

## Fashion and Creative Economy Editorial

### *Editorial Moda e Economia Criativa*

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Fashion is a phenomenon with many facets and that can be approached by various biases. As a symbolic consumer good, clothing is a vehicle for the expression of subjectivities, demarcation of social position, and belonging or differentiation. In this regard, Diana Crane (2006), in her book *Fashion and Its Social Agendas: Class, Gender, and Identity in Clothing*, highlights that clothes and accessories are the most evident marks of social status and gender and, therefore, fashion plays an important role in the maintenance and subversion of symbolic borders. According to the author, “clothing is an indication of how people, at different times, perceive their position in social structures and negotiate the boundaries of status” (CRANE, 2006, p. 21, free translation). Moreover, as an element of material culture, clothing and personal adornments express collective identities, tell stories of social groups, and tell us about the “spirit of the time.”

As a productive sector, the long chain of fashion — which begins in agriculture, goes through the production of fibers, yarns, and fabrics until reaching the apparel industry and, finally, retail — represents an important sector of the economy, responsible for great generation of income and jobs. According to the most recent data made available by the Brazilian Textile and Apparel Industry Association (ABIT, 2023), in 2021, the textile and apparel chain had 22,5 thousand formal production units throughout Brazil and its revenue was BRL 190 billion. In the same year, the sector was responsible for 6% of the total value of the production of the Brazilian manufacturing industry and generated 1.34 million formal jobs and 8 million indirect jobs, allocating 19.5% of the total workers of industrial production. In the classic fashion industry, among these professionals, there is a wide variety of functions: couturiers, patternmakers, assistants, managers, entrepreneurs, and creatives. The latter, according to the Mapping of the Creative Industry in Brazil (*Mapeamento da indústria criativa no Brasil*, an annual statistical survey of the creative industry in the country) (FIRJAN, 2022, p. 60), add up to almost 27 thousand employment relationships.

If, on the one hand, the fashion industry is a vector of socioeconomic development, on the other hand, it causes great socio-environmental impacts. High rates of informality and precariousness of work are quite common. In addition, clothing goods are the second class of products at greater risk of having been produced by workers in contemporary slavery, only behind the category “computers, laptops and smartphones” (WALK FREE, 2018). Furthermore, the United Nations (2019) estimates that the production of clothing and footwear is responsible for 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions and that,

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every second, the equivalent of a truck of textile garbage is disposed of in landfills or burned. Another concern is its harmful consequences for water resources and oceans, as this sector accounts for 20% of wastewater, and textiles account for 9% of annual microplastic losses to the ocean. These facts have generated propositions for a more sustainable dynamic of fashion production and consumption.

By this brief exposition on some of the various aspects that permeate fashion, it is possible to notice that it entails reflection by multiple perspectives. Throughout the seven years of the journal *Diálogo com a Economia Criativa*, in many of the 21 editions that precede this one, topics related to fashion have been addressed in different ways; but, up to now, an issue entirely dedicated to it had not been published. Thus, in order to highlight its relevance, complexity, and close relationship with creative economy, of which it is part as an important productive sector, we began the eighth year of *Diálogo* with the Fashion and Creative Economy Thematic Report.

The first article, "Fashion and the Crossroads: a Theoretical-methodological Essay," discusses fashion as a field of knowledge in the Brazilian context and its relationship with the coloniality of power. The researchers Carla Costa, Carolina Casarin, Heloisa Santos, João Dalla Rosa Júnior, and Michelle Medrado propose concepts for the confrontation of the colonial fashion matrix, seeking to broaden the thinking about its gears and, thus, operate the decolonial turn.

Subsequently, two articles address the relationship between fashion and craftsmanship. "Ecomoda and Rio de Janeiro as a background for design initiatives in contemporary handicraft and sewing groups," by Bárbara de Oliveira e Cruz, Rita Maria de Souza Couto, and Roberta Portas, reflects on the development of the urban space of Rio de Janeiro to understand it as a background for design initiatives in groups of artisans and seamstresses. The authors suggest that the valorization of local production, in addition to the characteristic of cultural valorization, can promote the social and economic development not only of favelas, but also of the entire city, in addition to assisting in environmental preservation, which they demonstrate by describing the Ecomoda case study.

Conversely, the text "Craftwork in authorial fashion of Pernambuco: a case study about the production of leather shoes" presents the results of a case study about the existing artisanal production in an authorial fashion brand of the metropolitan region of Recife (state of Pernambuco), whose main products are animal leather shoes. The main result of the study was the observation of the creator as an artist-craftsperson, whose manual dexterity and creative freedom are key elements in the construction of the brand. The article by Manuela Correia and Virgínia Pereira Cavalcanti was originally presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> Congress of Research and Development in Design (*Congresso de Pesquisa e Desenvolvimento em Design – P&D Design*), held in 2022 and organized in a partnership between Escola Superior de Propaganda e Marketing do Rio de Janeiro and Escola Superior de Desenho Industrial da Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, and it was selected among the articles of the thematic axis Design and New Economies for publication in the journal *Diálogo com a Economia Criativa*.

Likewise, the article “Circular economy and industrial symbiosis as strategy for the management of textile waste of the Beachwear Cabo Frio/RJ Local Productive Arrangement” integrated the presentations of P&D Design 2022 in the same thematic axis and was selected for publication in the journal, both of which were included in the Fashion and Creative Economy Thematic Report due to their themes. Maria Eloisa Conceição, Cláudio Freitas de Magalhães, and Jorge Roberto Lopes dos Santos are the authors of the study that presents the preliminary result of the exploratory field research on the local productive arrangement Beachwear Cabo Frio/RJ, which aims to investigate the flow of textile waste from the production of local factories, to analyze the feasibility of reinserting these residues in the production cycle of origin or transforming them into raw material for other production cycles.

Glauber Soares Junior and Claudia Schemes also address aspects related to sustainability, but from another perspective. In “Fashion and creative economy — possible dialogues: consumption, sustainability, and female entrepreneurship in the *Girlboss* series,” the authors carry out a film analysis fostered by theoretical concepts and highlight that the TV series focuses on the development of a creative venture in the field of fashion thrift stores, in which discussions on female entrepreneurship and the importance of having collaboration networks and notions of sustainability in this type of business take place, which is based on the cultural and creative capital of the main character of the series.

Still within the scope of sustainable fashion, but now dealing with the emergence of companies with this proposal, Maicon Douglas Livramento Nishimura, Leila Amaral Gontijo, and Ricardo Triska, in the article “Sprouting factors for sustainable fashion businesses,” observe that aspects, such as culture, education, media, coworking, and other collaborative movements, in addition to the Municipal Plan of Creative Economy of Porto Alegre and the Fashion Revolution, were fundamental for the emergence of the businesses surveyed by a qualitative-quantitative approach and analyzed in the study.

In “Creative informality: a quantitative investigation on fashion businesses in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil,” Cristiano Max Pereira Pinheiro, Thomás Czrnhak, and Carolina Blum Vorpagel address the economic informality in the fashion industry of the state of Rio Grande do Sul with the purpose of investigating the degree of informality that surrounds economic transactions, labor relations, and the creative output of fashion companies in the region.

In the article “Approaching the creative process as a complex adaptive system,” Lenice Eli Lunkes Scapato, Dusan Schreiber, and Vanessa Theis aim to understand the approach of the creative process, from the perception of professionals from creative areas who work in companies of the leather-footwear sector located in the Vale do Rio dos Sinos region, as a complex adaptive system. The authors identify that there are opportunities for the surveyed environments to explore, in a more in-depth way, the contributions of complex adaptive systems, which find similar characteristics in creative and innovative organizations.

Maria Paula Guimarães and Rita Ribeiro propose a reflection on the conformation of the fashion market, from its origin to the present day, from *haute couture*

to fast fashion, from its articulations with the media in the dissemination of trends and the influence on consumption patterns. In the article “Social identification processes in fashion: from luxury to fast fashion,” the authors discuss the changes in the fashion market, such as the emergence of fast fashion and the permanence of a luxury market of global dimensions, based on the understanding of fashion as a social phenomenon and its importance as an industry and cultural product.

Still regarding consumption, this edition ends with the study conducted by Rosana Dias Guedes de Moraes and Ana Christina Celano Teixeira, entitled “Women’s consumption relations with luxury handbags.” Inspired by the Itinerary Method, the researchers conducted in-depth interviews with owners of genuine handbags of international luxury brands, addressing the stages of purchase, use, and disposal, and investigated the consumer relations of Brazilian women with high purchasing power to these objects.

We hope, with the Fashion and Creative Economy Thematic Report, to contribute to the debate on this very fascinating phenomenon — namely, fashion. Enjoy the reading!

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