Eastern Influences
Greetings To the Wonderful Youth and Their Families,

I would like to present you with yet another issue of Penfeathers. This exciting issue is all about the influences of Eastern Cultures. We have four interviews, interesting information, and lots of fun for you.

Our next issue will be about Holidays, Festivals and Traditions. Their Royal Majesties’ Timothy and Ysmay are kind enough to be our next interviewees. This is your chance to ask them anything you would like to know.

Please have your questions in by November 14th, 2020.

We would also like for you to tell us about your favorite holidays, festivals, and traditions. We are always in need of art and articles. Submissions are due by November 14th, 2020.

Lady Deedre Turner, KMOC
What was a day in the life of your persona like? As a woman in a fairly gender-segregated society, she likely would wake, bathe, make offerings to her household deity, have some breakfast, and then do various leisure activities, like embroidery, painting, dancing, reciting poetry, etc. She’d have at least one more meal at some point, plus at least one other puja (offering), and maybe some leisure time with family in the evening before going to bed. At her rank, she probably wouldn’t have interacted with men outside her immediate family and would have relied on servants for many daily tasks.

What were technological advances in your time and place like? India was pretty technologically advanced, for the medieval period. Astronomy was fairly well-understood, as was complex mathematics and geometry. People in the subcontinent used complex systems of irrigation in growing crops and had learned to make gunpower from the Chinese. Indian armies used sophisticated and refined weapons, and the arts flourished under Mughal and Hindu rulers. In particular, the weaving and fiber arts were very well-known, and India exported fine textiles, printed textiles, and embroidery.

What is dose your persona eat? As a Rajput, Margavati would not have been a strict vegetarian, although on specific holidays and religious festivals she would have either fasted or abstained from meat altogether. Her diet would have been similar to what a lot of Indian people still eat - flat breads, pulses (lentils, etc), green vegetables, gourds, and a variety of tropical fruits. She might not have drunk chai (tea) in the way we think of it, as that gained popularity after the British occupation, but she would have had wine, water, dairy-based drinks, and sharbat, which is a water sweetened and flavored with floral and fruit flavors.

What is your favorite thing about your persona? The clothing. I love all the layers and colors, and the sounds my jewelry makes when I walk. It’s very extra, in a way that I don’t feel when I wear other types of garb.
Why is important to have a non-traditional persona? It is important for two reasons: the world was a very big place, and much of what Europe relied on for luxury culture came from outside of Europe (e.g. silks, spices). The renaissance and medieval period happened outside of Europe, too! Additionally, I want to show people who might not be of European descent that there's a place for them to be curious about and study their own cultures. We're all interested in learning here!

What do you do for fun? I love to dance, I love to play games, and I also love food! But researching and learning new things is the passion that ties it all together.

What clothes do you wear? It depends! In warm weather, I dress as a woman in 16th century Hindu Rajasthan would - I wear a short top (choli), a pleated and draped skirt (ghagara), and a long, sheer veil (odhani), along with lots and lots of jewelry. My jewelry is as much of my outfit as the clothes! Bangles, hair ornaments, necklaces, bracelets, armbands, anklets, etc. Then in the winter, I dress as a Mughal (muslim) woman, which involves slightly less jewelry, worn over a fitted dress with a full skirt known as a peshwaz, and a pair of salwar, plus a little pair of leather slippers. I sometimes layer a short coat (choga) over this and wear a veil and tall hat on my head.

Why did you pick your persona? I've always been interested in India, in general. Practically, though, I needed something that (a) let me wear makeup and jewelry and (b) was more forgiving in the southern heat. It all kind of grew out of that!

How does your persona feel about cats? I think she's fairly ambivalent. They're not really pets, but they're not seen as unclean or unlucky or anything.

What is your least favorite thing about your persona? Funnily enough, also the clothing, but not in the way you might think. There isn't much extant clothing to study, so much of what I wear is conjectural research. I have to look at paintings and make educated guesses about how the clothing works, which can be very frustrating! But it's very rewarding when I do figure it out.
OYEZ! OYEZ!

THE NEXT ISSUE OF PENFEATHERS INTERVIEW:
WITH THEIR ROYAL MAJESTIES TIMOTHY AND YSMAY

YOU CAN ASK THEM ANYTHING!

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How does your persona feel about cats? In Joseon, cats were considered good luck and having one cross your path while on your way to take the civil examination was considered very lucky! There are also lots of folktales and artwork with tigers, as the tiger was considered a mountain god.

What was a day in the life of your persona like? My persona is a married noblewoman, and my husband is a government civil official, so I would stay at home and take care of our children while he went out to work. We would probably have workers help us manage the house and buy food. I probably would have done a lot of sewing to pass the time. On festival days or for ceremonies, we would get dressed up and cook special foods!

What were technological advances in your time and place like? In the 15th century, King Sejong the Great invented the Korean alphabet, called hangul. He wanted to provide a way for all of his people, poor and rich, to read and write. The alphabet is still used today, with a few changes. There was also an update to an older movable printing type system, which was how lots of books were made. They had a water clock and celestial globe to help track the stars in the sky too!

What does your persona eat? Rice was a staple in Korea and it still is today. Seafood was also common because Korea is a peninsula, so there was a lot of ocean to fish! Fresh lettuce and vegetables would have been grown or harvested from the mountains, and livestock like chicken and pigs were raised. Some fresh vegetables would have been pickled to keep them through the winter. Korea had a lot of influence from China and Mongolia, so there were a lot of similar dishes. So, a meal could have had a bowl of rice, fresh lettuce, or greens to wrap the rice with various fresh and pickled sides. Or a bowl of noodle soup. Or steamed dumplings! Now I'm getting hungry!

Why did you pick your persona?

I picked a Korean persona because my mom is Korean and because it’s not a very commonly researched or represented area in the SCA. I thought it would be a good way to learn about and share the history of Korea and to help others who are also interested in Korean personas.
What do you do for fun?

My persona would have made clothes for her family, sewed, and made crafts. Not too different from what I like to do in my mundane life!

What clothes do you wear?

The traditional Korean outfit is called the hanbok. "Han" refers to the Korean people and "bok" is from the word for clothing. So together, hanbok means "Korean clothes." I would have worn a cross-over top called jeogori and a pleated wrap skirt called chima. It gets cold in Korea so I would have worn pants as well as several layers of skirts. I could also layer a few tops to stay warm, too. Some were stuffed with cotton and quilted to really keep you warm.

For festivals or ceremonies, I would wear a special robe with a rank badge on the front to show the rank of my husband in the government. While going out of the house, I’d wear a large hat with a black veil.

I’d also wear pretty ornaments made from knotted cord called norigae from my jeogori or chima. They would have lots of complicated knots and pretty stones or metal pieces for good luck or good health.

What is your favorite thing about your persona?

The clothes and the food are really fun to research! It makes me feel more connected with my culture and helps me teach others about it. I also like learning how to make the same things that they made, like the knotted ornaments or pouches. It still gets me excited to learn!

What is your least favorite thing about your persona?

Married women were not really allowed to leave the house much, so I think I would be bored of staying inside all the time. Luckily, we don’t have to do that nowadays! Also, as a married woman, I would have worn my hair in a long braid wrapped around my head, kind of like a crown braid. They also wore lots of fake hair pieces, so some of the hairpieces that I wear can also get heavy. It can be a literal pain in the neck!

Why is it important to have a non-traditional persona?

Since the Society has opened its borders to all cultures before 1600, I think it’s important to have a lot of different personas! It helps connect the dots of trade and culture influences from all around the world and it’s pretty cool to see what other people were doing at the time. Also, as someone who is half Korean, it’s important to me to see other personas who look like me as well. It makes you feel like you belong, and it shows that there are lots of different areas that we can research and learn!
Why did I pick my persona? I did generic Middle Eastern at first because I liked Middle Eastern dancing. I was in the SCA for 15 years before I landed on my Turkish persona. I love the variety of Turkish garb and of Turkish dancing.

How does my persona feel about cats? I don't know but I love cats so if I see one I will play with it.

What was a day in the life of my persona like? I haven't studied this much. I'm thinking I'd spend my day doing chores and crafts around my home and my evenings with family and friends.

What were technological advances in my time and place like? There isn't much information out there for early period Turkish. Some of them came down from Mongolia so I'd say, I'm only guessing here, that they had good camping setups and weapons.

What does my persona eat? I haven't done any research about food. I do know that the Middle East had good farming skills and amazing bread ovens.

Why is it important to have a non-traditional persona? I didn't seek a non-traditional persona. I went with one that I was most interested in.

What do I do for fun? I teach what I can, Middle Eastern dance, garb making, and embroidery. I also dance for fun.

What clothes do I wear? For regular/day wear: I wear a Turkish coat/caftan that is split up the front with buttons for closure, usually short sleeved, over an under dress/caftan that is not split up the front and has extra-long sleeves that are worn pushed up, and with salwar pants (the pants are very baggy at the top but they taper down to narrow at the lower legs/ankles), if it's not too hot out. For night/dancing wear: a variety of tops (the day's under dress, a choli (a short top with an open back), or a long blouse), with a vest that ties in front and a full circle skirt that flares out when I twirl around.

What if my favorite thing about my persona? The garb.

What is my least favorite thing about my persona? The lack of information about the early period life.
**WANTED:**

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAVORITE HOLIDAYS, FESTIVALS, AND TRADITIONS.

SEND IN ARTICLES, ART, STORIES, PICTURES, RECIPES, OR CRAFTS.

SUBMISSIONS ARE DUE BY NOVEMBER 14TH, 2020.

SEND THEM TO PENFEATHERS@MERIDIES.ORG OR MOC@MERIDEIS.ORG.
Sir Chit and Master Cat continued their adventure across the land to bring the stone to the painter. They traveled the mountains, high up into the cold where the very breath of you is sucked out by the Wind. Here they met a fellow traveler much like Master Cat named Batu. Covered in white fur and black spots, Master Cat and Batu sized each other up. The two were about the same size but Batu’s tail was much longer and Batu’s head was much like a tiger. “Master Cat laughed so that is the difference Between a Cat and a Snow leopard, I love it. What do you think Sir Chit?” “Another kind of Cat in the World what’s there to love about that for a squirrel who is freezing to death.” Master Cat laughed again. “Quite right Sir Chit.” They soon parted with Batu as the snow melted and got too warm for the Poor snow leopard. They traveled the desert where they met. What they thought was the largest horse they had ever seen. He also had an exceptionally long neck and a huge hump on his back. He said his name was Thar. Thar said it was his Desert that he was named after. After they crossed the Thar Sir Chit was not happy. He said, “If I Ever see another desert it will be too soon.” Master Cat agreed. The two wearily continued on. They traveled the rivers, where they took many boats traveling from one river to another. The Two were helped by an odd assortment of animals. Heading down the many rivers. One animal stood out to Master Cat as very odd because he had seen What had to be its Mediterranean Cousin on this very trip.
The Mediterranean cousin had distinctive coloring with multiple color bands along his sides that stood out for one. But she was plain gray. His predominately black coloring forward of his dorsal fin had a flash of yellow. Behind the dorsal fin where it was white was not the same for her and her sleek body. On him the coloration forms a beautiful hourglass pattern on his side marking him for what he was but she with her tiny dorsal was. She claimed her name was SuSu the susu, (The Ganges River dolphin). She knew it was not very original, but it was what her parents chose she smiled with her long slender beak with sharp, pointed teeth. She offered to pull their boat to their next destination so they would not get lost. They graciously accepted and they arrived in no time. They thanked her and continued on. They arrived at the coast of India where they parted ways. Shaking hands and bidding farewell. Master cat went on. Several more adventures. Sir Chit went back home and did what all good hero’s do...took a nap.
An Interview With: Zayn al-Munajjima, OP, affectionately called Mittens

Why did you pick your persona?
I wanted something different 😊 I also wanted a persona that would allow me to be an independent woman, because my real-life husband doesn't play in the SCA. Plus, PANTS and COLORS and FEATHERS!

How does your persona feel about cats?
We don't have a lot of evidence of daily life amongst the Sogdians, but what we DO have are textile and folio (paper) fragments picturing lions. Lions are REALLY BIG cats, so we at least know that some form of cat was known and appreciated.

What is dose your persona eat?
Fruit such as grapes, peaches, and melons are common in the warmer months. We also eat barley, wheat, peas, and mutton (sheep). Dishes are served in large serving containers, with everyone getting a portion. Spices are important, as well, and we use a LOT of spice!

What was a day in the life of your persona like?
I rise with the sun, bathe, dress, and eat something small to break my fast. I do my morning chores - stoking the fire, opening my doors, and ready myself for the day. I own and operate a trading post and travelers rest on the Silk Road, and every day is different. Some days, travelers come bearing silk from the East and trade it for wool from the West. Some days it's spices - OH, the aroma of all of the different spices! Some days it's quiet, and my only company is my family. Days like that, I busy myself with mending my clothes and doing larger household chores that always get put off.

What were technological advances in your time and place like?
We are metalworkers, travelers, traders, and observers. We craft fine silver cups, vases, and pitchers that we use in our everyday life as well as trade for other items.
Why is important to have a non-traditional persona?

Feel like our persona should do one of two things - either enhance who we are already or give us a way to be different. I am already a big fan of things outside what is considered “normal” - for example, I don't like TV! So, I picked a time and place that isn't commonly seen in Meridies, that fit with my desire to be independent, and that allows me to have some fun. Because having fun is what the SCA is all about!

What do you do for fun?

Zayn likes to laugh and talk around the common fire, eat good food, and take walks to the common well where she visits with anyone who will talk to her. She is interested in gossip, intrigue, and political rumors from all points along the Silk Road. She also likes to preserve food, because it makes her happy knowing that her family and the travelers she sees will never go away hungry.

Mittie - well, my personality is very much the same as Zayn's. We're both protectors and caretakers. And yes, I feed anyone that is around me! I spend too much time on Facebook though - it's probably the modern equivalent of being a travelers rest.

What clothes do you wear?

I wear pants and long tunics, sometimes with a coat over the tunic. I almost ALWAYS wear a head covering of some sort to protect my head and hair from the sun and dirt and to keep my hair out of my eyes. When I wear more formal clothing, I wear a headpiece called a taj that is often adorned with feathers and gems. My clothes are made from cotton, linen, and silk. And shhhhhhhhhhhhh, don't tell anyone, but I always wear Crocs.

What is your favorite thing about your persona? I like being a persona that helps people.

What is your least favorite thing about your persona?

Until very recently, I would have said that my least favorite thing is that there really hasn't been a lot of research done and making my persona accurate is hard. BUT!!! New articles and research are being published ALL THE TIME, so I can learn more! So, I'm not sure I have a least favorite thing. Crocs.
Everywhere you turn you hear, “Wash your hands.” Washing your hands is an important way to keep from getting sick or spreading germs to other people. Guess what? Washing your hands is period.

During the Middle Ages guests washed their hands before meals in full view of other guests and their hosts. People ate with their hands. No one wanted to share a dish with someone with dirty hands. Remember, during the middle ages you’re eating utensils were often your hands. Forks came later and weren’t widespread.

In the Middle East if you were invited to a meal or a feast, you were expected to have clean hands when you arrived. Once you sat down you washed your hands again with soap and water. A servant would hold a bowl under your hands and pour a little water over your hands to get them wet. You would wash your hands with soap made with sesame or olive oil. You made sure you washed between your fingers and up your wrists. Does that sound familiar? You also made sure your nails were clean. The servant would pour more water over your hands to rinse the soap off. You had to wash your hands long enough and well enough that you left no dirt on the towel you used to dry your hands, but you weren’t finished yet.

After dinner, scented powders were offered to clean your hands again. Once again the servant put a bowl under your hands to catch the water used to clean your hands. You used the scented powders to scrub any grease left on your hands. You had to scrub your hands carefully and rinse them well because you wanted to make sure you left the towel clean when you dried them. One of my books tells how a host told his servant to run after a guest with the towel he used to dry his hands. The guest was so embarrassed he bought the host a new towel.

You can try washing your hands with hand powders at home. Mix baking soda with fragrant ground spices like ginger, cinnamon, nutmeg, and clove. Rub the mixture over your hands and wash it off. Smell your hands after you dry them but be sure and wash all the powder off before
Coloring Pages
Japanese and Chinese Dragon Mythology

By: Morgan Turner

The Four guardians for compass directions:

In both Chinese and Japanese mythology, the dragon is one of the four legendary creatures guarding the four cosmic directions: a redbird is South, a dragon is East, a tortoise is North, and a Tiger is West.

The dragon has the head of a camel, horns of a deer, eyes of a hair, scales of a carp, and the paws of a Tiger. It has claws resembling those of an eagle, whiskers, and a bright jewel under its chin. There is a measure on the top of its head which allows it to ascend into heaven at will. This is an over-all description and does not apply to all Dragons, but some have such extraordinary descriptions that they cannot be compared with any other animal. The breath of the dragon changes into clouds from which either rain or fire can come. It is able to expand and contract its body, it can transform, and it can have the power of invisibility. The ancient Chinese emperor Yao was once referred to as the son of a dragon and many rulers of that country are referred to as dragon faced.

Dragons are generally considered to be aquatic they live in lakes rivers and the sea the larger the water the more powerful the dragon there are Dragons which inhabit the heavens 1/4 of the Sky being called the Palace of the green dragon this is reference to the stars in which Chinese astronomy had the constellation of the dragon the appearance of this constellation is said to bring on the rainy season

In China Dragons are also seen as a symbol for good luck and good fortune.

The number of claws: 5 four and three claws most Dragons of China and Japan resemble each other with the exception of the Japanese dragon that only has three claws. The celestial Kingdom of China the dragon has five claws. The dragon is a symbol of authority. It’s image was embroidered on the robes of Imperial family. It was said that the Royal family’s bloodline came directly from Dragons. In China only Imperial Dragons had five toes and five claws every other dragon had four toes and four claws. Dragons from Tibet had 3 toes in three claws.
You can make your own Middle eastern spice blends:

**Baharat:** 1 tablespoon black peppercorns, 1 tablespoon cumin seeds, 2 teaspoons coriander seeds, 1 teaspoon whole cloves, 1 1/2 tablespoons cardamom seeds, 1 1/2 tablespoons paprika, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

**Garam Masala:** 1 tablespoon ground cumin, 1 1/2 teaspoons ground coriander, 1 1/2 teaspoons ground cardamom, 1 1/2 teaspoons ground black pepper, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves, 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg