



Joanne Cutler

7ICAANE 2010

16 April 2010, Institute of Archaeology,
University College London, UK

During the 7ICAANE conference (International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East) a one-day workshop entitled 'Textile Production in the Ancient Near East: Neolithic Age – Bronze Age – Iron Age' was organised by Eva Andersson Strand and Marie-Louise Nosch of the Danish National Research Council's Centre for Textile Research, Copenhagen; its aim was to discuss the background for the introduction of textiles in the region and the subsequent development of tools, fibres and techniques, as well as to consider the social and symbolic aspects of dress in the societies of the Ancient Near East. The fifteen papers presented approached the theme from a number of different perspectives, including textile tool studies, experimental testing, iconographic studies and context studies.

In the morning session, Tineke Rooijackers (Leiden University Institute for Religious Studies, The Netherlands) discussed the appearance of spindle whorls in the Late Neolithic period at Tell Sabi Abyad and throughout the Near East, suggesting that their introduction was linked to the first spinning of animal fibres. Peter Fischer (Gothenburg University, Sweden and Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria) presented the evidence for textile production at Abu al-Kharaz in Jordan and considered the differences in the textile tools from different periods at the site, from the Early Bronze Age through to the Iron Age. Janet Levy and Isaac Gilead (Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel) then examined the adoption of textile economy in the southern Levant during the Chalcolithic period. Eva Andersson Strand (The Danish National Research Foundation's Centre for Textile Research, University of Copenhagen, Denmark) followed this with a discussion of an Old Mesopotamian text containing a description of how a 'guza' textile was made, considering how this could be interpreted with regard to both the techniques used and the type of fabric produced. Riccardo Besana (Dipartimento di Storia e Tutela

dei Beni Culturali, Università degli Studi di Udine, Italy) discussed the corpus of loom weights from Tell Mishrifeh (Qatna), while Agnete Wisti Lassen (Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark) considered the function of crescent shaped loom weights found at Anatolian sites in Bronze Age contexts. Laura Mazow (Department of Anthropology, East Carolina University, USA) ended the morning with an examination of the evidence for fulling in the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean.

Guilia Baccelli (University of Tübingen, Germany) started the afternoon session with a paper exploring the symbolic meaning of textiles in Syria in the second millennium BC, focusing on the evidence from the Royal Tomb of Qatna. Luca Peyronel and Frances Pinnock (Università di Roma, Italy) then discussed court attire in Early Syrian Ebla, drawing on the technological, textual and iconographic evidence. Assaf Yassar-Landau (Leon Recanati Institute for Maritime Studies, Haifa University, Israel), Eric Cline (Department of Classics and Semitic, George Washington University, USA) and Nurith Goshen (University of Pennsylvania, USA) followed this with a discussion of the evidence for textile production in palatial and non-palatial contexts at Tel Kabri in Israel. Marie-Louise Nosch's paper presented the results of the analyses carried out on a fragment of textile recovered from a Late-Final PPNB layer (8200 BP) from Basta in Jordan. Irene Good (Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, USA) then considered changes in fibre use and spinning technologies on the Iranian Plateau c. 4500-2500 BCE, and Caroline Sauvage (ISAW, New York University, USA) examined the evidence for spinning at Ugarit. Jeanette Boertien (University of Groningen, The Netherlands) discussed the loom weights from Tell Deir 'Alla in the Jordan Valley and their links to material from Syria. Finally, Joanna Smith (Princeton University, USA) explored the evidence for tapestries



in the Late Bronze Age and early Iron Age, focusing on Cyprus. The wide range of topics and perspectives presented

at the workshop initiated a great deal of stimulating and lively discussion, and a volume of the papers will be published in 2011.

Lena Larsson Lovén

TRAC 2010

25-28 March 2010, University of Oxford,
UK

In March this year the 20th Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference (TRAC) took place in Oxford, hosted by the University of Oxford and arranged in collaboration with the 9th Roman Archaeology Conference (RAC). The conference started with an opening lecture on the first evening, 25th of March, and was followed by more than 20 sessions during the next two and half days (26-28 March). The sessions covered many different aspects of Roman archaeology from all over the Roman Empire for instance Rome and the Sea, various aspects of Roman religion, Roman imperialism, and recent archaeological work on villas at the bay of Naples. Many interesting papers were presented – for the TRAC conference with a special emphasis on theoretical approaches.

Of particular interest to the readers of Archaeological Textile Newsletter was the session on “Cloth, clothes and gender in Roman art”. The session was organised by Kelly Olson from the University of Western Ontario in Canada. Kelly Olson has published several works on the clothing of Roman women and most recently a book on *Dress and the Roman woman. Self-representation and society* (London/New York 2008) and as contributor to *Roman dress and the fabric of Roman culture* (eds. J. Edmondson and A. Keith, Toronto 2008). At the TRAC conference

she gave a paper on tunics as a sign of status and masculinity in Roman antiquity. Two of the papers in this session were concerned with representations on funerary monuments from the western and eastern parts of the Roman Empire. Lena Larsson Lovén (University of Gothenburg, Sweden) discussed how men and women are represented in relation to textile production on funerary monuments from Roman Italy and Gaul. Erika Cappelletto (University of Heidelberg, Germany) discussed spinning implements as represented on funerary stelae from Asia Minor. In the eastern and western Roman provinces spinning was clearly related to women and it was used as an iconographic symbol of female work as well as femininity. Two other papers were concerned with clothing in the Roman provinces of the Danube provinces. Ursula Rothe (University of Edinburgh, UK) talked about native woman's dress in the Danube provinces as a possible key to the understanding of the cultural identity of region. Karina Grömer and Eva Hölbling-Steigberger (University of Vienna, Austria) presented textile finds from cemeteries in the Roman province of Noricum dated to the 4th and 5th centuries AD. The textiles were the basis of a discussion on clothing and adornment as expression of identity, community and social structures in Noricum. The TRAC 2011 conference will be held in Newcastle, UK.