

less prestige.

Readers of this journal will be especially drawn to the section on consumption, which discusses both cotton textiles and final products (clothing, armor, mattresses, pillows, bed linens, and sails) that included either cotton textiles or cotton padding. Based on commercial and household accounts, the author divides cotton textiles into three classes. High-quality cotton textiles—*fustian*, *pignolato*, *guarnello*—were usually produced in north Italy and often blended with linen. Mid-level cotton textiles included *bombaxium*, *cotonine*, and *veli di cotone*. The least prestigious included *bouracan*, *tiretaine*, *burdo*, and *falda*. However, the author notes that terminology was slippery, and the prestige and fiber content of cloth with a particular name could vary considerably.

The author suggests that cotton was usually associated with garments for the middle and lower levels of society; nobles and royalty tended to prefer wool, silk, and linen. Again, however, boundaries were slippery, and a number of noble and royal inventories mention cotton garments. The author also argues that the rise of the “new fashion”—especially men’s padded garments—played a major role in the growth of cotton consumption. Here, the author’s discussion differs somewhat from those of previous scholars: While Pipponier and Mane and Stella Mary Newton stress the 1330s and 1340s as the period when the padded doublet first gained widespread use, Jong-Kuk Nam traces the similar *jupon* to twelfth-century Italy and argues that it was modeled after the Islamic *jubbah*. — Sharon Farmer, *University of California, Santa Barbara*

The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England: Textual Constructions of a National Identity, by Roze Hentschell (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008). ISBN 978-0754663010. 209 pages, 3 black-and-white illustrations.

Roze Hentschell places the wool industry at the center of early modern English economics and cultural development. She argues that cloth reached far beyond its status as an object of production or commodity of exchange; it was, further, a locus for organizing sentiments of national solidarity and identity.

In her introduction, Hentschell notes that such sixteenth-century pamphleteers and chroniclers as Robert Greene and Thomas Deloney not only assert that the wool industry was both ancient and “most beneficial” to the Commonwealth, but also elevate the industry’s role beyond history to an almost mythic standing. Hentschell then enumerates a myriad of challenges to the wool industry, all of which were crucial to defining the importance of cloth to national identity.

In the next three sections, each of which contains two chapters, Hentschell examines the role of the wool trade using categories as diverse as “labor rebellion,” “the circulation of subjectivity,” and “staging the cloth crisis.” In Part One, Hentschell offers unique readings of Philip Sidney’s pastoral poetry, which resembles the texts that chronicle the anti-enclosure riots, and Thomas Deloney’s *Jack of Newbury*, which presents clothworkers as social activists. In Part Two, we are treated to analyses of texts at the intersection of English expansion and insularity, such as Robert Greene’s

Recent Books of Interest

A Quippe for an Upstart Courtier and Richard Hakluyt's *A Discourse of Western Planting*. Finally, in Part Three, Hentschell contends that the cloth crisis was staged in such texts as Thomas Middleton's *Michaelmas Term* and Anthony Munday's *Civic Pageant for the Drapers*.

While the most avid audience for this book will be literary scholars, economic and cultural historians will also find much to admire in Hentschell's thorough and well-written study. — *Margaret Rose Jaster, Penn State University, Harrisburg*

The Depiction of Clothing in French Medieval Manuscripts, by Patricia M. Gathercole (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008). ISBN 978-0773450141. 97 pages, 27 illustrations (2 in color).

This is the sixth in a series by this author, each book focusing on a category of depictions—animals, furniture, landscapes, and so forth—found in medieval French manuscripts. Despite its promising subject, this overview of clothing in illuminations can be only a disappointment to dress historians. The text, divided into brief sections by clothing component (hats, sleeves, shoes, etc.), is primarily descriptive, consisting mostly of strings of examples noting the appearance of these items in manuscript illustrations, but with little attempt to link those examples into a coherent analysis of either the fashions themselves or their treatment by illuminators.

Statements about various styles are often so generalized as to be of little use (“In church, all women also wore veils”), a situation made worse by the absence of any footnotes to indicate sources. The frequent failure to specify centuries or periods for such points is compounded by confusing shifts of verb tense from one sentence to the next. Oversimplifications, misinterpretations, and outdated assumptions abound. For example, in just the first two pages of the “Basic clothing” section, the author refers to “a corset of blue velvet and ermine,” women’s use of padding “to make stomachs bulge,” fifteenth-century bbliauts, and leather doublets worn as undergarments. In the same passage, the gowns of sculpted Madonnas, St. John the Baptist’s “camel skin robe,” and the fashions in the “Lady and the Unicorn” tapestries are cited with no acknowledgement that the clothing presented in such cases might be traditional, allegorical, or otherwise deliberately non-realistic.

In all, the book offers little to the reader who has even a basic knowledge of medieval dress, and does a disservice to students of manuscript illumination seeking information on clothing. It is also a mystery why the publisher would charge \$100 for a 20,000-word study that appears to be reproduced directly from an unedited printout, with low-resolution black-and-white images and a binding that began to disintegrate during a first reading. — *Robin Netherton, Editor*

Dressing the Past, edited by Margarita Gleba, Cherine Munkholt, and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxford: Oxbow, 2008). ISBN 978-1842172698. 190 pages, 97 illustrations (56 in color).

Originating as a series of lectures at the Design School at Kolding, Denmark, under the auspices of the Danish National Research Foundation’s Centre for Textile