

Reading / Writing Learners

Monastic clothing

Monks wore standardized clothes that derived from the clothes of **layman**¹ in the period of Late Antiquity and the early Medieval period. The basic **garment**² worn by the monks at Cluny, for instance, was a plain woolen tunic **girded**³ with a leather belt. Over this, the monk wore the cowl, a loose sleeveless garment reaching to the ankles in front and back, with a deep **hood**⁴ attached. The hood helped keep the monk's head warm in the cold environment of the monastery, while hiding the identity of the individual behind his monastic character. [...] Over the cowl the monk wore a loose gown with long, wide sleeves that helped keep him warm in winter and kept visible flesh to a minimum – the sleeves usually covered his hands. The monks at Cluny also wore socks and practical shoes or sandals.

1. *layman*: 'laico'.

2. *garment*: 'indumento, capo'.

3. *girded*: 'cinta'.

4. *hood*: 'cappuccio'.

[Jeffrey L. Singman, *Daily Life in Medieval Europe*, Greenwood Press, Westport 1999, p. 157]

Interpreting a secondary source

Having read the extract above, tick the box with the right option.

1. How do the monks' vestments compare to those of the secular clergy?

- a. Less complicated and without precious ornaments.
- b. More complex, but without precious ornaments.
- c. With precious ornaments.

2. Did monks wear shoes?

- a. Yes.
- b. No, they used to walk with bare feet.