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UNDERWEAR AS OUTERWEAR

BY

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INTRODUCTION

There is difficulty in discerning the exact date or period in history in which underwear became apparent as a separate layer to that of outerwear. There is the same difficulty today in separating the two layers. We are familiar with the idea that corsets, knickers, bras, vests and slips are all items of apparel that go under the heading of underwear. We are also familiar with the bra or corset top, hot pants, vest tops and slip dresses, all of which fit into the category of outerwear but have their routes (some more blatantly than others) in underwear.

The subject of this thesis is underwear and its emergence overtime from its original state to become outerwear. Within the subject that I have chosen I will answer such questions as, what has influenced this present fashion trend? How was underwear first exposed? and, in what forms do we see and wear underwear as outwear today?

To answer these questions it is necessary to understand the history of underwear so that a connection can be made to later trends. The books that I have found most informative in this area are Ewings' Dress and Undress, Carters' Underwear, the Fashion History, and Wilson and Taylors Through the Looking Glass, giving clear histories of underwear and dress with relevance to this subject.

Having followed the progression of the various forms of underwear in history I have then begun to look at the presence of underwear as outerwear at different times in history, considering social and economic structures influencing these styles of dress. To illustrate examples of this I have chosen various artworks giving clear depictions of the styles considered.

Technological advancement, the growth of the media and the fashion designer are all 20th Century influences which have effected society and the way in which we present ourselves outwardly. These factors bare a significant relevance to the way in which we dress today, causing people to turn their inner garments out, publicly divulging what was one private.

CHAPTER ONE.

A Historical Background of underwear

The practical significance of the forms of women's underwear, beginning in classical Greece, can be traced all the way through the history of underwear to the present day. Ever since the first records of clothing around 3,000 B.C., there have been shifts in what has been regarded as outerwear, and inner or underwear. For this reason it is difficult to ascertain exactly when underwear became a separate layer from outerwear. There is evidence that still survives today to suggest that underwear existed in a recognisable form as early as 3,000 B.C. This can be seen in the form of two terra-cotta figures, one a Babylonian statue from Sumaria which, is wearing a pair of briefs; the second figure dates from about one thousand years later, and is wearing the first recorded corset and crinoline. This figure is from the palace of Knossos, in Crete.

The Greeks are responsible for many innovations, in their golden age particularly, so it seems quite reasonable to credit them also with the introduction of the most significant forms of underwear - the corset and the brassière.

Historically, all over the known world, what man used to cover himself varied very little. In general, it consisted of a long length of cloth, draped and pinned around the body - a look familiar to us still from surviving classical Greek and Roman sculptures, frescoes and vases. There is evidence that two layers of clothing were worn in Greece and Egypt for many centuries before Christ; these consisted of a chiton or tunic (knee-length or full-length) draped around the body and over the shoulders, and fastened there by pins or broaches. Over this tunic went a himation or cloak, very similar to the chiton, the only difference being that it sometimes

went over the head. For centuries these were the usual style of clothing and are known to have been worn by the vast majority of people.

The first item used for body control, widely worn in Greece, was made of a band of linen or kid skin; this was worn around the waist and lower stomach to control and support that area. It was called the zonè or the girdle, and there are references to it in Homer's Iliad and The Odyssey. James Laver refers to the "strophium", this is the name of a band of unstiffened cloth worn around the bust for support; (Laver, 1972 Pg.14) the same item is given the name of a "mastodeton" by Ewing in (1978, Pg.10) but, by whatever name one chooses to call it, there is no arguing that with this item of apparel the brassière originated.

Other references to foundation wear at this time draw attention to the Cestus - similar to the zonè but with a wider band encasing more of the torso. There still exists mosiacs in the Piazza Armerina in Sicily that show female athletes wearing what we would now call a bikini.

The first important change in style of clothing came in the 4th century A.D. when the administrative centre of the Roman Empire moved to Constantinople (modern Istanbul). This had an enormous effect on many areas of life, and is illustrated in fashion, not least by the introduction of trousers, believed to have been a Persian influence. The first trousers were worn only by women but eventually became a unisex item of clothing, worn under the tunic at knee-length, they could be regarded as underwear of sorts. All subsequent styles of outer and inner wear can be traced back to variants of two main items of clothing, the trousers and the tunic.

The first signs of variation in the dress of Western Europeans came in the 12th century. The reasons for this change are debatable but it has been argued that the influence of the church on society at this time was weakening, allowing people to

accept and project their physical and sexual selves with more confidence. (Ewing 1978 Pg: 18) The most obvious change in style was that women began to wear their clothing fitted, at the waist particularly. There were still no cutting or style lines. All fitting was made possible by lacing at the back, front or sides of the tunic. This lacing produced the first defined waistline in the history of dress.

This first variation of the tunic marked the beginning of fashion and the differentiation between male and female dress. The 13th century brought a temporary return to the long, loose tunics that had been worn in the past. It was not until the 14th century that the cycle of changes in fashion, and shape-making, arrived to stay.

The History of the Corset

A 12th century manuscript, from the Cottonian Collection in the British Museum contains references to the corset in Europe but it is believed to have been an outer garment at that time. From about the middle of the 14th century there is definite evidence of the wearing of what we know as corsetry. At this stage the waist of a garment was now achieved by cutting and sewing. Under these fitted robes was worn a shift or smock which protected the body from the stiffened linen under-bodice. This was known as "cote" (meaning close-fitting in early French). The slim figure, with defined waist, grew in popularity and with it grew the rigidity and tightening of the under-bodice. This rigid form was created by the use of a stiffening paste between two layers of linen. By the 15th century this structure was called a "body" or "pair of bodies" and was constructed of two pieces, laced together at back and front. The body became stiffer and more structured with the use of whale boning inserted into the already rigid fabric as a frame to which the body was to conform. According to Stubbs, Anatomy of Abuses (1585) 'the body was imprisoned in whale bone to the hips'. And Leonardo da Vinci wrote that people were being suffocated by their corsets. (Ewing, 1978, Pg. 24) The dress of

the Elizabethan period added to the discomfort of the corset, and is one of the most impractical and uncomfortable styles ever to exist. The long front of the bodice stretched to ridiculously wide skirts and had a tightly laced inner frame-work keeping the "bust" in place. This busk, sword-like in shape, thick at the top and narrow at the bottom, went from above the bust to the hips. Another monarch had an ever more detrimental influence on fashion. Catherine De Medici is supposedly responsible for the iron corset. This torturous foundation item had a hinge at one side and was fastened with a pin at the other rather like a cage. (Fig.1).

The 17th century saw further changes in fashion. Charles II returned from exile in France bringing with him luxurious new styles of dress. Silks and lace became increasingly popular. The figure was still heavily controlled by corsets of heavy linen and whale bone. The reason for the use of whale bone was its flexibility which allowed for some body movement. It could also be easily split into fine strips for close corseting while retaining its efficiency.

By the end of the 18th century a new style of dress had appeared by striping the outer layer of clothing to reveal the shift or chemise. This look discarded the structure of the previous century, returning to the style of classical Greece, which imitated the fabric folds in sculptures of that period. The effect on corsetry was huge; there was a slump in the stay making industry, and corsets were reduced to a narrow, stiffened band, similar to the zonè of ancient Greece.

The 19th century saw a return to the full corset which became longer and reached to the hips. Early in the century a corset with bust cups appeared and was followed in 1816 by a corset known as the "divorce corset" which separated the breasts by means of a padded triangle of iron. This did not last long, the fashion for a shelf-like unseparated bust, popular in previous eras, soon returned.

The next significant effect on the corset was the introduction of metal eyelets for lacing. This was patented by Rogers of London and shortly afterwards, in 1839, a Frenchman, Jean Werly, patented a loom-made, woven corset. This type of corset remained popular to the end of the 19th century and was in effect the first step towards the machine-made corset. At this time corsets had become shorter, pushing the bust higher; they were, of course, as tightly laced as ever. In the 1860s a new technique in corsetry making appeared which introduced steam moulding of the desired shape. The corset was first stitched together with its busk and boning in place, then heavily starched and stiffened by steam.

These new production methods were an improvement, but nothing was to effect the corset, and indeed the underwear industry in general, as much as the invention of the sewing machine, introduced to Britain in the 1850s.

The 1880s and 90s brought a heightened concern for the benefits of health in dress. Dr Gustav Jaeger M.D. theorised the type of fabrics used in underclothes. He believed that all undergarments should be made of pure wool, this he believed improved general health, curing respiratory problems and other ailments. Thus, white, camel or grey corsets were produced in usually undyed wool with steel boning buttoned in at the top.

The introduction of suspenders to hold up stockings dates back to the beginning of the nineteenth century. The suspender belts were soon attached to the corset allowing the lacing to be loosened a little as the suspenders acted as an anchor keeping the corset in position.

At the beginning of the 20th Century Paul Poiret, a French couturier, rather prematurely announced the fall of the corset and refused to allow his clients to wear a corset under one of his creations. For the first time in centuries, women

were standing up straight almost unconstrained by foundation wear. This was not a lasting freedom and soon the straight silhouette began to restrict the figure once again. Women began to achieve the curveless figure by means of a corset which, as one fashion journal reported, 'Is cut so deep that to sit down would appear an impossible feat'. (Ewing, 1978, Pg. 114) The corset referred to here was very long and tubular, nearly to the knee. It was laced at the back and fastened with a busk fastening at the front. Suspenders were attached to this and clipped onto stockings just above the knees.

Around 1911 a craze for the Tango from Latin America began, first effecting the U.S.A. and quickly finding its way to Britain. This popular dance involved moving the hips and waist which proved difficult in the corsets worn to date, so corsets became shorter but more heavily boned.

Because of World War I a stop was put to the fashion cycle for a while; the narrow skirts that were popular in pre-war years were discarded for fuller skirts which were less constricting and more practical. With this style there was a little more freedom in corsetry, though it was still believed to be fundamental to a woman's wardrobe.

The 1920s brought a "boyish look" which flattened the bosom and displaced the waist. Predictably corsets were effected by this look and some women replaced them with a light foundation piece, or "girdle". About this time rubber elastic was discovered which had an enormous effect on the corset and its structure. The aim of the corset at this time was no longer to create a waist but rather to disguise any curve at all. This was achieved by a one-piece garment called a Corselette which shaped the body in a straight line.

By the 1930s the first trousers and shorts were being worn by women, and women's figures, - their natural figures - were being revealed as never before. Corsetry, made from elastic, now moulded and smoothed the body instead of forcing it into unnatural positions. The familiar "roll-on" appeared at this time, made completely of elastic it was knitted on the circular knitting machine which was also used to produce stockings. The next innovation to effect corsetry was the "lightening zip", introduced between 1934-5 which made lacing and buttoning a thing of the past.

After the war "the new look", introduced by Christian Dior, sent women in search of tightly-laced corsets, once again. The corset that gave this profile was called the "waspie", a narrow, boned corset about five or six inches wide with elastic inserts and optional back lacing.

This was the last style to necessitate the corset in its severest form. Thus, this item of foundation wear lost much of its power over fashion. The looks of the sixties and seventies had little necessity for the corset and, though the older generation held onto their stays, the younger generations happily discarded them and replaced them with little more than lycra. The reality of the corsets decline came when Gossard stopped the manufacture of corsets and introduced the wonder bra.

The History of the Brassière.

The second most important item of underwear to date is the brassière. Its history is comparatively short but its influence on fashion has been just as emphatic as that of the corset. Apart from a brief view of the ancient Greek 'Strophium' previously mentioned, there is no distinctive record of a garment, such as the brassière, with the purpose of control before the 20th Century. There are many references at the end of the 18th Century to 'bosom friends' and 'bust improvers'. These would

have been made to enhance the bust, projecting at the front but not separating the breasts. These 'implants' of wax or stuffed cotton were contained in the corset. The corset (containing the bust) is the closest forerunner to the brassière and began to contain separated bust cups in the early 1800s.

By the end of the 1880s a camisole-like garment appeared. It held boning and wire springs within its structure and could be adjusted to create an 'improved' bust line. These garments were separate from the corset and were known as 'bust bodices'; they were the next step in the evolution of the brassière which appeared soon after. This was followed by the introduction of a crossover bodice which consisted of two triangles of cloth crossing the front of the chest, in the centre.

The word 'brassière' is recorded by the Oxford dictionary as early as 1912, but the separate identity of the brassière from the bust bodice is difficult to pin point and it is equally impossible to credit one person with the design of this item of under apparel. The brassière has evolved quickly and has appeared in many different forms over its short history, and there are many recorded influences affecting this process. The first major advance in the design of the brassière was due to Mary Phelps Jacob - known as Caress Crosby. In 1912 she invented a short brassière of unstiffened material which allowed for the natural separation between the breasts. This style was free of boning and ended under the bustline.

By 1915 it was believed that a pretty bust bodice or brassiere was as essential as a corset (Fashion Magazine 1916) (Ewing, 1978, Pg. 123). This view developed with a more relaxed style of fashion which appeared in pre World War I years. Dresses were being made of softer fabrics and fitted closer to the body. The styles of the 1920s, however, ascribed the brassière a very different use. Instead of boosting the bosom and controlling it, the brassières of the time strapped it down, flattening the figure in keeping with the 'boyish look' mentioned earlier. These were

made of straight bands of cotton or brochè with side darts which were worn with a straight corset.

The next significant development in the brassière came in the late 1920s when Mrs Rosalin Klin of the Kestos Company created a brassière, known as the 'Kestos' bra. This shape allowed for a natural bust. By 1928 the brassière was used to shape and separate the bust and deeper bust, cups were designed by placing a disc like construction at the sides of the bust.

A few major steps in the progress of underwear, and especially the brassière appeared in the late 1920s and through the 1930s. These steps were the building blocks for the directions which underwear has taken since, and where it is today. The use of elastic, rayon, and other man made fibres gave way to more comfortable control and a softer feel. The discovery of new construction techniques and manufacturing processes also influenced the changing styles and performance of the brassière, giving this item of underwear the ability to uplift, accentuate and define the bust. Various cup fittings were introduced in 1935.

> "A system of sizing based on the difference between the circumference below the bust and at its widest point. Four cup sizes were introduced (A, B, C, D) and later sized from AAA, increasing to G became available to allow for a full bust on an otherwise slim figure and vice versa." (Carter, 1992 Pg. 151).

By the end of World War II, the brassière had firmly established itself in the female wardrobe, and was now known as the bra. New variations of bust shaping became popular such as the 'sweater girl' bra which created an exaggerated, high pointed bosom by means of stiffening and pointed cups and the 'high bust bra' which emphasised uplift using circular stitching around the bust cups and stiffened sections in the cup points. These styles became fashion due to such actresses as Jane Russell and Mae West, whose bosoms were the envy of many women.

The strapless evening gowns of the 1950s, worn by young prom queens, gave the strapless bra, originally designed in 1938, - a place in the market. Without shoulder straps it was necessary to reinforce the bra with elastic sections and wiring to prevent it from moving or slipping. Companies such as Kayser Bondor realised the possibilities of the youth market and in 1960 began to produce a range of bras for the adolescent growing figure.

By now the bra had taken many forms and shapes under different brand names. From Rudi Gernreichs no-bra of 1963 (Fig. 4) which was worn under transparent tops, to moulded, seamless bras sold by marks and Spencers (Fig. 5) and the Gossard Wonderbra introduced in 1969, giving emphasis to the cleavage with the use of padded side sections and underwiring. (The wonderbra has enjoyed renewed success in the 1990s). The development of a tricot type lycra in the late 1960s made it possible to match plain and elastic fabrics. Styles such as those mentioned could now be sold with matching pantigirdles, corselettes, briefs and slips. Sets of underwear quickly became, and remain, very popular today.

The Petticoat History.

In the 14th Century the only piece of underwear worn on the upper body, beneath the corset or bodice was the shift.. This loose, linen garment, worn next to the skin, was worn for centuries, changing its length and its name as time went by. The shift was previously known as a smock and later renamed the chemise. In 1823 it had become the 'envelope chemise' which fastened between the legs with a strap or gusset (Carter, 1992, Pg. 151) It appeared in the form of a vest in the 1920s.

Over the shift in the 14th century a women would wear volumes of petticoats which extended the width of the skirt. Petticoats were revealed under open skirts

by the reign of Henry VIII, and women displayed their place in society by the number of petticoats they wore. These petticoats came in many different colours usually in linen, cotton or wool, some were even quilted.

By the time Mary Tudor came to the throne in the 1550s skirts were being worn so wide that petticoats did not suffice. A frame work under the petticoats and skirt was developed called the farthingale. This began as a petticoat with a series of corded hoop sewn into the fabric, but eventually became a separate frame work made of cane, whalebone or wire. The French version of the farthingale, developed in the late 1570s, had large horizontal hoops at the waist which slanted downwards at the front to allow for the long fronted, stiffened bodice. Some women wore a 'bum roll' or 'sausage' around the waist which kept the skirts and petticoats out to a degree but this roll of stiffened cloth was not as successful as the farthingale, which remained fashionable until approximately 1625.

With the final abandonment of this cage like structure, skirts became softer but were still held away from the body by the use of many, beautifully decorated, petticoats, which were displayed by the tucking or looping up of the outer skirt. These petticoats were made of soft silks, brocades and were often embroidered or quilted to match dresses and skirts. By the end of the 17th Century petticoats were being made in floral silks and the long trains of that period were looped up at the back to create a kind of bustle.

Quilted petticoats became fashionable by the mid 18th Century both for their warmth and beauty. Elaborately embroidered, they were often made of satin with linings of cotton or wool. These, along with many other layers of skirt, were disguarded by the end of the 18th century to be replaced only with a slim fitting chemise type dress of muslin or cotton which was worn with a single narrow petticoat, though by the 1820s drawers were worn for warmth as well as decency.

First worn by little girls drawers, became part of the woman's wardrobe by the middle of the 19th century. They were worn long and consisted of two separate leg sections held together by a waist band. They were made in flannel, calico or cotton and were originally not intended to be seen under the dress or skirt.

Between 1815 and 1830 the high waistline that had been popular until then dropped and the bell shaped skirt evolved. Heavier dress fabrics were used to create the new shape and, so, under-layers of petticoats came back into fashion: By 1834 women wore four or five stiffened petticoats, some even wore boned insertions to support the increasing width of hems. Petticoats which showed below the hem of the skirt were decorated with flounces of lace. The top petticoat, worn just under the skirt was stiffened for reinforcement, and had a bodice attachment until about 1837 which acted as protection between the corset and the dress bodice.

To give the petticoats extra lift at the back a bustle reappeared in the form of a small down or cotton stuffed cushion worn in the small of the back. A bustle fortified with whale bone was worn around the waist and extended around the side to give extra protrusion.

According to Modes and Manners by Fischel Von Boeke the underclothing of a young lady in 1856 consisted of

> "long drawers trimmed with lace, a flannel petticoat wadded to the knees and stiffened at the upper part with whalebones inserted a hands-breadth from one another, a white starched petticoat with three stiffly starched flounces, two muslin petticoats, and finally the dress". (Ewing, 1978, Pg. 69).

It was at this time that the crinoline made a reappearance in ladies underclothing. This cage structure made of light metal or whalebone kept the skirt and petticoats held out, reducing the number of petticoats worn (Fig. 2). Although women no

longer had to carry the weight of so many petticoats now, they were even more restricted by their crinolines, which grew so wide that by the 1850s the space that a woman in full skirts required made it difficult to pass through doorways, climb stairs or sit down.

By the late 1950s a change in crinoline shape appeared which flattened the front and widened the hoops at the back. With the couturier, Worth's disapproval, and the abandonment of the crinoline by its most famous protagonist - the Empress Eugénié, the crinoline was finally out of fashion by the late 1860s.

Petticoats, however, reappeared becoming visible as skirts and trains - now gaining popularity - were looped-up revealing once again decorated underskirts of calico, muslin, wool and duck down quilting.

In the 1870s the bustle returned in the form of a "steel birdcage" covered with linen or calico and extended from the small of the back to the knees it was almost like a half crinoline (Ewing, 1979, Pg. 78). This was covered by a petticoat with layers of flounces at the back.

In the following decades underwear became more and more fanciful with frills, flounces, lace and ribbons decorating petticoats to extremes. One petticoat of the 1890s is recorded as costing £50 owing to its elaborate decoration. Petticoats for this end of the market were made of silk, satin, moiré and other luxury fabrics.

As women began to participate more widely in sporting activities - around the beginning of this century - underclothing gradually became more practical. Drawers were a popular item of under apparel and Amelia Bloomers invention of 1851 which was then frowned upon, reappeared in the form of "frillies" - bloomers which showed beneath knee-length skirts (for sport only).

The days of layering petticoats was coming to an end. By the 1920s, with the "boyish look", the petticoat was reduced to a slim close-fitting slip of silk or cotton with the minimum of bulk to facilitate that straight-line silhouette of the time. It was also possible to buy different styles of petticoat such as the half petticoat and the princess petticoat or 'slip' which was a straight tube with ribbon shoulder straps. The narrow style of the period reduced the widths of all underwear. It was at this time that close fitting knickers became fashionable. They were known as directoire knickers, similar to bloomers but with a slimmer fit, elasticated at the knees and waist. By 1928 one could purchase a combined petticoat with directoire knickers attached. The Chemise also lost its volume and was reduced to a narrow, shortened smock eventually replaced by the vest of wool, silk or cotton. The combination became popular at this time for both men and women. This all in one garment combined the chemise with drawers greatly reducing the bulk of underwear. Combinations came in wool or cotton, buttoned up the front and had long or short sleeves.

It was not until Diors 'new look' in 1947 that petticoats gained some of their width once more. The wide skirt and tiny waist that was the silhouette of the look necessitated voluminous underskirts, and in the 1950s evening wear was worn with petticoats of ballerina style volume trimmed with rows of lace and frills.

Throughout history, dress has been effected by underwear and in some cased underwear by outerdress. The two have intermingled at times to create a style of clothing which cannot be placed in one category, and so fits into both underwear and outerwear categories.

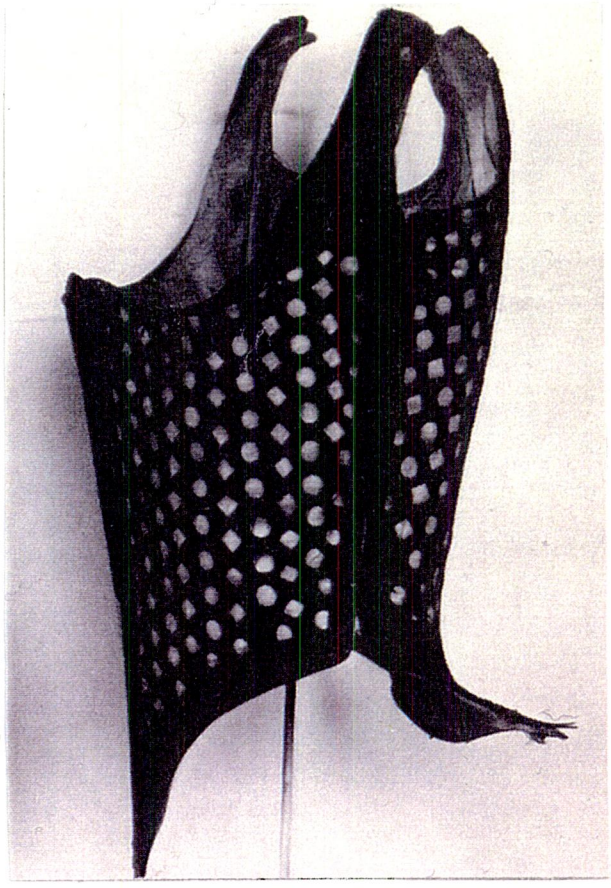

Fig. 1. Iron Corset, 16th Century

Fig. 2. Steel Crinoline with Horse Hair Flounce, 186

Fig.3 Corset add, Warner Bros., 19th Century.

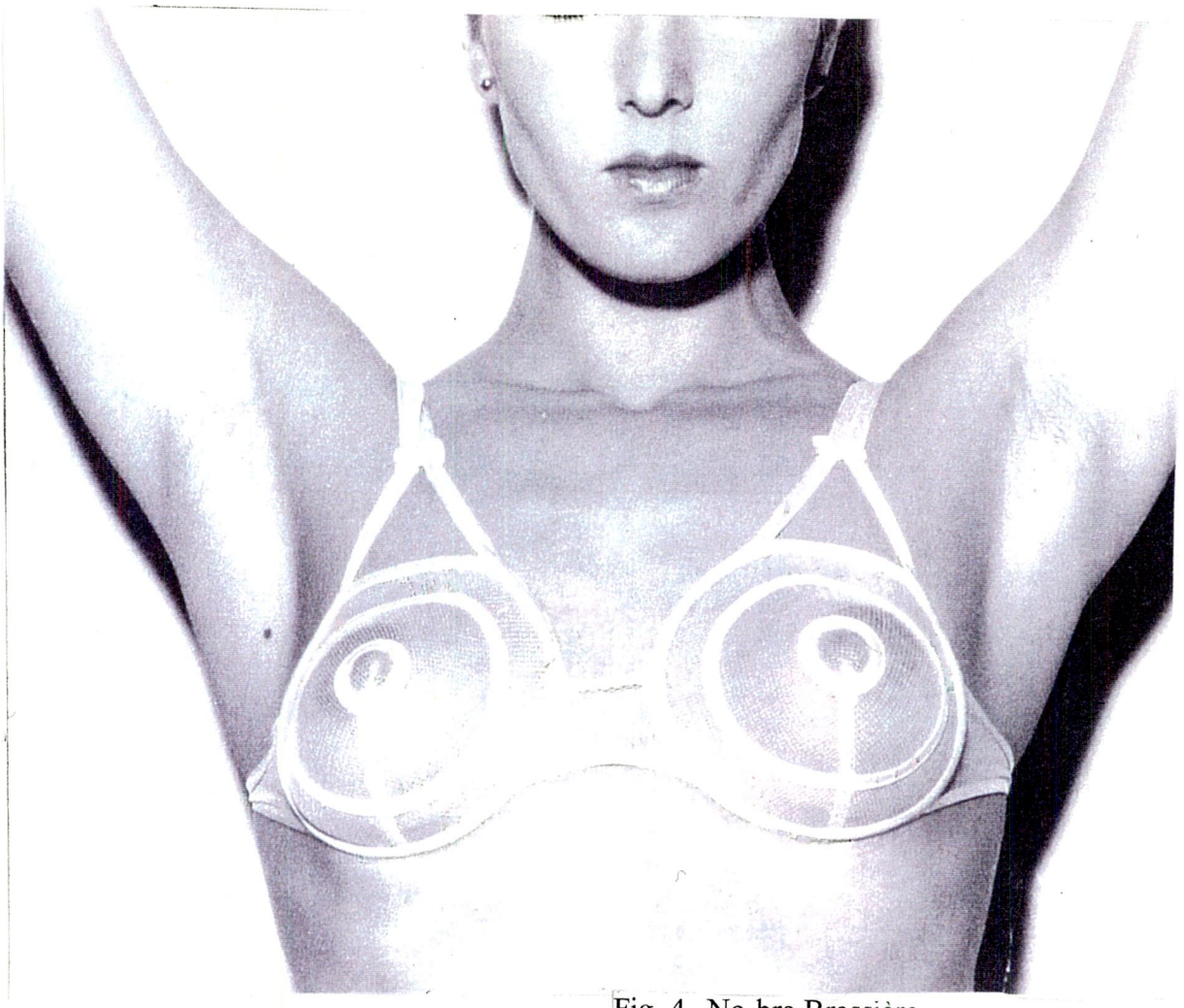

Fig. 4. No-bra Brassière,

Fig. 5. Moulded Brassière, Marks and Spencers, 1977.

CHAPTER TWO

Now that we have taken an overview at the progression of underwear through history, it is possible to look at some of these items in the context of the thesis title. In this chapter I intend to look at some significant historical periods in dress for examples of the intermingling, and role swapping of underwear and outerwear. As with all trends, social and economic structures have influenced styles in dress for centuries. For this reason it is important to consider these factors in the context of the relevant styles that this chapter describes from the visual and written examples available.

The Renaissance, which began in Italy in the 15th century and in Northern Europe nearly a century later, has left us with many clear representations of dress in paintings and sculptures of the period. It was in order to display their wealth that the upper classes patronised the art world thus leaving us many records, of the lavish costumes of contemporary affluent ladies and gentlemen.

In The Visitation by Domenico Ghirlandaio 1485-90, we see Giovanna delgi Albizzi (wife of Lorenzo Tornabuoni) dressed in a woven textile dress with heraldic design (Fig. 6). It seems that she may be pregnant in this painting and so the waist is not defined. The upper body of the dress illustrates a low cut bodice revealing underneath the gathered folds of a white, linen or muslin chemise. This long undergarment is obviously very generously cut, as slashes at the sleeves of the dress reveal the undersleeves of the chemise which are gathered to the extreme, probably necessitating many yards of fabric. The chemise sleeves are pulled through the slashes at the elbow and upper arm. This form of opening at the sleeves was fashionable in men's dress also, and continued to appear from time to time over the following centuries. The slashes were both functional as well as

Fig. 6. The Visitation by Domenic Ghirlandaio, 1485-90

decorative; they allowed movement in the arms and enabled the display of yards of chemise which remained fashionable for sometime. Both the dress of the subject and her handmaid reveal underskirts of contrasting fabrics. Giovanna's is probably one of many which keep her dress pushed out. The underskirt revealed here is an example of the elaborate weave and detail given to the visible undergarments at the time.

The Renaissance period brought with it massive upheavals in the religious beliefs of societies in western Europe. The schism in the Roman Catholic Church, coupled with an increasing access to knowledge due to the invention of the printing press, gave people a new focus. Society began to be influenced by ideas of the ancient Greeks and Romans.

The art of seduction became an important factor in the style of dress of the 16th century in Western Europe. "Pinched-in waists and low-cut bodices" gave erotic emphasis to the bosom and hip (Laver, 1969, Pg. 38-9). The revealing of undergarments was part of the seduction in dress of the time. Small areas of delicately decorated chemise edgings were visible at low-cut necklines and on sleeves. This decoration was due to new techniques of embroidery, cut work and filet - "a decorative technique of embroidered patterns on a net background - believed to be the fore runner of lace" (Tortora & Eubank, 1994, Pg. 154).

These tantalising revelations of lace and flashes of chemise remained in fashion throughout the Elizabethian period and into the 17th century when, even the boned underbodice was revealed, cut in the same fabric as the skirt. Sleeves of the 1630s were split at the seam to reveal undergarments. Some sleeves were gathered into the armhole and halfway down the forearm where they widened to reveal the whole chemise sleeve underneath, the chemise sleeve was often visible under the bodice sleeves also being decorated with frills and lace. The chemise filled in areas

around the neck on informal occasions, otherwise collars were worn, attached to partlets that were worn close to the throat or open in a V-shape. These could be worn inside or outside the bodice.

There are many portraits from this period with examples of fundamentals semi-revealed or becoming outer garments. One such portrait is Henrietta of Lorraine by Van Dyck, (1634) in which we can see that the outer gown has been specifically designed so as to reveal an elaborately decorated kirtle or underskirt at the centre front (Fig. 7). The undersleeves and bodice are also visible through openings in the seams of the outer gown and bodice. The underbodice is externalised here and covered in matching fabric to the underskirt. The outerdress fits over this bodice, and is cut away from the centre in a v-shape, it seems to be of a rigid nature similar to that of the underbodice. The chemise is not visible at the neckline here. Instead there is an open collar, similar to that described earlier, attached to partlets underneath the bodice of the outer gown. The elaborate lacing at collars and cuffs is also applied to petticoats and other areas of underwear that were meant to be exhibited. For the first time, underwear became sexy. The visible corset, seen in this portrait, became extremely fashionable in the later part of the century (becoming heavily decorated), and separate stomachers could be attached to the front of the corset in mix and match 17th century style.

Underskirts, still revealed by the overskirt in the 17th century, were heavily embroidered, ruffled and trimmed, the overskirts having splits, looping drapes and a long train at the back.

The fashions of the 17th Century became rich and elaborate, through increasing European trade with India and the Far East, and a wider choice of fabrics and goods. A consumer society was unveiling itself and a cycle of changing fashion was set in motion.

Fig. 7. Henrietta of Lorraine by Van Dyck, 1634.

The beginning of the Georgian period in England brought with it varying changes in the fashion silhouette. These changes were concentrated mostly in the skirt shape and were determined by the undergarments that were the structure for the silhouette. A series of hoops sewn into the petticoat or constructed with tapes, as a separate undergarment, held the skirts at the required angles. In 1710 a cone shape is recorded to have been the silhouette of fashionable women. This was achieved by circles of whalebone sewn into petticoats of stiffened cloth, each hoop increasing in size as it got closer to the hem. By the 1720s the dome shape predominated, replaced in the 1730s by a narrower front and back with wide hoops at the sides. This width at the sides of the skirt increased in the following decades until the 1760's, by which time some garments measured two and three-quarter yards in width. The skirts that cover these shapes were usually open at the centre front, revealing quilted petticoats which were gaining in popularity. The front bodice was often worn open to reveal a decorated corset underneath, similar to styles of earlier parts of the century.

The revealing of undergarments in the styles previously stated seem to have had a lot to do with the displaying of embellishment and decoration. All that was designed to be revealed was so adorned as to instantly convey the wealth of the wearer. The chemise that revealed itself at sleeve, cuff and neckline involved large amounts of stark, white linen or muslin in its design, amounts that only the rich could afford. The visible petticoats and underbodice were embroidered, quilted, and embelished on fabrics of high quality so that no passer-by could mistake their worth. Those who could not afford such finery simulated the silhouettes of the rich as best they could, using less expensive fabrics and decoration.

By the end of the 18th century a drastic change in dress occurred which paralleled the democratisation of the French Revolution. The excessive decoration of previous decades was stripped, literally to fundamentals. Rich fabrics such as

velvet, damascks and silks were banned. The classical draping of ancient Greece was reintroduced in the chemise-style silhouette of the 1790s. This style at first shocked society. The wispy, transparent, muslin chemise of that period must have felt, on initial wearing, as though one was entering public in one's underwear. Indeed, it is literally what the style endorsed; the chemise, with its yards and folds of muslin, which for centuries had been the innermost garment, suddenly became an outergarment. This silhouette was not commonly worn until such highly regarded ladies as Marie Antoinette, had their portraits painted wearing a *Chemise à le Reine*. Soon after that the fashion became generally accepted. According to Martin, some women wore their chemises soaked in water to attain more fully the appearance of the classical Greek drapery depicted by sculptures and art. (Martin, 1992, Pg. 17) This trend, for reasons of health as well as indecency could not have lasted long.

"Madame de Verninac" is shown by J.L. David in 1877 wearing a gold sheath which was fashionable at the time (Fig. 8). Her muslin shift, is an example of a chemise gown. The minimal design and embellishment of the dress starkly contrasts with its predecessor of the mid 18th Century. The folds of cloth suggest that many yards of muslin were used in the dress. There is button fastenings at the shoulder. The gathers of fabric are caught at the neckline and tied under the bustline to emphasis the bosom. The sleeveless arms are freed by the looseness around the arm hole - which contrasts with a later painting by Girodet-Trioson, (1809) of Angelique-Adèlaide de Meliand, Marquise de la Grange, in which the Marquise wears a similar white chemise with puffed sleeves that are caught at the upper arm. In this portrait the overcoat, also of muslin, has a ruffle collar attached, sitting quite far back from the neckline. This overcoat was worn in contrasting colours so as to vary the wardrobe a little. (Ribeiro, 1995, Pg. 118). The gold coloured cord which draws the gown in under the bust gives a little more embellishment to the look than that of Davids', Madame de Verniac.

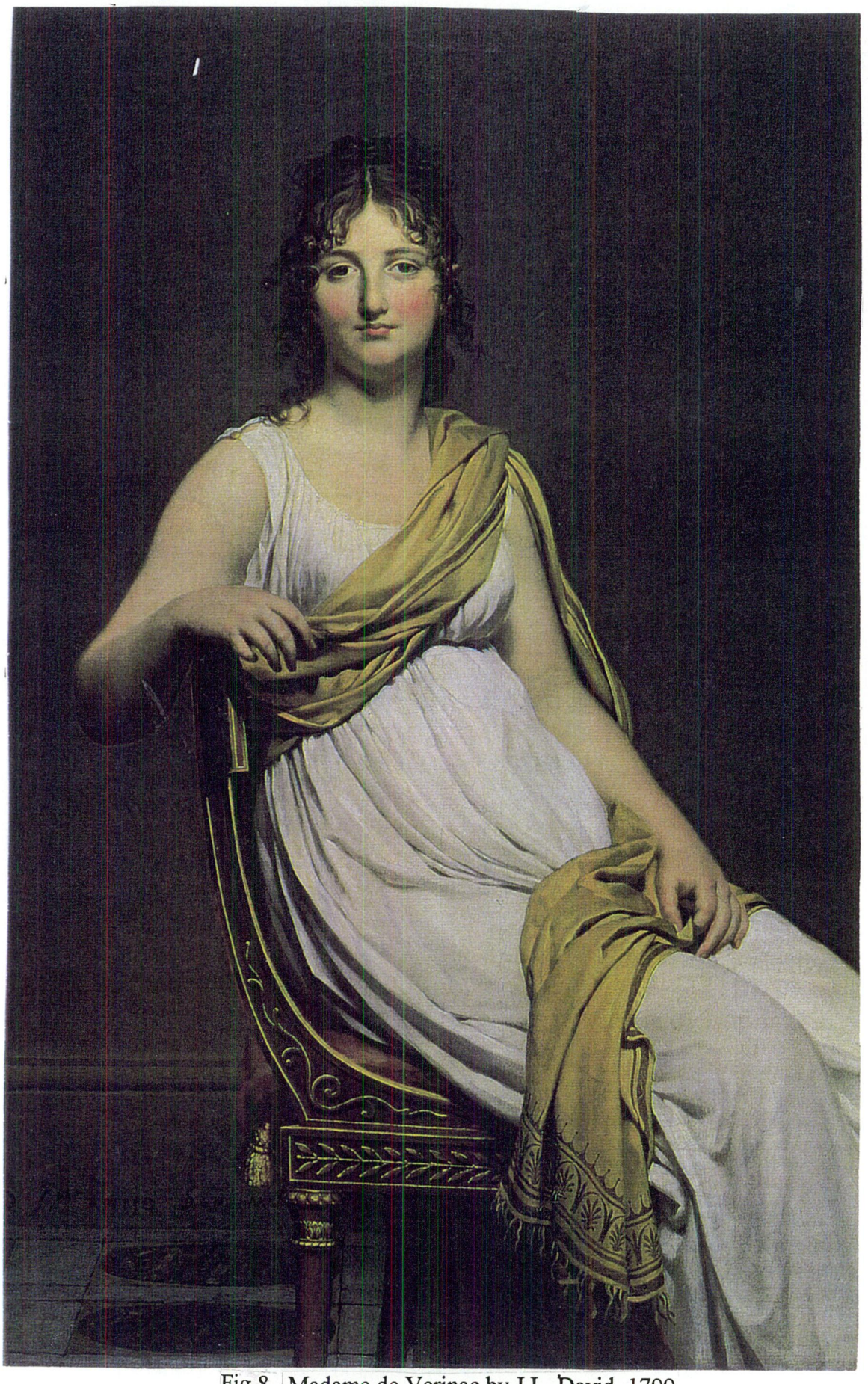

Fig.8. Madame de Verinac by J.L. David, 1799.
Henriette Delacroix, oil and canvas.

Fig. 9. Marquise De La Grange by A.L. Roussy-Girodet-Trioson, 1809.
Angélique - Adelaide de Miliand. Oil and Canvas.

By 1825 Classicism was declining and there was a dawning of the Romantic period. The middle classes began to take their influences from English romantic poets such as Scott, Keats, Byron and Shelley (Anderson Black & Garland, 1975, Pg. 143). The French Revolution had ended and people had grown tired of The Napoleonic Wars. It became less important to conquer land, as the state, and people in general, became more occupied with gaining personal wealth. The Industrial Revolution and an increasing supply of cotton from India and America had a huge effect on fashion. New lines of trade were being opened. Wholesalers, exporters and importers emerged, and the first department stores (selling-off-the peg clothing), opened for business.

By this time "the basic forms of costume for both sexes were established ..... gowns for ladies, and jackets and trousers for men. Changes in costume from then until today are, therefore, concerned with cut, fabric, decoration and accessories rather than form" (Black and Garland, 1975, Pg. 245)

Undergarments at this time were only visible at hemlines, if at all, but their influence was present in the fabrics and embellishment of the outergarments worn. According to Tortora and Eubank, morning dresses of the 1820s and 30s were often made of lingerie-type fabrics such as white cotton or fine linen with lace or ruffled trimming. (Tortora & Eubank, 1995, Pg. 279). Lace and ruffles had become synonymous with lingerie due to its increasing decoration. The intricate structures and varying techniques of lingerie ornamentation such as "shired bands, panels of broderie anglaise, insets of Valenciennes, lace, point d'esprit, silk ribbons, and pintucking" could not remain secret and so revealed themselves in the designs of outerwear. (Martin, 1993, Pg. 62 & 3) Vivid examples of this are present in an F.X. Winterhalter's painting of The Empress Eugénie and her Ladies of Honor, 1855. Here many of the previously mentioned techniques are illustrated in beautifully rendered tulles and laces. Bows and ribbons adorn sleeves, skirts and

Fig. 10. Empress Eugénie and Her Ladies of Honor by F.X. Winterhalter, 1855.

neck lines. Soft ruffles and folds give a chemise-like quality to the dresses, and flounces on skirts and bodices resemble 20th century lingerie and night gowns.
The subject of the painting was somewhat of a fashion influence at the time. The Empress had her clothes created by Charles Worth, and many ladies of her court followed suit.

By the 1860s fashion magazines began to appear in shops giving detailed descriptions and illustrations of the latest fashions. Harper's Bazaar, for example, was first published in 1867. These factors, along with rapid growth in industry and, especially, the development of the Singer sewing machine are responsible for the pace at which fashion was beginning to move.

Until now women had not participated in many active sports other than ice-skating, horseriding or croquet. After 1870 this began to change. There were more women in the work place, and the introduction of the safety bicycle in 1885 meant that women were becoming more active. Their social lives were now less centred around the home, and though dress did not immediately follow, it was only a matter of time before the fully bustled skirts of the lady cyclist had to be replaced. By the 1890s a divided skirt with leg separations was introduced for the sport of cycling described by Tortara and Eubank as 'a sort of full knickers' (Tortora and Eurbank, 1989 Pg. 321). At first 'nice' women were not willing to wear these, but soon it was adopted, not only for cycling but for other sports. Long skirts and petticoats continued to be worn for tennis and croquet.

The first decade of the new century brought with it many changes and progressions. Queen Victoria died in 1901 and her son Edward VII assumed the throne. His name has been given to that period. His interest in social activities and fashion rubbed off on the culture of the time. The democratic political system, which had been established in France from 1900, brought with it increasing

freedom for individuals which resulted in many innovations in the world of art, science and technology. Orville and Wilbur Wright made transport history in 1903 with the first ever successful flight and Henry Ford was responsible for the first model T. Ford in 1908, causing changes in society which were to continue at an ever increasing pace.

The many advances in the areas of science and research along with the increasing speed in which fashion was changing, came to an abrupt end in 1914 with the outbreak of World War I. Heavy rationing and a shortage of textiles as well as food, fuel and other supplies meant that fashion took a back seat and clothing became practical, with the utilisation of less cloth and conservative styles that would last for more than one season. Women's shift into the workplace during these years meant that their clothing had to be comfortable and suited to the tasks undertaken.

By the time the War ended in 1918 a large number of women had become accustomed to their new found independence and would not return to their original role of mother and housewife. Fashion was to play a part in this liberation and the '20s saw such drastic changes in women's dress as to effect the following decades. These changes in dress were not completely due to social behaviour, however, they had a lot to do with the advances in the textile industry towards man-made fibres, and an increasing influence of the cinema which was establishing itself as a major force in society. The first feature film was released in 1903 and was the dawning of a medium that was to influence social behaviour in dress and action to the present day. The designs of Poiret, the couturier, reflected this change in society, his loose, colourful creations freed the body and pathed the way for rapid and constant fashion change.

CHAPTER 3

In this Chapter I will consider some of the rapidly changing influences of the 20th Century on underwear and outerwear which have made them difficult to separate and categorise.

The advance in technology of man-made fibres, which began in the late 1880s and progressed in the 1920s, had a profound effect on underwear thus changing its structure, fabric and effect on the body. The use of elastic in control wear and the introduction of 'artificial silk' (rayon) as a leading fibre in lingerie and hosiery meant that comfort and reliability became part of the underwear package. Previous to their arrival underwear more often inflicted pain and discomfort on the wearer than any pleasure.

Cinema, which had established itself by the 1920s, moved from silent, flickering pictures to smooth, talking ones; from black and white to colour and television, so that in every household there is a moving talking picture box with the power to change the way the viewer dresses, speaks, thinks and acts. Along side this influential source of media there is the power of written and visual stimuli available in magazines and newspapers which have become mainstream sources of knowledge. It is now difficult to establish who or what has the greatest influence on dress in this century - society and economics, as in past centuries, or the media. In the context of this thesis it is important to consider these elements.

In the 20th Century we see the fashion designer come to power. The former dressmaker or tailor has been replaced by a set of style dictators who have gained celebrity status. The dictates of these designers, and other afore mentioned influences, are largely responsible for the increasing difficulty in separating inner from outerwear.

Though the scientific research into man-made fibres began in the 1880s with the discovery of a new fibre manufactured from cellulose discovered by Count Hilaire de Chardonnet, it was not until the 1920s that the fibre - known as artificial silk - was widely used (Tortora & Eubank, 1989, Pg. 378). It was given the name rayon by the United States Department of Commerce and was used in the production of women's clothing and especially undergarments, as it made underwear cheaper while resembling the more expensive silks and satins. Rayon was, however, seen as a poor substitute for silk and was only chosen for its price. It was not until the late 1930s, when the quality of rayon fabric had greatly improved that it became fashionable with the upper and middle classes. According to Wilson and Taylor, Courtaulds had great success with their advertisements of rayon garments for Harrods in Vogue. (Wilson & Taylor, 1989, Pg. 98) Other rayon fabrics such as acetate were also used in women's clothing and underwear.

Another man-made fibre, which was marketed by the E.I. du Pont de Nemours company in 1938, was nylon. A polyamide derived from carbon, oxygen and hydrogen, it had an even greater effect on the underwear industry than rayon. The first five years of its existence was given over mostly to the war effort in 1940-45. Being, light and durable, nylon was useful for "tents, parachutes, tow-ropes and tarpaulins" (Ewing, 1979, Pg. 151). After the war it was to revolutionise women's stockings and was also used in clothing.

The greatest effect on underwear and its emergence in different forms as outerwear was the introduction of elastic. Elastic was first made of rubber and appeared in corsetry as early as 1913 in the U.S.A. It was not until the importation of liquid latex that it became possible to introduce elastic into mass-production. Liquid latex could produce a very fine elastic thread through a process of extrusion. This thread could be woven into fabrics which meant the dawning of stretch materials. These materials were ideal for corsetry. Tight lacing and boning were no longer

necessary. Ewing lists the elastic fabrics used, for example, by Berlei manufacturers as "Lastex Batiste, hand knitted elastic, and chiffon lastex yarn". Other elastic fabrics widely used in underwear were "gripknit, French lastex-yarn lace, satin lastex, flowered satin power lastex yarn, controlelastic, aeroknit elastic panels and elastic net". (Ewing, 1979, Pg. 147)

By the 1960s elastics no longer contained rubber, were completely man-made and were given the name elastine by EEC regulations in 1976. Lycra was the dominant fabric in this group. Lycra is like nylon, weight by weight, it is about three times as powerful as rubber elastic. In 1960 fabric that was made from this fibre went under the category of corsetry and underwear.

Lycra and other elasticated fabrics became externalised when fitness and the work out came into vogue in the 1960s. The stretch of the lycra was ideal for movement and the smooth figure hugging effect of its fit meant that no bulge was hidden. Stretch also became a part of swimwear which simulated the styles of underwear more closely as time progressed; bikinis and swimsuits often look so similar to undergarments today that the two are sometimes used for the same purpose. As these activities became a part of daily life for many, the style of clothing began to creep out of the gym and swimming pool and onto the street. A trend for Lycra garments in the late 1980s hit the mass market. Dresses, leggings, tops, and skirts in Lycra became available in every chainstore, and were even found on the catwalks by the end of the decade, popularising a short, skin tight fit which suited only a well toned body. The fashion has since been watered down, but Lycra is here to stay. It is still very much a presence in underwear as well as outerwear.

Stretch fabrics have come along way from their first usage in underwear. It is now possible to buy a stretch wool suit which does not crease and loose its shape as would occur with pure wool. The Lycra trade mark can be found on tights,

stockings, T-shirts and eveningwear. It has been mixed and remixed in many different fibre combinations and has liberated the female form, because the female form was ready to be liberated.

Two World Wars put women in positions of responsibility previously denied to them. To establish a sense of authority and dominance that they had never before been encouraged to display, and which was now necessary to succeed in the work place, women's dress became quite masculine, shielding the wearer from an image of vulnerability associated with the female sex, thus giving the essence of leadership and authority. This dress ethic has continued in the workplace until recent years when softer, feminine shapes began to appear, suggestive of a new found security which perhaps allows women to maintain their authority while at the same time expressing their sexuality.

Masculine silhouettes had become a part of womens fashion by the 1950s and some women began to wear trousers. By the 1960s manufacturers were aiming their styles of clothing at a growing population of young people who were not content with the conventional lifestyles of their parents generation. Fashions reflected their young and rebellious nature. Designers such as Mary Quant introduced bright, daring styles which became immediately popular. The mini skirt appeared for the first time and revealed more leg than any other hem length had before it. Stockings could not be worn with this new look as they revealed suspenderbelts, so tights replaced them, (worn by ballerinas only, previous to this). They were made in wool and nylon in bright colours. Tights combine underpants with stockings and replaced them both for a while, being considered part-underwear, part-hosiery. There was not much of a leap from tights to the body stocking which fitted tightly to the figure from top to bottom. This all in one suit was popular among the well toned bodies of the late 1960s and early '70s. It is here that the definition of underwear and outerwear became clouded. See-through

fabrics, previously synonymous with lingerie, became outer tops revealing minimal, seamless underwear like the no-bra mentioned in Chapter 1 (Fig. 4). Loose dresses hung from the shoulder strikingly similar to the slip or chemise worn in a previous time.

Fashion released an obsession for the revealing of inner layers that was to continue for the rest of the century. This liberation in dress has helped to establish the intermingling of outer and inner wear as a fashion of the 20th century.

"Originally the basic purpose of fashion photography was to illustrate and sell clothes - advertising at its simplest and most direct" The photographic image however, has more potential than just to record the item. It can create a mood, tell a story and suggest a situation or life style. It is this art of suggestion which has created successful advertising, persuading the viewer that they want to buy into the image they see. The power of sex to sell has dominated the world of advertising ever since it was realised. The illusion of fulfilment, gratification and therefore happiness has been exploited in thousands of advertising campaigns from ice-cream to cars. The semi-clad woman beckoning the man into a sports car purveys the image to the male that to own this car would be to attract this woman, and to the female that to look this way would be to attract the man who could afford this car. This mentality has inspired women to dress in accordance with the images that they see. Ash and Wright explain it as, presenting the viewer with "a seductive suggestion requiring him or her to aspire to an ideal, even if that ideal represents an unashamed portrayal of luxurious clothes, extravagant living, and exceptional physical beauty far beyond the realisation of most spectators" (Ash and Wright, 1988, Pg. 112). The photographic image presents a frozen image to the viewer which appeals to the sense of sight. Television and cinema however, have the ability to talk the viewer into something that, on sight only, may not appeal to them. The power of these medias is obvious in many areas of our lives, including

Fig. 11 Express Yourself Corset by jean Paul Gaultier, 1990.

Fig. 12 Like A Virgin corset by Jean Paul Gaultier, 1990

the clothes which we wear, and how we wear them. Madonna has manipulated these powers, realising the ability of sex and seduction to sell. She has worn underwear externalised from the beginning of her career in many of her videos and tours, creating a fashion trend not only with fans, but with the general public and so with designers. Her "Express yourself" outfit designed by Jean Paul Gaultier in 1990 has been on exhibition in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in new York as an example of innerwear as outerwear (Fig. 11). The corset type body, worn over pin stripe trousers with a jacket utilises the fifties style of bra cup with exaggerated points. This is a feature of another corset, designed for her by Jean Paul Gaultier, in the same year. The "Like a Virgin corset" with circular bust cup stitching and lacing at front sides and hips was worn as a performance costume (Fig. 12). The styles with which Madonna shocked the world can now be found in every night club and bar.

With images created by the media, and individuals within the media being continually related to sex and seduction, it is not surprising that society has relaxed its attitudes towards sexual relations and become more outwardly seductive, focusing their attention on physical beauty. Clothing has followed closely these messages which are changing our society. There is a focus on seductive attire which is unquestionably responsible for the mingling of underwear with outerwear.

At this point, media, the consumer and culture come together to effect the influences of the designer. According to Ruth Rubinstein "Consumer relevance, not the designers, turn a style into a fashion"(Rubinstein, 1995, Pg. 145). She suggests that a designer offers a range of styles on the runway, but only a few of these are chosen by buyers, magazine editors and boutique owners to be offered to their clients. Rubinstein says that when the consumer re-orders their choices, these styles become the fashion of the time. She leaves the designer out of this equation

which many would dispute. As the designer makes the initial suggestions to his or her clients, it is surely a combination of designer, buyer and consumer which creates this fashion. Because these influences must all work simultaneously to please consumer, buyer and sell magazines and clothes it is important to consider all the ingredients to understand the evolution of underwear as outerwear and its status in the 1990s.

The Designer has become a marketing expert, predicting and interpreting styles of clothing that will sell within the economic and social climate of the time. Season after season, for over a decade, there has been a continued success in styles of dress that are seductive and revealing. This fashion, adopted by women, has been described by McDowell as the "females' dream of being tauntingly in charge of one's body and behaviour in a male-structured world", he continues to say that "womens dress parades a blatant sexuality previously unknown." (McDowell 1992, Pg. 175). Underwear has been interpreted as the obvious projection of allurement, being continually externalised by designers and accepted by magazine editors, buyers and the consumer as the fashion of choice.

Gianni Versace has produced many interpretations of seductive dress, taking his influences from the inner layers of clothing. His winter 1992/93 collection of strapped and buckled silk and wool crepe eveningwear, paying homage to bondage, reveal styles of fastenings and control still associated with the corset (Fig. 13). In his Spring collection of the same year there are aspects of historic underwear embellishment (reminiscent of the portrait of the Empress Eugeine) on the frilled and flounced skirt of a cocktail outfit which is worn with a beaded brassiere of metal and jet (Fig. 14). Versace continues to invest in the underwear as outerwear element creating collections incorporating stretch fabrics, lace, boning and corsetry in their design. An outfit for Spring '95 by Versace is

Fig. 13. Wool/Crep
Evening Dresses b
Gianni Versace,
Autumn/Winter 199

Fig. 14 Asymetrica
skirt and Brassiere
by Gianni Versace
Spring/Summer 19

Fig. 15.
Evening Gown by Garavani Valentino, Autumn/Winter 1989/90.

Fig. 16 Bust Bodices by Garavani Valentino, Autumn/Winter 1989/90.

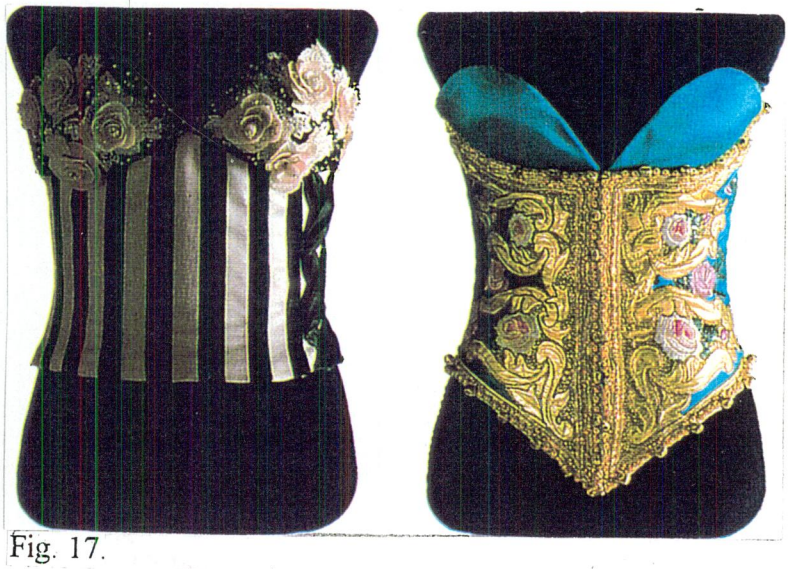

Fig. 17.

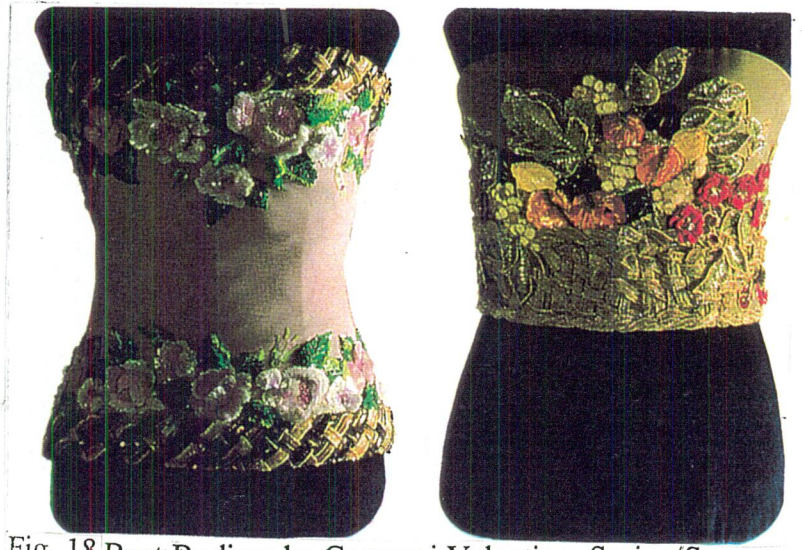

Fig. 18 Bust Bodices by Garavani Valentino, Spring/Summer 1989.

Fig. 19 Laced Back Dress by Garavani Valentino. Autumn/Winter 1989/90.

advertised as an "embroidered cotton bodice" with "Lycra hot pants" selling at £4,882 (McDowell, 5th Feb. 1995, Pg. 20).

Valentino more subtly displays the under layers of dress in a red, silk crepe and quilted silk satin gown from his Winter 1992/93 collection (Fig. 15). Here he has incorporated the corset, with its traditional bow fastenings and quilted embellishments, with a long draping silhouette. Another Valentino creation of Winter 1989 displays a crossed, lattice-work back (a feature used by many designers) suggestive of an earlier time in corset history (Fig. 19). For the same collection he designed a series of bust bodices with built in shaping to be worn with a skirt or trousers as an outfit (Figs. 16,17&18). Lacing is a feature at the centre front and sides of two of the bodices shown (Figs 16&17).

Most established designers - Yves St Laurent with his use of lace and tulle, ribbons and corset-like shaping (Figs. 20&21), Jean Paul Gaultier whose bustieres and conical bra features have launched him as the king of externalising underwear and Vivienne Westwood with her continuous return to the bustle and crinoline - have taken these revelations of the second skin to their limits. An article in American Vogue states that "it is the umpteenth time around for the underwear-worn-as-outerwear concept" and continues to give a list of examples; "bustieres have become a night-time classic, slip dresses, leotards, camisoles, Calvin Klein's parade of men's underwear for the opposite sex and the (current) obsession with see-through, even the babydoll silhouette comes into play". There are other aspects of underwear, more subtly displayed such as "zig-zag stitching, seams, stays, straps, gussets, grommets and garters, elasticised inserts and panels, boning, hooks and eyes and laces" (Shields, Nov. 1990, Pg. 342). These elements of underwear design have become such a part of outerwear that the crossover from one to the other goes unnoticed.

Fig. 20. Evening Dresses by Yves Saint Laurent. Autumn/Winter, 1991/92.

Fig. 21.

Perhaps this is the beginning of a less blatantly exposed view of the under layer. Lagerfeld, Versace and Lacroix all featured corsets in their Spring/Summer Collections of 1995 but they were not the centre pieces of their shows, they were more "the under pinning of the look, decently hidden", (McDowell, 5th Feb. 1995, Pg. 21).

CONCLUSION

This thesis has dealt with underwear of varying forms in history, and the direction in which underlayers have evolved, revealing themselves as outerwear.

There has been no clear, chronological order this process of exposure. The constant desire for change in dress and the ever moving concept of what constitutes beauty, have kept women shifting their styles and recreating their body shapes for centuries. It is usual that there is a focal point to the style of a time. The defined waist or bust maybe popular at one time and at another, the back or legs. According to Laver, this constant shift in the focus point of the female form is designed by women to allure the attention of the male, revealing or semi-revealing what, at the time, is deemed an erogenous zone and replacing it with another as time persists so as not to satiate the interest of the male. (Laver, 1969, Pg. 97)

The art of seduction relies heavily on the outward appearance of which dress ranks as a key component. The ability to entice and arouse the interest of the opposite sex by means of revelation or externalising inner layers of formerly private and intimate attire, has been realised throughout history. Previous to the Renaissance women were advised by the church fathers to cover themselves with long, unembelished robes so as to keep men from the sin of lust. To attract a suitor, women began to reveal sections of their chemise at slits in sleeves and skirts to arouse the interest of the opposite sex. Courtesans of the Victorian period seduced in a similar manner, revealing flounces, chemises and petticoats, sparking the interest of men and the disapproval of middle class women. In the 20th Century the power of allurement in this form has been realised by the media which has advertised and conveyed messages of seduction that particularly affect the way in which we present ourselves outwardly.

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