



**The Meaning of the Habit:  
Religious Orders, Dress and Identity,  
1215-1650**

Alejandra Concha Sahli

**PhD in History**

**UCL**

**Submitted for the degree of PhD in History**

**2017**

I, Alejandra Concha Sahli, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Signed,

---

## Abstract

---

It is well known that there was an increasing concern with clothing as a means of social and cultural distinction in the late medieval and early modern periods. This has been called the birth of fashion. One way in which this importance was expressed was through the development of some well-defined sartorial codes and rules, both tacit and explicit. These gradually lead to more exhaustive and specific regulatory forms. Hitherto, most of the scholarly emphasis has been on the secular world, particularly through the study of sumptuary laws, whereas analysis of the ecclesiastical sphere (the Carmelite order apart) has not got much attention beyond anecdotal description. This dissertation aims to provide a 'thick description' to understand the meaning of ecclesiastical dress in a social and cultural context for the period 1215-1650. Thus, the focus is not on clothes as such, but on the ways by which dress can express conscious and unconscious ideas at the base of the interaction between people, groups and institutions. Studying the dynamics, ideas, worries and controversies generated by religious habits, both within and outside the religious orders, reveals the layers of meaning that exist beyond the anecdotal evidence. And what they reveal is how religious orders in Western Europe developed a complex process of identity formation in which clothing, in its different levels, played a fundamental role. What lies at the core of this analysis of the conceptions about religious clothing – used as a heuristic tool – is precisely its capacity to show not only how the identities of the religious orders of the period evolved, but also how they were perceived and conceived, and how they shaped these changes.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

---

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the support of UCL's History Department during the development of this PhD, for providing me with stimulating academic opportunities and experiences during these last four years. I also especially thank my supervisor, Professor David d'Avray for his thorough, dedicated, and generous support and advice, as well as his constant encouragement and his unwavering commitment. I can only hope that, if I one day get to supervise my own students, I would be able to offer them even a fraction of the brilliant guidance he has provided me with during these years, though the bar certainly has been set very high. I would also like to thank Antonio Sennis, for his helpful suggestions and criticism, which have greatly contribute to make this a better thesis.

I thank UCL's Doctoral School and the Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences for their grants and funding, as well as UCL's Study Abroad Team, which gave me the unique opportunity of spending a term as a postgraduate Erasmus student at the *École nationale de chartres* in Paris, where I gained invaluable training and research access. I am also grateful to the Chilean Government and to Conicyt for funding this PhD, which would have not been possible without this support.

Writing has always represented a challenge for me. It is a difficult task in my native Spanish and even more so in English. When a third dead language like Latin is added, translated into English via Spanish, it certainly gets uphill. Therefore, I would like to express my utmost gratitude for the dedication and, especially, the generosity of my proofreaders: Trinidad Decombe, Alison Ray, Javiera Necochea, Emily Corran and Luis Dos Santos Sousa. I am forever indebted. I also thank Camila Gatica for her patient and sympathetic help, guidance, and, at times, even counselling, which helped me navigate through all sorts of bureaucratic duties as well as vocational and philosophical questions. I thank my family as well, especially my parents, for their continuous care and support.



Last but not least, I would like to express my immense gratitude to my husband, who is certainly more of a saint than many of the monks and friars of this thesis. I am grateful not only for his infinite patience and for keeping me sane (and fed) during the more taxing parts of this process, but also for his many sacrifices, and for having the bravery of following me down the rabbit hole, to a new country and a new life. His companionship has undoubtedly enriched both this process and this research.

# Table of Contents

<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	
<b>MORE THAN SHOCKING CLOTHES: THE CONCEPT OF SCANDAL IN THE GOVERNMENT OF RELIGIOUS HABITS</b>	<b>68</b>
NOT SO HOLY MEN: MONKS, CLERICS, AND SCANDALOUS GARBS	71
SCANDALISED KNIGHTS: WHITE CLOAKS AND THE DISPUTE BETWEEN THE TEMPLAR AND TEUTONIC ORDERS	80
APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 1	95
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	
<b>FORGING IDENTITIES: RELIGIOUS DRESS AND THE STRUGGLE OF THE AUGUSTINIAN HERMITS AND THE CARMELITES FRIARS TO FIT IN THE EUROPEAN RELIGIOUS SCENE</b>	<b>106</b>
STEALING THE LOOK: THE AUGUSTINIAN FRIARS AND THEIR TROUBLESOME HABITS	109
FROM SCORNFUL CLOAKS TO MIRACULOUS CLOTHES: THE BUMPY ROUTE OF THE CARMELITES THROUGH EUROPE	135
APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 2	177
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	
<b>HABIT ENVY: EXTRA-RELIGIOUS GROUPS, ATTIRE AND THE SEARCH FOR LEGITIMATION OUTSIDE THE INSTITUTIONALISED ORDERS</b>	<b>179</b>
<i>MULIERES RELIGIOSAE, HABITUS BEGHINARUM</i> : RELIGIOUS DRESS, LAY PIETY, AND THE FORMATION OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES	182
THE CLOTHES OF POPULAR PIETY: RELIGIOUS HABITS AND THE LEGITIMATION OF PENITENTIAL MOVEMENTS	200
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	
<b>THE VARIOUS HABITS OF ST FRANCIS: OBSERVANT ZEAL AND THE ROLE OF CLOTHES IN THE FRANCISCAN ORDER</b>	<b>227</b>
<b>CHAPTER 5</b>	
<b>THE <i>TRUE</i> HABIT OF ST FRANCIS: THE CAPUCHINS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW FRANCISCAN IDENTITY</b>	<b>276</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>329</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>334</b>

## List of Images

---

Fig. 1: St Francis's habit conserved in Florence _____	303
Fig. 2: St Francis's habit conserved at the Conventual's church in Assisi _____	303
Fig. 3: St Francis's habit conserved at the church of St Clara in Assisi ____	304
Fig. 4: St Francis's habit conserved in Pisa _____	304
Fig. 5: Habit of Peter Catani _____	305
Fig. 6: Habit of brother Morico _____	305
Fig. 7: Habit of brother Eleuterio _____	305
Fig. 8: Hood of St Francis _____	306
Fig. 9: Hood of brother Rufino _____	306
Fig. 10: Hood of Peter Catani _____	308
Fig. 11: Hood of Francesco of Fabriano _____	309
Fig. 12: Hood of St Francis conserved in Guardiagrele _____	309
Fig. 13: Hood of St Francis conserved in L'Aquila _____	310
Fig. 14: Hood of St Francis conserved at the Conventual convent in Assisi _____	310

## ABBREVIATIONS

---

AFH	<i>Archivum Franciscanum Historicum</i>
AM	Lucas Wadding, <i>Annales Minorum</i>
Corpus Iuris Canonici	A. Friedberg (ed.), <i>Corpus Iuris Canonici. Editio Lipsiensis secunda</i> (1959)
BF	<i>Bullarium Franciscanum</i>
DIP	<i>Dizionario degli istituti di perfezione</i>
Mansi	Giovanni Domenico Mansi (ed.), <i>Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio</i>
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
PL	J. P. Migne (ed.), <i>Patrologia Latina Cursus Completus</i>
Potthast	A. Potthast (ed.), <i>Regesta Pontificum Romanorum</i>
LSDE	Giancarlo Rocca (ed.), <i>La Sostanza dell'Effimero. Gli abiti degli Ordini religiosi in Occidente</i>

Unless otherwise stated, all translations in this thesis are my own.

## INTRODUCTION

---

Towards the mid-twelfth century, the Premonstratensian canon Anselm of Havelberg, when talking about the unity of the faith, pointed out how many people were ‘amazed and sceptical’ at the varied forms of Christian religious life:

They ask – said Anselm – like cunning inquisitors, ‘Why does God’s Church present so many new things? Why do so many orders arise in her? Who could count the orders of clerics? Who is not astonished at the many kinds of monks? Who is not even scandalised by the number of them, disgusted by the great variety and disagreement among the many forms of religious life? Who can, still further, fail to scorn the Christian religious life when it is subjected to so much variety, changed by so many new practices, disrupted by so many new laws and customs, tossed about year after year by novel rules and customs?’...In our times, these same people say, we see in the Church of God that folk appear who clothe themselves in strange habits on their own whim, choose for themselves a new form of life and – whether under the label of monastic profession or under the vow of canonical discipline – claim for themselves whatever they wish.<sup>1</sup>

Anselm’s account shows how the multiplication and proliferation of new and diverse forms of religious life during what has become to be known as the monastic reform of the twelfth century was rather hard to process for many of his contemporaries. So much novelty was not taken in easily, especially when people were not able to decipher a monk’s affiliations by their habits – their first and foremost “presentation card” – anymore. It must

---

<sup>1</sup> Anselm of Havelberg, *Anticimenon: on the unity of the faith and the controversies with the Greeks*, translated by Ambrose Criste and Carol Neel, (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2010) pp. 47-8. See also its Introduction, pp. 1-39.

have felt as if the world was changing too much too fast, and people could not easily read anymore the cues that made their social world understandable. The 'strange habits' that seemed to come from just a whim, and the ideas and attitudes developed about them, were an immediate reflection of these changes. This research looks into these changes and the problems that these new habits brought about – especially to their wearers, but also to their lay and ecclesiastical observers – perceived as a useful synecdoche of their broader world, one that may help expand our own understanding of the social and cultural dynamics and changes that characterised the Western Late Middle Ages.

Yet, this is not a study or history of clothes themselves, in the sense that it is not an object-based history of dress.<sup>2</sup> Description of habits will be, of course, pertinent in the cases discussed, but there will not be a cataloguing effort. In this context, the materiality of clothes is a secondary issue. It does not really matter the specific colour, shape, cloth or kind of garments the religious orders wore. What matters is that wearing those particular habits had an impact and consequences in the development of the orders' identities. This impact was not reflected merely in terms of the symbolical and allegorical meanings attached to these clothes – although they were present and very important at times – but much more so regarding the way in which these habits were placed in what I call the “system of differences of religious dress”, brought about by the effervescence of new religious foundations and manifested in how they related to others parts of the system. In that sense,

---

<sup>2</sup> For an interesting discussion in this matter see Lou Taylor, “Doing the Laundry? A reassessment of Object-based Dress History”, in *Fashion Theory*, 2 (1998), pp. 337-358.

the study of how religious orders understood and dealt with theirs and other orders' habits is what reveals a deeper but also much less studied and comprehended problem. Here, different layers of meaning start to appear, showing their capacity to convey various levels of information to those who were part of this system and shared the understanding of its language. However, although the system of meanings of which clothes formed part in the Middle Ages is a crucial one, this study will not attempt to reconstruct the whole syntax and grammar of the "language" of religious habits, a task that surpasses the reach of this research. Likewise, the aim here is not to provide a history of religious habits in their materiality, "reading" clothes in the sense that object-based history of clothing has traditionally done, nor simply to understand their iconic connotation, decoding them in what has tended to be a rather "thin description". This thesis aims to see dress beyond clothes themselves, as it hopes to take a closer look to some of the mechanisms that were part of the grammar that governed religious habits, in an effort to have a better understanding of their complexity and multifaceted role. In understanding the cases studied here within the system of differences of religious dress I hope to contribute towards a more holistic comprehension of the meaning of medieval religious habits, one in which these cases are not merely seen as isolated anecdotal episodes, but in which each one is understood as a manifestation of a larger social and cultural phenomenon.

## **Fashion studies, history of clothing: The literature on the social meaning of dress**

The last few decades have witnessed an increased scholarly interest in the phenomenon of the social meaning and the history of clothes. This interest has generated a multiplicity of approaches that varies greatly according to the discipline of study, as well as to the historical and geographical delimitations of the object of study itself. Thus, anthropological, sociological and historical approaches, among others, have made their contributions to the expansion of the field, helping to delineate it and position it as a research interest, where fashion has been the dominant concept.<sup>3</sup> However, as Maureen Miller has stated with respect to her study of clerical clothing, the term “fashion” is ill fitted for the subject, first of all because an encompassing definition of the concept has eluded its scholars, and, secondly, because this approach has been mostly focused on factors such as consumption, search for novelty and, moreover, secular cultural and social dynamics.<sup>4</sup> This is an appreciation that seems also pertinent for this

---

<sup>3</sup> Although this is a highly selective list, some useful titles on the matter are: Malcolm Barnard (ed.), *Fashion Theory: A Reader* (London: Routledge, 2007); Odile Blanc, “Historiographie du vêtement: un bilan”, in Michel Pastoureau (ed.), *Le Vêtement: histoire, archéologie et symbolique vestimentaires au Moyen Ages*, Cahiers du Léopard d’Or, Vol. 1 (Paris: Léopard d’Or, 1989), pp. 7-33; Ingrid Brenninkmeyer, *The Sociology of Fashion* (Paris: Librairie du recueil Sirey, 1963); Christopher Breward, *The Culture of Fashion: A New History of Fashionable Dress* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), and “Cultures, Identities, Histories: Fashioning a Cultural Approach to Dress”, in *Fashion Theory*, 2 (1998), pp. 301-314; Amy De La Haye and Elizabeth Wilson (eds.), *Defining Dress: Dress as Object, Meaning, and Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Anne Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes* (Berkeley-London: University of California Press, 1993); Alison Lurie, *The Language of Clothes* (London: Heinemann, 1981); Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins, Joanne B. Eicher and Kim K. P. Johnson (eds.), *Dress and Identity* (New York: Fairchild Publications, 1995); Lou Taylor, *The Study of Dress History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> Maureen C. Miller, *Clothing the Clergy: Virtue and Power in Medieval Europe, c. 800-1200* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014), pp. 8-9.



research, which can be considered, to some extent, as a cognate of Miller's subject of study. As Sarah-Grace Heller has observed, a principal characteristic of a fashion system is the constant rejection of the immediate past, with a desire for continuous and systematic change. Fashion, thus, represents an outlet form of individual expression in a context of social imitation, where consumption is key.<sup>5</sup> Not all of these characteristics apply directly to religious habits, which, as this research aims to show, were governed by a different logic.

However it should be borne in mind that, nonetheless, this was the world in which the people who are the subjects of this thesis lived in, and it is hard to think that they were absolutely immune to the social changes that the birth of fashion reflected. Heller confronts the dominant idea among scholars of the history of fashion, who have placed its birth in the courtly culture milieu of the mid-fourteenth century – particularly the Burgundian one – identifying it instead in the late eleventh and early twelfth century.<sup>6</sup> I believe that the multiplication of different habits in the face of the monastic reform that started to take shape in the same eleventh and twelfth centuries, as it will be discussed below, cannot be understood as an isolated fact from the major trends that were changing the society of the time and that saw the inception of the fashion phenomenon among other major cultural changes. Of course, correlation is not causation, but we should not forget that, at the end, those same reformers, and the monks and friars who followed them, were the sons,

---

<sup>5</sup> Sarah-Grace Heller, *Fashion in Medieval France* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007), pp. 8-10. See chapter 1 for a detailed and explicative discussion of the elements that conforms a fashion system.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50; pp. 59-60. See chapter 2 for a survey and discussion about the literature on the birth of fashion.

brothers, cousins, uncles or nephews of their secular relatives who were being affected by the changes that brought about the birth of fashion. It would be rather naive to think that their religious and pious minds would remain untouched by the deep social and cultural changes of their times. In fact, it can be argued that the attention paid to monastic dress which can already be found, for example, in the tenth century among the Cluniac monks – as Kassius Hallinger has shown<sup>7</sup> (more on this later) – was the expression of a tendency that the so called “birth of fashion” and the proliferation of sumptuary laws in the Late Middle Ages came to enhance and make evident, but which was already being manifested in the religious sphere.

In this context, the system of differences of religious clothes might be seen, in a way, as a precursor of the tendencies that the birth of fashion would reveal in the secular world. The change of habit that was, as it will be explained below, intrinsically connected with the search for reform was as well, just as in fashion, a rejection of the immediate past. The paradox is that the novelty sought by the reform movements was always looking to go back to the origins, to the “uncorrupted” state of a life of religious search of primitive monasticism. Yet, what did the “origins” look like? Each new group, each new reform would interpret this image differently, and would re-enact these “origins” in a particular habit. This particularity is what gave them the chance of gaining a place within the landscape of Western religious orders, and within the system of differences of religious dress. Therefore, even though fashion is not the correct framework to approach a study of the

---

<sup>7</sup> K. Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny: Studien zu den monastischen Lebensformen und Gegensätzen im Hochmittelalter*, Vol. 2 (Herder: Romae, 1951), pp. 661-734

meaning of religious habits in the Late Middle Ages, its existence must be acknowledged to understand them in a wider and more explicative context as a system of differences.

Miller's observations about the term "costume", another concept that was especially dominant during the nineteenth and early twentieth century in the study of dress, is equally relevant here, as it is a category that related more to folklore, theatre and a taxonomic approach to clothes, 'to designate a type of dress characteristic of a country, period, class, or calling.'<sup>8</sup> As Miller states, 'although clerical clothing in the Middle Ages did function as a means of visually distinguishing clerics, and thus articulating their calling membership in a social group, the term's connotations of artificiality in current parlance make it unsuitable,'<sup>9</sup> a clarification that applies entirely to the study of religious habits. Therefore, I share Miller's preference for the term "clothing", as well as dress, clothes, garments, attire and similar synonyms, as they appear to be, in the context of this research, more accurate to describe the material reality they refer to, and less charged with conceptual and theoretical assumptions that fail to be applicable to the study of medieval religious habits.

---

<sup>8</sup> Maureen C. Miller, *Clothing the clergy*, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*.

## Clothes and fashion in the Middle Ages<sup>10</sup>

Broadly speaking, the literature on the social and cultural meaning of dress in the Middle Ages has approached the topic mainly from two perspectives, which are, in turn, closely related to the type of sources in which they are rooted, and which can also be intertwined at times. One line of this historiography has been dominated by the interpretations derived from the study of medieval sumptuary laws, which mostly began in the traditional domain of economic or legal history, to be taken over by a scholarship focused on explaining the social and cultural implications that such laws had during the period. The opinions and works presented by contemporary

---

<sup>10</sup> A selective list of miscellaneous collections and general studies on the history of medieval clothes: Michèle Beaulieu, "Le costume, miroir des mentalités de la France médiévale (1350-1500)", in *Mélanges offerts à Jean Dauvillier* (Toulouse: Centre d'histoire juridique méridionale, 1979), pp. 65-87; Elke Brüggem, *Kleidung und Mode in der höfischen Epik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter-Universitätsverlag, 1989); Françoise Piponnier and Perrine Mane, *Se vêtir au Moyen Âge* (Paris: A. Biro, 1995), translated into English as *Dress in the Middle Ages* (New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 2007); Mireille Madou, *Le Costume Civil* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986); Susan Crane, *The Performance of the Self. Ritual, Clothing, and Identity During the Hundred Years War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002); Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba medievale. Vesti e società dal XIII al XVI secolo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1999); François Chausson and Hervé Inglebert (eds.), *Costume et société dans l'Antiquité et le haut Moyen Âge* (Paris: Picard, 2003); Rainer C. Schwinges and Regula Schorta (eds.), *Fashion and Clothing in Late Medieval Europe / Mode und Kleidung im Europa des späten Mittelalters* (Riggisberg-Abegg-Stiftung-Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 2010); Michel Pastoureau (ed.), *Le Vêtement: histoire, archéologie et symbolique vestimentaires au Moyen Âge*, Cahiers du Léopard d'Or N. 1 (Paris: Léopard d'Or, 1989); Désirée G. Koslin and Janet Snyder (eds.), *Encountering Medieval Textiles and Dress: Objects, Texts, Images* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); E. Jane Burns (ed.), *Medieval Fabrications: Dress, Textiles, Clothwork, and Other Cultural Imaginings* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); N.B. Harte and K.G. Ponting (eds.), *Cloth and clothing in medieval Europe: Essays in Memory of Professor E.M. Carus-Wilson* (London: Heinemann Educational, 1983); *Le corps et sa parure / The Body and its Adornment*, *Micrologus XV* (Firenze: SISMEL edizioni del Galluzzo, 2007); Isabelle Paresys (ed.), *Paraître at apparences en Europe occidentale: du Moyen Âge à nos jours* (Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2008); Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (eds.), *Medieval Clothing and Textiles Series* (Woodbridge, The Boydell Press) (2005-2016, 13 volumes to date). Also useful is Louise M. Sylvester, Mark C. Chambers and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (eds.), *Medieval Dress and Textiles in Britain: A Multilingual Sourcebook* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014).

moralists have also served to inform this approach to the topic.<sup>11</sup> The other line of research has come largely from the study of the history of fashion – at first developed mainly from the discipline of art history – which, as stated above, has been tracing the birth of this phenomenon to the Late Middle Ages, and therefore has looked to understand the background and mechanisms in which fashion originated.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> For a general history of sumptuary laws, see Alan Hunt, *Governance of Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996). Due to the nature of medieval sumptuary legislation, most studies on the topic are delimited geographically. A useful selective list would include: Catherine Kovesi Killerby, *Sumptuary Law in Italy, 1200-1500* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002); José Damián González Arce, *Apariencia y poder: la legislación suntuaria castellana en los siglos XIII y XV* (Jaén: Universidad de Jaén, 1998); Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli (ed.), *La legislazione suntuaria: secoli XIII-XVI: Emilia Romagna* (Roma: Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali, Direzione generale per gli archivi, 2002); Idem, “Il corpo spogliato. Multe, scomuniche e stratagemmi per il rispetto delle leggi suntuarie” in *Le corps et sa parure / The Body and Its Adornment*, pp. 299-423; Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli and Antonella Campanini (eds.), *Disciplinare il lusso: La legislazione suntuaria in Italia e in Europa tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna* (Roma: Carocci, 2003). Also interesting are Sarah-Grace Heller’s articles, “Anxiety, Hierarchy, and Appearance in Thirteenth-Century Sumptuary Laws and the *Roman de la rose*”, in *French historical studies*, 27 (2004), pp. 311-348, “Angevin-Sicilian Sumptuary Statutes of the 1290s: Fashion in the Thirteenth-Century Mediterranean”, in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 11 (2015), pp. 79-98, and “Limiting Yardage and Changes of Clothes: Sumptuary Legislation in Thirteenth-Century France, Languedoc and Italy”, in E. Jane Burns (ed.), *Medieval Fabrications*, pp. 121-136; Frédérique Lachaud, “Dress and Social Status in England before the Sumptuary Laws”, in Peter Coss and Maurice Keen (eds.), *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), pp. 105-123. Some insights of the moralists’ positions on the matter in Thomas M. Izbicki, “Failed Censures: Ecclesiastical Regulation of Women's Clothing in Late Medieval Italy”, in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 5 (2009), pp. 37-53; John Block Friedman, “The Iconography of Dagged Clothing and Its Reception by Moralists Writers”, in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 9 (2013), pp. 121-138; Cordelia Warr, “The Devil on My Tail: Clothing and Visual Culture in the Camposanto Last Judgment”, in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 11 (2015), pp. 99-118. Also related, Susan Mosher Stuard, *Gilding the Market: Luxury and Fashion in Fourteenth-Century Italy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

<sup>12</sup> On the history of fashion in the Middle Ages from this approach see for example, Margaret Scott, *Medieval Dress & Fashion* (London: British Library, 2007), and *Fashion in the Middle Ages* (Los Angeles, California: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2011); Anne H. van Buren, *Illuminating Fashion: Dress in the Art of Medieval France and the Netherlands, 1325-1515* (New York-London: The Morgan Library & Museum, 2011); Odile Blanc, *Parades et parures: l'invention du corps de mode à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997) and “From Battlefield to Court: The Invention of Fashion in the Fourteenth Century”, in Désirée G. Koslin and Janet Snyder (eds.), *Encountering medieval textiles*, pp. 157-172; Stella Mary Newton, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince: A Study of the Years 1340-1365* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1980); Jan Keupp, *Die Wahl des Gewandes: Mode, Macht und Möglichkeitssinn in Gesellschaft und Politik des Mittelalters* (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag 2010); Andreas Krass, *Geschriebene Kleider: Höfische Identität als literarisches Spiel*

Both lines, far from being mutually exclusive, have drawn upon each other, in an approach where sumptuary laws informs the studies on the birth of fashion and vice versa. However, in the context of this study, these two main approaches present two key problems: firstly, they are almost exclusively focused on the secular world (though this is probably inevitable in the case of sumptuary laws which mainly involved lay people) giving the impression that the ecclesiastical sphere had no relationship with clothing whatsoever, other than the prescriptions and prohibitions given in councils, synods and religious rules and chapters, accompanied with anecdotal transgressions of the same. Secondly, the interpretations provided by both approaches have tended to be somewhat narrow, as they generally reveal a materialist conception of history and of social facts, in which dress – both in sumptuary laws and in the birth of fashion – is understood mainly from prohibition and consumption, as a device that helped to perpetuate mechanisms of power and of social control from the part of the elites. This interpretation certainly holds truth to some degree, but its main flaw is that it is a rather bi-dimensional one, and ignores the rich complexity that the study of dress in the Middle Ages can uncover. In fact, medieval attitudes towards the social and cultural significance of dress are also revealed by means that have nothing to do with either of these concepts, and which appear in sartorial conflicts where neither the technics of dominance nor consumption are particularly at the centre, as this research aims to demonstrate.

---

(Tübingen: Francke, 2006). Also, Andrea Denny-Brown, *Fashioning Change: The Trope of Clothing in High- and Late-Medieval England* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2012).

## Literature on religious clothes<sup>13</sup>

Historiography has not done much justice to the importance that habits had for medieval religious orders, and it has also tended to be somewhat contradictory. The scholarly literature studying religious orders has often stated how religious habits were of great significance and highly symbolical for these orders, yet it has usually treated habits themselves almost as an afterthought. The mentions are commonly part of the anecdotal information about the orders, limiting themselves to repeat the indications given in

---

<sup>13</sup> The body of scholarly literature on clerical and religious clothes has been expanding greatly during the last few decades. A selective list, besides Maureen C. Miller's *Clothing the clergy*, would include: Janet Mayo, *A History of Ecclesiastical Dress* (London: Batsford, 1984); Louis Trichet, *Le costume du clergé* (Paris: Cerf, 1986); Roger Reynolds, "Clerical Liturgical Vestments and Liturgical Colors in the Middle Ages", in Roger Reynolds, *Clerics in the Early Middle Ages* (Aldershot-Brookfield: Ashgate Variorum, 1999), pp. 1-16; Barbara F. Harvey, *Monastic Dress in the Middle Ages, Precept and Practice* (Great Britain: The William Urry Memorial Trust, 1988); Thomas Izbicki, "Forbidden Colors in the Regulation of Clerical Dress from the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) to the Time of Nicholas of Cusa (d. 1464)", in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 1 (2006), pp. 105-114; André Moisan, "L'habit monastique: De la plaisanterie au texte littéraire", in *Le nu et le vêtu au Moyen Âge* (Aix-en-Provence: Presses universitaires de Provence, 2001), pp. 243-254; John Oldland, "Cistercian Clothing and Its Production at Beaulieu Abbey, 1269-70", in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 9 (2013), pp. 73-96; Allison D. Fizzard, "Shoes, Boots, Leggings, and Cloaks: The Augustinian Canons and Dress in Later Middle England", in *Journal of British Studies*, 46 (2007), pp. 245-262; Andrea Denny-Brown, "Old Habits Die Hard: Vestimentary Change in William Durandus's *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*", in *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 39 (2009), pp. 545-570; Dyan Elliot, "Dressing and Undressing the Clergy: Rites of Ordination and Degradation", in E. Jane Burns (ed.), *Medieval Fabrications*, pp. 55-69; Benoist Pierre, "L'habit faisait-il le moine? Le paraître des religieux au temps de la réforme catholique (France, Italie)", in Isabelle Paresys (ed.), *Paraître at apparences en Europe occidentale*, pp. 151-164; Cordelia Warr has also produced a fruitful research on the matter: "De Indumentis: The importance of religious dress during the papacy of Innocent III", in Andrea Sommerlechner (ed.), *Innocenzo III, Urbs et Orbis. Atti del Congresso Internazionale, Roma, 9-15 settembre 1998* (Roma: Società romana di storia patria, 2003), pp. 489-503; "Religious dress in Italy in the late Middle Ages", in Amy De La Haye and Elizabeth Wilson (eds.), *Defining Dress*; pp. 79-92; "The Striped Mantle of the Poor Clares: Image and Text in Italy in the Later Middle Ages", in *Arte Cristiana*, 86 (1998), pp. 415-430; "Religious habits and visual propaganda: The vision of the Blessed Reginald of Orléans", in *Journal of Medieval History*, 28 (2002), pp. 43-72; "Clothing, charity, salvation and visionary experience in renaissance Siena", in *Art History*, 27 (2004), pp. 187-211; "Hermits, Habits and History: The Dress of the Augustinian Hermits", in Louise Bourdua and Anne Dunlop (eds.), *Art and the Augustinian Order in Early-Renaissance Italy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 17-29; *Dressing for Heaven. Religious Clothing in Italy, 1215-1545* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010). Also, a mostly descriptive, but very useful guide in Giancarlo Rocca (ed.), *La Sostanza dell'Effimero. Gli abiti degli Ordini religiosi in Occidente* (Roma: Edizione Paoline, 2009).

religious rules, seemingly intending to provide a material description of the garments. This might be considered a rather naive approach that seems to think that, given their prescriptive form, these sartorial rules were always duly observed by the people they governed. Some historians, however, have acknowledged that the latter was not always the case, and have included, almost always briefly, accounts of some kind of controversy around the habit. Still, even in these cases, the treatment of the issues rarely goes beyond than serving as a colourful vignette that hardly surpasses this same anecdotal category. Habits, however, in their multiple layers of meaning, were not, by any means, a secondary matter for their wearers. Kassius Hallinger – who in 1951 attributed this scholarly neglect to the focus on critical editions rather than on social interpretations<sup>14</sup> – and, more recently, Andrew Jotischky, with his chapter especially dedicated to the Carmelite habit (and, to some extent, to religious habits in general) in his book on the order<sup>15</sup> are rather isolated exceptions, though all the more important for that reason.

Some studies have also dwell briefly on the symbolic meaning that can be attached to religious habits, from the all-encompassing idea of the habit as “outer sign of status, symbol of humility and detachment of the world” to the allegorical readings of colours, shapes and materials, mostly based on the elaborations made *a posteriori* by the same orders. Yet, the way in which this “great importance” was actually manifested and how

---

<sup>14</sup> K. Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny*, p. 663.

<sup>15</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and antiquity: Mendicants and their pasts in the Middle Ages*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).



historical subjects themselves experienced it has been largely omitted. Symbolism, sign of status and marks of membership were, of course, fundamental aspects of religious habits but this was only a part of the experiences and the attitudes that were developed around them. Moreover, allegorical or iconic meanings, even though important for the orders' own narratives, are still superficial meanings; they are on the surface of the sign, and do not explain the deeper working mechanisms of the sign itself.

Furthermore, it seems at times that, when addressing religious clothes, secular eyes have mainly dominated the approach, understanding the matter in a secular logic. This approach has been similar to the one used in the study of regulations regarding lay clothing, mainly found in sumptuary laws and, as mentioned above, largely given from the perspective of prohibition and consumption. These aspects were clearly a part of the picture, especially for secular clergy – although regular clergy was not exempted – but, as said before, it fails to provide an insight that goes beyond prescription and prohibition, status and consumption. In other words, the approach has often been made from the regulatory body of evidence and from an external point of view that emphasises the transgressions: monks or friars behaving badly through dress. However, the relationship of religious orders themselves with their habits has deeper connotations than just wearing or not some forbidden items, and the merely material analysis of their conformity with these prescriptions. This kind of view provides neither an understanding of the underlying causes, motives and meanings of these controversies, nor the reasons why those involved in them felt the need to

appeal to the papacy, seeking to establish a solution and a clear legal outcome from these issues.

Apart from a good deal of fresh empirical analysis of papal letters dealing with disputes about habits, the majority of the events narrated in the cases covered in the following chapters are not new discoveries. Most have been, at some point, reported in the literature that has studied the different and particular religious orders. Yet, this literature has rarely tried to put them within a wider narrative, looking to understand how these incidents draw a deeper meaning for their subject of study. Over the course of this research I have found that a broader and farther-reaching analysis of these matters has been largely neglected. Paradoxically, despite historians' general lack of interest in religious habits, sources show how important – and in how many ways – they were for the people who actually wore them. Sources mention the habit again and again, and their ubiquitous presence asks for a much-needed "thick description" of them in their layers of meaning, and in their social and cultural role. Then the big questions yet to be answered are: how did their wearers relate to and use religious habits, not only materially but also conceptually? How did they understand their habits, and not only how did they see them in an allegorical, political, organisational or practical sense? Part of it certainly had to do with status, membership and power, but I propose that a much larger component of it also involved the importance of natural symbols and the construction of identity. The case studies presented here help us to illuminate another part of the picture, to zoom it in and to put it into perspective.

## **A working framework of general ideas**

As stated above, in this study of religious habits, both anthropology and semiotics aid in the search of meaning, and in the interpretation of the social and cultural facts that lie at the heart of the system of differences constituted by the multiplicity of religious habits. In this context, the semiological approach to the study of dress and fashion, with Roland Barthes as one of its founders in the late '50s and '60s, and some of the concepts advanced by Mary Douglas and Clifford Geertz are especially helpful to better understand the object of this thesis in its complexity.

Mary Douglas's *Natural Symbols* can be useful for understanding medieval regular orders, which can be seen as a "high classification" system, where 'strong grid and strong group will tend to a routinised piety towards authority and its symbols; beliefs in a punishing, moral universe, and a category of rejects. Any bureaucratic system which is sufficiently secure and insulated from criticism will tend to think the same way.'<sup>16</sup> Also useful is her discussion of the idea of restricted code, especially when juxtaposed to the semiological approach to dress. As Douglas explains, the restricted code 'shortens the process of communication by condensing units into pre-arranged coded forms. The code enables a given pattern of values to be enforced and allows members to internalize the structure of the group and its

---

<sup>16</sup> Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (London-New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 63.

norms in the very process of interaction.’<sup>17</sup> The restricted code – just as religious dress – ‘allows a person to perceive his identity as part of his immediate social world; personal and social integration are achieved together.’<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, it should also be highlighted that ‘the restricted code is deeply enmeshed in the immediate social structure[;] utterances have a double purpose: they convey information, yes, but they also express the social structure, embellish and reinforce it,’<sup>19</sup> all notions that seem pertinent regarding to the subject of this research. In the context of this study of religious habits, the idea that the restricted code ‘is used economically to convey information and to sustain a particular social form,’ and that ‘it is a system of control as well as a system of communication’<sup>20</sup> are noteworthy, as all these elements can be applied to religious habits when understood as part of a system that serves to communicate identities.

As said before, one of the problems that has populated the way in which most of the literature on medieval regular orders has approached the topic of the habits is their apparent lack of interest in any further analysis of the subject and, as a consequence, the superficiality with which it has been largely treated. Here the concept of “thick description” that Geertz adapted and adopted for ethnology in the ‘70s is a refreshing corrective for the abundance of “thin descriptions” in the history of medieval regular life. As Geertz states, ‘analysis, then, is sorting out the structures of

---

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 162.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

signification...and determining their social ground and import'.<sup>21</sup> This approach finds itself in line with the one proposed by Barthes to understand the "language of clothes". In fact, the same Geertz points out that 'the whole point of a semiotic approach to culture is...to aid us in gaining access to the conceptual world in which our subjects live so that we can, in some extended sense of the term, converse with them.'<sup>22</sup>

As Umberto Eco has pointed out, 'the task of semiotics is to isolate different systems of signification, each of them ruled by specific norms, and to demonstrate that *there is* signification and that *there are* norms.'<sup>23</sup> The semiological method developed by Roland Barthes on the field of dress and fashion theory has heavily influenced the works on the topic for the last fifty years, so it would be ingenuous to approach any study on the meaning of dress without assessing Barthes's ideas.<sup>24</sup> Semiology starts from 'the assumption that insofar as human actions or productions convey meaning, insofar as they function as signs, there must be an underlying system of conventions and distinctions which makes this meaning possible.'<sup>25</sup> Here

---

<sup>21</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures. Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 9

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>23</sup> Umberto Eco, "Social Life as a Sign System", in David Robey (ed.), *Structuralism: An Introduction. The Wolfson College Lectures, 1972* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), pp. 57-72; p. 60. Italics in the original.

<sup>24</sup> In the decade of 1930, Petr Bogatyrev, although coming from another background – the Prague linguistic circle – formulated similar approaches to the ones made by Barthes some decades later in relation to dress and language, particularly in his study *The functions of folk costume in Moravian Slovakia* (The Hague-Paris: Mouton, 1971 [1937]). See especially pp. 82-5; p. 93.

<sup>25</sup> Jonathan Culler, *Saussure* (Glasgow: Fontana, 1990), p. 91. Grant McCracken, in his article "Clothing as Language: An object lesson in the study of the expressive properties of material culture" (in Barrie Reynolds and Margaret A. Stott (eds.), *Material Anthropology: Contemporary Approaches to Material Culture* (Lanham-London: University Press of America, 1987), pp. 103-128) has confronted the idea of clothing as a language but maybe too literally, from the point of view of the syntagmatic process of language and the

dress can be understood as a medium through which social codes are expressed and exchanged.<sup>26</sup> In this context, it is significant that, for Barthes, dress is 'in the fullest sense, a "social model", a more or less standardized picture of expected collective behaviour; and it is essentially at this level that it has meaning.'<sup>27</sup> Some of the ideas advanced by Barthes seem to still be pertinent when studying clothing systems, such as the system in which, as this research proposes, medieval religious habits were encompassed, with their determined patterns and regulations.

In his first essay on the field of dress, *Histoire et sociologie du Vêtement. Quelques observations méthodologiques*, of 1957, Barthes started to sketch some of the considerations that would build up his famous study, *The Fashion System*, of 1967.<sup>28</sup> Thus, in this essay Barthes declared that 'what should really interest the researcher, historian or sociologist, is not the passage from protection to ornamentation (an illusory shift), but the tendency of every bodily covering to insert itself into an organized, formal and normative system that is recognized by society.'<sup>29</sup> Barthes linked the approach presented by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, in the

---

construction of linguistic codes through selection and combination, where clothes do not necessarily answer to the linear nature of linguistic construction of codes.

<sup>26</sup> Jonathan Culler, *Saussure*, p. 51.

<sup>27</sup> Roland Barthes, "Histoire et sociologie du Vêtement. Quelques observations méthodologiques", in *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 12, 3 (1957), pp. 430-441; I will be using the English translation by Andy Stafford: "History and Sociology of Clothing. Some Methodological Observations", in Roland Barthes, *The Language of Fashion*, Andy Stafford and Michael Carter (eds.) (Oxford-New York: Berg, 2005), pp. 3-20; p. 14.

<sup>28</sup> Roland Barthes, *Système de la mode* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1967). English translation by Matthew Ward and Richard Howard as *The Fashion System* (London: Vintage Books, 2010).

<sup>29</sup> Roland Barthes, "History and Sociology of Clothing", p. 7.

posthumous recollection of his *Course of General Linguistics* (1916)<sup>30</sup> to the study of dress, declaring that ‘it goes without saying that dress – which cannot be reduced to its protective or ornamental function – is a privileged semiological field: one could say that it is the signifying function of dress which makes it a total social object.’<sup>31</sup> On the same line, Barthes declared that ‘since Saussure we know that language, like dress, is both a system and a history, and individual act and a collective institution. Language and dress are, at any moment in history, complete structures, constituted organically by a functional network of norms and forms.’<sup>32</sup>

Taking this analogy between language and dress into consideration, both understood as systems of meaning, a further concept elaborated by Saussure appears equally significant: the idea that in language ‘there are no identities, only differences. It is the relation between terms that allows signifiers to appear to possess an identity of their own.’<sup>33</sup> As Saussure explains, ‘the concepts are purely differential and defined not by their positive content but negatively by their relations with the other terms of the system. Their most precise characteristic is in being what the others are not.’<sup>34</sup> This clarification is essential to understand the way in which the identities shaped by religious habits in the Late Middle Ages were negotiated, constituting a system of differences in which sartorial identity was largely defined by

---

<sup>30</sup> Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course In General Linguistics*, Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye (eds.), Wade Baskin, translator (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1959 [1916]).

<sup>31</sup> Roland Barthes, “History and Sociology of Clothing”, p. 11.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>33</sup> Michael Ryan, “Structuralism and Poststructuralism”, in *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, Maryanne Cline Horowitz (ed.), Vol. 5 (Detroit-London: Charles Scribner's Sons, Thomson Gale, 2005), pp. 2260-64; p. 2261.

<sup>34</sup> Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course In General Linguistics*, p. 117.

dressing differently to other orders. As Barthes realised, clothing does not have to carry any meaning on its own, and therefore the task is to 'get at its social and global function, and above all at its history; because the manner in which vestimentary values are presented (form, colours, tailoring, etc.) can very well depend on an internal history of the system.'<sup>35</sup> The same is applicable to religious habits and ecclesiastical dress, as they bear a meaning that exists in relation to their social and historical reality. However, it should be noted that, in contrast to Barthes, who was describing a system of meaning that could be somewhat unconscious, in the system of differences of medieval religious dress there was full awareness of the importance and of the meanings conveyed by clothes. The dynamics that shaped the different identities within this system were clearly agency driven and these identities were consciously negotiated.

These systems of differences were also an essential part of the "visual grammar" that governed social dynamics in the Middle Ages, particularly from the eleventh and twelfth centuries onwards. The proliferation of new religious foundations and regular orders with their new habits during this period shows how the social codes that clothing can convey started to play an increasingly significant role. This phenomenon becomes more clear in a closer examination of this religious explosion and their renewed interest in the uniqueness of their habits, as differentiation became a key feature and therefore helped to build up a system of identities based on difference.

---

<sup>35</sup> Roland Barthes, "History and Sociology of Clothing", p. 14.



## Uniforms as a tool of analysis

From this theoretical approach to the understanding of dress in its social and cultural dimensions, some concepts borrowed from the study of uniforms may also add a further perspective of analysis, which can be usefully extrapolated to religious dress in the context of this research. Habits, indeed, can be considered to share some of the aspects or characteristics that are valid for uniforms, with some caveats. Although habits can be seen as uniforms in its modern understanding – in the sense that they provide a unified and distinct visual identity to a group or institution – the mechanism with which uniforms work in the present are not entirely the same principles governing medieval regular habits, even though visual uniformity and distinction were among their aims. Habits were also governed by other complexities – as the following chapters will show – which do not always subscribe to the logic of the pervasive Foucauldian heritage that wants to see uniforms almost exclusively as devices of control.<sup>36</sup> This is certainly a significant aspect of their social and cultural role, especially in modern times, but this would be a too restrictive understanding of them, one that misses the rich layers of meaning that they offer to the historian. Nathan Joseph's work on the topic, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication through Clothing*<sup>37</sup> offers a sociological approach that, besides understanding the control element present in uniforms, also acknowledges the semiological method,

---

<sup>36</sup> Especially since Michel Foucault's *Surveiller et punir: naissance de la prison* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975). It is, for example, the main approach taken by Jennifer Craik in *Uniforms Exposed: From Conformity to Transgression* (Oxford: Berg, 2005).

<sup>37</sup> Nathan Joseph, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication through Clothing* (New York-London: Greenwood, 1986).

providing illuminating insights about them that serve to inform some of the dynamics that are also valid for the subject of this thesis.

A first element to be considered is that uniforms make sense, just as habits do, within a system of differences. As Joseph points out, the uniform can exist only after an institution has achieved to be differentiated from other groups, and therefore, ‘an organisation can communicate sartorially only if it is a separate entity.’<sup>38</sup> Only once this needed process of differentiation has happened, and the group has become a distinct entity, the reading of signs transmitted sartorially can be effective regarding ‘the requirements of the organisation, its statuses and roles.’<sup>39</sup> This same development of differentiation brings about a process of elaboration of an exclusive identity, in which uniforms act as a synecdoche: ‘the uniform becomes the group, and the uniform rather than the group can become the focus of thought and affect,’<sup>40</sup> a similar process than the one experimented by religious habits in the Late Middle Ages. Joseph explains that ‘visibility in clothing is a social rather than a physical property. We respond not simply to the physical appearance of the clothing but to the information it provides about wearers’ statuses or affiliations, the norms to which they are held accountable, their degree of conformity to them, and whether they are in the appropriate context.’<sup>41</sup> Thus, uniforms have the capacity to enlist the public as external

---

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

censors, who have the power to monitor how the wearer complies with the standards held by the organisation.<sup>42</sup>

In similar ways to the ones in which religious habits worked, Joseph explains that the uniform ‘not only mediates routine interaction but serves as purely expressive display. It is the outer manifestation of inner grace or, in secular terms, the means of inculcating and displaying loyalty to an organisation.’<sup>43</sup> Thus, uniforms, as habits, can be understood as “a certificate of legitimacy”, bearing implicit hierarchical meanings and structures: ‘the uniform is read to discern the relationship between the wearer and the organisation. The very existence of a uniform implies at least a two-tiered organisational hierarchy, wearers and superiors who have granted them the right to wear the group uniform, and who supervise conformity to group regulations. By permitting the use of its uniform, a group certifies an individual as its representative and assumes responsibility for his activities.’<sup>44</sup> Moreover, an element to bear in mind in relation to the topic of this research – particularly in the case of the Franciscan controversies analysed in chapter 4 – is that uniforms are also ‘a symbolic declaration that an individual will adhere to group norms and standardised roles and has mastered the relevant group skills.’<sup>45</sup> In this context, ‘failure to meet these standards will result in penalties, and, in extreme cases, discharge and deprivation of the right to wear the uniform,’ as deviation reflects badly on the group, implying

---

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 50; p. 65.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp. 66-7.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 66.

that it is not able to control its members and its own certification.<sup>46</sup> Likewise, and especially pertinent in the perspective of habits understood as a system of differences brought about by the multiplication of religious orders and their new attires, Joseph emphasises that ‘for the uniform to function as a certificate of legitimacy for its representatives, the public must learn to recognise it as an indicator of special status. The proliferation of uniforms may, however, result in public confusion.’<sup>47</sup>

Also relevant is the idea that one of the first means of control that uniforms may exercise resides in their capacity of ‘permitting or forbidding members to exhibit their organisational affiliation through clothing.’<sup>48</sup> This is especially true for extra-religious groups attempting to wear religious habits, as was the case of beguines and penitential groups analysed in chapter 3. In this context, both religious habits and uniforms have the capacity to show and conceal the status as a member of a certain group, and ‘minimises the possibility of confusing members with nonmembers. Its importance as a differentiating device is indicated by the often severe sanctions against imposters.’<sup>49</sup> This is a fundamental concept when trying to understand some of the rules of the system of differences of religious habits, which was reinforced by certain phenomena such as their demand by extra-religious groups, or the conflicts incited by the similarity between the attire of different religious orders. In fact, an element intrinsically connected with uniforms is that ‘others may attempt to borrow some of the attributes of the uniform

---

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 67; p. 69.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 66-7.

wearer to achieve the benefits of such an identification and association,<sup>50</sup> a notion that was certainly shared by those who fiercely attacked outsiders like beguines. 'For organisational peers – explains Joseph – the uniform underscores a common membership, allegiance to the same set of rules, and the probability of similar life experiences. To outsiders, the uniform stresses differences in status norms, and way of life. The uniform serves, then, to bind the wearer to his peers and to separate him from outsiders.'<sup>51</sup>

### **New habits for new monks: The monastic reform of the twelfth century and the creation of a system of differences**

The complainers referred to by Anselm of Havelberg were not entirely wrong for, in fact, the period that ran from the second half of the eleventh century till the beginnings of the thirteenth century witnessed the foundation of several new regular orders. As the author of the *Libellus de Diversis Ordinibus et Professionibus qui sunt in Aecclesia* – written around the first half of the twelfth century – explained, 'different servants of God have arisen from the beginning of the early church, and many kinds of callings have come into being, and particularly in our day, institutions of monks and canons differing in habit and religious practice.'<sup>52</sup> Giles Constable has argued that 'there was a common concern at that time, and especially in the period from about 1100 to 1160, with the nature of religious life and the ideal of personal

---

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>51</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>52</sup> Giles Constable and Bernard S. Smith (eds.), *Libellus de Diversis Ordinibus et Professionibus qui sunt in Aecclesia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), p. 3.

perfection. A set of values as well as a way of life, embodied in various institutions, was at the heart of the movement of reform.<sup>53</sup>

We know – in great part thanks to the reform brought about in the ninth century by Benedict of Aniane that sought to establish some monastic uniformity, including in dress, and to curb the sartorial excesses of Carolingian monks<sup>54</sup> – that during the Early Middle Ages disparity, rather than uniformity, was the rule in monastic attire.<sup>55</sup> This should not be a surprise, considering both that each monastery was an autonomous body, sharing with other religious houses the common observance of the principles set by the Benedictine Rule<sup>56</sup> – but also interpreting it individually – and that the precepts left by St Benedict in his rule were highly general, particularly regarding dress. In fact, Chapter 55 of the rule, *De vestiario vel calciario fratrum* ('Of the clothes and shoes of the brethren'), just states that the monks' outfit should consist of a tunic, a cowl – 'thick and woolly in winter, thin or worn in summer' – a scapular for work, stockings and shoes to cover the feet. The monks should never complain about the colour or the

---

<sup>53</sup> Giles Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: University Press, 1996), p. 6. For a more detailed study on the reformation of religious life during this period, see also Brenda Bolton, *The Medieval Reformation* (London: Edward Arnold, 1983). For a broader and more recent approach to the period, see Thomas F.X. Noble and John Van Engen (eds.), *European Transformations: The Long Twelfth Century* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012).

<sup>54</sup> K. Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny*, p. 680; Adalbert de Vogüé and Pius Engelbert, "Formazione ed evoluzione dell'abito monastico", in LSDE, pp. 63-86; pp. 63-8.

<sup>55</sup> See K. Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny*, pp. 661-95.

<sup>56</sup> As G. R. Galbraith points out, even though the Benedictine Rule was not the only rule known and followed in Western Europe, it became 'the monastic rule *par excellence*'. In G. R. Galbraith, *The Constitutions of the Dominican Order, 1216 to 1360* (Manchester: University Press, 1925), p. 9.

coarseness of any of these things, but be content with what can be found in the region where they live and can be purchased cheaply.<sup>57</sup>

However, this lack of uniformity did not yet – until the advent of the Cluniac Order – mean the existence of a system of differences, because the central elements that defined the emergence of the latter were both the conscious changes made in dress as an immediate proxy of reform – as Hallinger has shown for the case of Cluny and its confrontations with Gorze, where controversies about reform went hand in hand with controversies about clothing<sup>58</sup> – and the creation of a new religious order as a result of this reform, with its new “brand” reflected in their new habits. Cluny, as the first “new order” was also the first example of how, already in the tenth century, transformations in habits were intrinsically connected with search for reform. The Cluniacs, in fact, took an uncompromising stance and every monastery joining the order had to accept its habit and tonsure.<sup>59</sup> Apparently, diversity was not permissible and, according to Hallinger, their despotism and narrow hearted formalism ended up generating resistance, fuelling a craving for freedom in subsequent monasticism.<sup>60</sup> For some, the Cluniac use of two

---

<sup>57</sup> ‘...Nos tamen mediocribus locis sufficere credimus Monachis per singulos cucullam et tunicam; cucullam in hyeme villosam; in aestate puram et vetustam, et scapulare propter opera: indumenta pedum, pedules et caligas. De quarum rerum omnium colore aut grossitudine non causentur Monachi, sed quales inveniri possunt in provincia, qua degunt, aut quod vilius comparare posit...Sufficit enim Monacho duas tunicas et duas cucullas habere.’ In *The Rule of our Most Holy Father St. Benedict, patriarch of monks; in Latin and English*, translated by a Monk of St. Augustine's Monastery, Ramsgate (London: R. Washbourne, 1875), pp. 224-6. For a more detailed survey of the monastic habit up to the twelfth century, see Adalbert de Vogüé and Pius Engelbert, “Formazione ed evoluzione dell'abito monastico”, pp. 63-79. For the habit of primitive monasticism, see Philippus Oppenheim, *Das Mönchskleid im christlichen Altertum* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder & Co., 1931).

<sup>58</sup> K. Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny*, p. 701; p. 712.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 716. See also Glauco Maria Cantarella, *I monaci di Cluny* (Torino: Einaudi, 1993), particularly pp. 299-316.

<sup>60</sup> K. Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny*, p. 715.

cowls (*duplex vestis*) was a sign of arrogance and – just as the Cluniacs did with the Cistercians a generation later – they were accused of showing self-righteousness in their habits.<sup>61</sup> Thus, the anonymous monk of Hersfeld who wrote the *Liber de Unitate Ecclesia Conservanda* towards 1093, lamented that ‘long is the combat and discord among monks about the monastic dress, and among them, those who are considered to be more religious for their boasting, I say, among them the name of the double cowl it is so solemn, and distinguished, and so holy and venerable, that the monks in the rest of the monasteries are judged by them to be of no merit and importance, unless they wear this double confusion.’<sup>62</sup> The monks of Montecassino had transmitted a similar idea to the German monks of Hersfeld towards 1072. They expressed that neither the tonsure, nor the habit of the Cluniacs pleased them, nor should they please anyone who wanted to live according to the rule respecting its law.<sup>63</sup>

Nevertheless, these controversies were largely solved within or between the same monasteries, without involving to the papacy. This may

---

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., pp. 707-15; Giles Constable, “The Ceremonies and Symbolism of Entering Religious Life and Taking the Monastic Habit, from the Fourth to the Twelfth Century”, in *Segni e riti nella chiesa altomedievale occidentale*, Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 33, 11-17 aprile 1985 (Spoleto: Presso la sede del Centro, 1987), pp. 771-834; pp. 825-6.

<sup>62</sup> ‘Ergo longum est inter monachos certamen atque discordia de veste monasticha, et apud eos, qui religiosiores videntur, pro sua iactantia, apud eos, inquam, tam solemne est et celebre tamque sanctum et venerabile nomen quod est duplex vestis, ut reliqui per monasteria monachi nullius meriti vel momentu aestimentur ab eis, nisi induantur hac dyploide confusionis.’ In W. Schwenkenbecher (ed.), *Liber de Unitate Ecclesia Conservanda*, in MGH, *Scriptores, Libelli de lite imperatorum et pontificum*, Tom. II (Hanover, 1892), pp. 173-284; p. 276; K. Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny*, p. 697; Giles Constable, “The Ceremonies and Symbolism”, p. 820; Jan Keupp, *Die Wahl des Gewandes*, pp. 85-6.

<sup>63</sup> ‘...de tonsura scilicet et habitu Cluniacensium, breviter respondere possumus, quia nec nobis placent, nec cuiquam qui regulariter vivere voluerit iure placenda sunt, videntur enim omnino contra regulam...’, W. Bulst (ed.), *Die Ältere Wormser Briefsammlung*, in MGH, *Epistolae*, Band III, pp. 13-15. I am grateful to Antonio Sennis for pointing out this source to me.



have been because the tenth and early eleventh-century papacy was not really in a condition to deal with such complexities. As the cases studied here show, this is, indeed, the third element that characterised the system of differences of religious dress that became to be fully in place in the thirteenth century: in a context of global religious orders, disputes about habits needed to be solved and settled by the global authority of the papacy.

Despite the fact that, as explained earlier, the Benedictine Rule was fairly unspecific regarding “practical” matters, including dress, without given specifications of shapes or colours, where the local variations were a common element, the customary colour of the habit had usually been black or dark tones.<sup>64</sup> This started to change with the advent of new orders with different habits during the eleventh and twelfth centuries – following Cluny – so it is important to have a brief account of the character and kind of these innovations, and on how these groups chose to dress and present themselves. Probably the most famous change, and the one that had the greatest impact at the time, was the one brought about by the Cistercian Order, the ‘white monks’, with their habits of undyed wool. However they were not the first religious to oppose Cluny with new attire. Around 1022 – so goes the tradition – St Romuald of Ravenna was in the *Campo Maldoli*, close to the Tuscan city of Arezzo, when he suddenly saw the heavens opening, almost as if its vortex was touching the ground, and ‘like the patriarch Jacob’ he had a vision of a ladder ascending to heaven through which white monks were climbing up. Romuald, who had been a Cluniac monk in the convent of

---

<sup>64</sup> Adalbert de Vogüé and Pius Engelbert, “Formazione ed evoluzione dell'abito monastico”, pp. 63-8.

Sant' Apollinare in Classe, near Ravenna, and had left it in a search of a stricter way of life, then decided to found a new religious order of hermits and changed his black Cluniac habit for white garments, which he also prescribed for his new order, thus becoming their particular emblem.<sup>65</sup> This change of clothes was, at the same time, a foundational act and it symbolised the institutionalisation of St Romuald's departure from the traditional Benedictine observance to his new cenobitical community of hermits, the Order of Camaldoli.

What most of these new orders had in common was, as posited by C. H. Lawrence, the 'quest for the primitive,' sharing a general dissatisfaction about the traditional ways of life of the monastic orders.<sup>66</sup> Indeed, in the words of Giles Constable and Bernard S. Smith, the period was a turning point in the history of regular orders and of Western Christianity as a whole.<sup>67</sup> These new foundations were a response to the religious and monastic establishment, and they sought to depart from the rigid feudal structures and obligations, as they looked for what these authors characterise as 'a more

---

<sup>65</sup> The vision has also been attributed to a certain 'Count Maldolo', from whom St Romuald would have heard the story. Either way, the tradition kept linking the vision to the foundation of the order and to the change of habits: 'Romualdum mirae pulchritudinis, coelum quasi suo vertice tangentem, dum confidens in agro Arretino, prope campum Malduli, longo itinere fatigatus quiesceret, ad instar illius, quam Jacob patriarcha videre meruit, per quam albescentium monachorum cernebatur ascendere multitudo, quo coelesti mysterio vir Dei collustratus de mutando eatenus nigro in candidum monastico et eremitico schemate deliberaverit, atque albis deinceps vestibibus Camaldulenses suos ab se tunc institutos incedere jusserit', in *Annales Camaldulenses Ordinis Sancti Benedicti*, D. Johanne-Benedicto Mittarelli and D. Anselmo Costadoni (eds.), Vol. I, 907-1206 (Venetiis: Apud Jo. Baptistam Pasquali, Aere Monasterii Sancti Michaelis de Muriano, 1755), pp. 346-7; C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism. Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages* (London-New York: Longman, 1989), p. 153. For Camaldoli see G. Cacciamani, "Camaldolesi", in *DIP*, Vol. I (1974), cols. 1718-25 and Giuseppe Vedovato, *Camaldoli e la Sua Congregazione Dalle Orgini al 1184. Storia e Documentazione* (Cesena: Centro Storico Benedettino Italiano, Badia di S. Maria del Monte, 1994).

<sup>66</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 150.

<sup>67</sup> Giles Constable and Bernard S. Smith (eds.), *Libellus de Diversis Ordinibus*, pp. xi.

individualistic way of life dedicated to personal salvation and the spiritual and temporal services of others, whose needs were increasingly apparent in an age of growing social awareness and economic development.<sup>68</sup> According to Lawrence, a feature that all the 'new experiments' had in common was the search 'for disengagement, solitude, poverty, and simplicity.'<sup>69</sup> Reformers began to look to Christian antiquity as a guide, and three main models seemed to be the most appealing: the eremitical life of the Desert Fathers; the "apostolic life" – understood as a life in community, with renunciation of personal property and with evangelisation as a fundamental task, as it was described in the Acts of the Apostles; and a return to a strict observance of the Benedictine Rule, which, for some of the reformers, was being followed with too many concessions to human weakness.<sup>70</sup> As a result, even though the exact number of men and women who took to living under a religious rule is not known, Constable and Smith state that 'during this period it increased enormously in terms not only of absolute numbers, perhaps as much as ten-fold in some regions, but probably also of proportion to the total population.'<sup>71</sup>

Lawrence offers a detailed survey of the variety of new communities born in this period, and I will follow it here as a guiding thread. Many influenced each other and even overlapped, sometimes showing an eclectic mixture of the features of the three models mentioned above. The Italian Camaldoli of St Romuald shared the ideal of the life of the desert with the French Carthusians, with its combination of eremitical and cenobitical life,

---

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., pp. xi-xii.

<sup>69</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 150.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>71</sup> Giles Constable and Bernard S. Smith (eds.), *Libellus de Diversis Ordinibus*, pp. xii.

both taking much of their guidelines from the Benedictine Rule, but marking some distance from the traditional conventual life.<sup>72</sup> These ideals were certainly reflected in the choice of their habits. Like the Camaldolese hermits, who were well known for their white version of the traditional Benedictine habit,<sup>73</sup> the monks of the Grand Chartreuse were also easily distinguishable, with a habit that has changed little since the establishment of the order till today. Although we do not have precise knowledge of the habit worn by St Bruno, the founder of the order, it is probable that it did not differ much from the one stated in the *Consuetudines* – the first constitutions of the order, written down around 1125-1127 by Guigo I, the fifth abbot of the Grand Chartreuse. It consisted of a long white tunic, made of coarse wool, reaching down to the ankles, and with long sleeves. It was worn over a cilice, a penitence garment that was usually a shirt made of goat hair, worn directly over the skin.<sup>74</sup> Over the tunic, the monks wore the characteristic cowl-scapular of the order, a piece made of the same cloth and colour as the tunic and composed by two pieces that covered the front and the back of the monk, also down to the ankles, with an attached hood. The monk had to wear this garment every time he left his cell. It was similar to the traditional Benedictine scapular – the garment that the Benedictine Rule gave for manual work – but it was easily distinguishable from it, and from the habit of

---

<sup>72</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 153; p. 160; for the Carthusian Order, see J. Dubois, “Certosini”, in DIP, vol. II (1975), cols. 782-821.

<sup>73</sup> Ugo Fossa, “Camaldolesi”, in LSDE, pp. 142-145; p. 142.

<sup>74</sup> Sometimes the cilice also consisted in a piece of coarse cloth or a belt with rings or mesh wire with spikes that was fastened over the waist or the legs. In Giancarlo Rocca, “Il guardaroba religioso”, in LSDE, pp. 35-61; p. 58.

other white monks, thanks to the characteristic sidebands that linked the rear and front pieces just below the waistline.<sup>75</sup>

Vallombrosa, in Italy, was a forerunner of the Cistercians in their discontent with Cluniac standards of life, their appeal to a literal observance of the Benedictine Rule, and their use of *conversi* or lay brothers.<sup>76</sup> The Vallombrosian habit followed the prescriptions given by St Benedict but, in contrast to the Cluniac black habit, it was made from wool that came from both white and black sheeps, woven together in a coarse cloth, thus giving the garments a grey-brownish colour.<sup>77</sup> A similar desire for ‘a simpler kind of claustral life based upon a literal observance of the Benedictine Rule’,<sup>78</sup> with the return to manual labour, private meditation, and seclusion from the outside world was also shared by both the French foundation of the Order of Tiron – established by Bernard d'Abbeville around 1106 – as well as by Robert of Molesme and his hermits, first in the Burgundian Abbey of Molesme (founded in 1075) and later in Cîteaux (1098).<sup>79</sup> The habit of the Tironensian monks followed the same tendency to coarseness, understood as a way of going back to the primitive traditions of monasticism. They chose rough and rustic clothes made from undyed and untreated wool of a greyish shade,<sup>80</sup> apparently totally unfamiliar to the people of the region, as they

---

<sup>75</sup> Giovanni Leoncini, “Certosini”, in LSDE, pp. 154-157; p. 156. Also James Hogg (ed.), “The Evolution of the Carthusian Statutes from the Consuetudines Guigonis to the Tertia Compilatio. Documents: Volume 1, Consuetudines Guigonis Prima Pars Statutorum Antiquorum”, *Analecta Cartusiana* 99 (1989), *Caput XXVIII. De utentibus celle*, pp. 32-3.

<sup>76</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, pp. 153-4.

<sup>77</sup> R. Nicola Vasaturo, “Vallombrosani”, in LSDE, pp. 149-159; p. 149.

<sup>78</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 156.

<sup>79</sup> Ibidem. For the Order of Tiron, see J. Dubois, “Tirone”, in DIP, Vol. IX (1997), col. 1175.

<sup>80</sup> Bernard Beck, *Saint Bernard de Tiron, l'ermite, le moine et le monde* (Cormelles-le-Royal: La Mandragore, 1998), pp. 263-4.

were rather different from the habits worn by other monks, as described by a certain Geoffroy Le Gross, one of Bernard's disciples.<sup>81</sup>

The Cistercian Order, in turn, was the product of many ideas current in its time, and its monastic observance also strived to go back to the most literal obedience of the Benedictine Rule. This fierce spirit of abnegation involved all the components of everyday life, including dress. As Adalbert de Vogüé and Pius Engelbert assert, the first Cistercians did not take anything from the Benedictine tradition without putting it first under examination. Thus, almost inevitably, they reacted against the rich habit of the Cluniacs, which comprised several pieces of clothing and was usually made of smooth and finely treated wool. The Cluniacs believed that they were wearing the habit prescribed by St Benedict, when, in fact, their outfit was closer to the one imposed by the reform carried out by Benedict of Aniane.<sup>82</sup> Therefore, in contrast to the Cluniac black outfit, the Cistercians' habit was made of coarse undyed wool, which brought them both the nickname of white monks and the harsh words of Peter the Venerable: 'Oh new races of Pharisees', he called them in his famous *letter 28* to Bernard of Clairvaux, because with their habits of 'unusual colour' they wanted to distinguish themselves from the

---

<sup>81</sup> 'Erant namque sanctitatis fervore succensi, quodlibet paupertatis onus ferre parati; habitatoribus illius patriae penitus ignoti, habitum quidem monachi habentes, sed vilem, incultum, villosum, a ceterorum habitu monachorum valde dissimilem, ovibus ipsis a quibus sumptus fuerat valde consimilem. Paupertatis et enim imperium, quae vilis possent comparari, eos habere indumenta compellabat, a quo S. Benedicti Regula, cujus professores erant, minime discrepabat.' In "Vita", auctore Gaufredo Grosso, monacho tironiensi et B. Bernardi Discipulo, in *ibid.*, p. 388

<sup>82</sup> Adalbert de Vogüé and Pius Engelbert, "Formazione ed evoluzione dell'abito monastico", p. 77.

monks of almost the entire world, and they boasted to be white among the blacks.<sup>83</sup>

Paradoxically – as Giles Constable points out – this letter from around 1127<sup>84</sup> is also the earliest mention in the sources on the colour of the Cistercian habit.<sup>85</sup> In fact, it is still not known when the first Cistercians monks changed their old dark habits for the undyed ones, for the first documents and constitutions of the order do not touch the matter of the colour. The earliest manuscript with the statutes – Biblioteca Comunale di Trento MS 1711 – dated around 1130-1135, states that the habit had to be simple and of low cost, without fur coats, ‘as the Rule describes it’.<sup>86</sup> The statute number 11 of the General Chapter of 1181 excluded the use of dyed or ‘curious’ cloths for the confection of the habit.<sup>87</sup> It would not be until the year 1269 that the statutes make explicit reference to the use of white cowls.<sup>88</sup> It was, however, fully embraced as an emblem, and in the following years the

---

<sup>83</sup> ‘...At uos sancti, uos singulares, uos in uniuerso orbe uere monachi, aliis omnibus falsis et perditis, secundum nominis interpretationem solos uos inter omnes constituitis, unde et habitum insoliti coloris praetenditis, et ad distinctionem cunctorum totius fere mundi monachorum, inter nigros uos candidos ostentatis. Et certe haec uestium nigredo antiquitus humiliatis causa a patribus inuenta cum a uobis reiicitur, meliores uos ipsis candorem inusitatum praeferendo iudicatis...’, in Giles Constable (ed.), *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, Vol. I (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 57.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 270-4.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 116.

<sup>86</sup> Quoted by Goffredo Viti, “Cistercensi (monaci)”, in LSDE, pp. 165-169; p.166; ‘Vestitus simplex et vilis, absque pellicis, camisiis, staminiis, qualem denique regula describit’, in J-M. Canivez (ed.), *Statuta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Cisterciensis*, Vol. I, 1116-1220 (Louvain: Bibliothèque de la Revue D’Histoire Ecclésiastique, 1933), p. 13.

<sup>87</sup> R. Pistolese et al., “Costume dei Monaci e dei Religiosi”, in DIP, Vol. 3 (1976), cols. 204-249; col. 217; ‘Panni tincti et curiosi ab Ordine nostro penitus excludantur...’, in J-M. Canivez, *Statuta*, Vol. I, p. 89.

<sup>88</sup> ‘Item honestati et commoditati Ordinis providendo districte praecipitur abbatibus Ordinis universi quod tam sibi quam monachis suis omnibus curiositate vestium summopere caveant, et quod tam cucullae quam manicae cucullarum non sint nimis longae, sed mensuratae secundum decretum regulae nostrae, et quod tam abbates quam monachi cucullis albis utantur uniformiter in claustris, et in choro horis matutinalibus, maxime in terris et locis ubi haberi poterunt competenter.’ In J-M. Canivez, Vol. III, 1262-1400 (1935), p. 69.

statutes would reiterate the white colour for the cowl and condemn the multiplicity and preciousness of garments.<sup>89</sup>

Another type of institutionalised ascetic and regular life that spread relatively fast was the one proposed by the canons regular: a hybrid new type of organisation that mixed elements of regular life with clerical duties, and which rooted its model in the life of the Apostles or *vita apostolica*.<sup>90</sup> Lawrence points out the heavy influence that the monastic model of life had over a significant portion of the clergy connected to the programme carried out by the Gregorian Reform: ‘the reformers sought to put an end to the secularisation of ecclesiastical offices, to separate the clergy from worldly entanglements and impress upon them the superior character of their sacred calling.’<sup>91</sup> It seemed that the best way to accomplish this goal was following a disciplined communal life, for which the canons regular adopted the Rule of Saint Augustine.<sup>92</sup> The Augustinian Rule had, in fact, a major impact on the views of regular life from the eleventh century onwards, perhaps being its greatest appeal the fact that it was very general and did not give many practical guidelines for the organisation of regular life. Therefore, the different houses of canons regular gradually developed their own statutes, taking into account the monastic tradition including the Benedictine Rule and the

---

<sup>89</sup> Goffredo Viti, “Cistercensi (monaci)”, p. 166.

<sup>90</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, pp. 163-4. See also C. Egger, “Canonici Regolari”, in DIP, Vol. II (1974), cols. 46-63, and Michel Parisse (ed.), *Les Chanoines Réguliers: Émergence et Expansion (Xie-Xiiiè Siècles): Actes du Sixième Colloque International du CERCOR, Le Puy en Velay, 29 Juin-1er Juillet 2006* (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2009).

<sup>91</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 164.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 164-5. For more information on the Augustinian Rule, see L. Verheijen, “Regula Augustini”, in DIP, Vol. VII (1983), cols. 1542-54 and B. Rano, “L’utilizzazione della RA: dal medioevo a oggi”, in *ibid.*, cols. 1554-5.



synodal legislation of Aachen (816-19), with a type of observance that was basically a monastic one.<sup>93</sup>

However, and although regular canons followed the monastic tradition of adopting a “uniform”, their habit was clearly distinguishable from the monastic one. Instead of the cowl and the scapular, which eventually turned out to be the most characteristic garments of the monastic status,<sup>94</sup> the canons regular were easily discernable by their *rochettum* or rochet, a shorter version of the *rochus*, the long white linen robe that belonged to the clergy *par excellence*. This rochet was a tunic typically made of linen, similar to the liturgical surplice, with long and narrow sleeves. It was worn over a cassock, also a customary garment for clerics, commonly white and long to the feet. The length of the rochet varied, usually reaching up to the knees, though it was shortened over time. The habit was completed with a cloak, normally black, and an also black *pilleolum* as headwear – in contraposition to the monastic hood – similar to the one worn by the secular clergy, and the *birretum* for liturgy and processions.<sup>95</sup>

The Augustinian Rule was also adopted by the Premonstratensians, the order of canons to which Anselm of Haverlberg belonged, founded around 1121 by his master St Norbert of Xanten. In many ways the Prémontré anticipated the mendicant orders. St Norbert combined some of

---

<sup>93</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 166. The acts of Synods of Aachen in Mansi, Vol.14, pp. 147ff.

<sup>94</sup> In 816 the Council of Aachen, in its canon CXXV, *Ut canonici cucullas monachorum non induant*, stated that canons could not wear the monastic cowl: ‘Reprehensibilem, et ecclesiastica emendatione dignum apud plerosque canonicos inolevisse comperimus usum. eo quod contra morem ecclesiasticum, cucullas, quibus solis monachis utendum est, induant...’, in Mansi, Vol. 14, p. 235.

<sup>95</sup> Luigi M. Loschiavo, “Canonici regolari: un abito da chierici”, in LSDE, pp. 87-91. For the description of clerical garments see Maureen C. Miller, *Clothing the clergy*; Roger Reynolds, “Clerical Liturgical Vestments”; Louis Trichet, *Le costume du clergé*.

the characteristic of monastic life with the tradition of the canons regular.<sup>96</sup> Thus, besides taking the Augustinian Rule, St Norbert looked to model his institution on the example set by the Cistercians, particularly regarding its austerity and strict observance, and its system of governance.<sup>97</sup> Dressed in simple habits composed of long tunics, a scapular, a cloak of undyed wool, and a white girdle – hence receiving the nickname of ‘white canons’ when they arrived to England<sup>98</sup> – instead of the traditional linen robes of the clergy, they understood the *vita apostolica* as ‘a combination of community life organised around the ideal of ascetical poverty with the active role of a missionary preacher.’<sup>99</sup>

In this idea about apostolic life, the Premonstratensians resembled another order founded some twenty years earlier in the double monastery for men and women of Fontevrault, which combined eremitic life with wandering preaching, an ideal that became fully developed with the advent of the mendicant orders, about a century later.<sup>100</sup> The founder of Fontevrault, Robert of Arbrissel, also took the Benedictine Rule as a model, but provided slightly more comprehensive prescriptions for his monks and nuns. Although we do not have a detailed description of the male habit, we know that their cloaks, robes and breeches had to be of only one colour – not specified – not

---

<sup>96</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 170. For more information on the Premonstratensian Order, see J. B. Valvekens, “Premonstratensi”, in DIP, Vol. VII (1983), cols. 720-45, and Theodore James Antry and Carol Neel (eds. and trans.), *Norbert and Early Norbertine Spirituality* (New York, N.Y.: Paulist Press, 2007).

<sup>97</sup> G. R. Galbraith, *The Constitutions of the Dominican Order*, pp. 22-3.

<sup>98</sup> Janet Mayo, *A History of Ecclesiastical Dress*, p. 36.

<sup>99</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 170. On the Premonstratensian habit, see also Adam Scotus’ *De Ordine, Habitu Et Professione Canoniorum Ordinis Praemonstratensis*, particularly Sermo III and IV, in PL, 198, cols. 439-669; cols. 461-79.

<sup>100</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 157. See also, G. Oury, “Fontevrault”, in DIP, Vol. IV (1977), cols. 127-9, and Jean-Marc Bienvenu, *L’Etonnant Fondateur de Fontevraud Robert D’Arbrissel* (Paris: Nouvelles Editions Latines, 1981).

trimmed and of low price. They could use belts, but only made out of wool. They were forbidden to wear capes or shirts of black cloth over the habit, or fur coats made from any other material than lamb.<sup>101</sup> The prescriptions for the female habit give some more detail about its appearance, and it is likely that the male outfit followed some of the same basic features. The nuns' habits had to be of local and coarse cloth, of natural colour, neither trimmed nor dyed, reaching down to the feet, but not farther. The sleeves should be two-feet wide and long to the knees. As the monks, they could wear belts only made of wool and fur coats, also only made from lamb, with sleeves which width should not surpass half a foot. Fringes, embroideries and pleats were ruled out, with the exception of the veil, which had to be made from one piece, folded and sewn on the inside.<sup>102</sup> Thus, the idea of simplicity and coarseness of dress kept being a characteristic feature of the habits that conformed this system of differences, reaching somehow a culmination point, both materially and ideologically with the mendicant orders, especially with the Franciscans.

However, before the mendicant orders came into existence, another type of monastic life appeared in the religious map of the medieval Church: the military orders. These orders of knights, originated to fight the infidels and to protect the pilgrims in the Holy Land, also took professional monastic vows and followed a religious rule as a guideline to their communal life. Although they seemed to be a contradiction, since religious men – regular or secular –

---

<sup>101</sup> Daniel Prigent, "Fontevraud", in LSDE, pp. 186-188; p. 187. Prigent takes these statutes from Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, MS 2468.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

were forbidden from bearing arms and shedding blood, the crusading movement managed to combine the quest for an ascetic life with the warrior ethos of European aristocracy, in a 'new ideal Christian knighthood.'<sup>103</sup> The most prominent of these orders were the Order of the Templars, which based its rule in a combination of the Benedictine Rule and the Cistercian's practices, and the Order of the Hospitallers, or Knights of St John of Jerusalem – also commonly known as Knights of Malta – whose rule was inspired by the Augustinian model.<sup>104</sup> The conventual habit of the military orders usually consisted of three main articles of clothing: the cowl, the cape and, especially, the cross-shaped badge that took different colours and forms. The Hospitallers were known for their black scapular and cape with a white eight-pointed cross, sewn on the left side.<sup>105</sup> On the other hand, the Templars, following the Cistercian tradition, took a white woollen cowl – 'which signifies purity and complete chastity,' as the primitive rule reads<sup>106</sup> –

---

<sup>103</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 207.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209; p. 211. For the Order of the Templars, see A. J. Forey, "Templari", in *DIP*, Vol. IX (1997), cols. 886-896; for the Order of the Hospitallers, see C. Toumanoff, "Sovrano Militare Ospedaliero Ordine di Malta", in *DIP*, Vol. VIII (1988), cols. 1934-44. Also Nicholas Morton, *The Medieval Military Orders, 1120-1314* (Harlow: Pearson, 2013).

<sup>105</sup> 'Item omnes fratres omnium obedientiarum, qui nunc vel in antea offerunt se Deo et sancto Hospitali Jerosolimitano, cruces ad honorem Dei et sancte Crucis ejusdem in cappis et in mantellis secum defferant ante pectus, ut Deus per ipsum vexillum et fidem et operationem et obedientiam nos custodiat.' Rule given by Raymond du Puy between 1125-1153, in J. Delaville Le Roulx (ed.), *Cartulaire Général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jerusalem*, Vol. I, 1100-1200 (Paris: Ernest Leroux Éditeur, 1894), p. 68. According to Giovanni Morello, the tradition of the eight-pointed cross, not mentioned in the rule, was a legacy from the Amalfitan origin of the order, since it was also part of the heraldry of the city. In Giovanni Morello, "Note Sulla Croce, Armatura ed 'Abito' dei Cavalieri di Malta", in *Waffen- und Kostümkunde: Zeitschrift der Gessellschaft für Historische Waffen- und Kostümkunde* 22 (1980), pp. 89-105; pp. 93-5.

<sup>106</sup> J. M. Upton-Ward (ed.), *The Rule of the Templars. The French Text of the Rule of the Order of the Knights Templar* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 1992), p. 24. Although the Statute 17 of the Primitive Rule, written in 1129, emphasises the symbolic meaning of the white colour for the habit, it indicates that 'all the brother's habits should always be of one colour, that is white, or black, or brown', (*ibidem*). Thus, the uniformity on the white habit must have come later, probably with the advent of other military orders. The Templars considered the white as their distinctive colour already by 1230, when they asked Pope

with a red cross sewn on the chest, a leather belt and an also white woollen cape, hooded and with the distinctive red cross on the left.<sup>107</sup>

The last great innovation on regular life in the Late Middle Ages appeared at the beginning of the thirteenth century with the birth of the mendicant orders. These new foundations embodied a yet new way of understanding the communal and apostolic life. They refused any kind of property, whether individual or shared, and rejected the idea of stability that had been a fundamental principle of traditional monasticism. As their pastoral mission of preaching and evangelisation was at the core of these institutions, they could no longer be enclosed in a monastery.<sup>108</sup> Nonetheless, the ideals that animated the friars were not completely new to the society of the time. Groups such as the Humiliati or the Waldenses had already set the tone for ideas of extreme poverty and for wandering preaching communities. Some of these groups were declared as unorthodox or openly heretical by the papacy, as was the case with the Waldenses, whilst the Humiliati succeeded in being proclaimed as a proper order in 1201. The sources for the habit of the latter are rather elusive, and the first references only mention that the dress of the member should not be too beautiful, but neither too ignoble. Nevertheless, the tradition pictured them in white or undyed simple robes.<sup>109</sup>

---

Gregory IX, without success, to forbid the use of white habits to the Teutonic Knights (see below, chapter 1, pp. 80-94).

<sup>107</sup> Giancarlo Rocca, "I monaci guerrieri", in LSDE, pp. 93-96; p. 94; Pistolese, R. et al., "Costume dei Monaci", col. 223

<sup>108</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 238.

<sup>109</sup> Marco Lunari, "Umiliati e Umiliate", in LSDE, pp. 393-395; pp. 393-4. The first *propositum* or guidance approved for the Humiliati by Innocent III in 1201 in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier de l'Ordre de la Penitence au XIIIe siècle* (Fribourg: Editions Universitaires, 1961) pp. 276-82. See also Frances Andrews, *The Early Humiliati* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

The first two mendicant orders, the Dominicans and the Franciscans, though from very different origins, spread with astonishing speed, presenting a new understanding of religious *ascesis* to the Christian society of the Late Middle Ages. The former was founded by Dominic of Guzmán, who, being an Augustinian canon, set the order as a clerical one, keeping many of the characteristics of the canons regular, noticeably embedded in the twelfth century ideal of the apostolic life.<sup>110</sup> On the other hand, the Friars Minor instituted by Francis of Assisi were the creation of a layman whose vision and rule 'was direct, literal, and concrete, uncomplicated by the conceptual analysis of the clerk who had passed through the schools.'<sup>111</sup> These differences of origin were certainly reflected in the habits worn by each order. According to G. R. Galbraith, after the prescriptions set by canon 13 of the Fourth Lateran Council, which forbade the creation of new orders and compelled any new foundation to take an existing approved rule,<sup>112</sup> St Dominic and his followers agreed on adopting the Augustinian Rule, taking the Premonstratensians constitutions as a model. This was reflected in the change the new friars made in their habits, replacing the rochet they used as canons, for the characteristic monastic scapular.<sup>113</sup> The *Consuetudines* prescribed a habit made of unsmoothed wool, or at least of coarse cloth, and the Dominican habit was then composed by a white tunic reaching down to

---

<sup>110</sup> C. H. Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, p. 243.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248.

<sup>112</sup> Canon 13 stated: 'Ne nimia religionum diversitas gravem in ecclesia Dei confusionem inducat, firmiter prohibemus, ne quis de cetero novam religionem inveniat: sed quicumque voluerit ad religionem converti, unam de approbatis assumat. Similiter qui voluerit religiosam domum fundare de novo, regulam et institutionem accipiat de religionibus approbatis.' In Mansi, Vol. 22, col. 1002.

<sup>113</sup> G. R. Galbraith, *The Constitutions of the Dominican Order*, p. 34.

the feet – a garment common to all twelfth-century canons – a white scapular, shorter than the tunic, with a detached hood (the Benedictine scapular usually had the hood attached to it), a black cloak with a pointed hood, and closed shoes.<sup>114</sup>

The first Franciscans were also easily noticeable with their rough and extremely humble habits of undyed wool, fastened with a simple rope. The official Franciscan Rule, the *Regula Bullata*, approved by Pope Honorius III on 29 November 1223,<sup>115</sup> prescribed that the friars who made profession of obedience could have one tunic with a hood and, those who wanted so, another one without a hood. They could also use a simple rope as belt, and footwear was permitted for those who were considered to need it. They were allowed, ‘with the blessing of God’, to repair their tunics with sack and ‘other pieces’.<sup>116</sup> For the Franciscans, as for Camaldoli, the habit also had a foundational meaning: St Francis’s own ‘conversion’ started with a change of clothes, when he stripped before the Bishop of Assisi and took a coarse tunic

---

<sup>114</sup> Pietro Lippini, “Fratres Predicatorum”, in LSDE, pp. 303-310; p. 303. Chapter 10 of the Constitutions for the Order for the years 1358-1363, *De vestitu*, refers to the habit as follows: ‘Vestes laneas non attensas ubi hoc servari poterit, defferant fratres nostri. Ubi vero servari non poterit utantur vilibus et potius vilitas in capis observetur. Lineis non utantur ad carnem, nec etiam infirmi. Sed lintheamina in infirmariis nostris penitus non habeantur. Nullus habeat plures tunicas quam tres cum pelliceo in hyeme vel III sine pelliceo quod semper tunica coopertum defferatur. Pelliceis silvestribus et coopertoriis quarumcumque pellium fratres nostri non utantur nisi in infirmaria, nec tamen utantur ibidem coopertoris pellium silvestrium. Tunice circa cavillam pedum, scapularia circa cooperturam genuum, sufficit ut descendant. Cappa vero brevior sit tunics et etiam pelliceum. Caligas et soccos habebimus ut necesse fuerit et facultas permiserit. Ocreas non habebimus nec chirotecas. Bote extra septa monasterii non portentur.’ In G. R. Galbraith, *The Constitutions of the Dominican Order*, p. 212, who takes these Constitutions from the British Library Additional Manuscript 23,935.

<sup>115</sup> BF I, no. 14, p. 15.

<sup>116</sup> ‘...Et illi qui iam promiserunt obedientiam habeant unam tunicam cum caputium et aliam sine caputiu qui voluerint habere. Et qui necessitate coguntur possint portare calciamenta. Et fratres omnes vestimentis vilibus induantur et possint ea repeciare de saccis et aliis peciis cum benedictione Dei...’, Francis of Assisi, “Regula Bullata”, in Caietanus Esser (ed.), *Opuscula Sancti Patris Francisci Assiensis, Bibliotheca Franciscana Ascetica Medii Aevi*, Tom. XII (Grottaferrata, Roma: Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1978), pp. 224–238; pp. 228-9.

in which he drew a cross,<sup>117</sup> and the Franciscan habit thus became the iconic representation of all the ideals sought and preached by the Friars Minor.

It has become clear that new religious foundations sought to reflect their novelty through dress, either by making modifications to the traditional black Benedictine habit or by producing a new outfit for their communities. This is especially true for the Cistercians and the Franciscans, whose habits were an open statement of principles – and therefore particularly noticed and discussed. However, after both Lateran IV and the establishment of the Franciscans and Dominicans, the need to present a clearly distinctive identity through dress was still a fundamental matter for new religious foundations, especially those of mendicant vocation.<sup>118</sup> As several papal letters make clear, dealing with a range of matters, from the most general to the most detailed “sartorial” concerns, this continued to be an issue also to the less known and popular orders and communities. These concerns were largely a consequence of the system of differences of religious dress that became to be in place as a result of the changes and new foundations related above.

### **It is a men’s world**

Despite my own intellectual inclinations and efforts, religious women are the great absentees from this research, and I hope someone will be able to expand the brief account that follows at some point in the future. The sources for the history of late medieval nuns turn out to be rather elusive, especially when contrasted with the superabundance of information on their

---

<sup>117</sup> See below, Chapter 4, pp. 234-5.

<sup>118</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and antiquity*, p. 76.



male counterparts, a fact that Désirée Koslin has also observed.<sup>119</sup> As Constance H. Berman has pointed out, this elusiveness might be due not so much to the lack of activity on the part of female religious women, as to the bias of both their contemporary chroniclers and the modern scholarship.<sup>120</sup> One may argue that this invisibility was also reflected, to a certain extent, in their habits, or rather in the lack of differentiation between the habits worn by the female branches and the male ones: essentially and broadly speaking, the cowl was simply replaced by a veil, and, as the Synod of Rouen of 1214 stated, decrees on the clothes of monks were also valid for nuns.<sup>121</sup> This, of course, helped to maintain identification and uniformity, but it might also show that there was little interest in helping female orders to develop an identity of their own. In the twelfth century this was, in fact, reflected in Heloise's own criticism of the Benedictine Rule and the difficulty of applying it to female circumstances. She protested that the rule was indeed written only for men and that some of its indications were useless to women, particularly

---

<sup>119</sup> Désirée Koslin, "The Robe of Simplicity: Initiation, Robing, and Veiling of Nuns in the Middle Ages", in Stewart Gordon (ed.), *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), pp. 255-274; p. 258. The only work I have been able to find entirely dedicated to the habit of Catholic nuns is Elizabeth Kuhns' *The Habit: A History of the Clothing of Catholic Nuns* (New York: Doubleday, 2003). Although it offers a useful general survey over the history of female habit, from early Christianity to the present times, it has a highly descriptive character, mostly focused on the material side of the topic, without really problematising the different aspects that female habits could pose, particularly for the period under study here (though, in fairness, she adopts a somewhat more interpretative approach for the twentieth century). Moreover, her use of sources and references is rather limited, and therefore it does not appear to be entirely reliable in terms of scholarly material.

<sup>120</sup> Constance H. Berman, *Women and Monasticism in Medieval Europe: Sisters and Patrons of the Cistercian Reform* (Kalamazoo-Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 2002), pp. 2-4. Although rather unrelated to the topic of this research, but equally fascinating is the article by Sarah L. Higley, "Dressing Up the Nuns: The *Lingua Ignota* and Hildegard of Bingen's Clothing", in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 6 (2010), pp. 93-109.

<sup>121</sup> '...Quaecumque dicta sunt de monachis, de habitu et gestu honesto, de indumentis et calceamentis et coopertoriis religionis congruentibus, de non habendis propriis, de monialibus secundum statutum ordinis dicta intelligantur...', in Mansi, Vol. 22, col. 912; Eva Schlottheuber, "Best Clothes and Everyday Attire of Late Medieval Nuns", in Rainer C. Schwinges and Regula Schorta (eds.), *Fashion and clothing in late medieval Europe / Mode und Kleidung im Europa des späten Mittelalters*, pp. 139-154; pp. 140-1.

the ones regarding dress. She therefore complained to Abelard asking: 'how does what is prescribed (c. 55) regarding cowls, underwear, and scapulars apply to women? Or regarding tunics or woollen garments worn next to the skin, since these are made altogether impractical by the monthly flow of superfluous humours?'<sup>122</sup> Female particular needs had been, indeed, largely invisible to St Benedict and the tradition of male monasticism.

This did not mean, however, that there were no regulations on the nuns' appearance. As Jo Ann McNamara points out, 'writers of rules for women obsessed over details of costume. White veils distinguished novices from the black veils of nuns. Abelard wanted to distinguish widows from virgins at the Paraclete by their headwear. St Brigitta received lengthy communications from Jesus concerning the four-cornered crowns embellished with red tassels that her nuns were to wear.'<sup>123</sup> And just as with monks, nuns' clothing deviations were a cause of worry for those in charge of them, as we see in the diary of Bishop Eudes of Rouen, who found that the nuns of a poor convent could not afford to have uniform veils, so they had to conform with lay second-hand ones.<sup>124</sup> Or the sisters from the rural priory of Villarceaux, to whom he had to instruct that 'no more saffron shall be placed on the veils, that the hair shall not be arrayed in vain curls, nor shall silver or metaled belts, or the skins of diverse and wild animals be worn, nor shall the hair be allowed to grow down below the ears...we forbid you to continue the

---

<sup>122</sup> *The letters of Heloise and Abelard: A Translation of their Collected Correspondence and Related Writings*, translated and edited by Mary Martin McLaughlin and Bonnie Wheeler (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 86; Iginio Lustrissimi, "Paraclete", LSDE, pp. 194-5.

<sup>123</sup> Jo Ann McNamara, *Sisters in Arms: Catholic Nuns through Two Millennia* (Cambridge, Mass.-London: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 327

<sup>124</sup> *Ibidem*.

farical performances which have been your practice at the feast of the Innocents and of the Blessed Mary Magdalene, to dress up in worldly costumes, or to dance with each other or with lay folk.<sup>125</sup> But then, with a prioress who used to get drunk every night and thus failed to appear at the matins, the archbishop surely could not expect much from the rest of the sisters.<sup>126</sup> Moreover, as Eva Schlotheuber has shown, similar concerns about the lack of observance in nuns' attire, as well as their use of secular clothes, were shared in the synod of Trier of 1237, and confirmed again in 1277.<sup>127</sup>

Broadly speaking, the religious habit had the same symbolic and legal function for both monks and nuns. However, according to Eileen Power, the garments worn by the latter inevitably mirrored the ideas, ideals and perceptions – largely shaped from the Early Middle Ages by the clergy and the aristocracy<sup>128</sup> – that their contemporary society attached to women, and which were to be fulfilled by these selected representatives of the gender, especially regarding virtue and behaviour. As Penelope D. Johnson has pointed out, 'the tradition of consecrated virgins taking the veil was perhaps the oldest liturgical vesture in the Christian tradition, while the veil itself, the outward sign of inward chastity for the professed woman, remained the one

---

<sup>125</sup> *The Register of Eudes of Rouen*, Jeremiah F. O'Sullivan (ed.) and Sydney M. Brown (trans.) (New York-London: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 49-50; Penelope D. Johnson, *Equal in Monastic Profession. Religious Women in Medieval France* (Chicago-London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 117. See also Susan M. Carroll-Clark, "Bad Habits: Clothing and Textile References in the Register of Eudes Rigaud, Archbishop of Rouen", in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*. Vol. 1 (2005), pp. 81-103. On the financial difficulties of nunneries, see Eileen Power, *English Medieval Nunneries: c.1275 to 1535* (London: Hafner Publishing Co., 1964), pp. 161-236.

<sup>126</sup> *The Register of Eudes of Rouen*, pp. 49-50. On this kind of trespasses, see also Eileen Power, *English Medieval Nunneries*, pp. 303-5.

<sup>127</sup> Eva Schlotheuber, "Best Clothes and Everyday Attire", p. 141; Mansi, Vol. 23, col. 38, and Vol. 24, col. 205 respectively.

<sup>128</sup> Eileen Power, *Medieval Women* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1997), pp. 1-2; p. 11.

distinctively female part of the nun's habit.'<sup>129</sup> In that sense, continues Johnson, the idea of holiness that surrounded nuns 'was visibly reinforced in the community's consciousness by the clothing worn by religious women.'<sup>130</sup> Silvia Evangelisti describes how the material world that made up a nun's life was closely examined, with attention on 'both the quantity and the quality of the things used by nuns, and their symbolic implications...like everything else in the convent, the habit reflected the nun's virginal status and integrity. It had to cover the whole body from head to toes, and to be made of rough and unrefined fabric of bare colours.'<sup>131</sup>

This sobriety had, on the one hand, the evident purpose of reflecting the religious vows made by the nun at the moment of her profession, just as happened with monks' attire. On the other hand, however, it partly reflects some of the attitudes medieval society seemed to have had towards women, especially regarding the kind of nonage in which they were placed and the expectations about their virtue. As Evangelisti observes, this kind of regulations aimed at the creation of an environment in which nuns would be protected from worldly temptations. In fact, the perceived female weakness for sartorial infringements was reflected in the rules that applied to nuns' visitors: 'female visitors who came to the parlour were to be simply dressed in order to avoid reminding the nuns, who had left "the sea of the world never to return," of "what they had once left to please God." At the same time, nuns should not trigger desire in their visitors by appearing unchaste, and were not

---

<sup>129</sup> Penelope D. Johnson, *Equal in Monastic Profession*, p. 236.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

<sup>131</sup> Silvia Evangelisti, *Nuns. A History of Convent Life, 1450-1700* (Oxford: University Press, 2007), p. 29.

to be seen without their habit or veil, exceptions to be made only for their “father or mother” or for a few other trusted people.<sup>132</sup>

According to Sarah Salih, the nun’s habit, particularly the veil, had a fundamental symbolic function, especially as ‘the enactment of virginity.’<sup>133</sup> In that context, the veil became a metonymy of the nuns’ vowed chastity, ‘a venerable symbol of submissive and feminine virginity.’<sup>134</sup> As Salih argues, the veiling ceremony ‘can be understood both to confirm the nun’s virginity and to confer it, a useful ambiguity which allows virginity to be perceived simultaneously as both natural to the body and discursively formed.’<sup>135</sup> According to Salih, after the nun’s ceremony of vestition and the profession of her monastic vows, the use of the habit and the veil became much more than just wearing a mandatory uniform, and – one may add – it was also invested with a symbolic burden that was not as evidently present for monks, especially regarding their sexual behaviour: ‘wearing the habit correctly in all details was necessary to maintain the monastic identity conferred at the profession ceremony, to keep the body virginal and disciplined...the significance of the veil is such that clothing infractions are read as breaches of chastity.’<sup>136</sup> Paradoxically, as McNamara shows, according to the records of visitations and reformers in England and Germany for the fifteenth and early sixteenth century,<sup>137</sup> those breaches of chastity seems to have not been

---

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., pp. 29-30.

<sup>133</sup> Sarah Salih, *Versions of Virginity in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001), p. 127.

<sup>134</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p. 128. See also Désirée Koslin, “The Robe of Simplicity”, pp. 264-9.

<sup>136</sup> Sarah Salih, *Versions of Virginity in Late Medieval England*, p. 135.

<sup>137</sup> Jo Ann McNamara, *Sisters in Arms*, pp. 357-8. Though McNamara mentions the case of some Venetian nunneries, considered by contemporaries as “public bordellos”, ibidem.

as a frequent misdemeanour as those in charge of the *cura monialum* might have feared. However, clothes did play a role in nuns' sins, with bishops denouncing, listing, and trying to fight their use of fashionable garments.<sup>138</sup> McNamara points out that, although it is probable that both observance and laxity generally fell within expected parameters, and despite the fact that registers of ecclesiastical visitors usually saw members of nunneries to be better behaved than those of male monasteries, their reported misgivings were what one might expect 'of ordinary women living humdrum lives: they wore coquettish clothing, made themselves comfortable, lavished affection on pets.'<sup>139</sup> Moreover, 'relatively small breaches were often blown up because the standard was so high or because ecclesiastical reformers and secular satirists rejoiced in female fragility. A fifteenth-century English visionary saw her vain sisters in purgatory wearing dresses made of hooks and headdresses of adders.'<sup>140</sup>

In this context, the appearance of a renewed religious zeal, especially among women – as Herbert Grundmann has analysed,<sup>141</sup> and as will be further discussed later on – should not be a surprise. Eileen Power has actually pointed out how 'it has indeed been argued that the prominent part which women played in heretical or near-heretical movements, such as Catharism, or the Order of Beguines, was a manifestation of women's

---

<sup>138</sup> Eileen Power, *Medieval Women*, p. 90.

<sup>139</sup> Jo Ann McNamara, *Sisters in Arms*, p. 359.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>141</sup> Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages: The Historical Links between Heresy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Women's Religious Movement in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century, with the Historical Foundations of German Mysticism* (Notre Dame, Ind.-London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995).

discontent with their lot in the world.’<sup>142</sup> A discontent that was probably multifaceted and linked to the rigidity and limitation of the role that nuns, and women in general, could expect to play in the Late Middle Ages. This role was then brought into question, with more or less care about orthodoxy, as new forms of religiosity multiplied, and women found they were not alone in this search. Nevertheless, we are yet to know if and how sartorial conflicts helped to shape the collective identities of nuns during this period within the system of differences in which the attire of their male counterparts was embedded. The development of such a research would mean, without doubt, a great contribution to the understanding of women in the Late Middle Ages in general, and of medieval nuns in particular.

### **Main sources and structure of this thesis**

This thesis is composed of five chapters, each corresponding to case studies that, although focused on particular issues, attempt to draw broader conclusions on its subject of research. The topic of each chapter has arisen from the elements contained in the sources rather than the other way around: as the vast, and also scattered material touching the matter of religious dress – particularly those contained in papal letters and decrees – has hardly been, and perhaps could not be, systematised in a coherent narrative, the problems and themes raised by the sources were the ones that dictated the approach to the cases presented here, rather than the topics themselves establishing the type of source needed.

---

<sup>142</sup> Eileen Power, *Medieval Women*, p. 22. However, as Chapter 3 will discuss, beguines should not be really referred as an “order” in the canonical sense.

Therefore, the main primary sources studied in this thesis correspond to a range of ecclesiastical documents related to the Church's internal organisation and hierarchy in which dress appears as a topic. Papal registers and letters, such as those present in *Registra Vaticana*, available online in the British Library, and calendared in the *Ut per litteras apostolicas* database,<sup>143</sup> with their rich material, offered a first entry point to the subject, with an astonishing number of them dealing with different kind sartorial issues. This body of sources was complemented with Customaries, Constitutions, different *Bullarium* collections, records from both general and local synods and councils, and from chapters of religious orders, collections of sources, and treatises from various religious orders and groups, which supplied the different pieces of information that helped to put in place a more complete image of the research topic. It should be noted that all of them are written sources. Although I am fully aware that art production and contemporary images have been used elsewhere in the study of medieval religious dress, this research, as expressed before, is not concerned with what religious habits looked like, nor with their material characteristics, but with the attitudes and problematics that surrounded them. Therefore, I have considered that, in the context of this research, images and art production can be understood to be mostly archetypical: they certainly show how the habits of the different orders were supposed to look, but they convey what is also a conventional representation of the habits themselves, within an

---

<sup>143</sup> Published digitally by Brepols Publishers, as the electronic version of the *Registres et lettres des Papes du XIIIe siècle* (32 vols., Rome 1899 ff.) and the *Registres et lettres des Papes du XIVe siècle* (48 vols., Rome 1899 ff.), edited by members of the Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome.



established iconographical programme. I believe that they do not necessarily suggest the problems and preoccupations that the written sources used in this research are able to show – though they might be a useful support at times.<sup>144</sup>

The first chapter of this dissertation deals with a topic that appears across every case studied here: the concept of scandal and its ubiquitous presence in the sources dealing with religious habits. The interesting element highlighted in this chapter is that it reveals a use of the concept of scandal that went way beyond from what the modern reader might expect. The invocation of scandal not only served to denounce a misbehaving cleric, but it also showed the complexity of the elements that were at stake in relation to religious attire.

The second chapter takes a close look at two of what Frances Andrews has rightly called “the other friars”:<sup>145</sup> the Augustinian Hermits and the Carmelites. Both orders were rather latecomers to the picture already dominated by their much more popular counterparts, the Franciscans and the Dominicans. Thus, they had to struggle to find both their place and their individual identity in a religious landscape of fierce competition. In this process of “brand” development, their habit had, for different reasons and circumstances, a fundamental role, though not one without controversies.

The third chapter steps away from the institutionally established religious orders, to explore the fascinating cases of extra-religious groups in

---

<sup>144</sup> Moreover, Cordelia Warr has already offered a thorough research, using images as her methodological approach, in her book *Dressing for heaven: religious clothing in Italy, 1215-1545*.

<sup>145</sup> Frances Andrews, *The other Friars: the Carmelite, Augustinian, Sack and Pied Friars in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006).

their desire to wear an attire that was understood as a type of religious habit. Their motivations and struggles serve to gain yet another insight to the place and meaning that religious habits had in the Late Middle Ages, and the attitudes and ideas they evoked.

The fourth chapter re-examines a topic that has been widely studied, albeit not from the perspective presented here: the controversy of the Spiritual Franciscans, with focus on the fundamental role that the habit had for the order of St Francis, in a approach that attempts both to draw a sort *longue* (or at least longish) *durée* assessment on the matter, and to analyse another way in which reform was ineludibly connected to a change of clothes.

The final chapter leaves the Late Middle Ages and moves into the Early Modern period, highlighting the continuities that link both periods, and complementing, at the same time, the previous chapter. The argument hinges upon three seventeenth-century treatises that discussed the Capuchin and Franciscan habit, revealing preoccupations and attitudes that echoed the late medieval debates on the matter, though contained and transmitted in a medium and with a logic characteristic of their own times.

### **The time frame**

Canon 13 of the Fourth Lateran Council, led by Innocent III, and its prohibition to establish new religious foundations clearly shows the wariness that the creation of all these new religious orders posed to the ecclesiastical

establishment.<sup>146</sup> The same council marked a turning point in the way it dealt with the matter of religious clothing. As Cordelia Warr has pointed out, its canon 16, which under the heading *De indumentis clericorum*<sup>147</sup> refers to ecclesiastical dress, shows a shift of emphasis, from humility to appearance: ‘the change is clear in comparison with the statutes of previous councils. Lateran II (1139) is one of the few earlier councils to contain a canon (IV) dealing exclusively with clerical clothing. However, specific items of dress are not mentioned: rather there is a general instruction to “exhibit holiness” through clothing.’<sup>148</sup> According to Warr, the papacy of Innocent III marked ‘the beginning of a period in which it became more and more important to tell a monk or friar, and more especially the latter, from his appearance.’<sup>149</sup>

Achille Luchaire saw the promulgation of canon 16 within a broader attempt made by Innocent III to curb the abuses and vices that had place

---

<sup>146</sup> For the text of the canon, see above p. 50, n. 111. Michele Maccarrone discuss in great detail the origin and complexity of this canon in the face of the multiplication of religious orders and fraternities during the previous century and at the time of Innocent III. In Michele Maccarrone, “Riforma e Sviluppo della Vita Religiosa con Innocenzo III”, in *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia*, 16 (1962), pp. 29-72.

<sup>147</sup> Canon 16 reads as follows: ‘Clerici officia vel commercia saecularia non exercent, maxime inhonesta. Mimis, jocularibus, et histrionibus non intendant, et tabernas prorsus evitent, nisi forte causa necessitatis in itinere constituti. Ad aleas vel taxillos non ludant, nec hujusmodi ludis intersint. Coronam et tonsuram habeant congruentem, et se in officis Divinis et aliis bonis exercent studiis diligenter. Clausa deferant desuper indumenta, nimia brevitate vel longitudine non notanda. Pannis rubeis aut viridibus, necnon manichis aut sotularibus consutitiis seu rostratis, fraenis, sellis, pectoralibus et calcaribus deauratis, aut aliam superfluitatem gerentibus non utantur. Cappas manicatas as Divinum officium intra ecclesiam non gerant: sed nec alibi, qui sunt in sacerdotio vel personatibus constituti, nisi causa timoris exegerit habitum transformari. Fibulas omnino non ferant, neque corrigias auri vel argenti ornatum habentes, sed nec annulos, nisi quibus competit ex officio dignitatis. Pontefices autem in publico et in ecclesia superindumentis lineis omnes utantur, nisi monachi fuerint, quos oportet deferre habitum monachalem: palliis diffibulatis non utantur in publico, sed vel post collum, vel ante pectus hinc inde connexis.’ In Mansi, Vol. 22, cols. 1003-6.

<sup>148</sup> Cordelia Warr, “*De Indumentis*”, p. 502.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibidem*.

inside the ecclesiastical hierarchy.<sup>150</sup> The same spirit would be behind the system of general chapters and visitations instituted from 1203.<sup>151</sup> However, the problem seems to be more complex, for the Church had always been trying to fight the abuses and vices of its members. It is true that the monastic reformation was a great concern for Innocent III, who went as far as conducting personal visitations of some of the monasteries of Rome.<sup>152</sup> Nevertheless, Innocent was also aware of the many changes happening in his time and, as Warr points out, the way he dealt with the advent of the new orders and their dressing issues should be understood within larger changes occurring in the society of the time, 'in the face of both the birth of fashion and the creation of social orders different from those in force in the previous centuries.'<sup>153</sup>

In this context, the year 1215 and the Fourth Lateran Council have been considered as a pertinent starting point to situate this research, understood as a moment in which most of the changes brought about by the reform movements referred earlier have already crystallised, and the above mentioned system of differences has already been set in place. Canon 13 may, in fact, be seen as a reply to this phenomenon. Furthermore, this was also the point at which centralised authority in the Church began to be drawn into the controversies about religious dress – in contrast with the disputes between Gorze and Cluny or the Cluniacs and Cistercians, which were

---

<sup>150</sup> Achille Luchaire, *Innocent III. Le concile de Latran et la réforme de l'Église* (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie., 1908), pp. 74-6.

<sup>151</sup> Antonio García y García, *Iglesia, sociedad y derecho*, Vol. II (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1987), p. 149.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>153</sup> Cordelia Warr, "De Indumentis", p. 500.

largely resolved within the same monasteries – thus reflecting a mainstream shift regarding religious habits in the ecclesiastical sphere from then onwards. At the other end of the time frame, the Capuchin controversy, incensed towards the mid-seventeenth century, marks the closing stages of the subject of this study, with a polemic that bridges the Late Middle Ages and the Early Modern period in a subtle, but also precise way.

It is interesting to note that some authors, such as Antonio García y García and Michele Maccarrone, have related canons 13 and 16 to the case of the missionaries in the Baltic region of Livonia: in 1201 Innocent III sent a letter to the bishop of Livonia in order to deal with the number of different religious orders – Cistercians, Premonstratensians, canons regular, traditional Benedictine black monks, among others – who were preaching the gospels in a zone not yet entirely Christianised. Apparently, the people from the region were shocked and confused by the diversity and heterogeneity of the habits worn by these multiple groups. As this posed an inconvenience for the purpose of the mission – spreading the Catholic faith – Innocent III told the local bishop to unify the missionaries under ‘one regular practice and respected habit.’<sup>154</sup> It was, as Maccarrone asserts, quite a ‘daring and

---

<sup>154</sup> ‘Ne igitur si dispar in vobis observantia fuerit et dissimilis habitus apud eos quibus unum evangelium predicatis scandalum suscitetur priusquam dividatur populus ille novus in partes quam in unum ecclesiam congregetur...per apostolica vobis scripta mandamus, quatinus eo non obstante quod inter vos monachi sunt et canonici regulares vel alii etiam regularem vitam sub alia distinctione professi, omnis pariter in unum regulare propositum et honestum habitum.’ In Michele Maccarrone, “Riforma e Sviluppo della Vita Religiosa”, p. 42. Maccarrone transcribes the text directly from the document conserved in The National Archives (Riksarkivet) of Stockholm, but he does not indicate holding name or number. However the same indications are contained in *Decr. Greg. IX, Lib. III Tit. i, cap. xi*, in *Corpus Iuris Canonici* II, cols. 451-2; Antonio García y García, *Iglesia, sociedad y derecho*, p. 154; Michele Maccarrone, *Studi su Innocenzo III* (Padova: Editrice Antenore, 1972), pp. 262-70. However Pope Celestine III had already sent a precedent in 1193, granting a dispensation for the missionaries regarding food, drink and habits: ‘...Caeterum, quia plures

revolutionary' provision, which forced the missionaries to temporarily suspend some of the constitutional vows of their religious profession, especially in the renunciation of the habit, the sacred badge of every order.<sup>155</sup>

Both García y García and Maccarrone have seen in Innocent's dealings with the orders preaching in Livonia a zeal for uniformity and reform directly related to the aforementioned canon 13. The multiplication of forms of the religious life had become an even more evident phenomenon in Livonia.

However, as Maccarrone also says, Innocent III never thought of applying the same resolution to other cases, such as the Albigensian crusade. In 1198 the pope trusted the preaching efforts to Fulk of Neuilly, who had full faculties to associate a number of religious orders under his direction in one single mission.<sup>156</sup> Here too, a variety of black monks, white monks and canons regulars became united and mixed in a missionary task. Yet, the various orders were able to keep their own ways of observance and habits, probably because they were less likely to be confused by the local people, who were already used to see new orders being established, each one with their own particular habit. Therefore, the greatest difference between the non-Christian people of Livonia and the heretical groups from France in this regard was that the latter – natives from a land that had been Christian long since – knew the tacit rules of the system of differences that

---

ex diversis ordinibus hujusmodi pium officium ad instantiam tuam vel propria devotione accesserunt hactenus et forte accedent in futurum, dispensandi cum eis in cibis, potibus, quin et vestibus et praedicationis officio...', in *Coelestinus III Pontifex Romanus, Epistolae et privilegia*, PL, Vol. 206, cols. 863-1280; col. 996.

<sup>155</sup> Michele Maccarrone, "Riforma e Sviluppo della Vita Religiosa", p. 43.

<sup>156</sup> Ibidem; 'Fratr Fulconi. Ut cum aliis piis viris ad militiam sacram proficiscatur: '...quem ad hoc officium exsequendum specialiter destinavimus, tam de monachis nigris quam albis sive canonicis regularibus aliquot, quos ad praedicandum idoneos esse decreveris...'', in *Innocentius III Pontifex Romanus, Innocentii III Regesta sive Epistolae*, in PL, Vol. 214, cols. 375-6.

governed religious habits. Where the Livonian pagans, “illiterates” regarding the clothing system that differentiated regular orders, probably just saw a mix of people wearing rather odd clothes, the Albigenses could clearly distinguish the different religious affiliations and orders from their attire, as these presented the ‘organised, formal and normative system that is recognised by society’<sup>157</sup> referred by Barthes. They could make sense of the different signs, because they happened to understand the language.

After the long period of “undifferentiation” up to the advent of the Cluniacs, religious habits became a system of differences *par excellence*. In the dynamics that marked this process there was clear conscience of the importance of clothes in general, and of religious dress in particular. Moreover, in this system, identities were developed not only individually by each order, but they were also directly shaped by the whole system: in their need to form an identity through distinction and differentiation, the orders had to negotiate with other orders’ identities. This was a complex system with different layers of meaning, in which their protagonists were aware of the role of their own agency. This same complexity, in turn, generated problems that fell to the papacy to solve, thus creating sources for the historian to use for the system’s subsequent history.

---

<sup>157</sup> Roland Barthes, “History and Sociology of Clothing”, p. 7.

## CHAPTER 1

---

### **MORE THAN SHOCKING CLOTHES: THE CONCEPT OF SCANDAL IN THE GOVERNMENT OF RELIGIOUS HABITS**

The notion of scandal in the Middle Ages offers a fascinating insight to medieval social dynamics of both the religious and lay spheres. However, scandal was not a term used randomly, or a rhetorical twist to give emphasis to a phrase; it was a well-established canonical term used in specific contexts. Slander was probably one of the most common of such contexts<sup>1</sup> (and also the most studied one), but scandal is also ubiquitously found in papal documents dealing with religious clothing, as many of the controversies presented in the following chapters will show, evidencing the complexity of the issues that religious dress could provoke.

The medieval sense of “scandal,” based on the biblical understanding of the word, was rather different from our modern meaning. It was, in fact, much more serious, multifaceted, and probably also more comprehensive than the sense of public commotion provoked by the shocking misbehaviour of a public figure that it usually has in the present. In its biblical meaning, the term referred to a behaviour that posed an opportunity or a provocation for

---

<sup>1</sup> See Richard Helmholz, “Scandalum in the Medieval Canon Law and in the English Ecclesiastical Courts”, in *127 Zeitschrift Der Savigny-Stiftung fur Rechtsgeschichte*, Kan. Abt. 258 (2010), pp. 258-274; also Lindsay Bryan, “Vae Mundo a Scandalis”: *The Sin of Scandal in Medieval England*, Ph.D. dissertation, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1998) for a thorough study on the development and use of a theology of scandal by medieval theologians.



others to sin. It was a “stumbling block” that made others in the community fall from the right conduct.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the medieval Latin term *scandalum* meant ‘cause of offence or stumbling.’<sup>3</sup> This had its intricacies. As Richard Helmholz observes, ‘to rise to the level of scandal, it was not necessary that the sin occurred in fact; it was enough that the conduct giving rise to scandal be likely to induce sin in others. Nor it was necessary that the conduct have actually encouraged a particular sin; it was sufficient that it tended towards that result. And scandal might be either oral or physical; the wrong lay in the inducement.’<sup>4</sup> In that sense, scandal could have also consisted in the appearance of evil,<sup>5</sup> and could either be actually sinful or what seemed to be so.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, provoking scandal meant unsettling the harmony of the community and medieval canon law sought to determine how it related to the government of the Church. In this context, scandal had a place in monitoring the conduct of the clergy and of religious people<sup>7</sup> – a conduct in which clothing had a central role, especially in the cases in which the behaviour of clergy members did not match the expectations of their community. Moreover, even though misbehaving clerics were certainly a reality, this is only the most obvious way in which the modern reader might think of scandal provoked by religious in medieval times. Yet, scandal could also be incited by members of the Church in other fellow religious, and not necessarily due to

---

<sup>2</sup> Richard Helmholz, “Scandalum in the Medieval Canon Law”, p. 260.

<sup>3</sup> Lindsay Bryan, “Vae Mundo a Scandalis”, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Helmholz, “Scandalum in the Medieval Canon Law,” p. 260.

<sup>5</sup> Ludwig Buisson, *Potestas und Caritas. Die Päpstliche Gewalt im Spätmittelalter* (Köln: Graz, 1958), p. 154

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>7</sup> Richard Helmholz, “Scandalum in the Medieval Canon Law,” p. 261.

what one may assume to be a patent misbehaviour. Here, the fact that the invocation of scandal could also serve to call special attention to a certain matter<sup>8</sup> seems particularly pertinent, as it could add emphasis to a grievance or make a case more noticeable to those in charge of imparting justice. Thus, in many of the cases, scandal might have helped to legitimise the complaint, putting it under a recognised element of canon law and forcing its review by the hierarchy of the Church.

*Scandalum* also had a further and fundamental dimension to consider: its inherent condition as a public sin. To be considered as scandal the fault had to be performed in front other people, which was indeed what theology understood as “public”.<sup>9</sup> Thus, a sin committed in public, which could potentially make others fall, was in the eyes of canon law certainly more serious than if it was committed in private, as this went beyond the sin of one individual and involved the public welfare.<sup>10</sup> In this sense, the more public the sin was, the deeper it disturbed and undermined the community of the faithful.<sup>11</sup> Thus, shocking or distressing one’s neighbour – religious or secular – was to be avoided. Yet, as many papal letters show, for some members of the clergy the sartorial temptation was bigger than their restraint and their promise to observe their vows. And so, religious men not looking as they were supposed to was indeed shocking, and a great cause of *scandalum*.

---

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 266.

<sup>9</sup> Lindsay Bryan, “Vae Mundo a Scandalis”, p. 303.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 29-30.

<sup>11</sup> Elena M. Lemeneva, “‘Do Not Scandalize Thy Brother:’ Scandal as Preached on by Jacobus de Voragine and Other Thirteenth-Century Sermon-Writers”, in Gerhard Jaritz (ed.), *Scandala*, Medium Aevum Quotidianum, Sonderband XXII, (Krems, 2008), pp. 18-32; p. 27.

## NOT SO HOLY MEN: MONKS, CLERICS, AND SCANDALOUS GARBS

In August 1335, the chancery of Pope Benedict XII had to deal with ‘unpleasant and hostile rumours’ about how some men of the clergy in the cathedral, the collegiate church and the secular community of the province and diocese of Narbonne had neglected the divine services.<sup>12</sup> The alarming issue was that they had also failed to conduct a life according to the standards that their clerical status required, and thus the divine offices were not executed with proper solemnity. The expectation that clerics should be virtuous was clearly at odds with the facts related in the accusatory missives. A first letter described some of the faults, including lasciviousness, ostentation, secular business, hunting, carrying weapons, and other forbidden and reprehensible acts.<sup>13</sup> It also told how these men had unleashed their untamed desires, covering themselves with ‘the stink of lust’, as they kept concubines or other women and they wandered outside the church, the cloister or elsewhere.

Even worse, they seemed neither to fear the danger in which they were placing their souls, nor the ruin and scandal they brought to many. The starting point to this scandalous misbehaviour was in their clothes: they wore short and tight garments, with sleeves adorned with hanging tongues of cloth

---

<sup>12</sup> See Appendix to Chapter 1, no. 1

<sup>13</sup> The prohibition on carrying weapons for ecclesiastical men was among the oldest regulations on clerical life, appearing, for example, already in the Council of Mâcon of 538. See Maureen C. Miller, *Clothing the Clergy*, pp. 19-20; Mansi, Vol. 9, col. 933. Hunting was officially banned for monks by Clement V in the Council of Vienne (1311-12), in *Corpus Iuris Canonici* II, col. 1167.

(*linguatis manicis*),<sup>14</sup> also differing among them in shape and colour, all of which did not agree with their status and order. Likewise, their tonsures – the essential feature that showed clergy apart – were either too small or not existent at all, and therefore, said the bull, they failed to demonstrate the maturity of their morals and the adornment of their virtues. Their attire was fundamental in this sense, as the letter asserted that these morals and virtues must be displayed in their clothes and gestures, so the rest of the faithful had the proper example to imitate, to which they were evidently failing: instead of guiding the flock with their own good example, the above-mentioned clerics were rather giving ‘a laughable spectacle, more fitting of a pantomime’ (*dantes in spectaculum more istrionico et derrisum*) than of men of God. These were not trivial charges. The letter stated that the transgressions of these ill-dressed clerics had to be emended and corrected, so that the morals (*mores*) of the clergy might be restored by the helping divine grace, as such insolence and other excesses had irritated the Lord, dragged away the health of the souls, diminished the devotion of the faithful, and produced great expense to the Church, by the scandalous evil and dangers pursued by the guilty party.

Furthermore, the problem was not only happening with the secular clergy. A similar letter,<sup>15</sup> dated on the same day, expressly refers to the

---

<sup>14</sup> As the secular fashion of the period dictated; see Stella Mary Newton, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince*, pp. 3-4. On secular fashion and scandal, see the interesting article by Henri Platelle, “Le problème du scandale: les nouvelles modes masculines aux XIe et XIIe siècles”, in *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*, 53 (1975), pp. 1071- 1096. On the changes on male dress during this time, see François Piponnier, “Une révolution dans le costume masculin au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle”, in Michel Pastoureau (ed.), *Le Vêtement: histoire, archéologie et symbolique vestimentaires au Moyen Ages*, pp. 225-242.

<sup>15</sup> See appendix to Chapter 1, no. 2.

transgressions from the monasteries of several regular orders in the dioceses of Narbonne, including houses of Benedictines, Augustinians, Cluniacs and Premonstratensians, among others, who had disdained the observance of their rules. Like the previous letter, the accusations stated that the disorderly monks neglected divine worship and were guilty of shameful and reprehensible acts, to the danger of their own souls, and the ruin and scandal of many. Their faults again included unreligious conducts such as lasciviousness, pomp, hunting, wandering, and secular business, and clothing was as well the primary sign of these deviations, especially evidenced in their habits' lack of dignity. Their clothes diverged, in their colour and shape, from the status and decency of their religion, as they wore exceedingly tight and short robes, sometimes with hanging sleeves. More gravely, they even used to hide their religious habits under other clothes, as if they felt contempt for the signs of their religious status. As these transgressions went in detriment of the souls and weakened the devotion of the faithful, the missive stated that all these excesses had to be urgently reformed and the insolences and vices eradicated, so that the seed of the virtues would grow and bear fruits in the same churches, monasteries, and fertile places. In this effort garments certainly needed to match the spirit.

The disorderly Narbonnese were not, however, the only religious men whose clothes did not agree with their vows, and who thus provoked scandal. Just a few months earlier the same Benedict XII had been dealing with similar 'unpleasant and hostile' rumours about the misbehaviour of some Augustinian canons from the community of Saint Salvius of Albi (in the

diocese of Rodez, Toulouse).<sup>16</sup> These rumours stated that the canons had been showing an insolent disregard for their rule – which since old times had made the monastery flourish – and therefore it was now fading and diminishing, with not little danger for everyone’s souls. The list of offences was long and included hunting, wandering, getting involved in secular business, indulging in carnal pleasures, neither eating in the communal refectory nor sleeping in their dormitories, growing beards and long hair, having little or no clerical tonsure, and, last but not least, wearing shameful clothes. These inappropriate attires were clearly excessive either in their tightness and length, or in their shortness, with sleeves with hanging pieces of cloth that followed the secular fashion. They also visibly wore linen caps with trains, not an accepted garment for those in these holy orders. By shape and colour, said the letter, their clothes seemed again to be more appropriate for pantomimes than for clerics and did not match the status and honesty of their order and religion. Furthermore, they did not wear their habits openly and publicly, but they concealed them under other garments, as if wanting not to be distinguished from the secular people by their clothes, thus despising the statutes of the canons and the holy fathers. They went around the city of Albi wearing an *epitogio* (a cloak worn over the tunic) or a *tabardo* (a tabard or short coat), like the secular clergy frequently did. By these and other execrable excesses, they were offending God and the integrity of their order in many different ways. Moreover, with such mischiefs, by which God was severely provoked, the decency of religion was diminished, the devotion

---

<sup>16</sup> See Appendix to Chapter 1, no. 3 and no. 4.

of the community was weakened, and they scandalised the people and the clergy with their offenses, which were not to be tolerated; in the disorder of their habits and clothes they clearly showed the disorder of their minds.

These were not isolated cases. Even though sartorial deviations were not always the major sin of religious people that provoked scandal – fornication tended to be a very common one<sup>17</sup> – the fact that several papal letters addressed faults of this kind shows that it was indeed a recurrent issue. In fact, a century before Benedict XII's letters, Gregory IX had to deal with similar problems.<sup>18</sup> In 1233 his chancery wrote to the abbot of a Cistercian abbey in the diocese of Besançon, in his quality of judge delegate, regarding a certain William, dean of the church of Saint Stephen of Besançon. This William was reported to have abandoned his clerical habit, as he wanted to be a knight. He had, therefore, ceased to perform any of his duties as a canon. Because William had abandoned his clerical habit, a conflict started over the position of the dean. The new chanter of the cathedral appealed to Gregory IX, complaining that William, backed up by some canons of the cathedral chapter, tried to keep his position fraudulently, showing up at the church dressed up as a canon (wearing their traditional round cloak and surplice), but also sporting a cap to hide the absence of clerical tonsure. However, to the annoyance of the pope, the faction of the cathedral chapter that supported the new chanter had previously made an unsuccessful appeal, so it appealed again, without telling the papal chancery that the case had already been judged. Gregory IX was even falsely informed

---

<sup>17</sup> Lindsay Bryan, "Vae Mundo a Scandalis", pp. 316-7.

<sup>18</sup> See Appendix to Chapter 1, no. 5.

that William had obtained the permission to wear lay clothes from the archbishop of Besançon, saying that it was the only way in which he could obtain his share of his father's inheritance from his brother, as the income from the deanery was too small to sustain him. Clothing here had a central role, and the problem was that this William wanted to have it both ways: to become a knight and get his inheritance, and to keep receiving the income from the deanery at the same time. So, although he had given up his habit, and went around as a layman, he still dressed up in religious attire from time to time to keep up the act as dean. And, as the new dean complained, this affair had brought not insignificant harm to their church and the scandal of many.

The interesting aspect of this particular case is that it shows how scandal regarding religious attire could be provoked in many ways. Subverting roles was one of them, and trying to appear as something else, or changing the identity that clothes conveyed according to convenience was a serious transgression. How could anyone trust someone who appeared one day as a dean and another as a knight? More importantly, how could anyone tell which one of these was his true role in society? Undermining the fundamental information that attire transmitted within medieval society was indeed cause for scandal. This has to do with a set of elements related to dress in a wider sense. Cynthia R. Jasper and Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins general observation about dress seems appropriate in this case. As they explain 'expectations for dress are both normative and evaluative in character. They are normative because, a person occupying a certain social



position is expected to dress in established ways believed to be appropriate to the position. The evaluative aspect comes into play when other people decide how well a person meets their expectations for dress as well as the type of behaviour his or her dress helps predict.<sup>19</sup> What was subverted, then, was much deeper than the mere appearance of a single individual.

A handful of similar cases came the way of Urban V during the second half of the fourteenth century, and they offer a glimpse of the multifaceted but also everyday nature of some of these conflicts. In 1366 a Benedictine abbot from Strasbourg was asking the pope to help him deal with a group of monks who refused to wear the clothes and footwear prescribed by the Benedictine Rule, as well as to observe other canonical constitutions.<sup>20</sup> The unruly monks, on the other hand, said that they were not compelled to obey the abbot, as they claimed to hold offices to which the pope himself had appointed them, or which the pope had confirmed. However, even if this was true, in their rebellious attitude – said the abbot – they were encouraging others to disobey as well, showing disdain of their order and of the Church, therefore causing the scandal of many. This was not just a trivial matter for the papacy, since the disruptive monks were attacking the base of their profession and vows, which started by taking the habit. Refusing to wear the garments prescribed by the rule was certainly a serious offence that could be

---

<sup>19</sup> Cynthia R. Jasper and Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins, “Role Conflict and Conformity in Dress”, in Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins, Joanne B. Eicher and Kim K. P. Johnson (eds.), *Dress and Identity*, pp. 139-146 (first published in *Social Behavior and Personality*, 16, 2 (1988), pp. 227-240); p. 140.

<sup>20</sup> See Appendix to Chapter 1, no. 6.

taken as an act of apostasy,<sup>21</sup> so it is easy to understand the distress of the abbot and the “stumbling block” that such an attitude posed to the rest of the community. The pope was thus quick to back the abbot, as he compelled the disobedient monks to observe the Benedictine constitutions about dress, adding a further threat to strip anyone who refused to obey of their benefices and offices.

From the same diocese of Strasbourg, Urban V’s chancery had to deal in 1370 with the case of a certain Sigelinus, whose list of excesses was as long as it was startling, and the sartorial transgressions made them all the more blatant.<sup>22</sup> To begin with, he conducted himself as the abbot of Honcourt Abbey (Alsace), but he had not made his profession in this or any monastery, so he was firstly accused of getting his office through simony. He kept a woman of ill reputation in the monastery, living with her in the community. He himself could neither read nor sing properly, thus he hardly had the skills needed to be an abbot (or to be a choir monk for that matter), and there seemed to be no distinction between choir monks and the rest of the community of the monastery. Moreover, this Sigelinus, accompanied with a large part of the monastery, used to frequent banquets at the village, and to openly gamble with laymen. Many of these mischievous brothers also used to cast off their habits, and went around the village and the monastery with laymen and women. In the presence of Sigelinus, they would have prostitutes in the refectory, which seemed to be more like a tavern than a religious

---

<sup>21</sup> On the topic of apostasy and the abandonment religious habits, see F. Donald Logan, *Runaway Religious in Medieval England, c.1240-1540* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 25ff.

<sup>22</sup> See Appendix to Chapter 1, no. 7.

place, with the air filled with the sound of their drums, their indecent speech and their shouting. Sigelinus and his naughty monks would also indulge in drunkenness and gluttony day and night, and they would also go hunting, taking horns, swords, and spears, and removing their habits, thus neglecting the singing of the Divine Office. As if all of this was not enough, they also went around with indecent clothes, that could scarcely cover their private parts, and they wore pointed shoes,<sup>23</sup> just as if they were scoundrels going around, thus scandalising both the good monks of their monastery and the good people of the area.

In the case of Sigelinus and his monks, the long list of aberrations was crowned with their lack of reverence for the habit that marked their status. This open provocation of scandal made the need of intervention an urgent one for their immediate community. However, it could also happen that sometimes the cure was considered worse than the disease, and correcting scandalous behaviour could bring more scandal than good. As Helmholz explains, 'it was sensible to accept a lesser violation of the law if a greater harm could thereby be avoided, unless of course the violation raised a danger to the soul's health of the parties involved. The concept of scandal allowed, therefore, a limited departure from the law.'<sup>24</sup> This departure could be, nevertheless, a double-edged sword, as a case from the city of Basel shows.<sup>25</sup> Between 1369 and 1370 the chancery of Urban V had to deal with some canons and other churchmen who were accused of committing a

---

<sup>23</sup> Pointing shoes were among the garments forbidden to the clergy in canon 16 of the Fourth Lateran Council (see above, pp. 62-3, n. 146); also Maureen C. Miller, *Clothing the Clergy*, p. 45.

<sup>24</sup> Helmholz, p. 268.

<sup>25</sup> See Appendix to Chapter 1, no. 8.

number of excesses, among them having benefices incompatible with their status, going around without fear of showing publicly their shameful long hair and their lack of clerical tonsure, as well as their short dresses and their large knives. These canons and their chapter, however, had some legal ground when they claimed precisely that they were exempt from the ordinary jurisdiction, and they could not be reformed without provoking scandal. Yet, the fact that the pope did not agree with such a statement, as he ordered that the group should be corrected and reformed, shows that messing about with religious habits was never taken lightly, not even when canon law might have agreed with those at fault. There was just too much at stake in the public eye if clergy disrespecting the foremost sign of their status went unpunished.

### **SCANDALISED KNIGHTS: WHITE CLOAKS AND THE DISPUTE BETWEEN THE TEMPLAR AND TEUTONIC ORDERS**

On 13 September 1230, Gregory IX replied to a complaint presented by the master and brothers of the Templars.<sup>26</sup> The subject of the grievance was the use of white cloaks by the knights of the Teutonic Order. According to the Templars, these garments resembled their own habit too closely, and they considered this to be a scandal. Yet, the pope did not rule in their favour and indicated that the Teutonic Order had obtained from the Apostolic See the same privileges as the Templars, including a special concession for the use of the problematic white cloak. Furthermore, they had obtained a generous sponsorship from Emperor Frederick II, who had given them over two hundred ounces of gold to purchase the garments in question.

---

<sup>26</sup> See Appendix to Chapter 1, no. 9.

Why was scandal invoked in the “white cloaks affair” between the Templars and the Teutonic knights? This was not an openly shocking behaviour that went evidently against the profession and the religious vows of those involved, at least not in the way exhibited by the disobedient monks and clerics described above. The clue is given by Hostiensis’s definition of scandal as a saying or action or sign by which ones’ neighbour is offended, or by occasion of which someone is drawn to consent to mortal sin.<sup>27</sup> It was the offence taken by the Templars from the use of white cloaks by the Teutonic Order that seemed to put the whole dispute within the framework of scandal, and probably legitimised, from a canonical standpoint, the complaint of the claimants. Still, this was much deeper than just wearing similar cloaks: it also had to do with the system of difference of religious dress and with ways in which competing institutions asserted their position and status among the growing military orders.

However, the Teutonic knights were not the only ones who attracted the outrage of the powerful Templars. A similar protest came in 1236, now involving the Order of St Thomas of Acre.<sup>28</sup> Unlike the Teutonic Order, which enjoyed both imperial and papal support, the brothers from the Order of St Thomas were less lucky in taking on the Templars. It was, in fact, a small order founded in the Holy Land during the Third Crusade – allegedly by King Richard I – dedicated to Thomas Becket, being in its origins a community of

---

<sup>27</sup> ‘Est autem scandalum dictum, vel factum, vel signum quo offenditur proximus, vel cuius occasione trahitur quis in consensum mortalis peccati...’, Hostiensis, *Summa Aurea* (Lugduni: Apud hæredes Iacobi Iuntæ, 1548), Liber primus, Cap. De renuntiatione, n. 9, f. 27r; Ludwig Buisson, *Potestas und Caritas*, p. 153; Richard Helmholz, “Scandalum in the Medieval Canon Law”, pp. 260-1.

<sup>28</sup> See Appendix to Chapter 1, no. 10.

regular canons. Under the initiative of Peter des Roches, bishop of Winchester, the community was transformed into a military order, taking the rule of the Teutonic Order.<sup>29</sup> When Gregory IX confirmed this transition in 1236, he also took into account the Templars' protest about 'the uniformity of sign and habit' between them and the Order of St Thomas. The clash hinged upon the latter's decision to use a red cross as badge, the already traditional Templar symbol. Indeed, the Templars had been wearing it at least for almost a century as, according to Matthew Paris, the order had received the cross-shaped insignia made of red cloth (*de panno rubeo*) from Eugene III in their general chapter of Paris in 1147, to distinguish them from other orders.<sup>30</sup> In this usurpation of their well-known emblem, the Templars complained that 'matter of scandal has been generated,' and this time they made sure their prominent position within the military orders was acknowledged. Thus, Gregory IX decided in favour of the bigger order, telling the Order of St Thomas to change their insignia for a bipartite red and white cross.

Looking alike was certainly at the core of both conflicts, causing offence to the Templars and justifying their invocation of scandal but, as said before, the problem was more profound and complex than just having similar habits. This was a grave matter for both orders, and calling it a scandal was

---

<sup>29</sup> Alan Forey, "The military order of St Thomas of Acre", in *The English Historical Review*, 364, (July 1977), pp. 481-503; idem, "Saint-Thomas d'Acre, ordre de", in Nicole Bériou and Philippe Josserand (eds.), *Prier et Combattre. Dictionnaire européen des ordres militaires au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Fayard, 2009), pp. 826-827.

<sup>30</sup> 'Postmodum, vero, tempore Eugenii papae, cruces de panno rubeo suis assuerunt mantellis a parte sinistra, ut esset eis tam triumphale signum pro clipeo, ne fugerent pro aliquo infideli, tanta talique protectione communiti, utque sic signati, a ceteris religiosis valerent discerni.' In Matthew Paris, *Historia Anglorum, sive, ut vulgo dicitur, Historia Minor*, Frederic Madden (ed.), Vol. I (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1866), p. 223; Simonetta Cerrini, "Templari", in LSDE, pp. 281-284; p. 282; Alain Demurger, *Moines et Guerriers. Les ordres religieux-militaires au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Seuil, 2010) p. 194;

a way to openly assert the seriousness of the dispute, in which not only the sense of identity and the individuality of the orders as collective bodies were at stake, but also where the equilibrium of the system of differences of religious dress was disrupted. This becomes especially clear in the long clash between the Teutonic Order and the Templars. As a matter of fact Gregory IX's decree mentioned above was the final word on a dispute that had lasted twenty years, with several papal letters dealing with and attempting to solve the matter.

The German order had been first recognised as such by Innocent III in February 1199, initially established as a field hospital for the German pilgrims in Acre by lay merchants from Bremen and Lübeck around 1190.<sup>31</sup> In its inception, it vowed to follow the example of the Templars as 'clerics and soldiers,' and of the Hospitallers in their care of 'the poor and the sick',<sup>32</sup> with the main purpose of helping in the defence and aid of the pilgrims in the Holy Land. Unfortunately, there are no sources describing what the habit of the first Teutonic brothers looked like. The scarce references only tell us that they wore a cloak made with 'Stanford cloth' – a fabric of coarse wool originally only made in England, which could be, but not necessarily, white.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, by the beginnings of the thirteenth century the Teutonic Order

---

<sup>31</sup> Kristjan Toomaspoeg, "Sante-Marie des Teutoniques, ordre de", in Nicole Bériou and Philippe Josserand, (eds.), *Prier et Combattre*, pp. 827-834; p. 827.

<sup>32</sup> 'Specialiter autem ordinationem factam in ecclesia vestra iuxta modum Templariorum in clericis et militibus, et ad exemplum Hospitalarium in pauperibus et infirmis...', in Ernest Strehlke (ed.), *Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici ex tabularii Regii Berolinensis codice potissimum* (Berolini: Apud Weidmannos, 1869), no. 297, p. 266. From now on, *Tabulae*.

<sup>33</sup> Francesco Tommasi, "Ordine Teutonico", in LSDE, pp. 292-298; pp. 293-5. Tommasi states that the cloak was not white, but he does not give any arguments to support this assertion.

already had gain a tradition that gave them reasons to defend their use of the white cloak.

According to the text of the *Narratio de primordiis ordinis Theutonici* – one of the foundational texts of the order’s own history, written at the beginnings of the thirteenth century<sup>34</sup> – in 1198 some of the principal magnates of the Empire and the Latin Orient, included the king and the patriarch of Jerusalem, gathered in Acre. There the master of the Templars and the Hospitallers allegedly transmitted the rules of their communities to the Teutonic Order.<sup>35</sup> Then, says the *Narratio*, the Great Master of the Temple gave them the ‘white cloak as testimony, so that all the mentioned soldier brothers of the house hereafter wear a white cloak, according to the established rule of the Temple.’<sup>36</sup> However, in the face of the bitter dispute between Templars and Teutonic knights, it is hard to believe that the former would have agreed with this account. Moreover, the *Narratio* has a certain amount of legend and, as Sylvain Gouguenheim has pointed out, the story about the cloak cannot be taken at face value, particularly since both Templars and Hospitallers were always very protective of their distinguishing features – one may add, as every religious order – and particularly of the cloak,<sup>37</sup> which was the best known and recognisable part of their habit, especially during battle. Nevertheless, there must be some truth in the

---

<sup>34</sup> Gisela Vollmann-Profe, “Narratio de primordiis ordinis theutonici”, in *The Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, Vol. 2 (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2010,) pp. 1136-7.

<sup>35</sup> Kristjan Toomaspoeg, “Sante-Marie des Teutoniques”, p. 827.

<sup>36</sup> ‘Magister Templi continuo dedit album pallium in testimonium, ut universi fratres milites memorate domus deinceps albis paliis utantur secundum regule Templi instituta...’, in “Narratio de primordiis ordinis Theutonici”, in Walter Hubatsch and Udo Arnold (eds.), *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum*, Vol. 6 (Frankfurt Am Main: Minerva, 1968), pp. 22-29; p. 28; Sylvain Gouguenheim, *Les chevaliers Teutoniques* (Paris: Éditions Tallandier, 2007), p. 29.

<sup>37</sup> Sylvain Gouguenheim, *Les chevaliers Teutoniques*, p. 29; Francesco Tommasi, “Ordine Teutonico”, p. 296.



*Narratio*'s arguments, as they appeared in similar terms in papal bulls later on.

Yet, despite the account given by the *Narratio*, the first Templar protest came quite soon, in 1210, with the claim that, from the beginnings of the institution, the use of the white cloak had been granted to them, marking them apart from everyone else. Innocent III decided in their favour in this first instance. The Teutonic knights, said the papal document, had recently taken the white mantle and in doing so they had created confusion with the Templars. To avoid having any issues that might encourage rivalry or discord, the pope stated that the Teutonic Order should be content with their own habit, and that by no means they should wear the white cloaks, which had been granted to the Templars as a badge of their order.<sup>38</sup> However, the victory of the Templars was short-lived, as a year later, and thanks to the intervention of Albert, patriarch of Jerusalem, this verdict was revoked. The new resolution allowed the Teutonic knights to wear the white mantle, having being able to prove that it had been confirmed by Innocent's predecessors.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> '...Suam nobis dilecti filii fratres militie Templi querimoniam obtulerunt, quod, cum in primordio institutionis ordinis sui eis fuerit ab apostolica sede concessum, ut in religionis signum milites militie Templi albis palliis uterentur ad differentiam aliorum; vos, in confusionem ordinis supradicti nuper alba pallia portare cepistis. Nolentes igitur, ut ex hoc inter vos et ipsos emulationes seu discordie materia suscitetur, presentium vobis auctoritate precipiendo mandamus, quatinus vestro contenti habitu existentes huiusmodi alba pallia, que, sicut premissum est, in signum religionis concessa fuerunt Templariis antedictis, nullatenus deferatis...', in *Tabulae*, no. 299, p. 269; Alain Demurger, *Moines et Guerriers*, p. 203; Sylvain Gouguenheim, *Les chevaliers Teutoniques*, p. 30.

<sup>39</sup> '...Ea propter, dilecti in domino filii, vestris iustis precibus inclinati statutum, quod de mantellorum depositione alborum, super quibus dilectos filios magistrum et fratres milicie Templi senciebatis infestos, licet ipsorum mantellorum usus a quibusdam nostris predecessoribus Romanis pontificis vobis quam a vestris successoribus amodo de stanforti a venerabili fratre nostro Al(berto), Ierosolimitano patriarcha, apostolice sedis legato, inter vos et Templarios supradictos pro bono pacis firmatum est...', in *Tabulae*, no. 301, pp. 270-1; Alain Demurger, *Moines et Guerriers*, p. 203; Sylvain Gouguenheim, *Les chevaliers Teutoniques*, p. 30.

Nevertheless, the Teutonic knights probably suspected that things were not going to get settled so easily. Therefore, in 1221 Hermann of Salza, the Grand Master of the order, managed to obtain a new document, this time from Honorius III, asserting the right of the order to wear mantles and other clothes according to the statutes of their order<sup>40</sup> (i.e., the white mantles). This move also anticipated the confirmation of the grant of the same privileges enjoyed by Hospitallers and Templars, which was again officially endorsed in a further bull, using a similar phrasing to the one found in the *Narratio*.<sup>41</sup> Honorius's favour of the German order was not based only on their good deeds, though, and it had a clear political side: the pope wanted to maintain a harmonious relationship with emperor Frederick II in view of their shared interests, such as the suppression of heresy in Europe, the preservation of the delicate peace in Italy, and the effort of the crusade. As Helen Nicholson has pointed out, in the period immediately after the coronation of the emperor and his wife in November of 1220, the papacy issued more than fifty bulls in favour of the Teutonic knights, conferring on them privileges and protection.<sup>42</sup> Among these, the special rights conceded regarding their clothes – as the

---

<sup>40</sup> ‘...Cum igitur ordinem fratrum Hospitalis Ierosolimitani circa pauperes et infirmos, fratrum vero milicie Templi circa clericos et milites ac alios fratres in domo vestra statueritis observandum, idque sit sedis apostolice privilegio confirmatum; auctoritate vobis presencium, indulgemus, ut nullius contradictione obstante libere utamini mantellis et aliis vestibus secundum statutum ordinis vestri nostro privilegio confirmatum...’, in *Tabulae*, no. 308, p. 281; Sylvain Gouguenheim, *Les chevaliers Teutoniques*, p. 30; Kristjan Toomaspoeg, “Sante-Marie des Teutoniques,” p. 829.

<sup>41</sup> *Tabulae*, no. 309, p. 281.

<sup>42</sup> Helen J. Nicholson, *Images of the Military Orders, 1128-1291: Spiritual, Secular, Romantic*, Ph.D. Thesis, (University of Leicester, 1989), p. 31. Nicholson published this thesis later on under the title *Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutonic Knights: Images of the Military Orders, 1128-1291* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1993). However, this particular information is not included in this later publication.

emperor's gift shows – could play a critical role in the intertwined and complex relationship between Church and Empire.

Still, for the Templars this was not yet the end of the matter, and they were willing to keep fighting to claim exclusivity over the signs of their distinctive identity. The order must have kept complaining to Honorious III, who seemed to have lost his patience with the business. In April 1222 the pope's response came in harsh terms:<sup>43</sup> it began by telling them how greatly it would displease him if, God forbade, they made themselves worthy of reprimand and derision. The letter stated that the Apostolic See had confirmed the way of life of the Teutonic Order. Therefore, the pope said, out of respect for the merits of the Teutonic Order and the prayers of Frederick II, he had confirmed their institution, as well as other privileges and indulgences, even if the Teutonic brothers might have not been wearing the white cloaks before because of their negligence, while they were a few and poor, or because of their fear of scandalising the Templars by their use of the habit, or in some other matter. Moreover, the German brothers had obtained the use of the white cloak with a special indulgence of the pope, and it was unworthy of the Templars to see, in this matter, that the Teutonic brothers had done something contrary to their institution, as anyone who gave the matter any thought, the pope expressed, could see. If the Templars, thus affected, were not held back because of respect for the pope or the emperor, they should at least restrain themselves because of the scorn they had brought on themselves from all those who would listen to this: it seemed in

---

<sup>43</sup> See Appendix to Chapter 1, no. 11; Helen J. Nicholson, *Images of the Military Orders*, p. 32; idem, *Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutonic Knights*, p. 25-6.

fact ridiculous that they were to be outraged because others were wearing a white cloak. They should not fear that anyone would take the brother of one order to be from another, especially since their habit was distinguished by their particular symbol (i.e., the red cross). Therefore the pope asked the Templars to drop any resentment held against the Teutonic Order and to walk in ‘the spirit of charity and the bond of unity’ with them, as befitted religious men. However, as their insistence shows, for the Templars there was nothing ridiculous in striving to keep an exclusive use over the elements that helped them assert their individuality among competing orders.

Moreover, besides the reprimand to the Templars for what the pope seemed to consider an overreaction, the letter shows what a complex and expansive term *scandalum* was, so much that the Teutonic Order apparently had chosen, in a first moment, not to wear the white cloaks they could rightfully use, for fear of scandalising the Templars. This was not, however, at all peculiar. Bernard of Clairvaux had discussed this kind of situation in the previous century, stating that it was clear that, even if having permission from the Apostolic See, it was ‘never lawful for anyone to give scandal or to command what would give scandal,’ except in the interest of truth.<sup>44</sup> However, the Teutonic knights had to decide for how long they would be willing to sacrifice their own process of identity formation in order to avoid scandalising their fellow Templar brothers.

---

<sup>44</sup> ‘...Constat, igitur ubi veritas, et veritas necessaria in causa non est, nec licite scandalum quodlibet a quodlibet posse committi, nec iuste praecipere, nec innoxie consentiri...’, Bernard of Clairvaux, Epistola 7, in Bernard de Clairvaux, *Opera*, Tom. VII, *Epistolae, Corpus Epistolarum 1-180*, J. Leclercq, H. Rochais and Ch. H. Talbot (eds.) (Romae: Editiones Cistercienses, 1974), pp. 37-8; English translation in B. S. James (trans.), *Letters of St. Bernard of Clairvaux*, London: Burns Oates, 1953), Letter 8, p. 31; Lindsay Bryan, “Vae Mundo a Scandalis”, p. 27.

Yet, it seemed that the decision was not only theirs to make. The political implications of this controversy become even clearer with the bull that Honorius III dispatched two days after the above-mentioned reprimand, on 19 April 1222. Here the pope confirmed Emperor Frederick's annual donation of two hundred ounces of gold to the Teutonic brothers for the acquisition of their white mantles mentioned by Gregory IX.<sup>45</sup> Whatever the reasons for the emperor's sponsorship of the German order, this display of imperial patronage shows – as pointed out before – the central role that religious habits could play even in political matters. With such a support, the Teutonic Order had the upper hand in a contest in which the formation and defence of each order's "brand" was fundamental and which was, therefore, at the heart of the system of differences that governed the relationships around religious dress.

This helps to explain the – at first – somewhat puzzling fact that the Templars should have insisted on the issue with Gregory IX about eight years later, prompting Gregory IX's bull of 1230 discussed above. They must have been clearly aware of the extent of the role of politics in the pope's dealings with the Teutonic Order. Perhaps they saw a window of opportunity for their claim during the period in which Frederick II had a falling out with the pope, with the emperor being excommunicated in 1228. However, the Teutonic knights had friends in high places and with Hermann of Salza

---

<sup>45</sup> *Tabulae*, no. 151, p. 148; Helen J. Nicholson, *Images of the Military Orders*, p. 32. See also James M. Powell, "Frederick II, the Hohenstaufen, and the Teutonic Order in the Kingdom of Sicily", in Malcolm Barber (ed.), *The Military Orders. Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994), pp. 236-244.

negotiating the reconciliation with the pope on behalf of Frederick II in 1230,<sup>46</sup> the odds were once more on the side of the Teutonic Order. In any case, the dispute was put again within the category of “scandal,” as Gregory IX’s letter of September 1230 makes clear. One may even wonder if the appeal to *scandalum* by the Templars might have been a legal move, as a kind of last resort to add significance to their grievances. However, as said before, Gregory IX promptly confirmed his predecessor’s ruling in favour of the Teutonic Order. He told the Templars that ‘many were murmuring, surprised that this sort of complain or article of scandal could be provided’ and exhorted them again to treat the Teutonic knights ‘in the Lord’s sincere charity.’<sup>47</sup> The Templars’ insistence, though, may also be interpreted as a sign of the fact that they were not only fighting to preserve a prerogative on the exclusive use of white in their cloaks, but also their prominence among military orders. As a matter of fact, there were other military orders that also wore white mantles, such as the Orders of Santiago and of Calatrava<sup>48</sup> – but which do not seem to have provoked the Templars discontent, probably because they were either easily distinguishable from them by other means or because they did not pose any threat to the Templar prominent position, as the Teutonic knights clearly did.

---

<sup>46</sup> David Abulafia, *Frederick II. A Medieval Emperor* (London: Allen Lane, 1988), p. 313; p. 200.

<sup>47</sup> ‘...Cum autem jam multi remurmurent, admirantes quod hujusmodi articulo scandalum vel questio potuerit suboriri – universitatem vestram rogamus, monemus et hortamur in Domino, per apostolica scripta mandantes quatenus – eosdem magistrum et fratres sincera in Domino caritate tractetis, ita quod ex hoc Deo et hominibus placeatis, nosque devotionem vestram possimus merito commendare...’, Gregory IX, *Cum ordinem vestrum*, 13 September 1230, in *Les Registres de Grégoire IX*, L. Auvray (ed.), Tom. I, Libraire Des Écoles Françaises D’Athènes et De Rome (Paris, 1896), no. 491, cols. 322-3; see also Appendix to Chapter 1, no. 9; Helen J. Nicholson, *Images of the Military Orders*, p. 32; idem, *Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutonic Knights*, p. 26.

<sup>48</sup> Alain Demurger, *Moines et Guerriers*, p. 197.

Moreover, the practical and economic side of the polemic might help to explain this aspect: just as the mendicant orders did within the urban space, so the military orders present in the Latin East (and to some extent, also in Europe)<sup>49</sup> competed against each other for donations and support. Maintaining the exclusivity of their “brand” was fundamental to securing that the funds were received by the right order. In this context, the rapid expansion of the Teutonic Order in the Holy Land – in great part thanks to the imperial support<sup>50</sup> – certainly meant a menace to the Templars’ status and influence. Likewise, one can imagine that the knightly ethos of those who belonged to these orders also played its part, and the risk of having one’s military glory attributed to another order may have also helped to increase the Templars’ acrimony. In fact, in the Templar Order the white cloak was reserved exclusively for the knight brothers – as it was also the case in the Teutonic Order, at least until the beginnings of the fourteenth century – lay, non-combatant, and non-knight brothers were to wear black or brown.<sup>51</sup> Thus, the conflict was multi-layered and also involved, besides the means to set their collective identities, perhaps the chance of social distinction, in a

---

<sup>49</sup> See Karl Borchartd, “Competition between the Military-Religious Orders in Central Europe, c. 1140-1270”, in Judi Upton-Ward (ed.), *The Military Orders, Volume 4: On Land and by Sea*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 29-34

<sup>50</sup> Kristjan Toomaspoeg, “Sante-Marie des Teutoniques,” p. 829.

<sup>51</sup> Simonetta Cerrini, “Templari”, pp. 281-2; Alain Demurger, *Moines et Guerriers*, p. 197; pp. 200-3. This was, however, a common practice among religious orders, which usually distinguished the professed brothers from the lay ones through their clothes. It was the case with the Cistercians (see Goffredo Viti, “Cistercensi (monaci)”, p.166); the Order of the Grandmont (see Jean Becquet, “Granmontani”, pp. 188-189; p. 188); the Camaldolese (see Ugo Fossa, “Camaldolesi”, p. 143); and the Augustinian Hermits (see B. Van Lwijk, “Bullarium Ordinis Eremitarum S. Augustini. (Periodus formationis 1187-1256)”, in *Augustiniana*, XIII (1963), pp. 491-2 and *ibid*, *Augustiniana*, XIV (1964), p. 225), just to name a few. On lay brothers see J. Dubois, “Converso”, in *DIP*, cols. 110-120.

struggle that also comprised principles of economical interest and definition of status among orders.

These are just some of the many cases in which the threat of scandal provoked by religious persons or orders appears in relation to questions of dress. What makes the use of the concept of *scandalum* so interesting in the context of cases about religious clothes is that it provides us with a better grasp of the dynamics and attitudes that took place among and towards religious members, which are often not very apparent on the surface of the conflicts. As G. Geltner points out, ‘after all, laymen identified groups such as monks as morally superior, and it is quite possible that, however unavoidable, minor violations among them would resonate not only within the perfect community but also, and perhaps especially loudly, outside it once they became known.’<sup>52</sup> One can imagine then that having monks in tight and short garments partying around the village was not the exemplary behaviour expected of them by both the community and the hierarchy of the Church. Neither was having two religious orders bitterly quarrelling about the use of a certain kind of cloak for over twenty years the charitable comportment expected by the wider society from fellow religious institutions, which were supposed to share their ultimate eschatological goal. Because, as Lindsay Bryan notes, in fact scandal was the opposite of charity, in a context in which ‘every reference, particularly in the New Testament reinforces the Christian obligation not only not to sin, but not to cause others to fail either, setting up

---

<sup>52</sup> G. Geltner, “Brethren Behaving Badly: A Deviant Approach to Medieval Antifraternalism”, *Speculum* 85 (2010), pp. 47-64; p. 59



a mutual responsibility for spiritual health among the community of Christians.<sup>53</sup>

Likewise, scandal in relation to religious dress sheds new light on the social attitudes that the society of the Late Middle Ages had towards clothing and external appearance. This is a perspective that, as pointed out in the Introduction, has been made visible mostly through the studies on the origin and the role of sumptuary laws of the period, with a mainly materialist perspective for the reasons for their existence. However, the study of the concept of scandal in relation to religious dress shows that this is still a partial understanding of a more intricate picture, and that the spectrum of medieval attitudes and ideas towards dress and group identity was actually wider, and usually more complex and multifaceted. For once, it involved more actors than just the legislative bodies that promulgated sumptuary laws and the local elites who might have benefited from them, including the unknown canon and the shocked parishioner.

Therefore, *scandalum* in relation to religious attire also includes more reasons than just the economic ones and more approaches than just a zealous defence of social distinction or a blurred notion of decency. The shock provoked by the dress choice of some ecclesiastics indeed shows how external appearance was not a private issue, but a matter of public concern, in which the whole community was involved, forcing the papacy to have a very active role in the matter. As Lindsay Bryan puts it, ‘it seems clear that the two bodies, the church and the community (which were in any case not

---

<sup>53</sup> Lindsay Bryan, “Vae Mundo a Scandalis”, p. 13.

always easily distinguishable), worked cooperatively to encourage conformity to standards of behaviour which, on the one hand, benefitted spiritual health, and on the other, ensured social harmony.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, as for the religious sphere scandal could also entail a mechanism to legitimate a claim, its use in relation to religious habits might have been a clever move: once the trespassing of a canonically established concept was invoked, the need for the papacy to make a pronouncement and find a resolution became more pressing. Habits were a synecdoche of both the whole institution to which the bearer belonged and of the complex spiritual dimension that such an institution represented for the Christian community. Scandal in religious dress meant that the “semiotics” of religious habits mattered not only in a formal and symbolic way, but also in their intrinsic social aspect. The use of the concept of scandal in relation to these “semantics” of the habit shows to what extent the habits could – or could not – make the monk. It also demonstrates how the dynamics and rules that governed these same habits within the system of differences of religious dress were a fundamental aspect that helped to build and define religious identities.

---

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 310.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 1

### 1. Benedict XII, *Inter sollicitudines*, 20 August 1335:

'...Sane ad nostri apostolatus auditum perduxit rumor implacidus et infestus quod per nonnullas personas in cathedralibus et collegiatis Ecclesiis secularibus civitatis et diocesis ac provincie Narbonensium divinis obsequiis mancipatas, status non servatur debitus, nec divinum officium agitur solenniter ut deceret, bona etiam Ecclesiarum ipsarum spiritualia et temporalia reguntur per eos ad quos pertinet minus provide et inutiliter sepius dispensantur. Nam aliqui, sicut fertur, tam in dignitatibus, personatibus et officiis constituti, quam canonici ac intitulati et beneficiati alii Ecclesiarum ipsarum qui deberent prout status cujuslibet ipsorum exigit maturitate servata debita operibus insistere virtuosis, lasciviis, pompis, negociationibus secularibus, venationibus, armorum portationibus et aliis prohibitis et reprehensibilibus actibus vacare non metuunt in suarum animarum periculum ac perniciem et scandalum plurimorum; deferunt nempe plures ex eis vestes nimis strictas et breves cum lingatis manicis et alias in forma et colore, statui et ordini suis minime congruas, parum aut nichil de clericali pretendentes tonsura seipsos qui per compositionem debitam et ordinatam vestium et gestuum, morum maturitatem et venustatem virtutum se deberent ceteris immitabiles reddere, dantes in spectaculum more istrionico et derrisum, circa cultum divinum etiam propter quem clerus principaliter in Ecclesiis constituitur negligenter intendunt nimium, quod in offensam divinam redundare non est dubium, et remisse, et si aliquando eos horis canonicis et divinis officiis in eisdem officiis interesse contingat, magis ad fabulas et vaniloquia quam ad cantandum et serviendum Domino se convertunt, frequenter etiam horis et divinis officiis hujusmodi quibus intersunt non completis chororum absque causa rationabili et honesta exeunt, per ecclesiam seu claustrum vel alibi vagando et deambulando, ac vaga sepius vagis et impudicis oculis concernendo; insuper aliqui rationis et honestatis laxatis abenis per campum licencie post suas voluntates indomitas discurrentes se involvere fetoribus luxurie, tenendo concubinas et alias mulieres suspectas, turpiter et detestabiliter non verentur, nequaquam attento quam crudeliter

famam suam negligunt, honoribus Ecclesiarum in quibus beneficia obtinent dampnabiliter detrahunt et quam graviter in conspectu Domini ex hiis cadunt capitula... Cupientes igitur Ecclesiarum predictarum indemnitatibus provideri ac transgressorum insolencias premissas et quasvis alias et excessus ex quibus irritatur Altissimus, saluti animarum detrahitur, fidelium decrescit devotio, innumera proveniunt Ecclesiis dispendia, et alia scandalosa mala et pericula subsecuntur emendari et corrigi, sicque mores in clero divina opitulante gratia reformari, quod viciorum et insolenciarum evulsis et extirpatis omnino tribulis, jacta et facienda crescant in agro dominico virtutum semina fructus uberes productura, et ad te per cujus fidelem circumspeditionem et industriam posse pro magna parte speramus divinis beneplacitis, et per consequens votis nostris super hiis satisfieri, dirigentes intuitum mentis nostre, te ad correctionem et reformationem predictas in eisdem civitate, diocesi ac provincia exercendas providimus specialiter deputandum...'. In *Benoît XII (1334-1342): lettres closes, patentes et curiales se rapportant à la France*, Georges Daumet (ed.), Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1920), no. 95, cols. 58-62.

## **2. Benedict XII, *Gratum Altissimo*, 20 August 1335:**

'...Intelleximus siquidem quod in ecclesiis tam cathedralibus quam collegiatis regularibus, necnon monasteriis et locis ecclesiasticis sanctorum Benedicti et Augustini, ac Cluniacen., Premonstraten. et quarumdam aliarum religionum ordinum civitatis, diocesis et provincie Narbonen. per nonnullos canonicos et monachos ecclesiarum, monasteriorum et locorum predictorum observantia regularis contempnitur, cultus divinus negligitur, lasciviis, pompis, venationibus, vagationibus, negociationibus secularibus et aliis inhonestis et reprehensibilibus actibus intenditur, sprete religionis modestia, et vacatur; bona etiam ecclesiarum, monasteriorum et locorum predictorum spiritualia et temporalia reguntur per eos ad quos pertinet minus provide ac irrationabiliter et inutiliter sepius dispensantur. Nam aliqui, sicut fertur, tam in prelaturis, dignitatibus, personatibus et officiis constituti quam canonici, et monachi, ac beneficiati et intitulati alii ecclesiarum, monasteriorum et locorum ipsorum,

qui deberent maturitate, prout requirit status cujuslibet, servata debita operibus insistere virtuosis, lasciviis et insolentiis, aliisque turpibus et staturum religiosorum dedecentibus actibus vacare non metuunt in animarum suarum periculum ac perniciem et scandalum plurimorum. Deferunt nempe plures ex eis habitus inhonestos, ac vestes nimis strictas et breves, cum linguatis interdum manicis a statu et decencia suarum religionum in colore ac forma, non absque transgressione canonum, discrepantes, religionum suarum habitus sub aliis vestibus, quasi dedignando se religiosos ostendere, sepius occultantes... Cupientes igitur ecclesiarum, monasteriorum et locorum predictorum indempnitatibus provideri, ac premissas et quasvis alias insolentias et excessus ex quibus irritatur Altissimus, saluti animarum et religionis puritati detrahitur, fidelium decrescit devotio, innumera dispendia proveniunt ecclesiis, monasteriis et locis predictis et scandala varia subsequuntur emendari et corrigi, sicque eorum mores, divina opitulante gratia reformari, quod viciorum et insolentiarum evulsis et extirpatis omnino tribulis jacta et jacienda crescant virtutum semina, fructus in eisdem ecclesiis, monasteriis et locis uberes productura...'. In *Benoît XII (1334-1342): lettres closes et patentes intéressant les pays autres que la France, publiées ou analysées d'après les registres du Vatican*, J.M. Vidal (ed.), Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1913), nos. 493-494, cols. 122-5.

### **3. Benedict XII, *Quamvis in cunctis*, 8 April 1335:**

'...Nuper siquidem infausti rumoris assertio perduxit ad nostri apostolatus auditum quod in Ecclesia Albiensi que inter ceteras partium illarum cathedrales Ecclesias solennis et nobilis reputatur, status non servatur per personas ejusdem Ecclesie debitus, nec divinum solenniter et devote ibidem agitur officium sicut decet, quinimo tam per aliquos ejusdem Ecclesie canonicos quam beneficiatos seu intitulatos alios qui laudandis virtutum operibus deberent insistere, lasciviis et operibus inhonestis vacatur: nonnulli siquidem, sicut eadem habet assertio, status sui sprete modestia et honore rejecto, comas et longas barbas nutriunt, parum aut nichil pretendentes de

clericali tonsura, vestes etiam inhonestas, sueque indecentes et incongruas honestati, statui et ordini, utpote nimis breves et strictas cum lingatis manicis, que magis istrionice quam clericales apparent, necnon pilleos lineos caudatos defferunt publice, per incompositionem et inordinationem habituum et vestium mentis incompositionem clarius denotantes, sicque turpiter et scandalose se intrant frequenter Ecclesiam et per civitatem et partes illas incedunt, et ulterius post sue voluntatis indomite libitum per campum licence laxatis abenis rationis et modestie discurrunt precipites, vitam inhonestam ducere, famamque suam lacerare crudeliter ac sinceritatem et honorem Ecclesie quantum in eis est vilipendere ac deturpare in divine majestatis offensam, animarum suarum perniciem, et plurimorum scandalum non verentur; rursus canonicis tam pueris quam aliis qui nondum sunt infra sacros ordines constituti nec curare videntur velle se divinis obsequiis mancipari, distributiones ministrantur integre, talesque ad tractatus communes capituli sicut ceteri contra sanctiones (sic) canonicas admittuntur et alia multa committuntur et omittuntur ibidem que divinis beneplacitis, equitati juris et rationis ac statutis et ordinationibus prelibate Ecclesie factis etiam auctoritate apostolica obvia existere asseruntur; cum autem tales excessus et insolencie non sint in Ecclesia tolerandi et qui matrem suam sic inhonorant et despiciunt suisque pravis deturpare factionibus, ex quibus provocatur Altissimus, decrescit populi devotio et in clero ac populo generantur scandala...'. In *Benoît XII (1334-1342): lettres closes, patentes et curiales se rapportant à la France*, no. 43, cols. 23-6.

#### **4. Benedict XII, *Licet moleste*, 29 May 1335:**

'...Habet siquidem rumor implacitus et infestus quod in monasterio sancti Salvii Albiensis ordinis sancti Augustini observancia regularis que ibidem florere antiquitus consuevit, hiis molernis temporibus per insolencias canonicorum ipsius monasterii non parum in animarum periculum defloruit et decrevit, nam ut intelleximus displicenter, nonnulli ex eisdem canonicis officio divino propter quod sunt in eodem monasterio specialiter deputati contemptui et negligencie, non sine Dei gravi offensa dimisso, venationibus,

vagationibus, secularibus negociis et quod est detestandum quamplurimum carnalibus deliciis vacant impudice, in communi refectorio non comedunt nec dormitorio dormiunt, barbas et comas nutriunt et vestes etiam defferunt inhonestas, utpote nimia strictura longitudine vel brevitate notandas cum lingatis manicis que magis istrionice quam clericales apparent in forma et colore, a statu et honestate sue religionis et ordinis discrepantes, habitum suum nequaquam patenter et publice defferunt sed sub suis occultant vestibus ne per illum a secularibus distingantur, canonum et sanctorum Patrum contempnendo statuta, sicque per civitatem Albiensem et partes illas utendo epitogio, nichilominus seu tabardo ad instar secularium clericorum frequenter incedunt, per hos et alios suos excecrandos excessus Deum et sui sinceritatem ordinis multipliciter offendentes. Cum autem talia, ex quibus graviter provocatur Altissimus, honestati religionis detrahitur, populi decrescit devotio et sepius generantur scandala non sint quomodolibet toleranda...'. In *Benoit XII (1334-1342): lettres closes, patentes et curiales se rapportant à la France*, no. 62, cols. 38-9.

##### **5. Gregory IX, *Dilecto filio*, 21 December 1233:**

'...Willelmus, decanus ecclesie Sancti Stephani Bisuntini, abjecto habitu clericali, volebat ad militiam se transferre, capitulo ipsius ecclesie inhibere curavit, ne quid de decanatu ejusdem ecclesie, si dictus decanus hoc faceret, ordinaret. Cumque ille clericalem habitum a se penitus abjecisset, idem cantor quasdam ab eodem legato super decanatu ipso ad eundem predecessorem tuum litteras impetravit, ut decanum jamdictum moneret quod, infra certum terminum ad ecclesiam suam rediens, ibi decanatus officium exerceret, alioquin illum ipsi cantori conferret, contradictores ac rebelles per censuram ecclesiasticam compescendo. Verum quia decanus ipse, ab eo monitus, redire noluit ad suam ecclesiam, diutius post prefixum sibi ab eo terminum expectatus, idem [praedecessor tuus] nominatum cantorem de decanatu predicto, juxta ipsius legati mandati continentiam, investivit, ei stallum in choro et locum in capitulo assignando; quem quidam de capitulo sicut obedientie filii receperunt, quibusdam aliis canonicis prefate

ecclesie ad nos appellantis, quia, ut dicebant, si cessisset vel decessisset eorum decanus, ipsi non erant jure eligendi decanum sine culpa privandi; quorum appellationem frivolam reputans, in rebelles excommunicationis sententiam promulgavit. Hii vero postmodum qui appellaverant, nobis mendaciter suggerentes quod eorum decanus de permissione venerabilis fratris nostri ..archiepiscopi Bisuntini habitum assumpserit laicalem, pro eo quod a fratre suo portionem hereditatis paterne non poterat aliter obtinere, ac de proventibus decanatus, cum essent tenues et exiles, non posset commode sustentari... Sed memoratus decanus, fraudulenter decanatum ipsum retinere contendens, ad ecclesiam suam rediit in termino constituto, eamque cum capa rotunda et superpellicio bis intravit, gerendo semper in capite capucium seu pilleum quibus laicalem tonsuram, quam non deposuerat, occultaret, nullam omnino coronam habens seu tonsuram etiam clericalem; ac elapso termino ab ecclesia prenominata recedens, raro unquam postmodum rediit ad eandem. Quare fuit ex parte supradicti cantoris nobis humiliter supplicatum, ut, cum a tempore illo sepe dictus decanus in vestibus, ornamentis et tonsura, laicali modo se gesserit et etiam adhuc gerat, et eadem ecclesia jam per quatuor annos et amplius decano fuerit destituta, in ipsius non modicum detrimentum et scandalum plurimorum, super hoc providere salubriter dignaremur...'. In *Les Registres de Grégoire IX*, Tom. I, no. 1656, cols. 909-11.

#### **6. Urban V, 3 January 1366:**

'abb. monast. novillarii argentin. dioc. o.s.b., qui olim, videns et advertens quod monachi sui monast. in refectorio, dormitorio et aliis locis necnon in indumentis et calciamentis ejusdem b. benedicti regulam et alias constitutiones canonicas non observabant, ipsis pluries prout tenetur in loco capitulari sub certis penis mandavit ut dict. regulam et constitutiones observarent sed nonnulli ex eis in dicto monast. administrationes, officia aut beneficia obtinentes, ex eo confisi quod ea, ut asserunt, a sed. apost. impetrarunt seu super ipsis confirmationes perpetuas obtinuerunt, mandatis predictis non obediunt sed alios simplices ad inobedientiam et rebellionem



cum eorum falsis mendatiis inducunt, in animarum suarum periculum, ipsius ordinis et ecclesie discipline contemptum et scandalum plurimorum...compellend. per censuram ecclesiast. ad observandum regulam b. benedicti et constitutiones circa vestes et alia facta omnes monachos [...] monast. novillarii argentin. dioc. o.s.b., etiam dignitates, personatus, officia, administrationes aut alia quecumque beneficia inibi obtinentes, ita ut, si sibi non obediverint, ipsos a dignitatibus, personatibus, officiis, administrationibus et beneficiis perpetuo amovere...'. In *Ut per litteras apostolicas* database (under Urban V, letter n. 326). Although the letter appears there as part of Urban V's register of petitions (*supplices*), the letter is not included in the compilation *Supplices d'Urbain V (1362-1370): textes et analyses*, Alphonse Fierens (ed.), *Analecta vaticano-belgica*, Vol. 7 (Rome, 1914). Correspondent letter in *Urbain V, 1362-1370: lettres communes analysées d'après les registres dits d'Avignon et du Vatican*, Michel et Anne-Marie Hayez (eds.), *Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome*, Tom. V (Rome, 1979), no. 17005, pp. 190-1.

#### **7. Urbanus V, 4 March 1370:**

'Episcopo Argentin. - cum, sicut Michael de Epfiche, mon. monast. de Hugoniscuria, O.S.B., Argentin. dioc., pape denunciavit, *Sigelinus*, gerens se pro abbate dicti monast., ad abbatialem ejusdem monast. dignitatem simoniacum habuerit ingressum eumque regularem ordinem non fuerit professus nisi sub abbate alterius monast. causa promotionis de ipso eadem die facte ipseque a nullo professo dicti monast. fuerit electus nisi duntaxat ab uno qui etiam sub abbate alterius monast. causa promotionis predictae professionem fecerat, ac idem Sigelinus per longum tempus mulierem inhonestatem tenuerit et ipsi mulieri in prefato monast. et in mensa atque villis et etiam inter dicti monast. monachos, fratres et laicos sepe et manifeste cohabitaverit, et adeo ignorans esse dinoscatur quod nescit bene legere nec cantare, et insuper dictus Sigelinus et quasi major pars conventus dicti monast. frequenter in villas ad coreas et convivia exire soleant et ibidem cum laicis manifeste ludere, et nonnulli ex eis, exutis habitibus, in monasterio et

villis supradictis manifeste cum mulieribus et laicis, predicto Segelino (sic) presente, corizare consueverint mulieresque inhoneste cum dicto Sigelino monachisque dicti monast. in ipso monast. et in mensa cohabitationem habeant, nec ibidem post mensam seu in mensa legatur lectio sed fisculatio et timpanizatio et sepe turpiloquium clamorque sicut in tabernis ibidem pro lectione habeantur, et nichilominus predicti monachi, appensis sibi cornibus, gladiis et cuspidibus et, exutis eorum habitibus, ad venationes exeant et inibi quandoque per triduum remaneant, ipseque Sigelinus sepe cum dictis monachis ad campos cum canibus, horis canonicis dimissis, exierit ita quod interdum per duas septimanas in dicto monast. non cantetur semel matutinum, ac nonnulli monachi dicti monast. ita inhoneste cum vestimentis ambulent quod vix valent eorum virilia tegere ac sotulares rostratos portantes quasi ribaldi incedant et die noctuque ebrietatibus et gule inserviant pluraque alia perpetrent, propter quod boni religiosi dicti monast. et alie bone persone partium earumdem plurimum scandalizentur...'. In *Urban V, 1362-1370: lettres communes analysées d'après les registres dits d'Avignon et du Vatican*, Michel et Anne-Marie Hayez (eds.), Tom. IX (Rome, 1983), no. 26512, pp. 214-5.

#### **8. Urban V, 15 May 1370:**

'...postmodum, exposito per dictum episc. quod nonnulli canonici dicte Basilien. eccl. et quamplures alie persone ecclesiast. civ. et dioc. Basilien. concubinas publice et quamplura benef. incompatibilia insimul tenere et inhoneste, cum magna coma et sine tonsura, cum brevibus vestibus et magnis cultellis incedere publice non verebantur et ad sacros ord., prout onus beneficiorum suorum requirebat, non se faciebant promoveri, et iidem canonici quasdam distributiones prefate eccl. Basilien., videlicet panem et vinum, audiendo sonum campanarum dicte eccl., licet ecclesiam non intrarent, de facto percipiebant et non nullos alios excessus commiserant et committebant, et quod ipse episcopus eandem Basilien. eccl., cum predicti canonici et capitulum a jurisdictione ordinaria pretenderent se fore exemptos, sine scandalo reformare non poterat, ipse papa preposito eccl. Lausanen.

suis dedit litteris in mandatis ut ad ipsam Basilien. et alias ecclesias dictarum civ. et dioc. de quibus sibi expediens videretur, personaliter accedens, de premissis omnibus informaret ac ea que ibidem correctionis et reformationis officio digere nosceret, corrigere et reformare curaret...'. In *Urbain V, 1362-1370: lettres communes analysées d'après les registres dits d'Avignon et du Vatican*, Tom. IX, no. 26628, pp. 242-4.

**9. Gregory IX, *Cum ordinem vestrum*, 13 September 1230:**

'...Questione suborta pro eo quod magister et fratres domus hospitalis Sancte Marie Teutonicorum mantellis albis utuntur, quasi esset eis in hoc similitudo vestri habitus interdicta, nos cupientes de regno Ecclesie colligere scandala, venerabili fratri nostro, patriarche Jerosolimitano, Apostolice Sedis legato, sicut nostis, pluries super hoc direximus scripta nostra, quorum tenores vos non credimus ignorare. Cumque dictus patriarcha, processus per eum habitos suis nobis litteris intimans, tandem totum negotium ad nostram presentiam destinavit, quia idem magister predicte domus Sancte Marie Teutonicorum apud Sedem Apostolicam constitutus, privilegium per quod statuitur ut ordo domus vestre circa clericos, ac milites ac alios fratres, in domo sua perpetuis temporibus observetur, et indulgentiam per quam omnes libertates, immunitates et indulgentie domui vestre ab Apostolica Sede concesse, sue domui conceduntur, nec non et specialem indulgentiam de mantellis ordini suo a pie memorie Honorio papa, predecessore nostro, clementer indultas, et innovatas a nobis, ac confirmationem ab eodem predecessore nostro sibi concessam super ducentis unciis auri, quas karissimus in Christo filius noster F[ridericus], Romanorum imperator illustris, semper augustus, et rex Sicilie, pro albis mantellis emendis ad usum fratrum militum sue domus, sibi et fratribus suis pia liberalitate donavit, exolvendas annis singulis, nobis exhibuit intuendas, nequaquam vobis vidimus expedire ut in negotio procederetur eodem, ne forsitan notaremini, si eveniret exinde aliquid quod nolletis...'. In *Les Registres de Grégoire IX*, Tom. I, no. 491, cols. 322-3.

**10. *Licet olim*, Gregory IX, 6 March 1236:**

‘..magistro et fratribus hospitalis Sancti Thome martiris Acconensis.

‘Licet olim venerabilis frater noster ..Wintoniensis Episcopus dum in partibus transmarinis peregrinationis gratia moraretur considerans domum vestram in qua fuerant canonici regulares situ loci et facultatibus minus aptam ordini regulari propter personarum degentium in eadem dissolutionem et incuriam ipsam miserabiliter corruisse de venerabilis fratris nostri ..Patriarche Ierosolimitani et Magnatum ipsius Regni consilio cathedrali et Metropolitanis ecclesiis tunc vacantibus eam remotis hinc dictis canonicis ad locum transtulit magis aptum, et vobis secundum regulam Hospitalis Sancte Marie Teutonicorum degentibus pro terre sancte subsidio subrogatis ac nos quod super hoc ab eodem Episcopo provide factum est supplentes de plenitudine potestatis, defectum qui in translatione huiusmodi fuerat ex eo quod dictus episcopus id faciendi auctoritatem non habuit auctoritate apostolica duxerimus confirmandum; quia tamen ex uniformitate signi et habitus inter vos et Templarios vobis gestantibus crucem rubeam sicut ipsi materia scandali generatur et signum baculi pastoralis quod ex parte crucis protenditur minus est militibus ad ordinem vestrum transire volentibus gratiosum, Nos attendentes quod plerunque sunt nonnulla vitanda quae possunt materiam scandali suscitare, cum et veritas ipsam quaedam fecerit ex temperantia equitatis pro vitando scandalo iudeorum et apostolus scandalizatis fratribus urebatur, vestris supplicationibus inclinati, mutandi signum crucis ac faciendi illud ex albo et rubeo bipartitum et removendi exinde protractionem baculi et ut milites uti possint nigro pallio et clerici ac Conversi eisdem ordinis de Camelino Rosseto auctoritate vobis presentium concedimus facultatem...’. Personal transcription. Reference in *Les Registres de Grégoire IX*, Tom. II (Paris, 1907), no. 3005, col. 282; full text in *Registra Vaticana* 18, fol. 116v, c. 417.

**11. *Honorious III, Quanto vos ampliori*, 17 April 1222:**

‘...Quanto vos ampliori caritate diligimus, tanto nobis amplius displiceret, si, quod absit, reprehensione seu etiam irrisione dignum aliquid faceretis.

Siquidem privilegia fratribus domus sancte Marie Teutonicorum ab apostolica sede concessa manifeste demonstrant, quod ordo vester in clericis et militibus ac aliis fratribus, Hospitalis vero in pauperibus et infirmis in ipsa domo iam dudum extitit institutus et per sedem apostolicam confirmatus. Licet antem fratres ipsi tum propter negligentiam suam, dum essent pauci et pauperes, tum etiam propter scandali vestri metum tam in habitu deferendo quam in quibusdam aliis aliquando contra institutionem fecerint memoratam, nos tamen inclinati sue religionis merito et precibus carissimi in Christo filii nostri F(ridericus), Romanorum imperatoris illustris semper augusti et regis Sicilie, qui in die coronationis sue id a nobis pro speciali munere postulavit. Institutionem ipsam de communi consilio fratrum nostrorum nostro privilegio confirmavimus, domum ipsam aliis privilegiis, indulgentiis et libertatibus munientes. Accepimus autem, quod vos occasione alborum mantellorum, super quibus deferendis specialem a nobis indulgentiam impetrarunt, pro eo quod in hoc specialiter fecisse contra institutionem huiusmodi videbantur, moti estis aliquantulum contra eos, quod quantum sit vestra religione indignum, quisquis recogitare voluerit, facile recognoscet. Si enim vos ab huiusmodi motu nec apostolica nec imperialis reverentia cohibet, cohibere saltem omnium id audientium subsanatio vos deberet, quibus videtur sicut est revera ridiculum vos indigne ferre alios a vobis album portare mantellum presertim a vestro habitu sic distinctum signaculo speciali. Ideoque circumspectionem vestram attente rogandam duximus et hortandam, quatinus omni rancore deposito, si quem forte contra dictos fratres occasione huiusmodi concepistis, ambuletis in caritatis spiritu et unitatis vinculo cum eisdem, eorum profectum, sicut decet viros religiosos, proprium reputantes, ita quod idem imperator, cum illuc deo dante pervenerit, fraternam inter vos inveniat unitatem, quia, si aliter faceretis, non solum apostolicam et imperialem incurreretis offensam, verum etiam in detractionem vestram ora quorumlibet audientium laxaretis...'. In *Tabulae*, no. 368, p. 322.

## CHAPTER 2

---

### FORGING IDENTITIES: RELIGIOUS DRESS AND THE STRUGGLE OF THE AUGUSTINIAN HERMITS AND THE CARMELITES FRIARS TO FIT IN THE EUROPEAN RELIGIOUS SCENE

Being a newcomer to the assembly of religious orders in Western Europe after 1215 and the promulgation of Lateran IV's canon 13 was not an easy business. Some orders, in fact, did not last long.<sup>1</sup> Although the council had decreed that new foundations had to take an already approved rule in order to be considered valid,<sup>2</sup> the decades that followed the council proved that there was more to it than that. Reality was more complex than what the canon wanted to enforce, and papal policy more flexible. New orders did indeed have to demonstrate their legitimacy and their right to exist, giving proof of both their antiquity and their original contribution to the Church. In this process, it was essential to claim an identity of their own, one that clearly distinguished them from any other existent orders. As canon 13 implied, repetition was not needed in the Church – particularly after the proliferation of new religious foundations that had occurred during the previous one and a half centuries – let alone the imitation of well-settled and renowned orders by some new growing groups.

---

<sup>1</sup> For instance, the case of the Sack Friars and the Pied Friars. See Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars*, pp. 173-230.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 50, n. 111.

Dress, inserted in the system of differences that emerged in the period, became a fundamental factor in this process of searching and constructing the collective identity of new orders. It was, indeed, a key issue for two of the last mendicant orders that arrived to the scene during the thirteenth century: the Augustinian Friars and the Carmelites. Moreover, it was particularly the case since, as David Knowles has pointed out, both orders had to deal with the fact that they had rather obscure origins.<sup>3</sup> Thus, they needed to deal with a number of things that put them at a certain disadvantage with their religious counterparts: first of all, they could not benefit from the figure of a charismatic founder, key to the success of both Franciscans and Dominicans; secondly, they lacked an organised set of rules established from the beginning to help them profile their way of living; and third, both Augustinian Friars and Carmelites had an earlier tradition of their own, which was not modelled following the two main mendicants orders,<sup>4</sup> so they did not seem to match the criteria already set out for them. They were, to some extent, at a loss in the grid of thirteenth-century religious orders. Knowles' image of feeble-minded relatives admitted at the fringe of family reunions is a pertinent portrait of the situation in which these two orders found themselves during the first stage of their presence in Europe.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, what was at stake for both orders amounted much more than the need to gain supporters. They needed to raise their profiles quickly, if they did not want to face suppression.

---

<sup>3</sup> David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 195. The origins of both orders discussed below.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 196.

This was a tricky and complex process, in which the orders had both to develop a strong internal and external identity, and to deal, through the arbitration of the Holy See, with other the objections coming from other reluctant orders. In fact, as we will see below, the substantial number of papal letters and other written works addressing the matter of the habit show how challenging it was for these two orders to develop an identity of their own that could be widely accepted, beyond the basic need for identification. This was especially true with regard to their attire, as they found themselves within the margins of a vaguely defined sartorial canon, developed mostly according to custom, on a “first arrived-first served” basis, so to speak. Whether because of too little originality, to the point of being mistaken for another order, as was the case of the Augustinian Friars, or too much novelty, like the scandalous striped cloak of the Carmelites, finding the correct habit was an unexpectedly controversial and difficult subject.



## STEALING THE LOOK: THE AUGUSTINIAN FRIARS AND THEIR TROUBLESOME HABITS

On 24 March 1240, Pope Gregory IX sent the bull *Dudum apparuit* to the bishops of the March of Ancona,<sup>6</sup> to deal with the controversy aroused by the habits worn by the Bonites, a brotherhood of hermits founded by a certain John Boni, which also was one of the main groups to join what became, in the following decade, the Order of the Augustinian Friars, or *Ordo eremitarum sancti Augustini*. The problem which the papal document was trying to deal with was that the hermit brothers of John Boni had discarded their staves – one of the traditional symbols of hermits – and had decided to wear cords in the place of belts – also a distinctive part of the hermit attire. The issue, however, was not only that they did no longer look like hermits;<sup>7</sup> the cord was by then a well-known identifying feature of the Franciscan habit, and the Friars Minor were always quick to defend the elements that distinguished their particular “brand”.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, these hermits not only looked like Franciscans, but they also went around begging for alms, diverting the charity of the faithful – who took them to be Friars Minor – away

---

<sup>6</sup> In B. Van Lwijk (ed.), “Bullarium Ordinis Eremitarum S. Augustini. (Periodus formationis 1187-1256)”, in *Augustiniana*, XII, 1-2 (1962), no. 22, pp. 180-2. See below, n. 9.

<sup>7</sup> On the traditional hermit attire, see Emanuele Boaga and Augustin Devaux, “L’abito degli eremiti”, in LSDE, pp. 517-20.

<sup>8</sup> As Andrew Jotischky has pointed out, the protection of the exclusivity of their appearance sought by the Friars Minor was also present in Salimbene de Adam’s chronicle, where he attacked the similarity in the dress of others orders, such as the Friars of the Sack. In Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and antiquity*, p. 69; pp. 73-4; Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica*, Giuseppe Scalia (ed.) (Turnholt: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1998), pp. 385-88.

from their intended recipients, who thus demanded the pope to intervene, invoking scandal.<sup>9</sup>

Pope Alexander IV officially established the Order of the Augustinian Friars on 9 April 1256, through the bull *Licet ecclesie catholice*.<sup>10</sup> The order was, in fact, the result of the union of different groups of hermits scattered in the northern region of Italy: the Hermit Brothers of Tuscany (the largest group), the already mentioned Bonites, the Hermits of Brettino, or Brettini, the Williamites and the Hermits of Montefavale – although the last two withdrew from the union soon after it was signed.<sup>11</sup> After Alexander IV had approved this *Magna unio* and following Lateran IV's canon 13, the new order undertook to follow the Rule of St Augustine, as some of the other recently founded groups were already doing, most prominently the Dominicans.<sup>12</sup> However, beyond the name and the rule, this union also entailed a more significant change, as it marked their transition from hermits to mendicants.

---

<sup>9</sup> Gregory IX, *Dudum apparuit*, 24 March 1240: '...Dudum apparuit in partibus Lombardiae religio, cuius professores vocati Eremitae Fratris Joannis Boni Ordinis S. Augustini, nunc succincti tunicas cum corrigiis baculos gestantes in manibus, nunc vero dimissis baculis incedebant pecuniam pro eleemosynis aliisque subsidiis deposcentes, et adeo variantes Ordinis sui substantiam, ut dilectis filiis Fratribus Minoribus uniformes in derogationem multiplicem ipsorum Ordinis crederentur, eisdem propter hoc minorem apud fideles sentientibus in suis oportunitatibus charitatem...Verum cum quidam Eremitae praefati Ordinis S. Augustini ac alii religiosi supradicti eremitis conformes habitu in eadem Marchia constituti formam praedictae identitatis prohibitam gestare dicantur in eorundem Fratrum Minorum infamiam et scandalum plurimorum, Fraternitatibus vestris mandamus, ut universis et singulis eremitarum et religiosorum praedictorum districtius iniungatis, ut circa praemissa memoratae provisionis statutum inviolabiliter observantes, eum, qui veniens monitus non resipuerit, excommunicandum ad eis, donec redeat ad mandatum, a suo consortio excludere non postponant...', in B. Van Lwijk (ed.), "Bullarium" (1962), no. 22, pp. 180-181; David Gutierrez, *The Augustinians in the Middle Ages, 1256-1356* (Roma: Augustinian Historical Institute, Villanova University, 1984), p. 33; Cordelia Warr, "Hermits, Habits and History: the dress of the Augustinian Hermits", pp. 17-28; p. 20; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and antiquity*, p. 74

<sup>10</sup> B. Van Lwijk (ed.), "Bullarium", in *Augustiniana XIV*, 1-2 (1964), no. 163, pp. 239-41

<sup>11</sup> For a detailed history of the order and its formation, see David Gutierrez, *The Augustinians in the Middle Ages*, particularly pp. 23-54, and Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars*, pp. 72-85

<sup>12</sup> G. R. Galbraith, *The Constitutions of the Dominican Order*, p. 34.

Thus, preaching, begging and leading a life of absolute poverty also became the key elements of their religious profession, in a model that now did not resemble so much the traditional hermits of the desert, but the apostolic ideal of the Dominicans and Franciscans.<sup>13</sup> Yet, this shift towards a mendicant vocation was not a novelty only introduced by Alexander IV and the “Great Union”, for it had started to manifest itself within the different groups that formed the union at least a decade earlier. Among the distinctive signs marking this change, a central one, albeit not one without controversy, was the appearance of their habit.

Indeed, the kind of ‘scandalous situation’ described in *Dudum apparuit* of 24 March 1240, was not new to the papacy. The same letter explains how the bishop of Ostia, then a papal legate in the region of Ancona, had already complained about a similar matter. In that occasion, the pope decided that, for the peace of both parties and in order to avoid any confusion in the ‘identity of the clothes’ of the order – which would give rise to more serious scandals – the external colours for the clothes of these problematic religious had to be black or white. Furthermore, the document states that, since they had already chosen black, the pope wanted them to remain satisfied with this colour. He also indicated that they were to wear enlarged and extended sleeves, which should almost resemble hoods, as well as large belts over their tunics, which were to be openly noticeable to everyone. In fact, he emphasised that by no means should their clothes conceal their outer belts and that the brothers should carry in their hands their five-foot staves,

---

<sup>13</sup> Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars*, p. 87.

announcing expressly to which order they belonged in their petition for alms. They also had to curtail the length of their clothes to such a degree that their shoes could be freely seen.<sup>14</sup> To sum it up, the hermits had to be clearly different from the cord-girded and barefooted Franciscans, and these same provisions were to be applied for the Bonites.

However, the matter was not easily settled, at least not for the Franciscans. This time the problem involved the Brettini, another of the groups of hermits which took part of the *Magna unio* of 1256, and who had also taken the Augustinian Rule as guidance.<sup>15</sup> Yet, apparently this faction of hermits had caused this kind of trouble before. According to David Gutierrez, the ‘certain hermits of the Order of St Augustine’ (*ac alii religiosi supradicti eremitis*) mentioned in the last part of *Dudum apparuit* as another subject of the Franciscan complaint, were in fact the Brettini.<sup>16</sup> Unlike the Bonites, who seem to have obeyed promptly, the Brettini turned out to be rather stubborn: they appear to have stalled the execution of the bull, which meant that the

---

<sup>14</sup> Gregory IX, *Dudum apparuit*, 24 March 1240: ‘...Sane cum per venerabilem fratrem nostrum Ostiensem episcopum et bonae memoriae T(homam) tituli S. Sabinae presbyterum Cardinalem, tunc in partibus illis legatione fungentem, huiusmodi praesumptio ad nostram audientiam pervenisset, Nos, ne identitas vestium in Ordinibus ipsis confusionem pareret et inde scandala graviora consurgerent, ad utrorumque quietem providimus statuendum, ut Prior et universi ac singuli fratres praedicti Ordinis S. Augustini in exterioribus vestimentis, quae nigri vel albi debebant esse coloris, quorum altero, videlicet nigro iam electo ab eis ipsos volumus manere contentos: largas et protensas manicas quasi ad instar cucullarum et desuper isa ferant peramplas corrigias et patenter omnibus apparentes, ita quod omnes cincti deforis eas vestibis nequaquam contegant, et portantes in manibus baculos quinque palmorum grandium, ac expresse in eleemosynarum petitione cuius sint Ordinis declarantes, adeo suarum vestium longitudinem temperent, quod a quibusque ipsorum calceamenta libere videantur, ut sic habitus confusione semota et sublata materia scandali a praedictorum Ordinum fratribus possit virtutum Domino liberius et gratius deserviri....’, in B. Van Luijk (ed.), “Bullarium” (1962), no. 22, pp. 181.

<sup>15</sup> See Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars*, pp. 81-2.

<sup>16</sup> See above, n. 9, ‘...Verum cum quidam Eremitae praefati Ordinis S. Augustini ac alii religiosi supradicti eremitis conformes habitu in eadem Marchia constituti ...’, in B. Van Luijk (ed.), “Bullarium” (1962), no. 22; p. 181. David Gutierrez, *The Augustinians in the Middle Ages*, p. 37

pope had to reissue his order not only once, in the bull *Apparente dudum in*, of 18 July 1240,<sup>17</sup> but three more times during the following month of August,<sup>18</sup> probably putting the papacy's patience to the test.

The first letter was sent to the bishops of Lombardy and repeated the points expressed in *Dudum apparuit*, reemphasising the call to the bishops to apply its prescriptions.<sup>19</sup> After this proved to be ineffective, the second letter was sent on 18 August, again to the bishops of the March of Ancona.<sup>20</sup> Like the bull from July, it reiterated the same directions dictated in March. However, the Brettini were not yet prepared to comply. In fact, they went to the pope asking for a variation: the bull mentions that a certain Brother Andrew, general prior of the major part of the hermits of the March, who, having gone to Rome with some brothers to appeal, 'humbly supplicated' that the pope, mercifully dispensing them from his previous command about the black cowls, would also let them wear their robes unbelted (*cucullas portare discinctas*),<sup>21</sup> as they considered this was enough to make a distinction from other friars. The pope finally acceded, letting them wear their grey habit of coarse wool without belts, making it clear that it was a decision that all the

---

<sup>17</sup> B. Van Lwijk (ed.), "Bullarium" (1962), p. 182.

<sup>18</sup> Gregory IX, *Dudum apparuit*, August 18 1240; idem, *Cum venerabiles fratribus*, 21 August 1240; and idem, *Licet vobis dederimus*, 24 August 1240, in ibid (1962), nos. 24-26, pp. 182-5; Gutierrez, *The Augustinians in the Middle Ages*, p. 37

<sup>19</sup> Gregory IX, *Apparente dudum in*, 18 July 1240, in B. Van Lwijk (ed.), "Bullarium" (1962), no. 23, p. 182.

<sup>20</sup> Gregory IX, *Dudum apparuit*, 18 August 1240, in ibid (1962), no. 24, pp. 182-4. Also, B. Van Lwijk, "Gli Eremiti Neri Nel Dugento. Con particolare riguardo al territorio pisano e toscano. Origine, sviluppo ed unione", *Collana Storica* n° 7 (Pisa: Biblioteca Del Bollettino Storico Pisano, 1968), pp. XVI-114; pp. 34-5.

<sup>21</sup> The word *cuculla* actually means 'cowl' but for fourteenth-century Augustinian writer Jordan of Quedlinburg it was a longer garment (see below, p. 133), so it is probably safe to assume, as Balbino Rano and Gutierrez do, that in this case the word is referring to a garment that covered the whole body, like a hooded tunic (Gutierrez, *The Augustinians in the Middle Ages*, p. 37; Balbino Rano, "Agostiniani" in LSDE, pp. 378-80; p. 378). For a classification of the different types of monastic cowls, and cowl-cloaks, see K. Hallinger, *Gorze-Kluny*, pp. 667-80.

hermits represented by Brother Andrew had to obey – but only them, as those brothers who did not want to wear their habits without a belt had to stick to the one already laid down for the rest of hermits.<sup>22</sup> Yet, as the two subsequent bulls suggest, both sent out within a week with instructions to enforce the use of the grey unbelted habit,<sup>23</sup> the matter was not easy to settle. Due to the lack of sources, we can only speculate about the reasons that the Brettini brothers might have had not to obey the directives that Brother Andrew had managed to get approved by the pope. Perhaps there was dissent at the interior of the group on how they wanted their attire to be, but whatever the motives, this episode shows how complex and important the role of clothes was in the process of developing collective identities for both the interested party and the papacy, who wanted harmony to prevail.

---

<sup>22</sup> Gregory IX, *Dudum apparuit*, 18 August 1240: ‘...Frater Andreas Generalis Prior maioris partis Eremitarum Marchiae cum quibusdam fratribus suis in nostra praesentia constitutus, se admitti ad prosecutionem appellationis iam dictae cum instantia postulavit. Nos autem frivolam reputantes eandem, ipsum super hoc, sicut nec debuimus, non duximus audiendum. Caeterum dicti Prior et fratres pro se et eremitis praedictis Nobis humiliter supplicarunt, ut eis cucullas portare discinctas concedere curaremus, mandatum nostrum de cucullis nigri coloris ferendis misericorditer relaxantes, eo quod talis usus cucullarum ad distinctionem praedictorum habituum satis sufficere videretur. Nos autem in hac parte supplicationibus duximus annuendum. Quare vobis per Apostolica scripta firmiter praecipimus et mandamus, quatenus praedictos eremitas cucullas de caetero, ut dictum est, gestare discinctas singuli vestrum per suas civitates et dioeceses...Non obstante statuto de ferendis corrigiis super cucullis ab eis edito et per Nos, ut dicitur, confirmato. In aliis vero eremitis et religiosis superius nominatis, qui se ad portandum cucullas, similiter discinctas, adstringere noluerint, faciatis statutum iuxta traditam vobis formam inviolabiliter observari.’ In B. Van Luijk (ed.), “Bullarium” (1962), no. 24, pp. 183.

<sup>23</sup> Gregory IX, *Cum venerabiles fratribus*, 21 August 1240: ‘Cum venerabilibus Fratribus nostris, universis episcopis de Anconitana Marchia dederimus in praeceptis, ut singuli per suas civitates et dioeceses Fratrem Andream Priorem et eremitas eiusdem provinciae sibi subiectos, post terminum quem vos ei duxeritis praefigendum, sub cuiusvis appellationis et contradictionis obtentu, per censuras ecclesiasticas cucullas discinctas gestare compellant, mandamus, quatenus eremitis praedictis ad hoc faciendum competentem auctoritate nostra terminum [imponatis]...’; idem, *Licet vobis dederimus*, 24 August 1240: ‘Licet vobis dederimus in mandatis ut Fratri Andreae Priori et eremitis Anconitanae Marchiae sibi subiectis ad gestandum cucullas discinctas praefigeretis terminum competentem; nolentes tamen, ut negotium huiusmodi diutius retardetur, districte vobis per iterata scripta mandamus, quatenus Priori et eremitis praedictis ad id faciendum proximum Festum Nativitatis Dominicae auctoritate nostra terminum praefigatis...’. Both in *ibid.*, nos. 25 and 26 respectively, pp. 184-5.

Still, the controversies around the habits of these groups of Augustinian Hermits were far from over, as bulls addressing the matter kept being issued. The Franciscans seemed to remain wary and in December 1240 they secured the exclusivity of their habits, thanks to the bull *Quia confusio habitus* granted by Gregory IX. The document stated that no one external to the Franciscan Order, not even a religious, was subsequently allowed to wear the Franciscan habit or clothes that the Franciscans could consider too similar to theirs.<sup>24</sup> Yet, apparently the unruly Brettini did not care much about it, as Innocent IV had to reissue the bull in November of 1243, repeating that anyone wearing a habit that could resemble the Franciscan one had the obligation to abandon it.<sup>25</sup>

However, and despite the endeavours of the Franciscans, this was far from being the end of it. Even though by this point the pope probably wished to close the conflict once and for all, the matter was still making noise at the papal chancery thirteen years later. Apparently, the troublesome Brettini continued to show their unwillingness to comply docilely, and the Franciscans protested again to Pope Alexander IV in 1256.<sup>26</sup> The reply from the Holy See came again in favour of the Friars Minor, through the bull *Ricordamur liquido* of 22 February, addressed to the archbishops and bishops in different regions of Italy, reiterating the commands given by Gregory IX in 1240. The Brettini had to wear their habits without a belt, and all the other hermits must

---

<sup>24</sup> Gregory IX, *Quia confusio habitus*, 13 December 1240, in BF I, no. 328, p. 289.

<sup>25</sup> Innocent IV, *Quia confusio habitus*, 20 November 1243, in *ibid.*, no. 19 p. 317; B. Van Luijk (ed.), "Bullarium" (1962), no. 29, p. 188. The bull was repeated again on 29 November 1243, 30 May and 23 July 1244 (BF I, no. 24, p. 319; no. 46, p. 341; and no. 63, p. 348 respectively).

<sup>26</sup> B. Van Luijk, 'Gli Eremiti Neri Nel Dugento', p. 35.

wear black or white,<sup>27</sup> thus enforcing the compliance with the system of differences of religious clothes: whether it meant wearing clothes of a different colour, or not using the infamous belt, the important thing was that they were easily distinguished from the Friars Minor.

Nevertheless, the controversy had even gone beyond the frontiers of Italy: a document from 17 June 1256 shows that the papal chancery received a communication from bishops of Bohemia, Moravia and Austria, denouncing that some friars from the Augustinian Order had left their staves and had been wearing tunics fastened with ropes instead of belts, again looking like Friars Minor, as they went around asking for alms.<sup>28</sup> It must have felt like an irritating *déjà-vu* for the Holy See: more than fifteen years on and it seemed that the whole controversy was back again to square one. Furthermore, the dispute is rather puzzling, as one would assume that, by this point, with the numerous and successive bulls on the matter, both the uniformity and the individuality of the Augustinian habit should have been somehow

---

<sup>27</sup> Alexander IV, *Ricordamur liquido*, 22 February 1256: ‘...Verum, cum sicut accepimus, ipsi Eremitae de Bricinis, obtentu quarundam litterarum super hoc a Sede Apostolica obtentorum, ac etiam alii eremitae, iam dicti, contra statutum iam dictum et provisionem ad communem pacem provide factam et in eorundem Fratrum Minorum infamiam et scandalum plurimorum iam in pluribus venire praesumpserunt, et Nos prorsus velimus praedicta, quae salubriter statuta fuerunt a supradicto praedecessore nostro, ubique et ab omnibus eremitis sive religiosis, cuiuscumque sint Ordinis, in exteriori habitu Fratribus Minoribus antedictis conformibus, inviolabiliter observari, fraternitati vestrae per Apostolica scripta firmiter praecipiendo mandamus, quatenus praedictos Eremitas de caetero statutum praedictum firmiter observare, ac illos de Bricinis cucullas, prout ipsi ut supra dictum est tunc acceptarunt, gestare discinctas, ac alios omnes, qui nigras non portant seu albas, singuli vestrum per suas civitates et dioeceses, sublato cuiuslibet appellationis et contradictionis obstaculo et litteris Apostolicis de corrigiis cinctis super cucullas non portandis, per eos impetratis...’, in B. Van Luijk (ed.), “Bullarium” (1964), no. 161, pp. 236-8.

<sup>28</sup> ‘Praesulibus Bohemiae, Moraviae necnon Austriae.

Eisdem scribit “apparuisse religiosum Ordinem Eremitarum Ordinis Sancti Augustini, qui succincti tunicas cum corrigiis, baculos gestantes in manibus, nunc vero dimissis baculis, incedunt pecuniam pro eleemosynis aliisque deposcentes subsidiis, et adeo variantes interdum habitus sui formam, ut fratribus Minoribus in derogationem multiplicem ipsorum Ordinis crederentur. Quod omni modo Pontifex in melius vertere studuit”...’, in Carlos Alonso (ed.), *Bullarium Ordinis Sancti Augustini: Regesta. Tom. 1, 1256-1362* (Romae: Institutum Historicum Augustinianum 1997), no. 13, p. 5.



implemented – even if imperfectly – across the order, including its “international” expansion. Perhaps the whole episode went down to the Franciscans trying to hinder their competition; perhaps the Augustinian Friars were still in a stage of development, struggling to achieve the said uniformity, which was further complicated with different prescriptions applying to different groups within the order. In any case, they certainly became keenly aware of the fundamental role that their habits had in this whole process of differentiation, competition and identity formation.

In fact, the Franciscans were not the only ones complaining about the habits of the Augustinian Friars. Grievances had come from the Dominicans as well, and they had also managed to obtain a privilege for the exclusivity of their habit in October of 1239.<sup>29</sup> With their habits consisting mainly of a white tunic and a black cloak, the concern of the Friars Preacher was not a far-fetched one: whether it was because both orders wore black garments, or because – as Frances Andrews points out – the white tunic used as undergarment by the Augustinian Friars might have been sometimes noticeable under the black tunics,<sup>30</sup> or perhaps because some groups within the Augustinians Friars kept wearing white as well as black tunics for a while, the fact is that the pope had to keep intervening. The Dominicans sought the

---

<sup>29</sup> Gregory IX, *Quia confusio habitus*, October 25 1239: ‘...Quia confusio habitus semper confusionem inducit Ordinem, et etiam animorum, auctoritate Apostolica districte duximus inhibendum, ut nulli Ordinum, si quos de cetero creari contigerit, vel hactenus post Ordinem dilectorum filiorum Fratrum Praedicatorum fuere creati, habitum ipsorum deferre liceat absque nostra licentia speciali...qui dictum habitum contra inhibitionem nostram deferre presumpserit, ad deponendum ipsum, cum a prefatis Fratribus requisiti fueritis...’, in *Bullarium Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum*, Thomae Ripoll (ed.), Tom. I (Romae: Ex Typographia Hieronymi Mainardi, 1729), no. 195, p. 107.

<sup>30</sup> Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars*, p. 89.

repetition of their exclusivity rights again, first in 1244,<sup>31</sup> then in 1246,<sup>32</sup> and again on 5 May 1256.<sup>33</sup> However this was seemingly not enough, as in 1256 the bull *Recordamur liquido* – issued twice, on 17 June and 24 June – directed the now established Order of the Augustinians Hermits to remove any white habits and to observe the prescribed use of the black cowls<sup>34</sup> – a paradoxical instruction, since the same pope had approved their use of a white scapular as a further garment only a year earlier.<sup>35</sup> Yet, it seems that the Augustinians were not entirely compliant, for the bull *Meminimus nos per*, issued on 15 October 1259, instructed again that the hermit friars had to give up any habits looking too similar to the Dominican one.<sup>36</sup>

In the highly competitive environment in which the different mendicant orders found themselves during this period – striving for alms and for support, not only in the economical, but also in the political sense – these disputes were about both identity and status. Their habits, as controversial as they became, helped the Augustinian Hermits to delineate and develop their

---

<sup>31</sup>Innocent IV, *Quia confusio habitus*, 25 March 1244: ‘...auctoritate presentium districtius inhihemus, ut nulli, sive sit in Religionis Ordine, vel extra Ordinem constitutus, habitum vestrum, aut ita consimilem, quod propter eum Frater Predicator credi possit, deferre liceat, absque mandato Sedis Apostolice speciali; ceterum, ut dicta inhibitio majorem consequatur effectum, statuimus, ut hi, qui habitum vestrum, vel predicto modo sibi consimilem, deferre presumpserint, ad deponendum ipsum, per Diecesanos loco, cum a vobis requisitu fuerint...’, in *Bullarium Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum*, Tom. I, no. 58, p. 138; B. Van Luijk, ‘Gli Eremiti Neri Nel Dugento’, appendix IV.

<sup>32</sup>Potthast, Vol. 2, no. 12176, p. 1031. This bull, however, does not appear in the *Bullarium Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum*; B. Van Luijk, ‘Gli Eremiti Neri Nel Dugento’, appendix IV.

<sup>33</sup>Alexander IV, *Quia confusio habitus*, 5 May 1256, in *Bullarium Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum*, Tom. I, no. 93, p. 304; B. Van Luijk, ‘Gli Eremiti Neri Nel Dugento’, appendix IV.

<sup>34</sup>Alexander IV, *Recordamur liquido*, 17 June 1256: ‘...ut priores ac eremitas Ordinis Sancti Augustini ac alios, qui nigras penitus seu albas cucullas non portant, ut usque ad festum Omnium Sanctorum proxime venturum nigri prorsus coloris cucullas, abiectis albis deferendas...’, in Carlos Alonso (ed.), *Bullarium Ordinis Sancti Augustini*, no. 12, pp. 4-5. Not to be confused with the bull *Ricordamur liquido* mentioned earlier, of February 22 1256; Cordelia Warr, “Hermits, Habits and History”, p. 19.

<sup>35</sup>With the bull *Pia desideria*, of 22 July 1255. See below, p. 126, n. 54.

<sup>36</sup>Alexander IV, *Meminimus nos per*, 15 October 1259, in Carlos Alonso (ed.), *Bullarium Ordinis Sancti Augustini*, no. 58, p. 18; Cordelia Warr, “Hermits, Habits and History”, p. 19.

unique identity, both in their internal process of transition from scattered hermit groups to a unified mendicant order, and in their rapport with the other existing orders. However, these disputes were also an expression of the relations of power and status that lay at the very core of the Church as an institutional body, even those that were only implicit. Franciscans and Dominicans had gained, by this point, a clear prominence over the other mendicant orders. They were older – even though the Augustinians tried at some point to make St Francis an Augustinian friar, partly to make themselves older than the Minors, and thus to help them prove their legitimacy in the face of Lateran IV and the Second Council of Lyons of 1274<sup>37</sup> – they were bigger and more extended, and they already had a permanent presence in the major cities of Europe. The Augustinian Friars had the odds against them when trying to rival their prestigious competitors, but after a challenging formation period, they managed to level the field, and despite the controversies, their habits had played an essential role in this process.

### **From the habit of hermits to the habit of St Augustine: The construction of the Augustinian Friars' identity**

The study of the first stages of the process that led to the definition of the habit of the Augustinian Friars also shows, however, the difficulties that the development of the order's internal organisation entailed. As mentioned before, the lack of both the charismatic founding figure, and of the

---

<sup>37</sup> E. L. Saak, *Creating Augustine. Interpreting Augustine and Augustinianism in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 72-3.

organisational set of rules provided from the beginning meant that, for the different groups integrating the order, finding a common ground was not a straight path. These two elements should not be overlooked, as the need to fill the gap with some authoritative voice – including in the matter of the habit – was still present a century after the *Magna unio* when, in 1357, Jordan of Quedlinburg (1330-1380, also known as Jordan of Saxony, but not to be confused with his Dominican homologue who lived a century earlier) wrote his *Liber vitasfratum*.<sup>38</sup> The Augustinian Friars needed to assert a certain pedigree – in a process that, as we will see below, resembled closely the one experienced by the Carmelites – to secure their place and their identity. As E. L. Saak has pointed out, only the Augustinian Hermits ‘developed a unique self-identity as Augustine’s true sons and heirs, tracing their order directly to Augustine himself,’ asserting ‘an image of themselves as the new embodiment of Augustine.’<sup>39</sup>

Here the habit had again a remarkable place: Jordan dedicated chapter 15 of his work to the discussion of the habit of the order (*De habitu ordinis*) and stated that ‘there is no doubt however that Augustine was dressed with a black habit and a leather belt – the habit finally established for the order – and that immediately after his baptism he put on this habit, Saint Ambrose lending his authority to the action, and that his brothers in the

---

<sup>38</sup> Jordan of Saxony, *The Life of the Brethren, Liber Vitasfratrum*, Gerard Deighan (trans.), John E. Rotelle (ed.) (Villanova: Augustinian Press, 1993). For the critical edition of the Latin text, see Jordani de Saxonica, *Liber vitasfratum*, Rudolf Arbesmann and Winfrid Hümpfner (eds.), in *Cassiacum: Studies in St. Augustine and the Augustinian Order* (New York: Cosmopolitan Science and Art Service Co., 1943).

<sup>39</sup> E. L. Saak, *Creating Augustine*, pp. 57-8. See Chapter 2, “The Rebirth of Augustine” (pp. 57-79), for a discussion of the way in which Augustine was ‘created anew as the founding father’ of the Augustinian Hermits (p. 63).

wilderness wore the same habit.<sup>40</sup> Henry of Friemar had adopted the same strategy about two decades earlier, in his *Tractatus de origine et progressu ordinis fratrum heremitarum et vero ac proprio titulo eiusdem* (1334). Henry stated that after St Ambrose had baptised him, St Augustine assumed a 'hermit habit', which consisted of in a black cowl and a belt worn over it.<sup>41</sup> That the Augustinian Hermits were indeed the true and own sons of St Augustine, and that he was their true father, was evident since he had worn their habit while he was living as a hermit, and had handed them over their rule of life.<sup>42</sup> This was a strategy in which, as Cordelia Warr has shown, art commissions depicting St Augustine dressed as an Augustinian Hermit – particularly in scenes portraying his baptism and vestition – played a fundamental propagandistic role from the fourteenth century onwards. Here the black cowl and the leather belt soon became the Augustinian Friars' garments *par excellence*. This was a recourse that turned out to be especially important when confronting the claims from the Augustinian canons, who also declared to be the true and only heirs of the saint.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>40</sup> Jordan of Saxony, *The Life of the Brethren*, p. 95. See also E. L. Saak, *Creating Augustine*, p. 74; Cordelia Warr, "Hermits, Habits and History", p. 21.

<sup>41</sup> 'Quod autem habitum heremiticum Augustinus assumpserit et portaverit patet per Ambrosium in Sermone de baptismo et conversione sancti Augustini, ubi dicit, quod, eo baptizato per beatum Ambrosium, cuculla nigra indutus est desuper zona cincta.' In "De origine et progressu ordinis fratrum eremitarum s. Augustini et vero ac proprio titulo eiusdem (Tractatus Fr. henrici de Vrimarya)", *Analecta Augustiniana* IV (1911-1912), pp. 298-307, 321-328; p. 300.

<sup>42</sup> 'Quod enim ordo fratrum heremitarum sancti Augustini et fratres illius ordinis sint veri et proprii filii beati Augustini et ipse sit eorum verus pater, ex hoc patet quod eorum habitum in heremo portavit et eis Regulam vivendi tradidit...', in *ibid*, p. 302.

<sup>43</sup> Cordelia Warr, "Hermits, Habits and History", pp. 17-28. On this topic see also Kaspar Elm, "Augustinus Canonicus–Augustinus Eremita: A Quattrocento Cause Célèbre", in Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (eds.), *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1990), pp. 83-107.

Moreover, Jordan of Quedlinburg also acknowledged that the diversity of the first members of the order was certainly reflected through their habit. He advanced, indeed, the following explanation: ‘after the passing of saint Augustine, the brothers were scattered in all directions, as we have related, and so there arose a diversity in habit as well as in the divine office and the other observances. This lasted until the time of the reunion. The simple brothers of that time were unsure what their correct habit should be, and so the Apostolic See looked back to the first beginnings of the order and decided that they should use their former habit.’<sup>44</sup> We know that Jordan’s account was mythical history and that these were not the actual origins of the order. What is worthy of highlighting here, however, is that, in this process of elaboration and appropriation of an *a posteriori* identity, the habit not only had this central mythical and foundational meaning attached to it, but also acted as a reflection of the different elements that were involved in the configuration of the order’s complex identity during its first century.

This variety is a fact also reflected in the *Bullarium* gathered by B. Van Lwijk for the “formation period” from 1187 to 1256,<sup>45</sup> with more than twenty bulls related to the habit, probably in an effort to give some kind of rationale to the visual identity of these groups. As Jordan of Quedlinburg had rightly acknowledged, during this period, the identity of the habit of the groups that later constituted the order, continued to change. As a result, they kept turning to the pope to help them resolve and give a legal endorsement to these

---

<sup>44</sup> Jordan of Saxony, *The Life of the Brethren*, p. 95.

<sup>45</sup> In *Augustiniana*, XII, (1962), pp. 161-195, pp. 358-390; XIII, Fasc. 3-4 (1963), pp. 74-510; XIV, Fasc. 1-2 (1964), pp. 216-249.

issues. For instance, in 1235, Gregory IX confirmed that the Brettini should always observe cheapness in price and colour, for the 'the Kingdom of God does not consist of precious clothes'. Therefore, they had to be satisfied with four tunics, one cowl and two scapulars, and wear a large one-piece belt over the tunic (the same that, as seen above, they seemed to dislike later on in 1240). They could also continue to wear sandals, shoes or the like if they had been doing so, following their own judgement.<sup>46</sup>

Nevertheless, over the years the troublesome group kept asking for changes: in 1240 came the concession for the grey unbelted habit instead of the black girded one<sup>47</sup> in use by the Bonites. However, it seemed that not all the Brettini were happy with the request made by the general prior Andrew: the group soon looked to resume the use of the belt, and in 1245 they obtained the bull *Religiosam vitam*, which stated that 'always observing the cheapness of their habits', they were allowed to have four tunics, two scapulars and one grey cowl, and a long one-piece belt.<sup>48</sup> Still, apparently they had trouble in making up their minds, as in 1256 they got Pope

---

<sup>46</sup> Gregory IX, *Quae omnium Conditoris*, 13 March 1235: '...Ceterum humiliter attendentes quod Regnum Dei non in pretiosa veste consistit et quod induit paupertatis habitum Conditore singulorum, laudabiliter statuistis, ut fratres vestri Ordinis de colore seu valore vestium minime contententes semper in eis vilitatem observent, et quattuor tunicis, una cuculla et duobus scapulariis sint contenti; item quilibet frater cingatur desuper ampla corrigia non consuta et illa contentus existat; item quod non utantur lineis indumentis, nec extra eremum possessiones, praeter hortum et silvam, habere praesumant. Super habendis caligiis, calceis et similibus prior secundum suum arbitrium potestatem habeat disponendi...', in B. Van Lwijk (ed.), "Bullarium" (1962), no. 19, pp. 178-9.

<sup>47</sup> See above, p. 113-4.

<sup>48</sup> Innocent IV, *Religiosam vitam*, 3 November 1245: '...Caeterum quia Regnum Dei non in veste pretiosa consistit et Conditore ac Redemptore humani generis ad imitandum humilitatis exemplum induit habitum paupertatis, fratres vestri Ordinis de colore seu valore vestium, sicut in eodem Ordine statutum esse dignoscitur, de caetero non contendant, sed semper vilitatem in eis pro consequenda stola gloriae observantes, quattuor tunicis, duobus scapulariis ac una cuculla coloris grisei sint contenti, et quilibet frater ampla corrigia non consuta cingatur desuper et illa contentus existat...', in B. Van Lwijk (ed.), "Bullarium", in *Augustiniana XIII*, 3-4 (1963), no. 55, p. 372.

Alexander IV to allow them to go back to the unfastened habit.<sup>49</sup> There was probably some dissent within the group, as the pope had to repeat this command again within a couple of days.<sup>50</sup> With this odd back and forth, keeping a cohesive identity through their habits proved to be somewhat of a challenge for the Brettini brothers.

Likewise, although less problematically, the Bonites also asked for adjustments over time. In September of 1250, Innocent IV had agreed to give them a dispensation from having to carry a staff, as they had been ordered to do ten years earlier, when their problems with the Franciscans arose and their habits were established for the first time.<sup>51</sup> This dispensation was extended three years later to the rest of the groups of Augustinian Hermits, who had informed the pope that the staff was proving to be a nuisance for various reasons and affecting their peace of mind.<sup>52</sup> The petition might be

---

<sup>49</sup> Alexander IV, *Ricordamur liquido*, 22 February 1256, See above, p. 116.

<sup>50</sup> Alexander IV, *Cum venerabilibus*, 25 February 1256: ‘...Cum venerabilibus fratribus nostris universis episcopis de Marchia Anconitana dederimus nostris litteris in praeceptis, ut singuli per suas civitates et dioceses Eremitas de Bricinibus Ordinis S. Augustini eiusdem provinciae post terminum, quem vos eis duxeritis praefigendum, sublato cuiuslibet appellationis et contradictionis obstaculo, per censuram ecclesiasticam cucullas discinctas gestare compellant, discretioni vestrae per Apostolica scripta mandamus, quatenus eremitis praedictis ad hoc faciendum competente auctoritate terminum praefigatis...’, in *ibid.* (1964), no. 162, pp. 238-9.

<sup>51</sup> Innocent IV, *Ex parte tua*, 7 September 1250: ‘...Ex parte tua et aliorum priorum et fratrum sui Ordinis fuit Nobis humiliter supplicatum. ut cum quilibet ipsorum, tam ex institutione ipsius Ordinis quam etiam ex antiqua consuetudine, deferre baculum, quocumque iverit, in suis manibus teneatur; et plerumque cum ad civitates, villas et castra eos devenire contingit, propter malitiam temporis occasione ipsius baculi exploratores a locorum hominibus reputentur; propter quod nonnumquam in personis et rebus eorum magnum perferunt detrimentum, providere super hoc eis de benignitate apostolica curaremus. Quocirca discretioni tuae praesentium auctoritate concedimus ut generali guerra durante super usu baculi praedicti disponas et ordines, prout noveris melius expedire...’, in *ibid.* (1962), no. 78, p. 387.

<sup>52</sup> Innocent IV, *Quanto studiosius divinae*, 14 March 1253: ‘...statutum extitere ut quilibet frater vestri Ordinis, quocumque ipsum ire contingat, gestare in manu propria baculum, teneatur. Cum autem, sicut asseritis, relatio baculorum huiusmodi certis ex causis molesta vobis existat et nimium tediosa et per hoc, vestris mentibus obductis turbatione, nubilo contingat multoties apud vos sanctae contemplationis otium impedire, Nos vestris devotis supplicationibus inclinati, quieti vestrae in hac parte consulere pro remedio cupientes, ut



seen as an eloquent echo of the changes and the process of identity formation that the group was experimenting during this period: the staff, along with the leather belt, was one of the traditional symbols of the hermit. That the Bonites – and then the rest of the Augustinian Hermits – explicitly asked permission to give it up can be interpreted as an early symbol of their departure from the eremitical tradition to the mendicant vocation.

However, it seems that this was far from being the end of the order's sartorial troubles, for that same year Innocent IV again had to address issues of this nature among the Augustinian Hermits. The bull *Pia desideria devotorum*, of 1 July 1253, confirmed a decree about the habit contained in a letter by the cardinal protector of the order, Riccardo Annibaldi. The missive reiterated a matter that, although should have been clear by this point, still seemed to cause enough headaches at the papal curia: the need to maintain a clear distinction among orders through their habits. Therefore the letter stated the guidelines for the garments to be worn by the Augustinian Hermits (Brettini aside): black tunics (*cucullas*) as they could be found in each province, but not dyed or accidentally coloured; a belt to be worn over the tunic, and a cross that they had to carry in their hands.<sup>53</sup> In 1255 Alexander

---

eosdem baculos, non obstante statuto praedicto, inviti deferre minime teneamini auctoritate nostra vobis indulgemus...’, in *ibid.* (1963), no. 101, pp. 483-4. It is interesting to note that the bull is addressed to ‘the Prior and all the brothers of the Order of the Hermits of St Augustine’ (*universis fratribus Ordinis Eremitarum S. Augustini*), even if the order was yet to be officially created three years later.

<sup>53</sup> Innocent IV, *Pia desideria devotorum*, 1 July 1253: ‘...Sane dilectus filius noster Riccardus S. Angeli Diaconus Cardinalis, cui Ordo vester a Sede Apostolica est commissus, ad differentiam aliorum Ordinum certum habitum deferendum tam a professis fratribus quam conversis ac etiam novitiis dicti vestri Ordinis de consilio quorundam discretorum fratrum vestrorum vobis provida deliberatione concessit, prout in patentibus litteris eiusdem Cardinalis confectis exinde ac suo sigillo signatis plenius continetur...unde habito consilio quorundam fratrum vestrorum discretorum tenore praesentium duximus statuendum, quod fratres vestri Ordinis professi deferant cucullas nigras, prout haberi poterunt in cuiuslibet

IV repeated this instruction, extending it to all the groups of hermits, with one addition: the use of a white scapular, over which the belt must be worn (*scapularia vero alba cingulis desuper cincta*).<sup>54</sup>

In this context, the emphasis that Alexander IV's *Licet Ecclesiae* put on the regulation and the uniformity of the habits should not come as a surprise. As Frances Andrews has pointed out, 'this was more than convenient rhetoric. The range of habits the different groups had adopted meant they were unlikely to be easily distinguishable.'<sup>55</sup> Thus, the pope repeated both the dispensation of the use of the staff and the prescription of the black habit, already in use by the Tuscans and Bonites, now for the whole order,<sup>56</sup> including the rebellious grey Brettini. Yet, it seems that the colour continued to be a problematic matter in Italy, as in October of that same year, the pope prescribed the compulsory and exclusive use of black cloth for their habits (either belted or not), this time addressing to the whole order, even though the entire prescription had been already clearly stated in the bull that

---

provincia, tamen non tinctas vel accidentaliter coloratas; desuper corrigiis cinctas et in manu crocias, in quorum superiori parte non sit curvum lignulum sed directum...', in *ibid.* (1963), no. 105, pp. 491-2. Van Lwijk, in his Appendix IV of "Gli Eremiti Neri Nel Dugento", wrongly states that this bull was intended for the group of the Tuscan hermits, when, in fact, it is addressed to the general visitor and all the priors and brothers of the Augustinian Hermits (Dilectis filiis (Adiuto) visitori generali et Prioribus ac fratribus eremitis universis Ordinis S. Augustini).

<sup>54</sup> Alexander IV, *Pia desideria*, 22 July 1255, in B. Van Lwijk (ed.), "Bullarium" (1964), no. 148, p. 225. The bull is addressed to the prior general and all the priors and brothers of Order of the Hermits of St Augustine (Priori Generali et universis prioribus et fratribus eremitis Ordinis S. Augustini). However, it does not mention the Brettini, so we do not know if the instruction of the belted scapular actually applied to them or not. Yet, judging by the bull that followed about seven months later, on 22 February 1256 (see above, p. 116), it is likely to have respected their exemption on the use of belts.

<sup>55</sup> Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars*, p. 84.

<sup>56</sup> Alexander IV, *Licet Ecclesiae*, 9 April 1256: '...per gratiam unionis et conformitatis huiusmodi, eis iuxta conceptum votum paupertatis spontanee perpetua possessionum terrestrium abdicatio remaneret et ipsis baculos vel ferulas deferendi imposita necessitas tolleretur...nigris dumtaxat et nullis aliis alterius coloris cucullis, ut uniformis amictus normam eiusdem in vobis professionis ostendat, utamini de caetero universi...', in B. Van Lwijk (ed.), "Bullarium" (1964), no 163, pp. 239-41.

officially created the order, only six months earlier.<sup>57</sup> ‘It would in fact be more true to say – asserted Jordan of Quedlinburg a century later, maybe wondering how this obvious solution had not been seen before – that [the Apostolic See] declared that this habit had long ago been decided upon by Saint Augustine. It decreed that the habit of the Order of Hermits of Saint Augustine should be as follows: on the exterior, a black cowl, and only black, with long and extended sleeves, girt over with a long cincture; the undergarment would remain at the discretion of the Order...In place of the shoulder garments they wear scapulars, and for tunics of skin (*tunicis pelliceis*) they wear woollen ones, in conformity with the time of year and the region.’<sup>58</sup> Jordan pointed out that this habit ‘was very suited to these brothers for two reasons’: the first ‘because it was very much like the habit which the fathers and brothers wore in the wilderness.’<sup>59</sup> The second reason, he explains, ‘why this habit suits the hermit brothers is taken from what it signifies: perfect contempt for the world and a putting to death of the outer man, all of which is particularly suited to hermits.’<sup>60</sup> Appropriating the habit, in

---

<sup>57</sup> Alexander IV, *Litteras nostras vobis*, 15 October 1256: ‘Archiepiscopis et episcopis per Lombardiam, Tusciam, Romandiolam ac Tarvisianam [sic] et Anconitanam Marchias, Ducatum Spoleti, Patrimonium beati Petri in Tuscia, Campaniam et Maritimam et Regnum Siciliae constitutis.

Eisdem mandat ut singuli eorum, infra octo dies post receptionem praesentium litterarum, processus suos contra priores et deferendarum initos studeant revocare, et eis inhibet ne usque ad festum Resurrectionis Dominicae proxime futurum contra illos auctoritate praedictarum litterarum procedant; “ex tunc vero ipsos tantummodo ad assumendum et deferendum cucullas nigras, cinctas vel non cinctas, non ad aliqua” compellant...’, in Carlos Alonso (ed.), *Bullarium Ordinis Sancti Augustini*, p. 6.

<sup>58</sup> Jordan of Saxony, *The Life of the Brethren*, pp. 95-6; Jordani de Saxonia, *Liber vitasfratum*, p. 51. Regarding the ‘tunics of skin’, Jordan might have been referring to the garments made of some kind of fur (usually of poor quality) traditionally ascribed to primitive monasticism and hermits, as it was, for instance, the usual iconographic representation of John the Baptist with his tunic made of camel hair (see Emanuele Boaga and Augustin Devaux, “L’abito degli eremiti”, in LSDE, p. 17).

<sup>59</sup> Jordan of Saxony, *The Life of the Brethren*, p. 95.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

all its dimensions, was thus a fundamental task for the writers of the order who were revisiting its history and therefore composing a narrative that helped them delineate the terms of its collective identity.

This was a task that had been indeed reflected early on, in an another set of circumstances: on 15 July 1255, Alexander IV issued the bull *Volentes omnes quod*, addressed to the cardinal protector of the order, Riccardo Annibaldi, to grant the group the power to enforce the removal of the habit on anyone who had abandoned the order on their own will, or who had not been professed with them.<sup>61</sup> Although the bull antedates the *Magna unio*, it speaks of the *Eremitis Ordinis S. Augustini*, noting the group had already developed a cohesive identity and, thus, it perhaps wanted to target both early imitators and early dissidents of the association that brought the order together. However, even if the Augustinian Friars seemed to already be conscious of their “brand” and were willing to defend it, unanimity over their habits was still difficult to reach. According to a passage narrated in the chronicle of the Friars Minor written by the Franciscan Mariano of Florence (probably towards the end of the fifteenth and the beginnings of the sixteenth century),<sup>62</sup> and referred by Lucas Wadding in his *Annales Minorum*, the conflict was still alive in 1274. The account tells that the Augustinian Hermits, still disagreeing

---

<sup>61</sup> Alexander IV, *Volentes omnes quod*, 15 July 1255: ‘Dilecto filio Richardo S. Angeli Diacono Cardinali, Salutem etc. Volentes omne, quod dilectis filiis Eremitis Ordinis S. Augustini vel eorum sacrae Religioni scandalum vel infamiam possit parere, quantum cum Deo possumus, submoveri, discretioni tuae per Apostolica scripta mandamus, quatenus fratres discedentes motu propriae voluntatis et eorum culpae amotos ab Ordine eorundem, ac illos qui Ordinem ipsum non professi, cum frequenter angelus tenebrarum se in lucis angelum transfiguret, ipsorum Eremitarum habitum deferunt, quod habitum ipsum deponant...’, in B. Van Lwijk (ed.), “Bullarium” (1964), no. 138, p. 218.

<sup>62</sup> See Lezlie S. Knox, *Creating Clare of Assisi: Female Franciscan Identities in Later Medieval Italy* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), p. 144, particularly n. 81; C. Cannarozzi, “Ricerche sulla vita di Fra Mariano da Firenze”, in *Studi Francescani* 27 (1930), pp. 31-71.

about the type of habit they should wear, ‘rushed’ to the Second Council of Lyons to solve the long controversy which repeated papal bulls had not been able to end. There, states the narration, Bonaventura, as a result of an ‘special papal commission’ prescribed the shape of the habit for each and every one of them, proposed so many times by the popes, and recommended in papal letters.<sup>63</sup>

Not surprisingly then, in the *Regensburg Constitutions*, drawn up in 1290<sup>64</sup> and which remained the fundamental body of Augustinian legislation until the Reformation,<sup>65</sup> the matter of the habit received great attention – probably much more than the one given in its Franciscan or Dominican counterparts. With eighteen instructions followed by a long addition, it looks as though the superiors of the order wanted to finish once and for all with any clothing discrepancies. The variety of the regulations contained in chapter 24, *De numero et qualitate vestium Fratrum*, certainly gives us an insight to the common transgressions and the worries of the priors. The habit was finally fixed with the belt as constituent element – Brettini inclusive. The constitutions prescribed that the friars had to wear it over the cowl, it had to be made of black leather and it should not have more than two or less than

---

<sup>63</sup> ‘...ei commissam longius protractam controversiam Eremitarum sancti Augustini circa formam habitus suscipiendi, quam repetitae Pontificum bullae terminare non potuerunt...scribit Marianus, atque ipsos inter se discrepantes circa habitum exteriorem ad Concilium accurrisse; Bonaventuram vero ex peculiari commissione Pontificia omnibus et singulis praescripsisse formam toties a Pontificis eisdem propositam, et litteris Apostolicis commendatam...’, in AM, Vol. 4 (1732), year 1274, no. 13, p. 399.

<sup>64</sup> Ignacio Aramburu Cendoya (ed.), *Las Primitivas Constituciones de los Agustinos (Ratisbonenses del año 1290)* (Valladolid: Archivo Agustiniiano, 1966).

<sup>65</sup> Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars*, p. 95.

one and a half fingers wide.<sup>66</sup> The brothers could have two scapulars, three tunics and a white short tunic, to be worn always under another long tunic, which could be white and could be worn when they were not wearing the black cowl. The cowl, of course, was to be black, of humble cloth, and both linen and twill, or other precious or noble cloths, were forbidden.<sup>67</sup> Being aware that this last matter was rather hard to establish and that it was bound to change geographically, the constitutions defined as ‘precious and noble’ any cloth that was exceedingly expensive in relation to the custom of the place, which did not have ‘real blackness’ (*veram nigredinem*) and that did not answer to their poverty and the daily exigencies of their begging for alms. If provincials or visitors were to find anything of the like in a convent, they had the authority to force the responsible person to sell the inadequate clothes and use the money to buy “honest and humble” habits.<sup>68</sup>

However, the list does not end just there and it seems to also act as a declaration of principles: only wool was permitted for the undergarments, never linen, as the cheaper the cloth – they stated – the more congruent it

---

<sup>66</sup> ‘Super cucullas cingantur Fratres corrigiis, quae sint de corio nigro, quae non sint amplius duobus digitis latiores et ad minus digito et dimidio, in quibus nihil dependeat vel deferatur’. In Ignacio Aramburu Cendoya (ed.), *Las Primitivas Constituciones*, no. 172, p. 75.

<sup>67</sup> ‘Unicuique autem Fratri duo scapularia, tres tunicas, et vestem albam breviorum, quam semper sub alia tunica longa portabit quando erit sine cuculla, de albo colore habere licebit. Cucullas nigras tantum, tinctas vel non tinctas, dummodo non sint garzatae, nec sint de staminea, nec de sargia, nec de aliquo pretioso et nobili panno deferant. Et recipientes a Conventu novas, reddant veteras.’ In *ibidem*, no. 167.

<sup>68</sup> ‘Pretiosum vero pannum et nobilem reputamus, qui nimis est carus secundum consuetudinem patriae, et qui veram nigredinem non habet, et honestati nostrae paupertatis et quotidianae exigentiae eleemosynarum non respondet. Quapropter districte praecipimus omnibus Provincialibus et Visitoribus nostrae Religionis, quatenus si invenerint contrarium facientes, sive Priores, sive Lectores, vel quoscumque alios auferant eis, et faciant vendi, cum honestate Ordinis, et eis denarii inde habitus reddatur pro habitu honesto et humili emendo.’ In *ibidem*, no. 168.

was with their honesty.<sup>69</sup> Furs of wild animals were also forbidden, except for the sick with the counsel of the doctors. However, the use of fur of domestic animals was permitted, with the approval of the prior, as well as wearing cloaks fastened to the chest, but never with silk or metallic binds.<sup>70</sup> Shoes were to be also black and open – they could wear closed shoes inside the convent – tied to the ankle, and could not go over the knees. No one could presume to wear slippers, and boots were also banned, especially if ‘curious’ (*curiosas*), with stockings, red or bicoloured.<sup>71</sup> The use of the secular *birretum*, along with gilded purses or knives, or other ‘notably curious hilts’ (*alia notabilia manubria curiosa*), or red, or bicolour sheaths, was strictly banned, as well as the use of personal seals, except with the permission of the general of the order.<sup>72</sup> The friars had to sleep with both the cowl and the scapular and a small hood and they could not leave the cell without the cowl and the scapular.<sup>73</sup> Even the use of handkerchiefs, either ‘to clean the sweat or for whatever other cause’ was regulated, and the constitutions stated that the friars could not hang them from the neck or the back, but from the belt,

---

<sup>69</sup> ‘Fratres, exceptis sarabolis, iuxta carnem vestimentis lineis non utantur sed laneis tantum, quae tanto magis honestati nostrae congruunt quanto magis fuerint violiores.’ In *ibidem*, no. 166.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Pelliceas de pellibus silvestribus nulli portare concedimus, nisi quis tali infirmitati laboret, quod, de consilio medicorum, eis uti habeat opus; sed de pellibus domesticis pelliceas illi portare poterunt, quibus Prior suus duxerit concedendum; et tam silvestres quam domesticas Fratres tectas portabunt.’ In *ibidem*, no. 170; ‘Chlamydes ligatas ante pectus, sine ligatura serici et cuiuslibet speciei metalli, infra loca, deferri licebit.’ In *ibidem*, no. 171.

<sup>71</sup> ‘Subtalares omnium Fratrum sine suberis erunt aperti, nisi qui deferuntur infra claustrum, qui possunt esse clausi. Ita tamen quod qui portantur in via nigri tantum sint, et ligentur corrigiis circa talum, et eorum altitudo genuas non excedat. Planelas nullus portare praesumat. Inhibemus autem caligas, rubeas et bicoloratas, cum pedalibus et curiosas.’ In *ibid.*, no. 173, p. 76.

<sup>72</sup> ‘Birretum etiam more saeculariorum, necnon bursas et cultellos deauratos, vel alia notabilia manubria curiosa, verum etiam vaginas rubeas et bicoloratas, vel laminas aliquas habentes, cordulas omnes, praeter albas aut nigras, nullus portare praesumat. Sigilla vero propria, nisi de licentia Generalis, nulli liceat habere.’ In *ibidem*, no. 174.

<sup>73</sup> ‘Cum cuculla quoque, vel scapulari vel caputio parvo quilibet dormiat; et extra cellam, nullus sine cuculla vel scapulari exeat.’ In *ibid.*, no. 183, p. 77.

and it had to be of simple linen and with ‘nothing contrary being mixed with the white colour.’<sup>74</sup> After a formation period full of controversies, the constitutions made sure not to leave anything to chance. Their astonishing capacity to remain current over such a long period of time, especially when contrasted with other orders, justified the effort.

The additions to the chapter on the habit emphasised again the importance given to the fact that both priors and provincials had the responsibility to look after the honesty of the habit. If they were to find any habits that did not comply in colour, value and shape to the directions given in the constitutions, they had the instruction to take them away and modify them ‘for the use of the convent’.<sup>75</sup> This was considered a serious fault. In fact, the priors were directed to do regular inspections of the cells – at least four times a year accompanied by two or three senior friars – and if they found ‘shirts or any other inappropriate garments’ the guilty friar had to be punished accordingly.<sup>76</sup>

This zeal for the correct observation of the habit was complemented with the development of a symbolic dimension, summarised by Jordan of Quedlinburg as follows:

The blackness, unrelieved by a second colour, signifies perfect contempt for all adornments and beauty of this world. This is indicated

---

<sup>74</sup> ‘Sudaria autem, quae aut pro sudore detergendo seu pro quavis alia causa deferunt Fratres non a collo vel a scapulis, sed a cingulo tantum dependeant; quae linea simpliciter esse mandamus, ut in eis nihil albo colori contrarium misceatur.’ In *ibid.*, no. 176, p. 76.

<sup>75</sup> ‘Circa vicesimum quartum capitulum de vestibus Fratrum addicimus quod Priores Provinciales diligenter attendere debeant si aliqui fratres in suis Provinciis portent habitum quantum ad colorem, seu valorem, vel figuram honestatem Ordinis nostri non decentem; et si invenerint talem habitum, priventur illo et ad utilitatem Conventus convertatur.’ In *ibid.*, p. 77.

<sup>76</sup> ‘Volumus autem quod quilibet Prior localis, ad minus quater in anno, cellas sui Conventus diligenter perquirat, assumptis secum duobus vel tribus de senioribus de Conventu. Et si invenerit camisiam vel aliquid indecens, puniat ut superius et expressum.’ In *ibidem*.



in the chant of the responsory when someone puts on the habit for the first time: "I have despised the kingdom of the world and all the adornments of this life."<sup>77</sup>

The cincture, which is given in place of the girdle which Elijah and John wore, is made from the skin of dead animals, and according to Cassian in the *Institutes [of the Fathers]* it signifies the putting to death of all our animal drives, especially in those parts which contain the source of lust.<sup>78</sup>

The cowl expands into the form of a cross when the arms are extended, and so, according to Anselm, it signifies a perpetual calling to mind of the Lord's passion; also, that the monk ought to be crucified to the world and its desires.<sup>79</sup>

The breadth of the habit signifies the broadness of charity, and its length, reaching as it does from head to foot, according to Anselm, signifies patience and perseverance in one's good resolve, something that which should reach from the outset of one's conversion to the end of one's life.<sup>80</sup>

The capuche or hood, which covers the head and has an opening for the face, falling down at the back in the shape of a shield, signifies charity, which covers the head of the body, that is, the mind, and protects it from the cold of sins and the heat of temptations...Its shield-like appearance signifies that charity protects those men who wear it from the arrows of the enemy's temptations.<sup>81</sup>

The scapular, or shoulder garment, or vest, which are all the same for our purposes...signifies a brave endurance of suffering. By it we show that we always carry the cross on our shoulders, and thereby conquer our vices.<sup>82</sup>

From troublesome and obscure origins to creating a narrative that made them the order founded by the very St Augustine, the Augustinian

---

<sup>77</sup> Jordan of Saxony, *The Life of the Brethren*, p. 96.

<sup>78</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>80</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>81</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

Hermits managed to get level with Franciscans and Dominicans over just a century. This happened in great part thanks to their ability to sort out the controversies that marked their foundational period and to their clever way of forming a unified identity within a system of differences. Their habits were at the same time both a reflection of these developments and the medium through which this process took place. Where the *Regensburg Constitutions* helped them to set a rational and defined code of behaviour for the entire order, the elaboration of historical and mystical accounts, like the ones made by Henry of Friemar and Jordan of Quedlinburg, gave them the needed credentials both to survive the suppression of orders made by the Council of Lyons of 1274,<sup>83</sup> and to compete with the other, more popular, mendicant orders within the urban space. After all, not every order could boast of wearing the habit that had been handed down by St Augustine himself.

---

<sup>83</sup> Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars*, pp. 90-2.

## FROM SCORNE CLOAKS TO MIRACULOUS CLOTHES: THE BUMPY ROUTE OF THE CARMELITES THROUGH EUROPE

The Carmelites were literally a foreign arrival in the European religious scene. Landing originally from Mount Carmel, in Palestine, in the early years of the decade of 1240, they experienced, at first, a fast expansion in Western Europe, only to be halted by the revision of the order's status by the Second Council of Lyons of 1274 and its decree *Religionum diversitate*.<sup>84</sup> Despite this quick growth – or, perhaps, because of it – they were not always received with a warm welcome.<sup>85</sup> And their religious habit, with their singular striped cloak, far from helping them to gain a respected place, as the sign of their status, apparently just made things worse. In fact, they got to the point at which they had to decide between keeping it in its original form – and take the risk of being mocked and resented – or adapting it, thus betraying an essential part of the original spirit of the order. Furthermore, the change of

---

<sup>84</sup> See Richard Emery, "The Second Council of Lyons and the Mendicant Orders", in *The Catholic Historical Review*, 39 (1953), pp. 257-271; p. 257; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 16. The decree in Mansi, Vol. 24, cols. 96-7. For the origins of the order, see Elias Friedman, *The Latin Hermits of Mount Carmel: A Study in Carmelite Origins* (Roma: Teresianum 1979), particularly pp. 170-86.

<sup>85</sup> As is shown, for example, in Innocent IV's bull of 13 January 1252, instructing archbishops and bishops to deter their flock from disturbing the members of the order: 'Universis archiepiscopis et episcopis ad quos littere iste pervenerint. Ex parte dilectorum filiorum heremitarum fratrum ordinis Sancte Marie de Monte Carmeli fuit propositum coram nobis quod, cum malitia temporis excrescente oportuerit eos de loco quem habebant in monte ipso fugere ante faciem persequentium paganorum, velintque cellas et ecclesiam construere ac habere cimiterium et campanam ad opus ipsorum in vestris civitatibus et diocesibus in locis ad hoc ipsis pia fidelium liberalitate concessis, ut ibi divina celebrare ac debitum Domino reddere valeant famulatum, nonnulli eos super hoc impedire presumunt, et exigunt nichilominus nonnulla indebite ab eisdem que in premissis loco non consueverant exhibere – illos super premissis – non permittatis quantum in vobis est ab aliquibus indebite molestari...', in *Les Registres d'Innocent IV*, E. Berger (ed.), Vol. III, Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1897), n. 5561, p. 24. A similar tone was conveyed in Alexander IV's bull *Ad audientiam nostram*, of 13 February 1256 (*Les Registres d'Alexandre IV*, A. Coulon (ed.), Vol. III, Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1953), n. 2850, p. 27. Full text in *Registra Vaticana*, 25, fol. 200, c. 84); Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 19ff.

location meant for the Carmelites also a shift from the eremitical to the mendicant vocation, similar to the one experienced by the Augustinian Friars. Now they were not isolated in the caves of Mount Carmel, but in the middle of some of the biggest European cities, where things were radically different – and where onlookers’ opinions mattered.<sup>86</sup>

Over the span of 150 years, the Carmelites made the transition from having scandalous clothes to being miraculously granted a scapular with providential connexions that assured salvation. Hardly a coincidence, this lapse of time is roughly the same that it took them to fully settle in the West, from being outsiders to securing their place within the major religious orders in Europe. The various elements that shaped the complex history of their habits are, in themselves, a reflection of this process. Thus, the Carmelites took great pains to elaborate and explain this complexity both to themselves and to others. The following pages build largely on both Andrew Jotischky’s excellent treatment of what might almost be called a Carmelite obsession with the history of their striped cloak,<sup>87</sup> and Richard Copsy’s study on “Simon Stock and the Scapular Vision,”<sup>88</sup> where he presents a thorough review of the state of the research on the origins of the devotion of the Carmelite scapular. The contribution this section aims to make, therefore, is to put together, for the first time, both the rationale that the Carmelites developed for the change of their striped cloak, and the narrative they offered

---

<sup>86</sup> On the first developments of the order, its arrival to Europe and its change of vocation, see Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, Chapter 1, especially pp. 10-17, and 35-6.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, Chapter 2.

<sup>88</sup> Richard Copsy, *Carmel in Britain: Studies on the Early History of the Carmelite Order. Volume III: The Hermits from Mount Carmel* (Faversham-Rome: Saint Albert’s Press and Edizioni Carmelitane, 2004), pp. 75-112.

about their divinely granted scapular within a common frame, understanding them as two parts of the same phenomenon, as we look in detail at the way the Carmelites continued to shape their collective identity through their habits.

In 1287 a general chapter of the Carmelites gathered in Montpellier. It was a rather decisive chapter, and it had a considerable impact on later accounts of Carmelite history, coming both from inside and outside the order, which kept referring over and over to the change of the traditional striped cloak for a white one that took official place in this chapter.<sup>89</sup> This was not without reason. As Andrew Jotischky explains, this kind of change did not only involve the domestic government of the order. Habits showed identities, and, as discussed earlier, a change of habits usually indicated a movement of reform and a change of religious programme. Therefore, it was only normal for external observers to wonder if this new habit designated a change of profession – a question that must have also been in the minds of some of the Carmelites that lived through the change – and it seems that Carmelites authors felt the need to provide a rationale for this modification.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> Apparently the only known extant depiction of the striped cloak predating the change of 1287 is the one found in British Library Royal MS 1 D I, the Bible of William of Devon, produced c.1265 (also mentioned by Adrian Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989), p. 49). The illumination corresponds to a small marginalia on folio 1r, that shows two Carmelite friars in vertical striped cloaks. It accompanies three similar representations of pairs of Franciscans friars, Dominican friars and two religious clothed in white, probably two Premonstratensian canons. On later representations of the Carmelite habit, see Cordelia Warr, *Dressing for Heaven*, pp. 93-9. However, Warr does not mention the marginalia illumination, so she was probably unaware of it. Also interesting are Joanna Cannon's article, "Pietro Lorenzetti and the History of the Carmelite Order", in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 50 (1987), pp. 18-28, and Creighton Gilbert, "Some Special Images for Carmelites, circa 1330-1430", in Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (eds.), *Christianity and the Renaissance*, pp. 161-207.

<sup>90</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 45.

The fact that the same general chapter had allegedly asked Sigfridus, archbishop of Cologne, to grant ten days of indulgence to all the faithful who called the Carmelites either “Brothers of Saint Mary” or “Brothers of Our Lady”<sup>91</sup> shows how important it was for the order both to reinforce that they were maintaining their identity and to show that they were not the *barrati fratres* – as they were popularly known because of the stripes of their mantles – of scorn anymore.<sup>92</sup>

There is scant information about the conditions that led the order to take such a decision. If the examples coming from the history of other mendicant orders, like the case of the Augustinian Hermits, serve as any indication, the final consensus on the change of their habit must have been hard to reach. The idea of the ridicule and scorn that the striped cloak brought to the friars is a commonplace, repeated in almost every modern work dealing with the early history of the order in the West. However, the only certain contemporary account about the alleged difficulties that the striped cloak brought to the order is found in the two surviving notarial acts that accounted for the 1287 chapter, known respectively as *Notum sit* (22 July

---

<sup>91</sup> Daniel a Virgine Maria (ed.), *Speculum Carmelitanum, sive Historia Eliani ordinis fratrum beatissimae Virginis Mariae de Monte Carmelo*, Vol. I (Antverpiae: Typis Michaelis Knobbari, 1680), n. 510, p. 118; A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 49. They had been officially known under these names from at least 1248 (Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 52).

<sup>92</sup> On the term *barrati fratres* see C. du Cange, et al., *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*, Tom. I, (Niort: L. Favre, 1883-1887), col. 588b. <http://ducange.enc.sorbonne.fr/BARRATI> (accessed on 05/03/2015). On the topic of striped clothes in religious orders, see Cordelia Warr, “The Striped Mantle of the Poor Clares: Image and Text in Italy in the Later Middle Ages”, in *Arte Cristiana*, 86 1998, pp. 415-430. See also Richar Emery, “The Friars of the Blessed Mary and the Pied Friars”, *Speculum*, 24 (April 1949), pp. 228-238; p. 236, n. 69; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 52.

1287) and *Invocantes* (23 July 1287).<sup>93</sup> The former reproduces a letter from 1286 from the cardinal protector of the order, Gervasio Giancoletto, in which he describes how the petition from the order to change the striped mantle had been explained to Pope Honorius IV. In it, he notes two problems: first, he claims that the variety of colours worn in the cloaks had generated ‘not little damage and scandal’ for the order; secondly, in a more practical level, he explains that varicoloured cloths were hard to obtain (the cloak had to be made of one piece of cloth, not sewn together). Thus, the resultant variety in the religious dress of many of the friars was considered scandalous and not pious enough for a religious order,<sup>94</sup> especially a mendicant one.

The *Invocantes* act repeats more or less the same argument, but the reasons for the petition find here a much richer and emphatic elaboration. It starts by saying that many scandals had arisen for the order because of the variety of colours of the mantle, and that, because of that variety, they were rejected by the common people, almost becoming an occasion for mockery, as if they were lay people fooling around.<sup>95</sup> They complained that, because of their striped clothes, they were seen as laymen by those in higher

---

<sup>93</sup> A critical edition of both documents in A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*. pp. 54-70. *Notum sit* is also reproduced in *Bullarium Carmelitanum*, Eliseo Monsignano (ed.), Vol. I (Romae: Typographia Georgii Plachi, 1715), pp. 35-8. See also Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, pp. 46-51 for a detailed analysis of the notarial acts and the change enacted at the general chapter.

<sup>94</sup> ‘Exposita per nos coram sanctissimo patre domino nostro Honorio papa IV, summo pontifice, ex parte vestra petitio continebat, quod ex varietate coloris quam gestatis in vestris chlamydis seu mantellis, non modicum vobis et ordini vestro detrimentum et scandalum generatur, ex eo quod panni sic varii sine difficultate a vobis inveniri non possunt, ipsaque varietas in religioso habitu plurimorum, qui eam minus pie considerant, animos scandalizat...’, in A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 57; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 48. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the invocation of scandal might have also serve to add canonical legitimacy to the Carmelite claim.

<sup>95</sup> ‘...Multa siquidem scandala ex hac varietate ordini proveniunt. Ex ea etenim fratres eiusdem ordinis facti sunt velut abiectio plebis, et quasi in derisum venerunt sicut saeculares homines ludibria exercentes...’, in A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 63.

ecclesiastical or secular ranks, and were also considered to be lacking decency.<sup>96</sup> They ‘painfully’ reported that ‘many of those who would like to serve God under the rule of our order, because of the aforementioned variety, while despising the garment as vile and despicable, deviate from their good purpose and remain out [of the order], refusing to enter [it].’<sup>97</sup> Because of this, the order suffered a body blow in that it was missing the chance to recruit ‘young men of percipient talent’ who would make progress in the study of theology at the appropriate time, while men already in the order were undeservedly held back in their academic careers.<sup>98</sup> Furthermore, the kind of cloths needed to make such mantles, whether because their rarity or their scarcity – as said above the stripes had to be woven in one piece of cloth, not stitched together – posed a problem for the order in terms of price and expenditure.<sup>99</sup>

There were ‘many other reasons, as well’, which they did not

---

<sup>96</sup> ‘...A viris insuper magnificis, dignitatibus saecularibus et ecclesiasticis praeditis, et gradibus excelsis pollentibus, habiti sunt tamquam laici, utpote vestes listatas gerentes, et frequenter nota pudoris notabili sunt notati...’, in *ibidem*.

<sup>97</sup> ‘...Et quod dolentes referimus, multi qui alias vellent sub nostri ordinis regula Domino Deo perpendere famulatum, propter varietatem praedictam, tamquam vilem vestem et despectam aspernantes, a bono concepto proposito deviant ac recusant ingredi et stant retro...’, in *ibidem*; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 50.

<sup>98</sup> ‘...Propter quod subsequitur incommodum afficiens viscerosius intestina, quoniam ad culmen divinum pro viribus ampliandum multos, quos non habemus, iuvenes perspicacis ingenii haberemus, qui in theologiae studio opportunis temporibus proficerent, et dilatato sui tentorii loco, suos funiculos facerent ampliores; plures etiam, quos habemus, capaces magnae scientiae, in locis insignibus, ubi magisteria conceduntur, patiuntur convicia, qui tamquam laici excluderentur a culmine, quantamcumque acquirerent scientiae margaritam...’, in A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, pp. 63-4; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 50.

<sup>99</sup> ‘...Et panni tales etiam cum difficultate, cum sit eorum raritas et ordientium seu textentium paucitas, reperiuntur; quare tam in quantitate pretii quam in aliis plura dispendia patiuntur...’, in A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 64; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 50. See also *ibid*, p. 49 for a comment on the methods used to make striped garments and why their alleged extra cost would have been enough reason alone for the change.



enumerate to avoid the ‘annoyance of a lengthy narration.’<sup>100</sup> Whether through a skilful use of rhetoric or a genuine display of desperation, the fact is that the Carmelites managed to be convincing enough and obtained a positive reception for their petition, which was finally confirmed by Boniface VIII on 25 November 1295 through his bull *Justis petentium*.<sup>101</sup> Judging by what is conveyed in the text of *Invocantes*, it seems that the Carmelites indeed found themselves in a distressing situation, for changing the striped mantle meant both taking a drastic measure and giving up part of their original tradition. They had to adjust their self-identity in order to fit within the rigid system that governed position and status in Western society, in a move that was probably essential for their self-preservation in the context of imminent suppression in which Carmelites and Augustinians Friars found themselves after at the Council of Lyons of 1274, and from which they were not officially safe until 1286.<sup>102</sup>

It is, however, somewhat puzzling that the details given in these documents are the only evidence of the Carmelites being attacked, mocked, or despised because of their striped mantles. One would expect such a matter to appear in any previous official communications, as the Augustinian’s controversies around the habit did. However, as Jotischky points out, apart from the two documents contained in *Notum sit* and *Invocantes*, the sources are totally silent regarding any discussion about the

---

<sup>100</sup> ‘...Multae sunt etiam causae aliae, quas non expedit propter prolixae narrationis fastidium singulari commemoratione singulariter recensere...’, in A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 64.

<sup>101</sup> *Bullarium Carmelitanum*, Vol. I, pp. 45-6.

<sup>102</sup> *Les Registres d'Honorius IV*, M. Prou (ed.) Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1888) n. 305 col. 233; Richard Emery, “The Second Council of Lyons”, pp. 260-1; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 51.

habit before the decade of 1320.<sup>103</sup> I have not been able to find so far any other document, whether from the same Carmelite Order or from any other body, ecclesiastical or secular, referring any 'scandal' around the striped mantle before 1287. There is only the contemporary record of the chronicle of Corbie Abbey, for 1286, quoted by du Cange in his entry for *barrati fratres*: 'since the Carmelite friars wore a habit which seemed unsuitable for members of a religious order, namely, a circular cloak with long white and grey stripes; a habit which, they asserted, derived from the prophet Elijah...Pope Honorius IV, for the sake of propriety, ordered [them] to give up that habit, and to wear on top an entirely white cape, and underneath, grey tunics with scapulars.'<sup>104</sup>

The only other notice of the Carmelite intention to change the garment is contained in John Trisse's *Capitula Generalia*, a summary of the general chapters of the order from 1259 to 1358, written in 1361.<sup>105</sup> Here Trisse points out that among other things, the general chapter of 1284, celebrated in Pavia, set a group of deputies to go to Rome and ask the pope for the change of the striped mantle.<sup>106</sup> As far as we know, there is no contemporary

---

<sup>103</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 54.

<sup>104</sup> 'Quum fratres ordinis Carmelitarum deferrent habitum, qui minus convenire videbatur viris religiosis, scilicet capam circulatam largis virgis albis et griseis; quem habitum asserebant fuisse Heliæ prophetae...Papa Honorius IV. propter honestatem mandavit habitum illum dimittere, et desuper cappas ex toto albas et tunicas subtus griseas cum scapularibus assumere.' C. du Cange, et al., *Glossarium*, under the rubric 'Barrati fratres', see above, p. 138, n. 92; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, pp. 53-4. However, the chronicler was mistaken in attributing the change to the agency of the pope rather than to the petition by the Carmelites.

<sup>105</sup> A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 288.

<sup>106</sup> 'Anno Domini 1284 fuit capitulum generale celebratum in provincia Lombardiae, in conventu Papiae, in festo Pentecostes, fratre Petro de Amiliano generali. In hoc capitulo fuerunt plura ordinata, specialiter fuerunt ordinati certi procuratores qui adirent Romam ad sedem apostolicam pro privilegiis impetrandis quam pro mantellis barratis mutandis.' In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 306; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 48.

record of the chapter itself,<sup>107</sup> but the fact that cardinal Gervasio Giancoletto had been asked to present the petition to Honorius IV seems to confirm Trisse's facts. Although the record does not give any further reasons for this decision, both the elements present in the petition and the arguments invoked to support it were enough to establish that the claims made by the Carmelites at Montpellier were genuine. Nevertheless, to say that the intransigence of the order regarding the striped cloak almost cost them their existence in the Council of Lyons of 1274, and that the conflict saw thirteen years of negotiations, as Michel Pastoureau has claimed,<sup>108</sup> seems a rather far fetched claim when contrasted with the available evidence.

A further aspect that is noteworthy is what it seems to be a rhetorical move in the text of *Invocantes*: the document points out, as an argument to support the change of the mantle, that the cloak was not, in fact, the sign of the Carmelite's religious profession, but only an external symbol. Thus, changing the *chlamydes* for the white *cappa* did not entail a change of habit,<sup>109</sup> a crucial idea to assert that they were not changing their identity as a

---

<sup>107</sup> As Adrian Staring explains, 'contrary to other Mendicant Orders, the Carmelites had no set residence for its central government; each general resided in his own province and often even in the convent of the province of which he was a member. After his death the acts and papal bulls of his generalate remained behind in this convent and were often later lost.' This was the case until at least 1318, when the acts of the general chapters started to be recorded in the *Liber Ordinis*. In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 287.

<sup>108</sup> Michel Pastoureau, *The Devil's Cloth: a History of Stripes and Striped Fabric* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), pp. 7-11 (originally published as *L'étoffe du diable: une histoire des rayures et de tissus rayés* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1991). Pastoureau certainly offers a vivid argument but, at least regarding what he calls "The Carmel Scandal", most of his assertions do not seem to be backed up by the sources on the matter, and his own references fall short of what he claims in his account. Moreover, I believe Jotischky has a point when he states that 'people found the striped cloak derisory, not because stripes were inherently humorous, but because they were considered inappropriate for poor friars.' (Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 63).

<sup>109</sup> '...quod mutare non intendimus habitum regularem, cum vestis superior, qui mantellus communiter dicitur, non sit de substantia ordinis nec habitus regularis, quod deinceps chlamydes seu mantelli varii, quos usque nunc portare consuevimus, a nobis et ordine

religious order. Paradoxically, this idea is in direct contradiction with the constitutions drawn in the general chapter of London of 1281 – the only known for the thirteenth century – which under the rubric *De vestimentis Fratrum* states that the professed brothers were to have one cloak made of one piece with seven uniform stripes, which was seen by the Carmelites as the ‘sign of our religion.’<sup>110</sup> Therefore, purporting that the cloak was a mere external symbol might have been part of a clever strategy. Getting the pope to accept such a drastic change in the habit of an order was a difficult task, and, indeed, an unprecedented one. However, placing the change as just a “nominal” matter made the case easier for the petitioners. It proved, indeed, to be a fruitful one, for this argument was then reiterated whenever the change of the cloak was pointed out by the detractors of the order, especially when attacking the claim made by the Carmelites of uninterrupted continuity between them and Elijah, now proclaimed as the founder of the order (see below).

This brings us to one of the most fascinating and yet paradoxical issues around the relationship of the Carmelites with their habit: even though there is virtually no information for the reasons that surrounded the change of

---

nostro penitus sint exclusi, et eos abiicimus de praesenti, ipsosque non ut habitum, sed ut signum exterius, in cappas albas, quae chlamydem loco succedant, nihil ex hoc religioni nostrae seu religioso statui detrahendo, diminuendo vel augendo, ut sit dexteræ Excelsi haec mutatio, commutamus...’, in A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, pp. 66-7; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 47.

<sup>110</sup> Ludovico Saggi offers two versions in his transcription of the constitutions: ‘Professus vero habeat tantum unam cappam, que est nostre religionis signum qua utatur in capitulo et ante portam et in summa missa, et secundum quod dominus dederit, necessitatibus singulorum provideatur et subveniatur’; and what he believes was the original reading: ‘Professus habeat unam carpitam, que est nostre religionis signum, non de petiis consutam sed contextam, et habeat septem radios tantum, ut simus uniformes.’ In Ludovico Saggi, “Constitutiones Capituli Londinensis Anni 1281”, *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum*, XV (1950), pp. 203-245; p. 224. See also his discussion in p. 203, and Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 47-8, n. 8.

the cloak besides the ones given at Montpellier, going over the topic became almost an imperative for the historiography of the order developed during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>111</sup> Carmelite authors not only discussed the issue of the striped cloak repeatedly, but they also enriched and elaborated the analysis, stretching its history and its symbolic connotations with each new narrative, almost like the children's game in which each person has to repeat all the elements of the story they have been putting together in turns, and then add a personal bit. It was not enough for the apologists to simply repeat the reasons set out in Montpellier – which had seemed to be a good enough explanation in 1287. Therefore, they proceeded to develop a whole new rationale in which legend and reality began to be interwoven. In these new narratives the two variations of the Carmelite cloak, the striped and the white one, became then associated with Elijah. The prophet was claimed as the founder of the order from at least 1281<sup>112</sup> – when the first official association was made in the *rubrica prima* of

---

<sup>111</sup> In this section I will be dealing only with those authors and works relevant to the topic of the Carmelite habit. For a detailed study of the historiography of the order for this period, see Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, particularly Chapter Four and Chapter Seven.

<sup>112</sup> According to Rudolf Hendriks, these claims were not found before 1280 (“La Succession Héréditaire (1280-1451)”, in *Élie le prophète*, Vol. 2. *Études Carmelitaines*, 35 (1956), pp. 34-81; pp. 34-5) but, as Richard Copsey points out, these ideas were likely to have appeared around the time of the Second Council of Lyons, when the order escaped suppression quite narrowly (Richard Copsey, *Carmel in Britain*, p. 7). The text of the *Rubrica prima* of 1281 reads as follows:

‘Qualiter respondendum sit quaerentibus a quo et quo modo ordo noster sumpsit exordium. Cum quidam fratres in ordine iuniores, quaerentibus a quo et quomodo ordo noster habuerit exordium, iuxta veritatem nesciant satisfacere, pro eis in scripto formulam talibus relinquentes volumus respondere.

Dicimus enim veritati testimonium perhibentes, quod a tempore Eliae et Elisei prophetarum, montem Carmeli devote inhabitantium, sancti patres tam veteris quam novi testamenti, eiusdem montis solitudinem pro contemplatione caelestium tamquam veri amatores, ibidem iuxta fontem Eliae in sancta poenitentia, sanctis successibus incessanter continuata, sunt proculdubio laudabiliter conversati.

the general chapter held in London – and so most of the accounts started to add their own twist, providing each one some new historical explanations and mystical associations to this piece of the Carmelite habit.

### **The recreation of a legendary garment**

The earliest Carmelite works discussing the matter of the Carmelite cloak are the *Compendium historiarum et iurium pro defensione institutionis et confirmationis ordinis beatae mariae de monte carmeli* and the *Laus religionis carmelitanae*, written by the English Carmelite John Baconthorpe (d. probably 1348) in the decade of 1320. In the former, Baconthorpe mixed both recent history and Scriptural knowledge. He first claims that the Carmelites took their habit following the *pallium*<sup>113</sup> worn by Elijah, as it reads in ‘4 Kings, c. 2,’ (2 Kings, c. 2) which was, at the same time, the manner in which the religious orders living in the Holy Land – such as the Hospitallers, Templars and Bethlehemites – went dressed, ‘wearing on their *pallium* their

---

Quorum successores, tempore Innocentii III, Albertus Ierosolymitanae ecclesiae patriarcha in unum congregavit collegium, scribens eis regulam, quam Honorius papa, successor ipsius Innocentii, et multi successorum suorum, ordinem istum approbantes, sub bullarum suarum testimonio devotissime confirmarunt.

In cuius professione nos eorum sequaces usque in hodiernum diem in diversis mundi partibus Domino famulamur.’ In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, pp. 40-1; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity* p. 54. For a discussion about the *Rubrica prima*, see Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, pp. 107-12.

<sup>113</sup> Jotischky associates the use of the word *pallium* to an effort from Baconthorpe to emphasise the biblical connexion, and distance the order from the shame brought by the striped mantle, which in the notarial acts of 1287 is referred as *chlamys* or *mantellus*. According to Jotischky, these terms were ‘more pejorative (from a monastic perspective) and non-scriptural’ (Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity* p. 54, n. 34). However I believe this was not necessarily always the case, as the word *chlamys* was used, without any detrimental meaning, by the military Orders to refer to their own cloaks (see for example the bull *Cum ordinem vestrum* of 11 August 1259, sent by Alexander IV to the Hospitallers of Jerusalem, in *Les Registres d’Alexandre IV*, Vol. III, no. 2938, p. 57). Therefore, I believe that the intention to put a lexical distance to reinforce the change seems to be a more complete explanation.

distinctive signs.’<sup>114</sup> Thus, the Carmelites first had a *pallium* with grey stripes.<sup>115</sup> Then, to reconcile the change of the cloak with this line of argumentation, Baconthorpe proposes that, over time, the Carmelites received from the Apostolic See a white *cappa*, without stripes, in the manner that had been foretold to the father of Elijah, ‘Sabacha’, who had seen in his dreams white men greeting him.<sup>116</sup> As Jotischky explains, the reference to Sabacha as Elijah’s father, also known as Sobac, was part of early Greek Christian Apocrypha that circulated later on in Europe in a Latin version by pseudo-Isidore.<sup>117</sup> The men dressed in white were understood as those ‘who prefigured the future followers of Elijah, who would one day wear white.’<sup>118</sup> It was quite an argument and the strategy pulled off by Baconthorpe was, indeed, rather clever: as Jotischky observes, this provided the Carmelites with the opportunity to both justify their new white mantles and to use this event as a way to make a point about ‘the special role of the order in sacred history.’<sup>119</sup> The change then, instead of being a disadvantage, became the realisation of the prophecy that prefigured the unique place, mission and

---

<sup>114</sup> ‘Ordo Carmeli congrue habitum accepit secundum ea quae Elias portavit. Legitur enim de Elia, quod ipse portavit pallium, ut habetur 4 Regum, c. 2. Modus enim religiosorum qui in Terra Sancta habitaverunt, fuit signum distinctivum gerere in palliis suis, ut patet de Hospitalariis et Templariis et Bethlemitis. Et ad instar huius Carmelitae primo habuerunt pallium cum barris griseis.’ In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 208; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 54.

<sup>115</sup> ‘Quod vero processu temporis Carmelitae cappam albam sine barris a sede apostolica susceperunt, ante ortum Eliae erat praenosticatum. Legitur enim in Historiis, 4 Regum, 2, quod Sabacha, pater Eliae nondum nati, vidit in somnis viros candidatos se salutantes.’ In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, 208; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 54.

<sup>116</sup> In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 209; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 55.

<sup>117</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 55, see also note 39.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 55-6

antiquity of the order.<sup>120</sup> However, not everyone readily accepted these claims based on the apocryphal story. In fact, the Dominican Robert Holcot, contemporary of Baconthorpe and a regent master in theology at Cambridge in the decade of 1330, dismissed the link rather sardonically, saying that then it might indeed follow that millers or shepherds are generally Carmelites.<sup>121</sup>

In his *Laus religionis carmelitanae*, Baconthorpe resumed the discussion of the Carmelite habit. Here the discourse leans more heavily towards the mystical and biblical arguments – from both the Old and New Testament – as he discusses the reasons for the colours of the habit (black and white) in its historical development.<sup>122</sup> In the second chapter of its *Liber Sextus, huius tractatus, in quo agitur de habitu Carmelitarum, qui ostendit Innocentiam, Legem et Gratiam* the author repeats, almost word by word, the argumentation about the religious orders living in the Holy Land and the inheritance of the habit from Elijah contained in the *Compendium*, but now he takes one step further. Constructing his sentences cleverly, he starts by saying that the Carmelites used to wear a cloak (*cappa*) of mixed colours – white and black, or white and grey according to some – and in the following sentence he adds that Elijah indeed worn a *pallium*,<sup>123</sup> probably trying to

---

<sup>120</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>121</sup> ‘Argumenta etiam non concludunt, quia non sequitur: vidit vel instituit viros candidos vel candidis indutos, ergo carmelitas. Tunc enim sequetur quod molendinarii vel pastores communiter essent carmeliti.’ In Beryl Smalley, *English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1960), pp. 330-1, from Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Laud Misc 722, fos, 50v-51; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 57.

<sup>122</sup> See A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, pp. 225-52.

<sup>123</sup> ‘Sciendum vero est quod ab antiquo cappa Carmelitarum mixtum habuit colorem, scilicet album et nigrum, vel album et griseum secundum quosdam. Elias enim portavit pallium, ut habetur IV Regum 3. Et modus religiosorum, qui in Terra sancta habitabant, fuit signum distinctivum gerere in palliis, ut patet de Templariis, Hospitalariis et Bethlehemitis. Et adinstar huius Carmelitae habuerunt primum pallium cum barris.’ In *ibid.*, pp. 249-50. See also Valerie Edden, ‘The Mantle of Elijah: Carmelite Spirituality in England in the Fourteenth



create a link between these Carmelites and Elijah. He proceeds then to clarify that the Carmelites did not wear such cloaks ‘without a reasonable cause’, and he takes this as an opportunity to reinforce the Marian link with the order,<sup>124</sup> as he enumerates these reasons: he first explains that the household of Mary wore ‘two-fold garments’, as she made striped clothes (*stragulatam vestem*) for them,<sup>125</sup> thus identifying the Carmelites as part of the household of the Virgin. The second cause refers to the idea that, just like Mary, when the Carmelites received their habits they were then bound to observe the Law, represented by the black stripes, which in turn permitted the Grace – symbolised by the white stripes – to flourish.<sup>126</sup> Finally, the third cause for the bi-coloured cloak related to the very double nature – divine and human – of the Son of Mary.<sup>127</sup> Despite these reasonable mystical causes,

---

Century” in Marion Glasscoe (ed.), *The Medieval Mystical Tradition: England, Ireland and Wales. Exeter Symposium VI: Papers Read at Charney Manor, July 1999* (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 1999), pp. 67-83; pp. 73-4.

<sup>124</sup> The Carmelite’s Marian devotion seemed to be of long date. In Innocent IV’s bull of approval of the order of 1247 he refers them as “Brothers of the Order of the Blessed Virgin of Mount Carmel” (*Bullarium Carmelitanum* I, p. 7) and according to Eamon Carroll, already in 1225 a traveller’s account referred them as ‘hermits of St Mary of Mount Carmel (in Eamon Carroll, “The Marian Theology of Arnold Bostius, (1445-1499)”, *Carmelus* 9 (1962), pp. 197-236; p. 215); also Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 33; Frances Andrews, *The Other Friars*, p. 53. The first official indication of Marian devotion appeared in the 1324 *Rubrica prima* (Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, pp. 109-10; A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 41).

<sup>125</sup> ‘Et talem cappam non sine causis rationabilibus portabant. Prima est ut tanquam familia Mariae specialis et domestica in se complerent quod dictum est: “Domestici eius vestiti sunt duplicibus”; et ut cum vestis similitudine sanctam sequerentur advocatam, de qua videtur esse scriptum: “Stragulatam vestem fecit sibi”.’ In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 250.

<sup>126</sup> ‘Secunda causa est ut in albo intelligant tempus Gratiae, vel ad habitum respicientes, palam sciunt se sub Legis floruisse tempore et sic in tempore Gratiae simul cum legis observatione Mariae fideliter famulasse, ut unusquisque ipsorum possit ad ipsam dicere: “Custodivi legem tuam”. Ipsa vero, licet pura et plena gratia, legem tamen observare curavit. Fructus autem ventris sui et Filius gratiae non venit legem solvere, sed adimplere. Cappa igitur de nigro et albo fuit, ut sic ostenderent, neminem absque mandatorum observatione ad gratiae posse venire plenitudinem.’ In *ibidem*.

<sup>127</sup> ‘Tertia causa est ut ostenderent, in Mariae Filio et in una persona utramque naturam, Dei scilicet et hominis, permanere perfecte, et etiam Mariam Filio coniunctam in caelis cum splendore perpetuo praesidere, sicut scriptum est: “Ipsa in perpetuum coronata triumphat!”.’ In *ibidem*.

Baconthorpe explains how the brothers had to change their cloaks afterwards, following their observance of the *Liber extra* decree on *De vita et honestate clericorum*, which forbade clerics and religious people to wear clothes of various colours, therefore forcing them to adopt the wholly white mantle.<sup>128</sup>

The next apologist to take the task to both elaborate the history of the order and to explain the habit was the French Jean de Cheminot, with his work *Speculum fratrum ordinis beatae mariae*, probably written in 1337 according to Adrian Staring's analysis. Although Cheminot gives a wrong date for the change (1282) and attributed it incorrectly to the agency of the papacy<sup>129</sup> – instead of a response to a petition by the order – his account is interesting, as he gives a straightforward symbolical interpretation of the striped cloak. As Jotischky points out, while in Baconthorpe's *Compendium* the mentioned orders living in the Holy Land had signs that were symbolically related to Christianity, the Carmelites stripes had no clear meaning.<sup>130</sup> Therefore, giving a symbolic explanation for the stripes became necessary. In this context, Cheminot reports that from the time when Elijah was taken to

---

<sup>128</sup> 'Unde sub tempore Gratiae. Unde in libro Decretalium, "De vita et honestate clericorum" interdicitur, quod clerici et religiosi gerant habitum varii coloris. Unde licet aliis causis rationabilibus cappa supradictorum in album tota fuerit mutata, hac tamen de causa speciali talem fieri mutationem divina credamus dispensatione et dispositione, ut sic pacem aeternam et resurrectionis gloriam, abiecta moeroris interpolatione, palam ostenderent fidelibus.' In *ibid.*, p. 252. The Decretal reads, under the rubric 'A negotiis, personis, locis, ludis, vestibus inhonestis et ornatu minus honesto praecepit clericos abstinere, et habitu honesto uti, cuius vanitatem in pluribus exprimit et detestatur', as follows: 'Pannis rubeis aut viridibus, nec non manicis aut sotularibus consutitiis sed rostratis, frenis, sellis, pectoralibus et calcaribus deauratis, aut aliam superfluitatem gerentibus, non utantur.' *Decr. Greg. IX, Lib. III Tit. I, cap. XV*, in *Corpus Iuris Canonici II*, cols. 453-4.

<sup>129</sup> 'Id circo fratres in capitulo suo generali in Monte Pessulano anno Domini 1282 celebrato pallium praedictum deponentes, auctoritate praedicti summi pontificis et sedis apostolicae cappam albam in signum suae religionis assumpserunt.' In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 137.

<sup>130</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 55.

heaven, the brothers, as a sign of sanctity and devotion, were used to wear a *pallium* of two colours *over* the habit. With its two colours, white and grey, they showed the double condition of chastity and penitence that accompanied their religious life. Moreover, the seven stripes that descended perpendicularly down the cloak had a further symbolic reading: the three black stripes represented the three theological virtues – faith, hope, and charity – whereas the four white stripes signified the four cardinal virtues – prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.<sup>131</sup> With skilful concision, Cheminot managed to give the cloak both a honourable antiquity and a symbolical reason to exist, whilst also separating it from the habit itself, marking that fundamental difference that meant that the order did not change its habit in 1287. ‘Cheminot – Jotischky observes – introduced a valuable new element into the Carmelite view of the habit by giving the *pallium barratum* a moral and theological interpretation, rather than relying on the weight of tradition alone.’<sup>132</sup> Furthermore, Cheminot also found the way to give an authoritative sanction to the change of the cloak: the order had to abandon it, he explained, because as time passed, this sign started to be considered as not pious enough for religious men in some regions of France

---

<sup>131</sup> ‘A tempore quo raptus est Elias in coelum, fratres in signum sanctitatis et devotionis super habitum suae professionis pallium duplicis coloris gestare consueverant. In quo colores, albus scilicet et griseus, statum duplicem, scilicet castitatis et poenitentiae, designabant. Item septem partes ab invicem distinctae, totum pallium integrantes, perpendiculariter descendebant; quarum tres nigrae tres virtutes theologicas, et quattuor coloris albi quattuor virtutes cardinales figurabant.’ In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, pp. 135-6, emphasis added; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, pp. 60-1.

<sup>132</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 61.

and Italy.<sup>133</sup> To reinforce this idea, he quoted John Cassian and his *De institutis monachorum*, which stated that religious men should have a belted cloak (*pallium*) and all the other garments that the monks once used to wear in the regions of Egypt. However, he then adds that they needed ‘to only keep those which the situation of the place and the customs of the province allow’, for ‘wearing of a sheepskin could provide a subject for derision instead of edifying the spectators.’<sup>134</sup>

From then on, one symbolical and mystical interpretation of the cloak followed another. A third work offering a history of the order from Elijah to the end of the thirteenth century came from William of Coventry, probably a Carmelite lay brother, and his *Chronica brevis de Carmelitarum origine et processu felici*, composed towards the middle of the fourteenth century.<sup>135</sup> Although this is a brief account, the author did not lose the chance to reinforce the biblical and mystical meanings on the matter of the cloak: ‘in the year of the Lord of 1287, the brothers of the blessed Mary of the Carmel changed their striped clothes, namely the *pallium* of Elijah, into a white cape

---

<sup>133</sup> ‘Processu vero temporis, quia signum huiusmodi in partibus Galliarum et Italiae minus religiosum hominibus videbatur, ipsum tempore Nicolai papae dimiserunt.’ In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 136.

<sup>134</sup> ‘Nam sicut dicit Ioannes Cassianus, 1 libro De institutis monachorum: “Religiosi debent habere succinctoria, pallium et cetera quae religiosi quondam in partibus Egypti portare, solebant. Ceterum a nobis”, inquit, “sunt tenenda illa tantummodo quae vel locorum situs, vel provinciae usus admittit. Melotis enim gestatio derisionem potius quam aedificationem ullam videntibus comparavit”.’ In *ibid.*, pp. 136-7. For Cassian’s *De Coenobiorum Institutis Libri Duodecim* see the translation by C.S. Gibson, *The Twelve Books Of John Cassian On The Institutes of the Coenobia, and the Remedies for the Eight Principal Faults*, from *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 11, Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (eds.) (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1894), in <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3507.htm> (accessed on 10/03/2015).

<sup>135</sup> See entry no. 2026, “William of Coventry”, in R. Sharpe, *A Handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540* (Belgium: Brepols, 1997), p. 761; also Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 126.

in honour to the mother of Christ.<sup>136</sup> Then, the French Carmelite Jean de Venette published his chronicle about the order around in 1357.<sup>137</sup> Staring explains that de Venette relied distinctly on Cheminot's *Speculum* for his work, but that he also shows knowledge of Baconthorpe's *Compendium*, as well as the use of earlier Carmelite foundational chronicles, such as *De inceptione ordinis* and the *Universis Christifidelibus*, quoted as '*in chronicis romanis*.'<sup>138</sup> Therefore, de Venette's chronicle starts closely following his predecessors in his explanation about the mantle: a *pallium* or *chlamyd* of two colours, 'called *carpita* by the ancient', worn *over* the habit as a sign of sanctity and devotion after Elijah was taken to heaven, in the fashion taken by all the religious orders in the Holy Land. He also repeats the mystical reading of the seven lines, and adds that this kind of mantle had gained the name of *Barrati* in different parts of the world.<sup>139</sup>

---

<sup>136</sup> 'Anno Domini 1287 fratres beatae Mariae de Carmelo commutaverunt vestem stragulatam, scilicet pallium Eliae, in cappam albam in honorem matris Christi, illorum advocatae postmodum gerendam, habita super hoc licentia domini papae Honorii IV, antea per plures annos petita et obtenta; quam commutationem dominus papa Bonifatius VIII sui pontificatus anno primo per bullam suam confirmavit.' In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, pp. 277-8.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150. Not to be confused with his Chronicle about France for the years 1340-1368. See Richard A. Newhall (ed.) and Jean Birdsall (trans), *The Chronicle of Jean de Venette* (New York: Columbia University press, 1953).

<sup>138</sup> A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 150. Both works in *ibid*, pp. 98-106 and pp. 81-90 respectively.

<sup>139</sup> 'Ab ipso igitur tempore quo raptus est sic Elias per turbinem ignis in caelum, ut dictum est, fratres de monte Carmeli in signum sanctitatis et devotionis super habitum suae professionis pallium seu chlamydem duplicis coloris gestare consueverant; et ipsam chlamydem carpitam antiquitus appellabant. Modus enim omnium religiosorum, qui ortum ultra mare seu in Terra Sancta assumpserunt, ut in pluribus fuit mantellis seu chlamydibus uti, prout adhuc patet in fratribus Hospitalis sancti Ioannis, etiam in Templariis, in fratribus Bethlemitis sancti Lazari et aliis multis, qui ultra mare et in Terra Sancta suam sumpserunt originem. Sic etiam et huius religionis de Carmelo professores chlamydem gestabant. In qua erant septem partes ad invicem distinctae, totum pallium integrantes et perpendiculariter descendentes. Quarum partium erant tres nigrae seu griseae, quae tres virtutes theologicas designabant, et quattuor aliae partes erant coloris albi, quae quattuor virtutes cardinales congruentissime figurabant. Et sic propter huiusmodi pallium seu mantellum variatum seu duobus coloribus contextum diversimode et barratum, fratres ipsi in diversis mundi partibus consueverant "Barrati" a pluribus antiquitus nominari.' In *ibid.*, p. 160. Emphasis added.

However, he then provides a completely novel explanation for the origin of the infamous stripes, differing from any previous account, as he tries to give a historical explanation of it: whilst Elijah was ascending to heaven in the fiery chariot, he let go his *pallium*, which fell from the sky through a whirl of fire, just to be received by Elisha. It was in this fall that the cloak may have taken its various colours: as the outer folds touched the fire, they became black or reddish, while the inner folds, protected and untouched by the fire, remained in their white colour.<sup>140</sup> De Venette continues explaining that this was the very mantle worn then by Elisha. Moreover, after the cloak descended from heaven through the whirl of fire, the waters of river Jordan immediately became divided at the touch of the garment. Therefore, because of the dignity of this *pallium*, many sons of prophets and their followers, as well as the hermits living both in Mount Carmel and in other holy places, decided to wear over their tunics a striped mantle (*chlamydem*) or a garment of two colours, in resemblance of this *pallium* and as a sign of sanctity and devotion. This was especially the case of the brothers of the Blessed Mary of Mount Carmel, who wore this “variegated” cloak for a very long time.<sup>141</sup>

---

<sup>140</sup> ‘Barras autem illas sive colores varios credimus in huiusmodi pallio propter hoc primitus contigisse. Nam sicut habetur in 4 libro Regum, illa hora qua raptus fuit Elias in curru igneo per turbinem in caelum, clamante post eum Eliseo et dicente: "Pater mi, pater mi, currus Israel et auriga ejus", dimisit Elias pallium suum descendere per turbinem ignis ipsi Eliseo. In quo descensu credimus ipsum pallium per plicas diversas, cum iam ab Eliae corpore discessisset, cadendo et transeundo per ignis turbinem infra plicas et extra propter ignem tunc colores varios forsitan accepisse, ut sic, ubi ipsum infra plicam non tetigit ignis, in suo albo colore remanserit, extra plicam vero ad contactum ignis apparuerit aequaliter denigratum sive rufum, et per consequens in diversis coloribus variatum. Unde isto eodem pallio usus est postmodum Eliseus.’ In *ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>141</sup> ‘Nam ut habetur in 4 libro Regum, ad tactum huius pallii statim post eius descensum de caelo per turbinem ignis, aquae Iordanis sunt divisae. Et ob hoc propter pallii dignitatem tam ipse Eliseus quam multi filii prophetarum et eorum sequaces, tam etiam eremitae in monte Carmeli quam alibi in locis sanctis habitantes, ad instar pallii supradicti in signum sanctitatis et devotionis chlamydem barratam aut sic duobus coloribus variatam gestare desuper

De Venette then describes the change of the striped cloak, repeating the facts contained in the notarial acts from the chapter of Montpellier quite accurately. He incorporates the arguments of the damage that the garment allegedly brought to the order, but then he includes an original addition, not present in those documents: he states that the main reason for the choice of the white mantle was Sobac's dream and vision.<sup>142</sup> With this addition he therefore gave a larger and older place to the account presented by Baconthorpe's work in the order's own collective imaginary and tradition. De Venette also included another notable fact, though probably a spurious one: the alleged discontent of the Premonstratensian Order about the Carmelite's choice for a white mantle, in a quarrel that would have been similar to the controversies between Augustinian Friars and Franciscans. White was in fact the traditional colour of the Premonstratensians, who, according to de Venette, took the matter to the Roman curia, as they considered that the Carmelites change brought "harm and censure" on them. The long quarrel, stated de Venette, was finally solved with the Premonstratensians gaining

---

decreverunt, et specialiter fratres beatae Mariae de monte Carmeli usi sunt talibus variatis chlamydibus per longissima tempora, ut dictum est.' In *ibidem*.

<sup>142</sup> 'Nota quod Honorius concessit primo cappas albas, sed praeventus morte bulla non fuit tunc habita, sed tantummodo testimonium cuiusdam domini cardinalis amici ordinis, dictas cappas procurantis. Quas post earum assumptionem seu gestationem papa Nicolaus IV nobis benigniter confirmavit. Et de huiusmodi concessionis testimonio sunt litterae dicti cardinalis in Brugis. Iste Honorius IV fuit post papam Martinum IV creatus anno 1285. Processu vero temporis quia signum huiusmodi in partibus citramarinis, videlicet Italiae, Galliae et aliis, minus religiosum hominibus videbatur, in tantum quod propter eius varios colores in derisum a pluribus habebatur, idcirco tempore Nicolai papae IV fratres in capitulo suo generali in Monte Pessulano anno Domini 1287 in festo beatae Mariae Magdalenae celebrato, tempore fratris Petri de Amiliano tunc prioris generalis, de provincia Narbonensi, qui hoc procuraverat, pallium praedictum auctoritate dicti summi pontificis et sedis apostolicae dimittentes, cappam albam secundum visionem et somnium Sabacha, patris Eliae prophetae, de quo somnio habetur in *Historiis scholasticis*, 4 Regum 2, in signum suae religionis et professionis de cetero gestandam uniformiter et unanimiter assumpserunt.' In *ibid.*, p. 162.

permission to eat meat on non-forbidden days as compensation.<sup>143</sup> This, however, seems highly improbable, and we would also have to take de Venette at his word, for there does not seem to exist any external source to confirm his account on this matter.<sup>144</sup>

Jean de Venette's work served as a source for John of Hildesheim, and his *Dialogus inter directorem et detractorem de ordine Carmelitarum*, written in 1374, to present his case against a detractor of the order. According to Jotischky, this work was most probably 'the record of an actual debate between a Carmelite (possibly himself) and a friar of another order, who, from internal evidence, must have been Franciscan or Dominican.'<sup>145</sup> Once again the matter of the habit and the mantle was put under examination. Hildesheim recurs to the story of Sabach's dream, and takes one step further when he now connects Elijah, John the Baptist and the

---

<sup>143</sup> 'Qua de causa religiosi canonici ordinis Praemonstratensis contra fratres praedictos indignationem nimiam habuerunt, dicentes quod fratres habitum ipsorum in eorum detrimentum et vituperium acceperant et gestabant, quoniam et ipsi similiter cappis albis induuntur. Et propter hoc dicti canonici fratres ipsos in Romana curia vocantes, gravibus querelis et litigiis per magna tempora vexaverunt. Tandem fratribus praedictis in dicto placito auxiliante Domino praevalentibus, et dictis canonicis post graves labores eorum et expensas ab intento frustratis similiter et privatis, concessum est eis per curiam seu per sedem apostolicam, ut ipsi canonici per totum ordinem suum in recompensationem tam expensarum quam capparum albarum sic a fratribus de Carmelo noviter assumptarum, in suis refectoriis diebus a iure non prohibitis carnibus vesci liceat; nam antea eos in refectorio, ut dicitur, carnes comedere non licebat.' In *ibid.*, p. 163.

<sup>144</sup> The Premonstratensians were indeed granted a mitigation on meat abstinence by Innocent IV in 1244, then confirmed by Nicholas IV in 1289 (see *Ordinis Praemonstratensis Chronicon*, Aubert Le Mire (ed.) (Coloniae Agrippinae: Sumptibus Bernardis Gualtieri, 1613), p. 186; p. 191; p. 209. (The chronicle says that Nicholas IV's confirmation was made in 1282, but it must have mistaken the year, because then Nicholas IV, who became pope only in 1288, could not have issued the bull). Considering the date of Innocent IV's privilege, it could not be remotely connected to the Carmelite change of cloak. Nicholas IV's bull makes no mention of any quarrel with the Carmelites so it is unlikely to be linked to the alleged conflict (full text in *Registra Vaticana* 44, ff. 135r-135v, c. 112). Mentions of the supposed conflict are also absent in Joannes Le Paige's account of Nicholas IV's confirmation of the privilege (Joannes Le Paige, *Bibliotheca praemonstratensis ordinis* (Parisiis, 1633), p. 211). I have not been able to find any source confirming neither the existence of the quarrel related by de Venette, nor the reported resolution of it.

<sup>145</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 133.



Apostles through their common use of the *melota*, a garment described as 'hairy, greyish and not artificially dyed,'<sup>146</sup> – a piece of cloth made of sheepskin worn indeed by the first oriental monks.<sup>147</sup> Hildesheim states that Elijah worn a *pallium* over his sheepskin garments,<sup>148</sup> and thus resorts to the alleged proverbial role of the order, seen now as forerunners of every religious order, as the direct followers of John the Baptist and the Apostles. In this fashion, Hildesheim repeats his predecessors' arguments around the symbolical meanings of the striped cloak – the theological and cardinal virtues – and also adds a new dimension: the seven stripes could also represent the passage of time, as the world was created in seven days. Moreover, the variety reflected on the mantle was not to be detested, as the Apostles had received several tongues in Pentecost, a gift which probably the 'inhabitants of Mount Carmel' (i.e., the Carmelites) had also received.<sup>149</sup> From this argument the Carmelites could now claim to have been both forerunners and contemporaries of the Apostles, and also witness of the

---

<sup>146</sup> 'Ubi etiam notandum, quod Elias et Ioannes Baptista consimili habitu utebantur, et nonnulli alii. Habitus autem illorum erat vestis pilosa, grisea, non colorata per artem, et haec vestis dicebatur melota. Unde Apostolus: "Circuierunt in melotis, in pellibus caprinis". Habebant etiam zonas pelliceas circa lumbos suos.' In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, pp. 353-4; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 60.

<sup>147</sup> See also Adalbert de Vogüé and Pius Engelbert, "Formazione ed evoluzione dell'abito monastico", p. 63.

<sup>148</sup> 'De Elia dicitur IV Regum 1: "Vir pilosus et accinctus zona pellicea circa lumbos eius". Super haec omnia consuevit Elias uti pallio, de quo fit mentio IV Regum 2, et in multis aliis locis. Hoc pallium ascendens Elias Eliseo dimisit.' In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 354.

<sup>149</sup> 'Habuit illud pallium tres plicas griseas et quatuor albas. Tres poterant significare tres virtutes theologicas, et aliae quatuor totidem virtutes cardinales. Vel septenarius ille partium explicatarum et involutarum significare potest mobilitatem totius temporis, quod septem diebus vertitur et volvitur quousque terminetur. Igitur habitum habere talem quo quis frequenter moneatur ut consideret volubilitatem temporis, videtur aliquid rationis praetendere. Varietas enim illa quam arguis, non est detestabilis, praesertim cum et Apostoli variis linguis locuti sunt in adventu spiritus vehementis. Et multum probabile est quod incolae montis Carmeli tale donum linguarum variarum receperunt ibidem.' In *ibid.*, p. 363; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 61.

passage of time and of their own continuity, almost implying that they had been here from the beginnings of time. Moreover, the white of their new mantles was again also connected to the Virgin Mary, as she had probably worn a white mantle as well, since she had an affinity and was familiar with angels, who always appear in white. Likewise, white were, as well, the clothes of Christ at the moment of the Transfiguration<sup>150</sup> – a passage which had an obvious meaning for the Carmelites, as it depicted both Elijah and Moses flanking Christ while dressed in white, thus helping them to add yet another mystical dimension to the formation of their identity.

In turn, the Cambridge Carmelite John Hornby, regent of the Carmelite *studium* at the university, used John of Hildesheim's exposition when he presented his defence against the attacks of the Dominican Cambridge master John Stokes.<sup>151</sup> The latter challenged the Carmelites assertions of their foundation by Elijah and their connection with the Virgin, as he identified the 'Blessed Mary' of their title with a converted Egyptian prostitute – St Mary of Egypt – rather than with the Mother of Christ.<sup>152</sup> Likewise, one of the arguments given by Stokes to object to the continuity the Carmelites claimed with Elijah was, indeed, the discontinuity of their habit. In his reply, Hornby agreed with Stoke's assertion that the Carmelites used to wear a striped *pallium* – there was, of course, no point in denying it – but this, in fact, only

---

<sup>150</sup> 'Praeterea videtur probabile, quod ipsa beata Virgo portavit pallium candidum, cum cognata fuerit et familiaris angelis qui semper in albis apparuerunt, et quia vestimenta Filii tempore transfigurationis in candorem niveum variata fuerunt.' In A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 359-60; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 62; the biblical references for the Transfiguration are Matthew 17, 1-8; Mark 9, 2-8; Luke 9, 28-36.

<sup>151</sup> For a detail study of the subject see J. P. H. Clark, "A defense of the Carmelite Order by John Hornby, O. Carm., A.D. 1374", *Carmelus* 32 (1985), pp. 73-206. Also, A. Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage*, p. 327, and Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 58, particularly note 47.

<sup>152</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, pp. 169-70.

showed that they were the genuine ‘successors and sons of the prophets’, who had also worn such garments. Going back to a premise already used by Baconthorpe, he added that the change was due to the express prohibition contained in the decretals, which forbade the clerics to wear habits of several colours.<sup>153</sup> Furthermore, he reasserted that what was changed at Montpellier was not the habit, for it was the scapular and not the mantle what constituted the sign of their profession,<sup>154</sup> explicitly referring the argument made in *Invocantes*, and building on what was, by this point, an authoritative body that served to back up the narrative of the order’s identity in their habits.

It was in the context of these controversies, that the provincial of Catalonia, Felip Ribot wrote his *Decem Libri de institutione et peculiaribus gestis religiosorum Carmelitarum*<sup>155</sup> during the decade of 1380. Ribot dedicated the entire Book Seven of his work to deal in detail with the matter of the habit, in a treatment that attempted to provide both a further “historical” and a mystical assessment on the subject. Here he repeats many of the notions found in the works of some of the previous apologists of the order,

---

<sup>153</sup> ‘Sed concedo bene quod aliquando habuimus pallium barratum ad ostendendum quod fuimus veri successores et filii prophetarum qui paliis utentabantur, sed tamen istud pallium fuit postmodum mutatum in capam albam, et causa fuit quia decretalis expresse prohibet et prohibuit ne clerici gerant habitum varii coloris, Extra De vita et honeste clericorum.’ In J. P. H. Clark, “A defense of the Carmelite Order”, p. 87. Clarks identifies the decree as *Decr. Greg. IX, Lib. III Tit. I cap. XI, Corpus Iuris Canonici II*, cols. 451-2, and Jotischky as *cap. II* (Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 59, n. 50), but it actually must be *cap. XV* (*ibid.*, col. 453), ‘a negotiis, personis, locis, ludis, vestibis inhonestis et ornatu minus honesto praecepit clericos abstinere, et habitu honesto uti, cuius vanitatem in pluribus exprimit et detestatur,’ see above, p. 149, n. 128.

<sup>154</sup> ‘Concludo quod capa non est habitus professionis mee, quia sine capa possum licite ire, missam celebrare, in altari ministrare, et sedere et iacere, et non excommunicari a iure; sed scapulare est habitus professiones mee...quod si temere dimisero, incurro excommunicationem ipso facto, et sic patet quod Magister non dicit verum quando dicit capam meam esse habitum meum.’ In J. P. H. Clark, “A defense of the Carmelite Order”, p. 87; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 58.

<sup>155</sup> A recent translation has been made by Richard Copsey: Felip Ribot, *The Ten Books On The Way Of Life And Great Deeds Of The Carmelites* (Faversham: Saint Albert’s Press, 2007).

like their connection to Elijah and John the Baptist through their use of the *melota*, and how this showed that ‘both under the Old Law and the New Law, it is becoming for a monk of our Order to have a rough garment.’<sup>156</sup> However, Ribot takes a step further in the narrative, and adds an explanation for the current absence of said garment among the Carmelites: ‘the wearing of the *melota* gave rise to ridicule at times rather than admiration in those who saw it. Now the wearing of this garment made of hair was carefully considered by everyone, for it did not bring any spiritual inspiration, but gave rise to some feelings of vanity, so the members of this Order came to a peaceful agreement and replaced it, adopting in its place a tunic of wool, not expensive, but of a rough, poor quality of the same colour as the *melota*, which they wore under the scapular.’<sup>157</sup> Likewise, Ribot explains that the first Carmelites indeed used to wear a white cloak over their habits, just like Elijah’s father, Sabach, had seen in his vision of men dressed in white, now clearly identified as the prophet’s followers, i.e., the Carmelites.<sup>158</sup> But then, according to Ribot, when the Holy Land was occupied by the Saracens, the religious men were forced to change this garment, as white was a colour exclusively reserved for the satraps. Therefore the Carmelites chose to wear the striped cloak.<sup>159</sup> Of course, this new mantle was not deprived of symbolical meaning: ‘the wearing of this cloak signifies that the monk ought

---

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>157</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid., p. 98. Ribot quotes here both Peter Comestor’s and a certain ‘John XLIV bishop of Jerusalem’ commentary on the passage as a source of authority. The latter was believed to have been a hermit of Mount Carmel who transmitted his knowledge to a certain Caprasius, a young Carmelite. See John Welch, *The Carmelite Way: An Ancient Path for Today’s Pilgrim* (Eastbourne: Antony Rowe, 1996), p. 52.

<sup>159</sup> Felip Ribot, *The Ten Books*, p. 99; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, pp. 61-2.

to have the gospel of Christ in his breast so that he may always know how to act. The white colour of which it is made signifies the purity which comes to the monk from following the gospel. This colour in the cloak is divided into four parts, just as the gospel is divided into the four accounts of the evangelists.<sup>160</sup> As for the black stripes, he explains that 'through the practice of the gospel sinners become dead to sin, and they are not reckoned by the superior as unclean but clean, that is, purified by God, and especially as this was done three times corresponding to the three aspects of penitence, that is contrition, confession, and satisfaction; which is what the black colour signifies in the three separate stripes of the said cloak.'<sup>161</sup>

In this way, the Carmelites became both champions of the gospel in a Holy Land now invaded by paganism, as well as a model for penance. Furthermore, it was actually their cloak what would become their instrument of salvation: 'so that the sinners – wearing this cloak and repenting of their sins and in all other ways following the gospel – are not rejected but are received into the unity of their monastic community, just as they are also received into the heavenly kingdom.'<sup>162</sup> Thus, with these two passages Ribot also shows how the change of the cloak of 1287 should not be regarded as such a novelty, as he endeavours to present that it had its precedents in the same history of the order.<sup>163</sup> The message is quite clear: changing a part of the habit was not, after all, so important a matter as the detractors of the order wanted it to be, since the order had done it before, with no one making

---

<sup>160</sup> Felip Ribot, *The Ten Books*, p. 100.

<sup>161</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>162</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>163</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 61.

such a great fuss about it. Ribot then continues to explain the last change of 1287 in the following manner: 'now in the various parts of Europe – such as Italy, Germany, England, France and Spain – the striped cloak was seen by Christians as unsuitable for religious, and because of its different colours it was held up to ridicule by many people. Therefore, the members of the Order sought to change it, and in its place to wear a more suitable garment. This change was acceptable as, some time previously, they had laid aside their garments made of skins and the white cloak, replacing them, on their own authority, with a black tunic and a striped cloak.'<sup>164</sup> In orderly fashion Ribot manages to take both the different accounts and disputes around the habit, and uses them to craft and present a cohesive identity for his order.

As Jotischky sums it up, it becomes clear that 'Carmelite apologists of the fourteenth century developed the notion that the change of habit, far from being innovatory, was a return to the most ancient traditions of the Order. A sophisticated rationale for the change of habit and for the history of the habit evolved, in which both the striped *chlamys* and the new white *cappa* were viewed in symbolic as well as strictly historical terms.'<sup>165</sup> However, it seems that no one has yet observed the elephant in the room: why keep going over a controversy that had been resolved long ago? One may think, at a first glance, that the natural instinct should have been to avoid the matter altogether, making their peace with the change, and to content themselves

---

<sup>164</sup> Felip Ribot, *The Ten Books*, p. 101; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 48.

<sup>165</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 55.

knowing that they had escaped suppression in 1274 almost by the skin of their teeth, to use Richard Copsey's words.<sup>166</sup>

This was clearly not enough. In a way, the Carmelite authors of the period had the task of filling the massive gap left by the lack of both the charismatic founder and a sound and clear account for their foundation. Thus, they needed to create a whole new history and mythology for the order that would assert their distinctive identity among the religious orders of the time – just as the Augustinian Hermits had done on their side, when they started to claim St Augustine as founder of their order and dressed the saint as one of them. Likewise, perhaps after such a risky and unusual move like changing an order's appearance, the Carmelites realised that constructing a narrative that explained and reinforced their continuity was crucial: 'the problems inherent in the Carmelites' strategy of 1287, notes Jotischky, were that any change seemed implicitly to criticize the image of the order until that point. Change could be seen as an admission of weakness and lack of integrity: in this case both the order's formal integrity as a constitutional entity and its historical integrity.'<sup>167</sup>

In this context, the defence presented first by Baconthorpe and then by Hildesheim and Hornby seems to give the main clue to what seems at first to be a paradox. It is probable that the accusations of inconsistency made by the Dominican Stokes – who refers the change of habit to support his argument – were just one among many. As said before, the competition among mendicant orders was a fierce one during this period. Although

---

<sup>166</sup> Richard Copsey, *Carmel in Britain*, p. 7

<sup>167</sup> Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 53.

Hornby presented a defence from a Dominican attack, the controversy shows both the tensions about status that existed among religious orders in general, especially among the mendicants, and the struggles to find a place within the system of differences in which the orders' habits were placed. Hornby's triumph in Cambridge can be also seen as a victory for the entire order, in their efforts to find – and secure – their “brand” within this system. Therefore, both explaining the change and providing arguments about their consistency and continuity needed more elaboration than just the reasons given at the general chapter of Montpellier. Thus, the Carmelites reached for both historical and mystical connections, going as far and as high as possible: with Elijah as founder and the Virgin as protector, securing a position among the mendicant orders became a much easier task. From there, gaining wide devotional popularity seemed to be just one step away. What better way to achieve this than being in possession of a miraculous garment that granted eternal salvation? Now it was the turn of the Carmelite scapular to make its appearance.

### **The clothes of salvation: The Carmelite Scapular and the consolidation of the order's identity**

Some day around 1322, so goes the legend, pope John XXII was kneeling in prayer before the Virgin of Mount Carmel, who suddenly came to life and delivered the following speech to him:

‘Oh John, oh John, Vicar of my beloved Son, just as, snatching you from your adversary, I, with the help of my petitions make you pope, asking this from my sweetest Son, which by grace I obtained: so



too you should have the pleasing and far reaching confirmation to my holy and devoted Carmelite Order, established by Elijah and Elisha in Mount Carmel, that everyone who, making their professions, observing the rule composed by my servant Albert the Patriarch, and approved by my dear Innocent: you, as the true vicar of my Son, should assent on earth to what my Son has established and ordered in heaven: that he who has persevered in sacred obedience, poverty and chastity, or who enters the sacred Order, will be saved. And if others, because of devotion, shall enter the order, bearing the sign of the holy habit, calling themselves brothers or sisters of my aforementioned order, they shall be freed and absolved of the third part of their sins on the day they enter the aforesaid order, promising chastity if she is a widow; virginity if she is a virgin, and the observation of the inviolable matrimony if she is married, as the Holy Mother Church commands. The professed brothers of the said Order shall be freed from the punishment and fault, and on the day of their death they will quickly pass through Purgatory. I, Glorious Mother, will descend on the Saturday after their death, and those who I find in Purgatory I will release and I will lead them to the holy Mountain of eternal life. However, these brothers and sisters have to say the Canonical Hours, as it is necessary according to the rule given by Albert; those who are ignorant, should lead a life of fasting during the days ordered by the holy Church (unless they are impeded by necessity), and they should abstain from eating meat on Wednesday and Saturday, except on the day of the nativity of my Son.’ And, having said this, the holy vision disappeared.<sup>168</sup>

The story is contained in the apocryphal bull *Sacratissimo uti culmine* attributed to John XXII, which soon became known as “Sabbatine Bull”. The spurious bull gave support to the so-called “Sabbatine privilege”, supposedly

---

<sup>168</sup> *Sacratissimo uti culmine*, 3 March 1322, in *Bullarium Carmelitanum* I, p. 62, (see Appendix to Chapter 2). The Latin of this version is not very neat but it seems to make better sense than the critical edition offered by Ludovico Saggi in “Il testo della ‘Bolla Sabatina’”, *Carmelus* 13 (1966), pp. 245-302; 283-7. Saggi’s study, however, is still fundamental to understand the history of the document and the document itself.

granted by John XXII to the Carmelite Order, and then allegedly confirmed by Alexander V.<sup>169</sup> As the story describes, thanks to this privilege – “urged” by the very Virgin Mary – all those belonging to one of the Carmelite Orders (including the male and female confraternities), would have a shortened stay in Purgatory, and would be rescued by the Virgin on the Saturday after their death (therefore its name), if they observed the requisites described in the bull. Among these it was the use of the order’s *signum habitum*, which soon became to be associated the scapular.<sup>170</sup> The authenticity of the bull was contested from quite early, as Ludovico Saggi points out, both because neither the original bull nor its record was ever founded in John XXII’s register, and because the multiple transcriptions vary too much between them. Nevertheless, the ecclesiastical authority would confirm the concession of the privilege itself, with some changes, with the bull *Ex clementi* issued by Clement VII in 1530.<sup>171</sup> Somehow, then, and despite the dubious origin of the

---

<sup>169</sup> Saggi explains in detail why neither of these allegations could be true, and how the earliest documents containing the bull are a notarial act from Sicily from 1430, which is in turn a copy from a document written in Majorca in 1421 (“Il testo della ‘Bolla Sabatina’”, pp. 287-302). Yet, as David d’Avray has observed, ‘it is fascinating how this tough pope, whom historians think of as an administrator and politico, keeps turning up in a devotional context’ (private communication). Indeed, John XXII is a recurrent character in this thesis, repeatedly dragged to solve sartorial controversies, probably despite himself.

<sup>170</sup> The use of the scapular became later on the essential prerequisite, together with joining a confraternity, to receive the promised indulgences: ‘Omnibus utriusque sexus Christi fidelibus, qui dictam Confraternitatem ubivis locorum tam hactenus canonice, ut praefertur, institutam, quam deinceps, ut infra instituendam de caetero ingredientur et habitum receperint, die primo eorum ingressus, si vere poenitentes et confessi Sanctissimum Eucharistiae Sacramentum sumpserint, plenariam.’ Pope Paul V, bull *Cum certus*, 30 October 1606, in *Bullarium Carmelitanum* II, p. 351.

<sup>171</sup> Ludovico Saggi, “Il testo della ‘Bolla Sabatina’”, pp. 245-8. Saggi points out that the *Ex clementi* bull was preceded by the document *Dilectii fillii* (15 May 1528), which became invalid as it was not confirmed within a year. However, it is important to highlight that neither document mentions the spurious bull (p. 251). *Ex clementi*, 12 August 1530, in *Bullarium Carmelitanum* II, pp. 47-50. The privilege was confirmed later again by Paul III, in 1534 and 1549; by Pius IV in 1561; by Pius V in 1566; by Gregory XIII in 1577; by Paul V in 1613; by Clement X in 1673; and by Innocent XI in 1678. The University of Salamanca also confirmed the currency of the promised indulgences in 1569, as well as the University of Bologna in

tradition, the Carmelites managed to secure an important source of popularity through their own habits, in a process that helped to reinforce both their distinctive identity, and their place and status among the other orders.

The Sabbatine bull, however, was not the only account claiming the predilection of the Virgin Mary for the order, and her promise of special salvation through the use of the Carmelite habit. In fact, the narrative that came to support this still widespread popular devotion mixes two different legendary threads, both of blurred origins, which developed more or less in parallel during the end of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth century. The second source was the legend of St Simon Stock, an Englishman claimed to have been the sixth general prior of the order around the middle of the thirteenth century, but of whom, in the words of David Knowles, 'we know almost nothing.'<sup>172</sup> In the Carmelite tradition, Stock is reputed to have been blessed with a vision of the Virgin Mary, who, according to the legend, appeared to him while he was fervently praying the hymn *Flos Carmeli* (which existed however independently before being linked to Simon Stock),<sup>173</sup> asking her to concede some privilege to the order that bore her name. The Virgin then promised him a gift similar to the one

---

1609, and the University of Paris in 1648 (see Elisée de la Nativité, *Le Scapulaire du Carmel, Etude historique* (Tarascon: Editions du Carmel, 1958), pp. 33-4).

<sup>172</sup> David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, p. 197; Richard Copsey, *Carmel in Britain*, p. 77. About the problems to date Simon Stock's generalship, see Richard Copsey, *Carmel in Britain*, pp. 82-3. The most thorough compilation of known sources related to the Simon Stock legend (and the "Sacpular vision" as a whole) has been made by Bartolomé Xiberta, in his *De visione Sancti Simonis Stock* (Rome, 1950). However, Copsey offers the following criticism on the work: 'Although he [Xiberta] found a number of late fourteenth-century sources, the overall result of all his efforts was, from an historical point of view, somewhat meagre and disappointing. Apart from an ambiguous thirteenth-century Dominican reference, his earliest evidence for Simon Stock was, at best, over one hundred years after his supposed death.' (Richard Copsey, *Carmel in Britain*, p. 77).

<sup>173</sup> See Richard Copsey, *Carmel in Britain*, p. 90.

allegedly offered to John XXII: 'To him the blessed Virgin appeared, surrounded by a multitude of angels and bearing the scapular of the Order in her blessed hands, saying: "may this be to you and to all the Carmelites a pledge that whoever dies wearing it will not suffer eternal fire, that is, wearing this, he will be saved."'174

The striking resemblance between this second account and the text of the Sabbatine bull is evident, and it is easy to see how they became intertwined in one tradition. However, as far as we know, they developed without any connection, which makes their similarity yet more remarkable. Both accounts aimed at the same target: to expand, through the devotion to the Virgin Mary, a form of popular piety which had the Carmelite Order, and particularly its habit, at the centre.<sup>175</sup> However, the Simon Stock's vision

---

<sup>174</sup> 'Saepius vero Virginem gloriosam Dei Genitricem Patronam Ordinis deprecabatur, ut suo titulo insignitos communiret privilegio, dicens quotidie voce devotissima in suis orationibus: Flos Carmeli, Vitis florigera,/ Splendor coeli Virgo puerpera,/ Singularis./ Mater mitis, sed viri nescia,/ Carmelitis da privilegia,/ Stella maris.

Quodam ergo tempore dum hanc orationem devote oraret, Virgo gloriosa Maria Mater Dei cum multitudine Angelorum ei apparuit, Scapulare Ordinis in manis tenens, et dicens: hoc erit tibi et cunctis Carmelitis privilegium in hoc habitu moriens salvabitur. Et ei Scapulare tradidit. Unde versus:

Si Ordinis in signo moritur quis, jure benigno/ Solvitur a poenis, fruiturque locis per amoenis./ Hoc impetravit Simon a Virgine chara:/ Postea migravit scandens ad gaudia clara.' John Grossi, *Viridiarum*, in Daniel a Virgine Maria (ed.), *Speculum Carmelitanum*, pp. 131-144; no. 599, p. 139; fragment translated by Richard Copsey, *Carmel in England*, p. 76. According to Copsey, the story present in Grossi's (prior general of the Order, 1389-1430) *Viridiarum*, composed at some point between 1413-1426, is 'the first recognisable of the Simon Stock legend.' (Richard Copsey, *Carmel in England*, pp. 75-6). A shorter version in Joannes Baptista de Cathaneis (ed.), *Speculum ordinis Fratrum Carmelitarum nouiter impressum* (Venice, 1507), fol. 103. See also Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 190, particularly n. 2.

<sup>175</sup> It is worth noting that Christian Ceroke argues that before Arnoldus Bostius and his *De patronatu et patrocinio beatissime Virginis Mariae*, 'the Scapular was worn merely in affiliation to the Order rather than as an active Marian Devotion.' In Christian Ceroke, "The Credibility of the Scapular Promise", *Carmelus* 11 (1964), pp. 81-123; pp. 104-5, n. 99. Likewise, Eamon Carroll points out that 'Bostius further describes our Lady as the Mother who not only regenerates us to Christ, but who nurses and nourishes us. He even extends this to clothing us, having in mind the Carmelite scapular; she clothes the Eternal World with flesh for the redemption of the world, and she clothes her beloved sons whom she has brought forth to Christ in her livery:

presents, just like the Sabbatine bull, a historical problem in itself. As Richard Copsey demonstrates, the cult of Simon Stock grew, in its first stage, separately from the so-called “scapular vision”: the first historical evidence of Simon Stock was linked to a local cult in Bordeaux and the miracles allegedly worked at the site of the tomb of a prior general, who had been reputed as a saint. The character in question was therefore known either as Simon of Bordeaux or as Simon of England. However, both the apparition of the Virgin Mary and the scapular promise are completely absent from these early sources, and, in fact, they did not become part of the Simon Stock tradition at least until 1423.<sup>176</sup> According to Copsey, the entries about Simon Stock in the Carmelite catalogue of saints started to be increasingly interpolated with the story of the scapular vision, showing the development of the legend, from the short version in which the Virgin appears to Simon, a holy man – not identified as prior general of the order – with the scapular and the promise of salvation,<sup>177</sup> to the detailed narration of John Grossi’s *Viridiarum* presented above. From this point onwards, the legend and the cult of Simon Stock, accompanied by the devotion to the scapular, spread rapidly through Europe. The cult’s reputation increased and Carmelite authors continued to elaborate and expand the story of the saint, which then began to gain a prominent

---

...Regina pietatis et bonitatis invictae et sempiternae clementiae quae in redemptionem mundi Verbum aeternum propria carne induit, Spiritu Sancto sanctificante, eadem in reconciliationem mundi Carmelitas divini Verbi portitores proprio vestivit habitu, Spiritu Sancto confirmante, praecipuo honoris privilegio digne pro meritis omnium mysteriorum suorum signiferas remunerans...’ (Eamon Carroll, “The Marian Theology”, pp. 208-9).

<sup>176</sup> Richard Copsey, *Carmel in Britain*, p. 82. See also pp. 77-81 and 85-90 for a discussion about the historical evidence and the development of the figure of Simon Stock. Also Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, pp. 38-9.

<sup>177</sup> Richard Copsey, *Carmel in Britain*, pp. 83-4.

place in Carmelite and Marian literature of the period,<sup>178</sup> whilst the fame of the Sabbatine privilege also continued to grow. As Richard Copsey points out, 'the absence of any link between the two stories created no difficulties for Carmelite apologists and the two Marian promises were quickly linked together in the preaching of the broader scapular devotion.'<sup>179</sup>

It should be noted, however, that the development of this kind of legend was not an isolated phenomenon, as the fifteenth century saw how the competition among mendicant orders shifted 'from historical claims to the efficacy of devotional practices.'<sup>180</sup> The use of the habit of a religious order *ad succurrendum* – at point of death – as a token of salvation had already gained notoriety from at least the twelfth century among lay people, and was rendered even more popular with the Franciscans.<sup>181</sup> Moreover, as Ludovico Saggi observes in his study about the milieu in which the Sabbatine bull was developed, elements of divine intervention find themselves repeated in different orders, in which the mystical reception of the habit is among the most popular ones.<sup>182</sup> In fact, the Dominicans claimed to have received their habit in quite a similar fashion to the Carmelite acquisition of the scapular, with the Virgin appearing to the blessed Reginald of Orleans in a dream, showing him the scapular and cloak of the Friars Preacher.<sup>183</sup>

---

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., p. 108.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>181</sup> L. Saggi, "L'ambiente della 'bolla sabatina'. Abito religioso e salvezza eterna in scritti medievali", *Carmelus*, 14 (1967), pp. 63-89; p. 66.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>183</sup> See Cordelia Warr, "Religious habits and visual propaganda: The vision of the Blessed Reginald of Orléans".

The Jesuit Herbert Thurston, in his discussion of Benedict Zimmerman's – rather uncritical – essay on the origin of the scapular devotion,<sup>184</sup> also points out that, during the period in which the legend originated, the privilege believed to be attached to the Carmelite habit, 'was in no sort of way the exclusive prerogative of the Carmelites,' as 'the annals of most religious Orders contain some similar tradition, generally founded on an apparition, more or less vaguely attested, and promising salvation to all who persevere in the Order until death.'<sup>185</sup> Indeed, Saggi shows how the account of Marian intervention expressed in the Sabbatine bull actually presents, among the literature of the genre, great affinity to similar Franciscan narratives.<sup>186</sup> As a matter of fact, the Franciscan Arnaldo Montaner had asserted towards 1354 that, among other things, Saint Francis descended to Purgatory once a year, to free the souls of those who belonged in life to his order, or the orders instituted by the same Franciscans (*seu Ordinibus per eundem institutis*, i.e., second and third orders), and to lead them into paradise.<sup>187</sup> The Dominican devotion of the Rosary also won popularity during this period, and the legend claiming how the Virgin had given it to Saint Dominic took shape towards the end of the century.<sup>188</sup>

In this context, just as with the works written by Carmelite apologists during the fourteenth century regarding the change of the cloak, the

---

<sup>184</sup> Benedict Zimmerman, "The Origin of the Scapular. A new Essay on an Old Subject – From Original Sources", in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 9 (Jan-Jun 1901), pp. 385-408.

<sup>185</sup> Herbert Thurston, "The Origin of the Scapular. A Criticism", in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 16 (Jul-Dec. 1904), pp. 39-75; p. 69.

<sup>186</sup> L. Saggi, "L'ambiente della 'bolla sabatina', p. 86.

<sup>187</sup> AM Vol. 8 (1733), year 1371, no. 28, p. 245; L. Saggi, "L'ambiente della 'bolla sabatina', pp. 78-9.

<sup>188</sup> Richard Copsey, *Carmel in Britain*, p. 15. On the devotion of the Rosary, see John D. Miller, *Beads and Prayers: The Rosary in History and Devotion* (London: Burns & Oates, 2002).

development of these two close legends alleging the special protection of the Virgin probably responded to the fiery competition between mendicant orders, and their need for differentiation and identity formation. As Copsey sums up, if the Carmelites wanted to attract the support from the faithful amid these multiplying stories of celestial donations, possessing some type of unique privilege for their habit was in order. The Simon Stock vision, based on similar Dominican and Franciscan stories, answered this need, as ‘an attempt to claim equal spiritual value for the Carmelite scapular.’<sup>189</sup> Copsey also points out that the devotion generated by the Simon Stock legend had an advantageous political side: the proliferation of the veneration of an English saint in parts of France which by 1426 were already under English control seemed rather helpful, especially for the English Carmelites transferred to French houses.<sup>190</sup>

Another point seems worth mentioning: although the apocryphal Sabbatine bull does not mention expressly the scapular as the vehicle for the privilege, only the habit, the Simon Stock legend used both terms, seemingly as synonyms. As seen before, the Carmelite Order soon identified the scapular as the sign of its profession – probably as a way to mark a distance with the cloak and its change – and the garment became to be considered the *habitus ordinis*, only given to the new brothers once they had made their profession.<sup>191</sup> Indeed, Christian Ceroke has noted that in the Constitutions of

---

<sup>189</sup> Richard Copsey, *Carmel in Britain*, p. 94.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

<sup>191</sup> Claudio Catena, *Le Carmelitane: Storia e Spiritualità* (Roma: Institutum Carmelitanum, 1969), pp. 44-5. However, the *summarium* of indulgences for Carmelites and its confraternities of 1673, contained in the Carmelite *Bullarium*, still referred to the ‘habitum



the order of 1294, of 1324, and of 1357, the terms were also used interchangeably, something that John Hornby had done as well in his confrontation with John Stokes.<sup>192</sup> What is interesting to note then, is the change regarding the means needed to receive what became to be known the Sabbatine privilege, with the Carmelite scapular as a token for both the habit and the salvation it promised. Perhaps the inclination towards the use of the scapular opened new possibilities, as it probably permitted to expand this devotion to the wider lay public, while it conferred a unequivocal mark of identity linked to the order.<sup>193</sup> As we have seen, dress had been a sensitive issue for the order during the century preceding the birth of the scapular devotion, with the Carmelites apologists almost obsessed about explaining and defending the habit, from both a historical and spiritual perspective. It seems that their stubbornness finally paid off. Even though this kind of privilege and the indulgences allegedly granted by the use of an object linked to a religious order was not exclusive to the Carmelites, no other order permitted the use of the central garment of their habit. In a way, this helped to level the ground for the Carmelites in terms of popularity, with thousands of people wearing the scapular from the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards.<sup>194</sup>

---

huius religionis gestarunt vel eorum confraternitatem ingressi fuerint.' *Bullarium Carmelitanum* II, p. 597.

<sup>192</sup> Christian Ceroke, "The Credibility of the Scapular Promise", pp. 81-123; pp. 102-3; Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 58-9, n. 49. See above, pp. 158.

<sup>193</sup> Although it seems that the garment that marked the affiliation of the confraternities to the order was not fixed and changed over time, from the cloak or mantle to the scapular, it was still clearly linked to the order. See Claudio Catena, *Le Carmelitane*, pp. 55-7.

<sup>194</sup> Richard Copsey, *Carmel in Britain*, p. 106.

This development might even be regarded almost as an overcompensation for their previous “traumatic” history, as it entailed a re-elaboration of their habit, now converted itself into a widespread devotional object, put at the centre of the pious relationship between the lay and the order. Moreover, the nature of this particular devotion may have helped to shift the traditional use of religious habits by the lay, until then almost uniquely granted at the point of death; it transformed the devotion for the habit of the order into a long-lasting commitment, not only a last resource for salvation. Thus, although the so-called Sabbatine privilege generated resistance and quite a good amount of controversy, at least until the end of the seventeenth century,<sup>195</sup> the providential scapular came to reshape the sartorial image of the Carmelite Order. This was an action that was not far from redefining the image of the order itself. Indeed, it marked an essential process that helped the Carmelites to shift its position and role for years to come, with an ever-growing popularity that saw the numbers of those wearing the scapular and joining Carmelite confraternities increase exponentially during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During his visit to Spain in 1566-67, the prior general of the order, Giovanni Battista Rossi, claimed to have given 200,000 letters of affiliation and to have enrolled as many in the scapular. In Rome, by the beginnings of the seventeenth century the scapular confraternity at St Martino ai Monti had around 42,000

---

<sup>195</sup> See Ludovico Saggi, “Il testo della ‘Bolla Sabatina’”, pp. 254-68. In fact, in 1603 the inquisitor of Portugal included in the Index of forbidden book a work that enumerated the privileges of the Carmelite Order, and in 1609 he banned all books that referred the Sabbatine privilege (in Joachim Smet, *The Carmelites: A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Vol. 2, The post Tridentine period, 1550-1600* (Darien, Ill.: Carmelite Spiritual Center, 1976), p. 225).

members, and there were 20,000 inscribed at St Crisogono, the oldest scapular confraternity in the city. In Portugal, there were 16,000 members of the confraternity in Lisbon in 1610 rising to 23,000 just three years later.<sup>196</sup> The popularity of Carmelite confraternities was such that, for example, butchers in Seville and Salamanca were complaining to the authorities about the economical damage that the abstinence of meat carried out by the large number of its members, especially on Wednesdays and Saturdays, meant for their business.<sup>197</sup> In fact, the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, traditionally celebrated on 16 July, was, by the end of the sixteenth century, known in Toledo as “the day of the Habit” (*día del Habito*).<sup>198</sup> With their habit, and also despite of it, by the end of the sixteenth century the Carmelites had certainly entered the major leagues.

The troubles faced by both the Augustinian Friars and the Carmelites because of their habits show how difficult was for them to find, and to hold, a place and an identity of their own in the very competitive environment in which religious orders developed during the thirteenth century. Unlike the more popular orders, their lack of charismatic founder meant they have to create their own “foundational myths”: they had to develop a narrative that helped them to make up for their lack of religious pedigree, and find their own position among this highly hierarchically organised scheme. Paradoxically, these same problematic habits were, at then end, the ones that provided

---

<sup>196</sup> Joachim Smet, *The Carmelites*, Vol. 2, pp. 224-6.

<sup>197</sup> Ludovico Saggi, “Il testo della ‘Bolla Sabatina’”, p. 253.

<sup>198</sup> Bartolomé Xiberta, *De visione*, p. 159. The feast was declared the central celebration for the whole order in the General Chapter of 1609 (Gabriel Wessels (ed.), *Acta Capitulorum Generalium Ordinis Fratrum B. V. Mariae de Monte Carmelo. Vol. 2 Ab anno 1598 usque ad annum 1902* (Romae: apud Curiam Generalitiam, 1934), p. 20); Ludovico Saggi, “Il testo della ‘Bolla Sabatina’”, p. 256.

these orders with a fundamental tool to put their own tradition together: as they struggled to fight the controversies that touched their habits, they started to build up their own identities. Having to defend and to explain their habits also meant to construct a history of the same, which in turn became a history of the orders themselves. In other words, as the stories and associations for their habits were multiplied and stretched out, hand in hand with the mythical narratives that Augustinian Friars and Carmelites developed, their habits proved to be much more than an external badge of identification; they provided them with something that was crucial to hold their ground against the rest of the orders: the gears for the construction of their own historical identity.

## **APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 2**

### **Text of the “Sabatine bull”, version of the *Bullarium Carmelitanum***

‘Ioannes Episcopus Servus Servorum Dei.

Universis, et singulis Christifidelibus etc.

1. Sic mihi flexis genibus supplicanti Virgo visa fuit Carmelita, sequentem effata sermonem: O Ioannes, o Ionnnes, Vicarie mei dilecti Filii, veluti te a tuo eripiam adversario, te Papam facio, solemni dono Vicarium meis juvantibus supplicationibus a dulcissimo Filio meo petens, quod gratiose obtinui, istam gratiam, et amplam meo sancto, ac devoto Carmelitarum Ordino confirmationem habeas praeconcedere, per Eliam, et Eliseum in Monte Carmelo inchoato.

2. Quod unusquisque professionem faciens, Regulam a meo Servo Alberto Patriarcha ordinatam observabit, et per meum dilectum Innocentium approbatam, ut verus mei Filii Vicarius debeat in terris assentire, quod in Coelis meus statuit, et ordinavit Filius, quod qui in sancta perseverabit obedientia, paupertate et castitate, vel qui sanctum intrabit Ordinem, salvabitur. Et si alii devotionis causa in sanctam ingrediantur Religionem, sancti habitus signum ferentes, appellantes se Confratres, et Consorores mei Ordinis praenominati, liberentur, et absolvantur a tertia suorum peccatorum portione, a die, quo praefatum Ordinem intrabunt; Castitatem, si vidua est, promittendo; Virginitatis, si Virgo est, fidem praestando; si conjugata, inviolatam matrimonii conservationem adhibendo, ut Sancta Mater Ecclesia imperat; Fratres professi dicti Ordinis supplicio solvantur, et culpa, die, quo ab hoc seculo isti recedunt, properato gradu accelerant Purgatorium.

3. Ego Mater gloriosa descendam Sabbato post eorum obitum, et quos invenero in Purgatorio, liberabo, et eos in Montem sanctum vitae aeternae reducam. Verum, quod isti Confratres, et Consorores, teneantur dicere Horas Canonicales, ut opus fuerit, secundum Regulam datam ab Alberto; illi, qui ignari sunt, debeant vitam jejunam ducere in diebus, quos sacra jubet Ecclesia (nisi necessitatis jam traditae impedimento) Mercurio, ac Sabbato

debeant se a carnibus abstinere, praterquam in mei Filii Nativitate, et hoc dicto, evanuit ista sancta visio.

4. Itam ergo sanctam Indulgentiam accepto, roboro, et in terris confirmo; sicut propter merita Virginis Matris gloriosa Iesus Christus concessit in Coelis. Nulli ergo hominum liceat hanc paginam nostrae Indulgentiae, seu Statuti ordinationem irritare, vel ei ausu temerario contraire. Si quis autem hoc attentare praesumpserit, indignationem Omnipotentis Dei, et Beatorum Apostolorum Petri, et Pauli se noverit incursum.

Datum Avenione tertia die Martii, Pontificatus nostri Anno sexto.'

(In *Bullarium Carmelitanum*, I, pp. 61-2).

## CHAPTER 3

---

### HABIT ENVY:

#### EXTRA-RELIGIOUS GROUPS, ATTIRE AND THE SEARCH FOR LEGITIMATION OUTSIDE THE INSTITUTIONALISED ORDERS

On 21 February 1241, Pope Gregory IX sent a bull to archbishops and bishops regarding ‘...some women who wander in your cities and dioceses, they falsely pretend to be from the Order of San Damiano, and in order that others may comply, with the false faith of unfounded trust, to what they assert, they go barefooted, wearing the habit and the belt or the thin ropes (*cordulas*) of the nuns of this order, whom some call *discalciatas* or *cordularias* or *minoretas*...’.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this letter was to deal with groups of women who apparently had taken to dress up in a similar way to the nuns of the Order of San Damiano, founded by Clare of Assisi some decades earlier.<sup>2</sup> The bull thus instructed the ecclesiastical authority that

---

<sup>1</sup> ‘...Ad audientiam nostram noveritis pervenisse quod nonnullae mulieres per vestras Civitates et dioceses discurrentes se fore de S. Damiani ordine mentiuntur; ut et alii sue assertionem mendaci fide credulitatis accedant, discalciatae vadunt: habitum, et cingulum Monialium eiusdem Ordinis et cordulas deferentes: quas quidem *discalciatas* seu *Chordularias*, alii vero *Minoretas* appellant; Cum tamen Moniales ipsae ut gratum prestant Deo famulatum, perpetuo sint inclusae. Unde quia in ejusdem Ordinis confusionem, ac derogationem, Ordo fratrum Minorum, et ipsorum Fratrum scandalum, ac Monialium, earumdem praedictarum mulierum religio simulata redundat; Universitati vestrae per Apostolica Scripta precipiendo mandamus, quatenus mulieres ipsas ad abjiciendum cum eisdem cingulis, et chordulis hujusmodi habitum...’, BF I, no. 331, p. 290 (italics in the original); Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Literature on Clare of Assisi and her order is extensive, but see for example: Ingrid J. Peterson, *Clare of Assisi: A Biographical Study* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1993); Maria Pia Alberzoni, *Clare of Assisi and the Poor Sisters in the Thirteenth Century* (St Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 2004); Joan Mueller, *The Privilege of Poverty: Clare of Assisi, Agnes of Prague, and the Struggle for a Franciscan Rule for Women* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006); Chiara Frugoni, *Chiara d'Assisi: una solitudine abitata* (Bari: Laterza, 2006); Lezlie S. Knox, *Creating Clare of Assisi*; Bert Roest, *Order and Disorder: The Poor Clares between Foundation and Reform* (Leiden: Brill 2013).

these women had to give up their belts, ropes and habits. The complaint of scandal from the Franciscans and the nuns of San Damiano about these women was analogous to the one presented by the Minors against the Brettini and Bonites around a year earlier. However, their protest not only drew attention to the fact that these women were ‘fooling the trustful pious’ with their attire, but also that, with the Damianites being strictly cloistered nuns, the *religio simulata* of these wandering women reflected poorly on the virtuous disciples of St Clare, who did observe the norms of claustration.<sup>3</sup>

Yet, as Herbert Grundmann has asserted, there was more to the conflict. These women seemed to have a genuine desire to enter the Order of San Damiano, but had not found a way in since, at least between 1228 and 1245, the order was neither accepting new members, nor building new convents to accommodate this demand.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, these women might have been more than just impostors, wandering around the cities, and trying to trick the devout as they appeared to be Damianites. Perhaps they were yet another group representing the wider movement of lay piety that had started to materialise throughout Europe by the end of the twelfth century, and that, according to Grundmann, especially extended among women during the

---

<sup>3</sup> Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, p. 110; p. 115; Lezlie S. Knox, *Creating Clare of Assisi*, pp. 37-8. On claustration of religious women, see Eileen Power, *English Medieval Nunneries*, pp. 341-93; Jane Tibbets Schulenberg, “Strict Active Enclosure and its Effects on the Female Monastic Experience”, in John A. Nichols and Lillian Thomas Shank (eds.), *Medieval Religious Women. Vol.1 Distant Echoes* (Kalamazoo, Mich: Cistercian Publications, 1984), pp. 87-113; James A. Brundage and Elizabeth M. Makowski, “Enclosure of nuns: the decretal Periculoso and its commentators”, in *Journal of Medieval History*, 20 (2004), pp. 143-155.

<sup>4</sup> Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, pp. 115-6. However, Sbaralea mentions that the Damianite convent of Salamanca, to which Innocent IV addresses one of his bulls in 1250, had been founded in 1238. BF I, p. 556, note d.



thirteenth century. Moreover, as women were forbidden to beg,<sup>5</sup> their motivation could not have been to take the alms intended to other religious orders, as the Brettini and the Bonites had been accused of doing. Nevertheless, despite the possibility that their actions were indeed founded on pious intentions, Innocent IV repeated the tone of Gregory IX's bull, twice in 1250, and again in 1252, with harsh words for these *mulieres*, who went around in the habit of the Order of San Damiano.<sup>6</sup>

As Grundmann skilfully presented it in his now classic study, new ways of religious devotion and life were flourishing throughout Europe during this period. Even though it was not a welcoming world for women who could not find a place to live the kind of novel religious experience that the Damianite order proposed, the resented women of Gregory IX's bull were not the only lay persons dressing up in religious habits. Women formed a notorious subset, and female movements took many different forms, but the longing to embrace a more virtuous way of life outside the traditional religious orders was shared by groups of both men and women. Paradoxically, for these people, who could not – or did not want to – take religious vows in the institutional established way, wearing uniformed clothes that resembled religious habits seemed to be essential, as the sheer amount of sources related to dress in G. G. Meersseman's *Dossier de l'Ordre de la Penitence* demonstrates. It became, indeed, a common feature of the “extra-religious”

---

<sup>5</sup> Constance H. Berman (ed.), *Medieval Religion: New Approaches* (New York-London: Routledge, 2005), p. 213; Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies. Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200-1565* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), p. 67.

<sup>6</sup> BF I, *Cum harum rector Sathanas*, 20 April 1250, no. 322, p. 541; *Ex parte dilectarum*, 30 September 1250, no. 345, p. 556; *Petitio vestra nobis*, 8 July 1252, no. 419, p. 619; Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, p. 116 and n. 167.

groups that started to spread during the thirteenth and fourteenth century, as an act that placed their choice of life immediately within their social and cultural context. Thus, it is worth taking a closer look to this phenomenon of “habit envy”, particularly the one represented by beguines and penitential groups who, standing outside the traditional male orders, still wanted their share of religious praxis.<sup>7</sup> And this praxis, just as with monks and friars, started with their clothes.

### ***MULIERES RELIGIOSAE, HABITUS BEGHINARUM: RELIGIOUS DRESS, LAY PIETY, AND THE FORMATION OF COLLECTIVE IDENTITIES***

She dashed to a recluse’s nearby cell, threw off her own garb wrapped herself in a despicable piece of fabric, draped a shabby cloth over it as a mantle, and wound a filthy rag around her head so that only her face was visible. She looked disgusting, but in that manner she walked the busiest streets and squares of the town, especially those where she had previously appeared in grand style and had haughtily dazzled the public with her fashionable appearance. Now she walked the same route as a horrible spectacle, a crazy fool.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> On the so-called *via media*, see Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture. With Special Emphasis on the Belgian Scene* (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), pp. 120-140.

<sup>8</sup> ‘Mox siquidem propriis exuta vestibus, ad reclusorium quoddam habitationi panniculo se involvens, et mattam vice chlamydis desuper circumponens, alioque vili satis operimento faciem suam involvendo submittens, per vicus et plateas, tali redimita schemate, per loca quae magis erant hominum frequentia constipata, coepit ambulando procedere: sed et ubicumque cultis vestibus olim incedere consueverat, et populares aspectus per habitus ostensionem in se dudum superba reflexerat; ibi nunc, velut amens et fatua, monstruosum quoddam hominibus praebens de semetipsa spectaculum incedebat.’ In *Vita Idae Lovaniensis*, D. Paperbroeck (ed.), in *Acta Sanctorum*, Apr., Vol. 2, 156-189; p. 163. Fragment translated by Walter Simons (*Cities of Ladies*, p. 66). However, this conversion and change of clothes also meant that Ida was thought by her family to have gone mad and was put in chains (Katrien Heene, “Gender and Mobility in the Low Countries: Traveling Women in Thirteenth-Century Exempla and Saint’s Lives”, in Ellen E. Kittell and Mary A. Suydam (eds.), *The Texture of Society: Medieval Women in the Southern Low Countries* (New York-Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 31-49; p. 35).

The fragment narrates the conversion, towards the end of the twelfth century, of the Belgian noblewoman Ida of Louvain, to a life dedicated to God and poverty. Like her more famous counterpart, Marie of Oignies, she was one of the forerunners of the movement of *mulieres religiosae*, which in time would be known as beguines.<sup>9</sup> As pointed out before, these *mulieres religiosae* were not the product of a deliberate attempt to set new forms of religious life, but rather ‘the result of the women’s religious movements insofar as it did not find reception into the new orders.’<sup>10</sup> Yet, despite the uphill challenge of finding themselves in an ambiguous terrain – as they opted for a way of life that resembled the monastic one, but which had neither the religious vows nor the privileges of the religious status – these groups of “extra-religious” women started to multiply rapidly. From the thirteenth century onwards they were a steadily growing presence in Europe, especially in the Low Countries, followed by France and Germany. Loosely organised, they usually put themselves under the spiritual guidance of a confessor, generally a Cistercian at first, and then a Dominican or

---

<sup>9</sup> As beguines were not always distinguished as a clearly defined category within the wider movement of *mulieres religiosae*, and because these extra-religious women could receive many other names, for example *Swestriones/Suestriones* or *bizoche* (see below, p. 203), I will be using the term also as synonym for the entire phenomenon. This seems to be, in fact, the approach taken also by authors like Ernest W. McDonnell in *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, Jean-Claude Schmitt in *Mort d’une hérésie. L’Église et les clercs face aux béguines et aux béghards du Rhin supérieur du XIV<sup>e</sup> au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Mouton/École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1978), and Gordon Leff in *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages. The Relation of Heterodoxy to Dissent c.1250-c.1450* (Manchester: Manchester University Press; New York: Barnes & Noble, 1967). Furthermore, this seems to have also been the practice in the Late Middle Ages, as, for example, in 1374 Lambert, bishop of Strasbourg made reference to ‘the women commonly called beguines, sisters or *swestriones* among other names’ (‘...profane multitudinis mulieres, que vulgariter etiam Begine, quedam ex eis Sorores seu Swestriones, vel aliis nominibus appellantur...’ in Michael Bihl (ed.), “De tertio ordine S. Francisci, in Provincia Germaniae Superioris sive Argentinensi syntagma,” *AFH* 14 (1921), pp. 138-98, 442-60; no. 21, p. 183). On the name, see also McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, pp. 430-8.

<sup>10</sup> Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, p. 139.

Franciscan.<sup>11</sup> Theirs was a new kind of *conversio*, led by their personal choice to follow the evangelical precepts, but detached from the traditional monastic understanding of religious life.<sup>12</sup> This brought them both the admiration of their contemporaries, but also distrust from many in the ecclesiastical establishment, so they transited between being considered saintly women or heretics, with often ill-defined distinctions between “good” and “bad” beguines.

In fact, at the beginning they quickly gained advocates, like Jacques de Vitry, Lambert le Bègue, John of Nivelles and Jacques Pantaleon, who promoted their extra-regular way of life.<sup>13</sup> With friends in high places, this *vita religiosa* was, at first, recognised by the ecclesiastical hierarchy and even orally endorsed by Honorius III to Jacques de Vitry.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, Gregory IX’s bull *Gloria virginalem* of 30 May 1233, although not a recognition of them as a religious order, indeed put the ‘continent virgins of Germany (Teutonia) who vow perpetual chastity to God’, under the protection of the Holy See and authorised them to live in communities.<sup>15</sup> As Ernest McDonnell points out, ‘although living among laymen, [they] were often considered by the

---

<sup>11</sup> Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 170ff; Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, p. 143; Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, p. 35ff.

<sup>12</sup> Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 59.

<sup>13</sup> Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, p. 140.

<sup>14</sup> ‘Obtinui...ab ipso [Honorius III]...litteras cum executoribus et protectoribus impetravi, ut liceret mulieribus religiosi non solum in episcopatu Leodi[n]esi, sed tam in regno quam in imperio quam in imperio in eadem domo simul manere et sese invicem mutuis exhortationibus ad bonum invitare...’, in Jacques de Vitry, *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry*, critical edition by R.B.C. Huygens (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1960), p. 74; Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, p. 48; Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, p. 140; Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 157.

<sup>15</sup> *Les Registres de Grégoire IX*, Tom. I, no. 1361, col. 762; on 4 June that same year the beguines of Cambrai obtained the same bull (Potthast, Vol. 1, n. 9281, p. 789). Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, p. 48; Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 6 and p. 157; Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 19.

contemporary mind superior in charity to those who professed the triple monastic vows.’<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, the goodwill towards these *mulieres religiosae* never got much further than that. Their champions did not draw them into an organised body under a rule and thus they never won official recognition as a religious institution.<sup>17</sup> As a result, Grundmann observes that ‘beguines constituted a strange transitional form between the ecclesiastical orders of the day, never belonging to the monastic community of *religiosi*, since it was not an approved order.’<sup>18</sup> Yet, he adds, they ‘belonged just as little to the lay world of *saeculares*, since beguines had left the *saeculum*, sworn chastity, and led a *vita religiosa*.’<sup>19</sup> However, despite finding themselves in this religious no man’s land, the statutes for beguines communities demonstrate how their organisation and life did not differ, in fact, much from the one of any female religious house of the time: daily time for prayer and religious exercises; observation of a chaste and pious life; hierarchical administration of the group under a “mistress”; supervision by male members of the Church, often with the recommendation of the adoption of the Augustinian or third order’s Rule.<sup>20</sup> In this context, as McDonnell asserts, securing a habit ‘was contingent on the acceptance and continuous observance of such prescriptions.’<sup>21</sup>

As it was also the case with fully approved religious orders, beguines positioned themselves within the system of differences of medieval religious

---

<sup>16</sup> Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 121.

<sup>17</sup> Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, p. 140.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, italics in the original; Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 157.

<sup>20</sup> Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 86.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*.

dress, looking to shape their group identity by distinguishing themselves visually, in order to indicate their chosen *status*. The fact that the biographer of Ida of Louvain, like Jacques de Vitry in his *vita* of Marie of Oignies,<sup>22</sup> did not let the sartorial options of these women pass unnoticed – in a manner that strikingly resembles Francis of Assisi’s own conversion and stance towards dress, as Walter Simons has duly pointed out<sup>23</sup> – shows that those seeking to maintain the beguine tradition were very well aware of the meaningful subtleties of sartorial gestures. They understood how attire was an essential element for any group that wanted to purport itself as a religious community – or, at least, as a community wanting to live a religious way of life. Although their dress was not, of course, a proper religious habit, but rather a “distinctive dress,” the sources usually referred them as *habitus*, showing that the garments worn by beguines were assumed by many of their contemporaries to be intended as a religious form of dress. Therefore, the use of this habit – or habits, as they probably differed from one community to another – certainly did not go unnoticed. As a matter of fact, these habits played at times a role that could be either favourable or detrimental to their own interests as communities, thus reflecting the very ambiguous status in which these *mulieres religiosae* found themselves.

---

<sup>22</sup> See *The Life of Marie d’Oignies*. By Cardinal Jacques de Vitry, translated by Margot H. King (Toronto: Peregrina Publishing 1989), pp. 51-2; pp. 61-2; Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, pp. 66. See also Anneke B. Mulder-Bakker, *Mary of Oignies: Mother of Salvation* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006) and Michel Lauwers, “Entre béguinisme et mysticisme. La vie de Marie d’Oignies (†1213) de Jacques de Vitry ou la définition d’une sainteté féminine”, in *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 66 (1992), pp. 46-70.

<sup>23</sup> Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, pp. 66-7; see also Kate Crawford Galea, “Unhappy Choices: Factors That Contributed to the Decline and Condemnation of the Beguines”, in *Vox Benedictina* 10 (1993), pp. 56-73; p. 56.

According to Elizabeth Makowski, medieval canonists understood the formal distinction between religious and quasi-religious women according to the *substantialia* that existed at the centre of monastic life: the religious profession, made with the three monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, that marked the official entry of a person into a religious order approved by the papacy.<sup>24</sup> Yet, alongside this clear-cut demarcation, there was also a popular understanding of what defined the status of the *mulieres religiosae*, where personal devotion and piety, as well as an endeavouring life of Christian perfection carried a great weight.<sup>25</sup> However, for the more conservative elements of both the Church and the wider society, the problem with beguines and other groups of *mulieres religiosae* was that, although lacking the essential elements of religious profession, they still acted and, especially, *looked* like true religious women, largely thanks to their habits. It should not be much of a surprise, then, that these habits were a prominent topic among the reasons given for their persecution, sometimes triggering the criticisms made by many of their detractors. William of St Amour, for example – the champion of the secular clergy in their fight against the mendicants at the University of Paris in the mid-thirteenth century – certainly did not hold the beguines in high esteem. In his *Responsiones*, written to defend himself from the accusations made by the Dominicans,<sup>26</sup> he addressed (or was made

---

<sup>24</sup> Elizabeth Makowski, “A Pernicious Sort of Woman”: *Quasi-Religious Women and Canon Lawyers in the Later Middle Ages* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), p. 89.

<sup>25</sup> Elizabeth Makowski, “Mulieres Religiosae, Strictly Speaking: Some Fourteenth-Century Canonical Opinions”, in *The Catholic Historical Review*, 85 (1999), pp. 1-14; pp. 2-3.

<sup>26</sup> The critical edition of this text in E. Faral (ed.), “Les «responsiones» de Guillaume de Saint-Amour”, *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale Et Littéraire du Moyen Âge* 18 (1950-51), pp.

to address) the matter. According to him, some of the beguines said that they could not wear expensive clothes without great danger. However, he replied, there could be arrogance in cheap habits just as much as in costly clothes.<sup>27</sup> A man or a woman, whether secular or religious, was not permitted to change the habit of their profession into the habit of another profession. For St Amour, if a man or a woman took to wear a coarser habit in order to be seen as different from others, and to be considered holier among others, they were guilty of the sin of hypocrisy.<sup>28</sup>

St Amour, however, was not alone in his reproaches. Bishop Bruno of Olmütz had similar criticisms of imposture and deception for the *mulieres religiosae*, and was quick to point them out in the *relatio* he wrote for Gregory X in preparation for the Second Council of Lyons of 1274. As Grundmann explains, the bishop complained of ‘people (men as well, but particularly

---

337-394. See also M. M. Dufeil, *Guillaume de Saint-Amour et la polémique universitaire parisienne, 1250-1259* (Paris: Éditions A. & J. Picard, 1972), pp. 283-91.

<sup>27</sup> ‘...quod in vili habitu potest esse superbia sicut in pretiosa veste...et sciendum quod praedicavi hoc propter Beguinas et Bono Valetos, dicentes quod vestis preciosa portari non possit sine magno periculo’, in E. Faral (ed.), “Les «responsiones»”, no. 10, p. 343.

<sup>28</sup> ‘...si vir vel mulier gerat habitum viliozem, ut aliis dissimilis videatur et inter alios sanctorum reputetur, peccatum est hypocrisis.’ In *ibid.*, no. 12, p. 344; Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 463; Tanya Stabler Miller, *The Beguines of Medieval Paris: Gender, Patronage, and Spiritual Authority* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), p. 18. Here St Amour was, in fact, accused of having said much harsher words, which he attempted to disavow: the Dominicans accused him of having said that the women – called beguines – who, living in the world, changed their clothes for the sake of religion, sinned gravely, as did those who cut their hair for the same reasons, and thus they should be excommunicated: ‘Item dixit [William] quod mulieres existentes in seculo mutant habitum suum causa Religionis, peccant graviter: et quae caedunt capillos suos existentes in seculo credentes hoc facere causa Religionis, peccant; et debent istae et illae excommunicare; si quidem tales sunt quae vocantur Beguinae.’ In E. Faral (ed.), “Les responsiones”, no. 12, p. 344; Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, p. 141; Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 463. McDonnell and Grundmann state that St Amour had, in fact, canon law on his side when making this assertion, though neither of them offers a reference to such legislation. In his response however, St Amour did quote the Deuteronomy, 12,11. Nevertheless, it is true that monks could only transfer to a stricter order (thus, change their original profession) with the permission of their abbot (Decretum, Secunda Pars, C. XX, q. IV, c. III, *Corpus Iuris Canonici* I, col. 851).



young women and widows), who bear the habit and name of *religiosi* without belonging to a papally approved order.<sup>29</sup> Likewise, in the previous decade, the Council of Mainz of 1261 had already issued a prohibition according to which neither the ‘foolish women’ (*mulierculae*) who had made a vow of continence and changed their secular habits, nor others who had adhered to certain rules, were to wander through the villages.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, in 1299 the Provincial Council of Narbonne drew attention on beguines and their clothes, saying that sometimes, under the appearance of good, evil slipped into the Church. It was not without a good reason, the council said, that the Holy Fathers had forbidden the variety of orders and of habits assigned to religious not approved by the Apostolic See (referring to canon 16 of Lateran IV). The beguines, moreover, were, among other things, suggesting new ways of penitence, abstinence, and colours of clothes for people of both sexes, so the council instructed the bishops to lead inquiries regarding these practices.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, p. 145. The text of the *relatio* reads as follows: ‘sunt etiam quidam et quedam apud nos religiosorum sibi habitum et nomina vendicantes, quos et quas, cum eorum non sit religio per sedem apostolicam confirmata, sectarum nomine credimus comprehendere, qui passim ut iugum evadant obediencie, habentes velamen malicie libertatem, quasi liberius Domino servituri, dominos et dominas habere nolentes, fugientes etiam obedienciam sacerdotum seu etiam coercionem coniugii maritalis, et per aliquem ordinem se astringi, femine iuvenes in statu viduitatis se ponunt...’, in “Relationes Episcopi Olomucensis Pontifici Porrectae”, in MGH, *Leges, Constitutiones et Acta Publica Imperatorum et Regum*, Vol. 3, (Hanoverae-Lipsiae, 1904-6), pp. 589-595; no. 620, p. 593. According to Grundmann, ‘the first sentence (*religiosorum sibi habitum et nomina vendicantes*) permits us to assume that Bishop Bruno knows and means the name “beguine”.’ P. 350, n. 33.

<sup>30</sup> ‘...prohibemus ne mulierculae, quae votum continentiae emisissent, mutantibus habitum saeculares nec tamen aliter certae regulae se adstringentes, per vicus passim discurrant...’ in Mansi, Vol. 23, col. 1089; Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 95.

<sup>31</sup> ‘Cum per experientiam saepius sit expertum, quod sub specie boni in ecclesia Dei mala subintrant interdum, nec sine causa prohibuerunt sancti patres varietatem ordinum, vel habitum religiosorum deputandorum, qui non sunt per sedem apostolicam approbati...novosque poenitentiae modos et abstinentias vestiumque colores utriusque sexus personis suggerentium...Beguini seu Beguinae vulgariter appellati...’, in E. Martene and U. Durand (eds.), *Thesaurus Novus Anecdotorum*, Vol. IV (Paris, 1717), cols. 226-7; Pierre Péano, “Les Béguins du Languedoc ou la crise du T.O.F. dans la France méridionale (XIII-XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles)”,

Amid these increasingly harsh criticisms, there still were those who saw in the beguines an initiative that was worth defending, particularly (and perhaps paradoxically), from those trying to imitate their attire: Walter Simons narrates how, towards the end of the thirteenth century, count Guy of Flanders 'ordered his bailiff in Ghent to watch out for "people who wear the habit of beguines but are unworthy of it because of suspect conversations, carnal lapses, or other crimes." The bailiff should intervene whenever he was alerted to such persons by the guardian of the Franciscan convent, the beguines' confessors, or the beguine mistresses, and force unruly beguines to discard their habit.'<sup>32</sup> The fragment reveals how, with this perceived risk of being imitated, the beguines had, by this point, already delineated a self-identity and obtained a place within the system of differences of religious clothes. Moreover, the different stances towards these *mulieres religiosae* and their semi-religious habits show how medieval attitudes towards religious dress were far from being a black and white matter.

Yet, despite the good will shown by some authorities, by the beginnings of the fourteenth century, the luck of the beguines and beghards (broadly speaking, the male counterpart to beguines)<sup>33</sup> had begun to turn for

---

in Mariano D'Alatri (ed.), *I frati Penitenti di San Francesco nella società del Due e Trecento*, Atti del 2° Convegno di Studi Francescani, Roma, 12-13-14 ottobre 1976 (Roma: Istituto storico dei Cappuccini, 1977), pp. 139-159; pp. 143-4.

<sup>32</sup> Ghent, Begijnhof Ter Hooie, Charters, no. 24, quoted by Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, p. 132.

<sup>33</sup> In McDonnell's words: 'Similar to the beguines in interests, aims, and spirit were the confraternities of devout, hardworking craftsmen of extra-regular status, variously known in the Late Middle Ages as *beguin* in southern France, beghards in Germanic lands and, as at Bruges, Louvain, Diest, and elsewhere, through corruption, Bogards, or generally by popular usage, *goede kinder die men heet Beggarde*, Lollaerts, Conversi, *boni pueri*, and *Boni Valeti* in France in the reign of Louis IX, "apostolic men" (*apostolici*) or simply "poor men." In Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, pp. 246-7. See also *ibid.*, pp. 246-65.

the worse. In many parts of Europe, especially in the territories of the Empire, they started to be looked at with suspicion and to be deemed as unorthodox. In the worst cases, they were considered downright heretics, especially when associated with the heresy of the Free Spirit.<sup>34</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly, their habits were repeatedly mentioned among the accusations made against them. As Jean-Claude Schmitt observes, through a complex game of associations of ideas, texts and people, the habit of beguines and beghards became the quintessential clothes of heretics, and those wearing it were treated as such. It was their apparent desire to single themselves out that seemed to be particularly threatening, because it was not an individual but a collective initiative: their habit seemed to express the threat of a body constituted for the sole purpose of disturbing the immutable order of the Church.<sup>35</sup>

Thus, in February 1307 the archbishop of Cologne, Henry II of Virnebourg, attacked both groups, and one of the charges was their disobedience of the Lateran IV's canon against the formation of new orders with their own habit. He therefore threatened them with excommunication if they did not give up their habits and way of life within a month.<sup>36</sup> As Gordon

---

<sup>34</sup> Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 315-9. Around the same time, they became also associated to the dissident Franciscan faction of the Spirituals and the sect of the Fraticelli. See Raoul Manselli, *Spirituali e Beghini in Provenza* (Roma, Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo. Studi storici. fasc. 31-34, 1959), and David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century after Saint Francis* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), p. 109; p. 120.

<sup>35</sup> Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Mort d'une heresie*, pp. 110-11.

<sup>36</sup> 'Eos igitur omnes et singulos requirimus et monemus quatenus intra unius mensis spatium, habitu hujusmodi assumpto dimisso resumptoque priori...', in P. Fredericq, *Corpus documentorum Inquisitionis haereticae pravitatis Neerlandicae*, Vol. I (Gent: J. Vuylsteke-1889) no. 161, p. 153; Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 318; Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 517. However McDonnell

Leff points out, the archbishop's accusations ignited a chain reaction, and in 1310 the synod of Trier was condemning "'false Beguines" who, dressed in the long tunics of their namesakes and despising work, formed conventicles and spread false doctrine among simple souls.<sup>37</sup> To make things worse, the resistance that some beguines started to generate in their immediate communities, along with their denounced deviation from orthodoxy in certain places, gained them the condemnation of Clement V, with his bull *Cum de quibusdam*, issued in 1311 in the Council of Vienne.<sup>38</sup> Jacqueline Tarrant has convincingly argued that the decree was not the blanket condemnation of beguines that, from its contemporaries to modern scholars, it has been thought to be.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, it was still used 'to authorize cycles of indiscriminate persecution', as Elizabeth Makowski observes, in which "'good" as well as "bad" beguines, along with those quasi-religious women

---

points out that the decree seemed to leave out "real beguines", as it was directed against '*Beggardos et Beggardas*' under the name of the Apostolici (ibid., p.518).

<sup>37</sup> Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 318. The section of the document is entitled *Contra Begardos laicos* and the fragments reads as follows: 'Item, cum quidam sint laici in civitate, diocese et Provincia Trevirensi, qui sub praetextu cujusdam religionis fictae Begardos se appellant, cum tabardis et tunicis longis et longis capuciis cum ocio intendentes ac labores manum detestantes conventicula inter se aliquibus temporibus faciunt et conversant seque fungunt coram personis simplicibus expositores sacrarum scripturarum...', in P. Fredericq, *Corpus documentorum*, I, no. 163, p. 155; Mansi, Vol. 25, col. 261.

<sup>38</sup> The text of the bull in *Corpus iuris canonici* II, Lib. III, tit. XI, c. I, col. 1169. The first lines of the bull refer to the 'so-called habit of the beguines': 'Quum de quibusdam mulieribus, Beguinabus vulgariter nuncupatis, quae, quum null promittant obedientiam, nec propriis renuncient, neque profiteantur aliquam regulam approbatam, religiosae nequaquam existunt, quanquam habitum, qui Beguinarum dicitur, deferant, et adhaereant religiosis aliquibus, ad quos specialiter trahitur affectio...'. Elizabeth Makowski offers a full translation of the bull into English in "A Pernicious Sort of Woman", pp. 23-4; Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 524.

<sup>39</sup> Jacqueline Tarrant, "The Clementine Decrees on the Beguines: Conciliar and Papal Versions," in *Archivum Historiae Pontificae*, 12 (1974), pp. 300-308; Elizabeth Makowski, "A Pernicious Sort of Woman", p. 26.

who resembled them, would be caught up', and which lasted for over a century.<sup>40</sup>

Both the Council of Tarragona (1317) and the one of Mainz (1318) proscribed beguines and banned their habit.<sup>41</sup> Likewise, in August 1317, John of Dürbheim, bishop of Strasbourg, issued a decree calling the "bad" beguards and beguines (begging sisters or 'Swestrones,' also nicknamed *brod durch gott*, "bread for God") to give up, within three days, their way of life and the habits that, in their 'perversity,' they had been wearing. They could neither wear garments that were open below the navel, nor small hoods, especially if attached to the tunic.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, although its closing clause supposedly protected both the "good" beguines and the penitents of the third Franciscan order, the Strasbourg chronicler observed in his entry for 1318 that some ecclesiastical authorities in Germany, interpreting Clement V's bull indiscriminately, and executing it unjustly, had forced devout and humble women to give up their coarse and poor habits, to wear undergarments (*camisia*), and to resume their use of lay and coloured

---

<sup>40</sup> Elizabeth Makowski, "A Pernicious Sort of Woman", p. 27.

<sup>41</sup> Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 331; the record for Tarragona reads: 'Mantellos non portent, nec conjuncta praeter modum communem, ne novum ritum vivendi et ab ecclesia non approbatum introducere videantur...', in Mansi, Vol. 25, cols. 627-8; Mainz indicated: 'Item exequendo constitutiones publice nuper editam constitutione prolatae praecepimus firmiter et mandamus, ne aliqua pro begina se de cetero teneat, statu, habitu, re vel nomine, aut alio quovis modo, et ne aliquis hominum ipsas voveat in statu, vel habitu, beginnerum.' Ibid., col. 638.

<sup>42</sup> '...ut ipsi infra triduum post publicationem presentium habitu quo hactenus in sua perversitate usi sunt, penitus abiecto et mutato, indumento ab umbilico deorsum scissis, desuper cum capuciis parvis, non tamen tunice consutis, non utantur...', in Michael Bihl (ed.), "De tertio ordine S. Francisci", no. 14, p. 173; Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beguards in Medieval Culture*, pp. 525-6; Robert E. Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1972), p. 93

clothes.<sup>43</sup> Hence, in the face of the growing harassment experienced by both “good” and “bad” beguines, John XXII sought to clarify the terms of Clement V’s earlier condemnation, with his bull *Ratio recta* of 13 August 1318. Although he explicitly did not grant official approval (*‘nullatenus ex praemissis intendimus approbare’*), he stated that the Clementine document was not aimed at “good” beguines, and that those leaving a perfectly orthodox life should not be persecuted.<sup>44</sup>

Still, John of Dürbheim issued a second decree, about eighteen months later, to repeat the censure on beguines, expressing that ‘as

---

<sup>43</sup> ‘Quamplures enim episcopi et ecclesiarum rectores et prelati in Alemania constituti eandem constitutionem [*Cum de quibusdam*], ut dictum est, indiscrete interpretantes et inique exequentes coegerunt mulieres deuotas et humiles habitum humilem et asperum deponere, camisias induere, uestes seculares et coloratas resumere.’ In Leonardus Lemmens (ed.), “Chronicon Provinciae Argentinensis O.F.M. circa an. 1310-27 a quodam Fratere Minore Basileae conscriptum (1206-1325),” *AFH* 4 (1911), pp. 671-687; p. 683; Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 529; Robert E. Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit*, p. 48. Gordon Leff, (*Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, pp. 332-3) also quotes the document, but he wrongly attributed the edition to Michael Bihl.

<sup>44</sup> The text of the bull in *Corpus Iuris Canonici* II, cols. 1279-80; Elizabeth Makowski, however, offers here a fragment of translation that seems somewhat erroneous. Her translation reads: ‘In many parts of the world there are those women who are also called beguines but who live in their own homes, in those of their parents, or sometimes in community, but who lead lives beyond reproach. If those beguines do not engage in preaching or disputation about doctrine, and if they attend church regularly, submitting to the authority of local clergy, they must not be molested and should be allowed to retain both their habits (distinctive dress) and their way of life.’ (Elizabeth Makowski, “*A Pernicious Sort of Woman*,” p. 47). Yet, the fragment of the bull that seems to correspond to her translation does not mention the habit: ‘Verum quia in multis mundi partibus plurimae sunt mulieres, quae similiter vulgo Beguinae vocatae, segregatae quandoque in parentum aut suis, interdum vero in aliis aut conductis sibi communibus domibus insimul habitantes, vitas deducunt honestas, ecclesiae de nocte frequentant, dioecesanis locorum et parochialium ecclesiarum rectoribus reverenter obediunt...Beguinas huiusmodi inculpabiles, ut praemittitur, nec suspectas sub prohibitione et abolitione praemissis, (quia de ipsis praedecessor noster praefatus nullatenus sensisse dignoscitur,) de fratrum nostrorum concilio declaramus et volumus non includi, locorum ordinariis nihilominus iniungentes, ut eas sub praetextu huiusmodi nullatenus molestari permittant.’ (*Corpus Iuris Canonici* II, col. 1279). Moreover, the only mention the pope does make in the bull about the habit seems to go in the opposite sense of Makowski’s interpretation. He states that those women, whatever name they have, who rendered themselves guilty or were deservedly suspected, were to remain under censure, whether or not they have change their status or habit in whatever way: ‘Porro mulieres, quodcumque nomen habentes, quae de illis, ex quibus prohibitio praecesserit, culpabiles se reddiderint, aut merito notabiles vel suspectas esse, si statum vel habitum quoquo modo mutaverint, vere sub praedicta decernimus remanere censura...’ (ibid., col. 1280).

experience had taught us,' they brought 'scandal and danger to the people'. In this document from 18 January 1319, beguines were instructed to effectively abandon their status within fifteen days. So that this renunciation would be openly visible, they had to cast away their clothes or habits, which, in consideration of said status, they had hitherto carried, under threat of excommunication.<sup>45</sup> The close attention put on the beguine's attire is made again evident in the decree issued by the same bishop within a month, on 17 February 1319, to repeat the ban. As a sign of their change of status, the beguines had to make the following alterations: the veil that, until then, they used to wear attached to their cloak, now had to be worn separated, as was the secular use (*more secularium*); they had to put their scapulars entirely aside; neither could their outer tunics, nor their mantles be made of grey (*pregrissio*) or camelhair (*kembelino*) cloth, or of similar colours. They could wear other colours, as long as it was clearly the will of one single person, and not with the purpose of dressing in one uniformed colour to distinguish themselves.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> '...circa reprobationem dictis status beginarum non duximus faciendam, propter quod, sicut experientia nos docuit, scandala et pericula in populo nobis subiecto sunt suborta...monemus nos, ut infra quindenam a publicatione presencium statum huiusmodi beginagium a se effectualiter asdicent, ita quod abdicatio seu alteratio huiusmodi status valeat notabiliter apparere, vestes seu habitum, quem dicti status contemplacione hactenus detulerunt...', in H. Haupt, "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sekte vom freien Geiste und des Begharentums", *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 7 (1885), pp. 503-576; no. 2, pp. 560-1.

<sup>46</sup> '...pro signo mutati status beginagii capitalia vela, que hactenus palliis includere consueverunt, extra pallia deferant more secularium resoluta, scapularia omnino deponant nec ad tunicas superiores et pallia pregrissio panno, quo hactenus aliquae ex eis uti consueverunt [*sic*] vel aliquo alio panno kembelino colorem grisei panni habente vel eidem colori aliquid simili vel conformi utantur; alios vero colores omnes eis permittimus, personarum unius cuiusque videlicet libito voluntatum, dum tamen non ex proposito ad unius coloris conformitatem studeant se vestire...', in *ibid.*, pp. 561-2; also in Michael Bihl (ed.), "De tertio ordine S. Francisci", pp. 175-6; Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 338; Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Mort d'une heresie*, p. 107; Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 533.

With these events, two aspects linked to the resistance generated towards beguines are also made more apparent: firstly, that they were perceived to be seeking, as a group, the development of a collective identity through their clothes, which showed obvious signs of religious status, a behaviour that became increasingly rejected. Secondly, that their chosen colours put them too close for comfort to other existing groups, particularly the penitents from the Franciscan third order, who, despite the saving clause of 1317, also found themselves risking persecution, as Michael Bihl has shown.<sup>47</sup> In fact, the penitents sought official protection from harassment and managed to obtain two letters from the Franciscan cardinal Vitalis de Furno in 1319, safeguarding them from the initiatives taken by the bishop of Strasbourg.<sup>48</sup> However, it seems that the confusion between beguines and Franciscan tertiaries was not new. On 6 October 1318, Frederick II van Zyrik, bishop of Utrecht, sent a letter to ecclesiastical authorities in his cities and dioceses, to protect the beguines who were not members of the Franciscan third order. He pointed out that, because of Clement V's *Cum de quibusdam mulieres* bull, great errors had arisen, provoking great confusion and scandal, especially because there had not been, until then, an evident difference

---

<sup>47</sup> Michael Bihl (ed.), "De tertio ordine S. Francisci", pp. 173-5.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, no. 16, p. 176 and no. 17, pp. 176-8. Although the first letter is from 15 January 1319, and it thus antedates John of Dürbheim's decree from 18 January, it is likely to have been obtained in the general context of the persecution discussed above, as Michael Bihl has pointed out (ibid., p.172). There is no exact date for the second letter, but we know it was obtained after John of Dürbheim's second decree, as it makes allusion to John XXII's bull *Etsi apostolicae sedis*, which was issued on 23 February 1319, with the same intention of protecting the Franciscan penitents (ibid. p. 177). The text of the bull in BF V, no. 354, pp. 163-4; Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 339.



between the beguines and the Franciscan tertiaries, neither in status nor in habit.<sup>49</sup>

More importantly, the two aspects just described can be understood in direct relation to the system of differences of religious clothing: in their attempt to generate a distinctive identity through dress, the beguines were, on the one hand – and as pointed out before – seen by their detractors as usurpers of a status to which they did not legally belong. Thus, they were, in a way, forcing themselves into the system. On the other hand, they were also disturbing the system itself, as, in their confusion with the Franciscan tertiaries, they were seemingly failing to observe the need for clear visual distinction between religious groups – so fundamental to the system – as the Augustinian Hermits had done before.

Still, and despite the voices that came in their defence, in 1335 Walram, the new bishop of Cologne, renewed the ban regarding the extra-religious group, which was still associated with the heresy of the Free Spirit, 'placing as much emphasis upon the illegality of wearing a distinctive habit as their errors.'<sup>50</sup> He reiterated the ban made almost thirty years earlier by his predecessor, Henry of Virnebourg. The processes of excommunication were to be resumed, since he had heard that the beghards and *suestriones* had not kept their promise of giving up their habits and way of life. Even if they claimed to have been absolved by his delegated *commissarium* (which he

---

<sup>49</sup> '...et ex hiis [Clement V] per nostram civitatem et diocesim, tam in clero quam in capitulo magnus sit error non sine confusione gravi et scandalo suscitatis, maxime quia inter hujusmodi Beghinas et sorores [of the Franciscan third order] nec in statu nec habitu unquam ulla hactenus differentia apparebat...', in P. Fredericq, *Corpus documentorum* II, no. 45, p. 75; Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 334.

<sup>50</sup> Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 336; also, Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards*, p. 520.

doubted), he had never intended to absolve them unless they changed their habits and way of life.<sup>51</sup> However, things did not stop there, for some forty years later Lambert von Brune, bishop of Strasbourg, renewed the persecutions, instructing in August 1374 that all the beguines found at fault had to give up their habits within six days.<sup>52</sup> This went directly against Gregory XI's bull *Ex injuncto nobis* issued in April of that same year (addressed to the ecclesiastical authorities of the Empire, Brabant and Flanders),<sup>53</sup> which meant that the pope had to resend the bull on 30 December to the bishop of Strasbourg.<sup>54</sup> This was seemingly not enough, as in December of 1377 the pope sent yet another bull to the German archbishops of Cologne, Trier and Mainz, as well as to the bishops in other parts of Germany, Brabant and Flanders, instructing them to stop the inquisitors who were improperly and unjustly persecuting those practising a life of poverty within orthodoxy because of their clothes. They were harming these honest poor faithful people, says the letter, when making them cut, transform and change their garments. Therefore the pope instructed that these "good" beguines should not be disturbed because of their simple and honest clothing, and that those excommunicated or deprived from the sacraments should be rehabilitated.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> P. Fredericq, *Corpus documentorum* I, no. 188, p. 184-5

<sup>52</sup> '...requiratis (omnes mulieres praedictorum culpabiles, ut infra sex dies) a premissis eorum detestandis actibus et erroribus desistant...sed vel habitum assumptum deponant...' in Michael Bihl (ed.), "De tertio ordine S. Francisci", pp. 183-4.

<sup>53</sup> The text of the bull in P. Fredericq, *Corpus documentorum* I, no. 220, pp. 228-231; Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 339-40.

<sup>54</sup> Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 339-40.

<sup>55</sup> 'Venerabilibus fratribus Coloniensi, Treverensi et Maguntinensi aliisque archiepiscopis et tam eorum suffraganeis quam aliis episcopis universis per Alamanniam, Brabantiam et Flandriam constitutis...Ad audientiam nostram pervenit quod in vestris civitatibus et diocesibus sunt nonnulli pauperes utriusque sexus qui humiliter et honeste in fidei puritate et

Even though, according to McDonnell, their ‘distinctive habit and profession of chastity, while setting the beguines apart from the world, were not sufficient to confer true religious status,’<sup>56</sup> the use of a special attire could still play in favour of the beguines. In fact, as Makowski has shown, it could help them obtain religious immunity, as a decision of the Roman Rota made in 1374 demonstrates. While *Decisio CCCXXII* had to do with right of patronage and the appointing of a benefice, some of its clauses are noteworthy in relation to beguines and their use of “distinctive clothes.” The *decisio* stated that even though beguines were seculars, they did not seem to be merely lay persons: they lived as religious and wore religious habits, and they were also allowed to form associations for religious reasons. Likewise, since beguines were able to bring their causes before an ecclesiastical judge, they did not appear to be mere seculars, especially seeing that they wore

---

honesteis vestibus aut habitibus ac in paupertate et castitate vivunt et ecclesias devote frequentant et quod, licet hujusmodi pauperes nibus et Romane Ecclesie ac eorum prelati et curati reverenter obediunt, nullis erroribus se involvendo sed intime caritatis amore Deo et propter ipsum proximis serviendo; tamen nonnulli ex vobis seu per vos ordinaria et etiam aliqui inquisitoris heretice pravitate in illis partibus apostolica auctoritatibus deputati hujusmodi pauperes occasione vestium indebite et injuste perturbant, ipsorum vestes simplices et honestas decurtari, transformari et quandoque transmutari faciendo, necnon occasione hujusmodi vestium sacramenta ecclesiastica inhibendo et alia gravamina inferendo eisdem in detrimentum ac dampnum ipsorum pauperum et scandalum plurimorum. Quodcirca fraternitati vestre per apostolica scripta mandamus quatenus quilibet vestrum in diocesi sua pauperes ipsos occasione hujusmodi eorum simplicium et honestarum vestium nullatenus molestis nec ab alii molestari quantum in vobis fuerit, dum tamen fideles et catholici reperiantur, permittatis; et si quos eorum occasione predicta excommunicatos vel dictis sacramentis privatos seu alias indebite punitos repereritis auctoritatis apostolica predicta vigore presentium absolvatis et ad sacramenta predicta restituatis eosdem in forma Ecclesie consueta...’ in *Lettres de Grégoire XI (1371-1378)*, Camille Tihon (ed.), Vol. 3, (Bruxelles-Rome: Institut Historique Belge de Rome, 1964), no. 3992, pp. 500-1; Gordon Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 347; Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Mort d’une herésie*, p. 111.

<sup>56</sup> Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture*, p. 409.

habits. Thus anyone who was to harm them was liable of canonical sentence.<sup>57</sup>

## THE CLOTHES OF POPULAR PIETY: RELIGIOUS HABITS AND THE LEGITIMATION OF PENITENTIAL MOVEMENTS

Around the middle of the thirteenth century, cardinal Hostiensis wrote in his *Summa Aurea* that, in a broad sense, someone who lives a holy and religious life in his own house, although not professed, is called religious, not because such a person is bound by any determined rule, but because they lead a stricter and holier life than other secular people – who are entirely worldly and live laxly – and also a more honourable life than the one they used to live before, both in habit and in food.<sup>58</sup>

The *mulieres religiosae* were not alone in this search for a way of life that could combine a life “in the world” and intense religious fervour. In fact, beguines should be understood as part of a much wider movement existing

---

<sup>57</sup> ‘...tales beguine sint seculares religiose tamen viuunt et habitum portant religiosum: ideo non videntur mere laice quare licet sint laice tamen propter religionem quam habent videntur facere collegium...Item iste beguine ut miserabiles persone coram iudice ecclesiastico sunt conueniende: ut vidue persone et alie...ideo mere non videntur persone laice seu seculares: maxime cum portent habitum et talibus iniuriando quis incideret in sententia canonis...’, in *Decisiones rote nove et antique cum additionibus casibus dubiis et regulis cancellarie apostolice, diligentissime emendate*, (Lyon, 1507), no. CCCXXXII, fol. cxli; Also in *Decisiones antiquae et novae rotae romanae, a variis auctoribus collectae et editae*, (Rome, 1483), no. CCCXXXII, fol 88.; Elizabeth Makowski, “A Pernicious Sort of Woman,” pp. 108-9; idem, “Mulieres Religiosae,” pp. 10-12.

<sup>58</sup> ‘Sed largo modo dicitur religiosus, qui in domo propria sancte et religiose vivit, licet non sit professus, et dicitur talis religiosus non ideo, quod astrictus sit aliqui regulae certae, sed respectu vitae, quam arctiorem et sanctiorem ducit quam ceteri saeculares, qui omnino saeculariter, idest dissolute vivunt, sed honestius quam antea, tam in habitu quam in cibis vivat...’, in Hostiensis, *Summa aurea*, lib. III, Rubrica “De regularibus et transeuntibus ad religionem”, f. 174(1)v. Also in Meersseman, Dossier, pp. 308-9; Elizabeth Makowski, “A Pernicious Sort of Woman,” p. xxvii; Alison More, “Institutionalizing Penitential Life in Later Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Third Orders, Rules, and Canonical Legitimacy,” in *Church History*, 83, (June 2014), pp. 297-323; p. 300; André Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages. Religious Beliefs and Devotional Practices* (Notre Dame-London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993), p. 113.

clearly from the second half of the twelfth century, where the *mulieres religiosae* shared a similar approach to lay religious life with communities like the Waldesian or the Humiliati.<sup>59</sup> Then, during the first decades of the thirteenth century, the movement started to expand, largely thanks to the impact of the mendicant orders and their call to perform penitence within lay society, especially with the example of St Francis and his companions, who had started as a group of penitents themselves.<sup>60</sup> The existence of *conversi* and lay penitents was not, however, a novelty in the history of the Church. Institutionalised expressions of both public and private penance can indeed be traced back to the Late Antiquity and Early and High Middle Ages.<sup>61</sup>

Yet, around the twelfth century the physiognomy of the penitent started to change. In contrast to the early *conversi*, who belonged to a monastery, or to the public penitents, who had either been imposed their expiatory penance, or had voluntarily sought a life of individual asceticism,<sup>62</sup> we see a new phenomenon emerging: these lay people had now begun to gather together and to form communities, even if in a rather spontaneous and

---

<sup>59</sup> André Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages*, p.113; p. 119.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 113; Ingrid Peterson, "The Third Order of Francis", in Michael J. P. Robson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Francis of Assisi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 193-207; p. 199; Herbert Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, pp. 31-58.

<sup>61</sup> Raffaele Pazzelli, *St. Francis and the Third Order* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1989), pp. 7-42; Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, *Penitenze nel Medioevo, Uomini e modelli a confronto* (Bologna: Pàtron Editore, 1994), p. 98; Marie-François Berrouard, "La pénitence publique durant les six premiers siècles. Histoire et sociologie", in *La Maison-Dieu*, 118 (1974), pp. 92-130; pp. 102-107; Robert M. Stewart, "De illis qui faciunt penitentiam." *The rule of the Secular Franciscan Order: origins, development, interpretation* (Roma: Istituto Storico Dei Cappuccini, 1991), pp. 91-105; Rob Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe, 600-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014). On some legal aspects, see Cassiano Carpaneto, "Lo stato dei Penitenti nel «Corpus Iuris Canonici»", in Mariano D'Alatri (ed.), *I frati Penitenti*, pp. 9-19. For confraternities, see G. G. Meersseman, *Ordo Fraternalitatis. Confraternite e pietà dei laici nel Medioevo*, Vol. I (Roma: Herder, 1977) and Gennaro Maria Monti, *Le Confraternite Medievali dell'Alta e Media Italia*, Vol. 1 (Venezia: "La nuova Italia" Editrice, 1927).

<sup>62</sup> Meersseman, *Ordo*, Vol. I, pp. 267-8.

loose way. They formed 'groups or fraternities which, without living in common, adopted the same "propositum" of penitential life,'<sup>63</sup> and which provided them with 'mutual spiritual and material support.'<sup>64</sup> The main novelty they presented lay precisely in that these penitents were no longer isolated individuals or families that took a humble habit as an external sign of their renunciation or penance, but larger associations. In entering the movement, they promised to give alms and to aid the poor, to give up worldly pleasures and luxuries, to fast, and to recite the divine office. However, perhaps the most central element to mark this devotional change was to start wearing the penitential habit.<sup>65</sup> In a certain way, as Augustine Thompson observes, in this unstructured way of life, the habit indeed 'made the penitent.'<sup>66</sup> This penitential habit was, in turn, re-signified with this sense of community: it not only announced the desire for penance sought by its users, but also established a new identity, both individually and collectively, within their social surroundings. Consequently, their penitential attire played a mayor part in helping them gain a place as a recognised *ordo* within the Church, making them distinguishable from their contemporaries, and also distinguishing them in their new status. It placed them within the system of differences of medieval regular life and dress.

---

<sup>63</sup> Raffaele Pazzelli, *St. Francis and the Third Order*, p. 63.

<sup>64</sup> Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God: The Religion of the Italian Communes, 1125-1325* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), p. 70. For a general synthesis of the renewal of the penitential movement and its various manifestations in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, see Robert M. Stewart, "*De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*", pp. 107-23.

<sup>65</sup> Alfonso Pompei, "Il movimento penitenziale nei secoli XII-XIII", in O. Schmucki (ed.), *L'Ordine della Penitenza di San Francesco d'Assisi nel secolo XIII*, Atti del convegno di studi francescani, Assisi, 3-4-5 luglio 1972, (Roma: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 1973), pp. 9-40; p. 35.

<sup>66</sup> Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God*, p. 82.

Because the movement appeared in the form of local manifestations rather than as a unified phenomenon, and, as a consequence, could vary greatly from one place to another – especially during its first century of development or so – it is difficult to delineate a cohesive picture of it. This is especially true considering that their denominations and categorisations also varied significantly, whether they were called an *ordo*, a *fraternitas*, or a *confraternitas*, penitents, *disciplinati*, *continentes*, *conversi*, *bizzocchi*, *mantellatae*, *pinzochere*, *vestitiae*, or even beguines<sup>67</sup> in certain cases. However, what emerges as common denominator was their collective scope, which originated from the shared desire of attaining eternal salvation whilst living *in domibus propriis*: not only in their own homes, but also in the secular world.<sup>68</sup> As André Vauchez explains, the penitential movement ‘expressed the aspiration of many laymen and laywomen to lead a religious life without submitting themselves to the rigid structure of monastic or canonical orders.’<sup>69</sup> Penitents sought to stay ‘in the world without living in a worldly manner’<sup>70</sup> but this also meant that this kind of association did not fall within any of the institutionalised categories of the Church. As they did not make a religious profession, they did not get canonical recognition. Therefore, during the early stages they remained, understandably, as lay people for the

---

<sup>67</sup> See, for example, the letter of 6 September 1287, from cardinal Jean Buccamazzi to the legate in Germany, in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 71; also p. 20.

<sup>68</sup> André Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages*, p. 114. As Meersseman explains, the expression *in domibus propriis existentium* referred to those clerics, *conversi*, and penitents who lived in their own houses, in contrast to those living in a monastery and those who did not have a fixed residence (*vagantes*) (in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 92).

<sup>69</sup> André Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages*, p. 119.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibidem*.

ecclesiastical hierarchy, in the ill-defined status of “quasi-religious” persons that also described the beguine movement.

Nevertheless, these new penitents sought to take some of the elements that distinguished religious from lay people, starting with their external appearance.<sup>71</sup> Although it is true that, as Thompson argues, the habit taken by the penitents ‘represented no separation from the daily work of earning a living, but rather the self-discipline by which individuals sought to overcome sins and vices,’<sup>72</sup> penitents nevertheless performed what Vauchez calls a *professio in signis*: ‘all it took to be recognized as a penitent was to wear a certain habit, for the exterior would bear witness to the interior.’<sup>73</sup> This had been, indeed, what the dramatic first change of clothes of St Francis’s before the bishop of Assisi had wanted to firmly express.<sup>74</sup>

The movement was also an intrinsically urban phenomenon: it was in the fabric of the cities that the association through fraternities was made possible, contrasting with the old practice of public – but individual – penance known until then in the Church.<sup>75</sup> From then on, the movement grew at a fast pace, especially thanks to the impulse given by Franciscans and Dominicans, who encouraged the formation of these lay communities, though the groups maintained their institutional autonomy, at least until the end of

---

<sup>71</sup> Alison More, “Institutionalizing Penitential Life,” p. 299.

<sup>72</sup> Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God*, p. 84.

<sup>73</sup> André Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages*, p. 113.

<sup>74</sup> See below, Chapter 4, pp. 234-5. The juridical meaning of Francis’ change of clothes is briefly discussed by G. G. Meersseman, *Ordo*, Vol. I, pp. 355-7.

<sup>75</sup> Marco Bartoli, “Gregorio IX e il movimento penitenziale”, in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La “Supra Montem” di Nicolo’ IV (1289): Genesi e Diffusione di una Regola*, Atti del 5° Convegno di studi Francescani, Ascoli Piceno, 26-27 ottobre 1987 (Roma: Analecta TOR, 1988), pp. 47-60; pp. 52-3. On the different types of public penance, see Mary C. Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France* (Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press, 1995), pp. 92-129, and pp. 248-87 for the performance of public penance in French cities during the thirteenth century.



the thirteenth century. This endorsement also helped them to secure protection and privileges from the ecclesiastical hierarchy.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, this urban environment was also significant for the relationship of the penitent movement with their habits, as the city was a privileged setting in which to seek and show this sign of status and differentiation.<sup>77</sup>

The importance of the penitential habit as the external sign of internal conversion appears from early on in the official documents involving penitents. In the first known papal document acknowledging the existence of the movement – a bull from Honorius III to the bishop of Rimini dated on 18 December 1221 – the pope asked the latter to intervene in favour of the penitents before the civil authorities of the city of Faenza, and of other ‘certain cities’. He urged the bishop to prevent the cities’ imposition of military service on those who, inspired by the Lord, had converted themselves to a penitential life, ‘exhibiting in their habits the sign of humility and penitence.’<sup>78</sup> In 1251, Innocent IV granted exemption from interdict to the ‘Virgins and Continents’ of Milan, who lived under a religious life and habit (*sub vita et*

---

<sup>76</sup> André Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages*, p. 122; Alison More, “Institutionalizing Penitential Life”, p. 298.

<sup>77</sup> Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba medievale*, p. 272.

<sup>78</sup> ‘...Significatum est nobis quod Faventiae et in quibusdam aliis civitatibus et locis vicinis quidam sunt, quibus illum dominus inspiravit affectum, ut mundi iam gloriam non querentes sed ex humilitate abicientes, in seculo semetipsos ad penitentiam se converterint, et ad hoc totum deputaverint tempus suum, signum humilitatis et penitentiae in habitu exhibentes...Quia vero tales super iuramento de armis sumendis et sequendis locorum potestatibus exhibendo multotiens molestantur, ex eo quod numquam defuit, qui bonis actibus invideret, fraternitati tuae per apostolica scripta mandamus, quatenus, cum a talibus fueris requisitus, molestatores suos per super huiusmodi iuramento, premissa monitione sublato appellationis impedimento, auctoritate nostra compescas...’, in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 41; idem, *Ordo*, Vol. 1, p. 363; Marco Bartoli, “Gregorio IX e il movimento penitenziale”, p. 52; Giovanni Odoardi, “L’Ordine della penitenza di San Francesco nei documenti pontifici del secolo XIII”, in O. Schmucki (ed.), *L’Ordine della Penitenza*, pp. 79-115; p. 111.

*habitu religioso*).<sup>79</sup> Likewise, the Italian brothers and sisters of Penance of St Dominic, ‘who were serving the Lord under a religious habit,’ were also exempted from interdict by Honorius IV on 28 January 1286.<sup>80</sup> A year later, the apostolic legate in Germany, Jean Buccamazzi, granted a similar exemption to ‘the persons of the Penance of St Dominic who had changed their secular habit’ (i.e., entered the penitential status) in Germany to be admitted to the divine offices during the time of interdict.<sup>81</sup>

The relevance of the habit is also manifest in the first landmark of papal approval in relation to what started to be shaped as *Ordo poenitentiae*: the *Memoriale propositi fratrum et sorores de Poenitentia in domibus propriis existentium*, issued by Honorius III in 1221,<sup>82</sup> probably composed around

---

<sup>79</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, no. 27, p. 60. It is possible to see here how the line between beguines and penitents was a rather blurred one. Judging by what has been presented above, the positive or negative consideration towards them probably depended on the subjective stance of each authority, rather than on any clear definition of their status.

<sup>80</sup> ‘...Congruum estimantes ut vos, qui sub religioso habitu gratum deo impenditis famulatum, opportuni favoris gratia persequimini, auctoritate vobis presentium indulgemus, ut tempore generalis interdicti liceat vobis in ecclesiis, in quibus ex indulgentia apostolicae sedis celebrantur, audire divina officia et ecclesiastica recipere sacramenta dummodo causam non dederitis interdicto...’, in *ibid.*, no. 45, p. 70.

<sup>81</sup> ‘...Hinc est quod nos, vestris supplicationibus inclinati, ut tempore generalis interdicti per ordinatos locorum positi, sorores, que Begine alio nomine nuncupantur, et personas de Poenitentia sancti Dominici, que secularem habitum mutaverunt, ad divina officia valeatis, dummodo causam non dederint interdicto, plenam et liberam vobis, auctoritate presentium, concedimus facultatem...’, in *ibid.*, no. 46, p. 71. As Lino Temperini discusses, such exemptions and privileges were not always seen with good eyes by the secular authorities of the cities (Lino Temperini, “Il penitente francescano nella società e nella chiesa, nei secoli XIII-XIV”, in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La «Supra Montem» di Nicolò IV*, pp. 325-379. He also provides here a thorough list of bulls and decrees containing privileges and exemptions for the penitents during this period).

<sup>82</sup> Even though this is the year stated in its title, the four earliest extant copies only date back to 1228 (see Raffaele Pazzelli, *St. Francis and the Third Order*, pp. 133-137). As Meersseman and Lino Temperini explain, *memoriale* means “chart” or “document”, and *propositi* relates to “a public promise of consecration”, “a programme of life”. Therefore, the *Memoriale* was not a religious rule, as Alison More also asserts; G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 92; Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione alle origini del Terzo Ordine di S. Francesco* (Roma: Editrice Franciscanum, 1996), p. 94; Alison More, “Canonical Change and the Orders of ‘Franciscan’ Tertiaries”, in Bert Roest and Johanneke Uphoff (eds.), *Religious Orders and Religious Identity Formation, ca. 1420-1620. Discourses and Strategies of Observance and Pastoral Engagement* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2016), pp. 69-85; p. 70.

1215 – and attributed to Cardinal Hugolino, the future Gregory IX by most authors.<sup>83</sup> The kind of clothes and accessories that the penitents should and were allowed to wear received detailed attention, and, in fact, they head the prescriptions given in the document, which opens with the chapter *De vestibus*:

1. The men who are to be part of this fraternity will dress with undyed humble cloth, that does not exceed the price of six soldi of Ravenna per arm, unless someone comes excused temporarily for evident and necessary cause, and the width and the length of the cloth should be considered in the aforesaid price.

2. They shall have cloaks and furs without cleavage, fastened or of one piece, nevertheless buckled and not open like the secular wear, and they shall wear closed sleeves.

3. The sisters shall wear a cloak and tunic made of cloth of the same price and the same humbleness, and at least with the cloak they shall have a petticoat, that is, a white or black dress, or an ample linen gown without pleats, which price does not exceed twelve denarii of Ravenna per arm.

3<sup>2</sup>. Yet, regarding these prices and also the furs, dispensation can be given according to the conditions of each woman and the local customs.

4. They shall not wear silk or coloured straps or ties. And both the brothers and the sisters may have furs of lambskin only. Purses of leather and simple belts, sewn without silk and of no other kind are allowed, and other vain ornaments shall be given up according the judgement of the visitor.<sup>84</sup>

---

<sup>83</sup> However, scholars have never definitely established its authorship. See Robert M. Stewart, “*De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*”, pp. 183-4; André Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages*, p. 121; Raffaele Pazzelli, *St. Francis and the Third Order*, pp. 130-3. On the role of Gregory IX in the development of the penitential movement, see Marco Bartoli, “Gregorio IX e il movimento penitenziale”, in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La «Supra Montem» di Nicolò IV*, pp. 47-60.

<sup>84</sup> ‘...1. Viri, qui huius fraternitatis fuerint, de panno humili sine colore induantur, cuius brachium VI solidorum ravennatum pretium non excedat, nisi propter causam evidentem et necessariam ad tempus cum aliquo dispensetur. Et consideretur panni latitudo et arctitudo circa predictum pretium.

It is worth noting that the *Memoriale propositi* bears resemblance with the *propositum* given to other groups with similar characteristics, all approved by Innocent III, such as the *Propositum* of the Humiliati (bull *Incumbis nobis*, 7 June 1201);<sup>85</sup> the first *Propositum* of the Poor Catholics (bull *Eius exemplo*, 18 December 1208);<sup>86</sup> the first *Propositum* of the Poor Lombards (bull *Cum inaestimabilis*, 14 June 1210);<sup>87</sup> the *Propositum* for the penitents under the direction of the Poor Catholics (bull of 26 May 1212);<sup>88</sup> and the second *Propositum* of the Poor Lombards (bull of 23 July 1212).<sup>89</sup> Meersseman also proposes the reconstruction of the statutes of a fraternity of penitents from about 1215, which, although less detailed, resembles closely the *Memoriale propositi*, including its indications on clothing.<sup>90</sup> These sets of rules confirm the essential role that the habit, with their emphasis in simplicity and humility,

---

2. Clamydes et pelles sine scollatura, fixas vel integras, tamen affibulatas, non apertas ut portant seculares, et manicas clausas.

3. Sorores vero de eiusdem pretii et humilitatis panno clamyde induantur et tunica, vel saltem cum clamyde habeant guarnellum sive placentinum album vel nigrum, aut paludellum lineum amplum sine crispaturis, cuius brachii pretium non excedat XII ravennates.

3<sup>2</sup>. De quo tamen pretio et de pellitionibus ipsarum dispensari poterit secundum condicionem mulieris et loci consuetudinem.

4. Bindas vel ligaturas sericas sive coloratas non portent. Et tam fratres quam sorores pelles habeant agninas tantum. Bursas de corio et corrigias simplices sine serico consutas et non alias habere liceat, et alia vana ornamenta visitoris arbitrio deponant...’, critical edition by G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 93-5; Lino Temperini offers a Italian translation of the text in *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 94-7; Robert M. Stewart offers an alternative translation in “*De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*”, pp. 188-9.

<sup>85</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 276-82; Robert M. Stewart, “*De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*”, p. 183; Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>86</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 282-4; Robert M. Stewart, “*De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*”, p. 183; Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>87</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 284-6; Robert M. Stewart, “*De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*”, p. 183; Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>88</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 286-8; Robert M. Stewart, “*De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*”, p. 183; Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>89</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 288-9; Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>90</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 88-90; Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 77-8.

had for these groups as the exterior and recognisable sign of their way of life.<sup>91</sup>

However, it is also important to underline that even though official documents addressing penitents during the thirteenth century show a growing tendency towards normative guidance, they remained mostly circumscribed to local communities, without indicating yet the presence of a cohesive *ordo* as such.<sup>92</sup> In this context, the keen attention paid to dress in the *Memoriale propositi* can be, indeed, understood as directly related to the system of differences of religious habits, especially at a time in which looking orthodox enough could sometimes literally mean the difference between life and death. Observing the thorough prescriptions on clothing was a fundamental element to help developing the framework needed to gain the status as *ordo*. In a period that grew increasingly convulsed with heresy, persecution, and the fear of being considered heterodox, the devil was in the details. Making the orthodoxy of lay piety as openly visible as possible could have a crucial role, as also did fully understanding and duly conforming to this system of differences that was always under scrutiny. As the Strasbourg case would clearly show in the next century, penitents, as beguines, were often standing on moving sands. It was only by the end of the thirteenth century, as André Vauchez explains, that third orders started to obtain a fuller canonical and juridical recognition from the ecclesiastical authorities. This not only answered the wishes of the pious penitents to be acknowledged in their

---

<sup>91</sup> Although the subject of the habit is not present in the first *Propositum* of the Poor Lombards, it was added in the second *Propositum*, following the prescriptions given to the Poor Catholics (G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 289).

<sup>92</sup> Alison More, "Institutionalizing Penitential Life", pp. 302-3.

status, but also granted the Church hierarchy the ability to exercise greater control over the otherwise loosely defined groups.<sup>93</sup>

Nicholas IV's bull *Supra montem*, issued on 18 August 1289,<sup>94</sup> came to change this undefined situation to some extent, as it represented a universal and official rule for penitents approved by the Holy See,<sup>95</sup> this time with St Francis indicated as founder of the movement. Although strictly speaking the rule did not institute the movement as a recognised canonical order, it provided the penitents, as Alison More observes, 'some claims to legitimacy, a saintly founder, and a nominal connection with the Franciscan order.'<sup>96</sup> Moreover, according to Edith Pásztor, with this document the Holy See gave them a function and place within the Christian society.<sup>97</sup>

The *Supra montem* depends largely on the *Memoriale propositi*<sup>98</sup> and it does not introduce substantial changes regarding the way the penitents should dress. The new rule states in its third chapter the following provisions:

---

<sup>93</sup> André Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages*, p. 122.

<sup>94</sup> In BF IV, no. 150, pp. 94-7; A bilingual edition in Latin and Italian, in Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 111-55; see also Mariano D'Alatri, "Genesi della Regola di Niccolò IV: aspetti storici", in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La «Supra Montem» di Niccolò IV*, pp. 93-107. For a comparison between the *Memoriale propositi* and the *Supra montem*, see Robert M. Stewart, "*De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*", pp. 373-88.

<sup>95</sup> Alison More, "Institutionalizing Penitential Life," pp. 302-3. However, Edith Pásztor points out that the bull was written and registered upon request rather than initiated by the papacy itself, as it does not appear registered *ex officio* in Nicholas IV's register of curial letters (Edith Pásztor, "La «Supra Montem» e la cancelleria pontificia", in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La «Supra Montem» di Niccolò IV*, pp. 65-92; pp. 66-7). Still, as Robert Stewart remarks, the 1289 bull became universally recognised and, in fact, used as the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order until 1883 (Robert M. Stewart, "*De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*", p. 202).

<sup>96</sup> Alison More, "Institutionalizing Penitential Life", pp. 302-3.

<sup>97</sup> Edith Pásztor, "La «Supra Montem»", p. 75; Robert M. Stewart, "*De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*", p. 207; see also Atanasio Matanić, "I Penitenti francescani dal 1221 (Memoriale) al 1289 (Regola bollata) principalmente attraverso i loro statuti e le regole", in O. Schmucki (ed.), *L'Ordine della Penitenza*, pp. 41-63.

<sup>98</sup> Meersseman presents Nicholas IV's rule as based on the set of prescriptions given by the Franciscan Caro di Arezzo, guardian of the Florentine Friars Minor, to the penitents of the city in 1284 (G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 128-38). However, Lino Temperini convincingly argues that this was highly unlikely and that the rule clearly follows the

The brothers of this fraternity shall generally dress with cloth humble in price and colour, neither entirely white nor entirely black, unless someone is temporarily dispensed regarding the price, for a legitimate and clear cause, by the visitors and with the advice of the ministers.

The aforementioned brothers may also have cloaks and furs, divided or of one piece, without cleavage, yet not open but clasped, as it suits modesty, and with closed sleeves.

The sisters shall also wear a cloak and a tunic, made with the same humble cloth, and at least they shall have with the cloak a petticoat or a white or black dress, and a large mantle made of hemp or linen, sewn without pleats.

Regarding the humbleness of the cloths and furs of the same sisters, they may be dispensed according to the condition of each of them and the customs of the place.

They shall not wear silk straps or ties. Both the brothers and sisters may have only lambskins, leather bags and simple belts made without any silk, and nothing else, and all the other vain ornaments of this world have to be given up, according to the salutary advice of the prince of the apostles St Peter.<sup>99</sup>

These indications, as well as the ones contained in the *Memoriale propositi*, reveal a degree of specificity not shared with any other religious

---

*Memoriale* (Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 114-5), which is also demonstrated by Robert Stewart (Robert M. Stewart, *De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*, pp. 203-10).

<sup>99</sup> '...Fratres insuper istius Fraternitatis de humili panno in pretio et colore improrsus albo vel nigro communiter vestiantur, nisi fuerit ad tempus in pretio per visitatores de consilio ministrorum ob causam legitimam et apertam, cum aliquo dispensatum.

Chlamydes quoque ac pelles absque scollatura, scissas vel integras, affibulatas tamen non patulas, ut congruit honestati, clausasque manicas fratres habeant supradicti.

Sorores etiam chlamyde induantur et tunica de huiusmodi humili panno factis, vel saltem cum chlamydem habeant guarnellum seu placentium coloris albis vel nigri, aut paludellum amplum de cannabo sive lino absque ulla crispatura consutum.

Circa humilitatem vero panni et pellitiones sororum ipsarum iuxta conditionem cuiuslibet earundem ac loci consuetudinem poterit dispensari.

Bindis et ligaturis sericis non utantur. Pelles dumtaxat agninas, bursas de corio, et corrigias simpliciter absque serico ullo factas et non alias, tam fratres habeant quam sorores, depositis ceteris, iuxta beati Petri apostolorum principis salubre consilium, vanis huius saeculi ornamentis...', in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 130-1 (see note above), also contained in BF IV, no. 50, pp. 94-5; Lino Temperini offers a Latin transcription and an Italian translation (*Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 135-6); see also Robert M. Stewart's own translation in *De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*, pp. 376-7.

rule, not even the Franciscan one.<sup>100</sup> From the Benedictine Rule onwards, the prescriptions covering the matter of clothing were fairly general, putting most of the emphasis in the humbleness of the attire, and usually just itemising the garments and maybe specifying colour and material.<sup>101</sup> Perhaps to the eyes of the ecclesiastical hierarchy the fact that the penitents were living in the world made them more vulnerable to “sartorial trespasses”, thus requiring more detail in their normatives – it seems, especially for women – but also more flexibility, hence the attention to local usage.

The main sartorial changes introduced by the *Supra montem*, in contrast to the *Memoriale propositi*, relate to the specification of the colour and to the price of cloth, which now ceases to establish a fixed price and just indicates it should be cheap in a broad sense, probably aiming to a more universal diffusion. Antonio García y García identifies the more general call for simplicity present in the rule with the prescriptions stipulated in canon 16 of Lateran IV.<sup>102</sup> This reading coincides with a previous interpretation of the *Memoriale propositi* made by two jurists about a decade before Nicholas IV issued the *Supra montem*, in which they explain that the colours included in the indication *sine colore* were green, red, brown, blood-red and some hue of yellow (*zallum*), but not black.<sup>103</sup> On the other hand, Servus Gieben puts the

---

<sup>100</sup> See St Francis of Assisi, “Regula Bullata”, pp. 228–9.

<sup>101</sup> See above pages 36-51.

<sup>102</sup> Antonio García y García, “La regla de Nicolao IV: aspectos jurídicos”, in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La “Supra Montem” di Nicolò IV*, pp. 109-131; pp. 120-1.

<sup>103</sup> ‘Inprimis ubi dicitur quod vestimenta sint *sine colore*, colorem intelligimus viridem, rubeum, brune, sanguineum, zallum; nigrum vero colorem in hoc contineri non credimus...’ (in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 114, italics in the original). Following this text, I believe Augustin Thompson is mistaken when he says that the interpretation ‘excluded [the use of] black’ for the penitents’ garments (and he also confuses the year, saying it goes back to 1260s, when in Meersseman’s *Dossier* it is dated to c. 1280), in Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God*, p. 83.



directions of the *Supra montem* in line with those given in the *Exposition of the Four Masters* – the clarification of the Franciscan Rule made in 1241-1242 by Alexander of Hales, Jean de la Rochelle, Robert de la Bassée and Eudes Rigaud.<sup>104</sup> The *Exposition* stated that the *vilitas* of the clothes prescribed by Francis related to its value (*pretium*) and appearance (*colore*),<sup>105</sup> which would translate in the *humili panno* of Nicholas IV's rule.<sup>106</sup> Likewise, the *non prorsus albo vel nigro* of the cloths would follow the indications given in the Franciscan Constitutions of Narbonne of 1260, which stated that the friars should not wear tunics entirely white or black.<sup>107</sup> This correlation probably also sought to endorse symbolically the claim of St Francis as founder of the movement that Nicholas IV – a Franciscan himself, ex minister general of the order as Jerome d'Ascoli – approved to be inserted in the bull, which thus made this statement official for the first time.

However, these garments “not completely black or white” (meaning that they were made of mixed undyed wool, tending to be greyish)<sup>108</sup> were not the sole property of the Franciscans and their branches. They were

---

<sup>104</sup> Bert Roest, *Franciscan Literature of Religious Instruction Before the Council of Trent* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2004), p. 105; Rosalind B. Brooke, *The Image of St Francis, Responses to Sainthood in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: University Press, 2006), pp. 77-8.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>106</sup> Servus Gieben, “L'iconografia dei Penitenti e Niccolò IV”, in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La “Supra Montem” di Nicolo' IV*, pp. 289-304; pp. 293-4.

<sup>107</sup> ‘Omnino nigrae vel penitus albae desuper tunicae non portentur,’ Michael Bihl (ed.), “Statuta Generalia Ordinis, edita in Capitulis Generalibus Celebratis Narbonnae an. 1260, Assisi An. 1279 atque Parisiis an. 1292,” *AFH* 34 (1941), pp. 13-94, 284-358; p. 44; Servus Gieben, “L'iconografia dei Penitenti e Niccolò IV”, pp. 293-4; also Raffaele Pazzelli, *St. Francis and the Third Order*, pp. 151-2. This might have also been related to the fact that, as seen in the previous chapter, after the controversies between Franciscans and Augustinian Friars, the latter (Brettini aside) *had* to wear black or white.

<sup>108</sup> According to Michel Pastoureau, undyed cloth could also be understood at the time as “uncoloured”, in what he calls the “zero degree” of colour for the medieval eye. In Michel Pastoureau, *Una historia simbólica de la Edad Media occidental* (Buenos Aires: Katz, 2006), pp. 168-70. Originally published as *Une histoire symbolique du moyen âge occidental* (Paris: Seuil, 2004).

indeed, as discussed in the Introduction, of fairly common use by some reform and penitential movements of the period.<sup>109</sup> In fact, the influence of the Franciscans on the movement is only a part of a much more complex phenomenon, as Alison More has observed. Although the Minors claimed authorship over this religious innovation, there is no evidence of Francis founding any penitent community.<sup>110</sup> According to More, the situation of the so-called penitents (who, as mentioned above, could receive a number of other denominations as well) did not experiment a dramatic change after 1289. There could be as many forms of penitential devotional practice as there were communities all over Europe, and even when the communities adhered to the rule laid out by the *Supra montem*, they did not always want to establish ties with the Franciscan order. Some would, in fact, openly reject any involvement with the Friars Minor,<sup>111</sup> as was indeed the case of one of the Florentine communities towards the end of the thirteenth century, as we will see below.

---

<sup>109</sup> Servus Gieben, “L’iconografia dei Penitenti e Niccolò IV”, p. 295; idem, “Per la storia dell’abito francescano”, in *Collectanea Franciscana*, 66, 3-4 (1996), pp. 431-478; p. 439. Moreover, as Michel Pastoureau has discussed, and as seen in the introduction, movements of religious reform, such as the Carthusians or the Camaldolese, had also donned habits of undyed wool as a reaction against the “Cluniac luxury”, from as early as the eleventh century. (Michel Pastoureau, *Una historia simbólica*, pp. 168-70); see above pp. 37-9. However, as I have discussed elsewhere, these early groups were looking for an anchorite or retired form of life that wanted to flee from secular society and, especially, from urban life, as opposed both to the penitential movements and to the Franciscan order, who remained in the fabric of cities (Alejandra Concha Sahli, “Más allá de las fibras: el estudio de la indumentaria medieval y las problemáticas de su utilización como fuente histórica”, in Andrea V. Neyra and Gerardo Rodríguez (eds.) *¿Qué implica ser medievalista? Prácticas y reflexiones en torno al oficio del historiador. Vol 1, El Medioevo Europeo* (Mar del Plata: Universidad de Mar del Plata, Sociedad Argentina de Estudios Medievales, 2012), pp. 239-256; pp. 250-1.

<sup>110</sup> Although some authors have debated if St Francis’s *Epistola ad fideles* can be seen as an attempt to establish such a community. See Kajetan Esser, “La Lettera di san Francesco ai fedeli”, in *Collectanea Franciscana* 43, (1973), pp. 65-78; for the full text and discussion of the two versions of the letter, see Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 13-73 and Robert M. Stewart, “*De illis qui faciunt penitentiam*”, pp. 81-90; pp. 142-83.

<sup>111</sup> Alison More, “Institutionalizing Penitential Life”, p. 298.

Moreover, the Franciscans were not the only ones offering guidelines to the movement. The Dominicans had already provided a rule for their penitents a few years before the *Supra montem*, as both orders started to look to mark affiliations through dress. The set of norms, attributed to the Dominican minister general, Munio of Zamora and probably written in 1285,<sup>112</sup> also prescribed in some detail the clothes to be worn by the Dominican penitents, albeit with fewer minutiae than the *Memoriale propositi* and the *Supra montem*. Its chapter II, *De habitu fratrum et sororum*, indicated that the brothers and sisters of the fraternity had to wear garments of white and black cloth – the Dominican colours – which should not appear to be excessively expensive either in colour or price, as is befitted to the modesty of the servants of Christ. The cloak was to be black, as well as the hood of the brothers, whereas the sister’s veils had to be of white linen or hemp. The tunic, however, had to be white, of which the sleeves should be closed and should extend up to the fist. They should have leather belts, which the sisters were to fasten under the tunic, and in their purses, shoes and other accessories they ought to cut short any worldly vanity.<sup>113</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> Although only approved officially by Innocent VII in 1405 with the bull *Sedis apostolicae* (26 June). See G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 143. Munio of Zamora, however, did not have a happy career later on. Elected as general of the order in 1285, he was deposed by Pope Boniface VIII in 1292, after a couple of decades tainted with controversy for his, apparently, not very saintly relationships with the nuns of a local convent in Zamora, Spain. See Peter Linehan, *The ladies of Zamora* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997); Michael A. Vargas, *Taming a Brood of Vipers: Conflict and Change in Fourteenth-Century Dominican Convents* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 292-5

<sup>113</sup> ‘...5. Omnes autem, tam fratres quam sorores dicte fraternitatis induantur panno albo et nigro, qui nec in colore nec in valore nimiam pretiositatem pretendat, sicut decet honestatem servorum Christi.

6. Mantellum sit de nigro, et fratrum capucia similiter sint de nigro; tunice vero sint de albo, quarum manice protendantur usque ad pugnum et sin clausae.

7. Corrigias de corio tantum habeant, quibus sorores cingantur sub tunica. In bursis et calceamentis et ceteris omnem mundanam resecent vanitatem. Vela vero sororum et binde sint alba de panno lineo vel canapino...’, in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 144-5.

As the status of penitents became progressively more defined, and started moving towards a certain clericalisation – which could be seen, for example in the privileges they received, or in the increased professionalisation of their participation of the movement<sup>114</sup>– they also sought to attain some special rights over their habits. This started to be made explicit, for instance, in certain regulations concerning penitents. Such is the case of the rule given in 1284 by bishop Guidaloste to the *Vestitae* of St Francis of Prato in which, besides prescribing in detail the garments they should don,<sup>115</sup> he threatens to excommunicate any woman who, not being part of the congregation, should dare to use their habit, lest a dishonourable woman would damage their reputation.<sup>116</sup> Likewise, if any of the sisters were being disobedient or rebellious, or leading a dishonourable life, causing scandal to their neighbours, they should have their habits and status removed, and be expelled from their association.<sup>117</sup>

---

<sup>114</sup> For instance, in the restatement of the ancient restriction for penitents to ‘return to the world’ after entering the fraternity (see for example, G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 109; p. 141; p. 147; p. 257; Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God*, p. 84), or the ceremony of blessing of the habit and vestition that started to accompany the entrance of the novices (for example, G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 145-16; p. 159; idem, *Ordo* Vol. 2, p. 643; Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 108-9). Even if one agrees with Augustine Thompson’s assertion that this ceremony of the blessing of the habit had no resemblance with the monastic vestition (Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God*, p. 84), I believe that the development of a more solemn ritual is still very telling about the existent desire to professionalise the elements that marked the penitential life.

<sup>115</sup> ‘...Habitum habeant humilem et honestum, et portent similiter, videlicet superiorem tunicam et mantellum. Nec alba nec nigra sint penitus, se ad modum ordinis sancti Francisci. Inferiorem tunicam de panno albo, si voluerint, deferentes, cordulis filo vel lino utantur pro cingulo...’, in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 139.

<sup>116</sup> ‘...Ceterum, ne a mulieribus inhoneste se gerentibus sub vestri specie habitus possit fame vestre claritas obfusari, sub pena excommunicationis, auctoritate presentium inhibemus ne aliqua mulier vestrum predictum habitum deportare presumat, nisi vestre fuerit obedientie congregationis subiecta...’, in *ibid.*, p. 140.

<sup>117</sup> ‘...Contrarium vero facientes predictis, auctoritate nostra discrete corrigant, puniant et reformat, penas et penitentias dilinquentibus imponentes, et si aliquae inobedientes et rebelles existerent, aut vitam suam ducerent inhoneste in scandalum proximorum, volumus ut auferatur eis habitus vite huius et formule, et de collegio isto eiciantur...’, in *ibidem*.

The prohibition of illegitimately wearing penitential attire was also present in the threat of excommunication given in July 1286 by Giacomo Cavalcanti, bishop of Città di Castello, to anyone who dared to take the seal and habit of the Order of the Penitence without the licence of its minister.<sup>118</sup> The same zeal for the exclusivity of the habit also appeared in the constitutions of the provincial chapter of the penitents of Bologna in November 1289, which established that no one should wear the habit of the brothers or sisters of the Penitence, unless they have previously made their profession according to the rule of Nicholas IV.<sup>119</sup> The same indication was repeated in the subsequent publication of the acts and statutes of the general chapter of the penitents of Bologna that same year, with the addition that in no way should the brothers go beyond their district or move away from their house more than a stone's throw without wearing their cloaks.<sup>120</sup> Similarly, statutes given to the penitents of Tuscany in 1298 forbade anyone who did not belong to the fraternity, or who had been expelled from it, to use its garments and signs.<sup>121</sup> Analogous instructions were given to the grey sisters

---

<sup>118</sup> '...Eorundem igitur propositum fine intendentes laudabili terminare, vobis omnibus ecclesiarum prelati Castellane diocesis sub excommunicationis vinculo mittimus in mandatis, quatenus omnes et quoslibet istius ordinis de Penitentia signaculi et habitus temerarios assumptores, qui post trinam citationem legitimam, scilicet decem dierum pro qualibet, predictum habitum non reliquerint apportandum sine licentia ministrorum ordinis supradicti, in ecclesia vestris et clericorum sinodis, quam citius contumaces extiterint, excommunicatos, vestrarum ecclesiarum populis congregatis, ex parte nostra nuntiare curetis et ex tunc excommunicamus eosem...', in *ibid.*, no. 19, pp. 203-4; Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God*, p. 84

<sup>119</sup> '...Item quod aliqua persona non presumat portare habitum fratrum Penitentie vel sororum, nisi primo professionem fecerint secundum regulam bullatam a domino Nicolao papa quarto...', in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 168-9.

<sup>120</sup> '...sine mantello nullo modo fratres vadant extra contractam suam elongando se a domo sua ultra iactum lapidis...', in Hieronymus Golubovich (ed.), "Acta et Statuta Generalis Capituli Tertii Ordinis Poenitentium D. Francisci Bononiae celebrati an. 1289", *AFH* 2 (1909), pp. 63-71; p. 69.

<sup>121</sup> '...Insuper cum in eadem regula exprimatur [Nicholas IV's *Supra montem*], quod incorrigibiles et inobedientes per visitatorem expelli debeant de consortio fraternitatis

(identified as Franciscan Third Order) of the hospital of St John of Ghent in 1397, who were to be deprived from their mantle and scapular for an entire year if they punched someone, or stole something, or committed a “carnal crime” with a man.<sup>122</sup>

Therefore, just as with canonical religious orders, for the penitential movement habits were a mirror of the virtue and the piety of its user – both internal and external. Thus, they were not only garments for the exclusive use of their legitimate owners, but they also had to be earned and respected in the solemnity of the promise they symbolised, as they were the sign of this profession. Likewise, the development of a collective identity within the system of differences of religious dress became more evident as the penitential movement increased its popularity: in the same way as with religious orders, fraternities gained rights of exclusivity over their habits and also started to pay disciplinary attention on the legitimacy of their use. Consequently, the groups sought to maintain these identities, not only to establish distinguishing attributes among different penitential associations, but sometimes also to assert their secular autonomy from religious authorities. After all, just as it was the case with the Augustinians Hermits,

---

eiusdem, ut talium contumacia publice notari valeat et malicia aliis obedientibus et humilis infamiam non inducat, firmiter prohibemus, ne persona aliqua sic eiecta habitum, pannos et signa fraternitatis ipsius portare presumat, sed omnia infra octo dierum spatium ab ipsa eiectione deponat, nec aliquis audeat ipsa propria temeritate resumere...’, in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 157-8. This instruction was probably linked to the long-standing conflict between two factions of penitents in Florence, discussed below, who wore habits of different colours.

<sup>122</sup> ‘...Item si soror aliqua, instigante inimico, manus violentas levaverit in consodalem percutiendo sive pungendo, vel furtum notabile commiserit, vel crimem carnale notorium et indubitum cum viro aliquo patrauerit, talis rea unius horum piaculorum, per annum integrum mantello et scapulari carebit, nec communitatem frequentabit, nisi pro sacramentis Confesionis et Communionis...’, in Hieronimus Goyens (ed.), “Monumenta historica inde ab anno 1397 circa vetus Hospitale Sancti Iohannis Gandavi III Ordinis S. Francisci”, AFH 7 (1914), pp. 511-526; p. 517.

the Carmelites, or the Teutonic Order, the different penitential groups were also developing in a highly competitive religious environment, and this competition meant not only growing numbers of members, participation, and public notoriety – besides its genuine pious zeal – but also privileges and, why not, power, influence, and economic gain.<sup>123</sup>

In this context, as the importance of the habit in the formation of distinctive identities for the penitential groups increased, it seemed almost inevitable for them to encounter similar controversies as those faced by religious orders in relation to their habits. This was, indeed, the case of the “black” and “grey” penitents of Florence during the last decades of the thirteenth century. The penitents had been established in the city since around the end of the decade of 1220, probably under the influence of the first mendicants who settled in the city.<sup>124</sup> Although they were especially close to the Dominicans during the first stages – helping them to administer their possessions and donations<sup>125</sup> – by the mid-thirteenth century they appeared to have distanced themselves, in a process apparently sought by both sides, and had gained an autonomy which was zealously defended from then on.<sup>126</sup> While the tensions between grey and black penitents appeared only towards the end of the century, it is possible to assume that a differentiation among the penitents of the city went back at least a couple of

---

<sup>123</sup> As both Meersseman (*Dossier*, pp. 180-240) and Anna Benvenuti (“Fonti e problemi per la storia dei Penitenti a Firenze nel secolo XIII”, in O. Schmucki (ed.), *L’Ordine della Penitenza*, pp. 279-301; p. 298, especially n. 73) have shown regarding this matter.

<sup>124</sup> Anna Benvenuti-Papi, “I frati della Penitenza nella società fiorentina del Due-Trecento” in Mariano D’Alatri (ed.), *I frati Penitenti*, pp. 191-220; p. 191; Raffaele Pazzelli, *St. Francis and the Third Order*, p. 149.

<sup>125</sup> Anna Benvenuti, “Fonti e problemi”, pp. 285-90, and idem, “I frati della Penitenza”, pp. 191-4.

<sup>126</sup> Anna Benvenuti, “Fonti e problemi”, pp. 293-4.

decades: in 1275 the Florentine citizen Cittadino, son of Bonasere de Passignano made his testament, specifying that he was a married brother of the Penitence, *habitus nigri*,<sup>127</sup> a qualification that was absent in previous documents involving the group.<sup>128</sup> However, as Anna Benvenuti points out, the fact that it appears as a completely normal aspect in the document suggests that it was not an entirely new development.<sup>129</sup> The specification appears again in a testament of two years later, in relation to the ‘*fratrum Pinzocherorum Nigrorum de Penitentia de civitate Florentina*,’ and their administration of a generous donation in relief of the sins of usury.<sup>130</sup> Whatever the factions involved here, or the reasons that may have influenced this appeal for distinction,<sup>131</sup> it seems that the “black” penitents rapidly developed a strong sense of individuality, distinguishing themselves from the group of “grey” penitents that now appeared in the sources – seemingly associated with the Franciscans.<sup>132</sup>

This zeal for autonomy and differentiation was made evident when, in 1284, the Franciscan Caro of Arezzo, guardian of the Friars Minor of Florence and allegedly the appointed apostolic visitor for the penitents of Tuscany, tried to impose a unique grey habit on all the penitents of the

---

<sup>127</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 196-8; Anna Benvenuti, “Fonti e problemi”, pp. 293; idem, “I frati della Penitenza”, p. 199, n. 28; p. 201.

<sup>128</sup> See the chapter “Cartulaire” in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 179-85.

<sup>129</sup> Anna Benvenuti-Papi, “I frati della Penitenza”, pp. 207-8, n. 55.

<sup>130</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 198; Anna Benvenuti, “Fonti e problemi”, pp. 293.

<sup>131</sup> Anna Benvenuti states, in discrepancy with Meersseman, that the choice of the black colour may have corresponded to the ties of the confraternity with the secular clergy of the city – also showed in that they had a secular visitor, Bindo Montanini – rather than to their dependency on the Friars Preacher. A fact that would, in turn, make more evident the confraternity’s autonomy (Anna Benvenuti, “Fonti e problemi”, p. 294).

<sup>132</sup> Benvenuti suggests the possible influence of the *Spiritual* Franciscans, and their accent on absolute poverty, in the adoption of a grey habit by a party of Florentine penitents (ibid., p. 295).



city.<sup>133</sup> A conflict exploded when a black penitent, Mainettino di Cambio, refused to make such a change unless the Franciscan showed the papal document that conceded him the faculty to visit and reform the Florentine brothers of the Penitence. Friar Caro not only did not produce the letter, but also excommunicated Mainettino, who in turn appealed to Pope Martin IV. The appeal was accepted and the pope requested an inquiry to be made by two prelates from Lucca.<sup>134</sup> The results of the inquiry, as well as the outcome of the confrontation, are unfortunately unknown, but the fact that the matter got the attention of the Holy See is quite telling of the status that penitents had gained within Christian society, and the place that the habit had for them. Moreover, despite papal involvement, the conflict was far from over: after the promulgation of the *Supra montem* – with its imposition of greyish habits – black penitents continued to keep hold of their now distinctive garments.

As a matter of fact, black penitents seemed to have been backed up in their refusal to change their clothes by the Florentine bishop, Andrea de' Mozzi, apparently a supporter of the faction, who in September 1291 received a letter of reprimand from Nicholas IV for opposing the union of grey and black penitents.<sup>135</sup> Here the pivotal role that the habit had for the movement is again made evident. The missive states how it had come to the pope's ears that, although the brothers of Penance of the city of Florence were formerly accustomed to wear a habit of one colour (*unius coloris*, grey as

---

<sup>133</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 241; Anna Benvenuti, "Fonti e problemi", p. 295.

<sup>134</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 69-70; Anna Benvenuti, "Fonti e problemi", p. 296; idem, "I frati della Penitenza", p. 209; Lino Temperini, *Carisma e legislazione*, pp. 114-5; Raffaele Pazzelli, *St. Francis and the Third Order*, p. 150.

<sup>135</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 77-9. Also Raffaele Pazzelli, *St. Francis and the Third Order*, pp. 210-11, n. 70; Anna Benvenuti-Papi, "I frati della Penitenza", pp. 209-10.

directed in the *Supra montem*), the same brothers, abandoning this habit, went over to another one on their own initiative.<sup>136</sup> The pope, therefore, thought he should lay down “a way of living”, called a *Memoriale*, as it had been handed down by St Francis – lest the same brothers should in any way veer away from the observance of their life – to grant them a certain rule. Having set it out in full in a bull, the ministers of the ‘beloved brothers’ of the Penitence of Florence – said the pope – together with many of the same brothers, resumed their previous habits, humbly and devoutly accepting the one that followed the rule and way of living handed down by the pope (in the *Supra montem*), and set out in the *Memoriale*.<sup>137</sup> Thus, it seems that after Nicholas IV’s bull, many penitents were divided between keeping their local custom or abiding the papal mandate. This was, at the end, as Benvenuti points out, a dilemma between maintaining their traditional autonomy or obeying the hierarchy of the Church,<sup>138</sup> a predicament that was reflected in their choice of garments – black for the former and grey for the latter. This is especially true in a period in which leaders of the mendicant orders were also increasingly trying to put penitents under their sphere of influence by

---

<sup>136</sup> It seems that whoever informed the pope got – intentionally or not – this particular fact wrong, as the idea that the black penitents had adopted the grey habits only to go back to the black ones does not make much sense, especially considering that they seemed to predate the grey penitents.

<sup>137</sup> ‘...Ad audientiam nostram pervenit, quod licet olim fratres de Penitentia civitates Florentine panni unius coloris habitum deferre consueverunt, iidem tamen fratres, habitu ipso dimisso, alium assumpserunt motu proprie voluntatis. Cumque nos omnibus fratribus de Penitentia modum vivendi, quod *Memoriale* vocatur, ne fratres ipsi circa observantiam vite sue aliquatenus fluctuarent, prout a beato Francisco fuit traditus, duxerimus ordinandum certam eis regulam concedendo, et faciendo eam sub bulla nostra totaliter annotari, ministri dilectorum fratrum prefate civitatis cum multis ex ipsis fratribus habitu priori resumpto, prefatam regulam et modum vivendi a nobis, ut premittitur, traditos, ac habitum secundum regulam et *Memoriale* predicta susceperunt humiliter et devote...’, in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 77-8. Italics in the original.

<sup>138</sup> Anna Benvenuti-Papi, “I frati della Penitenza”, pp. 209-10.

attempting to persuade them to use the colours associated to their orders,<sup>139</sup> which probably made this fight for autonomy an even more pressing matter for the rebel penitents. Indeed, bishop de' Mozzi, probably in an attempt to back the claim for independence made by the black penitents, became 'indignant' with the obedient grey penitents and, withdrawing his protection, seized the chest containing the rule, as well as their privileges, instruments and books, among other things, and started calling all those who were following the new rule of Nicholas IV apostates – a telling aspect of the role that habits started to have in the religious observance of penitents, and in their changing canonical status. The pope warned the bishop that those brothers who had recovered their previous habits and had accepted the rule given by him had by no means seen their status changed and should not be deprived from their rights and privileges because of this.<sup>140</sup> We do not know how this controversy continued, but the fact that de' Mozzi was transferred to Vicenza by Boniface VIII in September 1295, and immediately replaced by Francesco Monaldeschi, suggests that the former failed to put an end to it.<sup>141</sup>

---

<sup>139</sup> Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God*, p. 82.

<sup>140</sup> 'Verum tu ex hoc indignationis assumens spiritum contra eos, non solum protectionis tue favorem, quem ipsis consuevisti prestare, subtraxisti eisdem, sed nonnullas eis iniurias irrogans, fecisti eis quamdam capsam, in qua regula, privilegia, instrumenta, libri et quedam res alie ipsorum existebant...tibi de speciali mandato nostro...ut diligenter attendens, quod fratres observatores et receptores dicte regule non debebant vocari apostate, sicut eis in tua presentia dictum fuisse proponitur, sed potius digni erant ex hoc potiori gratia et favore, ac ipsos habentes ob nostram reverentiam propensius commendatos, ab eorum molestiis et gravaminibus abstinentes et ab his tuos subditos cohibens, exhiberes te dictis fratribus in tuo favore munificum et in eorum opportunitatibus gratiosum, ita quod dicti fratres ex tunc non haberent de te iustam materiam conquerendo...', in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 78; Raffaele Pazzelli, *St. Francis and the Third Order*, pp. 210-11, n. 70; Anna Benvenuti-Papi, "I frati della Penitenza", pp. 209-10.

<sup>141</sup> Anna Benvenuti, "Fonti e problemi", p. 298; Raffaele Pazzelli, *St. Francis and the Third Order*, pp. 210-11, n. 70.

The new bishop sought to unify both groups who, with so much discord and scandal, were bringing no little danger to the soul of other Florentines in their disunion of both their vows and will, and of their habits, showing also a pernicious example to other religious people.<sup>142</sup> The process, nevertheless, proved to be no easy task. The bishop tried to impose the union with a statute from 4 November 1296, which prescribed one rule and one habit, which should not differ notably in colour, and for which the material would be assigned, consisting in a humble cloth without colour, between black and white that the brothers would see to acquire.<sup>143</sup> Although both black and grey brothers took the oath for the union the day after of the promulgation of the statutes, the effort met with resistance, now from some of the grey (*bigii, bisii*) penitents<sup>144</sup> who, a couple of weeks after the oath, were excommunicated – and then absolved – because of their disobedience.<sup>145</sup> The bishop was unable to reach an agreement with the recalcitrant penitents, and the union was finally only achieved by the arbitration of the papal legate, Matthew d'Aquasparta in April 1298,<sup>146</sup> who imposed the observance of Nicholas IV's rule for all the brothers and sisters of the Penitence in Tuscany. D'Aquasparta – probably having in mind the obstinate black penitents still reluctant to change their clothes – threatened to excommunicate all those

---

<sup>142</sup> ‘...dudum inter fratres de Penitentia civitatis Florentine tantam discordie et scandali superseminavit zizaniam, ut tam habitu quam votis et voluntati divisi non modice animarum pericula incurrentes aliis Florentinis propter hec monstrarent pernicioso exempla religiosis personis penitus aliena...predictos fratres tam nigri habitus quam bisii nostre iurisdictioni subiectos, ut tam in habitu quam in regula et moribus inveniantur et efficiantur in omnibus uniformes, duximus uniendum...’, in G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 242.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 242-5, no. 2, no. 10 and no. 16.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245, no. 15.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 251-2; Anna Benvenuti-Papi, “I frati della Penitenza”, p. 210.

<sup>146</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 262-4; Anna Benvenuti-Papi, “I frati della Penitenza”, p. 211; Raffaele Pazzelli, *St. Francis and the Third Order*, pp. 210-11, n. 70.

who, having being expelled because of their disobedience and incorrigibility, dared to wear the habit and signs of the fraternity.<sup>147</sup> However, it seems that long traditions die hard, for the statute of the *podestà* of Florence for the year 1325 protected the exclusivity of the habit of the penitents (*pinçocherorum*), which was defined as a cloak, black up to the border of the hood (*clamidem nigram ad becchettum*),<sup>148</sup> showing that the stubborn Florentines were not going to give the ultimate symbol of their autonomy so readily.<sup>149</sup> After all, as with the rest of the “extra-religious” movement, their very identity as a community was fundamentally anchored in the use and zealous defence of their habits.

One might suggest that the struggle to define and secure collective identities by the quick-spreading “extra-religious” communities may also be understood, in a certain way, not only as an imitation of the way of life of regular institutions, but also in relation to the proliferation of associations such as professional guilds during the same period,<sup>150</sup> perhaps as the two sides of the same coin. Of course, both originated in different contexts and with different purposes, but they shared the same cultural and social changes

---

<sup>147</sup> G. G. Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 157-8. See above, pp. 217-8, n. 121.

<sup>148</sup> ‘...Statutum est quod nullus deferat, capiat vel portet pinçocherorum habitum nisi foret de vita et regula ipsorum, scilicet clamidem nigrum ad becchetum, ad similitudinem eorum vite, cum multi sint qui talia faciunt et fecerunt pro deceptione Communis in despectum gentium; et si quis contra fecerit, teneatur Potestas contra eum procedere, ad voluntatem fratrum ministrorum dictorum pinçocherorum...’, in R. Caggese (ed.), *Statuti della Repubblica fiorentina*, Vol 2, *Statuto del Podestà dell’anno 1325* (Firenze, 1921), p. 371; Anna Benvenuti-Papi, “I frati della Penitenza”, p. 208; p. 203, n. 42; Augustine Thompson, *Cities of God*, p. 83.

<sup>149</sup> Anna Benvenuti-Papi, “I frati della Penitenza”, p. 208; p. 203, n. 42.

<sup>150</sup> On medieval guilds see for example Steven A. Epstein, *Wage Labor and Guilds in Medieval Europe* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991); Stephan R. Epstein and Maarten Prak (eds.), *Guilds, Innovation and the European Economy, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Sheilagh Ogilvie, *Institutions and European Trade: Merchant Guilds, 1000–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Eva Jullien and Michael Pauly (eds.), *Craftsmen and Guilds in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016).

as a background, both rendering visible different expressions of the same wider phenomenon that marked the Late Middle Ages, in which defining a collective “brand” became so significant. The way in which penitential groups and beguines displayed the nature and scope of their communities was indeed through the adoption of their own “habits”. Thus, the fulfilment of this “habit envy” could grant a certain air of holiness, ecclesiastical privileges, and a hope for eternal salvation, but it could also bring accusations of heresy, excommunication, and even, in the worst-case scenario, death at the stake. In both cases, however, as extra-religious groups made their way into the system of differences of religious clothes with these habits, they brought about an enduring change not only in the lay, but also in the clerical attitudes towards popular piety. The legitimised use of clothes that resembled religious dress by extra-religious groups was the first and foremost vehicle to announce these new ways of understanding and performing lay devotional practices.

## CHAPTER 4

---

### THE VARIOUS HABITS OF ST FRANCIS: OBSERVANT ZEAL AND THE ROLE OF CLOTHES IN THE FRANCISCAN ORDER

The *Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals of The Order Of Friars Minor* tells us how Crescentius de Iesi (general minister of the Franciscan order between 1244 and 1247) had to deal, soon after becoming provincial minister of the March of Ancona, with a group of friars who ‘despised the institutions of the Order and considered themselves to be better than the others. They wanted to live according to their own choices and attributed everything to the spirit.’ Moreover, and more shockingly, ‘they also dressed differently, keeping their mantles short up to their buttocks.’<sup>1</sup> The problem here was not just about some brothers of the order showing more skin than people might have been willing to see, but also about the statement on observance that – if we believe the chronicler’s story – these friars were trying to make. However, when we consider that the anecdote was narrated by Pelegrino of Bologna in 1305, more than sixty years after the facts had allegedly happened, the meaning of the whole account looks rather different. As David Burr rightly points out, it is not unlikely that Pelegrino might have

---

<sup>1</sup> ‘Qui parum post factus Minister Marchiae invenit in Ordine unam sectam fratrum...qui instituta Ordinis contemnentes aestimabant se aliis meliores, qui ad libitum volebant vivere et omnia spiritui attribuebant, portantes etiam mantellos curtos usque ad nates...’, in *Chronica XXIV generalium Ordinis minorum. Cum pluribus appendicibus inter quas excellit hucusque ineditus “Liber de laudibus S. Francisci” Fr. Bernardi a Bessa, Analecta Franciscana ad Historiam Fratrum Minorum Spectantia*, edita a Patribus Collegii S. Bonaventurae, Tom. III (Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi), prope Florentiam, 1897), p. 263. English translation in *Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals of the Order of Friars Minor [1369-1374]*, Noel Muscat, translator (Malta: TAU Franciscan Communications, 2010), p. 356.

just been projecting back the developments that, from the last quarter of the thirteenth century, were to mark and change the order irrevocably.<sup>2</sup> What may appear to be just a passing remark was the only hint Pelegrino needed to characterise the unruly Anconan brothers as forerunners of the group of *zelanti* that made their appearance in the order some thirty years later. Coming from the same March of Ancona,<sup>3</sup> under the leadership of Angelo Clareno they were to become one of the leading factions of the *Spiritual* movement that shook the order to its core, and which became infamously identified by their tight and short habits. Therefore, it is highly probable that in the mind of Pelegrino's contemporaries, those short habits unequivocally connected the two groups and, depending on individual sympathies, immediately marked them out either as heretics or as the truthful followers of St Francis's original precepts.

The history of the *Spiritual* movement is an intricate one, with different factions originating in different places without any clear connection between them and without necessarily sharing their particular agendas. The complexities of the whole controversy are beyond the scope of this chapter, and David Burr's thorough study<sup>4</sup> has already dissected and explained the different strands that were entangled in it. However, an element shared by all the factions involved was the call for a greater and stricter observance of both the Franciscan Rule and the way of life that Francis had envisioned for his order; an observance *sine glossa*, as the founder had wanted it in his

---

<sup>2</sup> David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, pp. 22-4.

<sup>3</sup> *Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals*, p. 356, n. 114.

<sup>4</sup> David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*; see also Società internazionale di studi francescani, *Chi erano gli spirituali: atti del III Convegno internazionale: Assisi, 16-18 ottobre 1975* (Assisi: La Società, 1976).



Testament.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, they called for an observance free of the interpretations added *a posteriori* by popes and general chapters of the order, which they considered to be a major obstacle for the fulfilment of this call to a life of perfect evangelical virtue.<sup>6</sup> If there was one single aspect throughout the controversy that seemed to be as ubiquitous as the dispute on the right way of observing the Franciscan Rule it was the sartorial one: an on-going polemic about the habits of both the community of the order and the dissident friars; on the habits that each side was in fact wearing, and on the habits they should actually wear. This polemic shows, in fact, how Hallingers's "law" about the intrinsic relationship of religious reform and change of habit<sup>7</sup> applied also to observant movements within orders. Moreover, this is probably one of the most representative cases in the history of the period of the ways in which ideas and attire could become so intrinsically connected and so loaded with nuances, meanings, and even emotions. For habits ended up having a central role in a dispute that would have long-lasting effects for the whole Franciscan Order, and with some very dramatic turns at times.

---

<sup>5</sup> 'Et omnibus fratribus meis clericis et laicis praecipio firmiter per obedientiam, ut non mittant glossas in regula neque in istis verbis dicendo: Ita volunt intelligi. Sed sicut dedit mihi Dominus simpliciter et pure dicere et scribere regulam et ista verba, ita simpliciter et sine glossa intelligatis et cum sancta operatione observetis usque ad finem.' Francis of Assisi, "Testamentum", in Caietanus Esser (ed.), *Opuscula Sancti Patris Francisci Assiensis*, pp. 305-317; pp. 315-6. For a detailed commentary on the context and content of Francis' Testament see André Vauchez, *François D'Assise: Entre histoire et mémoire* (Paris: Fayard, 2009), pp. 208-13, and Augustine Thompson, *Francis of Assisi: A New Biography*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2012), pp. 133-6.

<sup>6</sup> Mario Sensi, *Le osservanze francescane nell'Italia centrale (secoli XIV-XV)* (Roma: Collegio S. Lorenzo da Brindisi, Istituto storico dei cappuccini 1985), p. 2; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, pp. 2-6; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and division in the Medieval Franciscan Order, from Saint Francis to the Foundation of the Capuchins* (Rome: Capuchin Historical Institute, 1987), pp. 103-4; Rosalind B. Brooke, *The Image of St Francis*, p. 77

<sup>7</sup> See Introduction, p. 35.

The whole story would even make a good plot for a lively period television drama, with excommunications, accusations of heresy, friars in dungeons, or on the run fearing for their lives, and some even condemned to death by the inquisitors. It all shows us how heated, and dangerous, the polemic became for the followers of the *poverello*. As a matter of fact, it ended up costing the lives of four Franciscan friars, infamously burned at the stake in Marseille, under charges of heresy, on 7 May 1318. It would not be much of an exaggeration to say that this fatal outcome occurred, to a great extent, because of their clothes, which had become the emblem of the Spiritual dissatisfaction and of their condemnation of the laxity that, according to them, was reigning within the Franciscan Order. The four friars refused to recant their ideas about the truthful way to follow the precepts that St Francis had left for his order. They complained about the current standards of living of the Friars Minor, who were betraying the principle of evangelical poverty proposed by St Francis, the essential charisma of the Franciscan Order.<sup>8</sup> Representatives of the Spiritual faction, they claimed that both their superiors and the pope were mistaken and, worse, disloyal to the spirit of the Franciscan Rule, so that they had no choice but to withdraw their obedience and follow their conscience.<sup>9</sup> Their sartorial defiance was a loud and clear

---

<sup>8</sup> On the principle poverty and apostolic life, see Duane V. Lapsanski, *Evangelical Perfection. An Historical Examination of the Concept in the Early Franciscan Sources* (Assisi: St Bonaventure University, 1977). Originally published as *Perfectio evangelica: eine begriffsgeschichtliche Untersuchung im frühfranziskanischen Schrifttum* (München: Schönigh, 1974); see also the chapter "Historia Paupertatis, vel de Pugna Paupertatis adversus mundum", in *Regula Fratrum Minorum, juxta Romanorum Pontificum decreta et documenta ordinis* (Parisiis, 1870), pp. 667-788.

<sup>9</sup> David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty: The Origins of the Usus Pauper Controversy*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), pp. 163-72; idem, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 171. In this assertion, they were following, to some extent, the ideas advanced by Petrus Iohannes Olivi on individual conscience and obedience, in which a

message both to the their superiors and to the ecclesiastical hierarchy. It was also a disruption of the system of differences of religious dress: wearing an altered habit immediately created the presumption of belonging to a different institution, and disturbed the uniformity that was crucial for the collective identity of any order. Likewise, it could also send the signal that the order was not able to control its members. Thus, the characteristic short and narrow habits of the Spirituals endangered both the Franciscan “brand” and the institution itself, and so they had to be strictly suppressed.

Some months before the tragic events at Marseille John XXII had issued the bull *Quorundam exigit*, of 7 October 1317, to address the problem presented by the unruly Spiritual friars, who, by this point, were considered to be schismatics by their conventual counterparts; they were trying to set themselves apart, claimed the latter, with a habit of different shape (*difformem*). The Spirituals, of course, denied such accusations of heterogeneity: they were not dismissing the habits of their order – rejecting the charge of apostasy that would come with this kind of action<sup>10</sup> – but, quite the contrary, they were striving to emulate the one that Francis himself had worn.<sup>11</sup> This was not a trivial issue, and, in fact, the Spirituals’ obstinate

---

command from the pope or the superiors involving a violation of their vow of absolute poverty would justify their disobedience. See David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 203. On Francis’ own ideas about obedience and its challenges see Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 34-8; pp. 40-6.

<sup>10</sup> See Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 133. See also F. Donald Logan, *Runaway Religious in Medieval England*, pp. 25ff.

<sup>11</sup> ‘Falsum est etiam, quod dicti fratres dicantur habitum sue religionis reiecisse, si iuxta suum modulum et imperfecte adhuc conabantur in vilitate habitus quantum ad formam et materiam se beato Francisco et aliis antiquis patribus conformare; et si hoc dicatur apostatare, videatur, debeat dici apostasia, institutori ordinis se pro viribus conformare.’ In Franz Ehrle, “Die Spiritualen, ihr Verhältniss zum Franziskanenorden und zu den Fraticellen”, in Heinrich Denifle and Franz Ehrle (eds.), *Archiv für Litteratur- und*

determination to keep wearing and defending their '*curtos, strictos, inusitados et squalidos*' habits was the first matter addressed by the John XXII in his bull.<sup>12</sup> To the zealots' misfortune, the pope was unequivocally on the side of the community of the order. He held that both he and his predecessors had already stated that although *vilitas* had to be observed, the final word on the brethren's clothing was in the hands of the superiors of the order, so that the dissenting faction had to abide by their ruling.<sup>13</sup>

The recantation terms for the four friars facing the stake in Marseille demanded, on the first place, that they gave up the particular 'tight, short and unusual habits,' which they had taken as the foremost emblem of their much stricter observance of both the rule and the evangelical poverty preached by their founder. To them, their habits were a much more truthful copy of the one worn by Francis. In fact, they claimed that those being worn by the community of the order were the ones differing from what was required by their profession, which in turn reflected the laxity that reigned inside the

---

*Kirchengeschichte des Mittelalters*, Vol. 4 (1888), pp. 1-190; p. 55; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 172; p. 196.

<sup>12</sup> The statement in *Quorundam exigit* reads as follows: '...ut ex eisdem fratribus aliqui habitus propterea curtos, strictos, inusitados et squalidos, novitate plenos ac disidii non ignaros, cum a communitate ordinis discreparent, assumerent, nec eos ad ministrorum, custodum et guardianorum eorundem mandatum requisitu deponerent nec alios, prout eiusdem ordinis communitas deferebat, habitus iuxta eorundem ministrorum, custodum et guardianorum arbitrium duceret resumendos dicentes, in hoc eorundem praelatorum suorum non parendum fore arbitrio, cum et suum sic despectum et regularem et cruciforme masserent, caeterorum vero habitum superfluum irregularemque censerent...Ideoque omnes et singulos fratres antedicti ordinis Minorum qui strictos, curtos et difformes habitus ab ipsius generalis ministri et aliorum fratrum de dicta communitate habitibus corem nobiset fratribus nostris vel alias Romana curia detulerunt vel deferunt, monemus et hortamus in Domino, nihilominus in virtute obdientiae ac sub excommunicationis poena per apostolica scripta mandantes, quatenus ad mandatum ipsius generalis deponant, quos deferunt habitus et aliis iuxta ipsius generalis arbitrium, determinationem sive iudicium induantur, ipsique generali in omnibus istis et aliis per omnia, secundum beati Francisci regulam et praedictas praedecessorum nostrorum declarationes, concessionones et commissionones...', in BF V, no. 289, pp. 128-30; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 196; p. 206.

<sup>13</sup> David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 196. The bull refers to Nicholas III's *Exiit qui seminatur* (14 August 1279, in BF III, no. 127, pp. 404-17) and Clement V's *Exivi de paradiso* (6 May 1312, in BF V, no. 195, pp. 80-6).

order. As Duncan Nimmo observes, for the Spirituals the rightful habit was a relevant part of the tradition they were rescuing from Francis's first companions and on which they had established their own agenda. Moreover, as we will see below, they were not completely wrong in stating that the community had shifted towards more comfortable and even luxurious clothes.<sup>14</sup> Thus, when asked by Michael of Cesena, general minister of the order, why they would not comply with the requirements of *Quorundam exigit* on clothing (as well as on cellars and granaries), the dissenting friars replied that they could not give up their habits because what the pope was asking was against both the rule and the gospel, and therefore, against their vows, to which they were bound.<sup>15</sup> They were, therefore, willing to take their stance to the last consequences before betraying their profession. The inquisitorial sentence given by Michel Le Moine said that they held their ground obstinately, and that no mortal could force them to give up their short and narrow habits, and take up the other ones of the community. They claimed that to attack those same short and narrow habits was to attack the gospel of Christ and his rule, and that the instructions given to them to put away these habits and accept others were not binding, because they were against the gospel. From these commands, they asserted, the destruction of their evangelical way of life (*vitae Christi*) would follow, and those who proceeded

---

<sup>14</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 100.

<sup>15</sup> The text of the interrogation in Raoul Manselli, *Spirituali e Beghini in Provenza*, pp. 291-6; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 197; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 157-8.

against them, and forced them to give up those habits, were in error and contrary to the truth of the evangelical rule.<sup>16</sup>

Some time earlier that same year, John XXII had asked a panel of thirteen masters of theology of the University of Paris to examine three of the Spirituals' claims and pronounce whether they were promoting heretical ideas, which the scholars confirmed. The first of these questions was related to the Spiritual negative to give up their '*strictos, curtos et difformes*' habits, and to their accusation that their superiors were contravening both the rule and the gospel when asking them to cast them away.<sup>17</sup> However this was not an issue of mere symbolism. For the Franciscans, the habit had had, from the beginning, a foundational place in their history – probably more so than for most of the other orders – as, in the eyes of the Minors' tradition, it had marked the creation of the order itself. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Francis's first "conversion" to a penitential life had started with him

---

<sup>16</sup> '...quod nullus mortalis potest eos cogere ad deponendum ipsos habitus curtos et strictos et alios communitatis assumendum, et quod ipsos habitus curtos et strictos impugnare est verbo et facto Christi evangelium et ejus regulam impugnare, et quod praecepta eis facta quod ipsos habitus dimittant et alios assumant, ut dictum est, non tenent nec obligant, quia sunt contra evangelium, et ex iis sequeretur et sequi posset destructio vitae Christi, et quod illi qui procedunt contra ipsos ut dimittant ipsos habitus sunt in errore contra veritatem evangelicae regulae...', in Etienne Baluze, *Stephani Baluzii Tutelensis Miscellanea: novo ordine digesta et non paucis ineditis monumentis opportunisque animadversionibus aucta*, D. Mansi (ed.) Tom. II (Lucae: apud V. Junctinium, 1761), p. 248; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 205.

<sup>17</sup> 'Vota quorundam magistrorum theologiae contra tres articulos partis fratrum Ord. Minorum: Queritur utrum isti articuli infra scripti et quilibet eorum sin heretici judicandi. Primus est dicere et essere pertinaciter, quod non est obediendum alicui prelato praecipienti quibusdam professoribus regule Ordinis beati Francisci quod deponant quosdam habitus curtos et strictos difformes ab habitu communitatis aliorum dicte regule professorum, quos assumpserunt per se ipsos, et quod est contra observantiam prefate regule beati Francisci et ejus intelligentiam, est per consequens contra Evangelium et fidem, et e converso, alias ipsa non esset penitus pro regula evangelica [habenda]. Sed tales habitus impugnare et eos [fratres] ad deponendum cogere est contra veritatem dicte regule et per consequens contra Evangelium et fidem...', in E. Chatelain and H. Denifle (eds.), *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, Tom. II (Parisiis: ex typis fratrum Delalain, 1891), no. 760, p. 215; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 198; Raoul Manselli, *Spirituali e Beghini in Provenza*, pp. 152-3;

challenging his father, as he stripped before the bishop of Assisi, and took on a coarse tunic in which he drew a cross, as his first biographies describe.<sup>18</sup> Although this was in fact an altered tunic similar to the one worn by Umbrian peasants,<sup>19</sup> Francis's own habit became the most patent bearer of his message and legacy, both in the Franciscan institution and in the impact he had on the secular world.

Indeed, it can be argued that it is not by chance that, from very early, several of his tunics were carefully kept, not only as relics in the traditional way, but also as visual reminders of the institution he founded – and perhaps of *how* that institution should look. As anyone who has had the good fortune of visiting Assisi has probably realised how the churches of the city might as well be museums for Franciscan habits, recounting the early history of the order through these garments. One may, however, wonder as well whether this eagerness to keep the precious relics of Francis's clothes, particularly in

---

<sup>18</sup> As it appears in both the *Legenda Maior* of St Bonaventure, and in the *Vita Prima* written by Thomas of Celano; 'Perveniensque coram Episcopo, nec moras patitur, nec cunctatur de aliquo, nec verba expectat, nec facit: sed continuo depositis omnibus vestimentis, restituit ea patri...totus coram omnibus denudatur...Hoc cernens episcopus, et admirans tam excedentem in viro Dei fervorem, protinus exsurrexit et inter brachia sua illum cum fletu recolligens, uti erat vir pius et bonus, pallio quo erat amictus operuit, praecipiens suis, ut aliquid sibi darent ad membra corporis contegenda; oblatu est autem ei mantellus pauper et villis cuiusdam agricolae servienti episcopi. Quem ipse gratanter suspiciens cum, caemento quod sibi occurrit, ad modum crucis manu propria consignavit...'; in Bonaventura, "Legenda S. Francisci", in *Opera Omnia*, Tom. VIII, (Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi): Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1898), pp. 504-564; pp. 508-9; 'Cumque perductus esset coram episcopo, nec moras patitur nec cunctatur de aliquo, immo nec verba expectat nec facit, sed continuo, depositis et proiectis omnibus vestimentis, restituit ea patri. Insuper et nec femoralia retinens, totus coram omnibus denudatur. Episcopus vero animum ipsius attendens, fervoremque ac constantiam nimis admirans, protinus exsurrexit et inter brachia sua ipsum recolligens, pallio quo indutus erat contexit eum.' Thomas De Celano, *Vita Prima S. Francisci Assisiensis et eiusdem Legenda ad Usus Chori* (Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi): Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1926), Vita I, p. 18; Alejandra Concha Sahli, "Más allá de las fibras", p. 247. On Francis' action of stripping before the bishop of Assisi, see Damien Boquet, "Écrire et représenter la dénudation de François d'Assise au XIIIe siècle", *Rives nord-méditerranéennes*, 30 (2008), pp. 39-63.

<sup>19</sup> Augustine Thompson, *Francis of Assisi*, pp. 29-30.

Italy,<sup>20</sup> did not also serve a more “political” purpose, especially in the context of the clashes between the observant and the moderate factions of the order, as would become in fact the case three centuries later in the quarrels between Capuchins, Observants and Conventuals (more on this in the next chapter). In a fight that was directly embedded in the system of differences of religious clothes, claiming to possess the original “model” of the Francis’s habit was certainly critical.

### **The ideal of poverty, the claims of laxity, and the place of clothes in the Franciscan mind**

Despite the real devotion that St Francis’s pious project was able to generate, the Spiritual controversy shows how the history of the Friars Minor was not the peaceful story of fraternal love that the saint would have wanted for his brethren. In fact, in the perspective of Angelo Clareno and Ubertino da Casale – two leading Spiritual spokesmen<sup>21</sup> – the division had even started to

---

<sup>20</sup> Giancarlo Rocca counts seven habits between those that are conserved complete and the ones with missing fragments, plus various other of his garments or fragments of them, such as hoods, cord and mantle. Giancarlo Rocca, “L’abito di s. Francesco d’Assisi”, in LSDE, p. 320. The topic of the relics of St Francis’s habit is a fascinating but rather undeveloped one, with more systematic studies of this rather unique phenomenon still lacking. Two of the tunics thought to have belonged to him, the one kept in the church of St. Francis in Cortona, and the one kept in Santa Croce in Florence, were recently subjected to radiocarbon analysis, which showed that only the former coincides with the period in which Francis lived. The findings of this study in M.E. Fedi, A. Cartocci, F. Taccetti, P. A. Mandò, “AMS radiocarbon dating of medieval textile relics: The frocks and the pillow of St. Francis of Assisi” in *Nuclear Instruments and Methods in Physics Research B*, 266, Issue 10, (2008) pp. 2251-54. Moreover, there seems to be indications that the relics of Francis’ habit had this kind of authoritative place from early on, at the very least in the minds of the Fraticelli, who considered themselves as the heirs of the Spirituels, as Nimmo’s passing remarks show (Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 283; p. 292).

<sup>21</sup> On Angelo Clareno see Lydia von Auw, *Angelo Clareno et les spirituels italiens* (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1979) and Gian Luca Potestà, *Angelo Clareno: dai poveri eremiti ai fraticelli* (Roma: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1990); on Ubertino da Casale see, Frédégand Callaey, *L’idéalisme franciscain spirituel au XIVe siècle: étude sur Ubertin de Casale* (Louvain: Bureau du Recueil, 1911); *Ubertino da Casale: atti del XLI*



manifest during the founder's own time. In the Spiritual tradition, Francis's closest companion, brother Elias of Cortona, already showed the existence of a faction that wanted to curb the most taxing aspects of the Rule, somewhat anticipating the future controversy between Spirituals and the community of the order.<sup>22</sup> And, no wonder, clothing certainly had a significant role to play here.

Sententious apocryphal anecdotes about Elias's disgraceful behaviour while Francis was still alive multiplied during the fourteenth century. Among them, there is a very telling story contained in both Ubertino da Casale's *Arbor Vitae*, and in the collection of tales about Francis's life compiled in the *Speculum Vitae*.<sup>23</sup> Both versions of the account narrate how, on one occasion, Elias decided to don a wide and long habit. When Francis saw this, he asked Elias, in the presence of other brothers, if he would lend it to him. Once Francis had put this habit on over his own – 'worn over the body forming folds in the tunic and with a differently shaped hood, as if in his spirit he could foresee the kind [of habit] his sons would be making in the future' – he started to walk around with a proud and arrogant demeanour, greeting the astonished brothers in a loud voice, saying 'good people, may the Lord give you peace.' Then, showing great indignation and casting the habit away from

---

*Convegno internazionale: Assisi, 18-20 ottobre 2013* (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo 2014).

<sup>22</sup> Gian Luca Potestà, *Storia ed escatologia in Ubertino da Casale* (Milano: Vita e pensiero. Pubblicazioni della Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, 1980), p. 131; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, pp. 12-3.

<sup>23</sup> For a study on the *Speculum Vitae*, see Paul Sabatier, "Description du Speculum Vitae Beati Francisci et Sociorum Ejus (éd. de 1504)" in *Opuscles de Critique Historique*, 6 (April, 1903), pp. 299-397. On the narrative sources for the history of Elias, see Rosalind B. Brooke, *Early Franciscan Government: Elias to Bonaventure* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), pp. 3-55, particularly 3-8 for the Spiritual tradition.

him, he said to Elias, while the rest of the brothers listened: ‘thus go around the illegitimate sons of this order.’ After this, he went back to his gentle look, and in his ‘despicable poor, tight and short habit,’ he continued to address the brothers with words filled with affection.<sup>24</sup>

The nod to the Spiritual habit is obvious, as well as the reference to the dress attributed to the moderate faction, with its cloth so abundant that the brothers needed to arrange it forming folds, like the one “foresaw” by St Francis. As Gian Luca Potestà has shown, Ubertino and Angelo had a clear project: to establish a total continuity between Francis and the Spirituals, both

---

<sup>24</sup> Cum aliquando F. Helias fecisset sibi fieri habitum latum et longum, vocavit eum B. Franciscum coram multis fratribus, petens ut ei mutuaret habitum quo erat indutus. Quem suo habitui superinduens ac succingens, gestus in corpore rugationes tunicae, atque aptationem caputii in capite formans, qualia in spiritu praevidebat a filiis suis facienda in posterum coepit elevato capite, inflato pectore, fastuosa maturitate incedere; et cum vocis boatu fratres admirantes salutare, ac dicere: bonae gentes, det Dominus vobis pacem. Deinde in fervore spiritus cum indignationis indiciis habitum exuens procul abiecit, dicens ad F. Heliam, aliis audientibus: Sic incedunt filii spurii huius Ordinis. Denique in suo habitu despecto, humili, stricto et brevi, ac facie ad mansuetudinem mutata, verbis affectu plenis eos est allocutus.’ In *Speculum vitae b. Francisci et sociorum eius...Opera et studio G. Spoelberch* (Antverpiae: Ex Officina Gerardi Wolsschatii, 1620), part II, p. 98; Ubertino’s version reads as follows: ‘Refero unum quod semel audivi relatione certissima contra superfluitatem et curiositatem habituum factura a sancto. Nam cum frater helias qui semper uidebatur sicut caro concupiscere contra spiritum sanctitate licet sub specie discretionis et boni fecisset unum habitum: qui in longitudine et latitudine et magnitudine manicarum et caputii, et preciositate panni illam uilitatem multo deformem quam sanctus instituerat uidebatur excedere, uocans illum coram multis fratribus dixit quod sibi prestaret habitum quem portabat, qui illu induens super suum, facta subcinctura et gestibus in rugatione tunice et aptatione caputii in capite et in toto corpore, quod in spiritu preuidebat fiendos a filiis cepit eleuato capite, inflato pectore: fastuosa maturitate incedere, et cum uocis boatu fratres in aspectu stupentes salutare inflata et insipida uoce dicendo: Bone gentes dominus det uobis pacem. Quod facto in feruore spiritu cum iracundie signo contumeliose extrahendo habitum, longe proiecit et dixit ad heliam audientibus aliis: Sic incedent bastardi ordinis, postea in suo habitus despecto breui et stricto, in quo sicut ceteri primi fratres mundi crucifixo uidebatur, mutata facie in mansuetudinem piam, et omnibus gestibus corporis alteratis, in charitatis pie et humilitatis profunde inditia, cepit per illos eosdem fratres incedere, et cum tanto eos affectu, eis dando pacem domini salutarem, quod affectus salutis eorum uidebatur in facie inlucere. Et dixit ad heliam et ceteros fratres, hic est modus incedendi in legitimis filiis meis.’ In Ubertino da Casale, *Arbor vitae crucifixae Jesu Christi*, (Venetiis: per Andream de Bonettis, 1485), lib. 5, cap. 7. English translation in Regis J. Armstrong et Al. (eds.), *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents. Vol. III: The Prophet* (New York-London-Manila: New City Press, 2001), pp. 202-3; The story must have made quite an impression, as it was maintained in Franciscan tradition and even Wadding recounts a version of it, in *AM*, Vol. 1 (1731), year 1220, no. 20, p. 340-1; Rosalind B. Brooke, *Early Franciscan Government*, p. 100; Servus Gieben, “Per la storia dell’abito francescano”, p. 433.

in an ideological and historical sense, and to demonstrate that the origin of their present conflict was to be found already while Francis was alive. In their vision, the Spiritual controversy was none other than the present manifestation of an enduring conflict between those who wanted to maintain intact the original identity and purpose of the order, and those who looked to adapt themselves to the times and to moderate the strictness of the Franciscan way of life.<sup>25</sup> In this perennial, and maybe inevitable clash, the brethren's habits were not only an ever divisive and controversial practical matter: these contrasting attires – exemplified in Francis and Elias – had also become a meaningful synecdoche for the opposing forces fighting to prevail within the order.

Before Angelo and Ubertino, however, other voices had risen to denounce the laxity creeping into the order. In these reproaches, that came both from within the Franciscan Order itself, and from external critics, the Minorite habit never failed to be mentioned. The body of antifraternal attacks is well known, formulated by satirists and contemporary authors, as well as the ones made by the Parisian masters during the thirteenth century.<sup>26</sup> Among the latter was William of St Amour, who in his *De Antichristo et eiusdem ministris* and the *Tractatus brevis de periculis novissimorum temporum* exposed the friars as wolves in garbs of sheep, who showed 'one

---

<sup>25</sup> Gian Luca Potestà, *Storia ed escatologia*, pp. 130-1; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, pp. 99-100.

<sup>26</sup> The antifraternal discourse against mendicants, and especially against Franciscans, is a well-studied topic which, although being beyond the scope of this chapter, provides a helpful insight to the reactions that laxity in observance, seemingly proliferating in the order, provoked in its observers. See for example Penn R. Szittyá, *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), as well as a more recent re-examination of the topic in Guy Geltner, *The Making of Medieval Antifraternalism: Polemic, Violence, Deviance, and Remembrance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

thing in dress and speech, but another in [their] deeds.’<sup>27</sup> They were, according to St Amour, the Pharisees, who went barefoot – an evident hint to the Franciscans – and tried to exhibit in their habits and in their alleged austerity what was actually lacking in their hearts.<sup>28</sup>

Yet, perhaps more noteworthy in the context of the Spiritual controversy are the observations coming from within the order. A prominent early internal critic of this laxity was Hugh of Digne, a zealous friar who later on would be seen, particularly by Clareno and Ubertino, as a forerunner of the Spirituals.<sup>29</sup> His writings emphasised the observance of the poverty principle so dear to St Francis’s institution, which was, of course, to be especially expressed through the *vilitas* and the humbleness of the brethren’s attire. In fact, he dedicated a significant commentary on this matter in his *Expositio* of the Rule<sup>30</sup> (which was largely based on the *Exposition of the Four Masters*, written between 1241-42).<sup>31</sup> His main attack was on superfluities – understanding them as anything that, after being taken away, leaves a remainder that suffices – as they meant the destruction of the marks of poverty. Thus, they were incompatible with the vow of extreme poverty.

---

<sup>27</sup> ‘...Qui aliud habitu et sermone, aliud operibus ostendunt...’, in William of Saint-Amour, *De periculis novissimorum temporum*, edition and translation by G. Geltner (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), pp. 74-5.

<sup>28</sup> ‘...quidam in habitu, in austeritate vitae, in observantiis spiritualibus, et traditionibus suis praetendebant sanctitatis speciem, quam non habebant in corde...Ex quo apparet, quod ambulabant discalceati...’, in Guilielmi de Santo Amore, *Opera Omnia* (Constantiae: Apud Alithophilos, 1632), italics in the original; Penn R. Szitty, *The Antifraternal Tradition*, p. 35; p. 40.

<sup>29</sup> Rosalind B. Brooke, *The image of St Francis*, pp. 81-2; p. 84.

<sup>30</sup> A critical edition of Hugh of Digne’s *Expositio* in David Flood (ed.), *Hugh of Digne’s Rule Commentary*, [*Expositio Hugonis De Digna super regulam fratrum minorum*] (Grottaferrata: Collegii S. Bonaventurae Ad claras Aquas, 1979). For the habit, see pp. 110-4. See also the edition made by Alessandra Sisto in *Figure del Primo Francescanesimo in Provenza. Ugo e Douceline di Digne* (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 1971), pp. 188-94.

<sup>31</sup> Rosalind B. Brooke, *The image of St Francis*, p. 85; p. 91.

Superfluous was to have something expensive (*sumptuosum*) when a cheap (*vile*) version was enough,<sup>32</sup> and the Rule clearly stated that all the brothers were to wear cheap (*vilibus*) clothes.<sup>33</sup> ‘Who – he asked – would call you a Friar Minor and not rather an apostate if, rejecting [it], you never wear the habit of the Friars Minor?’<sup>34</sup> For Digne, the habit of the order, cross shaped and made with thin and cheap garments, accompanied by the bare feet, made evident the poor and humble devout.<sup>35</sup>

The same Digne had already put forward some of his ideas about the observance of poverty in his *De finibus paupertatis*, which dwells on the meaning and exercise of poverty for the Franciscan Order. Here he explained, for instance, how the external signs (*insignia*) of poverty reflect the internal devotion of the friar. Humble habits and going barefoot appear again as fundamental marks of this loyalty to poverty, as they constitute four of the ten *insignia* of poverty he describes.<sup>36</sup> Perhaps even more interesting, however – but less studied – is his *Disputatio inter zelatorem paupertatis et inimicum domesticum eius*, an imagined dialogue that sought to denounce

---

<sup>32</sup> ‘Superflui namque adiectio insignum paupertatis extremae destructio est et ideo voto insignum paupertatis extremae impossibile est. Est autem superfluum quo ablato sufficit reliquum... Duo igitur superfluunt si unum sufficit; multum si parum; sumptuosum, si vile; speciosum, si despicabile.’ In David Flood (ed.), *Hugh of Digne's rule commentary*, p. 155; Rosalind B. Brooke, *The image of St Francis*, pp. 94-5.

<sup>33</sup> ‘Et fratres omnes vestimentis vilibus induantur...’, Francis of Assisi, “Regula Bullata”, pp. 228-9. See above, p. 51, n. 115.

<sup>34</sup> ‘Quis te fratrem minorem et non magis apostatam dicat si fratris minoris reiciens habitum numquam portas?’ In David Flood (ed.), *Hugh of Digne's rule commentary*, p. 103.

<sup>35</sup> ‘Habitum Ordinis forma crucis devotum pauperem autem et humilis vestis raras et vilis pedumque nuditas manifestant.’ In *ibid.*, p. 110.

<sup>36</sup> ‘Primum quidem est, quod hiis, qui veniunt ad ordinem, indicitur in usus pauperum eroganda facultas. Secundum vero habitus deformitas. Tercium vestimentorum vilitas. Quartum mutatorie vestis ablata numerositas. Quintum iniuriis terre et aeris pedum exposita immediata nuditas. Sextum interdicta equitandi pompositas. Septimum peregrinatio vel instabilitas. Octavum victus et vestitus mendicata necessitas. Nonum acquirendi pecuniam sublata possibilitas. Decimum vero vocabuli despicabilitas.’ In Alessandra Sisto, *Figure del Primo Francescanesimo*, p. 330; David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, pp. 20-1.

the contradiction between the professed poverty of the Friars Minor and their current standard of living.<sup>37</sup>

The *inimicus domesticus* voices what might surely have been an extended way of thinking among those friars advocating moderation. He argues, for example, that having clothes of a better quality was, in the end, the best choice: good tunics offered better protection against the cold, allowing the friars to recite the divine office and make their night-long prayers in better shape; they did not show a bad example to the world, as most of them still wore clothes of inferior quality; and their evangelical preaching was not hurt, as cheap clothes cost, in the long run, more than the expensive ones, since the latter could last for years, whereas the cheap ones could barely last a year. In comparison, having a smaller number of good tunics was more rational than wearing the humble ones.<sup>38</sup> The *zelator paupertatis* however, would have none of it. Soft clothes were the use of the rich, not of the poor, and therefore they were illicit for those professing poverty. According to St Bernard, says the zealot, soft garments exposed a softness of spirit. And if there was sin in superfluous costly garments for secular people and the rich, how much more there was for those professing

---

<sup>37</sup> David Flood (ed.), *Hugh of Digne's rule commentary*, p. 12. Full text of the work in Alessandra Sisto, *Figure del Primo Francescanesimo*, pp. 341-370.

<sup>38</sup> 'Cum enim bonas tunicas habeo minus frigus timeo, ac per hoc melius possum in ecclesia divinum officium psallere et ibidem in oratione melius pernoctare. Nec mundo malum exemplum ostendunt, quia ut plurimum inferius deportantur. Nec etiam evangelica predicatio offenditur, quia maior quantitas pecunie requiritur in vilibus vestimentis, quam in preciosis, quia una preciosa tunica et delicata per multos annos durabit et vilis vix per annum. Minor etiam numerus sufficit de preciosis et bonis, quam de vilibus. Per quod satis patet, quod induere vestimenta preciosa est magis rationabile, quam induere vilia.' In Alessandra Sisto, *Figure del Primo Francescanesimo*, p. 358; David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, pp. 21-2; Rosalind B. Brooke, *The image of St Francis*, p. 84.

poverty.<sup>39</sup> Expensive clothing could indeed be more useful, but only if one was speaking of utility for the flesh: but this kind of utility was in itself of great destruction to the spirit. This attempt to defend their failure to imitate St Francis, 'who would have dreaded these kind of vices,' and to justify it with deceitful reasoning,<sup>40</sup> as the zealot denounced, was indeed at the core of the long-lasting scission that divided the Friars Minor.

Hence, the zealous brother not only summarises the criticisms levelled against the moderate faction of the order by the observant one, but also what the latter considered to be at stake in this relaxation of the rule: laxity was so contrary to the Franciscan spirit that it diminished the entire order's work and purpose; the costly clothes promoted by the moderate faction, and their elaborate rationale to defend them, summed up everything that was wrong within the Franciscan family. In this context, Ubertino's version of the story of Elias's unwise choice of attire related above shows the influence that these notions about superfluity, and their relationship with the Franciscan habit, had on the corpus of ideas put forward later on by the Spirituales. Indeed, the anecdote served as a manifest example of the superfluity that, in eyes of the Spirituales, was too dear to the moderated faction, as opposed to the zealot

---

<sup>39</sup> 'Licet satis per ea dicta sunt superius, quod omnis usus dives illicitus est professoribus paupertatis...Quia hoc esset vituperabile, nam secundum Bernardum mollia vestimenta animi molliciem indicant...Si igitur hoc peccatum est secularibus et divitum, quanto magis paupertatis professoribus.' In Alessandra Sisto, *Figure del Primo Francescanesimo*, pp. 358-60; David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, pp. 21-2.

<sup>40</sup> 'Cum ergo dicis quod utenti melius est habere preciosa vestimenta quam vilia: si de utilitate carnis hoc intelligis, assentio satis. Sed talis utilitas et provisio est ipsius spiritus magna destructio...Non enim tu imitaris beatum Franciscum, qui adeo vitium istud horruit...Sed non propter hoc excusabile, sed eo magis vituperabile, quia dictum malum talibus apparentiis conaris defendere et dolosis rationibus excusare.' In Alessandra Sisto, *Figure del Primo Francescanesimo*, pp. 360-1.

position embodied by Francis himself, who in turn anticipated the Spirituals in his rejection of Elias's luxurious habit.

It is important to emphasise once again here how deep an impact St Francis's influence had on the place of poverty in the hierarchy of religious virtues: as André Vauchez points out, Francis's legacy advanced poverty from its undifferentiated place among the ascetic virtues commonly practiced by religious orders, as part of the austerity of the cloister, along with chastity, temperance and piety, to transform it in a new and exigent virtue that shone in a novel light: poverty became not just a virtue among other virtues, but the virtue *par excellence*. Thus, after the *poverello*, being poor meant not only leading a simple and austere life but it became, above everything, the way to imitate Christ as the basis of an integral evangelical experience, with total abandonment to Providence. However, says Vauchez, Franciscan poverty was not an economic statement, but a spiritual aspiration.<sup>41</sup> In this context, Neslihan Şenocak has observed that the main feature of the Franciscan idea of poverty – the prohibition to hold communal property in addition to the traditional ban on private property for religious people – was not indeed a completely original one. The French Grandmont, for example, had already been practising communal poverty for two hundred years. However, it was

---

<sup>41</sup> André Vauchez, "La place de la pauvreté dans les documents hagiographiques à l'époque des Spirituels", in *Chi erano gli Spirituali*, pp. 125-143; pp. 127-9. For a thorough study on the topic of Franciscan poverty, see Malcolm Lambert's classical work, *Franciscan Poverty. The doctrine of the absolute poverty of Christ and the Apostles in the Franciscan Order, 1210-1323* (London: S.P.C.K., 1961).



with Francis and his followers that poverty became inherently associated with the apostolic life.<sup>42</sup>

Moreover, Şenocak interestingly notes that, surprisingly enough, poverty did not have such a central role in Francis's own writings – where obedience and humility were the dominant virtues – neither did he provide a clear explanation of how Franciscan poverty had to be understood. As a matter of fact, Şenocak explains that the elevation of poverty as the highest virtue among all those associated with Franciscanism was rather the work of the educated brothers of the order and their writings, especially during the first half of the thirteenth century.<sup>43</sup> With them, poverty gained attention 'in the sermons, in the theological works, in the Rule commentaries, and in the statutes produced in this period and beyond.'<sup>44</sup> Şenocak proposes that it was the intense scrutiny to which these ideas on poverty were subjected what 'pushed the learned Franciscans to rise to its defence, thereby making it slowly the quintessential feature of Franciscanism that was constantly exposed, formulated, and reformulated in the intellectual discourse of the thirteenth and fourteenth century.'<sup>45</sup> One may also suggest that, just as the *vilitas* of dress that the Rule commanded every brother to observe seemed to be sufficiently self-explanatory for the saint, in Francis's own mind the idea of poverty was so evident and straightforward that it did not need much further

---

<sup>42</sup> Neslihan Şenocak, *The Poor and the Perfect: The Rise of Learning in the Franciscan Order, 1209-1310* (Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press, 2012), p. 45. See also André Vauchez, "La pauvreté volontaire au Moyen Âge", in *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, year 25, n. 6 (1970), pp. 1566-73.

<sup>43</sup> Neslihan Şenocak, *The Poor and the Perfect*, p. 121.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*; see also pp. 122-8.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

explanation. However, both concepts proved to be not so evident for his followers later on, as is demonstrated by the order's need to continuously elaborate and re-examine them. As Malcolm Lambert has put it, 'for Francis, the nature of the poverty of Christ was an assumed fact' and therefore 'he never explained what it was, because he assumed that everybody already knew.'<sup>46</sup>

### **Figuring out the habit: The order's revisitation of St Francis's precepts on clothing**

If the idea of absolute poverty was, indeed, a construct developed by the followers of the *poverello*, the clashes and disputes that seemed to dominate the life of the Franciscan Order take then an even more interesting tone. In a context in which the imagined precepts of the founder needed to be appropriated in order to claim legitimacy – both within the order and in the face of external critics – showing and knowing who were his truthful followers (and how they displayed this legacy) inevitably became a matter of the greatest importance. Any challenges to the concept that became the cornerstone of Francis's foundation were bound to have a major impact. This makes special sense in the long-standing dispute over St Francis's true habit, which – just as much as his teachings on poverty – needed to fit an evident image of what it meant to be a Franciscan.

Even though it was understood that it was the internal devotion and virtue that mattered, more than external appearances – as Hugh of Digne's

---

<sup>46</sup> Malcolm Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, p. 126.

domestic enemy asserts, and the zealot is bound to concede – the lack of any outer sign certainly would show the absence of internal disposition to a life of poverty.<sup>47</sup> Clothing was an immediate reflection of this disposition, playing a ubiquitous role in both Francis’s life and in the history of his order, especially during the first few centuries. From the observant standpoint, rich clothes could never dress a truthful Franciscan. Consequently, as Cordelia Warr has shown, clothing was a recurrent topic in both Francis’s biographies and iconographic representations, which showed his “scandalous” choice of poverty, predominantly represented by his tunic.<sup>48</sup> Unlike the Dominicans and the Carmelites, the Franciscans never claimed any supernatural agency in the origin for their habit.<sup>49</sup> One might suggest that this was in part because, as the multi-layered act of defiance that it represented, marking St Francis’s consecration, it also showed that it had been a human choice; one with major significance for both St Francis and his order in a symbolic and doctrinaire sense.

However, living up to the standard set by the founder proved to be a somewhat difficult task for many of the Friars Minor. As said before, St Francis himself probably never thought of the problems that could arise around both the interpretation of poverty and the use of the habit, and the

---

<sup>47</sup> David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, p. 21; ‘Inimicus domesticus: “...Non enim consistit paupertas in his exterioribus, sed potius in corde interius...”

Zelator paupertatis: “Confiteor quod vera pauper evangelica non consistit principaliter in privatione rerum temporalium, sed in corde...quis sit verus pauper nemo cognoscitur nisi Deus, sed, an sit non pauper, bene cognoscitur per aliquod signum exterius. Et hic es dives usus, scilicet deliciosus, curiosus, sumptuosus et superfluus...unde, esse pauperem et divitem usum habere ac solícite querere, est omnino impossibile...””, in Alessandra Sisto, *Figure del Primo Francescanesimo*, pp. 249-50.

<sup>48</sup> Cordelia Warr, *Dressing for heaven*, p. 99; p. 108; Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli, *Guardaroba medievale*, p. 273.

<sup>49</sup> Cordelia Warr, *Dressing for heaven*, p. 99.

Rule was rather succinct on the latter. For an order growing at as quick a pace as the Franciscan one, such a concise regulation was simply not enough. The *Regula Bullata*, approved by Pope Honorius III on 29 November 1223,<sup>50</sup> prescribed that the friars who made profession of obedience could have one tunic with a hood and, for those who wanted it, another without hood. A simple rope was allowed as a belt and those who needed could wear shoes. And with the blessing of God, they could repair their tunics with sack and 'other pieces.'<sup>51</sup>

Nevertheless, and contravening Francis's prohibition of interpretations of the rule, the friars felt the need for further specifications on how the poverty of the habit had to be understood, and they received papal support to do so.<sup>52</sup> Hence, statutes from general and provincial chapters, as well as papal bulls, followed one another in order to better define the subject. Even if these regulations were often brief, they show the concern that appearance raised for the order.<sup>53</sup> As a matter of fact, the apprehensions appeared early on and, as the "Exposition of the Four Masters" – the first attempt to explain the rule, made less than twenty years after its approval, when many of the first generation of friars were still around<sup>54</sup> – demonstrates, the item *de qualitate habitus* needed to be addressed. Norms such as the ones under the rubric *vilitas attenditur in pretio pariter et colore*, which left part of the decision

---

<sup>50</sup> BF I, no. 14, p. 15.

<sup>51</sup> Francis of Assisi, "Regula Bullata", pp. 228-9.

<sup>52</sup> Starting with Gregory IX's bull *Quo elongati* of 28 September 1230, in which he asserted that St Francis's Testament was not a binding document, as it had been written after the saint had ceased to be the order's general minister. BF I, no. 56, pp. 68-70; Rosalind B. Brooke, *The Image of St Francis*, pp. 77-8.

<sup>53</sup> Cordelia Warr, "De Indumentis", pp. 489-90.

<sup>54</sup> See above, p. 213.

subject to local judgment – the habit had to be coarse and poor in its regional context<sup>55</sup> – shows that there was confusion on how actually to apply the plain prescriptions of the rule. However, this was still not enough. After this first clarification of the rule, chapters would continuously address the issue.

Yet, beyond the realisation that the matter needed more explanation how exactly to interpret the new statutes in the wider context of the development of the order was far from being self-evident. Malcolm Lambert points out that, when comparing the constitutions given at the general chapter held in Narbonne in 1260 (the first one to establish a major set of statutes after “Exposition of the Four Masters”), with those made afterwards – for example at Paris in 1292 – changes seemed always to be made towards moderation of the strict poverty: ‘some changes fell on small details. Narbonne laid it down that no brother should have two tunics; Paris altered this to read: no brother should have two new tunics.’<sup>56</sup> Conversely, Duncan Nimmo is right to observe that even when this was the case, and new sets of statutes seemed to be compromising observance, the fact that they exist shows that there was, indeed, the desire to maintain the discipline and the

---

<sup>55</sup> ‘Et fratres omnes vestimentis vilibus induantur. Quearitur quid dicatur vestimentum vile. Et, secundum intentionem regulae, vilitas attenditur in pretio pariter et colore secundum aestimationem hominum regionis in qua fratres commorantur.’ In Livarius Oliger (ed.), *Expositio Quatuor Magistrorum Super Regulam Fratrum Minorum (1241-242)* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1950), p. 136.

<sup>56</sup> Malcolm Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, p. 165; Narbonne’s Constitutions said: ‘Item contra superabundantiam vestium ordinamus, quod nullus frater habeat duos habitus, et quod guardiani non dent alicui fratri habitum vel tunicam novam, nisi prius resignet, si quam habet, superfluam. Et tunicae quibus communiter fratres non utuntur ad necessitatem, pro tempore in communi servantur.’ Paris said: ‘...ordinamus, quod nullus frater eodem anno habeat duos habitus novos...’, in Michael Bihl (ed.), “Statuta Generalia Ordinis edita in Capitulis Generalibus Celebratis Narbonnae an. 1260”, pp. 43-4.

spirit of observance, and to curb laxity and abuses.<sup>57</sup> On the same line, David Burr asserts that, in fact, these new statutes were often even more restrictive than the rule itself, and much more detailed.<sup>58</sup>

This was not, however, very surprising, considering that the rule was rather vague on many of the issues of a “practical” nature. For example, according to the statutes of Narbonne, the friars could not hang anything from their cord. The aforementioned chapter of Paris added to this the prohibition of having an inner belt with a knife or a purse.<sup>59</sup> Interestingly enough, Narbonne also specified that the tunics should not have any “deformity”, although in this case the chapter was thinking about superfluity in length or width, much in Hugh of Digne’s line of argument, rather than in early deviations of the Spiritual type. This was reinforced by the prohibition on the use of carded cloth (a softer fabric than the one made of untreated wool), and the reiteration of the Four Masters’ indications that the habit should not be either entirely white or black.<sup>60</sup> The constitutions from the chapter held in Assisi, in 1316 – amidst the turbulence of the Spiritual conflict – remarked that the length of hood should not exceed the belt, and that the habits were to maintain their shape in the ‘old manner,’ according to the custom preserved until that point, and that any curiosity was to be rejected.<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>57</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 232.

<sup>58</sup> David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>59</sup> ‘Cingulum habeatur chorda communis, et nihil portetur appensum ad chordam’. Paris said: ‘Nec cingula habeantur interius cum cultellis et bursis...’, In Michael Bihl (ed.), “Statuta Generalia Ordinis edita in Capitulis Generalibus Celebratis Narbonnae an. 1260”, p. 44; Alejandra Concha Sahli, “Más allá de las fibras”, p. 253.

<sup>60</sup> See above, p. 212; Alejandra Concha Sahli, “Más allá de las fibras”, p. 253.

<sup>61</sup> ‘Fiat autem caputium tali modo, quod existens in capite usque ad cingulum non attingat...et in forma servetur modus antiquus et hactenus consuetus, curiositate qualibet

A very telling prescription, indeed, surely in reaction to the current state of affairs.

Nevertheless, this was far from being the end of it, and even after the Spiritual controversy had been ended so tragically, statutes on the habit continued to be issued, showing the persistent influence that the movement had on the order. The general chapter held at Perpignan in 1331 made a long revision of the statutes concerning the habit, from the words of St Francis in his rule, to the commands made by John XXII in *Quorundam exigiit*, including statements made by Bonaventure as well as the pronouncements made in the main previous chapters of the order.<sup>62</sup> Similarly, in the general chapter that took place in Venice in 1346, the first matter addressed was *de qualitate habitus*. Even though the statutes emphasised that the brothers should wear habits that were noted for their roughness, cheapness and poverty, as the rule commanded, they also stated that these garments should neither be expensive, so they would show curiosity or vanity, nor be so worthless or coarse, that they would induce horror and cause the scorn of those who saw them.<sup>63</sup> This last part of the statute must have been made with the controversial recent events in mind.

---

abdicata.’ In Armandus Carlini (ed.), “Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum anno 1316 Assisii conditae”, AFH 4 (1911), pp. 269-302, 508-536; p. 279.

<sup>62</sup> Saturninus Mencherini (ed.), “Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum a Capitulo Perpiniani anno 1331 celebrato editae”, AFH 2 (1909), pp. 269-292, 412-430, 575-599; pp. 283-4.

<sup>63</sup> ‘Ex antiquis constitutionibus domini fratris Bonaventure: “Cum regula dicat quod fratres omnes vestimentis vilibus induantur, statuimus ut vestimentorum vilitas attendatur in pretio pariter et colore”; et infra: “In omnibus autem, que ad habitum fratrum spectant, ad imitationem patrum nostrorum reluceat semper asperitas, vilitas et paupertas.” Huiusmodi igitur sacre regule vestigiis inherentes, ordinamus, quod fratres vestimentis talibus induantur, ita quod non sint adeo pretiosa, ut videntes eos de curiositate et vanitate notare debeant, nec ita vilia et grossa, quod videntes inducant in horrorem et provocent ad derisum.’ In Ferdinandus M. Delorme (ed.), “Acta Capituli Generalis anno 1346 Venetiis celebrati”, AFH 5 (1912), pp. 698-709; p. 699.

Yet, at the same time, this kind of remark would also help those who continued to fight laxity to make their point about the betrayal of the original Franciscan spirit, as the rule did not seem to care much about the mockery that the poor habits of the friars might provoke.

The rest of the statutes made in Venice regarding clothes were again probably made with the Spiritual conflict in mind, but they also seem to confirm that the observant factions had grounds for their indignation: they established the exact measures of the habit, including having enough cloth for the fold that should cover the cord, a feature despised by the Spirituals<sup>64</sup> – as Ubertino's version of the story about Elias's wrong habit shows – and that the cloth to make the habits had to be beforehand presented and authorised by the custodian or guardian. The constitutions also addressed the colour of the habit – neither too black, nor too white, or mottled with different colours – indicating that uniformity in dress was still hard to attain. Moreover, if the fear of scorn might have been showing in reality a tendency towards laxity, the inclusion of another piece of clothing to the attire of the friars – a mantle – seems to confirm this suspicion. This prescription was, indeed, openly contravening the precepts of the rule, which, as we saw, only contemplated a maximum of two tunics (one with a hood, one without a hood) for the Friars Minor. Likewise, the steps taken to avoid sartorial abuses were rather mild:

---

<sup>64</sup> As Laura Hodges has observed, wide tunics implied immoderate cost, since a bigger amount of fabric had to be used to make them. It could also refer to the use of costly fabric, because cloth made in wider sizes was more expensive. Moreover, Hodge says, greater width also could imply the risk of 'forbidden construction methods employed in making the tunic, such as a pleating and tucking', explicitly banned for religious robes. Laura F. Hodges, *Chaucer and Clothing: Clerical and Academic Costume in the General Prelude to the Canterbury Tales* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2005), pp. 17-20. See below, pp. 257-8, for Angelo Clareno's assertion that the habit of St Francis had no extra cloth to cover the cord.



for example, the brothers should be prevented of wearing clothes that did not comply with the indicated colours. However, those who were permitted to contravene this indication (one might wonder on what grounds) had to abstain from taking wine at one lunch,<sup>65</sup> certainly not a very harsh measure for friars who had professed a life of evangelical poverty.

In the face of this line of statutes, a disheartened Spiritual would probably have felt that their whole struggle had been in vain. The chapter of Assisi held in 1354, though, seemed to seek a somewhat greater strictness, perhaps finally echoing the voices of the more zealous brothers. The constitutions (known as Farinerian, as they were promulgated under the generalate of William Farinier) repeated the specific measures for the tunic and hood,<sup>66</sup> and the friars were warned against wearing inappropriate clothes, whether religious or secular, clerical or female, or 'other

---

<sup>65</sup> '...2. Longitudo autem habitus per V digitos ultra longitudinem fratris deferentis protendatur, ita quod corda de plica habitus valeat operiri; latitudo vero medium teneat, ita ut communiter XVIII palmos habeat et ad plus XX<sup>ii</sup>, si fratris deferentis grossities hoc requirant; caputium autem tali modo fiat, quod existens in capite eius extremitas per latitudinem duorum digitorum cingulum non excedat nec per unius digiti latitudinem supra cingulum debeat remanere.

3. Pannus autem, antequam fiat habitus, presentetur custodi vel guardiano conventus, qui iudicare teneantur, an pannus professioni nostre conveniat, et nisi secundum alterius eorum arbitrium pannus pro habitu vel mantello nullo modo scindatur; quod si oppositum attemptatum fuerit per aliquem ex fratribus, ipsum custos vel guardianus privare debeat illo panno...

5. Caveant etiam ministri, custodes et guardiani, ne pannos guttatim respersos diversis coloribus vel ad nimiam nigredinem aut albedinem tendentes, maxime in mantellis et habitibus, a fratribus deferri permittant; et qui scierint hec permiserint, a vino debeant uno prandio abstinere, et nichilominus habitus et mantellos huiusmodi fratribus deferentibus inhibere...', in Ferdinandus M. Delorme (ed.), "Acta Capituli Generalis anno 1346", p. 700.

<sup>66</sup> 'Longitudo autem habitus ultra longitudinem fratris deferentis talis sit quod nec plica ultra quattuor digitos protendatur, nec ita brevis, quin chorda ex ea valeat operiri; latitudo vero XVIII palmorum non excedat mensuram. Capucium vero tali modo fiat, quod existens in capite, extremitas per latitudinem duarum digitorum cingulum non excedat, nec per duorum digitorum latitudinem supra cingulum debeat remanere.' In Michael Bihl (ed.), "Statuta Generalia Ordinis edita in Capitulo Generali An. 1354 Assisii celebrato, Communiter Farineriana appellata (Editio critica et analytica)", AFH, 35 (1942), pp. 35-112; 177-253; pp. 84-5.

unusualness' leading to dissoluteness, for the feast of St Nicholas, of the Innocents, or any other one, under threat of humiliating punishment.<sup>67</sup> Yet, the specificity of the prescriptions, and the very kind of fault threatened with punishment, shows the extent of the transgressions made by the friars.

### **Observance, laxity, and habits in the Spiritual mind**

The struggle of the order to get a grip on what their vow of evangelical poverty actually meant went beyond legislation and regulation, and inevitably led to both the appearance of more elaborated explanations and to controversies about these same elaborations. Probably the most famous and influential one was the understanding of the *usus pauper* developed by Petrus Iohannis Olivi in the last quarter of the thirteenth century and summed up in his treatise *De usu paupere: The Quaestio and the Tractatus*, on the scope and limits that evangelical poverty entailed for the Friars Minor. The polemic, besides becoming a cornerstone of the ideas defended by the Spiritual faction,<sup>68</sup> was to unleash a long-lasting controversy that deeply divided the Franciscan family and would even put it at risk of being considered heretical.<sup>69</sup> As David Burr summed it up, 'the distinguishing

---

<sup>67</sup> 'Caveant fratres in festis S. Nicolai seu Innocentium vel quibuscumque aliis festis vestes estraneas, religiosas seu seculares, aut clericalis vel muliebres induere, aut novitates alias dissolutas inducere, sub poena amotionis confusibilis de conventu.' In *ibid.*, p. 98. *Poena confusibilis* or 'humiliating punishment' corresponded in general to the penalty of wearing crosses imposed sometimes by the Inquisition (see Henry Charles Lea, *The Inquisition of the Middle Ages* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1963), p. 222).

<sup>68</sup> David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, p. 46; p. 50; also Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 101-3. For further explanations of Olivi's arguments, see the introduction to the edition of the *De Usu Paupere* made by the same Burr, in Petrus Iohannis Olivi, *De Usu Paupere. The Quaestio and the Tractatus*, David Burr (ed.) (Firenze: Olschki, 1992), pp. ix-xxxix.

<sup>69</sup> David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, pp. 262-3, John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order from its Origins to the year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp.

characteristic of the *usus pauper* controversy was that the long-term debate over the degree of restricted use suitable for a Franciscan was combined with another over the relationship between restricted use and vow.<sup>70</sup> This was not a mere terminological nuance, as those four friars willing to die at the stake before renouncing to what they believed was an integral part of their vow, show. Beyond the theoretical discussion, the controversy revealed an attack on moderation and the existence of a faction that defended laxity. For Burr, this is an element that developed with the controversy itself. Olivi's opponents said that the pope had confirmed the status of the order, despite the fact that the friars were now used to 'eat and drink well, frequently dress well, and have big, beautiful dwellings.'<sup>71</sup> Olivi, however, was quick to point out that what the pope had approved and confirmed was 'the rule and the vow as it should be observed, not the many violations of it currently seen in the order,'<sup>72</sup> starting with the comfortable and rich habits denounced by the Spirituals.

To Raymond Geoffroi – general minister of the order between 1289 and 1295 – the failure to recognise the *usus pauper* as an essential component of the Franciscan Rule and of the friars' vow was, according to the letter he sent to Clement V in 1309, at the heart of the many impurities

---

313-7. For John XXII's condemnation of the doctrine of absolute poverty, see Malcolm Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty*, pp. 208ff.

<sup>70</sup> David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty*, p. x.

<sup>71</sup> '...quia sicut dicunt communiter hodie scitur a sapientibus quod fratres minores bene comedunt et bibunt et frequenter bene induunt et habent magna et pulchra habitacula, et tamen cum hoc sciunt quod papa approbavit et confirmavit statutum eorum, ergo perfectio evangelica voti altissime paupertatis compatitur se cum predicto vel consimili usu. Alis papa falso approbasset et ipsi nihilominus essent in statu mortalis peccati.' In Petrus Iohannis Olivi, *De usu paupere*, p. 130; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 59.

<sup>72</sup> David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 59.

that were present in the observance of their profession. These included the construction of large and expensive buildings, the possession of too many books and the use of costly clothes, and it was the pope's task to correct these errors to avoid a deeper deterioration of the order.<sup>73</sup> The letter was written upon Clement's petition to the different parties involved in the Spiritual controversy, to clarify certain points and assess their orthodoxy – among them, the rightful observance of the rule and of the explanation of it contained in the bull *Exiit qui seminat* of Nicholas III (14 August 1279) – before the Council of Vienne, held in 1311-12.<sup>74</sup> Ubertino da Casale, who had been heavily influenced by Olivi's ideas,<sup>75</sup> also answered the pope's appeal, thus becoming a leading spokesman for the Spiritual movement, in a missive that summed up his thoughts on the current state of his order.<sup>76</sup>

For Ubertino, the Franciscans were in a state of collapse, and their clothing was again a clear sign of this downfall. He denounced the extent to which the reality differed from the prescriptions left by Francis in the rule: novices from poor origin who entered the order could hardly follow the rule genuinely if, from their first day, they realised that their new attire was far more opulent than what they were used to wear. And although the rule proscribed shoes unless in case of necessity, it was easy to find that the brothers who were masters, or living in high places, wore them throughout

---

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 114.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 113. The outcomes of Clement's enquiry and deliberations were expressed in his bull *Exivi de paradiso* (6 May 1312), which sought to offer further clarifications on the observation of the Franciscan Rule (in BF V, no. 195, pp. 80-6). See also Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 121-4.

<sup>75</sup> David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, pp. 48-9; pp. 96-9.

<sup>76</sup> Burr offers the great contribution of synthesising by topic the ideas that Ubertino exposed along the debate, as well as the community's responses, in David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, pp. 115-34.

the winter. On the other hand, Spirituals were the only ones maintaining the injunction of going barefoot, and for this, and their humble habits they were persecuted by the community, who, not content with violating the rule, also sought to punish those who strove to observe it.<sup>77</sup> One of them even found, on one occasion, his habit used as toilet paper in the latrine after he had hung it to dry, a gesture that surely summed up the role that the habit had acquired in the controversy within the community.<sup>78</sup>

Angelo Clareno addressed the question of the habit in his *Chronica seu Historia septem Tribulationum Ordinis Minorum*, written in the decade of 1320,<sup>79</sup> where he offers a detailed description of how the habit should be:

Saint Francis, taught by Christ, wished his habit to be literally cruciform. Thus, by word and example he taught what length, width, quality, vileness and colour of his habit should be, according to the testimony of Brothers Leo, Bernard, Giles, Masseo, and others of his companions, who said they had taken the form of their habits from him and provided visible witness as to what it was like. As for material, he taught that it should be made of vile cloth, ashen or pale in colour, representing the mortification of Christ's body. It should be of sufficient size to warm the body, and for a healthy brother one tunic should suffice, patched inside and out, of such length that when it is cinched without any excess material above the belt it will not touch the ground. The sleeves should extend to the ends of the fingers, so that it covers the hands but does not extend beyond them. Their width should be such that the hands can easily enter and be withdrawn from them. The hood should be squared and long enough to cover the face, so that the

---

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>78</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>79</sup> About Angelo's chronicle, see David Burr and E. Randolph Daniel, "Introduction" in Angelo Clareno, *A Chronicle or History of the Seven Tribulations of the Order of Brothers Minor*, Translated from the Latin by David Burr and E. Randolph Daniel (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2005), pp. i-xxx.

habit should represent the form of the cross and by its vileness should preach contempt for all worldly glory and ornamentation. It should show that the brothers are crucified to the world and dead to it. It should cover one's nudity while serving as a incitement to the poverty necessary to those who love it, and as a sign of those who profess humility, and as a true mark of those who bear the opprobrium of Christ's cross.<sup>80</sup>

It seems that by this point, the habit came to be, to some extent, the yardstick against which every Franciscan should be measured. The same Angelo Clareno tells us how brother Conrad of Offida (c.1237-1306), who was renowned for his piety and humbleness,<sup>81</sup> 'closely followed in the footsteps of Saint Francis and completely conformed himself to Francis's ways, so much so that all the brothers who encountered him claimed that they saw another Francis.'<sup>82</sup> Not surprisingly, the first example chosen by Angelo to illustrate this devotion was related to the habit: 'For fifty-five years and more he was content with only one tunic, which was of old, vile material, patched with sackcloth and other bits of cloth. He always went barefoot. Throughout his life he wished to have only one tunic and cord. His bed was the bare earth covered with straw, a rush mat, or perhaps a wooden panel. He never ceased from prayers, vigils and fasts.'<sup>83</sup> Conrad's scrupulous observance of the rule and his imitation of Francis started and was summed

---

<sup>80</sup> Angelo Clareno, *A Chronicle or History of the Seven Tribulations*, p. 218.

<sup>81</sup> In reality, little is known of Conrad of Offida besides what Angelo tells about him in his *Chronica*, and the short account with anecdotes of his life presented in *Chronicle Of The Twenty-Four Generals*, written largely in the style of medieval hagiographies (pp. 567-75). Olivi praised his 'sanctity and discretion' in the letter he sent to him, written in September 1295, contained in Livarius Oliger (ed.), "Petri Iohannis Olivi De renuntiatione Papae Coelestini V Queastio et Epistola", AFH 11 (1918), pp. 309-373; David Burr, *Olivi and Franciscan poverty*, p. 112; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 95. See also L. M. Kortleven, "Conrad d'Offida," in *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, Vol. 13 (1956), p. 495.

<sup>82</sup> Angelo Clareno, *A Chronicle or History of the Seven Tribulations*, p. 101.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibidem*.

up in his observance of the habit. As Duncan Nimmo observes, this depiction of Conrad of Offida can be seen 'as a living expression of the Spiritual position.'<sup>84</sup> However, this was not a notion completely new, and neither did it belong exclusively to the Spirituals. Several decades before Angelo, Thomas of Eccleston, to exemplify the extent to which Haymo of Faversham (provincial minister of England from 1239-1240, and general minister between 1240-1243) was a true *zelator paupertatis*, tells us that in a provincial chapter he would sit at the edge of the refectory, wearing a torn and the cheapest (*vilissimus*) of habits.<sup>85</sup>

Angelo Clareno also recounts about brother Geoffroi de Cournon – one of the French Spirituals who had travelled to Avignon in 1317, summoned by John XXII to explain themselves – who had an impeccable record and who could, therefore, go before the pope as their spokesman without fearing to be challenged in his orthodoxy or behaviour (after every other spokesman had been dismissed and incarcerated under some kind of accusation). However, despite the fact that the community had nothing with which to reproach him, it was now the pope himself who cast doubt on his zealous strict observance. Brother Geoffroi, claimed the pope, had five tunics, which certainly did not correlate with his posture of pure observance of the rule. Geoffroi denied the accusation, but the pope detained him

---

<sup>84</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 96.

<sup>85</sup> '...Tantus enim zelator paupertatis erat, cum in provinciali capitulo in habitu vilissimo et scisso sederet cum extremis in refectorio ad terram...', in *Fratri Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston Tractatus de adventu fratrum minorum in Angliam*, A. G. Little (ed.) (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1951), p. 86; Neslihan Şenocak, *The Poor and the Perfect*, p. 75.

nonetheless, until they could find out if he indeed owned five tunics.<sup>86</sup> Whether or not he actually possessed that many tunics – which seems, however, unlikely, not only for him, but also for most religious men of the period – clothes received once again a central consideration during the development of the controversy. If we are to believe Angelo's account, in so heated a quarrel, having more tunics than appropriate was enough to afford someone a place in the dungeon.<sup>87</sup>

In this context, for the observant Franciscans their rough habits had become not only a meaningful symbol, but also a vehicle for sanctity and salvation, as the moral of one of the stories contained in the *Fioretti* aims to show.<sup>88</sup> One of the chapters tells about a young novice of noble origins who had entered the Franciscan Order but who, after just a few days, 'by the instigation of the demon,' started to despise his habit, that seemed to him to be nothing but a shameful sack: 'he had horror of the sleeves, he abominated the cowl, and the length and roughness of the habit appeared to him an intolerable burden. His disgust for the religious life ever increasing, he finally resolved to abandon the habit and return to the world.' However, before leaving the convent he went to kneel before the altar, when he had a vision,

---

<sup>86</sup> Angelo Clareno, *A Chronicle or History of the Seven Tribulations*, p. 208; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, pp. 194-5.

<sup>87</sup> On the issue of Angelo's veracity, see David Burr, "John XXII and the Spirituals: Is Angelo Clareno Telling The Truth?", *Franciscan Studies*, 63 (2005), pp. 271-287, especially pp. 276-8 for this particular episode.

<sup>88</sup> The habit was, of course, considered a crucial item in the salvation of any religious, as is well exemplified by Caesarius of Heisterbach's story of a pious Cistercian monk who, having died without his cowl, was then forbidden entry to heaven, as he could not prove to St Benedict that he had been a monk during his life. In Caesarius of Heisterbach, *The dialogue on miracles*, translated by H. von E. Scott and C.C. Swinton (London: G. Routledge & Sons 1929), pp. 268-9; Cordelia Warr, "Materiality and Immateriality", in *Material Religion* 6, 3 (2010), pp. 372-373.



in which he saw a procession of saints 'clad in very beautiful and precious vestments of silken stuffs.' Among them, 'were two more nobly clad and adorned than all the rest; and they were encompassed round about by so bright a light that whoever looked on them was filled with great amazement.' Then, by the end of the procession, the young novice saw 'one adorned with such great glory that he seemed a new made knight, more honoured than his peers.' When the procession was over, he ran after the last of them and asked who they were, to which the saints replied, 'know, son, that we are all minor friars, who now are coming from Paradise.' The novice then asked them who were those who stood out with such splendour, and they told him that the first two were St Francis and St Anthony, and that the last one was a friar who had recently died and was being guided to heaven. 'And these beautiful silken vestments which we wear – they added – are given us by God in exchange for the rough habits which we wore patiently when in religious life; and the glorious resplendence which you see in us, is given to us by God for the humility and patience, and for the holy poverty and obedience and chastity that we observed even to the end. Wherefore, son, deem it not a hard thing to wear the sackcloth of the religious life that brings so great a reward, because if, with the sackcloth of St Francis, for the love of Christ, you shall despise the world and mortify the flesh, and shall fight valiantly against the demon, you, together with us, shall have similar vestments of brightness and glory.' After hearing so, the young man went to confess and 'from then on he desired the roughness of penance and of

raiment and ended his life in the order in great sanctity.<sup>89</sup> Written during the second half of the fourteenth century, the story is not only likely to reflect a common problem faced by the order when receiving friars coming from the higher ranks of society, but it may also show the need felt, perhaps by the order as a whole, to make sense of the austerity that the habit was intended to show. It is hard to know whether the purpose of the remarks on the poorness and coarseness of the habit were an attempt to demonstrate that the clothes actually worn by the friars were indeed as humble as the rule instructed, or a reminder for contemporary friars of Francis's original prescription. In any case, the persistence of the topic shows how, even after the Spiritual controversy had ended, the troubled relationship of the Friars Minor with their habits was an ever-present matter.

In fact, David Burr points out that the *usus pauper* polemic might even appear to be 'an argument about fashion.'<sup>90</sup> When John XXII asked some cardinals to send a letter to Michael de Cesena and the provincial ministers, in which they told them that the French Spirituals were called to obey their superiors, it seemed that their main concern was, indeed, their attire, with the word *habitus* appearing seven times.<sup>91</sup> The cardinals emphasised that among those preaching one gospel and being of the same profession, there should not exist any dissimilarity in their habits or disparity in their

---

<sup>89</sup> Ugolino de Monte Santa Maria, *The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi*, W. Heywood (ed. and trans.) (New York: Vintage Books, 1998), pp. 45-47. For a brief commentary on the *Fioretti*, its context and its authorship, see Paul Sabatier preface in the Latin edition of the book: Paul Sabatier (ed.), *Floretum S. Francisci Assisiensis. Liber aureus qui italicice dicitur I Fioretti di San Francesco* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1902), pp. i-xvi. See also Andrew Jotischky, *The Carmelites and Antiquity*, p. 72.

<sup>90</sup> David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 181.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibidem*.

observance, as the sacred canons had beneficially established. They all should follow one regular way of life and one honest habit, because from a diversity of habits scandal was commonly generated.<sup>92</sup> Burr has also rightly observed that here the cardinals opted to stick to the written doctrine and omit 'historical specifics': 'the whole tortuous history of debate over proper observance of the rule, the whole welter of charges concerning oppression and counter charges concerning disobedience, all disappear from view, leaving the cardinals free to carry a single hypothesis through to its logical conclusion. A single order should wear common dress and obey a single group of leaders. Therefore, the Spirituals must stop wearing their distinctive garb and consent to be fully integrated within the order.'<sup>93</sup> Whether it was that the cardinals could not see the forest for the trees, or they chose not to, with

---

<sup>92</sup> The relevant fragments of the letter reads as follows: '...A sacris est canonibus salubriter institutum, ne inter eos, qui unum evangelium praedicant eiusdemque sunt professionis, dissimilis sit habitus disparque observantia, sed omnes in unum regulare propositum et honestum habitum se conforment, quia ex diversitate habitus plerumque scandalum generatur nec cohaerere nec coniungi possunt, quibus sunt studia et vota diversae scientiae. Orta materia quaestionis inter vos ex parte una et quosdam fratres ordinis vestri Narbonae et Biterris commorantes ex altera super eo, quod sub dissimili habitu disparique observantia ab aliis fratribus communitatis ordinis in locis praedictis vitam ducere satagebant, et ea ad audientiam sanctissimi patris et domini nostri domini Iohannis divina providentia papae XXII deducta, idem dominus papa assistente collegium cardinalium nobisque praesentibus, partibus coram se vocatis et allegationibus hinc inde auditis, statuit, decrevit et mandavit, quod omnes fratres, qui praedictos habitus dissimiles assumpserant, eos deponerent et secundum iudicium vestrum aliorumque suorum superiorum se in habitu cum aliis fratribus communitatis ordinis (eorum allegationibus non obstantibus) conformarent, quodque praedicti fratres, qui tunc praesentes erant, ceterique eorum consortes ad conventus per vos eis assignatos vel assignandos se transferrent, sic quod loca distincta ab aliis fratribus non haberent, et quod in ceteris omnibus, quae ad regularem spectant observantiam, vobis et cuilibet vestrum aliisque praelatis eis per ordinem assignatis vel assignandis (sicut fratres vestri ordinis) obedirent humiliter et devote mandatis eorum, [ita tamen] ne ipsis fratribus gravamina per vos vel per alios contra iustitiam inferantur. Verum ad ipsius domini papae notitiam postmodum fuit deductum, quod nonnulli ex praedictis fratribus, quibus per vos, ministrum provincialem, fuerant obedientiae, quod ad alios conventus eis per vos assignatos se transferrent habitusque deformes, quos assumpserant, deponerent, in vocem appellationis ab huiusmodi mandatis vestris ad sedem apostolicam proruperunt, allegantes inter cetera, quod non credebant praedicta mandata eis facta de ipsius domini voluntate et beneplacito...', in BF V, no. 4, pp. 119-120; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 181.

<sup>93</sup> David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 181.

this judgement, the powerful message of the Spirituals – with their habits playing a fundamental role, unambiguously conveying their position – was thus paradoxically reduced to the fault of just sporting a peculiar attire, silencing in its dismissal the entire project of reform called upon by the zealous group of friars.

### **The legacy of the Spirituals, the role of the habits, and the Franciscan Observant reform**

After the tragic events of Marseille and the continued persecution of the rest of the faction, the Spirituals had finally to admit defeat. However, the zeal for reform was by no means completely extinguished, nor did the habit cease to be a significant matter. The challenge for the order was, of course, to be able to make the necessary reforms without compromising its unity. Benedict XII made an effort in the direction of unity with his bull *Redemptor noster* from 28 November 1336, in which he promulgated new constitutions for the order. Clothing, once again, received broad attention. The section *De qualitate habitus et vestium* opened with a reference to John XXII's *Quorundam exigiit* and its treatment of the disobedient friars who had taken *habitus singulares et deformes*. It then went to threat with excommunication those who, contravening their superiors, dared to don a habit that differed from those of the rest of the community, as the pope had heard that the temerity and stubbornness of certain friars in that regard had not yet ceased. Nonetheless, the bull also made some acknowledgement of the problems associated with the clothes of the brethren. Although it did not touch the

*vilitas* of the habit reclaimed by the Spirituals, it deals with another troubling practice: the use of different habits to mark distinction among the friars, especially in terms of rank and education. The bull states that, in order that uniformity in dress would be complete and greater charity would shine among the brothers, every friar, including superiors, lectors, and preachers would wear habits made from the same common cloth, without any distinction or peculiarity. If, nevertheless, any brother happened to have a superfluity of garments, he was to show them to his superior who would immediately put them back to assist the necessities of other brothers or of poor people. If the said friar ignored or disregarded the command to show his clothes, the superior was allowed to take them away immediately.<sup>94</sup> However, these were certainly not the strict measures that the observant faction sought to apply, and so the zealous brothers continued to pursue the *vilitas* with which the Franciscan habit was meant to stand out.

---

<sup>94</sup> ‘...verum quia nondum, ut audivimus, cessat temeritas seu prae-sumptio aliquorum fratrum eiusdem ordinis habitum et vestes singulares et deformes portantium, ut praefertur: volentes eosdem per poenae adiectionem a temeritate et praesumptione huiusmodi ad communem ordinis observantia revocare, praesentium auctoritate statuimus, quod, si qui eiusdem ordinis professores contra arbitrium, determinationem seu iudicium ministrorum, custodum seu guardianorum in ordine suo praesidentium habitum aut ipsorum habituum caputia seu vestes deformes et vestibus aliorum fratrum communitatem ordinis tenentium dissimiles et difformes portare aut, quod fratres ordinis talibus uti deformitatibus teneantur, asserere personaliter praesumpserint, nisi infra quindecim dierum spatium, ipso facto sententiam excommunicationis incurrant... Ut autem maior sit vestium uniformitas inter fratres et charitas amplius reluceat inter eos, ordinamus, quod pannus communis secundum regulam et declarationes praedecessorum nostrorum Ordini et fratribus conveniens per illos, ad quos pertinuerit, procuretur tempore competenti; de quo communi panno ministri, custodes, guardiani, lectores, praedicatores, confessores, procuratores et ceteri fratres omnes sine distinctione aliqua aut specialitater tam interius quam exterius induantur. Si quis autem frater superfluas vestes habuerit, teneantur eas exhibere ministro, custodi vel guardiano, qui eas in tali loco reponere teneantur, ut de ipsis necessitates supervenientium fratrum vel aliorum indigentium subleventur. Si vero dicti fratres neglexerint seu contempserint vestes huiusmodi exhibere, custodes vel guardiani praedicti eas teneantur et possint licite eis auferre.’ In BF VI, no. 51, p. 28.

In this context, and although towards the second half of the fourteenth century the most critical part of the Spiritual conflict seemed to be in the past, the order was yet far from stability. As Nimmo asserts, the degree of laxity that still seemed to reign in the order motivated a renewed demand for reform.<sup>95</sup> In fact, the Spiritual ideas continued to resonate in the new generations of friars, which gave the former ‘a wider audience than ever it had had in its lifetime, and deeply influenced the whole subsequent story of the issue of reform and division in the order,’ becoming fundamental for the Observant reform movement.<sup>96</sup> Some changes had been already taking shape early on. In the 1330s John of Valle, a friar who is supposed to have been connected to Angelo Clareno,<sup>97</sup> was given authorisation to set up a modest hermitage in Brugliano, Italy, where he and other four brothers could observe the rule strictly, thus instituting the movement that came later to be known as Regular Observance.<sup>98</sup> Nimmo suggests that if John was successful in achieving what no other Franciscan reform movement had been able to do – that is, to get permission to observe the rule literally while staying inside the order – it was due to his efforts to avoid any sign of separatism.

Among his gestures of *bona fide* towards the superiors and the community, and as proof of his obedience, he seems to have not made any attempts to wear a different habit, and the silence of the sources on this

---

<sup>95</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 239.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 240. See also Mario Sensi, *Le osservanze francescane*, pp. 1-17.

<sup>97</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 368-9.

<sup>98</sup> John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, p. 369; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 370.

matter should be, indeed, very telling.<sup>99</sup> Although John of Valle can be regarded as heir of the Spirituals, on this very significant point he was probably quite conscious of how the habit had become too symbolically loaded. This seems to be even more plausible when one adds to the picture the defiance that the order was experimenting from groups of *Fratricelli de paupere vita*, the successors of the Spiritual Franciscans,<sup>100</sup> who therefore claimed to be Francis's only truthful followers, in the very same region in which the hermitage was established.<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, John and his companions were not entirely free from suspicion and opposition, as a bull issued by Clement VI on 29 November 1343 shows: in it, Clement refers to certain men identified as Friars Minor, who claimed to follow the rule literally, but seemed to be differing in many ways with the community, in their habits, way of living, doctrine and other approved forms of observance of the order, thus provoking scandal and disturbance in the latter. Therefore, the general minister was not to procure or do anything that would mean the approval of this sect, and the pope had to restrain the general minister from granting any immunity or favours to these men until the papacy have made a further pronouncement on their status.<sup>102</sup>

---

<sup>99</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 375-6. One can imagine that, after the events of the preceding fifty years, a fair share of attention was paid to the new community's habit, as following events will show.

<sup>100</sup> David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 302. Not to be confused with the *fratricelli de opinione*, followers of Michael of Cesena after he went into exile in 1328. Ibidem. On the Fratricelli see also the classic studies by Decima L. Douie, *The Nature and the Effect of the Heresy of the Fratricelli*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1932) and "Some Treatises Against the Fratricelli in the Vatican Library", in *Franciscan Studies*, 38 (1978), pp. 10-80.

<sup>101</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 377.

<sup>102</sup> 'Ad sedis apostolicae notitiam frequentibus relatibus est perductum, quod nonnulli, qui se fratrum ordinis Minorum professores et regulae beati Francisci ad litteram asserunt

As Nimmo observes, whether the facts referred by the pope were complaints attached, almost out of custom, to anyone trying to observe the Franciscan Rule to the letter, or they indeed addressed John's disciples, who were actually deviating from orthodoxy despite his efforts to avoid so, reform appears to have been inexorably destined to stir up deep-rooted fears and quarrels within the Franciscan order.<sup>103</sup> Habits – real or imagined – for better or worse, had an inextricable role in the whole process. This is confirmed by the letter that the recently elected general minister of the order, William Farinier, sent to the provincial ministers, stating that they were to compel all the brothers to observe uniformity in their habits, in their colour, price, and shape. Thus, they were not to wear a hood neither too small nor too large, in order to make evident not only the uniformity in their habits, but also the humility, sanctity, and poverty in their lives. All fashioning, impropriety and hypocrisy were to be prevented. Moreover, no brother was to be granted permission to join the hermitages, unless he was willing to agree with the other brothers in his habit, understood the catholic faith and did not disregard the community of the order.<sup>104</sup>

---

sectatores, universitati communitatis fratrum ipsorum tam in habitu, modo vivendi et doctrina quam aliis approbatis ipsius ordinis observantiis discrepare multipliciter, ex quibus in ordine ipso suscitantur turbationes et scandala, moliuntur...non expedit aliqua facere, per quae approbari secta talium in eiusdem ordinis scandalum videatur, tibi districtius tenore praesentium inhibemus, ne illis immunitates, gratias vel favores concedere vel exhibere praesumas, quosque per sedem eamdem circa statum ipsorum, sicut eidem sedi expedire videbitur, alius extiterit ordinatum.' In BF, VI, no. 245, p. 139; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 378-9.

<sup>103</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 379.

<sup>104</sup> '...7. Tu vero Minister compellas omnes fratres observare uniformitatem in habitu in colore, pretio et figura; sic quod non portent caputia nimis parva nec nimis magna, ut appareat in habitu uniformitas et in vita humilitas, sanctitas et paupertas et omnis fictio et difformitas et ypocrisis excludatur.

8. In heremis vero non permittatur aliquis frater residere, nisi fratribus aliis velit se in habitu conformare et nisi bene sentiat de fice catholica et comunitatem Ordinis non condempnet...'



Notwithstanding Clement VI's apprehensions, towards the mid-fourteenth century, and under the leadership of Gentile da Spoleto, one of John of Valle's companions, the community was allowed to spread and to continue its strict observance of the rule, simply and in its original purity, and they were to be free of any attack or disturbance from superiors or prelates of the order.<sup>105</sup> However, the endeavour was to be short-lived, as, according to Wadding, it quickly provoked discontent in the rest of the order. Rather unsurprisingly, habits played again their part here.<sup>106</sup> The community not only feared that this kind of initiative could spark a larger disagreement, like the controversy that had preoccupied Clement V and enraged John XXII until the latter extinguished it, but, to aggravate the situation, the brothers under Gentile had donned habits that were cheap (*viles*) in both their shape and quality, so they differed from the clothes of the rest of the friars and, worse, they were all too similar to those preferred by the Narbonne reformers (i.e.

---

in Riccardo Pratesi (ed.), "Una lettera enciclica del Ministro Generale dei Frati Minore Guglielmo Farinier (25 gennaio 1349)", *AFH* 50 (1957), pp. 348-363; p. 361; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 381-2 (see also Nimmo's analysis of the wider context and the implications that Clement's bull involved for the order as a whole, in *Reform and Division*, pp. 383-7).

<sup>105</sup> '...Cum itaque, sicut dilectus filius Gentilis de Spoleto ordinis fratrum Minorum pro parte vestra nobis exposuit, vos coelestium desiderio afflati eiusdem confessoris regulam in ea puritate et simplicitate primaeva...in perpetuum indulgemus, ut vos et ipsi possitis libere ac licite huiusmodi regulam simpliciter in primaeva puritate huiusmodi inconcusse servare, nec aliquis superior vel praelatus dicti ordinis in huiusmodi observatione vos impetere, perturbare aut molestare praesumat...', in *BF* VI, no. 558, pp. 245-6; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 382-3.

<sup>106</sup> 'Sub hoc tempore multi ex discipulis Ioannis de Vallibus...adhaeserunt Fr. Gentili de Spoleto laico, seu, ut vocant, converso, et summo conatu aspirantes ad perfectam Regulae Observantiam et Ordinis reformationem, intercessione quorundam nobilium virorum, causasque exponente fratre Gentile, obtinuerunt quatuor Coenobia sibi concedi, in quibus libere absque Ministri Generalis aut aliorum superiorum contradictione, liceret Pontificia auctoritate et protectione vivere simpliciter secundum Regula praescriptum. Generavit tamen postea privilegium hoc turbas et discordias in Ordine...', in *AM*, Vol. 8, year 1350, no. 15, p. 45; John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, pp. 369-70.

the French Spirituals).<sup>107</sup> Even though that *vilitas* was indeed prescribed in the rule, in the mind of the community, probably still traumatised by its recent history, Gentile's group surely had to be regarded as schismatics, as everyone knew too well what all those signs must mean. It was almost needless to say that distinctive habits always carried bad news – even if they made sense in the newly allowed literal observance of the rule. Nevertheless, the fears of the community had been fulfilled, and history seemed to be repeating itself. William Farinier knew this too well, so he brought the case privately to Innocent VI, Clement VI's successor, thus avoiding a confrontation that, according to Nimmo, could easily have escalated to the proportions of the Spiritual controversy.<sup>108</sup> The pope stripped the group of their privileges and put them again under direct jurisdiction of the general minister and the hierarchy of the order, reminding them that they had to obey their superior's judgement regarding the quantity, shape, and price of their habits, tunics, and mantles as it had been already commanded by Clement V, John XXII and Benedict XII; Gentile was imprisoned and the initiative was thus brought to its end.<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>107</sup> 'Aegre ferebant hoc tempore Ordinis Praelati intentatam ab Gentili Spoletano religionis scissuram, et peculiarem, quam meditabatur congregationem in quatuor illis humilibus domiciliis, quae austerioris vitae et strictioris Observantiae Professoribus sub illius disciplina victuris, peculiari diplomatae concessisse diximus Clementem. Timebant, his accessuros alios, et multiplicato numero, negotium facessuros universo Sodalitio, atque ex hac parva scintilla magnum oriturum discordiae incendium, illo majus, quod alias sub Clemente V. et Joanne XXII. fuerat extinctum. Auxit indignationem, quod hi habitus viles in qualitate et forma ab aliorum veste difformes, per omnia similes ei, quam praeferebant reformationis Narbonensis auctores, assumpserint...', in AM, Vol. 8, year 1355, no. 1, p. 103. The *Chronicle Of The Twenty-Four Generals* also relates these facts, pp. 735-7; John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, p. 370, n. 4; David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 304; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 388-9.

<sup>108</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 390-1.

<sup>109</sup> '...et quod guardiani et fratres, qui in locis eisdem pro tempore fuerint, in omnibus sint et esse debeant subiecti dictis ministris ac eorum et aliorum praelatorum dicti ordinis iudicio et

Not everything was lost, though, as Paoluccio dei Trinci, a Franciscan lay brother, was able to revive the movement about a decade later. Paoluccio had joined the community of Brugliano with John of Valle, and had also witnessed the dissolution of the movement under Gentile of Spoleto. In 1368 the new general minister of the order gave him permission to return to the original hermitage and to observe the rule strictly.<sup>110</sup> Sure enough, garments again had a role to play, only a happier one this time. Out of necessity in a very inhospitable region, where going barefoot was not an option, Paoluccio followed the local usage and adopted the footwear worn by the inhabitants of the surroundings, a kind of clog made of wood with fitted irons, called *zoccoli*. Besides these practical reasons, for Paoluccio the shoes symbolised poverty and humility, and he made sure he had the general minister's approval before adopting them. However, this somewhat extravagant choice of shoes was bound to attract attention to Paoluccio, as any sartorial decision was, as we know by now, a rather dangerous matter within the Franciscan Order. As Duncan Nimmo asserts, they were likely to be understood in only one way: as a means for the observant brothers to distinguish themselves from the

---

ordinationi tam quoad habitum, tunicas, mantellos et eorum quantitatem formam, pretium, valorem et alia concernantia ipsum habitum, iuxta constitutiones fel. rec. Clementis V, loannis XXII et Benedicti XII Romanorum pontificum, praedecessorum nostrorum...', in BF VI, no. 683, pp. 291-2; John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, p. 371; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 390-2.

<sup>110</sup> John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, pp. 371-2. See also Mario Sensi, *Le osservanze francescane nell'Italia centrale*, pp. 39-47, and Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 396-403 for a detailed (and quite entertaining) account of the not very orthodox developments that led to the re-foundation of the hermitage.

rest of the community. Yet, and surprisingly enough, they do not seem to have been challenged.<sup>111</sup>

Moreover, Nimmo notes that the sources also talk about his coarse and patched habit – with all probability similar to the ones promoted by the Spirituals and the Fraticelli – but there is no mention in the sources of any allegations of him being a heretic or a schismatic. Bearing in mind the antecedents, it can be safely interpreted that Paoluccio’s habit must not have differed substantially (at least in shape and colour) from the one donned by the rest of the community or, at least, that they were not intended to differ, and that its poor state was the expected result of constant wear and tear in a harsh setting.<sup>112</sup> If this was the case, states Nimmo, ‘Paoluccio had hit on a brilliant solution to a hitherto insurmountable problem – one which had played a very large part in the shipwreck of previous attempts to establish the literal observance: how to reconcile the statutory demand, insisted on by Superiors, for uniformity in dress, with the moral demand, enshrined in the writing of Francis and the stories about him, for accompanying poverty and humility.’<sup>113</sup>

It was also, perhaps, a sign of the times and a reflection of a shift in the minds of the order’s superiors, who were able to recognise that Paoluccio’s group could bring a new understanding to the order. At least they had the capacity to realise that the observant community could be the best publicity for a Franciscan Order that was even mocked in the streets of

---

<sup>111</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 404; “Vita inedita di fra Mariano da Firenze, scritta verso i primi anni del secolo XVI”, in D. M. Faloci Pulignani (ed.), “Il B. Paoluccio Trinci da Foligno”, in *Miscellanea Francescana* 6, (1896), pp. 103-111; p. 107.

<sup>112</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 404; “Vita inedita di fra Mariano da Firenze”, p. 107.

<sup>113</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 404-5.

Perugia by the Fraticelli, who would point out their comfortable habits with their various layers of garments, asking whether that was indeed how Francis had wanted them to be dressed.<sup>114</sup> This was, after all, a fair point, especially with the Fraticelli's clothes marking a sharp contrast with those of the more lax factions of the order. In fact, as the *Decalogus evangelicae paupertatis* – a Fraticelli polemical treatise written between 1340-1342 – clearly shows, clothing occupied a prominent place in the sect's agenda – as it could only be for the group that looked to keep the Spiritual programme going.<sup>115</sup> Here the defence of their coarse clothes, allegedly modelled according to the original form of St Francis's habit – which the author claims to have witnessed in the shrine of La Verna, where Francis allegedly received the stigmata – has a central role,<sup>116</sup> revealing how the matter of the truthful imitation of Francis's dress was far from being solved – and it would not be for centuries to come, as the Capuchin controversy analysed in the next chapter shows. It was in this context that Paoluccio, the obedient zealot, and his group, all dressed in rough and patched habits that sent a clear message about their observance of the rule, were entrusted by the provincial minister of the region to drive the schismatic group of Fraticelli out of it. This proved to be a crucial action that went on to win the cause for the observant movement, both immediately and in the long term. It helped them demonstrate their commitment to obedience, thus securing the trust of the general minister, which in turn supported its

---

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., p. 408; "Vita inedita di fra Mariano da Firenze", p. 107.

<sup>115</sup> The treatise is contained in Michael Bihl (ed.), "Fraticelli cuiusdam Decalogus evangelicae Paupertatis an. 1340-42 conscriptus", AFH 32 (1939), pp. 279-411; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 281ff.

<sup>116</sup> Michael Bihl (ed.), "Fraticelli cuiusdam Decalogus", pp. 342-3; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 281.

dissemination further in Italy and the rest of Europe.<sup>117</sup> Even though the Observant reform can also be considered as the successor of the body of ideas that inspired the Spiritual movement,<sup>118</sup> it seems rather paradoxical that, at the end, it was an approved version of a habit that probably looked very similar to the poor and wretched garments that had cost the Spirituals their condemnation, the one that, about half a century after the tragic events at Marseille, went on to win the upper hand over the Fraticelli – the group that regarded itself as direct heirs of the Spirituals, and that had maintained a central role for dress in their programme. Therefore, it is probable that the difference between both habits was more conceptual than material, where one was considered to be within orthodoxy and the accepted system of religious dress, and the other had heretical and dissenting connotations.

The modern reader might wonder how, after all, some garments could become such a disruptive matter, and how their thickness and length could provoke such a long-lasting upheaval. In the light of the events described above, part of the answer resides in realising that the Spiritual habit was far more than just an article of clothing: as a proxy for reform, it was a loud defiance of the current status of observance in the Franciscan Order, which resonated strongly both within and outside of it, as it also represented a transgression of the rules that governed the system of differences of religious dress. This habit was, indeed, a harsh reproach in the face of the community, one made so evident – as it literally covered them – that it was bound to make those accused not only uncomfortable, but also outraged, to the point

---

<sup>117</sup> Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, pp. 408-10.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 423-4.

of wanting to have some of their own brethren burnt at the stake. This reproach also derived into other doctrinal discussions that, although dangerously putting the entire order's orthodoxy under question, also helped to set in motion a slow – and also stubbornly resisted – reform. The deep impact that the Spirituals' *curtos, strictos et deformes habitus* had in the Franciscan family lasted for generations. It not only persisted with the Fraticelli outside the recognised branches of the order, but it also marked the approach of future reformatory efforts. John of Valle was clearly aware of this, and we should take the silence of the sources on the matter as a sign that he did not dare to endanger the fragile truce obtained concerning the habits. Likewise, the observant group guided by Paoluccio dei Trinci – which would ultimately set the right path for a durable and achievable reform – was also very conscious of the necessity to avoid in their habits any remembrance of the Spiritual reproach to the community. Their “white flag” demonstrated their intention to transform the truce into actual peace and, indeed, showed their obedience in a matter as fundamental as their habits. For dress transmits messages, constructs identities and reveals realities, and the Franciscans, from Francis himself to the Spirituals, to the Regular Observance, and beyond, were all acutely aware of this fact.

## CHAPTER 5

---

### THE *TRUE* HABIT OF ST FRANCIS: THE CAPUCHINS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW FRANCISCAN IDENTITY

It happened once, in the monastery of Montefalcone, where [brother Matteo] was living, while he was talking to another priest of the same family...that he heard him saying that he, and the rest of the brothers of the order, could wear the shape of the habit that the Observants used to carry in good conscience, as they had a dispensation from the Holy See to that purpose. Brother Matteo asked the priest if such dispensation was necessary for the Friars Minor to be able to wear the habit of our father St Francis, to which the friar answered: 'you are deceived brother Matteo. It is not the shape of the habit of our Seraphic Father this one that we are carrying?' Brother Matteo answered: 'are you talking seriously or are you mocking me? What other shape of habit is there besides this one, that belongs to our Father St Francis?' 'Do you not understand that it is mockery – said the brother – for the true shape of the habit of our father is the one that can be seen in one of his own, which is conserved in the city of Assisi, and in many images that can be seen in the same city, in Rome and in different places.' Then, brother Matteo insistently begged him to draw for him, in a panel, the shape of the habit he was referring, vowing that he had never seen or had word of another shape different from the one they were wearing. The friar traced the shape of the habit with a long and pointed hood stitched to it and without any part of it that fell on the shoulders or the back. And as soon as brother Matteo laid eyes on it, he got internally upset, and the affliction he felt was such and so fervent (an act of God that fervour) that from that moment on, day and night he thought about it, perpetually troubled in his spirit about how he could get to dress in the



true habit of St Francis, which he did not doubt anymore to be the same that the friar had sketched out for him.<sup>1</sup>

The passage belongs to the *Annalium, seu Sacrarum Historiarum Ordinis Minorum S. Francisci qui Capucini nuncupatur*, the first official history of the Capuchin Order. It was entrusted in 1627 by its superiors to brother Zaccaria Boverio da Saluzzo, with the aim of compiling the history of the Franciscan branch up to that point, and published for the first time in 1632.<sup>2</sup> The Matteo of the story is none other than Matteo Bassi (or da Bascio), the Italian Observant Franciscan who, in the 1520s, together with Ludovico Tenaglia da Fossombrone and his brother Raffaele, vowed to observe the Franciscan Rule literally, thus creating a new branch of the Franciscan family.<sup>3</sup>

According to Boverio's chronicle, after such a shocking truth had been revealed to him, Matteo kept doing penance, so God would show him the

---

<sup>1</sup> I will be using both the original Latin version of the Chronicle written by Zaccaria Boverio and the Spanish translation: Zacharias Boverius, *Annalium seu Sacrarum historiarum ordinis Minorum S. Francisci qui Capucini nuncupantur*, Tom. I (Lugduni: sumptibus Claudii Landry, 1632); Zaccaria Boverio, *Chronicas De Los Frailes Menores Capuchinos De N. P. S. Francisco*, Vol. 1, Francisco de Madrid Moncada (trans.) (Madrid: Carlos Sanchez, 1644), p. 34 and p. 43 respectively. Quotation marks added for greater clarity.

<sup>2</sup> See Mariano D'Alatri, *I Cappuccini. Storia di una famiglia francescana* (Milano: San Paolo, 1997), pp. 70-1. Also Anel Fernandez Sotelo, "De capuchas y demonios: un estudio sobre los orígenes míticos de la orden de los frailes menores capuchinos", *Clío*, 4, n. 32 (2004), pp. 105-125, particularly, pp. 116-20; idem, "El prodigioso hábito capuchino. Construcciones y violencia simbólica en la escritura de Zacarías Boverio", *Dimensión Antropológica*, 55 (2012), pp. 121-149. The article by Policarpo Felipe Alonso, "La identidad capuchina en los anales de Zacarías Boverio (1524-1556)", published in *Naturaleza y Gracia*, nos. 1 and 2 (2002), pp. 7-126, pp. 199-264, seems highly pertinent, but unfortunately I have not been able to have access to a copy of it.

<sup>3</sup> Mariano D'Alatri, *I Cappuccini*, p. 10; Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini nel primo secolo di vita (1525-1619): approccio critico alle fonti storiche, giuridiche e letterarie più importanti* (Padova: Messaggero, 2006), pp. 24-8; see also Father Cuthbert, *The Capuchins: A Contribution to the History of the Counter-Reformation* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1928), pp. 17ff; Costanzo Cargnoni, "L'immagine di San Francesco nella riforma cappuccina", in *Francesco d'Assisi nella Storia*, Vol. II (Roma: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 1983), pp. 25-53.

path he should follow. This revelation finally came with an apparition of St Francis himself, in the image of a walker 'dressed with a coarse, rough and wretched habit, with a hood that looked the same way as the one that the friar had drawn in the panel, and as the Capuchins usually wear.'<sup>4</sup> The vision repeated itself several times, until Matteo finally understood that, if he wanted to be able to fulfil the pure observance of his rule, he had to seek the perfect imitation of his founder father in the primitive shape of his true habit.<sup>5</sup> However, Boverio assures, Matteo was not looking for reform, at least not at first. He just wanted to imitate St Francis in his habit and life. Nevertheless, Matteo was not so naive as to ask the superiors of the order to allow him to wear such a habit, as he knew well – as probably any Franciscan who knew enough of the history of the order, especially if coming from the Italian Marches, as Matteo did – how badly they treated and persecuted anyone searching a different idea of the Franciscan life. Thus, and after having another celestial communication, he decided to go directly to Rome, to personally ask the pope for permission to wear the shape of habit he wanted, in which he would be finally able to observe the rule to the letter.<sup>6</sup> He therefore took an old and torn tunic, the coarsest he could find, he stitched a hood to it, made accordingly to the drawing he had, and, after girding himself with a rough rope, he took a wooden cross and set out on his journey to Rome in the middle of the night.<sup>7</sup> There he allegedly obtained oral permission (*vivae vocis oraculo*) to observe the Franciscan Rule as he wanted to, to

---

<sup>4</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annalium*, p. 35; *Chronicas De Los Frailes Menores Capuchinos*, p. 44.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>6</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annalium*, pp. 35-6; *Chronicas De Los Frailes Menores Capuchinos*, pp. 45-6.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37; *ibid.*, p. 47.

preach itinerantly, and to wear the habit he had adopted, under the condition to present himself to his provincial minister each year at the chapter.<sup>8</sup>

However, as with previous groups looking to live a stricter standard of life, resistance arrived promptly. Once Matteo presented himself at the following chapter held in Iesi, in 1525, he was considered as a fugitive brother and incarcerated, only to be freed thanks to the intercession of Caterina Cybo, duchess of Camerino and niece of Pope Clement VII, who was his admirer.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, Ludovico and Raffaele, after having fled their convents and being excommunicated as apostates, together with brother Matteo, found refuge in March of 1526 in the hermitage that the Camaldoli had in Massaccio, Italy.<sup>10</sup> The three were able to join again and departed for Rome. There they obtained, in May of the same year – and again with the help of Caterina de Cybo – a brief from cardinal Lorenzo Pucci, with a personal dispensation which allowed them to live as hermits, independently from the Observant fathers, and to observe the rule strictly.<sup>11</sup>

Nevertheless, they rapidly encountered the opposition of the Observants, and the provincial and general ministers of the order obtained the refutation of the brief from the pope.<sup>12</sup> Matteo returned to his itinerant preaching and the two brothers to a hermit life. However, as had happened before in the Franciscan Order, this stricter way of life attracted followers soon enough. In this context, Ludovico looked to officialise his movement of

---

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 43; *ibid.*, p. 54; Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini*, p. 24.

<sup>9</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annalium*, p. 64-5; *Chronicas De Los Frailes Menores Capuchinos*, p. 59-60; Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini*, p. 25.

<sup>10</sup> Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini*, p. 26; p. 28.

<sup>11</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annalium*, p. 48-9; *Chronicas De Los Frailes Menores Capuchinos*, p. 79-80; Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini*, pp. 26-8.

<sup>12</sup> Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini*, p. 27.

Franciscan-eremical life. He knew, however, that according to the bull *Ite vos* of 29 May 1517,<sup>13</sup> issued by Leo X, he needed explicit permission from the general of the order, or from his provincial, and he also knew that the chances of this happening were highly unlikely. Therefore, in a clever move, he put himself under the Conventual jurisdiction, with approval of his provincial minister.<sup>14</sup> He then went to find Pope Clement VII in Viterbo with a plea that included, firstly, permission to wear his particular habit of hermit-mendicant, with a square hood, and to grow a long beard. The petition, after some adjustments, finally found papal approval in the bull *Religionis zelus*, of 3 July 1528.<sup>15</sup>

More than two hundred years after the death at the stake in Marseille in 1318 of those four Spiritual friars whose fate was discussed in the previous chapter, the Franciscan habit, or more accurately, Francis's *true* habit, was playing yet again a fundamental role in the history of the order, and a very central one this time. If one may convincingly argue that the Spiritual controversy was at times, and in some degree, a quarrel about clothes, and that every attempt of revision in the Franciscan Order had to deal with the conflicting matter of the habit, with the foundation of the Capuchins dress openly took the spotlight. The very popular name of the reform group – and eventually new branch of the order – was a direct reference to their new

---

<sup>13</sup> Text of the bull in AM, Vol. 16 (1736), year 1517, no. 23, pp. 42-8; Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 640; Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini*, pp. 20-1.

<sup>14</sup> Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini*, pp. 28-9.

<sup>15</sup> ‘...favorabiles annuamus... V. Et habitum et Capucio quadrato gestare... VII. Ac tam illi, quam vos barbam deferre...’, in *Bullarium Ordinis FF. Minorum S.P. Francisci Capucinatorum*, Michaela e Tugio [Michael Wickart] (ed.), Tom. I, (Romae: Typis Joannis Zempel Austriaci, 1740), p. 3. From now on, *Bullarium Capucinatorum*; Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini*, pp. 29-30.

*original* habit, and they made sure that it was an essential feature in their call for reform and in their literal observance of the Franciscan Rule. Thus, it seemed only natural for Boverio to include, at the end of the first volume of his annals, a treatise on *De vera habitus forma a Seraphico B.P. Francisco instituta*, which, in eleven “demonstrations,” accompanied with images, aimed to show that the Capuchins in fact wore the only truthful copy of the habit of the *poverello*.<sup>16</sup>

However, neither the Observants, nor the Conventuals were going to sit on their hands, and exasperated replies from both branches followed soon. Maybe it was a sign of the times that both the disputes and the competition among the three branches of the Franciscan family happened, now in the seventeenth century, less in the papal courts and more in the public sphere, where the printed publication of controversial (and propagandistic) treatises took the polemic to a different kind of arena. The Observants’ reply came in 1640 by Jacobus de Riddere, in his *Speculum apologeticum fratrum minorum ordinis S. Francisci oppositum annalibus Capucinorum R.P. Zachariae Boverii*.<sup>17</sup> Even though de Riddere repeatedly says that he did not want to dwell in controversies, he still dedicated seven of

---

<sup>16</sup> The treatise, translated into Spanish as “De la verdadera forma de habito instituida por N. Serafico P. S. Francisco, onze demostraciones”, is contained at the end of the book of the *Chronicas De Los Frailes Menores Capuchinos*, but it starts with a new pagination, from *folio* 1.

<sup>17</sup> I will be using the second edition from 1653, Jacobus de Riddere, *Speculum apologeticum fratrum minorum ordinis S. Francisci oppositum annalibus Capucinorum R.P. Zachariae Boverii* (Antverpiae: Apud Gvilielmvm Lesteenivm et Engelbertvm Gymnicvm, 1653); Martin Elbel, in his article “The Making of a Perfect Friar: Habit and Reform in the Franciscan Tradition” (in Jaroslav Miller and László Kontler (eds.), *Friars, Nobles and Burghers – Sermons, Images and Prints. Studies of Culture and Society in Early-Modern Europe*, In Memoriam István György Tóth (Budapest-New York: Central European University Press, 2010), pp. 149-175) refers to this 1640 first edition (p. 153) but the second one of 1653 seems to be the only extant one.

the thirty-one chapters to discuss Boverio's statements on the habit. The Conventual answer, in turn, was written in Italian by Niccolò Catalano and published in 1652, under the title *Fiume del terrestre paradiso diviso in quattro capi, o discorsi. Trattato difensivo del sig. dotto. Niccoló Catalano da Santo Mauro, oue si ragguagli il mondo nella verità dell'antica forma d'habito de' frati minori istituita da S. Francesco*.<sup>18</sup> Although the work deals with the entire work written by Boverio, its focus on the Capuchin's treatise on the habit is clearly expressed in its title.

The arguments displayed in the works are, in fact, much more rhetorical than factual, and the few "facts" presented (if one may so call them) are often accommodated according to the narrative and the purposes of each author. More interesting, perhaps, is to realise that despite the fact that the whole dispute is properly situated in the Early Modern period, so much of the quarrel still resonates with medieval echoes. The format and medium have changed, but the issues are so rooted in the turbulent episodes of the early history of the order – which were, as we have seen in the previous chapter, so closely related to the role of the habit – that it is impossible not to see the continuities beyond the formal changes. Moreover, these continuities and medieval echoes are, indeed, the key to understand the issues that were at the heart of the competing identities developed within the Franciscan family, in which tunics and hoods played such an important and ever-present part. Indeed, these three treatises can be seen as both the materialization and the

---

<sup>18</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume del terrestre paradiso diviso in quattro capi, o discorsi. Trattato difensivo del sig. dotto. Niccoló Catalano da Santo Mauro, oue si ragguagli il mondo nella verità dell'antica forma d'habito de' frati minori istituita da S. Francesco* (Firenze: Stamperia d'Amadore Massi, 1652).

fulfilment of all the scattered, anecdotal, and sometime vague ideas that shaped the system of differences of religious clothes during the Late Middle Ages, but which were never systematised as a structured concept. In this context, one may suggest that the fragmented information that revealed the critical role of clothes in the religious sphere during the Middle Ages, became, in these treatises, crystallised, rationalised and, perhaps more importantly, put in circulation.

Not surprisingly then, the controversy – which at times must have been felt as a bad *déjà vu* to the papacy – was not well received in Rome. Boverio's work, in both its Latin and Italian version, was included in the Index of forbidden books in 1651, at least until it was corrected. The Capuchins complied and the ban was lifted the following year.<sup>19</sup> Catalano's treatise was included in 1658.<sup>20</sup> Although de Ridder's work it is not mentioned as such in the Index – at least in the period from its publication until the decade of 1680 – the same decree that banned Catalano's book also banned 'all the printed books, and those that were to be printed without consulting the Sacred Congregation, discussing the controversy about the true and uninterrupted succession of the sons of St Francis, and the true shape of the hood of the

---

<sup>19</sup> The ban can be found in the *Decretum Sacrae Congregationis Eminentissimorum, et Reverendissimorum DD.S.R.E Cardinalium à Sanctis. D. N. Innocentio papa X. Santaque Sede Apostolica ad indicem Librorum...* (Romae: Ex Typographia Revenderae Camerae Apostolicae, 1651); the restitution, with the corrections in *Decretum Sacrae Congregationis Eminentissimorum, et Reverendissimorum DD.S. Cardinalium...Fr. Raymundus Capisuccus Ord. Praed. Sac. Congr. Secr.*, Romae die 19, Novembris 1652, both in the British Library General Reference Collection, call no. 74/1896.d.4.

<sup>20</sup> In *Decretum Sacrae Congregationis Eminentissimorum, et Reverendissimorum DD.S.R.E Cardinalium à Sanctissimo D. N. Alexandro papa VII Santaque Sede Apostolica ad indicem Librorum...* (Romae: Ex Typographia Revenderae Camerae Apostolicae, 1658), in British Library, General Reference Collection call no. 74/1896.d.4.

same.<sup>21</sup> If de Riddere's book was known to the Congregation, its inclusion in the ban is very likely. Unfortunately, information about the authors is extremely scant. Boverio is the only one who has received more attention, mainly from the same Capuchin circle, and mostly thanks to his role as first official "historian" and also as definitor general of the order.<sup>22</sup> Catalano and de Riddere are much more obscure characters. There is a short note for the former in the work *Biblioteca Napoletana et apparato agli uomini illustri in lettere di Napoli*, published in 1678,<sup>23</sup> and also a brief notice on the latter in the *Bibliotheca universa franciscana*.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the same lack of attention also applies for research on the treatises themselves which, in fact, seem to have never been critically studied together.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>21</sup> 'Libri omnes impressi, et qui inconsulta Sac. Congregatione imprimuntur tractantes controversiam de vera, et non interrupta successione filiorum S. Francisci, et de vera forma Caputij eiusdem.' In *ibidem*.

<sup>22</sup> On Boverio, see *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, Tom. X, (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1938) pp. 291-2; A. Mercati and A. Pelzer (eds.) *Dizionario Ecclesiastico*, Tom. I (Torino, 1953), p. 423; Vittorio Da Ceva, "Padre Zaccaria Boverio teologo e annalista", *Italia Franciscana* 24 (1949) 133-141; Gianluca Crudo, "Padre Zaccaria Boverio da Saluzzo e le sue Annotazione sui Frati Cappuccini della Calabria [1525-1612]", in *Italia Franciscana* 85 (2019), pp. 499-530. An early biography was written by Francesco da Sestri, in his *Vita del P. Zaccaria Boverio da Saluzzo, diffinitore generale de' capuccini* (Genova: Per Pietro Giovanni Calenzani, 1664).

<sup>23</sup> Niccolò Toppi, *Biblioteca Napoletana et apparato agli uomini illustri in lettere di Napoli* (Napoli: Apresso Antonio Bulifon, 1678), p. 179.

<sup>24</sup> Joannes a Sancto Antonio, *Bibliotheca universa Franciscana, sive Alumnorum trium Ordinum S. P. N. Francisci qui ab Ordine Seraphico condito*, Tom. II (Matriti: ex Typographia Causæ V. Matris de Agreda, 1732), p. 106.

<sup>25</sup> Giovanna Saporì has studied the images in Catalano's work, and refers briefly to the relationship between the Conventual's and the Capuchin's books, in her article "Immagini come documenti, Il caso del *Fiume del terrestre paradiso* (1652) di Niccolò Catalano con le incisioni di Francesco Curti", in G. Bordini, I. Carlettini et al. (eds.), *L'officina dello sguardo. Scritti in onore di Maria Andaloro* (Roma: Gangemi editore, 2014), pp. 205-212. Martin Elbel, in his article "The Making of a Perfect Friar", refers, also succinctly, to de Riddere's work as response to Boverio's treatise. See above, n. 17.



## Revisiting deep-rooted conflicts

It is perhaps fair to say that, in the case of the Franciscans, old grudges were slow to heal. Thus, the contents of the treatises were often less interested in the doctrinaire aspects of the other branches' programme, and more concerned with the other branches' attitudes, as well as the reasons for the defence of such attitudes. When reading the treatises it seems at times that one is suddenly back again in 1318. Arguments from the different sides appear to have not changed much in three hundred years and, at some points, one might even argue that the Capuchins took the baton directly from the Spiritual Franciscans, only with better luck.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly, as we will see below in more detail, the Spirituales themselves (or *narbonnenses* as they were usually referred) were a recurrent topic in the treatises, revisited in a different light according to the particular sympathies of each branch. With both Boverio's demonstrations and his opponents' replies it is possible to have a privileged insight to subjects that, although they may appear rather trivial to the modern reader, reflected the ideas, disputes, worries and anxieties – especially the sartorial ones – that still in the seventeenth century continued to affect the relationships within the Franciscan family. Indeed, the matter of the hood of the habit became one of the central issues for the three polemicists, around which much of the debate hinges upon – where the term hood and habit are often used as interchangeable terms. The centrality of the

---

<sup>26</sup> On the aspects of continuity between the Spiritual Franciscans and the Capuchins, see F. Callaey, "L'Infiltration des idées Franciscaines Spirituelles chez les Frères Mineurs Capucins au 16<sup>e</sup> siècle", in *Miscellanea Francesco Ehrle*, 1 (1924), pp. 388-403; Thaddeus MacVicar, *The Franciscan Spirituales and the Capuchin Reform* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 1986).

matter, however, is hardly surprising, given the fact that it was indeed the hoods what marked the first departure of the Capuchin reform initiative from the Observant branch, to which Matteo Bassi, Ludovico, and Raffaele da Fossombrone belonged, and that ended up giving them the name with which they became to be, firstly popularly, and then officially, known.<sup>27</sup>

The focus of Boverio's interests in his treatise is put, indeed, on just a few topics that become interwoven – and at points entangled – throughout the work: in his first demonstration he asks whether St Francis showed a certain shape for the habit. He then passes to what is, rather predictably, his main preoccupation in the treatise: the hood of the habit. A first group of arguments concern the shape of the hood in itself: whether the hood established by St Francis was rounded or not (second demonstration); whether St Francis instituted, with the rounded hood, a semicircle (*lunulam*) and scapular – i.e., a separate cowl that covered the shoulders, chest, and upper back, round-shaped in the front, long and triangular in the back – (third demonstration); whether the hood established by St Francis was or not square and pyramidal (or pointed, fourth demonstration), subdivided in six “classes of testimonies,” accompanied with a series of “authenticated” images provided to prove his point. He then discusses if the hood had to be sewn to the habit (fifth demonstration) and, as a proof of authority, whether St Anthony of Padua, St Bonaventure and St Louis of Toulouse wore the square hood (sixth demonstration). The next topic analyses the change of the hood –

---

<sup>27</sup> The original name of the new congregation was *Fratres minores de vita eremitica*, in accordance with its original eremitical programme (Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 644).

its *original* square shape being already proved – studying for how long did this square or pyramidal hood last in the order (seventh demonstration); whether the shape of this square and pointed hood was changed with the authority of the pope or general chapter (eighth demonstration); and in which time and manner was the square and pyramidal hood changed (ninth demonstration). Finally, he seeks to answer whether the Capuchins, who obtained canonical restitution of the square hood from Clement VII, are truly Friars Minor (tenth demonstration),<sup>28</sup> and whether the habit of St Francis and of the Friars Minor has to be considered filthy and too cheap (last demonstration), in reply to another treatise published some decades earlier which deals with the topic.<sup>29</sup>

On his part, de Riddere poses, among the thirty-one questions that complete his work, the following ones targeting the matter of the habit: whether the Capuchin fathers are right to object the Observant fathers for the softness and costliness of their clothes (*quaestio* XXII); whether it is right that the question on the shape of the habit has been raised among those professed in the Franciscan Rule, and who has raised it? (*quaestio* XXIII);

---

<sup>28</sup> Boverio makes here a clever rhetorical move, referring to the permission granted by Clement VII to wear the square hood in his bull *Religionis zelus* (see above, p. 279) as a ‘restitution’, thus subtly reinforcing one of the key concepts in his argumentation, i.e., that the square hood had always been the original one.

<sup>29</sup> ‘An B. P. Franciscus certam, ac determinatam Habitus formam Fratribus Minoribus praescripserit; An forma Caputij a B. P. N. Francisco instituta, fuerit Rotunda, necne?; An cum Caputio rotundo, B. Franciscus Lunulam, & Scapulare instituerit; An forma Caputij a B. Francisco instituta fuerit Quadrata aut Pyramidalis, necne?; An Caputium Professorum, debeat esse cum Habitu coniunctum; An S. Antonius Ulyssiponensis, S. Bonaventura, et S. Ludovicus quadratum Caputium gestaverint; Quamdiu Caputium Quadratum, seu Pyramidale in Ordine floruerit; An auctoritate alicuius Pontificis, aut Capituli Generalis, forma Caputij quadrati, aut pyramidalis sublata fuerit; Quo tempore, et qua ratione forma Caputij quadrati, seu pyramidalis in Ordine mutata fuerit; An Capucini, quibus Forma Quadrati Caputij a Clemente VII Canonice restituta fuit, sint vere Fratres Minores, a B. P. Francisco instituti; An Habitus S. Francisci, & Minorum qui inter homines habitant, sordidus, ac nimis sit censendus.’

whether a particular shape of habit had been prescribed by our blessed father Francis (*quaestio XXIV*); what judgement should be formed concerning the shape of the regular habit of the Friars Minor, and by whom was the form of the one that the Observants wore instituted? (*quaestio XXV*); whether the Rule of the Friars Minor prescribed a pyramidal or square hood (*quaestio XXVI*); whether according to the Rule of the Friars Minors the hood should be sewn to the tunic? (*quaestio XXVII*); what kind of cord should the friars Minor wear? (*quaestio XXVIII*).<sup>30</sup>

Catalano's book, written in a quite flamboyant style (*fiorito*, as the same Giulio Antonio Catalano, provincial minister of Bari and brother of the author, who took under the task of publishing the book after the death of the author,<sup>31</sup> recognises)<sup>32</sup> is, in comparison to the other two treatises, much less straight-forward in his outline. The work is just divided into four chapters or "discourses," of which only the first one receives a particular title: 'For the true and ancient shape of the regular habit of the friars Minor' (*Per la vera, et antica forma dell'habito Regolare de' Frati Minori*). The motivation for the treatise, according to the author, is to reply to the 'violence raised by the partisans of the Capuchin fathers' over the shape of the Franciscan habit, in relation to its representation in a silver statue of St Anthony of Padua, which

---

<sup>30</sup> 'An merito RR. Patres Capucini obiecerint Patribus Observantibus vestium mollitiem et pretiositatem?; An merito de forma habitus quaestio moveatur inter Professores Regulae Franciscanae et quinam illam moveant?; An certa aliqua habitus forma a Beato Patre Nostro Francisco praescripta fuerit?; Quaenam censeri debeat forma Regularis habitus fratrum Minorum, et a quo forma, qua Observantes utuntur, sit instituta?; An Regula Fratrum Mimorum praescribat caputium pyramidalem vel quadratum; An ex Regula Fratrum Minorum caputium debeat esse assutum tunica?; Quali corda Fratres Minores uti debeant?

<sup>31</sup> Giovanna Saporì, "Immagini come documenti", p. 206.

<sup>32</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, page not numbered.

was supposed to be placed in the treasury of the city of Naples.<sup>33</sup> With the not insignificant amount of 559 pages, Catalano's work is not an easy read. His purpose is to address extensively and repetitively the same issues covered by Boverio: the shape of the habit as established by St Francis and as seen in papal bulls; the shape of the hood, and whether it was stitched or not to the tunic; whether the separate cowl (*mozzetta*) was legitimate or not; the role of the Spirituals (which he calls *Narbonensi*), and the use of authenticated images to contest those advanced by Boverio as proof.

### **The hoods of discord: The treatises and their arguments**

As mentioned above, Boverio's demonstrations begins with a discussion about whether St Francis did indeed show a certain shape for the habit of his order, perhaps the obvious starting point to discuss the *true* habit of the saint. He points out that, according to the opinion of some – probably thinking of the other two branches of the Minors – the founder did not require a particular shape for the habit.<sup>34</sup> Boverio argues that, as the 'chronicles of the order show,' the shape and humbleness of the habit was established from the beginning, when St Francis stripped in front of the bishop of Assisi and, with a pair of scissors, cut a cross-shaped habit.<sup>35</sup> His first line of arguments appeals directly to the system of differences of religious dress: if St Francis did not give his order a certain habit, where did it come from?

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., page not numbered (under the heading *a la benignita de lettori*); Giovanna Saporì, "Immagini come documenti", p. 206.

<sup>34</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 878; "De la verdadera forma de habito", fol. 1.

<sup>35</sup> Ibidem. Boverio seems to be referring to the chronicles wrote by the Portuguese Franciscan friar Mark of Lisbon, published between 1556 and 1568. However, he does not get the story completely right; on this episode of St Francis's life, see above, pp. 234-5.

What stops the Minors from taking the habit of another order, asks Boverio. Was Francis so inconsistent that he changed his habit by the day? Did he lack so much counsel and providence that he did not establish a distinct habit to set his followers apart from other orders?<sup>36</sup> For Boverio the matter seems to be almost self-evident, especially as, according to him, the rule itself arranged the shape of the habit, in the prescription that allowed the professed brothers to have two tunics, one with a hood and one without one, and the command to always observe the wretchedness of the habit.<sup>37</sup>

This assertion, however, left an open flank for his opponents. De Riddere states – though not very convincingly – that it would have disgusted him and made him ashamed to dwell on this vain controversy, but that he felt compelled to do so. His reply comes, then, because it has been said that his whole order, in their negligence and transgression of the rule, did not wear a habit of the same shape as the one established and prescribed by St Francis, but that they have, in fact, replaced it with another. Yet, he argues, it has neither been prescribed in the letter of the rule a different shape from the one they wear – ‘as it is evident by reading it’ – nor has any of the saints or old expositions of the rule expressed prescriptions or obligations of this sort; nor Nicholas III or Clement V, from whom yet clear declarations emanated over the shape and cheapness of the habit, as John XXII said in his bull *Quorundam exigit*<sup>38</sup> – a well played argument that is also conveyed in

---

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 883; *ibid.*, fol. 7

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 879; *ibid.*, fols. 2-3 For the prescription of the regarding the habit, see above, p. 51.

<sup>38</sup> Jacobus de Riddere, *Speculum*, p. 227. See above, p. 232.

Catalano's work.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, the Observant points out, 'none of our [brothers] thinks or says that St Francis had prescribed a certain shape for the habit; more correctly, he prescribed and allowed *a tunic with a hood and another without a hood*; however, he did not determine its shape and figure, or whether it should be pointed, rounded or square, but this was left to be determined to his successors and his order, as it was a thing of lesser importance, from which little depends.'<sup>40</sup>

Moreover, if the popes who had made declarations on the rule have said nothing on the matter of the shape, how could it be, he asks, that the pope would forbid the wearing the habit prescribed by the rule to those who have made their profession under that same rule?<sup>41</sup> He also reminds Boverio, probably touching a sensitive point for the Observants in their confrontation with the Capuchins, that together with prescribing the habit, St Francis warned the brothers against 'despising or judging men who they saw in soft and coloured clothes, saying that they rather let each one judge and despise their very self.'<sup>42</sup> In warning against despising secular men, de Riddere argues, the saint certainly 'did not concede fellow brothers to be despised

---

<sup>39</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 214.

<sup>40</sup> '...Nemo enim nostrum cogitat vel dicit sanctum Franciscum nullam habitus formam praescripsisse, imo praescripsit *tunicam cum caputio et aliam sine caputio* permittit: verum an illud acuminatum, rotundum, vel quadratum esse debeat, cuius formae ac figura non determinavit; sed hoc suis succesoribus et Ordini determinandum reliquit tanquam rem minoris momenti, unde minimum dependet...', Jacobus de Riddere, *Speculum*, pp. 232-3. Italics in the original.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 231.

<sup>42</sup> '...Quos moneo et exhortor, ne despiciant neque iudicent homines, quos vident mollibus vestimentis et coloratis indutos, uti cibus et potibus delicatis, sed magis unusquisque iudicet et despiciat semetipsum.' Francis of Assisi, "Regula Bullata", p. 229; Jacobus de Riddere, *Speculum*, p. 212.

and superiors to be judged, who so often have been united by the popes regarding the cheapness (*vilitate*) of their clothes.<sup>43</sup>

Here the argument almost turns into a philosophical discussion about what this *vilitas* of the Franciscan habit entails. The first thing that must be established in the matter, continues de Riddere, is that the cheapness (*vilitatem*) of the brothers' clothes has been prescribed in the rule, namely saying that all brothers are to wear cheap clothes (*fratres omnes vestimentis vilibus induantur*). Hence the superiors, who are entrusted with the judgement of the cheapness of the clothes, are bound by their conscience to always abide by the Rule, and the brothers are compelled to remain within the limits of true cheapness (*Fratres manere cognant intra terminos verae vilitatis*). Secondly, this cheapness is not prescribed as a precise absolute, otherwise the judgement and determination brought together by the superiors would be in vain, when the rule itself has defined the highest cheapness (*summam vilitatem*).<sup>44</sup> Likewise, de Riddere accuses Boverio of dwelling too much in terms such as “very cheap” (*villioribus*) and “most cheap” (*vilissimis*), even when it has neither been prescribed, nor declared by any pope or anyone approved to explain the rule, what is to be understood from its precepts, except that the cheapness should genuinely be that, and that the words “very cheap” or “most cheap” neither should, nor can be taken literally. Finally he adds that the Capuchins will never exhibit to him such a cheap

---

<sup>43</sup> ‘...Qui hoc de saecularibus non iudicandis et despiciendis monuit: non concessit despici confratres, et iudicari Superiores, quibus de vestium vilitate tam saepe a Summis Pontificis iudicium committitur...’, Jacobus de Riddere, *Speculum*, p. 212.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 212-3.



habit that would not be able to be made cheaper (*numquam tam vilem habitum mihi exhibebunt, quin possim facere viliorem*).<sup>45</sup>

This was not just a matter of habits' and hoods' shapes and cheap cloths, but it touched on a dispute that went directly back to first years of the Spiritual movement and Nicholas III's *Exiit qui seminat* (14 August 1279),<sup>46</sup> and his statement that the superiors of the order had the ultimate word regarding the habits, provided that they observed the *vilitas* required by the rule. This arrangement was then upheld by both Clement V's *Exivi de paradiso* (6 May 1312),<sup>47</sup> and John XXII's *Quorundam exigit* (7 October 1317), and yet again by Clement VI in the controversies surrounding Gentile da Spoleto. The problem with this provision was that, in the eyes of the reform movements, from the Spirituals, to Gentile's group, to the Capuchins, the superiors could not only be mistaken at times, but that when it came to the observance of the poverty of the habit in particular, they had been downright on the wrong path.

For Boverio, the argument hinges upon the idea that the superiors could indeed decide over the habits of the novices, but not over the ones of the professed brother. According to him, Clement V's *Exivi de paradiso* stated that it was not licit for those who had made their profession to change the shape of the habit<sup>48</sup> – a rather paradoxical assertion coming from an order

---

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 215.

<sup>46</sup> In BF III, no. 127, p. 413.

<sup>47</sup> In BF V, no. 195, p. 82.

<sup>48</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 879-80; "De la verdadera forma de habito", fol. 3. In fact, the bull just says that the friars must observe the precepts of the rule to which they are bound, '...item quod omnia, quae ponuntur in regula ad formam habitus tam novitiorum quam etiam professorum necnon ad receptionis modum ac professionem spectantia, nisi recipientibus

that did just that when it came into existence. This last declaration shows how the discussion seems at times to be more of an almost ontological debate: Boverio is of course thinking of those who changed the *original* shape of the habit, but then the natural response from his adversaries is against this pretended *original* form. The Capuchin argues that even given the power of the superiors to determine the length and width of the habit, or its coarseness, this does not relate to the “essential shape” of the habit, in contrast with the “accidentals” that may affect it over the years.<sup>49</sup> For Catalano, Boverio is gravely wrong in such an assertion, as he is falsely distinguishing between both categories, when there are only “accidental” differences when talking about clothing, Catalano says, perhaps calling Boverio’s bluff. Moreover, Catalano is here touching a central element of the system of differences of religious dress: what are the differences, he asks, between being dressed, for example, in the “Spanish way” or in the “French way”, if it is not for the accidental distinctive shapes between them, because they could just be made from the same cloth and colour. Even if the pyramidal and the rounded habit (i.e., hood) were essentially and specifically different, essence and accident in the habit are just the same thing.<sup>50</sup>

Boverio’s second demonstration is quite succinct, but introduces topics that the Capuchin will examine in more detail further on. It starts with Boverio pointing out that those who denied that St Francis himself

---

quoad habitum novitiorum (sicut dicit regula) secundum Deum aliter videatur: haec (inquam) omnia sunt a fratribus tamquam obligatoria servanda...’, in BF V, no. 185, p. 82.

<sup>49</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 880; “De la verdadera forma de habito”, fols. 4-5.

<sup>50</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 216.

established the shape of the habit repeat the same argument – as one would expect – for the shape of the rounded hood, worn by Observants and Conventuals alike. Boverio states that, in fact, he agrees with this assertion, since those who maintain that the saint was the author of the rounded hood would have to infer this either from his precepts, from his example, from the testimony of ancient writers, from the conserved hoods worn by Francis or his companions, or from the old images of the saint. None of them, says the Capuchin, proves their point. He seems to contradict himself, however, when he asserts that the rule only mentions that the professed brothers can have a tunic with a hood, without specifying its shape. Yet, he is quick to point out that the writers (of the order), both old and modern are not only silent on such a round hood, but that they state that St Francis did indeed establish the square or pyramidal hood. Moreover, he adds, none of the hoods conserved shows the rounded shape.<sup>51</sup>

De Riddere replies that Boverio misunderstands the statutes promulgated by Bonaventura in the general chapter of Narbonne, 1260, in which the length of the hood was regulated.<sup>52</sup> The shape established according to Boverios' ideas and sketched out in his images, argues the Observant, had long departed from that true square shape. More remarkably, states de Riddere, the Capuchins have moved away from that square shape by means of excess, as the Observants have done by means of absence. However, he asks, what use is it to dispute this nonsense? What is certain is

---

<sup>51</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, pp. 883-4; "De la verdadera forma de habito", fols. 7-8.

<sup>52</sup> The statutes of Narbonne did not regulate, however, the measures of the habit (see Michael Bihl, "Statuta Generalia Ordinis, edita in Capitulis Generalibus Celebratis Narbonnae an. 1260", pp. 42-5. De Riddere might have been confusing them with the ones of Assisi of 1316 that did provide such details (see above, pp. 249-50).

that the shape of the hood, square or rounded was of little concern for St Francis, as these things provide nothing, neither for the internal nor for the external expression of religion.<sup>53</sup> 'It appears that our fathers, when taking up the rounded shape – continues de Riddere – were paying attention to poverty, to refrain from the superfluity of cloth, seeing that the peak of the hood would be utterly useless to the end of covering the head. However, the semicircle [*lunula*] or mozetta is not useless or superfluous but, following the example of the religious of other orders, it is of use to honesty, and it covers the nudity of the neck and chest.'<sup>54</sup>

The third demonstration advanced by Boverio, on whether Francis instituted the rounded hood with semicircle (*lunulam*) and scapular, covers in turn some interesting topics, giving the reader a better insight into the Capuchin's way of thinking. From the rounded hood, he passes then to the cowl worn by both Observants and Conventuals. These were not trivial issues. For the Capuchins, this was a double sartorial deviation, from square to rounded hoods, and from them to the use of a cowl (also designated as hood with *mozzetta*, as the elbow-long cape worn usually by the canons regular), therefore introducing a whole new garment, in defiance of the humble and simple attire prescribed by the rule. According to Boverio, it was considered an integral part of the rounded hood, so the rationale was that, if St Francis had approved this kind of hood, he must also have approved the

---

<sup>53</sup> Jacobus de Riddere, *Speculum*, pp. 242-3

<sup>54</sup> 'Videntur Patres nostri, cum rotundam figuram assumpserunt, paupertati consuluisse, ut superfluitati pannorum parcerent: quandoquidem acumen ad capitis usus ac tegumentum prorsus sit inutile. Non sit autem inutilis aut superflua lunula seu mozetta, sed deserviat honestati, exemplo Religiosorum aliorum Ordinum, protegatque colli ac Pectoris nuditatem...', *ibid.*, p. 243.

cowl. Nevertheless, says the Capuchin, if this idea had already been dismissed for the hood, it certainly also applied to the cowl. The habit prescribed in the rule for the professed brothers, with one tunic with a hood and one without a hood, contrasted with the habit of the novices, consisting of two tunics without hood, and a *caparonem*, a short cape reaching down to the belt. The obvious conclusion, says Boverio, when seeing that the biggest difference in dress between novices and professed brothers was, in fact, the presence or absence of the hood, is that the same hood was sewn to the tunic and that no cowl was intended<sup>55</sup> – a notion to which he will return to discuss at length in his fifth demonstration.

The third demonstration also introduces a remarkable, if not at all new, topic: the story of St Francis reprehending Elias for his fancy habit.<sup>56</sup> It is worth noting that, apart from the fact that by this point the tale seems to have been already incorporated as part of Franciscan history, the account had a surprising plasticity, being interpreted with different filters, and serving different purposes according to each branch's position. For Boverio, the story is now read in a Capuchin key, so he highlights how Elias's habit was long and wide, and softer than the one prescribed in the rule, and that, when Francis put it over his own habit, 'he had to adjust his hood.' From this detail, he says, his opponents declare that the original existence of a cowl becomes obvious, as there needed to be "something" to be adjusted. The Capuchin is quick to clarify, though, that the account also said that, as the tunic was so large, Francis had to make some folds around the waist to fit it, and then 'he

---

<sup>55</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 885; "De la verdadera forma de habito", fol. 10.

<sup>56</sup> See above, p. 238.

lifted the hood.’ This, stated Boverio – although rather unconvincingly, as he does not explain why – clearly showed that the hood was square and pointed, so it could be lifted, an action that could not be done with the rounded hood.<sup>57</sup> De Riddere omits any reference to the Elias’s story, but Catalano compensates for his silence greatly, referring the account several times in his work. However, he inverts the sense given to the story by the Spiritual tradition: Elias, traditionally the recipient and representation of the deviation from the original spirit of the order, is now not the predecessor of the Conventuals, as the zealot faction wanted to make him, but of the Capuchins themselves.<sup>58</sup>

Catalano states that, as a matter of fact, the “Elian habit” had the exact same shape of the Capuchin one. The problem seems to reside in the way in which the story was read. Where Boverio reads the mentioned hood as the hood in Francis’s own habit, Catalano interprets it as the hood in the fancy habit of Elias. As the story is apocryphal, and not very clear in this regard for that matter, it is irrelevant whose interpretation is the correct one. What is significant is the pervasive use of the story, with all its connotations, still three hundred years later. Catalano advances the link between Elias and the Capuchins even further: how can the Capuchins deny that their habits are like the one worn and established by Elias, he asks, if the same Boverio uses an image of Francis’s companion wearing the pyramidal hood, with the legend *frater Elias fieri fecit?*<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, the Conventual asserts –

---

<sup>57</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 885; “De la verdadera forma de habito”, fols. 9-10.

<sup>58</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 59.

<sup>59</sup> Catalano is referring to the crucifix commissioned by brother Elias from the artist Giunta Pisano and dated 1236, for the first Basilica of St Francis in Assisi, but lost in the

quoting Wadding<sup>60</sup> – that the eremitical life professed by the Capuchins was not instituted by Francis, but by brother Elias, who also sported a long beard, just as the Capuchins do.<sup>61</sup> It is curious for Catalano to make such a statement, since St Francis’s eremitical period in the early days of his conversion were well recorded since the first biographies of the saint, as well as the retirements he sought during the rest of his life.<sup>62</sup>

Nevertheless, Catalano adds, again quoting Wadding, it was Elias, during the time that Francis spent in Egypt, who introduced the pyramidal hood.<sup>63</sup> Elias – he continues – who was a very ambitious man, always eager to leave a memory of himself within the order, and also somewhat contumacious, procured to satisfy his pride in the habit, making it not only different, but also contrary to the wishes of the founding father. This habit, asserts Catalano, was not the one with *mozzetta*, so it had to be the one with the pyramidal hood, which he introduced as vicar general after the death of St Francis. It was, thus, the visible sign of the “Elian congregation” and of the

---

seventeenth century. It represented Elias kneeling at the foot of the crucifix and it bore the inscription *Frater Elias fieri me fecit / Iesu Christe pie / miserere precantis Elias / Iuncta Pisanus me pinxit A.D.MCCXXXVI 9*. See Rosalind B. Brooke, *The Image of St Francis*, p. 62.

<sup>60</sup> AM, Vol. 2 (1732), year 1230, no. 12, p. 243. However, Wadding seems to be referring to the episode, narrated by Thomas of Eccleston, in which Elias, after his supporters had tried to take the generalship from John Parenti by force, retired to an hermitage to do penitence, including letting his hair and beard grown long: ‘...Frater vero Helias, divertens ad quoddam heremitorium, permisit sibi crescere comam et barbam, et per hanc simulationis sanctitatis ordini et fratribus reconciliatus est...’, in *Frater Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston Tractatus*, p. 66; John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, pp. 88-9); Rosalind Brooke, *Early Franciscan Government*, pp. 143-5.

<sup>61</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, pp. 96-7.

<sup>62</sup> See André Vauchez, *François D’Assise*, pp. 62-3.

<sup>63</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 96. Wadding portrays the time Elias assumed some leadership position in the order while Francis was in the East as a period in which the former relaxed the discipline and strict observance of the rule (although he is relying on Angelo Clareno for this account, so it should be taken with some caution). However, there is no mention of any change on the habit, let alone on the shape of the hood. In AM Vol. 1, years 1219-20, no. 1, p. 331-2

simulated reform of brother Elias. Likewise, Catalano states that this habit was held in contempt by Francis, who detested it and cast it away, and considered it the habit of the bastards of the order. Consequently, the true habit of the legitimate sons of the founder could not be the one with the pyramidal hood, much less would it be the saint's creation.<sup>64</sup> Catalano then links Elias to the zealot friars referred in the *Chronicle of the Twenty-four Generals*, who during the generalship Crescentius de lesi 'dressed differently, keeping their mantles short up to their buttocks,'<sup>65</sup> and who were generally seen as forerunners to the Spirituals. Catalano tries to explain the discrepancy between the long and wide habit that had gained Elias Francis's reproach and the short habits of the Italian zealots, saying that, at the end, what Elias wanted was to separate himself from the community of the order<sup>66</sup> – just as the Spirituals and the Capuchins had done and which was the action that the community of the order could never tolerate. Elias will appear again further on in the Conventual's treatise, as a means to discredit or contradict some of Boverio's assertions. One of the aspects that appears so remarkable about the recurrent use of Francis's companion is his archetypal representation of being the "other" within the order; in the efforts to build and develop a self-identity amid the confrontations among the

---

<sup>64</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, pp. 96-8. However, Catalano gets his facts wrong here; although the figure of the vicar existed during Francis life, to take his place in the government of the order while he was away, and Elias indeed took the role after Francis's death, from 1226 until John Parenti was elected minister general in 1227 (John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, pp. 83-4), the figure of the vicar general was not introduced until the Observant reform and the subsequent division of the order. However, later on Catalano does refer him as minister general (p. 99). See John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, pp. 449-50, Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division*, p. 550. Elias became minister general of the order in 1232 (John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*, p. 96).

<sup>65</sup> See above, p. 227; Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, pp. 99-100.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibidem*.



different members of the Franciscan family, Elias became the perfect metaphor of the transgressions to the system of differences of religious dress that each faction continued to resort to.

Boverio's fourth demonstration is perhaps the most fascinating of the treatise, and also the longest one. Here he introduces a sub-division, presenting different "classes of testimonies" to answer the question of whether the hood established by St Francis was indeed square and pyramidal. The first "testimony," 'from the rule' discusses again some of the points addressed in this regard early on in the work but serving, in this case, a different purpose. Boverio starts by acknowledging that, indeed, there is no mention in the rule of either rounded or square hoods, but just plainly of the one hood that the brothers were allowed to have. However, says the Capuchin, if one pays attention not so much to the letter of the rule, but to its spirit – a rather paradoxical idea coming from a branch that started with a group of friars who vowed to follow the rule to the letter and nothing more – it becomes obvious that the hood that Francis wanted to show was the same that he and his companions were wearing. Moreover, Boverio again develops an argument that seems relevant in the context of the system of differences of religious habits: it would make no sense, he argues, that their founder had not singled out a certain shape for the hood, because that would mean that there was no uniformity of habit in the order. If some brothers went about with square hoods, or with rounded ones, or longer or shorter ones, how would they be distinguished from the rest? And this, we know, was an essential element for religious orders and their "brand." Therefore, the Capuchin

argues that Francis talked plainly about hoods in the rule because for him the shape was evident (although one might ask if it was not, in fact, a totally unimportant matter to him), and, according to Boverio, that shape was square, because it was the only one that existed.<sup>67</sup> Indeed, to prove this apparently “self-evident” matter is the task to which he dedicates himself to during the rest of his demonstrations.

The second “class of testimonies” touches a topic that, by this point, seems to have become a tradition within the order: the role of the extant hoods and habits of St Francis and his companions. As seen in the previous chapter, the remains of St Francis’s habit had become precious, not only as relics, but also as an argument of authority for the zealot and reform groups, Spirituals, Fraticelli and Observants alike. Boverio argues that, rather than his word, it is “antiquity” what would be the judge for his case. By knowing which was the “original” hood worn in the old times, the truth of the shape that must be observed by the order would become clear. To this purpose, the author accompanies each described garment with what he calls an “authentic copy” of the same. The first evidence comes from the habit that Francis was supposed to be wearing when he allegedly received the stigmata in the hermitage of La Verna, Italy, and conserved – till the present day – in Florence, in the Observant convent of Ognissanti, which, according to Boverio, shows a square and pointed hood (fig. 1). The second habit of St Francis is the one conserved in the church of the Conventual fathers in Assisi, believed to be the one that the saint was wearing at the moment of his

---

<sup>67</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 888; “De la verdadera forma de habito”, fol. 13.

death, again with a square and pointed hood sewn to the habit, and without any semicircle piece of cloth or *mozzetta* (fig. 2).

*Habitus S. Francisci Florentie asseruatus.*



Fig. 1: St Francis's habit conserved in Florence (Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 890).

*Habitus S. Francisci Assisij in Ecclesia S. Fran. asseruatus.*



Fig. 2: St Francis's habit conserved at the Conventual's church in Assisi (Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 891).

Then Boverio presents the habit of St Francis conserved in the church of St Clare in Assisi, yet again without the *mozzetta* and with a square and pointed hood (fig. 3) – one can see the pattern emerging here. This is followed by the habit conserved in Pisa (fig. 4); the habit of brother Peter Catani, one of the first companions of the founder and first minister general of the order after St Francis renounced to its leadership<sup>68</sup> (fig. 5); the one of brother Morico, another of his first companions (fig. 6), and the one of a certain brother Eleuterio (fig. 7). To all this Boverio also adds the evidence

<sup>68</sup> Rosalind B. Brooke, *Early Franciscan Government*, pp. 76-83.

provided by a hood of St Francis conserved in the church of San Marcello, in Rome (fig. 8) and the one of brother Rufino (fig. 9), both, of course, in a square and pointed shape.<sup>69</sup> He then goes to enumerate a series of other habits conserved from the first years of the order, to show that this was, by then, a well-established practice. Thus, throwing down the gauntlet, he invites anyone with a different opinion to ‘show at least one testimony of a round hood so that they can prove their lineage to St Francis’.<sup>70</sup>



Fig. 3: St Francis's habit conserved at the church of St Clara in Assisi (Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 892).



Fig. 4: St Francis's habit conserved in Pisa (Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 893).

<sup>69</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, pp. 889-97; "De la verdadera forma de habito", fols. 14-22.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 898; *ibid.*, fol. 24.

*Habitus B. Petri Catanei Aprusti,  
in Calabria asseruatus.*



Fig. 5: Habit of Peter Catani (Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 894).

*Habitus B. Morici, qui Oropiti  
asseruatur.*



Fig. 6: Habit of brother Morico (Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 895).

*Habitus B. Eleutherij in Monte  
Aluernie asseruatus.*



Fig. 7: Habit of brother Eleuterio (Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 894).



<sup>8</sup>  
*Caputium S. Francisci, quod Romæ in Ecclesia  
S. Marcelli aſſeruat.*

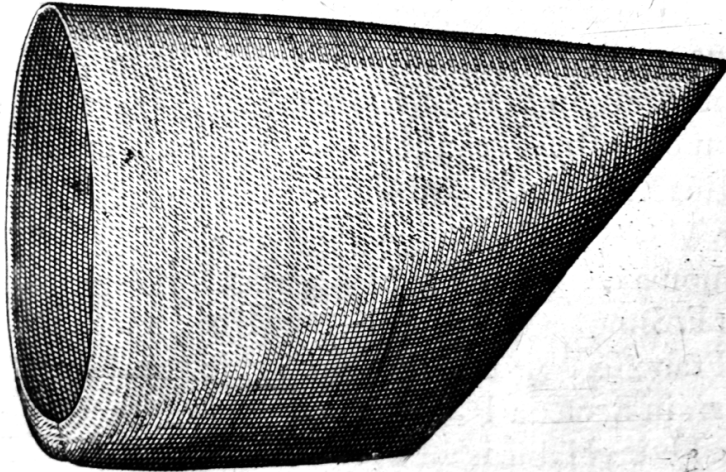


Fig. 8: Hood of St Francis (Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 897).

*Caputium B. Ruffini, quod in Ecclesia S. Clare  
Assisij aſſeruat.*

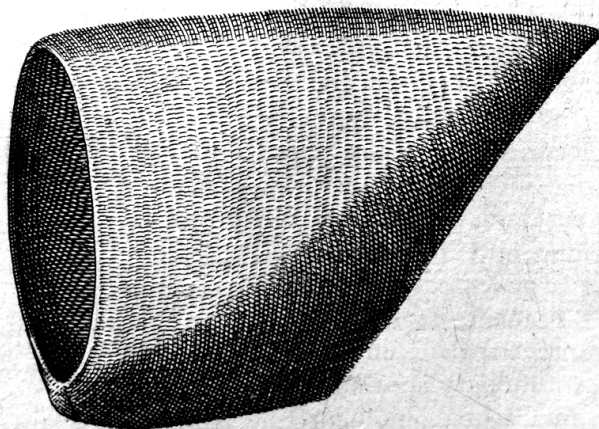


Fig. 9: Hood of brother Rufino (Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 897).

De Riddere replies in a general way to this sort of evidence stating that Boverio was wrong when he said that St Francis and his companions wore the cheapest (*vilissimus*) clothes, since, in fact and according to Wadding, the habit with which he received the stigmata, and conserved in Florence, was not the cheapest or extraordinarily cheap (*non fuit aut vilissimus, aut extraordinarie vilis*). According to the Franciscan annalist, quotes de Riddere, brother Antonio Daza was able to take the habit out from its reliquary in 1621 and examine it, noting that it was ash coloured, of cheap sack, but neither too coarse, nor too narrow.<sup>71</sup> However – and rather conveniently – the Observant leaves out the passage that follows this description, in which it is also stated that the hood of said habit was square, and without the semicircle hanging in front, usually called *mozzetta*.<sup>72</sup> We see how, in a way, St Francis's true habit was a construction, in which each faction chose the pieces that adapted more conveniently to their narrative.

Catalano, on his part, was of course not going to let the challenge posed by Boverio pass unanswered, so, following the Capuchin's example, he offers his own set of authenticated copies of images to confront the ones offered in Boverio's treatise. Therefore, he firstly presents an alternative hood to the one allegedly worn by Peter Catani (after questioning the veracity of those of brother Morico and brother Eleuterio), pointing out that this is not a pyramidal hood, but a square one, with a 'somewhat pointed angle' (fig.

---

<sup>71</sup> Jacobus de Riddere, *Speculum*, pp. 218-9; AM, Vol. 1, year 1208, no. 5, p. 47. This episode and the appreciation made by Daza on the quality of the conserved habit is also referred by the Capuchin Leandro of Murcia in his *Questiones selectas regulares y exposicion sobre la Regla de los Frailes Menores* (Madrid: Por Gregorio Rodriguez, 1645), p. 105.

<sup>72</sup> AM, Vol. 1, year 1208, no. 5, p. 47.

10).<sup>73</sup> To this example, the Conventual adds the image of a clearly rounded hood with *mozzetta*, allegedly worn by the Franciscan Blessed Francesco of Fabriano<sup>74</sup> (1251-1322, fig. 11). This rounded hood is followed by another three that Catalano now attributes to St Francis himself: one kept in Guardiagrele (Abruzzo, Italy, fig. 12), another kept in L'Aquila (also in Abruzzo, fig. 13) and a last one kept in the very Sacred Convent of Assisi, 'in the Chapel of the Sacred Relics, in the lower church, in a small wooden chest inlaid with ivory, with carved figures, and which is kept in custody under five different keys'<sup>75</sup> (fig. 14). Remarkably, Boverio also claims that the hood kept by the Conventual fathers of Assisi 'in the internal tabernacle of their church'<sup>76</sup> is another piece of evidence for his cause. Somehow, the relics of Francis's habits could fulfil the imagination of anyone claiming their authority.

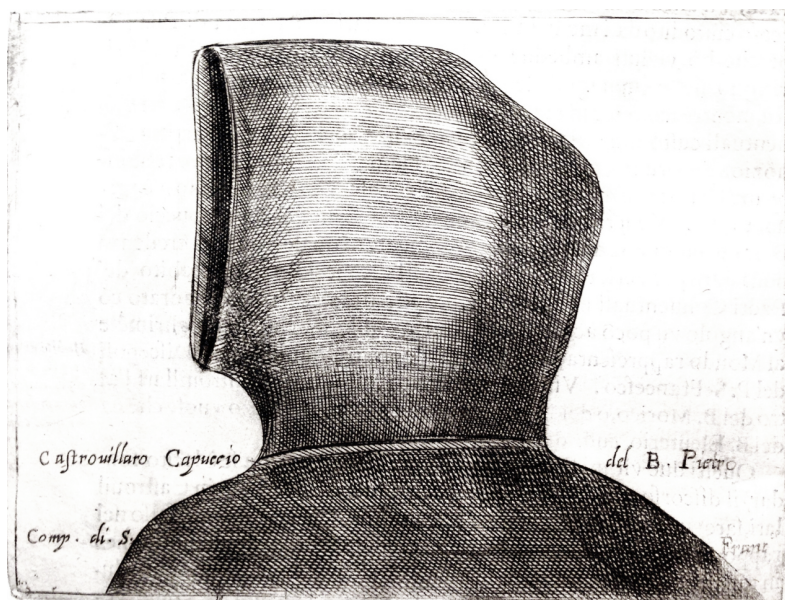


Fig. 10: Hood of Peter Catani (Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 268).

<sup>73</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 267.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 488-9; Wadding refers to his birth in AM, Vol. 3 (1732), year 1251, no. 30, pp. 244-5. See also *Acta Sanctorum*, April, Vol. III, pp. 88-94.

<sup>75</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 495, described also in pp. 376-7.

<sup>76</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 898; "De la verdadera forma de habito", fol. 23.



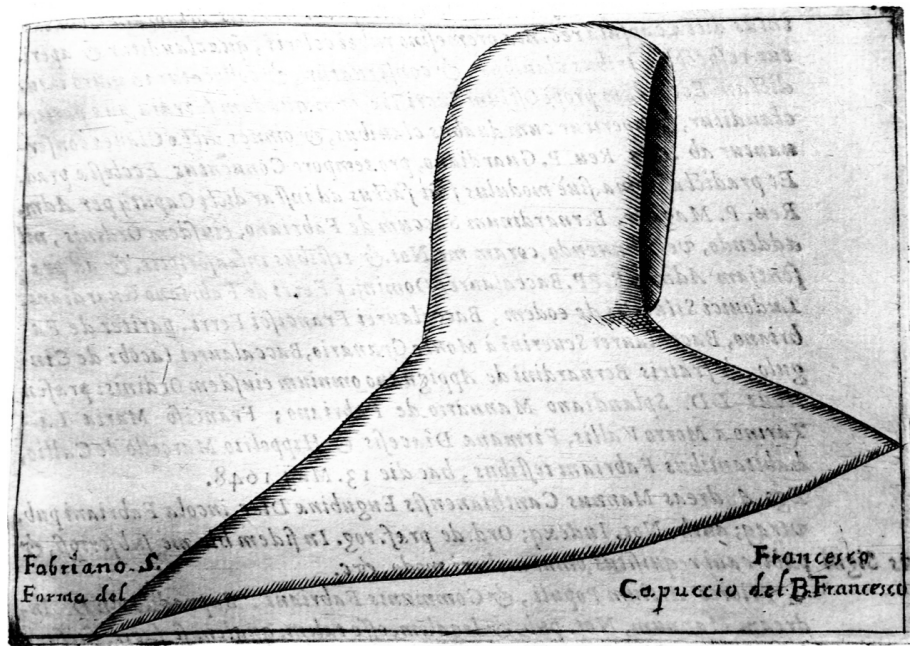


Fig. 11: Hood of Francesco of Fabiano (Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 487).



Fig. 12: Hood of St Francis conserved in Guardia Grele (Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 490).





Fig. 13: Hood of St Francis conserved in L'Aquila (Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 492).



Fig. 14: Hood of St Francis conserved at the Conventual convent in Assisi (Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 494).

The “third class of testimonies” presented by Boverio takes into account ‘the images and old sculptures of our father St Francis and his companions.’<sup>77</sup> Although, says the Capuchin, the evidence provided on the habits and hoods of Francis and his companions should suffice to prove his argument, he wanted to add to this the ancient images painted in the walls and the stone sculptures that, since the times of the founder, and long preceding both Observants and Capuchins, show again the true shape of the original habit. Boverio’s argument here has a good share of common sense and, more noteworthy, his reasoning is not so distant from a principle that still holds true in our modern approach to the use of images as historical sources, which is, indeed, how the Capuchin intends their use. After all, these kinds of images continue to inform our own ideas and anyone who has seen, for example, the frescoes in the Basilica of St Francis in Assisi, has probably formed a fairly clear image of how Franciscans might have looked at the time the frescoes were made. Painters, points out Boverio, would not paint St Francis with the cowl of St Benedict, or St Benedict dress in sackcloth. In other words, they understood well, as did any of their contemporaries, the system of differences of religious dress. Moreover, observes the Capuchin, the old images that show Francis with a square hood were the product not of the painter’s imagination, but of the devotion of the faithful, and of the patrons who wanted to see the saint portrayed as they were used to seeing him during his life.

---

<sup>77</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 899-900; “De la verdadera forma de habito”, fols. 24-5.

Thus, Boverio presents an array of several ‘truthful copies of images of St Francis, his companions and other ancient fathers’, sent from the various provinces of the order and verified by a public notary, in which they can be seen clearly wearing the Capuchin habit.<sup>78</sup> This collection is then accompanied by the reproduction of the said images, providing, in fact, an interesting catalogue of Franciscan art, from the first altarpieces made, to Giotto’s famous frescoes, to the mosaics in St John Lateran, to some fifteenth century images. The Capuchin is certainly thorough in his compilation. However, it seems that Boverio was just putting a practice extended among the Capuchins on paper, which motivated the following complaint by de Ridder: ‘what it is in the heart of the Capuchin fathers – asks the Observant – when they hang in every place and convent, especially near the doors, panels with different figures and images, by which they strive to show that their own habit is to be the same of St Francis’s and his first companions.’<sup>79</sup> It seems that the Capuchins had become keenly aware of the propagandistic power of images, and the fundamental role they could play in their programme as the true re-enactors of St Francis – and of his habit.

Catalano is certainly not outdone by Boverio, and contests these testimonies with an array of images of his own, and a long one at that. At this point, it almost seems that the controversy becomes a contest in which the

---

<sup>78</sup> Ibidem. An interesting account on artistic representations of St Francis during the first century of Franciscan story is provided by William R. Cook in his work *Images of St Francis of Assisi: in Painting, Stone, and Glass; from the Earliest Images to ca. 1320 in Italy. A Catalogue* (Firenze: L.S. Olschki; Perth, W.A.: Dept. of Italian of the University of W. Australia, 1999). On the same topic see, of course, Rosalind B. Brooke’s great book, *The image of St. Francis*.

<sup>79</sup> ‘...Quae res ita Patribus Capucinis cordi est, ut in omnibus locis and conventibus praecipuis circa portarias, tabulas appendant cum figuris et imaginibus diversis; quibus eundem suum et sancti Francisci ac primorum eius sociorum habitum esse demonstrare nituntur...’, Jacobus de Ridder, *Speculum*, p. 224.

one who can show quantitatively more becomes the winner. The Conventual observes that he stays 'quite amazed at the license that this author – meaning Boverio – takes when he says that, before the year 1400, there are no sculptures and images of the father St Francis and of other saints and brothers of the order with the semicircle garment with scapular,' and that it seemed that the Capuchin preferred to write and to say whatever he pleased in this matter, and not what he should, rather following the suggestions of 'his friend, the fantasy, and not of the truth.'<sup>80</sup> Therefore, he adds, he had decided to print at the end of his work all the images and sculptures he had found, not because he had such a high opinion of arguments from images, but to show that Boverio's evidence could be 'very misleading' and have grave exceptions.<sup>81</sup>

The Conventual also questions and refutes at length the images presented by Boverio, saying, for example, that many of his images were not authenticated.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, he claims, most of the ones that depicted St Francis wearing a habit with a pyramidal hood were, in fact, the deed of the Fraticelli, or of those brothers who, 'under the title of spirituali' wanted to be separated from the order, or even of brother Elias and his followers, or of Michael of Cesena 'rebel to the Church'.<sup>83</sup> In any case, for Catalano they were the work of any of those who had embodied disobedience, pride and division from the community of the order, and who had attempted to differentiate themselves through their clothes. It is noteworthy that, among

---

<sup>80</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 66.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 330-4.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 283; 307.

Catalano's images, there are also some that overlap with those in Boverio's work, as it is for example the case with the images painted by Giotto. Even though both authors present themselves under a pragmatic light, seeking to show what they deem to be a factual truth, these examples reveal to what extent the disputes over the habit – like any process of identity construction – had never ceased to have a large emotional and ideological component, in which the truth of that *true habit* is always understood from a biased standpoint.

Boverio's fifth demonstration, in which he discusses whether the hood of the professed brothers had to be sewn to the tunic, seems to touch a sensitive point, judging from the rather exasperated replies provided by his two opponents. The Capuchin's argument is centred again in the letter of the rule and the prescription that those making the profession were permitted to have two tunics, one with a hood, and one without a hood (*unam tunicam cum caputio, et alteram sine caputio*). For Boverio the issue seems to be self-evident: a tunic without a hood is a tunic without an attached hood. The obvious conclusion, then, is that a tunic with a hood is a tunic with a hood sewn to it, because what would be the purpose of adding such a clause if both tunics were hood-free? As a matter of fact, he says, St Bonaventura, in his exposition of the rule, understood, from this prescription, that the tunic with a hood should be seen as the habit.<sup>84</sup> Thus, determines the Capuchin,

---

<sup>84</sup> '...Et illi, qui promiserunt Obedientiam, profesi scilicet, habeant unam tunicam cum caputio, in qua habitus intelligitur...', Bonaventura, "Expositio Super Regulam FF. Minorum", in S. Bonaventurae *Opera Omnia*, Tom. VIII (Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi): Ex typographia Colegii S. Bonaventurae, 1898), pp. 391-437; p. 402.

for a tunic to become a habit, it needs to have the hood stitched to it.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, this is also the feature that, according to Boverio, marks the change from novitiate to profession, as the rule clearly states that the novices were to receive the cloths of probation, consisting in the two tunics without a hood, a belt, breeches and the *caparonem* described above.<sup>86</sup>

De Riddere dedicates his entire *quaestio XXVII* to reply to this matter. He starts by pointing out that, although Boverio tries to show that the rule is violated by the unattached hoods – assuming that it is clear from the words of the rule that the professed brothers are bound to wear the sewn habit – the rule, in fact, does not prescribe anything in this sense. While for the Capuchins the use of an unstitched hood by the novices seemed to be enough to show the differences with the professed brothers, for the Observants this was not sufficient. As for the latter the hood had never been sewn to the tunic, they had to give the novices the *caparonem*, this other garment, to make the difference patent.<sup>87</sup> There was another practical reason as well: generally, he observes, the two tunics permitted by the Rule were worn simultaneously by everyone, due to ‘rational necessity.’ Indeed – he adds – as it often happened that only the hood of the upper tunic got stained with sweat, and since the rule was not thought to compel it to be sewn, it was decided more suitable to wear it separated from the tunic, lest it would be always necessary to change the whole habit only to wash the hood.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>85</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, pp. 937-38; “De la verdadera forma de habito”, fols. 64-5

<sup>86</sup> ‘...concedant eis pannos probationis, videlicet duas tunicas sine caputio et cingulum et braccas et caparonem usque ad cingulum, nisi eisdem ministris aliud secundum Deum aliquando videatur...’, Francis of Assisi, “Regula Bullata”, p. 228.

<sup>87</sup> Jacobus de Riddere, *Speculum*, pp. 247; p. 249.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248.

De Riddere then moves to a grammatical discussion about the letter of the rule: the Friars Minor, he asserts, when wearing just one hooded tunic, distinguished indeed themselves from other orders who usually wear two hoods at the same time. Therefore, the “with” (*cum*) of the rule does not indicate so much a connection between the tunic and the hood, but between having a tunic and having a hood. Thus, the sense is: they can and should have a tunic with a hood, and those who want can have another, but without a hood. What the rule prohibits is to have two hoods, whether stitched or not. Moreover, for the Observant, by contrast with Boverio, it is not clear that the *tunic without hood* is the one which does not have it sewn, and the one *with hood* the one that has it stitched to it: Boverio speaks – points out the Observant – as if the particle *with (particula cum)* inevitably conveyed that the hood was sewn to the habit. However, it was certain that this particle not always implied such a connection, even when the habit was being discussed.<sup>89</sup> Accordingly, he continues, ‘our holy father said in his testament: *we were satisfied with one tunic with a belt and breeches,*’ and no one understood from this that these garments were sewn together.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, he adds, it was not clearly agreed that the hood of the professed brothers should be stitched to the tunic. Because, he says, if this can be so certainly inferred, it is extraordinary that so many men who, having knowledge of the rule, have hitherto not seen this connection, and have continued to be unable to see it. It is remarkable, continues the Observant, that Alexander of Hales

---

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 251. Italics in the original.

<sup>90</sup> Ibidem. Italics in the original. The fragment of the Testament reads: ‘...et illi qui veniebant ad recipiendam vitam, *omnia quae habere poterant* (Tob. 1, 3), dabant pauperibus; et erant contenti tunica una intus et foris repeciata, cum cingulo et braccis. Et nolebamus plus habere...’, Francis of Assis, “Testamentum”, p. 310. Italics in the original.



and the other masters, St Bonaventura, Hugh of Digne, Bartholomeus of Pisa and the rest of the ancient exponents of the rule had not kept in mind such an obligation, but that the words of the rule only teach to forbid other plurality of clothes.<sup>91</sup>

The Italian Conventual, on his side, also offers his thoughts on this matter, first and foremost, to defend the orthodoxy of his own branch. Boverio can say whatever he wants, declares Catalano, but it is false that the hood of the professed brothers should be sewn to the habit by virtue of the rule. Not only such a feature would be regulated under precept, Catalano states, but wearing it otherwise would also be a mortal sin, and the Conventuals, who wore the hood unstitched, were not sinning, not even venially. Moreover, the rule prescribes having, or not having, the hood, not having it sewn or unsewn from the habit.<sup>92</sup> Catalano also joins de Riddere's "grammatical" discussion around the word *cum*, arguing that there can be, in the habit, both the simultaneity and the unity conveyed by this term, without having them stitched to each other. The same happens, he remarks, with the papal, the sacerdotal or the military habit, in which the parts exist simultaneously and as a unity, without them being necessarily sewn together.<sup>93</sup> That *cum* particle, meaning simultaneity and company, has never had force and meaning of stitching, not even when talking about clothes. Therefore, when the rule talks about a tunic with a hood and another without one, it is merely stating that the brothers can have a hood, without meaning it should be sewn: one can

---

<sup>91</sup> Jacobus de Riddere, *Speculum*, p. 252.

<sup>92</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, pp. 174-76.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 189-90.

have the habit and the hood in combination with the tunic, in company with the tunic, together with the tunic, still without any stitching happening.<sup>94</sup>

So, why did such an apparently small issue as having the hood sewn or not to the tunic led to so much controversy? Catalano gives the clue, when he states that wearing the hood, stitched or unstitched, was ‘according to the canonists’ enough reason to differentiate the habits of the different orders.<sup>95</sup> Although he does not specify to which canonists he is referring, he was not completely wrong in this reasoning. As we have seen in the previous chapters, this kind of subtle variation was indeed enough, within the system of differences of religious dress, to mark a distinction among orders. Thus, a detail that may seem so insignificant to the modern reader was indeed an important matter in the *lexicon* of the religious visual codes, and it could, in fact, change everything. In the process of identity formation of religious orders, every detail counted. It was the case for the Augustinians Hermits and their use (or not) of a belt, and for the Spirituals and their narrow and short habits, and it was still the case, in the seventeenth century, for the Franciscan branches who were trying to work out their own “brand” within the family of the Minors.

It is in this context that the next three demonstrations proposed by Boverio, should be understood. The Capuchins were restoring the original Franciscan order in its totality, so it seemed obvious for Boverio to ask when had the order deviated in the first place. Therefore he analyses at length the change of the hood: for how long did the square hood last in the order, which

---

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., pp. 201-2.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 183.

authority enabled such a change, and how and when this change occurred. In this effort, Boverio is trying to somehow fix the historical circumstances in which the actions that the Capuchins considered a betrayal to Francis's true dispositions for his order took place. He goes back to the historical evidence he had used before in his treatise, the remains of habits used by Franciscans, now well into the end of the thirteenth century, as well as the paintings and engraved stones made across the fourteenth century.

The subject of whether the shape of the square and pointed hood was changed with the authority of the pope or general chapter is probably the most important in this line of arguments for the Capuchin: being able to invalidate any alleged canonical approval was, at the end of the day, more important than any evidence found in relics or paintings. Here the Spiritual controversy again plays its part. 'It is the opinion of some, states Boverio, that not only the square hood was changed, but also anathematised in the order of the Friars Minor by a constitution of Pope John XXII.'<sup>96</sup> According to this narrative, this happened in the middle of the tumultuous years that saw Michael of Cesena fleeing from Avignon to form a Franciscan government in exile, supported by Ludwig of Bavaria, who also established the Franciscan Pietro di Corbara as the antipope Nicholas V in Rome, at the end of the decade of 1320.<sup>97</sup> As a consequence, John had forbidden, under threat of excommunication, any friar to wear the same habit as their minister general, that is, the original habit of the order, thus replacing the square hood with the

---

<sup>96</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, pp. 942; "De la verdadera forma de habito", fol. 69

<sup>97</sup> See David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans*, p. 277; p. 291.

round one and the semicircle.<sup>98</sup> However, Boverio is emphatic – and correct – in assuring that there is no bull or precept emanating from John XXII or his successors changing or banning the square hood, or any shape for that matter.

Paradoxically, Catalano agrees with him, even if he is trying to expose the Capuchin's contradictions: there is no bull, manuscript, general chapter or anyone, besides Boverio, says the Conventual, that reports the change to a round hood. The obvious conclusion is that the hood was therefore always round. Moreover, for Catalano it all goes back, as well, to the Spirituals, Michael of Cesena and the Fraticelli.<sup>99</sup> He argues that 'if John XXII in his bull *Quorundam exigit* had prohibited the Spirituals (*Narbonesi*) to wear the pyramidal hood as one that was in discrepancy with the community of the order, it is sign that there was in the order another kind of habit, different from the pyramidal one, and this could not be any other than the habit with *mozzetta*.'<sup>100</sup> We know, however, that this is not what John forbade in the said bull.<sup>101</sup>

The remarkable aspect to note here, though, is how the ever present deeds of the Spiritual faction, as well as both the reactions from the superiors and the papacy, and the aftermath of the controversy – for example, in the persistence of the Fraticelli as heirs of the zealot group – had become mixed up in the blurred lines between history, memory, and legend, forming ideas that had seemingly become part of a Franciscan mythology. The source

---

<sup>98</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, pp. 942; "De la verdadera forma de habito", fol. 70.

<sup>99</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, pp. 27-9.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>101</sup> See above, chapter 4, p. 232.

Boverio contested was, as matter of fact, one coming from his own Capuchins (Francis of Coriolano), but the whole Spiritual affair had been so extraordinary, and had made such a long-lasting impression in the order, that it appears that the stories that departed from it continued to develop a life of their own, where the habit could not but play a central role.

### **Exclusive hoods: The protection of the Capuchin “brand”**

In this contest for identity formation, Boverio’s tenth demonstration, in which he discusses if the Capuchins, ‘who obtained from Clement VII canonical restitution of the square hood,’ are truly Friars Minor, fits right in. The disagreement here was double: firstly, it was disputed whether the square hood, believed by some to have been anathematised by John XXII, had been canonically restored by Clement VII. Secondly, and perhaps a more critical issue, the legitimate status of the Capuchins as Friars Minor was in question. On the first point, Boverio observes that, indeed, Clement VII had given the order canonical approval, including what he calls the ‘restitution’ of the square hood – though nothing was really restored, the Capuchins just got permission to wear the habit their founders had devised – confirmed by Paul III (with the bull *Exponis nobis*, 25 August 1536)<sup>102</sup> and the Council of Trent.<sup>103</sup> It is hard, however, to understand the motives for the second line of attack, when the Capuchins had been, by then, officially approved for over a

---

<sup>102</sup> *Bullarium Capucinatorum*, Tom. I, pp. 18-20; Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini*, p. 43.

<sup>103</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 953; “De la verdadera forma de habito”, fol. 82. See Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini*, p. 51.

century. Maybe for the rest of the Franciscan family it was just too hard to come to terms with yet another division.

The second issue was, of course, more pressing. The argument was that the Capuchins had not been recognised as Friars Minor until Pope Paul V officially acknowledged them as such.<sup>104</sup> Boverio is referring here to what could almost be considered as a campaign of defamation against the Capuchins that claimed that the Franciscan branch could not be counted as Friars Minor as they had not been instituted by Francis himself. Paul V had looked to silence the critics with the bull *Ecclesiae militantis* (15 October 1608)<sup>105</sup> in which he stated that the Capuchins were true Friars Minor as they professed the Franciscan Rule, a declaration that was confirmed by Urban VIII in June 1627, with the bull *Salvatoris et domini nostri*.<sup>106</sup>

Moreover, under the same argument, says Boverio, the Observants would not be Friars Minor either.<sup>107</sup> According to the Capuchin, some said that there was no real continuity between the Friars Minor, instituted by St Francis, and the Capuchins, as they belonged neither to the Conventuals, nor to the Observants. Their opponents asserted that to be part of the Franciscan family, they needed either to have been instituted in the time of St Francis, or to have been established by direct legitimate succession. However, true succession, argues Boverio, is actually given by the legitimate dissemination of those who have been incorporated into the Franciscan family, receiving the profession from the hands of the prelates, who in turn

---

<sup>104</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, p. 955; “De la verdadera forma de habito”, fol. 83.

<sup>105</sup> *Bullarium Capucinatorum*, Tom. I, p. 57.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 77-8; Antonio Fregona, *I frati cappuccini*, p. 57.

<sup>107</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, pp. 955-6; “De la verdadera forma de habito”, fol. 84.

have had their authority since the times of their founder. One may wonder what is this debate doing in a treatise about the habit of St Francis. The hint is in the following lines of Boverio's work – and here is where the Capuchin has a winning argument: in 1517 Pope Leo X had given the Observants the “primacy” of the order over the Conventuals through his bulls *Ite vos* and *Licet alias*,<sup>108</sup> because the former were truly observing the rule, which the latter had relaxed. However, this primacy was not given to the people or the name of the Observants, but to the real zeal to keep the Franciscan Rule. Therefore, as this primacy depended on the observance of the rule, lacking this, they would also lack the position and dignity given to the people to which the primacy was originally conceded. If the cause of the privilege was absent, the privilege then was lost as well, and that is why it had been transferred, in the first place, from the Conventuals to the Observants.<sup>109</sup> Although Boverio does not say it in all those words, the implication of this line of reasoning becomes quite clear: not only all those who profess and live under the Franciscan Rule have the right to be called Friars Minor, but among the sons of St Francis, those who are truly keeping the regular observance – and its habit – to the letter are the ones who should have the primacy. In other words, what the Capuchins claimed is that true Franciscanism resided not in the name, in the antiquity or in the succession, but in the truthful and literal observance of the rule. Therefore, the reason for this tenth demonstration lies in the rationale that the first and foremost step to be taken towards the

---

<sup>108</sup> The text of the bull *Licet alias* (6 December 1517) in AM, Vol. 16, year 1517, no. 9, pp. 490-1. For *Ite vos* see above, p. 279.

<sup>109</sup> Zaccaria Boverio, *Annales*, pp. 954-56; “De la verdadera forma de habito”, fols. 84-6.

fulfilment of this observance, and thus to becoming a Friar Minor, was wearing the *true* habit of St Francis.

This idea was certainly bound to meet resistance among Boverio's opponents. Catalano asserts that the Capuchin habit had never been the true, common, and ancient one of the whole Minor order, and therefore every other conclusion that followed from it was also false.<sup>110</sup> 'If the shape of the habit that they wear was the ancient and accustomed one to be commonly worn in the order – observes the Conventual – there would be no reason to embellish the cause.'<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, Catalano complained that what offended him the most was that the Capuchins wanted 'to be alone in that way of dressing and unique in the coarseness of the habit;'<sup>112</sup> to be the only ones to have such a shape and material of their attire, 'and so they have sought to have it banned for others as, in fact, whoever reads their Annals would see that there is no page in which they do not brag about how the Capuchins fathers have been the inventors of the original Minor habit, and the sole restorers of the pure observance of the Franciscan Rule.'<sup>113</sup> Therefore, he adds, 'the other Minor branches have conceded the ownership of the pyramidal hood to the Capuchins without a fight, to avoid giving trouble to the Holy See, because they do not think this is the common hood of the order.'<sup>114</sup>

As a matter of fact, just as the Franciscans had done three hundred years earlier in their controversy with the Augustinian Hermits about the

---

<sup>110</sup> Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume*, p. 38.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 21-2.



uniqueness of their habit, the Capuchins also sought to establish the exclusivity of their attire, obtaining papal decrees throughout the sixteenth century to ensure and enforce this privilege. The first came early on, from Paul III, with the brief *Cum sicut nobis* (April 1536),<sup>115</sup> followed by Pius IV's *Pastoralis officii cura* (April 1560).<sup>116</sup> Next came *Regularium personarum* from Gregory XIII (October 1581), forbidding the use of the Capuchin habit to the tertiaries of the Conventual branch in Sicily, who were confusing people who took and thought them to be Capuchins, and gave them alms and offerings, not without prejudice to the latter, and scandal to the seculars, who believed the Capuchins to be freed from their observance of the rule, being able to handle money and to get involved in commerce,<sup>117</sup> elements that had been banned by St Francis.<sup>118</sup> The story surely sounds now very familiar. Shortly after, the same Gregory XIII repeated a similar instruction to the brothers of the Hospital of St John of God (May 1582), listing the garments they should wear, down to the shoes, so no one would think them to be

---

<sup>115</sup> ‘...Districtius inhibentes quibuscumque Personis, cuiuscumque conditionis existant, sub excommunicationis latae sententia poena, eo ipso incurranda, ne habitum per Vos deferri solitum, nisi sub ejusdem Bernardini Vicarii [Bernardine of Asti] obedientia et cura permaneant, gestare quoquo modo praesumant...’, in *Bullarium Capucinatorum*, Tom. I, pp. 16-17; p. 16.

<sup>116</sup> ‘...Districtius inhibens quibuscumque personis, cujuscumque conditionis existerent, sub excommunicationis latae sententia poena, eo ipso incurranda, ne Habitum per eos deferri solitum, nisi sub praefati Vicarii Generalis, pro tempore existentis obedientia, et cura permanerent, gestare quoquo modo praesumerent...’, in *ibid.*, pp. 25-28; p. 27.

<sup>117</sup> ‘...Nihilominus [the previous decrees by Paul III and Pius IV] multi Fratres Tertiarii Minorum Conventualium Sancti Francisci nuncupatorum, in Regno Siciliae degentes, Habitum ejusdem panni, et coloris, quo ipsi Fratres Capucium utuntur, gestare, et salvo, quod Capucium rotundum, more Fratrum Conventualium hujusmodi deferunt, in reliquis ita consimiles eisdem Fratribus Capucinis incedere praesumunt, ut passim a Populo pro Capucinis habeantur, et reputentur, ac illis, tanquam talibus, eleemosynae et oblationes elargiantur, non sine eorundem capucinatorum praejudicio, et Saecularium scandalo, qui capucinos, a Regulae Observantia emancipatos credunt, eisque pecunarium usum, ac rerum commercium permitti intuentur...’, in *ibid.*, pp. 36-37; p. 36.

<sup>118</sup> ‘Praecipio firmiter fratribus universis, ut nullo modo denarios vel pecuniam recipiant per se vel per interpositam personam...’, Francis of Assisi, “Regula Bullata”, pp. 230-1

Capuchins.<sup>119</sup> This was followed by a *Mandatum Executivum*, given in two occasions later on in the sixteenth century, invoking the ‘secular arm’ – emperor, kings, dukes, magistrates, etc. – to implement such a directive: people who dared to defy the decree on the exclusivity of the Capuchin hood were to be imprisoned until they obeyed the Congregation’s instructions.<sup>120</sup> The prior of the Hospitalers at Rome even had to appear before the pope to have his hood inspected!<sup>121</sup> Furthermore, the Capuchins were able to obtain again a confirmation of this privilege from Gregory XIV in July 1591,<sup>122</sup> and from Gregory XV in December 1621.<sup>123</sup> They also managed to obtain from Urban VIII, in January 1624, a settlement of a dispute between the Capuchins and, on the one hand, the Observants of Italy, and, on the other, the *Fratres Recollecti* of France, in a case that looked to reinforce the compliance with the system of differences of religious clothes. The Observants had apparently begun to wear some garments that were similar to the Capuchins’ ones, and they were instructed to return to their clogs (*calopodia*) and give up wearing sandals. Although they should not be given a hard time for wearing cheap, wretched clothes (*vilioribus, et repetiatis*

---

<sup>119</sup> ‘...inhaerendo Literis Apostolicis concessionis privilegiorum Fratribus Ord. Min. S. Francisci Capucinis nuncupatis, a fel. rec. Paulo Papa III., et aliis Romanis Pontificibus, ac confirmationis eorundem Privilegiorum a fel. rec. Pio Papa IV. respective emanatis, in quibus praeter alia extitit ordinatum, quod solum eorundem Fratrum Habitu, verum etiam, nec ita similem, quod propter eum posset credi Frater eorum Congregationis, nisi sub Vicarii generalis ejusdem Ordinis, pro tempore existentis obedientia, et cura permaneat, sub pena excommunicationis latae sententia quoquomodo gestare paesumat; decrevit, et declaravit, quod Fratres Hospitalis *Joannis Dei* nuncupati deferant, et deferre debeant *Capottum* nuncupatum usque ad crura tantum, Capucium rotundum, caligas, *Calzoni* nuncupatas, usque ad talos, cum habitu *patientia* nuncupato, et corrigiam cum cingulo cum Sporta, et non utantur Sandaliis, prout utuntur Capucini, ne ab aliquibus credi possit, eos Fratares Capucinatorum esse...’, in *Ibid.*, p. 37. Italics in the original.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 38-9.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 45-6.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 65-7.

*pannis, et despecto colore*), they must conform to the Observant usage with respect to the round hood, the broad mozzetta, and a cloak. The *Fratres Recollecti*, in turn, were also banned from wearing sandals and the pointed hood that they had been using for some time. They must replace those garments with clogs, a round hood and a largish mozzetta,<sup>124</sup> and thus ensure they did not look like the Capuchins.

In this context, Boverio's treatise came to elaborate and corroborate the ideas that shaped a process which the Capuchins had been developing since their very beginnings; they formed and secured the construction of a new and unique sense of individuality within the Franciscan family that was intrinsically connected with their habit, the *true* habit of St Francis. Even if by the seventeenth century the accuracy of this *true* habit existed more in their minds than in reality, the whole Capuchin programme had still been developed from the literal observance of the Franciscan Rule, which was, in turn, rooted in the central significance they bestowed on their attire, as a synecdoche of their zeal for reform. The whole process was embedded in the system of differences of religious dress, where their new *original* habit

---

<sup>124</sup> '...Cum itaque causa inter dilectos filios Fratres Ordinis Minorum S. Francisci Capucinos nuncupatos ex una, ac Fratres ejusdem Ordinis Strictioris Observantiae ex altera, partibus, de, et super re assumptione Calopodiorum, et distinctione Habitus ad praescriptum Bullarum, per diversos Romanos Pontifices Praedecessores nostros emanatarum, diu agitata, ac de mandato nostro...eisdem Fratribus Strictioris Observantiae, quatenus Calopodia re assumere, soleasque ubique, per totam Italiam deponere, nec eas in posterum recipere debeant, sub excommunicationis latae sententiae...Quo vero ad ejusdem Ordinis Fratres Recollectos nuncupatos Galliae, qui non deferunt soleas, sed Calopodia, cum constet eos Capucium aliquantisper acuminatum deferre...mandamus, ut opportune curet, quod omnino rotundum capucium, mozzettamque largiorem assumant...pariter mandamus, praedictos Fratres Strictioris Observantiae non molestari, quin vilioribus, et repetiatis pannis, et despecto colore utantur, sed volumus sub eisdem poenis, quod eorum forma Habitus, quoad Caputium rotundum, Mozzettam latam, et Mantellum perpetuo protensum, sit et esse debeat observantiae Fratribus omnino conformis, illumque intra duos menses aptare, ac gestare debeant...', in *ibid.*, pp. 71-2.

marked their new “brand” out, as the fulfilment of the fundamental principle on which the new order’s identity was built and articulated.

## CONCLUSION

---

The year 1783 saw the publication of the satirical work, *Specimen monachologiae methodo linnaeana*, a “natural history” of monks, attributed to the mineralogist Ignaz von Born. Translated a year later by the French naturalist Pierre Marie Auguste Broussonet as *La monacologie, ou Histoire naturelle des moines*, the book dissected and described in technical language the representatives of European religious orders, paying particular attention to their clothes as a means of characterisation. Indeed, a later edition accompanied the descriptions with engravings of the relevant garments, from breeches, to belts, to the cowls or veils of the different types of religious.<sup>1</sup> ‘If we do a *general system of Monks* – read the preface of a 1790 edition – we may divide them into different classes, and divide each of these classes into several orders, for example, in bearded and beardless, in white, black, brown, pied or variegated, etc.’<sup>2</sup> Although the intention was sardonic, the phenomenon was a real one.

While the *Monachologia* was intended with a clear anticlerical tone, this documenting attempt had less ironic antecedents in sixteenth, seventeenth and early eighteenth-century “books of habits”: real catalogues of religious orders, which offered a brief description of each institution, accompanied by engravings (often in full-page) depicting the correspondent member in their full habit. Among these works we find Johann Adam

---

<sup>1</sup> *Monachologia, figuris ligno incisus illustrata / Monacologie, illustrée de figure sur bois* (Eridaniae, 1782; Paris, 1844).

<sup>2</sup> *Histoire naturelle des moines, écrite d’après la méthode de M. de Buffon* (Paris, 1790), pp. xiv-xv.

Lonicerus's *Staend vnd Orden der H. Roemischen Catholischen Kirchen...*, translated into Latin as *Cleri totius Romanae ecclesiae subiecti, seu, Pontificiorvm ordinvm omnivm omnino vtrivsqve sexvs, habitvs, artificiosissimis figuris...* (both published simultaneously in Frankfurt am Main, 1585); Odoardo Fialetti's *De gli Habiti delle Religione* (Venice, 1626); Claude du Molinet's *Figures des differents habitus des chanoines reguliers en ce siecle* (Paris, 1666); and Filippo Bonani's *Catalogo degli ordini religiosi della chiesa militante* (Roma, 1706),<sup>3</sup> to name a few. Beyond the characteristics of this type of publication and their particular problems – which sometimes even included non-existent orders<sup>4</sup> – what makes them noteworthy in the context of this thesis is that they could be understood as the culmination of the system of differences of religious dress. The cataloguing effort is typical of the cultural shifts regarding the documentation and transmission of knowledge of their particular historical moment,<sup>5</sup> but the reality they were capturing on paper was in direct continuity with the phenomenon described and analysed in this research: they provide a “directory” of religious orders, each one easily recognisable thanks to the features of their distinctive attires. It was in their habits that the public would know their religious membership, and acknowledge their identity.

Medieval people, however, did not seem to need such catalogues to understand the identities of religious orders, not only because they had

---

<sup>3</sup> See Giancarlo Rocca, “Il guardaroba religioso”, in LSDE, pp. 38-40; Lara Mercanti and Giovanni Straffi, *Quando l'abito faceva il monaco: 62 figurini monastici conservati nel Museo Diocesano di santo Stefano al Ponte di Firenze* (Firenze: Edizioni Polistampa, 2006), pp. 31-6.

<sup>4</sup> Giancarlo Rocca, “Il guardaroba religioso”, p. 39.

<sup>5</sup> See Odile Blanc, “Images du monde et portraits d'habits: les recueils de costume à la Renaissance”, in *Bulletin du bibliophile* 2 (1995), pp. 221-261.

witnessed, in the first stage, their establishment and had been contemporaneous to their development, but also because the elaboration of these identities had been in itself both a conscious and a collective process. Dress may at times appear to be anecdotal but religious habits certainly were not, neither for their wearers nor for the wider late medieval society, who lived in a world in which sharp distinctions were fundamental. Each of the chapters in this thesis shows that, in the dynamics that shaped the system of differences of religious dress, there was a strong sense of the importance of the habit in all its different layers of meaning. Furthermore, dress had a central place in one of the fundamental aspects that has defined the evolution of the Christian praxis in the Western world: as Kassius Hallinger brilliantly summed up, clothes, as an essential proxy of reform, always announced the cycles of renovation that characterised the historical development of Christianity, particularly – but by no means exclusively – in the pre-modern world. Although I believe religious clothes should not be read in a “fashion” key, in this constant search for renewal, religious habits could be seen as a prelude of the dynamics that characterised the cultural and social changes that became crystallised in the birth of fashion. In this context, religious habits are a privileged platform to understand the way in which clothes and identities were formed and interwoven during the Late Middle Ages.

Habits were read and scrutinised by their contemporary society, in both the lay and the ecclesiastical sphere. They helped their wearers and their observers to made sense of their social and cultural reality, marking

affiliations and roles, and also indicating when those carrying them did not comply with their expected place or behaviour. Habits also facilitated the development of a self-narrative for those orders whose identities were more conflictive or less settled. They found a way of building their individuality through the elaboration of a rationale for their habits, which meant, at the same time, formulating the terms of their own history. Religious dress was sought and envied by extra-religious groups looking to forge their own novel religious identities, and who had a clear understanding of the key role that clothes played in securing a rightful place in the practice of a religious way of life. Habits could also shake an important and established order such as the Franciscans to its core, where defiance was firstly expressed through garments. New observances and new identities were devised through the choice of new habits, which provided the vehicle to enact this zeal for renewal. They were at the very centre of religious life and they became a synecdoche of the reality they symbolised and condensed.

Moreover, in the conflicts and decisions that helped religious institutions to develop their identities, the agency of their protagonists becomes evident; the sources demonstrate that in the negotiated character of these outcomes, there was a clear awareness of what was at stake for those involved. Whether the habit made or not the monk depended not only on the clothes they donned, but also on these negotiations. These identities were shaped by the different orders in their need to assert a distinctive individuality within the system, but this was also a collective task: in being forced to establish a self-identity through difference, the orders had no option



but to relate with other orders' identities. The meaning of the habit resides, then, in the complex and multifaceted dynamics that gave form to the system of differences in which they were embedded. Habits not only served to cover bodies and to provide uniformity but also to delineate identities, where they reflected and informed ideas and ideals, of the orders themselves and of their wider society.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

### Primary Sources

#### Non-printed material:

London, British Library, Royal MS 1 D I.

*Registra Vaticana (Archivum Secretum Vaticanum)* (facsimiles available online in the British Library).

#### Printed material:

*Acta Capitulorum Generalium Ordinis Fratrum B. V. Mariae de Monte Carmelo. Vol. 2 Ab anno 1598 usque ad annum 1902*, Gabriel Wessels (ed.) (Romae: apud Curiam Generalitiam, 1934).

*Acta Sanctorum Bollandiana.*

Adam Scotus, *De Ordine, Habitu Et Professione Canonorum Ordinis Praemonstratensis*, PL, 198, cols. 439-669.

Alonso, Carlos (ed.), *Bullarium Ordinis Sancti Augustini: Regesta. Tom. 1, 1256-1362* (Romae: Institutum Historicum Augustinianum 1997).

Angelo Clareno, *A Chronicle or History of the Seven Tribulations of the Order of Brothers Minor*, Translated from the Latin by David Burr and E. Randolph Daniel (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2005).

*Annales Camaldulenses Ordinis Sancti Benedicti*, D. Johanne-Benedicto Mittarelli and D. Anselmo Costadoni (eds.), Vol. I, 907-1206 (Venetiis: Apud Jo. Baptistam Pasquali, Aere Monasterii Sancti Michaelis de Muriano, 1755).

Anselm of Havelberg, *Anticimenon: on the unity of the faith and the controversies with the Greeks*, translated by Ambrose Criste and Carol Neel, (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2010).

Baluze, Etienne, *Stephani Baluzii Tutelensis Miscellanea: novo ordine digesta et non paucis ineditis monumentis opportunisque animadversionibus aucta*, D. Mansi (ed.) Tom. II (Lucae: apud V. Junctinium, 1761).

*Benoît XII (1334-1342): lettres closes et patentes intéressant les pays autres que la France, publiées ou analysées d'après les registres du Vatican*, J.M.

Vidal (ed.), *Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome* (Paris, 1913).

*Benoît XII (1334-1342): lettres closes, patentes et curiales se rapportant à la France*, Georges Daumet (ed.), *Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome* (Paris, 1920).

Bernard of Clairvaux, *Opera*, Tom. VII, *Epistolae, Corpus Epistolarum 1-180*, J. Leclercq, H. Rochais and Ch. H. Talbot (eds.) (Romae: Editiones Cistercienses, 1974).

————— *Letters of St. Bernard of Clairvaux*, B. S. James (trans.) (London: Burns Oates, 1953).

Bihl, Michael (ed.), “Fratricelli cuiusdam Decalogus evangelicae Paupertatis an. 1340-42 conscriptus”, *AFH* 32 (1939), pp. 279-411.

————— “De tertio ordine S. Francisci, in Provincia Germaniae Superioris sive Argentinensi syntagma,” *AFH* 14 (1921), pp. 138-98, 442-60.

————— “Statuta Generalia Ordinis edita in Capitulis Generalibus Celebratis Narbonnae an. 1260, Assisi An. 1279 atque Parisiis an. 1292. Editio critica et synoptica. Index specialis”, *AFH* 34 (1941), pp. 13-94; 284-358.

————— “Statuta Generalia Ordinis edita in Capitulo Generali An. 1354 Assisii celebrato, Communiter Farineriana appellata (Editio critica et analytica)”, *AFH*, 35 (1942), pp. 35-112; 177-253.

Bonaventura da Bagnoreggio, *Opera Omnia*, Tom. VIII (Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi): Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1898).

*Bullarium Carmelitanum*, Eliseo Monsignano and Josepho Alberto Ximenez (eds.), 4 Vols. (Romae: Typographia Georgii Plachi, 1715–68).

*Bullarium Franciscanum*, Johannis H. Sbaralea and Conradus Eubel (eds.) (Romae, 1759-1904).

*Bullarium Ordinis FF. Minorum S.P. Francisci Capucinatorum*, Michaele a Tugio [Michael Wickart] (ed.), Tom. I, (Romae: Typis Joannis Zempel Austriaci, 1740).

*Bullarium Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum*, Thomae Ripoll (ed.), Tom. I (Romae: Ex Typographia Hieronymi Mainardi, 1729).

Bulst, Walter, (ed.), *Die Ältere Wormser Briefsammlung*, in MGH, *Epistolae*, Band III (Weimar, 1949).

Caesarius of Heisterbach, *The dialogue on miracles*, translated by H. von E. Scott and C.C. Swinton (London: G. Routledge & Sons 1929).

Caggese, R. (ed.), *Statuti della Repubblica fiorentina, Vol 2, Statuto del Podestà dell'anno 1325* (Firenze, 1921).

Canivez, J-M. (ed.), *Statuta Capitulum Generalium Ordinis Cisterciensis ab anno 1116 ad annum 1786. Opus in lineamentis ab eximio A. Trilhe* (Louvain: Bibliothèque de la Revue D'Histoire Ecclésiastique, 1933-41).

Carlini, Armandus (ed.), "Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum anno 1316 Assisii conditae", *AFH* 4 (1911), pp. 269-302, 508-36.

Chatelain, E. and Denifle, H. (eds.), *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis, Tom. II* (Paris: ex typis fratrum Delalain, 1891).

*Chronica XXIV generalium Ordinis minorum. Cum pluribus appendicibus inter quas excellit hucusque ineditus "Liber de laudibus S. Francisci" Fr. Bernardi a Bessa, Analecta Franciscana ad Historiam Fratrum Minorum Spectantia*, edita a Patribus Collegii S. Bonaventurae, Tom. III (Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi), prope Florentiam, 1897).

*Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Generals of the Order of Friars Minor [1369-1374]*, Noel Muscat, translator (Malta: TAU Franciscan Communications, 2010).

Claude du Molinet, *Figures des differents habitus des chanoines reguliers en ce siecle* (Paris, 1666).

Constable, Giles (ed.), *The Letters of Peter the Venerable, 2 Vols.* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1967).

Constable, Giles and Smith, Bernard S. (eds.), *Libellus de Diversis Ordinibus et Professionibus qui sunt in Aecclesia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003).

Daniel a Virgine Maria (ed.), *Speculum Carmelitanum, sive Historia Eliani ordinis fratrum beatissimæ Virginis Mariae de Monte Carmelo, Vol. I* (Antverpiae: Typis Michaelis Knobbari, 1680).

*Decisiones rote nove et antique cum additionibus casibus dubiis et regulis cancellarie apostolice, diligentissime emendate*, (Lyon, 1507).

*Decretum Sacrae Congregationis Eminentissimorum, et Reverendissimorum DD.S.R.E Cardinalium à Sanctis. D. N. Innocentio papa X. Santaque Sede Apostolica ad indicem Librorum...* (Romae: Ex Typographia Revenderae Camerae Apostolicae, 1651).

*Decretum Sacrae Congregationis Eminentissimorum, et Reverendissimorum DD.S. Cardinalium...Fr. Raymundus Capisuccus Ord. Praed. Sac. Congr. Secr., Romae die 19, Novembris 1652.*

*Decretum Sacrae Congregationis Eminentissimorum, et Reverendissimorum DD.S.R.E Cardinalium à Sanctissimo D. N. Alexandro papa VII Santaque Sede Apostolica ad indicem Librorum... (Romae: Ex Typographia Revenderae Camerae Apostolicae, 1658).*

Delorme, Ferdinandus M. (ed.), “Acta Capituli Generalis anno 1346 Venetiis celebrati”, *AFH* 5 (1912), pp. 698-709.

Faral, E. (ed.), “Les «responsiones» de Guillaume de Saint-Amour”, *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale Et Littéraire du Moyen Âge* 18 (1950-51), pp. 337-394.

Felip Ribot, *The Ten Books On The Way Of Life And Great Deeds Of The Carmelites*, Richard Copsey (trans.) (Faversham: Saint Albert's Press, 2007).

Filippo Bonani, *Catalogo degli ordini religiosi della chiesa militante* (Roma, 1706).

Flood, David (ed.), *Hugh of Digne's Rule Commentary, [Expositio Hugonis De Digna super regulam fratrum minorum]* (Grottaferrata: Collegii S. Bonaventurae Ad claras Aquas, 1979).

Francesco da Sestri, *Vita del P. Zaccaria Boverio da Saluzzo, diffinitore generale de' capuccini* (Genova: Per Pietro Giovanni Calenzani, 1664).

Francis of Assisi, “Regula Bullata”, in Caietanus Esser (ed.), *Opuscula Sancti Patris Francisci Assiensis, Bibliotheca Franciscana Ascetica Medii Aevi*, Tom. XII (Grottaferrata, Roma: Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1978), pp. 224–238.

————— “Testamentum”, in Caietanus Esser (ed.), *Opuscula Sancti Patris Francisci Assiensis, Bibliotheca Franciscana Ascetica Medii Aevi*, Tom. XII (Grottaferrata, Roma: Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1978), pp. 305-317.

Fredericq, P., *Corpus documentorum Inquisitionis haereticae pravitatis Neerlandicae* (Gent: J. Vuylsteke- 1889).

Friedberg, A. (ed.), *Corpus Iuris Canonici. Editio Lipsiensis secunda* (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1959).

Golubovich, Hieronymus (ed.), “Acta et Statuta Generalis Capituli Tertii Ordinis Poenitentium D. Francisci Bononiae celebrati an. 1289”, *AFH* 2 (1909), pp. 63-71.

Goyens, Hieronimus (ed.), "Monumenta historica inde ab anno 1397 circa vetus Hospitale Sancti Iohannis Gandavi III Ordinis S. Francisci", *AFH* 7 (1914), pp. 511-526.

Haupt, H., "Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sekte vom freien Geiste und des Begharentums", *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, 7 (1885), pp. 503-576.

Henry of Friemar, "De origine et progressu ordinis fratrum eremitarum s. Augustini et vero ac proprio titulo eiusdem (Tractatus Fr. henrici de Vrimaria)", *Analecta Augustiniana* IV (1911-1912), pp. 298-307, 321-328.

*Histoire naturelle des moines, écrite d'après la méthode de M. de Buffon* (Paris, 1790).

Hogg, James (ed.), "The Evolution of the Carthusian Statutes from the Consuetudines Guigonis to the Tertia Compilatio. Documents: Volume 1, Consuetudines Guigonis Prima Pars Statutorum Antiquorum", *Analecta Cartusiana* 99 (1989).

Hostiensis (Henry of Segusio), *Summa Aurea* (Lugduni: Apud hæredes Iacobi Iuntæ, 1548).

Hugh of Digne, *Disputatio inter zelatorem paupertatis et inimicum domesticum eius*, in Alessandra Sisto, *Figure del Primo Francescanesimo in Provenza. Ugo e Douceline di Digne* (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 1971), pp. 341-370.

————— *De finibus paupertatis*, in Alessandra Sisto, *Figure del Primo Francescanesimo in Provenza. Ugo e Douceline di Digne* (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 1971), pp. 325-340.

*Invocantes* (Notarial Act, 23 July 1287), in Adrian Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989), pp. 61-70;

Jacques De Vitry, *Lettres de Jacques de Vitry*, critical edition by R.B.C. Huygens (Leiden: E.J. Brill 1960).

————— *The Life of Marie d'Oignies. By Cardinal Jacques de Vitry*, translated by Margot H. King (Toronto: Peregrina Publishing 1989).

Jacobus de Riddero, *Speculum apologeticum fratrum minorum ordinis S. Francisci oppositum annalibus Capucinorum R.P. Zachariae Boverii* (Antverpiae: Apud Gvilielmvm Lesteenivm et Engelbertvm Gymnicvm, 1653).

Jean de Cheminot, *Speculum fratrum ordinis beatae Mariae de Monte Carmelo*, in Adrian Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early*

*Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989), pp. 107–146.

Jean de Venette, *Qualiter respondendum sit quaerentibus (Chronicle of the Carmelite Order)*, in Adrian Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989), pp. 152–175.

Joannes a Sancto Antonio, *Bibliotheca universa Franciscana, sive Alumnorum trium Ordinum S. P. N. Francisci qui ab Ordine Seraphico condito*, Tom. II (Matriti: ex Typographia Causæ V. Matris de Agreda, 1732).

Joannes Le Paige, *Bibliotheca praemonstratensis ordinis* (Parisiis, 1633).

Johann Adam Lonicerus, *Staend vnd Orden der H. Roemischen Catholischen Kirchen... / Cleri totius Romanae ecclesiae subiecti, seu, Pontificiorvm ordinvm omnivm omnino vtrivsqve sexvs, habitvs, artificiosissimis figuris...* (Frankfurt am Main, 1585).

John Grossi, *Viridiarum de ortu religionis et floribus eiusdem*, in Daniel a Virgine Maria (ed.), *Speculum Carmelitanum, sive Historia Eliani ordinis fratrum beatissimae Virginis Mariae de Monte Carmelo*, Vol. I (Antverpiae: Typis Michaelis Knobbari, 1680), pp. 131-144. Also in Joannes Baptista de Cathaneis (ed.), *Speculum ordinis Fratrum Carmelitarum nouiter impressum* (Venice, 1507).

John of Baconthorpe, *Compendium historiarum et iurium pro defensione institutionis et confirmationis ordinis beatae mariae de monte carmeli*, in Adrian Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989), pp. 199-217.

————— *Laus religionis carmelitanae*, in Adrian Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989), pp. 218–253

John of Hildesheim, *Dialogus inter directorem et detractorem de ordine Carmelitarum*, in Adrian Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989), pp. 336–388.

John Trisse, *Capitula Generalia*, in Adrian Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989), pp. 305-311.

Jordan of Saxony, *The Life of the Brethren, Liber Vitasfratrum*, Gerard Deighan (trans.), John E. Rotelle (ed.) (Villanova: Augustinian Press, 1993).

————— *Liber vitasfratum*, Rudolf Arbesmann and Winfrid Hümpfner (eds.), in *Cassiacum: Studies in St. Augustine and the Augustinian Order* (New York: Cosmopolitan Science and Art Service Co., 1943).

Le Roulx, J. Delaville (ed.), *Cartulaire Général de l'Ordre des Hospitaliers de S. Jean de Jerusalem*, Vol. I, 1100-1200 (Paris: Ernest Leroux Éditeur, 1894).

Leandro of Murcia, *Questiones selectas regulares y exposicion sobre la Regla de los Frailes Menores* (Madrid: Por Gregorio Rodriguez, 1645).

Lemmens, Leonardus (ed.), "Chronicon Provinciae Argentinensis O.F.M. circa an. 1310-27 a quodam Fratre Minore Basileae conscriptum (1206-1325)", *AFH* 4 (1911), pp. 671-687.

*Les Registres d'Honorius IV*, M. Prou (ed.) Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1888).

*Les Registres d'Innocent IV*, E. Berger (ed.), Vol. III, Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1897).

*Les Registres d'Alexandre IV*, A. Coulon (ed.), Vol. III, Bibliothèque des écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome (Paris, 1953).

*Les Registres de Grégoire IX*, L. Auvray (ed.), Tom. I, Bibliothèque Des Écoles Françaises D'Athènes et De Rome (Paris, 1896).

*Lettres de Grégoire XI (1371-1378)*, Camille Tihon (ed.), Vol. 3, (Bruxelles-Rome: Institut Historique Belge de Rome, 1964).

Mansi, Giovanni Domenico (ed.), *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio* (Florentiae; Venetiis; Parisiis; Arnhem and Leipzig, 1759-1962).

Martene, E. and Durand, U. (eds.), *Thesaurus Novus Anecdotorum*, Vol. IV (Paris, 1717).

Matthew Paris, *Historia Anglorum, sive, ut vulgo dicitur, Historia Minor*, Frederic Madden (ed.), Vol. I (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1866).

McLaughlin, Mary Martin and Wheeler, Bonnie (eds. and trans.), *The letters of Heloise and Abelard: A Translation of their Collected Correspondence and Related Writings* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

Meersseman, G. G., *Dossier de l'Ordre de la Penitence au XIIIe siècle* (Fribourg: Editions Universitaires, 1961).



Mencherini, Saturninus (ed.), "Constitutiones Generales Ordinis Fratrum Minorum a Capitulo Perpiniani anno 1331 celebrato editae", AFH 2 (1909), pp. 269-292, 412-430, 575-599.

*Monachologia, figuris ligno incisis illustrata / Monacologie, illustrée de figure sur bois* (Eridaniae, 1782; Paris, 1844).

*Narratio de primordiis ordinis Theutonici*, in Walter Hubatsch and Udo Arnold (eds.), *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum, Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft*, Vol. 6 (Frankfurt Am Main: Minerva, 1968), pp. 22-29.

Niccolò Catalano, *Fiume del terrestre paradiso diviso in quattro capi, o discorsi. Trattato difensivo del sig. dotto. Niccoló Catalano da Santo Mauro, oue si ragguagli il mondo nella verità dell'antica forma d'habito de' frati minori istituita da S. Francesco* (Firenze: Stamperia d'Amadore Massi, 1652).

Niccolò Toppi, *Biblioteca Napoletana et apparato agli huomini illustri in lettere di Napoli* (Napoli: Apresso Antonio Bulifon, 1678).

*Notum Sit* (Notarial Act, 22 July 1287), in Adrian Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989), pp. 54-61; also in *Bullarium Carmelitanum*, Vol. I (Romae: Typographia Georgii Plachi, 1715), pp. 35-38.

O'Sullivan, Jeremiah F. (ed.) and Brown, Sydney M. (trans.) *The Register of Eudes of Rouen* (New York-London: Columbia University Press, 1964).

Odoardo Fialetti, *De gli Habiti delle Religione* (Venice, 1626).

Oliger, Livarius (ed.), "Petri Iohannis Olivi De renuntiatione Papae Coelestini V Queastio et Epistola", in AFH 11 (1918), pp. 309-373.

————— *Expositio Quatuor Magistrorum Super Regulam Fratrum Minorum (1241-242)* (Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1950).

*Ordinis Praemonstratensis Chronicon*, Aubert Le Mire (ed.) (Coloniae Agrippinae: Sumptibus Bernardis Gualtieri, 1613).

Petrus Ioannis Olivi, *De Usu Paupere. The Quaestio and the Tractatus*, David Burr (ed.) (Firenze: Olschki, 1992).

Potthast, A. (ed.), *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum inde ab a. post Christum natum 1198 ad a. 1304*, 2 Vol. (Berlin: Rudolf de Decker, 1873-75).

Pratesi, Riccardo, (ed.), "Una lettera enciclica del Ministro Generale dei Frati Minore Guglielmo Farinier (25 gennaio 1349)", AFH 50 (1957), pp. 348-363.

*Relationes Episcopi Olomucensis Pontifici Porrectae*, in MGH, *Leges, Constitutiones et Acta Publica Imperatorum et Regum*, Vol. 3, (Hanoverae-Lipsiae, 1904-6), pp. 589-595.

*Rubrica prima* of 1281, in Adrian Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989), pp. 40-41.

Saggi, Ludovico, "Constitutiones Capituli Londinensis Anni 1281", in *Analecta Ordinis Carmelitarum*, XV (1950), pp. 203-245.

Salimbene de Adam, *Cronica*, Giuseppe Scalia (ed.) (Turnholti: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1998).

Schwenkenbecher, W. (ed.), *Liber de Unitate Ecclesia Conservanda*, in MGH, *Scriptores, Libelli de lite imperatorum et pontificum*, Tom. II (Hanover, 1892), pp. 173-284.

*Speculum vitae b. Francisci et sociorum eius...* Opera et studio G. Spoelberch (Antverpiae: Ex Officina Gerardi Wolsschatii, 1620).

Strehlke, Ernest (ed.), *Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici ex tabularii Regii Berolinensis codice potissimum* (Berolini: Apud Weidmannos, 1869).

*The Rule of our Most Holy Father St. Benedict, patriarch of monks; in Latin and English*, translated by a Monk of St. Augustine's Monastery, Ramsgate (London: R. Washbourne, 1875).

Thomas De Celano, *Vita Prima S. Francisci Assisiensis et eiusdem Legenda ad Usam Chori* (Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi): Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1926).

Thomas of Eccleston, *Fratri Thomae vulgo dicti de Eccleston Tractatus de adventu fratrum minorum in Angliam*, A. G. Little (ed.) (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1951).

Ubertino da Casale, *Arbor vitae crucifixae Jesu Christi*, (Venetiis: per Andream de Bonettis, 1485).

Ugolino de Monte Santa Maria, *The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi*, W. Heywood (ed. and trans.) (New York: Vintage Books, 1998).

Upton-Ward, J. M. (ed.), *The Rule of the Templars. The French Text of the Rule of the Order of the Knights Templar* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell, 1992).

*Urbain V, 1362-1370: lettres communes analysées d'après les registres dits d'Avignon et du Vatican*, Michel et Anne-Marie Hayez (eds.), Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, Tom. V (Rome, 1979).

*Urbain V, 1362-1370: lettres communes analysées d'après les registres dits d'Avignon et du Vatican*, Michel et Anne-Marie Hayez (eds.), Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, Tom. IX (Rome, 1983).

*Ut per litteras Apostolicas* (Brepols). Electronic Database of the *Registres et lettres des Papes du XIIIe siècle* (32 vols.: Rome, 1883-) and the *Registres et lettres des Papes du XIVe siècle* (48 vols.: Rome, 1899-).

Van Luijk, B. (ed.), "Bullarium Ordinis Eremitarum S. Augustini. (Periodus formationis 1187-1256," in *Augustiniana*, XII, 1-2 (1962), pp. 161-195; 3-4, pp. 358-390; XIII, 3-4 (1963) pp. 74-510; XIV, 1-2 (1964) pp. 216-249.

William of Coventry, *Chronica brevis de Carmelitarum origine et processu felici*, in Adrian Staring (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989), pp. 272–278.

Wadding, Lucas, *Annales Minorum*, second edition (Romae: Ad Claras Aquas, 1731-).

William of Saint-Amour, *De periculis novissimorum temporum*, edition and translation by G. Geltner (Leuven: Peeters, 2008).

————— *Opera Omnia* (Constantiae: Apud Alithophilos, 1632).

Xiberta, Bartolomé, *De visione Sancti Simonis Stock* (Rome, 1950).

Zacharias Boverius, *Annalium seu Sacrarum historiarum ordinis Minorum S. Francisci qui Capucini nuncupantur*, Tom. I (Lugduni: sumptibus Claudii Landry, 1632).

————— *Chronicas De Los Frailes Menores Capuchinos De N. P. S. Francisco*, Vol. 1, Francisco de Madrid Moncada (trans.) (Madrid: Carlos Sanchez, 1644).

## **Secondary Sources**

Abulafia, David, *Frederick II. A Medieval Emperor* (London: Allen Lane, 1988).

Alberzoni, Maria Pia, *Clare of Assisi and the Poor Sisters in the Thirteenth Century* (St Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 2004).

Andrews, Frances, *The Early Humiliati* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

————— *The other Friars: the Carmelite, Augustinian, Sack and Pied Friars in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006).

Amstrong, Regis J. et Al. (eds.), *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents. Vol. III: The Prophet* (New York-London-Manila: New City Press, 2001).

Antry, Theodore James and Neel, Carol (eds. and trans.), *Norbert and Early Norbertine Spirituality* (New York, N.Y.: Paulist Press, 2007).

Aramburu Cendoya, Ignacio (ed.), *Las Primitivas Constituciones de los Agustinos (Ratisbonenses del año 1290)* (Valladolid: Archivo Agustiniiano, 1966).

Barnard, Malcolm (ed.), *Fashion Theory: A Reader* (London: Routledge, 2007).

Barthes, Roland, “Histoire et sociologie du Vêtement. Quelques observations méthodologiques”, in *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 12, 3 (1957), pp. 430-441 / “History and Sociology of Clothing. Some Methodological Observations”, in Barthes, Roland, *The Language of Fashion*, Andy Stafford Michael and Carter (eds.) (Oxford-New York: Berg, 2005), pp. 3-20.

————— *Système de la mode* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1967).

Bartoli, Marco, “Gregorio IX e il movimento penitenziale”, in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La “Supra Montem” di Nicolo’ IV (1289): Genesi e Diffusione di una Regola*, Atti del 5° Convegno di studi Francescani, Ascoli Piceno, 26-27 ottobre 1987 (Roma: Analecta TOR, 1988), pp. 47-60.

Beaulieu, Michèle, “Le costume, miroir des mentalités de la France médiévale (1350-1500)”, in *Mélanges offerts à Jean Dauvillier* (Toulouse: Centre d’histoire juridique méridionale, 1979), pp. 65-87.

Beck, Bernard, *Saint Bernard de Tiron, l’ermite, le moine et le monde* (Cormelles-le-Royal: La Mandragore, 1998).

Benvenuti, Anna, “Fonti e problemi per la storia dei Penitenti a Firenze nel secolo XIII”, in O. Schmucki (ed.), *L’Ordine della Penitenza di San Francesco d’Assisi nel secolo XIII*, Atti del convegno di studi francescani, Assisi, 3-4-5 luglio 1972, (Roma: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 1973), pp. 279-301.

————— “I frati della Penitenza nella società fiorentina del Due-Trecento” in Mariano D’Alatri (ed.), *I frati Penitenti di San Francesco nella società del*

*Due e Trecento*, Atti del 2° Convegno di Studi Francescani, Roma, 12-13-14 ottobre 1976 (Roma: Istituto storico dei Cappuccini, 1977), pp. 191-220.

Berman, Constance H. (ed.), *Medieval Religion: New Approaches* (New York-London: Routledge, 2005).

————— *Women and Monasticism in Medieval Europe: Sisters and Patrons of the Cistercian Reform* (Kalamazoo-Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 2002).

Berrouard, Marie-François, “La pénitence publique durant les six premiers siècles. Histoire et sociologie”, *La Maison-Dieu*, 118 (1974), pp. 92-130.

Bienvenu, Jean-Marc, *L’Etonnant Fondateur de Fontevraud Robert D’Arbrissel* (Paris: Nouvelles Editions Latines, 1981).

Blanc, Odile, “From Battlefield to Court: The Invention of Fashion in the Fourteenth Century”, in Désirée G. Koslin and Janet Snyder (eds.), *Encountering Medieval Textiles and Dress: Objects, Texts, Images* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 157-172.

————— “Historiographie du vêtement: un bilan”, in Michel Pastoureau (ed.), *Le Vêtement: histoire, archéologie et symbolique vestimentaires au Moyen Ages*, Cahiers du Léopard d’Or, Vol. 1 (Paris: Léopard d’Or, 1989), pp. 7-33.

————— “Images du monde et portraits d’habits: les recueils de costume à la Renaissance”, *Bulletin du bibliophile* 2 (1995), pp. 221-261.

————— *Parades et parures: l’invention du corps de mode à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997).

Boaga, Emanuele and Devaux, Augustin, “L’abito degli eremiti”, in LSDE, pp. 517-20.

Block Friedman, John, “The Iconography of Dagged Clothing and Its Reception by Moralistic Writers”, in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 9 (2013), pp. 121-138.

Bogatyrev, Petr, *The functions of folk costume in Moravian Slovakia* (The Hague-Paris: Mouton, 1971 [1937]).

Bolton, Brenda, *The Medieval Reformation* (London: Edward Arnold, 1983).

Boquet, Damien, “Écrire et représenter la dénudation de François d’Assise au XIIIe siècle”, *Rives nord-méditerranéennes*, 30 (2008), pp. 39-63.

Borchardt, Karl, "Competition between the Military-Religious Orders in Central Europe, c. 1140-1270", in Judi Upton-Ward (ed.), *The Military Orders, Volume 4: On Land and by Sea*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

Brenninkmeyer, Ingrid, *The Sociology of Fashion* (Paris: Librairie du recueil Sirey, 1963).

Beward, Christopher, *The Culture of Fashion: A New History of Fashionable Dress* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).

————— "Cultures, Identities, Histories: Fashioning a Cultural Approach to Dress", in *Fashion Theory*, 2 (1998), pp. 301-314.

Brooke, Rosalind B., *Early Franciscan Government: Elias to Bonaventure* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959).

————— *The Image of St Francis, Responses to Sainthood in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: University Press, 2006).

Brundage, James A. and Makowski, Elizabeth M., "Enclosure of nuns: the decretal Periculoso and its commentators", in *Journal of Medieval History*, 20 (2004), pp. 143-155.

Brüggen, Elke, *Kleidung und Mode in der höfischen Epik des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter-Universitätsverlag, 1989).

Bryan, Lindsay, "Vae Mundo a Scandalis": *The Sin of Scandal in Medieval England*, Ph.D. dissertation, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1998).

Buisson, Ludwig, *Potestas und Caritas. Die Päpstliche Gewalt im Spätmittelalter* (Köln: Graz, 1958).

Burns, E. Jane (ed.), *Medieval Fabrications: Dress, Textiles, Clothwork, and Other Cultural Imaginings* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

Burr, David, "John XXII and the Spirituals: Is Angelo Clareno Telling The Truth?", *Franciscan Studies*, 63 (2005), pp. 271-287.

————— *Olivi and Franciscan Poverty: The Origins of the Usus Pauper Controversy*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989).

————— *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century after Saint Francis* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001).

Cacciamani, G., "Camaldolesi", in *DIP*, Vol. I (1974), cols. 1718-25.

Callaey, F., *L'idéalisme franciscain spirituel au XIVe siècle: étude sur Ubertain de Casale* (Louvain: Bureau du Recueil, 1911).

————— “L’Infiltration des idées Franciscaines Spirituelles chez les Frères Mineurs Capucins au 16<sup>e</sup> siècle”, in *Miscellanea Francesco Ehrle*, 1 (1924), pp. 388-403.

Cannarozzi, C., “Ricerche sulla vita di Fra Mariano da Firenze”, in *Studi Francescani* 27 (1930), pp. 31-71.

Cannon, Joanna, “Pietro Lorenzetti and the History of the Carmelite Order”, in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 50 (1987), pp. 18-28.

Cantarella, Glaucio Maria, *I monaci di Cluny* (Torino: Einaudi, 1993).

Cargnoni, Costanzo, “L'immagine di San Francesco nella riforma cappuccina”, in *Francesco d'Assisi nella Storia*, Vol. II (Roma: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 1983), pp. 25-53.

Carpaneto, Cassiano, “Lo stato dei Penitenti nel «Corpus Iuris Canonici»”, in Mariano D’Alatri (ed.), *I frati Penitenti di San Francesco nella società del Due e Trecento*, Atti del 2<sup>o</sup> Convegno di Studi Francescani, Roma, 12-13-14 ottobre 1976 (Roma: Istituto storico dei Cappuccini, 1977), pp. 9-19.

Carroll, Eamon, “The Marian Theology of Arnold Bostius, (1445-1499)”, *Carmelus* 9 (1962), pp. 197-236.

Carroll-Clark, Susan M., “Bad Habits: Clothing and Textile References in the Register of Eudes Rigaud, Archbishop of Rouen”, in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*. Vol. 1 (2005), pp. 81-103.

Catena, Claudio, *Le Carmelitane: Storia e Spiritualità* (Roma: Institutum Carmelitanum, 1969).

Ceroke, Christian, “The Credibility of the Scapular Promise”, *Carmelus* 11 (1964), pp. 81-123.

Cerrini, Simonetta, “Templari”, in LSDE, pp. 281-284.

Clark, J. P. H., “A defense of the Carmelite Order by John Hornby, O. Carm., A.D. 1374”, *Carmelus* 32 (1985), pp. 73-206.

Concha Sahli, Alejandra, “Más allá de las fibras: el estudio de la indumentaria medieval y las problemáticas de su utilización como fuente histórica”, in Andrea V. Neyra and Gerardo Rodríguez (eds.) *¿Qué implica ser medievalista? Prácticas y reflexiones en torno al oficio del historiador. Vol 1, El Medioevo Europeo* (Mar del Plata: Universidad de Mar del Plata, Sociedad Argentina de Estudios Medievales, 2012), pp. 239-256.

Constable, Giles, "The Ceremonies and Symbolism of Entering Religious Life and Taking the Monastic Habit, from the Fourth to the Twelfth Century", in *Segni e riti nella chiesa altomedievale occidentale*, Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 33, 11-17 aprile 1985 (Spoleto: Presso la sede del Centro, 1987), pp. 771-834.

————— *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: University Press, 1996).

Cook, William R., *Images of St Francis of Assisi: in Painting, Stone, and Glass; from the Earliest Images to ca. 1320 in Italy. A Catalogue* (Firenze: L.S. Olschki; Perth, W.A.: Dept. of Italian of the University of W. Australia, 1999).

Copsey, Richard, *Carmel in Britain: Studies on the Early History of the Carmelite Order. Volume III: The Hermits from Mount Carmel* (Faversham-Rome: Saint Albert's Press and Edizioni Carmelitane, 2004).

Crane, Susan, *The Performance of the Self. Ritual, Clothing, and Identity During the Hundred Years War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

Crawford Galea, Kate, "Unhappy Choices: Factors That Contributed to the Decline and Condemnation of the Beguines", in *Vox Benedictina* 10 (1993), pp. 56-73.

Crudo, Gianluca, "Padre Zaccaria Boverio da Zaluzzo e le sue Annotazione sui Frati Cappuccini della Calabria [1525-1612]", in *Italia Franciscana* 85 (2019), pp. 499-530.

Culler, Jonathan, *Saussure* (Glasgow: Fontana, 1990).

D'Alatri, Mariano, "Genesi della Regola di Niccolò IV: aspetti storici" in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La "Supra Montem" di Nicolo' IV (1289): Genesi e Diffusione di una Regola*, Atti del 5° Convegno di studi Francescani, Ascoli Piceno, 26-27 ottobre 1987 (Roma: Analecta TOR, 1988), pp. 93-107.

————— *I Cappuccini. Storia di una famiglia francescana* (Milano: San Paolo, 1997).

Da Ceva, Vittorio, "Padre Zaccaria Boverio teologo e annalista", *Italia Franciscana* 24 (1949) 133-141.

De La Haye, Amy and Wilson, Elizabeth (eds.), *Defining Dress: Dress as Object, Meaning, and Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).



Denny-Brown, Andrea, *Fashioning Change: The Trope of Clothing in High- and Late-Medieval England* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2012).

————— “Old Habits Die Hard: Vestimentary Change in William Durandus’s *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*”, in *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 39 (2009), pp. 545-570.

De Saussure, Ferdinand, *Course In General Linguistics*, Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye (eds.), Wade Baskin, translator (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1959 [1916]).

De Vogüé, Adalbert and Engelbert, Pius, “Formazione ed evoluzione dell'abito monastico”, in LSDE, pp. 63-86.

Demurger, Alain, *Moines et Guerriers. Les ordres religieux-militaires au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Seuil, 2010).

*Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques*, Tom. X, (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1938).

*Dizionario degli istituti di perfezione*, Guerrino Pelliccia and Giancarlo Rocca (eds.) (Turin: Edizioni Paoline, 1974-).

Douglas, Mary, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (London-New York: Routledge, 1996).

Douie, Decima L., *The Nature and the Effect of the Heresy of the Fraticelli*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1932).

————— “Some Treatises Against the Fraticelli in the Vatican Library”, in *Franciscan Studies*, 38 (1978), pp. 10-80.

Du Cange, C. et al., *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*, Tom. I, (Niort: L. Favre, 1883-1887).

Dubois, J., “Certosini”, in DIP, Vol. II (1975), cols. 782-821.

————— “Tirone”, in DIP, vol. IX (1997), col. 1175.

Dufeil, M. M., *Guillaume de Saint-Amour et la polémique universitaire parisienne, 1250-1259* (Paris: Éditions A. & J. Picard, 1972).

Eco, Umberto, “Social Life as a Sign System”, in David Robey (ed.), *Structuralism: An Introduction. The Wolfson College Lectures, 1972* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), pp. 57-72.

Edden, Valerie, "The Mantle of Elijah: Carmelite Spirituality in England in the Fourteenth Century" in Marion Glasscoe (ed.), *The Medieval Mystical Tradition: England, Ireland and Wales. Exeter Symposium VI: Papers Read at Charney Manor, July 1999* (Cambridge: Boydell & Brewer Ltd, 1999), pp. 67-83.

Egger, C., "Canonici Regolari", in DIP, Vol. II (1974), cols. 46-63.

Ehrle, Franz, "Die Spiritualen, ihr Verhältniss zum Franziskanenorden und zu den Fraticellen", in Heinrich Denifle and Franz Ehrle (eds.), *Archiv für Litteratur- und Kirchengeschichte des Mittelalters*, Vol. 4 (1888), pp. 1-190.

Elbel, Martin, "The Making of a Perfect Friar: Habit and Reform in the Franciscan Tradition", in Jaroslav Miller and László Kontler (eds.), *Friars, Nobles and Burghers – Sermons, Images and Prints. Studies of Culture and Society in Early-Modern Europe*, In Memoriam István György Tóth (Budapest-New York: Central European University Press, 2010), pp. 149-175.

Elisée de la Nativité, *Le Scapulaire du Carmel, Etude historique* (Tarascon: Editions du Carmel, 1958).

Elliot, Dyan, "Dressing and Undressing the Clergy: Rites of Ordination and Degradation", in E. Jane Burns (ed.), *Medieval Fabrications*, pp. 55-69.

Elm, Kaspar, "Augustinus Canonicus–Augustinus Eremita: A Quattrocento Cause Célèbre", in Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (eds.), *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1990), pp. 83-107.

Emery, Richard, "The Friars of the Blessed Mary and the Pied Friars", *Speculum*, 24 (April 1949), pp. 228-238.

————— "The Second Council of Lyons and the Mendicant Orders", in *The Catholic Historical Review*, 39 (1953), pp. 257-271.

Epstein, Stephan R., and Prak, Maarten (eds.), *Guilds, Innovation and the European Economy, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Epstein, Steven A., *Wage Labor and Guilds in Medieval Europe* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

Esser, Kajetan, "La Lettera di san Francesco ai fedeli", in *Collectanea Franciscana* 43, (1973), pp. 65-78.

Evangelisti, Silvia, *Nuns. A History of Convent Life, 1450-1700* (Oxford: University Press, 2007).

Faloci Pulignani, D. M., "Il B. Pauluccio Trinci da Foligno", in *Miscellanea Francescana* 6, (1896), pp. 97-128.

Father Cuthbert, *The Capuchins: A Contribution to the History of the Counter-Reformation* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1928).

Fedi, M.E., Cartocci, A., Taccetti, F., and Mandò, P. A., "AMS radiocarbon dating of medieval textile relics: The frocks and the pillow of St. Francis of Assisi" in *Nuclear Instruments and Methods in Physics Research B*, 266, Issue 10 (2008), pp. 2251-54.

Fernandez Sotelo, Anel, "De capuchas y demonios: un estudio sobre los orígenes míticos de la orden de los frailes menores capuchinos", *Clío*, 4, n. 32 (2004), pp. 105-125.

————— "El prodigioso hábito capuchino. Construcciones y violencia simbólica en la escritura de Zacarías Boverio", *Dimensión Antropológica*, 55 (2012), pp. 121-149.

Fizzard, Allison D., "Shoes, Boots, Leggings, and Cloaks: The Augustinian Canons and Dress in Later Middle England", in *Journal of British Studies*, 46 (2007), pp. 245-262.

Forey, Alan, "Saint-Thomas d'Acre, ordre de", in Nicole Bériou and Philippe Josserand (eds.), *Prier et Combattre. Dictionnaire européen des ordres militaires au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Fayard, 2009), pp. 826-827.

————— "Templari", in DIP, Vol. IX (1997), cols. 886-96.

————— "The military order of St Thomas of Acre", in *The English Historical Review*, 364, (July 1977), pp. 481-503.

Fossa, Ugo, "Camaldolesi", in LSDE, pp. 142-145.

Fregona, Antonio, *I frati cappuccini nel primo secolo di vita (1525-1619): approccio critico alle fonti storiche, giuridiche e letterarie più importanti* (Padova: Messaggero, 2006).

Friedman, Elias, *The Latin Hermits of Mount Carmel: A Study in Carmelite Origins* (Roma: Teresianum 1979).

Frugoni, Chiara, *Chiara d'Assisi: una solitudine abitata* (Bari: Laterza, 2006).

Galbraith, G. R., *The Constitutions of the Dominican Order, 1216 to 1360* (Manchester: University Press, 1925).

García y García, Antonio, *Iglesia, sociedad y derecho*, Vol. II (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 1987).

————— “La regla de Nicolao IV: aspectos jurídicos”, in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La “Supra Montem” di Nicolo’ IV (1289): Genesi e Diffusione di una Regola*, Atti del 5° Convegno di studi Francescani, Ascoli Piceno, 26-27 ottobre 1987 (Roma: Analecta TOR, 1988), pp. 109-131.

Geertz, Clifford, *The Interpretation of Cultures. Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

Geltner, G., “Brethren Behaving Badly: A Deviant Approach to Medieval Antifraternalism”, *Speculum* 85 (2010), pp. 47-64.

————— *The Making of Medieval Antifraternalism: Polemic, Violence, Deviance, and Remembrance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Gieben, Servus, “L’iconografia dei Penitenti e Niccolò IV”, in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La “Supra Montem” di Nicolo’ IV (1289): Genesi e Diffusione di una Regola*, Atti del 5° Convegno di studi Francescani, Ascoli Piceno, 26-27 ottobre 1987 (Roma: Analecta TOR, 1988), pp. 289-304.

————— “Per la storia dell’abito francescano”, in *Collectanea Franciscana*, 66, 3-4 (1996), pp. 431-478.

Gilbert, Creighton, “Some Special Images for Carmelites, circa 1330-1430”, in Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (eds.), *Christianity and the Renaissance*, pp. 161-207.

González Arce, José Damián, *Apariencia y poder: la legislación suntuaria castellana en los siglos XIII y XV* (Jaén: Universidad de Jaén, 1998).

Gouguenheim, Sylvain, *Les chevaliers Teutoniques* (Paris: Éditions Tallandier, 2007).

Grundmann, Herbert, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages: The Historical Links between Heresy, the Mendicant Orders, and the Women's Religious Movement in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century, with the Historical Foundations of German Mysticism* (Notre Dame, Ind.-London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995).

Gutierrez, David, *The Augustinians in the Middle Ages, 1256-1356* (Roma: Augustinian Historical Institute, Villanova University, 1984).

Hallinger, K., *Gorze-Kluny: Studien zu den monastischen Lebensformen und Gegensätzen im Hochmittelalter*, Vol. 2 (Herder: Romae, 1951).

Harvey, Barbara F., *Monastic Dress in the Middle Ages, Precept and Practice* (Great Britain: The William Urry Memorial Trust, 1988).

Harte, N. B. and Ponting, K. G. (eds.), *Cloth and clothing in medieval Europe: Essays in Memory of Professor E.M. Carus-Wilson* (London: Heinemann Educational, 1983).

Heene, Katrien, "Gender and Mobility in the Low Countries: Traveling Women in Thirteenth-Century Exempla and Saint's Lives", in Ellen E. Kittell and Mary A. Suydam (eds.), *The Texture of Society: Medieval Women in the Southern Low Countries* (New York-Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 31-49.

Heller, Sarah-Grace, "Angevin-Sicilian Sumptuary Statutes of the 1290s: Fashion in the Thirteenth-Century Mediterranean", in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 11 (2015), pp. 79-98.

————— "Anxiety, Hierarchy, and Appearance in Thirteenth-Century Sumptuary Laws and the *Roman de la rose*", in *French historical studies*, 27 (2004), pp. 311-348.

————— *Fashion in Medieval France* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2007).

————— "Limiting Yardage and Changes of Clothes: Sumptuary Legislation in Thirteenth-Century France, Languedoc and Italy", in E. Jane Burns (ed.), *Medieval Fabrications*, pp. 121-136.

Helmholz, Richard, "Scandalum in the Medieval Canon Law and in the English Ecclesiastical Courts", in *127 Zeitschrift Der Savigny-Stiftung fur Rechtsgeschichte*, Kan. Abt. 258 (2010), pp. 258-274.

Hendriks, Rudolf, "La Succession Héréditaire (1280-1451)", in *Élie le prophète*, Vol. 2. *Études Carmelitaines*, 35 (1956), pp. 34-81.

Higley, Sarah L., "Dressing Up the Nuns: The *Lingua Ignota* and Hildegard of Bingen's Clothing", in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 6 (2010), pp. 93-109.

Hodges, Laura F., *Chaucer and Clothing: Clerical and Academic Costume in the General Prelude to the Canterbury Tales* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2005).

Hollander, Anne, *Seeing Through Clothes* (Berkeley-London: University of California Press, 1993).

Hunt, Alan, *Governance of Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1996).

Izbicki, Thomas M., "Failed Censures: Ecclesiastical Regulation of Women's Clothing in Late Medieval Italy", in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 5 (2009), pp. 37-53.

————— "Forbidden Colors in the Regulation of Clerical Dress from the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) to the Time of Nicholas of Cusa (d. 1464)", in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 1 (2006), pp. 105-114.

Jasper, Cynthia R. and Roach-Higgins, Mary Ellen, "Role Conflict and Conformity in Dress", in Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins, Joanne B. Eicher and Kim K. P. Johnson (eds.), *Dress and Identity* (New York: Fairchild Publications, 1995), pp. 139-146.

Johnson, Penelope D., *Equal in Monastic Profession. Religious Women in Medieval France* (Chicago-London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).

Joseph, Nathan, *Uniforms and Nonuniforms: Communication through Clothing* (New York-London: Greenwood, 1986).

Jotischky, Andrew, *The Carmelites and Antiquity: Mendicants and their pasts in the Middle Ages*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

Jullien, Eva and Pauly, Michael (eds.), *Craftsmen and Guilds in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016).

Keupp, Jan, *Die Wahl des Gewandes: Mode, Macht und Möglichkeitssinn in Gesellschaft un Politik des Mittelalters* (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke Verlag 2010).

Knowles, David, *The Religious Orders in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

Knox, Lezlie S., *Creating Clare of Assisi: Female Franciscan Identities in Later Medieval Italy* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

Kortleven, L. M., "Conrad d'Offida," in *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*, Vol. 13 (1956), p. 495.

Koslin, Désirée, "The Robe of Simplicity: Initiation, Robing, and Veiling of Nuns in the Middle Ages", in Gordon, Stewart (ed.), *Robes and Honor: The Medieval World of Investiture* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000), pp. 255-274.

Koslin, Désirée, and Snyder, Janet (eds.), *Encountering medieval textiles and dress: objects, texts, images* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002).

Kovesi Killerby, Catherine, *Sumptuary Law in Italy, 1200-1500* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002).

Krass, Andreas, *Geschriebene Kleider: Höfische Identität als literarisches Spiel* (Tübingen: Francke, 2006).

Kuhns, Elizabeth, *The Habit: A History of the Clothing of Catholic Nuns* (New York: Doubleday, 2003).

Lachaud, Frédérique, "Dress and Social Status in England before the Sumptuary Laws", in Peter Coss and Maurice Keen (eds.), *Heraldry, Pageantry and Social Display in Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008).

Lambert, Malcolm, *Franciscan Poverty. The doctrine of the absolute poverty of Christ and the Apostles in the Franciscan Order, 1210-1323* (London: S.P.C.K., 1961).

Lapsanski, Duane V., *Evangelical Perfection. An Historical Examination of the Concept in the Early Franciscan Sources* (Assisi: St Bonaventure University, 1977).

Lauwers, Michel, "Entre béguinisme et mysticisme. La vie de Marie d'Oignies (†1213) de Jacques de Vitry ou la définition d'une sainteté féminine", in *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 66 (1992), pp. 46-70.

Lawrence, C. H., *Medieval Monasticism. Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages* (London-New York: Longman, 1989).

Lea, Henry Charles, *The Inquisition of the Middle Ages* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1963).

*Le corps et sa parure / The Body and its Adornment*, Micrologus XV (Firenze: SISMEL edizioni del Galluzzo, 2007).

Leff, Gordon, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages. The Relation of Heterodoxy to Dissent c.1250-c.1450* (Manchester: Manchester University Press; New York: Barnes & Noble, 1967).

Lemeneva, Elena M., "'Do Not Scandalize Thy Brother:' Scandal as Preached on by Jacobus de Voragine and Other Thirteenth-Century Sermon-Writers", in Gerhard Jaritz (ed.), *Scandala*, Medium Aevum Quotidianum, Sonderband XXII, (Krems, 2008), pp. 18-32.

Leoncini, Giovanni, "Certosini", in LSDE, pp. 154-157.

Lerner, Robert E., *The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages* (Berkeley-Los Angeles-London: University of California Press, 1972).

Linehan, Peter, *The ladies of Zamora* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997).

Lippini, Pietro, "Fratelli Predicatori", in LSDE, pp. 303-310.

Logan, Donald, *Runaway Religious in Medieval England, c.1240-1540* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Loschiavo, Luigi M., "Canonici regolari: un abito da chierici", in LSDE, pp. 87-91.

Luchaire, Achille, *Innocent III. Le concile de Latran et la réforme de l'Église* (Paris: Librairie Hachette et Cie., 1908).

Lunari, Marco, "Umiliati e Umiliate", in LSDE, pp. 393-395.

Lurie, Alison, *The Language of Clothes* (London: Heinemann, 1981).

Lustrissimi, Igino, "Paracleto", LSDE, pp. 194-5.

M. Powell, James, "Frederick II, the Hohenstaufen, and the Teutonic Order in the Kingdom of Sicily", in Malcolm Barber (ed.), *The Military Orders. Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1994).

Maccarrone, Michele, "Riforma e Sviluppo della Vita Religiosa con Innocenzo III", in *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia*, 16 (1962), pp. 29-72.

————— *Studi su Innocenzo III* (Padova: Editrice Antenore, 1972).

MacVicar, Thaddeus, *The Franciscan Spirituals and the Capuchin Reform* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, 1986).

Madou, Mireille, *Le Costume Civil* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1986).

Makowski, Elizabeth, "A Pernicious Sort of Woman": *Quasi-Religious Women and Canon Lawyers in the Later Middle Ages* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2005).

————— "Mulieres Religiosae, Strictly Speaking: Some Fourteenth-Century Canonical Opinions", in *The Catholic Historical Review*, 85 (1999), pp. 1-14.

Manselli, Raoul, *Spirituali e Beghini in Provenza* (Roma, Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo. Studi storici. fasc. 31-34, 1959).

Mansfield, Mary C., *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France* (Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press, 1995).



Mayo, Janet, *A History of Ecclesiastical Dress* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1984).

McCracken, Grant, "Clothing as Language: An object lesson in the study of the expressive properties of material culture", in Barrie Reynolds and Margaret A. Stott (eds.), *Material Anthropology: Contemporary Approaches to Material Culture* (Lanham-London: University Press of America, 1987), pp. 103-128.

McDonnell, Ernest W., *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture. With Special Emphasis on the Belgian Scene* (New York: Octagon Books, 1969).

McNamara, Jo Ann, *Sisters in Arms: Catholic Nuns through Two Millennia* (Cambridge, Mass.-London: Harvard University Press, 1996).

Meens, Rob, *Penance in Medieval Europe, 600-1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

Meersseman, G. G., *Ordo Fraternalitatis. Confraternite e pietà dei laici nel Medioevo*, Vol. I (Roma: Herder, 1977).

Mercanti, Lara and Straffi, Giovanni, *Quando l'abito faceva il monaco: 62 figurini monastici conservati nel Museo Diocesano di santo Stefano al Ponte di Firenze* (Firenze: Edizioni Polistampa, 2006).

Mercati, A. and Pelzer, A. (eds.) *Dizionario Ecclesiastico*, Tom. I (Torino, 1953).

Miller, John D., *Beads and Prayers: The Rosary in History and Devotion* (London: Burns & Oates, 2002).

Miller, Maureen C., *Clothing the Clergy: Virtue and Power in Medieval Europe, c. 800-1200* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014).

Moisan, André, "L'habit monastique: De la plaisanterie au texte littéraire" in *Le nu et le vêtu au Moyen Âge* (Aix-en-Provence: Presses universitaires de Provence, 2001), pp. 243-254.

Monti, Gennaro Maria, *Le Confraternite Medievali dell'Alta e Media Italia*, Vol. 1 (Venezia: "La nuova Italia" Editrice, 1927).

Moorman, John, *A History of the Franciscan Order from its Origins to the year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).

More, Alison, "Canonical Change and the Orders of 'Franciscan' Tertiaries", in Bert Roest and Johanneke Uphoff (eds.), *Religious Orders and Religious*

*Identity Formation, ca. 1420-1620. Discourses and Strategies of Observance and Pastoral Engagement* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2016), pp. 69-85.

————— “Institutionalizing Penitential Life in Later Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Third Orders, Rules, and Canonical Legitimacy,” in *Church History*, 83, (June 2014), pp. 297-323.

Morello, Giovanni, “Note Sulla Croce, Armatura ed ‘Abito’ dei Cavalieri di Malta”, in *Waffen-und Kostümkunde: Zeitschrift der Gessellschaft für Historische Waffen- und Kostümkunde* 22 (1980), pp. 89-105.

Morton, Nicholas, *The Medieval Military Orders, 1120-1314* (Harlow: Pearson, 2013).

Mosher Stuard, Susan, *Gilding the Market: Luxury and Fashion in Fourteenth-Century Italy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

Mulder-Bakker, Anneke B., *Mary of Oignies: Mother of Salvation* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006).

Mueller, Joan, *The Privilege of Poverty: Clare of Assisi, Agnes of Prague, and the Struggle for a Franciscan Rule for Women* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006).

Muzzarelli, Maria Giuseppina, *Guardaroba medievale. Vesti e società dal XIII al XVI secolo* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1999).

————— “Il corpo spogliato. Multe, scomuniche e stratagemmi per il rispetto delle leggi suntuarie” in *Le corps et sa parure / The Body and Its Adornment*, pp. 299-423.

————— *La legislazione suntuaria: secoli XIII-XVI: Emilia Romagna* (Roma: Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali, Direzione generale per gli archivi, 2002).

————— *Penitenze nel Medioevo, Uomini e modelli a confronto* (Bologna: Pàtron Editore, 1994).

Muzzarelli, Maria Giuseppina and Campanini, Antonella (eds.), *Disciplinare il lusso: La legislazione suntuaria in Italia e in Europa tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna* (Roma: Carocci, 2003).

Netherton, Robin and Owen-Crocker, Gale R. (eds.), *Medieval Clothing and Textiles Series* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press).

Newton, Stella Mary, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince: A Study of the Years 1340-1365* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1980).

Nicholson, Helen J., *Images of the Military Orders, 1128-1291: Spiritual, Secular, Romantic*, Ph.D. Thesis, (University of Leicester, 1989).

————— *Templars, Hospitallers, and Teutonic Knights: Images of the Military Orders, 1128-1291* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1993).

Nimmo, Duncan, *Reform and division in the Medieval Franciscan Order, from Saint Francis to the Foundation of the Capuchins* (Rome: Capuchin Historical Institute, 1987).

Noble, Thomas F. X. and Van Engen, John (eds.), *European Transformations: The Long Twelfth Century* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012).

Odoardi, Giovanni, "L'Ordine della penitenza di San Francesco nei documenti pontifici del secolo XIII", in O. Schmucki (ed.), *L'Ordine della Penitenza di San Francesco d'Assisi nel secolo XIII*, Atti del convegno di studi francescani, Assisi, 3-4-5 luglio 1972, (Roma: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 1973), pp. 79-115.

Ogilvie, Sheilagh, *Institutions and European Trade: Merchant Guilds, 1000–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Oldland, John, "Cistercian Clothing and Its Production at Beaulieu Abbey, 1269-70", in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 9 (2013), pp. 73-96.

Oppenheim, Philippus, *Das Mönchskleid im chrislichen Altertum* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder & Co., 1931).

Oury, G., "Fontevrault", in *DIP*, Vol. IV (1977), cols. 127-9.

Paresys, Isabelle (ed.), *Paraître at apparences en Europe occidentale: du Moyen Âge à nos jours* (Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2008).

Parisse, Michel (ed.), *Les Chanoines Réguliers: Émergence et Expansion (Xie-Xiiiè Siècles): Actes du Sixième Colloque International du CERCOR, Le Puy en Velay, 29 Juin-1er Juillet 2006* (Saint-Étienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Étienne, 2009).

Pastoreau, Michel (ed.), *Le Vêtement: histoire, archéologie et symbolique vestimentaires au Moyen Ages*, Cahiers du Léopard d'Or, Vol. 1 (Paris: Léopard d'Or, 1989).

————— *The Devil's Cloth: a History of Stripes and Striped Fabric* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

————— *Una historia simbólica de la Edad Media occidental* (Buenos Aires: Katz, 2006).

Pásztor, Edith, “La «*Supra Montem*» e la cancelleria pontificia”, in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La “Supra Montem” di Nicolo’ IV (1289): Genesi e Diffusione di una Regola*, Atti del 5° Convegno di studi Francescani, Ascoli Piceno, 26-27 ottobre 1987 (Roma: Analecta TOR, 1988), pp. 65-92.

Pazzelli, Raffaele, *St. Francis and the Third Order* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1989).

Péano, Pierre, “Les Béguins du Languedoc ou la crise du T.O.F. dans la France méridionale (XIII-XIV<sup>e</sup> siècles)”, in Mariano D’Alatri (ed.), *I frati Penitenti di San Francesco nella società del Due e Trecento*, Atti del 2° Convegno di Studi Francescani, Roma, 12-13-14 ottobre 1976 (Roma: Istituto storico dei Cappuccini, 1977), pp. 139-159.

Peterson, Ingrid, *Clare of Assisi: A Biographical Study* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1993).

————— “The Third Order of Francis”, in Michael J. P. Robson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Francis of Assisi* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 193-207.

Pierre, Benoist, “L’habit faisait-il le moine? Le paraître des religieux au temps de la réforme catholique (France, Italie)”, in Isabelle Paresys (ed.), *Paraître at apparences en Europe occidentale*, pp. 151-164.

Piponnier, Françoise, “Une révolution dans le costume masculin au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle”, in Michel Pastoureau (ed.), *Le Vêtement: histoire, archéologie et symbolique vestimentaires au Moyen Ages*, pp. 225-242.

Piponnier, Françoise and Mane, Perrine, *Se vêtir au Moyen Âge* (Paris: A. Biro, 1995).

Pistolese, R. et al., “Costume dei Monaci e dei Religiosi”, in DIP, Vol. 3 (1976), cols. 204-249.

Platelle, Henri, “Le problème du scandale: les nouvelles modes masculines aux XI<sup>e</sup> et XII<sup>e</sup> siècles”, in *Revue belge de philologie et d’histoire*, 53 (1975), pp. 1071- 1096.

Pompei, Alfonso, “Il movimento penitenziale nei secoli XII-XIII”, in O. Schmucki (ed.), *L’Ordine della Penitenza di San Francesco d’Assisi nel secolo XIII*, Atti del convegno di studi francescani, Assisi, 3-4-5 luglio 1972, (Roma: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 1973), pp. 9-40.

Potestà, Gian Luca, *Angelo Clareno: dai poveri eremiti ai fraticelli* (Roma: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 1990).

————— *Storia ed escatologia in Ubertino da Casale* (Milano: Vita e pensiero. Pubblicazioni della Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, 1980).

Power, Eileen, *English Medieval Nunneries: c.1275 to 1535* (London: Hafner Publishing Co.,1964).

————— *Medieval Women* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1997).

Prigent, Daniel, “Fontevraud”, in LSDE, pp. 186-188.

Rano, Balbino, “Agostiniani” in LSDE, pp. 378-80.

————— “L'utilizzazione della RA: dal medioevo a oggi”, in DIP, Vol. VII (1983), pp. 1554-5.

Reynolds, Roger, *Clerics in the Early Middle Ages* (Aldershot-Brookfield: Ashgate Variorum, 1999).

Rocca, Giancarlo, “I monaci guerrieri”, in LSDE, pp. 93-96.

————— “Il guardaroba religioso”, in LSDE, pp. 35-61.

————— “L'abito di s. Francesco d'Assisi”, in LSDE, pp. 319-321.

————— (ed.), *La Sostanza dell'Effimero. Gli abiti degli Ordini religiosi in Occidente* (Roma: Edizione Paoline, 2009).

Roest, Bert, *Franciscan Literature of Religious Instruction Before the Council of Trent* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2004).

————— *Order and Disorder: The Poor Clares between Foundation and Reform* (Leiden: Brill 2013).

Ryan, Michael, “Structuralism and Poststructuralism”, in *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, Maryanne Cline Horowitz (ed.), Vol. 5 (Detroit-London: Charles Scribner's Sons, Thomson Gale, 2005), pp. 2260-64.

Saak, E. L., *Creating Augustine. Interpreting Augustine and Augustinianism in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Sabatier, Paul, “Description du Speculum Vitae Beati Francisci et Sociorum Ejus (éd. de 1504)” in *Opuscles de Critique Historique*, 6 (April, 1903), pp. 299-397.

————— (ed.), *Floretum S. Francisci Assisiensis. Liber aureus qui italice dicitur I Fioretti di San Francesco* (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1902), pp. i-xvi.

Saggi, Ludovico, “Il testo della ‘Bolla Sabatina’”, *Carmelus* 13 (1966), pp. 245-302; 283-7.

————— “L’ambiente della ‘bolla sabatina’. Abito religioso e salvezza eterna in scritti medievali”, *Carmelus*, 14 (1967), pp. 63-89.

Salih, Sarah, *Versions of Virginity in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2001).

Sapori, Giovanna, “Immagini come documenti, Il caso del Fiume del terrestre paradiso (1652) di Niccolò Catalano con le incisioni di Francesco Curti”, in G. Bordi, I. Carlettini et al. (eds.), *L’officina dello sguardo. Scritti in onore di Maria Andaloro* (Roma: Gangemi editore, 2014), pp. 205-212.

Schmitt, Jean-Claude, *Mort d’une heresie. L’Eglise et les clerics face aux béguines et aux béghards du Rhin supérieur du XIV<sup>e</sup> au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Mouton/École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 1978).

Schlotheuber, Eva, “Best Clothes and Everyday Attire of Late Medieval Nuns”, in Rainer C. Schwinges and Regula Schorta (eds.), *Fashion and clothing in late medieval Europe / Mode und Kleidung im Europa des späten Mittelalters* (Riggisberg-Abegg-Stiftung-Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 2010), pp. 139-154.

Schwinges, Rainer C. and Schorta, Regula (eds.), *Fashion and clothing in late medieval Europe / Mode und Kleidung im Europa des späten Mittelalters* (Riggisberg-Abegg-Stiftung-Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 2010).

Margaret Scott, *Fashion in the Middle Ages* (Los Angeles, California: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2011).

————— *Medieval Dress & Fashion* (London: British Library, 2007).

Şenocak, Neslihan, *The Poor and the Perfect: The Rise of Learning in the Franciscan Order, 1209-1310* (Ithaca-London: Cornell University Press, 2012).

Sensi, Mario, *Le osservanze francescane nell’Italia centrale (secoli XIV-XV)* (Roma: Collegio S. Lorenzo da Brindisi, Istituto storico dei cappuccini 1985).

Sharpe, R., *A Handlist of the Latin Writers of Great Britain and Ireland before 1540* (Belgium: Brepols, 1997).

Simons, Walter, *Cities of Ladies. Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200-1565* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001).

Smalley, Beryl, *English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1960).

Smet, Joachim, *The Carmelites: A History of the Brothers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Vol. 2, The post Tridentine period, 1550-1600* (Darlen, Ill.: Carmelite Spiritual Center, 1976).

Stabler Miller, Tanya, *The Beguines of Medieval Paris: Gender, Patronage, and Spiritual Authority* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

Staring, Adrian (ed.), *Medieval Carmelite Heritage. Early Reflections on the Nature of the Order* (Roma: Institutum carmelitanum, Textus et Studia Carmelitana, 1989).

Stewart, Robert M., "De illis qui faciunt penitentiam." *The rule of the Secular Franciscan Order: origins, development, interpretation* (Roma: Istituto Storico Dei Cappuccini, 1991).

Sylvester, Louise M., Chambers, Mark C. and Owen-Crocker, Gale R. (eds.), *Medieval Dress and Textiles in Britain: A Multilingual Sourcebook* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014).

Szittyá, Penn R., *The Antifraternal Tradition in Medieval Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).

Tarrant, Jacqueline, "The Clementine Decrees on the Beguines: Conciliar and Papal Versions," in *Archivum Historiae Pontificae*, 12 (1974), pp. 300-308.

Taylor, Lou, "Doing the Laundry? A reassessment of Object-based Dress History", in *Fashion Theory*, 2 (1998), pp. 337-358.

————— *The Study of Dress History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).

Temperini, Lino, "Il penitente francescano nella società e nella chiesa, nei secoli XIII-XIV", in R. Pazzelli and L. Temperini (eds.), *La "Supra Montem" di Nicolo' IV (1289): Genesi e Diffusione di una Regola*, Atti del 5° Convegno di studi Francescani, Ascoli Piceno, 26-27 ottobre 1987 (Roma: Analecta TOR, 1988), pp. 325-379.

————— *Carisma e legislazione alle origini del Terzo Ordine di S. Francesco* (Roma: Editrice Franciscanum, 1996).

Tibbets Schulenberg, Jane, "Strict Active Enclosure and its Effects on the Female Monastic Experience", in John A. Nichols and Lillian Thomas Shank (eds.), *Medieval Religious Women. Vol.1 Distant Echoes* (Kalamazoo, Mich: Cistercian Publications, 1984), pp. 87-113.

Thompson, Augustine, *Cities of God: The Religion of the Italian Communes, 1125-1325* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005).

————— *Francis of Assisi: A New Biography*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2012).

Thurston, Herbert, "The Origin of the Scapular. A Criticism", in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 16 (Jul-Dec. 1904), pp. 39-75.

Tommasi, Francesco, "Ordine Teutonico", in LSDE, pp. 292-298.

Toomaspoeg, Kristjan, "Sante-Marie des Teutoniques, ordre de", in Nicole Bériou and Philippe Josserand, (eds.), *Prier et Combattre. Dictionnaire européen des ordres militaires au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Fayard, 2009), pp. 827-834.

Toumanoff, C., "Sovrano Militare Ospedaliero Ordine di Malta", in DIP, vol. VIII (1988), cols. 1934-44.

Trichet, Louis, *Le costume du clergé* (Paris: Cerf, 1986).

*Ubertino da Casale: atti del XLI Convegno internazionale: Assisi, 18-20 ottobre 2013* (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo 2014).

Valvekens, J. B., "Premonstratensi", in DIP, Vol. VII (1983), cols. 720-45.

Van Buren, Anne H., *Illuminating Fashion: Dress in the Art of Medieval France and the Netherlands, 1325-1515* (New York-London: The Morgan Library & Museum, 2011).

Van Luijk, B., "Gli Eremiti Neri Nel Dugento. Con particolare riguardo al territorio pisano e toscano. Origine, sviluppo ed unione", *Collana Storica* n° 7 (Pisa: Biblioteca Del Bollettino Storico Pisano, 1968), pp. XVI-114.

Vargas, Michael A., *Taming a Brood of Vipers: Conflict and Change in Fourteenth-Century Dominican Convents* (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

Vasaturo, R. Nicola, "Vallombrosani", in LSDE, pp. 149-159.

Vauchez, André, *François D'Assise: Entre histoire et mémoire* (Paris: Fayard, 2009).



————— “La place de la pauvreté dans les documents hagiographiques à l’époque des Spirituels”, in *Chi erano gli spirituali: atti del III Convegno internazionale: Assisi, 16-18 ottobre 1975* (Assisi: La Società, 1976), pp. 125-143.

————— “La pauvreté volontaire au Moyen Âge”, in *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, year 25, n. 6 (1970), pp. 1566-73.

————— *The Laity in the Middle Ages. Religious Beliefs and Devotional Practices* (Notre Dame-London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993).

Vedovato, Giuseppe, *Camaldoli e la Sua Congregazione Dalle Orgini al 1184. Storia e Documentazione* (Cesena: Centro Storico Benedettino Italiano, Badia di S. Maria del Monte, 1994).

Verheijen, L., “Regula Augustini”, in *DIP*, Vol. VII (1983), cols. 1542-54.

Viti, Goffredo, “Cistercensi (monaci)”, in *LSDE*, pp. 165-169.

Vollmann-Profe, Gisela, “Narratio de primordiis ordinis theutonicī”, in *The Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle, Vol. 2* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2010,) pp. 1136-7.

Von Auw, Lydia, *Angelo Clareno et les spirituels italiens* (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1979).

Warr, Cordelia, “*De Indumentis*: The importance of religious dress during the papacy of Innocent III”, in Andrea Sommerlechner (ed.), *Innocenzo III, Urbs et Orbis. Atti del Congresso Internazionale, Roma, 9-15 settembre 1998* (Roma: Società romana di storia patria, 2003), pp. 489-503.

————— *Dressing for Heaven. Religious Clothing in Italy, 1215-1545* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010).

————— “Hermits, Habits and History: The Dress of the Augustinian Hermits”, in Louise Bourdua and Anne Dunlop (eds.), *Art and the Augustinian Order in Early-Renaissance Italy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007)

————— “Materiality and Immateriality”, in *Material Religion* 6, 3 (2010), pp. 372-373.

————— “Religious habits and visual propaganda: The vision of the Blessed Reginald of Orléans”, in *Journal of Medieval History*, 28 (2002), pp. 43-72.

————— “The Devil on My Tail: Clothing and Visual Culture in the Camposanto Last Judgment”, in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles*, Vol. 11 (2015), pp. 99-118.

————— “The Striped Mantle of the Poor Clares: Image and Text in Italy in the Later Middle Ages”, in *Arte Cristiana*, 86 (1998), pp. 415-430.

Welch, John, *The Carmelite Way: An Ancient Path for Today's Pilgrim* (Eastbourne: Antony Rowe, 1996).

Zimmerman, Benedict, “The Origin of the Scapular. A new Essay on an Old Subject – From Original Sources”, in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 9 (Jan-Jun 1901), pp. 385-408.