



Lars Elenius

Clothing fashion variations for festive periods and everyday life



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Church Town of Gammelstad, Luleå
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Heritage List in 1996



Gammelstad

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Clothing fashion variations

for festive periods and everyday life

Lars Elenius



Project: More in-depth communication of the World Heritage Site Gammelstad Church Town.
The book is part of a thematic study of Gammelstad Church Town as a World Heritage Site and has been commissioned by museum director Ann Lindblom Berg, the open-air museum Hägnan & Gammelstad Visitor Centre, and the Culture & Recreation Department, Luleå Municipality.

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Translator: Paul Fischer, ELEX.

Cover photograph: For information about the cover photograph and other photographs and illustrations, see back cover.

Graphic form and production: Luleå grafiska tryckeri, Luleå, 2021.

Printing: Luleå grafiska tryckeri, Luleå 2021.

Project owner: Luleå Municipality.

Publisher: Gammelstad Visitor Centre.

Funding: The publication has been subsidised by the section for research and development (R&D) of the Swedish National Heritage Board, the County Administrative Board in Norrbotten County, Luleå Municipality and Region Norrbotten.

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ISBN: 978-91-519-4117-2

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Introduction

Without clothing, people would never have survived the climate we have in the area around the northern Gulf of Bothnia. The temperature range, varying from around twenty degrees above zero in summer to a similar number below zero in winter, calls for flexibility in dressing. Periods of extreme cold have made it necessary to use airy, insulating material. Work in the heat of summer has required ventilated clothing. Add to that the need of protection against mosquitoes.

In northern Sweden, clothing has always been very similar between different parishes. One can speak of similar mode of dress around the Gulf of Bothnia rather than describe distinguishing regional garments. As early as the 1670s, an Italian diplomat travelling in Sweden noted that the people of northern Sweden dressed in a certain way. The illustrator he had enlisted painted them wearing beak shoes on their feet as a special characteristic.

The Sámi were distinguished by clothing which over a long period had been adapted to a life of reindeer hus-

bandry and hunting. They had developed beak shoes made of reindeer skin, where their feet were wrapped in dried hay, which in winter gave maximum shoe warmth. They were then used by all domiciled dwellers as a cultural loan from the Sámi. The Sámi in turn used homespun wool and woollen cloth when developing their skin garments. As a child, I myself wore homespun trousers, in winter at least, until Year 2. I sometimes proudly showed off a pair of “nutukhaat” in school. That was what Sámi reindeer skin shoes were called in the Meänkieli dialect of Finnish.

To write about the changes in clothing in the Luleå area has been a cultural historical journey through time and space, and to me, relatively unknown terrain. Clothing says so much about society and people. A number of people have contributed to the contents with their knowledge. Special thanks to ethnologist Hillevi Wadensten, who thanks to her many years’ work with textiles and clothing has had the answer to many questions. She and Anja Wrede, curator

of collections at Norrbottens Museum, walked me through the rich textile collection at the museum and gave valuable advice on the garments that Anja selected.

Elisabet and Bengt Martinsson contributed comments, especially to do with folk costumes, Hillevi and Anja, as well as ethnologist Eva Gradin, have read the manuscript and made valuable observations. The museum’s photographer Daryoush Tahmasebi took pictures of the clothes. It is also appropriate to thank the former manager of Hägnan Visitor Centre, Ann Lindblom Berg, and the current manager Karina Jarrett for the publication of the fourth article in the thematic study of Gammelstad Church Town.

The reference group has included Beatrice Norberg, Ann-Louise Lång, Linda Stenman and Zara Johansson, who with untiring enthusiasm have contributed good advice and proofreading along the way. A huge thank you to you all!

Lars Elenius



In the subsistence economy era, clothes were made in the home. Often, home produced raw materials were used, such as wool and skins. The Sámi made warm shoes and furs of reindeer skin, which they also sold. From traders, they bought homespun cloth and other textiles. Clothes were also a marker of social status. In the time of Sweden's Four Estates therefore, farmers were forbidden to wear silk fabric in public.

CHAPTER 1

Clothing of The Subsistence Economy

The clothes used in the subsistence economy area came from nature in the surroundings. In the margin of Fritz von Dardel's watercolour, it is noted that he produced it at Selet near Luleå on 7 August 1858. The boys and girls clothes are copies of adult garments of the age.

Traditional North Swedish dress

The Church Town in Gammelstad and the surrounding region belong to the North Swedish dress tradition, which in turn is a combination of three influential industries: agriculture, reindeer herding and fur hunting. From the end of the Viking age, Swedish and Finnish speaking farmers around the northern Gulf of Bothnia concentrated on cattle rearing, while the Sámi specialised increasingly in reindeer herding. Both groups engaged extensively in hunting and shooting.



The Italian diplomat Lorenzo Magalotti visited Sweden in 1674. One interesting thing about the picture “North Swedes” is that the three men and a child are wearing beak shoes, once a clear Sámi cultural influence, but completely integrated in the northern Swedish dress.

By then, products made of skins especially for the northern area had been developed over a very long period.

One example is the leather beak shoe which up until the breakthrough of industrialisation was the widely used everyday shoe among farmers in northern Sweden. When the Italian diplomat Lorenzo Magalotti on a journey in Sweden in 1674 illustrated “North Swedes”, they wore beak shoes on their feet. It is judged that the wash drawing was produced in Sweden at the time of the journey by an un-

known Swedish illustrator. It can be compared to items by artist Fritz von Dardel, who on a journey along the Lule River Valley in 1858 portrayed both Sámi and other inhabitants in the village of Bredåker above Boden wearing beak shoes.¹ It is evident that the beak shoe has a long historical tradition in the area of northern Sweden.

When agriculture was established in the North, woollen textiles, for example homespun wool, began to be produced locally. Wool was the perfect material for lives where hygiene could not be observed according to today’s standards. Those who worked sweated, and gave off smells. The advantage of wool was that they both warmed and absorbed sweat while the user was working. The smell was also reduced compared to the case with cotton textiles. When the wearer was out in the rain, the moisture was dispersed and warmed up between the wool fibres by body heat.

Everyday clothing consisted of simple garments of home woven fabric made from wool, hemp or flax. No flax was grown in Luleå parish – it was brought in from the south. Man of letters and topographer Abraham Hülphers visited the Luleå region in summer 1758. In the spirit of the age he investigated in what way farmers in the parish made use of nature, and wrote: “In addition to ordinary root

vegetables, swedes, roots and potatoes, hemp and hops are so here, but not flax”.

When visiting the new Luleå town, he stated that a number of herb gardens were to be found which gave “fruits of the earth” for household needs. Magistrate’s assistant Lange had many plantings on his farm, including a Siberian herb tree and red- and blackcurrant bushes. Potatoes grew well, as did hops, “but flax and

hemp are not sown”. So we see that hemp was grown in places in the parish, but not on the meagre soil in the area to which Luleå town had been moved.² Flax was imported.

A by-product from heckling or combing flax was short-fibred but spinnable lengths of flax that were known as tow yarn (*blångarn*). The residue from hemp preparation was also known by that name. The use of such material for clothing gave an un-

even and coarse textile. Women could have undergowns, blouses and aprons made of tow yarn. Bodices could also be made of tow yarn or un-dyed grey homespun. The bodice was a tight fitting outer garment worn on the torso and reaching as far down as the waist. Jackets, trousers and codes were often made of grey homespun or leather, and knitted jerseys and jackets were neither dyed nor patterned. Furs in the northern regions were often made



When he was Crown Prince, Karl XV went on a trip up the Luleå River in 1858. In the village of Bredåker, the locals inquisitively crowded around his hen coop. The Sámi woman and other locals have beak shoes on their feet, which the artist Fritz von Dardel captured with his eye for detail.

of wolf skin, reindeer skin, dog skin, while sheep skin could be used for the lining.³

Different types of wool are suitable for different types of clothes. The bottom wool was in the past used for undergarments and soft shawls, since the fibres are fine and soft and pliable in contact with the skin, so the fibres do not itch. The long, coarse and strong guard hairs itch when close to the skin but have the advantage of repelling water when used for outer garments. They were therefore used for coats and similar outer garments.⁴

Women were paid in cloth

In rural areas, men's and women's clothing was constructed in a similarly functional way to be able to function in practical work. Bodices were used in earlier times to warm and protect the torso without restricting mobility. The difference was that women's bodices were handier with high waistline and larger cut-outs for the arms, while the men's were straighter, with a more distinct collar.

Jerseys were also used by both men and women, as well as gloves and socks, but there were also gender dif-

ferences. It was only women who used skirts or dresses, while the men used trousers or hose. One common outer garment for women was the large shawl. Garments were also tailored differently for women than for men. In addition, women had a broader range of garments in the form of colourful, patterned neckcloths, shawls, and different types of headwear.⁵

The apron developed into a typical female garment. Until the mid-19th century, it was considered immoral for a woman to show herself outside the farm without an apron. Its use was

both decorative on festive occasions and protective in work. One example of a fine and costly woollen fabric was "chalon" which had a waxen surface. It could be beautifully decorated with heavy borders of silver galloons and silken embroidery, even though it was perhaps not so common in northern Sweden.

Striped aprons of half-wool were the most common and could be used both day-to-day and on festive occasions. The apron's waistline was sewn with a woven ribbon of the same or contrasting fabric and knotted at the side or the front. During the 18th century, flowery "kattun" fabrics became popular as festive aprons. "Kattun" a direct translation of the English "cotton" or the German "Kattun". The apron continued to be a protective work garment for men too in different types of heavy labour or handicraft.

The more skirts, the more powerful the woman, was

the idea in the 18th and 19th century. One wore more skirts one over the other to mark status. One did it also for the sake of warmth, since the many skirts acted as a lining. The outer layer was in winter often a leather or homespun wool skirt. Clothing also represented a value and was used as a form of payment. In olden times, pay was made in natura and always to a certain proportion in the form of clothing. For example, Gustav Vasa gave an order to an equerry at Älvsborg Castle to ensure that more cloth was

imported from The Netherlands, half of it black-coloured and half orange, for it was needed for payment of salaries.

The King also paid workers at Luleå Royal Demesne, which was in op-



The wedding guests in Västerbotten County were painted in the first part of the 19th century. The women's aprons show a variety of patterns. The bride in her all-red dress and the groom in his short elegant jacket are conspicuous.



The thick, lined woollen skirt has belonged to Maria Lovisa Andersdotter who lived in Brändön in the latter part of the 19th and early 20th century. She was married to a preacher. It is lined in an unusual way with patches of cotton in different colours.





The bodice was a tight-fitting standard garment used to warm and shape the body. The fabrics were home-woven and lined. In later periods they were provided with stays of bone or metal to which stockings were attached. The red and brownish ones are from Vånafjärden, Kalix, and the white one from Rödupp, Överkalix.

eration 1558–1563, in cloth of varying quality. The finest was “English”, which was valued at 4 marks per ell. After that came “braban” at two marks per ell, then coarser cloths such as tow yarn, homespun and “rysselinen” (open seamed). Also double- and single-soled shoes were part of payment.⁶ In the oldest recorded statutes for serv-

ing staff from 1664 it is stated that the servants pay shall consist of clothing and coinage or the value of the coinage. One could therefore also receive payment in wool, flax or the right to sell the raw materials.⁷

A girl who began work early as a maid must first work for a number of garments. More often pay was

instead in the form of a number of ells of cloth. Confirmation required first of all a black or dark coloured dress, thereafter other clothing. Maids had to sew their dress fabrics during their weeks off in October or other free time. Everything was done under the supervision of the farming family, which meant that their house

traditions dominated. This restricted the introduction of new routines. The Sámi too were to some extent paid in the form of cloth when they carried out duties for the mining industry. This applied for example to Sámi who carried out transportation of materials to the silver mine in Nasafjäll in the mid-17th century.⁸

One macabre example of the value of clothing is a trial in Gammelstad concerning the murder of a Sámi woman known as Lapp-Anna in September 1696. She was murdered by an enlisted soldier in Rutvikssund with the collusion of the housekeeper, a maid and the soldier’s wife. The murder took place in the cattle shed, to which they had lured her with the promise of some milk. The macabre in the story is that after dragging out the murdered Lapp-Anna from the cattle shed, the maid and the soldier’s wife took off her homespun skirt and divided it into an apron for each of the two.⁹ After that they buried her in a nearby field. This shows the great value that was attached to garments.

Those breaking ground for new settlements lived as smallholders and the housewife in the family spun, weaved and sewed the family’s clothing using raw material they had produced or bought. There were always a few sheep on the farm, wool being the main material in the clothes

and so that at the same time the family got meat after slaughtering. Flax always had to be bought. Since all material for clothing and shoes came

straight from their own livestock rearing, this also meant that there was direct contact with blood, droppings, animal hair, lice and fleas. Urine was



In the bakery cottage of the pastor’s dwelling Klastorp in Gammelstad, thinbread was baked. The bakers in the picture were called “Eksells-Fia” and Anni. The long skirt, the apron and head-cloth were typical female working garments well into the 20th century.



The two-piece dress is from Jönsgården homestead in Börjelslandet, Luleå. The dress is probably from the time when the family of general store owner Johan Fredrik Olsson lived in the homestead and represents the wealthier section of the rural population in the latter part of the 19th century. It has sewn-on lace around the neck band and at the sleeves, and a broad belt.

also used, both to wash woollen clothing and for dyeing wool. Every evening therefore, the women of the house deloused themselves and other family members.¹⁰

In the past, neither women nor men used underpants. The usual female undergarment in olden times was an *undergown*, made from home woven cloth. It was designed as a full-length open dress. The lower part was often made of coarser fabric such as hemp or flax. The upper part was made of finer muslin which was kinder to the skin. The undergown could also be sewn completely in wool. For

practical reasons, women were naked beneath the undergown to more easily relieve themselves. The undergown was used as a work garment in the daytime and to sleep in at night. Not until the 19th century did special sleeping garments come into use.

When manufacturing the undergown the cloth pieces were carefully and economically cut from the cloth. It was then ensured that based on the width of the loom the cloth sufficed for the front and back, neck, sleeves and triangular pieces at the armpits. Very few undergowns from northern Sweden have been preserved. They were often made of cotton and could



The all-linen dress jacket is among the oldest 18th-century garments belonging to Norrbottens Museum. The lining in white brocade is from the 17th century. Typical for the era are the cut flaps on the rear side which are round-trimmed. The black silk bonnet with the evocative tambour embroidery is from Gäddvik, Luleå, and the light pink part in satin with embroidered bunches of grapes is from Gammelstad. It was in use until the 1870s.



have a simple crocheted or machined lace decoration around the neck and sleeves.¹¹ When the nightshirt was introduced it was as an exclusive sleeping garment.

In an investigation carried out by the Nordic Museum in cooperation with the regional daily Norrbottens Kuriren in 1930, a number of respondents sent in their written recollections of Church Town customs.

They noted their own recollections as well as those of older relatives and submitted them to a competition which the newspaper had arranged. There were also descriptions of how garments had changed. Hjalmar Palmgren, living in Brändön, described women's clothing in the Lule region. Underskirts in winter time were almost as thick as a normal blanket and were called "stubb". They could have edging of red homespun. Headwear was a head cloth called a "helka" or "hilka" (coif). For everyday use, wool, cotton or linen was used, but for holidays and festive occasions they were often made of finer cotton muslin or half-wool. Footwear was thick, home knitted woollen socks and a pair of beak shoes or beak boots. The feet were tucked into dried hay in the shoes.¹²

For a long time, leather shoes were in short supply. The skins one took from the limited number of cattle suf-

ficed only for leather aprons to protect clothes and for shoe leather. Therefore it was not at all unusual that people went barefoot to save their shoes. Women and children were often barefoot from the time the snow melted until late autumn, as were men. People carried their shoes in their hands when walking to church and did not

put them on until just before arriving. A farmer in Sunderbyn used to apply several layers of tar to the soles of his feet at the beginning of summer, and let them dry in the sun. Then he could walk barefoot on all kinds of terrain, across stones and twigs and pine needles. Similarly, it caused amazement when Captain Clementzoff,

owner of Bostället in Sunderbyn, was discovered walking barefoot beside a wagon pulled by his ox.¹³

Ordinary women's dress at religious feasts or special occasions was a skirt and blouse with a decorative neckcloth. Day-to-day clothing was home-woven square headscarves and as a representative shawl, a scarf with printed pattern or an exclusive silk cloth. Metal buttons were a luxury that had to be bought for money, and many buttons in one's attire indicated that one was well off. Until the 19th century, the custom was for only men to have buttons. Women used hook-and-eye fasteners as well as laces.¹⁴

Everyday clothes for men

A glimpse of what everyday clothes might have looked like can be obtained from travel accounts. When the man of letters and topographer Abraham Hülphers came to the church hill in Gammelstad in 1758, men were being recruited to Luleå Company. Previously 60 men had already left for Pomerania and now more were to be recruited. The hundreds of farmers assembled on the church hill were dressed in grey coats with red felt hats and boots. Hülphers noted that the coachman farmers in Kalix were dressed in a particular way, with long grey jackets, not cut out at the back in the shape of a slit, but only

with two small folds. A girdle was tied around the waist and a small skullcap of blue cloth covered the head. Boots were omnipresent. On feast days they often used hats and in winter they



The white shirt, dark blue cap and waistcoat belonged to a man's outfit from Överkalix which was delivered to an unknown customer in 1873, probably Artur Hazelius. He donated his private clothing collection to the Nordic Museum when he founded it in 1880. The Överkalix dress is to be found there today.

had large caps.¹⁵ Hülphers's description of the blue skullcaps in Kalix differs from that of the crocheted red skullcap with a red smock we usually associate with the man's regional costume in Överkalix further upstream on the River Kalix. The red smock, which was so common in northern Sweden, was known in dialect as "rödskjorta" or "rödtröja" (redshirt or redjersey).

In some watercolours by the artist

Fritz von Dardel showing boat trips on the rivers Lule and Kalix in 1858, we can see what the oarsmen's clothes looked like. The journey to the northern part of the country was made together with the Crown Prince, later Karl XV, so one may assume that the enlisted oarsmen had put on their finest clothes for the occasion. The fantastic thing is that in Dardel's watercolours we can see the oarsmen's clothes in colour, long before colour



One of the oarsmen who in 1858 helped row Crown Prince Karl XV up the Lule River. The white shirt, blue black waistcoat and cap are consistent with a man's outfit from Överkalix of the same period as on the opposite side. This supports research holding that traditional dress was a regional fashion in the Gulf of Bothnia area rather than a parish dress code.

photography was invented. One of the watercolours is a portrait of an oarsman and the other is a tillerman in a boat on the River Lule. Both are wearing a white shirt, blue black waistcoat and blue-black peaked cap.

Interestingly, the clothes they are wearing are almost exactly the same as the men's garments from Överkalix, which in 1873 were sent to a customer in Stockholm together with a corresponding complete woman's costume. The two outfits were later included in the clothes collection of the Nordic

Museum. The men's outfit consists of a white muslin shirt, homespun waistcoat and trousers, and a peaked cap of broadcloth. According to notes in the archive they were probably made to order in 1873. Both the manufacturer and the orderer are unknown, but as described later in this article, it is most probable that they were ordered by Artur Hazelius. All the garments are completely unused. In the 1970s they were used as a model to compose a traditional regional costume for Överkalix.¹⁶



The watercolour by Fritz von Dardel of the boat trip up the River Lule shows a selection of the local population's garments and the travelling clothes of the upper classes as they looked in the 1850s. Red or white shirts with dark waistcoats were standard dress among the oarsman.

The garments worn by the oarsman and tillerman on the River Lule are very similar to the man's outfit from Överkalix in the collections of the Nordic Museum. The shirt has wide sleeves with gussets and is gathered at the wrist buttoning. The collar is low with softly rounded tips. A light-coloured bandanna around the neck is suggested, but is better seen on later wash drawing. The waistcoat is of sturdy blue-black homespun cloth with double rows of buttons, four buttons in each row. The collars differ somewhat from that on the waistcoat from Överkalix but the waistcoats are otherwise very similar. The peaked cap on the oarsman is almost identical to that in the Nordic Museum.

Another watercolour by Dardel from the River Lule on the same trip shows how six oarsmen are rowing the Crown Prince upstream in a boat with a small white canopy across the middle part. There we see typical working clothes from the mid-19th-century with some variations. Some of the oarsmen are dressed in red shirts without a waistcoat and some in red shirts with black waistcoat. Others have a white shirt with brown or blueish waistcoat. The same type of variation in the oarsman's clothes is seen in a watercolour depicting a descent of the rapids on the River Kalix later on the journey.



The red smock comes from the Öhman family on Hindersön island. It is a typical example of how clothes were reused and when worn, were mended. The wedges in the sleeve are tailored in different ways and made of different kinds of fabrics. The skin gloves were made of seal skin and come from Svartbyn near Boden.

Dardel's watercolours show mid-19th century work clothes in Norrbotten in full colour. We see that what has been identified as special costumes of the Kalix and Lule River valleys are in fact a reflection of regional diversity and variation. The same sorts of clothes were used in both river valleys. Similar clothing as in Norrbotten and Västerbotten counties has been found in Finnish Österbotten.¹⁷

A further source of information about past dress customs or equipment lists for soldiers. In the old-time enlistment system one or two farmers were often responsible for providing for one soldier. From two separate equipment lists from the beginning of the 18th century, we see what a single soldier in Luleå parish was entitled to claim as clothing upkeep from his allotted farmers. This was something

known as "släpkläder" – less formal dress. One of the lists describes what was included in a standard outfit, which was leather trousers, a woollen jersey, scarf, socks, gloves, nightcap, gloves with outer mittens and long underwear called "lårfoder". In addition, two shirts and two pairs of shoes, a bottle and a kit bag for storing the items sent. In some cases this was made of seal skin.



In comparing the two lists, it can be seen how much the different garments were worth. A homespun coat was the most expensive, at a price of 8 daler, a linen shirt 5-6 daler, a pair of leather trousers 5-6 daler, a woollen jersey 3 daler, a pair of long underwear 2 daler.¹⁸ As protection from the rain, the herdsmen in northern Sweden used among other things large sheets of birch bark when out in the woods.¹⁹ According to Hjalmar Palmgren of Brändön, men in the Luleå area up to

the 1860s used only “kängskostövlar” as finer wear at feasts. According to the description they were similar to timber worker’s boots with different high shafts, which can be interpreted as a question of traditional beak shoes with shoe laces or beak boots.

After 1870, “heavy boots” began to be widely used as “fine shoes”. It is not evident what is meant. They were made of soft, greased leather with a semi-long shaft and provided with “stif-fener”. The shaft had a leather strap on each side of the leg through which a thinner strap was threaded. It was then fastened above the calves. Shoes with modern shoelaces began to be manufactured and sold around the same time. Men’s underclothes were made of home woven cloths of wool, or half-wool as for women. Sometimes they could also be made of cloth and were made of recycled rags. The socks were home knitted from wool, often with stripes of red or blue, occasionally some other colour. They were very long and held up by special straps.²⁰



Woman’s knickers from the Innat Påjka farm in Rödupp, Överkalix, have been patched and repaired many times. This was often done with underclothes which were not outwardly visible.

Repaired and altered garments

Just as people spun woollen and flax threads and wove fabric themselves, they sewed clothes, patched them and repaired them. So that the wool would last, old woollen clothes were unravelled. It was then carded aga-

in and spun into new woollen yarn. When livestock was groomed, animal hairs were mixed in with the wool. Nothing must go to waste! The few clothes people possessed were repaired and patched time after time, or they were reused for other purposes, cut up for carpet-weaving rags or used to caulk or insulate timber buildings.²¹ This is one reason why few everyday clothes are preserved in museums. There was also legislation on the handling of worn out clothes. Up until the 1820s everyone was required by law to hand in worn out clothing for recycling.²²

The bodice is a typical case of how garments were altered. It was originally a tight-fitting outer garment worn on the torso. There it gave back support and warmed the muscles around the waist. At the same time it allowed free movement of the arms when working. The bodice was also a colourful addition to a feast day outfit and therefore followed changing patterns and had many decorative features such as silk ribbons, decorative seams and so on. When the owner of the bodice beca-

me older and rounder, she altered it.

They could also be altered as fashions changed. Bodices and men’s waistcoats with long flaps belong to the fashion ideals of rococo. With the Empire style, shortened upper areas ending above the waist brought a shorter bodice or waistcoat, while the left-over fabric was used for other features. The neckline could be filled up using removed fabric and welt pockets sewn on. When the bodice was transformed into an undergarment, supports of bone or metal began to be sewn on the lower edge to attach stockings to. Fabrics also became



On the picture, white dog skin fur and a wolf skin fur from Vilhelmina and Teg respectively in Västerbotten County. Such a full-length fur coat was in northern Sweden called a “tulubb”. A long fur strap was used to hold the fur coat together. It was wrapped across the chest and then around the waist. The red crocheted fur strap on the picture is almost 6 m long and was made in Bälänge near Luleå in the 1880s.

simpler when the bodice was no longer outwardly visible.

The type of garment that perhaps was patched and recurred most was underclothes. After the French Revo-

lution in 1789, women started to wear trousers as underclothes. The fashion spread first among the middle-class in towns, while for a long time women in rural areas continued to avoid wearing



trousers as underclothes, wearing just an undergown as nightwear. The older model of knickers from around 1900 continued below the knee and was sewn together at the front but open at the crotch and the back. A later model was sewn together at the crotch and instead had buttons or drawstrings at the waist.²³ Since the knickers were not outwardly visible they could be patched and repaired endlessly until they were nearly disintegrating.

Clothing against the cold

The cold climate in northern Sweden makes special demands on clothing. Some of the functional Sámi garments therefore also became those of the domiciled population. Sámi shoes were warm and kept out the snow, and were used everywhere by farmers, as well as by burghers on market journeys. They were generally known as “Lapp shoes” by Swedes. The Sámi



had found that the best protection against the cold was a particular type of hay that was wrapped around the feet before putting on the reindeer skin shoes. Best of all was Bottle sedge (*Carex rostrata*) which was collected on marshland in late summer and autumn and then beaten against a stone, dried and braided into a roll for storage.

At the open fireplace in every farmer's cottage there was always a “shoe chair” or “hay chair” with a compartment for storing dried hay for shoes. Since it was not always possible to find suitable sedge species, sometimes even straw was used in the reindeer skin shoes. In the Luleå region therefore the chair for storing shoe hay was called a “straw chair”. The shoe used in winter made of uncured reindeer skin, with the fur remaining, was exchanged in summer for beak shoes or beak boots of cured leather.²⁴

It was not only in winter people

The Sámi were experts at making reindeer skin shoes for the most severe winter climate. The Swedes called them “lappskor” and they were in general use among people in northern Sweden, as was the dried hay that was wound around the foot. A “hay-chair” filled with shoe-hay was to be found on every farm in the 19th century, that on the picture from Gunnarsbyn just north of Råneå.

used beak shoes with shoe hay inside, they were also used in summer. On a journey up the Lule River as far as Kvikkjokk in summer 1858, the artist Fritz von Dardel described how much of the entourage of Crown Prince Karl XV used shoe hay: “From Luleå we followed the river bank, partly bo-



ting, partly walking in the deep sand as far as Bredåker. To avoid blisters on the feet, in accordance with the local customs we had acquired boots or reindeer skin bags filled with hay, in which the foot fares particularly well.”²⁵

In Lapland areas, one sewed boots in the Sámi way with a cutting point needle for leather and cobbler's thread or sinews. On the coast, shoemakers used a last to clamp-sew boots. On an older model of shoe in Västerbotten County, the tongue folded outwards, those in Norrbotten were folded inwards. The different models were known by their regional names. Both models were tied with shoe ribbons wrapped around the shaft and trouser legs to stop snow entering. In more strictly religious areas the shoe ribbons were often one- or two-coloured in blue, brown or black.²⁶ The Sámi used colourful shoe ribbons in bright colours.

From an inventory register for Luleå Royal Demesne dated 1559 we see that also a large proportion of the pillows, mattresses and cushions for the benches were made of “Lappish skin” or “reindeer skin”. Some of the pillows and mattresses people would lie on were filled with feathers, while others were filled with reindeer hair. In those days, people often slept in completely unheated rooms in winter. They

then needed the warmest possible bedclothes.²⁷ Luleå Royal Demesne was actually the rectory in Gammelstad which Gustav Vasa expropriated for a few years in the 16th century.

In Sámi, a reindeer fur is called *muoddá*. A reindeer fur was the warmest garment one could find. In Swedish it was called *lappmudd*. The lower edge was decorated with goat skin or dog skin. A fur for a woman was longer than one for a man. The most common commodities sold from Lapland areas to the coast were reindeer skin footwear and “lappmuddar”. Men's hats in the newly region in the 19th century were most often made of sheep skin. Only rich farmers or farmer's children could afford to buy the more expensive leather hats. Dog hair was considered the warmest for water repellent gloves. The guard hair of the goat, known as rag (reinforced wool), gave durable yarn”. It was used to knit socks with, which were then called “ragg” socks.²⁸

Hjalmar Palmgren of Brändön describes how ankle-length furs were made of sheep skin in the villages around Luleå. Usually however, they were made of wolf skin or dog skin and even goat skin was sometimes used. They had edging of broadcloth or some other cloth and were called “tulubb”. At the time there was often just one such fur in each home and it

was used for travel in winter time. The tulubb had a very high collar, which when folded up covered the winter headwear. It had a button or brass fastener at the top of the band for the collar, but had no other fastener. Instead there was a long fur strap. Its purpose was to keep the collar folded up and the fur closed.

First one folded up the collar, then one wrapped the fur strap around the neck and crossed it over the chest before knotting it around the waist, often on the left side. When travelling by sleigh the package of extra clothes and the package of food were often attached to the fur strap.²⁹ The fur strap could be 5-6 m long. Such straps were woven or crocheted in the home using woollen yarn in different colours according to taste, and also acted as female status marker on men's furs. When the men appeared in public settings on their travels, people could admire the beautiful fur strap with artistic designs made by their wives.

Changes in Sámi dress

Until the end of the 19th century, the Sámi were a self-evident part of life in the villages in the rural areas of Nederluleå parish. In almost every village there lived some Sámi family or individual Sámi people. In addition, mountain Sámi live temporarily in the area when they moved down fol-

lowing their reindeer in the winter to find forage or when as traders they travelled down on business or were enlisted by burghers to provide transport between inland areas and the coast.³⁰ Just as the domiciled farmers adopted features from Sámi dress, the Sámi were influenced by the frequent meetings with farmers and burghers. The influences crossed ethnic boundaries. At an early date, homespun and broadcloth became a standard material in the Sámi tunic alongside skins.

In Sámi society, it was the women who made the clothes. The men could repair or make shoes, but they never sewed clothes. The clothes were functional and often made of raw materials from the household. Traditional Sámi clothing is made of skins, especially reindeer skins, but other kinds were also used, such as cow skin or goat skin. This presupposed close cooperation between settlers or coastal farmers. This meant for example shoes. For the soles of shoes for bare ground, cattle hide was preferred,

The Sámi girl from Kaitum wearing a grey tunic was portrayed in Nattavaara by the military man Fredrik af Robson on a journey in 1827. He wrote that poor Sámi often had grey tunics and tin thread embroidery, while richer Sámi had blue tunics and silver embroidery. The red choker on the girl depicted was covered in silver embroidery.



which was thick and strong. Even those soles became worn. For summer stays in Badjelánnda two sets of shoes were needed.

All reindeer skin was utilised in making shoes and clothes. Skins that had been used to build a lávvu tent and begun to lose their hair were stripped clean and cured. Such skins became soft and pliable as the surfaces rubbed against the birch floor of the *lávvu*. Collecting enough skins for a fur coat sometimes meant several years' saving. To be really fine they should have the same hair thickness and colour range.

A normal-sized fur coat required 5-6 skins, but the cut of the fur coats are the same for men and women. The difference is that women have had long coats while the men's ended below the knee. Before cloth began to be used, summer clothes were sewn from cured leather. A leather tunic is made with the flesh side outermost, while the smooth side is towards the body.³¹

Textiles have been part of Sámi clothing for as long as we have records. They were obtained by bartering with local farmers or bought from traders on the coast in Norway and Sweden or at traditional fairs in inland areas. Besides homespun and finer broadcloth, cotton and silk fabrics began to be used. In the 1930s and 1940s,



The innovative bridal crown in blue broadcloth with tin thread embroidery was made by Marianne Nilsson in Jokkmokk in 1967. The inside is lined with cured white reindeer skin.

textiles became increasingly common, which coincides with the gradual move towards a cash economy. For everyday clothes subjected to high wear, homespun was chosen, while broadcloth was used for festive dress.

To a greater extent than other garments, hats showed one's family or kin, and thereby which area one came from. In Jokkmokk parish, the Forest Sámi use either the Jokkmokk or Arjeplog dress depending on kinship on the female side. This is a tradition from the time when handicraft skills were inherited from mother to daughter. In addition there is influence from Karesuando Sámi who were forcibly relocated just after the First World War. The use of leather headwear

ceased completely at the beginning of the 19th century. Since then they have always been made of cloth. Men stopped using broadcloth hats at the beginning of the 20th century.

Tunics have been used as everyday and festive dress. The breast opening in the Lule Sámi tunic has been V-shaped so that the tunic is easier to take off and put on. Since the opening catches the eye, a great deal of work has been put into its decoration in the form of edging and seams. Further back in the past, dress silver on clothes was a particular form of status marker. As protection for the throat and chest at the V-shaped opening, a cloth breastplate was used. It consisted of a rectangular breast band with a high, buttoned stand-up collar. On early photographs one can see that the breastplate was not as common in the beginning of the 20th century as it is today. The same applies to tin thread embroidery on the breast plates. There was an upswing in this in the 1950s thanks to the first handicraft consultant of the culture organisation Sameátnam.³²

The deep V-shaped chest opening is typical for female Lule Sámi dress. The opening made it easier to take off and put on the tunic. The outer border has always been red and the widest. Other borders could be in a variety of colours. The picture is of Susanne Tuolja, Sirges Sámi community.



State bans on luxury clothing

Dress customs were formerly used to discipline the population to be God-fearing and humble. It was done through ordinances regarding excesses that were issued at regular intervals from the 1570s to 1796, ordinances that were widespread in Europe. At the parish council in Gammelstad on 8 June 1663 there was a reading of the Royal interdict on the use of “dyed silk” and “stretched cloth”. At the December council the following year, a Royal statute was read out regarding a ban on excessive and lavish engagement, wedding, baptism and funeral ceremonies “and costumes”.³³

The ordinance was directed against general presumptuousness and gaiety in all social classes, including the nobility. But it was particularly directed at the peasantry and their excessively decorative and costly dress, which was considered in conflict with the current social hierarchy in an offensive way. It also addressed women who obtained clothing from overseas. They were to uphold their Swedish background and Swedish mode of dress. It was signed by Queen Hedvig Eleonora.³⁴

In the statutes issued it was regulated what sort of clothes, according to the Table of Duties in Luther’s catechism, the three estates were entitled to wear. The ecclesiastical estate was led by priests and the political es-

tate by the King and nobility. The economic estates consisted of farmers and people of their households. There, the master of the house was supreme. None of the estates had the right to infringe their given role in society, but each should carry out his or her duties within each estate. By regulating the use of luxurious and extravagant clothing in silk and other costly fabrics, the royal power and nobility marked their superiority in society. Therefore, legislation was enforced that the lower classes should not use



In the time of the estates it was royalty and the nobility who had the right to wear costly fabrics such as silk in public. Those who breached the ban were punished by imprisonment or fines. On the picture, Queen Lovisa Ulrika, born in 1720.

finer cloths and clothing than their station permitted.

People in the lower social classes, such as servants, were allowed to wear silk or printed cotton fabric in smaller garments such as scarves or aprons.³⁵ In Luleå town too, those who through their clothing or in other ways were considered to demonstratively show a life of luxury were taxed. In 1710, 11 individuals in Luleå had to each pay 1 daler for using wigs, 36 had to pay 1 daler for decorative ribbons on women’s headwear, and 13 had to pay 8 öre each for wearing “Band Myssor (be-ribboned caps)”. In 1732, Brita Hahn and Catahrina Orre each paid 1 daler for using “stiffened skirts” in public.³⁶

Occasionally, peasantry were fined for having used excessively exclusive fabric in their clothing. In the autumn assizes of 1722 the housemaid Sara Olofsdotter in Gammelstad was sentenced to 8 days’ imprisonment on bread and water for having used “lace and a Cotton Cardigan” at the church site. A similar fate occurred to housemaid Sara Larsdotter from Ängesbyn who had used “Lace and Forbidden Fabric types”. So it was sufficient to have used a cardinal of printed cloth of a finer sort to be sentenced to 8 days’ imprisonment. At the spring assizes in 1736, two women were sentenced to the same punishment for wearing bonnets made of blue silk da-



From a silk spinning mill in Stockholm in the 1770s. The two women are winding silk from textile swifts to bobbins in preparation for weaving.

mast and green semi-silk respectively. The two housemaids Carin and Margaret Larsdotter on the other hand were exonerated because they had only worn their yellow silk bonnets in their mother’s church cottage.³⁷ As long as they did not appear in public, it was acceptable.

We can certainly determine a conscious social protest in some of the breaches. The fact that the statutes had

boots in summer, but in winter waistcoats with coloured homespun outer clothing, downy hats with expensive brims, and reindeer skin shoes. The women use home woven everyday clothes, but with festive jerseys and robes of satin, flannel and other manufactured cloth; grand bonnets and scarves increase the ornamentation; here one can however see a somewhat greater change among the young, who are inclined to dress splendidly. Since the new dress mode has been adopted, large parts of the peasantry have afterwards had clothes made.”³⁸

The “new dress mode” was the national costume that King Gustav III had designed in 1778 and standard dress for the nobility and burghers. It had clearly inspired farmers in Luleå to order clothing in line with the national costume.



The pink bonnet was used by Helena Åkerström in Luleå in the latter part of the 18th century. It was used together with a piece of thin white cloth, which was put on to cover the hair before the bonnet was donned.



With mechanised cotton mills, clothes became cheap to manufacture. In towns, middle-class fashion developed, which spread to rural areas.

As a counterweight to industrialisation and modernisation, in the 20th century traditional regional costumes were constructed. They emphasised the local identity in contrast to urban anonymity.

CHAPTER 2

Industrialism as a turning point

Ernst and Jenny Östling's wedding in Gästgivaregården in Gammelstad, 1904, shows an emerging middle class. The suit and dress had their breakthrough as festive wear. The men's headgear varies from broad brimmed hat and bowl to uniform peaked casque. The older woman to the left is wearing a large shawl and dress, while the younger women have a variety of dresses or blouse and skirt with a narrow waist.

Cotton and factory manufactured clothes

It was cheap cotton fabrics that revolutionised dress from the mid-19th century. This is related to many interplaying factors. New technical innovations meant that cotton mills could be built on an industrial scale. In the 1830s, the first mechanised cotton mills were built in Västergötland, Sweden. Within two decades, large mills had been started in Norrköping, Gothenburg, Malmö and Gävle. The manufacture workshop in Gävle became an important supplier of cotton fabrics to northern Sweden.³⁹

Another important factor was that cotton became such a cheap raw material to buy. This is because it was produced by slave labour. The enormous expansion of cotton plantations, above all in North America, from the 18th century on was based on the trade in black slaves from Africa. Slavery was banned in the USA as late as 1865. At the time, 4 million black slaves were in forced labour, mainly on cotton and tobacco plantations in the USA.⁴⁰ The cheap dresses and suits of cotton were part of global colonialism and built on deeply unjust human trafficking. Of course this was not on the mind of a housemaid in Gammelstad who with her meagre pay bought a cotton apron, or a clerk in Luleå who saved up for a new cot-



"Mister Jones and mister Jöns" worked on the railway construction between Gällivare and Luleå for the English company Wilkinson & Jarvis in the 1880s. The astrakhan hat Jones wore and the exclusive Jöns's fur hat indicate that they were comfortably off. Under the well-tailored short coats they wore white shirts with collars.

ton suit. Garments in cotton had passed through many stages of production before they were sold at market in the Church Town or a shop in Luleå.

A further factor that affected the sale of factory-made clothes was that more and more began working in sectors where salaries were paid in money. Where one had previously received pay in the form of a number of ells of cloth one now received cash, to instead buy the finished garment from a seller. Ultimately, it was also improved transport systems that contributed to the success of cotton. The steamships that started to ply the coast of northern Sweden in the mid-19th century were part of industrialism just like the other factors. Transport became even more efficient when the rail network was expanded. In 1888, the first train rolled into Luleå direct from Stockholm – a trip that 100 years previously would have taken three weeks now took 24 hours. Another factor of great significance was that literacy increased and was improved when public elementary school was introduced. It created a market for newspapers and magazines which spread new fashions at



Emma Brännström was housekeeper for the Englishmen in Luleå during the railway construction project in the 1880s. Examination of the black silk dress shows that it has been altered around the neck and waist. It probably had a narrow waist with many buttons that was later opened up. It probably also once had a high collar that was exchanged for white lace. Some of the buttonholes have been sewn up and a new pocket was added.

faster rate. In that way, clothes fashion too changed quicker than before.

Luleå became a county seat in 1856, which meant that a number of state institutions, such as the post office, the telephone service and new privately-owned companies were established. Between 1880 and 1890, Luleå expanded dramatically. It meant that people moved from inland areas down to the coast to a greater extent, but also that blue-collar and white-collar workers from the southern parts of the country moved to Norrbotten. The construction of the mainline railway and the railway from the Orefields to the coast generated the emergence of workshops, steam mills and ironworks. The service sector expanded with the addition of tailors, shoemakers, hat makers, housekeepers, nurses and others. Bookkeepers and secretaries were employed in the growing service sector. The population tripled in 20 years, reaching almost 10,000 inhabitants by

1900.⁴¹

It was very much in contrast to Gammelstad, which had been given the first royal charter in 1621 under the name Luleå. There, the number of inhabitants in 1910 was less than 600.⁴² Nonetheless, the outside influ-

ences on clothing fashion in Gammelstad were just as powerful as in nearby Luleå. The modernisation of society affected clothing fashion among wealthy farmers just as much as maids and farmhands.

The workers start to buy clothes

The workers in workshops and sawmills often came from villages nearby or from inland areas. This applies also to housemaids. They brought with them their traditional clothing traditions which were designed for

the summer and winter climate in northern Sweden. Nearest the body, men wore a shirt. Having previously been made of wool, flax and hemp, they were now made of cotton. They were always long and tucked inside the trousers. In that way they differed from the smock which was always worn as an outer garment outside the trousers. The smock was a short work jacket originally developed by seamen. Originally it was sewn as a short canvas jumper pulled over the head. From seamen it spread to ru-

ral areas and in the past was made of wool or linen. From Norrbotten down to Småland red was the dominant colour of the smock. When it spread to sawmill workers it was called “arbetsblus” (work blouse).⁴³

Well into the 20th century, male labourers used the waistcoat or work waistcoat as a practical garment for physical work. As one worker put it: “It gets so calm inside a waistcoat like that.” The work waistcoat was a development of the bodice. As a waistcoat it became larger in format and

was made in new fabric qualities. The heavy home woven homespun had the advantage of handling plenty of moisture and provided warmth even when it was wet, but more flexible and thinner fabrics replaced homespun. Moleskin was the first really strong and industrially manufactured fabric for work clothes. It appeared on the market at the end of the 1850s, at the same time as steam-powered sawmills started the industrialisation of the coast of northern Sweden. The disadvantage of the strong moleskin was that it absorbed moisture. After a few more decades, English corduroy cloths took over completely.

Female workers too took their traditional dress customs from rural areas to town. They often found jobs in bakeries and dairies. At the same time, the blouse, skirt and apron came with them too as standard dress. In modified form this also applied to those who worked in sawmills. Those who became housemaids, nannies or housekeepers had demands on them to be suitably dressed. So too did those who became teachers or found work in the post office or telegraph service, where women were preferred as employees since their pay was lower than men's.

Industrialism also created new itinerant workers who influenced work clothing. They included railway-building navvies who broke with old

well-rooted regional traditions. They had a freer view of extramarital relationships and it is also recorded how the navvies affected the local populations with their enjoyment of work and their self-esteem. They also had a new approach to clients. The navvies needed durable and warm work garments which were not too expensive to buy. Unlike farmhands, they used factory-made clothes. Instead of homespun trousers they wore moleskin trousers which they were used to “sending off for” from mail-order companies. There were regular advertisements for clothing that could be ordered, for example in the twi-

ce-weekly edition of the national daily Aftonbladet.

The first garments available through mail-order were underclothes. They were not bought primarily for hygienic reasons but to obtain a warm layer for work for example in the forest. It was above all due to the fact that people no longer had the possibility to make their own clothes, but bought factory-made garments that were relatively cheap.⁴⁴ The new buying habits of the navvies contributed to the changed approach to clothes. When people from the region joined railway construction work they were affected by the navvies' values and be-



Navvies and masons in Luleå laying the foundations for the railway company SJ's office building. In the background, the locomotive sheds. Much of the work clothing from the agricultural society is still evident, such as the waistcoat, the work shirt and the smock. Leather aprons were common among tradesmen. Notice that half the children in the foreground are wearing shoes, and half are barefoot.



Also occupational groups such as bakers and dairy workers acquired uniform garments. New hygiene ambitions meant that one dressed in white, like personnel in hospitals. Dairy worker Lydia Vesterstrand from Långnäs and dairy assistant Beda Åström from Alvik worked in the dairy in Alvik.

gan themselves to order factory-made clothes. The move to factory-made clothes took place also among other occupational groups.

By the mid-19th century, the influence of industrialisation became evident also in rural areas. Tailors and shoemakers spread new fashions, as did the newspapers and mail-order catalogues. Factory-made threads and yarns began to be used. There was an increasing move from traditional dress styles to fashion-orient-

ted clothing. They were sometimes ready-made.⁴⁵ In many cases, the wives of industrial workers were themselves employed and did not have the time or opportunities themselves to weave and sew as in the old agricultural society. In the long run it became cheaper to buy factory-made clothes.

The uniformed collective

When looking at black-and-white pictures from Luleå in the early 20th century, it is striking how different ty-

pes of collective are manifested in the dress mode. It applies to everything from military personnel and state officials to female serving staff or male worker collectives. The purpose of the uniform was to peel away their personal identity and to signal uniformity and discipline in the service of the state. At the same time the uniforms symbolised the national plurality of collectives. One can say that the collaborating uniformity created the nation as a perceived political commu-

nity. The earliest uniforms were designed for military personnel and for policeman as a sign of their legal right to maintain public order and ultimately to exercise violence. The design and decor of the uniform was based on a hierarchic order which showed which powers the person had.

Military uniforms were not at all uncommon in Gammelstad Church Town. In the inventory of domiciled inhabitants in Gammelstad in 1817, it was noted that 15% were military or possessing a military background. They had titles such as First Armoury Sergeant (*rustmästare*), Colour Sergeant (*fältväbel*) or Senior Corporal (*furir*). In Gammelstad there was a long tradition of military presence from the 1690s, when Luleå Company (or as it was also known, *Livkompaniet*) was formed. The company soon had its assembly area on a field east of the church site where today the churchyard lies. The place was called *Tältgärdet* or *Campelementsplatsen*. An older farm building nearby was converted into an officer's dwelling, and to this day is known as *Bostället* (the dwelling place).⁴⁶

Modernisation of society was helped not least by different means of communication such as the postal service, the telegraph and the rail-



The postal service and the state railway system introduced uniforms for their personnel in the 1860s. The man on the picture was a railway clerk in Luleå.

way, each under their own state agency. The Postal Agency and the State Railways SJ introduced uniforms for their personnel in the 1860s. Initially, line inspectors, stationmasters, signalmen, switch operators and others had to pay for their own clothing. This included the caps based on the model and colour prescribed. After 1874, clothing was included in the ap-

pointment for in principle all personnel, and gradually more regulations were issued on the design of uniforms. The cloth should be dark blue in colour, where uniform items were sewn in broadcloth and coats in “drabs”. Furs were to be straight-cut in “paletå” form and lined with black sheep skin. Military insignia were designed with the help of galloons, silver bands and the national badge, i.e. a decorative stud in yellow and blue that symbolised the nation.

Northerly adaptations included outer boots lined with reindeer skin or “reindeer skin socks” which were probably Sámi beak shoes made of reindeer skin.⁴⁷ The first postal service uniforms came in 1866. Just like the railway uniform, the post office uniform resembled military garments. In 1904, the telegraph service too issued regulations on uniforms for its employees.⁴⁸ In Luleå the uniformed officials became conspicuous on the streets since state administration grew fast in the first half of the 20th century.

In civilian society too, the uniform as work wear developed. Here too, insignia signalled power and a hierarchical order. The clearest example is the Salvation Army, where the very



Luleå's combined police and fire fighting forces in 1912. Municipal clerks too could wear uniforms. They had specifically designed clothing and peaked caps for their respective missions in the community. All the policemen in the standing row except one are wearing a long overcoat with two V-shaped rows of buttons, known as a twin-row surtout. To the untrained eye, both groups look like military personnel.

concept was through a militarised organisation to win over people to Christian salvation. The organisation was originally called the “East London Christian Mission”. The Salvation Army came to Luleå in 1889, when Captain Gunnar Larsson together with two lieutenants rented premises on Stationsgatan. Eventually a children’s colony was started in Gäddvik and a summer home in Sunderbyn.⁴⁹ Female Salvation Army soldiers were recruited to Luleå. In the early 20th century they wore a tight buttoned blouse with a collar and epaulettes and the Salvation Army brooch at the neck band. The skirt had a high waist.

In winter, the uniform was a tailored overcoat with up to 20 buttons and a short collar. Soldiers wore a dark astrakhan hat bearing the text “SALVATION ARMY” in golden capitals on a broad red ribbon. In summer time, the women’s astrakhan was exchanged for a bonnet which at the front had an oversized brim. It was also known in England as a “hallelujah bonnet” and in Swedish a “bönemössa” (prayer bonnet). It had a folded lining and a conspicuously wide and long ribbon tied below and to one side of the chin. The men also had uniform-like dress with a high collar on the overcoat and epaulettes.

The uniform fashion did not only apply to those who were strictly uni-

formed. When a score of newly qualified locomotive drivers in Luleå posed for a group photograph, everyone except two were dressed in a dark, thin cotton suit, collar, waistcoat, shiny black dress shoes and a bowler hat. Other occupational groups too announced through their outfits that they were a collective of equals. The

white dress was introduced for several occupational groups, to improve hygienic conditions in the workplace. Bakers with apprentices began to dress in white as did those working in dairies. In the same way, doctors began to wear long white coats, and nurses white outfits.



The Salvation Army borrowed both its name and its uniform from the military. The unknown woman on the picture is fitted out in the long tailored greatcoat with 15 buttons. On her head she is wearing an astrakhan hat with the hat band of the Salvation Army in red and lettering in gold.

Middle-class fashion influences everyone

In the fast growing middle-class, the dress code was under a clear outside influence. The many newly-arrived clerks and traders in Luleå made higher demands of the cultural sector and were keen to mark their social status through their dress. Fashion was also influenced directly from overseas. The English company Wilkinson & Jarvis, which built the railway from Kiruna to Luleå, had at most over 3,000 employees.⁵⁰ On group photographs from that time, we see how English and Swedish fashion awareness merges. Luleå had become a melting pot for international fashion impulses.

Also the men in the villages around Gammelstad were influenced by middle-class fashion. According to a written note from Hjalmar Palmgren of Brändön, the red home woven woollen shirt without a marked collar was used as a dress shirt until about 1870, but as early as the beginning of the 19th century the suit was introduced in the Luleå region as formal dress for men. Initially, farmers called it “dress” exactly as they did the women’s garment. It was made of home woven grey or black homespun. It was not until after the 1860s other fabrics began to be used.

Around 1870, black half-length

frock coats began to replace the longer greatcoat with flaps. From Brändön, there is record of a person buying a frock coat as early as 1850. They were often made of broadcloth and were regarded as expensive, and therefore it took time for people with a lower income, such as farmers, day labourers, crofters, fis-

hermen or other household staff to be able to afford them.⁵¹ Eventually a dark blazer and white shirt came to be the premier male dress code. It followed the middle-class ethic that the man should “act behind the scenes” while the woman with her costly and showy dress should represent the family outwardly. Her pricy garments



At Easter 1922, the primary school teachers Linne Lundqvist, Ruth Åström, Nora Sandberg and elementary school teacher Erik Lundin gathered at a forester’s hut to celebrate the arrival of spring. We see that the women were wearing dresses with modern cardigans and hats typical of the time. The man is dressed in a beautifully tailored suit. The dress breathes urban life in the middle of the forest.



The three women and three men were photographed on Midsummer's Eve in 1890 at the summer cottage of the dexter (clothes-dyer) Mr Nordström at Mjölkudden. The dandies with their round hats and canes, like the women in wide dresses with narrow waists, stand as frozen symbols of a more carefree and fashion-conscious Luleå.

would show that the man could afford to clothe his wife in style.

Arne Wikström from Harads writes that men who visited Gammelstad to celebrate church feasts in the 1860s and 1870s wore a short waist-length suit jacket that had a single row of buttons. They wore tight trousers that were a little wider at the bottom,

and wore a cloth "flap hat".⁵² After 1870, hard collars of reinforced cloth were worn at events. They were often double, with long downward turned wings. According to Palmgren there was a certain aversion to the detachable collars because using them was seen as a sign of poverty. They were therefore originally called a "pover-

ty marker". And they were difficult to put in place around the neck.⁵³ Labourers too were dressed in dark suits during feasts and during demonstrations and strikes to signal their equal status in society. This shows how omnipresent middle-class fashions had become.

Women's dress followed the va-



The blue blouse with decorative chequered ribbon and inset black lace was made in 1902 and has belonged to Anna Wennerström, born Govenius, in Luleå. The outer fabric at the front is loose so that the garment better follows the body. A skirt of woollen satin belonged to the blouse.



garies of international fashion. The first to adopt changes were often that part of the urban population that was well-off and had a need to mark social status. The changing fashions in towns in Sweden followed changing European fashions. This applied especially to female fashion, which changed in a more dramatic way than male fashion. In the mid-19th century crinoline skirts were very stiff and wide. They were held up by lots of layers of underskirts, and later by a metal framework. To prevent the framework being visible through the skirts, the horizontal metal rings were placed densely. Every ring was also provided with a frill or filling. In addition, a softer petticoat was worn over the framework.⁵⁴

In rural parts of northern Sweden too, the volume of skirts increased with layer upon layer of underskirts. Sometimes people wove in horsehair to make the skirts sufficiently stiff. Instead of a metal framework, skirts were held out with hoops of pliable wood. Also a padded underskirt could be used to extend the width of the skirt. It was worn outside the undergown.⁵⁵ The fashion of having a broad marked hip and long skirt length was sometimes called *bonderokoko* (farm rococo). In the 1880s, the cloth



The corset of brown satin with heavily swept-in waist was worn by a woman from Sundom. It was probably used at the end of the 1880s, when the width of the skirts was expanded into a bustle at the rear. It affected the design of the corset which was given folds at the back.





was gathered in a bustle at the back, which gave the upper body forward leading posture. After 1900, dress became narrower, with the ideal being a smooth appearance around the waist.

According to Hjalmar Palmgren of Brändön, dresses in the latter part of

the 19th century were made of different types of woollen and cotton cloth such as “barosha, silk barosha, rips, saxony, paldesi and for spring and summer, linen and cotton.” Also home woven fabrics were used to sew dresses for use during church feasts.

They had long sleeves and a high collar. “Swanky dresses” in the 1850s and 1860s included the crinoline. A crinoline had very wide sleeves from the shoulders and had a long piece down on the arm, which was buttoned at the wrist with a tight-fitting narrow or wide cuff. The skirts of these dresses were very wide and bell-shaped and had a tight waist. According to a detail from one woman the cloth for a single skirt could be up to 9 metres long. In addition to dresses there were “tunics and gravelottes”. Both coats and dresses were decorated in different ways with glass beads or ribbons or both. It was considered more sophisticated, the more decorated the garment was and the more ornamentation there was on the cloth.



The black jacket with a long front and short back is from the beginning of the 20th century and was worn in Råneå. Around the collar and along the buttoning runs black lace, which is also found at the open armholes. At the bottom of the rear side there are braid trimmings, which were popular in the 19th century.



In the 1890s, long skirts dominated that almost dragged on the ground. The volume of cloth used was in itself a status symbol. They were designed with large wide puffed sleeves.⁵⁶ Another very important garment was the so-called “drapé”, where the skirt had a multitude of folds. Another sort of dress had frills on the skirt from the kick band up to the waist. For less formal occasions, chequered or striped cotton dresses were used, and home knitted hooped socks in grey, yellow, red, green, black or white. As an outer garment, the “doffelkappa” was used and in the 1920s the “schaggkappa”. To such outfits the women could add a muff with ribbons and puffs and a boa.

One important status marker in women's shoes were that they should squeak as much as possible. This was

The transition from black to white wedding dresses took place first among middle-class, urban circles. Anna Katarina Brännström from Ängesbyn wore this when in 1900, in Gammelstad, she married an engineer who worked in LKAB. She had previously worked as a seamstress, and the dress was sewn by her sister who was a so-called fine seamstress. The delicate details include lace and tulle garnishing over the shoulders and chest and a softly pleated waistband with an oval decoration of brass and rhinestone.

called “knarken”. So shoemakers who made shoes with a good squeak were considered skilful. The special squeaky sound was created by using double leather soles and have the undersides turned in towards each other. Later, people began to use birch bark shoes to improve the squeak. Hjalmar Palmgren of Brändön writes: “At dances, there was such a noise that the music could not be heard”.⁵⁷

Margareta Hansson of Ängesbyn describes how Sámi boys and girls living in different villages such as Råneå, Smedsbyn and Björsbyn would come to dances in Ängesbyn. They were then finely dressed and were probably wearing traditional Sámi tunics, because it is described how fine the “cloth clothes” were that they were wearing. She writes that there were not many farm boys or farm girls who were dressed as nicely.⁵⁸

What was considered fine clothing differed according to the social stratum or ethnic group with which one identified.

Tradition and modernity in the Church Town

In Gammelstad, with its tradition-bound ecclesiastical history, tradition and modernity met in a palpa-

ble way. In the small church cottages, tradition was cemented. For generation after generation, rural home-owners and their servants made the journey to the parish church, a journey



Around 1900, an outdoor life movement was starting up, which encouraged women and men of the burgher class to go skiing. The female ski dress at the time consisted of a long skirt with a warm blouse or woollen jersey under the jacket, as this woman is wearing near Gammelstad church in 1909.

that in itself was ritualised. The villagers often travelled in convoy to the church feasts, village by village, manifesting their community. When visiting the Church Town in Gammelstad they wore their Sunday best, the clothes they saved for special occasions. Up until the 19th century it was the most prominent home-owners in the surrounding villages who owned the church cottages, even though some burghers in the parish kept their inherited cottages or bought a church cottage.

Church apparel was expensive and was not used indiscriminately. It was previously common to leave one's best clothes and best coat in the church cottage when the feast was over.⁵⁹ Perfuming clothes was part of pro-



per care of them. The women added bog myrtle, mint or a certain type of meadowsweet between clothes in drawers or chests so that they would smell nice when taken out again.⁶⁰

Margareta Hansson from Ängesbyn describes how she went to commu-

The tailored green corsage with puffed sleeves is from Sjulsnäs near Piteå. To keep the shape at the front, a loose camisole was made, then the back of the outer cloth and lining were sewn together. The idea was for the corsage to hang loose and free. At the back of the bodice are sewn outside the lining, canals with supporting metal ribs to stabilise the shape. In the past, such ribs were made of whalebone.



nion classes in Gammelstad in 1867. It was in the middle of a famine year and she, like many others, had to take along some bark bread to eat. In those days, up to 5 people could stay in a small church cottage. In the summer, she worked with haymaking for a farmer in Ängesbyn. In her notes from 1930, she writes: "It wasn't a question of dressing in satin. We had to sew our own cotton socks and spin the yarn for dresses and weave our cotton dresses. They had to do for summer and winter... Now it is machines that make everything and you need cash for everything. ..."⁶¹ The cash economy had long since arrived.

The custom of young men paying courting calls to girls was associated with special dress rituals. Hjalmar Palmgren of Brändön writes that on the first day of a church feast, the men wore a grey homespun suit with red or green homespun shirt with shiny buttons. Such a shirt was called "kreop". On their feet, they wore beak shoes or boots. When then paying a courting visit, they changed into a more costly suit that was black or blue and green broadcloth or corduroy. It was called a "courting suit". If during the day one received permission from the girl to stay the night, the man went home and changed back into the

homespun suit. It was called the “lie together suit”. One was not allowed to take off the homespun trousers when lying next to the girl.⁶² The boy was to lie on the blanket fully dressed.

The equivalent for girls was the “lie together cardigan”, which can also

be described as a blouse. The girl put it on when waiting for the boy’s visit. It was a garment developed from the middle-class night cardigan, but is not mentioned in old-time homestead inventories. It was sewn of muslin or some other type of cotton. The

cardigan ended just below the waist and was always wide and open at the front. It was buttoned under the neck opening with just a few buttons. The sleeves were long and wide. Both the neckline and cuffs often had a lace edging. They could also be ornamented



with sewn-on machine-woven ribbons or a monogram.⁶³

The Church Town contributed to upholding a strong tradition. People did what they had always done and dressed as they had always dressed, but that did not stop changes to



Two photographs of Johan Fredrik Östling from Sundom show how modernisation affected dress. On the first photograph from 1928, he is sitting in a dark suit at the open fireplace in the church cottage in Gammelstad with an evident suntanned lower part of his face, as if he had been out in strong spring sunshine. On the second photograph he is correctly attired in a thick, patterned blazer and starched collar. Middle-class fashion had truly arrived in every social class.

the customs. Like other communities, Gammelstad became involved in the great nation-building of the 19th century. One important symbol of the unified nation was the railway. The parallel steel rails joined the different parts of the country with a common communication network of a new type. At the inauguration of the section of the mainline as far as Luleå, King Oscar II together with Norrbotten County Governor Karl Husberg travelled by train from Vännäs northwards. In Boden, a 200 metre platform was built in front of the station platform so that there would be room for the public. Everywhere along the railway, the bridges were decorated with flowers and Swedish flags flapping in the wind. At the station in Gammelstad, which lay between downtown Stadsön and the Church Town, a triumphal arch had been raised to honour the King. It was somewhat disappointing for the waiting crowd that the King

The brown dress with full-length skirt was used at the homestead Jönsgården in Börjelslandet, Luleå, and probably comes from the store-owning Lindgren Olsson family, who owned the homestead at the end of the 19th century.



stayed for only two minutes before continuing his journey to Luleå.⁶⁴ But the railway was a reality. A new era began, which influenced dress.

Around 1885, the custom of storing one's best clothes in the church cottages seems to have ended. One of the reasons was that church cottages had been broken into and clothes had been stolen. Many then began to store their best clothes at home instead, but did not wear them until arriving at the church cottage. For transporting them, the clothes were folded into bundles. The bundles could be made from cloth, a shawl or a blanket, which was used as a "travel bag". Once clothes had begun to be taken home,

they were used more often and wore out quicker.

At the beginning of the 19th century, headwear during special occasions had been the prayer bonnet, "hallelujah bonnet", or a home-woven headcloth for younger women, and for older ladies a "coif". It was woven of cotton or silk with print in beautiful colours. In winter, people wore large knitted shawls with broad lace, known as "bajader". They were knitted of very thin woollen yarn and either square or rectangular. One similar article was the traditional large shawl which for a long time was used

During the ongoing industrial expansion in Luleå there was a longing back to what was perceived as a lost folk culture. The creation of regional costumes strengthened both the regional and national identity. The children on the photograph are dressed in the 1912 Norrbotten costume.

by women for warmth in winter time. The custom of wearing a hat when going to church was changed towards the end of the 19th century. Girls then began to use different types of thin shawls instead.⁶⁵



It was not so common for overcoats to be used at church feasts. Most often, people wore a cloth blazer or jacket. For the journey to church, men usually wore calf skin gloves with thin gloves inside. Also knitted or crocheted gloves or mittens were used as "fine gloves". Gloves with fingers were considered more elegant.⁶⁶ Margareta Hansson tells of two bachelors from Alvik who were going to pit their strength against each other in Gammelstad during a church feast, which ended in a brawl outside the church cottage. One of them took off his jersey and under it he wore a red and white shirt with the black cloth trousers.⁶⁷ This gives a glimpse of the splashes of colour which could sometimes be lost in the black-and-white photographs we see from the early 20th century.



The Norrbotten costume was composed as a "folk costume" with elements from different parts of the county. It was a pure construction based on the notion that there had been a common rural costume in the County, something that was later questioned. The brooch for the Norrbotten costume was made by goldsmith Fritz Olsson in Luleå based on a sketch by the author David Törnqvist. A special bonnet was elaborated for the costume.



National Romanticism and folk costumes

The period around 1900 was one of intensive interest in the people of Sweden and the nation, which also found expression in rustic Romanticism. It influenced movements to create folk costumes and regional costumes in Norrbotten too.⁶⁸ Sewing was an important school subject for female pupils and it was considered especially important that local country textile traditions were upheld. To avoid having country people's folk costumes being marginalised by "banal industry goods", students in adult education were encouraged to weave and sew regional costumes.⁶⁹

It is therefore not surprising that the first folk costume from Norrbotten was created in connection with Sun-

derby Adult Education School in the decade following the turn of the 20th century. In the publication *Nordanbygd* published by the adult education school, the folklore friend and poet David Törnqvist presented to the public the Norrbotten folk costume that had been developed. It came to be called the 1912 Norrbotten costume. In the article he sought to put forward evidence that country people in

northern Sweden had formerly worn unified parish costumes, but also that they had looked similar throughout the County. He hoped that it would "... Spread much-needed, colourfulness in the strict sombreness of Nordic nature and the Nordic peoples ...". An important enthusiast behind the 1912 folk costume was county dairy superintendent Anna Gustafsson, who was particularly committed

to questions to do with the costumes within the Norrbotten Museum Association which after 1922 was reorganised as Norrbotten County Local History Society.⁷⁰

There is also an early link between on the one hand the collecting of folk costumes by the Nordic Museum and on the other hand Norrbotten. As described earlier, the museum's collections include a man's and a



When the Good Templars from Luleå gathered for an IOGT party in Alvik at the beginning of the 1930s, the County "Norrbotten" had achieved a position where it was seen as an expression of shared regional identity. The Norrbotten costume functioned at the same time as a regional costume for those wishing to manifest traditional countryside values.

woman's dress from Överkalix, which were ordered in 1873 by some person linked to the Nordic Museum. The year they were ordered indicates that it was Artur Hazelius who ordered the Överkalix costume. The strongest evidence that it was Hazelius who was the unknown customer is that his first area of interest as a folklore student was to collect and document rural Swedish costumes. His collecting mission began with the journey to Dalarna province in summer, 1872. His vision was to open a museum of folk costumes, and in November the same year he designed a national programme for the collection of folk costumes from all over Sweden.

The subsequent year, on 24 October 1873, he opened his private collections for public viewing in the Pavilion of Folk Costumes on Drottninggatan 71 in Stockholm. It was called the Scandinavian-Ethnological Collection.⁷¹ The inventory register of the Nordic Museum describes the man's and woman's costumes from Överkalix as completely unused. The different garments are lined with identical cotton cloth.⁷² This indicates that they were ordered for museum purposes in preparation for the exhibition on Drottninggatan which took place the same year. Since the Nordic Museum foundation was not established until 1880, a private individual must have ordered the cos-

tumes in 1873 and then put them in the Nordic Museum's collection. In a donation letter in 1880, Hazelius gave his collections to the Nordic Museum. The donation letter explains how the Överkalix costumes became the museum's without any details about the handover. They were quite simply part of Hazelius's private collection.



There is much to indicate that it was Artur Hazelius who in 1873 ordered a man's and a woman's costume from Överkalix for the national costume collection which he had begun to build. When, seven years later, he founded the Nordic Museum, this costume became part of the museum collection. His work to reconstruct Swedish folk culture inspired the creation of the Norrbotten costume.

If the two Överkalix costumes were ordered by Artur Hazelius expressly for the Scandinavian-Ethnological Connection in 1873, they are unique in two ways. They were in that case included as museum items in Artur Hazelius's private collection, thereby also as an early cultural historical element in the creation of the Nordic Museum and Skansen as a national institution. Secondly it is the first composed men's and women's costume from the time before the 20th century that we know. The criteria under which they were composed we do not know, neither who sewed the garments, but it is quite obvious that they were consciously composed based on the mode of dress at the time. This is shown not least by Fritz von Dardel's watercolour of oarsmen on the River Lule 15 years earlier, which is described earlier in the section on men's everyday clothes in the Lule region. Their clothing is completely in line with the man's Överkalix costume.

In the 1940s, new research was carried out that underscored diversity and variety in the folk costume instead of uniformity. In the federation of local history societies, one began instead to be increasingly critical of earlier composed folk costumes and regional costumes.⁷³ This also applied to the 1912 folk costume. In 1956, a costume committee was appointed



by the Handicraft Council of the Rural Economy and Agricultural Society in Norrbotten. When examining the composition of the 1912 costume, there was criticism of different details and a new variant was reconstructed that was more in line with garments preserved in the museum's collections. This was also based on more recent research. Investigations carried out by Norrbotten Museum have confirmed that there has never been a common Norrbotten costume used in the whole county.⁷⁴ The fact that the Norrbotten costume has continued to serve as a symbol for the County shows the great significance clothes have for maintaining collective identities.

The Nederluleå costume is created from the archives

Despite the long tradition of the medieval church and the Church Town in Gammelstad, it took right up until the end of the 1960s for a particu-

The Nederluleå costume was reconstructed at the end of the 1960s, and became popular in a period when the earlier rural culture was being revitalised and becoming fashionable also in the left-wing political sphere. On the picture, Lovisa Eriksson, Gällivare, has a typical "cattle shed knot" on her coif.

lar heritage costume for Nederluleå parish to be created. Now a new ideology had begun to emerge, with the basic idea that the costumes should be authentic in design. This meant that all the garments as regards both material and production should be made identically to those in the museum's collections. For a regional costume to be considered authentic, it should have an existing model and should be sewn in exactly the same way as the model, usually by hand in other words.⁷⁵

The woman's Nederluleå costume was reconstructed based on the garments in the textile collection of Norrbottens Museum. The models used included a red bodice from Gäddvik and a striped skirt from Sundom. The costume was composed in study circle form through cooperation between Svenska Ungdomsringen för Bygdekultur (The Swedish Youth Society for Regional Culture), Norrbottens läns hemslöjdsförening (Norrbotten County Handicraft Association) and Norrbottens Museum.⁷⁶ A booklet by Norrbotten County Handicraft Association was published in 1982 with detailed instructions on how to sew the different parts of the



The red bodice from Gäddvik was donated to Norrbottens Museum as recently as 1969. The home woven woollen fabric combined with cotton at the edging, and the fact that it is hand-sewn, indicates the considerable age of the garment. The striped skirt from Sundom was handed over to the museum in 1928. They are models for the garments in the Nederluleå costume.

costume. There was a brief scientifically-based text on costume terminology, which makes clear the difference between for example a rustic costume, folk costume and regional costume.

There was also ethical and moral reasoning, where among other things it says: "Everyone wearing a costume

should know something of its history and have knowledge of the region to which it belongs. One should wear the costume so that one represents this region in a correct way."⁷⁷ One might transfer the words to the Church Town in Gammelstad, with its hundreds of church cottages. There, the re-

latively uniform red church cottages with white corners signal a traditional approach to the fast-changing society. In a similar way, the regional costumes create a sense of historical continuity and collective community in a society that is becoming increasingly individualised.

Notes

1 Magalotti 1912 [1674], V–XIII, 42–43, 68–71; Elenius 2019.
2 Hülphers 1972 [1758], 40–41, 68.
3 Ulväng 2012, 76 ff.
4 Kewenter 2002, 31.
5 Ulväng 2012, 67 ff.
6 Harnesk 1990, 167–203.
7 Kewenter 2002, 47–48, 158–161.
8 Awebro 1986, 32.
9 Elenius 2019, 59–65.
10 Hazelius-Berg, 248; Kewenter 2002, 30–36.
11 Holmberg & Ågren 1982, 210–211.
12 EU 1341, Hjalmar Palmgren, Brändön.
13 Nordberg 1970, 773–774.
14 Hazelius-Berg, 252; Kewenter 2002, 158.
15 Hülphers 1978, [1758], Diary,102–104.
16 Gradin & Lindmark 2004, 63–65; Martinsson 2016.
17 Nylén 1976; Martinsson 2016
18 Nordberg 1965, 383–388.
19 Hazelius-Berg, 249.
20 EU 1341, Hjalmar Palmgren, Brändön.
21 Hazelius-Berg, 248.
22 Holmgren & Ågren 1982, 210; Kewenter 2002, 162.
23 Eldvik 2014, 35 ff.; Holmgren & Ågren 1982, 212–216.
24 Nordberg 1970, 768.
25 Dardel 1911, 175.
26 Holmberg & Ågren 1983, 16–17.
27 Nordberg 1970, 769–770.
28 Holmberg & Ågren 1983, 5–10; Kewenter 2002, 31.
29 EU 1341, Hjalmar Palmgren, Brändön; Holmberg & Ågren 1983, 5–10.
30 Elenius 2019.
31 Aira et al.1995, 13 ff., 57 f.; Skum 1938, 18, 78.
32 Porsbo 1988, 27 ff.; 57 ff.; Aira et al.1995, 7–8, 40–50.
33 Nordberg 1970, 772.
34 Royal statutes 1664.
35 Arnö Berg & Huselius Berg 1985, 24–32.

36 Steckzén 1921, 190.
37 Nordberg 1970, 772–773.
38 Hülphers 1972 [1758], 65–66.
39 Jonsson 2000, 59–79, 138–140.
40 Haywood 2008, 182–187.
41 Wennerström 1921, 82.
42 Statistics Sweden, Census, Parish records 1910.
43 Holmberg & Ågren 1982, 268–277; Hazelius-Berg, 248 ff.
44 Eldvik 2014, 183–190.
45 Kewenter 2002, 162–163.
46 Nordberg 1965, 378–383; Norrbottens museum, FOAN:12b, Church cottage ownership register, Gammelstad 1817; Palmgren 2010.
47 Welin 1906, 545–553.
48 Larsson 2008; The Telegraph Service Board’s deferential report for 1904. BISOS 1904. XXV.
49 Caption for picture no. 2007005100001. Municipal archive, Luleå Municipality.
50 Lundholm 1988.
51 EU 1341, Hjalmar Palmgren, Brändön; Eldvik 2000, 184.
52 EU 1344, Arne Wikström, Harads.
53 EU 1341, Hjalmar Palmgren, Brändön.
54 Granström 1990, 127.
55 Holmgren & Ågren 1982, 222–223.
56 EU 1329, Mina Fjellström.
57 EU 1342, Hjalmar Palmgren, Brändön; Sundström 1982, 18–19.
58 EU 1333, Margareta Hansson.
59 EU 1329, Mina Fjellström; Kewenter 2002, 158.
60 EU 1341 and EU 1342, Hjalmar Palmgren, Brändön.
61 EU 1333, Margareta Hansson.
62 EU 1341, Hjalmar Palmgren, Brändön.
63 Holmberg & Ågren 1982, 219.
64 Sörlin 1988, 11–92.
65 EU 1329, Mina Fjellström.
66 EU 1341, Hjalmar Palmgren, Brändön.

67 EU 1333, Margareta Hansson, Ängesbyn.
68 Gradin 2004, 16–17.
69 Centergran 1996, 87–88.
70 Moritz 2004, 38–41; Svensson 2018.
71 Nyström 1998, 53–71.
72 Eldvik 2000, 19–20.

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73 Centergran 1996, 127–132.
74 Moritz 2004, 41–45; Gradin 2004, 16–17..
75 Centergran 1996, 134–137.
76 Gradin & Lindmark 2004, 55–65.
77 Woman’s costume from Nederluleå 1982, 2.

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Interviews

Recorded interview with Hillevi Wadensten and Anja Wrede in Norrbottens Museum clothes store, Luleå 2020-11-17. Working material.

Photographs and illustrations

Cover picture

The photo on the cover shows a crowd during a typical church feast in Gammelstad, as reconstructed for a film shoot at Whitsun, 1928 by Gunnar Ullenius. Photo: Gustaf Boge. The Nordic Museum – Digital Museum (CC BY-NC-ND).

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- p. 47. 1912 Norrbotten costume. Nbm 28179. Photo: Daryoush Tahmasebi. Norrbottens Museum.
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From the construction of a church up to the present day, people have gathered for religious services in Gammelstad. When staying in a church cottage, people would wear their finest clothes. In *Clothing fashion variations*, historian Lars Elenius tells of how people in the Lule region dressed day-to-day and on festive occasions. In the era of the subsistence economy, people wove fabrics themselves, from which they sewed clothes. Wool was the most obvious material – it was to be found on the farm – but hemp was grown too. Flax, however, was imported.

The design of clothes and the choice of material also signalled status and power. In the era of the four estates, the social stratification was strongly enforced. There was a perception that the nobleman, the priest and the farmer belonged to different groups, where the lower classes were to remain the subordinates of the higher classes. No estate was allowed to step outside its place in the social hierarchy by exalting itself. Therefore, it was forbidden for the lower classes to use satin textiles and other exclusive fabrics in public in the 17th and 18th centuries. Those who breached this ban were sentenced to prison on bread and water for a period, or were fined.

Industrialisation together with cheap cotton revolutionised clothing. The navvies who built the railway to the Orefields and Luleå had no possibility to sew clothes. They bought clothes from mail order companies and from dealers for cash. Women working in various hospitals began to dress in white. Entrepreneurs, accountants, milliners, housekeepers and others moved to Luleå town. Middle-class fashions spread to the church cottages in Gammelstad, the farmers in the villages and workers in the towns. The changes in clothing fashion show us the transformation of society.