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Historical Clothing and Textiles in Europe

ABSTRACTS

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INTRODUCTION

Textiles and clothing play a fundamental role in human history, embodying developments in economy, technology, trade, identity, belief systems, and relationships with the environment. Garments, footwear, and accessories offer a particularly rich perspective through which to examine Europe's cultural and historical landscape across different periods.

This volume brings together the abstracts of papers presented at the thematic conference *Historical Clothing and Textiles in Europe*, organised by the Institute of Latvian History at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Latvia, in cooperation with the Latvian Association of Archaeologists and an international team of organisers, and held on 26–28 February 2026. The abstracts reflect contributions by dress historians, archaeologists, ethnologists, and other scholars from 23 countries, showcasing current research on historical clothing and textiles.

The conference programme comprises 39 presentations, covering a broad chronological and thematic range from the Neolithic period to the 21st century. The papers address diverse topics, including archaeological textiles, traditional dress, textile production techniques, fashion history, and the meanings and roles of clothing within social and cultural contexts. By bringing together experts from multiple disciplines and geographical regions, the conference fosters interdisciplinary dialogue and encourages new perspectives on the study of textiles and dress history in Europe.

The abstracts collected in this volume reflect the diversity and richness of contemporary research in textile and dress history, highlighting both established methodologies and emerging approaches. We hope that this collection will serve as a valuable resource for scholars and will encourage further research and collaboration in this dynamic field.

The strong interest among scholars in presenting at the conference demonstrates both the relevance of this field and the need for continued scholarly engagement. We aspire to establish this conference as a regular academic forum, held annually or biennially, to advance research in textile and dress history and to strengthen international scholarly networks.

The success of the conference would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of the organising team, whose expertise ensures a high-quality academic programme and a stimulating environment for discussion. The organising team consists of:

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We extend our sincere gratitude to all contributors, speakers, and participants for making this event a success, and we look forward to continuing these important academic discussions in the years to come.

On behalf of the organising team,

Ieva Pīgozne
Editor

CONTENTS

	Page
Francisco B. Gomes Yuna Le Quéré Catarina Costeira	6
	The Chief's New Clothes? Changing Patterns of Dress in the Western Iberian Late Bronze Age (12th – 8th c. BCE) and Their Social and Cultural Significance
Maria Elena Bertoli	7
	Decorative Elements on Bronze Age Textiles: Analysing New and Reassessing Old Finds from Northern Italy
Anna Sofie Zimmermann	8
	Prehistoric Patterned Textiles as a Source for Research on Numeracy and the History of Mathematics – A New Perspective on the Textiles from Hallstatt
Lilja Marie Gunnarsdóttir Husmo Yuna Le Quéré	9
	The Tale(TAIL) of a Bronze Age Horsehair Hat
	10
	Fibulae, Belt Buckles, and the Construction of Dress and Identity in Early Iron Age Southern Portugal
Jennifer Beamer	11
	Twirling Axioms: Qualifying the Subjective Expertise of Handspinners
Kayleigh Saunderson Karina Grömer	12
	Finding the Cloak in the Fragments: Late Roman Textiles from Unterradlberg (Austria)
Chloe Chapin	13
	Trinkets or Technology? Towards a New Understanding of Neolithic Human Fashioning
Katrin Kania Émeline Retournard	14
	The Mystery of Bishop Odalric's Breeches: Research on a Medieval Undergarment Preserved in Reims (France)
Hannah Evans	15
	Cloth and Clothing in Medieval Irish Hagiography
Aleksandra Belchurovska	16
	Threads of Faith and Power: The Garments of Noble Ktitors in Medieval Macedonia
Nic Kipar	17
	Triangulating Probability: Re-creating Medieval dress at the Intersection of Visual, Textual, and Extant Sources
Yvonne McDermott	18
	Late Medieval Dress in the West of Ireland: Gleanings from Figure Sculpture
Dilshat Harman	19
	Reality and Invention: Transparent Cap in Albrecht Dürer's Portrait of a Young Woman with Braided Hair (1497)
Krisztina Rábai	20
	Parallel Material Worlds: Courtly Textiles and Paper Usage in Jagiellonian Europe, 1490–1506
Miłosz Kargol	21
	Jagiellonian Power Dressing: Royal Identity Expressed through Jewelry

<i>Katerina Kiltzanidou</i>	The Fashion of Female Donors in Cypriot Icons during the Frankish Period (13th-15th c.): Between Elegance and Devotion	22
<i>Dmitrijs Ščegoļevs</i>	Unsolved Mystery of the Kreevings of Semigallia Historical Costume	23
<i>Isobel Harvey</i>	Rooted in Red: The Social Significance of Two Botanical Dyes in Early Medieval England	24
<i>Mária Lupescu Makó</i>	Reading the Red. The Meanings of Colour Red in Transylvanian Noble Costumes	25
<i>Elena Cuadrado Gómez</i>	Re-signifying White: A Contemporary Reinterpretation of Traditional Textile Codes in Spain	26
<i>Harpreet Kaur</i>	Europe Dyed in Chintz: Indian Cotton, Protectionist Laws, and the Political Economy of Textile Exchange in the Early Modern World (c. 1600–1800)	27
<i>Claire Bonavia</i>	Unveiling the <i>Għonnella</i> : Identity, Tradition, and Cross-Cultural Influence in Maltese Attire	28
<i>Patricia Poppy</i>	A Hidden Garment: Englishmen's Waistcoats to the Mid Seventeenth Century	29
<i>Ditte Kröner</i>	Collar Me Up: Collars as an Attribute of Status among the Bourgeoisie and Clergymen in 16th- and 17th-Century Denmark	30
<i>Yoád David Luxembourg Beatriz Castanheira da Silva Beatriz Rodrigues Afonso Willian Pasqual Júnior</i>	Marie Antoinette: From Aristocratic Ostentation to Contemporary Practices of Self-expression and Empowerment	31
<i>Riina Rammo</i>	Creative Urban Influences in Rural Fashion: The 16th–18th-century Estonian Belt Ornament	32
<i>Solveig Strand</i>	From Damasks to Cotton: The Transition from Rococo to Regency in Østfold, Norway	33
<i>Yvette Stanton</i>	Fries <i>Witwerk</i> : Its Stylistic and Technical Links with Hardanger and Ukrainian Embroidery	34
<i>Morten Grymer-Hansen</i>	Weaving Women on the Margins: Rural Craft, Skill, and Survival in 17th Century Denmark	35
<i>Kathrine Vestergaard Brandstrup Ditte Kröner</i>	Danish Looms from the 18th to 20th Century	36
<i>Kinga Kaptur</i>	What is a 'jupka'? A Specific Type of Outer Clothing Worn in 17th–19th Century Polish Lands	37

<i>Una Valtere</i>	A Comparative Evaluation of 19th Century Needlework Belts in the Baltic Region	38
<i>Ieva Pigozne</i>	Reconnecting the Threads: Applying a Digital Humanities Approach to the Study of Livonian Traditional Dress	39
<i>Marija Weste</i>	From Peasant Maiden to Modern Woman: The Semiotics of Costume in <i>Purva bridējs</i>	40
<i>Khrystyna Baziuk</i>	Scottish Fabrics Trade in Early Modern Lviv: Delivery Routes, Fabric Types and Ways of Use	41
<i>Hermínio Maio Graça Fernandes</i>	Traditional Portuguese Sweaters and Their Depictions in the 19th Century	42
<i>Mervi Maarit Salo</i> <i>Amelia Hergott</i> <i>Alexander Johannes Hergott</i>	Threads of Continuity: Sámi and Indigenous Reclamation of Textile Traditions in Contemporary Material Art and Design	43
<i>Sarah M Oliver</i>	Sustainability Fashioned on Historic Production	44
PROGRAMME		45

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The Chief's New Clothes? Changing Patterns of Dress in the Western Iberian Late Bronze Age (12th – 8th c. BCE) and Their Social and Cultural Significance

During the final centuries of the 2nd millennium BCE, the networks of exchange and interaction which had developed in both Atlantic Europe and the Mediterranean became increasingly interconnected. Western Iberia, as the boundary between both “worlds”, benefitted from this new conjuncture, becoming an important linchpin in that interconnection. This partially explains the sociopolitical and cultural developments which gave rise to the regional Late Bronze Age, a period of increased social hierarchization in which exogenous goods and ideas acted as the underpinning of new discourses of prestige, power and elite social status.

Among those elements, dress seems to have played a critical role. A key indicator of this is the appearance of bronze fibulae of Mediterranean types, which are quickly transformed locally. This suggests the adoption of new dress styles inspired by Mediterranean “fashions”, which become embedded in local high status representation practices, as seen by the representation of fibulae in the so-called “warrior stelae”. In the absence of preserved textiles, the application of new methodologies based on the metrological analysis of these fibulae offers new insights into how they might have been worn, and the types of fabrics they may have been combined with, allowing for a broader discussion of changing dress patterns.

The data from this approach can, in turn, be cross-referenced with other potential indirect evidence for textiles. In particular, the appearance of a range of decorated pottery and jewellery styles, using similar geometric motives, can tentatively be related to the introduction of decorated, likely imported fabrics which were so prized that their decorative patterns were emulated in other supports. Experimental approaches appear to support this apparent connection.

By combining these data, a clearer picture emerges of the central role of dress at this time as a key medium for the expression of identity, status and power.

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**Decorative Elements on Bronze Age Textiles:
Analysing New and Reassessing Old Finds from Northern Italy**

Archaeological evidence of prehistoric textiles is relatively limited. Bronze Age pile dwelling sites in northern Italy, as waterlogged contexts, favoured the preservation of fabrics in a charred and waterlogged state. These settlements offer a unique opportunity to investigate the final products, the textiles, and the semi-finished products associated with textile activities, such as threads, balls of yarn and bundles of processed fibres, and the textile tools. From the Early-Middle Bronze Age pile dwelling site of Molina di Ledro (Trento, Italy) come some of the most interesting materials to investigate the development of prehistoric textile economies. The textile remains from the settlement represent a unique corpus for Bronze Age northern Italy, due to the quality and quantity of the excavated material. Decorative elements, such as ornamental embroidery and sewing, have been identified on a few textiles from Molina di Ledro. Decorative elements are rarely preserved on archaeological fabrics and provide a unique insight into prehistoric textile decorative patterns and techniques.

In this paper, I present the results of the recent analysis carried out on a previously unpublished textile from this settlement. A preliminary investigation of the textile was carried out with a Dino-Lite optical digital microscope. The textile was sampled and analysed with Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM). Photogrammetry of the textile was also carried out. The results are compared to other textiles from Molina di Ledro (Trento, Italy), previously studied and published, as well as finds from Switzerland and elsewhere.

Prehistoric Patterned Textiles as a Source for Research on Numeracy and the History of Mathematics – A New Perspective on the Textiles from Hallstatt

Historically, weaving has made important contributions to mathematics, most famously in the development of calculating machines and early computers. To create a patterned textile, weavers must carefully plan the design and set up the loom according to mathematical and technical considerations.

Research on numeracy is concerned with the skills necessary to accomplish such tasks in every-day life. Numeracy reflects not just mathematical abilities but also social values, norms and ideas around mathematics and critical thinking and is therefore a valuable concept for archaeology. Yet, prehistoric weaving is hardly ever considered as a source on numeracy and the history of mathematics. Here I show how textile archaeology can contribute to the early history of mathematics by analysing prehistoric patterned textiles as the product of numeral practice.

Research on human number perception shows that intuitive comprehension of exact quantities is limited to around four. However, the number of threads used in the pattern sequences we encounter in prehistoric textiles from the Hallstatt salt mines frequently exceed this limit. For their design, weavers had to use and develop different numeral strategies such as approximation, concepts of exact number, number theory such as divisibility, counting and arithmetic. Furthermore, weaving as an every-day activity that repeatedly confronts the weaver with mathematical problems is an ideal environment for developing new mathematical concepts and techniques through creativity, trial and error.

The products of these numeral practices – textiles with different patterns, pattern combinations, errors and strategies to correct them – can serve as a window into mathematical thinking in the past. They are especially valuable as a source for periods, regions and parts of society for which very little other sources are available.

The Tale(TAIL) of a Bronze Age Horsehair Hat

In 1953, ten-year old Babette Mackay and her father, Donald John Mackay were out digging peat near Kirtomy, Sutherland. Little did they know that they were about to discover an artefact that is unique and of international significance: a ca. 3000-year-old, Late Bronze Age hat made of horsehair.

Originally investigated by Audrey Henshall at the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland (now National Museum of Scotland), in the early 1960s, it was half forgotten, placed in the post-medieval history collection, until rediscovered in 2014 during a move of the collection. Dr Alison Sheridan took a particular interest in it and decided to have the horsehair radiocarbon-dated. It came back as being 3000-years old. Then in 2024 Sheridan brought on Dr. Susanna Harris onto the project and Lilja Husmo, the author of this paper, to create a reconstructed version of the hat. The project contributed to a chapter in “Common Ground in Scottish Archaeology: Contributions in Honour of Anna Ritchie”. The research began by returning to the question of species identification checking, and it was confirmed that it was indeed horsehair. The investigation then moved onto questions of original construction and materials.

This paper discusses the initial investigations of the hat, samples and testing, through to the finished reconstruction. I will discuss research, material choice, acquisition of materials, construction methods, and process. The reconstruction serves as both a visual representation of what the hat originally could have looked like and as a methodology of studying the possible construction method.

This paper is prepared as part of the project funded by the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

Fibulae, Belt Buckles, and the Construction of Dress and Identity in Early Iron Age Southern Portugal

Dress plays a crucial role in the formation of personal and communal identity. In archaeology, it is often approached through the study of garments, which are not always extant in the material record, as is the case for the Early Iron Age (EIA) (8th–6th/5th c. BCE) in Southern Portugal. Metallic dress complements, on the other hand, are a tangible source that can provide key information about dress practices. Fibulae and belt buckles constitute a fundamental way to study this aspect of EIA communities in the region, as they occur in funerary, domestic and, to a lesser extent, votive contexts, even if they have so far remained confined to typological and chronological treatment.

To this end, my presentation proposes an alternative approach that integrates morphometrical, contextual, and regional evidence, while also considering iconographic data whenever available. Through these methods, I have examined the objects in their own right, as mediators of gender, age, and status, within their broader regional context.

This novel perspective on fibulae and belt buckles enables a better understanding of regional references, not only through the measurement of functional parameters, such as pin length and diameter, and bow height and width, but also through the reconstruction of the wearers' identities with the help of bioanthropological evidence from osteological analyses. This is particularly the case for the inhumation necropoleis of the Beja region, a group of sites distinguished by the quality of their archaeological documentation.

In short, my presentation aims to shed new light on dress practices in EIA Southern Portugal, emphasising the value of an integrated approach to metallic dress complements as an avenue for studying attire in contexts where organic remains and iconography are scarce.

Twirling Axioms: Qualifying the Subjective Expertise of Handspinners

Experimental archaeology provides a concrete basis for theoretical questions, yet due to its marginalised nature in archaeological studies broadly, methodological approaches for designing, implementing, and drawing conclusions remains fluid. Textile scholars embarking on an experiment dedicated to resolving an outwardly simple question typically begins with a set of basic parameters for building future experiments—the work of the Centre for Textile Research in Copenhagen, DK, is a prime example. While questions addressing woven products has been adequately examined thus far, those surrounding spun products from hand spinning require more consolidation.

The Spindling for Weaving project, sponsored with a grant by EXARC, endeavoured to coalesce disparate spindling experiments into a single project and produce a reference collection of yarns that will be of interest to all textile scholars who work with pre-industrial manufacturing processes. A comprehensive methodological approach was developed to systematically produce the yarns, while extending scholarship to include heavy whorls—up to 230g. The project drew inspiration from the approaches of Grömer (2005), Kania (2015), and Ibarra et al. (2018), who respectively studied prehistoric European whorls, Medieval/modern replicas, and Post Classic whorls and utilising indigenous Mesoamerican crafters.

The British Iron Age textile tool assemblage from Danebury hillfort, an extensively excavated site with a significant volume of artefacts, formed the case study collection for this project. Six whorls were selected for their characteristics of interest, and replicated in their representative material, chalk and clay respectively. Three different wools were tested as well, comprising the first known publication to investigate the suitability of wool choice in an experimental programme. Foregrounding the expertise of the spinner was an essential element throughout the project, since this node of production exerts the most influence on the resulting yarn. Though the guiding questions used to develop this project seem simplistic, the conclusions drawn from the yarns is vast, and a summation is presented in this paper.

This paper is prepared as part of the project funded by EXARC small research grants for experimental archaeology.

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Finding the Cloak in the Fragments: Late Roman Textiles from Unterradlberg (Austria)

In Central Europe, Roman period textiles are most commonly preserved through mineralisation on metal grave goods. This means that they are usually quite small fragments (usually only a few centimetres or less), no longer exhibiting their original colours and flexibility. While their original functions are not necessarily apparent when observing the textile fragments themselves, they are however possible to determine in some of these cases when considering the context in the grave – such as the object the textile is mineralised to, its location in the grave, the microstratigraphy, and the precise locations of the textile on the object.

The case study of Unterradlberg, a cemetery from Late Antiquity in Lower Austria, serves to demonstrate these possibilities. 24 textiles were found on burial goods in 20 graves, many of which are belt buckles and brooches. By carefully documenting the textile remains, we were able to determine that 16 of the textiles derive from clothing – in one case a selvedge and layers even show how exactly a cloak was fastened. Furthermore, there is also evidence of a linen burial cloth, likely wrapping the body – as seen in pictorial evidence. Apart from the functions of the textiles, the technical data was also documented, which in most cases shows characteristic features for Late Roman textiles, though some exceptions are interesting. Thus, this research shows the significance of precise documentation (and conservation) of textiles. Even if they are of only small size, interesting interpretations regarding their function and production tradition can be made.

Trinkets or Technology? Towards a New Understanding of Neolithic Human Fashioning

Around 4900 BCE, a man in Avignon was buried in a garment laboriously decorated with beautiful and rare materials. Discovered in the 1970s, the shells were initially interpreted as a necklace, but when archaeologists re-examined the remains thirty years later, they determined that the man had likely been wearing a jacket, decorated in intentional vertical designs with 158 seashells and 16 red deer canine teeth. Today, the number of labor hours and quality of materials would render this garment a label like “couture.” And yet, generations of archaeologists looked at the abundance of evidence of clothing of early humans and called it “trinkets.” Much of the early evidence of clothing is still dismissed by many archaeologists as “adornment,” or “body ornament,” best explainable as a subcategory of human behavior under the more explicable category of “art.”

There is a long-lasting rift between the science of archaeology and the philosophy of fashion studies, but these two fields must come together. The demands of archaeology require scientists to pay more attention to the age of the deer whose teeth were used as beads than speculating about possible self-fashioning. On the other hand, fashion history has a hard time grappling with the social or cultural meaning of clothing before the modern understanding of “fashion” as a phenomenon arising out of medieval European courts. In this paper, I use fashion studies to re-imagine the meanings of the dress of the prehistoric past. Can we even call it clothing? Was it fashion? A ritualistic form of shamanism? A sign of social distinction and therefore social inequality? Is dress art or language? Looking back to the origins of clothing may give us insight to the role it plays as a uniquely human technology.

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**The Mystery of Bishop Odalric's Breeches:
Research on a Medieval Undergarment Preserved in Reims (France)**

In 1919, during the excavations carried out in the Reims Cathedral (Marne, France), the presumed tomb of Bishop Odalric of Reims (assassinated 969), was found. However, the bones did not match the description in the archives. In fact, the remains of the 10th century bishop were exhumed in 1612 by the canons who confused them with those of Saint Albert of Louvain, Bishop of Liège (Belgium), murdered in 1192. The "real" bones of Odalric were sent to Belgium in the 17th century at the request of Archduke Albert and Archduchess Isabelle of Brabant, descendants of Saint Albert of Louvain. A study of the presumed bones of the saint done at the beginning of the 20th century showed inconsistencies between the textual sources and the bones present in the shrine. After the 1919 discovery, the two bodies were exchanged and the real Odalric's body was reburied in Reims Cathedral.

In 2018, a package of textiles labelled 'from Odalric's tomb' was discovered at the home of the former diocesan archivist. Among the items it contained were fragments of linen breeches, a woollen hose, and tablet-woven bands made of silk and gold thread. This paper focuses on the case of the breeches, preserved today in the Reims Diocesan Archives.

Breeches, as an important part of men's undergarments, have been a point of interest for many years. As no such garment dating to the Early or High Middle Ages was preserved and identified yet, whether from the archaeological record or other circumstances, different attempts at reconstruction were undertaken over the years, especially in the context of Living History or historical interpretations. The preserved garment now offers the opportunity to compare the extant piece, presumably belonging to the burial of Bishop Odalric and thus dating to the late 10th century, with the various reconstruction attempts.

Cloth and Clothing in Medieval Irish Hagiography

This paper explores the literary uses of textiles in both Latin and vernacular Irish saints' lives, and as such it will be building on our ever-growing knowledge and understanding of medieval textiles. In a practical ecclesiastical context, textiles are well regarded for their material significance in the form of numerous liturgical vestments and decorative tapestries, such as altar cloths and banners. On the other hand, research on written religious textiles has not been conducted in such depth, thus this paper aims to contribute to scholarship on medieval textiles through a literary analysis of ecclesiastical cloth, specifically as included and discussed in the Irish lives of Brigit, Brendan, Ciarán of Saighir, Berach, Máedóc of Ferns, and Ruadan.

Investigating the use of cloth and clothing as literary devices by the authors of hagiographical texts will not only provide insight into the writing culture of Christianity in early medieval Ireland but also help us further consider the religious persecution of cloth. Specifically, Thing-Theory will be used as a framework through which to further explore the social, cultural and practical relationships between the saints and their textiles. This will provide a window through which to delve into the nuances of textiles and further interrogate their symbolic importance in medieval Ireland, alongside the entanglement of immaterial and material themes. In addition, examining religious textiles from a literary angle, not only will this enable further cross-referencing with the comparable material culture, but also add to the scholarship on the rich and diverse corpus of medieval textiles.

Threads of Faith and Power: The Garments of Noble Ktitors in Medieval Macedonia

This presentation examines the visual and symbolic dimensions of aristocratic clothing in Macedonian ktitor compositions, focusing on how garments depicted in these monumental portraits articulate status, identity, and cultural belonging. The study explores how noble ktitors used the language of dress as a powerful tool of self-representation, legitimacy, and devotion within the broader framework of Byzantine visual culture.

Through an analytical comparison of preserved ktitor portraits from significant Macedonian monuments such as Ohrid, Lesnovo and other, the research seeks to reconstruct the aesthetic and symbolic vocabulary of medieval aristocratic clothing. Special attention is given to the styles, fabrics, color palette, and decorative motifs rendered in frescoes, examined in relation to contemporary Byzantine court fashion and to regional characteristics visible in Macedonian monuments from the 12th to the 14th centuries. The analysis highlights how these visual codifications of dress functioned not only as markers of aesthetic refinement and material wealth, but also as bearers of status embedded within ktitor iconography.

Methodologically, the research combines iconographic analysis with comparative study of written and visual sources related to Byzantine ceremonial and court life. This interdisciplinary approach enables a more comprehensive understanding of how clothing operated as a cultural text – a visual indicator of piety, lineage, and authority among the Macedonian nobility.

The presentation integrates perspectives from art history and cultural studies, offering new insights into the representation of noble identity and spiritual patronage in the medieval Balkans. By illuminating the aesthetic and ideological roles of clothing in ktitor portraits, the study contributes to a deeper appreciation of Macedonia's artistic and cultural heritage within the wider European medieval context.

**Triangulating Probability:
Re-creating Medieval dress at the Intersection of Visual, Textual, and Extant Sources**

This presentation explores the re-creation of two historically plausible Mid-Western European ensembles of high-status medieval women's dress dated to c. 1200 and c. 1350, developed as part of a creative practice doctoral enquiry. Rather than aiming to reconstruct a specific historical figure or extant garment, these outfits were approached as interpretive propositions: grounded in historical evidence, yet shaped through material engagement and hands-on labour.

Working with fragmentary and often contradictory sources, I developed an inferential framework that triangulates visual, textual, and surviving material evidence to support plausible decision-making where extant garments are unavailable. Each component - from neckline shape to textile type, embellishment, colour choice - was examined through this evidential lens. Gaps and inconsistencies were negotiated through a structured comparative process and recursive analysis of overlapping sources.

The garments were made entirely by hand using historically plausible materials and techniques, including silk embroidery, gold couching, gemstone settings, and brocaded tablet weaving. The presentation highlights how decisions were made in practice, and how materials themselves shaped outcomes (drawing on Material Engagement Theory, as developed by Lambros Malafouris).

Images of the artefacts and making process offer insight into the layered interpretive work involved. I reflect on how working with cloth, stitch, and form enabled a mode of historical enquiry that acknowledges uncertainty, systematically aims for probability, and foregrounds the embodied labour of research.

Late Medieval Dress in the West of Ireland: Gleanings from Figure Sculpture

This paper will consider the evidence for dress in the late medieval period in the west of Ireland, using depictions of clothing in stone sculpture from buildings of the period, especially churches and religious houses, with a particular focus on friaries of the mendicant orders. Few textiles survive from this period in Ireland but there are descriptions of the attire of the people in Ireland, whether Gaelic or gaelicised, or of Anglo-Norman descent, in documentary sources.

Disapproval of the Gaelic manner of dress was often expressed in English official documents of the period and various unsuccessful attempts were made to ban this form of dress, especially amongst communities of Anglo-Norman descent, as it was considered to exemplify the barbarism of the Irish. Stone sculpture depicting the human form dating from the late medieval period in the west of Ireland may take the form of tomb weepers, figure sculptures on doorways, head-shaped label stops and other architectural elements. Headwear is depicted at a number of sites, such as Rosserk friary, indicating the influence of contemporary European fashions. This stone has endured well beyond the lives of the textiles themselves, and in association with depictions of dress from manuscript sources, can provide us with insights into how people of status at this time dressed, and how they wished to see themselves represented in the monuments intended to outlive them and to represent their legacy.

**Reality and Invention: Transparent Cap
in Albrecht Dürer's Portrait of a Young Woman with Braided Hair (1497)**

This paper investigates how Albrecht Dürer represented a fine silk hair cap decorated with black and gold stripes in his Portrait of a Young Woman with Braided Hair (1497, Gemäldegalerie, Berlin) and asks whether such an object could have existed in late fifteenth-century Nuremberg.

The cap appears realistic, yet its structure is physically impossible. Dürer shows an extremely thin transparent silk gauze stretched tightly over voluminous braids. In reality, gauze of this kind could not withstand such tension. Contemporary caps of this type were often made using sprang inserts for elasticity, but these were combined with linen, not silk. Dürer's cap, therefore, is most likely an invention rather than a record of an actual luxurious hair cap. Its transparency was crucial for his artistic purposes. It allows the viewer to see the elaborate hairstyle, composed of real and false hair, intertwined with red silk ribbons and supported by hairbands decorated by pearls. Even its black and gold stripes could be pictorial inventions, directing the viewer's gaze toward a cap so sheer it might otherwise go unnoticed (fine silk gauzes of this quality were not striped in this era). By juxtaposing textures of different materials, Dürer could demonstrate his technical mastery across diverse materials. Because this portrait (with its pendant now in Städel Museum, Frankfurt) was likely not a commissioned work but a studio piece meant to impress potential clients, the artist was free to design a headdress that best showcased his skill.

The portrait highlights the importance of considering artistic intention when using visual sources for dress history. Dürer's headdress is not a record of fashion but a display of pictorial virtuosity, revealing how knowledge of existing fabrics and fashions can be used by early modern artists for their own goals.

This paper is prepared as part of the project "Constructing Early Modern Identities: Dress in Albrecht Dürer's Works", funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (project number 536024075).

**Parallel Material Worlds:
Courtly Textiles and Paper Usage in Jagiellonian Europe, 1490–1506**

Building on my previous research on the usage and acquisition of paper in the Jagiellonian courts (Rábai 2021), this paper explores the parallel material domains of textiles and paper within the administrative and economic environment of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The courtly accounts of Władysław, John Albert, Alexander, and Sigismund Jagiellon provide exceptionally detailed evidence for the circulation, repair, and seasonal rhythms of linen textiles in royal households between 1490 and 1506. These documents illuminate the scale, frequency, and qualitative distinctions of textile use at court at a time when linen was also the principal fibre used in paper production across Central Europe.

By situating the Jagiellonian court accounts alongside the documented establishment of nearby papermills – Kraków/Prądnik Czerwony, Wrocław, Świdnica, Opava, etc – the paper highlights the spatial and temporal convergence of courtly textile consumption with the rise of regional papermaking and associated urban rag-collection systems. Drawing on recent work on fibre economies and the reuse of writing materials (Reynolds; da Rold; others), the analysis considers how practices of rag-sorting, fibre grading, and linen degradation shaped the material properties of papers used in various administrative and practical contexts, including writing, printing, wrapping, packaging, and decorative work.

This approach reframes textiles and paper as parallel material worlds, coexisting within shared economic and urban ecologies rather than forming a single chain of reuse. It offers a new perspective on courtly material culture, administrative practice, and resource networks in Jagiellonian Europe.

Jagiellonian Power Dressing: Royal Identity Expressed through Jewelry

The paper examines the jewels and jewelry of the Jagiellonian dynasty as an integral component of power dressing, combining iconographic analysis with the few surviving objects and written sources. The study identifies four principal functions of jewelry: first, as insignia and signs of sovereignty; second, as expressions of piety and religious practice; third, as markers of familial bonds and instruments of dynastic strategy; and fourth, as key elements in shaping personal image, particularly in female portraiture.

Drawing on artworks held in the Czartoryski Museum in Kraków, including both extant pieces and items known from iconographic documentation and early photographs of the so-called “Royal Casket”, the paper discusses the role of jewelry at the Jagiellonian court. The point of departure is the group of portraits of the dynasty created in the workshop of Lucas Cranach the Younger, also preserved in the Czartoryski collection. Although very few surviving examples of Jagiellonian jewelry remain today, placing the material in its historical context allows for the reconstruction of the principles of royal representation. Jewelry united splendor, faith, familial identity and political messaging into a coherent visual program, serving as an essential and meaningful component of courtly dress that conveyed clear symbolic significance.

**The Fashion of Female Donors in Cypriot Icons during the Frankish Period (13th-15th c.):
Between Elegance and Devotion**

This paper explores the fashion of female donors in Cypriot icons between the 13th and 15th centuries. Following Richard the Lionheart's conquest in 1191 and the subsequent Frankish (1192-1489) and Venetian (1489-1571) dominance, the island experienced a unique fusion of Byzantine and Western styles.

The study analyzes twelve icons featuring female patrons. These representations include key trends such as cloak-like veils, gimpel (wimple), gorgerette, and aprons. Their attire reflects not only social status and mourning traditions but also personal expressions. The gradual adoption of Western styles raising new questions about their perceptions of modernity. Overall, the presentation emphasizes the significance of these sartorial choices as a reflection of female identity and status during a dynamic historical period in Cyprus.

Unsolved Mystery of the Kreevings of Semigallia Historical Costume

The Kreevins of Zemgale are descendants of the Vots, related to the Northern Estonians, who in 1444-47 ended up in the territory of the current Bauska region to complete the construction of the Bauska Castle and promote the economic growth of the Livonian borderland. Whether they were prisoners of war or colonists who arrived voluntarily, it is not yet possible to say. The Kreevins were granted a certain freedom of action, therefore there were many freemen among them, their own administrative unit 'Kreevins County' and, accordingly, their own self-government.

Later, the Kreevins became the Duchy of Courland citizens. Large Kreevins clans-families were wealthy enough to give rise to such well-known dynasties in Latvia as the Skulmes, Spekkes, Kugrēni, Villeruši, Tardenaki, Pliekšāni, Ulmaņi, Teivēni, etc. Having merged with the Latvians, the Kreevins left a noticeable influence on the regional culture even today – in jewelry, ornaments, linguistics and in the anthropology and mentality of the region. Specialists say that the influence of Kreevins culture reaches as far as the middle of Selonia's midland and the right bank of the Daugava in Lielvārde.

While studying the Kreevins national costume, several specialists already in the 1960s noted an interesting phenomenon – the Kreevins spoke the Voti language, but the women's national costume complex was similar to the women costume of the Izhora region of the Heva River, a neighboring tribe of the Voti, and was actively used until the 1910s of the 20th century!

Therefore, the restoration and revitalization of the Kreevins national costume today requires an in-depth study of the cultural history of the Kreevins in order to better understand what we actually see in the only image of the Kreevins national costume, which was made by A. J. Sjögren and G. W. Petzold in 1846 during the ethnographic expedition to Bauska area – Neu-Rahden. In fact, we need to answer the question of what and why we consider authentic and relevant to the time while working on the costume reconstruction issue.

Looking at the context of historical events, trends in fabric and clothing production and fashion, putting together Sjögren's notes and some images based on the descriptions in the 18th century in Bauska area and the place of origin of the Vots in Ingermanland, as well as the findings of modern researchers from Latvia and other countries, I will provide my insight into the reconstruction of the course of events and describe the problems of making and revitalizing the Kreevins national costume. That is why unravelling the mystery of the Kreevins national costume is the key to reconstructing Kreevins history and eliminating several blank spots in the history of the Votes itself.

Rooted in Red: The Social Significance of Two Botanical Dyes in Early Medieval England

This paper is a summary of the findings of a laboratory-based experiment on the performance of botanical dyes derived from the roots of Lady's Bedstraw and Dyer's Madder, conducted as part of my MA in Material Culture and Experimental Archaeology at the University of York.

There is archaeological evidence for the use of both plants as dyestuffs in Early Medieval England, with the record for red dye dominated by Dyer's Madder. Through experimenting with a range of different dye recipes, this paper will summarise the range of colours produced by each plant during the experiment. The social significance of these colours will then be examined, particularly with regards to what constituted a "good red" in Early Medieval England. The use of these dyes as part of performative dress practices in different social contexts may have influenced the decision to use one plant over another. The relationship between these dyed garments and the wider use of red material culture, particularly dress adornment, will be considered, demonstrating the importance of red dyes as symbols of both status and ideology in Early Medieval England.

Reading the Red. The Meanings of Colour Red in Transylvanian Noble Costumes

In the Middle Ages and early modern times clothing represented the most obvious instrument of the external representation, revealing, at first sight, the social and financial status, as well as the exigencies of the wearer. The symbolic system of clothing articles, with a very different range of colors and cutting, could be interpreted immediately by a contemporary. In this pattern, the colors played a very important role, having aesthetic, economic and social value. Taking into consideration different periods and regions, some colors were fashionable, had an identical content, while others changed their meaning completely.

In the present study I shall examine the color red, a color that appears very often in a rich variety of shades and symbolic values. The study aims to discover where these symbols attached to the color red came from, and how red can be traceable in the clothing culture of the Transylvanian nobility. I shall also show that red was an excellent status indicator, conferring clothing an important social role. Due to the fact that for modern research the knowledge of the specific characteristics of the garments and especially of their colors is possible especially through the invocation of the written sources and images, in this paper I shall refer mainly to the last wills and testaments.

Re-signifying White: A Contemporary Reinterpretation of Traditional Textile Codes in Spain

Re-signifying white is a design research project developed by third-year undergraduate students of the Fashion Design degree, conceived for participation in the 11th Edition of the Emerging Design Month at the Museo del Traje in Madrid. The proposal presents a contemporary reinterpretation of traditional Spanish dress, demonstrating how design operates as a tool for analysing, reinterpreting and generating knowledge from historical systems of dress.

The project stems from extensive research conducted in the traditional dress gallery of the Museo del Traje, complemented by documentary sources and historical-technical analysis. In parallel, it examines percale and other white textiles historically associated with undergarments and everyday clothing. Traditionally, white, linked to functionality, purity or concealment, was reserved for shirts, petticoats and underwear whose meticulous craftsmanship, though refined, remained visually subordinate beneath outer layers. This proposal inverts that hierarchy: white ceases to be a silent backdrop and becomes a formal, discursive and symbolic protagonist.

The work is structured around two conceptual axes: heritage, understood as cultural accumulation and collective identity; and symbolism, addressing the iconographic and social value of traditional garments. It also incorporates a sustainable dimension through the reuse of recovered textiles from domestic and hotel contexts, reclaiming historical practices of repair and resourcefulness.

The collection reinterprets historical techniques and typologies through processes of decontextualisation, deconstruction and reinterpretation. Key references include the dengue, the marseillaise jacket, eighteenth-century bodices and coifs, as well as specific elements of regional costumes from Zamora, Granada, Vizcaya, Monóvar, Béjar and Vejer de la Frontera. Artisanal practices such as cord piping, crochet, pleating, unravelling and fish-scale sequins are revisited and reactivated.

Selected for exhibition at the Museo del Traje in June 2025, the project contributes to contemporary discussions on fashion research by demonstrating how design practice can function as a mode of historical inquiry and cultural knowledge production.

**Europe Dyed in Chintz: Indian Cotton, Protectionist Laws, and the Political Economy
of Textile Exchange in the Early Modern World (c. 1600–1800)**

This paper examines the circulation of Indian painted and printed cottons, known in Europe as chintz, and their impact on European textile production and fashion between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. It focuses on manufacturing centers across the Deccan and western India, including Golconda, Masulipatnam, and Gujarat, where artisans developed complex techniques of mordant dyeing, resist painting, and block printing that produced durable, colorfast fabrics unmatched by European workshops until advances in dye chemistry in the later eighteenth century.

Through the commercial networks of the Dutch, French, and English East India Companies, chintz entered European markets as a desirable commodity that reshaped consumption patterns and stimulated imitation by local manufacturers. Its popularity led to protectionist legislation, including the French bans of 1686–1759 and the English Calico Acts of 1700 and 1721, which sought to curb imports and domestic use of Indian cottons.

Drawing on surviving textiles, trade records, and visual representations, the paper traces how specific design elements, such as the Tree of Life motif and stylized floral repeats derived from Mughal art, were selectively adapted to European tastes. It also considers how these adaptations reflected evolving colonial economies and changing perceptions of South Asian textile production.

By positioning chintz within the wider context of global trade and technological transfer, the paper argues that European textile industries and fashions of the early modern period cannot be understood in isolation from the knowledge systems and labor of Indian artisans. This study contributes to a more integrated history of European dress and economy, highlighting the material and ideological dependencies that underpinned Europe's engagement with South Asian textile cultures. This interconnected exchange demonstrates that South Asian textile production was far from peripheral to the development of European industries, consumption practices, and fashion identities during the early modern period.

Unveiling the *Għonnella*: Identity, Tradition, and Cross-Cultural Influence in Maltese Attire

The *għonnella*, also known as *faldetta*, was a distinctive traditional headgear worn by Maltese and Gozitan women for several centuries. Characterised by its unique shape resembling a billowing sail when worn the *għonnella* became an iconic symbol of Maltese identity and femininity. While black was the predominant colour across all social classes, the choice of fabric varied according to the wearer's social status and the occasion. Everyday versions were typically made from cotton, while those reserved for Sundays or special events featured richer materials such as silk, often imported from nearby Mediterranean regions.

This paper explores the origins, materials, and construction of the *għonnella*, tracing its possible influences from other Mediterranean cultures, including Italian and North African. Although its precise origin remains uncertain, its design demonstrates a blend of practicality, modesty, and aesthetic sophistication. The research also considers how the *għonnella* evolved over time, reflecting broader social and cultural transformations in the Maltese Islands. Through secondary sources, textile analysis, and visual evidence, this study aims to shed light on the craftsmanship behind the garment and its enduring symbolism.

Ultimately, the *għonnella* represents more than just a piece of clothing it encapsulates Malta's unique position at the crossroads of Europe and North Africa, where cultural exchange shaped a distinct national identity that continues to fascinate historians, designers, and cultural scholars today.

A Hidden Garment: Englishmen's Waistcoats to the Mid Seventeenth Century

From the early sixteenth century to the middle of the seventeenth century men's waistcoats were a hidden garment. In north-western Europe they were worn between the shirt and the doublet for warmth. In Scandinavia they may have been known as *nattrøjer* or *yllentröja*, whilst in England they were referred to as waistcoats. Being an undergarment, they rarely appear in portraiture and only occasionally in genre paintings, especially in those from the Low Countries. There are survivals in museums across northern Europe, many of these are knitted and have been examined, but there has been less attention given to woven textile waistcoats, which may have been more common.

This paper endeavours to match English written records, primarily from wills and probate inventories, but also wardrobe accounts, diaries, etc., with what little survives and can be seen. It examines the terminology, showing when waistcoats first appear in the English language and what is meant by the word. It also shows that waistcoats were worn across all levels of society, with costs, textiles and decorative choices changing with the status of the owner, even though the garments were not regularly seen. In the second half of the seventeenth century with the putative beginning of the "three-piece suit," comprising coat, waistcoat and breeches, waistcoats became more visible and changed in shape and appearance. The paper examines how this change led to a divergence in the English language, whereby an English waistcoat is called a vest in America, and an English vest is called an undershirt in America. The problems museums face in using modern language to describe the surviving garments is also addressed.

**Collar Me Up: Collars as an Attribute of Status among the Bourgeoisie and Clergymen
in 16th- and 17th-Century Denmark**

In 16th- and 17th-century Denmark, clothing largely followed the “modest” black fashion of Europe, especially among the bourgeoisie and clergy. Yet even within this restrained aesthetic, individuals found ways to display status, taste, and social belonging. This paper explores how collars functioned as key markers of identity and prestige in a small Danish town and its surrounding rural area, analysing epitaphs and portraits as primary sources.

These media served as platforms for self-representation—at home and in churches—where sitters carefully staged themselves to communicate wealth, virtue, and refinement. By examining these visual materials, the study traces changes in collar types and their chronological diffusion across social groups, offering insight into how local actors participated in broader European fashion systems. The analysis engages with Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital and social prestige in dialogue with Georg Simmel’s trickle-down theory of fashion, discussing their applicability to early modern dress studies and the negotiation of status through material display.

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Marie Antoinette: From Aristocratic Ostentation to Contemporary Practices of Self-expression and Empowerment

This research analyses the evolution of eighteenth-century fashion through the figure of Marie Antoinette, Queen of France, and examines her transformation from a historical monarch into a lasting cultural icon. Positioned at the intersection of art, politics, and fashion, Marie Antoinette embodied the aesthetics of the Rococo period and also redefined the role of women in courtly representation. Her influence transcended the boundaries of Versailles, shaping ideals of beauty, luxury, and femininity that continue to resonate in contemporary fashion and visual culture.

The research focuses on how her image evolved from a symbol of aristocratic excess into a source of inspiration for twentieth- and twenty-first-century designers, artists, and brands. It aims to contribute to the field of fashion studies by revealing how the visual and formal codes of the eighteenth century—such as ornamentation, pastel tones, and elaborate silhouettes—continue to influence modern notions of identity and power. It also seeks to demonstrate that fashion, as an expressive and symbolic medium, constitutes a bridge between aristocratic ostentation and contemporary practices of self-expression and empowerment.

The central questions that guide this research include: how did Marie Antoinette’s personal style influence modern women’s fashion? How has her image been reinterpreted over time? And how does her legacy contribute to current discourses on gender, celebrity, and aesthetic emancipation?

Accordingly, the research contextualises eighteenth-century French fashion, highlighting the symbolism of dress as a reflection of hierarchy, identity, and taste. It compares the paradigms of the “Sun King,” Louis XIV, and the “Sun Queen,” Marie Antoinette, revealing how the latter redefined courtly femininity through clothing and self-representation. And finally, it investigates the queen’s posthumous transformation into a cultural icon, tracing her presence in the work of contemporary designers, and in film and museum exhibitions that reinterpret her image as a symbol of autonomy and creativity.

Creative Urban Influences in Rural Fashion: The 16th–18th-century Estonian Belt Ornament

Over the centuries, the waist has been a key area emphasised in women's dress within the Estonian region, often accentuated with specific ornaments. Such belt adornments, differing in form and style across time and place, were typically eye-catching and conveyed information about the wearer's social status.

By the mid-sixteenth century, a distinctive belt ornament known locally as *rõhud* became fashionable among women in northern and western Estonia. Comprising multiple rows of chains with pendants and small bells, these ornaments were attached to the belt so that they hung in an arc over the hips and buttocks. By the mid-nineteenth century, their use had largely disappeared, surviving only on the western islands.

Until recently, knowledge of *rõhud* from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries relied mainly on sparse written and pictorial sources, as these ornaments were rarely deposited in graves or hoards. In recent decades, however, the number of archaeological fragments has increased significantly due to the activities of hobbyist searchers, with over fifty examples now recorded. Although dating isolated finds remains challenging, these fragments provide new insights into their manufacture, use, and the long-standing local tradition. This paper examines the role of *rõhud* within peasant material culture. This ornament combines enduring traditions with external influences from urban craftsmanship. Their development reflects both continuity and openness to new impulses, offering a case study of cultural entanglement in early modern rural Estonia.

From Damasks to Cotton: The Transition from Rococo to Regency in Østfold, Norway

Women's fashions went through significant changes from the 18th to the early 19th century. From the rococo period to the regency period. And fashion is not the only thing that changes. The world goes from a period of peace, diplomatic relations and international trade to a period of war, and for many, poverty and hardship. The economic situation in Norway in this period, has even been described as a crisis.

Former research has proven that in some regions in Norway, the changes that the regency period brought with it, led women to choose a less fashionable way of dressing. While in the 18th century women in many regions chose to adopt impulses from the outside, in the early 19th century we see a stagnation or a change for many less fashionable garments in people's wardrobes.

Østfold is a region located in the southeasternmost extreme in Norway, bordering Sweden to the east, and close to Oslo. The rococo period is well documented in the region, also in the context of dress and textiles. In other words, we do know that people in the region were quite fashionably dressed in the 18th century, but we know less about what happens with the transition to the new fashions of the early 19th century. My research is aiming to find out whether women in Østfold still are following fashion at the turn of the century 1800 or if traces of a stagnation or even deviation from fashion can be found. 36 probate inventory lists from the municipalities of Moss and Rakkestad, have been examined so far. The findings have been analysed alongside preserved garments, depictions and written accounts from the region. Hopefully, the results will give a better understanding of the development of dress in Østfold.

***Fries Witwerk*: Its Stylistic and Technical Links with Hardanger and Ukrainian Embroidery**

This paper explores *Fries witwerk* (Frisian whitework, an embroidery technique from Friesland, in the Netherlands) in relation to Hardanger embroidery from Norway and selected Ukrainian embroidery traditions, examining stylistic and technical connections across different periods and regions. While these forms have typically been studied in isolation, a comparative analysis of techniques and recurring motifs reveals patterns that suggest historical links, shared approaches, or parallel developments. By situating *Fries witwerk* within a broader European context, the study highlights both the distinctive features of regional traditions and the similarities that suggest networks of influence, adaptation, or parallel innovation over time and space.

Drawing on visual analysis of historical textiles, published sources, and practical reconstruction of characteristic stitches, the study investigates how these techniques and motifs were adapted and reinterpreted in different contexts. Practical reconstruction allows the researcher to engage directly with the technical challenges of each embroidery, providing embodied insight into the skills, decisions, and constraints that shaped these traditions. These observations highlight how comparing technical methods and motifs can shed light on the pathways by which embroidery travelled and transformed across Europe, revealing both local innovation and wider patterns of exchange.

This investigation forms a preliminary component of a planned doctoral research project that aims to create a genealogical mapping of whitework embroidery traditions (tracing the relationships between the embroideries themselves, not primarily their makers). By presenting this focused case study on *Fries witwerk*, the paper illustrates an approach for comparing and contextualising techniques across regions, as well as the potential for identifying points of convergence and divergence in historical practice, contributing both to the study of historical textiles and to understanding broader cultural exchange in Europe.

Weaving Women on the Margins: Rural Craft, Skill, and Survival in 17th Century Denmark

This paper challenges the assumption that weaving in early modern Europe was primarily a male and urban profession by examining an exceptional rural source: the parish register of Vonsild in southern Jutland (1686–1706), compiled by the vicar Johannes Røde. Among his detailed deathbed narratives are eight women – and no men – identified as weavers, whose lives he described with striking moral and emotional nuance. Through these records, weaving emerges not as incidental household labour but as a skilled craft, a means of livelihood, and a marker of moral identity. The vicar's accounts reveal how women acquired their expertise through informal, relational instruction between servants and mistresses, sisters, and neighbours, and how weaving sustained them across life stages as servants, single mothers, and widows. Significantly, several of these women learned to weave in the nearby city of Kolding, and at least one practised there before returning to Vonsild, demonstrating that rural and urban spheres of textile production were not separate but interconnected, with knowledge and opportunity circulating across them.

Combining microhistorical analysis with approaches from gender and labour history, the paper recovers weaving as a form of embodied knowledge and economic agency situated outside formal institutions, arguing that rural parishes, often seen as marginal, could be sites of skilled, adaptive, and morally valued female craftwork.

Danish Looms from the 18th to 20th Century

This paper is a preliminary compilation and analysis of data on handlooms in Danish museum collections. We have worked to define some types of looms to get a typological conceptual framework to work with in the next studies. There is no comprehensive overview of Danish looms, but in a research project on Swedish looms from the 1970s by Gertrud Grenander Nyberg, connections are drawn from medieval Europe to modern Sweden.

In Denmark the contemporary perception of the appearance of a loom is based on the late 19th century, when a new Danish weaving tradition emerged within the framework of the Danish handicraft movement. The need to develop and manufacture handlooms for both teaching and students prompted handicrafts teacher Anders Lervad in Askov to start production, and today it is still the Lervad or Askov loom that we know as the modern Danish handloom. But what types of looms were used before Anders Lervad manufactured the Askov looms? What did the looms look like, and what traces of them do we have today?

In 2024, a pilot project was carried out by the *Save the Loom* project group at the Centre for Textile Research, University of Copenhagen, entitled “The Danish loom from the 17th to the 20th century – a pilot project on definition, documentation and preservation”. One of the aims of the project is to investigate the disposal of looms by museums in connection with reviews and relocations of collections over the last 10-20 years. In addition, looms are rarely collected by museums. Perhaps this is because no one knows which looms are worth preserving, or which looms they should include in their collections.

What is a 'jupka'? A Specific Type of Outer Clothing Worn in 17th–19th Century Polish Lands

'Jupka' or 'jubka' is a type of clothing that appears in Polish female inventories and other written sources from the 17th century onwards. This word is usually linked by researchers to the elaborate oversized female silk fur-lined 'jackets' with characteristic type of sleeves and collars, dated to the 18th century. In fact, there's evidence – written, iconographic and material sources – that the definition of 'jupka' in the early modern period was much wider and included pieces of clothing made with a variety of materials for a variety of occasions.

To this day none of the researchers clearly defined 'jupka' type of clothing and it leads to a lot of misunderstanding. The most common short study of this topic comes from the late 1960s but it does not show the problem as a whole.

In this presentation I will try to answer the question - what is a 'jupka'? To solve this not so easy puzzle, I will show possible origins of a 'jupka' type of clothing (that to this day is linked by researchers to an Arabic clothing or a German word 'Joppe'/'Juppe'), how it changed in time, from what type of fabrics it was made and by whom it was worn. To do this, I will use a whole spectrum of early modern sources: written (inventories, diaries, dictionaries etc.), iconographic (from 17th-19th c.) and material (a few objects from Polish museums, objects from collections in countries east of 17th-18th c. Polish lands and findings from archaeological excavations in Poland).

A Comparative Evaluation of 19th Century Needlework Belts in the Baltic Region

In the second half of the 19th-century and the early 20th-century, urbanisation, industrial development, and expanding trade in the Baltic region increased access to industrially produced and imported materials. These changes influenced craft practices, which became more closely connected to the availability and circulation of materials, tools, and design ideas. At the same time, the wider spread of printed newspapers and fashion periodicals helped circulate ideas about dress and aesthetic preferences. This led to greater similarity in the visual appearance of clothing across different social groups, while differences were still maintained through the choice of materials and the quality of workmanship.

A comparative examination of needlework belts from Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia shows that these objects developed through shared processes of material circulation, technical knowledge, and the spread of printed embroidery patterns, rather than through isolated or territorially bounded traditions. Using an object-based and comparative material approach, the study examines belts preserved in museum collections across the Baltic region, focusing on their construction, embroidery techniques, and ornamental organisation.

Expanding the geographical scope of analysis makes it possible to distinguish features arising from broader material and technological circulation from those shaped by local conditions of production and consumption. This comparative perspective reveals shared processes and parallel developments that often remain obscured or are interpreted as locally unique within nationally oriented research frameworks. Taken together, the findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of 19th-century Baltic material culture, refining existing ethnographic interpretations and situating needlework belts within wider networks of production, exchange, and social meaning.

Reconnecting the Threads: Applying a Digital Humanities Approach to the Study of Livonian Traditional Dress

The traditional clothing of the Livonian people—a small Finno-Ugric community once inhabiting the northwestern coast of Latvia—has never been studied as a unified whole. Today, the surviving artefacts are dispersed across museum collections in Finland, Estonia, and Latvia, while written and visual documentation is preserved in several archives across Europe. This presentation demonstrates how digital humanities approach can bridge such geographic and institutional divides, enabling new comparative and interpretative research in dress history.

Building upon an open linked dataset of Livonian clothing artefacts accessible through the *TextileBase* platform, the study integrates museum data from the Finnish and Estonian national museums and aims to include artefacts held in Latvia. Through digitization and open access, previously fragmented materials can be virtually reunited, revealing new relationships between collections and uncovering connections that were impossible to detect before.

Newly identified written sources from Hungary complement the well-known documentation by Finnish ethnographers such as Anders Johan Sjögren, Axel Olai Heikel, and Emil Nestor Setälä, enriching our understanding of Livonian dress and its transformations during the 19th century. The chronological scope of these artefacts—spanning roughly from the 1840s to the early 1900s—captures the gradual transition from traditional rural attire to modern urban fashion, allowing us to trace stylistic evolution even where complete sets of clothing no longer survive.

Finally, the presentation explores how such digital integration benefits both scholars and the wider public through open-access dissemination. By linking datasets via *TextileBase* and exhibiting them through Wikipedia GLAM virtual exhibitions, Livonian cultural heritage becomes both a research resource and a shared public history.

This paper is prepared as part of the project “Territory of Latvia as a Contact Zone between Different Cultural Spaces, Religions, and Political, Social and Economic Interests from Prehistory to the Present Day” (ZD2015/AZ85).

From Peasant Maiden to Modern Woman: The Semiotics of Costume in *Purva bridējs*

This paper examines fashion and costume as thematic and representational elements in the attire of the protagonists in *Purva bridējs* (Wader in the Bog), focusing on the transformation of Kristīne's character from Rūdolfs Blaumanis' 1898 novel and his 1905 stage play to Leonīds Leimanis' 1966 film adaptation. Departing from Blaumanis' portrayal of Kristīne as a youthful, innocent peasant girl, Leimanis reimagines her as a mature, autonomous woman whose evolving appearance reflects broader shifts in cultural and gender representation.

Drawing on Roland Barthes' semiology of dress and Daniel Devoucoux's analysis of costume as a spatial and figurative cinematic element, this study argues that Kristīne's costumes operate as visual signifiers of psychological development and social mobility. Leimanis' Kristīne—by Vija Artmane, whose casting was both fortuitous and transformative—embodies a redefined image of the national female figure. Through her tailored 1960s dresses, Kristīne becomes aligned with contemporary ideals of femininity, professionalism, and self-determination, displacing the folkloristic archetype of the passive maiden. Yet, her costumes retain traces of traditional Latvian dress in their layering, colors, and silhouettes, visually contrasting her with the Baron's cousin—a representative of German nobility and an oppositional, oppressive force within the narrative. The cousin's character is expressed through her bathing costume, an actual historical artifact serendipitously, as noted by Latvian film historian Kristīne Matīsa, discovered by the film's costume designers. The visual distinction between the two women's attire delineates social and spatial boundaries, reinforcing the film's exploration of class, culture, and identity.

The temporal and spatial construction of Leimanis' film situates Kristīne between the nineteenth-century manor world and the sociocultural realities of 1960s Latvia, highlighting her mobility across both spatial and class divisions. Her symbolic gestures—most notably the removal of her bridal veil—embody acts of bodily and emotional autonomy, signalling a break from cyclical dependence on maternal and patriarchal authority. Ultimately, Leimanis' film reconfigures Kristīne as a modern subject: no longer a victim of love, but a self-aware agent of transformation. This representation reflects the ideological and gender dynamics of Soviet-era Latvian cinema and foremost recycles Latvian historical experiences of 1905 under the conditions of Soviet occupation.

Scottish Fabrics Trade in Early Modern Lviv: Delivery Routes, Fabric Types and Ways of Use

In mid-16th – first half of the 18th century, Lviv (now in Ukraine) was the center of the Ruthenian Voivodeship, an administrative unit within the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. Owing to its convenient location, the city was one of the key centers of regional trade and attracted merchants from everywhere, including Scotland. The most common goods imported here through the Baltic trade route were the so called “Scottish fabrics”. This broad term covered several types of wool, mostly of the middle price segment. In this paper, I attempted to reconstruct the entire chain of delivery of these fabrics: from Scotland to potential buyers in Lviv.

The following types of documents were included in the source base: letters from the late 17th – early 18th century sent to a Scottish merchant Arthur Forbes, who mainly resided in Lviv during that period; books with residents’ tax records of the early modern Lviv; ledgers of Lviv merchants of the first half of the 17th century.

Information from the letters helped establish key trade routes used by members of the Forbes trade network to deliver goods in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Ruthenian Voivodeship. Likewise, the range of available fabrics was reconstructed: their types and colors. Thanks to the analysis of the ledgers, it was possible to connect the color of the fabric to the way it was potentially used by buyers. Furthermore, the books with tax records of the Leopolitans helped identify names of other Lviv merchants who dealt in Scottish fabrics. On the one hand, this information allowed us to better understand the rhythm of merchants’ lives, and on the other hand, to take a fresh look at the correlation of the type of fabric to its color and later practical use.

Traditional Portuguese Sweaters and Their Depictions in the 19th Century

Although knitting is deeply rooted in Portuguese culture, it is less well-known than in other European countries. When we think of knitted lace or sweaters with intricate patterns or colourful jacquard designs, we tend to associate them with the British Isles, the Netherlands or some Nordic countries.

The *Camisola Poveira*, a knitted, embroidered wool sweater, is one of the most popular traditional Portuguese items. It was used by fishermen in Póvoa de Varzim, a small fishing village, around the middle of the 19th century. It received great attention in the following century when it was chosen for a folkloric parade in the 1930s, becoming a popular folk item. Production peaked between the 1950s and 1970s, when it was primarily produced for export.

In the Portuguese context, the *Camisola Poveira* stands out as a traditional sweater. There are no known counterparts used in other locations, and it appears to be the only embroidered knitted garment. But is this true?

The depiction of people in traditional costumes received great attention during the Romantic movement and continued until later in Portugal. The 19th century saw a wide range of media, from travel books to paintings, pay special attention to this subject. Following the popularisation of lithographic technology in the early years and, later, photographic techniques, small depictions of traditional costumes began to be widely reproduced and sold as collectible items, providing insight into how they were perceived.

This presentation aims to clarify how Portuguese traditional knitted sweaters were understood in the 19th century, when they started to be depicted, and how they were associated with certain social classes, such as fishermen and sellers.

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Threads of Continuity: Sámi and Indigenous Reclamation of Textile Traditions in Contemporary Material Art and Design

This collaborative presentation explores the reclamation and renewal of Indigenous textile practices, particularly Sámi *duodji* (traditional craft forms), as a form of cultural continuity, artistic innovation, and foundational to language revitalization. Focusing on the intersections of traditional technique and contemporary design, we examine how Indigenous makers, students, and educators engage with historical forms such as *gákti* (traditional Sámi clothing), leatherwork, and handcrafted accessories to sustain knowledge systems embedded in material practice.

Drawing on experiences from several community and academic contexts, this paper situates textile and material arts within broader movements of cultural reclamation and pedagogy. Through comparative discussion of intergenerational community-based workshops (e.g., elder-led drop-ins, family co-learning of weaving) and university courses, we trace how traditional methods such as hide processing/leather tanning, embroidery, and weaving are being both reclaimed and reinterpreted using both traditional and modern materials and technologies while retaining their symbolic and narrative integrity. This presentation employs rich visual documentation, including examples of historical garments alongside contemporary commissioned and student work, to illustrate the dynamic interplay between past forms and current innovation. This is informed by the collaborative research experience of the three presenters, who bring expertise in material culture, contemporary art education, and Indigenous and Sámi studies.

The presentation also addresses the visual and cultural symbolism embedded in garments and adornments, exploring their roles in expressing identity, belonging, and resistance. This includes the reclaiming of specific forms like historically banned headwear and the use of distinct textile colourways that encode membership within different Sámi communities. We consider how revitalized techniques and design approaches re-establish relationships between language, land, and making, which is an approach increasingly visible in Indigenous design education and research across the circumpolar North.

By foregrounding intergenerational collaboration and creative agency, this paper contributes to ongoing dialogues in European textile history about continuity and the politics of cultural representation. It argues that Indigenous textile reclamation does not merely preserve heritage but actively expands the future of material culture through innovation grounded in ancestral knowledge systems.

Sustainability Fashioned on Historic Production

Paris has long been the fashion epicenter, driving global fashion. Today, the European fashion landscape is witnessing a dynamic revival of historical craftsmanship through the lens of sustainability, especially in surrounding towns of Paris, France, where traditional techniques are being harnessed as vehicles for sustainable innovation. This paper explores how collectives and artisans across France and Italy are reimaging old-world methods to drive ethical, sustainable fashion.

In Lyon, Marseille, and Nantes, forward-thinking communities are at the forefront of producing French clothing that honors both artistry and environmental responsibility. By repurposing historic jacquard looms and silk production, once hallmarks of France's industrial heritage, these groups foster new models of production that preserve endangered crafting skills, encourage creative exchange, and build artistic networks. Communities like Saint-Julien-Molin-Molette, are creating art collectives around historic centers of silk production. The Fashion Green Hub in Roubaix stands out as a hub pioneering collaborative and technical solutions for sustainable textile innovation and amplifying artistic creativity.

This revival is not confined to production alone; artists and designers are actively redefining tradition. Tiziano Guardini, creative director and co-founder of Guardini Ciuffreda Studio in Italy, exemplifies the movement's spirit by integrating conscious design and historical references into his work. Likewise, Bevilacqua's artistic initiatives breathe new life into endangered skills through contemporary reinterpretation and advocacy.

By examining sustainable initiatives centered throughout France and Italy, this paper charts the resurgence of historic techniques as the foundation for ethical fashion, skill preservation, and environmental stewardship. This case study offers insights and inspiration for global communities seeking to connect heritage with sustainability in the realm of textiles and clothing, demonstrating that the sustainable future of European fashion lies in its rich, innovative past.



Historical Clothing and Textiles in Europe

Online (ZOOM)

Thursday, February 26, 2026, 10.00
AM EET

Friday, February 27, 2026, 10.00 AM
EET

Saturday, February 28, 2026, 10.00
AM EET

Programme

Thursday, February 26, 2026, 10.00 AM EET

Chair: Ieva Pigozne		
10.00–10.05	Ieva Pigozne <i>University of Latvia, Latvia</i>	Opening of the conference
10.05–10.30	Francisco B. Gomes Yuna Le Quéré <i>University of Lisbon, Portugal</i> Catarina Costeira <i>UNIARQ; Municipality of Sintra, Portugal</i>	The Chief's New Clothes? Changing Patterns of Dress in the Western Iberian Late Bronze Age (12th – 8th c. BCE) and Their Social and Cultural Significance
10.30–10.55	Maria Elena Bertoli <i>University of Glasgow, UK</i>	Decorative Elements on Bronze Age Textiles: Analysing New and Reassessing Old Finds from Northern Italy
10.55–11.20	Anna Sofie Zimmermann <i>University of Vienna, Austria</i>	Prehistoric Patterned Textiles as a Source for Research on Numeracy and the History of Mathematics – A New Perspective on the Textiles from Hallstatt
11.20–11.45	Lilja Marie Gunnarsdóttir Husmo <i>University of Glasgow, UK</i>	The Tale(TAIL) of a Bronze Age Horsehair Hat
11.45–12.10	Yuna Le Quéré <i>University of Lisbon, Portugal</i>	Fibulae, Belt Buckles, and the Construction of Dress and Identity in Early Iron Age Southern Portugal
12.10–12.30	Coffee break	
Chair: Riina Rammo		
12.30–12.55	Jennifer Beamer <i>Independent Researcher, UK</i>	Twirling Axioms: Qualifying the Subjective Expertise of Handspinners
12.55–13.20	Kayleigh Saunderson Karina Grömer <i>Natural History Museum Vienna, Austria</i>	Finding the Cloak in the Fragments: Late Roman Textiles from Unterradlberg (Austria)

13.20–13.45	Chloe Chapin <i>Harvard University, USA</i>	Trinkets or Technology? Towards a New Understanding of Neolithic Human Fashioning
13.45–14.10	Katrin Kania <i>Independent researcher, Germany</i> Émeline Retournard <i>Centre d'Histoire "Espaces et Cultures", France</i>	The Mystery of Bishop Odalric's Breeches: Research on a Medieval Undergarment Preserved in Reims (France)
14.10–14.30	Coffee break	
Chair: Mairéad Finnegan		
14.30–14.55	Hannah Evans <i>University of Liverpool, UK</i>	Cloth and Clothing in Medieval Irish Hagiography
14.55–15.20	Aleksandra Belchurovska <i>Center for scientific research, culture and education PANEPISTIMIO, Macedonia</i>	Threads of Faith and Power: The Garments of Noble Ktitors in Medieval Macedonia
15.20–15.45	Nic Kipar <i>Heriot-Watt University, UK</i>	Triangulating Probability: Re-creating Medieval dress at the Intersection of Visual, Textual, and Extant Sources
15.55–16.20	Yvonne McDermott <i>Atlantic Technological University, Ireland</i>	Late Medieval Dress in the West of Ireland: Gleanings from Figure Sculpture
16.20–16.25	Conclusion of Day 1	

Friday, February 27, 2026, 10.00 AM EET

Chair: Maria Elena Bertoli		
10.00–10.05	Maria Elena Bertoli <i>University of Glasgow, UK</i>	Opening of Day 2
10.05–10.30	Dilshat Harman <i>Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Germany</i>	Reality and Invention: Transparent Cap in Albrecht Dürer's Portrait of a Young Woman with Braided Hair (1497)
10.30–10.55	Krisztina Rábai <i>University of Szeged, Hungary</i>	Parallel Material Worlds: Courtly Textiles and Paper Usage in Jagiellonian Europe, 1490–1506
10.55–11.20	Miłosz Kargol <i>Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland</i>	Jagiellonian Power Dressing: Royal Identity Expressed through Jewelry

11.20–11.45	Katerina Kiltzanidou <i>Democritus University of Thrace, Greece</i>	The Fashion of Female Donors in Cypriot Icons during the Frankish Period (13th-15th c.): Between Elegance and Devotion
11.45–12.10	Dmitrijs Ščegoļevs <i>University of Latvia, Krieviņu novads / Kreevinimaa, Latvia</i>	Unsolved Mystery of the Kreevings of Semigallia Historical Costume
12.10–12.30	Coffee break	
Chair: Anete Karlson		
12.30–12.55	Isobel Harvey <i>University of Glasgow, UK</i>	Rooted in Red: The Social Significance of Two Botanical Dyes in Early Medieval England
12.55–13.20	Mária Lupescu Makó <i>Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania</i>	Reading the Red. The Meanings of Colour Red in Transylvanian Noble Costumes
13.20–13.45	Elena Cuadrado Gómez <i>EASD de Castellón, Spain</i>	Re-signifying White: A Contemporary Reinterpretation of Traditional Textile Codes in Spain
13.45–14.10	Harpreet Kaur <i>University of St Thomas, USA</i>	Europe Dyed in Chintz: Indian Cotton, Protectionist Laws, and the Political Economy of Textile Exchange in the Early Modern World (c. 1600–1800)
14.10–14.30	Coffee break	
Chair: Una Valtre		
14.30–14.55	Claire Bonavia <i>Heritage Malta, Malta</i>	Unveiling the <i>Għonnella</i> : Identity, Tradition, and Cross-Cultural Influence in Maltese Attire
14.55–15.20	Patricia Poppy <i>Retired scholar, UK</i>	A Hidden Garment: Englishmen’s Waistcoats to the Mid Seventeenth Century
15.20–15.45	Ditte Krøner <i>University of Copenhagen, Denmark</i>	Collar Me Up: Collars as an Attribute of Status among the Bourgeoisie and Clergymen in 16th- and 17th-Century Denmark
15.55–16.20	Yoád David Luxembourg Beatriz Castanheira da Silva Beatriz Rodrigues Afonso Willian Pasqual Júnior <i>University of Beira Interior, Portugal</i>	Marie Antoinette: From Aristocratic Ostentation to Contemporary Practices of Self-expression and Empowerment
16.20–16.25	Conclusion of Day 2	

Saturday, February 28, 2026, 10.00 AM EET

Chair: Meghan Korten		
10.00–10.05	Meghan Korten <i>University of Iceland, Iceland</i>	Opening of Day 3
10.05–10.30	Riina Rammo <i>University of Tartu, Estonia</i>	Creative Urban Influences in Rural Fashion: The 16th–18th-century Estonian Belt Ornament
10.30–10.55	Solveig Strand <i>Norwegian Institute of Bunad and Folk Costume, Norway</i>	From Damasks to Cotton: The Transition from Rococo to Regency in Østfold, Norway
10.55–11.20	Yvette Stanton <i>Independent scholar, Australia</i>	Fries <i>Witwerk</i> : Its Stylistic and Technical Links with Hardanger and Ukrainian Embroidery
11.20–11.45	Morten Grymer-Hansen <i>University of Copenhagen, Denmark</i>	Weaving Women on the Margins: Rural Craft, Skill, and Survival in 17th Century Denmark
11.45–12.10	Kathrine Vestergaard Brandstrup Ditte Krøner <i>University of Copenhagen, Denmark</i>	Danish Looms from the 18th to 20th Century
12.10–12.30	Coffee break	
Chair: Riina Rammo		
12.30–12.55	Kinga Kaptur <i>Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland</i>	What is a ‘jupka’? A Specific Type of Outer Clothing Worn in 17th–19th Century Polish Lands
12.55–13.20	Una Valtere <i>Art Academy of Latvia, Latvia</i>	A Comparative Evaluation of 19th Century Needlework Belts in the Baltic Region
13.20–13.45	Ieva Pigozne <i>University of Latvia, Latvia</i>	Reconnecting the Threads: Applying a Digital Humanities Approach to the Study of Livonian Traditional Dress
13.45–14.10	Marija Weste <i>Linköpings University, Sweden</i>	From Peasant Maiden to Modern Woman: The Semiotics of Costume in <i>Purva bridējs</i>
14.10–14.30	Coffee break	
Chair: Ieva Pigozne		
14.30–14.55	Khrystyna Baziuk <i>National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine</i>	Scottish Fabrics Trade in Early Modern Lviv: Delivery Routes, Fabric Types and Ways of Use
14.55–15.20	Hermínio Maio Graça Fernandes <i>University of Porto, Portugal</i>	Traditional Portuguese Sweaters and Their Depictions in the 19th Century

15.20–15.45	Mervi Maarit Salo <i>University of Tromsø, Norway</i> Amelia Hergott <i>OCAD University, Canada</i> Alexander Johannes Hergott <i>OCAD University, Canada & Sámi University of Applied Sciences, Norway</i>	Threads of Continuity: Sámi and Indigenous Reclamation of Textile Traditions in Contemporary Material Art and Design
15.55–16.20	Sarah M Oliver <i>University of Michigan, USA</i>	Sustainability Fashioned on Historic Production
16.20–16.25	Conclusion of the Conference	

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<https://zenodo.org/communities/textilebase/>

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Would you like to share your research datasets as linked open data, but you do not know how? Please contact the editor, Ieva Pīgozne.