Holy hands: a study of knitted liturgical gloves: evidence from the literature



Liturgical gloves in the treasury of the cathedral of St Bertrand de Comminges, Haute-Garonne, France (inventory number 58-P-726); © Dr Angharad Thomas

Compiled by Lesley O'Connell Edwards © July 2021

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Thanks are due too to Dr Angharad Thomas for setting up the *Holy Hands* project, and inviting me to work on it with her. It has been a fascinating journey.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Knitted liturgical gloves were used by senior prelates of the rank of bishop and above in rituals in the western church from the middle ages onwards, until Vatican II in 1968.[1] They were part of the 'pontifical insignia' that senior churchmen, such as bishops and cardinals, were allowed to wear; other items in this regalia included the mitre, the pallium and stockings, sandals and buskins (a type of soft boot). Although each glove is unique, virtually all of these gloves are finely crafted, often in silk, with ornately patterned cuffs, and medallions on the backs of the hands. There are many examples in museums across Europe and the United States, but these have been little studied, and even less attempt has been made to record their knitted construction and heritage despite the fact that most of the extant gloves are knitted. The *Holy Hands* project was established to examine these gloves, both as artefacts, and also through the relevant literature. This paper endeavours to draw together the information that can be gleaned from a wide variety of published sources on these liturgical gloves, to expand our knowledge about the use of such gloves, and to understand the use of knitting in their construction. Where possible, the sources given by the authors in articles were checked, but it should be noted that many authors do not provide references. Details of the gloves that were located as part of this project can be found in the *Knitting in Early Modern Europe* database.[2]

Liturgical gloves were used in church ceremonies, as part of the ritual of the mass, and sometimes in important processions. As part of the consecration ritual for a bishop, he was invested with gloves, along with other items of pontifical regalia. Some of these gloves were buried with a senior churchman and found in his tomb when it was opened later, such as that of Archbishop de Rada of Toledo in the Monastery of St Maria de Huerta in Madrid, Spain. A senior churchman might bequeath these to an institution, as in the case of the gloves William Warham gave to New College, Oxford (UK). Each glove or pair of gloves is unique, but they do share common features – most are richly ornamented including religious symbolism, sometimes with knitted-in patterning, sometimes embroidered; and often decorated with braid, lace and fringing. Many have ornate gauntlets, which can be trapezoid in shape; and many have a religious symbol on the back of the hand.

These gloves were used in sacred rituals, and from at least the sixteenth century, their main colour was often one of the main liturgical colours: red, white, purple or green. These gloves were not for ordinary secular everyday wear. Some museum catalogues, such as the Fashion Museum in Bath (UK), classify these as ecclesiastical gloves, and include in this category gloves that would be used by worshippers, such as inventory number GCT 23401 + A. This latter category can include gloves with slits in the fingers but are very different in style to liturgical gloves. By the nineteenth century, prelates in the Roman Catholic church were allowed to wear official gloves when they were at secular ceremonies, which were in the style

[1] Stam, Tuuk 'Gebreide bisschopshandschonen', in *Stitching Textielcommissie Nederland: Gebreid goed: Textieldag gebouden op 23 April 1998, Institut Collectie Nederland te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Stitching Textielcommissie Nederland, 2001), pp.37-45, p.37.
[2] *Knitting in Early Modern Europe* database. Available online at www.kemesearch.com) [accessed 5 August 2021]

of those used by laymen, but in the colour that the rank of a senior churchman allowed him to wear.[3] These gloves are not included in this study either.

This account begins with a discussion of the terms used with reference to knitted liturgical gloves, and an overview of the literature. It then looks at possible provenance of the gloves, dating and place of manufacture, before considering the different elements of gloves and non-knitted gloves. Literature specifically referring to knitted liturgical gloves, and what it reveals about the production of the knitted fabric, is then reviewed along with the possible makers. A section includes details of the few published studies of individual knitted gloves or pairs of gloves, before a discussion of two gloves described in the literature that no longer survive. The role of liturgical gloves in church ritual is then described, and also the part they potentially play as a cultural and symbolic artefact in a religious context. Finally, the theological background to these is briefly examined, before the history of their use is outlined.

[3] John A. F. P. Nainfa, *Costume of the prelates of the catholic church,* New edition, (Baltimore, MD: John Murphy, 1926), pp.128-129.

Chapter 2: Terminology

This review uses the term 'liturgical glove' to refer to those richly patterned gloves which were restricted to senior prelates, including bishops, abbots, cardinals and the pope. Such gloves are also referred to by nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first century writers as pontifical gloves, episcopal gloves, bishop's gloves, and ecclesiastical gloves. Barbier de Montault identified three types of gloves: liturgical gloves, which he refers to as 'pontifical' gloves; gloves used by simple priests; and 'prelating' gloves, the last of which were used by those accompanying the pope on horseback in nineteenth century Italy.[4] However, the term prelate can be used in conjunction with liturgical gloves: a fourteenth century French inventory refers to *gans pour prelat*: the accompanying description shows that these are clearly for liturgical use.[5] Occasionally, a writer uses two of these terms to differentiate between different uses: LeClerq uses the term 'episcopal gloves' to refer to gloves associated with bishops, or references to bishops wearing gloves especially before the eleventh century; and the term 'liturgical gloves' to refer to gloves being worn as a sacred vestment by bishops.[6]

Medieval writers referred to these gloves as *chirothecae*. Medieval spelling was not consistent, and there were a variety of ways of spelling this term, including *cirotecarum*, *cyrotecarum* and *serotecarum*. *Chirothecae* is a Greek term, meaning hand-case,[7] it is interesting to note that the Dutch use the term *bisschopshandschoenen* for liturgical gloves. Today, *handschoenen* roughly translates as 'hand shoes'. The term *usus chirothecarum* meant the right to wear such gloves, and this could only be granted by the pope. Other terms which can potentially be interpreted to mean glove are *manicae* and *wantus* or *gantus*. *Manicae* means a wristlet or a cuff; whilst *wantus* and *gauntus* does mean 'glove' and is derived from a Germanic root.

The medallion on the back of a liturgical glove is also referred to by a variety of terms by writers, including *fibula, circuli* or *plaque*. De Linas comments that the terms *lamina*, *tassellus* and *paratua* all appear in church inventories.[8] This review will use the term 'medallion' for this ornamentation.

The division between the middle ages and the early modern period can be subject to different interpretations. For the purposes of this review, the dividing line is 1500.

[4] Barbier de Montault, X., 'les gants pontificaux', *Bulletin monumental,* 5th serie, tome 4 n.42 (1876), pp.401-467, p.420.
[5] Jules Labarte, *Inventaire du mobilier de Charles V, roi de France* (Paris: Imprimerie national, 1879), p.136.
[6] Henri LeClerq, 'Gants' in Fernand Cabrol and Henri LeClerq (eds.), *Dictionnaire d'archaeologie chretienne et de liturgie* vol 6 Part 1 G-Gotha (Paris: Letouzey et Anê, 1924), columns 614-628, cols.624-627.
[7] Richard Rutt, *A history of hand knitting* (London: Batsford, 1987), pp.56-58, p.56.
[8] De Linas, Charles, *Vêtements sacredoteux et anciens tissus conservés en France* (Paris: Dideron, 1860), p.215.

Chapter 3: Historiography

Liturgical gloves are mentioned in literature discussing medieval western church vestments, from the nineteenth century onwards, but few of these mention that the ground fabric of some gloves was constructed by knitting. Most writers comment on other aspects of vestments, and include only a page or less on liturgical gloves. One of the earliest commentators is Pugin, who mentions them in his *Glossary of ecclesiastical ornament*, first published in 1844,[9] but, in common with later writers, he gives no information about construction.

The later nineteenth century and early twentieth century saw three writers who did consider liturgical gloves in detail, although all three only consider the construction of the fabric very briefly. All of these concentrate their commentary on the middle ages and the early modern period, and that is the period that shows the development of the use and form of liturgical gloves. One or more of these writers are still regularly quoted as a source by other writers on the subject. Barbier de Montault wrote several articles about liturgical gloves. The most detailed were over four issues of *Bulletin Monumental* in 1876-1877;[10] Braun included liturgical gloves in *Die liturgische Gewandung* in 1907.[11] Both covered the topic, including discussion of the theology and use of gloves, the types of ornamentation, and some of the extant examples. Bock produced less material and is less used as a source by glove writers and researchers.[12]

Very little general work was done on liturgical gloves through the first six decades of the twentieth century. In the interwar years, two brief articles appeared in the popular English fine art journal, *The Connoisseur*, on the glove collections of Robert Spence[13] and of Mrs Philip Lehmann,[14] with small black and white illustrations: both included liturgical gloves. Beaulieu published on liturgical gloves in 1968, concentrating on representations of gloves, and discussing extant gloves found in France.[15] Rutt and Turnau wrote general histories of knitting, which included a few pages on liturgical gloves at the end of the twentieth century.[16] Desrosiers *et al* discussed early liturgical gloves as part of their study of three recently conserved items.[17] Willemsen included liturgical gloves in her work on gloves published in

[9] Pugin, Augustus W. N. *The glossary of ecclesistical ornament and costume: compiled from ancient authorities* (London: Bohn, 1844), pp.136-137.
[10] Barbier de Montault, X., 'Les gants pontificaux', *Bulletin monumental* 5th serie, tome 4 n.42 (1876), pp.401-467, pp.649-675 (but pages 650-675 misnumbered 550-575), pp.777-809; 5th serie, tome 5 n.43, (1877), pp.5-62.
[11] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), pp.359-384.
[12] Bock, Franz *Geschichte der liturgischen Gewänder des Mittelalters oder Entstehung und Entwicklung der kirchlichen ornate und paramente*…..band II (Bonn: Cohen, 1866), pp.131-148.
[13] Gibson, Eugenie, 'Some gloves from the collection of Mr. Robert Spence, Part 1', *The Connoisseur* 55, n.218 (October 1919) pp.87-92.
[14] Beard, Charles R., 'Liturgical gloves in the collection of Mrs Philip Lehman', *The Connoisseur* 94 (October 1934), pp. 226-230.
[15] Beaulieu, Michèle, 'Les gants liturgiques au moyen age', *Bulletin archaeologique* New series, 4 (1968), pp.137-153.
[16] Turnau, Irena, *History of knitting before mass production* (Warsaw: Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of the history of material culture, 1991), pp. 16-18, 131-135.
[17] Desrosiers, Sophie, Dal-Pra, Patricia and Bédat, Isabelle, 'On medieval pontifical gloves abd glove medallions found in France', in Rast-Eicher, Antionette and Windler, Renata (eds.), *Archaeological Textiles* (NESAT IX) ((Nafels: Ragotti & Arioli, 2007), pp.159-165.

2015.[18] Warr's recent work (2019) takes an anthropological approach to liturgical gloves setting them in the context of their use.[19]

The late twentieth and early twenty-first century saw the publication of several studies of one or more liturgical gloves. Information about liturgical gloves can also occur as a brief mention within a more general paper or book, such as Henshall's description of the gloves found at Fortrose[20] or Pomar's mention of two gloves in Portugal.[21]

Two other sources of exist alongside the more traditional printed material available in the public domain – 'grey literature' in the form of conservation reports and internal documentation in museums, and information from the internet. Some institutions, such as the Abegg Stiftung, have included details of some gloves they have conserved in printed publications.[22] Other institutions have not put this information into the public domain, but are more than happy to share it with serious researchers: one such is the Fashion Museum in Bath (UK), which has a number of liturgical gloves, mostly belonging to the Glovers' Collection Trust.[23]

One article traced for this project was only available on the internet. It is by Shawn Tribe, and draws heavily on Braun, but does include photographs and some links to the relevant webpages for them.[24] Some institutions include information about the liturgical gloves they hold on their websites: this may be little more than a photograph or two, and a very brief description – but others give more detail. The quality of the photographs is variable but can often be magnified for detailed study. These web catalogue entries have not been included in this literature review.

[18] Willemsen, Annemarieke, *Van hand tot hand: handschoenen en wanten in de Nederlanden voor 1700*. (Zwolle: Spa, 2015), pp.36, 127-130, 142, 147, 152.
[19] Warr, Cordelia, 'In persona Christi: liturgical gloves and the construction of public religious identity', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library,* 95 (2019), pp.135-156.
[20] Henshall, Audrey S., 'Early textiles found in Scotland. Part II medieval imports', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 88 (1954-56), pp.22-39, p.39.
[21] Pomar, Rosa, *Portuguese knitting: a historical and practical guide to traditional Portuguese techniques…* (Tunbridge Wells: Search, 2020), pp.13-14.
[22]Flury-Lemberg, Mechthild, *Textile conservation and research,* (Bern: Abegg-Stiftung, 1988), pp.66, 244-247, 468, 488.
[23] Pers. comm.
[24] Tribe, Shawn, 'Pontifical gloves: a brief history and consideration', *Liturgical arts journal* 17 July 2018. Available online at: https://www.liturgicalartsjournal.com/2018/07/pontifical-gloves-brief-history-and.html [accessed 1 May 2020].

Chapter 4: Provenance and possible ownership of liturgical gloves

Some gloves are linked to specific saints or church dignitaries. However, such links need to be treated with caution. Various church treasuries contain gloves of 'their' bishops or holy saints, but the gloves date from the period when he was later beatified or canonised or even later than that. An example of this is the knitted fragment of a glove held in the Historical Museum in Deventer, the Netherlands, which came from the eleventh century crypt of the church of St Lebinius, and was associated with him; Willemsen dated the fragments to the sixteenth century.[25] Lebinius died around 775, long before the first known example of knitting.[26] Laget too argued that there could be a great temptation to attach significant objects to the most prestigious local personality, and amongst her examples included those attributed to St Remi in the basilica of St Sernin in Toulouse.[27] Interestingly, in the Greek Orthodox church, objects that are worn down by veneration are regularly replaced, sometimes as a gift, yet do not lose their symbolic value to the faithful – the most noted instance is St Spyridon's sandals in Corfu, which are replaced annually.[28]

Writing in the nineteenth century, Barbier de Montault was already aware of this possibility. He related his practical experience with the gloves of Archbishop Peter II of Tarentaise (1102-1174), considering that the earliest date for these is the fifteenth century. He argued that the gloves were made, or re-shaped, for the dead body of the archbishop. He estimated that the hand of the glove would fit his own hand but that the wrist was much narrower, and that his own hand would not fit through it, and thus the glove could not be pulled on in the usual way. In addition, there was straw at the end of the fingers, which he suggested was put there in order to make the gloved hand look realistic. He also thought that the few wax stains on the fingertips came from the candles placed on top of his reliquary, which had penetrated through the slots on the top.[29] His conclusion from this was that whilst the gloves were traditionally believed to be those of Archbishop Peter II, in reality his remains acquired them a few centuries later. He also pointed out that canonisation in the middle ages might involve the removal of the body from its grave, and its placement for veneration in a shrine. In France, this involved wrapping the body, or bones, in a shroud of precious fabrics; whilst in Italy and other neighbouring countries the body of a bishop was clad in pontifical regalia, and he thought that this was the case with the archbishop's body.[30]

Occasionally, the link between a person and gloves can be reliable. One such link is that of the gloves at New College, University of Oxford, which are believed to have been donated to the college by William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury (1456-1532).[31]

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[25] Willemsen, Annemarieke, *Van hand tot hand: handschoenen en wanten in de Nederlanden voor 1700* (Zwolle: Spa, 2015), p.129.
[26] Costambeys, Marios. 'Lebuin [St Lebuin, Lebwin, Leofwine, Livinus] (d. c. 775), missionary', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Oxford: September 23, 2004. Oxford University Press, 2004). [Accessed online 30 Sep. 2020, www.oxforddnb.com].
[27] Laget, Elizabeth, 'Vetements liturgiques', *Bulletin monumental* 129 (1971), pp.144-145, p.145.
[28] Carroll, Timothy, 'Textiles and the making of sacred space', *Textile History* 48 (2017), pp.192-210, p.194.
[29] Barbier de Montault, X., 'les gants pontificaux', *Bulletin monumental*, 5th serie, tome 5 n.43 (1877), pp.5-62, pp.13-14.
[30] Barbier de Montault, X., 'Les gants pontificaux', *Bulletin monumental*, 5th serie, tome 5 n.43 (1877), pp.5-62, pp.13-14.
[31] Ashton, Leigh, 'The so-called gloves of William of Wykeham', *Burlington Magazine* LIV (1929), pp. 34, 38-39.

Chapter 5: The elements of the gloves

Tenth and eleventh century church inventories are silent on the fabric, colour and ornamentation of liturgical gloves, and later inventories rarely give much detail on these. Braun traced six simple and twenty-two richly equipped gloves in church inventories.[32] This section will consider the elements common to all gloves, including the three sections identified by many writers – namely the gauntlet, the hand and the fingers.[33] It will also discuss the colour(s) of liturgical gloves.

Gauntlets

In images dated to the twelfth and thirteenth century, gloves regularly cover the arm beyond the wrist. Before 1250, the gauntlets of liturgical gloves seem to be a similar width to the hand, but from then on the gauntlet section became much wider. In many cases they were so wide that they hung down from the wrist and were finished with a tassel or a bell – but bells only appear in images, not on gloves that survive from the period, and it is possible these were only shown in representations of ecclesiastics because they were a popular secular fashion.[34] Some records suggest that the ornamentation of gloves might be transferred from glove to glove.[35] The fourteenth century saw wrists take on great importance, and representations of liturgical gloves in the fifteenth century reflect this trend. Large, flared gloves alternate with gloves of more modest dimensions: many surviving liturgical gloves made by single needle looping techniques have cuffs of smaller proportions, not the huge ones shown in images. Beaulieu considers that the gloves with narrower gauntlets were kept for the celebration of the mass as these were easier to put on.[36]

Hands and fingers

Writers generally do not comment on the fingers of gloves. Their interest in the hand tends to centre on the medallion which ornaments the back of the hand. Barbier de Montault devoted about a quarter of his work in the *Bulletin monumental* to these.[37] Most of these medallions were round, but others were elliptical or cruciform.[38] Those ornamenting medieval gloves were usually made from metal or fabric. They were often decorated with precious stones, figurative or symbolic representations, sometimes created in enamel, and sometimes embroidered. Particularly popular symbols were the saviour, the virgin, the lamb of god (agnus dei), the blessing of god (shown as a hand which reflected god's omnipotence), and the cross.[39] Braun considered that by the end of the middle ages, medallion motifs became

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[32] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.378.
[33] See, for instance, Barbier de Montault, X., 'Les gants pontificaux', *Bulletin monumental* 5th serie, tome 4 n.42 (1876), pp.401-467, p.430
[34] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), pp.371-373.
[35]Bock, Franz *Geschichte der liturgischen Gewänder des Mittelalters oder Entstehung und Entwicklung der kirchlichen ornate und paramente*…..band II (Bonn: Cohen, 1866), pp.131-148, pp.142-143.
[36] Beaulieu, Michèle, 'Les gants liturgiques au moyen age', *Bulletin archaeologique* New series, 4 (1968), pp.137-153, pp.148-149, 153.
[37] Barbier de Montault, X., 'les gants pontificaux', *Bulletin monumental* 5th serie, tome 4 n.42 (1876) pp.777-809
[38] De Linas, Charles, *Vêtements sacredoteux et anciens tissus conservés en France* Paris: Dideron, 1860), p.215.
[39] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), pp.374.

simplified, and limited to an IHS or a cross;[40] the IHS was the most common motif in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[41] IHS might be a contraction of the latinised version of the name 'Jesus', or it could be the initial letters of *J[I]esus hominum salvator*: the earliest use of this phrase has been traced to the mid-fifteenth century.[42] However, there are examples of more exuberant motifs, allegedly from this period, such as that on 437&A-1892 in the V&A Museum (UK).

It is possible that the same medallion might be used on more than one glove. The medallions on the gloves of Peter de Courpalay were identified as late eleventh century Byzantine by Beaulieu; Laget wondered if they might have had a previous use, given that Peter died in the early thirteenth century.[43] Coatsworth and Owen-Crocker considered that this is the case with the medallions on the gloves at Brixen. They date to an earlier period than the embroidery on the gauntlets, and show evidence of previously having been attached to another item.[44] Braun argued that there was no reason to keep old gloves that had become damaged: the valuable parts could easily be separated, and the gloves discarded.[45] Johnstone pointed out that it was known for vestments to be destroyed to reclaim their gold and jewels in the middle ages.[46]

Colours

Durandus is the only medieval liturgist to mention colour and he only mentions white. The earliest suggestion that bishops' gloves should match the colour of their chasuble is in the *Ordo Romanus XIII* of 1271. Rutt commented that 'since the colour most frequently used for solemn episcopal functions apart from white was red, most extant liturgical gloves are red',[47] which explains why there are not many green gloves, despite the length of ordinary time in the church's annual cycle. Possibly, there ought to be more white gloves. Most writers on liturgical gloves hold the view that that gloves were usually white until the sixteenth century, after which they were in any of the four liturgical colours. Braun suggested that Borromeo was the first to suggest liturgical colours should apply to gloves, and other authors seem to have followed him, but the source he quoted for this is erroneous.[48] Black was never used for liturgical gloves – despite black chasubles being worn at major feasts because they were often an institution's richest vestment.[49]

There is also a suggestion that the colour of a liturgical glove related to the churchman who owned it. White was the colour for the pope, red for cardinals, purple for bishops, and green

[40] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), pp.375.
[41] Warr, Cordelia, 'In persona Christi: liturgical gloves and the construction of public religious identity', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 95 (2019), pp.135-156. [Accepted author manuscript, p.6].
[42] F.R. Webber, *Church symbolism* (Cleveland: Jansen, 1938: reprinted Kessinger's legacy reprints), p.94.
[43]Laget, Elizabeth, 'Vetements liturgiques' *Bulletin monumental* 129 (1971), pp.144-145, p.145.
[44] Coatsworth, Elizabeth and Owen-Crocker, Gale, *Clothing the past: surviving garments from early medieval to early modern western Europe,* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), p.407.
[45] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), pp.376-377.
[46] Johnstone, Pauline *High fashion in the church: the place of church vestments in the history of art from the ninth to the nineteenth century* (Leeds, Maney, 2002; paperback reprint 2013), p.2.
[47] Rutt, Richard, *A history of hand knitting* (London: Batsford, 1987), p.56. Rutt lists the *Ordo* as XI, but this is an error as it was produced in 1143; Cardon also mentions *Ordo* XIII when discussing colour of gloves.
[48] See discussion below – section on St Charles Borromeo.
[49] Turnau, Irena, *History of knitting before mass production* (Warsaw: Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of the history of material culture, 1991), p.131.

for abbots. This is mentioned in Mayo,[50] who gave her source as Charles Beard. He does provide this information, but does not list his source.[51] It is possible he confused liturgical gloves with the colours decreed for official gloves for prelates, as laid down in the nineteenth century. In *Costume of the prelates of the catholic church*, for instance, it is stated that official gloves, which are not those used in the liturgy, were to be made of silk of the same colour as the stockings the prelate was entitled to wear – white for the pope, red for cardinals and purple for bishops and archbishops. This was published several years before Beard was writing.[52]

[50] Mayo, Janet, *A history of ecclesiastical dress* (London: Batsford, 1984), p.76.
[51] Beard, Charles R., 'Liturgical gloves in the collection of Mrs Philip Lehman', *The Connoisseur* 94, (October 1934), pp. 226-230, p.227.
[52] Nainfa, John Abel Felix Prosper *Costume of the prelates of the catholic church,* New edition (Baltimore, MD: John Murphy, 1926), p. 129.

Chapter 6: Non-knitted liturgical gloves

There are three other materials from which liturgical gloves were made, aside from knitted fabric: single needle looping, woven fabric and leather. Several extant gloves are seamless, and created by a single needle looping technique. To modern eyes which are used to analysing fabric structures, it is obvious that the technique used is not knitting. Earlier writers did not necessarily possess this analytical skill, and some gloves identified as knitted have later been identified as being created by a different single needle looping technique. Latour erroneously identified crochet as the technique used for all seamless gloves.[53] Desrosiers *et al* considered that single needle looping techniques were in use by the twelfth century to produce linen gloves without sewing.[54]

Bock considered that the earliest gloves may well have been made from woven fabric by cutting and seaming the fabric, and suggested that this continues until the development of knitting for stockings in the sixteenth century. He appears not to have been aware of the possibility of other needle looping techniques.[55] Braun provided the example of the liturgical gloves at Conflens (France) as ones which were made from woven fabric, which he dates to the thirteenth century,[56] although Beaulieu states that these had no liturgical use.[57]

There is very little evidence of liturgical gloves made from leather. Durandus was very clear that liturgical gloves can be made from the 'small skins of goats':[58] it seems unlikely he would have made this statement if gloves were not being made from fine leather. Legg argued that the term 'cheveral' used to describe two pairs of gloves in an inventory of the vestry in Westminster Abbey made in 1388 refers to gloves made from kid leather.[59] The Museum Catharijnconvent in Utrecht (Netherlands) has a pair of leather liturgical gloves which are dated to the seventeenth century.[60] Barbier de Montault also mentioned that gloves can be made from undyed skin, as white reflects the ideal of purity and incorruptibility, but gives no reference.[61]

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[53] Latour, A., 'The glove, a badge of office', *Ciba Review* 61 (1947), pp.2206-2211, p.2207.
[54] Desrosiers, Sophie, Dal-Pra, Patricia and Bédat, Isabelle, 'On medieval pontifical gloves and glove medallions found in France', in Rast-Eicher, Antionette and Windler, Renata (eds.) *Archaeological Textiles* (NESAT IX) ((Nafels: Ragotti & Arioli, 2007), pp.159-165, p.159.
[55] Bock, Franz *Geschichte der liturgischen Gewänder des Mittelalters oder Entstehung und Entwicklung der kirchlichen ornate und paramente*…..band II (Bonn: Cohen, 1866), pp.131-148, pp.135, 146.
[56] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.370.
[57] Beaulieu, Michèle, 'Les gants liturgiques au moyen age' *Bulletin archaeologique* New series, 4 (1968), pp.137-153, p.153.
[58] Durand, William, [Durandus] *Rationale divinorum officiorum* (on the clergy and their vestments) translated and introduced by Timothy M. Thibodeau (Chicago, University of Scranton P., 2010), p.186.
[59] Legg, J. Wickham, 'On an inventory of the vestry in Westminster Abbey, taken in 1388', *Archaeologia* 52 (1890), pp.195-286, p.222.
[60] Willemsen, Annemarieke, *Van hand tot hand: handschoenen en wanten in de Nederlanden voor 1700* (Zwolle: Spa, 2015), p.36 and fig.34.
[61] Barbier de Montault, X., 'les gants pontificaux', *Bulletin monumental* 5th serie, tome 4 n.42 (1876) pp.401-467, p.444.

Chapter 7: Knitted liturgical gloves

Bock considered that the art of stocking knitting was invented in the sixteenth century, and that it was then used for gloves, both sacred and secular.[62] Stam also saw knitting of liturgical gloves as a development from secular knitting which became common through Europe in the fifteenth century.[63] However, most writers see knitting as a technique for creating the base fabric of liturgical gloves as an earlier development: Turnau, for example, stated that the most frequently knitted liturgical products of the early middle ages are liturgical gloves, and suggests that the first were in Italy in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century.[64]

Descriptions in contemporary literature which mention knitted gloves are very rare. The only one traced to date is an inventory of Whalley Abbey in Lancashire (UK) made at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries (in the 1530s), which includes 'a pair of knette gloves with a rose of gold embroidered sett with perls and ij small safours [sapphires] in eyther of them'.[65]

Date and place of manufacture

Dating and country of origin

It is difficult to find much information on how the date of a specific is glove is determined. Turnau gave a list of which gloves have been dated to which period, drawing on the evidence supplied by museums, but did not provide any evidence as to what would link a glove to a particular period or location[66] - and she is not alone in this. This work has not uncovered any rationale for dating knitted liturgical gloves: the dealers who sold them to museums must have had some reason for the dates they applied, but this does not seem to have been recorded.

Carbonell is unusual in that the gloves she studied have the name of their apparent owner knitted into them, and she was able to trace two possible owners, ultimately opting for the later one.[67] De Kruijff dated the gloves in St Gertrudiskathedraal, Utrecht (Netherlands), to the seventeenth century by their embroidery;[68] and Ashton used the same rationale when he argued that decorations surrounding the medallions on the back of the New College, Oxford gloves date them to the sixteenth century, as the rayed circle can be compared with embroidery on burses, chalices and veils of the period.[69] Bock argued that the red silk gloves

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[62] Bock, Franz *Geschichte der liturgischen Gewänder des Mittelalters oder Entstehung und Entwicklung der kirchlichen ornate und paramente*…..band II (Bonn: Cohen, 1866), pp.131-148, p.146.
[63] Stam, Tuuk 'Gebreide bisschopshandschonen', in *Stitching Textielcommissie Nederland: Gebreid goed: Textieldag gebouden op 23 April 1998, Institut Collectie Nederland te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Stitching Textielcommissie Nederland, 2001), pp.37-45, p.40.
[64] Turnau, Irena, 'The diffusion of knitting in medieval Europe' in N. B. Harte and K. G. Ponting (eds.), *Cloth and clothmaking in medieval Europe* (London: Heinemann, 1982), pp.368-389, p.377.
[65] Walcott, MacKenzie E. C., 'Inventory of Whalley Abbey', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 19 (1886-1887), pp.103-110, p.107.
[66] Turnau, Irena, *History of knitting before mass production* (Warsaw: Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of the history of material culture, 1991), pp.132-133.
[67] Carbonell, Sylvia 'Gauntes episcopales con mensaje' *Datatextil* 17 (2007), pp. 82-88.
[68] De Kruijff, Anique. C., ' "In stof zijt gij" Enkele textiele vondstein in de reliekschat van de Utrechtse Gertudiskathedraal' *, Textielhistorische Bijdragen* 49 (2009), pp. 56-73, p.64.
[69]Ashton, Leigh, 'The so-called gloves of William of Wykeham', *Burlington Magazine* LIV (1929), pp. 34, 38-39, p.39.

taken from Cologne by the Bishop of Aachen date to the end of the sixteenth century because the IHS in the crown of rays is typical of this period.[70] Rutt listed five gloves that he thinks could be a group, on the basis of the similarities in the medallions on the backs of the hands, but he does not suggest a date (or a location) for these.[71]

Bažantová dated the gloves associated with St Adalbert in Prague (Czech Republic) to the thirteenth century based on the similarity of the scroll-like colour patterns to Egyptian and Iranian woven fabrics and knitted stockings. She also considered that they were most likely what she termed 'Arabic' work, given the combination of materials used in the construction, which are unusual for Europe, but typical for medieval Egypt and further east.[72] She used the same principle with the richly embroidered cuff on the glove at Stará Boleslav, and concluded that it was probably made in northern Italy in the first half of the fourteenth century.[73]

Ashton provided the most detailed arguments for the possible place of manufacture of the gloves at New College, Oxford. He pointed out that there is no evidence for St John Hope's attribution of the gloves to William of Wykeham,[74] and argued for their attribution to William Warham: an attribution still current. He posited two possible locations – Spain or Italy, linking both to events in which Warham was involved. If the gloves in the V&A Museum (UK) that are very similar to these (i.e. 876&A-1897) are Spanish, it is likely the New College gloves could be too. If so, Warham might have been presented with them by Spanish dignitaries when he was present at Philip of Castile's visit to Windsor in 1506 or at the marriage negotiations for Mary, daughter of Henry VII, with Charles V in 1508 or at the coronation of Henry VIII in 1509. Alternatively, if they are Italian, they might have been given to him when he was appointed by Pope Julius II in 1510 to present the Golden Rose to Henry VIII or in 1514 when he received the embassy sent by Pope Leo X.[75]

Evidence of place of manufacture from colour patterning style

There is little evidence cited for establishing a place of manufacture for knitted gloves. Turnau commented that the most complicated patterned knitted goods, including the silk jackets, are attributed to Italy, but she considered this a hypothesis which requires much more work before it can be considered seriously.[76]

There is support for a suggestion that some knitted liturgical gloves were Spanish. Rutt considered it could be argued that the thirteenth century densely patterned knitted cushions

[70] Bock, Franz *Geschichte der liturgischen Gewänder des Mittelalters oder Entstehung und Entwicklung der kirchlichen ornate und paramente*…..band II (Bonn: Cohen, 1866), pp.131-148, p.147.
[71] Rutt, Richard, *A history of hand knitting* (London: Batsford, 1987), p.57.
[72] Quoted in Odstrčilovă, Sylvie, 'The so-called St Adalbert's Glove from Prague. An Early Example of a Knitted Liturgical Glove', *Piecework* Jan/Feb 2016, pp. 8-12, p.10.
[73] Quoted in Odstrčilovă, Sylvie, 'The so-called St Adalbert's Glove from Prague. An Early Example of a Knitted Liturgical Glove', *Piecework* Jan/Feb 2016, pp. 8-12, p.12.
[74] St John Hope, W. H., 'The episcopal ornaments of William of Wykeham and William of Waynfleet, sometime Bishops of Winchester, and of certain Bishops of St Davids, *Archaeologia* 60 (1907), pp.465-493, pp.483-4, plate 50.
[75] Ashton, Leigh, 'The so-called gloves of William of Wykeham', *Burlington Magazine* LIV (1929), pp. 34, 38-39, p.39.
[76] Turnau, Irena, *History of knitting before mass production* (Warsaw: Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of the history of material culture, 1991), p.133.

found in the mausoleum of the Monastery of Las Huelgas (Spain) were 'Arabic', as they include an Arabic inscription, and argues that this is mudejar work, that is the work of a Muslim craftsman in a reconquered Christian area of Spain, but he refused to commit himself irrevocably to this viewpoint.[77] Stanley thought that the cushions were mudejar work, and that the gloves of Archbishop de Rada from the Monastery of St Maria de Huerta, Madrid, Spain, which have been dated to the thirteenth century, were too.[78] Rutt thought the patterning on the fragments of the gloves of Bishop Seigfried von Westerburg in Bonn (Germany) is similar to the cushions at Las Huelgas, though he did point out that these are very small fragments.[79] Feliciano argued that there was a pan-Iberian appreciation of mudejar textiles in thirteenth century Spain, by both Christian and Islamic rulers: the traditional view of mudejar work being by Muslims for Christian patrons is inaccurate. Many of the Islamic textiles come from funerary sources but show evidence of being used in life.[80]

The knitters of knitted liturgical gloves

There is very little evidence of who was actually knitting these gloves. The gloves demonstrate highly skilled work, and the fine gauge[81] of many means that the knitters would have been working with fine needles. They would need to be expert knitters, especially when creating the sections using two or more colours. Turnau considered that working five finger gloves required highly developed skills in the use of silk and of fashioning.[82] An experiment for the *Holy Hands* project of a partial reconstruction of the gauntlet patterning on GCT23408 in the Fashion Museum, Bath (UK), by one person using silk but at a coarser gauge, produced an estimate of twenty-seven hours for the full gauntlet: knitting to a finer gauge would probably take longer.[83]

Turnau stated that the majority of gloves were produced in women's convents,[84] but gave no supporting source for this assertion. Power referred to the nuns of the diocese of Rouen in the mid-thirteenth century selling and gifting sewn or 'knit' silken purses, tassels and needlecases.[85] However, Rutt considered that she has mistranslated the term *acuaria* which means 'needlework' as 'knitting';[86] and in any case the records she provided do not include gloves.[87] Johnstone mentioned that a large number of luxurious vestments were produced in

[77] Rutt, Richard, *A history of hand knitting* (London: Batsford, 1987), p.41-42.
[78] Stanley, Montse, 'Mil anys de punt. Pluralisme i interrogants/mil años de punto. Pluralismo e interrogantes', in Morral, Eulalia and Carbonell, Silvia (compilers), *Mil años de diseño en punto/Mil anys de diseny en punt* (Barcelona, Centre de Documentacio i Museu Textil, 1997), pp. 35-66, p.62.
[79] Rutt, Richard, *A history of hand knitting* (London: Batsford, 1987), p.56.
[80] Feliciano, Maria Judith, 'Muslim shrouds for Christian kings? A re-assessment of Andalusi textiles in thirteenth century Castilian life and ritual' in Cynthia Robinson and Leyla Routh (eds.), *Under the influence: questioning the comparative in medieval Castile* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 101-131, pp. 104, 117.
[81] See section on *construction*.
[82] Turnau, Irena, 'The diffusion of knitting in medieval Europe' in N. B. Harte and K. G. Ponting (eds.), *Cloth and clothmaking in medieval Europe* (London: Heinemann, 1982), pp.368-389, p.380.
[83] Experimental knitting by Lesley O'Connell Edwards, summer 2020. More experimentation by a larger group is anticipated and will be more instructive.
[84] Turnau, Irena, 'The diffusion of knitting in medieval Europe' in N. B. Harte and K. G. Ponting (eds.), *Cloth and clothmaking in medieval Europe* (London: Heinemann, 1982), pp.368-389, p.377.
[85] Power, Eileen, *Medieval English nunneries* (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1922), pp.258, 655.
[86] Rutt, Richard, *A history of hand knitting* (London: Batsford, 1987), p. 55.
[87] Power, Eileen, *Medieval English nunneries* (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1922), p.655.

sixteenth century Spain, but many were made in secular workshops.[88] She gave no source or reference for this, but if there was a tradition of secular workshops producing liturgical items, it is possible these included liturgical glove knitters.

Like Turnau, Stam commented that many gloves must have been manufactured within the cloister walls – but provided no source or reference. However, she produced some tentative evidence of liturgical glove knitters in seventeenth century Netherlands. The Maagden van den Hoeck was a community of devout women who were not monastic but had taken a simple vow of purity and poverty. They were very industrious in ecclesiastical textile work for the vicars apostolic from about 1614 to 1663. A 'batch of episcopal garments' considered to be their work were transferred to the Episcopal Museum after the closure of the 'secret' church in the district of Den Hoeck in Harlaam in 1870. Among these are a number of knitted and embroidered gloves. Stam claimed the gloves were made by them, but the quotations she provides from their records do not give any direct evidence of this.[89]

Construction of knitted liturgical gloves

Little has been written considering the actual act of creating knitting liturgical gloves, let alone comparing the construction of two or more pairs. In addition, very little scientific analysis has been done on the threads used in the construction of the gloves. Some of the individual studies in the section that follows provide specific details of construction and patterning of specific gloves.[90] Institutions also sometimes put this kind of data on their websites or their photographs are sufficiently clear that such information can be obtained from examining these. The gloves in the *Knitting in Early Modern Europe* database (www.kemeresearch.com) located by the *Holy Hands* project will enable researchers to analyse these details and produce a statistical survey.

Materials

Writers agree that most of the gloves were knitted from silk. The trade in silk with the near east was expanding in the later medieval and early modern period, and the spread of silk manufacture in northern Italy provided an increasing supply of European based fibre.[91] However, there are some exceptions. Some were made of linen, such as the white ground thread in the glove associated with St Adalbert in Prague (Czech Republic),[92] and possibly some of cotton. Wool gloves are known to exist, such as the fragments in the Historical Museum at Deventer in the Netherlands.[93]

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[88] Johnstone, Pauline *High fashion in the church: the place of church vestments in the history of art from the ninth to the nineteenth century* (Leeds, Maney, 2002; paperback reprint 2013), p.81.
[89] Stam, Tuuk 'Gebreide bisschopshandschonen', in *Stitching Textielcommissie Nederland: Gebreid goed: Textieldag gebouden op 23 April 1998, Institut Collectie Nederland te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Stitching Textielcommissie Nederland, 2001), pp.37-45, p.43.
[90] See below, *Studies of one glove, or a small group of gloves*.
[91] Johnstone, Pauline *High fashion in the church: the place of church vestments in the history of art from the ninth to the nineteenth century* (Leeds, Maney, 2002; paperback reprint 2013), p.21.
[92] Odstrčilová, Sylvie, 'The so-called St Adalbert's Glove from Prague. An Early Example of a Knitted Liturgical Glove', *Piecework* Jan/Feb 2016, pp. 8-12, p.8.
[93] Willemsen, Annemarieke, *Van hand tot hand: handschoenen en wanten in de Nederlanden voor 1700* (Zwolle: Spa, 2015), p. 129, pl. 147.

Sometimes, there is a lack of certainty on the material from which a glove is knitted, as is the case of the gloves at Canosa (Italy). It was previously suggested that these were made from cotton or a blend of wool and silk, but Coatsworth and Owen-Crocker considered that both are unlikely. Yarn made from a blend of wool and silk, is not a technique of the period of which they are aware, and neither there is any sign of moth damage, which they would expect with wool.[94] They felt that the gloves are most likely to be silk alone, or just possibly linen.[95]

Tools

Turnau stated that the gloves of St Remi at Toulouse were 'coarsely knitted on two stout needles', but gave no evidence as to how she arrived at this conclusion.[96] She argued that the introduction of knitting on four or five needles was an important advance, but again provided no source or reference, although she did give examples of the various paintings showing the madonna knitting in the round.[97] Stam was dubious that the skill of knitting on four needles had been mastered in northern Germany by the fifteenth century, although there are examples of round knitting from Bohemia and southern Alpine regions.[98]

Gauge information and other construction details

Writers agree that most of the gloves have a fine gauge of twenty or more loops/wales (stitches) and courses (rounds) to the inch, or eighty wales/courses to ten centimetres. (This review uses the terminology in the protocol for the description of knitted items laid out in Malcolm-Davies *et al*, to ensure the systematic recording of these artefacts.)[99]

The link of specific colour patterns to place of manufacture has been discussed earlier.[100] Odstrčilovă discussed construction direction on two Czech gloves based on the use of decreases and increases. The direction of the knitting that can be determined from the 'jog' in the colour patterning. She posited that the two were created in different directions, one from the wrist up, and the other working down towards the wrist.[101]

On some gloves, the IHS logo is correctly written from left to right on one hand, but reversed on the other, suggesting that the knitter reversed the complete pattern for the second hand. Willemsen made an interesting point that mirroring the name of Christ could be seen as blasphemy in the middle ages,[102] so what are we to make of this reversal? Black suggested

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[94] Wool is keratin whereas silk is sericin, which are different proteins.

[95] Coatsworth, Elizabeth and Owen-Crocker, Gale, *Clothing the past: surviving garments from early medieval to early modern western Europe,* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), p.401.

[96] Turnau, Irena, 'The diffusion of knitting in medieval Europe' in N. B. Harte and K. G. Ponting (eds.), *Cloth and clothmaking in medieval Europe* (London: Heinemann, 1982), pp.368-389, p.377.

[97] Turnau, Irena, 'The diffusion of knitting in medieval Europe' in N. B. Harte and K. G. Ponting (eds.), *Cloth and clothmaking in medieval Europe* (London: Heinemann, 1982), pp.368-389, p.382.

[98] Stam, Tuuk 'Gebreide bisschopshandschonen', in *Stitching Textielcommissie Nederland: Gebreid goed: Textieldag gebouden op 23 April 1998, Institut Collectie Nederland te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Stitching Textielcommissie Nederland, 2001), pp.37-45, p.38.

[99] Malcolm-Davies, Jane, Gilbert, Ruth and Lervad, Susanna, 'Unravelling the confusions: defining concepts to record archaeological and historical evidence for knitting', *Archaeological Textiles Review* 60 (2018), pp.10-24, pp.12-13.

[100] See section above, under *Date and place of manufacture*.

[101] Odstrčilovă, Sylvie, 'The so-called St Adalbert's Glove from Prague. An Early Example of a Knitted Liturgical Glove', *Piecework* Jan/Feb 2016, pp. 8-12, pp.10-12.

[102] Willemsen, Annemarieke, *Van hand tot hand: handschoenen en wanten in de Nederlanden voor 1700* (Zwolle: Spa, 2015), p.130.

that reversal of the medallion on the V&A Museum example (inventory number 876a) might indicate that section of the glove was worked back and forth, rather than in the round, and seamed.[103]

Studies of one glove or a small group of gloves

There are a number of articles in which a researcher or researchers have discussed either one glove, a pair or a small group of gloves, and provided some information on construction and/or provenance. These are listed below. The listing excludes items which simply mention a glove being in a specific place, and items where there is only minimal information.

Gloves of Archbishop Rodrigo de Rada of Toledo at the Monastery of St Maria de Huerta, Madrid, Spain.
There are two detailed accounts of these gloves, which are linked to de Rada, who died in 1247, and the conservation work done on them. Mantilla de los Ríos y Rojas discussed both gloves, including the patterning on the gloves, and the conservation treatment. Her article is well illustrated, with several black and white plates, including full-page photographs of the back and front of the right hand, and quarter page photographs of the left hand. There are also four colour photographs.**[104]** The right glove, which was conserved at the Abegg Stiftung, is discussed by Fleury-Lemburg: it includes a chart for the patterns, including the agnus dei [lamb of god], as well as black and white photographs.**[105]**

Feliciano discussed de Rada's funerary vestments, and gave the traditional story that his funerary attire was part of the Granadine Emir's tribute and presented to de Rada as a posthumous gift by the then Castilian king, Fernando III, although she suggested this legend should be further investigated. She also provided evidence from a contemporary source that when the tomb was opened in 1558, the body was seen in full pontifical regalia, including gloves. [106]

Boston Museum of Fine Art (USA)
The exhibition catalogue of *Raiment for the Lord's service* included black and white photographs of three of the gloves in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, together with very brief captions. One of the gloves is associated with Cardinal Richelieu. (The introductory essays do not mention liturgical gloves.)[107]

Braga (Portugal)
Pomar provided a brief discussion of these liturgical gloves, dated to the fourteenth century, which were found in the tomb of Bishop Pereira, who died in 1348. They have undergone

[103] Black, Sandy, *Knitting: fashion, industry, craft* (London: V & A, 2012), p.16.
[104] Mantilla de los Ríos y Rojas, María Socorro, *Vestiduras pontificales del Arzobispo Rodrigo Ximénez de Rada, s. XIII: su estudio y restauración* (Madrid: Instituto de Conservación y Restauración de Bienes Culturales (España), 1995, pp.70-76 (plates 59-72).
[105] Flury-Lemberg, Mechthild, *Textile conservation and research,* (Bern: Abegg-Stiftung, 1988), pp.66, 246, 247, 468.
[106] Feliciano, Maria Judith, 'Muslim shrouds for Christian kings? A re-assessment of Andalusi textiles in thirteenth century Castilian life and ritual' in Cynthia Robinson and Leyla Routh (eds.), *Under the influence: questioning the comparative in medieval Castile* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 101-131, pp.119-122.
[107] Mayer-Thurman, Christa C., *Raiment for the Lord's service: a thousand years of western vestments*, (Chicago: Art Institute, 1975), pp. 211-213 (plates 97-99).

conservation work. There is a colour photograph of the backs of the gloves, which is less than a quarter page. Pomar's information seems to have come from the Director of the Instituto dos Museus e da Conservação, in Lisbon (Portugal).[108]

Brixen, (Italy)
Coatsworth and Owen-Crocker provided a detailed description of these gloves, which are knitted from plain white silk. They concentrated on the embroidery and the metal medallions. There is a good colour photograph of the backs of the gloves and close-ups of the medallions on the backs of the hands.[109].

Gloves associated with St Sabinus - Canosa, Puglia (Italy)
Coatsworth and Owen-Crocker provided a detailed description of these gloves, including a page considering the knitted fabric, and the possible fit of the gloves. There is a colour photograph of the backs of the gloves and close-ups of the medallions on the backs of the hands.[110]

Coimbra (Portugal)
Pomar provided a brief discussion of these liturgical gloves dated to the fourteenth century found in the tomb of Bishop Brochado, who died in 1318. They have undergone conservation work. There is a colour photograph of the backs of the gloves, which is less than a quarter page, but it is poor quality, making it hard to distinguish the embroidered animals. Her information seems to have come from the Director of the Instituto dos Museus e da Conservação, in Lisbon (Portugal).[111]

Victoria & Albert Museum, London (UK)
The V&A Museum holds three pairs of liturgical gloves, but 276&A-1880 do not appear in the literature. Inventory number 437&A-1892 is an exuberant, heavily patterned pair, whilst 876&A-1897 has a knitted-in medallion and patterning on the gauntlet. Photographs of both of these last two appear in publications, with 437&A-1892 appearing more often than 876&A-1897, possibly due to its more impressive appearance. Levey described these two pairs in her article on knitting at the V&A Museum in the first issue of *Textile History*, and puts them in a brief context: later works give a different gauge for both wales and courses.[112] Harlow includes colour illustrations of 437&A, including a whole A4 page illustration, and claimed the fingers were knit in the round, and not cut: other authorities disagree.[113] Black discussed the construction of both 876&A and 437&A in detail, and provides colour photographs of both.[114]

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[108] Pomar, Rosa, *Portuguese knitting: a historical and practical guide to traditional Portuguese techniques…* (Tunbridge Wells: Search, 2020), pp.13, 14 (plate3).
[109] Coatsworth, Elizabeth and Owen-Crocker, Gale, *Clothing the past: surviving garments from early medieval to early modern western Europe,* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), pp.406-407.
[110] Coatsworth, Elizabeth and Owen-Crocker, Gale, *Clothing the past: surviving garments from early medieval to early modern western Europe,* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), pp.400-404.
[111] Pomar, Rosa, *Portuguese knitting: a historical and practical guide to traditional Portuguese techniques …* (Tunbridge Wells: Search, 2020), pp.13, 14 (plate 2)
[112] Levey, S. M., 'Illustrations of the history of knitting selected from the collection of the Victorian and Albert museum', *Textile History*, 1 (1968-70), pp.183-205, pp. 185-187, p.193 plate II.
[113] Harlow, Eve, *The art of knitting* (London: Collins, 1977 [1983 reprint]), pp.18,19, 138.
[114] Black, Sandy, *Knitting: fashion, industry, craft* (London: V&A, 2012), pp.16-17.

Patrimonio Nacional, Palacio Real, Madrid (Spain)
Morral provides a colour photograph and a brief discussion of construction of this pair of seventeenth century gloves, including gauge (8 wales and 11 courses per centimetre).[115]

Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester (UK)
Warr based her article *In persona christi* on these gloves, and details are dispersed throughout the article.[116]

Gloves attributed to William Warham - New College, Oxford (UK)
Photographs of these gloves appear in a number of publications. The gloves were originally thought to be part of the regalia of William of Wykeham and are first described in 1907 by St John Hope.[117] Ashton concentrated on the date and the provenance of the gloves, re-attributing them to William Warham and gives a very brief description.[118] Coatsworth and Owen-Crocker provided a detailed description of these gloves, including a colour photograph, showing the back of the left hand and the front of the right hand.[119]

St Adalbert's glove - St Vitus Cathedral, Prague (Czech Republic)
Photographs of this glove appear in a number of publications, and it is often commented on as being an early example of a knitted liturgical glove. There are two articles in Czech on this glove. Ryneš and Klosová (1966) described it and discussed its history,[120] Bažantovåá and Stehlíková (1987) gave a detailed description and history in Czech,[121] which updates some details in Ryneš and Klosová's paper. In 2016, Odstrčilovă provided a detailed description of the glove, including gauge (6 to 6.5 wales and 8 to 9 courses per centimetre). She also analysed its construction, including a chart of the patterned hands, and a diagram of the construction process. There are two colour photographs, one of the back of the glove, and a close-up of the gauntlet patterning.[122]

Church of St Vincelas, Stará Boleslav, Prague (Czech Republic)
There are two articles in Czech on this glove. Ryneš & Klosová (1966) described it;[123] Bažantová and Stehlíková (1987) gave a detailed description and history in Czech.[124]

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[115] Morral, Eulalia and Carbonell, Silvia (compilers), *Mil años de diseño en punto/Mil anys de diseny en punt* (Barcelona, Centre de Documentacio i Museu Textil, 1997), pp.288-289.
[116] Warr, Cordelia, 'In persona Christi: liturgical gloves and the construction of public religious identity', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 95 (2019), pp.135-156. [Accepted author manuscript]
[117] St John Hope, W. H. 'The episcopal ornaments of William of Wykeham and William of Waynfleet, sometime Bishops of Winchester, and of certain Bishops of St Davids', *Archaeologia*, 60, (1907), pp.465–492, pp.483-484, and plate 50.
[118] Ashton, Leigh, 'The so-called gloves of William of Wykeham', *Burlington Magazine* LIV (1929), pp. 34, 38-39.
[119] Coatsworth, Elizabeth and Owen-Crocker, Gale, *Clothing the past: surviving garments from early medieval to early modern western Europe,* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), pp.408-410.
[120] Ryneš V. & Klosová B.,'Oprava tzv. rukavice sv. Vojtěcha' *Památková péče* 126 (1966), pp.274-276.
[121] Bažantovåá N. & Stehlíková D., 'Pontifikální rukavice sv. Vojtěcha' *Památky a příroda*, 7 (1987), pp.400–421.
[122] Odstrčilovă, Sylvie, 'The so-called St Adalbert's Glove from Prague. An Early Example of a Knitted Liturgical Glove', *Piecework* Jan/Feb 2016, pp. 8-12.
[123] Ryneš V. & Klosová B.,'Oprava tzv. rukavice sv. Vojtěcha' *Památková péče* 126 (1966), pp.274-276.
[124] Bažantovåá N. & Stehlíková D., 'Pontifikální rukavice sv. Vojtěcha' *Památky a příroda*, 7 (1987), pp.400–421.

Odstrčilovă provided a precise analysis, including the construction of the glove, in 2016.[125] None of these articles provides an illustration of it.

Glove of St Bertrand de Comminges - Haute-Garonne (France)
Cardon provided a detailed survey of these gloves, including measurements and gauge (nine wales and eleven courses per centimetre). There is a colour photograph of the back of the right glove and the palm of the left glove, superimposed on a close-up of the patterning on the gauntlet.[126]

Gloves of Bishop Nikolaus Schiner, Bishop of Sion (Switzerland)
Fleury-Lemburg discussed the conservation of this pair of fifteenth century gloves found in the tomb of Bishop Nikolaus, which was carried out at the Abegg Stiftung. This includes black and white photographs.[127]

Liturgical gloves, inventory number CDMT 20.125 – Terrassa (Spain)
Carbonell discussed these gloves, which came from the monastery of Valbuena and have the name of Fray Augustin Lopez knitted into the fabric of the glove. She provided a detailed discussion of all the symbols, which cover the gloves, and also discussed to which of the two possible Fray Augustins the gloves might have belonged. There are clear colour photographs, of both the fronts and the backs of the hands.[128]

Gloves attributed to St Remi - St Sernin, Toulouse (France)
Turnau stated that Dubisson claimed these are made of linen and knitted on rather thick needles. She considers that they are made from unbleached silk.[129] Cardon produced a detailed survey of these gloves, including measurements and gauge (7.5 wales and 8.5 courses per centimetre). A colour photograph shows the backs of both gloves.[130]

St Gertrudiskethedraal, Utrecht (Netherlands)
De Kruijff provided a short description of these gloves, concentrating on the ornamentation. The gloves are illustrated in black and white photographs: there is a full-page view of the reversed IHS monogram on the back of the right glove, and a half-page view of the backs of each glove.[131]

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[125] Odstrčilovă, Sylvie, 'The so-called St Adalbert's Glove from Prague. An Early Example of a Knitted Liturgical Glove', *Piecework* Jan/Feb 2016, pp. 8-12, p.12.
[126] Cardon, Dominique, 'Les gants liturgiques du moyen age et les origines de la maille en Europe', in *Trésors textiles du Moyen Âge en Languedoc-Rousillon* (Carcassonne, Musée des Beaux Arts de Carcassonne, 1993), pp 29-39, pp.29 (plate13), p.39.
[127] Flury-Lemberg, Mechthild, *Textile conservation and research,* (Bern: Abegg-Stiftung, 1988), pp. 244, 245, 488.
[128] Carbonell, Sylvia 'Gauntes episcopales con mensaje' *Datatextil* 17 (2007), pp. 82-88.
[129] Turnau, Irena, *History of knitting before mass production* (Warsaw: Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of the history of material culture, 1991), p.17.
[130] Cardon, Dominique, 'Les gants liturgiques du moyen age et les origines de la maille en Europe', in *Trésors textiles du Moyen Âge en Languedoc-Rousillon* (Carcassonne, Musée des Beaux Arts de Carcassonne, 1993), pp. 29-39, pp.29 (plate 12), 38-39.
[131] De Kruijff, Anique. C., ' "In stof zijt gij" Enkele textiele vondstein in de reliekschat van de Utrechtse Gertudiskathedraal' *, Textielhistorische Bijdragen* 49 (2009), pp. 56-73, p.64; illustrations pp.71,72.

Lost knitted gloves

Not all gloves reported in the literature have survived. Two examples are pairs of knitted gloves believed to have been entombed with thirteenth century bishops in St Denis, Paris (France), and a bishop at Fortrose, Scotland. Both are cautionary tales for textile historians and archaeologists. Rowe recounted her experience of the gloves at St Denis in a paper published in 1969. She saw the gloves on the body of the unidentified bishop in 1949, and a fragment 6 cm by 3 cm was cut out of the palm and given to her by the inspector accompanying her: she took it back to Yale University Art Gallery (United States). The inspection had had to be carried out by flashlight and no notes were made. Rowe did not feel she could interfere in the matter of a French artefact. She made a return visit in 1959, when the body had been moved, and was unprotected and covered in dust. By the time she wrote her information, almost all remnants of the fabric had disintegrated. The sample she brought back to Yale was also disintegrating, and the decision was made to embed it in resin in 1967.[132]

The Fortrose gloves were originally unearthed at the end of the eighteenth century. About 1850, the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland visited the tomb, which was re-opened for them, and were presented with small samples from the some of the garments, including two from the gloves.[133] The two scraps, each around four inches square, were still in existence when Henshall described them in detail in 1954: one was in the possession of the National Museum of Scotland, and the other owned by Father MacGillivray, but she makes no mention of the gloves themselves.[134] Levey suggests that the gloves were in the possession of Mrs Stuart-MacKenzie of Brahan Castle in 1968.[135] The National Museum of Scotland still holds a fragment, but have no record of where the other fragment may be, or what has happened to the gloves, or, indeed, the rest of the garments found when the tomb was opened.[136]

[132] Rowe, Margaret T. J., 'Fragments from the tomb of an unknown bishop of Saint Denis, Paris', *Bulletin of the Needle and Bobbin Club*, 52 (1969), pp.27-33.
[133] Stuart, John, 'Notice of the remains found in an ancient tomb recently opened in the cathedral church of Fortrose', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* (1851), pp.281-284.
[134] Henshall, Audrey S., 'Early textiles found in Scotland. Part II medieval imports', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 88 (1954-56), pp.22-39, p.39.
[135] Levey, S. M., 'Illustrations of the history of knitting selected from the collection of the Victorian and Albert museum', *Textile History*, 1 (1968-70), pp.183-205, p.186.
[136] Pers. comm. Anna Groundwater and Jackie Moran, September 2020. The accession number for the NMS fragment is HKJ32.

Chapter 8: The use of liturgical gloves

There were two main uses for liturgical gloves – as part of the consecration of a bishop, and in the initial stages of the celebration of the mass. Gloves were a late addition to liturgical dress, only being recognised as part of a bishop's regalia by the second half of the twelfth century.[137] However, the western Christian church has not been a uniform body with regard to its liturgical practices for most of its existence, and so these varied from region to region until recent centuries. Records show that gloves were used at other times by some prelates, and were also used in coronations of some rulers, especially Holy Roman Emperors. An 1855 decree stated that liturgical gloves were only to be used to celebrate mass.[138]

Consecration of a bishop

Liturgical gloves were part of the pontifical regalia with which a bishop was garbed at his investiture. Other items included the mitre, stockings, buskins and sandals. There was a standard procedure for the order in which the newly consecrated bishop was decorated with these, by the consecrator, with help from the assisting bishops. The gloves were put on the hands immediately after the new bishop had received his mitre. Braun provides the prayer that accompanied this process, which reads in translation:

> *"Surround, Lord, your servant's hands with the purity of the new man who descended from heaven, so that he could be offered to you by the healing gift that he offers with his hands. May your blessing be earned as Jacob, your darling, acquired the fatherly blessing because, covered with the little hand [i.e. skins] on the hands, he offered welcome food and drink to the father, through Christ, our Lord, who took care of you for us in the way of sinful man himself. Amen."*[139]

In earlier times the bishop was given his gloves at his investiture with a prayer asking god to sprinkle the bishop with 'the dew of his divine blessing', so that all the bishop then blessed participated in god's blessing.[140]

The Mass

Writing in 1866, Bock stated that the gloves were presented to the bishop on a silver plate for the mass, and that the deacons and sub-deacons helped him put the gloves on and take them off.[141] Braun detailed the 1870 church regulations for mass: the gloves were put on the bishop immediately after the dalmatic (a tunic with long wide sleeves worn over the alb and under the chasuble). The bishop did not put on his own gloves: the right hand was put on by the

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[137] Johnstone, Pauline *High fashion in the church: the place of church vestments in the history of art from the ninth to the nineteenth century* (Leeds, Maney, 2002; paperback reprint 2013), p.15.
[138] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.359.
[139] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.360.
[140] Latour, A., 'The glove, a badge of office', *Ciba Review* 61 (1947), pp.2206-2211, p.2207.
[141] Bock, Franz, *Geschichte der liturgischen Gewänder des Mittelalters oder Entstehung und Entwicklung der kirchlichen ornate und paramente*…..band II (Bonn: Cohen, 1866), p.143.

assisting deacon and the left hand by the sub-deacon.[142] Given the bishop did not clothe himself, knitted gloves would be easier for others to put on his hands, as there would be some stretch in the fabric.[143] Prayers could be said as the bishop was being vested, such as:

> *Surround, lord, the hands of your servant with the purity of the new man who has come down from heaven, that through the salvation gift which he offers you with his hands, he may earn your blessing.*[144]

The gloves were used up to the point of the offertory in the mass, and then they were removed. The intention was that the hands were kept free of impurities, and the holy vessels were not defiled. No writers record instructions in missals for the replacement of gloves at the end of the ceremony but this seems to have been the case at Evesham Abbey in the late twelfth century,[145] and may have been so elsewhere.[146] The episcopal blessing at the end of the mass, made by making the sign of the cross was highly regarded by the congregation in the middle ages. Such an episcopal gesture was a matter of public importance, and continued as such through the Counter Reformation, which began in the mid-sixteenth century.[147]

Other uses

Liturgical gloves were not just used for the mass in the middle ages. At Evesham Abbey in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, the abbot used them in ceremonial processions, and also in Good Friday ceremonies.[148] Thirteenth century bishops of Bayeaux used gloves when they held office or took part in processions on certain high festival days. Abbots used them at church councils. However, there is little information in general, and nothing specifically from Rome that gloves were to be used other than in the mass.[149]

The Holy Roman Emperor received liturgical gloves at his coronation.[150] And what do we make of *chirothecae* listed in inventories? The Duke of Bedford had two pairs of 'gents pontificaux' in his inventory, made around 1435, which seem to have been spoils of war from

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[142] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.380.
[143] Warr, Cordelia, 'In persona Christi: liturgical gloves and the construction of public religious identity', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 95 (2019), pp.135-156. [Accepted author manuscript, p.11]
[144] Quoted in Stam, Tuuk 'Gebreide bisschopshandschonen', in *Stitching Textielcommissie Nederland: Gebreid goed: Textieldag gebouden op 23 April 1998, Institut Collectie Nederland te Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Stitching Textielcommissie Nederland, 2001), pp.37-45, p.37, and translated through https://translate.google.co.uk, July2020.
[145] Wilson, Henry A., *Officium ecclesiasticum abbatum secundum usum Eveshamensis monasterii* Series: Henry Bradshaw Society, 6 (London: H.B.S, 1893), col.16.
[146] Privat-Savigny, MarieAnne and Lécrivan, Dorothée, *Dans la peau du gant* [Exhibition catalogue Musée du Tissus, Lyon, 2009-2010], (Lyon: EMCC, 2009), p.64.
[147] Warr, Cordelia, 'In persona Christi: liturgical gloves and the construction of public religious identity', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 95 (2019), pp.135-156. [Accepted author manuscript, p.12].
[148] Wilson, Henry A., *Officium ecclesiasticum abbatum secundum usum Eveshamensis monasterii* Series: Henry Bradshaw Society, 6 (London: H.B.S, 1893), col.88.
[149] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.381.
[150] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.382.

the French chapel royal.[151] Bock commented that non-pontifical gloves were used in processions too.[152]

[151] Jenny Stratford, *The Bedford inventories: the worldly goods of John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France (1389-1435)* (London: Society of Antiquaries, 1993), pp.202, 316.
[152] Bock, Franz *Geschichte der liturgischen Gewänder des Mittelalters oder Entstehung und Entwicklung der kirchlichen ornate und paramente*…..band II (Bonn: Cohen, 1866), p.144.

Chapter 9: Anthropological approaches to the use of liturgical gloves

Several researchers have looked at liturgical gloves as material culture and suggested that they expressed spiritual truths. Barbier de Montault noted that some gloves were clearly much later in date than the prelate with whom they are associated. For him, such gloves were still precious relics and can be exhibited as such, since they were sanctified by contact with a holy body and effectively imbued with its substance.[153] Denny-Brown discussed the fact that clothing had become culturally and symbolically significant by the thirteenth century in her paper on the background to the production of Durandus's *Rationale*, which was a compendium of the material and spiritual aspects of the liturgy.[154] Warr's study of religious dress during the time of Innocent III noted that his policy of encouraging new expressions of popular religion was partly responsible for an emphasis on visual signs; and the dress of the religious assumed even greater importance after his death in 1216. The period saw the increasing importance of lay and secular appearance, and concern with codifying it: the first sumptuary laws appear at this time, too – the earliest was Genoa in 1157, and then in Siena in 1219. Canon XVI of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 deals with clothing and shows a move from using it to stress humility to stressing appearance of orthodoxy and conformity to the approved faith of the church.[155]

Warr's recent work specifically on liturgical gloves attempted to set their use in a symbolic and cultural context. As with other vestments, liturgical gloves were used to express spiritual truth through material splendour but are distinct in that they followed the contours of the part of the body they covered. Gloves could be seen as a link between the realms of heaven and earth – used by bishops and above to distinguish their rank, they were a 'material demonstration of their higher level of spiritual perfection and their connection to the apostles and to Christ.' The Counter Reformation and the seventeenth century saw an increasing awareness of the importance of gestures too.[156]

[153] Barbier de Montault, X., 'les gants pontificaux', *Bulletin monumental*; 5th serie, tome 5 n.43, (1877) pp.5-62, pp.14-15.
[154] Denny-Brown, Andrea, 'Old habits die hard: vestimentary change in William Durandus's *Rationale divinorum officiorum*', *Journal of medieval and early modern studies*, 39 (2009), pp.545–570.
[155] Warr, Cordelia, 'De indumentis: the importance of religious dress during the papacy of Innocent III' in Sommerlechner, Andrea (ed.), *Innocenzo III: urbs et orbis* v.1 (Rome: Societa romana di storia patria, 2003), pp.489-502, pp.489, 499, 501.
[156] Warr, Cordelia, 'In persona Christi: liturgical gloves and the construction of public religious identity', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 95 (2019), pp.135-156. [Accepted author manuscript, pp.4, 12].

Chapter 10: Theological background

Little has been written about the theological justification for liturgical gloves, and most of those who do comment on it were writing in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Durandus is most frequently quoted as a source, but Honorius of Autun, Bruno of Segni, Innocent III and Sicard are sometimes quoted as authorities by those writing on liturgical gloves. In the sixteenth century, St Charles Borromeo also touched briefly on them.

Several theologians have used the term *inconsutiles* when referring to liturgical gloves. This is translated as 'seamless' and has been interpreted by some writers as meaning that the gloves must have been knitted. However, this is not necessarily the obvious interpretation, as will be discussed below: in addition, knitting as a craft is thought to have developed in the twelfth century in Islamic areas of the eastern Mediterranean, and then moved west and north over the following centuries.[157] There are a few surviving gloves that are created by single needle looping, which is another seamless technique, but there are also a very few cut and sewn woven fabric gloves.[158]

Honorius of Autun (fl. early twelfth century)
The first mention of liturgical gloves seems to be in Honorius, which Macalister dated to around 1130. Honorius's explanation for the use of gloves is ambiguous: as hands are sometimes covered with gloves, and sometimes are bare, so good deeds should sometimes be hidden to avoid vainglory, and sometimes revealed to provide an edifying example to those near us.[159] Honorius attributed the use of liturgical gloves to the apostles in his *Gemma animae*, but without providing any evidence.[160]

Bruno of Segni (also called Bruno of Asti – 1045/7 to 1123)
Bruno commented that the bishop's hands were clothed with gloves so that they should be clean, pure and free from all dirt and 'noisesomeness'[161] – the last meaning free from anything offensive and harmful. Bock claimed he also stated that gloves should be made of linen, [162] but Braun disputed this claim.[163] Beck claimed Bruno stated that linen was used to denote the fact the hands that they covered were chaste, clean and free of impurity.[164]

Innocent III (1160-1216)
For Innocent, gloves were a symbol of the raw skins that Rebecca put on Jacob's hands, to make him appear to be his older brother, Esau. He considered gloves to typify the manhood

[157] Rutt, Richard, *A history of hand knitting* (London: Batsford, 1987), pp.32-35.
[158] See above, section on non-knitted liturgical gloves.
[159] Macalister**,** Robert Alexander Stuart, *Ecclesistical vestments: their development and history* (London: Elliot Stock, 1896), p.64, p.122.
[160] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.366.
[161] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.384.
[162] Bock, Franz Geschichte der liturgischen Gewänder des Mittelalters oder Entstehung und Entwicklung der kirchlichen ornate und paramente…..band II (Bonn: Cohen, 1866), pp.131-148, p.135.
[163] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.378, footnote.
[164] Beck, S. William, *Gloves, their annals and associations. A chapter of trade and social history* (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1883), pp.16-17.

Jesus took upon himself.[165] He also decreed that a *circulus* of gold or gold plate was to be attached to the back of the hand of the glove.[166]

Sicard (1160-1215)
Sicard only mentioned gloves very briefly in his *Mitrales*. He used the term *inconsutiles* but this refers to the bishop's faith. It is the faith of the church rather than to the nature of the gloves which must be seamless. Like Honorius, he also suggested that gloves could be used to hide good deeds, whilst bare hands could reveal them to the world.[167]

William Durnadus (1230-1296)
Durandus's *Rationale divinorum officiorum* (on the clergy and their vestments) included two sections on liturgical gloves. The first simply mentioned gloves in the order in which a bishop vests for mass.[168] The section second provided his thoughts on the theology behind the use of gloves, quoting relevant parts of scripture where appropriate.

He is concerned with preventing vainglory, as this corrupts many good works. The bishop is to cover his hands immediately after putting on his dalmatic, so that his left hand does not know what his right hand is doing, as in the gospel of *Matthew*, 6v.3. He also pointed out the command in *Matthew* 6v.1, not to do righteous works for men to admire, otherwise there will be no reward in heaven. Like Honorius, he considered that sometimes the hands are covered and sometimes they are bare, because sometimes good works should be hidden, and sometimes done openly for the edification of others. As with Sicard, he also decreed that the gloves should be seamless because the actions of a bishop ought to be in proper agreement with his faith. When the gloves are on the hands, they are examples of all the saints and their works, which must be purified, lest impurities contaminate the whole mass.

He made other comments on the physical glove. The glove is to have a gold circle upon it, which reflects the command in *Matthew* 5v.16 to 'let your light shine before men'. White gloves denote purity and chastity, so that the hands and their good works will be clean and free from all stain. The gloves are to be made with the small skins of goats, to reflect the fact of Rebecca clothing Jacob's hands with these so that he appeared to be Esau, and thus received his father's blessing.

Finally, he commented that the goat skin is an image of sin. Rebecca's covering of the hands of Jacob with this is was in order that he would resemble his elder brother, representing the first Adam, and thus claim his brother's birthright. Christ is the second Adam, who took on the appearance of sin, even though he was without sin, so that the mystery of the incarnation would be hidden from the devil.[169]

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[165] Latour, A., 'The glove, a badge of office', *Ciba Review* 61 (1947), pp.2206-2211, p.2209.
[166] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.374.
[167] Sicard Cremonensis espiscopi *Mitralis de officiis* ed. G Sarbak and L Weinrich. Series: Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis: 228 (Brepols: Turnhout, 2008), p.107 (II, 5 line 296ff).
[168] Durand, William, [Durandus] *Rationale divinorum officiorum* (on the clergy and their vestments) translated and introduced by Timothy M. Thibodeau (Chicago, University of Scranton P., 2010), p.133.
[169] Durand, William, [Durandus] *Rationale divinorum officiorum* (on the clergy and their vestments) translated and introduced by Timothy M. Thibodeau (Chicago, University of Scranton P., 2010), pp.185-186.

Denny-Brown considered that Durandus says little about gloves, as he was trying to link episcopal garments to the eight garments of Aaron in the *Old Testament* and reduce the fifteen episcopal garments to eight. However, gloves were one of the most recognisable parts of episcopal attire, so he was unable to leave them out.[170]

St Charles Borromeo (1538-1584)

Borromeo wrote that liturgical gloves must be 'interwoven' and prominently decorated on the top with a golden circle. He used the latin term *contexto* or intertwined, which Voelker said has been interpreted as interwoven or knit .[171] Mayer-Thurman considered that when he used the term he meant knitted, rather than woven in the strictest sense, and cites as evidence that almost all remaining liturgical gloves are knitted.[172] Warr considered that interwoven does not necessarily mean that a glove was knitted – just that his regulations are generally interpreted to mean this. She also argued the term 'golden circle' shows that it was expected that the glove would be adorned with a medallion.[173]

Braun, and others, possibly following Braun, wrote that Borromeo stated that gloves should follow the prescribed liturgical colour of the church's season – white, red, green and purple. However, it has not been possible to trace this in Voelker's translation of the *Instructiones fabricae et supellectilis ecclesiasticae* nor in any version online.[174] The source Braun gives is *Acta ecclesiae mediolananensis*, but this only provides the information that the gloves should be *contexto*, with a golden circle.[175]

[170] Denny-Brown, Andrea, 'Old habits die hard: vestimentary change in William Durandus's *Rationale divinorum officiorum*', *Journal of medieval and early modern studies*, 39 (2009), pp.545–570, pp.555-556.
[171] Borromeo, Charles, (Voelker, Evelyn, trans, and ed.), *Charles Borromeo's instructiones fabricae et supellectilis ecclesiasticae, 1577 book i and book ii: a translation with commentary and analysis* (1977-2008) available from: http://evelynvoelker.com/ [accessed 4th August 2020], dicta 19.
[172] Mayer-Thurman, Christa C., *Raiment for the Lord's service: a thousand years of western vestments*, (Chicago: Art Institute, 1975), p.213.
[173] Warr, Cordelia, 'In persona Christi: liturgical gloves and the construction of public religious identity', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 95 (2019), pp.135-156. [Accepted author manuscript, p.8].
[174] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.380.
[175] Borromeo, Charles, *Acta ecclesiae mediolananensis* (Milan, 1599), p.627.

Chapter 11: History of the use of liturgical gloves

The early legends which suggest gloves were used in apostolic times, are actually very late. That of St Fronte, for instance, in which he leaves his liturgical gloves at the funeral of Martha, sister of Lazarus, probably dates to around the end of the tenth century.[176] Some of the tenth century papal bulls, granting the right of *usus chirothecarum*, are probably forgeries.[177] Braun considered that the first reliable document granting the *usus chirothecarum* was in 1088 to Abbot Hugh of Cluny.[178]

Macalister considered that gloves owed their existence to the cold in the early churches and were simply invented in order to keep the hands of the wearer warm. In the ninth century, these, along with other vestments, assumed a more sacred character, and prayers were prescribed for putting them on, as was the case with older and more established vestments.[179] Braun considered that the explanation of northern cold is unlikely, as gloves could be used in summer and winter: instead, he suggested that from the Carolingian period onwards bishops wanted to surround themselves with splendour, and thus started to use gloves. In addition, their use may also have been influenced by a practical endeavour to protect the bishop's hands from contamination before the sacrifice of the mass.[180]

The earliest instances concerning liturgical gloves are tenth century. What may be pontifical gloves are listed in an inventory of Cremona (Italy), when the term *manicae* is used. The *Sacramentary* of Abbot Rathold of Corbie in this century records *manicae* in the context of liturgical gloves, with instructions to the bishop on how to dress for mass. He is instructed to put his rings over the *manicae*, suggesting that they must have separate fingers.[181] An ordo compiled around 1080, known as the *Missa Illyrica*, includes the use of gloves in the mass, but it is not possible to know how widespread this practice was. The Apostolic See granted the privilege of using pontifical regalia, which included gloves, to abbots from 1175, but granting the power to use gloves does not mean that they were used in worship in Rome, and thus it cannot be proven that they were regalia in the Roman rite.[182]

Liturgical gloves do not appear as specific regalia before the mid-twelfth century; after then they were seen as a sign of episcopal status and authority. They occur in various documents under the term *chirothecae*, spelt in different ways. They are sporadically mentioned in benedictions by abbots, and the pope granted non-bishops the right to use them.[183] Gloves

[176] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.361.
[177] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.365.
[178] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.369.
[179] Macalister**,** Robert Alexander Stuart, *Ecclesistical vestments: their development and history* (London: Elliot Stock, 1896), p.121.
[180] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.383, 384.
[181] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.364-5.
[182] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.365.
[183] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Ursprung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), p.367.

appear in church inventories, such as that of St Paul's Cathedral, London (UK). In 1245, four pairs of gloves of old workmanship decorated with gold circles are listed.[184] William Boys, who was abbot of Evesham Abbey from 1345 to 1367, gifted gloves to it along with other pontifical regalia.[185] Warr considered that the form of most liturgical vestments had stabilised by the thirteenth century, and that gloves echoed the form of secular gloves, to a limited extent.[186]

Pictorial representations of gloves occasionally appear in the twelfth century but are much more common by the thirteenth century. They appear on monuments, with wide gauntlets, such as one at Chartres cathedral (France), and in an arm reliquary at Munster church in Essen (Germany), which Braun considered showed a representation of single needle looping.[187] There are paintings of bishops wearing liturgical gloves, such as two bishops in Simone Martini's *De helige Gemianus, Michael et Augustinus* dated to 1319, and Meister Franke shows Thomas à Becket wearing gloves in a portrayal of his martyrdom made around 1424.[188] This latter reflects the fact that medieval artists showed their subjects in the garb of their time, rather than in the dress relevant to the subject's day. None of the gloves are obviously knitted. An exception to this is in Turnau who reported eleven images of bishops' knitted gloves in seals from 1200 to 1500, but frustratingly does not specify where these may be seen.[189]

[184] Hayward, Maria, 'Gloves' in Gale R. Owen Crocker, Elizabeth Coatsworth and Maria Hayward (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Dress and textiles in the British Isles c.450–1450* (Leiden, Brill, 2012). [Accessed online 9 December 2019], third paragraph.
[185] Wilson, Henry A., *Officium ecclesiasticum abbatum secundum usum Eveshamensis monasterii* Series: Henry Bradshaw Society, 6 (London: H.B.S, 1893), p.169.
[186] Warr, Cordelia, 'In persona Christi: liturgical gloves and the construction of public religious identity', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 95 (2019), pp.135-156. [Accepted author manuscript, p.3]
[187] Braun, Joseph, *Die liturgische Gewandung im Occident und Orient nach Urspung und Entwicklung, Vervendung und Symbolik* (Freiburg: Hedersche, 1907), pp.367, 369-370.
[188] Willemsen, Annemarieke, *Van hand tot hand: handschoenen en wanten in de Nederlanden voor 1700* (Zwolle: Spa, 2015), pp. 97, 132, plates 106, 151.
[189] Turnau, Irena, 'The diffusion of knitting in medieval Europe' in N. B. Harte and K. G. Ponting (eds.), *Cloth and clothmaking in medieval Europe* (London: Heinemann, 1982), pp.368-389, p.377; and she repeats this in her *History of knitting before mass production* (Warsaw: Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute of the history of material culture, 1991), p.16, again without locations.

Chapter 12: Conclusion

There is information about liturgical gloves in the literature, but it is mostly fragmented and sparse, and those writing generally on the topic still revert to Braun and/or Barbier de Montault's work, which is more than a hundred years old. Most of the more recent studies have concentrated on specific gloves or sets of gloves. The database of the *Holy Hands* project, which can be viewed on the *Knitting in Early Modern Europe* website,[190] includes more than ninety-five examples, but the literature provides surprisingly little scholarship on knitted liturgical gloves. This paper has identified the current literature and indicated a broad overview of the subjects and themes it covers. However, a comprehensive synthesis of the literature with precise details of the construction of these knitted items and their symbolic, cultural and religious context is long overdue.

[190] *Knitting in Early Modern Europe* database. Available online at www.kemesearch.com [accessed 5 August 2021]

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