

## **Dossiê 5**

**As fontes de pesquisa para moda. Uma aproximação interdisciplinar e arquivista da história da moda: pesquisa e ensino.**

# **FASHION AND CLOTHING AS OBJECTS OF STUDY IN HISTORY**

**A moda e o vestuário como objetos de estudo na história**

**La mode et le vêtement comme objets d'étude de l'histoire**

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## Abstract

Fashion as an object of study did not occupy a prominent position in academic production in the fields of History. It was often seen as something connected with the futile and frivolous, so it was relegated to the background. Most of the scientific publications originated in the areas of Communication, Design, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, Arts, among others. Although the number of dress and appearance historians is still limited, this scenario has changed significantly over the past two decades. This article aims to: examine the importance of Fashion for historical studies; to highlight the relevance of the studies of Roland Barthes, Fernand Braudel, Daniel Roche, Gilda de Mello and Souza for the construction of this field of knowledge and lastly to point out the significance of this area of study in both editorial market and symposiums within academic events.

**Keywords:** History. Fashion. Historiography.

## Resumo

O objeto moda não ocupava uma posição de destaque na produção acadêmica na área de História. Em geral, era visto como um assunto conectado ao fútil e ao frívolo, por isso era relegado a um segundo plano. A maior parte das publicações científicas tinham por origem as áreas de comunicação, design, sociologia, antropologia, psicologia, artes, dentre outras. Embora o número de historiadores que se dedicam ao vestuário e às aparências ainda seja pequeno, esse cenário sofreu significativas alterações nas últimas duas décadas. Esse texto tem por objetivos: pensar sobre a importância da Moda para os estudos históricos; destacar a relevância dos estudos de Roland Barthes, Fernand Braudel, Daniel Roche, Gilda de Mello e Souza para a construção desse campo do conhecimento e, por fim, apontar o espaço que essa área de estudo preencheu tanto no mercado editorial quanto nos simpósios realizados em eventos acadêmicos.

**Palavras-Chave:** História. Moda. Historiografia.

## Résumé

L'objet mode n'occupait pas une place importante dans la production universitaire d'Histoire. En général, il était perçu comme un sujet connecté au futile et au frivole, étant, par cette raison, relégué au second plan. La majorité des publications scientifiques avait par origine les domaines de la communication, du design, de la sociologie, de l'anthropologie, de la psychologie, de l'art, parmi d'autres. Malgré le petit nombre d'historiens dédiés à l'habillement et aux apparences, ce scénario a souffert de transformations importantes les deux dernières décennies. Ce texte a pour buts: penser sur l'importance de la mode pour les études historiques, faire remarquer l'importance des études de Roland Barthes, Fernand Braudel, Daniel Roche, Gilda de Mello e Souza et, finalement, montrer l'espace que ce champ d'études a pris tant sur le marché éditorial quant sur les symposiums organisés dans des événements universitaires.

**Mots-clés:** Histoire. Mode. Historiographie.

## 1 THE IMPORTANCE OF ROLAND BARTHES

Fashion<sup>1</sup> is a generally undervalued object in academic institutions. The idea that approaching the subject is a waste of time is linked to what Roland Barthes, in 1957, called the commercial myth of fashion (BARTHES, 2005, p. 258). Certainly, denying the fact that clothing is closely tied to Western consumer culture could be deceiving, and the author brilliantly discussed the subject in his texts. But a one-sided perspective would be naive. Several symbolic elements cross paths in the costumes and build an epoch. Garments allow transversal readings that travel through the most diverse spheres of thought, politics and economics.

The history of clothing has not yet benefited from the innovation of historical studies that took place in France around thirty years ago: a whole institutional perspective of clothing is still lacking, in terms of the economic and social dimension of History, of the relationship between clothing and sensitivity facts [...] (BARTHES, 2005, p. 258).

The first historical works devoted to costumes were written in the nineteenth century. The two most striking pieces are by Jules-Étienne Quicherat, *Histoire Du Costume en France Depuis les Temps les plus reculés jusqu'à La fin du XVIII siècle* (1875); and Albert Racinet, *The Historical Encyclopedia of Costume*. These works present rich data collection on the changes of silhouettes, depicting in a descriptive way what were the dress forms of various peoples. They act as a kind of clothing glossary. However, they lack reflections that establish relations between clothing and historical context.

The turning point took place in the 1950s with the thinker Roland Barthes. His studies can be considered as founders of Fashion research in various fields of knowledge: Semiology, History, Sociology, etc. Although Paris has been considered the capital of Fashion since the 17th century, little has been said about the subject in the French academic world before him. In a way, his production gave Fashion the status of object of thought. It is misleading to believe that his only work on the subject was restricted to the book *The Fashion System*, first published in 1967.

Works as Complete Works 3: *Image and Fashion* (1950-1970 / 2005), *Elements of Semiology* (1964/2006) and *Mythologies* (1957/2010) deal with the analysis of discourses which had scarcely scientific value, such as films, advertisements, food and Fashion. These writings gave a fresh thought to social phenomena, as they opened a unique track on the process of constructing, deconstructing, and reconstructing senses in objects that were previously undervalued. Some of his contemporaries saw a betrayal of scientific thought in his work. However, taking his life in perspective, one realizes that he had a passion for deviation and perceived the winding lines as the best way to think the human being.

It is noticeable that his most famous book, *The System of Fashion*, written between the 1950s and 1960s, presents lines of difficult understanding, even for those already inserted in his universe through previous works. At first, it is an arduous reading that does not remind that man enchanted by the provocation and the flows of passion. The book was his doctoral dissertation, initially tutored by Claude Lévi-Strauss and later by André

<sup>1</sup> The word *Fashion* is capitalized to refer to the concept of Fashion as something that is not restricted to clothing; but to attitude and worldview. Thus, the present text starts from the same principle as Roland Barthes in *The Fashion System* (2009, p.19): "We will write Fashion as a capital [...] so that we can maintain the opposition between the Fashion and a fashion."

Martinet, and it was never handed in. Perhaps the rigors imposed by academic writing have generated such schematic lines. Perhaps the author's self-restraint in doing a work in which he could combine the assumptions of Saussure's linguistics and Lévi-Strauss's structuralist methodology are the reasons why the text is considered by some to be indecipherable. However, an effort to deep dive into this work, breaking the initial barriers, makes it clear that the poetic Barthes can be found there.

In the discourses of the universe of clothing, the individual puts himself in the world through his clothed body. The costumes that cover him are choices or impositions that constitute discourses that form his look and, at the same time, dialogue with others. Thus, Fashion forges the subject through the construction of an identity brand that relates it to all those around it.

In a superficial approach, an outfit would be just a garment that covers the body. It would just be one piece or combinations that people wear to look like each other. In a semiological analysis, clothing is text. Through the fabric we read multiple discourses that make explicit the personal desires, the expression of subjectivities, the influence of society on the individual and his political attitude.

Barthes (2005, p.267) distinguished two concepts: clothing and costume. The first is founded as a social construction that goes beyond the individual; the second is individual, because it is based on the act of dressing in which the person appropriates the clothing to forge its appearance. This distinction brings us to the semiological concepts of *language* and *speech*.

Clothing would be the *language*. It is above all social. It is being connected to the whole through what you wear. For Barthes (2006, p.19) *language* "[...] is essentially a collective agreement to which we must submit if we are to communicate; moreover, this social product is autonomous [...] because it can only be managed after being learned [...]".

Costume implies speech. It is shown in the way each being expresses his appearance individually in the social context: "[...] it is essentially an individual act of selection and upgrading"; while *speech* is constituted by the "[...] combinations through which the speaker can use the language code to express personal thinking" (BARTHES, 2006, p.18). This analogy with the linguistic sphere essentially refers to the issues related to the role of Fashion, understood as a set that is built at the intersection between dress and costume.

The text *Blue is in Fashion this Year* (Barthes, 2005, p.307-33) contains the keys to understanding his reflections. It shows how artificial concepts are produced by advertising, such as relating spring to lightness and color smoothness; winter to sobriety and darker tones. Fashion magazines are full of genre claims: the fitted cut dress that stands out a seductive look; fitted shorts matching t-shirts to give the collection a more chilled out personality; the round skirt that exudes romanticism, among other clichés of this market. In other words, market trends speech tries to naturalize something that is unnatural. It creates needs that lead people to crave consumption, discarding what they already have, even if those are still wearable, on the grounds that you need to look relaxed, sober or romantic, according to what is part of a new collection.

The naturalization of a speech forged by the media transforms clothes into mythical objects, so they are not seen as pieces to be simply worn, but rather a set of elements that has the potential to transform users into something else: the seductress; the one

with attitude; the cool one; the adventurer, among others. Barthes takes up some of the themes he had studied in *Mythologies* (2010), a classic work in which he makes a study of the various myths of bourgeois society and their convincing tactics.

In *Language and Clothing*, published in 1959, the author expresses the paths to his future research. He states that printed fashion, from a semiological point of view, “[...] functions as a true mythology of clothing [...] which, it seems to me, must be the first stage of a linguistic dress clothing” (BARTHES, 2005, p.299). In this short passage, he mentions why Fashion was explicitly absent in his previous reflections: such an important phenomenon that an entire book would be dedicated to it: the Fashion System (2009), in which he analyzes clothing in depth, searching among the pieces of an immense social patchwork, finding, decoding, and reading the paths that threads can engender.

## 2 HISTORY TAKES ITS PLACE

The lack of serious and reflective research on the History of Fashion raised in 1957 by Barthes, was only tackled in France by Fernand Braudel, in 1967, with the publication of the first version of the first Volume of *Material Civilization, Economics and Capitalism - XV-XVIII centuries: The structures of everyday life*, in which there is a chapter entitled *Clothing and fashion*. In 1979, the author released the revised edition of the work and the other two volumes: *The Wheels of Commerce* and *The Perspective of the World*. Fernand Braudel was one of the greatest exponents of the second generation of *Annales* and professor of the Collège de France as of 1949, where he gradually became a kind of thematic and methodological guide for French and world historiography.

One of the main focuses of his thinking is the interdisciplinary dialogue between History and Social Sciences, based on the analysis of events from the long term perspective; that is, the reflection on historical contexts in the sphere of a temporality that goes beyond the brief time of the episodes. Facts themselves would be like the tip of a giant iceberg and their full dimension - size, extent, scope, or rather duration would demand a deeper dive.

In his text, he analyzes the importance of clothing from late Middle Ages to the 18th century. Criticizes the futility of the wealthy layers; but, on the other hand, he sees Fashion with very optimistic eyes. The need for rapid changes in clothing - due to the imitators' pressure and the aristocracy's pursuit of distinction - generate commercial impetus, a rise in the social scale of groups that could never have sought a different future, material progress and a certain social welfare improvement. Therefore, this study so little valued by historians was indeed necessary.

The history of clothing is less anecdotal than it seems. It raises all the problems of raw materials, manufacturing processes, production costs, cultural fixation, fashion, social hierarchies. Diversified, costumes stubbornly denounce social oppositions everywhere (BRAUDEL, 2005, p.281).

The above passage demonstrates that the French historian does not only consider clothes as functions of adornment, vanity, beauty and protection. He sees them as encompassing the productive process, the cultural issues, clothing fads and, above all, the conflicts between social groups, in other words clothing can never be seen as a single isolated object. Thus, it is clear that he proposes a model for those who intend to study the role of costumes in History: ways of dressing refer to structures and disputes between



en social layers. In order to have the true dimension of clothing within a society or time, it must be related to the great diversity of elements that surround it. The central issue is not dresses, accessories and combinations, but their relationships with everything around them. Braudel shows that the study of clothing in History cannot be seen as a simple description of the different silhouettes over time, but as an element of material culture where economic issues, mobility or immobility of social groups and their cultural values cross paths.

His work strongly tackles the binomial of imitation and distinction widely discussed by sociologists, such as Herbert Spencer (1883) and Georg Simmel (1911) at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century. In an interesting passage of his text, while claiming that these are exceptions, he does not restrict the competitive practice of appearances only among royalty, nobility and bourgeoisie; but states that in certain moments clothing and fad elements also affect some members of the popular strata who are better off, which means that clothing historians should not confine themselves to the study of elites.

The sumptuous laws correspond, therefore, to the wisdom of the rulers, but even more to the concerns of the upper classes of society when they are imitated by the new rich. Neither Henry IV nor his nobility could allow the women and daughters of the Paris bourgeoisie to dress in silk. But no one can ever oppose the upstart passion or desire to wear clothing that in the West is a sign of social advancement. [...] The same is true in the most mediocre universes. In Rumieges, the village of Flanders, near Valenciennes, in 1696, according to the curator, who writes in his diary, rich peasants sacrifice everything to the luxury of dress, "young people wear gold and silver hats ... "; the girls with one-foot-high hairstyles and the other matching clothes [...]" But it is an exception, as they are, in a representation of the patron feast of a German village in 1680, a beaded-collar peasants. They usually are all barefoot or almost barefoot, and even in the market of a city one glance is enough to distinguish bourgeois from the people. (BRAUDEL, 2005, p. 281).

In a humorous way, he says that there would be no fashion if there were only low-income people in the world:

If that were the case, the problem would not even present itself. Everything would remain still. There would be no wealth, no freedom of movement, no possible change. Their costumes, either ugly or handsome, would always be the same. Beautiful is the party costume, often passed on from parents to children and which, despite the infinite variety of national and regional folk costumes, has remained the same for centuries. Ugly is everyday work clothes that use the least expensive of local resources and change even less than the other (BRAUDEL, 2005, p.283).

Braudel differentiates between the terms clothing and Fashion. The first has always existed since primitive men - out of protection, vanity or shame - began to cover their bodies. The second is a practice that emerges in Western Europe with the commercial and urban development of Italian cities in the transition from the Middle to Modern Ages, being restricted to wealthy layers. His definition of the concept of Fashion is quite significant: "Fashion is also the search for a new language to overthrow the old, a way for each generation to renounce and distinguish itself from others [...]" (BRAUDEL, 2005, p. 293). Fashion, besides being related to clothing, is closely connected to ways of eating, walking, greeting people, house decorating, among other elements. However, he states that the phenomenon did not have a broader appearance until the end of the seventeenth century. He believes that the cycles of change were still slow; it was not until the eighteenth century that madness and obsessive whims took over the daily lives of the bourgeoisie and aristocracy. This is a very questionable argument: assuming that Fashion became

something insatiable in all aristocratic circles from the beginning of the fifteenth century would certainly be as naive as to say that humanist ideals revolutionized the daily lives of most European population at that time. But how can we analyze the court of Henry VIII leaving aside the fact that the influence of his garments on appearances far exceeded the boundaries of the territories he ruled?

How not to consider that the display of his power and his virility through his clothes, a fact well represented in Hans Holbein's portraits, marked a time? Would it be appropriate to think of the reign of Elizabeth I (1558–1603) without realizing the force that changes in the queen's ways of dressing exerted in England and elsewhere in Europe? How can we reflect on the construction of the public image of Louis XIV, crowned in 1654, without taking into account the fact that the monarch had transformed Paris and, more precisely, the court of Versailles, the capital of fashion in Europe? In the meantime, there is a passage in which a contradiction arises, as it shows intense presence of changes in appearance between the 16th and 17th centuries:

If we compare, for example, in the Munich Picture Gallery, a painting by Pieter Aertsen (1508-1575) and two paintings by Jan Brueghel (1568-1625), all three representing the market people, it is rather fun to see first that in every scenario, the humble salesmen or fishermen and the groups of bourgeoisie are recognized at first sight. But, it is even more curious to perceive that despite the fact the two painters were separated for almost half a century, the bourgeois costume changed a lot [...], however, the popular costume [...] remained the same [...] (BRAUDEL, 2005, p. 284).

Another important finding he made is that Fashion, seen as a system governed by constant change, is a process that belongs only to Western societies. In the East, between the 15th and 18th centuries, there is an enormous wealth of costumes and symbolic elements, but there are no continuous changes in their forms. One example is the Mandarin clothes that, from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century, are printed with the same silhouettes, combinations and colors. Even after the transformations that occurred with the Tatar invasions in the seventeenth century, little changes were seen in appearances: "The new lords imposed on their subjects short hair (except a tail) and slightly modified the great ancient tunic. Nothing but a little touch" (BRAUDEL, 2005, p.282).

The statements cited in the previous paragraph demonstrate that in the eastern societies - China, Japan, India, and the Turkish Empire - there was no room for the existence of Fashion. The constant look at the attitudes and values inherited from the ancestors was expressed through clothing, accessories and gestures that kept the traditions alive, that is, the relations of sociability were legitimated by the past. The logic of the constant transformations in appearance finds its place only where there is appreciation for the present and the incessant search for novelty. On the eastern world:

Mouradj d'Ohsson, in his *Tableau Général de l'Empire Ottoman*, published in 1741, notes that "the fashions that bully European women do not stir sex in the East: almost everyone walks there with the same hairstyle, the same cut of clothes, the same kind of fabric" (BRAUDEL, 2005, p. 283).

The French historian thought the study of costumes proves to be doubly important. First of all, the materials that make up a garment, such as fabrics, stones and dyes, tell a whole story about who made them and under what conditions they worked. Therefore, they give us important clues about the entire production chain and the social issues involved in it. Second, because it unveils a wide universe of attitudes. "This fashion that

touches everything is the way each civilization is oriented. It is as much thought as it is a costume, the expression of success as the gesture of *coquetterie*, how to set the table, the care when closing a letter, is the way of speaking [...]” (BRAUDEL, 2005, p. 296).

The initial project of this brilliant work started in the 1950s by Lucien Febvre. His idea was to tell the history of Europe between 1400 and 1800 in two large volumes. Braudel would address the issues of material life and his intellectual partner would research on matters concerning thought and beliefs. Febvre did not have time to write his part as he passed away in 1956. The author left the book aside for a few years, yet returned to it and took on the ambitious endeavor, but paid little attention to the topics that would be addressed by his fellow. The chapter *Clothing and Fashion* found in the volume, brings ingenious contributions to the study of the theme and, moreover, is a milestone; for the first time, a European historian cast a truly reflective look that broke with the superficiality of simply narrating the evolution of silhouettes.

Since the 1970s, French historian Daniel Roche has devoted himself to the study of consumption, clothing and housing. Two of his works are extremely relevant to the object studied here: *The Culture of Clothing, Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Régime* (17th-18th Century), published in 1989; and *The rise of consumer culture* (17th-19th centuries), launched in 1997. He sees costumes as the first vehicles for the passage from the civilization of customs to the civilization of court. Fashion has always functioned between two poles: freedom and subjection; between bowing to the dominant trend and the need for expression of individuality. Therefore, this study is primordial for the understanding of the intricate game of appearances, in the most diverse societies.

In *The rise of consumer culture. XVII-XIX* (2000), he states that the study of material culture as a historical source is essential because it allows researchers to establish links between objects that were previously considered irrelevant, and social, economic, religious and political issues. Every artifact carries within itself a story, be it a dress, a painting, a cup, a plate, among others. The utensils create human relationships that surpass their materiality; they function not only as codes of communication and social differentiation, but also as elements of a network of sensibilities indispensable to the understanding of history. “Any object, even the most common, contains ingenuity, choices, a culture” (DAGONET, Apud ROCHE, 2000, p. 19).

Knowledge and added meaning are linked to all objects. We see this in its mode of acquisition, in which morality, the principles that distinguish them, personal choices, intervene in the part of the budget devoted to it, in the way of its use in which a teaching and morality of use in norms are revealed and in the rules of decorum, in the mode of their possession in which the magnificence and waste of the great contract with the ostentatious consumption of the bourgeois or the compulsive consumption of the new rich (ROCHE, 2000, p. 19).

In *The Culture of Clothing* (2007), he reflects on the role of clothing in the French court of the Ancient Régime. Approaching Roland Barthes (2006), he considers that clothing is the relationship between two levels of reality: wearing a costume as a personalized act in which the individual appropriates the proposed patterns, but attributes to the clothes elements of personal taste (speech); and to wear clothing, a practice in which the person puts on his body what is sanctioned by society (language). To Roche

Fashion lies at the intersection of dressing, which an individual can throw and generalize into the clothing system, where it becomes common property, with clothing, widespread in a way of dressing and reproduced on a collective scale,



haute couture, for instance. Changes can be understood in this relationship, as the way clothing evolves as one moves from the personal act to the ordinary gesture. The relationship between the clothed individual and the society that proposes the dress code can be measured in the major changes that affect the clothing system, and, by comparison, in the possibilities of diffusion and reception. (ROCHE, 2007, p. 59).

By analyzing the costumes of the French court, he looks at the history of clothes through two ways: the function of the worn clothes and the transformations of sensitivity. He states that, although dressing is a necessity, the historian cannot be limited by this viewpoint, because it would only be on the surface of shapes and styles, not allowing himself to dive into the complex symbolic web built in the universe of appearances. Clothing indicates inclusion and exclusion, hierarchy, imitation, distinction, personal taste, among many other elements, so it is a privileged way to read society. Fashion expresses values of sensitivity and mobilizes senses. Through the fabrics and their colors, the slack and tightness, one can perceive a whole body language of a society.

For a history of dress culture in Modern Age, we need to trace the evolution of colors, contacts, and the status of fabrics. How appearances have been reshaped will be revealed by a body topology, changes in what could and could not be seen, redefinitions of modesty and immodesty, and hygiene lessons that challenged the values of neatness and carelessness. Clothing shapes the body, and the body plays in clothing; they are means of socialization that have their rite of passage. Between stability and mobility, clothes discover the fashion that arises in the field of social contradictions when there is a possibility of desiring what others desire (ROCHE, 2007, p. 47).

The daily life of the court society (ELIAS, 2001, *passim*) was permeated by the obligation of individuals to be wasteful, through exhibitionism, the luxury of clothing, parties, decoration, food, among others. Ostentatious spending was a compulsory practice in a social sphere that prioritized the obligation to waste; a layer in which being discreet or economical was almost synonymous with crime. Therefore, the futility of the aristocracy, which for many researchers is a minor object in historical studies, is one of the keys to understanding that moment for Roche.

By focusing on consumption, and especially the articles from the Fashion universe, Roche points out that the ostentation of luxury expresses, at the same time, the functioning of social relations and the questioning of behavioral rules established by society. The rise of the bourgeoisie's space - in the aristocratic European world of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, thanks to the process of industrialization and the spread of Enlightenment ideas - generated a radical transformation in the patterns of appearance culture established throughout the Old Regime. The bourgeois dress system, since the French Revolution and over the next century, destabilized the structures, establishing new forms for the construction of silhouettes and attitudes. The author contemplates Fashion as far beyond the imitation and distinction schemes, typical in the analyses found in several researches on the subject; It functions as an element of construction and deconstruction of meanings. Even with the Restoration promoted by the Vienna Congress in 1815 or the existence of monarchies wishing to rescue the court society, the world of appearances would never be the same.

### **3 BRAZIL COMES IN**

Before the beginning of the twentieth century, clothing was not the object of historical study in national territory. Publications on the subject were restricted to etiquette

manuals, women's journals, and novels such as those by Machado de Assis, Joaquim Manuel de Macedo, and José de Alencar. The first book dedicated to the history of clothing produced in Brazil was *Três Séculos de Moda no Brasil* by João Afonso. The volume, written and illustrated in 1915, was commissioned by the Belem government as part of the city's tricentennial commemorations (1616-1916), but due to budget restrictions was not published until 1923. The author had no academic background, but was a very cultured man, dedicated to writing in newspapers on various subjects, which earned him the status of intellectual in the north of Brazil. This is not an academic text, but a succession of descriptions of the evolution of the silhouettes in the European courts, especially the French, and how they influenced the forms of dressing in our territory, especially in Belém.

The first researcher to approach clothing in a reflective and problematic way was Gilberto Freyre. In the works, *Sobrados e mucambos*, in 1936 and, much later, *Modos de homem & modas de mulher*, in 1987, dressing appears as one of the important elements to study Brazilian society. In the first work, clothing is highlighted when the author discusses the processes of assimilation of European costumes, especially in the Second Reign. From the reports of travelers and medical studies, he points out the inadequacy of such silhouettes and materials in Brazilian territory, such as corsets, long and heavy dresses, use of wool and velvet that were worn in tropical summer. Comparing women's and men's clothing from the position each sex held in society and also from the ways in which wealthy women dress in public - impeccable in clothing and posture - and within the domestic space - absolutely slovenly - provides data of great relevance to gender studies. Five decades later, the sociologist compiles several articles and publishes the collection *Modos de homem & modas de mulher* in 1987. In addition to revisiting the 1930s book, he discusses the 1980s beauty standards, architecture, decoration, and ecological issues. As a result of confronting genders attitudes, women are seen as the center of *fashion*, since he perceives in the socially constructed feminine personality, the concern with beauty, the ornamentation of forms and vanity. As for the masculine universe, there are the *manners*; Men have the concern to be polite and sophisticated, to have good manners, but when dressing are discreet and sober. His arguments, though still questionable, clearly express the logic of physical appearances built by the rising bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century.

In 1950, Gilda de Mello e Souza, tutored by Roger Bastide, presented the doctoral thesis *A moda no século XIX: ensaio de sociologia estética*. The work was published the same year in the Paulista Museum Magazine, getting negative reviews from the academic community. Sociologist Florestan Fernandes published a review in which he praised the author, but also criticized her harshly:

As it stands, the work of Dr. Gilda de Mello and Souza reveals two things. First: the author's talent and extraordinary sensitivity to the investigation of such a complex phenomenon because of the many facets it can be exposed and explained. Second, a sure knowledge of the field of her specialization, at a level that until recently was rare in Brazil. These qualities are reflected in the composition of the work, making its reading very mild. One could, however, lament the abusive exploitation of freedom of expression (which is not in accordance with the nature of a sociological essay) and the lack of empirical foundation for some of the most suggestive and important explanations. On the other hand, we do not agree with the author's statement that "fashion, like every manifestation of taste, is treacherous and, when closely analyzed, hides its most characteristic features, inducing the observer to error" (p. 10). In this regard, we think that one of the advantages of the sociological approach to the phenomenon is precisely the possibility of understanding and interpreting it, through appropriate investigation techniques,

in its manifestations in the world in which we live, that is, as current dimensions of being (FERNANDES, 1952, p. 139-140).

The thesis only reached a larger audience when it was released as a book in 1987 under the title *O espírito das roupas: a moda no século XIX*. The research is of fundamental importance for the historiography of Fashion in Brazil, mainly because it is the first national academic study totally dedicated to the object. The author's innovation and boldness were so great in that context that she made her work considered "a kind of deviation from the prevailing norms in the theses of the University of São Paulo" (MELLO E SOUZA, 1993, p. 7). In its chapters, she analyzes clothing through shapes, fabrics, colors, sociability relations, social distinction, artistic representations and gender studies. She conducts a bibliographical survey on the area ranging from Sociology - Spencer, Veblen and Simmel - to the field of literature, referring to the texts of Balzac, Proust, Machado de Assis and José de Alencar. The scholar demonstrates a great erudition, not only for working with diverse authors and themes, but also for establishing articulations between them and the transformations of clothing throughout the nineteenth century. Although the work lacks a thematic cut - the researcher addresses several issues, but does not make clear an object delimitation - the book is a must read since its unprecedented look at the subject within Brazilian historiography.

In 1978, Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva publishes *Cultura e sociedade no Rio de Janeiro (1808-1821)*. Through an in-depth study of articles published in *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro*, the historian outlined a broad but by no means superficial profile of everyday practices during the Johannine Period: housing, parties, ceremonies, art, slavery and clothing are some of the topics covered over a time of great transformation in the city of Rio de Janeiro. Fashion has a great relevance in the book, especially for the author's care to explain that costumes represent the place of the individual within the intricate universe of social relations, therefore clothes, burdened with symbolism generate in those who wear them a number of attitudes, gestures and specific vocabulary.

In 2002, Maria do Carmo Teixeira Rainho published her Master's dissertation, presented ten years earlier, *A cidade e a moda: novas pretensões, novas distinções - Rio de Janeiro, século XIX*. In this book, the author draws a beautiful panel on the relationship between the transformations of the urban space in the Brazilian capital, especially in the Second Reign, and the appropriation of European fashion by the social layer that defines as the good society:

[...] in the context of this work, we are qualifying the members of the "good society" as the men and women who civilized their customs and made fashion an element that accentuated the differences between themselves and between them and the other population strata. It is men and women who, in Europeanising their bodies, began to worry about the correctness of dress, the rational dress and the adoption of clothes appropriate to their position in society. Finally, they are those who, through their appearance and not only money and power, made visible the differences that marked the gulf between the "good society" and the "common society" [...] (RAINHO, 2002, p. 17).

The work is the result of an intense and unprecedented research on the study of three types of sources: the manuals of civility, such as, *Entretenimentos sobre os deveres de civilidade colecionados para o uso da puerícia brasileira de ambos os sexos* (1875) and *Escola de política ou tratado prático da civilidade portuguesa* (1845); Fashion journals or those with sections devoted to her, such as *O novo correio das modas* (1852-

1855), *O jornal das senhoras* (1852-1855), *A marmota fluminense* (1852-1857), *A mãe de família* (1879-1888) and *O sexo feminino* (1873-1889); in addition to theses presented to the Faculty of Medicine of Rio de Janeiro, such as *Considerações acerca da idade crítica da mulher* (1849), *Algumas considerações acerca das vestimentas* (1849), *Da educação Física, intelectual e moral da mocidade do Rio de Janeiro e de sua influência sobre a saúde* (1855) and *Algumas reflexões sobre a cópula, O nanismo e prostituição* (1855).

Based on extremely different sources, the researcher weaves a wide web on the multiple representations of Fashion through the various discourses that structured it, showing how the *good society* incorporated the European elements and, at the same time, sought to establish their own view of the world, what is right and wrong; in short, imposing what they considered as belonging to civilization, Rainho sewed a panorama of Rio de Janeiro's society through Fashion from sources of very different origins, but which dialogued with each other.

It is worth mentioning the temporal distance between the above mentioned national surveys: Gilberto Freyre (1936), Gilda de Mello de Souza (1950), Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva (1978) and Maria do Carmo Teixeira Rainho (2002). This observation highlights the gaps of decades between publications, which expresses the lack of interest of both researchers and publishing market on the subject.

Although not very daring, the local academic production in Fashion History has undergone a great expansion in the last fifteen years. Substantial publications were made, such as: Camila Borges da Silva - *O símbolo indumentário: distinção e prestígio no Rio de Janeiro - 1808-1821* (2010); Geanneti Tavares Salomon - *Moda e ironia em Dom Casmurro* (2010); Rosane Feijão - *Moda e modernidade na Belle Époque Carioca* (2011); Maria Cláudia Bonadio and Maria de Fátima Mattos (org.) - *História e cultura de moda* (2011); Marcelo de Araújo - *Dom Pedro II e a moda masculina na Época Vitoriana* (2012); Maria Cláudia Bonadio - *Moda e publicidade no Brasil nos anos 1960* (2014), Maria do Carmo Teixeira Rainho - *Moda e revolução nos anos 1960* (2014); Mara Rúbia Sant'Anna - *Sociabilidades Coloniais Entre o Ver e o Ser Visto* (2017); Maria Cristina Volpi - *Estilo Urbano. Modos de Vestir na Primeira Metade do Século XX no Rio de Janeiro* (2018), Laura Ferraza de Lima - *Quando a Arte encontra a Moda* (2018) and Joana Monteleone, Camila Borges and Paulo Debom (org.) - *A História na Moda, a Moda na História* (2019).

The First Fashion Colloquium was organized by the Brazilian Association of Fashion Studies and Research (ABEPEM), in 2005 and Fashion professors and researchers from various universities promoted a national academic event on the theme. The beginning was very modest, but gradually the event grew and gained international visibility. There were several symposiums with varied themes and, in the third year, the thematic symposium *History and Culture of Appearances* was set up. In 2010, it was renamed *Fashion, Culture and Historicity*, in which works from the most varied Brazilian universities are presented and discussed. It is worth mentioning that this is an event of fashion professionals, in which sociologists, psychologists, historians, publicists, designers, entrepreneurs, photographers, among others, participate, and a dedicated group of studies of History was created.

In 2007, a symposium on Fashion was launched at the meeting of the National History Association (ANPUH Brazil), but the pioneering initiative did not go ahead due to the low number of subscriptions. Among the events organized specifically in the area of History, the first to contemplate a space dedicated to History of Fashion was the PPGH-



UERJ Political History Week, in 2011, with the *Thematic Symposium Fashion, Image & Power*. In 2013, the theme earned a place in the PPH-UEM International History Congress with the symposium entitled *History of Clothing, Fashion and Gender*. Between 2012 and 2019, Rui Barbosa's House in Rio de Janeiro promoted meetings dedicated to the area. The national editions of Anpuh Brasil in 2017 and 2019 featured the symposium *For a historical understanding of appearances: the uses of fashion, clothing and visuality*. It is clear that prejudice is slowly being overcome and consequently local productions arise. Given this scenario, it is notable that Fashion and clothing have actually managed to establish themselves as objects of study and research in the Brazilian scenario.

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