

A study for the impact of impressionism period's coloring, style and mode on fashion designers

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Abstract

Impressionism is a result of scientific and social developments' influence on art and cultural movements during 1870's. Impressionism, as being the brand new and the most important development in art during 19th century, has represented the modern painting with a strict separation from former understanding of art. While other art movements of 19th century have been maintained the relations or bore trace from classical understanding, impressionists severed all these ties. Instead of observing the nature in a realistic manner, they used impressions of observing it on art.

Fashion in the most general sense, is representing the change. Whereas, fashion has been seen as the synonym of dressing, it involves all the aspects of human life. The Belle Epoque Era (1890-1914) that comprised a coy eroticism in fashion overlaps with the Impressionism period. It was a period characterized by an extensive freedom, economic growth and scientific development in Europe. New daily sport clothes and expensive night dresses were the source of inspiration in fashion. Trains and cars made it possible to spend time at the outside for everybody and new fashion styles adopted for social activities. This study is intended to analyze Impressionism Period's impact on fashion designers. The clothes of the period are going to be investigated from the view point of their color, style, models and accessories.

Keywords: Fashion, art, impressionism, belle epoque

1. Introduction

The opening of Musée d'Orsay in Paris led to the rediscovery of art in its more holistic sense in the second part of 19th century. It brought about the evaluation of not only impressionist painting but also very different movements including official and "demanding" academic tendencies from realism to naturalism in a truer and more complex way. Besides that, it is still difficult to define impressionism evenly (Bocquillon, 2005); since there appeared a need to make changes in painting in line with this discovery (Gombrich, 2009).

In the painting, lights were painted in yellow, orange, red and shadows were painted in blue green and purple. They did not use brown, black and grey hues which are not within the colors of the Sun (Olmez, Uysal and Yilmaz, 2012). While the approach of using lines was almost abandoned and it was replaced by colorist approach. In particular, the shaping of the colorist approach and quest which were acted from the second part of 19th century onwards happened after 1870. For the impressionists, the importance of nature in the first place and the relation with nature increased; and it allowed the first impressions obtained from the life and nature where movement and lights changed rapidly (Beksac, 2000).

Fashion was particularly a style at the end of 17th century. In modern saying, it is likely to define it as the way of existence, life and clothing way or style (Wuquet & Laporte, 2011). In the change of fashion, periodical artistic inclinations, mentality, belief, wish, need and similar formations are the basic factors comprising the existence and revival of fashion. Fashion has been a social, psychological and aesthetic phenomenon since the earlier ages; and it has reached to the current time within the framework of these features (Aktepe, 2012).

Cross inspirations have been encountered so often among fashion designers from the late 19th century onwards. As an example, Charles Frederick Worth, the inventor of Haute-Couture tailoring, expressed that he received some details for his creations from some paintings (Wuquet and Laporte, 2011) Fashion designers and artists were both contemporary people and friends. The values comprising the mentality of the era, the results of their researches, would change the mood of the period and the environment surrounding them. Therefore fashion and art was integrated (Aktepe, 2012).

Work of arts naturally reflected a democratized and gradually secularized community (Bocquillon, 2005). A distinctive feature of the impressionist movement was "restriction" and "simplification. This movement is a symbol of "freedom" as well. The love affairs of ladies with attractive clothes and womanizer gentlemen with a wig and frock coat became a subject for works of arts as well as daily life. Renoir (1841 -1919) painted parties and balls using bright colours (San, 2009).

In 1880, the founder of Haute-Couture, Charles Frederick Worth, making his name a trademark with his signature on the clothes he designed in the history for the first time and had the title of "Fashion Designer", made the clothe designers have a status and made them closer to artistic circles. Poiret founded Martin Decoration Ateliers in the year 1911 and brought a great many painters, fashion designers and fabric designers together (Aktepe, 2012, 56). He was dominant on Parish fashion in the second part of 19th century and it became the capital of designers. The creations of Worth had a great many components from the ball costumes to taffeta, velvet and to the costumes which were made of his mostly loved Lyons silk, even to the details like wooden beads wound with silk threads (Watt, 2013).



Fig. 1. (a) Distant view of the ball costume designed by Charles Fredrick Worth; (b) Close view.

The international fame Charles Worth attained as the person dressing elite group from high society and wealthy people was represented in this court painting portraying Austrian Elisabeth (See Fig. 1 (a)). Famous for her beauty, Elisabeth put an emphasis on her too slim body with a hard tied corset application. When Winterhalter worked on this painting, fashion historian James Laver made a parallelism between the extremity in his crinoline second empire which was an ambiguous period in terms of material abundance, extravagancy and morality (Fogg, 2014).

Braid: The bright hair of Elisabeth center parted in the front and crowned with twisted braid by leaving down at the back. The star-like diamond coated jewelry located along the braid formed a sincere crown (See Fig. 1 (b)).

Decollate: There is a deep decollate going downward from the white satin dress, starting with short, puffy arms and ending with a froufrou. The empress is posing in a charmingly with her naked shoulders and her head looking at the viewer.

Transparent Fabric: A layer from the tulle which a transparent fabric known as illusion or maline surrounds the corsage and volume skirt which are decorated with stars located to match the decorations on the hair. An extra part of tulle flowing from the waist.

Fan: It was rather an accessory used to court to gentlemen than using as a tool to cool oneself in hot ball rooms. Fan became popular after coming to Europe from the Far East in 17th century and has been increasingly used as a decorative accessory (Fogg, 2014).

High Victorian Era defined Krinolin and tight waists; Belle Epoque is connected with new "S" shaped, with a plain front swan beak or health corset (Fig. 2). The woman anatomy stands still routinely with an angle of 33 degree. During Belle Epoque, fashion was divided into two types of women: Those with a corset and the ones without a corset. The latter was a small group made up of people with free idea adopting the principle of Art and Craft act and having a desire for the universal empire line. Oscar Wilde was one of the leading supporters of this movement. Wild suggested his readers to take of their corsets (Watson, 2007).



Fig. 2. Abdominal Corset.

This era was a period of widespread and long-lasting freedom, economic development and scientific advancement in Europe. The alliance formed between Britain and France against Germany directed British and French consumers to the new stores of such designers as Jacques Doucet, Jeanne Paquin (Fig. 3), Paul Poiret and Locey, Lady Duff-Gordon. Such activities as completion in Longchamp, gambling in Deauville and hunting in Scotland by French and British elites became a source of inspiration for casual clothes and expensive night clothes which were desired by the lower parts of the social stratification. For the activities out of the offices, new style of fashion was adopted and striped blazer jacket and straw hat worn by Oxbridge sport clubs became so popular among gentlemen (Fogg, 2014).



Fig. 3. Afternoon dress, 1900s. Jeanne Paquin.

Some preferences in woman clothing was out of social standards. Showy dressing was regarded out of fashion in the main movement. These "Bohemians" were innovative people and would possibly go shopping in Liberty or Omega in London, Fornuty in Venice or Wiener Werkstatte from a small but innovative group where artist and designer worked together in an effective way in Vienna. Such famous artists as Sonia Delaunay tended to combine fashion and art; or they were influenced by mentality of Russian constructivist Luibov Popova and Vavara Stepova. These women became a part of this highly artistic experience throughout the first twenty years of the century. This new teaching started to spread in Europe. Some new movements emerged in Europe such as Fauvism and Cubism in Paris, Separatists in Austria, Expressionists in Germany, Futurism in Italy and Constructivism in Russia and they were followed by Surrealism and Modernism. Painters, poets, musicians, authors and architects created an imaginary residential place called Bohemia. It was a symbol of being free from the pressure of bourgeois, from physical oppressions. More importantly, the main purpose of the Bohemians was to combine art and design, presenting in to daily life with an application of clothes.

Opening the exhibition hall in 1903, Paul Poiret (1879-1944) was the first designer applying this dynamism in his works; he would combine the drafts and used them as surficial embroidery with an impressive color combination without depending on a complicated structure. The director style which he used at the beginning was followed by orientalist office for almost ten years. This style was worn over kimono-like jackets slightly packaged with Chinese, Japanese and Iranian motives, stretched tunics with transparent borders, furs and baggy trousers with golden fringes around the border (Blackman, 2013).

2. Conclusion

Impressionism is a movement of art having an effect on France in the first place and other European countries in the second half of 19th century and first quarter of 20th century. This new movement became dominant in the life of art in a very short time and it was regarded as a real revolution. Until the impressionist era, there had always been a change in the movements and in the way the works of arts produced. However, the era of impressionism was a breaking point and appeared as a movement against traditionalism. The whole was broken into pieces, the frame in the compositions was broken and colors became brighter and used unrealistically. It is likely to see the same breaking in clothing and fashion as well. Traditionalism changed suddenly and freedom became dominant in clothes. The puffy style was abandoned in clothes and they were replaced by straight lines. Corsets were not a whole anymore, they were considered as broken pieces and harming people, so they were replaced by free style corsets. Woman clothes had a change to reveal themselves; horse races were considered as a fashion platform. Fashion designers started to dress high society, royal family, aristocrats, wealthy women, "models" and famous people of the time. Woman clothing became a style with more embroidery, laces with attractive appearance. A specific line was determined for each activity and this case meant changing at least four or five clothes a day.

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