

THE RICH ROBES OF QUEEN ELEANOR OF SICILY (1325-1375)

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Resum

Més enllà de la funcionalitat pròpia de la indumentària aquesta expressava un llenguatge codificat que era compartit pels homes i dones de Catalunya i que, en general, es feia extensible a la majoria de territoris europeus del segle XIV. Les vestidures permetien fer visible l'ordre natural que regulava la societat medieval identificant les persones per gènere, edat, jerarquia social o posició de marginalitat que, per raons ètnic-religioses, ocupaven respecte a la majoria de la població. Un dels pilars simbòlics en que es sustentava la representació del poder estava constituït per la presència de la riquesa a les vestidures. Riques vestidures per embolcallar el cos i també riques vestidures per cobrir l'arquitectura i el mobiliari. D'entre les esplèndides peces de vestir que configuraven el guarda roba de la reina Elionor de Sicília el present treball es centra fonamentalment en la identificació tipològica i l'estudi de quatre vestits exteriors: "la cota", "la cota ardia", "el curtapeu" i "l'aljuba". D'alguns d'aquests vestits amb que s'abillà la reina el dibuix ha intentat una reconstrucció aproximativa de la seva tipologia així com dels magnífics dissenys brodats o teixits que els ornaven. Una ràpida ullada a la recambra del vestuari reial ens ha permès descobrir la febril activitat de sastres i broadors ocupats en confeccionar, adobar i reutilitzar les riques vestidures de la reina Elionor de Sicília.

Paraules clau: indumentària, medieval, guarda roba, vestidura, simbòlic, Elionor de Sicília, Pere el Cerimoniós.

Abstract

In fourteenth-century Catalonia, as well as in most European territories, clothing expressed a sort of coded language that went beyond its mere functionality and was shared by both men and women. Clothes gave visibility to the natural order that governed medieval society. They differentiated people by gender, age, and social standing, including the eventual marginal position some groups occupied due to ethnic and religious reasons. Rich garments, either wrapping the body or covering buildings and furniture, were one of the pillars that sustained the symbolic representation of power. Among the splendid pieces of clothing that formed the wardrobe of Queen Eleanor of Sicily, this paper focuses primarily on the typological identification and analysis of four outdoor attires: the cotte, the cottehardie, the courtepy, and the aljuba. The drawings included in this paper are an approximate reconstruction of the typology and the magnificent embroideries and fabrics of some of the queen's dresses. A quick look at the boudoir of the royal wardrobe has allowed us to discover the feverish activity of tailors and embroiderers engaged in making, repairing, and reusing the rich robes of Queen Eleanor of Sicily.

Key Words: clothing, medieval, wardrobe, attire, symbolic, Eleanor of Sicily, King Pere the Ceremonious.

On 27 August 1349 a young Sicilian *infanta* rode into Valencia astride a magnificent palfrey. The 24-year-old *infanta* was Eleanor of Sicily, the daughter of Peter II of Sicily and Elizabeth of Carinthia. Awaiting her in Valencia was her betrothed, Peter IV,¹ king of the Crown of Aragon, commonly known as *the Ceremonious*.² Fleeing the disputes between the Angevins and the Aragonese over the throne of Sicily, the *infanta*, who favoured the union with the Crown of Aragon, rode into the city under the protection of the guard sent by Peter IV. The marriage between Peter the Ceremonious and Eleanor of Sicily would produce three boys and a girl. The two surviving sons, John and Martin, would inherit the Crown of Aragon. John I died at the young age of 45 and would be succeeded by his brother, Martin I, called ‘the Humane’, and also ‘the Ecclesiastic’.

The subject of this paper are some of Queen Eleanor’s costly attires, such as the robes she wore at her coronation, at the weddings of her two sons, and the clothes she gave to her relatives and those she had made for her grandson. Amongst the documentary, iconographic,³ and archaeological sources consulted, the most important ones are the delivery notes of the Royal Patrimony conserved in the Archive of the Crown of Aragon. Delivery notes and accounting ledgers were drafted by the clerks called *escrivans de ració*, who were responsible for receiving and administering the expenses of the royal servants, amongst whom there were numerous tailors and embroiderers. These clerks answered to the Chief Treasurer, known as ‘Mestre Racional’,⁴ whose functions included the accounting and auditing of the King’s goods in the Crown of Aragon.

Special mention should also be made of a written source which has been of crucial importance for our research: Eleanor of Sicily’s clothes book, which recorded all the movements of clothing in and out of the Queen’s chamber from 1371 to 1375.⁵ This document provides information related both to the clothing women wore at court and to the improvements and alterations tailors made to the Queen’s attires.

THE LANGUAGE OF MEDIEVAL CLOTHING

In the fourteenth century, clothes not only fulfilled the function of protecting men and women from the elements and from other people’s gaze.⁶ Clothing also indicated gender, given that the

¹ Translator’s Note: Peter IV of Aragon was Count of Barcelona and the rest of the Principality of Catalonia as Peter III.

² Before his marriage to Eleanor of Sicily Peter III had already been married twice: to Maria of Navarre (1326?-1347) and to Eleanor of Portugal (1328 – 1348). After the death of Eleanor of Sicily, the king would still marry a fourth time, to Sibil·la of Fortià (1350?-1406)

³ Fourteenth-century Catalan Gothic works of art (paintings, miniatures, sculptures, and embroideries) give us an insight into the types of clothing and the way it was made.

⁴ For an introduction to the role of the Mestre Racional in the Crown of Aragon see MONTAGUT 1987.

⁵ ANGLADA 1992: 9-89.

⁶ For some interesting reflections, not without irony, on the fragility of the human body in relation to other mammals see FOSSIER 2007: 17-48. See also DESLANDRES 1998: 17-24 for the motivations of human beings to wear clothes.

appearance of fashion at the beginning of the century increased the differences between the attires worn by men and women. Age was also a factor, as young people looked progressively different from their elders, depending on the style of their clothes, and on the way such clothes were decorated. In the case of men this also included variations in the length of the tunic. Personal situation, what today would be called marital status, was also advertised through clothing, particularly in the case of women whose status was defined by their relationship with men: veils and toques differentiated married women and widows from the uncovered hair of unmarried women. But, above all, clothes declared one's class or social group. These ranged from the low quality wools of the clothes of most peasants, tradesmen, and the humbler classes of urban centres through to other types of clothing typical of the marginalized minorities of towns. Thus, some Catalan inventories from the fourteenth century mention the low quality clothing worn by the female slaves of the household [*esclaves*, sing. *esclava*, in Catalan]. Poor quality textiles, many of which were not only second hand and worn out but also simply made and unadorned, suggest the origins of the qualifying use of the expression “de sclava”⁷ which from time to time accompanied certain articles of clothing such as veils, or dresses such as the *gonella* [a sort of tunic] and the *cotte*. However, prostitutes, described as *fembres vils* [vile females],⁸ even if they had to live in neighbourhoods away from respectable women, could wear all kinds of expensive clothing with no restrictions. In addition, the Jews of the ghettos had to cover their heads with a *capero* [a kind of hood], and wear a badge on their coats in the form of a red and yellow disc.⁹

By contrast, lavish, sumptuously adorned textiles signalled the most noble classes, and royalty. In the rigid medieval hierarchy, luxurious, costly robes could only be worn by those associated with power. In this sense, rich robes of different types such as the so-called *royal dalmatics* and Eleanor of Sicily's exquisite silk *cottes* and *aljubes* are just some of the garments that were closely connected with the representation of power.

Luxurious clothing inevitably meant rich textiles and adornment, and the high quality of the materials, which generally came from important centres of production, was an essential element in the manufacturing of lavish garments. The lining was also of high quality and this often was as important an aspect as the actual cloth of the garment, especially in low-necked robes and those with lateral or frontal cuts, which could show off the rich lining as they opened and closed. Valuable materials demanded costly adornment with silks, furs, precious metals, such as gold and

⁷ “Alguns vells de esclaves de poca valor”, “una gonella blava de esclava”, “un cot desclava, nou, de drap de lana blau, de la terra”, Roca 1928: 307 i 314.

⁸ “En aquestes emperò ordinances no són enteses les fembres vils ne àvols de lurs cors màs tota fembra àvol e vil de són cors e quis tenga per aytal puxa portar aytals vestidures com se vullen o en aytal manera com se vullen”, Arxiu Històric de la Ciutat de Barcelona (AHCB hereinafter), Llibre del Consell 17, (1345-1356), fol. 31r; Llibre del Consell 19 (1354-1359), fol. 82; Llibre del Consell 22, (1365-1366), fol. 16.

⁹ “Juheu fisich, sia a nos vengut per missatges del rey de Tunij manam vos que ne ell ne dos altres juheus qui l'acompanyen forçets a portar lo capero vestis ne aportar la roda groga e vermella segons novellament es stat ordonat,” GIRONA I LLAGOSTERA 1911-1912. 4: 154.

silver, and pearls and gemstones. All these decorative elements could be spread over the dress in the form of buttons, gold embroidery and multi-coloured silks, and above all, bands of different widths bordering the collar, the cuffs, and the lower part of the skirts. These bands were called *fres* and the most costly were decorated with gold and jewels or painted. Luxurious materials and embellishments required another essential component, a good dye. This was so important that high quality clothing was synonymous with the use of high quality dyes in order to obtain colours¹⁰ of great beauty due to their luminosity and density.

In addition, there were the aspects related to the actual tailoring, which was a key element in turning luxurious materials into rich garments. The new and changing forms imposed by fashion demanded the design of complex patterns composed of a considerable number of different pieces, which had to be sewn together and transformed into a splendid piece of clothing. For this reason, opulent clothing involved the work of highly qualified people, such as the tailors and seamstresses of the Royal Household. In fact, the creation of a piece of clothing made from a costly material was no small or minor matter, as is made explicit in a letter (mentioned below) that John, the first-born, sent to his mother, Queen Eleanor, and in which he clearly asserts his preferences for one tailor over another due to his manner of cutting the cloth.

The most luxurious materials were also used to dress the walls, the flooring, and the furniture of the royal and noble palaces. The bare stone of the palace rooms were covered with pallia, tapestries (*draps de ras*),¹¹ and embroidered or painted sheets known as *draps de pinzell*¹² in Catalan inventories, whilst part of the cold paving disappeared under rugs and warm carpets. In addition, the wood of much of the furnishing was draped with beautiful cloths, which, used as a type of throw, cloaked tables, chests, beds, and chairs.¹³ The most outstanding amongst these luxurious materials were those used for decorating the beds in the royal chambers, which were made of many pieces, from the bedspread through to the canopy that crowned the bed and from which hung the so-called *sobrece*l taking the form of a tent. This magnificent space, a kind of textile architectural construction,¹⁴ was closed off by curtains held up by fine metal bars. In addition to her clothing, the wardrobe of Queen Eleanor of Sicily had a wide range of luxurious materials. Amongst the most notable pieces we find numerous *vanoves* [bedspreads] decorated

¹⁰ There were highly valued colours such as a violet red called *cagnazo*, which was produced in Florence, though in other parts of Italy it was known as *pavonazo*. The scarlet from Venice was another colour also destined for luxurious clothes, MUZZARELLI 2008: 48. For information about dyers and the natural dyes used in the Middle Ages, see PASTOREAU 1995 AND 2006: 189-217; BLANCO 2010; SÁNCHEZ 2010: 175-194.

¹¹ *Draps de ras* or *d'arrazi* are expressions used in Catalan and Italian inventories respectively to refer to textiles from the city of Arras, capital of Artois.

¹² Amongst the published inventories recording the great variety and luxurious nature of the materials used for clothes and architecture, one of the most important is that of the merchant Antoni Cases, published in part by TERÉS 1998. 19: 295-317.

¹³ In the inventories of the most well-to-do houses in fourteenth-century Catalonia, the words *siti* and *bancal* identify both the two types of seat and the cloth which covers them. In general, the documents make a detailed description of the motifs that decorated the cloth of the seat.

¹⁴ For information about the use of textiles in Islamic architecture see: MARINETTO 2012: 25-26.

with stitching, buttons, and embroidery, *cobertors d'hivern* [winter blankets],¹⁵ one of which had a detachable lining made of 842 pieces of ermine, cushions of various shapes, sizes, and purposes made of leather or worked silk, the collection of illustrated *draps de ras*, the Queen's precious silk cloths woven with scenes combining animals and flower and vegetable motifs used for covering seats (*sitals*),¹⁶ and canopies, such as the one made of cloth of gold that was suspended from twelve poles by twelve silk ribbons that sheltered the young Sicilian *infanta* when she rode into a richly decorated Valencia to get married to Peter the Ceremonious.¹⁷

Without a doubt the *cambres*¹⁸ or *lits* were the most luxurious and spectacular elements due to the quantity of pieces needed and the architectural feel they gave. This seems to be expressed in the very way this ensemble of cloths that 'constructed' the royal bed was described. The textile structure was like a grand pavilion containing the bed itself within it. In the wardrobe of the Queen the different *cambres* or *lits* were identified by the colour of the cloth or by the decoration which distinguished them: *cambre de grius* (grey), *cambre reyal de drap d'or e de vellut vermell* (cloth of gold and red velvet), *cambre de roses* (rose). The one which stands out above all others due to its sheer opulence is the one described as *cambre blanca d'or e de seda teixida* (white coverlet of gold and woven silk),¹⁹ which had been part of the Queen's dowry. On the death of a queen, her bed could only pass to another future queen: Martha d'Armagnac, wife of John, the first-born son of Eleanor and first in line to the throne. The contents of the will, which in cases like this was dictated by interests of state, could differ substantially from the personal feelings and preferences which Eleanor of Sicily might have towards people who were due to receive part of her legacy. Thus, the white coverlet didn't go to her only daughter, but the Queen did leave her her best robes and numerous sets of jewels and luxurious materials.

The sophisticated luxury of the royal wardrobes, expressing a power that ultimately came from divine authority, was threatened by the proliferation of luxury clothing in fourteenth-century society. The growth of markets and the development of manufacturing technology made

¹⁵ DEIBEL 1928: 65.

¹⁶ In 1358 the Sicilian embroiderer Bonaventura d'Alafranco embroidered for Eleanor of Sicily a cloth to hang on the wall and another to cover a seat or "sital a ops de un drap de paret e d'un sital que la dona na Bonaventura, qui obra de draps d'or en Barchinona, feia a la dita senyora," Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragón (ACA, hereinafter), reg. 474, fol. 54.

¹⁷ On the occasion of the wedding, Peter the Ceremonious gave his new wife precious silk cloths such as one of purplish scarlet silk bought in Brussels and another six pieces of red, yellow, and purple sendat silk: MARTÍNEZ 1923, 1: 542-577, 559 AND 563.

¹⁸ OLIVAR 1961.

¹⁹ "Item una cambra blanca d'or e de seda teixida ab barres amples, ço es: dossier e sobrecel orlats de zaytoní blau ab senyals de la Senyora Reyna. Ítem III cortines corredisses de taffatà groch e blanch, ab I^a orla als caps de taffatà blau, ab senyals de la Senyora Reyna. Ítem un cubertor de drap d'aur teixit ab senyals de Sicília, sembrats menuts, forrat de sendat vermell. Ítem altre cubertor de samit blanch e de drap d'or blanch fet a barres, forrat de drap de lin blanch e tot lo dit semblantment. Ítem V peçes de cortines semblants del dossier qui se'n són per estar en la paret entorn del lit, e dalt en cascuna peça ha una orla de zaytoní blau ab III senyals de la Senyora, salvant que en la I^a n'a quatre. Ítem un parell de lançols encara no tallats ne cosits, qui són VI peces de seda blanca ab los caps d'aur teixits, e són per a la dita Cambra," ANGLADA 1992: 79.

it possible for the bourgeoisie, enriched by trade and commerce, to devote large amounts of money to clothing. The so-called sumptuary laws, which civil authorities enacted in large parts of Europe, were designed to put a stop to luxury in clothing. A good number of these laws, such as those issued in Barcelona,²⁰ were aimed at prohibiting the incorporation of gold, silver, gemstones, pearls, silk, and fur into clothing, particularly ladies' clothing, although the degree of restriction could vary from one town to another. In addition, certain clauses in the sumptuary laws of Barcelona also limited the number of luxury materials that could be exhibited on the walls, floors, and furniture of the house of the bride on the occasion of her wedding.²¹ At any rate, the symbolic representation of power through clothing was extremely powerful for the men and women of the medieval period. As late as 1571 a cushion made of a rich silk velvet cloth of a precious crimson colour was the origin of a bitter quarrel due to the rank of the person using it. The Journal of the Counsellors of the Town Hall of Barcelona in that year records the differences that arose between the spokesman of the governor of the Principality of Catalonia, Pedro de Carmona, and the councillors, who considered it inappropriate for the noble to use a "cushion of crimson velvet"²² during the High Mass of Saint George in the Gothic chapel of the palace of the *Generalitat*. Municipal authorities argued that the crimson cushion was a privilege reserved for the monarch, or, in his absence, for his representative. The confrontation, which was repeated in 1580, would end in 1596 with the decision of the municipal representatives not to attend the mass due to disagreements over the governor's spokesman's use of the cushion, symbol of royal power and authority.

THE WARDROBE OF QUEEN ELEANOR OF SICILY

Although the clothes mentioned in the queen's chamber book are not dissimilar to those that appear in other fourteenth-century Catalan inventories it is nevertheless true that the extraordinary quality of the clothes means that they belong at the heart of the Royal Household. Moreover, since we have few iconographic references in fourteenth-century Catalan art of the very specific types of clothing which made up Eleanor of Sicily's wardrobe we have been moved to attempt a hypothetic reconstruction of some of the clothes on the basis of the book's highly detailed descriptions of the textiles.²³

The clothes of the fourteenth century involved two layers of clothing: the inner one (*dejús*), which was placed directly on the underclothes, and the outer one (*dessús*),²⁴ which was open

²⁰ AHCB Llibre del Consell, 17 (1345-1346), fol. 30v and Llibre del Consell, 19 (1354-1359), fol. 82.

²¹ AHCB Llibre del Consell, 23 (1366-1368), fol. 76 and fol. 28; Llibre del Consell, 22 (1365-1366), fol. 12v and 13r; Llibre del Consell, 24 (1373-1376), fol. 24 and 138.

²² MANUAL DE NOVELLS ARDITS 1892.

²³ The artist who produced the drawings is Joan Carles Ronchera Castell, who graduated in Graphic Design at the Llotja School of Design of Barcelona.

²⁴ According to the Franciscan friar Eiximenis, respectable women who worked indoors had to wear inner and outer clothing: "la dona atendre qui ha mester la casa quant a draps, a vestir dessus e dejús," EIXIMENIS 1981, 1: 143.

to view and where most of the ornamentation was concentrated. The most typical type of inner layer was the *gonella* but in the Queen's wardrobe there was also the *samarra*. Though they were very similar, the *samarra* was always mentioned in the chamber book as a very ornate piece of clothing, and unlike the *gonella*, there is no explicit mention made of a short-sleeved *samarra*. Its sleeves were narrow and had most of the ornamentation, either in the form of lining or in buttons of worked silver or other costly materials.²⁵

The outer clothes in Eleanor of Sicily's wardrobe were of four types: the *cotte* (*cota*), the *cottehardie* (*cota ardia*), the *courtepy* (*curtapeu*) and the *aljuba*.²⁶ With the exception of the *courtepy*, which is a garment only used by women, the others were used by both sexes. The outer layer tended to be complemented by a covering layer such as a *mantell* [cloak] so that the combination of the inner and outer layers and the *mantell* made up a luxurious three-piece 'ensemble' of the same colour and material. For reasons of space, our study will focus on Queen Eleanor's outer clothing. Whilst men's clothes could range in length from the thigh to foot or anywhere in between, women's clothing always tended to be full-length. In general terms, the woman's *cotte* had a more traditional and conservative cut, with mainly long, wide shapes which tended to hide the natural form of the female body. This said, from the end of the first half of the fourteenth century one can begin to see some subtle changes as fashion tended toward a narrower tailoring showing up the female forms, whether pulling in the gown with belts or folds, or opening up the neckline to leave part of the shoulder open. Sleeves tended to be wide, even though they sometimes included buttons, which limited how much they could open. Sometimes rows of buttons also ran down the front of the dress.

The main distinct characteristic of the *cottehardie* was the flamboyant form of the sleeve: the lower part of the sleeve drops away at the elbow forming sinuous spear-shaped scoops. The sleeve hangs down vertically and breaks the natural line of the arm. In Queen Eleanor of Sicily's wardrobe the materials used for *cottes* and *cottehardies* were velvet and high quality wool. When the robes were woollen, they had a particularly characteristic type of adornment in which miniver and rabbit furs were combined with ermine. Miniver was always used for creating a circular decoration for the bottom of the skirt, which was called *gir de peus* [literally, around the feet] or less frequently *entorn de peus*. In this way, in addition to making the robe more opulent, the furs hid the hem and gave a more luxurious 'finish' to the piece. The ermine ran along the lateral

²⁵ For information on the development of clothing and fashion in the West the following works are particularly interesting: BORUDEAU 1904; BOEHN 1928; BOUCHER 1965; DESLANDRES 1998. Some more specific works on medieval fashion are those by: VIOLLET-LE-DUC 2004; BLANC 1997; MUZZARELLI 1996 and 1999; PIPONNIER, MANE 1995; LE GOFF 2003; MARANGES 1991; DURAN I SANPERE 1973, 2: 310-326; BERNIS 1956.

²⁶ The identification and typological description of the clothes of Queen Eleanor of Sicily is based on my doctoral thesis, *L'Art de la indumentària a la Catalunya del segle XIV*, University of Barcelona, 2011. In this work various types of clothing and their variants are studied, such as the *cotte* for men, of which at least six 'versions' have been identified: the A *cotte*, the B *cotte*, the C *cotte*, the ankle-length *cotte*, the short *cottehardie*, and the long *cottehardie*. For this reason it is not surprising that the luxurious *aljubes* of Eleanor of Sicily should be made of a wide variety of cloths and ornamentation even if they are always within the ankle-length form as befitted women's clothing.

openings of the skirt, which as ‘false pockets’ or *maneres*, could be used to slip one’s hands in (Fig. 1). Fur could also be used as lining in the majority of these robes. Another element that made these clothes more opulent were the buttons, which, lined with the same material or with silver, pearls or amber, ran down the front of the garment in abundance.²⁷ The cottes and cottehardies made of silk (velvet and *atzeituni*) added precious embroideries to the furs. Thus, in the autumn of 1360, the royal embroiderers Enric de Loany and Jaume Copí created various figures out of gold and silk thread²⁸ for a blue and a white cotte. In the same way, a luxurious band of gold and silk cloth, called *savastre*, ran along the edge of the collar, the sleeves and the front part of a silk cottehardie belonging to Eleanor of Sicily (Fig. 2).²⁹ The fire-red silk of the robe was sprinkled with vine-leaf motifs. On the *savastre* which lined the cotte’s sinuous sleeve cuff there were eighteen pearls in rows, and 46 more pearls were in the form of buttons running along the sumptuous band on the front of the robe. The considerable number of cottehardies in the Queen’s wardrobe suggests that Eleanor of Sicily had a predilection for this type of gown. It was a gown which in the Queen’s youth became the most commonly used in Catalonia and in other Iberian and European territories, but whose importance began to diminish from the 1370s onward, as is shown by documentary and iconographic sources. Despite this, in January of 1373 cottehardies were still regularly being made to dress the housemaids of the Queen’s household.³⁰

The courtepy and the *aljuba* make frequent appearances in Queen Eleanor’s chamber book but are little seen in Catalan inventories, where the cotte is the most widely used amongst both men and women of all classes. This seems to be due to the opulence of both types of clothing, at least in their most luxurious version. The structure of the courtepy must have been very similar to that of the female cotte and it is possible that the very name of the dress may be a reference to an element common to all courtepies: the reduced length of the skirt with respect to the skirts of other dresses, which was, nevertheless, made up for by a wide cloth or fur fringe which thus became the main decorative element of the robe. Even if it had the same furs around the *gir de peus* and the *maneres* it outdid the other two robes in the luxury of the silks with which it was made—velvet, *atzzeituni*, and scarlet silk—and in the special attention given to its sleeves which were also decorated with ermine. In particular, fur was attached to the *braons* (sing. *braó*), which was the part of the arm between the shoulder and the elbow.³¹

²⁷ “Cota d’escarlata de Loan la qual es folrada de vayrs rog en gir peus, guarnida de bricans, en la qual ha XXXII botons de perlls plans e per les maneres guarnida d’erminis,” ANGLADA 1992: 35. “Una cotardia de drap blau clar florentí, forrada de vayrs roig, ab botons del dit drap, ab vayrs en gir de peus e herminis per les maneres,” ANGLADA et al 1992: 20-21.

²⁸ “Anrich de Loany, obrer de perles de casa del Senyor Rey, a ops de acabar diverses obres de fil d’or que fa en j. cot de vellut blanc de la dita Senyora,” ACA, reg. 476, fol. 67v.; DURAN I SANPERE 1973: 321. “Jaume Copí, obrer de perles, d’or e de seda...per faedures de VIII obres d’or e de seda ab perles que feu en un cot d’atzeituni blau de la dita Senyora,” ACA, reg. 476, fol. 180v., DURAN I SANPERE 1973: 315-317.

²⁹ “Una cotardia de drap de seda fogat, pampolat, ab savastre per danant, per lo cabeç e per les mànegues, ab XLVI botons de perles, per lo fil danant perlas e XXXVI en les mànegues, forrada de vay roig,” ANGLADA et al. 1992: 21.

³⁰ ACA. Reial Patrimoni, compte 49, fol. 54v. Cited in DEIBEL 1928: 52.

³¹ “Item entrà en adobar un curtapeu de vellut morrat...per los braons. Herminis II,” ANGLADA et al. 1992: 51.

The fact that only the upper part of the sleeve was decorated with ermine indicated that it was a half-sleeve that stopped at the elbow. The sleeve opening took on that lengthened and wavy shape which made it seem like an ox tongue. These “cut-outs” at the sleeve openings were called *aligots* (Fig. 3).³² The short sleeves of the courtepy made it possible to show off in all their splendour the narrow sleeves decorated with rich buttons belonging to the piece of clothing that was worn underneath, the *samarra* or the *gonella*. Embroideries with pearls, gold, and silver could increase the opulence of this type of garment. Thus, a blue courtepy belonging to the Queen was embroidered with gold and silver storks by the embroiderer Enric de Loany,³³ who has been mentioned already. Amongst other precious clothes, Eleanor of Sicily bequeathed to her daughter all the dresses with pearls and gemstones.³⁴

Lastly, the *aljuba* (plural *aljubes*) was a garment of Arab³⁵ origin worn both by men and women. It became popular also among Christians and its presence is particularly frequent in noble and royal wardrobes. The *aljubes* in the wardrobe of the Queen could be divided into three types which were defined by the three types of material out of which they were made: wool, *camellot* (a type of luxurious wool), and silk. The woollen *aljuba*³⁶ was worn during the autumn while the woollen cotte replaced it in the coldest months. Like the cotte, the cottehardie, and the courtepy it also had furs on the *gir de peus* and on the *maneres*. The *aljubes* made from *camellot*³⁷ came in various types but one of the most valuable was made of a mixture of silk and cashmir, which is a type of goat's wool. The main decorative effect of the *aljuba de camellot* was the sharp contrast between the colours of the dress itself and the lining. In this two-colour system a chromatic harmony was sought in the contrast of tones.

The crown's jewel in Eleanor of Sicily's wardrobe, however, was a collection of *aljubes* made of precious silks. The silk *aljuba*, made predominantly out of cloth of gold, included an ornamental element that was particularly characteristic of this type of clothing: the square-shaped *parament* or *camper* that decorated the lower part of the skirt. In some cases the *parament* reached as far as the chest and the sleeves. Some *aljubes* made of a silk that are particularly rich in decorative motifs do without this item. That said, the exceptional quality of the silk, the *paraments* adorning them, and the actual structure of the garment link this *aljuba* to another type of garment of a liturgical nature; the dalmatic. In fact the royal dalmatic became the piece of clothing which

³² “Curtapeu de velut blau guax escur, forrat de pena de vays rog, ab los aligots de lengua de bou forats de vays apurats e perfilats d'arminis e les maneres gornides d'arminis e en gir de peus, gornit de la roda d'erminis,” ANGLADA et al. 1992: 34.

³³ “Anrich de Loany, brodadore de perles de casa del Senyor rei...per fil d'or e d'argent que mes en un curtapeu de drap blau amb cigonyes de la dita Senyora,” ACA, reg. 471, f. 57; DURAN I SANPERE 1973: 321.

³⁴ DEIBEL 1928: 45.

³⁵ MARANGES 1991: 30.

³⁶ “Aljuba e mantonet de drap florentí color de sandrea, la qual aljuba es guarnida en gir de peus de 1^a roda ...en que ha XXXV vays, e ha entrats per les maneres V arminis,” ANGLADA et al. 1992: 37.

³⁷ “Aljuba de xamellot vermell de IIII fils, forrada de tafettà verd». «Aljuba he mantonet de jamellot vert, lavorat desimateix, forrat de cendit vermel,” ANGLADA et al. 1992: 28 and 36.

best symbolized the power and authority of the King. In the most important royal ceremonies the dalmatic was used along with other symbols related to power, such as the throne, crown, orb and sceptre. The royal dalmatics, accompanied by other liturgical clothing such as the *maniple*³⁸ and the *estola*³⁹ were particularly splendid when worn on the occasion of the coronation of the monarchs of the Crown of Aragon,⁴⁰ which was always held at the Cathedral of Sant Salvador in Zaragoza. The chronicles of Ramon Muntaner⁴¹ or even those of Peter the Ceremonious⁴² himself give a vivid description of the rich dalmatics which Eleanor of Sicily's father-in-law, Alfons IV of Aragon, called the Kind, and her own husband wore in the Aragonese cathedral on their coronations, on Easter Sunday 1328 and 1336, respectively. The book that describes the ceremony of consecration and coronation of the kings of the Crown of Aragon commissioned by Peter the Cerimonious contains a historiated initial that depicts the king wearing a luxurious red silk dalmatic with golden embroidery while he holds the crown in his hands (Fig. 4).⁴³ The documentation also describes the coronation of a number of queens, in ceremonies which were neither simultaneous nor complemented those of their husbands. Five queens were crowned: Constance of Sicily, wife of Peter II (1276), Eleanor of Sicily,⁴⁴ third wife of Peter the Ceremonious (1352), Maria de Luna, first wife of Martin I (1399), Sibil·la of Fortià, fourth wife of Peter the Ceremonious, (1381) and Eleanor of Albuquerque, wife of Ferdinand I, (1414).

Eleanor of Sicily was crowned in Zaragoza on a weekday, a Wednesday. Like her husband sixteen years before her, she wore a sumptuous red dalmatic lined with silk (taffeta) and a silk damask⁴⁵ *maniple* on her arm embroidered with gold. This rich dalmatic was worn over a linen chemise from the city of Reims and another silk chemise with sleeves closed with four buttons⁴⁶ made of gold thread. The splendid dalmatic did justice to a queen who always played an active role

³⁸ The *maniple* was a liturgical garment in the form of a strip of cloth which widened out in spade-like shapes called *fanones* at either end. It was worn over the left arm, near the wrist, attached to the *alba* or shirt with a needle and made out of the same luxurious cloth as the dalmatic.

³⁹ The *estola* consisted of a large band of cloth that was worn over the shoulders and reached down almost to the feet. It also widened out in the form of a spade and tended to be finished off with a fringe.

⁴⁰ DURAN 1989, 103: 17-40.

⁴¹ RAMON MUNTANER 1998, 2: 210 AND 212.

⁴² CRÒNICA DE PERE EL CERIMONIÓS 1984: 42, 85 and 86.

⁴³ *Ordinación feyta por el muyt alto e muyt excellent princep e senyor don Pedro tercero daragon de la manera como los Reyes daragon se faran consagrar e ellos mismos se coronaran*, Fundación Lázaro Galdiano, Madrid, Mss. I5024, fol 1r.

⁴⁴ RIERA I SANS 2005, 26: 1-8. Until the publication of this work, the almost non-existent bibliography related to the coronation of the queens made no mention of the fact that Eleanor of Siciy was anointed and crowned queen in 1352. According to the author there may have been three motives which led Peter the Ceremonious to promote the coronation of his third wife: to recognize the fecundity of the queen who had given him an heir to the Crown of Aragon, John, born two years before, to reaffirm the succession, and to glorify the monarchy. Moreover, DEIBEL 1928 in *La Reyna Elionor de Sicilia*, does mention the robes that Eleanor wore to the ceremony, even though she makes no explicit reference to the coronation of the Queen.

⁴⁵ *Damasch* or *domas* was a silk cloth, whose name refers to the ancient city of Damascus. The term could also denote a technique of weaving which combined patterns made with matt and glossy threads.

⁴⁶ ACA. Reial Patrimoni, 942, fol. 29. Cited in DEIBEL 1928: 413-414.

in the politics of the kingdom:⁴⁷ her regencies in 1363 and in 1374 enabled her to exercise royal authority in the absence of the King; and her opposition to the interests of the House of Anjou caused her to become intensively involved in Sicily's politics, working to lay the foundations for the island's integration into the Crown of Aragon, a union which was finally brought into force by her son Martin at the beginning of the fifteenth century. In 1354 she participated in the siege of Sardinia with her own guard,⁴⁸ and 300 letters⁴⁹ written between 1374 and 1375 give testimony to her intensive efforts to provide supplies of grain to the main cities to overcome the shortages that successive epidemics of plague had caused in the Catalan territories. She also intervened decisively in the plot that resulted in the fall and subsequent conviction of the royal counsellor Bernat Cabrera, and from 1368 onwards she had her own palace, the Palau Menor [Minor Palace], in order to preserve her autonomy. It is well known that the Queen maintained unyielding opposition up until her death to the marriage of her daughter Eleanor to John of Castile, son of Count Henry of Trastámara, bastard son and rival of the Castilian king Peter the Cruel.

Eleanor attended the marriage of both of her two sons, a little less than a year apart. At the beginning of the 1380s the delicate health of the Queen, (on the wane due to an inflammation of the kidneys and increasing obesity which made movement difficult), made it wise to hold the wedding of her first-born John to Martha of Armagnac in Barcelona, where the Queen tended to spend long periods. For the wedding ceremony on 28 April in the cathedral in Barcelona, the Queen wore one of the most lavish robes in her wardrobe: the silk *aljuba*. For this occasion the *aljuba* was made of blue *atzeituní* and the entire robe was adorned with eagles embroidered with pearls.⁵⁰ The pearl eagles, which soared over the blue of the Queen's robe, expressed the great importance of the union of the first-born son and first in line to the crown of Peter the Ceremonious. Within the context of the ceremony the eagle motif took on a two-fold symbolism: on the one hand, it was a symbol that tended to be associated with royalty, above all with masculine power. Two eagles (standing) were part of Eleanor of Sicily's coat of arms. So here the majestic birds adorning the robe seemed to proclaim that, in addition to Queen, Eleanor of Sicily, third wife of Peter III, was also the mother who had borne the future king John I of the Crown of Aragon.⁵¹

The lavish wedding ceremony of the heir to the kingdom had been preceded little over a year before (13 of June 1372) by the wedding of the second son of Peter the Ceremonious and Eleanor of Sicily. Martin, as a son not born to reign (even if he would do so from 1396 due to the sudden

⁴⁷ SILLERAS 2002-2004. The author records the concept of *reginalitat* as the Catalan equivalent of the term *queenship* used in English-speaking historiography.

⁴⁸ GUBERN 1955, 1: 114.

⁴⁹ MUÑOZ 1985. Dissertation supervised by Carme Batlle, Universitat de Barcelona.

⁵⁰ "Altres àguiles qui són en l'aljuba de l'aceytoni blau que's feu fer a les noçes del Duch fill seu," ANGLADA et al. 1992: 23.

⁵¹ In five years John and Martha had five children: James, Joanna, John, Alfons and Eleanor. Only Joanna survived her mother who died giving birth to the last child (October 1378).

death of his brother) took as his wife the Aragonese noblewoman Maria de Luna.⁵² Eleanor of Sicily attended the wedding of the two exceptionally young spouses (Martin and Maria were less than 16-17 years old) in the church of Santa Maria del Mar, also in Barcelona. For Martin's wedding the Queen selected another silk *aljuba*. But the gold and silver *aljuba* worn by Queen at the wedding of her second son seemed very different to the decorative ostentation lent by the pearl eagles to the *aljuba* she wore to the wedding of the heir to the throne. Apart from the splendour of the cloth itself, the decoration was confined to the red square section (*parament* or *camper*). Within this red *parament* there were various polychromatic motifs woven from golden and silk threads in the form of leaves and animals such as lions and deers. The golden tones of the robe were run through with sinuous silk branches⁵³ in the form of vines. Finally, the entire robe was lined with a thin layer of green taffeta silk (Fig 5).⁵⁴

These designs, in which figures of animals are interwoven with floral and plant motifs tend to be present in the most extravagant robes as well as in the materials used to cover walls, furniture, and altars. It is possible, however, that the Queen's motives in choosing this design in particular may have had something to do with the fact, well supported by the sources and argued by a good many historians, that Martin was much the favourite son of the Queen.⁵⁵ The lion motif may have been a reference to her status as queen, but the luxuriant foliage which emerges over the animals and which ends up invading the skirts takes the form of climbing vines and seems more closely linked to the symbolism of the tree of life or the fruitfulness of nature. We don't know for certain what emotional significance the dress may have had for the wearer, but the motifs adorning it seem to bring the Queen close to her role as mother, the transmitter of life.

At any rate, the costly fabrics that Eleanor of Sicily gave her husband Peter the Ceremonious and her son Martin on the days immediately preceding the latter's wedding show a degree of ornamentation quite different from the motifs predominating on the Queen's dress we have just described. Thus, the *infant* received a luxurious silk and golden cloth with the aforementioned

⁵² Maria de Luna belonged to the Aragonese aristocracy. She was the daughter of the Count Llop Ferrandes de Luna and his second wife, the Provençal noblewoman Brianda de Got. After the early death of the count (1360) the mother sent her five-year-old daughter to the Catalan-Aragonese court. Queen Eleanor of Sicily looked after her upbringing and education. Thus, the child lived in the Queen's household in the company of the boy who would be her husband. On the first wife of Martin, see the biography by JAVIERRE 1942.

⁵³ A sculpture of Saint Lawrence from the second half of the fourteenth century preserved at the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya de Barcelona (Inv. 5291) shows the young martyr wearing a dalmatic decorated with golden motifs in the form of vine leaves out of which emerge finely traced black climbers. In this case, both leaves and climbers seem to have a sacrificial significance.

⁵⁴ "Aliuba de drap d'or fi, lo camper vermell, ab cervos e leons qui tenen un gran fullatge dessus, tot d'or ab vies de seda, qui són semblants a serments, les quals la Senyora Reyna se féu fer per a les noces del Senyor Infant, fill seu, e són forrats de taffetà vert," ANGLADA et al. 1992: 31.

⁵⁵ The first-born John left the maternal home at the age of thirteen when he was named *lloctinent general dels regnes* [general lieutenant of the kingdoms]. The young Martin grew up under the protection of his mother who became his guardian and the person responsible for his education. Until the day of his marriage, Martin lived together with his sister Eleanor, born two years after him, and Maria, his betrothed. See GARRIDO 2010: 41.

motif of the eagle, in this case with the legend “the day will come” between its claws,⁵⁶ whereas the King, as befits the solemnity of the celebration, was presented with a rich cloth with a vibrant pattern swarming with dragons, dogs, and lions mixed with leaves of blue silk.⁵⁷

The silk the *aljubes* were made of was bought in pieces⁵⁸ and the part that was to decorate the skirt was already woven. The sales of these clothes indicate that in the main textile centres cloths were manufactured for certain types of garments, such as the pieces of silk and gold thread with the *parament* of a different colour and decorated with various motifs that were needed for the *aljubes*. The four magnificent fourteenth-century fragments of *diapré* from Lucca displayed in the Lazaro Galdiano Foundation in Madrid⁵⁹ or those conserved in the Musée des Tissus de Lyon,⁶⁰ also from Lucca, make it possible to carry out a close analysis of the woven motifs on the silks destined for robes such as the lavish *aljubes* of Queen Eleanor of Sicily. The designs of the six fragments include figures of birds, gazelles, and dragons facing each other around oval plant forms, which can be understood to be a stylized reference to the tree of life. The texture with which the motifs have been constructed seems to increase the beauty of the pieces. The cloths appear to have been woven with a draw loom using a design pattern. The patterns made it possible to weave around a vertical axis in order to create a rectangle of variable proportions, for example 37 x 11 cm or 37 x 12 cm.

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE ROYAL WARDROBE

A royal wedding always mobilised a galaxy of people involved in the world of clothes making, and ultimately, of fashion; seamstresses, tailors, embroiderers, clothe merchants, weavers of veils... The most important amongst these royal servants were the tailors and embroiderers. As officials of the Royal Court and Household they were assigned an annual amount for the creation and ornamentation of the clothing of the King, the Queen, their children and any other members of the royal family, and for this they had to report to the Mestre Racional. The most well-known among the tailors in the court of Peter the Ceremonious and Eleanor of Sicily were Peter of Vallernera⁶¹—who made many of the Queen’s dresses; Jaume Clapers⁶²—who worked for Sibila of Fortià (fourth wife of Peter the Ceremonious); and Anaquí Fabre⁶³—who was responsible for

⁵⁶ “Ab agulles qui tene un breu en los peus qui diu tant diex vondra,” ANGLADA et al. 1992: 60.

⁵⁷ “Ab vibres, e cans e leons e altres diverses obrages d’or ab alguns fulages de seda blava,” ANGLADA et al. 1992: 58-59.

⁵⁸ “II peces de drap d’or d’Espanya ab lo camper vermel, ab rodes grans, les unes són ab senyals salmons e els altres són en caschuna II pahons ab altres molts obratges”; “dues peces de drap d’or, ab lo camper blau, ab bestions e capells de sols e auzells d’or ab moltes d’altres diverses obratges,” ANGLADA et al. 1992: 59 and 60.

⁵⁹ Four fragments of *diapré* from Lucca. Silk and gold. *A la luz de la seda*. CATÁLOGO DE LA COLECCIÓN DE TEJIDOS NAZARIES DEL MUSEO LÁZARO GALDIANO Y EL MUSEO DE LA ALHAMBRA, Madrid, 2012.

⁶⁰ Two fragments of silk cloth and gold thread. From Lucca. 14th century. Lyon, Museum of Tissus.

⁶¹ “A·n Pere de Vallernera, sastre de casa de la Senyora Reyna,” ANGLADA et al. 1992: 168 and 169.

⁶² ACA. Reial Patrimoni, reg. 506, fols. 31v, 36 and 38. reg. 507, fol. 54v.

⁶³ ACA. Reg. 1742, fol. 4. Cited in ROCA 1929: 258-259.

the wardrobe of John I. Amongst the extensive roster of embroiderers in the service of the court, the most outstanding masters were Enric de Lloany,⁶⁴ Mateu Torres,⁶⁵ Antoni Caranyena,⁶⁶ and Jaume Copi who was associated with the royal household as embroiderer to the King and the Queen for 55 years (1360-1415). In fact, his art was placed at the service of two generations of royalty; at the end of the first half of the fourteenth century he embroidered an impressive number of cottes, *aljubes*, *mantells*, *caperons*, and other clothes for Peter the Ceremonious, Eleanor of Sicily, and the *infants* Joanna (daughter of Peter the Ceremonious and his first wife, Maria of Navarre), Martin, and John. Later, the clothes of the fourth wife of the monarch, Sibil·la of Fortià and those of her brother Bernat de Fortià were also adorned with the embroideries of the master. The master “mestre brodador de la casa de la senyora reyna” [master embroiderer of the household of our lady, the queen]⁶⁷ continued in the service of John I and his second wife, Violant de Bar.⁶⁸

But the great royal ceremonies were not the only events to keep the court tailors busy. Their work also increased when seasonal changes demanded the renewal of royal wardrobes, that is, twice a year, at the beginning of winter and of spring. In April the tailors started to make the clothes for the warm weather and around September/October they started with the clothes and coats out of warm wools and silks in order to cope with the colder seasons. In and amongst the everyday work there were also the special celebrations such as weddings, births, royal entrances into town, deaths, and mourning periods. Other occasions linked to the liturgical calendar requiring special celebrations such as Christmas, Easter, and Good Friday meant that the court tailors had to produce new clothes for the queen and possibly other members of the royal family.

The royal tailor had to have sufficient technical ability and knowledge to be able to mark out the cloth, cut out the new forms for the clothes, baste, sew, gather in the skirts and coats to make them hang down in graceful folds or take them in to make the cloth hug the body. The linings, made of cloth or fur, were also part of their work, as were the fur adornments that decorated the clothes once finished.

Even so, for much of the year the trade of the royal tailor did not so much entail making new clothes as mending and altering clothes that needed their professional touch. They were also engaged in taking in or letting out clothes (one has to remember the frequent pregnancies of the queens), sewing up hems that had come undone, or shortening or lengthening them when the garment in question changed owners (which happened frequently with the clothes of the *infants*). Certainly, a good number of clothes in the wardrobe of Eleanor of Sicily needed to be

⁶⁴ ACA. Reial Patrimoni, reg. 476, fol. 67v.

⁶⁵ ACA. Reial Patrimoni, reg. 508, fol. 136.

⁶⁶ ACA. Reial Patrimoni, reg. 512, fol. 85.

⁶⁷ ACA. Reial Patrimoni, reg. 508, fol. 198.

⁶⁸ On the relationship between the arts of creating luxury cloths and Violant de Bar, see the study by TERÉS 2011: 9-69.

altered through her four pregnancies: in 1350 she gave birth to John, who was named First-Born, in 1356 Martin was born, and two years later, Eleanor. She gave birth to another boy, Alfons, in 1362, who died two years later. The pregnancies, the constitution she would pass down to her son Martin, and maybe the early symptoms of some illness changed the young, slim⁶⁹ princess into an obese woman who would be remembered as “the fat queen”.⁷⁰ In the part of her wardrobe reserved for more intimate clothes for covering the legs or the head there is a blue, woollen *caperó* from Florence that the queen had partially unstitched “so she could fit her head in”⁷¹...

We know that there were no special clothes for children,⁷² who wore the same style of clothes as adults adapted to their size; nevertheless it was necessary to make some clothes especially designed for smaller children. These children’s gowns possibly went through alterations as the child grew, or were passed down to younger siblings, as tends to be the case today. In any case, Eleanor of Sicily had a series of little pieces of clothing made from wool bought in Vilafranca⁷³ made for her first grandson, James, son of John I and Martha of Armagnac. These were vests worn directly against the skin, kerchiefs, and little caps tied to the head called *gambuxes*⁷⁴ and what must have been a series of little cloths like bibs, *baverols*, which were laid on the youngest children’s chests. In July 1374, when Queen Eleanor had these clothes made, the child would have been about 7 or 8 months old and his first teeth were beginning to come through.

The tailors were also responsible for the “mobile” or detachable elements that could be part of a garment such as sleeves, cuffs, collars, or the expensive adornments, all of which had to be replaced when they became worn, or transferred to another piece of clothing. Eleanor of Sicily’s wardrobe was overflowing with clothes and extras which were constantly being stitched, unstitched, and stitched once again onto another piece of cloth: robes converted into new robes or into luxury materials for the building. Just one example is the luxurious but somewhat worn *aljuba* woven with cloth of gold, which the Queen gave her only daughter around July 1372 when the mother was just beginning to wear the new clothes of the season. At her behest, the worn-out and faded ermine furs that bordered the hem of the skirt were taken off and replaced with 62 pieces of miniver. The detached ermine stayed in the Queen’s Chamber⁷⁵ to be used on

⁶⁹ GUBERN 1955, 1: 101.

⁷⁰ TASIS 1994: 92. See also LORENZO VALLA 2002: 133, who records the serious problems with obesity which also affected the health of King Martin ... “estaba excesivamente obeso y aquejado de una enfermedad que lo tenia somnoliento” [he was extremely fat and suffered from an illness that made him drowsy].

⁷¹ “Item un caperó de drap blau clar florentí, tot pla. Aquest ha fet fer la Senyora Reyna desfer a prop perquè li pogués entrar lo cap,” ANGLADA et al. 1992: 42.

⁷² ALEXANDRE-BIDON 1989: 123-168.

⁷³ The document probably refers to Vilafranca del Penedès, capital of the Catalan county of Alt Penedès. In the medieval era the city enjoyed considerable mercantile growth fostered by frequent markets and fairs. The town had a royal palace to which the court made various visits. The great-grandfather of Peter the Ceremonious and son of James I the Conqueror, Peter the Great, died in this palace in 1285.

⁷⁴ “Foren fets de IIII canes de drap de Vilafrancha camisetes e gambuxes e baverols a l’Infant Don Iachme, fill del Senyor Duc,” ANGLADA et al. 1992: 74.

⁷⁵ “Item una aljuba de drap d’or, l camper de seda blava ab caps de dones ligades a la castelana. Fou donada, per

some piece of clothing less sumptuous than the one they had been taken from.

Even the pearls from the blue *aljuba* that Eleanor of Sicily wore for the wedding of her first-born had been taken from a courtepy, which was accompanied by a little cape. The Queen had the court tailor turn the courtepy into a pallium destined for the altar of a church in Sicily. The pearls were taken off the cape, and some of them were turned into a costly gift for one the ladies of the court, Maria Lopez, whilst the rest were sewn into the eagles of the new *aljuba* that Queen Eleanor would wear at the wedding of her son John.⁷⁶

One particularly laborious task was the alteration of a great cloak that came from Castile. The cloak was made out of a precious velvet cloth lined with numerous squirrel furs. The front of the garment was edged with a costly band of cloth called a *fres*, which was studded with pearls and small gemstones.⁷⁷ The alteration required a number of different operations. First, as was usual in Eleanor of Sicily's wardrobe, the tailors took off the most valuable elements, the pearls and gemstones, which ended up in the possession of Maria Lopez of Heredia, undoubtedly for some service rendered to the court. Then the fur lining was removed from the cloak and was kept in the royal wardrobe until it was sewn into a new green velvet cloak from Castile that the Queen wore for Christmas in 1373. Finally the unlined cloak, once the pearls and gemstones had been removed from the *fres*, was used to make a chasuble to which a new lining was added.

In Queen Eleanor's household costly and richly decorated garments were not the only clothing continually subjected to alteration and re-use: worn-out clothes were also put into service. Thus, on various occasions, the Queen ordered torn sheets from her chamber to be put to another use. Sometimes, the material of the sheets was cut in the shape of bandages like those used to tend the wounds of a lady from the court, Antonia Palma.⁷⁸ Another large ripped sheet was torn in half and put to two different uses. One part of the sheet ended up in a sumptuous cloth-of-gold *aljuba* that came from Damascus and belonged to the queen. Although the sheet was linen, and didn't seem best suited to line a dress woven with golden and silk thread, as these were normally lined with taffeta or sandal, it was probably placed behind the gold cloth to reinforce the parts where the threads had become frayed or broken. The other part of the cloth was used to wrap up belts⁷⁹

manament de la Senyora Reyna, a la Infanta dona Alihonor, sa filla, e foren-ne levats les herminis d'entorn peus, e foren-hi messes LXII vayrs engraunats, e les herminis són en la Cambra, ja vells e tenits," ANGLADA et al. 1992: 24.

⁷⁶ "Ítem un curtapeu del dit vellut violat qui solia ésser sembrat d'ànguiles de perles. Del dit curtapeu feu fer la Senyora Reyna I pali que envià en Scicilia per al altar de Sent...Ítem un mantonet del dessus dit vellut violat sembrat d'ànguiles de perles...Et diu que n'a fetes les altres àguiles qui són en l'aljuba de l'aceytoní blau que's feu fer a les noçes del Duch fill seu," ANGLADA et al. 1992: 23.

⁷⁷ "Un mantó gran castellà de vellut clar, ab fres per lo fil danant, e sembrat lo dit fres de perles ab pedretes, forrat de pena-vayre," ANGLADA et al. 1992: 24.

⁷⁸ "A n'Antònia Palma, I l'ansol esquisat per fer benes, obs de la dita Senyora, qui avia mal en la cama," ANGLADA et al. 1992: 83.

⁷⁹ The most luxurious belts could be made of leather, silk, or silver, and have plates of precious metals, gold or silver, which were studded with gemstones or enamel. These plates were called *platons* and for this reason these types of belt are called *corretges platonades*. Eleanor of Sicily had this type of belt in her wardrobe. Moreover, the belts were an important element of clothing throughout the Middle Ages. Not only did they fit the clothes to the body, they also served to hang little bags such as *almoiners* [bags to carry alms], or arms. The most ornate and valuable were

and jewels, which thus covered were deposited in Eleanor of Sicily's wardrobe.⁸⁰ The Queen had another piece of damaged sheet made into fine towels to be used for cleaning the face and head.⁸¹

On Friday, 20 April 1375 the clerk recorded the use of what would be the last piece of clothing needed by Eleanor of Sicily from her wardrobe: a considerable quantity of good quality unused linen which would be used to cover her body, as she had passed away the same day. It seems very possible that the fine linen was used in order to embalm the corpse of the Queen,⁸² as suggested by the fact that Peter the Ceremonious sent an apothecary from Lleida and a monk from the monastery of Poblet to Lleida, where the Queen had died, with the order to open the coffin and let the King know the state of the body.⁸³

The quantity and complexity of tasks carried out by royal tailors and embroiderers, which went from purchasing through to tailoring, adornment, "conversion" and decoration of the expensive clothing of the court—without forgetting the speed with which the orders of the Queen were obeyed in anything to do with presents and donations of luxurious garments from her wardrobe to members of her family, ladies in waiting, and persons whose services linked them to the court—seem to suggest that she supervised personally and directly the work carried out by these masters of needle and thread. The wardrobe had a budget for clothes that was not to be squandered. In October 1372, Eleanor of Sicily bought two pieces of silk cloth in Barcelona from a Pisan merchant, Antoni Facha. The Queen spent 30 *lliures* on the first piece, a precious blue/violet velvet cloth, which was kept in her Chamber for future use. The second piece, which cost 21 *lliures*, was also a silk cloth with a red *parament* featuring a scene showing men hunting boars with white dogs. On Saturday, 16 October, however, the Queen, dissatisfied, had the second piece returned to the Pisan merchant.⁸⁴ With the refunded money she acquired from another merchant, whose name and origins we don't know, another gold and silk cloth that was twice as big as the one she had bought from the Pisan draper. Despite its high quality there was no polychromatic silk scene, as in the case of the Pisan piece, which may have explained its great expense. With

considered authentic jewels and for that reason it is no surprise that the cloth coming from a damaged sheet in the chamber of Queen Eleanor could be used to wrap up *corretges e altres yoyes* [belts and other jewels].

⁸⁰ "Fou desfet un lançol esquinsat de IIII teles, e la una tela és mesa en la aliuba de drap d'or de Damàs de la Senyora Reyna, e altra tela és estada esquinçada per metre correges e altres yoyes," ANGLADA et al. 1992: 84.

⁸¹ "E féu-ne tovaes de cara e de lavar cap," ANGLADA et al. 1992: 85.

⁸² "Fforen meses VII canes e mige en lo cors de la Senyora Reyna com passà d'esta vida divendres a XX d'abril de l'any MCCCLXXV," ANGLADA 1992: 73.

⁸³ DEIBEL 1928: 47.

⁸⁴ "Ítem la Senyora Reyna, stant en Barchinona, comprà d'en Anthoni Facha, mercader pissà, II peces: la una, de velut blau ho violat és dobla, que costà XXX lliures; he l'altra peça és de drap de seda baldaquí, ab lo camper vermel e cans blancs he homes que cacen porchs, e costà XXI liura en lo mes d'octubre de l'any LXXII. D'aquestes dues pezes, la blava o violada és en la Cambra; l'altra peza de drap de seda baldaquí, manà la Senyora Reyna tornar al mercader, car no li alta e les XXI lliures manà donar a madona Togores e après, disabte a XVI d'octubre, per manament de la Senyora Reyna, madona Togores donà les XXI liures a n Blascho dez Lor, lo qual am major quantitat comprà II peçes de drap d'or hi de seda, de què feren jaqueta e jubó al comte Guillem de Peralt," ANGLADA et al. 1992: 60-61.

or without a scene, however, the case is that the Queen made a good buy; for the same price she got twice as much cloth.

The particular care shown in his clothes by Eleanor of Sicily's First-Born, often known as "Lover of Gentility" led him also to have direct dealings with his tailors in order to make sure that his clothes were cut and assembled according to his taste and style. For this reason, when his mother wanted to give him a suit (*jaqué*) of cloth of gold, the *infant* John, along with his thanks for the intended gift, clearly expressed the wish to receive the piece of precious cloth whole so that his own tailor could take his measurements, cut, and make the garment to his own taste.⁸⁵ The generational difference in clothing tastes and the particular complexity involved in creating a garment such as the *jaqué* may have lain at the root of the future king of the Crown of Aragon's insistence that the luxurious cloth of gold cloth from Eleanor of Sicily be cut and sewn by his favourite tailor. The *jaqué* was a short, close-fitting garment for men, worn over the jerkin. A proof of the complex pattern of the piece, a companion garment of the *jaqué*, can be seen in the jerkin conserved in Lyon,⁸⁶ made out of no less than twenty-seven pieces. On another occasion, the *infant* John's admiration of the craftsmanship used in making a *houppelande*, a garment similar to the *cotte*, which would replace the *cotte* towards the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century, led him to change his mind and prefer the clothes which were due to be cut by the tailor Anaquí to be shared with another tailor, named Master Peter.⁸⁷

When the tailor Pere Toalles had to make a *houppelande*, a jerkin or a *caperó*, Peter the Ceremonious had various batches of cloth and minivers purchased with the express order that the purchaser pay special attention to the quality and beauty of the colour. His clothes required a blue and green striped cloth,⁸⁸ but each one of these colours had to be of the finest quality and the dye had to be cleanly, and finely done.⁸⁹ In the fourteenth century, a beautiful and rich colour had to be a dense, vivid, luminous, and solid colour that impregnated the fibre and withstood the discolouring effects of the sun, bleach, and the passage of time. It also mattered to the King that

⁸⁵ "Exí mateix demanats a la senyora Reyna de part nostra la peça de drap d'aur real de la qual ella nos volia fer tallar jaqués, car mils se tallarà a nostra mida e per la manera que nos volem que no lla...per en Johan Jener he sabut que vos senyora, hauets feta fer una peça de drap daur real per fer jaqués per ami, la qual cosa senyora vos tinc en gracia e mercè. E fahiem saber lo dit Johan que trametés aquí lo meu sastre. E senyora, car lo dit sastre, no tallaria lo dit jaqués ama guisa, per tal humilment vos suplich que la dita peça vullats liurar al dit Johan Janer qui lem aportarà o trametrà," ACA, reg. 1742, fol. 4. Cited in ROCA 1929: 264-265.

⁸⁶ Jerkin. Silk cloth (*llama*) and gold. Inv. 30307. Museum of Tissues of Lyon. The piece had belonged to Charles de Blois from the house of Châtillon, who died in 1364. The garment was made of a kind of jigsaw puzzle of twenty-seven separate pieces, nineteen of which were for the two sleeves and eight for the bodice. One of the sleeves has one piece more than the other.

⁸⁷ ACA. Reg. 1659, fol. 117. Cited in ROCA 1929: 258-259.

⁸⁸ Striped clothes were either made of two colours or of two different pieces of cloth.

⁸⁹ "Manam vos en que continent comprats draps de les colors deus escrites, aytant com ni haia, ops à hopalanda e juppó e caperó per á nos e semblantment al comte de Denia. E les colors dels draps sien aquestes. Una partida de listat o desguisat, lo pus bell e pus fi que trobar se pua en Barchinona, é l'altra partida sia del pus bell blau é del pus bell vert ques puga trobar, obra neta, fina, e bell espesses de vayres á les hopes," COROLEU 1889: 43.

the striped clothing combined well with other garments of blue, green and light brown he had bought, undoubtedly as the royal tailor also had to put together the striped clothing and at the very least, make an ensemble in which monochrome pieces were worn alongside striped pieces. At any rate, the monarch, always meticulous and with an eye to detail, ordered that if the blues and greens purchased didn't go well with the striped cloth then others should be bought which matched it better.⁹⁰

Proof of the personal attention that the Queen and also her family paid to clothing and court dress can be seen in the financial shrewdness of Queen Eleanor of Sicily in returning the cloth to the Pisan merchant in order to buy another at a better price, the young John's preference for a certain tailor to cut and assemble his clothes, and Peter the Ceremonious' insistence on the purchase of beautifully coloured cloths which could be combined harmoniously.

At any rate, a look through the doors at what was for years the wardrobe of Queen Eleanor of Sicily has allowed us a deeper understanding of the rich apparel of the Queen, composed of precious materials but also suffused with aesthetic, symbolic, and emotional values.

⁹⁰ "Emperò volem que si alguna de les dites colors blau, vert o bruneta no campejaven bé ab listat o desguisat, quen comrets daltre que campeg bé," COROLEU 1889: 43.

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Fig. 1. Hypothetical reconstruction of a cotte from the wardrobe of Eleanor of Sicily. Drawing by Joan Carles Ronchera.



Fig. 2. Hypothetical reconstruction of a cottehardie from the wardrobe of Eleanor of Sicily. Drawing by Joan Carles Ronchera.

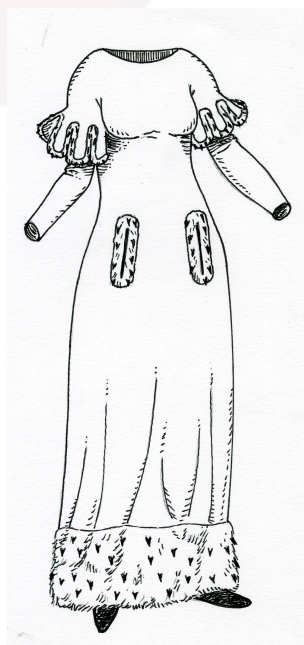


Fig. 3. Hypothetical reconstruction of a courtepy from the wardrobe of Eleanor of Sicily. Drawing by Joan Carles Ronchera.



Fig. 4. Ordinación feyta por el muyt alto e muyt excellent princep e señor don Pedro tercero daragon de la manera como los Reyes daragon se faran consagrar e ellos mismos se coronaran, Fundación Lázaro Galdiano, Madrid, Mss. 15024, fol. 1r.

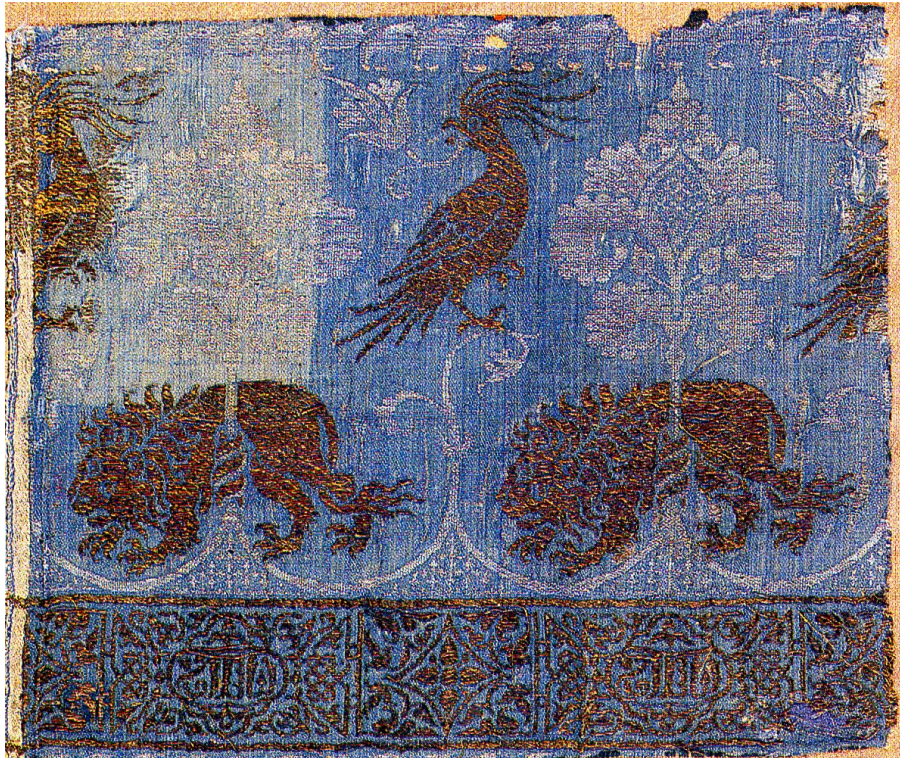


Fig. 5. Fragment of silk fabric depicting lions and birds. Italy (Lucca?), 15th century, Musée des Tissus de Lyon.



Fig. 6. Hypothetical reconstruction of an aljuba from the wardrobe of Eleanor of Sicily. Drawing by Joan Carles Ronchera.