
The Medieval Dress and Textile Society

September 2014 www.medats.org.uk Issue 75



A blacksmith of 1467 depicted in one of the Nuremberg House Books
Germanisches Nationalmuseum. Amb.317.2° Folio 86 recto
(See future meetings on page 10)

A message from The Acting Honorary Secretary

MEDATS AUTUMN MEETING 2014

The members of the committee have decided with regret to postpone the Autumn Meeting and AGM until next February. There are a number of reasons for this, not least that, with the resignation of Jenny Tiramani and the indisposition of Jane Bridgeman, the committee is very much depleted and, moreover, is lacking members with the academic experience to offer guidance on finding speakers. Rather than risk presenting a sub-standard conference, we think it best to wait until next year, to give us time to get the committee back up to strength, and to find enough speakers of a suitable calibre.

In the meantime, anyone wishing to be considered for election to the committee should write to me, enclosing contact details, academic qualifications and areas of interest.

Bushy Westfallen
Hon Secretary

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Editorial

The summer conference held at the British Museum on June 14 and entitled *The Fabric of Pageantry* saw four speakers of extremely high calibre give four fascinating papers on the textiles used in tournaments and jousts. Summaries of the papers and a selection of some of the wonderful images we saw can be found in the following pages.

As Bushy has stated above it is in striving to maintain the high standards of the conferences that the decision has been made to postpone the autumn conference until February. The post of programme secretary remains vacant and the society very much needs someone with either academic or curatorial experience to fulfil this role in order to continue running the programme of events. Being a member of the committee is voluntary and requires attendance at bi-monthly meetings held in London. The meetings are always interesting, and last no more than 1 - 2 hours, all travel costs are reimbursed. If you feel you may be able to offer your time to contribute to this unique and worthwhile society please contact Bushy on the details above.

Ninya Mikhaila

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The tournament theme continued after the *Fabric of Pageantry* conference had ended as on the way home Hero Granger-Taylor pointed out to Karen Watts that the memorial lamp-posts outside Euston Station feature lances, helmets and weapons!

To receive the newsletter as a colour PDF file electronically, please e-mail medatseditor@hotmail.co.uk

MEDATS Summer Meeting - British Museum, 14th June 2014

This meeting saw four excellent speakers presenting papers on the theme of the *Fabric of Pageantry*

Professor Maria Hayward

University of Southampton

Textiles and tournaments under the Tudor kings

This talk was designed to provide an introduction to the subject and provide context for the following speakers. The focus was on the high quality textiles produced by the Revels Office for the tournaments organised for Henry VII, Henry VIII and Edward VI. Held in either temporary or permanent tiltyards, these events often celebrated royal occasions such as coronations, weddings, and the birth of children. Others, especially prior to the Break with Rome were held on key days in the liturgical year. By the 1540s and 50s jousts tended to be associated with court events such as weddings of favourites and visits by foreign ambassadors.

A range of textiles were required for a tournament including arming doublets, bases, saddles and trappers, livery for attendants, banners for trumpeters, gifts for female spectators, tents which could be used as arming sheds and as a means of making an entrance to the tiltyard. A range of fabrics was used to make these items including cloth of gold, cloth of silver, satin, velvet and damask and they were decorated with a variety of embroidery techniques including metal thread embroidery, and cutwork. As such, these were expensive items that were intended to display the wealth and discernment of the Tudor monarchs and the high levels of military prowess at their courts.

Royal tournaments were important in expressing ideas about kingship and in turn this was influenced by whether the monarch was a spectator as in the case of Henry VII or a participant as with Henry VIII. Edward's role evolved as he got older and he was increasingly presented as an active participant and as a godly king.

Several themes influenced the decorative schemes selected for the jousts. The most important being the cult of chivalry, courtly

love, and the significance of youth, the latter being especially important under Edward VI. Adopting a disguise could also be important, especially in the early years of Henry VIII's reign. He arrived in disguise at his first joust in January 1510.

The paper ended with a brief case study focusing on the base and in particular how the base associated with the silver and engraved armour of Henry VIII can be used, in tandem with evidence from written and visual sources to make some suggestions about how they might have been made.



Henry VIII on horseback c.1538 by Cornelis Anthonisz. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Natalie Anderson, Ph.D Candidate,
 Institute of Medieval Studies,
 University of Leeds
*The Pageantry of the Joust in the Tournaments
 of Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor*

Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I (1459-1519) was a devoted lover of the tournament, and, throughout his lifetime, he promoted this sport throughout his empire.

Under Maximilian, the tournament grew in popularity and expanded in form. This was thanks, in part, to his artistic and literary output, as well as the fact that he both held and participated in numerous tournaments. The armour utilised in these events, as well as the textiles – especially those for the horses – took on varied and fantastic forms which added to the atmosphere of theatre and spectacle. The imagery found in these textiles, whether on crests, shields, or the horses' bards, helped to promote the chivalric ideals which Maximilian himself upheld, and they represent the significance which Maximilian, 'the last knight' placed on the tournament.



From Burgkmair, Hans, *Turnierbuch*,
 Augsburg, ca 1540, Bayerische
 Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Cod.icon. 403

Karen Watts,
 Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds
*Joust for fun? Self-fashioning, identity and
 public persona in the medieval tournament*



Ulrich von Liechtenstein with Venus crest. Manesse
 Codex, German, 1300-50, Universitätsbibliothek,
 Heidelberg, MS Cod. Pal Germ 848

As the tournament evolved from the 12th century, there was a shift from tourney to joust and foot combat. Within the tournament are forms of combat called feats of arms and pas d'armes. The adoption of personas and the desire for self-promotion can be examined through dress in surviving texts and contemporary visual culture, primarily in 15th century England, France and Germany. Despite the absence of surviving material culture from the Middle Ages, there are numerous manuscript sources, with both written accounts of actual and literary tournaments, often illustrated. Self-fashioning is a term introduced by Stephen Greenblatt (*Renaissance Self-Fashioning*, 1980), to describe the process of constructing one's identity and public persona according to a set of socially acceptable standards. Accepted displays of masculinity were knights depicting themselves in armour within a tournament context. This view does not allow for the adoption of personas and role-playing during tournaments.

Ulrich von Liechtenstein (c.1200-1278) for example, chose to portray himself quite differently. He wrote a poetic-autobiography in which he described his 'Venus Journey'. Ulrich rode from Italy to Bohemia, issuing a general challenge to all knights to joust with him. To each knight who broke three lances with him he gave a gold ring, but if the challenger was defeated, he was to bow to the four corners of the earth in honour of Ulrich's lady. He tells us that he broke 307 lances in a month's jousting, sometimes engaging in up to eight matches a day. He was dressed in full armour covered by a woman's dress and wearing a wig:

*I had some woman's clothing made
To wear throughout the masquerade....
My cloak was velvet and was white
As was my hat, but this was bright
With many pearls on every side.
My loving heart was filled with pride
That I should serve my lady now
With knightly deeds and keep my vow.
The braids I had were thick and brown
And were so long that they hung down
below my sash, just like a girl's...
I had a white and glossy shirt
which was as long as was the skirt
With woman's sleeves of quality
that made me proud as I could be.
My gloves were silk and finely made.
Attired like this and unafraid
I left the sea as I had vowed,
and soon collected quite a crowd.*

Ulrich von Liechtenstein, 'The Venus Journey' from the Service of Ladies, trans. J.W.Thomas (2004)

In 1352 at Bourg-en-Bresse, a tournament was held at Christmas at which the 'Green Count', Amedeo VI of Savoy, earned himself a reputation as a great chivalrous figure. As the trumpets announced the entry of the combatants, the Count, who was dressed in green silk and velvet under his armour, headed a procession of eleven of his noblest knights, all dressed in green. Each of the knights was led into the arena by a lady who held her champion 'captive' by means of a long green cord attached to the bridle of the horse. The ladies, also dressed in green, released their knights and the tournament began. At the end of the day the ladies re-entered the arena and 're-captured' their knights, leading them back into the castle for a banquet and ball.

In the Royal Armouries Collection is a codex of three tournament manuscripts (I.35). It is an important source for the study of chivalric culture of 15th century England, France and Burgundy. There are full accounts of the Burgundian Feat of Arms (1467) and the Pas d'armes of the Golden Tree (1468). The codex also contains an illustrated description of a famous tragic joust between the Englishmen Jean de Chalons and the Frenchman Louis de Bueil.

Below: Jean de Chalon kills Louis de Bueil during a tournament at Tours in 1446/7.
Royal Armouries Codex, I.35



Dr Lynsey Darby
Archivist, College of Arms

The Westminster Tournament Roll: a visual depiction of a tournament in the reign of Henry VIII

The Westminster Tournament Roll is one of the College of Arms' most prized possessions. Created to commemorate the tournament held in February 1511 to celebrate the birth of a son to Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon, it depicts the participants in all their rich and gilded finery. It was probably created by the workshop of Thomas Wriothesley, Garter King of Arms, and to our knowledge has not left the College's custody. It shows selected scenes from the tournament: the procession entering the lists, the King jousting, and the procession leaving the lists. This focus on processions is natural in a work composed under the direction of a herald, as marshalling ceremonies is one of the heralds' traditional duties.

Studying the Roll alongside other sources for the tournament gives us a fuller picture of events and of the impression the spectacle



made on those witnessing it. Probably the chief purpose of tournament pageantry was to display to the King's subjects and to visiting foreign dignitaries just how much wealth, and therefore power, is at his command. The Roll uses a pineapple design as well as colour to portray cloth of gold, depicting it not only on the King's garments, but also on those of his pages, in the tilt gallery, and trimming the robes of the gentlemen of his court. The author of the Great Chronicle of London delighted in the riches on show, deeming the second day of the tournament the best, not because of "the more valiant acts that day done of arms, but for the

inestimable richness and costeous apparel which that day was worn". Of course, the King must outshine all others in the arena. He and his fellow Challengers entered the tiltyard on the second day under pavilions carried by footmen. The Roll and the Master of the Revels' Accounts show that the King's pavilion was made of cloth of gold and blue velvet, whereas the others were of red and blue damask. The chroniclers noticed this – although one chronicler mistook the damask for satin, he still received the message



that the King's pavilion was made of finer fabrics than the others.

Discrepancies between sources can be interesting: revealing, for example, that the Roll is diplomatically flattering to the King – in the jousting scene he is depicted shattering his lance on his opponent's helmet (the highest-scoring blow), whereas the tournament score cheques provide evidence that he did not. The Roll and the Revels Accounts show that the Challengers' horsebards were covered with the letter 'K' in honour of Queen Katherine, but the author of the Great Chronicle's mistake in thinking the letters were 'K' and 'H' and stood for 'King Henry', suggests in whose honour he understood the tournament was held.

These sources show what a vivid impression of wealth and splendour the 1511 tournament made on those witnessing it, exactly as Henry intended. In its fineness of execution, with its use of rich colours and symbols, and its flattery of the King, the Roll reflects and responds to that, communicating the brilliance of the spectacle of the tournament magnificently.

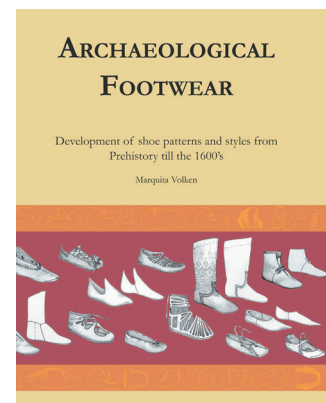


RECENT PUBLICATION

Archaeological Footwear, Development of shoe patterns and styles from Prehistory till the 1600's
Marquita Volken, Spa Uitgevers: Switzerland. 407 page hardback, ISBN: 978-90-8932-117-6

A review by June Swann.

Many, mostly black & white photographs and drawings, 140 pages of the catalogue of types, each with drawings. This publishes the system the author has pioneered for archaeological types of footwear, named after the first shoe of each type found, under the term Calceology, as used by the Dutch Olaf Goubitz in 1987 for study of historical footwear. With the English (continually updated) shoe trade glossaries since 1913, I automatically used those terms when I began cataloguing shoes in 1950, a practice I continually encourage all to follow – and Northampton Museum from 1977 published and sold hundreds of Thornton's Glossary; he had been updating the trade's glossaries for many years. So no reason to change to Dutch-invented terminology with, too often, three English words describing the boot or shoe by its fastening. Trade terms use the shoe pattern for definition, now proposed in this book, but using near 30 letters to identify them. The date ranges given appear to be wide, and not immediately obvious: the century is in Roman numerals, with A & B for 1st and 2nd half; a,b,c,d for 1st – 4th quarter, though some BC dates are in figures. Doubtless usage will make this system familiar, though not encouraging. There is an 18 page bibliography and the index is not comprehensive. The two page summary in English, French and German seems to be a useful beginning. The six page Glossary also includes German and French terms, though English shoemakers will not recognise a number of the terms used: needless to say, practical shoemakers did not use the terms medial and lateral, but inside and outside. It is unfortunate that 'patten' was chosen in place of the general term, overshoe. The latter is in the Index, but not patten. Worst of all, the captions for pictures of shoes do not include the date of the object, which busy curators will curse. The drawings of the 1630s-1670s shoes will be unfamiliar to those of us dealing with contemporary non-archaeological shoes, and very misleading for art historians.



Note from the editor: We have a copy of Hodges, L (2014) *Chaucer and Array: Patterns of Costume and Fabric Rhetoric in the Canterbury Tales, Troilus and Criseyde and Other Works*, D.S. Brewer: Cambridge
If anyone would like to review it for the February issue of the newsletter please email me with your postal address.

EXHIBITIONS FORTHCOMING



Ordsall Hall, Ordsall Lane, Salford, M5 3AN
The Tudor Child:

Clothing & Culture 1485-1625
12 October 2014 - 1 February 2015
www.salfordcommunityleisure.co.uk/culture

Abegg-Stiftung

Werner Abeggstrasse 67,
CH-3132 Riggisberg

Veil and Adornment

Medieval Textiles and the cult of relics
27 April - 9 November 2014
www.abegg-stiftung.ch

EVENTS FORTHCOMING

Othello's Island

The Annual Conference of the Byzantine, Mediaeval and Renaissance periods and their legacies in art, culture, history, literature, etc.

Third Annual Conference. Nicosia • Cyprus

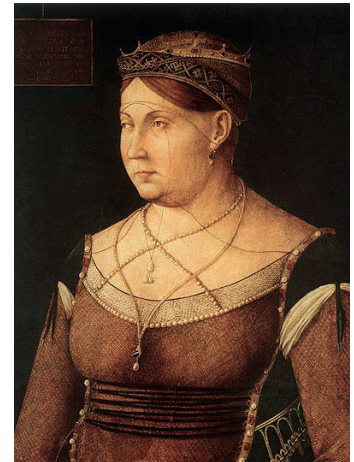
20 to 22 March 2015 (with optional extra day trip on 23 March)
• CALL FOR PAPERS FOR 2015 CONFERENCE •

First held in Larnaca in 2013, Othello's Island is developing rapidly into major annual meeting of academics, students and members of the public interested in medieval and renaissance art, literature, history and culture. The event embraces the whole of Byzantine, Mediaeval and Renaissance literary, artistic, cultural and social history.

The remit has developed since the conference first started, from having a specific focus on Cyprus and the Levant, to being a far broader ranging forum for the discussion of the cultural, social and political histories of this period.

Inevitably Cyprus, the Levant and the Mediterranean still loom large, not least because for anyone interested in medieval and renaissance history Cyprus is a virtually undiscovered gem, full of architectural and other material culture relating to the period. This includes museums filled with historic artefacts, gothic and byzantine cathedrals and churches and a living culture that has direct links to this period.

One of the most refreshing aspects of the conference is its truly interdisciplinary nature. Experts in subjects as diverse as literature, architectural history, art history, social and linguistic history and post colonial studies discuss each others' topics in what has been described as one of the friendliest conferences ever organised. For further information and a list of confirmed speakers so far and please visit www.othelloisland.org



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Early Textiles Study Group 14th Conference

Crafting Textiles from the Bronze Age to AD 1600: A tribute to Peter Collingwood

Friday 10 October and Saturday 11 October 2014

Franks Room, Wellcome Collection Conference Centre
183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE



(LOAN:STEIN.589; Victoria and Albert Museum, London)

Peter Collingwood, a renowned weaver and master of textile structures, was a member of the Early Textiles Study Group until his death in 2008. As a tribute to his skills as a maker and innovator this conference will investigate some of the ancient techniques that fascinated him including tablet weaving, braiding and sprang.

Speakers include academics, museum curators, conservators, textile practitioners and experimental archaeologists from Europe and Canada. The keynote lectures will be delivered by renowned experts from Denmark and Switzerland, namely Lise Raeder Knudsen and Regula Schorta. Craft demonstrations will also take place. It promises to offer two days of absorbing papers and lively discussions.

Please address all enquiries to:

Frances Pritchard, Conference Organiser
Whitworth Art Gallery, The University of Manchester
Oxford Road, Manchester, M15 6ER, UK
Email: Frances.Pritchard@manchester.ac.uk

www.earlytextilesstudygroup.org

CLOTHED IN HARDENED STEEL: THE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION & USE of RENAISSANCE ARMOUR 14th & 15th November 2014

In this two-day course Dr. Tobias Capwell, Curator of Arms and Armour at the Wallace Collection and champion joustier, presents the real story of Renaissance plate armour, peeling away centuries of myth and misconception to reveal it as it really was- high fashion, advanced technology, and fearsome battle gear.

Day One will feature an in-depth, hands-on exploration of armour design, construction and methods of wear, including the complete arming of a Renaissance knight, piece by glittering piece. Day Two will take students to the Wallace Collection for a special tour to encounter one of the finest collections of Renaissance armour in the world.

TUTOR - Tobias Capwell. £100 / £75 concessions Venue - Friday at Sands Films & Saturday at The Wallace Collection, London.

A few places are still available.

To book please email: courses@theschoolofhistoricaldress.org.uk



FUTURE MEETINGS
MEDATS Autumn Meeting
February 2015
Occupational Dress

To be held at The British Museum

Members are invited to submit papers or suggest speakers



A cook of 1475 depicted in one of the Nuremberg House Books
Germanisches Nationalmuseum. Amb. 317.2° Folio 95 recto

MEDATS COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

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Chairman – Vacant

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Membership Secretary – Carole Thompson, 9 Fairthorn Road, Charlton, London, SE7 7RL.

Ticket Secretary, – Bushy Westfallen.

Programme Secretary – Vacant

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Naomi Speakman, Curator of Late Medieval European Collections, The British Museum, London WC1B 3DG

Lloyd de Beer, Project Curator, Late Medieval Europe, The British Museum London WC1B 3DG

MEDATS SUBSCRIPTIONS

Information about MEDATS and application forms may be had from the Membership Secretary, Carole Thompson, or from the society website: www.medats.org.uk.

Correspondence address for the Membership Secretary: As above.

Annual subscriptions (payable in pounds sterling only) run from 1st Jan – 31st Dec.

Rates:

£15 Individuals in Britain and Europe;

£20 Households in Britain and Europe (2 members);

£10 Students in Britain and Europe (with proof of status);

£10 Individuals outside Europe in receipt of e-mail newsletters;

£20 Individuals outside Europe in receipt of paper copies of the newsletter;

£30 Institutions irrespective of location.

Bank details:

Lloyds TSB

109 Finsbury Pavement

London EC2A 1LB

Treasurer's Account Sort Code 30-95-74 Account Number 24025468

Name – Medieval Dress and Textile Society



www.medats.org.uk