

call for papers

TEXTS and TEXTILES

a conference organised by the Centre for Material Texts, University of Cambridge
to be held 11-12 September 2012 at Jesus College, Cambridge

The shared origin of *text* and *textile* in the Latin *texere*, to weave, is a critical commonplace. Many of the terms we use to describe our interactions with words are derived from this common linguistic root, and numerous other expressions associated with reading and writing are drawn from the rich vocabulary of cloth. Textiles are one of the most ubiquitous components of material culture, and they are also integral to the material history of texts. Paper was originally made from cotton rags, and in many different cultural and historical settings texts come covered, wrapped, bound, or decorated with textiles. And across the domestic, public, religious, and political spheres, textiles are often the material forms in which texts are produced, consumed, and circulated.

In the light of the CMT's current research theme on 'the material text in material culture', we invite papers which consider any of the many dimensions of the relationship between texts and textiles. There are no historical, geographical, or disciplinary limitations. Areas to be addressed could include:

the shared language of texts and textiles

- *construction and deconstruction*: to weave, spin, stitch, knit, suture, tie up or together, piece, tailor, gather, fashion, fabricate, mesh, trim, stretch, wrap, unfold, unpick
- *challenges and problem-solving*: knots, tangles, holes; to lose the thread, iron out creases, unravel, cut, keep on tenterhooks
- *pieces and fragments*: rags, patches, patchwork, scraps, strands, threads, rhapsodies, patterns, seams, loose ends, layers

textile texts

- needlework and words: tapestry, embroidery, samplers, quilts, hangings, carpets, banners
- the needle and the pen
- printed textiles
- sacred/religious texts and textiles
- love-tokens, keepsakes, charms, and relics
- cushions, badges, handkerchiefs, flags, scarves, uniforms, livery and other textual/textile ephemera
- professional and amateur work
- relationships and networks of gifts, patronage, exchange
- pattern books, sample books, costume books

the stuff of books

- bookbindings and covers
- incunabula - 'swaddling clothes'
- medieval girdle books, book chemises
- paper and paper-making
- cutting, sewing, and stitching in and on books
- scrapbooks, albums, collages
- book ribbons and bookmarks
- carpet pages
- textiles in illustrations, frontispieces, title pages

Proposals of up to 250 words for 20-minute papers should be sent to
Jason Scott-Warren (jes1003@cam.ac.uk) and Lucy Razzall (lmfr2@cam.ac.uk)
by 30 April 2012

www.english.cam.ac.uk/cmt/