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Outdoors and home inheritance textiles: clothing and linen in Castile (1750 – 1850)

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Bills of payment for marriage dowries issued in countryside and Castilian cities (Valladolid) during the Ancien Régime show the evolution in rural and urban consumption patterns and its impact on the structure of family and household demand. The study of these documents (and their comparison with the types of goods mentioned in post-mortem inventories during the inheritance process) provides a lot of information about the 'domestic and family spaces' and about permanent and changing features of personal clothes, household clothes and furniture, in that crucial period of changes that is comprehended between the middle of the Eighteenth Century and 1850.

The setting up of a new family through marriage becomes a key point insofar as it allows us to learn many things about the material culture and the standards of living in the development of historical societies. A close examination of the spouses' patrimonial wealth at the time of marriage, as well as for the female contribution to household equipment, shows the importance of clothes –garments, underwear, external adornments, bed– and table linen, etcetera as a means of publicly displaying –both in- and outdoors– social and economic appearances.

As a result of a slow though steady process, an ever greater number of households externalized their both public and private aspirations by fulfilling certain standards of power, the criteria of social emulation, comfort, luxury and hygiene. In this way, dowries over 25,000 reales gradually but slowly show, especially since 1780-1830, the influence of such factors as European bourgeoisie ideology¹, the prestige of the Court of Madrid or the changes and transformation in manufacturing and commercial practices.

Here, we analyze, between 'the consumer revolution', the two existing patterns of economic and cultural development: one represented by the high number of low-income marriages, in which household goods and clothes were passed down from generation to generation; the other by the small though gradually growing series of well-to-do families who were ready to purchase in the

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¹ See: I. Dubert, *Los comportamientos de la familia urbana en la Galicia del Antiguo Régimen*, Santiago, 1987; J. Cruz, "Élites, comerciantes y consumo en Madrid a finales del Antiguo Régimen", *VI Simposio de Historia Económica*, Barcelona, 1992; A. Collomp, *La maison du père. Famille et village en Haute Provence aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, París, 1983; F. J. Lorenzo, "La familia y la herencia en la Edad Moderna Zamorana a través de los testamentos", *Studia Historica*, vol. IX, 1991, pp. 159-201; P. Malanima, *Il lusso dei contadini. Consumi e industrie nelle campagne toscane del sei e settecento*, Bolonia, 1990; V. Barbagli (ed.), *Domanda e consumi: livelli e strutture (nei secoli XIII-XVIII)*, Florencia, 1978; or L. Fontaine, *Histoire du colportage en Europe (XVe-XIXe siècle)*, París, 1993.

market new cloths, 'fashionable' garments, furniture or crockery for the occasion. Within the urban setting, the key to the widespread consumption of semidurable goods lies in the predominance of one of them².

1. From luxury to misery and from misery to luxury

At the beginning of the 17th century, with the Court present in Valladolid, many external signs expressed public display and riches. This was true, but only in this city and just during this time and also limited to the privileged classes ('The riches were evident and they showed one favourite way of expression: luxury'). This situation disappeared with the passing of this century and it did not return in the 18th century, when many inhabitants of Valladolid from a certain level of purchasing power stopped buying anything³.

Nevertheless, J. Sempere y Guarinos (1788) or Isla⁴ valued the debate originated by the spreading of luxury and the adoption of new customs and outward appearance, leading to the consumption and the demand of articles which were not indispensable nor needed for subsistence. To those who underlined the importance of the French fashions as a result of the taste for 'superfluous things of life', this was translated into new ways of life. We can speak of an 'epidemic of imitation', with a special focus on women clothing. Even the legislation tried to stop the luxury and excess of jewellery and clothing (*Novísima Recopilación de las Leyes de España*, 1802). J. Cadalso⁵ also illustrated the contradictions in the behaviour, between luxury and domestic Castilian clothing. However, such testimonies, observed by travellers⁶, must be interpreted with care.

The enlightened reformers showed the productive and commercial deficiencies of Valladolid (or Palencia), based on two reasons: Manufacture lacked sufficient quality to compete with foreign and other national production; and they did not transform to meet a growing demand, though not very consumerist. The situation was a very complex one, as the problem resided in the prices, despite that the 'most important law of merchandise' could be described as 'adaptation to the taste of the consumers'.

No doubt poverty was important for many sectors and this gives us a key reasoning to understand the lack of perfection of much crafts. In 1773 the condition of the crafts and of transport was very decadent, but still 'luxury was growing faster than ever, the value of the supplies for first necessities had risen with one third and in the grandeur of costume people from the first and second class were now on the same level'. Therefore the objective was described as follows: 'As it is easy to acquire samples of the new inventions made by the foreigners, the same types of manufacture of Valladolid could imitate them and spread them throughout the realm. This way its introduction can be stopped and the pitiful delays that were caused by such novelties, so liked by the consumers

² I. dos Guimarães and M. García (dirs.), *Portas Adentro: Comer, vestir e habitar na Península Ibérica (séculos XVI-XVIII)*, Universidad de Valladolid y Universidade de Coimbra, 2010.

³ See: B. Bennassar, *Valladolid en el Siglo de Oro*, Valladolid, 1983; and T. Pinheiro, *Fastigia o fastos geniales*, Valladolid, 1973.

⁴ J. Sempere y Guarinos, *Historia del lujo y de las leyes suntuarias de España*, Madrid, 1788; or J. Isla, *Historia del famoso predicador Fray Gerundio de Campazas, alias Zotes*, Madrid, 1757 (Madrid, 1978, 2 t.).

⁵ J. Cadalso, *Cartas Marruecas*, Madrid, 1789-93.

⁶ J. García Mercadal, *Viajes de Extranjeros por España y Portugal (Desde los tiempos más remotos hasta comienzos del siglo XX)*, Valladolid, 1999; VI tomos.

and which have invaded the court, can be avoided.... In order to prosper they need to be cheap, bright and of great variety. Nobody is so carried away by love of his fatherland that he is willing to buy the expensive national product, when the foreign one is cheap. Luxury prefers the brilliance of the moment to the long lasting but less bright. We do not live anymore in a time when clothing passed from one generation to another'⁷.

2. The 'consumer revolution'. Life-styles and urban material culture

This was the key to success: cheap, fashionable and with great variety, set against a paralysis of consume, outward homogeneity, and an austerity of fabrics and fabrication. The buying capacity grew and overcame the mental barriers caused by class differentiation. This led to a substantial improvement of the wardrobe and a modernisation of clothing in line with the changes in production and modern necessities. This can be placed against the old situation, with general basic needs, a transmission of clothing through heritage and the custom 'to dress like the forefathers did a hundred years ago'.

Some time later (around 1830), a rich merchant from Madrid indicated that 'they were good years for the merchandise: the political changes had developed a taste for luxury and fashion favoured trade'⁸. To reach this state of affairs, a century of changing habits and customs had passed: about understanding life, the feeling of intimacy and of family, about material culture, a more accentuated sense of domestic life and a awakening of the 'love for things elegant and comfortable'. It is to say, since the last decades of the 17th century and encouraged by the Enlightenment, a 'culture of appearances' is being democratised, quite obvious in costume, and resulting in a situation where the attire has changed into a clear professional and economic outward presence.

Mckendrick speaks of a 'consumer revolution', proceeding the industrial ('the necessary convulsion on the demand side of the equation to match the convulsion on the supply side') where fashion and changes of taste play a fundamental role, together with the level of mobility and the possibilities of emulation of the ways of consumption between the social groups. These factors accelerated the diffusion of fashion and created new lines within the demand. This critical consideration is centred on the role cities played in this process of change. Nowadays the accent falls on their role as centres of consumption and as areas where different cultural behaviour emerged and with conflicts, these were transferred to larger spacious areas. This way, the importance of London is underlined, as well as its diffusion through travelling salesmen, such as the 'Manchester man' or the 'Scotch drapers'. They formed 'a new kind of genuine retailer –a mixture between the London tallyman and the traditional pedlar–'⁹.

Another significant case is the French. There the changes of fashion and the strengthening of a luxury culture also were an urban phenomenon, based in Paris and afterwards spread throughout the whole country. Behind the enlightened

⁷ E. Larruga, *Memorias Políticas y Económicas sobre los frutos, comercio, fábricas y minas de España...*, Madrid, 1778-1800, tomos 23, 24, 25 y 26.

⁸ B. Pérez Galdós, *Cádiz*, Madrid, 1976.

⁹ N. McKendrick, "Commercialisation and the economy", N. McKendrick, J. Brewer and J. H. Plumb, *The birth of a consumer society. The commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*, Bloomington, 1982; criticized by B. Fine and E. Leopold, *The world of consumption*, Londres-Nueva York, 1993.

irradiation we find the bourgeoisie with their headquarters in the cities, in the centre of everything. Other factors were the development of individuality and privacy, even affecting the socially independent role of women. In short, we were dealing with the ‘exhibition of oneself’, shaped by the force of imitation and emulation: ‘the revolution of appearances’¹⁰.

To sum up, and taking into account the numerous discussions (in this social vision of the economic history, in which consumption and demand not only depend on the acquisition power), the role attributed to the cities in the ‘consumer revolution’ tends to be reinforced. This can be set against the immobility of the rural family and the tradition in the greater part of the popular world, where the inheritance remained determining¹¹.

The Spanish case can not be totally different. During the 18th century the debate on the extension of luxury intensified (together with the desire of adopting new ways of life and of pretending). This affected the consumption and the demand of the not indispensable products. The European character of this phenomenon was underlined, as well as the import of French fashions as a result of the taste for the ‘superfluous things in life’ (‘French fashions have corrupted the customs’). We find this reflected in a ‘new vocabulary’ and in some new ways of life. The valley of the Duero and more particular, its cities, did not form an exception. During the crisis of the Ancien Régime the new commercial techniques were inciting a major consumption and especially more widespread from a social point of view, within that urban, pre-bourgeois and enlightened society. This affected the ways of commercialisation, the costs of distribution and the models of mercantile organisation¹².

The possibilities of the proposed focus are even more obvious in the textile sector and in the consumption of the different fabrics. During the second half of the 18th century a strong development took place of the drapery of fine wool and of woollen yarn (and of the industry of ribbons and of dress adornments). It is difficult to explain the development of the linen drapery and the empty space within the demand it opened –afterwards occupied by the cotton industry– if one does not think of the taste for domestic items that favoured the sector of bed- and table linen. Already during the first decades of the 19th century this implied more than 50% of the stock of textile in many Castilian households. The same mantilla, of such extended use (also related with the veil as a complement), first of cloth and silk but afterwards of blond lace and inlaid work, became the base of the expansion of the industry of Manresa. But we could also talk of the evolution within the silk sector, related to the use of handkerchiefs and other elements of the attire of most well-off groups, or the diffusion of the cotton prints (the ‘indianas’), a fabric adequate for the demand of the popular groups.

Nevertheless, the spread of fashion within Castile was not as simple as Mckendrick exposed. The ‘trickle down’ was more of a ‘trickle up’ if one considers the extension of the mantilla, the cape, the skirt or the components of ‘majismo’

¹⁰ D. Roche, *La culture des apparences. Une histoire du vêtement. XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles*, Paris, 1989.

¹¹ M^a Á. Sobaler and M. García, “Las dotes matrimoniales de solteras y viudas en la Castilla rural durante el siglo XVIII. Pautas de cultura material diferenciadas”, en *Cultura material, patrimonio familiar, consumo y apariencia: mujeres y hombres, jóvenes y viejos, en la ciudad y en el campo*, Sesión 9 del IX Congreso de la ADEH, Azores (Portugal), junio, 2010.

¹² B. Yun, “Peasant material culture in Castile (1750-1900)”, A. Schuurman and L. Walsh (eds.), *Material culture: consumption, life-style, standard of living, 1500-1900*, Milán, 1994, pp. 125-136.

towards the highest groups of society. As ‘Majismo’ I understand the style of dressing of ‘majos’ and ‘majas’, based on quality dress of traditional origin. This is in contrast to the dandy, the ‘petimetre’ (petit mètre, Luis XIV). It was not as much a directed diffusion of taste, as a syncretism of the ways of dressing, derived from a complicated combination of foreign fashions with other autochthonous styles. The most important fact was the rising demand itself. This way the opposition between ‘dandies’ (‘petimetre’) and popular ‘majos/majas’ –a basic question within the ‘struggle of the appearances’ and loaded with ideological implications– could be decisive in implying a major taste and democratisation of luxury and of consumption, as before. In all, the limits of fashion and consumption were evident.

Access to these practices for the popular layers of society remained very difficult until a reduction in price of the products or an improvement of its acquisition power. The inheritance of used clothing was customary. And it was normal to re-style the garments in relation to the changes in fashion. The powerful ribbon industry can be explained through this custom. Even still in 1830 women restyled their clothing and at home they kept producing stockings, garters, table- and bed clothing. This explains the frequency in which ribbons, lace and threads (laws were published against its excessive democratisation) appear in the draper’s or in the inventories of goods of merchants. On the other side, the importance of the auctions¹³ or the second hand markets continued until the 19th century¹⁴.

The information (from the marriage dowries and the post-mortem inventories¹⁵) points out that the marginal inclination to the consumption of durable and semi-durable primary goods of the intermediate groups (the incipient formation of a middle-class of consumers) was clearly stronger than that at the base and at the peak of society. The volume and form of the demand depended on the partition of riches. But, at the same time, the growing bond between the family economies and the market encouraged the acquisition of merchandise and the progressive substitution of home produced goods with others acquired through buying. This fact, implicit within the approach of the ‘industrious revolution’¹⁶, is especially clear and fundamental in the Castilian cities from 1820 onwards.

The development of urban demand between 1750 and 1800 can not be doubted, but at the same time we can see brakes that contradict the universality of this ‘consumer revolution’. Until halfway the 19th Century, the English transformations did not penetrate in a clear way. Only then consumption became an element of modernisation. In Valladolid or Salamanca people preferred already ‘less ostentatious houses but with more comfort’. Squares and groves were spread out, announcing the diffusion of the walk (‘paseo’) as a way of leisure and to show off new fashions. The rationalisation of commercial space also triumphed over the old ‘isles of shops’: Within the surroundings of the central square (‘Plaza Mayor’) the concentration of fixed shops grew, implying an improvement of the organisation of the commercial location. This was combined with a regulation of

¹³ M. García, “Cultura material, consumo, moda e identidades sociales: nuevos horizontes”, en *Cultura Material y Vida Cotidiana en el panorama historiográfico modernista español: Proyectos y Escenarios*, Valladolid, abril, 2010.

¹⁴ G. Doré and Ch. Davillier, *Viaje por España*, Madrid, 1982, vol. II.

¹⁵ *Archivo Histórico Provincial de Valladolid (AHPV)*, Sección de Protocolos Notariales.

¹⁶ J. De Vries, “Between purchasing power and the world of goods: understanding the household economy...”, J. Brewer and R. Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the world of goods*, Londres, 1993, pp. 85-133.

the arrangement of the wooden show boxes ('cajones') to improve the possibility of access for the buyer¹⁷.

There were also transformations in the perception of the domestic space, in search of a major privacy. In some houses the rooms gained special functions, the use of cabinets (the sitting room, the dining room) became more general and the familiar and the working space were separated. The term 'aposeno' for a room was substituted by that of 'salas'. At the end of the century the diversity in room had become even more evident and some appeared clearly separated¹⁸.

Between the furniture of the new bourgeoisie of Valladolid we find an abundance of chests and coffer, together with the first cupboards for clothing. There is a growing quantity of mattresses and beds, while also the first cradles appear. Numerous religious paintings and other elements of decoration were hanging on the walls (French mirrors with plate glass, cornucopias and display cases). Easy chairs, fashion stools and tables multiplied. The desks and 'bufetes' within the cabinets, replaced the ones called 'bargueños', classical old Castilian cabinets with many drawers (made in the style of the village of Barga). There were old remaining things next to the new ones¹⁹.

Neither failed appraisal of the liberty those women enjoyed in their dressing. In 1787 the flexibility in the adoption of fashion is remarkable: 'In Spain everybody is dressed in cotton fabrics from Manchester and there is no woman to be seen without her veil of muslin, notwithstanding the prohibitions'²⁰. These expressions, related to the ideas of Mckendrick on the positive effect of social dynamism on consumption, show the rapid development of French fashion.

Such testimonies are however to be taken with no little caution and with a much sharper comparative judgement, even more when talking of the villages and cities of the Spanish valley of the Duero.

Despite the remodelling of the cities and their housing, Valladolid was characterised by 'the obscurity of its yards, narrow streets and large and deserted houses'. Also within the domestic concept the permanencies remained important and the advances need precision and nuance. There was a lack of privacy and differentiation between spaces. Many houses were far off from the material consumer culture that could change the customs of life. The notary records still express the lack of intimacy within the conception of the interior areas.

The techniques of promotion and diffusion of fashions met with evident limits. The progress of shops (there was even in the 19th century still no clear distinction between the shop and the residential part of the housing) and the commerce of retail goods was limited. Regarding the presentation of the merchandise, the London shops contrasted with the usual Castilian standards, where the goods were piled up on badly organised tables under the arcades of every establishment, with its restrictive effect on commerce.

¹⁷ M. García and B. Yun, "Pautas de consumo, estilos de vida y cambio político en las ciudades castellanas a fines del Antiguo Régimen (Sobre algunas teorías del crecimiento económico desde la perspectiva de la demanda)", en J. I. Fortea Pérez (ed.), *Imágenes de la diversidad. El mundo urbano en la Corona de Castilla (S. XVI-XVIII)*, Santander, 1997, pp. 245-282.

¹⁸ AHPV, Secc. Prot., Legajo 2899. 1702; Leg. 3889. 1778; or Leg. 14072. 1799.

¹⁹ AHPV, Secc. Prot., Leg. 3889. 1778; Leg. 14072. 1778; or Leg. 14072. 1766. There were permanencies, but also novelties. This should be compared with the data from the study by Nuno Luis Madureira, *Cidade: Espaço e Cotidiano (Lisboa 1740-1830)*, Lisboa, 1992.

²⁰ See: J. García Mercadal, *Viajes de Extranjeros por España y Portugal (Desde los tiempos más remotos hasta comienzos del siglo XX)*, Valladolid, 1999.

This caution was maintained with regard to the press and its function of publicity for the extension of new fashions. Although progress can be traced in the techniques of commercialisation (the *Diario Noticioso* contained a section of announcements of sales and auctions), some journals, instead of promoting, like the prolific graphic journalism in France, found it their objective to ‘ridicule the fashions’. Many periodical publications contained ‘news’ but its commercial importance was still very limited, most of all within the local press of the Castilian cities. Because of this, within the seventy numbers of the *Diario Pinciano* of Valladolid (1787-88)²¹ the advertisements for selling were very restricted and their subjects reflect the traditional and rudimentary character of this publicity.

This way the diffusion of new fashions found a lot of obstacles on its way or provoked very strong insinuations. For example, the reaction against masculine and feminine ‘dandies’ caused the appearance of the ‘majismo’, where the group of well-to-do citizens imitated elements of popular culture.

Having seen these arguments, there exist quite some motives to think that the first decades of the 19th century were witness to much more profound changes²².

In Valladolid the custom of the walk through the ‘Campo Grande’ (place of leisure and recreation in tune with the new life-styles and prolongation of the ‘Plaza Mayor’, where the desire to appear and to display became first) started to spread. This process was accompanied by a change in the way people looked for amusement (the bullfights became a spectacle to the masses, favourable to the ostentation of clothing) and with the diffusion of the cafés –a replica of the more private refreshments (‘refrescos’), chocolates (only some 20% of the families lacked their own chocolate pot) and visits of the Ancien Régime–.

These new habits and customs were an expression of changes in the material culture and in its consumer patterns. Between ‘wars of fashion’, between 1830 and 1840, a place opened up for dress and frock coats, neckties and Italian style hats arrived and people dressed according the fashion in Paris²³. All this was united to a tendency of social levelling and tied to the appearance of the middle-class, mostly evident in Madrid. This way wigs fans and bow ties, known before, now became more and more present within the wardrobes of Valladolid, in order to ‘dress up according to the fashion’²⁴. A minority also started to use underclothes and to take care of their appearance within their own houses.

During the time of this process, new sectors of the textile demand were expanding. The table linen now abounded in the inventories and animated the selling of Galician flax, at the same time as the spreading of the use of stockings, garters and coloured handkerchiefs of silk.

Within the more personal field of personal dressing, less public but significant for the changes of both products and mentality, the transformation was not less important. The amount of feminine and masculine underwear increased and some inhabitants of Valladolid even summed up to ‘four pair of linen underpants’. The significant expression ‘change of underwear’ was accompanied by a wide selection of linen, such as shirts, underskirts and jerkins²⁵.

²¹ J. M. Beristáin, *Diario Pinciano, primer periódico de Valladolid (1787-1788)*, Valladolid, 1978.

²² See: B. Pérez Galdós, *Los apostólicos*, pp. 114-116; and R. Maruri, *La burguesía mercantil santanderina. 1700-1850*, Santander, 1990, pp. 107-121.

²³ AHPV, Leg. 12029. 1829; and Leg. 12029. 1825.

²⁴ AHPV, Leg. 12029. 1787.

²⁵ AHPV, Leg. 3889. 1778; Leg. 3889. 1766; or Leg. 14072. 1778.

The kitchen equipment also experimented variation. With the growing of the importance of the service at the table and in the dining room, napkins, hand-towels and tables with flax cloth became more and more numerous. The selection of forks, glasses and plates (of earthenware, Talavera, chinaware or crystal) grew progressively after the customary limited level of domestic use at the middle of the 18th century. Even more, the presence of small plates and cups (for sweets) announced the coming of new habits of consumption ('confection fashion', 'of daily use', 'ordinary crockery' or 'without using')²⁶.

The changes reached unto the interior of the home. During the thirties of the 19th century it became generalised to use new objects in tune with comfort and convenience. There were plenty of mirrors, sofas, settees, double settees and curtains. It arrived at an 'extravagance in white and table clothing'. Together with this we see the increase, with a logic distribution throughout the house, of food cupboards, images, lamps and clocks...²⁷.

But again, as during the proceeding century, and despite the acceleration of these changes, it remains evidently of a limited character within the Castilian cities. In 1840 the seasonal commerce still was predominant -the fairs- and the number of retail shops specialised in non-foodstuffs stayed small²⁸. Seen against the development of London or Paris, the space occupied by the new establishments remained reduced (Plaza Mayor, Acera de San Francisco, Santiago street)²⁹. The shops possessed very little furniture and still around 1825-39 they did nothing in the field of publicity. The best-endowed shops only could show the shelves with their counters. The shops ('tiendas') lacked even labels and but a few business ('comercios') possessed them because 'the grocers ('lonjistas') -using here the 'antique' denomination- thought: Good cloth is sold in a chest'.

The new habits were introduced quite slowly. In Valladolid there was only one café in 1830, still predominating the consumption of chocolate and refreshments. Even the walk ('paseo'), the cheapest of the new diversions and even an active element for the emulation of dressing and the expansion of the demand, was still a custom not very extended within the popular classes: Fashion saw itself limited by the economic possibilities of the population, despite that the changes

²⁶ AHPV, Protocolos Notariales.

²⁷ AHPV, Leg. 12029. 1825.

²⁸ M. García, "El consumo popular en la Castilla del Antiguo Régimen", *Consumo y sociedad en la España moderna*, Valencia, marzo, 2010.

²⁹ "Uno de los mayores encantos de París y Londres es la inmensa multitud y la belleza singular de las tiendas, habiendo llegado en ellas el lujo al extremo de no concebirse el inmenso consumo que debe haber para sostenerle. Las de Londres se distinguen por su amplitud y comodidad, por su extraordinario surtido y por su aspecto de riqueza y profusión; pero las de París, además, reúnen un gusto, una elegancia, un orden en la colocación de los objetos que no pueden menos de seducir al extranjero. La profusión de bronce y cristales, los pisos de mármol, los magníficos aparadores colocados a la puerta con arte y delicadeza, presentando a la vista del comprador lo más escogido del almacén, deteniéndole en su marcha rápida y ofreciéndole sobre cada artículo una tarjeta con el precio... todo esto reproducido por multitud de espejos y por gran cantidad de luces de gas, y unido a la cortesía en los modales, la abundancia y variedad de los artículos, la comodidad de llevarlo a casa por cuenta del almacenista, la baratura en fin de la mayor parte de los objetos, arrastran y seducen al más indiferente. Nada iguala a la sorpresa que produce en el recién llegado la vista de las galerías cubiertas del Palacio Real, adornadas con más de trescientas tiendas, en donde se hallan reunidos todos los inventos, todos los caprichos del lujo más refinado". Todo lo cual se complementaba con el surgimiento de los bazares y "otros muchos medios (que) ha inventado la industria en aquellas capitales para facilitar el despacho de sus productos"; J. García Mercadal, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-63.

went in another direction. The subtle relation between the middle-class and fashion found itself separated from the popular groups because of the question of the prices that made it impossible to dedicate a major proportion of the family budget to those durable products related to the (textile) industrial development.

3. The marriage dowries: standards of living and standards of consumption

The Castilian dowry was the absolute property of the daughters that received it and it meant a privileged anticipation of their legitimate inheritance, received by the fiancée before the death of their parents in order to facilitate a more advantageous female marriage.

To understand the described standards of consumption and the Castilian material culture (with its changes and permanencies, the implications of its renown and its influence on the familiar demand of semi-durable goods), we can study the possibilities of the feminine marriage dowries. These define the white cloth, the dresses, the kitchen household and the furniture really existing at the moment of the wedding, a moment of major consumption vitality regarding the acquisition of new goods. Based on an extensive research³⁰, it is possible to know the composition of the dowries, the typology and the evolution of the quality of the different domestic objects and of clothing, the contrasts between the rural world and the urban development, as well as the standards of acquisition and consumption of the new products and fabrics. This way we receive a complementary view besides the analysis of the post-mortem inventories, when the inherited capital was definitively divided between the members of the family.

Though many of these goods were inherited and not bought at that moment in the shops (the marriage wardrobe was resistant to change and less subjected to the changes of clothing and of 'fashion'), its structure and diversification shows the material culture and its influence on the market and how and when the housing and the renovation of the wardrobe was transforming. We can analyse the limits of the demand, the customs of consumption or the acquisition of new commercial conduct, a result of consumption and emulation, with tendencies different from those in other European countries.

Capital, possibilities of consumption and tendencies of demand. The quantity and the types of goods brought into the marriages varied with the status of the family³¹. We should verify from what level of income this composition changed and see its consequences for the consumption of semi-transitory products in relation to the quantity and the quality of demand.

In the city of Valladolid the percentage of women who brought in dowries of less than 5,000 reales formed some 52%, while those superior of fifty thousand never rose above 6.5%. The lowest category summed up two-thirds in 1750 to diminish to 40% at the end of the 18th century, while the tendency was the opposite within the most substantial dowries. The halfway category between 20,000 and 50,000 reales only represented a small part of the population (scarcely some 7.5%), though from 1830 onwards it reached above 14% (from this moment

³⁰ Dates elaborated from 200 letters of payment of dowries, carried out in the city of Valladolid in 1700-04, 1750-54, 1795-99, 1830-34 and 1850-54); *AHPV*, Sección de Protocolos Notariales.

³¹ See: J. Amelang, "A note on marriage contracts as a source for the social history of early modern Barcelona", *Estudis històrics i documents dels arxius de protocols*, VIII (1980), pp. 237-243; and I. Testón, *Amor, sexo y matrimonio en Extremadura*, Badajoz, 1985.

some 19% summed up more than 20,000). From this moment it had an influence on the evolution of the more general demand and it had strong consequences for the growing of the supply of all types of products.

More than half of the families always possessed very limited economic possibilities (essential goods and of little quality): some 73% of the dowries summed up to around 22% of the total amount. On the contrary, the powerful incorporated within their bridal portion garments and other varied objects and of high value. Necessity defined the existence within all households of common pieces. Above this basic consumption (ordinary household goods/ some clothing), the demand of the social privileged group (that could offer very elevated marriage dowries) showed an increase in quantity, quality and variety.

But this way of taste and the emulation were fundamental too in order to value the quantity and the quality of the goods found within the intermediate dowries. It was in this wide and growing group with possibilities of acquisition of a major number of products, and more modern ones, that we can find the key to understand the changes and the evolution of consumption and demand at the end of the Ancien Régime in the urban areas of the Spanish interior. Then, we can follow it through the growing diversification of the part of the dowry destined to clothing, household goods and furniture for the houses. While a large social base lacked the means to start a new family, from those levels of wealth onwards, the practices of acquisition started to vary, caused by the economic possibilities and the birth and development of new necessities, generated by an imitation of the refined tastes present within the minority of the most powerful layers. Within this already important third part of the population (but more than 40% from 1800 onwards, and above 50% when we include the dowries between 20,000 and 50,000 reales) the standards of passivity of consumption changed, with the growing of the number of pieces, its quality, its variety and with the appearance of novelties (luxury or import).

Therefore, and despite the stiffness of consumption and a continuous standard of acquisition, a clear evolution appeared within the composition of urban demand, especially of fabrics but also of confection and complements for clothing, besides dishes and specialised furniture³². During the 19th century the social scale rose and thus a city of the interior slowly incorporated itself within the consumption course of other more dynamic Spanish and European regions.

Tendencies semi-transitory products within this domestic bridal portion; inertia and changes of the structure of consumption; influence on the evolution of demand. More than half of the dowries (68% average) stayed under 10,000 reales and given the importance of the fabrics and the white clothing, the popular textile products constituted the major part (more than 75%).

On the other hand, within the urban dowries above 20,000 reales the changed started to be clear. The household goods did not even represented a third part and more than just an increase in the quality of cloth, furniture, porcelain and cutlery, the transformation came from an increase in all 'house decoration':

³² M. García and B. Yun, *art. cit.*, pp. 245-282; C. Shammas, *The pre-industrial consumer in England and America*, Oxford, 1990; N. McKendrick, J. Brewer and J. H. Plumb (eds.), *The birth of a consumer society... op. cit.*; L. Weatherill, *Consumer behaviour and material culture in Britain, 1660-1760*; J. Brewer and R. Porter (eds.), *Consumption... op. cit.*; A. Schuurman and L. Walsh (eds.), *Material culture: consumption, life-style, estándar of living, 1500-1900*; and J. De Vries, *art. cit.*

curtains, chairs, chests and the rest of the conditioning and of domestic furnishing, the increase of table linen with its matching napkins or the growing amount of sheets, earthenware y other kitchen utensils. Everything became more numerous, varied and specialised, while for textiles this evolution was related to an increase of the pieces, its qualification (fine fabrics of 'house and walk') and a refill of textiles³³.

Changes and permanencies of the attire. The typology, the quantity and the quality of the textile goods and the furniture show significant changes, within a generalised maintenance of the standards and possibilities of urban consumption. Notwithstanding these continuities and inertia, the tendency of the evolution of dress indicates the transformation of confection at a semi-long scale. Around 1800 and fundamentally around 1830-35, we can pinpoint the key moment of the breaking, with substantial qualitative changes in the life-styles and in the familiar and domestic demand.

Around 1830 (better than 1850) the growth of the middle-sized dowries can be found clearly. Then they duplicate their value compared to the proceeding century. We see a gradual progression of the demand of objects for dressing and house, increasing by 2.5 in between these dates: Clothing changed from around one third of the bridal portion up to more than 45%.

We can observe a difference between the necessary objects and the demonstratives of comfort, luxury and civilisation. This way the introduction of foreign goods within the dowries only became important starting at the end of the 18th century. At that time a group, not only those who possessed a privileged income, but anyhow a social minority, started to find an interest in French fabrics and English cloth, besides the already famous printed calicoos from Catalunya. At the peak of the traditionalism ('casticismo'), the dandyism ('majismo') and the 'Manola' the imported fashions arrived and therefore the French-style dandies and the more sober, functional, practical, comfortable and hygienic English costumes. All this together with pieces from 'China' and 'Manila' started to be present in the typical walking streets of Valladolid.

Around 1800 many garments that had been used before were still maintained, while other new ones already formed part of a model wardrobe. Doublets of quality were in high esteem, while the omnipresent skirt and the large Castilian dresses ('guardapiés' and 'basquiñas') were competing with mantillas, cloaks and handkerchiefs.

Furthermore we see how from 1830 the development in the use of underwear increases more rapidly. It appears in the majority of the dowries and its multiplication will reach to an average of a dozen shirts and stockings. In 1850 we also find spare clothes and pairs of undershirts and socks. Fifty years before the flourishing and quick development of decoration and of complements to the garments had started: Manual (proliferation of purses, gloves and fans), all things necessary for the hairdo (nets, veils, hats, parasols and combs) and for footwear (now not only the necessary, as every wife counted three or four pares).

While stagnation of consume and the traditional models were still dominating the behaviour of the very wide Castilian rural world.

³³ C. M. Belfanti, "Le calze e maglia: moda e innovazione alle origini dell'industria della maglieria (XVI-XVII)", *Società e Storia*, 69 (1995), pp. 481-501; or F. Orlando, *Storia del costume femminile nel tardo barocco a Firenze*, Milán, 1992.

The number of pieces of textile grew and the average of the more common dresses became higher.

Despite the emphasis on the change ‘from the covered body to the body as a model’, can be emphasised, the objects of many dowries remained reflecting that fashion and consumption until the middle of the 19th century possessed some clearly marked social and economic limits. Therefore some garments clearly witnessed a very slow access into the popular groups. Remodeling and adapting to the new time was more important than the buying of new foreign or national products. This can explain the strength of the auctions (‘almonedas de viejo’), the maintenance of the second hand markets, the importance of inherited clothing and the frequency of ribbons, lace and thread in the inventories of the drapery shops³⁴.

This relative renovation of the wardrobe was accompanied by another change of the primary material. Within its evolution we see with the passing of time an important change from flax to cotton, framed by the maintenance of the traditional wool sector. We also see a similar growth in the number of used pieces and of the textiles used. The textile most abundantly used was linen. This, together with wool, was always present in the feminine bridal portions of all times, though progressively its importance diminished within the whole of cloth. Therefore flax lost its leading position (before 1705 it possessed 55%), the cotton (75% after 1830) replaced it.

Conclusions

The changes related to the introduction of new fashions are to be found primarily and much more rapidly in the cities. Its diffusion was blocked by a great deal of obstacles or in other cases it remained a limited phenomenon. Notwithstanding, new habits and customs within a minority express changes in the material culture and in the patterns of consume of the whole Castilian society³⁵.

The criteria of power, social emulation, comfort, luxury and hygiene, reveal both public and private aspirations within a growing number of households. This way the bourgeois ideology, the influence of Madrid, the transformation of manufactory and commercial practices, were introduced in the dowries over 25.000 reales and gradually but slowly their influence grew after the period between 1780 and 1830.

It was only after the first quarter of the nineteenth century that a more important breakthrough occurred, reflected in the quantity of the textile household apparels and in the composition of the textiles. Also the cultural quality of the household goods defines the tendencies within the patterns of consume.

The development of urban demand in this region between 1750 and 1850 cannot be doubted. But at the same time we observe blockades and inertia that could even invite us to revise the universal value of the theories on ‘predisposition’ and a ‘consumer revolution’. These elements were no doubt present, but their dimensions and effects depended on quite a lot of other factors. In reality, and considering the precocious nature of the process, we have to wait until the middle of the nineteenth century before some of the first English changes can be traced clearly within the Castilian cities: Only by then, the pattern of consume acquires the characteristics that convert it into an element of modernization. A key factor was the deviation of the demand of textiles to the dynamic sector of cotton, a

³⁴ See: J. Laver, *Breve historia del traje y la moda*, Madrid, 1988, pp. 285-344.

³⁵ See: M. García and B. Yun, *art. cit.*, pp. 245-282.

sector that by 1840 already showed its quality of responding to the necessities of growing and homogenizing popular consume. Such a phenomenon took place in a world where emulation and the importance of fashion had become very important, but where the institutional bonds still remained the more decisive factors: the distribution of the income, labour productivity, the organization of the commercial networks and the small scale commerce.

As a result we see that from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards and apart from the indispensable household goods, a lot of other garments in a growing diversity and quantity are added to the household apparels. Not only to cover the basic needs but also to respond to a more diverse and greater showing of the personal to the outside world (for personal comfort) together with the improvement of conditions regarding the quality of the home, and faced to society, within the interior of the houses.

The concept of a domestic space and its functions is also being reflected by the level and the degree of diversification of consume of furniture and other household goods. Trade stimulated the demands and the access to the commodities (could only economic capacity permit its acquirement? When and how did privacy and the differentiation of spaces within the house develop? To whom did this happiness result important?). Changes in the domestic consumer pattern can respond to these questions. During the eighteenth century few external variations can be found, nonetheless the transformation of decoration and of the comfort of bedrooms and other rooms. A lot of inventories reflect the continuity of the solutions in the interior, with scarce variety in the pieces, the absence of functionalism and specialization. Notwithstanding, the elements of transition grew in number after the middle of the century and its changes were nominal and structural, with a growing importance of interior decoration and typology. Progress was considerable, but so were immobility and permanency: the maintenance of the furniture beside some important changes. All of this affected to the wealth; also at a cultural level and by the extent of the mental horizon.

Other conclusion: The distribution of riches and the formation of a 'middle class of consumers' determined a growing tendency to the acquirement of durable primary goods.

The family defined the origins and the possible patrimonial and cultural rise. The heritage marked the strategies in life. Space facilitated or limited personal possibilities.

In conclusion, the confluence of four different variables –family, space, inheritance and patrimony– influenced the evolution of popular consume.