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*Fashion, emulation and social classes in late medieval Valencia.
Exploring textile consumption through probate inventories*

1. Introduction

The last centuries of the Later Middle Ages represented a period of profound transformations in personal dress. The huge variety of garments of complex designs that developed in the epoch represented a novelty as compared to immediate prior centuries, to the extent that some historians have suggested that the origins of fashion itself should be located in the late medieval period (Heller 2010, 2007). Similarly, other scholars have stressed the innovations and dynamism showed by late Medieval clothing with notorious terms, such as those of ‘dress revolution’ (Piponnier 1989; Blanc 1997) and ‘fashion revolution’ (Koenig 1991; Scott 2007). This phenomenon, in turn, can be contextualised within the wider ‘consumer revolution’ that included not only textiles, but also other material objects and possessions that emerged or spread across a number of late medieval households (Petrowiste 2018; Kowaleski 2006; Dyer 2005).

Identifying the emergence, proliferation and sometimes disappearance of certain fashions proves to be an extremely complex matter to deal with. Some cloths appeared in the late medieval period and remained in use for centuries, well into the early modern period, while others had a very short existence. Likewise, particular garments were only present among the houses of the rich, while others spread enough to be worn by urban workers and peasants. The reasons for the expansion of certain fashions are no less difficult to establish. Historians have explained this many times as an expression of social emulation, that is, the imitation of the consumption patterns of elites, since it seems evident that kings, courts, and townspeople possessions were desired by the rest of society, which could lead and inspired the consumer behaviour of the latter (Kowaleski 2006, Dyer 2005). The proliferation of sumptuary laws and criticisms of contemporary clergymen to these realities also supports the idea that emulative attitudes existed and were widely present in late medieval society (Muzzarelli 2003). In Iberia and, more specifically, in the kingdom of Valencia, a realm located in the east of the peninsula that was part of the Crown of Aragon, similar processes have been detected in the last years, with a general rise in living standards and consumption that lead altogether to changing textile fashions as well as emulative attitudes (Furió 2009; 2011; García Marsilla 2014; 2015; Almenar Fernández 2018; 2020. Almenar Fernández and Belenguer González 2020).

The purpose of this work is to explore textile consumption among various social classes so as to identify the origins, spread and consolidation or extinction of particular textile fashions. We turn to a sample of 83 probate inventories from the late medieval kingdom of Valencia, particularly, of the city of Valencia and its surrounding countryside. The sources will allow to explore the garments of men and women from various social classes, with a wide range of details that prove excellent for tracking the diffusion of fashions across society. Particular attention will be paid to process of trickle-down or 'downward' transmission of consumption patterns, from the richer to the poorer, as well as from townspeople to peasants. Independent, genuine fashions of particular social classes, with no evident inspiration in the habits of consumption of other groups, will also be dealt with, as well as 'bubble-up' or 'upwards' transmissions, from the poorer to the richer.

Part one presents the kingdom of Valencia and its two selected areas for analysis, as well as Valencian inventories and their ability to show the textile possessions of medieval society. Part two deals with temporary and long-lasting textile fashions, with particular attention to its origins and diffusion across society. Part three focus on a major novelty that came to stay, the emergence of gender-specific cloths, as a global reality across all social strata. Finally, part four approaches the proliferation of fashions of higher complexity, like those in colours, cloth materials, styles, linings and finishes, which developed transversally across various garments and often independently from them.

2. Clothing in late medieval Valencian inventories

The conquest led by the kings of Aragon in the mid-thirteenth century of the Eastern territories of Al-Andalus, the name with which Muslims referred to Iberia, gave birth to the creation of a brand-new political entity, the kingdom of Valencia. The realm was included as part of the set of territories under the authority of the kings, known as the Crown of Aragon, of which the kingdom of Aragon, the principality of Catalonia and the Balearic Islands were part too. The kingdom of Valencia rapidly became a burgeoning economy in the context of the North-western Mediterranean, as a result of an important presence of towns – either inherited from the Muslim period or created by the Christian conquerors –, of a highly market-orientated agriculture, and of a strategic position in international trade networks.

The realm was named after its capital, the city of Valencia, a vibrant hub where nobles, notaries, clergymen, merchants, students, artists, writers, craftsmen, labourers, slaves, peasants and a number of people in general gathered and created a dynamic urban society. All these individuals came originally and predominantly from Catalonia and Aragon, the place of origin of the Christian conquerors, but the realm would soon attract migrants from all around the Christendom. In fact, the constant and uninterrupted arrival of migrants prompted the city of Valencia to experience a continuous population growth during the late medieval period. The mortality caused by the Black Death (1348) was rapidly offset by this constant flow of outsiders, what helped improving the relevance of the city of Valencia in Iberia.

By 1510 the capital hosted at least 10,000 hearths, implying that not only had it become the largest town of the Crown of Aragon, but also of Iberia.

The economic prosperity of this large town was also supported by its rural hinterland, whose peasants found opportunities for prospering by supplying the city, and also benefited from the permanent urban markets. The surrounding areas of the city of Valencia, historically called the *horta* – the ‘irrigated land’, due to the fact that this was the system employed for cultivation that largely defined the landscape –, was inhabited by some 1,200 hearths distributed in several villages, as well as in some scattered, isolated farmsteads (Furió 2012). All these peasants interacted with the capital of the realm in a number of ways almost as an everyday practice, attending urban markets to sell their products and making businesses, as well as to purchase what they might need, from foodstuffs to everyday products for their houses.

The city of Valencia and its rural hinterland represent thus an ideal case study to explore the spread of textile fashions. Both populations constituted separate societies in essence: an urban one and a rural one – even if a highly ‘urbanised’ rural one –, that is, two groups of consumers with different lifestyles, residences and economic resources. At the same time, nevertheless, both of them were close enough and interacted frequently with each other, thereby encouraging the transmission of consumption patterns. These can be well studied thanks to the abundance of probate inventories in the late medieval notarial records preserved in the archives of the city of Valencia. These sources are well-known in this field of historical research and have proved to be much useful for a quantitative approach to household consumption, in particular for the early modern period (Overton et al. 2014). Although far less studied in this way, late medieval probate inventories are significantly abundant in North-western Mediterranean archives since the thirteenth century, namely within these notarial sources, providing an exhaustive description of the goods and properties that belonged to deceased individuals (Almenar Fernández 2017; 2018; Barceló 1994; Bolòs and Sánchez-Boira 2014; Besc 2014; Garcia-Oliver 2006).

The reasons for the making of an inventory could vary from place to place depending on local legislation but, in general terms, common circumstances led to the ordering of an inventory in the Crown of Aragon, as well as in other locations of this part of the continent. Inventories were generally ordered by individuals who were about to receive an inheritance with the aim of avoiding potential legal disputes, as well as to find out its general state, very often to consider the potential burden of debts before accepting or refusing it. When the heir was a minor, besides, a tutor was needed to receive the inheritance on his or her behalf and to manage it until the age of majority. In that case an inventory was forced by law, without which the tutorship could not begin (Almenar Fernández 2017, 541-3). Both circumstances have led to a huge abundance of these documents in Valencian archives. The sources are known for being precise and exhaustive in the recording of the possessions of the deceased. As a result, they include all types of properties, whether movables or real estates, thereby describing houses, lands, animals and workshops, as well as all imaginable objects, like furnishings, bedlinen, tableware, cooking equipment, books, lightning items, non-perishable foodstuffs, and personal

dress. Because of their legal usefulness, all members of society seem to have turned to the practice of ordering an inventory before notaries if in need, and consequently, it is possible to find inventories of all echelons of societies, from nobles to peasants (Almenar Fernández 2017, 551-9).

In recent decades, important scholarship has developed assessing the methodological limits of probate inventories when exploring consumption quantitatively, although essentially for the early modern period and Northern-European areas. Some common biases noted are, for a start, the possible neglect of low value goods, as well as the fact that those deceased recorded tend to have belonged to the wealthiest strata of each social sector (Clark 2010. See also Clark 2007, 40-70). Yet, the impression Valencian inventories provide really is of a profound thoroughness when describing objects, including those in pawn, those that were sold immediately after the death of their owner but before the arrival of the notary, and even those described as 'old', 'of low value', 'rotten' and so on. On the other hand, even if a certain wealth bias is present in the deceased covered by inventories, it is crucial to remember some of these sources were forced by law irrespective of the goods possessed by the deceased. Besides, ordering an inventory before a notary was an affordable practice, whose price was set by the constitutional law of the kingdom (*Furs*) at a low level. This all leads to the impression that, ultimately, everyone with the will or need of ordering an inventory would have done it in late medieval Valencia, just as it very much would have happened in other areas of the Crown of Aragon (Almenar Fernández 2017, 556-8).

The extraordinary descriptiveness with which notaries wrote down the garments of the deceased are a further strength that must be emphasized. When it comes to textiles, an ordinary Valencian inventory records the quantity of garments of a deceased as well as a number of details as to typologies, materials, qualities, colours, ornaments and styles. As a way of illustration, a canonical example is provided by the inventory of Sancho Roíz, written in 1375, from the village of Manises, nearby the city of Valencia, which includes 'a women shirt, linen-made, with the part of the chest made of red and black silk, with a silken red cord at both sides of the shirt'.¹ The inventory of Saurina, the wife of Pere Vidal, a peasant that lived within the walls of the city, was written in 1381, and recorded 'one linen hat, with blue strips two *alnes* [ca. two metres] long and three palms in width'.² This extensive set of details makes Valencian inventories ideal for databases analysis, in which various relevant concepts can be included. This allows developing quantitative analysis and studying the relative incidence of these aspects among the two groups of consumers, those from the city of Valencia, and those from its rural hinterland. They can also be explored in a more qualitative way, by tracking the emergence and spread of particular items, colours, styles and so on within and between both groups. This proves particularly useful for researching the

¹ 'Una camisa de dona de lli, ab corporal de seda vermella e negra, obrat ab corda vermella de seda als costats'. Arxiu Municipal de València (AMV), *Protocolos, Antoni Cortés*, m-1, 13 June 1375.

² 'Un capçó de lli, ab llistes de cotó blaves, de dues alnes de larch e tres palms d'ample'. Arxiu de Protocolos del Corpus Christi de València (APCCV), *Vicent Queralt*, 1,412, 23 September 1381.

transmission of fashions and consumption patterns throughout all these individuals, as well as the existence of emulative attitudes.

In this work we carry out these analyses by turning to a sample of 83 inventories covering the period 1307-1413, a key moment when European living standards would have increased and changes in consumption patterns were more visible (Allen 2001; Petrowiste 2018), also in the kingdom of Valencia (Furió 2009; 2011; García Marsilla 2014; Almenar Fernández 2018; Almenar Fernández and Belenguer González 2020). The collection of inventories has attempted to be exhaustive as to the period before the Black Death, for the lower number of notarial records from that period has allowed compiling nearly all extant inventories of deceased of the city of Valencia and its hinterland by 1350. The vast number of notarial records preserved thereafter makes it impossible to undertake a systematic survey of all surviving inventories, and thus we have turned to selections of particular notaries. These professionals tended to specialise in particular groups of social groups as clients, so that we have focused on notaries whose clientele was focused on craftsmen from the city of Valencia and peasants from its rural surrounding areas (Cruselles 1998). Altogether, this has led the period between 1351 and the early fifteenth century to be represented by a fewer number of inventories. However, the studied number of these lists of goods proves useful enough to search for the diffusion of textile fashions, as well as to explore the major differences between both groups of consumers, aspects which are central to this work

3. Temporary and durable fashions. A rise in textile consumption

A global, quantitative approach to inventories reveals a general increase in the repertoire of clothes present in the houses of Valencian society. Tab. 1 presents the mean number of pieces of clothing owned by the deceased, as classified according to their place of residence, and into two periods, before and after 1351. This year is taken in order to provide the image of the 'before' and the 'after' of the demographic and economic effects of the Black Death (1348), as well as a convenient separation point to ensure the representativeness of the sample once sub-divided into two chronological periods. The table includes the number of inventories representing each group too. This evidence suggests that the mean number of garments would have increased from one epoch to the other, both in town and countryside, around 15 to 30 per cent (Tab. 1).

The analysis can be repeated considering the studied individuals by their social strata. The variety of the occupations of the deceased was noticeable in the city of Valencia, where inventories have reported the possessions of smiths, butchers, wool-carders, brokers, barbers, nobles, notaries and so on. In order to ensure analytic viability, all occupations can be simplified into three major clusters, as 'bourgeoisie and nobility', 'craftsmen and urban workers' and 'peasants'. This implies a reduction of the sample to 41 inventories in total, since the rest of the studied inventories – effectively, half of our sample – do not specify the occupation of the deceased, but a general indication of them being 'neighbours' (*veïns*) of their

place of residence. Regardless, as shown by Tab. 2, it is possible to see the same increase in the number of garments. Besides, this analysis also poses that such a growth in textile possessions was more evident among wealthier individuals, although it was certainly a generalised social phenomenon, since craftsmen, urban workers and peasants owned more pieces over time too (Tab. 2).

Tab. 1. Mean number of pieces of clothing per decease as to their residence

	1307-1351		1351-1413	
	Pieces (Mean)	Inventories (N.)	Pieces (Mean)	Inventories (N.)
City of Valencia	17.2	31	19.9	19
Rural hinterland	7	25	10	8

Notes. The rural hinterland is formed by deceased from the following populations: Albal, Albalat, Alfajar, Benetússer, Burjassot, Foios, Massarrojos, Rafelbunyol, Russafa, Meliana, Patraix, Soternes. It also includes residents from two farmsteads (*alqueries*), called 'de Benibahari' and 'de Sant Jordi'.

Tab. 2. Mean number of pieces of clothing per decease as to their occupation

	1307-1351		1351-1413	
	Pieces (Mean)	Inventories (N.)	Pieces (Mean)	Inventories (N.)
Bourgeoisie and nobility	16.5	9	52	3
Craftsmen and urban workers	7.8	8	15	8
Peasants	7.2	8	12.6	5

Notes. 'Bourgeoisie' is formed by the following occupations: 'citizen' (*ciudadà*), notary (*notari*). 'Craftsmen and urban workers' is formed by barbers (*barbers*), belt-makers (*corretgers*), brokers (*corredors*), butchers (*carnívors*), doublet-makers (*juponers*), mattress-makers (*matalafers*), shoe-makers (*sabaters*), silk-makers (*seders*), smiths (*ferrers*), wool-carders (*pelaires*), and one official (*saig*). 'Peasants' is formed by 'peasants' (*llauradors*), 'shepherds' (*pastors*) and 'fishermen' (*pescadors*). Widows are classified as to the occupation of their husbands.

The rich descriptiveness of inventories allows not only identifying a higher presence of pieces of personal dress in the houses of Valencian society, but also the specific garments that were behind the process. Some of them were not novelties, but objects with a long-held existence in European textile culture, since at least the thirteenth century, like tunics (*cotes* o *cots*). These loose, long garments that went below the hip, even up to the feet, are by far the most abundant garment in fourteenth century inventories, before and after the plague. Moreover, they appear with a remarkable and increasing frequency both in the houses of wealthier individuals, like merchants and urban nobles, and in those of peasants. This all suggests that tunics acted as the commonest garment for daily use for most of society, and a higher presence of them in inventories over time would imply a search for variety in everyday appearance. This would have been of remarkable interest for ordinary people, who tended to possess only one outfit in the period,

whereby other people recognised them in legal processes when providing a description (García Marsilla 2014, 230).

Map 1. **Place of residence of inventoried deceased: the city of Valencia and villages in its rural hinterland**



Nonetheless, tunics' design could be very diverse, and it is in these variety where differences across social strata manifested themselves. Peasant tunics that appear in our sample are made of locally produced cloths and a narrow range of colours and finishes like linings. A wider repertoire of tunics can be easily identified among notaries, merchants and among certain craftsmen, whose pieces were more often made of imported animal fur linings, with sleeves made of other textile fibres, jewels and attachments of precious metals added to them, and many other complements. Particular styles like the *cota meitadada* – 'tunic by halves', for its composition was divided vertically into two colours – appear only among deceased from the capital of the realm in our sample, belonging particularly to affluent individuals like the noble Alfons Martínez de Palma, who possessed a red and green silken exemplar.³ Some peasants developed their own ways to make their tunics more visible and elegant, perhaps by inspiration of urban tunics. A popular way of doing this during the second half of the fourteenth century was including linings made of rabbit fur, as revealed by inventories like the one of Guillem de Conques, from the village of Meliana, written in 1330, and the one of Marieta, a women from

³ Arxiu del Regne de València (ARV), *Protocols*, Domènec Molner, 2,777, 6 July 1342.

Burjassot deceased in 1354.⁴ However, there existed also improvements in design that affected both groups of consumers, particularly the fact that tunics became progressively more elaborate to become gender-specific. Notaries could visually perceive these differences in shape, describing these pieces progressively more as either *cots de dona* or *cots d'home* ('women tunics' or 'male tunics'), changes that went in hand with higher refinement of tailoring in the period (De la Puerta Escribano 1997). Other loose and long, traditional pieces, just as tunics, were also very abundant during the whole fourteenth century and undertook a process of gender differentiation too. This was the case of external garments, like coats (*gramalles* or *garnatxes*) and capes (*capès*), as well as internal tunics called smocks (*gonelles*).

Fig. 1. Male cotehardies are dressed by all the characters of this scene.
The cotehardie is the internal garment whose sleeves fall dawn from the elbow.
Scene from the Book of Hours of Marie de Navarre, (mid-14th century) now in the
Biblioteca de Catalunya



⁴ ARV, *Protocols*, Pasqual Vallebrera, 2,833, 26 December 1330. ARV, *Protocols*, Blai Roures, 1,969, 8 January 1354.

Fig. 2. Female Cotardie worn by a woman in Saint Michael Chapel of the monastery of Pedralbes, Barcelona (mid-14th century)



The rise in textile consumption was not only due to the proliferation and diversification of already existing goods, but also to the notable emergence of textile novelties that became fashionable. Some of them were temporary and did not go beyond a very limited elite of wealthy consumers. The most representative case was that of the cotehardie – ‘bold tunic’, in French (Fig. 1-2). This was a tunic characterised by its long sleeves, whose upper part reached the elbow, while the other one extended vertically falling alongside the body. As part of the gendered designs that developed in other garments in the period, cotehardies could be either masculine or feminine. In the Crown of Aragon the earliest documented one has been an specimen in the court of Barcelona of Peter the Cerimonious in 1334, although recently, we have been able to locate an earlier case in Saragosse, in a probate inventory of a noble of House Luna from 1331.⁵ In the sample under exploration only three co-

⁵ Archivo Histórico de Protocolos Notariales de Zaragoza (AHPNZ), 2.314, *Miguel Pérez de Tauste*, 1331, 16 February 1331, fols. 48r-v.

tardies are present in a very specific chronology, covering from 1341 to 1344, in the inventories of three wealthy individuals: the nobleman Alfons Martínez de Palma, the citizen Bernat Vilardida, and one of the most important *drapers* (i.e. merchant of imported cloths) of this century, Jaume Benagues, whose knowledge of the textile market must have certainly helped him in the early acquisition of this new product.⁶ The *cotardia* disappears thereafter from Valencian inventories, and as far as it is known, also from inventories in Barcelona and other areas of the Crown of Aragon, when they never appear again after the 1370s (Aymerich Bassols 2018, 80-5). References from subsequent epochs are limited to the representation of the object in paintings, when they had already gone out of fashion and vanished from medieval trousseaus (Aymerich Bassols 2018, 84-5).

Fig. 3. Doublet (*Gipó* or *jupó*) dressed by Saint Sebastian in an altarpiece painted by Jaume Ferrer II (beginning of 15th century) now in the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya (MNAC)



⁶ ARV, *Protocols*, Domènec Molner, 2,777, 6 July 1342. ARV, *Protocols*, Guillem Vilardell, 2,878, 16 February 1343. ARV, *Protocols*, Domènec Molner, 2,923, 23 August 1341.

Other fashions, contrarily to the case of the cotehardie, were long-lasting and socially transversal. In this sense, a new object that became rapidly fashionable and popular among Valencian society was doublets, called *jupó* or *gipó* in Catalan (Fig. 3). In fact, the proliferation of this piece was a general phenomenon all over Europe during the second half of the fourteenth century, and a key element of the ‘dress revolution’ of the period, and particularly, of the specifically male dress (Piponnier 1989). Doublets were exclusively masculine garments, particularly characteristic for their close-fitting outfit, which included paddings in certain parts of the upper body to provide the wearer with a wider back appearance, and a general stronger look. The piece was originally a war complement that was worn under the armor, but it was eventually adopted as a garment suitable for civil dress. Its origins are somewhat confusing. Contemporary clergy writers criticised severely doublets as a demonic and erotic piece, for they overly stressed men body outlines – including ‘their privates’ (*llur vergonyes*), as posed by the friar Francesc Eiximenis (1983, 158-61) –, in absolute contrast with traditional loose garments like tunics. They also considered it a ‘lier’ clothing because they provided an athletic appearance that was in actual fact the result of paddings. None of these moral authors wanted their respective nation to be the creator of the doublet, and hence they all blamed foreign nations for inventing it. The friar Francesc Eiximenis considered that French people were responsible for the creation of the piece and for having brought it to Naples in the early fourteenth century, from where the fashion would have been moved to Iberia. Contemporary English writers considered that the French were the creators too, whereas French writers argued that they had received the fashion from Italians. Meanwhile, Italians blamed the Christian kingdoms of Iberia (García Marsilla 2017, 81-2).

The influence of the urban world and elites in the diffusion of doublets throughout the kingdom makes of doublets perhaps one of the clearest examples of how social emulation acted and encouraged the spread of these new goods. Doublets do not appear in our sample until the 1370s. The references to these objects that we have been able to compile are revealing and remarkable in the context of the current knowledge of the diffusion of the taste for this garment. The earliest reference we have found is from the aforementioned Roiz family, a dweller from the village of Manises, of unknown occupation, in 1375.⁷ This is just five years after the first known documented case in the Crown of Aragon, when Queen Leonor from Sicily, third wife of Peter the Cerimonious, ordered some doublets to be made for the princess. It has also been noted that in inventories from Barcelona the first specimens appear recorded during the 1330s (Aymerich Bassols 2018, 195). The fashion might have originated thus among powerful and rich consumers, but in the 1370s at least some individuals living in the Valencian countryside followed it, and many peasants would do it too very soon. Llorenç Pérez, a peasant that died in 1398, but who had its residence within the walls of the city, is one of the first peasants we have been able to identify possessing a doublet.⁸ A more generalised diffusion of doublets to the countryside took place in the first decades of the fifteenth century, not only in the rural hinterland of the capital of the kingdom, but also in

⁷ AMV, *Protocols*, *Antoni Cortés*, m-1, 13 June 1375 and 11 August 1375.

⁸ APCCV, *Sancho Cornell*, 13,070, 2 July 1398.

other areas, like in the middle-south, in the areas of Alcoi, Cocentaina and Alzira. The fashion of doublets spread rapidly not only within the city of Valencia and from there to the countryside, but also from town to town, encouraged by the presence of the royal court, which demanded the purchase of these novelties (García Marsilla 2007).

A further finding of relevance in relation to doublets has been the location of the inventory of a doublet-maker (*giponer*) from Valencia, died in 1398, called Joan de Salamanca.⁹ Its appearance is representative of the rapid emergence and consolidation of a group of textile craftsmen exclusively specialised in the confection of these garments in the city of Valencia. Effectively, the number of doublet-makers acting in the capital rose rapidly in a very short time after mid-fifteenth century. The lists of neighbours compiled in 1360s as a result of various forced subsidies show no reference to doublet-makers. In 1404, therefore, doublet-makers and housiers founded their own confraternity, separatedly from that of tailors (Castillo and Martínez 1999, 105-107). Between 1409 and 1412 at least 29 of these craftsmen have been documented in Valencian sources. By 1418, the number of doublet-makers working in Valencia was so high that García de Alcaraz, one of these craftsmen, explained in the court of justice of the capital that he had to close its workshop in Valencia and move to Llíria, for «there are so many doublet-makers in Valencia, who harm each other, and trying to sell their pieces cheaper they lose money».¹⁰

The consolidation of this group of highly specialised textile craftsmen agreed thus with a transversal taste for the garment across various social strata. Doublets could be made of silk and velvet, like the pieces visible in the courts of kings and nobles, but also of cotton of various qualities, including rough, cheaper qualities called *cotonina*, more affordable for vast members of society. Wearing doublets became then a powerful fashion that encouraged the economy and brought many benefits for producers and consumers. Perhaps the most visible phenomenon of this success was how much the fashion lasted since it was still popular well into the early modern period, as later as in the seventeenth century.

Other garments became fashionable in the period precisely in relation to the popularity of doublets. One with a certain relation with the doublet was the *farset* or *faset*, which existed long before the doublet. *Farsets* were padding, cotton-made military shirts wore under the chainmail. Historical vocabularies and dictionaries tend to define *farsets* as a synonym for 'doublet', which does not fit with the neat distinction with which contemporary sources distinguished both of them, including inventories. In fact, it seems that doublets were a more elegant version of *farsets*. In the thirteenth century, namely in 1282, Bernat Desclot referred to the blackened *farsets* the men of the troops of Peter the Great of Aragon wore when they arrived to Sicily (Desclot 1982, chapter XCI, 177). Towards the mid-fourteenth century *farsets* appear already as non military pieces of clothing among some townspeople of the kingdom of Valencia and in the Crown of Aragon in general, like in the inventories of some neighbours of Sagunt and clergymen from Lleida (Bolòs and

⁹ APCCV, *Bertomeu de la Mata*, 21,910, 16 September 1398.

¹⁰ ARV, *Justícia Civil*, 870, hand 18, f. 15 v.

Sánchez-Boira 2014).¹¹ *Farsets* in our sample appear within some houses of the city of Valencia in the 1340s, and later, in the 1380s, in the houses of sporadic peasants from its hinterland, like Pere Oliva from Benetússer.¹²

A higher interest for hoses (*calces*) also took place, likely stimulated for the diffusion of doublets and *farsets*, which did not cover the lower-body. Most of the hoses present in the inventories under analyses appear made out of several types of locally produced medium-quality wool, called *cordellats*, *palmelles*, *burell*, and so on. The visual exposure of legs, whose shape had been traditionally covered by loose and long garments like tunics, led to an important interest for acquiring colourful hoses, particularly red ones, the commonest colour one can find for these pieces even among peasants, who also demanded and purchased hoses, just as they did with doublets. Differences of course were notable among urban and rural consumers as to the acquisition of these garments, particularly regarding the number of pieces possessed. A peasant hardly owned more than two pieces, while a merchant like Jaume Benages had more than six, including blue, grey, red, and black exemplars.¹³

Fashions could originate in elites and large towns and being emulated by urban societies and peasants, but not every transmission followed a 'downward' direction, from the richer to the poorer. Peasants could indirectly inspired the consuming attitudes of the rich. In Iberia, the types of coats and capes that were common all over the continent coexisted with external garments enrooted in the Islamic tradition, and these were predominant among peasants. *Aljubes* and *almeixies* (Fig. 4 and 5), long tunics with sleeves, for instance, appear in Valencian inventories from the countryside with a higher frequency than regular coats (*gramalles*), and more abundantly in the countryside than in the city of Valencia during the first half of the fourteenth century. Inhabitants from the capital adopted *aljubes* and *almeixies* towards the end of the century, in correspondence with a rising fashion of Muslim-like garments, particularly in female dress, like *alcandores* (dresses) and *alquinals* (headdresses, fig. 6), which women from the city of Valencia wore with an ornamental and conspicuous character. These pieces appear in no rural inventory of our sample, despite becoming a common piece of dress of luxury connotations in towns for the rest of the Later Middle Ages. Plaerdemavida, from the chivalric romance *Tirant lo Blanc*, written in the late fifteenth century, is described wearing one of these *alquinals* (Aguiló, 1873-1905, chapter 351).

The taste for Islamic-style pieces that developed in towns, therefore, had its origins in the functional dress peasants wore since a long time ago, developing into a more refined version appreciated for its exotic appearance. Perhaps some villages with a mixt population of Muslims and Christians, a minority in a kingdom in which both religious communities were generally separated into Christian or Muslim populations, represented the hub where the shift in the social consideration of these pieces took place. Some members of the Roiz family of Manises, one of

¹¹ See, for instance, the inventory of Dolça, the widow of a dweller of Sagunt called Albert Joan, who possessed one cotton *fasset*. AMV, *Protocols, Domingo Joan*, I-1, May 1348.

¹² APCCV, *Vicent Queralt*, 1,412, 31 December 1381.

¹³ ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,923, 23 August 1341.

these villages where Christians and Muslims coexisted, possessed an important number of these *almeixies* and *alcandores* when they died in the 1370s.¹⁴

Fig. 4. Saint Joseph wears an *aljuba*, a buttoned dress fitted at the waist that fell in the form of a skirt to the knees in a table o Francesc d'Osona (second half of 15th century), now at the Museo Catedralicio de Segorbe)



Finally, some textiles gained popularity essentially for their functionality more than for the possibility of exhibiting them. A sign of a higher sense of comfort and hygiene can be deduced from the higher presence of underwear in inventories, a phenomenon that is documented essentially –but not exclusively– in towns. For most of society linen shirts were the only piece with this function, which were also used for sleeping. Guillem Carbonell, a citizen from the capital, possessed exceptionally nine different shirts, made of linen or silk, in 1401, which implies he had more shirts than most of his neighbours, and clearly more than any peasant.¹⁵ Affluent individuals had also access to shirts for male and for women, showing the gender specialisation that other garments experienced too. Similarly, the presence of 18 panties (*bragues*) in the inventory of the notary Bartomeu Bonet in 1401 differs importantly from peasants, who rarely possessed any.¹⁶

¹⁴ AMV, *Protocols, Antoni Cortés*, m-1, 13 June 1375 and 11 August 1375.

¹⁵ AMV, *Protocols, Jaume Desplà*, n-12, 8 October 1401.

¹⁶ AMV, *Protocols, Jaume Desplà*, n-12, 12 November 1401.

Fig. 5. Blue *almejá* or *almeixia* worn by the Virgin Mary in the Cantigas de Alfonso X el Sabio (second half of 13th century), now in the Library of Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial



Fig. 6. *Alquinal* on the head of a woman in a table of Jaume Huguet (second half of 15th century), MNAC



4. The emergence and consolidation of gendered clothing

The shift from unisex to gender-specific garments, which has already been mentioned, is one of the most remarkable changes in dress history that occurred during the late medieval period. Not only did this imply the making of specific male and female designs of common pieces like tunics, but also the production of exclusive clothing for each one. It is no coincidence that women became to be fiercely criticised by contemporary clergymen in this period as wasteful and superficial for overly spending on their dress, as the Valencian friar Saint Vincent Ferrer did (Ferrer 1934, vol. 1, 33-5. See also Iradiel 1986 and Benito 2003, 59-68).

Our sample allows exploring some women-specific garments through inventories of widows and the garments 'of the wife' (*de la dona*) possessed by male deceased. An exclusively women piece was the *brial* –usually called *briault* in English, as an incorporated French term–, a long dress clung to the waist that covered the entire body to the feet. Most *briaults* appear possessed by townswomen, predominantly among affluent ones, although they still had some presence in other Valencian towns like Sagunt, as well as in some villages of the rural hinterland of Valencia like Albal.¹⁷ In some cases the sources are rich enough to describe the confection of the pieces, like the 'close-fitting *briault*' (*brial estret*) that a widow from Sagunt possessed in 1348. Meanwhile, the noble Alfons Martínez de Palma owned a 'large *briault* without sleeves' (*brial gros sense màneges*) in 1342, which was likely used by his wife.¹⁸ It is remarkable, on the other hand, the appearance of a cotton 'male *briault*' (*brial de home*) in the house of a citizen of Valencia called Joan Montsoriu in 1317, an unusual finding that should be interpreted as part of those early times of gender definition for certain typologies of clothes.¹⁹

A common, everyday female dress consisted of a tunic (*cota*) and a smock (*gonella*), but during the fourteenth century adding a mantle (*mantell*) became fashionable, a piece that frequently agreed in design and colour with the other two. Our sample of inventories tends to refer to these pieces one next to the other or associated in various ways, particularly tunics to mantles. The aforementioned peasant Gil Joan, for instance, possessed a blue women tunic and mantle, made out of Mechelen cloth, and lined with black rabbit fur.²⁰ The stylistic and cultural relation that established among these objects can also be seen, for example, in the donations to daughters in last wills, which included two or three of these pieces. These also appear in the dowries provided to poor young women by some confraternities, which comprised a tunic and a mantle made of a new red cloth (*cot e mantell de drap nou vermell*) (Castillo 1993). Mantles, however, could be substituted by headdresses of many sorts for special occasion since they functioned progressively

¹⁷ See, for instance, the inventories of Dolça, the widow of a dweller of Sagunt called Albert Joan, as well as the inventory of the goods of Jaume Sobirats from Albal. AMV, *Protocols, Domingo Joan*, I-1, May 1348. ARV, *Protocols, Aparisi Lapart*, 10,408, 29 July 1326.

¹⁸ ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,777, 6 July 1342.

¹⁹ ARV, *Protocols, Guillem Vilardell*, 2,836, 23 March 1317 (loose sheet).

²⁰ APCCV, *Joan de Vera*, 1,445, 1381.

more as a visible mark of the economic power of women. Among Muslim-inspired headdresses, apart from the aforesaid case of the *alcandores*, there was also the *albanega*, a sort of bonnet that was profusely decorated with silk strips or pearls, which were typically worn by women around the 1340s. Yet, this went rapidly out of fashion to evolve into specialised female hats towards the 1370s, called *capells de dona*. These were fully made out of linen or silk, and appear sometimes described as *jubat*, a similar term to the word ‘doublet’ in Catalan (*jupó* or *gipó*) that suggests a padding consistency and perhaps that they were made of cotton-like fibres too. Countryside women, meanwhile, wore commonly *sàvenes* towards the end of the fourteenth century, a mantle that covered both the head and the shoulders.

Belts, knives and bags, on the other hand, were complements that expressed masculine values, and they formed part of the outfit of the ‘respectable’ man of the epoch, complementing novelties like doublets, which were man-specific garments too. Belts (*corretges*) were distinctive objects of affluent individuals, for their design could be very complex and include luxurious items, like silver-made buttons and buckles, as well as patches made of silk, taffeta and other precious clothing. At the beginning of the fourteenth century belts were more often called *cints*, but they already wore their characteristic silver appliqués, as it can be seen in the inventory of the citizen from Valencia Arnau Salelles, who possessed three of these belts in 1328.²¹ Hence, since the 1330s, inventories describe these objects predominantly as *corretges* designed with a more varied set of styles, like ‘wide’ (*corretja ampla*), ‘thin’ (*corretja estreta*) or with naturalistic shapes, like the leather ‘lion belt’ (*corretja de lleó*) that the aforementioned *draper* Jaume Benagues possessed.²² A more common presence of silver appliqués can also be detected in these belts since that moment, also of the quality and quantity of the silver they included, stating the weight, among other things, which oscillated between a few grams and five *onçes* (some 160 grammes). Male peasants also adopted the taste for belts, made of silk or green-blue wool (*palmella*), in which it was also possible to place silver buttons or spheres (*platoms*). Either way, belts could be accompanied by knives, sometimes decorated with filigrees in ivory or precious metals, as well as by deer leather bags, which could be fashionable items by themselves. Alamanda, the widow of a citizen from Valencia called Arnau Pinosa, possessed by her dead in 1336 a red silken belt (*corretja*) with silver spheres (*platoms*), with a leather bag imported from Pisa.²³

Finally, there also existed hoots and hats intended for men. Hoots (*capirons*) were added to external coats, and inventories record them occasionally matching with an outfit formed by various garments in several ways, for instance, ‘tunic, mantle and hoot’ (*capiró, mantellina e cota*), ‘smock, hoot and gown’ (*gonella, capiró e gramalla*), and so on.²⁴ They also were likely the commonest method for rain protection – inventories show the presence, in fact, of some ‘hoots for the rain’ (*capirons de*

²¹ ARV, *Protocols, Guillem Vilardell*, 11,183, 26 August 1328.

²² ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,923, 23 August 1341.

²³ ARV, *Protocols, Bernat Costa*, 2,801, 10 July 1336.

²⁴ As revealed by the possessions owned by the noble Alfons Martínez de Palma and Jaume Benagues. ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,777, 6 July 1342. ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,923, 23 August 1341.

pluja). They appear more commonly in the city, where they were more complex and provided with varied colours, such as red, green, black and purple. Townsmen also wore hats (*capells de sol*), bonnets, and so on, like the widow of a smith from Valencia called Bernarda, who owned a silken *capell de sol* lined with sendal.²⁵

5. Clothes, colours, linings, and complements

Fashion was complex enough to manifest itself in more aspects than in particular typologies of garments. As revealed by many of the already provided descriptions, a personal dress could end up being extraordinarily unique, not only due to the use of complements, but also to aspects like the material of which it was made out. Inventories report a wide range of textile fibres of the cloths (*draps*) that were employed for the making of the garments. First of all, the sample helps distinguish differences between town and country that occurred during the whole fourteenth century. The diversity of urban cloths included wool of various qualities (e.g. *sayal*, *grana*, *escarlatina*), as well as silk and velvet. Meanwhile, the materials of the cloths of the hinterland of Valencia prove predominantly simple and frugal, made of tow (*estopa*) and coarse wool, which was likely the fibre for the cloths whose material was not specified by notaries (Tab. 3).

In spite of these general inequalities, some of the characteristic fibres of urban dress made their way into the outfits of some peasants during the second half of the fourteenth century. That was the case of cotton, which had a higher presence in the countryside in the shape of the aforementioned doublets and *farsets*. Also carmine-dyed cloths (*grana*) gained popularity among peasants, some of whom possessed some exemplars of red capes, like the one the peasant Arnau Garcia from the village of Massarrojos had.²⁶ Yet, none of these fibres showed such a round change as silk did, a material that would become the star product of Valencian textiles, with its production increasing exponentially during the early modern period. The inventories under exploration reveal an urban silk consumption oriented initially towards small compliments, like small sachs for being hung from belts, laces and ribbons. Since the end of the fourteenth century it is possible to find entire pieces among individuals from the city of Valencia, particular silk shirts, that were used as underwear and for sleeping. As to the countryside, the emergence of silk garments was comparatively lower, but still significant, as shown by pieces like the two silk-made *sàvenes* of a peasant from Patraix called Gil Joan that, in turn, were ornated with two coloured silk strips in the upper part of the piece, and whose total value was estimated in six *sous*²⁷ (Tab. 3).

²⁵ ARV, *Protocols*, *Domènec Molner*, 2,923, 10 May 1341.

²⁶ AMV, *Protocols*, *Jaume Desplà*, n-4, 24 November 1388.

²⁷ APCCV, *Joan de Vera*, 1,445, 1381.

Tab. 3. Material of garments described in inventories (number of pieces)

Material	City of Valencia	Rural hinterland
Linnen	83	37
Coarse wool (<i>cordellat</i>)	8	1
Cotton	8	3
Coarse cotton (<i>colonina</i>)	8	1
Canvas (<i>llenç</i>)	7	
Wool mixed with animal skin (<i>camello</i>)	5	
Damascene (<i>damasquí</i>)	3	
Scarlet-dyed (<i>escarlantina</i>)	3	
Dark wool (<i>saya</i>)	3	
Velvet	3	
Velvet-like sateen (<i>zaitoní vellutat</i>)	3	
Leather	27	5
Silk	27	4
Carmin-dyed (<i>grana</i>)	23	1
Tow (<i>estopa</i>)	2	22
Cinamon-like (<i>canellat</i>)	2	
<i>Fil tirat</i>	2	
Blue/green-dyed (<i>palmella</i>)	12	
Dark wool (<i>burell</i>)	11	4
Mixed cloth (<i>drap mesclat</i>)	10	3
Mixed <i>burell</i> (<i>burell mesclat</i>)	1	
Deer skin (<i>cervo</i>)	1	1
Hemp (<i>canemàs</i>)	1	
Cinamon-like coarse wool (<i>cordellat de canyellat</i>)	1	
Painted cloth (<i>drap pintat</i>)	1	
Fustian	1	
Golden thread (<i>fil d'or</i>)	1	
Thick cloth (<i>drap gros</i>)		2
Golden cloth (<i>drap d'or</i>)		1

Inventories provide also a chance to know the origin of many of the cloths of which garments were made out, suggesting they were predominantly locally produced, either in the city of Valencia or in its rural hinterland. After all, the capital of the kingdom was a textile production centre of international relevance, and a significant part of the craftsmen dwelling within its walls were implied in this sector. The same applied to the peasantry of the surrounding areas of the city, who collaborated in various phases of the productive process, like weaving, escaping the limitations established by guild regulations. This latter phenomenon gave as a result cloths described as 'from the land' (*draps de la terra*), which are often identified in inventories as well. Even so, 70 out of the 1,110 garments compiled in our database are linked to a foreign toponym. The identified populations refer to some of the most relevant textile production centres of the continent during the period under analysis, particularly, from Occitany (Fanjeaux, Carcassone, Toulouse) and, above all, from Flanders (Bruje, Ghent, Mechelen, Ypres) and modern Northern France (Douai, Vervins), and

other areas of modern France like Chalon and Paris. Sporadic references to other locations, like Almería, Perpinyà, Florence and Cyprus also appear. Flemish cloths, particularly those from Vervins and Mechelen are, by far, the commonest ones of the sample as compared to the rest of the aforementioned ones (Tab. 4).

Tab. 4. Imported clothes (*draps*) described in inventories (number of pieces)

Origin	City of Valencia	Rural Hinterland
Vervins	13	1
Mechelen	12	5
Chalon	5	
Florence	3	
Ghent	3	1
Almería	2	
Carcassonne	2	
Douai	2	
Paris	2	1
Fanjaus	1	
Ypres	1	
Mardeni (?)	1	
Toulouse	1	
Cyprus	1	
Brúje		2
Perpinyà		1

Although these typologies of clothes have a significant presence over time during the fourteenth century in both samples, an increasing number of peasants possessed some of them towards the end of the century, in Albalat, Foios and Meliana, all of them nearby villages to the city of Valencia. For instance, Benvinguda, the widow of Pere Oliver, a peasant that had its residence within the city walls, possessed a cape from Paris when he died in 1330.²⁸ A further interesting case is that of the aforementioned peasant from Patraix called Gil Joan, who passed away in 1381, and who owned a red tunic (*cota*) with its mantle (*mantell*), made of Mechelen cloth.²⁹ He also possessed a *samarra*, an external coat without leaves, a typical garment of peasant dress, but made of 'mixed' cloth from Vervins (*mesclat*), suggesting foreign and local materials were combined in the same piece. Regardless, it must be noted that perhaps not every cloth associated with a foreign town was an actual imported piece, but maybe a local production that imitated the characteristic design of those places. This is suggested, for example, by the inventory of the wool-carder (*pelaire*) Joan Sagarriga, died in 1395 and resident in the city of Valencia. This list identifies the ownership of a red woman smock (*gonella de dona*), made out of cloth of Vervins 'from the land' (*de la terra*), the same term that was used for locally manufactured cloths.³⁰

²⁸ ARV, *Protocols, Aparisi Lapart*, 2,758, 2 Abril 1330.

²⁹ APCCV, *Joan de Vera*, 1,445, 1381.

³⁰ APCCV, *Domènec Barreda*, 869, 21 July 1395 and 2 September 1395 (addenda).

At a visual level, the material of garments was not as relevant as their colour, which was the first identifiable aspect of any piece and an expressive mechanism of taste, identity and fashion. The sample under exploration allows seeing the incidence of colours in each group of consumers transversally, considering all garments together. This analysis reveals an evident ‘chromatic inequality’ between town and countryside. Many of the colours present in urban textiles can hardly be seen among peasant possessions, particularly, those of darker tonalities, which were the hardest to produce in the period. Black and purple garments, for instance, can almost exclusively be found among inventories of townspeople. Moreover, it is also possible to see among them a wider range of tonalities for each colour, as suggested by the adjectives used by notaries in the description of specific colours, turning to very precise words. Garments could be described as *olivét* (olive green), *foguent* (fire red), *fetge* (liver-like), *ferret* or *ferreny* (iron-like), and combinations of all of them with the words ‘light’ and ‘dark’ (e.g. *blau escur* [‘dark blue’]). This more varied range of colours increases towards the end of the fourteenth century in urban inventories, while the presence of dark colours, and especially of black, increased significantly, underpinning its consideration as a symbolic tonality of distinction and elegance that would remain for centuries. Blue and red were the commonest colours in the clothing of most members of society, as well as green and white and green, following this order, although these two latter appear more frequently among urban inventories. It is also possible to see that certain pieces were more subject to colour variation than others, particularly those that were in permanent sight, like capes, tunics, and smocks, which altered colours while, blue, green and red very frequently (Tab. 5).

Tab. 5. Colour of garments described in inventories (number of pieces)

Colour	City of Valencia	Rural hinterland
Blue	66	45
Light blue	4	1
Dark blue	3	1
Red	66	33
Fire red (<i>foguent</i>)	3	
Green	39	9
Olive green	15	
Dark olive green	1	
Black	42	
White	21	11
Purple (<i>morat</i>)	9	1
Wine purple (<i>tenat</i>)	5	
Grey (<i>bru</i> , <i>burell</i>)	3	5
Liver (<i>fetge</i>)	1	
Iron (<i>ferret</i> , <i>ferreny</i>)	7	
Clove (<i>giroflat</i>)	3	

Despite these differences, Tab. 5 is also revealing of the fact that peasants had access to a certain variety of colours. Moreover, during the second half of the fourteenth century the peasant dress appear overall to be more colourfull by turning to some urban styles, like the fashion of stripped garments (*llistats*). These resulted from adding strips, linings or pieces of clothes of other materials or colours to a piece, allowing to combine cheaper and expensive materials in the same piece. Tunics and capes could be subject to this style, as well as *capçons*, the typology of linen or tow hats that were particulaly present in the countryside, to which peasants added cotton or silk strips, as seen in specimens like those possessed by the peasant from Valencia Miquel Guardiola, described as two *capçons* made of tow with blue silken strips.³¹

Linings, laces, tassels, skits, cords and a vast universe of minute finishes that contributed to the individualisation of dress popularised in various and complex ways, with a dynamism that in many cases developed independently from that of garments. Inventories show, for instance, that even sleeves could be a further aesthetic element on their own, for they were removable in many garments so that consumers could possess sets of sleeves to combine them with various pieces. There were consequently ‘male sleeves’ (*mànegues d’hom*) and ‘women sleeves’ (*mànegues de dona*), made of their own materials, finished with particular linings, and some of them could even be imported, like the two white linnen sleeves from Almería that the citizen from Valencia Guillem Carbonell possessed.³² Out of these many elements an outstanding case of emulation is suggested by linings, overall far more present in urban dress. In fact, our sample reveals how certain lining typologies did not reached the countryside during the entire period of analysis. This was the case of taffetas (*tafetà*), expensive silk products very often imported from Flanders, which were placed on mantles and capes. They appear more frequently owned by affluent individuals, like nobles and citizens, but also among labourers and craftsmen, like the butcher Guillem Palma in 1332 or the widow of a smith called Bernarda in 1341.³³ The same applies to sable furs (*pena de vairs*), with which the sleeves and skirt of tunics were lined, as well as to the mantles possessed by merchants, butchers and wool-carders (*pelaires*). There existed other more affordable linings, like those made of rabbit fur (*pena de conills*), either black or white, which were the most characteristic lining of peasant garments. It is also possible to detect a higher popularity of coloured sendals during the second half of the century, thin silk textiles suitable for transparencies in green, blue and particularly red, almost exclusively among dwellers of the city of Valencia. A few peasants, though, did possess clothes lined with sendal, like the aforementioned Gil Joan, who owned a blue mantle of women lined with *sendal fort*, suggesting it was made out of a coarse quality.³⁴

³¹ APCCV, *Joan de Vera*, 1,443, 7 March 1381.

³² AMV, *Protocols, Jaume Desplà*, n-12, 8 October 1401.

³³ ARV, *Protocols, Guillem Vilardell*, 2,356, 25 November 1332. ARV, *Protocols, Domènec Molner*, 2,923, 10 May 1341.

³⁴ APCCV, *Joan de Vera*, 1,445, 1381.

Conclusions

Far from imagining a world of hermetic consumption patterns, inventories from late medieval Valencia reveal a complex and fluid movement of influences across all echelons of society. The city was the main centre of innovation, and where novelties from outside usually arrived first, as it was a large merchant city with colonies of traders from all over Europe. Nevertheless, fashions did not only originate in towns or among elites and did not simply trickle down to the rest of society and from the city to the countryside. There also existed upward influences, which were evident for example in fashions related to Islamic dress. This demonstrates that 'ordinary people' could also be active enough as consumers to develop their own material life, with enough personality to attract wealthier consumers to an extent. Nonetheless, it is important to remark there were 'global' fashions too, that can be perceived simultaneously developing both in town and countryside. This all implies that social emulation was only one aspect that explained how textile consumption patterns developed, among many others. Perhaps it is worth wondering also how ordinary people assimilated these novelties and included them in their everyday lives, as well as what they were intending when doing this. The expansion of fashions in the middle and lower classes is largely related to the growing internal stratification experienced by these sectors of the population. By no means were all peasants or craftsmen the same, and those who stood out for their wealth or power found in dress their best form of distinction. After all, it was essentially the same as the elites did, but on a smaller scale. Hence, social mobility was behind the continuous dynamism of fashions, and it was an impetus to consumption, since those who were on the upswing showed it with pride, and those who, on the other hand, saw their situation worsening tried to hide it with clothes that offered the image of a certain economic prosperity.

A second major finding of importance as revealed by inventories is that fashions went far beyond garments and designs. In fact, fashion had many faces that allowed the personal tastes of consumers to be manifested in a variety of aspects, such as colours, complements, items, and so on. All these aspects could vary at different rates. For instance, larger garments remained more or less unchanged for decades while small details, such as the way sleeves, tights or belts were worn according to the moralists of the time, changed every year and were the real tell-tale signs of whether or not the person wearing them was aware of the latest trends. Despite these seemingly banal but significant changes, the presence of fashion in everyday life was consequently and certainly much larger than traditionally suspected, as suggested by the descriptive potential of the sources we have explored. What is more, it should not be forgotten that fashion, as a cultural and sociological phenomenon, was also present in other products, not only textile, like ceramics and glass, whose consumption was also in the ascendance during the late medieval period (Almenar Fernández 2018; 2021).

Altogether, the complexity and dynamism of late medieval clothing in the kingdom of Valencia suggests that in Iberia, as in other European areas of the epoch, an active consumer society had developed, accustomed to turn to the market to satisfy its needs and personal tastes. This arrived alongside the

consolidation of a mature Valencian economy, capable of satiating a stable demand for consumer goods through an important local textile production sector, located both in the city and in the countryside, which was perfectly compatible with the importation of luxury textiles from the great manufacturing centres of Europe.

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