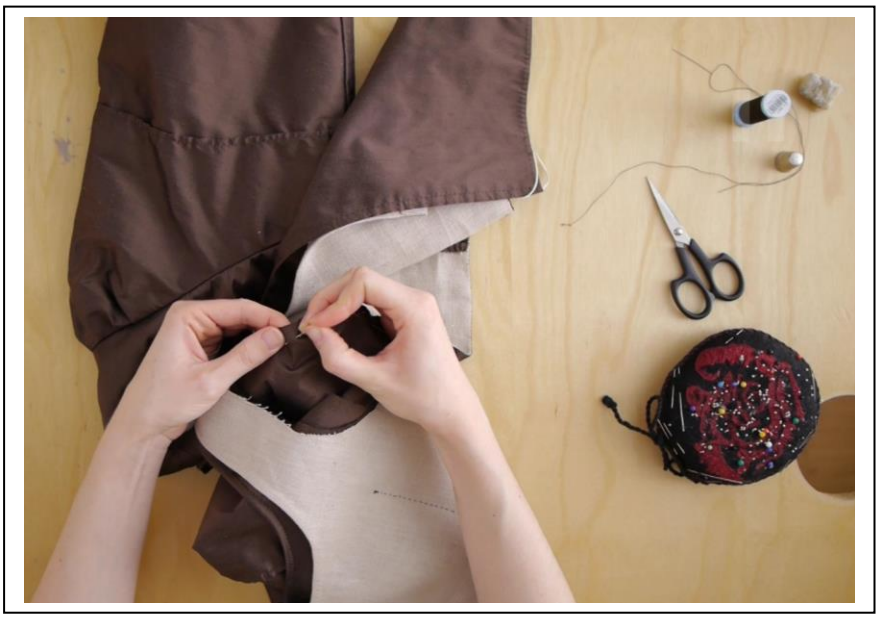
UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

RECONSTRUCTING EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY TAILORING

A Qualitative Study of Craft Knowledge



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ABSTRACT
This thesis researches the craft knowledge in eighteenth-century sewing through case studies and reconstructions. With the theoretical framework of experimental archaeology, craft science and object-based research, it was found that reconstructions can be a suitable method to research and document craft knowledge and skills of hand sewing. Two dresses from a museum collection were studied in detail and then reconstructed. They represent both folk dress and fashionable dress, showcasing different materials and construction techniques. Fabrics and materials were chosen to match the originals as close as possible and a pattern was taken from the original for the reconstructions. To explore the tailors craft knowledge and skill, the patterns were changed to fit a specific body. The sewing process was done with the same techniques used on the originals with only hand sewing. The reconstructions were documented in writing of each step of the process, as well as photography and video to capture the embodied skill of the maker. It is important to document the process with the hands visible to show how to hold the needle and fabric to perform the specific stitch. Only documenting the result of the sewing loses the documentation of the embodied skill. To be able to use reconstruction as a research method the craft skill of making is needed, which can be limiting the extent of its use. It is also important to clearly document each step in the research process to make it replicable. Then the reconstructions are set against previous research and literature to research them in a wider a context. The reconstructions in this thesis show a shift in construction techniques, with the traditional techniques in the folk dress and the new techniques used for the new fashion of the turn of the century, in the fashionable dress. The thesis presents a method for using reconstructions within academia and craft science with a critical discussion of the method.

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction

There is a widespread interest of making and wearing historical clothing, with societies meeting for social gatherings, dressed up in clothes from specific eras (e.g. https://www.gustafsskal.se/, https://www.sca.org/). I've been fascinated by this and historic clothing since I was little. The eighteenth-century's clothing and its craft has become my main focus and are topics I have been exploring for several years now. I use historical clothing both in my private life and in my profession, for occasions such as private gatherings, bigger public events and lectures. A big part of my interest in the eighteenth-century clothing is the way the garments were cut and made in that era, that differs a great deal from how clothing is manufactured today. Today clothing is mainly mass manufactured for fast fashion, using industrial machines with production set up in countries with cheap labour. Before sewing machines came into being all clothing was done by hand. Cheap labour was desired already though, which does not differ from today. The character of the fabrics and what they were made of, is a big contrast in that they only used natural fibres and most of the fabrics were woven. Now man-made fibres and knits are the most common. The materials used demanded other types of cut and skills to work with and make into clothing. The knit fabrics of today does not require as much knowledge of construction and fit as woven fabrics does. The garments preserved in museums from the eighteenth-century, with their intricate details, embroideries, luscious fabrics, but also the rough, pieced and worn-out clothing, were all made by hand. Somebody sat with it in their lap, sewing each stitch with needle and thread. The thought of this leaves me in awe of their skill and precision. Looking at each stitch, checking the length and choices in fabric and construction methods, draw me nearer to the past and the craft skills needed to complete those stitches. With this thesis I want to get closer to the craft behind the museum garments and will be researching original garments, as well as constructing new ones, to explore what they can tell about the past.

1.1 Background

I first studied to become a seamstress with focus on modern construction techniques and cut. After that I continued to explore historical techniques for several years, mainly sewing eighteenth-century clothing using hand sewing techniques and materials. Although the fashions of the past are a part of this, my main focus and fascination has been the historic construction techniques. Seeing how intricate things were made and the craft knowledge that it required before the industrialisation. Following this, I have done a number of case studies on eighteenth-century garments, both in an academic setting (Holmgren 2016) as well as popular science (Holmgren 2021). I have also worked in museum collections, handling historic dress for digitalization, exhibitions, as well as long-term storage. The choice of researching eighteenth-century garments and not later hand sewn garments, is because of the specific way garments were cut in that era that fascinates me that is not the same in the nineteenth-century. The choice is also based on availability, earlier garments are very rare in museum collections today.

Sewing my own historic garments has been a big part of my life and I am interested in delving deeper into the construction and how the craft of making can teach us about the past. Dress reconstructions has traditionally been used in Sweden outside of academia in folk dress for

over a hundred years. The use of reconstruction in an academic setting is not very common and seem to be a questioned method of what it can actually tell. There are a few scholars who in recent years has used reconstruction of dress to explore the past, but it does not have a distinct method for academic purposes. I want to explore the use of reconstruction to learn more about eighteenth-century clothing and the craft of tailoring that they imbue. The construction differs from modern clothing, with the use of a sewing machine and modern cutting methods requiring one set of skills that is not equal to that of the eighteenth-century tailor. My sewing education involved some hand sewing still, but the way of constructing clothing requires me to handle the pieces with a different approach. Sewing by machine goes quicker, but hand sewing does not take as long as one might first think. The choices of construction order and the way outer fabric and linings are dealt with, can save time and thread. Looking at historic garments with the intention of reconstructing them, has required me to look beyond what is visible and think about what order things have been put together, deconstructing the garment in my head to see how they got to the shape they are today. This can be done without the intention of reconstructing the garment, but through the reconstruction the idea of the work process can be tested. Which leads to the hypothesis and the questions to be investigated in this thesis.

1.2 Problem formulation

The working hypothesis is "*Through reconstruction the craft knowledge of making clothing in the eighteenth-century can be preserved and documented".*

1.3 Purpose and aim

The thesis will investigate how reconstructions can be executed and what they can tell. The reconstructions will also be a way of preserving the knowledge of how clothing was made, before the use of sewing machines and modern tailoring techniques. Reconstructions can be made with different intentions and with different objectives in mind. For this thesis the main objective of the reconstructions is the craft of hand sewing.

There are a few articles and thesis's that have used reconstructions of dress as a method of investigation, most of them pointing to the need for further use and development of methodologies and theories. There is a lack of research on Swedish dress collections, with only a few scholars focusing on the actual extant garments, rather than just the fashion. The aim is that this thesis will build on the research already done, and produce a method of how to use extant garments and reconstruction as data for academic research. The long-term goal is to learn about dress history and craftsmanship through the craft of sewing.

1.4 Research questions

The thesis will research the following questions:

- What can a reconstruction teach us about the craft of eighteenth-century sewing?

- What methods could be used to document dress reconstructions with?

- How can reconstruction be used as a method in an academic setting?

1.5 Limitations

The fabric of the originals will be noted for reference, but will not be researched further or reconstructed as the focus of the thesis is the craft of sewing the garments, rather than the making of the fabric. The fabric used for the reconstructions was chosen as they were the closest to the original that could be purchased within the budget. Therefore, these are mass manufactured, modern textiles and not hand-woven textiles that would have been used for the originals. The modern materials differ in manufacturing and may change how they are to sew with. The underwear or accessories worn with clothing during the eighteenth-century will not be researched in this thesis.

The number of reconstructions is limited to the time of the preceding University course and the time allotted to the thesis. It was only feasible to complete two dresses, consisting of four separate pieces. The reconstructed extant garments and the other extant garments referenced are limited to what is preserved at museums today and how accessible they are. To reconstruct historic garments, it is important to look at the originals to get all information needed. This can sometimes be problematic if the extant garments are in poor condition, the museum might not be able to accept study visits or the garment might be part of an exhibition. This however, was not a problem in regards to this thesis, I was able to book visits to the museum collections to study the garments in person.

Reconstructions has traditionally been made in Sweden outside of academia, for instance within the Folk costume movement. This means there is knowledge about reconstructing historic garments, but little research has been done on the subject and therefore it is limiting the number of sources available. Reconstructed garments can also be used in re-enactments, which focus more on the lived experience of the past but as this thesis will focus on the craft of making, the wearing and use of the garments will not be researched.

1.6 Previous research

1.6.1 Reconstruction research

Davidson writes about a shift to more acceptance of material objects as sources for research (2019). The studying of and reconstruction of historic dress is not new in the way that it has been utilized for making replicas for exhibitions and as a tool for conservation. This has however mostly been set in museums (Davidson 2019, p.334). When it comes to widening the use of reconstructions in an academic setting, it is still limited by the fact that the researcher must have the skills to carry out the work. There is also a need for an acknowledged methodology and theory for using reconstructions as a research method. This is needed to better grasp the tacit knowledge involved in the making of reconstructions. Both in terms of the person reconstructing an article of dress, as well as what skills the person who made the original had and what they expressed through their making (ibid, p.336).

Through reconstructing historical dress, the making process can be researched in different levels. It can be through the making of the textiles, cutting out the pieces, sewing and shaping the garment, decorations such as embroidery but also how it would be to wear. The reconstruction can be of an extant garment that can be examined, but it can also be a reconstruction of a garment from a painting or making something from a historic pattern.

(Davidson 2019, p.340-341). Using reconstructing of dress can be a useful method to test hypotheses. Depending on the hypotheses the extent of the reconstruction can help in different ways. The cost of a reconstruction can also effect decisions made in how close to the original it is possible to come (ibid, p.344). If it is to see and test how a garment might have fit and how the person who once wore it was built, it can be enough with one layer of calico. On the other end, you can reconstruct the fabric, sew it together as seen on the original and to the same shape and size to test the whole process (Davidson 2015, p.215, 217). Depending on the hypotheses, the researcher must also decide if the reconstruction is replicating the object as it is now today, or how it might have looked and been put together originally. Depending on the choices made throughout the reconstruction, different information can be found (ibid, p.218).

Objects in museums cannot be tried on or used today, they are there to be researched and preserved for the future. The reconstructions can stand in for the original in exhibitions to lessen the wear of the original (Davidson 2015, p.207). They can also be tried on and used, and give insights to how the person who once wore the original might have felt wearing and using it (Davidson 2019, p.346). The reconstructions also help to highlight the skills of the makers that is not well recorded in written historical documents, but embedded in the garments that has been preserved (ibid, p.352). Davidson replicated a pelisse to investigate if it might have been Jane Austen's, by comparing the garment to documentation about Austen's figure and with the help of written records (2015, p.201-202). The reconstruction started with examining the extant garment closely, measuring and taking a pattern from it, as well as documentation through photography (ibid, p.208). They had a fabric made specifically for the reconstruction, it was not a complete match to the original however as it would have been too expensive (ibid, p.215). The replica was completely hand sewn, replicating the stitches as closely as possible. As it was important to get the size and shape true to the original, the pattern was tested several times before the final replica was made (ibid, p.217-218). The result of the research gave information about Austen's body shape and also helps to protect the original garment for the future, with the replica standing in for it at times (ibid, p.220-221).

Bendall (2019) builds on Davidson's research on reconstructions (2015), with the question of how to reconstruct a historic garment with no surviving example and instead looking to written documents. In this case two underskirts from the sixteenth and seventeenth century (Bendall 2019, p.365). The reconstructions were made with an experimental approach, with the help of written and visual documents from the period and research done previously by other scholars. The starting point was to find visual sources to see how the garments looked to be able to create a pattern (ibid, p.368-369). To get an idea of the size the visual sources were measured to get the proportions for the garment (ibid, p.374). To get it to look right in real-life, the pattern was tested and adjusted until the result was similar to that of the sources. When the pattern was done the material was research through written records, including Elizabeth I's wardrobe accounts (ibid, p.377-378). Then the reconstruction was carried out using techniques found in other surviving garments of the period (ibid, p.379). Bendall acknowledges her limitations as a seamstress as "*Those who sewed by hand day in and day out for most of their lives honed such embodied knowledge over the course of many years until such precise needlework became second nature*." (ibid, p.381).

As a next step, the reconstructed underskirts were tested on models to see how they looked on a body and to learn more about their functionality (Bendall 2019, p.383). This is however hard to know as it is very individual how one experiences clothing, especially clothing that is far from what we are used to wearing today. Instead of focusing on the comfort, more focus was on how it limited the movement of the wearer. Written sources from the period is not always accurate in describing the comfort of women's garment either, as most documentation has been written by men and might be skewed, as they did not themselves wear them (ibid, p.386). The reconstructions gave new insights into how the garments were made and the actual size of them (ibid, p.389). As there are no surviving examples it was also a way to recover the knowledge of how they might have been made (ibid, p.382).

Woodyard (2017) and Rudolph (2019) both used reconstruction as a part of their master thesis's but with different approach. Woodyard formulated a new methodology called *Hand-sewn inquiry,* for using hand sewing as a way to "…*explore and understand the knowledge and material objects that are produced during the hand-sewing process.*" (Woodyard 2017, p.25). The approach is practice-based, with hand sewing and a maker's perspective when looking at and recreating the object. The maker's perspective makes the researcher ask the original garment different questions than someone focusing more on the style and surface of it. The maker needs to look at how the garment was made, why it was made like that and what choices the person who once made it took (ibid, p.26). To make reconstructions a valid source for academic research, literature needs to complement and support the work and frame the methodology. As the reconstruction is based on the researcher's execution of the practical work, their background and prior knowledge needs to be addressed and reflected on (ibid, p.27-28). To document the reconstruction, Woodyard has used photography and written down each step in the making process (ibid, p.161-176).

When taking patterns of extant garments, they might be worn and stretched in places, meaning there is limitations to how precise the flat pattern can become. This extends to the fabric the reconstruction is made from, as the machine-woven textiles of today can differ in drape and structure from the textiles of the eighteenth-century (Woodyard 2017, p.49). Fabric samples can help to compare what fabric that might be closest in hand and texture for a reconstruction, as this effects the result with the shape and feel of the garment (ibid, p.61). Through using the historical techniques with hand sewing and materials to match the original, the reconstruction gives an understanding of the production and skill of the person who sewed the original (ibid, p.63). By studying extant garments and looking close at the construction and recreating it, it gives the researcher literacy to these kinds of objects, which can help in understanding written sources about similar objects (ibid, p.83).

Compared to Woodyard (2017) Rudolph does not use the reconstruction of a historic object to the same extent. Rudolph uses the reconstruction to "…*support and clarify written literature, as well as provide details that cannot be examined through traditional methods of artifact analysis."* (2019, p.30). More of the thesis is focused on written sources, rather than the act of reconstruction and the methodology around it. The examination of the shoes to be reconstructed is however done with a similar approach with the making of them in mind. The reason for making a reconstruction was to understand more about the issues mentioned in

contemporary literature about the comfort and safety of women's shoes (ibid, p.83). Rudolph also uses written documentation and photography to document the reconstruction process (ibid, p.114-128). The pattern of the original shoes was slightly altered to fit the researcher to be able to try the shoes on and see how they felt to wear (ibid, p.85, 92). Historical objects in museums can highlight the maker behind them, but also the life of the wearer (ibid, p.99). In the case of Woodyard (2017) and Rudolph, it has helped to bring awareness to the women that once made and wore the reconstructed objects (2019, p. 98).

A conservation project at Perth Museum and Art Gallery included the conservation of an original doublet from the seventeenth century, together with reconstructions of the doublet (Payne, Wilcox, Pardoe & Mikhaila 2011). Based on the construction and fabric of the original, the doublet was probably made by a skilled tailor (ibid, p.44) and might have been worn as wedding attire (ibid, p.42). Doublets and garments in general from the seventeenth century are not common in museum collections today, so a conservation was carried out to better preserve it for the future (ibid, p.51). After this the doublet was more stable and could be thoroughly examined and measured for reconstruction. The fabrics chosen for the reconstruction were modern, machine woven textiles but they were still close enough to the original textiles to be a good representation (ibid, p.56). Following the construction of the original doublet, the reconstruction was hand sewn in the same manner. They also made a pair of breeches based on the fashion of the seventeenth century to be able to exhibit a full suit, to better show how it might have looked when new and worn 400 years ago (ibid, p.59).

It is impossible to create an exact copy of a textile object, the extent of the reconstruction is dependent on the use of the final result and what material is available today (Nørgaard 2008, p.44). Nørgaard writes about the process of reconstructing prehistoric textiles and how to think when making decisions regarding the process and materials. If the reconstruction is made as a theatre costume or not to be looked at closely, it can have modern production techniques such as machine sewing for inner seams. When it is made to be worn as a tool for teaching about history, it is important to make it more accurate and use techniques contemporary to the original. The reconstruction for the article was made for a museum exhibition to be presented next to the originals to show how they might have looked when new (ibid, p.45-46). The wool for the fabrics was hand spun and then hand-woven to be as close to the original textiles as possible with the knowledge of the techniques at the time (ibid, p.48). All through the article Nørgaard thoroughly describes the process and the decisions made, as well as why things were done in a certain way. For example, some of the techniques used for the reconstruction was not contemporary to the original to save time and money (ibid, p.49). The result is dependent on the skill of the person making the reconstruction and there is always room for interpretation (ibid, p.53-54).

1.6.2 Clothing production in eighteenth-century Sweden

Liby (1997, 2018), Rasmussen (2010, 2014) and Eldvik (2014) use extant garments as sources in their research. Their research will help to illustrate what people wore and how they acquired their clothing in the eighteenth-century in the following section. Before looking at what they wore, a background is given to who was making the garments.

1.6.2.1 The guild system

Understanding more about who made garments in Sweden during the eighteenth-century has some basis in the guild system. In Sweden, guilds started to appear in the 1300s in Stockholm (Kallionien 1997, p.92) but not until the 1600s had it reached wider in the country. The guild regulated conditions within the craft performed, as well as social and some criminal punishments, sometimes the latter more prominent than the actual handicraft. The guild system was a way to organize the craft but also social conditions, building a smaller collective within the wider community (Lindström 1997, p.99-100). Being part of the guild, the individuals had responsibility to help uphold the honour of the group (ibid, p.102).

The guilds mostly had its place in towns, but sometimes craftsmen from the countryside could be part of a guild in the neighbouring town (Edgren 1997, p.110). Within the towns, craftsmen in the guilds were for the most part the only ones that were allowed to perform the craft of the guilds. If there were more than three masters of the same trade in a town, they were required to form a guild, if less than three they needed to be part of another town's guild for that specific trade. To become a master of a craft you were required to be an apprentice for five years, then a journeyman for at least three. After that period the journeyman could request to become a master by performing an exam in making a sellable product to be approved (ibid, p.112-113). The examination was supposed to guarantee that, the tailor for instance, had the knowledge needed to perform the craft (Rasmussen 2010, p.89). There were different exams depending on if the journeyman was aiming at becoming a tailor focusing on men's or women's garments. The examinations included garments for both though, with the men's tailors being required to sew a complete men's costume as well as an easier women's garment and the other way around (ibid, p.91). After the implementation of the National costume in 1778, the tailor's exam was to sew a national costume according to its regulations. This was in place up until the 1810s in some places (Bergman 1938, p.52). It was not only in the guilds power to approve a new master, to become a master, and have burghership, you also needed to have permission from the magistrate to run a business (Edgren 1997, p.117). In the countryside tailors could be approved by the parish to work in the district (ibid, p.125).

With the guild system also came the fact that only men were allowed to become tailors and make tailored garments for customers (Rasmussen 2014, p.50). This was the norm in Sweden until the end of the eighteenth-century. Tailoring was previously seen as cutting and shaping garments rather than sewing. As had happened in other countries earlier, the discussion arouse also in Sweden as to focusing the making of garments on needlecraft which was seen as more suitable for women rather than men. This view was further grounded in that fashion was seen as feminine. The male tailors were giving up on making clothes for women as a result of this development, and it led to women being encouraged to start working as seamstresses and making clothes for other women. Cutting and sewing garments for women had been seen as professional work for tailors previously but now it was de-professionalised and seen as unqualified work (ibid, p.52). The change of cut in women's garment by the turn of the century, with the straighter, more flowing dresses, has been seen as a simpler cut than previous fashion and as less technically demanding to make. Rasmussen however states that this might not be the case. Just because the garments look simple it does not mean that they

did not require skills to make. Instead, the high-waisted dresses required other skills to shape around the body to make them fit properly (ibid, p.57).

1.6.2.2 The tailors craft knowledge

The craft of the tailor lies in different aspects in the construction of clothing. A master tailor's competence is a result of experience and craft knowledge. According to a publication from 1754 on the tailoring craft, the knowledge lies in their hands and cannot be replicated by uneducated persons. The craft demanded knowledge about cut, proper fit and how to put the pieces together in the best way, using the right techniques (Rasmussen 2010, p.74).

Pattern construction and cutting were important knowledges of the tailors (Rasmussen 2010, p.74). There were no patterns in the eighteenth-century as we are used to today. Instead, the tailors were trained to know how to form and cut garments directly on the fabric. They could also have basic patterns that they adjusted to the measurements of the customer. The same technique was used both for women's and men's wear. To take the measurements on the customer, a paper was notched or a string was marked with knots for the different measurements needed. This was then used to draft the pattern on the fabric (Rasmussen 2014, p.57-58). The basic patterns the tailors used could be in different sizes. Patterns for military uniforms and the National costume were provided in three sizes. Sizes can also be seen in pre-embroidered panels for clothing, as they were embroidered to shape on a fabric before it was cut into shape (ibid, p.59). When drafting the pattern on to the fabric, it was important to do so in an economic fashion, using as little fabric as possible through piecing the fabric for the pattern pieces. The most talented tailor was the one using the least amount of fabric, saving in cost for the customer (Rasmussen 2010, p.74-75). The cut of the garment pieces and how to lay them correctly onto the fabric was one of the biggest trade secrets. The master tailors would perform this, keeping it as a tacit knowledge, not shared freely even to the journeymen (ibid, p.88).

At the time, the cutting of the garments was seen as the most demanding aspect of making garments (Rasmussen 2010, p.74). However, Rasmussen has in her research showcased that the sewing also demanded a wide knowledge and experience to sew the garments in the correct manner (ibid, p.175). In the extant garments she has found that they show a great variety in stitches used, some uniformity can be seen but also individuality from the tailor, in what threads, stitches and construction orders were used (ibid, p.177). The sewing techniques and the knowledge of how to use it correctly, also plays an integral part to the final result, it is not just the cutting that makes the garment skilfully made (ibid, p.234). If the master tailor was not working alone, it was common to delegate the sewing to the journeymen and apprentices. The sewing was generally performed sitting in a tailor position on a table, with the garment in the worker's lap. This was particularly fitting when working with heavy and large pieces of fabric, as they would not fall onto the floor and pull when sewing. The position also made it possible to anchor the garment on one's knee to stretch the fabric for easier and faster sewing (ibid, p.241).

1.6.2.3 The clothing

The clothing of the eighteenth-century is today usually separated into fashionable dress and folk dress. The fashionable dress is considered worn by the upper classes such as nobility and

the wealthier bourgeoisie. The folk dress was in turn considered worn by the peasantry. This separation is partly due to the idea that folk dress supposedly was more traditional and characterized by the location. However, there were fashion influences in the folk dress as well, but not always at the same time or to the same degree as the fashionable dress (Liby 1997, p.5, Eldvik 2014, p.16). Some areas in Sweden had a more traditional view on how the clothing should look and did not adhere to the fashion changes, but was instead shaped by the local culture. This could lead to a characteristic dress differing noticeably from the more fashionable dress, as well as folk dress. It is important to note that folk dress did not dictate a uniform, there were stricter guidelines for what was acceptable in that area, but the people did not wear exactly the same costume or outfit (Liby 1997, p.100-101).

The perception of folk dress as a folk costume or a uniform, has been communicated partially because museums sometimes separate the fashionable dress and folk dress into separate collections, and have helped build the stereotype of folk dress not being affected by fashions of the time (Eldvik 2014, p.11). Both Liby (1997, 2014, 2018) and Eldvik (2014) have in their research emphasized that this is not the case, but that folk dress and fashionable dress have more in common than what has previously been the norm in the field of dress history. Just as fashionable dress, folk dress has mostly been affected by the time it was made rather than where (Eldvik 2014, p.12). It was not uncommon for older styles to be worn for longer periods of time with new styles coming in and being worn in combination with the old (Liby 2014, p.26). Liby is suggesting adopting the term fashionable folk dress instead as it a lot of the time evolved with the fashion. There were some differences even in these though, mainly in the fabrics and use of old-fashioned accessories, such as aprons and head wear (ibid, p.36).

Clothing in eighteenth-century Sweden was not allowed to be manufactured as ready-made garments but as made-to-measure only, as it was regulated by the guild system. Garments were however allowed to be sold second-hand (Rasmussen 2014, p.50-51). Independent of your social status, the underwear, such as shifts and shirts, was constructed from simple straight pieces of fabric that could be sewn in the home by women. The outerwear however, such as waistcoats, jackets and petticoats, were sewn on commission by a tailor. Tailors in the countryside usually travelled around to customers' homes and stayed for a period to make several garments for the household while there. The cut and construction of the outerwear was more complicated than the underwear, requiring the skill and knowledge of the trained craftsperson. The most important tools of the tailor were scissors, needles, thimble, awl and iron. The customer always provided the fabric and thread for the garments (Liby 1997, p.33-34).

The travelling countryside tailor could play a part in spreading fashionable new cuts for the garments for all social classes. Other inspirations have been the military uniform for men's wear, with the cut of the uniform merging with the folk dress (Liby 2014, p.38-39). Servants were also a factor in spreading fashion, as they might go to work in another parish or town where they adopted new fashions that they later brought back home. The fashions and the clothes people chose to wear, displayed who they were to a bigger extent than today. It for instance marked your social class, marital status and wealth (Blixt 2014b, p.119-120).

An important part of the history of dress is also how the garments were used. During the eighteenth-century it was common practice to mend garments when they were starting to show wear, rather than discarding them. The garments were worn, mended and re-sewn into other things as long as possible (Liby 2018, p.212). Traces of this can be found in museum collections today.

1.6.2.4 The fabrics

Just as the trade of making garments was regulated, the fabrics used was also regulated by law. There were plenty of sumptuary laws regarding fabric enacted during the eighteenth-century to control what people could wear. The thought was to keep the luxury consumption down and inhibit import of goods that the state preferred to be manufactured within Sweden. Manufacturers were given subsidies and financial support to produce goods to expand the domestic production of for example textiles. To further emphasise this there were large import duties for some fabrics, and some were prohibited from entering the country. The custom officials were given long lists of goods that were banned (Lundqvist 2013, p.192), and textile samples to compare with the imported textiles to easier see if they were allowed or not. Despite the banns and samples, the prohibited fabrics were smuggled into the country, partly because smaller amount of goods could not be stopped, but mostly because of corruption within the customs office (ibid, p.197-198). Textiles that were at times banned included patterned and coloured silks, all qualities of wool and wool blend textiles (ibid, p.192-193).

Textiles that were prohibited were a lot of the times styles that were made within the country. These types of fabrics were still smuggled into the country, in part to the price for the retailer but also that the quality of the foreign textiles was believed to be superior to the domestically produced textiles. Another attractive side to smuggling was the avoidance of the high taxes that were put on some goods. Avoiding them meant selling for a larger profit, and still selling them easily even though the consumer might be paying more than for the domestic textiles (Lundqvist 2013, p.203). Lundqvist notes that the smuggling of foreign textiles can be seen as a cultural transfer, spreading new fashions and knowledge about textiles from country to country (ibid, p.211).

The fabrics for folk dress were usually home-woven from wool and linen, but the use of bought fashion fabrics were becoming more common in the eighteenth-century (Liby 1997, p.29-30). The home-made fabrics were mainly woven by women and the workload was divided depending on their skill with a particular type of weave (Liby 2018, p.175). By the end of the eighteenth-century the state found that the peasantry was beginning to adopt more fashionable fabrics such as silk. Through sumptuary laws they were trying to inhibit this and some parish meetings discussed this. Some people requested to keep wearing silk ribbons and other accessories, while others just requested to wear them out, and then not buy any new silk. The silks were mainly used for the peasantry's formal attire and not every day wear (Blixt 2014a, p.49). The ready-made fashion fabrics could be bought on trips to a close by town (Liby 2018, p.179). Broadcloth and coarse woollen cloth (vadmal) were the most common fabrics for everyday wear in folk dress (Blixt 2014c, p.137).

For the upper classes, silks were more common. Large flower-patterned silk fabrics were popular for a large part of the eighteenth-century, fitting for the fashion of the time. In the last

quarter of the century, it was becoming more common and fashionable with simpler fabrics (Rasmussen 2010, p.191). The upper classes still used linen of different qualities as lining, just as for folk dress (ibid, p.182). The last few years of the century saw the increase of cotton fabrics for fashionable dress as well as monochrome silks (ibid, p.202). The monochrome silks can be connected with a sumptuary law from 1794, indicating only black, white or gray fabrics were allowed to be used outside (ibid, p.45).

1.6.3 Folk costume

Liby (2018), Eldvik (2014) and Centergran (1996) has written about folk costume and folk dress from different perspectives. The definition *folk costume* is important to separate from *folk dress* that was discussed earlier. Folk costumes can be made as reconstructions of extant garments, but a lot of times they are made after sketched up ideas from the early 1900s, of what the stereotype said the peasantry could have worn in a certain place in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century (Eldvik 2014, p.15). Centergran calls the newly produced, reconstructed, clothing *district costume* and instead refer to the original garments as folk costume (1996, p.14). For this thesis, Eldvik's definition will be used as that seems to be the norm in research today.

A Folk costume movement (folkdräktsrörelsen) was started in the beginning of the twentieth century that researched what type of clothing and dress traditions had been prominent in each parish and region. When there was not sufficient evidence for a specific style of dress, the Folk costume movement sometimes composed costumes themselves. Handicraft associations were started and they provided materials and instructions on how to make the folk costumes (Liby 2018, p.221-223). The cut of the garments was occasionally modernized to fit more loosely, and the techniques used were not practiced in the time the original garments were made. The colours were chosen after modern ideals of what was proper and the fabrics should be home-made even though manufactured textiles were used in peasant clothing historically (ibid, p.224-225). For the most part the costumes were based on the oldest, rarest and most elaborate extant garments and ideas of what people used to wear, this is also true for the garments collected at museums (Centergran 1996, p.48).

In a later stage of the movement, more original garments were researched and the inkling to make the reconstructions closer to the originals was becoming more prominent (Liby 2018, p.229). Around the same time as this shift, classes were started to teach people how to more accurately sew their folk costumes (Centergran 1996, p.140). When choosing what folk costume to make the norm was, and is, to make the one associated with the place you were born or where your parents were born, regardless of where the person lives when making the costume (ibid, p.209, 211). Within the Folk costume movement there is a lot of focus on making the costumes accurate, but there are split opinions of what actually is accurate (ibid, p.223). Some say that the most important thing is the fabric and the look of the costume, but it can still be sewn by machine, while other say that it needs to be sewn by hand with the same materials and stitch lengths as on the original (ibid, p.243). As the folk costume is supposed to be based on extant garments there is limitations on how much material there is to base the costumes on. This has led to people wearing the same costumes, indicating that the folk dress used to be something like a uniform which was not the case. It has also led to newly

composed costumes with very little base in the historic materials (ibid, p.229-231). Centergran proposes to look at the folk costume as imagined history instead, as the costumes can never be completely accurate anyway (ibid, p.240).

The making and wearing of folk costume have been implemented as an Intangible cultural heritage in Sweden, with a background of traditional craftsmanship. The folk costume has its traditional ground in the folk dress worn by the peasantry historically. As the garments are still made today, though in a different setting and with a different purpose, it is a living tradition (https://www.isof.se/lar-dig-mer/levande-traditioner/forslag/2019-01-30-folkdrakter). When implementing folk costume as an Intangible cultural heritage, it is now deemed to be preserved under the responsibility of the nation (UNESCO 2020, p.9-10). As folk costume falls under traditional craftsmanship, the working responsibility lie with The National Swedish Handicraft Council (Institutet för språk och folkminnen 2012, p.21). It is kept a living tradition with the help of the Handicraft movement, Folkdansringen (society of traditional dance, music and craft) and museums working with folk costume in different ways (https://www.isof.se/lar-dig-mer/levande-traditioner/forslag/2019-01-30-folkdrakter).

All though this thesis is not about folk costume as such, the tradition uses hand sewing and reconstructions as a way of preserving the craft knowledge in making and explore historic cuts and constructions. This has its similarities to what this thesis will investigate but in an academic setting and with specific garments.

1.7 Theoretical framework

This thesis will use three main theories for the research, including experimental archaeology, craft science and object-based research.

1.7.1 Experimental archaeology

Reconstruction is a way to come closer to the past and can be done in many different ways and with different intentions. One approach that has been a part of academia for some time is *Experimental Archaeology*. Experimental Archaeology tests hypothesises through experimentation to replicate the past in some way. The experiment should be performed in a controllable environment and the result can give valuable information about the past, and offer new ways to interpret the past (Mathieu 2002, p.1). Mathieu has broken it down to four types of experiments; objects, behaviours, processes and systems. As this thesis will focus on reconstruction of extant garments it mostly falls under the type of *Object replication*. Object replication can be done through a *visual replica* that is close to the original visually, but might be made out of cheaper materials and with modern techniques (ibid, p.2). This type of replica can be used as a visual representation of the past but not to teach about how the original was made. To get closer to the original you can create a *functional replica*. This type of replica can be made if it needs to be used as the original would have been. They still do not have to be made with accurate materials but they need to function as the original would have. The next step could be to create a *full replica*, where the replica is made with accurate materials and techniques. Object replication is most often used for education, archives, or as a tool for further experiments into behavioural replication. The full replicas can however also be used to research how the process would originally have been in making the extant object (ibid, p.3). The reconstruction in this thesis also touches on *Technological process replication*, which

focuses on the technology and production of for example an object (ibid, p.5). The different types of replication overlaps and connects to each other to form a method appropriate for the specific experiment and its hypotheses (ibid, p.6).

An experiment can be separated into different phases. The first phase can be to design the experiment, how it will be performed to research the hypotheses. After this has been established comes the actual experiment, followed by the analysis of what was found during the experiment (Mathieu & Meyer 2002, p.75). Mathieu states the importance of not taking the results of the experiments as facts, but "*Rather, it merely eliminates possibilities, shows possible answers, and sometimes indicates the degree of probability of certain answers*…" (Mathieu 2002, p.8). Experimental archaeology and reconstructions should be used to show how things can be and might have been, they should not be used to prove theories (Petersson 2003, p.270) as there is always room for interpretations.

Petersson studies full-scale reconstructions in her dissertation, outlining reconstruction as a full-scale copy, an imitation, of buildings or objects from the past (Petersson 2003, p.18-19). Within this definition there is the experiment and the incarnation of the object and the past. Just as Mathiue (2002), Petersson highlights the importance of the experiment being replicable in the same way to make it a scientific experiment. The incarnation and embodiment include familiarizing with the past and finding ways to make it approachable in the present. This can be part of the experiment of the reconstruction in a way of public experimentation or in various ways making it accessible for others. The experiment and the incarnation in a reconstruction can be combined, even though they traditionally have been separated (Petersson 2003, p.21-23). The use of the different aspects is defined by the purpose of the reconstruction. Experimental reconstruction is seen as more scientific and the incarnation a way of conveying the past to a wider public. Experimental reconstruction is both theoretical and practical, it has to be thoroughly planned first and then executed practically (ibid, p.208). This requires the researcher to have knowledge of how to perform the experiment, they need to be familiar with traditional craftsmanship and have some skill in performing it (ibid, p.244). An experiment can also be the reconstruction of a craft, the focus being on the making of an object rather than the object itself (ibid, p.252).

Experimental archaeology demands both planning and execution, it cannot be one without the other. Reading about a technique only gets you so far, the doing gives a deeper understanding of the technique (Paardekooper 2019, p.2). There is a growing interest in replicating historic items among living history societies, this could be applied to experimental archaeology but it needs to be documented correctly and be more critical to the sources (ibid, p.5). There are also freelancers working towards museums and living history sites that use experimental archaeology when producing an object or demonstrating their knowledge. The use of experimental archaeology is not just for scientific purposes and research anymore. It is also used to show a wider public how things might have been done historically, for example in museums (ibid, p.6-7). More of the experiments need to be documented and published to spread the results and the knowledge gained though (ibid, p.8). Paardekooper suggests a structure of five steps to document experimental archaeology. Starting with researching the

primary source, setting up a hypothesis, testing the hypotheses, documentation of the test and then comparing the results with archaeological records (ibid, p.9).

In contrast to the opinion in the article of broadening the scope, Paardekooper still claims that reconstruction of clothing does not fall under experimental archaeology, however no further explanation is given to why not (Paardekooper 2019, p.10). Narmo on the other hand is writing about a costume that has been reconstructed from an archaeological find as experimental archaeology. The reconstruction was performed with academic and skilled textile workers and compiled in a thesis (2011, p.199-200). Here it is stated as an experiment because it was a controlled experiment referencing archaeological material (ibid, p.223).

Petersson together with Narmo suggests that experimental archaeology could benefit from a humanistic orientation (2011, p.29). In this the craft in the experiment and the performer can take a larger part and incorporate sensory and emotional perspectives. Handicraft is a big part in open-air museums, with public experimentations that by some is not seen as experimental archaeology as they are not documented in a scientific way (ibid, p.31-32). The documentation for scientific standard usually involves text and illustrations of different variants. There are other alternatives to documentation however, including filming. The experiment can be filmed through the maker's perspective and give new sensory insights (ibid, p.35). A humanistic perspective gives room for tacit knowledge (ibid, p.41) as that can be useful in understanding the past and present, *"It is in comparison with our time and our own personal experience that we understand the significance of humanistic experimental archaeology."* (ibid, p.46). Beck also suggests including subjective data in the results of experimental archaeology with a contextual orientation. This should always be documented as the research will be influenced by the subjectivity of the researcher in some way, even if not intentional. The results of experiments are affected by the present and need to be interpreted with an openness to more possibilities when compared to the sources (Beck 2011, p.188-189).

Almevik and Melin writes about the reconstruction of the church of Södra Råda that was burnt down in 2001 (2015). The reconstruction was initiated by the Swedish National Heritage Board with the idea that it would give more knowledge about the craft of building medieval churches (Almevik & Melin 2015, p.72). The project partially looked to experimental archaeology to reconstruct the church. But the focus was also on the researcher and the skilled craftsperson's, as well as their impact, as an important tool in the research (ibid, p.99). The reconstruction was performed together with skilled craftsperson's (ibid, p.76) and archaeologist who carried out excavations of the church (ibid, p.78). There was extensive previous documentation about the church, but not quite precise enough to easily perform the reconstruction, for instance lacking in documentation of construction details. To find out more, photographs were researched as well as remaining material from the site (ibid, p.81). This was complemented by archival studies and researching similar churches still standing and looking closer at how they were constructed (ibid, p.82). The result and experience of making the reconstruction has for example brought new information about how the wood was handled before construction, not known before the practical experiments (ibid, p.86).

1.7.2 Craft science

Craft and craft knowledge can be linked to traditions. When traditions change due to a shift in the market, with competition or loss in demand, craft knowledge can be lost. With the help of cultural conservation these skills might be brought back (Almevik 2014, p.12). The preservation of intangible cultural heritage is today legitimized by UNESCO's convention of securing intangible cultural heritage and traditional crafts is a part of the convention (UNESCO, 2020). Objects are not made in the same manner today as they were historically, a big factor to that is the industrialization and globalization of productions and trade (Sjöberg, 2014, p.78). Objects and tools used to make the objects historically has been preserved in museums, but many of them lack the information of how to produce the objects or use the historic traditional tools (Almevik 2016, p.80).

Craft knowledge falls under tacit knowledge, where the knowledge is a means to produce something. Generally, the result of the knowledge has been seen as more important than the knowledge itself (Almevik 2014, p.19-20). When putting craft into a scientific aspect it is important to acknowledge and use both practical and theoretical grounds for the research (ibid, p.21). All traditional crafts might not be necessary to preserve for today, but Almevik highlights the need that might come in the future, when they might be lost completely. A way to extend the knowledge is through documentation (ibid, p.25-26).

Lykke Lundberg (2011) and Wood recommends that documentation could be done by filming to make it available to others to watch and learn a craft skill (Wood 2014, p.58). Wood writes it is important to make the filming of the craft as little intrusive as possible so as not to hinder the craftsperson in their work, or make it into a performance (ibid, p.60). Videos documenting handicraft can be used as instructional videos, but also for spreading and documenting research. Even with video it is hard to grasp the tacit knowledge of the craftsperson, *"The expert practitioner makes the task look easy, tacitly responding to subtle cues that may be any combination of kinaesthetic, visual, auditory or olfactory".* The audio recordings might help to an extent to this but some things might be left unsaid, as the craftsperson might not even reflect on what they have done and why (ibid, p.65).

Video recordings of craft is not a new thing. The handicraft movement with its founder Lilli Zickerman, took the initiative to make the first craft documentary in Sweden in 1917 (Zickerman 1999, p.167) and Nordiska museet had a project in the first half of the twentieth century building a film archive (Lykke Lundberg 2011, p.188). Lykke Lundberg divides film documentation into three sections. *The personal document* only used by the maker, *the public documentation* should hold all information necessary to be able to be used as a source material for research, and *the communicating document* is used to spread knowledge and interest. It is important to decide what the focus is before starting the filming. Those steps can evolve to instruction films, documentation films or documentaries, all depending on the adaptation of the filmed material (ibid, p.190). An inquiry about the use of film with handicraft showed that there was a large interest from craftsperson's to use that as a medium of documentation (ibid, p.193). It is important that the documentation process chosen, whether it be film, photography or any other process, is one that fits the best with what is to

be documented and suits the person who is performing what is to be documented (ibid, p.195).

Almevik, Jarefjäll and Samuelsson has researched video and reconstructions as a way of preserving traditional craftsmanship through analysing a craft documentary from the 1970s (2013). They reconstructed the process from the film to see what information it holds and what might be missing. Craftsmanship cannot be performed by just anyone, it requires previous knowledge of the craft to make an accurate documentation. The reconstruction was carried out by two skilled craftspeople, *"Skill is an issue of trustworthiness in the reconstruction. Skill is a vital ingredient in the investigating method: to reflect in action and over action."* (ibid, p.151). To document the process, they kept an event-log and video. The documentation is vital for analysis but it hindered the craftspeople somewhat in their process. Writing down each step in between, takes the craftsperson away from the craft process (ibid, p.153). Their reconstruction of the old documentary show that it is important that the producers of craft documentation understand the craft process, as the documentary was missing important information of how to actually perform the craft. To get proper documentation of traditional craftsmanship, they highlight the need for craftspeople to be a part of the whole process (ibid, p.144). Skilled craftspeople need to be involved to keep a traditional intangible cultural heritage alive.

Almevik also writes about the Craft Laboratory's research (https://www.gu.se/hantverkslaboratoriet) that focus on methodologies that highlight the embodied skill of the craft person, within craft research and heritage studies (Almevik 2016, p.78). Embodied skill comes from experience and prowess in making. The experience guides the body in the making with the tacit knowledge of the crafts person (ibid, p.82). Embodied skill also include problem solving when things do not work as usual, or according to plan (ibid, p.93). An important question in craft research is how to put tacit knowledge into words or other means of documenting it. The Craft Laboratory has for example researched written documentation from the craftsperson's perspective with the documentation being aimed at their peers. The main challenge is to include the tacit knowledge and not just write a step-by-step instruction. The documentation needs to include everything needed to reproduce the craft (ibid, p.87-88). This type of documentation can empower craftsperson's to spread their knowledge and the crafts intangible heritage (ibid, p.94-95).

Planke has used craft knowledge and reconstruction in his research. His view is that objects are sources to life and knowledge, but because research has not focused on the objects but rather written documents, the objects are hard to read today (Planke 2005, p.203). Within craft science, focus and the highest value has been put to written documents and the act of craft has had the lowest value. The traditional view is that in texts it is easier to reference other sources and plainly see what they mean. When it comes to illustrations and objects, they are harder to reference as they need to be interpreted, but they can still build on the written arguments (Planke 2016, p.125). When it comes to the craftsperson, the act of craft is much higher valued, with written documents lower as they are separated from the process and the object (ibid, p.126). For the further development of craft science both of these aspects are important

and need to be used together (ibid, p.128) and valued equally (ibid, p.131). To get more knowledge about craft, the experience of the act of it is important to be able to draw conclusions about how things historically were made by the craftsperson's of that time (ibid, p.130). The act of making and reconstructing gives other insights to the craft and production than what only observation can give (ibid, p.133).

The knowledge needed for craft and reconstructions does not only lie in the object to be reproduced, but in the craftsperson. The practical knowledge of making is within the craftsperson, taught by experience and not solely by reading about a craft. Practical knowledge is learned by trial and error. Traditional crafts cannot be carried on only with written documents, the tradition is carried forward by the makers and their tacit knowledge of the craft (Planke 2005, p.214-215). The act of making reconstructions and experimenting with different solutions, show other sides of the objects and the craft and skills needed to make them (ibid, p.216). Knowing the craft behind an object is important to understand it fully. Planke also notes there needs to be better ways of documenting and conveying knowledge about historical objects and craft science (ibid, p.217).

Larsson writes that craft skills and craft knowledge requires theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as familiarity with the techniques and the materials (Larsson 2007, p.32). Traditionally it is rare that crafts people are involved in academia themselves, but according to Larsson the combination would give a deeper understanding of objects and reconstructions. The use of practical knowledge, together with theoretical knowledge when researching objects widens the perspective of the research (ibid, p.352). Reconstructing and documenting a historic craft give the craftsperson an insight to how the process might have looked historically. And though the reconstructions cannot give absolutely certain answers, they open up for discussion and further research about the craft that would not have been possible from just written sources, or only looking at an extant object (ibid, p.28).

1.7.3 Object based research in dress history

When it comes to object-based research within the field of dress history, many scholars (Mida & Kim, 2018; Rudolph, 2019; Dyer, 2021; Davidson, 2019; Woodyard, 2017) refer to Jules Prown's definition of material objects and his methodology of how to use objects as a source (Prown 1982). Objects carry the history with them into our time and can be sources for a wider history because it is not dependent on someone having been able to write it down. This means the objects can tell the story of the main body of the population historically, as being literate was not the norm (ibid, p.3). Prown notes clothing as a good source for object-based research, as clothing can be very personal and can make the researcher come closer to the individual who once wore it (ibid, p.13). Objects tell a story just as much as a historic text does, just in a different way.

In the field of dress history, object-based research has previously not been much utilized. Focus has instead been on written sources (Mida & Kim 2018, p.12-13). Clothing can however be a valid source for learning more about the past. The style and production of them as well as how they were worn, gives insight into how society worked historically. In contrast to other material objects, clothing is worn and can have traces left of the body and person that once wore them. Mida and Kim have developed a method for using dress artefacts as research

sources, using different steps for documentation and reflection. The method is separated into three steps including; observation, reflection and interpretation (ibid, p.26-27). They have built their method on Prown's methodology of using objects as research sources (1982), but their method is specifically for dress studies. In the book *"The Dress Detective"* there are checklists included for the three steps to guide the researcher through the process of looking at and examining a dress artefact (Mida & Kim 2018).

The three steps start with observation. This phase starts with a general overview of the object with questions such as what type of garment it is, fabrics used, what period it is from and if it can be handled safely (Mida & Kim 2018, p.41-42). Followed by questions of construction, defining how the garment was made and what features it has (ibid, p.45-47). Closely related to construction comes textiles, what types have been used and where (ibid, p.49-52). For more modern clothing there is also a section on labels (ibid, p.55). While looking at objects it is also important to note if it has been altered or changed in any way, also including if it shows signs of wear on specific places. The last step in the observation phase is to find out if there are any supporting materials to the object, including museum documentation (ibid, p.57-58).

The next step is reflection. During this phase the researcher answers questions to find out about their own biases and how their perception of the object might affect the result. First up are sensory reactions, including how the object looks and feels to the touch. Then comes the reflection of personal reactions. Why was this object chosen, how do you as a researcher feel about it, would you want to wear it or if you have an emotional reaction to it (Mida & Kim 2018, p.63-66). This step also includes questioning the provenance of the object, what does the information say about the object? Are there more objects like it in other collections, has this style been researched before and what other materials can be used to compare the object with? Finding out more about previous research and provenance can help in directing the forthcoming research (ibid, p.69-71).

The last step is interpretation. By this step it is time to gather up what has been found during the previous steps and decide on where to take your research (Mida & Kim 2018, p.76). Re-formulating research questions and deciding on what theory to use and form a working hypothesis. The focus of the research might be affected by the researcher's background and skill, but it is important to look at more than just one perspective to start with. Mida and Kim emphasizes "*Reading a dress is like reading a painting: both can be undertaken with scientific precision, but the interpretation is subjective*." (ibid, p.78-79).

Dyer has recently written an overview of material culture and its use in researching history (Dyer 2021). It is a field that is still needing to be validated as written documents is still sometimes seen as more valid. However, Dyer notes that objects and material culture can be just as valid, they just require a different approach to interpret (ibid, p.283). *"Material culture centres on accessing and assessing the myriad layers of cultural meaning embedded within objects. When approached as material culture, objects are more than witnesses to history, they are autonomous agents in the creation of that history*." The objects can help tell the story of the people that once made or owned the object and help tell the story of peasant people who have not left written documents to the same extent that higher social classes have (ibid, p.285). Handling of objects can bring the researcher closer to the past, but it is important to

acknowledge one’s emotional reaction, and problematize the research and not assume things without grounds (ibid, p. 289). Research of objects and the interpretation of the story the objects tell is still under development and expansion. There is room for further research and use of objects in more research (ibid, p.291).

2. Material and methods

Literature studies, case studies and reconstructions has been the methods used for this thesis. The thesis partly include research found in two preceding university courses, including researching the topic of experimental archaeology, craft science and reconstruction and where this thesis would sit in the field of conservation. The practical work with the reconstruction was also done before the start of this thesis as an empirical study.

The reconstructions were done in full scale to get as close to the original process as possible. When sewing in smaller scales the process differs in the sense that you have less fabric to manipulate, shorter seams and you cannot test the fit of the garments. Advantages to sewing in smaller scale are that it requires less fabric, therefore it is cheaper, and the seams are shorter which can make the process quicker. I have previously done a few reconstructions in 1:4 scale, which was extremely fiddly. Fitting a sleeve into an armscye that small is not the same as fitting a sleeve into a full scale armscye. Although sleeves can be hard to get right, the full scale gives you a better view of the fit and it is also a lot easier to manipulate as it is bigger and you can see much clearer. As the thesis investigates the craft process of eighteenth-century tailoring, a scaled down version of the originals for the reconstructions would not have given the same results of the process or the finished garments.

2.1 Source criticism and source material

For this thesis two main dresses (BM2207, BM4543) from Textilmuseet in Borås (Appendix 1), has been researched as case studies to look at how eighteenth-century clothing was constructed. The two dresses were chosen because of availability to the museum, they were able to accept study visits and I had not looked at these dresses for previous studies. The plan was to look at two dresses from different social backgrounds and these two represent folk dress and fashionable dress, as well as being from around the same decade. Case studies not in as much depth, has been done on additional garments from Textilmuseet and Västergötlands museum. Studied garments from Västergötlands museum include 1M16-588 jacket, 1M16-593 including a jacket, bodice and petticoat, 1M16-681 including a jacket, bodice and petticoat, 1M16-4016 jacket, 1M16-4017 jacket and 1M16-4020 bodice. From Textilmuseet I also looked at BM210 bodice, BM211 petticoat, BM358 bodice and BM4449 jacket. For these garments the materials and seams were documented, no patterns were taken. The main case studies will work as examples of how clothing could be made as individual solutions.

Both of the main dresses show signs of wear, BM2207 (see fig. 61, 62 on p.64) is faded and torn in places but still retains its original form. BM4543 (see fig.75, 76 on p.71) however is harder to distinguish what would have been the original form. The skirt has no way of being worn on a body in the form it is in today. A part of my reconstruction work has been to try and figure out how it possibly would have looked when originally constructed. As the skirt has been conserved since it came to the museum, some information might have been lost. There are traces of pleats at the top but the skirt has been ironed at some point so nothing can be said for certain. To tackle this, I have documented how the original looks today and the reconstruction gives one sewn example of how it could have been completed and worn. This is not definitely how it would have been originally on BM4543, but an interpretation from my

knowledge of late eighteenth-, early nineteenth-century construction, as well as my interpretations of the traces on the original.

2.1.1 Survivor-bias in museum collections.

It is important to acknowledge the fact that museum collections do not represent the truth, they are not a natural occurrence. Most museums in Sweden were started around the end of the nineteenth- and beginning of the twentieth-century, with the collections reflecting the nationalistic thoughts of that era. Some museums actively collected and others were more dependent on donations that also influence the content of the collections (Forssberg & Sennefelt 2014, p.25). Museums also advertised for what they wanted to add to their collections in future (Wittgren 2013, p.75). The collected objects are only examples to represent certain parts of history (ibid, p.37). The collection of museum objects in Sweden was influenced by Arthur Hazelius ideas when forming the Nordic Museum and Skansen. Hazelius wanted to focus on old objects and the more decorated the better (Palmsköld 2016, p.22). This means there is a gap in what has been chosen to be preserved and what has been denied entry into the museum collections over time. Torell points out that the time of collecting and the objects collected are tainted by the times ideals, with traces of for instance elitism, sexism and different ethics. The objects can however be researched today with new and more inclusive perspectives (Torell 2014, p.39-40).

When the objects were collected around 100 years ago, the cataloguing and classification mainly required the information of when the object came to the museum, how it was acquired, where it came from and from whom (Wittgren 2013, p.90). The objects were collected to be preserved, safeguarded and to represent the past in wake of the industrial revolution. The lack of information connected to the objects in collections means that information has been lost (Almevik 2016, p.80-81). The two main objects researched for this thesis from Textilmuseet in Borås, only have brief information from when they were collected. BM2207 was acquired as a gift in 1905. It came with the information of it having been worn as a wedding gown 1798 in Härna parish, Ås district, but without information of who wore it. One can today question why the date of the wedding was seen as important and has been documented, but not the wearer. If the donor knew the date, would they not have known the name? The date is probably correct, as the cut of the garment is similar to others of that time (Eldvik 2014, p.77-78). BM4543 was acquired in 1910, also as a gift. It is said to have been worn by the countess Mariana Helena Sparre af Söfdeborg, who lived at Torpa, Länghems parish, Kinds district. This information gives some perspective to the context in which it was worn in because we know who wore it, where she lived and something about her social standing. The questions asked of objects in museums today are wider and seek more context than how it was understood when they were collected. Researching museum objects gives more information that is relevant for the museum's dissemination of knowledge (Forssberg & Sennefelt 2014, p.18-19).

The collection of clothing in museums can be seen as haphazard, with a lot of it being acquired to the museums as gifts. Very few historic garments have been preserved of what would have been used at the time (Rasmussen 2010, p.23-24). Most of the preserved folk dress garments in Swedish museums are not representative of what people wore day to day.

The museums focused on collecting the special and grander costumes of different locations. This explains why a lot of the garments in collections today are wedding and formal attire (Eldvik 2014, p.16). People are also more prone to save garments from special occasions as memorabilia (Palmsköld 2013, p.65) and in turn be what they want and have to give to a museum. There are not many garments left to study today and very little information has generally been noted and saved with them when coming to the museum. Eldvik notes that the quality of most of the preserved garments is also quite high, which probably represents the wealthier sections of the peasantry, with garments made of manufactured fabrics in rich colours. Something that is prevalent in a lot of them however, is the courser linings of home-woven linen fabrics (ibid, p.25).

In contrast to the preserved folk dress of special occasion garments, the fashionable dress preserved in museums are more representative of the everyday of the upper classes according to Rasmussen. They show signs of wear and tear as well as re-use. The most fashionable and highest-class garments have only been preserved in very few numbers. The fashionable dress and objects related to the upper classes of society was, in the beginning of the museum formation, collected for its representation of a specific style and fashion, the provenance was not seen as that important as for the folk dress. Rasmussen claims that museum objects without provenance can still be used as scientific research materials, as they can still be part of a context depending on the research question (Rasmussen 2010, p.24).

2.1.2 Connoisseurship, embodied knowledge and craft skill

When researching and studying objects Forssberg and Sennefelt, as well as Torell highlight the importance of looking at a wide representation of objects to create an object context. The problem with this is the varying representation in collections of objects. Some objects can today seem unique as there are few preserved, but might have been a common occurrence in its original setting (Forssberg and Sennefelt 2014, p.28; Torell 2014, p.47). Torell writes about a Grand Tour among the objects, with visits to museum collections as an important aspect to gaining knowledge and context (2014, p.51). Historic objects such as clothing, imbue information about the craft skills that was required to produce the object. To bring that skill to the surface, experience and knowledge is needed which is procured over time and with continued research (Forssberg & Sennefelt 2014, p.29-30).

Connoisseurship builds on previous knowledge and a familiarity of the researched objects. Knutsson, Nyström and Palmsköld argues for connoisseurship's relevance when performing academic research. It has been critiqued as too subjective, but if the researcher thoroughly documents how and why a conclusion has been made it can be applicable. A deep knowledge of the source material includes knowledge about material choices, techniques and why it has been done in a certain way (Knutsson, Nyström & Palmsköld 2021 p.73-74). The research cannot be conducted only on the basis of connoisseurship, but requires written sources and scientific research as well. The conclusion needs to be fortified by the supplementing sources (ibid, p.75-76; Rasmussen 2010, p.21). Ulväng further writes about connoisseurship in the context of textiles and clothing. With a lot of experience of looking at extant garments in museum collections, the researcher can interpret the material and for instance see construction choices, sewing techniques and what may have been changed in the objects since it was first

finished (Ulväng 2014, p.95). Rasmussen uses connoisseurship analysis in her dissertation based on her practical knowledge in textiles and extant textiles in museum collections. She highlights that the practical knowledge can guide the object studies, but it is also important to be aware of how that knowledge might affect how you look at the object. It is important to be attentive though, as the tailoring used in the eighteenth-century is different than what is used today, but the practical skill can still help you look more thoroughly (2010, p.20).

Larsson writes about a familiarity to the historic objects and techniques used to make them, that can only be gained by looking at and handling the objects themselves and learning the skills needed to make them. To truly understand the craft behind an object, one needs to have gathered knowledge from objects, materials and tools. Reading about it is not enough (2007, p.50-51). The practical knowledge gives you the ability to look both at details and the wider perspective of an object at the same time (ibid, p.40). The objects can in themselves give the attentive and experienced person clues that might have been overlooked by others (ibid, p.42). Larsson argue that the familiarity with objects and crafts gives the practitioner the possibility to evolve with the craft and create new knowledge (ibid, p.33). Familiarity and deep understanding can only be gained over time within the field with trial and error as a part of the knowledge building, giving the researcher and practitioner a "*knowledge-in-action"*. As a researcher it is important to communicate what knowledge one has going into the research and analysis using familiarity or connoisseurship (ibid, p.31)

I have long experience of constructing, cutting and sewing clothing, starting with a formal education as a seamstress. A few years after my sewing education I started reconstructing historical garments using traditional crafts skills and have done so regularly since. During my bachelors I did my first case studies of eighteenth-century clothing in a museum collection (Holmgren 2016). After my bachelors I have worked with textile collections as a textile curator, giving me a lot of insight to how museum collections function and looking at a lot of different textiles and clothing. Before starting this master thesis, I also performed a large amount of case studies on eighteenth-century garments for a book on clothing and tailoring in Västergötland, Sweden (Holmgren 2021). My education and experience have given me embodied knowledge of craft skills and a familiarity with historical clothing. This background has been of importance for the research in this thesis, as without it I would not have been able to reconstruct the garments and execute my chosen method.

It is important to note that the reconstruction process I have used is based on my previous experience of sewing similar garments and my familiarity with the fabrics, materials and tools used. I cannot say that my way of constructing the garments, in that particular order or the particular hand hold, is the same as would have been used by the tailor who made the original. But my craft skill and choices have led me to a similar result as the process used over 200 years ago. This will be further discussed and reasoned about critically in 3.2 Craft process.

2.2 Case studies

Two dresses from the collection of Textilmuseet in Borås are the foundation for the thesis investigation. One is a folk dress said to have been worn as a wedding attire in 1798 made

from wool fabric (BM2207). The other is a dress worn by a noble woman probably made around 1795-1805 from silk fabric (BM4543). The dresses show variation in materials and use of construction techniques. These dresses were thoroughly examined and their construction has been documented through writing, measurements and photography. The case studies were performed using Mida and Kim's steps of object-based research (Mida & Kim 2018) as well as my earlier experience of case studies (Holmgren 2016; Holmgren 2021). I used my perspective as a maker when looking at the garments, asking the question; what do I need to know to recreate the process to get to the same result as the originals?

The first step in the case studies was to check the condition of the garment to see how they could be handled. Both dresses were quite stable but were still handled with absolute care when turning over, looking inside and taking measurements. I used vinyl gloves all through the studies. Next, I observed what fabrics were used, where they were used and what materials they were made of. Following this I went through the construction of the garment by starting at the centre back seams and working my way towards the front. This order was chosen as it would be a natural way of constructing the garment in my experience, starting with the back pieces, continuing with the side seams and so on. All the seams were documented with type of thread, stitches and stitch length. The cut of the garments was measured to make a 1:4 scale pattern of the pieces, the patterns can be found in Appendix 2 and 3. It was not possible to make the pattern to full scale, as it requires a lot bigger work space. As these were to be reconstructed, as much information as possible was collected. The full description of the original's construction can be found in 3.3 Sewing techniques.

2.3 Reconstructions

The two main dresses from the case studies were then reconstructed using the same techniques as found in the originals. The reconstructions were done as close to the originals as possible in construction in terms of stitches and construction methods. The order of making things were done from my perspective as a maker, but based on the originals and how I interpreted the order of construction. The reconstructions have been documented through writing, photography and video. The process of documentation and the result will be the base for the further research in this thesis.

2.3.1 Tools

For the reconstruction modern tools were used, they were not historic replicas. The tools I used were sewing needle, pins, scissors, measuring tape, thimble, awl and beeswax. The tools used were only hand tools, as the reconstruction only used techniques from the eighteenth-century, no sewing machine was used. Most of the tools used existed in the eighteenth-century but were made from different materials and with different techniques from the mass-manufactured tools of today. However, I did use measuring tapes which was not used in the eighteenth-century. Then they would have used a string or a piece of paper to mark up the measurements of the customer to make up the cut (Rasmussen 2010, p. 145). I also used a modern electric steam iron, as I do not have the tools or setting needed to use an iron resembling the ones used in the eighteenth-century, heated by a fireplace. The tailors of the eighteenth-century did not always have access to an iron though and might have used the thimble to press seam allowances or a sewing weight (ibid, p.181). I also used pins quite a lot

in the process as that is how I was taught and am used to work, but pins and pinning might not have been done to the same extent in the eighteenth-century. Pins were not essential and could be replaced with basting, using long running stitches (ibid, p.178).

2.3.2 Reconstruction process

The first step in the reconstructions was to scale up the patterns taken from the originals. They were first scaled up to full scale from the 1:4 patterns and then I did some alterations after my measurements. Making the garments fit was an important part of the tailor's profession (Rasmussen 2010, p.74), therefore an important part of the craft process. With that in mind, and the tradition of the folk dress reconstructions, I decided to make the reconstructions so they would fit my body, rather than making them up in the exact size of the originals. This gives a similar process to the originals, as I have to check the fit of the garment before starting to sew, just as the tailor would have done on his client, and the size is similar enough to not change the amount of fabric manipulated. As I use eighteenth-century clothing in my profession for lectures and workshops, the reconstructions will be more useful in the future if I can wear them. I also use historical clothing for events and gatherings on occasion, so they will have even more use that way.

BM2207 was pretty close to fitting me as it was, but I ended up making a few smaller changes. The original was probably sewn for someone a bit shorter than me, so I lengthen the bodice 1cm, added 0.5cm for width at centre back and 1cm at centre front to make it a bit bigger. The sleeves were a bit hard to discern how they would have fit originally, but looking at where the dart hit my elbow, I lengthened the sleeve 3cm and moved the dart down a little. This change made it look like it would have been a long sleeve, so I added one more centimetre at the bottom so it fit my arms full length. I also took in the upper sleeve 2-3cm. The bottom of the sleeve fit perfect as it was originally. I made two mock-ups to get the pattern to fit me. The mock-ups were done in muslin and the alterations were done by pinning and adding in fabric whilst trying it on. As for the petticoat the waist was a bit too snug so I added 2.5 cm for the reconstruction and as the bodice had been too short, I decided to add some length to the petticoat as well, making it 2cm longer.

For the BM4543 bodice I made one mock-up of the original pattern which fitted pretty well, I decided to add 7mm to the centre back, raised the neckline 1cm and lengthen the bodice 1cm. I lengthened the bodice mainly because I had to add quite a bit of length to the skirt belonging to the bodice, so I thought the person who the original was sewn to was shorter than me, therefore the bodice should also be longer. As this is a gown cut to sit under the bust rather than the waist, the actual fit is a bit harder to discern when it comes to the position of the bodice hem. I lengthened the skirt with 5.5cm to make it full length from under the bust where the bodice ends.

The fabrics and threads for the reconstructions were chosen to match the originals in material, weave and weight, but was limited to what is produced today and what was within budget. Therefore, they differ somewhat from the originals. I made one garment at a time, from start to finish. The first one was the petticoat for BM2207. I started with this one because it was the most basic garment with no trim or complicated fit. I thought it would be a good way to get into the process of the reconstructions and doing the documentation at the same time. I have

previous experience of photographing garments while making them but not of writing down every step of the process. I then continued with the jacket for BM2207, which was the first reconstruction I have ever filmed the process of. When the jacket was done, I moved on to the bodice for BM4543, followed by its skirt.

In the following subheadings the reconstruction process of the individual garments will be documented in detail, using photographs with detailed captions to clearly visualize and describe the process.

2.3.2.1 Reconstructing BM2207

The skirt

I started by cutting out the skirt panels. The pattern can be found in appendix 2. As the fabric I am using is wider than the original fabric, I ended up with 3 panels to come up with the same width and be able to add the piecing in the front. The piecing on the petticoat is referred to as a "sparvåd" in Swedish, which can translate to "saved panel". It was a cheaper piece of fabric put in the front of the petticoat to save on the more expensive main fabric. This would be covered by an apron that was always used with the petticoat (Eldvik 2014, p.69). One panel was the full width, the second cut into two pieces to accommodate the width of the piecing. Another way would have been to cut the fabric into the same widths as the original, but the widths are defined by the selvages on the original so I chose to work that way as well.

Figure 1. The first seam was sewing together the piecing with the wool fabric with backstitches. Then the piecing was folded over and felled down to the wool with 2mm stiches, 8mm apart as on the original.

Figure 2. Then I sewed the lengthwise seams together with a spaced backstitch 2mm long and 4mm apart. The original uses the selvages, as I had to cut one width apart, I chose to whipstitch the raw edges to keep them from fraying too much.

Figure 3. I double folded the piecing's edges and sewed them down with 2 mm long hem stitches, 8mm apart, all the way down to the piecing of the wool.

Figure 4. I folded and pressed the hem of the wool fabric and the edges of the hem facing in linen. The facing was sewn with hem stitches around 1mm long and 4mm apart. The top of the facing was sewn down with running stitches 1mm long and 4mm apart.

Figure 5. The piecing needed to be gathered down to 20 cm and the original has nine pleats. I made the pleats 2cm wide and folded in around 3cm to get the same amount as the original. They were folded to the left-hand side when worn.

Figure 6. On the original the wool fabric had a fold of 7-8cm left raw on the inside. I forgot to accommodate for this when cutting out the panels so I added a strip of wool when pleating the petticoat. The original was folded over before it was pleated so it gave the same effect.

Figure 7. The pleats on the wool fabric are directed from the front towards the centre back. The pleats on the original seem to be done by eye, they are around 1-2cm wide with different amounts of fabric in the folds. I chose to do an approximate calculation of how to pleat the wool to get 49 pleats as on the original. I made the finished waist 2.5cm bigger to fit me. The calculations were that for 1cm wide pleats, each pleat should hold just over 4cm. I did however do the pleating by eye trying to keep to the measurements. The original had a few wider pleats in the front next to the piecing so I made 3 pleats that were around 2cm wide on each side. Then the rest about 1cm with 4cm folded in. I was left with a bit more at centre back so the last two pleats had the rest folded in, about 7cm for each pleat. I pinned the pleats as I went along, I do not however know if the tailor who made the original would have had that many pins at hand, so when I had gotten the pleats right, I basted them down as a test. The basting held the pleats down better than the pins, as the pins deformed the thick folded fabric to a curve. The basting kept the fabric smoother. This made sewing on the waistband a lot easier.

Figure 8. I hand pressed the waistband to 1cm wide, then I pinned it and sewed it on to the outside of the petticoat first, I then folded it over and sewed it to the inside. It was sewn with hemstitch 2mm in on the waistband and 8mm apart as on the original.

Figure 9. Lastly, I added a hook and eye as there were traces on the original after a closure that resembled that.

Figure 10. The finished petticoat reconstruction.

The Jacket

For the complete video documentation of the jacket reconstruction see appendix 4. The first step in the construction was to cut out all the pieces from the wool and linen fabrics, the pattern can be found in appendix 2. The front and back panels and gussets were cut from the wool and the linen twill. I then started with the sleeves, pinning the linen pieces. I tried on the sleeves again to make sure that the fit looked right in the final fabric. The original lining had a different cut to the outer fabric, but I was unable to look closely at that because it was not an option turning the sleeves inside out. The garment, although in good condition for its age, could have been harmed by that kind of treatment. I instead decided to construct the lining in the same manner as the outer fabric.

Figure 11. The pieces were sewn together with 3mm long back stitches using unbleached linen thread. The dart was left open at the bottom for the slit in the sleeve. The original jacket has a thinner linen fabric at the bottom of the sleeve, so I decided to cut off the sleeve and add 6cm of a thin unbleached linen at the bottom instead. I sewed it on using a running back stitch in unbleached linen thread.

Figure 12. I then pinned the outer fabric of the sleeves. The dart and front seam I sewed with backstitches in a blue linen thread as on the original. The back seam on the original was sewn with a pink thread, potentially linen, to match the outer fabric. I could not get a hold of a linen thread to match the outer fabric of my reconstruction so I went with a silk thread instead. The back seam of the reconstruction was therefore sewn with a dark red silk thread with back stitches. All stitches were sewn 3mm long.

Figure 13. I then put the sleeves together by putting the lining and outer fabric wrong side to wrong side. Then I folded in the edges at the hem and sewed that in a blue linen thread with hemstitches, 1mm long and 4mm apart. The top of the slit in the dart, that I previously cut away the excess fabric from, had four running stitches sewn at the same place to secure the slit and not put too much stress on the sleeve seam.

Figure 14. The top of the sleeve has a prick stitch to keep the layers together for when sewing it on to the bodice later. This was done with blue linen thread with 1mm long stiches, 5mm apart.

Figure 15. Next it was time to start on the bodice. The cut for the gusset was made and widened to accompany the rounded shape of the top of the gusset. I pinned it in place half way and sewed the outer fabric gusset with the blue linen thread with back stitches 2mm long, but as I got to the top, I made them smaller so they would be tighter so it would not show through on the outside later. The same method was used for the lining but using a running backstitch and unbleached linen thread.

Figure 16. Then I moved on to sewing the back panels. The lining has a thinner linen fabric at the skirts. So the first step was to sew them on to the main panel by turning in the seam allowance and sewing it down with hem stitches in unbleached linen thread, the stitches 2mm in and 4mm apart.

Figure 17. Then I hand pressed the seam allowance at centre back and pinned the back panel wrong sides together. The centre back seam was then sewn with whipstitches in unbleached linen thread, just at the edge with 4mm distance between the stitches. This created the visible whipstitch as in the original when unfolded and pressed.

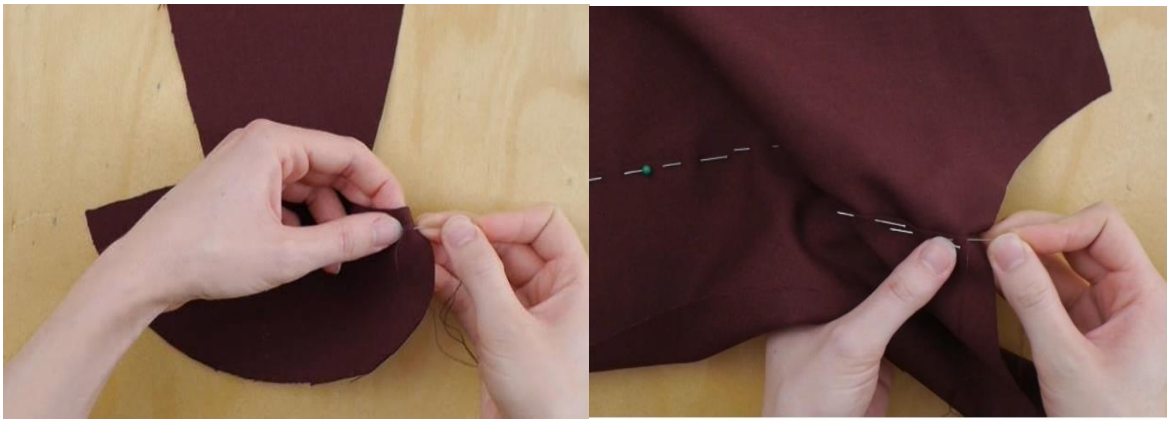

Figure 18. The outer fabric of the back is sewn in a different manner. The skirts of the wool is first sewn with 3mm long back stitches using matching dark red silk thread. Then I cut into the seam allowance at the point of the skirts to allow for the fabric to hang and turn. The right-hand side back panel has the centre back seam allowance folded in and pressed, then put over the left-hand side. The panels were joined by a prick stitch in matching dark red silk thread with 1mm long stitches, 3-4mm apart.

Figure 19. When the back panels were done it was time to attach them to the front panels. The outer fabrics back panel's sides and shoulders seam allowance were folded in and pressed, then pinned to the side of the front outer fabric and lining. At the top and bottom of the side seam only the outer fabric is sewn, leaving the lining free for when hemming the bodice so the fabrics can be turned in towards each other. The seam was done in the same manner as the centre back seam, using dark red silk thread and prick stitches 1mm long and 3-4mm apart.

Figure 20. After the side seams it was time to finish the gussets. On the original they have reinforcement stitches through both the outer fabric and the lining. I smoothed out the layers and pinned to make sure it did not shift when sewing. Then a few running stitches 1mm long and 3mm apart were made, using blue linen thread around the top of the gusset.

Figure 21. I then sewed up the shoulder seams using the same technique as the side seams, also here leaving the lining free a couple of centimetres at both ends to be folded in later.

Figure 22. I decided it would be easier to sew in the sleeves before finishing the lining. First the seam allowance of the outer fabrics armscye was folded in and pressed and I also cut into the seam allowance to allow it to lay smooth on the inside. I then pinned in the sleeve, placing the folded edge of the armscye just past the prick stitch around the sleeve, matching up the seams to the placement of the sleeve. This was then sewn with prick stitches in dark red silk thread, 1mm long and 3mm apart through the two sleeve layers and the outer fabric of the bodice.

Figure 23. Then I folded in the lining of the front panels and sewed it to the sleeve seam with blue linen thread with hemstitches 2mm long and 4mm apart, only going through the lining layers. This was placed so the seam of the sleeve was still visible as on the original.

Figure 24. Next it was time to finish the lining by adding the back panels. I lined up the centre back seams and then smoothed out the fabric and folded in the seam allowance at the side seams, towards the sleeve and shoulders. The lining was sewn down with hem stitch 2mm in and 4mm apart using blue linen thread.

Figure 25. After that it was time to hem all the edges of the jacket. The outer fabric was folded, pressed and cuts were made to give ease for the seam allowance. To get the lining correct, I smoothed it out against the outer fabric to make sure it was the same size so there would not be any bubbling parts in the fabric.

Figure 26. I folded in the lining against the outer fabric and sewed it with hem stitches 1mm long, 4mm apart using blue linen thread.

Figure 27. Around the neckline on the original there is one more row of stitches for reinforcement. So 1cm from the edge I sewed a line of running stitches 1mm long, 4mm apart with blue linen thread, all around the neckline.

Figure 28. The skirts at the back of the jacket were sewn down with running stitches at the folds with blue linen thread 2mm long 2mm apart. At the waist the original has cross stitches that are visible as prick stitches on the outside. They were hard to get right as they seem to be quite messy and irregular on the original.

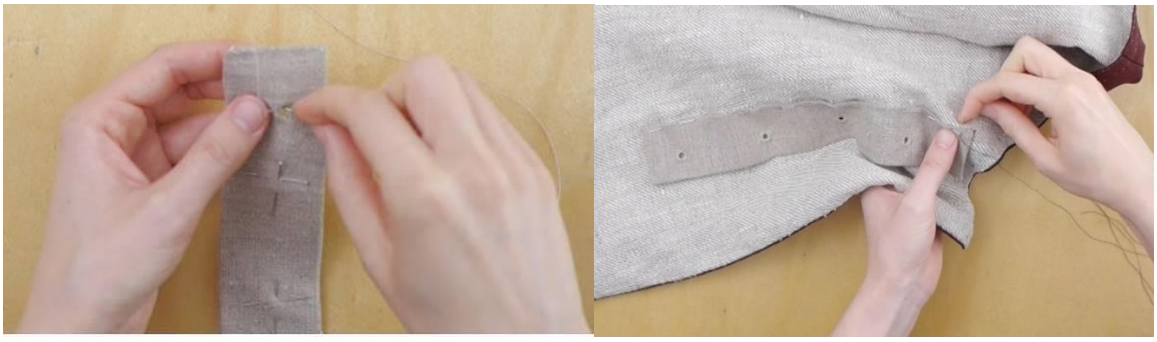

Figure 29. The last step was to make and sew on the lacing strips. I cut out two pieces of a plain weave linen, folded it lengthwise and pressed it to encase the seam allowances on the top and bottom. The top and bottom edges were sewn shut with whipstitches in unbleached linen thread. Next, I marked and sewed the eyelets. To get the hole, I poked through the fabric with an awl then whipped the edges with unbleached linen thread. The side that was not on a fold had one side with seam allowance that I folded in over the raw edge. This side was pinned to the inside of the front panel and first sewn with hem stitches at the edge with dark red silk thread.

Figure 30. The raw edge was then encased by sewing a second row with running stitches 1cm from the edge.

Figure 31. The finished jacket reconstruction.

2.3.2.2 Reconstructing BM4543

The bodice

For the complete video documentation of the bodice reconstruction see appendix 5. The first step in the sewing was to cut out the pieces from the lining and the outer fabric, the pattern can be found in appendix 3. I started working with the back panels, the lining and outer fabric was first sewn together separately.

Figure 32. I sewed together the linings centre back with 1-2mm long backstitches using unbleached linen thread, the outer fabric with 1mm long backstitches using matching dark brown silk thread. Then I pressed the seam allowances open and pressed up the seam allowance of the waistline so that I then could pin these wrong sides together.

Figure 33. I sewed the hem on the back panels with whipstitches just on the edge 3mm apart using dark brown silk thread.

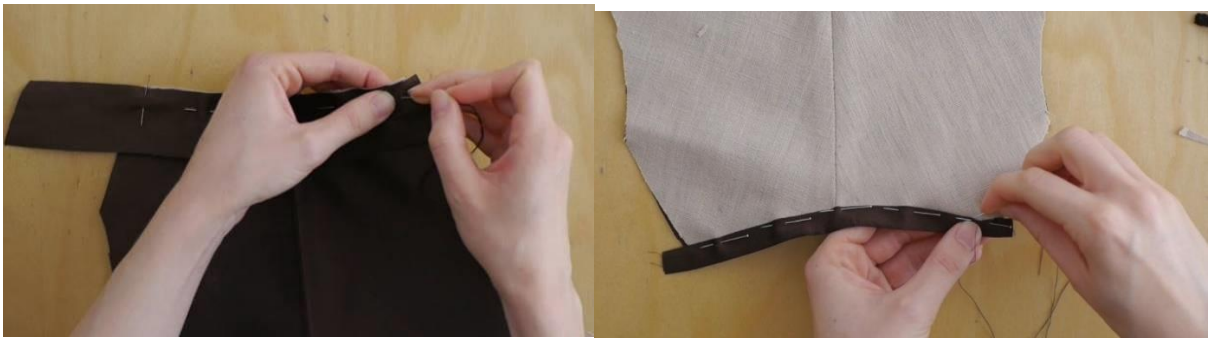

Figure 34. The top of the back is bound with a straight cut piece of silk. First I pinned the binding to the right side of the neckline, sewing it with 1mm long backstitches using dark brown silk thread. Then I folded the binding over, leaving 8mm visible on the front and folding in the seam allowance leaving 13mm visible on the back. I sewed down the binding with hemstitches 2mm apart using dark brown silk thread, only catching the lining so it does not show on the outside.

Figure 35. Then I moved on to the front panels. The lining is mainly sewn separately. I folded down the neckline twice, making it a 5mm wide hem, the centre front I folded in 25mm. From centre front and 10.5cm to the side I double folded the waistline to 5mm. The rest of the waistline will be hemmed with the outer fabric later. I sewed the folded hems with hemstitches 1mm in and 2mm apart using unbleached linen thread.

Figure 36. For the outer fabric, the centre front is first double folded to a 3mm wide hem and sewn with hemstitches 1mm long, 2mm apart using dark brown silk thread. The waistline and neckline have channels for a drawstring. I double folded the waistline to 6mm from the centre front to the marking in the pattern from the original, the rest will be sewn to the lining, I sewed the channel with hemstitches 1mm long, 2mm apart using dark brown silk thread. For the neckline I double folded a 6mm wide hem from centre front to the shoulder. I hemmed the channel with 1mm long and 2mm apart hemstitches, using dark brown silk thread as on the waistline.

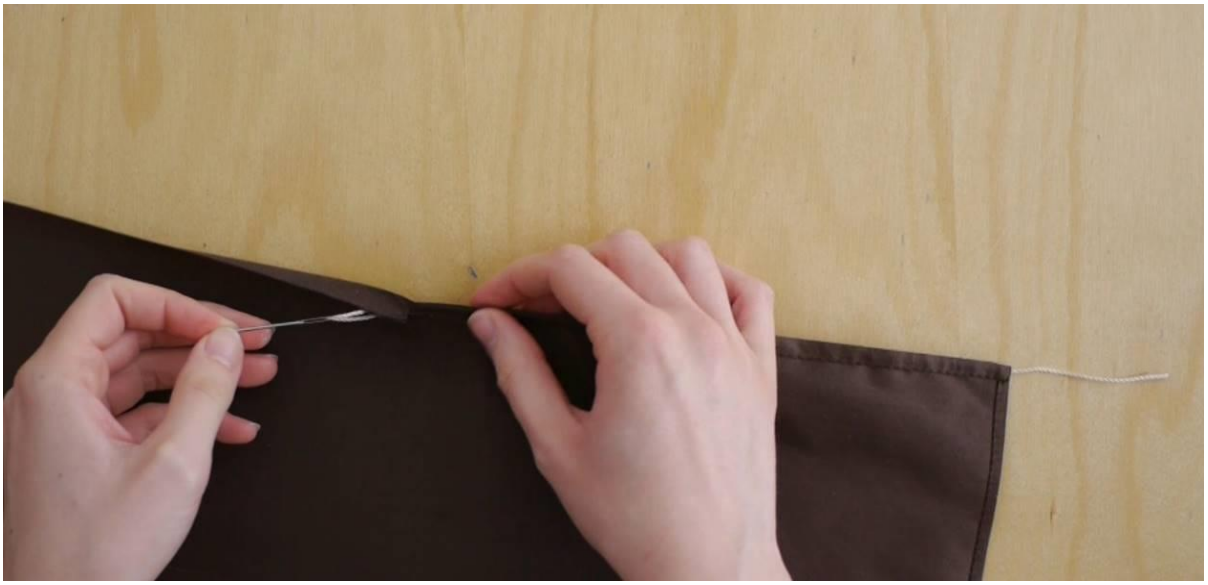

Figure 37. When the channels were sewn, I used a big, blunt needle to thread the drawstring through the channels. I sewed it to the shoulder for the neckline and the marking for the waistline with whipstitches and knots using the dark brown silk thread.

Figure 38. I tied off the drawstrings leaving a fringe at the end to be tied to close the bodice.

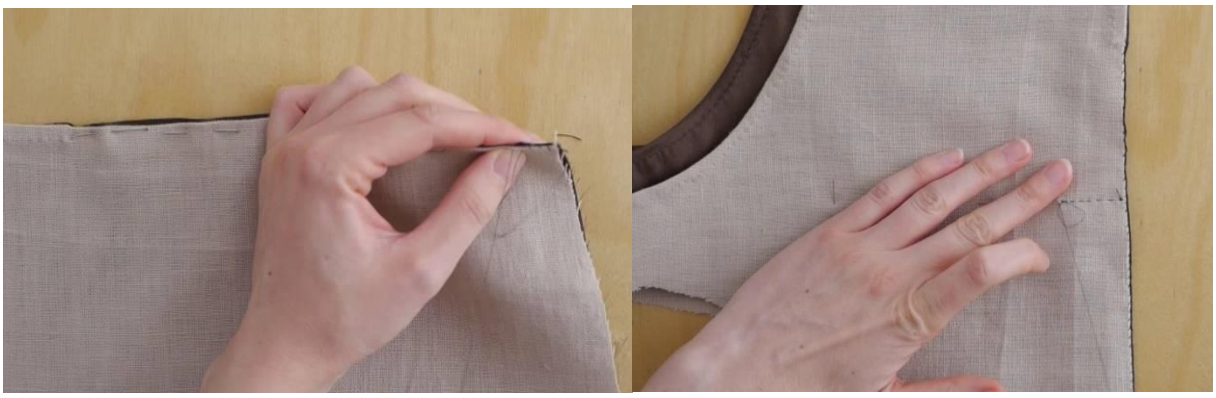

Figure 39. Next it was time to hem the front panels lining and outer fabric together, from the sides to the markings at the waistline. The layers are sewn together with wrong sides facing each other. I hemmed it with 1mm long hemstitches 2mm apart using dark brown silk thread. The layers are also sewn together further in on the original, so I sewed a line 13cm from the side and 13cm up with running stitches 1mm visible on the outer fabric 2mm apart using the dark brown silk thread.

Figure 40. When the front panels were done it was time to sew them to the back panels. I pinned the side seams and shoulder seams right sides together and sewed them together with 1mm long backstitches using dark brown silk thread.

Figure 41. Then I pressed the seam allowances apart and sewed them down to the lining with hem stitches 3mm in on the seam allowance and 5mm apart using dark brown silk thread.

Figure 42. Moving on to the sleeves I started working on the lining. The lengthwise seam was sewn together with 2mm long backstitches using unbleached linen thread. Then I whipped the seam allowance 3mm in and 5mm apart also using unbleached linen thread. I hemmed the sleeve by double folding the bottom and sewing it with hemstitches 1mm in and 2mm apart using unbleached linen thread.

Figure 43. As the lining and outer fabric is sewn to the bodice at the same time, I then continued with the outer fabric. The first step was marking the channel from the pattern with chalk on the wrong side of the fabric and then thread marking it to be visible on the outside. I folded the sleeve at the markings and sewed the channel from the right side with 1mm long running stitches 2mm apart using dark brown silk thread. I then threaded a silk ribbon through the channel using a blunt needle, cutting the ribbon 4,5cm shorter than the channel making the sleeve gathered. I sewed down the ribbon with a few whipstitches using dark brown silk thread at the lengthwise seam.

Figure 44. Then I pinned and sewed the lengthwise seam with 1mm long backstitches, and then whipped the seam allowance 3mm in 5mm apart, both using dark brown silk thread. For the hem I first pressed up 2mm and then 4mm for a double folded hem. I sewed it with hemstitches 1mm long, 2mm apart using dark brown silk thread.

Figure 45. When the outer fabric and lining sleeves were done it was time to attach them to the bodice. The markings I had taken from the original did not quite work, I do not know if I might have marked the shoulder seam on the sleeve cap incorrectly or if the shape of my shoulder did not match the original, as it looked wrong when I tried it on with the setting on the pattern. Therefore, I decided to shift it slightly to get it to fit my shoulders and arms better, positioning the sleeve slightly to the back in comparison, about 2cm down from the shoulder marking. This was done both to the lining and outer fabric. The layers were pleated separately, then I pinned in both layers sewing them in at the same time with 1mm long backstitches using dark brown silk thread.

Figure 46. Then I split the seam allowances as on the side and shoulder seams, and sewed them down to the lining with hem stitches 3mm in and 5mm apart using the dark brown silk thread

Figure 47. The last step was to sew on the bows on the back of the sleeves on the channel. I marked the positions on the channel, tied the twisted string to a bow and sewed it on with a few whipstitches using crème coloured silk thread.

Figure 48. The finished bodice reconstruction.

The skirt

I started by cutting out the skirt panels from the dark brown silk taffeta, the pattern can be found in appendix 3. As the fabric I am using is wider than the original fabric, the panels does not have as many selvage edges as the panels on the original skirt.

Figure 49. After cutting all the pieces I whipped the lengthwise edges without selvages using dark brown silk thread with the stitches 4mm in and 8mm apart.

Figure 50. Then I sewed all the panels' together, beginning with the front and front gores and working my way through all the panels. I sewed them together with a spaced backstitch, 1mm long and 2mm apart using dark brown silk thread. For both these steps I used a weight to hold the fabric so that I could hold it out with my left hand and sew with my right hand, making the process faster. When sewing the panels together this also resulted in not having to use any pins as the layers were held together by the weight and then adjusted with my left hand.

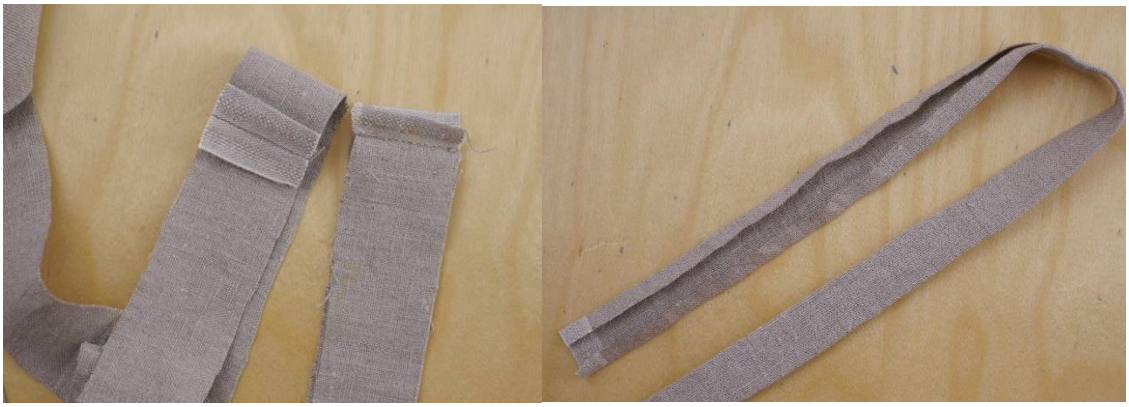

Figure 51. Next, I faced the hem by first cutting out the facing from unbleached linen fabric and pressing up the seam allowances to make the facing 2.5cm wide. I needed 3 widths to cover the whole hem, where the facing needed to be joint, I sewed the linen together with backstitches, 2mm long, using unbleached linen thread.

Figure 52. I then pressed up the skirts seam allowance and covered it with the linen facing. I positioned it so that the facing was 1mm down from the fold of the silk. Then both sides of the facing were sewn to the skirt with running stitches 1mm long 2mm apart using dark brown silk thread.

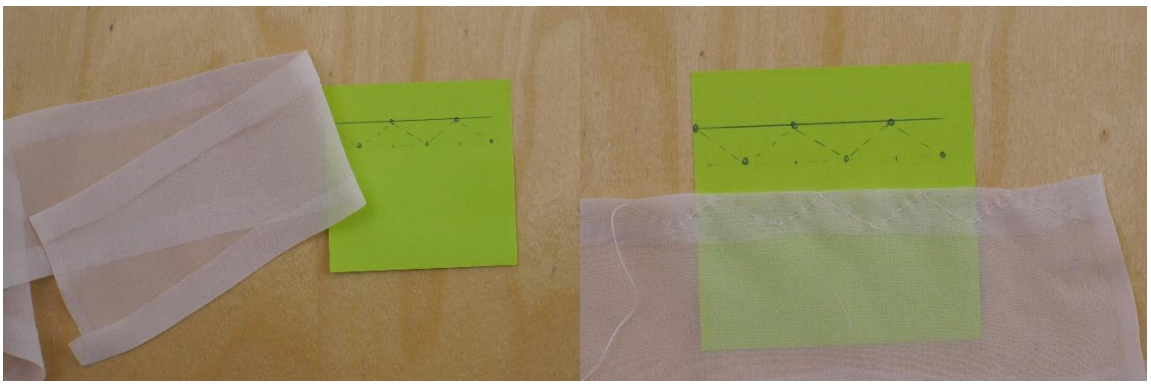

Figure 53. Continuing on the hem of the skirt I then cut out the trimming from the crème silk crepe chiffon. I needed just over 5 widths of the fabric and cut them to 9.5cm wide that I then pressed in 1.3cm on both sides. For the gathering I made a template to get the pattern correct, the sick-sack pattern has a point 1.4cm apart. I then marked the pattern a little bit at a time and sewing the lines with running stitches around 2mm long, 2mm apart using crème coloured silk thread.

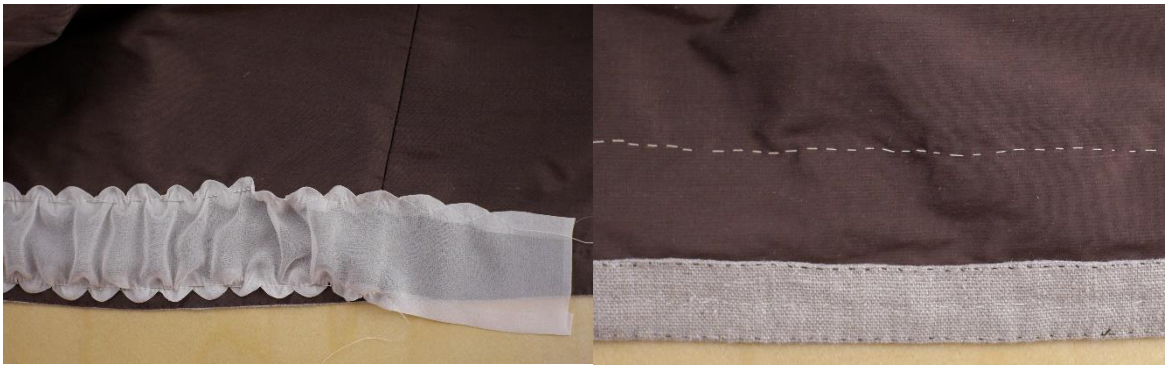

Figure 54. I then pulled the thread, gathering the puffs to about 2cm and pinned the edges of the puffs around 3mm from the edge of the skirt hem. I sewed the trim to the skirt in the same line as the gathering seam with running stitches around 1mm long, 3mm apart using the crème-coloured silk thread. The joints of the chiffon I sewed with running backstitch, 1mm long using crème-coloured silk thread

Figure 55. For the top of the skirt, I first whipstitched the front panel 3mm in, 5mm apart using the brown silk thread. Then I pressed the middle 2.5cm in and towards the side panel to a 5mm double folded hem. At centre front I made holes for the drawstring to go through and attached them at the side panels with a few knots.

Figure 56. The folded channel I sewed with running stitches 1mm long, 2mm apart using brown silk thread. For the side panels the double folded hem continued but I sewed them with hem stitches 1mm long, 2mm apart, also using brown silk thread.

Figure 57. For the back panel the top was only whipstitched 3mm in 5mm apart. I then pinned and basted the pleats on the back panel with prick stitches, both seams using brown silk thread.

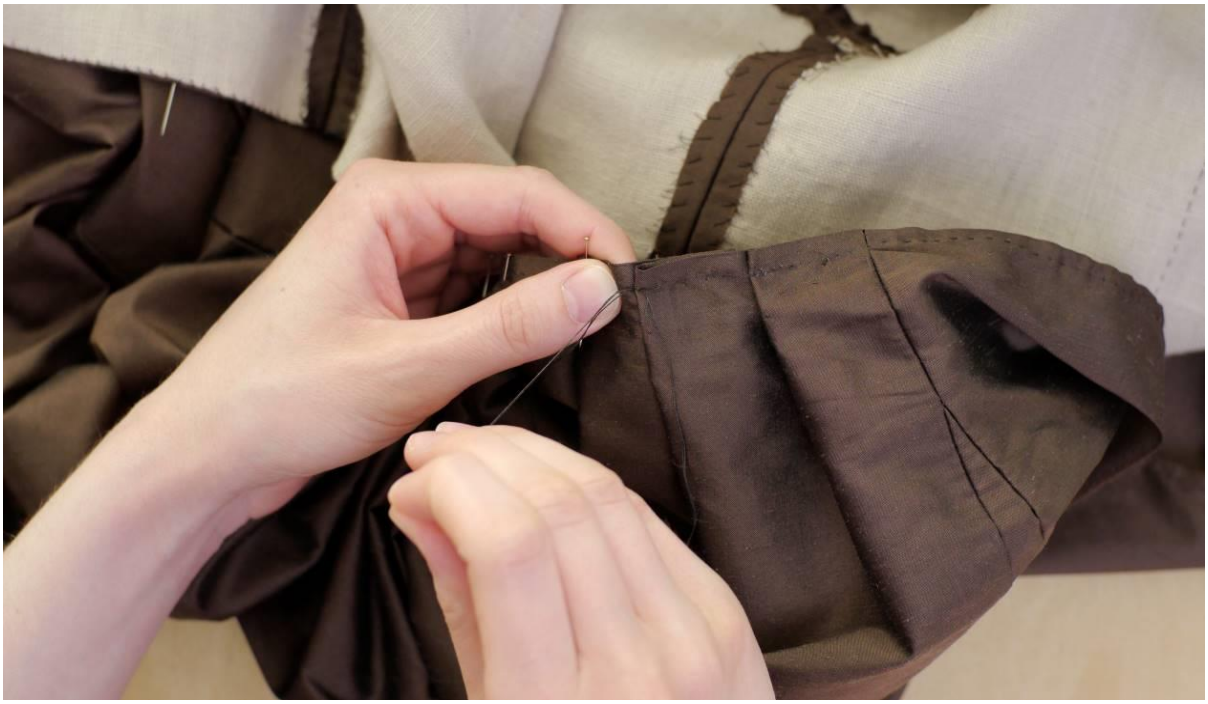

Figure 58. The side panels on the original also had traces of pleating, so I pleated the sides to where the front panel needed to sit around my body. I then basted these pleats with prick stitches using brown silk thread.

Figure 59. After a lot of analysing and searching for construction techniques, I decided to attach the skirt to the bodice on the back and side panels. To attach the skirt, I pinned it to the bodice 5mm up to cover the whipstitches and the hem. I then sewed the skirt on from the outside, sewing in the hemstitches of the bodice with hemstitches using brown silk thread.

Figure 60. The finished dress reconstruction.

3. Results

This chapter will present the results from the reconstructions and case studies.

3.1 Documentation of the reconstructions

I used a few different techniques for documenting the reconstructions, including written documentation, photography and video with voice-over. All of them have their advantages, disadvantages and limitations which will be reflected on here. As for equipment I used two daylight balanced LED-lights on stands, a digital system camera with two different lenses and a C-stand. The photographs were taken in jpeg and raw, and the video was shot in HD.

3.1.1 BM2207

I started the reconstruction work with the petticoat for BM2207 which was a bit of trial and error. I documented the petticoat reconstruction using written text and photography, I found that this did not impede the work flow that much. My plan was to photograph all new steps so it was natural to take a break before starting the next seam. I noticed however once the reconstruction was done, that I had missed to photograph some details, such as the lengthwise seams and had to take those pictures afterwards. I did not have the C-stand at this point, so the pictures only show the finished seams rather than the process of sewing them. Together with the text this still tells what seams were used to sew the petticoat but it does not show how in the sense of grip or techniques.

For the BM2207 jacket I set up the camera on a stand to be able to film the process. The complete video can be found in Appendix 4. For the first clips I had the camera set to auto which did not work well with either the lightning or the focus (Appendix 4 timestamp 1:10-3:00). I then had some help with finding the correct settings and after that I manually set the light and focus. For the rest of the filming, I had the camera set on a C-stand instead to get an overhead look to see the process more clearly. I also had two LED-lights set up to be able to film even when it was dark outside and to get a consistent look all through the rest of the video. The filming process disturbed the flow in the sewing process quite a lot. I did not manage to count the hours of making the jacket as a lot of time was spent fixing the camera, making sure it was in frame and in focus and properly lit. As this was my first time filming a project, the disturbance did not come as a surprise though. For most part the camera and lights worked great, unfortunately I lost one clip of sewing the pleated skirts as the camera had trouble with the memory card and did not succeed in saving it.

3.1.2 BM4543

For the BM4543 bodice I also filmed the reconstruction process. The complete video can be found in Appendix 5. I kept the lights and the camera in the same position as for the jacket. This time I was more prepared for how the filming would affect my sewing so it was easier to work around it, making me able to time how long the bodice took to sew.

When reconstructing the BM4543 skirt I changed to written documentation with photography again. This time I kept the C-stand with the camera to be able to take pictures when I was working on the seams. I used self-timer to set up the shot and then get my hands back to work pausing mid stitch to get the shot in focus. This worked better than the documentation of the

BM2207 petticoat. As I had the camera in the stand, I did not have to reposition anything or hold the camera. Instead, it was all set up to just take a picture when needed in the process. This disturbed the work flow the least.

3.1.3 Outcome

As the reconstructions progressed, so did my technique of documenting it. It went a lot easier with the last two as I had made mistakes on the first ones and learned how not to do it and trying new solutions. The documentation and reconstructions are only done by one person though so it has its limitations. Standing by a table sewing and keeping in mind where the camera is to get the correct shot is not natural to me when sewing. Generally, I sit with the sewing in my lap to get it close to me so that I can see properly and manipulate the fabric easier when needed. The table is also much more slippery, making the fabric move around. Had another person come in to film and photograph, it would have been a different result.

If a separate camera person or film team would have done the documentation, they would probably have had more experience working with that media, being able to produce a more streamlined result. The help of someone else would also have made it easier to film the reconstruction process in a more accurate setting, with me sitting and sewing as I would normally do without thinking of making it observable for the camera. If I would have had more experience of film documentation the result would also have looked different.

The techniques and equipment I used for the documentation was dependent and limited to what knowledge I had, the time I had and what equipment I had access to. As this was done within a university course I did not have a large budget to work with, a budget also needed for the material for the reconstructions. The few things I did use though still sufficed to make a video documentation, meaning that it does not have to require a large budget, but it all depends on what is to be documented. If the documentation is done to show where and how a tailor in the eighteenth-century would have performed the sewing, a bigger production would have been needed. Such as a room with furniture and décor in line with the epoch, the person performing the reconstruction wearing accurate clothing and so on. The important factor of this documentation however, was to see how a garment was made in the eighteenth-century, documenting the seams used and in what order it might have been done. The focus was on the craft rather than the whole experience.

I changed the lenses depending on how close-up I wanted the footage as I did not have access to a zoom-lens. I was working on a height-adjustable desk so I could also raise and lower that if I needed to come closer or further away than the lenses would allow.

All the documentations of the reconstructions show how I interpreted how the originals might have been made. The order of construction documented is how I decided to make it from my perspective as a seamstress and what seemed logical to me to get the garment looking as the original.

I edited the footage to show the start of each process, with the cutting of the fabric, all seams and in the order it was made. The videos do not show the whole sewing process of the entire seams, just the start of the seams and where they are done. A few pieces were pinned and then sewn. For example, the BM4543 bodice took over 10.5 hours to make, but the edited footage

is 80 minutes. I consciously did not film the whole process as that would have been a very long format that would not be as accessible as a shorter video. I found that the important part was to show each step to make it possible to recreate the process again. This also helped me rationalise what to film and make the editing process quicker and easier as I did not have endless hours of footage to go through, it made me more conscious of what I was documenting and visualising the result while filming. As I had been able to film in a controlled environment with set lightning and the camera being adjusted to that, I did not see the need to colour grade the video. The light and colour reproduction were good except for the first shots of the BM2207 jacket when I did not have the lights yet. The documentation was done to show the process and not an art documentation so there was no need to make it look any different than how it looked in reality.

The voice-over was written after the editing was done based on the written documentation I did while sewing and filming. It mainly focuses on what I am doing, what seams I use and what thread for which part of the garment. A voice-over could also have included more reflections of why I am holding the needle in a certain way, how the fabric feels and why the seams are done in the specific order. A deeper analysis of the process was not possible within the time frame of the reconstruction project but will be dealt with in more depth for this thesis under the following heading.

3.2 Craft process

The craft process started with the scaling of the pattern and fitting it on the body, then moving on to cutting out the pieces and on to sewing them all together in the correct manner. The following are reflections on the craft process during and after the reconstructions were done. I took notes while constructing them and have also watched the videos again to see how the process has looked. The experienced process might look different from an outside perspective and bring other thoughts to light that I missed while in the midst of the craft. When looking back at the footage I for example noticed my hands being positioned unconsciously. Such as how my left-hand index finger curled up regularly when holding the fabric taught with the rest of my hand for sewing with my right hand (e.g., Appendix 4 timestamp 9:45, 20:22, Appendix 5 timestamp 28:22, 45:21, see also fig.12, 13). How I am holding and manipulating the fabric, as well as positioning the needle is tacit and embodied knowledge from experience of sewing regularly for over 10 years. My technique is also shaped by my background as a trained seamstress for modern sewing using a sewing machine. I am used to pinning as much as possible at the same time, going over to the sewing machine and sewing all the seams in one go. This would probably not have been the process in the eighteenth-century's hand sewing method.

I was not consistent with the use of my thimble. As I was not sewing for more than 4 hours at a time I did not always feel the need to wear it. However, when sewing frequently and through course fabric I felt it crucial to use as not to make a hole in my finger after pressing the needle through time and time again.

3.2.1 Reconstructing BM2207

The petticoat

The petticoat was a bit rough to sew, and keeping to the exact distance as the original stitches

took a little time to get used to, but it felt natural quite quickly though. The techniques used in the original was not that far from how I usually sew so it did not feel hard or strange. It was not very smooth sewing with the linen thread despite waxing it, it snagged and knotted on occasions. The linen fabric is course but still pretty dense so it requires some pulling for the sewing. The thread snagging can have to do with the fact that it is a bit too course for the wool and a bit too fine for the linen. The fold at the waist before pleating gave the skirt a bit of support below the waist. It is unclear whether this was done because the skirt was cut too long, or maybe it was done intentionally to get the skirt a little bit of bum support instead of the fashionable bum pads of the time. The petticoat took 6.5 hours to make.

The jacket

I decided to start sewing the sleeves on the jacket, however I could just as well have started with the bodice.

Sewing in the gussets were a challenge, I am used to sewing in gussets in a different way to make it have a sharp point at the top, not the rounded shape of the original (Appendix 4 timestamp 24:08-31:29). I had to redo one of them as the seam showed on the outside very clearly. The second attempt made it better but it is still not perfect but neither is the original so I thought it would be good enough. This was the technique farthest from how I usually sew in the construction of this jacket, otherwise I have used most of the techniques previously.

Sewing in the sleeve was really easy, it was fast matching up the seam allowance when I had the prick stich on the sleeve to go on (Appendix 4 timestamp 58:22-1:02:27). This was in contrast to smoothing out the layers before sewing the hems. It is important to get the outer fabric and lining to the same size everywhere before hemming so that there will not be any puckering. I checked and re-pinned several times before I was happy with how the layers looked by feeling how the fabrics were laying against each other and holding it up and trying it on to see (Appendix 4 timestamp 1:16:35-1:18:35).

I think the cross-stitches at the waistline on the back panel might be to reinforce the waist as it is put under a bit of stress from lacing the jacket closed and also having an apron tied around the waist at that point. I had a hard time getting them to look correct as this was a new use of that type of stitches for me (Appendix 4 timestamp 1:25:42-1:28:05)

The fit of the jacket came out pretty good, it’s quite flat at the front so it gapes a bit when the petticoat is worn underneath, but as this would be covered by an apron it might not have been seen as a problem. From what I’ve gathered so far this style of jacket might have been worn with just a shift underneath, giving a pretty flat silhouette over the bust as the jacket gives very little support. I wonder if it might have had a bodice underneath after all. However, wearing it without makes it very comfortable and I have full mobility in my torso. The sleeve setting also gives me full range of movement in my arms, not being impeded by the stiff fabrics or form fitting bodice. I did not manage to take the time on the making of the jacket, but compared to others ones I have made similar to this one, it probably took around 10-13 hours to make.

3.2.2 Reconstructing BM4543

The bodice

The sleeve lining came out a bit too long and was visible below the outer sleeve. Before I can go back and double check the original, I do not know where I made a mistake, either in adding to the lining when taking the pattern, making the outer fabric too short or that the fabric I used was a lot stiffer than the original and therefore puffs out more and does not hang down in the same manner. The lining also shows on the front of the bodice when I pull the gathers. The lining is made shorter from the beginning but not enough to keep hidden when the bodice is worn. I am wondering if this is due to the stiffness of the fabric or if this was a problem on the original as well, or if the need to pull it together quite densely forces it to bunch up more than if I had pulled it together less.

Besides the problem with the sleeve setting this was a rather easy sewing project. It was interesting to sew the back and front panels finished before putting them together (Appendix 5 timestamp 14:25, 39:56), this method is not something I have tried before or seen myself in garments I have previously taken patterns from. I wonder if it is a technique that is more common by the turn of the century moving into the nineteenth-century, something that needs to be research further. It took 10.5 hours to make.

The skirt

The trim on the hem of the skirt was very fiddly to make but came together quite nicely in the end. However, as the original trim is extremely torn, pressed flat and even replaced for large parts, it was hard to get proper measurements to reconstruct. Hopefully the look of the reconstruction gives a representative image of how the trimming might have looked when new.

The construction was very straight forward and easy, but it took a long time to make as the seams are very long and the stitches small. Whipping the edges took 2hours 25minutes, sewing the panels together took 4hours 25minutes. Hemming took 4hours 5minutes and the trimming took 9hours. With the cutting it took over 20 hours to construct. Even without the trimming this skirt took a lot longer to make than the BM2207 petticoat.

When moving on to making the skirt I was still not sure how it would be sewn or worn together with the bodice. There are no markings on the original bodice of the skirt ever having been attached, or any clear signs on the skirt of having been sewn to something. My aim though, was to make it into a dress and see how it might have looked if it had been finished. For the back panel on the skirt there were clear signs of it having been pleated, but the sides were harder to discern. From a few traces on the originals side panels there was a possibility of a few of the pleats maybe being 1-1.5 cm wide. I tested making 5 pleats of this width but the proportions were very off once I tried the skirt on. The front panel pulled and did not sit right. Instead, I checked where the front panel should end for it to fall nicely and it ended up being that the side panel should start 5cm from the bodice side seam towards the front. With that in mind, the pleats then had to be around 2.5-2.75cm wide with 6 pleats. When testing this the gown looked correct for the time period and it had a nice drape to it, both front and back. I could be interpreting the traces wrong though, and the side panels might have been

gathered as on other extant dresses from this time period (Rasmussen 2010, p.204-205), there were dresses that had pleats at the back as well though (Hammar & Rasmussen 2001, p.94). The traces of a seam on the original I deduced might have been basting, stitched to keep the pleats in place, therefore I basted the pleats in place.

As there were no visible signs on the bodice of the skirt having been attached, I first tried the skirt separated from the bodice. However, the skirt is very back heavy because of the dense pleating at the back and the weight of the train. Pinning would not be possible without the pins showing. I instead chose to sew the skirt to the bodice at the back and side panels, leaving the front panel of the skirt with the drawstring loose. This made the gown look correct, however the front wanted to hang down slightly from the bodice so the skirt will have to be pinned to the stays worn underneath this sort of gown. Other gowns with front opening bodices usually have openings on the front of the skirt as well and are attached to the bodice all the way around (Rasmussen 2010, p.206). This would not work on this dress as the bodice gathers a lot more in the front than the skirt. It would be a lot of gathers at centre front, and flat at the side front before the pleats at the side back. If I gathered the bodice and skirt fronts before sewing them together, I would not have enough room to get the dress on, solving the problem with even gathers but creating another. There is one dress in the Nordic Museum (NM.0113534) that have a front opening bodice with a skirt attached to the back and sides with the front of the skirt loose and gathered by a drawstring. The skirt of that dress does not have any openings either on sides or front, just like the skirt of BM4543.

When sewing on the skirt to the bodice I sewed it on in the stitches already made for the hem of the bodice. Sewing in the stitches already on the bodice means there are no new pin pricks in the bodice, which might be an explanation of why there are no marks on the bodice. The dress is now wearable and looks correct for the fashion of the time, however I still cannot say with absolute certainty that this was the way it was meant to be put together.

3.3 Sewing techniques

The sewing techniques are an important part of the construction of clothing. The studied originals and later reconstructed garments show different techniques for construction and uses a variation of stitches depending on the function of the seam and the placement. To analyse the sewing techniques used in the originals, photographs with captions will showcase the process. This will help visualise the process more clearly rather than only using the written documentation from the case study and the reconstruction.

3.3.1 BM2207

Dress BM2207 from Textilmuseet in Borås consist of a jacket and petticoat. Both garments are quite worn and the colour has faded. The waistband on the petticoat has almost torn completely by the pocket opening. There is also a tear in the wool fabric by the piecing on the petticoat. The lacing holes on the jacket have been discoloured. The cut and materials distinguish this as a folk dress.

Figure 61. BM2207 Jacket, original.

BM2207 uses a combination of whipstitches, spaced backstitch, regular backstitch, running backstitch, cross stitches, hemstitches and running stitches. The jacket is constructed with two back panels, two front panels, two gussets, two lacing strips and four sleeve pieces. The petticoat is constructed with six panels and a waistband. The main outer fabric is a pink and blue wool camblet. The jacket has three different linen lining fabrics. The main is a striped bleached and unbleached twill weave used for the bodice, a bleached twill weave for the sleeves and a thinner half bleached plain weave for the cuff and skirts on the back panels. The petticoat is pieced with a course blue plain weave linen fabric. The hem facing and the waistband is made from an unbleached plain weave linen fabric. The garments are sewn using blue, red and unbleached linen thread and pink linen or silk thread.

Figure 62. BM2207 Petticoat, original.

Figure 63. The right-hand side of the centre back of the outer fabric is folded in and put on top of the left panel's outer and lining fabric. It is sewn together with a spaced backstitch, 1mm long and 3-4mm apart from the neck to the waist. The rest is sewn with 2mm backstitches right sides together. The side seams are done in the same manner with the outer fabrics back panels folded in and put on top of the front panels, outer and lining fabric. This time all the way to the hem. Both seams are done with pink linen or silk thread.

Figure 64. The back lining has a thinner linen fabric at the skirts. The linings centre back is sewn with whipstitches 4mm apart using unbleached linen thread. The back panel's sides are folded in and put on top of the side seam and sewn down with hem stitches 2mm in and 4mm apart. The shoulder seams are done the same way. The pleats in the skirts are folded and sewn into shape with a combination of cross stitches and running stitches. Both seams are done with blue linen thread.

Figure 65. The gusset in the outer fabric is sewn in with backstitches using blue linen thread. It is reinforced at the top with running stitches going through the lining as well. The lining gusset is sewn with what looks like running backstitch, using unbleached linen thread.

Figure 66. The neckline has the seam allowance folded in towards each other and is sewn with a hemstitch 1mm long 4mm apart. A reinforcement stitch is made 1cm from the edge with running stitches 1mm long 5mm apart, both using blue linen thread. The rest of the bodice is finished by also turning the seam allowance in towards each other and sewn with a hemstitch 1mm long 4mm apart using blue linen thread.

Figure 67. The lacing strips are made of a double folded linen fabric and is attached to the bodice with hemstitches 1mm long, 5mm apart at the edge of the lacing strip and also with a row of running stitches, 1mm long and 5mm apart, 1cm from the edge, both using red linen thread. The lacing holes are sewn with whipstitches around the hole using linen thread.

Figure 68. The dart on the sleeve is sewn with 3mm long backstitches using blue linen thread. The front seam on the sleeve is also sewn with 3mm long backstitches using blue linen thread, the back seam is done with 3mm long backstitches but using pink linen/silk thread. The slit at the bottom of the sleeve and the hem is done with the seam allowances turned towards each other and sewn with hemstitches 1mm long, 4mm apart using blue linen thread. At the top of the slit a few 5mm stitches are made at the same spot to reinforce the top using blue linen thread.

Figure 69. The sleeve lining is cut in a different manner than the outer fabric but as it cannot be turned inside out it is hard to make out how exactly. It is sewn together with backstitches and hemstitches using unbleached linen thread. The top of the sleeve has the outer fabric and lining sewn together using a spaced backstitch 1mm long, 5mm apart, using blue linen thread.

Figure 70. The sleeve is attached with the bodice outer fabrics seam allowance folded in and put over the sleeve and sewn in place with a spaced backstitch 1mm long, 3-4mm apart, using pink linen/silk thread. The bodice linings seam allowance is then folded in and put on top and sewn down with hemstitches using blue linen thread.

Petticoat construction

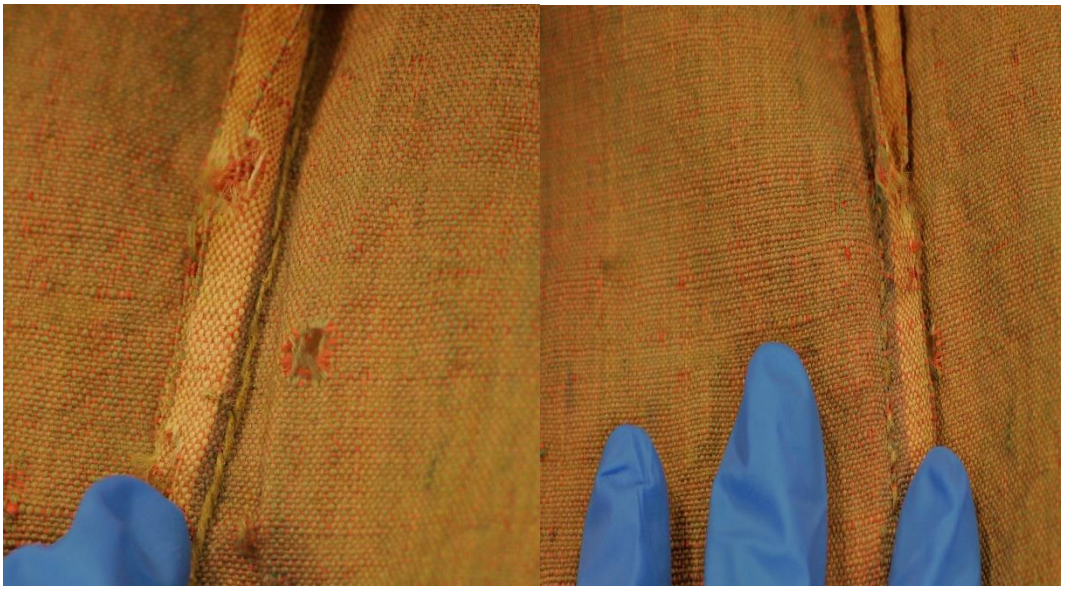

Figure 71. The lengthwise seams on the petticoat are done with a spaced backstitch 2mm long and 4mm apart using unbleached linen thread. The panels use the width of the fabric and the selvedge edges are nicked every 3cm.

Figure 72. The front panel is pieced with a linen fabric and both sides of the piecing are used as pocket openings and are finished with a double folded hem using unbleached linen thread open 20cm from the waistband. The piecing is attached to the wool at the bottom with backstitches and then double folded to the wool and sewn with hemstitches 2mm in and 8mm apart, both using unbleached linen thread.

Figure 73. The top of the petticoat is folded down around 7-8cm and then pleated by eye. The front panel is pleated down to 20cm, the rest of the width is pleated down to 51cm. The lining is attached with hemstitches 2-3mm in and 8mm apart using unbleached linen thread. The waistband looks to have been closed with a hook and eye, there are traces of something being sewn on to the lining by the left-hand pocket opening.

Figure 74. The bottom of the petticoat is finished with an 8.5-9cm wide hem facing in linen fabric. The bottom is sewn to the wool using hemstitches 1mm long, 4-5mm apart. The top of the facing is sewn with running stitches 1mm long, 4-5mm apart. The piecing in the facing is sewn together with running or backstitches, all using unbleached linen thread.

3.3.2 BM4543

Dress BM4543 from Textilmuseet in Borås consists of a bodice and a skirt. The bodice is in good condition with no major damages, only a few small holes in the fabric. The skirt trim has mostly been replaced after it came to the museum. The original trim that is left is in poor condition with tears all over. Otherwise, the skirt is in good condition. The cut and materials distinguish this as a fashionable dress.

Figure 75. BM4543 Bodice, original.

BM4543 uses a combination of backstitch, whipstitch, hemstitch, running stitch and spaced backstitch. The bodice is constructed with two back panels, two front panels and two sleeve pieces. The skirt is constructed with four panels and four gussets. The main outer fabric is a silk fabric with ikat satin woven stripes and plain-woven stripes in the same weave. Half bleached linen fabric is used to line the bodice and an unbleached linen fabric to face the hem of the skirt. The dress is sewn using beige and crème coloured silk thread and half bleached linen thread.

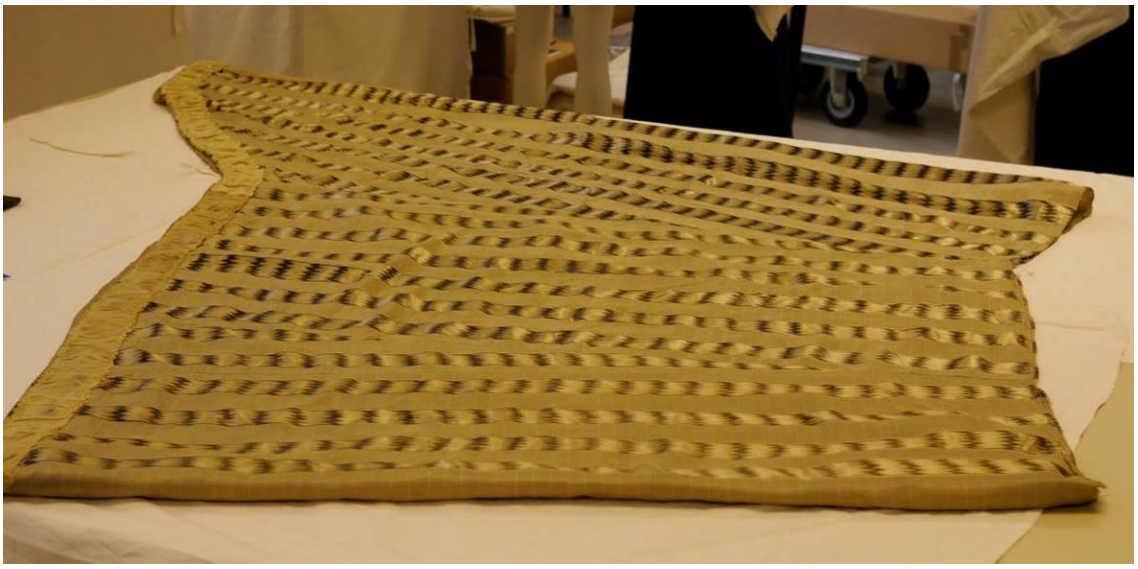

Figure 76. BM4543 Skirt, original.

Bodice construction

Figure 77. The centre back seam is done outer fabric and lining separately. The outer fabric is sewn with 1mm long backstitches using beige silk thread, the lining with half bleached linen thread also using 1mm long backstitches. The seam allowances have been split and pressed to each side. The back panel is hemmed at the waist with whipstitches, 1mm in and 2mm apart using beige silk thread. The top of the back panel is bound with the silk fabric, 8-9mm showing on the outside and 13mm folded to the lining. It is first sewn right side to right side with 1mm backstitches and sewn to the lining with hem stitches 1mm in, 2mm apart, both using beige silk thread.

Figure 78. The centre front of the outer fabric is hemmed with 1mm long hemstitches, 2mm apart. The neckline has a drawstring and the channel is double folded to 6mm and sewn with 1mm long hemstitches 2mm apart, both these seams are done using beige silk thread. From the shoulder and down there is a silk string to gather the neckline. The linings centre front has a fold of 26mm and is sewn with hemstitches 1mm in and 2mm apart using linen thread. The neckline of the lining is double folded to 5mm and also sewn with hemstitches 1mm in and 2mm apart, using linen thread.

Figure 79. The outer fabric and the lining of the front panels are hemmed together from the side seams and 20cm to the front with hemstitches, 1mm long and 2mm apart using beige silk thread. The rest of the hem is finished separately. The lining has a double folded hem and is sewn with hemstitches 1mm long, 2mm apart, using linen thread. The outer fabric has a channel for a drawstring sewn with hemstitches 1mm long, 2mm apart, using beige silk thread. 13cm from the side seam and 13cm up from the waistline, the bodice has a visible seam to hold the layers together sewn with running stitches 1mm long, 2mm apart, using beige silk thread.

Figure 80. The front and back panels are sewn together all layers at the same time right side to right side with 1mm long backstitches using beige silk thread. The seam allowances are separated and sewn down to the lining with hemstitches 3mm in and 5-6mm apart, invisible on the outside.

Figure 81. The lengthwise seam of the sleeves outer fabric is sewn with 1mm long backstitches and then the seam allowance is whipped together 3mm in and 5-6mm apart, both seams using beige silk thread. The sleeve has a drawstring channel which is sewn with running stitches 1mm long, 2mm apart.

Figure 82. The drawstring is not changeable and the bow on the sleeve is purely decorative, it is sewn on with crème coloured silk thread. The sleeves are hemmed with a 4mm double folded hem sewn with hemstitches 1mm long and 2mm apart using beige silk thread. The sleeve lining is sewn separately and the lengthwise seam is sewn with 1mm long backstitches and is hemmed with a 5mm double folded hem sewn with hemstitches 1mm long, 2mm apart, both seams using linen thread.

Figure 83. The outer fabric and lining of the sleeves are pleated separately and then sewn to the bodice at the same time with 1mm long backstitches.

Figure 84. The seam allowances are separated and sewn down to the lining with hemstitches 3mm in and 5-6mm apart, invisible on the outside. Both seams are done using beige silk thread.

Skirt construction

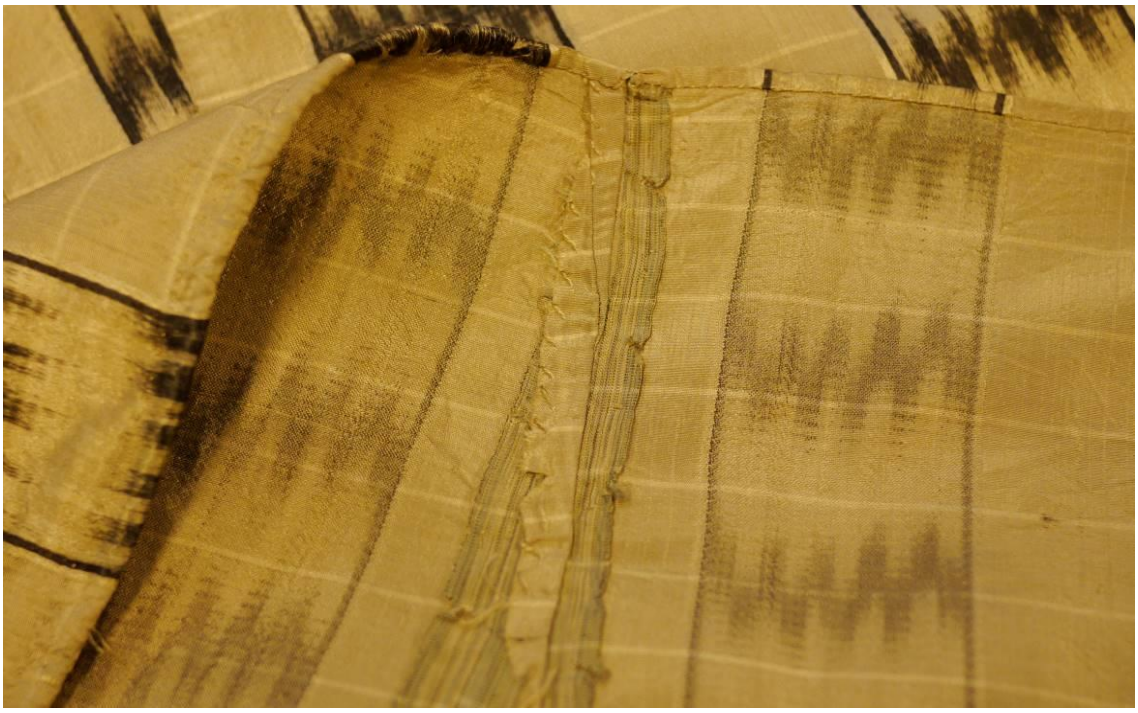

Figure 85. The lengthwise seams on the skirt are sewn with a spaced backstitch 1mm long and 2mm apart using beige silk thread. The edges that have the selvedge are nicked every 3cm, the raw edges are whipped 4mm in and 8mm apart using beige silk thread.

Figure 86. The top of the skirt is finished with a channel on the front panel. At the centre front the top is folded in 2.5cm and then gradually turns into a 5mm double folded hem at the side panel. The raw edges at the front are whipped 3mm in and 5mm apart and the double folded hem is sewn with running stitches 1mm long and 2mm apart. The drawstring comes out of a hole in the fabric at centre front. At the side panels the double folded top is instead sewn with hemstitches 1mm long, 2mm apart, using beige silk thread.

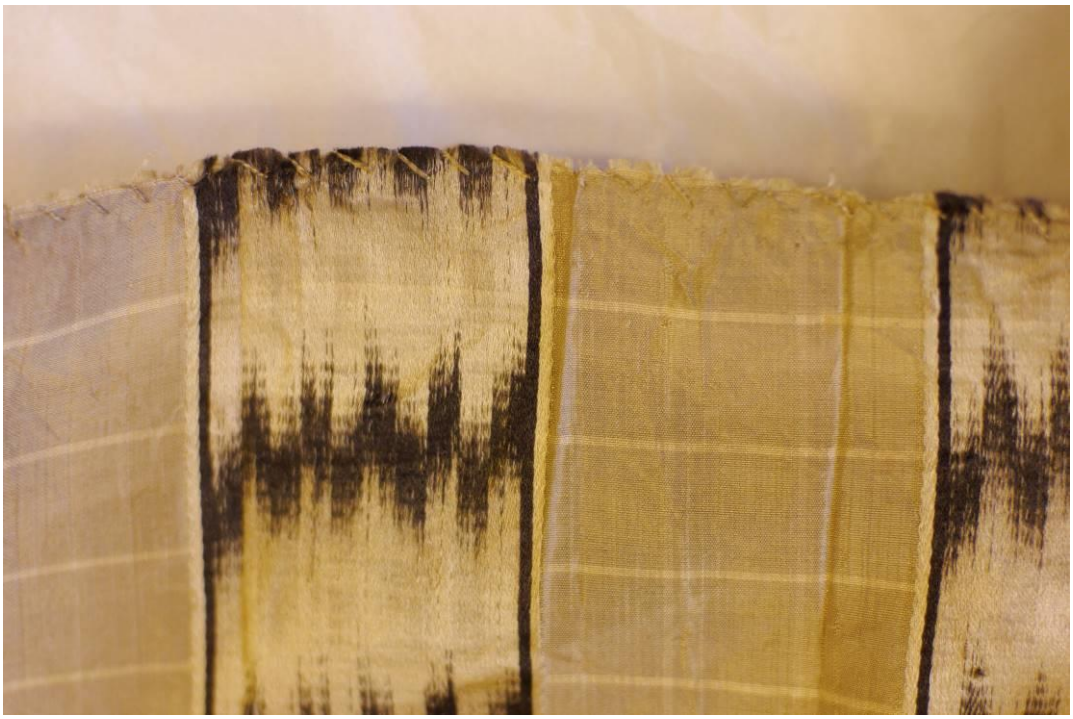

Figure 87. The back panels top has only been whipped 3mm in and 5mm apart using beige silk thread.

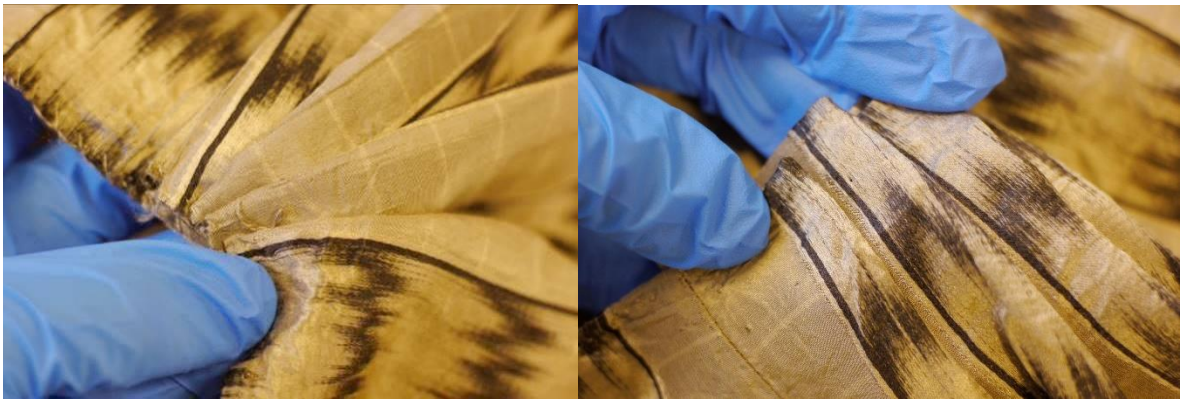

Figure 88. The skirt has probably been pressed at some point after it came to the museum, but there are some traces of old pleats at the back panel and side panel. The back panels pleats are more visible, the side less so. The pleats at the back look to have been 5mm visible and 5.5cm folded in with 10 pleats for that panel. The side is harder to discern. There might have been 5 pleats at each side panel with 1-1.5cm visible, based on the two that are most visible still. There are no traces of any side openings having been sewn up. There are traces of an old seam on the back and side panels below the whipstitches and folded hem.

Figure 89. The skirt is hemmed by folding up the outer fabric and then it has been covered with a 2.5cm wide linen facing. Both sides of the facing are sewn with 1mm long running stitches, 2mm apart.

Figure 90. The hem trim is made of a strip of crepe chiffon that has been gathered by sewing a running stitch in a zigzag form and gathered to 2-2.4cm between the puffs, making the strip 6cm wide when gathered. The gathering is sewn using crème coloured silk thread and the same thread is used to attach it to the skirt.

4. Discussion

For this chapter the results will be discussed with the previous research and theoretical framework to answer the research questions.

4.1 What can a reconstruction teach us about the craft of eighteenth-century sewing?

The previous research of reconstructions showed different purposes to making reconstructions, with testing hypotheses (Davidson 2019, p.344), understanding the knowledge needed to make certain garments (Woodyard 2017), how they would feel to wear (Bendall 2019; Rudolph 2019) or for exhibiting at a museum (Davidson 2015; Payne, Wilcox, Pardoe & Mikhaila 2011; Nørgaard 2008). The focus of the reconstruction in this thesis has been the craft process, from pattern to finished garment, to explore the craft knowledge the eighteenth-century tailor had.

Reconstructions can be made replicating the exact size of the original (Davidson 2015, p.201), but as stated by Woodyard, it can be hard to get the exact measurement of the original as it might have stretched in places when it was originally worn (2017, p.49). An important part of the tailors work was getting the garments to fit the wearer (Rasmussen 2010, p.74) and because of this I decided to make the reconstructions after my measurements. This then implemented the craft skill in tailoring of fitting the garment to a specific shape. As I had the pattern taken from the originals to work with, I first made mock-ups in the original shape to see how they would fit. Both the dresses turned out to need some alterations. I made some changes to the patterns before cutting the garments from the final fabrics. The use of basic patterns for certain types of garments was used in the eighteenth-century, and basing a new garment after an old one was also done (Rasmussen 2014, p.57-58). So even though I did not use the technique of taking measurements with a string or notched paper (ibid), the patterning of the reconstructions was still reminiscent of techniques used in the eighteenth-century.

BM2207 is, as stated before, representative of a folk dress with the wool fabric, separate jacket and petticoat, use of course linen fabrics and the economic fashion in which it was cut. It was pieced in several places in the jacket sleeves and the petticoat has a *sparvåd*, a saved panel in front, using a cheap material that would be covered by the apron (Eldvik 2014, p.69). The costume of a separate jacket and petticoat was worn both for folk dress (ibid, p.77) as well as fashionable dress (Rasmussen 2010, p.181). Fashionable dress had changed fashion to the higher waist seam (ibid, p.201) at the time of production of BM2207 however, indicating a delay in the new fashion for this particular folk dress. The use of older styles within folk dress while a new fashion was coming in was not uncommon (Liby 2014, p.26). The use of camblet for BM2207 indicates it was worn by a wealthy peasant woman, as it was a manufactory made textile rather than a home woven textile (Eldvik 2014, p.67). BM4543 as representative of fashionable dress is instead sewn in silk fabric and does not have any piecing in it. Fashionable dress could be pieced just as folk dress though (Rasmussen 2010, p.74-75).

4.1.1 Craft knowledge in eighteenth-century sewing

Clothing production in Sweden during the eighteenth-century was mainly performed by trained tailors on commission to a client (Rasmussen 2014, p.50-51). Therefore, the dresses in the case study for this thesis was most likely made to measure by a tailor. The different cut

and construction of BM4543 might raise the question if it was sewn by a tailor or a seamstress, as it shows a very different construction from the other dress that has a more traditional cut and construction. Rasmussen however states that the new techniques used must not indicate a change in craftsperson as the stitches were used by tailors as well as seamstresses (Rasmussen 2010, p.240). It might still be a possibility that BM4543 was sewn by a seamstress, but that requires further research not possible within the time frame of this thesis.

As fabrics were very expensive in the eighteenth-century, using as little material as possible was an important factor for the tailors to adhere to (Rasmussen 2010, p.74-75). Fabrics are still expensive today and because of budget restraints the fabrics used in the reconstruction were chosen to be close to the original, but not exactly the same. This is not an uncommon problem in regards to reconstructions, as handwoven textiles are hard to find and very expensive to purchase today, so many times modern machine woven textiles are used (Davidson 2015, p.215; Payne, Wilcox, Pardoe & Mikhaila 2011, p.56). Nørgaard states that it is impossible to make an exact copy of an extant textile and that compromises and choices has to be made depending on the purpose and future use of the reconstruction (2008, p.44). Both the reconstructions for this thesis were done to get as close to the originals as possible in construction techniques, with some compromises in materials.

My reconstructions were done using modern fabrics with a weave width of 135-150cm, compared to the originals weave width of 50-66cm. The panels of the original BM2207 petticoat were cut using the whole weave width and then being able to use the selvage to keep the fabric from fraying. For the original BM4543 skirt it has some panels cut at an angle demanding more fabric. These techniques show the economic way of cutting petticoats for most of the century, with the new cut from the turn of the century which required more fabric (Rasmussen 2010, p.204). For the reconstructions I tried to use the whole width of the fabric when I could. This was mainly possible for BM2207 petticoat. Instead of having six panels of 50cm each, I used three panels, one 150cm, one 100 cm and the third 50cm to be able to add the linen *sparvåd.* For the remainder of the cutting, I tried to save as much fabric as possible, but the width of the fabric for cutting out the correct panel pieces for the BM4543 skirt proved quite wasteful. As the pieces had to be cut to the same size as the original to accommodate for the gores between the panels, I could not change them to accommodate the wider width of the modern fabric.

For the reconstruction of BM2207 I instinctively basted the pleats on the petticoat and, according to Rasmussen, basting to hold down pleats could be used to better keep them in place. This is also true for holding layers together (Rasmussen 2010, p.179), which can be seen on the sleeve head of the BM2207 jacket. The fact that the jacket of BM2207 is sewn with spaced backstitches from the outside may indicate that it was pinned to size on the body, with the pins left in when taking it off to sew the seam as pinned, no changes needed (ibid, p.180).

BM4543 is still a bit of a mystery, with knowledge lost in how it would have been worn originally. The skirt has probably been seam ripped at some point, with no way of holding it up on a body today. Rasmussen writes about the change in fashion demanding new ways of

constructing dresses and new closures as a challenge with different solutions. Dresses from this time generally have the skirt attached to the bodice with an opening at centre front or two side openings (Rasmussen 2010, p.204, 207). The skirts could also be separate with a waistband (NM.0016299). There is also an example of an empire waisted skirt with braces to hold the skirt in its correct position, however it is dated to the 1820-1830s (NM.0001376). The closest to BM4543 in how it might have been constructed is a gown from the Nordic Museum without openings in the skirt and the skirt sewn to the back and sides but separate at the front (NM.0113534). As the skirt of BM4543 has been conserved and pressed at some time after it came to the museum, vital information as to how the skirt would have been finished, is now gone. So, the choices I made when finishing the skirt and the dress is only one interpretation of how it might have been done, based on the traces on the pieces and compared to other extant garments as nothing can be said for certain (see 3.2.2 Reconstructing BM4543). It was not uncommon to disassemble a dress, the skirts could for example be taken off for laundry, and according to Rasmussen the waist seams on extant garments are often secondary (Rasmussen 2010, p.206). However, as the bodice of BM4543 does not show any clear signs of a ripped seam this might not be the answer either. The state of the dress today raises the question of if the dress might not have been finished at all.

The dresses in the case study, BM2207 and BM4543, show different choices in cut and construction techniques. They are from around the same time but represent an earlier fashion in BM2207, with the traditional jacket and petticoat. The new, coming fashion with the high cut waist, can be seen in BM4543. As for the construction, BM2207 uses seven different stitches, BM4543 uses five. The order of making the garments differ mainly in the jacket and bodice. While BM2207 is constructed with methods similar to what I have seen in many other jackets from the eighteenth-century (e.g., Holmgren 2021; BM211; 1M16-588; 1M16-593; 1M16-4016; 1M16-4017) the bodice of BM4543 is completed by sewing the front and back panels separately, completely finished, before sewing them together. They show a shift in construction methods by the end of the eighteenth-century going into the nineteenth century, discussed by Rasmussen in her dissertation. There is also a refinement in the cut and construction taking over with smaller and neater stitches (2010, p.207, 237). The stitches on BM4543 are shorter, with a general stitch length of 1mm, than those used on BM2207 that use spaced backstitch in the jacket instead of regular backstitches.

I found that reconstructing the jacket for BM2207 was the garment piece requiring the most skill and precision. It is a close fitting garment, demanding a lot of care in the cut and fit. The petticoat worn with it however, was the easiest and fastest make, hardly demanding any fit and using very straight forward sewing techniques. The bodice reconstruction of BM4543 requires some thought to fit, as the back should sit nice and tight on the body. But as the front can be pinned and gathered it is a lot more forgiving in construction precision. Reconstructing the BM4543 skirt was in its basic construction as simple as the BM2207 petticoat, a precision challenge came however in the sewing of the trim. The trim required a lot of care in handling the thin silk crepe chiffon, as well as precision in how it was positioned on the skirt hem.

4.2 What methods could be used to document dress reconstructions with?

The research methods in this thesis have taken inspiration from experimental archaeology, craft science and object-based research.

4.2.1 Preparatory work

Before starting a reconstruction process the thing to be reconstructed must be researched, therefore starting with object-based research in this case. There is a developed method of how to study dress formulated by Mida and Kim (2018). I combined their process of observation, (Mida & Kim 2018, p.41) reflection (ibid, p.63) and interpretation (ibid, p.76) with my previous experience of researching historic garments (Holmgren 2016; Holmgren 2021). Using historic objects as empiric material is not a given within academia. Written sources have, and still is to some extent, been seen as more valid (Dyer 2021, p.283). Dyer argues that objects can tell us other things than the written texts, bringing the researcher closer to the persons of the past (ibid, p.285). As there is very little written texts about tailors and their craft in the eighteenth-century, with only two published works in Sweden from that century (Rasmussen 2010, p.30), researching the extant garments is needed to know how they were made. Object based research can gather information from the extant object in terms of what materials they are made of (Mida & Kim 2018, p.49-52), checking the construction and how they were made (ibid, p.45-47). Taking a pattern by measuring the extant garment is crucial for reconstruction and can also be supported by photography (Davidson 2015, p.208). I followed these steps and documented each detail. The complete documentation of the researched extant garments for the reconstruction has previously been reported under 3.3 Sewing techniques.

4.2.2 Methods of documenting reconstructions

I used three different methods to document the reconstructions; written text, photographs and video. The purpose was to document the craft knowledge in making eighteenth-century garments. The methods of documenting reconstructions are dependent on the purpose of the documentation (Lykke Lundberg 2011, p.195). Using film to document reconstructions has been highlighted by other scholars as an appropriate method for craft documentation (ibid, Almevik, Jarefjäll, Samuelsson 2013, Wood 2014, p.58). Lykke Lundberg writes about three different types of film documentation; *the personal document*, *the public document* and the *communicating document*, and that the focus needs to be chosen before filming (2011, p.190). The separations and definitions are harder to define for this thesis as the films are made as a personal document for me to remember what I have done for the analysis, also as a public documentation, as the videos will be watchable through this thesis. And the aim is for it to also be communicative, as it is supposed to show how the craft of sewing could be carried out in the eighteenth-century. So, all three types are involved in the results of my reconstruction videos. Wood has a wider approach for film documentation with them being used as documentation and instructional videos (2014, p.65). Reconstructions can also be made as a public process, as in the case of the full-scale reconstructions researched by Peterson (2003). The process can then be both practical, documentary and communicative to an audience while it is being performed (Peterson 2003, p. 21-23). This type of reconstructions can be used by museums to showcase historic craft (Paardekooper 2019, p.6-7; Petersson & Narmo 2011, p.31-32).

Reconstructions can also be documented through written text and photography. Woodyard (2017) and Rudolph (2019) both uses this method to show their process. Woodyard uses photographs and short captions to show each step in the construction, including materials and tools. The photographs show the results of each seam, not showing the actual making process (2017, p.161-176). Rudolph instead mainly uses written documentation with some photographs to show what the text is about. The documentation include what materials and tools were used and each step in the construction process. As for the photographs (2019, p.114-128), they are taken in the same manner as for Woodard's reconstruction (2017) only showing the result of the seams and not showing the craft process of making in action.

I filmed two of the reconstructions, and photographed the other two. It was a bit of trial and error to begin with, as I had to do everything myself. Once I had some proper equipment set up, the photography and the video documentation worked pretty smoothly. For the first reconstruction I was not able to take photographs of the actual sewing, but rather the results of the sewing just as Woodyard (2017) and Rudolph (2019) did. I found this method took away from documenting the craft process. For the three remaining reconstructions a C-stand made it possible to take pictures and film from my point of view while in the act of sewing. As the reconstructions were made to document the craft skill in making, this felt essential to document, to show the embodied skill in the hands of the maker. Photographing the actual process rather than the result can show the grip and positioning of the hand and needle to better visualise how the actual craft of sewing is executed. This was further visualised in the filming of the process, as the hands movements and grip can now be seen in action in the video. I found that the filming best captured the craft skill and tacit knowledge in hand sewing. It is a craft demanding movement, and the method of filming best highlights this.

Regardless of the purpose of the reconstruction the person performing it must have the skill to execute it (Davidson 2019, p.336; Planke 2005, p.214-215). With the documentation the embodied knowledge and skill of the maker can be documented and preserved (Almevik 2016, p.78). Filming might not always be a possibility, as it demands equipment and set-up. Written documentation is more accessible. It might be harder to include the embodied skill and tacit knowledge in writing though, as that is something the crafts person might not even reflect upon while making and writing about it (ibid, p.87-88). I found it took a bit of time to get used to writing each step down during the sewing process, but worked quite well after a while. I filled in some reflections of things I did without reflecting on them during the making process that I saw when looking back at the videos. This exemplifies the issue noted by Almevik, of the crafts persons challenge to verbalise their tacit knowledge (2016, p.87-88). The combination of writing, photographing and filming was a good way to gain the most information. It also comes down to experience, as I had not done something similar before, the method evolved during the process. Even despite having planned it out before hand, I learned as I went along what I needed and what worked for me to still be able to focus on the craft of making while documenting it.

4.3 How can reconstruction be used as a method in an academic setting?

There is a lacking scientific and academic discussion about using reconstructions as a research method for historic clothing. There is a limited number of sources to compare to and to take

inspiration from. As seen in 1.6.1 Reconstruction research and 1.7.3 Object based research in dress history, many of the researcher refer to one another and are building on and trying to evolve the use of reconstruction as a scientific method. This is a source-critical aspect but it also highlights the need for further research that this thesis is aiming to do. Reconstructions has traditionally been made in Sweden for over 100 hundred years outside of academia, within the *Folk costume movement*. The making of folk costume has been deemed an Intangible cultural heritage and is listed on the Institute for Language and Folklore's website for living traditions.

The type of clothing reconstructed as folk costume today was originally made to measure by a tailor for the peasantry, the same process was also true for the upper classes fashionable dress (Liby 1997, p.33-34). I would therefore argue that all historic dress that is reconstructed is part of a traditional craftsmanship and intangible cultural heritage that could fall under the folk costume movement. They may however have different purposes. The folk costume has more focus on the wearing of the garment, for this thesis the purpose has been the process of making the garments. But outside of the framework of this thesis I also intend to wear the reconstructions I have made. As there is a call for using reconstructions more in academic settings and as research methods (Davidson 2019; Woodyard 2017), this could also be a way of preserving the craftsmanship in making and wearing historic clothing.

Reconstructions has traditionally been used within experimental archaeology (Mathieu 2002, p.1), but there are divided opinions on whether clothing reconstruction can be seen as experimental archaeology. Paardekooper claims it cannot, without arguing the point further (2019, p.10), but other researchers use experimental archaeology as a framework for their clothing reconstruction research (Bendall 2019, p.367; Narmo 2011, p.199-200). An important factor is to make the process replicable (Petersson 2003, p.21-23), therefore it needs to be thoroughly planned before the experiment starts (Mathieu & Meyer 2002, p.75) and documented during and after (Paardekooper 2019, p.8-9). The results of experimental archaeology show how things might have been, but cannot prove that it has been in exactly the same way as the research shows (Mathieu 2002, p.8; Petersson 2003, p.270). The approach and ethics used within experimental archaeology worked well for setting up the reconstruction process within this thesis. Each step was systematically documented to show how the research was carried out. This makes the research replicable and the results show examples of how it might have been originally, as an interpretation and not set in stone.

The reconstructions carried out for this thesis can be deemed *functional object replication* (Mathieu 2002, p.2-3) and a *technological process replication* (ibid p.5). Meaning the objective has been to reconstruct the garments to be functional in the same way as the originals, and also replicating the process that would have been done in the eighteenth-century to create the extant garments.

Reconstructions raises new questions that might not be apparent when only studying written documents or merely looking at extant objects (Woodyard 2017, p.26). For this thesis the reconstructions have been used in an academic setting to answer research questions that would have been hard, if not mere impossible, to answer without the use of reconstructions. To truly understand and research a craft properly, the researcher needs to have an

understanding about the craft knowledge needed to make the extant object (Planke 2016, p.130, 133; Almevik, Jarefjäll & Samuelsson 2013, p.144). It is therefore important for the researcher to disclose their previous knowledge about the objects, craft and the process of making (Larsson 2007, p.31). This kind of connoisseurship is gained by experience, researching and looking at a lot of objects (Torell 2014, p.51) and learning the skills of making (Larsson 2007, p.40; Rasmussen 2010, p.20). By disclosing the qualification of the researcher and putting the results of the reconstructions against written sources, it is possible to use within academia (Knutsson, Nyström & Palmsköld 2021, p.75-76; Rasmussen 2010, p.21). My previous knowledge and craft skill has been vital for using reconstructions as a research method. Without the experience of sewing historic clothing and having looked at a variety of historic clothing for several years, I would not have been able to discern how the garments researched for this thesis would have been made in the eighteenth-century.

4.4 Conclusion and future research

This thesis started with the hypotheses: "*Through reconstruction the craft knowledge of making clothing in the eighteenth-century can be preserved and documented".* And through the following research questions that hypothesis has been tested and proved; what can a reconstruction teach us about the craft of eighteenth-century sewing? What methods could be used to document dress reconstructions with? How can reconstruction be used as a method in an academic setting?

Different use of cut and construction has been visualised in the extant garments as well as the reconstructions. The order of construction could be tested with the reconstruction to gain the same result as the extant garments are in. The choices made by the tailor in the eighteenth-century in regards to thread, stitches and stitch lengths has been researched and the craftsmanship needed to make the garments has been exemplified in the reconstructions. Further knowledge could be gained by also researching the fabrics used in the original garments, which was not possible within the time frame of this thesis.

It took me slightly over 50 hours to make the reconstruction. This is just counting the actual sewing, not the set up for filming or all the note taking during to document the process. Also not counting the thought process and research before and during the reconstruction process. So, it can be quite a time-consuming research method. However, searching for written sources can take a lot of time as well so I do not think this should be a seen as a problem, just a different way to do your research.

Through a bit of experience, the documentation of craft can be done with written text, photography and filming without disrupting the work flow. All three methods have proven manageable in this thesis and complement each other. To get as close as possible to the craft, the video is more successful as that shows movement and grip better than just photography and also show things that might be difficult to explain in writing.

Previous research and this thesis have shown that it is possible to use reconstructions in an academic setting. The use of reconstruction has shown that there are answers to be gained through making that would be harder to reach by only looking at extant garments, and a lot more knowledge about the craft of making has been gained than from just researching written

documents. Further research into how reconstructions could be utilized in academic settings is needed, the solution in this thesis is just one example of how it can be used and executed.

5. Summary

This thesis has sought to research the craft of eighteenth-century tailoring and how to document it. The aim was to produce a method of researching extant objects with reconstructions and how to document them through the three following research questions; What can a reconstruction teach us about the craft of eighteenth-century sewing? What methods could be used to document dress reconstructions with? How can reconstruction be used as a method in an academic setting? The working hypotheses has been "*Through reconstruction the craft knowledge of making clothing in the eighteenth-century can be preserved and documented".*

In the eighteenth-century all clothing was made to order by a tailor. The tailors were educated through the guild system, starting as an apprentice, then journeyman and finally a master tailor. Only men were allowed to train to become tailors, therefore for most of the century, only men were allowed to make clothes on order. By the end of the century seamstresses were becoming more acceptable. There were a lot of secrecy within the tailor's profession, with very little publications on how to construct clothing from the period. The tailor did not use paper patterns in the way we do today, they could have basic patterns to base the construction on, but also used old garments to base the new ones on or, using measurements, drafted the pattern directly to the fabric. The cutting of the garments was seen as the most important factor of the tailors work at the time with the most secrecy. The sewing was however also an important aspect of the tailor's knowledge and skill, using the right stitches for a specific seam.

Eighteenth-century clothing in museums today are not a natural occurrence, they have actively been collected and donated, many of them representing special occasion garments such as wedding attire. Only a small fraction of garments worn and used in the past is preserved in museums. They usually lack information about how, when and by whom they were worn, limiting the searchability of their provenance. Regardless of this, they can still be used as research objects depending on the research questions. For this thesis two dresses, consisting of four pieces, from Textilmuseet was used as case studies and reconstructed. One dress is representative of folk dress in cut and use of materials, the other of fashionable dress. The folk dress is noted as having been worn as wedding attire in 1798 but without naming who wore it. The fashionable dress has no date of wear but a previous owner and wearer documented.

Each garment in the case study was thoroughly examined with each seam, materials and construction orders documented. Patterns were also taken from both dresses. The patterns were then used for the reconstructions. They were slightly altered to fit me to include the tailor's process of making the garment fit the customer. The dresses were then reconstructed using the same techniques as the originals. The materials were chosen to be as similar as possible to the originals within the budget, but were not exactly reproduced. The craft process and the craft knowledge needed to make the garments was in focus during the research. The decisions made and how the order of construction was executed was based on the originals and my interpretation of how it would have been done in the eighteenth-century. Reconstruction as a research method is limited in the way that the researcher must have the

skill to perform the craft needed for the reconstruction or cooperate with a craftsperson. I performed the reconstructions myself as I have previous experience of sewing historical clothing and researching historic garments.

The dresses differ in cut and constructing, showing the older techniques in the folk dress and newer solutions with the new fashion of the turn of the century in the fashionable dress. The folk dress has a traditional style of jacket and petticoat in matching fabrics, using construction techniques seen in both folk dress and fashionable dress for a long period of the eighteenth-century. The fashionable dress is no longer in its original form, but has been taken apart at some point or not been finished. This led to more research into how dresses of that time should be put together. The way it was finally sewn together in the reconstruction, show one solution of how it might have been intended on the original. Through the previous research and the reconstructions, the eighteenth-century tailors craft skill has been visualised. From the fitting of the garment, cutting of material in an economic fashion and construction methods with use of different types of thread, stitches and stitch lengths.

The reconstructions were documented with written text that include each step in the making and the decisions made along the way. This was complemented by taking photographs of each step as well as filming the process for two of the pieces. The written text and photographs are harder to use as documentation of craft skill but can still complement it. It is important to photograph and film the actual process of sewing, rather than just taking a picture after each seam is done. The videos show how the hands grip the needle as well as the fabric pieces when sewing each different seam, highlighting the embodied skill of the maker.

Using extant objects, and reconstructions especially, is not common practice within most fields of academia. There has been a call to widen its use within dress history and craft science. Reconstructions has mainly been used within experimental archaeology which has also served as a theoretical framework for the research in this thesis. If using reconstructions as a research method, it is important to document each step of the process to make it replicable. The result of the reconstruction cannot stand on its own but has to be put in a bigger perspective including researching other sources such as extant objects and literature. Reconstructions and object-based research raises questions that only literature studies would not raise, or be possible to answer.

6. Sammanfattning

Den här uppsatsen har sökt forska om 1700-talets skrädderihantverk och hur det kan dokumenteras. Syftet har varit att ta fram en metod för att forska på bevarade föremål genom rekonstruktioner och hur de ska dokumenteras genom följande frågeställningar; Vad kan en rekonstruktion lära oss om hantverket i 1700-talssömad? Vilka metoder kan användas för att dokumentera klädrekonstruktioner? Hur kan rekonstruktioner användas som metod inom akademisk forskning? Arbetshypotesen har varit *”Genom rekonstruktion kan hantverkskunskapen av att tillverka 1700-talskläder bevaras och dokumenteras”.*

Under 1700-talet tillverkades alla kläder på beställning av en skräddare. Skräddarna undervisades genom skråämbetet, de startade som lärling, sedan gesäll och vidare till mästare. Enbart män tilläts utbilda sig till skräddare, så mestadels av århundradet var det bara män som fick tillverka kläder på beställning. Mot slutet av århundradet började detta luckras upp och sömmerskor blev mer accepterade. Det var mycket hemlighetsmakeri inom skrädderiprofessionen, med få publikationer om hur kläder skulle konstrueras från tiden. Skräddaren använde inte pappersmönster på det sätt vi gör idag, de kunde ha grundmallar att utgå från, men även använda, gamla plagg att basera nya på samt att använda mått för att konstruera mönstret direkt på tyget. Tillskärningen sågs som viktigast och mest krävande i skräddarens arbete och hölls hemligt utåt. Sömnaden var dock också en viktig aspekt av skräddarens kunskap och handlag genom att kunna använda rätt stygn för rätt söm.

Kläder från 1700-talet i museisamlingar idag är inte en naturlig förekomst, de har aktivt samlats in och donerats. Många av dem representerar kläder för speciella tillfällen, exempelvis bröllopsklädsel. Bara en fraktion av alla de kläder som användes förr har bevarats i museisamlingar. De saknar ofta information om hur, när och av vem de använts, vilket begränsar sökbarheten för deras proveniens. Trots detta kan de ändå användas för att forska på beroende på forskningsfrågorna. För den här uppsatsen har två klänningar bestående av fyra separata delar från Textilmuseet använts för föremålsanalyser och sedan rekonstruerats. En av klänningarna är en folklig dräkt, den andra en modedräkt. Den folkliga dräkten har burits som brudklänning 1798 men utan uppgifter om vem som burit den. Modedräkten har ingen datering men däremot namn på tidigare ägare och brukare.

Klänningarna i föremålsanalyserna undersöktes noggrant, varje söm, material och konstruktionsordningen dokumenterades. Uppmätningar gjordes också på alla delar som sedan användes för rekonstruktionerna. Mönstren ändrades lite för att passa mig för att få med skräddarens process av att få dräkten att passa beställaren. Klänningarna rekonstruerades sedan med samma tekniker som användes till originalen. Materialen valdes för att matcha originalen så nära som möjligt inom en begränsad budget, så de producerades inte specifikt för rekonstruktionerna. Hantverksprocessen och hantverkskunskapen låg i fokus under processen. Valen som gjordes gällande konstruktionsordning baserades på originalen och min tolkning av hur det gjorts under 1700-talet. Att använda rekonstruktion som en forskningsmetod är begränsat till forskarens kunskap inom hantverket eller samarbete med en hantverkare. Jag gjorde alla rekonstruktionerna själv då jag har tidigare erfarenhet av historisk sömnad och föremålsanalyser.

Klänningarna skiljer sig åt i tillskärning och konstruktion, med äldre tekniker i den folkliga dräkten och nyare tekniker i modedräkten. Den folkliga klänningen har den traditionella jackan och kjolen med matchande tyg sydda med tekniker använda för både folklig- och modedräkt under stora delar av 1700-talet. Modedräkten är inte längre intakt i sin form utan har någon gång tagits isär eller eventuellt inte sytts färdig. Detta ledde till mer efterforskningar i hur klänningar från den tiden syddes samman. Den slutliga sammansättningen av rekonstruktionen visar på en möjlighet av hur det skulle kunna ha gjorts på originalet. Genom tidigare forskning och rekonstruktionerna av 1700-taldräkterna har skräddarens hantverksskicklighet visualiserats. Från passform, tillskärning på ett sparsamt sätt till konstruktionsmetoder med olika typer av tråd, stygn och stygnlängder.

Rekonstruktionerna dokumenterades skriftligt med information om varje steg i processen och valen som gjordes under arbetet. Detta kompletterades med fotografier av varje steg samt att två av dräktdelarnas process filmades. Den skriftliga dokumentationen och fotografierna är svårare att använda som metod för att dokumentera hantverksskicklighet, men kan fortfarande vara ett bra komplement till film. Det är viktigt att fotografera och filma själva processen av sömnaden, inte att bara fotografera de färdiga sömmarna. Filmerna visar tydligast hur nålen och tyget hanteras för att sy varje enskild söm, vilket ger fokus till hantverkarens taktila kunskap.

Att använda bevarade föremål, och rekonstruktioner speciellt, är inte vanligt inom de flesta akademiska områden. Det efterfrågas dock att vidga detta inom dräkthistoria och hantverksvetenskap. Rekonstruktioner har traditionellt mestadels använts inom experimentell arkeologi. Om rekonstruktioner ska användas som akademisk metod är det viktigt att dokumentera varje steg i processen för att göra forskningen replikerbar. Resultatet från rekonstruktioner kan inte stå på egna ben utan måste sättas in i ett större perspektiv mot andra källor så som bevarade föremål och skriftliga källor. Rekonstruktioner och forskning på bevarade föremål lyfter andra typer av frågor som litteraturstudier in skulle få fram eller ha möjlighet att svara på.

List of figures

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Objects

Textilmuseet

BM210 bodice
BM211 petticoat
BM358 bodice
BM2207 wedding gown
BM4449 jacket
BM4543 dress

The Nordic Museum

NM.0016299
NM.0001376
NM.0113534

Västergötlands museum

1M16-588 jacket
1M16-593 including a jacket, bodice and petticoat
1M16-681 including a jacket, bodice and petticoat
1M16-4016 jacket
1M16-4017 jacket
1M16-4020 bodice

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Appendices

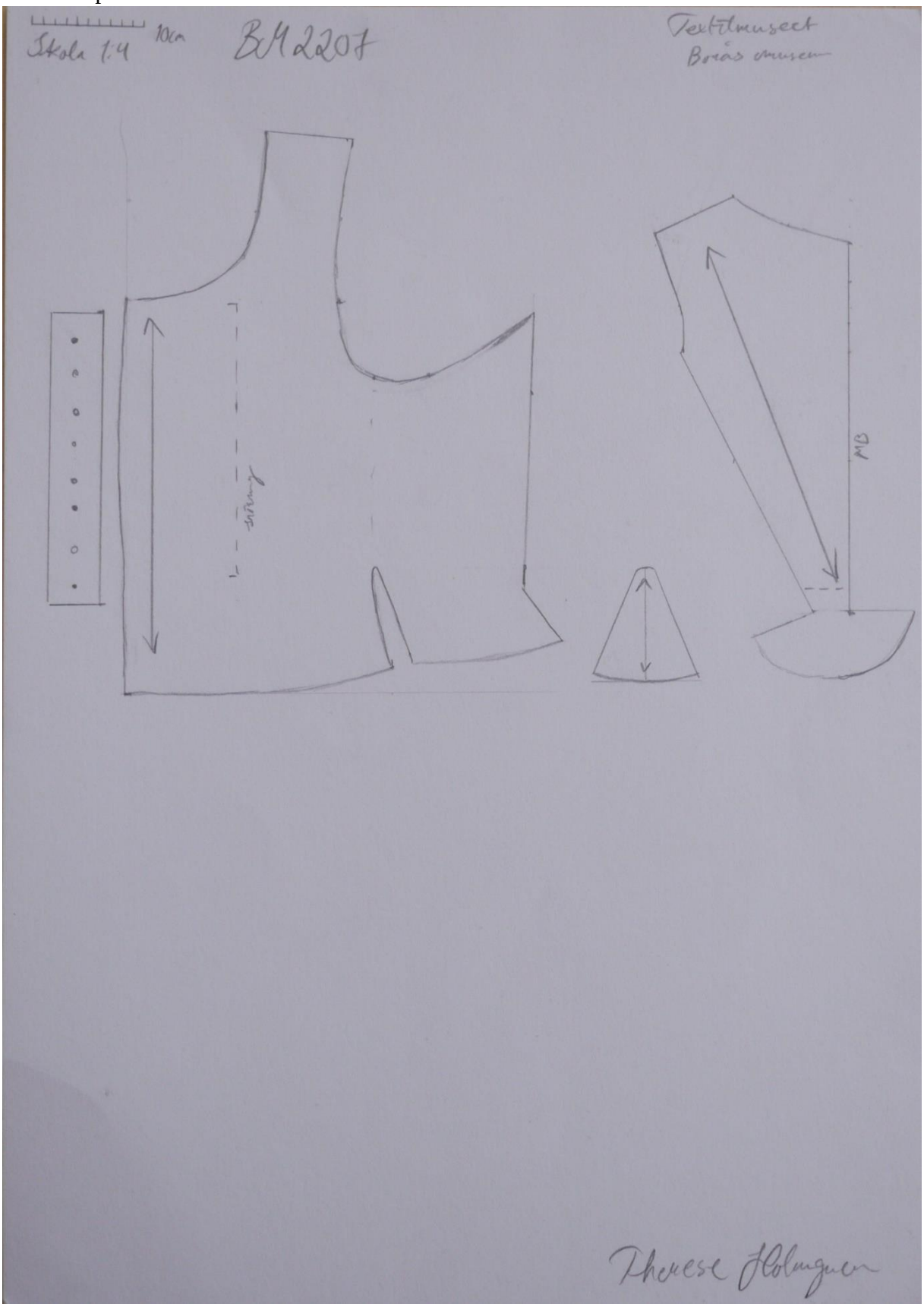
Appendix 1

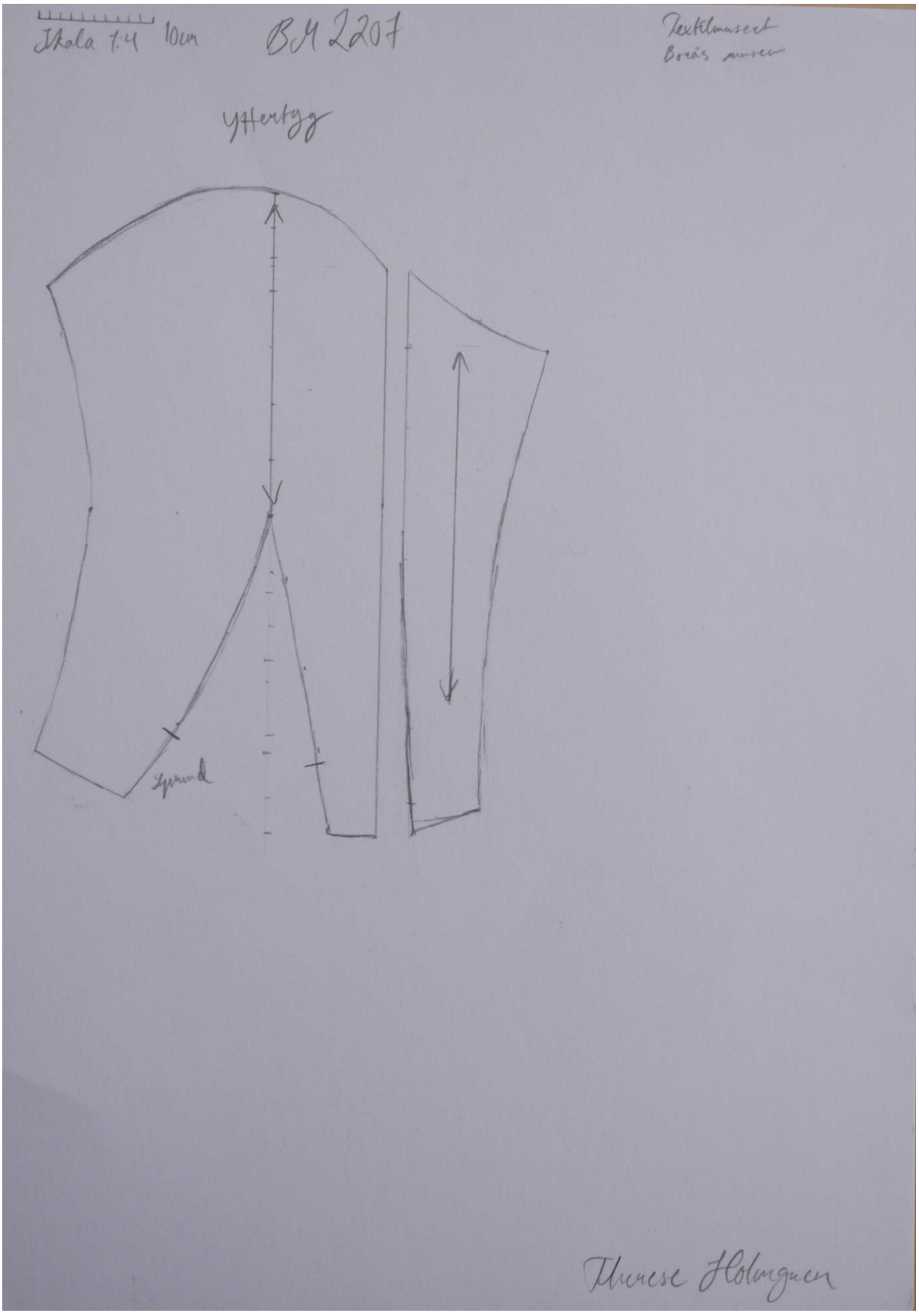
Textilmuseet in Borås

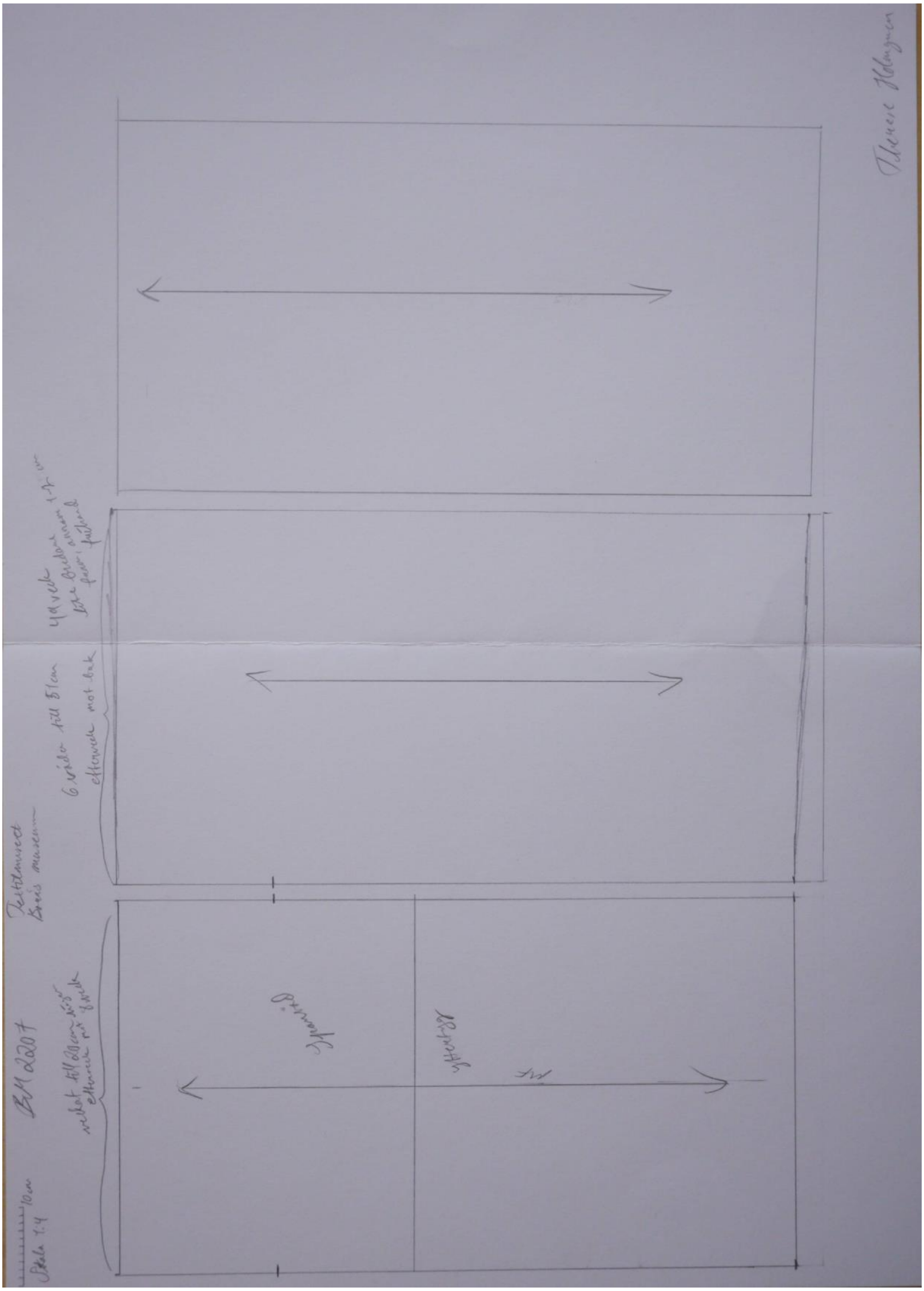
Textilmuseet has its base in the Cultural-historical association of the seven districts (De sju häradernas kulturhistoriska förening*)* which was founded in 1903 with the aim of opening a museum in Borås. The association had a focus on textiles, as that had been an important aspect to the area's history and the trade and industry. Besides collecting textiles and objects related to that they also collected archaeologic objects, ethnographic objects and industrial objects. Buildings were also collected and in the 1910s they opened an open-air museum in Borås. The collection has a local history focus. The need for better suited premises to show the textile industries history was highlighted already in the 1950s, but first in 1972 a specific museum for the textiles was opened (https://www.d7kf.se/historik/, 2022).

Since 1984 Borås municipality is responsible for the running of the museum, but all objects collected before that remains in the ownership of the Cultural-historical association of the seven districts. They now operate as a support association for Borås museum and Textilmuseet (https://www.d7kf.se/historik/, 2022). The focus of Textilmuseet was in the beginning to show the history of the textile- and fashion manufacturing of the area (Wasling 2013, p.139). Today they also focus on more contemporary textiles and fashion (Hild, 2013, p.149.

Appendix 2
BM2207 pattern.

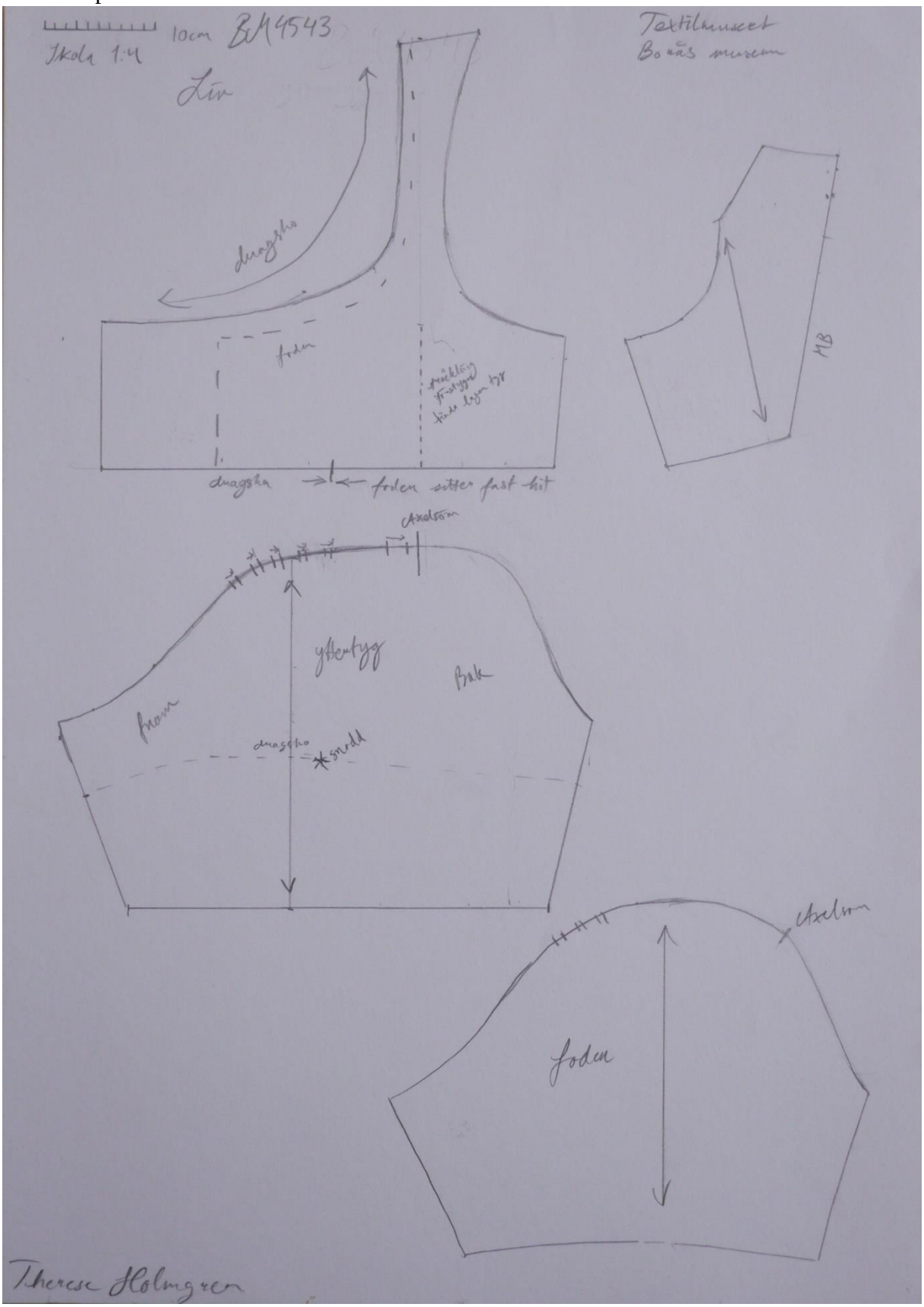



Skala 1:4 10cm
BM 2207
Textilmuseet
Borås museum
Yttertyg
Tyrund
Therese Holmgren

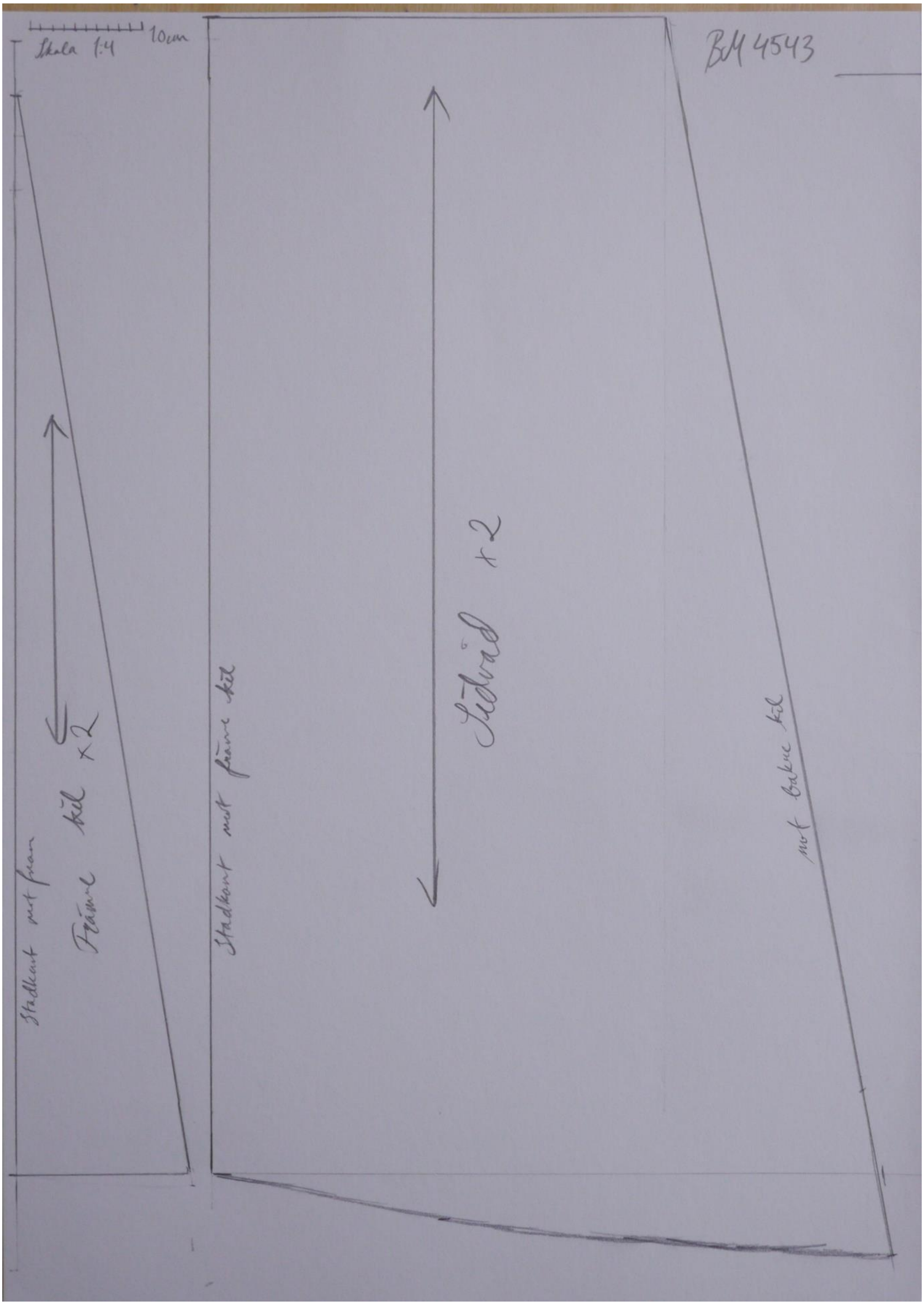

Skala 1:4
10 cm
BM 22207
Textilmuseet
Borås museum
Therese Holmgren

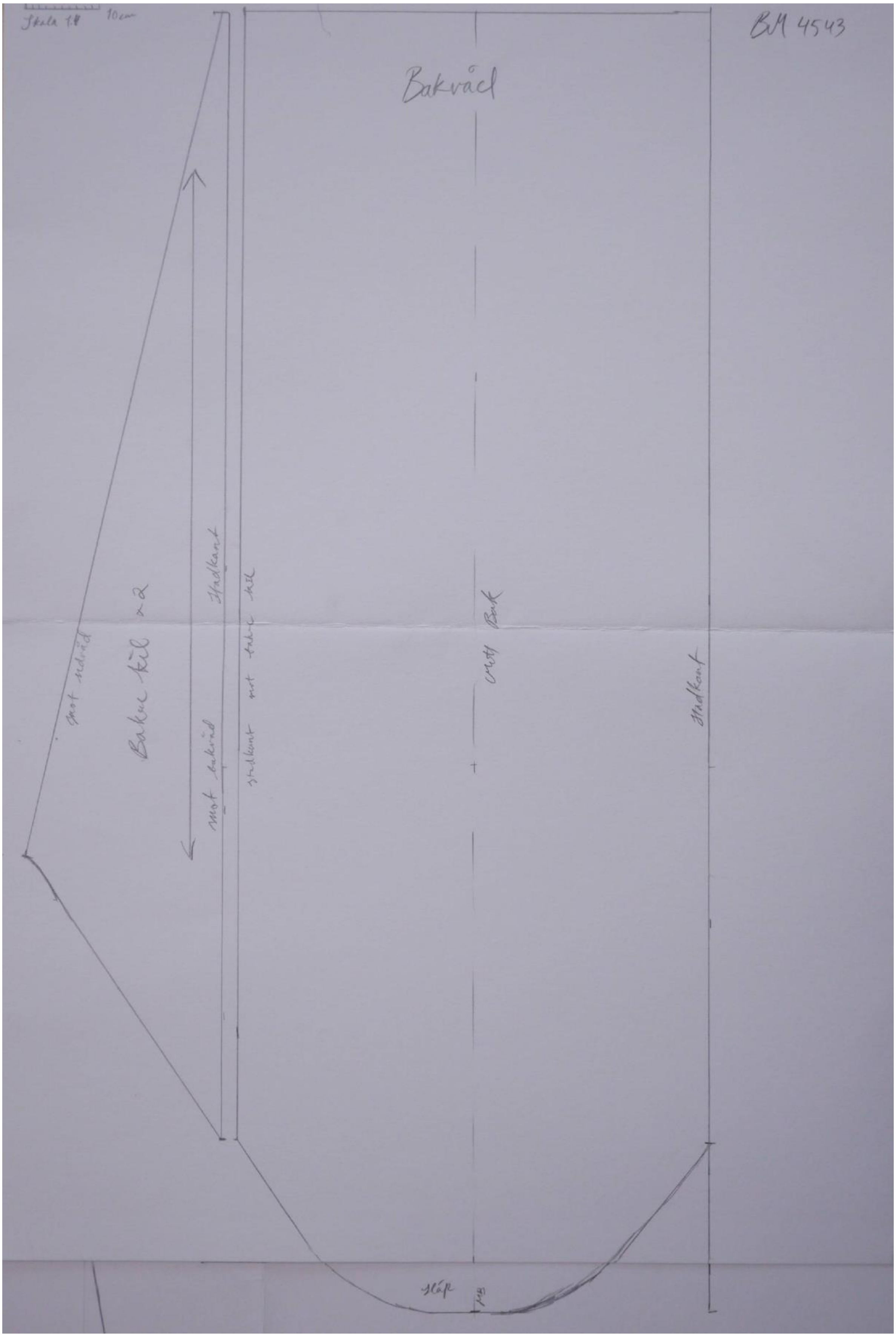

Skala 1:4
10 cm
BM2207
Textilmuseet
Borås museum
GB
Therese Holmgren

Appendix 3
BM4543 pattern.




Skala 1:4
10cm
BM 4543
Textilmuseet
Borås Museum
Framvåd
mF
mot sid


Skala 1:4
10cm
BM 4543
Främre kil x2
Sidvåd x2
Stadkant mot främre kil
mot bakre kil


Skala 1:8
10cm
BM 4543
Bakvåd
Bakre kil x2
mot sidvåd
Stadkant
mot bakvåd
Stadkant mot bakre kil
Mitt Bak
Stadkant
släp

Appendix 4

Video documentation of the reconstruction of BM2207

https://youtu.be/dvJCrWnRovI

Appendix 5

Video documentation of the reconstruction of BM4543

https://youtu.be/zFmJ2pL6PFU