
THE RHYTHM OF GRAPHIC STYLE AND FORM IN PRINTED TEXTILES

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ABSTRACT

A preliminary study of fashion styles over the last hundred of years suggested repeated re-vamp and re-interpretation of past fashion styles. Some of the new trends of fashion style re-emerged as a result of either re-interpreting or re-inventing their past, and a rhythmic and cyclic occurrence of fashion styles was revealed.

A project was carried out with an aim to establish a theoretical framework of classifying and categorizing the graphic style and form to develop a model to predict the coming graphic style in textiles design along with fashion trend which is based on the past appearances by applying quantifiable data and soft computing technology. The project adopted a photographic approach for capturing the fashion images shown in Vogue magazine as its primary source of data, supplemented by literal data, e.g., those by historians, to define the various graphics styles and forms of textiles applied in fashion design appeared in these magazines. Measurement and analysis of the style changes of graphics over a specific period of time were then carried out.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In this research, we focused the styles and trends of fabric pattern in London by the fact that UK is one of the leaders in textile and fashion design since the mid-19th century.
- 1.2 Review of fashion styles and trends from the beginning of the 20s to present, indicated that fashion had an important role in contemporary society. The material, shape, colour and pattern of clothes also conveyed aesthetic influences and fulfilled people's spiritual needs.
- 1.3 The style of fabric pattern and fashion are an expression of the temper of an age; They also represent individual taste; mass collective unconsciousness and personal ideology. Both the style and trend of fashion agree with the model of 'Rhythmic Phenomenon' found and discoursed by theoretical issues by prior researchers. The cyclical phenomena of fashion style and trend are seemingly interdependent. By this belief, a model of quantifiable measure was being developed to evaluate, calculate and project the fashion style and trend of fabric pattern in the coming future.
- 1.4 It is generally believed that in a globalized market as the one we are in today, competitiveness depends much on technological advancement. The next generation of textile, garment manufacture and automated retailing systems cannot be done without the success of suitably catering for the aesthetics and design needs of consumers. Any mixes of images, however eclectic and inconceivable, can be calculated, synthesized and visualized from a plethora of past and present images via digitalization and mathematical manipulation to cater the ever-changing demand of nouvelle images in textiles.
- 1.5 This paper reports some of the findings of the revelation of the rhythmic development of graphic styles in printed and woven textiles in three main forms: organic, geometric and abstract. It is envisaged that the results will help to predict future style and trend of printed textiles using statistical analysis.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Prior studies on fashion trend have revealed its rhythmic and cyclic occurrences. A preliminary study of fabric pattern development over the last hundred of years suggested repeated re-vamp and re-interpretation of styles, e.g., floral, animal, geometrical and abstract. Some of the new trends re-emerged as a result of either re-interpreting or re-inventing their past. Thus, it will be of great interest and commercial value to set out to investigate into the possibility of predicting coming prints and graphics in textiles and fashion based on their past appearances.

The aim of this study was to develop a predictive method by quantifiable measure to evaluate in an objective way for calculating the fashion style and trend of fabric pattern in the coming future. It served as an objective reference for design practitioners in the fashion and textile industries.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

- 3.1 Through the discourses by Behling (1908), Wolfflin (1915), Ross (1917), Kroeber (1919), Poiret, Sapir (1931), Laver (1945), Munro (1956) and Young (1966) et al., it was found that style and trend in costume exhibited specific discipline and cycle, in that the trend of fashion was a kind of 'Rhythmic Phenomenon'. This phenomenon was linked, related and influenced by the context of different realms, such as art and aesthetics, social and culture, politics, economy, psychology, scientific development.
- 3.2 The Theory of Determinism is being used for this research. Scholars such as Wolfflin, Heinrich (1915) Vasari, Giorgio (1965), and Winckelmann (1872) reckoned this theory in that the nature of style change is structured on the life history. This view attributes to art as a recurrent cycle of childhood, maturity or an age. "Determinism" coincides with the rise, maturity, and decline of a culture as a whole. Vasari (1971) supported this theory and insisted that the theories of the nature and history of art that expressed in lives were similarly derivative. Wolfflin (1915) described that we could achieve different degrees of continuity, periodicity and unit of style when we examined how the old product could be brought out each time into a new phase of style, and how a permanent development was blended thoroughly and harmoniously with special development. He also preferred the study of the most general representational form which based on the element of art in which that beauty can be expressed. Munro insisted that the construction of the trend or style can be traced back to the works of some specific people, artists, or group of artists, which could be recognized and distinctive from others throughout the history.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 Visual study of printed fabric pattern via fashion photography images appeared in fashion magazines 'Vogue' published in London from 1913 to present was the main source of primary data in this research based on fashion photography as an expression of fashion and trend of specific time. According to Barthes's theory in "Fashion System" (Barthes 1967), Jobling (1999) and Barnard (2002) affirmed that fashion photography is influencing more people's mind in fashion and delight in fashion. It also influences people's attitude in selection of attire based on the optical illusion and imagination by

audiences. Barthes (1978) and Sontag (1979) affirmed this issue in photography context.

- 4.2 Photographic images from fashion magazines recorded and presented major fashion styles and fashion trends. Fashion magazines had been the Bible in fashion since 1913, and the first of its kind was published in British in 1916. Among them, “Vogue Magazine” became one of the most important fashion magazines in London in which many fashion trends in London were captioned and presented over the years.
- 4.3 The estimation of the dimension of printed fabric pattern is based on the photographic images appeared in the fashion magazines. Digital camera was employed to capture those pictures with printed fabric patterns to form a vast images database for this research.
- 4.4 Since the first photographic image appeared in Vogue magazine was in 1913, the period between 1913 to date was identified as the scope of this study.
- 4.5 The study focused on those pattern fabrics appeared in Vogue from 1981 to 1990 as the first phase of this research in attempt to find out the basic discipline for reference before coming study.

5. THE CRITERIA OF SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHIC IMAGES

- 5.1 Different fashion photographs including special features, designer label, advertising, etc. was collected in an issue of Vogue. After reviewing a few decades of Vogue, it was discovered that most volumes of Vogue carried a theme in the section “Vogue Eye’s View” with photographs as a reflection of the most updated and trendy fashion. Photographs in this section were screened by the editors as the most representative reflection of the trend during that time. Photographs from the commercials and designer label were not included since the commercials in each volume were mainly for the promotion of specific product as commodity rather than fashion. For example, “Samsara” perfume had the preference to use the tone in red in its commercial. Others adopted their corporate or brand logos as patterns on cloths or fashion, e.g. monogram of LV. These commercial intents not suggest any direct relationship with the popularity of product at a given time. On the other hand, “Vogue Eye’s View” focused on fashion trends of a time. As time went, “Vogue Eye’s View” had become an authoritative feature of its kind. Gradually, readers took information in this section as the index of fashion trends.
- 5.2 Certain volumes of Vogue did not carry “Vogue Eye’s View”, the photographs from “Features” would be selected instead. The stock of the photographs captured in this study excluded those photographic images of fashion design highlighting individual designer as this study did not put emphasis on any promotion of individual designers, rather, it identified the popular fashion styles and trends throughout a prescribed period of time.
- 5.3 Only the images of printed fabrics and woven patterns were taken for this study, excluding, for instance, lace, fur, leather and beading. If more than one photograph of the same pattern appeared, only one would be select.
- 5.4 The cover photograph was not taken too as the cover design was often selected with

factors of consideration other than fashion styles.

6 RATIONALE OF THE SELECTION OF FABRIC PRINTS

Fabric itself is a major element of fashion. The characteristics of fabric material consist of texture, color, line, shape and form. In this study, only the form and shape of patterns and prints were the within the scope of study for establishing a model that governs the disciplines of successive style change of patterns and prints.

7 CLASSIFICATION OF PRINTS AND TEXTILE FABRICS

Images of patterns and prints were classified into three main categories: organic, geometric and abstract patterns. Certain traditional forms such as classical paintings or religion styles were excluded due to a scarcity of appearance. For the mixed form such as dot and stripe or floral and zip-zap, they were recorded separately. Details of the classification of sub-divisions and codified are as follows:

Abstract -

Organic - AO

Geometrical - AG

Organic -

O1 - Skin of animal (e.g., tiger, leopard, etc.)

O2 - Birds (including Paisley and the like)

O3 - Floral

O4 - Leaf (including Paisley and the like)

O5 - Insect

Geometric -

G1 - Stripe

G2 - Checker (including Scotland patterns and the like)

G3 - Dot, stone

G4 - Zip-zap (including ribbons and the like)

8. DATA COLLECTION

The number of appearance of the patterns from 1981 to 1990 was accumulatively counted and the time of the appearance was recorded to record their frequency of appearance for preliminary research study. The percentages of the appearance of fabric pattern and their sub-divisions were compared to those of the textile fabrics.

9. TABLES OF FINDINGS

A total of 432 fashion images were selected from a total of 1109 captured by Vogue magazine during 1981 to 1990. They were further classified into 'organic', geometric' and 'abstract' patterns.

Preliminary research showed that the most frequent appeared pattern was stripe, followed by checker, floral, and dot (see Figure 1). Chart 1 shows that dot pattern appeared continuously in the summer of 1981 to 1984 and 1986 to 1988. It suggests that

dot had been one of patterns that enjoyed a steady popularity. However, almost most pattern appeared every year, except a minority few such as bird and insect. For better accuracy in this study, different patterns were re-grouped into three main categories: organic, geometric and abstract patterns. Chart 2 shows that the rhythm of stripe pattern was the most popular from 1981 to 1982 and from 1986 to 1987. Although the data in chart 1 is more comprehensive, it is more difficult to make comparison among patterns.

Pattern	Number
G1(STRIPE)	113
G2 (CHECKER)	103
G3 (DOT)	65
G4 (ZIPZAP)	17
O1 (ANIMAL SKIN)	16
O2 (BIRD)	2
O3 (FLORAL)	89
O4 (LEAF)	13
O5 (INSECT)	2
AG	6
AO	6
Total	432

Fig 1

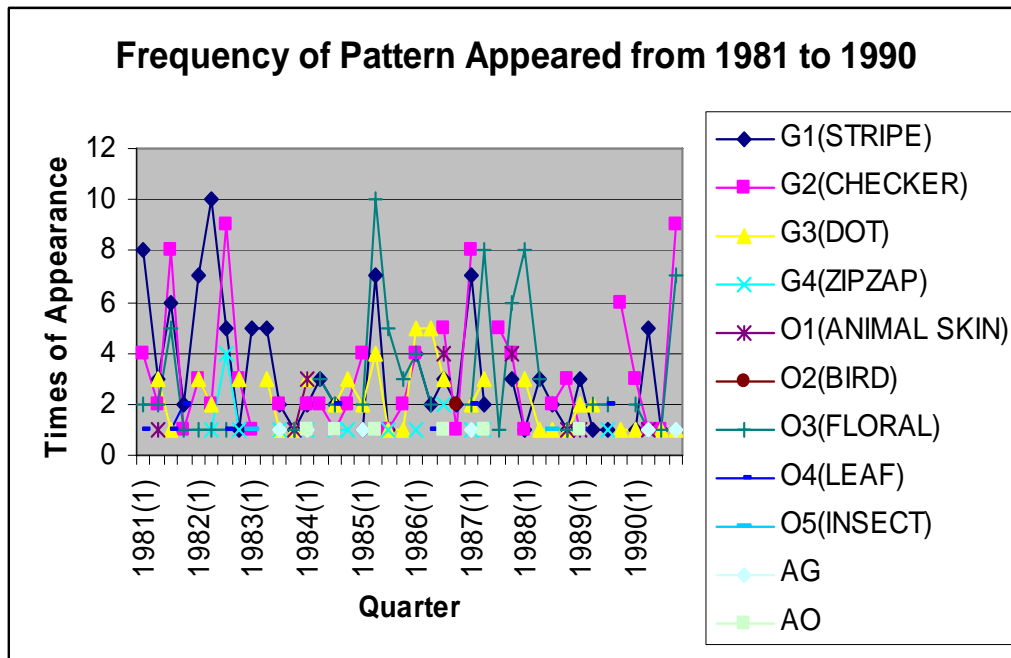


Chart 1

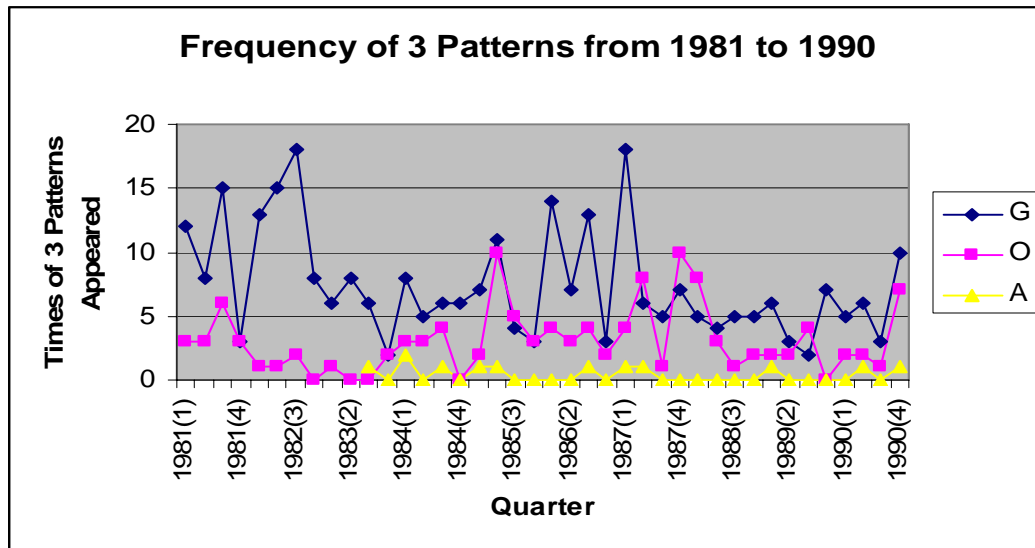


Chart 2

10. CONCLUSION

From the findings collected from 1981 to 1990, the rhythmic pattern of fabric patterns and prints was preliminarily ported out without repetition. The re-occurrences of the pattern can now be detected and the macro-picture of the rhythmic pattern could be identified toward predicting patterns in the short future. It is hoped that the collection of data from a longer period of time can help detect and predict more accurately what the patterns and prints will be in the short future.

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[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vogue_\(magazine\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vogue_(magazine))

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