



Oldest leather shoe discovered



In 2008, a well preserved and complete shoe was recovered at the base of a Chalcolithic pit in the cave of Areni-1 in the Vayots Dzor province of Armenia, which borders on Turkey and Iran. It is made of a single piece of leather and was shaped to fit the wearer's foot. The shoe contained grass, although the archaeologists are uncertain as to whether this was to keep the foot warm or to maintain the shape of the footwear. Likewise it is uncertain whether it was worn by a man or a woman. The shoe is relatively small, corresponding to a European size 37. Three leather samples provides a date range of 3627–3377 Cal BC (95.4% confidence interval) and the calibrated range for the straw is contemporaneous (3627–3377 Cal BC). The archaeologists put the shoe's remarkable preservation down to the stable, cool and

dry conditions in the cave and the fact that the floor of the cave was covered by a thick layer of sheep dung. This layer of excrement acted as a solid seal, preserving it over the millennia.

"We thought initially that the shoe and other objects were about 600-700 years old because they were in such good condition," said Ron Pinhasi from University College Cork in Ireland. "It was only when the material was dated by the two radiocarbon laboratories in Oxford and in California that we realised that the shoe was older by a few hundred years than the shoes worn by Oetzi the Iceman."

Other well preserved objects were also found in the cave, including large containers, many of which held wheat and barley, apricots and other edible plants. Other 4th millennium discoveries of shoes (Italian and Swiss Alps), and sandals (Southern Israel) indicate that more than one type of footwear existed during the 4th millennium BC, and that we should expect to discover more regional variations in the manufacturing and style of shoes where preservation conditions permit.

Read the full article on "First Direct Evidence of Chalcolithic Footwear from the Near Eastern Highlands" (2010) by R. Pinhasi, B. Gasparian, G. Areshian, D. Zardaryan, A. Smith, G. Bar-Oz and T. Higham in PLOS ONE, 3 June 2010, Volume 5, Issue 6, e10984 (www.plosone.org)

Conference announcements

Textile production workshop 2010

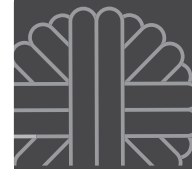
23-25 August 2010

Lejre, Denmark

The workshop will give practical introductions into different aspects of both textile production based on knowledge from the Roman world and also from Roman Iron Age Scandinavia. This will be hands-on experience archaeology, which will give important insights into ancient textile production and its complexity. Furthermore, the obtained knowledge can serve as inspiration for questions to be explored via experimental archaeology. The workshop addresses researchers interested in textile craft but with no or little practical experience. Registration is necessary, deadline 1 July.

Each participant can choose two subjects of interest to study out of four possibilities; one for each of the first two days. The subjects are 1. Fibre preparation and spinning, 2. Dyeing with plant material, 3. Weaving on upright loom and 4. Tool making. The third day is for those who want to continue with one of these projects, but without instruction. There will be room for 4 persons in each study group.

This workshop is arranged by the Danish National Research Foundation's Centre for Textile Research and the EU culture programme Clothing and Identities – New perspectives on textiles in the Roman Empire (DressID) and the Land of Legends Lejre (former Lejre Experimental Centre).



For more information please contact Ida Demant,
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http://ctr.hum.ku.dk/conferences/2010/uploads/textile_production_workshop.pdf/

Textile Forum 2010 6-12 September 2010

ArcheoParc Schnals, Italy

The European Textile Forum is organized for people working in historical textile crafts. The programme consists of three parts: Free time to work, try out things and talk about textile techniques in the mornings; the possibility to attend workshops about historical techniques in the afternoon; and a series of short paper sessions in the evening hours. The aim is to present current projects, reconstructions, technical problems or research work during those talks. Poster presentations, including a "show-and-tell" of your current project in progress, are also very welcome. The European Textile Forum will take place at ArcheoParc Schnals, South Tyrol in Italy. Up to thirty textile experts and enthusiasts will be given the opportunity to meet at the museum for one whole week. The museum is open to the public and we welcome weavers, spinners, dyers, to come so they can also sit, work and talk with both guests and participants. Information about accommodation and registration on www.textileforum.org. Questions can be addressed to info@textileforum.org.

PURPUREAE VESTES IV - Textiles y tintes del Mediterráneo

5-6 November 2010

Literary University of Valencia, Avda. Blásco Ibáñez, 28 (46010 Valencia)

Theme: "Production and Trade of Textiles and Dyes in the Roman Empire and Neighbouring Regions"

Contact: manuel.albaladejo@uv.es

International Symposium and Exhibition on Natural Dyes and Colorants (ISEND) 2011 Europe 24-30 April 2011

La Rochelle, France

Information available at <http://www.isend2011.com>

Twelfth International Conference on Oriental carpets (ICOC)

16-19 June 2011

Stockholm, Sweden

In June 2011 the Twelfth International Conference on Oriental carpets will be held in Stockholm, Sweden.

The conference, a Dealers' Fair and several exhibitions will take place at the congress hall

Stockholmsmässan, ten minutes by train from the

centre of the city. In the evenings there will be exhibitions at several museums and at the Royal Palace with well-known rugs and carpets as the world famous Marby rug, Transylvanian rugs, Polonoise, Swedish folk art textiles from the 18th century, a world famous Safavid velvet coat that belonged to Queen Christina *etc.* A pre-tour to Copenhagen June 14-15 to see the David Collection, the royal castle Rosenborg, the Museum of Applied Arts and the royal apartment at Amalienborg Palace will be organized.

After the conference there will be a post-tour to St. Petersburg to see many famous carpets and textiles from the storages of the Hermitage, Kunstkamera and the Russian Museum of Ethnography. There will be a boat tour and visits to a Palace.

The three cities that will be visited: Copenhagen, Stockholm and St. Petersburg are beautiful cities with rivers, lakes and canals, many beautiful buildings and ideal to see in the summer. Information available at <http://www.icoc-orientalrugs.org/index.shtml> or anette.granlund@bukowskis.se

XI Nordic-TAG on Multidisciplinary archaeology with session on Textile and Theory

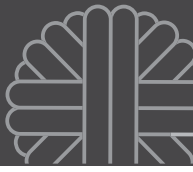
26-29 April 2011

Kalmar, Sweden

Textile research as an specialized archaeological field of research has a reputation of being non-theoretical and the results obtained are often considered difficult to use in archaeological research in general. Textile research is a field that contains researchers with many different training backgrounds and approaches, and a textile researcher can for example, be a textile conservator, textile engineer, craft person, archaeologist, historian or ethnologist. Similarly textile research has traditionally focused on the analyses of the textiles themselves: developing of methodology and new types of analyses especially in collaboration with the natural sciences.

As textile archaeologists, analysis of archaeological textiles and studies of their physical and social context from both a diachronic and a synchronic perspective are of course, together with different theoretical approaches, essential in our interpretation of the past. The challenge is not the lack of material, results or theoretical approaches, but rather how to integrate all this information into archaeological research and make it visible and useable. Further, it is important to discuss what textile research can contribute to the understanding and the interpretation of the past.

This session invites conference participants to show how theoretical approaches can be applied to textile



research results or how textile researchers have contributed to the theoretical discussion. For further information please contact: evaandersson@hum.ku.dk

Textile Calendar 2010

28-31 July: Celtic Conference in Classics, session "Addressing Dress: Clothing in the Ancient World", University of Edinburgh, UK

23-25 August: "Textile Production workshop", Land of Legends Lejre, Historical Archaeological research and communication centre, Lejre Denmark
http://ctr.hum.ku.dk/conferences/2010/uploads/textile_production_workshop.pdf/

1-5 September: EAA sessions "Threads to the past: novel methods for the investigation of archaeological textiles and other organic materials", "Golden glittering garments; Investigation, Systematic Study, Experimental Reconstruction, Handling and "Material networks in the ancient Mediterranean and beyond", the Hague, Netherlands
www.eaa2010.nl

6-12 September: Second Textile Forum, Archeoparc Val Senales, South Tyrol

8-9 September: Conference "Distribution Networks for Textiles and Dress, c. 1700-1945", Wolverhampton, UK
<http://home.wlv.ac.uk/~in6086/2010conf.html>

6-9 October: Textile Society of America Symposium "Textiles and Settlement: From Plains Space to Cyber Space", Lincoln, NE, USA
http://www.textilesociety.org/symposia_2010.htm

5-6 November: Purpureae Vestes IV "Production and Trade of Textiles and Dyes in the Roman Empire and Neighbouring Regions", Valencia, Spain

19-20 November: Early Textiles Study Group Meeting "Colour", London, UK
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