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Haute Couture: Historical Trends & Innovation

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Abstract

Haute Couture is a high quality of expensive garment Started from 16th to 18th century, royal class of people wore this garment common people not allowed to wear. Royalty women's wear this garment to look more beautiful by reducing waist and exaggerated bustle & Sleeve. To make this time taking process, Capable Craftsmanship and Group of artisans work on this garment with very fine quality of fabric & work done. To make shape for garment used corset for upper body farthingale for lower body.

Nowadays this haute couture garments used in fashion shows, Wedding Gowns etc.

This study included how to get fullness to the garment, Which fabric looks good for garment, shaping for garment.

Key Words : Fabric, Patterns, Designs Drafting, Modification.

Introduction

Since Elizabeth I, Queen of England, was the ruler, women's fashion became one of the most important aspects of this period. As the Queen was always required to have a pure image, and although women's fashion became increasingly seductive, the idea of the perfect Elizabethan women was never forgotten.

The Elizabethan era had its own customs and social rules that were reflected in their fashion. Style would depend usually of social status and Elizabethans were bound to obey The Elizabethan Sumptuary Laws, which oversaw the style and materials worn.¹

Elizabethan sumptuary laws were used to control behaviour and to ensure that a specific social structure was maintained. These rules were well known by all the English people and penalties for violating these sumptuary laws included harsh fines. Most of the time they ended in the loss of property, title and even life.

Regarding fabrics and materials for the clothes construction, only royalty was permitted to wear ermine. Other nobles (lesser ones) were allowed only to wear foxes and otters. Those lower in the social hierarchy were allowed to make use of other animal products in the use of their clothing, "Padding and quilting together with the use of whalebone or buckram for stiffening purposes were used to gain geometric effect with emphasis on giving the illusion of a small waist".

The upper classes, too, were restricted. Certain materials such as cloth of gold could only be worn by the Queen, her mother, children, aunts, and sisters, as well as duchesses, marchionesses, and countesses. Viscountesses and baronesses, among others, however, were not allowed to wear this material.

Not only fabrics were restricted on the Elizabethan era, but also colours, depending on social status. Purple was only allowed to be worn by the Queen and her direct family members. Depending on social status, the colour could be used in any clothing or would be limited to mantles, doublets, jerkins, or other specific items. Lower classes were only allowed to use brown, beige, yellow, orange, green, grey and blue in wool, linen and sheepskin, while usual fabrics for upper class were silk or velvet.

Fabrics and trims

The general trend towards abundant surface ornamentation in the Elizabethan Era was expressed in clothing, especially amongst the aristocracy in England. Shirts and chemises were embroidered with blackwork and edged in lace. Heavy cut velvets and brocades were further ornamented with applied bobbin lace, gold and silver embroidery, spangles and oes, and jewels. Toward the end of the period, polychrome (multicoloured) silk embroidery became highly desirable and fashionable for the public representation of aristocratic wealth.

The origins of the trend for sombre colours are elusive, but are generally attributed to the growing influence of Spain and possibly the importation of Spanish merino wools. The Low Countries, German states, Scandinavia, England, France, and Italy all absorbed the sobering and formal influence of Spanish dress after the mid-1520s. Fine textiles could be dyed "in the grain" (with the expensive kermes), alone or as an over-dye with woad, to produce a wide range of colours from blacks and greys through browns, murreys, purples, and sanguines. Inexpensive reds, oranges and pinks were dyed with madder and blues with woad, while a variety of common plants produced yellow dyes, although most were prone to fading.

By the end of the period, there was a sharp distinction between the sober fashions favoured by Protestants in England and the Netherlands, which still showed heavy Spanish influence, and the light, revealing fashions of the French and Italian courts. This distinction would carry over well into the seventeenth century.





A **corset** is a support garment worn to hold and train the torso into the desired shape and posture. They are traditionally constructed out of fabric with boning made of whalebone or steel, a stiff panel in the front called a busk which holds the torso rigidly upright, and some form of lacing which allows the garment to be tightened. Corsets were an essential undergarment in European women's fashion from the 17th century to the early 20th century. In the 17th and 18th centuries they were commonly known as "stays" and had a more conical shape. This later evolved into the curvaceous 19th century form which is commonly associated with the corset today. By the beginning of the 20th century, shifting gender roles and the onsets of World War I and II (and the associated material shortages) led the corset to be largely discarded by mainstream fashion.

Since the corset fell out of use, the fashion industry has used the term "corset" to refer to undergarments or shirts which, to varying degrees, mimic the look of traditional corsets. While these modern corsets and corset tops often feature lacing or boning, and generally imitate a historical style of corsets, they by-and-large have very little, if any, effect on the shape of the wearer's body. Elasticated garments such as girdles and waist trainers are still worn today and serve to compress the waist or hips, although they lack the rigidity of corsets. A corset brace is a type of orthotic resembling a traditional corset, used to support the lower back in patients with mild to moderate back pain.

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