



Speakers' Abstracts

1. Innovation

'Hurly Burly' Innovation in Early Modern Europe

Evelyn Welch, Queen Mary, University of London

The sixteenth century saw a constant series of challenges to long-accepted beliefs and knowledge about the world. In 1584, Jan van der Straat, a Flemish artist with close connections to the Medici court in Florence, published a series of ten prints under the heading: *De Novo Reperta* or New Discoveries. These illustrated the Americas, the lodestone, gunpowder, new medicines such as holywood or guaicum, clockwork devices, the printing press, distillation, riding with stirrups and silk manufacturing. These were all new forms of information, manufacture and goods that had not been known to the Romans, knowledge that would allow the modern world of the late sixteenth century to surpass the ancients. In publishing these prints, van der Straat hoped to take advantage of widespread public fascination with 'newness' and novelty. In doing so, he joined numerous contemporaries who created prints and texts proclaiming their display of the 'newest' images and the most recent 'secrets'. But novelty, newness and innovations were also suspect categories. In *Henry IV, Part I*, Shakespeare has the King describe, 'the garment of rebellion, with which some fine colour that may please the eye of fickle changelings and poor discontents Which gape and rub the elbow at the newes of hurly burly innovation.' (1598 Shakespeare *Henry IV*, Pt. 1 v. i. 78) As Shakespeare knew, changes in clothing could serve as powerful metaphors for political and social disruption and fashion was a particularly potent challenge to the continuity of traditional values and social structures. This paper asks how and when 'Hurly Burly' innovations in fashionable dress frightened as well as attracted consumers and looks at the mechanisms by which European governments tried to both promote and control innovation.

Fashion and Innovation in Early Modern Europe

John Styles, University of Hertfordshire

Early-modern Europeans characteristically thought about clothes and fashion in terms of personal and social identity. 'The apparel oft proclaims the man' declares Shakespeare's Polonius. Much recent research into early-modern fashion has followed suit, inspired by the idea that dress constituted an expressive material language, capable of being manipulated by its wearers and read by those who observed them. Yet this focus on identity runs the risk of ignoring fashion as a process of change. Fashion is inseparable from novelty and innovation. It is as much about the material sequencing of change, whether in time or space, as it is about the material ordering of identities. This paper explores early-modern fashion as a process of material innovation. It asks when and how seasonal and annual sequencing became widely established across early-modern Europe, and for which fashion commodities. It considers how new kinds of regular and accelerating modulation were overlaid on other temporal patterns. And it examines the ways new fashion chronologies were resisted, for political, economic, religious and moral reasons.

Governing Innovation: The Political Economy of Textiles in the Eighteenth Century

Giorgio Riello, University of Warwick

Textile production was one of the most important productive sectors in pre-industrial economies. Textiles were similarly important for consumers as they shaped their garments, household furnishing and the very concept of fashion. This is why early modern states had a clear interest in regulating the production and trade of textiles, in fostering their quality and competitiveness and in guiding consumers in their everyday choices. This paper starts by providing a general overview of the role of state administration in Europe and focuses on the specific case of cotton textiles in eighteenth-century France. It argues that mercantilist positions based on the banning or heavy taxing of imports were unsuccessful at shaping demand, though they were more influential in structuring trade. Yet, at the same time, states had also an active part in developing manufacturing. This is particularly evident when we consider the case of red dyeing in France. Red was a difficult colour to achieve but was particularly important for printed and painted cottons. The French state encouraged experimentation with dyeing substances, financed the setting up of dye-works and facilitated cooperation between chemists and textile entrepreneurs. Next to innovative consumers and innovative producers, we should consider ‘innovative institutions’ that influenced, govern and shaped textile innovation.

Framing Early Modern Knitting

Maj Ringgaard, National Museum Denmark

Although the art of knitting was not a new invention, it developed rapidly during the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries and knitted goods played a more profound and important role in fashion and textile trade during this period. There were considerable variations in the types of knitwear that were popular. For example, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, knitted caps were ubiquitous while in the second half of the century, we find knitted stockings replacing hose or stockings sewn of woven material. The latter was particularly important in stimulating new forms of production from the well-fitting high quality silk, worsted and fine jersey stockings to much coarser woollen socks.

Until this period all knitted items had been round-knitted using four or five double pointed needles. Innovative techniques included the purl stitch were developed while flat knitting multiplied the potential for fashioning of knitted items. In 1589, William Lee invented the knitting frame, a system of production apparently based on so-called ‘peg-knitting’. Peg-knitting had mainly been used for knitting cords and is quite different from hand knitting. Instead of pulling the loop of yarn through the stitch, the stitch is lifted over the yarn on the peg using a pointed needle or pin. At first, the early knitting frame could only produce semi-fine quality knitting but its development during the 17th century made it possible to produce increasingly finer qualities in larger quantities.

These changes had a significant impact both on the ways in which garments were made, but also on how they looked. The leading silk-knitting areas in Spain and Italy developed both purl and the flat-knitting; both techniques are found in high quality goods such as the purl-patterned stockings of Eleanora de Toledo from 1562, in brocade-knitted “Italian jackets”, and in long silk caps in complex patterns. At the same time we find that makers of woollen stockings and socks from London, the Netherlands and Denmark were struggling with how to fashion the heel without purl stitches and flat-knitting. Before the invention of the purl stitch, patterns were made by using different coloured yarns in simple bands or the more complex brocade or intarsia knitting. Then in the 17th century, one colour knitting with a purl pattern on a plain knitted background, damask-knitting, became popular. Damask-knitting was especially beautiful when produced in a smooth shiny yarn as silk or worsted. This effect was also used to create a pattern on the side of the stockings, the clock. This type of patterning was used in knitted vests, the popular fishermen’s ganseys or guernsies and in the so-called “nattrøje” (night-jacket) in Denmark-Norway.

Nonetheless, new techniques of production did not automatically crowd out more traditional versions. During the 17th century, many sewn kersey stockings were still produced and exported from England to the Continent. It was not only the poor or peasants who continued to wear sewn stockings; these are also mentioned in probate inventories of well-off individuals such as the nobleman Hans Rosencreutz who in 1708 had 13 pairs of knitted stockings, 5 pairs of sewn and 'a bunch' (et knippe) of leather stockings.

Likewise, in spite of the invention of the knitting frame, hand knitting was still important for manufacturing stockings, vests, petticoats, mittens etc. Many areas of Europe became dependent during the 17th century on the trade of knitted goods. Around 1700, only 10% of the knitted textiles deposited on the city dump in Copenhagen were frame knitted. As this suggests, the spread of innovations is dependent on many factors; in some cases older skills were adapted rather than replaced and the speed of many hands could match the novelty of the machine.

2. Reputation

Making a reputation: Designers and Merchants in the Lyon Silk Industry, 1660-1789

Lesley Miller, Victoria & Albert Museum

By the early years of the eighteenth century, Lyon in the south-east of France had gained a reputation for producing the most innovative fashion silks in Europe. While historians have built up a detailed picture of the organisation of the silk industry and many of its practices, they have not, on the whole, examined the reputations of individual designers or manufacturers and the basis on which they were built.

This paper will foreground the handful of designers who gained a reputation during the eighteenth century via texts that reached different audiences, local, national and even international. The abbe Perneti (1757) and Joubert de l'Hiberderie (1765) set out to offer role models worthy of emulation by their fellow citizens, the former across a range of trades and states, the latter more specifically in silk design. A prize-winning discourse on how to improve the state of manufacturing presented to the Academy of Arts and Sciences in Lyon in 1787 was similarly selective (Bertolon, 1787). Archival evidence fleshes out the summary and often hagiographical profiles in these publically disseminated sources, permitting an analysis of the qualities and actions that distinguished these men from their contemporaries and contributed to the making of their reputations.

All That Glitters. Merchandising Silver and Gold Silk Brocades in Paris at the End of the 17th Century

Corinne Thépaut-Cabasset, Victoria & Albert Museum

The paper will present the biography of a famous textile merchant based on unpublished primary sources in the notarial records in Paris (Minutier Central des notaires), demonstrating the value of methodical analysis of such sources for 17th-century European textile and fashion studies. In particular, it will focus on a major inventory of an influential merchant and retailer whose reputation was celebrated and immortalised by Donneau de Visé in the *Mercure Galant*, Madame de Sévigné in her letters, and La Bruyère in his *Caractères*.

This exceptional document records his merchandise and his accounting practices, and reveals that he supplied the wardrobes of Louis XIV, the queen, the royal family, the Parisian elite and European rulers in the 1670s and 1680s. Its analysis offers insights into the connections between the merchant and his customers, some of whom were the tailors and seamstresses who supplied the finished product to the rich aristocracy.

This case study also provides the opportunity of revealing the quarter of Paris devoted to fashion (rue Saint-Honoré), its inhabitants, bourgeois, shopkeepers, artisans, and a wealthy family business in textile trade in early modern times.

Selling Textiles Under Revolution: Economy and Politics in Paris During the Revolution, 1790-1795

Natacha Coquery, University of Lyon 2

Fashion means change, and shopkeepers played with opportunities, bringing clothing to fashion. Traders are keen to play with circumstances, even difficult ones. But how did manage shopkeepers involved in the luxury and semi-luxury Parisian market during the French revolution? I will investigate the luxury market during the Revolution period with the help of two newspapers : the daily *Journal de Paris* (which began in 1777) and the *Affiches de Paris* (which began in 1751). The point is to show the connections between politics and economy, and to understand the transformations and adaptations of businessmen. The fact is that luxury market is eagerly linked to fashion, to products (silk, accessories such as fans, jewellers, etc.), to consumers (aristocracy, uppers classes); what happens when traditional consumers disappear? I will show that the period promotes features which already existed, such as fixed prices, second-hand goods, warehouses, advertising argumentation. But they largely spread out during the Revolution. Shopkeepers play with fashion and politics (the 'politically correct' in clothing), and some new markets appear; some traders take advantage of aristocratic emigration or deaths.

3. Dissemination 1 & 2

Who Could See? Spreading Fashion Through Print in the 18th Century

Peter McNeil, University of Technology Sydney & Stockholm University

We can never really know how easy and how widespread it was to look at prints about fashion, respectful or scurrilous. The lure of the 'print shop window' image type, tantalising as it is, provides no definitive proof of viewing positions and there is debate regarding the accessibility of the more expensive prints. Print was everywhere, however. From humble Staffordshire tea caddies, to the more expensive tea and coffee wares attributed to Vienna, people viewed but also carried, poured and drank from wares that carried copies of illustrated fashion innovations. As Anne Hollander famously noted of Renaissance art, forms such as engravings might have taught people what it was to look and to be fashionable. In the eighteenth century, both the categories of high-art painting and the modest caricature were means through which fashion was read, experienced and modulated. Like the theatre, which assumed different reading positions from its multiple publics, the power of the caricature print is to function on several levels simultaneously. Although John Brewer notes that there is almost no surviving evidence of how the common people viewed popular imagery such as the caricature prints, there are many contemporary descriptions of the street and the theatre which emphasise that the fashionable and wealthy were often mocked or even abused for their pretension. Fashion caricatures participated in this dialogue.

Fashion Imagery in 18th Century Sweden. Transnational and Transmedial Circulation of European Print Culture

Patrik Steorn, Stockholm University

Fashion images - plates and caricatures - were active parts of the French and English fashion cultures in the 1700s. Regularly illustrated fashion press was not introduced in Sweden until the 1810s, but images do exist already in the late 18th century press, even though they have therefore often been overlooked. This paper explores both visual and material re-use of European fashion-related imagery

in a Swedish context in order to discuss how an expanded understanding of fashion supported the transnational migration of fashion-related motifs into Swedish print culture in the 18th century. The imported images of fashion were promptly imported into a Swedish context and generated a whole range of responses as they migrated geographically into Sweden; from respectful reproduction to intended misinterpretations and pirated copies. Their open character of printed matter further allowed for motifs to migrate between media, beyond the printed paper to ceramics, fans, etc.

Dress, Dissemination and Change: Artisan 'Fashions' in Sixteenth-Century Italy

Paula Hohti, University of Helsinki

In the last few years, historians have paid an increasing interest to clothing, identifying the wide range of new fashion products and clothing designs that were produced for the European markets from late fifteenth century onwards. Yet, with the important exception of John Styles' work, most studies that focus on early modern communities have centered on the production and consumption of clothing among wealthy elites, providing scant information about the types of clothing and dress accessories that were disseminated further down the social scale. Paying close attention to the circulation of new types of manufactures and fashion innovations in sixteenth-century Italy, this paper explores how ordinary working people dressed and how the design and quality of their garments changed during the course of the century. In looking closely at how clothing and fashions moved across social classes, it is hoped that this paper sheds light into the question of whether dress fashions in the early modern period were driven at the lower social levels by the same concepts of novelty and innovation deployed by the elite.

The Rise and Fall of the Spanish Farthingale: The Politics of Women's Fashions in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

Amanda Wunder, Lehman College and Graduate Center, City University of New York

The story of the rise and fall of the Spanish Empire can be told through the evolution and dissemination of women's fashions, most of all through their skirts. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the distinctively Spanish style of skirt was supported by a sizeable, stiff farthingale: first, the cone-shaped *verdugado* that predominated in the 1500s and later on the extreme bell-shaped *guardainfante* that came into fashion in the 1630s. The Spanish farthingale spread throughout Europe and Latin America in the sixteenth century and became one of the most visible markers of Spanish imperialism abroad. In the seventeenth century, as Spanish power declined, the Spanish farthingale was rejected in Paris and London but remained popular in Italian and Latin American cities including Milan, Genoa, Santiago de Chile, and Mexico City. At home in Spain, the Spanish farthingale was at the center of political debate and diplomatic relations, both of which fixated upon women's bodies and fashions as signs and symbols of Spanish culture and identity. From the early modern era to the present, scholars and critics have represented the Spanish farthingale as a garment that was imposed upon and repressed the women who wore it. But by exploring a variety of non-canonical visual and textual sources—including women's writings, Inquisition records, anonymous portraits and city views—we can better understand women's actual experiences of making, wearing, denouncing, and defending this controversial garment. The study of skirts uncovers those women's varied contributions to the political culture of their times through one of the few venues of influence that was open to them: that is, through fashion.

Filtering Impressions: Meeting with Fashionable Goods in Danish Everyday Life in the Eighteenth Century

Mikkel Venborg Pedersen, Danish National Museum

The expansion of oceangoing commerce is a major aspect of the development of (early) modern Europe, closely linked to the European colonial expansion from late 15th century onwards. This was a process in which also the Scandinavian double-kingdom Denmark-Norway with the duchies Schleswig and Holstein took part from early 17th century onwards, the capital of Copenhagen forming

an epicentre. The colonial influence on everyday life was comprehensive; however it was probably most visible in new consumer possibilities following European fashions. Fashionable encounters did not only take place, when it came to garments though. Northern Europe, and hence also Scandinavia, imported manufactured goods on a wider scale than ever before with new foods and raw materials drawn in from around the world. The appearance of these goods coincided with a new civility in middle and upper class society, showing itself, for instance, in new ways of dressing, eating, living and socialising.

These influences stand in focus, and emphasis is on people culturally encountering these new colonial goods and European fashions arising from them. In a way, Scandinavia was on the fringe of colonial consumption, and many new fashions and traits came to the Scandinavian countries through Germany, France, the Netherlands and, late in the period, Britain. In another way, due to Copenhagen's position as centre for both the Danish realm and pivot for re-export of colonial goods to all of North-Eastern Europe – and to Britain, the Netherlands and Middle Germany – in Copenhagen and other larger Danish towns one could buy everything. One thing is the possibility, though; another thing is the wish. How did the new commodities find way into the homes and daily routines, how did people come to terms with the new possibilities? – are the questions, which will lead the presentation and article behind it.

Hence, the contribution is also a modification of the perhaps common notion of fashion as having to do with clothes alone. It was, and is, much broader. Fashion has to do with economic, social and cultural exchange, with social and cultural norms and standards, with cultural domestication of ways and doings. European fashions, themselves so heavily influenced by the European colonial contacts, met in Scandinavia both the countries own colonial experiences and people striving for living up to international fashion vogues, often understanding them in their particular way, from their perspective and, thus, being both followers and innovators at one and the same time.

Fashion in a Restricted Market – European Commodities in Greenland in 17th-19th Century Peter Andreas Toft, National Museum of Denmark

Glass beads, faience, textiles and other European commodities travelled far from their place of origin to new cultural settings in the wake of European colonisation. Trade with European commodities was an important part of the resulting cultural encounters.

This paper will address, which European commodities was in fashion in colonial Greenland and discuss how the concept of fashion works in a partly monopolised market. Further examples of how European things were used in an innovative and creative fashion in Inuit culture will be shown. By comparison of ethnographic and archaeological material from three Greenlandic regions this paper will also demonstrate how the nature and duration of local cultural encounters affected Inuit consumption and reception of European goods.