



The Fabric of my Life – Newsletter 6

January 2021 – June 2021

By CTR

The Fabric of My Life (FABRIC) is a joint project of cultural institutions in DK, GR, and DE with the aim to innovate and test new methods in the cultural sectors concerning migration history, to empower refugee women and to train cultural workers and design students. FABRIC fosters new digital and cultural products co-created with migrants.

In FABRIC, we see clothing as an individual means of communicating our identity, our history and the future at which we aim.

Europeans and migrants (furthermost women) are invited to co-create and contribute to exhibitions, digital, pop-up, and conventional shows, and use clothing to narrate their life stories. FABRIC trains cultural workers to widen their scope, reach out to new audiences and speak directly to migrants.

What's happened at CTR?

Dissemination knowledge about dress traditions

We published the paper on young female Muslim dress 2020 in Copenhagen: Gülzar Demir, Marie-Louise Nosch and Else Skjold, "How I wear my headscarf. Narratives from young Danish Muslim women in Copenhagen", In *(Re-)Claiming Bodies through Fashion and Style. Gendered Configurations in Muslim Contexts*. Edited by Viola Thimm. Palgrave Macmillan – New Directions in Islam Series (2021), 65-87.

We submitted two papers on dress practices:

1. Gülzar Demir, Rabia Ilhan Korkmaz, Marie Louise Nosch, "Ottoman clothing regulations and the Kemalist clothing legislation in the early 20th century." Submitted to *Arachne* February 2021.
2. Marie Louise Nosch, Else Skjold, From Tehran to Thisted via Textiles: Interviews with two textile artists on textile as a successful foundation and privileged ground for co-creation and memory. *Arachne* (8 pages submitted April 2021)

Partner visit:

Marie Louise Nosch visited SheWorks workshops and textile artist Solveig Søndergård twice in June 2021. Here are photos from the art pieces for the exhibition.



1 Textile artists Solveig Søndergård shows some of the art pieces for an exhibition.

8th Monitoring meeting, 12 April 2021, online.

Hosts: Centre for Textile Research at University of Copenhagen

Participants:

CTR: Marie-Louise Nosch, Rezvan Farsijani, Solveig Berg Søndergård, Gülzar Demir, Rabia Kormaz, Pernille Højgård

ARTEX: Stella Spantidaki, Christina Margariti, Kalliopi Sarri

National Museum of Denmark: Gitte Engholm

Deutsches Textilmuseum: Annette Schick, Christina Schulte

Associated partners: Else Skjold (KADK), Anne Louise Bang (VIA)

Agenda:

1. Approval of minutes from 7th Monitoring meeting, December 2020
2. Approval of agenda
3. Presentations by partners: progress on projects and your needs for budgetary changes. The main topic on the agenda is to share how we are dealing with the pandemic, and how we plan to allocate the funds in the coming year until 2022. Please consider what changes are necessary in your budget to implement the activities and enhance communication and dissemination during the pandemic and beyond.
4. Next Newsletter, edited in DK (Pernille)
5. Continuous reporting, presented by Pernille and Gülzar
6. Next meeting: we suggest 10th September 2021 at 10-12

New project:



We applied in the Ministry of Culture, Denmark for funding a new partnership between institutions in the socially challenged suburbs of Copenhagen to co-create textile art. Partners are: CTR, Greve Museum, Tingbjerg Kulturhus og Bibliotek, Tingbjerg Kirke. The project was funded with 2,000,000 DKK and will run 2021-2024



2News Paper Brønshøj-Husum Avis 25th of May 2021

Other publications appeared in 2021

1. Marie-Louise Nosch & Agata Ulanowska, "The Materiality of the Cretan Hieroglyphic Script: Textile Production-Related Referents to Hieroglyphic Signs on Seals and Sealings from Middle Bronze Age Crete" in Philippa Steele, Philip Boyes and Natalia Elvira Astoreca (eds), *The Social and Cultural Contexts of Historic Writing Practices*, Oxbow Books, Oxford (2021), 73-100.
2. Marie-Louise Nosch, Agata Ulanowska, Katarzyna Żebrowska, Kinga Bigoraj, Anna Gręzak, "Sheep – 'a factory without waste'. Comparative, interdisciplinary and diachronic views on sheep in the Aegean Bronze Age", in R. Laffineur and T.G. Palaima (eds), *ZOIA. Animal-Human Interactions in the Aegean Middle and Late Bronze Age. Proceedings of the 18th International Aegean Conference, originally to be held at the Program in Aegean Scripts and Prehistory, in the Department of Classics, the University of Texas at Austin, May 28-31, 2020*, Aegaeum 45 (2021), 35-49 and plates V-VII.
3. Marie-Louise Nosch, "Textiles, vêtements et parures des royautés en Grèce avant Alexandre", in Ariane Guieu-Coppolani, Marie-Joséphine Werlings & Julien Zurbach (eds.) *Le pouvoir et la parole. Mélanges en mémoire de Pierre CARLIER* (2021), 103-138.

Promise at Dawn by Rezvan Farsijani

Between June and January 2021, I focused on editing the project and thinking about how best to present it.

In February, I went to the border of Afghanistan in Iran – where there are many Afghan refugees – in order to work with them and wait for their stories; I filmed and recorded their stories.

They embroidered on the fabrics that I had brought from Paris, Beirut, Damascus, the fabric already embroidered by Afghan, Syrian women...



3 Textile artist Rezvan Farsijani sits with Palestinian women in the camps in Jordan, listening to their stories, embroiding on her textile art piece, and showing off some of the textiles used in the art piece.

In the of march I went to Jordan for 5 months, still with the embroidered fabric in my suitcase, with this piece of muslin that carries the story of these women scattered around the world.

In Jordan, I had the chance to meet Palestinian women in the camps, and they in turn embroidered my fabric for the walls of my house with their story.

Women of different generations told me their reasons for leaving, they told me their love. I documented their stories, filmed them and recorded their history and oral heritage.

In Amman, I had the chance to take a guided tour at TIRAZ which is an interactive museum for an elegant and extremely rare kind of social history; a history which is tactile and visual, woven into fabric, and related though the work of feminine hands.

TIRAZ is an extraordinary place to learn and discover the beauty of the clothing heritage of Syria, Palestine and Jordan...



4 Cover picture for the exhibition at TIRAZ in Amman.

I interviewed the person in charge in order to know much more than preserving the past. It is about renewing it, for many generations to come.

This costume collection represents a story of human beings, and a form of history itself, woven in thread.

Created over the course of a lifetime, the collection includes more than 2000 pieces of wedding garments for women and men, everyday wear, children's garments, head veils and dresses for women, as well as men, and amulets, home utensils and religious robes. It ranges from the simple and homespun to forms of craftsmanship, for example the use of gold and silver plated thread, which are extremely rare.



5 Pictures from the exhibition at TIRAZ showing clothing, accessories as well as a map indicating where certain pieces of clothing came from.

When I arrived in Paris, I realized that I could not finalize my artwork and build the house, because one of the fabrics (the wall of the house) is with an Afghan woman who has gone to Kabul, and with the fall of Kabul it was impossible to follow the project as before, so I designed to create a new strategy to build this house:

To destroy all the embroidered fabrics in order to sew with a red transparent mould (the color of labor and the one managed by the women I collaborated with) in order to gain more fabric in quantity and to finalize my house. (Appendix 1).

The fabrics were presented, thanks to the whole FABRIC team and the Danish Institute in Athens, during our visit and meeting in Greece.

Currently I am in the final stages of editing a sound creation with Lebanese artist Hadi Zeydan, to create a sound that brings together the testimonies of the women between Paris and Tehran via Damascus, Ramallah, Beirut, Amman... And the sounds that surround them: ancient lullabies, the noise of airplanes that creates an unbearable sound position in the vicinity of the camps, the sounds of their daily lives... In order to invite the spectators to live the intense moments between the embroidered muslin walls.



6 Cover art for German exhibitions showcasing the stories of people's lives through their dress robes.

What's happened at DTM?

DTM-Activities from January to June 2021

The COVID 19-crisis determined the activities of the DTM. The current China-exhibition stayed closed until 1st of June except of a few days in Spring and the museum decided to keep this exhibition until the end of 2021, and the exhibitions' schedule was postponed to the years after. In the meantime, the DTM-team keeps on preparing the exhibition and catalogue on Pre-Columbian textiles to be exhibited in summer 2022.

Meanwhile, the FABRIC-team of Christina Schulte and Annette Schieck went on conducting cooperations, interviews, films, collecting products, and initiating various new paths of communication.

DTM-AMD-Cooperation

In Spring 2021, professor and 'Studiendekan' Ralf Lobeck and Uwe Stoklossa started teaching a class on 'Brand and Communication Design' to second grade students. Students were to create a corporate design for the online exhibition, starting with elements of print media such as poster, invitation, and flag. The kick-off meeting was held on April 14 by zoom, but the intermediary presentation was held in physical presence. 18 students were invited to the 'Museumsscheune' at Krefeld-Linn, a hall used for exhibition openings. In order to work on the designs, students had to get together in groups of two, presenting nine layout drafts in the morning (Figs. 1, 2). After serving lunch, a press conference was held (see appendix 1–3). In the afternoon, the individual layouts were discussed within the whole group, and afterwards, students were invited to visit the China-exhibition of the DTM.



7 Discussion on layout-designs of AMD-students in the 'Museumsscheune' of the DTM on June 8, 2021 © Photo: Andreas Bischof for Presseamt Krefeld.



8 AMD-students DTM-team, professor Ralf Lobeck in the park near the DTM Krefeld on June 8, 2021 © Photo: Andreas Bischof for Presseamt Krefeld.

Within the second phase of the class, students are asked to create nine layouts in total, suggesting a wide range of possible designs to be adopted by the DTM-team for the virtual exhibition and then programmed later in summer. The final presentation of the designs will take place in physical presence at the AMD Düsseldorf on July 20. Out of the nine layouts, three will be awarded, and the best of them will be taken as a model for the online exhibition.

[Interviews documented on Film – Additions to the DTM-AMD-Photo-Sessions](#)

Professor Ralf Lobeck held a class at the AMD on portrait-photography during the winter term 2019/2020. In addition to these images, the DTM-team initiated a series of interviews of the models, being documented by freelance filmmaker Reimund Meincke, Krefeld. While most of them were carried out in November and December 2020, the ones with the two Bulgarian ladies, the Japanese woman, and the man from Bangladesh had to be postponed to 2021, due to the Covid-lockdown.

On June 17, the two Bulgarian ladies living in Krefeld were interviewed, and on June 24, the Japanese lady living in Düsseldorf were filmed (9). The DTM-team is currently negotiating the appointment with the man from Bangladesh.

Each interview is currently being edited and cut to an individual film to be included in the virtual exhibition of the DTM. All of the interviews will later be arranged to a larger film, showing individual answers given to the same questions asked to all participants. This film will also be added to the virtual DTM-exhibition.



9 Megumi Suzuki-Brandenbusch presenting her kimonos and obis to the DTM-team on June 24, 2021 © Photo: Annette Schieck.

DTM-KI-BKVB-Cooperation

Initiated by the DTM, the vocational school Vera Beckers (BKVB) applied for extra funding at the KI Krefeld (Kommunales Integrationszentrum), in order to conduct a one-week-student-project on decorative techniques. The funding was granted (2.000 €), two teachers of BKVB were involved in the concept and planning, and Jeni Josten, an expert in traditional ethnic embroidery was hired to conduct the work-plan. The schedule foresees Jeni Josten to start with a theoretical section on ethnic dress and embroidery inspiring the students to sketch and design outfits to be decorated with embroidery. In order to do so, students are to carry out practical exercises with embroidery by hand, but also by computer. Then the students will create parts of the outfit they designed, such as cuffs, neck-openings, button tabs, etc. On the last of five days, a final presentation and press-conference is scheduled, presenting the results to the public.

The workshop will be accompanied by print and digital media (instagram etc.) and will be documented by Reimund Meincke. The film will then be integrated into the DTM-FABRIC-exhibition.

The workshop was scheduled for the beginning of November 2020 but had to be postponed due to the 2nd Covid-lockdown in Germany. It is now scheduled for the period of September 13 to 18, 2021, in physical presence at the school.



DTM-Exhibition

Since the FABRIC-exhibition had to be postponed, and the general exhibition-schedule of the DTM tumbled all over due to the COVID 19-crisis, the DTM-team has decided to change the plans of composing a physical exhibition towards creating a virtual exhibition.

From the beginning of 2021 Annette Schieck, Christina Schulte and Andrea Sturm (secretary of the museum with homepage-abilities) are heavily involved in creating the elements to be arranged within the exhibitions, while the AMD-students develop layout designs. Actual programming of the webpage will be done throughout the summer, and the opening of the exhibition will most likely be in Fall 2021.

Krefelder Integrationskonferenz

Annette Schieck participated in the 'Krefelder Integrationskonferenz' on June 18–19. The conference invited citizens of the Krefeld community and members of the city's administration to participate in the process of developing the next agenda on integration of migrants. The process will be continued in fall via workshops and meetings and the result will be an integrative concept for the city's developments.

Since culture is a key to integration, the DTM aims at becoming a steady partner in terms of cooperation.

Perspectives

DTM-Publications in print

- Annette Paetz gen. Schieck & Christina Schulte, 'The Fabric of My Life' (2018–2022) – Das Deutsche Textilmuseum Krefeld im EU-geförderten Kooperationsprojekt zu Kleidung und Identität von Personen mit Migrationshintergrund, in: Die Heimat 92, 2021.
- Annette Paetz gen. Schieck & Christina Schulte, 'The Fabric of my Life' at the Deutsches Textilmuseum Krefeld, Arachne-Volume, 2021.

'Interkulturelle Woche' Krefeld 2021

On September 26, the world celebrates the 107th day of migrants and refugees. This anniversary is followed by the 'week of intercultural communication', celebrated all over Germany, for the 40th time already, and among them: the city of Krefeld. Krefeld organizes a festival within the city's center. Migrant groups are asked to present their native culture by concerts, dancing performances, food, in paintings etc. The DTM will participate in this festival and will present the FABRIC-project to the public.



Additional-Funding

To the DTM another generous additional-funding is prospected by the KI, to be spent in the name of the FABRIC-project. The DTM-team hopes to start a program in physical presence in Fall 2021, addressing migrant women of the city and region of Krefeld. The DTM-team is currently working on this program.

Appendix

The Following appendix showcases Textile artist Rezvan Farsijani's *Promise at Dawn* project.

Appendix 1









