

# Fetishism in International Fashion Industry

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**Abstract:** This study has been undertaken to investigate the determinants Fashion Fetishism as a mental condition may be defined as the necessity to use any object in order to accomplish certain gratification. The object may be some other body part, an article of clothing, or, less frequently, some more impersonal object. The condition occurs almost exclusively among men, and most of the objects used relate to the female body or female clothing. Long hair or the foot may be the primary object of sexual attention; cases in which a certain hair color or type of body blemish is required for sexual stimulation are also generally classified as fetishism.

**IndexTerms** – Fashion, Fetishism, Clothes, Silhouette, and Consumer psychology.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Fetishism is a form of paraphilia, a disorder that is characterized by recurrent intense sexual urges and sexually arousing fantasies generally involving non-human objects, the suffering or humiliation of oneself or one's partner (not merely simulated), or children or other non-consenting persons. The essential feature of fetishism is recurrent intense sexual urges and sexually arousing fantasies involving specific objects. While any object may become a fetish, the distinguishing feature is its connection with sex or sexual gratification. A diagnosis of fetishism is made only if an individual has acted on these urges, is markedly distressed by them, or if the fetish object is required for gratification.

The research paper examines on the theory that every common passionate response for colour, hairstyle, clothes, skin-show, shoes, etc, etc, has its bearings in the 'bond' that we as individuals need to develop in order to exist. She goes back to the just-born neonate stage, attributing the severing of the umbilical cord to one's need for bonding in life. Establishing these various bonds, at various levels, in various degrees results in one or the other fetish in a consummate manner and this philosophy is beautifully worded and illustrated in this paper.

## 2. Clothing fetishism or garment fetishism

It is a sexual fetish that revolves around a fixation upon a particular article or type of clothing, a collection of garments that appear as part of a fashion or uniform, or a person dressed in such a garment.

The clinical definition of a sexual fetish would require that a person be fixated on a specific garment to the extent that it exists as a recurrent (or exclusive) stimulus for sexual gratification.

One who exhibits a clothing fetish may be aroused by the sight of a person wearing a particular garment, or by wearing the garment oneself which can be because of the look one achieves by wearing it or the way it feels while it is being worn (and might also get some arousal by seeing somebody in it and imagining how it feels). In later case arousal may originate from the way its fabric feels (see clothing fetish by fabric type) or from the way the garment feels and functions as whole (restrictive clothing being an example).

Others with a clothing fetish may be aroused by the sight of such garments, even without wearing them and in the absence of other person wearing them, and may also derive pleasure from collecting them.

## 2.1 Relative prevalence of garment fetishism

In order to determine the relative prevalence of different fetishes, researchers at the University of Bologna obtained a sample of at least 5000 individuals worldwide from 381 Internet discussion groups. The relative prevalences were estimated based on (a) the number of groups devoted to a particular fetish, (b) the number of individuals participating in the groups and (c) the number of messages exchanged. The top garment fetish was clothes worn on the legs or buttocks (such as stockings or skirts), followed by footwear, underwear, whole-body wear (such as costumes and coats), and upper-body wear (such as jackets or waistcoats).

## 2.2 By garment type

Though almost any type of garment in theory can be the subject of a fetish, common clothing fetishes include footwear, female underwear and uniforms. A wide range of other garments have been the subject of less common fetishes.

Separate from fetishes as a paraphilia are garments worn to enhance appearance, such as tight jeans or other eye-catching clothing. The difference is whether, for the person concerned, the clothing is the focus of a sexual fetish, or is merely appreciated and found pleasing.

## 2.3 Restrictive clothing

Clothing that limits the wearer's movement is commonly used for this property, particularly among bondage enthusiasts and it has common appearance in bondage-related fetish fashion. Such restrictive fashion, among others, includes corsets, collars, and hobble skirts. As many restrictive items of clothing belong to women's fashion, male restrictive clothing fetishists can have problems in obtaining and using such items without being labeled as transvestites.

### Corsets

The training corset and bondage corset has also become a staple in fetish wear, particularly among professional dominants. A submissive or slave may also be forced to wear a tightly laced corset as a form of punishment or simply restriction.

### Hobble skirts

Lingerie Model wearing full-fashioned stockings, with an open-bottom girdle, see-through panties, and high heels.

A hobble skirt is a long, tight skirt, extending below the knees and often ankle length, which is so tight that it is difficult to walk in. When used as fetish clothing, it is often made of latex or PVC and sometimes corseted, to increase the restriction.

### Sneakers

Sneaker fetishism is another specific form of shoe fetishism and like boot fetishism it can be accompanied by a fetish for the material from which it is made for example the rubber which the outsole and sidewall are made of can be a source of rubber fetishism.

### Swimwear

Swimwear fetishism is a sexual fetish relating to swimwear. It can also involve printed or electronic material with swimwear being worn.

## Jeans

The style and cut of jeans can also enhance their sexual appeal to fetishists of either gender. Jeans without pockets on the back are sometimes viewed as showing off one's buttocks and therefore more flattering. Stretch jeans are often viewed as attractive because they have the appearance of being skin tight, while not binding like regular denim jeans would. An example of fetish denim would be "Zip Around Jeans", so called because their zipper unzips starting in the front and continues all the way to the back. Other popular styles include the lace up jean and multi button style jeans.

### 2.4 Material Fetish

The extremely complex subject, which is commonly perceived in the negative, is dealt with, with sensitivity by the invitee authors; the compilation communicating on a single cohesive platform. Illustrations and photographs sit well in tandem and one cannot escape appreciating the efforts that must have gone in, to prove the multifarious fetishes that have been concisely dealt with.

### 2.5 Object Fetish

Beautifully packaged, this paper illustrates more than 50 fetishes, covers a wide range of contemporary issues relating to fashion, fetishism and society and also includes a few short stories as well as designer work insights.

With great fashion houses now fading in the light of massive image dispersion making visible other practices going on in the fashion scene, other provocative and disruptive representations have started to come forth in a salient way. Such a context makes for a fertile ground in re-thinking the relationship between body and fashion artefacts. In constructing such a scenario her main endeavour falls on our encounter with the materiality of objects, part of it due to present tactile turn, from touch-screen to touch-sensitive fabrics, a tendency that builds-up our requests from objects. Now, design and adornments do not suffice, they have to be prerogative structures: they need a materialization that performs for us and dresses us in a performance to be seen by others concurrently. This is where the human quest for other forms of connections and bonds starts; unable to replace it, we will try to re-enact or at least to remember the primal bond of life." She thus accounts for the body to be something unfinished that always needs to find a counterpart, a kind of comfort zone, like the blanket little children hold on to, where comfort surely means something very different for each of us. At stake are the dress and fashion adornments, in their innate capacity to form and transform the body, the way they come to be meaningful to us. This "meaningful" as a personal response is where the idea of fetish gets its most powerful enactment from. And I must say, Edelkoort approaches a primarily human body through an exquisite use of fetish as an advocate for what attracts and drives us towards objects and imageries, along with their fleshy, sensed tone.

Beyond the preponderant sexual acknowledgement of fetish, which is an obsessive interest for particular objects, the curator's understanding of it bears a much broader sense based on anthropological perspectives that provided its terminology. The cultural practice and historical trace of its appearance ground fetish as the term used by Portuguese, fetisso, to name African cult objects that held magical power. Once ingested or carried, these objects could give people some extraordinary personal powers and were capable of healing the body. To extrapolate, the objects become animated, filled/fuelled with energy. There is a catch to it, nonetheless: also according to anthropological suppositions, the way the body was dressed also combined an

essentially magic feature, with pieces of clothing having different roles in order to attract positive animist energies and to guard the individual from ill omens. Dress, like fetishes, is then another example for the human ability to disengage objects from their practical role and invest them with figurative connotations.

It became a truism to speak of dress in terms of body substitute, likewise of fetish as surrogate for symbolic loss. So, both have the role to complete the body or, in magical acceptance, to heal it. From magical endowment, the shamanic figure is the next intrinsic mental correlation one can make, which has to do with our collective memory of past radiant individuals. The shaman performs rituals through which endowed objects are used to physically veil him and within this veiling to attain a close communion with natural and spiritual forces, but the objects is also a passage back to the community, to order. Rituals are neither more nor less than enactments, the reactualization of a primal event that can never be repeated. One should be reminded that a shamanic experience is both spiritual and bodily effected, and what is more, the ecstatic can be easily replaced by the orgasmic, in other words the sexual encounter is part of the object transfigurations too. However, fashion as is often perceived today rather orders, offers pre-given identity mouldings and proclaims what should the body feel in them. Nonetheless, between the ritualistic role objects/dress have in the shamanic experience and our new performative requirements from objects, Edelkoort makes the connection to a contemporary animism, where dress and fashion adornments still function as lucky charms, veiling, protection, invested with our own beliefs. Animal prints, natural materials, bio food, leather, textures and their bodily experience are reminiscent of a constant return to the environment and our organic bond with the animal. If we also take into consideration the role of fetish in healing and completing the body, that could mean we feel threatened by our perception of a less corporal and much too holographic body.

Resembling a trickster, the fetish in fashion/dress is then not the spiritual, nor the carnal, not good, nor evil, but an intermediate, the bridge between dividing worlds, the personal and the collective one, the carnal body and the symbolic, between what cannot be named but only felt, and the one which evokes and remembers it. The bond, the exchange is to be sustained in the way the “artificial”, manmade objects – manufactures – borrow human features similar to the way individuals assume the item's. And it's a relationship that certainly does not lack tension, since any borderline always involves negotiations and slips. Art (or lightly said any creative process), which historically resides in the same rituals that invest images and objects with figurative connotations and transfigure objects, is closely linked to the sameness of fetishes and dress/fashion. From this perspective, Edelkoort tracks creative acts in order to step into an active individual dimension, which also means that, among many other aspects, it brings with it a more or less obvious critique of mass production fashion.

The cards of the curator's fetish are thus to be played between these two points: the objects of desire and the body's reappropriation of multisensorial attribute, and she does so by stretching the line between fashion, art and the sensuous body.

**3.1** The study is filled with metaphors of remarkable objects that evoke attachment to the body, objects that structure it, elongate it, consume it, or let themselves be explored or embodied. Whether part of a creative process or just commonly used, the objects are the perfect milieu due to their ability to influence not only our body experiences, but also to shape our perception upon life. Depending on our everyday experiences,

we share much more profound bindings and sometimes a conscious emotional attachment to objects, and then to discard them is a far more difficult task than it would seem at first glance. Along these lines, the curator attempts a restoration of the objects' lost aura and brings back a sense of value.

Constant defiance of embedded representations likewise constitutes the high point in approaching the most sexualised fashion items: corsetry and shoes; it avoids traditional accounts and turns to more different perspectives and ironic voices. The juxtaposition of traditional costume and footwear engravings and new footwear creations call attention not only to the shoe's restrictive character upon the sensed body, but towards something else, namely the revival of historical icons as an inspirational source. In this sense, it appeals to art history's iconology since portraits have long been the medium for symbolic identification of dress. Hereby, representations afford another sense to fashion's use of the past as tool in the creative process, fashioning a more assumed practice that tends to gradually withdraw from the contemporary circus of references or, at least, to highlight that there is a core for symbolic use that gets to be spread over uncharted territories.

Even if they escape or mock familiar structures, designs are nonetheless reminiscent of traditional acceptance and reliquary, and we usually come to understand them as such.

**3.2** The aforementioned darkish resonance belongs in fact to black fetish which is, so to speak, the thread, that kind of knot never to be undone, a constant reminder of the thanatos – death, the pain, and the scary fascination for unknown or maybe, the elegant as a death for fashion frills. But if we were to mix it with those numerous interventions over black culture, it becomes part of a search for a more lively and free felt body, like jazz era which found comfort in primitivism, in a burst of imagination and spiritual retreat. Such a statement is not without ground, since the study repeatedly makes account for contemporary types of new primitivism forms whether they are textually stated, or just by entailing visuals of rituals as well as some rough organic materials. Spirituality is brought back next to the body, not as an overdoing but as its complement.

## CONCLUSION

Nonetheless, this constant mixture of elements caught in the creative process reinforces the old western perspective over fashion. Regionalism and patriotism were surely supposed to avoid such excursions, given that they shine light on local historic and cultural heritage. Yet, the Asian turn does not step out of the image-band of clichés, conforming to stereotype images we are all used to: niponism exemplifies the kimono as prime example for fetish folding and unfolding of materials, Asian beauty falls particularly on geisha, while infantilism makes reference to Japanese Lolita Doll looks. If, on the one hand, such a perspective is understandable should we consider today's repetitive plethora of images inspired by Asian culture, on the other hand, the previously mentioned local appositions do niponism an utterly substantial disservice.

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