



London: After a Fashion

Alistair O'Neill

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London Fashion Week is the pinnacle of the fashion season, and it features an array of native designers, from Burberry and Vivienne Westwood to Alexander McQueen and Nicole Farhi. The roots of London's place as the international epicenter of haute couture and prêt-à-porter stretch back centuries, and they are explored here by Alistair O'Neill.

Arguing that fashion was central to the impact of modernity in late nineteenth- and twentieth-century London, O'Neill maps the progress of fashion against the city's neighborhoods and streets. Carnaby Street, Soho, Jermyn Street, and King's Road each get their turn in *London*, along with many others, revealing the intersection between London's urban history and the development of fashion. O'Neill's analysis is not merely confined to clothing—from the popularity of tattooing in the 1890s to the diverse uses of chintz in the 1980s design aesthetic, he traces the history of fashion in its various manifestations and explores how particular figures were key to disseminating fashion throughout British and international cultures. Participating in fashion, *London* shows, was not only a pleasurable aspect of modern urban life, but also a fundamental element of contemporary cultural sensibilities. *London* unearths vital moments of revolution in fashion that reflect deeper changes in London's history and culture, contending that these historic changes are unfairly marginalized in accounts of transformation in the city's culture.

A fascinating look at style and urbanism, *London* offers an intriguing reconsideration of the role of fashion in city life and fills in long overlooked gaps in the history of London and modern design.

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