

V. Baradel, *Crowning the Mind: A Sensorial Approach of French Mitres (13th-15th century)*

In my paper, I will delve into the profound significance of liturgical garments and their capacity to embody one's faith. Religious attire exerted influence on both the outer and inner senses, eliciting distinct affective and spiritual responses in its interpretive perceivers – the celebrants and faithful. Indeed, touching the celebrant's body and functioning as an extension of it, the garments had a “transformative” power, manifesting physically in gestures, posture, gait, and constraints on bodily movement of the wearer, as well as spiritually. In a similar fashion, they exerted influence also on the perceptions of the faithful gathered during the liturgy, even though they could experience them only visually, thus privileging the sense of sight over the others.

Among the array of liturgical accoutrements, my focus will particularly hone in on a group of French miters made between the 13th and 15th centuries. The miter, in addition to being one of the emblems of episcopal dignity and thus a symbol of authority, was also endowed with multiple spiritual values. Since it was worn on the head, it was associated with physical sensations but also with cognition, in terms of memory, perception, and intellectual understanding. Therefore, when placed on the bishop or abbot's head during consecration, it was accompanied by prayers and a highly symbolic ritual intended to protect the wearer's senses from evil and sin.

To illuminate this topic comprehensively, I will draw on a diverse array of materials, encompassing literary sources such as pontifical books, liturgical commentaries (e.g., Durandus' *Rationale*), treatises (like Bruno of Segni's *De Mitra*), and miracle accounts. Additionally, I will explore the materiality of the objects themselves, as the choice of fabric, inclusion of precious stones, pearls, small bells, and even relics, along with their decorative patterns, all played a crucial role in conveying the meanings outlined above.