

Dankwoord OIKOS publieksprijs Anique Hamelink

It is a great honour to find myself among an illustrious list of previous recipients of the OIKOS Publieksprijs. I heartily thank the judges for finding me so deserving, and my dear colleagues for nominating me.

The main research theme of my PhD project is the relation between dress, gender, and cultural transformation in the North-western provinces of the Roman empire, involving studies of iconographical and archaeological sources. Over the course of my PhD project, I have been engaged in public history in various roles and to a variety of different audiences, which I would like to share with you.

Due to my specialisation in dress and iconography, most of my public history projects have been focussed on the tangible and visual. As part of my research, I have been involved in the creation of replicas, illustrations, and interpretation of archaeological objects that I study. In these projects, I have been the commissioner, the consultant as well as the maker. For besides my academic pursuits, I am an artisan and an entrepreneur with my business in Roman replica jewellery.

Due to my interest in ancient textiles, I have developed skills in hand spinning, sewing and other traditional textile techniques, which I employ actively as part of my academic research. When Dutch archaeologist Lourens van der Feijst asked me about the potential function of bone staff-like objects, excavated from Roman period graves throughout the Netherlands in the last decade, I set up an experimental research project. This project, titled "Testing for function: Roman period bone tools from The Netherlands", was designed to test my hypothesis of these objects being textile tools, specifically as a distaff (the staff which holds the wool during spinning). Previously, scholars had rejected the interpretation of these objects as textile tools because they believed them to be too short and too weak to use as a distaff.

In collaboration with the historical textile specialists and craftspeople of the European Textile Forum, I commissioned a wood- and bone worker to create exact replicas of these objects and had them tested by expert historical spinners, concluding that these objects are actually highly suitable as distaffs. I have since then demonstrated this replica in use at academic conferences and at Roman history events for the general public.

Reconstructions can be the instrument of research, but they can also be the visualisation of the outcome of research. During my research of dress on funerary monuments, I encountered several examples of monuments from France on which preserved traces of original paint indicated that the garments were decorated with two red stripes. This type of decoration was widely used on Roman tunics in the Mediterranean, where the motif is known as *clavi*, but was unknown on Gallo-Roman dress and changes our perspective on provincial dress as rejecting influences from Mediterranean fashion. I made a reconstruction of this type of garment, by hand, to illustrate this new discovery and change in perception of provincial Roman dress. In addition to illustrating this conclusion for one's academic peers, the reconstructed garment can be used as an educational tool in teaching and museum exhibits.

In addition to my own research projects, I have worked extensively with museums and craftspeople. For instance, I collaborated with archaeological illustrator Graham Sumner on a drawing of a woman named Julia Quinta, on the basis of her Roman period funerary monument. This process of

interpretation in which missing information, such as on colours, textures and, in this case, the hairstyle or head covering needs to be added on the basis of comparative funerary monuments from the region, as well as a knowledge of archaeological textiles. This illustration is now used in the Römerhalle Bad Kreuznach museum as part of a special museum experience aimed at children, who meet several real historical characters from local Roman history. This reconstruction drawing helps bring these characters come to life and engage the young visitors with the past.

I have also had the pleasure to work with weaver Eva Klee to reconstruct Roman fabrics based on archaeological textiles. She designed and wove these fabrics by hand in her workshop in Amsterdam, based on information I provided on fibers, weaving structures, dyes, and patterns from the Roman period. These fabrics were designed as curtains and garments for the furnishing of a new museum, a full-scale replica of a Roman villa in Somerset, called the Villa Ventorum. This museum aims to create an immersive experience for the visitors, by displaying a fully furnished and operative Roman country villa.

Another museum project took place on behalf of the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden. The museum wished to create a new facial reconstruction of the skull of a mummy from Roman Egypt, dated to 109 C.E., to feature in their travelling exhibition "Egypt, Land of Discoveries". Thanks to my experience in studying and recreating ancient hairstyles and making Roman jewellery as part of my business, I was able to advise the museum, the facial reconstruction artist and hair stylist on the appropriate hairstyle and jewellery for that time period in Roman Egypt with very detailed instructions.

Last year, I had the chance to do a similar hairstyle recreation for the tv-documentary "In Levenden Lijve". This was the recreation of Cleopatra VII's hairstyle, based on her numismatic and sculpted portraits. This time, I was not behind the scenes as a consultant, but recreated the hairstyle on a live model myself, while being interviewed about how dress and appearance could be employed as instruments of power.

I served as historical consultant in the blockbuster documentary series "Het Verhaal van Nederland", which recounted the entire history of The Netherlands in 10 episodes. I coordinated with the costume and hair & make up department on the costumes for the Roman and medieval characters that appeared in the dramatized historical narrative, such as Julius Civilis and his wife, and Batavian warriors. My role in this project was to advise the costume designer on practical elements, such as what type of make-up and hairstyles women and men wore in the Roman period, and provide more conceptual insights on how people's appearance reflected gender, social class and cultural norms within that specific time period. At the same time, I assisted them in abandoning pre-existing misconceptions about dress in the Roman world, such as that clothing was white and everyone wore the toga.

Though we may criticise such tv-shows for valuing entertainment and viewing rates above historical accuracy, I firmly believe that it is important that we, as the academic community, do our utmost to make our knowledge and insights available. These productions aimed at a big audience shape the image that people have of history for the coming years, and we can contribute to their historical truthfulness.

A different type of project I engaged with was the collaboration with modern artist Janneke Kornet. With my input on ancient cult practice, iconography, and the archaeological finds, Janneke designed

artworks for two different exhibitions inspired by Dutch goddesses from the Roman period: Nehalennia and Sandraudiga, whom we know from the votive altars that are presently housed in the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden. The exhibitions “Po Nagar en Nehalennia” and “Searching Sandraudiga” translate the iconography and the domains of these goddesses to a timeless modern form: water, apple seeds, stone blocks, the address of “DEAE” and the dye pigments used to paint these altars as well as a reference to the iconic short woolen cloak of Nehalennia. In this manner, the artworks capture the essence of the ancient cults, based on historical and archaeological artefacts.

These projects are, respectively, illustrations, recreations and reinterpretations of our ancient source materials, aimed at a variety of audiences: from school children to fellow researchers, art gallery visitors and museum visitors, both in The Netherlands and abroad. I believe that such outreach projects are rewarding enterprises, both for their intended audiences as well as for researchers. Reconstructions, visualisations and creative interpretations of history help the general public to understand and connect with the past by creating an experience tailored to their knowledge and interests.

For academics, such projects help us to conduct research, communicate research and inspire new research questions. They invite us to look at the ancient world from different perspectives, and tap into emerging interests and social developments of our present day society.

I would very much like to express my gratitude to the people I have worked with on these projects for the inspiring and enriching experiences they have given me during the course of our collaborations. I would like to thank my colleagues and the jury for their recognition by their presentation of this award.