The Right to Dress

This is the first global history of dress regulation and its place in broader debates around how human life and societies should be visualised and materialised. Leading scholars on Asian, Latin American, Ottoman and European history shed new light on how and why items of dress became key aspirational goods across society, how they were lobbied for and marketed, and whether or not sumptuary laws were implemented by cities, states and empires to restrict or channel trade and consumption. Their findings reveal the significance of sumptuary laws in medieval and early modern societies as a site of contestation between individuals and states and how dress as an expression of identity developed as a modern ‘right’.

GIORGIO RIELLO is Professor of Global History at the University of Warwick and Chair of the Pasold Research Fund. He is the author of several books, including Cotton: The Fabric that Made the Modern World (Cambridge, 2013), which won the World History Association Book Prize 2014, and Luxury: A Rich History (2016).

ULINKA RUBLACK, FBA is Professor of Early Modern European History at the University of Cambridge, and is a Fellow of St John’s College. Her previous books include Dressing Up: Cultural Identity in Early Modern Europe (2011), which won the Bainton Prize. She is co-editor, with Maria Hayward, of The First Book of Fashion (2015).
The Right to Dress

*Sumptuary Laws in a Global Perspective, c. 1200–1800*

Edited by

Giorgio Riello

*University of Warwick*

Ulinka Rublack

*University of Cambridge*
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Contributors

EVA I. ANDERSSON works at the Department of Historical Studies, Gothenburg University, Sweden. She completed her PhD in 2006 with a dissertation entitled ‘Clothes and the individual in medieval Europe’. Between 2009 and 2012 her research project ‘Clothes, gender and status 1500–1830’ was funded by the Swedish Research Council. Her publications cover subjects such as manners of dress, sumptuary laws, and the relationship between clothing and perceptions of gender, status and national identity in medieval and early modern Sweden.

FRANCISCO BETHENCOURT is Charles Boxer Professor of History at King’s College London. He is the author of Racisms: From the Crusades to the Twentieth Century (2013) and The Inquisition: A Global History, 1478–1834 (2009). He organised an exhibition on Racism and Citizenship at the Padrão dos Descobrimentos, Lisbon in 2017. He holds a Major Leverhulme Fellowship to work on ‘The New Christian Trading Elite (1497–1773)’.

BRUNO BLONDÉ teaches early modern social and economic history at the University of Antwerp, where he is affiliated with the Centre for Urban History and the Urban Studies Institute. He publishes on the history of urban networks in the Low Countries, pre-industrial transport, the history of material culture, retail trade and consumption, urban growth and social inequality.

BUYUN CHEN is Assistant Professor in the Department of History at Swarthmore College, US. She is a cultural historian who specialises in the material culture of pre-modern China. Her research seeks to understand how the circulation of objects shaped the formation of knowledge and practice, both local and mobile.

ADAM CLULOW is Associate Professor at Monash University in Melbourne. His first monograph, The Company and the Shogun: The Dutch Encounter with Tokugawa Japan (2014), won multiple awards.
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including the Jerry Bentley Prize in World History from the American Historical Association. He is most recently the editor with Lauren Benton and Bain Attwood of Protection and Empire: A Global History (2017).

ROBERT S. DUPLESSIS is Isaac H. Clothier Professor of History Emeritus at Swarthmore College (USA). He has published widely on early modern economic, material culture and textile history. His most recent book is The Material Atlantic: Clothing, Commerce, and Colonization in the Atlantic World, 1650–1800 (2015). He is currently completing a revised edition of Transitions to Capitalism in Early Modern Europe.

REBECCA EARLE is Professor of History at the University of Warwick. Her most recent book The Body of the Conquistador (2012) explored the centrality of food to the construction of colonial space, and the ‘racial’ categories that underpinned it. She is currently writing a history of the potato, which uses the emergence of the potato as an Enlightenment super-food to explore the connections between everyday life and new ideas of individualism, political economy and the state.

TOBY GREEN teaches in the departments of History and Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American Studies at King’s College London. He is the author of The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300–1589 (2012) and A Fistful of Shells: West Africa from the Rise of the Slave Trade to the Age of Revolution (2019). He was a recipient of a 2017 Philip Leverhulme Prize in History.

MARIA HAYWARD is Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Southampton. Her research interests include textiles and dress in late medieval and early modern Europe. Her publications include Dress at the Court of King Henry VIII (2007), Rich Apparel: Clothing and the Law in Henry VIII’s England (2009), The Great Wardrobe Accounts of Henry VII and VIII (2012) and The First Book of Fashion, edited with Ulinka Rublack (2015).


ANDRÈ HOLENSTEIN is Professor of Swiss History and Comparative Regional History at the University of Berne, Switzerland. He is a
List of Contributors

member of the Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHAS) and vice-president of the Swiss Association for the History of the Eighteenth Century. He is the author of Mitten in Europa. Verflechtung und Abgrenzung in der Schweizer Geschichte (2014) and, with Patrick Kury and Kristina Schulz, of Schweizer Migrationsgeschichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart (2018).

CATHERINE KOVESI is a historian at the University of Melbourne.

Her research centres on discourses surrounding luxury consumption in early modern Italy; clothing, textiles and gender; Florentine and Venetian family history; and the history of women religious in Australia. She is the author of Sumptuary Legislation in Italy, 1200–1500 (2001) and has published several articles on sumptuary laws.

LUCA MOLÀ is Professor of Early Modern Europe: History of the Renaissance and the Mediterranean in a World Perspective at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. He is also a member of staff of the Department of History, University of Warwick. He has written on the history of the silk industry and on the history of innovation and patents in Renaissance Italy.

MARIA GIUSEPPINA MUZZARELLI is Professor of Medieval History at the University of Bologna, Italy. She has worked extensively on the history of mentality, the history of women and the history of dress and fashion. Among her works are Disciplinare il lusso (edited with A. Campanini, 2003), Guardaroba medievale. Vesti e società dal XIII al XVI secolo (2nd ed. 2008) and Breve storia della moda in Italia (2011).

GIORGIO RIELLO is Professor of Global History and Culture at the University of Warwick and the current Chair of the Pasold Research Fund. He is the author of four books, among them Cotton: The Fabric that Made the Modern World (2013), which won the World History Association Prize, and Luxury: A Rich History (with P. McNeil, 2016). He has published extensively on the history of textiles, trade and material exchange between Europe and Asia in the early modern period and has co-edited a dozen books, among which are The Spinning World (2009), How India Clothed the World (2009), Writing Material Culture (2015; 2nd ed. 2019), Global Gifts (2018) and Threads of Global Desire: Silk in the Pre-Modern World (2018).

MATTHEW P. ROMANIENELLO is Assistant Professor of History at Weber State University and editor of Sibirica: Interdisciplinary Journal of Siberian Studies. He is the author of The Elusive Empire: Kazan and the Creation of Russia, 1552–1671 (2012) and the forthcoming Enterprising
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Empires: Russia and Britain in Eighteenth-Century Eurasia. He was previously Professor of History at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa and an editor of The Journal of World History.


ISIS STURTEWAGEN has worked as a post-doctoral researcher at Leiden University and the University of Antwerp (Centre for Urban History). In 2016 she defended her PhD dissertation on the consumption of fashion and clothing in the Low Countries during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. She holds an MA in archaeology from Ghent University, with a thesis on headscarves in the late Middle Ages.

AMANDA WUNDER is Associate Professor of History at Lehman College and a faculty member in Art History, History and Renaissance Studies at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She works on the cultural history of early modern Spain. Her publications include Baroque Seville: Sacred Art in a Century of Crisis (2017).

MADELINE C. ZILFI is Professor of Middle East and Islamic History at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her research and teaching focus on Ottoman social and cultural history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, particularly with regard to slavery and dependency and popular religious movements. She is the author of Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire (2010) and author and guest editor for a collection of papers on Middle Eastern televised social and historical fiction, forthcoming in Review of Middle East Studies in 2018.
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