

Waterworks in Medieval Montpellier

Medieval Lecture Series
St. Jerome's University and the University of Waterloo

WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT:

Come and enjoy cheese and pastries, relaxed conversation, and a discussion of water management in medieval Montpellier.

WHEN: Wednesday, 18 October 2017, 4:30-6:00

WHERE: St. Jerome's University, SJ2-2007
Reception: 4:30
Lecture: following the reception

WHO: Dr. Geneviève Dumas



Located near the occidental Mediterranean coastline, the medieval town of Montpellier was surrounded by several bodies of water. Between the urban settlement and the sandbank, lay navigable marshes with bottleneck accesses to the sea. Montpellier was also crossed by two rivers and enclosed by a wall and a ditch. Inside the town, an underground water system provided clean water to the inhabitants and a sewer system drained waste waters. As in most medieval urban spaces, water in Montpellier was the source of multiple sanitary and environmental concerns. The city council had to cope with numerous

problems related to water, including: insurance of proper supply of fresh water, wells and fountains. It had to deal with river maintenance, the upkeep of sewers, and management of wastewater and water pollution. Using Montpellier's rich medieval archives, this talk will examine the various means, policies, and regulations developed by the city council to cope with health risks caused by water-related issues.



Geneviève Dumas is Associate Professor at the Université de Sherbrooke. Her recent monograph, *Santé et société à Montpellier à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Brill, 2014), explores the subject of urban health in the medieval Mediterranean. Her current project, funded by SSHRC, examines the concept of urban identities in medieval Montpellier.

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