



MUSÉE DE CLUNY

le monde médiéval

ENGLISH

GLOSSARY

Almoner (alm purse): purse worn on the belt, closed with a flap or cords. Variable in size and shape, it is an accessory to the female and male costume.

Antependium or altar frontal: textile decoration hung vertically before an altar.

Appliqué embroidery: technique consisting of attaching pieces of fabric, leather, parchment, etc. to a textile by sewing them onto the ground weave.

Buckram: plant-based fabric used as a lining.

Bullion or purl thread: fine gold thread wound around a needle to form a hollow spiral.

Chasuble: outer liturgical vestment, open on the sides, worn by clerics celebrating Mass. A chasuble, stole and maniple are generally worn together.

Cope: ample liturgical vestment worn by clerics during religious services. Semi-circular in shape, a cope generally has no sleeves and is decorated in the back with a shield-shaped piece of material, a remnant of a hood that has since disappeared.

Core: linen, cotton or silk filament around which a metal strip is wrapped to form metallic thread.

Counted-thread embroidery or needlepoint: embroidery consisting of small straight, oblique or crossed stitches, achieved by counting the threads of the ground fabric (cloth weave).

Dalmatic: liturgical vestment with short sleeves open on the sides, worn by deacons during Mass and liturgical ceremonies.

Drawn gold thread: Gilt silver thread, with a circular cross section, drawn out through a die.

Embroidery: art of decorating textiles that consists of creating patterns, flat or in relief, on fabric, by means of thread, metal thread and other items (pearls, precious stones, enamel, etc.).

Filé: silver or gilt silver thread made from a strip of precious metal wound around a fibrous core (e.g. silk, linen, etc.).

Filé riant: metallic thread whose twists are spaced out enough to leave the core filament visible.

Lampas: woven fabric consisting of at least two warps: a main warp (ground weave) and a supplementary warp (binding warp), and one or more wefts. The design is made up of weft floats which interlace with the ground weave and are fastened by the binding warp.

Maniple: short band of fabric worn over the left arm, exclusively during Mass, by all clerics.

Membrane threads: organic metal thread consisting of gilt animal membrane entwined around a fibrous core.

Mitre: liturgical headdress and badge of honour worn by bishops and some abbots (i.e. "mitred" abbots). A mitre consists of two shield-shaped halves that come to a point and two fringed streamers that hang from the base of the back, called lappets.

Organic metal thread: narrow strip of organic material (leather, animal gut, etc.) gilt in silver or gold and wrapped around a fibrous core.

Orphrey: woven bands, sometimes embroidered, sewn onto liturgical vestments for embellishment.

Patterned weave: woven textile decorated with a more or less complex pattern obtained by crossing the threads of the warp and the weft.

Raised embroidery: unlike flat embroidery, embroidery that is elevated from the ground fabric thanks to padding, (large waxed threads, cardboard, parchment, etc.). A distinction is made between low-relief embroidery, quilting, and embroidery in the round.

Rapport: technique consisting of applying pieces embroidered separately onto a ground fabric.

Samite: plain or patterned textile consisting of two warps (foundation and binding) and at least two wefts. A half-silk samite has a warp foundation made of linen.

Satin: woven fabric whose glossy and smooth surface is achieved by weft floats above the warp threads.

Silk floss: loosely twisted silk thread, generally used for embroidery.

Stole: long band of fabric worn around the neck by the entire hierarchy of clerics, including deacons, to celebrate Mass and administer the sacraments.

Toile or taffeta: textile weave whose even and odd warp threads alternate at each shot, above and below the weft. Both sides of the fabric are identical. Weaves made with discontinuous fibres (e.g. linen, hemp, wool, cotton) are called toile, while weaves made with continuous fibres (e.g. silk) are called taffeta.

Twill: textile weave with a diagonal rib pattern achieved by offsetting each binding point by one thread at each passage of the weft.

Two-ply thread: thread that is spun together from two single-ply threads in the opposite direction as that of the single-ply threads.

Velvet: plain or patterned weave made up of at least two warps and one weft, whose surface is covered in pile (cut velvet), loops (uncut velvet) or a combination thereof (cisé velvet) on a ground weave.

Warp: the threads that run the length of a fabric on the loom.

Weave: interlacing of the warp and weft threads of a fabric. The three main weaves are tabby (or taffeta), twill and satin.

Weft: threads that run transversally to warp threads in a woven fabric.

EMBROIDERY STITCHES (*stitches illustrated in a diagram)

Waffle-pattern: low relief embroidery achieved by placing threads or strings on a fabric, with metallic threads placed perpendicular to them and held in place by stitches, generally in silk, forming patterns (chevrons, checkers, fragmented rods, etc.).

Guipure: technique consisting of laying metallic threads over padding, fastened at either end of the pattern by small stitches, generally in silk. The gold is only visible at the surface.

Gold shading: particularly luxurious embroidery technique consisting of laying metallic threads on the ground weave, fastened at both ends by small stitches, then covering them with coloured silk stitches to create images, relief and shading.

Running stitch*: straight stitch. The needle passes over and under the fabric in order to form a dashed line.

Back stitch: straight stitch. The needle travels one stitch length backwards to form a new stitch and is fed back to the front of the fabric after having passed over two stitch lengths at the back.

Laid work / couching*: threads (generally metallic) laid flat and parallel to the surface of the fabric, individually or in groups of two or more, secured by stitches, generally silk, whose arrangement may form patterns (e.g. diamond shapes).

Underside couching*: couching technique in which the securing thread, made of linen, is fed from behind and pulls the decorative metallic thread in tiny loops through to the back. The metallic thread is visible at intervals on the underside of the ground fabric.

Fishbone stitch: filling stitch made up of straight stitches worked diagonally from a central line by alternating from left to right to form an acute angle.

Double seed stitch: similar to a seed stitch, a filling stitch consisting of two back stitches side by side and arranged haphazardly.

Chain stitch*: series of stitches that resemble chain links worked along a line. The thread, fed from the underside of the fabric, secures the stitch in place on the right side.

Herringbone stitch *: stitch consisting of diagonal threads spaced out and crossed by oblique threads going in the opposite direction.

Overcast stitch: stitch resembling a fine cord achieved by securing a filling thread laid across the ground fabric with small, closely-set transversal stitches all along the laid thread.

Festoon stitch (or buttonhole stitch) *: stitch worked in parallel rows, forming a series of closely-set U's, interlocking on one side by the thread, fed from behind, which wraps around the needle.

Knot stitch*: stitch formed by knots obtained by winding thread around the needle before pulling it through to the back of the fabric.

Bullion stitch: starting with a back stitch, the thread is then wrapped around the needle several times before it is pulled up and through to the back again, laying down a small coiled strap on the fabric.

Point de piqûre: back stitch that is more closely set and in which the consecutive stitches touch.

Darning stitch: running stitch worked on a woven ground fabric, by counting the number of weaves from right to left, then left to right, and where the interval between each stitch is half the surface stitch length.

Seed stitch: filling stitch using diagonal or horizontal back stitches. The seed stitch can be spread out widely or set very close and arranged haphazardly.

Overcast stitch*: sewing technique used to create a seam with a series of diagonal stitches along the edge of a fabric.

Stem stitch*: slightly slanted stitch worked along a line, overlapping the previous stitch at the mid-way point.

Weaving stitch: embroidery technique in which lengths of thread are laid in one direction before interweaving another thread at a right angle, creating a woven effect. Used for more refined and reinforced patterns.

Bayeux stitch*: threads (silk, wool or linen) are laid flat and parallel on the ground weave, then secured with perpendicular stitches at regular intervals, which themselves are secured by small staggered stitches.

Split stitch*: stitches worked along a line that consist of making one stitch, then another by piercing the thread of the previous stitch in the centre, thereby splitting the thread into little V-shapes.

Straight stitch: very short flat stitch.

Miniature stitch: very small stitch.

Satin stitch*: flat stitch worked in straight or oblique rows whose threads do not overlap from row to row.

Long and short stitch*: flat stitch consisting of long and short stitches that are staggered from row to row. Ideal for shading, that is, colours that gradually change in intensity and tone.

Brick stitch*: needlepoint technique in which even stitches laid vertically overlap each other.