

who, in the 1890s, began to encourage school attendance among their children, also introduced new and unusual names for their offspring and supervised the abandonment of traditional dress by their children (though they, themselves, continued to don the traditional clothes).

Important discussions also focus on changes in textile manufacturing, both domestic and industrial, on developments in urban lower class dress, on economic development in the region, on gender variations in dress and the "undressing", on the emergence of local politics and patronage linked to national political culture and on the role of fashion as a commodity in the late nineteenth century. Finally, Pollack Seid discusses the role of romantic revivalism at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. Outsiders interested in folklore drew attention to the costume in a way which emphasized the sentimental and commercial vestiges of the dress, transforming the costume into an *objet d'art*. This patronizing attention contributed to the Bethmalais' abandonment of the costume, but also helped preserve vestiges of the costume for commercial tourism, a marriage of convenience between tradition and modernity.

*The Dissolution of Rural Culture* by Roberta Pollack Seid is published as part of a relatively new venture launched by Garland Press with the aim of putting in print a significant number of previously unpublished dissertations. It bears the strengths and weaknesses of a dissertation: thoroughly documented, repetitious at times, marred by the usual typographical errors found in every dissertation. The book includes a number of photographs and maps useful to the reader, though, as with dissertations, there is no index. An Afterword attempts to address some complex issues raised by feminist scholars about dress and fashion, but is too brief to be satisfactory. In the end, the merit of Pollack Seid's work is its use of local history to provide a nuanced look at a process with which historians must come to grips: modernization.

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Aileen Ribeiro — *Fashion in the French Revolution*. New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1988. Pp. 159.

Examples of colorful and political clothing in revolutionary France abound in Aileen Ribeiro's *Fashion in the French Revolution*. Buckles representing the towers of the Bastille were shown in a fashion magazine of 1789. Men and women sympathetic to the plight of royalty under constitutionalism and the Republic allegedly wore black, symbolic of mourning. Under the Directory, elite women — known as the *merveilleuses* — carried the craze for antique styles to extremes, wearing diaphanous, high-waisted white muslin dresses, short, curly hair *à la Titus* and thin, laced sandals. During this period, a few men — the *incroyables* — showed their disdain for the Republican Terror by sporting huge collars and wide lapels on tight, square-cut coats; long locks of hair fell beside their faces like dogs' ears and calf-length breeches caught by ribbons hugged their legs. Throughout the revolutionary decade, whether out of conviction or for self-preservation, males and females in large numbers donned blue, white and red cockades in their hats.

Unquestionably, fashion and clothing during the French Revolution reflected political developments, as Ribeiro's bountiful illustrations and commentary demonstrate. The book is less successful, however, in supporting Ribeiro's other assertions; namely, that she would trace social changes in the fashions from the 1780s to 1800, and that the French Revolution marked a significant departure from Old Regime uniformity and hierarchy in clothing to a condition where dress represented the expression of personal individuality and freedom.

Ribeiro begins the book with a chapter on the 1780s explaining how the formal court dress of the French aristocracy was already succumbing to the casual, possibly even egalitarian, influences of English style. According to Ribeiro, King Louis XVI, because he cared little for clothes, and Queen Marie Antoinette, because she cared about them very much, encouraged the adoption of less complicated styles and less extravagant fabrics for clothes. Indeed, the Queen and the King's brothers were notorious for pointedly wearing the simpler styles from England, which, Ribeiro asserts with flimsy evidence, "helped to produce a more casual attitude toward the monarchy" (39). White muslin dresses and skirt and jacket combinations for women, and dark woollen suits and less shaped redingotes (riding coats) for men were already popular in France in the decade prior to the Revolution.

From 1789 to 1794, the trend away from formality accelerated, with obvious political connotations that Ribeiro emphasizes. Simplicity, even slovenliness, in dress was regarded as patriotic as French revolutionaries brought down the old social structure and hierarchy, including the different costumes that reflected them. Long trousers, if not the baggy, sans-culottes sort, at least in the form of smooth, tight pantaloons, replaced the knee breeches of rich men. Women wore skirts and jackets (supposedly after the short coat of the sans-culottes, which contradicts the earlier assertion about English influence) and cotton dresses printed in blue, white and red. There were attempts at more radical changes in clothing during this period. Proposals for dress reform, specifically to impose patriotic equality and instill a sense of citizenship, began in the National Assembly as early as 1790. Ultimately, though, David's designs of 1794 for male representatives' outfits, hearkening to antique modes of tunics and tights (a substitute for ancient nudity) were never adopted. Moreover, women who asserted the right to wear the revolutionary *bonnet rouge* and hinted at further adoption of male dress (military influences were clear in women's hats and dresses and/or jackets during this period) were severely repressed.

Ribeiro suggests that with Robespierre's fall in 1794 and the end of Terror, variety and innovation in both male and female dress flourished, notably among the newly rich bourgeoisie. The Directory was the heyday of the dandyish *incroyables* and the scandalous *merveilleuses*, but Ribeiro also asserts that the majority of men wore the by then conventional dark coats, pantaloons and boots associated with informality and liberty, while women generally favored dresses of opaque fabric and some shape.

Was fashion under the Directory more individualistic and free than before the French Revolution? Though Ribeiro wants readers to think so, she presents conflicting evidence of conformity and experimentation in clothing, a situation no different from her reconstruction of dress in the 1780s. Ribeiro also concludes that the Revolution started a new trend toward extreme difference in male and female clothes, with male garments more sober and uniform than the gaily-colored, infinitely variable costumes of women. This is an intriguing point, with significant gender, political and

social implications, but Ribeiro raises these issues too briefly and without sufficient support or explanation.

There are many problems with this book from the perspective of social history. First, half of it is a simple narrative of revolutionary events, which Ribeiro juxtaposes with descriptions of clothing. For historians, this narrative is superfluous, even irritating with its glib generalizations of extremely complex events. It appears to be a substitute for an in-depth analysis of the social and political implications of French fashion from the 1780s to 1800, despite Ribeiro's claim to "explore the ways in which social and political trends were reflected in dress" during the French Revolution (19). She often fails to make clear distinctions among social classes and social groups in her assertions about fashion. Nor does Ribeiro explain sufficiently the social, political and economic changes before and during the Revolution that related to clothing. What was the position of the bourgeoisie during the late eighteenth century, and how did this affect fashion? To what extent did government controls over production and trade influence the kind and quantity of fabrics available for private consumption? How did technological developments in textile manufacturing relate to fashion? What were the effects of revolution, war and emigration on clothing industries and workers — tailors, dressmakers, ribbonmakers, hatters, wigmakers, embroiderers, lacemakers, staymakers and so forth? These and other questions bear directly upon Ribeiro's stated intention and assertions, yet, she addresses them only in passing, if at all.

Finally, the book would benefit from a reading of some of the many recent social histories of late eighteenth-century France. For example, were Ribeiro familiar with works on elite women by Margaret Darrow, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, Samia Spencer and Elisabeth Badinter, among others, she probably would not have made the following, erroneous, statement: "Fashion was...a way of life...for upper-class women with very little to do except to enjoy a life of pleasure" (25). Contrary to Ribeiro's interpretation, studies now show that upper-class women in the pre-revolutionary period were actively engaged in the promotion of family status, in the social and official life of salons and court, and in significant cultural and literary pursuits. It is surprising, too, that Ribeiro's bibliography mentions no other study of fashion except her own earlier book.

In sum, Aileen Ribeiro raises some interesting and important questions, but there is room for some wide-ranging research and more penetrating analysis of fashion during the French Revolution.

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Roger Sawyer — *Children Enslaved*. London and New York: Routledge, 1988. Pp. xviii, 238.

This survey documents the widespread existence of enslaved children in the late twentieth century. To Sawyer's credit, he defines slavery to include a wide range of forms of enforced exploitation: from the debt peonage and chattel slavery which survive in the Third World to child prostitution, homelessness and "kiddie porn" which flourish in the First World. The tale which the author recounts is a harrowing