



MEDIEVAL TEXTILES

Weaving an 11th Century Irish Brat

By Alexis Abarria

Introduction

I can document fake fur?! Once I wrapped my brain around that concept, the fun began. I found references to pile weaves in both Scandinavian and Irish sources. North European Symposium on Archaeological Textiles to the rescue! NESAT is my favorite textile reference source. My search led me to weaving techniques and hauling out the books on 1960's weaving. So, here is a timeline: Icelandic Viking, Ireland of Henry VIII, and Hippie. This was an intellectual exercise, honest...

My goal was to make a practical garment from the sheep out. That meant spinning, dyeing, weaving, finishing, sewing, and embellishing the garment. It also meant researching construction and methodology - what was done, and how it was done.

Historical Process

Wool was an integral part of medieval economy and was commonly used for cloth production since the Roman times. It was common to use S-Twist singles for the weft and Z-Twist singles for the warp. This allowed the fibers to lock together better in the fulling process. It also helped prevent the grain of the fabric from skewing or shifting, since spun singles have energy stored in the twist, unlike plied yarns.

Brown is easily produced either from dyes or from the natural color of some sheep.

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Brocaded Cardweaving

by Cerise Moodey

Brocaded cardweaving dates back to the latter half of the fifth century and was one of the most widely used forms of clothing decoration up to the fifteenth. Most were made of silk, many with metallic threads.

Set up your loom as you would for regular cardweaving, generally with an SZSZSZ setup (so your finished work won't curl from twisting in one direction), and a solid color for the background. I was asked to weave a belt for a Master Chirurgeon in the SCA (chirurgeons are the trained medical volunteers). A Master Chirurgeon's belt is red with gold borders, with a design of a stylized white fleem (a tool used in medieval times to bleed people).

Make a chart diagram for your pattern as you would a cross-stitch diagram, keeping in mind that your pattern will elongate in the weaving. However wide it is, that is how many cards you will use in the weaving. Also, you don't want more than four warp floats in a horizontal row, so include tie-downs in your design. Each square will equal one thread from the top of the uppermost shed (one-fourth of the total warp threads).

My fleem with gold borders is eighteen spaces wide, so I set up my loom with eighteen cards in an SZSZSZ pattern with two cards of gold threads, fourteen cards of red threads, and two cards of gold threads. I used standard crochet cotton for warp and weft.

The actual weaving is time consuming but simple. You will use two shuttles or bobbins. Weave a section with the first bobbin (weft matching the background color, or the background edges) in the usual manner until you have a bit of a lead and know precisely what your weaving tension for the piece should be. Then, after you've passed your weft through, instead of turning the cards the usual 1/4 turn, turn them just

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Dyed yarns were generally much preferred, since wealthy and aristocratic are regularly described as wearing brightly coloured clothes, while only the poor and the pious wore undyed wool cloth. [Walton]

Walnut hulls are available locally for only the effort of gathering them, another sign of economy, then and now.

Cloth of this nature could have been woven on a variety of looms, from a warp-weighted loom to a frame loom to a horizontal loom such as I used. Warp-weighted looms were used from pre-Viking times to the 12th century when they faded from common use. Horizontal looms in period would resemble a modern counterbalance loom where the shed drops instead of rising. They arrived in Europe in the 11th century.

Straight and reverse twills have been woven since Neolithic times. A twill weave makes a closer and stronger cloth than a tabby weave, thus making the cloth thicker, warmer and more durable. The diagonal lines have the added benefit of making the cloth more pliable. The tufts or pile adds a factor of extra warmth and water resistance to the cloth by creating an added layer and insulation, making it very desirable for outdoor wear in a wet and cold climate.

Archaeological Finds

Pile cloths can be found from Viking times to Ireland of Henry VIII, who forbade his subjects to wear such barbarous clothing. Two examples were found in the Cronk Moar dig. Seven piled weaves (tabby or twill) were found in Anglo-Saxon England (350-1050 AD) and catalogued under "indeterminables" by Lise Bender Jorgensen. A ninth century Icelandic fragment comprised of two pieces joined by a seam. The ground weave was a four-end twill.

Interestingly enough, the pile consists, not of spun yarn but of continuous locks or tufts of long hair, between 15 and 19 centimetres long, taken straight from the fleece. [Geiger]

An Anglo-Scandinavian archaeological find with a thread count of 5 threads per centimeter, Z x S-spun yarn, and dyed with madder was found at Copperate and detailed by Penelope Walton. Other fragments were found at Lund, Sweden; Wolin, Poland; York, England; Dublin, Ireland; Heynes, Iceland; and Birka

Sweden. The most famous shaggy mantle is the Mantle of St. Brigid. It has a tabby weave and the nap is drawn and curled.

Standardization of measure was brought about by the weaving guilds and sometimes mandated by laws. Even then, it could vary depending on region. For instance, the standard shaggy coat (Icelandic) is defined as being "four thumb ells long and two thumb ells wide with thirteen tufts across" [Jochens]. Thread count of cloth found in the Middle Ages varied widely. Some coarse fabric has been found with an ends-per-inch (epi) between 8 and 24. Fine fabrics were found between 95 and 248 epi. Of the three Irish finds from the Roman Period, "the counts vary between 8/7 and 17/16 threads/cm" [Jorgensen]. This comes out to 31 to 67 epi and is a medium fabric.

The Irish Brat

The Irish Brat is a simple rectangular piece of cloth pinned at one shoulder. A variation of this basic design has an oval hem.

The brat was the most colorful, versatile and warmest garment in the early Irish wardrobe. It was four-cornered, roughly rectangular in shape and being of wool was probably treated or 'fulled,' to a dense finish. [Dunlevy]

Woven pile cloaks also formed part of the traditional costume of the Scottish highlander. They could be rectangular or semi-oval.

They were also found in earlier Icelandic lore and law. The tufted coat (roggvarfeldr) or pile coat was a significant trade item. Given the scarcity of fur, this would have been a good substitute since it does not involve killing animals for their fur and would protect the wearer from bad weather.

Law specified that a standard coat must have thirteen tufts across the width. [Jochens]

The coat also doubled as a blanket. By 1200, the shaggy coats had gone out of fashion.

Curly fleece mantles were described in Irish folklore as chronicled by monks in the 11th and 12th centuries. Several characters were described as wearing them in "*The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel.*"

A possible early Irish example is the relic known as the Mantle of St. Brigid... This piece is now in Belgium but is believed to be of Irish origin dating to the 11th century rather than the sixth, the presumed lifetime of the saint. The textile is red in colour and is described as having a thick curly fleece woven in with either the warp (probably) or the weft. [Heckett]

The same fabric could also be used for a comforter or bedspread. The bedspreads were favored among monastic communities and among the less well to do.

My Process

I decided on Coopsworth sheep for the warp and weft, and Border Leicester sheep for the locks. I was informed by a group of local spinners that both breeds have excellent felting properties and that they were good choices for a novice spinner. The Border Leicester had long locks and luminosity that I found attractive. Not being allowed to raise sheep in the city limits, I bought my wool from sheep farmers.

Since the wool was raw and I had no wish to store grease and dirt, I scoured it. For sanitation reasons, I used soap to wash the wool instead of stale or fermented urine (as would be period). As the Border Leicester was going to be used for the locks, I did not need to process it further.

I set to carding the Coopsworth into rolags using hand cards to make the wool easier to spin. I picked out as much of the second cuts and vegetable matter as I could before carding. However, some remained behind causing noils, or lumps, in the yarn and frustration to the spinner. I also managed to build up some impressive muscles in my back and shoulders.

Spinning

The yarn was hand-spun on a wheel. For the warp, I tightly spun the wool into Z-twist singles. For the weft, I spun the wool into S-twist singles. I spun 1,300 yards for the weft and 1,800 yards for the warp.

By the time I was done, I could see a noticeable improvement in my spinning. Over the course of processing the wool into yarn, I went from 5 pounds of raw wool to 3 pounds of yarn. The entire operation from raw wool to yarn took an entire summer.

Dyeing

A single color fabric could be produced by either dyeing the fleece (in the wool) before spinning, dyeing the spun yarn (in yarn) or dyeing the cloth (in piece); while multicolored fabric could only be produced by weaving with dyed yarns. Thus, the dyeing process had to occur in the wool or in the yarn as I wanted to leave the locks in the natural color. Plus, I did not have a pot or stove big enough to dye the finished cloth.

I created a subtle design effect by using dyed yarn for the warp and weft while leaving the locks in their natural state. I used walnut hulls to obtain a light brown yarn. I gathered five pounds of walnuts in the hull for dyeing, valiantly fighting off vicious squirrels. No one warned me about the grubs that live in the walnut hulls. Ick! Ewww! Time to scrub the kitchen!

I boiled the hulls for two hours to create the dye bath. Since walnuts are a natural source of tannin, it was not necessary to add mordant the yarn prior to dyeing. Then I added in wet, unmordanted wool, dyeing first the warp and then the weft. That way, any color change between the two dye baths would add variety and subtle patterning to my weaving. I simmered each batch for two hours. Then I rinsed the dyed yarn in warm water until all the excess dye was removed. Finally, I hung the yarn to dry. If there was any hue change between the dye baths, I could not discern it.

Sizing

My next step was to size the Z-Twist warp yarn to prevent fuzzies, limit breaking, and to add stability to the yarn during the weaving process. I chose a gelatin sizing because I had previous success with it when weaving very sticky mohair. Flaxseed would have been the choice in the Middle Ages, but since I was using my precious hand-spun wool, I decided to go with a formula that had proven itself to me. And again, I needed to clean the kitchen since the sizing ended up all over everything.

Weaving

I used straight 2/2 twill for my base fabric and inserted locks of wool into the weave. Firmly beaten in and later fullled, the locks are held in place without knots. I used a draft found in NESAT as a starting point and built a 2/2 twill with locks inserted in every

fifth shed. The draft I created can be seen in Figure 1.

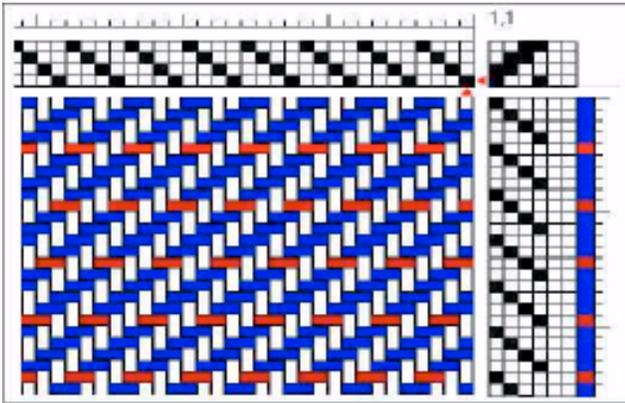


Figure 1: Pile Weave Draft - The red on every 5th row indicates the inlay of wool locks

I chose to make the cloth 21" wide so instead of wasting cloth, I could use selvages for the edges and middle seam of the Irish Brat, making for a sturdier garment. Length is a function of the purpose of the cloth and the amount of yarn available to the weaver for the project. I chose a length that would (when doubled) give me a 7-foot brat. My thread count is 6 epi, chosen to provide ample room to clear a shed and allow for the diameter variance of hand-spun yarn.

First, the Z-twist yarn was measured out on a warping board to produce the length and width of the desired cloth. Next, the loom was warped. This was the foundation upon which the weaving happened. I warp back to front, so I start by securing the warp to the back beam. The warp yarn was passed through heddles, attached to one of four harnesses to form a pattern according to the draft (see Figure 1) and through the reed. Then, the yarn was tied to the front beam to provide tension. The S-twist yarn was wrapped around the spool and put in the shuttle for the weft.

Then the cloth was woven. Weaving is accomplished by interlacing two sets of yarn to form fabric. By manipulating the four sheds up and down in combinations, one can change which set of yarn is on top, thus creating a pattern. The shuttle was passed into the opening between the two sets of warp yarn to place the weft yarn. The weft is beat into place with the reed. Every fifth shed, I would insert locks by wrapping them around the warp threads that were raised. As I finished with each spool, I bound the

yarn off at the selvage by overlapping 1-2" and binding the old yarn into the floating selvage for a few beats. The process was repeated with the change of the spools until all available warp yarn is woven or one has woven the cloth to its desired length.



Figure 2: Irish Brat Modeled by Baron Thorfinn Grimkelsson, Baron of Andelcrag

After weaving, the cloth was cut off the loom, the waste yarn was removed, and loose ends were woven into the cloth. I sewed the two pieces of cloth together at the selvages because I wanted them to felt in the wash, if possible.

Washing, Fulling and Felting

The cloth was then washed, fullled, lightly felted, and

air-dried. The fulling and felting occurred in the bathtub. I used Ivory soap instead of fuller's earth (which is period) due to a desire not to clog my pipes. I also needed the hot, soapy water to remove the gelatin sizing I used on the warp threads. After washing the cloth, I proceeded to felt the locks.

I rolled the cloth first from fringe to fringe and walked across it for several minutes, then reversed the roll. I repeated the process until I notice the locks had started to tangle together. The fulling occurred at the same time as the felting. The yarn expanded and filled in the mesh, helping to secure the locks in place.



Figure 3: Close up of weaving, showing front and back

After drying, I noticed that some of the locks had cowardly fled their carefully assigned positions to either escape or to felt in with other locks. I also noticed that the felting had occurred differently in places. Some areas felted into a "confused mass" as expected. Others resisted my efforts entirely. And some matted down into the curls I hoped to develop. As my sample had felted evenly, I was surprised. My assumption was that because I used fleece from the entire sheep, instead of picking prime locks, the fibers had slightly different properties and acted accordingly.

The ends were twisted to prevent raveling. Twisting the ends to prevent the edges from unraveling until the cloth is used finishes the cloth. Hemming or knotting the ends would also have provided the same function. As this cloth was made into an Irish brat, the fringe would add decoration and serve as an additional watershed.

Conclusions

This was my first attempt at garb from the sheep out. I am very pleased with the overall results. My spinning improved dramatically over the course of the year. The project provided me with an excuse to play with natural dyeing. I learned that wool from the same sheep might behave inconsistently. I also gained a huge appreciation for the sheer effort it took our ancestors to keep their families clothed.

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London, England, 1995, ISBN: 0-7141-2305-6
Walton Rogers, Penelope, Textile Production at 16-22 Coppergate, Council for British Archaeology, York, England, 1997

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I find the brocade works best when the weave is very tight (but I prefer a tight weave normally, particularly when working with a pattern). I do this by pushing against the inside of the shed after I've turned the cards, to push the wefts as close together as they will go. Because tablet weaving is a warp faced weave, this also tightens up the warps that will be showing on the surfaces of your weave (remember, in tablet weaving four warps twine around each other). In this weave, you can do this in the middle and the top shed. After weaving a row of brocade pattern, complete your 1/4 turn and weave the belt through the middle shed with the original shuttle. Don't get your two shuttle threads crossed. Then turn the cards enough to open the three sheds, and weave the next row of brocade in the top shed. The brocade will be woven simultaneously with the weaving of the belt and on top of the warp being used for the belt itself.



If you're separating your brocade weaving with spaces between the pattern, don't bother hiding the brocade warp in all the intervening weaving. Weave a row or two at the end to secure it, then cut the end off where it can't be seen. You can easily start again when you wish to continue your pattern.

There will be spaces between the rows of your brocade pattern unless you use a thicker weft than that used in the rest of your piece. I don't generally do so, as I rather like the effect myself.



If you would like some authentic medieval patterns to weave, there are a number of charts in Nancy Spies' Ecclesiastical Pomp & Aristocratic Circumstance: A Thousand Years of Brocaded Tabletweaved Bands. Spies wrote an article in issue 7 of this newsletter on the history, materials, and motifs used in brocaded tabletweaving.

Cardweaving, cont'd from page 1

enough to open up three sheds instead of one. The top of the uppermost shed is what you're going to be working with for the brocade.

Keep in mind you want to keep the direction changes between your patterns, so you may wish to weave enough to change direction, then weave just a bit more before you begin the brocade. If you would like to minimize the warp floats at the direction change, weave that section a little tighter than the rest.

A tapestry bobbin is probably the easiest tool to weave brocade with. Wind it with whichever color you chose for your pattern (in my case, white). So, obviously, one would weave the bobbin under where the pattern calls for the background color, and over for the design itself.



From the Chair:

by Nancy M McKenna

This time next year, 2004, you will be receiving the next dye-themed issue. I have decided that due to the ongoing interest in natural dyeing, medieval and otherwise, this is a topic that can be visited every tenth issue. The last dye issue was #29, thus the next dye issue is #39: June 2004. It is preferable that the dyes covered be others than those visited in issue #29 – that is, dyes other than woad, weld, madder, Persian berries (buckthorn) and walnut although if you are exploring history and use these dyes are still fair game. To aid you in your dyeing, I have listed a bibliography on the webpage: www.faela.medievaltextiles.org/dye.html

and on that site, and also with this issue, there is a chart listing some important information about some of the more often discussed natural dyes. If you are planning on participating, please let me know so I may advise you closer to the due date as to the number of members. The sample yarn pieces for the last issue were measured by wrapping the yarn over a CD case. We average about 26 members, but membership does fluctuate a little from month to month. Also, articles about textile color in the medieval period are as valid for a dye issue as 'how to' article on the dyes themselves.

This also gives me the opportunity to bring up safety. Natural dyes, especially when used with only Alum as a mordant are thought to be less dangerous than chemical dyes. But bear in mind that for the person who is sensitive to either the plant material or mordant, only a little bit can be too much. And although even MSDS sheets on the natural dyes may say that there is little harm in using them, remember that these are opinions, and that long term use has not usually been considered when these safety sheets were drawn up. Please err on the side of caution. Some sources for information on art-safety issues:

Clark, Nancy. Ventilation: A Practical Guide for Artists, Craftspeople, and Others in the Arts. Lyons & Burford, © 1987 ISBN 0941130444
 Dean, Norman. The Toxic 500: The 500 Largest Releases of Toxic Chemicals in the United States. National Wildlife Federation © 1989
 McCann, Michael, PhD, Artist Beware Lyons & Burford Pub. © 1993 ISBN 1558211756

McCann, Michael, PhD. Health Hazards Manual for Artists. Lyons & Burford © 1994 ISBN 0941130061
 Rossol, Monona. The Artist's Complete Health and Safety Guide. Allworth Press. © 1990 ISBN 0927629100

Rossol, Monona. Dyeing Healthy Surface Design Journal, 15(2), Winter, 1991, 13-15, 38

If you have access to the internet, please also view the video clip found at: <http://www.taunton.com/finehomebuilding/pages/hvt036.asp> which discusses mask/respirator fit and maintenance.

Recently, I visited Cincinnati, Ohio. It was for the running of the Flying Pig marathon; in the running of which my husband knocked 17 minutes off his last best time for running 26.2 miles (chip time: 4:00:59). Unfortunately, there is not a lot to do in that city on Sunday mornings as almost nothing is open, and those things that are, do not open their doors until noon. However, there is one place that is well worth mentioning: St. Theresa's Textile Trove. That name does not really do it justice - truly a treasure. Shot silk, shot silk damask, kente cloth, batik - you mention it! They also carry beads from all over the world and buttons and some other odds and ends such as porcupine quills. It is at Main and 13th Street, easy walking distance in the downtown area.

...for the person who is sensitive to either the dye material or mordant, only a little bit can be too much.

For those who wish to see snippets of what the little town I live in looks like, the movie *Children on their Birthdays* is now out on video/DVD. Much of the movie was filmed here. The inside of the church is our Historical Society. The outside of the church was filmed elsewhere. Budnik's pharmacy (scene with the ice cream & others) is a real-live place & looks exactly as it did in the movie, although it is now an art supply store (as of 2 months ago) The inside is still unchanged. The bridge is on Stephen (pronounced 'Steven') St. and goes over the Illinois & Michigan Canal. The barbar shop next to Tom's Place (Blatz Beer sign) is one of only two such in town. Both are popular. The outside of the garage is not Lemont, but the inside appears to be as the view thru the door looks like Illinois Street. The building the mural is on is a patisserie that is just fabulous! All the pastry dough is made on the premises, not purchased from restaurant suppliers as are the fillings. The outdoor forest scenes I don't recognize and the yards are a little large for the age of the houses, so they must have been filmed in Aurora. Parts of the movie *Save the Last Dance* were also filmed in Lemont.

The Silk Industry of Renaissance Venice

by: Luca Mola

Baltimore MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. 457 p. \$52.95. (ISBN 0-8018-6189-6)

Reviewed by Krystal Ruth Morgan

Strictly speaking, this book is a work of economic history, an in-depth examination of the manufacture and marketing of silk thread and fabric in Venice during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The Venetian silk industry reached a high level of sophistication and complexity at an early date, and the book contains discussions of the same topics one sees in the business section of a modern newspaper - government regulation of imports and exports, the development of new markets and diversification of product lines, issues of protectionism versus free trade, the impact of technological development and changing fashions, consumer fraud and patent law, all from the viewpoint of Renaissance merchants and silkwomen, weavers and dyers.

The breadth, depth, and detail of the author's research into his chosen topic is astonishing. Beginning in 1992, he delved deeply into the archives of Venice, combining original research with a study of previously published material about silk-reeling, spinning, dyeing, weaving, and marketing. Far from being dry and technical, the book is filled with lively anecdotes about the people who made and sold silk threads, damasks and velvets. On page 40, we meet a Ragusan businessman named Luca, who tried, and failed, to smuggle silk workers, a silk mill and several looms out of Venice, in hopes of establishing a silk industry in Dalmatia. On page 50, we meet Marcantonio Varotta, a taffeta weaver whose quest for work took him from Lyon, to Geneva, to various Italian city-states, and whose religious ideas brought him before the Inquisition. On page 124, we meet Zuane Pinardo, one of the three head officers of the silk guild, whose steadfast opposition to the introduction of cochineal eventually ruined his career. Appendix B lists several dozen people, by name and occupation, who applied to the Venetian government for patents for such items as spinning machines, winding machines, patterned silk cloths, mangles, and a silk-worm-raising technique.

The book does not contain any weaving drafts, but does discuss regulations concerning fabric widths and thread counts. A discussion of the manufacture of mixed cloths, which had silk warps, and wefts of wool, flax or cotton begins on page 171.

There are twenty illustrations, including engravings (dated 1580s) of peasants raising silkworms on page 230, and women reeling silk on page 233, to accompany a discussion of sericulture. The end-notes are as fascinating as the text. Note 1 on p. 364 contains 3 different recipes for a paste, or size, to be put on finished sendal (lightweight silk) to make the colors shine.. Originally a fraud to disguise poorer-quality fabrics, sizing silks became a standard practice.

The author himself complains that very little is known about the drawlooms of this period. He also observes that it would be of interest to conduct similar research in other areas, as the Venetians' recorded complaints of competitors with lower production costs, or poor quality materials received from trading partners, may not be trustworthy.

A six-page glossary defines many Italian textile terms. The thirty-four page bibliography is neatly divided into archival sources, primary printed sources, and secondary sources. The index contains the names of people and places, as well as topics. It is not possible for us to visit the weaving studios and dye workshops of Renaissance Venice, to tour mulberry plantations of the Terraferma, to marvel at the invention of a hydraulic silk mill, to watch a merchant examine a new shipment of silk. However, the book does give a sense of what such things might have been like, and I can't wait to read it again.

Samples:

Please weave enough for 26 samples. Samples & draft are due November 15th, 2003. *This is a piece of cloth as small as 12 inches x 21 inches (30cm x 52.5 cm) This could be fabric "left over" from another project. It need not be handspun, nor of painstakingly accurate grist yarn, either. Everyone is invited to contribute since everyone receives samples.*

Many of the same weavers who have done samples in the past are contributing for the next sample exchange. This is an opportunity to contribute if you do not wish to write an article about your research: Please consider contributing samples of your weaving to make this the best exchange to date.

Encountering Medieval Textiles and Dress: Objects, Texts, Images

Edited by Désirée G. Koslin and Janet E. Snyder
Palgrave Macmillan, 2002; 257 pages; 28 figures
ISBN 0-312-29377-1

Reviewed by Nancy M McKenna

As is the case with many books compiled from excellent work created by diverse authors, this book could warrant a review of each chapter. The book covers the fifth through the sixteenth centuries, from Ireland to Italy and the Mediterranean, and is compiled into three sections based on date(s) covered by the articles.

This tome discusses the distinctions of levels of society as delineated by clothing, the development of the textile industry, and the use of textile analogies in period literature. It examines textile depictions found on monuments, in sculpture, in paintings, and on manuscripts. But in its fourteen chapters this volume manages to convey a cohesive and encompassing view of textiles in the medieval period. It offers the reader not only interesting facts, but the authors' excellent work convincingly connects the dots so as to give clothing a life of its own in the context of the times.

Chapters such as *Dressing the Part, From Content to Form* and *Marie de France's Bisclavret* deliver both sides of the coin: we are what we wear as well as wearing what we are entitled due to class structure. Without clothes, Bisclaveret is a wolf, unrecognizable; with clothes he is a nobleman, although Gloria Thomas Gilmore discusses the balance of both sides of the coin. Does form follow function, or is function a result of the form?

In *Christ as a Windblown Sleeve*, Margarita Yanson explores the changing costumes within Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan* where changes in clothing mark the complexity of the main character, Tristan. Similarly, in *As Proud as a Dog in a Doublet*, Linda Anderson sees costume as an integral part of the play. On the other hand, *The Margaret Fitzgerald Tomb Effegy* comments on the strong nationalism in the dress of the late 15th and early 16th centuries, when adherence to national norms was seen as akin to patriotic act, and changing one's dress could be seen as treason and

situates the effegy within the context of the time.

The chapters written by the editors are pivotal and act to anchor the rest of the book. Snyder's work discusses not only the sculptural forms in the column-figures and document seals in great detail, but in discussing the dress pictured from England to Germany it provides both an overview and excellent detail. Inserted between two chapters that draw from literary sources, the sharp images of the columns offer the mind a break as the detail is made visible to the eye as well as to the mind. Désirée Koslin's chapter touches on materials, dyes, weaving, finishing and meaning of cloth and clothing. Even through its title the final chapter is an overview and a case study. In many ways, it rounds out and sums up the book in a very satisfactory manner.

From art and legal manuscripts to archeological evidence and period documents the authors describe dress and its importance in great detail. The rich description plus the illustrations paint a lucid image of the clothing of the time in detail suitable for recreating the costumes discussed, while the discussion of the meaning of such explores timeless issues regarding the role of clothing and cloth in society and the lives of individuals. Black and white images throughout illustrate the chapters, and a seven page glossary makes terms that may be unfamiliar to some understandable without reaching for the dictionary, and a comprehensive index makes revisiting bits of information a breeze. Although this book is aimed at the student of the medieval period, and specifically at someone interested in the dress of the period, those interested in philosophy and dress in general can see parallels throughout the ages making this a book of value. Reading this book has made me think about dress more closely, not only in a historical context, but also while people-watching, and in movies such as the Matrix trilogy where dress has layers of meaning.

Check out our website:
www.medievaltextiles.org
to contact the chairperson:
nmck@medievaltextiles.org or
507 Singer Ave
Lemont, IL 60439

Note: Rachel Hartman will be unable to continue the cartoon due to the impending birth of her child.

Upcoming events:

Art Institute of Chicago:

On or Off the Wall: A Selection of Tapestries and Carpets, 1920s–1970s

May 14, 2003 – February 8, 2004

The Textile Museum:

Carpets of Andalusia

March 8 - August 10, 2003

Mamluk Rugs from Egypt: Jewels of The Textile Museum's Collections

March 28 - September 7, 2003

<http://www.textilemuseum.org/>

WELCOME TO THE TEXTILE CENTER
AND WEAVERS COTTAGE AT
KIRKMAN HOUSE MUSEUM IN
WALLA WALLA
214 No. Colville St.

Hours: Wednesday - Sunday from 1-4 p.m.
or by appointment

The Cottage on the grounds of the museum was renovated last year to accommodate a loom and furnishings typical of the 19th C in rural farm homes in the area with emphasis on the local sheep and wool industry as well as the history of coverlets often brought across the plains in covered wagons with families who settled in the area.

Another feature is a Dyer's Garden with plants used to color homespun yarns for weaving both wool and linen household goods. In the garden are marigold for yellow, madder for red along with a small patch of flax for producing linen thread.

These home produced yarns are woven on the large 'barn' type loom which at present is equipped with a drawloom attachment on which intricately designed coverlets could have been woven.

A SPECIAL WELCOME TO
COMPLEX WEAVERS.

Special tours arranged by appointment by contacting the Textile coordinator at

www.kirkmanhousemuseum.org

or calling Peggy Hoyt at 509-529-5978

From Ann Kreckel:

Helge Ingstad & Anne Stine Ingstad document the extensive archaeological digs at the site of L'Anse aux Meadows in their book The Viking Discovery of America. This book was part of our preparation for a trip to Newfoundland in September of 2002.

The recreated village, as it would have been in the 10th century, is amazing. And even more so is the knowledge of these contemporary Vikings as to their ancestors, how they lived, and what they did.

No textile remains were found during the excavations, but there is sufficient documentation from Viking journals of that time to know the textile history.



A contemporary Viking at Newfoundland's L'Anse aux Meadows National Park

About the photo below, **Peggy Hoyt** says: "A friend just took some pictures in our Weavers Cottage where I have hung the series of 4 shaft towels I've been doing in my Purugia study."

The warp is 20/2 linen (I used some info from an article by Nancy Hoskins) The weft is some singles linen and colored is my handspun plant dyed linen. Am now putting a 16/1 unbleached linen at 32 epi on (it was a beast to work with) to thread in goose-eye twill as the aqua towel in the picture."

