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COSTUME DURING THE TIMES OF LOUIS XIV, XV, AND XVI OF FRANCE

BY

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

and

Historical Background

The purpose of this paper is to study the characteristic features of and reasons for the costumes during the reigns of Louis XIV, XV, and XVI, of France. In glancing through the volumes of authentic information written on Historic Costume, certain periods stand out from the others as being unusual in some particulars. The period from 1643 to 1789 in the history of France, is one such period. The interested person immediately becomes curious to know the reasons for such extreme, elaborate and eccentric fashions; and why fashions change from one reign or period to another.

There have been given by writers on the subject various reasons for change in fashions. Some of the most important of these are: Changes in fashion due to advance in civilization, climate, religious and political reasons, convenience, love of variety, and on the other hand, a desire to retain what has become habitual. Woman too frequently dress for men, and novel or unusual styles are welcomed. Imitation plays a very important role and it is said that "no fashion has ever been so

inconvenient, uncomfortable, and injurious as to prevent its being worn if initiated by high authority. Reason may or may not influence the leader of fashion, but imitation does the rest."¹ For example, a French queen's hair showed signs of turning grey and all the ladies of France felt obliged to grease and powder their hair.²

Sumptuary laws cause fashion to change. They are passed as a protest against extravagance, to draw a line in rank, and in some cases to force home-made goods upon the people. Painters have had an enormous influence on dress. Fiction and dramatics sometimes carry weight and introduce a new fashion.

Fashions of any country or period can never be studied as a unit isolated from the artistic, political, religious, and financial affairs. All are interrelated and so closely connected that an understanding of all is essential for an understanding of one. In view of this fact, a short history of France from 1643 to 1789 will be considered.

In May, 1643, Louis XIII died. As his eldest son was then only five years old, the queen, Anne of Austria, took complete charge of affairs at Parliament. She soon appointed Cardinal Mazarin, an Italian, to conduct court affairs. He was unpopular but ambitious and had a strong, foreseeing mind. The finances of the country were at this time in a bad condition, due to previous wars with Spain, Germany and Austria. Tariff

1. Ballin, Ada, The Science of Dress in Theory and Practice, p. 259.

2. Ibid., p. 259.

edicts had been passed to which the people greatly objected. Parliament was opposed to royal authority and on January 8th, a decree was issued in which Cardinal Mazarin was declared an enemy to the King and the state, and a disturber of public peace. Until April of 1649 the war of the Fronde was carried on. No one knew definitely why they were fighting, but in the face of bankruptcy and other conditions as bad, everyone wanted improvement. Eventually Mazarin was driven into exile and the prince of Conde established. In 1651 the queen sent for Mazarin to return, but at this time he was no more popular with Parliament than before. For the next few years he saw to it that all of his relatives held important positions, but at the same time allowed commerce and agriculture to be neglected and the navy to dwindle. At the immature age of fourteen Louis took active charge of the government and soon after married Marie Theresa of Spain, thus bringing an end to a war which had been going on for twenty years.

"The brilliant period of Louis XIV extends from 1661 to 1683, from the death of Mazarin to the death of Colbert and is filled with those stormy characters which the preceding years had produced: for example, in internal administration Colbert; in war, Turenne, Condé, Duquesne, and Louvois; in letters, Molière, La Fontaine, Boileau, Raciné, Bossuet, Bourdaloue, and Madame Sévigné; in art, Lebrun, Claude Lorraine, Puget, Hardouin, Mansard, and Perrault. Then the King was successful in everything; permanent conquests were made, great works were

accomplished, splendid monuments erected." ³

When Colbert became comptroller general his first task was to remedy the financial condition by putting a stop to extravagance; he reformed commerce and navigation and even tried to regulate thought and moral life. This absolute monarchy of Louis' gave the people "security, glory, and prosperity, in compensation for the liberty of which it deprived them". ⁴ The many wars during this period were so costly that when Colbert died in 1683 he was obliged to leave finances, commerce, and industry in about the same condition in which he had found them.

In 1685 the Edict of Nantes was passed by which Louis desired to bring his subjects back to the Catholic faith. Protestants were deprived of worship and ministers ordered to leave the country. A little later hundreds of thousands carried "industries, wealth, and bitter resentments" to a foreign land. War with England followed. It is said that toward the end of the war in 1695, more than a tenth of the people were reduced to beggary. Out of 750,000 people, there were not 50,000 who had bread to eat when they wanted it or anything to lie upon but straw. Louis soon found that his love of war had lost him all allies of any strength in Europe. In 1715 when the King died, France was utterly exhausted. His only surviving heirs were his grandson, Philip V of Spain, and his great grandson, the Duke of Anjou, then only five years of age.

Louis' one thought had been to establish his reputation. He had no intention of sharing his authority with others. Of

3. Duruy, Victor, A History of France, p. 416

4. Ibid., p. 429.

the fifty-six years from the peace of the Pyrenees and the death of Louis in 1715, thirty-two years were occupied with war. Never was there less excuse for wars, but Louis found war the easiest way of gaining glory. He likewise loved courtly and kingly extravagance and had a passion for building and costly fancies. The height of the glory of France had been reached and from then on it slowly went to ruin.

The Regency of this next period from 1715 to 1723, saw a progress and decadence going on at the same time. In the minds of some, humanity, justice, and equity toward the masses were thought desirable. These efforts were without results. About this time, John Law's financial revolution brought about a more favorable distribution of money to the lower classes. Low morality and extravagances were prevalent everywhere. A crisis followed and the nation was in a worse financial condition than ever before.

In 1723, Louis was thirteen years old and his majority was declared. The government went on, however, in much the same manner as before. A few years later the King was married to Marie Leszczyński of Poland. She was a gentle person of simple tastes, neither beautiful nor clever.

From 1723 to 1748 Fleury was prime minister and had complete charge of affairs. The King did not even feign an interest. He was busy gambling, hunting, making tapestries, or reading secret correspondence. The minister tried to set up peace and economy, as his aims, but for the most part the government ran itself. It is said that Louis saw some of the outstanding faults of the

times, but he threw the blame on the barrenness of conditions, or contented himself by knowing that the catastrophe would not come in his reign. During this period was a succession of wars, but the eight years after 1748, was the most prosperous period of French commerce in the eighteenth century.

Soon after 1750 decadence set in swiftly in France. All that Louis was now interested in at the age of forty was in getting someone who could still amuse him. Parliament and the people objected to the huge expenses connected with this task, but of no avail. From 1756 to 1763 was the Seven Years' War during which time heads of French armies and government were equally incompetent. France had shown herself a failure in all fields of endeavor and after this war, was in a pitiful state. The King who had started his reign under the name of "Well Beloved", was now quite universally hated. "The three orders of the State - clergy, nobility and plebians - were distinguished by privileges or burdens which made of the French people three different nations, each having its hierarchy and its distinct classes. Everything gave evidence of the frightful misery of the people. The peasants of Normandy lived in great part upon oats and dressed in skins. General ignorance among the poor was a strong contrast to refined education of the nobility. Beggars were constantly seen and low morality and corruption were general".⁶

The art and writing of this age was inferior to that of the preceding age. Among some of the better writers were

6. Duruy, A History of France, pp. 514-515.

Voltaire, La Mathe, Montesquieu, Diderot, Fontenelle, Buffon and Rousseau. No great statues or pictures were produced. Everywhere intelligent men were pointing out the future of France.

Louis XV died of small pox in 1774 at the age of sixty-four, after reigning for fifty-nine years. At this time his grandson was twenty-two years old and had in 1770 married Marie Antoinette of Austria.

The new King was already loved and impatiently waited for by the people. The youthful ruler in reality had pure morals, a narrow mind, but was so timid that he lacked enough force to make those about him carry out his wishes. Turgot, the newly appointed minister, was intelligent and capable and attempted to bring about reforms, but the burden was beyond the strength of both sovereign and minister. Incompetent men succeeded Turgot and financial conditions again became worse.

In 1776 France sent money and ammunition to America whereby the feeling of England became so strong that war was declared between France and England and the French were victorious. The success of the American Revolutionists made a deep impression on the mind of many a Frenchman.

Until 1785 Marie Antoinette had taken no part in politics. For some time she had lived at the Trianon where she had new amusements and pleasures which appealed to her. She had "made many enemies at court by her too exclusive friendships, and among the public by too great a disregard of rules of etiquette and conventionalities".⁷ She now began to take an active part in

7. Ibid., p. 531.

affairs of state, and toward 1789 became so unpopular that pamphlets were issued against her. Everyone seemed to be having one last fling. Even science under Lavoisier tried to apply discoveries to common and practical wants.

Through Louis' entire reign he tried, although sometimes weak and misled in his judgment, to do what he thought would be best for his people. Toward the last he gathered an assemblage of notables, one hundred and forty in all, from all over France to counsel and give him advice. It was the first time in one hundred and sixty years that the nation had been called on to take a part in the government of its own affairs.

The meeting, however, proved to be a failure, as all attempts at reform had. It did prove a big step toward the Revolution. Disturbances were arising everywhere and in 1788 Necker was recalled, too late to be of any assistance. The people in the end revolted against poverty and the absolute monarchy in which they had practically no voice.

CHAPTER II

Period of Louis XIV

(1643 to 1715)

We now come to a discussion of the costumes of these three periods. The first to be considered is that of Louis XIV, extending from 1643 to 1715. This period divides itself naturally into three parts. The first from 1643 to 1655; the second from 1656 to 1680; and the third from 1681 to 1715.

Women: During the early days of the regency, fashions were set by two men. One of them had large amounts of money and did everything for the sake of publicity; the other showed no good taste except in his selection of ribbon and fine linen. Dress at this time was dominated by the Civil War troubles. Everything, even fashion, was à la Fronde. There was a gradual transition from broad shoulders of the reign of Louis XIII to the narrow tight sleeves. Dress showed the masculine influence. The bodice was long and pointed and cut low and round in the neck. Some gowns were cut almost to the waist in the back and the shoulders were rouged. The bodice was finished with a turn down collar, bands of gimp or jewelled embroidery. Sleeves, set in a low cut armhole, were a series of small puffs increasing in size toward the lower arm. There were often bands of ribbon

between these puffs. The short sleeves had either ruffles or lace cuffs. "The outerskirt, which was raised like the sides of a window curtain, and fastened by clasps set with brilliants, or by knots of ribbon, displayed the sumptuous underdress".¹ All skirts and petticoats were extremely long.

In 1644 the Cardinal issued an edict prohibiting the use of point lace, gold, silver and copper lace, thus bringing ribbons more into request for trimming and decoration. In 1656 he issued another edict denouncing the use of bows of ribbon, called galants. For the most part these edicts were disregarded.

From 1655 to 1680 was the period of greatest supremacy, for as soon as Louis became the active ruler he was the example of sumptuousness in dress. Everything was elaborate and very gorgeous. Long, pointed wasp waists were still popular. The bodice extended horizontally over the shoulders often showing lace from the chemise or a lace scarf or a deep falling collar of lace hanging straight all around. This elaborately trimmed bodice was fastened either in front or in the back. Knots of ribbon were used everywhere and when arranged in tiers on each side of the bust in front, were called ladders. The very short puffed sleeve with large cuff usually allowed the longer and fuller sleeve of the chemise to show underneath. After 1670 sleeves lost their gathers and became wider and straighter.

The skirt from 1655 to 1675 was gathered in close pleats around the waist. It often opened down the front over the petticoat and was looped back showing its colored lining of watered

1. Robida, Albert, Yesteryear, p. 216.



1663 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)

satin. A trimming commonly used was an edging of another material and color put on full and caught together regularly by the use of jewels. The overskirt usually trailed behind or was carried over the left arm.

In 1664 Louis ordered the making of some body garments of blue faced with red and embroidered with gold and silver. These he gave to some of the nobility to wear. Throughout his reign he made it very clear to all of the lower classes, that gold and silver were to be used only by the nobility. The other sumptuary laws which Mazarin had passed he disregarded entirely.

Negligée or undress of a lady in 1672 was a black gown with a short white apron. At court or in full dress shoulders were uncovered. Out of doors a kerchief or cape of lace called a palatine was worn in summer and a fur tippet in winter. The name "palatine" was probably derived from the Princess Palatine of Bavaria who came to France in 1671 to marry the King's brother.

The dress which Madame de Montespan, mistress of Louis', wore at court festival is described as, "a gown of gold on gold, broided in gold, bordered with gold and over that gold frieze stitched with a gold mixed with a certain gold which makes the most divine stuff that has ever been imagined".² The fashion of transparent gowns made of black tissue or English lace, called "transparent" were in vogue for a few years. These were worn over gold or silver brocades. It was the peasants who paid the

2. Ibid., p. 126.



1668-1694 - Louis XIV
(From Challamel)

penalty for this extravagance and the nobility who ran up huge debts.

Lace was greatly used in a variety of ways. As a result lace manufactories were established by Colbert in 1665 at Alençon, Vallenciennes, Arras, Quesnay, Sedan, Château-Thierry, Loudon, and Aurellac by bringing lace makers from Venice to France. An edict was passed to forbid buying of lace in other countries in order to protect the home industry. All lace was hand made. In 1690 Beauvois tapestry works were established.

At the battle of Steinkirk in which William of Orange was beaten, the cavalry rode into battle with their dress in disorder and their untied lace cravats flying in the wind. Soon after, the fashion of "négligent" lace cravats was adopted, and all women wore Steinkirks.

Both men and women tried to shine in dress. The Court followed the dictates of the sovereign and everybody else tried to follow the Court. Fashions were so extravagant and changed so rapidly that many people went deeply in debt. It was often difficult to distinguish the countess from the cook, for everyone whether he could afford it or not, imitated the King and the Court. The Minister of Fashion for the latter part of this era of royal splendor was Langleé, son of the Queen's lady-in-waiting. He had fashion dolls sent to Vienna, Italy, and England so that French fashions would be more widely known.

Until 1680 there was an uninterrupted procession of elegant women whom the King favored. All of these women had a



1669 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)

passing influence on fashion.

Plainness characterized the period from 1683 to 1700, after Louis had passed under the spiritual influence of Mme. de Maintenon. Fashion as well as the King turned to devotion and solemnity. Lace, ribbons, embroideries and floral designs almost entirely disappeared. Flounces were popular skirt ornaments. One kind, called the "pretintaille" was a large piece of material applied at the bottom of the silk skirt. Women often wore two skirts under their dress, which counting the dress, made three skirts. Each one had a special name: the top one was called modesty, the bottom one, the secret, and the middle one, the rascal. The length of the train of the underskirt was determined by the wearer's rank, the Queen's being longest.

Louis gradually grew tired of drabness of costumes and in 1697 asked that the court and himself be as magnificent as possible at the Duke of Burgundy's wedding. His desires were carried out to the last degree. From then on fashions tended again to become more affected and overornamented. Large cut out patterns and flounces laid on to skirts of a different color, made the dress extremely heavy. The term manteau was applied to the exterior petticoat or skirt of the robe which was gathered up behind. The bustle was placed under this manteau and was made of gummed linen. It became known as the criarde for the stiffness caused it to crackle. The petticoat was decorated with rows of pleated silk or lace and stripes of various colors. After 1700 sleeves were close fitting. One kind of sleeve covering the arm was called the "Jansenist" in reference to the severe morals of



1680 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)



1680 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)

Port Royalists who were always objecting to insufficient or light clothing.

From 1643 to 1715 there were a variety of materials and colors worn.

About 1650 dresses of muslin or lawn with bunches of flowers painted or printed on were worn over an underdress of bright-tinted moiré satin. Velour and a silk material called brocatel, with little color and silver designs, were also used. During the most brilliant part of the reign, materials were magnificent in both color and texture. Gold cloth was worn by the monarch and his favorites only. Rich, heavy, brocaded silks were popular. Other materials included printed and embroidered linens, gauze, transparent black velvets, and satins. To supply silk for these materials white silkworms were brought into France from northern Italy, and a silk industry established at Lyons.

For the tradewomen and others of the working class, Dutch camlet, a mixture of silk and wool, ferrandine, made of silk and cotton, and serge were used. A thin grey colored material called "grisette" was also commonly seen.

Toward the end of the century, plain colored materials with very little embroidery were in vogue. Louis had created rules classing the materials by seasons. In autumn and spring one could wear almost any light weight materials; in winter, ratiné, velour, and satin; in summer, taffeta. Colors included black, grey, yellow, blue, green, and all shades of red. White was worn by widows.

The last sumptuary law of which there is any record was



Court Dress 1687 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)

passed in 1708 and prohibited the use of gold to all persons. It was disregarded as usual. "It is worthy of notice, however, that gold and silver were never less used in the decoration of civil costume than after the statutes had ceased to denounce the employment of them."³

Hairdress and headgear was considered a part of the dress, and much attention was given to it.

During the early part of the period the hair was pulled straight back into a coil behind. Side locks resembling corkscrews hung over the ears. Jewels, aigrettes, flowers, lace and ribbons were worn in the hair. Flowers were sometimes stuck in glass bottles and filled with water and hidden in their curls. About 1671 the hair was cut fairly short and curled all over the head. A few years later it was worn in close curls around the forehead and was called a bullhead. A white gauze veil was often worn over the back of the hair.

Until this time women hairdressers were the only kind known, but now a man named Champagne established a reputation as a ladies' hairdresser. In 1671 a woman who had succeeded Champagne brought into fashion a style of hairdress called hur-luberlu, meaning inconsistent or thoughtless. This received the name of à la Maintenon and had long ringlets hanging down the sides.

One day in 1680 at a royal hunting party, Duchess de Fontange, the King's favorite, caused a revolution in head dress

3. Planché, James R., A Cyclopedia of Costume, p: 315.



Hunting dress 1695 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)

due to a very simple incident. Her hair fell down after the wind had blown off her hat. She used her ribbon garter to tie her hair, putting the rosette in front. Hair dressed à la Fontange became the rage. It kept increasing in height until it measured two feet. Laces and ribbons were added to it. The caps of lace or lawn covered the back of the head and rose in front in several tall wired tiers. This hair dress reached its climax about 1700. Wired-out side curls and powder were also popular.

Until 1690 bare heads were fashionable except for loose kerchiefs and bands. For riding many ladies used a mannish hat. A full cape-like cloak was used as an outer garment. A little later hats worn had brims turned up on three sides and many feathers.

With the exception of a few months during this reign, head gears had been enormous. One day in 1714, two Englishwomen were presented at Court in France in low headdresses. Almost immediately the use of high headdresses was discontinued. The King had wanted this change made but had been unable to bring it about. The hair was brushed straight back from the forehead over a pad. This continued in style during the reign of Louis XV.

Shoes were made with very high (six inches at the highest) narrow heels sometimes of beechwood. They were in various colors, red heels being worn by people of high rank. The vamps were made of silk or fine skin, and trimmed with gold or silver buckles.

4. Robida, op. cit., p. 130.



Lady of Rank 1696 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)

set with jewels. The buckles frequently cost more than the shoe. "Small feet were considered the thing, and many women bound theirs with bands of hair to make them smaller; this, in connection with very high heels and tight lacing, made the women so uncomfortable that they often fainted."⁵ About 1690, long feet became fashionable so toes of shoes were long and square far exceeding the size of the foot. High heeled mules covering only the front part of the foot were popular.

Stockings usually matched the color of the dress and were either plain or embroidered. At the beginning of the eighteenth century nearly four hundred stocking looms were in use at Orleans. Stockings of one color with clocks of another were sometimes seen.

Long elbow gloves of kid and mittens of netted silk were introduced generally at this time, whereas formerly they had been of leather badly shaped and worn only by men. Dog skin was also used for making gloves as it was soft to the touch.

Lingerie consisted of lace fichus, aprons, and morning wrappers. "Underclothes and chemises were made of fine material from the Dutch provinces. The sleeves were long, sometimes embroidered and had little lace trimming at the bottom."⁶ Toward the end of the reign, expensive lace aprons were worn. These were only worn inside the house and for walks in the garden. Bloomers were made of batiste and were very stiffly starched.

Chenille, knots of ribbon and buttons were used abundantly. The buttons were large jet or enamel ones sometimes set with

5. Sage, Elizabeth, A Study of Costume, p. 132.

6. Giaffferri, Paul L.V. de marquis, L'Histoire du Costume Feminin Francais, from the French by M. A. Ziebarth, p. 60.



1708 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)

diamonds. Toward the end of the seventeenth century they were made of the same material as the garment. Face patches made of black silk, velvet, or taffeta in a variety of shapes were worn. This custom probably arose from the desire to conceal pimples on the face. Trinkets of all kinds were used including canes, muffs on which pet dogs were carried, pearl necklaces, either real or artificial, scarves, personal snuff boxes, etc. Square watches with a looking glass at the back were seen. All women, including the queen Mother used face masks until about 1695. A sweet lemon was often carried in the hand and occasionally put to the mouth in order to redden the lips. Actresses became popular and many of these bits of fashion were taken from operas and other stage productions. Portrait painting for a time during this period was the rage.

Tight stays were adopted by the ladies and to conceal their discomfort fans were in constant use, both in winter and in summer. These were gorgeous affairs painted and mounted in wood, mother-of-pearl, ivory, steel, or gold.

Men: During the 'forties, fashions for men showed the doublet and pointed waistline. Sleeves either fit closely or were full to the elbow and close fitting below. Slashing the material at the back and front was characteristic. The doublet was sometimes left partially unbuttoned to show the shirt. This opening was often provided with buttons down the center back. The jerkin gradually became less popular. Wide, tubular breeches were seen at this time. Ribbon loops were used over the entire outfit in profusion. Ruffs were worn but were quite limp.



1643 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)

Men's dress as the period advanced became more frivolous. The breeches called petticoat breeches or rhingraves were full and plaited at the waist, reaching nearly to the knees. This fashion was set by Comte de Salm who had the title Rhingrave, agent in France of the Government of the United Provinces. The breeches were made of silk, satin or velvet, ruffled and trimmed with embroidery. The short coat was worn over a linen shirt. The cravat was of lace and the sleeves had deep ruffles of lace at the hand. Rosettes of ribbon were a popular trimming.

In 1660, fashions for men underwent a change. The doublet disappeared and the forerunner of the present frock coat made its appearance. It buttoned up the front to the neck. The long sleeves had flowing cuffs below which were seen the full ruffled linen shirt sleeve. The vest was long, straight and decorated. Petticoat breeches were still being worn. At first the new coat was straight and waistless and reached only to the middle of the thigh. Both vest and coat soon lengthened, however. About 1675 the long cravat worn was of lace or muslin. Scarves and sashes were also worn.

Soon after 1680 buttons took the place of ribbons and tight, short breeches gartered at the knee, took the place of rhingraves. Everything was reduced in size except wigs and coat sleeves. The coatskirt was slit up behind and on either hip. These openings were usually provided with buttons. In 1690 the coat now fitted to the waist was often worn without a vest. It was full skirted and gathered on both sides "into a fan-shaped group of pleats radiating from the button on the hip



Louis XIV in 1664
(From Lacy)



A noble 1670 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)

(the origin of the buttons at the back of our modern tail-coats)⁷". Both coat and vest were collarless and both had ornamented bulky sleeves. Plain close fitting breeches fastened at the side of the knee with a button or buckle were popular. The Steinkirk which has been previously mentioned was a cravat with loosely twisted ends tucked through a buttonhole of coat or vest.

Since wars were almost constant during Louis XIV's reign, the military costume was quite prevalent in civil life after 1670. It consisted of a jacket and vest at first worn with rhingraves. Over the jacket and vest was worn the shoulder belt from which hung the sword.

During this century the night gown with sleeves open to the elbow came into existence. It was used with satin slippers and a velvet cap and was worn in the study when reading or writing a love letter.

The first fashion books were brought out by the King at this time for the benefit of men at court. Louis was often seen dressed in blue velvet trimmed with embroidery and gold buttons and a vest of satin in red, blue, or green.

Materials and colors worn by men were very similar to those worn by women. Among men black was a favorite.

The size and shape of the hat with its many feathers or colored plumes to match was another characteristic feature of the costume. It was often of felt or beaver, high and slightly

7. Kelly, Francis and Schwabe, Randolph, Historic Costume, p. 159.



1693 - Louis XIV
♥ (From Lacy)

conical in shape and flattened at the top. It had a straight, wide brim decorated with cords and feathers. About 1690 the tricorne was also worn, Round caps with fur were used for travelling and riding.

At the beginning of this reign the tendency was for the hair to lengthen and for the moustache and beard to become smaller. "Love-locks" pleated or tied with ribbon were popular. Toward 1655 especially among the younger men, there were seen many clean shaven faces. To appear in public without a cloak was not considered good form, but until 1685 the hat was generally worn indoors. After 1670 cloaks were no longer in fashion.

Periwigs were a very important feature of dress and were worn by all men after 1660. "By the end of the century the manufacture of wigs was so perfected that in spite of their immense size, they weighed only six ounces"⁸. The most popular form of wig had long curls which hung over the shoulder and often to the waist in back, the front being made with shorter curls. Each class of society had an especially shaped wig. The names given included comet, cauliflower, the ladder, etc. It was not until the end of Louis XIV's reign that he would allow his wig to be powdered; in fact, it was not until the end of the century that he wore a wig at all. He had abundant hair of his own. The loveliest wigs were those called lap-dog or lamb's wig, because they resembled the well combed hair of lap dogs and lambs. At various times blonde wigs, black ones, white or powdered ones

8. Racinet, Albert, Le Costume Historique Firmin; from the French by M. A. Ziebarth, p. 5.

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1700 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)

were in fashion.

From 1650 to 1670, low, square-toed, high-red-heeled and red-soled shoes were worn with white or colored hose. The shoes were decorated with bunches of ribbon. High floppy boots had their wide tops full of lace. Long close fitting boots and boot hose of strong linen were often used. Boots were usually larger at the top and then turned down below the knee. Boots and spurs did not necessarily denote a rider. After 1670 these were not very commonly worn. Buckles and looped ties of ribbon were popular. About 1680 shoes became tall and square sometimes turning over at the top to show the red lining often cut out as a cupid's bow curve. They were usually of shiny black leather and occasionally of a color, and for men as well as for women, long shoes were in vogue toward the end of the century. With these, plain brown stockings with gold or silk embroidered clocks were worn. After 1680 cotton stockings often of rose color were used; before this, striped or variegated silk hose had been popular. The seams in the leg were made with gold-colored thread. Accessories for men were quite similar to those for women and just as elaborate.

In winter a muff was worn suspended by a ribbon around the neck. This was the first time it had been used as an accessory to the costume of a gentleman. In the early part of the reign gloves were often fringed and embroidered and had deep gauntlet cuffs or were fur lined. Later plain gloves were used.

The broad sash tied in a large bow and the shoulder belt



1704 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)



1705 - Louis XIV
(From Lacy)

were military fashions. Paint, patches, combs and lace handkerchieves were popular. Ear-rings were sometimes seen on men of fashion. Snuff and the snuff box were handled with care for a fashionable man must open and close the box with one hand and gracefully use the snuff with the other. Ribbon and jewelry were used to excess. Louis seldom wore jewelry, however, except in his shoe buckles and garters. A walking stick, enamelled watch, and tobacco grater were likewise carried by those who followed fashion.

It was during this period noted for its politeness, distinction, and elegance that the French method of salutation was created. One must bow very low with a sweeping, deep gesture, thus using the plumed hat to advantage.

CHAPTER III

Period of Louis XV(1715-1774)

There was no noticeable transition between the period of Louis XIV and that of Louis XV. Fashions were still supreme and very gay and remained so until 1760; from 1760 to 1774 there was a general decline. "Fashion said by moralists to be the daughter of frivolity invented a thousand new follies to do honor to its mother, and as though that were not enough, it re-adjusted some of the old ones which had been so long forgotten that they were once more charming."¹

Women: The pointed bodice with long wasp waist was still commonly worn. The front was either open and laced across over a stomacher or closed with false fronts. The bodice was often trimmed with ribbon bows and the low neck finished with a lace scarf or fichu. Elbow sleeves with puffs were popular, but for ordinary wear the long, close sleeve came into fashion again about 1770. Cuffs were very elaborate with gathered or flounced trimming. The skirt and petticoat were usually of ankle length or longer. The skirt was opened in front and

1. Robida, op. cit., p. 140.



Court Dress 1722 - Louis XV
(From Lacy)

gathered on the hips and behind. From 1710 to 1715 hoops and bustles reappeared after a suppression of about a century. These gradually became broader at the sides making it very difficult for women to move about easily. Another popular dress of the first of this period was the loose bodied sack or Watteau gown in vogue until 1740, seen, however, until the Revolution. This gown was named after M. Watteau, a famous painter who had often done portraits of women in gowns of this type. These dresses were often made of white or rose colored silk and were worn either open or closed in front. The gown hung over a panier, from the square neck, rather straight in front and with a deep plait at the back. It had no belt. Still another popular dress was the polanaise having rounded open fronts and curving toward the back. It fit the upper part of the body closely and the full skirts were looped by strings behind the hips. By 1770 bustles for the most part took the place of hoops.

"The leading characteristics of fashion during the eighteenth century seem to have been the panier and vertugadine."² This fashion of paniers was introduced into England by two English women who appeared in the garden of Tuileries wearing the farthingale, as it was called there. A Master of Requests, a M. Pannier, had died in a shipwreck on his way home from the Antilles and his fate was used as a pretext for giving a nickname to the panier.

2. Sage, A Study of Costume, p. 136.



Lady of Rank 1730 - Louis XV
(From Lacy)

Queen Marie Leczinska along with the King's mistresses, including Epinay, Pompadour, and Du Barry, set most of the fashions. In 1742 the appearance of a comet, led to comet fashions. One of these mistresses, Madame de Pompadour, patronized art, literature and the theater, which in turn made their passing influence on fashion. These mistresses helped to emphasize interest in all the arts such as lace and embroidery industries, jewelry, china, silverware, ribbons, tapestries, silks, and velvets, as well as fashions. An actress appeared on the stage in a panier five yards in circumference under a skirt of silver gauze. Actresses were also included among the queens of fashion as they too received extravagant gifts from the King. Many people objected strenuously to the use of paniers, especially the clergy. Pamphlets were published against excesses in dress but paniers kept increasing in size. It is said that only three women with such huge paniers could sit in a theater box at one time.

Paniers on the hip worn throughout this period were made of circles or hoops of whalebone, of rush, or of light wood, fastened together by ribbons or lace. After 1725 a top skirt was worn over the paniers. By 1730 they were huge and were often equal in diameter to the height of the person wearing them (sometimes six feet in width). "In order to allow women to sit down, the arms of the Louis XV chairs were partly cut away. Edicts were passed forbidding the princesses to draw their chairs near that of the queen, as their paniers would interfere." ³ Two

3. Ibid., p. 136.

women walking beside each other took up the entire walk. As a result of the popularity of this peculiar fashion, whalebone trade increased tremendously. Flounces of lace or material to match the skirt were popular trimmings.

Young girls wore dresses of white gauze, or embroidered muslin over slips of colored silk. Sleeves were tight at the top and flared at the elbow, this flare being filled in with ruffles of lace. "Young girls did not wear paniers or trains. They needed only a few dresses, as they received their fiancées in the convent parlor, which they left only a few days before their marriage."⁴ Pinafores were sometimes worn.

It is possible to put sleeves of this period into three classes:

1. Short ones which reached to the elbow, finished off with two or three lace ruffles.
2. Those which were puffed out and then gathered in at the elbow.
3. Those which reached to the wrist and were finished off with fine lace and cuffs of embroidered linen.⁵

The farther one advances into Louis XV's reign the less good taste presides over fashion of clothes. About 1750 prominent doctors of Germany and England attacked the wearing of tight corsets. In 1770 a book under the title of "Degradation of the Human Species by Wearing of Whalebone Corsets" appeared.

4. Giaferri, op. cit., p. 65.

5. Ibid., p. 69.



1740 - Louis XV
(From Lacy

While this controversy was on, the linen drapers had made a corset of dimity having only a few stays, and eventually these were worn instead of the former ones. Corsets at first had been so tight that wide dresses were worn having an opening in the back so that the corset could be easily loosened in case of a fainting spell.

It might be mentioned here that certain provinces such as Brittany and other smaller districts had kept their native or more primitive costumes in spite of the frequent fashion changes elsewhere.

Materials worn during the first of the period were variegated satins, chased velvets, and plaid taffetas. Embroideries, printed silks, and brocades were also used. Later on India, muslins, dimity, colored cotton and linen prints, cretonnes, chiffon, laces with a net foundation, ribbons and artificial flowers were popular. Materials were rich and vivid in color. As the process of manufacture was perfected, cloth became less stiff and very soft. Softer shades were used in addition to bright reds and greens. Pastel shades were introduced but black was also used. In 1760 when dresses contained from ten to twelve yards of material, the heaviest materials used were flowered silks.

The working people usually wore leather breeches and shirts for the men, garments of coarse homespun and woven fabrics for women and children. Ratine, barracan, camlet, and drugget were commonly used by the lower classes.



A Lady 1757 - Louis XV
(From Lacy)

At the beginning of the period hair was dressed very simply and worn low. It was often parted in front with long curls at the back, which were partly hidden by a long veil or lace cap. Sometimes the hair was drawn up on top of the head and ornamented with strings of pearls, rows of diamonds, or twists of different colored hair. By 1770 hair dresses were of enormous size and very complicated in arrangement, so much so that they often remained dressed for a month at a time. The hair was sometimes a mass of frizzles across the front. Many hair dresses were one-half yard high, being built over a structure of wire. Hair dressers developed a great deal of skill and were much in demand for hair-dressing was considered an art. In Paris alone there were said to be two hundred engaged in this trade. Coaches, streets, doors, and chairs were no longer large enough for both paniers and head-dresses, and the ladies often had to kneel on the floor or put their heads out of the window to accomodate the head-dress. At the time when paniers were most enormous, hair was worn powdered and hats became unpopular. Rolls, bows, loops of ribbon, feathers, and pearls were used as decoration.

Caps were not worn from 1724 to 1730 except the "cornette", a little cap with long streamers. In winter the "bagnolette" was worn; for hunts and drives the grey or black felt hat or tricorne; and in summer the small shoulder mantilla with a frilled silk or satin hood attached was worn for an outergarment. The hood was held out by a hoop of brass wire and the collar was of lace, ribbon, or taffeta cut in a chain of flowers. The cloak for winter wear was long and fur trimmed in martin or Siberian



Lady of Rank 1760 - Louis XV
(From Lacy)



1760 - Louis XV
(From Challamel)

squirrel. These were called "balandrans". The fur trimmed pelisse, which buttoned from neck to hem, was often seen. Coats could be worn on either side as the coat was of one color and the lining of another. The camlet raincloaks or waterproofs were worn in wet weather.

Hose and shoes were not so very different from those of the preceding period. Heels of women's shoes were three to four inches high and white shoes with enamelled or diamond buckles were the rage. Pointed toes were popular during the first part of the reign. At court lustrous black leather shoes with red wooden heels were worn. Ladies wore white cotton hose with colored clocks; silk hose had gold or silver clocks. In winter several pairs of hose were worn for warmth.

In the line of accessories, sunshades of Chinese origin with lacquered handles were used. It was impossible to close these, but taffeta umbrellas used for rain were made so that they might be closed. Umbrellas for protection against bad weather were used by those of the common class who had no carriages, thus Parisiens hesitated to carry them. This probably led to the idea of inaugurating a service of public parasols, made chiefly for use when crossing bridges. The streets were so narrow that shade was provided by the buildings when walking there. Public parasols were made of green taffeta. They were at this time small enough to be carried by the user, whereas they formerly had not been. Princesses were allowed to carry their own sunshades if they obtained the King's permission. Gloves were often carried, but seldom worn. It was a custom for the girl to give them to her lover as a pledge of her love. Long silk mittens

were worn for dress occasions. They were also seen in taffeta and dimity, the latter for morning use. Purses were not so popular for women had bags sewed between their underskirts in which they carried trifles. To match the solitaire of men, a black velvet ribbon or string of jewels was sometimes worn about the neck. Ladies often wore a case with thimble, scissors, etc., at the left side of the waist. In addition to wearing of furs, it was fashionable to have a poodle dog, monkey, or some other animal for a pet. About 1730 red moiré ribbons were in vogue; they were named after books, songs, and daily events. Perfumed muffs were popular. Brooches, rings, and bracelets were worn by both men and women. Handkerchiefs were small and ornamented and used only for decoration. Canes and huge painted fans with ivory and mother-of-pearl mount were extremely popular. It is said that there were about five hundred manufactories of fans in Paris during the eighteenth century. All true ladies must be able to handle the fan gracefully. Among other accessories were patches, rouge, necklaces, gold needlecases, and crosses of gold filigree. Starch, powdered and scented was used for face powder. The first Indian shawl, or "cachimire" seen in France was imported toward the end of the reign. It created a sensation but no attempt was made to copy it.

Men: When Louis XV was five years old, he was shown in a portrait as wearing short breeches and long stockings. He wore a skirted jacket and peruke and carried a long cane and a sword. At the beginning of this century boys were dressed like their fathers.

As paniers increased in size for women, the length and fullness of the coat increased about as rapidly for men. These were held in place by buckram and somewhat resembled paniers in appearance. The long vest almost hiding the breeches was still worn. It was buttoned with four buttons at the waist line and left open at the neck to show the frilled shirt front and lace cravat. The cravat with long falling ends was held in place by a black velvet or ribbon bow called a solitaire, which was often a part of the ribbon used to tie the queue of the wig. The coat and vest were often elaborately embroidered. In 1720 trimming on the coat and the breeches were of the same color and texture. Large lace ruffles drooped over the hand and embroidered cuffs were common. Breeches were fitted close at the knee and fastened with buttons, but made full in the seat.

In 1760 macaroni fashions were in vogue. The coats were cut very short and both coat and collar were laced with corners cut off like a modern cutaway. Trousers were now made as skin tight as possible. A new cravat, a muslin neckerchief tied in a bow in front, was favored by the macaronies.

In 1759, M. Silhouette, Controller General of Finance, made himself unpopular by imposing several very heavy taxes. To show that his attitude irritated everybody, fashions suddenly assumed the character of extreme shabbiness. Breeches had no pockets, snuff boxes no ornaments, and even portraits were reduced à la silhouette to a mere profile of a head, and the word⁶ thus became established in the language.

6. Giafferri, History of French Masculine Costume, p. 165.



Louis XV
(From Lacy)

Brussels camlet, Neapolitan cloth, Sicilian druggets or smooth cloth were the fabrics most in fashion. The colors most popular were grey, cinnamon, maroon, dark lilac, and agate. Yellow was unpopular as it had always denoted Jews, deceived husbands and traitors.

Each group of men such as soldiers and doctors had a distinct type of peruke or wig which they wore. The type of wig most popular was that one worn dressed off the face, flat and straight across the forehead and tied in a queue at the back. A great variety of queues were in style. The hair grew higher and higher on top and in 1770 the Macaronies carried it to excess. In addition, the hair was usually brushed out or curled over each ear.

The small three cornered hat with narrow brim was the popular headgear. It was trimmed with flat rosettes of ribbon and usually carried in the hand so that the wig would not be disarranged. About 1770, the front peak of the hat pointed straight up. Fur trimmed winter coats were popular toward the middle of the century. Overcoats were usually long, loose, and shapeless. The redingate was used for riding and occasionally for winter wear.

Low shoes and stockings clogged in gold or silver were worn, the latter especially for dress. Heels were generally high and painted red. White hose were also worn.

Men indulged in extravagance and excess jewelry as much as women did. Gold, silver, and steel jewelry was all popular.



1740 - Louis XV
(From Lacy)



1740 - Louis XV
(From Lacy)

Jewelled buttons were used to fasten pocket flaps and turned back cuffs. The fashionable men of the period carried lace trimmed handkerchiefs, muffs, and canes, and snuff boxes beautifully carved and painted. Until 1770 the sword was commonly worn. Watches were carried in pairs, one usually being a dummy.

This period might be characterized as a pleasure loving, carefree and radiant period, especially from 1750 to 1760. Everyone did what he wanted to, and no one was scandalized by anything. That ever changing ideal of beauty at this time "was modified by the decadence of morals. To be attractive, one had to have Chinese eyes, a fine, noble nose or a daintily turned up one, a mouth not too little nor a complexion too white."⁷

Though Louis XV did not have the strength of character of Louis XIV, he was still the leader of fashion for men. He kept a court which in its brilliance compelled the interest and admiration of all other royal courts of Europe. In character the King was proud, timid and of a melancholy disposition. Louis had in him elements which might, with due cultivation, have grown into talents and good disposition, but they were allowed no development. He was careless, indifferent and utterly lacking in energy. He saw the evils which afflicted his kingdom, but it would have been too much trouble to try to remedy them. "Louis is looked on as a frivolous, selfish debauchee, utterly negligent of every duty as a King and a man, slavishly governed by a

7. Racinet, op. cit., p. 19.

succession of shameless adulteresses and the man culpable in all this because he was not without germs of higher things which he might have turned into better account."⁸

8. Freeman, Ernest, "Court of Louis XV", Bentley's Quarterly, 2:255.

CHAPTER IV

Period of Louis XVI(1774-1789)

During the fluctuating period of the reign of Louis XVI, extending from 1774 to 1789, French fashions passed through three distinct phases. The first was characterized by excessive luxury, frivolity, and extravagance. The second was one of simplicity and the third was characterized by the invasion of English and American fashions.

It was Queen Marie Antoinette who brought eighteenth century styles to a climax and in her time these styles began to decline. It is said that she created a new style every week, and her word was law to all the ladies of that day. At the end of her first year on the throne Marie Antoinette was indebted \$300,000 unknown to the King. Clothes became the Queen's greatest interest and frivolity and extravagance were extreme.

Paniers in 1778 became even more huge than during the previous reign. They were nearing their end and before going out acquired enormous proportions. Dresses were often copied from theater costumes. Watteau and Pompadour gowns were still worn to a certain extent. At this time Polish and Circassian gowns were also seen. These were first shown with paniers and



1780 - Louis XVI
(From Challamel)

later became long and flowing. The tight pointed bodice was again fashionable. Necks in the dresses were cut square and very low. Sleeves were tight to the elbow. The neck and sleeves below the elbow were trimmed with lace. The upper and under skirts were yet in vogue. Just before disappearance of the paniers, a short, close-fitting dress called Jeanne d'Arc appeared. It had a very low neck and short skirt.

Toward 1783 as the Revolution drew nearer, all evidence of the end of the old regime in dress was seen. All gaiety and paniers gradually disappeared together. Some authorities say that Rose Bertin decided they should no longer be worn and others that actresses refused to wear them. The Queen brought about the fad for peasant costume as a result of her love for rural life at the Trianon. The sheperdess dress and plump figure appeared. She organized her community of make believe peasants who acted and dressed the part of milk maid and sheperdesses. Every new activity of the Queen brought with it new opportunity for dressing up and the whims of the Queen were followed by the ladies of the court and by the world outside as the fashion of the hour. Simply made chemises of fine material were worn with the peasant type of costume.

At this time the real instigator of fashions was Mlle. Rose Bertin, given the name of Minister of Fashions. Whatever she dictated all women thought marvelous. In 1776 because of the Queen's wishes, a guild of milliners had been established with more than thirty members. Rose Bertin, a capable milliner,



1783 Louis XVI
(From Lacy)

dressmaker, and business woman was made head of this. From 1772 to 1789 she was the Queen's chief milliner and dressmaker. The queen had conferences with Bertin twice a week and fashions changed very rapidly. She had no family backing or wealth, but did have ability, energy, and resourcefulness. She became the outstanding fashion creator of Europe and even sent illustrations of her new styles to the courts of other countries once a month as fully dressed dolls. Her shop was arranged as a beautiful salon and her creations named from current events, great people, and characters in successful plays. She also used geographical names, names from classics, myths, and war heroes. Her influence began to decline about the same time as that of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette.

Dresses were still made open down the front over an underskirt of another color. For simple style of hair dress both skirts were often alike. The bodice became shorter and was buttoned up double breasted. The neck was finished with a bouffant fichu. Sleeves formerly tight and short were longer. Skirts were now about ankle length. Clothes were loaded with trimming of all kinds including gauze, puffs, bows, shells, garlands, jewels, etc. The difference between full dress and half dress continued to be strictly observed, as it had been since the days of Louis XIV and continued until the Revolution.

Because of some unknown reason, Marie Antoinette lost the scepter of fashion. Thus toward the very end of the period, France was invaded by English fashions. This is about the only wave of its kind known in the history of France. The typical dress included

Queen Marie Antoinette - Louis XVI
(From Lacy)

vests, jackets with waistcoats, and frocks fastened with big buttons, or laced. These had large turn down collars and were quite masculine in appearance.

Up until 1780 materials and colors remained about the same as the preceding period, but were given peculiar names. Colors were named for events which occurred and novels which were written. Such names as "canary's tail", "stifled sigh", and "lively sheperdess" were heard. One day a flea got into Court and the new colors were "flea", "flea's belly", and "flea's back". In 1763 the opera house burned and the new popular color was "burnt opera house". Materials were still classed according to season. Stripes of all kinds were used for men, women and children. Decorations consisted of gauze, lace, fur, ribbons, and artificial flowers.

In 1782 white was a favored color, and hand painted and light weight materials were especially popular. Dresses worn over paniers required many yards of material and the price of a dress sometimes represented a fortune. Other materials included printed cretonnes, colored and white linens, handpainted satins and chiffons. Violet, green, yellow, red, and blue were popular colors. The lighter weight and transparent materials included cambric, gauze, batiste, lace, organdy, embroidery, and tulle trimmed with pastel colored ribbons. Women of the lower classes wore an inferior kind of grey stuff.

Up until 1785 head dresses were so high that they seemed one-half of the entire body. A cushion or pad was put on the

head as a base for the construction. These pads were supplemented by cotton and wool foundations and masses of false hair. This was worn day and night for several weeks at a time and produced an extremely irritated scalp. Puffs were also in vogue. Leonard, the chief hairdresser, excelled in the art of making puffs and used as much as fourteen yards of material in one. The Queen established the fashion of wearing expensive feathers in the hair. These often cost as much as \$250, and were used only for full dress. About the most celebrated of all these absurd masterpieces was the one called the "Belle Poule". "It represented a full rigged ship on a sea of hair, arranged in rolling waves, and was designed to commemorate the victory of the Belle Poule over the English frigate Arethusa in 1778"¹. In the same year the Queen invented the hedge-hog style of hairdress. This was a bush of hair frizzed from points to roots, very high and without powder. It was held in place by a ribbon tied around the head. Hairdressers were kept busy figuring out new and more absurd ideas of hair dress. Another popular style was called "pouf au sentiment". It was an arrangement of flowers, and shrubs with birds in the branches. Butterflies and cupids flew around the garden. Soon after these came the Innocence, the Peal of Bells, the Milkmaid, the Bather, and others. There were caricatures of the period which showed ladies wearing these head dresses seated in Sedan chairs, with the roof taken off to allow the top of the

1. Sage, op. cit., p. 117.

structure powdered snow white to come through. These were not given up until theater managers began to object. It was then that an English style called "cadagan" was adopted. It was a wig similar to those worn by men. Powder was worn in the hair until 1789. To add to the difficulties, enormous hats were designed to be worn on top of these piles of hair, the calash being one of these. It was a huge hood on hinged hoops which made it possible to raise and lower the hood. In honor of the discovery of inoculation for small pox, Mlle. Bertin invented the "pouf à l'inoculation". It showed a rising sun and an olive tree in full fruit. Around this a serpent was entwined, holding a club wreathed with flowers. Later a mechanical wig was made in which by touching a spring it could be lowered one or two feet.

In 1786 Marie Antoinette lost part of her hair during an illness. As a result her hair was dressed in a child-like fashion with curls on the forehead and a small knot on the nape of the neck. At this time beaver hats were worn. Short jackets and straw hats were used with the shepherdess dress.

Riding habits were very becoming. The skirts were long with belts. Large brimmed hats were worn perched on top of the powdered cadagan plait made by pleating and looping the hair behind. The bonnet hat and demi hat were large and elaborately trimmed with ribbons and ruches. The turban hat was striped, plumed and trimmed with a gauze scarf. It is said that shapes of hats were changed seventeen times from 1784 to 1786.

The cloak fell like a dressing gown from the neck to the middle of the leg. In 1786 the large cloak with three capes

1789 - Louis XVI
(From Challamel)

called "Anglo-Saxon" was worn. It was closed with two rows of large buttons. When driving, a white muslin jacket, called a racing jacket, with white silk gloves was worn. Driving coats with large lapels and a triple collar, tight to the figure and long in back were seen.

In 1780 heels were lower and flat shoes were again in fashion. These were made of satin and silk and trimmed with large buckles. "Louis" heels also continued to be worn until the Revolution. Heels were now rose, blue, and white instead of red. Mules covering the fore part of the foot were made.

Rouge and patches were both very popular. Women were careful to place these patches in the most becoming manner, each according to her particular style of beauty. "The 'majestic' was placed on the forehead, the 'funny' at the corner of the mouth; on the lips of a brunette the patch was the 'roguish', on the nose it was the 'saucy', in the middle of the cheek the 'gallant', near the eye, as it rendered the glance either languid or passionate according to the fair one's intention, it was the 'murderous', while the fanciful patches, crescents, stars, comets, hearts, etc., were past counting."²

After 1785, metal buttons of every kind and shape often pictorially designed, were worn on the cloak. Both men and women wore two watches with long chains hanging from the waistcoat. Both also wore cravats, carried long canes or shepherd's crooks, and wore muffs. Every woman wore a large fichu above

2. Robida, op. cit., p. 172.

a squeezed in waist. Louis cared little for lace and embroidery and it was not seen a great deal during these last years. Open-air parties, royal parks, deer stalking, and country life gave women a taste for the rural. It was a period dominated by love of nature. In 1778 the first weekly fashion journal appeared, "The Linendraper's Journal"; in November, 1785, the "Ladies Cabinet of Fashions" was published.

Pearls set close together were the chief feature in the line of jewelry. Rings had square sets and many fashionably dressed women wore a bracelet of horsehair or straw. Rectangular shaped bags of embroidered velour or taffeta were seen. Fans and fringed umbrellas were carried.

Only the more extreme fashions have been mentioned. There were many women who kept in style at a safe distance, wore small coifs, modestly cut gowns, small hoops; had good morals, but still enjoyed themselves in a decent manner in this pleasure loving age.

Men: The State and Pageantry of the French Court was unbelievable. The guards who always preceded the King were dressed in gold and blue embroidery and their caps loaded with ornaments. The cushions in the King's gallery at Mass were crimson velvet with deep gold fringe. After the King returned from Mass, the Queen went in just as much state. Her guards were dressed in blue and silver with scarlet silk stockings, waistcoats, and breeches.

Louis started his reign by trying to install economy but fashions became only slightly less exaggerated. The vest

and coat became shorter and the coat now had lapels and a turn down collar. Breeches were tight and buttoned below the knee. About 1780, for ordinary wear, one saw a high waisted, double-breasted "cut-away" with pointed lapels. The ruffle often showed beneath the cuff. Cuffs reduced in size until they were borders to match the collar. Waistcoats were square cut, double-breasted and skirtless. From 1785 to 1789 fashions were very fickle. The breeches and waistcoats were nearly always striped with blue either vertically or horizontally. In 1786 the fashionable costume was a reddish coat trimmed with copper gilt buttons, the tails of the coat beginning at the hips. It had breeches and a vest of yellow cloth. The colored or white waistcoat was often embroidered showing marine flora, boughs of trees, sheaves of corn, etc. Most of these embroideries were done in factories at Lyons. After 1785 noblemen due to excessive debts were forced to give up some luxuries although extravagance still prevailed.

In 1787 formal dress was rather generally disregarded. A negligé was the popular costume. The French habit and froc were two variations of this. The former included a vest, a sword, red heeled shoes and a three cornered hat. The cravat was of fine batiste.

For riding, a waistcoat with wide, white and scarlet stripes forming large squares was worn underneath the habit. The breeches were of canary colored kerseymore and the trimming of sky blue. These garments although rather simply made were very expensive.



1780 - Louis XVI
(From Lacy)

Deep mourning demanded the wearing of a cloth coat without any buttons for trimming and without pockets. The front of the coat itself had six buttons above, two in the middle and three below.

Little boys were dressed in a type of sailor costume. The hair hung in long curls and a high-crowned, wide-brimmed jockey cap with a wide red ribbon was worn.

Materials for men's garments were similar to those of women's. Ribbed silk and spotted cloth materials were popular. There was no idea of pleasing color combinations. Every outfit was of many bright and sometimes clashing colors. Black was popular and chosen especially by those of moderate circumstances. Yellow was also seen a great deal. Brocaded materials and colored silks were still worn; also embossed velvet and herbage, a material of silk warp and cotton weft, with gold and silver flowers woven in; serpentine, a light fabric with a cotton nap; grograine, a strong fabric of raw silk; satin and twill. Stripes were seen everywhere. Previous to 1783 materials for men were plain in color.

Hair dressing in 1775 underwent a change. The queue tied to the back of the head was very wide and short. A single broad curl often ran from ear to ear above the queue and a broad messy looking crop of curled hair covered the whole head. All styles of hair dress were loaded with powder and pomade. The peruke began gradually to go out of style, especially among those having an abundance of hair, but high perukes were seen until 1785. In 1788 white powder was discarded in favor of fair and reddish tints.

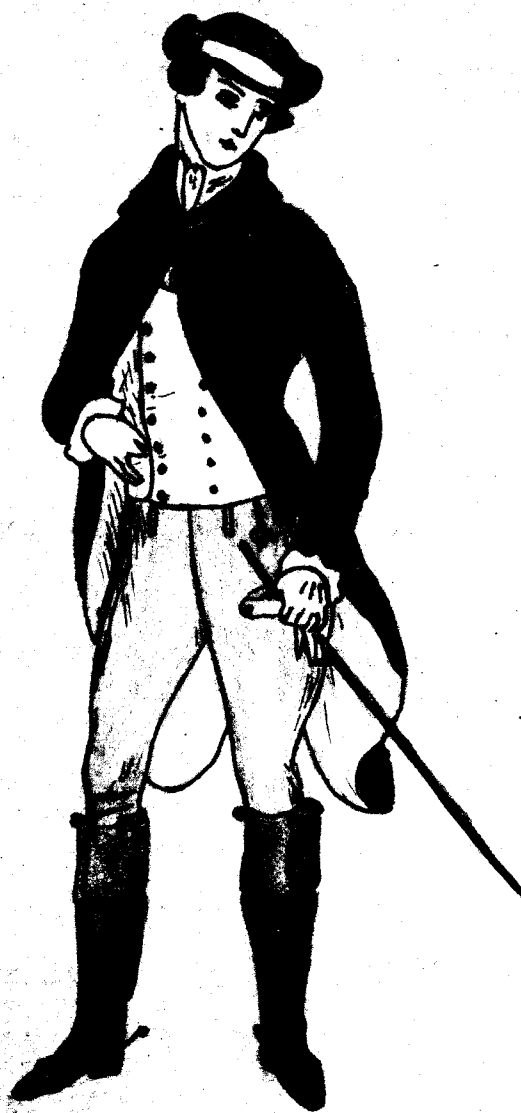
Men hairdressers were most popular now.

In 1785 the long redingote with several collars, or capes, the English dress coat, the polonaise and the braided coat were all popular. The lining of the coat was always of a contrasting material, for example, yellow under sky-blue material.

Hats were of many kinds. The more popular kinds included the three-cornered hat, the small round jockey hat, the Dutch and Quaker hats, having round crowns and wide brims. Toward 1785 a hat with a high tapering crown was worn.

For riding, high, black boots with yellow tops and silver spurs were correct footwear. For ordinary wear, stockings of wool, silk, or cotton, had wide horizontal stripes; low shoes and garters had large oval ornamented buckles. The shoes were long, pointed, and flat heeled. The black parts of the footwear were kept well polished and merchants sold a great variety of oil, wax, and varnish which helped to keep the shine. For "dress", red heels stayed in until the Revolution.

For riding a little whip and yellow silk gloves were carried in the hand. Two watches were often worn. From one of these hung a cord with tassels and from the other a plaited silk braid or ribbon with a long key dangling on it. Gloves for everyday wear were of light yellow chamois leather. Canes were of strong bamboo with black silk tasselled cord attached to them. Buttons of huge size with all kinds of pictures on them were worn. Ivory pocket combs were carried. Hair and face powder, paint, and patches were used as decoration. Men were experts in crocheting, embroidering and sewing.



1779 - Louis XVI
(From Lacy)

Louis XVI would probably have been greatly beloved in time of peace. He liked solid books; had a fine memory and was a real student when he chose to be. During most of the time, however, he was dull, easy-going, careless, and helpless. The customs of the Court established through previous reigns, still continued to make him nominal head of art and fashion as well as political government, but with less actual influence than had been the case under Louis XV or more especially under Louis XIV.³ He had good intentions but not enough force of character to put them into effect.

Marie Antoinette was at first very democratic. She was generous, genuine, and hated flattery. The decencies of life were more strictly observed in this reign than in the preceding one, and, as a result, costume in general was improved. When Marie Antoinette became queen she was a lively, fun-loving girl. She had not been educated and was ignorant on most subjects. She was fond of the theater, dancing and singing. She was vivacious, irresponsible, and could be charming if she chose. During the latter part of the reign the Queen became sedate, haughty, and resolute. She honestly tried to inspire the King to action but could not. Upon her all the anger, exasperation, and rage of the French people was concentrated. Extravagance and lack of consideration of the masses are characteristics of the entire period.

3. Nystrom, Paul, Economics of Fashion, p. 255.

On the fourteenth of July 1789, the Parisians made open display of their demands in the streets of their city, and gave the signal for the fall of a whole social system by their attack on the Bastille.

CHAPTER V

Conclusion and Comparison with Present Day Clothes

It has been said that every age suffers from excess of its qualities. Dress of extreme type has always been worn and has always been condemned by a certain group of people. They believe that women and the world are destined to ruin; but soon styles change, and all is forgotten until the next extreme style comes along.

Since before the time of Louis XIV to the present time, the rest of the world has worn what Paris wears. The world admires the taste of Paris in the art of dress. All of us are apt to think, however, that the prettiest fashions are those of today. It is very difficult to look impartially at present day fashions, and it is only as one looks back on them that they may be judged for their true worth. There are certain definite principles which one may apply to see if a garment of a by-gone day truly belongs to the realm of the artistic.

No dress can be beautiful that is not appropriate and appropriateness consists chiefly in graceful expression and useful purpose. Too often fashionable dress is in bad taste and opposed to the principles of good art. Dress should express the personality of the individual, that is, should reflect her tastes

and harmonize with her character. There are three general rules to observe in dress: (1) that it should not contradict the natural lines of the body, (2) that it should express the character of the wearer, and (3) that proportion of the dress should obey the proportions of the body. Every part of a garment should be for some definite purpose, therefore the more artificial a thing is, the worse it will be. A modest simplicity is always desirable over the gaudy, flashy, elaborateness of some dress. The line of the dress will usually show the character of the person to a certain extent. The round line unmistakably belongs to the rollicking, pleasure loving person; a heavy curve shows its wearer to be one who chooses above everything comfort and material ease. A garment must also be durable and hygienic. It should never fit so tightly as to impede the vital processes, should not be too heavy and should allow freedom of motion. Cleanliness or adaptability to cleanliness should be an outstanding characteristic of clothing.

During the times of Louis XIV, XV, and XVI clothes were for the most part artistic in an elaborate way, but at the same time artificial and unsuited to practical use. Up to 1789 styles were in general harmony with each other and the surroundings of furniture, architecture, and social life. There was a great deal of opportunity for expression of individuality in selection of colors, fabrics, types of ornaments, but in general every one followed the King, Queen, or mistresses with no thought of expressing his or her own tastes. Marie Antoinette expressed her

own ideas and the ideas of her day. The spirit of her clothes show her own grace and happiness. She wore light and airy fabrics. Looking at this period as a whole, garments and head dress were not hygienic or easily cared for and not in harmony with the natural lines of the body.

It is rather difficult to compare the cost of clothes under consideration to those of the present day. As has already been stated, the period from 1643 to 1789 was one of utmost extravagance and the cost of apparel extremely high. A very small percentage of the total population could afford to be fashionable. In 1923, one author gave \$200 per year as the minimum amount on which a woman could maintain a smart appearance. One would definitely not have been able to maintain a smart appearance on \$200 in 1750 in France.

From 1920 to 1929 women wore the most sensible, practical and useful clothes in the history of fashion. Within certain limits she chose the type of dress best suited to her needs and personality, a type durable and for the most part easily cleaned. One sincerely hopes that styles never again become as elaborate and artificial as those under Louis XIV, XV, XVI of France.

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