

Draktskikk i Aust Telemark. Mangfold og endring. Oslo 2010 Folkdress-tradition in Eastern Telemark. Diversities and changes

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Abstract:

This book is the last one in the trilogy of books on women's folk dress tradition in the county of Telemark in southern Norway. The publication is based on the author's own fieldwork carried out in the area in the 1960s. The work includes cataloguing, taking pictures of the clothes, and interviewing the owners about who owned and made the clothes, and how and when they were used. The folk dress I am now presenting may be sub-divided in three groups:

Content: Bridal dress / Raudtrøyeklede (the red jacket clothing / Beltestakk-klede (the belted skirt-dress) / Stakk og liv (skirt and bodice) / Headdresses / Conclusion

Bridal dress

Hovudsylv / lad (fig. 1): The oldest bridal headdress we know of is the *hovudsylv* (headsilver) or *lad*. This is a rectangular support lined with red woven material. Square pieces of gilded silver ornaments are attached to the support so that the base is hidden. There could be five or six rows of ornaments. The word *lad* refers to the Old Norse *lad*; "Hlað", vb. "Hlaða", which means something that is loaded, in such a way that the base is concealed. The Norwegian Folk Museum has silver of this type.



Fig. 1: Bridal headsilver or lad. Telemark. The support is decorated with Gilded silver ornaments. The bottom of the support is hidden.
© Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo, photo no. 1965-08.

The dress itself (fig. 2): The skirt is red, the jacket is black and the front pieces of the jacket are decorated with gilded silver eyelets in such a way that the base is concealed. This is a 13th-century fashion. The apron is white, and a pair of embroidered belt extensions hangs down from the silver belt. The stockings are sewn of black woollen fabric, and decorated with multi-coloured woollen embroidery. Red skirts and white aprons are recorded from the second half of the 17th century onwards. In the first half of the 19th century, the red skirt and the white apron were replaced by a black or blue skirt and a black or green decorated apron. After the wedding, these clothes were used for churchgoing.



Fig. 2: Jacket, silver. Bride. East Telemark. Black cloth. The front pieces are decorated with a pair of claspers and eyelets. © Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo, photo no. 2229.

Raudtrøyeklede – the red jacket clothing

Raudtrøyeklede. / *The red Jacket clothing* (fig. 3): The red jacket clothing is, as indicated, named after the jacket worn with the dress. The jacket is made of red wool. The front is decorated with multi-coloured woollen embroidery. The right-hand front piece is hooked onto the left front piece. The red jacket is influenced by 15th and 16th century fashion.



Fig. 3: Red woman's jacket. Woollen multi-coloured embroidery. Hjartdal. Telemark. © Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo, photo no. 5078A.

The skirt is of black and blue wool (fig. 4). The oldest type was pleated, though none of these have been kept. The material is rubbed and sewn onto a waistband. The hemline may be decorated with red or blue ribbons. The apron is of black or even green wool, decorated at round the hem with multi-coloured woollen embroidery (first half of the 19th century), or with different types of ribbons, silver and gold laces. Belt: Tablet woven belt.



Fig. 4: Aslaug Bjørnsdatter Mosebo, born 1825 died 1853 in Sauland, East Telemark. Red jacket clothing. On top of the headdress a white scarf with a coloured scarf tied around the forehead – she has a coloured scarf tied under the chin. Adolph Tidemand, watercolour. © Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo, photo no. 2038.

Shirt (fig. 5): There are two types of shirts. The oldest one had sleeves without cuffs, and the later are with cuffs. The bride wore both shirts at the same time, the older one on top of the newer. Characteristic for the shirts is the very rich multi-coloured embroidery in wool, supplemented with silk and linen. The embroideries do not match and vary within the shirt and from one shirt to another.



Fig. 5: Shirt. Telemark. Linen. Embroidery in blue. Cuffs without sleeves. © Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo, photo no. 9267.

Jewellery: Various types of brooches have been used. Several of them are rooted in the middle ages. Clasps and buttons were used.

Footwear

Stockings (fig. 6): There were two types of stockings. The oldest was sewn of black woollen material with the toe of material or with a knitted toe. The stockings were embroidered on the leg. They were for churchgoing and festive occasions. A few brides are said to have worn the stockings in the 1870s. The stockings can be traced back to prehistoric times. Stockings without embroidery and without toe were for everyday use. None of these have been kept. Stockings of woollen materials were replaced by knitted stockings in the second half of the 19th century.

Shoes: Wooden shoes were worn summer and winter. They were for everyday use. Raw hide shoes, known since prehistoric times, were mostly for men. Leather shoes were for churchgoing.



Fig. 6: A pair of stockings. East Telemark. Black cloth. Multicoloured embroidery. © Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo, photo no. 1921-1267ab.

Beltestakk-klede – the belted skirt dress.

The belted skirt dress replaced the red jacket clothing. The tablet woven belt as part of the dress, has given the name to the whole outfit.

The headdress (fig. 7): The hair twisted in tablet woven ribbons, which are laid around the head. On top they had a pair of coloured kerchiefs, one folded in a triangle and tied at the back, the other one folded, laid on top of the first one, and tied in a bow on top of the head. It might also be a square piece of cotton or linen folded, or tied at the back with a silk scarf tied around the forehead.



Fig. 7: Anne Solberg born 1895 heddal, Telemark is twisting her hair with a tablet woven ribbon.
Photo: Aagot Noss, 1965.

The black woollen skirt (fig. 8): It is made up of several widths, the stiffening at the bottom became stiffer and stiffer, and the width increased as time went on. The bodice became smaller. The belted skirt might be said to have been “fully” developed in the 1980s. The apron was very often made of black sateen, decorated with different types of ribbons.



Fig. 8: Three girls. Bø in Telemark. Belted skirt dress. Photo ca 1870.
© Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo, photo no. 13426.

The shirt (fig. 9): It was of white cotton. The sleeves had cuffs, and might or might not be decorated with embroidery. A coloured shirt might also be part of the outfit. *The black jacket* is made of wool. It resembles the red jacket, but does not have the woollen embroidery characteristic for these jackets.



Fig. 9: Two children. The girl has a belted skirt dress. Children were dressed like adults.
© Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo, photo no. photo 1986-12599d.

Stakk og liv – the skirt and bodice

The skirt and bodice clothing was still (1960s) worn by some of my interviewees (fig. 10). It was their only dress used for every day, Sundays and churchgoing. These clothes which were fashion inspired came into use about 1900, replacing the belted skirt-dress. The skirt and bodice, which were made of black woollen material, were attached to each other. The shirt was of factory made fabrics, such as cotton, velvet, and silk, and could be of any colours. The headdress: The hair was twisted with tablet woven ribbons, and laid around the head. For Sundays and churchgoing, they might have a pair of scarves on top.



Fig. 10: Anna Tveitan in Bø, Telemark born 1891.
Skirt and bodice dress. Twisted hair. Photo: Aagot Noss, 1965.

Headdresses

The same type of headdress seems to have been worn by both the unmarried and the married. The hair was twisted in ribbons and laid around the head. On top they might or might not have had a headdress consisting of:

- Two coloured scarves. Known since the 1820s. Worn now and then in the 1960s.
- White cotton scarf and a coloured scarf that is folded, laid around the forehead and tied in a bow on top of the head. 1820s to 1840s. (fig. 11)
- Folded, laid around the forehead and tied at the back. 18th century until 1840s.
- White cotton or linen scarf folded in a triangle, and tied at the back.
- Outdoors: scarf laid on top of the headdress, tied at the neck or under the chin. Second half of the 19th century and part of the 20th century.



Fig. 11: Kristi Aanundsdotter, Sauar, Sauherad. Born about 1802. Red jacket dress. Headdress: two coloured silk scarves. One is tied at the back, the other on top of the head. The painter may have been Adolph Tidemand, 1844. © Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo, photo no. 12086.

Bridal Headdress. Malerull or benik (fig. 12a-b): This is a sort of roll lined with woollen material, and has twelve filigree or cast eyelets. When dressing they crossed a silver chain at the back of the head. An alternate name has been the benik, i.e. bindike. That means a headdress tied around the head. This can be traced back to the middle ages and was worn by the unmarried. The bridal headdress Malerull has been used since the 1830-40s and is still occasionally worn (1960s). This headdress has been used in the period of the belted skirt dress and might even be used in the 1960s, then with the bunad of today.



Fig. 12a-b: Bride. Bø in Telemark 1966. The headdress is malerull. A silver chain is crossed at the back of the head. She has East Telemark bunad. © Norsk Folkemuseum, Oslo, photo no. 03097.

Conclusion

The traditional dress is out of use. For festive occasions, quite a number have a so-called "bunad", which is a more or less uniformed type, either of the belted skirt dress, or of the red jacket clothing.

For more information see:

Aagot Noss: *Draktskikk i Aust-Telemark. Mangfald og endring*, English summary, Oslo: Novus forlag (2010).