



International conference “Textiles and war in Europe and the Mediterranean from Prehistory to Late Antiquity”, 17–19 May 2023, Bucharest, Romania

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The international conference “Textiles and war in Europe and the Mediterranean from Prehistory to Late Antiquity” was held from 17th to 19th of May 2023 at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Levant Cultures and Civilization (ISACCL) in Bucharest, Romania (fig. 1). It was organised by Liviu Iancu (ISACCL) and Francesco Meo (University of Salento, Italy). The conference is part of the project “Europe through textiles: network for an integrated and interdisciplinary humanities (EuroWeb)” funded by the European Union.

The conference was attended by 22 participants from 10 countries, who presented 15 papers grouped into five sessions (fig. 2). Keynote lectures were delivered at the beginning of the first two days. The working language was English.

The conference began with opening speeches by Emil Constantinescu, President of the Republic of Romania from 1996 to 2000, and by the organisers Liviu Iancu and Francaesco Meo. This was followed by a keynote lecture by Margarita Gleba (University of Padua, Italy), an Italian archaeologist, who discussed the importance of textiles in ancient warfare. The first session, chaired by Liviu Iancu, was focused on military textiles. Emil Nankov (NAIM–BAS) presented the use of textiles in the production of slings. Accounts by ancient writers and archaeological finds of slings from Egypt, the Levant and Central Europe show the use of different organic materials and production techniques. Gianluca Tagliamonte (University of Salerno, Italy) discussed the military use of linen in Italic equipment and armour on the basis of scarce information from ancient authors and grave finds. Fabio Spagiari and Elisabetta Malaman (PhD student, University of Padua, Italy) continued the theme of using linen for protection. The Italian colleagues presented a very good analysis of the written, iconographic and archaeological evidence for the use of lining in Roman imperial helmets (1st–5th c. AD). It had been hypothesized that different lining systems were used during this period.

Francisco B. Gomes (University of Lisbon, Portugal) was the chairman of the second session. The panel began with presentations by Paulina Lebidowicz (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland) on the iconographic representation of sails and ropes of Greek warships on ancient ceramics. Alina Iancu (Museum and Archaeological Documentation Section of the National Heritage Institute, Bucharest, Romania) discussed war-related representations on ancient textile tools. Spools and conical looms stamped with ring seals showing a warrior with helmet and shield were presented as examples. The last paper in this session was presented by Amine Hadj Taieb (University of Sfax,



Fig. 1 Official poster of the conference
 Обр. 1 Постер на конференцията

Tunisia). The author described Carthaginian military dress using various historical, iconographic and archaeological sources. The session was followed by a visit to the National Museum of the Romanian Peasant.

The second day of the conference opened with a keynote lecture by Raimon Graells i Fabregat (University of Alicante, Spain) entitled, “Craft, design and ergonomics: on decoration, reinforcements and protections for Mediterranean panoplies”. The third session was chaired by Francesco Meo. Liviu Iancu explored the evidence found in ancient writers’ accounts and inscriptions about booty and tribute as a source of textiles for the ancient Greek and Roman armies. The second paper was presented by Francisco B. Gomez, Teresa Rita Pereira (University of Lisbon, Portugal), Carlos Pereira (University of Lisbon, Portugal) and João Pimenta (National Museum of Archaeology, Lisbon, Portugal). The authors discussed textile production in the Roman Republican military contexts of Western Iberia in the 1st c. BC. A domestic, self-sustaining production pattern has been hypothesised on the basis of numerous finds of various textile tools, such as spools and looms from several Roman military sites in Western Spain and Southern Portugal. Iulia Dumitrache (University of Iași, Romania) discussed the problem of supplying the Roman army during the Empire. The author has analysed various types of documents which show that the Roman military relied on official suppliers related to the state and on local merchants for their supplies. Kerstin Droß-Krüpe (University of Kassel and University of Bochum, Germany) continued the discussion on the supply of the Roman army. Due to her absence, the report was presented by Margarita Gleba. Based on papyrological records and written tablets, the author argued that Roman soldiers not only obtained their textile needs from the Roman state, but also from other sources, such as the local market or from friends and relatives.

The iconography of Italic military textiles and clothing was the focus of the fourth session. It was chaired by Gianluca Tagliamonte. Francesco Meo presented a woven and engraved military dress from Daunia area. As examples, the author pointed to the excellently preserved garment from a tomb 382 in Ortona (ancient Herdonia), dated around 400 BC, an anthropomorphic stele of the late 7th c. BC and depiction of a Daunian warrior on a red-figured vase. Carlo Lualdi (PhD student, University of Warwick, United Kingdom) discussed the dress of the warriors depicted on the upper register of the proto-Lucanian red-figure hydria found in tomb 2, part of the necropolis near the settlement of Gravina in Puglia. The day ended with a visit to the George Severeanu Museum.

The third day began with the official presentation of the EuroWeb Digital Atlas of European Textile Heritage by Catarina Costeira (University of Lisbon, Portugal) and Alina Iancu. The Digital Atlas of European Textile Heritage is a project within “EuroWeb – Europe through Textiles: Network



Fig. 2. The participants of the conference in front of ISACC
 Обр. 2. Участниците в конференцията пред ISACC

for Integrated and Interdisciplinary Humanities”. Once completed, the Atlas will be a free online database containing extensive archaeological, historical and ethnographic data on the history of textile crafts and the development of clothing culture in Europe from prehistoric times to the 20th c. The iconography of Imperial Roman military textile items and dress was the subject of the fifth and final session, chaired by Francesco Meo. Ergün Laflı (University of Izmir, Turkey) and Maurizio Buora (Friulian Society of Archaeology, Udine, Italy) presented images of Roman military clothing on sarcophagi in Cilicia (southern Turkey). Philip Kolev (NAIM–BAS) discussed a group of stelae from the Middle Strymon Valley (southwestern Bulgaria). The gravestones depict male figures wearing a belted tunic and a cloak made of animal skins. In one hand they hold a pickaxe, axe, or spear, and in the other a strange object probably made of leather. The author proposed the hypothesis that the men depicted on the funerary stelae were miners who were given the privilege of carrying weapons to defend themselves in case of need. The final paper of the session and the conference was presented by Adrián Gordón-Zan (PhD student, University of Zaragoza, Spain). Based on the accounts of ancient authors, coinage and sculpture, the author examined the evolution of military clothing in the depiction of Roman emperors in the 3rd c. AD.

At the end of the conference, the organisers, Liviu Iancu and Francesco Meo, made some final remarks concerning the study of textile materials in antiquity and the forthcoming publication of the conference proceedings.