

# Evolution of Fashion Over The Period of Time from Roman Era to 2000

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## ABSTRACT

Fashion is ever changing due to various reasons like societal developments, change in gender roles guidelines, search of novelty by consumers, psychological factors such factors. This paper aims to research on such factors as mentioned above. To assess a state of knowledge about the evolution of fashion and marketing changes on the clothing choices of consumers which will be highlighted by the help of empirical studies.

## HISTORY OF FASHION

History of fashion throws light on need and purpose of the development of garments, shoes and accessories, and their design and construction. The modern industry set up which is based upon fashion brands and houses governed by individual designers, started in 19th century with the Father of Fashion Charles Frederick Worth who was the first designer to have his label sewn into the garments designed or created by him.

Fashion started when humans began wearing clothes. These clothes were typically made from plants, animal skins and bone. Before the mid-19th century the division between haute couture and ready-to-wear did not really exist. But the most basic piece of female clothing were made-to-measure by dressmakers and seamstresses dealing directly with the client. Most often, clothing was patterned, sewn and tailored in the household. When storefronts appeared selling ready-to-wear clothing, this need was removed from the domestic workload.

The design of these clothes became increasing based on printed designs, especially from Paris, which were circulated around Europe, and eagerly anticipated in the provinces. Seamstresses would then interpret these patterns as best they could. The origin of the designs was the clothes devised by the most fashionable figures, normally those at court, together with their seamstresses and tailors. Though there had been distribution of dressed dolls from France since the 16th century and Abraham Bosse had produced engravings of fashion in the 1620s, the pace of change picked up in the 1780s with increased publication of French engravings illustrating the latest Paris styles, followed by fashion magazines such as *Cabinet des Modes*. By 1800, all Western Europeans were dressing alike (or thought they were); local variations became first a sign of provincial culture and later a

badge of the conservative peasant,

Evolution of Fashion down the history - A timeline of fashion

- Fashion in the Roman Era ( 500 BC – 323 AD)
- Fashion in the Middle Ages ( 400 – 1200 AD)
- The Renaissance period ( 1350-1520)
- Fashion during the period between 1600-1900
- Fashion in the 1910s
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- Fashion in the 1980s
- Fashion in the 1990s
- Fashion in 2000

## Fashion in the Roman Era ( 500 BC – 323 AD)

People in Rome dressed with a cultural bias – their clothing used to denote their social status, wealth, etc.

In Rome, the woman wore a palla ( a shawl draped over her head) over her stola ( a long dress). The Roman man used to wear a Toga over a tunic. The toga was a semi-circular cloth draped over the body and was a mark of Roman citizenship. The draped style of clothing was popular then and their tunics were as close to modern dresses as any.

## Fashion in the Middle Ages ( 400 – 1200 AD)

This is the period after the Romans exited England. During the reign of the Anglo-Saxons, the men and women used to wear a belted tunic. The women's tunic was ankle length and over this, a shawl covered their head. The color of the clothes used to denote the financial status of the people.

There were also clear distinctions between the garments of the rich and the poor. The rich women wore layers of dresses. The rich men wore tunics that were sewn up on the sides in contrast to the poor who had their tunics open from hem to waist.

After the Norman Invasion, fashion in England changed slightly. Clothes became more close-fitting and elegant.

By the beginning of the 14th century, men and women started to wear a different style of clothing, a big change from the tunics used earlier by both genders.

Women wore close-fitting gowns with long sleeves and a full skirt. Tight-fitting hose made of wool or linen were worn under short tunics by men. Older men wore long gowns with full sleeves.

Sometime later tunics were replaced by short jackets over padded doublets.

The Renaissance period (1350-1520)

This is a very important period in fashion history, because of the high interest in fashion among the aristocrats.

A lot of money was spent on clothes. It is said that Henry VII, King of England, spend a fortune on clothes and the aristocrats followed him in everything he did and spend.

Other than the aristocrats a new cultural order emerged who imitated the aristocrats in their clothing- the traders and merchants (the middle class). The clothing during this period reflected the social standing of the wearer

Fashion during the period between 1600-1900

Elizabethan era (1558-1603), Restoration (1660 – 1700 AD) Victorian Period (1837–1901), all these periods have their own place in the evolution of fashion. But nothing groundbreaking happened in changing the clothing styles.

Gowns for ladies and trousers and jackets for men – this was established as the dress code. Men's fashion consisted of buckled shoes, waistcoat, a shirt, and an outer coat. Seamstresses and tailors designed clothes for the aristocrats and everyone else followed suit as much as they could afford.

Marie Antoinette, Queen of France (1770-1789) dictated the fashion of the period that she reigned. Rose Bertin, the dressmaker of the queen had a lot of influence during that time. French Revolution of 1789, which overthrew the French royals, is a historical event that caused some upheavals in the history of fashion.

Another major development during this period was the Industrial Revolution in Britain (1760 to 1840). Textile manufacturing flourished in Britain during this period. Till this time everything was handmade – now machines took over production and tailoring. Knitted and woven fabric of fine gauge was produced by these machines.

The invention of the sewing machine (1790) enabled speedy and less labour intensive manufacturing of garments. Learn more about the timeline in the history of sewing machines here

During the earlier times, the common man was not concerned about fashion. Fashion was more of a cultural thing than showcasing a personal style.

Fashion in the late 1800s-1900s

In the late 19th century there was a revolution in the fashion

scene- a designer was born. Charles Frederick Worth (1826-95, Britain born but based in Paris) may be called the first fashion designer of the world – In all the period dramas and historical novels that I read the aristocratic beauties were all custom dressed by Worth. He can be credited with the start of fashion designing in the true sense.

Many other designer houses were established to cater to the members of the royal court.

Earlier the seamstresses were at the mercy of their clients and they decided what they wanted to wear but the arrival of Worth and other designers changed this scenario and the designer was able to dictate terms – which fashion should stay and which should be out was decided by the designer.

Corsets which were tightly laced at the waist and chest made the waist seem tiny and the hips were forced back. Hats and parasols were a major part of the elaborate dressing style of this period. Check out the post on the different types of corsets here.

But towards the beginning of the 20th century more practical clothes were preferred by many women and it coexisted with the elaborate style of dressing of earlier.

Fashion magazines started to be popular and influential. These magazines started to cover the fashion scene accompanied by photographs and this had a great impact to spread the word on new trends in fashion.

### **Fashion in the 1910s**

This period saw a major change in women's dress silhouette. The S bend silhouette that made the waist very narrow with corsets gave way to a slim and straight silhouette.

Famous Designer Paul Poiret (1879-1944) had some hand in this change. Paul Poiret designed the first outfit that a woman can wear on her own, and more clothes that did not include a petticoat or a corset. He came up with the famous "flapper" style which replaced the tight fitting corsets and voluminous skirts.

Another fad during this time was orientalism with pantaloons, turbans and kaftans.

Designers of the period: Jeanne Paquin (The first fashion show was organized in 1910 by Jeanne Paquin who is known as the first female couturier) Jacques Doucet (He made clothes with a fluid silhouette in diaphanous materials), Mariano Fortuny

### **Fashion in the 1920s**

This period between the two world wars is known as the golden era of French fashion. America started to be very prosperous. Other than royalty and aristocracy, a new set of clients emerged for fashion houses – wives of Industrialists, American entrepreneurs, film stars.

Women gained more independence and even got the right to vote and started to join the workforce more than ever.

The waistline dropped. Flapper style with no-waist gained unprecedented popularity during this period.

In men's wear also there was a major change. The formality of the past years was replaced by clothing that gave more emphasis on relaxation and youthfulness- sports clothes gained acceptance. Wide grey flannel trousers called Oxford bags became popular. Short jackets replaced long stiff jackets. Knickers and sweaters gained popularity. The tailcoat was replaced by a short tuxedo.

### **Fashion in the 1930s**

The Wall Street crash of 1929 had a major impact on the fashion scene also – the frivolous dressing made way for a conservative style of dressing

During this period there was a re-emergence of feminine fashion – to recapture sophistication and elegance in dressing. Ankle length skirts, evening dresses all became popular once more. At the same time, the girls started to wear trousers.

Sportswear was gaining popularity and women started to take an interest in sports and gained a more athletic figure.

### **Fashion in the 1940s**

After world war II everything changed in the fashion industry. A booming consumer society with the common man at the center stage emerged and changed the fashion scene in its entirety.

Mass manufacturing gained popularity along with ready to wear clothes. Many fashion houses in Paris had closed during the world war and they never opened. The fashion scene shifted from Paris to London and New York.

Handmade clothes became unaffordable to the now impoverished aristocracy, so fashion houses lost favor with them. Common man adopted factory made clothes.

The wealthy who had enough of austerity during the world war started to be interested once more in the elaborate dresses of earlier times. The age also saw the return of the corsets. Ready to wear dresses was adopted by modern women as they were deemed as elegant and modern.

Polyester and Nylon had just been discovered and this was revolutionary. The discovery of Nylon led to it replacing silk to make leggings and cheaper clothes.

### **Fashion in the 1950s**

High disposable income along with a booming economy meant young invested more in fashion than ever before, and in great numbers. The ready to wear mass market found favour and Brands like Marks and Spencer became great success stories.

American Movie star James Dean popularized blue jeans in the movie Rebel Without a Cause in 1955. A combination of T-shirts, Jeans and leather jackets as worn by him became hugely popular.

Another major change in men's fashion occurred in the 1950s

with the introduction of Italian tailored clothing with single-breasted suits, tapered pants, narrow ties and pointed shoes.

Film stars of the times like Marilyn Monroe, Sophia Loren, Grace Kelley, Marlon Brando started to influence the fashion styles of people. When they wore a garment in a movie that became an instant rage.

### **Fashion in the 1960s**

During this period ready to wear clothing brands established themselves as big players in the fashion scene.

Unisex clothes were all the rage in this period. The A-line dresses without much body definition started to be popular. Mini skirts came to be in 1965. Young working middle-class girls with financial independence started to be a major force to reckon with.

Tight trousers and brightly colored military jackets and patterned shirts were favorites of men.

Designers like Yves Sait Laurent came up with modern clothes for modern youth. Designers Andres Courreges and St. Laurent made clothes with the theme of modernism and futurism and space-age themes. Jeans started to be accepted as daily wear.

### **Fashion in the 1970s**

Vivienne Westwood opened her boutique catering to customers who loved Punk clothes in this decade. Punk was defined by ripped t-shirts, chains and weird hairdos.

In the 1970s there was a fashion preference for flared trousers. Hippy clothes with maxi skirts, wide-legged trousers (bell-bottomed denim), hot pants, tie and dye clothing, kaftans along with platform shoes, all were popular. During this time pants were preferred by most women.

### **Fashion in the 1980s**

Jeans became a staple in every wardrobe. Women of the 80s wore tailored suits with wide padded shoulders to the office.

Fitness was big during this period. Sports brands like Nike, Reebok, Adidas came up with athletic clothes and were very popular. Fashionable sportswear with tracksuits, training shoes, leggings and lycra / stretch body-hugging clothes became popular.

Madonna, Boy George and Michael Jackson were music icons as well as fashion icons and their styles were taken up by their millions of fans. Celebrities like Princess Diana also held a lot of influence in fashion sensibilities of the period. What they wore became fashion.

### **Fashion in the 1990s**

The main change in fashion during this time was that the glamorous dressy style of the early decades gave way to more simplistic styles. Fashion shows gained immense popularity.

Globalization led to international influences in fashion.

Fashion images spread through the internet and television led to fashion adopting international influences. You may hear of this as cultural appropriation (the adoption of elements of one culture by members of another culture) in a negative sense (misappropriation) or as global fashion influences in a positive sense.

### **Fashion in 2000**

In this century, the economy and profit drive fashion. Another important element is comfort. The very popular fashion style called ‘Streetwear style’ has its base on comfortable clothes that people like to wear. Read more on Streetwear fashion style here.

Till now the 5 countries which drove the most fashionable ideas and innovations were America, Britain, France, Japan, and Italy. All the rest of the world looked up to them for inspiration. But today countries in Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa are emerging as major markets for the fashion industry and fashion is changing to cater to these changing audiences and designers from these areas are gaining global attention.

Fast fashion, online selling platforms and shops, mobile obsessed consumers, economic uncertainty, ethical concerns and sustainability, emerging markets (other than the established markets in western parts of the world) are the watchwords of this century. These are the drivers of fashion forecasts of this period.

Notable Designers of this period: British designers Alexander MacQueen, Stella McCartney, Phoebe Philo, American designers Alexander Wang, Marc Jacobs, Tom Ford, Christian Louboutin (French)

To keep up with the latest fashions, people subscribe to fashion magazines, keep a keen eye on what has appeared in shops and what has been there for a long time, and go to fashion shows to see what the designers are putting on the catwalk this season, and therefore what will make it in to the shops. For the extremely wealthy, they might have their own personal relationship with a designer who will keep them well ahead of the current trends, therefore, many people wanting to know what the new fashion lines are going to be will watch what celebrities are wearing. Being ahead of fashion is for many, the ultimate achievement, although being too ahead of the fashion is just as bad as being behind it! If you are too far ahead people will think what you are wearing is not in fashion, because it isn't, yet.

Designers continue to market the importance they know people put on fashion, and people continue to hang on to designers' every move in the fashion world, therefore as long as this carries on fashion will continue to maintain its dominant position in society for a very long time to come. It influences not only what we wear, but everything we do, say, and even think. This is why fashion does indeed rule the world. Tania Machowska (2017)

### **Conclusion**

Research shows that 75% of Indian population have acquired a minor or major mental health condition that requires medical intervention. Studies proven that art relieves stress and depression. Creating art whether through painting, sculpting or drawing, supplies your brain with a much-needed break from its customary thought patterns. Doodling is a form of art that actually helps you pay better attention to things going around you. The beauty of Doodle art is that it's fun and relaxing. It gives you an emotional outlet, it helps to express feelings, even calm you down if you're frustrated, anxious or depressed. Doodling enhance creative thought. Doodling can actually benefit mental health, when we doodle we express ourselves in our work, and this helps to express anxiety and other negative feelings. It is a form of art and a fantastic way to aid mental health in people of all ages.

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