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TABLET WOVEN BANDS IN NORWAY Living Tradition and Forgotten Techniques

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Translation by Katherine Larson

5. Patterning in groundweave and with supplemental weft, brocaded

A fragment of a band that until now is unique here in Norway was found during the excavation under Uvdal stave church in Numedal in 1978.¹⁸

Not only is it much more technically intricate than the bands that have been described above, but it is also much older since there is little doubt it is from the Middle Ages. This dating is based on the technique and pattern since the find conditions do not give a basis for dating. The fragment has a woven length of ca. 25.2 cm, with ca. 0.7 cm loose fringe of warp threads at one end, and at the other an incomplete hem with temporary whip stitches. The width is ca. 5.3 cm.

The material is white linen yarn in the ground warp and red wool yarn in the pattern warp. The ground weft is white linen. Pattern weft for brocading is wool yarn in indigo, ochre and warm red.



*Tablet woven band found under Uvdal stave church, Numedal, Buskerud.
University Antiquities Collection, Oslo, C. 34866/323. Front.*

The band is richly decorated with patterns created in two ways: with the help of an extra pattern warp of red wool yarn and individual rotation of the tablets, a varied pattern is created against a ground of white linen consisting of diverse braids, several cross shapes such as the braided cross, diagonal cross, and small cross, in addition to diagonal lines that divide the band in triangular sections offset by broad patterned diagonal bands. The red yarn forms contours with cord effect around all of these motifs, and where the threads do not come up and form patterns, they float on the back. Where there are large sections of white ground, the red yarn forms dots in the ground, probably to bind the threads and avoid overly long floats on the back – a technical as well as decorative aspect. The ground warp floats over

shorter distances on the back around the sections with regular cord twining. All the contours, and thus all the motifs, are based on diagonal lines relative to the length of the band. No lines go across the warp threads or parallel with the warp except for the edge stripes.

In order to further emphasize the pattern, brocading¹⁹ is used within the various contours with supplemental pattern picks of yellow, red, and indigo wool yarn. The blue indigo color is quite uneven in intensity and nuances, and varies from strong blue to light blue-green. The yarn has clearly taken the color unevenly, and it is difficult to judge if the variations are deliberate, or indicate uneven dyeing, or different reactions to the ravages of time. The red color also shifts to yellow-red, brown-red, and cool red. The red contour threads bind the brocaded pattern threads. To some extent the pattern weft forms long floats on the back.

The band is woven with 51 tablets. The edges are formed from three tablets on each side, rotated continuously in quarter turns. Outermost are two tablets with white linen, innermost against the pattern section is one tablet with red wool yarn. The edge tablets have four threads in each tablet. Two of the tablets are threaded from the same side, the third from the opposite.

The pattern section is woven with 45 tablets and all are threaded from the same side. It is woven with three threads in each tablet, two linen threads for the ground and one thread of red wool yarn for the pattern. When the pattern contours are to be created, the affected tablets are rotated separately and in one direction to create cord twining, while the remaining tablets are rotated alternately forward and backward one time such that a ground of expanded plain weave is created, where the ground weft goes over two and under two ground threads. This results from the fact that pairs of tablets are arranged differently in the starting position.²⁰

Where the red yarn forms dots in the plain weave

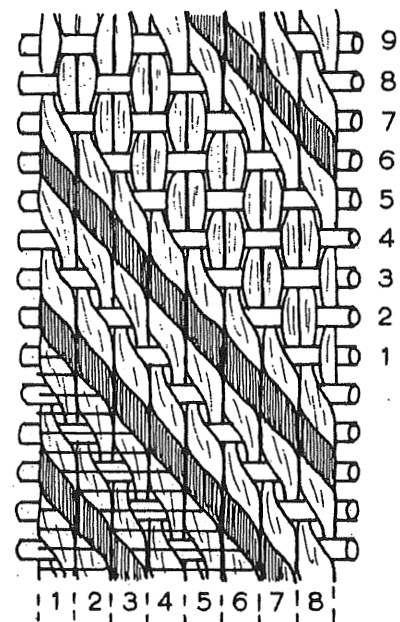
ground, pairs of red threads consequently go together. Where the red threads form contours they go individually.

The well-defined, dark diagonal lines show continuous cord twining on the wrong side, something that on the right side is only seen as



Technique sample, tablet woven. Expanded plainweave and cord structure, executed on basis of the Icelandic bands from Höfði church, Iceland. After Collingwood, 1982.

Diagram of expanded plain weave combined with cord structure. Lower left, suggested portion with brocaded supplemental weft. Technique as in the Uvdal band. After Collingwood, 1982.



slim twisted edge contours and otherwise is hidden under the brocading. Because of the cord twining the colors come in order, two white, one red, etc. Between the two white threads' twining, the weft pick is visible and this indicates that this is where the empty hole in the tablet passes. The colors are threaded in the tablets thusly: red, white, empty hole, white, such that the white threads go in diametrically opposed holes. It is of note that along each red contour there is also a white cord contour. Accordingly, the twine is started one pick before the red pattern thread comes up.

In some white sections on the right side there is likewise cord twining and not plain weave. This is where the pattern bands follow diagonal lines that are themselves in cord twining, as along both sides of the area with the braided St. Andrew's crosses. The creation of cord is just continued there to make the white bands parallel with the diagonal.

The main divisions of the pattern are distinguished by the thin, brocaded diagonal lines. Where these meet and change direction in the top of the triangle in the middle of the fragment, the tablets direction of rotation also changes, such that all the diagonals have one direction of rotation on one side of the triangle, and the opposite direction of rotation on the other. Within all the small motifs that fill out the triangles and the broad diagonal bands, the direction of rotation changes more often as necessary.

It is characteristic that both the white linen ground and the brocaded areas participate in the pattern effect. For example, in the triangle there are St. Andrew's crosses with doubled red contours. The innermost cross is formed of the white ground, while the outer area between the contours is brocaded, and this again is surrounded by white ground weave. The motif can be seen, then, either positive or negative, as a white or as a colored cross.

It is further characteristic that the color division in the brocading does not follow the form of the figure. For example, the aforementioned cross has brocading between the outer contours that in places is yellow-red, in places blue independent of the cross form. Most of the brocaded diagonal lines are also partly yellow, blue, and red without any definite system in the distribution.

If we look at the pattern motifs within the main division's diagonal lines, when the central triangle has the point up we have the following motifs seen from the left: in the corner near the end, which likely is the remains of a triangle area, there are braided bands of a relatively wide white band with red contours, and outside of this a brocaded area. Then follows a white angled band of cross forms with short wide arms, drawn only in red contours and with the aforementioned red dots within and outside the cross forms.

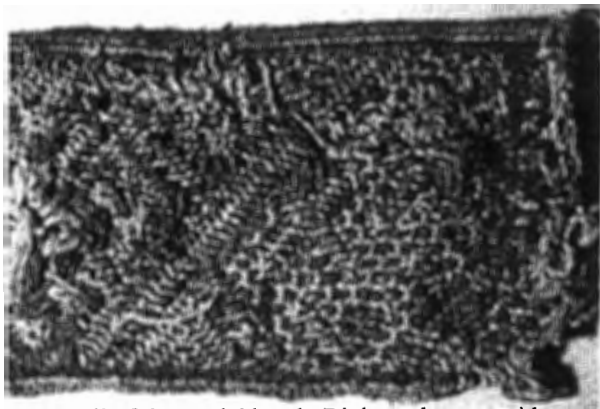
Next comes a wide slanted band with St. Andrew's crosses formed by a white band contoured in red. The bands are braided over and under at the meeting points, like two narrow rectangles that are slipped into each other. Brocaded areas follow the outer contour of the cross shape and outside of these runs the white band that continues along the entire diagonal area.

Then comes the only whole triangle area with white St. Andrew's crosses surrounded by brocaded contours. The surrounding white area is broken by brocaded squares such that the entire time the ground gives the impression of a band that slips in and out along the cross shapes and forms its own pattern. On the triangle's other side is a narrower diagonal band with a braided band motif in the shape of a narrow grid or link-like motif in white, where a band is braided through in the lengthwise direction. The small squares between the bands are brocaded.

The next diagonal band is wider, with a motif that is more difficult to interpret. Broad white bands form approximate squares, that are divided



*Detail of the Uvdal band. Right and wrong side.
Author's photo.*



*Detail of the Uvdal band. Right and wrong side.
Author's photo.*

by narrow red lines and small brocaded squares. Between the squares are brocaded lines. The band is somewhat destroyed here, but it appears as if the motifs are not completely the same within the entire area.

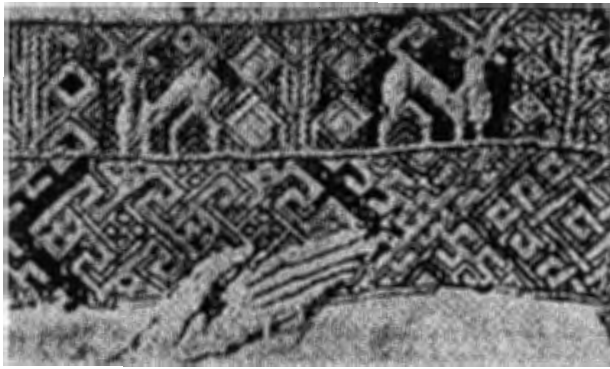
The last part of the band is again a triangle, to the extent that the top is preserved. The ground is filled by a labyrinth-like pattern where brocaded cross shapes and angles are shot into the white ground, which forms broad white bands with red dots. A lesser triangle fills out the pattern near the other selvage.

It is not possible to propose any well-grounded hypothesis concerning what this band could have been used for. Pieces of linen thread are affixed to four places on the back that do not appear to have anything to do with the weaving, but to some extent seem to be sewn in with a needle. The linen thread is of the same type as in the band's warp and weft. This could indicate that the band has been fastened to another piece of cloth. It must surely have been a rather loose and temporary manner of fastening. There are no ends of threads that could indicate sewing along the edges. It is likewise not unreasonable to imagine that the band could have belonged to some of the church's liturgical textiles, or that it *could* have belonged to secular clothing.

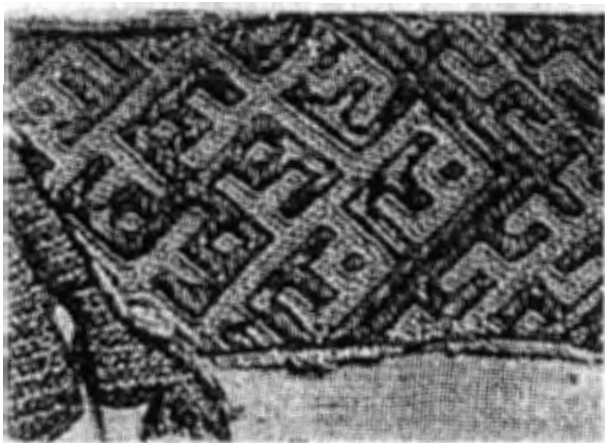
Comparisons

There are very few bands we can compare the Uvdal fragment with technically. The only ones with which it is related are found in the Nordic countries. The pattern motifs, on the other hand, are found on a number of Nordic and European bands and other textiles. First we will consider the bands that are closest from a technical perspective.

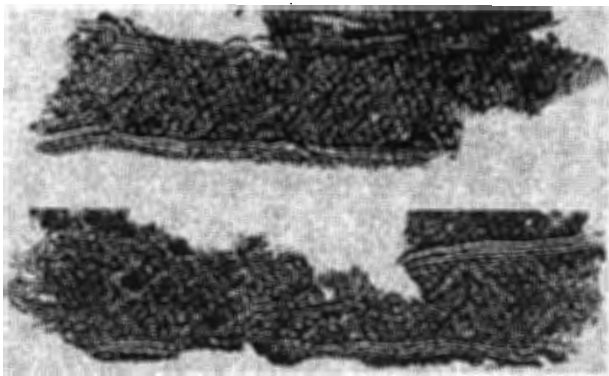
In Iceland there are two tablet woven bands that are especially related to the Uvdal fragment. They have been sewn to the upper edge of an antependium from Höfði church.²¹ Unfortunately I know of them only from the literature.²² One band has a pattern of animals,



Detail of the two tablet woven bands from the antependium from Höfði church, Iceland, 1200s. Lower band most related with the Uvdal band. After Dedekam,



Detail of band from Höfði church, Iceland. Compare to Uvdal band. After Sylwan, 1921.

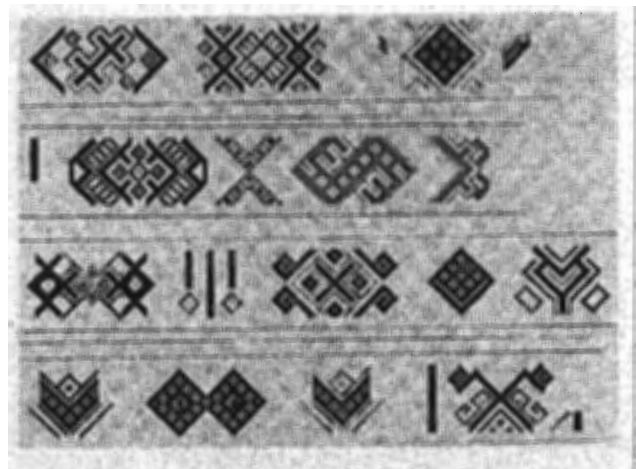


Parts of the tablet band from Leksand church, Sweden, 1200s. After photo by Nils Lagergren, ATA, in Nockert, 1982.

trees, and simple geometric figures.²³ The figures appear in expanded plain weave, as with the ground of the Uvdal band, and with the same type of contours in cord effect. But the brocading weft on this band covers the *whole* surface around the figures, and is bound by irregular twill.

The other band²⁴ is closer to the Uvdal band in execution. It has an arrangement of St. Andrew's crosses and rhomboids with angled contours as a main design, and the ground in these larger figures are filled in with braided bands, swastika variations, and other geometric motifs. The ground in one of the rhomboids is filled with a labyrinth motif similar to that of the Uvdal band. Here we see the same effect of the brocaded pattern in distinct figures around the motifs placed in white, as on the Uvdal band. The white yarn in the Icelandic bands is not linen but finely spun guardhair,²⁵ something that indicates the bands were made in Iceland. The warp has also here been threaded in the tablets with two threads for the ground and one thread for the pattern warp.

A related band is also found in Sweden that was found in 1971 in a woman's grave under Leksand church.²⁶ It was an edging band along the forward edge of a cap that, according to the reconstruction, was in the form of a half circle. Technically the band has a good deal in common with the Uvdal band and the Icelandic bands. It has edge stripes woven with four threads per tablet and cord effect. The pattern area, like the others, has three threads in a tablet, two for the ground and one for pattern. The ground weft has disappeared but was probably white linen, while the pattern weft is wool.



Pattern motifs from Leksand band. After Nockert, 1982.

The geometric pattern figures appear in regular plain weave, where the threads in warp and weft are single. The figures appear individually against a red ground of irregular twill with warp effect. It is not evident from the description if the original color variation in the patterns, yellow, yellow-red, and green (that now appear as yellow) is due to different colors in *both* the pattern warp and pattern weft. The ground weft apparently formed the pattern in addition to the two-shaft patterns by floating over a set number of warp threads, partly emphasizing the contours of the figures, and partly making supplemental small motifs. It can well be imagined that this linen thread was white and it must have been visible in the twill ground as white binding points that created diagonal lines. Where linen has floated in a weft-wise direction, the red ground weave warp must have been visible in the binding points. This weft of white in the pattern effect seems to have been a necessary contrast to the red ground and the neighboring colors in the two-shaft figures.



Tablet woven band, individual rotation, two sided patterning is silk, red and blue, brocading weft in gold. Bamberg(?), 11th century (?) After Geijer, 1972.

Despite the similarity between the Uvdal and Leksand bands, the differences are large: the Leksand band does not have contours in cord effect; the ground pattern is formed only of plain weave sections against the twill ground. Not evident here is the usual cord form that simultaneously binds the pattern warps, as in the Uvdal band, but instead the pattern warps have (probably) been bound by the ground weft. Also not here are any supplemental brocading weft, but instead patterning with ground weft. Further, the ground and pattern are colored wool yarn, while the presumed linen weft in white has only participated in the figures and the groundweave binding points. Finally, the figures are spread

out with larger areas of ground between them, while the Uvdal band, and also the Icelandic band with geometric pattern, have the entire area filled with the bands and figures that the white ground or the brocaded sections form. These two bands' patterning clearly have had an origin in the braided-band ornamentation that was so widespread in the early Medieval textiles, not only woven but embroidered as well. Here they separate themselves from the two remaining bands.

Both from a technical perspective, with the blending of plain weave and cord effect, and based on materials, domestic wool and linen, these Nordic bands seem to form a group of their own. One must certainly regard them as being made in the Nordic countries. They exhibit a control of the tablet technique's possibilities that is not inferior to the prehistoric Norwegian bands.

As early as the 800s, tablet woven bands from medieval Europe were predominately characterized by the brocading technique. I am not familiar with examples of the same technique seen in the Nordic bands, with individual rotation, changing between cord sections, and plain weave binding as well as brocading. A few bands are preserved in which the pattern is based on the cord structure and individual rotation, where the patterning is in two colors and appears reversible with opposite colors on the front and back²⁷ as in the Norwegian bands from the Migration Period from Enebø and Snartemo. Furthermore, there are a few bands that in addition have brocaded patterns of silk and gold thread.²⁸ Also known are technically highly regarded tablet-woven bands of silk with brocaded pattern of silk and gold or silver thread from the 800s and onward to the 1300-1400s, chiefly in connection with liturgical textiles. In these the under layer for the brocading is as a rule unpatterned bands in cord or knit-like structure, covered entirely by the brocading that creates pattern together with the lines that are

shaped by the binding points, where the tablet cords' threads bind the brocading weft.



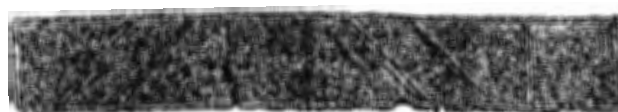
Detail of Bayeux tapestry, 11th century. Edge border motifs divided by diagonal lines. After Sir Frank Stenton (Gen. Ed.), 1965. The Bayeux Tapestry. London.

In our own Oseberg find from ca. 860 [see note 29 for revised date] there are a number of tablet bands. These are not yet published, but Hougén²⁹ mentions that the brocading technique dominates completely in the loose bands from the find.

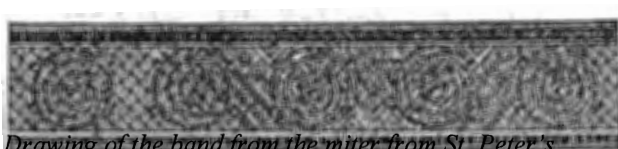
In the Birka find from Sweden, 800-975,³⁰ the tablet bands are also dominated by brocaded pattern, in this case in gold and silver thread. The European fashion is seen in the Nordic countries as well during the same period. We can say that in the Uvdal band and in the Icelandic bands, the older method from the Norwegian find, of making pattern by individual rotation of the tablets, encounters the brocading

fashion that characterized European tablet woven bands throughout the entire Middle Ages.

If we look more closely at the patterning, we see that the Uvdal band's most apparent pattern elements are the slanted bands, that by alternating direction frame in the triangular areas, respectively along one side edge and then the other. Such slanted bands with different shapes for patterns are found in a good many tablet woven bands, but also on other types of textiles. A clear example is seen in an Egyptian brocaded tablet-woven band from late antiquity.³¹ This band also has certain technical elements in common with the Uvdal band in that, according



Tablet woven border from chasuble, Bamberg, 11th century. After Sir Frank Stenton (Gen. Ed.), 1965. The Bayeux Tapestry. London.



Drawing of the band from the miter from St. Peter's church in Salzburg. After Dreger, 1908.

to Sylwan, it has a purple colored wool thread in the white linen warp. This purple thread forms contours for the angled bands as well as for the meander pattern elements with which they are filled. In addition there is brocading with several colored wool yarn in the triangles between the angled lines. The arm band for the 11th century Danish Viking find from Mammen is a gold-brocaded tablet woven band with angled bands, triangles and braided-band ornamentation.³² From the same time period we have the embroidered Bayeux tapestry, where the edge borders' motifs are separated by angled bands with the figures of plants. The angled band is found, accordingly, as a division not only in connection with geometric motifs, but also

between figures and animal motifs. An example is the band on the miter from the cathedral in Bamberg, with vine-like motifs and animal figures.³³

On the holy Rupertus' miter from St. Peter's Cathedral in Salzburg³⁴ there is a tablet woven band with gold brocading on a black silk ground in cord structure. This is in every respect an example of the aforementioned European band types of which the Uvdal band is a coarser version. Here we find the angled bands, the triangles, and the tight patterning of band-braiding. We find a single motif such as the lattice-like motif with interworked midband from the Uvdal band that is for the most part identical to one of the angled section of the miter bands. A ground pattern is also highly related with the labyrinthine pattern near the end of the Uvdal band. Information to the effect that the brocading is executed in the ground with cord effect leaves little likelihood that the bands are also technically similar. But the pattern must be among those that have served as models in the period. The miter dates from after 1231. The band could, of course, be somewhat older.

Motifs from the Uvdal band are also recognized on other important textiles from the late Roman period in Europe. The richly patterned embroidered liturgical textiles from the Austrian cloister of Göss,³⁵ probably from the 1200s, stands out almost like a sampler from the period's geometric motifs, especially the band-braiding ornamentation. In these textiles we find the lattice motif, the braided St. Andrew's cross, the labyrinth motif, small crosses, and the St. Andrew's cross.

Even into the 1300s we find brocaded bands with the angled band motif, like for example a narrow band from a Swiss antependium from the middle of the century. It is brocaded with gold thread and silk, but the pattern is simpler than on the earlier examples and without the complicated band-braiding.³⁶



Embroidered tunic from the cloister Göss in Steiermark, Austria, 1200s. After Dreger, 1908.

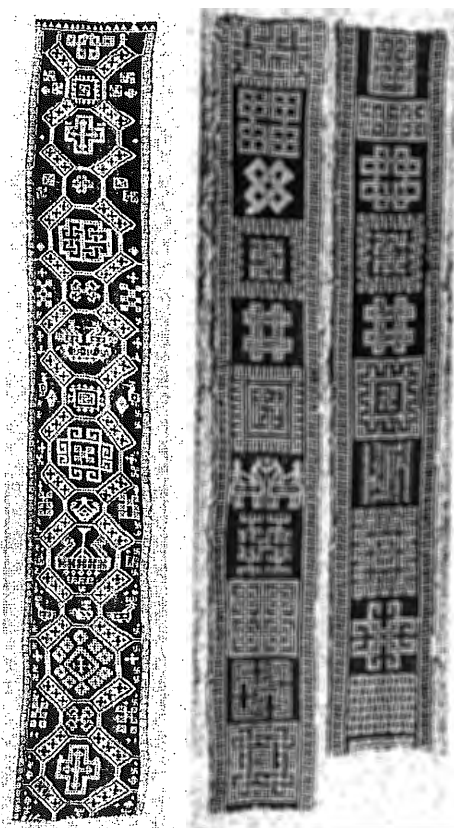
Several of the motifs are also found in the Nordic medieval textiles. The braided St. Andrew's cross is found in the Rennebu border³⁷ from Sør-Trøndelag, and on the edging from Revsund³⁸ in Jämtland. The labyrinth motif is found in several versions in the Revsund edging, closely related to the edging from Överhogdal³⁹ in Härjedalen, and on the textile from Kyrkås⁴⁰ in Jämtland. We also find the lattice or link motif on the Revsund border, and on an embroidered alter cloth from Valfafell⁴¹ in Iceland from the late Middle Ages.

Right-angled, broken band-braided motifs are found on all these textiles as on the Uvdal fragment. Such motifs dominate the patterning on the two medieval textiles from Lomen and Ulness churches in Valdres as well.⁴²

All the aforementioned Nordic medieval weavings, aside from the Icelandic embroidery, are executed in the double weave technique. Characteristic of these weavings is that one warp layer is white linen while the other is colored wool, with the colors divided in stripes that progress independently of the pattern figures. There are several features of the Uvdal band that show a relationship to the double weaves. First, the materials that contrast white linen and colored wool. Second, the colors in the brocaded weft picks in the Uvdal bands progress in stripes that are divided amongst the figures without

regard to the form of the motifs. This gives an effect from the colors in the weft direction that corresponds with that which we get when the warp stripes in the double weaves proceed without regard to the pattern figures. Thirdly, the band has small motifs in the ground weave that bind the pattern warps. In the double weaves we find comparable small motifs sprinkled amongst the main motifs. Aside from the fact that the use of small motifs sprinkled about is part of the style of the period that is found not only in textiles, in the double weaves they also have had constructive purpose in binding the two woven layers together to avoid large areas in which they are loose.

*Border from
Revsund (to
right) and
Överhogdal,
probably
1200s.
After
Branting
and
Lindblom.
1932. New
date, 2002:
Revsund
780-
980. Överho
gdal 900-
1100.*



Finally there is the use of color itself. The white linen is common to both, and the colors of the wool yarn also exhibit a great deal of agreement. Red and blue appear in all, and occasionally yellow, more seldom green. The red is a warm red, often from madder,⁴³ and can have nuances

towards yellow, or darker, browner, and now and then bluish red, as in the Uvdal band. The blue is indigo⁴⁴ and the color exhibits the same nuances that we have noted for the Uvdal band, coming possibly most frequently from the woad plant.

Together the color nuances, the dye materials, and the character that dyeing gives seem to recur in the medieval textiles. If we compare the character of the Uvdal band's color, with blond, yellow-red tones against white and blue, with for example the Lomen and Kyrkås textiles, there is an obvious relationship.

Dating

The Göss liturgical textiles and the other mentioned liturgical textiles from Europe are dated to the 1200s. All the other woven Nordic textiles we have used for comparison, above, are also presumed to date from that century.⁴⁵ The Icelandic bands from the Höfði antependium are dated to the 1200-1300s.⁴⁶ The Leksand band and the cap it is attached to are dated to the early Middle Ages, probably no later than the latter part of the 1200s.⁴⁷ Because there is so much correspondence in regard to pattern, materials and colors between the Uvdal fragment and the double weaves, and technical similarity with the tablet woven bands, the Uvdal band ought to be classified in the same time period [see addition to note 45]. Even though nothing can be positively determined, there is nothing that contradicts such a dating.

Finally, it should be mentioned that patterning with angled bands and band braiding motifs has lived on in Norwegian band weaving, but in other techniques. Especially the later folk art bands from Leksand in Dalarna, Sweden have patterns that are particularly influenced by this pattern tradition.⁴⁸ The angled band also characterizes the bands woven in the square weave technique with slits from East Telemark.⁴⁹

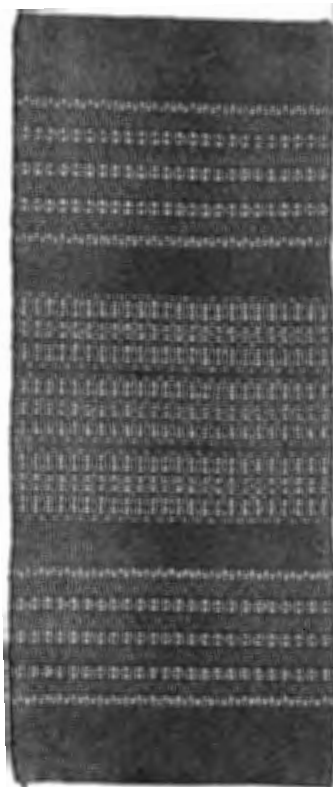
Notes

18. The University's Antiquities Collection, inventory number C. 34866/323. Graciously loaned to the Norwegian Folk Museum for analysis. Hoffmann, 1981; Nockert, 1982, note 9.
19. I use here the word brocading in the discussion of bands with patterning aided by supplemental weft, even if it concerns in some cases selvage-to-selvage supplemental weft [*lansering*].
20. Collingwood, 1982, has executed a weaving sample with the combination of plain weave structure and cord structure based on the Icelandic bands from Höfði church, p. 202-207, the same technique as the Uvdal band.
21. Icelandic National Museum, inventory number Pjms. 10886b.
22. Dedekam, 1914, fig. 102; Sylwan, 1921; Nockert, 1982.
23. Nockert, 1982, fig. 21; Dedekam, 1914, fig. 102 above.
24. Dedekam, 1914, fig. 102, bottom; Sylwan, 1921, fig. 3.
25. I thank Inspector Elsa E. Gudjonsson, National Museum, Reykjavik, for information in a letter of 6/26/84, and weaving teacher and Director of the Handcraft School in Reykjavik, Sigridur Halldorsdottir, for technical information in a letter of 6/26/84.
26. Nockert, 1982.
27. For example, Schuette, 1956, p. 25 band from the end of the 800s with cord structure and inscription, and a band with animal figures probably early 1300s. Both in Diözesan Museum in Augsburg. Müller-Christensen, 1972, presents an inscribed band of the same type from Domen in Speyer, nr. 1594, 1595, from 800-900s. Henshall, 1965, Pl XXIV, presents a band in cord structure with animals, related to the animal border from Evebø and the fragment from Snartemo (Dedekam 1924-25).
28. Crowfoot, 1956, St. Cuthbert's belt has diagonal structure with reversible pattern and in addition gold brocading. Schuette, 1956, p. 26, for example maniple from 900s with brocading in gold and silk.
29. Hougen, 1948. Recent scholarship indicates that the Oseberg ship was built in 820 and buried in 834. The textiles from the find will be published soon, probably in 2004.
30. Geijer, 1938, 1972.
31. Sylwan, 1921; Schuette, 1938, in the article *Borte, Bortenweberei* mentions that it was a common pattern type in ancient Egyptian half-wool bands from 400-500s. The medieval Palermo borders are characterized by similar patterning.
32. Hald, 1950, p. 236 and following pages.
33. Müller-Christensen, 1960, p. 77 and fig. 102. She mentions that framing borders in illuminated manuscripts have the same patterns with diagonal bands or cross bands between pattern motifs; some are based on textile models. See also 11th century band in Bamberg, Müller-Christensen, 1977, fig. 6.
34. Schuette, 1956, p. 24 and p. 26 lower. Dreger, 1908, p. 630.
35. Dreger, 1908.
36. Schuette, 1956, p. 27.
37. Engelstad, 1958, fig. 17; Hoffmann, 1981, p. 326 and following.
38. Branting and Lindblom, 1932, fig. 9 in color (in chapter II by Vivi Sylwan); Hoffmann, 1981, p. 326 and following; Salvén, 1923, p. 128 fig. 102.
39. Branting and Lindblom, 1932, pl. 12 on left and pl. 13 color detail; Hoffmann, 1981, p. 326 and following.
40. Branting and Lindblom, 1932, pl. 14 color detail; Salvén, 1923, p. 128 fig. 100.
41. Hoffmann, 1981, p. 334 fig. 4.11.
42. Hoffmann, 1981, p. 328 and following pages, fig. 4.6 and 4.7; Engelstad, 1958, pl. I, color reproduction of the tapestry from Lomen.
43. For the textiles that have undergone analysis in regard to dye material, the red has been determined to come from madder: the Leksand band (Nockert, 1982, note 6), and the bands from Skog and Överhogdal, together with the edging from Överhogdal (Salvén, 1923, p. 53-56).
44. Salvén, 1923, p. 53-56. The chemist who has conducted the color analysis believes that the change in the blue color indicates the technical difficulties associates with dyeing and to a lesser degree the effects of aging. The dye material is indigo taken from the woad plant (*isatis tinctoria*). The Leksand band's green color has possible indigo from woad as the blue color component (Nockert, 1982, note 7).
45. Hoffmann, 1981. It must be added that all these datings have been altered by radiocarbon determination, published by Nockert and Possnert in 2002: Revsund 780-980. Överhogdal IV (the band) 900-1100, Lomen 1165-1260, Kyrkås 990-1160. According to this, perhaps the Uvdal band might be dated a bit earlier?
46. Sylwan, 1921; Nockert, 1982.
47. Nockert, 1982.
48. Walterstorff, 1925, picture 126-138.
49. Christie, 1978; 1982.

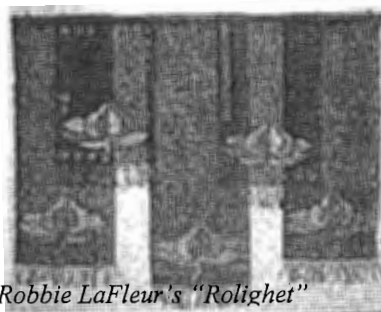
The 24th National Exhibition of Weaving in the Norwegian Tradition

Each year, thousands of visitors go through Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum's annual exhibition of folk art. The exhibition runs for one week (this year July 23-30) and concludes with Decorah's Nordic Fest. Weaving, rosemaling, woodworking, and knifemaking is featured. Entries are judged and ribbons are awarded. The goals of the exhibition are to educate the public about traditional and contemporary folk art, to encourage new artists, to publicly recognize outstanding artists, and to give artists an opportunity to sell their work.

For the weaving exhibition, there were 12 entries for ribbon competition and 4 entries submitted by Gold Medalists. The judges were *Betty Johannesen, *Lila Nelson, and Elizabeth Lorentzen. The results were:



Bob Paulson's Kukkola



Robbie LaFleur's "Rolighet"



Syvilla Bolson's
"Flesberg Variations II"

In the **Traditional Category** (pieces that follow historical tradition in technique, colors, and materials) a Blue Ribbon was awarded to *Bob Paulson of Oklee, MN, for a coverlet in kukkola weave. A Red Ribbon went to *Syvilla Tweed Bolson of Decorah, IA, for "Flesbergplegg Variations I," a runner in Flesberg weave. No White Ribbons were awarded.

*Syvilla Bolson also received an Honorable Mention for "Flesbergplegg Variations II," a runner in Flesberg weave.

Pieces in the **Contemporary Category** show a contemporary departure from historical in technique or colors or materials, but with elements that identify them as being within the tradition. No Blue Ribbons were awarded. *Betty

Rikansrud Nelson of Decorah, IA, received a Red Ribbon for a wall hanging in doubleweave pickup technique titled "Eight-pointed...Stars?" No White Ribbons were awarded. Honorable Mentions went to three artists: Kathleen Aaker of Viroqua, WI, for "Sunny Islands," a rug in tripleweave technique; Jeanette Erickson Bauer of Iowa City, IA, for "Reeds and Rushes" boundweave wall hanging; and Maureen Larson of Decorah, IA, for her monk's belt wall hanging titled "Inspired by the Fjords."

*Robbie LaFleur, a Gold Medal weaver from St. Paul, MN, received **Best of Show** (judges' choice) and **People's Choice** (visitor's choice) awards for "Rolighet," a wall hanging in transparent tapestry.

Ribbons carry points toward a Gold Medal. No new weaver accumulated enough points for a Gold Medal this year.

* NTG members



Betty Nelson's
"Eight-pointed...Stars"

