



## Tværfaglige Vikingsymposier

### 38. Tværfaglige Vikingsymposium – 38<sup>th</sup> Interdisciplinary Viking Symposium

1 October 2021, The National Museum in Copenhagen, Ny Vestergade 10

## Social, cultural and economic impact of textiles and textile production in the Viking Age

### REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The COVID-19 pandemic restrictions have by now been fully lifted, but precautions regarding vaccination and valid Corona-Pass are still recommended. The Cinema in the National Museum holds a maximum of c. 150 persons. We therefore wish all to register and receive a written confirmation from the organisers no later than September 23rd, **please contact Michael Lerche Nielsen: [lerche@hum.ku.dk](mailto:lerche@hum.ku.dk)**. We plan to broadcast the Symposium via Zoom, and therefore English is the conference language. Please note that those who wish to participate on-line must register too. The organizing committee has no funding, so lunch and beverages during the symposium will be at your own cost. Since the practical setup concerning lunch is still uncertain, more information will follow in a later announcement. The National Museum has generously granted all participants free access to the exhibitions.

### Symposium programme:

#### **10.30-11.00 Registration and coffee**

11.00-11.10 Opening Jesper Hansen, Odense Bys Museer, Chair of the organizing committee

11.10-11.30 Eva Andersson Strand, Centre for Textile Research University of Copenhagen: *Textile consumption and impact on Viking Age Society*

11.30-11.50 Ulla Mannering, the National Museum of Denmark: *Fashioning the Viking Age*

11.50-12.10 Ida Demant, Sagnlandet Lejre: *Textile production and craft people in Viking Age - new analyses and results*

12.10-12.40 Group 1 demonstration of the Viking Textile Box in the auditorium. Group 2 visits the reconstructions in the exhibition.

12.40-13.10 Group 2 demonstration of the Viking Textile Box in the auditorium. Group 1 visits the reconstructions in the exhibition.



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**13.10-13.50 lunch break**

13.50-14.10 Sarah Croix, Centre for Urban Network Evolutions, University of  
Universitet: *Textile production and use of space in urban contexts: a contextual  
analysis at Ribe's Viking-Age emporium*

14.10-14.30 Jonas Holm Jæger, Department of Archaeology & Section for  
Evolutionary Genomics, University of Copenhagen: *ZooMS'ing in on Sheep: Wool  
production during the Scandinavian Viking Age and the Potential of Biomolecular  
Methods*

14.30-14.50 Carsten Jahnke, Saxo Institute, University of Copenhagen: *Textiles in the  
Viking Ages – just homespun? Traces of textile trade*

**14.50-15.10 coffee break**

15.10-15.30 Rikke Steenholt Olesen and Michael Lerche Nielsen, Institute of Nordic  
Studies and Linguistics, University of Copenhagen: *The Lund weaving temple and  
other runic artefacts referring to textile production*

15.30-15.50 Tarrin Wills, Old Norse Prose Dictionary, the Arnamagnean Collection,  
NorS, University of Copenhagen: *Lexicographic approaches to the study of Viking  
Age material culture*

**15.50-15.55 Concluding remarks**

After the symposium the exhibitions are open till 17.00.



## Tværfaglige Vikingsymposier

### 38. Interdisciplinary Viking Symposium. October 1<sup>st</sup> 2021. Abstracts:

**Eva Andersson Strand:** *Textile consumption and impact on Viking Age Society*

Textiles are not simply a binary system of fibres, but a result of complex interactions between resources, technology and society. These interactions demonstrates both the society's and the individuals' needs and desire and this is equally valid for textiles for in the Viking Age society. Textiles also reflect the economic and organisational structures of societies, as well as larger processes of cultural and socio-political development taking place across decades and centuries. New research clearly indicates a new and increasing need and consumption of textiles for sails, and cloth for travellers and warfare and further a new fascination and use of luxury clothing in the late Iron Age/Viking Age. Producing these textiles affected the whole society, as a surplus of raw materials, techniques, skills, craft people and time was both essential and necessary for this production. To conclude, knowledge of textile history is hence a key to our understanding of a multitude of the Viking Age society. This presentation will therefore discuss how textiles and textile production were integrated in the society and how this information can yield new perspectives on the Viking Age Society.

**Eva Andersson Strand:** Associate professor and director, Centre for Textile Research, Saxo-institute University of Copenhagen [evaandersson@hum.ku.dk](mailto:evaandersson@hum.ku.dk)

**Ulla Mannering:** *Fashioning the Viking Age and the new exhibition of textile replicas at the National Museum*

The aim of the project *Fashioning the Viking Age* is to create new and archaeologically well-founded interpretations and reconstructions of Viking Age textiles and clothing that can be used in exhibitions, teaching and popular outreach about the varied life in the Viking Age. In **Part 1. Viking Age Textile Production**, different textile types and tools are reconstructed based on archaeological finds from graves and settlements. The outcome is a Textile & Tool Box, that provides a hands-on experience of Viking Age textile production. In **Part 2. Viking Age Male and Female Clothing**, a complete male and female outfit will be constructed based on the finds from Mammen and Hvidehøj in Denmark (AD 900s). The reconstructions can be used for exhibitions and outreach purposes. In **Part 3. Viking Age Clothing Catalogue**, we create an overview of the many different archaeological, iconographical and written sources linked to Scandinavian clothing design. The outcome is an online open-access catalogue.

In the presentation I outline the first results and outcomes of the project, and presents the many different methods, techniques and collaborators/crafts peoples involved in the project.

The project *Fashioning the Viking Age* is a collaboration (2018-2021) between National Museum of Denmark, Centre for Textile Research at University of Copenhagen and Land of Legends in Lejre. The project is funded by the VELUX FOUNDATIONS.

**Ulla Mannering:** Senior Researcher, National Museum of Denmark, [ulla.mannering@natmus.dk](mailto:ulla.mannering@natmus.dk)

**Ida Demant:** *Textile production and craft people in Viking Age - new analyses and results*

An important aim of the project "Fashioning the Viking Age" is to make *Reconstructions of tools and textiles of varied qualities*. Therefore, in the first season, two reconstruction samples of newly analyzed textiles from the harbor of Hedeby, were produced. The samples are part of a "textile tool-box" which is used for outreach purposes and the samples present the tactile dimension of Viking-Age textiles.

Reconstruction of Viking-Ages textiles have been done previously as well as tests of different types of contemporary tools and textile techniques. In order to expand our knowledge on not only the Viking Age textile manufacturing but also on the craft people skills and knowhow it was decided to combine these methods.



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The premise for the samples was that they should be made with wool fibres as close to the original as possible and further, produced with exact reconstructions of tools, generally from Viking-Age Hedeby. The first results have given new insights in craft people's use and choices of tools and raw materials and clearly demonstrated the complexity of Viking Age textile production.

**Ida Demant:** Research Fellow, National Museum of Denmark, [ida.demant@natmus.dk](mailto:ida.demant@natmus.dk)

**Sarah Croix:** *Textile production and use of space in urban contexts: a contextual analysis at Ribe's Viking-Age emporium*

In connection with the excavation of two plots from the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries in Ribe, the Northern Emporium Excavation Project has documented an exceptional archaeological material, with thousands of artefacts sealed in occupation deposits. Among them, hundreds of finds relate to textile production, including unburnt loom weights, which were often found deposited directly on top of floor layers within buildings. Their three-dimensional position within the stratigraphy was recorded systematically throughout the excavation.

Among the wide array of specialized crafts attested in the Viking-Age emporia in Scandinavia, textile production played a double role. Previous research has stressed the degree of specialization and skills of the textile workers, suggesting that textiles were produced with an eye for trade, but also the importance of textile production within household economies, within which they were traditionally embedded in rural, mostly agrarian contexts.

In this paper, I will explore the potential of a contextual analysis of tools for textile production for gaining a better understanding of the social significance of this craft in an early urban setting. The analysis of the depositional context of textile tools, especially loom weights, allows investigating the character of textile production but also its relation to other activities, both craft-related and domestic. Together, this approach informs about the use of space within buildings and the character of the occupation on some of the plots of the emporium throughout the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries. By looking at the spaces for textile production, we get a glimpse at its place among the daily activities of the inhabitants and their "urban" life-style.

**Sarah Croix:** Assistant Professor, PhD, UrbNet, School of culture and Society, Moesgård, University of Aarhus. [marksc@cas.au.dk](mailto:marksc@cas.au.dk)

**Jonas Holm Jæger:** *ZooMS'ing in on Sheep: Wool production during the Scandinavian Viking Age and the Potential of Biomolecular Methods.*

ZooMS (Zooarchaeology by Mass Spectrometry) is a palaeoproteomic method to species identification based on the analysis and identification of collagen-peptides. As collagen is the most abundant protein in humans and animals and found in tissues such as bone, teeth and skin, as well as surviving better and longer than DNA, protein residues make an obvious source of information into the archaeological record. The method provides an unambiguous species ID and in combination with being fast and cheap it constitutes a very suitable alternative to current morphological methods. As the difficulties regarding the separation of sheep and goat remains are legendary in zooarchaeology, a detailed description and characterization of Viking Age sheep husbandry has long been problematic if not close to impossible. As the introduction of sails made from wool during the Viking Age is thought to have been associated with an intensification of the sheep husbandry aimed at wool production, a reliable method for identifying and distinguishing sheep and goat remains is highly desirable. Here I present an evaluation of ZooMS to provide insight into the sheep husbandry practices and the associated wool production of Viking Age Scandinavia.

**Jonas Holm Jæger:** Master's student, prehistoric archaeology, Department of Archaeology, the SAXO-Institute, Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen & Section for Evolutionary Genomics, the GLOBE-Institute, Faculty of Health, University of Copenhagen, [jonash@palaeome.org](mailto:jonash@palaeome.org)



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**Carsten Jahnke:** *Textiles in the Viking Ages – just homespun? Traces of textile trade.*

Textiles are and were symbols of status and power now as in the Viking Age. They can differ in quality of production and regional raw-materials - but, they can also differ by materials and techniques unknown and rare. Trade in textiles in the Viking Age is known, i.a. the trade in silk from the South East to Scandinavia. But can we draw a greater picture of textiles as trading-commodities in the Viking Ages in general? What can we say about the export of textiles from and the import to Scandinavia in this time? Was there a regular market? And what consequences will this have for our understanding of this period? The paper will try to give a first overview and maybe will give reason to some structural discussions.

**Carsten Jahnke:** Associate Professor, Saxo Institute, University of Copenhagen, [jahnke@hum.ku.dk](mailto:jahnke@hum.ku.dk)

**Rikke Steenholt Olesen & Michael Lerche Nielsen:** *The Lund weaving temple and other runic artefacts referring to textile production.*

Within the corpus of c. 3,725 runic inscriptions from the Viking age and c. 2,775 inscriptions from the medieval period in Samnordisk runtextdatabas we find a number of textile utensils. Thus, almost 50 spindle whorls from Greenland to Ukraine carry runic inscriptions. In addition, inscriptions on needles reveal the name of the specific type of object: *nál*, *skefningr*, *spýta*. Runic inscriptions have also been found on weaving swords and on a weaving contrivance, a so-called temple, from Lund with the inscription **tinbl:bein**. A few inscriptions tell about the sale and distribution of wool and knit-work and several personal bynames refer to garments. Apart from informing us about the name for the objects, the types of inscriptions found on textile objects provide information on the intellectual milieu and the men and women who were involved in textile production.

**Rikke Steenholt Olesen & Michael Lerche Nielsen:** Associate Professors, Institute of Nordic Studies and Linguistics (INSS), University of Copenhagen [rikke.steenholt.olesen@hum.ku.dk](mailto:rikke.steenholt.olesen@hum.ku.dk), [lerche@hum.ku.dk](mailto:lerche@hum.ku.dk)

**Tarrin Wills:** *Lexicographic approaches to the study of Viking Age material culture.*

Judith Jesch's groundbreaking work 2001 work, *Ships and Men in the Viking Age*, uses the lexicon of Viking Age texts as a starting point for a large part of its investigation of an important aspect of Viking Age material culture. Jesch restricts herself to texts that can be dated to the Viking Age itself: runic inscriptions and early skaldic poetry, but the method can be extended to texts that come later, where there is good reason to argue there is continuity in material culture. This paper presents some resources that can be used in a similar way to find words that, in context, can shed light on early Scandinavian material culture in fields such as food, warfare, building and so on. To find textual sources that deal with material culture researchers need a way of finding words that belong to the relevant social and cultural fields and easily accessing the texts that use them. This paper presents features found in the skaldic project and related projects (including [lexiconpoeticum.org](http://lexiconpoeticum.org)), as well as the Dictionary of Old Norse Prose. It will also explore the lexicon of textiles and clothing to explore what can be found from the textual records relating to the Viking Age.

**Tarrin Wills:** Senior Editor at the Old Norse Prose Dictionary, the Arnamagnean Collection, NorS, University of Copenhagen, [tarrin@hum.ku.dk](mailto:tarrin@hum.ku.dk)