4
HOW WE GOT HERE

It is very entertaining to consider the strange styles of the ancient Romans, and there is no doubt that their clothing gives us more pleasure, because of its distance in time, than does that of modern people, which we have continuously before our eyes.

CESARE VECELLIO

Cesare Vecellio wrote these words about the dress of ancient Rome in 1590 (Rosenthal and Jones 2008: 67). His book, entitled *Habiti Antichi et Moderni* (*Clothing Ancient and Modern*), was the first to present a comprehensive dress history. This chapter reviews literature from the earliest sixteenth-century costume books to the proliferation of fashion history titles today. It explains the development of Eurocentrism in the study of dress history and its recognition by dress scholars in the 1980s, reflecting the premise of Eric Wolf's *Europe and the People Without History* ([1982] 1997). The rise of cultural and critical studies and the resultant acceptance of fashion as a legitimate subject by multiple disciplines are discussed. An account of the current state of the intellectual field includes the description of a paradigm shift that has taken place since 2010. The chapter closes with a call for attention to a global fashion history.

Early writings to 1900

Historians in ancient civilizations occasionally noted the dress of other cultures, especially when it differed from their own. For example, in 98 CE the Roman historian Tacitus described the dress of the inhabitants of Central Europe ("Germania") as "the skins of wild beasts" (Owen-Crocker 2004: 18). To Tacitus, acculturated to the draped woven clothing of Roman civilization, the skins and furs of animals signified Germania's "barbarianism." But such accounts were rare prior to the invention of the printing press in Europe in 1439. All books before that time were single-issue "manuscripts," handwritten and sometimes decorated

with illustrations. Termed "illuminated manuscripts" in Europe, comparable documents existed in Mesoamerica, South Asia, Far East Asia, and Islamic cultures. Illustrations from such manuscripts are used to exemplify themes in this book. These manuscripts, some of which were religious in nature, serve as a visual record of contemporary dress, but their creators offered little in the way of commentary.

Sixteenth-century costume books

Cesare Vecellio's *Habiti Antichi et Moderni* was the first *history* of dress. It came out toward the end of a long run of costume books. Approximately twelve books were published between 1562 and 1601 in multiple editions and translations (Olian 1977). The successful genre began with *Recueil de la diversité des habits* published in Paris in 1562. *Recueil* illustrated the contemporary dress of urban Italy and France as well as Turkey, Egypt, India, Persia, Africa, and Greece (Olian 1977: 22).

The costume book genre grew out of travelogues, etiquette books, and costume engravings. In 1528, Baldesar Castiglione recorded the customs and manners of Venetian court life in *The Book of the Courtier*, which was translated and reprinted for distribution to other European courts. Of the travelogues, Nicolas de Nicolay's *Navigations* was among the best. Nicolay journeyed to Turkey, Greece, the Mediterranean Islands, and North Africa as France's royal geographer, observing customs and costumes along the way. First published in Lyon in 1527, *Navigations* appeared in Latin, German, and Italian editions (Olian 1977: 25). Its sixty costume plates offered a valuable resource for other authors, who did not visit Turkey. The Ottoman Empire, which stretched from the Middle East to North Africa and Hungary during the reign of Suleiman the Magnificent (1494–1566), inspired great curiosity among Europeans. In Figure 4.1, we see Nicolay's illustration of a Turkish gentlewoman; she is in her house overlooking the seraglio. The fashionably dressed woman wears a patterned robe, striped sash, headdress, necklace, and chopines (elevated footwear). The chopines show the influence of Venetian styles on Turkish fashion. Both Venice and Istanbul were among the world's top luxury markets in the sixteenth century; fashion news must have traveled easily between these two cities.

Up until Vecellio's publication in 1590, none of the costume books investigated the dress of past civilizations. Cesare Vecellio was a Venetian, a cousin to the great Renaissance artist Titian. He made his living as an artist, printmaker, and engraver (Sherrill 2009). The first edition of *Habiti Antichi et Moderni* included 420 wood block prints of costumes from Europe, Asia, and Africa. The second edition, published in 1598, added the New World, which altered the title to read "the clothing, ancient and modern, of the whole world" and increased the

Figure 4.1 "Noble Woman of Turkey." Nicolas de Nicolay, 1580. Courtesy of *Travelogues*, Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation, Athens, Greece. Available online: http://www.eng.travelogues.gr/item.php?view=40363. This Turkish woman is fashionably dressed in a patterned robe, striped sash, headdress, necklace, and chopines.

number of plates to over 500 (Rosenthal and Jones 2008). For the illustrations of older forms of Italian dress, Vecellio used surviving artwork as sources; for contemporary dress, he recorded what he saw in this travels. He did not venture outside Italy except for a trip to Augsburg, Germany; for the Turkish and North African plates, he copied from published sources without attribution. For example, Nicolay's "Turkish Gentlewoman" in Figure 4.1 reappears in reverse as Vecellio's "Turkish Woman" (Paulicelli 2014: 115). For the New World prints, he used sources such as John White's watercolors of North Carolina's Indians reprinted by De Bry.

Vecellio wrote the text including introductory information on fibers, fabrics, and other materials. Originally published only in Italian, the second edition (1598) added Latin so that educated people outside of Italy could read it. It was reissued in 1664. A French edition with redrawn plates appeared in 1859/60, affirming its importance as a source of information.

Vecellio happened to be in the right place at the right time with the right product. Europe's exploration beyond its borders and the widening trade with Asia and North Africa created curiosity about the world's peoples and places. Vecellio's book appeared just as Venice and the Ottoman Empire had begun to decline in power. He affirmed Italy's importance in world history by illustrating its dress, both historic and contemporary.

This detailed description of Vecellio's work is relevant for the current discussion on two accounts. First, his perspective incorporates the notion of fashion, and second, he did not restrict himself to Europe in illustrating fashionable dress. Thus, his work included fashion systems beyond Europe.

Although he used the word *habiti*, which is translated as "clothing," he commented repeatedly about the changing nature of dress, that is to say fashionable behavior, in all cultures. He cited the multiplicity of dress styles in ancient Rome and contemporary Venice. For instance, in describing the dress of ancient times, he said, "Rome was subject to changing princes and leaders, so it is no wonder that both men and women kept transforming their clothing and adopting new styles of dress" (Rosenthal and Jones 2008: 60). About Venetian women of former times, he explained: "Wearing of the style illustrated here did not last long among women, though to begin with they had liked it because they thought it was new" (Rosenthal and Jones 2008: 148).

Regarding the "habits" worn by non-Europeans, Vecellio did not distinguish them as "traditional" or "slow changing." Although both the images and the text came from other sources, his phrasing connotes the same appreciation for non-European dress as for the accoutrements of Venetians. About the American Indians, he wrote that their "extremely beautiful" feather garments were "skillfully and artfully made, in such a variety of well-matched color that for this reason and for their rarity, they can be considered the most delicate and sumptuous clothing to be found anywhere" (Rosenthal and Jones 2008: 57).

Vecellio included numerous images of the famous courtesans of Venice and Rome. Surely their stylish appearance piqued the curiosity of his readership. About the courtesan illustrated in Figure 4.2, he said, "Modern Roman courtesans dress in such fine style that few people can tell them apart from the noblewomen of that city." He described their gowns as satin and velvet trimmed with gold buttons, with "low necklines that expose their entire breast and neck, adorned with beautiful pearls, necklaces and ruffles of brilliant white" (Rosenthal and Jones 2008: 88). He also commented on their bleached blonde hair. These women had a recognizable style that situated them in time and space on the same level as the nobility despite their lower social status. With these comments, Vecellio recognized that fashion is "a market driven cycle of consumer desire and demand" (Paulicelli 2014: 96).

By the early seventeenth century, costume books had faded in popularity. European powers were establishing colonies around the world, and sailors from

Figure 4.2 "Cortigiane Moderne." Woodcut by Cristoforo Guerra, tedesco, da Norimberga. From Cesare Vecellio, *Habiti antichi, et moderni di tutto il mondo*. Venice: Presso Damian Zenaro, 1590. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. In the best known of the sixteenth-century costume books, Vecellio noted that Roman courtesans dressed in the latest fashions, making it difficult to distinguish them from noblewomen.

faraway places appeared in the ports of Venice, London, and Antwerp in their native garb (Olian 1977: 37). Books about foreign dress were no longer novel or interesting to readers.

Costume history books from 1600 to 1900

After the popularity of costume books waned, no significant developments in publishing dress history occurred until the eighteenth century. Engravers produced illustrations of French court fashions and masquerade costumes, but like most of the earlier publications, the emphasis was on images rather than words.

Joseph Strutt, an engraver and antiquarian, wrote the first English-language costume history book. Titled *Dress and Habits of the English People*, it was

published in two volumes over the years 1796–99. Strutt drew and engraved all the images himself from manuscripts in the British Museum and the Bodleian Library, or from other original sources. Previously, he had published works on English manners, customs, and armor from which he derived some of the images for *Dress and Habits of the English People*.

Strutt's *Dress and Habits of the English People* is considered his most important work. Billed as covering dress history from the Saxons to the close of the seventeenth century, nothing preceded it. He was starting from scratch. Strutt strove for accuracy by using historical sources. He read ancient historians; he quoted from the likes of Herodotus. He did not identify the "birth of fashion." However, he established a pattern of coverage for the ancient world that would persist for centuries: he started with ancient Egypt, then moved to Assyria, Persia, Greece, and Rome before settling in on the Anglo-Saxons. A new edition was issued in 1842 demonstrating its long-lasting contribution to fashion history. It is worth noting that *Dress and Habits of the English People* has religious overtones. Strutt referenced Adam and Eve and their lack of clothing in the introduction and commented that after God clothed "our primeval parents," a "vast variety of dresses" arose (Strutt 1842: i). Christianity is another underlying factor that restricted fashion history to the West, where Christianity is the dominant religion. Thus, non-Christians were excluded from dress histories of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The nineteenth century saw increased interest in histories of costume. In 1823, James Robinson Planché, an English dramatist and antiquarian, criticized the lack of accuracy in the costuming of Shakespeare's plays on the London stage. As a result, producers hired him to research and create historically accurate costumes. In 1834, he published a history of British dress from the earliest period to the close of the eighteenth century. He wrote on other decorative arts topics, finally producing his most ambitious historical work, *A Cyclopedia of Costume, or Dictionary of Dress*, in 1879 (Figure 4.3). This two-volume work included a dictionary of costume terms starting with "abacot" (a hat) and ending with "zibelline" (sable fur). Volume 2 was a chronological history, beginning with Rome. Like Strutt, Planché consciously focused on the dress of Christian nations, subtitling his work as a "general chronological history of the costumes of the principal countries of Europe, from the commencement of the Christian era to the accession of George III."

The historicism of the Victorian era rekindled an interest in past fashion, especially that of the Gothic era. Planché's work found a ready audience with theatrical costumers, who followed his lead in designing more accurate costumes for the stage. Simultaneously, Queen Victoria and her consort, Prince Albert, began staging fancy dress balls for which the wearing of costumes representing historic English monarchs and nobles strengthened links to Britain's past. Artists who created history paintings consulted Planché. Like Strutt before him, Planché

Figure 4.3 "The Dream of Life. Italian Costume of the 14th Century." James Robinson Planché. *A Cyclopedia of Costume, or Dictionary of Dress*. Vol. 2. London: Chatto and Windus, 1879. Planché acknowledged the source from which he took this image: "From a fresco painting by Orcagna in the Cloisters of the Campo Santo of Pisa."

sourced his illustrations from period artworks. The scene in Figure 4.3, for example, is from a fresco by Orcagna in the Cloisters of the Campo Santo of Pisa.

The English were not the only ones publishing dress histories in the nineteenth century. In France, Camille Bonnard published *Costumes des XIIIe, XIVe et XVe Siècles* (*Costumes of the 13th, 14th and 15th Centuries*) in 1829–30 in two volumes with 148 color plates by Paul Mercuri (Bonnard 2008). The painters of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood are reputed to have sourced Bonnard for images of medieval and Renaissance dress. In Germany, Hermann Weiss authored *Kostümekunde* (1864) in two volumes following the usual chronology of ancient, Byzantine, and medieval dress to the Renaissance and beyond.

Why do the dress history surveys often include the ancient cultures of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome to the exclusion of other great cultures farther away and others that had existed in Europe? Certainly, knowledge of the past was more limited than today due to the development of archaeology as a field in the eighteenth century and its constantly improving investigative technologies. In addition, geographical location affected the scope of coverage. Mesopotamia, bordering on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, represented the birth of civilization itself. The Egyptian past was long lasting, well preserved,

and intersected with Christianity, the predominant European faith. Imperial Rome resonated with the Age of Enlightenment and witnessed the origins of Christianity. Greek culture was considered, and still is by many, as the crucible of philosophy, geometry, and democracy, which grew in importance after 1776.

The publication of dress histories picked up toward the close of the century. In 1882, M. Augustin Challamel's *The History of Fashion in France* was translated from French into English. This book concentrated on women's attire, perhaps foretelling the twentieth century's penchant for equating fashion with female dress. Interestingly, the book deliberately used the word "fashion" in the title rather than the more usual "costume." Even the subtitle—"The Dress of Women from the Gallo-Roman Period to the Present Time"—avoids the word "costume." In defining fashion, the author described it is a "thermometer of the various infinite tastes of the day" (1882: 2). Justifying the focus on France, Challamel claimed that "at present the type of feminine dress always originates in France, into the most distant regions of Europe, and even into Asia and America" (5). Colored plates each consisting of four females dressed in fashions of the period illustrate the volume. In Figure 4.4, the women wear the styles of the early 1600s.

Auguste Racinet's *Le Costume Historique* is notable for its inclusive coverage of dress beyond the West. Its contents included sections on nineteenth-century civilizations outside of Europe as well as traditional costume of the 1880s. Originally published in France in periodical form, it was consolidated into a

Figure 4.4 *The History of Fashion in France, or The Dress of Women from the Gallo-Roman Period to the Present Time*. Augustin Challamel. New York: Scribner and Welford, 1882. Plate facing p. 113. The two figures on the left illustrate women's fashions in 1590 during the reign of Henry IV; the figures on the right display the fashions in 1614 during Louis XIII's reign.

six-volume work in 1888. It was the most wide-ranging and ambitious coverage of dress history since Vecellio, with all illustrations in color. In 2003, the art publisher Taschen reissued it in three languages—English, French, and German—a testament to its relevance in the current era of globalization.

After Racinet, the global encyclopedic approach fell out of favor. Costume histories focused on European culture and civilization after initial chapters on the ancient world.

Publications of national costume had begun prior to 1900 as a vehicle for romantic nationalism. This movement was particularly strong in Europe, where researchers traveled to villages to gather folktales and songs, study local customs surrounding births and weddings, and collect local "peasant" or "folk" dress for newly founded ethnographic museums. Presses eagerly published folk costume and regional dress titles, especially when such publications suited nationalism. An unintended result was that dress publications further split into "traditional dress" (unchanging) and "historic costume" (fashion). Even in Great Britain, the Scottish tartan was treated as traditional dress, despite the fact that it was an invented tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983).

With the emergence of anthropology as a discipline in the late nineteenth century, a new approach to dress history began. Anthropological publications contribute "scholarship that relates to understanding the place of dress in culture" (Eicher 2000: 59). Historically, the discipline explored non-Western societies. The relationship between colonialism as a program of occupation and dominance by Western nations and the nascent anthropology field, which has been discussed in Chapter 3, at first allowed a divide based on an assumed cultural hierarchy. The geographical divide between European-based cultures and indigenous cultures perpetuated the distinction between Western and non-Western dress.

This pattern of Eurocentrism, the practice of viewing the world from a European perspective with the implication of the superiority of its own culture, was well established by the eighteenth century. The above discussion shows how entrenched Eurocentrism became embedded in the costume history field. The emphasis was soundly on civilized Europe and its real or perceived heritage in ancient Mediterranean and near eastern cultures. Further, the dress of rural peoples in Europe was treated as a separate branch of inquiry, and in this way, fashion was separated from nonurban dress practices.

Twentieth and twenty-first centuries

Books from 1900 to 1960s

By the twentieth century, the perspectives of the various disciplines with an interest in dress influenced histories of dress. Theatrical costumers needed references

to design period costumes for the stage and the emerging cinema. Museum professionals in departments of costume and textiles, or those working with ethnographic collections, needed detailed works to help them identify objects. Educators, particularly in the United States in what became known as the home economics field, needed accurate references and textbooks for teaching design.

Max Tilke, a German artist and ethnographer, was among the first to focus on dress as an object. Acknowledging expanding interest from artists and fashion firms, he realized that something was missing from previous publications: the dress itself, meaning the cut, construction, and embellishment. To remedy the problem, he gathered patterns on garments he encountered on his journeys through North Africa, Spain, the Balkans, and the Caucasus. He also visited museum collections. The result was *Orientalische Kostüme in Schnitt und Farbe* (*Oriental Costumes in Cut and Color* (1923)). His publication coincided with the height of international interest in the "Orient," a vague designation that covered North Africa and most of Asia.

Tilke made careful renderings of garments from the places he visited, plus China and Japan. The garment in Figure 4.5, drawn from the original in the Museum für Volkerkunde (Ethnological Museum) in Berlin, is a *tobe* from a colonial region called at that time "French Soudan." It features narrow cotton fabrics woven on strip looms sewn together and embroidered in silk. His illustrations of flattened garments off the body, showing seams and ornamentation placement, were a novel approach. Tilke's book met with great approval, and he went on to publish multiple costume titles in several languages.

Figure 4.5 A *tobe* from colonial French Soudan. Plate 13, Max Tilke, *Orientalische Kostüme in Schnitt und Farbe*. Berlin: Verlag Ernst Wesmuth A-G, 1923. Special Collections, University of Rhode Island Library. Tilke's illustrations showed garments off the body, flattened to show seams and decoration. He emphasized garments from non-Western cultures like this *tobe* from the colonial region called French Soudan.

Although many nineteenth-century dress history books were bound with chromolithographs, the advent of photography in 1839 made media other than "faithful drawings" possible. However, fashion publications did not use photography to display fashion until the 1910s. Even then, fashion photography vied with fashion illustration for decades at fashion magazines and in fashion history books. Thus, it is not surprising that it took until the twentieth century for photography to be fully exploited in fashion history publications, especially color photography.

The English and French have been leaders in chronicling the history of Western fashion, joined by Germans and Americans. Notable authors include the prolific Cecil Willet Cunnington and Phillis Cunnington, who wrote many books based on their personal collection of English women's fashion now housed in Manchester, England, at the Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall. Together and individually, they wrote over two dozen books about fashion history, most of which were originally published in the 1950s and 1960s. The Cunningtons focused on everyday dress and undergarments. They illustrated their books with drawings and occasional photographs. James Laver, former keeper of prints, drawings, and paintings at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, also penned many books including a general survey entitled *The Concise History of Costume and Fashion* (1969b). As discussed in Chapter 3, he promoted the "shifting erogenous zones" theory of fashion change (Laver 1969a).

In Germany, Emma von Sichart edited Karl Köhler's 1871 German costume book, scrapping his historical introductions and modifying the illustrations and patterns. She added photographs of people modeling original garments as well as reproductions and theatrical costumes. It was published in English in 1928 as *A History of Costume*. Dover released an unabridged edition in 1963 (Köhler 1963). The value in Köhler's work was that he looked at garments, or their reproductions in art, and drafted patterns, although Sichart modified them. It was a popular textbook for historic costume classes, especially in theater.

In the United States, theatrical costume designer Millia Davenport collected thousands of photographic images for her 1948 *The Book of Costume*. The book covered Western fashion from ancient Egypt until 1860. She prefaced her work with the comments that books illustrated by the author are "terrible" and that the best books are the ones "with the most pictures" (Davenport 1948: ix). Thus, her work includes a whopping 2,778 black-and-white photographs with extensive captions. It was reprinted in 1964. This book remains a valuable reference.

In France, François Boucher's *20,000 Years of Fashion* appeared in 1965 and was reprinted in 1987. It had 1,188 illustrations, many in color, with no redrawings. Boucher's book was outstanding in this regard; it is still used as a college textbook. The author used the terms "costume" and "fashion" interchangeably starting with fourteenth-century dress, despite the promising title.

Fashion history publications from 1900 through the 1960s had several elements in common. First, their coverage was decidedly Western. Many books

followed the pattern established in previous centuries by examining the ancient world to the modern in Europe and its diaspora, reflecting the model in art history scholarship. Second, they were primarily descriptive. Interpretive examinations would come later. Third, many of them were based on sound academic research, which explains the many reprints of these classic texts.

Most of the titles use the word "costume" rather than "fashion." Costume was seen as the all-embracing term that included ancient and medieval dress as well as fashion. Costume did not have the dress-up connotation that it has today. Yet, although the word "costume" was broad enough to cover the ancient and medieval eras, the dress of non-Western cultures was largely ignored as it was outside the parameters of interest. Only Tilke and Planché looked beyond the usual geographical boundaries.

Costume history textbooks

Costume history has been taught in American colleges and universities since the early twentieth century. The courses were part of the home economics curriculum, which had begun a half-century earlier when social reformers applied scientific principles to homemaking. The movement received a boost in 1862 when the US Congress passed the Morrill Act, which established land-grant universities in every state. Home economics was considered a field appropriate for women.

At the 1910 American Home Economics Association meeting, Jane Fales advocated for a course in historic costume so that students (mostly female) would understand artistic design and develop originality (Fales 1911). Such a course was meant to serve as an inspiration for designers and dressmakers. As it was, dressmaking ranked third in employment for women in the United States in 1916 (Allinson 1916). Thus, a costume history course was justified. The proposed syllabus surveyed the dress of ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, ancient Gaul, the Franks, and modern France from the Merovingians to the French Republic. Interestingly, America was not included; Fales stated, "In America, we have no past" (Fales 1911: 244). Home economics units evolved, and separated into textiles and clothing departments, which were renamed to include design and fashion merchandising; through all these organizational changes, costume history courses remained part of the core curriculum. Although some professors in American universities called for a less Eurocentric viewpoint in costume history classes, little has changed (Jasper and Roach-Higgins 1987).

In the beginning, there was no textbook. Faculty members assigned background reading from general histories and collected fashion plates for illustrative purposes. Eventually the previously discussed books by Köhler, Davenport, Boucher, and Laver served as textbooks.

Blanche Payne, a professor at the University of Washington, wrote one of the first comprehensive histories of Western dress intended as a textbook. Published

in 1965, it treated men's and women's dress equally, stopping at 1900. Payne traveled to museums in the United States and Europe, where she made pattern drafts from extant garments and sourced original artwork to accompany her text. She also researched folk dress in the former Yugoslavia in the 1930s; she produced a manuscript on Yugoslavian dress, but did not secure a publisher. Payne's *History of Costume* was the most widely used textbook for decades. Twenty years after her death it was revised and updated (Payne, Winakor, and Farrell-Beck 1992). A challenger with a similar temporal and geographical scope appeared in 1989 in Phyllis Tortora and Keith Eubank's *Survey of Historic Costume*. It became the dominant textbook. It is now in its sixth edition with a new author, Sara Marcketti, replacing Eubank (2015).

Theater costume classes for many years used Lucy Barton's *Historic Costume for the Stage*, published in 1935. Focusing on styles frequently used in theatrical productions, it was accompanied by pattern drafts for specific garments. Douglas Russell's *Stage Costume Design: Theory, Technique, and Style* replaced it upon its publication in 1973.

All of the textbooks trace the history of dress as it reflects Western civilizations, with varied attention to ancient cultures of the Near East and Mediterranean. Tortora and Marcketti (2015) have responded to the need for a global perspective by including boxed features called "global connections." Cross-cultural influences on Western dress are incorporated into coursework. Although some universities offer courses in ethnic dress, global fashion history courses are rare.

Daniel Hill took on the monumental task of writing about the history of world dress (2011). He attempted to be comprehensive, and he avoided privileging the West. At about the same time, Oxford University Press and Berg Publishers released the ten-volume *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion* (2010). These are important resources. Yet, there is no uniform agreement on how to build a global framework into existing courses. What remains to be written is a world fashion history textbook appropriate for undergraduate courses.

In Europe, by the 1960s, the history of dress was a subject taught in theater design and in art and design schools offering fashion diplomas. Not until the latter twentieth century and the acceptance of cultural history as a scholarly endeavor did fashion history courses and degree programs appear at European universities.

Journals/periodicals

The formation of societies devoted to the study of historic dress resulted in meetings and symposia for the purpose of presenting research. The Costume Society of Great Britain was formed in 1964 and published their first journal *Costume* in 1967. *Costume* publishes articles from a broad chronological period and with a worldwide remit, emphasizing the social significance of dress.

The Costume Society of America formed in 1973 and began publishing its journal *Dress* in 1975. It publishes peer-reviewed scholarship on dress in art, social history, anthropology, and material culture. It also invites work on fundamental concerns such as theory and research methods

The journal titled *Fashion Theory* appeared in 1997 aimed at a more critical analysis than what typically appeared in either *Costume* or *Dress*. As stated inside the cover, *Fashion Theory* "takes as its starting point a definition of 'fashion' as the cultural construction of the embodied identity." It publishes works on both historic and contemporary dress.

More recently, Intellect Publishers has entered the arena with a host of titles focusing on fashion. These include *Fashion, Style & Popular Culture*, which is dedicated to fashion scholarship and its interfacings with popular culture. *Critical Studies in Men's Fashion* focuses on the many dimensions of men's appearance. *Clothing Cultures* takes a semiotic approach to dress studies, making a distinction between "clothing" and "fashion." While clothing covers the body, "fashion alludes to the glamorous, the ephemeral and the *avante garde*." The *International Journal of Fashion Studies* aims to bring the fashion scholarship of non-English-speaking authors to English-speaking audiences by providing translation services after peer review. While all of Intellect's journals emphasize current fashion discourse, historic topics are included.

A variety of other journals ranging from *Winterthur Portfolio* to *Textile: Cloth and Culture* publish research on the history of dress. As will be discussed later in this chapter, interest in fashion history has expanded into many disciplines, enriching the many perspectives to be considered. Journals from the disciplines of history, anthropology, geography, and more have published peer-reviewed scholarship on dress history topics.

Museum exhibitions/catalogs

Curators in museums work with objects to illustrate themes about art, culture, and history. Museums mounted increasing numbers of costume exhibitions starting in the 1970s, when the history discipline embraced its social and cultural dimensions. Art and design museums soon followed. More recently, museum curators in non-fashion departments have been including dress and textiles in thematic exhibitions.

Many museums in North America have departments of costume/fashion. In New York, the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute began mounting annual exhibitions in 1972. These exhibitions, always accompanied by a catalog, have grown into major fundraisers for the museum. The openings (e.g., the Met Ball) have become fashion spectacles of their own, with much-photographed celebrities in designer fashions. The exhibitions have raised the profile of fashion history immeasurably. The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, in

New York's garment district, regularly features exhibitions and catalogs. The Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Cincinnati Museum of Art, the Canadian Museum of Civilization, and the McCord Museum in Montreal have all contributed to fashion history scholarship in North America.

In London, it is the Victoria and Albert Museum that regularly mounts fashion exhibitions. In Paris, it is the Musée de la Mode. In Japan, it is the Kyoto Costume Institute. This list could go on, but suffice it to say that many historical museums and art museums across the world have produced exhibitions and catalogs with long-lasting relevance.

The early focus of costume exhibitions was on stylistic analysis of elite fashions. Simple chronologies are no longer enough. Instead, curators employ postmodern frameworks to explore themes across time and space (Crawley and Barbieri 2013).

Encyclopedias and other reference works

The new millennium saw an uptick in the publishing of encyclopedias for reference works in many fields. Fashion did not escape this development. One of the first was Valerie Steele's three-volume *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion* (2005), which has 640 essays focusing on the emerging field of fashion studies. It was advertised as featuring "multidisciplinary critical insights into history and contemporary experience of clothing and fashion." A plethora of encyclopedias on dress and fashion have appeared since 2005 (Condra 2013, Snodgrass 2014, Lynch and Strauss 2015).

Most ambitious was the ten-volume *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*, edited by Joanne Eicher. It is especially important for a history of world fashion because the coverage is comprehensive. There is more depth in the topics from 1700 forward. Arranged geographically, it does not favor the West. It is billed as the first single reference work to explore all aspects of dress and fashion globally, from prehistory to the present day.

The future of printed encyclopedias is in question as the knowledge base moves to digital platforms. Leaders in the field of reference works, like the *Oxford English Dictionary* and the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, no longer publish printed editions. The *Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion* is available online as part of the Berg Fashion Library, which also includes over seventy electronic books and exclusive online articles (Eicher 2010).

The digital age has created a new window of opportunity for fashion research. Nearly all academic journals are available digitally; some do not have print versions anymore. Academic services like Digital Commons make self-published scholarship accessible to anyone with internet access the world over.

Another valuable digital resource is the information on museum websites. Museums and universities with fashion departments are posting images and catalog information online. Students and scholars can do object research without leaving home. Some sites have essays accompanying selected objects. The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History includes essays on specific objects. The Victoria and Albert Museum's website features detailed descriptions for specific fashion objects.

The new fashion history

In the 1980s, the "new" fashion history emerged. Valerie Steele was among the first to use this term in the preface to the *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion* (2004). The new fashion history embraced the developments taking place in related disciplines; hence, the phrases *interdisciplinary* and *multidisciplinary* took on new relevance. While appreciating the groundwork laid by object-based fashion historians, the new fashion history strove for interpretation and cultural context. Significantly, the new fashion history embraced those who had been left out of the old costume history.

At this point, we have discussed the early writings on fashion as a system (e.g., "Key Fashion Theories" in Chapter 3) and the development of fashion history literature (prior sections of the current chapter). As we have seen, much of the early writing in fashion history has concentrated on elites in the West. Now we will briefly describe theoretical developments in related fields that have intersected with the work of scholars interested in textiles and dress, giving rise to fashion studies.

Rise of cultural and critical studies

The emergence of the new fashion history hinged on changes in the objectives and analytic approaches in the social sciences and humanities, and especially as occurred in sectors of the related fields of sociology, cultural anthropology, archaeology, history, literary studies, and linguistics. The shift toward interpreting culture included turning away from structuralism. Post-structuralist and post-positivist critiques blossomed in mid-century, and the emerging fields of cultural studies and social critical theory grew in influence. They turned attention to power relationships and cultural identity, and thus questioned metanarratives of privilege such as Eurocentrism.

The shift toward interpretive non-positivistic methods had already begun in German sociology in the 1930s; Georg Simmel was among those who rejected positivism in the study of societies (Levine 1971). Critical social theory had already

been formed in Germany's Frankfurt School in the 1930s with a foundation in Marxist theory. Among that group, Walter Benjamin (see Chapter 3) contributed to fashion theory through his conception of modernity, understood in part to mean experiencing and adjusting to the "now" through fashion participation.

Post-structuralist scholarship in history, cultural anthropology, and sociology provides focus upon the meanings of cultural forms, whether social or material, and upon how those meanings are created, transmitted, and interpreted in everyday life. The *cultural turn*, as this shift in analytic methods and objectives is often called, created new or alternative points of departure for scholarship (Jameson 1998). Understanding previously marginalized groups and issues surrounding marginalization gained a central role in intellectual discourse. Studies related to identity—race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, social status, and place—increased. The effects of economic power and of the processes of production and consumption that intertwine with identity also received increased scholarly attention. Interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary scholarship grew in importance as multiple perspectives or cross-disciplinary research skills were needed in order to address topics of concern.

Literary theory was crucial in the development of the cultural turn and new scholarship. French literary critic and philosopher Roland Barthes was also a semiotician and he used that technique in *The Fashion System* ([1967] 1983). Similarly, critical literary theory, often based in the hermeneutical method, was developing detailed and nuanced understandings of a text. This methodology, which first developed for written texts, can be applied to any "text" or cultural form, such as the corset. The corset has been variously interpreted as deforming women's bodies, disciplining women's bodies, impeding conception, and stimulating eroticism (Davies 1982; Steele 2001).

The field of cultural studies engages social and political consciousness to examine power relations inherent in cultural systems; it aims to produce change. Following its inception at the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies in the 1950s, the influence of cultural studies spread in the second half of the twentieth century. Led by Stuart Hall, the early work examined white working-class youth subcultures. The ethnographic work of Dick Hebdige (1979) provided insights into British youth subculture and inspired fashion scholars to further consider the dress of non-elites as important sites of inquiry. The rise of cultural studies as a disciplinary field stimulated scholars to bring forward the voices and stories of the marginalized.

Important thinkers that contributed to the cultural turn include Clifford Geertz and Pierre Bourdieu. Geertz was an American anthropologist whose development of the ethnographic analytic technique called *thick description* influenced many dress scholars (Geertz 1973). For example, Gwen O'Neal used Geertz's methodology to support the argument that an African-American aesthetic of dress has its roots in West African culture (O'Neal 1998).

Pierre Bourdieu's contributions include the concept of *habitus*. Habitus is an individual construction encompassing both the formation of and the reaction to social constructs such as race and gender. It extends to how one chooses to dress oneself. Habitus reflects location within a society, including one's taste and preferences (Bourdieu 1977, 1990). Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a French philosopher, identified the body and the way it experiences the world as the primary force in one's perception of the world (1976). This theory, known as *corporal schema*, countered the prevailing philosophy that perception develops in the mind.

Bourdieu, it should be noted, also employed structuralist techniques and relied on statistical data analysis for his important work *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (1984). The project outlined how those with cultural and social capital, for example, a university degree, set taste standards, and that in this way the production of taste exemplifies the reproduction and sustainment of cultural dominance. In order to find acceptance, people in lower class groups must sublimate their own preferences and conform to the tastes of the dominant classes in possession of cultural capital.

Judith Butler, an American feminist philosopher, theorized gender, identity, and performativity (1988, 1990). Her theory of *gender performativity* proposes that categories of gender, such as the normative concept of masculinity in a male, are socially constructed. In the case of normative masculinity, an array of bodily movements and behaviors that are constructed and perceived as masculine constitute the masculine gender identity, but the particular bodily movements and behaviors are not in themselves a specific gender. Butler understands such socially constructed gender norms as a means of control. Butler's work has influenced gender and identity studies, and has proven applicable to fashion studies, as dress is often a primary component of gender presentation.

We cannot leave the discussion of cultural studies without mentioning the philosophical concepts of *deconstruction* and *postmodernity*. Deconstruction is a philosophic critique proposed by Jacques Derrida during a period of social upheaval in the West (1967 [1978]). It questioned the power structures and hierarchies of existing cultural institutions in order to include the marginalized and forgotten peoples within history. Postmodernity was characterized by French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard in *The Postmodern Condition* (1979) as the period after modernity, that is, after the devastation of the Second World War, in which attainment of a single truth and of progress ended. He described postmodernity as a rupture between modernity and the next historical era. Multiple truths and the end of beliefs in metanarratives mark postmodernity. The postmodern condition, that is, the experience of postmodernity, includes feelings of ambivalence in the experience of postindustrial society infused with technologies and in the face of the end of progression toward truth. In

postmodernity, the barriers or boundaries of society exhibit permeability or even breakdown. The philosophies of deconstruction and postmodernity share the position that a single historical narrative no longer holds and that, instead, multiple and diverse human experiences are present. Fashion as it has been occurring since the late 1960s is recognized as an expression of postmodernity.

Marshall McLuhan observed the multiplication of imagery in his famous book *The Medium is the Massage* (1967), which became a catch phrase of the 1970s. He prophetically identified the circulation and recirculation of imagery as a critical component of the culture of that time and increasingly in the future. He made these observations decades before the arrival of the internet, the personal computer, the tablet, and the smartphone. The contemporary proliferation of images intersects with the notion of *simulacrum*. *Simulacrum* is Latin for "likeness," but in recent philosophical discourse its meaning has expanded. Jean Baudrillard expounded on the complexity of imagery, and of images made from or of other images, and complications related to the real or original and the simulacra or copy ([1981] 1994). He argued that in postmodernity, symbols of real things such as events, places, and objects, rather than the things themselves, shape reality. Consider an animal-printed fashion piece such as a scarf; it represents the animal, yet was drawn from an image of an animal or a print of an artwork of an animal, and was then created as a printed textile in an industrial setting. An actual animal has little or no relationship to the scarf. Baudrillard's analysis provides fashion scholars a rich theoretical basis to examine fashion practice in relation to image proliferation and simulacrum; he drew attention to the postmodern breakdown of borders and boundaries between cultural forms, between the actual and its image. Simulacrum is also involved in contemporary reflexivity, flush with selfies and online posts, and in historicism in fashion wherein the historical is reimagined, styled, photographed, and broadcast repeatedly.

Taken in sum, the perspectives discussed in this section may be assessed as foreshadowing the need for a global and inclusive view of fashion history. They provide openings for inquiry into the dimensions and occurrences of fashion among non-elites, non-Western cultures, and in varied power or economic structures. They also suggest to the fashion discipline that critical questions and analyses are needed in order to amplify the understanding of power relations related to fashion and the production, consumption, and practice of fashion. This book, *Fashion History: A Global View*, is a product of these perspectives. Through examination of the symbolic concept "fashion," it critically analyzes the historical formation of the meaning of fashion as a term and as an expression of privilege; that is, this book investigates the problematic heritage of Eurocentrism including Imperialism and Social Darwinism, in the conceptualization of fashion.

Rise of fashion studies

Developments in related fields affected by the rise of cultural and critical studies, especially linguistics, anthropology, sociology, feminist studies, geography, art history, history, languages, and comparative literature, aroused interest in the history of dress. Beginning in the 1960s, fashion gradually emerged from the shadows to become an accepted topic of academic study in the new millennium.

Linguistic interpretations were among the first to theorize fashion. French cultural critic and linguist Roland Barthes published *The Fashion System* in 1967 in which he deciphered words and images in French fashion magazines. He focused on the silent communication of the printed fashion magazine page to readers. He did not study actual garments or accessories; rather, he studied words and images. *The Fashion System* raised awareness of alternatives to object analysis and study of art representations. Semiotics, the methodology he used, is a structuralist method of analysis, but Barthes transitioned to a post-structuralist position as his work continued. He found that there might be multiple interpretations of a written text. It cannot be overemphasized how much his work affected dress studies in that it opened up a new interpretation of dress as a form of silent communication. The concept has been applied to ethnographic costume and textiles from Central and South America in *Costume as Communication* (Schevill 1986), as well as to American fashionable dress in *What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America* (Baumgarten and Watson 2002).

In the field of anthropology, the emphasis was on theorizing material culture. Two major works appeared: *The Fabrics of Culture: The Anthropology of Clothing and Adornment* (Cordwell and Schwarz 1979) and *Cloth and Human Experience* (Weiner and Schneider 1989). These works looked at dress and textiles as a system, whereas anthropologists had mostly ignored dress before these publications. Later research focused on identity formation. Anthropological studies were among the first to succeed at merging materiality with theory.

Sociologists extended identity formation to its social expression through fashion. Fred Davis, who was influenced by Herbert Blumer and symbolic interaction theory, published *Fashion, Culture and Identity* in 1992. He argued that clothing is encoded with meanings in cultural context. Joanne Entwistle, drawing on the concept of habitus, coined the term *embodied practice* in her landmark book, *The Fashioned Body* (2000). She proposed that the dressed body and the experience of dressing mediate the individual to the social world.

Among feminist authors, Rozsika Parker's *The Subversive Stitch* (1984), Elizabeth Wilson's *Adorned in Dreams* (1985), Angela McRobbie's *Feminism and Youth Culture* (1991), and Caroline Evans's *Fashion at the Edge* (2003) are notable for advancing the discourse as it relates to feminism. Parker argued that women's embroidery was relegated to craft status rather than art status.

Elizabeth Barber expanded on the relationship of women to textile work in the widely read *Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years* (1994). Wilson's work drew attention to fashion as an expression of modernity; she observed that scholars of fashion repeatedly had to justify their choice of topic. Apologies were no longer needed by the time Evans published her postmodern analysis of fashion in the new millennium.

Geographers, embracing the cultural turn, developed a branch of the field termed "cultural geography" that included exploration of fashion as it relates to space and place. This strand of scholarship produced works that explored fashion and the city such as *Fashion's World Cities* (2006) by cultural historian Christopher Breward and cultural geographer David Gilbert.

Fashion historians have had a long relationship with art history. In fact, the field of dress history paralleled that of art history with its prior emphasis on chronological development of high art in the West. Art historians did not pay much attention to dress, however, until Anne Hollander published *Seeing Through Clothes* (1978). She demonstrated to art historians and fashion historians the ways in which clothes represented in art idealized the human body. In England, the postgraduate studies program at the Courtauld Institute of Art brought art historians to the table by training students to analyze dress in painting and prints. The program was started in 1965 under the direction of Stella Mary Newton, who wrote numerous well-regarded books on dress history such as *Health, Art and Reason* (1974), *Renaissance Theatre Costume* (1975), *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince* (1980), and *The Dress of the Venetians, 1495–1525* (1988). Aileen Ribeiro assumed leadership of the program from 1975 to 2009. Ribeiro has authored many books and articles on the history of dress in art, such as *The Art of Dress* (1995) and *Ingres in Fashion* (1999).

In the history discipline, the arrival of the "new history" in the 1970s turned scholarly attention toward cultural history and social history. Dress and fashion became an acceptable subject of inquiry, especially after French historian Daniel Roche published *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Régime* (1994). Roche examined inventories of different social classes in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France, concluding that a clothing revolution occurred by the end of that time. He thought that clothing, more than any other commodity, reflected social values. Roche called for a more holistic study of fashion systems, encouraging others to explore the production and consumption of clothing. Some historians have followed his lead, for example, Beverly Lemire in *Fashion's Favorite: The Cotton Industry and the Consumer in Britain, 1660–1800* (1992), Giorgio Riello in *A Foot in the Past* (2006), and John Styles in *The Dress of the People* (2007).

Scholars in languages and comparative literature have embraced the study of fashion, some with a global scope, others with a regional focus. Eugenia Paulicelli, a professor of Italian, along with dress scholar Hazel Clark, edited *The*

Fabric of Cultures: Fashion, Identity and Globalization (2009), which explored fashion as it shapes the identity of cities and nations within a global framework. Contributors to that volume focused on recent examples. Meanwhile, Regina Root, a professor of languages and Hispanic studies, has taken a historical approach to her research. Addressing her own Latin American sub-area, she declared that "scholars will need to assess carefully and push forward definitive Latin American fashion histories in the future . . . . The stories remain, for the most part untold" (2013: 403).

All this newfound attention to fashion resulted in an explosion of research. Dress historian Lou Taylor stated that since the late 1990s, "our field has broken its banks and flooded into a fertile plain of new approaches and methodologies" (Taylor 2013: 23). Taylor captured the state of the field well in her books *The Study of Dress History* (2002) and *Establishing Dress History* (2004), in which she outlined the development of various methodological approaches to dress history as well as the history of the field itself. Taylor coined the phrase the "Great Divide" in reference to a chasm between the two sides whose main area of research interest was fashion in the early twenty-first century. One side included traditional fashion historians interested in the object/artifact (e.g., material culture), whereas on the other side historians embraced interdisciplinary scholars who employed theory (e.g., cultural studies). An example of an object-based historian is Janet Arnold, who contributed greatly to the field with her pattern books, which are enormously useful to museum curators and costumers (Arnold 1964, 1966, 1985). An example of cultural studies scholarship is found in the work of Christopher Breward, who wrote one of the first general histories focusing on the cultural meanings of fashion: *The Culture of Fashion: A New History of Fashionable Dress* (1995). The Great Divide was apparent at a 1997 conference in Manchester, England, entitled *Dress in History: Studies and Approaches*, selected papers of which were published in *Fashion Theory* (1998). According to Lou Taylor, in recent years the old divides have collapsed as museum curators and theorists work together to investigate problems in fashion history (2013: 28).

This interdisciplinarity is evident in a number of collaborative works. The previously mentioned encyclopedias are one example. Others include the numerous fashion readers and handbooks that have appeared in recent years: *The Fashion Reader* (Welters and Lillethun 2007, 2011), *The Men's Fashion Reader* (Reilly and Cosbey 2008), *The Men's Fashion History Reader* (McNeil and Karaminas 2009), *The Fashion History Reader* (Riello and McNeil 2010), and *The Handbook of Fashion Studies* (Black et al. 2013). Also influential has been the Dress, Body, Culture Series edited by Joanne Eicher. The inaugural title was *"New Raiments of Self": African American Clothing in the Antebellum South* (Foster 1997), a postmodern history of dress of a marginalized people. In addition to the readers and handbooks focused on fashion history, volumes

primarily focused on fashion theory have appeared. Among them are *Fashion Foundations* (Johnson, Torntore, and Eicher 2003), *Fashion Classics* (Carter 2003), *The Rise of Fashion: A Reader* (Purdy 2004), *Fashion Theory: A Reader* (Barnard 2007), and *Dress History: New Directions in Theory and Practice* (Nicklas and Pollen 2015).

For this present work, it is crucially important to distinguish between fashion in cultural studies and fashion in history. While the field of cultural studies appreciates history, it has not drawn attention to the need for a global approach to fashion history. Cultural studies scholars who research contemporary fashion are already global in their perspective. For example, Jennifer Craik in *The Face of Fashion* (1994) rejected the viewpoint that fashion is unique to capitalistic culture. She argued that fashion systems operate globally and that non-Western dress has been shortchanged by labeling it "traditional" (Craik 1994: 4). She later elaborated on this viewpoint: "Fashion is not a phenomenon that has existed since the fourteenth century. Nor has it been confined to Europe" (Craik 2009: 21). Recall from Chapter 1 that Sandra Niessen had appropriated Wolf's phrasing to point out that scholars have been thinking of fashion history as "Europe and the People Without Fashion" (2003). Some researchers absorbed this commentary; Susan Kaiser, for example, lists as one of her key assumptions that fashion is now transnational, not just Western or Euro-modern, in *Fashion and Cultural Studies* (2012). She wrote that at the end of the twentieth century, the accepted narrative of fashion beginning in the West in the fourteenth century did not ring true anymore as cities around the world were vying for attention on the global fashion stage.

We interpret the developments described above to suggest that those in the field seek to better understand its intellectual history, which this book aids in addressing. We also acknowledge that some scholars have already questioned the long-standing theoretical frameworks of the field that have defined fashion as a product of Western capitalism.

A paradigm shift

Given the new intellectual developments from several fronts concerning locating fashion in human experience, we observe a paradigm shift under way. The term *paradigm shift*, initially conceived by T. S. Kuhn (1962) in regard to scientific inquiry, has many definitions. For our purposes, a paradigm shift is a change in the theory or practice of a particular science or discipline. A change such as the fashion discipline is undergoing, in the altering of its foundational concepts and in research methods, reshapes understanding and knowledge. Fashion scholarship is continuing to expand beyond image descriptions, object analysis, texts from historical records, experiments, and quantitative data to contextualization and multidimensional approaches.

The paradigm shift in fashion history, which has yet to fully occur, places the need for a global fashion history in the foreground. In 2012, we articulated the need for a radical change in how fashion history is conceived. We noted the movement to an inclusive framing of fashion that acknowledges fashion as "global and diverse in its development, occurrences, and dimensions" (Lillethun, Welters, and Eicher 2012: 77–78). This constitutes a change in ontology, in the underlying assumptions about knowledge within the discipline. The paradigm shift in fashion history is reshaping what is known about past fashion systems and processes; previously unexamined questions and groups now receive attention, and prior conclusions and interpretations are reexamined.

We are not alone in our appeal for a global history of fashion. Among the earliest to recognize problems with the former rigid definition of historical fashion have been anthropologists. Jane Schneider observed that the history of dress in courtly societies of non-Western cultures demonstrated the same fundamental elements of a fashion system—changing styles and stylistic influence of elites—as did the court fashions of Europe, although they "stopped short of the perpetual mutation" that took hold in the courts of Italy's mercantile cities during the Renaissance (Schneider 2006a: 208). Joanne Eicher has been an important proponent of our position. Recognized for her scholarship in dress and fashion, she trained as an anthropologist and conducted fieldwork in Africa. In the introduction to National Geographic's *The Fashion of Dress*, she explained that "change happens in every culture because human beings are creative and flexible" and that humans "enjoy change" (Eicher 2001: 17, 19).

In the new millennium, a few established scholars in traditional disciplines have attempted broad histories of dress. Robert Ross, a historian, wrote *Clothing: A Global History* on sartorial globalization of dress from the sixteenth to the twenty-first century. He reviewed an admirable range of literature, but ultimately stuck with existing definitions of dress, clothing, costume, and fashion; he associated fashion with the upper circles of society who used it to exclude those below on the social scale who could not follow sartorial changes fast enough (2008: 6). Robert DuPlessis, also a historian, focused his work on the clothing trade in the Atlantic during the period of colonization. His understanding of fashion incorporated change and novelty, but did not go so far as to limit it to the upper echelons of cultures (DuPlessis 2016: 18, 28). His view that clothing is never static reflects our thinking. The field needs more comprehensive studies like these.

A handful of scholars have gone deep in a single country, observing fashion in what had formerly been considered "traditional" dress systems. Antonia Finnane, in *Changing Clothes in China*, claims that "the fact remains that little is known in the English-speaking world about changes in material culture in non-Western societies" (Finnane 2008: 8). Toby Slade, writing about Japan, hoped to "demonstrate that there are other modernities, and different fashion histories

beyond the canon of European and American dress narratives, which dominate nearly all interpretations of the practices, styles, institutions and hermeneutic structures of clothing in the modern age" (Slade 2009: 1). Penelope Francks noted that fashion operated in elite circles in China, India, and Japan from at least as far back as the eighteenth century. She further argued that fashion cycles occurred not in the cut of Japanese clothing, but in the fabrics (e.g., background colors, type of pattern, and overall design), an observation that we explore further in chapters 6 and 7 (Francks 2015).

These are examples of studies that will move the global history of fashion forward. We have noted that senior scholars who possess broad and deep knowledge have accomplished some of the best studies in the new fashion history. Achieving a global history of fashion will encounter challenges: language barriers restrict access to research studies, reports, and books for many researchers, thus affecting cross-cultural exchange; lack of evidence limits the understanding of the dress of past cultures; the scholarly talents needed are diverse; the idea faces resistance in the teaching profession due to embedded beliefs and classroom time restraints for topics. However, a global fashion history movement will provide richer knowledge of humanity with understandings not yet known. By displacing fashion history of privilege as the dominant format with a multivalent fashion history, the global fashion history will provide for more truthful and integrative teaching and learning about human history. This objective is transformative.