

institut FRANÇAIS de la MODE

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Session 1

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Learning Goals

- Raising awareness of the key stages in the development of the current Parisian fashion scene.
- Understanding the geopolitical aspects of the fashion and luxury industries on an historical perspective.
- Knowing how Fashion Capital cities appeared and their positioning.
- Understanding the strategies of the professional institutions in the fashion industry.
- Understanding how Soft Power plays a role in today's fashion and luxury industries.

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Session 1 – Couture, Apparel Manufacturing, Haute Couture

Agenda:
1) The emergence and development of couture houses (1858-1910)
2) The distinction between couture and ready-to-wear clothing (1911-1944)
3) The fashion house model (private clientele, reproduction rights, licensing contracts) (1945-2000)
4) The Parisian *Prêt-à-Porter* : from *Paul Poiret & Lelong Edition* to *Saint Laurent Rive Gauche*

1) The emergence and development of couture houses (1858-1910)

(Grumbach, 2014, p. 13) :
(1675) 'It was forbidden for these dressmakers to keep any lengths of fabrics in their boutiques (...) to sell it'.

Haberdashers: Gagelin
rue de Richelieu
1850: Dressmaking workshop for Worth in Gagelin's store.

1853: Worth: associate with Gagelin

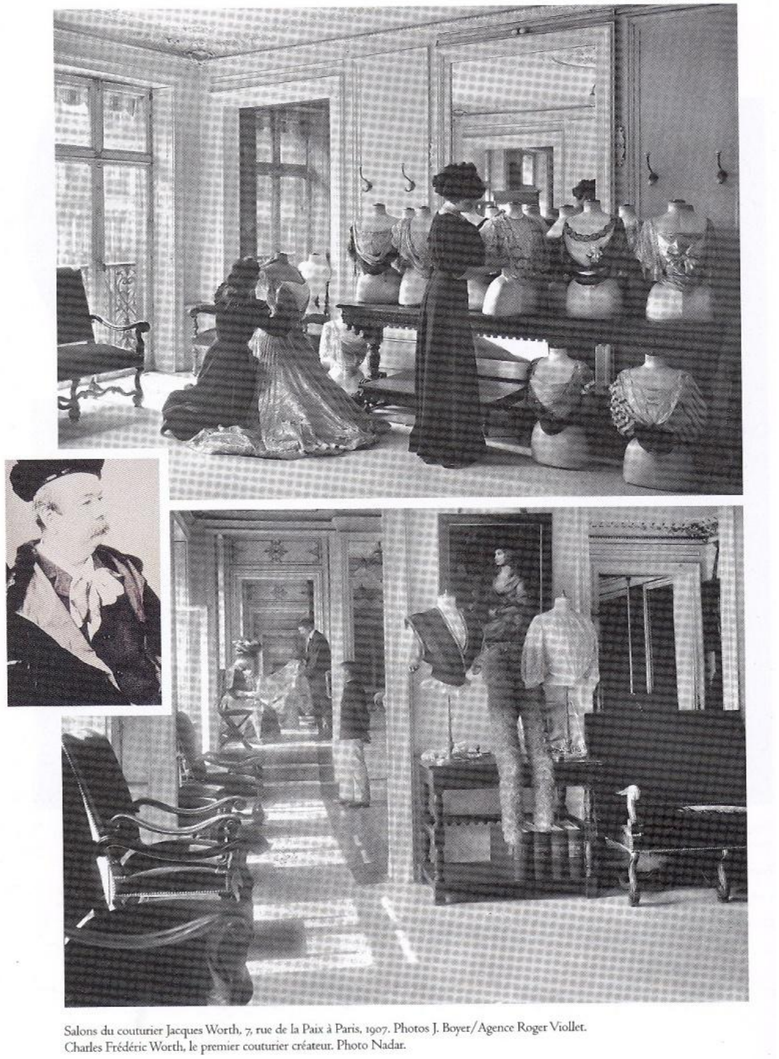
1) The emergence and development of couture houses (1858-1910)

C.F. WORTH

1858: with

Otto Gustav Bobergh

7, rue de la Paix



Salons du couturier Jacques Worth, 7, rue de la Paix à Paris, 1907. Photos J. Boyer/Agence Roger Viollet.
Charles Frédéric Worth, le premier couturier créateur. Photo Nadar.

1868: Creation of the '*Chambre syndicale de la couture et de la confection pour dames et fillettes*'

(Worth & Doucet: 'confection')
Confection & couture: same means of production.

1911: '*Chambre Syndicale de la Couture*'
Couturiers gather themselves to be distinguished.
'Membership approved by two committee members'
(Grumbach, 2014, page 32).

Haute couture 1858-1919

1858: Worth
1875: Doucet
1895: Callot Soeurs
1904: Poiret
1912: Vionnet
1914: Chanel

Haute couture 1858-1919

1905: Lady Duff Gordon (Lucile):

- London (Hanover Square)
- Paris
- New York
- Chicago

- Chambre syndicale de la couture parisienne: ‘haute couture’ = calendar

2) The distinction between couture and ready-to-wear clothing (1911-1944)

Couture may be:

- Haute couture,
- Moyenne couture,
- Petite couture.

Haute Couture
Madeleine Vionnet



Haute Couture
Madeleine Vionnet







Au rez-de-chaussée : la manutention.
Les ateliers sont confortables et bien éclairés.

Haute couture 1919-1939

1919 Chanel
1919 Jean Patou
1919 Lucien Lelong
1919 Maggy Rouff
1927 Lanvin
1929 Mainbocher
1932 Nina Ricci
1933 Piguet
1935 Grès
1937 Jacques Fath
1938 Balenciaga

Haute Couture
Lucien Lelong

rue Vignon, place de la Madeleine
rue Matignon

1 200 collections
1911: Chambre syndicale
de la couture
1918: 20 people in the atelier
1926: 1 200
1927: ABC (3 perfumes)
1934: Lucien Lelong Edition
1948: The couture house closes
1954: Foundation of the
Comité Colbert
1958: Death of Lucien Lelong



Haute couture 1919-1939

The buyers

Grumbach (2014, page 92):

‘Amongst the buyers, one could clearly distinguish three specific types:

a) Manufacturers who made mass-produced garments for their own production
b) Shops that were developing an integrated made-to-measure department or providing sub-contractors with patterns and models for mass production
c) Couturiers working for order.’

Haute couture 1919-1939

The buyers

Grumbach page 92:
‘Buyers came from all over the world, and amongst them, the most influential Americans; if not the largest numbers, were nicknamed ‘the Seventh Avenue’ after the New York City neighborhood where their business were generally established. (...)

In some cases and under very restrictive conditions, shops were allowed to associate their names with the couturiers, on the label of the copied garment: ‘Christian Dior for Saks Fifth Avenue’ (...)

Haute couture 1919-1939

The buyers

Grumbach (2014, page 92):
‘This phenomenon continued to grow until the 1960s. Harrods of London (...) attended the shows along with everyone from the department stores on New York’s Fifth Avenue. The buyers from Lord & Taylor, Bonwit Teller, B. Altman, Saks Fitfth Avenue, and Bergdorf Goodman competed skillfully to obtain the couturiers goodwill. There were two types of buyers. The first owned a couture workshop; the second had « line for line » copies made by sub-contractors. (...)

The jewel in crown of luxury shops was incontestably Bergdorf Goodman.’

Haute couture 1919-1939

The American market

Grumbach (2014, page 91):
‘In the years around 1925, the most eagerly awaited buyers were the American buying offices. Twice a week at Le Havre, transatlantic ships uploaded their overexcited buyers (...)
They ordered a number of models in different sizes that they wanted different copies of. These purchases were meant to fill the luxury departments of America’s biggest shops that, in turn, carried out any necessary alterations for their clients. For America, haute couture at the time, was only luxury ready to wear. It meant that agents had to choose the kinds of garments likely to satisfy a traditional clientele, little inclined to excesses.’

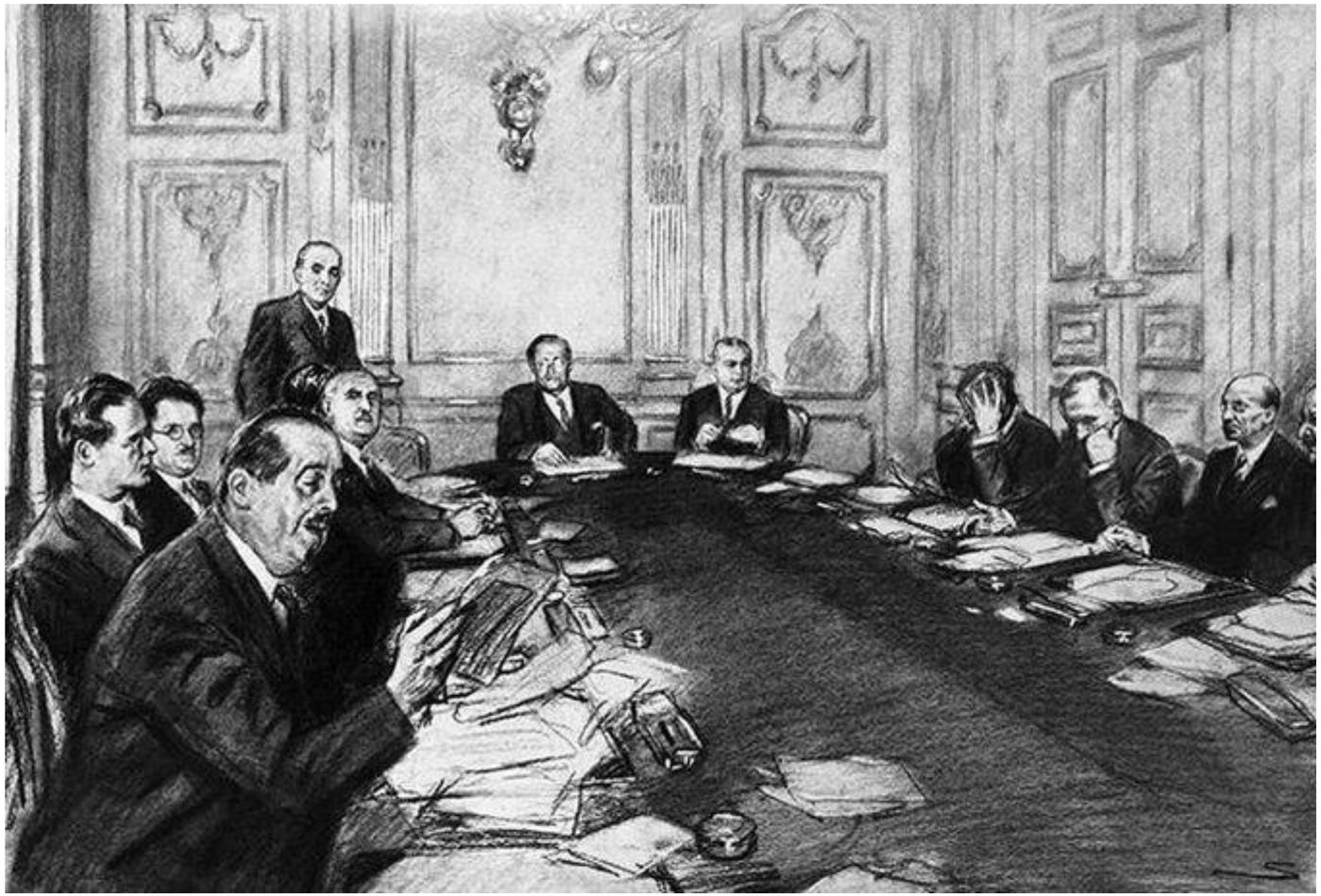
Haute couture 1919-1939

The American market

Grumbach (2014, page 91):
‘ The 1929 crash rang in the end of this opulent commerce. America was in crisis. To defend itself, the American government levied a 90 per cent customs tax on imported garments. At the same time, other States imposed draconian quota systems or established controls on exchange rates. All these regulations destroyed the couture industry bit by bit. In order to get around the taxes, buyers imported fewer couture dresses, and instead, more patterns with permission to reproduce the model in large numbers ’.

Haute couture 1919-1939

18 June 1936: the Matignon agreement



Haute couture 1919-1939

(Grumbach, 2014, page 45):

1925: 2 billion francs

1931: 483 479 000 francs

1936: 51 224 000 francs

A government recognition since 1945

Since 1945:

‘Haute Couture is a legally protected and controlled label that can only be used by those fashion houses, which have been granted the designation by the French Ministry of Industry. The group of companies that enjoy the Haute Couture label is reviewed annually’

A government recognition since 1945

Since 1945:

- Decree 23 January 1945:
Couturier
Haute couture
Couture-création

The economic situation in 1945

Haute couture status

vs

Purchasing power (USA, UK, Germany & France)

The economic situation in 1945

1949: Jacques Heim & the 'Prêt-à-Porter Création'

Carven
Grès
Jacques Griffe
Jacques Heim
Jean Dessès
Lanvin
Madeleine de Rauch
Maggy Rouff
Nina Ricci

Haute Couture
Pierre Balmain 1951



3) The fashion house model (private clientele, reproduction rights, licensing contracts) (1945-2000)

Christian Dior (c. 1950)



Christian Dior, son jonc cerclé d'or à la main, lors d'une séance de travail avec le mannequin Lucy, c. 1950. Courtesy Christian Dior/Photo Bellini.

1950s-1980s
Licensing



Haute Couture
Christian Dior (c. 1950)

‘Jacques Rouët then developed an idea that was to prove fruiful. The idea was to sell the patterns of the dresses, a practice that already existed but which he applied systematically. Since the Dior line is copied no matter what you do, you might as well take a tithe in passing by selling what could be called interpretation rights’.

(Pochna, 1994)

Haute Couture
Christian Dior (c. 1950)

‘Any buyer attending the Avenue Montaigne collection pays a deposit (60 000 F) which is refunded against the first purchase. Jacques Rouët offers two types of patterns:

The canvas pattern, which gives the reference of the original fabric, butonns, supplies, and the address of a commission agent in charge of guiding the buyer. The pattern thus made will have to wear the label.

In the less high end style, a simple paper pattern is also proposed, leaving the manufacturer more free to Americanise his choice of fabric and colours.’.

(Pochna, 1994)

Haute Couture
Christian Dior (c. 1950)

‘An American woman ordering her dress from Bendel will wear ‘Christian Dior’ in large letters and « Bendel » in smaller letters sewn inside. (...). This list is handed over to costums at the same time as the special haute couture plane that flies to New York each season, carrying its cargo of patterns and models’.

(Pochna, 1994)

Haute Couture
Christian Dior (c. 1950)

‘During the first 5 years of its existence, 50% of Christian Dior’s turnover was generated on the new continent, which is obviously a springboard for the future.

(...)

1949: signature of the first stocking license in the United States with Julius Kayser & Co.’

(Pochna, 1994)

Haute Couture
Christian Dior (c. 1950)

‘In 1950: first licence for ties (...) with Stern, Meritt & Co.

On recalls that even before the opening of the house, Dior accepted the propozsal from the New York company Prestige (...) to markets its stockings by affixing the name « Christian Dior » to its own stockings’.

(Pochna, 1994)

Haute Couture
Christian Dior (c. 1950)

‘An American manufacturer of silk twill also came to avenue Montaigne, still under construction, to propose to Christian Dior to put his name on ties. Never seen before! Christian Dior gave the green light to Jacques Rouët to negotiate with this Mr. Benjamin Theise (...)

These two historic contracts are the prelude to hundreds of other...

It is then the stockings that make their entrance at Galeries Lafayette. (...) The presence of a couturier’s label in a French department stores’ is totally new.’

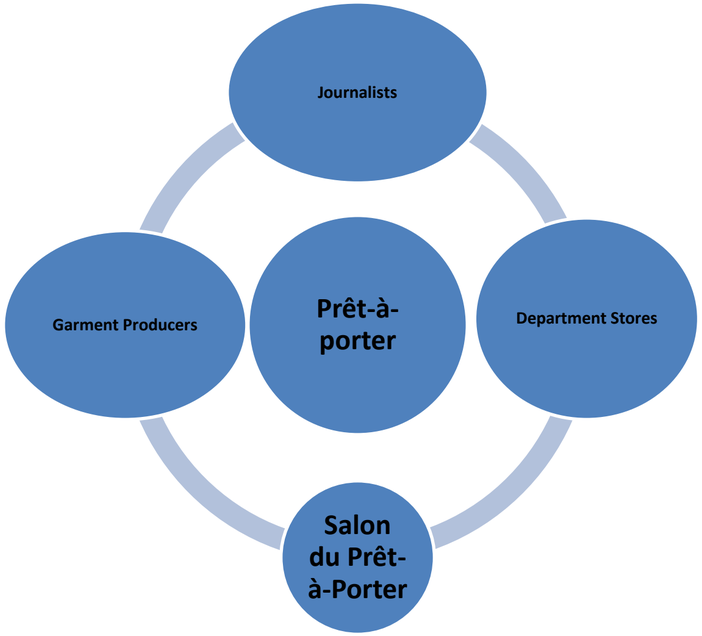
(Pochna, 1994)

Haute couture 1945-1973

1945 Pierre Balmain
1947 Christian Dior
1952 Hubert de Givenchy
1953 Pierre Cardin
1954 Chanel *(réouverture)*
1957 Guy Laroche
1962 Louis Féraud
1962 Jean-Louis Scherrer
1962 André Courrèges
1964 Antonio Canovas Del Castillo
1965 Emanuel Ungaro
1971 Paco Rabanne

1945-1973: the birth of prêt-à-porter

Ready to wear appears in fashion magazines: Elle, Le Jardin des Modes
Journalists become fashion designers and trendsetters:



Ready-to-wear and «*créateurs*»: new players in the Parisian fashion industry

First collection or store

1962: Dorothée bis
1962: Daniel Hechter
1968: Sonia Rykiel
1969: Chantal Thomass
1970: Kenzo
1971: « Créateurs et Industriels »
1973: Claude Montana
1973: Issey Miyake
1973: Thierry Mugler
1974: Jean-Charles de Castelbajac
1976: Jean Paul Gaultier
1976: Agnès B

Haute Couture

1966: 39 Haute Couture houses....

... a year later (1967): 17

The renewal of the French creative industries

Nouveau roman:



Alain Robbe-Grillet

Nouvelle vague:



Jean-Luc Godard

Nouvelle cuisine:



Paul Bocuse

A social context of changes



Paris, May 1968

Some couturiers mix « *Haute Couture* » & prêt-à-porter.

André Courrèges



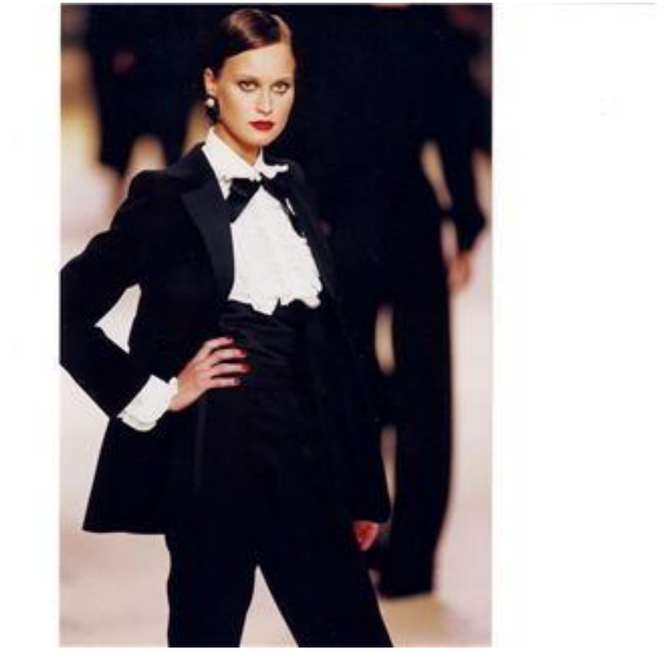
A lot of them have already their ready-to-wear lines and shows which follow another agenda.



Hubert de Givenchy

Haute couture & prêt-à-porter: Yves Saint Laurent

A couturier expresses himself, four times a year, both in Haute Couture and in prêt-à-porter



Fall – Winter 1966-67



Saint Laurent rive gauche,
Avenue des Champs-Elysées, April
1977

3) The fashion house model (private clientele, reproduction rights, licensing contracts) (1945-2000)

Christian Dior

(Grumbach, 2014, page 111)

‘Garment production alone was no longer a sufficient source of revenue; the couturiers had to find other means of survival. (...)
Their first act, at the end of 1947, was Dior’s creation of a subsidiary for his perfumes. He entrusted the management to Serge Heftler Louiche (...)’

3) The fashion house model (private clientele, reproduction rights, licensing contracts) (1945-2000)

Christian Dior

(Grumbach, 2014, page 111)

‘In 1948, Christian Dior himself, he opened a luxury ready-to-wear business in New York called ‘Dior New York’.

Haute couture 1945-1973

1945 Pierre Balmain
1947 Christian Dior
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1965 Emanuel Ungaro
1971 Paco Rabanne

Haute couture 20th century

(Grumbach, 2014, page 91):

‘Once they [the professional buyers] had acquired their card, the professional buyers could register at the couture houses they wanted to visit, where that had to pay in advance on possible future purchases to be able to attend the collection viewings. This ‘security deposit’ had to be paid to the couture house in any event. (...)

From 1930 until the 1970s, the United States represented couture’s main market.

Haute Couture

1966: 39 Haute Couture houses....

... a year later (1967): 17

The Parisian *Prêt-à-Porter* : from *Paul Poiret & Lelong Edition*
to *Saint Laurent Rive Gauche*

Paris Collections Inc.

Ungaro
Yves Saint Laurent
Givenchy
Issey Miyake
Emmanuelle Khanh
Chanel
Valentino
Jean-Charles de Castelbajac
Christiane Bailly…

Vs Les Trois Hirondelles

Couture houses & ready-to-wear

Courrèges Future

Saint Laurent Rive Gauche

Miss Dior

Givenchy Nouvelle Boutique

How did the professional organization deal with this situation?

The incorporation of the ‘créateurs’ into a new professional body.

1973:
The new institutional structure

- Yves Saint Laurent
- Dior
- Ungaro
- Chloé
- Dorothée Bis
- Sonia Rykiel
- Kenzo
- Emmanuelle Khanh

1973:
The new institutional structure

Fédération de la couture, du prêt-à-porter des couturiers et des créateurs de mode

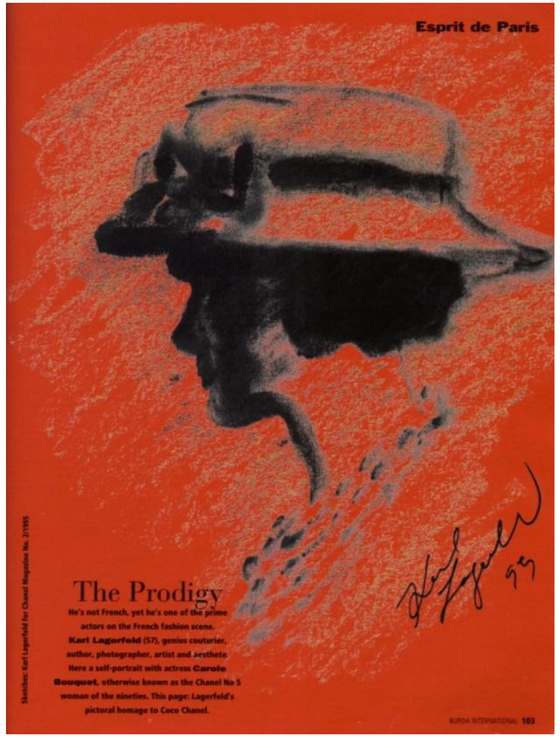
Chambre syndicale de la couture

Chambre syndicale du prêt-à-porter des couturiers et des créateurs de mode

Chambre syndicale de la mode masculine

1980s and 1990s

Couture houses hire artistic directors



Karl Lagerfeld 1995

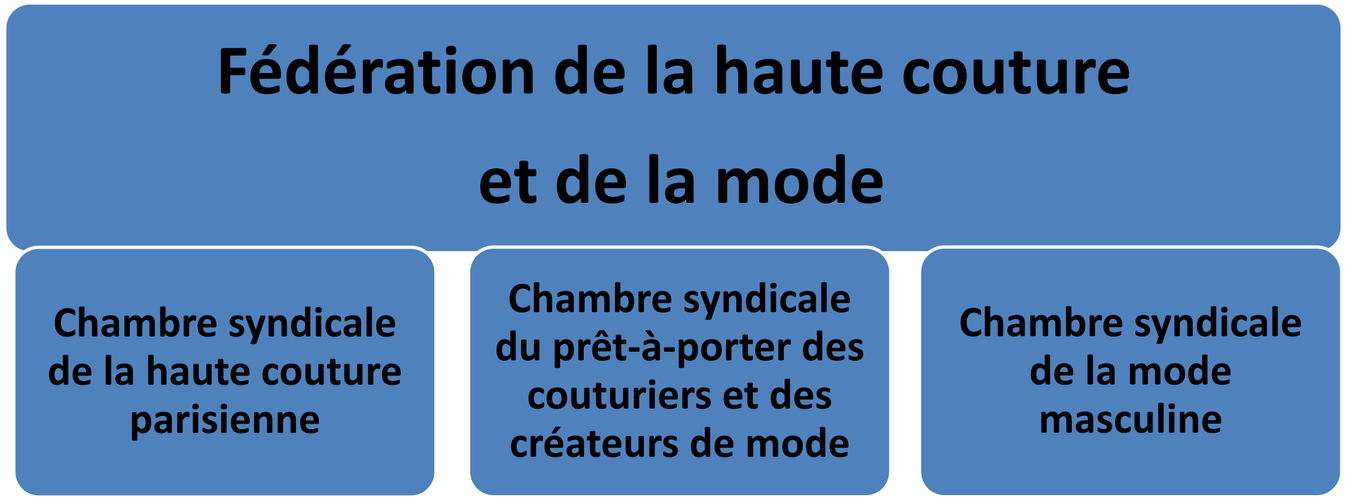
From 1998

Systeme with two levels:

Haute Couture ‘exclusive & national’
10 to 15 companies

The Paris fashion week ‘inclusive & international’
100 to 150 companies

2017:
The institutional structure



Thank you for your attention!

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