

# FASHION AND CLOTHING IN LATE MEDIÉVAL EUROPE

## MODE UND KLEIDUNG IM EUROPA DES SPÄTEN MITTELALTERS



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SEPARATUM





# Fashion and Clothing in Late Medieval Europe

## Mode und Kleidung im Europa des späten Mittelalters

Herausgegeben von  
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## Best Clothes and Everyday Attire of Late Medieval Nuns

«Oh woe upon my youthful days  
oh woe is my languishing wail  
Sister, dear sister mine, shall we be cut off from the world?  
That is my greatest pain.  
Should I never wear a circlet, then I must complain,  
for in the world I yearn to be.  
A circlet in my hair would I rather wear,  
instead of the veil of the nuns.»<sup>1</sup>

With these words, a young girl bemoans her forced entry into a cloister in a song. This and other songs of lamenting nuns express what entry into the cloister meant for them: parting from the lay world with its zest for life and the joys of its colourful and sumptuous dresses, here exemplified concretely with the image of a circlet in the hair – the epitome of courtly hair decoration<sup>2</sup>. In contrast, entry into the cloister was connected to an internal and external *conversio*, and the festive exchange of clothing was an integral part of the ceremony in this rite of passage, which took the form of a celebratory mass<sup>3</sup>. The inner transformation of *mores*, which now were to conform to the divine commandments of humility, chastity, and obedience, corresponded to the external renunciation of worldly clothing. During the ceremony, the priest illustrated this symbolic act with the words: *Exuat te dominus veterem hominem cum actibus suis* – «May the Lord strip you of your old nature with all its deeds». And as he dressed the nun in the habit, he said: *Induat te dominus* – «May the Lord cloth you with a new nature» (Col 3,9; Eph 4,24)<sup>4</sup>. The habit of a nun consisted of a frock (*floccus*) with sleeves, a wide sleeveless cowl with or without a *cingulum* (a belt or cincture), and in some cases on top of it a scapular and a mantle<sup>5</sup>. The headdress consisted of a wimple, two veils – a *peplum* (usually a white underveil) and a *velum*, which was typically a black veil (depending on the

order, it could also be white), and often a nun's crown. Canon law prescribed a habit that varied between black and white and intermediate tones of gray and brown, which was worn by men as well as women<sup>6</sup>.

In the altarpiece of St Clare, the artist visualises the decisive step of entry into the spiritual estate by means of the exchange of clothing and cutting off the hair: Clare swaps the gorgeous golden dress of a daughter of the upper classes for the white habit and black veil of the order, which she receives from the hands of its members<sup>7</sup> (fig. 1).



Fig. 1: Robing of St Clare, Swabia, c. 1500. Berlin, Deutsches Historisches Museum, inv.-no 1986/12.



The habit symbolises humility because it nullifies any difference of estate; it signifies the will to chastity because it disguises the feminine form of the body; and it displays outer obedience to divine commands by its timelessly simple cut and fabric of linen or wool. Given this sort of symbolism, fashion and nuns appear to be mutually exclusive themes.

Some contemporary ideals did, however, accommodate the possibility of festive attire for nuns. The concurrent notion anchored in medieval society, that an elevated social position in the religious or secular hierarchy must find an appropriate expression in outward appearance, competed with conceptions of humility and modesty. Moreover, canon law included the fundamental principle that members of the upper estates should be recognisable by their more valuable accoutrements<sup>8</sup>. The external differentiation of a position of superiority was a fundamental element of symbolic communication, as a consequence of which the saints were attired in sumptuous clothing encrusted with precious stones that corresponded to their rank in the heavenly hierarchy. The altarpiece takes as its central theme the coronation of St Clare<sup>9</sup>. Its composition places the respective coronations of Mary and the nun in parallel, by adorning in gowns of gold brocade not only St Clare, but also Mary, the first virgin and the nuns' role model in chastity and obedience. At first glance this imagery seems to undermine Clare's lifelong struggle to espouse poverty but, rather than standing for luxury, the valuable dress primarily symbolises the precious soul. The notion of a particular distinction owing to their estate was seen as peculiarly appropriate for nuns, who were due an especially lofty position in the spiritual hierarchy because of their roles as virgins dedicated to God<sup>10</sup>. The vow of chastity was understood as a sort of bloodless martyrdom that constituted a prerequisite for their particular proximity to Christ<sup>11</sup>.

This proximity to the Son of God found expression in a way that impressed contemporaries in the image of the bride of Christ or *sponsa Christi*. Betrothal to the <highest ruler>, Christ, ennobled them as well. This special <estate> was made visible through the nun's crown, which embodied nuns' special social

position. It was the earthly equivalent of the heavenly coronation that they expected after death as the reward for a life devoted to Christ on earth. On the altarpiece, the same crown that Christ gives to Mary on the upper level beckons to St Clare as well, indicating the parallel status of the nuns with the saints. The idea of expressing social status via one's external appearance was thus familiar to the nuns. It attained additional influence because many of the religious came from the upper social strata, from noble or patrician circles, in which wearing clothing appropriate to one's estate was considered a matter of course<sup>12</sup>.

These two competing ideals – the timeless, simple habit demanded by the order as an expression of humility and the self-confident display of a particular spiritual and social position – determined the clothing and appearance of late medieval nuns. Embellishment of their habits swung between these two poles. Following adjustments in society in the second half of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, expression of a particular estate became more important, while the Observantine reforms of the fifteenth century tried hard to bring back the ideals of humility and equality.

In order to examine these relationships, we first survey normative directives. The orders' rules only rarely made concrete specifications about the female habit, but synodal and diocesan prescriptions give us some insight into the normative will of the church hierarchy. In a second step, we look at the sartorial extravagances of nuns, insofar as the sources – particularly visitation records – take this aspect of the matter of clothing as a theme. Such sources reveal that the headdress, the nuns' veil and crown, attracted the women's particular interest. In conclusion, it is worthwhile to glance briefly at some extraordinary occasions on which women wore special clothing, and even costumes.

### Normative Provisions

Episcopal synods devoted a great deal of attention to nuns' clothing. Although the Synod of Rouen in 1214 provided that anything decided under papal authority

about the clothing of monks was also valid for nuns<sup>13</sup>, it was apparently necessary to discuss the clothing of religious women again and again. The ecclesiastical «framework directives» were systematised at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215: A habit should be of a length neither noticeably short nor long (it should cover the feet); coloured fabrics were forbidden; valuable clasps or rings of gold with precious-stone decorations were prohibited as well<sup>14</sup>. These provisions were made even more concrete by later episcopal synods: In 1237 a provincial synod in Trier proclaimed that abbesses and nuns were forbidden to wear mantles or surcoats (an outer garment of the medieval nobility and upper bourgeoisie of French origin) made of black or brown «Brunat», or expensive furs with colourful workings; their habits should display no narrow, form-revealing, or sewed-on sleeves<sup>15</sup>. White hanging sleeves had appeared at twelfth-century courts and they often hung to the ground<sup>16</sup>. Veils of silk seemed just as unacceptable to the synod's participants as buckles or golden or silver rings, golden fringes, silken belts, and other secular adornments.

It is remarkable how often such decrees repeat that nuns were not to dress in secular clothing when they left the convent<sup>17</sup>. Trips away from the cloister were among the occasions for donning better clothing or even one's best apparel, and for such special journeys nuns seem to have chosen their secular clothing. When the decrees of Trier forbade the use of gilded chairs and reins while riding outside the cloister, they plainly pointed at the elevated standards to which women's communities were accustomed. *Superpellitia* – light overcoats – were allowed, but they were to be cut according to the style of the religious; an ostentatious, courtly length was not permitted. We have reason to doubt that synodal rules were effective: In 1277 the directives for abbesses and nuns in Trier were ratified again to their complete extent<sup>18</sup>. Even the ecumenical Council of Vienne (1311–1312) found it necessary to specify the appearance of nuns and urge visitors to correct their lifestyles: «Thus let the visitors direct their attention with alacrity so that the nuns, of whom we have heard that some have overstepped the regula-

tions, do not wear silk gowns, fur trim, sandals, long or swept-up hairstyles, or plaid or striped veils, and that they do not participate in worldly dances and celebrations [...].»<sup>19</sup>

Since nuns often made fashionable attire on their own, the step to using such items themselves or as gifts for friends was short<sup>20</sup>. Visitation reports, like one that survives from the convent of Heiningen in 1240, repeatedly enjoined religious women not to make secular items but instead to fashion simple works in linen<sup>21</sup>. The provincial council that met in Magdeburg in 1403, for example, decreed that nuns were not to perform any handiwork for profit or any type of business, nor make purses, gloves, or anything similar to give as gifts, unless compelled by the most extreme poverty, being destitute of funds or charitable aid<sup>22</sup>.

Clerical commentators such as the diocesan clergy of Salzburg did in 1281 argued that spectators should be able to distinguish easily between the spiritual and secular estates on the basis of their external appearance<sup>23</sup>. Clothing was even intended to differentiate subtle hierarchies among the religious, with the colour of the veil distinguishing nuns from lay sisters<sup>24</sup>. As an important component of symbolic communication, clothing preserved «true order» in the eyes of contemporaries. Because it bore such symbolic meaning, the monastic habit worked to stabilise the medieval society of orders<sup>25</sup>.

### **Fashion and Extravagant Clothing of the Nuns**

According to the Benedictine Rule, it was part of the duty of the chambress, who was in charge of the nuns' wardrobes and bedding, to ensure that all their attire, cowls, wimples, veils, crowns, pins, capes, and all such items, following the disposition of the abbess, should never attract attention but be plain and humble<sup>26</sup>. Old garments were to be given back to the chambress when the nuns received new ones<sup>27</sup>. The rules provided that better quality garments than those worn daily were to be issued to anyone who made a journey<sup>28</sup>. This clothing was to be returned to the general wardrobe after the nun's return, in keeping with the Rule's prohibition on private ownership of clothing and private gifts.



Fig. 2: Sisters of Saint Stephan in mantles padded with ermine. Altarpiece showing the life of St Odilia from St Stephan. Strasbourg, Dépôt du Collège Saint-Etienne au Musée de l'Œuvre Notre Dame.

Religious women generally reacted to such restrictions not by altering the basic form of their habit or headdress but by expanding their boundaries as much as they could. They devoted great creativity to ornamenting the garments allowed to them according to the clothing styles of the age<sup>29</sup>. The Sisters of St Stephan, for example, assembled their mantles with expensive furs (fig. 2). Regarding fulfilment of the Rule's demands, in 1249 the Visitor Eudes Rigaud found the ladies of Villarceaux (1249) fashionably up-to-date – even though the nunnery was poor and the archbishop wanted the nuns to stop accepting new members and draw up monthly accounts. Nevertheless, the nuns had pelisses of rabbit, hare, and fox fur; they wore their hair long and curled, scented their veils with saffron, and adorned their belts with silver- and steel-work clasps, with which they fastened the habits closed<sup>30</sup>.

As a sign of devotion to God women's hair was to be cut when they entered into the spiritual estate (the equivalent to the tonsure for men)<sup>31</sup>. Extravagant clothes and hairstyles corresponded to their worldly lifestyles. As Eudes Rigaud discovered, everybody in the convent seemed to have a lover, and several had children. Johanna de Aululari frequently went out to see her son<sup>32</sup>. The archbishop strenuously forbade long hair and curls, belts of ironwork, saffron, expensive fabric, and the more costly kinds of fur<sup>33</sup>. But, as Eileen Power puts it, «it was unlikely that he was successful. The world never called more seductively to medieval nuns than in contemporary fashions.»<sup>34</sup> Like courtly women, the Benedictine nuns of St Salvator in Évreux kept different kinds of pets (little dogs, squirrels, monkeys), and wore fancy belts and *auricularia* (probably a kind of earmuff), which they made themselves<sup>35</sup>. The nuns of Almenêches wore necklaces (*monilia*)<sup>36</sup>.

We lack comparable knowledge of the state of affairs in thirteenth-century German cloisters. The reform movement of the high middle ages that stemmed from the Investiture Controversy probably strengthened the influence of the rule on daily life in female convents<sup>37</sup>, but ecclesiastical visitors to these institutions point out similar manifestations later on. Even

in the mid-twelfth century, however, the nuns around Hildegard of Bingen at the Rupertsberg kept their hair long, and on feast days they wore white silk veils so long that they touched the ground<sup>38</sup>.

Precious rings were also widely worn: the *Ordo romanus* specified that at their dedication as virgins, in addition to receiving consecrated veils from the bishop, the nuns should be presented with rings to symbolise marriage to the heavenly bridegroom, Christ<sup>39</sup>. It was only a small step from this prescription to the fashioning of this symbol of bridal status in expensive materials and its ornamentation with precious stones<sup>40</sup>. In 1509, the Archbishop of Canterbury stated his wish that only consecrated nuns should wear rings and that they should be satisfied with one<sup>41</sup>. Nuns' attempts to expand upon the permissible are reflected masterfully in Geoffrey Chaucer's (c. 1343–1400) literary portrait of the Prioress Madame Eglentyne in the 'Prologue' of 'The Canterbury Tales': She wears a luxurious habit of the finest manufacture, although in the prescribed colour – gray – and in the correct cut. Her headdress is an appropriate veil, although she wears it too far back in order to expose her fine forehead<sup>42</sup>. As her sole adornment, she bears on her arm the distinguishing sign of the religious, a rosary – but this one is worked in green and red stones and boasts a golden pendant engraved with the slogan of medieval chivalry: *Amor vincit omnia*<sup>43</sup> («Love Conquers All»).

Especially in the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth centuries, monastic rules were widely disregarded in nunneries. During this period, nuns often supported themselves with incomes from private property and kept servants of their own<sup>44</sup>. Valuable legacies of garments were often bequeathed personally to individual nuns<sup>45</sup>. Such practices weakened the influence of superiors on women's communities, and this tendency to 'independence' can easily be read in convent women's apparel. Descriptions of nuns in visitation records seem to resemble that of Chaucer's Prioress. English visitation records, which are particularly well-preserved, offer a revealing picture. The 1441 records of the visitor from Lincoln report the following of the Prioress of Ankerwyke, Clemence Medforde:



Fig. 3: 'Madonna von Pfnos' with a 'Kruseler', around 1380. Innsbruck, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, inv.-no P 284.



Fig. 4: A «Kruseler» under a nun's veil. «Liber animarum capituli Monasterii s. Quirini Nussiensis» (n. 51), London, British Library, Ms. Add. 15456, fol. 2r.

«[§ 14] Also the Prioress wears golden rings exceedingly costly with divers precious stones and also girdles silvered and gilded over and silken veils, and she carries her veil too high above her forehead, so that her forehead, being entirely uncovered<sup>46</sup>, can be seen of all, and she wears furs of vair [a variegated fur, probably squirrel]. [...]

[§ 15] Also she wears shifts of cloth of Reynes [Rennes], which costs sixteen pence the ell. [...]

[§ 16] Also she wears kirtles laces with silk and tiring pins of silver and silver-gilt, and has made all the nuns wear the like. [...]

[§ 17] Also she wears above her veil a cap of estate furred with budge. She confesses thereto; it is however, on account of divers infirmities in her head. [...]

[§ ad 14] Also the prioress has round her neck a long cord of silk, in English a lace, which hangs down below her breast, and thereon a golden ring with one diamond.»<sup>47</sup>

In Germany as well we hear of extravagant clothes in the context of late medieval reform visitations. Fifteenth-century reformers like Augustinian canon Johannes Busch tried to reverse such developments; his



Fig. 5: The white pepla is artfully folded. Sacristan at the mass of the dead, single page of a liturgical manuscript, Southern Germany, c. 1420/30. Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Min. 12834 (36-1928).



Fig. 6: A Premonstratensian nun wearing a nun's crown, 1334. Frankfurt on Main, Städel Museum, Altenberg altarpiece, inv.-no SG 358-361 (detail).

reports are similarly telling<sup>48</sup>. When Busch introduced reform in the cloister of Augustinian canonesses at Barsinghausen near Hildesheim in 1455, he expressed great wonder at the sylphlike figures who came to welcome him, dressed in long, close-fitting, unbelted linen tunics, over which they wore – in place of the requisite mantles – wide and sleeveless *superpellicia* – *quasi transparentes*, reports Busch in addition, so that one could recognise almost all their members underneath<sup>49</sup>. Closefitting, «transparent» female clothing that made a woman appear almost naked was one of the favourite themes of courtly literature<sup>50</sup>. The «white Magdalenes» of Hildesheim, who followed the Dominican Rule,



Fig. 7: Crown made from woven silk bands with embroidered medallions (nun's crown?), France (?), 12th century (Riggisberg, Abegg-Stiftung, inv.-no 5257). – The medallions on the horizontal band depict the Lamb of God, a cherub (or seraph), an angel, and a king raising his hands in adoration. The crossing of the two vertical bands is adorned by a medallion with a four-pointed golden star on red ground. The blue velvet support dates from the 16th or 17th century.

wore a black veil (*vela nigra*) over a white under-veil (*pepla alba*), but the veil was frilled in the style of the *«Kruseler»*, a fourteenth-century frilled bonnet quite popular in northern Europe (figs. 3–5)<sup>51</sup>.

The most important item of clothing for nuns, not least for their own self-understanding, was the headdress<sup>52</sup>. Veils were also prized gifts; Helena of Sampleben, a member of the lower nobility who lived in the *«Heilig-Kreuzkloster»* near Brunswick, had white veils sewn from a piece of inherited linen for all her fellow nuns in 1492<sup>53</sup>. As early as 1240, the bishop found the nuns in Heiningen wearing *pepla*

*crispa*<sup>54</sup>. And the sisters of Mary Magdalene in Hildesheim wore the *«Kruseler»* (*«Ranse»*) as a matter of course – believing or pretending to believe that Maria Magdalena herself had done the same. They had also become accustomed to having the upper half of their tunics down to the cord cut very narrowly, for under it swung an additional pleated skirt, following the worldly style<sup>55</sup>. With reform, such extravagances usually ceased. Emphasising again the authority of the church hierarchy, clerics put broad pressure on nuns to wear pious, conforming habits. Strict enclosure was re-established, firmly separating nuns from the secular

world. The Observantine reform movement – in this respect as in others conservative in reinforcing the old, <right> order of society – thus reestablished a clear differentiation of the estates as an element of divinely willed social arrangements.

In addition to the veil, the nun's crown was of special meaning; it was worn under or over the veil by many nuns, though not all, as the highest accolade of female religious life<sup>56</sup>. Because the consecration of a nun represented the church hierarchy's approval of a life devoted to virginity, only a bishop could perform the «Jungfrauenweihe». The profession, a promise to live a spiritual life, had to be established first. The ritual was similar to the rite for secular marriage, except that the bishop stood in for the divine bridegroom, Christ. Following the usual ritual in the *Pontificale romanum*, the bishop placed a crown (*torques* or *corona*) on the nun's head with the words: «Accept the sign of Christ upon the head, so that you may be made his wife, and if you persevere in him to the end, you will be crowned in perpetuity» (*Accipe signum Christi in capite, ut uxor eius efficiaris et si in eo permanseris, in perpetuum coroneris*)<sup>57</sup>. In some convents, therefore, this consecration was connected with the crowning of the nuns. The crown – understood as a promise or representation of the consecration in the afterlife – consisted of a white band of cloth of about two fingers' width with two additional bands in the form of a cross laid over the head (fig. 6 and 7). Often crosses of red silk symbolising the wounds of Christ were sewn onto the crown at the forehead, or even more commonly on all four sides and on the crest. Given their weighty symbolic value, it made sense to embellish them specially. Johannes Busch reports of the canonesses that they had sewn golden crosses on all four sides and a golden rose on the top of their crowns (*desuper in medio rosam auream*)<sup>58</sup>.

In a sense, nun's crowns were the religious equivalent of the circlets of maidens in the secular world. Adornment of nun's crowns with valuable materials had a long tradition reaching back at least to the high middle ages. In his <Rule for Heloise>, Abelard (1079–1142) mentions as a matter of course the nuns' consecration by a bishop and the wearing of crowns with *cruces*<sup>59</sup>. In the

twelfth century, Tenxwind of Andernach reports that in the convent of Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179), the nuns wore fabric crowns worked in gold over their long, unbound hair<sup>60</sup>. These crowns bore crosses (according to the first redaction of the letter, about 1146/1153) or the image of angels on both sides and on the back (according to the second redaction, about 1180/1190), and on the forehead the image of a lamb. The nun's crown found in the collection of the Abegg-Stiftung (fig. 7) is an outstanding example for a twelfth century crown as Hildegard of Bingen describes it. As a sign of their virginity and closeness to Christ, the women wore these crowns even to bed<sup>61</sup>. An episode that Johannes Busch reports about the introduction of reform in the Cistercian female cloister of Mariensee in the diocese of Minden explains the inseparability of the veils and crown from the self-understanding of the nuns. A young nun angrily cast the veil and crown at the feet of the bishop, with the words: «Until now you always said that I didn't need to reform myself; now you want to force me to do so. You can have your veil and crown back; I don't want to be a nun anymore.»<sup>62</sup>

Even after the late-fifteenth-century reforms, the external appearance of nuns was not as effectively simplified as we might imagine today. When papal legate and indulgence preacher Raimund Peraudi (1435–1505) promised to bless the Cistercian nuns of <Heilig-Kreuz> personally before his departure from Brunswick in 1503, the women were allowed to pass before the walls of the cloister on this extraordinary occasion. But it transpired that the nuns were not able to transmit the uniform picture to others that they believed they had themselves. A nun who recorded the events in a journal wrote: «We were overjoyed and prepared for the reception of such a high-ranking guest by donning our white Sunday mantles (*candidas cappas dominicales*), for our mistress [the abbess] allowed us to put on our best. Indeed I refer to the mantles because I thought that in future we should take care that such a lack of uniformity should not appear in our habits as it did then. Namely, the *cappa* of one was very short; fur extended from the mantle of another (*uni erat cappa nimis curta, altera pellicium extendebatur ultra cappam*); yet another sister appeared in



pristine white, while another was filthy and untidy – all of which unsettled us deeply and should thus be avoided in the future – if it can be (*si potest*)», she appended realistically<sup>63</sup>. But the situation did not embarrass the women of <Heilig-Kreuz> on this occasion, for the cardinal mistakenly rode out of the city via the wrong gate and thus missed the nuns completely – to their great sorrow<sup>64</sup>.

The effects of the reform notwithstanding, nuns' lives in the fifteenth century still played out between serious adherence to the rules of their orders and relaxed festivity. In the rhythm of daily life and feast days the nuns developed a great deal of creativity, and lived in a much more lively fashion than the morally and didactically coloured theological texts of the period want us to think. Seen in this light, the writings of the schoolgirls at the Benedictine convent Ebstorf are a singular source. Next to short Latin practice, *dictamina*, in still-awkward handwriting and faulty Latin, the girls noted numerous details from the daily life of the cloister. The last page of the manuscript ends with a description of the celebration of carnival after an

unusually long and hard winter: «We spent the time of the carnival very happily. We were freed from all of our studies (*omne ius scolasticum fuit nobis relaxatum*) and the younger girls (*iuuencule*) costumed themselves (*assimilaverunt*) as bridegrooms or husbands.»<sup>65</sup>

Costuming on special feast days like St Innocentius (22 September) was widely common, even in nunneries<sup>66</sup>. The girls in Ebstorf wore felt caps and hoods on their heads, and tiny bags and knives hung at their sides. Many of them put on clothing with fur and broad fringed sleeves (*cum amplis fimbriatis manicis*), and «others dressed in the courtly style (*curialiter*) [and had] primped their hair with a curling iron. A few wore monk's habits. But we [the older girls] were not allowed to put on costumes. But we were jolly anyway. Our circle dance grew to a great size and the *cantrix* sang worldly songs which we repeated in loud voices.» On <Ash Wednesday> it was all over: As was customary, all the members of the convent, including children and girls, received ashes on their countenances «in order to remind us», the author closes, «that we come from dust and to dust we shall return».

1 Owê, mîn jungen dage / Owê, mîn sênen klage / Swester, lieben swester mîn / sullen wir gescheiden sîn / von der werlt, daz ist mîn meistiu swaere. / Sol ich nimmer schapel trage, / sô muoz ich wol von schulden klagen, / wan ich gerne bî der werlde waere. / Ein schapel klâr ûf mînem hâr / trüeg ich für den wîle / als man siht die nunnen tragen / zeiner kurzewîle [...] The song continues (v. 617): Mich dûhte ein vrowe gekleidet wol / diu ze nâhest an ir haete / Ein hemedo ganzer kiusche vol / gegürtet wol mit werner staete, / Dar obe einn roc mit reinen siten / und einen mantel schamevar / den rehtiu mâze haete gesniten / vür ungebaere: ir vrowen, nemt der kleider war! (*Karl Bartsch*, *Deutsche Liederdichter des XII.–XIV. Jahrhunderts*, 4th ed., Stuttgart 1901, p. 379, vv. 593–602.) This thirteenth-century poem hails from Bavaria or Austria. Another Latin song of the twelfth century takes a similar tone: Plangit nonna, fletibus / [...] Fibula n[on] perfruo, / flammeum non capio, / strophium [as]sumerem, / diadema cuperem, / heu misella! / monile arriperem / si vale[r]em, / pelles et

herm[inie] libet ferre («I have no brooch to enjoy, can wear no bridal-veil; how I'd long to put on a chaplet or tiara, woe is me – I'd get hold of a necklace if I could – and what joy to wear ermine furs!»). Cf. *Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love-Lyric*, vol. 2, ed. by Peter Dronke, Oxford 1966, pp. 357s., vv. 19–27.

2 *Elisabeth Vavra*, art. Schap(p)el, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 8 (1995), col. 1440. Unmarried girls wore the <Schapel> over loose hair.

3 *Eva Schlottheuber*, *Klostereintritt und Bildung. Die Lebenswelt der Nonnen im späten Mittelalter. Mit einer Edition des <Konventstagebuchs> einer Zisterzienserin von Heilig-Kreuz bei Braunschweig (1484–1507) (Spätmittelalter und Reformation. Neue Reihe 24)*, Tübingen 2004, pp. 134–146. See *Désirée Koslin*, *The Robe of Simplicity: Initiation, Robing, and Veiling of Nuns in the Middle Ages*, in: *Robes and Honor. The Medieval World of Investiture*, ed. by Stewart Gordon, New York 2001, pp. 255–274.

- 4 See *Reginald L. Hyatte*, *The Habit Makes the Monk: Clothes-Cloth and Valuation in Joinville's «Vie de saint Louis»*, in: *Studi francesi* 50 (2006), pp. 7–16; *Roland Bebrendt*, *Theology of Dress*, in: *The American Benedictine Review* 52 (2001), pp. 437–448; *Gregor Pottbof*, *«Habitus non facit monachum, sed professio»*. Die «susceptio habitus» und ihre Rechtsfolgen bis zum Konzil von Trient, in: *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und seiner Zweige* 108 (1997), pp. 7–79; *Giles Constable*, *The Ceremonies and Symbolism of Entering Religious Life and Taking the Monastic Habit, from the Fourth to the Twelfth Century*, in: id., *Culture and Spirituality in Medieval Europe (Variorum Collected Studies Series 541)*, Aldershot 1996, pp. 771–834.
- 5 *Adalbert de Vogüé*, *Aux origines de l'habit monastique (III<sup>e</sup>–IX<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, in: *Studia Monastica* 43 (2001), pp. 7–19; *Ruedi Imbach*, art. *Habitus*, in: *Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages* 1 (2000), p. 649; *Pius Engelbert*, *Grundlinien einer Geschichte des benediktinischen Habits*, in: *Studia Monastica* 41 (1999), pp. 277–302; *Uwe Kai Jacobs*, *Die Aufnahmeordnung der Benediktsregel aus rechtshistorischer Sicht*, in: *Regula Benedicti Studia* 14/15 (1988), pp. 115–130, here pp. 123–125; *Barbara F. Harvey*, *Monastic Dress in the Middle Ages. Precept and Practice*, Canterbury 1988.
- 6 Cf. *Clementinarum lib. III, tit. X (De statu monachorum)*, c. 1, in: *Corpus iuris canonici*, vol. 2, ed. by Emil Friedberg, Leipzig 1881, p. 1166s.: *Statuimus, ut superior vestis ipsorum habitui proxima nigri, brunni aut albi coloris existat iuxta morem, apud eos servari solitum in regione, qua degunt*. They were not to wear linen shirts, either, see *Franz Fuchs*, *Wolle oder Leinen. Zum Streit um den rechten Habit in der Regularkanonikerbewegung des 12. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Regula Sancti Augustini. Normative Grundlage differenter Verbände im Mittelalter*, ed. by Gert Melville and Anne Müller (Publikationen der Akademie der Augustiner-Chorherren von Windesheim 3), Paring 2002, pp. 219–238.
- 7 *Robing of St Clare (Swabia, c. 1500)*, *Deutsches Historisches Museum Berlin*, inv.-no 1986/12. See *Klaus Schreiner*, *Seelsorge in Frauenklöstern – Sakramentale Dienste, geistliche Erbauung, ethische Disziplinierung*, in: *Krone und Schleier. Kunst aus mittelalterlichen Frauenklöstern. Ausstellungskatalog*, ed. by Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn and Ruhrlandmuseum Essen, Bonn 2005, pp. 53–65, esp. the image on p. 60.
- 8 *Concilium Saltzburgense in causa disciplinae ecclesiasticae 1386*, in: *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, 53 vols., ed. by Joannes Dominicus Mansi, vol. 26, Paris 1903 (repr. 1961), p. 728: *Canonica testatur auctoritas, quod ex maiore decore et maioritate ornatum apparere debeat maioritas dignitatum*.
- 9 The altarpiece probably came from St Clare in Nuremberg, c. 1350/1360; (1.) *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie*, cat. 1216; (2.) *Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin*, inv.-no Gm 94/1; (3.) *Städelsches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt a.M.*, inv.-no SG 443. Cf. the images and descriptions in *Krone und Schleier* (n. 7), pp. 511–514.
- 10 *Schlotbeuber*, *Klostereintritt* (n. 3), pp. 156–166; *Désirée Koslin*, *Value-added stuffs and shifts in meaning: an overview and case study of medieval textile paradigms*, in: *Encountering medieval textiles and dress. Objects, texts, images*, ed. by Désirée Koslin and Janet Snyder, New York 2002, pp. 233–249; *Thomas Lentz*, *Die Gewänder der Heiligen. Ein Diskussionsbeitrag zum Verhältnis von Gebet, Bild, Imagination*, in: *Hagiographie und Kunst: der Heiligenkult in Schrift, Bild und Architektur*, ed. by Gottfried Kerscher, Berlin 1993, pp. 120–151.
- 11 See below p. 147; cf. *Eva Schlotbeuber*, *Klostereintritt und Übergangsriten. Die Bedeutung der Jungfräulichkeit für das Selbstverständnis der Nonnen der alten Orden*, in: *Frauen – Kloster – Kunst. Neue Forschungen zur Kulturgeschichte des Mittelalters*, ed. by Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Carol Jäggi, Susan Marti and Hedwig Röcklein in cooperation with the Ruhrlandmuseum Essen, Turnhout 2007.
- 12 *Franz-Josef Felten*, *Zum Problem der sozialen Zusammensetzung von alten Benediktinerklöstern und Konventen der neuen religiösen Bewegung*, in: *Hildegard von Bingen in ihrem historischen Umfeld*, ed. by Alfred Haverkamp, Mainz 2000, pp. 189–236. Cf. also *Maren Kubn-Rebhus*, *Die soziale Zusammensetzung der Konvente in den oberschwäbischen Frauenzisterzen*, in: *Zeitschrift für Württembergische Landesgeschichte* 41 (1980), pp. 7–31 (= *Speculum Sueviae. Beiträge zu den historischen Hilfswissenschaften und zur geschichtlichen Landeskunde Südwestdeutschlands. Festschrift für Hansmartin Decker-Hauff*, vol. 2, ed. by Kommission für geschichtliche Landeskunde in Baden-Württemberg and the Württembergischer Geschichts- und Altertumsverein Stuttgart).
- 13 *Concilium a. 1214 apud Rotomagum celebratum*, in: *Mansi* (n. 8), vol. 22, c. XXXV, p. 912 (*De vita et honestate ac paupertate monialium*): *Quaecumque dicta sunt de monachis, de habitu et gestu honesto, de indumentis et calciamentis et coopertoriis religioni congruentibus, de non habendis propriis, de monialibus secundum statutum ordinis dicta intelligantur*.
- 14 *Dekrete der ökumenischen Konzilien*, vol. 2: *Konzilien des Mittelalters. Vom ersten Laterankonzil (1123) bis zum fünften Laterankonzil (1512–1517)*, ed. by Josef Wohlmuth, Paderborn 2000, c. 16 (*De indumentis clericorum*), p. 243.
- 15 *Concilium Trevirense provinciale 1227*, in: *Mansi* (n. 8), vol. 23, c. 16, p. 38: *Item praecipimus districte, ut abbates et monachi, abbatissae et moniales, nec mantella nec surcotos portent de cetero nec habeant pannos de nigra bruneta nec de moreto, sed quanto possit haberi melioris pretii*

- prout regula praecipit. [...] Item statuimus, ut habeant abbatissae et moniales habitum decentem et religiosum, sorchorum autem laucas et tunicas nullo modo habeant; item ut dictum est mantella de bruneta nigra sive mureta et pellicea de vario et alias exquisitas et sumptuosas pelles districte omnibus inhihemus; item non habeant moniales manichas strictas vel consurcias nec habeant monilia nec fibulas nec annulos aureos vel argenteos nec aurifrigia nec cingulos sericos nec aliquem secularem ornatum. In 1200 a council in London restricted Benedictine nuns from wearing coloured headdresses, but the standard English decree on the subject issued by the Council of Oxford in 1222 followed the general line of the church hierarchy, see *Eileen Power*, *Medieval English Nunneries c. 1275 to 1535*, Cambridge 1922, pp. 585s.
- 16 See *Elke Brüggem*, *Kleidung und Mode in der höfischen Epik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts* (Beihefte zum Euphorion 23), Heidelberg 1989.
- 17 Concilium Trevirense provinciale 1227, in: *Mansi* (n. 8), vol. 23, c. 16, p. 38: Item abbatissae et moniales, quando eas egredi contingit non utantur habitu seculari nec habeant [...] sellas deauratas aut phaleratas aut frena deaurata sed modeste incedant et religiose; item superpellitia habeant et religiose formata non crispata nec nimis longa.
- 18 Trevirense concilium 1277, in: *Mansi* (n. 8), vol. 24, c. 16, p. 205.
- 19 Konzil von Vienne (1311–1312), in: *Dekrete der ökumenischen Konzilien 2* (n. 14), p. 373 (c. 15): Visitatores autem huiusmodi sollicitudinis studium diligenter impendant, ut moniales ipsae, quarum nonnullas dolentes audivimus in subscriptis excedere, pannis sericis, variorum foderaturis, sandalitiis, comatis et cornutis crinibus, scacatis et virgatis caputiolis non utantur, non choreas non festa saecularium prosequantur [...].
- 20 On this subject see *June Mecham*, *Sacred Vision, Sacred Voice. Performative Piety and Female Monastic Devotion in Late Medieval Germany*, Turnhout, forthcoming, c. 3.
- 21 *Urkundenbuch des Hochstifts Hildesheim und seiner Bischöfe*, vol. 2, ed. by Hans Hoogeweg (*Quellen und Darstellungen zur Geschichte Niedersachsens 11*), Hannover/Leipzig 1901, no 583, p. 290: [...] precipimus etiam, ut forma antique in supelliciis claustralibus observetur, [...] nec clenodia faciant secularia, que vanitatem aliquam vel levitatem ostendant, sed simplicia de lino operentur, que et utilia sint accipientibus et religionem in eis commendent et exhibeant que fecerunt; circotecas non habeant seculares [...]. See also *Charlotte D'Evelyn* (ed.), *The Latin Text of the Ancrene Riwe*: edited from Merton College Ms. 44 and British Museum Ms. Cotton Vitellius E vii (*Early English Text Society 216*), London 1944, p. 172: Non facietis bculos ad dandum alicui nec tenas laqueos de serico nec similia sine licentia.
- 22 *Concilia Germaniae*, ed. by Johann Friedrich Schannat and Joseph Hartzheim, vol. 5 (*Concilia 1400–1500*), Cologne 1763 (repr. 1970), p. 698: Prohibemus etiam monialibus [...] ne aliqua monialis de cetero professa vel non professa aliquod artificium vel manuum suarum opus exercent causa lucri, seu negotii cuiuscunque, nec pursas, cyrothecas, vel alia similia faciat etiam amicis, nec aliis ut gratis tribuat, vel impendat. Nam non decet viam dei agnovisse et post agnitam optimam partem deseruisse, nisi paupertatis defectus ipsas ad laborandum, redditibus monasterii destructis, districtius compelleret, et amicorum suffragio destitutas. More examples can be found in *Renate Kroos*, *Niedersächsische Bildstickereien des Mittelalters*, Berlin 1960, pp. 160s.
- 23 Concilium Saltzburgense 1281, in: *Mansi* (n. 8), vol. 24, c. 5, pp. 398s.: Item ut habitus debitus unicuique, religiosos et religiosas distinguat a saecularibus, a quibus debent esse vita et moribus separati. The same impetus is revealed by an article of the synod of London in 1237, cf. *ibid.*, vol. 24, c. 14, p. 453.
- 24 A black veil characterised a professed nun. For the struggle in medieval England to bind the nuns and lay sisters to this differentiation see *Power*, *English Nunneries* (n. 15), p. 302.
- 25 See *Anne-Katrin Reich*, *Kleidung als Spiegelbild sozialer Differenzierung: Städtische Kleiderordnungen vom 14. bis zum 17. Jahrhundert am Beispiel der Altstadt Hannover* (*Quellen und Darstellungen zur Geschichte Niedersachsens 125*), Hannover 2005; *Jan Keupp*, *Macht und Mode. Politische Interaktion im Zeichen der Kleidung*, in: *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 86* (2004), pp. 251–282.
- 26 *La règle de saint Benoît*, 2 vols., ed. by Adalbert de Vogüé, Paris 1972 (*Sources Chrétiennes 181/182*), c. LV, pp. 618–620.
- 27 *La règle de saint Benoît* (n. 26), c. LV, p. 620: Accipientes nova, vetera semper reddant in presenti reponenda in vestuario propter pauperes. In 1249, visitor Eudes Rigaud found the nuns of St Salvator at fault in this: Item, quando recipiebant nova vestimenta non reddebant vetera; precipimus quod aliqua monialis non presumeret dare vetera absque licentia abbatisse; cf. *Regestrum visitationum archiepiscopi Rothomagensis MCCXLVIII–MCCLXIX* [*Journal des visites pastorales d'Eude Rigaud, archevêque de Rouen 1248–1269*], ed. by Théodose Bonnin, Rouen 1852, p. 305. Cf. *Penelope Johnson*, *Equal in Monastic Profession. Religious Women in Medieval France*, Chicago / London 1984.
- 28 *La règle de saint Benoît* (n. 26), c. LV, p. 620: Femoralia hii qui in via diriguntur de vestuario accipiant, quae revertentes tota ibi restituant. Et cucullae et tunicae sint aliquanto a solito quas habent modice meliores; quas exeuntes in via accipiant de vestuario et revertentes restituant.

- 29 On contemporary fashion, see *Annemarie Bönsch*, *Formengeschichte europäischer Kleidung* (Konservierungswissenschaft, Restaurierung, Technologie 1), Vienna 2001; *Joan Num*, *Fashion in Costume: 1200–2000*, London 2000; *Erika Thiel*, *Geschichte des Kostüms: Die europäische Mode von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, 7th rev. ed., Berlin 2000, pp. 105–150; *Diane Owen Hughes*, *Regulating Women's Fashion*, in: *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 2: *Silences of the Middle Ages*, ed. by Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, 3rd ed. Cambridge 1995, pp. 136–158.
- 30 *Regestrum visitationum* (n. 27), p. 43: *Multae ipsarum habent pellicias cuniculorum, leporum et vulpium [...]. Omnes nutriunt somam usque ad mentum, ponunt crocum in peplis.* On courtly fashion, see *Katrin Kania*, *«Vil guotiu kleider hetens an»: Ein Rekonstruktionsversuch zur Kleidung adliger Frauen um 1200*, in: *Zeitschrift für Archäologie des Mittelalters* 32 (2005), pp. 119–130.
- 31 *Schlotbeuber*, *Klostereintritt* (n. 3), p. 143; cf. *ibid.*, fig. 1 (Processionale, 1519, of the Cistercian nunnery Marienstern), which depicts the haircutting of a nun during the profession; see also *Andreas Rütther*, art. *Tonsur*, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 8 (1997), cols. 861s.
- 32 *Regestrum visitationum* (n. 27), p. 43: *Johanna de Aulari quondam exivit claustrum, et vixit cum quodam de quo habuit puerum, et aliquando exit claustrum ut videat ipsum puerum; item, infamata est de quodam qui vocatur Gaillardus. [...] Jacqueline recessit gravida de quodam capellano qui propter hoc eiectus fuit de domo.* Reading those complaints, one almost finds it understandable that the prioress found it easier to deal with life while drunk: *Priorissa ebria est fere qualibet nocte* (*ibid.*).
- 33 *Ibid.*: *Item precipimus quod de cetero non apponatis crocum in peplis, nec habeatis superbias crispatas, nec zonas argenteas aut ferratas, nec pelles varias aut silvestres, et quod comam non nutriatis ultra aures.*
- 34 *Power*, *English Nunneries* (n. 15), p. 663.
- 35 *Regestrum visitationum* (n. 27), p. 73: *Visitavimus monasterium monialium Sancti Salvatoris Ebroidensis, ordinis sancti Benedicti. [...] Item ibi sunt canes parvi, escurelli et aves. [...] Item statuimus ut removeant corrigias ferratas et bursas inhonestas. Item statuimus quod abbatissa sepius visitet moniales et ab ipsas tollat bursas et auricularia, que faciunt. Chaucer's Prioress, Madame Eglentyne, also had little dogs («smale houndes»), which she fed with white bread so they would not grow too much, cf. *Geoffrey Chaucer*, *The Canterbury Tales: Fifteen Tales and the General Prologue. Authoritative text, sources, and background criticism*, ed. by V. A. Kolve, New York 2005, p. 6 («The General Prologue»).*
- 36 *Regestrum visitationum* (n. 27), p. 82.
- 37 See recently *Juli Hotchin*, *Women's Reading and Monastic Reform in Twelfth-Century Germany: The Library of the Nuns of Lippoldsberg*, in: *Manuscripts and Monastic Culture: Reform and Renewal in Twelfth-century Germany* (Medieval Church Studies 13), ed. by Alison I. Beach, Turnhout 2007, pp. 139–189; *Fiona Griffiths*, *The Garden of Delights: Reform and Renaissance for Women in the Twelfth Century*, Philadelphia 2007, pp. 24–48; *Christina Lutter*, *Geschlecht & Wissen, Norm & Praxis, Lesen & Schreiben. Monastische Reformgemeinschaften im 12. Jahrhundert*, Vienna/Munich 2005; *Urban Küsters*, *Formen und Modelle religiöser Frauengemeinschaften im Umkreis der Hirsauer Reform des 11. und 12. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Hirsau St. Peter und St. Paul*, vol. 2: *Geschichte, Lebens- und Verfassungsformen eines Reformklosters*, ed. by Klaus Schreiner (Forschungen und Berichte der Archäologie des Mittelalters in Baden-Württemberg 10), Stuttgart 1991, pp. 195–220.
- 38 *Alfred Haverkamp*, *Tenxwind von Andernach und Hildegard von Bingen. Zwei «Weltanschauungen» in der Mitte des 12. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Institutionen, Kultur und Gesellschaft im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Josef Fleckenstein zu seinem 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by Lutz Fenske, Werner Rösener and Thomas Zotz, Sigmaringen 1984, pp. 515–548, here p. 543 (I a, about 1146/1153): *Aliud etiam quoddam insolitum de consuetudine vestra ad nos pervenit: virgines videlicet vestras festis diebus psallendo solutis crinibus in ecclesia stare ipsasque pro ornamento candidis ac sericis uti velaminibus terrae tangentibus [...].* The editor of the letters of Hildegard of Bingen probably also thought this was not quite right so he emended the text around 1180/1190 to read: [...] *virgines videlicet vestras festis diebus pro ornamento candidis quibusdam uti velaminibus.* (*Ibid.*, I b).
- 39 *Le Pontifical romain au moyen âge*, vol. 3: *Le Pontifical de Guillaume Durand*, ed. by Michel Andrieu (*Studi e Testi* 88), Vatican City 1940, p. 419: *Tunc episcopus desponsat illas Christo hoc modo. Accipit enim anulum cum dextra manu et dextram manum virginis cum sinistra dicens: «Desponso te Iesu Christo, filio summi patris, qui te illesam custodiat. Accipe ergo anulum fidei, signaculum spiritus sancti, ut sponsa dei voceris, si ei fideliter et munde servieris. In nomine patris et filii et spiritus sancti. See Schlotbeuber, Klostereintritt (n. 3), p. 171.*
- 40 *Power*, *English Nunneries* (n. 15), pp. 74–78.
- 41 *Provinciale Anglicanum 1509*, in: *Mansi* (n. 8), vol. 31A, p. 411: *Et sola monialis consecrata deferat anulum et uno solo sit contenta.*
- 42 See *Stella Mary Newton*, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince: A Study of the Years 1340–1365*, Woodbridge 1999.
- 43 *Chaucer*, *Canterbury Tales* (n. 35), pp. 5s.: *Ther was also a Nonne, a Prioressse / That of hir smylyng was ful symple and coy / Hire gretteste ooth was but by seinte Loy / And she was cleped madame Eglentyne. / [...]* In curteisye

- was set ful muchel hir lest. / [...] Ful semely hir wympul pinched was / Hir nose tretys, hir eyen greye as glas / Hir mouth ful smal, and therto softe and reed / But sikerly she hadde a fair forheed / It was almoost a spanne brood, I trowe / For, hardily, she was nat undergrowe. / Ful fetis was hir cloke, as I was war. / Of smal coral aboute hire arm she bar / A peire of bedes, gauded al with grene, / And the-ron heng a broche of gold ful shene, / On which ther was first write a crowned A, / And after «Amor vincit omnia». See also *Katherine C. Little*, *Images, Texts, and Exegetics in Chaucer's Second Nun's Tale*, in: *The Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 36 (2006), pp. 103–134.
- 44 They typically kept their personal property in locked cases; the problem was an old one. Eudes Rigaud wrote 1250 of the nuns of St Almenèches: *Habent cameras cum firmatura, in dormitorio. Habent pedissetas proprias que non serviunt communitati. Non comedunt ex eodem vase, set habent diversa vasa. Quelibet habebat unum panem pro se, et servabat residuum. [...] breviter non vivunt in communitate.* (*Regestrum visitationum* (n. 27), p. 235).
- 45 See *Mecham*, *Sacred Vision* (n. 20), c. 5 («The Vice of Proprietas: the intersection of gender, status, personal wealth and piety among religious women»).
- 46 When William, Archbishop of Lincoln, visited the Cistercian nuns of Catesby in 1442 he found them in a similar condition, cf. *Visitations of religious houses in the Diocese of Lincoln*, vol. 2: *Records of visitations held by William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln, a.d. MCCCCXXXVI–MCCCCXLIX*, ed. by Hamilton Thompson, London 1919, pp. 46–53, here p. 47: [...] *et moniales non habent vela ad superpellitia, sed frontes habent[!] nudatas.*
- 47 *Visitations of religious houses* (n. 46), pp. 3–5: [14] *Item priorissa utitur anulis aureis quamplurimum sumptuosis cum diversis gemmis et eciam zonis argentatis et deauratis et cericis velis, et nimium elevat velum supra frontem, quod frons patens totaliter ab omnibus potest videri, et fururis utitur de vareo. Fatetur usum plurium anulorum et zonarum et velorum cericorum et elevationem velorum, fatetur eciam usum furrurarum de vario. Iuravit quod ista reformabit.* [15] *Item utitur camisiis de panno Reinensi, cuius ulna [!] valet XVI d. Negat articulum.* [16] *Item utitur tunicis laqueatis cum cerico et acubus argenteis et deauratis et sic fecit omnes moniales uti. [...] [17] Item utitur pileo status furrato cum bugeo supra vela. Fatetur propter tamen infirmitates varias in capite. [...] [ad 14] Item priorissa habet in collo unum longum ligamen, anglice lace, de cerico pendens usque inferius pectore et in eo unum anulum aureum cum I diamaunde. Cf. *Power*, *English Nunneries* (n. 15), p. 76.*
- 48 See *Bertram Lesser*, *Johannes Busch. Chronist der Devotio moderna. Werkstruktur, Überlieferung, Rezeption, Tradition – Reform – Innovation* (Studien zur Modernität des Mittelalters 10), Frankfurt a.M. 2005. A new edition of his work is forthcoming: *Johannes Busch, Liber de reformatione monasteriorum – Briefe und Predigten*. Textkritische Ausgabe. Mit einer Erstedition der Schriften von Hermann Ryd (Publikationen der Akademie der Augustiner-Chorherren von Windesheim).
- 49 *Johannes Busch, Liber de reformatione monasteriorum*, ed. by Karl Grube (*Geschichtsquellen der Provinz Sachsen und angrenzender Gebiete* 19), Halle 1886, p. 567: *Et quamvis graciles erant, strictas albas tunicas et longas subtus habentes de panno, desuper autem vestes nigras lineas quasi transparentes, quas superpellicia vocant, habentes non cinctas sed latas cum manicis, quas pro cappis deferunt, sub quibus omnia pene membra sua videri poterant, que palam subtus habebant.*
- 50 *Jochim Bumke, Höfische Kultur, Literatur und Gesellschaft im hohen Mittelalter*, vol. 1, Munich 1986, p. 193.
- 51 *Das Neusser Totenbuch. Liber animarum capituli monasterii sancti Quirini Nussiensis* (London. British Library, Ms. Add. 15456), ed. by Stadt Neuss and Rolf Nagel with the assistance of Joachim Oepen, Neuss 2000 [facsimile]; cf. *Maren Hohn-Haider, Liber animarum capituli monasterii sancti Quirini Nussiensis. Anmerkungen zu den Miniaturen des Neusser Totenbuchs*, in: *Mittelalter am Rhein und Maas. Beiträge zur Geschichte des Niederrheins*. Dieter Geuenich zum 60. Geburtstag, ed. by Uwe Ludwig and Thomas Schilp (*Studien zu Geschichte und Kultur Nordwesteuropas* 8), Münster et al. 2004, pp. 137–145.
- 52 *Gabriela Signori, Veil, Hat or Hair? Reflections on an Asymmetrical Relationship*, in: *The Medieval History Journal* 8 (2005), pp. 25–47 [in German: id., *Räume, Gesten, Andachtsformen. Geschlecht, Konflikt und religiöse Kultur im europäischen Mittelalter, Ostfildern* 2005, p. 96–113]; *Guy-Marie Oury*, art. *Veil*, in: *Encyclopedia of the Middle Ages* 2 (2000), p. 1501; *Kurt Hammerich, Der Schleier. Alltagsrequisit und Mythos*, in: *Kunst und Kommunikation: Betrachtungen zum Medium Sprache in der Romania. Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Richard Baum*, ed. by Maria Lieber and Willi Hirdt, Tübingen 1997, pp. 401–416; *Elisabeth Vavra*, art. *Schleier*, in: *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 7 (1995), col. 1480.
- 53 *Schlottheuber, Klostereintritt* (n. 3), p. 440.
- 54 *Urkundenbuch des Hochstifts Hildesheim* (n. 21), no 583, p. 290: *Auctoritate igitur visitationis nobis iniuncte prohibemus, ut pepla vel nimis crispa vel crispata sorores loci deinceps non habebant.*
- 55 *Johannes Busch, Liber de reformatione* (n. 49), p. 582: *Sorores nostre iste ante reformationem et in principio reformationis sue pepla crispa, vulgariter dicta «Ranse» deferebant, quemadmodum beatam Mariam Magdalenam portasse existimabant, et tunicas superiores usque ad cingula super*

- pectora multum strictas, ut graciles apparerent, et a cingulis ulterius usque in oram earum multum latas cum multis pellicis more secularium feminarum. Ego autem cum fratre meo Iohanne Bodiker animadvertentes, habitum istum non satis religiosum sed magis seculi preferre vanitatem multis et piis admonitionibus successive eas induximus, ut huiusmodi pepla crispa deponerent et pepla alba simplicia sine rugis capitibus suis reimponerent, tunicas etiam suas superius strictas inferius latas et rugatas per amplius non deferrent, ne seculi vanitatem et animi sui curiositatem magis quam religiositatem sequi viderentur.
- 56 See *Nikolaus Gussone*, *Die Jungfrauenweihe in ottonischer Zeit nach dem Ritus im Pontifikale Romano-Germanicum*, in: *Frauen – Kloster – Kunst* (n. 12), pp. 25–41. Also on the nun's crowns, cf. *Schlotbeuber*, *Klostereintritt* (n. 3), pp. 156–174; *René Metz*, *La consécration des vierges dans l'église romaine. Étude d'histoire de la liturgie*, Paris 1954.
- 57 See *Gussone*, *Jungfrauenweihe* (n. 56), p. 40 (text edition).
- 58 *Jobannes Busch*, *Liber de reformatione* (n. 49), p. 603: [...] coronam habentem in quatuor angulis circuitus quatuor cruces aureas et desuper in medio rosam auream, quam coronam episcopus eis imposuit.
- 59 *Abelard's Rule for Religious Women*, ed. by Terence P. McLaughlin, in: *Medieval Studies* 18 (1956), pp. 241–292, here p. 282: *Vela uero earum non de serico, sed de tincto aliquo lineo panno fiant. Duo autem uelorum genera esse uolumus ut alia sint scilicet uirginum iam ab episcopo consecratarum, alia uero minime. Quae uero praedictarum sunt uirginum crucis sibi signum habeant impressum quo scilicet ipsae integritate quoque corporis ad Christum maxime pertinere monstrentur et sicut in consecratione distant a caeteris, ita et hoc habitus signo distinguantur quo et quique fidelium territi magis abhorreant in concupiscentiam earum exardescere. Hoc autem signum uirginalis munditiae in summitate capitis candidis expressum filis uirgo gestabit, et hoc nullatenus antequam ab episcopo consecratur gestare praesumat. Nulla autem alia uela hoc signo insignita sint.* A new translation of the text is furnished in: *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*, ed. by Michael T. Clanchy, London 2003.
- 60 The nuns of the Rupertsberg wore precious rings and crowns over the veil, cf. the letter of Tenxwind in Haverkamp, *Tenxwind von Andernach* (n. 38), p. 544: [...] coronas etiam auro contextas capitibus earum desuper impositas et his utraque parte et retro cruces insertas, in fronte autem agni figuram decenter impressam, insuper et digitos earundem aureis decorate anulis. The redactor of the letters (about 1180/1190) emends: [...] coronas etiam decenter contextas capitibus earum desuper impositas et his utraque parte et retro angelicas imagines insertas, in fronte autem agni figuram decenter impressam (ibid.).
- 61 A Cistercian nun, the author of the late medieval *«Konventstagebuch»*, tells of a sister nun who ran out of bed at night after being terrified by a rumour of fire – without a veil but wearing a crown as if she were sleeping, cf. *Schlotbeuber*, *Klostereintritt* (n. 3), p. 379: *Nec hoc pretermittam, quod una ex eis, que egrediebantur, tanta agitata fuerat timore et terrore imminentis periculi, quod oblita fuerat habitum nocturnalem deponere; sed inbutta nocturnali cum pillio et corona, sicut in lecto iacuerat, sine peplo quasi vagabunda currens in ambitu [...].*
- 62 *Jobannes Busch*, *Liber de reformatione* (n. 49), p. 563: *Et una earum iuencula velum et coronam de capite deposita ante pedes suffraganei proiecit ea dicens: «Hucusque semper mi dixistis, quod me reformare non deberem, modo ad reformandum me vultis compellere. Ecce! Velum et coronam vestram, amplius monialis esse nolo.»*
- 63 *Schlotbeuber*, *Klostereintritt* (n. 3), p. 453: *Sabbato ergo ante Iudica [April 1st, 1503] mandaverat nobis cardinalis post refectonem perrecturus per confessorem nostrum vellet nos benedicere et pacem dare, unde nos gaudentes disposuimus nos et preparauimus in occursum tanti hospitis induentes candidas cappas dominicales et que viliores cappas habebant, licenciabat domina nostra induere optimas. De cappis autem idcirco hic mencionem facio, quia videbatur mihi, quod in futuro esset precavendum, ne tanta difformitas in habitu nostro appareat sicut tunc: uni erat cappa nimis curta, altera pellicium extendebatur ultra cappam, unius cappa apparuit candida, alterius sordida et perfusa, unde etiam aliqua erant valde permote in animo – ideo, si potest, caveatur in futuro.* On the legate Raimund Peraudi in Brunswick see *Thomas Vogtherr*, *Kardinal Raimund Peraudi als Ablaßprediger in Braunschweig (1488 und 1503)*, in: *Braunschweigisches Jahrbuch* 77 (1996), pp. 151–180; *Andreas Röpke*, *Geld und Gewissen. Raimund Peraudi und die Ablaßverkündigung in Norddeutschland am Ausgang des Mittelalters*, in: *Bremisches Jahrbuch* 71 (1992), pp. 43–80.
- 64 *Schlotbeuber*, *Klostereintritt* (n. 3), p. 453.
- 65 *Klosterarchiv Ebstorf*, Hs. V 4, fol. 104r–104v: *Dum splendit sol, liquescit nix. In omni libertate deduximus letum tempus carniprivii. Omne ius scolasticum fuit nobis relaxatum, preter primum spacium et summam missam. Iuencule assimilaverunt se maribus, pillea et cucullas gestabant in capite, capsellas et cultros habebant penes latus. Plures amiciuerunt se pollimitis vestibis, cum amplis fimbriatis manicis. Alique fuerunt curialiter curate, que iverunt in calamistris. Pauce fuerunt amicte monagali [probably instead of «monachali»] habitu, nobis fuit inhibitum mutare habitum. Tamen eque bene existebamus letabunde. Chorea nostra late extendebatur in giro. Precentrix precinuit nobis laicas cantelenas, quas iteravimus emiscis [sc. emissis] vocibus. Que extat dissona nequid precinere.*

Cantus superacutus displicet audientibus. Medius modus multum commendatur. In die cinerum generaliter accipimus cineres. In monumento quod de terra plasmati sumus et denuo in pulverem rediebimus [...]. See Handschriften des Klosters Ebstorf, ed. by Renate Giermann and Helmar Härtel, Wiesbaden 1994, pp. 140–144, and *Eva Schlotheuber*, Ebstorf und seine Schülerinnen in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts, in: Studien und Texte zur literarischen und materiellen Kultur der Frauenklöster im späten Mittelalter, ed. by Falk Eisermann, Eva Schlotheuber and Volker Honeman (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought 99), Leiden/Boston 2004, pp. 169–222.

66 The nuns apparently were accustomed to masquerade as secular folk on special occasions, like the feast of St Innocentius. The archbishop forbade the nuns of Villarceaux (1249)

from doing so, cf. *Regestrum visitationum* (n. 27), p. 44: Item inhiemus ne de cetero in festis Innocentium et beate Mariae Magdalenes ludibria exerceatis consueta, induendo vos scilicet vestibus secularium aut inter vos seu cum secularibus choreas ducendo [...]. They also celebrated special feast days by performing spiritual plays, see *Mecham*, Sacred Vision (n. 20), for which they wore costumes. In 1403 the provincial synod of Magdeburg forbade the nuns to do so, cf. *Concilia Germaniae* (n. 22), p. 697: Prohibemus etiam, ne de cetero moniales nostre provinciae in monasteries vel ecclesiis suis sub quocunque colore, in memoriam alicuius sancti, vel presumpte consuetudinis, in suo proprio habitu vel alieno ludos facere presumant, sine larvis, cum larvis: nec etiam per extraneos ludos aliquos seu spectacula quocunque fieri permittant.