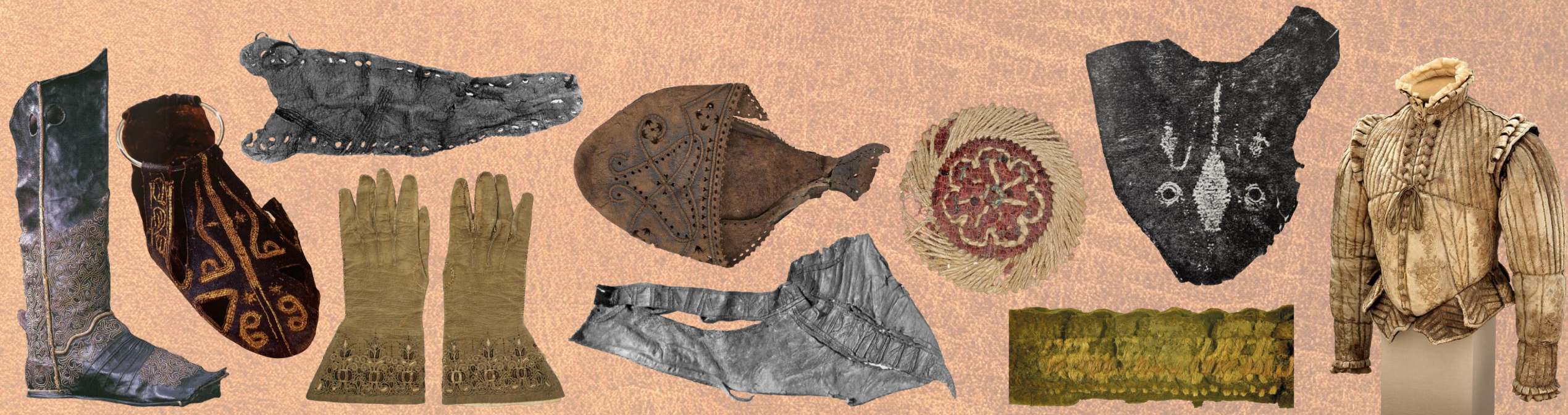


Embroidery on Leather

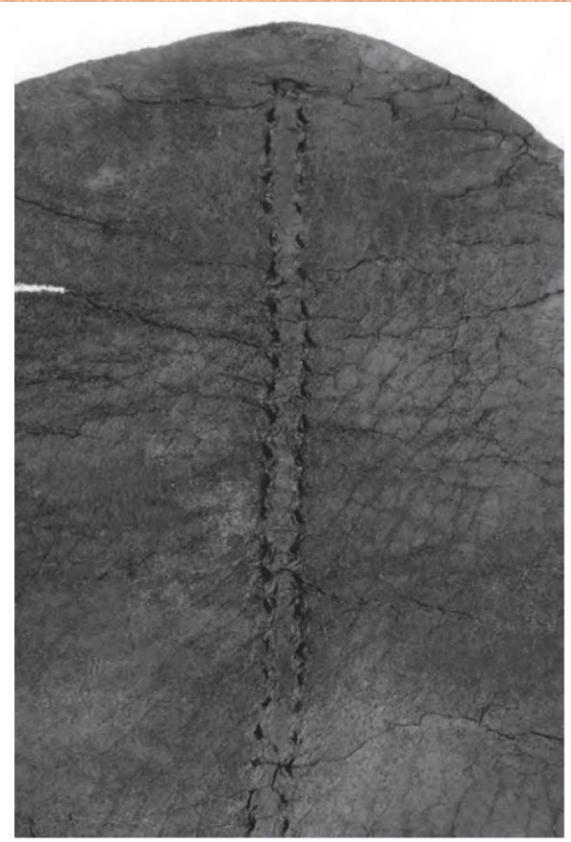
A catalog of Surviving European Artifacts from 600-1600

Robert of Ferness, OL, Pennsic 50

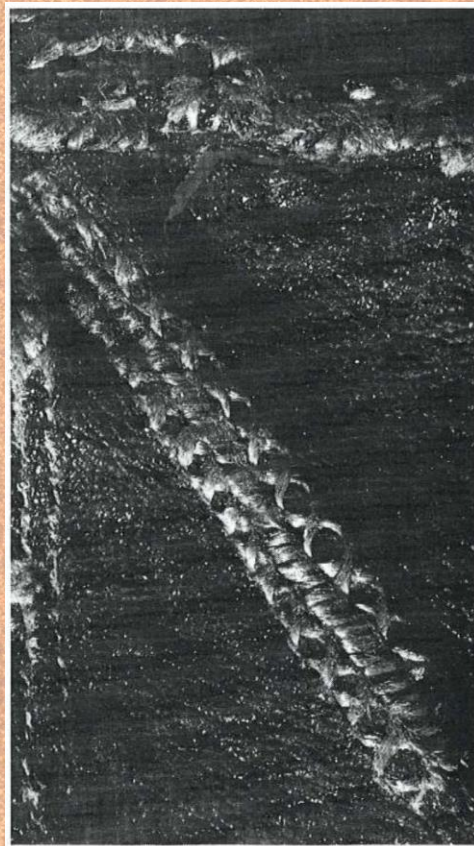


Included

directly applied "embroidery" or "decorative stitching" indicated by direct or indirect evidence of silk, wool, linen, or wire (silver, gold, or tin)



Mould, 2003, p3344, f1673



Pedersen, 1992a, p98, f14

Not Included

inlay, appliqué, ms. repairs, covers



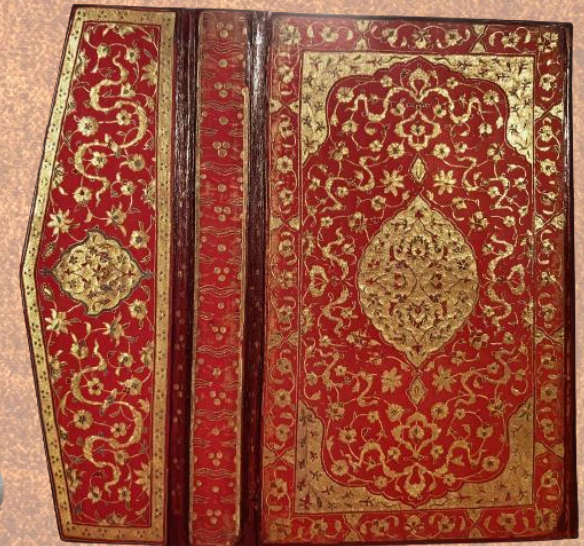
Dagtas, 2007, p57



Sciacca, 2010, pl3



Baudin, et al., 2015, p505

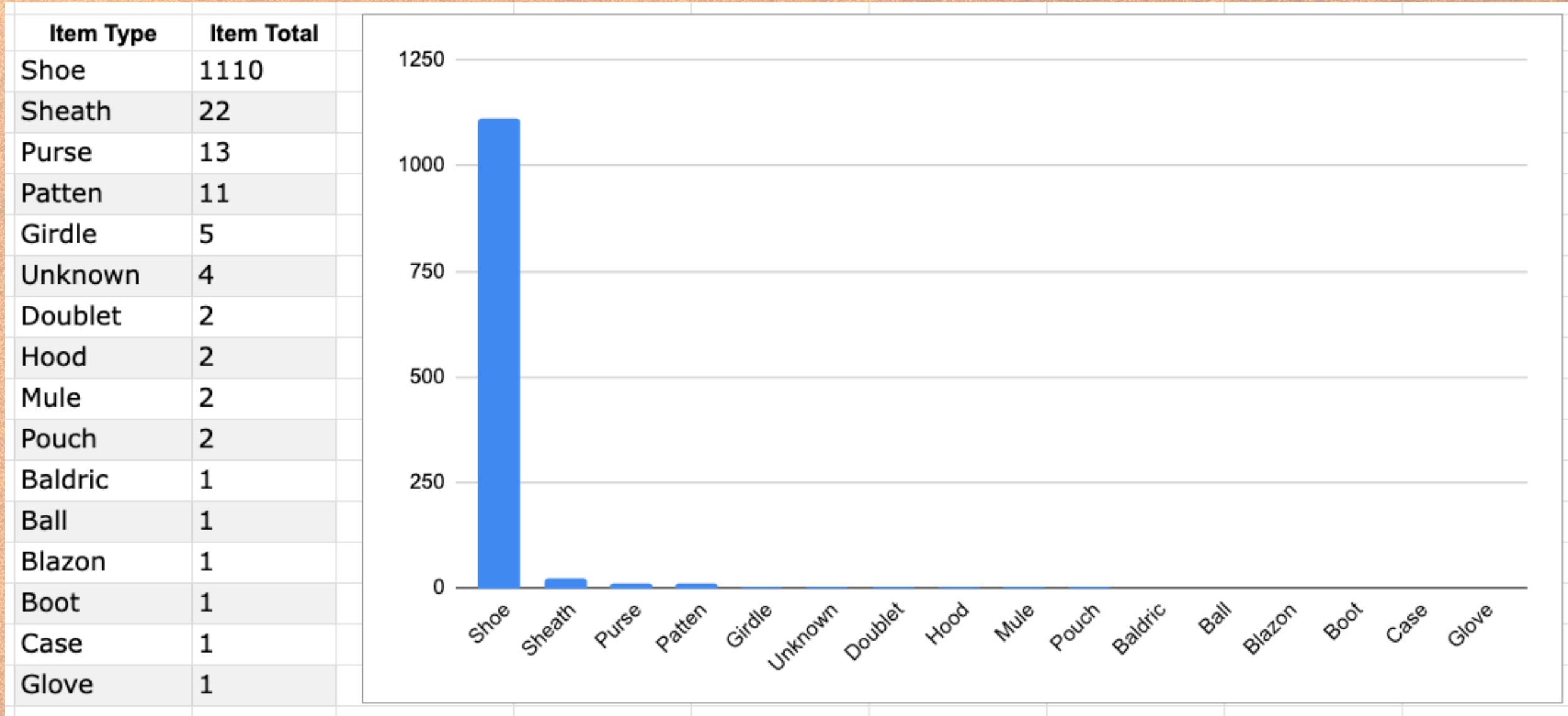


Rogers, 1986, pl94

Methodology

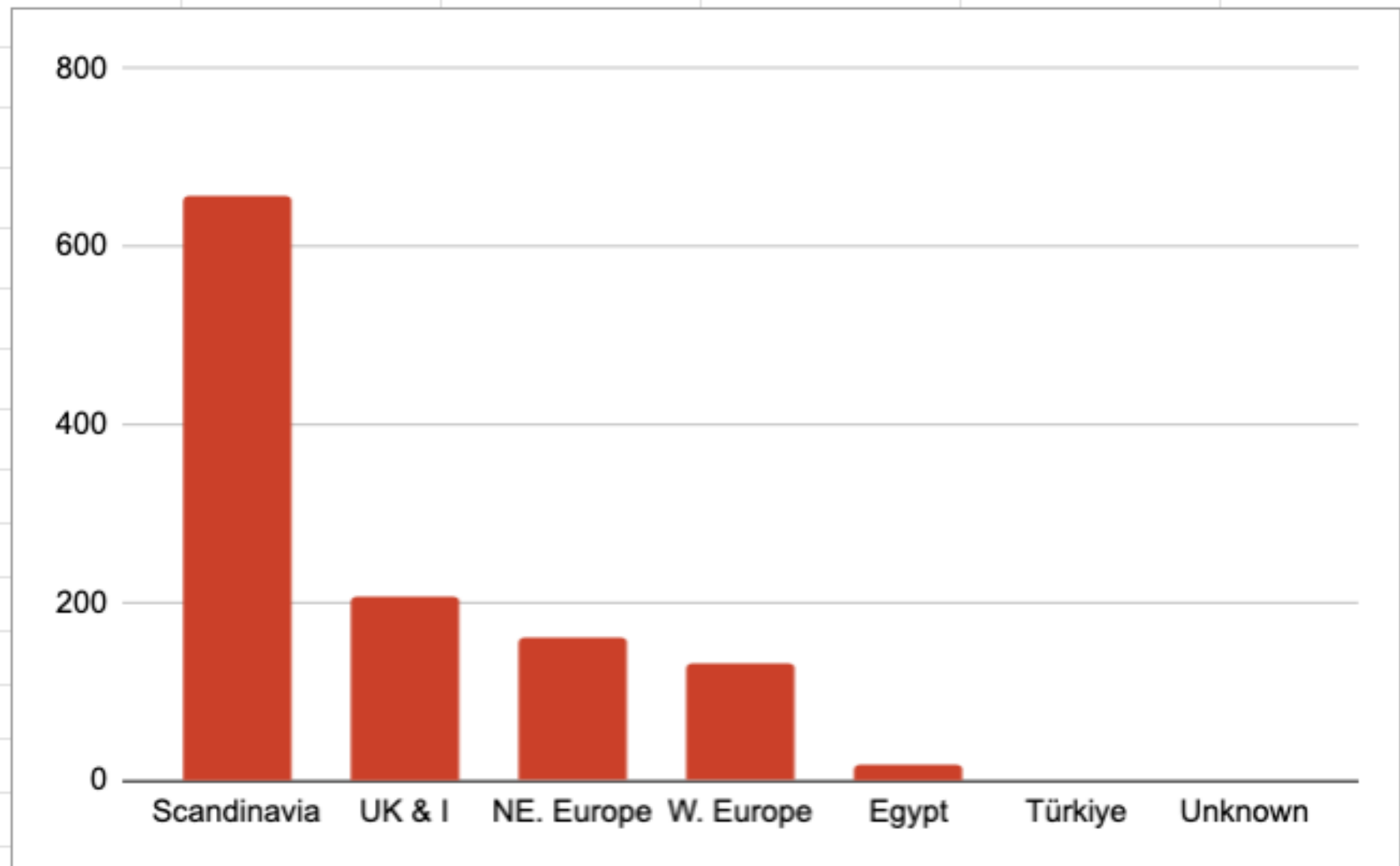
- To-date, I have been limited to working with published books and articles, and some online prospecting, and e-mail queries to museums.
- Twelve languages so far: Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish. *Google Translate has been very useful.*
- Any details provided about the embroidery itself, such as stitches, quality of work, type or spin of thread, stitch count, etc., come from the sources: I have not (yet) handled any of the items in this catalog nor travelled to see them in person, to take clearer macro photos, or to study them up close.
- Most of the sources provide only low-quality photographs or simple line drawings so the embroidery is not particularly photogenic.

The vast majority of leather artifacts that have direct embroidery or decorative stitching are shoes.



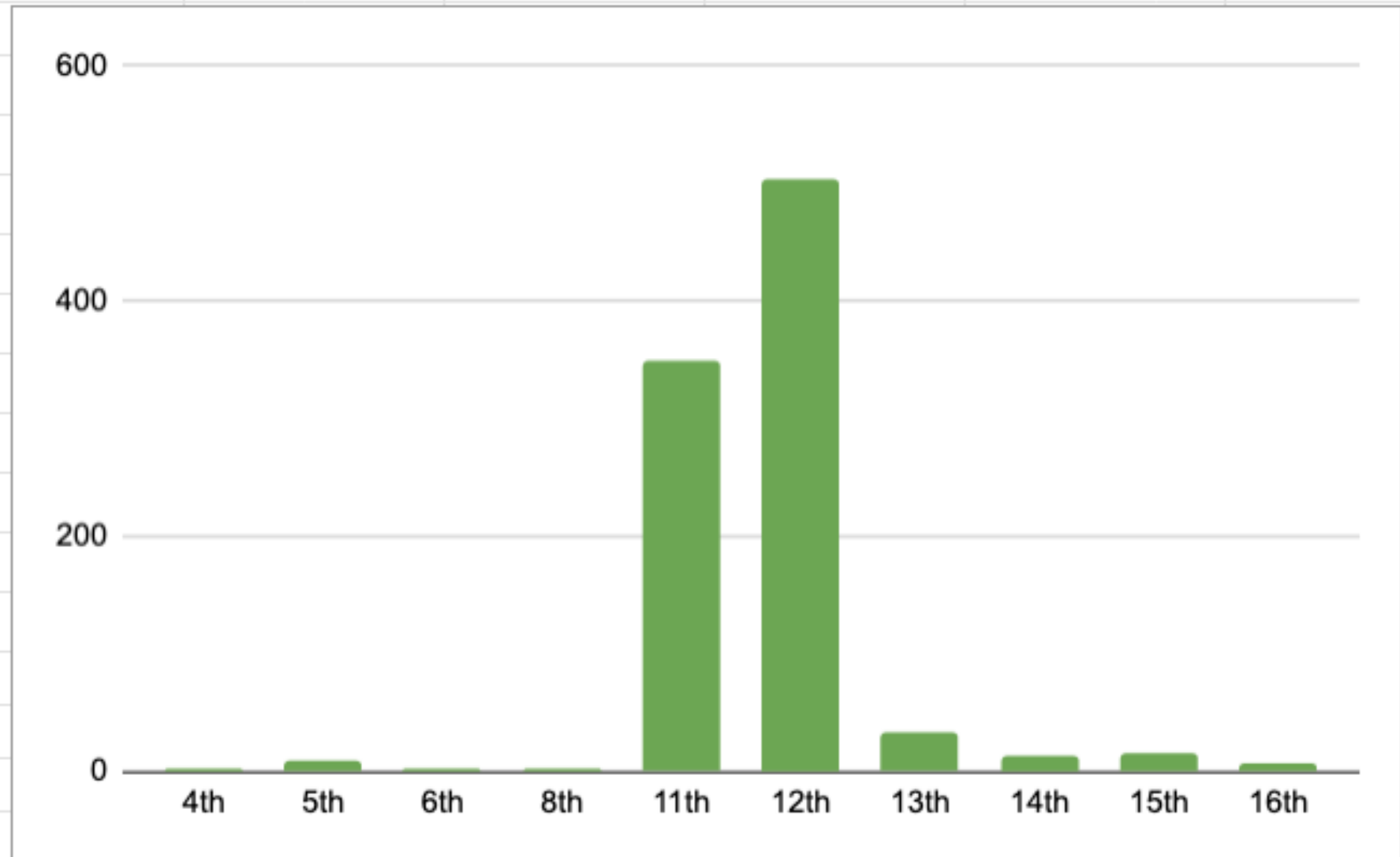
The vast majority of items come from Scandinavia, in urban settings.

Region	Item Total
Scandinavia	658
UK & I	208
NE. Europe	161
W. Europe	133
Egypt	18
Türkiye	1
Unknown	1



The vast majority of items date to the 11th-12th century.

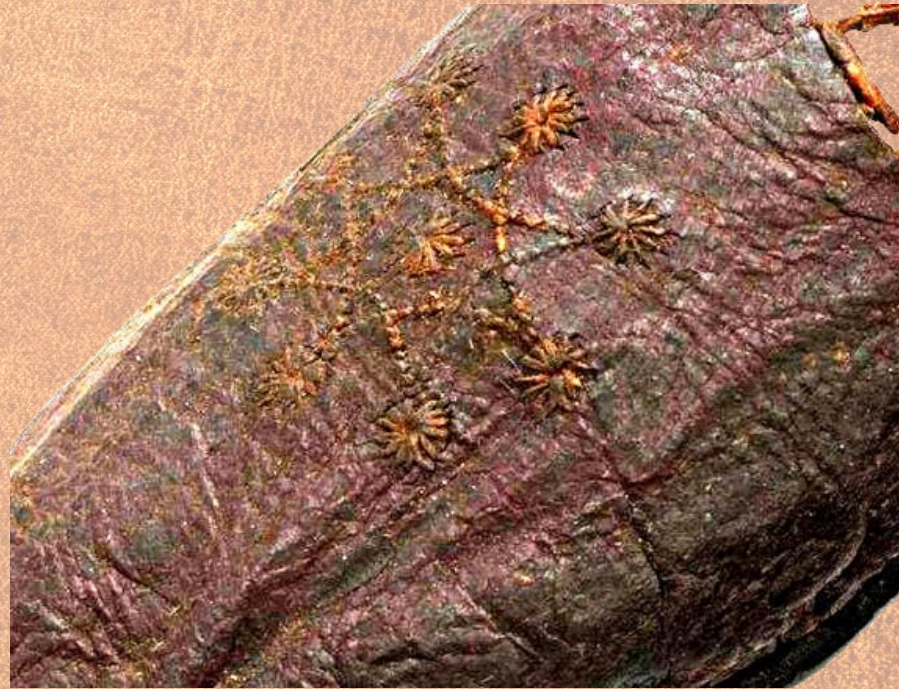
Century	Item Total
4th	3
5th	10
6th	4
8th	3
11th	349
12th	503
13th	33
14th	14
15th	17
16th	7



Egyptian Shoes



Veldmeijer and Ikram, 2014, p278 (top)
Veldmeijer and Ikram, 2014, p280 (bottom)



VA2015HK1356 enlarged and enhanced

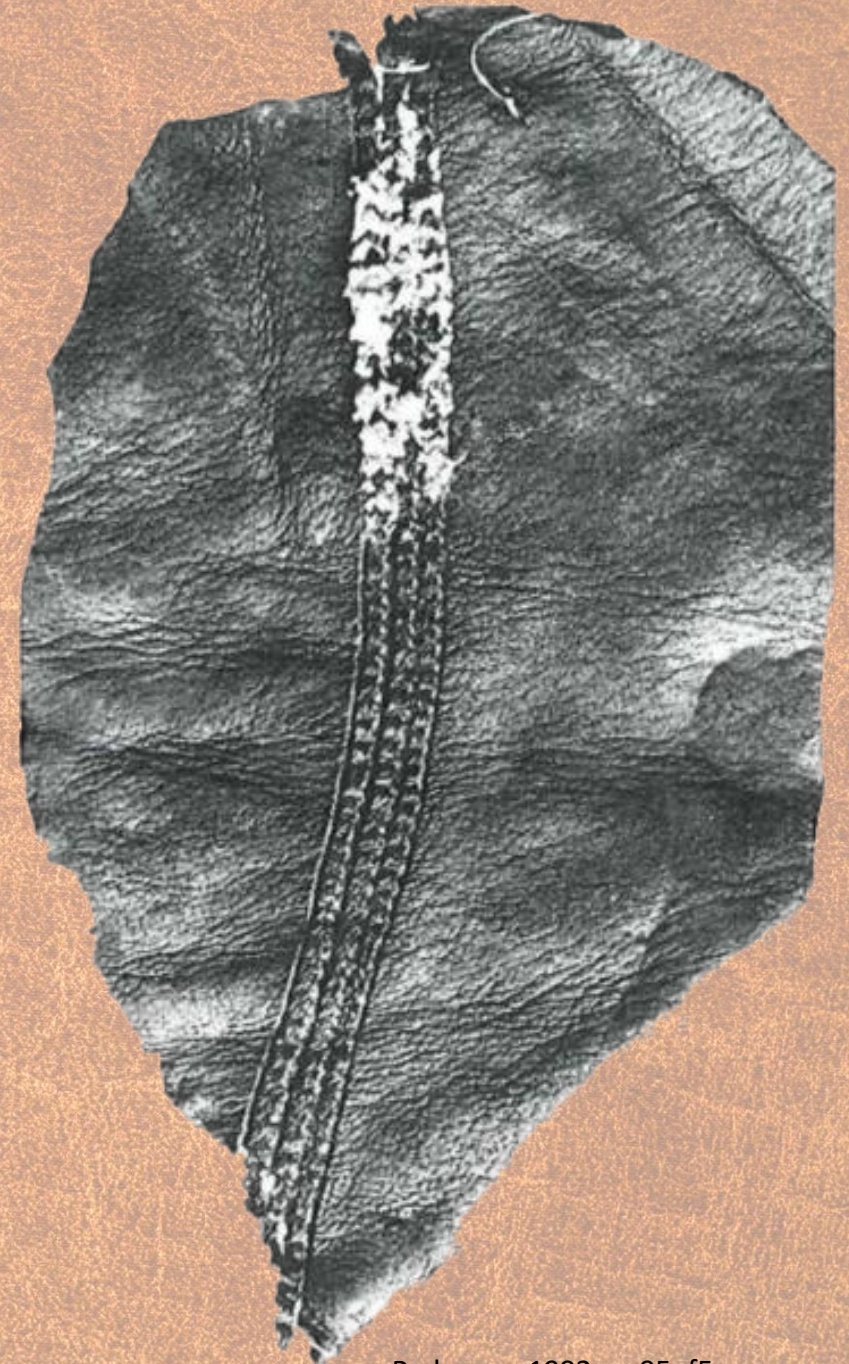


VA2009CC5620 enlarged

Three Shoe-Embroidery Styles

Northwest Europe:

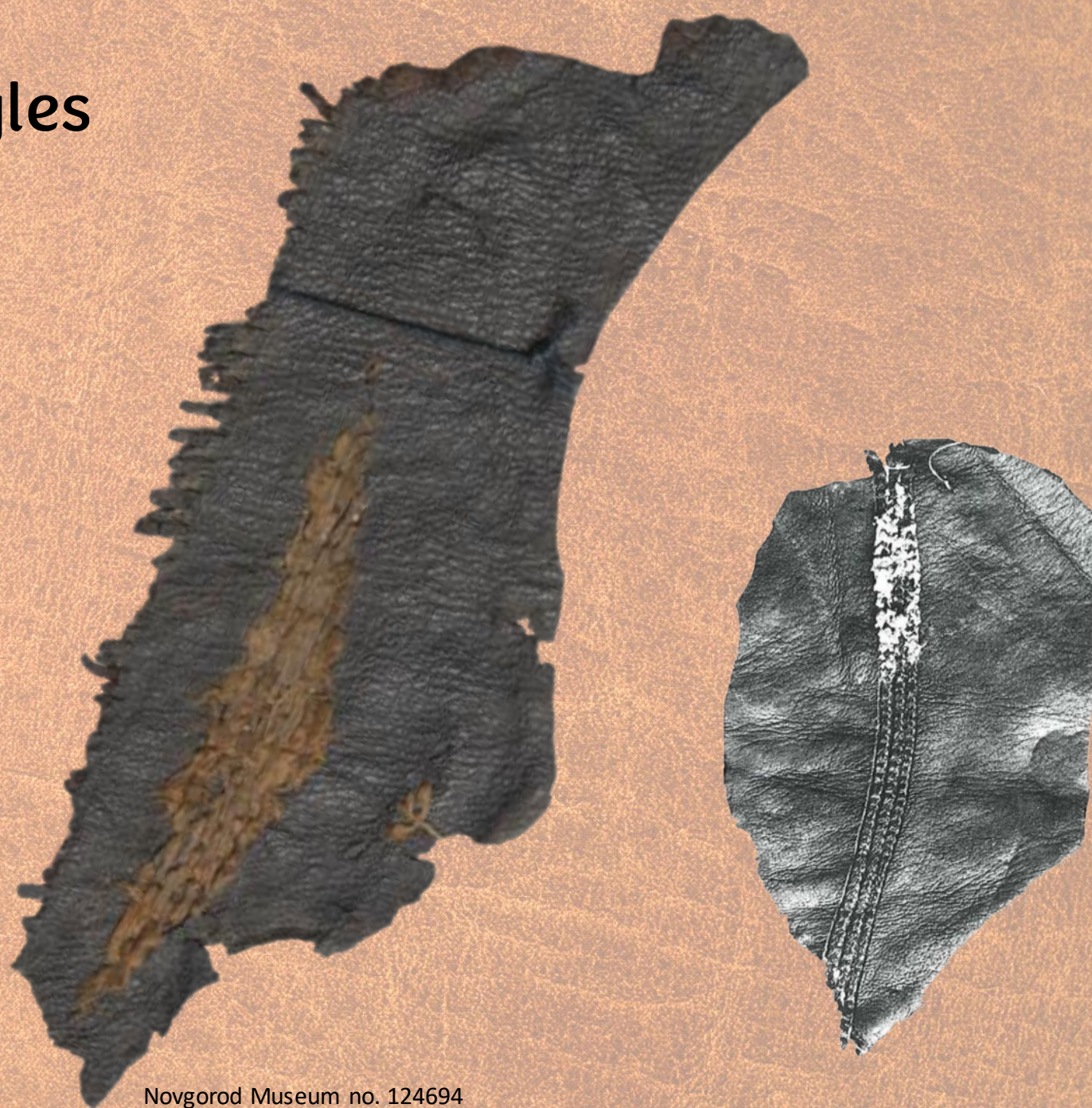
- ❖ parallel incisions
- ❖ tunneling threads
- ❖ satin, fishbone, cross



Three Shoe-Embroidery Styles

Northeast Europe:

- ❖ linear stitches
- ❖ long curving lines or shapes
- ❖ rhomboidal, floral, and spiral designs

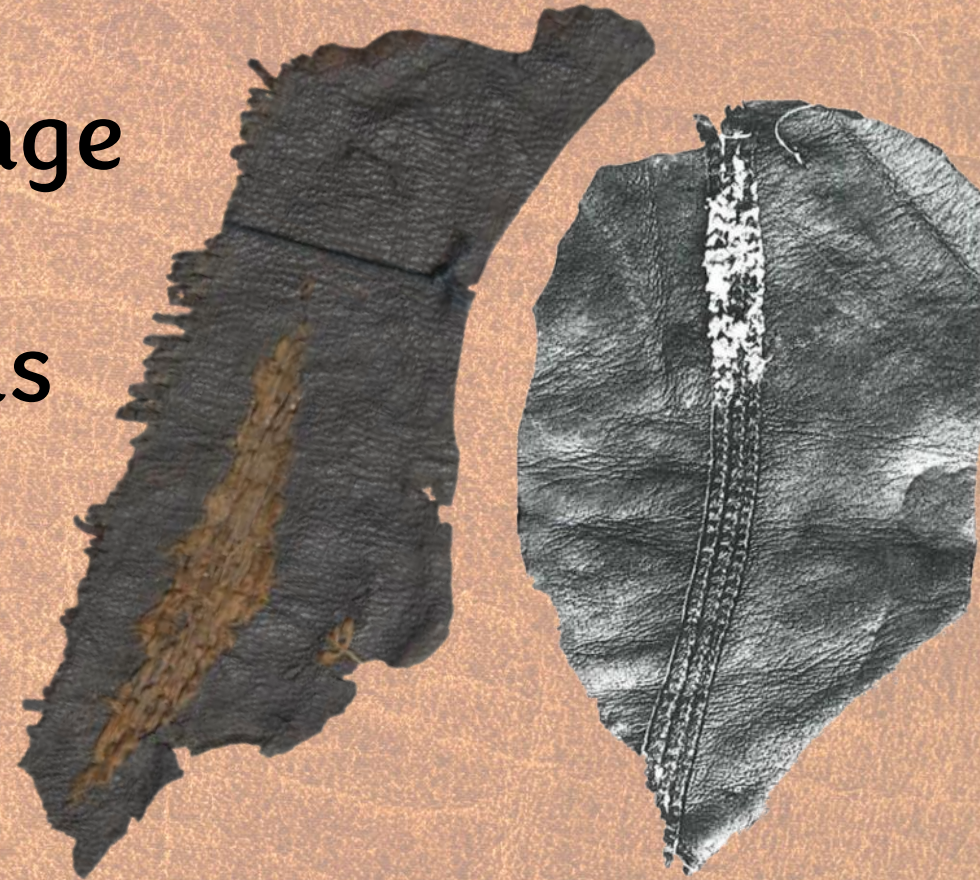


Three Shoe-Embroidery Styles



Ecclesiastical:

- ❖ area coverage
- ❖ broad bands
- ❖ Italian?



Shoes with Linear Embroidery

Found in:

- Bergen
- Oslo
- Trondheim
- London
- York
- Schleswig
- Waterford
- Vlaardingen
- Sheffield
- Perth
- Coventry

Parallel lines:

- always at least a toe-to-ankle strip of 1 or 3 stripes
- possibly other lines (descending from ankle)
- usually straight, but can curve and occur in groups

Stitches:

- satin
- raised fishbone
- cross

Materials:

- silk
- linen
- wool

Colors:

- red
- gold/yellow
- green
- pink
- white/natural
- brown
- black

Examples of Northwestern European shoe designs

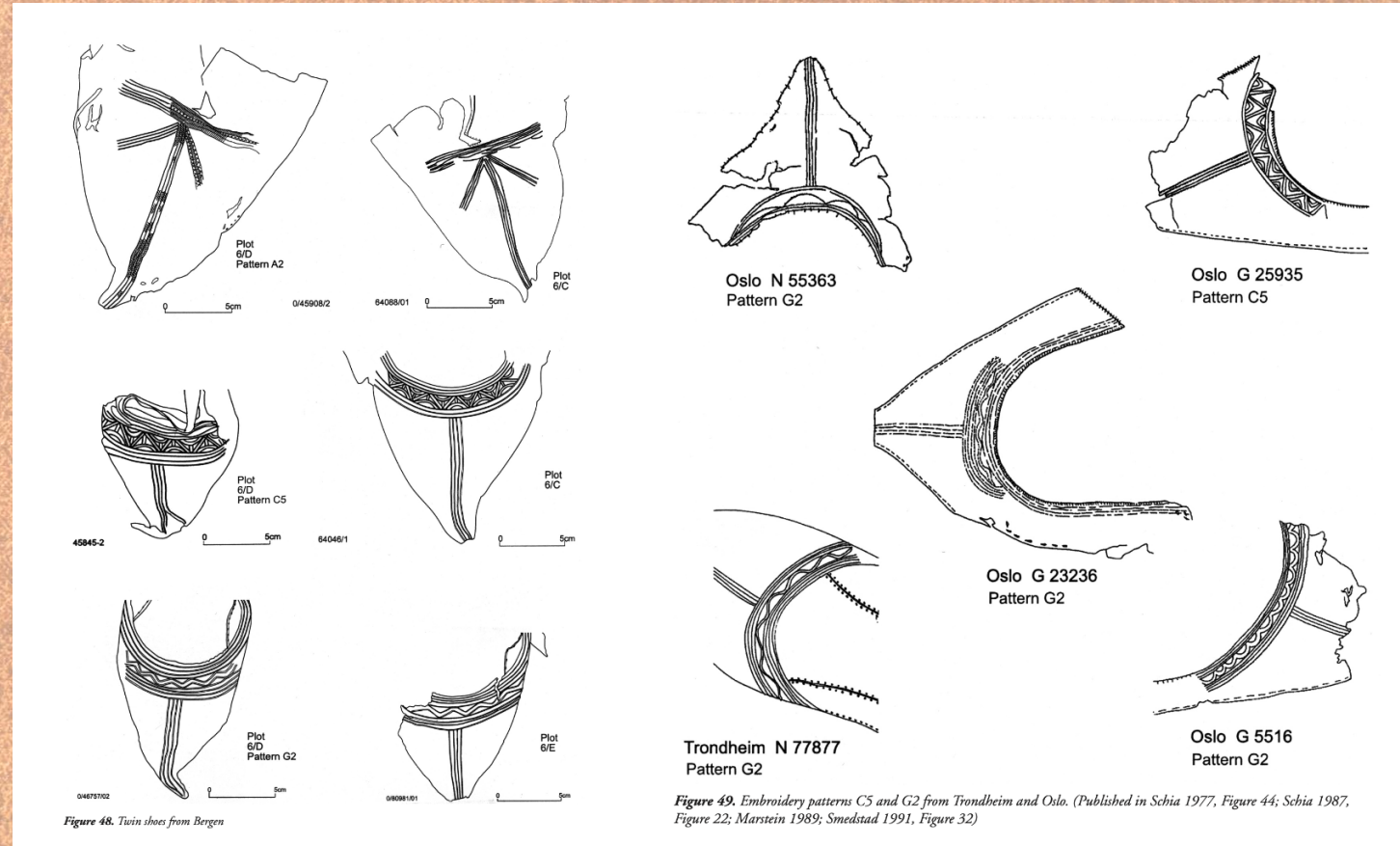
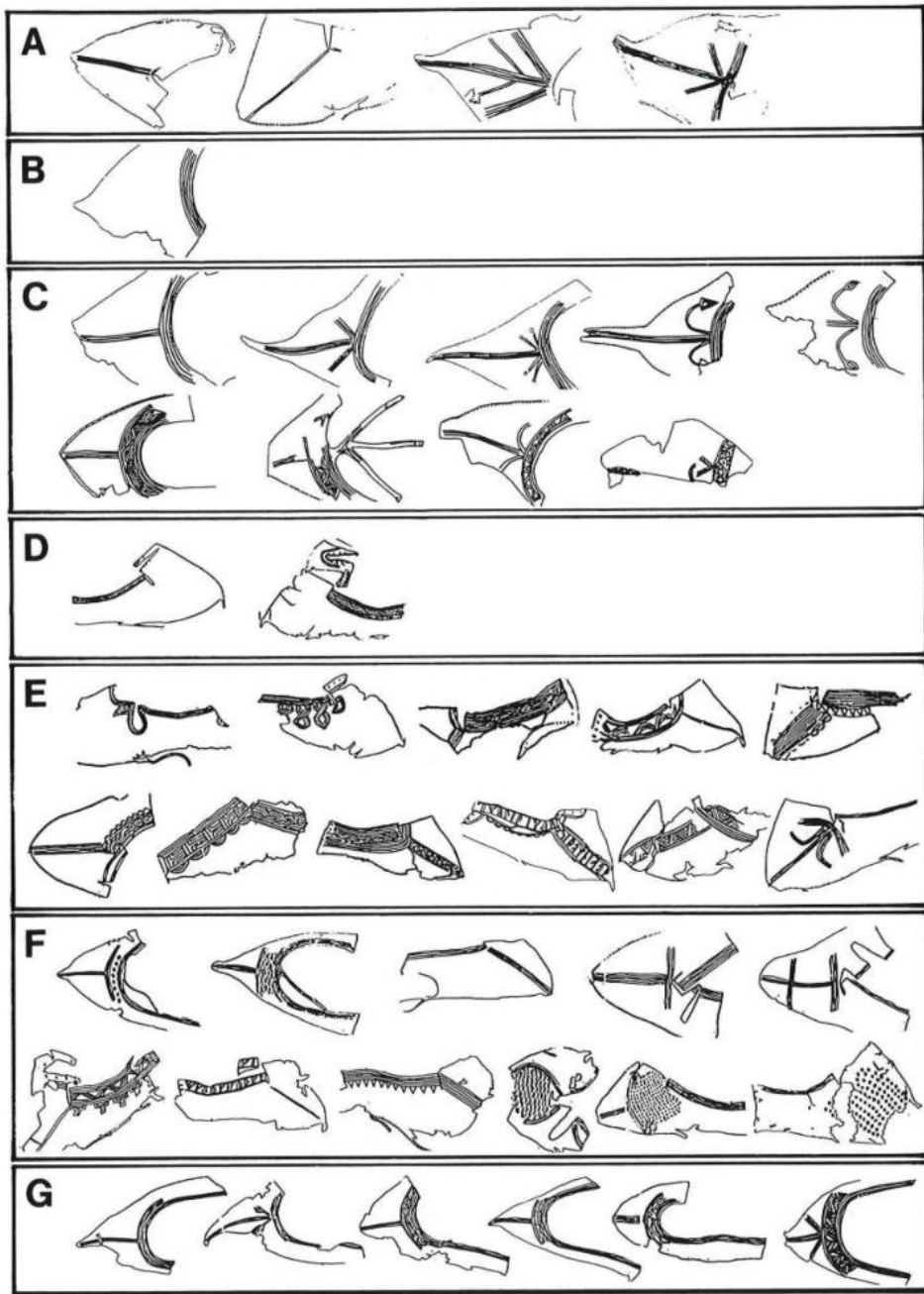


Figure 48. Twin shoes from Bergen

Manuscript examples of embroidered shoes



Codex Manesse 6r



Bayeux Tapestry

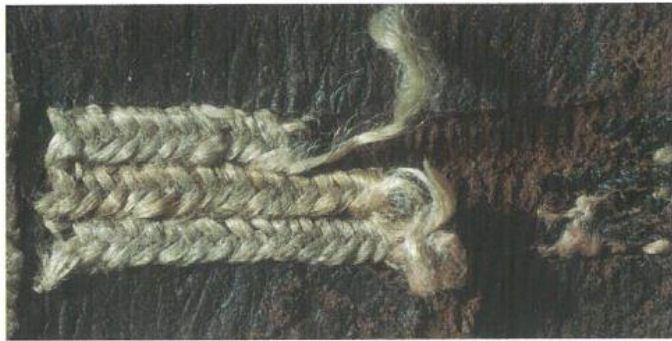
Hortus Deliciarum



Ingeborg Psalter 41u



Shoes from Bergen, Norway

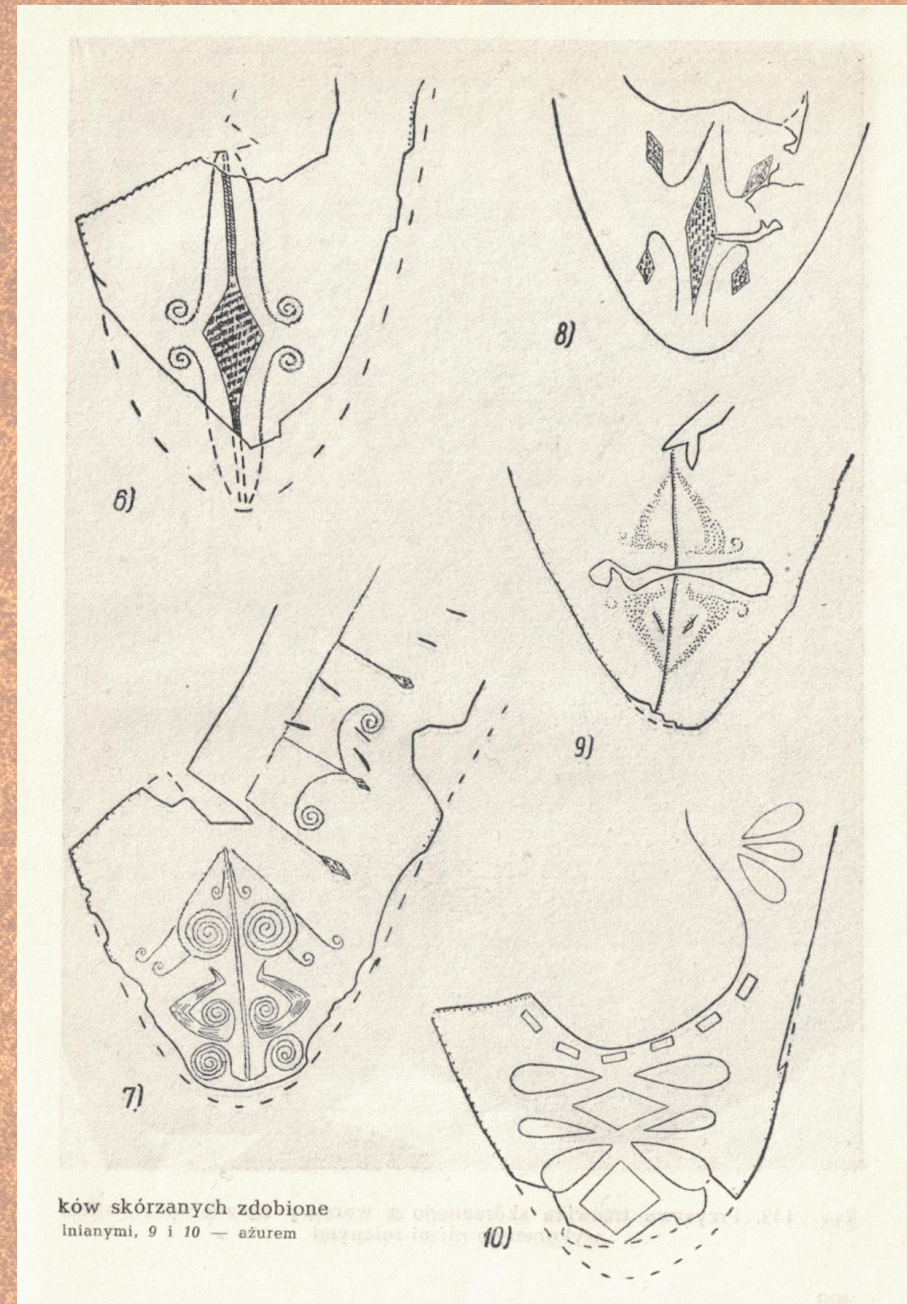
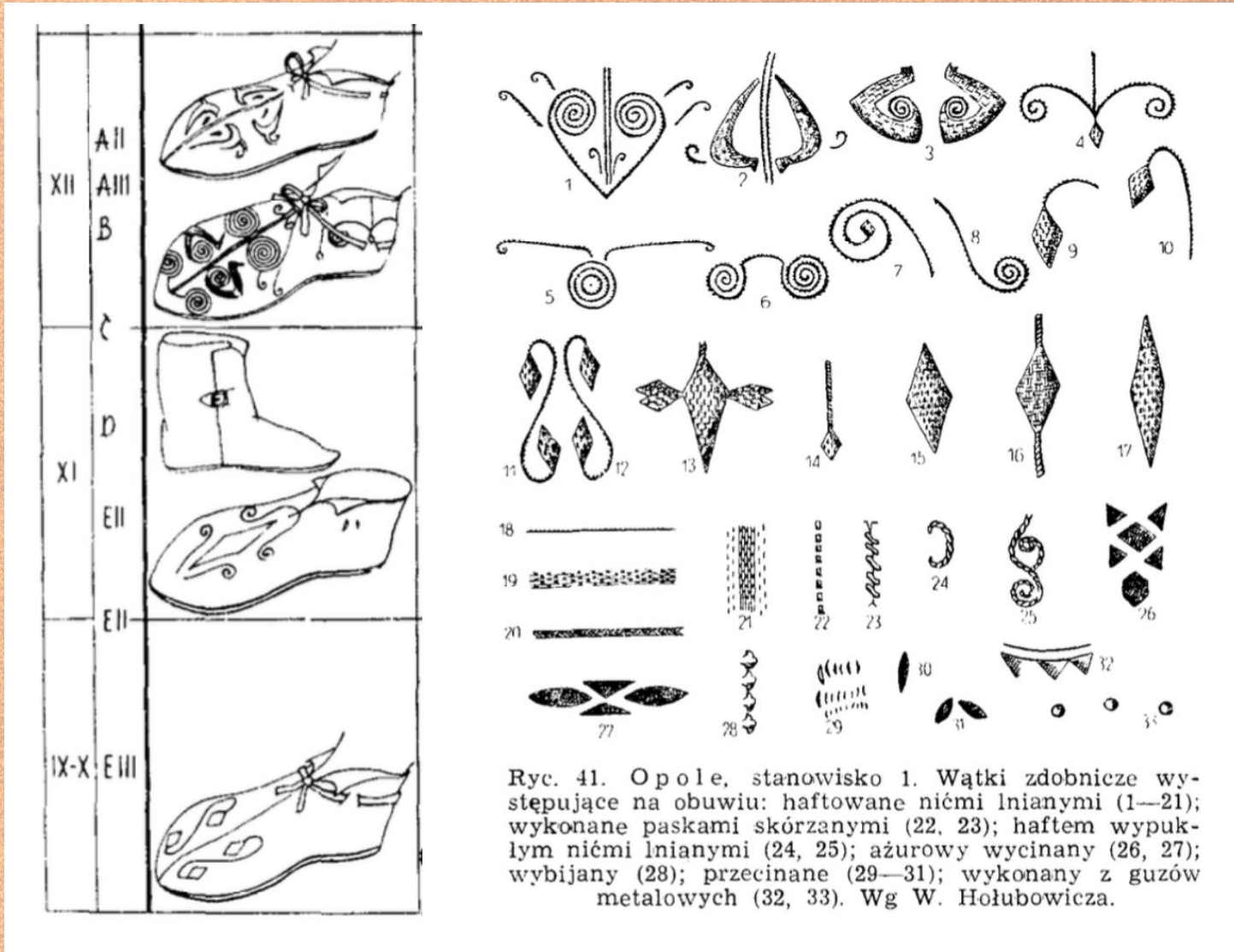


Close-up of northwestern embroidery technique

- ❖ Keeps the water out
- ❖ Prevents internal wear



Examples of Northeastern European shoe designs



Shoes with Naturalistic Embroidery

Found in:

- Gdańsk
- Opole
- Wolin
- Staraya Ladoga
- Nougorod
- Wrocław
- Szczecin

Shapes:

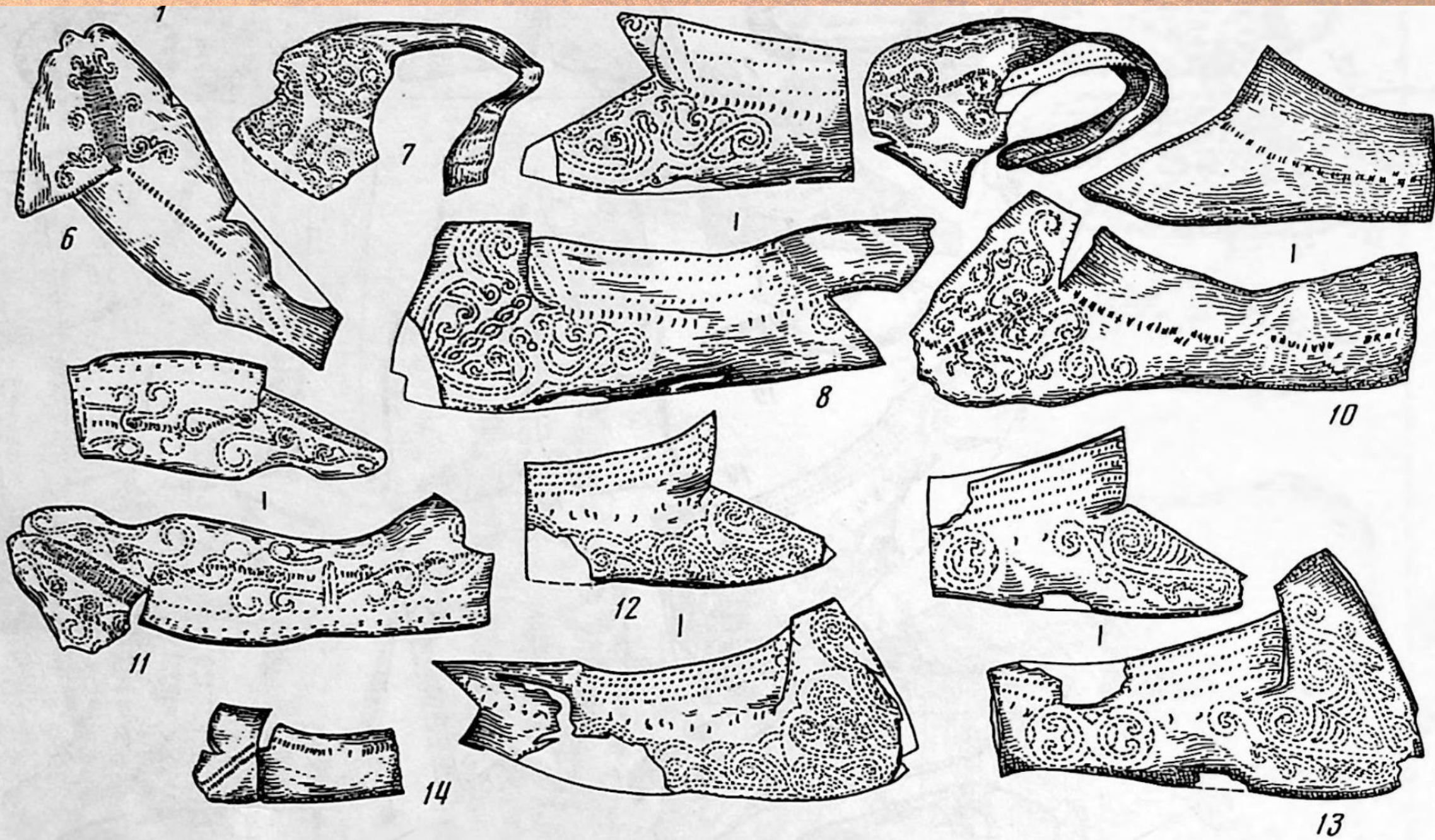
- floral
- spiral
- rhomboidal
- foliaceous

Stitches:

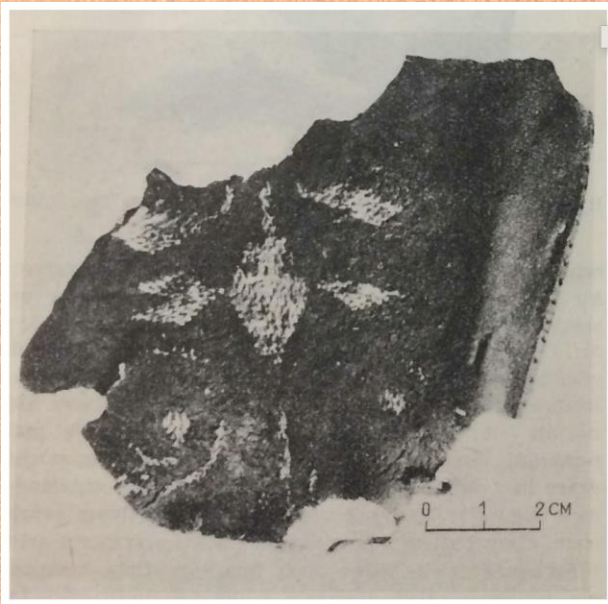
- running
- return
- uncertain

Materials:

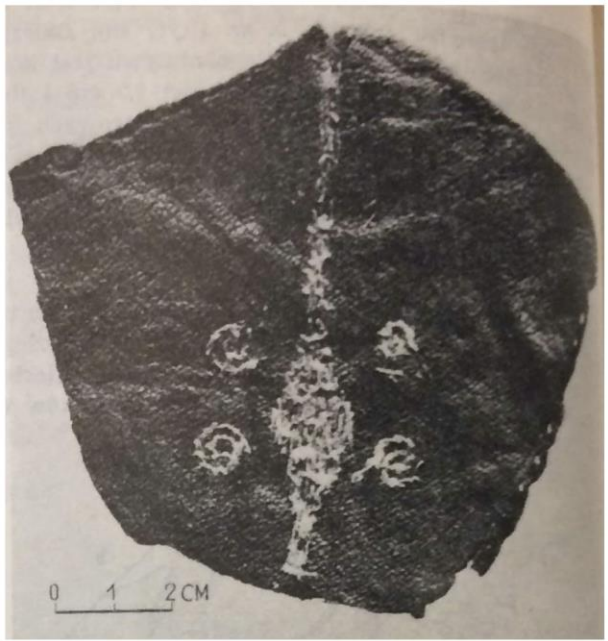
- silk
- linen
- wool



Shoes from Opole, Poland



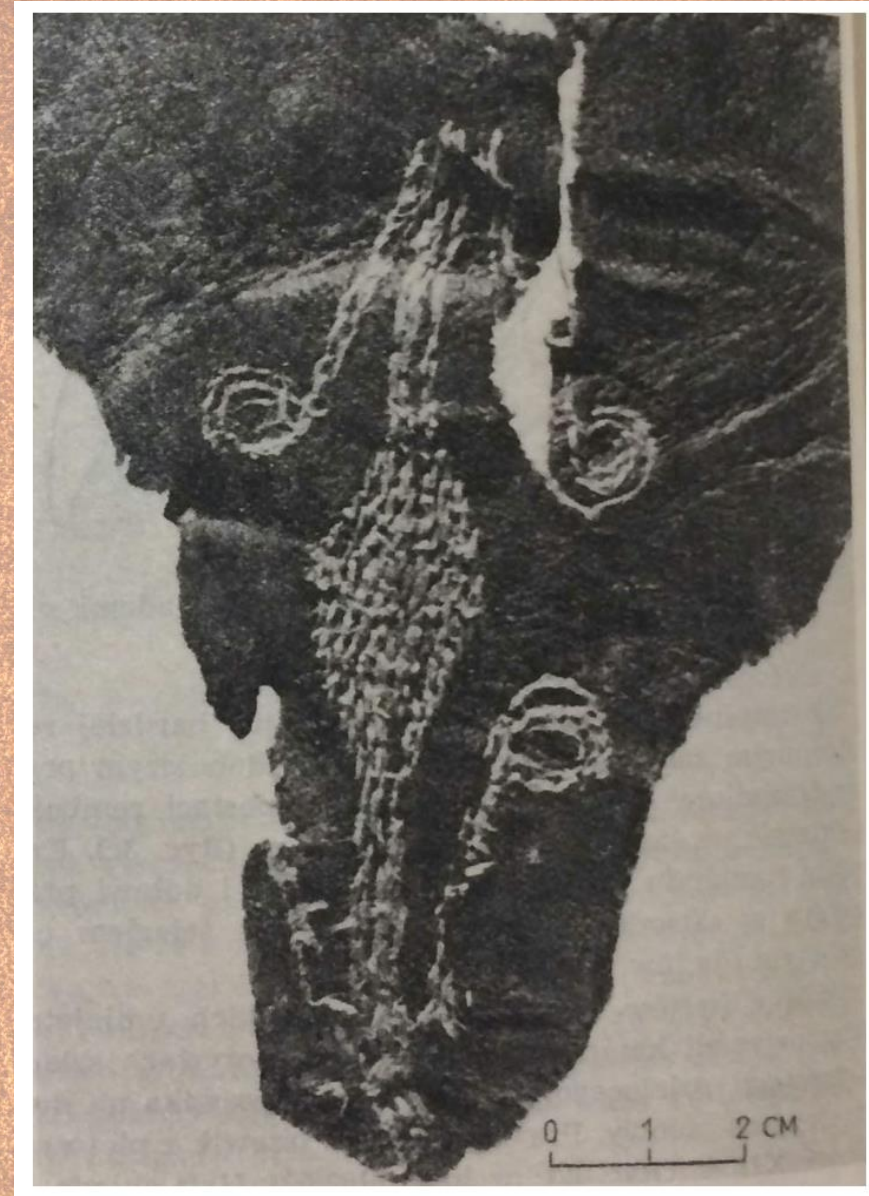
Norska-Gulkoa, 1964, p8, f12



Norska-Gulkoa, 1964, p6, f6



Norska-Gulkoa, 1964, p8, f13

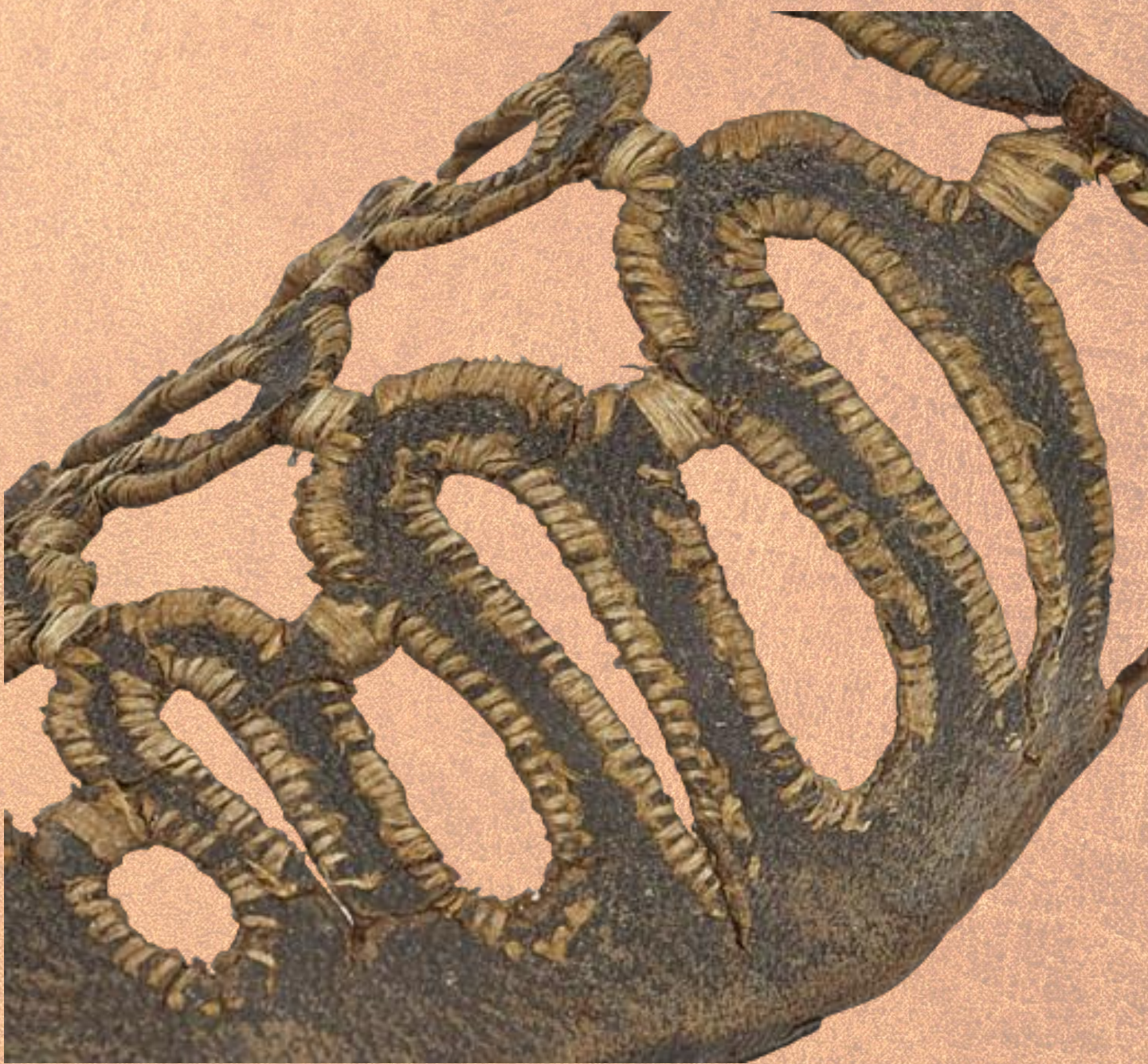


Norska-Gulkoa, 1964, p6, f7

Gdańsk example 1

Google-translated from Polish, stitches used on northeastern shoes include cross, shaded, water, basting, chain, naval, and loop.





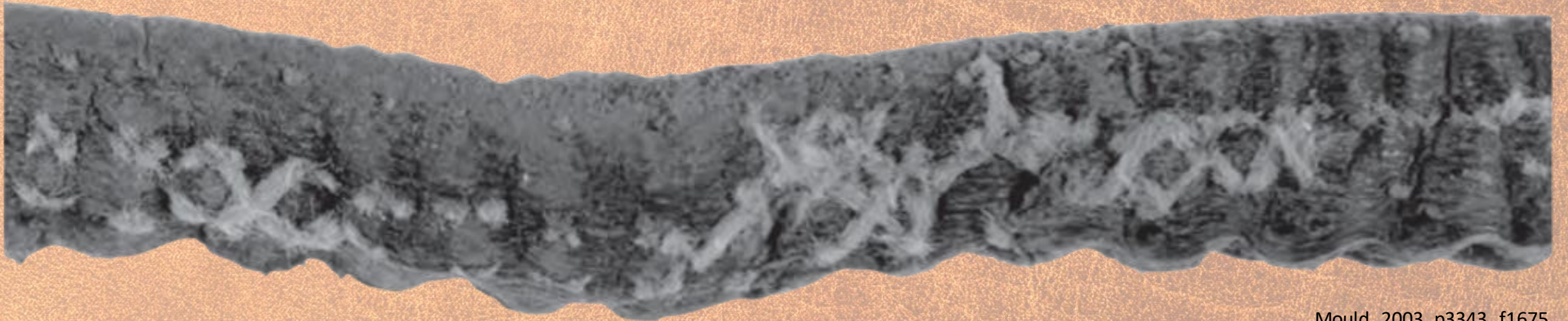
Gdańsk example 2



Topbands

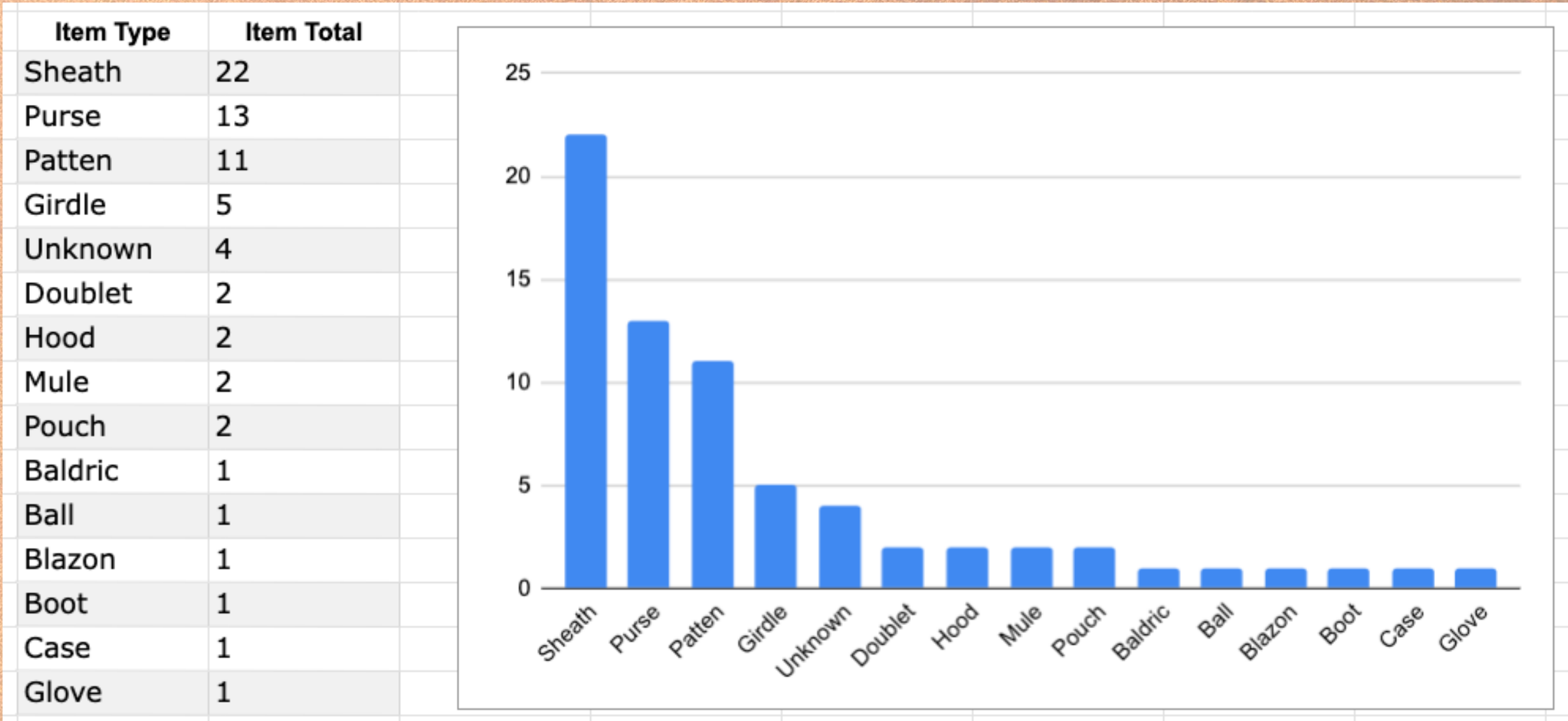


Mould, 2003, p3344, f1676

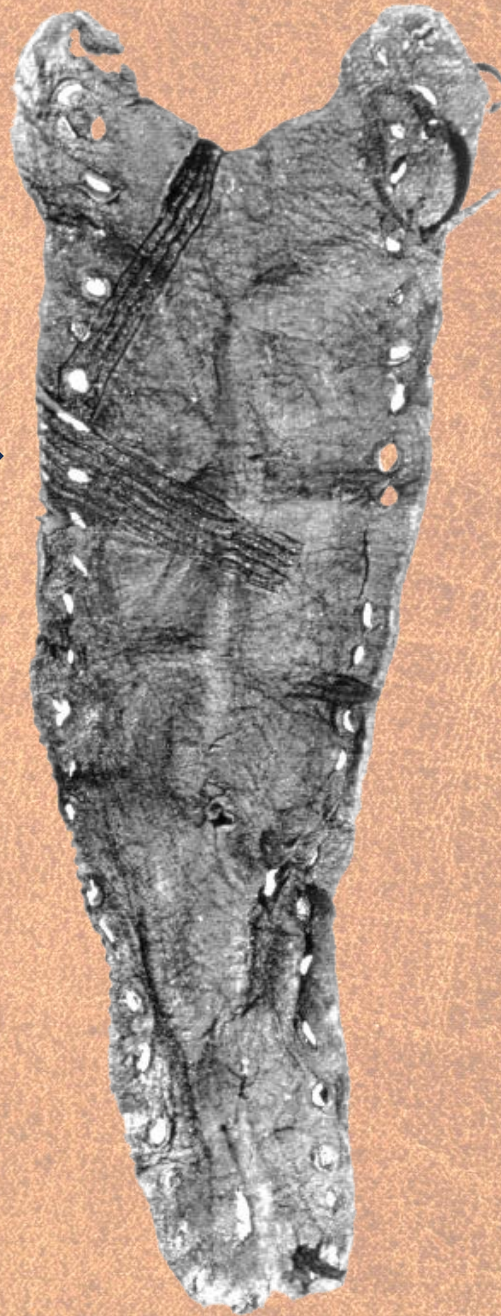


Mould, 2003, p3343, f1675

Relatively few nonshoe embroidered leather items have been discovered.



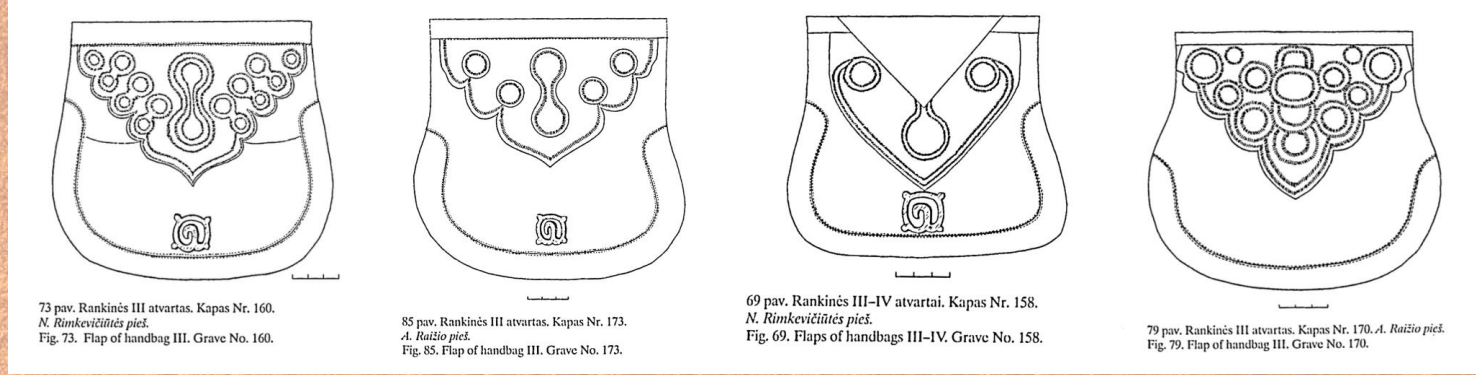
Fun fact: many sheaths were made from reused shoe uppers.



Knife Sheaths: 22



Purses & Pouches: 15



73 pav. Rankinės III atvartas. Kapas Nr. 160.
N. Rimkevičiūtės pieš.
Fig. 73. Flap of handbag III. Grave No. 160.

85 pav. Rankinės III atvartas. Kapas Nr. 173.
A. Raižio pieš.
Fig. 85. Flap of handbag III. Grave No. 173.

69 pav. Rankinės III–IV atvartai. Kapas Nr. 158.
N. Rimkevičiūtės pieš.
Fig. 69. Flaps of handbags III–IV. Grave No. 158.

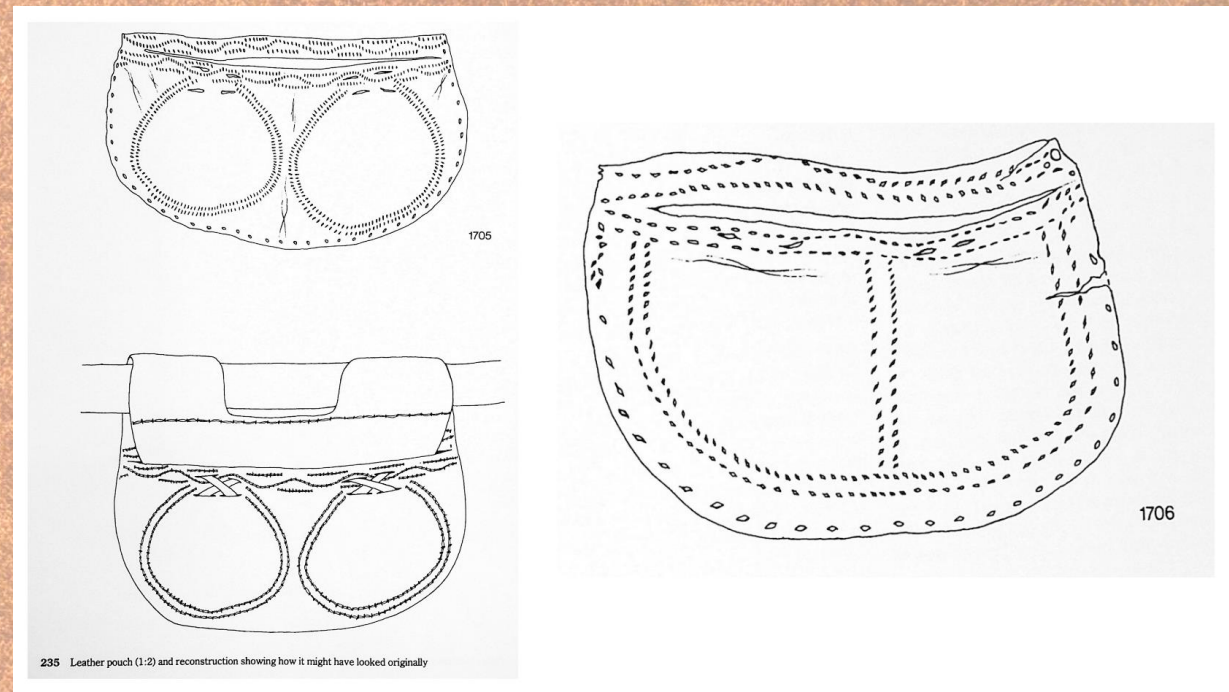
79 pav. Rankinės III atvartas. Kapas Nr. 170. A. Raižio pieš.
Fig. 79. Flap of handbag III. Grave No. 170.

Rickevičiūtė, 2003 pp. 187, 186, 191, 189 (left to right)



229 Leather pouch edged with silk ribbon no. 1696 (3:4). Detail showing engraved decoration and silk embroidery (5:1)

Egan and Pritchard, 2002, p347, f229



235 Leather pouch (1:2) and reconstruction showing how it might have looked originally

Egan and Pritchard, 2002 p354 f235

Egan and Pritchard, 2002 p355 f236

IHS Purse (Mary Rose)



Posted to The Mary Rose Facebook group April 10, 2023; photographer uncredited.

Pattens & Mules: 13

- ❖ Colored thread through holes
- ❖ Much later than any of the other shoes (15th-16th c.)

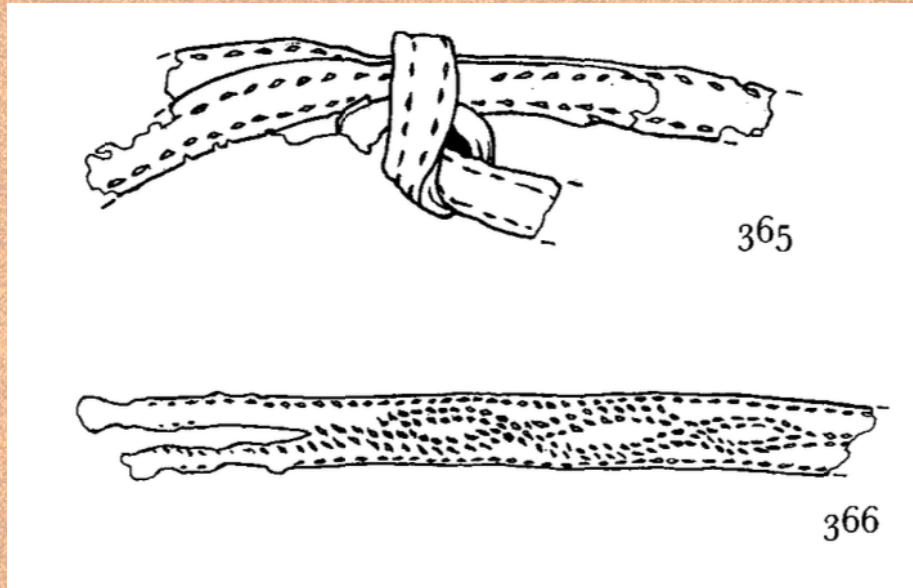


Ceynowa, 2016, p79 (enhanced)



Ceynowa, 2016, p106

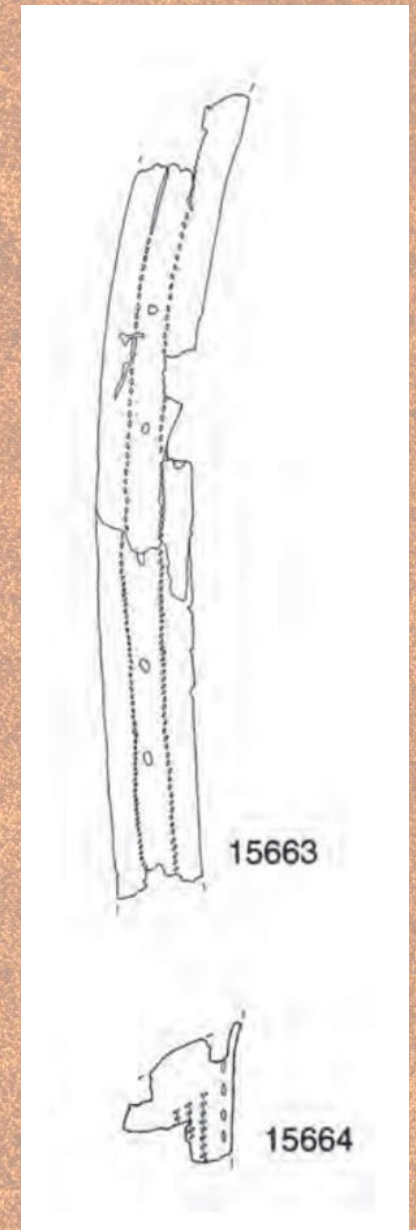
Girdles (Belts): 5



Pritchard, 1991, p239, f3.125



Egan and Pritchard, 2002, p38, f21



Mould, 2003, p3393, f1712

Doublets: 2

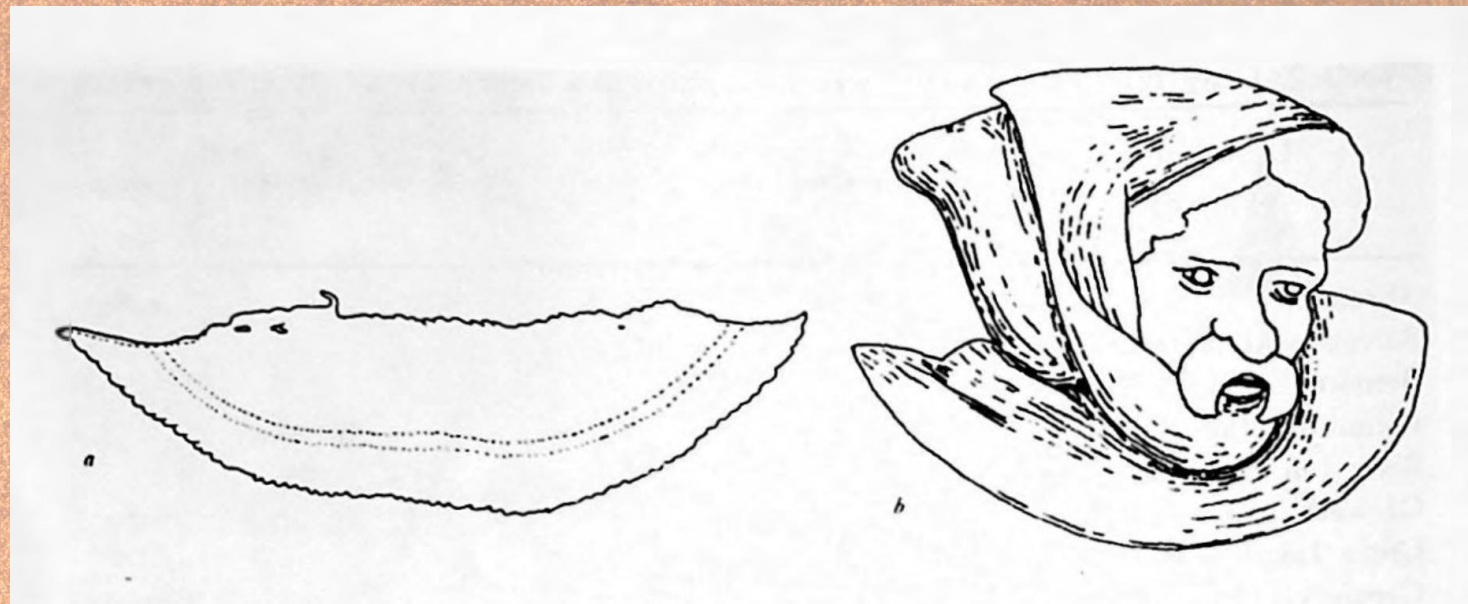


Got €45,000?

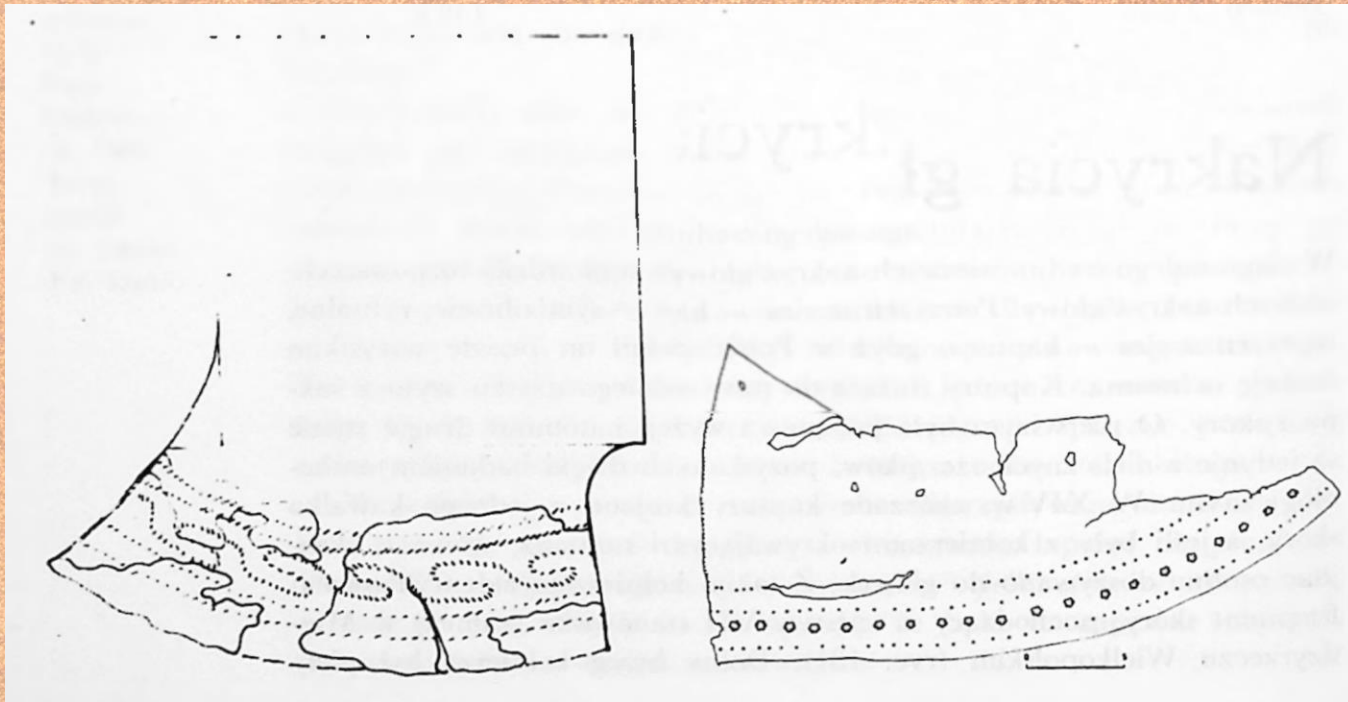


Hoods: 2

Międzyrzecz Wielkopolski, 14th century



Turska, 1987, p204, f131



Turska, 1987, p204, f133

Kaliszumicście, 14th century

Qur'an Case

"...it belonged to the last sultan of Granada, Muhammad XII, known in Europe as Boabdil (r. 1486-92)..."



"The belt of St. Césaire d'Arles"



Early 6th century

"The belt of St. Césaire d'Arles"



Guyon, 2001, p91

Or baldric?



Volken, 2020, p36

Gloves



Falconry Kit

*"...said to have
belonged to James VI
and I..."*



Embroidery on leather?



Pulliam, 2003, p25



Pulliam, 2003, p26

Quinton, 2013, p84, f55



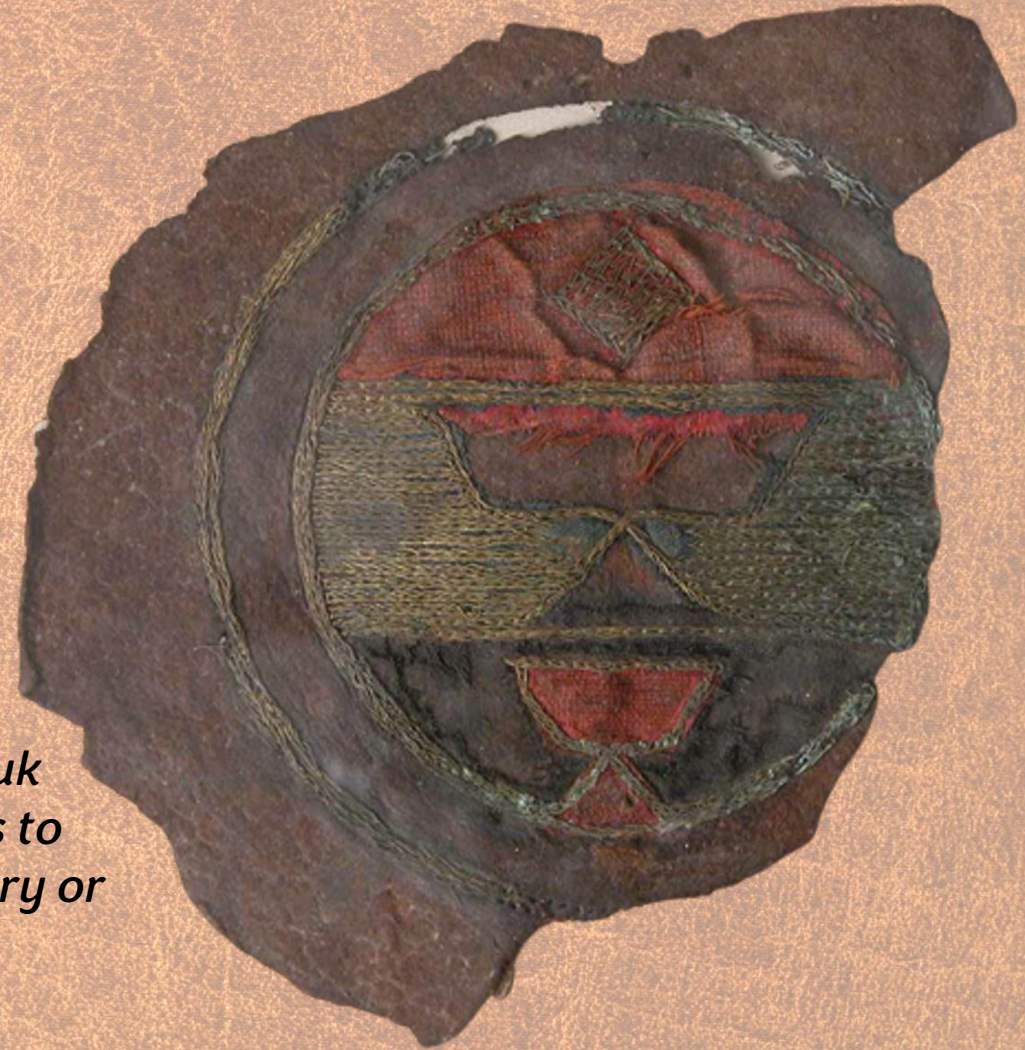
Boot



Swann, 2001, p95, f103

Blazon Fragment

"...a present from the Khan during his visit in 1582..."



"...a leather Mamluk emblem that dates to the fifteenth century or slightly earlier..."

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/452407>

ԿՈՐԻՐ ԻՄՋՐ ՈՒՒԿՈՒ ԳՄԻՐԻ ԳԸ



Mulil amor vincit omnia et nos cedamus amori



Embroidery on Leather

Contact me at

kps1@cornell.edu



Special thanks to the staff of the Cornell University Library and other institutions for their efforts in tracking down and scanning articles from a wide range of sources located throughout the US and overseas.

