

Speaking of amber - a local gem, here in Latvian we usually invoke "naphthalene smell", grandmother's beads and souvenirs. For refreshing contrast, from 11th till 16th December, 2012 in National Etruscan Museum of Villa Giulia in Rome a week dedicated to Baltic amber was held. The patron of the event was Italian President Giorgio Napolitano. Within this week scientists and Baltic artist introduced public to the Baltic amber. This was great chance for Riga, Capital of European culture (CEC), to show our point of view on amber – one of CEC program thematic lines in year 2014.

Inga Lasenko: how amber thread was born{jcomments off}

Dr.sc.ing. of Riga Technical University (RTU) Inga Lasenko currently working Scientific Research Laboratory of Biotextile Materials at RTU kindly shows everything about development of amber threads – small pieces of amber, various colors of amber pellets and finally – very fine amber powder used for manufacturing of amber powder. „I'm not going to open this bag of amber powder because it's like cosmetic powder – it flies away” she smiles.

The idea about use of amber in order to obtain textile threads appeared to her few years ago in National library of Cairo when she found an article about amber use in Ancient Egypt. Egyptians thought that amber could be used to form blood vessel (implant). „I think that was the moment when a muse came to me with a thought – why not use amber in medical textile?” says the scientist. One of her invention – silver thread, used in hosiery (with healing effect) has got attention in rest of the world.

In order to realize this idea about amber thread Inga Lasenko has to travel almost all Europe – countries which made „Amber road”. „The result is international project: idea was born in Latvia, amber is obtained in Kaliningrad region, thread itself was made in Germany, because we don't have machinery necessary for manufacturing also the process is very expensive”, she summarizes while showing bobbin with yellow, thin threads and textile samples made in the laboratory. As it turns out, the scientist newer thought that her invention will be used in piece of art. It was surprise to her, however „In textile used in clothing, amber would be great component – it stimulates regeneration of skin cells, improves skin condition... My job was to invent the thread, about usage of invention designers has to worry”. We have to say that in interest in making textiles containing amber threads is huge: even Italians, Saudi Arabia etc. wants to use this technology. With impatience Inga Lasenko is waiting how the art work made by Iveta Vecenane will look and thinking about making more special threads – gold, pearl and bronze.

<http://www.diena.lv/kd/maksla/dzintars-atslega-uz-eiropu-13983468>