

DATINI STUDIES  
IN ECONOMIC HISTORY



**LA MODA COME MOTORE ECONOMICO: INNOVAZIONE DI PROCESSO  
E PRODOTTO, NUOVE STRATEGIE COMMERCIALI, COMPORTAMENTO  
DEI CONSUMATORI**

**FASHION AS AN ECONOMIC ENGINE: PROCESS AND PRODUCT  
INNOVATION, COMMERCIAL STRATEGIES, CONSUMER BEHAVIOR**

edited by  
**Giampiero Nigro**



DATINI STUDIES IN ECONOMIC HISTORY

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Erik Aerts

*Economia e moda: una relazione bilaterale*

Signor sindaco, cari colleghi, studenti e amici della Fondazione Datini,

con un anno di ritardo, dovuto alla pandemia da coronavirus che ha colpito il mondo intero, vorrei darvi un cordiale benvenuto alla LII Settimana di Studi, dedicata alla moda nell'ambito della vasta categoria dei prodotti tessili. Credo fermamente che, con un argomento così raffinato e vario, sia stato scelto un tema che incontrerà l'interesse degli studiosi di tutto il mondo e che merita di essere analizzato secondo metodi nuovi e freschi. Per questo la Settimana spera di contribuire a rinnovare l'interesse nei confronti dei tessuti nell'arte e nella moda del tardo Medioevo e dell'Età Moderna (Brachmann 2019).

La moda è senza dubbio antica come la storia dell'umanità. Come ha scritto Elizabeth Wilson, professoressa di Studi culturali alla London Metropolitan University e autorità nel campo della moda, riconosciuta a livello internazionale: «In tutte le società il corpo è 'vestito' e dovunque l'abito e l'ornamento hanno ruoli simbolici, comunicativi e estetici» (Wilson 2003, 3). I reperti archeologici dimostrano che i vestiti erano usati come oggetti decorativi già nella preistoria. Secondo la teoria del sociologo francese Pierre Bourdieu, la moda è un fenomeno del tutto ambivalente. Da una parte è una strategia consapevole usata dalle persone per raggiungere uno status e distinguersi dagli altri consumatori. Dall'altra, invece, è altrettanto spesso uno strumento per soddisfare esigenze estetiche generali secondo un *habitus*<sup>1</sup> adottato o per provare la sensazione di far parte di uno specifico ambito sociale (*campo*) (Bourdieu, Delsaut 1975).

La moda e i suoi cicli erano noti alle élite medievali. Di recente gli storici hanno contestato la visione tradizionale secondo la quale per i bassi strati della popolazione medievale «l'abbigliamento fosse soprattutto pratico e si basasse sull'uso di tessuti logori, squallidi, riutilizzati e incolori». Mentre questi colleghi sostengono con convinzione che le classi medio basse e povere della società urbana volessero partecipare alla nuova «sensibilità per l'abbigliamento alla moda»,<sup>2</sup> questa Settimana dovrà analizzare se la domanda di moda da parte della popolazione a basso reddito

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<sup>1</sup> *Habitus* «ossia la maniera attraverso cui un essere sociale interiorizza la cultura dominante, riproducendola» (Bologna 2017, 112 nota 21).

<sup>2</sup> Queste righe sono ispirate dalla stimolante relazione di Peter Stabel in questo volume.



fosse abbastanza forte da influenzare il processo di sviluppo economico e il cambiamento sociale già nel Medioevo. La maggior parte degli storici concorda sul fatto che questo sia stato assolutamente il caso del XVII e XVIII secolo e che, ancor più, la moda si sia evoluta in una «istituzione sociale» per la prima volta in Europa durante l'Età Moderna (Belfanti 2008). I cicli della moda si sono succeduti a un ritmo più elevato raggiungendo più gruppi di persone di prima.

La relazione tra moda e economia è stata bilaterale. Il contesto economico, i movimenti economici di breve e lungo termine hanno influenzato profondamente le tendenze e i cicli della moda, ma questi, a loro volta, sono stati in grado di condizionare settori e aree della vita economica. Permettetemi di illustrarvi entrambi gli aspetti di questo rapporto causale.

Nonostante la moda sia un processo creativo, non era avulsa da un contesto, ma era determinata dalle condizioni economiche. Quando esse favorivano alcune società in regioni o periodi specifici, le loro idee e i valori nel campo della moda, spesso divenivano il modello dominante per gran parte dell'Europa e anche fuori di essa. Ciò non sorprende se uno dei padri della storia economica italiana, Carlo M. Cipolla (1974, 167) difendeva la tesi secondo la quale «Quando una società dimostra di essere vitale, lo dimostra a tutti i livelli, e non solo a quello economico». Non può certo essere una coincidenza che la moda fiamminga-borgognona-italiana abbia ispirato le corti e le élite europee nel tardo Medioevo al tempo in cui grandi e piccole città di quelle aree erano i centri industriali e commerciali più prosperosi d'Europa. La stessa analogia può essere vista nei secoli successivi quando, in sequenza, la moda spagnola nel XVI secolo, quella francese nel XVII, quella inglese tra il tardo XVIII e l'inizio del XX secolo e quella americana dopo la Seconda Guerra Mondiale, hanno conquistato agevolmente il mondo. Il potere politico e il vantaggio economico hanno contribuito al dominio culturale e hanno aiutato chiaramente lo sviluppo di una tendenza dominante nella moda. Non solo, il mutevole equilibrio del potere all'interno dell'Europa ha avuto un'importanza fondamentale per l'emergere dei principali modelli della moda. Non appena l'economia europea si è consolidata nel processo di globalizzazione, la moda europea si è fatta facilmente influenzare dalle materie prime, le tinte, i motivi e i disegni provenienti da fuori del vecchio continente. Un esempio tipico è il grande sviluppo dell'industria cotoniera del XVIII secolo (DuPlessis 2005, 80-81).

La causalità, tuttavia, potrebbe anche essere invertita per cui non è stata l'economia a determinare il percorso della moda, ma le tendenze e i lanci della moda a cambiare il destino di interi settori economici. Solo un esempio. Dai tardi anni '20 del XIV secolo in Europa dilagò una nuova moda nell'abbigliamento: le tradizionali vesti ampie e lunghe scomparvero a favore di abiti attillati per le donne e, per gli uomini, gonne più corte e più accattivanti. Non è improbabile che questo ridotto utilizzo di materie tessili abbia diminuito la domanda complessiva di stoffe pregiate e in questo modo abbia acuito la profonda crisi industriale dei vecchi centri tessili (Van Uytven 1986, 228-31).

Questi sono solo alcuni degli affascinanti temi che verranno indagati durante la Settimana. In condizioni normali, senza lo scoppio della brutale pandemia, avremmo presentato 24 relazioni da parte di 29 studiosi. Purtroppo, per diverse ragioni, alcuni studiosi non hanno potuto essere con noi durante la conferenza online. Comunque abbiamo avuto la fortuna di accogliere 16 relazioni. Alcuni colleghi che ci sono scusati per non aver potuto partecipare al convegno, ci hanno promesso di inviare il loro testo dopo. Come sempre l'Italia e la Spagna sono fortemente presenti nella selezione, ma abbiamo anche un certo numero di interessanti relazioni sulla Francia e il Regno Unito e non sono state dimenticate aree più periferiche o piccole come l'Austria, i Paesi Bassi e la Svezia. Inoltre, alcuni interventi forniscono prospettive globali e comparative, collegando la moda europea alle rotte atlantiche e caraibiche e al vasto orizzonte dell'Oceano Indiano. Ringraziamo gli autori e speriamo che apprezzerete questo programma accattivante.

Se questa Settimana avrà successo, il risultato non dovrà essere attribuito soltanto alla qualità delle relazioni: molte persone hanno contribuito al risultato finale in circostanze non sempre facili.

Ringrazio i Professori Maryanne Kowaleski e Marco Belfanti per aver portato alla nostra attenzione questo interessante tema un paio di anni fa. I Professori Maryanne Kowaleski, Michel North e Salvatore Ciriaco hanno gentilmente accettato di partecipare alla discussione della tavola rotonda alla fine del convegno. Infine, la Professoressa Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli dell'Università di Bologna, che da molti anni studia il fenomeno della moda nelle sue origini medievali, cui è stato richiesto di preparare la prolusione che si leggerà nelle prossime pagine.

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*H.F.J.M. van den Eerenbeemt ter gelegenheid van zijn 25-jarig professoraat aan de Katholieke Hogeschool te Tilburg, 1961-1986*, a cura di Willem Frijhoff, e Minke Hiemstra, 219-231. Tilburg: H. Gianotten.

Wilson, Elizabeth. 2003. *Adorned in dreams. Fashion and modernity*. New Brunswick (New Jersey): Rutgers University Press.

Affronterò in dieci punti il tema della moda come motore di sviluppo ragionando sulla moda come via d'accesso e metafora della modernità, una modernità che risale però al basso Medioevo. Per dire che le definizioni cronologiche sono prive o quasi di relazione con la realtà alla quale si applicano e sono invece aderenti al pensiero (e ai pregiudizi) di chi le ha proposte. Quanto l'ultimo Medioevo è stato moderno, nel senso di capace di cogliere e rappresentare il nuovo nel campo che qui ci interessa indagare, non lo è stato il periodo storico della modernità, della modernità definita come tale o, meglio, autodefinitasi come tale in polemica con il periodo precedente: una definizione che pecca di eccessiva autostima e di sottostima delle significative novità introdotto fra XIII e XV secolo (Paulicelli 2006; Colombo 2010).

Il XIII secolo ha segnato una nuova fase a molti riguardi anche perché è proprio nel Duecento che è nata la moda (Wilson 2011; Belfanti 2008). Quest'ultima è effetto di modernità oltre che simbolo di essa nonché motore di elaborazione di continui cambiamenti. È possibile parlare di nascita della moda fra Due e Trecento per una serie di ragioni: i corpi degli uomini ma anche delle donne appaiono molto più visibili e la distinzione di genere assai netta grazie a capi inediti, policromi, aderenti al busto e alle gambe come non si era mai visto prima; nelle città in un numero crescente di botteghe artigiane si realizzano sempre più oggetti della moda producendo una ricchezza in grado di cambiare lo *status* di questi artigiani decisi a contare anche in politica; sempre più persone possono acquisire quegli oggetti della moda che le botteghe producono ed espongono rendendoli desiderabili; gli Statuti cittadini si valgono della regolamentazione delle apparenze come di un vero e proprio strumento di governo; i predicatori dedicano intere prediche non a generiche considerazioni sulla vanità ma a precise indicazioni sul modo di vestirsi.

Vorrei ora illustrare in dieci punti come la moda ha implicato e prodotto modernità intendendo per modernità la valorizzazione del presente con particolare riguardo agli aspetti di esso caratterizzati da progresso ed evoluzione, in polemica con quanto giudicato antico, passatista o comunque legato ad epoche precedenti.

La moda pur in perenne dialogo con il passato che tende a rivisitare, cannibalizzare, reinterpretare, saccheggiano, è per definizione volta al futuro, tesa al cambiamento e lo è stata anche nei secoli del Medioevo nei quali ha preso forma il fenomeno. Ciò anche se per un periodo non breve ha avuto luogo un'interessante concomitanza fra effettive importanti innovazioni e aspetti di mentalità volti, al contrario, a temere e dunque ad arginare le novità, a criticarle a cercare di discipli-

narle.<sup>1</sup> Ne è derivata una dialettica che anziché essere effettivamente ostativa si è rivelata fondamentale nello sviluppare la coscienza di quello che stava accadendo grazie alla moda in un ambito davvero ampio che ha riguardato il mondo economico, sociale e politico.

Uno degli aspetti che caratterizza la modernità, in qualunque arco cronologico la si voglia collocare, è la valorizzazione dell'individuo e quanto accaduto nel campo della moda fra Due e Trecento ha ampiamente realizzato questo obiettivo.

1) La moda stacca da uno sfondo indeterminato gli individui e non solo alcune singole figure di privilegiati che in abiti sontuosi sono stati sempre ben visibili rappresentando potere, ricchezza e unicità. A segnare la nascita della moda è un notevole ampliamento della 'visibilità' di individui appartenenti a diversi e più allargati ambienti sociali, in definitiva tutti quelli che potevano lavorare sulla propria immagine grazie a fogge, colori e accessori degli abiti. Questo è un elemento di novità e dunque di modernità che ha fatto irruzione negli ambienti urbani del secondo Duecento. Nuove tecniche sartoriali e una nuova idea del corpo abbigliato hanno prodotto questo effetto una volta evidentemente emerso ed intercettato un bisogno di proporre di sé un'immagine individualizzata, sartoriale verrebbe da dire. Ciò nell'epoca in cui i sarti hanno contribuito a rispondere a questo bisogno cominciando a costruire abiti 'su misura' e definendo sempre meglio il loro ruolo e la loro funzione (Tosi Brandi 2017). Fra Due e Trecento si afferma nel modo di vestire una netta distinzione fra uomini e donne, una sorta di sottolineatura della identità e dunque anche del genere mettendo in valore la corporeità (Blanc 1997). Ciò grazie ad abiti non drappeggiati ma modellati sul corpo. Questi nuovi abiti, segnatamente il farsetto maschile, hanno ben evidenziato alcune parti del corpo (Piponnier 1989, 225-39), il busto ma soprattutto le gambe consentendo ai singoli di costruirsi un'immagine individuale: segno di modernità.

2) Le capacità dei sarti dunque sono state fondamentali in questa costruzione ma altrettanto importanti risultano le disponibilità non solo di competenze ma anche di materie prime e cioè di tessuti, materiali, accessori: tutti beni prodotti, migliorati, imitati e offerti in botteghe cittadine che consentivano di vedere, desiderare, toccare, provare (si vedono sulle canne esposti dei semilavorati, una sorta di *prêt à porter* da personalizzare), acquistare, esibire e poi far circolare e ricircolare giacché sappiamo che la vita di questi capi era lunga. Un abito spesso passava da una generazione all'altra, da una casa a un'altra e, non di rado consegnati in pegno, da una casa passavano a un banco e dal banco in un'altra casa.

3) Anche quest'ultimo è un aspetto della modernità e cioè l'uso sul mercato di capi d'abbigliamento come moneta, ma anche per ricavare monete nei banchi di pegno e successivamente (ma siamo ancora in età medievale) nei Monti di Pietà che sono la prima forma di banca pubblica, un servizio creditizio alla cittadinanza (*welfare*).

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<sup>1</sup> La legislazione suntuaria condannava i lussi ma anche le nuove fogge (Muzzarelli 2002, 129: Bologna, 1401, gennaio, *Statuto suntuario*: vietate «vestes novas factas ad turlos, scaglias, undas vel ad intaglios vel ad aliam formam seu figuram novam, quam ad formam et fogram que hucusque fuerit comuniter» pena di 10 lire e la perdita della veste).

Farsetti cuciti addosso, imbottiti ad arte, decorati da bottoni (una novità) combinati con calze dai colori vivaci e durevoli (altra novità frutto dei progressi dei tintori) affermano un nuovo gusto vistoso, quasi sfacciato (secondo la nostra sensibilità) e rivelano nuove conoscenze ed abilità.

4) L'effetto di tutto ciò sull'economia risulta potente. Le botteghe diventano ambito di sperimentazione, luogo di cura degli interessi di gruppi che si autocostruiscono, le *artes*, e di difesa dei propri prodotti oltre che di promozione sociale. Chi si forma in queste botteghe, una volta acquisite le conoscenze e le abilità indispensabili ne apre una propria. Dalle botteghe escono nuovi protagonisti dell'economia ma anche della politica: uomini attivi, che si sono fatti da soli, che intendono contare socialmente e politicamente. Stiamo parlando di quei popolani che prendono il potere nel pieno Duecento. Molti di loro sono diventati ricchi producendo e commerciando proprio oggetti della moda e molti di loro brandiranno l'arma del disciplinamento delle apparenze (cioè dei capi di abbigliamento) per mantenere il loro potere, dopo averlo conquistato, e contrastare quello dei Magnati.

Paradossalmente proprio quegli stessi ambienti che producevano oggetti della moda hanno utilizzato le leggi suntuarie per concedere, dosare o proibire oggetti della moda una volta raggiunte posizioni di potere nei governi popolari.

Un altro paradosso: proprio quelle leggi suntuarie a lungo considerate un ferro vecchio, un inutile diga al tracimare del gusto per abiti belli e preziosi, esprimono modernità. Ciò per il progetto sotteso di utilizzare sistematicamente e 'politicamente' le apparenze per governare e per comunicare. Il proposito non era quello di contrastare quel gusto ma di 'cavalcarlo', di guidarlo o quanto meno di valersene per rendere espliciti ruoli e gerarchie o anche solo per incassare denaro, come vedremo.

5) Sta di fatto che nelle botteghe, come si diceva, si sperimentava, si miglioravano prodotti e tecniche, si studiava e si imitava. Ma si imitava anche fuori dalle botteghe. L'emulazione è stata una spinta molto forte che ha portato i produttori di oggetti della moda a riprodurre tessuti e accessori cercando magari di rendere più accessibili prodotti d'élite ed inaugurando quel processo di popolarizzazione del lusso che è una delle caratteristiche della modernità. Questo quanto ai produttori. Quanto ai clienti, il desiderio di emulare si è fatto progressivamente sempre più esteso. Bastava che qualcuno esibisse per le vie cittadine un capo inedito per tessuto o foggia che subito qualcuno desiderava possederne uno analogo. Riferiscono il fenomeno i predicatori ma anche i governanti. Si legge in un provvedimento di Foligno, 1567: «Domenica, che furonsi tre di agosto, ho visto na giovane della nostra città [...] portare una veste di seta quale ha fatto mormorare tutto Foligno et io ho udito parlare questo et quello che diceva: Mo' semo per andare in precipitio [...] non ci manca altro che di cominciare a mettere questa maledetta usanza di far vesti di drappo» (Nico Ottaviani 2005, 515).

Si imitava anche nei secoli precedenti ma il fenomeno riguardava perlopiù gli ambienti cortesi coinvolgendo una limitata cerchia di persone che attorniava la coppia cortese o altre corti. Quando la moda irrompe nelle città gli effetti di essa, anche relativi all'emulazione si ampliano notevolmente. Come molte più persone partecipano al potere (il comune comporta e significa questo) così molte più persone vogliono imitare quello che vedono fare o possedere da altri: effetti della moda con conseguenze non solo sul modo di vestire.

Già nel Duecento l'intera città era coinvolta dalla moda e dunque stimolata ad emulare, a partecipare al gioco delle apparenze e il fenomeno rischiava di scardinare l'ordinamento cittadino, di essere eversivo. Da qui la necessità, da parte di chi era al potere, di governare questo fenomeno o almeno provare a farlo. Il riferimento è alle leggi suntuarie che dal XIII secolo hanno inteso disciplinare le apparenze vietando, dosando ma anche concedendo: in sostanza opponendosi alle istanze di libertà introdotte dalla moda, libertà di vestire a piacimento e non secondo l'ordinamento gerarchico, lo *status*, la condizione morale e così via (Riello e Rublack 2019; Muzzarelli 2020).

A metà Duecento la modernità è palpabile: si è affermata, ha cambiato il volto delle città e contribuisce a determinare nuovi protagonisti della politica anticipando molti istituti e aspetti della contemporaneità. Da questo punto di vista il Medioevo finisce fra Due e Trecento e si entra in una fase nuova. La moda ha potentemente contribuito al cambiamento e contemporaneamente lo rappresenta. Fra le forme di modernità collocherei la coscienza dei consumi (Lemire 2018).

6) La coscienza dei consumi si forgia proprio grazie a quelle leggi suntuarie che cercavano di disciplinare i lussi o forse meglio di dettare modi e forme esteriori (Trentmann 2016). È evidente che si tratta di un tentativo per niente 'moderno', eppure il disciplinamento suntuario è proseguito per tutta l'Età moderna. Le continue e spesso dettagliate prescrizioni dei legislatori inducono all'analisi di sé e degli altri (tra l'altro conveniva analizzare con cura come erano vestiti gli altri perché a denunciare casi di mancato rispetto delle regole si guadagnava una parte della multa) e forgiavano una coscienza dei consumi. Ad essa hanno contribuito anche le riflessioni dei predicatori e degli autori di trattati sul tema e penso a Giovanni da Capestrano (Chiappini 1956). Ragionando su cosa era permesso e cosa no, a prescindere dalla ricchezza detenuta, i predicatori hanno operato sul senso dell'opportunità e della misura (Muzzarelli 2019) o almeno hanno provato a farlo guidando i consumi più che opponendosi ad essi.

7) A ben vedere è possibile sostenere che dal XIII secolo è nata anche la 'libertà di consumo'. Vediamo in che senso e soprattutto come ciò si componga con la continua produzione di leggi suntuarie volte a reprimere tale libertà. Due parole sul contesto: i governi di Popolo cercavano di conservare il potere raggiunto e di contenere gli arroganti Magnati che intendevano mantenere, aumentare ed esibire la loro ricchezza e potenza. Ciò nel secondo Duecento e nel primo Trecento, all'epoca appunto della lotta fra Magnati e Popolani. Le città, non solo Firenze, assistevano al drammatico contrapporsi dei nuovi detentori di potere economico e politico (gli artigiani, il popolo grasso) ai precedenti detentori di ricchezza e potere quali i cavalieri e quanti vivevano di rendita e non di commerci e produzioni (in buona parte legate a beni connessi con la moda, dai tessuti alle materie tintorie, dal filo d'oro alle pellicce). Uno degli strumenti di governo e di lotta ai Magnati è stato proprio quello delle leggi suntuarie che avevano l'obiettivo di contenere il lusso, scopo che va meglio precisato.

Già nei primi Statuti cittadini della metà del Duecento troviamo indicazioni relative a cosa ci si poteva mettere e cosa no, quali e quanti capi, di quale tessuto, con maniche di quale larghezza e lunghezza e via descrivendo e prescrivendo. Queste norme cercavano di contenere le importazioni ma soprattutto intendevano riservare

sfoggi vistosi a ristretti gruppi indicati, miravano a evitare spese eccessive ma principalmente si proponevano di contenere l'orgoglio e l'ambizione espressa tramite sete, broccati e fili d'oro dagli arroganti Magnati (Hunt 1996; Kovesi 2002; Muzzairelli 2003, 180-220; 2009, 597-617). Realisticamente consapevoli della difficoltà di contenere il fenomeno, i governi di popolo erano però disposti ad accontentarsi di ricavare vantaggio economico da questi sfoggi colpendoli con multe o, per semplificarci la vita, multandoli preventivamente con una sorta di condono anticipato. A Firenze nel 1299 si inaugurò questa pratica che comportò una sorta di 'libertà' di apparenze a pagamento: un altro aspetto, certamente discutibile, della modernità (Reiney 1985, 92 e ss; Olson 2015, 1-15). È nata in definitiva la tassa sul lusso, si è aperto uno spazio per una sorta di democrazia a pagamento che consentiva ai Magnati, quando anche politicamente perdenti, di primeggiare grazie al loro denaro. Volendo si può intendere ciò come una sconfitta del governo popolare ma forse si può parlare di una ragionevole mediazione, di una soluzione pratica senza armi ottenuta grazie al denaro, in definitiva di un modo moderno di risolvere un conflitto legiferando su come dovevano vestire le donne

8) Anche gli uomini vestivano con lusso e spudoratezza, eppure le norme fanno quasi esclusivamente riferimento alle donne. Fra le novità comportate dalla moda si colloca l'uso del corpo abbigliato delle donne come vetrina d'esposizione del privilegio delle famiglie e dei gruppi. Ciò ha consegnato alle donne forme di protagonismo compensativo. A lungo si è riproposto il nesso fra le donne e la moda intendendo quest'ultima come una compensazione (Simmel 1998): il fatto è che proprio la produzione di oggetti della moda ha offerto alle donne un'altra e più rilevante forma di protagonismo.

9) Il riferimento è alla produzione specializzata, intensa e innovativa di oggetti della moda da parte di maestranze femminili (Orlandi 2012, 149-66; Zanoboni 2016) che ha consentito alle donne di affermarsi come artigiane capaci e richieste. Ciò ha dato loro visibilità e risorse avviando un percorso di protagonismo femminile grazie al lavoro, a un lavoro che richiedeva abilità, fantasia: una storia molto moderna.

10) Le capacità produttive di queste maestranze specializzate, pronte a scommettere su nuove produzioni, combinate alla circolazione di artigiani e di idee in una continua ricerca di innovazioni, nate in molti casi dall'imitazione di prodotti forestieri o con l'arrivo di artigiani portatori di conoscenze e pratiche inedite, mettono in luce un altro aspetto di modernità costituito dalla capacità cittadina di darsi un progetto, di pensare all'avvenire. Fu questa capacità che portò ad esempio Bologna fra il 1230 e il 1231 a mettere in piedi un'operazione complessa per attirare artigiani del tessile e avviare una nuova produzione (Bocchi 1984, 251-61). Una sorta di attrazione dei cervelli *ante litteram* sulla base di una visione del futuro che rese possibile la cooperazione fra pubblico e privati nel comune intento di ampliare la capacità produttiva della città. Qualcosa di difficile da realizzare oggi che ha avuto effettivamente luogo nel pieno Duecento e in un campo connesso alla moda riguardando lavoratori della lana e maestri della seta.

Dunque nel Duecento si può collocare l'allineamento fra la secolare opera pratica di innovazione, invenzione, modernizzazione (nel senso di affermazione



dell'individuo) e un'immagine nuova del corpo nonché una diffusa partecipazione attiva e fruttuosa al fenomeno della moda e relativa sequela di modernità.

In definitiva la comparsa della moda nel basso Medioevo porta la modernità, segna una nuova epoca e lo ha fatto in concreto senza teorizzare la modernità ma realizzandola. Lo ha fatto emanando paradossalmente senza sosta norme per contenere le novità o il libero accesso agli oggetti della moda senza in realtà riuscire a contenerle e, a ben vedere, tenendo viva l'attenzione per la moda e rimpinguando le casse cittadine grazie alla passione per i nuovi ritrovati della moda. Tutto ciò fra XIII e XV secolo.

Nel Cinquecento, mentre si infittiscono le norme suntuarie, inizia una nuova fase esteticamente meno colorata e fantasiosa e culturalmente caratterizzata da una riflessione laica sulla moda. Basti pensare al «Libro del Cortigiano» dove si parla di moda non per dare indirizzi o prescrizioni ma per descrivere il fenomeno in sé. Inizia una fase nuova anche per via degli effetti delle straordinarie scoperte geografiche e della stampa. Nuovi mondi e nuovi protagonisti richiedevano adeguati strumenti per riconoscere e distinguere, una bussola per orientarsi e la moda analizzata e registrata da Vecellio nel suo *Habiti degli antichi et moderni* era questo (Vecellio 1590; Riello 2019). Cesare Vecellio ha realizzato sistematicamente il collegamento della moda con le diverse realtà geografiche e culturali consentendo a chi sfogliava questa sorta di catalogo a stampa di farsi un'idea delle diverse parti d'Italia e del mondo conosciuto grazie alla moda e diffondendo la conoscenza di mondi lontani e relativi modi di vestire anche fra chi non si era mai allontanato dalla sua città.

In pieno Seicento l'abate Agostino Lampugnani (1648) eviscera il fenomeno della moda con atteggiamento da anatomopatologo ricavando l'idea che vestire alla moda fosse una forma di pazzia caratteristica del suo secolo, secolo alla moda appunto, immerso negli aspetti meno vitali del fenomeno, quasi vittima di esso che si è mostrato talmente forte da predominare sul progetto politico, sociale ed economico. Questo testo, che mette in scena una discussione sulla moda in carrozza, uno dei ritrovati della modernità, segna un passaggio importante che attesta la consapevolezza della fase che sta attraversando il fenomeno un tempo portatore di vitalità, di vantaggi economici, di usi politici ed ora pervaso di frivolezze praticate da insensati 'followers' (i «modanti») nel pieno del crepuscolo del protagonismo dei sarti italiani. Oggi, asserisce Lampugnani, sono i modisti francesi i creatori di sostanziali innovazioni nel campo della moda della quale Lampugnani teorizza e svela la forza, la capacità di indurre a continui cambiamenti e anche ad accettare sacrifici e assurdità. Ciò quando si era ormai spenta la spinta propulsiva e la capacità di inventare, quando l'Italia era ormai al traino della potenza altrui.

Il 'moderno' XVII secolo è tale per la nuova capacità di analizzare il fenomeno dominato dai modisti francesi (nasce qui il mito della moda di Francia) creatori di sostanziali innovazioni: «Da che sono venuti in Italia... i Francesi, non a tagliare ma a guastar i drappi, per farne la vestimenta alla Moda, non si può più far bene, né più vogliono le buone regole, s'è affatto perduto il diritto del nostro mestiere. Hora è tempo, che chi più sgratatamente strapazza la nostra parte, e fa 'l peggio che sa, quegli è il più valente sarto alla Moda» (Lampugnani 1648, 12-13). Anche nel XIII secolo si era attribuita ai Francesi la responsabilità dell'introduzione di «stranianze d'abito né belle né oneste» (*Cronica* di Villani: Gherardi Dragomanni 1845) ma allora

si seppe sfruttare l'occasione, prendere lo spunto da queste novità per far decollare un'economia, si seppe usare il gusto per la moda e il disciplinamento di esso come arma politica, come strumento di governo. Quella modernità nel campo della moda ha dato molti frutti, la nuova modernità li ha praticamente seccati.

Qualcosa del genere si è riprodotto altre volte nella storia d'Italia nel campo della moda. Forse serve rifletterci anche oggi per capire non solo da dove provieniamo ma anche dove siamo e dove stiamo andando.

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*Innovazioni di prodotti e processi*

*Innovations in products and processes*



Tatiana Markaki

*Innovations and the art of deception:  
mixed cloths in Venetian Crete (17<sup>th</sup> century)*

## 1. Introduction

The island of Crete, being under Venetian rule for more than 450 years, became the most important Venetian colony in the Eastern Mediterranean after the loss of Cyprus during the War of Cyprus (1570-1573).<sup>1</sup> Situated at the crossroads of three continents, the island and, in particular, its capital Candia, was the transfer point between different economic and cultural zones.<sup>2</sup> As such, it was crucial in shaping processes of cultural exchange. In border societies, such as in Candia (modern Heraklion), identities were particularly malleable and the issue of intercultural encounters is a key aspect in defining them. Research has demonstrated that, especially, in ‘contact areas’ and colonial environments, there is a high degree of inter-connectedness and interlocking cultural elements.<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of this study, which is part of a large-scale research project on the marital material culture in Venetian Crete,<sup>4</sup> is to contribute to the understanding of fashion as a multifaceted issue.<sup>5</sup> It explores the role of certain innovations of the early modern European textile industry in shaping individual and collective identities in Venetian Crete. How did mixed fabrics circulate across transnational networks and facilitate intercultural encounters? How did these novelties shape clothing, bed furnishings as well as identities? To what extent did Crete follow the changes in production techniques of the European textile industry of the time? In

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<sup>1</sup> This point is stressed in many publications. See indicatively Markaki 2018, 39-41; Lambrinos 2019, 162.

<sup>2</sup> For the participation of Crete in the maritime commercial networks of the era see Panopoulou 2017, in particular, pp. 382-86; 388-89; 391-96.

<sup>3</sup> The theme of cultural exchange in early modern Europe is discussed in detail in Roodenburg 2007 (relevant bibliography can be found in pp. 381-427). See also Bormpoudaki et al 2017, 8-15. For the malleable identities in Venetian Crete see O’Connell 2004.

<sup>4</sup> The project is titled *Women and Material Culture in Venetian Crete (17<sup>th</sup> century)* and is being pursued within the research school ARTES (Amsterdam School for Regional, Transnational and European Studies) of the University of Amsterdam. It is based on the computer-process of a sample of 770 marriage agreements and inventories from Candia and its countryside (1600-1645). For the precise methodological parameters of the project see Markaki 2018, 287-325.

<sup>5</sup> Fashion as a multifaceted phenomenon with economic, social and cultural dimensions is addressed in a number of studies with regard to the early modern European urban and rural space. See, indicatively, Monnas 2008; Frick 2002; Malanima 1990; Molà 2000; Blondè and van Damme 2009; on Middle Ages see, for instance, Bormpoudaki et al. 2017, 130-36.

order to answer these questions we will look closely at the multiple meanings of mixed fabrics in different socioeconomic and geographical contexts within the Cretan society of the first half of the seventeenth century.

The selected period of study (1600-1645) is a sub-period of the *Golden Age* in Venetian Crete;<sup>6</sup> it is the last peaceful period on the island before the outbreak of the fifth Veneto-Ottoman War, which marked a twenty-five year turbulent period of continuous warfare and led to the fall of Crete to the Ottomans in 1669. During the *Golden Age*, the creation of the so-called *Veneto-Cretan culture* reached its climax: «the meeting of East and West in Crete engendered a process of cultural cross-fertilisation» (Holton 1991, 16) leading to a synthesis of Italian, Byzantine and local elements. That cultural encounter is known under the term *Veneto-Cretan culture*.<sup>7</sup>

The primary sources used in this study are 130 notarial documents (marriage agreements and accompanying inventories of movables) from the State Archives of Venice (Markaki 2018, 310-17). These archival documents indicate 130 cases of transmission of dowry in Candia between 1600-1645 whereby 8,345 objects are transferred to the brides. Computer-processed data from these documents demonstrate the consumption behaviour of different population groups when fathers were marrying off their daughters by providing information on several material qualities of the transferred objects (such as quantity, material, color, decorative patterns, style, value).<sup>8</sup> Through a comparative lens, light will be shed on the ways in which brides (or their families) used mixed cloths to differentiate themselves from others. By converting the monetary units that signify the value of goods to only one stable unit (the unit of account *perpero*) this study has made comparisons between material goods possible.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. New products, mixed cloths in Venice and Europe

In the seventeenth century, the textile production and distribution was still a great Venetian resource, despite the fierce French, English and Dutch competition (Molà 2000, 61-4). The Venetian brocades were much in request in Europe. This suggests the existence of a vast market with specialized products and an increasing range of distributors and customers. The development of the silk market in Renaissance Venice with its powerful network of manufacturers, merchants and

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<sup>6</sup> On the definition and content of the term see Markaki 2018, 39-41; 58.

<sup>7</sup> For the definition and content of the term see Holton 1991, 16; Maltezou 1991, 46-7; Lymberopoulou 2010.

<sup>8</sup> For the methodological details see Markaki 2018, 309-318. For other relevant studies using seventeenth-century Cretan dowries as primary source see, for instance, Karagianni 2011/2012. For relevant cases in seventeenth-century Italy see Pisetzky 1966, 383, note 171 and Molmenti 1929, 419-432. See Molmenti 1928, 475-489; 490-493 with regard to the sixteenth-century Italy.

<sup>9</sup> On the complex Cretan monetary system see Vincent 2007; Markaki 2018, 134-135. On the *perpero* see, for instance, Markaki 2018, 31, note 73. The fact that the Cretan inventories make comparisons between material goods possible, due to the separate valuation of almost every single dowry commodity, offers this source a unique place in Europe. As a rule, this last feature is absent from similar sources, such as the probate inventories, extant in other European regions (Markaki 2018, 18). For the role of appraisers in the process of valuations of movables see Markaki 2018, 136-42.

distributors, government and customers, has been already studied in detail.<sup>10</sup> The growing demand for new products in Venice and elsewhere brought forth - from the sixteenth century onward - changes in production techniques, which facilitated the consumption of lighter, cheaper, less durable products. Goods became more easily worn out and, therefore, had to be replaced faster and more often. The ephemeral became attractive and sustained product-durability was made subordinate to style (Blondé and van Damme 2009, 5). A mentality of consumerism was born all over Europe. New mixed silks were produced everywhere in Italy (from Venice to Naples) as well as in Holland and in the Levant.<sup>11</sup> That is why Venetian weavers requested flexible state regulations that, on the one hand, intended to guarantee the traditional high-quality features of Venetian cloths, and on the other, made fast modifications of the production standards possible so that they could compete with foreign manufacturers with regard to the introduction of novelties (Molà 2000, 185). Attempts to make false products (products of lower quality imitating the high-quality ones) were common in Venice. This tendency was visible, mainly, in the textile industry, but also in jewelry making and in storage furniture manufacturing. A characteristic example in the field of chest manufacturing was the imitation of the costly decorative style of the inlay work (*alla certosina*). Painting a wooden chest with tempera to look like *intarsia alla certosina* was a common practice in Renaissance Venice for patrons who could not afford the 'real' luxurious treatment (Brown 2005, 104-5). Making counterfeit products was «a venerable Venetian tradition» (Brown 2005, 104).

### 3. Mixed silks in Venetian Crete

The innovation of fake products reached Crete as well. Glass beads, used as substitutes of valuable pearls,<sup>12</sup> and mixed silks, used as substitutes of high quality silk, emerged in Candia attesting a timid appearance of consumerism. These fabrics of lower quality and price, thus, less durable and more sensitive to fashion changes, were frauds: they imitated the pure silk, but, they were made by a warp of thrown silk and a weft of cotton or flax.

*Brocadello* silk was such a novelty.<sup>13</sup> It was a Venetian cloth with thick, inferior-quality weft thread, noteworthy for its patterns of bicolored silk (Molà 2000, 184). Its lower quality did not affect the breathtaking visual effect. It was consumed in Candia by whomever wished to keep up appearances: fathers and daughters who longed to distinguish themselves and to give the impression that they were in step with the most privileged (the ones who could afford the pure silk *brocado*). That

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<sup>10</sup> See, indicatively, Molà 2000 (relevant bibliography can be found in pp. 409-442); Iida 2017, 192, note 5.

<sup>11</sup> The innovation of mixed silk fabrics in Venice, Italy, Flanders and the Levant is discussed in Molà, 2000, 161-85; 294-298. On examples of mixed fabrics in England see Hart and North 2009, 22-3.

<sup>12</sup> On the use of glass beads (*paternostri*) and *tondini* in Venice see Vitali 1992, 278; 378. On their use in Venetian Crete see Markaki 2018, 228-30.

<sup>13</sup> The spelling of the fabrics in this paper is the original one used in the notarial documents. For visual examples of *brocattello* see Monnas 2008, 193; 203-5; 290-1; 301.



were brides from the group of distinguished *cittadini* (such as bureaucrats, doctors, pharmacists),<sup>14</sup> but also daughters of artisans or even priests. In spite of its fake composition, the *brocadello* was included in the five most expensive silk cloths in Cretan dowries together with *canevazzéta*, another mixed cloth. The real silks *brocado*, *ormesin* and *damasco* took the three higher positions in the price-list (Markaki 2018, 184-6; 193-6).

Other mixed silk fabrics in Cretan dowries were the *canevazzéta*, *bavella*, *terzanela* (*terzanello*) and *ferandina* which were suitable for cheaper light clothing items. All imitated the pure silks, such as the *brocado*, an expensive Venetian fabric of Celtic origin, woven with gold-gilt or silver-gilt thread and used for highly ornamented pieces of clothing, such as a *vestura*.<sup>15</sup> The *ferandina* was sometimes made of high-quality and waste silk and sometimes of wool and silk.<sup>16</sup> The *terzanela* was a plain or simply-patterned silk fabric.

The *canevazzéta* fabric, always made of pure silk and *bavella* (thrown silk), was more common in Cretan dowries than *brocadello*.<sup>17</sup> It was used, chiefly, for making female clothing (valuable gowns), accessories (detachable sleeves) and decorative elements (lining or edgings).<sup>18</sup> In addition, it could be used in bed furnishings, such as bed curtains. This mixed fabric was used by nobles, *cittadini* ('distinguished' or not) and artisans.<sup>19</sup> The connecting element among these different population groups seems to be wealth. For instance, Marina Moraitopoula received in her 'rich' dowry<sup>20</sup> three gowns made of *canevazzéta* (one second-hand and two new ones) trimmed with colorful edgings, gold-gilt thread and other fashionable details.<sup>21</sup> Was Marina the daughter of a rich *cittadino* who wished to show her refined taste, although she could not afford the 'real' silks? The answer awaits future research.

<sup>14</sup> On the material choices of the brides of this specific group see Markaki 2015.

<sup>15</sup> See the lemma's *brocadeli* and *brocado* in Vitali 1992, 72-8. Examples of English brocaded silk of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century see in Hart and North 2009, 48-9; 60-1; 90-1. Examples of the cloth in Italian paintings see in Monnas 2008, 73-75; 161. For the use of the female gown *vestura* in Venetian Crete see Markaki 2017. For its use in Venice see Vitali 1992, 422.

<sup>16</sup> For more information on *ferandina* in Venice see Molà 2000, 119-120; 172-14; Vitali 1992, 188-189.

<sup>17</sup> For the production of the *canevazzéta* in Venice see Molà 2000, 171-4; 184. For its production and use in Padua and Crema see Molà 2000, 179; 294-5.

<sup>18</sup> See for instance the following documents: State Archives of Venice (ASV), *Notai di Candia* (notary Zorzi Protonotari), busta 222, libro 5, f. 88v and f. 227v-229r; (notary Mattio Seppi), busta 267, minute filza 6, without nr. (dowry of January 25, 1643).

<sup>19</sup> The upper segment of *cittadini* consisted of bureaucrats (notaries, secretaries and other high administrative officers in the Venetian chancellery) who could be considered as 'distinguished' members of this social group. They enjoyed social prestige, high revenues and other privileges and formed a separate subgroup within the middle social stratum of *cittadini* in Candia. On their socioeconomic and political development see Lambrinos 2015. Lawyers, doctors, rich merchants and shipowners and rich creditors could be included in this subgroup as well thanks to their social prestige and accumulated wealth. Evidence for the privileged position and high status of all the above-mentioned *cittadini* is provided by the use of special designations before their names in the notarial documents (see Lambrinos 2009, 147-148, Markaki 2018, 28).

<sup>20</sup> For the methodological distinction in 'poor', 'middle' and 'rich' dowries see Markaki 2018, 142-7.

<sup>21</sup> ASV, *Notai di Candia*, (notary Zorzi Protonotari), busta 222, Libro 5, f. 227v-229r.

Brides Maria Manganaropoula, daughter of the chief of the guild of carpenters in 1622-23, and Zuana Coregiopoula used this mixed cloth as well, whereas they belonged to the social group of *popolani*.<sup>22</sup> Artisan bride Marieta Troulinopoula received for her wedding bed two new sky-blue *caneva* bed curtains with silk colorful fringes *alla Napolitana* and valance sheet and holder.<sup>23</sup> Among all the artisan brides of the studied sample Troulinopoula distinguished herself by having this particular bed equipment in her sleeping room. Bed curtains created a protected, secret environment, and guaranteed more comfort. They kept out draughts and created a genuine 'house within the house', as Sarti notes for the eighteenth-century Paris (Sarti 2002, 119). Marieta Varangopoula received with her 'rich' dowry two valuable new coverlets, lined with the mixed fabric *bottana* and trimmed with red silk.<sup>24</sup> She distinguished herself from other *cittadini*, who did not assign valuable bed furnishings. Although these women had, presumably, a different socioeconomic background, they all used mixed silk cloth as a distinction marker.<sup>25</sup>

The large variety of pure and mixed silk qualities suggests a high degree of diversification and refinement of the material in Crete. Therefore, there must have been a substantial number of tailors in the town able to work with this material and a considerable import trade of raw materials and/or ready-to-wear silk clothes. Plenty of archival evidence illustrates the economic power of the guild of tailors in Candia; it was one of the largest in town with significant immovable property that reflected the higher social status of its members (Panopoulou 2012, 394-413). Besides, there is ample evidence for purchase orders and import of ready-to-wear clothing items in the town of Candia as there was a continuous range of female customers in the town with varying requirements and a refined taste. Purchasing fashionable garments in Venice for personal use (via a family member) was not uncommon for Cretan women (Maltezou 1986; Markaki 2018, 165-9). It is also documented that the island's shipowners and merchants exported Cretan agricultural products and brought back luxurious/exotic materials and any commodities they would consider as profitable ones taking into consideration the demand and requirements of the local market of Candia.<sup>26</sup> The large-scale export trade of silk (raw or in the form of pure and mixed fabrics and garments) from Venice or other Italian cities to various destinations in the Eastern Mediterranean is well documented.<sup>27</sup> In addition, there is archival evidence for Ottoman customers'

<sup>22</sup> On M. Manganaropoula, see ASV, *Notai di Candia* (notary Zorzi Protonotari), busta 222, libro 5, f. 250v-252v. On her father, a carpenter with social status and prestige, see Panopoulou 2012, 349-350; 355. On Z. Coregiopoula, see ASV, *Notai di Candia* (notary N. Benedetti), busta 21, libro 2, f. 96r - 97r.

<sup>23</sup> On M. Troulinopoula, see ASV, *Notai di Candia* (notary Giacomo Cortesan), busta 63, libro XXIV, f. 360r-361v.

<sup>24</sup> ASV, *Notai di Candia* (notary Giacomo Cortesan), busta 63, protocollo XXV, f. 60r-61v.

<sup>25</sup> Similar patterns of distinction are documented in other European regions as well. See, for instance, Dibbitts 2010.

<sup>26</sup> See, for instance, Markaki 2018, 53-54; Panopoulou 2017, 394-396; 400; Kalaitzaki and Spanakis-Voreadis 2016, 3; 5-7; Gasparis 2010, 255-261. On the Mediterranean trade and the transport of luxury commodities in the Middle Ages see Bormpoudaki et al. 2017, 37; 130-7.

<sup>27</sup> See, for instance, Molà 2000; Monnas 2008, 4-21.

preferences for Venetian lighter and cheaper mixed silk fabrics in 1624 in Bursa and 1640 in Istanbul (Iida 2017, 194-5). Based on the above-mentioned information it may be concluded that the existence of mixed cloths in Candia could have been the result of all or some of these factors: expression of female personal taste and knowledge of fashion innovations of the metropolis; local production by tailors in the town; import by Cretan merchants travelling to Venice and elsewhere; direct export to Candia/Crete with Venetian/Italian/English/Flemish ships which could transport these commodities anywhere in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The sixteen different silk qualities of the Cretan dotal items<sup>28</sup> were mostly used for making garments and for adding extra value on them, regularly because of their 'exotic' origin. Venetian Crete followed what was common practice in Italy. In Renaissance Venice and Florence the silk industry was very important not only for the state, but also for the urban population. Manufacturing and trading in high-quality silk fabrics and so-called new products through flexible laws and a continuous policy-readjustment meant that there was a continuous demand for varying silk products. The refinement of silk qualities, the high valuation of silk clothing items and their restricted quantity classifies silk as a luxury material in Crete.<sup>29</sup> Also in Venice, Florence and other Italian cities silk clothes were considered highly luxurious and therefore they were often prohibited.<sup>30</sup> In Florence, for instance, the *Commune* continually passed sumptuary legislation that restricted vestimentary display; from 1281 to 1531 there were approximately eighty separate legal entries, while Florence had a thriving fine clothing industry itself (Frick 2002, 3; 241).

Mixed silk fabrics could also have expensive colors, such as crimson, or certain ornamental features that added even more luxury.<sup>31</sup> For instance, Marieta Melissinopoula, daughter of ducal secretary Zuanne Melissino, received in 1630 a valuable crimson *brocadello vestura*;<sup>32</sup> Vittoria Chourdopoula, a furrier's daughter, received upon marriage a new *canevazzéta* gown with colorful lining and golden-gilt threads.<sup>33</sup> Families in Venetian Crete preferred to transmit these ready-to-wear clothes when they were marrying off their daughters, because these could function as status symbols, suitable for display and social recognition, during the whole process of dowry transmission (Markaki 2018, 127-30). *Cittadini* must have been aware of the different qualities and high evaluation of silk fabrics. They embraced the novelties and visualized in this way their increasing influence in the urban space. Mixing expensive and cheaper fibers with each other provided a very successful low-quality imitation of the 'real' thing, which at the same time was highly

<sup>28</sup> For the names of these qualities see Markaki 2018, 175.

<sup>29</sup> Of the total 8,345 items registered in the examined sample only 5% was made of silk. On the discussion about the definition of luxury see Rittersma 2010; Malanima 1990.

<sup>30</sup> On the prohibition of five silk qualities in Venice (*canevazzéta, tabi, brocado, veludo, raso*) see Vitali 1992, 125; 373. On Florence, see Frick 2002, 179-200.

<sup>31</sup> On crimson see Monnas 2008, 78; 256-257; Molà 2000, 111-2; 117-20.

<sup>32</sup> ASV, *Notai di Candia* (notary Giacomo Cortesan), busta 61, protocollo XVII, f. 206v-209r.

<sup>33</sup> ASV, *Notai di Candia* (notary Zorzi Protonotari), busta 222, libro 5, f. 88v. On the addition of gold or silver thread see Monnas 2008, 26.

competitive in price. Therefore, the use of these fabrics contributed to the visual blurring of social boundaries and could be motivated by a number of elements, such as an effort of the users to compensate for their inferior legal position or an effort to express lucidly their personal taste (Markaki 2015). Both elements were very important in other (early modern) European urban contexts as well.<sup>34</sup> Fast changing fashion preferences and the entry of less durable novelties influenced the taste, created a large diversification of choices and led wealthy city residents all over Europe to a constant renewal of their material goods. The blurring of social boundaries, through the deception caused by novelties, could threaten the social order and stability; and that was exactly what the widespread sumptuary legislation in early modern European towns was trying to avoid. Nevertheless, the widening gap between those who were noble and those who simply *lived* in a noble manner did not close.<sup>35</sup>

With regard to the geographical setting, there were only two types of silk that infiltrated the rural areas around Candia, i.e. the pure *ormesin* and, to a lesser extent, the mixed *canevaζζέτα*. *Ormesin* was a high-quality silk, lightweight, reasonably priced and had an exotic origin (Vitali 1992, 273). However, it lacked the prestige of other more luxurious silk fabrics, such as the *velluto* (velvet) and *damasco*.<sup>36</sup> Thus, the choice of these two specific types of silk illustrated that the countryside was somewhat underprivileged in comparison with Candia.<sup>37</sup>

#### 4. Mixed cotton

As the textile techniques continued to improve, new processes were invented to mix not only silk, but also cotton with wool or flax. These new mixed fabrics had remarkable softness and made new styles possible (Pisetzky 1966, 228-30). *Dimito* was such a case. It was a double-threaded fabric made of flax and cotton, imitating the six-threaded silk cloth *sciàmito/samito/εζάμιτο*. In Venice, this technique was used to make the homonymous piece of clothing, worn by *popolani* during the fifteenth century (Vitali 1992, 173-4). However, in the seventeenth-century Cretan dowries *dimito* was not used for garments, but, exclusively for bed furnishings, such as mattresses, quilts and blankets. This shows that «consumers were adapters not mere adopters. They did not restrict themselves to adopting certain goods; they adapted them to their own needs and sensitivities» (Sarti 2002, 108). A selective adoption of Venetian elements has been documented in Crete in various fields.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, the case of the *dimito* fabric is no exception.

<sup>34</sup> See, for instance, Blondé and van Damme 2009; de Laet 2011, 155-9; 186-9; Brown 2005, 221-225.

<sup>35</sup> See Brown 2005, 221-5; de Laet 2011, 159.

<sup>36</sup> For the use of velvet in Venice see Vitali 1992, 398-407. For the use of *damasco* see Vitali 1992, 171; Monnas 2008, 251-4; 302. Later examples of English silk damask can be found in Hart and North 2009, 94-95.

<sup>37</sup> On the downgraded status of the Cretan countryside see indicatively Lambrinos 2018, 21-4; Markaki 2018, 63-8.

<sup>38</sup> See, for instance, the case of religious architecture in Gratziou 2010, 16; 19.

## 5. Conclusion

Notarial documents offer the opportunity to look closely at female fabrics and their material details. They illustrate that in ‘contact areas’, such as in Venetian Crete, there was a high degree of inter-connectedness and interlocking cultural elements. Crete followed the innovation of fake products, a widespread practice in Venice, and, in particular, the new techniques of the Venetian textile industry of the sixteenth century. The inhabitants of Candia were very well aware of the developments in the textile industry of the metropolis and embraced the mixed cloths that positioned themselves as European commodities and as part of a broader visual culture. Especially the mixed silk fabrics *brocadello* and *camevazzeta* had multiple meanings as they offered wealthy brides of lower social groups the opportunity to appropriate elements of the lifestyle of the upper class in an affordable way and to distinguish themselves. Mixed fabrics were consumed by elite and non-elite brides, always in limited numbers, and created a deception which was convenient for whomever wished to keep up appearances.

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*Drapers and tailors. Fashion and consumption in medieval Catalonia*<sup>1</sup>

During the first half of the fourteenth century, there was a wave of sartorial innovation across Europe that has induced some historians to consider it as the birth of fashion.<sup>2</sup> Research has focused on the aristocratic courts and urban elites, which are usually identified as the social groups that led changes in clothing (Bartholeyns 2008; Blondé and Ryckbosch 2015). Another historiographical scholarship has proved that rural society became increasingly commercialised by the Later Middle Ages. Thus, even peasant households were able to sell and purchase, at least occasionally, a variety of goods that included clothes (Britnell 1993; Kowaleski 2006; Dyer 2012). It is remarkable that an awareness for new fabrics and new apparel seems to have been socially widespread among medieval populations and not restricted to urban elites. Emulation and a desire to differentiate oneself – two key features of societies driven by consumerism – already existed in late medieval times, and had far-reaching economic implications (Dyer 2005, 126-72). Fashion thrived in a context in which households were ready to spend on garments not only for utilitarian purposes, but because it conveyed symbolic capital. Furthermore, a more commercialised economy enabled specialization and more specifically the proliferation of cloth retailers and tailors. Both trades were crucial in disseminating new textiles and new ways to transform them into personal outfits.

An increase in purchases of carefully chosen cloth was clearly linked to expanding textile manufacturing and the development of specialized production in some specific areas of north-western Europe (chiefly Flanders and Northern France). Burgeoning cities such as Ghent, Arras, Ypres, Paris and Châlons-en-Champagne sustained a growing textile production because their products were distributed over a large geographical area (Munro 2003). More and more, they were able to produce several types of fabrics and ship them to distant places. Lists of commodities in tolls bear witness to an increased circulation of textiles across the western Mediterranean (Hoshino 1980, 65-113; Gual 1968). As a result, the range of fabrics available in some markets expanded dramatically during the thirteenth century. At the beginning of the fourteenth century, the warehouse of a merchant

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<sup>2</sup> The chronology for the “birth” of fashion is quite problematic, as has been posited by Heller (2007, 46-60). See also: Piponnier 1989; Blanc 1997; Scott 2007, 35-121.



in Perpignan contained a large quantity of cloth imported from 16 Flemish and French cities, with more than 50 different types of fabrics (Alart 1881, 85-9).

An eagerness for new types of cloth is revealed by a succession of different kinds of textiles pledged by families as a gift for their daughters' marriages in thirteenth century Catalonia (To Figueras 2016). In Vic, a city in Old Catalonia, between 1230 and 1240, it was already possible to acquire fabrics from Bruges, Arras and Saint-Omer in order to make female garments (i.e. tunics and capes). Cloth from Châlons-en-Champagne was also available from 1253 onwards, and thereafter became an extremely popular choice for brides' attire. Twenty years later, in 1273, cloth from Ieper started to be on offer, and textiles from Narbonne were also being sold by 1275. Finally, in 1280, textiles from Paris and Saint-Denis, called *biffes*, turned up as another cloth that could be used for women's apparel. Moreover some of these textiles hailing from distant places circulated in several varieties of colour and other features. For example *biffe* from Saint-Denis, as it appeared in Vic, could be blue, green, purple or with stripes. Thus, the range of textiles available to consumers expanded dramatically between 1230 and the beginning of the fourteenth century with the continued addition of new types of cloth. Overall, the flow of new types of cloth that reached cities such as Vic increased primarily because clients embraced these novelties, but also because a growing number of people could afford such wares or decided to invest more on clothing. A prosperous network of cloth retailers was instrumental in lowering transaction costs and profiting from a surge in demand. Further prospects for individual choices were made possible by a larger range of fabrics, but also by the methods garments were cut and assembled. Thus, along with cloth retailers, specialized tailors, and to a lesser extent seamstresses, became a common feature of late medieval society. These specialists were crucial in socially disseminating an economy of fashion that involved people of variegated social status and wealth.

Tab. 1. **First appearances of French-Flemish cloth in a bride's trousseau in Vic (Catalonia)**

\*mentioned among stocks of merchant J. d'Aldiard of Perpignan (1307)

Bruges, 1230  
 Saint-Omer, 1239 (stamfort, 1239)  
 Arras, 1240 (stamfort, 1240)\*  
 Châlons, 1253\*  
 Ieper, 1273 (*cuverte*, 1290)\*  
 Cambrai 1273  
 Avignon 1273  
 Narbonne, 1275 (dyed red, 1286)  
 Saint-Denis, 1280 (*biffe*, 1280)\*  
 Paris, 1281 (*biffe*, 1280)\*  
 Limoux, 1281  
 Provins, 1286 (*biffe*, 1286)\*

## 1. Drapers

In the second half of the thirteenth century, there were cloth retailers, referred to as drapers (*draparii*), in many cities and market towns of the western Mediterranean. Although they could be engaged in many other economic activities, textile retail was what defined them.<sup>3</sup> Drapers are first mentioned in Barcelona at the beginning of the thirteenth century (Bensch 1995, 230-1; Batlle 2010). At this earlier stage, some were involved in ambitious commercial ventures, which could explain their wealth, although their geographical scope was usually much more limited. Contrary to long-distance merchants, most drapers restricted their sales to the town where they resided and a few neighbouring localities. In Catalonia, in the years 1297-1317, drapers from the town of Peralada sold their wares mostly to customers living in the surrounding rural areas (Fariás 2009, 306-7). In some local markets, drapers came from a larger neighbouring town. For instance, around 1300, the small town of Santa Coloma de Queralt was repeatedly visited by drapers from the town of Cervera, 25 km to the north (Milton 2012, 104-5). In other cases, a group of local drapers was complemented by others coming from bigger cities. In Amer, a small monastic town, by the end of the thirteenth century resident drapers had to compete with drapers coming from the city of Girona. Both groups provided clients with a substantial range of textiles for the years to come (To Figueras 2019, 45-52). The same pattern found in Catalonia was replicated in the Kingdom of València by the middle of the thirteenth century. For example, in Cocentaina, a small town 100 km south of València, there were some local drapers from at least 1269 onwards, and received occasional visits of drapers from other cities, just a generation after Christian conquerors had imposed their rule. This shows how by that time cloth retailers had become an essential part of the medieval economy (Ferragud 2003, 186-7).

Similar groups of drapers were also active in other regions of the western Mediterranean, besides the Crown of Aragon. In Tuscany, there are several examples of local drapers (or *pannari*) selling their wares to quite a diverse clientele as, for example, in the city of Lucca, already by 1246 (Blomquist 1969).<sup>4</sup> Some burghs in Provence, such as Reillanne and Trets, also witnessed the activity of drapers during the first half of the fourteenth century. In Provence, drapers also offered a variegated range of cloth to clients living in the same town or the neighbouring areas, making cloth a commodity that reached almost every corner of the region (Poppe 1980, 148-9; Drendel 2014). Although retailers specializing in textiles existed in many places, there is only surviving evidence of a few of them. Sometimes the only way to trace their activity is through their purchases from wholesalers at regional fairs. For example, some drapers from towns such as Solsona, Berga and Tremp in Old Catalonia show up as debtors for French cloth

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<sup>3</sup> Drapers were involved in cloth production in some European regions. In the Crown of Aragon, *parator* was the term used to identify those whose main activity was cloth manufacture. On a comparative perspective see: Roch 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Blomquist did not identify these drapers as retailers selling to final consumers, but he was probably wrong on this particular point, as pointed out by R. Marshall (1999, 117).

acquisitions at the fair of La Seu d'Urgell, in the Pyrenees, around 1290 (Batlle and Navarro 1984-85).

Drapers could operate in different ways, but they generally used marketing institutions or facilities such as stalls in market squares, taking advantage of the proliferation of chartered markets that took place in the thirteenth century (Fariás 2009, 284; Batlle 2004; Petrowiste 2020). In some Catalan towns, such as Amer, there was a section of the market square with stalls (*tabulas*) specifically devoted to cloth sales (*draperia*), allowing clients to choose among several retailers. In the town of Castelló d'Empúries, an entire small square was devoted to cloth stalls (Fariás 2009, 291). Weekly markets allowed some drapers from bigger centres to attend several local markets in order to sell their textiles. In Catalonia, markets possibly worked as an integrated system, similarly to English markets (Masschaele 1997, 140-46; 165-88). In larger cities, such as Vic, the activity at stalls in its «Mercadal» square was probably more continuous, and therefore sales were not restricted to a single day per week. Undoubtedly, those cloth merchants who used to sell in bulk had large warehouses, but the modest activity of some drapers also required rented spaces in the market towns for storage (Sales 2019, 105; 216). Although shops did not yet exist in most small towns or cities by the beginning of the fourteenth century, drapers and merchants in general had the possibility to display their wares in stockrooms or workshops (*operatoria*) (Batlle 1981). Joan d'Aldiard, a wealthy merchant from Perpignan, had just a few benches on which to put his textiles, more or less carefully wrapped.<sup>5</sup>

Drapers had some mobility, from market to market but also to fairs or other places where they met purveyors, encouraging somewhat informal partnerships. They frequently operated in pairs or small partnerships (*societas*) that pooled capital and human resources, although it is unlikely that they reached the level of complexity or size attained by big commercial companies (Bensch 1995, 287; Reyerson 1985, 38). Nevertheless, some degree of internal cooperation, even without formal guilds, was crucial in their rise to political and social prominence.

A common feature of drapers' activities was the extensive use of credit, which is why their purchases and sales can be traced back to at least the first half of the thirteenth century. Drapers systematically allowed for some delay in payments by their clients, whilst at the same time purchasing from cloth merchants on credit. By the middle of the thirteenth century credit was already a key feature of the economy and retail featured prominently as one of the domains in which it had become the norm. Credit offered a fundamental stimulus for cloth consumption and at least the possibility to speed up purchases of new textiles, like those that some manufactures in Flanders and northern France were shipping to Mediterranean cities (Comuzzi 2021; Vela 2007). Drapers who sold textiles on credit could rely on courts and institutions that would eventually enforce repayments (Sales 2011). In the event of disputes, however, written records were instrumental and drapers therefore used them systematically.

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<sup>5</sup> According to his inventory, he had five *bancals in quibus tenebantur panni botigue* and two *bancos operatori in quibus tenentur panni* (Alart 1881, 85-9). On medieval shops: Dyer 2019, 20-5; García Marsilla 2020, 73-89.

Debts could be recorded in drapers' accounting books that have seldom survived but they were a basic instrument in their businesses.<sup>6</sup> In Cocentaina, by the end of the thirteenth century, drapers took an oath to conduct business in fairness and to keep an accounting book on their premises (Ferragud 2003, 187-8). Inventories of deceased drapers highlight pending debts in their ledgers and this is the only way to have a sample of their contents. Debts for cloth purchases could be recorded with a higher degree of formality at a notary or a local court. These provide a glimpse of what kind of fabrics were sold, at what price and to whom, although in most cases it simply stated that a transaction had been made for cloth (*pannus*), without stating type nor amount. According to these records, by the beginning of the fourteenth century, drapers in Old Catalonia were able to reach almost every single household in towns, as well as rural areas. Thus, people from all social backgrounds and levels of wealth were acquainted with cloth retailers and their wares. Making good use of market institutions and credit, drapers managed to transform a substantial part of the population into clients ready to spend on new wares. However, it would be misleading to confer such a transformative power to drapers alone. As has been previously noted, this was a society in which clothing was meaningful, thus generating a demand for new types of cloth.

Drapers usually sold untailed cloth. It is rare to find references to transactions of ready-made garments. For example, the notaries of Vic, recorded at least 158 debt notes for cloth purchases between 1262 and 1265, among them some were bulk transactions of entire pieces of cloth, although most were unspecified transactions of modest value.<sup>7</sup> Some even stated that they bought cloth for dresses, to be cut into individual clothes.<sup>8</sup> In this small sample, there is just one case in which the acknowledged debt to a draper was for a specific garment.<sup>9</sup> In the small town of Amer, the local notary recorded 868 debt notes for cloth in the years 1283-1340, mostly featuring three local drapers as creditors.<sup>10</sup> Although notary notes are also quite laconic, they can occasionally supply some information on the amount of cloth and the purpose of some purchases.<sup>11</sup> Several notes specify that cloth was acquired to dress the debtor or someone else. For example, a certain amount of

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<sup>6</sup> Only a few fragments of drapers' ledgers survive from southern France and Tuscany (Reyerson 2002, 154; Marshall 1999, 43; 63-69).

<sup>7</sup> Arxiu Episcopal de Vic-Arxiu de la Cúria Fumada (ACF), vols. 10-11a. Example of debt for entire pieces of cloth: «pro duobus peciis de stamini forti quos a vobis emi» (ACF, vol. 10, fol. 173v).

<sup>8</sup> «Pannis ad opus vestimenti mei» (ACF, vol. 10, fol. 140v).

<sup>9</sup> Debt of 40 sol. «precio unius camisol» (ACF, vol. 11a, fol. 10r, 1265).

<sup>10</sup> Local drapers Ramon de Ribes, Jaume Saula, Guillem de Vanera and their partners appeared in 602 out of 868 acknowledgments of debt to creditors (To Figueras 2019, 46).

<sup>11</sup> For example, in some cases they explicitly indicate cloth was acquired for someone: «racione pannorum quos a te emi ad opus mei et R. filii mei» (Arxiu Històric de Girona [AHG], notaries Amer, vol. 17, fol. 30r; 1321), and debts for specific amounts of cloth: «racione pannis rubei: unius canne et ii palmarum pannis rubei, (AHG, Amer, vol. 8, fol. 32v, 1297); «racione pannorum videlicet pro iii cannis de panno lividi obscuro» (AHG, Amer, vol. 9bis, fol. 41v, 1308); «racione v cannarum brunis quas a te emimus» (AHG, Amer, vol. 10, fol. 58r, 1309); «ii cannas et unum palmi panni de burello quos emi ad opus induendi persona mee» (AHG, Amer, vol. 28, fol. 13v, 1334).

cloth was bought for mourning garments that a widow would wear.<sup>12</sup> But in this case, as in many others, drapers were selling just the fabric and there was almost no sale of ready-made clothes.<sup>13</sup> After the cloth was purchased, it needed to be cut and then assembled and sewn.<sup>14</sup> These were distinct operations, with their own techniques, which in a context of labour specialization were usually assigned to specialists other than the drapers: chiefly tailors and seamstresses.

## 2. Tailors and seamstresses

In addition to drapers in several cities and towns of the western Mediterranean there was a growing number of tailors, a group that played a crucial role in the spread of new garments and dresses. Tailors were already in place when new fabrics from Flanders and northern France began to expand the sartorial choices. Their expertise was decisive in taking advantage of the influx of textiles and widening possible custom-making options (Tarrant 2010, 61-7). Tailors also worked mending dresses and were instrumental in bringing new life to old attire. In testaments of the Central Middle Ages, individual garments were quite frequently bequeathed to relatives and friends.<sup>15</sup> A thriving second-hand market, at least in late medieval cities, also meant that old garments could be reused (García Marsilla, Navarro, and Vela 2015). New owners may have required items of clothing being overhauled by tailors and seamstresses. Rearranging one's attire was a common practice for people from all social backgrounds and a convenient way to obtain new dresses using old fabrics. Although a professional tailor was not essential in most cases, it would have been customary for aristocratic households and especially the Royal Court to seek their services.

Drapers' and tailors' activities overlapped and some individuals could switch between the two trades. There were also cases in which drapers and tailors cooperated, making it easier for customers to obtain clothes that suited them. As in the case of drapers, it can be difficult to identify tailors or seamstresses in medieval sources. Prior to 1348, many individuals appear in notarial records without a designated occupation. When they do, it may exaggerate the degree of labour specialization because, as drapers, tailors might be engaged in many other activities and businesses besides making garments. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that by the second half of the thirteenth century and the first half of the fourteenth

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<sup>12</sup> «50 sol. racione pannorum quos a me emistis ad opus unius cape et unius coti que emistis ad induendum Bonanatam uxorem ipsius R. de Triliis que vestes fuerunt sibi facte per vos racione luctus mortis dicti R. viri sui» (AHG, Amer, vol. 27, fol. 11v, 1332).

<sup>13</sup> On one occasion, a draper sold a «gramasie de panno rubeo» on credit (AHG, notariales Amer, vol. 17, fol. 24r, 1320). Besides cloth, in 1330-32 Ugo Teralh, draper of Forcalquier, also sold breeches, hoods and detachable sleeves (Meyer 1898, 136).

<sup>14</sup> In 1331, the executors of a woman's will were requested to buy some cloth and then have it cut to produce a couple of garments for her daughter: «quod .. manusmissori predicti emantur iv cannas de panno virido sive livido et ipse A. faciat scindere dicte filie mee capam et cotum in continenti post finem meum» (AHG, Amer, vol. 25, fol. 106v, 1331).

<sup>15</sup> Examples from a register of wills (Vic, 1238-51): Ollich 1988, 123. For a much earlier sample: Triás Ferri, 2012.

there were tailors almost everywhere. Some can be traced as creditors or debtors in notarial records, others through contracts to take in apprentices. As drapers or merchants, tailors could keep accounting books partially accessible through probate inventories that listed pending debts. They prove that tailors' services had reached a wide section of the medieval population by the fourteenth century. Surely not all tailors worked at the same level. Some were in the permanent service of an aristocratic court, while most were independent entrepreneurs offering their services in exchange for particular payments.

## 2.1 Tailors at the royal court

During the first half of the fourteenth century, both the King of Majorca, James III, and, afterwards, the King of Aragon, Peter III, issued ordinances that describe the offices of the court and their duties.<sup>16</sup> Although they provide more of an idealized picture of how the court should operate rather than what it was actually like; they do contain a valuable chapter on the tailor and his aides, plus another one on the seamstress and her aide. The ordinances established that an appointed tailor would be at the court permanently whose main duty would be to make the King's clothes in a secluded space, hidden from the curiosity of others.<sup>17</sup> The royal tailor was in charge of buying cloth and all that was needed for the King's garments by himself or through other officials, and he was therefore accountable for all expenses to the royal treasury. It was the tailor's responsibility that the King have new clothes for several festivities all year round, and only the appointed tailor or his aides were to make them. For further security, the tailor had to swear an oath to the King. The same secrecy applied to the seamstress who was in charge of the King's undergarments and linen, although she was not supposed to intervene in purchases. In another chapter, the ordinances listed which festivities required new clothes, and established an additional number of four new outfits per year, with some particularities. In total, making 16 new outfits per year just for the King was more than enough to keep the royal tailor busy all year round.<sup>18</sup> The case of the royal court of Aragon provides a useful example of tailors working for aristocrats as courtiers, because plenty of data are available regarding their everyday tasks and responsibilities; although tailors did also acquire prominence in aristocratic courts elsewhere (Bartholeyns 2010, 216-7).

The accounts of the royal treasury recorded some of the purchases and expenses of the royal tailors before the aforementioned ordinances were written. Between 1302 and 1304, the royal tailor Guillem Torroja featured in the treasury accounts several times because he had bought cloth to be used for the King's

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<sup>16</sup> In fact the «Ordinacions» of King Peter III are a loose translation into Catalan of the Majorcan *Leges Palatinae* written in Latin (Pérez Martínez et al. 1991; Gimeno, Gonzalbo, and Trenchs 2009, 22-37).

<sup>17</sup> «que en la cort nostra sia un sastre sufficient qui dins la nostra casa faça totes les vestidures a ús nostre cors deputadores», chap. 38 (Del sartre e sos coadjutors) (Gimeno, Gonzalbo, and Trenchs 2009, 103-4; Beauchamp 2013, 43-56).

<sup>18</sup> Chap. 39 (De la custurera e de la coadjutora) and chap. 81 (De les vestidures e altres ornaments) (Gimeno, Gonzalbo, and Trenchs 2009, 104; 165).

clothing (Tab. 2). Other purchases were made by someone called Robert (or Rubi) Anglès, also a «tailor of the King», and a third tailor called Jaquet (González Hurtebise 1911, n. 340, 624, 752, 1099, 1243, 1288, 1293). Therefore, tailors working at the court were responsible for purchases of cloth or acquisitions by other means. In 1283, during the war, the royal tailor Berenguer Serra collected some cloth for the King that had been seized from an enemy's vessel.<sup>19</sup>

Tab. 2. **Expenses of Guillem Torroja, tailor to King James II  
(March 1302- March 1304)**

Reference*- Date	Date	Cloth-Items	Receiver	Payment in <i>solidi</i> (b=Barcelon a, j=Jaca)	Seller-City
506	Nov- 1302	Red scarlet cloth, white cloth from Nabonne and gloves	King	452 s. b.	Jaume Ferrer de la Sala, draper of Barcelona
776-780	Feb- 1303	Cloth from Châlons, cords for a mantle and expenses for cloth shearing	King	536 s. b.	Jaume Ferrer de la Sala
783	Feb- 1303	2.5 furs for the garment made with cloth from Châlons	King	590 s. b.	Berenguer Ferrer, furrier of Barcelona
787	Feb- 1303	<i>Biffe</i> from Saint- Denis and breeches	9 courtiers	446 s. b. 3 d.	Pere de Segrià of Barcelona
801	Feb- 1303	<i>Biffe</i> from Paris, fur, and cloth from Narbonne for breeches	G. Torroja	56 s. b.	
808	Feb- 1303	<i>Biffe</i> from Paris, fur, and cloth from Narbonne for breeches		121 s. b. 6 d.	In Barcelona
812	Feb- 1303	White cloth from Narbonne	Cistercian monks	?	
947	Apr- 1303	<i>Biffe</i> from Saint- Denis	13 poor	698 s. b. 10 d.	Workshop of J. G. and Parinços, (drapers of València)

<sup>19</sup> «recipiatis ad opus nostri pannos et pennas vayres, vocato ad hoc Berengario Serra, sartore nostro» (Cingolani 2015, 592-3, doc. n. 572).

986	Apr-1303	Sewing a garment made of <i>biffe</i> from Saint-Denis	F. d'Andosella	4 s. b. 8d.	
1024	May-1303	Biffe from Paris, fur, and black cloth from Narbonne for breeches	G. Torroja	135 s. b.	
1103-1104	Jun-1303	Small expenses for repairs to garments made of cloth from Douai and curtains	King	201 s. b. 2 d. b., 12 s. j. 4 d. j.	In Barcelona
1120	Jun-1303	Saddlebags (to carry the King's garments)		12 s. j. 9 d. j.	
1435-1436	Oct-1303	36 buttons for the King and silk for the trumpets' banners	King	5 s. j. 40 s. b.	
1545	Dec-1303	Mule to carry a scarlet cloth from Barcelona to València		28 s. b.	
1634	Jan-1304	Green silk for curtains in the King's chamber		236 s. 3d.	
1680	Jan-1304	Small expenses on garments of the King and others matters of the court		59 s. 1 d.	
1706	Feb-1304	Sewing garment of <i>biffe</i> from Saint-Denis and white cloth from Narbonne	Chapel altar boy	5 s. b.	
1796	Mar-1304	7 furs		1,460 s. b.	In Barcelona and València

\*Based on González Hurtebise (1911).

The table only lists explicit references to tailor Guillem's expenses, but the accounts undoubtedly include many more made on his behalf. Sometimes it is



stated that cloth was bought directly by Guillem himself, but his duties included also taking care of any transfer of royal garments from one place to another, sewing clothes, adding fur linings, etc. Naturally, it would be interesting to know more about the royal tailors' careers and how they carried out their duties.<sup>20</sup> From the sample it arises that Guillem Torroja was not only engaged to make the King's garments: other people at the court required his services. Although the King's clothes were framed in a fixed pattern, royal tailors were at least able to add some personal touches: buttons, silk cords and fur linings.<sup>21</sup> In any case, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the royal court was able to disseminate new clothing styles. Many people came into contact with the royal court and received a piece of cloth or an item of clothing as a gift following an audience. As already noted, by the beginning of the fourteenth century, a wide range of cloth and accessories was not restricted to noble households. It was already a shared feature of common people's apparel, even if the quality of the fabrics and furs varied for each social group. Furthermore, a large section of the population had already come into contact with tailors and paid for their services.

## 2.2 Independent tailors

From the second half of the thirteenth century onwards, there were tailors that made a living offering their services as independent artisans, and not as permanent courtiers of a noble house, both in Catalonia and elsewhere. In Puigcerdà (1260-1300), a bustling urban centre in the Pyrenees, young people were engaged in apprenticeship contracts or hired by master tailors as journeymen (Bensch 2003, 17). In Perpignan, there were a number of tailors from 1239 onwards, six of whom received spaces to build their houses from the Templars between 1241 and 1280. Thus, tailors were making a substantial contribution to urban expansion.<sup>22</sup> In 1302 a group of fourteen tailors were listed among the members of the municipal council (*Consell de Cent*) of Barcelona (Batlle et al. 2007, 370; 374). A similar noticeable community of tailors could be found in other cities of France (Petrowiste 2018, 141-55), Italy (Frick 2002, 13-31; 57-74) and England (Kowaleski 1995, 156) in the fourteenth century. In the rich notarial series of Vic, there is an example of a tailor

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<sup>20</sup> It is tempting to see Robert Anglès as an Englishman, and Jaquet could also be the nickname of a Frenchman, which would imply that the court had an international perspective in sartorial matters.

<sup>21</sup> Other instances show the importance of such accessories as buttons. For example, tailor Jacme d'Argilanes was paid for wedges, silk cords and silver buttons in 1315 (Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Reial Patrimoni - Mestre Racional, Llibre Tresoreria vol. 449, fol. 33r). The same accessories, buttons and wedges appear in Barcelona bourgeois familie's probate inventories at the beginning of the fourteenth century (Sabaté 1990, 63-4).

<sup>22</sup> Concessions for Ramon Barrot, tailor, in 1241, 1246, and 1264; for Bartomeu Amblard, tailor, in 1271; for Pere de Castelló, tailor, in 1271; for Jaume de na Feliu, tailor of Cànoes, in 1271; for Pere Barrere, tailor, in 1279, and for Guillem Romeu, tailor, in 1280 (Tréton 2010, doc. n. 376, 466, 628, 778, 793, 806, 924, 934).

apprenticeship contract as early as 1238.<sup>23</sup> Later, in 1280, another contract for a tailor apprentice refers to the custom of the trade (*consuetudine dicti officii*) meaning that a small group of tailors was already well-established in Vic and might have had some kind of collective organization.<sup>24</sup> In the small town of Amer, also in Old Catalonia, an apprenticeship contract from 1320 specified that at the term's end the apprentice would receive some tools, as it was customary, overseen by two master tailors. This was a further indication of a settled trade that, even without a guild, operated according to some shared rules and customs.<sup>25</sup> Although there is less evidence regarding seamstresses, at least in Vic it was also considered a trade that could be learnt through an apprenticeship.<sup>26</sup>

### Tab. 3. Tailors of Vic (ACF, 1269-1315)

- 1.-Pere Brull, *sartor et cives* of Vic (1269-1280)
- 2.-Bernat Scentis, *sartor* of Vic (1280)
- 3.- Berenguer, *sartor*, son of Pere Quadres of Vinyoles d'Orís (1283)
- 4.- Berenguer Carbonell, *sartor* of Vic (1288)
- 5.- Pere de Sala, *sartor* of Vic (1296)
- 6.- Ramon de Portell, *sartor* of Vic (1298)
- 7.- Jaume de Pissorella, *sartor* (1300)
- 8.- Ramon de Soler, *sartor* of Vic (1304)
- 9.- Arnau de Graylers, *sartor* of Vic & family (1308)
- 10.- Bernat Cerola, *sartor* of Vic (1310)
- 11.- Pere de Campferran, *sartor* of Vic (1314)
- 12.- Bernat de Vall, *sartor* of Vic (1315)

Several tailors lived in Vic during the second half of the thirteenth century. In 1289, a peasant family from the vicinity of Vic made plans for their son to be trained as a tailor for several years, which implies it was a viable professional outlet.<sup>27</sup> Some tailors attained social prominence and engaged in more ambitious economic ventures than just producing garments. One way of expanding their business was to also become cloth vendors and therefore mix tailoring with activities characteristic of drapers or cloth merchants. For instance, Pere Brull, a tailor and citizen of Vic, received 1000 s. and then 200 s. in commenda contracts, that he intended to invest in trading cloth and other commodities.<sup>28</sup> Prior to this he

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<sup>23</sup> The expected length of the contract was five years, and the apprentice had the possibility to spend two weeks each year working in the harvest, hinting at his peasant origins. The master, in exchange for training and housing, would receive 20 s. and cereal from the apprentice's mother (ACF, vol. 2, fol. 159v.).

<sup>24</sup> The master was Bernat Scentis and length of the apprenticeship was three years (ACF, vol. 17, fol. 169r, 1280).

<sup>25</sup> «Quod est consuetum in villa ista dare per sartores discipulis» (AHG, Amer, vol. 11, fol. 43r).

<sup>26</sup> A widow sent her daughter to learn «custorerie» as an apprentice with a woman in Vic for five years (ACF, vol. 17, fol. 104v, 1280).

<sup>27</sup> «Doceatur magisterium sartorie» (ACF, vol. 3306, fol. 52v, 1289).

<sup>28</sup> ACF, vol. 17, fol. 52r (1280). Along with others, there is evidence of Pere Brull selling cloth on credit earlier: ACF, vol. 11, fol. 79v (1269), fol. 122v (1270), fol. 124v (1270).

had bought part of a stall in the market square, a house in Riera street, later another one in the street of Hospital de Sant Jaume, and finally he had also rented a workshop in another square of Vic.<sup>29</sup> Two trends in tailors' business are also apparent in other areas. Firstly, tailoring as a craft that spread and expanded from towns to cover rural populations; and secondly, tailors also becoming cloth dealers, and therefore a mixture of traditional tailors and drapers.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, tailoring was already an activity that allowed for some kind of labour specialization, and demand for tailors' services also became widespread among the peasantry. In the small town of Amer there were at least ten tailors between 1312 and 1320, while in the neighbouring valley of Llémena, located 12 km to the north-east of Amer, there were also a few scattered among the small villages. These were rural parishes with no urban population so tailors could only survive if peasant families decided to pay for their services. In Briolf, a small rural parish a little further to the north, a couple of tailors, Bartomeu de Torrent and Francesc Goldró, decided to set up a partnership in 1325. In the following two years, they expected to cut and mend all cloth that their neighbours, inhabitants of their parish, or others would bring them.<sup>30</sup> Briolf was a peasant community quite modest in size, and such a business was only conceivable if humble households around it would also consider becoming their customers.

Another interesting feature of tailoring is that as it expanded, it became a trade not restricted to men. Although the vast majority of tailors were men, it was not uncommon for women to act as tailors, at least at the beginning of the fourteenth century in a context of increasing demand. In Vic, there is an example of a whole family, women included, who engaged in this trade. Upon marrying their daughter Elisenda, Arnau de Graylers and his wife agreed to train their son-in-law, Jaume de Trivellers, as a tailor, a craft he would share with his spouse.<sup>31</sup> If the general trend in late medieval Europe was to exclude women from tailoring, this was not yet the case in this pre-plague context, perhaps due to an increase in labour demand. In Vic, by the end of the thirteenth century, women also had the option to join other cloth-related trades, the most obvious being that of seamstress, but also there were women working in purse production (*borseria*) or as weavers.<sup>32</sup> In a fairly similar vein, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, several girls in Amer became

<sup>29</sup> ACF, vol. 10, fol. 152v (1263); vol. 11, fol. 119v (1270), and vol. 17, fol. 144r (1280).

<sup>30</sup> «Ita quod nos scindamus et emendamus quascumque custuras et pannos ad manus nostras pervenerint tam a parrochianis nostris quam ab aliquibuscumque personis», Arxiu Comarcal de la Garrotxa (ACGAX), notaria Besalú, vol. 11 (notari Bernat Safont), fol. 36r (1325). They expected to make some profit in cereals (*tam bladum quam denarios*) which also implies they aimed at a peasant clientele (To Figueras 2019, 52-55).

<sup>31</sup> «Promittimus vobis Jacobo et Elicsendis quod de primo mensis septembris ad ii annos, ego dictus A. docebo te Jacobi meum magisterium sartorie et tibi dicte Elicsendem faciem doceri magisterium sartoris» (ACF, vol. 3300, fol. 22r, 1308). This clause was cancelled in the notarial register for unknown reasons.

<sup>32</sup> All trades can be documented through apprenticeship contracts. Seamstress (*custuraria*): ACF, vol. 17, fol. 104v (1280). Purse maker (*borseria*): ACF, vol. 10, fol. 109r (1263); vol. 10, fol. 251r (1265); vol. 33, fol. 88v (1299). Weaver (*textoria*): ACF, vol. 10, fol. 228r (1264); vol. 10, fol. 248r (1265); vol. 17, fol. 31v (1279); vol. 17, fol. 116r (1280). In most cases apprentices came from small villages and moved to the city of Vic where their masters lived and worked.

tailors' apprentices under the supervision of women masters. Some others enrolled as apprentices with weavers' masters and two were sent by their parents to train as purse makers in the city of Girona.<sup>33</sup> Overall, women's work made a significant contribution to cloth manufacture and clothing development, not restricted to seamstresses taking care of undergarments.<sup>34</sup>

### 2.3 Successful tailors

In the first half of the fourteenth century disparities among tailors became more visible. Whilst some were experts in cutting and mending, others were engaged in more ambitious enterprises. Such is the case of Pere Brull of Vic, who also became involved in cloth trade. Others followed his example: a couple of tailors set up a partnership (*societas*) for two years with some capital they wanted to invest on *draperia*.<sup>35</sup> Tailors and drapers tended to have a close relationship. In some cases, tailors bought cloth directly from drapers, probably entrusted by buyers to choose the right cloth for ordered garments, as in the case of the royal court. One draper from Amer, Ramon de Ribes, had three tailors from the same town and another one from the neighbouring town of Sant Feliu de Pallerols among his clients.<sup>36</sup> Most of these transactions did not imply a notarial contract and remained unrecorded. According to his accounting books, the list of those indebted to the cloth merchant J. d'Aldiard of Perpignan, upon his death in 1317, comprised around 25 tailors. This allowed tailors to start working on items of clothing without waiting for their clients to provide some cloth. The accounts of Ugo Teralh for the years 1330-1332, a draper (*notarius et mercator*) from Forcalquier, show another possible link with tailors. According to his ledgers, cloth purchased by his clients would go directly to tailors' workshops. He requested that clothes should not leave the tailors' premises until he was paid, and apparently he would count on tailors' complicity in this regard.<sup>37</sup>

A further step is represented by those tailors who also became cloth retailers and adopted their commercial methods. A couple of examples will show how tailors could adopt drapers' strategies and achieve a remarkable social prominence.

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<sup>33</sup> Tailor's apprentices: AHG, notaries Amer, vol. 10, fol. 175v (1311); vol. 11, fol. 43r (1312); vol. 13, fol. 193r (1317); vol. 624, fol. 281v (1320); vol. 30, fol. 38v (1335). Weaver's apprentices: AHG, Amer, vol. 13, fol. 197v (1317); vol. 15, fol. 105r (1321); vol. 22, fol. 30r (1326); vol. 33, fol. 92r (1339); vol. 34, fol. 6r (1339); vol. 703, fol. 15r (1340); ACGAX, notaries St. Feliu de Pallerols, vol. 58, fol. 187r (1316). Purse maker's apprentices: AHG, Amer, vol. 8, fol. 28v (1297); vol. 11, fol. 84r (1313).

<sup>34</sup> Their role in the royal ordinances appears in chap. 39 («De la custurera e de la coadjutor») (Gimeno, Gonzalbo, and Trenchs 2009, 104). In poorer households, presumably, such tasks were performed by the women of the family.

<sup>35</sup> AHG, Amer, vol. 27, fol. 17v (1332).

<sup>36</sup> Ramon de Ribes, draper, sold cloth to the following tailors of Amer: Joan de Sala in 1317, R. Basses in 1319, Arnau d'Oliveda in 1335, and to Arnau de Matavaques, tailor of Sant Feliu de Pallerols in 1332 (AHG, Amer, vol. 17, fols. 18r, 21v, 71r, 57v-58v).

<sup>37</sup> «enans que parta de l'obrayre Bt Isnart, sartre», «enans que parta de l'obrayre de Bt. Pelicier, sartre», «enans que parta del obrayre de Calotier, sartre» (Meyer 1898, 141, 144, 145, 153, 158, 162).

Despite being called a tailor, Guillem Vinyes from Peralada was involved in cloth sales as a draper, at least during the last years of his life, between 1337 and 1345. In a volume that the notary kept only for him, hundreds of debts for purchases of cloth made by men and women of all social levels were recorded, including nuns, clerics, members of the Jewish community, while only exceptionally debts were declared for making clothes.<sup>38</sup> During the same period, Guillem also had two or three apprentices, invested in several commenda contracts and bought land. A clothier of Peralada acknowledged he was paid for his work dying cloth for Guillem which further highlights his activities beyond tailoring.<sup>39</sup> His will, dictated in his house in 1344, represents a crucial statement of his social expectations. His pious donations were extremely generous: specifically, he ordered the purchase of cloth to dress poor people, one of the works of mercy especially favoured by those who had become wealthy selling textiles.<sup>40</sup>

Another example comes from the town of Besalú: assets and goods belonging to Berenguer de Costa, a tailor, were carefully listed on behalf of his underage children in an inventory written shortly after his death in 1345.<sup>41</sup> A large section of the inventory describes his house and the objects found there including a crossbow and other weapons. Berenguer had rented a workshop where he kept small quantities of cloth and two canes used for measuring cloth. More crucially, the inventory copied all entries of his accounting books that could be used as proof of an unpaid debt as part of his assets. An impressive list of 485 debts filed in his ledgers, some backed up with notarial charters, is a good indicator of the scale of Berenguer's businesses. Reasons were only stated in a small proportion of cases: a few were for cloth (*pannus*), and others just for sewing (*custuras*). Some debts were surprisingly small, 192 over 485 were for 2 *solidi* or less, which would not pay a regular piece of cloth. These will doubtless have been related to his activities of cutting and sewing as a tailor. Other, more substantial debts could be associated with his role as a draper or investor. Among his debtors there were other fellow tailors, some of them from small villages of the countryside around Besalú, which implies some kind of professional network. The most relevant conclusion that can be drawn from these debts is the vast array of Berenguer's customers. They were extremely diverse, both socially and geographically: noblemen, clerics, Jews, peasants and artisans may have requested the tailor's services. Several clients lived in Besalú, but many others came from villages and rural parishes from all around the county. They bear witness, once more, to the pervasiveness of tailors, at least in this area of Catalonia, during the first half of the fourteenth century.

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<sup>38</sup> AHG, notariales Peralada, vol. 1049. In one instance, the notary decided to cross out the word «tailor» and write on top of it «draper», fol. 20v (1339).

<sup>39</sup> Debt «ratione tincturarum et colorum cum quibus dicto patri vestro quondam et vobis meis missionibus tinyi pannos vestros lane», AHG, Peralada vol. 1049, fol. 76v (27-ix-1344).

<sup>40</sup> Purchases of cloth for the poor on Good Friday in the royal accounts (Tab. 2). Several merchants and rich bourgeois bequeathed money for clothing to the poor. For example, Ramon de Ribes, one of the most prominent drapers in Amer, left funds in his testament for dressing some poor on Good Friday: AHG, Amer, vol. 15, fol. 68r (1321).

<sup>41</sup> ACGAX, notariales Besalú, vol. 2017 (notari Ramon de Socarrats), fols. 12v-19r (1345).

Tab. 4. Debtors of Berenguer de Costa, tailor of Besalú

	Number of debts	Median in <i>denarii</i> of Barcelona	Clerics, monks	From Besalú*	Jews	Tailors	From parishes outside Besalú*
Women	34	24	-	5	-	-	15
Men	451	36	38	69	6	11	221
Total	485	33	38	74	6	11	236

Source: ACGAX, notariales Besalú, vol. 2017. Some debtors appear without any indication of place (Besalú or other)

\*Excluding clerics and monks

## Conclusions

Changes in ways of dressing and a new sense of fashion during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries should be placed in the context of some major developments in cloth manufacture, cloth distribution and tailors' services. Firstly, the thirteenth century saw an expansion in the range of cloth available in local markets, which allowed buyers much greater choice. Obviously, not all fabrics were priced the same, so the materiality of cloth - wool, colour - helped stress hierarchies and nuances in a world characterized by evolving social boundaries. All of these textiles could not have reached consumers without a growing number of cloth retailers, who made extensive use of both market institutions and credit. Stalls devoted to cloth proliferated in many market squares and made it easier for clients of modest means to have access to all sorts of wares offered with delayed payments (Howell 2010, 286). Drapers and cloth merchants in many cities and small towns rose to the highest ranks of local society and enriched themselves, even if cloth retail was never their unique source of income.

Tailors' skills took dressing to another level. It was not only the choice of a particular fabric but the way it was cut and sewn that added more options, new possibilities for self-differentiation and new ways to display wealth, with subtle variations (Wilson 2017, 112-4). Tailors were instrumental not only in making garments but also in rearranging them, especially when they were transferred to new owners. By the second half of the thirteenth century, tailors could already be found in several Catalan towns. After 1300, there is evidence of a diversity of tailors: some worked at the royal court, holding a range of responsibilities and duties, but most of them were offering their services to all kinds of consumers. The proliferation, even in small towns, of tailors, seamstresses and artisans specialized in the production of accessories such as purses or hats was a consequence of enhanced labour division, although boundaries between trades, notably between those of tailor and draper, were less than fixed. The dramatic expansion of crafts related to cloth and clothing was the result of an increasing demand by a large pool of consumers. For instance, peasant families required tailor's services even if only occasionally and for their best clothes. Although an awareness of clothing changes was commonplace in the Crown of Aragon and elsewhere by the middle of the

fourteenth century, drapers and tailors had become an essential feature of urban and peasant society long before. They reveal an economy that was able to sustain a striking expansion of manufacture and services, particularly those related to clothing and personal attire.

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John Styles

*Re-fashioning Industrial Revolution.*

*Fibres, fashion and technical innovation in British cotton textiles, 1600-1780*<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introduction

The last forty years have witnessed an explosion of interest among historians in the things people consumed. In Britain, the roots of this new concern with consumption lie in a search for a consumer and marketing revolution that could explain the classic Industrial Revolution. The key intervention was the publication in 1982 of McKendrick, Brewer and Plumbs' *Birth of a Consumer Society*. There Neil McKendrick famously identified an 18<sup>th</sup>-century consumer revolution, sudden and unprecedented, that «was the necessary analogue to the industrial revolution, the necessary convulsion on the demand side of the equation to match the convulsion on the supply side» (McKendrick 1982a, 9).

Yet at precisely the moment McKendrick was formulating the notion of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century consumer revolution, economic history was moving in the opposite direction. A key intervention here was Joel Mokyr's 1977 article, "Demand vs. Supply in the Industrial Revolution" (Mokyr 1977). Mokyr insisted that aggregate economic growth can derive only from changes in supply – cost-reducing innovations – and that there is little evidence for changes in demand autonomously inducing or stimulating such innovations on an economy-wide scale. Among economic historians, it was this view that prevailed, although debate continued (Cole 1981; Berg 2004; Horrell 2014). The most influential recent studies in the field have tended to dismiss the significance of consumer demand as a cause of technical innovation during the Industrial Revolution. They have sought explanations in factor prices, or intellectual and cultural influences, or institutions, but not in changing patterns of consumption (Allen 2009; Mokyr 2012).

There have been notable exceptions, however, particularly among economic historians who have explored the impact of overseas trade, both imports and exports, on process innovation. Nowhere has this been more apparent than in the study of cotton textiles, the industry that led mechanical innovation in manufacturing during the Industrial Revolution. Maxine Berg insists that, in Britain, «the ex-

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pansion of 18<sup>th</sup>-century manufacture relied not just on process invention, but on product innovation. Understanding product innovation must lead into questions of demand». It was «the market for varieties of cotton goods and especially high-quality cottons [that] played a key role in fostering innovation in the industry, both in technology and in organization, including the factory system». That market, moreover, was a high-end market for variety, novelty and fashion, created not by Lancastrian entrepreneurs, but by the English East India Company's imports of calicoes and muslins from India. «The muslin and calico manufacturers fashioned their goods in direct competition with Indian cottons». It was India that «set the terms» (Berg 2002, 2; Berg 2009, 401-2; 405; 408; 414).

In a similar vein, Joseph Inikori argues that a huge increase from the 1750s in exports of Lancashire-made cotton textiles to West Africa, to be exchanged for slaves, was the crucial stimulus to the mechanization of British cotton spinning that began in the following decade. For Inikori, however, innovation was driven by African demand for cotton checks, rather than for calicoes or muslins. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Indian all-cotton textiles imported to London by the English East India Company were indispensable for the purchase of slaves on the African coast, particularly textiles with loom-patterned check or stripe patterns. Inikori suggests that for Britain, by the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century the leading European slave-trading nation, this was a decisive stimulus to product innovation in Lancashire, which then led on to innovation in manufacturing processes. Drawing on British customs records, he observes that overseas demand for British-made checks began to grow from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The new overseas demand came predominantly from Africa and was for Lancashire-made checks which mimicked Indian textiles. Domestic demand for these textiles, he insists, was relatively stagnant, but during the 1750s and 1760s demand for Lancashire-made checks to exchange for slaves in West Africa exploded. Once again, India set the terms, but in a process of export substitution rather than import substitution. Substituting British for Indian textiles in a key overseas market put pressure on yarn supplies, prompting a search for technical innovations in spinning during the 1760s. It was the rapid growth of these exports, Inikori argues, «dependent almost entirely on the slave economy of the Atlantic system», that «created pressures which stimulated the inventions» (Inikori 1989, 354-5; 369).

This article shares Berg and Inikori's insistence on the crucial importance of product innovation, demand and fashion for technical innovation in the British cotton industry of the early Industrial Revolution. It argues, however, that understanding markets and fashions requires attention not just to changes in numbers and prices, but also to the materiality – the physical characteristics and variation – that lies concealed behind 18<sup>th</sup>-century textile nomenclature. What *was* cotton? Like our English-speaking predecessors of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, historians find the English words «cotton» and «cottons» convenient labels for the huge diversity of textiles which have incorporated fibres from the fruit of the cotton plant. Yet until the very end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the composition of the vast majority of the «cottons» manufactured in western Europe was very different from the Indian all-cotton fabrics they sometimes aimed to copy. They consisted only partly of cotton fibre, if at all. Many consisted of mixtures of cotton yarns with linen (flax or hemp)

yarns, in various proportions. Some combined cotton with silk yarns, or woolen yarns, or worsted yarns. One type of heavily napped woolen cloth, woven in Wales and north-west England, was known as «cotton», but contained no cotton fibre whatsoever. This ambiguity explains the tautology in a 1776 letter from a Bedfordshire gentlewoman to a friend in London about buying a piece of cotton fabric. Obligated to distinguish between a printed fabric woven wholly from cotton and one woven from the more familiar combination of cotton-linen, she asked for a printed cotton «of the *new* manufactory which are *Cotten* both ways», explaining «it is a great deal lighter than a Cotton, and the colours look more lively».<sup>2</sup>

Scrutiny of material differences between the various «cottons» is not simply an exercise in taxonomic pedantry. These differences were crucial for the ways the manufacture and consumption of cottons developed in Europe and around the Atlantic basin between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. They were especially significant for the timing and technological trajectory of the British Industrial Revolution in textiles. The early years of the British Industrial Revolution were dominated by mechanical innovations in cotton spinning – James Hargreaves’ spinning jenny (c.1766), Richard Arkwright’s spinning frame (1769) and Samuel Crompton’s spinning mule (1778-9). They emerged at a time when raw cotton prices were unprecedentedly high and the supply of all-cotton fabrics from India, the world’s principal producer of cotton textiles, had contracted dramatically. The majority of the cotton textiles produced in Britain (and elsewhere in Europe) were union fabrics, woven from a combination of cotton yarns and linen yarns. Faced with rising raw material costs, manufacturers of fabrics such as cotton checks and stripes economised by increasing the proportion of cheaper linen yarns in their fabrics and reducing the proportion of more expensive cotton yarns.

This kind of manipulation of yarn content was not possible, however, in the case of the four types of fashion-sensitive cotton goods that enjoyed the greatest sales growth in British domestic and North American markets – printed fabrics made with cotton, cotton stockings, cotton velvets, and muslins. As British manufactures, these goods were newcomers. Both muslins and cotton printing fabrics, as well as the process of colour-fast printing itself, were British substitutes for imports from India. Cotton velvets and frame-knitted ribbed cotton stockings were British product innovations without obvious Indian precursors. These most fashionable of cotton products were either woven entirely from cotton, or required a fixed proportion of cotton yarn. As the cost of raw cotton rose, their burgeoning sales provided the principal inducement to increase quality and cut costs by inventing machines for spinning cotton yarn.

It is these four textiles that are the focus of this article. The article is grounded in an analysis of changing demand for cotton textiles in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Britain and the British Atlantic, based on customs and excise duties and trials for theft in London. It also draws on fibre analysis of yarns in surviving 18<sup>th</sup>-century cotton textiles in Britain and North America. The article begins by locating cotton textiles in the

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<sup>2</sup> Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Record Service, M10/4/34: Williamson Muniments, correspondence, letters to Mary Williamson, 1775-8, Margaret Cater, Kempston Greys, Bedfordshire, to Mrs. Mary Williamson, London, 17 October 1776.

broader history of European textiles from the late Middle Ages to the Industrial Revolution. It then proceeds to explore the relationship between the mechanization of cotton spinning and demand for cotton textiles in Britain and its export markets during the middle decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

## 2. Textile innovation in Early Modern Europe

Between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Europe witnessed a tide of novelty in textiles. It was underpinned by a key development during the later Middle Ages – the shift from a two-fibre textile culture, with European production and consumption monopolised by wool and flax, to a four-fibre textile culture, with woollens and linens supplemented by fabrics made from silk and from cotton. Introduced initially from the eastern Mediterranean, silks and cottons were becoming thoroughly domesticated in parts of western Europe by the end of the Middle Ages. During the next three centuries – the Early Modern era – their manufacture and consumption underwent massive expansion, both geographically and socially.

Two main trends in product innovation characterized Europe's new, four-fibre textile culture during the Early Modern period. First, a shift towards lighter, more colourful and more highly patterned fabrics, used both for clothing and for furnishings. Second, the dissemination of textiles employing new or unfamiliar techniques, such as knitting, lacemaking and printing. The impact of these innovations can be observed across the whole range of textile fibres, including wool, linen, silk and cotton. Their effects were felt at every level of the market, from the finest patterned silks worn by monarchs and their courtiers, to the cheap blue and white linen check aprons worn by housemaids. These forms of product innovation were intimately linked to innovation in technology, fashion and marketing. They were associated with the invention, dissemination and refinement of new machines, many of them intended for the manufacture of premium luxury and semi-luxury textiles: water-powered silk-throwing machines; twisting mills for silks, worsteds and fine linens; engine looms for tapes and silk ribbons; stocking frames for knitted goods; improved draw looms for patterned textiles. They also went hand-in-hand with an intensification and systematization of fashion, culminating in the emergence of an annual fashion cycle for silks, at least, during the later 17<sup>th</sup> century (Poni 1997; Styles 2016b).

Pre-existing types of woven fabrics tended to become lighter. Loom-patterned silks, produced principally in Italy, but widely exported, were the most costly and high-status textiles in 16<sup>th</sup>-century Europe. Between the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century and the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, their weave density fell by a third, reflecting a shift to lighter, thinner cloths (Mola 2003, 88, 146-52). An equivalent change can be observed in fine woollen broadcloths, which could be almost as expensive as silks. Between the 1630s and the 1680s, the weight of a typical coloured broadcloth made in Wiltshire, in the west of England, fell by a third (Mann 1971, 14; 312-5; Chevis 2021).

The reduction in the weight of established fabrics was accompanied by the dramatic success of a variety of light woven fabrics. Most prominent were those

made from combed, long-staple wool. They succeeded at the expense of heavier and less attractive competitors. Light fabrics, such as says and serges, made either entirely from combed, long-staple wool or mixed with short, carded wools, had long been produced in Europe (Munro 2003a; Munro 2003b). Nevertheless, the expansion of European commerce during the late 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries saw huge increases in their production in key centres, initially in Flanders, but extending in the course of the next two centuries to Holland, England, France, Italy and beyond (Van der Wee 2003; Harte 1997). This growth was accompanied by a proliferation of new light fabrics, often manufactured in the same localities. Some were made entirely from combed, long-staple wool. Others combined combed, long-staple wool with silk or other fibres. Those mixed with silk copied a wide range of costly silk piece goods – satins, damasks, velvets and taffetas – but at a much lower price (Chorley 1993). Collectively they were known in English as worsted stuffs. By the later 17<sup>th</sup> century, they too were facing substantial competition in key markets from another category of light-weight woven textile that was new to Europe – Indian cottons, imported initially by the Portuguese in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and, after 1600, on an ever larger scale by the English and Dutch East India companies.

The shift to lighter weight fabrics for outer garments was accompanied, from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards, by a mass diffusion of linen underwear. It was associated with a major expansion in the production of coarse linen and hemp fabrics in the late Medieval countryside, both for local consumption and for international trade (Epstein 2001, 41; Huang 2015). The proliferation of linen underwear reflected the spread of new conceptions of cleanliness. At the same time, it contributed to the multi-layering of dress associated with wearing outer garments that were thinner and lighter, providing reduced thermal insulation.

Textiles were not just becoming lighter in weight. The new fabrics were cheaper. The new, light silks – grosgrains, sarcenets, satins and damasks – cost only half to three-quarters of the price of the traditional heavy brocaded velvets they superseded (Currie 2007, 160). But these new fabrics were also less durable. The Venetian ambassador to the French court complained in 1546 that the satins and damasks made by the Tuscans and the Genoese were «cloths that cost little and last even less» (Mola 2003, 96). In 1606 it was claimed, perhaps with some exaggeration, that the old Norwich worsteds of the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century would have lasted six times longer than the new Norwich stuffs (Martin 1991, 7). A century later, the English author Daniel Defoe famously dismissed Indian calico as «ordinary, mean, low-priz'd, and soon in rags» (Defoe 1727, 50). Cheaper, less durable fabrics facilitated more frequent purchases of a wider array of items, aligned with a heightened sensitivity among consumers to novelty and variety. The Tuscan and Genoese silks criticized as cheap and flimsy by the Venetian ambassador in 1546 were made to «suit the desires and tastes of the French». They were «exactly what that nation wants, because it would get bored if a garment lasted too long» (Mola 2003, 96).

An emphasis on design innovation was a corollary of the acceleration in turnover. Almost all the new fabrics were distinguished by the speed with which their patterns and colours were changed. Norwich was one of the main English centres for the new, light worsted stuffs made from combed wool. In 1611, Norwich stuffs were already being described as being «of infinite variety of sorts,



figures, colours and prices.» The need for new patterns was constantly stressed. «Our trade is most benefitted by our new inventions and the varying of our stuffes which is contynually profitable» (Priestley 1997, 278).

The shift to lighter weight fabrics was associated with a proliferation of new textiles made from mixed materials. They included union fabrics, in which the fibre of the warp yarn differed from the fibre of the weft yarn, as well as blended or union yarns, in which the yarns themselves combined different fibres. Mixed-fibre fabrics were not, of course, new. Archaeological survivals from Medieval London include half-silk velvets, combining linen weft and silk warps, and *tiretaines*, combining linen yarns and woolen yarns (Crowfoot, Pritchard and Staniland, 2006, 127-9). Fustians with linen warps and cotton wefts were produced on a large scale in northern Italy from the 12<sup>th</sup> century and subsequently in southern Germany (Mazzoui 1981). Yet despite these Medieval precursors, the proliferation of new kinds of mixed fibre textiles that accompanied the European shift to lighter textiles from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards was unparalleled. Like Medieval half-silks, the new mixed fabrics often mimicked more expensive textiles made from a single type of fibre, but at a lower price.

Thus as the new, cheaper, light-weight Italian silks swept western Europe in the later 16<sup>th</sup> century, their patterning, colours and sheen were evoked for less affluent consumers by cheaper textiles combining expensive silk yarns with cheaper yarns made from combed wool, mohair, cotton, or linen. Equally, the expensive new broadcloths made with Spanish wool were imitated in fabrics like serge and baize, which combined warp yarns made from combed wool with weft yarns made from carded wool, as well as in heavily napped fustians.

It is also important to emphasize that Early Modern innovation in textile piece goods was accompanied by a transformation in the character, range and volume of textile trimmings and clothing accessories. Ribbons and tapes have ancient origins, knitted goods were known in medieval Europe, and needle and bobbin lace had medieval precursors. Nevertheless, all three saw a remarkable elaboration and proliferation after 1500. Most spectacularly, stockings, knitted initially in combed wool or silk, almost entirely replaced medieval hose made from woven woolen cloth in the course of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (Caracausi 2014; Levey 2003; Belfanti 1996).

### 3. The impact of Indian cottons

The Indian cotton textiles that began to be imported to Europe during the Early Modern period formed part of the trend towards lighter-weight fabrics, although they commanded a relatively small slice of the overall market for textiles. Indeed, much of their success during the so-called «calico craze» of the late 17<sup>th</sup> century arose because they were light in weight and colourful in design in ways consistent with the existing direction of change in the larger and more important markets for silks and woolens. India could offer an enormous variety of all-cotton and cotton-silk union fabrics that matched existing trends in European textiles, while reinforcing and extending them. Indian cottons enjoyed the advantage that

their manufacturers could dye, paint, or print them in bright colours that were washable and permanent, unlike the colours in European woolsens, linens and silks.

Direct import to Europe of Indian all-cotton textiles was developed initially by the Portuguese in the course of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and expanded by the English and Dutch East India Companies in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, peaking in the 1680s and 1690s. This chronology indicates that Indian cottons did not initiate, or even drive the European trend towards lighter, decorated fabrics. That was largely an endogenous western European development. Nevertheless, Indian production during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries proved remarkably elastic in response to fast-growing European demand. This was not to be the case in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Production constraints, partly to do with warfare on the subcontinent in the middle decades of the century, resulted in a fall in imports by both the English East India Company and the Dutch East India Company from the 1730s to the 1760s, although subsequently reversed. Prices, however, rose and continued to rise (Nierstrasz 2015, chapters 4 and 5).

The European trading companies that purchased Indian cottons did not operate speculatively, especially as their operations grew in scale. They specified the types of fabric they required. For a long period during the later 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, they even sent figurative designs from Europe to be painted or printed in India (Styles 2000, 132-6; Rothermund 1999, 284). As a consequence, many of the Indian cottons ordered for European markets, whether woven or painted/printed, evoked the patterning and colours found on more expensive European silk textiles, in the same way as the European-made worsted stuffs and union fabrics with which they competed, although it is important to stress that the Indian cotton fabrics were not necessarily cheaper. At the same time, a very large proportion of the Indian cotton fabrics sent to Europe were plain – neither loom-patterned, dyed, nor painted / printed. They ranged from coarse Bengal gurrachs to fine muslins. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, most of the plain calicoes imported from India were printed in Europe. Less than a third of the Indian calicoes and chintzes imported to London in the middle decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century arrived painted or printed.<sup>3</sup>

Europeans found it hard to compete with Indian all-cotton textiles. They struggled for much of the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries to match Indian colouring techniques, although by the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century they had developed new methods which differed from those in India, such as the cold vat process for indigo dyeing and the use of copper plates to print large, pictorial designs in fast colours (Riello 2013, 177; 179-81). Attempts to manufacture all-cotton fabrics in Europe proved especially challenging, as a result of the high relative cost of raw cotton fibre and the low relative cost of Indian labour. The shortness of cotton fibre made it awkward, time-consuming and therefore expensive to spin. It was especially difficult to insert the degree of twist necessary to bear the tension warp yarns sustain in a loom. English spinners were technically capable of spinning cotton warps to the specifications required to match the imported Indian fabrics, often relatively coarse at this period, but were unable to do so at a commercially viable price. This was partly due to the high cost of raw cotton, imported mainly from the eastern Mediterranean or the Caribbean, and partly due to the relatively high wage

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<sup>3</sup> The National Archives, CUST 3/40-79: Ledgers of imports and exports, 1740-1779.

rates for hand spinning that prevailed in cotton manufacturing districts in England in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Styles 2020). In India nominal spinning wages were low and cotton was grown locally, but high British tariffs impeded the development of any substantial trade in yarn.

In major markets like France, Britain and Spain, European governments responded to this predicament with prohibitions on the import and use of many, if not all, printed textiles and / or Indian cottons. At the same time, several permitted the manufacture of cheap adaptations of Indian cottons from other, usually mixed materials, especially mixtures of cotton yarn and linen yarn. The fibre composition of these new, light mixed cotton-linen fabrics echoed the heavy cotton-linen fustians produced in Europe since the Middle Ages and in Britain since about 1600. Like fustians, most of the new fabrics – *siamoises*, cotton Hollands, cotton checks, *indiennes* – combined cheap linen warp yarns and expensive cotton weft yarns. Yet they were rarely described as fustians, because they were not generally woven in the twill weave characteristic of fustian since its first appearance in medieval Italy.<sup>4</sup> Like the Indian fabrics they copied, they were mainly plain-weave and differed from fustians in look, feel and weight. Made largely with linen warps, and consequently inferior in colouring to equivalent Indian all-cotton textiles, these new light fabrics sold as substitutes for Indian fabrics in European and Atlantic colonial markets, but at lower prices.

It is important to emphasise that Indian all-cotton fabrics were often more expensive than the European linen-cotton textiles that copied them, even in African and American markets where they were neither prohibited nor much taxed. Nevertheless, customers knew the difference and were willing to pay if necessary. In 1774 Henry Fleming, a merchant at Norfolk, Virginia, complained to his suppliers in Whitehaven, England, that: «the calicoes charged by Mr. Potter [a draper at Whitehaven] per the [ship] James are nothing but high priced printed cottons [ie. prints on linen-cotton fabric], wretched dull patterns beyond the limits of our order and never likely to fetch first cost».<sup>5</sup>

#### 4. Britain: cotton checks and the perils of correlation

How did demand for these various cotton textiles in Britain and its export markets during the decades from the 1740s to the 1770s shape the mechanical inventions of the early Industrial Revolution? For most of these middle decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Indian all-cotton woven fabrics were either prohibited in the domestic British market (if colour-patterned), or taxed extremely heavily (if white and imported, like calico and muslin). In Britain's American colonies, however, they were neither prohibited nor heavily taxed, nor were there any official constraints on their supply to the intensely competitive West African market. Colour-patterned

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<sup>4</sup> «Twill weave accompanied the work of fustian makers like a characteristic geological fossil» (Endrei 1987, 65).

<sup>5</sup> Cumbria Record Office Carlisle, D/Lons/W/22/Fleming [Box 1841]: Henry Fleming Letterbook, April 1772-October 1775, April 1783-October 1788, Henry Fleming, Norfolk, Virginia to Fisher and Bragg, Whitehaven, England, 29 July 1774.

Indian all-cotton fabrics sold well in both markets, but were largely absent from the British domestic market because, in contrast to France, smuggling of Indian printed or painted calicoes and all-cotton stripes or checks was not significant. Less than 10% of the printed textiles that survive in the archive of the London Foundling Hospital are calicoes, and a good number of those may have leaked out of the London printworks where they were allowed to be processed for re-export.<sup>6</sup> The British domestic market for «cottons» in these years was largely a market for union fabrics consisting partly of cotton yarn and partly of linen yarn. The sources of both materials were mainly overseas, whether in the form of ready-spun linen yarn from the Baltic and Ireland, or of raw cotton to be spun in Britain, some from the Levant, but mostly expensive, high-quality cotton from the West Indies. As with the other union fabrics which proliferated in Early Modern Europe, there was considerable potential here for substitution of one material for another, according to changes in demand, prices, tastes and techniques.

The pervasiveness of material substitutions highlights the danger of assuming mechanization was the obvious response to rising input costs for British cotton-linen fabrics. Joseph Inikori, having identified a huge increase from the 1750s in exports of Lancashire-made checks to West Africa to be exchanged for slaves, goes on to insist that replacing Indian textiles with British imitations in a key overseas market put pressure on yarn supplies, which then drove the search for technical innovations in cotton spinning of the following decades (Inikori 1989, 355; 369).

By the 1740s checks were a well-established commodity in Britain, especially familiar as women's cheap but colourful blue and white working aprons. Though far from fashionable, their domestic market increased substantially over the next three decades, encouraged, perhaps, by a colour palette resembling Chinese blue and white porcelain, or cheap blue and white Delftware that mimicked porcelain. It is conventional for historians to categorize these checks as cottons, because they were manufactured in Lancashire and resembled an important group of Indian all-cotton fabrics that sold in vast quantities across Early Modern east and south Asia, as well as in Africa. Yet among checks in the London Foundling Hospital archive dating from 1759-60, the majority were made entirely of linen, while almost all the rest were predominantly linen, with just a handful of cotton threads to provide a stronger colour. Hardly any were 50:50 cotton:linen and none were all-cotton (Table 1). The reason is simple. Improving the colour of the criss-cross pattern by including even a small proportion of cotton yarn increased the price of what were among the cheapest colour-patterned fabrics on the market.

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<sup>6</sup> London Metropolitan Archives, A/FH/A/9/1/1-178: Foundling Hospital Billet Books, 1741-1760. For background to the Foundling textiles, see Styles 2010.

Tab. 1. Fibre content of yarns in checks, 1759-60

Fibre	Number of swatches
Cotton/cotton	0
Linen/cotton	1
Linen + some cotton / linen + some cotton	12
Linen/linen	17
Unclear	1
TOTAL	31

Source: London Metropolitan Archives, Foundling Hospital Billet Books, AF/149 (July 1759) and AF/166 (January 1760).

Both in England and in colonial British North America, linen checks sold for less per yard than cotton checks, and what were described as cotton checks were far from being all-cotton. Linen yarn prices rose from the later 1740s at the same time as a rise in the prices of raw cotton, but the increase in linen yarn prices was more muted (Styles 2020). Linen yarn remained substantially cheaper than cotton yarn. Indeed, the cost of spun linen yarn suitable for many Lancashire fabrics was close to that of unspun, low quality Levant cotton, itself often used for checks. So, for fabrics like checks and stripes where the cotton:linen ratio varied, substitution of cheaper linen yarn for costlier cotton was a feasible cost-reduction strategy. According to the Manchester merchant and checkmaker Samuel Touchet, in 1750 «the high price of cotton had obliged them to use coarse linen instead». Consequently, one type of fabric, «which used to be made all of cotton one way, was now made not above 1/4 part cotton: and in another species, 1/4 part less cotton was used than formerly» (Committee on Linen Manufactory 1803, 291). Wholesale purchasers were all too aware of this tactic. A Manchester merchant partnership was informed in 1772 that a New York purchaser had «complained of the checks having some threads of blue linen mixed with the cotton, but [I] told him there certainly was as much cotton in them as could be afforded for the price».<sup>7</sup>

This finding casts doubt on Inikori's insistence that the huge increase from the 1750s in exports of British-made checks to West Africa to be exchanged for slaves was a crucial stimulus to the mechanization of British spinning. The British checks exported to Africa were, like those sold in Britain, largely either all-linen or predominantly linen, so their cotton content was unlikely to have been a crucial stimulus for mechanical innovation. Inikori is correct to argue that a process of export substitution was at work, but the key context was the failure in the middle decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century of Indian supply of the loom-patterned textiles which

<sup>7</sup> Historical Society of Pennsylvania, AM.125: William Pollard letter book, 1772-4, William Pollard, New York, to Benjamin and John Bowers, Manchester, 27 November, 1772. Also see [Ogden] 1783, 78-9 and TNA, T 70/129: Royal African Company: Committee of Goods, January 1751.

had become the principal commodity exchanged for slaves in Africa. Before 1750, the British were already serving a small market for linens in West Africa. In the 1750s, as demand for slaves increased and supplies of Indian textiles declined, British (especially Liverpool) merchants provided both additional plain linens and developed a market for versions of the Lancashire linen and linen-cotton checks already selling on the British market. These checks were inferior adaptations of Indian designs, but lower in price by courtesy of their high linen content. It was probably their cheapness that sustained their sales in Africa when Indian supply revived in the 1760s, although once Indian all-cotton checked fabrics became readily available again, sales no longer increased.<sup>8</sup>

Faced with a temporary market opportunity in Africa, but rising costs in Britain, the checkmakers' principal response was not, as Inikori suggests, mechanization, but rather adulteration of their product by increasing the proportion of cheap linen yarn.<sup>9</sup> Adulteration apart, the early spinning machines' dependence on longer-staple, New World varieties of raw cotton makes it unlikely that checks could have provided a sustained impetus to mechanization. Checks, more than other Lancashire cotton textiles, used short-staple, Old World varieties of raw cotton from the Levant. What Lancashire's intervention in the West African market for check fabrics demonstrates is the need for careful attention to a textile's materiality before ascribing a causal relationship to correlations between evidence of an increase in demand for a particular textile in a particular market, an increase in input costs, and mechanization. Innovation in process technology was rarely the only, or even the most likely response.

## 5. Britain: fashion and mechanisation

That is not to say we should ignore correlations between demand, input costs and mechanization. During the middle decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when input costs were rising in Lancashire, there was a group of cotton textiles characterized by rapid increases in demand in Britain and its overseas markets, but with little potential for cost savings by manipulation of fibre content. These textiles were either all-cotton, or they required a fixed 50:50 ratio (or higher) of cotton yarn to linen yarn. Unlike the cheap blue-and-white checks made in Lancashire, they were expensive, semi-luxury fashion fabrics, which required fine cotton yarns spun from New World cotton. Four of them – printed cottons/calicoes, muslins, cotton stockings, and cotton velvets/velverets – were directly implicated in the key mechanical spinning inventions of the 1760s and 1770s, as evidenced by the statements and biographies of the three key inventors – James Hargreaves, Richard Arkwright and Samuel Crompton.

Hargreaves, the inventor of the spinning jenny (c. 1766), was a working Lancashire weaver, who wove «Blackburn greys», the 50:50 cotton:linen base fabric

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<sup>8</sup> DANS (Data Archiving and Networked Services), *Anglo-African Trade, 1699-1808*: <https://easy.dans.knaw.nl> (accessed 13 August 2014); *Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*: <http://slavevoyages.org> (accessed 11 June 2016).

<sup>9</sup> Striped cotton hollands were subject to similar adulteration (Ogden 1783, 78).

for printed cottons. His invention of the jenny was a response to a new putting-out system, introduced as input costs for these fabrics rose in the 1750s and 1760s (Styles, 2020). In 1768 he left the Blackburn area of Lancashire, taking his invention to Nottingham to set up a proto-factory to supply yarn to the town's burgeoning cotton stocking industry. In the same year, the Lancastrian Richard Arkwright, inventor of the spinning frame (patented in 1769), also moved to Nottingham, at a time when his invention was barely complete. Funding for its successful commercial implementation came from Nottingham manufacturers of cotton stockings. By 1772-3, Arkwright was still adapting his frame for water power at nearby Cromford in Derbyshire, but he was already supplying yarn for cotton stockings, and also for velverets and printed calicoes (Fitton 1989, 15-17; 22; 31-7). Samuel Crompton, the inventor of the spinning mule (1778-9), was, like James Hargreaves, a Lancashire weaver. As a youth outside Bolton at the end of the 1760s, he had laboured at an early eight-spindle spinning jenny making yarn for loom-patterned Marseilles quiltings, which had been introduced by the Bolton manufacturer Joseph Shaw in 1763. They required fine, regular cotton yarn (Dossie 1768, 17; 18; 129-31). Bolton was already a centre for fine cotton weaving, where cotton velvets had been developed in the mid-1740s (Sykas 2009, 10-11). The following year Shaw began manufacturing coarse all-cotton muslins, using twisted local wheel-spun yarn. The initiative was short-lived, due to the revival of the East India Company's muslin trade after its disruption during the late 1750s and early 1760s (Britton 1807, 294-5).<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless, Crompton's personal experience of the jenny's shortcomings in spinning fine yarns inspired his invention in 1778-9 of the spinning mule, which was known for a time as the «muslin wheel» (Baines 1835, 202). As mule-spun fine yarns became available in the early 1780s, muslin weaving rapidly resumed at Bolton.

Measuring changes in consumption of domestically produced goods in 18<sup>th</sup>-century England is notoriously difficult. Only a narrow range of commodities was subject to data gathering for excise taxation. English post-mortem probate inventories lack detail about ownership of textiles and clothing, and their survival is poor after the first two decades of the century. So how can we gauge demand for the four semi-luxury «fashion fabrics» during the mid-century decades that were decisive for the invention of mechanical spinning? Fortunately, the four decades from the 1740s to the 1770s are the earliest for which the digitized records of theft cases tried at the Old Bailey, the principal criminal court for London, are sufficiently comprehensive to identify trends in the ownership of stolen goods with some precision. Other available sources include customs returns of imports of raw cotton and linen yarn, excise taxation of printed fabrics, and the 5,000 textile swatches which survive in the collection of the London Foundling Hospital for the years from 1741 to 1760.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *Manchester Courier*, 18 April 1829.

<sup>11</sup> *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org>, version 8.0, March 2018).

Tab. 2. Production or ownership of selected cotton textiles, 1740s and 1770s

Type of textile	Source of evidence	1740s	1770s	Increase
<i>Fashion fabrics.</i>				
Printed fabrics	Excise (sq. yds)	2.1 m	6.3 m	x 3.0
*Muslins	Old Bailey (trials)	57	333	x 3.9
*Cotton stockings	Old Bailey (trials)	14	107	x 5.1
*Cotton velvets/velverets	Old Bailey (trials)	-	11	x 7.3
<i>Non-fashion textiles.</i>				
Candlewick (candles)	Excise (lbs)	33m	45m	x 1.4
*Checks	Old Bailey (trials)	55	166	x 2.0
*Fustians	Old Bailey (trials)	45	135	x 2.0
<i>Materials.</i>				
Raw cotton, annual imports	Customs (lbs)	2.2 m	4.8 m	x 2.2
Linen yarn, annual imports	Customs (lbs)	3.1 m	8.3 m	x 2.7

Sources:

Excise: The National Archives, CUST 145/20: Excise duties, receipts, payments and rates, 1684-1798; Deane and Cole 1964, 72.

Customs: The National Archives, CUST 3/40-79: Ledgers of imports and exports, 1740-79.

Old Bailey: *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org>, version 8.0, March 2018).

Notes.

\* Old Bailey trials. Between the 1740s and the 1770s the total number of trials at the Old Bailey increased by half, from just under 4,000 to just over 6,000. The reasons for the rise in the number of cases is not clear, but it appears to run well ahead of the increase in the population of London over the same period. To take account of this, the figures for the increase in the number of trials involving each category of fabric have been deflated by a third.

Candlewick. Excise duties were levied on tallow candles, which incorporated candlewicks made mainly from cotton.

Fustians. This category includes textiles identified by the names fustian, thickset, jean, corduroy and dimity.

Table 2 uses these sources to compare the growth in domestic consumption (either nationally, or in London) of the four, semi-luxury «fashion fabrics» with consumption of other cotton textiles during the middle decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The cotton textiles included here represent the principal types on sale in the domestic market, corresponding to the categories employed by Patrick Colquhoun in his frequently cited analyses of the cotton industry in the 1780s.<sup>12</sup> It also includes

<sup>12</sup> Baker Library Special Collections, Harvard Business School, Harvard University, Mss. 442 1771-1789 C722: Statistics on Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain, 1771-1789, by Patrick Colquhoun, f. 11: «The Application of the Raw Materials (as before stated) to the various Branches of the Manufacture is found to stand nearly as follows», 6 March 1788. Colquhoun drew up different versions of this analysis, but this one appears to be the earliest and the most detailed. Colquhoun's categories were: candlewick, packing, quilting, etc.; hosiery; silk mixtures/linen and check mixtures;



data for retained imports of raw cotton and linen yarn, to indicate the overall rate of growth for an industry in which almost all raw materials were imported. The figures in Table 2 are far from offering a precise measure of national changes in consumption of cotton textiles, but the differentials they reveal in rates of increase provide a broad indication of relative performance.<sup>13</sup>

Not only did consumption of the four «fashion fabrics» outperform their more mundane equivalents, but it also outperformed the growth of the cotton textile industry as a whole, as measured by imports of its materials. The «fashion fabrics» achieved these increases in consumption in the face of rising input prices for both materials and labour, which in their case could not be addressed by the kind of adjustments to yarn composition Lancashire manufacturers applied to checks and some other cotton-linens. It is not surprising, therefore, that the spinning inventions of the 1760s and 1770s were aimed at these «fashion fabrics».

Yet in what sense were the «fashion fabrics» fashionable? To understand their contribution to mechanization, we need locate them within the broader mid-18<sup>th</sup> century fashion system, by considering their material characteristics, the uses to which they were put and their prices relative to alternatives.

### 5.1 Cotton velvets

The largest rate of increase in ownership registered in Table 2 is for cotton velvets and velverets, but it is of limited significance because their numbers start in the 1740s at zero and remain tiny throughout. They are included here partly because Richard Arkwright specifically identified them as one of the cotton textiles he was experimenting with as he installed his early spinning frames, and partly because they were to become one of the runaway successes of the Lancashire industry in the 1780s and 1790s. Indeed, by the later 1770s they had become so successful in continental European markets that in Germany they were known simply as «Manchesters» and were «especially fashionable» (Bergius 1779, 77). Invented at Bolton in the 1740s as an all-cotton development of earlier fustians with a raised napped surface, such as thickset, they sold as a cheaper, harder-wearing substitute for silk velvet, which they resembled in their dense pile. They were widely used for men's breeches and waistcoats.

For men, as for women, costly silks remained the height of fashion for many garments. In 1758, silk velvet breeches were being advertised in London at prices ranging from 38 to 50 shillings. Equivalent cotton velvet breeches cost only 28 to 32 shillings. Two years later, best cotton velvet breeches were advertised at 42 shillings, woollen cloth breeches by the same maker at only 17 shillings.<sup>14</sup> Cotton velvet breeches were cheaper than silk, but more expensive than the non-silk alternative fabrics for breeches. They commanded a premium as a result of their close resemblance to fashionable silk. Most silk-like were the Manchester all-cotton

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fustians; calico; muslins. Cotton velvets and velverets fall in Colquhoun's fustian category, but are treated separately here for the reasons set out below.

<sup>13</sup> For the use of criminal records to study consumption of clothing, see Styles 2007, Appendix 1.

<sup>14</sup> *Public Advertiser*, 19 June 1758; *Public Advertiser*, 27 May 1760.

velvets woven with double cotton warps, but they spawned a range of cheaper iterations, including velveret, velveteen, vellure and velveroy. These appear to have been distinguished by the yarns employed, the relationship between warp and weft, and the pile technique. In the Old Bailey trials of the 1770s, it is velverets that appear more frequently. They cost less than cotton velvets, perhaps because they used a linen ground warp and were sometimes printed. They still required supplementary cotton threads for the pile, so there was a limit to how much cheap linen they could incorporate.

## 5.2 Cotton stockings

Cotton stockings were hardly mentioned at the Old Bailey criminal trials before 1730. Yet they were already an object of plebeian aspiration by 1750, when a thief and his accomplice were bantering over the counter with the proprietor of a haberdashery shop in Soho, London. One, pretending to be the other's master, offered to buy him a ribbon. Seeing a white pair of cotton stockings lying on the counter, the other replied «I had rather you'd buy me such a pair of stockings as they are».<sup>15</sup> Unlike thread (linen) or worsted stockings, knitted cotton could reproduce the pure white of fashionable silk stockings, but at a small fraction of the cost (Table 3). Unlike silk, cotton was easy to wash.

Tab. 3. Average valuations by fibre for pairs of stockings pawned to George Fettes, pawnbroker, York, 1777-8 and in theft indictments at the Old Bailey, London, 1785 (pence)

Stocking material	Fettes 1777-8 (n = 38)	Old Bailey 1785 (n = 71)
Silk	49.5	31.5
Cotton	12.0	16.5
Worsted	9.0	12.5
Thread (linen)	9.0	9.5

Note: Indictment valuations appear to have been based on second-hand values.

Sources: York City Archives, Accession 38: Pledge book of George Fettes, pawnbroker, York, 1777-8; *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org>, version 8.0, March 2018).

Rapid growth in the consumption of fine, frame-knitted cotton stockings had to wait for the invention of the Derby rib attachment for the stocking frame at the end of the 1750s by Jedediah Strutt, who was to be one of the principal backers of Richard Arkwright's spinning frame at Nottingham (non-ribbed knitted cotton stockings lacked elasticity and sagged). Thereafter consumption exploded. By the 1780s cotton stockings accounted for approaching 40% of all stockings stolen in

<sup>15</sup> *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org>, version 8.0, March 2018), Oct. 1750, George Anderson (t17501017-19).

London, grabbing market share from stockings made both from worsted and from thread (linen), despite costing more.

The fivefold increase between the 1740s and the 1770s in the number of Old Bailey trials mentioning cotton stockings was larger than the increase in any other of the «fashion fabrics» in Table 2, apart from the tiny number of cotton velvets/velverets. The economic implications of this increase were magnified because cotton stockings used a disproportionate amount of raw cotton compared to most Lancashire cotton-linen piece goods. They were made entirely of cotton and their tightly twisted and doubled thread required relatively more raw cotton than the single yarns generally used in weaving piece goods. Hargreaves' and Arkwright's migration from Lancashire to Nottingham at an early stage in their development of their machines has often been ascribed to push factors – particularly hostility from Lancashire hand spinners and weavers in the late 1760s – but a more important consideration may have been the powerful pull of rapidly growing demand for smooth, consistent yarn from the Nottingham hosiers (Aspin and Chapman 1964, 16-9).

### 5.3 Muslins

Unlike cotton velvets and cotton stockings, muslins were a well-established commodity on the British market by the middle decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The word «muslin» embraced a range of expensive, fine-spun all-cotton textiles, mainly plain, but also embroidered or loom-patterned. They originated in India and began to be imported in large quantities by the East India Company in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, particularly from Bengal. The vast majority of the East India Company's muslin orders during the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century were for lower-quality Bengal cossaes and mulmuls, not the extraordinarily fine muslins woven near Dacca for the Mughal court at Delhi and for local rulers in Bengal, which so astonished Europeans.<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, even the coarser Indian muslins widely sold in Britain were woven from yarns of a fineness which proved impossible for British hand cotton spinners to match at a commercially viable price. In the 1740s, any cotton yarn spun in Britain to counts above Ne 24 was considered fine, and above Ne 40 was exceptional. Yet in the early 1780s, it was to require machine-spun yarn of counts between Ne 50 and Ne 70 for Lancashire manufacturers to compete successfully with Indian coarse muslins in the domestic market (Baines 1835, 129-32; Unwin 1924, 43). From the late 17<sup>th</sup> century until Crompton's invention of the mule, repeated attempts were made to produce British versions of Indian muslins, but none achieved sustained success (Woodcroft 1854, 54; Hunter 1976, 2-3; Wadsworth and Mann 1965, 121-4; Britton 1807, 294-5).

Indian muslin was always an expensive, premium fabric in Britain. It was loaded with import duties at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, amounting to over a third of its value, although white muslins were not prohibited under the calico act of

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<sup>16</sup> Warwick University Global History and Culture Centre, Europe's Asian Centuries: Trading Eurasia 1600-1830: databases (<https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/ghcc/eac/databases/textiles/>).

1721 (7 Geo. I, c. 7), which banned colour-patterned all-cotton textiles (Sickinger 2000, 228). Moreover, like other Indian cottons, muslin prices at source rose markedly during the middle decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Despite a premium price, muslin accessories were widely owned. Ninety percent of the muslin items pawned with the York pawnbroker George Fettes in 1777-8 were aprons, securing an average loan of 16d., almost twice as much as loans on workaday blue-and-white check aprons.<sup>17</sup>

During the later 17<sup>th</sup> century, muslin, along with a number of other expensive, fine white fabrics, such as lawn, cambric, lace and silk gauze, was fashionable for women's and especially men's neckwear – cravats and neck handkerchiefs. Muslin continued to be worn in that way during the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but the Old Bailey trials indicate no marked rise in thefts until the 1750s, followed by a dramatic acceleration in the 1770s. The muslins stolen between the 1750s and 1770s were not, however, the white muslin gowns that were to dominate women's fashion in the later 1780s and especially the 1790s (Rauser 2020). The increase in thefts of muslins was driven by neck handkerchiefs and especially women's aprons, reflecting a new fashion for decorative accessorizing with clean, white muslin, often patterned with white embroidery and trimmed with white lace. It was part of a broader trend towards simpler, plainer ways of dressing, drawing on literary idealisations of a clean, healthy, rural life (Styles 2007, chapter 11; Spencer 2018). For the elite, a white muslin apron became an indispensable part of fashionable undress, preferably decorated with another ultra-fashionable recent import from India – tambour embroidery – for which muslin offered an excellent ground, often being fairly loosely woven. Indian muslin outpaced the other luxury fabrics previously used for aprons and neckwear – cambric, lawn and, to some degree, silk. The popular loom-patterned white cotton Marseilles quiltings, widely worn as petticoats, on which Samuel Crompton worked at Bolton, appealed to the same fashionable aesthetic.

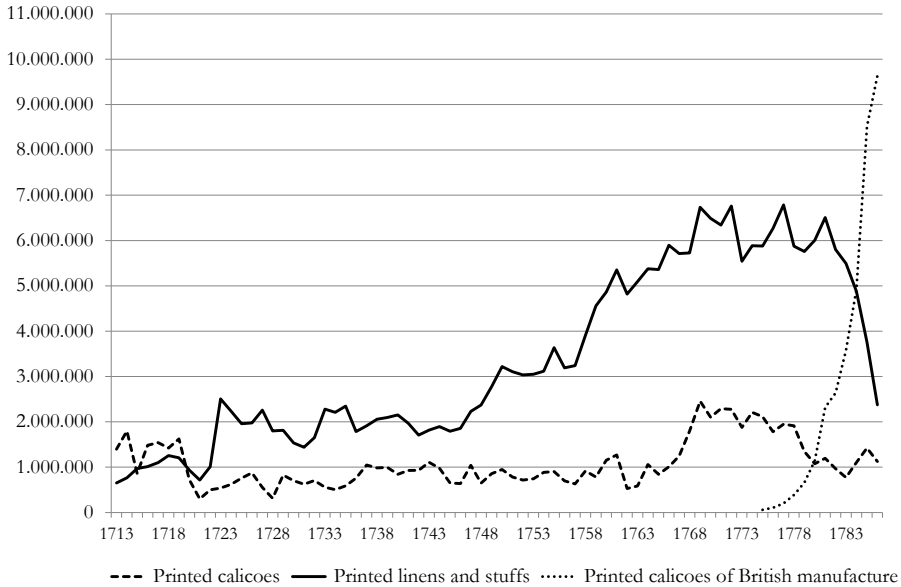
#### 5.4 Printed fabrics

Printed fabrics were subject to excise taxation, so we have reasonably comprehensive data on output (Graph 1). Unfortunately, the excise data distinguishes only between printed all-cotton calicoes, largely Indian and prohibited in the domestic market from 1722 to 1774, and printed linens and stuffs, a category which embraced both cotton-linen union fabrics and all-linen fabrics. The excise data reveals a big leap in printing on these alternatives to calico in the immediate aftermath of the introduction of the prohibition legislation in 1722, followed by two decades of stagnation. Further expansion began in the 1740s, peaking at the end of the 1760s, but then collapsing in the 1780s in the face of competition from the new, machine-spun British printed calico.

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<sup>17</sup> York City Archives, Accession 38: Pledge book of George Fettes, pawnbroker, York, 1777-8.

Graph 1. Quantities of printed calicoes, linens and stuffs charged with excise duty, 1713-1786 (square yards)



Source: The National Archives, CUST 145/20: Excise duties, receipts, payments and rates, 1684-1798.

Non-calico printing was undertaken both on cotton-linen «Blackburn greys» from Lancashire, and on all-linen fabrics imported from Germany and Ireland. The excise data do not reveal the relative shares of cotton-linen fabrics and all-linen fabrics. If we examine figures for retained raw cotton imports, we find that from the mid-1750s to the mid-1770s the rise in output of printed non-calico fabrics consistently outpaced increases in the available supplies of raw cotton and, therefore, cotton yarn. Raw cotton prices doubled in the course of the 1740s, and were subsequently extremely volatile, with very high peaks. Wages for spinning raw cotton increased. The price of imported linen yarn rose too, especially in the 1740s and the later 1750s, following the same trajectory as raw cotton, but less dramatically (Styles 2020, Fig. 8). Nevertheless, linen yarn continued to be substantially cheaper than raw cotton. Yet, unlike the check makers, the manufacturers of Blackburn greys did not have the luxury of reducing the proportion of expensive cotton in each piece of cloth. A 50:50 cotton yarn to linen yarn ratio, with a thick, fluffy cotton weft to display the dye and a finer, stronger and less visible linen warp, was essential for producing an acceptable finish.

Old Bailey trials for printed fabrics suggest that what happened as a consequence was that sales of cheaper printed linens outpaced those of printed cotton-linens. Women's gowns were one of the main outlets for printed fabrics. Between the 1740s and the 1770s, the number of trials involving linen gowns

increased almost two and a half times faster (though from a lower base) than trials involving cotton-linen gowns. Linen gowns cost less than cotton-linen gowns (Table 4) and, although their weight, drape and aesthetic effect were different, and in some respects inferior, technical innovations like the indigo cold vat process and printing with large copper plates made prints on linen increasingly desirable at this period. So what we are probably observing in the excise data from the 1750s and 1760s is an increase in consumption of printed gowns made both from cotton-linen and linen that, nevertheless, conceals a shift away from cotton-linens towards linens.

Tab. 4. Values of Gowns by Material, 1750-1778 (pence)

	Average indictment value of gowns stolen in London, 1750-59 (n=227)	Average value of gowns pawned at York, 1777-78 (n=896)
Silk	239	71
Cotton	78	54
Linen	64	47
Worsted	54	34

Note: Indictment valuations appear to have been based on second-hand values.

Source: *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org>, version 8.0, March 2018); York City Archives, Accession 38: Pledge book of George Fettes, pawnbroker, York, 1777-8. Sample consists of all gowns identified by material and valued individually.

Faced with rising input costs and unable to manipulate the 50:50 linen warp:cotton weft ratio of their fabrics, manufacturers of Blackburn greys responded by reorganizing their putting-out systems, in particular by devolving the costs of organising spinning of the cotton weft yarn to their weavers. James Hargreaves was such a weaver and his invention responded to the new circumstances. His original eight-spindle spinning jenny (c.1766) increased the productivity of the individual spinner, making it possible to concentrate spinning of cotton weft for a Blackburn grey within the weavers' household. At the same time, the jenny addressed the industry's input-cost challenge by producing weft that was cheaper and more consistent (Styles 2020).

The challenges faced by prints on cotton-linens in the 1750s and 1760s were not, however, confined to the domestic market. In the British colonies in the Americas, decorated, all-cotton Indian calicoes were not subjected to the prohibitions and tariffs imposed in Great Britain in the early decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Eacott 2012). All types of Indian textiles could be imported and used in the American colonies, as long as they were shipped from India via Great Britain. As a consequence, American consumers sustained a firm preference for prints on Indian all-cotton calico across the decades after 1722, when their British counterparts were first required to make do with prints on linen-cotton Blackburn greys or on all-linen fabrics. In 1722, the population of British North America was under half a million, less than a tenth of that of England. Fifty years later, on the

eve of the American revolution in 1776, the population of the future United States was two and a half million, over a third of that of England. What must have seemed a small, distant, unfamiliar and insignificant market in the 1720s had, by the 1760s, become huge, prosperous and indispensable, its importance enhanced by a boom in exports of all kinds of textiles to the mainland colonies during the later years of the Seven Years War.

Tab. 5. **Imports of Printed Fabrics to British North America, 1769-71**

	<b>Square yards</b>	
British printed cotton	151,090	10%
Foreign printed calicoes	573,590	38%
British printed linen	306,363	20%
Foreign printed linen	483,924	32%
Total	1,524,817	100%

Source: The National Archives, CUST 16/1: Imports and Exports America, 1768-73.

During the three years 1769 to 1771, which provide the most detailed official information about imports to British North America available for the colonial period, prints on Indian all-cotton fabric (foreign printed calicoes) outsold British cotton-linen prints (British printed cotton) in North America by almost four to one (Table 5). The printed designs were often identical, because in both cases the textile printing was mostly done at printworks in the vicinity of London, not in India, nor in Lancashire. Yet the poor take-up of dyes on the linen yarns in a Lancashire cotton-linen resulted in an inferior overall effect. Their 50:50 cotton:linen yarn ratio may have served to maximize the surface area consisting of dye-friendly, thick, loose-spun, cotton weft yarns and minimize the area of finer, denser, tight-spun linen warp yarns, but the print quality remained inferior to an all-cotton Indian calico (Styles 2020, Fig. 10).

Most calicoes sold and worn in North America during the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were printed in Britain. Their Indian-made component was confined to the intermediate good – the plain calico fabric for printing which European labour costs made prohibitively expensive to manufacture locally. The decoration of the finished product, the key element in rendering it visually distinctive, was designed and printed in Europe, even if the colour-fast printing technique derived originally from India. Depending on the number of colours employed and the difficulty of the design, the cost of printing could account for anything between a quarter and three-quarters of the final London wholesale price of a printed calico exported to the British American colonies.<sup>18</sup>

Many of the printed designs were monochrome and simple, lacking any obvious Asian connection, but the link to India was especially tenuous if, as was remarked in 1756, «patterns for the calico-printers ... are for the generality in

<sup>18</sup> Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Jones Family Papers, vol. 8: Jones and Wister Invoice Book 1759-62, William Neale, London, 20 Feb. 1761.

imitation after the fashions of the flowered silk-manufactory» (Smith 1756, 47). The market for printed textiles, whether the cotton-linen prints sold in Britain, or the calico prints sold in America, was to a considerable extent a fashion market for women's gowns (Hawes 1959, 63-4). It rested on the unique capacity of printed fabrics to reproduce and adapt the motifs and colours (albeit not the sheen) of high-fashion woven silks as they changed annually, but at a much cheaper price. Printed textiles could adapt silk designs quickly and in materials that (unlike silk) could be washed without a significant loss of colour.

Correspondence between American and British merchants about the trade in printed calicoes is full of comments on the need for prints to be fashionable. Take one example out of many. In 1772 the order from the Philadelphia merchants, Miles and Wister, to John Yerbury in London included a request for purple-ground calicoes, adding, «these we leave to your fancy to send such as are the newest and most fashionable figures».<sup>19</sup> Although printed gowns were more expensive than everyday worsted stuff gowns, their moderate price made them a popular semi-luxury which democratized designs on silk fabrics accessible only to the elite.

By the 1750s, North America had become the largest single market for Indian calicoes printed in Britain. Yet at the same time, the supply problems of that decade in India meant the East India Company faced increasing difficulty supplying the plain white calicoes used for printing. Prices kept rising, orders remained unfulfilled, but Americans continued to insist on printed calico. It was, therefore, America, more than any other market, that signalled the potential profits the Lancashire cotton industry was foregoing due to its inability to produce cotton warps economically enough to manufacture all-cotton calicoes for printing. Lancastrians must have been well aware that their prints on cotton-linen «Blackburn greys» were very much second-best in America. Lacking the capacity to spin cotton warps, Lancashire producers of cotton-linen fabrics for printing were at a marked disadvantage in the American market.

Richard Arkwright was the Lancastrian who successfully responded to this opportunity, just as he responded to the opportunity provided by the expanding domestic market for cotton stockings. Whether Arkwright began work on his spinning frame in 1767 with the objective of producing the high-twist cotton yarn necessary for calico warps is unclear. His use of a spindle and flyer mechanism, which tends to put a high twist into yarn and was used for hand spinning of flax, suggests he did. He was certainly quick to set his new yarn to work making calicoes. As we have seen, within a few months of his first, horse-powered Nottingham spinning mill going into production in late 1772, he was having the yarn it produced woven into calicoes for printing (Fitton 1989, 26-37).

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<sup>19</sup> Winterthur Library, Wistar family collection, Folder 5, Miles and Wister order book, 1771-1774: Miles and Wister, Philadelphia, to Mr John Yerbury, London, 15 May 1772.



## 6. Conclusion.

For the British cotton textile industry, the middle decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century were challenging. New opportunities and rapid expansion confronted unprecedented constraints. The decades from the 1740s to the 1770s saw growth in the domestic market for fustians, checks, cotton-linens for printing, muslins imported from India and, especially from the late 1750s, cotton stockings. Overseas, new opportunities arose as a result of a combination of contracting Indian supply and rising Indian prices, at a time when India remained the world's foremost exporter of cotton textiles. Nevertheless, British producers of cottons were afflicted by their own problems securing raw materials, which were largely imported. It was these challenges that gave rise to the three key mechanical spinning inventions of the early Industrial Revolution – Hargreaves' jenny, Arkwright's frame and Crompton's mule.

The exceptionally high cost of raw cotton at this period and the fact that it was spun locally in Britain provided a strong inducement for mechanical innovation in spinning. The promise of mechanization was both quantitative and qualitative. It offered the prospect of reducing the price of spinning in a fast-growing industry with mounting costs. It also offered the prospect of finer, more even, and therefore less wasteful yarns, and, ultimately, of stronger yarns for warps that would enable the British industry to compete directly with Indian all-cotton textiles. However, most of the British cotton industry's products were mixtures of cotton with linen. Where trade-offs were possible between the two fibres, inducements to cut costs by mechanical means were reduced.

The group of cotton textiles that fostered the emergence of the three key spinning inventions did not lend itself to such trade-offs. It consisted of premium products – «fashion fabrics» – for which the quality of yarn was crucial in one way or another, in addition to its price. These four «fashion fabrics» – printed fabrics made with cotton, cotton stockings, cotton velvets, and muslins – shared characteristics which, in combination, distinguished them from other, cheaper cotton textiles and shaped the character and timing of mechanization. They enjoyed rapidly increasing demand despite their premium prices. Between the 1740s and the 1770s, sales of the four «fashion fabrics» outpaced cheaper cotton textiles, such as fustians and checks, in the British domestic market, as well as in North America. They were fashionable semi-luxuries, substitutes for even more expensive high-fashion goods, especially silks, but at prices affordable enough to command a large, socially-extensive market. Prior to mechanization, they already required expensive, consistent, high-quality cotton yarns, spun by hand to what were fine counts by mid-18<sup>th</sup> century British standards.

If quality was crucial for the relationship between markets, materiality and machines, what are the implications for the historiographical debates outlined at the beginning of this article? Three stand out.

First, the role of India. Did India set the terms, as Maxine Berg insists? There is little doubt that Indian calicoes, muslins and other cotton textiles provided a quality standard against which the manufacture of equivalent cotton textile products in Britain was judged (although not necessarily their surface pattern design). That was

not the case for successful British product innovations with roots in the long history of European fustian manufacture (cotton velvets and velverets), or in European clothing practices (frame-knitted, ribbed cotton stockings). There, India did not set the terms. Instead, what we observe is substitution of a cheaper fibre for expensive silk, in a form of product innovation characteristic of Early Modern European textile manufacturing.<sup>20</sup>

Second, mechanisation and trade. Was the objective import substitution or export substitution? A desire to make British-made cotton textiles capable of competing with the high quality of Indian calicoes and muslins was an important incentive for mechanization. The intended outcome was, however, not only import substitution in the British domestic market. It was also export-orientated, aimed at substituting British for Indian products in overseas markets for premium textiles, especially in North America, but ultimately also in continental Europe, where the English East India Company re-exported vast quantities of Indian cottons, plain and printed.

Third, mechanisation and luxury. The «fashion fabrics» were semi-luxuries, less expensive than fashionable silks, but more expensive than equivalent products made from other fibres.<sup>21</sup> Historians such as Neil McKendrick have presented the spinning inventions of the 1760s and 1770s as a first step on the road to 20<sup>th</sup>-century mass production (McKendrick 1982b, 66). From the perspective of the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, however, they are better viewed as a successful application of mechanical solutions to quality and supply challenges familiar in Early Modern semi-luxury textile manufacturing. Substitutions between fibres, mixes of materials and searches for mechanical solutions were all too common among Early Modern semi-luxury textiles, part of an endless quest for cheaper copies, adaptations and developments of fashionable fabrics. The process of product innovation and diversification in cotton textiles in Lancashire during the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century was not so very different from the equivalent process in Norwich worsted stuffs a century and a half earlier (Ogden 1783, 76).

Previous phases of European product innovation in luxury and semi-luxury textiles had resulted in numerous mechanical inventions, some of them water-powered. The mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Lancashire spinning inventions drew on an established European history of inventing or adapting capital-intensive, mechanical techniques for manufacturing premium textiles (Styles 2016a). There were, however, three aspects of the British spinning inventions that were novel. First, the concentration of so much successful inventive effort, applied to a single industrial process, into less than fifteen years (1766 to 1779). The speed with which this burst of inventive effort generated mechanical techniques that could be applied profitably to the commercial manufacture of almost every type of cotton yarn was remarkable. Second, the pace, scale and impact of subsequent incremental improvements in

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<sup>20</sup> In 1683, the English East India Company proposed developing an import trade to England in cotton knit stockings from India, but quickly cancelled the initiative because it would compete with English stocking makers (Madras Record Office 1916, 49, 140).

<sup>21</sup> They share some similarities with the products Cissie Fairchild has termed, in a French context, «populuxe» goods (Fairchild 1993).

mechanical cotton spinning and associated mechanical technologies, which dramatically increased productivity (Maw, Solar, Kane and Lyons 2021). Moreover, within another fifteen years the new cotton spinning machines had been adapted to spin flax, long-staple wool, short-staple wool, and waste silk (Rimmer 1960, 13-24; Aspin with Chapman 1964, 56-8; Jenkins and Ponting 1982, 29; Nelson 1982). Third, the capacity of agriculture in the West Indies, Brazil and ultimately the United States to ramp up supplies of the kind of raw cotton best suited for mechanical spinning. Tragically, and in contrast to cotton cultivation in other parts of the world, this expansion in raw cotton output was to depend largely on the plantation system and enslaved African labour.

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Germán Navarro Espinach, Joaquín Aparici Martí

*The colour of Valencian silk fabrics in the European market (1475-1513)*

## 1. Innovation in silk dyeing and technical manuals

The silk dyers of Valencia (*tintorers de seda*) pitted a litigation during 1507-1513 against the silk velvet weavers (*velluters*) in a dispute over technical expertise. It contains very interesting declarations in its final part regarding how they dyed silks in fifteenth-century.<sup>1</sup> For example, the veil weaver Pere Falcó had known sixty or seventy years before, around 1437-1447, many silk dyers who worked in the zone of the old Jewish souk of the city of Valencia. They were no velvet weavers because at that time there were no artisans with that professional name in the city. Nevertheless, in his declaration he averred that, when Genoese *velluters* arrived in Valencia, they began to dye silks on their own, without the existence of a corporation of silk dyers in the city. Another veil weaver, whose name was Lluís Almenara, declared the same day as Falcó as a witness in the proceedings. In his case, he went back forty years to around 1467, to remember the silk dyers that worked then in Valencia such as Solanes, who was the father of Andreu Solanes, the Morells – father and son, Na Redona, Mas or Celma and sons. Additionally, the veil maker Francesc Serra gave testimony of the proceedings on 12 January 1508 and added the names of other silk workers who were also in the zone of the old Jewish souk such as the Boils or Martí Sentpol. In fact, silk dyeing was an activity monopolized by the Judeo-converting silk families in the Crown of Aragon (Navarro 2020a).

Matteo Grasso, a Genoese velvet weaver and resident in Valencia, testified as a witness on 16 April of the same year 1507. He explained that twenty-five years before, in 1482, there were many silk dyers in several zones of the city such as Morell, Solanes or the Miró brothers. He knew this because he was a velvet weaver and he gave them the silk skeins to dye that he needed to make his fabrics. Another Genoese velvet weaver named Cristoforo Machalufo remembered that thirty-five years before, in 1472, he also gave silks to the mentioned dyers, acknowledging that other velvet weavers were able to dye them themselves. On 12 January 1508, the silk dyer Bernat Clariana said that he was born in 1440 in a house of the old Jewish souk where his father Jaume Clariana worked, as well as other silk dyers like Gabriel and Galceran Morell or Andreu Solanes. He confessed that they dyed silks for velvet weavers when they began to arrive from Genoa. Years later, Bernat Clariana testi-

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<sup>1</sup> Archivo del Colegio del Arte Mayor de la Seda de Valencia (ACAMSV), *Lg. 3.3.1., Procesos, 4*, 250 folios (Aleixandre 1987, doc. 647; Navarro 1999, 88-90).



fied again in these same proceedings on 14 January 1513. He affirmed that there was no velvet weaver in Valencia that knew how to dye silk in colours, because they only dyed it black. In addition, they had all learned how to obtain the colour black, from some servants of silk dyers that they had put to work in their houses. In fact, he said that there was no velvet weaver with examination by the guild of silk dyers.

Possibly, the predominance of the colour black in Valencian silks was due to Genoese influence, as 60 percent of the damasks and velvets commissioned by the silk merchants to the weavers in Genoa at the same years were black, which also was the case with regard to the percentages of pieces of silk sold in that city. Black thus became a fashionable colour representing virtue, austerity, morality but also social rank (Ghiara 1976, 1991). In fact, black velvet or *velluto nero* was the most important type of silk fabric in the Genoese industry during the fifteenth century (Massa 1981, 69). This fashion trend for black had to do with the success that the colour had attained in general at the end of the Middle Ages. So much so, that the black cloth suit inspired by the Spaniards became fashionable among the high classes of Europe, taking as a model the portraits of the Emperor Carlos V and his son Felipe II, dressed rigorously in black.

Some velvet weavers in fifteenth-century Valencia were artisans of the *officium de texir domasos e velluts e de tenyir la seda* in notarial documents. Valencian silk making, full of Genoese immigrants, must have also been influenced by the new ordinances of the *Arte dei Tintori di Seta* of Genoa of 1496. In fact, the Valencian silk dyers requested the establishment of their own corporation the following year in 1497. The two municipal council members who represented this new corporation together with the rest of the guilds of the city are included from 1507, the year in which they lodged a lawsuit against the velvet weavers to delimit their respective technical expertise. Both the analysis of the corporate statutes of dyeing of silks in Valencia and the quantitative study of the preserved fiscal sources taxing the export of silk in the city allow the reconstruction of product and process innovations in fashionable colours during the industrial silk expansion in the Late Middle Ages (Navarro 1999, 87-8).

There were similar judicial proceedings in subsequent centuries to fight for the monopoly of the profession, such as the one brought by the velvet weavers' guild from 1685-1689 in defence of the right they possessed from time immemorial to have in their workshops dye and every instrument necessary for dyeing silks.<sup>2</sup> In the year 1689, there was another complaint lodged by the master dyers José Valero, Francisco Pérez and Máximo Barbarroja against the Guild of the Art of Silk (*Colegio del Arte de la Seda*) intended to prohibit the velvet weavers from silk dyeing and possession of dyeing instruments. The Royal Court (*Real Audiencia*) closed the case because the velvet weavers continued arguing for the right they had to twist and dye silks for their own workshops.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, on 4 July 1771, the General Board of Commerce (*Junta General de Comercio*) proclaimed an order prohibiting silk manufacturers from dyeing in detriment to the dyers. In this order was attached a copy of the proceedings followed in 1689 between dyers and velvet weavers in which the

<sup>2</sup> ACAMSV, L.g. 3.3.1., *Procesos*, 122 (Aleixandre 1987, doc. 765).

<sup>3</sup> ACAMSV, L.g. 3.3.1., *Procesos*, 125 (Aleixandre 1987, doc. 768).

exclusive right was established of the former to dye silks.<sup>4</sup> Between 24 January 1773 and 29 January of the following year 1774, the Royal Board of Commerce (*Real Junta de Comercio*) made successive orders prohibiting the dyeing of the colours called Prussian blue and Prussian green considered to be false, giving dyers a period of two months to consume the vitriol they had in their houses.<sup>5</sup>

What do we know about the colours of the fabrics in the technical manuals since the Middle Ages? For example, the document known as the *Innsbruck Manuscript*, copied around 1330 in the Stams Monastery in the Tyrol, contains some of the oldest recipes regarding the dyeing of textile fibres. They refer to dyeing in ochre with clay, in blue with dyer's woad, in black with gall and in red with brazilwood. With detailed instructions, it explains how to obtain up to four types of red dye, two greens, two yellows, one blue and one black. For the reds, mineral materials were used, like cinnabar and minium, mixed with vegetable extracts. Specifically, the black and dark colours were obtained from fabrics already dyed red to which iron oxide or gallnut was applied (Brunello 1968, 156-7).

The anonymous manuscript known as *Trattato dell'arte della seta* (1489), preserved in the Laurentian Library of Florence, contains up to thirty-two of its seventy-nine chapters devoted to the dyeing of silks. Greater attention is devoted to red, pink and violet tones than to the dark or black ones. The 32nd chapter titled *Del tigner nero* states:

A tignere negro, bolli la galla, e metti su la seta come lieva su il bollore, e dâlle quattro o sei volte sossopra, e così la lascia stare tutta la notte: e poi, tratta di galla, metti fuoco al nero tanto che bolla; e com'e' bolle, metti la seta dentro e dâlle quattro o sei volte, e tra'la fuori e freddala. Di poi la rimetti dentro e dagliene altrettante sempre freddando, e così fà insino la freddi sei volte. E così fatto, mésta la caldaia, e caccia sotto dette lavorio e lascialo istare sotto ore dua. Di poi lo cava e fà bollire la caldaia, e dàgli altrettante volte e mettilo sotto insino all'altra mattina, e questo s'intende a'peli: e gli orsoi si mettono poi di rieto nelle medesime volte, e così le trame, senza avere bollire; imperò, se bollisino in detto nero, gli orsoi hanno a durare gran fatica, e non reggerebbero poi al tessero. Non interviene così de' peli, però non durano fatica alcuna. E se'l tuo colore venisse per caso che fusse cieco, può venire che la caldaia avendo troppo in corpo nel bollire, detta materia vien su e acciecalo, e simile fa detto colore trarre al morone, cioè al nieraccio pieno e cieco. Questi mancamenti anche possono venire che se detta caldaia avesse poco in corpo, e'l tintore dà tanto fuoco alla caldaia ch'ella tigne per forza di quel fuoco alla caldaia ch'ella tigne per forza di quel fuoco, ma non di bontà; e anche può venire detto ciecho che, trato il nero di caldaia, e lavato bene, s'usa d'insaponarlo col sapone da panni, cioè istrutto il sapone in una caldaia d'acqua calda, e datogli'su in parucegli venti o venticinque volte: e non facendo questo tanto che fusse a bastanza, rimane cieco o aspro, e toccandolo con la mano, lo conoscerai tanto sia aspro; e quando è bene saponato, diven-

<sup>4</sup> ACAMSV, Lg. 3.5.1., *Fábricas*, 14-1 (Aleixandre 1987, doc. 1063).

<sup>5</sup> ACAMSV, Lg. 3.5.1., *Fábricas*, 14-4 (Aleixandre 1987, doc. 1066).

ta lucente e bello e morbido. E se tu trovassi in detta seta molte trafusole appastringiate e appicate insieme, questo viene che'l tintore ha messo di nuovo in sulla caldaia gommerabica, e inanzi l'abbia lasciata istrugere ha messo su detta seta. E detta goma va attorno per la caldaia appicandosi in sulla seta, e dov'ella s'appica, infracida e non se ne spicca se non col pezzo. E se tu vedessi che detto colore traesse a un certo rossonaccio e mal nero, questo nasce che'l tintore l'ha cavato troppo tosto fuori, e questo ha fatto per masserizia, ricordandoti che se detto colore s'asciuga, e tu lo voglia rimettere, mai sarà buono, e questo è per mezzo della gomma che mai lo lascia immollare, e dove e' non s'immolla, in quel luogo viene tutto macchiato. Pertanto è meglio lasciarlo istare di primo tratto, imperò che rimettendolo in sulla caldaia te lo farà bene un poco più pieno, ma sempre sarà cieco e morto e peggio che prima. E questo basti intorno al tignere il nero.

A racconciare detto colore nero che avesse il cieco, o il morone, o il morto, piglia detta seta e lavala di gran vantaggio nell'acqua chiara e fresca. Dipoi abbi adattato una caldaietta d'acqua calda, cioè tiepida, e disfavi dentro tre o quattro once di gromma di vino vermiglio, o di bianco, e lasciala molto bene istruggere, e istrutta ch'è, metti su detta seta in parucegli, e dàlle sei o otto volte, e tra'ne un saggio. E se non è venuto a tuo colore, rimetti su un poco di detta gromma, e fà un poco più calda l'acqua, e metti su detta seta. E così fà tante volte in modo che l'acqua venga quasi bollita. Questa gromma te lo farà lucente e bello quanto una spada: ma abbi avvertenza a mollarlo di primo tratto bene, e così dàgli la gromma tiepida, e di mano in mano vienla sempre un poco più iscaldando, acciò che con dolcezza tu smuova detto cieco, imperò che, volendolo fare a un tratto, tegliene bisognerebbe dare bollita, e morderestilo più in uno luogo che in un altro, e anche ti rimarrebbe iscarico di nero e carico di galla. E se vuoi conoscere detto colore grommato, toccalo con mano, chè canterà como uno inzolfato. E questo basti (Gargioli 1868, 59-61).

The fifteenth-century treaty titled *Segreti per colori*, preserved in the San Salvatore of Bologna Library includes fifteen recipes exclusively devoted to the dyeing of silk. Most of them are devoted to dyeing with brazilwood in reddish tones, at times with addition of madder and bleach made with ashes of vine shoots, all boiled in water with four ounces of soap per pound of silk. The lichen called *urchilla* was used for violet colours and gall for the blacks. In contrast, the dyeing manuscript, also of the fifteenth century, preserved in Como Municipal Library contains more than two-thirds of its chapters devoted to dyeing in red in diverse tones and with various products. The colourant most used is brazilwood, alone or mixed with madder, after which comes *grana* mixed likewise with madder. To a lesser extent, it reproduces recipes in ten chapters about dyeing in black, five devoted to green, two to grey and one to yellow with saffron, for example. To compare with the instructions reproduced before from the *Trattato dell'arte della seta*, the manuscript of Como states the following about the dyeing of silks in black:

Prima a far el pé del negro voiando far libre 5 de seda. Toi libra una de gala per libra de lavor, onze 6 de viriol, onze 6 de goma, libra una de limadura; questa si è la roba del pé del negro. Toi tutte queste cosse et mettile insieme in una calderuola et lasale boir uno quarto de hora et non piui et posa tirale fuora et mettile in una tinela et lasale posar fina al terzo dì. A ingalar ditti lavori toi libra I 1/2 de gala per libra de lavor et onze 2 de goma rabica per libra de lavor et parechia una caldiera et metti dentro sechi 4 de bagno et metti dentro questa gala et fali bon fuoco et fai che la lieva el boio et come l'ha levado el boio tira fora el fuoco et abi inbrulado li toi lavori et mettili denttro et menali denttro per spazio de uno quarto de hora et poi tirali fuora et sorali et quando i è fora dali volta in le brule et retornali denttro la caldiera et lasali star fin l'altra mattina, posa la matina tirali fora et strucali et mettili a sugare et vuoda quela ingalatura in una tinela e toi el bagno chiaro del pé del negro et mettilo in la ditta caldiera et zonzi denttro onze 6 de goma per libra de valor, libra una de limadura, onze 6 de viriol et fai fuoco sotto la ditta caldiera et fai che la lieva el boio et come l'ha levado el boio cava fora el fuoco de sotto la caldiera et abi el tuo lavor inburlado et mettilo a sorar et dali volta et remettilo denttro et menalo uno quarto d'ora et cavalo fuora et mettile a sorar in tera et fai fuoco sotto la caldiera et fai levar el boio et cava fora el fuoco et metti in questa caldiera li ditti lavori et metili sopra uno gran cargo si che stia ben sotto et lasali star da la sera a la matina et quando è la matina tira fuora et lasale gozar moltto ben e torzile et mettile a sugar et posa la sera fai foco sotto la caldiera et fala levar el boio et cava fora el fogo et metti denttro li ditti lavori et lasali star per fina a la matina come dexedestua et posa la terza fiada come l'è sutta abi una tinela de aqua fresca et metti denttro libra una de mesura d'axedo over de vin marzo et lavalì li ditti lavori et posa fali lavar al canal moltto ben et possa indulzisili et insavonali. Avixotti che le savonade che se cuoxe i ditti lavori sie bona de insavonar. Fali lavar al canal et mettili a sugar. Avixotti che la crescerà onze 6 per libra et sarà bon et avantazado color (Rebora 1970, 64-5).

The manual of Gioanventura Rosetti titled *Plichto de l'arte de'tentori che insegna tenger panni* (1540) comprises four parts, the third of which describes the procedures for dyeing silk. In general, a third of this manual is devoted, in the same way as in the previous manuscripts, to the colour red in its diverse tones and secondly, to black, because both were the most requested by the society of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, it registers up to twenty-one recipes for obtaining the colour black with the use of iron salts and tannins derived from gall and from sumac or, to a lesser extent, using green vitriol or copperas. Another anonymous manuscript printed in Brussels in 1513 also emphasizes the colours black, grey, red, yellow, green, blue, purple and violet obtained from the most used colourants of the era such as madder, brazilwood, dyer's weed, sumac, gall, *grana* and dyer's woad (Brunelo 1868, 186-95).

The first known treatise on dyeing for the medieval and modern era in the Iberian Peninsula, called *Manual de Joanot Valero* (1497), also gives protagonism to the dyeing of red cloths or to the range of reds, rose pinks, purples, pinks or scarlets with almost fifty recipes of the sixty-six it contains. It devotes ten more to dyeing in

black and only six to green. It does not devote any recipe to the dyeing of silks or canvasses, only to wool fabrics, but the trend in colours in fashion seems to be the same (Cifuentes, Córdoba 2011).

Two and a half centuries later, the ordinances of the Silk Dyers Guild of Valencia of 1764 (Navarro 2018, 70-107) contain considerable information of interest regarding the colours of the silks that were dyed in the 18th century from four main dyes, which were the blues, carnations or reds, the yellows and the blacks (chap. 37). Then the main colour was blue, which was obtained from dyer's woad mixed with common madder, bran, ash and indigo, from which were derived greens, mauves, purple, amaranth and oleander (chap. 41). The dyers' ordinances in Spain of the 18th century were especially specific in the knowledge of those four main colours or dyes of blue, red, yellow and black (Molas 1994, 57-58). The ordinances of the Silk Dyers Guild of Valencia of 1764 underlined how to make and apply black, because it was precise for shadowing and darkening innumerable colours. Black must be done with a portion of sumac, gall and vitriol in the event that there was no other or it was not desired to use that which was assigned for black silk. For this purpose, a specific boiler was prepared and in another boiler or in a pot, a stick of sumac, gall, iron filings, vitriol, gum and vinegar should be mixed. The portions vary depending on the boilers in which the dyeing was done. With the use of gall serious damage can be caused if too much sumac was added or it was added when boiling; because of this the amount of sumac must be regulated, no more than was necessary should be added, and always when cold, because if there was an incorrect weight the silk will be lost. Neither pomegranate peel nor ordinary gall nor other bad mixtures will be used (chap. 44). It is necessary to compare all this information with the knowledge we have today about the natural dyes, a technology much of which is also present in the world's silk museums (Cardon 2014; Navarro, Huerta ed. 2020).

## 2. The Valencian silk dyer ordinances since 1497

The founding of the silk dyers guild in the city of Valencia began on 28 September 1497, with the presentation of a draft of the first ordinances to the municipal authorities for their approval. Nine years later, a privilege of King Fernando II of Aragon confirmed them on 29 April 1506. The archive of the Guild of the High Art of Silk in Valencia kept a manuscript of ordinances concerning to the silk dyers guild. A notary copied and witnessed them until 27 February 1578 by decision of the governor of the kingdom, reproducing all the statutes approved during that period. The transcription and analysis of this manuscript has brought to light a set of corporate acts of enormous interest in understanding the problems faced by the artisans of the sector. This book contains up to four series of consecutive provisions. The first ordinances (1506) are of silk weavers and dyers. The second ones (1537) pertain to those artisans known as 'little pot' dyers (*tintorers d'olleta*). The third ones

(1549) allude simultaneously to both silk dyers and *olleta* dyers, and the last text is a petition that refers to specific aspects of the previous statutes from 1553.<sup>6</sup>

With regard to the founding ordinances of 1506, the petition made some years before in 1497 was justified by the large number of people who practiced this profession (chap. 2). In addition, the manuscript reproduces a painting on parchment with the representation of the guild's patron saint, the Archangel Michael, which served to leave a record of what this corporate flag or banner looked like. It is a polychrome representation of the saint, flanked by two skeins of silk, coloured blue and red respectively, that hang from the ends of two long poles. The standard or banner of the guild must also be kept in the corporate house with other insignias and objects to embellish and ennoble the patron saint (chaps. 3, 4).

Three trustees acted as first supervisors (*mayorales*) of the guild, namely, the masters Pere Vicent, Leonard Jordi and the Italian Agostino di Francisci, the system for election to positions being established (chap. 5). The minimum age to be examined was stipulated at twenty years with a registration fee of 100 *sueldos* (chap. 6). A *sueldo* was on average, a day's wage of an official at that time. Likewise, teaching of this craft was not allowed either to moors or to other infidels (chap. 7). Neither utensils of the profession nor silks to be dyed could be kept at home unless one was an examined master; otherwise, a fine had to be paid of 60 *sueldos* (chap. 8). That same punishment would be applicable against whoever did not do good and licit dyeing work (chap. 9).

Black dye was made by mixing gall and antimony (*alcofol*) (chap. 10). The gall was a protrusion caused in some trees and plants by insects depositing their eggs. *Alcofol* is an old name given to antimony or lead sulfide. The colour *grana* was produced with the bark of sumac, a bush with a high tannin content, and with gall on white. White was a colouring material of this name and not only the name of a colour. Likewise, red was made with the wood of the tree called brazilwood. Greens and blues were obtained from another well-known bush, the indigo bush. In chapter 10 of these founding ordinances of silk weavers and dyers of 1506, the dimensions are also detailed of the types of products that formed the official offer of the guild: wide or narrow silk strips and half-strips, wide or narrow Seville strips, reinforced silk strips, cords of thick or fine silk, silk fringes, wide or narrow strips of silk from broken cocoon (*biladizo*) or of yarn, thick or fine cords of *biladizo* or yarn, and patches of silk, both of satin and of hair.

To learn these trades of silk weavers and dyers, a time of four years was established (chap. 11), with the obligation to register the contract of the apprentices in a specific book that the supervisors of the corporation would administer (chap. 12). Two walkers would be in charge of acting as messengers of the guild (chap. 13) and accountants would proceed to carry out the audit of the accounts two months before finishing the mandate of the key holder (*clavario*) and of the supervisors (*mayorales*) (chap. 14). Masters and male or female workers paid one *sueldo* per head as an annual quota for being registered, up to four general meetings or ordinary chapters being established per year (chap. 15). Key holders and supervisors could

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<sup>6</sup> ACAMSV, *Varia*, 4.1. The edition of this manuscript has been published with other documents of the Valencian silk dyers guild (Navarro 2018).

impose corrective punishments on those who violated the rules and the children of masters were exempt from paying the registration fee in order to be examined (chap. 16). Tasks begun could never be left unfinished to assume tasks with several masters at the same time, as those who did not comply would pay a fine of 100 *suel-dos* (chap. 17). The silks woven could only be made by examined masters: bands, strips, cords (chap. 18). Lastly, any meeting that the guild held had to have the prior consent of the governor of the kingdom or of his lieutenant, also notifying the municipal authorities of Valencia (chap. 19).

Apart from those first ordinances, we know that an edict was issued on 30 October 1510 by the city that allowed silk dyers to dye with pomegranate until Christmas, as subsequently they had to do so with pure gall. Some velvet weaver ordinances of 27 March 1511 went beyond this, insisting on the exclusive use of fine gall from Romania until it was proven that Valencian gall alone was good for dyeing black without the need to mix it with pomegranate, antimony (*alcofol*) or sumac. With regard to coloured silks, the velvet weavers also established specific standards. For the colour red, *grana* (kermes) is used on white and not madder (*rubia*) another dye plant; as for the purples, a base of *grana* had to always be used. Meanwhile, another municipal edict on 24 October 1514 ordered the taking of a general inventory of all the gall of the land of indigenous production, as well as of antimony, stored in the houses of the velvet weavers or of the silk weavers and dyers of Valencia, or in any shop where it was known to be, so that in a period of fifteen days it would all be taken outside of the city limits under penalty of, if this were not done, its confiscation and burning in the public square (Navarro 1998).

The second ordinances of *olleta* dyers are from 13 October 1537. This designation of *olleta* (in Catalan) is because in the past, there were two guilds of dyers in the city, one that was called the silk dyers and the other that was in charge of the dyeing of wool and yarns, or *tintorers d'olleta*. These second ordinances are brief and only contain a preamble and three chapters. When they were approved, more than a year had passed since they had been requested before the municipal authorities of Valencia by the trade of silk weavers and dyers on 14 August 1536. Four years of learning were established as a minimum for this type of *tintorers d'olleta* (chap. 1). The examination for master consisted of knowing how to prepare a jug of cold dye and explain how to dye a fustian yellow or other colours (chap. 2). The widows of masters, until they married another man, could continue using the same trade of dyeing as their husbands and keep all the necessary tools in their home (chap. 3).

The municipal authorities approved new statutes for the trades of silk and *olleta* dyers on 1 August 1549, although the petition for them had been made more than a year before, on 23 June 1548. In the preamble of the said petition it was emphasized that, with such abundance of homegrown silk in the kingdom of Valencia, their ancestors, with the greatest diligence, had striven in every way to ensure that silks were worked and woven both in the city and in the kingdom, due to the enormous profits that this business provided for the municipal and *Generalitat* coffers, and due to the increase in population the capital was undergoing, as it was considered to be a true fact that each silk loom gave a living to four, five or six people. For these reasons, they intended to fight any frauds and dishonesty that appeared, especially regarding the use of pomegranate dye. They argued in the

preamble that the colour lasted less than when the silk was dyed with gall and in fact, a few days before the presentation of these ordinances to the municipal authorities, all the houses of the dyers in the capital had been inspected and all the pomegranate that was found was confiscated and burnt in the cathedral square.

Those third ordinances of 1549 are comprised of eight chapters that established, firstly, that silk was not to be dyed with pomegranate, or if it were, a fine would be paid of 300 *sueldos* (chap. 1). In addition, the dyeing boiler in which it had been proven that pomegranate had been used would be crushed and the copper it was made of would be donated to the General Hospital of Valencia, in addition to the dyer owning the boiler being disqualified perpetually. The sale of pomegranate was also prohibited within and outside of the municipality (chap. 2). The use of any mixture of sumac or of other substance with gall to dye black was not authorized, as only pure gall was to be used (chap. 3). Any person found to be in possession of pomegranates, or raw, cooked or powdered pomegranate peels would be fined 200 *sueldos* (chap. 4).

Silk dyeing was a guild that could be carried out without the authorities being able to control the numerous frauds committed. For this reason, no dyer that was not examined could have a boiler in their house for dyeing or otherwise it would be crushed and the copper it was made of would be given to the General Hospital of Valencia (chap. 5). Likewise, with the prohibition of the use of pomegranate, the dyeing of cloth and hats was usually done by the *tintorers d'olleta* using pomegranate peel; thus, only the key holder was empowered, or in his place, an examined master of the trade to buy all the pomegranate needed and to store it under his control in a house to which the artisans would go to acquire it (chap. 6). Accordingly, whoever bought or sold it on their own account or on the behalf of someone outside the guild would be fined 300 *sueldos* (chap. 7). Lastly, no dyer could dye silk and cloth for hats at the same time but had to declare which of the two trades they wanted to practice; otherwise, they would be fined an additional 300 *sueldos* as well as being disqualified from the profession. That is, either one was a dyer of silk or of *olleta*, but practicing the two specialities at the same time was prohibited (chap. 8). Finally, the public announcement or proclamation of these ordinances in the streets of the city was carried out on 8 August 1549 with trumpets as was the custom, one week after its approval by the municipal authorities.

On 6 October 1553, the notary Francesc Vives presented an appeal to the municipal authorities and the silk dyer Francesc Ontiveros, trustee of the guild, interpreting the statutes of 1549, approved four years before. It referred exclusively to the silk dyers, not *olleta* dyers. It again underscores the great abuses and frauds that occur when dyeing silks, cloths, *calicuchs*, *cotonines*, hats and any other type of fabrics with dye of pomegranate (*magrana* in Catalan), milled dyes (*molada*) and water of *roldón* (*raudor*, *roldor*, *roldó* in Catalan), a plant also known in Spanish as *emborrachacabras*, whose dry leaves ground into powder were used to dress hides and skins.

Still in the latter part of the seventeenth century, the Captain-General of the city and kingdom of Valencia ordered the issuance of a royal proclamation printed on 19 February 1685 regarding the prohibition of the ingredient of pomegranate



peels in the dyes of silks and of any other type of clothing.<sup>7</sup> According to this proclamation, silk dyes of the city and of the kingdom of Valencia were in decadence according to a letter of 28 November of the previous year, 1684. In it a number of knights and citizens, together with a lawyer of the velvet weaver's guild reported frauds that were being committed in the mentioned dyeing workshops. They apparently used a greater amount of pomegranate peels than was suitable to improve the quality of silk fabrics, practices difficult to detect by inspectors. To this regard, King Carlos II issued an order on 30 January 1685 that was disseminated in the proclamation on 19 February in which several ordinances were established, prohibiting master silk dyers from having pomegranate peels, ground or unground, in their houses, even those mixed with gall. The reason was that any dye for cloths, fabrics or hats with these substances lasted a short time and was of poor quality. Additionally, from the day of the proclamation, the sale of pomegranate peels was also prohibited throughout the kingdom, so that in a period of eight days, the remaining amounts of dye contained in their boilers and warehouses had to be consumed.

### 3. The colours of Valencian silks in the fiscal registers of 1475-1513

The launch of the silk industry and commerce in the city of Valencia and in other populations of the kingdom during the second half of the fifteenth century was the beginning of a long history in which the silk business finally became one of the most important economic sectors for the Valencian territory over the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries (Franch 2012). Thanks to the documentation preserved of the tax that the Valencian Corts collected under the name of *Tall del Drap del General* on all types of fabrics that were exported, it was possible to find their oldest manuscripts in Catalan language with the title *Manifest de les Sedes*, regarding silk trade in 1475 and 1512-1513. Our research project for this *Settimana Datini* has allowed the complete transcription and the detailed study of these manuscripts, which together total 426 folios with 3,871 total fiscal registers, including here for the first time the unprecedented data corresponding to 1513, only January to July.<sup>8</sup> Since 1440, those who declared this tax paid 29 *diners* for each *lliura* of value of the fabrics registered, that is 12.08 percent (Muñoz 1987, 308-15).<sup>9</sup>

The 1475 manuscript comprises three volumes with 237 folios and 1,414 fiscal registers. The first volume has 155 folios and 979 fiscal registers. The second volume with the name *Summari del procebit a la Taula del Jeneral del Tall en la ciutat de València* (Summary of the General Tax in Valencia city) includes 30 folios and only 4 fiscal registers, because it mainly contains the daily amounts of the tax collection. And the third volume has 529 tax registers along 32 folios, including information not only about silk trade but also from the leather trade (*Pelliceria*). The registers of

<sup>7</sup> ACAMSV, *Lg. 3.1.3., Pregones*, 6 (Aleixandre 1987, doc. 639).

<sup>8</sup> Archivo del Reino de Valencia (ARV), *Generalitat*, 3324-3325 (1475) and 5004 (1512-1513).

<sup>9</sup> The Valencian account currency had the following system of equivalences: 1 *lliura* (pound) = 20 *sous* = 240 *diners*.

1475 manuscript appear in chronological order, according to the name of the people who sold or bought the declared fabric. After their name is normally written *dóna de manifest* (he declared) on specific date the quantity of *alnes* (in Catalan language; *varas* in Spanish), detailing the type of fabric and colour. Other alternative expressions were *comprà* (he bought), *tallà del teler de* (cut from the loom of), *vené* (he sold), *tragué* (he exported) o *sellà* (he sealed). Sometimes the value of the fabrics on which the tax is applied appears, but not always. The prices do not appear either. We have identified the name of 204 people, including 137 declarants. Export destinations are 28, mainly Castile but also Barcelona, Zaragoza or other places of the Crown of Aragon. There are not international places, that is, outside Iberian territories.

The global balance of those declaring in the 1475 manuscript (Tab. 1) shows a total of 38 specific combinations of silk fabrics and colours, apart from 99 more with other possibilities of colours and types of textiles. We have counted almost 21,000 *varas* registered if we add 5,142 *varas* cut directly from looms (column A), 12,060 *varas* in stock (col. B) or 3,774 *varas* of fabrics sold (col. E). Other expressions such as received fabrics (col. C), purchase of fabrics (col. D), exported fabrics (col. F) or sealed fabrics (col. G.) expand that sum to a total of 29,617 *varas* of silk fabrics registered in 1475. In terms of representation, black satin (7,258 *varas*), black velvet (4,929 *varas*) or black damask (1,758 *varas*) together make up 47 percent of the total silk fabrics registered in 1475.

The 1512-1513 manuscript comprises two parts with 189 folios and 2,457 fiscal registers. The first part includes all the year 1512 with 117 folios and 1,473 registers, and the second part refers only to the period between January and July 1513 with 71 folios and 984 registers. As we have said, the study of this second part of the manuscript constitutes the main contribution of this new analysis that we present here. Except for a few exceptions, all the registers of 1512-1513 manuscript always express a chronological order with the name of each declarant and the person from whom he bought the fabrics, their type and their color, indicating length, price and purchase value. Sometimes the destination of these tissues is stated. The amount paid for the tax does not appear in each register, as in the manuscript of 1475. The sums of all amounts paid by declarants are together separate. We have identified the name of 495 people in 1512, more than double compared to 205 people of 1475, including 197 declarants, 60 more than the 137 of 1475. Export destinations are 27, one less than in 1475, mainly Castile and other places of the Crown of Aragon again, but now there are international places or territories: Cagliari, Naples, Palermo, France or Portugal.

Tab. 1. Colours of silk fabrics in Valencia (1475)

Quantities in *alnes* or *varas*. 1 Valencian *alna* or *vara* equals 0.9 Meters.

A: loom cut fabrics; B: stored fabrics; C: received fabrics; D: purchase of fabrics;  
E: sale of fabrics; F: exported fabrics; G: sealed fabrics; Total: A+B+C+D+E+F+G.

Colours	Silk Fabrics	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total
Black	Brocade		110	24					134
Black	Camelot	26	33		26	26		22	133
Black	Damask	109	1,344		130	102	23	50	1,758
Black	Satin	2,378	1,325		1,459	1,425	458	213	7,258
Black	Velvet	1,608	1,097	30	719	837	262	376	4,929
Black	Velvety Velvet		129					2	131
Blue	Brocade		236	27	26	14	26		329
Blue	Camelot		33						33
Blue	Damask		167		28			4	199
Blue	Satin		401		46	9	9		465
Blue	Velvet	13	43		54	18		10	138
Dark	Camelot		24	53		100	73		250
Dark	Damask	55	318		52	52		28	505
Dark	Satin		88	151		32	32	24	347
Dark	Velvet	10	24					10	44
Dark Red	Camelot	37			28	36			102
Dark Red	Damask	92	625	14	137	103	46	28	1,045
Dark Red	Satin		156	148		119	120	11	554
Dark Red	Velvet	6	36		6	6		2	56
Green	Brocade		58			3			61
Green	Damask	22	361	18	59	11		43	514
Green	Satin		93	309		94	43	13	552
Green	Velvet	214	95	21	88	84	2	67	571
Purple	Brocade	130							130
Purple	Camelot	51	31		77	77		4	240
Purple	Damask	27	137		40	40		22	266
Purple	Satin	95	92		28	28	16	6	265
Purple	Velvet	163	164	83	42	36	85	49	622
Purple	Velvety Velvet	13							13
Red	Brocade		366	2	14	18	14		414
Red	Damask		172					3	175
Red	Satin		1,315	183				18	1,516
Red	Velvet		127	19				19	165
White	Damask	68	179		36	116		41	440
White	Velvet					6			6
Yellow	Damask		33					16	49
Yellow	Satin		74	25		51	65	65	280
Yellow	Velvet		31		6			1	38
<i>Other</i>	<i>Other</i>	35	2,543	9	261	331	895	837	4,911
	Total	5,152	12,060	1,116	3,362	3,774	2,169	1,984	29,617

Source: Navarro 1999, appendix 9, 299-301.

Tab. 2. Colours of silk fabrics in Valencia (1512)

1 *vara* or *alna*: 0.9 meters.  
Prices variation in *diners/alna*.

Colours	Silk Fabrics	<i>Varas</i>	Prices
Black	Damask	3,864	432-240
Black	Satin	4,497	312-164
Black	Taffeta	2,675	156-72
Black	Velvet	23,788	468-336
Black	Velvety Velvet	1,126	660-450
Blue	Damask	23	324
Blue	Satin	240	276-252
Blue	Velvet	340	492-408
Dark	Satin	108	270-240
Dark	Velvet	68	528-408
Dark Red	Damask	10	328
Dark Red	Satin	108	276-252
Dark Red	Velvet	204	460-414
Green	Damask	56	336
Green	Satin	152	258-144
Green	Velvet	334	480-384
Purple	Damask	142	360-276
Purple	Satin	487	276-150
Purple	Velvet	408	480-396
Purple	Velvety Velvet	6	708
Red	Damask	109	414-360
Red	Satin	18	420-324
Red	Velvet	441	528-438
Red	Velvety Velvet	80	576-504
White	Damask	149	390-270
White	Satin	85	336-300
Yellow	Damask	73	336-312
Yellow	Satin	589	276-164
Yellow	Velvet	71	528-516
<i>Other</i>	<i>Other</i>	1,792	
	Total	42,043	

Source: Navarro 1999, appendix 10, 303-304.

The global balance of those declaring in 1512 (Tab. 2) shows the 29 combinations of colours and silk fabrics more important out of total of 59, that is to say that behind the expression *Other* there are 30 combinations with less quantity of *varas*. If we compare with the 137 varieties of 1475, the typology of fabrics and colours has been reduced considerably in 1512. We have counted 42,043 *varas* in total and only black velvet represents the 56.58 percent with 23,788 *varas*. If we add to that data the number of *varas* of black satin (4,497), black damask (3,864), black taffeta (2,675) or black velvety velvet (1,126), it reaches up to 35,950 *varas* in black that is to say the 85.50 per-

cent. The trend of black as a fashionable colour already present in 1475 reaches an even greater force in 1512, confirming what the artisans affirmed in the judicial proceedings that in Valencia black was the colour used most for dyeing. We should remember that in the fiscal registers of Genoa black fabrics totalled up to 60 percent. On the other hand, the most expensive fabrics were velvety velvet or velvet in purple, red, yellow or black. Some colours were an added cost factor because, without a doubt, they were the real luxury in silk fabrics.

Tab. 3. Colours of silk fabrics in Valencia (January 3 – August 1, 1513)

1 *alna* or *vara*: 0,9 meters.  
Price variation in *diners/alna*.

Colours	Silk Fabrics	Varas	Prices
Black	Damask	3,047	330-162
Black	Satin	5,418	384-144
Black	Taffeta	1,475	252-72
Black	Velvet	12,302	498-336
Black	Velvety Velvet	1,105	520-420
Blue	Damask	145	332-312
Blue	Satin	81	252-216
Blue	Velvet	465	480-408
Blue	Velvety Velvet	19	581
Dark	Damask	47	348-320
Dark	Satin	117	264-228
Dark Red	Damask	65	320-312
Dark Red	Satin	127	264-138
Dark Red	Velvet	386	468-420
Green	Satin	20	144
Green	Velvet	458	492-360
Green	Velvety Velvet	29	624
Purple	Damask	73	321-312
Purple	Satin	92	228-156
Purple	Velvet	408	504-408
Purple	Velvety Velvet	16	600
Red	Satin	117	336-240
Red	Taffeta	23	216
Red	Velvet	668	528-384
Red	Velvety Velvet	68	648-605
White	Damask	163	384-276
White	Satin	280	342-216
Yellow	Damask	66	339-336
Yellow	Satin	483	348-216
<i>Other</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>942</i>	
	Total	28,560	

Source: ARV, Generalitat, 5004, ff. 118-189.

Until now, the comparative study of the fiscal registers of 1475 and 1512 had shown a strong growth of exchanges and of the number of those declaring fabrics and of trade agents involved in the export of silks from the city of Valencia to the European market with a clear predominance of the black velvets. In this study, we will add, for the first time, the unprecedented data from 1513 to show how this trend of a colour in predominant fashion continued evolving. The new data we have obtained from the study of the fiscal declaration of silks in the city of Valencia corresponding to 1513 confirm this trend (Tab. 3). During the first seven months of 1513, from January to July, we have counted 28,560 *varas* of silk fabrics and 23,347 of them in black colour (81.74 percent), a proportion similar to that recorded in 1512. If the complete manuscript from 1513 had been preserved, with at an average of 4,080 *varas* a month (28,560 in seven months), the total amount for this year would reach to 48,960 *varas*, slightly higher than the 42,043 *varas* of 1512. Velvety velvet and velvet were the more expensive textiles, especially when they were red, purple, blue, green or black, according to the 29 main combinations of fabrics and colours.

According to the other manuscripts of the *Manifests de les Sedes* preserved in the sixteenth century in the Archive of the Kingdom of Valencia, the number of *varas* from 1475 (29,617), 1512 (42,043) or 1513 (about 50,000 for the full year as an estimate) were only the beginning of the take-off of the Valencian export trade that increased even more in subsequent years: 96,620 *varas* in 1529, 297,902 *varas* in 1598 or between 130,000 and 135,000 *varas* in 1600-1601 (Franch 2012). It is quite clear that, compared to the 42,000 *varas* of 1512, export doubled in excess the volume of the beginning of the sixteenth century. The definitive degradation of Valencian silk production would occur in the following century, specializing in the preparation of tafetas, cheaper and lower-quality fabrics than those of the end of the fifteenth century. In this regard, this situation would be very similar to the one experienced in parallel by the Genoese industry of that time (Massa 1992).

The trends shown below by the quantifiable results of the research (Tab. 4) constitute a very significant volume of information on the basis of more than 90,000 meters of Valencian silk fabrics (100,220 *varas*) analysed through the fiscal sources of the kingdom compared between 1475 and 1512-1513, with special emphasis on the 73.47 percent of black colour. The emergence of a specialised guild of silk dyers in the same way as other similar corporations were founded during those years in the main silk centres of the western Mediterranean. The fundamental key to the take-off of the silk business in Valencia was the strong commercial demand for these types of fabrics. Without a doubt this brought about strong commercial trade between Valencian and foreign agents that promoted the migratory movement of the Genoese artisans not only through merchants of their origin but also through local traders. The hegemony of the black colour had to continue throughout the sixteenth century as it also happened in Genoa (Massa 1981).

Tab. 4. Colours of silk fabrics in Valencia during 1475-1513

Data in number of *varas* from Tab. 1-3  
(1 *alna* or *vara*: 0.9 meters)

Colours	1475	1512	1513	1475-1513	%
Black	14,343	35,950	23,347	73,640	73.47
Blue	1,164	603	565	2,332	2.32
Dark ( <i>burell</i> )	1,146	176	164	1,486	1.48
Dark Red ( <i>tenat</i> )	1,757	322	578	2,657	2.65
Green	1,698	542	507	2,747	2.74
Purple ( <i>moral</i> )	1,536	1,043	589	3,168	3.16
Red ( <i>carmesí, grana</i> )	2,270	648	876	3,794	3.79
White	446	234	443	1,123	1.12
Yellow	367	733	549	1,649	1.64
<i>Other</i>	<i>4,911</i>	<i>1,792</i>	<i>942</i>	<i>7,645</i>	<i>7.63</i>
Total	29,617	42,043	28,560	100,220	100

#### 4. Conclusions

Half a century ago, Jacques Heers presented a study in the first *Settimana di Studi* of Prato of April 1970 on fashion and the wool fabric markets in Genoa and its region in the latter part of the Middle Ages. The said study continues to be an essential reference for the subject of fashion that this *LII Settimana* undertakes, because it placed attention on the observation of demand and consumption, underscoring that luxury not only was based on the quality of the fabrics, but obviously in the choice of colours. People of that time were sensitive to a certain idea of fashion, Heers said, of diversity and in that apparel changed from city to city, from year to year. The comparative study of the inventories of properties of the deceased registered in the Genoese notaries of the era, the news contained in the accounting books of the textile companies or the study of fiscal sources relating to the urban and rural consumer markets allowed him to observe how the colour red had become the symbol of great luxury for the Mediterranean bourgeoisie of the Late Middle Ages. In that regard, he asserted that the variations of fashion were a decisive factor for their great fortunes in the economic and social history of the clothmaking cities (Heers 1971, 1096-7; 1110; 1117).

The key question, however, was knowing why fashions varied at certain times and not at others. On the other hand, what is important is to reconstruct the context of the actors, as well as the dynamics of innovation and circulation that they generate and the complexity of their development between the public taxation, companies and business or the international activities as posed by Paulino Iradiel in his study on tax authority and economic policy of the urban industries (Iradiel 2019). Nevertheless, we should not forget that urban and rural manufacture was in many cases interchangeable and that in certain industrial districts the colours of the fabrics in the countryside repeated current trends in the cities. Almost half of the cloths dyed in the Comtat area in the south of the kingdom of Valencia were black

and the rest showed very diverse tones with a wide variety of possibilities, according to what is shown in this case by notarial sources (Llibrer 2020; García 2017).

In our analysis we have compared guild ordinances, judicial proceedings, technical manuals of dyeing and particularly, fiscal sources. The silk declarations in the city of Valencia from 1475 to 1512 in relation with the new unprecedented data of 1513 refer to the export of silk fabrics from the Valencian capital to other parts of Europe with multiple details regarding those declaring (buyers, sellers) and characteristics of the fabrics (type, colour, length, price and quantity), which makes it possible to establish a database of 3,871 fiscal registers with more than 90,000 meters of Valencian silk fabrics (100,220 *varas*) and the 73.47 percent of them in black colour.

This research project has therefore been centred on the process of consolidation of the art of silk in late medieval Europe to analyse fiscal series of documentation on the changes that took place in the production process of Valencian silk fabrics. Combining diverse sources such as corporate ordinances, technical manuals and fiscal registers is a wise and important approach to the analysis of demand and consumption patterns. Although we have given too much space to the titles of corporate ordinances and manual texts, we recognize that these types of sources have a theoretical value, in contrast to the more practical value of tax data. In that sense, it has been not possible to expand the tables of our study with the names of buyers and their quantities to see the differentiated consumption and the hypothetical social diffusion of fashion. Finally, we have not started in our introduction with the historiographical frame of reference and specify how this essay fits into it, but some of these aspects are instead found in the next last paragraphs.

The transfer of technology and of fashion trends from Genoa to Valencia was one of the causes that explain the predominance of the colour black over the course of the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries. Consumption patterns were transformed and influenced the stimulus of manufacturing. This is confirmed by the regulations that existed regarding the silk dyers corporation and the most important dyeing materials. What has been documented in Valencia is comparable to what was studied during those same years with regard to the silk industries of Genoa (Ghiara 1976; Massa 1981), Venice (Molà 2000) or Florence (Tognetti 2002; Goldthwaite 2005). These historiographic questions find another important perspective of comparison in the latest studies carried out on the silk trade of Granada, Toledo, Aragon, Catalonia or Portugal (Franch, Navarro, ed. 2017). Fifteenth-century Spanish velvet production was a business of the first magnitude for the textile industries of Multi-cultural Medieval Iberia (Navarro 2020; 2021).

Finally, we would like to conclude with a key reflection by Alberto Grohmann:

In relazione al Medioevo, data la carenza e la frammentarietà delle fonti, specialmente di quelle di natura quantitativa, e data la disparità dei mercati e delle strutture politiche e sociali, si giunse a studiare dei micro spazi e si fece largo uso del tempo breve. Così si scrissero lavori, pur assai raffinati, sul trasporto di alcune balle di stoffe, sul costo del lavoro in una data azienda in relazione a pochi anni, sull'entità della popolazione in un piccolo aggregato umano, per fare solo qualche esempio. Questi studi pionieristici, pur di gran-



de interesse, hanno avuto a mio avviso il difetto di non mettere in meritata luce la valenza globalizzante dell'economico (Grohmann 2020, 31).

We wish we had not fallen here into that defect. With our study from heterogeneous sources we have wanted to show that it is possible to quantify fashion trends in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in some cities as Valencia, interesting observatory on innovation in silk production and processes at the end of the Middle Ages.

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Laurel Ann Wilson

*The impact of technological change on medieval fashion*

## Introduction

Technology and fashion have always influenced each other, technology generally being the leader in their dance. In writing of the medieval cloth industry in England, John Oldland points out that the cloth industry in general is more dependent on change and flexibility, on the development of new products and markets, than many other industries in which the product changes very little or very slowly (2019, 13), which may help to explain the closeness of the connection between new technologies and new fashions.

A broad definition of the technologies which influenced the medieval textile industry would include not just the many new processes involved in actual textile making and dyeing but also developments in sheep breeding, tailoring, even financial techniques. I am going to concentrate here on what I see as the most significant technological change: the arrival and development of the horizontal pedal loom and its main product, the famous medieval broadcloth or *drap*.

At least one significant transformation of dress in the Middle Ages, the change to long clothing for men in the twelfth century, can be tied directly to the advent of the horizontal loom, since the transformation was concurrent with the development of a widespread industry based around the new loom and its ability to produce longer pieces of cloth. New weave structures and finishing techniques also evolved which made the new cloth particularly suitable for showing off rich jewel-toned dyes. I think it possible as well that the social effects of the new technology, or rather of the growth of the industry which developed from it, contributed indirectly to the far more drastic transformation of dress which occurred in the fourteenth century.

Textiles became increasingly important to the European economy from Late Antiquity on: according to John Munro, «[n]o form of manufacturing had a greater impact upon the economy and society of medieval Europe than did those industries producing cloths from various kinds of wool» (2003, 1:181). The process by which fine woolen cloth was produced, however, underwent a radical change from the eleventh century on.<sup>1</sup> New technological innovations, particularly the introduction of the horizontal pedal loom and the complex of tools which accompanied it, not

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<sup>1</sup> The most detailed descriptions of these processes and their development are to be found in Poerck (1951), especially vol 1, *La Technique*; Endrei (1968); Cardon (1999); and Munro (2003).

only launched new types of cloth, but dramatically increased output as well: it has been estimated that the advent of the new type of loom tripled production of cloth, and the later adoption of the spinning wheel is thought to have added a similar multiplier (Oldland 2019, 81; Munro 2003, 1:196; Endrei 1968, 38 [pre-thirteenth century], 87-88 [post-thirteenth century]; Graph 3; 173).<sup>2</sup>

The net result, at its highest level, was a true luxury cloth. Each piece of *drap* was extremely large and contained a substantial amount of tightly packed wool (more than 38 kilograms in Flanders [Munro 2003, 196-7]), but was as drapable as silk, thanks to the elaborate finishing process.<sup>3</sup> Because the cloth was so firmly woven, even before fulling it was unusually receptive to being dyed in deeply saturated colors. In addition, the firmness of the cloth meant that it did not ravel when cut into, which set off an ongoing rage for dagging and other forms of cut ornamentation.

The production of *drap* on a large scale, and its wide distribution, both domestically and via extensive long-distance trade, became known as the *grande industrie* and was one of the major economic engines of the Commercial Revolution, which began around the turn of the first millennium in Europe (Lopez 1976; Pounds 1994, 407-42).<sup>4</sup>

The new *grande industrie* affected fashion, which in turn contributed to the growth of commerce. The ability to produce long, deeply colored cloth, for example, was certainly an influence in the adoption of long clothing for men in the twelfth century. A more subtle influence was exerted by the growth of standardization in the cloth industry via guild- or government-issued regulations that prescribed standardized details and tools which enabled the measurement of those details. Standardization developed initially for reasons relating to long-distance trade, such as the need for predictability in size and quality, but it is also essential for the the growth of fashion, which requires standardization to produce the sameness against which individual difference can rebel.

## The weaving process

Understanding the complexity of the processes involved in producing a fully finished piece of luxurious *drap* requires some knowledge of the weaving process. Weaving is the process of interlacing one set of threads with another set which is perpendicular to it. It can be done with needle and thread or even with the fingers; the loom, in whatever form, is just a tool for making it easier and, crucially, faster.

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<sup>2</sup> Which perhaps accounts for Adam Nahlik's claim in *Tkaniny wsi wschodnioeuropejskiej X-XIII w / Textiles of the East European country (sic) in the X to XIII Centuries*. (1965, Lodz) that at its height the medieval woolen industry based on the horizontal pedal loom increased productivity 5 to 10 times above what had been achieved by the warp-weighted loom (quoted in Cardon, 1998).

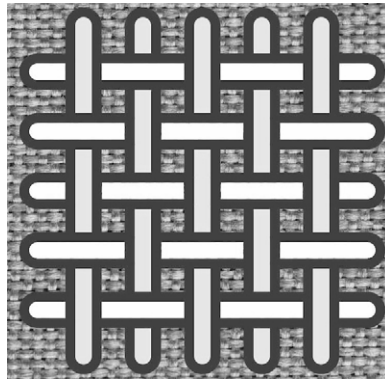
<sup>3</sup> Oldland (2019) goes into the weights of different cloths in detail, but for a later period. He also claims, convincingly, that the weight of English cloth increased considerably over time.

<sup>4</sup> See Henry (2015, 55-6) contra, suggesting that it was growing commercialization which led to the introduction of the horizontal loom, rather than the other way around.

One set of threads, the «warp», is stationary, and remains taut, and one of the two essential functions of a loom is to hold the warp under tension. The variations among looms which have to do with warp tension are few: warp threads may be held horizontally or vertically, and the tension may be maintained with weights or by the structure of the loom or by the weaver's body.

The second set of threads, those which the weaver manipulates across the warp, are called the «weft», and they go over some threads and under others: in the most basic weave structure, plain weave, the weft goes over and under alternate threads (fig. 1). This is the other essential function of the loom: lifting the desired warp threads to allow the weft to pass under them, a process known as «changing the shed». There are many different ways of changing sheds, and there have been many types of loom designed to make this process more efficient, but here I am concerned with the two most popular: the warp-weighted loom and the horizontal loom.<sup>5</sup>

Fig. 1. Plain weave structure



Photographer: Aaron Heffels  
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The warp-weighted loom (fig. 2) is one of the earliest forms of loom, found in Europe as early as the fourteenth century B.C.E. (Barber 1991, 91-112) and still in use in the twentieth century (Hoffmann 1964). It is simply a wooden frame from which the warp threads hang; they are kept under tension by stones, or, later, purpose-made weights hung at the bottom of the threads. The shed is changed by means of a combination of «heddles», mechanisms by which the appropriate warp

<sup>5</sup> There was a third type of loom in common use in parts of medieval Europe, the two-beam upright loom. Of Roman origin, it was primarily used in the Middle Ages for weaving cloths which were different from broadcloth in both size and composition. This was perhaps one of the looms used by weavers of narrower cloths such as châlons when they were made on a commercial scale (Cardon 1999, 396-400; Munro 2003, 193-7).

threads are lifted to accommodate the weft. In the case of the warp-weighted loom, heddles are simply sticks placed in the warp under the relevant threads. The advantages of this type of loom are that it is easily made and portable, requiring little in the way of materials or skill in construction. It is also suited to the production of decorative weave structures: elaborate twills, in particular, were characteristic of the medieval warp-weighted loom.<sup>6</sup>

Fig. 2. **Reconstruction of a warp-weighted loom**

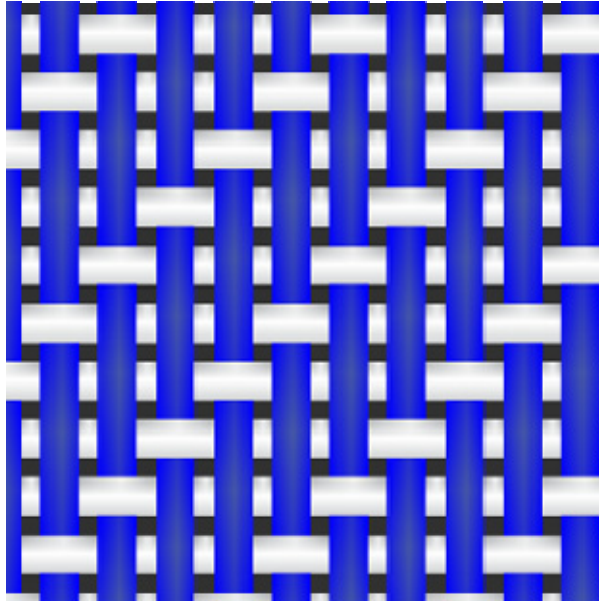


Textiles Zentrum, Haslach an der Mühl  
 Photographer: Haeferl  
 CC BY-SA 3.0

<sup>6</sup> Twill is a weave structure in which the crossings of warp and weft are offset from one another, producing diagonal lines (see fig. 3); denim is a type of twill. Complex twill patterns may have been the basis of the famous *pallia fresonica* gifted by Charlemagne to rulers such as Haroun el-Rashid (Thorpe 1969, Notker 2:9).

The warp-weighted loom can be and has been used for small-scale production weaving from the Roman era on. But it has drawbacks: it limits the length of the cloth which can be produced, and on a warp-weighted loom, where the finished cloth is above the unwoven threads, the beating is done upwards, so the weave remains relatively loose.

Fig. 3. **Twill weave structure**



Photographer: David C. Todd  
 CC BY-SA 4.0, via *Wikimedia Commons*

More than that, it is slow: when changing the shed after each pass of the weft threads, the weaver's hands must leave the shuttle that carries the weft thread and move to the heddles and then, before the weaver's hands can return to the shuttle, the weft thread must be beaten into the cloth. Marta Hoffmann, who studied warp-weighted looms in use in Iceland in the 1960s and actually participated in the weaving, demonstrates the time-consuming nature of this process on a wide warp-weighted loom operated by two people:

The heddle rod that was to be used was first moved forward on the left side; we then walked over to the right-hand side of the loom, using the pin beater [a tool for beating in the weft] and pushing up the pick [pass of the weft thread] that had been passed before the shed was changed. The pin beater was held in the right hand, the selvage [edge of the cloth] in the left. We then lifted the rod on to the support at the right side, and, holding the sel-



vage with the right hand, used the pin beater in the left. Another pick was then passed through the new shed and pushed up with the pin beater, first with the shed open, then with it closed. When changing the shed, the heddle rod that is being used is lifted from the notch on the support, and the next rod put in its place. Going to the other side, the procedure is repeated, and the new heddle rod now rests in both supports. One then goes back to the first side, beating up the weft with the pin beater. The sword beater is used only with a closed shed...When weaving fine *wadmal*, it was necessary to beat more than twenty times with the sword beater (1964, 130-6).<sup>7</sup>

The horizontal pedal loom was the answer to the difficulties of large-scale production on the warp-weighted loom. The change of sheds is done by foot pedals, meaning that the weaver does not have to let go of the shuttle. There is a built-in beater, which can be operated with one hand, again leaving the weaver's hand on the shuttle. And, since the cloth is being woven horizontally, the beating motion is toward the weaver, meaning the cloth can be beaten very tightly.

Another advantage of the horizontal loom is that its structure and size allow for the weaving of extremely long cloths – the average length of a standard piece of broadcloth at the height of its popularity was anywhere from 25 to 40 meters or more, depending on where the cloth was made.<sup>8</sup> Thus, the manufacturing process was very different, and the resultant products were quite distinct from the fabrics made on the warp-weighted loom.

## Broadloom and broadcloth

The process of producing true luxurious broadcloth began with the choice of fleece (fig. 4a). Since good cloth was luxurious in large part because of the raw materials involved, the industry depended heavily on the breeding of sheep with the right kind of fine wools.<sup>9</sup> And, as is true throughout the component parts of the woolen industry, this was a recursive process: the more the wool was in demand, the finer it became. Though measurable standardization is not possible, as it is in other parts of the process, there was sufficient standardization, or at least predictability, in terms of quality to allow for price lists based on types of wool, and

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<sup>7</sup> *Wadmal* was the most common cloth produced on the warp-weighted loom in Iceland from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century.

<sup>8</sup> It is difficult to calculate the exact length of broadcloths; although their lengths were often prescribed by statute or guild regulation, they were generally listed in *annes* or *ells*, the length of which varied from place to place. In addition, the fulling process which was used on broadcloth greatly reduced its length after it came off the loom; see n. 19 below. Cardon has a detailed table of measurement equivalents across medieval Europe (1999, 607-11), and Munro (2003, 312-6) supplies specific weights and measures of cloth in France, the Low Countries, and England from 1278 through the sixteenth century arranged by chronology and location (Table 5.7) and a table (5.8) which also includes warp count, arranged by types of cloth (Table 5.8). Oldland (2019) has a detailed chart, but it is from the mid-sixteenth century; he does specify that standard broadcloth length in England from 1328 on was set at 28 yards unfulled, shrinking to 24 yards after fulling (see n. 18 below)

<sup>9</sup> There is a great deal of literature on the types of sheep and types of wool to be found in the Middle Ages. See, for example, Ryder (1983, 1984); Cardon (1999, 39-54).

even forward sales of wool, that is, purchases prior to the actual fleece being grown (Bell, Brooks, and Dryburgh, 2006).

Fig. 4. Processes involved in producing broadcloth



Vitrail des Drapiers, Chapel de St. Blaise. Collégiale Notre Dame, Semur-en-Auxois. (Note: originally created in the fifteenth century, portions of this window were restored in 1854 by Viollet-le-Duc). Photographer: Daniel VillafruelaCC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Fleece might also differ in quality depending on the part of the sheep from which it had come, so a fleece would be carefully picked over, generally by professional sorters.<sup>10</sup> The chosen fleece was washed and, for true woolen *drap*, it would then be oiled to return the grease which had been removed by washing.<sup>11</sup> It was then made ready to spin, either by carding (fig. 4b), combing, or in some cases by bowing, and then sent out to spinners, usually women working from home.<sup>12</sup>

True standardization begins in the work of the spinners, who were subject to regulations concerning the length and thickness of the yarn they produced; length, to ensure the supplier was not being cheated by getting less than the expected yardage, and thickness, because it had a major impact on the fineness of the finished piece of cloth. Spun yarn was wound off onto a reel (fig. 5) to make it into workable skeins; the reel was, as Cardon points out (1999, 277-302) one of the major tools of standardization in the industry, ensuring that specific types of yarn were spun to the desired gauge, or thickness, which was measured by counting the number of skeins to a pound of yarn. Since this method relies on a standardized length of skein, which is achieved by winding onto a reel of the prescribed size, it required widespread standardization of reel sizes, and many guild regulations thus address the size of the reel to be used.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Cardon (1999, 118-9) points out that no part of the fleece would have been wasted. This means that the production of luxury cloth was necessarily accompanied by the production of cheaper cloths in order to use up the less desirable portions of the fleece.

<sup>11</sup> There were a number of binary divisions in medieval woolen manufacture, such as woolens/worstedes, *draperies ointes* [greased] / *draperies sèches* [dry], and so on. They are difficult to pin down, being defined differently in different areas, and are not part of this discussion, which is limited to broadcloth, a true woolen. Oldland (2019, 21); Munro (2003, 182-4); Cardon, (1999, 256-61).

<sup>12</sup> In the first few centuries of the *grande industrie*, there were questions about the validity of new tools such as the spinning wheel (vs. hand-spinning on a spindle, or «rock») and wool cards with metal teeth (vs. combing, which produced a stronger, tighter yarn). Both were initially prohibited by guild regulations, although the very existence of the bans indicates that they were actually in use. Munro (2003, 201) traces the regulations which ban wheelspinning, either altogether or for warp yarns, as they moved northward from the Italian cities, beginning in Venice in 1224 and continuing northward and westward throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; see also Endrei (1968, 55). Carding and wheel-spinning did ultimately come to be considered acceptable, at least for weft yarns, in even the best cloth, and the classic *drap*, initially entirely combed and rock-spun, thus became a mixed cloth, made of carded and wheel-spun weft and combed and rock-spun warp. According to Cardon (1999, 258), this shift seems to have occurred sometime in the thirteenth century. It may have taken some time to make its way further north: according to Crowfoot, Pritchard, and Staniland (1992, Table 1, p. 27), the rise in mixed cloth in England is not visible in the archaeological record until the fourteenth century. See Chorley (1997) for a detailed discussion of both the initial shift to mixed cloths and the further, long-term shift to fully carded and wheel-spun cloth.

<sup>13</sup> This is an ancient system; Cardon cites evidence of a similar system from Crete and Mycenaean Greece (278), as well as the remnants of a reel found by Schliemann in Troy, though misidentified until recently as a distaff (282 and 282 note 32). She also cites medieval guild regulations from all across medieval Europe (278-90) governing the length of the reel used in each location and for each type of yarn desired. The same system has continued in use in many places. A weaving textbook written in 1965 points out that not only is the system still in use, but the calculations are still based on the size of the (presumably medieval) reel in use in a particular district (Tovey 1965, 76; see also Cardon 1996, 20).

Fig. 5. Reel



Epicharis, from *De mulieribus claris*  
Bibliothèque National de France (BNF), ms. fr. 599, f. 79v.

The warp threads would be taken directly from the skein to be made into a warp. Warping, that is making a warp ready to be put on the loom, was a very complex process which varied greatly with the type of cloth desired, and required a great deal of knowledge and dexterity. (Fig. 4c shows an early portion of this process, «chaining the warp», in which the warp threads are arranged in a way that will facilitate winding them on a warping board.) This too is an area which was subject to much standardization, and thus tightly hedged around by guild and government regulations, beginning with the number of threads to be used: as is still true today, one of the major determinants of the quality of the finished fabric is the number of warp threads in the finished piece. Today we count by threads or «ends» per inch of width (this is known as the «sett»); according to Cardon (1999, 353-71), there were two different methods in use in medieval Europe, both relying on the warping board or rack, which was both a means of keeping warp threads in order and tangle-free and a tool of standardization. One method was to count either by the number of groups of threads, or ligatures, usually of 100 threads, which went into a standard width on the loom; the other method, given a specified number of threads in each pass around the warping board or rack, was to count how many passes – *portées* in French, *gangen* in Flemish – went into the finished

warp.<sup>14</sup> The warping board/rack was also a measurement tool: the length of the warp, which would determine the length of the finished piece of cloth, was prescribed by regulation in every cloth-making area, and it would be measured automatically in the warping process.

The loom then had to be «dressed»: that is the warp had to be carefully wound on to the back beam of the loom without losing any of the thread placement so skillfully arranged in the warping process, a complex task which normally required at least two people. Once this was done, the warp threads then had to be brought forward and individually threaded through the heddles, the devices which lift the alternating threads – a very time-consuming task, given that there might be as many as 3,000 individual warp threads. Following this, the warp threads were brought forward again, and drawn individually through the teeth of the reed. Like the reel, the reed, which is the comb running across the front of a horizontal loom, is another easy, mechanical way of standardizing the width and density, and thus the quality, of a piece of cloth, and there are therefore many regulations which prescribe the width of the reed, the number of teeth, and the spacing between threads.<sup>15</sup>

Weft threads were carried on a bobbin within a shuttle, which had not necessarily been the case with the warp-weighted loom. A shuttle can speed up weaving, but holds only a limited amount of thread, so in order for the weaver to work without interruption, someone, usually a child, would have the job of preparing additional shuttles, using a bobbin-winder to fill the bobbins. Figure 6 shows a boy doing precisely that, along with additional, presumably filled, shuttles hanging above the loom.

Only after all of this could the weaver begin his work (fig. 4d).<sup>16</sup> The operations described above – wool sorting, spinning, all the processes involved in warping and dressing the loom – require a good deal of skill and experience, but the amount of skill required for the actual weaving is debatable. It requires an even rhythm, but beyond that it is a relatively mechanical process, albeit a time-consuming one. According to John Munro (2003, 196-7), «[i]n late medieval Flanders, weaving a standard broadcloth of 42 ells by 3.5 ells (29.4 m by 2.45 m = 72.0 m<sup>2</sup>), containing

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<sup>14</sup> Cardon supplies three charts (377-90) which detail thread counts according to guild regulations in, respectively, the northwest Mediterranean, Italy, and northern Europe. She points out (354) that in the northwest Mediterranean thread counts often gave their name to the cloths: *dotzges*, *trezges*, etc., referring to the number of ligatures of 100 threads to the prescribed width. See also Munro (2003, 195), for a more concise description of thread counts.

<sup>15</sup> Cardon (1999, 495-501) discusses at length the double function of the reed, as well as how regulations of the width of the reed and the spacing of the warp threads within it affected the quality of the finished cloth, with examples from guild records. For Flanders, see Poerck (1951, 79). England seems to have had fewer and less detailed regulations (Oldland 2019, 15; 33; 68-9).

<sup>16</sup> The *grande industrie* included both male and female weavers, but, as alluded to below by Rashi, the majority of professional weavers were men, whereas the majority of weavers on the warp-weighted loom had been women. When cloth production became an organized industry, women were primarily relegated to the lesser occupations within the industry, a dynamic similar to that described for the brewing industry in Bennett (1999).

84 lb or 38.2 kg of wool (16.3 kg of warp and 21.8 kg of weft), typically required about twelve days or more.»<sup>17</sup>

This was by no means the end of the process. As described by William Langland in the fourteenth-century poem *Piers Plowman*:

Cloth that comes from the weaving is not comely to wear  
Till it be full'd under foot or in fulling stocks  
Washed well with water and scratched with teasels  
William Langland, *Piers Plowman*, Passus 15, 450-2  
(modernization/translation mine)

Once woven, the cloth was removed from the loom to be washed. It was then subjected to fulling, which is a process of applying pressure to wet wool, similar to the felt-making process but stopping short of actual felting (fig. 4e).<sup>18</sup> Broadcloth was made of short-stapled wool, which is suitable for, and thus underwent, very heavy fulling, which would shrink the cloth by as much as half, by packing the wool in very tightly.<sup>19</sup>

The cloth would then be stretched back to something approximating its original dimension, by means of an expandable frame with hooks, called a «tenter» (hence the English expression *on tenterhooks*). Once the cloth was dry and fully stretched, the part of the finishing process which was unique to the medieval *grande industrie* began.

The nap of the cloth would be raised by means of a «teasel», named for the type of thistle from which it was made (fig. 4f). Raising, which entailed using the hooks of the teasels to raise the nap evenly all over the fabric, was followed by shearing, the clipping off of the nap which had just been raised (fig. 4g).<sup>20</sup> These two processes required great skill, and the shearing of a fine broadcloth, including final pressing and folding, might take up to five days (Oldland 2019, 28). Raising and shearing might be repeated many times in the most luxurious cloths, leaving them with a drapability and

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<sup>17</sup> Endrei attempts his own calculations (1968, 124-6), but Cardon dismisses them, I think rightly, as the product of a valiant attempt made in the absence of trustworthy data. As an archaeologist, Cardon has taken a somewhat different tack, attempting to compare guild regulations with actual surviving samples of cloth (1999, 569-77). Her main conclusion is that productivity was tremendously variable, depending on a great many factors. She singles out the weaver's dependence on a yarn supply to which he had no direct access, given that it was the master draper or entrepreneur who supplied the yarn, usually as the fruits of a far-flung putting-out system. Nonetheless, she attempts some guesses at an average figure, which turns out to be surprisingly close to Munro's figures: 15 days to weave a piece of cloth 34 meters long (2003, Table 22, 574).

<sup>18</sup> Some fulling was done by foot, some was done by water-powered fulling mills. There is a long-standing controversy over the prevalence of fulling mills. Carus-Wilson (1941) sets out the argument for wide use of fulling mills, but both Munro (2003, 204-9) and Adam Lucas (2005) make a compelling argument that there were fewer of them in use than generally supposed.

<sup>19</sup> See n. 8 above. In the Low Countries, according to Munro (2003, 204), shrinkage of broadcloth was mandated to be at least 56 percent in Bruges, and 54 percent in Ghent. As he points out, the shrinkage was greater in the width than in the length because weft yarns were more loosely woven and thus more compressible.

<sup>20</sup> Figure 4h shows a final finishing process, probably calendaring, a smoothing process which was not common before the fifteenth century.

feel much like that of silk, but much heavier. Indeed, luxury cloth was so tightly packed after fulling that even after several raisings and shearings there was enough left that the raising and shearing process could be repeated later in the life of a garment as a cleaning technique. After raising and shearing, if the cloth had not been dyed before weaving (the origin of the English expression *dyed in the wool*), it would now be dyed, a complex process in its own right, and one which also called for increasingly refined skills, as well as capital outlay.

## Chronology

It is not clear exactly when the horizontal pedal loom appeared in Europe. The sparse archaeological evidence which has been found to date suggests that it appeared as early as the tenth century in northern Europe, and spread quickly from there through northwestern Europe, although it seems to have been adopted somewhat later in southern Europe.<sup>21</sup>

There is also archaeological evidence from surviving cloth fragments. For technical reasons, the warp-weighted loom is particularly well-suited to producing a type of twill known as a four-shed twill, whereas the horizontal loom, when used for twill at all, produced a different type. As no four-shed twills appear among the textile finds from London excavations after the end of the tenth century, it seems a safe assumption that this marks the shift from the warp-weighted loom to the horizontal pedal loom, at least for large-scale production (Pritchard 1984, 67-8).

This chronology is confirmed by the first written evidence of the new type of loom. The Jewish sage Rashi of Tours, in his mid- to late eleventh century commentary on the Talmud, refers to «the part of the loom of weavers who weave by foot which is in place of the rod that goes up and down in the loom used by women» (Carus-Wilson 1969, 165). This passage suggests that the horizontal loom had been in use for some time, since the writer was able to take it for granted that his readers were familiar both with the device and with the idea that the old and the new looms were gendered differently: not only does Rashi state that women used a different type of loom, but the Hebrew word he used for weavers specifically means men (Carus-Wilson 1969, 165 note 84) and apparently carries a professional connotation as well (Ball 2009, 40).<sup>22</sup>

Further confirmation of the professional/commercialized making of cloth, presumably tied to the use of the new loom, is the appearance of weavers' guilds in city records across Europe as early as the turn of the twelfth century, in the German towns of Speyer and Mainz, for example (Brentano 1870, 52-3). There are also

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<sup>21</sup> Cardon (1999, 407) discusses the archaeological evidence for the horizontal loom at length, pointing out that a particular type of pulley which is unique to the horizontal loom has been found in tenth- and early eleventh-century sites in Haithabu (Germany), and Novgorod. Figure 145 maps the chronology of the archaeological finds. See also Endrei (1968, 23-37) and Walton Rogers (1997, 1763). Southern Europe: contra the above, Cardon (1999, 404) points to the discovery of relics on an eighth-century site in Spain which may, and she stresses *may*, have come from a horizontal loom. See also Henry (2015, 55) and Cardon (1998).

<sup>22</sup> See n. 16 above.

records of substantial payments made by the weavers' guild of London and five other English towns in 1130, the implication of which is that the guilds had already been in existence for some time (Carus-Wilson 1952, 628). Carus-Wilson also mentions (626) that teasels were among the goods for which tolls were charged at Arras and St. Omer in 1024 and 1043. This is not definitive proof that the horizontal loom was in use, but teasels were integral to the process of raising the nap, which was characteristic of the horizontal pedal loom but not of the warp-weighted loom.

Fig. 6. Horizontal loom with extra reed, spare shuttles, boy filling shuttle bobbins



Chartres Cathedral, Bay 139  
 Photographer: micheletb  
 CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

Visual confirmation of both the horizontal loom itself and of the professionalization of clothmaking is to be found somewhat later, in the stained glass windows donated by French weavers' guilds in the early thirteenth century, examples of which can be found at many cathedrals, including Bourges, Amiens, and Chartres.<sup>23</sup> The ability to donate part of such a window indicates that the guilds were prosperous, which, again, confirms that they had existed for some time.

I have gone into the chronology at length in order to establish a timeline against which changes in clothing can be set. Since the new clothes did not, of course, emerge from a vacuum, we will look first at earlier changes in clothing over the course of the Middle Ages. Beyond the actual stylistic changes, key points of analysis include gender differentiation, status distinction, and degree of complexity.

<sup>23</sup> See figure 6.



The rate of change is particularly significant: there are always changes in clothing, but the pace of those changes can vary tremendously.

Please note that the fashions discussed in this work are exclusively from men's clothing, which changed more often and more obviously than did the clothing of women in the Middle Ages. Men's clothing, particularly that of wealthy men, also tends to be privileged in both wardrobe accounts and artistic representations, since, as Sarah-Grace Heller points out, «[m]en were at the forefront of consumption and display through the Middle Ages,...having primary control of finances and selection» (2007, 4).<sup>24</sup>

### Clothing through the eleventh century

In the early Middle Ages change in clothing was very slow. Most men wore an ensemble consisting of a knee-length tunic, or *bliaut*, leg coverings, and a short cloak, an ensemble which can be seen across Europe at least as early as the seventh century C.E.<sup>25</sup> This simple ensemble was initially the dress of ordinary people. Einhard, in his contemporary biography of Charlemagne (§23) tells us that the tunic ensemble described above was Charlemagne's normal dress and characterizes it approvingly as «worn by the common people», in contrast to the robes worn by aristocrats. Notker's biography of Charlemagne, written roughly fifty years later, is very similar, and includes more detail (§34) (Thorpe, 1969).

By the late tenth century the short tunic ensemble was more or less universal male garb, worn by all classes including the highest levels of the aristocracy. Charlemagne's grandson, Charles the Bald, is even depicted in the tunic ensemble while being crowned by heaven at his coronation (fig. 7). The clothing involved varied little between classes other than in the materials which went into it. One French manuscript from the mid-eleventh century depicts, according to the legend, «kings, princes, and merchants» (fig. 8), but without the crowns in the upper register and the musical instruments in the lower it would be difficult to tell the ranks apart save that the kings appear to be wearing much richer fabrics.

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<sup>24</sup> I note, however, that in studying medieval fashion it is ultimately important to examine men's and women's clothing and clothing changes in relation to each other, rather than separately.

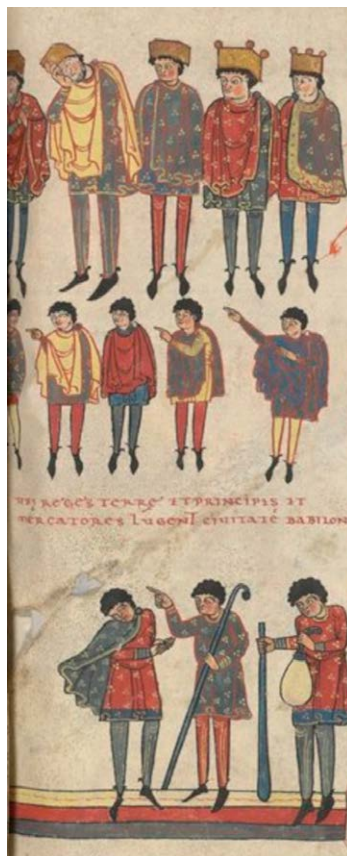
<sup>25</sup> Examples can be found throughout the Ashburnham Pentateuch (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, nouvelle acq. lat. 2334), which has been dated variously to the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, and the ninth-century Stuttgart Psalter (Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. bibl. 2° 23). See also King Edgar in the tenth-century New Minster Charter (BL, Cotton MS Vespasian A VIII, f. 2v); the Old English Hexateuch, c. 1000 (BL, Cotton Claudius B IV, f. 12v.) and figures 7 and 8.

Fig. 7. Coronation of Charles the Bald/Allegory of divine right of kings



Sacramentarium (unfinished), c. 870, Metz.  
BNF ms. lat. 1141, f. 2v.

Fig. 8. Kings, princes, and merchants weeping over Babylon «reges terrae et principes et mercatores»



Beatus de Saint-Sever, late 11<sup>th</sup> century.  
BNF ms. lat. 8878, f. 195r.

Though knee-length, this ensemble is relatively short compared to the long robes which had been the primary dress of aristocrats.<sup>26</sup> Clerical moralists, who are generally extremely reliable, if disapproving, guides to medieval fashion, duly greeted the spread of the tunic ensemble to the upper classes by violently condemning it: «indecent,» «abuse,» «diabolical superstition,» and «bizarre, shameful, and abominable to modest glances» were a few of the epithets hurled at shorter clothing and those men who wore it by Northern French and German clerics around the year 1000 (Platelle 1975, 1071-96).

Fig. 9. **St. George slaying the dragon**



Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*  
Dijon, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 168, f. 4v.

## Twelfth-century dress

The tunic ensemble spread across Europe, but it spread slowly. By contrast, when change did come, in the early twelfth century, it was drastic. The tunic

<sup>26</sup> Although warp-weighted looms were able to produce cloth long enough for aristocratic robes, it was easier to produce shorter lengths, which may account in part for the spread of a shorter ensemble.

ensemble continued to be worn, particularly below the aristocratic class, but many upper-class men began to wear long, flowing clothes. Initially these garments had wide sleeves, and were often slit to show off legs, hose, and the new type of shoe with exaggeratedly long toes (fig. 9). The tunic ensemble remained in use for most of the male population; at the beginning, the new long clothing was, at least in its initial stages, worn only by young and aristocratic men.<sup>27</sup>

The return of draped clothing, and its connection to young and noble men, is confirmed by clerical moralists, who often condemned the newly long clothing in the same terms in which moralists had castigated the short clothing a century earlier (Boucher 2008, 135).<sup>28</sup> Orderic Vitalis, writing of the newly long twelfth-century clothing, referred scathingly to «clothes that sweep up all the filth of the ground» and compared them unfavorably to «our ancestors, who wore decent clothing» (Chibnall 1973, 8:3).

### The thirteenth century

By the thirteenth century, men's clothing had evolved into an ensemble of several one-piece garments known as a *robe*, the more elaborate of which might contain as many as five or six garments, though generally only two or three of them would be worn together. The fabric was most often unpatterned, in deeply saturated colors, and there was typically a color contrast between one layer and the next, as shown in figure 10. Gender distinction is considerably blurrier than it was in earlier clothing. Although it is generally possible, by examining hair and slight differences in the length of garments, to distinguish men from women in thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century visual representations, it is not always easy, at least for modern viewers, as figure 11 demonstrates.<sup>29</sup>

As to the rate of change, though the initial change to long clothing in the twelfth century was both rapid and drastic, it was not followed by other major changes, unlike later fashion systems. Rather than getting involved in the debate as to whether the changes in twelfth and thirteenth century clothing constituted *fashion*, we can confidently say that the long clothing which appeared in the twelfth century was at the least *fashionable*, given both its widespread adoption and the chorus of condemnations which greeted its arrival.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Note that the man on whom St. George is standing in figure 9 is wearing the tunic ensemble, in contrast to St. George's clothing.

<sup>28</sup> Just as fourteenth-century moralists castigated the new short clothing in similar terms to those which had been used to inveigh against the earlier long clothing.

<sup>29</sup> In one celebrated incident, John Benton, a historian specializing in courtly love, challenged Marc Bloch's identification of a scene found on a seal in which one figure is kneeling before another as «the lover's homage». The kneeling figure is a knight, thus clearly male, and Benton believed, I suspect correctly, that the standing figure is also male, and therefore represents a knight paying homage to his liege (Benton 1991, 119-20).

<sup>30</sup> It is not part of this article to engage in the controversy over «dress» vs. «fashion», and I have tried to avoid making that distinction. Briefly, when historians began to look at dress and fashion as legitimate objects of study, one of the first theoretical questions asked was whether fashion, or, as later scholarship puts it, a/the fashion system – as distinct from dress in general – had a specific beginning,

Fig. 10. **Scenes from the Life of David (detail)**

Morgan Picture Bible. France c. 1250  
 Getty MS Ludwig I. 6. (83.MA.55)  
 Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program

Fig. 11. **Carole, *Roman de la Rose***

France, late 1320s  
 BNF, ms.Rothschild 2800, f. 6r.

and if so, when and where did it begin. The birth of the so-called Western fashion system has been variously ascribed to different centuries in the Middle Ages, most often the fourteenth, as well as to nearly every century thereafter, with particular emphasis on the eighteenth century. As Sarah-Grace Heller put it, «Fashion is born whenever you study it» (2007, 47). More recently, scholars have begun to see the idea of a people or culture without fashion as Eurocentric and condescending. See Craik (1994); more recently, Niessen (2003), who ascribes to Orientalism the idea of the West as the only culture with fashion. See also Welters and Lillethun, who describe the rise of a global idea of fashion as a true «paradigm shift» in fashion studies (2018, 65-7).

## Broadcloth and long clothes

What was behind the twelfth-century change in fashionable dress? An overall change in silhouette such as this one is never generated by a single factor, but rather by a conjunction of social, economic, and cultural factors. For example, as mentioned above, men's and women's clothing began to look more and more alike as long clothing for men evolved. This may relate to the ethos of courtly love, given what one literary scholar calls «the gender fluidity that informs courtly love service» (Burns, 1997, 19).<sup>31</sup>

There are material factors to be considered as well. Many historians ascribe a renewed taste for long clothing to the influence of the comfort and beauty of the long draped clothing and silk fabrics which European men encountered either in Outremer or via Norman conquerors.<sup>32</sup> The impact of Eastern silks was perhaps somewhat less than is generally thought, however, since silk clothing was extremely rare in Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In their authoritative text on medieval fashion, Françoise Piponnier and Perrine Mane state flatly that, until the fourteenth century, silk «remains reserved for the most part for hangings and liturgical ornaments» (1995, 75). This is further confirmed by archaeological evidence, such as the lack of silken secular clothing before the late fourteenth century in the textile fragments found in various London excavations (Crowfoot, Pritchard, and Staniland 1992, 82-126).<sup>33</sup> At the highest levels of society, at least in England and France, there does seem to have been a gradual shift to a greater proportion of silk over the course of the fourteenth century (England: Oldland 2019, 55-7; France: Wilson 2010).

The long, elegantly draped silhouettes of the clothing encountered by the Crusaders and by Norman conquerors may well have influenced the shape of European men's clothing in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but the European versions were primarily made not of silk, but of the true luxury cloth of the time: richly dyed broadcloth. Piponnier and Mane (75) assert that in this time period «Colored woolen cloths take first place in princely clothing», while George Duby suggests that in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the two major amenities of high life were good wine and «cloth of wool dyed in brilliant colors» (Duby 1990, 126). Patrick Chorley (1987, 259) also points out that in official documents of the export trade, such as taxes and price schedules, «the term “coloured”...always

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<sup>31</sup> Burns cites a number of other scholars who make the same point, including Joan Cadden, Roberta Krueger, and Susan Crane.

<sup>32</sup> Heller (2002, 105) gives an extensive list of the historians who have suggested either or both of these ideas, going back to Jules Quicherat and Camille Enlart in the nineteenth century; she cites, among many other twentieth-century scholars, Piponnier and Mane (1995) and Boucher (1987). However, she dwells on what she sees as Boucher's caution about over-emphasizing the Crusader influence, citing the 1987 English edition (170-8); a later French edition of Boucher (2008), stresses the Eastern influence rather more. In both editions, Boucher advances the theory that it was the luxurious silk cloth from the East that had the most influence, rather than the shapes of the clothing.

<sup>33</sup> Robin Fleming (2007) argues, however, for widespread use of silk earlier, in late Anglo-Saxon England.

denotes a distinct and superior class of cloth. It is never employed for cheaper goods».

The horizontal loom had enabled the production of pieces of cloth which were far longer than those woven on the warp-weighted loom. In addition, the products of the warp-weighted loom were often woven in complex patterns, while the luxurious cloth which came off the horizontal loom had little surface design, and was uniquely suited for dyeing in rich, highly saturated colors. Since it was the horizontal pedal loom which enabled the production on a grand scale of precisely the type of cloth described by Piponnier and Mane, Duby, and Chorley, it is clear that the horizontal loom was a crucial factor in the development of the longer styles of the twelfth and thirteenth century.

### The Effects of the *Grande Industrie*

In addition, as we have seen, there were a great many processes and occupations involved in producing a fully finished piece of luxury woolen cloth. The horizontal loom itself was far more complex to construct than earlier forms of loom had been, and the industry also required a great deal of supporting equipment, including sacks for transporting fleeces and wool, cleaning agents, wool cards with metal teeth, wool combs ditto, swifts, bobbins, reels, warping boards, warping paddles, warping reels, fulling vats and cleansing agents, tentering frames and their metal hooks, teasels, shears, and finally the entire complex of tools and raw materials related to dyeing.<sup>34</sup>

The production process on the horizontal loom, from sheep to finished cloth, also generated an entire aggregate of occupations, ranging from the semi-skilled to the extremely skilled. Carus-Wilson (1952, 654) estimated that there were more than twenty separate wool-working occupations in fourteenth-century Florence. There were even more in Flanders: Peter Stabel (2019, 85) states that there were more than fifty manufacturing stages, while Eric Broudy (1993, 140) goes further, stating that one (unnamed) historian estimated as many as seventy specializations in the Flemish woolen industry.<sup>35</sup>

In other words, at its its height this industry depended upon and brought about an extremely detailed division of labor, and created numerous subsidiary trades. It is clear, moreover, that the *grande industrie* needed entrepreneurs to make it work properly: no single artisan would have been able to afford the necessary personnel, raw materials, and tools to accomplish all of the above, or to coordinate the many skills and processes involved. And, given that much broadcloth was being produced for long-distance trade, entrepreneurs were also needed in the distribution end.

Thus, the complexity of the *grande industrie* had profound effects on society, and therefore on fashion. The establishment of guilds, the development of a merchant/gentry/middle class, and the resulting division of social statuses into

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<sup>34</sup> I have left dyeing out of the technical descriptions above, not because it is not important, but because its methods and the timing of the process were so variable as to make it all but impossible to summarize.

<sup>35</sup> Unfortunately, he gives no citations.

smaller and smaller tranches, both affected and were affected by the intersection of fashion and technology.

### The long and the short

The next major change in dress began suddenly in the 1330s, well before the Black Death, and introduced a revolutionary, and to some degree permanent, change in the entire silhouette of men's clothing. In my view, this development was indirectly the result of the changes in technology described above, stemming primarily from the social reverberations of the *grande industrie* and the Commercial Revolution, although changes in sewing and tailoring technology also played a part (Blanc, 2002). Admittedly, the connection between the new technologies and fourteenth-century fashion is subtle and involves a certain amount of speculation on my part. Nonetheless, I believe the connection is there, and deserves at least a brief discussion.

Fig. 12. Roman d'Alexandre



Flanders, 1338-44  
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, ms. Bodl. 264, f. 128v.  
 Courtesy of Digital Bodleian  
 CC BY-NC 4.0



We know the timing of the sartorial revolution with some exactitude: literary, documentary, and visual sources all indicate that change, primarily the progressive shortening of thirteenth-century clothing, began in the 1330s in several places in Europe (Newton 2002).<sup>36</sup> Beginning around 1340, the pace of change increased tremendously, in contrast to the earlier drastic change, which evolved slowly.<sup>37</sup> By the early 1340s the new fashions had become something quite different and very complex (see fig. 12). The clothing was short and tight clothing, often in separable pieces (head covering/collar, sleeves, upper body, lower body, hose), and it reshaped the male silhouette. Although in some ways it resembled the old tunic/hose combination, with short upper garments and men's legs on display, the actual body shapes were quite different, emphasizing the chest disproportionately, and accentuating the genital area with purses, belts, or daggers, as well as by the extreme shortness of the upper garments. In other words, the new clothing drew attention to binary gender differences, in direct opposition to the earlier, more unisex clothing.<sup>38</sup>

Moralists and chroniclers confirm that the most noticeable features of the new clothing were its shortness and its tightness; they were also particularly disturbed by what they perceived as constant change.

## Vectors of change

The factors which influenced the changes in the clothing of the fourteenth century are somewhat less obvious than those which affected twelfth-century clothing, but I suggest that the influence of the changes in technology which I have described can still be seen, though it is admittedly very indirect. Since there was certainly no one single factor, but rather a confluence of them, this theory should be seen not in opposition to, but rather in conjunction with, other theories which have been proposed to explain the revolutionary changes in dress. The most prominent explanations are both connected with the constant warfare of the late thirteenth and the fourteenth century. One is indeed technological: the new clothing is intricately cut and tailored, and it is possible that the techniques needed to accomplish this were developed in order to make tighter clothes which would fit better under armor (Piponnier and Mane 1995, 80-1; Boucher 1955).<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Newton's *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince* is an exhaustive presentation of the fashion trends of the 1330s and 1340s.

<sup>37</sup> There is a great deal of available evidence from the 1340s, both visual and documentary. Newton emphasizes the documentary evidence as well as the visual; other discussions can be found in Blanc (2002), Boucher (1955), Boucher et. al (2008), Ch. VII; Heller (2007); Piponnier (1989); Piponnier and Mane (1995), 80-92; Wilson (2011)..

<sup>38</sup> It appears that women's clothes, particularly in England and Northern Europe, followed suit, with tighter bodices and «fitchets», or pocket outlines that also emphasized the genital area.

<sup>39</sup> Briefly, armour had become more tightly fitted in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. The traditional way of constructing the linen shirt worn under armour was simply sewing together three rectangles – two for the sleeves, one for the body – and cutting a hole for the head, producing a T-shaped garment. Since garments of this type bunch up under the arms, they were no longer suitable for wearing under armor which fitted tightly, and thus a new way of constructing the

The new clothing appeared quite similar to what knights wore in battle, and a related theory accordingly suggests that the overall military appearance of the new fashion was part of what appealed to its wearers (Blanc 2002, 157-72; Piponnier 1989, 225-42).<sup>40</sup> The military aspect doubtless also influenced the very obvious gender divide which the new clothing expressed.

My more conjectural theory has to do with the social effects of the introduction of the new loom. I listed earlier the large number of tools involved in the sophisticated system of related crafts and industries surrounding the making of broadcloth, which includes not just preparatory and finishing operations, some of which were industries in themselves, such as dyeing and fulling, but smaller groupings, such as makers and repairers of the new tools). A process which could have been carried out by one person on the warp-weighted loom had now become extremely labor-intensive and specialized.

Clothmaking now also required expensive raw materials and tools, as did the finishing processes appropriate to the new types of cloth, such as fulling and dyeing. As a result, it now required capital to produce cloth on a large scale, which moved large-scale cloth production out of the household arena. It also required capital and a degree of organization to engage in the extensive trade, both domestic and long-distance, which grew up around broadcloth and the other new cloths. Enter the entrepreneur, someone with the capital and the organization to organize all of this.

At the same time, and possibly as a result, finer social distinctions were emerging over the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Concurrent factors such as the multiplication of sumptuary laws from the thirteenth century on (Wilson 2017), the vehement reactions of chroniclers to changes in dress as indicated above, and the attention paid to clothing by writers of twelfth- and thirteenth-century romances (Smith 2012; Wright 2010 and 2018) indicate that new significance was being placed on dress as a means of displaying status. One of the striking features of the new clothing of the fourteenth century is how complex it was, enabling the wearer to communicate far more subtle nuances of status, as opposed to the simple oppositions of rich/poor, noble/commoner that most earlier men's clothing embodied. Since I believe that the increase in nuances of status is one of the long-term indirect effects of the introduction of the horizontal loom, I suggest that the new fashions of the fourteenth century can be considered as indirectly resulting in part from those changes in weaving technology as well.

It does, however, lead us back to where I began: the relationship between technology and fashion is an ongoing dance in which each partner takes the lead at different times. I hope I have demonstrated that in the later Middle Ages it was technology which was the prime mover for a long period of time.

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shirt had to be devised, leading to new tailoring techniques. Oldland (2019, 115) suggests the opposite: that the advent of clothes closely fitted to the body may have increased the demand for fine broadcloth.

<sup>40</sup> Piponnier and Mane (80-1) also point out that the new clothes resemble that which was worn *under* armor, which may have made it even more shocking to see them worn as outer clothing.

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*Un changement radical dans la consommation de tissus  
par la royauté et son milieu (1293-1504): de la laine au lin et à la soie<sup>1</sup>*

## 1. Introduction<sup>2</sup>

Un poème dont le fond est une dispute théologique – la transsubstantiation – écrit et propagé dans la seconde moitié du XI<sup>e</sup> siècle expose les avantages respectifs de l'utilisation des tissus de laine et de lin (Pirenne 1926, 179; Vaan De Vyver et Verlinden 1933; Jacobs 1994). Écrit par un cultivé ecclésiastique séculier, ses connaissances devaient être liées à son milieu et se rapporter à des produits textiles de qualité – des toiles de lin fin blanchies, des tissus de laine teints. Le texte témoigne ainsi de la consommation de produits textiles de lin et de laine au sein d'un groupe de privilégiés. Dans le cas de ces derniers avec une nuance à prendre en considération: la matière première était de bonne qualité (les tissus étaient teints) mais son contact avec la peau était irritant,<sup>3</sup> ce qui n'était pas le cas du lin. L'usage des tissus de lin et de chanvre est pourtant un phénomène pas très fréquemment recueilli ni dans les documents ni dans les restes archéologiques du Moyen Âge.<sup>4</sup> La laine et la soie sont omniprésentes dans les sources écrites et dans les musées. La faible attention prêtée aux fibres végétales n'est pas très différente de celle accordée aux tissus en laine de qualité médiocre. Le poème montre que le lin était largement

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<sup>3</sup> «Holy men indeed wear woollen undercloths...for the sake of discomfort, wear wool as an ascetic practice». Jacobs 1994, 8-9. Cette idée de draps de laine rêches était maintenue au début du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle pour ceux de qualité médiocre: *Si es luxuriós, fes penitència portant cilici e estameya*, Sermons S[an] V[icente] F[errer], 1,107. DCVB, estameña.

<sup>4</sup> «Une grande partie de la production de toiles échappe aux circuits commerciaux et donc à l'écrit», (Piponnier et Mane 1995, 31-3; 53 ; Kohout et Brezinová 2015, 333).

utilisé dans la confection textile parmi les gens aisés comme chez les citadins et les paysans.<sup>5</sup>

Dans des articles antérieurs (Fernández de Pinedo et Moral 2017; Moral et Fernández de Pinedo 2019; Fernández de Pinedo Echevarría et Moral 2019a; 2019b) nous avons analysé les notables changements accomplis dans la structure de consommation à la Cour (de Sancho IV de Castille, 1294, et Jaime II d'Aragon, 1302-1304, à Juan II, 1453, e Isabel Ière de Castille, 1483-1504, Tab.1) entre 1300 et 1500: des chers lainages – teints – et de la soie aux lins et aux soieries. Fernand Braudel avait suggéré, se référant à la mode et aux tissus «sans prendre cette déclaration à la lettre, gageons qu'il y a des chances, une fois de plus, pour que l'immobilité soit d'un côté, celui de la majorité, et le mouvement de l'autre, celui du luxe» (Braudel 1979, 290).

Il s'agit maintenant de savoir si ces changements se sont également produits dans d'autres groupes sociaux avec un pouvoir d'achat inférieur ainsi que les motivations qui orientent le choix.

Tab. 1. **Consommation de tissus de la Maison de Isabel Ière de Castille (en varas), 1483– 1504**

Fibre	Varas (moyenne annuelle)	Pourcentage
Lin	1773,6	55,71%
Soie	719,5	22,60%
Laine	661,0	20,76%
Divers	21,9	0,69%
Sans données	7,6	0,24%
Total	3183,6	100,00%

Source: Fernández de Pinedo et Moral 2017; Fernández de Pinedo Echevarría et Moral 2019a sur les données de De la Torre et De la Torre (1955-56).

Note: Une *vara* en Castille est une unité de mesure de longueur qui équivaut à environ 0,8359 m.

## 2. Les sources

Les sources, bien que diverses – inventaires, ventes aux enchères, limitations des prix (taxes), droits de douane, interdictions... – sont limitées.

Les documents et tissus conservés, dans le cas des soies ainsi que dans les lainages de moyenne ou bonne qualité, sont généralement abondants. Ce n'est pas le cas des tissus bon marché, constitués par des fibres végétales – lins, chanvre... – et certaines laines, bien qu'ils étaient beaucoup plus consommés et utilisés que les soies. Ces limites à la conservation des témoignages ne facilitent pas l'analyse de la diffusion de nouveaux tissus et des modes en dehors des groupes laïques privilégiés. Le ruisseaulement du haut vers le bas de la mode des vêtements chers vis semble évident; l'ostentation contrecarrant son prix. Mais en ce qui concerne les pièces intimes – chemises, draps de lit, matelas... – pas ou peu vues par les autres, les

<sup>5</sup> *Mercatum lini*, à Zaragoza, en 1259 (Comellas 1972, 198). *Taubulis panni lini* en 1251 et *tabularum panni lini* en 1257 à Ausona (Carreras y Candi 1910, 438).

facteurs de rang social et de vanité ont été nuancés par leur prix élevé et leur faible exhibition. D'autre part, les grâces et dons évitaient les vêtements non visibles et les objets destinés à un usage domestique, pour des raisons évidentes: la générosité et la munificence du donateur ne seraient alors pas appréciées par les autres.

Les tissus usagés étaient offerts aux pauvres ou, en temps d'épidémie, détruits par le feu. Une infime partie aurait pu passer dans le marché d'occasion. D'ailleurs, à partir du moment où le papier a remplacé le parchemin, l'utilisation de chiffons de lin ou de coton pour fabriquer celui-ci a nui sans aucun doute à la conservation de ces tissus. Il faut en outre ajouter le manque d'inventaires dans les cas des groupes à faible pouvoir d'achat. A ces limitations s'ajoute l'absence générale de valorisation monétaire parfois supplée par la vente aux enchères.

Les droits de douane, les péages, ou les taxes permettent aussi d'analyser les variations de prix relatifs et l'apparition de nouveaux tissus. Mais il demeure difficile de saisir l'autoconsommation ou la vente entre voisins à l'insu de la fiscalité municipale, noble ou royale (Piponnier 1976, 424-5).

Les rois et leur entourage achetaient des tissus importés, ce qui n'était pas le cas de la grande majorité de leurs sujets. Certaines sources privilégient la mobilité ou les transformations parfois rapides par rapport, non pas à l'immobilité mais aux lents changements dans un cadre légal assez rigide pas toujours accepté. La comparaison entre les tissus importés, achetés par la royauté et son entourage, et ceux que nous trouvons dans les registres de douanes met en évidence les importantes différences en qualité et en prix. Les comptabilités tenues par les douaniers permettent parfois de saisir l'évolution du goût dans les couches moyennes, qui s'habillaient surtout avec des tissus autochtones mais aussi avec de tissus étrangers pas trop chers peut-être pour des événements précis. Ce serait le cas des tissus importés par San Sebastián et Fuenterrabía en 1293 (Fernández de Pinedo 1982, 68; 71-3). Dans des recherches précédentes, nous avons essentiellement utilisé des documents qui recueillaient l'achat de milliers de mètres des tissus pour la royauté et son cercle le plus proche. Documents dans lesquels on fournissait la date, le vêtement, la fibre, le prix, les mesures... Ce genre de source ne semble pas avoir existé ou survécu pour analyser la consommation de groupes sociaux à revenu beaucoup plus faible. Il faut faire appel aux dons, aux inventaires, aux enchères ou aux dots dont les données tendent à être beaucoup moins ajustées à la consommation réelle.

La mode n'était probablement pas le moteur exclusif du changement. La technologie et la baisse des coûts de production ont pu avoir un poids considérable dans le remplacement de certains tissus. Les modifications dans les tissus peuvent être encouragées en raison des modes, en particulier celles opérées dans les couches sociales supérieures (effet de demande). Cependant, le changement technique et la diminution des coûts répercutés sur les prix ont pu être la cause du remplacement de certains tissus par d'autres (effet d'offre). Il y a quelques exemples historiques fort connus. Donc, mode mais aussi diffusion de nouvelles fibres et évolutions techniques avec des effets sur les prix. A quoi il faut ajouter une éventuelle baisse du coût des matières premières et le recours à une main d'œuvre qualifiée (Farmer 2017; Navarro 1997; Ladero 1993, 132).

Avec ce type de sources, ce n'est que de manière très limitée qu'il est possible d'approcher la structure de consommation des fibres. Dans cette recherche, nous



nous sommes principalement attachés à essayer de spécifier la diffusion de tissus coûteux, plus exactement des *holandas*<sup>6</sup> et des soies.

Nous n'avons pas cherché explicitement à analyser la structure de la consommation par type de fibre mais plutôt à voir la diffusion « vers le bas » de l'achat de toiles de qualité et de vêtements de soie au lieu de ceux en laine: de la royauté à la noblesse puis aux sujets urbains, ecclésiastiques... à travers quelques exemples concrets.

### 3. Les antécédents

Dans le cas de la couronne de Castille et probablement aussi d'Aragon, la diffusion relative du goût mauresque vers l'époque d'Enrique IV (1454-1474), voire beaucoup plus tôt, complique l'analyse et les interprétations.

Les achats ordonnés par le roi Juan I de Castille à son *Camarero Mayor* et effectués à Grenade en 1380 pour des sommes considérables (133 pièces pour lesquelles on paya 1 605 *doblas moriscas*, environ 53 767,5 *mrs.*) indiquent un goût pour les vêtements morisques (Tab. 2).

Tab. 2. Produits textiles achetés à Grenade pour Juan I (1380)

Produits	N° pièces	<i>Doblas</i>	<i>Mrs./pièce</i>
<i>Xerevias</i> (1)	1	65,0	2 177,50
Draps au poids/ <i>Paños de peso</i>	5	253,0	1 695,10
<i>Sarsabanes</i> avec de l'or	7	202,5	969,11
<i>Sarsabanes</i> sans or	1	15,0	502,50
Draps en soie en damier	1	14,0	469,00
<i>Sarsabania</i>	25	321,5	430,81
<i>Xerevias</i> (2)	6	72,0	402,00
Draps de soie	9	107,0	398,28
<i>Rixas</i>	11	128,0	389,82
<i>Almaysares</i> (3)	1	9,5	318,25
<i>Almaysares</i> en soie	2	16,0	268,00
<i>Rabias</i>	43	310,5	241,90
<i>Albaremes</i>	21	91,0	145,17
<i>Total</i>	133	1 605,0	

Source: Suárez 1977, t. II, document 181.

Notes: (1) Draps nommés *Xerevias* avec des lettres morisques en or. (2) *Sarsabania* *viadillas* qu'on appelle *Xerevias*. (3) Pour le prix, bien que cela ne soit pas expressément indiqué, ils seraient également en soie.

Les tissus au poids, les *xerevias* avec des lettres arabes en or et les *sarsabanes* avec de l'or étaient parmi les plus chers, essentiellement en raison de leur teneur en or, et le prix des *sarsabanes* avec et sans, or suggèrent que la quantité d'or représentait une

<sup>6</sup> *Holandas*: tissu en lin plus minces et chers que les lins de Flandre et de Bretagne. D'après Sabbe (1942, 17-9), «toile tissée en Belgique [Flandre, Hainaut, région de Gand...], mais blanchie en Hollande».

valeur similaire au tissu, certainement en soie. Les *xerevías*, et évidemment les autres tissus qualifiés « en soie », semblent être élaborés avec cette fibre. Ceux d'un prix inférieur (entre 10 et 4 *doblas*) peuvent être des coiffes (*tocas*), les nommés *almaysares*, en soie, et les *albaremes*, en lin blanc (Gual 1968). Ainsi, à la fin du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle, un monarque castillan s'habillait, au moins à certaines occasions, de tissus de soie, de soie et d'or ou de lin, originaires ou achetés à Grenade, et tout indique qu'ils étaient des vêtements vus (*prendas vistas*).

Les sociétés d'Al-Andalus, d'Afrique du Nord et du Moyen– Orient avaient leur propre structure de consommation textile. Le poids des soies, des toiles, du coton, etc. était bien plus élevé qu'en «Occident» au Moyen Âge. La chronique du voyage de Clavijo, ambassadeur d'Enrique III auprès de Tamerlan, en est un bon témoignage du tout début du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle. Le texte de Ruy González de Clavijo (2003) signale sans aucun doute les tissus et les vêtements qui ont retenu son attention et qui ont été utilisés dans un cadre particulier. Cet auteur indique le type de tissus consommé par la cour et l'entourage (petits fils, fils, épouse...) de Tamerlan. Deux sont les limites de ce témoignage: ce qu'on lui a permis de voir et ce qui a attiré son attention. Les cadeaux qu'il a apporté de Castille à Tamerlan renseignent sur les produits qui étaient considérés en «Occident» comme de grande valeur, à l'exception de la soie, puisque la plus grande partie provenait d'Orient. Parmi ce qui lui a été volé à l'aller on signalait du tissu écarlate, des vêtements écarlates de Florence doublés et une pièce de lin fin. Parmi ceux qu'il offre à Tamerlan ou à son fils aîné, on peut trouver de «vêtements en drap et en laine» (*ropas de paños y lana*), «vêtements florentins» ou «écarlates». Si l'on ajoute la toile fine, qui pourrait être de Reims, au début du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle les tissus les plus précieux pour un monarque castillan étaient ceux élaborés en laine chère, teints en écarlate, de Florence et sans doute ceux en soie.

Au retour, il est possible de penser que les cadeaux offerts au roi de Castille étaient les plus estimés de l'empire Tamerlan ou de sa cour. Cependant il semble que tous ou presque tous lui ont été volés: des draps de soie *setunis*, *comocanes* de Cathay et des vêtements écarlates, ainsi que d'autres choses. Le *setuní*, proviendrait de la ville chinoise de Zeitoun Tsé-toung, (Dozy et Engelman 1869, 109; 340). Les *comocanes*, des brocarts de soie, étaient tous de Chine. Clavijo avait déjà souligné que les tissus de soie de Cathay étaient les meilleurs du monde, mais surtout «*los que son sin labores*», c'est-à-dire sans ornements. On les vendait à Samarkand en provenance de Caly et de l'Inde de Tartarie – *setunies*, *comocanes*, *cendales*, taffetas et *tervenales* – (González de Clavijo 2003, 91; 96; 109). Les tissus teints en rouge, les soies et les toiles de lin chères semblent être les produits textiles les plus prisés par les monarques et les empereurs d'Orient et d'Occident.

#### 4. Groupes sociaux et consommation

Pour tenter de préciser la diffusion «vers le bas» des *bolandas* et des soieries dans diverses sphères sociales, nous avons fait recours principalement, mais pas exclusivement, à plusieurs documents faisant référence aux nobles, aux agriculteurs, au clergé et aux citoyens.

Vers le milieu du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, dans le cas de la noblesse castillane, très proche de la cour, nous avons utilisé les comptes (1453-1455) du *Camarero Mayor* de Don Pedro López de Estúñiga, comte de Plasencia, décédé en 1453, et de son fils, Don Álvaro de Estúñiga, en 1455. Don Pedro avait été «*el Justicia Mayor del rey*», le juge en chef du roi. En outre, nous nous sommes servi de l'inventaire des tissus remis par Don Rodrigo Ponce de León – entre autres titres de noblesse, Marquis de Cádiz – à sa future épouse, Doña Beatriz de Pacheco, vers 1471. L'inventaire de Don Pedro fut réalisé entre mai 1454 et janvier 1455 (Cañas 2014; Sáez 1805, 524-8). L'influence mauresque apparaît clairement dans les tissus des Ponce de León. Au contraire, les Estúñigas, particulièrement riches, semblent être sous d'autres influences et plus économes.

Une certaine vision, partielle mais panoramique, de la consommation du royaume de Castille peut être donnée par la limitation des prix (*tasa*) de 1442, bien que du point de vue du souverain et du maintien d'un certain ordre. La taxe limite le prix de vente de certains tissus, mais limite également le coût de la tondre (*tundido*) des tissus. Dans cette section, apparaissent des tissus bon marché dont le prix vente n'était pas limité: draps de Perpignan, des *palmillas* et des *blaos* (Saéz 1786, 107-13; Puñal 2001). Ce qui est peut-être le plus surprenant, c'est l'absence de certains tissus de soie, très acquis par la maison d'Isabel Ière, comme les velours.

Nous avons utilisé pour l'étude de la consommation des laboureurs deux témoignages. Un de Palencia (Vieille Castille) (Serrano 1906, 211-31) et l'autre de Lérida (Catalogne intérieure) (Inventaris 2014, n° 86, 1068-1702). Pour les citadins, nous prendrons les cas d'un maître bâtisseur et sculpteur et de la veuve d'un avocat (*jurisperito*), tous deux habitants de Lérida (Inventaris 2014, n°65, 883-48). Pour d'autres groupes urbains, en outre, nous aurons recours à un inventaire très particulier des biens volés à Olite, ville du royaume de Navarre (1496) d'environ 2000 à 2500 habitants (Inventario 1978).

Le document le plus problématique est sans doute celui qui fait référence à Olite, avec lequel nous essayons d'aborder la consommation de certains textiles par les citadins aisés. En février 1495, les troupes du comte de Lérin, du parti des Beaumontés, liées à Ferdinand le catholique, mettent à sac la ville navarraise d'Olite où elles demeurent jusqu'au début du mois de mai. En juillet 1496, les Rois catholiques ordonnent l'établissement d'un inventaire de tout ce qui a été volé; inventaire dont une bonne partie a été conservée dans divers livrets, certains répétés et avec des corrections. Apparemment, presque toute la population a été volée. C'est une source incommode. Il est très probable que les objets chers et petits aient été facilement cachés (bijoux, argent, pièces de monnaie...) et que ceux qui étaient très bon marché n'aient pas attiré l'attention des pillards. Il est très certain que les vols se soient concentrés sur des vêtements chers et de vente facile. Mais comme notre objectif principal n'est pas de jauger le poids relatif des différentes fibres mais de voir si certaines «nouveauautés» avaient été acquises par des groupes sociaux urbains aux revenus inférieurs à la royauté et à la haute noblesse, ce problème est secondaire. Si les *bolandas* n'apparaissent pas, on peut penser qu'elles n'ont peut-être pas été consommées ou simplement qu'elles ont été cachées avec succès. Mais si elles sont mentionnées, il est clair que, avec un poids inconnu, à Olite, à la fin du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, certains voisins les ont achetées. Ainsi, le document sous-estime sans

aucun doute les vêtements bon marché (picots...) portés par une bonne partie ou une majorité de la population. En revanche, il y aurait une tendance à accentuer le poids de ce qui était considéré comme un luxe à l'époque (le plus volé). Dans la mesure où il s'agit d'évaluer si les transformations dans la consommation se sont propagées et dans quelle mesure elles ont pénétré dans d'autres couches sociales à faibles revenus, les vols indiqués représentent une source acceptable.

#### 4.1 La haute noblesse aux goûts mauresques: les Ponce de León

On a pu seulement quantifier les tissus avec lesquels ont été confectionnés les *briales*, robes, jupes (*faldrillas*)... grâce au reçu que la fiancée a donné à son futur époux. À l'écart, relativement, restent les tissus appelés *cosas de albameria* et de *tocar* (ornements pour la tête et les cheveux), sans nombre ni valeur. Il est très probable que pour ces articles, le terme « pièce » (*pieça*) désigne un objet ou un nombre de vêtements et non pas une pièce avec une certaine quantité de *varas*. Toute une série d'accessoires en tissu, la plupart avec des noms arabes, n'apparaissent pas dans la systématisation recueillie dans le tableau 3. En ce qui concerne les brocarts, les soies et les laines – 353 ½ *varas* – 19 pour cent étaient des brocarts, 53 pour cent des soies (en particulier des velours, des damas et des satins) et 28 pour cent des tissus en laine (*grana*, *conray mayor*, lilas et tissu de Rouen).

Tab. 3. Tissus de soie et de laine en *varas* et par couleurs donnés par D. Rodrigo Ponce de León à sa future épouse Doña Beatriz de Pacheco vers 1471

	Cramoisi	Vert	Violet	Brun, Brunâtre (Pardillo)	Fauve	Noir	Écarlate (Grana)	Bai (Vayo <sup>7</sup> )	Total
<b>Soie</b>									
Brocart r.r. <sup>1</sup>			9,50						9,50
Brocart v.v. <sup>2</sup>	32,0	13,00	13,75						58,75
Damas					22,00				22,00
Satin ( <i>Raso</i> )						22,75			22,75
Velour	34,5	28,33		25	25,75	30,00			143,58
Total soie	66,5	41,33	23,25	25	47,75	52,75			256,58
<b>Laine</b>									
<i>Conray</i> m.c. <sup>3</sup>									27,00
Écarlate c. <sup>4</sup>							5,5		5,50
Écarlate c. F. <sup>5</sup>							11,5		11,50
Lila						24,00			24,00
Rouen <sup>6</sup>					13,66			15,25	28,91
Total laine					13,66	24,00	17,0	15,25	96,91

Notes: (1) brocart *rico raso*, (2) brocart *vellud villorado*, (3) *conray mayor de cascabel*, (4) *grana colorada*, (5) *grana colorada de Florencia*, (6) *pañño de Roan*. (7) Nous interprétons *vayo* como bai, couleur blanc jaunâtre de la peau de certains chevaux.

Dans le cas des soies, les velours prédominent clairement. D'après les données d'Isabel Ière ils étaient les plus consommés mais avec un prix légèrement inférieur à la moyenne des tissus de soie (Fernández de Pinedo et Moral 2017, 582 tableau 11 ; Fernández de Pinedo Echevarría et Moral 2019a, 260 tableau 3; Heyd 1959, Supplement I 708-98; May 1957, 194; 200-01; 211-2; 215-6; 219; 223; 225; Lassalle and Desrosiers 2020; Navarro Espinach 2020). Parmi les tissus de laine, les différences de prix sont faibles. Tous ces tissus étant importés, il est probable qu'ils proviennent de trois origines géographiques différentes – Florence, Flandre et Rouen ou avec expédition à Rouen. Encore une fois, la présence de tissus de Rouen est à noter (Piponnier 1970, 109; 303; 305; 331). Parmi la haute noblesse, vers 1470, les soies en quantité et sans doute en valeur, même à l'exclusion des brocarts, ont remplacé les draps de laine coûteux, du genre des *contray mayor* ou des florentins. Il est plus problématique de classer et d'estimer l'importance de ce qu'ils appellent *albameria y de tocar*. Douze pièces de *albame* (*albamar*: couverture, tapis) sont élaborées en lin et dix en soie, mais nous ne savons pas le tissu de deux pièces de *almalafas* (vêtement féminin, très probablement), de quatre *almocazas* et de six *almáisares* (*almאיִזָּר*: coiffe morisque en gaze). La fibre n'est pas indiquée non plus dans les produits de *tocar* – deux pièces de *implas* (coiffe ou voile de tête) avec origine à Xativa ou six *implas* romaines –, ni des 50 ½ *varas* de soie chère (*seda cocha*) ni de 18 ½ *varas* de soie grège (*seda cruda*) ni des 53 ½ *varas* de *arsanaydas* (?) (Sáez 1805, 527).

L'absence de draps de lit et d'oreillers ou de coussins est surprenante (sauf si *almalafa* est interprétée comme un drap), mais ces pièces pourraient faire partie du trousseau de la mariée fournie par ses parents. En tout cas, les vêtements visibles – *briales*, robes, tabards, capuchons, mantilles et capes – semblent être principalement en soie et subsidiairement en laine. Certaines des soi-disant choses de *albameria* et de *tocar* peuvent-être en lin, coton ou soie. D'après le nom, elles ne semblent pas venir d'Europe du Nord. Si certaine noblesse castillane appréciait les toiles en lins fins ou très fins, c'était dû à l'influence mauresque. Le début en 1482 de la guerre contre Grenade aurait conduit à leur remplacement par les *holandas*.

## 4.2 La noblesse proche de la cour: les Estúñigas

Après la mort de Pedro de Estúñiga (vers 1388-†1453), *rico hombre*, comte de Plasencia et *justicia mayor* de Juan II (1406-1456), un inventaire détaillé de ses biens personnels a été effectué (Cañas 2014). L'inventaire n'échappe pas à la critique de Fontaine à l'égard de ce type de sources (Fontaine 1993, 233). Ces inventaires reflètent ce qui restait à la fin d'une vie. Dans ce cas, il ne s'agit pas de ce que *los ricos hombres*, la haute noblesse, ont acquis au milieu du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, mais ce que le comte de Plasencia a retenu des biens acquis plutôt au deuxième quart du siècle. Quoique certains vêtements soient qualifiés d'usés (*traidos*) et même avec des trous faits par des souris, sur plus ou moins cinquante-neuf objets liés au lit ou à la chambre (oreillers, draps...) cinq sont explicitement classés comme «neufs», ce qui indique un remplacement plus ou moins régulier, très souvent avec la Flandre comme origine.

L'inventaire contient de nombreux mots arabes – *almohada, almadrake, alfómar, alcatifa, almofrejes, fazalejas...* – coexistant avec des termes castillans pour des objets similaires – matelas, couvre-lits...-. Dans le cas du textile de maison, les *bolandas* sont absentes, et elles ne semblent pas avoir été incluses dans le générique *flandes* – couvre-lit en toile de Flandre (deux), draps en toile de Flandre, toile fine, oreillers de Flandre, literie de Flandre...-. La difficulté de systématiser des données surtout qualitatives n'empêche pas ce document de fournir des informations pertinentes.

Le plus surprenant est peut-être que dans la maison d'un comte, pour son propre usage et celui de sa famille – à l'exclusion des serviteurs –, les couvre-lits de Flandre coexistent avec des couvre-lits de «toile de la terre» ou des matelas de «toile de la terre» pour le seigneur et les dames (mère et filles du comte). Sur huit registres expressément consacrés aux toiles, on a classé comme des toiles de la terre de différente finesse un grand drap (*sábana de ocho piernas*) et 73 (65+8) *varas*, plus six *varas* de chanvre. Le comte envoya une partie (douze *varas de lienzo curado delgado*) de cette toile à *Doña Elvira*, sa fille, pour faire des chemises. Les chausses des «petits messieurs» sont en tissu de *San Juan*.<sup>7</sup> C'était un tissu qui servait aussi à faire des *briales* aux jeunes filles de la comtesse. Provenant du lit du seigneur, sont notées trois paires de draps, deux d'entre-elles en toile de Flandre mais l'autre en toile castillane. Bien que peu abondantes, les tapisseries (*mantas de pared*) de Séville à figures coexistent avec des françaises, richement décorées, ou un drap sévillan avec des images (signalé comme vieux) est à côté des draps français avec des scènes de chasse. Incontestablement, le comte s'habillait de riches étoffes de soie et de draps de laine: *tapete* noir doublé de zibeline, tige (*ropa de estado*) noire avec doublure de soie noire, drap fauve *de estado* doublé de soie *rasa pardilla*, des pourpoints de différentes couleurs (*azeytuny pardillo, azeytuni negro alcachofado, damasco negro de alcachofa*), mais aussi avec une capuche (*capuz*) en drap brunâtre de Valladolid, des jupes (*sayas*) de Rouen (*ruán de monte*), une soutane (*loba*) en Rouen brunâtre doublée de renards (*raposos*), un burnous (*albornoz*) en laine de chèvre... Contrairement à une certaine fréquence des tissus français, les italiens ne sont pas expressément mentionnés qu'une seule fois – un bonnet (*caperuza*) de rouge écarlate italien.

Aussi surprenant, mais peut-être pas exceptionnel, est le recyclage par le comte de certains vêtements de laine et de soie. Il semble relativement courant qu'une doublure en bouracan (*bocarán*) noir d'un habit monacal (*monjil*) puisse être réutilisée dans ce cas pour faire une housse pour les ornements du cheval du seigneur, ainsi qu'un *balandrán* (robe longue) en écarlate doublé en *pardillo* (drap brunâtre) utilisé pour faire une robe (*ropa*) pour un page. Mais c'est quand même surprenant qu'à partir d'une tige en drap noir (*ropa de estado de paño negro*), le comte se soit fait confectionner une robe courte (*ropa corta*) doublée de zibeline et qu'il ait conservé la doublure en camelot du vêtement initial. Un autre vêtement en drap brunâtre, doublé de *tapete* noir, fut allongé avec un morceau du même drap brunâtre et fut doublée avec des peaux d'agneaux et la vieille doublure en *tapete* noir sauvée. Des manches et des morceaux de *tapete* brunâtre qui avaient resté de l'habit monacal

<sup>7</sup> Selon le taux de 1442, les *Sanjuanes* étaient parmi les plus chers tissus de laine fabriqués dans la péninsule mais un peu moins chers, environ 25%, que les plus beaux *contray* ou les *bervis* de Flandre, qui étaient les moins chers des importés.

(*monjil*) ont été utilisés pour faire des pourpoints (*jubones*). Mais la chose la plus étonnante fut défaire un habit monacal en camelot fauve doublé en bouracan et doubler avec lui le devant d'une cotte en damas pour Madame Elvira, fille du comte. Le pourpoint (*jubón*) récent de satin noir du comte, à sa demande, a été donné pour doubler deux *capelos* pour Doña Leonor et Doña Elvira, ses filles, et un pourpoint de brocart cramoyé a été utilisé pour faire un *capelo de vestir* pour Doña Leonor. Malheureusement, le manque d'estimation monétaire des vêtements et des tissus ne nous permet pas d'avoir une idée juste de la garde-robe du comte (Cañas 2014, 120-24; 127-31). Mais l'impression tirée est qu'à la hauteur de 1450 dans un certain secteur de la haute noblesse castillane, plutôt économe, la soie avait ou était en train de déplacer à la laine, mais il ne semble pas que les linges chers, les *bolandas*, aient pénétré dans la consommation ou aient remplacé les linges moins fins de Flandre et de la terre.

Tab. 4. Prix de certains textiles à Plasencia, en 1457-1458

Tissus	Mrs./vara	Vêtement
<i>Blanqueta</i> (laine)	80	<i>Brial</i>
Toile d'Hollande/ <i>Liengo de Olanda</i>	75	
Drap brunâtre/ <i>Paño pardillo</i> (laine)	75	Capuche donation/ <i>Capuz donado por el noble</i>
Drap brun/ <i>Paño pardo</i> (laine)	28	Aumône de la dame noble/ <i>Limosna de la noble</i>
Drap blanc/ <i>Paño blanco</i> (laine)	26	Quatre couvertures blanches et bourre/ <i>Cuatro mantas blancas y borra</i>
Drap brun/ <i>Paño pardo</i> (laine)	25	Aumône de la dame noble/ <i>Limosna de la noble</i>
Futaïne/ <i>Fustán</i>	20	Aumône probablement
Toile/ <i>Liengo</i>	18,75	Nappes/ <i>Manteles</i>
Treillis/ <i>Terliz</i> (lin/coton)	12	Deux oreillers ou matelas/ <i>Dos almadragues</i>
Treillis/ <i>Terliz</i> (lin/coton)	12	Deux petits oreillers ou matelas/ <i>Dos almadraguejas</i>
Bure/ <i>Sayal</i> (laine)	10	Deux couvertures/ <i>Dos mantas</i>
Toile/ <i>Liengo</i>	9,2	Deux traversins, deux oreillers et bourre/ <i>Dos traveseros, dos almofadas y borra</i>
Toile/ <i>Liengo</i>	8	Deux matelas/ <i>Dos colchones</i>
Étoupe/ <i>Estopa</i>	5	Deux dos d'oreillers ou matelas/ <i>Dos suelos de almadragues</i>
Étoupe/ <i>Estopa</i>	5	Deux dos de petits oreillers ou matelas/ <i>Dos suelos de almadraguejas</i>
La fibre n'est pas donnée	15	Nappes/ <i>Manteles</i>
La fibre n'est pas donnée	180 mrs./unité	Deux almafares/ <i>Dos almafares</i>

Source: "Razón del precio que tuvieron diferentes géneros en la ciudad de Plasencia en dicho reynado, tomados de las cuentas que dio a don Álvaro de Estúñiga, conde de dicha ciudad, Pedro de Cepeda su recaudador", 1457-1458 (Sáez 1805, 515-18).

Les vêtements attribués au fils (1455) ne peuvent être considérés comme un inventaire. Très peu de vêtements en lin sont notés, et dans ce document aucun n'est classé comme *bolanda*, tandis que la toile castillane, la toile épaisse et la toile rugueuse apparaissent quoique pas très fréquemment (Cañas 2014, 128-43).

Cependant, une autre source faisant référence à ce même personnage, désormais nouveau comte – son père est décédé en 1453 – permet de remarquer qu'en plus d'acheter du linge bon marché, autour de 1457-1458, un de ses administrateurs acquit à Plasencia pour son seigneur une petite quantité de *holanda*, d'un prix considérable, sans en préciser la destination. Le prix de la toile hollandaise était proche de celui du tissu acheté pour faire un *brial* (Sáez, 1805, 515-18). La *holanda* est donnée au maître d'hôtel du comte, ce dont on peut déduire qu'elle était à l'usage du noble, mais il s'agissait d'une quantité modeste, une *vara* et demie.

D'après ces données, d'ailleurs pas très abondantes, on pourrait soutenir que la soie a été adoptée plus rapidement, en quantité, parmi la haute noblesse que les toiles de lins fins et chers, les *holandas*.

Différents rythmes de diffusion et d'acceptation pour les vêtements visibles (soie) que pour les presque invisibles (les *holandas*) ? Une plus grande précision de la comptabilité liée aux achats qu'aux inventaires ?

### 4.3 La consommation textile du royaume vue de la cour. La taxe des prix de Juan I (1442)

Le document divise les tissus en tenant probablement compte du type de consommateur et des prix: a) tissus fins de laine et tissus de soie, en principe tous importés, qui sont parmi les plus chers à quelques exceptions près (de 100 à 400 *mrs./vara*); b) les tissus fabriqués dans le royaume de Castille et ceux rapportés d'Aragon (de 60 à 20 *mrs./vara*); c) et un troisième groupe hétérogène (de 15 à 5 *mrs./vara*) qui comprend les futaines, les toiles, les *picotes* et les gros draps de laine (Tab. 5 et Tab. 6).

Il convient de noter que dans cette taxe il manque des tissus importants à l'époque. Parfois, la raison est évoquée: étant donné la diversité des tissus il est difficile de déterminer les prix, par exemple des draps écarlates anglais ou d'autres couleurs. Pour des raisons similaires, les écarlates florentins ou d'Ypres ou autres ne sont pas valorisées. Les brocarts très chers non plus, à cause de l'or et de la soie qu'ils contenaient. On laisse le prix à la discrétion des autorités locales. Par conséquent, il n'y a pas de références de prix pour les tissus de soie ou les plus chers en laine teints en écarlate. Le prix des *terveneles* et des *bocaranes* est donné en pièces (300 *mrs.* et 70 *mrs.* respectivement), bien qu'ils soient inclus dans la section «draps de soie et bouracans». Il ne fait aucun doute que les *terveneles* étaient en soie. Et singulièrement, il manque des tissus de soie largement consommés par la Maison d'Isabel Ière: *cebties*, damas, satins, taffetas et surtout velours, tissus de soie de qualité moyenne, mais qui représentaient près de la moitié des *varas* de soie acquises (Fernández de Pinedo et Moral 2017, 582 Tableau 11).

Il est probable que les tissus importés – Ypres *menor*, *contray* de qualité (*suerte*), *cestres* et *bervis* de Flandre – tous dans la catégorie «des plus fins», pourraient être à la portée de ceux qui s'habillaient en *Sanjuanes* du même prix ou un peu moins chers que les importés (Tab. 5). Toutefois la différence entre les prix des tissus importés, des florentins non teints en *grana* (177 *mrs./vara*) et de ceux teints en écarlate (de 200 à 400 *mrs./vara*) par rapport aux plus chers de la péninsule (*sanjuanes*, à 60



*mrs./vara*), était très considérable. Il est probable que ceux qui pouvaient acheter des *sanjuanes* achetaient parfois des Ypres *menores*, des *bervís* de Flandre ou des *contrais* de qualité (*suerte*). Mais pas des draps de laine importés plus chers.

Tab. 5. Limitation des prix de 1442. Tissus de soie et de laine. *Mrs./vara*.  
Qualité: la meilleure

Tissus de soie	<i>Mrs./vara</i>	Tissus de laine
<i>Aceituní</i> velu velouté/ <i>Aceituní vellut vellutado</i>	400	Écarlate de Londres
<i>Aceituní</i>	300	
Tapis de table/ <i>Tapete</i>	250	
Damas	240	
	200	Écarlate d'Ypres
<i>Aceituní</i> plat/ <i>Aceituní raso</i>	180	
	177	Florentin non écarlate
	160	<i>Velarte de contray mayor</i>
	150	<i>Velarte de Melinas</i>
	140	<i>Brujas de ventaja</i> / Les meilleurs draps de Bruges ?
	120	Malines de moyenne qualité/ <i>Melinas medianos</i>
	120	<i>Clusquin de Liria</i> /Lièrre
	120	<i>Ypré mayor</i>
	100	<i>Brujas de suerte</i>
	90	<i>Trestes</i> / <i>Cestre</i>
	85	<i>Ypré menor</i>
	80	<i>Bervi de Flandes</i>
	60	<i>Contray de suerte</i>
<i>Cendales</i>	60	<i>Sanjuanes serrés</i> ou très foncés et brunâtres/ <i>Sanjuanes prietos y pardillos</i>

Source: Saéz 1786, 107-113.

En 1442, les tissus de soie étaient parmi les plus chers, mais un *aceituní* de toutes les couleurs, *vellut vellutado*, avait le même prix qu'un drap écarlate de Londres et un *aceituní raso* de toutes les couleurs était aussi cher qu'un tissu florentin non teint en écarlate ou presque du prix d'une étoffe écarlate d'Ypres. Il faut également considérer que les prix étaient indiqués sans tondre et qu'une très petite somme doit être ajoutée aux draps de laine pour ce procédé. Vers le milieu du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, ce document reflète déjà une approximation entre les prix de certains tissus de soie chers et ceux de laine coûteux. Certaines soies étaient abordables pour les acheteurs de draps de luxe, c'est-à-dire la royauté, son entourage et la noblesse. Serait-on confronté à un cas de changement de mode dû en grande partie à une nouvelle offre?

La taxe de 1442 enregistre une production textile de laine bon marché et diversifiée en couleurs en Castille (tissus de Valladolid, Palencia, Cuenca, Cordoue, Ciudad Real, Baeza, Chinchilla) et importée de la Couronne d'Aragon (Saragosse et Valence, ici la présence de *bervís* et, bien qu'ils n'apparaissent que dans la taxe de tondre, les draps de Perpignan). *Picotes*, futaines, bures (*sayales*), toiles figurent parmi

les moins chers (Tab. 6). En revanche, le tarif n'indique pas la présence de tissus de lin coûteux, tels que les *holandas*. Ainsi, du point de vue de la Cour, du pouvoir, les toiles de lin coûteuses passent ou bien inaperçues ou bien elles étaient d'une consommation si restreinte qu'on n'a pas envisagé de limiter leur prix. En ce qui concerne les lins bon marché, le tarif de 1442 les laisse à la discrétion des autorités municipales, ce qui indique moins leur faible importance qu'une diversité régionale. La taxe montre également la médiocre qualité de la draperie castillane et probablement l'existence très limitée d'une production de tissus de soie. Mais sans aucun doute, le tarif publié en 1442 était très particulier et limité dans le nombre de produits considérés.

Tab. 6. **Limitation des prix de 1442. Tissus des royaumes de Castille et d'Aragon, classés par type de fibre. Mrs/vara**

Tissus de laine	Mrs./vara	Toiles...
<i>Sanjuanes</i> serrés ou très foncés et brunâtres	60	
<i>Sanjuanes</i> de toutes couleurs.	50	
<i>Pardillos berbis de Valencia</i>	45	
<i>Pardillos de Valladolid y Segovia</i>	40	
<i>Pardillos de Zaragoza</i>	35	
Draps de laine de <i>Palencia, Cuenca, Córdoba</i> bleus et vert foncé	34	
Brunâtres d'autres lieux	30	
Autres draps de <i>Palencia...</i>	30	
Draps vert- foncé de <i>Ciudad Real, Baeza, Chinchilla</i>	30	
Draps d'autres couleurs de <i>Ciudad Real...</i>	28	
Drap brunâtre pur et haut de couleur de <i>Ciudad Real...</i>	24	
Drap brun blanchâtre... fort de couleur/ <i>Paño pardo canillo... cerrado de color</i>	24	
Drap brunâtre blanchâtre... pas fort de couleur/ <i>Paño pardo canillo ...no subido de color</i>	20	
Picote foulé/ <i>Picote pisado y abatanado</i>	15	Futaine teinte avec l'écorce de l'orme ? / <i>Fustán del Olmo</i>
	12	Futaine teinte avec l'écorce de l'olivier sauvage ? / <i>Fustán de acebuche</i>
	12	Futaine de Gênes et d'autres lieux d'Orient / <i>Fustán de Génova y otros lugares de Oriente</i>
<i>Sayal</i> foulé/ <i>Sayal pisado y abatanado</i>	7,5	
	6	Toile de lin... / <i>Lienzo de cerro de lino</i>
Grosse toile pour faire des sacs/ <i>Xerga para saquería...</i>	5	
	4,5	Étoupe/ <i>Estopa</i>

Source: Saéz 1786, 107-113.

#### 4.4 Les laboureurs

Comme dans presque tous les documents de ce type, qui enregistrent la consommation des groupes sociaux ruraux ou urbains, les lacunes sont importantes en ce qui concerne la fibre avec laquelle les vêtements ont été confectionnés, les mesures ou la valeur. Par conséquent, une catégorie «sans données» a été laissée pour évaluer le degré de représentativité des chiffres.

Dans le cas d'un couple marié d'agriculteurs d'un village (San Salvador de El Moral) de la province castillane de Palencia, en 1466, sur l'ensemble des vêtements, linge de maison et linge de corps, 41 pour cent avait été fabriqué avec des fibres végétales et 24 pour cent en laine (Tab. 7).

Tab. 7. **Vêtements... textiles d'un couple marié de laboureurs de San Salvador de El Moral, province de Palencia, 1466**

Fibre	N <sup>o</sup> de pièces	Pourcentage
Lin/ <i>Lino</i>	10	18,52
Toile/ <i>Lenzo</i>	3	5,56
Lin- coton	3	5,56
Futaine/ <i>Fustán</i>	1	1,85
Coton	1	1,85
Étoupe/ <i>Estopa</i>	4	7,41
<b>Fibres végétales</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>40,75</b>
<b>Laine</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>24,07</b>
<b>Sans données</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>35,18</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>100,00</b>

Note: Nous avons interprété *alfarda de algodón* comme ornement utilisé par les femmes et *bustan* comme futaine, *aljuba de Yple añilada* comme manteau mauresque avec du drap d'Ypres et une autre *blay* comme en drap *blau*.

Il se peut qu'une partie de l'activité de cette famille ait consisté à carder de la laine en complément de leurs revenus agricoles-élevage, puisque quelques vieilles cardes et quelques vieilles grandes cardes en fer (*un par de cardas viejas e unos carduços viejos*) sont indiquées dans l'inventaire, bien que rien ne laisse entendre qu'ils tissent. Il est fort probable que les tissus en coton et en futaine aient été importés et en provenance d'Al Andalous.

Le 30 novembre 1463 fut réalisé un inventaire des biens d'un *agricola* (*pagés*) et de son épouse dans la région de Lérida.<sup>8</sup> Nous avons regroupé les produits textiles en trois catégories: a) linge de maison (tels que *lançols*, *tovalles*, *tovallons*, *coixins*, *flaçadas*, etc.); b) vêtements pour homme et femme; c) matières premières brutes (Tab. 8).

On ne sait pas si le couple était engagé, directement ou indirectement, dans la production de tissus en fibres végétales pour leur propre usage ou aussi pour la

<sup>8</sup> *Inventario de Bartolomeu Guaites, Pagés, i de seva muller Maria*. Les objets mentionnés ont été donnés à *Esteve Guaites, net de tots dos*, Inventaris 2014, t. 2, n<sup>o</sup> 86, 1068-1072. Le transcripteur traduit le terme latin *agricola* par *pagés*.

vente, car ils avaient pas mal de *canas* de toile et de tissus de laine, en plus de treize livres de pelotes de lin, un morceau de chanvre et de laine pour faire des sacs. En tout cas, on note une prédominance des fibres végétales.

Dans le domicile, avec un faible degré d'indéfinition (seulement le 28%), la plupart des linges de maison étaient confectionnés avec du lin et du chanvre, une bonne partie en plus de mauvaise qualité (étoupe). Parmi les vêtements, l'indétermination de la fibre est élevée. Il est très probable que la laine ait été prédominante, mais peut-être pas de qualité aussi basse que les soi-disant «mélanges» (*mezclas*) et burail (*burel*). La soie n'apparaît que de façon anecdotique comme dans le col d'une robe de femme. Des toiles et des laines bon marché étaient à la base de la consommation de tissus d'un laboureur et de sa femme, qui ne semblaient pas être des paysans pauvres car ils possédaient quelques objets en argent: deux verres à pied et une petite cuillère.

Tab. 8. **Vêtements et linge de maison (pièces) inventoriés d'un riche couple de *pageses* de la région de Lérida en 1463**

Fibre	Maison	% maison	Vêtements	% Vêtements	Tissus en <i>palms</i>	% tissus
Toile/ <i>Liengo</i>	22,0	32,12			451,5	66,00
Étoupe/ <i>Estopa</i>	23,0	33,57			232,5	34,00
Lin et coton	2,0	2,92				
<i>Bocarán</i>	2,5	3,65				
<i>Burel</i>			4	25,00		
<i>Mezcla</i>			1	6,25		
Sans données	19,0	27,74	11	68,75		
Chanvre et laine					Une pièce	
Étoupe et lin en pelotes					13 <i>libras</i>	
Total	68,5	100,00	16	100,00		100,00

Source: Inventaris 2014, t. 2, n° 86, 1068-1072.

Note: On a estimé *unos, unas* comme deux. Lorsque dans un matelas, un coussin... la face était constitué d'un tissu et le dos d'un autre, on a considéré deux demi-morceaux ou pièces.

#### 4.5 Les citadins

Tout d'abord l'inventaire d'un sculpteur et maître d'œuvre de la cathédrale de Lérida en 1441. Il présente une structure de consommation pas très différente en ce qui concerne la relation entre les fibres végétales et la laine bien qu'évidemment beaucoup plus riche en vêtements que les précédents (Tab. 9).

Son inventaire répertorie 151 ½ vêtements et linge de maison. La fibre est proposée pour 71, le 47%. De ces 71 habits, 55 pour cent sont élaborés avec des fibres végétales, 28 pour cent en laine, un modeste 3 pour cent en soie (deux doublures en *tercenes*) et 14 pour cent est de classification problématique.

Bien que le pourcentage de ‘sans données’ soit très élevé, étant donné que parmi eux abondent les pièces élaborées en fibres végétales (*tovallola, traversers...*), il est très probable que les pourcentages de fibres végétales, en tout cas, soient en dessous de la réalité.

En plus, on signale 41 *alnes* d'étope tissée chez un tisserand et 50 *alnes* de fil chez un autre. Et deux *libras* de lin d'Alexandrie en partie filé, mais propriété de la veuve (Inventaris 2014, 839-41; 845).

Tab. 9. **Vêtements d'un maître-constructeur et sculpteur décédé (Lérida), 1441**

Fibre	N° pièces	Pourcentage
<b>Soie</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1,32</b>
<i>Tercenel</i>	2	
<b>Laine</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13,20</b>
<i>Blanquet</i>	2	
<i>Bristo</i>	6	
<i>Bruneta</i>	2	
<i>Burell</i>	2	
<i>Ras vert</i>	6	
<i>Sanjuan</i>	1	
<i>Verní</i>	1	
<b>Fibres végétales</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>25,74</b>
Chanvre Perpiñán	19	
Étope	10	
Grosse futaine	2	
Toile	4	
Lin	2	
Lin fait à la maison	2	
<b>Fibre sans classer</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6,60</b>
<b>Sans données/non fourni</b>	<b>80,5</b>	<b>53,14</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>151,5</b>	<b>100,00</b>

Source: Inventaris 2014, t. 2, n° 65, 833 et ss.

Note: Nous avons interprété *Bristo* comme Bristol, *ras* comme Arras. Et six paires de *lançols de cànem, de drap de Perpinya* et trois paires et demie de *lançols per als infants, del dit drap* comme chanvre de Perpignan (p. 839).

Dans le cas de l'inventaire de la veuve d'un expert judiciaire de Lérida (1481),<sup>9</sup> quelques 118 vêtements et linge de maison sont recueillis. On offre la fibre pour le 48 pour cent. Sur ce pourcentage, la majorité, 65 pour cent, sont élaborés en fibres végétales, en étope et surtout en toile, et un 30 pour cent en laine. La laine est généralement très bon marché – étamine, mélange (*mezcla*), burail (*burell*), *molada*<sup>10</sup> – et semble liée à des vêtements visibles – gonnelles, jupes (*faldetas*), habit monacal (*monjil*)... Seul le *monjil* pourrait être fabriqué avec du tissu d'Arras. Précisément

<sup>9</sup> Veuve d'un expert judiciaire (*jurisperito*) de Lérida. (Inventaris 2014 n° 102, 1481, 8 juin, Lleyda, 1216-1224).

<sup>10</sup> Tissu similaire au burail, peut être utilisé en deuil, Coromines 1985, v. V, LL-NY,740.

celui-ci et une *gramalla* étaient doublés, l'un d'une fourrure blanche, l'autre d'un tissu vermeil gros (*tela vermeia grossa*). En outre, il est à noter l'existence d'une pièce d'étamine de sept *alnes*, d'un drap de demi-laine (*media lana*) de six *alnes* et écheveaux de fil de lin pour le tissage, ou du lin pour la filature, un écheveau ou une pièce *grossa* de huit *alnes* d'étope et une quinzaine d'écheveaux. Seuls six petits écheveaux (*madexetes*) de fil mince d'Alexandrie (*d'Alexandre*) sont à souligner, ainsi que quatorze écheveaux de lin *mig cuyt, prim* dont la veuve avait fait don à l'église de San Andrés pour faire des *corporales* (Inventaris 2014, n°102, 1222). Etant donné qu'il y a deux *pintes* [peignes] de *pentinar* [peigner] *li, bu gros e l'altre prim* (Inventaris 2014, n° 102, 1220), on peut en déduire qu'à la maison on filait ou tissait du lin et de l'étope. Malheureusement, le tissu de trois chemises *velles de dona* et d'une chemise mauresque n'est pas indiqué. On consommait du fil fin d'Alexandrie mais on ne signale pas la présence des *holandas*.

Avec toutes les réserves déjà évoquées, les données d'Olite sont moins homogènes puisqu'elles touchent différentes catégories sociales mais elles ont l'avantage de valoriser les produits textiles très fréquemment. Nous avons utilisé ce que nous appelons des données sûres, c'est-à-dire celles qui sont détaillées individuellement et avec leur valeur en florins. Afin de ne pas exagérer la présence de certains vêtements et linge de maison, lorsque le document mentionnait *unos/unas*, par exemple certaines chemises ou des chemises, on a noté le minimum, deux.

Tab. 10. Nombre d'objets textiles volés à Olite auxquels on a donné une valeur. Valeur en florins navarrais. 1496

Fibre	N° vêtements ou équivalent	Pourcentage vêtements	Valeur (florines)	Pourcentage valeur
Soie	34	3,25	320,9	11,41
Laine	71	6,79	631,0	22,43
Fibres végétales	226	21,63	344,2	12,23
Divers	33	3,16	188,1	6,69
Sans données	681	65,17	1328,8	47,24
Total	1045	100,00	2813,0	100,00

Source: Inventario 1978

Notes: Avec «données sûres». On a estimé *unos, unas* comme deux.

Soie: brocart, *celí*, velours, *tiraz*; Laine: Brujas, *bruneta*, camelot, *contray*, étamine, écarlate, Londres, drap, Perpignan, Rouen, serge, *sayal*. Fibres végétales: coton, chanvre, étope, foutaine, toile, lin, Bretagne (1), Flandre (8), Hollande (4), treillis. Divers: mélange de soie et de drap, *verdegay, pebret* et autres.

Les acheteurs d'Olite semblent disposer d'une large gamme de tissus. Sur les vêtements volés, aucune information n'est disponible concernant le type de fibre dans près des deux tiers des cas (65,17%), bien qu'en valeur (florins) pour près de la moitié (47,24%). En tout cas, on compte 364 vêtements et linge de maison, élaborés majoritairement en fibres végétales, et à peine quelques importations (Bretagne, Flandres, Hollande). Après vient la laine et enfin la soie. Comme nous l'avions déjà noté dans les achats de la trésorerie d'Isabel Ière, ces pourcentages

changent lorsque la valeur en florins est prise en compte, mais avec une nuance importante: la soie reste à la troisième place (voir Tab. 10). La structure de consommation spécifiée pour les citadins aisés n'est pas celle de la cour. Ils auraient dépensé autant dans des tissus de laine que dans l'ensemble des toiles et des soies.

Une structure similaire est observée lors de l'analyse des pièces ou des morceaux de tissus volés mesurés en *codos* et en valeur. Le degré d'indétermination est très bas (seulement 21% sans données). La plupart des *codos* étaient en fibres végétales, après en laine et de manière presque anecdotique en soie (voir Tab. 11). En valeur (florins), la laine vient en première place, suivie des fibres végétales et de la soie en troisième position. Par rapport à ce que nous avons vu dans d'autres groupes sociaux (agriculteurs...), la soie, bien que très modestement, était consommée et fut volée à la fois sous forme de vêtements et en tissu. De plus, les *holandas* apparaissent, bien que de manière réduite. Une structure sociale plus complexe, comme c'était normal dans un noyau urbain (Olite était reconnue comme ville), se traduit également par une consommation plus variée et plus riche.

Tab. 11. Textiles volés à Olite en *codos* et valeur (florins de la Navarre)

Fibre	<i>Codos</i>	Pourcentage <i>codos</i>	Valeur (florins)	Pourcentage valeur
Soie (1)	14,00	1,42	69,73	19,01
Laine (2)	202,17	20,55	155,27	42,33
Fibres végétales	530,33	53,90	98,97	26,98
Divers (3)	35,33	3,59	7,53	2,05
Sans données (4)	202,00	20,53	35,33	9,63
Total	983,83	100,00	366,83	100,00

Source: Inventario 1978.

Notes: (1) damas et *vetí* noir. (2) *Bruneta* (de couleur brun), *cadin*, *márrega*, mélangé d'Aragon, Perpignan, drap de demie écarlate, de *San Giron*, de *Tudela*, de deuil, brunâtre (*pardillo*), *sayal*. (3) *Bordat* et bourgrain (*bocarín*). (4) toile fine (*tela delgada*), *tobajón*, coiffe (*toca*), tablier (*devantat*).

## 5. Les hollandes

La première référence que nous avons trouvée à un tissu explicitement nommé comme *holanda* date de 1444, dans une faillite commerciale à Lérida (Catalogne), *a peça d'Olanda prima*, à côté de *vellutats de couleurs*, d'un objet en or et argent et d'autres biens probablement chers, ce qui indique que ce linge était considéré comme un tissu précieux (Madurell 1969, 619-20). Vers cette époque (1449) on trouve dans les comptes du roi René plusieurs «cannes» «de toile fine de Hollande».<sup>11</sup>

Au milieu du siècle (1457-1458) le receveur de Don Álvaro de Estúñiga, déjà à cette époque comte de Plasencia en raison de la mort de son père, le *Justicia Mayor del reino* susmentionnée de Juan II, note l'achat d'une chère toile de *Olanda* (Tab. 4). La ville de Plasencia était située entre les foires Medina del Campo et Séville et il est

<sup>11</sup> Lecoy de la Marche, 1873, docs. 606 à 774, pp. 226 et 338: 14 cannes de toile de Hollande... Le linge apparaît lié à la table et à la chambre à coucher, mais peut-être il fut utilisé pour faire des «chemises».

très probable que la pénétration de ce tissu en Castille ait eu lieu par Séville ou par les ports du nord de la Péninsule, et dans ce cas vendu dans ces foires (Casado, 2018, 111-32).

Une taxe du milieu du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle nous permet d'avoir une vision des différents types de toiles importées (avec des données plus proches de celles d'Isabel Ière que de celles proposées en 1442) et de placer les *bolandas* dans l'ensemble des tissus de lin et de chanvre (Tab. 12).

Ce tarif, daté de 1462, fait ressortir l'origine géographique des toiles: Hollande, Flandre, Bretagne et d'autres, bon marché, d'origines très diverses (Loyarte, Morlaix, Vitré...). Celles de Hollande de 80 à 30 *mrs. /vara*, celles de Flandre de 30 à 25, celles de Bretagne de 18 à 15 et le reste de 11 à 5. Il y avait sans doute des toiles péninsulaires régionales ou locales moins chères, non comprises dans la taxe. Mais vers le milieu du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, les toiles de Hollande étaient de loin les plus chères. Seules les lustrées (*bruñidas*), les plus minces, de Flandre se rapprochent du prix des grossières de Hollande. Les différences entre une «Hollande» et une «toile de la terre» allaient probablement de dix à un.

Tab. 12. Taux du «au milieu du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle». Toiles et chanvres

Produit	Mrs./vara
Toile d'Hollande, la plus mince.	80
Toile d'Hollande, pas si bonne.	60
Toile d'Hollande, plus commune	50
Toile d'Hollande, plus grossière.	30
Toile de Flandres lustrée ( <i>bruñido</i> ), la plus mince.	30
Toile de Flandres sans lustrer ( <i>por bruñir</i> ), la plus fine	27
Toile de Bretagne, la plus mince.	25
Toile de Flandres, la plus mince, sans lustrer.	27
Toile de Flandres lustrée et sans lustrer grossière.	25
Bretagne la plus commune	18
Bretagne plus grossière	15
Toile d'étoupe de Vitré ? / <i>Cañamasa de vitse</i> [¿cañamazo de Vitré?]	9
Toile d'étoupe de loyarte / <i>Cañamasa de loyarte</i>	7
Toile de Morlais	11
Toile du Portugal	7
Toile d'étoupe	5
Toiles de Vizcaya et Guipúzcoa (1)	Autorités municipales

Source: Paz 1973, 358-366.

Note: (1) Un tarif de Cuenca de 1462 ne nous fournit pas le prix de la *vara* de toile de *Vilbao* (Biscaye) mince, quoiqu'il signalait qu'on devait réduire son prix dans un quart (Iradiel 1974, 308-309).

Au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle le terme *olanda* renvoie sans doute à la Flandre que Charles V héritera (voir note 6). Plus tard, il semble que ces *olandas* aient été imitées dans d'autres endroits. En général, derrière le terme *olanda* se trouve le lieu de production – *una toalla de olanda de Cambray* (1518), *olandilla de Cambray* (1539). Les toiles d'Hollande et de Cambray étaient qualifiées d'«exquises» (Checa 2010, 1132; 2525).



Ce taux suggère, par rapport à celui de 1442, non pas seulement l'existence d'une grande variété de toiles de lin importées chères, mais que leur consommation s'était répandue dans tout le royaume de Castille, sans aucun doute de manière très inégale, géographiquement et socialement. Le trousseau de l'archiduchesse (fille des rois catholiques) lors de son voyage en Flandre (1496) portait *Olandas*, ce qui n'est pas étrange. Mais il est éloquent qu'une bonne partie ait été achetée à Tolède, dans le centre de Castille (Ladero 2003, 99).

Dans le dernier quart du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, à Murcie, on signale l'existence d'un drap de lit de deux *varas* de *holanda* avec des rubans d'écarlate évalué à 1000 *mrs.*, par rapport à d'autres en lin, entre 100 et 540 *mrs.* Mais on signale aussi deux draps de lit en lin de Gênes à 1045 *mrs.* chacun (Abellán 2009, 158-60). Dans l'inventaire (1464) réalisé par la veuve de D. Alonso de Sotomayor, propriétaire de plusieurs domaines dans la région de Cordoue et décédé à l'âge de 28 ans, il y a cinq draps de lit de *Olanda*, deux paires d'oreillers de *Olanda* et deux tissus *Olanda* teints, l'un brunâtre (*pardillo*) et l'autre fauve, textiles liés, en général, à la chambre à coucher (Cabrera 1975, 40-1). En 1479, olandas sont mentionnées à Quart (Valence) (Valdecabres 2008, 105).

Les données sur les tissus de Hollande d'un autre type proviennent des vols accomplis à Olite: deux chemises, dix *codos* divisés en deux pièces (huit plus deux), la doublure d'un *cubrichet* (une coiffe), deux draps de lit *reales*, d'un prix extraordinaire (30 florins), une *serviada* (serviette probablement), et un drap de lit. Nous ne savons pas à quoi serviraient les dix *codos*. Les chemises et la coiffe peuvent être liées aux vêtements vus en partie, mais pas le reste: draps de lit, *serviada*... Sur ses six propriétaires, trois étaient des femmes (une juive) et trois hommes, deux avec des positions et des fortunes remarquables – le receveur (*el recibidor*) d'Olite, Johan Miguel, et le *protonotario* (chef des notaires ou celui qui dépêche avec le roi et endosse ses certificats). Rien n'est clair sur le troisième, mais il ne semble pas être une personne riche. Les draps de lit *reales*, très chers, ont été volés au *protonotario* (Inventario 1978, 92) et les deux chemises et huit *codos* en tissu au receveur. Aux femmes appartenaient une coiffe, deux *codos* en tissu, la doublure du *cubrichet* et un drap de lit. La *serviada* était, elle, au troisième homme. Si nous avions disposé de la valeur des tissus, sans doute aurions-nous pu constater que les pertes les plus importantes furent celles subies les deux personnages les plus éminents mais sans titre de noblesse.

Un autre exemple, assez curieux, provient du don de la reine Isabel Ière à Doña Francisquita et à Beatriz, la Latina, en 1487: de la *holanda* à 124 *mrs./vara* et du lin à 36 *mrs./vara* pour faire deux chemises; les manches, vues, en *holanda*, le corps (*el cuerpo de las camisas*), très probablement couvert avec un autre vêtement, en lin à 36 *mrs./vara*.<sup>12</sup>

Les *holandas* n'étaient pas inconnues dans les royaumes de Castille et d'Aragon depuis le milieu du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, tant chez la noblesse que chez certains bourgeois. Mais elles n'étaient pas entrées dans la consommation des ecclésiastiques.

<sup>12</sup> El libro del limosnero de Isabel la Católica 2004, 78. D'accord avec les données de la p. 81, 36 *mrs./vara* était le prix du lin fait à la maison, *lienzo casero*.

Bien que la soie et le lin fin fassent partie de la liturgie depuis l'Antiquité, il n'est pas évident qu'il s'agisse de fibres, à l'exception de celles à bas prix, consommées par le bas clergé, probablement pour des raisons socio-idéologiques et un attachement notable aux vêtements traditionnels. Les soies étaient très ostentatoires, les lins fins trop agréables. Ainsi, les inventaires conservés au siège de Lérida et liés à son clergé ne sont pas une source adéquate pour saisir l'évolution de la consommation de certains tissus. Il faut attendre à 1539 pour que l'inventaire d'un chanoine de Lérida indique qu'il avait possédé quatre surplis (vêtement liturgique, bien que dans ce cas, privé). Deux étaient en *tela d'Orlanda*, un autre en *talicu* et un autre de *filet*. En plus six *coxineres grans bordades, totes de Orlanda*, avec les bords en soie noire et écarlate, usagés, et un *pentinateur de tela de calicú ab trenes de grana y seda blanca*.<sup>13</sup>

Les lins très fins appelés *holandas* étaient déjà présents dans la péninsule ibérique au milieu du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, se répandant parmi la royauté et la noblesse tout au long du reste du siècle, atteignant même certains groupes urbains, mais de façon marginale. En quantités importantes même pas parmi les groupes riches. Entre les urbains pas riches, comme dans le cas de la soie, on peut les retrouver surtout comme ornements ou en remplaçant des voiles de soie. Si l'on excepte la royauté (Maison d'Isabel Ière), la consommation de *holandas* parmi la noblesse et parmi les riches urbains semble limitée. En tout cas, même entre la haute noblesse, très loin des achats effectués par Lope de Villacorta pour le compte du roi Juan II en 1453 aux foires de Medina del Campo: un peu plus de 258 *varas* de toile de Hollande. Parmi cette quantité, 72,25 *varas* de la toile mince de Hollande et le reste nommé simplement *holandas*. Les *holandas* étaient destinées pour garnir des pourpoints (*jubones*) et les chausses du roi (González 2005, 243-4 notes 138 et 142), c'est-à-dire pour adoucir le contact du tissu vu avec la peau.

On n'a pas l'impression qu'elles ne se soient pas répandues, puisqu'elles apparaissent un peu partout (*Olite, Lérida, Toledo, Plasencia, Murcia, Zaragoza*, foires de *Medina del Campo, Valencia*...), mais pour leur large utilisation il y avait deux obstacles: leur prix élevé et leur usage, au moins par la royauté, à cette époque surtout comme linge de maison, plus lié à une vie privée confortable qu'à montrer la richesse du possesseur. Cet usage n'était pas un stimulant pour orienter leur achat vers des ressources qui pouvaient être utilisés pour un luxe extérieur et visible. Ce serait, avec son prix, un élément dissuasif. Entre l'acquisition d'un tissu visible du même prix, il est probable que ceux qui n'avaient pas un revenu élevé et même parmi ceux qui en disposaient, ils aient préféré opter plutôt pour ce qui était visible que pour ce qui était agréable, mais dans la sphère privée. Au milieu du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, la famille d'un secrétaire du Roi, les Delgado, consommait des *holandas*, mais avec modération. Les dix-neuf draps de lit étaient en étoupe, lin ou toile. Sur onze chemises de *Don Juan Delgado*, six étaient en toile de Biscaye, à 476 *mrs./une*, quatre en *holandas* et une en Rouen à 525 *mrs.* chacune (Thomson 2019, 134; 146-52).

Il se peut que la présence des *holandas* s'inscrive dans un mouvement de diffusion de nouvelles toiles en lin. La taxe de 1462 comprend les *lienços de Viscaya e*

<sup>13</sup> La personne responsable de la transcription interprète *calicó* comme tissu blanc en coton (Inventaris 2014, 1693). Le chanoine de l'église de Lérida était une personne plutôt aisée.

de *Guipúzcoa* dont le prix est laissé à la discrétion des autorités municipales. Dans la taxe de Cuenca à la même date, apparaît le *lienço de Vilbao, delgado*. Et dans les inventaires d'Aragon entre 1487 et 1497 l'existence du *lienço vizcayno* est indiquée. Gênes aurait exporté des tissus de lin coûteux. Des toiles génoises pour draps de lit un peu plus chères que les *bolandas* sont recensées à Murcie à la fin du XVe siècle. La *Beatilla de Bizcaya* est mentionnée dans la vente aux enchères post mortem (1539) d'Isabel de Portugal (Paz 1973, 360; Iradiel 1974, 309 ; 294 et ss.; Serrano y Sanz 1915, 86-90; 1917, 122; 1919, 744; Heers 1957, 114; Abellán 2009, 159-60, Checa 2010, 1374).

## 6. Aumônes et dons

F. Braudel avait signalé une certaine consommation de toile chez les paysans, remplacée plus tard par des tissus de laine (Braudel 1979 t. I, 274). Cependant, les sources, du moins ibériques, ne montrent pas beaucoup la présence de vêtements vus en toile. Cela peut tout simplement dériver du problème de sources, comme nous l'avons déjà indiqué. Certains tableaux du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, faisant notamment référence à la Résurrection du Christ, avec de personnes presque nues, dessinent des tissus très légers et transparents. Dans *Les très richesses heures du duc de Berry*, les chemises des moissonneurs sont vraisemblablement en toile. Dans un dessin incolore de quelques mineurs à ciel ouvert dans le sud d'Alava et au nord de Burgos, on a essayé de montrer la légèreté du vêtement permettant d'apprécier, à travers le tissu, les cuisses des travailleurs. Il est très probable que ceux-ci, au moins en été (l'exploitation minière en général était une activité des mois secs), fussent habillés de toile.<sup>14</sup> Même probablement en hiver et pas seulement les ouvriers. Des hobereaux d'Oñate (Guipúzcoa) en 1388 portaient ce type de tissu (vêtements de *lyno*, sans faire mention de la laine) (Díaz de Durana et Fernández de Larrea 2004, 326). Quelques fois les *jubones*, vêtements vus, pouvaient être confectionnés en futaine *del olmo*, laine ou soie (Sáez 1786, 112). C'est le cas du *jupó de fustanya* d'un prêtre, en 1402, (Inventaris 2014, n<sup>o</sup> 57). Pourpoints et jupes en futaine, *sayos* noirs en toile, pas très fréquemment, sont inclus entre les vêtements du comte de Plasencia en 1478 (Lora 1991, 317-38). Il est très probable que l'usage de vêtements visibles en toile ou en autres fibres végétales ait été beaucoup plus important que ce que les sources conservées signalent.

Cependant, les sources écrites, lorsqu'elles se réfèrent à des vêtements donnés aux pauvres (parfois aux très pauvres, aux mendiants, mais pas toujours) les montrent pour la plupart faits avec des tissus de laine bon marché (Tab. 13) et lorsque les toiles sont mentionnées, le doute subsiste qu'il puisse s'agir de draps de lit pour les pauvres accueillis dans les hôpitaux. Dans les aumônes du roi Juan II à Séville en 1409 nous trouvons un don de chaussures et de linge à treize pauvres, mais ils sont dans un hôpital. D'autres reçoivent des *blaos*, du *sayal*... (Vilaplana 1974, 442).

<sup>14</sup> Chancillería de Valladolid. Planos y Dibujos, carpeta 30, n<sup>o</sup> 448. Date vers 1493.

Tab. 13. **Dons aux femmes, aux enfants, aux aveugles, aux captifs libérés, aux gens du peuple... en mrs. et fibre**

	Laine	Toile	Soie	Sans données	Total
Captifs	102 605,5			2 190,0	104.795,5
Reste	11 666,0	315,5	396,0	9 356,5	21 734,0
Pourcentage sur la quantité totale de dons (187 159 mrs.)	61,06%	0,17%	0,21%	6,17%	67,61%

Source: *El libro del limosinero de Isabel la Católica*, 2004.

Notes: Exclut personnel de la Maison royale, ecclésiastiques, noblesse...

Captifs: À Córdoba: 116 hommes de Loja et 17 femmes, avec bon drap de la terre pour sayos, capas, camisas, jubones (102 605,5 mrs.). La soie était destinée à vêtir le *galleguillo loquillo* (le petit galicien en peu fou).

## 7. Conclusions

À cette époque, selon les sources écrites, les vêtements vus étaient en général en laine ou en soie, de prix plus élevé au fur et à mesure que l'on montait dans l'échelle sociale. Ceux liés à la vie privée étaient en toile, coton ou futaine, même quelque fois en chanvre. Les changements de mode semblent se produire plus rapidement dans les vêtements vus que dans le linge de corps et de maison, sauf peut-être dans le cas de la royauté. Dans le cas des soies et des lins coûteux, l'influence de Grenade aurait pu être un élément accélérateur des transformations: achat des lins chers, mais pas exclusivement des *holandas*. Il semble qu'il ait été possible les acquérir dans de nombreuses villes des royaumes chrétiens de la péninsule (Lérida, Plasencia, Toledo, Murcia, Olite, Zaragoza, foires de Medina del Campo...) au moins depuis les années quarante du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle. Mais les *holandas* ont été achetées de manière très limitée par les citadins et pas de façon très abondante par la noblesse.

L'ostentation a joué en faveur des tissus visibles contre le confort des lins doux mais chers, et peu vus. Les *holandas* apparaissent chez les «riches» citadins, pas en grandes quantités, comme linge de maison ou de corps (draps de lit, oreillers...) et parmi ceux qui ont moins de pouvoir d'achat comme des parements ou ornements (coiffes, manches...). Quelque chose de similaire à ce qui s'est passé avec les soies utilisées comme parure ou garniture. La diffusion était limitée par le prix, aussi bien dans le cas des *holandas* que dans les soieries. Et dans le premier cas en raison aussi de son utilisation dans des biens textiles avec peu de visibilité extérieure.

On ignore à quel moment les *holandas* ont commencé à avoir une certaine diffusion, qui furent les premiers consommateurs et si elles remplaçaient d'autres tissus ou se développaient en raison d'une augmentation des revenus de certains groupes socio-économiques. Comme dans le cas des soies, en raison de leur prix élevé, leur clientèle était constituée de riches qui achetaient probablement déjà des tissus similaires auparavant, bien qu'en quantités plus limitées. Ce qui semble vérifiable, c'est qu'au milieu du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, au moins, nous rencontrons des *holandas* à la cour du roi René, du roi Juan II de Castille et dans un magasin de produits textiles coûteux à Lérida. Un peu plus tard on les retrouve au moins chez la noblesse castillane, mais dans ce cas l'influence mauresque et non pas seulement le

prix aurait supposé une barrière à l'entrée jusqu'à la guerre de Grenade. Dans le cas de la reine Isabel Ière, nous n'avons des données qu'à partir de 1482, mais sa consommation fut spectaculaire. Dans les couches sociales à très hauts revenus, sa consommation semble avoir été davantage lié au confort intime (draps de lit, nappes...) qu'à l'apparat, mais sans comparaison avec la Maison d'Isabel Ière.

Quelques rares exemples suggèrent que dans les groupes à faible revenu, les *bolandas* furent utilisées comme vêtements visibles ou au moins pour la partie visible de certains vêtements comme la coiffe à Olite ou les manches de chemises dans le cas de *La Latina* et de *Doña Francisquita*. Dans ces contextes sociaux, l'ostentation plutôt que le confort serait le principal facteur de diffusion.

Dans le cas des soies, les motifs de substitution aux laines teintées coûteuses semblent clairs parmi la royauté et la noblesse. Le prestige de la soie et une baisse plausible de son prix due à divers facteurs auraient facilité sa mise sur le même pied que certains draps de laine coûteux et serait un facteur explicatif parmi d'autres. Le commentaire de Clavijo au début du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle ne doit pas être ignoré: les soies de Cathay étaient les meilleures du monde, mais surtout «celles qui sont sans ouvrage». Ce type de tissu, plat, sans dessins, est celui qui semble avoir déplacé les draps écarlates, pas les *comocanes* et les brocarts, chers en matières premières et en main d'œuvre.

Lins chers (de Reims, *ceñdales* ...) et soieries seraient des produits très désirés mais trop chers pour une consommation importante même parmi les groupes les plus privilégiés. Une hypothétique baisse de prix ou la capacité de produire de la toile de lin très mince à des prix élevés mais abordables comme les *bolandas* ou bien des soies à des prix inférieurs à celles importées d'Orient, auraient stimulé leur consommation – dans le cas des soies au détriment des draps de luxe. Une demande préalable et une baisse des prix (combinaison des effets de l'offre et de la demande) seraient parmi les facteurs du changement.

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Julien Villain

*L'innovation de produit et les dynamiques de l'offre sur les marchés des étoffes de laine dans la France du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Quelques aperçus quantitatifs et qualitatifs*

## **1. Introduction: Les dynamiques de l'offre sur les marchés des étoffes au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle**

L'Europe a connu au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle une hausse de la consommation des biens de «commodité», destinés à accroître le confort et le plaisir – comme les étoffes, les accessoires de parure, les denrées coloniales ou les équipements intérieurs –, consommation à laquelle même des milieux sociaux modestes ont pu accéder. Grâce à l'essor économique séculaire, les revenus de larges segments de la paysannerie et de l'artisanat ont en effet crû, et de nombreux consommateurs ont pu augmenter et diversifier leurs dépenses d'alimentation, de vêtement, de mobilier, de bibelots ou de produits culturels.

Cette poussée consumériste s'explique sans doute aussi par les transformations de l'offre de produits portées par les fabricants et les commerçants. Dans les grandes villes, beaucoup de boutiquiers veillaient ainsi à proposer une gamme de produits faisant la part belle aux nouveautés, et à piquer la curiosité de leurs clients par des dispositifs commerciaux les mettant en valeur (Mui et Mui 1989). Dans certaines branches, les marchands-fabricants se coordonnaient même avec les détaillants pour vendre des biens fréquemment renouvelés et susciter chez les consommateurs le désir d'acheter – et éviter par-là la saturation des marchés (Poni 1998; Pallach 1987). C'était particulièrement notable sur celui des étoffes, les plus consommés des produits manufacturés à l'époque préindustrielle.

La nouveauté en matière textile pouvait prendre deux formes. La première consistait en un jeu sur les caractéristiques secondaires des produits comme les couleurs ou les motifs. Un des cas les mieux documentés et les plus précoces est la Grande Fabrique de Lyon, qui depuis les années 1670 pratiquait le «cycle annuel»: les dessins des soieries façonnées étaient renouvelés d'une année sur l'autre, et étaient adressés aux détaillants en étoffes quelques mois avant le tissage pour qu'ils passent leurs commandes (Poni 1998). Des pratiques similaires se retrouvaient dans les fabriques de toiles peintes, qui se développèrent en Europe de l'ouest à partir des années 1740 (Chassagne 1991). La nouveauté pouvait aussi consister en l'invention de nouveaux produits aux caractéristiques principales différentes des autres tissus. Les producteurs faisaient alors varier la largeur, le nombre de fils de chaîne ou la qualité des fils employés – à l'image des ouvriers et marchands-

fabricants de Reims, particulièrement dynamiques et innovants aux XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles, qui mirent au point de nouvelles variétés comme les «dauphines» ou les «marocs» (Wroblewski 2010, 56-62).

Plusieurs études portant sur les fabriques d'étoffes de laine du Languedoc, de toiles du Cambrésis et du Saint-Quentinois ou de soieries du Bas-Languedoc ont mis en évidence l'essor au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle de la production de biens de qualité moyenne destinés à de larges clientèles de consommateurs (Minovez 2012a, 67-77; Terrier 1996, 31-34; Teisseyre-Sallmann, 1995, 299-316). Dans toutes ces fabriques, ce segment de marché se caractérisait par le renouvellement et l'élargissement des gammes de biens proposés – certaines commercialisées pendant quelques saisons seulement, d'autres plus durables venant compléter un fonds de produits stables sur le siècle. Mais en allait-il de même dans les autres fabriques ? Nous nous proposons dans cette étude de procéder à une «pesée globale» systématique de l'innovation de produits dans le secteur textile. Nous limiterons notre enquête aux étoffes de laine, qui malgré le spectaculaire succès des cotonnades restaient très vraisemblablement en volume comme en valeur les plus largement consommées au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle (Lavoisier (1791) 1988, 144-45; Roche 2007, 119-48).<sup>1</sup> Nous nous pencherons sur le cas de la France, qui était alors très certainement à la fois le plus grand producteur d'étoffes de laine d'Europe et le marché de consommation le plus étendu (Markovitch 1976; Van der Wee 2003, 462-72).

La documentation disponible pour mener une telle étude est assez riche, grâce en particulier aux «états des manufactures» élaborés sous l'égide du Bureau du commerce, section du Conseil du roi chargée de superviser la politique économique (Minard 1998; Vosgien 2017): à compter des années 1710 sont ainsi dressés deux fois par an des tableaux spécifiant pour chaque fabrique les variétés d'étoffes produites, les quantités en jeu et les prix de vente. Pour une vingtaine d'espaces productifs situés dans seize ressorts d'inspection des manufactures, il est ainsi possible de suivre les mutations au fil du siècle de la gamme d'étoffes tissées.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Les lainages constituaient au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle un marché de consommation déjà bien établi. A la différence de «l'innovation radicale» que représentaient les cotonnades, qui se traduit par l'usage d'une nouvelle fibre, l'essor de nouvelles branches de production et une demande nouvelle de la part des consommateurs, le marché des lainages se caractérisait par un assez grand conservatisme technologique et des mutations relativement modestes des types de biens mis sur le marché. Pour parler comme Rajesh Chandy et Gerard Tellis (Chandy et Tellis 1998), les innovations de produit sur le marché des lainages oscillaient entre la «percée sur le marché» (obtenue à niveau technologique équivalent et proposée pour le même prix, mais apportant une satisfaction supérieure au consommateur grâce à certaines modifications caractéristiques du produit) et «l'innovation incrémentale» (introduisant des changements mineurs en matière technologique ou dans la qualité, à satisfaction constante du consommateur). Nous remercions chaleureusement John Styles pour ses remarques et réflexions, et notamment pour nous avoir indiqué cette dernière référence.

<sup>2</sup> La généralité d'Alençon (avec notamment les fabriques du Perche autour de Nogent-le-Rotrou); l'inspection particulière d'Amiens; la généralité d'Auch; l'inspection particulière d'Aumale; la généralité de Riom (correspondant à l'Auvergne); la généralité de Bourges; la généralité de Caen (avec les fabriques de Caen, Vire, Cherbourg et Saint-Lô); la généralité de Châlons-en-Champagne (avec notamment les fabriques de Châlons et de Troyes); l'inspection particulière de Grandvilliers et Feuquières; la généralité de Montauban (avec les fabriques de Montauban et de Cahors); la généralité d'Orléans; l'inspection particulière du Poitou et de l'Aunis; l'inspection particulière de Reims (détachée

Après avoir montré comment utiliser les états des manufactures pour notre enquête (2), nous pourrions prendre une première mesure de l'innovation de produits dans le secteur des lainages entre les années 1710 et les années 1780 (3), et nous tâcherons à partir des indications sur les volumes fabriqués d'évaluer son ampleur réelle (4). Les états des manufactures ne recensant toutefois que les étoffes dont la fabrication était codifiée par des règlements productifs, une bonne partie de l'innovation de produit, non-réglémentée, nous échappe. Nous essaierons malgré tout d'en estimer le volume en recourant à des inventaires de fonds de boutiques (5).

## 2. L'approche de l'innovation par les états des manufactures

Les états des manufactures, une fois mis en série et moyennant certaines hypothèses, permettent de mesurer l'ampleur de l'innovation de produit dans les différentes fabriques à l'échelle du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Ils ne recensaient cependant que les étoffes dont la production était autorisée par les règlements de manufacture. Edictés pour la première fois en 1669, ces derniers imposaient des normes productives et qualitatives strictes aux fabricants d'étoffes en vue de maintenir la qualité et la réputation des produits. Par nature conservateurs, ils enregistraient cependant une bonne partie des innovations.

### 2.1 Etats des manufactures et règlements de manufacture

A toutes les fabriques du Royaume produisant pour le commerce régional ou interrégional s'appliquaient des «règlements généraux» portant sur la taille des pièces d'étoffes, le nombre et la qualité des fils de chaîne et de trame à employer ou les types de finition à apporter. La vérification de la conformité des étoffes aux règlements incombait à des «bureaux de visite et marque», supervisés par les gardes-jurés des corps de métier des fabricants: après y avoir été certifiée conforme, la pièce de tissu était revêtue d'un plomb de visite (Minard 1998, 20-21 et 162-166). Malgré leur caractère contraignant, les marchands-fabricants trouvaient des avantages à ces règlements. Ils permettaient en effet de garantir une qualité minimale stable des produits: chaque espace productif était une «marque collective» dont il fallait assurer le renom, dans le cadre d'une concurrence portant à la fois sur les prix et les qualités (Grenier 1996, 68). A l'intérieur de la fabrique, les marchands-fabricants pouvaient en outre utiliser les prescriptions des règlements comme moyen de pression sur les ouvriers (Minard 1998, 294-300). Les principales places de fabrique obtinrent toutefois dès 1669 des aménagements sous forme de règlements particuliers leur permettant de continuer de produire selon l'usage local certaines étoffes de large diffusion.

La prise en compte des innovations de produit dans le cadre réglementaire se faisait de manière assez plastique. Loin d'être hostiles aux nouveautés, les inspecteurs des manufactures ou les intendants laissaient les marchands et les

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de la généralité de Châlons-en-Champagne); l'inspection particulière de Romorantin (Sologne); la généralité de Rouen (qui comprend également les fabriques de Louviers et d'Elbeuf).

fabricants les développer, convenant ensuite avec eux d'un règlement productif spécifique une fois le débit et le renom de la nouvelle étoffe bien établis. Les règlements de manufacture étaient en somme le produit d'une coopération entre les corps de métiers et les autorités. Y étaient relevées les innovations «consolidées» – c'est-à-dire celles qui étaient suffisamment durables et d'une diffusion telle qu'elles justifiaient une adaptation de la réglementation générale.

Les états des manufactures étaient des tableaux dans lesquels les inspecteurs des manufactures estimaient tous les six mois, pour l'information du Bureau du commerce, les volumes produits et le nombre de métiers employés dans les différentes fabriques de leur circonscription. Les états précisaient pour chaque variété d'étoffe autorisée par les règlements généraux ou particuliers sa dénomination, ses principales caractéristiques et les matières premières qui la composaient. Synthétisant un certain nombre d'informations contenues dans les règlements, ils donnent à voir en première approximation, une fois mis en série à l'échelle d'un ressort d'inspection, les innovations de produits «consolidées» introduites au fil du temps. Décrivant les principales caractéristiques des étoffes, ils permettent en outre d'échapper aux difficultés que fait courir l'approche de l'innovation par les seules dénominations – des produits qui voient leurs caractéristiques changer au fil du temps tout en gardant le même nom; des produits changeant de nom tout en gardant les mêmes caractéristiques.

Une partie notable des innovations nous échappe toutefois. Beaucoup de nouveaux produits ne respectaient en effet sans doute pas les règlements généraux ou particuliers, quand d'autres, pourtant conformes, n'étaient peut-être pas portés aux bureaux de marque par crainte de complications bureaucratiques. Dans tous les cas, ces nouvelles étoffes non-marquées alimentaient les marchés de ce que les inspecteurs des manufactures considéraient comme de la «fraude» (Jeggle 2011, 91-104; Minard 2007, 621-38). Tenter de saisir l'ampleur de leur diffusion suppose de recourir à d'autres sources. Nous y reviendrons en dernière partie.

## 2.2 La mesure de l'innovation dans la seconde moitié du siècle

Les inspecteurs des manufactures signalaient depuis les années 1730 une explosion de la «fraude» (Minard 1998, 264-75). A partir des années 1750, beaucoup avaient en fait assez largement renoncé à faire appliquer les règlements, aussi bien par découragement que par ralliement progressif aux idées de «laissez-faire» (Minard 1998, 313-49). L'hostilité croissante aux règlements était d'ailleurs partagée par le Bureau du commerce: ils ne furent plus mis à jour à partir des années 1750, et le dernier recueil complet de règlements à l'échelle du Royaume date de 1730.

Nous pouvons cependant nous appuyer pour un certain nombre de provinces sur les tableaux des étoffes réglées issus de la dernière grande tentative de réglementation productive, celle de 1779-1781 (Minard 1998, 321-6). Le ministre Necker échafauda en effet à cette date un «système intermédiaire» laissant aux fabricants le choix de produire et d'écouler des produits «réglés» ou «non-réglés» – les premiers devant se conformer à des règlements particuliers refondus et les seconds échappant à toute norme réglementaire (Minard 1993). Les étoffes «régées» devaient

comme auparavant être marquées après vérification; les «non-réglées» étaient seulement tenues de porter un plomb dit «de liberté». Le «système» neckérien, mis en place par une série d'édits de 1780 et 1781, reflète la tension parmi les fabricants, les commerçants et les inspecteurs entre la volonté de laisser libre cours à l'initiative des producteurs pour satisfaire les désirs changeants de la clientèle et la nécessité de disposer d'une grille de lecture permettant de s'orienter dans un monde des biens en expansion et à renouvellement rapides (Grenier 1996, 60-78).

Chaque édit concernait une province particulière, et ses prescriptions s'appliquaient à l'ensemble des fabriques.<sup>3</sup> Y étaient joints des tableaux des étoffes réglées, élaborés par les inspecteurs des manufactures en 1779 et 1780 après des enquêtes détaillées et de longues discussions avec les intendants et les représentants des marchands-fabricants – les producteurs ont d'ailleurs manifestement profité de l'occasion pour faire enregistrer et régler par la monarchie nombre de productions locales jusqu'alors non-réglées. Beaucoup d'innovations «consolidées» trouvent ainsi leur place dans ces documents.

Pour plusieurs espaces, il nous est en somme possible de retracer l'évolution des variétés réglementées fabriquées des années 1710 aux années 1780.<sup>4</sup> Aucune modification substantielle des règlements particuliers n'ayant eu lieu entre les années 1750 et les années 1779-1781, on ne peut cependant pas dater précisément l'apparition des produits nouveaux mentionnés dans les tableaux des édits inspirés par Necker. A l'échelle séculaire, les dynamiques générales de l'innovation sont en tout cas perceptibles.

### 3. L'ampleur et les formes de l'innovation «consolidée»

La documentation ne nous permet pas de saisir l'innovation de produits pour l'ensemble du Royaume. Toutes les provinces n'étaient en effet pas concernées par les édits de 1780-1781, qui n'avaient été promulgués que pour celles où la production était massive, et notre collection d'états des manufactures ne couvre pas tout le territoire français. Pour une vingtaine d'espaces productifs, une documentation plus ou moins continue existe néanmoins des années 1710 aux années 1780: tous étaient des régions manufacturières majeures à l'échelle française voire européenne, et ils assuraient en valeur comme en volume 55 à 60% de la production du Royaume.<sup>5</sup> D'autres problèmes de mise en série des données se

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<sup>3</sup> Les règlements ont été accordés en 1780 et 1781 par lettres patentes (Alençon: 1<sup>e</sup> mars 1781; Amiens: 22 juillet 1780; Auch: 18 septembre 1780; Auvergne: 22 juillet 1780; Bordeaux: 1<sup>e</sup> mai 1781; Bourges: 22 juillet 1780; Caen: 1<sup>e</sup> mars 1781; Champagne: 22 juillet 1780; Grenoble: 16 décembre 1780; Montauban: 25 février 1781; Orléans: 22 juillet 1780; Paris: 22 juillet 1780; Poitiers: 22 juillet 1780; Provence: 16 décembre 1780; Rouen: 1<sup>e</sup> mars 1781; Tours: 22 juillet 1780).

<sup>4</sup> Voir l'annexe 1 pour les espaces productifs étudiés et les cotes d'archives des états des manufactures.

<sup>5</sup> Pour cette estimation grossière du volume de la production dans ces espaces, destinée surtout à évaluer leur poids parmi les manufactures du Royaume, nous nous appuyons sur les chiffres fournis par Tihomir Markovitch (Markovitch 1976, 492-5). Ils sous-estiment en réalité la production, car en ne s'appuyant que sur les données des états des manufactures, ils omettent d'évaluer la fraude. On

posent toutefois. A l'intérieur de chaque inspection, les états des manufactures ne recensaient en effet que la production passant par les bureaux de marque: même si leur semis était serré, la production de quelques petites localités nous échappe sans doute, d'autant plus que les recompositions productives ont fait apparaître au fil du temps de petits pôles de fabrique (Minard 1998, 33-74). Dans chaque espace productif, nous limiterons donc notre enquête aux pôles manufacturiers pour lesquels nous disposons à l'échelle du siècle d'une série continue de données.

### 3.1 Une innovation de produit massive

Trois grands types d'innovation productive peuvent être distingués en matière textile. Il peut tout d'abord s'agir d'innovations «absolues», correspondant à la fabrication et à la commercialisation d'étoffes entièrement nouvelles. D'autres sont en revanche seulement partielles: quelques caractéristiques du produit seulement connaissent des changements – le nombre de fils de chaîne, la largeur de la pièce, les laines employées –, et ne transforment pas fondamentalement la nature de l'étoffe. L'innovation peut enfin consister en l'imitation de produits «étrangers»: certains biens nouveaux sur le marché sont en fait des «façons de», transpositions de produits fabriqués ailleurs, et qu'il s'agit de concurrencer directement. Ce dernier type n'étant pas forcément aisé à identifier à partir des états des manufactures, il se trouvera dans nos calculs compris avec les innovations absolues.

Pour prendre la mesure de ces transformations, nous avons réparti les marchandises présentes dans les stocks en plusieurs catégories. Les variétés d'étoffes tissées étaient très nombreuses et très diverses, ce qui était lié au caractère décentralisé de la production: chaque fabrique locale produisait ses marchandises, du traitement des fibres à la finition, avec des procédés qui lui étaient propres. Comme William Reddy ou Jean-Yves Grenier l'ont fait remarquer, les biens se trouvaient par ailleurs hiérarchisés selon une échelle des qualités et du prestige reflétant la hiérarchie sociale: des étoffes de luxe, destinées aux élites, se distinguaient d'étoffes de qualité intermédiaire, largement diffusées dans les couches moyennes et supérieures de la population, et de produits de qualité inférieure, pour les usages domestiques des couches aisées ou pour les catégories populaires (Reddy 1986; Grenier 1995). Le XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle fut toutefois marqué par des mutations dans la hiérarchie des produits, certains étant désormais consommés dans de larges segments de la population. C'était le cas notamment des étoffes de coton comme les indiennes, produits nouveaux très en vogue dans toute l'Europe dès la fin du XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle, mais aussi pour ce qui nous concerne ici des lainages de qualité intermédiaire (Shammas 1990), qui se diffusaient parmi les classes laborieuses. Notre taxinomie des produits doit ainsi tenir compte à la fois de la hiérarchie des qualités, encore prégnante dans les modèles sociaux de consommation du siècle des Lumières, et des fibres employées, certaines gagnant en popularité au fil du temps.

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peut toutefois supposer qu'à une même date celle-ci était d'un niveau équivalent dans tous les espaces productifs étudiés.

Tab. 1. L'innovation de produit absolue dans différentes fabriques de lainages au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle

Fabrique	Dates	Etoffes de luxe		Belles étoffes		Etoffes de laine communes		Petites étoffes de laine		Etoffes mêlées	
		Nombre de variétés produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de variétés produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de variétés produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de variétés produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de variétés produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)
Alençon	1714-1781					6	50,0	2	50,0		
Amiens	1719-1780					97	98,0			30	90,0
Auch	1725-1780					25	88,0	5	60,0	1	100,0
Aumale	1715-1781					2	50,0	1	100,0		
Auvergne	1716-1780					10	100,0	3	33,0		
Berry	1716-1780			1	100,0	1	0,0			2	100,0
Caen	1716-1781					22	72,7	1	100,0	4	75,0
Champagne (hors Reims)	1717-1780					9	78,0	2	50,0		
Grandvilliers et Feuquières	1717-1780							1	0,0		
Montauban	1716-1781					37	86,0				
Orléans	1718-1780					2	0,0				
Poitiers	1717-1780					18	67,0	1	100,0	1	100,0
Reims	1719-1780					34	91,0	17	76,0		
Romorantin	1716-1780			2	100,0	4	50,0			2	100,0
Rouen	1715-1781	11	27,0	4	25,0	19	79,0				

Le classement suivant a par conséquent été retenu:

1) Etoffes de luxe, de haut prix et d'excellente qualité: on y trouve les étoffes de laine cardée les plus prestigieuses, comme les draps de Louviers ou de Sedan;

2) Belles étoffes de laine cardée, de très bonne qualité et de prix élevé, mais moins chères et moins socialement exclusives que les précédentes: c'est le cas des draps de Romorantin, fabriqués en Sologne;

3) Etoffes de laine communes, en peigné, en cardé ou d'une combinaison des deux (Harte 1997): il s'agit d'étoffes résistantes et d'assez bonne qualité, mais de prix modéré et accessibles à un public assez élargi de consommateurs – comme les étamines de laine de Reims ou certains cadis du Languedoc;



4) Petites étoffes de laine, en peigné, en cardé ou d'une combinaison des deux, plus communes et moins résistantes que les précédentes: on y trouve par exemple les dauphines, produites à Reims, ou la plupart des cadis languedociens;

5) Etoffes mêlées, à base de différentes fibres, comme la laine et le chanvre, la laine et le lin, la laine et le poil de chèvre ou encore la laine et la soie: leur combinaison permet aux producteurs, selon la proportion respective de chaque fibre, de varier les qualités de produit et de proposer aux consommateurs des marchandises à renouvellement fréquent. Les « velours façon d'Utrecht » tissés à Amiens mêlaient ainsi du fil de laine en chaîne et du fil de lin en trame.

Pour prendre une première vue globale de l'innovation de produit, nous comparerons d'abord le début et la fin de la période étudiée. Pour chaque pôle productif, nous avons calculé la proportion des biens qui dans les années 1780 relevaient par rapport aux années 1710-1720 de l'innovation absolue (Tab. 1) puis celle relevant de l'innovation partielle (Tab. 2).

L'innovation absolue de produit fut particulièrement forte à l'échelle du siècle sur le marché des « étoffes de laine communes », puisque selon les fabriques entre la moitié et la totalité des variétés produites dans les années 1780 étaient des nouveautés – à l'exception de la généralité d'Orléans où l'on note sur toute la période le maintien des variétés produites, notamment dans le Perche avec les étamines « du Mans » (Cailly 1993, 73-81). Dans la généralité de Montauban, la dynamique d'innovation s'est traduite par la diversification de la production de cadis, couplée autour de la ville chef-lieu à une montée en gamme des fabriques par la production de ratines et de draperies fortes (Minovez 2012b, 134-7). Dans la généralité de Caen, les fabriques de Bayeux, Condé et Fresnes diversifièrent leurs gammes de serges et de tiretaines, à mesure que la fabrique caennaise déclinait (Perrot 1975, 382-400). A Reims, les fabricants ont à l'échelle du siècle considérablement élargi leur offre en étamines, burats et flanelles, tout en mettant sur le marché des produits entièrement nouveaux comme les draps dits « de Silésie », les « perpétuelles » ou les « wilstons » (Wroblewski 2010, 56-62). A Amiens, l'innovation s'est manifestée aussi bien par la mise au point de nouveaux produits de très large débit – « pannes de fond » et « tamises » – que par la diversification des variétés de productions traditionnelles de la fabrique comme les « camelots » (Wroblewski 2010, 49-56). On peut ainsi dans l'ensemble considérer que deux-tiers des variétés d'étoffes de laine communes ou de qualité médiocre fabriquées à la fin du siècle étaient des nouveautés par rapport aux années 1710-1720.

Les tendances à l'innovation absolue étaient apparemment du même ordre de grandeur pour les « petites étoffes de laine » et les « étoffes mêlées ». Pour les premières, la fabrique de Reims et son annexe de Rethel se montrèrent particulièrement dynamiques, mettant sur le marché différentes variétés de « marocs ». La fabrique amiénoise a quant à elle largement élargi sa gamme d'étoffes mêlées de laine et de soie (comme les camelots ou les prunelles) ou de laine et de lin (comme les velours d'Utrecht).

Les dynamiques d'innovation absolue furent par contre moins nettes pour les produits de qualité supérieure – « étoffes de luxe » ou « belles étoffes ». Les fabricants de Haute-Normandie ont ainsi privilégié la stabilité productive, préférant se concentrer sur leurs produits-phares et maintenir le plus haut degré possible de

perfection – ce qui était tout particulièrement sensible à Elbeuf, premier centre lainier de la généralité au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, qui maintint sa production de draps «fins» ou «ordinaires» (Concato 2004, 360-5). Les fabricants de Sologne et du Berry, aux productions de qualité un peu moindre, auraient quant à eux cherché à monter en gamme en produisant quelques variétés de draps de meilleure qualité et de plus haut prix.

Il est difficile d'en dire davantage à ce stade: seule une étude fine des marchés de consommation des étoffes de chaque fabrique, des stratégies commerciales des marchands-fabricants en réponse aux fluctuations et sollicitations des marchés ainsi que de leur articulation avec les configurations productives locales permettrait d'y voir plus clair – sur le modèle de l'étude de James Thomson sur Clermont-de-Lodève aux XVII<sup>e</sup> et XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècles (Thomson 1982).

### 3.2 L'élargissement des gammes de produits et les mutations qualitatives

Outre une forte innovation de produit «absolue», on constate l'élargissement au cours du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle des gammes de produits pour quelques biens d'ample diffusion, en particulier les étoffes communes et les petites étoffes. L'échelle des qualités s'est en effet étendue par la mise au point de nouvelles sous-variétés de produits, c'est-à-dire de déclinaisons qualitatives d'une même variété d'étoffe par le jeu sur la largeur, le nombre de fils ou les finitions (Tab. 2).

Dans la plupart des cas, il s'agit de proposer une version meilleur marché et de qualité moindre d'un produit déjà existant. En Champagne, une version «commune» des petits draps de Troyes était désormais fabriquée et commercialisée, tandis qu'à Rouen six qualités différentes d'espagnolettes étaient désormais tissées – de «première», «deuxième» ou «troisième» qualité, en «croisé» ou en «lisse». Dans certains cas, les nouvelles variétés de produits étaient d'emblée déclinées en différentes qualités: dans le Berry, les marchands-fabricants commercialisaient à la fin du siècle des draps de qualité moyenne de différentes largeurs, dérivés des nouveaux produits; il en allait de même dans la généralité d'Alençon avec les flanelles et les molletons de Lisieux, proposés en cinq qualités différentes. Ces évolutions sont probablement là encore à relier à l'élargissement social des marchés de consommation, à la volonté des marchands et des fabricants de conquérir les segments plus modestes de la population et à leur souhait de proposer des produits de moindre coût et plus facilement remplaçables aux consommateurs soucieux d'être «à la mode».

Tab. 2. L'innovation de produit partielle dans les différentes fabriques de lainages

Fabrique	Dates	Etoffes de luxe		Belles étoffes		Etoffes de laine communes		Petites étoffes de laine		Etoffes mêlées	
		Nombre de qualités produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de qualités produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de qualités produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de qualités produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de qualités produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)
Alençon	1714-1781					3	100,0	6	87,0		
Amiens	1719-1780										
Auch	1725-1780					2	100,0				
Aumale	1715-1781							1	0,0		
Auvergne	1716-1780							2	100,0		
Berry	1716-1780			6	100,0	5	100,0				
Caen	1716-1781										
Champagne (hors Reims)	1717-1780					4	50,0	1	100,0		
Grandvilliers et Feuquières	1717-1780							1	0,0		
Montauban	1716-1781					3	100,0				
Orléans	1718-1780					4	25,0				
Poitiers	1717-1780					1	100,0				
Reims	1719-1780					3	33,0	1	100,0		
Romorantin	1716-1780			4	100,0	5	20,0				
Rouen	1715-1781	2	100,0	3	66,0	6	100,0				

Notre approche par les règlements productifs et les états des manufactures suggère en somme une innovation de produit entre les années 1710 et 1780 de l'ordre de la moitié pour les étoffes de laine de qualité supérieure, et des deux-tiers pour celles de qualité moyenne ou médiocre – avec toutefois des trajectoires différenciées entre les espaces productifs, singulièrement pour les places produisant des biens haut de gamme. Si l'on note un fort renouvellement de l'offre de lainages à l'échelle du siècle, il apparaît que l'innovation était permanente et massive: entre les années 1750 et les années 1780, l'apparition de nouveaux produits dans les fabriques atteignait des niveaux très élevés.

### 3.3 Les rythmes de l'innovation

Une comparaison entre les états des manufactures des années 1750, au moment où le Bureau du commerce renonce de fait à renouveler les règlements, et les états

des étoffes réglées des années 1780 laisse supposer une forte accélération de l'innovation dans la seconde moitié du siècle (Tab. 3).

Tab. 3. **L'innovation de produit absolue dans les différentes fabriques de lainages (années 1750 – années 1780)**

Fabrique	Dates	Etoffes de luxe		Belles étoffes		Etoffes de laine communes		Petites étoffes de laine		Etoffes mêlées	
		Nombre de variétés produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de variétés produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de variétés produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de variétés produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)	Nombre de variétés produites vers 1780	Proportion des innovations (en%)
Amiens	1750-1780					97	70,0			30	60,0
Aumale	1749-1781					2	50,0	1	0,0		
Caen	1753-1781					22	41,0	1	100,0	4	50,0
Grandvilliers et Feuquières	1762-1780							1	0,0		
Orléans	1756-1780					2	50,0				
Poitiers	1756-1780					18	44,0	1	0,0	1	0,0
Rouen	1749-1781	11	36,0	4	100,0	19	47,0				

Le mouvement est une fois de plus particulièrement sensible pour les étoffes de laine communes. Dans les espaces productifs où on peut l'observer, il semblerait qu'entre la moitié et les deux-tiers de l'innovation de produit repérée à l'échelle du siècle date d'entre 1750 et 1780 – c'est le cas à Caen avec diverses variétés d'«étamets» ou de «demi-rases», dans le Poitou avec les «calmouks» ou les «cadisés», à Rouen avec les «frocs», les «calmouks» ou les ratines. Amiens s'affirmait quant à elle comme place à haut niveau d'innovation, tant pour les étoffes de laine communes que pour les étoffes mêlées. Pour les premières, on voit apparaître dans la seconde moitié du siècle différentes variétés de «tamises», de «turcoins», de «pannes de fond» ou «de chameau». Pour les secondes, une offre étendue de «camelots poil» – faits de laine superfine, de soie organisée et de poil de chèvre – ou de camelot «mi-soie» est désormais proposée. Cela tendrait à accréditer l'idée d'un dynamisme accru des marchés à partir des années 1750, avec des consommateurs plus nombreux et plus avides de nouveauté, auxquels les fabricants s'efforceraient de fournir des produits plus diversifiés – par crainte peut-être aussi de la surproduction et de la mévente?

Toutes les estimations menées jusqu'ici reposent sur un simple comptage des variétés de produits et de leurs déclinaisons. Il conviendrait toutefois de pouvoir évaluer le volume que représentaient effectivement les innovations dans l'ensemble des biens en circulation.

#### 4. La diffusion effective de l'innovation de produits: quelques aperçus

Pour évaluer le poids des nouveautés sur le marché, il faudrait rapporter leur masse à celle de l'ensemble des marchandises en circulation. Les seules données globales disponibles sont fournies par les états des manufactures, qui indiquent le nombre de pièces d'étoffes produites ainsi que leur valeur. Les quantités relevées sont cependant assez douteuses, qui reposent sur le nombre de pièces d'étoffes présentées aux bureaux de marque: or comme on l'a vu, les inspecteurs des manufactures alertaient dès les années 1730 sur l'énormité de la fraude. Du fait de ce sous-enregistrement croissant, les chiffres des états des manufactures ne peuvent guère être utilisés pour étudier l'évolution des volumes produits. Cette difficulté est toutefois moindre dans le cadre d'une étude synchronique: on peut en effet raisonnablement supposer qu'à un moment  $t$ , le sous-enregistrement à l'intérieur d'une fabrique particulière était similaire pour l'ensemble des produits de celle-ci – tout du moins pour ceux de la même gamme qualitative.

Grâce à quelques chiffres de production disponibles pour les années 1750, nous pouvons pour cette date calculer la part que représentaient dans l'ensemble des étoffes fabriquées les nouveautés par rapport aux années 1710-1720. Les années 1750 sont intéressantes pour notre étude: elles correspondent à une période d'accélération de la poussée consumériste entamée dans les années 1720 et 1730, laquelle se traduit par l'accroissement vraisemblable de l'innovation de produit. Nous calculerons ici la part des nouveautés dans l'ensemble de la production pour les fabriques des inspections d'Amiens, d'Aumale, de la généralité de Caen, de l'inspection de Grandvilliers-Feuquières et des généralités d'Orléans et de Rouen (Tab. 4). La relative étroitesse de l'échantillon interdit toute généralisation excessive, mais quelques enseignements peuvent malgré tout être tirés.

Les dynamiques d'innovation étaient dans plusieurs espaces productifs très fortes pour les étoffes de laines communes ou les étoffes mêlées: l'offre de textiles destinés aux marchés de consommation les plus socialement étendus a ainsi connu en une trentaine d'années une forte mutation, de nouvelles variétés apparaissant qui pouvaient représenter une large part de la production locale (Tab. 4).

Tab. 4. L'innovation de produit dans diverses fabriques françaises vers 1750 (par rapport aux années 1710-1720)

Fabriques	Etoffes de luxe		Belles étoffes		Etoffes de laine communes		Petites étoffes de laine		Etoffes mêlées	
	Nombre total de pièces produites	% innovation en % de l'ensemble de la production	Nombre total de pièces produites	% innovation en % de l'ensemble de la production	Nombre total de pièces produites	% innovation en % de l'ensemble de la production	Nombre total de pièces produites	% innovation en % de l'ensemble de la production	Nombre total de pièces produites	% innovation en % de l'ensemble de la production
Amiens					14826	74,9	336	0,0	31758	80,8
Aumale					600	0,0	7954	0,0		
Caen					7606	78,4			1870	88,8
Grandvilliers et Feuquières					563	88,6	22422	38,9		
Orléans					10521	98,4	2289	65,0		
Rouen	2214	29,3	9263	3,4	9775	24,4				

Il convient toutefois là encore de distinguer entre les espaces productifs, les stratégies locales étant vraisemblablement très différentes. La fabrique d'Aumale produisait ainsi des étoffes de consommation courante, mais ses marchands-fabricants ne se sont apparemment pas lancés dans des innovations destinées à anticiper les désirs de la clientèle – à moins qu'ils n'aient pas pris la peine de faire enregistrer leurs innovations de produits, préférant recourir à la fraude? De leur côté, les marchands-fabricants amiénois ont préféré élaborer et commercialiser des variétés de produits nouvelles, faisant semble-t-il le choix à la fois de l'innovation par imitation et du développement des étoffes mêlées (Wroblewski 2010, 49-56). Les données pour l'inspection d'Orléans interpellent: si la comparaison entre le début et la fin du siècle laisse supposer une absence d'innovation (tab. 1 et 2), celle-ci a semble-t-il été très marquée entre les années 1720 et les années 1750. Les innovations de la première moitié du siècle auraient-elles donc été abandonnées dans la seconde? Si oui, faut-il y voir un signe de déclin de la fabrique? Cela semble peut probable, puisque la production de l'année 1778 montait apparemment à 20.000 pièces d'étoffes environ, soit un peu moins du double du chiffre porté dans le tableau, qui correspond à la seconde moitié de l'année 1756. On ne peut non plus exclure que les marchands-fabricants orléanais aient fait le choix dans les années 1780 de se tourner vers la production non-réglée à la faveur du «système intermédiaire». Les fabricants de Haute-Normandie ont quant à eux manifestement préféré s'en tenir à une production structurée autour de produits stables de haute qualité à la réputation établie (Concato 2004, 360-5).

Si la massivité de l'innovation de produits ne fait guère de doute dès le premier tiers du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, elle était vraisemblablement très différenciée entre les

fabriques, et obéissait à des stratégies de place portées par les marchands-fabricants locaux. Nos observations ne sont toutefois que partielles, qui reposent sur la seule innovation «consolidée» intégrée dans les états des manufactures: une bonne partie de l'innovation était en effet non réglementée, et consistait en étoffes échappant aux bureaux de marque. Nous nous proposons ainsi dans une dernière partie d'essayer d'estimer l'ampleur de cette innovation non-réglée à partir de l'étude des stocks de marchands détaillants en étoffes.

## 5. Une estimation de l'innovation de produit non-réglée

Puisque par construction l'innovation non-réglée échappait aux états des manufactures, il faut recourir à d'autres documents pour en prendre la mesure – par exemple à des sources de la pratique marchande. Les plus nombreuses sont les inventaires de faillite, qui recensent les biens possédés par les marchands au moment du dépôt de leur bilan. A partir de l'étude des fonds de boutique de détaillants en étoffes vers 1750 et vers 1780, nous pouvons tenter d'évaluer la part dans les stocks des innovations «régées» et «non-régées».

### 5.1 L'approche de l'innovation par les inventaires de faillite

Les inventaires de faillite nous donnent accès à la diversité des marchandises proposées par les marchands. Construits sur le même modèle que les inventaires après décès, on y trouvait les mêmes types d'informations, les marchandises y étaient prisées de la même manière, et ils posent par conséquent les mêmes problèmes d'utilisation (Overton, Whittle, Dean et Hann 2004; Baulant, Schuurman et Servais 1988). Selon la diligence et l'application des priseurs – souvent des marchands de la localité d'exercice du failli ou des environs mandatés par les juges consulaires –, les produits étaient plus ou moins bien décrits: pour les tissus étaient malgré tout généralement précisés outre le nom la couleur, la largeur ou les différents motifs ornant la pièce d'étoffe.

Recourir pour notre enquête à des marchands ayant échoué n'introduit en réalité pas de biais considérable. Si certaines faillites signaient l'effondrement pur et simple de l'activité des marchands – situation que l'on repère à l'énormité du passif et à la chétivité des actifs –, la plupart ne correspondaient qu'à des périodes de difficultés passagères – actifs et passifs étant alors du même ordre de grandeur. La faillite, issue d'un défaut de paiement, était en fait un état relativement courant chez les marchands des économies préindustrielles, et tout particulièrement chez les détaillants: faire la jonction entre les paiements à effectuer et ceux à recevoir était en effet souvent assez périlleux (Hoppit 1987, 56-67). Nous n'utiliserons ici que des inventaires de faillite de marchands ayant connu des difficultés passagères.

L'autre type de biais que l'on peut craindre en recourant à des inventaires de faillite concerne la nature des actifs, en particulier celle des marchandises présentes en stock. On y retrouvait en effet ce qui n'avait pas été vendu au moment de la constitution de l'inventaire: ce qui se vendait le plus mal, comme les marchandises passées de mode, était ainsi sans doute surreprésenté (Garden 1973, 265-300). Les

stocks portés aux inventaires ne refléteraient donc pas tant les ventes effectivement faites que les méventes. On n'y trouvait cependant pas uniquement des marchandises d'écoulement difficile: c'était peut-être le cas chez les commerçants ayant connu un effondrement de leurs affaires, mais chez les autres les assortiments de marchandises ne se distinguaient guère de ceux des marchands non-faillis. Au demeurant, comme nous ne menons pas notre analyse des fonds de boutique pour des périodes très resserrées mais pour des plages d'une quinzaine d'années (1740-1755 et 1770-1785), la surreprésentation des invendus dans les inventaires ne pose pas de gros problèmes méthodologiques: une étoffe démodée en 1750 pouvait très bien avoir été encore très recherchée en 1745. A une telle échelle temporelle d'analyse, les effets de mode de court terme et les biais qu'ils introduisent dans l'analyse sont gommés.

Nous étudierons les stocks de marchands détaillants en étoffes de Lorraine centrale et méridionale (Villain 2021, 21-30). Cette région présente pour notre étude l'intérêt d'être à l'échelle de l'Europe de l'ouest du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle moyennement riche et urbanisée, mais également bien insérée dans les flux du grand commerce interrégional – ce qui permettait aux détaillants de proposer une offre en marchandises diversifiée, susceptible de stimuler la curiosité des consommateurs.<sup>6</sup> Les étoffes vendues par les commerçants lorrains étaient pour les lainages en majorité issues des espaces français, les marchandises du Saint-Empire, de Suisse ou des Pays-Bas dominant quant à elles l'offre en cotonnades ou en toiles. Les dynamiques d'innovation dans les manufactures françaises de lainages se reflétaient ainsi très vraisemblablement sur le marché lorrain des étoffes.

Nous concentrerons notre analyse sur les différentes variétés de tissus de laine en reprenant les catégories définies et employées plus haut – «étoffes de luxe», «belles étoffes», «étoffes de laine communes», «petites étoffes de laine» et «étoffes mêlées» comprenant de la laine. Nous excluons de nos calculs les étoffes non identifiées – c'est-à-dire inconnues des sources consultées pour caractériser les marchandises (le *Dictionnaire universel de commerce* de Savary des Bruslons dans son édition de 1744, la plus tardive, et les volumes concernant le commerce de l'*Encyclopédie Méthodique*, dans l'édition de 1783-1784), dans la mesure où nous n'avons pas pu déterminer de quelles fibres elles étaient composées.

Les produits peuvent apparaître dans les inventaires sous leur nom précis («espagnolette», «cadis», etc.) ou sous la simple mention de leur type générique («drap», «serge», «droguet», etc.). Qu'une forte proportion de produits soient désignés seulement par leur type dans les stocks est le signe de la grande diversité de l'offre: mal identifiés, beaucoup de biens sont définis par leurs seules caractéristiques générales. Nombre d'innovations pouvaient se glisser parmi ces produits à la désignation lâche – même si bien sûr tous n'étaient pas nécessairement des nouveautés. Nous dénombrerons les produits désignés par leur seul type générique (et non par leur désignation exacte), en considérant l'ampleur du volume

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<sup>6</sup> Les marchands importateurs résidaient principalement dans des pôles commerciaux comme Nancy (29.100 habitants en 1793), Lunéville (11.700 habitants), Epinal (6.700 habitants), Pont-à-Mousson (6.400 habitants), Saint-Dié (5.100 habitants), Mirecourt (4.900 habitants) ou Neufchâteau (2.800 habitants). Nous reprenons les chiffres de population fournis par la base Cassini ([http://cassini.chees.fr/cassini/fr/html/1\\_navigation.php](http://cassini.chees.fr/cassini/fr/html/1_navigation.php)).



de ces étoffes imparfaitement identifiées comme un indice du niveau de l'innovation de produit non-réglée.

L'approche retenue n'est bien sûr pas pleinement satisfaisante, et donne simplement une idée de l'extension *maximale* de l'innovation de produit non-réglée. Un certain nombre de produits réglés pouvaient en effet être désignés par leur seul type du simple fait qu'ils étaient inconnus des experts confectionnant l'inventaire. Les mutations observées peuvent donc alors n'être qu'apparentes. Il n'empêche que si nous discernons une tendance sensible à l'accroissement de la part des étoffes non-identifiées dans les inventaires, ce peut être le signe d'une diversification de l'offre et du recul de la part des étoffes réglées dans l'ensemble de celles en circulation.

## 5.2 La forte proportion des lainages non-identifiés dans les stocks marchands

Nous nous appuyons ici sur les inventaires de marchands en étoffes de bonne envergure, dont les boutiques se caractérisaient par la diversité de leur offre: sept pour les années 1740 et 1750, et douze pour les années 1770 et 1780 (Tab. 6).

Dans les années 1740-1750 (Tab. 5), la proportion des étoffes non-identifiées parmi les lainages montait à 40% environ. Il est donc possible que la proportion d'innovations hors-règlements ait déjà été élevée.<sup>7</sup>

Tab. 5. Part dans les stocks des produits identifiés seulement par leur type dans les années 1740-1750 (en % de la valeur en livres lorraines - liv. l.)

Marchands	Lieu de résidence et d'activité	Lainages identifiés dans les stocks (en liv. l.)	Lainages non-identifiés dans les stocks (liv. l.)	Proportion des lainages non-identifiés (en%)
<b>Brion (Anselme)</b>	Pont-à-Mousson	10649,30	4630,83	43,5
<b>Court (Philippe)</b>	Lunéville	30496,52	12306,86	40,4
<b>Duparge (Jean-François)</b>	Nancy	15577,90	6698,07	43,0
<b>Mathis (Joseph)</b>	Epinal	9281,50	3766,40	40,6
<b>Parent (Alexandre)</b>	Dieuze	13471,77	4177,38	31,0
<b>Rupied (François)</b>	Lunéville	8604,63	3074,74	35,7
<b>Wathié (Gaspard)</b>	Nancy	2884,29	1316,82	45,7

<sup>7</sup> Les inventaires de faillite utilisés dans cette partie sont tous conservés aux Archives Départementales de Meurthe-et-Moselle à Nancy. Les cotes sont entre parenthèses: Anselme BRION (49B 173, 1751); Philippe COURT (49B 172, 1750); Jean-François DUPARGE (49B 171, 1750); Joseph MATHIS (49B 173, 1751); Alexandre PARENT (49B 175, 1753); François RUPIED (49B 171, 1749); Gaspard WATHIE (49B 172, 1750).

Pour les années 1770-1780, nos données suggèrent une proportion de lainages non-identifiés dans les stocks d'environ 50%.<sup>8</sup> Vu l'étroitesse des échantillons et leurs modalités de constitution, il semble excessif de conclure à une hausse dans la seconde moitié du siècle – tout au plus peut-on supposer que la part des lainages non-identifiés dans les stocks des marchands-détaillants était au moins du même ordre de grandeur vers 1780 que vers 1750.

Tab. 6. **Part dans les stocks des produits identifiés seulement par leur type dans les années 1770-1780 (en % de la valeur en livres lorraines - liv. l.)**

Marchands	Lieu de résidence et d'activité	Lainages identifiés dans les stocks (en liv. l.)	Lainages non-identifiés dans les stocks (en liv. l.)	Proportion des lainages non-identifiés (en%)
<b>Barrois (Claude)</b>	Lunéville	8819,63	6293,55	41,6
<b>Cormier (Jean-Baptiste)</b>	Nancy	12723,57	13694,40	51,8
<b>Cotte (Joseph)</b>	Lunéville	1098,28	1460,46	57,1
<b>Garosse (Charles)</b>	Lunéville	7196,81	4558,32	38,8
<b>Goguet (Anne-Françoise)</b>	Bruyères	1591,29	2944,57	64,9
<b>Henry (Claude)</b>	Pont-à-Mousson	4467,16	4934,53	52,5
<b>Lebel (Jean-Claude)</b>	Nancy	773,30	9692,23	92,6
<b>Méget (François)</b>	Neufchâteau	4685,28	1813,63	27,9
<b>Mercier (Léopold)</b>	Epinal	3664,75	4893,47	57,2
<b>Pellerin (François-Denis)</b>	Epinal	895,63	1939,33	68,4
<b>Thiriet (Nicolas)</b>	Lunéville	5916,45	5564,13	48,5
<b>Vaillat (Pierre)</b>	Etain	891,45	1961,04	68,7

La très forte présence de lainages non-identifiés dans les stocks des détaillants est à relier à la grande diversité des variétés de produits disponibles, qui compliquait la tâche des experts-priseurs lors de la confection des inventaires: le «monde des biens» était sans doute assez peu lisible. Cette diversité était due notamment au grand nombre de lieux de production et aux facilités accrues d'acheminement des produits depuis des espaces éloignés. Le rythme soutenu du renouvellement de la production non-réglémentée n'était en somme qu'un élément de diversification de l'offre en lainages parmi d'autres. Mais dans quelles proportions ? Le seul élément un peu tangible que nous pouvons avancer est que la production non-réglée ne représentait probablement pas plus de la moitié des stocks marchands dans la seconde moitié du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle – en tenant compte des autres facteurs de non-

<sup>8</sup> Les cotes sont les suivantes: Claude BARROIS (49B 219, 1781); Jean-Baptiste CORMIER (49B 222, 1783); Joseph COTTE (49B 219, 1781); Charles GAROSSE (49B 216, 1779); Anne-François GOGUET (49B 225, 1785); Claude HENRY (49B 221, 1782); Jean-Claude LEBEL (49B 217, 1780); François MEGET (49B 216, 1780); Léopold MERCIER (49B 218, 1781); François-Denis PELLERIN (49B 225, 1785); Nicolas THIRIET (49B 219, 1781); Pierre VAILLAT (49B 219, 1781).

identification, nous pouvons risquer l'hypothèse de la présence d'un tiers d'étoffes non-réglées dans les fonds de boutique.

Notons toutefois que les types de produits par lesquels les étoffes étaient désignées n'ont pas profondément changé entre le milieu et la fin du siècle: cela illustrerait le caractère plutôt conservateur des techniques de production et des attitudes de consommation – sensibles sans doute à la nouveauté, mais dans le cadre d'une offre structurée autour de types de produits connus (Tab. 7).

Tab. 7. **L'apparition de types d'étoffes entre le milieu et la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle dans les fonds des marchands détaillants lorrains**

Apparition de types de biens par sous-catégories d'étoffes entre les années 1740-1755 et les années 1780	Nombre de types de produits représentés dans les années 1780	Nombre de types de produits apparaissant	Nombre de types de produits stables	Proportion des types de produits apparaissant dans la seconde moitié du siècle
Etoffes de luxe	3	2	1	0,67
Belles étoffes	19	7	12	0,37
Etoffes de laine communes	18	6	12	0,33
Petites étoffes de laine	5	2	3	0,40
Etoffes mêlées	6	2	4	0,33

L'ampleur des innovations de produit serait ainsi plutôt à relativiser: il se peut fort que la grande diversité des nouvelles variétés de biens mises sur le marché au fil du siècle ait surtout pris la forme de variations subtiles et limitées sur des types relativement stables. L'innovation aurait de la sorte été contenue à l'intérieur de bornes étroites, s'apparentant surtout à de la «percée sur le marché».

## 6. Conclusion

Estimer l'ampleur de l'innovation de produit sur le marché des étoffes de laine au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle achoppe sur les lacunes des sources et pose par là même des problèmes méthodologiques considérables. En croisant des documents relevant les productions de plusieurs pôles manufacturiers avec d'autres renseignant sur ce que les marchands mettaient à disposition des consommateurs, il est toutefois possible d'éclairer les dynamiques d'innovation à l'échelle du siècle, et de donner quelques ordres de grandeur. Pour les produits clairement identifiés dans les règlements

productifs, la nouveauté représentait en valeur comme en volume près des deux-tiers de l'ensemble des biens en circulation à l'échelle du siècle sur le créneau des étoffes de qualité moyenne ou médiocre, et probablement autour du tiers ou de la moitié sur celui des tissus de qualité supérieure.

Une part importante des étoffes vendues en boutique était toutefois composée de biens désignés par leur seul type générique: c'était le cas de 40 à 50% des lainages disponibles dans les boutiques lorraines dans la seconde moitié du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Cela pourrait suggérer une très forte propension des manufactures textiles à mettre sur le marché des produits fréquemment renouvelés, à durée de commercialisation limitée et échappant au cadre réglementaire – par conséquent difficilement identifiables. Les grands types de biens étaient toutefois assez stables sur le siècle, les étamines ou les serges restant par exemple des produits très populaires tout au long de la période étudiée. La consommation d'étoffes était donc finalement assez routinière, et se structurait autour de types génériques éprouvés.

Si l'innovation de produit était différenciée entre les catégories de biens, elle l'était aussi entre les fabriques particulières. L'analyse des états des manufactures laisse supposer l'existence de stratégies de place, à l'initiative des milieux marchands ou productifs locaux – certains faisant le choix de l'innovation et d'autres celui de la stabilité de l'offre et du maintien de la qualité. Les réorientations de l'offre de produits sont de toute évidence à mettre en regard avec les reconfigurations de l'organisation productive locale et des structures des marchés de consommation (Thomson 1986; Minovez 2012b). Si l'innovation de produit entend à la fois répondre à la demande des consommateurs et les inciter à l'achat en créant des besoins parmi eux, il convient d'étudier les dynamiques et initiatives propres aux différents pôles productifs: c'est alors les équilibres internes entre marchands et fabricants qu'il faut interroger, mais aussi la possibilité qu'avaient les commerçants des différentes fabriques de s'insérer dans des circuits de diffusion des biens et d'anticiper la demande extérieure. L'étude de l'innovation de produits au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle invite en somme à étudier à nouveaux frais les structures et les dynamiques différenciées des espaces productifs.

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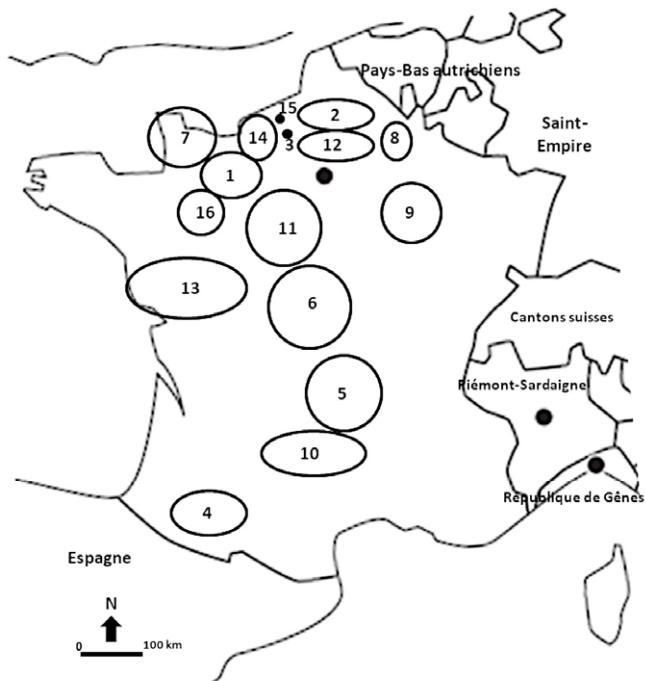
**ANNEXE 1: Cotes d'archives des états des manufactures**

Les états des manufactures sont conservés aux Archives Nationales (site de Pierrefitte-sur-Seine) dans la série F<sup>12</sup>. Les cotes des états utilisés sont indiquées entre parenthèses pour chaque date.

Ressort d'inspection	vers 1710	Vers 1730	Vers 1750	Vers 1770
<b>Alençon</b>	1714 (561)	1730 (1369 A); 1731 (561)		1778 (651)
<b>Amiens</b>	années 1710 (560); années 1720 (1351)	1730 et 1732 (560)	1750 (560); 1755 (1352); 1762 (1351)	
<b>Amiens (Grandvilliers et Feuquières)</b>	1717 à 1719 (1354)	1730 (1354)	1762 (1351)	
<b>Auch</b>	1716, 1723 et 1724 (1378)			
<b>Auvergne</b>		1723, 1725, 1726, 1727 (1376)		
<b>Bourges</b>	1716-1717 (554)	1725 (1373)	1759 (554)	
<b>Caen</b>	1715-1716 (561 ou 1369 B: 1716- 1717)	1734-1736 (561 ou 1369 B: 1733)	1753 (561 ou 1369 B: 1751- 1752)	1771 (561 ou 1369 B: 1769- 1770)
<b>Champagne (Reims et environs)</b>	1720 (555); 1719 (1360)	1730-1732 (555)		1767-1768 (675)
<b>Champagne (hors Reims)</b>	1717, 1719, 1721, 1723 (1359)			
<b>Montauban</b>	années 1710 et 1720 (556 et 1378); 1716 (559)	-		1772 (1379)
<b>Orléans</b>	1718 (562 et 649)	1729-1732 (562); 1734 (1374)	1756 (649)	1779 (651)
<b>Paris (Beauvais)</b>		1727 (1362 A)		
<b>Poitiers</b>	1717 (564)	1725-1726-1727 (1371)	1756 (1371)	1773 (1371)
<b>Rouen</b>	1715 (1363)	1727 (1363)	1745 à 1755 (1363)	1768, 1770, 1771 (1364)
<b>Rouen (Aumale)</b>	1715-1717 (1368)	1730, 1732, 1734 (1368)	1749 (1368)	
<b>Tours (Maine)</b>			1762 (559)	1769-1770 (675); 1772- 1773 (559)



## ANNEXE 2: Carte de localisation des espaces productifs



- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1 : généralité d'Alençon                      | 9 : généralité de Champagne  |
| 2 : inspection d'Amiens                       | 10 : généralité de Montauban |
| 3 : inspection de Grandvilliers et Feuquières | 11 : généralité d'Orléans    |
| 4 : généralité d'Auch                         | 12 : inspection de Beauvais  |
| 5 : généralité de Riom (Auvergne)             | 13 : inspection de Poitiers  |
| 6 : généralité de Bourges                     | 14 : généralité de Rouen     |
| 7 : généralité de Caen                        | 15 : inspection d'Aumale     |
| 8 : inspection de Reims                       | 16 : inspection du Maine     |

*Strategie commerciali*

*Commercial strategies*



Moira Dato, Pascale Gorguet-Ballesteros<sup>1</sup>

*Lyonnais silks «ad uttimo gusto»:  
the trade in fashionable waistcoats between France and Italy  
in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century*

## 1. Introduction

The European production of silk threads and fabrics has been an industry in constant evolution, following and adapting to the ever-changing landscape of European politics and economy. The first silk weaving looms were introduced in Europe between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries by Arabic or Byzantine craftsmen, in Sicily, Calabria or Puglia (Crippa 2000, 8). Production progressively spread to the rest of the Italian peninsula and to other parts of Europe, such as England, France and Spain. Italian weaving centres, however, dominated this production, especially with their luxury fabrics such as figured velvets and damasks (Tognetti 2007, 143-4). Looms were active in Tours as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but it was not until the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century that France experienced a significant development in its production of silk fabrics with the manufactures of Lyon. Looms had been established in the city of Lyon in the previous century. Francis I granted two merchants from Piedmont permission to set up looms in the city in 1536 (Godart 1899, 15-6; Barbier 2019, 252-54). In 1667, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Louis XIV's Minister of Finance and Trade, reformed the guild regulations on production, implementing a greater division of labour and higher standards of quality (Godart 1899, 83-5). In parallel, the Lyonnais merchant manufacturers (*marchands fabricants*) initiated a system of seasonal fashion changes: on a regular basis, new patterns were made available on the market for sartorial silks. These regular, quick innovations in fashion stimulated consumption while also making it more difficult for competitors to keep up with the pace of change (Poni 1997). Through these different strategies, Lyonnais manufacturing, called the *Grande Fabrique*, experienced a significant development, eventually taking the lead in the European production of luxury, fashionable silks.

The Lyonnais manufacture of silks took place within the framework of the guild of the *Maîtres marchands et maîtres ouvriers fabricants en étoffes d'or, d'argent et de soie* (Godart 1899). The merchant manufacturers managed the entire chain of production, from buying the silks threads, distributing them to master weavers (*maîtres ouvriers*), and selling the finished product. They also commissioned designs,

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<sup>1</sup> The authors would like to thank Lesley Miller for her attentive proofreading and most helpful comments. Our gratitude also goes to Auberie Planchon who generously shared information collected through her research.

put out dyeing and finishing processes, thus acting as the connection between the many different artisans in the industry. Because only master weavers could become merchants, as per the guild's regulations, these tradesmen possessed the technical knowledge of weaving; some merchants were also designers (Miller 2014a, 34-6). The designers, who could also work as employees of a firm or as freelance artists, were in charge of creating the patterns for silks. Because of the Lyonnais strategy centred around the regular changes in patterns, their work was central to the *Grande Fabrique* (Miller 1988, 55; Poni 1997, 41).

Lyonnais merchant manufacturers sold their silks by various means. They could deal with consumers directly, selling their fabrics in their premises. They sold most of their production, however, through intermediaries. Indeed, most Lyonnais silks were sent beyond the city's walls. Lyonnais merchants supplied many French cities, Paris being most important (Miller 2014b, 88). They also sent fabrics abroad, and intermediaries were essential to conduct this long-distance trade. Lyonnais silks were sold to consumers through retailers, such as mercers or milliners. Finally, Lyon also had agents or commissionaires, who presented new production to clients (both consumers and retailers), conducted sales, gathered due payments, and in more general terms dealt with the long-distance businesses of the Lyonnais (Miller 2014b, 89-90; Peyrot 1973, 36-37).

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Lyonnais silks were indeed exported to many countries in Europe and beyond (Le Gouic, 276; Bogomonolova, 247). The different regions of the Italian peninsula were also avid clients.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, many Italian weaving centres were still active manufacturers of silk fabrics, competing actively with the *Grande Fabrique*. Italy was also the main European producer of finished and semi-finished silk threads, and therefore one of the main suppliers of the Lyonnais manufactures, making their relationship all the more dynamic and symbiotic (Tolaini and Battistini 2010, 203-5). The Lyonnais merchant manufacturers distributed their silks through a large number of retailers scattered throughout the peninsula, being in contact with mercers based in Alessandria, Cagliari, Genoa, Livorno, Lucca, Mantua, Milan, Modena, Naples, Palermo, Rome, Turin and Venice, while the firm Sonnerat et cie traded with Alessandria, Cagliari, Genoa, Mantua, Milan, Naples, Palermo, Parma, Rome, Turin and Venice.<sup>3</sup> This network of intermediaries was essential to ensure the success of their business. To multiply connections was a way to reach a broader range of clients, as well as to spread risks, bankruptcies being common in this trade (Miller 1998, 150).

Lyon sent to Italy a wide range of silks: taffeta, satin, *lustrine*, watered silk, *droguet*, *gourgouran*, *cannelé*, *lamé*, striped, *chiné*, *gros de Tours*, *gros de Naples*, silks with gold and silver... in a myriad of colours. They were sent as lengths in varying

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<sup>2</sup> In this paper, the term 'Italy' will be used to refer to the mosaic of independent city-states, duchies or regions under foreign rule that constituted the Italian peninsula in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>3</sup> See for instance the papers of the Lyonnais merchant manufacturer François Fayet in Archives départementales du Rhône (ADR), 8B/871/3-32; or of the firm Sonnerat et cie in Archives départementales des Pyrénées-Orientales (ADPO), 1J/467/1-2, Journaux de ventes, 1755-1776.

numbers of ells, the unit to measure textiles' length in France.<sup>4</sup> The fabric was cut and transformed at a later stage according to its intended use by a specialised craftsman: a tailor or dressmaker made up clothes; an upholsterer made furnishings. Traditionally, members of the *Grande Fabrique* were not to make any garments from their silks, guild regulations keeping this prerogative for tailors (Roche 2007, 282).

Sources, however, reveal a peculiar tendency. In most account books, the textiles manufactured, sold or bought are recorded following a standard format: a short description of the fabric, the number of ells, the price per ell, and the overall price. There is usually no indication of the garment for which the silk was intended.<sup>5</sup> Yet, in some Lyonnais merchants' account books, one item stands out: the waistcoat. Entries are devoted to this garment and do not follow the usual format. Mentioned simply as «veste» or «gilet», sometimes described as brocaded or embroidered, the price is not given per ell, but for each single item.

The peculiarity of this phenomenon pushed us to investigate it and the Italian market, with its numerous mentions of «vestes», provides an interesting case study. Analysis of the Lyonnais trade in waistcoats with Italy reveals how both manufacturers and consumers constructed fashion and how merchants navigated its whims to keep their businesses running. This case study offers an excellent example of how fashion can shape a market. Furthermore, the transnational approach of this case study will illustrate the influence of the industrial, economic and social context on such a market. This analysis engages with a variety of archival and material sources. It is in large part based on the bankruptcy records of Lyonnais merchant manufacturers, which contain account books and correspondence with retailers in Italy. Further business papers were gathered in Florence, while archives of Italian consumers, whether from individuals or from courts' administration, added to this panorama. These documents prove much useful to discern tendencies and patterns in this business in waistcoats. However, their lack of descriptions makes it difficult to grasp this trade's nuances and raise several questions regarding the typology and terminology of this product. Which is why they are completed by further printed texts such as dictionaries. Finally, this study confronts these written sources with surviving garments from the Palais Galliera, musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris, the Palazzo Mocenigo in Venice and the Palazzo Bianco in Genoa.

As peculiar as the mentions of waistcoats in account books appear, they strongly suggest the need for a definition of this item. An exploration of its terminology combined with surviving garments and sources will allow us to first outline a

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<sup>4</sup> One ell, called *aune*, was of about 1,18m. In Italy, most cities had their own unit of measurement. In Florence, for instance, the *braccio* (about 0,58m) was used, while in Turin it was the *raso* (0,59m).

<sup>5</sup> Account books from the bankruptcy collection of ADR, fond 8B. It contrasts with other forms of account keeping, where, although the fabric is sold in length, the garment it is intended for is also indicated along with the right number of ells for its making. It is the case, for instance, in the bills of some Parisian silk mercers who supplied the Comtesse d'Artois (Paris, Archives nationales, Papiers Bourbon-Busset, T 2651<sup>8</sup>) or the Comtesse du Barry (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, manuscrits français ms. 8157). It is likely this later form of recording was more usual for retailers in direct contact with consumers, such as mercers, who would sell fabrics being aware of their intended use by their clients.

typology of the waistcoat and understand its context of production in 18<sup>th</sup>-century France. We will then explore how from the 1770s the Lyonnais merchant manufacturers adapted to radical changes in fashion by introducing the manufacturing of embroidered waistcoats to their production.

## 2. A typology of the male waistcoat in the 18<sup>th</sup> century

The history of French terminology for waistcoat remains obscure. If manuscript sources, especially the ones of manufacturers, use most of the time the term «veste», writers of memoirs, such as the Baroness of Oberkirch, refer to this item as «gilet». Surviving examples in museums suggest that a distinction can be made upon the presence or absence of sleeves, a difference never clearly expressed in archival sources.<sup>6</sup> A look into dictionaries of the time helps narrow down this definition.

Antoine Furetière, in his *Dictionnaire universel* of 1690, describes the *veste* as: «Espèce de justaucorps qui va jusqu'aux genoux. En France on porte des vestes légères sous les justaucorps» (Furetière 1690). This definition classifies the waistcoat as a garment worn under the *justaucorps*, a sort of flare-shaped little coat reaching down to the knees at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century before shortening progressively in the following century. In his *Dictionnaire universel*, Jacques Savary des Bruslons solely uses the term *veste*, for instance under the entry «Cordonnet»: «Menu cordon d'argent, de soie ou de fil [...] pour former des boutonnières de justaucorps, et de vestes» (Savary des Bruslons 1744, 1097). It is only later that we start seeing *veste* and *gilet* side by side: in his *Art du tailleur*, François Alexandre de Garsault distinguishes the *veste* from the *gilet*, indicating that the latter would come from the *camisole*, characterised as a «veste de dessous qu'on met souvent immédiatement sur la peau ; il s'en fait à manches et sans manches ; cette dernière se nomme un gilet» (Garsault 1769, 9; 14; 23). Similarly, in 1771, the fifth edition of Trévoux's dictionary makes the distinction between the *veste*, «espèce de longue camisole. *Vestis interior*. En France on porte les vestes légères sous le justaucorps, plus ou moins haut selon les modes», and the *gilet* «espèce de camisole sans manches, de laine ou de basin, que l'on met par dessus ou par-dessous la chemise pour se garantir du froid» (Anon 1771, t. 8, 373 and 509). These definitions therefore confirm that the *veste* is usually a garment with sleeves, while the *gilet* is without sleeves, depending on the consumer's preference. Thus, there was in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century a shift of terminology and use from *veste* to *gilet*. The latter,

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<sup>6</sup> These terminological questions are not proper to France. In Italian, the terminology is even less fixed than in French: the terms «sottoveste», «camisette», «vesti», «vestiti» were used depending on the place and person writing down the accounts. In English, Jenny Tiramani in her introduction to the book *Waistcoats* draws the attention to the double use of waistcoats mentioned by the Academy of Armory published in 1688. At that time waistcoats could be worn very close to the body «[...] under a Doublet, and within the Waist-band of the Breeches» or just under a coat, adorned so that they could be seen «rich» (Hopkins 2017, 5). These early definitions do not precise the presence of sleeves. It becomes clear that terminology was far from being fixed and depended largely on the place and context of use. It is nevertheless important to acknowledge that the English word waistcoat, used in this paper, does not make the distinction between the *veste* and the *gilet*.

at first worn as an undergarment under the shirt, seems to have substituted the *veste* put over the shirt and under the coat, following the trend for *négligé*. The appearance of the term *gilet*, however, does not put an end to the use of *veste*, especially in the manufacturers' accounts. Some Lyonnais merchant manufacturers mention indistinctly their waistcoat production as *vestes* throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>7</sup> while others make the distinction between *veste* and *gilet* in the last decades of the century.<sup>8</sup>

These considerations of terminology can be applied to surviving garments, samples and designs in museum collections to outline a typology of the male waistcoat in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. *Vestes* and *gilets* are certainly among the most ubiquitous surviving garments of the 18<sup>th</sup> century in museum collections. For instance, in the Palais Galliera, Musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris, 399 *vestes* and *gilets* have been inventoried on a collection of 900 items of male costume, therefore a third (Fig. 1).<sup>9</sup> They show waistcoats made in silk, but also in other fabrics such as wool and cotton. In the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the waistcoat was worn long (the *basques* reaching to just above the knee) and often with sleeves. Through the decades, the garment became progressively shorter and more close-fitted to the body. From the 1780s, the *basques* disappeared while a collar emerged. Waistcoats could be plain or patterned, motifs being either woven or embroidered, with silk but also metallic threads. Only the front panels of the waistcoat were adorned, as it was always worn under the coat in polite society so that the back and sleeves were not visible. The back and sleeves were made of a different, simpler fabric. A standard way of distributing the patterns on the garment becomes apparent from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century: they are mostly gathered along the front edges, on and under the pocket flaps, while the rest of the fabric surface is either plain or with small repeating motifs.

To acquire a new waistcoat, consumers could buy from a silk merchant manufacturer or mercer a length of fabric, plain or with small patterns covering evenly the entire surface, which was then sent to the tailor to be cut. If clients wanted additional decoration on the edges of the fabric, as it was often the case, they could take their newly made waistcoat to the embroiderer to add embroideries or trimmings (Schoeser Boyce 1981, 39).

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<sup>7</sup> This can also be explained by the fact that the Lyonnais merchant manufacturers could not know if their silks would be later on worn with or without sleeves, the word «*veste*» being therefore used as a generic term. ADR, 8B/876/1-41, Correspondance et livres de comptes de Marin Fiard.

<sup>8</sup> ADR, 8B/1089/1-14, Correspondance et livres de comptes de Pascal Vial et cie.

<sup>9</sup> Although, as most collections, these numbers are the result of accidents of survival, they are significant enough to show the importance of the waistcoat in the male apparel, suggesting a strong enthusiasm for this garment in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.



Fig. 1. Waistcoat, c. 1770-1775. Silk tabby, chain stitch embroidery, multicolour silk threads. Embroidered to shape pattern. Paris, Palais Galliera, Inv. 1962.108.376



CC0 Paris Musées / Palais Galliera, Musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris

Waistcoats were also sold in shape. Consumers could buy a length of fabric which had patterns already arranged in the shape of the garment's front edges and pockets. In the case of woven patterns, they were made during the manufacturing of the fabric itself, the motif being woven in the shape of a waistcoat on the loom. In the case of embroidered patterns, the needlework was done once the fabric was woven and taken off the loom, also arranged according to the shape of the front edges. The shapes of the collar and button covers were embroidered on the same panel which could be between one and two ells (Fig. 2). The woven or embroidered

panels were then taken to the tailor to be cut and assembled, the fabric used for the back allowing the garment to be adjusted to the wearer's size. This particular type of production, rarely specified in written sources, can however be identified when a waistcoat is said «à bordures», which indicates it was sold with the edges already woven or embroidered.

**Fig. 2. Silk length for a waistcoat embroidered to shape, fronts, pockets, collar, buttons, c. 1785-1790. Silk tabby, satin stitch embroidery, multi-coloured silk threads. Embroidered to shape pattern. Paris, Palais Galliera, musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris, Inv. 1985.31.1**



CC0 Paris Musées / Palais Galliera, Musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris

If the origin of the production of garments in shape remains unclear, some sources testify of its presence in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Indeed, a trade card of the Parisian embroiderer Jean Magoulet, dated from around 1670-1690,

illustrates a scene of the craftsman showing to a client a coat embroidered to shape.<sup>10</sup> Some surviving garments confirm this production was already in use at that time, such as the pieces of a coat embroidered to shape preserved in Rosenborg Castle and said to have belonged to Charles XI of Sweden and dated around 1675-1679 (Rangström 2002, 159 and 355). At the same period, other garments such as petticoats, bodices or shirts were produced ready-made, although the ready-to-wear industry did not truly develop before the 1840s (Perrot 1984, 93-94; Lemire 1997, 43-74; Styles 2000, 158-62). Garments made to shape, however, need to be distinguished from the ready-made production. They still had to be taken to a tailor to be assembled. The production of waistcoat shapes therefore seems to have been an in-between stage from the traditional making of cloth and the ready-made.

The business of waistcoat shapes is difficult to uncover. They seem to have been sold by a wide variety of actors. Those woven to shape could be bought directly from silk merchant manufacturers or from intermediaries such as mercers. Some Lyonnais merchants sold waistcoats woven to shape already in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, as demonstrated by a letter from the merchant Charles Lachasse in Cadix to the Lyonnais merchant manufacturers De Vitry et Gayet in 1724:

Si vous voulez donner dans un article qui nous donne du profit considérablement, vous devriez monter des étoffes dans le goût des vestes faites, dont les devants et parements de poches étaient tissées en argent (cited in Le Gouic 2011, 287).

Waistcoats embroidered to shape could be sold by mercers and milliners, but also by the embroiderers themselves. In Paris, embroiderers had their own guild, the *corporation des brodeurs-découpeurs-égratigneurs-chasubliers*. Some dealt directly with consumers, as in the case of the embroiderer Balzac (Delpierre 1956, 10-1; Franklin 1906, 11), or the famous Davaux and Trumeau who worked for the court. Others were employed in workshops, fulfilling the commissions of mercers and *marchandes de modes*. In Lyon, in contrast, there was no embroidery guild. Embroiderers could work independently and sell their own production, but they often worked as employees of merchants specialised in embroideries (Baker 2019, 249). Embroidery work not being part of the silk weaving guild, Lyonnais merchant manufacturers only sporadically sold embroidered waistcoats. This distinction between weaving and embroidery became however a problem for the *Grande Fabrique* once the new fashion for embroideries took off in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### 3. The new embroidery-mania: Lyon facing the whims of fashion

For the first sixty years of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, woven patterns were the most fashionable: large and stylised in the 1700s-1720s, with a more naturalistic effect in the 1730-1740s, and on a smaller scale from the 1750s (Thornton 1965). As a result of the technique of *points rentrés*, developed by the Lyonnais merchant and designer

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<sup>10</sup> *Trade Card of Jean Magoulet, Embroiderer-in-Ordinary*, c. 1690, etching and engraving on paper, Aylesbury, Waddesdon Manor Collection, 3686.1.6.8.

Jean Revel (1684-1751), the *Grande Fabrique* could manufacture woven vegetal motifs, but also architectural elements and human figures in a most naturalistic way (Miller 1995). However, in the last quarter of the century, fashion experienced a dramatic change. It shifted progressively away from richly brocaded fabrics towards simpler ones with lighter and more discrete patterns and to plain silks. The taste of consumers leaned towards patterns and adornment added in the form of embroideries, trimmings, ribbons, gauze attached in a fancy manner to plain or striped fabric (Gorguet-Ballesteros 2021). This change was fostered by the rise of new figures of the fashion trade, particularly the *marchandes de mode*, whose role and ascendancy on the making of latest trends became increasingly important (Parmal 1997, 68-77; Jones 2004, 91-6).

The waistcoat was no exception, as is clear from those preserved in museum collections. While surviving waistcoats of the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century can be either woven or embroidered, garments from the second half of the century show an almost absolute predominance of patterns made of needlework. Museum collections also hold numerous designs for embroideries. The Palais Galliera holds a series of 179 watercolour and gouache designs which were models for waistcoats' embroideries (Fig. 3). These designs are also abundant in other public collections, such as in the Musée des Tissus de Lyon which holds 316 of them, in addition to numerous embroidery samples.

Contemporary texts confirm this taste for embroidered waistcoat, such as the baroness of Oberkirch who wrote in 1787:

les belles étoffes et les diamants continuaient à primer, c'est-à-dire le luxe et la richesse; mais les hommes imaginaient des singularités. D'abord il fut du bel air absolument d'avoir des gilets à la douzaine, à la centaine même, si l'on tenait à donner le ton. On les brodait magnifiquement avec des sujets de chasse et des combats de cavalerie, même des combats sur mer. C'était extravagant de cherté (Bernard de Montbrison 1869, t. 2, 310).

Needlework could add colourful motifs to garments, mostly floral ornaments but also architectural elements, animals, human figures, reflecting the political, literary and artistic events of the time (Piettre 2021, 125-26). Embroideries could be made of polychrome silk threads, but also silver or gilded silver threads combined with metallic spangles. Progressively, embroideries took over from woven motifs.

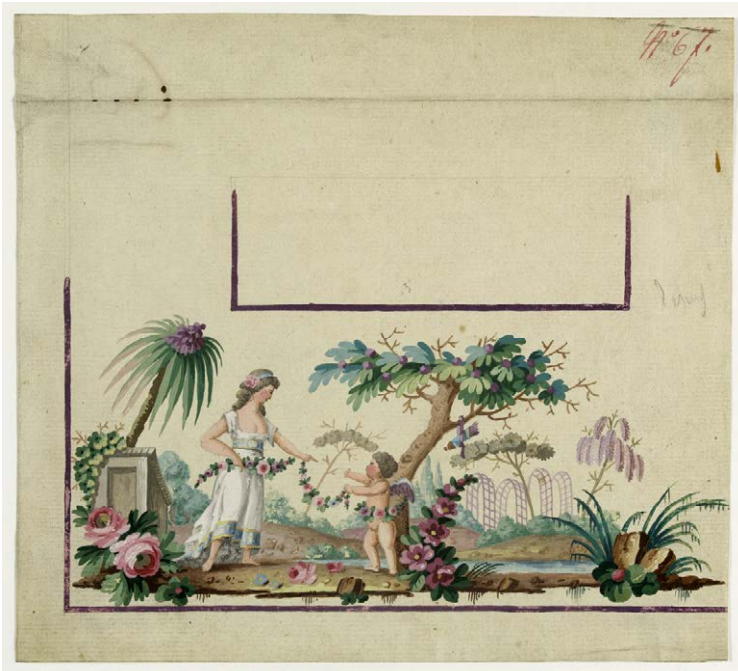
This new trend was certainly a problem for the Lyonnais manufacturers, who had based their entire strategies on the production of fashionable woven patterns. With this new trend, consumers were mostly interested in plain or simple-patterned fabrics, which were less profitable to sell (Arizzoli-Clémentel 1993, 7-8). The Parisian mercer Delpech, for instance, lamented to the Lyonnais merchant manufacturer Marin Fiard in 1781 that business was not going well since he had only been able to sell plain taffetas for the summer.<sup>11</sup> With this new fashion, the Lyonnais were also losing their supremacy on the market, as they could not rely any longer on the regular fashion changes of their woven patterns that had given them the edge over other manufactures. The *Grande Fabrique* strongly complained about

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<sup>11</sup> ADR, 8B 876/1, Lettre Fiard/Delpech, 18/05/1781.

this new fashion, lamenting that «la broderie faisoit aujourd'hui la branche la plus essentielle du commerce de la fabrique» (cited in Miller 1988, 78).

**Fig. 3. Drawing for an embroidered design for the edge of a waistcoat's left front, c.1770-1790. Watercolour and gouache on beige cardboard. Paris, Palais Galliera, musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris, Inv. 1956.42.30**



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The issue was particularly important when it came to the Italian market. The peninsula had a number of very active weaving centres which produced a large variety of fabrics. Following the rise of the *Grande Fabrique* in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, consumer preference had favoured fashionable Lyonnais silks. Italian manufactures had to adapt, and did so by focusing their production on types of fabrics which did not have to compete directly with the patterned silks of Lyon. They focused part of their production on the weaving of plain fabrics, such as taffetas or satin, but also on more traditional textiles such as velvets (especially those used for furnishing), and Italian figured velvets still enjoyed a good reputation among European consumers (Tolaini and Battistini 2010, 204-5). From the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, a new geography of silk production therefore came into being with Lyonnais silks having the upper hand on the market for fashionable, patterned silks, and Italy keeping a profitable trade in fabrics not subject to ephemeral fashion changes. However, with the new trend for plain or

small-patterned fabrics, Lyon lost its advantage over Italian production, as the latter suited the trend admirably, and could compete for clients. In particular, Italian consumers could enjoy plain taffetas or satins produced locally and therefore available at a lower price. There was no longer incentive for them to import expensive Lyonnais silks. It was thus all the more difficult for the Lyonnais merchant manufacturers to keep this market in the face of such strong local competition. This new fashion seemed to be out of the Lyonnais’ control, stealing their profitable markets. Some Lyonnais merchants, however, turned this new fashion to their advantage by focusing on the production of and trade in waistcoats embroidered *à bordures*.

#### 4. The Lyonnais production of waistcoat shapes

If the manufacturing of a waistcoat woven to shape did not differ much from the making of other types of silk fabrics, the patterned textile being entirely made on the loom by weavers, embroidered waistcoats entailed a different organisation of production. The making of a fabric whose patterns were woven took place entirely within the silk weaving guild. Only preliminary work, specific effects and extra finishing processes were undertaken by workers from a different guild. However, everything was still done under the management of the Lyonnais merchant manufacturers, these different processes being closely linked. Embroidery, on the other hand, was not systematically part of this overall process: while all merchant manufacturers employed silk spinners, dyers and weavers, not all employed embroiderers. This part of the work was before the 1770s mostly left to merchant embroiderers specialised in this trade (Baker 2019, 129-30).

With the new fashion for embroideries, some silk merchant manufacturers decided to also embrace this aspect of adorning silks in order to sell waistcoats embroidered to shape. Indeed, their accounts reveal that some employed directly embroiderers, providing them with lengths of fabrics to embroider in the shape of waistcoat’s edges.<sup>12</sup> This part of production was easy to incorporate as there was no embroidery guild in Lyon (Baker 2019, 198). The Lyonnais merchants were not restricted in the number of embroiderers they could employ. Some even ran embroidery workshops rather than employing individual needleworkers (Baker 2019, 249). The firm of Joseph Pascal, Vial et cie, for instance, had an embroidery workshop in the city between 1767 and 1787 (Joly 1928, 391-5; 451-5; 510-4; Arizzoli-Clémentel 1993, 10-1).<sup>13</sup> By commissioning this further step, they had the almost entire making of a garment under their supervision.

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<sup>12</sup> The merchant Fiard, for instance, had account books entirely devoted to the embroideresses he employed. ADR, 8B/876/33, Livres pour les broderies.

<sup>13</sup> ADR, 8B/1089/1-14, Correspondance et livres de comptes de Pascal, Vial et cie. Designs for waistcoats are present in this collection.

Tab. 1. Sample of prices per typology of waistcoats commissioned from Italy, about 1750-1780<sup>14</sup>

Type of pattern	Type of fabric	Price per ell or waistcoat	In shape	Period
Plain	Tissu argent	28 to 30 livres (l.)/ell		1770s
	Tissu or	30 to 32 l./ell		1770s
Unknown (woven or embroidered)	Fond lamé or	26 to 28 l./ell		1760s
	Damas	30 to 35 l./ell		1720s
	Gros de Tours or et argent nué	40 l./ell		1760s
	Gros de Tours lamé argent	18 l./ell		1760s
	Florentine	5 l. 7 deniers (d.)/ell		1750s
	Carrelé	6 l. 10 d./ell		1770s
Woven	Fond tissu lamé or et nuances	33 to 61 l./ell		1750s
	Fond tissu lamé or broché et nué	76 l./waistcoat	X	1760s
	Fond tissu lamé or liseré	76 l./ell		1750s
	Fond tissu lamé or broché argent nué	38 l./ell		1750s
	Fond tissu or relevé or	100 l./ell		1750s
	Fond tissu argent	74 l./ell		1750s
	Fond tissu argent broché et nué	68 l./ell		1750s
	Fond tissu argent relevé sans nuances	82 to 84 l./ell		1750s
	Gros de Tours broché or nué	35 l./ell		1750s
	Gros de Tours broché or sans nuances	44 l./ell		1750s
	Gros de Tours broché argent sans nuances	43 l./ell		1750s
	Gros de Tours broché or et argent nué	48 l./ell		1750s
	Gros de Tours broché or et argent sans nuances	57 l./ell		1750s
	Taffetas	17 l./ell		1760s
Taffetas broché or et soie	30 l./ell	X	1770s	
Embroidered	Taffetas, broderies de soie	18 to 30 l./waistcoat	X	1770s
	Taffetas, broderies de soie et argent en bordures	21 to 30 l./waistcoat	X	1770s
	Satin rayé, broderies de soie en bordures	18 to 34 l./waistcoat	X	1770s
	Satin, broderies de soie et or en bordures	34 to 60 l./waistcoat	X	1770s
	Satin rayé, broderies de soie et or en bordures	23 l./waistcoat	X	1770s
	Tissu or, broderies de soie en bordures	60 to 70 l./waistcoat	X	1770s
	Tissu or, broderies d'or et soie en bordures	70 l./waistcoat	X	1770s
	Tissu or, broderies d'or, argent et soie en bordures	50 to 70 l./waistcoat	X	1770s
	Fond lamé or, broderies de soie en bordures	40 l./waistcoat	X	1770s
Fond lamé or nuancé très riche	60 l./ell		1770s	

<sup>14</sup> These data are taken from a sample of 307 Italian commissions of waistcoats identified in the account books of the Lyonnais merchant manufacturers and their correspondence with Italy (ADR, fond 8B). The price is either per ell or per waistcoat (made with about 1 to 2 ells of fabric). Technical terminology is in French, as per the one found in the sources.

The production of embroidered waistcoats might have even been rather profitable for some Lyonnais merchant manufacturers. It allowed them to diversify and expand their range of products. Differences in price between garments and from one merchant to the other indicate that a wide variety of waistcoats was manufactured in Lyon. From embroidery to brocade, from silk threads to gold and silver decoration, from plain to patterned ground, from simple, repetitive motifs sitting discreetly on the garment's edges to sophisticated and colourful flower gardens splendidly spreading on the fabric, the Lyonnais merchant manufacturers could offer waistcoats at a wide range of quality and prices on the market (Tab. 1).

With embroidery, they were indeed able to lower the costs of production and, as a result, offer fashionable and medium- to high-quality waistcoats at cheaper prices. A comparison of the wages of weavers and embroiderers reveals differences in production costs between an embroidered and a brocaded waistcoat. Weaving complex patterns was a long and costly process. First, the setting up of the loom, with the reading of the design, took longer to make for a patterned textile. The loom used for large and sophisticated motifs, called *métier à la grande tire*, was a complex mechanism which took several weeks to set up. The pattern had to be transferred on the loom through a process called *lisage*, or read in, an additional cost to the manufacturer. Marin Fiard, for instance, paid a weaver eight *livres* solely for «frais de lisage» in September 1775.<sup>15</sup> The weaving process was also long, especially for brocaded fabrics which required to use each weft colour one by one and the assistance of another worker. Weavers were paid per ell of fabric woven, the salary depending on the quality and the complexity of the fabric's motifs. Sophisticated and colourful patterns took longer to weave and the price of manufacturing per ell was therefore higher. The cost of weaving of a brocaded silk could go up to 16 *livres* per ell, and up to 36 *livres* with the use of metallic threads (Miller 2014a, 17). The use of material that was more delicate to handle, such as metallic stripes and threads, required more time and skill.

It was possible to lower production costs, but the design had to be simple and with a reduced number of colours. Fayet had brocaded taffetas woven for about 10 to 15 *sous* per ell, some going up to 36 *sous*. A sample book left among the firm's papers provides visual evidence of the type of fabrics the company manufactured.<sup>16</sup> The figured silks are indeed rather simple, the motifs being slightly abstract and with a limited number of colours (Fig. 4). It is possible to understand how their weaving required less time and effort than a complex brocaded fabric.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, figured silks were only a small portion of the book's contents, and most samples are simply stripped or chequered. Around the same period, the merchant manufacturers Lassause et Regnier manufactured brocaded taffetas for which they paid their weavers between 4 and 7 *livres* per ell.<sup>18</sup> We can imagine these taffetas had a more complex design which required more time.

<sup>15</sup> ADR, 8B/876/34, Livre d'ouvriers, 1775-1776.

<sup>16</sup> ADR, 8B/871/30, Livres d'échantillons 1746-1755.

<sup>17</sup> This point also raises the question of how fair the weavers' salary truly was. Justin Godart mentioned how some merchants paid their weavers lower than the actual worth of their work.

<sup>18</sup> ADR, 8B/995/1, Livre d'ouvriers, 1754-1761 (Godart 1899, 390).



The weaving of a waistcoat with brocaded motifs made to shape answered to the same parameters. Some weaving accounts have left an indication of the price of weaving a waistcoat *à bordures*. Fiard paid his weavers around 11 *livres* the waistcoat for the manufacturing of patterns to shape (therefore about 8 *livres* per ell).<sup>19</sup> If, once the loom was set up, several waistcoats could be woven on the same installation, only variations in colour were possible, the design remaining essentially the same.

Fig. 4. Sample of figured taffeta from the sample book of the Lyonnais merchant manufacturer François Fayet, 1746. Lyon, Archives départementales du Rhône (photo by Moïra Dato)



In comparison with the weaving of a figured silk, an embroidery was quicker and easier to make. It could be done on a plain fabric (monochrome, striped or checked) or on one with little designs, called *petits façonnés*. These types of silks required simpler looms, quicker to set up and easier to handle. Also quicker to weave, the wages of weavers were accordingly lower: plain silks were woven at a rate of 8 to 22 *sous* per ell (Godart 1899, 390). Furthermore, needlework required no sophisticated and expensive equipment, and embroideresses' wages were not high. A complex and sophisticated waistcoat embroidery could be done in a few days for a few *livres*, a Lyonnais embroideress being paid between 2 and 4 *livres* per waistcoat (Baker 2019, 289). Overall, the production of an embroidered waistcoat could be faster, but also cheaper for the merchant manufacturer supervising its manufacture. The *Grande Fabrique* could therefore produce fashionable waistcoats with sophisticated designs at cheaper costs, which allowed them to expand their range of prices to attract a wider spectrum of consumers.

<sup>19</sup> ADR, 8B/876/38-39, Livres d'ouvriers.

## 5. The rise of the Lyonnais waistcoat: example of the Italian market

In 1786, the fashion magazine *Le Cabinet des Modes* wrote that almost all *gilets* on the Parisian market came from Lyon (Baker 2019, 195). To stress the Lyonnais origin of waistcoats seems to even have become an advertising strategy: the Parisian milliner Madame Auboineau, for instance, advertised «all sorts of waistcoats from Lyon» in her shop at the Palais Royal (cited in Baker 2019, 195). Indeed, the embroidered waistcoat became not only a French success, but also a Lyonnais one. The trade in Lyonnais waistcoats made to shape was not only successful in Paris, but also abroad, as demonstrated by the case of Italy.

**Fig. 5. Waistcoat of Claude-Lamoral II (1685-1766), Prince of Ligne and of Holy Roman Empire, c. 1745-1750. Gros de Tours liseré broché (brocaded), multi-coloured silk threads, gilded silver threads. Woven to shape pattern. Paris, Palais Galliera, musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris, Inv. 2004.7.1**



Fig. 6. Waistcoat, c. 1745-1750. Gros de Tours liseré broché (brocaded), multi-coloured silk threads, gilded silver threads. Woven to shape pattern. Venise, Palazzo Mocenigo, Inv. CL.XXIV n.251



Waistcoat shapes were sold in Italy already in the first half of the century, as suggested by written archives,<sup>20</sup> but also by surviving examples. A remarkable group of garments illustrates the international success of Lyonnais waistcoats woven to shape. The Palais Galliera holds a sleeved waistcoat, known to have belonged to Claude Lamoral II, Prince of Ligne and of the Holy Roman Empire (Fig. 5). This garment, decorated with opulent floral patterns on a ground of golden-silver palm leaves, typical of the Jean Revel's style, is an illustration of the highly skilled Lyonnais production of the 1740s. This specific waistcoat of a peculiar blue could have enjoyed some success in Italy, as suggested by the presence at the Palazzo Mocenigo in Venice of an almost identical garment: if the shape slightly differs, the patterns and colours are exactly the same (Fig. 6).<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> The Milanese merchant Spreafigue, for instance, commissioned grey and silver brocaded waistcoats to the Lyonnais merchants Vitry et Gayet in 1725. ADR, 8B/1281/2, Lettre Vitry et Gayet/Spreafigue (Milan), 02/10/1725.

<sup>21</sup> Palais Galliera, musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris, inv. 2004.7.1.; Venise, Palazzo Mocenigo, INV.CLXXIV n.251. In addition, a 1747 drawing by the English designer Anna Maria

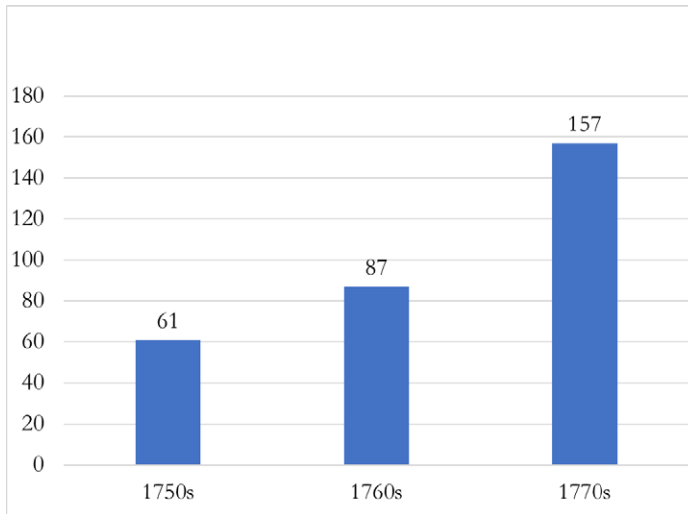
Fig. 7a and b. Silk length for a waistcoat embroidered to shape, c. 1770-1780, full length and detail. Silk satin, tambour embroidery, multi-coloured silk threads. Pattern embroidered to shape. Genoa, Palazzo Bianco, T.114



Gartwaite (London, Victoria and Albert Museum, inv.5985.13) and a third similar waistcoat in the United States (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Costume Institute, inv.CI. 66.14.2) are further evidence to the circulation of this Lyonnais design, and by extension to the European success of the Lyonnais artistic and technical creativity.

Numbers are however much higher in the second part of the century. From a sample of 639 Italian commissions (all types of products included) on the period 1750-1780, 307 of these commissions were for waistcoats, therefore almost half (48%) of the overall orders. Furthermore, the number of waistcoat shapes sent to Italy grew significantly from 1770 (Graph 1). Such increase was most certainly related to the fashion for embroideries, which was the privileged method of decoration for this garment by that date. This tendency is suggested by written sources, where most identified waistcoats shapes sent to Italy are embroidered (see Tab. 1), but also by Italian museums: some of them, such as the Palazzo Bianco in Genoa, hold surviving examples of waistcoats embroidered to shape likely to have been sent from France (Fig. 7).<sup>22</sup>

Graph 1. Number of waistcoat commissions per decade, 1750-1779



Slowly but surely, many Lyonnais merchants started incorporating waistcoats and coats embroidered *à bordures* in their production. Pierre César Sonnerat, for instance, active since at least 1755 in the silk trade, sent 20 embroidered waistcoats to Turin in 1775 instead of the usual lengths of fabric.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, the firm Gaudin et cie had embroidered waistcoats and coats alongside other silk fabrics in their workshop in 1776.<sup>24</sup> It is a trend that not only silk merchant manufacturers, but also other tradesmen opted into once the fashion for embroideries took over. The merchant Joseph Pascal, for instance, was primarily specialised in the sale of *dorures*, gold and silver threads and trimmings in various forms, including spangles or strips. He sporadically commissioned embroideries to sell, but it is only from the mid-1770s that

<sup>22</sup> The waistcoat of the Palazzo Bianco in Genoa has an attached original label that reads in French «297. Veste satin brodée» (sic.), which would suggest that the garment was sent from France

<sup>23</sup> ADPO, 1J/467/2, Journal d'achats, 22/02/1775.

<sup>24</sup> ADR, 8B/912, Inventaire des marchandises sur le métier et en magasin, 1776.

his firm, newly constituted with the embroiderer Vial, started commissioning and selling embroidered waistcoats. This branch of Pascal’s commerce, however, remained secondary to the sale of metal threads and trimmings. It is not until the 1780s that embroidered waistcoats took over and became the main focus of the firm’s activity.<sup>25</sup> This shift testifies to the success of this business and how some Lyonnais merchants seized the opportunity to diversify by manufacturing embroidered waistcoats.

Entering a new trade, however, was not always easy. If Pascal, Vial et cie managed to expand their business in embroidered waistcoats to sell them all over France (they had clients in Avignon, Montpellier, Bordeaux, and of course Paris), they sent only a few of them abroad. Already from the 1740s, Italy was their main foreign market (along with Switzerland), and they had among their regular clients several merchants based in Turin, Milan, Palermo, Augusta, Parma and Rome. However, only a few embroidered waistcoats and coats were sent to the peninsula, and not all met with success. In a letter of 1786, the Milanese merchants Canna and Varese complained to Pascal that the waistcoats they had received were of poor quality, «très ingrates, très indignes», and did not manage to sell them. Their disappointment at the quality and problems with paying their bills encouraged them to end all exchanges with Pascal.<sup>26</sup> Until the end of the century, Italian merchants commissioned Pascal mostly gold threads and trimmings, a trade in which they already had a reputation built on decades of experience. In the 1780s, several merchants from Turin were still referring to Pascal, Vial et cie as «marchands de dorures», unlike French merchants who often referred to them as «marchands brodeurs».<sup>27</sup> They therefore did not seem to have convinced their foreign customers of the quality of their waistcoat production enough to expand their new business abroad.

This was not the case for the Lyonnais merchant manufacturer Marin Fiard, who from the late 1760s made this garment the main object of his trade. Already active in the 1750s, he was mainly sending lengths of fabric. The number of ells of most of his commissions, however, already points towards production specialising in waistcoats: many of them were of one or two ells, the length needed to make a waistcoat of this period. Already from 1760, Fiard started sending what can be identified as waistcoat shapes - unfortunately, it is not possible to say if the motifs were woven or embroidered.<sup>28</sup> Yet, by 1768, he was sending to Italy waistcoats identified as embroidered to shape by the dozen.<sup>29</sup> The accounts of his master weavers reveal that they manufactured mostly fabrics for waistcoats from about 1767, this type of production taking over the usual longer lengths which became in the 1770s rather sporadic and limited to a small number of weavers.<sup>30</sup> To grasp the scope of his production, we can use the account book in which all the metallic

<sup>25</sup> ADR, 8B/1089/1-14, correspondance et livres de comptes de Pascal Vial et cie.

<sup>26</sup> ADR, 8B/1089/4, lettre Pascal Vial et cie/Canna et Varese (Milan), 13/06/1786.

<sup>27</sup> ADR, 8B/1089/4, Correspondance de Pascal Vial et cie.

<sup>28</sup> ADR, 8B/876/32, Livre de vente au comptant.

<sup>29</sup> ADR, 8B/876/30, Marchandises vendues comptant et Mains courantes.

<sup>30</sup> ADR, 8B/876/38-39, Livres des maîtres ouvriers.

material used for his silk fabrics and waistcoats was listed, with more or less consistency. In 1766, he counted 180 waistcoats made with «lames or et argent», «fils or et argent», «frisé», «sorbec» and other metallic threads. In 1767, the number skyrocketed to 751 waistcoats, and slightly declined to 593 the next year.<sup>31</sup> These numbers are all the more significant as they solely refer to the gold and silver waistcoats, therefore only one part of his production. Eventually, Fiard ended up selling almost exclusively waistcoats embroidered to shape, accounts specifically dedicated to the work of embroideresses being drawn up from 1773 onwards.<sup>32</sup> Unlike Pascal Vial et cie, Marin Fiard became extremely successful with his embroidered waistcoats, to the extent that he specialised in the production of this specific garment. By the 1780s, he was sending waistcoats to Italy, but also to England, Germany, the Low Countries, Poland, Spain and Switzerland.<sup>33</sup> His products were also in great demand in many French cities.<sup>34</sup> Fiard's success, however, ended when he died and his papers were seized as the firm was considered bankrupt, a situation which should be attributed to mismanagement rather than lack of demand for his products. As his account books and correspondence reveal, commissions were flooding in.<sup>35</sup>

## 6. Promoting fashionable embroideries in Italy: Lyon and French fashion

Although garments made to shape or ready-made were not new, they were not the most common way of buying clothes at the latest fashion (Lemire 1991, 178). To develop this market, the Lyonnais merchants therefore had to secure the consumers' interest by making these items, along with their specific mode of acquisition, attractive. Why would Italian consumers want to purchase waistcoat shapes? If the tailoring of the garment was quicker than that for a normal waistcoat cut from a length of silk, the time difference was probably not great: the tailor still had to make measurements and sew the garment together. The first advantage offered by garments made to shape was that the added decoration, the embroidered motif, was already on the fabric, and therefore no further trip to the embroiderer was needed. However, such ready-made embroideries could also be produced in Italy by local embroiderers. This is when fashion becomes, once more, a selling argument around which the Lyonnais merchants centered their business. In order to make their embroidered waistcoats attractive, the Lyonnais merchants relied on what had made their silks desirable in Italy for decades: the constant renewal of designs. If Italian consumers decided to buy and import these foreign fabrics instead of having them manufactured locally, it was due to their perception of Lyonnais silks, which they considered the most fashionable (Poni 1997, 43).

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<sup>31</sup> ADR, 8B/876/32, "Ce que mes dessins reviennent en dorure".

<sup>32</sup> ADR, 8B/876/33, Livres pour les broderies.

<sup>33</sup> ADR, 8B/876/10, Correspondance reçue de l'étranger.

<sup>34</sup> ADR, 8B/876/1-9, Correspondance reçue de France.

<sup>35</sup> ADR, 8B/876/1-10 and 30-32, Correspondance and livres de comptes de Marin Fiard.

The idea that Lyonnais silks were at the peak of fashion came from two factors. First, the prestige of French culture and ‘taste’, with notably the influence of the royal court in Versailles, led French fashion to the forefront of European trends, followed by other courts and countries (Ribeiro 2002, 6; 56; Sargentson 1996, 104). Some Italian consumers wanted to wear French fashion, and above all what was worn in Paris. As the milliner Forot, based in Naples, put it in 1753:

C’est assez que je sois française pour me mettre plus au fait des modes [...] toutes les Françaises font fortune ici si elles savent travailler à ces colifichets. Il n’y a pas de meilleur commerce que celui-là. L’on tire tout de France quoique l’on fabrique de tout à Naples.<sup>36</sup>

Forot’s letter suggests that Neapolitans preferred the imported French silks over the locally manufactured fabrics for the very reason that they were French.<sup>37</sup> Simultaneously, Lyonnais merchant manufacturers stimulated this perception by accelerating the pace of fashion changes, launching new motifs for their brocaded silks on the market on a regular basis. For decades, Lyonnais silks were sought after for their newest designs, to the extent that other manufactures attempted to copy them (Miller 1999, 281). We can see from their correspondence with Italian retailers that novelty was, along with fair prices, the main requirement. Fabrics sent to Italy had to be «alla dernière mode».<sup>38</sup> In the last quarter of the century, the same expectation was applied to embroidered waistcoats. When commissioning these garments, Italian merchants invariably asked the Lyonnais to send their newest production, as the merchant Bernascone, based in Alessandria near Turin, expressed by asking for «disegni delli più moderni ad uttimo gusto».<sup>39</sup> In order to introduce their embroidered waistcoats in Italy, the Lyonnais merchants could therefore rely on their already-acquired reputation and on the everlasting success of French fashion. Consumers were aware that Lyonnais silks were in the latest fashion and mirrored what was worn in Paris.

Not only did the *Grande Fabrique* mirror Parisian fashion, it was the place of creation of silk fashion. Historiography has demonstrated the close collaboration between Lyon and Paris in the making of new fashionable designs (Miller 1998; Miller and Sargentson 1996). New patterns were created on a regular basis by Lyonnais designers, who went regularly to Paris to visit the art collections, gardens and silk shops of the capital and discuss with the mercers the new trends of the time. This trip allowed them to find inspiration and get information on the new styles favoured by consumers. Back in Lyon, they discussed their ideas with merchant manufacturers, taking into consideration the technical and economic issues underlying the transformation of their designs into fabric (such as weaving techniques, the use of metallic threads, the translation of the design to a loom, etc.) (Poni 1997, 64-6). Prototypes were made in the form of small samples that were sent to Paris. The capital’s mercers would then approve the design or request

<sup>36</sup> ADR, 8B/871/3, Lettre Fayet/Forot, 14/07/1753.

<sup>37</sup> An idea promoted by the Bourbon dynasty in Naples (Clemente 2017).

<sup>38</sup> ADR, 8B/876/10, Lettre Fiard/Gambara (Parma), 28/02/1758.

<sup>39</sup> ADR, 8B/876/10, Lettre Fiard/Bernascone, 14/02/1778.



modifications (Miller 1998). Their opinion was taken into consideration by the Lyonnais manufacturers, aware that the most famous mercers carried weight in the consumption of their Parisian clients, who trusted their judgment and followed their advice. It was therefore to the advantage of the Lyonnais to gain the approval and custom of these influent merchants.

However, the actual impact of the Parisian mercers in the decision-making process needs to be nuanced. If there are cases of mercers requesting specific modifications, they remain rare. Complaints from Parisian mercers over the quality of a design or a fabric are common, but they are rarely accompanied by suggestions for improvement. Indeed, correspondence between Lyonnais merchants and Parisian mercers reveals that such complaints were often used by the latter as an excuse to request a discount.<sup>40</sup> Of course, many of the exchanges between the Parisian mercers and their Lyonnais counterparts must have taken place orally, especially during the Lyonnais designers' visits to the capital, and therefore left very few written traces to allow assessment of their impact. However, it is important to stress that most of the creative process took place in Lyon. Lyonnais designers found inspiration from their trip to Paris, but also from previous designs that were kept in the Lyonnais firms' design studios and from their exchanges with fellow designers. The technical skills of weavers, and the economic knowledge of merchant manufacturers – who also were, along with most designers, in possession of technical know-how – was central in determining what could and could not be done, or which design would have a good visual effect or sufficient quality once manufactured (Miller 2002).<sup>41</sup> Being in Lyon offered a unique environment where designers, merchants and skilled artisans – weavers, dyers, embroiderers – collaborated closely. The Venetian ambassador in France, Marco Zen, wrote himself in 1777 that the situation in Lyon was ideal for silk designers, because of

la residenza di Lione, la gara di tanta fabbriche, l'esercizio incessante, la vista degli altrui ritrovati, la necessità d'inventare altrimenti non si smaltisce, tutto concorre in quel luogo a spronare e sforzare gli ingegni e la volontà in modo particolare e forse unico, talmente che, quello stesso disegnatore non suol più fare una eguale riuscita [...] trasportato dovunque (cited in Della Valentina 2003, 172).

The patterns, the colours, the material, were conceived, selected and decided in Lyon with some input from Parisian mercers. The fashion for silks was therefore just as much 'made in Lyon' than 'made in Paris'.

The crucial role of Lyon in the making of French silk fashion was essential for their reputation abroad. It became all the more important when embroideries became the preferred decoration. Originally, embroidery was not a Lyonnais specialty. The Lyonnais could however use their reputation as fashion-maker, along

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<sup>40</sup> The Parisian mercers Leroux et Delasalle, for instance, wrote to Marin Fiard that they were unhappy with a sample of blue and black silk they received, asking for its price to be reduced by 10 *sous* per ell. ADR, 8B/876/4, Lettre Fiard/Leroux et Delasalle, 30/05/1783.

<sup>41</sup> On the importance of techniques and economic factors in the making of a design, see the work of Lesley Miller on the training of designers (Miller 2002).

with their long-time close collaboration with Paris, to underline the fashionable nature of their embroideries in the mind of consumers. With their waistcoats, the Lyonnais offered embroideries 'made in France', produced in one of the two centres of French fashion in order to catch the interest of Italian consumers who would prefer them over Italian embroideries.

The belief that Lyonnais embroideries were the most fashionable is illustrated by the trust Italians put in the garments sent from Lyon: some Italian merchants commissioned waistcoats without prior selection of design. Fiard received several commissions of waistcoats which bore no reference numbers or samples which would point towards a selection from designs previously circulated. The Italian merchants asked for a certain number of waistcoats, only detailing the type and colour of fabric, if metallic threads were desired and if edges should be embroidered. They did not specify what kind of motif was expected, only that they had to be of fine taste. The Piedmontese merchant Tommaso Nava, for instance, only specified in a commission of 1774 that he wanted embroidered waistcoats «de très bon goût». <sup>42</sup> The underlying meaning behind these 'blind' orders of embroidered waistcoats is that some Italian merchants trusted the Lyonnais to send them designs of excellent taste and at the latest fashion, and that they were ready to accept whatever they sent. They trusted the knowledge and taste of the Lyonnais merchants to have the legitimate authority on what was fashionable. Such trust is expressed in their correspondence: in another commission, Bernascone asked Fiard for waistcoats «de bon gout, nous en rapportant entierement a vous». <sup>43</sup>

Italian retailers commissioned brocaded silks without a prior selection already in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, as illustrated by the Milanese merchant Spreafigue commissioning brocaded silver waistcoats with «des desseins bien particuliers, me rapportant en cela a votre gout» from the Lyonnais merchants Vitry et Gayet in 1725. <sup>44</sup> Blind commissions, however, seem to have been a much rarer practice prior to the 1770s. <sup>45</sup> We can see in the correspondence of the Lyonnais merchant Fayet from the years 1740s-1750s that the reference number of a design was systematically attached to the lengths of silk commissioned from Paris and Italy. <sup>46</sup> Merchants always asked Fayet to send samples before making any commission:

si vous faites pour l'été prochain quelque chose de joli et nouveau en fait que de taffetas façonnés et même quelques magnifiques dessins de Chine, pour lors nous pourrions satisfaire avec un vrai plaisir réciproque

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<sup>42</sup> ADR, 8B/876/10, Lettre Fiard/Nava, 17/04/1774.

<sup>43</sup> ADR, 8B/876/10, Lettre Fiard/Bernascone, 06/02/1779. A similar trust is visible in the Lyonnais correspondence with Spain (Miller 2014b, 92-93).

<sup>44</sup> ADR, 8B/1281/2, Lettre Vitry et Gayet/Spreafigue (Milan), 02/10/1725.

<sup>45</sup> Only two examples prior to 1770 were found in the Lyonnais correspondence: the three silver waistcoats commissioned to Vitry et Gayet by Spreafigue in 1725 (cf. previous note) and a coat with embroidered edges commissioned to François Fayet by the merchant Mathieu Chambeyron, based in Naples, in 1748 (ADR, 8B/871/3, 29/08/1748).

<sup>46</sup> ADR, 8B/871/1-3, Correspondance de Paris et de l'étranger.

L'empressement que vous nous témoignez, mais il est nécessaire de nous faire avoir de bonne heure vos échantillons.<sup>47</sup>

Furthermore, almost all of these blind commissions from the 1770s were for embroidered shapes. It is therefore apparent that this practice was often attached to the business in and consumption of waistcoats embroidered to shape. Selling them in shape certainly presented a number of advantages for both parties. First, it allowed the Lyonnais to skip the stage of circulating samples, which was not only costly in time and money, but also a risk as their designs for the new season might be copied by rival manufactures (Miller 1999). Furthermore, waistcoat shapes seem to have been particularly convenient for bulk orders, a large number of them often being commissioned at once. In 1777 for instance, Bernascone asked Fiard to send 39 waistcoats through a single order.<sup>48</sup>

With embroidered waistcoats, the Lyonnais merchants therefore managed not only to keep their Italian market despite the downfall of brocaded silks, but also to seize a niche they did not control before. Garments made to shape were not new at that time nor were they a Lyonnais invention. Lyon's waistcoats embroidered to shape, however, were the first garments of this type that became so popular and sold at an international level, to the extent that they became a Lyonnais 'brand'.

To better understand the consumption of Lyonnais waistcoats in Italy, it would be most informative to compare it with the local production of waistcoats. It is an aspect of the trade that still needs to be uncovered, along with the role of the different Italian actors (merciers, *setaioli*, embroiderers, etc) in their production and consumption. The only trace of waistcoats locally embroidered to shape found so far is in Florence where a Lyonnais merchant, Pierre Chauvet, established himself in the 1770s and started manufacturing and selling *gilets* all over Italy.<sup>49</sup> Other traces of embroidered waistcoats were found in the first years of the 1780s in the account book of Françoise Belsent, a French milliner previously based in Turin who came to Florence in the 1750s.<sup>50</sup> Consulted account books of Italian merchants do not mention any waistcoats, all fabrics being sold in length.<sup>51</sup> It is therefore difficult to say if the manufacturing of waistcoat shapes was common in Italy. Further research in business archives of other Italian cities is surely necessary to delve deeper into this matter and determine the competition for Lyonnais waistcoats.

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<sup>47</sup> ADR, 8B/871/3, Lettre Fayet/Chambeyron (Naples), 14/08/1756.

<sup>48</sup> ADR, 8B/876/10, Lettre Fiard/Bernascone, 21/06/1777.

<sup>49</sup> Archivio di Stato di Firenze (ASF), N/422/1376-1391, Libri di commercio e di famiglia, Pietro Chauvet.

<sup>50</sup> ASF, Archivio Antinori, Busta 136, Debitori e creditori di Francesca Belsent, modista, 1779-1784.

<sup>51</sup> For instance, ASF, N/422/5012, Giornale di bottega di Vincenzo Turchi, setaiolo, 1783-1792; ASF, N/422/5017, Registro dei drappi riconsegnati dalle tessitrici al negozio di Vincenzo Turchi e compagni, 1783-1792; ASF, Archivio Venturi Ginori Lisci, 498, Giornali d'Antonio Cenni e figli, setaioli in Por Santa Maria, 1771-1774.

## 7. Conclusion

The increasing number of embroidered waistcoats, especially those in shape, in the Lyonnais merchants' papers from the 1770s is indicative of a significant change in production and business practices that took place in this period. This new tendency originated in and was shaped by fashion. The trend for embroidery taking over Europe, the *Grande Fabrique* had to adapt. Some Lyonnais merchants did so by transposing their trademark of seasonal fashion changes onto embroidery and by focusing their strategies on the garment the most likely to make this medium flourish. The waistcoat was not only a garment particularly popular embroidered, but also the central part of the male attire. By capitalizing on it, following sartorial trends and with a quick production process, Lyon maintained its hold on the market for fashionable silks. Exploring their trade with Italian cities, we saw that a number of Lyonnais merchants successfully incorporated the production of waistcoats embroidered to shape to their manufacture. Turning this trend to their advantage, they were able to stimulate consumption by offering a wider range of goods at different price levels. These observations nuance the usual narrative about the Lyonnais industry suffering at the end of the century because of the decline in demand for fashionable brocaded silks, a story often exaggerated by the manufacture itself. Some Lyonnais merchants were not only able to adapt to this change, but actually used it to their advantage in order to develop a successful product and expand their production. Furthermore, the case of the male waistcoat woven or embroidered to shape is also an excellent example of how different items and processes of trading and consumption could spread as a response to the emulation of fashion. Through their modes of production and acquisition, waistcoats woven and embroidered to shape were among the first steps that led towards the ready-made clothing industry of the following century.

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Daniel Muñoz Navarro

*The virus of fashion. Democratization of luxury  
and new commercial strategies in early modern Valencia<sup>1</sup>*

It is not new that fashion was a widespread phenomenon in eighteenth-century European cities. In addition, the social and cultural approach has prevailed in the study of this topic during the last decades (Roche 1991; Belfanti 2008). However, it is worth asking about the economic effects of this phenomenon, so it is necessary to return to case studies, such as the one presented in the following pages. This study is situated within the current research on «retail revolution», which has valued the role played by changes in supply and commercialisation systems in the process of modern economic growth (Stobart and Hann 2004; Dewilde 2015; Blondé and Van Damme 2015). However, a brief examination of the specialized literature confirms that this approach has been limited to the more developed regions of north-western Europe (Mui and Mui 1989; Cox 2000; Stobart 2005, Benson and Ugolini 2005; Blondé, Stobart et al. 2006; Blondé, Briot et al. 2005).

One of the questions this research seeks to answer is to confirm that this process, closely linked to fashion and the diffusion of new consumption patterns, was not exclusive to the more urbanised areas of Europe, and can also be extended to the context of southern Europe. Mediterranean cities experienced similar processes of diffusion and imitation of new fashions, developing their fixed textile commercialisation systems, in response to renewed consumption behaviors in which colourfulness and design of garments were dominant qualities above durability. In doing so, it will be provided a diachronic analysis of the textile supply in one of the main cities of the Spanish Mediterranean façade, asking when the first substantial changes in retail systems took place, who were the protagonists and what were the channels of diffusion of the new fashions in eighteenth-century Valencia.

For the Spanish case, Pierre Vilar highlighted the role *botigas* (shops) and retail trade played in the economic development of Catalonia in the eighteenth century. The author pointed out that «the *botiga*, when it acquires a certain importance, almost always has a “company” that finances it». The capitalist nature of these companies entailed, on multiple occasions, «the formation, frequent indeed, of individual fortunes and the rise of certain families» (Vilar 1988, 159-60). Through the abundant information provided by private Catalan documentation, Vilar

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underlined the transformative nature of these commercial establishments, the role of their protagonists in shaping the Catalan eighteenth-century bourgeoisie, and, finally, the contribution of shops (together with other essential business models, such as the «*barca*» or the «*compañías*») to the merchant capital accumulation and, ultimately, to capitalist economic growth. All this was crucial in the Catalan policy of *redreç* – the implemented measures to reactivate the economy of Catalonia in the final decades of the seventeenth century.

However, this process was not exclusive to the Catalan area but also stood out in other cities in Mediterranean Europe, such as Barcelona (Torra 2003), Naples (Clemente 2011), Rome (Ago 2006), and Valencia (Muñoz 2015; 2018). Fashion undoubtedly stimulated economic growth in the more developed regions of northwestern Europe. In addition, it also did so in the Mediterranean area since this economic and social transformation was also present there (Yun and Torras 1999; Muñoz 2011; Nigro 2015). The city of Valencia participated very actively in this transformation, developing an important sector of the merchant petty bourgeoisie and changing consumption patterns in most of the population. However, it is necessary to study in-depth how the influence of fashion in eighteenth-century Spain transformed the commercial structure, making the petty bourgeoisie the main protagonist and shops the central scene of the changes. The case study is eighteenth-century Valencia, a dynamic city that experienced remarkable economic development during that century (Franch 1986; 2000). The main challenge to analyse this process is the fragmentation of the sources, requiring complementary archival collections to piece together the evolution of retail strategies implemented by cloth *botigueros* (shopkeepers) established in Valencia in the eighteenth century.

## 1. Taxation, Consumption and Textile Supply in Valencia at the Turn of the eighteenth century

Tax records of the *General del tall* help to know the retail trade in Valencia at the end of the seventeenth century (Muñoz 2012). Thus, it is reconstructed the textile supply of some of the main families of shopkeepers, considered representative of the whole sector of the commercial petty bourgeoisie, that remained active for several decades. The goal is to define better the nature and characteristics of this emerging transformation process in the ongoing textile commercialisation during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Specifically, to confirm the initial hypothesis, it is analysed the commercial activity of three families of shopkeepers: the Sumbiela, the Casamayor (of French origin) and the Luesma (probable natives of Valencia) in 1683, 1693 and 1704, based on the tax records of the *tall* in those years.

As was relatively common, these families were perpetuated for decades in the retail textile business, taking advantage of the context of the city's economic recovery, beneficial tax and administrative reforms, and the boom in consumption. Some even made the leap to wholesale trade, much more lucrative and socially better regarded than direct selling («*al corte*»). Merchants were regularly involved in leasing municipal or manorial taxes and rights, trying to consolidate their

socioeconomic status and perpetuate trade in their shops, even if they let *mozos*, *factores* or *socios* run the business.

Textile shops, concentrated in the Puerta Nueva neighbourhood, maintained their activity for several generations, usually because the business partners were relatives or from the same region (Muñoz 2015). Although documentation provides numerous examples of this commercial inbreeding that prevailed in Valencia's textile retail trade, sometimes it is difficult to trace the activity of a family for decades since the surnames could change. Despite this, several families remained active for decades, especially the Sumbiela, who were present in the retail textile trade for almost a century (Muñoz 2008).

There were three families of cloth shopkeepers that continued in the cloth retail business between 1680 and 1705. Hence the goal is to compare variations of the textile supply of the shops over almost three decades when the change started. Specifically, we analyse the sales registered in 1683, 1693 and 1704 according to the tax records of the *tall*, focusing on the families mentioned above. They all had a considerable volume of business and an uninterrupted sale of textile products, based on kinship ties and the prevalence of inbreeding in this social sector.

We reconstruct their textile supply and commercial activity over almost three decades by analysing sales in those years. This section will allow us to define better the revitalisation and transformation process in early and gradual commercialisation systems, which can hardly be considered revolutionary.

Tab. 1. Analysis of the textile supply of three cloth shops in Valencia (1683-1704)

	No. of sales	Yards Sold	Value in pounds	Average extension	Average price/yard
<b>CASAMAYOR</b>					
Year 1683	1.456	3.210,63	2.026,70	2,21	0,63
Year 1693	2.000	4.030,00	2.542,80	2,02	0,63
Year 1704	1.694	5.258,00	4.067,20	3,10	0,77
<b>SUMBIELA</b>					
Year 1683	808	1.509,38	1.092,30	1,87	0,72
Year 1693	1.222	2.104,31	1.503,95	1,72	0,71
Year 1704	1.945	5.869,50	4.519,25	3,02	0,77
<b>LUESMA</b>					
Year 1683	717	1.896,13	1.189,25	2,64	0,63
Year 1693	1.489	4.376,13	3.164,85	2,94	0,72
Year 1704	2.114	6.339,13	4.603,95	3,00	0,73

Joint analysis	Year 1683	Index	Year 1693	Index	Year 1704	Index
Yard per sale (average)	2,24	100,00	2,23	99,55	3,04	135,71
Price per yard (average)	0,66	100,00	0,69	104,55	0,76	115,15

When analysing the evolution of the commercial activity of these three families, one can say that all the data point to a substantial increase in turnover and a transformation in textile supply. Each of the mercantile companies that ran these three shops started from a different scenario. Francisco Casamayor's shop was already consolidated in 1683, while Luesma's and Sumbiela's had a more modest activity.<sup>2</sup> However, by 1704, Casamayor's shop had increased in turnover, but at a slower rate than the rest, while the other two had significantly increased trade, surpassing it in the number of sales and *varas* (yards) sold.

However, all the data point in the same direction despite the differences common in the cloth sector. This group of «*mercaderes de puerta abierta*» or «*mercaderes de vara*» («open-door» or «yard» merchants, names that began to be used in the late seventeenth century to define this group of the commercial petty bourgeoisie linked to the retail of textiles in Valencia) increased trade volume, thanks to greater flexibility in activity, modifying textile supply to adapt to demand and expand the customer base. Thus, this sector was increasingly controlling the market, diversifying the textile supply, something that artisans could not do due to the structural limitations of the workshops and the rigid guild regulations they had to comply with. The sale «*al fiado*» (on credit), a common practice among cloth retailers, who acted almost like lenders risking a good part of their capital to guarantee a steady clientele also contributed to this process. Not surprisingly, this was one of the arguments Valencian authorities put forward in 1723 to defend the fixed sale against the itinerant activity of Savoyard peddlers: «because neighbouring merchants use cash sale and credit sale, thus facing locals' shortage, while foreign street vendors only sell what is paid to them in cash».<sup>3</sup> Thus, shopkeepers risked part of their capital in active debts, which were difficult to collect, to reinforce the commercial activity.

Notarial protocols of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are full of deeds of obligation between cloth dealers and their customers, who undertook to pay the debts they had incurred within a certain period. For example, on 4 May 1685, Manuel Bello, a citizen of Valencia, recognized he owed Pedro Sumbiela the amount of 32 Valencian *libras* (pounds), «*debitas ex pretio et valore tot raupe per me ex domo vestra empta, habita et recepta, de cuius bonitate, pretio et valore sum contentus et plenarie satisfactus*».<sup>4</sup> There are many other examples, but of little use, as they only indicate the overall value of the debt (a result of multiple purchases) without offering additional information about the clothes purchased.

Thus, shops began to predominate over other retail systems, consolidating a broader customer base. Social sectors that have traditionally remained outside the

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<sup>2</sup> In 1683, Pedro Sumbiela ran the store, while his brother, Juan Bautista, was probably a *mancebo* (an apprentice or an auxiliary employee). Shortly afterwards, Juan Bautista Sumbiela managed the cloth shop, while Pedro engaged in other activities, such as leasing manorial rights, like those of the village of Gestalgar, or the credit business through censuses sale.

<sup>3</sup> Archivo Municipal de Valencia (AMV), Repeso, box 1, file 1.

<sup>4</sup> Archivo de Protocolos del Patriarca de Valencia (APPV), Notary Francesc Escamilla, sign. 2282. Deed of obligation, dated on 4 May 1685.

market were beginning to satisfy their desires for consumption. When analysing the sales made by these three families, one can observe how, between 1683 and 1704, the average extension of the sales increased. However, it is not just a question of buyers buying more and more fabrics, but also that the average price had risen considerably.

Focusing attention on the sales made by these three families, one can conclude that the average extension of fabric sales rose from 2.24 to 3.04 yards between 1683 and 1704 (a positive growth rate of 35.71%). Also, the average value of a yard of cloth rose from 0.66 to 0.76 Valencian pounds in the same period (+15.15%).

However, the rise was not due to the higher cost of purchased textiles, but to lower consumption of traditional fabrics (especially *camelote* [camlet]) and increasing demand for specific fabrics (such as *estameña* [a simple and rough woollen fabric], *bayeta* [baize], satin or *pelusa* [a kind of napped fabric]) in tune with new tastes but more expensive. Concerning textile supply, there was a significant increase in the number of fabrics sold in each shop. More yards were being sold, and the supply was diversifying, incorporating different silk and wool fabrics. In addition, the range of qualities, colours, origins and prices also increased, favouring greater consumption for those social sectors that previously had hardly frequented clothing stores.

As can be seen in the following tables, the textile supply of the three families coincides in the process towards greater diversification, despite the differences between them. Particular situations influenced the sales recorded in each shop: the availability of capital to acquire wholesale goods and distribute them at retail or other ups and downs, such as the death of one of the partners and passing the business to heirs. However, despite these differences, some common trends can be seen in the transformation of textile supply. Before the analysis, it should be noted that, in the tables detailing the textile supply of each family between 1683 and 1704, the criterion followed when ordering the range of fabrics sold is alphabetical, to make it easy for readers to track any fabric included in those years.

In 1683, a limited range of fabrics, which in two of the three cases analysed here were no more than 20, characterised the textile supply. However, a decade later, the increasing textile supply in the Luesma shop (+52.94%) and the Casamayor shop (+42.11%) is very noticeable. In turn, the Sumbiela shop seems to be going through a slump in 1693, with a slight reduction in the number of fabrics sold (-15.38%), although this is a short-term issue. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the three shops increased their supply, selling more than 30 fabrics, as can be seen in the tables. Combining the data, the textile supply increasing of these three shops is 67.74%, going from an average of 20.67 fabrics in 1683 to 34.67 fabrics in 1704.

Similarly, if analysed by fibres, a very similar process is observed. New fabrics began to be sold in both fibres. This increase is standard for wool (+57.14%) and silk (+90.00%) but is more intense for silk, as the initial values were much lower. However, despite this greater diversification of the textile supply, wool fabrics predominate widely over silk. Unfortunately, as in previous analyses, no data are available for linen or hemp fabric sales due to tax exemption.

Tab. 2. Analysis of the textile typology of sales made by the three analysed shops (1683-1704)<sup>5</sup>

	No. of fabrics	Index	Wool	Index	Silk	Index
<b>CASAMAYOR shop</b>						
Year 1683	19	100,00	15	100,00	4	100,00
Year 1693	27	142,11	20	133,33	7	175,00
Year 1704	37	194,74	23	153,33	14	350,00
<b>SUMBIELA shop</b>						
Year 1683	26	100,00	15	100,00	11	100,00
Year 1693	22	84,62	18	120,00	4	36,36
Year 1704	36	138,46	21	140,00	15	136,36
<b>LUESMA Shop</b>						
Year 1683	17	100,00	12	100,00	5	100,00
Year 1693	26	152,94	19	158,33	7	140,00
Year 1704	31	182,35	22	183,33	9	180,00

Joint Analysis	Year 1683	Index	Year 1693	Index	Year 1704	Index
Wool fabrics	42	100,00	57	135,71	66	157,14
Silk fabrics	20	100,00	18	90,00	38	190,00
No. of supplied fabrics	62	100,00	75	120,97	104	167,74

Between 1683 and 1704, camlet and baize prevailed among wool fabrics. However, the consumption of these materials followed opposite trends. The more traditional camlet was bought less and less due to the interest generated by other fabrics. In turn, baize became a new option due to a greater variety of colours and diversity in quality and price. As baize was better adapted to demand, it was being consumed more and more. Something similar happened to *estameña*, *sarga* (serge, a type of twill fabric) or *lanilla* (a low consistency fabric made with fine wool). The joint analysis shows that the fabrics with the greatest diversity of colour, external appearance, origin and price were more consumed.

Silk fabrics were increasingly present, evidencing the progressive incorporation of this fibre into the textile supply of Valencian cloth shops during the last quarter of the seventeenth century. However, it was still less important than wool. Only taffeta had a significant presence in 1683, increasing in the following decades. Along with this fabric, satin also stood out, absent in 1683 but widely sold in 1704. To a lesser extent, other silk fabrics such as *setinela*, *felpa* (a kind of plush), damask or sateen began to be part of the textile supply of fabric shops. Overall, the increase in the number of fabrics sold is 67.74%, an unequivocal indicator of the diversification of textile supply and the emergent consolidation of retailing in Valencia between 1675 and 1705. This fact supports the hypothesis raised in these

<sup>5</sup> Index 100: 1683.

pages. According to available data, it was still an early-stage process intensified after the War of the Spanish Succession.

## 2. The Sumbiela. A family of shopkeepers in eighteenth-century Valencia

To corroborate the trends in the textile supply of Valencian shops during the first half of the eighteenth century, we have considered it convenient to focus our attention on a paradigmatic example: the Sumbiela family. This family was closely linked to textile commercialisation during the second half of the seventeenth century and, at least, until the mid-eighteenth century. Juan Sumbiela, a shopkeeper by profession, appears mentioned in the record of French merchants' certificates of 1674, but not his address. Likewise, the tax records of the *General del tall* include a good number of cloth sales registered under the surname Sumbiela, without indicating the first name. Although from other documentary references, we know that Pedro Sumbiela and, later, Juan Bautista Sumbiela worked in the retail sale of textiles in Valencia. These brothers, whom we have already referred to previously, were most likely sons or, at least, close relatives of Juan mentioned above, succeeding him in the family business. In the same way, after the death of Juan Bautista, the shop was run by his widow, Serafina Gallent, who kept it working until at least 1728, helped by one of her sons. Josep Sumbiela y Gallent was a *mancebo* in the shop of another Frenchman, Francisco Bordanova, replacing him at the head of the business around 1727, after Bordanova's return to France.

In addition, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, around 1706, another member of this family, Bernardo Sumbiela, joined the record of «*mercaderes de puerta abierta*», starting his commercial career in the shop he ran at Puerta Nueva Street until the moment of his death, in 1745. From this moment on, the Sumbiela surname disappears from the registers and merchants' certificates records, which does not mean that the business has closed. The will, the post-mortem inventory and the property administration deed show us how, in the absence of direct heirs, the company's partners, all of them of French origin, was used to keep working the shop's commercial activity.

This continuity and the information provided by the sources allow us to compare the evolution in the supply of cloth shops managed by the Sumbiela between the final decades of the seventeenth century and the middle of the eighteenth century, taking it as a representative example of the changes produced in the textile commercialisation of Valencia during this period. To do this, we have the 1745 post-mortem inventory of Bernardo Sumbiela's cloth shop, which allows us to extend our comparative analysis to the first half of the eighteenth century. Like most French retail merchants settled in Valencia, this shopkeeper was originally from Moneny, Province of Bearne, in southern France's Atlantic Pyrenees. At least since 1709 and until his death, Bernardo Sumbiela had maintained an active retail fabric trade in Valencia, which means more than thirty years of commercial activity.

Compiling these inventories implied making a specific list of the genres in stock in the Sumbiela shop, allowing us to compare with the information we have for the beginning of the century. Focusing attention on the textile supply of Bernardo

Sumbiela's shop in 1745, one can appreciate essential differences regarding the textile supply of Juan Bautista Sumbiela in 1683, 1693 and 1704, with that of Serafina Gallent, his widow, in 1706 and, in general, with that of cloth shopkeepers at the beginning of the eighteenth century. In Bernardo Sumbiela's shophouse, there were 15,051.63 yards of fabrics distributed among different types of wool, linen and silk cloths, and other types of haberdashery products such as galloons of different qualities and other several products. The total value of the goods in stock in this shop amounted to 13,307.84 pounds, a high sum indeed, which shows a dynamic and prosperous commercial activity continued by the company's partners after the death of Bernardo Sumbiela.

Suppose one establishes a comparison with the situation at the beginning of the century. In this case, the textile supply in the Sumbiela shop in 1745 is much more heterogeneous, evidencing the transformation process that has been discussed throughout this chapter. The diversity of inventoried textile products stands out. No longer exclusively fabrics are included, but also galloon goods and other items intended for personal adornment, included in the haberdashery category.

Tab. 3. **Textile supply in Bernardo Sumbiela's shop (1745). Analysis by fibres**

	Wool	%	Linen	%	Silk	%	TOTAL
Yards	7.703,00	51,18	4.865,25	32,32	2.483,38	16,50	15.051,63
ValorValue	5.896,42	54,57	1.609,35	14,89	3.300,13	30,54	10.805,90
Average price (in pounds)	0,77		0,33		1,33		0,72

Tab. 4. **Comparison of wool and silk fibres from Bernardo Sumbiela's inventory (1745)**

	Wool	%	Silk	%	TOTAL
Extension in yards	7.703,00	75,62	2.483,38	24,38	10.186,38
Joint value (in pounds)	5.896,42	64,12	3.300,13	35,88	9.196,55

The inventory analysis allows us to affirm that the number of fabrics in the shops of the Sumbiela family increased significantly between 1704 and 1745. By mid-century, we can distinguish up to 49 different fabrics (19 wool, 14 silk, 13 linen and three unidentified), although this information is misleading. In 1704, Juan Bautista Sumbiela sold 36 different fabrics, but only wool and silk. In 1745, Bernardo Sumbiela had a similar number in his shop, 33 fabrics of these two fibres. The specific analysis carried out, exclusively comparing the wool and silk products, allows us to observe that, even though wool continues to predominate, in 1745, silk has consolidated its presence in cloth shops. The number of yards represents 24.38% of the total, a slight increase compared with 1704 (21.30%). However, to its value, the percentage shoots up to 35.88%, evidencing an increase in the specific importance of silk fabrics over Sumbiela's textile supply as a whole.

Thus, the increase in the number of fabrics supplied occurs especially in linen products, a fibre gaining ground due to its good adaptation to new consumption

patterns (a light, colourful and inexpensive fabric). As we already pointed out when analysing the seizure of Sumbiela's widow in 1706, linen was scarce. There were three types of linen fabrics, so the growing specific importance of this fibre is evident. However, it is not only a question of a more significant number of fabrics supplied but of the differences in the typology of these fibres, their origin and purchase price.

Firstly, the 7,703 yards of wool fabrics stored (51.18% of the total) were worth a total of 5,896.42 pounds (54.57%). Thus, the average value for each yard was 0.77 pounds. A price somewhat lower than 1704 (0.80 pounds), a slight decrease, although significant. As can be seen in the following table, among the wool products, we find some varieties, such as the imported cloths –baize and *grana*, the latter dyed with the pigment obtained from cochineal– that far exceed the price of 1 pound/yard. More modest cloths, such as *chalón* (a lightweight twilled fabric of wool or worsted fabric), *filipichín* (a printed wool fabric), *lila* (a woollen fabric of various colours) or *sarga*, did not reach 0.50 pounds. The main novelty of wool fabrics Sumbiela supplied was their origin since most were made in France or the Netherlands. New European cloths, lighter and showier, were more in demand displacing the domestic manufacture. Some of the imported fabrics had a high price, such as *carro de oro* (a very fine iridescent woollen fabric) from the Netherlands or Amiens (1.80 and 1.60 pounds/yard), baize from Alconchez (2.00 pounds/yard), cloths from Sedan, Beauf or Carcassonne (3.50, 3.40 and 2.30 pounds/yard), while others were more economical, such as *barragán* (similar to camlet) from Brussels or *estañema del Príncipe* (both at 0.55 pounds/yard).

Secondly, there were 2,483.38 silk yards (16.50%). Its global value is 3,300.13 pounds (30.54%) since the average price is higher, standing at 1.33 pounds/yard. However, the price of these fabrics had increased a lot, compared to 1704 (the average price was 0.70 pounds). This increase is especially notable in taffeta, which goes from 0.51 to 0.98 pounds/yard. However, it does not correspond to the general trend. The great variety of qualities and the incorporation of luxury items, such as the threads of gold and silver, can explain this situation. Diverse and lively colours predominate among the 14 fabrics on supply, just like the beginning of the eighteenth century. We can also distinguish between qualities, especially in taffeta (simple, double or *entredoble* –said of a cloth type that it is neither double nor as simple as another of its kind) and *espolín* (brocade adorned with gold or with gold and silver). Although the importance of imported silks is less than that of wool, some fabrics of French origin were also supplied, such as French taffeta of various colours (1.20 pounds/yard) or taffeta of *manto de lustre* (1.70 pounds/yard). The French shops predominantly marketed these imported goods, despite the large production of Valencian silk.

The third group would be linen fabrics, a fibre of plant origin, with lighter and more affordable fabrics for most eighteenth-century Valencian society. This fibre is the one that increased its specific importance the most in 1745. With 4,865.25 yards, it accounted for 32.32% of the total yards of the Sumbiela shop. However, concerning the overall value of the fabrics, it represents only 14.89% (1,609.35 pounds) since the average value of the yard of this fabric was 0.33 pounds. These data indicate the existence of a large group of consumers of modest social



extraction, demanding cheaper fabrics, but new and more colourful, trying to adapt to new fashions. Among these types of fabrics, we find different qualities. In general, they are fabrics of ordinary quality, such as *cambray* (0.33 pounds/yard), *linetes* (0.30 pounds/yard), *lienzo naval* (0.40 pounds/yard), *ruán* (0.30 pounds/yard) or *granoble* (0.43 pounds/yard), among others. Although not explicitly stated, many of these cloths were imported from different regions of Northwest Europe, as their names show (Chambray, Rouen, Grenoble). The variety is more significant than in 1704, and they are no longer loosely woven linen fabric but finished fabrics of different colours. The consumption of this fibre of plant origin spread enormously in Valencia during the first half of the eighteenth century, but not before. Throughout this century, wool gave way to imported linen and cotton fabrics, much lighter, more colourful and more fashionable than traditional cloths. The consolidation of these new fibres in fixed commercial systems is a slow process that had to wait until the mid-eighteenth century, later than the one traced in Mallorca or Catalonia (Bibiloni 2011).

Finally, we must mention the fourth group of textiles inventoried in this shop, the haberdashery. Inside it, we find many galloons (860 *onzas* [ounces] valued at 1,999.30 pounds, 2.32 pounds/ounce) of various qualities, plus some raw silk, linen, cotton, and a few pounds of cochineal, valued at 439.34 pounds.

The expansion and diversification of the textile supply in cloth shops were not limited to fabrics. The consolidation of fixed retailing systems lied on this flexibility. It allowed incorporating new goods, such as finished garments, decorative elements (scarves, stockings, fans, hats), lace, galloons and other haberdashery products, which competed with all the craft trades related to textiles, generating not a few legal disputes. The comparative analysis of the Sumbiela family between 1704 and 1745 is a representative example of the transformation process of the textile supply that took place in Valencia throughout this period, in which the traditional seventeenth-century fabric shops were transforming into showcases of fashion.

### 3. Textile prices. A critical element in spreading new fashions

Finally, when analysing the success of the new commercial strategies of Valencian fabric shops, we must consider a key factor: textile prices and their direct influence on the purchasing power of Valencian consumers. To do this, we analyse the evolution of textile prices throughout the eighteenth century, establishing a comparison with the price series of different essentials and victuals, marked by a persistent inflationary trend (Hamilton 1988; Palop 1977). To verify this fact, we have calculated the average value of each product, starting from the available archival and bibliographic sources.

For wheat, we have the study carried out by J.M. Palop, who reconstructed the price series for this and other victuals, mainly using the records of the General Hospital of Valencia.<sup>6</sup> Through them, we can know its evolution, year by year, from

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<sup>6</sup> In the case of wheat, the price provided was in pounds/*barchilla*. The *barchilla* was a unit of capacity equivalent to 16.75 litres. In turn, the value of fabrics was expressed in pounds/yard. The Valencian yard was equivalent to 0.91 centimetres (Vidal 1862).

1719 to 1805. However, for the beginning of the eighteenth century, it was necessary to resort to E. J. Hamilton's classic work, more imprecise than the previous one since the price evolution in Valencia, between 1651 and 1800, does not indicate the product's specific value but the value in annual and five-year indexes. Despite this, combining both references, we have calculated an indicative price for a *barchilla* of wheat in 1700-1705.

On the other hand, to know the average value of fabrics, distinguishing between wool, linen and cotton, we have resorted to the databases created for the author's doctoral thesis, which determine the chronological divisions, based on the available archival sources (Muñoz 2018). For the beginning of the eighteenth century, we used tax records of the *tall*. At the same time, since 1730, we already have a sample of inventories and seizures of goods from cloth shops large enough to calculate the average price of each fibre analysed.<sup>7</sup>

As a whole, we can affirm that, throughout the eighteenth century, the fabrics supplied in Valencian shops maintained a much more enduring value than that of essentials. In a conjuncture of inflation, this meant an actual decrease in prices, making acquisition more affordable for the poorest social groups. Nevertheless, before starting to reel off the data obtained, there are several issues to be highlighted. In the first place, to make this comparison, we have discarded the possibility of comparing the evolution of the value of a specific fabric. Instead, we have calculated the average price of all the fabrics manufactured with the same fibre in each period, using the extensive databases that we have compiled to analyse textile supply. Thus, we avoid falling into specific cases, given the significant differences in prices in each fabric (depending on quality, colour, external appearance and origin). This fact allows us to assess the overall evolution of each fibre in contrast with wheat, the basis of the Valencian diet in the modern age.

Likewise, we dispensed silks among the analysed textiles since they had little presence in the shops of «*mercaderes de vara*» and were instead sold through other sales channels. Hence, it is impossible to calculate a reliable average value for this fibre in the different periods considered. Something similar happens with cotton fabrics, which did not begin to have a notable presence in the textile supply of the Valencia cloth shops until the 1760s. This is why we lack data on the prices of these fabrics in the first two periods.

Finally, the stages established in the following tables and graphs come to terms with the archival sources used and the historical context they belong to. For this reason, we avoid referring to the period of the War of Spanish Succession due to the economic repercussions and the inflationary imbalances it caused. Hence, we divide our analysis into seven specific periods. The first would be the one covering 1700 to 1705, before the succession conflict, subsequently giving a chronological jump to 1730. This second stage lasts until 1759 due to the low sample of inventories gathered for this period. The analysis is decade-divided up to 1800 due to source availability, which allows us to have much more substantial knowledge of

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<sup>7</sup> As linen goods were exempt from the payment of the *tall* tax, their average price in 1700-1705 has been calculated from the information extracted from judicial collections since the beginning of the eighteenth century.

prices evolution. The last period analysed is somewhat shorter to coincide with the established chronological limit of this research, sticking to 1800-1805.

For reflecting the data in the following tables and graphs, we have used two comparison systems. The first shows the actual product price for wheat (in pounds per *barchilla*) and wool, linen and cotton textiles (in pounds per yard). Thus we can establish a direct comparison between the price evolution of an essential product and that of these consumer goods and capture the different dynamics according to the fibre they were made of.

Not surprisingly, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, a yard of wool (0.80 pounds) cost more than a *barchilla* of wheat (0.58 pounds). This situation reversed from the mid-eighteenth century, especially from the 1760s, coinciding with the Esquilache riots, as seen in the graph. Likewise, it is worth highlighting the low value of coarse and ordinary linen cloths in this same period. The substantial increase in this average fibre price from 1760, due to the quality of these products throughout the second half of the century, is equated with the other plant raw material, cotton. Cotton was always more affordable than wool but not as inexpensive as linen.

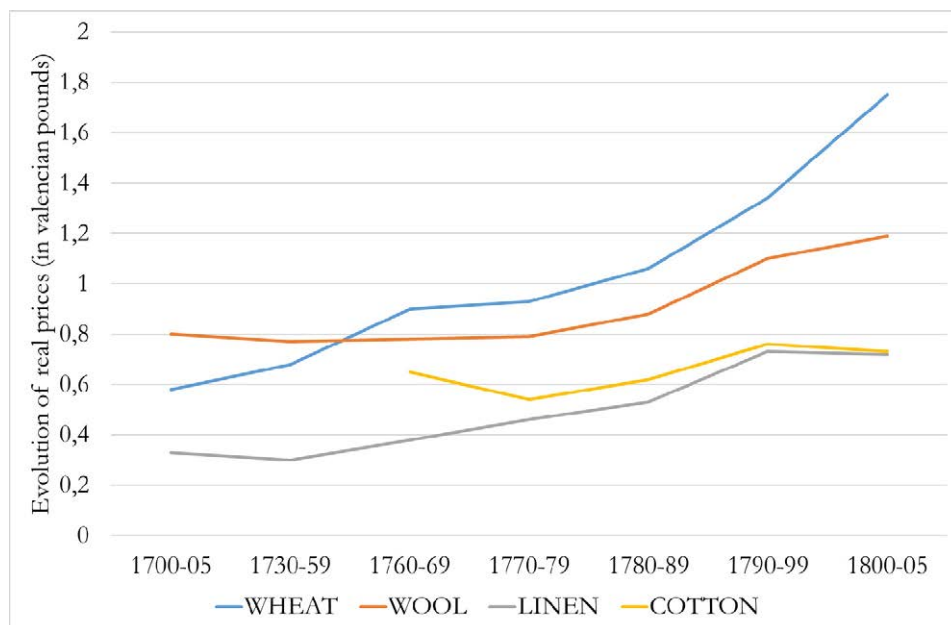
Tab. 5. Comparison of wheat and textile by fibre prices (1700-1805)<sup>8</sup>

	1700-05	1730-59	1760-69	1770-79	1780-89	1790-99	1800-05
Wheat	0,58	0,68	0,90	0,93	1,06	1,34	1,75
Wool	0,80	0,77	0,78	0,79	0,88	1,10	1,19
Linen	0,33	0,30	0,38	0,46	0,53	0,73	0,72
Cotton <sup>9</sup>	-	-	0,65	0,54	0,62	0,76	0,73

<sup>8</sup> The actual price was in pounds per *barchilla* (wheat) and pounds per yard (textile fibres).

<sup>9</sup> As we have already mentioned, cotton fabrics did not have a significant presence in the textile supply of Valencia's cloth shops until the 1760s. For this reason, we lack data on the prices of these fabrics in the first two periods.

Graph 1. Comparison of wheat and textiles by fibre prices (1700-1805)

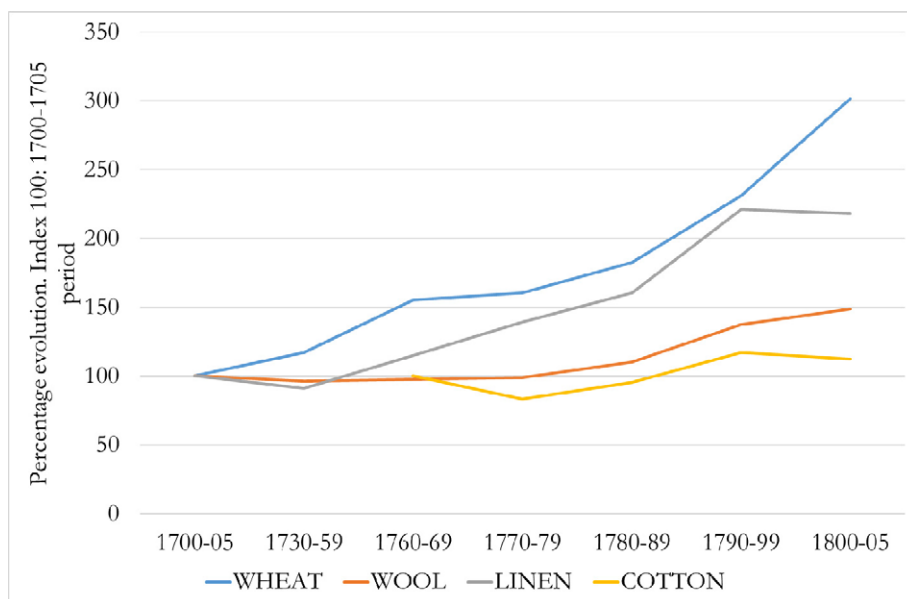
Tab. 6. Comparison of wheat and textiles by fibre prices (1700-1805). Percentage evolution<sup>10</sup>

Wheat	100,00	117,24	155,17	160,34	182,76	231,03	301,72
Wool	100,00	96,25	97,50	98,75	110,00	137,50	148,75
Linen	100,00	90,91	115,15	139,39	160,61	221,21	218,18
Cotton <sup>11</sup>	-	-	100,00	83,08	95,38	116,92	112,31
	1700-05	1730-59	1760-69	1770-79	1780-89	1790-99	1800-05

<sup>10</sup> Index 100: 1700-1705.

<sup>11</sup> In the case of cotton, as we do not have data for those years, we have set the index 100 in the first available data, 1760-1769.

Graph 2. Comparison of wheat and textiles by fibre prices (1700-1805).  
Percentage evolution



In any case, to establish a more detailed comparison, which allows us to compare the evolution of the prices of these products, we have resorted to representing it, not in absolute terms, but based on percentage value. We have assigned an index value of 100 to 1700-1705 prices, reflecting the fluctuations in the later stages based on this. Thus, all prices start from the same point, and we can more graphically represent their different evolution throughout the century. Only in cotton products, for the reasons already mentioned, we lack an average value for the first two stages, so the index value of 100 is assigned to the first data available, that of the period 1760-1769, estimating its evolution from this moment onwards.

The data and the comparisons confirm our initial hypothesis and correspond with the evolution of the textile supply in Valencia, analysed previously. The fabric prices in Valencia, in real terms, fell significantly during a good part of the eighteenth century, especially in the consolidation stage of the shop as a fixed retailing system.

As seen in the tables and graphs, the prices of wool and cotton fabrics remained relatively stable throughout most of the century, even decreasing at certain times. These fibres followed very similar trends. The percentage distance for wheat grew more and more due to moderate fabric price increase in these two fibres (+48.75% in wool and +12.31 % in cotton), concentrated mainly in the period after 1790. It was a period of fluctuation and price increase due to the constant warlike confrontations and social tension.

Among textile fibres, only linen fabrics follow a different pattern. Since 1760, the value increased at a very high rate, sometimes even more than wheat, multiplied

by two at the end of the eighteenth century (linen had increased by +121,21 % in 1790-1799). This fact is explained if we take into account the deficient levels from which it started. As mentioned, the linen fabrics were characterised by their poor quality at the beginning of the eighteenth century, alien to fashions and showy consumption. Hence the low price, around 0.33 pounds per yard. However, this situation began to change from mid-century, reaching 0.72 pounds at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The incorporation into shops' supply of higher quality imported linen fabrics, more elaborate, light and showy, was accompanied by an increase in prices. In this regard, this plant fibre stopped being an ordinary fabric and became part of new consumers' ostentatious consumption and tastes. Linen's affordable price was added to the qualities already outlined. Despite the substantial percentage increase, linen fabrics continued to be much more inexpensive than wool or silk and very similar to cotton. Therefore, different price dynamics in front of wool and cotton was not due to the general context of inflation, but the low initial price and changes in the textile supply of the shops. Despite being made of the same raw material, these newly incorporated linen fabrics were much more elaborate and refined than the previous ones.

If we carry out an overall assessment, we can affirm that the upward trend affecting primary products hardly influenced the value of textile goods in Valencia. At least, this was the case until the 1780s, since in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, textile prices rebounded significantly, although always at a lower level than wheat. On the other hand, linen goods increased in price, but not due to an actual increase in prices, but somewhat improved quality. Not surprisingly, it is significant that the value of these fabrics stagnated between 1790 and 1805. The supply was already completely renewed, following a trend similar to cotton fabric prices.

Intense commercial competition within this sector of the merchant petty bourgeoisie also contributed to a moderation in textiles value for most of the century. Several factors influenced this fact, but one of the most important was the growing presence of Maltese traders in the Valencian textile market. At first, they were street vendors and later *«mercaderes de vara»*, whose supply was more affordable, threatening the French hegemony in this retail trade (Franch and Muñoz 2012). Likewise, the actual reduction in the average prices of the fabrics sold in Valencian shops is related to new commercial strategies of the retailers and the process of diversification of their textile supply to attract a more heterogeneous clientele, including sectors of the middle and lower classes, eager to consume but with little purchasing power.

It seems logical that prices would remain low, despite the general inflation context, in a textile market with better stock and a broader and more specialised supply, as was the case in Valencia. Only at the end of the eighteenth century did the prices of textiles slightly increase. In any case, it was a specific juncture. The actual value of textiles in Valencia would decrease during the eighteenth century, favouring conspicuous consumption beyond the elites and consolidating fixed shops as the leading textile retailing system.

#### 4. Final conclusions

Commercialisation systems and textile supply were profoundly transformed in Valencia throughout the eighteenth century as a result of the consolidation of new consumption patterns among large urban groups, which tried to imitate new trends coming from Europe. The *botigas* played a key role in showcasing new fashions, producing a whole range of qualitative and quantitative changes in the commercial activity of the petty bourgeoisie – mainly of foreign origin, French and Maltese–established in the city. The diachronic analysis of the textile supply for some of the main lineages of shopkeepers allows us to confirm that this transformation process had already begun in the final decades of the seventeenth century. It took place in an emerging context of economic recovery in Valencia, which promoted an extension of retail trade and a progressive democratization of luxury.

The growing specialization of the textile supply in Valencia reveals a context of parallel change in consumption patterns, which adapted to the European fashion standards. This fact prioritized the external qualities of the fabrics (colourfulness and design), compared to other traditional criteria such as thickness or durability of the garments. Consequently, textile supply in Valencia expanded typologies, features and prices, which considerably diversified the range of textile fabrics for sale in these fixed shops. In addition, there was a development of marketing and credit sales techniques that tried to encourage the consumption of fabrics among local and foreign customers, who bought and redistributed these genres in other areas beyond the city.

In this regard, the continuity in the Sumbiela family's retail trade provides us with a privileged study framework to understand the nature of these changes and their influence in Valencia. By mid-century, textile shops in the city had considerably modified their commercial activity, offering not only a more diversified range of textiles but also a great variety of personal adornment (handkerchiefs, stockings, fans) or home decoration (curtains, bedding, table linen), which allows to compare them with the European fashion shops of the time.

From an economic point of view, these new commercial strategies reinforced the consolidation of a social sector of the petty bourgeoisie specialized in textile commercialisation, which contributed to stimulating processes of capital accumulation and social progress, in the same line pointed out by Pierre Vilar for the Catalan case. The rise of retail trade and the creation of specialized commercial networks, predominantly of foreign origin, made it possible to increase the social cohesion of this sector (which was able to create a new guild). In addition, it generated a process of commercial specialization and the emergence of new consumption spaces, structured and hierarchical among themselves, dedicated exclusively to the textile retail business, around the economic heart of the city, the Market Square in Valencia.

Despite the upward trend in the prices of victuals (mainly wheat) throughout the eighteenth century, the preparation of price series for textiles, distinguishing between fibres of animal origin (wool) and fibres of plant origin (linen and cotton), confirms another of the initial hypotheses. The rise of retail trade and the process of democratization of luxury in Valencia was accompanied by a trend towards

moderation in the prices of textile products, the result of a more heterogeneous supply and growing competition between different commercial sectors, which contributed to the fact that prices for textiles were clearly growing at a slower rate than those for commodities. This trend, together with a much more extensive network of shops and the generalization of credit sales, contributes to a better understanding of the economic impact of this process, encouraged by a process of social and cultural modernization, linked to the spreading of the culture of the appearances.

All things considered, this study shows that there was a transformation of textile commercialisation systems in Valencia that can be framed within the concept of «retail revolution», as a consequence of the emergence of fixed shops, the consolidation of specialized areas in retailing within the urban space and the development of a renewed and fashionable textile supply, along with new marketing techniques. However, this process – which could spread to other urban contexts in Mediterranean Europe – did not have a revolutionary nature, as has been pointed out by Blondé and Van Damme in the case of Antwerp. This should be understood as a secular process of evolution, rather than revolution, closely linked to a trend of social modernization and economic growth slowly eroding the structures of the Ancien Régime in Europe long before the Industrial Revolution took place.

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Klas Nyberg

*The production of international fashion in  
state-sponsored manufactures in Sweden, 1740-1810. Part I*

## Introduction

To what extent did state-subsidized manufactures<sup>1</sup> contribute to the emergence and spread of fashion in Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries?<sup>2</sup> Sumptuary laws as well as research on leading European courts as cultural disseminators have been traditional starting points for research into the origins of fashion during the period. The role of state manufactures and their influence on fashion has however been neglected, and rarely explored.<sup>3</sup> The overarching question here is whether the production of textiles and garments in state-subsidized manufactures on the European periphery spread fashion in a more conscious and locally adapted way, than if fashion models had been imported from European fashion centres and solely been governed by sumptuary laws (Riello and Rublack 2019).

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<sup>1</sup> The term «state-sponsored» or «state-subsidized manufacture» refers to the Swedish legal term «manufaktur» which in early modern times referred to handicraft businesses, regardless of scale, that functioned next to the guild system, instead answering to municipal hallmark courts. Wool, silk and cotton / linen and certain other consumer goods manufactured according to an international model were described as manufacture goods. The so-called hallmark and manufacture courts which regulated the field, referred to the hall ordinances of 1739 and 1770, respectively, which established special privileges for manufacture operations. Before 1766, manufacturers were granted individual privileges for the production of one or more types of goods by the Manufacturing Office, and subsequently by the Swedish Board of Commerce. The Swedish term «manufaktur» is a parallel to the German «manufaktur» while the English word «manufactory» lacks the mentioned legal meaning in early modern times.

<sup>2</sup> This study forms part of the project «Fashion, luxury, credit and trust in early modern Sweden-Finland, c. 1739-1846», funded by the Torsten Söderberg Foundation (*Torsten Söderbergs Stiftelse*). It was presented as a conference paper at the *ADH New Research in Dress History Conference*, 7-13 June 2021 where I received valuable comments, for which I am grateful. I would also like to thank Dr Håkan Jakobsson, Stockholm University, who translated the text, as well as the participants at the Higher Seminar at the Department of Media Studies, Centre for Fashion Studies at Stockholm University, several of the participants at the Datini Symposium, 2021, and the thorough work and comments from an anonymous referee.

<sup>3</sup> An exception is the international symposium *European Court and State Manufactures in a Global perspective, 1400-1800*, held at the EUI 2014, organised by Luca Molà (European University Institute), Philippe Minard (Paris VIII and EHESS) och Giorgio Riello (Warwick University).

The concept of fashion is often defined as the spirit of the times with associated ideals, especially expressed through textiles, clothing and its accessories (Nyberg 2021a, 15, note 36). Fashion in early modern societies with defined hierarchical social structures was regulated mainly through state ordinances, where the oldest form were so-called sumptuary laws. They stipulated how different strata in society should dress and what kind of garments they were allowed to wear. The oldest type of fashion was in the words of Lesley Ellis Miller mainly expressed by «...textiles made fashion in dress» (Miller 2010, 216). The rise of industrialism, parallel to the rise of ready-to-wear after the French Revolution, broadened fashion to include a wider range of citizens (Green 1997).

State-sponsored manufactures consisted of a range of operations for the regulated production of consumer goods that existed next to the handicraft industry. The manufacture production included quality textiles (wool, silk, cotton, linen), luxury goods (furniture, instruments, lacquer work) and stimulants (sugar and tobacco), but also the oldest forms of organized, standardized mass production, such as woollen textiles and the manufacture of weapons. Around this production an extensive institutional structure was created, next to the existing guild system (Cole 1943; Nyström 1955).

The institutions included government agencies, credit institutes and banks, labour courts and quality control of manufactured goods by hallmark courts (*Hall- och manufakturrikt*). The outline of regulations varied between different European states, but often included bans on the import of competing goods, detailed regulations for the imitation of goods that were used as standard models, and royal, princely or state privileges to entrepreneurs who usually had a monopoly on their operation. Typically, the aim was to achieve the highest possible quality of, for example, different varieties of silk textiles, precious furniture made of hardwood, or faience and porcelain (Heckscher 1955; Nyström 1955, chapter 1; Henderson 1956; 1985; Braudel 1986; Hartman and Weststeijn 2013).

While sumptuary laws were normative statements whose compliance remains uncertain and can be questioned, the impact of European manufactures on fashion can be studied and substantiated in detail with the help of sources, including agencies and institutes that regulated and promoted the emergence of key elements in the fashion process. In Sweden, for example, institutions were created by the state to promote sheep breeding for quality wool, silk cultivation, the spinning of yarn, the imitation of an international product range of luxury goods, as well as several incentives, including grants, production premiums, and loans at subsidized interest rates via special credit institutions (Heckscher 1937/38; Nyström 1955; Kjellberg 1943; Nyberg 1992).

Thanks to the extensive and well-preserved source material, numerous studies have been undertaken on the Swedish situation, though by now some of them are fairly dated. The Swedish development has however rarely been related to the development in Denmark (including Norway until 1814), an approach that would be desirable to provide an overall picture of the situation in the Nordic countries that could be compared to the broader European development (Stavenow-Hidemark and Nyberg, 2015).

The aim of this paper is to discuss the production of textiles in Sweden between 1740 and 1810, based on the general summaries of manufacture output collected by municipal authorities during this period.<sup>4</sup> The summaries include annual data on the production of the most important wool and silk textiles, wool and silk knitwear, as well as cotton and linen textiles.<sup>5</sup> More specifically I will discuss and show the type of fashion that was produced in Swedish textile manufactures during the period and how international influences affected the Swedish product range.<sup>6</sup> In a subsequent forthcoming investigation I will discuss what the change in the Swedish textile production range towards the end of the eighteenth century says about Swedish and Nordic textile fashion in a European and international context.

### Theoretical point of departure

Historical research of fashion has in recent decades been influenced by consumption-theoretical approaches that have changed our view of the early industrialization process and the historical origins of modern economic growth at the end of the early modern era. These approaches and the knowledge they have led to affect how we today interpret the production of luxury and fashion textiles in manufactures. The approaches are presented in more detail in the introductory chapter to the project's first publication (Nyberg 2021a, 1-15).

From having previously viewed manufactures as a kind of forerunner to the emergence of the factory system in the late eighteenth century, and as a sudden break with older static conditions, we now know that European industrialism was a more complex, gradually emerging process (Marx (1906) 1954; Mendels 1972; Kriedte et al 1981; De Vries 1994). In Swedish research the idea of manufactures as artificially constructed «political greenhouse flowers» was discussed and analysed from the 1930s until the 1970s as part of the so-called Heckscher-Nyström debate. That debate today appears anachronistic (Heckscher 1937/38; Nyström 1955; Krantz 1976, part I and Krantz 1976, part II; Nyberg 1992, chapter 1). The early industrialization began earlier than previously thought and was based on an extensive home industry in the countryside (Berg 1994; Hudson 1992). The growth of fashion was affected by increased consumption of consumer goods and falling relative prices of groceries and industrial products. These consumption processes represent a slow but ground-breaking change in early modern society (Trentmann 2012).

The issue at the heart of this investigation, i.e., the importance of manufactures for the emergence and spread of fashion must be seen in the light of this renewal of research. I recognize the relevance of Jan de Vries' theory of the emergence of an «industrious revolution» in Western Europe as early as the end of the seventeenth

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<sup>4</sup> Up until 1809, Sweden also included present-day Finland, which thereafter became part of the Russian Empire.

<sup>5</sup> The complete source material covers the time period 1739-1846.

<sup>6</sup> See also the part «The background to the project» in the end of this paper.

century, an approach that theorizes how households changed their resource allocation as a result of a growing demand for consumer goods (De Vries 2008). The idea of an industrious revolution, as well as Maxine Berg's view of a «new luxury», falls back on older more empirical approaches about the birth of a consumer society introduced by McKendrick et al in the 1980s (Berg 2005; McKendrick et al 1982; Nyberg 2021a, 1-15).

The emergence of a manufacturing industry is still primarily associated with the institutional structure of the early modern states in north-western Europe, including England and the Low Countries. The various theories as regards the formation of such institutions, have been dealt with in the first publication of this project (Nyberg 2021c). The way in which manufactures were developed in different European countries must however also be seen in a comparative perspective, connected with a growing world trade in luxury textiles and clothing before the emergence of ready-to-wear garments and colonial goods (Roche (1994) 1996; Lemire 2017; Styles 2007; Riello and Thirthankar 2009).

State-sponsored manufactures was one of the early modern institutions that was intimately associated with the rise of absolutism and central power and the spread of fashion. This applies both to the situation in Philip II's Spain and later in France during the time of Louis XIV and Colbert, as well as in the expanding Nordic states of Denmark and Sweden (Magocsi 2002; Braudel 1986; Braudel (1949) 1997; Cole 1939; Cole 1993; Minard 2009). To this must be added the rich presence of manufactures in the many princely states within the German-speaking area and in the Habsburg Empire (Henderson 1985; Ogilvie 1997; Siebenhüner, Jordan and Schopf 2019). The dismantling of guilds, monopolistic trading companies and manufactures in north-western Europe represents a different distribution of fashion impulses than was the case in the Nordic countries and areas in continental Europe with a stronger tradition of manufacturing and guilds. We must at the same time assume that there were distinctions between the different countries. The sparsely populated Nordic countries, where manufacturing policies were only widely implemented in the middle of the eighteenth century, represent something significantly different than the leading mercantile countries in Europe.

The emergence of Sweden and Denmark as nation states during the sixteenth century not only led to their expansion in the Baltic Sea area and on the northern European mainland. During the seventeenth century, the two states also became places where fashion emerged as part of a wider institutional build-up with the aim to commercialize the heavily agrarian economies (Nyberg 2010). The emergence and implementation of fashion in Sweden based on state manufacturing formed part of closely related trade policies that should be understood in the context of international development patterns.

By all accounts, Nordic state-sponsored manufactures transferred an international product range of fashion goods and an associated world of ideas to the Nordic countries. In the process it also adapted this complex to the conditions of the nascent domestic markets by specific designs of new societal institutions.

In previous publications, the production in Swedish manufactures during the eighteenth century has been contextualised based on research in consumption history outlined above. The establishment of manufactures was closely linked to the

emergence of a new group of large merchants in Stockholm (Nyberg 2021b). The research has also shown that the rise of manufactures was part of an institutional framework that included artisanal crafts and visual arts, where for example areas of handicraft production such as furniture making, mirror making and instrument making, were placed under the auspices of the hallmark courts, or where funding for cultural workers was supplied through the Manufacture Office (Nyberg 2017, 23-26).

The consumer goods produced by Swedish manufacturers during the eighteenth century were mainly consumed by members of the higher urban social strata (Ahlberger 1996, chapt II). This consumption grew continuously from the period after the Napoleonic Wars until 1846 when the hallmark courts and the guild system were abolished (Schön 1979, chapter III-IV; Nyberg 1999, chapter 5).

### **State-sponsored manufactures**

#### *The Swedish manufacture statistics*

Information about the production in state-sponsored manufactures in Sweden from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards can be found in factory reports, collected by the municipal hallmark and manufacture courts. In addition to the production quantities and the so-called manufacturing value of the products, the number of plants and their owners as well as the number of looms and workers were also recorded by the authorities. The information forms a uniquely coherent series from 1739 until 1846, i.e., a period of over 100 years (Mitchell 1992, 490, table D14).

One could still question the accuracy of the information, in particular with regards to the quantities compiled in the so-called general summaries, where data from all the different manufactures were summarized. This was also the compilations that were used by Professor Eli F. Heckscher, as the basis for the comprehensive statistics in his pioneering works on Swedish economic history. The original data has been digitized and is analysed here to present the value and scope of production for the period up to 1810. The latter part of the statistics from the first half of the nineteenth century onwards has been treated by modern researchers and will not be covered here (Schön 1979; Persson 1993).

The general background to and the contents of the archives of the hallmark court in Stockholm have been discussed by the Swedish archivist Lars O. Berg (Berg 1967). The courts, or the magistrates, in cities that were too small to have their own court, registered individuals with concessions to operate manufactures, with a production that was subjected to hallmarking, meaning that it was stamped as part of the official quality control. They did also, at least in theory, register manufacturers who produced goods that were not hallmarked.<sup>7</sup> Unstamped goods

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<sup>7</sup> See Hallordningen 1739, Art I, par 9, See also Hallordningen 1770, Art VIII, par. 1.



were those on which it was technically impossible to affix a paper, lead or varnish stamp, including for example soap and sugar.<sup>8</sup>

Two copies of the factory report were compiled by the hallmark courts, one of which was sent to the Manufacture Office and the Board of Commerce on a central level, whereas the other was kept by the court. The reports should be viewed as a secondary source, based on the primary information about looms, workers, production quantities, quality of production and the manufacturing value.<sup>9</sup> The general quality of the data has been discussed by both Heckscher and Nyström, but then mainly with respect to its consistency over a longer period (Heckscher 1937/38, 154; Nyström 1955, 142f).

I have made a thorough source-critical analysis of the annual reports. The analysis is based on a review of all manufacture regulations issued between 1739 and 1846 and a detailed investigation of how the legislation was interpreted by the hallmark court in Stockholm during the same period (Stavenow-Hidemark and Nyberg 2015, 321-24). My review of the regulations concerning quality control and the registration of production, shows that the legislative texts became more stringent and precise over time. In the hallmark regulation of 1770, a distinction was made between preliminary stamping and final stamping of finished goods with the expressed aim to be able to point out where errors arose in the long process of textile refinement. In cases when defects were registered, the producer was always the one who was directly responsible, while he at best indirectly at certain points could seek to hold the workers responsible.

The development of the regulations concerning volume and quality suggests that the information in the factory reports was so accurate that the recorded quantities of different textile qualities can be regarded as reliable. The statistics can also be compared with three textile sample collections (see below) that have been preserved for the years 1744, 1751 and 1766.<sup>10</sup> In cases where a written explanation of the textile samples was included in the sample books the terminology is the same as in the factory reports. The name of the manufacturers in both materials also correspond during the specific years. In 1751, the reported textile varieties in the factory statistics also agree well with the extant sample pieces.<sup>11</sup>

Exactly how carefully the regulations were applied in practice regarding quality control and the measurement of length and width, is impossible to determine. The fact that the factory reports over time became more coherent suggests that the compiled volumes were indeed matched by an increasingly thorough inspection. This is further supported by the fact that the hallmark courts were relatively

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<sup>8</sup> See Kongl. Maj:Ts Landt-, Tulls-, och AccisOrdning år 1756., in R. G. Modée, *Utdrag Utur alle ifrån den 7. Decemb. 1718 utkomne Publique Handlingar, Placater, Förordningar, Resolutioner ock Publicationer...* (I–XV. 1742–1829, cited Modée), vol. VI, Cap VII, Par. 2, punkt, 1, 4299.

<sup>9</sup> Riksarkivet (RA), Kommerskollegium, kammarkontoret, Årsberättelser fabriker serie 1, 1739-1815.

<sup>10</sup> RA, Kommerskollegium kammarkontoret Industrivävnadsprover, Svenska städer A-Ö (cited 1744:); RA, Kommerskollegium, Kammarkontoret, Industrivävnadsprover 1751 Stockholm (cited 1751:) and Nordiska museets arkiv (NMA), Adolph Modée's tygprovssamling («En del af Kunskaopen. Sw. Fabriquerne i ordn. Saml. af Ad. Modeer»).

<sup>11</sup> Stockholms stadsarkiv (SSA), Hall- och manufakturättens arkiv (HMA), series B-III, year 1751.

independent institutions, which after 1770 were linked more closely to the town magistrates (Nyström 1955, 251f).

### *Collections of textile samples*

In 1990, Elisabet Stavenow-Hidemark, in her role as the head of the textile collections at the Nordic Museum in Stockholm, published a catalogue of the so-called Berch collection of eighteenth-century textiles, as part of an exhibition at the museum (Stavenow-Hidemark 1990). The Berch catalogue renewed Swedish research by showing that Swedish textile manufacturing formed part of an international context. The collection of mainly British samples from the 1740s shows the importance of different kinds of smooth and patterned woollen fabrics. This variety of fabrics corresponds to *new draperies*, a type of textile which revolutionized the European textile market from as early as the end of the sixteenth century. The type arrived in the Nordic countries, mainly via Norwegian port cities and through smuggling (Eldvik 2014). Other types of factory-made textiles were also part of the international textile trade. Samples of silk and the precious felted woollen are also prominent in the Berch collection.

A long-standing collaboration between Stavenow-Hidemark and myself arose in the aftermath of the exhibition, which in 2015 led to the publication of another catalogue of three Swedish collections of eighteenth-century textiles (Stavenow-Hidemark and Nyberg 2015). Together, these three collections from 1744, 1751 and 1766, contain about 1,500 fabric samples. The samples are small, but often contain information about the name of the manufacture, where it was made, its width, and price.

The 2015 catalogue provides detailed knowledge of the domestic production and a unique visual experience of the fabrics that were recorded by the hallmark courts in the period after 1739, after the introduction of new policies on manufacturing and a ban on the import of new draperies (Aldman 2008). The authorities instead wanted to see more domestic production in line with the mercantilist ideas of the time (Magnusson 1994). The samples can also be seen as the long-term result of a manufacture system that was formulated already in the seventeenth century, but only led to lasting results after the end of the Great Nordic War in 1719 and the new development after 1739.

### *Methods*

As mentioned, textile production in Swedish manufactures was recorded by municipal hallmark courts. The information was sent to the Manufacture Office and after 1766 to the Board of Commerce where the local data was combined into a general national industrial statistic. In the following I will focus on the information in the later compilations (Stavenow-Hidemark and Nyberg 2015, 363-73).<sup>12</sup> I will subsequently also compare the individual production information with

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<sup>12</sup> RA, Professor Eli F. Heckschers efterlämnade excerpter, «Manufakturere i kuvert».

the fabric samples to show the representativeness of the fabric samples when compared to the annual manufacture production. The samples provide more reliable knowledge compared to previous research on what kind of textiles the factory reports recorded, including how they were designated, looked, and were composed, what colour they could have and what their international equivalents were.

My interpretation of what the textile categories in the general summaries represent is mainly based on textile manufacturing dictionaries and similar compilations of information on textiles and fabrics. Textile manufacturing in Sweden was meant to follow international models, and, as mentioned, as a result often retained an established nomenclature.

The analysis of individual quality designations has been carried out in various ways. For woollen fabrics, as well as cotton and linen, the local terminology has been found in three lexica of trade goods from 1797, 1815 and 1845 (Orrelius 1797; Synnerberg 1815; Almström 1845). The international word for the same quality has subsequently been identified, not least with the help of the Berch collection catalogue. The etymological origins of various fabrics have been found in Leif Wilhelmsen's *English Textile Nomenclature* (Wilhelmsen 1943; see also Wilhelmsen 1954). The linguistic-historical dimension has been supplemented with information from Florence M. Montgomery's *Textiles in America 1650-1870* (Montgomery 1984). This has been further supplemented by several textile dictionaries from the period after 1850 where older statements about textile quality designations from archives, investigations and older dictionaries have been brought together. I have also consulted additional Swedish and Danish catalogues of historical textile samples in the Nordic countries (Goliger 1984; Cock-Clausen 1987; Lindström 2004). Finally, the analysis is based on research on the individual sub-industries as conducted by Per Nyström, Sven T. Kjellberg and myself (Nyström 1955; Kjellberg 1943; Nyberg 1992).

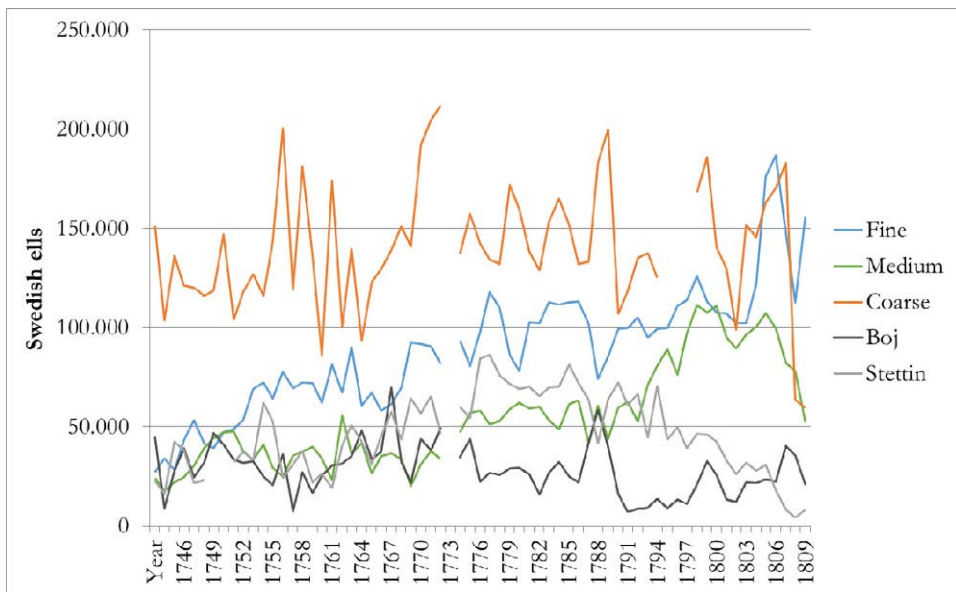
## The general outline of the textile production

The production of woollen (*kläde*) – a felted fabric without patterns – increased during most of the eighteenth century. Before the middle of the 1750s, the total annual production amounted to less than 300,000 Swedish ells (see Graph 1). After 1770, more than 400,000 ells were typically produced each year. The bulk of this expanding volume was in finer qualities. In the 1740s about one-fifth of the total production volume of woollen consisted of fine and medium-fine varieties. This increased to about 200,000 ells at the end of the eighteenth century. Coarser qualities stayed at roughly similar production levels.

The production of woollen during the eighteenth century seems to have been significantly lower than the quantities that were imported in the seventeenth century (see Graph 2). This development formed part of a long-term transition from coarser to finer and more expensive varieties. Just before the middle of the seventeenth century, between 540,000 and 819,000 ells of woollen were imported annually, mainly of coarser qualities. As late as 1718 – the last year of the Great

Nordic War – 500,000 ells were imported. Only two years later this amount had been halved (Boëthius and Heckscher 1938; Aldman 2008). When the import of woollen and other textiles was gradually banned during the next two decades, approximately the same amount was produced domestically until the 1750s when the numbers started to rise. Still, not even the highest annual numbers of half a million ells that were produced during the war years at the end of the eighteenth century amounted to more than half of the highest imported quantities in the seventeenth century. A reasonable interpretation is that the long-term increase, and the rising share of fine and medium qualities, reflects a growing demand for fashion fabrics in Swedish society. The much higher production numbers before 1720 and during individual years towards the end of the eighteenth century and in the beginning of the nineteenth century were largely inflated by orders from the military (Kjellberg 1943, 487f; Nyberg 2007, 18-21; Nyberg 2013, 2-6)

Graph 1. The Swedish production of woollen, 1744-1810 (in Swedish ells; 1 Swedish ell = 0.594 meter)



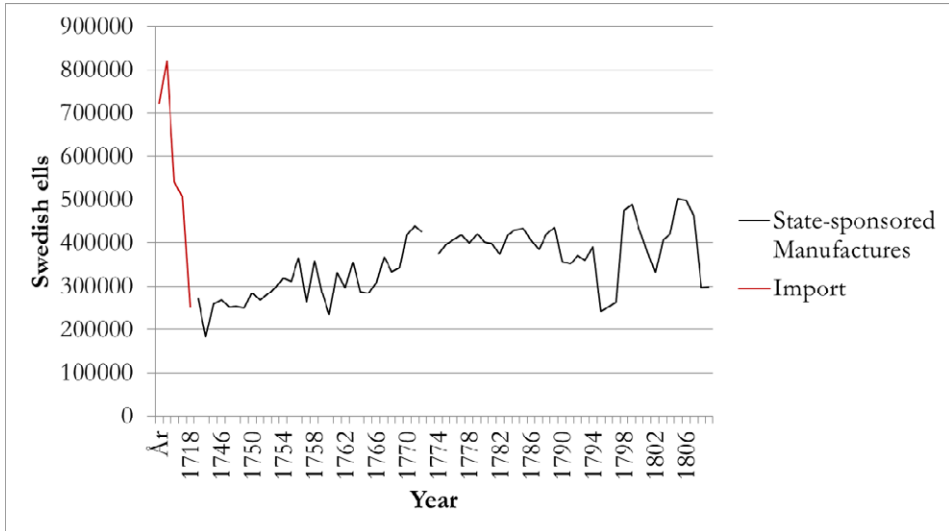
Source: RA, Professor Eli F. Heckschers efterlämnade excerpter, Manufakturerna i kuvert.

Fig. 1. Woollen samples in different colours



Source: NMA, Adolph Modéer's tygprovssamling, Sheet 29 (Woollen in different colours, 21 samples, Pinckhardt & son's manufacture).

Graph 2. **Import of woollen in 1637, 1640, 1645, 1718 and 1720 compared with the state-sponsored manufacture production as related by municipal hallmark courts, 1744-1810 (in Swedish ells)**



Source: Graph 1; Boëthius and Heckscher 1938.

Note: The proportions in 1718 and 1720 do not fully correspond to chronological calendar years; the total manufacture production refers to the sum of the five most important qualities: fine, medium and coarse woollen as well as the coarse qualities boj and stettin for the period 1744-1810.

Next to the large textile imports during the seventeenth century, a substantial domestic production was also undertaken by early cloth industries (*vantmakerier*). Their production apparatus was mainly designed to supply the crown with fabrics to produce uniforms, which sometimes required large deliveries at short notice. Next to the right to temporary exemptions from various types of taxes and fees, the cloth producers were often also allowed to combine production with trade in unprocessed and uncoloured fabrics as well as the preparation of purchased semi-finished products and imported finished fabrics.

Woollen was the quantitatively dominant textile produced in Swedish textile manufactures during the eighteenth century. Woollen production however also included the manufacture of worsted textiles (*stoff*) woven with warp yarn, into a fabric that could include patterns. Other types of fibres were sometimes mixed into the weft yarn. A range of different qualities existed, but only a few of these were quantitatively significant (see Graph 3).

The production of worsted textiles in Sweden was strictly regulated in state ordinances from 1751 and 1772 which defined the dimensions of the most important qualities in both their raw and finished states (see Fig. 2). Worsted textiles are also prominent in the examined fabric sample collections. In the end they still only played a minor role in overall woollen production. When compared

with woollen, the production of worsted textiles declined during the late eighteenth century, leading to the easing of the import bans on imported yarn that were meant to stimulate the domestic production (Kjellberg 343-55). This can be compared with British export figures, where the same type of textile increased its share of wool exports during the period up until 1775 when it amounted to 64.6 percent. Towards the end of the century, the proportion decreased to just under 50 percent and woollen rose by more than 15 percent (Van der Wee 2003, 397-472; Harte 1997; Kerridge 1985).

Fig. 2. The state-sponsored production of worsted textiles in Sweden was strictly regulated in state ordinances, which defined the dimensions of the most important qualities in both their unfinished and finished states

**REGLEMENTE,**  
Som utvisar, til hvad bredd, Jurifets Stoffwäf-  
werie Waror, så wäl rå som helfärdige böra  
tilwärfas.

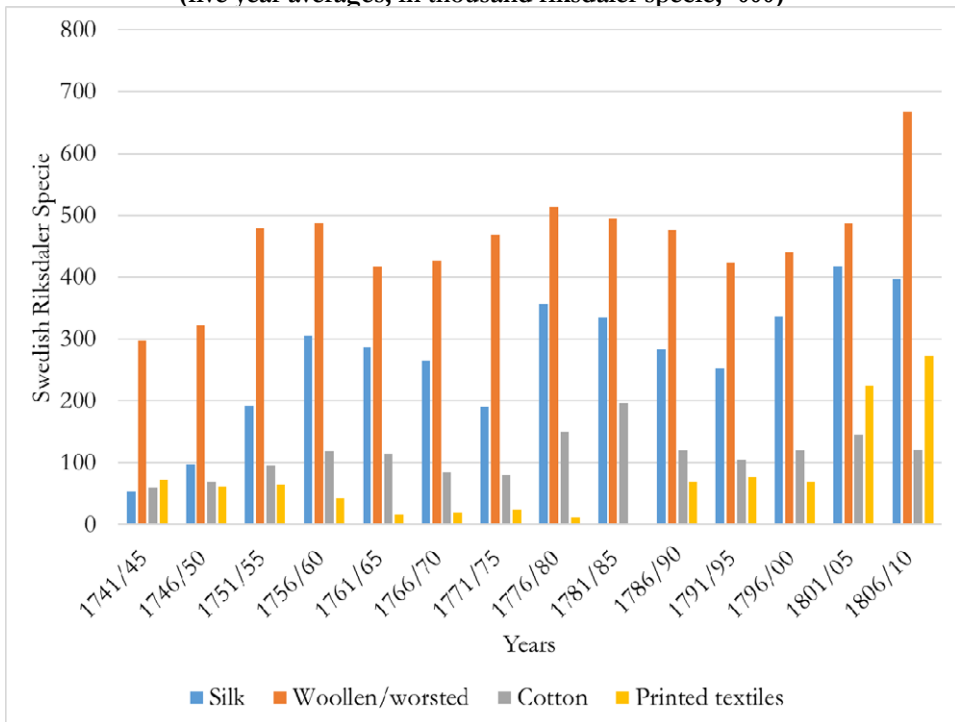
	Bredden.	
	Uf-färdige Waror.	Färd- igens.
Alle Felp bör utom listen hålla	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ qn.	—
Imperial eller Klådes Sarge	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ a 2 aln.	10 qn.
Smalare dito	6 qn.	8 qn.
Fryfte Sarger eller Flaneller	5 qn.	6 qn.
Ensfärgade Swarta Flaneller	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ qn.	6 qn.
Tina hwita Sfiort Flaneller	5 qn.	5 qn.
Gollgaft Flaneller	5 qn.	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ qn.
Chalong	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ qn.	6 qn.
Rasf	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ qn.	6 qn.
Camlott med Kanten	4 qn.	4 qn.
Barakan med Kanten	4 qn.	4 qn.
Enffa Camlotter eller Camlettiner	3 qn.	3 qn. 1 t.
Womnerade Sattiner	4 qn.	—
Dito af mindre bredd	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ qn.	—
Dito af än mindre bredd	3 qn.	—
Cassa & Bräck	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ qn.	—
Etamin dubbelt	1 aln.	—
Enffe dito	1 aln.	—
Callminker dubbla	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ qn.	—
Callminker enffa och rosige	3 qn.	—
Camlott de Corde	4 qn.	—
Slåta Sattiner	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ qn.	—
Sayett	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ qn.	—
Eternell eller Carlé	4 qn.	—
Droguett imperial	6 qn.	9 qn.
Ordinarie dito	4 qn.	6 qn.

På Stockholms Stads Hall och Manufactur-Rätt,  
den 16 December 1751.

Source: *Arstrycket*, December 16, 1751.

Next to wool, silk production was the second most important textile sector both in terms of the amounts produced and value during the eighteenth century. Cotton and linen production (cotton yarn with linen warp) played a minor role, which only changed towards the end of the eighteenth century, when calico (*kattun*) printing was introduced, in connection to the introduction of new technologies by Jewish immigrants (Brismark 2013, 171-88).

Graph 3. **The production of the most important textile qualities in Swedish state-sponsored manufactures, 1740-1810**  
(five year averages, in thousand riksdaler specie, -000)



Source: RA, Kommerskollegium, kammarkontoret, Årsberättelser fabriker serie 1, 1739-1815.

### *Woollen textiles*

#### Woollen

Woollen was made from short wool fibres which were spun into a loose, comparatively coarse yarn, after a series of preparatory production processes.<sup>13</sup> A special feature was the final treatment of these fabrics. They were mechanically processed by ways of stamping so that weft and chain yarns were felted together

<sup>13</sup> Linköpings Lands- och stiftsbibliotek (LLS) Handskrifter, E14, 31.



into one unit. The fabric was then roughened up with brushes, after which the surface was sheared. Finally, the fabric was pressed (Wilhemsen 1943, 43f; Wilhemsen 1954, 61; Cock-Clausen 1987, 35f; Stavenow-Hidemark 1990, 250f; Nyberg 1992, chapter 2).

Preserved examples of woollen from Sweden during the eighteenth century have almost always been sheared and finished. The 361 preserved examples in the 1751 textile sample catalogue, for example, all show the appearance of the fabric after it was finished through rolling and dyeing. Unfinished woollen, which was taken out of the loom to be prepared, was referred to as raw woollen cloth. This can be seen in a few samples in the Berch collection which both show how the textile looked before the preparation and how it was gradually refined during its various stages through rolling, roughening, shearing, dyeing and pressing (Stavenow-Hidemark 1990, 141-48). For finer varieties of woollen, roughing and shearing took place repeatedly and alternately and were thus part of the fashion element: a sheared piece of woollen was roughened up again and again, after which it was sheared anew, with a finer quality achieved, the more times this happened. In the process, the fabric decreased in size, as the felting pulled it together. No fabric shrank as much in length during its preparation as woollen (Randall 1991, 52; Kjellberg 1943, 730).<sup>14</sup>

A wide range of woollen qualities of varying fineness were manufactured in Sweden. Fineness was determined by the number of warp threads in the fabric in relation to the determined width, which at its widest was 2.25 ells (1.33 meters) (Kjellberg 1943, 245). The more warp threads, the finer they were spun. As mentioned, finer fabrics required more extensive preparation than coarser ones.<sup>15</sup> This affected the manufacturing value, or what essentially was the administratively determined price. Fine woollen was valued about twice as high as medium fine and twice as high as coarse woollen.

During the eighteenth century, Swedish woollen was divided according to the hundred-thread principle. A woollen identified as 16/00 had a warp that consisted of 1,600 yarns of a certain fineness. In addition to fine, medium, and coarse woollen, there were also special quality names for other types, including *boj*, *stettin*, *fris* and *ratin*.<sup>16</sup> The varieties differed in terms of weaving technique, binding patterns, and preparation, when compared to how ordinary woollen with the same number of warp threads was treated and defined.

The wool and yarn used in the weaving process were defined in a similar way. In order to be called fine cloth, for example, a specified number of warp threads spun in a certain fineness was required. The wool itself had to maintain a specified quality which also was defined according to the hundred-thread designation (see Graph 4).

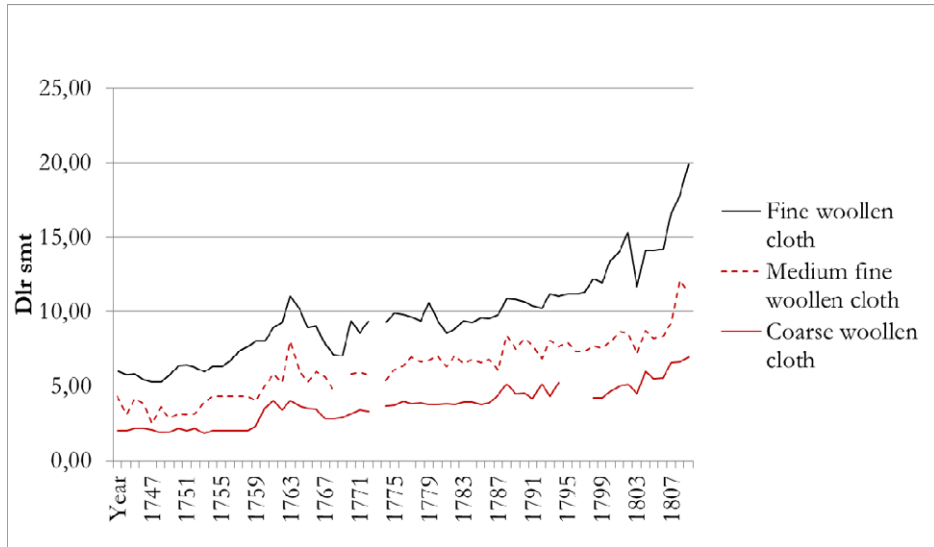
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<sup>14</sup> ILS, E14, 113.

<sup>15</sup> ILS, E14, 101.

<sup>16</sup> RA, Kommerskollegium, kammarkontoret, Årsberättelser fabriker serie 1, 1784-1788.

Graph 4. The production value per Swedish ell for fine, medium and coarse woollen, 1744-1810 (in daler silvermynt)



Source: Graph 1.

The raw material supply to Swedish-Finnish woollen manufactures included three groups. The most expensive was imported Spanish quality wool, from which the finest textile varieties were made. The domestic, heavily subsidized Swedish wool production was also focused on higher qualities, but still does not seem to have matched the Spanish wool in fineness. Finally, various coarser wool qualities were also imported, typically from Poland or different regions in present-day northern Germany. The domestic supply of wool and its organization was the subject of substantial government attention throughout the latter part of the eighteenth century (Westerlund 1988; Quiding 1865, 468-69; Nyberg 1992, chapter 5).<sup>17</sup>

## Worsted

*Stoff* or *estoff* (Fr: *Étoffe*) was, as mentioned, the Swedish name for several different types of worsted textiles. Internationally these textiles were generally called “new draperies”. The emergence of new draperies was so significant in the history of textiles in England that the Norwegian researcher Leif Wilhelmsen used it to name the period after the Norman conquest. According to Wilhelmsen, the period extended until the beginning of the industrial revolution at the end of the eighteenth century.

<sup>17</sup> RA, Kommerskollegiums arkiv, Särskilda utredningar, plantager och schäferier, capsule 42-45.

Fig. 3. Solid-coloured damask was common in eighteenth-century furniture fabrics, wallpaper and drapes



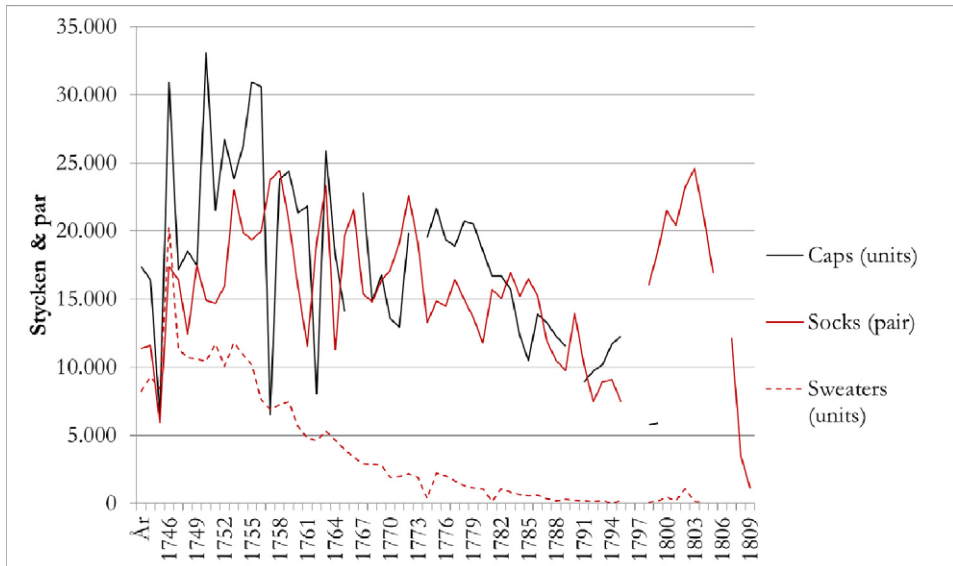
Source: NMA, Adolph Modéer's tygprovssamling, Sheet 24 (Solid-coloured wool damask, 7 samples, small moth attacks).

Unlike woollen, most worsted textiles were imported or smuggled into the Nordic countries before the eighteenth century. With the mentioned ordinances of 1751 and 1772, the Swedish state highlighted the importance of worsted textiles and their international connection.<sup>18</sup> In the ordinances, the prescribed width of the

<sup>18</sup> *Ärstrycket*, December 16, 1751.

fabrics was specified for about twenty varieties with different variations in the design. During the heyday of worsted manufacturing in the 1760s to 1780s, there were countless variants in the product range. By the turn of the nineteenth century, the variations were fewer and the focus was on varieties of simpler design. The long-term decline in the production of worsted textiles, which happened in parallel to the downturn of the silk industry, saw a development towards the production of plain instead of patterned fabrics (Nyström 1955, 173). The Swedish production of flowered satin, a patterned fabric, for example amounted to 60,000 ells in 1766 and was then among the three most important, but thereafter almost disappeared. Instead, simple and inexpensive variants increased their shares towards the end of the eighteenth century (Nyström 1955, chapter V; Kjellberg 1943, chapter X; Nyberg 1992, 267f; Jakobsson 2021, 97-119) (see Table 1).

Graph 5. The principal hosiery garments produced in state-sponsored manufactures in Sweden, 1744-1810 (number of pieces or pairs)



Source: Graph 1.

Printed import statistics from the period after 1828 suggests that these simpler fabrics were available also in the first half of the nineteenth century, but that they were increasingly imported, with a sharp increase in imports in the 1830s.<sup>19</sup> In knitwear production, worsted yarn, which was called *redgarn* in the Swedish nomenclature, was also used (*Preliminär textiltknisk ordlista* 1957). The industry had

<sup>19</sup> *Kommerskollegii underdåniga berättelse om rikets utrikes sjöfart, 1828-1846.*

its heyday before the 1760s but then declined long-term. The sharp increase in the production of socks made from worsted yarn towards the end of the eighteenth century was not a natural market increase, but was connected to shifting state demands during the war years (Stavenow-Hidemark 1990, 207f) (see Graph 5).

Table 1. **Worsted qualities produced in Swedish state-sponsored manufactures, 1746-1810 (in Swedish ells)**

Year	Camlet	Flowered Satin	Shalloon	Flannel	Rash	Bunting	Calimanco
1746	3,907		15,843	8,705	11232	984	5,804
1754	64,179	47,557	102,649	3,390	33,193	820	24,072
1766	68,797	57,988	44,903	5,041	61,130	5,555	20,235
1771	150,175	34,462	65,513	12,961	79,922	21,825	6,082
1776	111,474	32,899	46,455	3,644	66,991	33,681	8,330
1780	84,895	15,726	58,859	5,619	66,539	74,437	6,014
1785	60,954	4,929	80,218		66,073	67,826	514
1790	47,882	1,323	41,813	5,591	22,881	198,310	869
1800	35,305		47,076	16,082	38,713	61,688	
1810			12,480	30,363	8,196	44,280	

Source: RA, Kommerskollegium, kammarkontoret, Årsberättelser fabriker serie 1, 1746-1810.

Worsted fabrics were light yarn fabrics with warp made from worsted yarn (Synnerberg 1815, (II), 143; Nyberg 1992, note 4, chapter 1). The weft could consist of worsted yarn, carded yarn, silk, camel yarn or even a mixture of several different fabrics, a production technique that was a direct parallel to new draperies (Kjellberg 1943, 414f). The different manufacturing techniques used to produce different types of wool affected the dyeing and thus how different aspects of fashion changes were implemented. While fabrics based on short fibres could be dyed at various stages during the refining process, dyeing of silk and worsted fabrics took place during the final preparation of the textiles. In connection with this, the fabric was also washed, stretched, and mangled. As with woollen, the process ended with the pressing of the fabric. An important part of the imitation of the international models was to ensure that the fabric got the required stiffness, but in particular the correct shine and lustre.

The names of the various worsted fabric varieties were only partly based on the techniques used in the preparation and often instead had a geographical place as a name, prefix, or suffix. One example was camlets, which during the eighteenth century often were made under the name *Camlott de Bruselle* in Sweden. Sometimes binding patterns were mentioned as special qualities, for example satin, while there were also uniquely Swedish names such as flag cloth (*flaggduk* [bunting]). In a couple of cases, there were similar names for varieties that occurred in both silk and cotton production, such as *shag* and *felp*.

Worsted fabrics were imported in significant quantities before the introduction of the manufacturing system in the 1740s. In 1718, just over 485,000 Swedish ells were imported; two years later 473,000 ells entered Sweden from abroad.<sup>20</sup>

**Fig. 4. Wool-imitations that resembled ermine pelts were based on an association with superb luxury. Ermine-lined coats were an attribute among senior officials**



Source: NMA, Adolph Mod er's tygprovssamling, Sheet 26 (Wool textile fabrics, 7 samples).

Despite opportunities for diversity and variation by using different types of weft yarn, the type of worsted fabrics that were mentioned in the factory statistics were clearly defined textiles. Comparisons of the yarn fineness based on weaving calcula-

<sup>20</sup> The figure should be seen as approximate as the coarse cloth *boj* was also included in the sum.

tions from the 1740s and 1750s, compared with data from 1782, suggests that no significant technical change happened that affected the varieties (Kjellberg, 1943, 318f; Stavenow-Hidemark and Nyberg 2015: Joh. Pauli: 1751: Sheet 10, column 1, sample 1-14; Nic. Pauli: 1751: Sheet 10, column 2, sample 1-15; Christ. Pauli & son: 1751: Sheet 10, column 3, sample 1-5).<sup>21</sup> That assumption is further supported by a decree from 1772 which shows that the names of the worsted fabrics and their dimensions were identical to the situation some twenty years before.<sup>22</sup> Abundant proof of the domestic production of worsted fabrics can be found in all of the three fabric sample collections (Stavenow-Hidemark and Nyberg 2015: Sheets 9-12b in the 1751 collection mainly contain worsted yarn fabrics. The exceptions are fabrics from a couple of smaller garment manufacturers and a cotton and linen manufacture. 1751: Sheet 12, column 1; column 2, sample 1-14. The 1766 collection contains no less than 141 worsted yarn samples on sheets 21-30).

### *Silk textiles and silk ribbons*

A similar tendency towards simplification and standardization of the product range that can be observed in the production of worsted textiles also happened in the silk industry. During the heyday of the silk industry between the 1760s and 1780s, a countless range of fabrics were produced in the domestic manufactures. By the turn of the nineteenth century, the number of varieties had decreased in parallel with a tendency to focus on fabrics of simpler quality. The production of brocades (*broscherade*) as well as velvet and floral-patterned silks (*blommerade*) were reduced except for *droguet*, which had small-flowered patterns. They were replaced by smooth fabrics such as taffeta, satin, as well as silk scarves.<sup>23</sup> (see Table 2)

Tab. 2. **Some important silk qualities produced by state-sponsored manufactures in Sweden, 1750-1791 (in thousand Swedish ells, -000)**

Year	Race de Sicile	Droguet	Bordaloux	Taffeta	Satin	Flor
1750	6,8	9	0,8	5,3	..	2,5
1759	15,2	31,1		50,5	11,7	17,5
1766	7,7	27,7	16,1	29,9	6,7	12,7
1770	8,6	27,5	41,9	16,1	10,4	26,8
1780	1,5	35	22,6	25,9	18,3	176,7
1791	..	1,6	1,9	34,2	28,4	114

Source: Graph 1.

<sup>21</sup> RA, Kommerskollegium, utredningar, capsule FV 46; SSA, Suck-Pauliska arkivet, Series G IX, Abraham Paulis Kassabuch, 73-75; 83-88, with calculations on shalloon, camlet, satin and flannel.

<sup>22</sup> *Ärstrycket*, December 16, 1751; Modée V, 3113; Modée IX, 799-802.

<sup>23</sup> The latter were referred to as handkerchiefs in the manufacture statistics.

Fig. 5. Small-patterned silk fabric woven with two warps, called «droguets liserés», mainly used for menswear. Elements in several colours launched, ie. Runs from city edge to city edge



Source: NMA, Adolph Modéer's tygprovssamling, Sheet 12 (7 samples).

In the factory reports, one can see a division of the silk fabrics into four main groups, mainly corresponding to how the fabrics were made: smooth, floral patterned (*blommerade* or *façonerade*), brooched, and sheared fabrics.

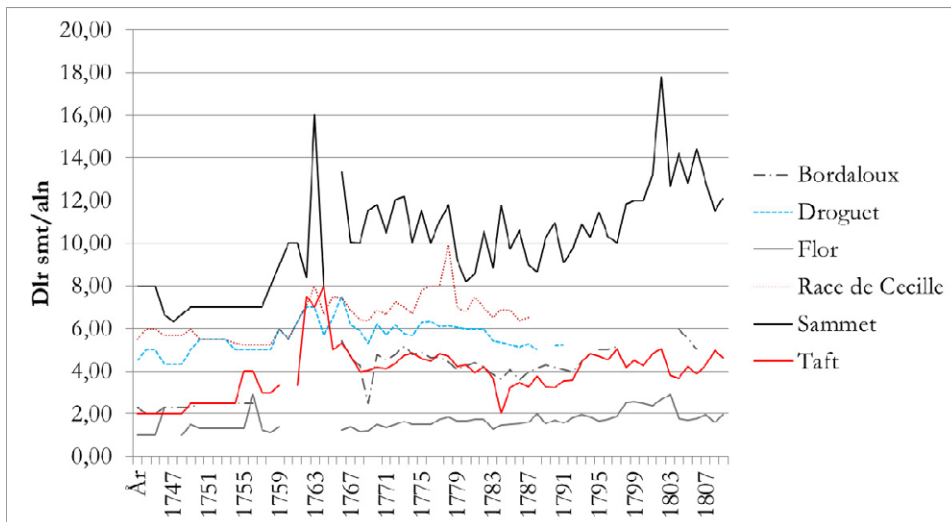
Smooth silk fabrics, such as taffeta, satin and serge de soie (*kypert*) were woven on ordinary looms. Small-patterned fabrics, such as *bordaluox*, *carlé* and *natt och dag*, could be made by equipping the loom with up to 25 shafts and treadles. Fabrics that were woven with more extensive patterns included *droguet*, *liseré*, *prussienne*, *peruvienne*. These were produced on a type of draw loom – in eighteenth century Swedish sources often called *trückverk*, which in French sources is referred to as a *le*



*métier à petite tire* or *le métier à bouton*. The set-up of this type of loom was very time consuming but the weaving was relatively simple.

Brocades and large-patterned fabrics such as *damask* and *raz de sicile* were woven on simple drawlooms (*le métier à la grande tire*) a loom where the drawstrings were lowered on the side of the loom. The pattern was marked with tied strings, so-called 'curls' and the drawstrings were handled by an assistant. The weaving was slower on this loom, but the patterns could probably be prepared by tying the curls in a frame outside the loom. The factory reports do not state what type of drawloom harnesses (*dragrustning*) were used in the Swedish silk weaving mills. At one point, however, a manufacturer distinguished between chairs for brocades and floral fabrics, which could possibly represent two different types. Weavers of worsted and linen textiles used similar harnesses to weave patterned fabrics in wool, cotton, and linen. Sheared fabrics included velvet, plush, *felb*, *schagg* and *caffa*. They could be either smooth or patterned in the loom.

Graph 6. The production value per ell for the silk qualities bordaloux, droguet, flor, race de sicille, velvet and taffeta in state-sponsored manufactures, 1744-1810 (daler silvermynt / Swedish ells)



Source: Graph 1.

Smooth fabrics were usually cheaper than patterned textiles or brocades. (see Graph 6) The amount of material that was needed seems to have been the decisive factor in the pricing of the fabrics, where a smooth velvet fabric was much more expensive than a patterned silk textile. This holds true, despite that the work effort was greater for the patterned fabrics, which in addition to the weaver required an assistant. The smooth fabrics were woven wider than the patterned ones, which

also increased their price. Some colours (including black and real red) were also more expensive, which explain the price differences between fabrics of the same technology and quality.

### *Cotton and linen textiles*

In Sweden, the production of cotton and linen textiles was treated under a similar heading in the industrial statistics. This included textiles with a linen warp and cotton weft yarn, a type which fell back on English forerunners. Before the introduction of the factory system and the breakthrough of mechanized cotton spinning mills during the latter part of the eighteenth century, similar cotton textiles with linen warp called fustians (*parkum*) had been produced in Lancashire (Nyberg 2013, 11). Cotton could sometimes also refer to wool in the early modern period and researchers have pointed out the complexity of the term's older meaning (Montgomery 1984, 206). Quantitatively, Swedish cotton and linen production was of limited importance during the period. It is significant that the quantities of cotton fabrics produced in Swedish manufactures decreased from the end of the eighteenth century at the time of the breakthrough of the mechanized spinning mills. The amount of calico, i.e., printed cotton textiles, that was produced on the other hand increased sharply from the late eighteenth century.

The limited amount of cotton and linen fabrics in relation to the total production in the textile manufactures must also be understood against the background of an extensive handicraft of fine and coarse linen in the countryside.<sup>24</sup> These fabrics were of two types. On the one hand, simple shaft fabrics were woven that could be fine or coarse in their design. On the other hand, expensive patterned fabrics were also produced. The simple linen fabrics were often produced in the cottage industry and played an important role as clothing or for textile furnishings for the broader population. The most common pattern fabrics were woven in *damask* and *dräll* (Utterström 1957; Jonsson 1994; Brismark 2008).

## **Conclusion**

The manufacturing policy in Sweden after the 1739 hallmark legislation built on an active state control of the fashion element in the production of legally defined luxury goods, in addition to guild-controlled crafts and traditional imports. As mentioned, this did not only apply to textiles. The production and colouring of furniture, glass, porcelain, and faience as well as wallpaper were also affected. The main aim was to achieve an international quality standard to produce luxury and colonial goods (mainly sugar and tobacco).

The state wool policy, silk cultivation, state-organized spinning districts for the spinning of worsted and cotton yarn, and its dyeing policy followed two lines. On the one hand, it focused on the domestic production of quality wool, silk, worsted yarn, and dyes (imports of Spanish wool, silk, and partly worsted yarn as well as

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<sup>24</sup> Mainly in the Sjuhäradsbygden region and the provinces Ångermanland and Hälsingland.

indigo and red dyes were maintained, however). On the other hand it was intended to streamline and organize processing efficiently. Commodity management, training, migration, and sales were supported with premiums and subsidized lending. The international movement and training for journeymen – which had already been developed within the framework of the guild system – was further promoted through travel scholarships. At the same time, about 3,600 textile workers were introduced to Sweden.

The tightened state control after 1739 influenced the design of fashion with an institutional dimension of a fundamentally new kind. The manufacturing policy was intended to break the guild system. Following the introduction of the 1739 manufacture legislation, guild-organized wool weavers and dyers were instead required to answer to the hallmark courts. It was a slow process, however, with dyers being incorporated into the manufacturing industry under protest. Shearers were also forced to abandon their guilds in favour of working under the overseeing eyes of the hallmark courts. The same probably also applied to the artisans in charge of the preparation of silk and worsted fabrics.

Wool preparation, spinning, weaving, patterning, preparation, and dyeing were affected by differences in the production processes. The state manufacturing policy was at times very detailed, almost a little French in its elaborate regulation (Minard 1998). In addition to the 1739 and 1772 hallmark court ordinances which specified the textiles that the manufactures were expected to produce, there were several separate ordinances that for example defined how the handling of wool, dyeing, and the width of woollen fabrics should be organized. All of these were sub-components in the larger state-defined manufacture system.

The preparation of worsted textiles was for example affected by the basic difference between short and long fibres. Carded wool and short cotton fibres had to be crushed and felted, while cotton and camel yarn was created by twining long parallel fibres. Silk yarn was made from the extremely fine threads in silk cocoons. The preparation of short-fibre fabrics began with rolling, where the fabric was processed with a kind of pounding mallet or wooden logs whereby the strength of the fabric was significantly increased. The remaining loose fibres was then roughened up with special brushes and the lint of the surface was cut off with specially designed scissors. In the wool industry this was called shearing and was an advanced craft and a special profession just like dyeing. The finer the fashion quality in question, the more rounds of such finishing were required. The result was a thin and almost indestructible fabric that got its variation from the fineness of the wool that was used; nuances in the change of fashion that were described in the fashion magazines of the early nineteenth century. The many conflicts that arose when errors were made during these stages of refinement dominate the protocols of the hallmark courts and provide a unique insight into the implementation of the manufacturing policies.

While fabrics based on short fibres could be blended and dyed during different stages of the refining process, the dyeing of silk and worsted fabrics typically happened during the finishing stages. In connection with this, the fabric would be washed, stretched and mangled. As with clothing, the process ended with the fabric

being pressed. An important part of the imitation of the international model was to ensure that the fabric achieved the required shine and lustre.

**Fig. 6. Only following the finishing stages in the production of smooth silk satin was the required lightness and shine created**



Source: NMA, Adolph Modéer's tygprovssamling, Sheet 15.

Until 1766, there was extensive experimentation with state support for different kinds of production methods and a varied product range. After 1766, the subsidies were modernized and more saleable production came to the fore (see also Miller 2014 for the French context). This led to a narrower product range of single-coloured and smooth silk and worsted fabrics, as well as increased production of

fine and medium-fine woollen. State-provided monetary support decreased while the discounting of wool and finished fabrics was accepted with heavily subsidized interest rates.

In summary, the manufacturing policy affected the fashion and production of Swedish luxury goods in various ways, above all by regulating production in detail according to international standards. The state governed through special ordinances that specified the technical properties of the textiles that the municipal hallmark courts were called on to inspect. The authorities in particular challenged the guild system. In Stockholm this for example led to the hallmark court taking over the inspection of textiles from the three guilds that represented weavers, shearers and dyers. As a result, the management and control of manufacturing was given a new administration which did things differently than the traditional guild system. It also further integrated the Swedish production system with the European standard.

### The background to the project

This article is the second out of three planned studies in the project «Fashion, luxury, credit and trust» that summarizes how the institutional design of fashion and luxury industries in Sweden, including credit institutions, affected fashion growth and design at the end of the early modern period. The first study, which would have originally been presented at the Datini Symposium in 2020 under the heading «Fashion, luxury, credit and trust in eighteenth and early nineteenth century Stockholm», focused on conditions in the credit market. When the symposium was moved to 2021 due to the covid-19 pandemic, it was instead integrated in the anthology *Luxury, Fashion and the Early Modern Idea of Credit*, which was published as volume 62 in the Routledge series *Perspectives in Economic and Social History* at the end of 2020. The current study continues by analysing the role of state-sponsored textile manufactures in Sweden as fashion creators and distributors. The study should be read in parallel with the first study, which dealt with the growth of the Swedish luxury industries as well as the social and institutional transformation that followed after the introduction of new manufacturing legislation in Sweden. It also discussed the Swedish research situation and older interpretations that mainly relate to the Scandinavian research situation. A third study will conclude the project: *The production of international fashion in state-sponsored manufactures in Sweden, 1740-1810. Part II*. It will broaden the investigation of the manufacture production and place it in an international comparative perspective.

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- medlen att upptäcka de förra och förekomma eller afhjelpa de sednare genom behörig undersökning, förvaring och behandling; en handbok för så väl dem som egnat sig åt bandeln som för hvar och en hvilken bör, eller önskar, äga kännedom om handelsvaror och kunna bedömma deras godhet.* Stockholm.
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Aris Kafantogias

*The catalyst of change? The appearance of Viennese female servants and its relation to fashion in the period 1760-1823*

## **1. Introduction: Fashion and consumption in Europe in the eighteenth century and the case of Vienna**

In his monumental work Fernand Braudel considered fashion an integral element in European material life and made several important arguments about its development and function as a historical phenomenon (Braudel 1981, 1:315-33). Several of his assertions have been questioned by subsequent historical research (Lemire 2016, 10-4). However, his argument that in the eighteenth century the pace of fashion accelerated, and that fashion did not hinge on quantity and extravagance anymore, rather it depended on the ability to change and adapt to the accelerated rate of change, has been elaborated further in recent studies.

Many researchers have acknowledged the integral role of fashion in the crucial changes in consumption in eighteenth-century Europe. Maxine Berg argued that the principal criterion for consumption, especially for novel consumer goods (not just clothing), in the period was not price or quality, but fashion, which referred not only to individual goods, but mainly to lifestyles and that fashion affected the consumption choices of all social strata (Berg 2005, 247-48; 256-57). Similarly, Frank Trentmann in his analysis of consumption culture in the eighteenth century, placed novelty, variety, speed of change, the prevalence of visible and immediate forms of consumption, and the availability of goods to a considerably broader consumer base among several important characteristics of consumption. He described a dynamic and innovative consumption regime at the core of which was individual choice and in which fashion emerged as an industry that drove demand (Trentmann 2016, 53-77). Observed within the broader discussion on the development of consumption in Europe in the early modern period, and particularly the theories concerning the increased ability of a greater part of the European population to acquire goods through the market, to exercise choice and to consume in an accelerated pace, fashion was placed at the core of Neil McKendrick's concept of the «consumer revolution» and Jan de Vries' theory of the «industrious revolution» (McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb 1982, 27-9; 94-9; De Vries 2008, 126).

The establishment of fashion as an integral part of European consumption in the eighteenth century was a complex process, which involved producers, consumers, intermediaries and institutions. It followed several important

developments such as the abolition of sumptuary legislation and the changing attitudes towards luxury and consumption, the establishment of the practice of annual or seasonal fashion cycles, the changing urban landscapes, which became more suited to the needs and desires of a greater part of the population, the evolving marketing techniques, and the regular circulation of news from the leading European fashion centers to a wider public in many regions of the continent. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the Viennese were familiar with the latest fashions from the dominant fashion centers Paris and London through a variety of sources, such as almanacks, pocket books or calendars, albeit with a certain delay. These works were published in great numbers in the period and addressed mainly women. According to contemporary commentators, fashion change in Vienna was generally slower than in Paris and the latest Parisian fashion was taken on in Vienna several months after its introduction. Moreover, it was not adopted with the same pace or in the same way across the social spectrum. In general, the slower rate of adoption of the latest fashions in the German territories was remarked in German fashion magazines in the period (Buxbaum 1986, 43-4; Kaut 1970, 35-42; Purdy 2003, 229; Pezzl 1787a, 4:587-91). Nevertheless, these works contributed to the cultivation of fashion consciousness in a greater part of the Viennese population and set off a process of appropriation, which resulted in the creation of a separate Viennese direction in the following period, as in such a process the individuals transform the appropriated objects and, as a result, mold their specific local sartorial context (Samida, Eggert, and Hahn 2014, 101-3; Hahn 2014, 101-6). The emancipation of Viennese fashion should be placed in the first decades of the nineteenth century, especially in the years after the Vienna Congress (1814-1815), which stimulated the production of clothes due to the great number of guests that needed a variety of garments for different occasions. This was depicted in the great increase in the number of tailors in the city in the first half of the nineteenth century (Sandgruber 1982, 301-2; Kaut 1970, 62-6). During the congress, Vienna and Viennese dress became fashionable. Furthermore, the guests influenced the local tailors and were influenced by the local production in return.

As Viennese fashion became progressively independent from French and English examples, it set the tone for the whole Austrian Empire (wealthy individuals in the different lands of the empire ordered fashionable clothes and other fashionable items from Vienna (Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunst, Literatur Theater und Mode (WMZ), 20.12.1817)). Viennese fashion was characterized by high quality materials, fine craftsmanship, attention to detail, balance of extremes, avoidance of exaggeration and strong connection to local production and forms. As a product of its time, Viennese fashion moved away from aristocratic and towards bourgeois models (Buxbaum 1986, 25; Kaut 1970, 44; Springschitz 1949, 9). In the first half of the nineteenth century the seasonal Viennese fashion cycle commenced in the first of May in the public space of «Prater», which was accessible to all city residents and in which the new fashion was presented. However, in a court city like Vienna there were many public spaces, where, according to time of the day, fashionable dress was on display either by the bourgeoisie or by the nobility (Kaut 1970, 78; Buxbaum 1986, 45).

A critical development for the establishment of Viennese fashion was the publication of the first Viennese fashion magazine, the «Wiener Modenzeitung» (later «Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunst, Literatur Theater und Mode»), in 1816. In accordance with other fashion magazines in Europe at the time this was a high-cost publication, as it included a short segment with a colored engraving once every week advertising the creations of Viennese fashion, but, in contrast to other such endeavors, it was also high-intensity publication, as issues were gradually published more times in a week. The magazine's popularity indicates not only the existence of a substantial audience for fashion news in the period, but also the eagerness of the Viennese producers to present their works to the public (Kaut 1970, 48-53; Styles 2017, 53). As with other fashion magazines in the German regions, the Viennese fashion magazine promoted local producers and locally produced goods by contrasting them with popular French and English creations. It was critical of French and English influences on Viennese dress, advocated the emancipation of fashion in the German regions and engaged in debates over the need for a German costume («Tracht») (WMZ, 4.1.1816, 25.4.1816). This debate was also undertaken in other German periodicals such as the «Journal des Luxus und der Moden» (North 2004, 27-33). These periodicals in the German regions contributed greatly to the creation of fashionable consumers among the middle strata in the period, who could read fashion news and consume French and English fashion indirectly through these and other publications (North 2004, 32-33; Styles 2017, 51-3).

In the second half of the eighteenth century the Habsburg Empire followed a policy of protectionism in order to strengthen and improve local manufacture in a wide range of industries. The state attempted to localize the production of fashionable, especially luxury, products, such as mirrors, silk fabrics or porcelain. It gave incentives to foreign producers of specialized fashionable goods, such as pocket watches and umbrellas, or specialized technology, such as innovative dyeing techniques for cotton yarn or special silk looms for the weaving of specific flower patterns from Lyon, to bring their production in Vienna. This policy influenced the development of the Viennese textile industry greatly. In the period under examination, despite certain periods of crisis, substantial growth in the textile industry, particularly in the production of cotton and silk fabrics can be observed. A great variety in all main fabrics was produced in the Habsburg Empire. In the case of the silk industry in particular, the state abolished antiquated quality controls that obstructed the industry's capacity to keep up with fashion change. Restrictions in the sale of products, especially of bigger manufactures were also abolished. Guild restrictions were eliminated for specific sectors of commercial activity in the city, which were reformed towards a more liberal, market-oriented system (Chaloupek, Eigner, and Wagner 1991, 1:52-65, 70-88; Sandgruber 2005, 179-84; Buxbaum 1986, 177-79; Katsiardi-Hering 2003, 99-133). These measures contributed to the expansion of the domestic market, especially the retail trade of textiles and the stimulation of consumer demand in Austria (Sandgruber 1982, 386). The development of local manufacture presupposed a receptive audience, familiar with the latest European fashion trends and their nuances, who could exercise choice and, if they were unable to buy the products imported from London or Paris, would settle for locally produced goods.

Fashion was also influenced by broader shifts in the material culture of early modern European dress. A shift towards lighter, more colorful and patterned fabrics, as well as the dissemination of textiles, which employed new techniques, such as knitting, lacemaking, printing, or dyestuffs coming from the New World characterized the early modern period (Styles 2019, 35). These changes affected all main fibers of European dress, though certain fabrics such as silk or cotton had increased importance in the development of fashionable dress and appearance (Lemire and Riello 2008). Fabrics became cheaper, less durable and more fashion-sensitive. Early modern consumers were in position to acquire a wider array of garments made from a greater variety of fabrics, which had to be renewed at an increased pace. Variety and novelty were becoming desirable qualities in fabrics and this demand was covered through accelerated pace of change in patterns and colors, as well as imitation and product innovation with the proliferation of new mixed fabrics (Styles 2019, 36-9). Johann Pezzl, an author and prominent commentator on life in Vienna at the end of the eighteenth and the start of the nineteenth century remarked that women in the 1780s dressed in a lighter and more natural manner. Fabrics were not so heavy, expensive or durable as in the past, and, due to their lightness and low price, they were changed more often and replaced with new ones. The result was a more diverse, clean and fresh appearance (Pezzl 1787b, 1:77-8).

At the end of the eighteenth century, it was taste, rather than wealth, luxury, and, consequently, social position that provided the foundation for fashion. Taste referred to broader non-aristocratic social strata and was associated with commercialization, accessibility, the public domain, knowledge and the role of female consumer behavior (North 2004; 2008, 169-71; Jones 1994, 958-60). The urban middle strata and particularly female consumers constituted key groups in the investigation of the influence of fashion on consumption. Both de Vries and McKendrick have stressed the importance of women as consumers in their arguments, especially working women in the lower social strata, who possessed their own income and consumption capability, and brought new desires and tastes in the consumption decisions of a household.<sup>1</sup> McKendrick also identified a social subgroup with particular importance for the dissemination of fashionable consumption, namely domestic servants, who, especially in a capital city like London, could constitute a link between the consumption habits of higher and lower social strata (McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb 1982, 21-4; De Vries 1993, 117-9; 1994, 261-2). Daniel Roche made a similar argument for a trickle-down process of diffusion in eighteenth-century Paris, in which servants' dress constituted a crucial intermediate stage (Roche 1987, 160-80). The present essay concerns the case study of Vienna in the period 1760-1823 and investigates the relation of the consumption of clothes of a broad part of the Viennese middle strata with fashion. Riello and Parthasarathi have proposed the term «fashionability» for the investigation of this relation in order to separate it from

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<sup>1</sup> This assertion has also been disputed concerning its applicability outside north-western Europe (Ogilvie 2010, 312-19). An overview of different approaches of historical investigation to the relation of women with fashion in eighteenth-century France in (Jones 2013).

twentieth-century notions of fashion as a system of production, marketing and consumption, which did not exist in previous periods (Riello and Parthasarathi 2009, 146). However, in the essay the relation of female consumption of clothes and accessories with fashion is examined in the specific period, in which fashion in Vienna, did not simply refer to foreign or novel goods, but to an emerging industry that strived to unshackle itself from foreign influence and construct its own local production sources, marketing apparatus and consumer base. The study places the focus on the consumption of female domestic servants and compares the number, value, quality, condition and particular features of their clothes to the rest of the Viennese female middle-class population. It examines their role in trickle-down or trickle-across processes and investigates the material basis of arguments about their function as trendsetters in the consumption of broader parts of the population in the period.

## **2. The Viennese probate inventories and the population under examination**

The relation between fashion and consumption in Vienna is examined in the present essay through the analysis of a sample of one hundred fifty (150) female probate inventories in the period 1760-1823. The inventories are gathered approximately in twenty-year intervals. Thirty cases come from the 1760s, forty cases come from the years 1783-1784, forty cases come from 1803 and, finally, forty cases come from 1823. Probate inventories document a person's belongings at the time of death. As a result, they tend to depict the estate of older people, for who fashion relevance might not have been among their principal reasons for consumption or even for keeping certain items (Shammas 1990, 19; Reith 2015, 29). Though, as Amanda Vickery has argued, mature women did not renounce, but instead negotiated fashion as they aged and decided to adopt, retain or reject certain features of prevalent fashion later in their lives according to multiple factors such as status, economic situation or socially appropriate appearance. Furthermore, older working women could also increase their expenditure on clothes, if they did not need to support their children anymore (Vickery 2013, 871-5; 883-4).<sup>2</sup> This sample is not designed to depict the short-term fashion changes within one or two annual cycles. However, it can show broader shifts in the consumption of clothes and, consequently, in the character and form of Viennese fashion. Furthermore, female consumption of clothes can be observed separately, as the inventories referred to specific individuals rather than households.

It has been postulated that in this period demographic and economic growth contributed to the creation of a rather broad and diverse stratum of an early bourgeoisie in Vienna, which included not only factory owners or bankers, but also innkeepers and master artisans (Mittenzwei 1998, 21). This sample is constructed to represent the lower end of this emerging group, as well as the groups directly below them in the social scale, namely the middle and lower-middle strata of the Viennese population within a wealth spectrum of 10-10,000 Gulden as active total wealth at

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<sup>2</sup> According to information on the age of death in the inventories in 1823. The average age of death of non-servants was fifty-five years, while that of servants forty-five years.

the time of death. It includes at one end of the spectrum milkmaids, wives of journeymen or wage laborers, who owned just one dress, and at the other wives or daughters of merchants, master craftsmen or higher public employees, who, apart from several different dresses, owned a house and could also employ servants.

## 2.1 Servants as part of the Viennese population

The servants constituted a diverse population group, which is difficult to encompass in a historical analysis. Raffaella Sarti proposed an approach to the definition of servants in early modern Europe, which is also adopted in the present essay:

In pre-industrial Europe, in fact, domestic service, though (also) an employment, was not a specific job, but rather a *type of relationship* that could exist between people of very different social class, geographic origins, training, income, duties, sex, age, and marital and legal statuses. A servant was defined as such because he or she had a master, not because he or she carried out a specific task. In this sense, the ministers of princes and kings, as well as farm servants, could be considered servants. Being a servant was thus a condition rather than a profession. This was not an absolute condition: servants could in turn be masters, just as sons can also be fathers (Sarti 2005, 408).

This definition is particularly suitable in the present essay. Vienna was a capital city and the residence of the imperial Court. Moreover, a significant number of noble families also resided in Vienna. Consequently, there was a great number of court and aristocratic servants, who differed greatly in wealth and station from other types of domestic servants. So, the servants examined in the present essay are divided in two main categories: common servants and aristocratic servants (coded in the tables as «low» and «high» respectively). The group of aristocratic servants in the sample was very diverse, as great Houses employed many servants with elaborate hierarchies and great differences in status between them (Maurer 1995, 178-9). This group encompassed individuals in different ranks, who performed a wide range of tasks, namely personal servants («Kammerjungfer») or the wives and daughters of secretaries, estate administrators, but also cooks and lower-ranked servants. The group of the common servants, except from few cases of administrators of households, was more homogenous regarding both the social status of its members and their occupations, as they were mostly cooks or they were simply mentioned as servants. Many female servants in the sample were working women. They were not wives or daughters of male servants and their occupation is clearly denoted in the inventories irrespective of their marital status or the occupation of their husbands. This categorization makes the investigation of the role of servants either as trendsetters, or as key cogs in trickle-down processes, more complex and layered, as the crucial differences, between different types of servants, and particularly working women, can also be taken into consideration.

Servants' inventories constitute a significant part of the sample of female inventories, namely forty-one cases (27.3%), twenty-two cases of common and nineteen cases of aristocratic servants. Most servants were single and almost all working women (twenty-six cases) were also single. This should be associated with indications that female servants in the period remained until an older age, perhaps also all their lives, in domestic service (Eder 1995, 44-5; 64). In the analysis, cases are divided in: «non-servants», «non-servants adj. (5,000-10,000 Fl.)», «non-servants adj. (10-100 Fl.)», «aristocratic and common servants» and a subgroup «aristocratic and common working servants».<sup>3</sup> Table 1 shows that the fortune of common servants at the time of death was in all instances lower than that of the general population as depicted in the sample, as well as that of non-servants (except from the poorest part of the group), and, in certain periods it was significantly lower. On the contrary, in most periods, though with some notable exceptions, the mean total wealth of aristocratic servants was higher than that of all but the wealthiest group of non-servants, which indicates that this was generally a wealthier, but also a more diverse group. For both groups of servants, the mean value of their material possessions, namely movable goods including production goods, was almost always lower than that of non-servants. Even the value of movable goods of the poorer group of non-servants was greater than that of common servants. In all periods, aristocratic servants had more fortune at the time of death and the value of their material possessions was higher than that of common servants. All servants in the sample were tenants. In most cases of common servants, their employers provided their accommodation, and, as can be seen in many inventories of people who employed servants, the most expensive and valuable pieces of furniture, such as beds, were also provided by the employers. Therefore, the lower value of their movable goods should be at least partially associated with the kind of items found in the inventories and not only with the valuation of the articles.

### 3. Viennese fashion and the role of servants

In the 1780s, domestic servants in Vienna were at the forefront of the discourse on fashion and consumption. Female servants were a prominent subject of a great number of brochures, pamphlets and satirical works, which gained significant readership in the period, and were employed in order to make statements on female consumption and fashion (Kauffmann 1994, 178-82). An intense debate was sparked in 1781, by an essay on Viennese female servants «Über die Stubenmädchen in Wien», which criticized their appearance and, subsequently, their morality (Rautenstrauch 1781).<sup>4</sup> The appearance of the «Stubenmädchen» was

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<sup>3</sup> Servants' inventories are distributed relatively evenly in the period under examination. Female aristocratic servants in the 1760s constitute a problematic field as there is only one case in the sample, as until 1783 servants in Vienna belonged to the jurisdiction of their employers, and the nobles did not belong to the jurisdiction of the city authorities (Hochedlinger 2001, 310). There is also only one case of female working aristocratic servants in 1823.

<sup>4</sup> The «Stubenmädchen» could be defined as female domestic servants in households of different, usually higher and aristocratic social strata, who performed a variety of duties, such as cleaning or



characterized by cleanliness and naturalness, in contrast to the artificiality of the look of women in the higher social strata. Their dress, which was compared to that of their employers, was associated with their questionable morals as it attracted men from various ages and stations. They were accused of seducing men in order to be able to afford opulent dress and of generating the need for such opulence in other women. They were portrayed as a moral hazard, which could only be impeded through strict restrictions on their dress (Rautenstrauch 1781).

The same arguments about women, and particularly single working women were used at the time in literary descriptions and in medical topographies (Pezzl 1787a, 4:511-13; Strohmayer 1813, 108). Viennese satirical texts in brochures and magazines at the end of the eighteenth century also followed similar critical approaches to fashion and contemporary dress (Kauffmann 1994, 101, 247-8; 276-7; Richter 1917; 1918). Female servants were also a popular theme in many literary genres in the period (Gugitz 1902, 148-9). Some works, critical of fashion, even advocated for the reenactment of sumptuary legislation in the Austrian Empire. Criticism of the consumption of the lower strata, and particularly female consumption, was a common argument in the last sumptuary laws in Austria, which were enacted more than a century earlier (Codicis Austriaci ordine alphabetico compilati pars prima, 2:153-9). However, strict directives regarding clothing according to social status were already since the 1760s practically and theoretically rendered obsolete due to economic, social and political reasons, such as the growing textile industry and retail trade (Sandgruber 1982, 297-9; G. Hampel 1962, 64-9; L. Hampel 1974, 16-7). These issues were debated intensely in the public sphere and the discussion continued at the start of the nineteenth century, as can be seen in an article on coquetry in the Viennese fashion magazine. An important argument in the article was that women had the right and the capability to choose the means, with which to make themselves attractive to men according to their own sense of self-love and moral compass and not by moral or legal directives. This constituted a clear objection to the aforementioned arguments and, simultaneously, a definite statement about female agency in consumption and appearance. The author, who used a pen name, signed as a «defender of women» («Vertheidiger der Frauen») (WMZ, 1.2.1816). The use of female servants in order to make statements on appearance and morality and the implicit associations of these arguments, were familiar to the audience and constituted part of the broader discussions on consumption and luxury in eighteenth-century Europe. Participants in the debates on luxury often made arguments against female consumption based on moral grounds. Similarly, in German-speaking regions the critique on luxury also centered around moral and social arguments (Berg and Eger 2003, 21-22; Lemire 2000, 397-9; Wirtz 1996, 167-70, 172-3).

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setting the table, except from cooking (Oekonomische Encyklopädie Oder Allgemeines System Der Staats- Stadt- Haus- Und Landwirthschaft (hereafter just Oekonomische Encyklopädie), «Stubenmädchen»). In this debate the «Stubenmädchen» were treated as a separate category of servants than cooks (Gugitz 1902, 142, 145).

Fig. 1. Johann Christian Brand: «Stubenmädchen: Zeichnungen nach dem gemeinen Volke besonders Der Kaufruf in Wien»: «Stubenmädgen./Servante», Wien 1775. This is an image with the dress of the «Stubenmädchen», which sparked the debate over their appearance



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#### 4. The wardrobes of servants and non-servants in Vienna: Number and value of clothes and accessories and their relation to fashion

In this discussion, female domestic servants were ascribed the role of fashionable consumers and trendsetters, who even rivaled the dress of their employers. The role of trendsetters in a society presupposes the capability for consumption and regular change of clothes and accessories, knowledge of the latest fashion trends and access to producers of fashionable products. In the period, this role was normally reserved for the elites, even though exceptions to this norm, such as the intrusion of elements of traditional dress, clothing articles popular in the

lower strata or certain professions in fashionable clothing (trickle-up processes) called this assertion into question. However, even viewed in a trickle-down process, broader fashion trends are adopted (or rejected), interpreted and materialized differently in different social strata, and new styles are also formulated differently in a process, in which different groups assume the role of trendsetters or tastemakers. Similarly, fashion as a category of social distinction, which differentiates between persons or groups as 'in-fashion' or 'out-of-fashion', should be viewed with caution in terms of its meaningfulness in different contexts due to the different pathways and timelines of this process (Sassatelli 2007, 70; Prinz 2003, 208-9; Vickery 1993, 289-91; Lemire 2000, 401-2). Therefore, the analysis of the role of fashion in the dress of the Viennese middle strata should not be based merely on established notions of social distinction embedded in a process of emulation and subsequently imitation of a person's social superiors, the basis of which was Georg Simmel's seminal work (Barnard 2014, 17-8; Simmel 1904, 133-40). A trickle-down process does not presuppose neither imitative behavior nor emulative motives, and social distinction is not necessarily directed upwards (Campbell 1993, 40-1; Trentmann 2012, 9-10). It should not be assumed that Viennese fashion, and consequently fashionable consumption, had a single point of origin at the top of society, from which all changes derived in a repetitive cycle of imitation. Furthermore, the presence of foreign fashion trends in Viennese dress suggests the active role of these strata in this process of appropriation. So, it should be demonstrated how fashionable consumption functioned as a process of reception, interpretation and adoption of fashion trends in different levels within these middle-class population and the specific historical context, and which groups could perform the role of trendsetters. This can be demonstrated in the analysis of their wardrobes.

Table 2 depicts the mean number and value of clothes and accessories of female servants and non-servants in the sample, as well as their percentage in their total and material wealth. The mean number of clothes and accessories of aristocratic servants (working or not) was in all but the last period much higher than the respective number for non-servants. The same was true for the mean value of their garments. Only the wealthiest group possessed a comparable number of clothes and accessories in the last two periods, the value of which surpassed that of aristocratic servants. The percentage of total, but particularly of material wealth of female aristocratic servants, which was devoted to clothes and accessories, was in most instances greater on average than that of non-servants (due to the great differences in wealth, there are extreme differences between the percentages in the wealthiest and poorest part of the population). This was not surprising for an overall poorer group like working aristocratic servants. However, apart from the wealthiest part of the population in the sample, female aristocratic servants were in the first three periods a wealthier group than non-servants and the percentage of their material wealth devoted to clothing was even comparable to the poorest part of the population in certain instances. As mentioned above, their material wealth might not have included certain valuable items, but in this group relatively expensive furniture were not rare in their inventories. It is evident that this group could and did invest heavily on their appearance compared to non-servants, and they also prioritized their dress in relation to other possessions. This is particularly

clear in the case of working aristocratic servants in 1783/84. Even in 1823, a relatively poorer group in relation to non-servants owned a greater number of clothes and accessories and devoted a percentage of material wealth to clothes comparable to the previous periods. The value of their clothes was lower, though this should be associated more with the drop in the value of clothing in the last period in general.

Female common servants (working or not) were a much poorer group in all periods. Almost all common servants in the sample were working women. In many cases, clothes made up most of their total and material wealth at the time of death. So, the percentage of these items in their material wealth was much higher than aristocratic servants or non-servants. It was also greater than that of even the poorest group of non-servants. The mean number of their garments was lower in the first two periods and then slightly higher in the last two compared to non-servants. In almost all periods the mean number of items was also comparable to even the wealthiest part of the population and in the nineteenth century it was much higher than the poorest part. However, the mean value of these items was in all periods significantly lower than that of non-servants, in some cases even lower than that of the poorest group. This is an indication that common servants favored quantity over quality, perhaps because most were working women, whose clothes worn down faster.

There was also a significant gap in the mean number and value of clothes between aristocratic and common servants in all periods. Aristocratic servants possessed especially in the eighteenth century three times as many clothes and accessories, and their value was also three times higher, though in the last periods this discrepancy was relatively reduced. The difference in annual income between these two groups should also be taken into consideration. Contemporary commentators estimated the annual wage of the «Stubenmädchen», who were employed by higher social strata, in the 1780s between 25-40 Gulden (Pezzl 1787a, 4:511). Though, as is indicated in the inventories, aristocratic servants' yearly wages in the period could reach much higher.<sup>5</sup> The annual cost of clothing an artisan's family in the 1760s was estimated at 80 Gulden, while the cost for clothing of a person in the 1790s was estimated between 23-42 Gulden. For higher social strata the cost was estimated much higher (Sandgruber 1982, 317-8; Stöger 2014, 212).

#### 4.1 Fashionable clothes

For a better interpretation of the numbers provided in table 2 an examination of the specific categories of garments of the different groups is required. Table 3 shows the mean number of female outer garments in the different groups. Certain items in female appearance, such as bodices, corsets and stays remained relatively stable, though in different relations, throughout the period and across all groups. They served not only aesthetic, but also practical functions. They formed and constricted the silhouette to different degrees. Their fabrics were rarely mentioned

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<sup>5</sup> Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv (WStLA), Zivilgericht, A2, Faszikel 2: Verlassenschaftsabhandlungen: 113-1783/84.

in the lists, so it is difficult to ascertain whether they were worn as outer or undergarments (Deneke 1965, 17-8). Similarly, skirts and petticoats were fashionable garments, however they also performed practical functions. They were worn in layers to keep the body warm and they were interchangeable to a degree (Klier 1950, 123). All groups possessed multiple skirts and petticoats in comparable numbers. An important item, which constituted a particular element of Viennese fashion in the nineteenth century was the short shirt («Schmißl/Chemisette»). This garment was supposedly introduced to Viennese fashion by the servants, and is considered to have moved up the social scale (Springschitz 1949, 18). An indication of this process might be the presence of this item in the inventories of aristocratic servants in 1803 and, in 1823, its appearance in inventories of non-servants, particularly in those of the wealthiest group, who owned most such items on average. The short shirt was also found in the inventories of common servants, who owned almost one short shirt on average.

In the analysis of female outer garments, the emphasis should be placed on gowns, jackets, one-piece dresses and overgowns, as it was these items that made up the core elements of fashionable dress in the period. Jackets and short cloaks were found in the inventories of non-servants, but they were mainly worn by aristocratic servants, who possessed multiple such items on average. An exception constituted the poorer non-servants, who owned a comparable number of jackets to aristocratic servants in 1783/84, perhaps as a shorter substitute for gowns. Gowns were prominent in all groups in the eighteenth century. Aristocratic servants, and particularly working women owned between nine and twelve on average, while common servants and non-servants owned between one and (about) six on average. There was a significant difference in ownership between the wealthier and poorer groups of non-servants, but neither group approached the number of gowns of aristocratic servants. Rather, the mean number of gowns in the wealthier group was comparable to that of common servants. The main structural difference in women's appearance in the period was the gradual adoption after the turn of the century of the one-piece dress, the chemise, in place of the dress comprised of a skirt or petticoat, gown and stays. The chemise was a form of one-piece dress with a higher waist, which became popular initially in France in the 1770s. This dress slimmed down the female silhouette, while hooped skirts and tight stays were removed from the female appearance, which conformed to prevalent ideals of simplicity and aesthetic harmony between dress and body at the end of the eighteenth century. This was also due to the warnings against the damaging effects of the tight corset in the period. The overgown was worn over this dress and resembled its cut (Ribeiro 2002, 227; North 2008, 52-55; Zander-Seidel 2002, 59-62; Junker and Stille 1988, 38-43; Strohmayer 1813, 107-8). Aristocratic servants were the first to make the move towards the one-piece dress in greater numbers as they owned approximately four on average. Non-servants in all groups also transitioned but evidently slower. Apart from the wealthier group, the mean number of one-piece dresses between aristocratic servants and non-servants was comparable in 1823. However, aristocratic servants possessed a greater number of overgowns, with which they could differentiate their appearance. Common servants owned on average approximately one one-piece dress and

between one and two overgowns in the last two periods, fewer than even the poorer group of non-servants. They never seem to have adopted these items to the same degree as gowns and their appearance remained in the previous form of dress, as is evident from the number of skirts, corsets and stays in their inventories.

In order to better assess the relation of these items to developments in fashion in the period, it is important to examine their descriptions in the inventories. In table 4 the mean number of certain types of dresses and jackets in all groups is presented. Casual bourgeois female dress was progressively simplified in Vienna in the eighteenth century. A looser-fitting dress found in the Viennese inventories in the 1760s was the «Contouche» («robe à la française»), which was initially used only as dressing gown, but was steadily inserted into female public appearance as a dress worn in promenades and then also in church. This type of dress, which originated in France in the first half of the eighteenth century, had different forms depending on its cut and structure, if it had a waistline or if it was open («adrienne») or closed («French sack») in the front (Meyers Großes Konversationslexikon, «Contouche») (Buxbaum 1986, 38-9; Nienholdt 1961, 114-6). The «Contouche» appeared in the inventories of aristocratic servants and non-servants in this period, though not in comparable numbers. Another type of garment, which almost all groups owned in the first period was the «bedgown». These were looser shorter garments, cheaper than the full-length gowns and were popular among (mainly) poorer women in England in the second half of the eighteenth century (Styles 2007, 38). Since the 1760s the volume of the hips was steadily reduced to a small artificially billowed back part, the «cul de Paris» or «cul postiche» (Nienholdt 1961, 121). Panniers were gradually confined to the formal dress of higher social strata and the nobility. This is also reflected in the sample, in which only five such items in total are recorded. The middle strata, who are represented in the sample, gradually abandoned these items and adopted a less elaborate silhouette and simpler forms of outer garments. Johann Pezzl, who criticized panniers intensely and advocated for a more natural female silhouette, remarked that the higher social strata had stopped using them and that panniers had disappeared in 1787 (Pezzl 1787b, 1:79-80).

In 1783/84, the «Contouche» was found in greater numbers in the inventories of common servants, than in those of the other groups. Similar types of dresses like the «Adrienne» or the «Sack» were also found in the inventories in the eighteenth century, though not in great numbers. The lower mean number of the «Contousche» in the inventories of non-servants and aristocratic servants should be attributed to the popularity of another type of dress in the period, the «Commode», which was an informal female morning dress (Reclams Mode und Kostümlexikon, «Commode», 155). The term «Commode» is not easy to interpret. It has been postulated that the «Commode» in Vienna at the time described the «cul de Paris», which billowed the skirt at the back and was part of the dress of working women (Buxbaum 1986, 39). According to fashion magazines in the 1790s, the term described a type of comfortable casual dress («Chemise») that could be easily worn over night attire (Journal für Fabrik, Manufaktur, Handlung und Mode, October 1794). In the inventories this item described probably a type of gown that was characterized by the billowed back. Its place and its description in the lists hinted at a more valuable item, the fabric and color of which was often described. This is an

indication that it was not just worn under skirts or petticoats but was an item that was displayed, and so its features contributed to its valuation. The «Commode» should be associated with the «robe à l'anglaise», to which this silhouette with the «cul de Paris» conformed, and which was considered a semiformal or informal type of dress usually of lighter-weight fabrics worn by middle-income women (Ribeiro 2002, 116; Pietsch 2017, 85). This type of gown was more common in the inventories of aristocratic servants in 1783/84 and in the following period in those of non-servants, while it was never popular among the common servants. It was also an item that was mainly confined in the wealthier group of non-servants, who owned three such gowns on average in 1783/84, and almost the same number in 1803.

Additional items worth mentioning are the «Nelson» in 1803 in the inventories of aristocratic servants, and the «Spencer» in 1823. The «Nelson» was evidently a type of overcoat (Oekonomische Encyklopädie, «Überrock»). It was a fashionable garment at the turn of the century named after admiral Nelson, who visited Vienna in 1800 and was considered a popular figure due to his victories against the French (Pohl and Botstiber 1927, 3:162-63). Its presence in the inventories reveals that aristocratic servants followed the latest fashion trends very closely. The «Spencer» as an item of female dress in the period was a close-fitting jacket with long sleeves that reached just above the waist and originated in England (Reclams Mode und Kostümlexikon, «Spencer»). All groups owned at least one spencer, as it was accessible even to the poorer group perhaps due to its shorter length. Common servants also owned more than two on average. The presence of these items in the lists reveals not only the influence of English fashion on Viennese dress, but also the appeal of England in contemporary Viennese culture, which was already observable in Vienna since the last decades of the eighteenth century (Pezzl 1787a, 4:579-80).

Apart from the broader fashion changes depicted in the analysis of the outer garments of the Viennese, three important observations should be made. First, foreign influences are evident in the appearance of this group. According to German periodicals, Vienna in the 1780s looked mainly to France in matters of fashion, and the impact of local trends was limited (North 2008, 54). However, the evidence from the inventories indicates that influences came from both leading fashion centers of the period, Paris and London. Apart from a few exceptions, like the short shirt, elements of a distinct Viennese fashion are indeed difficult to pinpoint. However, this is also an issue of the less detailed description of outer garments in the last period, when the particular forms of the Viennese fashion were established.

The second observation concerns the speed and degree of adoption of new trends in the different groups. Throughout the period, female aristocratic servants (especially working servants in 1783/84) adopted the latest trends to a greater extent than other groups, as they possessed more, and in certain instances significantly more, pieces of the fashionable garments in the periods, in which they initially appeared. Female non-servants also followed the latest trends, though not to the same degree regarding the mean number of fashionable garments with the

only exception the wealthiest group in 1783/84. Female common servants lagged evidently behind, as did the poorer group of non-servants in most instances.

The third observation concerns the mean number of the individual pieces in the different groups. The mean number of the basic items that comprised the appearance is important because it denotes the capacity for combination, differentiation and change, which constitutes a fundamental prerequisite for fashionable appearance and, consequently, for the ability to play the role of trendsetters in a society. In the eighteenth century, common servants owned a comparable number of gowns with the wealthier group of non-servants, though there were crucial differences in their type and fashion relevance. However, aristocratic servants, particularly working women, certainly possessed the greatest mean number of gowns in the first two periods, and then in the next two, the greatest mean number of one-piece dresses and overgowns (combined). This was the group with the greatest capacity to change and combine different pieces of clothing. The mean number of their outer garments was in most instances greater than even that of the wealthiest part of this middle stratum. However, the discrepancy was not so stark in the nineteenth century and the fact that these numbers were comparable suggests that the wardrobes of aristocratic servants could be not compared to that of their employers and it is doubtful if they could approach that of the higher bourgeoisie. These strata possessed regular changes of morning and evening dress, particularly during the congress, when they had clothes specifically made for balls and other festivities (Springschitz 1949, 55; Karner 2014, 211). This is also evident by the absence of dresses described as formal or festive in the inventories.

Another important aspect of fashionable clothing in the period was the material of the garments. Clothes were not only fashionable because of their cut or the silhouette, in which they formed the body, but also because of their material, pattern and decoration. The fabrics of women's outer garments in the period were generally diverse. Diagram 1 depicts the percentage of each fabric in the descriptions of female outer garments in 1823 (in the cases, in which the fabric was mentioned). The description of the material was crucial in the appraisal and, consequently, the sale of a garment, so the appraisers used terminology in the descriptions, which corresponded to the essential consumer knowledge in the secondary market. The greater variety of fabrics in the market and the accelerated pace of fashion change had made such a degree of product knowledge about the type and quality of fabrics essential for early modern consumers (Jordan and Schopf 2017, 228-9). However, it is not always clear in these descriptions, from which fiber these fabrics were made. Therefore, in order to infer their composition, the descriptions in the inventories are juxtaposed with the analysis of the fibers in pattern books of textile producers in the Austrian Empire in the collection of the Museum of Applied Arts in Vienna («Museum für angewandte Kunst»). The diagram shows that the most popular fabrics in women's outer garments in all groups were cambric, percale and silk, while taffeta was particularly common in the wealthier group of non-servants. Percale («Perkab») and cambric («Kammertuch»)



described in all cases cotton fabrics in the pattern books.<sup>6</sup> Cotton's appeal and great fashion relevance was associated with the variety of fabrics produced by this fiber (Riello and Parthasarathi 2009, 146-7). In Max Heiden's textile lexicon *percale* is mentioned as: «fine, plain-woven cotton fabrics originally from the East Indies, which are denser than muslin, almost the same as cambrics, which is why they are often called that» (*Handwörterbuch der Textilkunde aller Zeiten und Völker*, «Perkal»). However, it should not be assumed that the descriptions of *percale* and *cambric* in the lists referred to the same fabric.

Even though cotton fabrics were more common in the descriptions of female outer garments in the lists, silk never went out of fashion in Vienna in the period. As mentioned above, cotton, but mainly silk manufacture constituted significant branches of protoindustrial production in Vienna and the surrounding area and both were essential fabrics in Viennese fashion. An analysis of the fabrics of outer garments presented in the engravings in the Viennese fashion magazine in 1822 and 1823 reveals the popularity of cotton and silk. Clothes were made and decorated with multiple different fabrics, but in this analysis only the base fabric of a dress is considered. The most common fabrics of fashionable outer garments according to their percentage in the engravings were *organdy* (11.8%), *percale* (7.8%), *barège* (6.9%), *taffeta* (5.9%) and *merino* (5.9%). Other notable fabrics were *crêpe* (4.9%), *crepon* (a fabric similar to *crêpe*) (3.9%), *batiste* or *cambric* (4.9%), *gros de Naples* (3.9%), *atlas*, *muslin*, *musselinette* and *gauze barège* (each 2.9%) (WMZ, 3.1.1822-25.12.1823). Apart from silk, the most common fabric of outer garments of non-servants in 1823 was *cambric*, followed by *percale* and *taffeta*. These three fabrics made up more than forty percent of all descriptions. This relation changed in the different wealth groups, as in the wealthier group *taffeta* was prevalent, while in the poorer group *percale* was the most common fabric. Other notable fabrics, which were mentioned much less, were *atlas*, *muslin* and *dimity*. *Cambric* was the most common description in inventories of aristocratic servants followed by silk and *percale*. The more prominent presence of silk and *taffeta* in the inventories of aristocratic servants and the wealthier group of non-servants is not surprising as these fabrics were associated with wealth, while cotton fabrics were more accessible. The presence of silk in the inventories of aristocratic servants should also be associated with the material of the clothes of their employers, who could hand down pieces of clothing to their servants. *Cambric*, *percale* and silk were also the main fabrics found in the inventories of common servants, while linen was also mentioned.

It should be noted that, even though the inventories of non-servants included the greatest variety, possibly as a result of their greater number, similar main fabrics appeared in the inventories of all groups. This suggests a certain degree of uniformity in fabrics, which should be attributed to prevalent fashions. Even

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<sup>6</sup> The search in the database was for the period 1760-1825 and the terms searched were «Kammertuch» and «Perkal»/«Percal». There are one hundred four samples of *cambric* and nine samples of *percale* in the database in the period 1808-1825. Museum für angewandte Kunst in Wien (MAK) Sammlung Textilien und Teppiche: [https://sammlung.mak.at/sammlung\\_online?&q=string\\_administration\\_name\\_DE:%22Textilien%20und%20Teppiche%22](https://sammlung.mak.at/sammlung_online?&q=string_administration_name_DE:%22Textilien%20und%20Teppiche%22) (2021-11-12).

though the fabrics in the inventories of all groups did not include some of the most fashionable fabrics in the period, there were certain important points of convergence between the descriptions in the lists and in the engravings, namely in the presence of percale, taffeta and cambric. It is also mentioned in the magazine that the small number of engravings published could not encompass the number and variety of fabrics in women's dress, just the most prevalent ones. These were divided in fashionable silk and cotton fabrics. In 1817, apart from monochrome silk fabrics, thin-striped marceline and moire gros de Naples were also popular. Concerning cotton fabrics, white cambric with stripe- or square-woven small cords and printed calico with small printed patterns or squared stripes were the most popular, while muslin with woven colored small flowers and broad edging was a novelty that was often used in the summer season (WMZ, 20.8.1817). Therefore, it can be ascertained that women in the sample followed fashion and that the absence of certain popular fabrics in 1822 and 1823 from the lists should rather be attributed to the nature of the source.

The descriptions in the engravings also point to a final aspect of dress that played a significant role in fashionable appearance: the patterns and decorations of clothes. Fashionable garments in the period were distinguished not only by their elaborate patterns, but also by their decorations. Printed and painted cotton fabrics made decorative patterning accessible to broader strata, intensified the dynamic of fashion, and spread fashion consciousness among the European population. Furthermore, decorations, such as trimmings and ribbons that could make clothes appear more fashionable proliferated, and cheaper varieties were also accessible to the lower strata of the population (Lemire and Riello 2008, 906-7; Styles 2019, 41). In Vienna, the introduction of cylinder printing in the period resulted in greater production of printed cottons (Karner 2014, 204). However, as diagram 2 shows patterns and decorations in female outer garments were not found in great numbers in the Viennese inventories.<sup>7</sup> Overall, the descriptions of patterns and decorations were relatively rudimentary compared to those of fabrics. Throughout the period, only in the clothes of aristocratic servants, particularly working women, can different patterns in adequate numbers be observed. Needlework, stripe patterns, flower patterns or chiné patterns characterized even a small part of their outer garments, as at least half of the working aristocratic servants possessed minimum one adorned garment. The greater mean number of such items in their inventories could also be a direct consequence of the appraisers' need to differentiate between garments in cases, in which multiple items of the same fabric were listed. In the clothes of common servants only few items with wool linings, dotted and stripe patterns can be observed. Non-servants also owned fewer such garments, and, while the wealthier group mainly conformed to the most popular trends, needlework and stripe patterns were almost the only patterns in the outer garments of the poorer group.

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<sup>7</sup> The mean numbers in the diagram concern the whole period and are multiplied by ten in order to be better illustrated.

## 4.2 Fashionable accessories

In the works that criticized female consumption in Vienna in the period, apart from the fashionable cut and expensive fabrics of their garments, the dress of the «Stubenmädchen», was considered opulent because of their accessories (Rautenstrauch 1781, 9-10). As with clothes, items such as ribbons, lace, bonnets or handkerchiefs could often attract critical comments (Vickery 2013, 880). Certain items mentioned in these descriptions like the Bohemian bonnets («böhmische Hauben») did not appear in the inventories, though other fashionable bonnets, such as Viennese bonnets or «Schlepphauben» were mentioned. These Viennese bonnets, which were popular among the middle strata, were made of gold or silver thread and they also had gold or silver lace (Buxbaum 1986, 37). As with outer garments, an examination of the number of accessories in the inventories could provide information on the ability of the different groups to differentiate their appearance by changing and combining these items.

Table 5 demonstrates the mean number of accessories in the different groups throughout the period. With few exceptions, the mean number of bonnets is comparable in all groups throughout the period and only subtle differences in ownership can be observed. The mean numbers suggest that almost across the sample women possessed at least two, and in most instances at least three such items on average. This was necessary for such accessories that could come in different styles. Bonnets were fashionable garments in the period, as their illustration in multiple occasions in the engravings of the Viennese fashion magazine indicates. Even though the fabric of these items was rarely mentioned in the lists, silk bonnets could be found both in the inventories of common servants, as well as in those of the poorer group of non-servants. Though fashion changes in bonnets did not concern mainly their material, but their style and decoration.

All groups owned a great number of neckerchiefs and handkerchiefs in all periods and these served both practical and aesthetic functions. Their form and function could be interchangeable as they were described mostly together in the inventories. The material of these items was denoted in the inventories almost exclusively in the first two periods and among the main fabrics were canvas and linen, which hinted at the more practical function of these items. However, there were some notable exceptions. Neckerchiefs and handkerchiefs were not just used to blow the nose, wipe the sweat, or even carry around money or tobacco, they also added color to the appearance or displayed expensive fabrics and refined embroidery. They also displayed cleanliness as the most common color of these items in all groups was white and the whiteness of the garments was the indication of cleanliness in the period (Roche 1994, 178-80; Styles 2007, 78-79). In the 1760s non-servants owned approximately two muslin neckerchiefs on average, but almost none in the following period, and, even though the wealthier group owned almost three, the poorer group also owned one on average. On the contrary, aristocratic working servants owned approximately three such items in 1783/84, but none in the previous period. Common working servants also owned between one and two on average in 1783/84.

Gloves were an essential part of dress for aristocratic servants, who possessed more of these items on average than the other groups in the eighteenth century and particularly in the second period, in which working aristocratic servants possessed more than ten times more pairs of gloves than all other groups. In the nineteenth century, the possession of gloves constituted an obvious difference between the dress of the wealthier and the poorer group of non-servants, as well as between common and aristocratic servants. Perhaps also due to the different nature of their work. However, the material of these items was seldom mentioned. All groups possessed comparable numbers of scarfs and shawls, though in the nineteenth century these accessories as well as collars constituted items more relevant for the dress of the wealthiest group of non-servants. These items, together with gloves, became more relevant with the adoption of the one-piece dress, as the arms, neck and shoulders were in many cases left uncovered due to the cut of the dress, though it is not clear to what extent this was also done by neckerchiefs. Shawls appeared in the inventories in 1823. They were popular in Vienna at the start of the nineteenth century, as an article on cashmere shawls, which were imported in the Habsburg Empire from Central Asia, in the Viennese fashion magazine revealed (WMZ, 29.2.1816). However, such shawls constituted luxury items and were not found in the inventories of this stratum.

A very important aspect of these accessories was their decoration, which is displayed for all groups in Diagram 3.<sup>8</sup> Aristocratic servants in the period owned more than one adorned item (mainly neckerchief) on average. Working aristocratic servants also owned more knitted items or accessories decorated with embroidery and different kinds of lace than other groups. However, the most interesting finding in this diagram is the significant presence of items in the inventories of common servants, and to a much lesser extent in the poorer group of non-servants, adorned with gold thread or gold lace. These items were almost exclusively bonnets and they were found in their inventories in the first three periods. Bonnets adorned with gold lace or gold thread were one of the first products of Viennese fashion and were popular until 1815 among broader strata of the population. The thread and lace for these products was also made in Vienna. However, for most, they were expensive items that could be obtained only once (Kaut 1970, 21-2). Furthermore, the distinction between gold lace or gold thread and «leonische Spitzen», namely lace made from gold- or silver-plated cooper, which was produced in Vienna in the period was also made in the descriptions (Chaloupek, Eigner, and Wagner 1991, 1:72-3, 80). These adorned accessories that were found in the inventories of common servants could be one of the primary reasons that triggered the discussion on servants' appearance in Vienna and initiated the questions about how they were obtained by these women. However, for working women, especially domestic servants, these accessories were not just a touch of luxury in their appearance. They could constitute a valuable tool in their attempt to keep up a relatively youthful appearance, which could perhaps enable them to find work and ensure their economic survival (Vickery 2013, 884).

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<sup>8</sup> As with the patterns and decorations of outer garments the mean numbers in the diagram concern the whole period and are multiplied by ten in order to be better illustrated.

### 4.3 The inventory of a court servant

An example that can demonstrate the apex of servants' wardrobes is the inventory of Katharina Hoffinger, who died in 1823 and was the widow of a doctor and the «Kammerfrau» of the empress, namely the chambermaid of the highest rank that served the empress directly (Oekonomische Encyclopädie, «Kammerfrau»). Her fortune at the time of death was 10,276 Gulden and 16 Kreuzer and her material wealth was 1,529 Gulden and 36 Kreuzer. Apart from her clothes and accessories, her material wealth comprised of jewelry and precious items of gold and silver, which amounted to 832 Gulden and of domestic textiles and furniture valued at 318 Gulden and 48 Kreuzer. In total, her wardrobe consisted of two hundred eighty-seven clothes and accessories valued at 378 Gulden and 48 Kreuzer.<sup>9</sup> Their value made up 3.7% of her total wealth and 24.8% of her material wealth. She possessed fifteen dresses made of expensive and fashionable materials such as silk, muslin and percale, as well as many cloaks and overgowns made of silk, merino and poplin, all fashionable fabrics in the period according to the engravings in the fashion magazine. The total value of these outer garments was 130 Gulden and the most valuable individual piece was a fur overgown («Pelzüberrock») valued at 14 Gulden. Among these items was a white silk dress with tail («weiß seidenes Schlepp Kleid») valued at 8 Gulden. This was probably a formal dress for special occasions, as this type of dress did not appear in the inventories in the sample. The only case in the sample with comparable number and value of clothes and accessories is Johanna Weyerin, who was also an aristocratic servant at the imperial Court. She was a «Mundköchin», namely the person responsible for the meal of the emperor (Oekonomische Encyclopädie, «Mundkoch»). Even though both her total and material wealth at the time of death was much smaller, she owned two hundred sixty-nine items valued at 293 Gulden and 15 Kreuzer. The value of her dresses and jackets, which she bequeathed to her daughter, was higher than that of Katharina Hoffinger, as they were worth 200 Gulden in total. The most valuable garment was a blue fur dress made of atlas («blau atlasenes Pelzkleid»), which was valued at 36 Gulden.<sup>10</sup> However, Katharina Hoffinger owned more and more valuable undergarments and accessories. She owned items such as neckerchiefs and pairs of stockings in the dozens, one hundred thirty-two items, more than the highest mark in female inventories in the sample, one hundred eighteen old handkerchiefs, neckerchiefs and pairs of stockings, which belonged to the widow of an aristocratic servant.<sup>11</sup>

Katharina Hoffinger also owned several imported fashionable items, which were not found in the inventories in the sample. She possessed two dresses made of English linen, and two English shawls. Reference to the origin of the fabrics or the items was rare in the inventories. It could be assumed that such references were also linked to the appraisal of the items and were used to refer to the particular form or cut of a garment, to denote the superior quality, or to signal the fashion

<sup>9</sup> WStLA, Zivilgericht, A2, Faszikel 2: Verlassenschaftsabhandlungen: 1187-1823.

<sup>10</sup> WStLA, Zivilgericht, A2: 267-1783/84.

<sup>11</sup> WStLA, Zivilgericht, A2: 499-1823.

relevance of an item (Jordan and Schopf 2017, 234). In this case, it was a combination of all these factors, as English products at the time were considered not only fashionable, but also of great quality (North 2008, 48-50). Katharina Hoffinger owned just two adorned bonnets with lace decoration. However, an important item in her inventory was a Florentine straw hat. Straw hats were one of the characteristic products of Viennese fashion and were featured prominently as a very fashion-sensitive item in the Viennese seasonal fashion cycle in the first half of the nineteenth century. Even though the straw hats were made in Vienna, the straw (and perhaps also the inspiration) was imported from Venice, Florence or Switzerland. As a result, straw hats made from imported straw were very expensive and not accessible to broader strata, who wore straw hats of inferior quality produced by local raw materials. In the sample only two straw hats were mentioned in the inventories of a common servant and a widow of a publican in 1783/84. However, no additional description for these items was provided.<sup>12</sup> The period of great popularity and fashion relevance of Viennese straw hats was the period 1830-1848 (Kaut 1970, 78-81). Therefore, this item might have been a precursor to this fashion. Finally, the most precious items in the wardrobe of Katharina Hoffinger were two real shawls («2 echte Schawls»), which were valued together at 120 Gulden. These were probably the aforementioned imported cashmere shawls, as their value indicated their status as luxury items fashionable among the higher social strata.

It becomes evident from the analysis of this inventory, that aristocratic servants, who were placed near the top of society could possess a great number of garments, as well as items of great quality and value. As the comparison with the inventories in the sample showed, the wardrobe of Katharina Hoffinger could only be compared to those of other aristocratic servants in terms of number, quality and value of items. Though not in terms of fashion relevance of individual garments, as certain fashionable imported items did not appear in the inventories in the sample. A final parameter that influenced fashionable clothing and can be deduced from the inventories, is the condition of the clothes of the Viennese.

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<sup>12</sup> WStLA, Zivilgericht, A2: 22-1783/84, 687-1783/84.

Fig. 2. Georg Emanuel Opitz: «Wiener Szenen und Volksbeschäftigungen», Blatt 34: «Le Coureur avec une fille de Chambre, et une Blanchisseuse de Vienne./Ein Läufer mit einem Stubenmädchen, und einer Wäscherinn in Wien», Wien 1804-1812. This image provides a stark contrast between the dress of the «Stubenmädchen» (woman on the left) and a launderer (woman on the right)



Copyright: Wien Museum.

## 5. The condition of clothes

The examination of the condition of clothes in the Viennese inventories could provide information on the ability of the different groups to renew their dress and follow the latest fashion trends. Appraisers did not provide detailed descriptions of condition in the lists regarding the fashion relevance of the items. There is only one entry in the inventory of Maria Grabawitschin (without profession) in 1764, in which four old «Contouche» were also described as «old-fashioned» without any further specification.<sup>13</sup> The most common terms in the descriptions of condition of female outer garments were: old («alt»), ordinary («ordinari») and worn out

<sup>13</sup> WStLA, Alte Ziviljustiz, A2: Verlassenschaftsabhandlungen: 170-80.

(«abgetragen/abgenutzt»). Even though the meaning of these terms is not fully explained, it would be safe to assume that the descriptions of condition were also linked to the appraisal of the items and denoted the diminishing value of the clothes (Overton et al. 2004, 115; Beurdy 2003, 44-6).

Table 6 displays the mean number of principal outer garments in female inventories with a description of condition. Common servants generally possessed more clothes described as worn out on average in all but the second period. Conversely, clothes described as old or worn out were rarely found in the inventories of aristocratic servants except from the second and fourth periods. Moreover, the increased presence of worn out clothes in the inventories of working women constitutes a further indication that, due to their work, their clothes were more likely to be worn out. In general, non-servants owned progressively fewer garments described as old on average. This trend is mostly evident in the wealthier group. Apart from the first period, this group owned the lowest number of old clothes across the sample. On the contrary, the poorer group owned in all instances the highest or second highest mean number of old clothes. Even though the terms «old» and «worn out» could be interpreted similarly, they are not identical. The possession of worn out clothes indicates intense use, perhaps due to insufficient changes of these garments, inability to maintain the clothes or a slower pace of renewal. However, old clothing could mean that the garments were old-fashioned, patched up, handed down or even purchased in the secondary market, not necessarily that they were overused, not maintained or not renewed at an appropriate pace. Despite the uncertainty in the meanings of the descriptions, the table certainly shows that wealthier women, in contrast to the poorer group or common servants, were progressively able to acquire clothes, whose value did not drop, and they could be resold and reused. They had more changes of outer garments and they could maintain or renew their clothes.

The presence of old clothes in the inventories of servants could also be attributed to the practice of employers to hand down clothes to their domestic servants. Even though this cannot be shown for aristocratic servants in the present essay, there were many inventories of employers of servants, in which certain items were listed as «legirt», as bequests to their servants. These items were mostly clothes, but also domestic textiles or pieces of furniture, such as beds. This could also be a form of payment for servants, if the employer could not pay them in any other way. This form of involuntary consumption constituted a common way for the lower strata to acquire clothes that were beyond their means (Styles 2007, 247-55). This was also a practice followed amongst servants, as the case of Maria Johanna Kreyerin, the widow of an aristocratic servant of higher rank in 1783 indicates. She employed a female servant, Magdalena Fritzin, to whom she bequeathed a bedstead, a palliasse, a woolen mattress, a duvet, three pillows, a green blanket made of stuff, two bedsheets, three old cotton gowns («Contouche»), six old coarse shifts, four coarse aprons and four pairs of stockings. In total, these items amounted to 13 Gulden and 30 Kreuzer, approximately 13% of the value of her material possessions. However, the servant did not receive any of her most valuable outer garments, such as a light brown gown («Contouche») made from gros de Tours with petticoat of moire silk valued at 8 Gulden, or a brown gown («Sack») again made of gros de Tours valued at 6 Gul-



den.<sup>14</sup> So, it should not be assumed that the value of servants' dress was greatly determined by the dress of their employers regarding the practice of handing down clothes (clothes that were not bequeathed, but were perhaps given to servants to wear temporarily, were not recorded in their inventories, as they were not part of their property). Finally, the presence of ordinary garments in the inventories of non-servants and common servants could constitute an indication that they developed a certain degree of homogeneity in the style and material of their clothes, which might have conformed to certain fashionable norms, but their garments did not have features that would make them stand out and bring additional value to their potential resale.

## 6. Conclusions

The present essay investigated the female consumption of clothes and accessories of the middle and lower-middle strata of the Viennese population in the period 1760-1823, and the relation of their wardrobes to fashion. This was a period, in which fashion started to play a very significant role in clothing consumption and female consumers in these middle strata were at the core of this shift. It was perceptible in the analysis of their probate inventories that the Viennese female consumers followed fashion. The garments and fabrics of their dress conformed to popular trends in the period, and comprised a rather homogenous ensemble, which denoted that consumption of clothes was done according to general fashion directives. The inventories depicted not only the structural changes of female dress, such as the adoption of the one-piece dress, but also specific fashion changes, like the introduction of different types of gowns. French and English fashion shaped to a considerable degree the appearance of Viennese women in the period, as garments such as the «Contouche» were found in every wardrobe. However, the process of emancipation and gradual emergence of Viennese fashion can also be observed through the popularity of certain garments, such as the «Chemisette», or accessories, like Viennese bonnets which constituted specific products of Viennese fashion and were embedded in the Viennese fashion cycle. Furthermore, the influence of Viennese fashion can be detected in the fabrics of their dress, which conformed to a significant degree with the directives of the Viennese fashion magazine.

The essay also focused on aristocratic and common servants, a big part of which were working women, and compared their wardrobes to those of the wealthiest and poorest non-servants in the sample. The servants' role in the dissemination of fashionable dress within this middle-class population was an important object of investigation in the study. Female aristocratic servants, and particularly working women, invested greatly in their appearance, and their wardrobes could only be compared to those of their peers. Not only were the number and value of their garments greater than that of the other groups, particularly in the eighteenth century, they adopted the new fashionable garments to a greater extent and were also the first to move on. They possessed several distinct fashionable items and they also decorated their

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<sup>14</sup> WStLA, Zivilgericht, A2: 42-1783/84.

clothes more. Furthermore, the examination of specific examples from this group and the possession of certain valuable, imported items such as shawls showed that their dress was greatly influenced by the consumption of the elites. Therefore, if a trickle-down process concerning the prevalent fashion is assumed, it was this group that could constitute the crucial link between the dress of the elites and the middle strata, and mainly function as trendsetters for this middle-class population.

Finally, female consumption, and particularly the appearance of female domestic servants, was also an object of intense discussion in the Viennese society in the period. The analysis revealed that, regarding the wardrobes of common servants, there was little material evidence, on which this criticism could be based. Female common servants might have possessed certain fashionable dresses and accessories especially in the eighteenth century, such as multiple gowns or bonnets decorated with gold thread or gold lace that could instigate such comments, and they certainly devoted a great percentage of their total and material wealth in their appearance, but their wardrobes were smaller in size than those of their employers, the value of their garments much lower, the condition of their clothes was generally poorer, and they were also slower to adopt the latest trends. Even though greater in size, the value of their wardrobes was comparable to that of the poorest part of the population in the sample. Therefore, the notion that common servants urged middle-class women towards opulence or that they were imitated by their employers did not have merit. Rather, it was the dress of aristocratic servants in the second half of the eighteenth century that could have instigated this discussion, even though their wardrobes could certainly not approach those of the aristocracy. Non-servants and common servants in this Viennese middle-class population were fashion conscious and their dress adapted to notions of common and relevant. In general, the appearance of the Viennese middle-class women was rather homogenous in its basic principles. Concerning the relation of this stratum with the prevalent fashion, it was the group closest to the elites that set the tone. However, through the demonstration of the nuances of fashionable consumption in this broad Viennese middle stratum, it was shown that Viennese women did not necessarily need to look upwards and aspire to the elites in a process of emulation and imitation, rather they could formulate their taste and clothing consumption by looking across within this stratum, by interacting with their constantly changing material environment and the increasing availability of goods, by listening in on the contemporary debate on fashion in Vienna, or by receiving and processing information from leading European fashion centers and appropriating foreign fashionable dress. Finally, they could look to the agents and media of the emerging Viennese fashion industry, which their consumption choices also shaped.

## Appendix: Tables and diagrams

Tab. 1. Female servants and non-servants in the sample: Mean active total wealth and mean material wealth<sup>15</sup>

<i>Year</i>		1760s		1783/84		1803		1823	
		mean material wealth in Fl.	mean wealth in Fl.	mean material wealth in Fl.	mean wealth in Fl.	mean material wealth in Fl.	mean wealth in Fl.	mean material wealth in Fl.	mean wealth in Fl.
<i>Female</i>		163.7	1499.6	270.0	1685.2	393.0	1632.5	177.3	1570.7
<i>Female non-servants</i>		170.0	1477.2	306.3	1812.1	558.1	1725.2	216.3	1925.1
<i>Female non-servants adj. (5,000-10,000 Fl.)</i>		527.0	6735.3	622.8	6844.2	2223.3	8535.0	809.6	6621.2
<i>Female non-servants adj. (10-100 Fl.)</i>		41.2	63.4	60.0	63.6	65.9	73.7	38.8	53.3
<i>Female servants</i>	<b>high</b>	498.0	2867.0	255.0	2058.7	261.6	2994.9	75.5	476.8
	<b>low</b>	40.8	1298.0	32.8	111.3	54.8	325.8	16.8	248.4
<i>Female servants working</i>	<b>high</b>	498.0	2867.0	287.3	1120.5			7.0	10.0
	<b>low</b>	47.7	400.3	32.8	111.3	53.6	358.5	16.8	248.4

<sup>15</sup> All the data in the tables and diagrams come from the Viennese inventories (WStLA, Alte Ziviljustiz, A2: Verlassenschaftsabhandlungen; WStLA, Zivilgericht, A2, Faszikel 2: Verlassenschaftsabhandlungen). All the money values in gulden (Fl.) mentioned in the tables and the text are converted in «Conventionsmünze», even though values of clothing in the inventories of the year 1823 are mostly in «Wiener Währung», which was introduced after the state bankruptcy in 1811. At the time, the Wiener Währung had an exchange rate to the Conventionsmünze of 2.5:1 (Rumpler 2005, 123–24).

Tab. 2. The mean number and value of clothes and accessories of female servants and non-servants and their percentage in total and material wealth

Year		Female	Female non-servants	Female non-servants adj. (5,000-10,000 FL.)	Female non-servants adj. (10-100 FL.)	Female servants		Female servants working	
						high	low	high	Low
1760s	Average number	37.3	37.0	37.3	27.0	65.0	32.3	65.0	36.0
	Average value in FL.	40.3	39.7	42.7	16.4	101.0	29.3	101.0	34.3
	Percentage in total wealth (%)	2.7	2.7	0.6	25.9	3.5	2.3	3.5	8.6
	Percentage in material wealth (%)	24.6	23.3	8.1	39.9	20.3	71.8	20.3	72
1783/84	Average number	71.5	60.8	54.8	51.7	132.0	43.0	172	43.0
	Average value in FL.	66.2	62.0	62.4	25.7	109.4	21.3	157.0	21.3
	Percentage in total wealth (%)	3.9	3.4	0.9	40.5	5.3	19.1	14	19.1
	Percentage in material wealth (%)	24.5	20.2	10.0	42.9	42.9	64.9	54.7	64.9
1803	Average number	77.4	71.6	103.3	40.6	100.9	74.4	-	79.8
	Average value in FL.	67.7	70.3	134.3	31.4	99.4	36.3	-	39.6
	Percentage in total wealth (%)	4.2	4.1	1.6	42.6	3.3	11.2	-	11.1
	Percentage in material wealth (%)	17.2	12.6	6.0	47.7	38	66.3	-	73.9
1823	Average number	64.1	60.4	81.8	42.9	84.5	71.2	52.0	71.2
	Average value in FL.	27.8	29.9	48.4	20.8	28.8	13.8	7.0	13.8
	Percentage in total wealth (%)	1.8	1.6	0.7	39.0	6	5.6	70	5.6
	Percentage in material wealth (%)	15.7	13.8	6.0	53.6	38.1	82.1	100	82.1

Tab. 3. Mean number of principal outer garments of female servants and non-servants

<i>Year</i>	<b>Garments</b>	<b>Female non-servants</b>	<b>Female non-servants adj. (5,000-10,000 FL.)</b>	<b>Female non-servants adj. (10-100 FL.)</b>	<b>Female high servants</b>	<b>Female low servants</b>	<b>Working high servants</b>	<b>Working low servants</b>
<i>1760s</i>	bodice	0.3	0.3	0.6		0.8		1
	cloak	0.1						
	corset	0.1	0.3	0.1	1		1	
	fur	0.3	1	0.1		0.5		0.7
	gown	2.8	2.7	1	9	2.3	9	2
	petticoat	2.4	4	1.9		2.8		3
	short cloak	0.2			2		2	
	skirt	1.2		2.2	3	2.3	3	3
stays	0.8		0.8	1	0.8	1	1	
<i>1783/84</i>	bodice	0.1	0.2		0.3			
	cloak	0.2		0.4	0.7		0.8	
	corset	0.9	0.4	1.6	1.1	1	1.5	1
	full dress	0.9	0.2	0.1	0.6		0.3	
	fur	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.4	1	0.8	1
	gown	4.4	5.6	1.7	9.3	4	12.3	4
	jacket	0.9		1.4	1.6		2.8	
	petticoat	2.2	4.2	1.9	2.7	1	2	1
	short cloak	0.5	0.4	0.3	2		2	
skirt	2.9	2	2.3	5.9	2.3	9.3	2.3	
stays	0.7	1.8	0.3	1.6	1.5	2.5	1.5	
<i>1803</i>	bodice	1	0.7	1	0.6	0.7		0.8
	cloak	0.2			1.1	0.1		0.1
	corset	1		1.7	3.4	5.3		5.8
	full dress	0.6	1.7	0.1	1.6	0.1		0.1
	fur	0.4	0.3		0.3	0.1		
	gown	3.6	4.7	1.4	0.6	1		1
	one-piece dress	1.7	1.7	2	4.3	1		0.9
	overcoat				0.3			
	overgown	1.2	2	0.4	1	0.8		0.8
short shirt				0.1				

	skirt	5.1	6.7	3.9	6.4	5.4		6
	stays	0.5	1	0.1	0.1	1.7		1.9
<i>1823</i>	bodice	0.1			1	0.8	4	0.8
	cloak	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.2		0.2
	corset	1.4	0.4	2	0.5	1.6		1.6
	fur	0.1						
	gown	0.7	1.6			0.6		0.6
	one-piece dress	2.1	3.6	1.4	1.8	0.8		0.8
	overgown	3.1	2.4	2.8	7.3	1.8		1.8
	petticoat	2.4	5.2	2.1	2.8	1.8	6	1.8
	short shirt	0.5	1.4	0.1		0.8		0.8
	skirt	1.6	1.2	1.9	1	4.2		4.2
	spencer	0.6	1.2	0.9	1.5	2.6	3	2.6
	stays	0.2	0.4		0.5	0.4		0.4

Tab. 4. Mean number of different types of gowns and jackets of female servants and non-servants

<i>Year</i>	Types of gowns and jackets	Female non-servants	Female non-servants adj. (5,000-10,000 Fl.)	Female non-servants adj. (10-100 Fl.)	Female high servants	Female low servants	Working high servants	Working low servants
<i>1760s</i>	contouche	1.4	1.3	0.6	7	0.5	7	0.7
	gown	0.3						
	fur gown					0.3		
	mantelet	0.2			2		2	
	sack	0.1	0.3			0.5		
	bedgown	1	1	0.4	2	1	2	1.3
<i>1783/84</i>	adrienne				0.7		1	
	commode	1.2	3	0.7	3.3	0.5	4.5	0.5
	commode gown	0.4			0.3		0.5	
	contouche	1.2	1.6	0.1	2.3	3.5	2.3	3.5
	gown	0.3		0.1	1.9		3.3	
	mantelet	0.5	0.4	0.3	2		2	
	fur gown				0.1		0.3	
polonaise gown	0.1		0.1	0.1		0.3		

	sack				0.1			
	jacket	0.9		1.4	1.6		2.8	
	jacket gown	0.9	1	0.6	0.4		0.3	
	bedgown	0.1						
	volante gown	0.2						
	commode	2.6	2.7	0.6	0.4	0.4		0.5
	commode gown			0.1				
	commode fur	0.3	0.7	0.3		0.1		0.1
	contouch e	0.4	1		0.1			
<i>1803</i>	fourreau	0.2		0.3		0.4		0.4
	nelson				0.3			
	gown	0.1		0.1				
	fur gown		0.3					
	chemise	1.7	1.7	2	4.3	1		0.9
	commode	0.2						
	fourreau	0.1	0.6			0.4		0.4
<i>1823</i>	gown	0.4	1			0.2		0.2
	chemise	2.1	3.6	1.4	1.8	0.8		0.8
	spencer	0.6	1.2	0.9	1.5	2.6	3	2.6

Tab. 5. Mean number of accessories (headwear, gloves, neckwear) of female servants and non-servants

<i>Year</i>	Articles	Female non-servants	Female non-servants adj. (5,000-10,000 Fl.)	Female non-servants adj. (10-100 Fl.)	Female high servants	Female low servants	Working high servants	Working low servants
	bonnet	3.6	3.3	2.8	7	3.8	7	4.3
	gloves (pair)				1	0.3	1	0.3
	handkerchief	1.7	1	1.1	2	1.8	2	1.3
<i>1760s</i>	morning cap	0.2						
	neckerchief	3.9	4.3	3.4	7	2	7	2.7
	neckerchief and handkerchief	0.1						

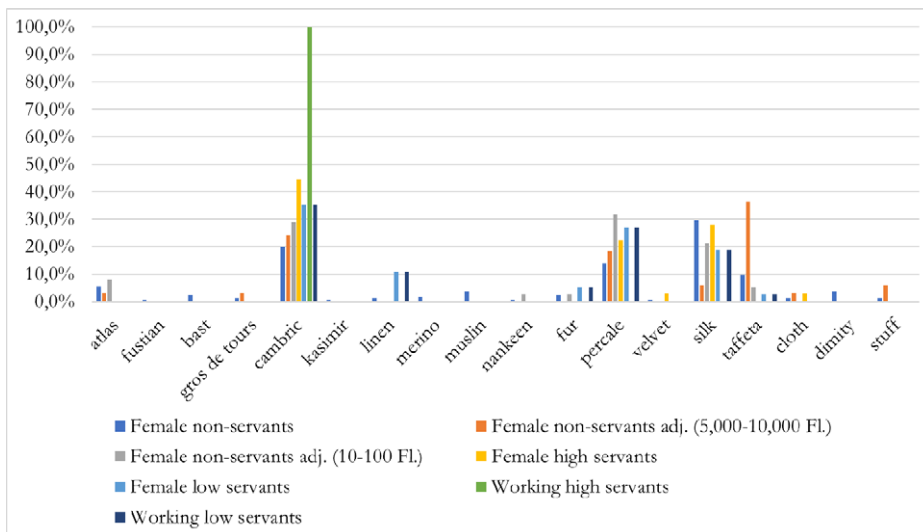
	scarf	0.2		0.1				
<i>1783/84</i>	bonnet	3.9	2.4	3.9	4.6	3.5	4.3	3.5
	collar			0.1	0.1			
	gloves (pair)	1		0.1	7.9	0.5	12.3	0.5
	handkerchief	2.1	1.4	1.1	7.1	0.5	9.3	0.5
	hat					0.3		0.3
	headband	0.2						
	neckerchief	4.9	7.6	6.7	8.6	4	13	4
	neckerchief and handkerchief	4.4	2.8	1.7	8.6	4	8.5	4
	scarf	0.1	0.2		0.6		0.8	
<i>1803</i>	bonnet	4	6.7	2.9	3.6	5.4		5.5
	gloves (pair)	1.4	3.3	0.9	2.7	1.1		1.3
	handkerchief	0.1		0.3	3.1			
	hat	0.4			1	0.4		0.3
	neckerchief	0.4		0.4	6.4	0.9		1
	neckerchief and handkerchief	11.6	14.7	6.4	16.9	10.4		11.3
	scarf	0.7	1.3		0.6	0.2		0.1
<i>1823</i>	bonnet	3	5.4	2.4	2	2.4	1	2.4
	collar	0.5	2			0.2		0.2
	gloves (pair)	1.1	2.2	0.8	1.3	0.4	2	0.4
	handkerchief	0.4				1.8		1.8
	hat	1.6	2.8	1.3	1.8			
	neckerchief	2	0.2	2.4	0.8	3.2	3	3.2
	neckerchief and handkerchief	12.4	22.6	8	23	7.2		7.2
	scarf	0.5	0.2			0.4		0.4
	shawl	1.2	1.6	0.6	1	1		1



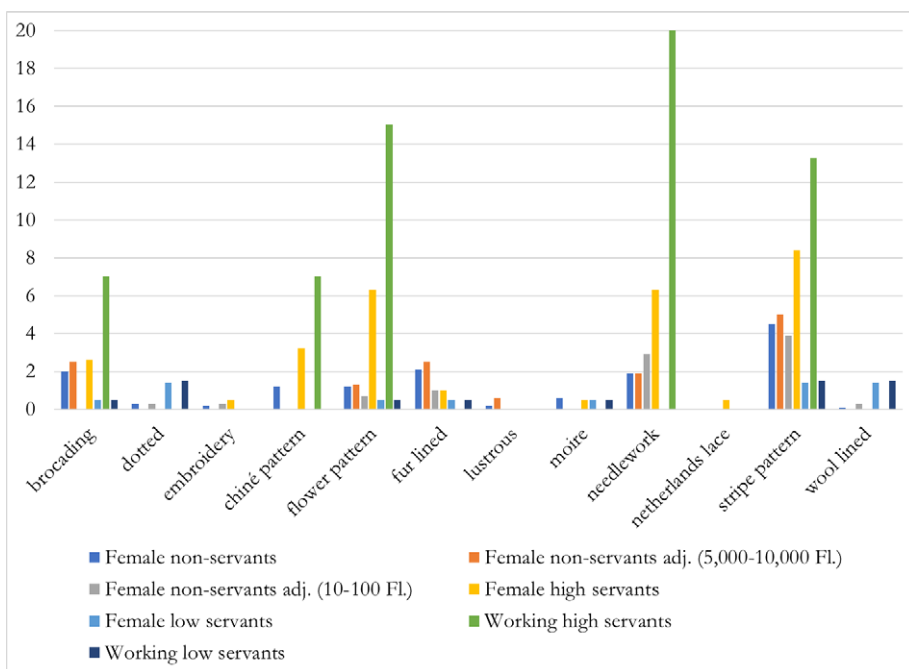
Tab. 6. The condition of principal outer garments of female servants and non-servants

<i>Year</i>	<b>Condition</b>	<b>Female non-servants</b>	<b>Female non-servants adj. (5,000-10,000 Fl.)</b>	<b>Female non-servants adj. (10-100 Fl.)</b>	<b>Female high servants</b>	<b>Female low servants</b>	<b>Working high servants</b>	<b>Working low servants</b>
<i>1760s</i>	bad	0.4		0.4		1.3		1
	old	2.8	4.3	1.4	1	3.3	1	3.7
	ordinary					0.3		0.3
	worn out	0.3				1.5		1.7
<i>1783/84</i>	bad					0.2		0.5
	old	1.9	1.6	2.3	2.9	0.8	3.8	1.8
	ripped	0.1		0.3				
	worn out	0.5	1	0.3				
<i>1803</i>	old	1.1		1.1		2.2		2.4
	ordinary	0.1		0.7	0.3	1		1.1
	ripped					0.2		0.3
<i>1823</i>	old	0.9	0.4	2.5	1.8	1.2		1.2
	ordinary	2.2	1.8	0.3		4		4
	worn out				2.3	2.8	9	2.8

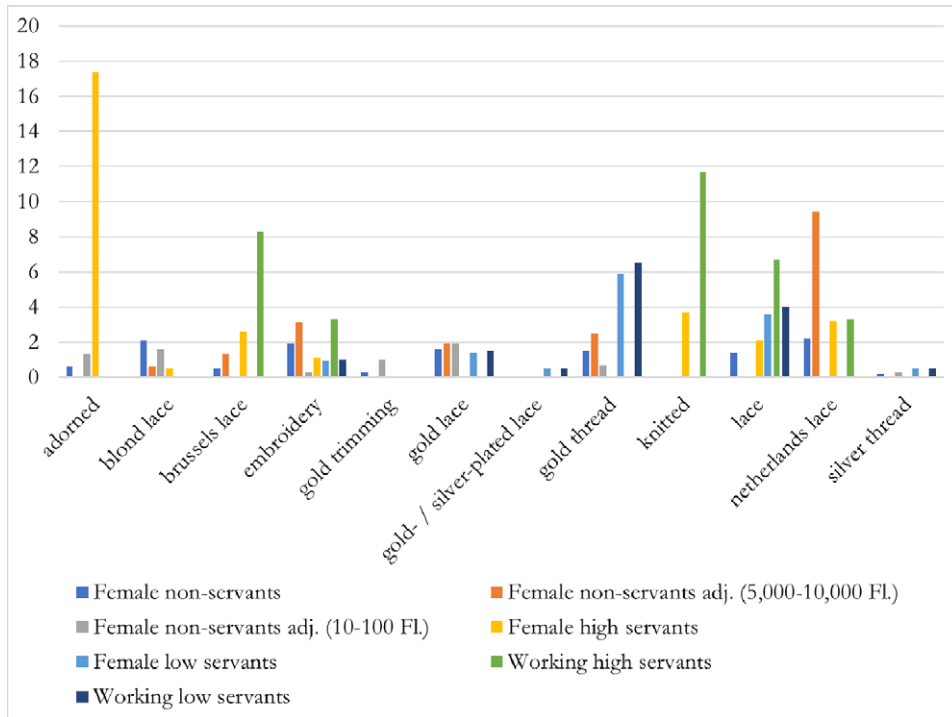
Graph. 1. The presence of different fabrics in the principal outer garments of female servants and non-servants in 1823



Graph 2. Mean number of patterns and decorations in the principal outer garments of female servants and non-servants, 1760-1823 (10=1)



Graph. 3. Mean number of decorations in the accessories (headwear, gloves, neckwear) of female servants and non-servants, 1760-1823 (10=1)



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*Cambiamenti nel comportamento dei consumatori*

*Changes in consumer behavior*



Peter Stabel

*Unlikely followers of fashion?  
Dressing the poor in late medieval Bruges*

Dress is often considered as one of the main instruments of expressing individual or collective identity and status in public space. Already in his classic study in 1904 Georg Simmel has pointed at the mechanisms which turn fashion into a tool of social ‘equalization’, but at the same time he stressed that it also allows segregation and distinction. Fashionable dress is, therefore, situated in the tension between the ambition to conform for some (usually, but not exclusively lower social strata) and the ambition to be distinct for others (usually, but not exclusively higher social strata; Simmel 1904, 130-155; 2003, 238-45). Hence fashion or the willingness and social ambition to participate in changing taste for in this case dress and apparel, not only generates the material environment in which social cohesion or social fragmentation are constructed (for example by uniform dress or uniform colours for specific occupational groups and associations), but it is also used to define power relations between social groups. Strikingly most authors tackling these issues see the rise of fashion in exactly their own period (Rublack 2010 and Welch and O’Malley 2007 stress for example the importance of the Renaissance). Middle classes in society are considered as being very sensitive to such processes. In the work of Thorstein Veblen and Norbert Elias, fashion and clothing are part of what is in essence a diffusion process of emulation set by court and elite society. As such, this process tends towards trickle down effects, whereby processes of emulation and social discipline concur to mould material behaviour. In Elias’ views this historical process is often steered by sumptuary legislation (Veblen 1899; Elias, 1983). Clothes are, in other words, both creating or blurring social boundaries and can, therefore be considered as instruments of class (re)production.

This process of ambiguity speeded up with the arrival of the modern era. The specialist of material culture in the transition towards modernity, Daniel Roche, saw clothing as still lacking agency in premodern society. Processes of class distinction were, at this time, still too dominant disallowing real material dialogue. It is in what Roche described as a new ‘culture of appearances’ during the final stages of the early modern period, that modern choices of distinction and social meaning were increasingly present in all social strata (and no longer only among elite groups). Clothing choices started to get defined by economic opportunity, by bourgeois culture, and by what Roche so eloquently phrased as «the laws of consumption and confusion», rather than by the fixed social positions of premodern Europe (Roche 1994, 513).

But despite Roche's observations and the indeed fundamental societal changes of the late eighteenth century, clothing seems to have been, also in earlier periods, an important instrument of social aspiration. Wearing dress, colours and designs was used to claim or confirm social status as well as group identity. And like Simmel had already suggested in the early twentieth century, it is the middle strata of society that wanted to increase their spending on appearance. In a recent synthesis, Diana Crane, even goes as far as stating that fashionable clothes embody «the hegemonic nature of values» and, therefore, of power relations. Acceptance or refusal to wear dress in private or public space not only points at the social position individuals or groups want to take, but also at their relation to social values in general. Display of dress becomes, as such, an agent of social identity (Crane 2000, 235-44; De La Haye and Wilson 1999). Simmel had already described this urge for social identification in terms of a limitation of personal freedom. In the end, lacking means to participate competitively in the world of display, poorer people were inevitably also subjugated by the drive towards social emulation, but they participated in a process in which inequality can only be reinforced and they inevitably lost (Simmel 1904, 548). But such fatal competition also demonstrates that the process was not necessarily only top-down. In fact, processes of material appropriation and emulation are quite complex. Recently, it has been demonstrated for premodern cities in the Low Countries how particular objects moved their way up the social ladder as for example handkerchiefs and spittoons became common first among bourgeois households, and only later were taken over by noble households, therefore a process of 'civility' rather than of 'courtesy' (Baatsen et al. 2018). In eighteenth century Spain, the elites were not afraid of taking over dress codes that were common before among the working poor (López Barahona and Nieto Sánchez 2012).

Periods of increasing sensitivity for fashion (and increased investment in the process of material emulation) reinforced this stalemate for the less well-off. The later Middle Ages were exactly such a period of accelerating fashion cycles, when elite consumer demand – answering the fundamental shifts of standards of living in the post-Black Death era – steadily had to distinguish itself from supposedly threatening (urban) middle groups (Herlihy 1997). No wonder the period also witnessed intense sumptuary legislation. Even the southern Low Countries, where government interference in private spending had always been limited – the region was, of course, also manufacturing rich textiles –, experienced the first grand-scale attempt at organising and defining spending on dress at the end of the fifteenth century (Howell 2010). The question, therefore, remains whether poorer town dwellers in this period were anyhow touched by the increased pace of fashion (a process considered by Roche as starting only at the end of the Early Modern Period); whether they tended to conform already in this period to examples set by trickle-down effects, in what Georg Simmel has described as an utmost characteristic of middling groups; or whether they distanced themselves from this process and directed the little available consumption outside the bare necessities for survival towards other kinds of material surroundings or towards food and drink.

In order to answer such an ambitious and, because of the failing sources, also a very difficult questionnaire, a basic knowledge about the clothes poorer people

possessed and wore needs to be available. And it is this empirical foundation that is lacking for the period. Archaeological excavations do not yield enough representative traces of dress to be useful except for objects like shoes or leather garments. Moreover, urban archaeology cannot always define social backgrounds exactly and does only seldom allow close examination of social difference (Smith 2009, 309-32). Our knowledge tends, therefore, to be built on fiction and (mostly religious) moralizing and condescending comments by clerics and intellectuals on the one hand, and on iconography on the other hand. Both have in common, however, that they represent the vision of elites and of middle-class bourgeois on the poor, rather than that they strive to present what people really wore (Blanc 1989, 243-54). So only a detailed study of the material culture in inventories is likely to present us with such an image. But inventories of late medieval poor people are a contradiction in themselves: as a rule, the poor do not have a lot of worthwhile things to pass on to their heirs, or to be seized by creditors or the authorities. Luckily some exceptions to this rule allow us to get at least a fragmentary insight in the realities of poor dress, and fifteenth-century Bruges, the trading and textile emporium of Northwest-Europe, yields such an exception.

### **The paradox of clothing in poor households**

Research into the material culture of late medieval townspeople has amply demonstrated that textiles and clothing constituted key elements in people's possessions, and that they were decisive for the construction of social and cultural identities (Rublack 2010; Scott 2007; 2004; Piponnier and Mane 1996). Among the middle strata of urban society, data in wills and probate inventories have shown the crucial importance of dress in establishing and transferring material possessions (Lorcin 2007; Stabel *forthcoming*; Alexandre-Bidon and Lorcin 2003, 266-84). But also in the poorer strata of urban society, clothing not only constituted an important part of people's wealth (and probably was used as a kind of reservoir for sudden needs of liquidity), it seems that clothing also provided the most important means for constructing individual and collective identity in urban space (Howell 2010; Breward 1995, 7-40). Many forms of punishment for 'moral offenses' that became ever more frequent across the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (adultery, prostitution, insults etc.) consisted in confiscating the perpetrator's gown, indicating that this was not only a very valuable item for the owner concerned, but in confiscating exactly it, it was also a way to attack a person's individual integrity and social reputation (Carlier and Stabel 2002, 241-62; Rousseaux 1999, 251-74; Maes 1986, 135-56).

But at the same time, scholarly work on standards of living never fail to mention that material possessions of poor people were not only very limited in both quantity and quality, but that poor people's dress was likely to be old and worn, made from raw textiles or at best dyed in easily fading colours (Dyer 1989; Sosson 1987, 17-39; Munro 2003, 185-297). Late medieval iconography points at a similar pattern. Often depicted in the scenes of daily life, which were omnipresent in the often lavishly illuminated calendars of fifteenth-century Flemish Books of Hours (not coincidentally a genre made for elite consumers), the poor were likely to be

dressed in anonymous, grey or faded costumes, designed for work and other practical purposes rather than intended to follow the latest fashion, which in the same images was the prerogative of the nobly born, the wealthy and the powerful (Mane 1989). Their blandness stands in stark contrast with the depictions of the rich garments of the urban elites and the nobility (Smeyers 1999; van Buren and Wieck 2011; Blockmans and Prevenier, 1998). Few would argue with the assessment that late medieval iconography, and surely miniature painting, depicted a top-down version of social hierarchies. At best the poor were associated with the teachings of Christ and his disciples, but in non-religious imagery (and even in Books of Hours, like the famous *Les très riches Heures* of the Duke of Berry by the Limbourg Brothers) the blandness of poor people's dress is often linked to uncontrolled sexuality or other kinds of undesirable behaviour (Dücker and Roelofs 2005; Easton 2008; Camille 2001). Unsurprisingly, research often states that the clothing of poor townfolk was likely to be supplied either by poor relief institutions and intergenerational succession or the less well-off were dependent upon the omnipresent second-hand circuits. Market driven fashion cycles were in other words out of their reach (Maes 1986; Danneel 1987; Deceulaer 2008).

There is, however, a strange kind of paradox in these assumptions. On the one hand, dress constituted a privileged source for liquidity among poorer households, but on the other hand if clothing was present (or was represented in word and image), it seems to be worth next to nothing, and it is, therefore, not likely to have been of much use in creating a significant amount of liquidity in times of urgent need (McCants 2007). The problem is, of course, that neither of these assumptions has ever been tested thoroughly, and certainly not for the densely urbanized and highly commercialized Low Countries. The ways in which dress and textiles constituted a capital reservoir remains purely hypothetical if so little is known about their use and about the turnover of clothing in the second-hand circuits. On the other hand, it is difficult to consider the opposition between the shabbiness of poor people's dress in contrast with the ever more rapid fashion cycles of the upper and even middle layers of urban society, as long as systematic surveys of the material culture of the poor remain so rare. The few attempts to scrutinize the material culture and clothing of the late Middle Ages were until now limited to elite groups and the rise of fashion cycles at princely courts (Jolivet 2006; Pignonier 1970). At best some samples also discuss urban middle groups (Stabel *forthcoming*). Furthermore, the few studies that exploit the rare series of medieval inventories, are not very systematic in dealing with class differences, and tend to use broad social categories as 'bourgeois' and 'urban', rather than keeping track of social hierarchies (Pignonier and Mane 2001; Dubbe and Meischke 1980).

In this contribution we want to tackle these seemingly paradoxical issues and look at the clothing of poorer townsmen in Bruges, one of the largest and economically most important cities of late medieval Flanders. This region was characterized by the massive deployment of textile production (woollens and linens) from the eleventh century onwards and it was also a major hub for international trade in fourteenth and fifteenth-century Europe. It was a place where access to all kinds of fabrics, and perhaps more importantly, to knowledge about them and to fashion cycles must have been relatively easy and available to many. It will be argued, not

for the first time, that dress constituted for poor people an important part of their material culture, but by looking at the specifics of dress among the poor, it will also be stressed that it was equally paramount for constructing poor people's individual and collective identity. The investments the poor were prepared to make must have been relatively important, and, as such, poorer townsmen tend to follow (from a certain distance, of course) fashion cycles set by noble and urban elites (and the already mentioned emulative strategies of the middle classes). But above all, it shall be stressed that poor dress did not necessarily 'make' poverty. And it certainly did not constitute its outward expression. In the cities of the Low Countries, there seems to have been no such thing as a poor man's or poor woman's uniform of grey and shabby clothes. There was more to poor people in late medieval cities than just timeless and unfashionable designs, faded colours and worn fabrics. Clothing was as much part of the lives of the poor as those of their wealthier neighbours.

### Poor relief and dress

Institutions dealing with charity provided besides food and occasional housing, also dress and bedcovers to a few poor city-dwellers (and even to relatively well-off pensioners, as charity evolved more and more into a form of social security for urban middle groups). The fact is well documented for many parts of late medieval Europe (Mollat 1978; Bologni et al. 2002). Moreover, different institutions took care of support and gave subsidies, food and textiles to the needing poor. Each of these institutions, which were mostly parish or guild based or were private foundations, had its own selection of poor: townsmen, guildsmen, parishioners and «prebend» holders (elderly people who had donated part of their possessions to a particular institution in return for support in alms-houses). The parochial poor relief systems (called «poor tables» or «tables of the Holy Spirit» in the Bruges sources), hospitals and the urban authorities provided not only so-called *aelmoesen* (alms, sometimes cash) and *provenen* (food baskets consisting of bread, vegetables, oil, butter, meat or fish depending the season, or leaden tokens which could be exchanged for food and fuel), but also shoes, dress and textiles (Tits-Dieuaide 1975; Blockmans and Prevenier 1976; 1978; for Bruges Galvin 1998; 2002).

In the first half of the fifteenth century, the urban authorities in Ghent gave each year a kind of uniform to some selected poor citizens (clothing made from black fabrics with white lining, the city's heraldic colours) while some orphans received white cloth. From the city accounts of 1436 onwards the distribution of *aerme lakens* («woollens for the poor») appears regularly. A heraldic sign with the arms of the city was attached to the dress (Maes 1986; Bonenfant 1996). The same procedure can be found in Bruges where outer garments (*kerels*) were given to some selected poor. The garments were given with the city's arms attached to them (Gilliodts-Van Severen 1876, IV, 83). In the fourteenth century the city donated occasionally also confiscated woollen textiles (which did not fit the standard requirements of the local cloth industry) to parochial poor relief institutions in the central parishes of Our Lady and Holy Saviour (Galvin 1998, 58). Hospitals also distributed garments or had clothing given to them (or left by deceased patients)



sold in a public auction, for example in the hospital of St John's in Bruges (Maréchal 1978).

But these scattered examples cannot hide that the parochial poor relief institutions, the main outlet for charity in late medieval Flemish cities, only rarely distributed textiles or clothing. 'Clothing the naked' was not on their list of top priorities. Attention of parochial poor relief was primarily focused on the distribution of food (and to a lesser extent of peat, the main source of fuel). In medieval Ghent, there seems to be a tendency whereby only the wealthier, centrally located parishes distributed dress, while the parochial 'tables' in the more peripheral and poorer quarters seem only to have distributed food (Maes 1986; Nicholas 1987). In Bruges a similar pattern appears, although the link with the poverty rates in each parish cannot be established as such. For nearly all central parishes of the city, accounts of the parochial poor relief of the fifteenth century have survived (S. Giles, S. James, S. Walburga, *Our Lady, Holy Saviour*: Galvin 1998). The accounts often give a lot of details about the distribution of food and fuel to the parochial poor. Usually on Sundays and holidays, baskets of bread and meat were distributed to selected poor. Occasionally the food package also contained peas and butter, and during Lent also herring or other fish. It is striking that only one of the parochial institutions explicitly mentions the distribution of textiles. In the parish of Our Lady, from the account of 1483 onwards, each year a sizable sum is spent on the purchase of linen (Galvin 1998, 57-8).<sup>1</sup> Before that date the Poor Table of Our Lady had distributed only a limited amount of linen in the 1410s (30 ells) and again in the 1470s (more than 130 ells each year). Linen was used to make what were likely undergarments for the poor. In the account of 1470, a tailor is paid to make shirts and breeches. In the other parishes, however, no clothing is mentioned at all. Only shoes were distributed regularly in both the parishes of Our Lady and its neighbour, the parish of the Holy Saviour. In the latter parish the number of distributed shoes was between 15 and 25 pairs each year, and occasionally it rose to 36 pairs, a number that cannot have satisfied the demand of the destitute in this large parish (Galvin 1998, 57). None of the dozens of alms-houses, scattered all over the city, seem to have given away clothing. They spent their money for consumables almost entirely on the preparation of food (ingredients for the ubiquitous *potage*) and on fuel for their pensioners. It is, therefore, safe to conclude that dress was not among the main concerns of the urban poor relief institutions in Bruges, nor of any other late medieval Flemish city for that matter.

Only the urban authorities themselves seem to have distributed outer garments, and they were also keen on making a very public statement, using heraldic colours and coats of arms. If parochial institutions distributed any clothing at all, it seems to have been exclusively linen for undergarments. This does not mean, however, that outer garments were not channelled through the poor relief institutions at all. Some hospitals seem to have been active in distributing dress (of deceased people?) or in organising auctions as an alternative for the regular second-hand markets. Neither the 'urban' distribution of garments, nor the parochial and hospital initiatives can, however, have been very substantial, and furthermore they only reached a very lim-

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<sup>1</sup> Bruges, OCMW archives, Poor tables of Our Lady, R1-9.

ited part of the urban poor. It is, therefore, safe to assume, that in the cities of the southern Low Countries the poor got hold of most of their clothes through regular first- or second-hand market circuits (or through inheritance or personal gifts), rather than through collective charity and that if dress was distributed by charity, it cannot have been representative for the wardrobe of the city's poor.

### **Inventories and the urban poor: the case of Bruges 1438-1442**

Since accounts from poor relief institutions and other sources on public welfare are only marginally interesting for assessing the dress of poor townspeople, it is to inventories of material belongings that historians must turn. But (probate) inventories often fail to present us with a reliable picture of the material culture of poor people. Since their existence and registration depends on the presence of a substantial number of material objects and on the value to be transmitted, inventories of poor people tend to be invariably scarce, those of the very poor non-existent. There is, however, an exception to this rule: the estates described in the bailiff's accounts of mid-fifteenth-century Bruges. They list the property of inhabitants of illegitimate birth for the period 1438-1443.<sup>2</sup> Their estates were seized by the bailiff because of the Count of Flanders's privilege that the estates of persons of illegitimate birth who died without direct heirs (children from a legitimate marriage) were forfeit (Carlier 2001). In Bruges and its region, this privilege was mitigated by the fact that if there was a surviving spouse, the count would be content with half the estate. In 1289 Count Guy of Dampierre had given this right to the city government (and henceforward it was never put to practice with great enthusiasm). But after the city's revolt against Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy in 1436 was crushed, one of the minor penalties the Burgundian duke inflicted on his disloyal city was to claim again the *bastard's privilege* (Dumolyn 1997). He put the *schout* (bailiff) Jacob Scaec, his main representative at the local level, in charge of receiving the tax (Van Rompaey 1967). In the first years (until 1442) the estates have been carefully registered, with great detail for the real estate, outstanding debts and material goods, and for the person to whom the estate eventually was sold (usually a relative of the deceased). In 1443 the entries in the bailiff's accounts become more summary and they only give the name of the deceased, the buyer of the estate and the total amount (the same level of detail that was also in the city's accounts before 1437) and they are, therefore, no longer useful for studying material culture.

In this way the *bastard's privilege* allows us a window of about five years, in which the estates of 83 Bruges citizens of illegitimate birth were seized and their inventories listed in the bailiff's accounts, 78 of which contain enough detail about the movable wealth for a detailed analysis of the property. The chronological distribution of these 78 useful inventories points at a clear concentration in the first years after the taxation had returned to the comital authorities. More than 60% of all inventories were registered in the six first accounts (covering approximately two years). Undoubtedly the phenomenon can be linked to an operation of catching up

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<sup>2</sup> State Archives Brussels, Chambres des Comptes, 13773-13774.

the arrears in the previous period of political turmoil, but the high numbers in 1438 and 1439 are primarily the result of a severe plague that hit Flanders in these years (Stabel 1995, 66-8; Thoen and Devos 1999, 29-33). In other words, death arrived very suddenly, which makes it unlikely that a lot of tax evasion had taken place before the goods could be seized. This improves the quality of the sources for analysing movable wealth to no small extent.

It is, of course, very hazardous to make an analysis of the social profile of the relatively small group of Bruges citizens of illegitimate birth. The inventories contain many useful indicators, material culture and housing being the most obvious. Objective 'internal criteria', such as the number of rooms in the inventory, which has been used to assess probate inventories in the Early Modern Period, do not seem useful yet in the late Middle Ages, as the internal organisation of the house was still in a process of change. External criteria, such as taxation lists are not available for this period. At this stage of research, for pragmatic reasons the assessed value of the estate was used. This assessment can be considered as a careful balance by the bailiff of the assets (real estate, outstanding loans, cash, and material possessions) and liabilities (in first instance debts of all kinds) in the confiscated estate. Many studies dealing with probate inventories have already pointed at patterns that may disturb the use of contemporary valuations of estates. They rely heavily on the administrative skills of the officials, but most of all inventories depend also on cyclical patterns, whether seasonal (harvests in the countryside, trading season in cities) or related to life cycle patterns. Not only the total amount of the assessment, but also the relationship between assets and debts can be strongly influenced by both patterns, and this seems indeed to be the case for the relatively rich households that ran up in debt.

Tab. 1. **Inventories of Bruges citizens of illegitimate birth, 1438-1444 (in £ parisis = 20d Flemish or, the equivalent of 2.5 day's wages of a skilled craftsman in Bruges) N=78 (total £11,352 12s)**

	% of all wealth	Mean	Median
Total		£145.5	£48
Q1	2.5%	£14	£12
Q2	6.4%	£37	£36
Q3	13.7%	£80	£72
Q4	77.4%	£451	£276

The bailiff was often very pragmatic in his assessment and sold most estates to the surviving spouse or to a close relative, people with a vested interest, emotional or economic, to safeguard the integrity of the estate. Although it is always mentioned that the estates were sold to the highest bidder (*comme au plus offrant*), the remarkable presence of family members among the buyers already points at the fact that the bailiff looked among the close relatives of the deceased for a quick and easy return, avoiding a cumbersome selling procedure. Eventually close relatives

were probably also inclined to pay more for emotional and practical reasons and to keep particular goods and property in the family. Other elements need also to be considered. It is very probable that not all illegitimate inhabitants of Bruges appear in the bailiff's accounts. It can be safely assumed that the very poor do not appear, because it was not worthwhile for the bailiff to seize their modest properties. The threshold, however, was very low. The smallest estates were sold for only £6 parisis, which amounts to a mere 15 day's wages of a skilled carpenter or mason. The richest estate was assessed at £2,160 parisis. Hence the bracket spans from 5,400 day's wages of a skilled artisan to 15 days (360/1), with an average of 363 day's wages and a median of 120 (Sosson 1977; Munro 2005, 1013-1076).

The social distribution of the estates points at levels of inequality that clearly exceed those of the late fourteenth-century taxation lists studied by Ingrid De Meyer and others in the 1970s, with a larger share of the wealth in the hands of the richest estates, but if the richest estate (Joris Kempe who lived close to the church of Saint Donatian in the political heart of the city) is taken away, the social distribution looks much like that of the tax lists in the late fourteenth and late fifteenth century (De Meyer 1974). Hence, we can assume that the inventories reflect more or less the distribution of fiscal hierarchies in this period. Occupational data are mentioned only rarely in the confiscation files. A prosopographic study will probably reveal a much more detailed survey soon, but for the moment only 22 occupational titles are known (about a third of the sample). The poorest group (Q1) includes some skilled craft artisans (a mason and a tailor), but unskilled workers seem to dominate: two *brouteurs* (carriers of goods or more generally labourers) and one servant girl (Lisbette Coppaeards, servant in the household of Rijkaert De Vlietsnidere). The group also contains modest clergymen (one priest and one curate, brother Giselbrecht Van Olsene, curate of the church of St. James outside the walls). Not surprisingly occupational titles become more numerous and more specialised in the more well-off estates in the wealthier quartiles Q3-Q4. These were usually located in large to middle-sized houses in the central parts of the city, while the housing of the poorer deceased is mostly branded as «small houses» or «rooms» in the urban periphery close to the city gates and walls.

The gender relations demonstrate a more or less even and normal distribution among men and women, but the estates of (single) women tend to be concentrated particularly among the poor and less wealthy estates (62.5% in the poorest quartile; 43.75% in the richer Q3 and Q4), while male estates are clearly dominant in the middle class and among the wealthier estates. The gender relations do not, however, reveal automatically a lot about the gendered nature of possessions, as the whole household is liable to the tax, not only the goods left by the illegitimate partner. It is, therefore, also necessary to look at single households separately. Somewhat less than half of the estates were owned by singles, a very substantial number (but, of course, only childless households were confiscated). It is striking, however, that the percentage of single households is much higher among the lower groups 56 and 62%, with many single women. These women were not widows, who tend to be particularly present among the wealthier inventories. The high level of female estates in the lower groups is, therefore, the result of a high proportion of single women, probably young girls who were not (yet) married and who probably owned

their living as a servant girl. Because these were people without children, in average, they were much younger than normal probate inventories, a phenomenon exacerbated by the suddenness of plague mortality.

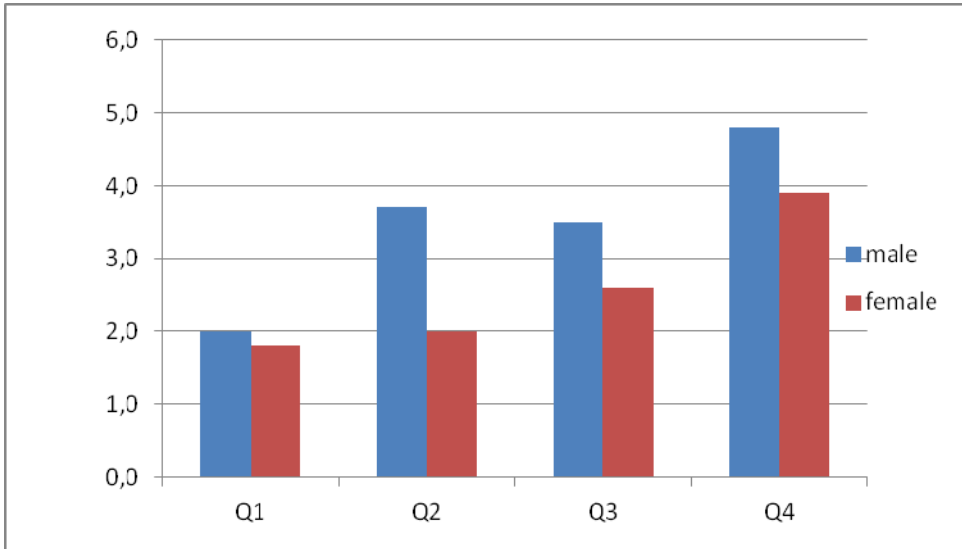
### Dress in the poor Bruges inventories

The first striking feature is that clothing was very prominent in the material culture of all Bruges households, rich and poor, male and female. Nearly all inventories have impressive listings of often a very wide variety of dress. The most important conclusion that can be drawn from the data is that Bruges bourgeois, wealthy and cosmopolitan as they may have been in an international business centre, did not wear silk dress, nor owned much silk except for some specific clothing accessories. Although the nature of the fabric used in dress is only rarely mentioned, if it is recorded it always concerns clothing made from woollen cloth (or lined with linen). Accessories like gloves, hats, etc. were clearly not on the bailiff's list of items to be registered. Exception was made for very expensive accessories made of precious metal or silk. But no gloves or shoes appear among the confiscated items. Nor do undergarments of whatever nature. Linen, despite being one of the core industrial goods manufactured in Flanders, was strangely absent from the inventories. Perhaps because the resale value was too small, but also perhaps of the peculiar circumstances of the seized goods in a period of plague and the fear of contagion. Items that came in close contact with body fluids were not listed at all. But the source does not reveal that they were perhaps burned as a precaution against contamination.

Fashion in the 1430s and 1440s still required the *houppelande* or *kerel*, a grand garment in-between a cloak and a tunic often with very elaborate sleeves and lining, which was worn by both men and women and that had been around since the late fourteenth century. The *houppelande* in the Bruges estates was made of woollen cloth or (only occasionally) of mixed fabric; it was often lined with linen or fur on the edges or the sleeves, and, most of all, it required a (sometimes silk) belt in order to make a perfect fit to the body. The *houppelande* is omnipresent in the Bruges inventories, both in the higher and, strikingly, also in the lower strata of society, both for men and women (although the cut of a woman's *houppelande* was of course very different from a man's). Almost 90% of the wealthy inventories contain the garment, in lower and middle groups (Q1 and Q2) the proportion varies between a still impressive 70 and 78%. In general, woman's inventories were more likely to contain *houppelandes*. Except for the lowest strata where an average inventory had two *houppelandes*, the average number of *houppelandes* in female estates was much lower than in male inventories, in the middle strata of urban society, where men have almost two times as many *houppelandes* as women (3.6 vs. 2.3). The wider range of this attire in male inventories is also noticeable in the wealthiest bourgeois households, but the difference between men and women is less outspoken. An average male inventory in the highest quartile contains 4.8 *houppelandes*, women own almost 4. The significance of the *houppelande* in male estates is striking. Although women had a critical role to play in public life in the cities of the late medieval Low Countries,

because of their relative advantageous juridical status in this part of medieval Europe, they were heavily involved in economic and cultural life, but they had been ousted from most craft guilds by the late Middle Ages and they were, of course, hardly active in the city's political life (Stabel 2015; Hutton 2011; Howell 1998). The smaller numbers of garments among women, from very poor to very rich, may have been caused by the necessity of men to possess more representative attire for public occasions in the guild and civic ritual.

Graph 1. Average number of houppelandes per inventory



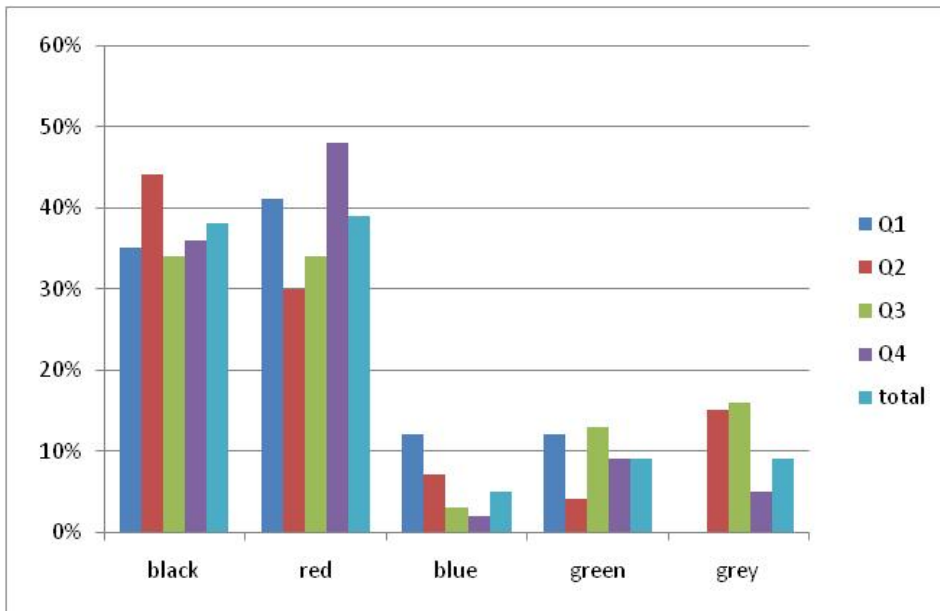
Although the garments often receive a lot of attention and their value is regularly indicated by qualifications, only 8% of all *houppelandes* are described as «shabby», «old» and «faded». In the lowest quartile this percentage is only slightly higher, 14%. But the figure remains relatively low. Dress in the lower strata of Bruges society is clearly not associated automatically with old and worn fabrics (Spufford 2000; 2003).

In the accounts, the material objects are not valued separately. No other indicators of value are present than 1° the presence of fur in lining on edges and sleeves, and 2° the colour of the garment. Sadly, the quality of the woollen fabric is never discussed in the surveys of material belongings. Once textiles are turned into dress, they almost immediately seem to lose their identity. Of the qualifications in the source, fur is obviously the best proxy for value. Unsurprisingly, the presence of fur becomes more important as the average wealth of the household increases. In the poorest group only four inventories contained furred *houppelandes* (and only one in each inventory). Except for one marten fur, these are described by the bailiff as *fouurrures simples*, simple furs, probably rabbit. Still, one in five of all *houppelandes* in the poorest quartile were lined with fur. It is striking that women, and mostly single

women, tended to own more furred *houppelandes* in the lower strata of Bruges society than men. But fur was particularly present in the middle strata of society. In the middle groups (Q3), fur clearly had become an element of distinction and half of the households had them. As such, middle groups invested relatively more in these kinds of prestigious garments than other groups. Fur as such seems to have been the identity maker of middle class and they invested also in quantity, rather than quality. Even in middle class families simple (rabbit?) furs dominate, besides the occasional Russian squirrel, marten and lamb (*agneaulx*). For the wealthier households it is quality, rather than quantity which gives status, so these households tend to possess more clothing lined with expensive furs like marten and Russian squirrel, most of them imported from the Hanseatic territories in Eastern Europe (Delort 1978).

Colour seems to be less socially distinctive. Of course, the quality of dyeing is of crucial importance for the real value of the garments, but sadly the inventories contain too few remarks about the depth and richness of colours. The distribution of colours resembles very much the pattern set by court fashion in the middle of the fifteenth century (de Méringol 1989, 221-51). Blacks and reds are particularly dominant across all social layers. This should not necessarily surprise. Although deep black and bright kermes red tend to be highly expensive colours in the top range of dyeing, there are also cheaper alternatives and the main dyestuffs for these colours, madder and woad, were readily available in the southern Low Countries. The former was grown in the coastal areas of Flanders and Zeeland, the latter in Walloon-Flanders (Munro 2007, 55-95; Stabel, *forthcoming*).

Graph 2. The colour of the *houppelande* in Bruges in the late 1330s and early 1440s



The most striking phenomenon is that there seems to have been no significant social difference in the use of black and red. Blacks seem to be more present in middle class inventories, reds among both the poorest and wealthiest inventories. But of course, red is not always the same. The Bruges inventories distinguish between two kinds of red fabrics: *sanguine* (colour of blood) and *vermeil* (vermilion): the stock of inventories contains 32 *houppelandes* that are described as *sanguine*, while 16 are made of vermillion cloth. Poorer households tend to have more of the latter (20% of all vermillion garments can be found in the poorest quartile) and less of the former: there is only one *houppelande* in the poorest quartile that is described as «blood red». It was lined with very simple furs (probably rabbit) and it was owned by Katherine, the wife of Pieter Andries, who had three *houppelandes* in their house (one male garment, and two for which gender was not specified). It is, therefore, likely that *sanguine* fabrics were dyed in more saturated colours, adding for example brazilwood to the normal madder, and that they were more expensive than the vermilion fabrics.

Other colours than black and red are socially more distinct. Blue was more present in the lower strata of Bruges society, grey among the middle groups. This profile is also gender sensitive. The dominant colours of black and red are equally distributed among men and women (although men tend to slightly prefer black over red). The poorest men seemed, however, to have a great preference for blacks (50%), the poorest women for reds (44%). But the pattern is confusing as these preferences are reversed in the lower middle groups Q2 where men preferred reds (58%) and women blacks (40%); The richest men clearly preferred black (39%), the richest women red (39%: widows wore red in this period). So, no clear gendering of the dominant colours can be acknowledged. For the other colours such a gendered pattern, however, does clearly appear. Blue and green *houppelandes* for example are nearly always owned by women and above all by poorer women in Q1, and only occasionally by men (and only in the middle social strata). Perhaps the fact that clothes tended to stay longer in the possession of poorer people (at the end of the chain of use) can explain the longer presence of 'outdated' colours. But as such quantitative differences remain slim and incoherent.

Of course, the *houppelande*, though the most widespread of the confiscated garments, was not the only type of dress mentioned in the inventories. A late medieval wardrobe was highly diversified, also in poorer households. The types of outer garments mentioned include the *cloque* (a cloak mostly associated with women), the *cote*, *cotelette* or *cotron* (a preponderantly woman's tunic or dress), the *huque* or *beuk* (a cape or overcoat with or without hood worn mostly by men), the *surcot* (a man's or woman's bodice worn above the *cote* or *cotelette*), and finally the male *pourpoint* (doublet). The most widespread across the social strata of Bruges was the *huque* (more than 50% of all inventories, but particularly numerous in the wealthier households) and the *cotte* (in particular the subtype of the *cotron*: less than 50%) and the *surcot* (about 40%, but not numerous in poorer households and present in most wealthier inventories). It is unsurprising that the *cote* appeared above all in female households, and mostly in the upper strata of Bruges society, and that the doublet is present in male households (again with a strong social bias in wealthier and middle-class household). Women owning doublets were either married or widowed. Most



households had between one or two pieces of such types of clothing. Only the wealthier households had as a rule two or three *buques*. As to colours, a slightly different pattern from the *houppelandes* emerges: black is much more dominant for the other outer garments (in particular for the overcoats like the *buque* and the *cloque*), while the distribution of other colours for dresses, doublets and bodices is much more even. Black and red are still, and by far, the most fashionable colours, but greens, greys and blues are more visible.

Finally, the inventories also count headwear, and among these head coverings that formed an integrated part with clothing, hoods (*chaprons*) and the so-called *faïlle*, which could point at a typically Flemish woollen garment that covered the back of the head and the shoulders (as such it is in between garments and headwear and it is usually associated with older women: Sturtewagen 2016). Most types of headwear seem to have been gendered, except for the *chaprons* which were ubiquitous, whatever the gender of the deceased: in the poorer households they appear in 70% of the inventories, in the richer households this rises to 85%. *Faïlles* seem to be socially more distinct: they appear in only 18% of the poorer female households, while it is present in half of the middle class and wealthy households (but the gender bias is less explicit in this case).

### Fashion accessories and jewellery in the inventories

Medieval dress was not limited to body wear or headwear, all kinds of clothing accessories that completed outfits were equally important as social denominators. The Bruges inventories do not mention a whole range of accessories in fabric or leather like hats, shoes, gloves and belts. These were probably considered as not valuable enough to be mentioned separately, and they were ranked among the «objects of little value scattered throughout the house» (*meubles de petite valeur qu'on trouve aval la maison*). But the inventories do, of course, mention the very valuable items in precious metal or silk. These items should probably not be understood primarily as a kind of capital good that could easily be pawned or turned into money (although some items like jewellery had probably such a function). From the analysis of the inventories, it clearly becomes apparent that tableware, in particular pewter or tin hollowware, which was omnipresent in the inventories in all social strata, and silverware in the wealthier households (most notably goblets, cans, plates etc.), was much more practical (and stable in value) and, therefore, much more used for such a purpose. As such the capital function of expensive accessories did not differ that much from that of ordinary clothing. There is no doubt that fabrics, and certainly the woollen cloth and furs in the ubiquitous *houppelandes*, had an important resale value. The fact that they are mentioned with such detail, while for example the (linen) undergarments or shoes, leather belts or purses are not mentioned at all, points at this important financial aspect of clothing and the possibilities for re-use on a second-hand market for dress.

Compared to clothing itself, accessories – or rather accessories with a high re-sell value – are surprisingly scarce, even in middle class and wealthy inventories. It is possible that because of their small size, these items *par excellence* could escape the

control of the bailiff, more so because, as already has been stated, most of the assets were bought either by the surviving spouse or by close relatives, exactly the persons who had probably easy access to the goods just before or right after death. The almost complete absence of purses with cash money in the inventories can probably be explained by a similar kind of tax evasion. Despite these methodological problems it is, nonetheless, clear that valuable accessories are more present in wealthier households (almost half of the sample) than in poor households (only 15% of poor households). Middle class households are, equally unsurprising, in between these two extremes. Although the methodological problems of small numbers become acute in this case, valuable accessories seem to be important in particular for women in the very low and the very high social strata. In the former group it is single women, in the latter widows that pay a lot of attention to such items. In the middle classes, clothing accessories can mostly be found in male households. Female households interested in valuable accessories are again to be found particularly among single women.

Tab. 2. Clothing accessories in silk and precious metals (% of inventories)

	Total	N	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total	26.0	77	15.0	22.2	25.0	42.1
Men	25.0	36	11.1	25.0	30.0	33.3
Women	26.8	41	18.2	20.0	20.0	50.0
-single women	25.0	16	28.6	20.0	33.3	0.0
-married women	20.0	20	0.0	20.0	16.7	33.3
-widows	60.0	5	0.0		0.0	100.0

Which kind of objects were registered as valuable accessories? If anything, it is not leather objects. Only one inventory, and surprisingly in the category of wealthy households, mentions a leather belt, probably a finely decorated belt of exceptional high value, because leather belts must have been present in all households, as were other leather items like shoes, purses, gloves etc., none of which appear in the inventories. The only other leather objects are related to the numerous stocks of arms and armour present in the Bruges inventories, which are not dealt with in this contribution (Stabel 2011, 1049-74). But belts (*courroies, ceintures*) do figure among the valuable items recorded by the bailiff. They are described as silver belts, gold plated belts or belts with silver- or gold-plated buckles. Belts of precious metals were popular (*courroie d'argent, ceinture d'argent*). Almost one quarter of all middle class and wealthy households had them (and the richer one got, the more one was inclined to own them). There seems, however, not to be a distinct gender pattern. Both men and women possessed these belts, which must have completed the outfit of *houppelandes* and other garments. Five households (one among the poor inventories, one middle class and three wealthy households) possessed *tissus*, silk belts or ribbons used to hold in place outer garments. The *tissus* had small buckles and were

adorned with nails in precious metal (*clous*). These (mostly black) silks described as *tissut ferré d'argent*, *noir tissut tout au long fouré d'argent*, *noir tissut tout au long fouré d'argent*, or *petit tissue d'argent* were clearly imported (Italian?) fabrics (silk, silver cloth). There is no gender difference as to who owns these silks. Both men and women had them. At least one of them was black silk, but all of them were lined with or woven with silver thread, which made them very expensive items. They are the only representatives in this bourgeois milieu of the silk fabrics or gold and silver cloth that were ubiquitous at the duke's court and that were commonly traded at the Bruges market by Lucchese and Florentine merchants and financiers. They are, therefore, the exception to the rule that there was a clear divide between dressing the nobleman (and woman) and dressing the city dweller. These silk or silver belts seem to be, however, well outside the reach of poorer households. It is probably not a coincidence that the only woman to have owned such a silk ribbon in the lower categories was a domestic servant. Possibly she got it as a gift from her master or mistress. Servants often received clothing and accessories as a gift (De Groot 2011, 1-15). The *houppelandes* of poorer Bruges citizens must have been tied together with belts made from leather or more common fabrics.

Jewellery is very exceptional in the inventories. The bailiff managed to get hold of these precious objects in only some households. Some inventories contained silver rings, and one had stock of precious stones for an amount of no less than £10 Fl. (the equivalent of a year's wage of a skilled artisan). Other items seem to be randomly recorded: one inventory in the lower middle-class group contains a silk purse (an item that must have been much more widespread in the wealthy and middle-class households). Other types of purses – the guild of the purse-makers in late medieval Bruges was among the very specialised fashion guilds to do relatively well in the late Middle Ages – are completely absent. Obviously, none of these valuable objects appear in the poorest inventories.

### **The industrious poor? Financing social emulation**

These findings are despite all the obvious differences of the material culture between richer and poorer households, nonetheless surprising. Being poor in late medieval Bruges was not necessarily equal to only being able to afford poor food (meat consumption was already high in the early thirteenth century and it did certainly not diminish around 1400: Soens and Thoen 2010, 495-527), poor housing or poor clothing (Stabel, *forthcoming*). Even very poor Bruges citizens apparently were able to share a material culture common also to the wealthier citizens. But most of all, poor Brugesois would look similar to their better-off neighbours. They participated in the same fashion trends, they wore the same types of garments, they wore the same colours, and they had the same preference for garments lined with fur. It does not mean that they wore the same clothing, only that their clothing, just as today's jeans, was very similar and based upon similar typologies, similar colours and similar designs. This means that even poor people were willing to invest in order to conform to generally accepted standards of appearance. Differences between rich and poor were therefore defined by secondary differences in the quality of the col-

our, the craftsmanship of the tailor or other artisans, the density and shine of the fabric, the nature and cost of the furs used. Poorer people will have used, of course, much more secondary circuits to acquire their clothing also.

But how can we explain this common clothing culture. Several reasons for the pattern will probably have played their role. Because of the lack of similar source materials elsewhere in the Low Countries, and of similar analyses for other parts of Europe, these reasons are up to a certain point hypothetical, and based on circumstantial evidence, rather than real hard proof. First, the pattern can probably be explained partly by local exceptionality. Bruges was after all a wealthy and thriving city, even in the 1430s, a period of plague and political unrest. Bruges was the textile emporium of Northwest Europe, and all expertise and knowledge about fabrics and fashion came together in this commercial hub, as did, of course, the textiles themselves. A second partial explanation can probably be found in the development of fashion itself. The early fifteenth century may have been an exceptional freak moment for the fashion of outer garments. *Houppelandes* or *kerels* were already prominent in the late fourteenth century in court and noble elite circles, and they would remain popular well into the 1430s when gradually other types of outer garments (*robes*, *buques*, etc.) would take over. Moreover, the houppelande was a very flexible piece of garment, that could be changed by adding different sleeves or lining or by giving it a different colour altogether. It could therefore be adapted to shorter fashion cycles easily. It was flexible by its very nature, and this flexibility made trickle down easier. It allowed fashion to reach also the lower levels of income. A third reason for the pattern may have been the urban culture in the Low Countries in general. The cities of the Low Countries were characterised by high levels of political, cultural and social negotiation between the different stakeholders in society. The Dukes of Burgundy and their urban subjects, the city authorities and the urban population, the guilds and their members (crafts, fraternities, military associations, rhetoricians, etc.), all needed to invest in social dialogue. Cities were as such platforms for social negotiation, and such dialogue needed to be lubricated by common identities and shared values. Dressing in similar ways may have been just one of the tools providing these common standards (various contributions in Blondé et al. 2018).

It is not surprising, however, that the most important reason must be sought also in changing standards of living. The period around 1400-1450 was a period marked by rising real wages and higher standards of living, throughout Europe. Although there are reasons to assume that these developments did not particularly create an exceptional period in the Low Countries -real wages were already at a high level around 1300 in the urbanized Low Countries, although there was a sharp decline in the first half of the fourteenth century-, the period of the 1360s-1390s and again in the 1430s-1460s were characterized by rising real wages (Sosson 1977; Geens, *forthcoming*). Moreover, these rising real wages do not necessarily tell the whole story. The Bruges tax registers of the early 1390s demonstrate that even in this period of real high wages, wage earners, such as textile craftsmen and people working in the building trades, were commonly situated at the lower ends of wealth (Stabel, *forthcoming*). The higher income middle classes of small commodity producers and retailers were dominant in the city, where, of course, also wealthy mercan-

tile elites thrived. So, if the purchasing power of wage earners in late medieval Bruges had risen, the standards of living of craftsmen-retailers had probably risen even more.

But the rising real wages do not tell the whole story, of course, as is so often assumed in historiography. Also the willingness to invest time in work is important. Sadly, even less is known about labour temporalities. Recent research by Sam Geens for rural Flanders (and the region around Bruges in particular) has, however, allowed to draw a picture of what could be called a late medieval 'industrious revolution' (Geens, *forthcoming*; Blondé, Geens and Stabel, *forthcoming*). In the wake of rising real wages in the late fourteenth century, we see that investment by wage-earners in work time declined. There was, therefore, clearly a leisure preference: people exchanged higher income for less work time. But the decline of labour time happened at a slower pace and to a lesser extent than the rise of the real wage. So, people also sacrificed leisure to raise their income, and, as is suggested by the pattern of material culture in Bruges, to enjoy a more elaborate material culture, and to participate in fashion cycles (see also Blondé et al. *forthcoming*).

But higher standards of living do not explain alone the patterns of clothing among the Bruges poor, of course. Why would the poor choose for clothing to spend their improved purchasing power on? Overall, across late medieval Europe, there seems to have been a greater willingness to engage in a more elaborate material culture. This pattern has already been identified for earlier periods as well, so well before the changing standards of living of the post-Black Death period (Smail 2016; Dyer 1989). It is striking that the material profluence in the Bruges inventories of the late 1430s even in lower income households, not only concerns dress, but also other goods such as pewterware and comfortable furniture with cushions etc. Many of these items were also fungible, and particularly pewter and dress were used not only for pawning or resale, but also as collateral for the ubiquitous credit arrangements we also find in the same inventories (Stabel, *forthcoming*). Many households, certainly in the poorer layers of society, did not have yet real estate that they could mortgage, nor would they probably ever have real estate, so for many the *renten* or annuities were out of reach as the main credit instrument. In come clothing and pewterware: goods of relative stable value (certainly if the clothing was made of fabrics of the *draperie ointe*) that gave lustre, elegance and sophistication, yet that could be used also for getting access to credit arrangements. A perfect tool for cities where social negotiation was necessary continually on several fronts.

The final question must, however, be: did it last? Recent investigations in the material culture of Bruges in the final decades of the fifteenth century (Sturtewagen 2016) shows higher levels of differentiation. Bruges citizens start to wear other fabrics: expensive silks, but also cheaper mixed fabrics. The range of clothing typologies seems to increase and the durability of fashion to decrease. The late fifteenth century saw in other words the end of the late medieval clothing consensus. Real wages started to drop also; silk entered bourgeois society ending the divide between noble silk and bourgeois wool; visual social distinctions became more significant; the cheaper fabrics in fashion had a much shorter life cycle than the heavy medieval woollens and were, therefore, less apt for maintaining status on second-hand markets; more complex and less standardized clothing de-

signs appeared also, which could less easily be transformed and adapted to the latest fashion. It is likely that the poorer strata in society were no longer capable at living up to the clothing consensus, nor to follow any more closely the fashion cycles. Paradoxically, therefore, in a period when 'cheaper' defines the new textiles and material culture, the distinction between poor town dwellers and their richer neighbours increased.

## Conclusions

The use of clothing by the poorer strata of late medieval urban society is often dealt with starting from either normative sources (for example sumptuary legislation) or from descriptions in both iconography and (moralist) literature. Poor people's clothing tends, therefore, to be described from the point of view of wealthier groups in society. It is usually described as bland, grey, practical, worn and used, dirty and not in any way related to fashion cycles, which became ever more important across the final centuries of the Middle Ages for both the elite and middle layers of society. The sets of clothing we know from distributions to the poor in fourteenth and fifteenth-century Flanders seem to confirm this picture. They suggest that poor people's clothing consisted of linen undergarments (which were often the only clothes to be provided by the parochial poor relief institutions) and one set of garments, that reached the poor either as a gift from local authorities (and in that case easily recognisable in the city's colours and bearing the city's coat of arms) or through the complex circuits of second-hand trade.

These assumptions of dress and textiles in the poorer strata are, however, only part of the reality. In the Bruges inventories of the late 1430s and early 1440s, a unique set of sources representing the material culture of not only middle-class households but also of poor townsmen, a very different picture emerges of poor people's relations with their material surroundings. Although the epithet «worn» (*usé*) appears slightly more often in poor man's and woman's dress than in that of more well to do citizens, it was in no way typical for poor people's wardrobe. Even richer people owned worn dress and dress in faded colours. The impression is one of great uniformity of fashion across all layers of urban society (and across gender). Certainly, a garment like the ubiquitous *houppelande* was very flexible as it allowed a wide variety of cuts and qualities (of the cloth used, of the lining, of furs, of dyes etc.). Yet the language of fashion remained almost universal across social strata, allowing dialogue and exchange between various social groups (and smoothening the all-important second-hand circuits). In fact, the importance of the second-hand market for dress may well have been one of the phenomena that may have partly caused the uniformity of dress typology (Stabel *forthcoming*). Because of the resale value, in the end dress always found its way to the market again and was likely to end up in the poorer people's wardrobe. But the fact that the uniformity not only touches the kind of clothing but also the fabrics and the colours used in dress, and this in a period of relatively rapid fashion change, points also to the fact that the success of second-hand markets does not suffice to explain everything. Black and red woollens are dominant across all urban social boundaries. They were, moreo-

ver, the same colours as the dukes themselves, noblemen, courtiers and ducal officers wore at the same moment.

Despite indications that poor people owned more garments in outdated colours, both the typology of dress as their fashionable colours were shared by both rich and poor. Expensive dyes, such as the enormously high-priced kermes based reds and deep blacks, undoubtedly belonged to the realm of the wealthy as did high quality imported furs as lining for the garments, but this did not prevent poor people from owning black and red gowns – the two colours that dominate Bruges fashion in this period – or from owning other fashionable types of clothing, such as the *buque*, the garment in which in the same period the extremely wealthy Lucchese merchant, Giovanni Arnolfini, was depicted by Jan Van Eyck. Moreover, there seems to be even an attempt to emulate the middle classes' preference for furred lining and sleeves. Even fashionable clothing accessories were very much in evidence in some of the poorer households.

The difference between rich and poor lies, therefore, not so much in the fashionable nature of clothing typology and colours, but rather in the quality of the fabric, the luxury of specific types of luxury furs, the depth of colour, the refined nature of the cut etc. Hence the ubiquitous blacks and reds are not necessarily the same in all layers of Bruges society. The wealthier households did not only own red clothing, but they also owned bright and deep 'blood' reds and blacks and the saturation of the dyes involved was probably very different. It is also in colour that, although not very outspoken, the most striking gender differences appear. Blacks and reds were worn both by both men and women, but not always in equal measure. It was mostly wealth and social status that decided whether expensive dyestuffs were used, not gender. And, of course, wealthy and middle-class households just owned more pieces of clothing than poor ones, allowing greater diversity and flexibility. But this did not prevent poorer people to own not only in average more than one gown, but also to own the right kind of gowns, the ones in fashion.

These striking findings must be a warning against too easy assumptions on social distinction and the deliberate strategies of showing social status that have been made for the Low Countries by scholars like Wim Blockmans, Raymond Van Uytven and many others (Blockmans and Janse 1999). All of these scholars have used the prescriptive sources that instruct us about the elite groups and the way they wanted the social divide to be noticed. The fact that sumptuary legislation on dress (although almost absent in the southern Low Countries until the late fifteenth century) and above all story and manner books written by religious or secular moralists constantly warn for transgression of these desired symbolic social boundaries, is often ignored and tells us more about the omnipresence of these transgressions.

The dress owned by Bruges townsmen, rich and poor alike, tells a different story, a story about fashion and the way it trickles down from court society into urban society, not only to the socially ambitious middle classes, but also to the non-guild organised workers, to single women (often in domestic service), to poor parochial clergymen etc. It tells the story of another kind of social ambition, a desire of poor people to fit in and their willingness to spend what must have been a large proportion of their very modest means on apparel and dress as a means of identification and social identity, a desire therefore, to express their sense of belonging in the

changing urban society of the late Middle Ages, in the constant tension between emulation and distinction.

It seems to have been a price that the poor were willing – or felt they were socially obliged – to pay. While the late medieval period facilitated to a certain extent this eagerness to conform because of the average higher standards of living, and the period is characterized by a remarkable clothing consensus across social boundaries, this proved also to be a very vulnerable equilibrium. The urban societies of the Low Countries may have stimulated lower strata in society to invest heavily in dress – it was after all important to adhere to a common urban culture and identity –, once the conditions changed, the clothing consensus also seems to have disappeared. Despite overall ‘cheaper’ fashionable textiles, towards the end of the fifteenth century, the social divides of clothing widened, dress became less adaptable and less durable, secondary markets probably less attractive to uphold status and fashionability, and poorer people could no longer follow the necessary investments. It is striking that this broken clothing consensus seems to have predated the inflationary trend of the sixteenth century.

Hence it was not only the representatives of the middle classes in late medieval Bruges society who had to pay the price for social aspiration and emulation – although their heavy investments in dress (and fur) seems to confirm Georg Simmel’s prediction–, but poorer groups in urban society as well were also tightly held between the hammer of emulation and the anvil of distinction. Their family budgets must have clearly felt this *Catch 22* situation. In the end, the speeding fashion cycles in post Black Death Europe were, therefore, not only triggered by elite demand, chased by ambitious and wealthier middle classes; it was the whole of urban society that seems to have been part of the process. Whether this urge for the urban poor in Bruges towards the consumption of clothing can be explained by the general rising purchasing power in the post Black Death period or a willingness to sacrifice leisure preference (Blondé, Geens and Stabel, *forthcoming*), whether it is linked to the specificity of Bruges as a commercial gateway and a hub for the textile trade, or whether it reveals a structural phenomenon in pre-modern urban society, whereby the poor cannot but participate in the consumer frenzy of particular periods, are questions that will have to be addressed in the near future.

One thing is, however, beyond any doubt, in late medieval Bruges, and probably also in the other cities of the Low Countries, the poorer strata of urban society were clearly participants in changing fashion and must have boosted demand to no small extent. In late medieval Bruges the second-hand cloth and second-hand fur dealers were numerous crafts and were even getting more important across the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. In their statutes there is little mention of shabby clothes they were selling (State archives Bruges, Craft guilds, 1, f. 252r-266v). On the contrary, the low-end markets for worn clothes were often in the hands of non-guild organized sellers, mostly women (Fontaine 2008). The Bruges *oudkleerkopers* and *oudgrauwerkers* (sellers of old clothes and furs) were above all manufacturing crafts, whose activities consisted mainly in transforming used clothes and furs into fashionable items. They were as much part of world of artisans transformed the city of Bruges from a textile manufacturing centre into a hub for luxury and fashion



trades in the late Middle Ages (Stabel *forthcoming*). And among their customers were not only the wealthy and middle-class citizens, but they also catered for the poor.

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Máximo García Fernández

*Keeping up appearances in early modern Castile*

Social emulation drove demand and influenced consumer behaviour at all levels, leading to the *power and tyranny of fashion* and the development of all economic sectors involved in the cultural projection of clothing\*. Clothing was not replaced at the same rate as it is today, but some social sectors still witnessed rapid and widespread changes in clothing habits. After the *birth of fashion* during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries (Belfanti 2008), the 18<sup>th</sup> century experienced a *revolution of consumption* (McKendrick 1982). It is thus important to research the material culture that changed male and female bodies with different garments and accessories (Roche 1997), which had by then become a civilisational and *sensorial* issue for public consumption. Within this methodological framework, it is also necessary to compare these developments within Castile and western Europe more broadly (Torrás 1999), assessing the significance of innovations and the variety of items available as a reflection of market strategies, establishing the characteristic attitudes of each social group and defining individual aspirations (balancing the wish for social promotion and prices) underlying intercultural contact (García M. 2016).

In the present study, a wide variety of notarial records (guardianship accounts, dowries and post-mortem inventories) and of literary, moral and legal sources (dated to the Renaissance, Baroque and Enlightenment periods, and including numerous memoranda, tailors' patterns and reformist fashion magazines) are examined from an economic, social and cultural perspective in order to study fabrics, colours and accessories used as social markers and design strategies from the perspective of gender, age and identity expressed through clothing. These are key variables in tracing changes in the collective and individual demands of Mediterranean families during the Ancien Régime from the Middle Ages (Furió 2018) to the modern period (Pérez 2013) in rural (Malanima 1990), provincial (Ramos 2010) and/or courtesan environments (Figeac 2007).

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## 1. Markets and luxury

The reactivation of demand and urban consumption depended on market access – from the periodic fair to the permanent shop – the economic situation and the prevailing economic mentality, which were reflected in recurrent *sumptuary laws*; these mercantilist tenets led to the implementation of protectionist policies to promote local fabrics and hamper the import of foreign ones, or to critical illustrated publications that expressed horror at the availability of vast quantities of smuggled French mousselines in 18<sup>th</sup> century Spain. In this context, an item is not simply a commodity but a symbol of distinction and social prestige, whereby its tangible value is entangled with its cultural value; luxury, ostentation, decorum and appearance were all key factors in the growing circulation of intercontinental gifts (Carrió 2016).

The dissemination of luxury items could have been the end of the *European aristocratic constitution*. A symbol of a certain social code of conduct, the *vice of appearances* was considered unnecessary, corrupting norms and triggering decadence. As such, luxury was a legitimate target of bans and taxes to control consumption, as long as it was not the product of national industries or was not subject to custom duties, or it was regulated by the commercial networks that traded in them (Carmagnani 2012, 21-55). However, stopping the dissemination of this *abyss of pleasure* was an impossible mission: it was visible in palatial architecture, carriages, fashion and fine household items. A new civic virtue had to be built, based on a reinterpreted relationship between the material and the immaterial, between public and private needs. Within this renewed framework, luxury acquired a collective positive hue because it materialised in more comfortable housing and better clothing whilst also striking a balance between fending off external threats and satisfying the desires of the individual. This created the possibility of enjoying luxurious goods (which were even cheaper, *populujos*) without good habits being undermined and of cancelling laws that were never able to solve the problems of demand, most notably in relation to the dynamic circulation of Eastern cottons (Martínez 2008).

The dissemination of these ideas about consumption allowed Dutch and English publicists and merchants to progressively dismantle the principles of mercantilism and their obsession with the balance of trade, whilst adding value to re-exports and arguing that traffic could not be stopped by prohibitions. In parallel, the liberalisation of consumption at continental level destabilised the rigid aristocratic hierarchies and created new ways of social promotion for the enemies of *sumptuary laws*, for whom ostentation knew no limits, and could be contained but never suppressed. This debate was revived by the spirit of bourgeois *sweet trade*, *education in manners*, *solid luxury* based on *real needs*, and the very *improvement of customs* (rather than simply a *refinement of vanity*).

When dealing with the controversial issue of clothing, Rousseau was an enemy of luxury:<sup>1</sup> «In the independence in which I lived... and, stifling the vanity... I be-

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<sup>1</sup> Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Confesiones* (1748-55), libro 8° (1993. Barcelona: Planeta, 381). His thoughts on luxury are found throughout his works, but his responses in the *First Discourse* (compiled

gan the change in my dress, I quitted laced clothes and white stockings». Two factors contributed to him adopting the *Armenian* attire. Firstly, «On Christmas Eve... the door of a garret, in which all our linen was hung up after being washed, was broken open. Everything was stolen, amongst other things, forty-two of my shirts, of very fine linen, and which were the best part of my stock». Secondly, he had prostate issues and difficulty urinating while wearing stockings and pantaloons. In his *Discourse on the Arts and Sciences*, he complained about the corruption of habits, forcing himself to practice the plainness that he preached and giving up his bourgeois clothes for a limited and austere wardrobe. These principles of *rusticity*, however, triumphed only in the mental and conceptual sphere.

Thus, the aspiration to personal ostentation converged, and clashed, with critical attitudes towards the collective desire for clothing that outlined, at all levels, social inequality. This clash accelerated the underlying conflict that marked the progress of modernity, when the desire for comfort became widespread and even universal. The increase in the public capital of appearances is sharply illustrated by the differences between the domestic comforts and the external appearance of Francisco Javier Carrión Ribas, a diplomat who died in Madrid in 1779,<sup>2</sup> and those of father don Alonso de Carrión y Losada, who died in 1678. The living room of the latter, despite the fact that he was the perpetual mayor of Zamora, was barely furnished, with eight chairs *baqueta de moscovia*, and his alcove was decorated only by four pieces of cloth. Another room contained two desks, two sideboards covered with cloth and a portable pantry. The bedroom was furnished with a four-poster bed and an old bench; inside, there were chests, trunks, a carpet, a heater and a stove. Upstairs, there was a chest with two cassocks, short capes, two new hats and his capes. Two interior rooms contained rope beds and mattresses, a headboard and a duvet, and a chest containing eleven bed sheets and fifteen pillows, a hairdresser's sheet and a handkerchief, eight napkins and six small tablecloths, five pairs of underwear, four pairs of stockings, a coat, three shirts and a nightgown, a woman's dress of Dutch linen and an overskirt, a large mat and a brazier, sixteen fine plates, twelve bowls, six small cups with their saucers, three large bowls, four pairs of gloves, two head cloths, a robe and two fans. Carrión, for his part, owned carriages and three walking sticks, a large library, Chinese-style tableware and a fish pan to eat from; a draughts board, inkwells and quills on the desk; 100 chairs, stools and couches *for visitors*, along with candles, candlesticks and mantelpieces; music scores near a large number of glazed bowls; carpets, crystal lamps, cornucopia mirrors and several clocks; and razors for shaving and tweezers for the fingernails. His wardrobe was well furnished too. A dozen cloth or velvet dresses, including matching waistcoat, jacket and trousers (one «old fashioned» for Holy Week, and a

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by Masó, Salustiano. 1979. *Escritos de combate*. Madrid: Alfabeta, the *Discurso* and the entry *Économie (morale et politique)* in the 1755 *Encyclopaedia* (later entitled *Discours sur l'économie politique*, 1985. Madrid: Tecnos) are particularly interesting. The *Discourse on Inequality* was very controversial, reinventing the topic of the natural state and turning man into an affable creature capable of fertile feelings of happiness. During this controversy, Palissot brought to the stage a «four-legged character» with a leaf of lettuce between the teeth, whom Voltaire referred to as «Diogenes' monkey», noting in one of his letters that «no one has ever employed so much passion in wishing to turn us into animals».

<sup>2</sup> Archivo de Protocolos de Madrid, leg. 16294, f. 323.



black one for mourning), and 30 *trué* shirts, fifteen made of fine cloth and thirteen of inferior quality. His late wife's wardrobe and coiffure were equally rich (headdresses, hairpins, handkerchiefs, *peinadores* and dozens of fans).<sup>3</sup>

«The excess of luxury / has taken root / from dotage / to the innocent child / regardless of sex, / occupation or trade».<sup>4</sup> Despite not having access to every type of foreign clothing, the middle classes began purchasing tight vests, corsets and bodices, incorporating novelties (a pejorative term: «thing that is new and not common; often dangerous, because they bring changes to old uses»; Sebastián de Covarrubias) that did not go unnoticed by Enlightenment intellectuals. This was an ideological transformation that brought with it some positive notions, such as the encouragement of industry and the condemnation of idleness. Wills, inventories and dowries began listing a growing number of sumptuary garments, often accompanied by information about their place of origin as a way to emphasise their prestigious nature: Maltese, Neapolitan, Turkish, Venetian and Chinese, or made after the style of said countries: «in the French style», «in the English style», «in the Polish style» or «in the Sultan's style». Also of significance was the increase in the number of «unused» shirts, which presented a way to project a given image, to define or impose «the latest fashion». Many are labelled «for its use», «to dress up», «of its sex» or «for travelling»: in other words, made and decorated for special occasions. Both outer and inner garments were increasingly made of cotton, which was easier to wash, dry and iron, as well as being cheaper to adapt to new patterns, dyes and cuts. This was the reason for the increasing arrival of foreign mousselines and chiffons (and also the growing export of Catalonian *indianas*) (Muñoz 2011). This variety of garments «in the international» or «Oriental» styles coexisted with traditional dress (black outer skirts and/or white shawls) and with the habit of using it in the open air or the Church, often with open references to popular authenticity (*casticismo*). As such, shapes and types copied from the best Paris dressmakers (lace, ribbons and openwork reproduced in picture cards and magazines) existed side by side with classic homemade garments.

With the material luxury of the court (Descalzo 2014) and popular plainness (García M. 2019a) as a backdrop, private and commercial letters reveal, for example, that the harbour of Alicante stored a large volume of imported cloth, which demonstrates the increasing importance of the fashion industry.<sup>5</sup> The letters being exchanged across the Atlantic, which consigned the constant traffic in textile novelties, reflect the same trend (Silva 2019).

These were no mere commodities, and for this reason economic means and mentality had to go hand-in-hand to dynamise increasingly widespread demand. This ran parallel to critical attitudes towards luxury and growing consumption among emerging social groups in urban contexts, which resorted to symbolism to

<sup>3</sup> Archivo Histórico Provincial de Zamora, leg. 1644, ff. 513-517.

<sup>4</sup> Merás y Queipo de Llano, Ignacio. 1785. *Consejos de un cortesano a un amigo suyo sobre las modas y el exceso del lujo en la corte*. Madrid. Another eloquent title: Eijocente, Luis de. 1795. *Libro del agrado, impreso por la virtud en la imprenta del gusto, a la moda y el aire del presente siglo*. Madrid.

<sup>5</sup> Arxiu del Regne de Valencia, *Varia*, n° 74; 463 letters sent by the merchant Felipe Moscoso from Alicante to a number of merchants in Genoa from 1660 to 1686.

better display their prestige. Dress always concealed ideological and civilisational undercurrents, as reflected in the tension between novel dress fashions and a censorship that sang the praises of rusticity: the impact caused by the novelties being pushed forward by the *fashion of the century* was thus uneven. It can be deduced that during the 1700s aesthetics and colour, among other important factors, counted for more than durability. Lyon was to transform the canon of textile quality by disseminating the new French fashion, supported by a strong silk (and cotton) industry; thereafter, Paris was to *set the tone* for elegant dress, exporting their goods to the Spanish-American market and competing with the Asian goods traded by the company of the Philippines.

## 2. Quantitative sources for clothing consumption

What was in demand, and when? Did patterns change according to social group, age and gender? The increase or decrease in cultural inequality and changes in the standards of living must be explained.

The increase in aggregate consumption from the Late Middle Ages onwards is reflected in wills, post-mortem inventories, dowries, seizure documents and inter-vivos donations (García J. 2001). These documents represent the legal, economic and social reality of each period, and the information that they provide in different European countries can be profitably compared. These records were related to private, domestic and familial spheres (concerning the tutelage of minors). They were a guarantee against a lack of trust that was never far from the surface («to avoid all fraud»). Insecurity, litigation, disagreements, intestates or disputes over property encouraged their production; beyond the logic of succession, they allowed personal property to be enjoyed without fear. These records have been widely used to examine demand, material culture and everyday life (standards of living) between 1500 and 1850, although it must be remembered that they remain partial and sometimes unclear, and also that not all property was necessarily recorded for various reasons (García M. 2015).

In addition, the «debts satisfied in recompense for your good offices... letters of payment for the years spent in our service» consign the very varied (in terms of amount, quality and typology) amounts of money spent by masters on their servants. Receipts for *white bed linen* and other textile goods suggest that masters often rewarded their servants with clothing (shirts, stockings, coats), shoes and headdresses (*coffias*), as well as the cloth with which they were made.<sup>6</sup> Although the items so bequeathed are not dissimilar to those used by the masters, the differences are also enormous, which meant the possibility of confusion was small. The few personal ledgers that survive today also give interesting insight into the lives of married women and widows, especially the interaction between the public and private spheres. The careful recording of female domestic expenses includes the purchase of clothes. The family's trousseau was generally made at home, especially the undergarments, and this was a task that fell entirely to women (clothes were

<sup>6</sup> Archivo Histórico Provincial de Valladolid (AHPVa), *Protocolos Notariales* (PN), legajo 103, 1551; leg. 102, 1550; leg. 48, 1552; Valladolid city.

sewn, shortened and lengthened to fit new needs, and they were sold in the public *almoneda* or amicably shared), although hiring professional weavers and tailors was not rare. For instance, Isabel Despés bought several serge breeches for her son, while sending out to be mended others that were worn through wear (Gascón 2012).

We also have (a few) documents in which the authors recorded information about their own clothes (Luciani 2013), including diaries and autobiographies («a weapon against forgetfulness and a tool of memory»; Amelang 2005).<sup>7</sup> Clothing was a language that formed recurrent images (Ebben 2010).<sup>8</sup> For instance, the clothes bought by an Italian student in Salamanca, according to his own account, were as follows (Haley 1977):

Tab. 1. Clothes bought by Girolamo da Sommaia in Salamanca (1603-1607)

Girolamo da Sommaia	1603	1604	1605	1606	1607	Total	
Breeches	2	1	1	5	4	13	pairs
Short trousers	5	3	3	3		14	
Shoes		6	7	3		16	pairs; more than three per year
Other (18 different pieces)	2	9	20	8	13	52	
Pieces	9	19	31	19	17	95	(annual average: 19)

Source: Haley 1977.

The small number of shirts and warm clothes bought by this student is surprising. This stands in sharp contrast to the large number of shoes purchased («I wore a new pair», he reiterated). He acquired more than 20 different pieces, but approximately two-thirds correspond to the typical dress of Castilian Baroque students: breeches, shorts, doublets and gloves. He also spent a not inconsiderable amount on passementerie, cloths of Rouen, fustian, canvas, silk, taffeta, chamois and Dutch linen in various colours, of which black was not predominant.

Although this student did not spend excessively on clothing and his expenses were not regularly spaced, he never neglected his image as a Florentine noble. He gave clothing as gifts, borrowed it, lost it, bought it in shops (even when he travelled to Barcelona) or ordered it from Salamanca tailors and hosiers. A travel case for travelling to Medina del Campo was his only other possession. He purchased barely a dozen pieces of clothing per year, despite his luxurious

<sup>7</sup> See also Amelang (2006).

<sup>8</sup> According to the memoirs of several young military officials during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, having or not having clothes, and their exchange, repair and gifting, was a way to ratify hierarchies, to express value. Often they altered their external appearance, imitating and adapting to the «air» of their superiors, seeking recognition. In this way, they tried to maintain and improve their social status, moulding their identity and showing authority through the symbolism of dress; appearances were a central and vital motif, the reflection of the cultural paradigms of the time.

appearance and his good demeanour, *in the Spanish fashion*, although more colourful: similar to what he would wear in his native Tuscany.

Unlike other young men, who were not so keen on studying, at the age of 22, after fighting with his father and «so as to not die of hunger», in 1568 the student began attending the University of Gaspar Ramos Ortiz in Salamanca (Rodríguez 1999). Soon after his arrival, he bought his diary and rented a house with a classmate, purchasing several items in second-hand shops and from peddlers on the well-stocked street of Serranos. After describing his poor furniture, he spent much more effort on describing his dress. He was punctilious about his personal appearance: shirts, doublets, leather jackets and smocks, breeches and *forros*, socks, slippers, shoes and flip-flops, necks, frills and gloves, bonnets, *loba* and *manteo* for his scholar's uniform (and buttons, thimble, thread and needles to mend them).<sup>9</sup> His dress was plain although he often wore short capes, colours and lace.

Tab. 2. Daily expenses for Gaspar Ramos in Salamanca (1568-1569)

Living expenses ( <i>ordinario</i> )	26%
Clothing expenses	24%
Housing	16%
Medical attention	14%
Studies	12%
Other	8%

Source: Rodríguez 1999.

Those excessive expenses until August 1569 (when he got married) led to a long conflict with his family, forcing him to drop out of university. Tuition fees were 14 ducats per year; the housekeeper charged five reales; he spent 30 maravedies on food every day; the scholar's uniform (22-thread kersey cloth) cost no less than 175 reales; and he also bought a few cheap Latin books. In short, he spent much on eating, clothes and uniforms, but little on books and ink.

Family inventories also provide information about social dress,<sup>10</sup> and they can be a valuable source in terms of quantities, qualities and varieties (shortcomings and luxuries) of clothing and shoes.

<sup>9</sup> From July to September 1568, he spent 7,814 maravedies on clothing (35% of total expenses).

From October 1568 to March 1569: 2,210 mrs. (15%).

From April to August 1569: 1,836 mrs. (30%).

<sup>10</sup> In 1550, Rodrigo de Miranda was curator of Juan Espinosa, a young man from Valladolid; AHPVa, PN, leg. 47.

Clothing	14 pieces	37%	963 mrs.	32%
Shoes	24	63%	612	21%
Varas cloth			1.268	42%
Tailoring costs			140	5%

## 2.1 Guardianship accounts

«*Cuentas que da*», «*de la curaduría de*», «*consta por su libro de gasto*» (Brunet 2012). Clothing was a clear medium for the social projection of youth (Cava 1999). An order issued by the *corregidor* of Salamanca to the guardian of the minor Gaspar Téllez in 1584 certifies the attire of Castilian youths (Lorenzo 2019):

To learn the trade, see to it that he is not naked; give him a coat, two smocks, two pairs of stockings and two galligaskins, a hat and the shoes; two shirts and a doublet, all made of tow; the cloth must be of six reales per vara [cheap]; and cover tailoring expenses; and all that is spent on these clothes discount from the profit brought in by the lad.<sup>11</sup>

At the end of their commission, the expenses paid by the guardians were to be charged to the «minor's guardianship accounts». Their analysis reveals the typical attire of youths and the consumption of new clothes by families. The same pieces of clothing feature time and time again. It was typical for special expenses to be made on new clothes and tailoring at Christmas time. The monthly or annual clothing expenses of these Castilian youths, many of whom came from the countryside, demonstrate that the dissemination of new fashions was not limited to the elite.

The detailed listing of clothing and shoes in these accounts allows us to reconstruct the basic elements of the urban dress of male and female youths. Sometimes, various pieces were bought at the same time, and on other occasions these purchases were spaced out throughout the year. Toddlers were dressed in *ropillas*, small doublets, *lavaderos*, muffs and nappies; young men wore a hat and coat; and girls wore shawls, long cloaks, *sayuelos* and robes. Coarse cloths were used for undergarments, breeches and socks. Linen canvases were used for shirts, baggy trousers, handkerchiefs and head cloths. The most costly fabrics –taffeta, satin, silk and laced velvets– in yellow, purple, green, brown or blue, were used for hats and sleeves, adorning short capes. Necks from Holland and Milan coexisted with skirts of Courtray, Rouen and Brittany cloth. In many cases, the pieces purchased were new, and tailoring expenses had to be added, but even the most affluent orphans often resorted to mending and reusing their parents' old clothing: the most common of such operations were the refurbishment of waistbands, legs and doublets, adding patches and changing buttons. Most of these youths had shoes, often up to fourteen pairs per year; these were not necessarily simple, of a bad quality or in need of having their soles replaced.

## 2.2 Female dowries and *almonedas* of inventoried property

Some of the most widely used documentary sources to understand the living standards and evolution of demand in pre-industrial Spain are payment letters

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<sup>11</sup> Archivo Histórico Provincial de Salamanca (AHPSa), PN, leg. 3482, f. 513; 1588.

associated with dowries, the post-mortem inventory of family possessions and the public sale in the *almoneda* of heirlooms.

In brief, the main issue with using data from dowries is that they generally correspond to the trousseaus from the preceding generation: legally understood as an advance of their will, a trousseau meant daughters inherited many of the elements that entered the new family's trousseau from their mothers or as gifts from other relatives (Dávila 2005). This was one of the peaks of consumption in the life-cycle, but on many occasions the number of pieces consigned in these records is not only small but also largely comprises «used», «very old» or «broken» items, which makes it more difficult to infer how accessible the market was for these households (indeed, the replacement of old and worn clothing seems to have been fairly uncommon).

On the other hand, establishing when the items that were left at the end of the life cycle (Duraes 2018), when households often disaggregated, had entered the household is also difficult, not least because many possessions were intentionally concealed. In addition, the system followed in interior Castile saw the items valued by the appropriate guild master, but no details were given concerning the room in which these items were kept. Therefore, items and pieces of clothing were listed more than once and not counted systematically, which is unsurprising for a society in which the pressure of consumerism was less acutely felt.

However, the *almoneda* (García M. 2013, 235-60) records present a more accurate picture of the auction of second-hand books, including starting and final prices. The possessions of residents of small rural towns were auctioned outside the morgue or in the public square, as set by ancestral custom; items were shown and their quality and novelty proclaimed, and these (frequent) events often became impromptu fairs, where the residents could buy what they needed or simply find a bargain.

In any case, these records can provide complementary information about juvenile attire among the popular classes, which have otherwise left few traces in the record.

### 3. Covering the everyday needs of minors

Although clothing expenses of different Castilian youths varied widely, the amount that guardians spent on this was on average a substantial 25% of total expenses. Apart from possible biases in the record (embezzlement) and bad management, guardians always tried to keep the orphans decently dressed although they gave priority to food, healthcare, training and other education expenses.

Tab. 3. Percentage of guardianship expenses for Castilian orphan minors

20 cases	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Maravedies
A 1547-96	39.8	35.0		2.8	3.6		2.5	16.3	56,617
1547-53 a	32.3	61.8		1.0	3.6			1.4	49,123
b	29.1	63.9	0.1	0.4	5.5			1.1	46,707
c 1565-68	30.0	51.0	7.0	4.0	7.0		1.0		35,857
d 1587-94	53.2	12.7		3.2			2.2	28.7	205,118
e 1583-90	19.4	80.6							15,385
f 1589-96	78.2	5.7		6.6	8.6			0.8	82,817
g 1580-83	28.6	70.1					0.8	0.5	10,421
1593-95 h	12.8	81.7			5.6				22,897
i	17.6	75.9		6.5					17,243
j 1586-96	70.8			7.2	4.3	14.2	0.2	3.2	52,627
k 1557-61	53.9			10.5		19.1	1.6	14.9	12,655
B 1568	24.0	26.0	16.0	14.0	12.0			8.0	
C 1540-48	24.8	22.4		1.3	15.5		4.0	32.0	837,048
D 1565-1627	5.0	6.0		1.0	1.0			87.0	
E 1619	30.0	32.0		5.0			33.0		34,340
F 1620	9.0	75.0		0.5	2.0			13.5	35,493
G 1715	23.3	70.0			6.7				22,440

1. Clothing. 2. Food. 3. Housing (housekeepers/servants). 4. Healthcare. 5. Studies. 6. Practical training. 7. Leisure/Trips. 8. Administration.

A. Salamanca city and province (average of 11 guardianships): a and b. Brothers Juan Maldonado and Pedro Bonal; c. Diego Guzmán; d. Sebastián de Olivares; e. Nicolasa Delgado; f. Francisco Rodríguez; g. Ana García, of Villamayor; h and i. Brothers Pedro and Francisca Emperador; j. Juan de San Vicente; k. Andrés Flórez.

B. Ramos Ortiz, of Salamanca city; C. Hernando Daza, of Medina del Campo city; D. Barromás village, Ávila (average of four guardianships); E. Juan Sarmiento, of Bocigas village, Valladolid; F. Ana García, Soria city; G. Francisco Ustáriz, Navarra province.

Sources: AHPsA and AHPVa, PN, several bundles.

Other examples from Salamanca include: the account issued by the administrator of the late Ana García, Lorenzo Crespo (1580-1583);<sup>12</sup> the accounts

<sup>12</sup> AHPsA, PN, leg. 5084. He issues this document along with Marcos de Palacios, brother-in-law of the minor and husband of Isabel García, daughter of Juan García and sister of the deceased; resident in Villamayor village, Salamanca.

Accounts: 434 *maravedies* for cloth for a skirt; 68 mrs. for a shawl; 3 reales for a shirt bought in the first year of the guardianship; 51 mrs. for a pair of breeches and a pair of shoes; 34 mrs. for a pair of shoes (first year); 5 rs. for a short cloak; 4 rs. for a shirt; 1 rs. for a pair of shoes; 2 rs. for two pairs of shoes; 10 mrs. for tailoring; 5 rs. for a shirt in 1580; 40 mrs. for a pair of shoes; 9.5 rs. for a skirt the

given by Simón Delgado of his guardianship of his sister Nicolasa Delgado (from February 1580, when their father died, to 1590);<sup>13</sup> and the invoices submitted by Roque Ledesma, a clothes' merchant who had died during his guardianship, for his tutorship of minors Pedro Emperador and Francisca García, residents of Torresmenudas (1593-1595).<sup>14</sup>

These documents add little more to the record of expenses yielded by these 20 guardianships, mostly concerning minors from Salamanca and Valladolid in the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but also later, up to 1715 (Tab. 3). They do, however, allow us to pursue several interesting fields of enquiry – and to compare this evidence with coetaneous European data – concerning the demands of Castilian youths (for example, types of shoes and clothing used, and the annual distribution of expenses) in another ten or so similar documents from approximately the same period (one isolated example is much later, and comes from the 1760s). The amounts vary little, but these documents are valuable in that they illustrate material culture and consumption (from the market to the household) in the day-to-day lives of these youths. Let us examine this in detail.

The *dación de la cuenta de la tutela de Josefa Fernández Recalde*<sup>15</sup> is of enormous interest because it presents a very detailed snapshot of the period.

Clothing expenses barely amounted to 746 rs. (just over 5% of the total). On average, three new pieces were purchased per year, which always included a skirt and a shirt (and sometimes doublets, vests and aprons). By the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, when consumerism was much more acute, the 30 pieces bought for Josefa bear witness to the plainness of female dress in the Castilian countryside. This number also included several pieces of headdress and abundant shirts.

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year she died; 1 rs. for a shawl; 5 rs. for another skirt in 1580; 340 mrs. for two shirts in the second year; 85 mrs. for a black shawl; 68 mrs. for two pairs of shoes (second year); 3 rs. for two pairs of shoes when she was with her uncle; 60 mrs. for a shawl when she was with her uncle; 5 rs. for a shirt when she was living with her uncle, on Saint Michael's day, September 1581; 51 mrs. for a pair of shoes when she was with her uncle for the wine harvest of 1581; 60 mrs. for a pair of shoes when she was with her uncle; 60 mrs. for a pair of shoes for Christmas; 4 rs. for a shirt.

<sup>13</sup> AHPSa, PN, leg. 2954. Both parts appointed an accountant, with Nicolasa being represented by her husband, Diego del Águila, a clerk in Medina del Campo city, where they all resided.

<sup>14</sup> AHPSa, PN, leg. 4312, ff. 1202-1220. The accounts were examined by Juan de Silva, silversmith, by that time the minors' guardian, and requested from García, widow of Roque Ledesma (who was also Juan's relative).

Accounts: 12 rs. for 18 nappies, three shirts, four towels and a large shawl for the nights; 6 rs. for a new orange *frisa* cloak; 20 mrs. for a pair of breeches; 1.5 rs. for a pair of knitted sleeves; 1.5 rs. for a pair of breeches and a pair of shoes; 2 rs. for a pair of tights; 6 rs. for a little fur-lined tunic; 20 mrs. for a pair of shoes; 42 mrs. for a pair of breeches and a pair of shoes; 4 rs. for a night cover for swaddling; 4 rs. for a small doublet; 4 rs. for a new cloak; 12 rs. for four shirts; 4 rs. for a headboard for the cot; (1595) 16 rs. for pair of baggy trousers and a small tunic; 14 rs. for a tunic.

<sup>15</sup> Lumbrales village, Salamanca. He hands Pascual Arroyo and his wife Josefa Fernández Recalde the accounts for the eleven years in which Juan Fernández Recalde, her uncle, acted as her guardian; Archivo de la Real Chancillería de Valladolid (ARChVa), *Pleitos Civiles* (PC), Pérez Alonso, olvidados, caja 397,1; «Libro de cuentas (1757-1567); memoria de lo que voy dando a mi sobrina de los bienes que me entregaron».



Tab. 4a. **Clothing items (*varas* of cloth/canvas and tailoring) bought by a guardian for his niece**

	Total	Skirts	Doublets	<i>Frisas</i>	Vests	Aprons	Capes	Shirts
1757	4	1	1	1		1		
1759	3	1	1	1				
1760	2	1						1
1761	2		1					1
1762	3	1			1			1
1763	4	1		1		1		1
1764	2							2
1765	6	1	1	1			1	2
1766–67	4	2			1			1
In 11 years	30	8	4	4	2	2	1	9

Tab. 4b. **Shoes (pairs) for Josefa**

	Total Pairs Shoes	Bought (54)	Made (16)	Buckles (3)
1757	4	4		
1758	6	4	2	1
1759	7	6	1	1
1760	9	6	3	
1761	5	5		
1762	5	5		
1763	5	4	1	
1764	6	5	1	
1765	9	6	3	1
1766	9	5	4	
1767	5	4	1	

Tab. 4c. **Monthly distribution of expenses on shoes (70 pairs)**

Christmas and New Year	10	17%
Easter	17	28%
Corpus	10	17%
Santiago	3	
Saint Mary of August	7	12%
All Saints	6	10%
February – September – October	5	
Local festivities	2	

Source: ARChVa, *Pleitos Civiles*, bundle 397,1.

In contrast, the accounts indicate that five pairs of shoes were bought, and nearly two more made to suit, every year on average, and in some years this increased to as many as nine pairs, including their replacement buckles. The

amount spent on footwear<sup>16</sup> amounted to a considerable 597 reales (4%). Shoes were always bought on special occasions, such as Easter, Corpus Christi, Christmas and New Year (as well as mid-August and All Saints). In summary, she got plenty of shoes and shirts, along with lower garments and headdresses.

The *cuentas tomadas por los guardians* of *Barromán* in 1565–1627<sup>17</sup> certify that most expenses went on food (and teachers and/or apothecaries) rather than on their poor garments. The average amount spent on clothing was a meagre 5%, but in some cases this amount is considerably higher, up to 24%, 19% and 17% (the minimum is 4%). In one example, expenses associated with the minor María Martín, married to Juan García, amounted to 17,503 maravedies for 1605, of which a substantial 6,568 mrs. (38%) went on 23 pieces of clothing:

Tab. 5. Pieces and prices of clothing went for María Martín (1605)

Shirts	4	317 maravedies	
Skirts	4	519	
Overskirt	2	432	
Hoods	1	44	
Headdresses	4	538	
Shawls	2	291	
Breeches	2	459	
Stoles	1	544	
Shoes (pairs)	3	330	(plus ten <i>varas</i> of <i>pardillo</i> ): 3,094 mrs.

Source: ARChVa, *Protocolos y Padrones*, bundle 24,1.

Guardianships in Salamanca are at the heart of this study. For instance, Diego Flores, the guardian of Pedro Bonal and Juan Maldonado, underage brothers, requested accounts for 1547–53 from their tutor Antonio Ramírez.<sup>18</sup> Clothing expenses were in the region of 30% of the total, and both brothers were more or less treated equally.

The accounts for Juan Maldonado indicate expenses of 49,123 maravedies, 15,201 mrs. more than for his brother.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Affordable prices: 8, 10 and 11 reales («a pair of white shoes», September 1766, 12 rs.). «Shoes made by Juan Saldaña»; «a pair of shoes made by Remigio and another pair by Saldaña».

<sup>17</sup> ARChVa, *Protocolos y Padrones*, caja 24,1; Arévalo city; 1565–1627 (during the 16<sup>th</sup> century, 108 examples (78%) and 30 during the 17<sup>th</sup> century (22%)). The amounts vary widely, from 400,000 to 7,000 maravedies; only 8% contain detailed information about clothing.

<sup>18</sup> AHPSa, PN, leg. 3167; 1547–53. Antonio Ramírez, the tutor, submitted the accounts in March 1554.

<sup>19</sup> Tanning, tailoring, *varas* cloth; lining; laces; pins and accessories. 1550. A cloth cassock, 9.5 rs. 1551. Cape, smock and breeches (6 *varas* of cloth from Piedrahita, at 7 rs. per vara): 1,423 mrs.

Tab. 6. Accounts for the minor Juan Maldonado (1547-1553)

Pieces	1547	1548	1549	1550	1551	1552	1553	Total	
		1	2		1	1	1	6	
Tailored Smocks	1		1	1	1	1	1	6	
Doublets	1		3	1	1	1	1	8	
Breeches/half breeches		2	2	2	2	2	2	12	
Shirts				1				1	
Cassocks							1	1	
Capers					1			1	
Hats							1	1	
Shoes / boots (pairs)		4	8	6	7	6	9	40	annual average: 6
Pieces	2	7	16	11	13	11	16	76	monthly average: 1
Maravedies	180	991	1,727	1,119	2,260	1,854	3,794	11,925	

Source: AHPsA, PN, bundle 3167.

«What I, Antonio Ramírez, tutor of Pedro Bonal, have spent between 24 September 1547 and the day they left my household, giving them all that they needed, clothing, shoes, school and education, books, paper and other trifles».<sup>20</sup>

Tab. 7. Accounts for the minor Pedro Bonal (1547-1553)

Pieces	1547	1548	1549	1550	1551	1552	1553	Total	
Tailored Smocks		1	2	1	1	1		6	
Doublets	1		1	1	1		1	5	
Breeches/half breeches	1		2	1	1		1	6	
Shirts		2	2	4	2	2	1	13	
Capes						1		1	
Cloaks					1			1	
Shoes (pairs)	1	4	8	7	6	5	4	35	annual average: 5
Pieces	3	7	15	14	12	9	7	67	monthly average: 1
Maravedies	362	895	1,107	1,445	2,297	3,178	1,125	10,409	

Source: AHPsA, PN, bundle 3167.

<sup>20</sup> 1550. Breeches and matching smock: half a ducat.

1551. For cloaks, smocks and breeches for him and his brother: 11.5 *varas* of Piedrahita cloth: 1.423 mrs. went for him; preparing the cloth for tailoring (2 rs.) and the lining (3 rs.).

1552. For a smock and a 20-thread cape, 4 *varas* at 16 rs.: 240 mrs.; lining for the smock, 1.5 of *friseta*: 90 mrs.; preparation of the cloth: 30 mrs.; 3 rs. for the tailoring of smock and cape.

A comparison of both accounts reveals that canvas shirts were considered a basic purchase. The tutor spent similar amounts on both brothers (1,700-1,500 mrs. over the year), but in one case these expenses were more evenly distributed over the years, whereas in the case of Pedro the expenses clearly peaked in 1549-1550. Their «shopping baskets» were also similar, comprising the typical items for the period: smock, doublet and breeches, which were annually replaced, plus two warm capes. These pieces were purchased from local tailors, at a rate of one piece per month. Again, not an excessive number of pieces of clothing, but five pairs of shoes. With these ten/eleven pieces, these two lads were much better attired than the girls seen above; the expenses were well controlled by attentive guardians, who made an effort to keep their charges well clothed.

We must point out the considerable difference in the price of shoes in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, which ranges from 22 to 46 mrs.: the most common price was 34 (ten pairs), and the most expensive 40 (nine pairs). Many pairs fetched prices of 26, 28, 30 or 35 mrs. (50% were in the 30s, 30% in the 20s, and 20% in the most expensive bracket, the 40s). However, by the 1590s the prices had increased substantially: 24 pairs fetched prices of 61 mrs. each, three pairs 130 and 140 mrs., nine pairs 153 mrs., two pairs 161 mrs., two pairs 170 mrs., two pairs 182 mrs. and seven pairs 187 mrs.<sup>21</sup>

The accounts of the guardianship of Sebastián de Olivares for 1587-94 are also very systematic;<sup>22</sup> interesting additional information can be extracted from the following example (Tab. 8).

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<sup>21</sup> Value of the work of Sebastián de Olivares: pairs of shoes: two at 136 mrs., one at 146 mrs., six at 153 mrs., two at 161 mrs., five at 170 mrs., one at 182 mrs., one at 183 mrs. and three at 187 mrs. Mending four pairs cost 24 mrs., and the triple mending of boots cost 510 mrs.

<sup>22</sup> AHPSa, PN, leg. 5266; 1595. Accounts taken from Antonio de Villarroel during his guardianship of Sebastián de Olivares (orphan), both of whom were residents in the city of Salamanca. Amount: 544,501 maravedies. Expenses: 499,910 mrs. Alcance contra el curador: 44,591 mrs.

1588. Five *varas* of 24-thread cloth for clothing for the minor (5,542 mrs. in total), with three dozen buttons; double-soled shoes: 153 mrs.; mending of two Holland necks.

1589. Outfit of black *raja* from Segovia: with buttons, hat (12 rs.), cuffs, necks, closed cordovan boots «bought to accompany the dean to Zamora» (15, waistband and spurs (9,439 mrs.).

1590. *Varas* of 22-tread cloth from Segovia for tunic and short cape (3,978 mrs.); *chamelote* (2,210 mrs.); tailoring (510); linings (229); silk (34); passementerie (108); taffeta (94 mrs.); *rizo* (7 rs.).

1591-1592. 220 rs. paid for a dress to join that military company. «After Sebastián Olivares came back from the war, the court ordered his guardian to give him 80 ducs of his estate for dressing, shirt, sword and other things that he needed».

1594. «As admitted by Olivares himself»: 2,210 mrs. of black *chamelote* for *sevillanos*.

Tab. 8. Accounts for the minor Sebastián de Olivares (1587-1594)

Pieces	1588	1589	1590	1591	1592	1593	1594	Total	
Doublets	1		1			1	1	4	
Breeches/half breeches	1	1	2					4	
Stockings and tights/ <i>ligas</i>	3	2	2			2	1	10	
Shirts	2	2	1			4		9	
<i>Bebederos</i>		1	1			1		3	
Handkerchiefs	1							1	
Dresses	1	1					1	3	
Short Capes	1	1	1			1	1	5	
Galligaskins	2		1					3	
Tunics	1						1	2	
Undergarments	1	1	1			1	1	5	
Hats	2	2	1			1	2	8	
Necks/Cuffs	2	4	6				3	15	
Ruffs							2	2	
Sleeves						1	2	3	
Military uniform				1	1			2	
Boots	1	1						2	
Shoes (pairs)	3	7	6			2	7	25	
Pieces	22	23	23	1	1	14	22	106	monthly average: 2
Maravedies	12,345	18,441	11,081	7,480	---	11,702	17,160	78,209	

Source: AHPsA, PN, bundle 5266.

Sebastián's attire displays the need to present an urban appearance, as indicated by the presence of ruffs and cuffs in the accounts, as well as stockings and boots. Hats and military uniforms feature in all years except for two, demonstrating that his personal appearance was always carefully maintained.

Also very valuable is the full<sup>23</sup> «account that Juan Bautista Rodríguez makes of his expenses on behalf of Rodrigo de Monroy, guardian of the minor Diego Guzmán», son of the *comendador* don Gonzalo del Aguila, dated to June 1568.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> The total expenses: 35,827 maravedies.

<b>September–December 1565</b>	<b>3,907 maravedies</b>	
Dress	1,051	(27%)
Food	2,640	
Schooling	178	
Apothecary	18	
Leisure	20	
<b>1566</b>	<b>13,616 maravedies</b>	
Dress	4,220	(31%) (add buttons to smock; mend old breeches; cloth-canvas)
Food	7,920	(30 ducats per year)
Schooling	1,117	(2 reales per month)
Apothecary	44	
Leisure	245	

Tab. 9. Accounts for the minor Diego Guzmán (1565-1567)

Pieces	1565	1566	1567	Total	
Capes and Smocks (tailoring)	1	2	2	5	
Doublets		2	3	5	
Breeches/half breeches	2	5	12	19	
Stocking an Tights		3	3	6	
Shirts		3		3	
Hats		4	4	8	
Gloves	1	1		2	
Belts		2	2	4	
Shoes	3	8	15	26	
Pieces	7	30	41	78	monthly average: 3

Source: AHPsA, PN, bundle 2943.

Both brothers averaged one new garment per month overall, but their figures tended to converge: Sebastián got two per month for seven years (106 in total), and Diego three per month across 28 months (78 in total). This resulted in good profits for hosiers and cobblers; old pieces were not necessarily replaced but were also mended. Almost a third of the expenses of their guardianship went on clothing, but this did not mean that other expenses were neglected (apothecaries, domestic service, schooling, leisure). In terms of dress, they had at least two new outfits comprising cape, smock and doublet per year.

Let us consider one final account that reflects these guardianship expenses before presenting a global analysis.

This record includes male<sup>25</sup> and female fashion (sometimes the girls' garments are more numerous, but overall the boys have double the pieces): hats or

<b>1567</b>	<b>18,304 maravedies</b>	
Dress	5,402	(30%)
Food	7,920	
Schooling	920	
Apothecary	1,319	(barber)
Leisure	116	
Housekeepers / servants	2,627	(Dieguillo)

<sup>24</sup> AHPsA, PN, leg. 2943; 1565-68.

<sup>25</sup> AHPsA, PN, leg. 5268, ff. 1309-1336; Antonio de Santillana, tutor of Juan de San Vicente.

Expense: 442 mrs. for a doublet and a pair of breeches when he arrived to his household; 1,992 mrs. for an outfit of short cape, tunic and cloth breeches; 782 mrs. for a tunic and galligaskins; 408 mrs. for a doublet and canvas baggy trousers; 1,122 mrs. for a tunic and mixed-cloth green galligaskins.

1588-94: 200 rs. for shoes in the first seven years, «although due to illness in the first year, 24 rs. are taken off, 176 rs. remaining». During these same years, he bought new hats and as many half breeches «as needed» (three pairs of half breeches per year, amounting to 8 rs. per year, and two hats per year, at 6 rs. each); 2,108 mrs. on shirts, at a rate of two shirts during each of the seven years, at 6 rs. each (both small and large) 147 rs. (3,132 mrs.); 13 rs. when he left prison in shoes and half breeches; 15 rs. for a doublet on Midsummer Eve, 1594; 5 ducats for a tunic and a pair of galligaskins of brown cloth; 18 rs. for hat, half breeches and shoes; 8 rs. to rescue a pawned tunic kept by a surgeon.

headdresses, breeches or tunics, short capes or cloaks, and undergarments and doublets feature for both boys and girls. The variety in terminology expresses the still-growing Castilian style, which, however, soon began to wane and was no longer able to mark European fashions, being overtaken by French fashion between approximately 1640 and well into the 1700s.

Tab. 10. **Other different pieces and minors**

	Nicolasa	Ana	Pedro (brother i)	Francisca	Juan	Total
Pieces	(e) 1583-90	(g) 1580-83	(h) 1593-1595	(i) 1593-95	(j) 1586-1596	
Skirts/Smocks	4	1				5
Smocks/ <i>Sayuelos</i>		2				2
Large Cloaks	1		2	1		4
Doublets/small doublets	4		1	1	6	12
Breeches/half breeches	1		1	1	24	27
Shirts	3	7	7	4	17	38
Cloaks	2					2
<i>Ropas</i>	2		3			5
Tunics					7	7
Bodices	1					1
Farthingales	1					1
Headcloths	8					8
Shawls		3	1			4
Bonets	1					1
<i>Bebederos</i>	1		4			5
Sleeves			1			1
Baggy Trousers			1	1	2	4
Full Outfit					2	2
Short Capes				1	3	4
Undergarments		1	3	1	2	7
Galligaskins				1	7	8
Hats				1	16	17
Necks/Cuffs	1			1	2	4
<i>Coletos</i>					1	1
Sleeves	2				1	3
Mules	3					3
Clogs	2					2
Boots/ankle boots/ <i>Botillas</i>	3				1	4
Shoes (pairs)	1	12	3	5	20	41
Pieces: monthly average: 2	41	26	27	18	111	223

Sources: AHPSa, PN, several bundles.

Tab. 11a. **Expense distribution in guardianship accounts, Salamanca, 16<sup>th</sup> century**

23 cases	Tutors	Curators
Food	16%	30%
Dress/Shoes	14%	19%
Schooling	2%	1%
Apothecary	1%	3%
Debts	1%	13%
Bureaucratic fees	12%	4%
Estate management	17%	5%
Legal costs	11%	2%
Others	26%	23%
Investment	33%	53%
Management	41%	24%
Others	26%	23%

Tab. 11b. **Supervision expenses, Salamanca (1547-1596). 11 cases**

Dress (including white linen)	39.8%
Food	35.0%
Schooling/apprenticeship	3.5%
Apothecary	2.8%
Leisure/Trips	2.5%
Management	16.3%
Annual average	19,892 reales
Annual average on dress	7,920
Personal average	56,617
Personal average on dress	22,542

Tab. 11c. **Clothing (pieces recorded). Personal average: 35 pieces**

	Male (79.1%)	Female (20.9%)	
Upper Garments	20.6%	15.8%	
Lower Garments	15.1%	14.8%	
Accessories	16.0%	12.2%	
Shirts	11.2%	14.3%	
Shoes	37.1%	18.5%	(265 pairs for boys, 35 for girls)
Bed linen	--	24.4%	

Sources: AHPSa, PN, several bundles.

The distribution of expenses (Tab. 3 and 11a, 11b and 11c) and the importance attached to each concept is revealing, especially when the analysis includes an examination of guardianships and supervision (the former being less prone to spending on



clothing). Although studies, housing, apprenticeships, healthcare and travelling were considered secondary, clothing, along with the administration of the minors' inherited estates and money, was considered important (including bed linen, which was considered a key female need). Clothing is the largest expense item in four of the accounts examined, in one case amounting to as much as 78% of the total budget. Although dress-related expenses could reach 40% of the budget, this was rare, and, in most cases, notable deficiencies can be attested in the construction of a sufficient wardrobe; we must not forget that a significant proportion of dress expenses was spent on shoes.

#### 4. Conclusions for the debate

Guardianship accounts allow us to analyse material culture (which was rather basic for the lower and rural classes). Although it is clear more examples need to be examined, we can still suggest consumption among *Ancien Régime* youth seems stagnant, despite this being a period in the life cycle in which material needs are many. There was growth in some areas, but the dissemination of novelties was uneven, a reflection of the ideological dispute between modernity and critical attitudes towards luxury and vanity, and the corresponding defence of rusticity.

Notable differences existed between classes, genders and periods; the privileged groups were more likely to follow new fashions, as orphans rarely inherited enough means to actively join the semi-perishable goods market. Their estates, however, were sufficiently substantial to keep textile consumption at dynamic levels (Welch 2009).<sup>26</sup>

Badly shod (few expensive shoes are attested, and many sole replacements) despite their mobility, the quality of their garments depended on the care of their guardians, their gender, their context (rural or urban) and their professional projection (academic or agricultural) (García M. 2019b).

Once we go beyond De Vries' *industrious revolution* (2009) gaze, changes in consumer behaviour are attested in interior Castile prior to 1850, as reflected in guardianship accounts, dowries, *almonedas* accounts and household inventories carried out after the death of testators. Additional information may be extracted from legal texts, works that describe traditional customs and Enlightened memoranda (Bartolomé 2012). This evidence and the methods used to examine it indicate that innovation played little role in the dress of the popular classes, and that each social class had a characteristic approach to the distribution of expenses depending on their aesthetic aspirations, the conditions of the market (generally, the prices recorded were not high) and the interplay of contradictory interests of public promotion. This also reflects traditional commercial, cultural and guild relations, which are expressed in the items on offer at fairs and in retail shops. We must keep these salient points in mind in order to compare the evolution of these apparently rigid consumption patterns with those of north-western and Mediterranean Europe.

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<sup>26</sup> A study of material and visual culture of consumption in Renaissance Italy that follows the track of buying: lively experiences of civilization («behind the apparent routine of inspecting the goods, selecting, bargaining, and organising deliveries, there was a multi-faceted game of deep-rooted beliefs; the everyday nature of the connections considerably strengthened the social order»).

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*Fashion, emulation and social classes in late medieval Valencia.  
Exploring textile consumption through probate inventories*

## 1. Introduction

The last centuries of the Later Middle Ages represented a period of profound transformations in personal dress. The huge variety of garments of complex designs that developed in the epoch represented a novelty as compared to immediate prior centuries, to the extent that some historians have suggested that the origins of fashion itself should be located in the late medieval period (Heller 2010, 2007). Similarly, other scholars have stressed the innovations and dynamism showed by late Medieval clothing with notorious terms, such as those of ‘dress revolution’ (Piponnier 1989; Blanc 1997) and ‘fashion revolution’ (Koenig 1991; Scott 2007). This phenomenon, in turn, can be contextualised within the wider ‘consumer revolution’ that included not only textiles, but also other material objects and possessions that emerged or spread across a number of late medieval households (Petrowiste 2018; Kowaleski 2006; Dyer 2005).

Identifying the emergence, proliferation and sometimes disappearance of certain fashions proves to be an extremely complex matter to deal with. Some cloths appeared in the late medieval period and remained in use for centuries, well into the early modern period, while others had a very short existence. Likewise, particular garments were only present among the houses of the rich, while others spread enough to be worn by urban workers and peasants. The reasons for the expansion of certain fashions are no less difficult to establish. Historians have explained this many times as an expression of social emulation, that is, the imitation of the consumption patterns of elites, since it seems evident that kings, courts, and townspeople possessions were desired by the rest of society, which could lead and inspired the consumer behaviour of the latter (Kowaleski 2006, Dyer 2005). The proliferation of sumptuary laws and criticisms of contemporary clergymen to these realities also supports the idea that emulative attitudes existed and were widely present in late medieval society (Muzzarelli 2003). In Iberia and, more specifically, in the kingdom of Valencia, a realm located in the east of the peninsula that was part of the Crown of Aragon, similar processes have been detected in the last years, with a general rise in living standards and consumption that lead altogether to changing textile fashions as well as emulative attitudes (Furió 2009; 2011; García Marsilla 2014; 2015; Almenar Fernández 2018; 2020. Almenar Fernández and Belenguer González 2020).

The purpose of this work is to explore textile consumption among various social classes so as to identify the origins, spread and consolidation or extinction of particular textile fashions. We turn to a sample of 83 probate inventories from the late medieval kingdom of Valencia, particularly, of the city of Valencia and its surrounding countryside. The sources will allow to explore the garments of men and women from various social classes, with a wide range of details that prove excellent for tracking the diffusion of fashions across society. Particular attention will be paid to process of trickle-down or 'downward' transmission of consumption patterns, from the richer to the poorer, as well as from townspeople to peasants. Independent, genuine fashions of particular social classes, with no evident inspiration in the habits of consumption of other groups, will also be dealt with, as well as 'bubble-up' or 'upwards' transmissions, from the poorer to the richer.

Part one presents the kingdom of Valencia and its two selected areas for analysis, as well as Valencian inventories and their ability to show the textile possessions of medieval society. Part two deals with temporary and long-lasting textile fashions, with particular attention to its origins and diffusion across society. Part three focus on a major novelty that came to stay, the emergence of gender-specific cloths, as a global reality across all social strata. Finally, part four approaches the proliferation of fashions of higher complexity, like those in colours, cloth materials, styles, linings and finishes, which developed transversally across various garments and often independently from them.

## **2. Clothing in late medieval Valencian inventories**

The conquest led by the kings of Aragon in the mid-thirteenth century of the Eastern territories of Al-Andalus, the name with which Muslims referred to Iberia, gave birth to the creation of a brand-new political entity, the kingdom of Valencia. The realm was included as part of the set of territories under the authority of the kings, known as the Crown of Aragon, of which the kingdom of Aragon, the principality of Catalonia and the Balearic Islands were part too. The kingdom of Valencia rapidly became a burgeoning economy in the context of the North-western Mediterranean, as a result of an important presence of towns – either inherited from the Muslim period or created by the Christian conquerors –, of a highly market-orientated agriculture, and of a strategic position in international trade networks.

The realm was named after its capital, the city of Valencia, a vibrant hub where nobles, notaries, clergymen, merchants, students, artists, writers, craftsmen, labourers, slaves, peasants and a number of people in general gathered and created a dynamic urban society. All these individuals came originally and predominantly from Catalonia and Aragon, the place of origin of the Christian conquerors, but the realm would soon attract migrants from all around the Christendom. In fact, the constant and uninterrupted arrival of migrants prompted the city of Valencia to experience a continuous population growth during the late medieval period. The mortality caused by the Black Death (1348) was rapidly offset by this constant flow of outsiders, what helped improving the relevance of the city of Valencia in Iberia.

By 1510 the capital hosted at least 10,000 hearths, implying that not only had it become the largest town of the Crown of Aragon, but also of Iberia.

The economic prosperity of this large town was also supported by its rural hinterland, whose peasants found opportunities for prospering by supplying the city, and also benefited from the permanent urban markets. The surrounding areas of the city of Valencia, historically called the *horta* – the ‘irrigated land’, due to the fact that this was the system employed for cultivation that largely defined the landscape –, was inhabited by some 1,200 hearths distributed in several villages, as well as in some scattered, isolated farmsteads (Furió 2012). All these peasants interacted with the capital of the realm in a number of ways almost as an everyday practice, attending urban markets to sell their products and making businesses, as well as to purchase what they might need, from foodstuffs to everyday products for their houses.

The city of Valencia and its rural hinterland represent thus an ideal case study to explore the spread of textile fashions. Both populations constituted separate societies in essence: an urban one and a rural one – even if a highly ‘urbanised’ rural one –, that is, two groups of consumers with different lifestyles, residences and economic resources. At the same time, nevertheless, both of them were close enough and interacted frequently with each other, thereby encouraging the transmission of consumption patterns. These can be well studied thanks to the abundance of probate inventories in the late medieval notarial records preserved in the archives of the city of Valencia. These sources are well-known in this field of historical research and have proved to be much useful for a quantitative approach to household consumption, in particular for the early modern period (Overton et al. 2014). Although far less studied in this way, late medieval probate inventories are significantly abundant in North-western Mediterranean archives since the thirteenth century, namely within these notarial sources, providing an exhaustive description of the goods and properties that belonged to deceased individuals (Almenar Fernández 2017; 2018; Barceló 1994; Bolòs and Sánchez-Boira 2014; Besc 2014; García-Oliver 2006).

The reasons for the making of an inventory could vary from place to place depending on local legislation but, in general terms, common circumstances led to the ordering of an inventory in the Crown of Aragon, as well as in other locations of this part of the continent. Inventories were generally ordered by individuals who were about to receive an inheritance with the aim of avoiding potential legal disputes, as well as to find out its general state, very often to consider the potential burden of debts before accepting or refusing it. When the heir was a minor, besides, a tutor was needed to receive the inheritance on his or her behalf and to manage it until the age of majority. In that case an inventory was forced by law, without which the tutorship could not begin (Almenar Fernández 2017, 541-3). Both circumstances have led to a huge abundance of these documents in Valencian archives. The sources are known for being precise and exhaustive in the recording of the possessions of the deceased. As a result, they include all types of properties, whether movables or real estates, thereby describing houses, lands, animals and workshops, as well as all imaginable objects, like furnishings, bedlinen, tableware, cooking equipment, books, lightning items, non-perishable foodstuffs, and personal

dress. Because of their legal usefulness, all members of society seem to have turned to the practice of ordering an inventory before notaries if in need, and consequently, it is possible to find inventories of all echelons of societies, from nobles to peasants (Almenar Fernández 2017, 551-9).

In recent decades, important scholarship has developed assessing the methodological limits of probate inventories when exploring consumption quantitatively, although essentially for the early modern period and Northern-European areas. Some common biases noted are, for a start, the possible neglect of low value goods, as well as the fact that those deceased recorded tend to have belonged to the wealthiest strata of each social sector (Clark 2010. See also Clark 2007, 40-70). Yet, the impression Valencian inventories provide really is of a profound thoroughness when describing objects, including those in pawn, those that were sold immediately after the death of their owner but before the arrival of the notary, and even those described as 'old', 'of low value', 'rotten' and so on. On the other hand, even if a certain wealth bias is present in the deceased covered by inventories, it is crucial to remember some of these sources were forced by law irrespective of the goods possessed by the deceased. Besides, ordering an inventory before a notary was an affordable practice, whose price was set by the constitutional law of the kingdom (*Furs*) at a low level. This all leads to the impression that, ultimately, everyone with the will or need of ordering an inventory would have done it in late medieval Valencia, just as it very much would have happened in other areas of the Crown of Aragon (Almenar Fernández 2017, 556-8).

The extraordinary descriptiveness with which notaries wrote down the garments of the deceased are a further strength that must be emphasized. When it comes to textiles, an ordinary Valencian inventory records the quantity of garments of a deceased as well as a number of details as to typologies, materials, qualities, colours, ornaments and styles. As a way of illustration, a canonical example is provided by the inventory of Sancho Roíz, written in 1375, from the village of Manises, nearby the city of Valencia, which includes 'a women shirt, linen-made, with the part of the chest made of red and black silk, with a silken red cord at both sides of the shirt'.<sup>1</sup> The inventory of Saurina, the wife of Pere Vidal, a peasant that lived within the walls of the city, was written in 1381, and recorded 'one linen hat, with blue strips two *alnes* [ca. two metres] long and three palms in width'.<sup>2</sup> This extensive set of details makes Valencian inventories ideal for databases analysis, in which various relevant concepts can be included. This allows developing quantitative analysis and studying the relative incidence of these aspects among the two groups of consumers, those from the city of Valencia, and those from its rural hinterland. They can also be explored in a more qualitative way, by tracking the emergence and spread of particular items, colours, styles and so on within and between both groups. This proves particularly useful for researching the

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<sup>1</sup> 'Una camisa de dona de lli, ab corperal de seda vermella e negra, obrat ab corda vermella de seda als costats'. Arxiu Municipal de València (AMV), *Protocols, Antoni Cortés*, m-1, 13 June 1375.

<sup>2</sup> 'Un capçó de lli, ab llistes de cotó blaves, de dues alnes de larch e tres palms d'amplè'. Arxiu de Protocols del Corpus Christi de València (APCCV), *Vicent Queralt*, 1,412, 23 September 1381.

transmission of fashions and consumption patterns throughout all these individuals, as well as the existence of emulative attitudes.

In this work we carry out these analyses by turning to a sample of 83 inventories covering the period 1307-1413, a key moment when European living standards would have increased and changes in consumption patterns were more visible (Allen 2001; Petrowiste 2018), also in the kingdom of Valencia (Furió 2009; 2011; García Marsilla 2014; Almenar Fernández 2018; Almenar Fernández and Belenguer González 2020). The collection of inventories has attempted to be exhaustive as to the period before the Black Death, for the lower number of notarial records from that period has allowed compiling nearly all extant inventories of deceased of the city of Valencia and its hinterland by 1350. The vast number of notarial records preserved thereafter makes it impossible to undertake a systematic survey of all surviving inventories, and thus we have turned to selections of particular notaries. These professionals tended to specialise in particular groups of social groups as clients, so that we have focused on notaries whose clientele was focused on craftsmen from the city of Valencia and peasants from its rural surrounding areas (Cruselles 1998). Altogether, this has led the period between 1351 and the early fifteenth century to be represented by a fewer number of inventories. However, the studied number of these lists of goods proves useful enough to search for the diffusion of textile fashions, as well as to explore the major differences between both groups of consumers, aspects which are central to this work

### 3. Temporary and durable fashions. A rise in textile consumption

A global, quantitative approach to inventories reveals a general increase in the repertoire of clothes present in the houses of Valencian society. Tab. 1 presents the mean number of pieces of clothing owned by the deceased, as classified according to their place of residence, and into two periods, before and after 1351. This year is taken in order to provide the image of the 'before' and the 'after' of the demographic and economic effects of the Black Death (1348), as well as a convenient separation point to ensure the representativeness of the sample once sub-divided into two chronological periods. The table includes the number of inventories representing each group too. This evidence suggests that the mean number of garments would have increased from one epoch to the other, both in town and countryside, around 15 to 30 per cent (Tab. 1).

The analysis can be repeated considering the studied individuals by their social strata. The variety of the occupations of the deceased was noticeable in the city of Valencia, where inventories have reported the possessions of smiths, butchers, wool-carders, brokers, barbers, nobles, notaries and so on. In order to ensure analytic viability, all occupations can be simplified into three major clusters, as 'bourgeoisie and nobility', 'craftsmen and urban workers' and 'peasants'. This implies a reduction of the sample to 41 inventories in total, since the rest of the studied inventories – effectively, half of our sample – do not specify the occupation of the deceased, but a general indication of them being 'neighbours' (*veïns*) of their



place of residence. Regardless, as shown by Tab. 2, it is possible to see the same increase in the number of garments. Besides, this analysis also poses that such a growth in textile possessions was more evident among wealthier individuals, although it was certainly a generalised social phenomenon, since craftsmen, urban workers and peasants owned more pieces over time too (Tab. 2).

Tab. 1. Mean number of pieces of clothing per decease as to their residence

	1307-1351		1351-1413	
	Pieces (Mean)	Inventories (N.)	Pieces (Mean)	Inventories (N.)
City of Valencia	17.2	31	19.9	19
Rural hinterland	7	25	10	8

Notes. The rural hinterland is formed by deceased from the following populations: Albal, Albalat, Alfajar, Benetússer, Burjassot, Foios, Massarrojos, Rafelbunyol, Russafa, Meliana, Patraix, Soternes. It also includes residents from two farmsteads (*alquerías*), called 'de Benibahari' and 'de Sant Jordi'.

Tab. 2. Mean number of pieces of clothing per decease as to their occupation

	1307-1351		1351-1413	
	Pieces (Mean)	Inventories (N.)	Pieces (Mean)	Inventories (N.)
Bourgeoisie and nobility	16.5	9	52	3
Craftsmen and urban workers	7.8	8	15	8
Peasants	7.2	8	12.6	5

Notes. 'Bourgeoisie' is formed by the following occupations: 'citizen' (*ciudadà*), notary (*notari*). 'Craftsmen and urban workers' is formed by barbers (*barbers*), belt-makers (*corretgers*), brokers (*corredors*), butchers (*carnívors*), doublet-makers (*juponers*), mattress-makers (*matalafers*), shoe-makers (*sabaters*), silk-makers (*seders*), smiths (*ferrers*), wool-carders (*pelaires*), and one official (*saig*). 'Peasants' is formed by 'peasants' (*llauradors*), 'shepherds' (*pastors*) and 'fishermen' (*pescadors*). Widows are classified as to the occupation of their husbands.

The rich descriptiveness of inventories allows not only identifying a higher presence of pieces of personal dress in the houses of Valencian society, but also the specific garments that were behind the process. Some of them were not novelties, but objects with a long-held existence in European textile culture, since at least the thirteenth century, like tunics (*cotes* o *cots*). These loose, long garments that went below the hip, even up to the feet, are by far the most abundant garment in fourteenth century inventories, before and after the plague. Moreover, they appear with a remarkable and increasing frequency both in the houses of wealthier individuals, like merchants and urban nobles, and in those of peasants. This all suggests that tunics acted as the commonest garment for daily use for most of society, and a higher presence of them in inventories over time would imply a search for variety in everyday appearance. This would have been of remarkable interest for ordinary people, who tended to possess only one outfit in the period,

whereby other people recognised them in legal processes when providing a description (García Marsilla 2014, 230).

Map 1. **Place of residence of inventoried deceased: the city of Valencia and villages in its rural hinterland**



Nonetheless, tunics' design could be very diverse, and it is in these variety where differences across social strata manifested themselves. Peasant tunics that appear in our sample are made of locally produced cloths and a narrow range of colours and finishes like linings. A wider repertoire of tunics can be easily identified among notaries, merchants and among certain craftsmen, whose pieces were more often made of imported animal fur linings, with sleeves made of other textile fibres, jewels and attachments of precious metals added to them, and many other complements. Particular styles like the *cota meitadada* – 'tunic by halves', for its composition was divided vertically into two colours – appear only among deceased from the capital of the realm in our sample, belonging particularly to affluent individuals like the noble Alfons Martínez de Palma, who possessed a red and green silken exemplar.<sup>3</sup> Some peasants developed their own ways to make their tunics more visible and elegant, perhaps by inspiration of urban tunics. A popular way of doing this during the second half of the fourteenth century was including linings made of rabbit fur, as revealed by inventories like the one of Guillem de Conques, from the village of Meliana, written in 1330, and the one of Marieta, a women from

<sup>3</sup> Arxiu del Regne de València (ARV), *Protocols*, Domènec Molner, 2,777, 6 July 1342.

Burjassot deceased in 1354.<sup>4</sup> However, there existed also improvements in design that affected both groups of consumers, particularly the fact that tunics became progressively more elaborate to become gender-specific. Notaries could visually perceive these differences in shape, describing these pieces progressively more as either *cots de dona* or *cots d'home* ('women tunics' or 'male tunics'), changes that went in hand with higher refinement of tailoring in the period (De la Puerta Escribano 1997). Other loose and long, traditional pieces, just as tunics, were also very abundant during the whole fourteenth century and undertook a process of gender differentiation too. This was the case of external garments, like coats (*gramalles* or *garnatxes*) and capes (*capes*), as well as internal tunics called smocks (*gonelles*).

Fig. 1. Male cotehardies are dressed by all the characters of this scene.  
The cotehardie is the internal garment whose sleeves fall dawn from the elbow.  
Scene from the Book of Hours of Marie de Navarre, (mid-14<sup>th</sup> century) now in the  
Biblioteca de Catalunya



<sup>4</sup> ARV, *Protocols*, Pasqual Vallebrera, 2,833, 26 December 1330. ARV, *Protocols*, Blai Roures, 1,969, 8 January 1354.

Fig. 2. Female Cotardie worn by a woman in Saint Michael Chapel of the monastery of Pedralbes, Barcelona (mid-14<sup>th</sup> century)

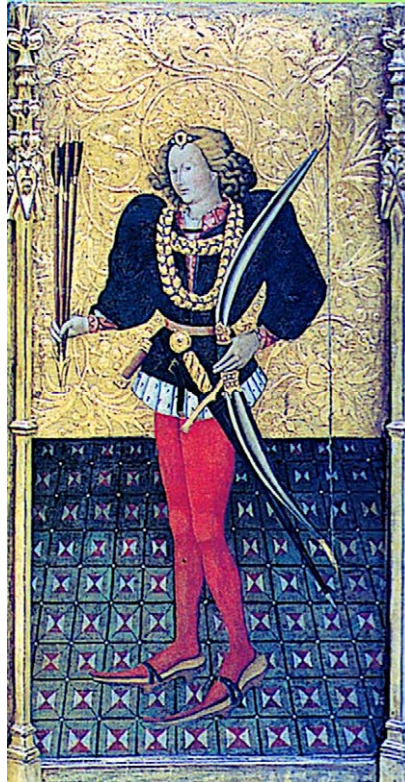


The rise in textile consumption was not only due to the proliferation and diversification of already existing goods, but also to the notable emergence of textile novelties that became fashionable. Some of them were temporary and did not go beyond a very limited elite of wealthy consumers. The most representative case was that of the cotehardie – ‘bold tunic’, in French (Fig. 1-2). This was a tunic characterised by its long sleeves, whose upper part reached the elbow, while the other one extended vertically falling alongside the body. As part of the gendered designs that developed in other garments in the period, cotehardies could be either masculine or feminine. In the Crown of Aragon the earliest documented one has been an specimen in the court of Barcelona of Peter the Cerimonious in 1334, although recently, we have been able to locate an earlier case in Saragosse, in a probate inventory of a noble of House Luna from 1331.<sup>5</sup> In the sample under exploration only three co-

<sup>5</sup> Archivo Histórico de Protocolos Notariales de Zaragoza (AHPNZ), 2.314, *Miguel Pérez de Tauste*, 1331, 16 February 1331, fols. 48r-v.

*tardies* are present in a very specific chronology, covering from 1341 to 1344, in the inventories of three wealthy individuals: the nobleman Alfons Martínez de Palma, the citizen Bernat Vilardida, and one of the most important *drapers* (i.e. merchant of imported cloths) of this century, Jaume Benagues, whose knowledge of the textile market must have certainly helped him in the early acquisition of this new product.<sup>6</sup> The *cotardia* disappears thereafter from Valencian inventories, and as far as it is known, also from inventories in Barcelona and other areas of the Crown of Aragon, when they never appear again after the 1370s (Aymerich Bassols 2018, 80-5). References from subsequent epochs are limited to the representation of the object in paintings, when they had already gone out of fashion and vanished from medieval trousseaus (Aymerich Bassols 2018, 84-5).

Fig. 3. Doublet (*Gipó* or *jupó*) dressed by Saint Sebastian in an altarpiece painted by Jaume Ferrer II (beginning of 15<sup>th</sup> century) now in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC)



<sup>6</sup> ARV, *Protocols*, Domènec Molner, 2,777, 6 July 1342. ARV, *Protocols*, Guillem Vilardell, 2,878, 16 February 1343. ARV, *Protocols*, Domènec Molner, 2,923, 23 August 1341.

Other fashions, contrarily to the case of the cotehardie, were long-lasting and socially transversal. In this sense, a new object that became rapidly fashionable and popular among Valencian society was doublets, called *jupó* or *gipó* in Catalan (Fig. 3). In fact, the proliferation of this piece was a general phenomenon all over Europe during the second half of the fourteenth century, and a key element of the ‘dress revolution’ of the period, and particularly, of the specifically male dress (Piponnier 1989). Doublets were exclusively masculine garments, particularly characteristic for their close-fitting outfit, which included paddings in certain parts of the upper body to provide the wearer with a wider back appearance, and a general stronger look. The piece was originally a war complement that was worn under the armor, but it was eventually adopted as a garment suitable for civil dress. Its origins are somewhat confusing. Contemporary clergy writers criticised severely doublets as a demonic and erotic piece, for they overly stressed men body outlines – including ‘their privates’ (*llur vergonyes*), as posed by the friar Francesc Eiximenis (1983, 158-61) –, in absolute contrast with traditional loose garments like tunics. They also considered it a ‘lier’ clothing because they provided an athletic appearance that was in actual fact the result of paddings. None of these moral authors wanted their respective nation to be the creator of the doublet, and hence they all blamed foreign nations for inventing it. The friar Francesc Eiximenis considered that French people were responsible for the creation of the piece and for having brought it to Naples in the early fourteenth century, from where the fashion would have been moved to Iberia. Contemporary English writers considered that the French were the creators too, whereas French writers argued that they had received the fashion from Italians. Meanwhile, Italians blamed the Christian kingdoms of Iberia (García Marsilla 2017, 81-2).

The influence of the urban world and elites in the diffusion of doublets throughout the kingdom makes of doublets perhaps one of the clearest examples of how social emulation acted and encouraged the spread of these new goods. Doublets do not appear in our sample until the 1370s. The references to these objects that we have been able to compile are revealing and remarkable in the context of the current knowledge of the diffusion of the taste for this garment. The earliest reference we have found is from the aforementioned Roiz family, a dweller from the village of Manises, of unknown occupation, in 1375.<sup>7</sup> This is just five years after the first known documented case in the Crown of Aragon, when Queen Leonor from Sicily, third wife of Peter the Cerimonious, ordered some doublets to be made for the princess. It has also been noted that in inventories from Barcelona the first specimens appear recorded during the 1330s (Aymerich Bassols 2018, 195). The fashion might have originated thus among powerful and rich consumers, but in the 1370s at least some individuals living in the Valencian countryside followed it, and many peasants would do it too very soon. Llorenç Pérez, a peasant that died in 1398, but who had its residence within the walls of the city, is one of the first peasants we have been able to identify possessing a doublet.<sup>8</sup> A more generalised diffusion of doublets to the countryside took place in the first decades of the fifteenth century, not only in the rural hinterland of the capital of the kingdom, but also in

<sup>7</sup> AMV, *Protocols*, *Antoni Cortés*, m-1, 13 June 1375 and 11 August 1375.

<sup>8</sup> APCCV, *Sancho Cornell*, 13,070, 2 July 1398.

other areas, like in the middle-south, in the areas of Alcoi, Cocentaina and Alzira. The fashion of doublets spread rapidly not only within the city of Valencia and from there to the countryside, but also from town to town, encouraged by the presence of the royal court, which demanded the purchase of these novelties (García Marsilla 2007).

A further finding of relevance in relation to doublets has been the location of the inventory of a doublet-maker (*giponer*) from Valencia, died in 1398, called Joan de Salamanca.<sup>9</sup> Its appearance is representative of the rapid emergence and consolidation of a group of textile craftsmen exclusively specialised in the confection of these garments in the city of Valencia. Effectively, the number of doublet-makers acting in the capital rose rapidly in a very short time after mid-fifteenth century. The lists of neighbours compiled in 1360s as a result of various forced subsidies show no reference to doublet-makers. In 1404, therefore, doublet-makers and housiers founded their own confraternity, separatedly from that of tailors (Castillo and Martínez 1999, 105-107). Between 1409 and 1412 at least 29 of these craftsmen have been documented in Valencian sources. By 1418, the number of doublet-makers working in Valencia was so high that García de Alcaraz, one of these craftsmen, explained in the court of justice of the capital that he had to close its workshop in Valencia and move to Llíria, for «there are so many doublet-makers in Valencia, who harm each other, and trying to sell their pieces cheaper they lose money».<sup>10</sup>

The consolidation of this group of highly specialised textile craftsmen agreed thus with a transversal taste for the garment across various social strata. Doublets could be made of silk and velvet, like the pieces visible in the courts of kings and nobles, but also of cotton of various qualities, including rough, cheaper qualities called *cotonina*, more affordable for vast members of society. Wearing doublets became then a powerful fashion that encouraged the economy and brought many benefits for producers and consumers. Perhaps the most visible phenomenon of this success was how much the fashion lasted since it was still popular well into the early modern period, as later as in the seventeenth century.

Other garments became fashionable in the period precisely in relation to the popularity of doublets. One with a certain relation with the doublet was the *farset* or *faset*, which existed long before the doublet. *Farsets* were padding, cotton-made military shirts wore under the chainmail. Historical vocabularies and dictionaries tend to define *farsets* as a synonym for 'doublet', which does not fit with the neat distinction with which contemporary sources distinguished both of them, including inventories. In fact, it seems that doublets were a more elegant version of *farsets*. In the thirteenth century, namely in 1282, Bernat Desclot referred to the blackened *farsets* the men of the troops of Peter the Great of Aragon wore when they arrived to Sicily (Desclot 1982, chapter XCI, 177). Towards the mid-fourteenth century *farsets* appear already as non military pieces of clothing among some townspeople of the kingdom of Valencia and in the Crown of Aragon in general, like in the inventories of some neighbours of Sagunt and clergymen from Lleida (Bolòs and

<sup>9</sup> APCCV, *Bertomeu de la Mata*, 21,910, 16 September 1398.

<sup>10</sup> ARV, *Justícia Civil*, 870, hand 18, f. 15 v.

Sánchez-Boira 2014).<sup>11</sup> *Farsets* in our sample appear within some houses of the city of Valencia in the 1340s, and later, in the 1380s, in the houses of sporadic peasants from its hinterland, like Pere Oliva from Benetússer.<sup>12</sup>

A higher interest for hoses (*calces*) also took place, likely stimulated for the diffusion of doublets and *farsets*, which did not cover the lower-body. Most of the hoses present in the inventories under analyses appear made out of several types of locally produced medium-quality wool, called *cordellats*, *palmelles*, *burell*, and so on. The visual exposure of legs, whose shape had been traditionally covered by loose and long garments like tunics, led to an important interest for acquiring colourful hoses, particularly red ones, the commonest colour one can find for these pieces even among peasants, who also demanded and purchased hoses, just as they did with doublets. Differences of course were notable among urban and rural consumers as to the acquisition of these garments, particularly regarding the number of pieces possessed. A peasant hardly owned more than two pieces, while a merchant like Jaume Benages had more than six, including blue, grey, red, and black exemplars.<sup>13</sup>

Fashions could originate in elites and large towns and being emulated by urban societies and peasants, but not every transmission followed a 'downward' direction, from the richer to the poorer. Peasants could indirectly inspired the consuming attitudes of the rich. In Iberia, the types of coats and capes that were common all over the continent coexisted with external garments enrooted in the Islamic tradition, and these were predominant among peasants. *Aljubes* and *almeixies* (Fig. 4 and 5), long tunics with sleeves, for instance, appear in Valencian inventories from the countryside with a higher frequency than regular coats (*gramalles*), and more abundantly in the countryside than in the city of Valencia during the first half of the fourteenth century. Inhabitants from the capital adopted *aljubes* and *almeixies* towards the end of the century, in correspondence with a rising fashion of Muslim-like garments, particularly in female dress, like *alcandores* (dresses) and *alquinals* (headdresses, fig. 6), which women from the city of Valencia wore with an ornamental and conspicuous character. These pieces appear in no rural inventory of our sample, despite becoming a common piece of dress of luxury connotations in towns for the rest of the Later Middle Ages. Plaerdemavida, from the chivalric romance *Tirant lo Blanc*, written in the late fifteenth century, is described wearing one of these *alquinals* (Aguiló, 1873-1905, chapter 351).

The taste for Islamic-style pieces that developed in towns, therefore, had its origins in the functional dress peasants wore since a long time ago, developing into a more refined version appreciated for its exotic appearance. Perhaps some villages with a mixt population of Muslims and Christians, a minority in a kingdom in which both religious communities were generally separated into Christian or Muslim populations, represented the hub where the shift in the social consideration of these pieces took place. Some members of the Roiz family of Manises, one of

<sup>11</sup> See, for instance, the inventory of Dolça, the widow of a dweller of Sagunt called Albert Joan, who possessed one cotton *fasset*. AMV, *Protocols, Domingo Joan*, I-1, May 1348.

<sup>12</sup> APCCV, *Vicent Queralt*, 1,412, 31 December 1381.

<sup>13</sup> ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,923, 23 August 1341.



these villages where Christians and Muslims coexisted, possessed an important number of these *almeixies* and *alcandores* when they died in the 1370s.<sup>14</sup>

Fig. 4. **Saint Joseph wears an *aljuba*, a buttoned dress fitted at the waist that fell in the form of a skirt to the knees in a table o Francesc d'Osona (second half of 15<sup>th</sup> century), now at the Museo Catedralicio de Segorbe)**



Finally, some textiles gained popularity essentially for their functionality more than for the possibility of exhibiting them. A sign of a higher sense of comfort and hygiene can be deduced from the higher presence of underwear in inventories, a phenomenon that is documented essentially –but not exclusively– in towns. For most of society linen shirts were the only piece with this function, which were also used for sleeping. Guillem Carbonell, a citizen from the capital, possessed exceptionally nine different shirts, made of linen or silk, in 1401, which implies he had more shirts than most of his neighbours, and clearly more than any peasant.<sup>15</sup> Affluent individuals had also access to shirts for male and for women, showing the gender specialisation that other garments experienced too. Similarly, the presence of 18 panties (*bragues*) in the inventory of the notary Bartomeu Bonet in 1401 differs importantly from peasants, who rarely possessed any.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> AMV, *Protocols*, *Antoni Cortés*, m-1, 13 June 1375 and 11 August 1375.

<sup>15</sup> AMV, *Protocols*, *Jaume Desplà*, n-12, 8 October 1401.

<sup>16</sup> AMV, *Protocols*, *Jaume Desplà*, n-12, 12 November 1401.

Fig. 5. Blue *almejá* or *almeixia* worn by the Virgin Mary in the Cantigas de Alfonso X el Sabio (second half of 13<sup>th</sup> century), now in the Library of Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial



Fig. 6. *Alquinal* on the head of a woman in a table of Jaume Huguet (second half of 15<sup>th</sup> century), MNAC



#### 4. The emergence and consolidation of gendered clothing

The shift from unisex to gender-specific garments, which has already been mentioned, is one of the most remarkable changes in dress history that occurred during the late medieval period. Not only did this imply the making of specific male and female designs of common pieces like tunics, but also the production of exclusive clothing for each one. It is no coincidence that women became to be fiercely criticised by contemporary clergymen in this period as wasteful and superficial for overly spending on their dress, as the Valencian friar Saint Vincent Ferrer did (Ferrer 1934, vol. 1, 33-5. See also Iradiel 1986 and Benito 2003, 59-68).

Our sample allows exploring some women-specific garments through inventories of widows and the garments 'of the wife' (*de la dona*) possessed by male deceased. An exclusively women piece was the *brial* –usually called *briault* in English, as an incorporated French term–, a long dress clung to the waist that covered the entire body to the feet. Most *briaults* appear possessed by townswomen, predominantly among affluent ones, although they still had some presence in other Valencian towns like Sagunt, as well as in some villages of the rural hinterland of Valencia like Albal.<sup>17</sup> In some cases the sources are rich enough to describe the confection of the pieces, like the 'close-fitting *briault*' (*brial estret*) that a widow from Sagunt possessed in 1348. Meanwhile, the noble Alfons Martínez de Palma owned a 'large *briault* without sleeves' (*brial gros sense màneges*) in 1342, which was likely used by his wife.<sup>18</sup> It is remarkable, on the other hand, the appearance of a cotton 'male *briault*' (*brial de home*) in the house of a citizen of Valencia called Joan Montsoriu in 1317, an unusual finding that should be interpreted as part of those early times of gender definition for certain typologies of clothes.<sup>19</sup>

A common, everyday female dress consisted of a tunic (*cota*) and a smock (*gonella*), but during the fourteenth century adding a mantle (*mantell*) became fashionable, a piece that frequently agreed in design and colour with the other two. Our sample of inventories tends to refer to these pieces one next to the other or associated in various ways, particularly tunics to mantles. The aforementioned peasant Gil Joan, for instance, possessed a blue women tunic and mantle, made out of Mechelen cloth, and lined with black rabbit fur.<sup>20</sup> The stylistic and cultural relation that established among these objects can also be seen, for example, in the donations to daughters in last wills, which included two or three of these pieces. These also appear in the dowries provided to poor young women by some confraternities, which comprised a tunic and a mantle made of a new red cloth (*cot e mantell de drap nou vermell*) (Castillo 1993). Mantles, however, could be substituted by headdresses of many sorts for special occasion since they functioned progressively

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<sup>17</sup> See, for instance, the inventories of Dolça, the widow of a dweller of Sagunt called Albert Joan, as well as the inventory of the goods of Jaume Sobirats from Albal. AMV, *Protocols, Domingo Joan*, I-1, May 1348. ARV, *Protocols, Aparisi Lapart*, 10,408, 29 July 1326.

<sup>18</sup> ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,777, 6 July 1342.

<sup>19</sup> ARV, *Protocols, Guillem Vilardell*, 2,836, 23 March 1317 (loose sheet).

<sup>20</sup> APCCV, *Joan de Vera*, 1,445, 1381.

more as a visible mark of the economic power of women. Among Muslim-inspired headdresses, apart from the aforesaid case of the *alcandores*, there was also the *albanega*, a sort of bonnet that was profusely decorated with silk strips or pearls, which were typically worn by women around the 1340s. Yet, this went rapidly out of fashion to evolve into specialised female hats towards the 1370s, called *capells de dona*. These were fully made out of linen or silk, and appear sometimes described as *jubat*, a similar term to the word ‘doublet’ in Catalan (*jupó* or *gipó*) that suggests a padding consistency and perhaps that they were made of cotton-like fibres too. Countryside women, meanwhile, wore commonly *sàvenes* towards the end of the fourteenth century, a mantle that covered both the head and the shoulders.

Belts, knives and bags, on the other hand, were complements that expressed masculine values, and they formed part of the outfit of the ‘respectable’ man of the epoch, complementing novelties like doublets, which were man-specific garments too. Belts (*corretges*) were distinctive objects of affluent individuals, for their design could be very complex and include luxurious items, like silver-made buttons and buckles, as well as patches made of silk, taffeta and other precious clothing. At the beginning of the fourteenth century belts were more often called *cints*, but they already wore their characteristic silver appliqués, as it can be seen in the inventory of the citizen from Valencia Arnau Salelles, who possessed three of these belts in 1328.<sup>21</sup> Hence, since the 1330s, inventories describe these objects predominantly as *corretges* designed with a more varied set of styles, like ‘wide’ (*corretja ampla*), ‘thin’ (*corretja estreta*) or with naturalistic shapes, like the leather ‘lion belt’ (*corretja de lleó*) that the aforementioned *draper* Jaume Benagues possessed.<sup>22</sup> A more common presence of silver appliqués can also be detected in these belts since that moment, also of the quality and quantity of the silver they included, stating the weight, among other things, which oscillated between a few grams and five *onçes* (some 160 grammes). Male peasants also adopted the taste for belts, made of silk or green-blue wool (*palmella*), in which it was also possible to place silver buttons or spheres (*platoms*). Either way, belts could be accompanied by knives, sometimes decorated with filigrees in ivory or precious metals, as well as by deer leather bags, which could be fashionable items by themselves. Alamanda, the widow of a citizen from Valencia called Arnau Pinosa, possessed by her dead in 1336 a red silken belt (*corretja*) with silver spheres (*platoms*), with a leather bag imported from Pisa.<sup>23</sup>

Finally, there also existed hoots and hats intended for men. Hoots (*capirons*) were added to external coats, and inventories record them occasionally matching with an outfit formed by various garments in several ways, for instance, ‘tunic, mantle and hoot’ (*capiró, mantellina e cota*), ‘smock, hoot and gown’ (*gonella, capiró e gramalla*), and so on.<sup>24</sup> They also were likely the commonest method for rain protection – inventories show the presence, in fact, of some ‘hoots for the rain’ (*capirons de*

<sup>21</sup> ARV, *Protocols, Guillem Vilardell*, 11,183, 26 August 1328.

<sup>22</sup> ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,923, 23 August 1341.

<sup>23</sup> ARV, *Protocols, Bernat Costa*, 2,801, 10 July 1336.

<sup>24</sup> As revealed by the possessions owned by the noble Alfons Martínez de Palma and Jaume Benagues. ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,777, 6 July 1342. ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,923, 23 August 1341.

*pluja*). They appear more commonly in the city, where they were more complex and provided with varied colours, such as red, green, black and purple. Townsmen also wore hats (*capells de sol*), bonnets, and so on, like the widow of a smith from Valencia called Bernarda, who owned a silken *capell de sol* lined with sendal.<sup>25</sup>

## 5. Clothes, colours, linings, and complements

Fashion was complex enough to manifest itself in more aspects than in particular typologies of garments. As revealed by many of the already provided descriptions, a personal dress could end up being extraordinarily unique, not only due to the use of complements, but also to aspects like the material of which it was made out. Inventories report a wide range of textile fibres of the cloths (*draps*) that were employed for the making of the garments. First of all, the sample helps distinguish differences between town and country that occurred during the whole fourteenth century. The diversity of urban cloths included wool of various qualities (e.g. *sayal*, *grana*, *escarlatina*), as well as silk and velvet. Meanwhile, the materials of the cloths of the hinterland of Valencia prove predominantly simple and frugal, made of tow (*estopa*) and coarse wool, which was likely the fibre for the cloths whose material was not specified by notaries (Tab. 3).

In spite of these general inequalities, some of the characteristic fibres of urban dress made their way into the outfits of some peasants during the second half of the fourteenth century. That was the case of cotton, which had a higher presence in the countryside in the shape of the aforementioned doublets and *farsets*. Also carmine-dyed cloths (*grana*) gained popularity among peasants, some of whom possessed some exemplars of red capes, like the one the peasant Arnau Garcia from the village of Massarrojos had.<sup>26</sup> Yet, none of these fibres showed such a round change as silk did, a material that would become the star product of Valencian textiles, with its production increasing exponentially during the early modern period. The inventories under exploration reveal an urban silk consumption oriented initially towards small compliments, like small sachs for being hung from belts, laces and ribbons. Since the end of the fourteenth century it is possible to find entire pieces among individuals from the city of Valencia, particular silk shirts, that were used as underwear and for sleeping. As to the countryside, the emergence of silk garments was comparatively lower, but still significant, as shown by pieces like the two silk-made *sàvenes* of a peasant from Patraix called Gil Joan that, in turn, were ornated with two coloured silk strips in the upper part of the piece, and whose total value was estimated in six *sous*<sup>27</sup> (Tab. 3).

<sup>25</sup> ARV, *Protocols*, *Domènec Molner*, 2,923, 10 May 1341.

<sup>26</sup> AMV, *Protocols*, *Jaume Desplà*, n-4, 24 November 1388.

<sup>27</sup> APCCV, *Joan de Vera*, 1,445, 1381.

Tab. 3. Material of garments described in inventories (number of pieces)

Material	City of Valencia	Rural hinterland
Linnen	83	37
Coarse wool ( <i>cordellat</i> )	8	1
Cotton	8	3
Coarse cotton ( <i>colonina</i> )	8	1
Canvas ( <i>llenç</i> )	7	
Wool mixed with animal skin ( <i>camello</i> )	5	
Damascene ( <i>damasquí</i> )	3	
Scarlet-dyed ( <i>escarlantina</i> )	3	
Dark wool ( <i>saya</i> )	3	
Velvet	3	
Velvet-like sateen ( <i>zaitoní vellutat</i> )	3	
Leather	27	5
Silk	27	4
Carmin-dyed ( <i>grana</i> )	23	1
Tow ( <i>estopa</i> )	2	22
Cinamon-like ( <i>canellat</i> )	2	
<i>Fil tirat</i>	2	
Blue/green-dyed ( <i>palmella</i> )	12	
Dark wool ( <i>burell</i> )	11	4
Mixed cloth ( <i>drap mesclat</i> )	10	3
Mixed <i>burell</i> ( <i>burell mesclat</i> )	1	
Deer skin ( <i>cervo</i> )	1	1
Hemp ( <i>canemàs</i> )	1	
Cinamon-like coarse wool ( <i>cordellat de canyellat</i> )	1	
Painted cloth ( <i>drap pintat</i> )	1	
Fustian	1	
Golden thread ( <i>fil d'or</i> )	1	
Thick cloth ( <i>drap gros</i> )		2
Golden cloth ( <i>drap d'or</i> )		1

Inventories provide also a chance to know the origin of many of the cloths of which garments were made out, suggesting they were predominantly locally produced, either in the city of Valencia or in its rural hinterland. After all, the capital of the kingdom was a textile production centre of international relevance, and a significant part of the craftsmen dwelling within its walls were implied in this sector. The same applied to the peasantry of the surrounding areas of the city, who collaborated in various phases of the productive process, like weaving, escaping the limitations established by guild regulations. This latter phenomenon gave as a result cloths described as 'from the land' (*draps de la terra*), which are often identified in inventories as well. Even so, 70 out of the 1,110 garments compiled in our database are linked to a foreign toponym. The identified populations refer to some of the most relevant textile production centres of the continent during the period under analysis, particularly, from Occitany (Fanjeaux, Carcassone, Toulouse) and, above all, from Flanders (Bruje, Ghent, Mechelen, Ypres) and modern Northern France (Douai, Vervins), and

other areas of modern France like Chalon and Paris. Sporadic references to other locations, like Almería, Perpinyà, Florence and Cyprus also appear. Flemish cloths, particularly those from Vervins and Mechelen are, by far, the commonest ones of the sample as compared to the rest of the aforementioned ones (Tab. 4).

Tab. 4. Imported clothes (*draps*) described in inventories (number of pieces)

Origin	City of Valencia	Rural Hinterland
Vervins	13	1
Mechelen	12	5
Chalon	5	
Florence	3	
Ghent	3	1
Almería	2	
Carcassonne	2	
Douai	2	
Paris	2	1
Fanjaus	1	
Ypres	1	
Mardeni (?)	1	
Toulouse	1	
Cyprus	1	
Brúje		2
Perpinyà		1

Although these typologies of clothes have a significant presence over time during the fourteenth century in both samples, an increasing number of peasants possessed some of them towards the end of the century, in Albalat, Foios and Meliana, all of them nearby villages to the city of Valencia. For instance, Benvinguda, the widow of Pere Oliver, a peasant that had its residence within the city walls, possessed a cape from Paris when he died in 1330.<sup>28</sup> A further interesting case is that of the aforementioned peasant from Patraix called Gil Joan, who passed away in 1381, and who owned a red tunic (*cota*) with its mantle (*mantell*), made of Mechelen cloth.<sup>29</sup> He also possessed a *samarra*, an external coat without leaves, a typical garment of peasant dress, but made of 'mixed' cloth from Vervins (*mesclat*), suggesting foreign and local materials were combined in the same piece. Regardless, it must be noted that perhaps not every cloth associated with a foreign town was an actual imported piece, but maybe a local production that imitated the characteristic design of those places. This is suggested, for example, by the inventory of the wool-carder (*pelaire*) Joan Sagarriga, died in 1395 and resident in the city of Valencia. This list identifies the ownership of a red woman smock (*gonella de dona*), made out of cloth of Vervins 'from the land' (*de la terra*), the same term that was used for locally manufactured cloths.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> ARV, *Protocols, Aparisi Lapart*, 2,758, 2 Abril 1330.

<sup>29</sup> APCCV, *Joan de Vera*, 1,445, 1381.

<sup>30</sup> APCCV, *Domènec Barreda*, 869, 21 July 1395 and 2 September 1395 (addenda).

At a visual level, the material of garments was not as relevant as their colour, which was the first identifiable aspect of any piece and an expressive mechanism of taste, identity and fashion. The sample under exploration allows seeing the incidence of colours in each group of consumers transversally, considering all garments together. This analysis reveals an evident ‘chromatic inequality’ between town and countryside. Many of the colours present in urban textiles can hardly be seen among peasant possessions, particularly, those of darker tonalities, which were the hardest to produce in the period. Black and purple garments, for instance, can almost exclusively be found among inventories of townspeople. Moreover, it is also possible to see among them a wider range of tonalities for each colour, as suggested by the adjectives used by notaries in the description of specific colours, turning to very precise words. Garments could be described as *olivet* (olive green), *foguent* (fire red), *fetge* (liver-like), *ferret* or *ferreny* (iron-like), and combinations of all of them with the words ‘light’ and ‘dark’ (e.g. *blau escur* [‘dark blue’]). This more varied range of colours increases towards the end of the fourteenth century in urban inventories, while the presence of dark colours, and especially of black, increased significantly, underpinning its consideration as a symbolic tonality of distinction and elegance that would remain for centuries. Blue and red were the commonest colours in the clothing of most members of society, as well as green and white and green, following this order, although these two latter appear more frequently among urban inventories. It is also possible to see that certain pieces were more subject to colour variation than others, particularly those that were in permanent sight, like capes, tunics, and smocks, which altered colours while, blue, green and red very frequently (Tab. 5).

**Tab. 5. Colour of garments described in inventories (number of pieces)**

Colour	City of Valencia	Rural hinterland
Blue	66	45
Light blue	4	1
Dark blue	3	1
Red	66	33
Fire red ( <i>foguent</i> )	3	
Green	39	9
Olive green	15	
Dark olive green	1	
Black	42	
White	21	11
Purple ( <i>morat</i> )	9	1
Wine purple ( <i>tenat</i> )	5	
Grey ( <i>bru</i> , <i>burell</i> )	3	5
Liver ( <i>fetge</i> )	1	
Iron ( <i>ferret</i> , <i>ferreny</i> )	7	
Clove ( <i>giroflat</i> )	3	



Despite these differences, Tab. 5 is also revealing of the fact that peasants had access to a certain variety of colours. Moreover, during the second half of the fourteenth century the peasant dress appear overall to be more colourfull by turning to some urban styles, like the fashion of stripped garments (*llistats*). These resulted from adding strips, linings or pieces of clothes of other materials or colours to a piece, allowing to combine cheaper and expensive materials in the same piece. Tunics and capes could be subject to this style, as well as *capçons*, the typology of linen or tow hats that were particulaly present in the countryside, to which peasants added cotton or silk strips, as seen in specimens like those possessed by the peasant from Valencia Miquel Guardiola, described as two *capçons* made of tow with blue silken strips.<sup>31</sup>

Linings, laces, tassels, skits, cords and a vast universe of minute finishes that contributed to the individualisation of dress popularised in various and complex ways, with a dynamism that in many cases developed independently from that of garments. Inventories show, for instance, that even sleeves could be a further aesthetic element on their own, for they were removable in many garments so that consumers could possess sets of sleeves to combine them with various pieces. There were consequently ‘male sleeves’ (*mànegues d’hom*) and ‘women sleeves’ (*mànegues de dona*), made of their own materials, finished with particular linings, and some of them could even be imported, like the two white linnen sleeves from Almería that the citizen from Valencia Guillem Carbonell possessed.<sup>32</sup> Out of these many elements an outstanding case of emulation is suggested by linings, overall far more present in urban dress. In fact, our sample reveals how certain lining typologies did not reached the countryside during the entire period of analysis. This was the case of taffetas (*tafetà*), expensive silk products very often imported from Flanders, which were placed on mantles and capes. They appear more frequently owned by affluent individuals, like nobles and citizens, but also among labourers and craftsmen, like the butcher Guillem Palma in 1332 or the widow of a smith called Bernarda in 1341.<sup>33</sup> The same applies to sable furs (*pena de vairs*), with which the sleeves and skirt of tunics were lined, as well as to the mantles possessed by merchants, butchers and wool-carders (*pelaires*). There existed other more affordable linings, like those made of rabbit fur (*pena de conills*), either black or white, which were the most characteristic lining of peasant garments. It is also possible to detect a higher popularity of coloured sendals during the second half of the century, thin silk textiles suitable for transparencies in green, blue and particularly red, almost exclusively among dwellers of the city of Valencia. A few peasants, though, did possess clothes lined with sendal, like the aforementioned Gil Joan, who owned a blue mantle of women lined with *sendal fort*, suggesting it was made out of a coarse quality.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> APCCV, *Joan de Vera*, 1,443, 7 March 1381.

<sup>32</sup> AMV, *Protocols, Jaume Desplà*, n-12, 8 October 1401.

<sup>33</sup> ARV, *Protocols, Guillem Vilardell*, 2,356, 25 November 1332. ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,923, 10 May 1341.

<sup>34</sup> APCCV, *Joan de Vera*, 1,445, 1381.

## Conclusions

Far from imagining a world of hermetic consumption patterns, inventories from late medieval Valencia reveal a complex and fluid movement of influences across all echelons of society. The city was the main centre of innovation, and where novelties from outside usually arrived first, as it was a large merchant city with colonies of traders from all over Europe. Nevertheless, fashions did not only originate in towns or among elites and did not simply trickle down to the rest of society and from the city to the countryside. There also existed upward influences, which were evident for example in fashions related to Islamic dress. This demonstrates that 'ordinary people' could also be active enough as consumers to develop their own material life, with enough personality to attract wealthier consumers to an extent. Nonetheless, it is important to remark there were 'global' fashions too, that can be perceived simultaneously developing both in town and countryside. This all implies that social emulation was only one aspect that explained how textile consumption patterns developed, among many others. Perhaps it is worth wondering also how ordinary people assimilated these novelties and included them in their everyday lives, as well as what they were intending when doing this. The expansion of fashions in the middle and lower classes is largely related to the growing internal stratification experienced by these sectors of the population. By no means were all peasants or craftsmen the same, and those who stood out for their wealth or power found in dress their best form of distinction. After all, it was essentially the same as the elites did, but on a smaller scale. Hence, social mobility was behind the continuous dynamism of fashions, and it was an impetus to consumption, since those who were on the upswing showed it with pride, and those who, on the other hand, saw their situation worsening tried to hide it with clothes that offered the image of a certain economic prosperity.

A second major finding of importance as revealed by inventories is that fashions went far beyond garments and designs. In fact, fashion had many faces that allowed the personal tastes of consumers to be manifested in a variety of aspects, such as colours, complements, items, and so on. All these aspects could vary at different rates. For instance, larger garments remained more or less unchanged for decades while small details, such as the way sleeves, tights or belts were worn according to the moralists of the time, changed every year and were the real tell-tale signs of whether or not the person wearing them was aware of the latest trends. Despite these seemingly banal but significant changes, the presence of fashion in everyday life was consequently and certainly much larger than traditionally suspected, as suggested by the descriptive potential of the sources we have explored. What is more, it should not be forgotten that fashion, as a cultural and sociological phenomenon, was also present in other products, not only textile, like ceramics and glass, whose consumption was also in the ascendance during the late medieval period (Almenar Fernández 2018; 2021).

Altogether, the complexity and dynamism of late medieval clothing in the kingdom of Valencia suggests that in Iberia, as in other European areas of the epoch, an active consumer society had developed, accustomed to turn to the market to satisfy its needs and personal tastes. This arrived alongside the

consolidation of a mature Valencian economy, capable of satiating a stable demand for consumer goods through an important local textile production sector, located both in the city and in the countryside, which was perfectly compatible with the importation of luxury textiles from the great manufacturing centres of Europe.

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Elizabeth Currie

*Action men: martial fashions in Florence, 1530-1630*

Men's fashion has a long tradition of drawing inspiration from the battlefield. One early example is the quilted pourpoint of the fourteenth century, which was first designed to be worn under chainmail. During the sixteenth century, military styles were reinterpreted for civilian purposes in new ways, part of a growing sense that clothing could convey strength and bravery. The correlations between inner virtues and outward appearances, and specifically the links between bravado and dress, were underlined in the expanding literature on etiquette and gender roles. Numerous cultural and artistic forms, from fresco cycles to festive performances, incorporated representations of warfare and glorified the male body in combat. Prolonged periods of warfare meant that soldiers on and off duty were increasingly prominent, gaining notoriety for their flamboyance and brightly-coloured clothing. Even the appearance of military adversaries offered source material for sartorial innovation. This chapter explores these eclectic influences, which emerged from city streets and taverns as much as from the art forms decorating public and private spaces. It shows how specific types of clothing enhanced male physical presence and power and considers how their appropriation within the fashion system affected their original associations with violence and disruption. These styles coexisted alongside more sober and decorous fashions, such as the predilection for black in male portraiture, receiving more emphasis according to factors such as the social context or age of the wearer.

## 1. The transformative powers of clothing

Early modern texts underline the analogies between bravery and ostentation. John Florio's Italian-English dictionary *Queen Anna's New World of Words* (1611) differentiates between bravery and courage, translating the word *bravura* as «bravery, swaggering» and *coraggioso* as 'courageous, hardy and stout» (Florio 1611, 67; 123). Although physical strength is implied in both, this suggests courage is a more silent, stoic quality while bravery is showier and performative, dependent to a degree on an audience. The *Vocabolario della Crusca* of 1612 defines the verb *bravare* as «un certo minacciare imperioso e altiero». In the first English translation of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, published in 1620, the word bravery is used to mean finery, with expressions such as, «imbroydered bodies, tricked and trimmed in such boasting bravery» or the adage that you can load an ass with «the richest braverie» but it will

not make him any wiser (Boccaccio, trans. Florio 1684, 31). This usage appears less frequently in Italian written sources, possibly because *bravo* referred to a particular social group by this period. It is significant, however, that descriptions of *bravi*, usually translated into English as foot soldiers or mercenaries, emphasised their appearance and aggression. The alignment between male heroism and clothing and strong colours is evident in other written sources. In an account of the Milanese celebrations in 1598 of the wedding of Margaret of Austria to Philip III of Spain, Guido Mazenta describes his admiration for the monarch and «*varii, e splendidi colori delle sue virtù heroiche*» (Mazenta 1598, 3). Touching on a similar theme, Gregorio Leti's *La lode della guerra e il biasimo della pace* (1664) observes that when the Amazons changed their style of clothing they became hardier and more warrior-like: «*per l'istinto della loro natura vestivano l'abito della lascivia e viltà femminile, fecero ferma risoluzione di cambiar moda e, non trovando il più abito nobile che quello del guerriero, lo presero e, vestitolo, fecero con questo maraviglie degne dell'eterna memoria*» (Garavaglia 2015, 42-3).

Fig. 1. Agostino Musi, called Veneziano, *Les Grimpeurs (The Climbers)*, after Michelangelo, 1524, engraving, Yale University Art Library, 1969.98.1



It was widely believed that clothing could draw out or enhance latent forms of bravery. Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, for example (published in Spain in 1605, first

translated into English by Thomas Shelton in 1612 and into Italian in 1622), alludes to the agency of clothing in the case of a woman who is «all clad in green, so brave and rich that bravery itself was transformed into her» (Cervantes, trans. Shelton, 1740, Vol. III, 209). Michelangelo's much-copied composition for the Battle of Cascina commission, abandoned when he was summoned to Rome by Pope Julius II in 1505, brilliantly conveys the literal and metaphorical significance of dressing for battle. The group of soldiers are startled by their adversaries while bathing and reach for their clothing in haste. The figure on the right is seen from behind in the act of fastening his adherent hose to his upper body armour (Fig. 1). Clinging to his buttocks, the garment appears to grow out of his skin, creating a perfect fusion of inner and outer intent, throwing into relief a part of the anatomy that was also showcased by male fashionable dress.

Two sixteenth-century Florentine diaries recall how men consciously altered their clothing and hairstyles to demonstrate their readiness to take up arms and rise against the foe during the siege of 1529-30. This involved cutting their hair short, growing beards and swapping the *cappuccio* – traditionally worn by the Florentine patriciate and wrapped, turban-like around the head with one end hanging down over the shoulder – for hats and berets (Corrazzini 1900, 96). The anonymous addition to Luca Landucci's diary also associates this wartime sartorial turning point with the adoption of slashed breeches, a fashion derived from the clothing of soldiers (Landucci 1883, 371). These accounts suggest that Florentines were transformed into men of action when they were unhampered by long locks and fabric draperies.

As implied by the biblical expression «to gird one's loins», trailing, voluminous clothes were manifestly unsuitable for physical combat. The relationship between bravery and particular clothing colours is less immediately obvious. Discussing the symbolism and properties of the colour red in his *Del Significato de' Colori* (1535), Fulvio Pellegrino Morato explains that:

Aggiunger cosa artificiosa alla Natura è supplire alli difetti di quella, perciò gli timidi Soldati mancandogli il calor naturale, pigliano il color finto Rosso, perche le cose che concorreno à far il color Rosso, hanno forza incentiva & calorifica, piu che quelle che concorreno à far li altri colori, et così aiutano la loro pusillanimità naturale, con l'aiuto delle cose exteriori (Morato 1535, 26-7 and Currie 2019, 122).

The explanation for this was that red was a hot colour with a capacity to draw out inner fire and bring it up to the surface. Although Morato seems disdainful of soldiers who relied on this strategy, its efficacy is not questioned.

## 2. Flamboyance and Aggressive Masculinity

Whether or not they possessed inner fire, by Morato's time soldiers were well known for their distinctive appearances. While flamboyance was a prerequisite for the standard bearer on the battlefield, it was also a marker of the off-duty soldier carousing in a local hostelry. Soldiers had relative freedom in terms of their behaviour and clothing and came to represent the antithesis of the ideals of decorum and restraint that limited the choices of many Florentine men. Cesare



Vecellio's *De gli habiti antichi et moderni di diverse parti del mondo* (1590 and 1598) includes detailed descriptions of the clothing of on- and off-duty soldiers of different social ranks. Even the foot soldier in combat depicted in a *corsaletto*, or half-armor, wears brightly coloured breeches. These, we are told, are «always rich and beautiful» and sometimes even made of patterned or brocaded silks (Vecellio 1590, 162v). The figure's clothing is designed to reveal his strength and vigour: «il quale Habito mostra dispostezza del corpo: oltre la gagliardia della vita, come si vede in molti Nobili d'Italia, i quali mostrarono tanto valore in quella guerra, che meritamente si deve tener conto d'ogni suo vestigio» (Vecellio 1590, 163r). The off-duty, high-ranking soldier is shown in even more expensive attire including a satin doublet and leather jerkin with gold buttons and velvet breeches. A similar combination of upper body armour, in this case embellished with the cross of the Medici Order of Saint Stephen, and patterned silk breeches mark out the senior members of the Medici troops at the Battle of Bona in Bernardino Poccetti's fresco in the Palazzo Pitti. The scene is one of several designed to commemorate Ferdinando de' Medici's military victories, reprising the themes of the *Salone dei 500* in the Palazzo Vecchio discussed below.

Vecellio's coverage of soldiers concludes with a depiction of a Venetian *bravo*, stating that in previous times these men were called gladiators. The fifteenth-century *bravo* who appears earlier in the volume is a neutral figure, associated with training and skill in swordplay and fighting (Rosenthal and Jones 2008, 120). In contrast, the sixteenth-century *bravo* is characterised as more brutish: «hoggidi bravi, overo sbricchi, i quali per danari servono hor questo, hor quello biastemando, & bravando senza proposito» (Vecellio 1590, 165r). However, according to Vecellio they dress very well, the key components of their clothing being a linen doublet, leather jerkin, short cloak decorated with gold braid, silk breeches and a high velvet hat. Military figures in the volume are often characterised by their panned and slashed breeches with stockings tied above the knee. The widespread fashion for slashing in civilian dress throughout the sixteenth century is thought have derived from the ripped and torn garments of Landsknechts. The arrival of Cosimo I's troop of Swiss Guards in Florence from 1541 onwards would have underlined the link between masculine strength and ostentatious apparel given that they were a highly visible presence in public life, dressed in their bright liveries with plumed hats and panned trunk hose (Arfaïoli, Focarile and Merlo, 2019).

The many campaigns of the Italian Wars (1494-1559) and changing military practices swelled the numbers of foot soldiers and militia men, and among them unwilling conscripts, often poorly paid, and prone to high desertion rates (Mallett 2019, 153-59; 226-27). When their services were no longer needed some joined the retinues of feudal lords or members of the aristocracy, who depended on armed «heavy men» to protect their interests. These men would have been described by many contemporaries as *bravi* and had a reputation for being rough, tough and lawless. Some also embodied an element of glamour, in part due to the type of eye-catching dress outlined by Vecellio. Jonathan Walker has shown that in Venice the term was applied to a range of individuals, from rogue criminals to the employees of noblemen, and the boundaries between their roles were not always distinct (Walker 1998, 85). The growing presence of *bravi* in the second half of the sixteenth

century in public spaces and in representational forms, from *commedia dell'arte* performances to genre paintings, suggests they were a source of both desire and anxiety. In 1583 in Milan legislation was passed against *bravi*, vagabonds, rascals, and cheats «without a salary or profession, who idle about in squares, taverns, and brothels, sometimes asking for alms pretending to be poor soldiers returned from the war» (*Grude et Ordini* 1584, 17-18). The city's concerted efforts to curb the activities of *bravi* were viewed favourably in other parts of Italy. In 1612, for example, a notification from Rome to the Medici court reported that the Spanish Governor of the Duchy of Milan «si mostrava molto rigoroso nelle cose del governo et particolarmente circa l'estirpatione de'bravi, facendone ogni dì carcerare qualcuno, né voler che si porti da nessuno pistole».<sup>1</sup>

Parallels can be drawn between the behaviour of *bravi* and their wealthier, titled, male counterparts given that masculine honour was often asserted and maintained through acts of aggression at all social levels. In 1579 in Milan, for example, Cardinal Carlo Borromeo tried to limit reckless, violent acts and flamboyance amongst courtiers during Carnival. The places and practices he urged them to relinquish included hostleries, cards, games, sword fights, brawls, masking, bacchanalian and lascivious activities: «sono introdotte risse, inimicitie, giuochi, balli, comedie, spettacoli conviti, crapule, et ogni sorte di dissolution et offese de Dio» (Annoni 1984, 926-27). For Florentine noblemen in their teens and twenties, disputes and clashes were quickly magnified by the fact that men often acted in groups and their sense of status was enhanced by belonging to different factions or coteries (Trexler 1980, 387-89). These characteristics, and the strong links between youth, visibility, violence and daring, are illustrated in a tragic episode from 1548 involving a group of young Florentine noblemen. A feud exacerbated by their opposing political affiliations came to a head during a game of football, a favourite sport of the Florentine male elite that tended to combine sartorial ostentation with brute force (Currie 2016, 131-35). An argument over a goal led to blows between Francesco Bucherelli, described in contemporary correspondence by Giovanni Maria Segni as a «giovanetto sbarbato e bello» and another youth, Gino Capponi, a favourite of Cosimo de' Medici (Mellini 1820, 109-11). Bucherelli's friends, including Paolo Buonagrazia, «un uomo che si piccava di bravo e di duellista», encouraged him to vindicate his honour but when they broke into Capponi's house at night they encountered more opponents than they had bargained for: ten men including two soldiers and a priest. Bucherelli and two of his supporters attempted to escape but were captured and later hanged, while the fourth, Niccolò degli Alessandri, died fighting off his opponents. Segni was more forgiving of Alessandri than the others, calling him «un uomo valoroso», implying that this act of bravery transformed him into a knightly, heroic figure (Mellini 1820, 110).<sup>2</sup>

On both sides, these men were armed with a mixture of improvised weapons and swords. Cosimo de' Medici's sumptuary laws of 1562 prohibited men who did not qualify for exemption from wearing knitted silk stockings and hat feathers yet

<sup>1</sup> State Archives of Florence (ASF), *Mediceo del Principato*, Vol. 4028, fol 380. Medici Archive Project, Doc ID 24448.

<sup>2</sup> For further details of this episode, see Babcock (1991).

allowed them to carry swords, daggers, spurs and gold, silver or silver-gilt knives (Cantini 1802, Vol. IV, 407).<sup>3</sup> The growing prevalence of such weaponry can be traced through household account books, surviving objects, and commentaries on changing court etiquette (Bartels 2019, 188-223). By the early seventeenth century, observers such as Bartolomeo Cenami and Tommaso Rinuccini noted that courtiers were increasingly accustomed to carrying arms on their person (Pellegrini 1901, 123 and Aiazzi 1840, 276). The Venetian author, Lucrezia Marinella highlighted the importance of weaponry when she caricatured the appearance of male bravado in *The Nobility and Excellence of Women and the Defects and Vices of Men* (1600), describing how «we always see men dressed up like soldiers with weapons at their belts, bearded and menacing, and walking in a way that they think will frighten everyone» (cited and translated by Paulicelli 2014, 143). This underscores the potential for weapons to be worn and displayed in different ways: darkly sheathed under a cloak when they needed to be concealed or clinking and glinting at every move for a public performance of assertiveness.

### 3. Portraying heroism in court culture

Florentine men's personal experiences of physical aggressions were echoed in the many representations around them of male exemplars engaged in acts of strength and bravery. The aestheticization of combat permeated court life and the military conflicts that took place during the first decades of Medici rule, from the Battles of Montemurlo in 1537 to Lepanto in 1571, were commemorated or re-enacted in the form of propagandistic paintings and performances. Giorgio Vasari and Giovanni Stradano's frescoes for the Palazzo Vecchio celebrated Florentine military triumphs, including the depiction of the Battle of Marciano (1554) in the *Salone dei 500* portraying combatants in a mixture of antique-style armour and sixteenth-century clothing. The most striking elements of their armour include muscle cuirasses with lappets influenced by classical sculpture, while other figures wear garments typical of the clothing of Landsknechts, including codpieces and *pluderhosen*. Patricia Lee Rubin notes that Vasari was preoccupied with achieving accuracy in details of dress elsewhere in his history paintings in the Palazzo Vecchio (Rubin 1995, 205). However, in this scene dress is primarily a tool to show off the idealised, heroic body to best effect. The theme of warfare was also incorporated into the painted ephemera for court festivities as, for example, in the series of triumphal arches created to celebrate Ferdinando de' Medici's wedding to Christine of Lorraine in 1589. Although the arches do not survive, preparatory drawings and sketches show they included scenes elevating the military history of the House of Lorraine-Guise (Saslow 1996, 192-93).

In addition, court life regularly offered opportunities to perform feats of bravery in staged battles, such as jousts, usually featuring lavish costumes or liveries. The ideal of beautiful combat is highlighted in a description of a joust for Francesco de' Medici and Bianca Cappello's wedding celebrations in 1579:

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<sup>3</sup> «...spada pugnale, cintura di spada, sproni, & coltelli dorati, & d'oro, & d'argento, così ferri & finimenti di Carnieri o scarselle...»

Come ebbero fine le vaghe rappresentazioni, cominciarono le giostre a piedi, le lance erano verdi, e salde, gli stocchi molto pesanti, si che vi furono di molti incontri bellissimoi & di molti forti colpi, i quali di raccontar tralascio, perche tali cose ogni giorno possono esser vedute, se non facilmente almeno con minore difficoltà, che le inventioni, & le livree, che furono così nobili, e belle, che à giudizio di chiunque le vide mai ne tante, ne tali per bellezza, o per ricchezza erano state vedute (Gualterotti 1579, 80).

The protagonists gained prestige from their appearances as much as their actions. This is evident from the carefully annotated design by Baccio del Bianco for a festive court costume for Jacopo Giraldi (1576-1630), Knight of Malta and member of the *Accademia della Crusca* (Fig. 2). The sketch shows him wearing a fantastical warrior's outfit, including a gorget, sword and helmet, decorated with a range of costly materials from ermine and swan feathers to silver lace.

Fig. 2. Baccio del Bianco, Costume Design for Jacopo Giraldi, depicted on horseback, 1620-30, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1948, 48.122.2(11a)



Such staged battles were a key component of Medicean propaganda, building on traditions established by earlier generations of the family. The mock naval battle, or *Naumachia*, held at the Palazzo Pitti in 1589 for Ferdinando de' Medici's marriage to Christine of Lorraine is a notable example of this (Saslow 1996, 165). While courtiers and visiting dignitaries often took part in these court displays, particularly the popular football matches, the *Naumachia* was unusual in being performed by 150 soldiers and sailors from the Grand ducal galleys (Saslow 1996, 49; 163). The demanding nature of the event, heightened by a sudden, torrential downpour, presumably required special physical or technical skills.

The *Gioco del Ponte* was one of many festive team sports configured as a mock battle. Usually staged in Pisa, it was performed in Florence in 1608 as part of the programme of celebrations for the wedding of Cosimo II to Maria Maddalena of Austria.<sup>4</sup> A souvenir book for the wedding underlines that clothing was a key element of the event, with one illustration showing the formation of the ten different teams on the bridge each composed of 30 men, who made «una bella mostra». The teams were dressed in the clothing of foreign nations: «con abiti stravaganti, capricciosi, e livree di colori apparenti, e ben concertati, per potersi riconoscere nella folta della mischia» (Rinuccini 1608, 63). There was presumably little concern for these brave liveries once the battle began and the teams fought to gain control of the bridge: Stefano della Bella's etching of the *Gioco del Ponte* in Pisa in 1634 shows that contestants sometimes ended up in the river Arno.<sup>5</sup> Poet and composer Andrea Salvadori helped to devise the Battle of Love performed as part of Carnival festivities of 1616. In the accompanying souvenir book he extols the socio-political merits of mock combat:

Fu sempre nobilissima usanza di tutte le più civili Nazioni con pubblici spettacoli trattenere nell'ozio della pace la moltitudine....si devono lodare quei giuochi, che, havendo sembianza di Guerra, rallegrano infinitamente l'animo di chi gli vede, e rendono il corpo di chi gl'esercita piu vigoroso, & agile per le vere militari imprese (Salvadori 1615, 5).

He notes the crowd-pleasing potential of these spectacles and their ability to relay authority and power while enabling the noble participants to flamboyantly demonstrate their strength and bravery. He also praises the realism of this particular event, noting that the only thing missing to make it seem a real battle was «il veder' correre il sangue per il Teatro» (Salvadori 1615, 40).

#### 4. Jerkins and cuirasses: the appeal of leather

Several key features of Florentine fashionable dress reflected these militaristic influences by magnifying the wearer's bravado and physical presence. The codpiece is the best-known example of this kind of cross-fertilisation. At first a simple flap intended to cover the gap between separate leg hose, the codpiece was initially

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<sup>4</sup> For further discussion of these festive battles see Laura Kramer (2014).

<sup>5</sup> British Museum, London. Accession number: 1871,0513.665.

associated with soldiers on foot and horseback and subsequently developed into an ostentatious and decorative component of male fashionable dress. There is a considerable body of literature on the codpiece, which had similar characteristics in both its civilian and military guises (Fisher 2006; Frick 2011; Glover 2019). Yet there were several other types of clothing that were influenced by masculine ideals of combat and bravery and absorbed into fashionable dress via more circuitous routes, undergoing changes in appearance and function in the process. Reconstructing the initial context or model for these ubiquitous components of sixteenth-century fashion is key to uncovering their significance within the broader fashion system.

Over the course of the sixteenth-century, leather upper body garments, such as sleeveless jerkins (*colletti*) and doublets, became increasingly fashionable, as evidenced by portraits and wardrobe accounts. For centuries leading up to this, leather had been worn in combat, either as a single, outer layer or underneath plate armour, prized for its resilient qualities. Alongside its use in battle, leather was also worn for other physical pursuits, such as hunting. In 1572, news reached the Medici court of a hunting accident involving Charles IX de Valois when a member of his hunting party apparently accidentally wounded him with a large knife. The account suggests that the French king would have lost his arm if it had not been for his layers of clothing that included «...una bona veste di lupo, et un colletto di buffalo con le maniche et un grosso gippone con le maniche con molto bambagio dentro...».<sup>6</sup> Leather clothing also offered protection in a brawl or street fight. Vecellio's *bravo* wears «un colletto di caprone, o cerviotti, o camozze...calzette di cuoio o stame di Fiandra» sometimes combined with leather breeches (Vecellio 1590, 165r). It is not surprising that it is one of the identifying characteristics of Giovanni, a Flemish man wanted in Florence in 1557 for unspecified crimes. In an account reminiscent of a baroque genre painting, a witness named Natale Borgognone reports spending an evening visiting hostelryes and a brothel with Giovanni who wore:

un paio di calze gialle scavezze con raso rosso drento. Un colletto di cuoio nero trinciato. Giubbone di tela bianca. Spada alla spagnuola con'ilzi gia' dorati. Coreggina di velluto morello che mi disse era ancora della livrea quando stava col Marchese di Pescara?<sup>7</sup>

Some forms of leather jerkin became so associated with aggressive behaviour they were banned in a 1585 Florentine law (Calvi 2002, 491; Currie 2016, 97). The same approach was taken in Elizabethan England, where «doublets of defence» were outlawed (Strype 1824, 296). The Florentine law prohibited padded or reinforced leather jerkins, called *colletti di Dante*, similar in function to modern stab vests, but allowed all ranks of *Signori* and courtiers to wear «ordinary» ones. As with many early modern clothing terms, the name reflected the shifting networks of trade, production, and consumption that drove fashionable change. Terms such as *ormesino*, *ciambellotto*, or *palandrana*, remained current even when the garment style or product had evolved to bear little resemblance to their original namesakes.

<sup>6</sup> ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, Vol. 4026, fol. 109r. The Medici Archive Project, Doc ID 28364.

<sup>7</sup> ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, Vol. 1864 fol. 203. The Medici Archive Project, Doc ID 8745.

*Ciambellotto*, for example, was originally an imported fabric made of camel hair and although there are later examples of silk camlets, by the mid-sixteenth century it was usually a medium-cost woollen cloth.

The *colletto di Dante* seems to have taken its name from the dant, lant, or danta, an animal described in writings by European travellers to Western and Central Africa, from Alvise da Mosto in the mid-fifteenth century onwards. Although the dant's tough hide was a source of curiosity and fascination there was little consensus around its appearance, which prompted comparisons with various animals in the bovid family, such as gazelles or cows. Travellers recorded that its skin was used for the production of clothing and armour in Africa as well as being exported to Spain and Portugal. In his description of the Jolof kingdom, the Venetian Livio Sanuto observed: «si prevagliano di targhe rotonde e larghe, fatte del cuoio d'un animale detto Danta, che è durissimo» (Sanuto 1588, 80). Filippo Pigafetta and Duarte Lopes' report of the kingdom of Kongo includes an animal called empachas in the neighbouring kingdom of Loango, stating that «it is smaller than the ox, with horns like a goat, and is still found in Germany, where it is called Dant. From these Parts and from Congo the skins are taken to Portugal, and from thence to Flanders, where they are dressed and made into jerkins, corselets, and cuirasses, to which they give the name Dant» (Hutchinson 1881, 25). Giovanni Botero's *Delle Relationi Universali* (1591) lists animals found in the Kongo, including «i bufali, e gli asini salvaticchi, e Danti (la cui pelle e' durissima) vanno in frotte per li boschi» (Botero 1591, 152). John Florio's dictionary provides a further flourish with his translation of Dante as «a great wilde beast in Affrica with a very hard skin. Also used for the best perfumed Turkie or Spanish leather for gloves or ierkins» (Florio 1611, 136). During this period, Italian production centres came to rely increasingly on imported hides to satisfy the growing demand for leather for clothing, accessories, domestic furnishings, the upholstery of coaches, and so forth (Ventura 2003, 472). According to George E. Brooks, the trade in hides from West Africa to Europe expanded significantly in the latter part of the sixteenth century especially propelled by the activities of Dutch and French merchants (Brooks 2003, 31). The scale of the import market is hinted at in a 1624 bulletin to the Medici court reporting seven vessels arriving in Zeeland from Cape Verde with a cargo seized from the Spanish, comprising sugar, silver, and twenty thousand ox skins.<sup>8</sup> Even when made from local leather, the notoriety of the *colletto di Dante* was presumably enhanced by the implied connection with the famed qualities of this distant beast.

Like their martial prototypes, fashionable jerkins were also thought to safeguard the wearer. Rodrigo Fonseca, the Portuguese physician and lecturer at the University of Pisa recommended in his *Del Conservare la Sanita* (1603) that those with weak chests «should arm themselves by covering the whole chest with a leather skin, like a corset, and wear leather clothing» (Cavallo and Storey 2013, 106). Leather was considered by some to be a sturdier, more masculine choice than softer fabrics, especially silks.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the jerkins worn by wealthy Florentine men tended to privilege decorative features over functional ones, often being made

<sup>8</sup> ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, Vol. 4258, fol. 301. The Medici Archive Project, Doc ID 23760.

<sup>9</sup> Views on this in an English context are raised in Erica Fudge (2002, 89).

of thinner skins, slashed, and decorated with braid and embroideries. The jerkin in the Stibbert Collection, Florence is stuffed with cotton or wool and quilted, making it stiff and resilient although it lacks other key defensive elements of a military garment. It has a high waist, finished with pickadils that barely overlap and the V-aperture at the neck creates another weak spot (Orsi Landini 1998, 74-5). Leather garments made for battle usually included design features such as overlapping areas at front openings or at the skirts, in the case of buff coats, to provide maximum resilience (Downen 2015, 162-63). In 1546, Cosimo de' Medici ordered a new *colletto di corame* to replace one that he thought was too heavy.<sup>10</sup> This suggests a more decorative garment than the jerkins he wore as a younger man keen to visually align himself with his father, the renowned military leader, Giovanni delle Bande Nere (Currie, 2016, 47-48), perhaps resembling the Stibbert jerkin thought to be made of fallow deerskin, or the fencing doublet in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, from c. 1580.<sup>11</sup> As a ruler, dressing too aggressively could lead to accusations of cowardice. This was the case for the Stuart King James I, of whom it was said «he was more corpulent in his clothes then through his body...his cloathes [were] ever being made large and easie, the Doublets quilted for stiletto proof, his breeches in great pleats and full stuffed» (Hayward 2020, 60). It was insinuated that the king depended upon dress to increase his bulk and appear physically stronger, although it could equally be argued that he was merely following the fashions of the time. In whatever form, ornamental or reinforced, leather jerkins were intended to show the wearer was no stranger to action and the layering of skin on skin harked back to the muscle cuirasses on the backs of the heroes who adorned the walls of Florentine *palazzini*.

## 5. Military conflict and the circulation of fashions

In 1624, one Alessandro Scavaruoti, the fiscal auditor for a member of the Gonzaga family, is described in Medici correspondence and identified by his clothing, which included «un colletto di dante con alamari d'oro».<sup>12</sup> It was typical to combine leather jerkins with this type of braided fastening, now known as frogging and usually described in contemporary sources as *alamari* or *bottoni all'ungheresca*. Both terms referred to the foreign origins of frogging, which reached Italy via different routes, another reminder of the richness of the vocabulary of sixteenth-century fashion. *Alamari* is derived from Arabic and Spanish while *all'ungheresca*, the term usually employed in Medici wardrobe accounts, nods to the style's connections with Hungary (Orsi Landini and Niccoli 2005, 58). Dress historians have linked frogging with the types of ornamentation utilised on metal breastplates, specifically those worn by the notorious Hungarian Hussar regiment. It has been

<sup>10</sup> ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, Vol. 1172 fol. 174r. Medici Archive Project, Doc ID 7811. «Il colletto di corame che lui ha e' troppo grave, et che non e' il proposito suo, et percio' che la [ne] faccia fare un'altro piu' leggier di quello».

<sup>11</sup> Museo Stibbert, Florence. Inv. no. 193. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Accession number: 29.158.175.

<sup>12</sup> ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, Vol. 2952, unfoliated. The Medici Archive Project, Doc ID 5753.



suggested that «when seen from a distance their braid-trimmed breastplates were meant to look like deadly attackers' rib cages» (Johansen 2005, 17). Sixteenth-century Italians would also have associated frogging with the zupan, kaftan, or dolman-type gowns worn in North Africa and Turkey but it was the use of frogging in military contexts that accelerated its diffusion from one country to another.

Fig. 3. Giacomo Franco *Effigie naturali dei maggior prencipi et piu valorosi capitani di questa eta con l'arme loro* (Venice, 1596), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1957, 57.506(35)



Following the Ottoman-Hungarian wars, many elements of Turkish clothing were adopted in Hungary and spread to neighbouring countries such as Poland as well as to Italy, one of various examples in this period where fashion transcended geographical borders, as well as political and religious differences. This intermingling of styles was remarked upon by the Hungarian Martin Csombor

travelling through Poland in 1616: «Once, the Polish men's dress was different from the Hungarian but today there are only a few differences for both delight in Turkish dress» (Tazbir 1985, 173). The Battle of Lepanto gave further impetus to these sartorial transmissions in Italy in the last quarter of the century. Rick Scorza has described how Italian soldiers «cavorted in colourful 'Turkish battle dress' in victory processions (Scorza 2012, p. 178) while the sailors manning the Ottoman ships in the 1589 *Naumachia* wore Turkish dress (Poole 2011, 405). Turkish military figures were typically identifiable by their frogged upper garments, as exemplified by the portrait of Grand Vizier Sinan Pasha in Giacomo Franco's *Effigie naturali dei maggior prencipi et piu valorosi capitani di questa eta con l'arme loro* (1596) (Fig. 3). Turbaned Turkish riders wear similar gowns in Giovanni Stradano's engraving of the Siege of Vienna, designed for the 1589 Medici wedding celebrations (Gualterotti 1589, 132).<sup>13</sup> Vecellio depicts frogging on Polish, Croatian and Hungarian male clothing and his description of Polish men's customs is prefaced with the assertion that «il Polacco è bellicoso, e valoroso a cavallo», underlining the extent to which Italians associated these figures and their clothing with martial skills (Vecellio 1590, 353v).

Frogging had several practical advantages, being preferable to buttons for fastening thick fabrics while the loops could be adjusted depending on the size of the wearer and the number of layers worn underneath. As with leather jerkins, these functional aspects tended to become redundant when frogging was utilised on fashionable, bespoke garments. Indeed, from the mid-sixteenth century onwards, frogging was employed for decorative purposes as much as for fastenings. In 1562, Don Garzia de' Medici was buried in a cloak decorated with frogging, described by the team who conserved it as «silk braid fastenings after the Polish fashion», along the side seams, hanging sleeves and collar (Arnold and Orsi Landini 1993, 52 and 64). Similarly, sketches for Medici liveries from 1593 incorporate frogging as ornamental detail, such as around the hem of a cloak (Currie 2007, 164-6). It is employed in the same way upon the robes of high-ranking Janissary captains in an engraving from Nicolas de Nicolay's *Discours et histoire veritable des navigations, peregrinations, et voyages, faits en la Turquie* (Antwerp, 1586). Here, in addition to the rows of front-fastening frogging, the braiding also appears on the cuffs of hanging sleeves and splits at the side of full-length robes (Jirousek 2019, 86). The link between frogging and bravery was so deeply embedded that it survived its appropriation across different countries on male and female clothing. The frogging on Elizabeth I's bodice in the so-called 'Darnley' portrait (c. 1575) by an unidentified continental artist should surely be seen in this light: as a conscious evocation of masculine authority and strength, in the same way the queen harnessed male-gendered terminology.<sup>14</sup> Elizabeth's wardrobe also featured two leather doublets (Arnold 1988 142-44), a material more frequently associated with menswear. Charlotte A. Jirousek suggests that the Darnley portrait was painted

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.bl.uk/treasures/festivalbooks/pageview.aspx?strFest=0204&strPage=132> (17 February 2021).

<sup>14</sup> National Portrait Gallery, London. Accession number: 2082.

during secret Ottoman negotiations and that the inclusion of the braided fastenings was a conscious reference to links between the two courts (Jirousek 2019, 100).

## 6. Fashioning the muscular male body

Turning to the lower half of the body, the new style of short, bulbous trunk hose that exaggerated the buttocks and highlighted the male thigh also encapsulated virility. Leg padding had been used earlier on by soldiers to provide extra protection and cushioning under leg armours and the practice became increasingly prevalent in civilian fashions from the first decades of the sixteenth century. Padded breeches developed as the result of other changes in male dress: the gradual separation of upper hose (or breeches) and lower hose combined with the popularity of short, high-waisted doublets. Prior to this, men wore full-length hose, usually made of woven fabric, often with integrated leather soles (Muzzarelli, 206-9, 212-15). When the lower half of the body was encased in a single garment, the male silhouette appeared lithe and elongated, an impression further enhanced by the use of parti-coloured hose. In contrast, padded upper breeches created a burlier look, mimicking the shape of muscled buttocks and thighs, or compensating for less developed ones. Tailors soon created breeches in an array of different styles and decorative effects, often taking inspiration from the leg coverings of soldiers, who were known for their paned, slashed breeches, codpieces, exposed buttocks and other eye-catching styles. Some of these features, including clearly delineated buttocks, were incorporated into costume armour thought to have been made for Polish nobleman Jerzy 'Herkules' Radziwill in c. 1525, evidence of the reciprocal influences between fashion and armour (Patterson 2009).<sup>15</sup>

Sixteenth-century art idealised the monumental male form, often modelled on classical prototypes. The combative bodies in representations of warfare tended to be endowed with Herculean thighs, such as the pair in the foreground of Giorgio Vasari's fresco of *Maximilian Lifting the Siege of Livorno* (1568-71) in the Palazzo Vecchio. The rediscovery of sculpture and other artefacts from classical antiquity fuelled these tastes and Renaissance artists were spurred on to produce their own, occasionally even more awe-inspiring bodies, as exemplified by the reconstruction of the Farnese Hercules (Haskell and Penny 1981, 103 and 229-30). When the statue was recovered from the Baths of Caracalla in 1546 without its legs, sculptor Guglielmo della Porta was commissioned to create a new pair. Shortly afterwards, the originals were recovered but contemporaries including Michelangelo argued that della Porta's limbs were preferable. While his opinion was shaped by a desire to demonstrate the superiority of Renaissance artists over those of classical antiquity, it probably also reflected his appreciation of the more imposing proportions of the new additions, which can be seen in Hendrick Goltzius's engraving of the statue from c. 1592 (Fig. 4). The original legs were reunited with the rest of the sculpture in 1787. When Goethe saw them shortly afterwards he commented «it is now incomprehensible how the first legs by Porta could so long have passed for good»,

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<sup>15</sup> Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Accession number: 24.179; 26.188.1, .2; 29.158.363a, b.

a reaction that possibly reflected shifting views of the ideal male body (Goethe 1883, 365).

Fig. 4 Hendrick Goltzius, *Farnese Hercules*, c. 1592 dated 1617, engraving. Gift of Henry Walters, 1917, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 17.37.59



Tailors had various means at their disposal to make breeches that would endow the upper thigh with larger-than-life dimensions, applying skills and techniques already in their repertoire. Surviving garments and archival records point to the use of padding, wadding, quilting and under layers, often made using excess fabric to plump up outer layers. Florentine sumptuary laws acknowledged such styles required more material. In 1562, two *braccia* were allowed to make *braconi* but this had doubled by 1568 (Cantini 1800-1806, Vol. III, 406 and Vol. VII, 38). A missive from Rome in June 1567 describes a similar trend: «la Pragmatica del vestire si è rinnovata adesso allo improvviso con molto furure [furore], et sono stati presi molti giovani per amore de braconi, et così gli sbirri fanno ogni dì buonissime prede».<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> ASF, *Mediceo del Principato*, Vol. 3080 fol. 96. Medici Archive Project, Doc ID 21625.

Eugenia Paulicelli has identified various texts that refer to the use of props or prosthetics to make legs appear more muscular, from Ariosto's comments in his play *Cassaria* (1508) that men «support their hips with props, they enlarge their shoulders with felt and cardboard and the legs take on Herculean size with the help of babbage and rags» to Venetian nun Arcangela Tarabotti's critique of the same fashion (cited and translated by Paulicelli 2014, 100-104 and 192). The latter's comments formed part of a series of polemical exchanges by different authors on the subject of male and female followers of fashion. Lodovico Sesti's contribution to this dialogue expressed his support of padding: «Abominate che essi consumino una poco di bambagia per supplire ai mancamenti di natura, e dar compita perfezzione ad una gamba» (Sesti, 1656, 153). However, physician Frediano Elici's *Arca novella di sanita* (1656) suggests by this point the style was on the wane, as men no longer wore doublets and breeches with so much cotton stuffing they looked like mattresses or cushions (Cavallo and Storey 2013, 106).

Vecellio spoke in similarly disparaging tones of the spectacle of men's upper thighs, squeezed into such tight breeches you could see the veins in their legs (Jones 2017, 101-2). The increasing use of knitted stockings made of wool or even silk, which had greater adherence and elasticity than woven ones, inevitably focused attention on the musculature of the male leg. Banned in Florentine sumptuary law in 1562, as noted above, silk stockings were a luxury product. The account books of wealthy courtiers Francesco and Riccardo Riccardi show even they usually opted for woollen knitted stockings in the late sixteenth century.<sup>17</sup> This tendency is confirmed by the inventories of merchants trading in knitted goods in Mantua and other Italian cities including Florence on the cusp of the seventeenth century, 90% of whose stockings were woollen (Belfanti 2003, 587-9). The propagandistic potential of the male thigh can be glimpsed in representations of Cosimo and Ferdinando de' Medici in active roles with their legs decorously sheathed in knitted stockings yet very much on display. Benedetto Velli's 1589 engraving of Cosimo overseeing the fortifications of Tuscan cities (Gualterotti 1589, 145) shows him in mid-thigh-length breeches that reveal well-defined, poised legs.<sup>18</sup> Jacques Callot's depiction of Ferdinando, presiding over the fortifications at Livorno, emphasizes his stockinged knees protruding from panned breeches, a muscular contrast to the rest of his body, which is swaddled in silks and furs despite the apparent heat of the day (Fig. 5).

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<sup>17</sup> ASF, Riccardi 55, 41v, 42r, *Riccardi* 56, 73r: various payments to Agostino Agucchiatore including for *calze di stame* and *calze intere*.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.bl.uk/treasures/festivalbooks/pageview.aspx?strFest=0204&strPage=145> (17 February 2021)

Fig. 5. Jacques Callot, after Matteo Rosselli, *Fortification of the Gate of Livorno by Order of the Grand Duke*, Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Gift of William Gray from the collection of Francis Calley Gray, by exchange, Photo ©President and Fellows of Harvard College, S3.91.2



As the Italian elites became more removed from actual warfare, they embraced ways of incorporating a martial aesthetic within their clothing. The popularity of the codpiece was an early manifestation of this phenomenon and a striking conjunction of the martial and hypermasculine. It has been noted that its prominence was relatively short-lived but its heyday in male fashion coincided with other celebrations of warfare and male muscularity in the visual arts and festive life. By the mid-seventeenth century, however, the Medici court seemed less focused on projecting its bellicose nature, perhaps a sign of the confidence of the Grand ducal regime. Equally, the courtly taste for festive war games that glorified noble participants began to dwindle and these events were increasingly replaced by more controlled military displays (Pollak 2010, 280-6). Indeed, in 1688 a publication dedicated to the Medici was deemed necessary to drum up support for the once-popular sport of Florentine football (Bini 1688). The rise of military uniforms across Europe in the seventeenth century marked a clearer distinction between the appearances of soldiers and civilians, putting a stop to the more ad-hoc assemblage of styles that could be appropriated to express the combative powers of elite men. Fashion during the century leading up to this point is therefore noteworthy for its public promotion of the idealised masculine attributes of strength and bravery.

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*Tavola rotonda*

*Round table*



Salvatore Ciriaco

### *Tavola rotonda*

Come avviene sulla base dello statuto storiografico dell'Istituto Datini, l'argomento «Moda» è stato affrontato nei suoi aspetti economici in senso largo, vale a dire quelli produttivi e tecnologici, premessa di un possibile legame con le attese dei consumatori e in ogni caso sostenuti dalle materie prime a disposizione nei secoli considerati. Un approccio che si è rilevato ineccepibile e foriero di risultati storiografici importanti sebbene non si possa dimenticare come i rimandi ad altri aspetti della tematica «Moda» siano altrettanto fondamentali e che essi debbano essere ripresi in altre occasioni. Imprescindibile è in questa prospettiva l'aspetto sociologico, psicologico e persino psicanalitico, solo raramente tenuto presente in questa occasione. Ricorderei quanto sottolineavano sin dai primi anni del ventesimo secolo Georg Simmel (*Die Mode*) o John Carl Flügel, e quindi molto prima dell'*Esprit de distinction* di Pierre Bourdieu, molto citato negli ultimi anni; nonché da semiotici e linguisti come Roman Jakobson, risvolti presenti in un precedente saggio di Odile Blanc. Svolta infatti la funzione protettiva e vergognosa (la necessità di coprire le nudità del corpo umano), l'abito ha potuto esprimere in molte epoche un costume sociale opposto, vale a dire l'esposizione e l'attrazione delle membra del corpo, soprattutto di quello femminile (ma sarebbero molti gli approfondimenti necessari in tale direzione).

In ogni caso l'abito e la moda si sono intrecciati alla cultura di corte e alle raffinatezze di una civiltà urbana che a partire dal XII e XIII secolo hanno rappresentato l'abbrivio di un percorso socio-economico divenuto allo stesso tempo espressione del bello e rappresentazione del potere. Come metteva in evidenza nella sua *Prolusione* Maria Giuseppina Muzzarelli (Bologna), l'abito sottolineava molto di più che nei secoli precedenti le sinuosità del corpo umano (contro ad esempio la tunica classica) rappresentando la raffinatezza di un ceto nobile e di una borghesia urbana che si affermava in quei secoli. Su questa linea interpretativa Laurel Ann Wilson, di New York, concordava con il suo *The impact of technological change on medieval fashion* sul ruolo delle tecniche medievali, differenziandosi su questo piano da altri studiosi, come Catherine Kovesi, la quale ha guardato al XVI secolo e al Rinascimento italiano come al più tardo periodo storico durante il quale era l'espansione economica di quel secolo a sottendere l'esplosione del gusto e di una raffinatezza crescente. Altri hanno sottolineato (Carlo Marco Belfanti nei suoi precedenti lavori) come il fattore «Moda» non fosse stato un fenomeno unicamente europeo ma come esso possa essere evinto in altre civiltà extra-europee, *in primis* quella cinese ma anche in quella indiana e nipponica.

John Styles (*Re-fashioning Industrial Revolution: Fibres, fashion and technical innovation in British cotton textiles, 1630-1780*) ha ripercorso le innovazioni tecnologiche che hanno accompagnato il largo uso durante la Rivoluzione industriale non solo del cotone ma di una più larga varietà di fibre tessili. È stato questo, del resto, un approccio che è ritornato in altre comunicazioni, come quella di Nadia Fernández de Pinedo (Madrid), Maria Paz Moral (Leioa-Erandio) e di Emiliano Fernández de Pinedo (Leioa-Erandio). Questi hanno guardato a come la monarchia spagnola (*Un changement radical dans la consommation de tissus par la royauté et son milieu (1293-1504): de la laine au lin et à la soie*) non avesse incrementato solamente la domanda della fibra più preziosa, la seta, nel rispondere ai consumi di corte, ma avrebbe sollecitato la produzione di altre fibre tessili, collegate ad altrettanto diversi processi produttivi, come il lino, la canapa, la lana. In questa stessa prospettiva ha guardato il contributo di Julien Villain (Évry), il quale ha spiegato come anche nel corso del XVIII secolo, parallelamente alla lavorazione del cotone, non si abbandonarono in Francia le innovazioni legate alla lavorazione di un'antica fibra: la lana (*L'innovation de produit et les dynamiques de l'offre sur les marchés des étoffes de laine dans la France du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Quelques aperçus quantitatifs et qualitatifs*).

I progressi tecnologici, certamente avvenuti all'interno di un quadro nazionale, fosse esso quello inglese o francese, poterono svilupparsi grazie a un transfer tecnologico che giungeva dall'esterno, come ci hanno ricordato Germán Navarro Espinach e Joaquín Aparici Martí (Zaragoza). In questo caso (*The colour of Valencian silk: fabrics in the European market (1475-1513)*) il *know-how* legato alla coloritura della seta era giunto da Genova, città al pari di altri centri urbani italiani fondamentali nella produzione serica di qualità per tutto il XVI secolo, sebbene in diretta competizione con la Francia nei secoli successivi. Ce lo ricordavano Pascale Gorguet-Ballesteros di Parigi e Moira Dato di Firenze con i panciotti di seta, originale prodotto alla moda lanciato dal setificio di Lione: *Lyonnais Silks «ad ultimo gusto»*. *Fashion and Marketing Strategies between France and Italy in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The case of the male waistcoat*. Qui il ruolo dello stato e la domanda di carattere nobiliare si erano affermati prepotentemente ed erano divenuti fortemente competitivi nei mercati internazionali, soprattutto nei confronti del tradizionale setificio italiano, come è stato evidenziato da molta letteratura.

Tali aspetti – le politiche mercantilistiche ma in nuce anche l'ideologia e la stessa religione – sono stati illustrati, aprendo scenari da riprendere in altre occasioni, in un altro contesto, scarsamente evidenziato sino ad ora, vale a dire quello scandinavo: Klas Nyberg (Stoccolma), *The production of international fashion in state-sponsored manufactures in Sweden-Finland, 1740-1810*. In effetti, se quanto è avvenuto nella penisola iberica fra il Medioevo e la prima età moderna ha ricevuto in questa Settimana un'attenzione rilevante, altrettanto opportuno sarebbe stato confrontare, in misura più diretta, quanto avveniva nell'Europa settentrionale rispetto all'Europa mediterranea. In quest'ultima prospettiva il Protestantesimo ha sicuramente svolto, o almeno ci sembra opportuno sottolinearlo, un ruolo rilevante nel controllare un abbigliamento che non fosse troppo appariscente, come avveniva appunto nei paesi mediterranei. Su questi aspetti e in particolar modo su quanto avveniva in Castiglia, Máximo García Fernández (Valladolid) con il suo *Consumos de apariencia en la Castilla moderna* ci ha offerto interessanti materiali di riflessione.

D'altro canto, quello che ha caratterizzato questi secoli è stato sempre il fenomeno sintetizzato nella formulazione del *trickle-down*, in altri termini l'emulazione delle classi sociali inferiori rispetto alle classi alte, le quali certamente sino alla Rivoluzione industriale hanno dettato legge nella moda. Solamente negli ultimi decenni è stato individuato un processo sociale inverso (una moda giovanile imitata da ceti sociali più danarosi ma più attempati, non volendo tuttavia questi ultimi sfigurare rispetto a giovani più rampanti): un aspetto riassunto nel fenomeno del *bubble-down* (Belfanti 2008, 262). Ad ogni modo la città di Valencia (certamente in espansione in questi secoli) ha offerto lo spunto per approfondimenti in questa direzione: Juan Vicente García Marsilla, Luis Almenar Fernández (Valencia), *Fashion, emulation and social classes in late medieval Valencia. Exploring textile consumption through probate inventories*; Daniel Muñoz Navarro (Valencia), *The virus of fashion. Democratization of luxury and newcommercial strategies in early modern Valencia*.

Un termine di confronto ma in un'altra direzione e contesto sociale è stato posto da Aris Kafantogias di Vienna, studiando una classe sociale anch'essa posseduta dal virus della moda: *Viennese servants in the period 1760-1823*. Sempre in una prospettiva di carattere sociale, ma alla quale si potrebbe aggiungere la variabile «centro-periferia», ha guardato la relazione di Tatiana Markaki (Amsterdam). Analizzando la produzione tessile nella Creta del XVII secolo ha evidenziato l'impossibilità di produrre broccati e damaschi quali erano tessuti nella Dominante. Gli abiti di largo uso risultavano di più modesta fattura, specialmente quanto a fibre lavorate: *Innovations and the art of deception: mixed cloths in Venetian Crete (17th century)*.

In questa stessa prospettiva si potrebbe leggere l'innovativa ricerca di Peter Stabel, dell'Università di Anversa, incentrata nello studio della pur ricca Bruges, dove le classi sociali più povere erano indotte a riciclare gli abiti dei più ricchi, termine di paragone ineludibile.

In un quadro socio-economico così ampio, nell'ambito del quale la «Moda» ha rappresentato per secoli un «segno» più che rappresentativo, non sono certo mancate tematiche e filoni di ricerca paralleli ai processi produttivi, alle fibre impiegate, alla congiuntura economica, alle ragioni scambio. Lluís To Figueras, di Girona, ci ha ricordato come i sarti, legati a una domanda di carattere nobiliare (*Drapers and tailors. Fashion and consumption in medieval Catalonia*) abbiano pur rappresentato un tassello fondamentale nelle produzioni alla moda, alle quali si chiedeva di seguirla ma alla fin fine esse stesse potevano indirizzarla.

Gli stessi colori (dominanti nelle diverse epoche e anch'essi legati a molteplici fattori, indagati solo in parte in questa occasione ma pur sempre fondamentali) o la destinazione d'uso dell'abito (scopi militari o tematiche rappresentative del ceto nobiliare o borghese) non potevano essere ignorati. Il caso di Firenze, studiato da Elizabeth Currie dell'Università di Londra (*Action men: martial fashions in Florence, 1530-1630*) ha guardato a tali aspetti. In effetti le arti marziali e la stessa iconografia hanno rinvio sicuramente agli ideali di vita e ai valori sociali che dominavano il caso fiorentino nel corso del XVI secolo. Nei secoli successivi tali tematiche e motivi pittorici (si pensi all'attenzione che la pittura olandese dedicherà nel corso del XVII secolo alla borghesia, agli interni, alla natura morta – ma questa è sicuramente un'indicazione frettolosa) rappresenteranno un modello divergente rispetto al Rinascimento fiorentino, impegnandoci quindi in ulteriori analisi e studi.



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Maryanne Kowaleski

*Round Table comment.*

*Fashion as an economic engine: continuity and change*

When Marco Belfanti and I proposed the *Settimana* theme of «Fashion as an economic engine» three years ago, our main aim was to highlight how fashion by itself could stimulate economic transformations, not only indirectly through changes in, for example, textile manufactures. I am pleased to see that our expectations have been more than met in the array of excellent papers that have been presented. My remarks, organized according to the three major points in the Call for Papers, focus especially on continuity and change between the medieval and early modern periods and pose further questions that we should consider. As a medievalist, I am especially struck by how often developments characterized as new in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can also be identified in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, even though these developments may have been more intense and rapid in the later centuries. Here I am also picking up on Professor Muzzarelli's arguments (this volume) that medieval developments in fashion represented the beginning of the road to modernity.

### **Innovations in products and processes**

Similarities more than differences characterized medieval and early modern innovations in the production of textiles, which all required capital investment and yielded cost reductions and improvements in quantity and quality. In both periods, knowledge transfer from immigrants – who were sometimes deliberately recruited for their technical skills – could play a crucial role. Most technological innovations, whether the horizontal loom, new tailoring techniques, lacemaking, or the use of New World dyestuffs, are imprecisely dated developments that took some time to realize fully. Other changes singled out in the early modern period, such as the shift to lighter, cheaper, and less durable textiles; to mixed-fibre fabrics; and to linen underwear, all originated in the late Middle Ages. But a break in the traditional process of technological innovation did occur in the second half of the eighteenth century when complementary 'inventions' such as the spinning genny, water frame, and spinning mule can be attributed to named inventors at specific times and locations. These and other inventions such as the mechanized looms radically improved the production and quality of textiles in laying the foundation for the industrial revolution.

There are interesting questions to ask about the motivating factors behind these innovations across time. Convincing arguments have been made for how changing

patterns of consumption stimulated technical innovation in the eighteenth century, but were the general contours of innovation all that different in the earlier and later centuries? There are medieval parallels to the quickening pace of adaptation and invention; to the power of choice among consumers as the variety of fabrics, colors, and shapes proliferated; and to the impact of multiple, global forces shaping both supply and demand. Are the differences mainly those of degree? Perhaps this is a question that can be revisited at the 2022 *Settimana* on «The knowledge economy: innovation, productivity and economic growth».

Product innovation has been a major theme in the conference papers, with in-depth analysis of changes in weaving, cut, shape, color, fibre content, and fabrics, although the focus has been more on demand than on supply, and rather less has been said about economic stimulants such as state fiscal policies and rising standards of living, although these factors have received considerable attention in the past. If we stand back and assess what prompted innovations in the types of garments being produced, however, what role should economic historians assign consumer demand compared to supply, and how much weight should we assign to larger political, financial, and demographic trends? Did the balance of these factors differ in the medieval and early modern periods? Did all technical innovations in the production of cloth and clothing lead to fashion innovations?

### **Commercial strategies**

Although the proliferation of prints, costume books, and magazines depicting fashionable dress offered more targeted marketing strategies in early modern than medieval Europe, the retailing venues of markets and shops were largely the same across this entire period. The papers say little about the the role of fairs in fashion, but early modern fairs performed essentially the same functions as the medieval fairs when it came to marketing the cloth that was employed in crafting fashionable garments and accessories. There also seems to be little new evidence about shops or other locations where cloth and clothing were offered for sale. Indeed, I am struck by the similarities in the images that speakers have used to illustrate shops, especially in terms of the overhead or bird's eye views of open marketplaces used in several powerpoints – in fact, these images are very close to what we see even today in the Sunday market in Prato's Piazza del Duomo.

There is, however, perhaps more to say about changes in the experience of shopping over time, whether done by drapers, mercers, and intermediaries seeking textiles and mercery from local, regional, and international suppliers, or by consumers themselves. Scholars have been exploring the contours of pre-modern shopping (for example, Blondé et al. ed. 2006; Welch 2005), but I would like to know more. Did the greater variety of textile and fashion choices in the early modern period fundamentally change how consumers approached shopping for garments and dress accessories? When exactly could a fashion-forward aristocratic lady, or a middling urban guildsman, or a well-off peasant walk into a shop and find ready-made wear? Was that entirely outside our period? Did this type of consumer behavior occur first in big cities or in certain regions?

The speakers have been especially effective in telling us about the sellers and makers of cloth and clothing and how changes in their tasks, guilds, profits, and influence can reflect changes in the production of cloth and clothing, and therefore fashion. Indeed, the history of urban guilds often serves as a lens to track product innovations and consumer behavior in the manufacture and sale of textiles and dress. But can we step back and look at the *longue durée* in a European perspective? Drapers and tailors in thirteenth-century Catalonia sound a lot like their counterparts in England at this time, but by the early sixteenth century the London tailors had become the liveried company of Merchant Taylors, with significant investments in and control of the domestic cloth trade (Davies and Sanders 2004, 55-67; 73-87). The tailors in the provincial English city of Exeter also became wealthy enough to challenge the local mercantile elite in the mid-fifteenth century, although only the minority engaged in overseas trade ever came close to the status and power exercised by the merchant class (Williams 2020). Did the tailors of Vic experience a similar rise and if they did, what might that tell us about fashion and the economy? Did tailors' growing access to imported luxury cloths help prompt new types of clothing and accessories? In the discussion, Peter Stabel notes that second-hand clothes dealers in medieval Bruges were really a manufacturing trade, which was not entirely the case for their counterparts in London and Paris at the time (Staples 2011; 2015). Parisian embroiderers were organized into guilds during the Middle Ages (Depping 1837, 379-82), but even in the eighteenth century the Lyons embroiders worked as independent contractors. What are we to make of these similarities and differences? Or should we simply throw up our hands and concentrate on understanding this organization of labor in our own research bailiwicks?

### Changes in consumer behavior

Consumer behavior has rightly received the bulk of attention in the *Settimana* papers, with convincing evidence across all periods that clothing was a crucial part of the material culture of middling and poorer people, representing a significant expense in their budgets and an opportunity for them to communicate both individual and collective identities. Also welcome is the attention now being paid to how gender (and among women, how marital status) influenced patterns of dress consumption. Social emulation is everywhere perceived as a potent force in consumer choice, although we have also been given some examples of bubble-up phenomena in medieval Valencia, renaissance Florence, and eighteenth-century Vienna. But I want to know more about why noble or urban elites would adopt dress practices from lower social groups. Were the reasons gendered in any way? I'm thinking here of how easily the street fashions of soldiers were adopted and wonder if masculine street fashion can be more easily adapted to elite fashion tastes when it reinforces aspirational male virtues like strength, bravery, and a certain youthful insouciance. Even today, new styles of male street fashion such as sagging jeans that display a guy's underwear can have an easier time making it to fashion runways than many female street fashions, which have a tendency to put an inexpensive twist on magazine high fashion.

As several speakers have noted, when it came to shopping for ready-made clothing, consumers often looked to second-hand dealers. Early modernists have begun to rethink second-hand clothing (for example, Fontaine, ed. 2008; Lemire 2012), which medievalists until recently have tended to view as reflecting the poverty of its buyers, whereas now the emphasis is placed on the large consumer market that second-hand dealers served (for example, García Marsilla 2013; Staples 2015). In the Middle Ages, second-hand dealers were probably the main providers of ready-made garments. Non-elite customers could acquire colors, fur trimmings, and expertly cut garments that they would not be able to afford when new by participating in the second-hand market, or via gifts or bequests of used clothing. This is a topic that deserves more attention, not only because it is likely that second-hand dealers served an even larger market in the medieval than early modern period, but because these dealers could also fashion new clothing out of old garments and because used clothing helped to blur the boundaries of social distinctions that we see as such an essential function of dress. It was also a clothing trade that appears to have employed many women (Staples 2015, 300-1). The resale value of clothing and accessories, moreover, also points to their use as capital to secure loans and pay debts, as both medievalists and early modern scholars have pointed out (for example, Smail 2016).

### **A final word on sources and methodologies**

The Call for Papers concluded with this question: How can economic historians draw on new methodologies and different types of sources for understanding the relationship between fashion and the economy? The papers have indeed presented a wealth of methodological approaches and examples of clever exploitation of often recalcitrant sources to find useful data to underpin interpretations about this relationship. Archaeological evidence is now playing a more important role in understanding fashion, especially in the Middle Ages, when documentary sources are more scarce. For example, a close examination of hundreds of excavated leather shoes embroidered with red and yellow silk in twelfth-century Norway established not only that the silk likely came from Central Asia and Byzantium, but also that this fashion trend, which lasted into the first two decades of the thirteenth century, went far down into the social hierarchy, suggesting that the silk yarn needed for the embroidery was affordable across a wide social spectrum (Hansen 2015). And as we have seen in several of the papers, historians are also now benefiting from scientific analysis of the fibre content, processing, colors, and designs of fabrics across the medieval and early modern periods to augment our understanding of changes in production techniques and consumer preferences.

We have also heard how many museums are now making their textile and dress collections more easily available for consultation by scholars in person and online. The website of the Museum of London's «Dress and textiles» collection, for example, illustrates the types of available resources. The Museum's Archaeological Archive is the largest in the world, and most items are discoverable via an online searchable catalog (Museum of London, «Advanced search»). The medieval collec-

tion of the Museum of London contains over 12,000 artifacts; a search for the keyword 'cap' for the period 1100-1500 yields 129 results. Clicking on an image brings users to the catalog entry with further descriptions of the item. A similar search on 'cap' for the years 1500 to 1750 in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London produces 1172 examples, most with a high-quality image of the object and useful metadata on its date, origin, decoration, and materials, as well as links to similar items in the collection. These types of digital resources, which have only become accessible in the last few years, provide a valuable source for fashion historians.

Because consumer behavior was central to so many of the conference papers, probate inventories and to some extent bankruptcy and shop inventories have become a particularly important source. Some regions, such as Valencia, seem to be blessed with especially early and full inventories, but scholars everywhere are spending more time locating and transcribing these documents because of the information they contain about material culture, including data about the value, characteristics, and owners of textiles, clothing, and dress accessories. Here too new digital resources are proving especially helpful. Some members of this audience will know about the new «Documentary Archaeology of Late Medieval Europe» (DALME) project at Harvard University (Smail, Pizzorno, and Morreale, «Overview»), which is making medieval inventories and other lists of objects accessible as open, structured datasets that can be searched and subjected to computational analysis. They include inventories from all corners of western Europe, including significant sets from Gascony, Geneva, Marseille, and Valencia. Clicking on one of the inventories opens up two facing windows: one with the original document and the other with a transcription. In addition to providing new data to dress historians, projects like this have pedagogical value in being well-suited for student research projects while, in the case of DALME, also providing interdisciplinary perspective in drawing on archaeological ontologies for its 'documentary archaeology.'

Another project that combines archaeological and documentary research is «Living Standards And Material Culture in English Rural Households», which examines objects recovered from hundreds of archaeological excavations along with lists of goods forfeited to the crown by criminals and suicides in order to investigate the extent to which a consumer revolution occurred in the period from 1300 to 1600. This project is producing a monograph and essay collection, as well as transcripts of selected lists of forfeited goods from people very far down the social ladder.

There are also now online resources that offer help navigating the pitfalls of textile terminology, a problem that has been mentioned several times in the last few days. For example, «The Lexis of Cloth and Clothing Project» (Crocker-Owen et al.) offers a searchable glossary of types of cloth (such as 'holland cloth'), ornamentation (like 'dagginge'), garments (such as 'skirt'), or occupations (such as 'calendar'), which are defined and contextualized by identifying the earliest references for each term. The Lexis focuses on the British Isles and Ireland and encompasses more than fifteen of the languages spoken there, from Old English and Old Irish to Latin and Anglo-Norman French, but I suspect that there are similar digital resources becoming available elsewhere for other regions, other languages, and for

both the medieval and early modern periods. It would be a good idea to follow up on John Styles' suggestion that we create a shared dictionary of cloth types and their measurements since there is an increasing need to bring this material together in one place for those examining the international trade in textiles. I would like to close, therefore, by suggesting that we gather a list of these digital resources in the history of textiles and dress in an appendix for the *Settimana* volume that will be produced from this conference or, better yet, that we compile a curated list on the Datini Institute website, which is becoming an increasingly valuable scholarly resource for historical images, open access papers and ebooks, and the Datini archive itself.

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## SALVATORE CIRIACONO, Tavola rotonda

Pur avendo la LII Settimana sviluppato adeguatamente il tema della Moda nei suoi aspetti economici, produttivi e tecnologici, non dimenticando le attese dei consumatori e il ruolo delle materie prime a disposizione nei secoli considerati, sono rimaste inevitabilmente ai margini altri aspetti di questa complessa tematica, la quale rinvia a questioni di carattere sociologico, linguistico, psicologico e persino psicoanalitico. Altrettanto opportuno sarebbe stato confrontare, in misura più diretta, quanto avveniva nell'Europa settentrionale rispetto all'Europa mediterranea, tenendo presente il ruolo del Protestantismo, molto lontano da un abbigliamento che fosse troppo appariscente. Il ruolo dei colori e delle tematiche, anche di carattere artistico, che trasparivano dall'abbigliamento rinviano egualmente ad altri aspetti che dovranno essere ripresi in altre occasioni.

*Although the LII Week adequately developed the theme of Fashion in its economic, productive and technological aspects, not forgetting the expectations of consumers and the role of raw materials available over the centuries considered, other aspects of this complex issue inevitably remained on the sidelines, which refers to questions of a sociological, linguistic, psychological and even psychoanalytic nature. It would have been equally appropriate to compare, in a more direct way, what was happening in northern Europe with respect to Mediterranean Europe, bearing in mind the role of Protestantism, very far from clothing that was too flashy. The role of colors and themes, also of an artistic nature, that transpired from clothing also refer to other aspects that will have to be taken up on other occasions.*

## ELIZABETH CURRIE, Action men: martial fashions in Florence, 1530-1630

This chapter analyses the influence of contemporary ideals of valour, physical strength, and martial skill on male court fashions. It outlines the various channels that enabled the propagation of martial styles and begins by examining the close relationship between inner valour and outward display, highlighting the meanings

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<sup>1</sup> In questa sezione del volume abbiamo inserito gli abstracts inviatici dagli Autori.

ascribed to the words «bravo» and «bravura» in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italian texts and imagery. Florentine courtiers were surrounded by idealised representations and performances of warfare, including mock battles with lavish costumes that were a key feature of Medici propaganda. Soldiers and mercenaries were themselves frequently characterised as fashion setters, associated with gaudy colours, flamboyance, and ornate decorations considered inappropriate male attire in many civic contexts. The chapter proceeds to focus on three key aspects of male dress connected with military might and physical strength: leather upper garments, frogged fastenings on cloaks and gowns, and adherent, short trunk hose. Consumer demand for these styles and their cultural meanings are traced through contemporary literature, visual sources, and archival records.

*Questo capitolo analizza l'influenza degli ideali contemporanei di coraggio, forza fisica e arti marziali sulla moda maschile della corte. Delinea i canali che facilitavano la propagazione di stili guerrieri ed inizia analizzando il rapporto stretto tra il valore interno e la pompa esterna. I cortigiani fiorentini erano circondati da rappresentazioni visuali e teatrali che idealizzavano la guerra, includendo le battaglie simulate con costumi stravaganti che erano una nota caratteristica della propaganda medicea. I soldati ed i bravi erano spesso visti come influenzatori della moda, legati con i colori vivaci ed ornamenti ricchi che di solito erano considerati non appropriati per gli indumenti maschili nel contesto civico. Il capitolo esplora tre tipologie significative della moda maschile che si collegavano a questo ideale bellico: i colletti di pelle, gli alamari e le calze corte e voluminose. La popolarità di questi stili di moda si rintraccia tramite la letteratura, le immagini e le fonti d'archivio.*

MOÏRA DATO, PASCALE GORGUET-BALLESTEROS, Lyonnais silks «ad uttimo gusto»: the trade in fashionable waistcoats between France and Italy in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century

Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Lyonnais silk manufacturing was constantly creating, adapting and transforming products in response to the evolution of fashion, which was both a profitable tool and a turbulent stream to harness. The male waistcoat is an excellent example of the difficult exercise in which merchant manufacturers engaged in order to secure their markets. Although not originally a specialty of the French city, the waistcoat eventually became a key item in Lyonnais production, selling very successfully in France and abroad. In this article, we analyse trade with Italy in order to explore in detail how the Lyonnais adapted to changes in fashion and used them to their advantage in order to stimulate consumption while navigating the challenges of a foreign market.

*Tout au long du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, la manufacture de soieries lyonnaise fut dans un constant processus de création, d'adaptation et de transformation de sa production suivant l'évolution de la mode, qui était un outil précieux mais difficile à maîtriser. La veste masculine est une excellente illustration de la stratégie adoptée par les marchands fabricants afin de conserver leur marché. Bien que n'étant pas à l'origine une spécialité de la ville française, la veste devint un produit clé de la production lyonnaise, vendue avec succès en France et à l'étranger. Dans cet article, nous analysons le*

*commerce avec l'Italie afin de comprendre comment les Lyonnais surent s'adapter et tirer profit des changements de mode tout en faisant face aux difficultés d'un marché étranger.*

NADIA FERNÁNDEZ DE PINEDO, MARIA PAZ MORAL, EMILIANO FERNÁNDEZ DE PINEDO, Un changement radical dans la consommation de tissus par la royauté et son milieu (1293-1504): de la laine au lin et à la soie

Depuis le royaume de Juan II et surtout de la reine Isabel Ière de Castille, on avait constaté que les tissus en soie avaient déplacé de la première place, au moins parmi les groupes privilégiés, les chers draps teints en laine. En même temps, un tissu en lin très fin, la holanda s'était répandue spectaculairement, au moins, à la Maison d'Isabel Ière surtout comme linge de corps et de maison. On a essayé de voir dans cet article comment ces changements se sont transmis vers le bas à travers des exemples de différents groupes sociaux - noblesse, citadins, paysans- en considérant les limitations économiques et sociales qui auraient soupesé dans sa diffusion.

*Since the reign of Juan II and especially Queen Isabel I of Castile, we have found that silk fabrics had displaced expensive dyed wool cloths from the first place, at least among the privileged groups. At the same time, a very fine linen fabric, the holanda spread in a spectacular way, at least in the case of the House of Isabel I, especially as body linen and household line. In this article, we discuss how these changes could be transmitted downwards through some examples of different social groups - nobility, townspeople, peasants - considering the economic and social limitations that would have been relevant in its diffusion.*

MÁXIMO GARCÍA FERNÁNDEZ, Keeping up appearances in early modern Castile

Social emulation stimulated the demand for clothing with the rapid generalisation of certain types of dress in given social circles. Beginning with this birth of fashion in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the 18<sup>th</sup> century witnessed a revolution in consumption. Material culture had a public projection, and appearance and luxury became variables of civilization. In this methodological framework, and using tutorship accounts and inventories (from the Renaissance and Enlightened periods, and from rural and courtesan contexts), this paper aims to examine cloths and accessories that made a difference, with consideration to age, and gender. The evolution of this process in Castile is compared with that in other western European countries in terms of innovation, availability, intercultural contacts and social aspirations.

*La emulación social estimulaba la demanda indumentaria cuando en ciertos ámbitos se generalizaba ya una rápida transformación en el modo de vestir. Desde ese nacimiento de la moda en el siglo XVI se pasaría en el XVIII a una revolución del consumo, obligando a investigar la cultura material que modificaría la notoriedad pública según las distintas apariencias y lujos, ya entonces cuestión de civilización. En ese marco metodológico y utilizando cuentas de tutoría e inventarios de bienes (renacentistas e ilustrados; rurales y cortesanos) se profundiza en los tejidos y accesorios diferenciadores o en la imagen desprendida del traje según género o edad, para comparar la evolución castellana con la europea occidental en cuanto a innovación y disponibilidad, contactos interculturales y aspiraciones sociales.*

JUAN VICENTE GARCÍA MARSILLA, LUIS ALMENAR FERNÁNDEZ, Fashion, emulation and social classes in late medieval Valencia. Exploring textile consumption through probate inventories

Abstract: This article explores the personal garments present in the probate inventories of 83 individuals that lived in the city of Valencia and its hinterland during the long fourteenth century. The paper explores the differences between both groups of individuals, the urban and the rural one, in aspects such as the typologies of the pieces of clothing, the colours, finishes, complements and fabrics employed in their design. It also tracks the spread of particular pieces of clothing across both groups of deceased before and after the Black Death, and discusses how far these changes were guided by emulative motivations.

*Este artículo explora los atuendos personales presentes en los inventarios post mortem de 83 individuos que vivieron en la ciudad de Valencia y en su entorno durante el largo siglo XIV. El trabajo explora las diferencias entre ambos grupos de individuos, el urbano y el rural, en aspectos tales como las tipologías de las prendas de vestir, los colores, acabados, complementos y telas empleadas en su diseño. También se rastrea la difusión de prendas concretas entre ambos grupos de difuntos antes y después de la Peste Negra, y se discute hasta qué punto estos cambios estaban guiados por motivaciones emulativas.*

ARIS KAFANTOGIAS, The catalyst of change. The clothing of the Viennese servants and their relation to fashion in the period 1760-1823

In the eighteenth century, fashion constituted a fundamental criterion for consumption for broader parts of the European (and Viennese) population. This article investigates, through various sources, like probate inventories, fashion magazines and pattern books, the consumption of clothes and accessories of female servants in the period 1760-1823 and associates it with debates on their appearance at the time. It compares their wardrobes to those of a broad part of the Viennese female middle-class population, and examines the relation of their wardrobes to fashion, notably in the period of the emergence of Viennese fashion. Finally, it investigates whether female servants could function as intermediaries of the prevalent fashion between the elites and this middle stratum, and, consequently, as trendsetters for this group.

MARYANNE KOWALESKI, Round Table comment. Fashion as an economic engine: continuity and change

This comment points out the medieval precedents of many developments characterized as new in the early modern manufacture, sale, and consumption of fashionable textiles and clothing, although these developments were more rapid and intense in the later centuries. There was, for example, a significant break in the traditional process of technological innovations in the second half of the eighteenth century, when a series of complementary inventions radically improved the

production and quality of textiles. In terms of commercial strategies and consumer behavior, however, there was less significant change, although the role of the second-hand trade deserves closer attention. The comment ends by highlighting how speakers have drawn on new methodologies and sources for understanding the relationship between fashion and the economy.

TATIANA MARKAKI, Innovations and the art of deception. Mixed cloths in Venetian Crete (17<sup>th</sup> century)

This paper investigates innovations of the early modern European textile industry and practices of cultural transfer using seventeenth-century Venetian Crete as a case study. It explores the use of novelties, such as mixed cloths, in the dowries assigned to brides in the urban setting of Candia (modern Heraklion) and the surrounding countryside during the period 1600-1645. It draws on computer-processed data from marriage agreements and inventories of movables from the State Archives of Venice. It illustrates, through a comparative lens, how brides used (silk) mixed fabrics to differentiate themselves from others and how Venetian Crete followed the changes in production techniques of the European textile industry.

*Questo articolo esamina alcune innovazioni dell'industria tessile europea moderna e le pratiche di trasferimento culturale impiegando la Creta veneziana del XVII secolo come studio di un caso. Esplora l'uso di novità, come i tessuti misti, nelle doti assegnate alle spose nell'ambiente urbano di Candia (l'Heraklion di oggi) e nella campagna circostante durante il periodo 1600-1645. Si basa su dati elaborati al computer da contratti di matrimonio e inventari di beni mobili dall'Archivio di Stato di Venezia. Illustra, attraverso una lente comparativa, come le spose si servivano di tessuti misti (seta) per differenziarsi dalle altre e come la Creta veneziana seguiva i cambiamenti nelle tecniche di produzione dell'industria tessile europea.*

DANIEL MUÑOZ NAVARRO, The virus of fashion. Democratization of luxury and new commercial strategies in early modern Valencia

This work intends to analyze how the influence of fashion in eighteenth-century Spain transformed the commercial structure, being the petty bourgeoisie the main protagonists and the shop («botiga») the priority scenario of these changes. To do this, we will focus on eighteenth-century Valencia as a case study, a dynamic city that experienced a remarkable economic development during this century. Undoubtedly, fashion stimulated economic growth not only in the more developed regions of north-western Europe, but this process was also present in the Mediterranean context, developing an important sector of petty bourgeoisie mercantile and a change in the consumption patterns of most of its population.

MARIA GIUSEPPINA MUZZARELLI, Prolusione

Illustrerò in dieci punti come la moda ha implicato e prodotto modernità intesa come valorizzazione del presente con particolare riguardo agli aspetti di esso

caratterizzati da progresso ed evoluzione. Ciò a partire da un notevole ampliamento della 'visibilità individuale': al riguardo le capacità dei sarti sono state fondamentali. Gli effetti sull'economia della moda 'moderna', nata per altro nel medioevo, sono stati rilevanti. Sta di fatto che dal XIII secolo tanto i trattatisti e i predicatori come i legislatori si sono occupati del modo di vestire per regolare la società mentre nelle botteghe artigiane non solo si inventavano sempre nuovi oggetti ma si preparavano anche inediti destini sociali e politici. Per queste ed altre ragioni si può sostenere che la moda è stata motore di sviluppo e metafora della modernità.

*Divided into ten points, this paper aims to illustrate how fashion produced modernity, understood as valuing the present, especially its progressive and evolving elements. A process that focused on amplifying 'personal visibility', and in which the abilities of tailors played a crucial role. The effects on the economy of 'modern' fashion, born in the Middle Ages, have been significant. Since the thirteenth century, treatisers and preachers, as well as legislators, focused on the way people dressed as a means to regulate society, while artisanal shops invented, ever so often, new objects and prepared unseen social and political scenarios. For all these and many other reasons, we can state that fashion moved and was a metaphor of modernity.*

GERMÁN NAVARRO ESPINACH, JOAQUÍN APARICI MARTÍ, The colour of Valencian silk fabrics in the European market (1475-1513)

Our research compares guild ordinances, judicial proceedings, technical manuals of dyeing and especially fiscal sources in the Valencian archives to check the fashion trends on the colour of silks fabrics during the 15th-16th centuries in relation to what was happening in the European market at that time. The silk declarations in Valencia city from 1475 to 1513 makes it possible to establish a database of 3,871 fiscal registers with more than 90,000 meters of Valencian textiles (100,220 varas or alnes). The 73.47 percent of them was in black. This colour was also fashionable in the silk industry of Genoa, from where there was an important technological transfer to Valencia through the immigration of technical masters, workers and specialized businessmen.

*Nuestra investigación compara ordenanzas gremiales, procesos judiciales, manuales técnicos de tintura y, especialmente, fuentes fiscales en archivos de la ciudad de Valencia para comprobar las tendencias de moda que hubo respecto al color de las sedas durante los siglos XV-XVI en conexión con lo que estaba sucediendo en el mercado europeo de aquella época. Los manifiestos de la seda en la ciudad de Valencia desde 1475 hasta 1513 han permitido establecer una base de datos de 3.871 registros con más de 90.000 metros de tejidos valencianos (100.220 varas o alnes). El 73,47 por ciento de ellos eran en negro. Este color estuvo de moda también en la industria sedera de Génova, desde donde se produjo una transferencia tecnológica importante hacia Valencia mediante la inmigración de maestranza técnica, trabajadores y hombres de negocios especializados.*

KLAS NYBERG, The production of international fashion in state-sponsored manufactures in Sweden-Finland, 1740-1810. Part I

This paper discuss the production of international textiles in statesponsored manufactures in Sweden-Finland between 1740 and 1810. The data set is based on the general summaries of manufacture output collected by municipal authorities during this period. The summaries include annual data on the production of the most important wool and silk textiles, wool and silk knitwear, as well as cotton and linen textiles. More specifically the paper analyze the type of fashion that was produced in Swedish textile manufactures during the period and how international influences affected the Swedish product range. In a subsequent forthcoming investigation I will discuss what the change in the Swedish textile production range towards the end of the eighteenth century says about Swedish and Nordic textile fashion in a European and international context.

PETER STABEL, Unlikely followers of fashion? Dressing the poor in late medieval Bruges

Surprisingly little is known about the way the poor strata of urban society in the late medieval period used dress to express social identities. Systematic empirical data have not been available, and sources tend to illustrate the opinion of the elites about poverty. Through the analysis of cloth distribution by charitable institutions and, above all, of a unique set of inventories for fifteenth-century Bruges, it becomes clear that dress was not only an important element in the material culture and the construction of social identity of the poor, but that instead of being a passive player depending on charity and alternative commercial circuits, the poor used dress to conform to fashion cycles set by the wealthier groups in urban society. In late medieval Bruges, they were wearing the same typology of dress, the same colours and the same fabrics, displaying in this way a willingness to participate and invest in fashion cycles. In assessing both urban economies and social dialogue, scholars should therefore not focus on elite demand alone.

JOHN STYLES, Re-fashioning Industrial Revolution. Fibres, fashion and technical innovation in British cotton textiles, 1600-1780

The early years of the British Industrial Revolution were dominated by mechanical innovations in cotton spinning. They emerged at a time when raw cotton prices were unprecedentedly high and the supply of all-cotton fabrics from India, the world's principal producer of cotton textiles, had contracted dramatically. Most «cotton» textiles manufactured in Britain in the mid-18th century were combinations of expensive cotton yarn and cheap linen yarn. Faced with rising material costs, manufacturers economised by increasing the proportion of cheaper linen yarn. The most fashionable cotton products were, however, made entirely from cotton, or required a fixed proportion of cotton yarn. As the cost of cotton rose, their rapidly rising sales provided the principal inducement to improve quality and cut costs by inventing machines for spinning cotton yarn.



LLUÍS TO FIGUERAS, Drapers and tailors. Fashion and consumption in medieval Catalonia

The range of textiles available in markets across the western Mediterranean expanded significantly during the thirteenth century. Cloth retailers, or drapers, constituted a fundamental link between merchants and consumers, using a network of local markets with specific spaces for selling cloth. They were able to sell a wide range of commodities, including Flemish and French woollens, to satisfy a growing demand. Between 1250 and 1350, there were also tailors almost everywhere, some at the permanent service of an aristocratic court, such as the kings of Aragon, but most of them worked as independent entrepreneurs offering their services in exchange for specific payments. Therefore both drapers and tailors formed small partnerships and frequently used credit in order to reach all levels of medieval society.

JULIEN VILLAIN, L'innovation de produit et les dynamiques de l'offre sur les marchés des étoffes de laine dans la France du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Quelques aperçus quantitatifs et qualitatifs

La consommation d'étoffes a connu dans l'Europe du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle une expansion notable, en particulier en France, pôle majeur de diffusion des modes vestimentaires à l'échelle du continent. Porté par les fabricants et les marchands d'étoffes, le renouvellement qualitatif de l'offre a été mis en évidence pour plusieurs espaces productifs français. Une évaluation de l'ampleur et des rythmes de l'innovation de produit au niveau du marché des étoffes dans son ensemble n'a toutefois jamais été tentée. En variant les échelles d'analyse, des statistiques élaborées par la monarchie française pour évaluer la production dans les différentes fabriques aux inventaires de boutique, nous pouvons essayer de reconstituer les mouvements séculaires de l'innovation. Celle-ci apparaît au fil du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle marquée par le dynamisme particulier des lainages de qualité moyenne ou médiocre, pour lesquels le renouvellement des variétés était de l'ordre des deux-tiers. On note aussi une tendance à la diversification de l'offre, qui finit par rendre le « monde des biens » peu lisible, beaucoup des innovations de produit n'ayant qu'une durée de vie limitée sur le marché.

*The consumption of fabrics in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Europe experienced a notable expansion - particularly in France, a major hub for the diffusion of clothing fashions across the continent. Driven by manufacturers and merchants, the supply of new product varieties has been highlighted in several French production areas. However, a general assessment of the scale and rates of product innovation in the market for fabrics has never been attempted. By varying the scales of analysis, from the statistics the French monarchy used to assess production in the various production areas to store inventories, we can try to estimate the secular movements of product innovation. Over the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the market for medium or poor quality cloths appears to have been particularly dynamic: the proportion of new varieties at the end of*

*the century approximated two-thirds of the stock. There was also a tendency to diversify the supply - which ended up making the «world of goods» difficult to read, many product innovations being present on the market only for a while.*

LAUREL ANN WILSON, The impact of technological change on medieval fashion

In the early fourteenth century, a new fashion system appeared in Europe, one which was based on constant change and the privileging of the new. This paper argues that the new system did not appear simply as a response to consumer demand; it was also precipitated in part by two major technological innovations: the thirteenth-century development of the advanced broadloom, and the new tailoring techniques of the early fourteenth century. These technological innovations thus helped to precipitate the fashion revolution in obvious material ways, but they also led less directly to social and economic changes which were equally important to the development of fashion.



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4. G. NIGRO, *Mercanti in Maiorca. Il carteggio datiniano dall'isola (1387-1396)*, 2 (esaurito)

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# DATINI STUDIES IN ECONOMIC HISTORY

2

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ENGINE: PROCESS AND PRODUCT INNOVATION,  
COMMERCIAL STRATEGIES, CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

The study of the textile sector has always been central to economic history: from reconstructions of the dynamic growth in the medieval wool industry, to the rise of silk and light and mixed fabrics in the modern era, to the driving role of cotton in the industrialisation process. Although the dynamics of textile manufacturing are closely linked to the transformations of fashion, economic history has long neglected its role as a factor in economic change, treating it primarily as a kind of exogenous catalyst. This book makes a decisive contribution to the understanding of a fundamental transformation, the consequences of which are projected into contemporary society, but which matured in pre-industrial times: the advent of fashion.

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