

History of Cosmetology

History of Cosmetology – Study Notes

1. Definition

- **Cosmetology:** The art and science of beautifying the skin, hair, nails, and body.
- Encompasses **hair styling, skin care, makeup, nail technology, and spa treatments.**

2. Early Beginnings (Pre-historic – 4th c. BC)

Era / Region	Key Practices	Materials & Tools
Pre-historic (c. 30,000 BC)	Body painting for ritual, status, camouflage	Ochre, charcoal, plant pigments; simple brushes made from animal hair
Ancient Egypt (c. 3000-30 BC)	Elaborate eye makeup, hair wigs, scented oils	Kohl (lead sulfide), malachite, henna, gold leaf; metal combs, stone mortars
Mesopotamia (c. 3500-539 BC)	Perfume making, nail polishing	Aromatic resins, crushed gemstones; metal tools
Indus Valley (c. 2500-1900 BC)	Hair braiding, skin exfoliation	Plant oils, herbal powders; wooden combs

3. Classical Antiquity (4th c. BC – 5th c. AD)

Culture	Contributions
Greece	Use of olive oil for skin, early cosmetic powders (lead white, chalk). Development of public baths with grooming services.
Rome	Expansion of beauty salons (balneae) offering hair dye, shaving, and facial treatments. Introduction of hair extensions using human/animal hair.
China (Han dynasty)	First recorded hair care manuals ; use of rice water for hair shine; early nail polishing with gold leaf.

4. Middle Ages & Renaissance (5th – 16th c.)

Period	Highlights

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Islamic Golden Age (8th?13th?c.)	Al-Jazari and others wrote treatises on perfumes, ointments, and hair dyes using natural extracts (saffron, indigo).
European Middle Ages	Grooming limited to the elite; herbal salves for skin, lemon juice for hair lightening.
Renaissance Italy	Rise of court cosmeticians ; use of lead-based face powders and cinnabar for rouge. Publication of beauty manuals (e.g., <i>Il Trattato della Bellezza</i>).

5. Early Modern Era (17th – 19th?c.)

Century	Milestones
17th?c. (France)	Mademoiselle Perrot opens the first “ <i>Salon de Beauté</i> ” in Paris (1660). Introduction of powdered wigs and synthetic pigments (e.g., vermilion).
18th?c.	Marie Antoinette popularizes poudre de riz (rice powder) for skin. Development of perfume houses (e.g., Guerlain, 1828).
19th?c.	Industrial Revolution ? mass production of soap, shaving creams, and hair oils . 1850: **John H.