



Fashion in the Middle Ages

Margaret Scott

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From the costly velvets and furs worn by kings to the undyed wools and rough linens of the peasantry, the clothing worn by the various classes in the Middle Ages played an integral role in medieval society. In addition to providing clues to status, profession, or geographic origin, textiles were a crucial element in the economies of many countries and cities.

Much of what is known about medieval fashion is gleaned from the pages of manuscripts, which serve as a rich source of imagery. This volume provides a detailed look at both the actual fabrics and composition of medieval clothing as well as the period's attitude toward fashion through an exploration of the illuminated manuscripts in the collection of the J. Paul Getty Museum. The last portion of the book is dedicated to the depiction of clothing in biblical times and the ancient world as seen through a medieval lens. Throughout, excerpts from literary sources of the period help shed light on the perceived role and function of fashion in daily life. The book accompanies an exhibition of the same name on view at the J. Paul Getty Museum from May 31 to August 14, 2011.



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