

Abstract

In terms of the current rapidly growing investigative interest in the history of clothing (whether according to seasons, professional groups or geographic areas) the estate dress of Christian priesthood stands rather aside. It is caused also by the fact that within the overall history of clothing this subject represents a very specific group characterized by uninterrupted continuity, rich symbolism affirmed not only by the church regulations, but also by a local tradition. The theological teaching on priesthood and priestly estate formed as early as in the early centuries, nevertheless it did not remain a mere teaching, but it also had a practical impact on the life of a clergyman and his surroundings. The priest became the guarantor of social order and its associated values. Thus, a visible distinction between the priest and the rest of the community got even a symbolic dimension. This dissertation traces the ways in which the teaching on priesthood and priestly mission changed in the Christian community on the background of the general Church history. The priestly dress clearly communicates how a priest was perceived by a community, by the Church (or more precisely by the canon law), as well as how he perceived himself. All this is compared with extant visual material and analysis of surviving garments.