

Study of Christian Priesthood Costumes (Coptic-Syriac) in Egypt

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Introduction:

Apparel, its manufacture, nature, and even their appearance and how they are chosen are among the dimensions that have psychological effects surrounding the individual, and more evidence of this is the identity of the clothes for the different beliefs that express their nature, culture and even their ideas.

From this point of view, the research dealt with many previous studies, and scientific references for the nature of clothing and its appearance, and even the relationship between its parts in the extent of the impact of the realism in their use, such as costumes that are used by people with different religious doctrines, regardless of the religious name and its functions.

It is worth noting that Christianity since its emergence, specifically in the first century AD, as a result of many circumstances, whether political, economic or social, and the constant pressures, especially the Roman state, which controlled many societies in the world at the time, and this helped in its spread in many places, including Egypt, to which its people were attached, specifically in the middle of the first century AD by Saint Mark, who wrote the second gospel in 56 AD, and since that date, Egypt has known Christianity. (Samir Fawzy -1997)

Christian denominations varied, including the Syriac Orthodox Church, which was called the Church of Antioch, and this name dates back to the dawn of Christianity when Antioch was the capital of Syria and one of the three major capitals of the Roman state. (Mohammed bin Mahmoud Al Abdullah -2016)

In view of the diversity of those Christian sects, which, like all religions, choose the body of their men in the way they choose fashion, which differed between the different sects for concepts and philosophy specific to each sect, including the Orthodox Church.

Throughout history, the clergy's fashion has changed and diversified according to many influences, including social, economic, cultural and political ones, up to what it is at the present time. (Majid Magdy -1990)

(Markarius the Monk -1992) pointed out the importance of the costumes of the Christian clergy and its impact that gives them prestige, whether in the costume as a whole or in its details of decorations and colors, which display symbols of faith and rituals.

In the context of the foregoing and the diversity of studies that dealt with different dimensions of the costumes of the Christian clergy, whether historically, or a comparison between ancient and modern, or the different influences that affected these costumes, or an analysis of the details of its parts, and among those studies (Salwa Henry Gerges -1982), which referred to the historical dimensions and the Roman influence that contributed to these fashions, as well as the

study of (Majid Nasrallah 1990), which dealt with the historical dimensions of the costumes of the Christian clergy in Egypt, and the study of (Salwa Henry 1988), which indicated the impact of Byzantine fashion on contemporary fashion, and the study of (Jamal Hermina Boutros - 2010), which referred to the analysis of the landscape, religion and symbolism in Coptic painting.

The aforementioned indicates the importance of the costumes of the priesthood of the Christian religion in its various sects, especially the Orthodox sect, because of the historical and civilization effects it carries with a distinctive heritage, and the materials and various decorations that it was distinguished by. (Alphonse Abdallah -1962)

Among this great diversity of the costumes of the priesthood of the Christian clergy, especially what is associated with the Orthodox Church, is a fertile source worthy of study and analysis because of its historical and cultural dimensions and the diversity of materials, decorations and colors, which contribute to understanding and assimilating different dimensions expressed by the costumes of the Christian religion in the Orthodox Church.

This is what this study is dealing with; the costumes of the Christian clergy in the Coptic and Syriac Church, with different ranks and degrees.

Research Problem:

It was noticed by reviewing previous studies, researches and references, and also through a survey of Christian clergymen such as (Father / Lord Phillips Issa, head of the Syriac sect in Egypt) the extent to which they are few, and even weak, in analyzing priesthood costumes in the Coptic Church and the Syriac Church, and finding relationships between those costumes and the comparison between the different ranks and degrees, and even the complements, the decorations, and the colors of those costumes. Hence, the nature of the problem is determined in the analytical study of the priesthood costumes among the clergy of the Coptic Church and the Syriac Church in Egypt, and the extent of the relationship between them in the different ranks and grades.

Research Questions:

- ١- What are the priesthood costumes in the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt?
- ٢- What are the priesthood costumes in the Syriac Orthodox Church in Egypt?
- 3- What are the differences between the priesthood costumes in the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Syriac Orthodox Church in Egypt?

Research Aim: This research aims to:

- 1- Defining the priesthood costumes in the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt.
- 2- Defining the priesthood costumes in the Syriac Orthodox Church in Egypt.
- 3- Defining the differences between priesthood costumes in the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Syriac Orthodox Church in Egypt.

Research importance:

Identify the forms, parts and details of the priestly costumes in the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Syriac Orthodox Church in Egypt, and clarify the relationship between the parts of those costumes for each rank and degree.

Research Limits: Priesthood Fashion in the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Syriac Orthodox Church in Egypt.

Research Tools:

The priesthood costumes in the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Syriac Orthodox Church in Egypt (the study's intention) were identified through reviewing previous studies, through personal interviews of some different ranks in Egyptian churches, through visits to museums and access to scientific encyclopedias.

Research Methodology:

This research follows the historical and the analytical method.

Theoretical Framework:

Coptic Orthodox Church

Meaning of the word Coptic: After the Arab conquest, the Arabs called the word Copt, which is derived from Aegitos to name the original sons of the country, meaning all the residents. Accordingly, the word Copt has come to mean, from an etymological standpoint, Egypt or Egyptian. This name continued to be used as the special name of the original inhabitants of this country, that is, the Egyptian Christians

Coptic art: Coptic art has been subjected to the influences of the Egyptian environment in which it was born.

Characteristics of Coptic art: (Isaac Fanous - no general)

- 1- An independent art and not a school of any other art.
- 2- Coptic art was distinguished by its popularity because it was inspired by the people and for the people, and art was linked to public life.

Stages of Coptic Art: It consists of three stages:

- 1- The stage of awakening and its impact on myths, completion stage, propagation stage.

Summary of the stages of polar art:

The first stage is from the second century AD to the third century AD. At that stage, Coptic art derived its elements and vocabulary from the myths of the ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman arts. It is characterized by movement and closeness to nature. As for the transition phase, Christian symbols appeared, and the previous influences of mythological themes continued. The third stage dates back to the sixth and seventh centuries AD, in which the Coptic artist used Christian elements and vocabulary and the tendency to transform and abstraction and to move away from mimicking nature and taking symbolic elements and drawings for Christian figures.

Sections of Coptic Art:

- 1- The art of building and religious architecture: Church planning is generally confined to three main types: basilica planning, Byzantine planning, and Coptic planning. If there are general features that combine all of these models, but each of them have its own unique characteristics. The church is not limited to a specific heritage, but in most cases it combined two or three styles.

2- The Art of Sculpture: Christianity abolished the system of sculpting the Greeks, and the making of statues became a personality in itself and was sculpted in only two dimensions. The Copts used to carve stones in an amazing way, very similar to their papyrus inscriptions.

3- Photography: It is a spontaneous art practiced by the individual and there is no difference that it is on a flat or canvas, as there was no difference in the artist's mind between a creative art and an applied art, and there was no difference between art and craftsmanship.

4- Coptic weaving: It is a word that is not Arabic, and the Arabs gave it to the Egyptian textile in relation to its Coptic people. Al-Maqrizi mentioned that Al-Muqawqis gave the Messenger (peace and blessings of God be upon him) a hat and twenty garments from the Copts of Egypt, as was the covering of the Kaaba in Egyptian Copts. And that the Coptic weaving is the first attempt to obtain a textile decoration consisting of two or more colors.

Coptic motifs:

Geometric motifs, Ornaments of animal and bird elements:

Ornaments of Adamian elements

Plant ornaments:

Factors affecting the fashion of the Coptic priesthood:

First: Intellectual and cultural life

Second, political life:

Third: Social life:

Rank the specialists in the affairs of the Christian religion among the Coptic Orthodox:

First: Deacon: a Syriac word meaning servant, and the deacon's job is limited to assisting the priest or bishop in completing the church rituals. And their degrees are: Absaltis - Agostus - Epidiacon - Diacon - Archdiacon.

Second: The Priest: It is the first of the priestly ranks and degrees: Priest - Hegomen - Priest Episcopos.

Third: The Bishop: It is a higher rank in the priesthood and its ranks: Bishop - Metropolitan - Patriarch.

The Syriac Church:

Syriac: It is a linguistic, not an ethnic, term. It is applied to the eastern Syrians, and the term refers to the Christians of Syria and the inhabitants of its land. It also refers to all Christians who use the Syriac language in the rituals of their churches. The Syriac in the Middle East consists of two groups, the Assyrians and the Aramaic. The Assyrians live in upper Mesopotamia, while the Arameans live in the Levant west of the Euphrates River Joseph – 1961.

The Icon and Faith: The icon, in general, narrates the event with all its values and beauty, but the question that always imposes itself: Is holy imagery a necessity for faith?

Syriac Art Style:

The early Fathers accepted painting on the Gospels either with inspiration or spontaneous intuition. Decorate the Gospels with these drawings with clean, expressive lines that radiate spirituality. The spiritual and aesthetic values were represented through diagnoses that swim in a real world and not in an imaginary world. They simulate nature, but within an independent

proposal for linear treatment and an engineering awareness of the combination between the world of form and color.

Decoration and colors

As for the decoration, it is accidental, and what was used in it came to indicate a specific texture, such as the decoration of clothes. As for the frames of these manuscripts, they were decorated with geometric and vegetal motifs, and they evolved until they were called arabel in Islamic art. These decorations were colored in various bright colors, and sometimes they did not differ from the colors of the manuscripts themselves.

Conclusion: the message of the icon

Syriac art is an independent school that has its own distinctive features. It is theological in the subject and has a mission to spread the Gospels, popularize the doctrine and beautify churches. The Syriac and Byzantine arts also have reciprocal influences, as the second was influenced by the first in the early periods of Christianity, and the first was influenced by the second in the later periods of the production of these works, i.e. the eleventh to thirteenth centuries. We find the continuity of this art in the Baghdad School of Painting by Al-Wasiti in Islamic art.

The ranks of the specialists in the affairs of the Christian religion among the Syriac Orthodox Copts:

First: Deacon: A Syriac word meaning servant and the function of the deacon is limited to assisting the priest or bishop in completing the rituals of the church. And their degrees are: Archdeacon - Evangelist Deacon - Aliodiaqen - Continental – Psalmist.

Second: The Priest: It is the first of the priestly ranks and degrees: Priest - Presbyterian

Third: The Bishop: It is the highest rank and degrees, the bishop - the metropolitan - the patriarch.

Why does the priest (deacon, priest and bishop) wear white in the liturgy?

Because it is a symbol of holiness and purity, and it refers to the purity of the heart, and it is the color chosen by God Himself, with which the prophets appeared, and with which He promised the victors (Romans 3). God “wears the light as a garment” (Psalm 104:2), and in the history of clothing there were many laws stipulating the obligation of the clergy at the time of the liturgy to wear white.

Research Results:

In light of the extent to which the objectives have been achieved: through the analytical study of priesthood costumes, and also in the above, in answering the questions, the extent to which the objectives of the research have been achieved are as follows:

Pieces of the priestly clothing of the Coptic Orthodox sect:

Deacon: tuna and albatross.

Priest: Al-Tunia, Al-Talisana, Al-Telij, Al-Sadr, and Al-Prince.

Bishop: tunic, breastplate, robe, crown, sleeves, crown and care stick.

Pieces of the priestly clothing of the Syriac Orthodox sect:

Deacon: konito, harar, and the highest rank wear sleeves and a girdle.

Priest: konito, girdle, sleeves, suit, ferro, and hemenich.

Bishop: the konito, the girdle, the sleeves, the suit, the eskim, the hemnech, the workpiece, and two icons.

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