

Observed by a foreign traveler in the beginning of the 19th century, a black boy dances on the street and shows off his old boots with open pride.

The fact wouldn't be so significant if the boy wasn't completely nude. For the traveler, the situation is incomprehensible; for the child, though, it makes sense. As the Carnival dancer who will one day swing down Brazilian streets, what he happily shows is not only a pair of boots but one of the most eloquent symbols of ascension and social distinction in Colonial Brazil.

At that time, a pair of shoes differentiated the poor from the rich, the slave from the free, the catechized Indian with a soul from the non-catechized one without a soul – and the boy knew that very well. To the unaware European, the only thing to do was to write down another picturesque case in his travel notebook.

Many images like that will give the few hints that guided us in this attempt of recomposing the footwear's path in Brazilian lands, from the Portuguese boot that was buried in the sand in 1500 to the prodigiously balanced stiletto coming on the catwalk.

The Indians

To the idealized image of a welcoming land, a soft ground carpeted by leaves and white sand beaches, it's easy to oppose the evidence that Brazilian Indians walked through hostile forests and lands and probably suffered with low temperatures in the mountains and in the southern areas.

None of that, however led to the development of footwear among them. On a letter sent to the King of Portugal reporting the discovery of Brazil, Pero Vaz de Caminha wrote that the Indians were brown, all nude, without a thing to cover their bodies. There is no way of casting doubt on a Catholic Portuguese astonished with the vision of nudity at to the 16th century.

In a certain passage of the same letter, he describes two naked Indian women, their bodies covered with painting: "... another brought both her knees with the curves as well dyed in black and also her feet's insteps ... " This is the first mention in written language of this part of human anatomy on a Brazilian inhabitant.

Reports by foreign travelers that came to Brazil in the following centuries confirm that the Indians walked barefoot. What remained of indigenous culture among us leaves no room for doubt.

Naked and barefoot, they handled an efficient utilitarian apparatus, a cast of ritual objects, although modest and essential, of sophisticated ornamental taste and intense symbolic content. Ritualistic clothing was worn only to speak to the gods. Shoes, what for?

Those habits remained unaffected until the arrive of the Portuguese, when caravels didn't bring only greed, men, weapons and colored beads. With them came also military boots, probably the first protagonists of this narrative, and, to be honest, the Portuguese's naturalistic enchantment for the land's inhabitants.

Under the mild influence of the dazzle with "paradise", the unavoidable violence of conquest was left for later, which was a providential circumstance for natives, much more than shoes that hadn't become popular among them, neither at that time nor at forthcoming times. Instead, it allowed many white men to leave aside convention and get into the local habit.

There were no shoes, neither had they been adopted here. That absence indifference, opposed to the advanced sophistication level of the habit of wearing shoes among disembarked European people, gave shoes a peculiar condition in Brazil, turning them into symbols of social distinction, represented by scenes as the one this book's opening

But covered feet had surely impressed the Indian. The settler also showed certainty in his superiority by the suit and shoe. In the History of Brazil by Frey Vicente de Salvador, written in Bahia in 1627, the following text appears:

...just by seeing this white men dressed, wearing beard and everything else they lacked, the Indians had them as divine, and more than men...

The Indians needed to create words to identify footwear. In *Tupi-Guarani*, there are *mbi ubá*, which means to cover or dress the foot, and *mbi upã*, landing or seat for is also *piubã* or *piupã*, which means feet's site. All of them were used to name in general, like espadrilles, sandals, clogs or boots.

There are reports on *in natura* rubber shoes worn by northern Indians. None of this is confirmed neither do these records help to point out accurately where, in the Amazonian forest, at a time of indefinite borders, this habit was verified. Trustworthy is the statement that rubber gatherers waterproofed fabrics and leathers extracted from *seringueira* (a Brazilian rubber tree), confectioning boots to feet eventually worn by the Indians.

In the eyes of the first Brazilians, around the middle of the 16th century, the Europeans seemed very funny, with wide-toed shoes and high stockings, en vogue in Europe. They were even nicknamed *emboabas*, which in plain indigenous language means something like *hen in pants*.

The Portuguese

Historically, leather treatment was in charge of humble classes, which explains the scarcity of reports on this industry considered inferior by nobility in ancient times. Moorish Arabs, who practiced the craft with art and refinement, were the ones who introduced in the Iberian Peninsula techniques of tanning, dyeing and devices production. For instance, espadrilles are of Arab origin. In France, the word *cordonnier*, that defines shoemaker, comes from a cord of dyed kid leather created by them and used for fastening shoes.

By the beginning of the 16th century, in Portugal, these techniques had been refined and footwear was in evolution. The *poulaines* or *cracowes* common in the 15th century, something like leather socks originally with very long and pointed toe in gothic style and used over wooden soles, started to have wide, cow mouthed foreparts. Lat-

er, they would be given heels and closure with buttons and buckles on the instep.

The bourgeois wore leather boots called buskins, tied with laces, and slippers worn with stockings, those that made the Indians laugh. Wooden clogs, designated for lowest classes, kept away the mud, snow and dirt of the country and the cities. Also, the habit of walking barefoot was not uncommon.

All these models and techniques got, by one means or another, to Brazil; but most of them must have been constituted by boots that answered to military needs and taste. They were high, with straight or turned out boot legs, as the ones used in *bandeirantes* depictions, and were called *botifarras*. They were tied with laces that kept it properly close to the legs. Buskins were worn by high rank officers and the crew's elite. The rest of the fleet probably wore simpler models and the low paid staff might have similar habits to natives. Some barefoot, others with worn-out boots and simple wooden clogs, with only one wide strap on the instep. With almost any evolution, they can still be found today at popular markets in Brazil. These clogs are Asian in origin and probably got to Portugal through the colonies in the East.

Religious orders

A leather sandal was probably the first footwear worn by the Brazilian. Sandals might have seemed more acceptable for feet used to freedom of movements and were worn by most of the religious orders.

Friars educated the natives and introduced them to the settlers beliefs and habits, establishing close relationships. Therefore, we feel free to imagine the moment when indigenous culture, barefoot and untouched, suffered the first advancement of civilizing intentions, reasonably represented by the instant when the feet of an Indian girl or a little *curumim* (a boy in indigenous tupy language) are covered by this strange artifact under the close guard of an European friar.

The adoption of the habit of walking barefoot, common among some religious orders in Europe, was associated to the idea of dispossession and spiritual gain. The diffusion of this practice counted on a promotional aid in Brazil, around 1550, by the influential figure of the priest Jose de Anchieta, contributing for the mystification of shoes in colonial imagery. If in the Indian's case it was absence, among the missionaries it was abstention reinforcing the importance of the denied object.

Many religious orders had been sent with the mission of insufflating and managing soul among the local savages. One of the most active of them in the course of settling was the Jesuits. The Society of Jesus' friars became famous as contradictory humanists. They adopted the Indians education but were intransigent with their original culture. Soon they realized that women and children were easy elements to maneuver. Gilberto Freyre, in "Sobrados and Mucambos", emphasizes that especially for little *curumins*, they dedicated huge efforts, separating them from their families for the sake of offering them education accompanied by the side dish of religion.

Besides lessons, prayers and songs, children learned to wear clothes and shoes. Probably the first converted Indians, as soon as they got away from the vigilant eyes, left religion aside as well as their garments.

In the south, the Jesuits organized efficient guilds where leather goods were produced aiming at the Missions' self-sufficiency. They adopted the use of medieval sandals in leather, efficient for colony's life conditions. Models varied, with crossed or simple upper straps, the sole manually sewn to the upper part and fastened to the feet by ankle straps. Resistant and practical, they were the ancestors of a tropical footwear style characterized by open modeling. They have evolved little, preserving the intelligent simplicity transmitted to a whole family of Brazilian popular sandals.

The Jesuits fought furiously in defense of their possessions and catechized Indians. They were expelled of the south region for the first time in 1641, abandoning huge flocks whose descents would constitute an abundance of cattle that would supply the growth of the sector in Rio Grande do Sul some centuries later.

The Africans

Despite the differences among black cultures forcedly brought to Brazil, as well as among indigenous peoples, shoes were not worn in most of the African tribes. Anyway, the blacks arrived here dismissed of any material possession. Their abilities found expression only in learning the necessary occupations for survival. Many of them learned the shoemaking craft, surpassing and rivaling with those who taught them. It was their duty to preserve the immaterial part of their original culture and to adapt themselves to the new land's practices. Their contribution, after all, was great, not only in the ability of learning and developing techniques but also in the spreading of the custom of wearing shoes, because of the great social transit of black maids, as we'll see later.

Interesting stories speak of the freed black who adopted footwear, valuing its condition of free man, but that, at a time of military recruiting, deceived authorities by walking barefoot, resembling once again the enslaved black. After the signature of Lei Aurea ("Golden Law", the law that abolished slavery in Brazil in 1888) many people went out on the streets to celebrate. As shoes pinched their feet, they took them in the hands, symbolizing the conquered status.

The social rules of that time firmly restricted social transit, forbidding certain uses to slaves. But Chica da Silva, a black woman from Diamantina, in Minas Gerais, wore wigs, dresses, jewels and shoes brought by her white lover from the Portuguese Court, contradicting prohibitions and adopting European fashions, in a mix of admiration and mockery.

The Dutch

Led in its final phase by the hands of Prince João Mauricio de Nassau, a rich and ambitious scholar of German origin, the Dutch saga in Pernambuco has ingredients that make it particular in what was the civilizing effort promoted in Brazil.

Maurício de Nassau imposed himself, together with his retinue, during eight years at the end of three decades of occupation amid the patriarchal, misogynous and conservative society of the state of Pernambuco.

Differently from the Portuguese, the Dutch were interested in establishing a culture similar to that of their native country in the colony. It was Maurício de Nassau who made the urban planning spectacularly designed for the city of Recife, which by the time was nothing more than a wild land, a *fen*.

Nassau fought to establish a society of cosmopolitan habits, where Catholics, Jews and Protestants moved around. The bourgeois urbanity of Recife overshadowed the "feudal and ecclesiastical" Olinda (Gilberto Freyre, "Sobrados and Mucambos"), punished by the occupation war, with austere customs and inhabited by sugar barons and their families.

Of sophisticated and liberal habits, with taste for parties and dressed in the elaborated style of the 17th century, the Dutch brought artists and scholars to the effervescent colony. In the Holland of that time, bourgeois, capitalist and of a great religious tolerance, feminine condition differed in everything from that imposed to Iberian women, since Dutch women enjoyed freedom in public space, walked around the cities and were involved in commercial activities. The impact of this mentality in such a wild land shouldn't be underestimated.

Although the Dutch hadn't stayed long, driven away by Portuguese and raging Indians, the fact foretold, even though in a smaller scale, something equivalent that would happen almost two hundred years later, when the Portuguese consummated the completely delirious idea of constituting an European Court in the tropics.

Women

At first, it was only the indigenous women, described as natural beauties, naked and barefoot, as it has already been said. Then they got together with the Portuguese without abandoning their customs at all, covering the body only with rustic fabrics.

The Portuguese were mostly simple women. They wove, dyed, worked in anything that appeared, and many of them prostituted themselves. There was a higher and reduced class of European wives of the Crown's employees, for whom goods were imported from their countries. They were imitated by rich families' women, who ordered similar models to the local shoemakers. Pictorial records show them wearing Portuguese slippers, pantotles and backless clogs, like eastern style slippers.

Women's footwear followed the same format of men's, initially pointy and shaping the foot. Shoes were usually buttoned or tied with cords, and sometimes they would even wear a shoe of each color, according to fashion. But women's footwear never constituted great fashion or raised particular interest, since it had a purely utilitarian function, for they were not visible items, always smothered and hidden by the great volume of mantles. The most common shoes were pantofles

and slippers. Pantofles, manufactured in fine materials such as silk, molded the foot and tightened below the ankle, between two and four inches high. Like other fragile footwear, it was preferentially worn inside the house or in the Court. Slippers for women resembled the ones for men, with widened round toes and tightened on the heel. In many sizes, there were some higher, above the ankle, and other lower, similar to silk pantofles. Servilhas and overshoes or galoshes seemed more like slippers in leather, in the first case and leather strapped sandals, in the second case, and were mostly worn by ordinary women. Fernando Oliveira, "Vestuario Português ao Tempo da Expansão – sec XV e XVI".

In the mansions, the intimacy with white women allowed blacks maids to gradually assimilate the custom of wearing shoes.

When a wealthy man opened his house for visits or took his family to the apex of social events, it was a synonym of status for the families that also the blacks dressed like their ladies.

Black women were intelligent and skillful peddlers. Many of them accumulated money and adopted by themselves the whites' uses. As they didn't live imprisoned and walked around free of social moorings and domineering husbands, they modified the Brazilian urban landscape by quickly taking these habits to public life.

Gilberto Freyre, in Sobrados e Mucambos, points out:

The largest struggle was because of the woman, for whom street yearned for, but who the mansion paterfamilias tried to keep locked in the alcove and among the girls as long as possible.

Leaving home ...

... only for the Mass. Only in the four holidays of the year.

Little they appeared, even inside their own houses.

As a strange man got into the house, soon the rush-rush of skirts of women running away could be heard, the noise of young women in slippers with no stockings hiding themselves.

Generally, they all fought to dribble a predominantly masculine environment and the Church that ruled with a rod of iron, interfering in every subject, condemning the exhibition of "teats and breasts" and pursuing those who dared to show the feet, "teasing the stings of the flesh" – in the words of a pastoral letter by D. Antonio de Toledo in 1773. Shoes and sexual fetish, it seems, do have an old relation.

Basically, feminine presence led to the adoption of civilized customs, to the construction of comfortable houses. It required the importing of mirrors, fabrics, hygiene and, obviously, shoes. A shadow inside the masculine universe, women quietly molded a better Brazil also by the power of fashion, mixing up petticoats and European heels to spurs and machetes.

Sertanejos, saddlers, muleteers and Lampião

Brazilian northeast's interior lands, or sertão, were colonized by cattle driver sertanejos that sought economic alternatives and promoted the power of the Emperor and of religion.

Mainly in the northeast, they disseminated over the interior the saddler craftsman figure, skilled in the making of riding goods and occasionally shoemaker, producing for travelers and settling down along the routes of the troops.

As they settled over the backcountry, they moved away from the coast's habits and from new fashions and techniques. Preserving traditions, they knew how to adapt medieval, European and Moorish references, creating in the northeast a varied modeling and a wide range of extremely rich ornamental motifs, configuring a particular style and technical system. Their legacy for the formation of Brazilian footwear was great. Leather of cattle or goat skin was the main material for ingenious models, many of which were made directly on the feet. The craftsmen treated it with natural products. Instead of chrome, they used the bark of angico, a local tree.

The *cangaço* (a movement of peasant revolts in northeastern Brazil) was a circumstance in which that regional style found its maximum expression, both in technique and in evolution of ornamental patterns. The cangaceiro, ornamented from the hat on the head to the sandal on the feet, is one of the good fashion images generated in Brazil. In a perhaps involuntary allusion to the curupira, a character of indigenous mythology whose feet are turned 'back, Lampião wore his sandals inverted, leaving behind footprints that confused his pursuers.

Bandeirantes

The *bandeirantes* (members of exploring expeditions into Brazilian backcountry in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries) penetrated the country as well as sertanejos, but in a planned way and in groups. In the beginning, their objective was to arrest Indians for slave work and, later, to find new wealth as alternative to agriculture and to the economical activities disseminated on the coast. Their working method was cruel. They fortified themselves with the discovery of gold and diamond mines, spreading fear through the backcountry tribes. They usually left São Paulo for incursions that covered great distances, with different expeditions disputing the mines of Goiás, Minas Gerais and other areas.

For the heroic dimension that they were given in Brazilian historical iconography, they are represented wearing imposing leather boots, the Portuguese *botifarras*. It's probable that the wealthiest among them wore those boots, but this representation is idealized. They walked mostly barefoot, wearing wide-brimmed hats and cotton doublets with turtle neck to protect them from the arrows.

Anyway, they impressed the imagery of the time coining to today the romanticized figure always identified with high boots, a clear element of power and strength attribution.

The Gauchos

Since the 16th century, the presence of Spanish and Portuguese in the country's south, always in a constant animosity atmosphere, was added a bit of spice and many other complex characters in the figure of Jesuits, warrior Indians, Argentinean, Uruguayans and Paraguayans. With the latter, the gauchos, they divided imprecise borders, belligerently disrespected everywhere.

Difficulties with the Jesuits, distressing relationships with the nations to the south, revolts against the Crown and later against the Republic established an atmosphere of permanent war in the area. Indirectly, all of this strengthened the saddling culture and the manufacture of leather goods, destined to provide the war machine.

The animals that died in combat supplied raw material for a notable artifact, with something sinister but of great ingenuity, the colt paw boot. One of the oldest footwear already identified, present in several primitive indigenous cultures, it became common in the area. The colt's paws were cut off and the leather was entirely extracted and totally used, without amendments or sews. Usually, the toes of who wore them remained exposed. This way, the paw boot was worn by Indians, gauchos and muleteers. Some pulled it forwards, twisting it as candy wrap and tying the tip with a string, or a longer leather flap was kept, folded upwards and sewn with a leather thread, perfect for riding and for the gaucho, always an exceptional horseman.

The vigorous local industry of leather goods appeared under a wide range of factors, among them the production of *charque*, salted and dried meat for food, which demanded the slaughtering of a great amount of animals. Leather, almost a by-product of the *charqueada*, impelled the industry of saddles and shoes, probably underestimated in its origin.

European immigrants

By the early 19th century, finding alternatives to slave labor had become a priority. The country's economy depended basically on that kind of work. That radical dependence, together with the pressure of abolitionist ideas, contributed to the adoption of a new strategy. Opportunely, the Empress of Brazil was Leopoldine, married to Pedro I and daughter of Francis II, the last Holy Roman Emperor. Under her influence, negotiations that allowed the first German colonists' coming in 1824 were possible. They were heterogeneous groups and among them there were skilled professionals, skin tanners and shoemakers that dominated European techniques. The group that would have a vital importance for Brazilian footwear settled down by the Sinos River Valley, in Rio Grande do Sul, in the city of São Leopoldo.

They measured the customer's foot, adapted the last, made the model, manufactured it and sold it.
Jose Maria Carrasco, "Estilismo e Modelagem – Técnica do Calçado".

It's clear by the text that the craftsman had total control over all the stages of the process.

Brazilian authorities neglected the agreements with those

foreigners. Promises were not kept; demands were not satisfied, forcing them to reinvent their condition in the foreign country. They adapted themselves to local habits with ability and pleasure, mainly through the work with leather, an abundant raw material in the area.

About fifty years later, the Italians arrived. Also among them there were experienced shoemakers. Their activity in the footwear sector concentrated in São Paulo. A little later, English and Scotsmen would participate in the origins of great companies of the sector, also in the state of São Paulo, as investors and modern industrialists.

The European, particularly the German in origin, first as conqueror, later as immigrant, was the definitive element in the origin and consolidation of the footwear industry in Brazil. People from other continents and nationalities passed by or settled down and it's undeniable that this diversified cultural ethnic scene contributed to the national taste's width.

The Arab influence should also be reminded, as well as the scattered contributions of the Spanish during the colonial period, much more recently, when some experienced professionals based in the south helped to define technical rules and to establish quality standards for industry.

Portuguese Court

Under violent pressure in Europe, with Napoleon tormenting the Spanish and cannons pointed at Portugal, the Portuguese Court found an unprecedented solution to maintain the status quo: to move overseas. The fact is notorious. Colony turned into metropolis and the capital of the Empire was taken, all at once, outside its own borders. It's not difficult to imagine the impact of the presence of this characters involved in that saga on the colonial atmosphere.

As the Portuguese Court arrived at Rio, it was received with astonishment and celebrated by the delirious crowd; but, except for the relief of common language, it must have been a difficult beginning.

Social life was minimum and fashion updating inexistent. Something like the equivalent to one third of the population disembarked in the city that had less than 50.000 inhabitants, half of it slaves, most of it exotically dressed for local standards. Rio de Janeiro was little more than a warehouse in the way to the rich villas of Minas Gerais.

The local imagery has probably never got rid of the impact of that involuntary Carnival parade. Luis Edmundo, apud Maria do Carmo Teixeira Rainho, "A Cidade e a Moda", describes the city as " ... a dung-hill. Even the Indians don't feel good here". Under local balconies and glances paraded the king, the queen, princes, counts, barons, chambermaids, gentlemen and ladies, a whole gallery of European noblemen and servants disembarking in the Rio de Janeiro of 1808, the timid society, the unhealthy houses, the unpaved streets, the dirty city and, the worst of the misfortunes, totally out of beautiful stores.

The care given to clothes and footwear was minimum, "especially by women, on the verge of negligence", Maria do Carmo Teixeira Rainho writes in her book

If women, as we've seen, went out on the streets with slippers men's models, with fabric pantofles, more suitable for domestic use, or even with humble closed-toed wooden clogs, men still wore shoes that reminded the 17th century, described by columnist Luis Edmundo (apud Maria do Carmo Teixeira Rainho) as "*large clumsy shoes decorated with heavy and immensely huge buckles*".

Rio de Janeiro and Brazil in the 19th century

Since the Court's arrival, Brazilian society began a race to the civilization of its habits according to the European model. From that period dates the recrudescence of a common dependence characteristic of the colony in relation to the Court's standards and, in this case, of the whole Europe.

The English Maria Graham, who was here in 1822, proudly and exaggeratedly registered the frisson caused by her hat, in her own words "*copied in fifty different colors before the weekend*".

Internally, that dependence was felt among other Brazilian cities; Rio de Janeiro was a model for all of them.

Rio was then the empire's capital and what happened next would radically alter this scene, placing fashion in the center of Brazilian life. Investments came, money spurted out. In a relatively short time, the city changed. Public buildings, pavement, balls, parties, clothes, beauty products, footwear, still of English taste, but more and flowing from Paris, the city that would soon begin to dictate all the fashions.

Rio represented to the country what Paris represented to itself.

Wanderley Pinho's book, "Salões e Damas do Segundo Reinado", pictures a delicious scene of that time's society, endowed with an enormous curiosity for European habits which it unaware mimics and fuses to colonial past.

Royal parties: arrivals, weddings, coronations, retinues: the shining of noblemen as they boasted pomp, sometimes as a way to capture favors of the Crown – they gave models and incited imitations.

The work detects evolution and changes in every area, registering interaction architecture and habits:

To the progresses in architecture corresponded a improvement in furniture and in the interest in ornamenting houses – and all of that competed for more finesse in the customs.

It also registers the growth of French influence, including the product's prices that exasperated the English, used to have commercial control:

From some ports of France have been arriving slips fashions and decorations and trifles, cheaper than the English ones.

The woman becomes focus of attention and the admirable element that makes fashion cycles rotate. The texts of that time affectedly incorporate quotations in French.

Brazilian women could compete with the Parisian and even then they would win the prize, because they had the good taste to keep using' "le costume charmant que les Franceises on quitté pour adopter les longs corsets qui otem au corps toute sa grace".

Famous fashion pictures, produced to diffuse innovations, were printed in a vertiginous rhythm for that time's standards. It didn't take long since they left Europe until they fell in the hands of Brazilian women. With the slow rhythm of marine trade, and accepting the hypothesis that the woman of that time didn't differ so much from the modern woman, shoes, eagerly awaited, started to be copied and manufactured here.

The shoemaker artisans, masters in their craft, came to reproduce them more quickly.

Who, in the cities, produced the goods (especially the leather ones) to be sold? A certain amount of them, consumed by the richest layers of population, was imported. Another portion was made by craftsmen, free or slaves. Luccock, Rio Grande, 1809, apud Ligia Gomes Carneiro, "Trabalhando o couro – Do Serigote ao Calçado Made in Brazil" – Editora L&PM, 1986.

Debret, artist who came with the French Mission to document the country's habits, inhabitants and things, accurately registers, with a style worthy of the best fashion column in some passages, the taste of Brazilian women for shoes:

The European who arrived at Rio de Janeiro in 1816 could hardly believe, before the considerable number of shoe stores, all full of workers, that this kind of industry could be supported in a city in which five sixths of the population walked barefoot. He understood it, however, as soon as they hold him that Brazilian ladies, exclusively wearing silk shoes to walk on stone sidewalks in all weathers, tearing in few minutes the delicate fabric of the footwear, couldn't go out more than two successive days without renewing them, especially to pay visits.

The luxury of footwear is elevated to its full under the pure sky of Brazil, where women, usually favored by beautiful feet, develop all the coquetry natural to the people from the south to enhance them. The only colors used were white, pink and sky blue; from 1832 on, green and yellow, imperial colors that were used in the Court, were added.

Not only speaking of colors and materials, he detects the valuing of footwear in the whole social pyramid:

That luxury, in fact, is not exclusive for slave owners; it forces the rich Brazilian woman to make the six or seven blacks that accompany her to the church or for a walk to wear silk shoes just like her. The less wealthy housewife has the same expense with her three or four daughters and her two black maids. The mulatto woman supported by a white

also insists on wearing new shoes every time she goes out, and the same happens with her black and her children. The small merchant's wife lacks almost all that's necessary to go out with new shoes and the free black girl ruins her lover to satisfy this much renewed expense.

The Asiatic influence is also noticed:

However, this coquetry can only shine during the itinerary from the house to the church because there, on her knees over the carpet spread on the ground, the Brazilian woman conscientiously hides her heels with the dress and only abandons that position to sit down to the Asian fashion, that is, with legs shrunk under the body, habit that is observed in private meetings of the lower classes of population, which always sit down on the ground.

The handling with shoes, in the privacy of the houses, is also commented by the chronicler:

It is, therefore, exclusively in party days that we can see in Rio de Janeiro women of all classes in shoes; because as they get home, the slaves put them away and the room maid keeps only an already old pair that she wears as slippers. The same happens in the privacy of most families, where women, almost always with no stockings and usually sat down on mats or on caned-bottomed couches, usually have by their side a pair of old shoes that serve as slippers, so that they don't have to walk barefoot inside the house. In short, that waste of footwear by women that don't use them at home is enough to support shoemakers who, furthermore, manufacture very fine silk shoes of extremely sensitive colors, as we've seen.

Debret also observes and registers the origin and circumstances in which shoes were manufactured and sold then:

The Portuguese anglomania of some courtiers that came with the king's suite, and imitated at first by the rich merchants of Rio de Janeiro, made them have their footwear imported from London. But, as soon as Rio became the kingdom's capital, there settled German and French shoemakers provisioned with excellent leathers from Europe. As expected, black or mulatto workers employed in those shoe stores soon became rivals of their masters, and today all kinds of footwear, perfectly made, can be found in those colored individuals' stores.

The distribution around the city and a detailed description of the interior of a store finishes up the chronicle. Perhaps the best document on footwear of the whole colonial period:

By the time of our arrival, the shoe stores were located on the small Rua dos Barbeiros, first alley by Rua Direita, along the Capela do Carmo; in less than two years, this industry's progress took it to part of Rua do Cano, almost contiguous to

Rua dos Barbeiros, and today shoe stores begin to spread over other streets of Rio de Janeiro. The internal distribution of those stores and the harmony of the scenery don't vary). White, light green and pink are the exclusively adopted colors. The poorest ones, however, lacking glazed closets, present a simple partition in the back, which is also to hide the bed and a door that communicates with a small patio where are the kitchen and the place in which the shoemaker's slave sleeps. The picture represents the opulent store of a Portuguese shoemaker punishing his slave; the mulatto woman, his wife, although nursing a child, can't resist to the pleasure of spying the punishment. Jean-Baptiste Debret, "Viagem Pitoresca e Histórica ao Brasil".

All this fuss over women's footwear still happened by the beginning of the 19th century. Since then, the city of Rio has been urbanized, parks have been built and life has stopped being so private. "Good society" women and men start to walk through the Public Promenade and go shopping in the elegant stores of Rua do Ouvidor.

Machado de Assis, also a meticulous chronicler of the time, aware of the changes that happened in fashion, when describing Capitu for the first time, in Dom Casmurro, can't help writing down:

... she wore duraque shoes, flat, old, with some stitches made by herself.

Duraque was a strong and resistant fabric used in women's footwear, some models finished up with patent leather toe-caps. It's interesting to see how the material is mentioned in the text. If until then footwear occupied a secondary role in the visual group of clothing, with the life out of the houses and the still shy shortening of dresses, it won visibility and status, starting to be seen and commented.

Men's footwear, instead, from now on will accomplish the inverse movement, blending with clothes by color and economy of shapes, until the almost neutrality with which it arrived at our days.

In the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, with the appearance of photography and of the colored engraving, nothing would be the same again in terms of visual documentation (picture 45). As Gilda de Melo e Souza points out in her book "O Espírito das Roupas", from this moment on the reading of fashion in the past becomes reliable and the artist's imagination doesn't interpose reality anymore.

During the following decades, newspapers that had columns dedicated to fashion spoke of the latest international news and showed illustrations of foreign models; but, mainly, they dictated rules of behavior and usage. There was a big effervescence about imports and national production, according to foreign models, with a frenzied expectation for innovations. Fashion became a public property subject.

The understanding of the civilizing project that Brazilian society deliberately applied on itself is the starting point for understanding the directions that national fashion would take, from then on, moving forward until today:

The adoption of European fashion by the "good society" was Herbert Spencer described as "respectful imitation", for which tries to get the sympathy of who is imitated. As current fashions are always the dominant class' fashions, following fashion represented for the "good society", in first place, an integration factor that allowed members of that layer to equal the Portuguese aristocracy and the European bourgeoisie. But following European fashions was also related to a need of new distinctions, According to Frederic Mauro, the taste for European clothes "was related to the desire of differing from the black slave and even from Indian, of keeping the stamp of Europe, of civilization, It was mark of an unconfessed and unconfessable inferiority complex in relation to the European", Maria do Carmo Teixeira Rai Cidade e a Moda,

This dependence hasn't disappeared completely among us, perpetuating the system. Only recently it began to be questioned, making way for Brazilian creation.

The end of the 19th century also saw the appearance of fashion as we know it today, reproducible from the adoption of industrial system, sold at public stores, in linked to urban development and with even shorter renewal cycles.