

Eva Andersson, *Kläderna och människan i medeltidens Sverige och Norge*. Avhandlingar från Historiska institutionen i Göteborg 47 (Göteborg 2006). 284 pages. Written in Swedish with an English summary (*Clothing and the individual in Mediaeval Sweden and Norway*). ISBN 91-88614-60-3; ISSN 1100-6781

The manner of dress in Norway and Sweden between 1200 and 1500 is investigated in this dissertation. The primary sources are Norwegian and Swedish charters, such as wills. Clothes mentioned in these documents are analysed with the help of pictorial sources and preserved garments. As well as the particular garments, the complete dress and its development over time is studied, and comparisons are made with European fashion and manners of dress. The clothing materials mentioned in the documents and how they change over time are also examined.

Dress is also studied as an expression of social categories; how dress differed between the estates and between the sexes and how it was used to signal status and gender is examined. In this investigation the results from the first part of the dissertation are used, along with other sources, such as sumptuary regulations and courtly literature.

Previous research has shown the dress of the lower estates in Scandinavia as fixed and unaffected by contemporary fashion. In this dissertation it is shown that the spread of the fashionable ideal in dress reached far, both socially and geographically. The same types of garments were, to a large extent, worn by all levels of society; the difference lay in from which materials they were made.

One of clothing's most persistent functions is to express and signal differences between men and women. *How* this is done is, however, culture specific and changes over time. In the Middle Ages with few exceptions men and women wore the same types of garments. Primarily, gender was signalled with headgear and other items of clothing that did not emphasize the physical differences between the sexes. The question of how gender was signalled in clothing is in the dissertation tied to theories about how bodies and sex was perceived in the Middle Ages.

As a result of this study the reader will gain a deeper understanding not only of the manner of dress, but also of how gender and status were perceived in mediaeval Norway and Sweden