

Dossiê 5

As fontes de pesquisa para moda. Uma aproximação interdisciplinar e arquivista da história da moda: pesquisa e ensino.

AMONG METHODS AND PRACTICES: HISTORICAL SOURCES APPLIED TO FASHION AS A RESEARCH OBJECT

**Entre métodos e práticas: as fontes históricas
aplicadas à moda como objeto de pesquisa**

**Entre méthodes et pratiques: les sources
historiques appliquées à la mode comme objet de
recherche**

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Abstract

Using fashion as a research object, this article deals with the various types of documents used by historiography since the last quarter of the twentieth century, thinking, analyzing and problematizing its uses and practical methods in the academic and school context for the construction of knowledge. Assuming that the issues raised in the different documents (printed, digital, institutional, inventory, epistolary, literary, imagery, oral, cinematographic, musical and material) contribute to the construction of historical sources, we will briefly reflect on some research to illustrate the range of analytical perspectives that can contribute to the dialogue between history and fashion. This methodological proposal allowed us to reflect and understand the precautions that should be taken in the use of different historical documents, as well as the importance of the problems raised, enabling the crossing of sources and wisdom in the construction of narratives that give visibility to the fashion used by individuals and groups, in different societies, in time and in historical space.

Keywords: Fashion. Historical Sources. Methodology.

Resumo

Ao utilizar a moda como objeto de pesquisa, este artigo trata dos diversos tipos de documentos utilizados pela historiografia desde o último quartel do século XX, pensando, analisando e problematizando seus usos e métodos práticos no contexto acadêmico e escolar para a construção do conhecimento. Partindo do pressuposto de que as questões levantadas aos distintos documentos (impressos, digitais, institucionais, inventariais, epistolários, literários, imagéticos, orais, cinematográficos, musicais e materiais) contribuem para a construção de fontes históricas, faremos uma breve reflexão acerca de algumas pesquisas realizadas a fim de ilustrar a gama de perspectivas analíticas que possam contribuir para o diálogo entre a História e a Moda. Esta proposta metodológica permitiu refletir e compreender os cuidados que devem ser tomados na utilização de diferentes documentos históricos, bem como a importância das problemáticas levantadas, possibilitando o cruzamento de fontes e a sapiência na construção de narrativas que deem visibilidade à moda utilizada por indivíduos e grupos, em distintas sociedades, no tempo e no espaço histórico.

Palavras-Chave: Moda. Fontes históricas. Metodologia.

Résumé

En utilisant la mode comme objet de recherche, cet article porte sur différents types de documents utilisés par l'historiographie depuis le dernier quart du XXe siècle, en réfléchissant, analysant et problématisant ses utilisations et ses méthodes pratiques dans le contexte académique et scolaire, pour la construction du savoir. En supposant que les questions soulevés dans les différents sources (imprimés, numériques, institutionnels, inventaires, épistolaires, littéraires, imagétiques, orales, cinématographiques, musicaux et matériels) contribuent à leur construction de sources historiques, nous ferons une brève réflexion sur quelques recherches déjà réalisées afin d'illustrer la gamme de perspectives analytiques qui peut contribuer au dialogue entre l'histoire et la mode. Cette proposition méthodologique a permis de réfléchir et de comprendre les précautions qui doivent être pris pour bien utiliser différents documents historiques, ainsi que l'importance des problématiques soulevées, permettant le croisement des sources et la sagesse dans la construction de récits qui offrent une visibilité à la mode utilisée par les individus et les groupes, dans différentes sociétés dans le temps et l'espace historique.

Mots-clés: Mode. Sources historiques. La méthodologie.

1 INTRODUCTION

As research on history and fashion in Brazil is expanded, we realize the importance and the need to raise some questions and pay attention to methodological care on this topic. For this, we will reflect on the tools available to study fashion as an object of knowledge and, thus, maintain the scientific rigor that is required in academic work.

From the historical perspective, we propose to present, problematize and analyze the different types of documents - print, digital, institutional, inventory, epistolary, literary, imagery, oral, cinematographic, musical and material - that can serve as source for the production of knowledge, apprehending fashion as an object of research. The presentation of these documents, as well as their problematization and analysis, is part of the methodological procedure adopted in this work, justified by the broadening of research perspectives in the fields of history and fashion.

In this way, we will initially make a brief explanation of the historiographic field at the beginning of this century, followed by the presentation of some perspectives of analysis of the different documents used as historical sources. In a synchronized manner, we will point out the care and methodological possibilities of using these materials taking fashion as an analysis tool.

We need to emphasize that this proposal is not intended to become a methodological manual with the need to be followed thoroughly and not to serve as a tutorial, instructing the “step-by-step” research, because this subject does not deplete the issues and problems raised here. Therefore, we want to signal and suggest, with this text, some possibilities of analysis that can be used in various types of research and, thus, contribute to the expansion of studies and dialogues between History and Fashion.

2 THE HISTORIOGRAPHIC FIELD IN THE 21ST CENTURY: BETWEEN DOCUMENTS AND SOURCES

Since the late twentieth century, especially caused by the crisis of paradigms that began in the 1970s, the historiographic field has gained new objects and new perspectives of analysis. The main change occurred in the plural possibility of documents used by historiography for the production of knowledge, as well as in the problems, approaches and objects that were placed on these materials. While considering “the structures, the long duration, and the social groups,” Helenice Rodrigues da Silva points out that the critical turn of the French historiographic current has taken into account “the scales of analysis, the individual actors, and the writing of History” (SILVA, 2007 p. 169), illustrated by the use of narrative, argumentation and subjectivity in historiographic production. Such positioning is due to the production, circulation and reception of new historiographic currents, which altered the historian’s position regarding the analysis criteria and approaches of the research sources used in the construction of the historical narrative. While the study of long-term structures (BRAUDEL, 1965) was analyzed on the scale of Italian microhistory, work on social groups and actors gained visibility through the approach of English social history and the history of German daily life. Thus, the writing of history received new interpretations from the perspective of the American linguistic turn.

Analyzing the return of the subject in the historical narrative, Bernard Lepetit hi-

ghlights that the modalities of chronological scales, while considering the long duration, “revalue the short term, the event understood as situated action” and “that of direct or indirect human experience.” (LEPETIT, 2001, pp. 241-242). The situated action, which the researcher deals with, can be interpreted as social practices, to which Roger Chartier perceives as “complex, multiple, differentiated, that builds the world as representation” (CHARTIER, 2002, p. 28).

Concerned with the subjects as agents of their historical becoming, the specificities of analysis used by each historiographic current were incorporated by various historians around the world, allowing a plurality of sources. As they were raised, new questions and exclamations arose about human activities in the writing of history. The book *Subjects in History: Perspectives and Approaches*, organized by Giselle Martins Venancio, Larissa Vianna and Maria Verónica Secreto, points to an important change in the historian’s posture in identifying human actions and their connections with events. It is perceived that these subjects are “inserted in processes whose social constraints promote greater or lesser possibility of extending freedom of action” (2017, p. 16).

In this process of valuing the subject, encompassing new methods and approaches to analysis, other research objects received the historian’s attention to the interpretation of society. Among these objects, we can mobilize fashion, considered in this research “as a system of signifiers, a classifying activity, a much more semiological than semantic order” (BARTHES, 1979, p. 264).

But before treating fashion as an object of research in the historical perspective, it must be considered that the various sources used by this field, and which will be dealt with afterwards, cannot be naturally assimilated by the researcher. In other words, before becoming sources, they go through a process of reflection, problematization, survey and analysis of theoretical and methodological foundations for the elaboration of a narrative. This systematic and complex process is described by researcher Silvia Hunold Lara as an “invention” act, that is, the act of creating means to study and interpret sources from the interrogations, methods and approaches that are posed by the historian and by other researchers in the documents available to them for analysis (LARA, 2008, p. 18). It is also necessary to clarify that, in this process, not every document can be considered as a source. It will be from the questions, the reflections, the analyzes, the theoretical and methodological survey made by the researcher and the provision of “information about past human actions” that the document can be considered a source of research (LARA, 2008, p. 18).

From these clarifications, we present the different types of documents - printed, digital, institutional, inventory, epistolary, literary, imagery, oral, cinematographic, musical and material - that can be sources for the construction of knowledge. As they are presented, we will point out the necessary precautions for the production of scientific knowledge, while analyzing different works that used some of these sources to approach fashion as an object of study.

3 SOURCES TO FASHION STUDY: AMONG METHODS AND PRACTICES

Among the most accessible sources in 21st century historical research, press can be seen as a protagonist both for its rapid diffusion, especially in the digital age, and for addressing a wide range of subjects for a extensive variety of audiences. Thus, forms

have a range of analytical possibilities, which must be carefully questioned, so that the document does not become a receptacle of findings and evidence already thought teleologically. It is necessary to analyze documents from the questions raised, the adopted analyzes, the theoretical-methodological procedures employed, in order to obtain answers for the production of a historical narrative.

In this process of study of sources Tania Regina de Luca presents some methodological criteria that contribute to think about the questions that can be made to printed documents. Among other aspects is the materiality of the journals. We can consider, for example, their physical composition, size, paper type, print quality, colors used, and images inserted. These elements can signal the typographical agreements made between the newspaper owners and other traders, the financial resources mobilized in the production of this material, their political, economic and social interests and the existing techniques for the production of this type of material.

Attention to the material aspect of newspapers and magazines leads us to think about its circulation, its diffusion and its micro and macro space circulation, that is, in the cities, states and other countries where the print was published or even where it circulated. It is also necessary to inquire about the subscription sites, the individuals directly and indirectly involved in the production of this material, “the social functions of these forms”, and to which audience the journal was intended (LUCA, 2008, p. 132).

When we question who was the target audience of the print, we face exclamations that permeate their textuality. Thinking about the title, the subtitle, how columns and articles are arranged, the text-image, the number of pages and the subjects treated, helps to identify to which audience this material is aimed at. At the same time, it allows to reflect and problematize the texts chosen to be published, and what are the personal and collective interests in the economic, political and social sphere. Thus, it is necessary to contextualize the printed production, that is, to historicize it. It is important to “take into account, therefore, the current technical conditions of production and the investigation, among all that was available, of what was chosen and why” (LUCA, 2008, p. 132).

Like Tania de Luca, historians Maria do Rosario da Cunha Peixoto and Heloísa de Faria Cruz also address some methodological criteria that can be adopted in research that uses printed documents to generate knowledge (PEIXOTO; CRUZ, 2007). The attention given to journal identification, graphic-editorial design, individuals and groups involved, technical and economic conditions, political positioning, aspects of production and distribution, circulation and reception unfolds a range of analytical possibilities in which the researcher will need to consider when addressing the subject matter, using the press as a source of research.

By using fashion as an object of analysis, Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva “examines the role of the press in disseminating fashion and the transnational nature of fashion magazine since its inception” (SILVA, 2017, p. 179). The researcher highlighted the importance of the press in the nineteenth century, as an effective technological resource for the transmission of information about fashion to other countries. Characterized as a pedagogical instructor, the fashion press shaped certain social habits of dressing appropriately in different spaces and thus established certain tastes among its readers. As an example, we can analyze the journal *O Jornal das Senhoras* (1852-1855) to treat fashion as a research object. On Sunday issues, published by women in Rio de Janeiro, and ai-

med at the female audience, almost 80% of its editions had illustrations and descriptions of Parisian fashion, inserted in the print thanks to an agreement between the editors in Brazil and the journal editor. French *Le Moniteur de la Mode* (1843-1913).

The process of translation and transcription of the French fashion articles inserted in *O Jornal das Senhoras* was suffering a mediation process, carried out by the editors, who also circulated through the fashion establishments in Rio de Janeiro, especially in Rua do Ouvidor, in search of information. on fabrics, props and other accessories necessary for the reproduction of the image drawn on the French fashion print (BARBOSA, 2018). This procedure allows us to think about the editorial strategies used by Brazilian copywriters in the weekly organization of the newspaper and in the search for the maintenance and adhesion of new subscribers, or to ask who were the merchants involved in this process. Thus, it is also possible to observe how the transnational circulation of periodicals, fabrics and props linked to the creation of clothing in Brazil occurred in the mid-nineteenth century.

In the case of the transnational circulation of fashion journals, Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva claims to have been a reality in the nineteenth century, given the growth of urban consumption, established by a new group of people who grew and affirmed their personal and social identities (SILVA, 2017, p. 193). Attentive also to the care and problems that the use of the printed source presents, the researcher demonstrates how its physical and economic aspects, as well as its symbolic load embedded in texts and images that circulate transnationally, contributed to materialize the taste and the consumption of European fashion in 19th century Brazil (SILVA, 2007).

The relationship Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva establishes between fashion and literature regarding typographic strategies that mobilized readers' taste and consumption through European fashion and literary texts makes us consider this document as a source of research. Being aware that literary production does not have the same concern and obligations that historical production has, regarding "different forms of apprehension of equally different dimensions of reality", Maria do Rosário da Cunha Peixoto raises some precautions for the use of literature as a source for knowledge production (PEIXOTO, 2011, p. 15).

In addition to inquiring into the contextualization and historicity of literary production and the environment in which the characters are described, it is important to question who the individual (s) or narrative producer (s) were, the characters and what are their symbolic roles, who is the target audience, what are the means of production, circulation, diffusion and reception of the literary work, and in which media the literature is inserted (PEIXOTO, 2011, p. 30).

Such questions are linked to the doubts that permeate the creation of the literary narrative. The attention given "to the specificity of the literary language", the "replacement of the literary text in the historical conditions of its production", the analysis of the "source / language relation" that inserts the text in the fictional field are the main care and methodological procedures pointed out by Maria do Rosário da Cunha Peixoto for the researcher who intends to use literature as a research source (PEIXOTO, 2011, p. 32). These problems were dealt with by Geanneti Tavares Salomon when using *Dom Casmurro* (1899), written by Machado de Assis (1839-1908), to analyze fashion and its relationship with the

characters. To study fashion as a concept, the researcher deals with this object.

As a semiological, historical and sociological phenomenon, capable of pointing out the cultural and social characteristics of a given people, and more profoundly, also able to demarcate time, expose aspects of the personality of the people and the time in which they lived, and explain further changes in their personalities throughout their existence, and thus serving the literary construction (SALOMON, 2010, p. 18).

In this perspective, Geanneti Tavares Salomon analyzes Dom Casmurro as “an important source of information to complement historically the study of the fashion of an era”, extracting “beyond fashion, the customs, the way of life of the society, the subtle movement that was lost in other sources” (SALOMON, 2010, p. 45).

Aware that literature alone cannot provide historical writing with the apprehension of the dimension of truth, which is typical of its field of knowledge, the researcher crosses literary and imagetic sources. She also analyzes academic studies on the period and place where Dom Casmurro was produced, to conclude that Machado de Assis’ literary production “reflects a specific historical moment, with the social, political, and cultural changes of the nineteenth century, and their circumstances exposed in the narrative through astonishing developments, such as fashion” (SALOMON, 2010, p. 186).

The imagetic sources used by the researcher makes us think and analyze the care and methodological procedures that should be adopted in this document. Considering an imagetic document as a source demands “that the researcher become familiar with the numerous variables that define the nature of the image and the multiplicity of meanings and roles it can historically assume” (MENESES, 2012, p. 244).

In this logic, Ulpiano Toledo Bezerra de Meneses considers it important to pay attention to the problematic of meaning that permeates the imagetic field, in order to overcome certain perspectives that make use of these sources only as an illustration or confirmation of analysis, falling back to the teleological scheme.

Thus, it is necessary to think about the effects of the image in the production of codes, the use of perspective, the arrangement of the components portrayed on the screen, the use of colors, the type of ink or product used to create the image. In addition, it should be questioned who painted the image, contextualizing the work and crossing other sources, including imagery, in order to verify the existing artistic trend that preceded the work and the painter.

When we analyze French fashion illustrations printed in the journal *Le Moniteur de la Mode* and reproduced in *The Journal of Ladies* we can identify certain common elements, characteristic of the moment when the images were produced.

By the mid-1830s most of the plaques represented two women, indoors or out, engaged in upper- or middle-class women’s activities, such as dances - including the children’s costume ball - receiving a visit to the salon, playing pianoforte, reading books or magazines, writing or reading letters, embroidering, sketching, painting, and strolling in gardens, parks, or farms (HAHN, 2009, pp. 67-68).²

Painted by Jean-Baptiste David (1808-1892), commissioned by French copywriter

² Texto traduzido do original: “By the mid-1830s most plates depicted two women, in domestic ball or outdoor settings, engaged in upper or middle-class feminine activities, such as attending balls – including costume balls for children – receiving a visitor in the salon, playing the pianoforte, reading books or magazines, writing or reading letters, doing embroidery, sketching, painting, and promenading in gardens, parks or at country estates” (HAHN, 2009, pp. 67-68).

Adolphe Camille Goubaud, the illustrations were made with the use of bright colors to highlight the dresses, since the images were inserted in a fashion journal, whose purpose was to instruct readers about the distinct spaces of sociability in which each costume could be worn. In this way, a cultural taste, a social habit of consumption, and a habit of dressing appropriately for certain purposes were promoted.

Like illustrations painted on different stands, photographs, with their proper technical specificities, have certain approaches in which we can raise questions by treating them as a source of knowledge.

In the case of technical specificities, it is necessary to think about the support that produced the photograph, the technical resources of light, shadow, glow effects, focus, treatments, masks and the full range of tools available for fixing the image built in the time and space lived.

From the perspective of senses and meanings attributed to photography as a revealing document of aspects of life, Ciro Flamarion Cardoso and Ana Maria Mauad conceive this material as an “agent of the process of creating a memory that must promote both the legitimation of a given choice and, on the other hand, the oblivion of all others” (CARDOSO; MAUAD, 1997, p. 572).

Thus, choices attributed in the production of the captured image are part of a system of nonverbal signs, that is, assimilated by metalanguage, linked to an autonomous existence accessed by memory, and relative to the composition of the photographic message (CARDOSO; MAUAD, 1997, p. 573).

Aware of photographs as a nonverbal, non-textual resource, but giving the viewer particular senses and meanings, Diana Crane examines “responses to gender representations in fashion photography and clothing advertisements among young and middle-aged women, representatives of different ethnicities and nationalities” (CRANE, 2006, p. 414).

Carefully, the selection of photographs “to represent various aspects of hegemony” (CRANE, 2006, p. 414) is thought by the researcher in her technical and symbolic means. The technical focus is on the characteristics of a photography produced for a fashion magazine, giving visibility to the effects of light and shadow, brightness and intensity in focus, as well as the other resources that are mobilized to produce an image that is accepted by the editors of the magazine.

In this process of acceptance fall the symbolic aspects that permeate the choice of the model to be photographed, the production made on her body, regarding makeup, haircut and positioning in front of the camera. The costume that will be worn is also considered, as well as the scenario in which the image will be forged and the other symbolic effects that can be inserted, in order to please the fashion consumers.

Conscious that fashion magazine photographs are aimed at profit and advertising, and should appeal to advertisers and target audiences, Diana Crane considers that they “express the tensions and contradictions of a conflicting hegemony”, both by “traditional perceptions of personal behavior” as well as the “modern conceptions of social identity” that shape “the female perceptions of postmodern culture” (CRANE, 2006, pp. 450-451).

The conflict in the production of images, reported by the women interviewed, denotes the attention that should be given to the analysis of photographs and images as

a source of research, but also in the use of orality for the production of knowledge. Extracting information from a discussion group of 45 women of different ages, racial backgrounds and nationalities, Diana Crane asked several questions, “formulated to detect perceptions about photographs and the degree to which women could identify with the models of the photos” (CRANE, 2006, p. 415).

The researcher justified the procedure of using discussion groups instead of individual interviews because the narrators were not used to commenting on photos and could be influenced by the answers of other women in certain questions. (CRANE, 2006, p. 414).

Given the answers obtained by the interviewees, Diana Crane understands the plurality of perceptions that women had about fashion magazine photographs. In this sense, the attention given to the narrative, as a source of research, must be problematized so that the researcher does not conduct or force certain responses, but acts in an organic manner, collecting the answers projected by the interviewees in a natural way.

In the 1980s, when interviewing an African-American couple who experienced a strike in the 1930s, Italian historian Alessandro Portelli performed some methodological procedures that may contribute to the use of orality as a source of research. The care with the choice of interviewees, the place of the interview, the freedom given to the narrator in the production of orality, the support used to archive the speech and also the questions carefully prepared and put in due time, are of great importance to the construction of trust between researcher and the narrator. The latter is considered a key point in the apprehension of elements forgotten and / or omitted by the interviewee.

For the interpretation of orality, Alessandro Portelli establishes a typology of narrative modalities, classified by pronouns used in singular or plural for certain narrated times and spaces (PORTELLI, 2010, p. 22). Certainly this typology changes from interview to interview, but it is an important linguistic resource for interpreting and analyzing the narratives organized and produced in the present about the acts that happened in the past and are remembered by the interviewee.

When dealing with memory, it is important to consider that the reported contents are evoked and verbally organized in the interactive dialogue between the speaker and the listener, thus not having an obligation to the chronological time and the time of the narrative itself. Thus, respecting the nonlinearity of orality and the interviewee’s narrative time is essential to avoid distorting the senses and meanings of the oral source, built from the questions raised, the theoretical-methodological procedures adopted and, subsequently, from their interpretation and analysis.

In some situations, the report of life experiences may contradict collective symbolic constructions, forged as national traditions. The case of the interview of veteran Australian soldiers of the Great War (1914-1918) is emblematic in this respect. Alistair Thomson demystified the national Anzac legend - the name the soldiers received - as the collected interviews contrasted between the veterans’ life experiences and the researcher’s perception of the legend (THOMSON, 1997, p. 55).

Between memories, forgetfulness and silences, certain narratives rested on the collectively constructed legend. Thus, they made up certain reminiscences that arose over time and the fragility of memory. In this act of composition, the researcher Alistair Thomson understands that

The process of remembering is one of the main ways we can identify when telling a story. In narrating a story, we identify what we think we were in the past, who we think we are in the present, and what we would like to be (THOMSON, 1997, p. 57).

Therefore, it is important that the researcher has the sensitivity to interpret the narrated fact as a production of memory from the perspective of the narrator. After all, just as the sources are created from the questions posed in the documents, the analysis and the theoretical-methodological procedures used, the narrative is part of the results obtained from the questions proposed by the historian and the approaches chosen by the narrator.

Just as orality is produced from access to memory and pervades a criterion of choices between what will be spoken and how it will be narrated, the epistolary source can be framed in the same mold, having some specificities. While the oral source is created orally and materialized in the transcript in partnership between interviewer and interviewee, the epistolary source is not created in conjunction with the researcher, except for illiterates who need to dictate letters to someone to write them.

When dealing with the memories of Aurélia Dias Rolemberg (1863-1952), the historian Samuel Albuquerque gives visibility to the performance of preceptors in Eighteenth-century Brazil, as well as denoting elements of fashion experienced by the Sergipe-born memorialist during her adolescence and stay in the city of Rio de Janeiro.

The attention and care given to the letters as a source of research are in the context of this record. In other words, one must ask who is the sender and recipient, the place and occasion of correspondence, on what types of material support the document was produced. In this interrogative bulge, it is important to inquire into the contents of the letter and its context, what people and spaces were described, what clothes were worn, and what might have been omitted or even forgotten.

During his analysis, and especially in the look given to fashion, Samuel Albuquerque crosses different correspondences with academic productions that address the context narrated by the memorialist. Thus, Albuquerque notes that Rua do Ouvidor was frequented by Aurélia Dias Rolemberg and her family, and records the female habit of attending fashion establishments and having custom made dresses originally displayed in French fashion illustrations, presented in women's newspapers published in Brazil in the Eighteenth century (ALBUQUERQUE, 2015, p. 45).

Faced with the lack of technical resources in Brazil, in the mid-nineteenth century, such as the computer, the camera, the recorder or the camcorder, the memory records, human actions and goods acquired by different individuals were filed in missives, wills, and other types of public and private papers.

While the epistles took on a private character and were composed of human desires, emotions, feelings, and actions, wills and inventories were treated in the public and institutional realm, since they assigned functions and delegated goods from one individual to another through inheritance, payments and / or other arrangements. In an attempt to analyze clothing through inventories, Camila Borges da Silva raises some specificities, analyzes, procedures and pertinent questions to address and build her research source.

In her survey, the author points out that the inventory is a detailed register of the material elements of the deceased's life at the time the document was produced (SILVA, 2018). This means that the inventoried goods did not belong to the individual throughout

his life, but were acquired throughout his existence.

Taking into account that this document was not a compulsory production at that time and context, and that it required a cost for its elaboration, it circumscribes different social classes. Therefore, we should avoid generalizations when using it, since goods belonging to the individual could be omitted and the values attributed to the inventoried products could change, as assessed by the notary, raising some care in the process of interpretation and transformation of the source document (SILVA, 2018).

Attentive to these precautions, Camila Borges da Silva crosses three inventories with civil codes, Brazilian laws, the Philippine Order, period dictionaries and works that deal with the researched period. In this way, she was able to investigate the importance of fashion as a central system in the debate about the individuality of taste and the great extent of the coincidence of these same tastes, in a given time and space (SILVA, 2018, p. 152).

In this sense, the researcher is aware of the difficulty of researching clothing in the context of material culture, since its conservation process is not simple nor is the preservation of certain costumes part of popular culture. Such difficulty mobilizes us to think about care and methodological procedures when dealing with this type of document in historical research.

In considering material culture as any “segment of the physical environment that is socially appropriated by man” (MENESES, 1983, 112) Ulpiano Toledo Bezerra de Mene- ses situates this document as material support, transformed by man for a certain purpose of social life.

This position mobilizes Marcelo Rede in the search to minimize the subordinate character that material sources received by historians over printed sources (REDE, 2012). Taking into account the materiality of the object, as a product and vector of human relations, allows us to understand its production process, the use of the elements that constitute materiality and to distinguish the societies that produced it, in a given time and space.

Regarding fashion as an object of research, Maria Cristina Volpi denotes the importance of observing different products used in the composition of a costume to understand the social structure that builds this materiality (VOLPI, 2018, p. 31). The brief journey of textile technical progress made by the researcher is a methodological path through which it is possible to situate certain “dress forms”, codes of social conduct and social and cultural relations established between the different individuals and groups (VOLPI, 2018).

Similar to what was done in other research, Maria Cristina Volpi cross-references different documents linked to material culture as a source of research, with imagery, printed, institutional, oral records, as well as period dictionaries and bibliographies that address fashion and the Brazilian context in the first half of the twentieth century.

Among the sources of research mobilized by the researcher, we can take as an example some institutional records to think about the creation of “dress forms”, used by members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. These official documents can serve as a source for the production of knowledge, according to the questions, approaches and methods used to analyze fashion as an object of research.

An analysis of Decree No. 20,041 of 7 May, 1932, that approves and executes plans and regulations for uniforms of the members of the Diplomatic and Consular Bo-

dies, from the Decree No. 21,498 of July 23, 1946 and the Uniform Regulation of the foreign service officials, we think of the symbols attributed to the use of the costumes, as well as the hierarchy existing among the members of the diplomatic corps. Identifying the performance of these individuals in certain spaces and their sociability relations with other official members raises questions about the use of symbolic power in accessing and obtaining certain benefits. Likewise, it allows us to investigate the relationship between individual and collective identity as an individual member of a national institution with international functions.

Dealing with official documents requires thinking about who produced them and what their intentions were, the subject matter, in what condition it was prepared (decree, law, regulation, paragraph, item, etc.) and their context of production. Still, what the procedure is (voting in the chamber of deputies, senators, etc.) and the path taken by the official document until it is published, and which people were, are and / or will be affected by it.

Thus, it is certain that the forms of circulation, dissemination and reception of the official document will only be understood systematically with the support of other sources. Periodicals, television programs and digital documents are examples of sources that, when crossed, may indicate comments and their repercussions. In this sense, we can see that the mobilization of other documents for the production of knowledge contributes to the resolution of the questions raised by the researcher.

Another way to analyze the material culture of clothing and the universe of fashion can be realized in the use of cinema as a source of research. We can take the movie *The Devil Wears Prada* (2006) as an example, based on the book of the same name written in 2003. The symbolism that the film brings about the universe of fashion, the costumes dressed, the speeches used by the characters, their ways of dressing and acting on scene are some of the aspects that need to be problematized when mobilizing the film document to analyze fashion as an object of research.

From this perspective, Marcos Napolitano problematizes the context and place in which film production is placed and in which the characters are situated. The framing of the image and characters throughout the scenes, the games of light and shadow used, the songs and sounds mobilized, the chosen costumes and the subjective signs that are emitted to viewers are also raised (NAPOLITANO, 2008).

Following a similar methodological procedure, Alexandre Busko Valim problematizes the individuals and groups that contributed to the elaboration of film production. In this problematization, it is important to consider the social, political and economic interests, the target audience, the production process, the means of circulation, dissemination and reception, and the ways of repercussion at national and international level (VALIM, 2012).

Reflecting on these notes requires the intersection of other research sources. In the case of the analysis of the film *The Devil Wears Prada*, the use of printed sources linked to the cinema allows us to check the opinion of the film critics and other viewers regarding the film production. Finding out the material culture of the costumes produced in the same period in which the film was produced allows us to attest what was the current prevailing fashion. Analyzing the music used in film production allows us to understand the signs and codes attributed to the narrative of the characters.

In the case of music, in addition to the signs and codes produced by song and melody

in film production, other elements can be analyzed, as this document can also be used as a source of research. Marcos Napolitano denotes the precautions that must be taken when avoiding analytical fragmentations, that is, the separations made between lyrics and music, context and work, author and society, aesthetics and ideology. For this, the researcher understands to be important to consider the manifestations and the musical styles within his time, the musical scene in which the work is inserted, the problems with the inherited value hierarchies, the question of individual and collective musical taste, the articulation between text and context, the poetic procedures and the language figures adopted in the song (NAPOLITANO, 2005).

Caring for the technical issues allows us to think, discuss and analyze the process of music creation, harmony, melody, rhythm, interpretation, arrangement, height, pulse, tone, vocal and the instruments used. The author inquires about the commercial, aesthetic and ideological implications in which music production is produced and inserted, raising aspects related to recording, the vehicles of diffusion and legitimation of fame, and the symbolic weight on concepts of the past, cultural heritage, tradition, genius and masterpiece (NAPOLITANO, 2005). Given the different technological resources that allow us to produce musical documents, we must consider such devices as producers, but also as soundstores. Problematizing digital content, whether musical, imagery and / or textual, allows us to consider these documents as a source of research.

Questions raised regarding the attitude of researchers towards the use of digital sources are analyzed by Anaclét Pons in order to meditate on the challenges of the 21st century (PONS, 2011). To address the problems that the digital document has, while being a source of research, the researcher understands it is necessary to consider that digital is part of everyday life and the current context of human experience. The use of e-mails, looking for information on search engines, paying bills, telecommunication resources are all on the palm of our hands, transforming human relationships. Considering the way individuals and societies deal with digital resources allows us to understand reading and interpretation habits, as well as social and cultural relations mediated by different technologies (PONS, 2011).

Thus, Anaclét Pons takes into account the issue of users' access to certain content, the process of scanning and archiving from different sources, the digital companies that monopolize certain resources, and the construction of truth and lies effects on the part of users, that are propagated, replicated and who mobilize new actions and reactions from other users who receive this content (PONS, 2011). The concerns raised by Anaclét Pons are also questioned by Célia Cristina da Silva Tavares in problematizing access, archiving, availability, symbolic and economic capital, and the tensions surrounding content owners and users, as well as lack of domain regarding what is saved or erased and the relation of truth produced in the digital age (TAVARES, 2012).

Aware that the historical production of this century does not intend to narrate the truth, but to grasp the different dimensions of realities lived in time and space, the analysis of digital documents should lead the researcher to understand the modalities of truth that are built with different purposes.

Thus, whether in the sense of composing, overlapping or counteracting historical narratives that have been legitimized by other sources, the effects of truth produced by digital sources in the 21st century signal new approaches, methods and problems that will

not be considered in this proposal, for methodological reasons, but that are considered key for the care needed in the use of different sources and research objects by the historian and other researchers.

4 CONCLUSION

As we highlight in this proposal, the study of research sources from the questions posed, the reflections made, the theoretical foundations used and the methodological proposals adopted in the various documents mentioned throughout this article demands a herculean effort for the researcher who intends to use them in their craft. Although it may seem like an arduous task, the theoretical and methodological interrogations and exclamations made to research sources allow us to understand and situate the various research possibilities in time and in historical space.

Taking fashion as an object of research, we raised some works that mobilized several sources in order to present, discuss and analyze some of the methodological procedures used and that can signal and suggest multiple ways of analysis to study History and Fashion.

Finally, in this proposal it was possible to understand that the historical shift, which began at the end of the twentieth century, allowed us to think about some approaches, methods and problems that arise in our century to cross the different historical sources in the analysis of fashion as an object of research. .

Now that we know the tools and their uses, we can contribute more effectively to the construction of historical knowledge. Let's get to work!

5 SOURCES

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