

preface

The business of fashion in the twenty-first century developed from two primary economies that first emerged in the nineteenth century: the establishment of couture centered in Paris and the rapid expansion of mass production technologies during the Second Industrial Revolution.

Where once fashion was determined by society's elite and executed by skilled tailors and dressmakers, by the mid-1800s, fashion had become a more broadly commercial enterprise, driven by imaginative designers whose innovative creations set the trends of style for everyone. For more than a century from the 1850s into the 1960s, the dictates of Paris governed fashion around the world. Through mass production and mass marketing by ready-to-wear makers, fashions that originated in the ateliers of the couturiers were disseminated to all socioeconomic classes. This was the democratization of fashion. And although the radiant influence—some would say tyranny—of the couturier greatly diminished in the last decades of the twentieth century, modern fashion is, more than ever, a commercial commodity, conceived by creative minds and mass produced for a global consumer market.

It is largely from this commercial Eu-

roAmerican perspective that this survey of modern era fashions has been compiled. The majority of images used as illustrations are of ready-to-wear adaptations of the prevailing fashions. The text provides corresponding descriptions and analysis of the key trends and style changes as they evolved decade by decade.

Each chapter has been formatted with introductory historical and geographical references. Chronological graphs at the start of each chapter feature highlights of historical events and cultural achievements relevant to the era. Selected maps show the shifting geopolitical boundaries of European nations since the nineteenth century. For those readers who have limited knowledge of world history, or wish a brief refresher of the topic, each chapter opens with a short overview of the significant historical, social, and cultural developments of the time.

The core text of each chapter is organized into sections for the dress of women, men, and children. The full range of dress is presented, including principal forms of daytime apparel, evening wear, outerwear, undergarments, sleepwear, swimwear, shoes, hats, jewelry and other accessories, and hairstyles and grooming trends. Key terms of clothing or accessory styles are empha-

sized with bold type. Varieties of garment silhouettes, constructions, fabrications, and decorative treatments are described in detail. To reinforce the accuracy of the descriptions, many primary sources of each era are cited, such as the fashion editorials of *Godey's*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Vogue*, *Esquire*, and *GQ*, to name a few, as well as quotes from the designers themselves and other fashion cognoscenti. Other primary sources include images and copy from period retail or manufacturing catalogs and similar fashion marketing materials.

Each chapter concludes with a review that recaps the key types and characteristics of the fashions of each era. In addition, chapter questions aid readers in reviewing the broad themes and important details about dress. Recommended research and portfolio projects provide students with ideas for developing a more thorough understanding of the trends in a given period. A glossary at the end of each chapter catalogs the terms of fashion with brief definitions for easy reference.

A selected bibliography is provided at the end of the book with the focus on material written about historic dress since 1800. The index is extensive and provides numerous cross references to more easily locate content.

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