

Fashion and Politics in Europe

Far from being a marginal approach, fashion history provides a unique perspective on European politics. This særemne will look at how fashion can contribute to debates about class, gender, racial, and civic identity in societies and nations within Europe.

Specifically, this særemne will examine political aspects of fashion in the context of a broad range of countries and epochs, encompassing Revolutionary France, Victorian Great Britain, Nazi Germany, Soviet Poland, and Post-Colonial Cambodia. These five cases will open up questions about the political significance of fashion, the political agency of women through fashion, the legitimation and contestation of racial ideology through fashion, the economic contradictions of communism through the fashion trade, and the colonization and decolonization of appearances.

Fashion does not merely mirror political changes, but can play an active role in transformations and processes. While dress practices are ostentatious, they are not necessarily easy to read and can carry competing meanings, which makes fashion all the more useful to highlight a complex visual economy where political meanings and values are constantly negotiated and re-written.

Session 1. Introduction: Fashion, Politics, Power

Session 2. Political Significance of Fashion during and after the French Revolution

[Elizabeth Amann, "Blonde Trouble: Women in Wigs in the Wake of Thermidor", *Fashion Theory*, 13:3, 2009, p.299-324.](#)

[Naomi Lubrich, "The Little White Dress: Politics and Polyvalence in Revolutionary France", *Fashion Theory*, 20:3, 2016, p.273-296.](#)

[Richard Wrigley, "Revolutionary Relics: Survival and Consecration", *Fashion Theory*, 6:2, 2002, p.145-189.](#)

Session 3. Fashion and the Politics of Gender in Victorian Great Britain

[Diana Crane, "Clothing Behavior as Non-Verbal Resistance: Marginal Women and Alternative Dress in the Nineteenth Century", *Fashion Theory*, 3:2, 1999, p.241-268.](#)

[Shu-chuan Yan, "'Politics and Petticoats': Fashioning the Nation in *Punch Magazine* 1840s-1880s", *Fashion Theory*, 15:3, 2011, p.345-371.](#)

Session 4. Nazi Ideology, Yellow Star, and Concentration Camp Dress

[Irene V. Guenther, “Nazi chic’? German Politics and Women’s Fashions, 1915-1945”, *Fashion Theory*, 1:1, 1997, p.29-58.](#)

[Sophie B. Roberts, “A case for dissidence in Occupied Paris: The Zazous, youth dissidence and the yellow star campaign in Occupied Paris \(1942\)”, *French History*, 24:1, 2010, p.82-103.](#)

[Sofia Pantouvaki, “Narratives of clothing: Concentration camp dress as a companion to survival”, *International Journal of Fashion Studies*, 1:1, 2014, p.19-37.](#)

Session 5. The Clothing Trade in Eastern Europe and the Paradoxes of Communism

Judd Stitzel, “From ‘New Out of Old’ to ‘Socialist Fashion’: Patching Together an Alternative Consumer Culture,” Chap. 3, in *Fashioning Socialism: Clothing, Politics and Consumer Culture in East Germany* (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 49-77. **(To be found in Fronter)**

Mila Oiva, “Selling Fashion to the Soviets. Competitive Practices in Polish Clothes Export in the Early 1960s”, in K. Miklóssy and M. Ilic, *Competition in Socialist Society*, London: Routledge, 2014, p.71-88. **(To be found in Fronter)**

Session 6. Colonizing & Decolonizing Appearances in Cambodia

[Penny Edwards, “Restyling Colonial Cambodia \(1860-1954\): French Dressing, Indigenous Custom and National Costume”, *Fashion Theory*, 5:4, 2001, p.389-416.](#)

Katalin Medvedev, “Designing from Dumpsters: Cambodians Start at Grassroots with Fashion,” *Fashion Practice*, 2:2, 2010, 223-248. **(To be found in Fronter)**