday 26 March 2016

9.00 - 9.40  Guest speaker: Giovanni Ricci (University of Ferrara)
Ambiguous Dress: Four Stories from the Medieval and Early Modern Mediterranean World

9.40 - 10.55  Session 6: Negotiating sartorial identities
Chair: Giovanni Ricci
9.40 - 10.05  Andrew Robarts (Rhode Island School of Design)
10.05 - 10.30  Marloes Cornelissen (Sabancı Üniversitesi)
Fashion and Identity among the Dutch in Early Modern Ottoman Istanbul
10.30 - 10.55  Sümeyye Hoşgör Büke (METU, Ankara)
Making Difference through Dresses in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire: The Case of Galata

10.55 - 11.15  Coffee break

11.15 - 12.30  Session 7: The image of the Other and the politics of representation
Chair: Rosita D’Amora (University of Salento)
11.15 - 11.40  Gwendolyn Collaço (Harvard University)
Documenting Dress in Diplomacy and Poetry: Costume Albums as a Transcultural Genre
11.40 - 12.05  Ilse Sturkenboom (University of Vienna)
Muslims Dressing up Christians: The Image of the Christian in Medieval Persian Manuscripts
12.05 - 12.30  Robyn Radway (Princeton University)
Muddling East and West: Costume and Identity in the Ottoman Habsburg Borderlands

12.30 - 13.30  Lunch break

13.30 - 14.20  Session 8: Communities between East and West
Chair: Petra de Bruijn (Leiden University)
13.30 - 13.55  Alexander A. Novik (St. Petersburg State University)
Traditional Costume, Ethnic affiliation and Common Memory of Slavic (Macedonian) Muslims in Albania: Adaptating and Preserving the Identity
13.55 - 14.20  Nicola Verderame (Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies)
  *Costumes in World Fairs and Orientalisms: The Case of Chicago, 1893*

14.20 - 14.45  Coffee break

14.45 - 16.00  Session 9: Dressed to impress in the early medieval eastern Mediterranean
   Chair: Tineke Rooijakkers (FISO, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
   14.45 – 15.10  Susanne Enderwitz (Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg)
      *Zarf: A Dress-Code in Medieval Baghdad*
   15.10 – 15.35  Alexandra Pleșa (FISO, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
      *Between Tradition, Religiosity and Status: Burial Dress and Practice at Matmar and Mostagedda (Middle Egypt) during Late Antique and Early Islamic Times*
   15.35 – 16.00  Hasan Al-Khoe (SOAS, University of London)
      *To Wear Black Robes or White? Colour, Clothing and the Fatimid-Abbasid Rivalry (10th and 11th Centuries)*

16.00 - 16.30  Closing remarks
Scarf and wearing hijab may appear hindrance and nuisance for women’s freedom in the eyes of some observers or activists both in the ‘occident’ and the ‘orient’ but there are many women who have incorporated hijab in their everyday life attire. Scarf has become an instrument of ‘self-fashioning’ (Greenblatt 1980) and ‘tactic of everyday life’ (de Certeau 1980) for young women as well as their older generations. For instance, Lebanese Shi’a women have taken scarf as the style and a mode of expression to navigate themselves into the maze of political allegiances while maintaining their subjectivity beyond the tyranny of patriarchy and gaze of Hezbollah resistance movement.

Into that effect, I employ the idea of ‘material semiotics’ to demonstrate how investigating styles of wearing a scarf and sartorial practices among Lebanese Shi’a women opens the ‘realm of performativity’ (Law 2008) and traverses the limitations of representation and identity. The material semiotics of scarf is not about the controversies of hijab and veiling but rather concentration on how scarf stands as a vital metaphor instead of a construction. I look at different styles of wearing scarf among Lebanese Shi’a women who live in Hezbollah constituencies in order to explain the enactment and performance of scarf. My attempt is to elucidate how each style of wearing a scarf produces a different network of reality in reaction to the waves of politics, religious discourse and campaigns disseminated by the resistance movement within the western suburb of Beirut or specific provinces in the Southern Lebanon.

Finally, I try to complete this picture by making a brief comparison between Shi’a women sartorial preferences and those of Lebanese Shi’a clerics. Thus, we may be able to use material semiotics as a method to address the politics of dress and how it produces ‘precarious reality’ (ibid).

Younes Saramifar wrote his PhD on Hezbollah armed resistance movement in Lebanon, looking at the figure of militant and spatial practices in Hezbollah constituencies. The result was published as a book entitled “Living with the AK-47”. Currently he is engaged in a new research project with a focus on memory and narrativity in post-war Iran at the department of social and cultural anthropology at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.
Veiling and unveiling embody two extremes reflecting beliefs, cultural traditions, faith, life styles, opinions, perceptions, politics, and sexuality. Both visible and invisible, these two verbs/actions invite discussion and controversy of challenging nature. While not physically revealing, the veil remains provocative in its concealment. The subject retains powerful symbolism outside the Muslim world, addressing or connoting subjects such as domestic life, oppression, women’s rights, the gaze, and the ‘other’. There is a complex relationship of the veil with contemporary society and it is fitting to look at art works that present a transcultural questioning and exploration of various approaches to the literal and, moreover, metaphorical meanings of the controversial topic of (un)veiling.

Through the work of three radically different individuals, this paper will query the diverse positions that (un)veiling and covering hold in the fashion as well as the contemporary art world. Hussein Chalayan, a Turkish fashion designer and artist originally from Cyprus and based in London along with the Turkish artists Kutluğ Ataman (based in Istanbul/London) and Nilbar Güreş (based in Istanbul/Vienna) will be the basis of discussion. The probing of aesthetical, cultural, and political references are fertilizers for these creators as they express a critical viewpoint. Through their creations, this paper will look into how dress codes or different forms of (un)veiling relate to issues of class, ethnicity, migration, and nationality. Women’s rights, relationships to social space, and religion, are examples of the issues continually raised by veiling. Demonstrating that veil is subjective with different meanings in different contexts; this paper will also address the challenges of existing between cultures producing tension and the role that (un)veiling plays. However ambiguous, empowering, or reactionary these artistic positions may be, their examination and presentation is a significant and necessary contribution to an evolving discussion on (un)veiling.

Art historian and curator Lora Sariaslan is a PhD candidate at the University of Amsterdam. She went to Knox College, Illinois where she received her B.A. in Art History and Integrated International Studies, and received her M.A. in Art History from the University of Texas at Austin. She has worked at the Dallas Museum of Art in Texas (2001-2005) and was curator at Istanbul Modern (2005-2011).
Tal Shenav, The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace, The Hebrew University

*Dress Code and Modern Muslim Role Model – A Case Study of the Animated Television Series ‘Stories of Women in the Quran’*

Throughout Muslim history dress code is an important element. It identifies people and societies as part of a certain community, marks them as secular or religious and even defines gender *status quo*. Dress code in the 21st century has an enormous role in Middle East countries as a marker of change as presented both by participants in the "Arab Spring" turbulences as well as by supporters of ISIS. Television series broadcast during Ramadan month educate viewers about Islam. By using satellite and the Internet, television programs cross boundaries and create virtual communities. The series are usually broadcast by several television channels, thus creating an imagined community of Muslims in the Middle East and around the world. The animated series for children "Stories of Women in the Quran"—the holy book for Muslims—was first broadcast during Ramadan in 2013. The 30 chapters tell the stories of ten women mentioned in the Quran and the people that interacted with them. The stories are told by a Muslim Judge to his only teenaged daughter. They live sometime after the death of prophet Muhamad in the 7th century and before modernization era. The series confronts issues that are at the heart of debate in the Muslim Middle East in the 21st century: What is the true Islam, who is to be considered a reliable source of information about Islam, what should be the gender *status quo* in both public and private sphere and above all what are the characteristics of a Muslim role model. This paper will argue that by using different designs, colors, and dress codes for everyday life, for special occasions and according to the social status the series designs and exemplifies the virtues of modern Muslim female and male role models. This conclusion is also supported by other visual elements, content and sound.

Dr. Tal Shenav is a research fellow at The Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace, The Hebrew University. She is a member of the research group "Popular Culture and Conflict Resolution". Her research deals with social processes and specifically Gender issues as presented in Middle Eastern national television channels. Her current research deals with animated series about the Quran.
Session 2: Veiling communities

Ruxandra Todosi, Nottingham Trent University

Depth of Surface in Glamour and in Modesty: Art(ifice), Communication and Introspection through Veils Today

Veiling practices follow a long and convoluted historical path, stemming from ancient times — old civilizations such as the Persian, Mesopotamian, Hellenic, or Byzantine — and growing to preempt wide-spectrum cultural significance in both Eastern and Western spaces thereafter. Before becoming an international vignette of faith (predominantly Islamic, though also encountered in Hindu, Jewish and Christian traditions), veils nevertheless had little, if anything to do with religion. In pre-Islamic times, they reflected less controversial attributes, chiefly related to wearers’ social reception: nobility, distinction, class.

Today, however, aside from their established spiritual significance, these surfaces take on important ethical, philosophical, and biographical connotations. Regarded by some as tickets into specific communities, and by others as ‘heart cloths’ invested with the power to accommodate or determine social connections, ideals of self-improvement and even ‘truth’, more veil cloths today than ever before transcend their materiality to become repositories of depth: inter- and intra-personal, emotional, axiological, idiographic depth.

Drawing on four years of fieldwork with Muslim and Christian veiled women, this paper looks at subjective definitions and micro-cultural interpretations of modesty based on, and invested in, contemporary modest surfaces. Relevant examples reflective of particular appropriations of piety debated between principles, values, attitudes and appearance, will be explored, and alternatives to dichotomic understandings of covering (i.e. compliance/resistance, submission/empowerment, appearance/substance, materiality/ immateriality) will be charted.

Ruxandra has a PhD in Art and Design from Nottingham Trent University (UK). Her research explores intersections of materiality and immateriality, surface and depth in ‘valuable’ objects (prominently textiles) regarded as affective and aesthetic experience. Her PhD project zoomed in on privately-informed — spiritual and philosophical, emotional, artistic — aspects of modest gear appropriation.

R. Arzu Ünal, Fatih Üniversitesi

The Çarşaf: From a National Outfit to a Community Garment

This paper focuses on the çarşaf, the most austere and uniform style of outdoor garment in the Turkish tesettür scene. It first makes a historical detour to trace the genealogy of the çarşaf in Turkey, proceeding from the late Ottoman era when the çarşaf was introduced as a national outfit to the turn to çarşaf fashions, the attempts in Turkey to ban it, and the more
recent connection between the çarşaf and a particular religious community in Turkey (the Ismailağa Cemaati, Istanbul).

It addresses women’s personal reflections on çarşaf as a sartorial practice contest the most common depiction of the çarşaf as a timeless, pure and radical form of dress. It elaborates how this idealization of çarşaf as the most dedicated form of tesettür also stands in contrast to the shifting meanings and styles of çarşaf, both in political discourses and in everyday life since the mid-19th Century.

Findings of this paper are based on an ethnographic research which I conducted between 2007 and 2011 in the Netherlands and Turkey. Additionally, I will provide a thicker historical background on changing meanings and styles of çarşaf in Turkey as my current research explores the formation of Muslim women’s sartorial practices and images, gestures and bodily appearances of women in Ottoman\Turkish cultures since 1900s. By bringing intimate accounts of the çarşaf as everyday clothing and the genealogy of çarşaf together, this paper aims to reveal a series ambiguities and shifts in çarşaf practice.

R. Arzu Ünal is Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology at Fatih University, Istanbul. She obtained her PhD in anthropology at University of Amsterdam (2013). Currently, her research explores sartorial practices and identities of Muslim women in the late 19th century of Ottoman Empire and early Republican Period in Turkey.

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a Çarşaf is a two-piece outfit consisting of a long, loose skirt and a short cloak covering the upper part of the body. The whole outfit loosely covers the body from head to toe. The çarşaf is usually black, or occasionally another dark, subdued color, though lighter çarşafs may be worn in summer.
b I employ tesettür as an umbrella term to refer an array of different styles of covered, recognizably Muslim female clothing.

Alice Leri, University of South Carolina

*Global Trends and Local Meanings: Highlighting Power Dynamics in the Marketplace*

In the current conjuncture collective identities have become increasingly complex (Vertovec 2007). We witness a fragmentation of meaning on multiple levels, from a societal to an individual one. Not only “old” labels have acquired multiple and sometimes contrasting meanings but people have also started to make more and more sense of who they are applying micro-hegemonic discourses to different spheres of their life (Blommaert and Varis 2011). So, not only the discourses Muslim women tell about who they are vary from context to context and within the same context, but these women also perform multiple identities that before were not even thought as possibly conciliable. Perceived by the large public almost as an oxymoron, “Modest Fashion” shows, Muslim fashion bloggers, hijabistas and Muslim stylists are becoming increasingly visible in the global landscape and challenge traditional understandings of Muslim female identities.
The phenomenon has both a global and a local component. On the one side, we find global brands, trendsetters with thousands of followers across the globe and international, multi-ethnic and multi-cultural communities of believers. On the other, however, marketing campaign, products and the meaning associated with those practices still retain a strong local component.

Therefore, again, we have multiple global and local discourses about Modest Fashion and what it entails. The African American Muslim experience, however, shows that even though super diversity has brought to the development of micro-hegemonic discourses guiding people within different spheres of life, it is also true that intersectionality still matters and multiple but insoluble identities can be expressed through one instance of practice. So clothing choices become a practice where both standing out as well as a fitting in multiple labels are negotiated at the same time.

Alice Leri is a clinical assistant professor of international business in the Sonoco International Business Department in the University of South Carolina Darla Moore School of Business. She received her Ph.D. from Tilburg University in 2014. Dr. Leri’s academic interests include Turkish Islam, halal marketing and halal consumption practices.
Session 3: Women and modesty in early Christianity and Islam

Kate Cooper, University of Manchester

*Transvestite Saints, Modesty, and Ancient Violence Against Women*

This paper will explore the second-century transvestite heroine Thecla of Iconium as an example of an ancient debate about female modesty comparable to our modern debates about veiling.

I. **Reading Modesty**: Introducing the second-century saint Thecla, heroine of the apocryphal *Acts of Thecla*, as a much-disputed ancient heroine, whose choice to reject marriage and to dress as a male was celebrated by numerous ancient writers, and gave rise to a tradition of transvestite heroines in early Christian literature.

II. **Symbolic and Real Violence Against Women**: Ancient writers wrote in a context in which violence against women was systemic. How should this influence our reading of ancient heroines who adopt extreme expressions of modesty, such as transvestitism? Did this 'radical modesty' subvert or reinforce the traditions of modesty customary among marriageable women in ancient society? Did the adoption of radical modesty correlate to a willingness, or ability, to defy (male) violence against women? Thecla as a powerful supernatural protector of her late ancient and medieval communities of religious women. We will consider Egeria’s visit to the late fourth-century Thecla community at Seleucia, and the attack on the nuns of Thecla’s monastery in Maaloula, Syria, on her feast day in 2013, as a comparative instance.

III. **Re-thinking Context**: We will consider how ancient debates about Thecla can be re-read in light of modern debates on veiling.

Kate Cooper is Professor of Ancient History in the University of Manchester. She writes and teaches about the world of the Mediterranean in the late Roman period, working to understand the ‘identity politics’ of the Roman provinces with a special interest in daily life and the family, religion, and gender. Her first book, *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity* (Harvard University Press, 1996) opened up a new approach to the politics of womanhood and the representation of female virtue in the later Roman empire, showing how Christian writers mobilized an ideal of feminine innocence in the cult of virginity. *The Fall of the Roman Household* (Cambridge University Press, 2007) considered the ‘silent majority’ of Christian householders, arguing that the rise of Christian marriage represented as radical a transformation in the Roman landscape as the rise of virginity. Her most recent book, *Band of Angels: The Forgotten World of Early Christian Women*, published by Overlook Press in 2013, returns to the question of stories about women – and stories told by women – contributed to the ‘viral’ spread of Christianity in the first centuries of the Roman Empire.
This paper centres on issues revolving around the long and wide sleeved *qamīš* (body covering) of 14th century Mamlūk Egypt, and the socio-political and geographical context in which they took place. Previous research has made it clear that developments around the *qamīš* were a topic of political debates on different governmental levels at various moments in time. However, the role of this sartorial trend on identity formation from the perspectives of gender, religion, and other forms of social stratification remains unclear. Also, patterns of the phenomenon across space and time are still understudied as previous research was restricted to Egypt. In this study, the long and wide sleeved *qamīš* are investigated through a larger scope. Through primary sources (historiographies, *bidʿa* manuals, legal documents and depictions) interactions and motivations connected to identity formation are reconstructed, shedding new light on the day-to-day reality faced by people of various walks of life in Mamlūk Egypt and the wider Mediterranean region as well as social dynamics, sumptuary law-making, law enforcement, and the transcultural travel of trends. Preliminary results show that regulation of the wearing of *qamīš* was heavily directed by the male Muslim intellectual elite, discriminating on the basis of gender and religion. The *qamīš* is illustrative of a vicious circle of dressing up and discursive dressing down in Mamlūk society of which the *qamīš* was an important part.

Judith Kindinger is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Humanities at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Judith studied Political Science and Near and Middle Eastern Studies at Heidelberg University. In February 2013 she started her PhD project supervised by Prof. Dr. Bas ter Haar Romeny and Prof. Dr. Petra Sijpesteijn. This project focuses on comparing Majority and Minority Dress Codes among Egyptian Muslims and Christians and is funded by the NWO. In the project, Judith focuses on the Mamlūk period (1250-1715) and investigates the dynamics of identity formation of Egyptian Muslims and Christians through dress.
Friday 25 March 2016

Session 4a: Male sartorial politics

Avner Wishnitzer, Tel Aviv University

*Mustached, Young Turks: A History of Facial Hair in the Late Ottoman Empire*

Historians and sociologists have long noticed the importance of facial hair as a marker of identity and status and yet, within the field of Middle East studies little has been said about the subject. This paper is a first step toward filling this lacuna by explaining the growing popularity of a specific arrangement of facial hair in a particular moment in Ottoman history.

The study is based on the systematic examination of portraits and group photos that appeared in the Servet-i Fünun journal from the early 1890s until 1920. Additional collections of contemporary photos (such as the Gertrude Bell Collection) were used to expand the evidence base of the study. The visual evidence is supported by archival documents, contemporary publications, diaries and memoirs.

Based on all these materials, I argue that while mustaches were certainly common among different populations of the Ottoman Empire in the early modern period, around the turn of the 19th century they were adopted by young effendis, especially graduates of the Ottoman education system. These people developed a discourse the stressed the importance of the "new generation" (nesli-ı cedid) for the future of the Ottoman Empire and used it to assert their place in the cultural and political spheres. Mustaches, I contend, became an important marker of this generational identification, the related self-consciously 'modern' worldview, and the implicit challenge it presented to the "bearded" Hamidian order. They allowed one to literally wear his identity on his face, to distinguish himself from his others, and to identify other members of his group. In short, among this particular group, the mustache grew to be political.

Avner Wishnitzer is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Middle Eastern and African History at Tel Aviv University and his research focuses on late Ottoman cultural history. His book *Reading Clocks, Alla Turca: Time and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire* was recently published by the University of Chicago Press.

Sivan Balslev, Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem

*Fake Collars and Fake Westernizers: Dress, Masculinity, and Social Distinction in Early 20th century Iran*

In 1907, the satirical journal "Majalleh-ye Estebdad" published the fictive proceedings of the "Society of Despotism". In this piece, several men were joined in a meeting parodying nationalist activity. Among these unpatriotic figures was one dubbed as a "fokoli" — a dandy
wearing a high detachable collar (faux col in French). This became a stock figure in Iranian media and literature of the early 20th century. Epitomized by the use of the detachable collar and a tie, the fokoli became a symbol of superficial westernization based on the aping of western appearance and mannerism rather than on profound knowledge of western culture and thought.

However, not all wearers of western attire were considered fokolis. Elite men, who were educated in western institutes, and were becoming the new models of hegemonic masculinity in Iran, dressed in a similar manner. Therefore, the fokoli had to be categorized minutely so that "properly" westernized elite men would not be suspected as mimic figures, an accusation directed toward men of lower social standing. Western dress thus became a contested site in which issues of masculinity, patriotism and social differentiation were debated.

Further changes in Iranians' approach to western dress occurred in 1927, when parliament approved a dress code for all male citizens. The dress code included a suit and the "Pahlavi Hat" (named after the new monarch – Reza Shah Pahlavi), resembling the French Kepi. The western suit and hat now came to represent Iran's move toward progress and modernity. The dress law and the governmental bias in favor of westernization temporarily marginalized the figure of the fokoli. Nevertheless, new debates arose from the law and its implementation, and new power-relations (such as between government and citizens) established and buttressed by it. My paper discusses the changing meanings male western attire received in Iran during the early 20th century, and the changing notions of masculinity, patriotism, and westernization they reflected.

Dr. Balslev is a postdoctoral fellow at the Polonsky Academy for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences at the Van Leer Institute, Jerusalem. Her dissertation examined the development of modern hegemonic masculinity in Iran circa 1870-1940, covering issues such as nationalism, modernization, sexuality, body image and social distinction.

Gülsen Kaya Osmanbaşoğlu, Social Sciences University of Ankara
The Irony of Clothing Political Leadership in Turkey: Ecevit and Demirel

Clothing, with its specific semiotics, might say many things on one’s identity and political position in particular cases. In that regard, Turkish politics experienced state’s forceful attributes towards the clothing of people as they are also carried by the political leaders. This trend ironically continued during the mid-1960’s under the leadership of Süleyman Demirel and Bülent Ecevit. This paper aims at unveiling the irony of these two leaders’ clothing preferences with reflections to their political career.

Coming from a rural background and a lower-middle class religious family, Süleyman Demirel used to wear luxury clothes. He also usually utilized the top hat as a symbol of
secularism and modernization of Kemalist regime, in order to be legitimized by the upper-middle class as well as the secular bureaucracy. On the other hand, Ecevit, with a truly elite background with respect to his family and education, attached the cap and blue collars workers’ shirt to his political identity while constructing the center-left ideology in Turkey despite the fact that his party, the Republican People’s Party had formerly enforced the top-hat as the suitable garment for Turkish people. Given their personal backgrounds contrary to their expected clothing styles, the clothing preferences of these two leaders changed the built image of particular clothes and helped leaders to position themselves on their political manoeuvre easily. In that vein, clothing played as a passing card for them to be acknowledged by their audiences in the political position they managed while these kinds of ironies weaken the constructed image of the specific clothes in time.

Dr. Gülsen Kaya Osmanbaşoğlu is a lecturer at the Social Sciences University of Ankara. She completed her BA studies in 2006 at the Political Science and Public Administration Department of the Bilkent University. She received her PhD in 2014 from the Political Science Department of the İhsan Doğramacı Bilkent University. Recently, she published “The Politics of What You Wear on Your Head”, in Middle East Critique, 24(4), pp 389-406.

Shoshana-Rose Marzel, University of Haifa
The Seventies Turning Point in Israeli Masculine Fashion

The history of the state of Israel is (also) closely connected to the development of Israeli masculine dress. This communication will concentrate on the turning point of this story, when immigrants from Arabic-speaking countries rebelled against the so-called Israeli national dress code and paved the way for nowadays male Israeli fashion.

During Israel pre-state era, many Jewish pioneers wished to invent a new way to be as well as a new way to look. Although men and women alike participated eagerly in this enterprise, the "new look" concerned mainly men. They dressed with khaki shorts and blue shirts, biblical sandals and dome-shaped caps called kova tembel. This look was associated with Western socialist political movements and became the male Israeli national dress code before and after Israel’ establishment (1948). However, although this dress code was perceived as the mythical Israeli image for a long time, not all Israelis identified with it. Immigrants from Arabic-speaking countries (Mizrahim) regularly challenged this look, until they succeeded in dethroning it during the 70s. Both their opposition to the ruling mood of the time and their adherence to other ideologies expressed through dress.

This communication will concentrate on this critical moment in Israeli fashion. It will clarify how this revolution came to be, how it converged with political upheaval. It will disclosed its ties with Arabic heritage concerning body care and gender' perceptions; and last, it will show how and why this "rebellious" look became the main stream in men' dress in nowadays Israel.

**Kobi Peled, Ben-Gurion University**

*The Poetics and Politics of Bedouin Dress among the First Zionist Watchmen and Shepherds*

The purpose of this paper is to explore the poetics and politics of dressing up as a Bedouin among the first Zionist watchmen and shepherds. Why did some of the Zionist pioneers dress up as Bedouin? What did they wish to express in their new garments? And what can we say about this today, after more than one hundred years of Jewish-Arab conflict?

The paper will examine the history of this fashion, its various sources, such as the worlds of the pioneers who immigrated from Eastern Europe, their predecessors from the old Jewish communities in Palestine, and the mostly Western European orientalist tradition of dressing up as an Arab or as a Bedouin. We will study the enchantment of the East in the minds of the first Zionist watchmen and shepherds (in the late 19th century and the early 20th century) and the nature of the romanticization reflected from numerous staged photographs of watchmen and shepherds in Bedouin dress (and in other forms of clothing).

The paper will discuss the relations between the worldviews of those Zionist pioneers and what they explicitly and implicitly expressed in their forms of dress. We will check the relations between what they wrote about their experiences and what one can see in their photographs. Believing that dress is a complex and ambiguous cultural signifier, we argue that a variety of emotions and ideas, not a clear and unambiguous sentiment, led the watchmen and shepherds to pose in Bedouin and Arab garments and accessories (a headkerchief and a headband, a Bedouin gown, a curved dagger, etc.). Our purpose is to interpret this unique dress vocabulary and to understand whether this “deep play” at the borderlines of Jewish and Arab identities was indeed an exploration, albeit subtle and hesitant, of social and political limits, or a mere play, a romantic fantasy about the East, and nothing more.

Session 4b: Depicting status in Byzantine times

Mat Immerzeel, Leiden University
Who Do We Think They Are? Donor Portraits in the Medieval Middle East

Just like their Byzantine Orthodox and Latin co-believers, the Christians of the Middle East, in particular the Copts, Maronites, and Melkites, were accustomed with the application of donor portraits in church imagery. Particularly interesting in this matter are several instances found in Lebanon and Syria, within the territories of the former County of Tripoli and the Kingdom of Jerusalem. Judging from the appearance of these figures and the contextual circumstances, at least some of them may have been Latins, which, however, does not exclude the possibility that they actually rendered non-Latin benefactors dressed according to Western fashion.

The complexity of the determination of ethno-religious identities through dress comes particularly to the fore in the description in the Copto-Arabic Churches and Monasteries of Egypt of the portrait of Abu al-Fadl, a powerful Copt in the Fatimid administration in the eleventh-twelfth century, in his funerary church near Cairo. Against all expectations, he was depicted as a deacon, rather than a wealthy Christian notable. This case raises the fundamental question of the frictions between how people preferred to be eternalized, and the expectations of modern scholarship.

Dr. Mat Immerzeel is an archaeologist and art historian at Leiden University, and is connected to the Paul van Moorsel Centre of Christian Art and Culture in the Middle East, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He specializes in the material culture of the Middle East and the eastern Mediterranean, and is currently working on the artistic interaction between Cyprus and the Latin states on the mainland in the thirteenth century. His most recent book The Narrow Way to Heaven: Identity and Identities in the Art of Middle Eastern Christianity will be coming out this year.

Cristina Stâncioiu, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg
Sartorial Choices in Eastern Mediterranean Portraiture: 13th-15th Centuries

This paper analyzes the symbolic and material character of late thirteenth to fifteenth-century dress recorded in secular portraiture that flourished on eastern Mediterranean islands—particularly on Venetian Crete—where native Byzantine communities came under European rule in the advent of the Crusades. Substantial numbers of visual and written records chart the shared experience of Catholic settlers from Europe and indigenous Orthodox Greeks, presenting a unique method of cultural interaction and exchange that is best seen in the choice of dress featured most prominently in commemorative portraits.
While medieval Byzantine artists produced stereotypical examples of official portraiture, the visual evidence from the islands reveals a wider scope of portraiture reaching the lower social levels of the local nobility in rural exile and villagers of means who commission large scale, personal and individualized images that must be integrated into the history of European portraiture. This type of portrait subversively offered lower classes the opportunity to participate in trends, manipulate fashion, and maintain a sense of relevance in history and in otherwise expropriated social and political contexts. Secular portraiture developed as an acute reflection of a multi-faceted reality: faced with this imported genre, locals ingeniously adapted it in order to strongly promote their agendas to sensible audiences versed in deciphering clues in various visual languages.

A comprehensive investigation reveals the endurance of traditional—albeit long outdated—Byzantine dress and imperial insignia, and the inscriptions that accompany them recall Byzantium’s political authority lost with the installation of colonial rule, claiming that imperial legacy even after the fall of the Byzantine Empire in 1453. The local Greek nobility, stripped of their lands and political power, chose to revive this type of clothing—with its distinctive authoritative character—in portraits safely concealed inside remote village churches, away from colonial authorities ruling from coastal cities.

Art historian Cristina Stâncioiu specializes in the visual and material culture of the eastern Mediterranean. She publishes on issues of cultural identity and artistic exchange from the thirteenth through the seventeenth centuries, and is currently completing a manuscript on portraiture and dress as a subversive instrument in pre-Modern colonial environments.

Eleni Barmparitsa, Hellenic Ministry of Culture

*Dressing Codes in the Late Medieval Peloponnese, Greece: 13th- 15th Century*

In Peloponnese, the Frankish knights of the Fourth Crusade (1204) carved out a territory known as the *Principality of Achaea* (1205-1428) that maintained throughout its history strong affiliations with Western Europe. On the east side of the peninsula, the territory that would come to be known as the *Despotate of the Morea* (1262-1460) was ceded to the Byzantines in 1262. The two states of the Late Medieval Peloponnese were in constant geopolitical competition and cultural interaction.

In Greek territories under Latin rule a sort of hybrid civilisation was developed during the late Middle Ages, characterised by mutual artistic exchanges. A period of economic growth was based on the development of trade routes, under the leading presence of the Italian cities. The appearance of the upper social classes forms a suitable area for the examination of the coexistence of two different cultures. Dressing habits of the former Byzantine territories underwent a sort of transformation under the new political and economic situation. The main outer dress for both males and females throughout the Late Middle Ages was the long, broad tunic with proper cuttings on neck and sleeves, which could
reveal the inner clothes. During the thirteenth and the early fourteenth century, indigenous population, especially females, continued to wear the traditional ample Byzantine long-sleeved garments, while the non-Byzantines followed the trends of their places of origin. By the middle fourteenth century the appearance of all social classes adopted common features, influenced by the western fashion.

Dress codes are examined through the scope of published excavation material (belts, buckles, buttons, pins, pieces of clothes/shoes etc.) in conjunction with the iconographic sources of the period (mainly mural paintings and miniature illumination). Additionally, relevant written sources will be used.

Eleni Barmparitsa received her PhD from National University of Athens (Greece) in 2014. Her specialisation is in Byzantine Archaeology and Art. She has been working as an archaeologist for the Hellenic Ministry of Culture since 2005, cooperating in restoration programs and the organisation of museum exhibitions.

Sophia Germanidou, Hellenic Ministry of Culture
The Attire of Peasantry in Byzantine Iconography

The way male and female peasants were dressed, in order to perform their agricultural tasks as attested in Byzantine art, is a field of research not yet fully studied. The interest has been too often laid on the luxurious or exotic garments worn by the elites, high-rank officers or other members of Byzantine society of special character and traits. However, the attire of the peasants, who represented the high percentage of populace, provide a wonderful, elucidating insight not only into the material culture of the era but also to the visual effect of each work of art – predominately illustrations from manuscripts. And they have a lot to highlight such as the depictions of a realistic “working uniform”; its diverse patterns; the influence of classical garments and the divergence from the western modes; the female peasant “dress” etc. The aspects outlined above aim to be the subject-matter of the paper, proposed to be presented at the conference.

Sophia Germanidou studied Byzantine Archaeology and History of Art in the University of Athens, Greece, where she also finished her Master and PhD. She has worked for 15 years in the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and has recently been named external collaborator in the Institute of Historical Research in the National Hellenic Research Foundation in Athens. Her main publications include matters of Byzantine iconography and the archaeology of agricultural / productive infrastructure.
The term *toupha* indicates a tuft of animal hair or feathers decorating the top of helmets and triumphal crowns in Byzantine iconography, both in art and in numismatics. The first clear images appeared on gold coins struck in VI-VII centuries depicting emperors in military attire with a plumed helmet, an element described by contemporary literary sources too. To the same period belongs the most famous example, the lost Constantinopolitan equestrian statue of Justinian I documented by chroniclers and later drawings. This case probably marked a first passage of the *toupha* from simple helmet ornament to triumphal crown decoration. The importance of this symbol developed during the X century when written sources started to associate the term to *tiara*, suggesting the headgear itself. Several images confirm the triumphal connotation of this meaning shift: the well-known "Gunthertuch" (a silk tapestry donated from the Byzantine emperor to the Bamberg bishop in 1064-1065, today kept in the German town) illustrates the horseback portrait of a sovereign receiving normal-type and plumed crowns from two female personifications, clearly an echo of a ceremony organised in Constantinople.

The aim of this paper is investigating the evolution and the actual shape of this element in relation with its representations over the centuries, together with its function and identity role. Firstly, the value of the exotic part will be considered paying attention to Oriental cultures, namely to Sasanian Persia. Secondly, the steps moving from simple decorative meanings to political implications will be analysed in order to identify the *toupha* not just as a garment of the imperial wardrobe but as a fundamental insignia of "military kingship" and as a reflection of the Emperor *status* set in a ritualised space far from the battlefield.

Andrea Torno Ginnasi was born in 1982. He is currently a post-doctoral research fellow in History of Art at the Università degli Studi di Milano, where he completed his Ph.D. in 2013. His interests include Byzantine art and numismatics with a focus on imperial iconography and political and military insignias.
Session 5a: Powerful hats

Philipp Wirtz, SOAS, University of London and University of Warwick

Between Turban and Tarbush: Remembering Cultures of Clothing in the Autobiography of Ahmad Amīn

The study of autobiographies produced in the modern Middle East opens up various fascinating areas of research. These narratives make for a fruitful reading experience, as sources for various fields, but also as literary treats. My Life (Hayāti, first published 1950), by the Egyptian writer and scholar Ahmad Amīn (1886-1954) is a captivating account of the social and cultural conditions of late 19th and early 20th century Egypt, as well as the individual bildungsroman of a young man who was a product of a very specific discourse: The complicated frontier zone between “tradition” and “modernity”.

This paper discusses ways in which Amīn chooses to remember and describe change, both intellectual and material, during his childhood in Cairo. One re-occurring topic that combines the two aspects in his narrative is the issue of clothing. This paper aims at contextualising the author’s preoccupation with clothing within the development of his social and cultural outlook. Negotiating varied spaces and contexts between the study halls of al-Azhar and the tennis lawns of the Giza Sporting Club, the author describes the changes of clothing that went with these movements. For Amīn, the clothing on his person frequently reflect changing outlooks of the “inner man” as he sees himself growing from a gowned madrasa pupil to a modern intellectual in a suit. A second aspect of his changes of clothing is another border crossing: The author’s rebellion against what he initially sees as stultifying traditional mores and conventions. However, it will be shown that Amīn’s account becomes far more nuanced than a simple condemnation of the “old ways”: As his narrative progresses, it becomes clear that Amīn sees positive aspects in both worlds, and that the donning of western-style clothing may not accompany a straight trajectory towards positive development.

Philipp Wirtz teaches at SOAS, New York University, and the University of Warwick. His research areas include the Ottoman Empire and successor states, first-person narratives, autobiographies and travel accounts. His monograph, to be published in early 2016, is entitled Depicting the Late Ottoman Empire in Turkish Autobiographies: Images of a Past World (Ashgate).
Anaïs Massot, Universiteit Leiden and École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales

Clerical Clothing and the Politics of Recognition during the Ottoman Tanzimat Period: the ‘Affair of the Hat’ as a Case Study

During the Ottoman Tanzimat period, clothing was used as an instrument to create new social hierarchies based on loyalty to the modern state. Clothing has been addressed through the prism of consumption and the development of a middle class in the Tanzimat reform period. This article will show that it was also used as a tool of legitimacy-building in the politics of recognition that characterized the institutionalization of the millet system, that is the restructuration of the different religious communities’ leadership and representation. During this process, each religious sect, and sometimes sub-sects, used various tools to obtain recognition from the state and to be granted the status of millet. Clothing was one of these instruments. This recognition was particularly sought after in the Tanzimat period for it was associated with a variety of privileges.

This article will explore how a Greek clergy’s ceremonial headgear, or kalimafki, became the subject of various overlapping conflicts of recognition and jurisdiction in Damascus in the early 19th century. The so-called ‘affair of the hat’ opposed the Greek Orthodox Patriarch and Greek Catholic priests in the context of the recognition of the Uniate churches. Eventually, it called for the intervention of Ottoman officials and foreign powers’ representatives, becoming a diplomatic issue.

This article will first explore how in the period of the institutionalization of the millets, which was accompanied by the development of narratives of autonomy, certain items of clothing became signifiers of authenticity and orthodoxy and were used in the Ottoman Tanzimat politics of recognition. Then, it will examine how the ‘affair of the hat’ contributed to define the border between the religious and secular authorities in a period of increasing state interventionism. Finally, it will shed light on the various audiences of clothing displays and unintended consequences of inter-Christian competition for visibility, including inter-confessional violence.

Anaïs Massot is a Phd student at Leiden University and the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (France). Her thesis is entitled: Socio-political Changes and Inter-confessional Relations in Ottoman Damascus (1760-1860).

Esther Voswinckel Filiz, Centrum für Relionsforschung (CERES) Bochum
Sufi Turbans (Tac‐ı Şerif) in Istanbul – the Textile and Textual Production of Ritual Headgears at Saintly Gravesites

In this paper, I would like to introduce to the audience a part of my anthropological fieldwork which focuses on the materiality of Sufi saint cult in Istanbul. In the centre of the veneration
of local Sufi saints at their mausoleums (türkbe) is a textile object which crowns the sarcophagus of the revered buried person: a huge, impressive turban called taç-ı şerif (venerable turban).

While the turban as a headgear of the living started to be considered as symbol of backwardedness and was abolished already in 1826 by Sultan Mahmud II in favor of the red fez, a law which was followed hundred years later by Atatürk’s famous „hat law“ which prescribes the European hat as the headgear of Turkish men, in the veneration of Sufi saints, the Ottoman turban has remained alive as an object of veneration and a marker of religious identity. The saintly turban is a central element of the visualization, a pars pro toto or ‘presence body’ of the deceased saint (evliya).

The production of Sufi turbans used to be such an important ritual craft in the Ottoman past, that there exists a whole genre of literature called tâcnâme (turban treatise) which deals with the esoteric meanings of the incountable details of the different Sufi turbans such as colours, numbers, materials, and designs. While the corpus of Ottoman tâcnâme texts has already been researched by some scholars, in my paper, I would like to shed light on the production and veneration of the turban as a living ritual practice, as it can be witnessed in contemporary Istanbul.

Esther Voswinckel Filiz (M.A.) is a PhD student at the Centrum für Religionsforschung (CERES) in Bochum (Germany). She studied Cultural Anthropology and Religious Studies in Marburg, Bologna and Tübingen and graduated from Tübingen University in 2010 with a thesis on “Sufism in Istanbul. Sensual perception and Urban space.” Between 2010 and 2014 she has been living and working in Istanbul. Since 2013, she has been conducting a long time anthropological fieldwork around the Sufi saint cult of Aziz Mahmud Hüdâyî in Üsküdar (Istanbul).
Session 5b: Self-representation in ancient eastern Mediterranean

Serdar Yalçın, Parsons School of Design, New York

*Image vs. Reality: Babylonian Professionals, their Seals and the Issue of Representation in Ancient Mesopotamia.*

This paper will explore the relationship between dress and professional identity in the context of ancient Mesopotamia through an analysis of the Babylonian glyptic material from the so-called Kassite period (ca. 1550-1155 BC). From the Akkadian era onwards (ca. 2350 – 2150 BC), distinctive hairstyles and garments were used as two main visual signs in the state arts of the ancient Near East primarily marking ethnicity and gender. Professional identity was rarely marked in such representational arts. In Babylonia and other parts of the Near East, more privately commissioned forms such as personal seals provided venues for larger segments of the society to express various facets of owners’ identity, profession being one of them.

An analysis of the Kassite period personal seals from Babylonia shows that holders of certain professions, especially priests and temple administrators, were portrayed in some scenes with distinct garments and clean-shaven heads. These images are compatible with the textual evidence delineating these professionals in daily life. However, majority of the Babylonian professionals’ seals, including the ones that belonged to priests, portray their owners in the typical elite adult male form wearing long mantels, with long beards, and the hair collected in chignons at the back.

I argue that these images did not provide a realistic representation of the seal owners, especially in the case of the priests, but were idealized visions of masculine elite adult men. This discrepancy between the image and reality arose from the fact that in ancient Babylonia not visual mimesis, but the name inscribed on the seal stone, was the aspect that imbued the object with the identity of the owner.

Serdar Yalçın is a postdoctoral fellow at Parsons School of Design in New York. He received his Ph.D. in Art History and Archaeology from Columbia University in 2014. His research interests include art and archaeology of ancient Near East, identity and material culture, and interconnections in the ancient eastern Mediterranean.

Jessica L. Nitschke, Stellenbosch University

*Identity, Status, and the Meaning of Foreign Styles of Dress in Phoenician Self-Representation*

Archaeologists and art historians have long viewed dress as a key marker of ethnic identity. It is widely understood that artists in ancient Greece, Egypt, and the Near East employed different or exotic styles of dress in order to signify the ‘other’. The exception to this is the Phoenicians, whose city-states were situated along the Levantine coast at the crossroads of
heavily trafficked trade and military routes between the Near East, Egypt, and the wider Mediterranean. Phoenician patrons and artists throughout the first millennium B.C. made wide use of a variety of foreign styles of dress and adornment to represent themselves, especially in monumental art, borrowing heavily from the representational traditions of both its trading partners and its conquerors. We have little to no written testimony as guidance, and so interpretations of this phenomenon by scholars are varied. For example, some have suggested the use of Egyptian dress should be regarded as a strictly ceremonial costume, on the basis of the general Phoenician affinity for certain Egyptian gods and symbols. Representations of Greek dress, on the other hand, have been taken literally as clear evidence of the acculturation—‘hellenisation’—of the Phoenician elite. Drawing on modern dress theory and postcolonial approaches to culture-contact, this paper revisits specific examples, analysing them in their political, social, and artistic contexts to reveal a multiplicity of possible messages being communicated by Phoenician patrons regarding status and cultural identity. Working on the premise that meanings of dress are contextual and constantly shifting and that not every society views art and dress through the same ethnically-oriented lens, this paper also challenges the static associations frequently made by scholars between certain forms of dress and ethno-cultural identity, especially with respect to constructed notions of ‘East’ and ‘West’.

Jessica Nitschke is a research associate in the Department of Ancient Studies at Stellenbosch University and a part-time lecturer at the University of Cape Town, in South Africa. She has a PhD in Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology from UC Berkeley, with research interests in identity, culture-contact and archaeology.

Melanie Wasmuth, Universität Basel and Allard Pierson Museum Amsterdam

Dressing Darius I: Visual Strategies of Incorporating Mutually Incompatible Kingship Concepts

The royal statue of Darius I (reign: 525–486 BC) provides intriguing insights into the perception and representational display of (conceptually incompatible) eastern and western identities. Within a wider framework of dress including posture, gesture, attire, and presentational format, it deliberately combines elements from different cultural traditions in order to display and establish a kingship vision: the integration of Egyptian, Persian and Mesopotamian kingship and their display into a new concept, which incorporates them as integral parts or facets. This integration of different kingship concepts and its display of combined cultural identities has been taken up and extended around 340 BC in the very historical situation when presenting the ruler as Great King of the whole of the Eastern Mediterranean World is most important and effective: in the context of re-integrating Egypt into the Achaemenid empire. To circulate this feat, a memorial coin has been designed, for which Artaxerxes III is clothed in Persian court dress and Egyptian double crown holding Cilician and Persian regalia while being seated on a Phoenician/Levantine throne.
Based on an analysis of the derivation of the cultural traditions drawn upon, I would like to discuss our modern chances to grasp whether (re)presenting cultural identities were major concerns in the production of such monuments and to interlink the concepts of (multiple) cultural identities and authorship: Who decides how facets of (cultural) identities are displayed and why? How can we glean that from the sources?

Consequently, I would like to explore to which extent Ancient Civilisations Studies and more modern-day oriented research areas can mutually profit from a joint academic polylogue: by offering case studies which allow to transfer personally or politically sensitive topics to a ‘neutral’ sphere respectively by providing insights which incentives nowadays can be discerned behind the display of (multiple/transient) cultural identities.

Melanie Wasmuth specializes in the transcultural history of the wider Eastern Mediterranean region of the eighth to sixth century BCE and non-royal representation strategies in ancient Egypt. She is currently a research associate at CH-Basel in Egyptology and a visiting scholar at the Leiden Institute for Area Studies. She holds a PhD degree in Egyptology (Basel, 2009), and an MPhil in Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies (A-Vienna 2002).

Betty Rame, University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne

Mycenaean Headband: An Identity Sign?

Diadems, or funerary headbands depending on the author, have been found in a large part of the Mediterranean world (Aegean, Anatolia, Mesopotamia), dating back to the Bronze Age. Golden or silver, they were, for the most part, found in funerary contexts. They have been considered as a symbol of prestige, suggesting the tomb of a prince/ princess or a king. This interpretation is based on their rarity on the preciousness of the raw material and finally on data of historical eras. Are headbands tokens of identity? To answer this question, I focused on golden headbands from Grave Circle A and B in Mycenae (MH III/LH I). Twenty-nine were found in this cemetery, equally distributed between the two circles. These headbands were found along twenty three skeletons out of one hundred and thirteen. Does this low percentage suggest the existence of a particular group among the circles? This question has led me to investigate on how the headbands were worn and what hairstyles are associated with them. Hairstyles can also be tokens status or identity. As hair residues are not preserved, I compared these data with iconographic sources. Various materials have been considered: frescos, molded plates, statuary and seals. The hairstyles associated with the headbands evoke topics such as beauty, comfort, gender, prestige and fashion, from an anthropological point of view. Can we presume the existence of permanent cross-cultural features regarding the symbolism of hairstyles?
Betty Rame is a PhD student in Aegean archaeology at the university Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. She has studied for a master’s degree the Aegean gold headband. Her PhD thesis on the headband and hairstyle in Aegean during Bronze age is in progress.

Maria Papadopoulou, University of Copenhagen

*Alexander the Great’s Cloak and the Politics of Dress in Hellenistic Egypt*

The *chlamys*, the ancient Greek cloak of hunters, travellers, cavalrymen was an orthogonal piece of handwoven textile linked to the rites of passage to manhood from adolescence. Alexander the Great is often depicted donning the *chlamys*. The Macedonian type of *chlamys* had a hybrid shape, partly orthogonal, partly circular. This type of cloak also appears on two important pages of Hellenistic history: both the urban plan of Alexandria and the world map of Eratosthenes, head librarian at the Library of Alexandria, were reported by a number of ancient authors to have been shaped after a Macedonian *chlamys*. The *chlamys* soon became part of the official attire of Alexander's successors in Egypt, the dynasty starting with Ptolemy I and ending with Cleopatra VII. The Ptolemies ruled Egypt both as Macedonian kings and as Egyptian Pharaohs. Following the foundation of Alexandria by Alexander the Great, an influx of Greek colonisers came to Egypt. The demand for *chlamys* thus rose.

This paper analyses how this seamless, woollen garment, dyed in vivid colours and woven on the vertical loom in the fashion of Greek textiles, was introduced into Egyptian textile history, with its long tradition of white linen garments woven on horizontal looms.

The main question asked is what meanings and messages this garment carried in connection with three distinct groups:

a. Ptolemaic royals, who adopted a luxury *chlamys* made of fine wool dyed in true purple as part of the royal costume, and extended its use to a circle of trusted friends.
b. First generation Greek expats or Egypt-born Greeks who donned the *chlamys* on several occasions, and especially when going to the *gymnasion* to train.
c. Egyptians who opted to dress in *chlamys* as part of a general strategy of accommodating or assimilating to the ruling Greek elite.

Maria Papadopoulou earned a BA in Classics from the University of Athens, Greece, and an MA in Linguistics from the University of Lancaster, UK. She wrote her PhD in Classics at the University of Athens on the “Semantics of Colour Terms in Hellenistic Poetry”. She is currently a Marie Curie Fellow at the University of Copenhagen. Her project focuses on the introduction of the *chlamys* in Hellenistic Egypt upon the foundation of Alexandria, namely the impact of the new textile culture represented by this traditional Macedonian cloak on the cultural, social and economic life in Egypt under the Ptolemies. Her recent publications include “The Chlamys City: Urban Landscapes and the Formation of Identity in Hellenistic Egypt” in *Proceedings of the 2014 Annual Meeting of the ICOM Costume Committee* and
Saturday 26 March 2016

Session 6: Negotiating sartorial identities

Andrew Robarts, Rhode Island School of Design


Through an analysis of dress, visual culture, and sumptuary laws, my paper will, in a comparative manner, analyze and explore the negotiation of identity and status in the early-modern eastern Mediterranean. Using both visual and textual sources, it will engage in an interdisciplinary discussion of the ways in which Ottoman Muslim merchants dressed and articulated identity while living and working in Venice, the ways in which Venetian envoys and travelers in Istanbul projected and defined communal and/or confessional identity through costume while in Istanbul, and the ways in which local populations (in Venice and Istanbul respectively) received, absorbed, adopted, and appropriated Venetian and/or Ottoman fashion to promote (or sublimate) identity and project (symbolically) social status. Against the background of the broader historical context of the complex and intertwined geopolitical relationship forged between the Ottoman Empire and the Venetian Republic in the 16th and 17th centuries, my paper will, through an analysis of the sartorial flexibility displayed by “transient” populations on the move between the urban centers of Istanbul and Venice, problematize the paradigmatic (and notionally oppositional) concepts of “east-west”, “orient-occident” and “Christian-Muslim”. In so doing the hybridity and sui generis nature of cultural exchange between Istanbul and Venice in the early-modern eastern Mediterranean will be highlighted. In order to gauge the efficacy of confessionally-based socio-economic hierarchies in the early-modern eastern Mediterranean, my paper will engage in an analysis of Ottoman and Venetian sumptuary laws. The connections between conversion, identity, and costume in the commercially-oriented urban centers of Venice and Istanbul will be addressed as will the ways in which “eastern” idioms were incorporated into visual culture in Venice and “western” idioms incorporated into visual culture in Istanbul, specifically in terms of clothing, headgear, and footwear.

Andrew Robarts is an Assistant Professor of History at the Rhode Island School of Design. A scholar of the early-modern Ottoman Empire, Robarts’ research focuses on questions of Ottomanism and Ottoman identity in the early-modern period. At RISD he teaches courses on Istanbul, the Ottoman Empire, and the Middle East.
Marloes Cornelissen, Sabancı Üniversitesi

*Fashion and Identity among the Dutch in Early Modern Ottoman Istanbul*

Between 1700 and 1750 the Dutch *echelle* or ‘nation’ in Istanbul consisted of a small group of merchants, family members of the Ambassador, embassy staff and other individuals with Dutch protection. In the chancery registers of their embassy their worldly possessions and eternal wishes for the afterlife were recorded in their final wills and probate inventories.

Some of the younger merchants never mastered the Dutch language in their Ottoman environment which was infused with influences from the West and the East. Their way of dressing was at least as much a fusion of their European and Ottoman identities. Their mastery of French, Italian, Ottoman and occasionally also Greek was reflected in their dress as well as in the records of their material world. The inventories, auction records and final wills were penned down in multiple languages infused with Ottoman terms. Dutch merchants’ wives owned not only muslin and taffeta fontanges, but also elaborate Ottoman headdresses called *serpuş*, turbans and fur kalpaks. It appears that especially the older members of the Dutch ‘nation’ started to don Ottoman attire, but did not give up their wigs and European hats either. Ottoman textiles and clothing were at the same time also highly appreciated as some of the most valuable pieces among Dutch women’s dowries.

The Dutch in Istanbul were navigating between European and Ottomans consumption cultures and perhaps even created a ‘Levantine’ context of their own in which their mixed material culture was norm rather than exception.

Marloes Cornelissen wrote her PhD dissertation at Sabancı University in Istanbul on the material culture of the Dutch community in eighteenth-century Istanbul: a group of merchants, embassy staff-members and the occasional eccentric. In her research, she combines cultural history, Ottoman and European history, and social and economic history. She is currently working as a postdoctoral fellow at Leiden University on her new project *Material culture at the Ottoman Porte: the Dutch "nation" and the Ottoman elite (1750-1810).*

Sümeyye Hoşgör Büke, METU, Ankara

*Making Difference through Dresses in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire: The Case of Galata*

During the early modern period Ottoman Empire dissociates the Muslim and non-Muslim communities from each other by using dress codes and regulations. Simply, those codes were prohibiting some kinds of textile fabrics and colours for non-Muslim subjects. Considering the fact that dressing, in the context of the material culture, is one of the most primordial ways of expressing oneself and identity formation, this paper tries to understand people’s experiences of and reactions to those dress codes and regulations. In other words, this paper is an attempt to understand the ways that people tried to make a difference within those
dress codes and regulations. To that aim, *tereke* registers (probate inventories) as an archival material are used in this study. Those registers contain lists of materials that a deceased person had had in her/his lifetime. Therefore that kind of archival material can give us clues about dresses that the people had had. The *tereke* registers analyzed for this study belongs to the Galata Kadişhip which was one of the three major kadişhips of the capital city Istanbul. Additionally this district was special and prominent in terms of its multi religious population structure. Therefore it is possible to find various kinds of people’s *tereke* registers in those archival materials. In short, *tereke* registers of Galata are used in this study to interpret the implementation of the dress codes and regulations in the daily life from the perspective of those who were subjected to those regulations.

Sümeyye Hoşgör Büke is a PhD candidate and research assistant at the History Department of the Middle East Technical University, Ankara-Turkey. She is studying Ottoman History with a specific focus on the urban daily life of Istanbul during the early modern period.
Session 7: The image of the other in the politics of representation

Gwendolyn Collaço, Harvard University

*Documenting Dress in Diplomacy and Poetry: Costume Albums as a Transcultural Genre*

Scholars have recently begun to consider how costume albums of Near Eastern bazaars aided diplomats in distinguishing palace officials and city figures through dress. However, these albums also had a role in the Islamicate world. The question remains of how these types of images or images of typology appealed to more than curious travelers, engaging both a local popular audience and even the court itself in the Ottoman and Safavid Empires. Yet to understand this phenomenon, we must consider the social contexts from which they emerged. How do these albums interact with regional genres of literature, and a cosmopolitan market of bazaar artists, who drew from both European printed sources and emerging artistic trends at court? Additionally, in scholarship costume albums have been treated largely in an Ottoman context. Yet by discussing one of the earliest examples of a Safavid costume album, I will explore a wider trend in the illustration of costume in the Near East.

My paper examines two Safavid and Ottoman costume albums made for European travelers during the late seventeenth century: the Ralamb Costume Album (1657-58) and the album of Dr. Engelbert Kaempfer (1684-85). Both albums were made for members of Swedish embassies into these respective empires. First I examine the compilations of bazaar miniatures by their European patrons and how these individuals could have used them during their journeys as guidebooks to new societies through their dress. Next I examine how the same miniatures within them also have a distinct relationship to a shared Persianate genre between these empires: *şehrengiz/shahrashub*. This poetic genre sought to catalogue the beauties of a city through costume elements, accessories of trade, guilds, and physical attribute. Thus I illustrate how bazaar artists catered the same stock of miniatures to both local and foreign audiences as a transcultural product.

Gwendolyn Collaço is a Ph.D. candidate specializing in Ottoman art and social history. She researches the intersections between popular and material culture in the early modern Ottoman Empire. She is investigating costume albums made in the bazaars of Istanbul and their translations into the turquerie fashion movement in European states.

Ilse Sturkenboom, University of Vienna

*Muslims Dressing up Christians: The Image of the Christian in Medieval Persian Manuscripts*

In Persian medieval literature, the Christian other is a recurring textual image found in both poetry and prose. The meaning and valuation of this trope may vary according to its textual context. Moreover, can its veritableness be doubted with good reasons. The rich visual
language that is so characteristic for Persian literature nonetheless provides us with a set of features considered to be distinctive for the appearance of Christians. Certain gowns, caps and belts are described as being Christian in those texts. The idea of Christian life is further embellished by settings such as monasteries and churches, wine drinking and the tending of swine.

Especially interesting is how these textual images became visualized in painted illustrations. How do book illustrations interpret the texts? What were Christian gowns, belts and caps imagined to look like? Wherefrom did the inspirations for these appearances derive? Painted images of Christians only became rather large in number starting from about the end of the 14th century. By then, Christian communities had mostly disappeared from Persian realms as a result of the breakdown of the tolerant Mongol dynasty in 1335. Therefore it can be hypothesized that imagination, the usage of models or a combination of both were employed to envision a Christian and his or her dress.

This paper seeks to present a selection of 14th and 15th century book illustrations of Persian texts in which Christians are depicted. Focussing on attire, the visualizations of Christians will be set into the context of the wording that they accompany. These images will furthermore be compared to manuscript illustrations of groups of Eastern Christians and to European paintings. In the end, this survey aims to shed light on the ways in which text, models and imagination found cohesions in the visual representation of Christians.

Ilse Sturkenboom is University Assistant at the Institute of History of Art History in Vienna. She studied Art History in Groningen and Persian Studies in Bamberg. The defense of her PhD thesis is planned to take place at the University of Bamberg in the Spring of 2016.

Robyn Radway, Princeton University

Muddling East and West: Costume and Identity in the Ottoman Habsburg Borderlands

The multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, bureaucratic organism referred to in the sixteenth century as the “Turkish Empire” and the massive military it supported was a conglomerate: a patchwork with permeable borders into which entrepreneurizing men from the non-Muslim borderlands could always migrate and find an exciting and rewarding position to take up their swords and shields and earn a large share of booty. Local troops, carrying their material culture with them as they moved, frequently joined the imperial army to create one relentless and highly variegated war machine. This paper explores the relationship between dress and identity on the military borderland between Ottoman and Habsburg Europe. Using extant objects alongside verbal portraits and visual attempts to pinpoint identities in costume books, it shows how locals of the borderland lived in a world where practices of clothing, draping, and arming the body were just as fluid and permeable as the border itself. While diplomats and travelers were cautious to identify and follow formal dress protocol as they entered the spaces where Ottoman hierarchical society was put on display, locals continued their own
mixed practices. We see groups commissioning wearable arts across the border, exchanging textile gifts, and forging multiple self-images in conversation with their surroundings. This muddling of costume and identity is essential to grasping how the two rival empires defy models of cultural exchange and the very categorizations of East and West.

Robyn Dora Radway is a Ph.D. candidate in History at Princeton University writing a dissertation entitled “Cultures of Diplomacy: Scholars, Soldiers, and Pashas Between Renaissance Europe and the Ottoman Empire.” She holds two degrees in Art History and has worked in many museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Session 8: Communities between East and West

Alexander A. Novik, St. Petersburg State University

Traditional Costume, Ethnic Affiliation and Common Memory of Slavic (Macedonian) Muslims in Albania: Adapting and Preserving the Identity

The paper is devoted to the questions of traditional clothes and ethnic affiliation of Slavic (Macedonian) Muslims in conditions of combined ethnical neighborhood. There are around ten settlements with Slavic (Macedonian) population in the Eastern part of the Republic of Albania (Mac. Golo Brdo, Alb. Golloborda). Five scientific researchers from St. Petersburg: Andrej Sobolev, Alexander Novik, Denis Ermolin, Maria Morozova and Alexandra Dugushina (Institute of Linguistic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera) and St. Petersburg State University) organized fieldwork in the villages Trebisht, Klenje, Ostren etc. in 2008-2010.

The author puts into academic context a new description of almost unexplored Macedonian community. The data have been obtained during the fieldworks in Eastern Albania. In conditions of long-term neighborhood with other languages and religious denominations, the adapting mechanisms have worked out specific approaches to preserving ethnical identity and traditional culture including dresses’ production and handcrafts, perceiving their value and necessity of translating to descendants.

One of the aspects investigated in depth was the traditional costume, serving as a very important marker of ethnic and confessional identity. The paper concentrates on the socially most important clothing complex, which is a women’s wedding costume.

Materials of fieldwork include data about identity, language, culture of Macedonian community in different periods of the state of Albania (Osmanli time, Royal Albania, Enver Hoxha monism period, post-communist transition, modern republic). The founds of the Museum Kunstkamera have traditional clothes of Macedonian Muslims from Golo Brdo which were collected during the fieldworks 2008-2010.

Dr. Alexander A. Novik is Head of the Department of European Studies, Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera), the Russian Academy of Sciences. He is assistant professor of Cultural and Social Anthropology and Albanian Philology at the St. Petersburg State University, Philological Faculty.

Nicola Verderame, Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies

Costumes in World Fairs and Orientalisms: The Case of Chicago, 1893

World Fairs were occasions for both Western and non-Western countries to display, perform, and consume identities. As Zeynep Çelik has shown, exhibitions in Europe and the United States often displayed the Islamic world as somewhere in between the advanced West and
the backward sub-Saharan Africa. This paper considers the Ottoman entry in the Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition, for which the Ottoman state authorities and entrepreneurs collaborated, through the lens of costume displays. This fair was widely covered both in the United States' and Ottoman press, and has produced a rich array of photographic, journalistic, and archival sources.

The case of the Ottoman entry in Chicago is emblematic for the ambiguous uses of garments as markers of identity: on the one hand, the Ottoman authorities used costumes for displaying the integration of regional diversities under an encompassing Ottomanist umbrella. On the other hand, the Ottoman entrepreneurs from the Levant displayed Bedouins stressing their “authentic” outlook, with an attitude that historian Ussama Makdisi has labelled “Ottoman Orientalism”. To further complicate the picture, the official events organised by the Ottoman delegation featured the members of an American Freemason brotherhood called “Ancient Arabic Order of the Mystic Shrine”, that sported Ottoman-inspired Oriental costumes and that were consciously used by the delegation to make a good impression on the home public.

In this interplay of Orientalisms, costumes could testify to the inclusion of ethnicities within an imperial project to be displayed abroad. Garments could also be used to cater on the exotic taste of the fairgoers, or could be consciously appropriated in a seemingly innocent and playful manner by non-Ottomans. Finally, this paper aims at complicating seemingly clear-cut boundaries between Westerners and Orientals as the subjects and objects of representation in international contexts.

Nicola Verderame received his MA in Islamic Studies at L’Orientale University of Naples, and his MA in Turkish Studies at Leiden University. He is currently Doctoral Fellow at the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies – Free University Berlin, writing a dissertation about the late Ottoman water supply. His fields of interest include world exhibitions, urban history, and contemporary Turkish poetry.
Session 9: Dressed to impress in the early medieval eastern Mediterranean

Susanne Enderwitz, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg

Zarf: A Dress-Code in Medieval Baghdad

When Ibn al-Washshâ‘ composed his handbook on elegant appearance and conduct (żarf) in 10th century Baghdad, the Arab-Islamic culture on the one hand and the Preislamic-Persian heritage on the other had already found some sort of reconciliation with each other. Together with the bureaucrats (kuttāb), the religious scholars (‘ulamā‘) were reckoned among the “people of the pen”, and together with the “people of the sword” both groups represented the majority of the court society of the Abbasids. Thus, Ibn al-Washshâ‘ addresses an upperclass which defines itself as being courtly and Muslim at the same time. However, even if the dividing lines between a strictly hierarchical tradition and a tradition with tribal roots were blurred at the court, they were not settled. Dress codes can serve as a clue to latent conflicts, as they sometimes point to the opposite. In the realm of the żarf, the otherwise sharply segregated society shared some kind of unisex culture. My paper will try to explore different meanings of different dress-codes, as they appeared in different strata of society at the height of the Abbasid Empire.

Prof. dr. Susanne Enderwitz is a professor at the department for Near and Middle Eastern Studies at Heidelberg University. Her research concentrates on medieval and modern literature (adab, geography, (auto-)biography, historiography, and poetry), medieval cultural and social history, the formation and the development of Islam, as well as Islamic extremism. Her latest co-edited book Communication and Materiality: Written and Unwritten Communication in Pre-Modern Societies (De Gruyter) was published in 2015.

Alexandra Pleşa, FISO, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Between Tradition, Religiosity and Status: Burial Dress and Practice at Matmar and Mostagedda (Middle Egypt) during Late Antique and Early Islamic Times

The presentation details my ongoing research on burial dress from the later Byzantine and early Islamic times (fifth – ninth century CE) at the sites of Matmar and Mostagedda, Middle Egypt, and several preliminary observations emerging from the analysis of the material.

In the late 1920s, the famous British Egyptologist Guy Brunton carried out a series of excavations at the villages of Matmar and Mostagedda, in the Badari District of Middle Egypt. During three work seasons, vast necropoles dating to Roman, Byzantine, and early Islamic times were uncovered. The burial inventories, containing approximately 600 items—textiles, accessories, and personal belongings—were shipped to museums across the world, without proper documentation and photographing, situation which continues to the present day.
Over the last two years, I was able to document approximately 300 surviving artefacts—textiles, leatherwork, jewellery and accessories—and to reconstruct partially the visual appearance of the burials. This led to a series of insightful, yet preliminary considerations about how burial customs and attire can inform us about the social and religious identities of the deceased. People at Matmar and Mostagedda were villagers with a limited means of acquiring luxurious dress items. Although of modest quality, their attire was of vibrant colours and decorations, different from that of other regions at north. Constant care was shown in providing the deceased with jewellery of various types, accessories and items of personal use. However, only a small number of burials contained items marking a clear religious affiliation, usually Christian. The population was most probably largely Christianized by the sixth century and even in larger numbers later on. Were people at the two villages not interested in advertising themselves as Christian? Did their religious identity play a smaller role than their social status in their choices of burial? Or were they concerned following traditional burial customs, centuries old?

Alexandra Pleșa is a PhD candidate of the NWO Research Project Fitting In/Standing Out: Comparing Majority and Minority Dress Codes among Egyptian Muslims and Christians, at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. She studied Art History and Medieval Studies at the University of Bucharest, and Middle Eastern Studies at Leiden University. Her main interest is the the art and archaeology of early Islamic Middle East as means to look into social, religious and cultural aspects of Muslim and non-Muslim communities in the area.

Hasan Al-Khoe, SOAS, University of London
To Wear Black Robes or White? Colour, Clothing and the Fatimid-Abbasid Rivalry (10th and 11th Centuries)

In 969, the armies of the Shi‘i Fāṭimid Caliphate conquered Egypt and wrested it away from their ‘Abbāsid rivals. As reported in the historical narratives, there soon followed a significant change in the colour of the robes worn by the prayer-leaders of Egypt’s congregational mosques. Whereas the local imāms had once always worn black-robos, instead they now donned robes coloured white.

The ideologically driven rivalry between the Fatimid and Abbasid Caliphates in the 10th and 11th centuries was manifest through an array of different communicative acts in the public sphere, including the choice of the ‘official’ clothing. “Taking on the black” had been a requirement of ‘Abbāsid government officials from the onset of their rule (thus labelled the ‘black-robbed ones’ in contemporary Byzantine and Chinese chronicles). Concurrently, white became the colour of ‘official clothing’ for the Fatimids, who in the 10th century established an Empire over the western half of the Muslim world. The choice of ‘black or white’ became integral in the dynamics of the ‘Abbāsid-Fāṭimid rivalry. Wearing one or the other became a
critical public gesture of allegiance, and the donning of black or white was often a primary symbol of rebellion by local power brokers.

The paper will argue that in the early medieval Muslim world, the colour of robes worn by ‘government officials’ became a site of discourse on legitimate Caliphal authority. To legitimise power, rival Caliphates consciously embedded symbolic meaning particular colours, usually by associating colour to past events or precedents. Consequently, the colour of clothing became an arena wherein authority and resistance were manifest in the public sphere.

Hasan Al-Khoe is currently a final-year doctoral candidate at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, working on forms of public communication in the 7th – 9th century Muslim eras. He is also a researcher at the Institute of Ismaili Studies with a particular focus on early Fatimid history.
The Politics of Dress and Identity in Eastern Mediterranean Societies, Past and Present
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Dr. Tineke Rooijakkers

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