
The Medieval Dress and Textile Society

Volume 5 Issue 11

www.medats.org.uk

May 2013



Pope Leo X with Cardinals Giulio de' Medici and Luigi de' Rossi
(Raphael, 1518, Uffizi Gallery, Florence)

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Editorial

The society has suffered another blow since the last newsletter. Dan Towse, who had been doing such a fine job as Program Secretary was forced to relinquish his position at short notice. This unfortunately stalled the organisation for the Spring Meeting. With so many of the committee leading such full lives, it was not possible to take up the slack in time to maintain the planned schedule. Thus, the Spring Meeting has become the Summer Meeting, and arranged for the twenty-second of June at the British Museum. The details can be found later in this edition. Whether the sequence of planned meetings advertised in the last edition will simply be pushed back by one third of a year or whether it will be re-arranged is yet to be decided.

Dan's departure means that once again the committee is short-staffed. Hence, we need a new Program Secretary, as well as a replacement for me. I repeat that *my* job requires no great skill, nor a large investment of time and there are perks. By all means contact me for more information.

As ever, to receive the newsletter as a colour PDF file electronically, e-mail me via medatseditor@hotmail.co.uk.

TIMOTHY DAWSON

EXHIBITION

Nello Splendore Mediceo – Papa Leone X e Firenze (*Amid Medici Splendour - Pope Leo X in Florence*)

2nd March – 6th October 2013

Medici chapels, St. Lorenzo Church

Florence, Italy

This exhibition opened in March in the Medici Chapels of San Lorenzo Church in Florence. Panel texts are bilingual Italian and English.

The imposing 614 page catalogue, all in Italian, edited by Nicoletta Baldini and Monica Bietti covers Giovanni de' Medici's entire life-span (Florence 1475 – Rome 1521). Essays and detailed catalogue entries have been contributed by numerous scholars.

The personality of Giovanni de Medici has been evoked through the objects which surrounded him or which were his personal possessions. We can envision this transformation. The chubby young man who, while tutored by the eminent Neoplatonic humanist scholars, also enjoyed hunting and musical festivities in the family's Tuscan villas. The portly mature man then becomes the major European

religious and political figure of the High Renaissance. Pope Leo X is surrounded by magnificent opulence created by the most important artists (Michelangelo and Raphael), but also by court intrigues.

Particular emphasis is given in the exhibition to Pope Leo X's ceremonial entry into Florence on the 30 November, 1515. A journey which symbolized the return of Medici control over Florence after the Republican governance of Savonarola and Piero Soderini. A multimedia display recreates the scenographic celebration arches and street decor which the papal retinue would have seen. These ephemeral stage-sets, little of which still remains, were designed by such Florentine artists as Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio, Francesco Granacci and Rosso Fiorentino.

Splendid textiles also were an important part of papal luxury. A lectern cover (312 x 58 cm) from the Cortona Passerini vestments, circa 1515, is highlighted in the exhibition. This Florentine cloth-of-gold and crimson velvet is similar in style to that of Leo X's personal set of ceremonial vestments. However, a papal banner (315 x 67 cm) is the sole remaining extant piece of the rich set of vestments presented around 1516 by Leo X to the San Lorenzo Church.



Detail of the banner of Pope Leo X.

Relating archival documents to this object Josephine Rogers Mariotti attributes the execution of the coat-of-arms embroideries to Galieno di Michele (1454, documented until 1520). She also suggests that a payment made by Giovanni de Medici between 1513 and 1514 to the Florentine silk merchant Nicholo di Tommaso Antinori for “33 braccia di drappi di brochato doro rosso riccio sopra riccio col fondo d’oro tirato” may pertain to this regalia.

She also notes that the church archives, studied in 1993 by Paolo Peri, state that the original set of papal vestments was dismantled and the banner recomposed and refurbished with additional embroidery “*alla moderna*” in 1752. I have a personal comment to make here on this last point. In fact, the cartouche design with the rocaille form around the Medici coat-of-arms is eighteenth-century style. But in 1752 would “*alla moderna*” signify the transfer of power in the Grand Duchy of Tuscany from the Medici to the Austrian Hapsburg House of Lorraine? One may ask, was it simply the dismantling of worn-out materials with Medici emblems? The Lorraine program of suppression of ecclesiastical possessions was underway.

I think this banner tells the story of what occurs with textile usage and the vagaries of changing fashion. Each object is a palimpsest. And all these strata of transformations are not immediately discernible.

Another point is the availability of more precise instruments for scientific study. Thanks now to constant developments in technical equipment used in conservation laboratories scientific, artistic and even documental research can be facilitated.

At the recent Textile Society Natalie Rothstein Tribute and Silk Symposium in London (Wellcome Institute, 15th–16th March) this point was also expressed by Sonia O’Connor and Mary M. Brooks who have worked in the conservation field.

Rosalia Bonito Fanelli

CONFERENCES FORTHCOMING

International Medieval Congress

University of Leeds,
1st – 4th July 2013

The DISTAFF sessions this year are all clustered on the final day, Thursday 4th July.

Session 1508: Focus on Fibre

- a- 'Bartolomeo da Montechiaro: (d. 1419): Silk Merchant of Lucca', Christine E. Meek.
- b- 'English and Continental Terminologies for wool-based textiles', John H. A. Munro.
- c- 'Hedging on Heckles: Identifying Flax Working Tools from Medieval Novgorod', Heidi Sherman.
- d- '3-Harness Linen Weaves: Experimental Archaeology', Anne Reaves.

Session 1608: Narrative on Dress – Dress as Allegory

- a- 'Mind the Gap: Textile Narrations bridging Openings in Vestments', Barbara M. Eggert.
- b- 'Configuring the Clothing of the pre- and post-Lapsarian Body in Early English Drama', Sarah Brasil.
- c- 'Sacred and Profane: An Examination of Sienese Women's Dress in Ambrogio Lorenzetti's *Allegory of Good Government*', Jasmin Cyril.

Session 1708: The Pleasure and Morality of Dress and Textiles

- a- 'Unholy Pleasures: Displeasure and Pleasure in Worldly Dress in Anglo-Saxon Hagiographical Tradition', Maren Clegg Hyer.
- b- 'Women's Headdresses in Welsh Love Poems', Alaw Mai Edwards.
- c- 'Renouncing Pleasure: Giving the Best to the Grave', Gale R. Owen-Crocker.

There are also a few dress or textile related papers in other sessions:

Session 223: Monday 1st 14.15–15.45

- c- 'Jewels for Women's Pleasure: Results of Archaeological Excavations in the Market Square of Cracow', Aldona Garbarcz-Klemper.

Session 819: Tuesday 2nd 16.30–18.00

- a- 'Luxury Furs and Feathers from the North: Sources of Pleasure and Income', Lars Ivar Hansen.

Session 1523: Thursday 4th 09.00–10.30

- d- Choice: Spices and Dyestuffs in Late Medieval Lucca', Daniel Jamison.

Session 1629: Thursday 4th 11.15–12.45

- a- "Sum tyme I was in Riche Array': Eleanor Cobham, Elizabeth Woodville and Margaret Beaufort – the Body, Dress, and Aspirational Behaviour in 15th Century England', Laura Saxton.

Session 1715: Thursday 4th

- a- 'Medieval Gold Textiles: Pleasure or Piety', Alison Waters.

Further information on the IMC

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RECENT AND FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

Roberta Gilchrist, *Medieval Life: Archaeology and the Life Course*.

Boydell Press, Woodbridge 2012.

Hardcover, 336pp. illus.

ISBN: 9781843837220

The aim of this book is to explore how medieval life was actually lived - how people were born and grew old, how they dressed, how they inhabited their homes, the rituals that gave meaning to their lives and how they prepared for death and the afterlife. Its fresh and original approach uses archaeological evidence to reconstruct the material practices of medieval life, death and the afterlife. Previous historical studies of the medieval “lifecycle” begin with birth and end with death. Here, in contrast, the concept of life course theory is developed for the first time in a detailed archaeological case study. The author argues that medieval Christian understanding of the “life course” commenced with conception and extended through the entirety of life, to include death and the afterlife. Five thematic case studies present the archaeology of medieval England (c.1050-1540 CE) in terms of the body, the household, the parish church and cemetery, and the relationship between the lives of people and objects. A wide range of sources is critically employed: osteology, costume, material culture, iconography and evidence excavated from houses, churches and cemeteries in the medieval English town and countryside.

Andrea Denny-Brown, *Fashioning Change: The Trope of Clothing in High- and Late-Medieval England*.

Ohio State University Press, Columbus, Ohio 2012.

hardcover, 252pp., 3 colour plates.

ISBN: 9780814211908

Medieval European culture was obsessed with clothing. In *Fashioning Change*, Andrea Denny-Brown explores the central impact of clothing in medieval ideas about impermanence and the ethical stakes of human transience. Studies of dress frequently contend with a prevailing cultural belief that bodily adornment speaks to interests that are frivolous, superficial, and cursory. Taking up the vexed topic of clothing’s inherent changeability, Denny-Brown uncovers an important new genealogy of clothing as a representational device, one imbued with a surprising philosophical pedigree and a long history of analytical weightiness. Considering writers as diverse as Boethius, Alain de Lille, William Durand, Chaucer, and Lydgate, among others, Denny-Brown tracks the development of a literary and cultural trope that begins in the sixth century and finds its highest expression in the vernacular poetry of fifteenth-century England. Among the topics covered are Boethian discourses on the care of the self, the changing garments of Lady Fortune, novelty in ecclesiastical fashions, the sartorial legacy of Chaucer’s Griselda, and the emergence of the English gallant. These literary treatments of vestimentary variation, which develop an aesthetics of change itself, enhance our understanding of

clothing as a phenomenological and philosophical category in medieval Europe and illustrate the centrality of the Middle Ages to theories of aesthetics, of materiality, and of cultural change.

Maria G Parani, 'Encounters in the Realm of Dress: Attitudes towards Western Styles in the Greek East',

in Marina S. Brownlee and Dimitri Gondicas (eds). *Renaissance Encounters: Greek East and Latin West*, Leiden: Brill, 2012. ISBN: 9789004235915

Mechthild Müller, Malte-Ludolf Babin and Jörg Riecke (eds.), *Das Thema Kleidung in den Etymologien Isidors von Sevilla und im Summarium Heinrici 1.*

Walter De Gruyter, 2012

Hardcover (9.7 x 7 x 1.5 inches): viii, 623 pages, 23 colour plates.

ISBN-10: 311029365X ISBN-13: 978-3110293654

This work provides the primary source as well as German translations, critical commentary, and overview discussions on the topic of clothing.

<http://www.degruyter.com/view/product/184819>

Jose Luis Colomer and Amalia Decalzo (eds), *Spanish Fashion in Early Modern Europe: The Prevalence and Prestige of Spanish Attire in the Courts of the 16th and 17th Centuries.*

Holberton, London for CEEH Madrid, 2012. Rescheduled for publication Spring 2013
hardcover, 500pp., ca. 200 colour illus.

ISBN: 9781907372230

<http://www.paul-holberton.net/paul-holberton-publishing,product,view,213,23,,.html>

Contents:

L.R. Bass, 'Dress and drama of urban life in the Spanish Hapsburg capital';

M. Hajana, 'Spanish fashion in the kingdom of Bohemia under Rudolf II';

M.J. Garcia Sierra, 'Who dresses kings & queens? Royal wardrobes & court tailors';

A. Ribeiro, 'A story of pride and prejudice: perceptions of Spain and Spanish dress in 17th-century England',

F. Barallo, 'Katherine Micaela at the court of Savoy',

G. Guarino, 'Spanish fashions and sumptuary legislation in Hapsburg Italy';

C. Thepaut-Cavasset, 'Marie-Louise d'Orléans, Queen of Spain';

M. Hayward, 'Katherine of Aragon, Spanish Princess or Queen of England?'

C. van Wyhe, 'The making and meaning of the Spanish habit at the Hapsburg courts'.

Timothy Dawson, *Armour Never Wearies: Scale and Lamellar Armour in the West, from the Bronze Age to the Nineteenth Century*

The History Press, Stroud, August 2013

Armours made of small pieces of durable material assembled into a fabric are not only the oldest employed by humans, but also the forms that were used for the longest period and over the widest geographical range. Despite this, they have been significantly less well researched than other types of armour. In fact, this is the first book solely devoted to these forms.

The author's long practical experience in making and using medieval military equipment has made a great contribution to interpreting evidence drawn from archaeology, art and literature. He systematically defines the forms in a manner never before done, and proposes a typology for scale armour to replace that created by Von Groller in 1900, and never yet challenged.

MeDaTS Summer Meeting
Saturday 22nd June 2013
Stevenson Lecture Theatre, British Museum

Below the Knee; Pattens, Shoes and Hose

- 9.30 Registration
- 10.00 Welcome
- 10.15 'The Reconstruction of Tight-Fitting Textiles in Sprang Technique',
Dagmar Drinkler, Bayerischen Nationalmuseum, Munich.
- 11.00 'Cloth hose', **Speaker tbc**, Museum of London.
- 11.30 Refreshment break (not provided)
- 12.00 'The Refinement of Small Legwear in Sixteenth Century Princely Fashion:
Extraordinary Examples from the Saxon Rulers' Court in the Costume
Collection of the Dresden Armoury',
Jutta von Bloh, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden.
- 12.30 Discussion
- 12.45 Lunch break (not provided)
- 14.15 "A Child of 20 yer that knytt gret hose by whom cometh their chief lyvinge":
Archival and Archaeological Evidence for hand-knitted hose in Elizabethan
England', **Lesley O'Connell Edwards**.
- 14.45 'Fifteenth Century Poulaines', **June Swann**
- 15.15 Discussion
- 15.30 Refreshment break (not provided)
- 16.00 'Shoes in the Community: Engaging the Public with Medieval Footwear',
Aimee Payton, Ashmolean Museum.
- 16.30 Recapitulation and discussion
- 16.45 End of meeting

Booking Form: MEDATS Summer Meeting

'Below the Knee; Pattens, Shoes and Hose'

Please supply: ticket(s) for members @ £20 each;
..... ticket(s) for students @ £15 each;
..... member / non-member dual £40.
..... Total
(The price does not include refreshments)

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Please send a **cheque** and **stamped addressed envelope** to:

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