



The
Society for
Medieval
Archaeology

“Cultures of Cloth”

The Archaeology of Textiles in Medieval Northwest Europe

Society for Medieval Archaeology Virtual Conference

Saturday 24th July 2021

Following the postponement of last year’s annual conference, the Society will hold a free, online day conference for members on the archaeology of textiles.

Textiles were the single most important manufactured product in the medieval world. Moving from domestic household production to the commercialisation of the textile industry was a primary driver of the development of the medieval European economy and helped to shape medieval landscapes and settlements ranging from rural villages to international cities. Textiles were one of the most prominent commodities in medieval trade networks; wool and linen were the stuff of everyday life while silks, damasks and cloth of gold were among the most valuable luxuries in the medieval world. Textiles were used as clothes, bedding, tablecloths, wall-hangings, sails, sacks, altar-cloths and shrouds; they were integral to every aspect of the routine and ritual lives of medieval people, through which they expressed identities based on geography, status, gender, age and ethnicity. For better or for worse, spreading disease and depopulation as well as wealth, opportunities and knowledge, cloth production and trade interconnected communities of all sizes across Europe, surviving and driving a millennium of profound social, economic, political and environmental change.

This conference brings together a group of speakers who together will address key themes in textile production, exchange and consumption across the medieval period in Britain and North-Western Europe, from a multitude of different disciplinary perspectives. The papers offered range from evidence for sheep husbandry and textile production, to archaeological finds of preserved textiles, and the production and display of silk as one of the key luxury textiles in both the secular and ecclesiastical worlds. Together, they will explore how textiles drew together networks of farmers, craftspeople and merchants across the medieval world and wove together the fabric of medieval life.

The event will be held online on Saturday 24th July 2021 hosted by the University of Nottingham. Please go to the Conference website to view the full programme and for details of how to book.

www.nottingham.ac.uk/go/Cultures-Cloth

Contact the conference organizer Dr Chris King (Department of Classics and Archaeology, University of Nottingham) at Chris.King@nottingham.ac.uk



Provisional programme

Theme 1: Textiles – objects and commodities in medieval Europe

Keynote lecture

10:00-11:00 - Frances Pritchard - A new look at medieval textiles excavated in London

11:00-11:15 Break

11.15-11.45 Chris King – Cultures of cloth in the English midlands: production, trade and consumption

11.45-12.15 Richard Thomas and Matilda Holmes – Counting sheep: new zooarchaeological perspectives on sheep husbandry in medieval England

12.15-12.30 – Discussion

12.30-13.00 Lunch break

Theme 2: The shimmering thread: luxury textiles in medieval Europe

13.00-13.30 Tina Anderlini - Embroidered silk knots to cover heads

13.30-14.00 Mary Brooks - Expressing embroidered faith and power: vestments associated with Archbishop John Morton

14.00-14.30 – Discussion

Conference closes

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The Society for Medieval Archaeology exists to further the study of the physical remains of the medieval period, whether standing buildings, landscapes, buried remains or artefacts in museums. The society publishes a highly regarded journal, *Medieval Archaeology*, and holds regular meetings and conferences bringing together a wide range of disciplines to explore and develop current and emerging research themes. Membership of the Society is open to all those interested in medieval archaeology and members receive two issues of the journal and two issues of the society Newsletter per annum. Members are also entitled to discounted rates for conferences and monographs, while a number of other institutions also offer special discounts to society members.