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978-1-108-08272-3 - The Principles of Gothic Ecclesiastical Architecture: Being a Brief Account of the Vestments in Use in the Church, Prior to, and the Changes Therein in and from, the Reign of Edward VI: Volume 3 – Companion

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Excerpt

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Sepulchral Effigy of a Roman Citizen, 4th or 5th Century,  
in the Museum, Caerleon, South Wales.

## CHAPTER I.

OF THE VESTMENTS IN USE IN THE CHURCH UP TO  
THE REIGN OF EDWARD VI.

**T**HE change from woollen to linen garments in the ministrations of the Jewish Church is thus described by Ezekiel:—"And it shall come to pass that when they (the priests, the Levites) enter in

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at the gates of the inner court they shall be clothed with linen garments, and no wool shall come upon them whilst they minister in the gates of the inner court and within. They shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, and shall have linen breeches upon their loins; they shall not gird themselves with anything that causeth sweat. And when they go forth into the utter court, even into the utter court to the people, they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments, and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments." In commenting upon which S. Jerome observes—" *Per quæ dicimus, non quotidianis et quibuslibet pro usu vite communis pollutis vestibus nos ingredi debere in sancta sanctorum sed munda conscientia et mundis vestibus tenere domini sacramenta.*"

During the persecutions in the three first centuries of the Christian era, when the rites of the Church and its Holy Mysteries required to be performed in secret, we can expect to meet with few notices of peculiar habits used by the clergy during the divine offices.

In the so-called *Clementine Liturgy*, perhaps the most ancient of the liturgies of the East, written not later than the early part of the fourth century, (by some considered to have been written much earlier), the following remarkable rubrical direction occurs, after the dismissal of the Catechumens:—"Then the Bishop, after having prayed secretly, and likewise the Priests, and having put on his splendid vestment, and standing at the altar,

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and signing himself with the sign of the cross upon his forehead, let him say," &c.<sup>a</sup>

It was early believed by many that as in the Old Testament there was a Divine command that the priests should in their sacred functions use certain appropriated vestments, so also were sacerdotal vestments appropriated to the Church, whence the sacred office of the Priesthood amongst the faithful might be had in greater esteem. And it can hardly be doubted but that originally the names and fashion of the sacred vestments were the same as, or derived from, those worn in civil life,—with this difference, that they were whiter and of a better quality.

Pope Stephen, who died circa A.D. 257, is said to have decreed that priests and deacons should not wear the sacred vestments in common daily use, but in the church alone.<sup>b</sup>

Eusebius of Cæsarea, in his panygeric on the building of the churches, circa A.D. 315, alludes to the tunic reaching to the feet and worn by the priests as a sacred habit; and this, I presume, was that afterwards known as the alb.<sup>c</sup>

The alb indeed as an ecclesiastical vestment is mentioned in the Canons of the supposed Fourth Council of Carthage, said to have been held A.D. 399.

<sup>a</sup> *Εὐξάμενος οὖν καθ' ἑαυτὸν ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς ἅμα τοῖς ἱερέουσιν καὶ λαμπρὰν ἐσθῆτα μετενδύς καὶ στὰς πρὸς τῷ θυσιαστηρίῳ, τὸ τρίπαιον τοῦ σταυροῦ κατὰ τοῦ μετώπου τῇ χειρὶ ποιησάμενος εἰς πάντα, εἰπάτω.*

<sup>b</sup> *Hic constituit Sacerdotes et Levitas vestibus sacratis in usu quotidiano non usi, et nisi in ecclesia tantum. Baronii Ann. 260.*

<sup>c</sup> *Amici Dei et sacerdotes qui sacra tunica talari induti. Thomassini vetus et nova ecclesie disciplina.*

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When, as Dupin tells us, Christians began in the reign of Constantine, early in the fourth century, to perform Divine service publicly, and with solemnity, there can hardly be a doubt but that the ancient ecclesiastical ceremonies were then perfected, and new ones added to them, to render the celebration of the Holy Mysteries more venerable to the people.

By the 22nd and 23rd Canons of the Council of Laodicea, held between A.D. 360—370, ministers and readers were forbidden to carry the stole.

S. Jerome, who flourished A.D. 345—420, informs us, in his *Commentary on Ezekiel*, that the habit worn in religious ministrations was different to that worn in ordinary life. *Religio alterum habitum habet in ministerio, alterum in usu vitæque communi*. He also adverts to the use of white vestments: “If the Priest, the Deacon, and others of Ecclesiastical Order proceed to the administration of the Sacrifice in a white vestment.”<sup>d</sup>

In the *Leonine Sacramentary*, circa A.D. 483, we have little of rubrical directions. In the *Gelasian Sacramentary*, circa A.D. 492, the vestments are but generally alluded to, “They proceed to the church, and entering the vestry they vest themselves according to custom.” *Procedunt ad ecclesiam et ingrediuntur in Sacrarium et induunt se vestimentis sicut mos est*.

The *Ordo Romanus*, compiled as it is said by Gelasius, circa A.D. 497, but altered by S. Gregory the Great,<sup>e</sup>

<sup>d</sup> Si Episcopus, si Presbyter Diaconus et reliquus ordo Ecclesiasticus in administratione sacrificiorum candida veste processerint.—*Con. Pel. l. I.*

<sup>e</sup> Omnis Pontifex ex hominibus assumtus, pro hominibus constituitur in his quæ ad Deum sunt. Quod intelligens S. Gregorius, mox ut Pontificatum iniiit, de Liturgia rebusque sacris rite disponendis cogitavit. *Ordi-*

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contains the earliest enumeration of the vestments I have met with. It notices the pall; the maniple; the alb; the girdle; the stole; the dalmatic; the amice; the chesible; and the cope. The mode of vesting an archbishop by the subdeacons of the district according to their order was as follows:—one vested him with the amice; another with the alb; another with the girdle; another with the dalmatic; another with the stole; another with the chesible; then one of the deacons took from the hand of a subdeacon the pall, and put it on the archbishop, and affixed it by a pin to the chesible behind and before, and on the left shoulder.<sup>f</sup>

According to this *Ordo*, when deacons were ordained there were given to them stoles and dalmatics; and when priests were ordained they received stoles and chesibles.

The different Ecclesiastical Orders are defined: the Doorkeeper; the Reader; the Exorcist; the Acolyte; the Subdeacon; the Deacon; the Priest; the Bishop.

It is then, I think, to S. Gregory the Great, at the close of the sixth century, that the development of the vestments of the Church in their entirety may be ascribed.

nem itaque Romaum a Gelasio I. quibusdam aut detractis aut additis, aut immutatis, meliori forma donavit.—*S. Gregorii Papæ vita l. II. c. iii.*

<sup>f</sup> Subdiaconi regionarii secundum ordinem suum accipiunt ad induendum pontificem ipsa vestimenta, alius lineam alius amblogium id est amictum quod dicitur humerale, alius lineam dalmaticam quam dicimus albam, alius cingulum, alius dalmaticam, alius orarium, alius planetam et sic per ordinem induunt pontificem. Novissime autem cui jusserit Dominus pontifex ex diaconibus sumit de manu subdiaconi sequentis pallium, et super pontificem induit, et illud cum acu in planeta retro et ante et in humero sinistro configit.

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Albinus Flaceus Alcuinus, who flourished in the latter part of the eighth century, (he died A.D. 804), in his book, *De Divinis Officiis*, treats of the episcopal vestments, and is the earliest writer I have met with who assigns to them severally a mystical meaning. He commences with the episcopal sandals, *Sandalia episcoporum*; after which follows the *Superhumerales*, that is the amice, which he states was to be made of fine linen, *Quod fit ex lino purissimo*; then follows the episcopal alb, *Postea sequitur poderis, quæ vulgo alba dicitur. . . . Tunica usque ad talum*; after that the girdle, *Deinde sequitur zona, quæ cingulum dicitur, qua restringitur poderis ne lave per pedes diffluat*; then follows the stole, *Sequitur orarium. Orarium id est stola*; then the dalmatic, *Dalmatica quæ sequitur, ob hoc dicitur, eo quod in Dalmatica sit reperta. Usus autem Dalmaticarum a B Silvestro Papa institutus est*; then the maniple, *Mappula quæ in sinistra parte gestatur*; then the chesible, *Casula quæ super omnia indumenta ponitur*; lastly, the Archbishopial pall, *Pallium Archiepiscoporum super omnia indumenta est, ut lamina in fronte pontificis*. I omit the mystical significations he adduces to each of the above. Such were the vestments worn by an archbishop preparatory to his celebration of the Eucharistic Rite.

Amalarius, Archbishop of Treves, who flourished in the early part of the ninth century, (he died A.D. 837), wrote four books on the offices of the Church, *De Ecclesiasticis Officiis*. In the second book he treats of the vestments, assigning to them mystical significations. He first notices the amice as worn about the neck. *Amictus est primum vestimentum nostrum quo collum un-*

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*digue cingimus*; next the alb, *Postea camisiam induimus quam Albam vocamus*,—he describes it as a long linen tunic fitting tight to the body, with close-fitting sleeves, *Ex lino tunica, est poderis id est talaris. Haec adheret corpori, et ita arcta est, et strictis manibus, ut nulla omnino in veste sit ruga, et usque ad crura descendat*; then, though out of its proper course, he takes the chesible, *Casulam, quae est generale indumentum sacrorum ducum ante caeteras vestes quae sequuntur, praeponimus*; then the stole; after which the dalmatic; then the tunic, which the priest wore over the alb, *De tunica quam sacerdos induit super camisiam*; then the pall, *De pallio quo utuntur Archiepiscopi*; lastly, the maniple, which he describes as carried in the left hand, *De sudario. In manu sinistra portatur*. He also treats *De vestimento cantorum*. Though he mentions the vestments severally he does not so consecutively in order as the priest was vested.

Rabanus Maurus, Bishop of Mentz, who flourished in the early half of the ninth century, (he died A.D. 856), wrote three books, *De Institutione Clericorum*. In the first book he treats of the sacerdotal vestments, assigning to each a mystical meaning. He commences with the Amice. *De superhumerali. Primum ergo eorum indumentum est Ephod Bad, quod interpretatur superhumeralis lineum*. Secondly, the Alb. *De podere id est tunica lineae. Secundum est linea tunica quae Grece ποδήφορ, Latine talaris dicitur, eo quod ad talos usque descendat*. Thirdly, the Girdle. *Tertium vestimentum est cingulum sive balteum, quo utuntur, ne tunica ipsa defluat, et gressum impediatur*. Fourthly, the Maniple or Fanon. *De phanone, Quartum vero mappula, sive mantile sacerdotis*

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*indumentum est, quod vulgo phanone[m] vocant, quod ob hoc eorum tunc manibus tenetur. Fifthly, the Stole. De orario, id est stola. Quintum quoque est quod orarium dicitur, licet hoc quidem stolam vocent. Sixthly, the Dalmatic. Sextum namque est, quod Dalmatica Græciæ provincia, in qua primum texta est, nuncupatur. Hæc vestis in modum est crucis facta, et passionis Domini indicium est. Habet quoque et purpureos tramites ipsa tunica, a summo usque ad ima, ante ac retro descendens, necnon et per utramque manicam. Seventhly, the Chesible. Septimum sacerdotale indumentum est, quod casulam vocant, dicta est autem per diminutionem a casa, eo quod totum hominem tegat, quasi minor casa, hanc Græci planetam nominant. Hæc supremum omnium indumentorum est, et cætera omnia enterius per suum munimen tegit et servat.* Then succeeds a notice of the Sandals, and of the Archiepiscopal Pall.

Walfridus Strabo, who flourished about the middle of the ninth century, wrote *De exordiis et incrementis rerum ecclesiasticarum liber unus*. He treats, however, very concisely of the vestments, which he enumerates in the order following:—*dalmatica, alba, mappula, orarium, cingulum, sandalia, casula, et pallium*.

Ivo, Bishop of Chartres, who flourished in the latter part of the eleventh and early part of the twelfth centuries, (he died A.D. 1115), in his third sermon or discourse treats upon the mystical significations of the sacerdotal habits. *De significationibus indumentorum sacerdotalium*.

Hugh of St. Victor, who died A.D. 1142, also treats of the vestments of the church, both in the second book of his work *De Sacramentis*, as also in his work *Speculum*



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*de Mysteriis Ecclesie*; giving to each its mystical signification.

But it is to Durandus, Bishop of Mende, who flourished in the thirteenth century, (he died A.D. 1296), that we are indebted for a work better known than any of the preceding works, his *Rationale of Divine Offices*. *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum Gulielmi Minacensis Ecclesie Episcopi*. The first published edition of this work is one of the earliest printed books of the fifteenth century, and several editions of it have since been published. As a ritualistic work it is perhaps the most complete and valuable we possess, written on that subject in the Middle Ages. In the third book he treats of the vestments with their mystical significations. An archbishop, *Pontifex*, about to celebrate, put off his ordinary garments and put on those which were clean and sacred. And first he put on his Sandals. 2nd, the Amice. 3rd, the Alb, reaching to the ankles. 4th, the Girdle. 5th, the Stole. 6th, the Tunic. 7th, the Dalmatic. 8th, the Gloves. 9th, the Ring. 10th, the Chesible. 11th, the Maniple. 12th, the Pall. 13th, the Mitre. 14th, the Pastoral staff, *Baculum*. These the writer likens to the spiritual armour spoken of by the Apostle. He tells us that six of the above were common alike to priests and bishops, namely, the Amice, Alb, Girdle, Stole, the Maniple and Chesible; and that nine were specially worn by those of Episcopal rank, namely, Stockings, Sandals, the episcopal Girdle, *succinctorium*, the Tunic, Dalmatic, Gloves, the Mitre, Ring, and Pastoral Staff.

Then he treats of the six sacerdotal vestments severally, and at length with regard to their mystical

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significations, and first of the *Amice*, worn about the neck and over the shoulders, called also the *super-humerale*—this was fastened in front of the breast by two bands or cords. After the amice came the *Alb*, a linen garment or tunic fitting close to the body, reaching to the ankles, and girt about the body with a *Girdle*, *zona seu cingulum*. Over the alb was worn the *Stole*, *orarium sive stola*, hanging down from the neck, right and left, crossed in front of the body, and fastened beneath the girdle. This was worn in a different fashion by a deacon to what it was by a priest. Next came the *Maniple*, anciently carried in the left hand, but subsequently worn over the left wrist—this was also called the *fanon*, and *sudarium*. Over all these the *Chesible* was worn, *casula seu planeta*—this was the principal vestment, and without this no celebration could take place.

Besides the six vestments above described as common to priests and bishops, nine others were specially appropriated to bishops and archbishops. These were the stockings and sandals, *calige et sandalia*, the episcopal sash, *succinctorium*, anciently worn by all bishops in addition to the girdle, now only worn by the Pope. The tunic worn over the stole, the dalmatic worn over the tunic, the episcopal gloves, the mitre with its *infulæ*, the episcopal ring, and the pastoral staff. In addition to these, archbishops were entitled to wear the pall. Durandus also tells us that the colours of the vestments were four: white, red, black, and green. Besides the above we have other articles of ecclesiastical apparel: the surplice, the cope, the tippet, the hood. Of these subsequent notice will be taken.