



Dear Reader,

The year 2022 became the one in which the pandemic finally lost its tight grip on our academic world and the world in general. Conferences could take place in person again and the previous good experiences with online participation made it possible for those still unable to travel to link up with old and new scientific communities. In this issue, we have news from some of these conferences. There are still fewer than usual but the number is increasing. Please remember that you are all welcome to report on all events relevant to our *Archaeological Textiles Review* readers in the future. Despite the pandemic, ATR has received a constant flow of contributions this year and we already have many exciting articles and project reports in the pipeline for the next issue (ATR 65) – but we are always ready for more. We do our best to process material for the next issue as promptly as possible and continue to be a route to relatively quick publication. However, the editors and peer reviewers are all volunteers and we are grateful for your patience, if the process is delayed or postponed. We, just like everybody else at the moment, struggle with difficult work conditions for international collaborative work.

Our cover for this issue pays tribute to Ukrainian refugees who are volunteering with our colleagues in Estonia in an extensive textile project. Jaana Ratas, textile conservator at the University of Tartu and Anu Lensment, a fashion designer working for Estonian TV, are part of a network of local coordinators all over Estonia who are recycling textiles into camouflage nets on university campuses, in museums, and at social centres. There are 3,500 members in the project, both locals and refugees, with more members joining each day. A Facebook group, Aitan Kaitsta (I help to defend), helps to coordinate the work.

Information about net making, including up-to-date colour schemes for them, is shared there. The Estonian specialists have all studied textiles, fashion, design, traditional crafts, or conservation to university level. They receive advice from engineers and military experts about the best techniques for making camouflage nets and use their own craft skills to develop step-by-step instructions, which are published as free downloads in Estonian, Ukrainian and English and in tutorial videos.

The handmade camouflage nets are considered better than the mass-produced ones because they blend into the environment more naturally and are more effective at disguising vehicles and people. Since March this year, nearly 1,000 m² of camouflage netting has been made in Estonia and sent to Ukraine making use of

three tons of secondhand clothes, household textiles and sacks donated by clothing and coffee shops. They are made from old fishing nets, strips of the upcycled fabric, and unravelled jute. Sorting these materials, which must be categorised by colour for different kinds of camouflage, is a regular part of volunteers' work. Needles made for single needle looping are used for sewing fishing nets together and people with dyeing skills tint the textiles, if necessary. Despite 14-hour days at the beginning of the project and now three days a week away from their regular jobs for the Estonian coordinators, there are never enough nets. Other textile academics volunteer to work on the nets during their free time, including their lunch breaks, and some have started researching the history of camouflage to inform the project.

The Ukrainian volunteers add their own "magic" to the camouflage nets: prayers, rhymes, and greetings are written on the labels, and little dolls filled with herbs or cloth angels in blue and yellow are tied to them. Children's drawings, chocolate, and knitted woollen socks are also hidden inside the rolled-up nets. Many project participants also now knit socks for the soldiers, adding labels with their thanks and good wishes. There are benefits too for those making the nets. They make new friends, share stories, learn new languages, and experience the therapeutic effects of doing something useful with their hands which distracts them from their anxieties. Sometimes, the Ukrainian women sing while they work. Often, there is positive feedback from Ukraine which is very motivating for them. Some refugees have returned to Ukraine and continue to make nets there using the skills, knowledge and instructions they gained in Estonia. Despite the success of the project, Jaana says that she hopes "the war will be over some day and I could do textile research again."

This project is a timely reminder that textiles are key to human survival sometimes in ways we do not always appreciate. Whose current knowledge will prove crucial in the future? Our growing awareness of sustainable textile production makes its ancient and historical context ever more relevant – we can learn a lot from the past. We should all work on bringing our knowledge of the past to the fore in discussions about the future. Learning from the past also includes respecting the knowledge of those who have led our discipline down new paths. ATR 64 features the obituaries of three colleagues who have passed away this year. Even though this is sad, we must be glad that their legacies continue. Each in their own way brought

skill and passion to textile research and we honour their memories.

This year's issue also includes eight articles which range geographically from north Africa to Norway, and from the 16th century BCE to the 17th century CE. Some are about specific new textile discoveries and others document continuing analysis of old finds. The reports section has interesting news about recently started projects and updates on projects coming to an end. They all illustrate the fascinating breadth of textile research underway in European academia today. We congratulate you all on attracting the necessary funding and managing these complicated collaborations. A tremendous amount of work goes into managing research in this field, we hope that these experiences will benefit all who are working in textile research in the long run.

We hope you all enjoy reading this open-source journal, which is free to download and share. This is only possible through the dedication of many enthusiastic hearts, minds and hands. Please do consider offering your services if you would like to help keep this journal alive and kicking or consider sending us a contribution for publication. The deadline for articles for every issue is 1 May each year but project and conference reports may be submitted by 1 June and 1 October, respectively. The deadline for news including doctorates awarded, new publications or awards is 1 November.

Please note that it is still possible to order a printed copy of ATR from the webshop at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark (www.webshophum-en.ku.dk/shop/archaeological-textiles-664s1.html).

The Editors



Fig. 1: Ukrainian refugees sort second hand clothing and household textiles for camouflage nets (Images: Jaana Ratas and Mark Raidpere)