

Introduction:

From Costume History to Dress Studies

JONATHAN EDMONDSON AND ALISON KEITH

In the opening Book of *Sartor Resartus*, first issued in serial form in 1833–4, Thomas Carlyle has an unnamed ‘English editor’ introduce us to the novel’s extravagantly named German protagonist, Professor Diogenes Teufelsdröckl, and the major work that he has just completed: *Die Kleider: Ihr Werden und Wirken* (*Clothes: Their Origin and Influence*). In the first chapter this anonymous editor reflects with surprise on the fact that so little had previously been written on the philosophy or history of clothes:

How, then, comes it, may the reflective mind repeat, that the grand Tissue of all Tissues, the only real Tissue should have been overlooked by Science, – the vestural Tissue, namely of woollen or other Cloth; which Man’s Soul wears as its outmost wrappage and overall; wherein his whole other Tissues are included and screened, his whole Faculties work, his whole Self lives, moves, and has its being?

For a man whose first name is that of the fourth-century BC Cynic philosopher who eschewed the use of any clothing at all but a coarse cloak and whose surname translates as ‘Devil’s Dirt,’ it is something of a surprise that clothing provides such a central metaphor for understanding the universe in which he lives. But as the novel proceeds, further elements of Professor Teufelsdröckl’s philosophy of dress become clear, not least his view that clothes play a major role in defining humans as social beings. As a result, Carlyle’s work is seen by some as a founding text in what may now legitimately be termed the field of ‘dress studies.’¹

Since the 1970s there has been a burgeoning scholarly interest in the analysis of dress. Sociological, anthropological, psychological, and semiotic studies have appeared that have taken the subject well beyond the rather sterile ‘costume history’ that for so long dominated the field.² The language

of clothes; the social psychology of clothing; dress and morality; dress and class distinctions ('dressing up and dressing down'); dress and power relations; dress and popular culture; dress and gender; cross-dressing and sexual identities; dress, culture, and identity; dress and ethnicity; and clothing as material culture are just some of the topics that have been elucidated from a variety of different perspectives.³ This is not to say that there were no valuable contributions prior to the 1970s; indeed, many fundamental points were made by Georg Simmel in his short treatise *Philosophie der Mode* in 1905, by John Flügel in *The Psychology of Clothes* (1930), and by anthropologist Alfred Kroeber and sociologist Edward Sapir in their respective articles of 1919 and 1931.⁴ James Laver, curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London from 1922 to 1959, produced a number of works on dress that went well beyond an art historian's concern to identify and date particular costumes.⁵ But it was arguably Roland Barthes' 1967 study, *Système de la mode*, that introduced a new degree of theoretical sophistication into this discussion, as did the work of Pierre Bourdieu, notably *Distinction*.⁶ The former certainly made a strong case for seeing clothing as a communicative code, while the latter analysed the social symbolism of sartorial and cosmetic choices, and documented in particular the cultural capital expended and amassed in self-presentation.

Barthes' structuralist study of women's clothing was conducted in accordance with his rigorous semiological method: he identified a corpus for investigation (fashion magazines from the years 1958–9), the signifying unit ('matrix') and its constituent components (object, support, and variant or 'vesteme'), and an inventory of species (materials, cuts, etc.) and *genera* (types of clothing). Of perhaps most importance was his detailed demonstration that a description of clothing may have reference (1) to the clothes themselves (*clothing*); (2), self-reflexively, to the critical discourse (i.e., meta-language) of fashion (*Fashion*); and (3), most significantly, to the larger socio-political context of the culture beyond the fashion system altogether (*world*). His study concluded not only that the language of Fashion assumes a regulatory role in the context of the fashion magazines but also that, on the connotative level, 'rhetoric opens Fashion to the world; through it, the world is present in Fashion, no longer only as human productive power in an abstract sense, but as an ensemble of "reasons," i.e., as an ideology.'⁷

In *La Distinction: critique social du jugement*, Pierre Bourdieu addressed more directly the sociological implications of the fashion system adumbrated in Barthes' semiological analysis. Bourdieu's analysis of French consumers' clothing purchases documents significant divergences along the axes of age, gender, class, and ethnicity. He argued that 'the working classes make a realistic or ... functionalist use of clothing,' in that they prefer func-

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tion over form and choose lasting value over passing fad,⁸ while as one moves up the social scale the quantity and quality of the clothing purchases of both men and women increases. These differences he ascribed to a complicated social calculus in which the necessities and facilities that characterize one's social position and economic condition are, on the one hand, redescribed (mystified) as a particular lifestyle and, on the other hand, assessed 'as an opportunity to accumulate social capital.'⁹ He concluded, therefore, that 'the interests the different classes have in self-presentation, the attention they devote to it, their awareness of the profits it gives and the investment of time, effort, sacrifice, and care which they actually put into it are proportionate to the chances of material or symbolic profit they can reasonably expect from it.'¹⁰

Part cause and part result of this upsurge in interest, a number of specialist journals have been launched since the late 1960s: *Costume* (which first appeared in 1968), *Textile History* (since 1969), *The Clothing and Textile Research Journal* (since 1982), *The Journal of Design History* (since 1988), *Fashion Theory* (since 1997), and *Textiles: Journal of Cloth and Culture* (since 2003). In addition, major journals such as *Gender and History* have occasionally published special issues devoted entirely to the theme of dress.¹¹ Berg Publishing, with editorial offices in Oxford and New York, has played an especially important role in promoting scholarly interest in dress studies not just through the journal it has established, *Fashion Theory*, but also through its lively interdisciplinary series, *Dress, Body, Culture*, in which a number of cutting-edge monographs and volumes of collected essays have been published. To take stock of such developments, general handbooks have appeared charting the main contours of the field, while various readers are now available that aim to define the seminal works in the field.¹² Dress studies is clearly now well established as a recognized field of intellectual enquiry. It can no longer be accused of being a frivolous or lightweight topic.

Social and cultural historians of various periods have benefited from the insights of this scholarship to produce some revealing studies of clothing in particular historical contexts, whether it be medieval Europe, early modern England, Renaissance Italy, Russia before Peter the Great, *ancien régime* France, colonial West Africa, Victorian and Edwardian England, or nineteenth- and twentieth-century North America.¹³ Others have integrated analysis of dress into more general historical treatments of particular periods.¹⁴ Elite and royal dress have loomed large in many of these historical studies, but the clothing of ordinary people is now attracting more attention, especially as historians become more interested in questions of material culture.¹⁵ Indeed, studies of dress and fashion have featured prominently in

analyses of the rise of consumerism, while historians of labour and gender have focused on the shifting technologies of textile production that increasingly marginalized domestic production, which for so long in pre-industrial society defined the world of women's work.¹⁶

Art historians have always been interested in clothing, as they have sought to describe and analyse the sculptures and paintings in major art collections, but here, too, there has been a paradigm shift in the way the topic has been approached. The essays and books of Anne Hollander have led the way – not least her seminal work, first published in 1978, *Seeing Through Clothes* – towards a much subtler understanding of the relationship between real clothes and their representation in art or sculpture.¹⁷ Literary critics, too, have become more alert to the subtle poetics of dress in their readings of texts. Thus, we now have studies of dress in works ranging, for example, from Origen to Cervantes, from Molière to Henry James.¹⁸ Clothing is now seen as crucial to the definition of gender in literature, whether it be in medieval texts, in eighteenth-century French literature, or in the contemporary novels of Margaret Atwood.¹⁹ Not surprisingly, attention to questions of dress has become more intense as part of the general proliferation of scholarly interest in the body in different historical periods and in literature and art.²⁰

The cumulative result of this scholarship has been to foreground some of the many ways in which clothing has contributed towards the definition of class, gender, ethnicity, and cultural identity in many societies across the centuries. It has also demonstrated the importance of combining a variety of different methodological approaches (historical, art-historical, and literary; anthropological, sociological, psychological, and semiotic) to produce as richly textured a picture of dress as possible. Different styles of dress, and different fabrics, have traditionally marked boundaries between classes, and so those who aspired to higher status have often usurped the style of dress of the upper orders as part of their claim to social mobility. Views of what is appropriate dress for men and for women have evolved, especially in the twentieth century, and the clothes men and women have chosen to wear make an eloquent public statement about how they wish their gendered identity to be perceived.

Dress also defines occupational groups, as soldiers and religious officials, academics and lawyers, farmers and factory workers, sportsmen and sports-women, bankers and prostitutes each have their own distinctive dress, their uniform, to mark their identity through work. But individual dress items often change their meaning over time, as the history of blue jeans so powerfully illustrates.²¹ Those in positions of power are often invested with distinctive dress or elements of dress: whether it be the crown, sceptre, and

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robes of royalty or the chain of office of a local town mayor. Even more so, people seek to gain power over others by the dress that they wear. Dress creates a 'portable environment' in which power relations can be effectively played out.²² Subgroups within a society, especially adolescents, often define their own dress code in reaction against the socially conservative dress norms of society. In many ways dress helps these subgroups to assert a defining identity.²³ Striped clothing has often marked marginalized groups in society – prostitutes, domestic servants, criminals – and even bankers.²⁴ Religious groups sometimes adopt a form of dress that defines their shared community and announces their confessional affinity, especially during sacral acts, while religious leaders don further distinctive elements of dress that signal their religious authority.²⁵ And dress can be very powerful in summing up a culture's sense of itself, for marking ethnicity and a sense of shared community, whether it be the 'Englishness' of English dress or the invented tradition of the kilt as a marker of highland 'Scottishness.'²⁶ This has become particularly clear in colonial and post-colonial contexts as 'ethnic dress' is usually starkly contrasted with the 'dress of the colonizer' and resistance to the colonial power has often been focused by the use of ethnic dress (or elements thereof) as a symbol of resistance.²⁷ Similarly, clothing plays a central role in the debates within immigrant communities in North America, for example, over the degree to which they should assimilate to the dominant culture and how far they should preserve the diverse cultural traditions of their homelands.²⁸

This is all possible because clothing is always bound up within a socially determined code of appropriate and inappropriate dress – a code that develops and shifts in the light of negotiation (challenges to it, attempts to reinforce it) and its ongoing reinterpretation. It is against current norms that an individual's conformity or transgression is measured. But there is always a tension between a community's dresscode and the clothes that an individual chooses to wear. Deviations in terms of dress are often glossed by conservative elements in society as morally depraved, dangerous to the moral good of the community. As a result, social elites have often felt the need to develop techniques of control to enforce the traditional code. But elites have also been the object of control, too, as political and religious leaders sought to limit, usually without success, ostentation and immorality in terms of dress through sumptuary laws.²⁹ And it is through individuals' choices (now fuelled by dress manufacturers' marketing methods) made against the backdrop of the current orthodoxy that certain styles of dress are adjudged 'fashionable' and fashion trends are set.³⁰

As part of this general scholarly trend, recent work on Roman dress has – for the most part – moved beyond an attempt to establish just what Roman

clothes really looked like. Valuable though such studies are as a first step, the 'costume-history' approach of scholars like Lillian Wilson simply lacks the subtlety to bring out the richness of Roman dress for revealing central aspects of what it meant to be Roman, what were appropriate modes of appearance for Roman men and for Roman women, and how dress helped to underline the key hierarchical status layers into which Roman society was divided.³¹ The valuable papers collected in the volume *The World of Roman Costume*, edited by Judith Sebesta and Larissa Bonfante (1994), demonstrate the potential of a multidisciplinary approach to the study of Roman dress, with social and cultural historians sharing their insights with art historians and literary scholars. Some of its papers show an awareness of the anthropological and sociological literature on dress, but many remain more descriptive than analytical and a few prefer to stay closer to a Wilsonian paradigm: in particular, for instance, Goldman's contributions on Roman shoes and on Roman costume more generally, the latter replete with patterns for creating a woman's tunic and *palla*, several styles of male tunic and toga, a Greek *peplos*, various types of cloaks (the *lacerna*, *paenula*, *cucullus*, *sagum*, and *paludamentum*) and even underwear.³²

The roots of this type of scholarship lie in the obvious need of art historians to identify the costumes in which men and women were depicted in Roman sculpture and wall painting. Indeed, some of the very best scholarship in the field of Roman dress has been that of art historians carefully evaluating the visual evidence for the nature of the Roman toga and *stola*, the key defining garments for adult male and female citizens respectively.³³ Important art-historical work has also been done on Roman footwear and jewellery.³⁴ Studies of Roman women have necessarily involved discussion of their dress and the two *I Claudia* volumes, which resulted from the exhibition of that name on women in Roman art and society, first mounted at the Yale University Art Gallery in 1996, have significantly advanced the question.³⁵ Much of this art-historical discussion has necessarily been anchored in sound philological interpretation of the terms for Roman clothing items that appear in literary texts.³⁶ It is only thanks to this meticulous scholarship that more wide-ranging interpretive analysis of Roman dress is made possible. The studies in this volume would simply not be conceivable without this crucial earlier spadework.

Several recent articles on Roman dress have adopted a methodological approach similar to that found in this volume. The work of Judith Sebesta and Kelly Olson on Roman women's and children's dress and the articles by Shelley Stone and Caroline Vout on the Roman toga all combine literary and iconographic evidence to provide subtle, anthropologically astute readings of Roman clothing.³⁷ Roman authors had keen eyes for spotting deviance in

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matters of dress, and Roman literary scholars are becoming increasingly alert to the role that dress played in the poetics and construction of Roman identity, whether it be social identity, gender, or ethnicity. As studies of modern dress have emphasized, dress needs to be defined broadly to include hairstyles, male shaving preferences and the style of beards, jewellery, cosmetics, and perfumes.³⁸ Colours and fabrics can make eloquent statements, too, and some work has started to appear on these, although much more remains to be said.³⁹ Further collections of papers have been published, most recently *Costume et société dans l'Antiquité et le haut Moyen Age* (2003) and *The Clothed Body in Antiquity* (2005).⁴⁰ These volumes cover Greece, Rome, and the early Middle Ages, and include further papers on the Roman toga and the poetics of dress in the *Historia Augusta*.⁴¹ Scholars of the Greek world are also now realizing the fruitfulness of studying issues of dress, even if Greek dress was not quite so richly invested in symbolic meaning as its Roman counterpart. Here much interest has centred on the veiling of Greek women, but other aspects of male and female dress have all received attention, including aspects of ethnicity as expressed through dress.⁴²

In the context of the important historical and archaeological studies that have recently been devoted to Roman adornment and attire, it seems a propitious time to explore the cultural poetics of dress in the ancient Roman world. Jonathan Edmondson opens the volume with a chapter analysing the public dress code of the Roman elites in the late republican and early imperial period (chapter 1). He argues that a distinctively Roman ceremonial, public dress came to be established and enforced for both sexes and all classes of the Roman citizen body not only explicitly, through legislation, but also implicitly, through complex rhetorical strategies linking traditional morality with traditional dress; as a result, dress became so important a mechanism of social control in the Roman empire that every person's gender, age, class, ethnicity, and citizenship were identifiable at a glance. He considers the emblematic dress of the Roman citizen male and female, the toga and *stola* respectively, in the civic contexts in which it was required to be worn: the senate and law courts, the theatres and religious festivals, the morning *salutatio* and the evening imperial banquet. Required of citizens, these garments were denied to those outside the civic body: foreigners and adulteresses, slaves and criminals.

The ideological tensions negotiated in their dress and adornment by Roman citizen and non-citizen alike are the focus of the remaining chapters in the volume. Even within the citizen body, gradations of class and rank could be signalled by changes in style of dress. For example, although Roman children of both sexes wore the *toga praetexta*, a purple-bordered toga that established them from an early age as members of the civic community, they

exchanged this for sex- and class-differentiated adult dress at coming-of-age ceremonies, discussed in this volume by Fanny Dolansky (chapter 2) and Kelly Olson (chapter 6), respectively. Dolansky examines what we know of the *rite de passage* in which the Roman boy assumed the white toga, *toga pura*, of the freeborn enfranchised (adult) citizen male. Her study unravels the symbolic resonances of the *toga pura*, the very name of which, often accompanied by the adjective *libera* (free), connoted the pure birth of the freeborn citizen male. Analysis of the public rights and responsibilities of citizenship conferred on the wearer by the assumption of the toga – enabling him to begin a career in politics, law, rhetoric, and the army – is complemented by an exploration of the private emotions, particularly of pride and anxiety, elicited from celebrant, family, and friends on this important occasion in the domestic sphere. A discussion of the appearance of the young Roman girl by Kelly Olson draws together the diverse literary and artistic evidence for a distinctive dress code for Roman girls. Discussion, ancient and modern, of the attire and adornment of the Roman girl has been hampered in its reliance, on the one hand, on the evidence for the appearance of the Roman boy and, on the other, on the evidence for the appearance of the adult woman. Olson shows, however, that the dress of Roman girls differed significantly from that of both Roman boys and sexually mature Roman women, who exchanged the child's tunic and *toga praetexta* for the *stola* upon their marriage. Nonetheless, Olson's findings indicate that elite Roman girls were not as visually distinct from their mothers in the artistic sources as the literary sources would suggest and she argues that Roman girls may have been groomed for the role of sexually mature wife and mother by wearing the cosmetics, jewellery, and elaborate hairstyles of their mothers.

Other *rites de passage* were similarly marked by a change of clothing, while within the ranks of the elite still further specialization of dress obtained in, for example, the whitened *toga candida* that candidates for election to Roman office wore, the purple-bordered *toga praetexta* to which curule magistrates were entitled, and the entirely purple *toga picta* worn by censors. In a synthetic study of the representation of public dress in Roman sculpture (chapter 3), Michael Koortbojian examines the different togate forms in which elite male citizens portrayed themselves as an expression of Roman civic ideology. Although details distinguishing the colour and line of the toga only rarely survive on extant statuary, the social distinctions such details marked were not omitted from the plastic arts but rather conveyed more frequently through the application of paint. Koortbojian argues that togate and cuirassed statues on display in public (i.e., political and military) contexts in this way bespeak their subjects' prominent social standing and embody their claim to the exemplary Roman virtues of dignified authority

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(*dignitas*) and military courage (*virtus*). Michele George turns from the elite investment in the toga as a symbol of civic prestige to the representation of the toga as a symbol of social oppression in the satirical writings of the poet-clients Martial and Juvenal (chapter 4). Her study supplements Koortbojian's discussion of elite perspectives on the social symbolism of the toga in an examination of the negative portrayal of the toga in authors who represent themselves not as elite patrons but as citizen *clientes* and whose perspective is conditioned by social limitation rather than social privilege.

Still lower on the social scale were gladiators, legally disadvantaged (*infames*) if not slaves, who fought in amphitheatrical spectacles mounted for the enjoyment of a broad cross-section of the Roman citizen body. Michael Carter explores in chapter 5 the broad cultural stereotypes, beliefs, and expectations with which the spectators viewed the different gladiatorial costumes, especially that of the *retiarius*, the gladiator who fought nearly naked and lightly armed with net, trident, and dagger against a much more heavily armed opponent variously called *contrarete*, *myrmillo*, or *secutor*. His findings suggest that *retiarium* were admired not only for the speed and agility with which they outmanoeuvred their more heavily equipped foe but also for their good looks, visible to the spectators because they wore neither faceguards nor helmets. Their naked appeal, however, seems also to have laid them open to charges of licentiousness and, by extension, effeminacy.

The Romans policed the gendered rhetoric of dress closely, even down to the niceties of headgear. Elaine Fantham, in her study of Roman head-coverings (chapter 7), contrasts the ritual requirement for Romans to cover their heads when officiating as priests with respectable Roman women's daily wearing of woollen headbands, *vittae*. Both sexes, moreover, were supposed to wear *infulae*, the hanks of wool shaped like a diadem from which *vittae* hung on either side, when officiating as priests or acting as suppliants, while the bride also wore them on her wedding day. Despite the abundant literary evidence documenting women's daily wearing of *vittae* and priests' ritual wearing of *infulae*, however, Roman portraiture preserves few traces of these headbands, and Fantham speculates that their absence in the plastic arts may reflect Roman women's disinclination to observe the prescriptions of the moralists. Leslie Shumka likewise contrasts the strictures of Roman moralists concerning women's sartorial behaviour with women's own self-presentation, in so far as it is visible in the iconography of funerary commemoration in the so-called *mundus muliebris* reliefs, which depict the articles women employed in their toilette (chapter 8). She argues that a special feminine iconography developed in the decorative programs of these commemorative monuments to record the essential tools in the design of female appearance and she suggests that this gendered mortuary culture can be read

as evidence not only of elite Roman women's aspirations to beauty but also of the (slave or freed) beautician's memorialization of her occupational skills. Either way, these reliefs attest to the importance of dress and adornment to Roman women as vehicles of self-expression. Like Shumka, though from a different perspective, Alison Keith in chapter 9 explores the limited evidence we have for Roman women's views on female dress. In a discussion of the poetry by and about Sulpicia, the niece of Augustus' general M. Valerius Messala Corvinus (consul in 31 BC) and the best known Roman female poet whose work is extant, Keith argues that Sulpicia was sensitive to the prescriptions of both poets and moralists concerning female dress in Roman culture. She suggests that Sulpicia exploited elite women's access to sartorial finery to blur gender and class lines in her poetry, but that her male contemporaries may have been impervious to the gender and class challenges posed by sartorial self-fashioning.

In chapter 10, Riemer Faber traces the history of the literary metaphor of the woven robe in classical epic in order to unravel the significance of the metaphor in the proem of the epic poem *Ciris*, honouring the dedicatee, M. Valerius Messala. He finds the *Ciris*-poet's identification of a general with the spangled cloak of heaven particularly appropriate to literary panegyric, and argues that the poet intends a compliment to Messala by identifying him with the immortal subjects of cosmology. In a discussion of late-antique panegyric descriptions of woven robes, Michael Dewar in chapter 11 examines the strategies by which Claudian and other late Latin poets praise the emperor and his advisers by equating consular robes with the office on which they depend. He argues that the elaborate descriptions such garments received in late-antique poetic panegyric suggests both the visual importance they assumed in late-antique imperial ceremonies and the larger political messages they could convey to the astute observer.

In a study of Apuleius' self-presentation at his trial in the mid-second century AD for magic held in Roman North Africa, Keith Bradley is similarly concerned in chapter 12 to elaborate the signals that the orator's self-portrait, particularly his description of his dress and deportment, conveyed about his social, political, and economic standing, and the particular social situation – a judicial trial – in which he delivered the speech in his own defence. Bradley finds that Apuleius' self-portrait was designed to appeal to the judge by fashioning him, like the judge, as an orator, togate and learned, formed in the Roman tradition. Like Bradley, Corey Brennan explores the social significance of modes of dress in Roman North Africa in an analysis of Tertullian's *De Pallio* (chapter 13). Examining the rhetoric in which Tertullian urges his audience to reject the Roman toga (symbol of their Roman citizenship) and return to the Greek *pallium* (symbol of erudition), Brennan

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argues that Tertullian invokes the *pallium* as a metaphor to encourage his Carthaginian audience to renounce the worldly pursuits symbolized by the prestigious Roman toga and thereby to embrace the Christian faith symbolized by the *pallium*. In the final chapter (chapter 14), Guy Métraux is also concerned with the significance of clothing and accessories in late antiquity, both in textual and in artistic representations, and he examines in particular two emerging concerns about dress: first, an increasing prudery about mortal female nudity and, second, an increasing uniformity in the length of the toga and in its style of draping. Métraux links both developments to new standards of self-fashioning, in which clothes came to be invested with both a literal and a symbolic significance that sacralized what had formerly been secular style.

As this survey indicates, the contributors share our commitment not only to investigate the social symbolism of dress in the Roman world but also to elicit the views of a wider spectrum of the members of Roman society than just those of the male elite. These concerns are reflected in the organization of the volume. Part I, 'Investments in Masculinity,' groups together papers that examine masculine attire, especially the toga, in ancient Rome and assess the views of those whose age, class, or ethnic background could make the assumption of the toga a dangerous or socially limiting act. Part II, 'Fashioning the Female,' explores the strategies for self-expression available to Roman women in negotiating a dress code prescribed by a patriarchal culture. Part III, 'The Cultural Poetics of Dress,' explores the complex dynamics of dress in imperial Roman culture, both literary and artistic. With the establishment of secure rule over the whole of the Mediterranean, Greeks and Punic North Africans alike became members of the Roman Empire and had to learn to dress the part.

Obviously, it has not been possible to cover every aspect of Roman dress in a single volume and there are many topics that will require further treatment elsewhere. This volume does not concentrate very much on Roman fashion per se and the way in which styles of dress evolved between Republic and Empire and beyond, even though Keith's study of sartorial elegance in the Sulpician corpus (chapter 9) reveals much about Roman attitudes towards refinements. More could be said about luxury fabrics and evolving fashions in dress among the Roman elite. Here the depiction of luxury dress in Pompeian wall painting would repay closer scrutiny, even though this involves complex methodological problems of just what is being represented in this artistic genre. Male dandies and cross-dressers have piqued some curiosity, but further work would be enhanced by the application of insights from the crosscultural literature now available on these striking figures.⁴³ Religious dress – the dress of the major *flamines*, *pontifices*, augurs, and

haruspices, of the Vestals and *flaminicae*, not to mention the more exotic garb of priests of Cybele or Isis – needs further study, as does the extent to which dress was regulated during festivals, whether it be the need to wear *vestes albae* at the Ludi Cereales or multicoloured clothes at the Floralia (Ov. *Fasti* 4.619–620; cf. 5.355–356).⁴⁴ Roman military dress would also repay close analysis: not just the rank distinctions that have been the object of much work by Roman military historians,⁴⁵ but in particular the striking dress of the commander, when he dramatically exchanged his toga for the scarlet, purple, and gold *paludamentum* after crossing the sacred boundary (*pomerium*) of the city of Rome as he left on campaign. To denote that war had been declared, it was sufficient for Roman authors such as Sallust to state simply, ‘He changed his toga for a *paludamentum*.’⁴⁶

Although Faber in chapter 10 discusses the imagery of fabrics and weaving in Roman epic, there is also little here on the fabrication of textiles per se or on the gendered technologies of production, questions that have engaged a range of scholars working on more modern periods. Nor is there space here to discuss clothing trends across the provinces of the Roman Empire.⁴⁷ This volume concentrates on dress as a key marker of *Romanitas* and has something to say on the complex reactions to the wearing of Greek dress at Rome and on dress codes in the provincial setting of Roman North Africa (chapters 12 to 14), but much more needs to be said about the close connection in Roman mentality between dress and ethnicity. Olson, Fantham, Shumka, and Keith in chapters 6 to 9 each touch on several ancillary items of female dress and adornment such as ribbons, jewellery, and cosmetics, but a more thorough-going treatment of such items, to which should be added hair-styles and perfume, would be valuable. While the focus here is for the most part on the elite, the dress of Roman emperors and female members of the *domus Augusta* would also benefit from more systematic discussion to see to what degree they differentiated themselves in terms of dress from other members of Roman society, and more needs to be said about the *tunicatus populus* and the dress of the working poor across the Roman Empire.⁴⁸

During the reign of Augustus, the learned grammarian and freedman M. Verrius Flaccus, tutor to the emperor’s grandsons, composed a major work of Latin lexicography, *On the Meaning of Words* (*De verborum significatu*), following in the footsteps of M. Terentius Varro, whose *On the Latin Language* was completed probably in 43 BC. Although Verrius Flaccus’ work is now lost, it was abridged in the later second century AD by Sex. Pompeius Festus, whose epitome (of which only about half survives) was in turn epitomized in the eighth century by Paul the Deacon. Without the epitomes of this work, we would be much less well informed about Roman dress; for Verrius Flaccus clearly treated the whole gamut of Roman dress: the toga,

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the *stola*, the *toga praetexta* of the Roman child, the dress of a bride on her wedding day, mourning dress, the purple ribbons (*vittae*) of the *flaminica*, the fringed shawl (*ricinium*) of the Roman widow, to name just a few items. Not to be outdone, the learned scholar Suetonius composed a work *On the Nature of Clothes* (*De genere vestium*) in the early second century. It, too, is now lost, but a few snippets can be gleaned from stray quotations in later authors. He clearly discussed the different kinds of *trabea*, including those worn by augurs, the *laena* (a double toga) worn by *flamines* when sacrificing, the various types of caps worn by priests, and the distinctive shoes of patricians.⁴⁹ In the fourth century AD, the grammarian Servius included many explications of Roman dress in his learned commentary on Vergil's *Aeneid*. And as late as the seventh century, Isidore, bishop of Hispalis (modern Seville), drew on the scholarship of these earlier authors for the material on dress that he included in his work *The Etymologies*. Its penultimate book contains a series of observations, totalling over 4,000 words, on dress (*Etym.* 19.22–34) and the discussion is organized into the following sections:

- 22 On the diversity and names of garments (*De diversitate et nominibus vestimentorum*)
- 23 On the distinctive dress of certain peoples (*De proprio quarundam gentium habitu*)
- 24 On men's outer garments (*pallia*) (*De palliis virorum*) (including the toga)
- 25 On women's outer garments (*pallia*) (*De palliis feminarum*) (including the *stola*)
- 26 On coverings and other textiles currently in use (*De stratu et reliquis vestibus quae in usu habentur*)
- 27 On fabrics (*De lanis*)
- 28 On the colours of clothes (*De coloribus vestium*)
- 29 On instruments used in making clothes (*De instrumentis vestium*)
- 30 On decorative accessories (*De ornamentis*)
- 31 On decorative accessories for women's heads (*De ornamentis capitis feminarum*)
- 32 On rings (*De anulis*)
- 33 On underwear (*De cingulis*)
- 34 On shoes (*De calciamentis*)

The sheer comprehensiveness of the ancient scholarly literature on dress illustrates how deeply significant it was to the Roman mentality. Even if Isidore occasionally got muddled over some details, for instance when trying to explain the *cinctus Gabinus* style of wearing the toga, it is nevertheless striking that the importance of dress as a defining element of Roman culture was still remembered in learned circles in the far western Mediterranean over 200 years after the Romans had lost political control of the region.⁵⁰

Notes

- 1 For Carlyle's place in the study of dress, see Keenan 2001 and Carter 2003: 1–17, a study of *Sartor Resartus* as the first of what are for Carter 'Fashion Classics.'
- 2 For examples of the costume history approach, see Köhler 1928; Payne 1965; Bigelow 1970; for Roman dress studied from a costume history perspective, see Wilson 1924 and 1938a; Croom 2002.
- 3 Language of clothes: Lurie 1981; psychology of clothing: Kaiser 1990; dress and morality: Ribeiro 1986; class: Binder 1986; power relations: McDowell 1992; Johnson and Lennon 1999; popular culture: Cunningham and Lab 1991; gender: Martin 1989; Barnes and Eicher 1992; Fischer-Mirkin 1995; Buckley and Fawcett 2002; Burman and Turbin 2003; cross-dressing: Garber 1992; Griggs 1998; culture and identity: Kuper 1973; Davis 1992; ethnicity: Eicher 1995; material culture: Kuchler and Miller 2005.
- 4 Simmel 1905, on which see Carter 2003: 59–81; Flügel 1930, with Carter 2003: 97–119; Kroeber 1919, on which see Carter 2003: 83–96; Sapir 1931.
- 5 Most important, among his many works, are Laver 1937, 1950, 1969; see further Carter 2003: 121–41.
- 6 On Barthes, see Carter 2003: 143–63; but note the mild scepticism of Davis 1992: 5–18.
- 7 Barthes 1983: 278.
- 8 Bourdieu 1984: 200.
- 9 Ibid.: 202.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 For example, volume 9.3 (1997) on dress and gender in the ancient world or volume 14.3 (2002) on dress and gender in historical perspective, the latter subsequently reissued as a book (Burman and Turbin 2003). Cf. *Journal of American Folklore* 111, no. 440 (Spring 1998), on 'Modern Dress: Costuming the European Social Body, 17th–20th Century'; *Art Journal* 54.1 (1995) on 'Clothing as Subject,' ed. N. Felshin.
- 12 Taylor 2002; Breward 2003; Calefato 2004; Kawamura 2005. For seminal works in dress studies, Carter 2003; Johnson, Torntore, and Eicher 2003.
- 13 Medieval Europe: Pionnier and Mane 1995. Early Modern Europe: Jones and Stallybrass 2000. Early Modern England: Vincent 2003. Early Modern Italy: Frick 2002. Russia: Sekatcheva 2004. *Ancien régime* France: Roche 1989 = 1994. West Africa: Martin 1994 and 1995. Victorian/Edwardian England: Breward 1999. America: Kidwell and Christman 1974; Marchand 1985; Severa 1995; Palmer 2004.
- 14 Le Goff 1985: 188–207 = 1988: 132–50 (on the 'code vestimentaire' of Medieval Europe); Harris 1981 (on the red liberty cap of the sans-culottes in the French Revolution).

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- 15 Royal dress: Cumming 1989 (in general); Burke 1992 (Louis XIV); Smuts 1996 on the early Stuarts. Elite dress: for example, see Dolan 1994; Vincent 2003. Ordinary people: Styles 1994, 2002, 2003; Smiles 1997. Slave-dress in the eighteenth and nineteenth century: White and White 1995.
- 16 Fashion and consumerism: Rappaport 2000; Williams 1982; Wilson 1985; Leach 1993; Lears 1994; Palmer 2002 and 2004. For shifting technologies of production, see Lemire 1997 (seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England); Styles 2003; Bray 1997 (on late-imperial China). For weaving as women's work in the ancient world, see esp. Barber 1994.
- 17 Note also Hollander 1999 (esp. Part II) and 2002. For further developments in this line, see Ribeiro 1995 and 2000; Ashelford 1996; Rodini and Weaver 2002.
- 18 See, respectively, Noce 2002; Dock 1992; Bernis 2001; Hughes 2001. In general on dress and literature, see Monneyron 2001.
- 19 Medieval texts: Burns 2002 and 2004. Eighteenth-century French literature: Batchelor 2005; Jones 2004. Margaret Atwood: Kuhn 2005.
- 20 Seminal here of course has been the work of Foucault 1984.
- 21 Barthes 1983: 295; Gordon 1991; and note the exhibition catalogue: *Histoires du jeans de 1750 à 1994* (Musée de la mode et du costume 1994).
- 22 Johnson and Lennon 1999; Keenan 2001. On dress as a 'portable environment,' see Watkins 1984.
- 23 For analyses of the manner in which Goth dress has defined a whole subculture, see Hodkinson 2002; Spooner 2004: esp. ch. 6, 'Undead Fashion' (159–99). For the importance of gay men's dress during the twentieth century for self-definition of the male homosexual community, see Cole 2000.
- 24 As revealed in the fascinating study of Pastoureau 1991.
- 25 On religious dress in cross-cultural perspective, see Mayo 1984 and esp. Arthur 1999 and 2000.
- 26 On English dress: Breward, Conekin, and Cox 2002; on the kilt, Trevor-Roper 1983.
- 27 For this in Africa, see Martin 1994; Allman 2004; in colonial Jamaica, Buckridge 2004; in Australia, Maynard 2001; in India, Chaudhuri 1976; in East Asia, Chen 2003. In general, see McClintock 1995. For the related question of dress and globalization, see Maynard 2004; Niessen 2003.
- 28 On Jewish immigrant women's dress in the United States, see Schreier 1994. On Asian American and African American use of ethnic dress in courtship rituals and marriage ceremonies, see Lynch 1999.
- 29 See Harte 1976. For sumptuary laws, Hughes 1983; Hunt 1996.
- 30 For discussions of fashion, see esp. Hollander 1978: 349–90; Davis 1992; Ash and Wilson 1992; Breward 1995, 1999, and 2003; Buckley and Fawcett 2002.
- 31 On the toga, Wilson 1924; on Roman clothing in general, Wilson 1938a; on Greek, Roman, and Byzantine costume, Wilson 1938b. For other works that take

- a 'costume history' approach, note Heuzey 1923; Repond 1931; Houston 1947; and, most recently, Croom 2002. For a well-illustrated introduction to Roman dress in general, see Sette 2000.
- 32 Goldman 1994a and 1994b. For a more revealing look at Roman underwear, see Olson 2003.
- 33 Toga: Goethert 1937 and 1939 and esp. Goette 1990. On the toga in the Greek East, see Havé-Nikolaus 1998. Stola: Bieber 1931 and esp. Scholz 1992. The valuable work of Bonfante on Etruscan and Roman dress (1973 and 1975) is essentially grounded in this art-historical tradition.
- 34 Footwear: Goette 1988; Curletto 1990; Goldman 1994a. For jewellery, see Pfeiler 1970; Stout 1994.
- 35 Kleiner and Matheson 1996; Kleiner and Matheson 2000.
- 36 So both Goette 1990 and Scholz 1992 include careful discussion of the textual references to the toga and *stola* respectively. For a thorough philological study of clothing terms in Latin, see Potthoff 1992.
- 37 Sebesta 1994a, 1997, 2005; Olson 2002; Stone 1994; Vout 1996.
- 38 On the poetics of dress in Cicero, see Heskell 1994 and Dyck 2001; in Roman epic, Bender 1994; Keith 2000: esp. 18–35; on the poetics of cosmetics, Wyke 1994 and Richlin 1995; on women's hair, Bartman 2001; on beards, Zanker 1995; on 'moral appearance' and 'effeminate signs,' Corbeil 1996: chap. 4, esp. 159–69; on reading the body, Edwards 1993: chap. 2; Gleason 1995: esp. chap. 3 ('Department as Language').
- 39 Colours and fabrics: see Sebesta 1994b; Alfaro et al. 2004; colours: Cleland et al. 2004; on textile production, see Wild 1970; Cardon and Feugère 2000; Rogers et al. 2001.
- 40 Chausson and Inglebert 2003; Cleland et al. 2005.
- 41 On the toga, Deniaux 2003; Davies 2005; Sebesta 2005; on the *Historia Augusta*, Molinier-Arbo 2003; Harlow 2005.
- 42 The veil: Cairns 2001 and 2002; Llewellyn-Jones 2003. For an excellent collection of papers on Greek women's dress, see Llewellyn-Jones 2002. On Athenian male dress, Geddes 1987; on dress and ethnicity, note Cohen 2001; Miller 1997 (analysing Persian dress at Athens). In general, Losfeld 1991 and 1994; Alden 2003. Jones Roccas 2006 provides a useful annotated bibliography on Greek dress.
- 43 See briefly Tracy 1976; Edwards 1993: 63–70, 78–97; Corbeil 1996: 159–69. Modern studies: Garber 1992; Griggs 1998.
- 44 On the regulation of Greek dress, especially at festivals, see Mills 1984; Ogden 2002.
- 45 See Franzoni 1987.
- 46 Sall. *Hist.* 1. 87, quoted at Isid. *Etym.* 19.24.9; cf. Pliny *Pan.* 56.4.
- 47 For some (mainly descriptive) work, see Wild 1985; Böhme 1985; Garbsch 1985; Roche-Bernard and Ferdière 1993; Roussin 1994; Swift 2000.

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- 48 Alföldi 1935 still provides a valuable starting-point on the emperor's dress; on slave-dress, note Bradley 1994: 87–9, 95–8; George 2002.
- 49 Suet. frs. 165–169 (ed. Reifferscheid).
- 50 *Etym.* 19.24.7, with the comments of Stone 1994: 39n6. We are very grateful to numerous colleagues in the Department of History at York University for their bibliographic suggestions on dress in later periods.