

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TEXTILES NEWSLETTER

ATN 14, May 1992

EDITORIAL

The range of items in this issue of the *Newsletter* again reflects the enthusiasm and motivation of certain of the subscribers. There is a bias towards the Near East with a notable lack of items from people in North Europe and Scandinavia. If the *Newsletter* is to be a success and accurately represent current events in the world of archaeological textiles then we need to have more information from all regions of the world. In this respect we would also like to mark a change in editorial policy. Readers may remember that in the first issue of the *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter* it was stated that we would not include New World textiles unless they were directly related to an Old World issue. This act of regional discrimination has now been reversed! If anyone has items relating to archaeological textiles from the Americas we would be very glad to hear about them.

In this current issue there is a brief note about a recent find of a Roman helmet excavated at Nijmegen, The Netherlands which was covered in an elaborate cloth which may be needle-woven. This is the preliminary note about the cloth and we hope to hear much more. There then follows two items about textiles and items relating to the production of textiles in the Levant region, namely, a 12th-century BC cloth found at Beth Shean; a weaving comb from the Wadi Murabba'at. These are followed by a useful note

which summarises various finds of textiles from Early Islamic sites along the Israeli section of the Spice Route.

There is a move to the north with a summary of a recent undergraduate dissertation on the evidence for the range of clothes worn by the Vikings resident in Scotland. It is clear from the comments made that more should be heard about this comparatively neglected area of the Viking World.

There is an unusual plea for help. Research is currently being carried out on the history and use of sails for ships. Aid is requested for information about surviving examples of ship's sails. It would appear that only a handful of sails have survived from the Ancient World and even then their identification is sometimes contentious. Another plea for help comes from a new textile research centre which is being set up in Leiden, The Netherlands by one of the editors of this *Newsletter*. The centre is intended to support students and researchers working on archaeological and anthropological textiles, but help is needed in order for the Centre to carry out this work.

Finally, there are short items about two meetings about textiles which were held in Brooklyn, New York and Leiden, The Netherlands.

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE DUE!

Do not forget! It is time to renew your subscriptions! The cost of the *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter* remains at twenty Dutch Guilders per year for two issues. But mind the bank fees (see elsewhere on this page)

NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS

The *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter* aims to provide a source of information for those who are studying textiles primarily as archaeological objects. Contributions to the *Newsletter* are welcome, and should be in accordance with this concept.

1. Contributions can be in English, German or French. If necessary, items in Russian will be accepted, but these will be translated into English.
2. Contributions may include short (!) references to recently published books, journals, articles and to forthcoming exhibitions, seminars, conferences, special courses, lectures, etc., information concerning work in progress (see note 3), and any queries concerning the study of archaeological textiles.
3. **Work in Progress:** this is a general category which includes, for example, work on archaeological textiles from recent excavations or in museums. Items in this section should contain information (if available) about the following: where the textiles were found; the relevant dates; who excavated the site and when; the range of textiles found; who is responsible for the cataloguing of the textiles and where they are to be published. These notes should not exceed a maximum of 750 words per item. Maps showing the position of the relevant sites would be greatly appreciated.
4. Line drawings will be considered, but photographs cannot be accepted at present.
5. The editors reserve the right to suggest alterations in the wording of items sent for publication.
6. The deadline for contributions is the 1st April and the 1st October, for the May and November editions respectively.

The views expressed by the various authors are not necessarily those held by the editors.

COLOPHON

The *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter*, No. 14, 1992. Published in Leiden, The Netherlands. ISSN: 0169-7331.

Editorial board: L. Bender-Jørgensen, G. M. Vogelsang-Eastwood, P. Walton and J. P. Wild.

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Logo: The logo is taken from the famous depiction on a Hallstatt urn, found at Odenburg/Soporn, Hungary. The original illustration shows three women who are spinning and weaving.

OBITUARY

INGRID LÜTKEN 1917-1992

On 22 March 1992 the death occurred of Ingrid Lütken, at the age of 75 and after a long and richly colourful life.

Ingrid Lütken was a weaver at the College of Handicrafts in Copenhagen. Her love of nature, and not least of the Arctic, resulted in several prolonged stays in Greenland, where she acquired an interest in Greenland beadwork. This interest led to a large scale, but unfortunately unpublished study of beadwork techniques among primitive peoples.

In 1976 she went for the first time to Spitsbergen, where she became aware of the large quantity of hitherto unused source material for 17th century textile history which was available in this out-of-the-way location, in the form of graves from the whaling period with significant amounts of well-preserved textiles. The study of textiles from the 17th century was from that point on to become a field of work in which her professional and technical knowledge could be utilised and developed to the full.

In 1984 she was a very active and effective participant in the 'Donskøya project', which was a joint Danish/Norwegian archaeological expedition to the north-west of Spitsbergen, with the purpose of excavating parts of what was thought to be a Danish/Norwegian whaler burial site from the first half of the 17th century.

The analysis and study of the very well-preserved textiles brought home by the Danskøya expedition from 25 graves of whalers was to take up a significant part of Ingrid Lütken's time in her last working years, until serious illness unfortunately put an end to her scholarly activities.

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*A ROMAN HELMET WITH TEXTILES FROM
NIJMEGEN, THE NETHERLANDS*

An iron helmet from the early first century AD has recently been found at the site of the Kops Plateau, Nijmegen in The Netherlands. The mineralised textile structure covers the outside of the helmet, in addition there are traces of cloth lining the inside.

There would appear to be three elements to the material covering the outside of helmet. There are traces of fur which covered the helmet. Over the fur was a roll of material wrapped horizontally around the middle of the helmet. These layers were then covered with a fine, delicate openwork structure based on a system of parallel lines of braiding. A broader central braid was placed down the centre of the helmet from the front to the back.

The helmet and its textiles are currently being investigated by staff members from the Rijksdienst voor het Bodemonderzoek, Amersfort. As further details become available these will be reported in the *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter*.

G. Vogelsang-Eastwood

*A TWELFTH-CENTURY BCE LINEN TEXTILE
FRAGMENT FROM BETH SHEAN*

Several small fragments of linen cloth were discovered wrapped around scrap silver on a floor of Stratum VI at Beth Shean [1], dated to the Twentieth Dynasty, in a large building of Egyptian nature. This stratum was characterized by local Canaanite pottery as well as Egyptian type vessels and a number of local imitations of Aegean types; it is attributed to the final phase of the Egyptian presence at Beth Shean.

The textile fragments were wrapped around the silver scrap and it appears that the metal helped to preserve the cloth. Similar finds were also found at Arad stratum 11, tenth-century BCE [2], Megiddo stratum VIa, twelfth to eleventh centuries BCE [3] and Migne-Ekron from the seventh century BCE [4].

The linen from Beth Shean is undyed and unbleached beige. It was densely woven in a tabby weave, with threads varying in thickness. Both the warp and the weft threads are visible.

The warp is medium spun in an S direction and has a slightly varying density, ranging from 16 to 20 threads per cm. The weft is loosely spun in an S direction and has a slightly varying density of 10 to 12 threads per cm.

Linen textiles found in the Beth Shan valley region are from the 10th century BCE destruction level at Tell el-Hamma [5] and Tell es-Saidiyeh [6] stratum XII also dating to the tenth century BCE [7]. The linen fragments from Tell Beth Shean are thus considerably earlier.

Though the buildings in which the textile was discovered is of an Egyptian nature, the linen is not of Egyptian origin, but rather locally produced [8].

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References

- 1 The excavations at Tell Beth Shean are directed by Prof. A. Mazar on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in the framework of the archaeological project at Beth Shean, run by the Beth Shean Tourist Administration Organization.
- 2 M. Aharoni, "A silver treasure from Arad", *Qadmoniot*, 49-50, 1980:39-40 (in Hebrew).
- 3 G. Loud, *Megiddo II: Seasons of 1935-0*, Chicago, 1948, pl. 229.
- 4 See *ATN* 13:4-5.
- 5 In preparation, see also *ATN* 2:4, 7-8.
- 6 J. Tubb, "Tell es-Saidiyeh: Preliminary Report of Renewed Excavations", *Levant*, 20, 1988:23-88.
- 7 I accept the argument of the excavators of Tell el-Hamma that Stratum XII at Tell es-Saidiyeh was destroyed in the tenth century BCE and not in the 12th century BCE as J. Tubb claims. Cahill, J. *et al.* "Tell el-Hamma in the Tenth Century BCE", *Qadmoniot*, 85-86, 1989:33-38 (in Hebrew).
- 8 See A. Sheffer and A. Tidhar, "Textiles and basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrud", *Atiqot*, 20, 1990:3-4.

Acknowledgments

Many thanks are due to Prof. A. Mazar and N. Panitz-Cohen for their help.

*A WEAVING (?) COMB FROM WADI
MURABBA'AT, JUDAEAN DESERT*

Following the recently much discussed topic of weaving combs (Tuohy, *ATN* 11; Ryder, *ATN* 13), I wish to introduce a unique comb, made of wood and yarn, in a special composite construction. The comb was purchased, together with many other Murabba'at objects, from the Bedouins who had plundered the caves in the Wadi. These caves are the well-known source of the Dead Sea Scrolls (Benoit *et al.*, 1961). Domestic objects including spindles and whorls were described and illustrated in the report (*ibid*, pl. XIII), as were varied textile fragments from different periods (Crowfoot and Crowfoot 1961).

The well preserved comb (Reg. No. Mur. 227) was not included in the report, nor was it described elsewhere. It has rested, escaping attention, in a storeroom of the Rockefeller Museum building in Jerusalem since the early fifties.

In spite of the shortcoming of its being stratigraphically undefined, I have chosen to discuss the comb because of its unusual details. Several features, to be described below, seem to relate the comb to textile crafts rather than to hair care.

Description

The comb is 103 mm in max. length, 33 mm in width (original width circa 37 mm), and consists of nine sharpened twigs, with an average diameter of 3 mm each, held together by yarn (fig. 1). In its original state, the comb consisted of ten parallel twigs arranged symmetrically:- four shorter (93 mm) in the centre, flanked by six longer (103 mm), three on each side (one of the outermost was lost). The pointed teeth formed the working end, while the opposite end, with a recessed contour, may have been associated with a handle.

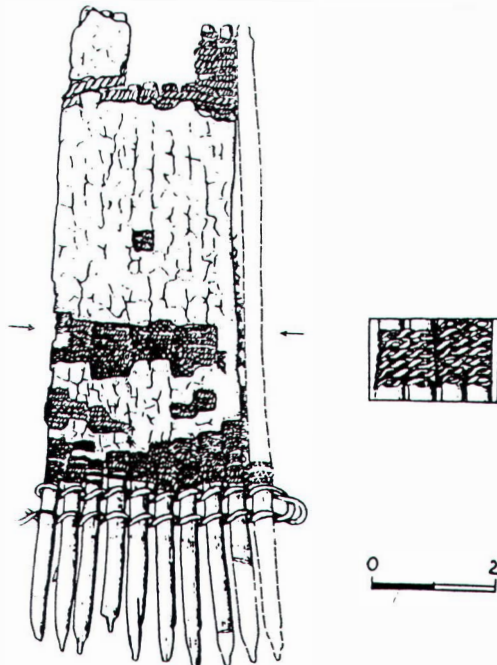


Fig. 1 A weaving (?) comb from Wadi Murabba'at, Judaean Desert

The Z-spun, S-plyed yarn twines around each of the twigs in a well packed twining structure (rather difficult to achieve, considering the inflexible nature of the 'warp'). At about mid-length the yarn twines, for several rows, around paired twigs (and there are several other groupings), thus lending extra strength and stability to the structure as a whole. It is clear from incisions on the twigs that the yarn had covered most of their length, leaving a working end of about 10 mm. The exposed teeth exhibit extensive attrition wear from a lengthy use.

Thin layers of glossy material (identified by Yuval Goren of the Israel Antiquities Authority, as raw asphalt), now present only in patches, had covered the comb on both sides. This too added firmness to the delicate object, and possibly served as adhesive material for hafting the comb onto a handle of some kind.

Even in its deteriorated state, the comb exhibits a high standard of craftsmanship. Practice and much attention went into its manufacture.

Possible use of the comb

The object in discussion does not resemble any of the hair combs preserved in several arid locations, including the ones found in Wadi Murabba'at itself (Benoit *et al.* 1961, pls. VII, XIV). Our comb differs from the latter in raw material, shape, proportions, technique of manufacture and nature of wear. Also indicative are the lack of lice! (J. Zias, Israel Antiquities Authority, pers. comm.). Being coated with asphalt, it is unlikely to have served as a hair comb. The proportion of the comb - a long body (a manual extension) in relation to the short teeth, suggests its function as a tool. Furthermore, the worn teeth point to a strong beating activity. No attempt has been made to simulate possible uses of the tool: whether it was used as a 'beater in' (Ling Roth, 1977, ch. 11) for small-scale weaving; as a combing tool for plant fibres, or in any other activity, is not clear. Intuitively, however, in view of the above details, and the comb's peculiar fabric-like structure, I wish to suggest that the comb played a role in textile manufacture.

Date of the comb

The provenance of the comb from Wadi Murabba'at is undetermined. However, the comb shows some characteristics that may be described as technologically "primitive":- the composite construction, the use of shaped twigs, of plied (z2S) vegetable yarn, the twining technique and the asphalt coating, all echo details of an early repertoire: e.g. the Nahal Hemar cave perishable assemblage (Schick, 1988) of the Early Neolithic period.

The earliest material from the Murabba'at caves is described as belonging to the Chalcolithic period. However, the illustrated finds - pottery and others (Benoit, *et al.*, 1961, pl. V; Fig. 1) - range in date from the Pre-Pottery Neolithic B to the Chalcolithic period (7th to 4th millennia BCE). Lacking a radiometric date, I would place also the Murabba'at comb within this range.

Comparable combs of such construction are as yet unknown from this part of the world in any period. However, odd pieces of similar technology, but of widely varied archaeological context, have been recorded (for example, Engel, 1963, pl. fig. 152; Gleeson and Grosso, 1976, fig. 22; Adovasio and Andrews, 1982:67, fig. 7). They have been described as in personal use or as a weaver's tool. Hair combs shaped similarly are known to this day in tribal groups in Africa (personal observations).

As undergoing study and identification of the raw materials, signs of wear and the date of the comb, may further contribute to our understanding.

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TEXTILES FOUND ALONG THE SPICE ROUTE FROM THE ROMAN PERIOD UNTIL THE EARLY ISLAMIC PERIOD IN ISRAEL

During the past ten years, a series of excavations have been carried out in the south of Israel (the 'Arava, Judean Desert and the Negev), many of them along the spice route.

The main artery of trade connected the Nabatean capital of Petra, in the Edom mountains of present-day Jordan, with mercantile outlets on the Mediterranean Sea, notably Gaza and el-Arish.

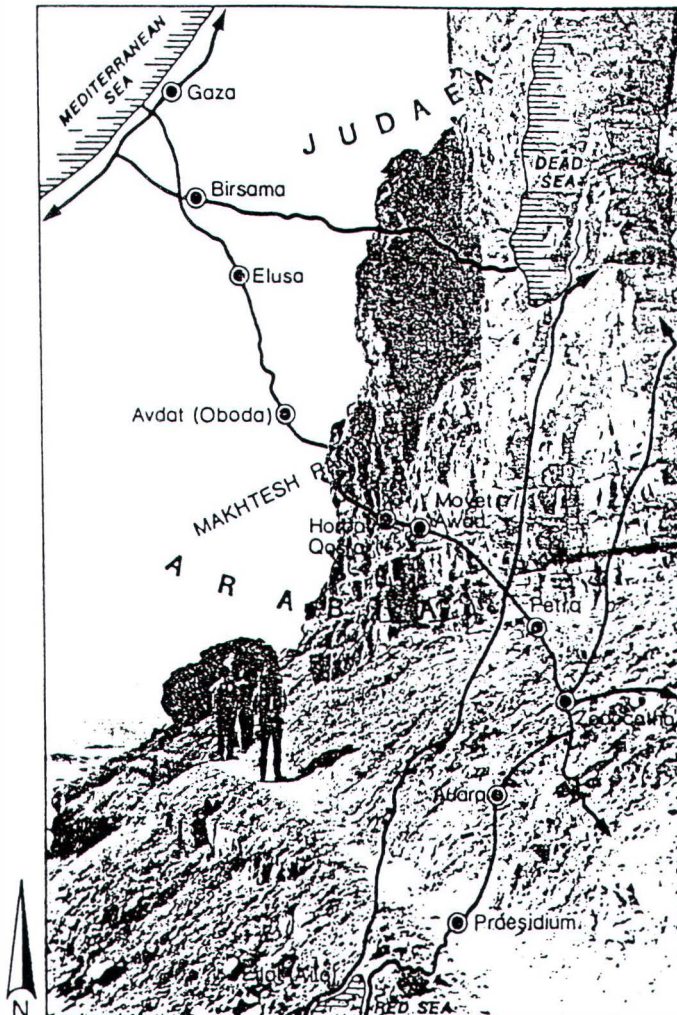
The spice trade was of major economic value especially during the Roman period, determining the construction of the caravanserais, fortresses and towers along this route; these served to protect and service the camel caravans.

The Nabateans were middlemen in this venture. They controlled one of the crucial overland passages, and could tax merchandise passing through their territory, northwards to Syria and westwards to the Mediterranean. They also undertook much of the transport themselves,

providing the beasts of burden as well as drivers [1].

This route continued to be in use during the Byzantine and Early Islamic periods - the seventh century CE.

The dry climate of this region has helped to preserve much organic material such as wooden objects, worked leather, reed mats, baskets, wooden whorls, bundles of threads and hundreds of textiles. This preservation of textiles from various periods has allowed for research into the development of weaving techniques, as well as colours and patterns, all of which were certainly influenced by the passage of the trade caravans through these sites.



Comparison between textiles from different sites indicates a wide variety. For example, the woollen textiles from En Rahel (see ATN 12) dating to the Roman Period were made in different variations of plain weaves, some of which were patched, while a few were dyed or decorated with bands. On the other hand, at sites such as Moyet Awad (Mo'a) (with more than one hundred textiles) and Sha'ar Ramon, there is a large amount of twill weave, most of which is dyed and are rarely patched, thus indicating the relative wealth of the inhabitants. This is born out by the ceramic finds which include many luxury vessels.

The Early Islamic sites yield very simple textiles at Kefar Shahak (see ATN 13) as opposed to Nahal Omer [2] where more than one hundred textiles, including complex weaving techniques such as weft-faced compound tabby and dyed cotton textiles are found.

The following are the sites along the spice route which have yielded textiles presently being researched [3]:

The Roman period: En Rahel, Moyet Awad (Mo'a), Sha'ar Ramon, Horbat Qasra and En Yahav.

The Early Byzantine period: Rogem Zafir

The Early Islamic period: Kefar Shahak and Nahal Omer

Moyet Awad (Mo'a), Sha'ar Ramon, Horbat Qasra and Rogem Zafir were excavated by Dr. R. Cohen. En Rahel, Kefar Shahak and Nahal Omer by D. Nahlieli and Y. Israel. En Yahav by S. Porat. All of these archaeologists work for the Israel Antiquities Authority.

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1 R. Cohen, "The Nabatean spice route in the Negev", *Israel Land and Nature*, 13, 1987-88:65-69.

2 The research on the material from Nahal Omer is being carried out in cooperation with A. Baginski.

3 See Map 1. All sites not mentioned on the map lie very close to Moyet Awad (Mo'a) and Horbat Qasra.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my appreciation to T. Schick and A. Baginski for their support and encouragement, as well as their helpful comments in reading the material. Valuable aid was provided by Prof. Z. C. Koren, director of the Edelstein Center for the Analysis of Ancient Textiles and Related Artifacts, Shenkar College of Textile Technology and Fashion. Many thanks to O. Naganbitzka, T. Allon and O. Shor of the Israel Antiquities Authority Laboratory, where the textiles underwent treatment.

ASPECTS OF VIKING (AGE) DRESS: A REVIEW OF THE TEXTILE EVIDENCE

(undergraduate dissertation summary; Dept. of Archaeology, The University of Glasgow, Scotland)

This is an area of study which has evoked much debate in recent years in Scandinavian countries. Yet, it should be realised that the matter has hardly been addressed in Scotland, due to the relative lack of evidence here.

However, impressions on metal artifacts in graves, and the formation of pseudomorphs next to metal surfaces, allow archaeologists in Scotland to address the question of Viking costume.

Surveys by Henshall (1952) and Bender Jørgensen (1983) have already shown that most fabrics worn in the Northern and Western Isles were *plain tabby constructions*, and that all fibres were spun in the *Z direction*, conforming to the Scandinavian standard of this time. This is not surprising, considering the dispersed nature of the Hebridean settlements, and their isolation from major trading networks: the people who lived here did not need to produce varying types of weave for other people. Furthermore, there may not have been the necessary technology or

organisation of people involved in weaving trade. Weaving must have been on a domestic scale - there was no need for elaborate weaves. Tablet-weaving has been observed in the 'Orkney hood', but this technique does not require sophisticated equipment. There is no evidence to show that the Orkney hood incorporated gold thread as did the textiles from Mammen.

The Kirklevington stone may provide evidence that hoods were more common than has been thought during the Viking Age. They may have been worn with shirts with tufted pile sleeves such as that from Rogart, Sutherland. The similarity of the Rogart shirt to a ninth century linen shirt from Viborg-Søndersø supports a Viking date. The hood and tufted shirt may have been a Celtic phenomenon. Similarly, the pile-tuft cloaks in the Balladoole and Cronk Moar burials on the Isle of Man might also be seen as Celtic, especially when one considers their ZS spun tabby construction, a combination unparalleled by finds in either England or Scandinavia, and the way in which the tufts were inserted.

No evidence for a particular style of trousers has come from Scotland and the material from Hedeby is still our major evidence for these.

Concerning a reconstruction of a royal Viking woman's dress, there has been no evidence to decide which interpretations, Inga Hägg's or F. Bau, is more likely in Scandinavia or Scotland. What is probable, is that if the Oseberg tapestry depicts the queen's life (Krafft 1950), then a shawl over a dress, worn with a train is more likely than an under-dress and an over-dress which Ingstad has suggested (1982). This point, however, still does not help us with the question of the dress worn in the Hebrides or by lower status people.

The use of symbolism on clothes seems to have been important. A gold stag embroidered on to silk cloth which was found in a Birka grave, may symbolise the presence of royal authority there. The symbol was also present on silk cloth from the Mammen burial. The association of the stag with royalty has been made by the nature of the sceptre at Sutton Hoo. Its absence on textiles

from Scotland might suggest a different social organisation here, although the lack of well-preserved finds makes this difficult to ascertain.

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ANCIENT SAILS

During the course of writing an article [1,2] on ancient sails and the materials from which they were made, we became aware of the fact that no *actual* sails (as opposed to those on Egyptian model boats found in tombs and a few model ships found in churches) from before the Middle Ages have so far been found either on land or on shipwrecks.

The only exception seems to be the identification by the late J. Rougé of part of a woven linen sail (Carbon-14 dated as made in 150, +/-150 AD) used as a shroud for an Egyptian mummy preserved in the Musée de Tissu in Lyon [3]. We are now studying the mechanisms (physical, chemical and biological) by which ancient sails seem to have deteriorated so

rapidly - as opposed to the many ship hulls, rigging and anchor ropes which have survived.

We would therefore appreciate receiving any information on authentic sails or sailcloths prior to 1800 A.D. of any material made of papyrus, leather, linen, cotton, hemp, etc. in any environment - such as the seabed, fresh water lakes or rivers, waterlogged or dry archaeological land sites (including tombs) or even frozen in glaciers or the tundra.

E. Black and D. Samuel

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or

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1 E. Black and D. Samuel, "What were sails made of?", *The Mariner's Mirror: The Journal of the Society for Nautical Research*, 77 (1991), 217-226.

2 E. Black, "Where did all the sails go?", *TROPIS: Proceedings of the Fourth International Symposium on Ship Construction in Antiquity*, August 1991, Athens, (in press).

3 J. Rougé, "La momie contenait-elle les fragments d'une voile?", *Nov. Arch. Mus. Nat. Lyon*, 25 (1987), 91-96.

STICHTING TEXTILE RESEARCH CENTRE, LEIDEN

The Textile Research Centre (*stichting*) was established in 1991. It was founded by members of the University of Leiden, The National Antiquities Museum, Leiden and the Ethnology Museum, Leiden. Its objective is to support and encourage the academic study of textiles, especially those of archaeological and anthropological value. Many of the Centre's activities are carried out together with students from Leiden University. The Centre is currently housed at the National Ethnology Museum.

Although we have been founded for less than one year the Centre is engaged in the following projects:

General

The teaching of the techniques of textile research to students from various departments of Leiden University and others who are interested, especially those working in the fields of archaeology and anthropology.

The preparation of a series of pattern books for garments from various cultures throughout the world. The first title in the series is *Patterns for Ancient Egyptian Clothing*. Other titles will include: *Patterns for Medieval Garments from Mali*; *Patterns for the Clothing of a Viking King*; *Patterns for the Garments of a Medieval Egyptian Merchant and his wife*. These booklets will be written by specialists in the various fields.

The collecting and purchasing of articles and books in the fields of archaeological and anthropological textiles.

Africa

A catalogue and detailed study of the medieval and later textiles now in the African collection of the Museum of Ethnology, Leiden

Egypt

A catalogue of the Pharaonic Egyptian textiles now in the Museum of Antiquities Leiden; a detailed study of sewing techniques in Ancient Egypt

The Classical World

A catalogue of the Roman textiles from North Europe now in the Museum of Antiquities, Leiden

A detailed study of the textiles found on an iron helmet from the Roman period which was recently found at Nijmegen, The Netherlands

The future aims of the Centre lie in the building up of a laboratory for the technical analysis of textiles, including facilities for the identification of fibre types, and for dye, mordant and metal thread analysis. If our work is to continue, however, the Centre needs support from people who are interested in furthering research into archaeological and anthropological textiles.

At the moment two items are essential: relevant books, offprints, photographs and slides for the library and funding in order to purchase essential equipment such as microscopes and books.

For further information about the Centre, please contact Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood at the address given below.

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The Netherlands.

REDISCOVERING ISLAMIC TEXTILES

On Saturday, April 4th 1992 a one-day symposium on Islamic textiles was held at the Brooklyn Museum, New York. The symposium was organised by L. S. Diba of the Department of Islamic Art. The order of speakers was based on a loose chronological development with topics from various areas of the Islamic world rather than from one specific region. This was done in order to have a general overview of the range of textiles associated with the Islamic world. The success of the concept of this symposium can be seen in the fact that over 180 people attended the event.

The speakers included A.S. Melikian-Chirvani, Centre National de Recherches Scientifiques, Paris, on "Studies in literary archaeology: The royal silks of Sasanian Iran and their Islamic successors"; G. Vogelsang-Eastwood, Textile Research Centre, Leiden, "Islamic archaeological textiles from sites in Egypt"; A. Wardwell, The Cleveland Museum of Art, "New evidence from Tibet for Central Asian silk weaving in the thirteenth century"; M. McWilliams, The Cleveland Museum of Art, "Cultural collision: Iconographic sources for a Safavid velvet" and L. Mackey, "New on old: Illuminating historical textiles through video documentation in Fez, Morocco"

As one of the speakers of the symposium it is a little difficult for me to be totally objective about the day as I was somewhat nervous. However, I enjoyed the symposium and judging from the comments made to me and overheard, it was clear that everybody participating in the day also had similar pleasure. I should like to thank L. S. Diba for organising the symposium and for her kindness. I look forward to hearing about the next symposium.

Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood

*APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF TEXTILES,
A TWO DAY SEMINAR ON TEXTILES*
21st-22nd November 1991, Leiden

A two-day international seminar about textiles was held at the National Museum of Ethnology, Leiden on the 21st and 22nd November 1991. The seminar was organised by R. Bedaux, The National Museum of Ethnology and G.M. Vogelsang-Eastwood, The Textile Research Centre, Leiden, under the auspices of the Centre of Non-Western Studies, Leiden University. Participants at the seminar came from The Netherlands, Belgium, Britain, France and Germany.

There was a total of 12 speakers. The lecturers had been deliberately chosen to give an impression of as wide a variety of approaches to the study of textiles as possible.

On the first day of the seminar the talks were directed towards understanding various technical aspects of textiles. The following talks were given: "The use of the Scanning Electron Microscope" by W.D. Cooke (University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology); "Dye Analysis" by J. Wouters (Kunstpatrimonium, Brussels) and finally, "Weaving" by R. Bolland (Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam). Due to illness, the lecture on spinning Ancient Egypt by G. M. Vogelsang-Eastwood was heard on the second day. Her slot was gallantly filled by J.P. Wild (Manchester University) talking on the problems

encountered when studying archaeological textiles.

The second day was devoted to a general discussion concerning what could be classed as more subjective approaches to textiles. Dr. Boser from Basel was the first to talk and her subject was the use of philology to study the development of different loom types. This was followed by a *pas de deux* by B. Brommer from the Gemeentemuseum, Helmond and E. Hartkamp from the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, discussing various economic and commercial aspects of the study of textiles and in particular the relation between The Netherlands and Indonesia. We then switched both chronologically and geographically to Medieval Nubia. K. Innemme (Leiden University) talked about wall-paintings depicting ecclesiastical figures and the range of information which can be gained about clerical garb from the Near East during this period. An anthropological approach to textiles was demonstrated most clearly by R. Heringa (Leiden University). By way of a break, there was a guided tour of the then current Tellem Textile exhibition by R. Bedaux. The textiles for this exhibition come from an excavation at the medieval site of Tellum, Mali in West Africa. Finally, D. De Jonghe (Kunstpatrimonium, Brussels) presented a video film about a modern attempt to reconstruct the workings of a horizontal or ground loom from Ancient Egypt.

The two days were intensive, but satisfactory as they presented numerous challenges to preconceived ideas about textiles. It became clear during the seminar that the subject is complex and should not be idly dismissed. Textiles cover a wide range of analytical, economical, philological and historical research topics, which will provide a challenge to anyone who wished to pursue the subject.

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The National Museum of Ethnology and
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ENCYCLOPEDIA OF TEXTILE HISTORY

Work has begun on *Encyclopedia of Textile History*, to be edited by Lise Bender Jørgensen and published by Garland Publishing, Inc., of New York City. Scheduled to appear in 1996, the book will comprise alphabetically arranged entries on all aspects of the subject from prehistoric remains up to art textiles of the present. It will cover all the major traditions from Peru and Central America through Europe and Africa, right across to China, Japan and the Pacific. The intention of the *encyclopedia* is to provide an overview of current scholarship in this fast-changing field.

Enquiries should be addressed to: Lise Bender Jørgensen, Konservatorskolen, Esplanaden 34, DK-1263 Copenhagen K, Denmark.

M. Hoffmann, *Fra fiber til tøy (From Fibre to Cloth. Textile tools and implements and their use in Norwegian tradition)*. Landbruksforlaget. Oslo 1991. 223 pages, 265 ill. English table of contents, summary and captions. Price 250 N.Kr., plus postage 30 Kr.

The author, head curator in the Dept. of Handicraft at The Norwegian Folk Museum in Oslo (now retired), has over 40 years travelled throughout the country to register and document the traditional use of textile tools. Due to historical and geographical reasons, urbanisation was late in Norway. Textiles for domestic use were still being produced on farms in some areas until this century. The tools belong to an old European-wide tradition which has been lost in more central areas. In the author's opinion the living tradition has preserved a basic way of using the old implements, handed down from generation to generation, from person to person.

G. M. Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Patterns for Ancient Egyptian Clothing*

Leiden, 1992. 54pp, line drawings and patterns, short bibliography. Price: fl. 20, plus fl. 5 for postage and packaging. Please pay in cash, Eurocheques, or by using the following Dutch Giro bank account no. 29.82.359.

The first in a new series published by the Stichting Textile Research Centre, Leiden. The booklet introduces and gives instructions for reconstructing the basic garment types worn on an everyday basis in ancient Egypt.

The series is aimed at a general audience and gives simple patterns for the reconstruction of garments from other societies. If anyone feels they have a suitable manuscript for this series could they please contact G. M. Vogelsang-Eastwood at the address given below.

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K. Gjøl Hagen, *Profesjonalisme og urbanisering. Profesjonalismsproblemet i handverket belyst ved et tekstil -og vevloddmateriale fra middelalderens Trondheim, fra 1000-tallet fram til slutten av 1300-tallet*, Ph.D thesis, Oslo University, 1988.

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