

Both male and female clothing from the eighteenth century are represented in the collection, but from the nineteenth century on, the collection represents primarily women's clothing, as the KCI feels it reflects the ideal beauty of the time more faithfully than male apparel. The contemporary branch of the collection comprises clothing created by world-famous designers, including numerous pieces from Japanese designers who have been active since the 1970s, like Comme des Garçons, which donated over 2,000 items, Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto, and other designers of the new generation.

The Kyoto Costume Institute has lent its collections to longer-established museums like the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) and the Victoria and Albert Museum (London), among others. The KCI has also received numerous donations from individual fashion collectors and designers from all over the world, including Jean-Charles de Castelbajac, Calvin Klein, Yves Saint Laurent, Christian Lacroix, and many Japanese designers. A professionally controlled environment in which temperature and humidity are constantly monitored with great care ensures that the collection is preserved from aging and other types of deterioration. The KCI only restores items in the collection when absolutely necessary, and then with the utmost attention to detail.

THE KEY TO COSTUME EXHIBITION

These high standards and the extensiveness of its collections ensure the success of the exhibitions held by the Kyoto Costume Institute. The KCI stands in opposition to the general trend of the past two decades where the establishment of a museum structure is privileged above the quality of the collections inside. Despite the fact that the KCI has mounted superior exhibitions every four to five years, often in conjunction with the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, the institute itself still does not have its own large-scale exhibition space.

The Kyoto Costume Institute's first major exhibition, "The Evolution of Fashion 1835-1895," was held in the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, in 1980. This exhibition and others that followed were designed to introduce the world history of Western fashion as an enjoyable, beautiful, and universal cultural property. Several of the KCI's exhibitions, such as "Revolution in Fashion 1715-1815," "Japonism in Fashion," ("Japonism & Mode") and "Visions of the Body: Fashion or Invisible Corset," have also traveled to Paris and New York, receiving accolades for their presentation and their accompanying catalogues.

An exhibition of clothing requires a different approach from the exhibition of a painting or a sculpture. For example, for clothing, mannequins are frequently used to mount the show, and most museums do recognize that mannequins are an essential part of an effective clothing presentation. However, because fashion has changed not only the shape of clothing over time, but also has especially altered the basic shape of the female body, the KCI has given much thought to the construction of mannequins uniquely appropriate to each exhibition.

Corset

c. 1580-1600

French

Iron with scroll motif; one front and two back pieces; opening at center-back.

Inv. AC9250 95-45

Gift of Wacoal Corp.



With the death of Louis XIV and the coronation of Louis XV in 1715, a smart and refined style called “rococo” had blossomed. Though the term *rococo* was later used in the nineteenth century in a derogatory sense, suggesting excess and frivolity, today it refers to a general artistic style emblematic of harmonious French culture. The culture responsible for the rococo style was characterized by the pursuit of personal pleasure. Since that pursuit naturally included clothing, it, too, was soon elevated to the realm of art. Though France was already an acknowledged leader of fashion during the reign of Louis XIV, the rococo period confirmed the country’s reputation as the leader of women’s fashion worldwide.

After the initial popularity of rococo, clothing styles veered off in two diametrically opposed fashion directions, one involving a fantastic conceit of artificial aesthetics, and the other a desire to return to nature. The French Revolution in 1789 modernized many aspects of society and brought a clear shift in clothing styles from decorative rococo to the more simple dress of neoclassicism. This radical change in clothing styles, a phenomenon unique in the history of fashion, is a reflection of the momentous upheavals in the social values of the period.

Women’s Rococo Fashion

For women, the essential spirit of rococo fashion was rooted in elegance, refinement, and decoration, but there were also elements of capriciousness, extravagance, and coquetry. In contrast to the dignified solemnity of seventeenth-century costume, women’s dress of the eighteenth century was both ornate and sophisticated. Men’s costume in the seventeenth century had been more extravagant and colorful than women’s, but women now seized the initiative and their court costumes became splendidly elegant. At the same time people also sought a comfortable lifestyle, one in which they could spend leisurely hours in cozy sitting rooms, surrounded by knickknacks and their favorite furniture. To accommodate these more down-to-earth urges, a relatively relaxed and informal style of dress also appeared.

A new style in the early eighteenth century was the *robe volante*, or the flowing gown, derived from the *négligé* popular toward the end of Louis XIV’s reign. The characteristic feature of the gown was a bodice with large pleats flowing from the shoulders to the ground over a round petticoat. Although the bodice was tightly molded by a corset, the loose-fitting pleated robe gave a comfortable and relaxed impression. Following the *robe volante*, the typical women’s rococo gown was called the *robe à la française*, and this style was worn as formal court dress up until the Revolutionary period.

Throughout the period, the basic elements of a woman’s costume consisted of a robe, a petticoat much like what we would call a skirt today, and a triangular stomacher worn over the chest and stomach under the front opening of the robe. These garments were worn over a corset and a pannier, both of which formed the body silhouette. (The term *corset* was not used in the eighteenth century, but is used here to refer to an undergarment stiffened with whalebone stays, called *corps*, or *corps à baleine*.) With only the decorative details changing decade after decade, such were the fundamental components of women’s dresses until the French Revolution.

Painters such as Jean-Antoine Watteau, Nicolas Lancret, and Jean-François de Troy portrayed these splendid dresses in great detail, depicting everything from individual stitches of lace down to intricate footwear. In *Gersaint’s Shopsign* (1720, Schloss Charlottenburg, Berlin; ill. p. 39), Watteau dramatically delineated the elegant gowns of the day and the delicate movement of their pleats, and captured their lustrous, smooth textures of satin and silk. Although he himself did not design them, such double-folded pleats at the back later became known as “Watteau pleats.”

Extravagant silk fabrics produced in Lyons, France, were essential for rococo fashion. From the seventeenth century onwards, the French government supported the diversification of silk fabric production in Lyons through the development of new loom mechanisms and dyeing technology. French silk fabrics gained a reputation for top quality, and replaced the Italian silk products that had been dominant during the previous century. In the mid-eighteenth century, the golden age of rococo, Louis XV's mistress Madame de Pompadour appeared in portraits wearing exquisite gowns made from silk fabrics of the highest quality. In the François Boucher portrait *Madame de Pompadour* (1759, The Wallace Collection, London; ill. p. 56), she wears a typical *robe à la française*, the gown opening at the front over a tightly fitted bodice. A petticoat and triangular stomacher can be seen under the robe. The stomacher is richly decorated with a ladder of ribbons (*échelle*), which accentuates the shape of her bosom, which is seductively lifted and formed by the corset. In addition, *engageantes* of top-quality lace adorn the cuffs of the dress. Flounces, lace, ribbons, and artificial flowers embellish the entire robe. Although the ornamentation might be said to be excessive, the elements harmonize well and present the most sophisticated and delicate spirit of rococo.

During the same period that rococo reached such decorative heights, the aristocracy found itself turning toward the fashion of the commoners for hints on how to dress for a more comfortable lifestyle. The functional coats and skirts of ordinary people influenced aristocratic women's costumes, which gradually tended toward simpler styles, except on formal occasions. A practical short coat called a *casquin* or a *caraco* was adopted for everyday wear, and robes were simplified. The stomacher, for example, once attached to the robe with pins, was now replaced by the relative ease of two flaps of fabric (*compères*) that connected the front opening of the robe.

The growing popularity of simpler, more functional dresses in France at the time was in part due to "Anglomania," a fascination with all things English prevalent at the time in French culture. The first signs of Anglomania in men's costume can be found in the final years of the reign of Louis XIV, and then in women's costumes after 1770. When the English custom of walking in the countryside and enjoying the open air became popular among the French, the *robe retroussée dans les poches* appeared as a fashionable style for women. The skirts were pulled through the slits for the pockets in the side of the dress and draped over the back in a practical arrangement originally created for working-class women to wear while at work or walking through the town.

This fashion was succeeded by the *robe à la polonaise*. In this style, the back of the skirt was held up by strings and divided into three draping parts. Poland was divided (first) by three kingdoms in 1772, and it is said that the term *robe à la polonaise* derives from this political event. When the pleats at the back center of the robe were sewn down all the way to the waist, the style was called *robe à l'anglaise*, or English style. A *robe à l'anglaise* consisted of a front-closing robe and a petticoat that protrudes from under the rear bodice, which has a pointed shape at the lower end. Sometimes the robe was worn without a pannier, attaining its round shape solely through the drapes of the skirt. Later, during the Revolutionary period, the trend incorporated the stomacher and skirt, and was transformed into a one-piece dress, or round gown.

Elegance in Men's Fashion

During the seventeenth century, new, colorful, and ornate men's costumes constantly appeared, but in the eighteenth century, men's fashion was more stable and less garish. The *habit à la française*, a typical eighteenth-century French suit, consisted of a coat (*habit*, called *justaucorps* in the seventeenth century) which gradually became fitted in shape, a waistcoat, and breeches. A white shirt, a jabot frill, a cravat, and a pair of silk stockings completed the men's suit.

Brilliant colors, intricate embroidery, decorative buttons, and elaborate jabots for the neck, chest, and cuffs were the important elements for gentlemen dressed in the rococo style. In particular, the coat and waistcoats of the typical suit (the *habit à la française*) were elaborately embroidered with gold, silver, and multicolored threads, sequins, and artificial jewels. Many embroidery workshops were located in Paris during this period. Cloth for jackets or waistcoats was often embroidered before tailoring so that men could first choose their favorite patterns, then order the suit cut and sewn to size.

Anglomania, evident in French men's costumes from the late seventeenth century, continued to be in fashion. For example, the collared English riding-coat (*redingote*) was adopted for town wear as an alternative to the French coat. During the latter half of the eighteenth century, the French version of the English frock coat, or *frac*, appeared. This was a jacket with a turned down collar, generally constructed from a plain-colored fabric. On the eve of the Revolution, striped patterns became popular, and the passion for elaborate embroidery on men's suits disappeared. Due to the English taste for simplicity, the *frac* continued to be a standard item of men's clothing throughout the nineteenth century, along with the pantaloons that eventually replaced breeches.

Exoticism: Chinoiserie and *Indienne*

Europeans had long been intensely curious about various items imported from the East. In the seventeenth century, the importation of remarkable Chinese decorative arts brought a new form of exoticism and created a vogue for *chinoiserie*. Complex, curvaceous forms based on Oriental aesthetics and sensibility inspired painters such as Jean-Antoine Watteau and François Boucher, who were fascinated by exotic Chinese scenery and customs. In aristocratic residences, the sitting room was often decorated with rare Chinese furniture and porcelain, and in the garden it was not uncommon to find a small arbor and a pagoda.

Dress also reflected a Chinese influence. In particular, textiles with asymmetrical patterns and unusual color combinations found popularity at the time. The desire for exotic cultural details and variety stimulated an interest in Bizarre silks, *ungen* embroidery, Pekin stripes, and in Nankeen (yellow cotton from Nanking, China). Even the names of these materials evoke an exoticism valued by late rococo culture. As accessories, oriental folding fans, which had been important accessories in European fashion since the sixteenth century, were now called upon to complete the *chinoiserie* ensemble.

Europeans did not accord Japan a distinct national cultural identity until the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the "Japonism" movement took off in Europe. However, as early as the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Japanese kimonos were imported by the Dutch East India Company and worn by European men as an indoor gown. Since the supply of authentic imported Japanese kimonos was limited, oriental gowns made of *indienne* (Indian chintz) appeared to help satisfy the demand. These were called *Japonsche rocken* in Holland, *robes de chambre d'indienne* in France, and banyans in England. Due to their exotic features and relative rarity, they became status symbols of wealth.

The *indienne*, a painted or printed cotton fabric made in India, became so excessively popular among Europeans during the seventeenth century that authorities felt compelled to ban the import and production of *indienne* until 1759. Once the ban was lifted the printing industry immediately grew. Among many printed fabrics, the Jouy print became especially well known. Christophe P. Oberkampf, who set up the Jouy factory in the Versailles suburb of that name, profited from timely developments in both physics and chemistry. Through technical innovation, he invented a new printing technique in place of the conventional resist-dyeing method, and adopted advanced printing techniques from England.

Printed cotton fabrics became the trend not only for clothing, but also for interior decoration; their exotic and refined multi-colored patterns were appealing, and they were priced more economically than silk fabrics. Printing factories sprang up all over Europe in the eighteenth century. Initially merely imitating *indiennes*, these factories inspired technical developments such as the invention of the copper roller printing system, which made possible the mass production of printed fabrics. The popularity of cotton fabrics during this time helped give rise to the shift in favored material for clothing from silk to cotton during the Revolutionary period.

The Fantastical Aesthetics of Artifice and the Return to Nature

As the *ancien régime* teetered on the verge of collapse, the fully-matured rococo style waned in importance. In the 1770s, the typical women's court costume was a huge skirt pushed out on both sides with a wide pannier, and a high coiffure whose aim was to exalt the beauties of artifice. Women's dresses were not so much items of apparel as awesome architectural constructions made of fabric. The refined aesthetics of rococo culture disappeared, and its delicate lightness was replaced with the looming shadows of the Revolution.

The gigantic coiffures, huge wigs, and outrageous headdresses of this period amplified the darkness of those looming shadows. Women's faces looked tiny framed in the center of such outlandish ornamentation. Coiffures were often large enough to contain models of chariots, landscapes, streams, fruit baskets, and all sorts of other fanciful elements. In order to dress in a stylish fashion, *coiffeurs* (hairdressers) were required to lay out, construct, and arrange the extraordinary hairstyles. To match the hair, the creation of extravagant decorations for dresses was also essential.

By the second half of the eighteenth century, the role of the *marchand des modes* (haberdasher) began to grow in importance, and increasingly they also sold various ornaments for clothing and headdresses. Designing hair ornaments and decorating costumes produced by tailors (*tailleur*) and dressmakers (*couturière*), the *marchands des modes* displayed great originality, and were responsible for initiating innumerable new trends in fashion.

A vital method for spreading the trends of Paris was (as it still is) the fashion magazine. Although one periodical that introduced the latest fashions in Paris had already emerged during the seventeenth century, several new and important fashion magazines sprang up in the pre-Revolutionary period. These included *Le Journal du Goût* (1768–1770), *Le Cabinet des Modes* (1785–1786), and *La Galerie des Modes et du Costume Français* (1778–1788), all of which appeared during the second half of the eighteenth century. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, with the help of advanced printing technology and the development of railroad delivery systems, fashion magazines became still more important sources for trend-setters and a way for the arbiters of Paris fashion to disseminate their creations.

In marked contrast to the extravagance of court costumes, ordinary clothing tended to be simple and comfortable. The excavation of the ancient Roman ruins of Herculaneum in 1738 provided the impetus for an emerging style of neoclassicism based on a worship of antiquity. Incorporating the concept of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's "return to nature," this attention to ancient Greece and Rome became an essential theme in the changing ideals of European society. It was a theme, that came to dominate the arts and general lifestyle of Europeans from the second half of the eighteenth century until the early nineteenth century.

A forerunner of the clothing style that would reflect this theme, a style influenced by Anglomania, was one adopted by Marie-Antoinette. To escape the rigors of court life, the young queen took to dressing in a simple cotton dress and a big straw hat, and played at being a shepherdess at the Hameau de la Reine at the Petit Trianon in Versailles. It is not surprising then that the queen also favored a simple, white muslin chemise, a style that around 1775 came to be known as the *chemise à la reine*. In terms of its material and its construction, the *chemise à la reine* served as a transitional form

to the high-waisted dress of the Directory period. Consequently, the demand for cotton fabric burgeoned in Europe. The widespread use of cotton supplied by the East Indian Company was a major spur to the Industrial Revolution, especially within the textile industry. New spinning technology was developed, producing cotton fabrics that were lighter and whiter than before, and cotton ultimately emerged as the new clothing material for the new era.

The Corset and the Pannier

Throughout the eighteenth century, the outline of a woman's dress was formed by undergarments, such as the corset and the pannier. In the age of rococo, the top of the corset was dropped down to a position that made the breasts partially visible. The corset no longer restrained the entire bodice area, but rather pushed up a bust that peeked through a delicate fringe of lace at the neckline of the dress.

The early form of the pannier was bell shaped, but as skirts widened in the mid-eighteenth century, the pannier was modified and split into left and right halves. Although the huge and impractical pannier that resulted was frequently the subject of caricature, women simply adored the fashion. At court, the wide pannier eventually became a compulsory element of attire.

Complex garments such as these were usually manufactured by men. A guild of tailors had been established during the medieval period in France, and, from that time on, each role in the construction of clothing was strictly regulated. Although a company of female dressmakers, *Les Maîtresses Couturières*, had been established in the second half of the seventeenth century to make women's clothing, male tailors generally sewed all eighteenth-century court costumes. Men also made women's corsets, as strong hands were needed to stitch whalebone into stiff corset material.

Fashion in the Revolutionary Period

In 1789, the French Revolution promoted a profound change in the aesthetics of fashion, and the favored fabric shifted from refined silk to simple cotton. It was a revolution with many causes: the failure of the national economy, increased conflict between the aristocracy and those with royal prerogative, the discontent of a majority of citizens toward the more privileged classes, and an extended, severe food shortage. The Revolution adopted fashion for the purposes of ideological propaganda in the new age, and revolutionaries declared their rebellious spirit by appropriating the clothing of the lower classes.

Those who still wore extravagant and brightly colored silk clothing were considered anti-revolutionary. Instead of the knee breeches and silk stockings that symbolized the nobility, revolutionaries wore long pants called *sans-culottes* (non-breeches). Besides his long pants, the revolutionary sympathizer dressed in a jacket called a *carmagnole*, a Phrygian cap, a tricolor cockade, and clogs. Derived from simple English tastes, this fashion evolved into a style of frock coat and trousers, which was afterward worn by the modern citizen in the nineteenth century.

But not everything changed in 1789. During the Revolution, new fashion styles emerged in quick succession, reflecting the changing political situation, but conventional clothing, such as the *habit à la française*, was still worn as the official court costume. New and old fashions intermingled during the Revolutionary period.

In some cases the chaotic social climate created eccentric fashions. In particular, the youth of France embraced unusual, frivolous, and radical styles. During the Terror, the *Muscadins*, a group of young counter-revolutionaries, protested against the new order, and dressed in eccentric black coats with large lapels and wide cravats. In a similarly

eccentric vein, fops (*petits-mâtres*), called *Incroyables*, appeared during the Directory period. Extremely high collars characterized their fashions, with large lapels folded back, gaudy waistcoats, wide cravats, breeches, cropped hairstyles, and bicorne instead of tricorne hats. Their female counterparts, who were known as the *Merveilleuses* (the marvelous ones), wore extremely thin and diaphanous dresses with neither corset nor pannier. Illustrations of round gowns, dresses with waistlines starting just below the bust, and a bodice and skirt made of one piece, can often be seen in the fashion plates of Nicolaus von Heideloff's *Gallery of Fashion* (1794–1802, London). The round gown later transformed into the chemise dress, the most popular cotton dress of the early nineteenth century.

Whereas in England modernization was brought about by the Industrial Revolution, French society received new impulses in the late rococo period through political revolution. Set against the backdrop of such social unrest, European fashion moved toward a new modernity.

Tamami Suoh, Curator, The Kyoto Costume Institute





Lace, created with the most delicate hand-work techniques, was significant in embellishing wardrobes for both men and women. Needlepoint lace, based on embroidery techniques, and bobbin lace, based on braiding techniques, both developed in late-sixteenth-century Europe. Lace production was prominent in parts of Italy, France, and Belgium, and these various types of lace were named after the areas in which they were produced. Shown on the left page, the *quilles* that stretch from the neck to the hem at the front opening of the robe, the lappets on the head-dress, and the engageantes on the cuffs, all of which are lace, give the gown an even more luxurious look. Since lace was the most expensive kind of ornament to adorn a gown, the type of lace that made up the engageantes varied, from layers of high-quality lace to inexpensive cotton drawn work. The decorative lace apron was one of the most popular items in women's wardrobes during the eighteenth century.

← **Dress (robe à la française)**

c. 1760

White and pink plaid silk taffeta; double-flounced pagoda sleeves; stomacher with *échelle* of ribbon; engageantes, *quilles*, and lappets of Argentan lace.

Inv. AC4628 83-21-1AB

→ **Dress**

1760s (fabric c. 1755)

French

Pink floral silk damask with double-flounced cuffs; matching petticoat; stomacher of *bouillonné* silk satin decorated with flowers and chenille; engageantes of triple-layered cotton drawn work.

Inv. AC4425 83-1-17AB

→→ **Dress (robe à la française)**

c. 1760 (fabric c. 1755)

French

White Lyons silk brocade with red and green floral ribbon and peacock-feather pattern, decorated with self-fabric trim, braid and fly fringe; double-flounced pagoda sleeves; matching petticoat; engageantes, fichu, and apron of linen drawn work.

Inv. AC4841 84-18-1AB



1. Stomacher

1740s

Yellow silk with decoration of gold thread and sequins.

Inv. AC10129 99-28-2

2. Stomacher

1740s

Orange silk taffeta brocaded with polychrome floral pattern; three-dimensional shape given by bones with stiff ground.

Inv. AC4272 82-17-3

3. Stomacher

1740s

Silver ground and metallic light blue borders with pink woven floral pattern; silver braids hold layered light blue silk; silver thread button and tassel at center and silver braid trimming.

Inv. AC10131 99-28-4

4. Stomacher

1740s

Ivory silk taffeta brocaded with floral pattern in polychrome silk and silver threads; three-dimensional shape given by bones; edge decoration of floral silk ribbon.

Inv. AC4270 82-17-1

5. Stomacher

1740s

Beige silk ground with swirling and floral motifs brocaded in corded silver threads; tabs at both sides.

Inv. AC10128 99-28-1

6. Stomacher

1740s

Dot-patterned ivory silk brocade with polychrome floral embroidery, cording, silk and silver lace, fly fringe, self-fabric bow.

Inv. AC10130 99-28-3









39. c. 1790. Antoine Laurent Lavoisier and his wife. J. L. David.
By courtesy of The Rockefeller University, New York
The Chemise dress. A completely softened line, simple and free of decoration. See Cutting Diagram XXV



During the eighteenth century, the neckline of dresses was wide and open. A triangular fichu was draped over the shoulders, loosely covering the open area, and was fastened on the stomacher. As shown on this dress, the style where both ends of the fichu cross through the stomacher band is similar to the fashion that appears in the painting *Madame d'Epinau* by Jean-Etienne Liotard.

Dress (robe à la française)

c. 1760

English

Yellow silk taffeta (lustring), matching trim; double-flounced pagoda sleeves; matching petticoat; linen stomacher with bands, plant-pattern silk embroidery; cotton knit *aumônière*.

Inv. AC5761 88-1LAB





Although extravagant men's wardrobes were prominent in the seventeenth century, those of the eighteenth century became more subtle and refined. The seventeenth-century men's jacket, the *justaucorps*, was replaced in the second half of the eighteenth century by the *habit* (coat), which was worn with a waistcoat and knee-breeches.

Left

Man's Suit (coat, waistcoat, and breeches)

c. 1740

English

Wine-red wool; coat and waistcoat decorated with gold braid and buttons wrapped with gold threads; sleeved waistcoat; jabot of Valenciennes lace; sleeve ruffles of Binche lace.

Inv. AC5507 86-51-3AC

Center

Man's Suit (coat, waistcoat, and breeches)

c. 1765

French

Deep-yellow velvet woven with small floral figures and cartouches; buttons wrapped with silver threads; sleeveless waistcoat; jabot and sleeve ruffles of bobbin lace.

Inv. AC306 77-12-21AC

Right

Man's Suit (coat, waistcoat, and breeches)

c. 1760

Purple suit of silk brocade with double-leaf motif; wide folded-back cuffs; waistcoat with sleeves in different fabrics; jabot and sleeve ruffles of Brussels appliqué lace with floral patterns.

Inv. AC878 78-24-53AC



The fabric with the water-blotting pattern was called *chiné à la branche* in French. Just as in the Japanese *hogushi*-weaving (a type of *kasuri* technique), the pattern was printed onto the warp prior to weaving. In Europe, the *chiné* technique was extremely difficult, so the large *chiné* patterns were produced only in France. The patterns were mainly applied on thin fabrics such as silk taffeta. Light pastel coloring and fluffy texture are characteristic of *chiné*. During the mid-eighteenth century, it was fashionable to use *chiné* for high-priced summer clothing. Since Madame de Pompadour strongly preferred wearing dresses of *chiné*, it was often called "Pompadour taffeta."

→ Dress (*robe à la française*)

c. 1765

French

Light-blue Lyons silk *chiné* with cartouche-enclosed floral motif; self-fabric trim; double-flounced cuffs; matching stomacher and petticoat; engageantes of Alençon lace; lappets and bonnet of Argentan lace.

Inv. AC5317 86-8-5AE

François Boucher

Madame de Pompadour (detail), 1759

The Wallace Collection, London





The vogue of the stripe spread through all the social classes starting in the 1770s. In the *Magasin des Modes*, a fashion magazine that was published in the 1780s just prior to the French Revolution, both men's and women's fashions with vertical stripes of two colors frequently appeared. The trend of the stripe in fashion continued during the French Revolutionary period.

From left to right
 (Detail pages 60/61)
Dresses (robes à la française)
 c. 1770–1775
 French

Left: Pink Lyons brocade with stripe and floral pattern, self-fabric and fly fringe trim; single-flounced pagoda sleeves; matching petticoat.

Inv. AC4241 82-13-1AB

Center: Yellow Lyons brocade with white floral stripe; *compères* with buttons; double-flounced pagoda sleeves; matching petticoat.

Inv. AC14 77-5-7AB

Right: Blue Lyons silk *cannelé* with stripe and floral ribbon motif; *compères* with buttons; double-flounced pagoda sleeves; matching petticoat.

Inv. AC5054 84-40AB

Functional elements of clothing appeared in mid-eighteenth-century women's fashion. In this dress, the *compères*, two flaps of fabric with buttons, cover the front bodice. The *compères* were connected to the front opening of the robe with either hooks or buttons, so the stomacher was no longer necessary. The *compères* are simpler and more practical than the stomacher, which had to be pinned to the dress each time.

→ **Dress (robe à la française)**
 1770s

White linen chintz with blue plant motif; *compères* with buttons; matching petticoat.

Inv. AC7621 92-34-2AB







Flounces, fly fringe, artificial flowers, ribbons and chenille are essential ornaments for rococo fashion. This dress is adorned with delicate fly fringe, chenille, and *bouillonné* filled with cotton to give more of a three-dimensional look. Although the decorations are excessive, they perfectly harmonize with each other, and represent the most sophisticated and delicate spirit of the rococo style.

Dress (robe à la française)

c. 1775

Beige silk satin with thin stripe and dot pattern; *compères* front; matching petticoat; padded three-dimensional decoration with smocking; fly fringe and chenille at front.
Inv. AC7716 93-5AB

The popularity of Anglomania led everyday costumes to be simple during the last half of the eighteenth century. In contrast, women's court fashion at the time presented an exaggerated silhouette with a bodice tightly fitted by a corset, and a wide skirt expanded on each side by a pannier. Representing the extreme beauty of artificiality, the widely expanded dress and high coiffures remained as court costume until the Revolution.



✓ Dress (robe à la française)

c. 1760
English

Ivory Spitalfields silk brocade of gold, silver, and polychrome threads with floral pattern, gold lace, silver gauze; double-flounced pagoda sleeves; matching petticoat; stomacher of gold and silver lace and fly fringe; engageantes of Brussels lace.

Inv. AC4891 84-23-1AC

↓ Dress (robe à la française)

1775-1779 (fabric 1750s-1760s)
French

Ivory Lyons silk striped brocade with floral pattern of chenille, self-fabric trim; matching petticoat; stomacher of matching fabric with flower ornaments of chenille; sabot sleeves.

Inv. AC9704 98-26AF





The typical eighteenth-century French suit, the *habit à la française*, consisted of a coat, a waistcoat, and breeches. It also included a pair of silk stockings, a jabot, a linen or cotton shirt with decorative cuffs, and a cravat. Men's suits transformed to a more functional style in the last half of the eighteenth century. Overall the coat became tight-fitting, the

length of the waistcoat became short, the waistcoat's sleeves were removed, and the hem was cut horizontally. Yet the brilliant colors, exquisite embroideries, elaborate lace for jabots and cuffs, and decorative buttons still remained important elements for dressing a gentleman in the rococo style.



↖ **Dress (robe à la française)**

c. 1775
English

White striped floral Spitalfields silk *cannelé* with metallic lace trim; double-layered pagoda sleeves; triple-layered engageantes in Brussels lace; silk gauze apron with fly fringe and chenille decoration.

Inv. AC4687 83-29-3AB

↑ **Man's Suit (habit à la française)**

c. 1770–1780s
French

Set of coat, waistcoat, and breeches of pale blue striped silk taffeta with woven floral trim; sleeve ruffles in needlepoint lace.

Inv. AC3861 81-18-LAC



In the eighteenth century, the elegance of embroidery appeared more in men's fashion. In particular, the coat and the waistcoat were impressively embroidered with polychrome silk threads, gold and silver threads, sequins, and artificial jewels. Many embroidery workshops were located in Paris at that time, and Diderot described such a workshop in his *Encyclopédie*. At the workshop, the customer would select the already embroidered fabric, and the fabric was then cut and sewn to fit. This method of tailoring was called *à la disposition*. Many decorative buttons adorned eighteenth-century men's suits. Skillfully crafted artistic buttons made of porcelain, embroidery, metalwork, and glass were stylish elements of men's fashion.



← **Man's Suit (habit à la française)**

c. 1780

French

Three-piece set of coat, waistcoat, and breeches; coat and waistcoat of striped Lyons silk brocade, embroidered with sequins and mirror beads, waistcoat in silk *cannelé*, self-fabric-wrapped buttons.
Inv. AC5530 87-8-1AF

→ **Man's Suit (habit à la française)**

c. 1770

French

Three-piece set of coat, waistcoat, and breeches; coat and waistcoat of blue silk satin; waistcoat of white silk taffeta; Beauvais embroidery; self-fabric-wrapped buttons.
Inv. AC5308 86-6-12AC





Illustration of men's buttons
Magasin des Modes, June 10, 1788



Man's Suit (habit à la française)

c. 1790

French

Three-piece set of coat, breeches, and waistcoat; coat and waistcoat of blue striped uncut velvet with sequins and glass jewels; embroidery of metallic thread, self-fabric-wrapped buttons; waistcoat of white figured silk.

Inv. AC985 78-29-1AC



← Man's Suit (*habit à la française*)

c. 1810

French

Three-piece set of coat, waistcoat, and breeches; coat and breeches of black wool broadcloth with colored-thread embroidery; high standing collar; self-fabric-wrapped buttons; waistcoat of white silk satin with polychrome embroidery.

Inv. AC12 77-5-5AC

← Man's Suit (*habit à la française*)

c. 1790

French

Coat and breeches of green cut velvet with polychrome floral silk embroidery; high standing collar; buttons wrapped with fabric.

Inv. AC3334 80-21-20AB





From the end of the 1780s just prior to the Revolution, stripes became popular and replaced extravagant embroidery in men's fashion. The coat with striped patterns had a laped collar, and the length became short.

Man's Suit (coat, waistcoat, and breeches)

c. 1790

French

Coat of blue and green striped silk taffeta and satin; fold-back standing collar; cut-away front hem; waistcoat of silk faille with Roman-like arch embroidered showing a country scene; wing collar; silk satin breeches.

Inv. AC5146 85-28-2AC, AC5667 87-35-1

Magasin des Modes, December 10, 1787









The guild of tailors had been established since the medieval period in France, and their role was strictly regulated. Although a company of dressmakers, *Les Maitresses Couturières*, had been established to make women's clothing in the last half of the seventeenth century, only male tailors were accepted as makers of both men's and women's court costumes and corsets. Since a man's strong hands were needed in order to stitch whalebones into stiff materials, corsets were mainly made by tailors.

Left
Corset
c. 1760

Pale blue silk brocade with floral pattern; lacing at front and back; ribbon-tied sleeves; boned throughout.

Inv. AC224 77-11-64AD

Center
Child's Corset
Mid-18th century
American

Beige plain-weave linen with leather trim; boned throughout.

Inv. AC6379 89-17-51

Right
Corset
Early 18th century

Orange silk faille with silver braid, back and side lacings, pocket at inside center front, boned throughout.

Inv. AC9 77-5-2AC



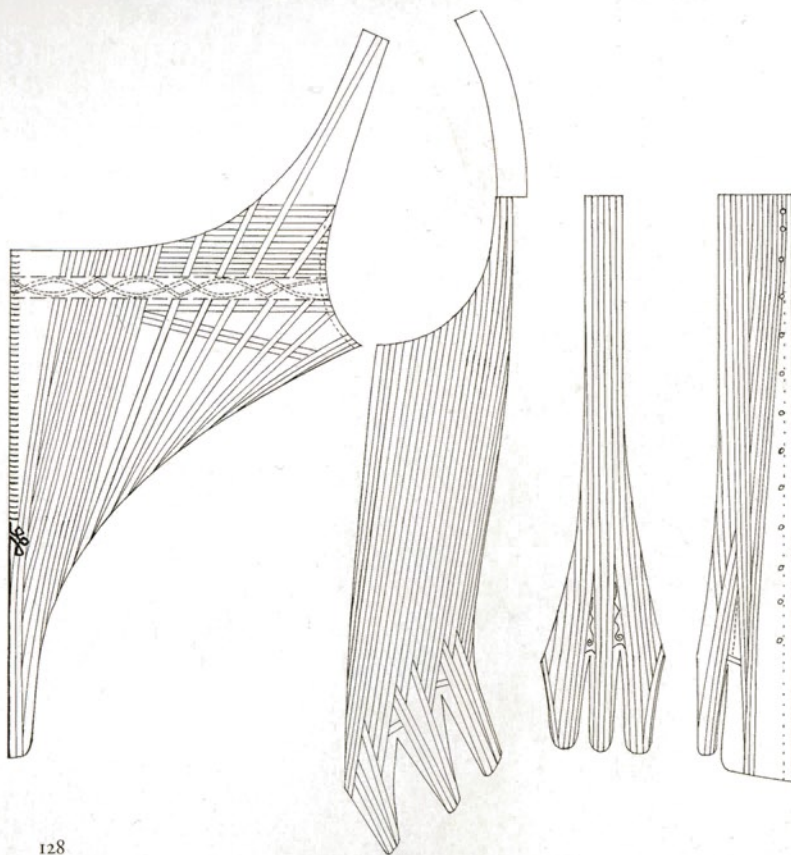
Throughout the eighteenth century, the silhouette of a woman's dress was formed with a corset and a pannier. In order to push up the bust for a feminine outline, the corset was framed with pieces of whalebone. First appearing in the early eighteenth century, the pannier became a mandatory item for court dress up until the time of the French Revolution. As the skirt widened in the mid-eighteenth century, the pannier was modified and split into left and right halves. Such huge panniers frequently became the subject of caricatures.

→ **Corset, Pannier, Chemise**
c. 1760–1770, c. 1775, c. 1780

Corset of brown cotton satin with 162 whalebones inside; pannier of cotton chintz with oval rattan hoops and padding; linen chemise.

Inv.AC337 77-12-51, AC7682 93-1-4, AC6289 89-4-6

← *The Old Coquette* from German caricature, c. 1775



Pattern of corset on right page made by KCI



Left
Corset
c. 1785
English

Beige quilted silk taffeta; front lacing with hand-darned eyelets; boned at center front and back and both sides; straps tied with ribbon.

Inv. AC4431 83-2-5

Center, above
Corset
c. 1785
English

Beige coutil with continuous straps; front lacing with hand-darned eyelets; boned throughout; probably altered from a mid-eighteenth-century corset.

Inv. AC5080 85-9-4



"The Fad for Corsets" from *Le Corset*, c. 1809

Center, below
Child's Corset
c. 1785
English

Beige plain-weave linen; boned throughout; back lacing.

Inv. AC6380 89-17-52

Right
Corset
c. 1790

White linen chintz; boned front, back and sides; metal spring at sides to adjust; front lacing; straps tied with cord.

Inv. AC4197 82-5-5









During the time of the French Revolution, women no longer wore the corset and the pannier, and the trend of fashion dramatically shifted from the rococo to a rational, neoclassical style. Around 1804, a new type of soft corset without whalebones came into use, and so the corset once again became an indispensable part of women's wardrobe.

Left
Corset
c. 1820

White cotton satin; cord quilting; cut-out straps; back lacing with hand-darned eyelets.

Inv. AC542 77-16-3

Center, above
Brassiere
Early 19th century

Brown coutil; boned at bust.

Inv. AC210 77-11-50AB

Center, below
Corset
Early 19th century

White cotton sateen; cord quilting; straps; back lacing with metal eyelets; triangular gusset and drawstring at bust; wooden busk.

Inv. AC219 77-11-59

Right
Corset
Early 19th century

White cotton sateen; cord quilting; straps; back lacing with hand-darned eyelets; triangular gusset and drawstring at bust; metal busk.

Inv. AC218 77-11-58AB

Pages 134/135
"Ah! What Relics!!! Oh! What a Foolish
New Fashion . . .," 1797

During the eighteenth century, France was recognized as a worldwide leader of fashion for women. That reputation was consolidated in the following century, and in the realm of women's fashion France became the unchallenged authority. The English dominated men's fashion, however, thanks to an advanced wool industry, superior textile machinery, and the more refined tailoring techniques developed during the eighteenth century. These distinct influences led to expressions like "Parisian Mode" and "London Tailoring." During the nineteenth century, constantly fluctuating silhouettes characterized women's fashion, whereas men's clothing retained its basic form and changed only in minor details.

The French Revolution of 1789 brought about the collapse of the traditional social hierarchy and saw the rise of a wealthy bourgeoisie that came to characterize French society throughout the nineteenth century. Up until the period of the Second Empire (1852–1870), French nobility enjoyed a renewed position of power, and Empress Eugénie, the wife of Napoleon III, became a prominent fashion leader. The class structure of society again collapsed in the period of the third Republic (after 1870), and fashion leaders once more diversified accordingly. Gradually the central figures of the fashion scene became the wealthy bourgeoisie, actresses, and *demi-mondaines* (high-class courtesans), all of whom became important clientele of *haute couture* in the latter half of the century.

In the second half of the century the pursuit of fashion came to be enjoyed by a larger segment of the population, and trends began to reach even the lower classes. The invention in France of the department store in the 1850s contributed dramatically to this expansion by providing freedom of choice combined with a variety of merchandise at reasonable prices. Due to international exhibitions, the first of which was held in London in 1851, and the arrival of public transport like railroads and steamships, international commerce experienced an unprecedented upswing. Fashion magazines, the titles of which burgeoned rapidly during the nineteenth century, helped Parisian fashion to be recognized around the world by the second half of the century.

The Empire Style and Court Clothing

During the first chaotic revolutionary period a dramatic change occurred in women's fashion. The chemise dress, so named because of its resemblance to a chemise undergarment, became the dominant fashion. Its simplicity stood in stark contrast to the full rococo dresses of the preceding era. Undergarments such as the corset and pannier, which had been necessary to form the exaggerated shape of women's rococo costumes in the previous century, were abandoned. Women preferred to wear thin, almost transparent white cotton dresses with few or no undergarments instead. The chemise, with its high waistline and single-pieced bodice and skirt, had a clean, tubular silhouette. Marie Antoinette wore a prototype of this dress, or *chemise à la reine*, as can be seen in a portrait of her by Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun (1783). A later portrait, this time of *Madame Récamier* by François Gérard (1802, Musée Carnavalet, Paris; ill. p. 157), illustrates how that dress shape gradually blended into the style of neoclassicism, which celebrated the refined and geometric forms of Greek and Roman antiquity. Diaphanous materials like muslin, gauze, and percale were chosen for their simplicity. These fabrics also suggested that the function of garments was to drape, rather than mold, the body. The chemise was emblematic of a newly developed aesthetic consciousness and of post-Revolutionary values in France. However, the European winter was too cold for the thin material of the chemise, so cashmere shawls wrapped around the shoulders became popular to warm its wearer and to complement the dress. In addition, practical, tailored English outerwear such as the spencer and the redingote helped to keep the cold at bay. These outer garments showed a strong influence of Napoleonic military uniforms, which had adopted attractive bold designs to emphasize the power of the troops. Cashmere shawls from Kashmir, India, are said to have caught on when Napoleon brought them back to France following his Egyptian campaign in 1799. Because of the exotic patterns and appealing polychromatic colors

of the shawls, they became extremely popular as accessories to be worn with the simple chemise dress. They were, however, very expensive at the time, and sufficiently valuable to be recorded in wills and trousseau lists. After the 1830s, the popularity of cashmere shawls spread to the general public and by the 1840s huge shawl industries had sprung up in both France and England to serve the demand. In Lyons, France, luxurious products were made with superior materials, while less expensive woven and printed imitations were mass-produced in the Scottish town of Paisley. The name "Paisley" grew to be so widely known that it became synonymous with the cone pattern often associated with cashmere items. The vogue for cashmere shawls continued until the Second Empire period, when an oversized version worn with crinolines became the dominant style. When the demand for cashmere shawls eventually diminished, the production industries suffered a decline.

After the Revolution, silk was replaced by more favored cotton materials from England, and the silk industry in Lyons, a driving force of the French economy, fell into a serious crisis. Concerned with the economic situation, Napoleon made an effort to revive the French industry by imposing customs duties on imports from England and by prohibiting the public from wearing English muslin, but these measures did not turn the tide of the trend. Upon his coronation as Emperor in 1804, Napoleon began to utilize clothing as a political medium. He issued an imperial ordinance that both women and men wear silk garments at formal ceremonies, and he successfully revived the extravagant court dress style of the pre-Revolutionary era. The silk ceremonial dress and court train (*manteau de cour*) worn by Empress Joséphine at Napoleon's coronation and depicted in Jacques-Louis David's famous painting (1805–1807, Musée du Louvre, Paris; ill. p. 166) show the typical court style of the Empire. The empress's velvet court train with ermine lining symbolizes the luxuriousness and authority of the French court, and illustrates how the ideology of revolution had been firmly set aside. This style of court train long remained a standard garment in the European courts.

During the first decade of the nineteenth century the outline of women's clothing did not undergo any dramatic change, but skirt lengths were shortened after 1810. Once again, undergarments were back in demand; the *brassière*, which later became a prototype of the brassiere, came into use, as did soft corsets without whalebone reinforcements. The preference in clothing material shifted too, from cotton back to silks, as flamboyance in decoration and color returned to fashion.

The Romantic Style

The raised waistlines of the Empire style dress dropped back down to a more natural position by the mid-1820s. Simultaneously, corsets once again became necessary for women's fashion since smaller waists were recognized as an important feature of the new style. Skirts, by contrast, were broadened to a bell-like shape, and their lengths were shortened to reveal the ankles. Elaborately decorated stockings appeared to adorn the now visible feet. But the most distinctive trend of all during this period was the *gigot* or "leg-of-mutton" sleeve, which ballooned out dramatically from the shoulder and then narrowed in at the cuff. Sleeves of the *gigot* style reached their greatest volume around 1835. Another salient feature of fashion was the décolleté, which became so wide that fichus and capes were often necessary to regulate exposure during the daytime. Berthas and shawl-like garments were also worn frequently. To offset and balance the voluminous sleeves and yawning necklines, hairstyles and hats were also enlarged, with elaborate decorations of feathers, artificial flowers, and jewelry.

The fashion conventions of the period were heavily influenced by Romanticism, which pursued imaginative and romantic impulses and fostered a taste for historical or exotic worlds. The romantic image also demanded that the ideal

woman be delicate and melancholic. An active, healthy image was considered vulgar, and hence pale complexions were much admired. The Romantic style also borrowed dress, hair, and jewelry nuances from court dresses of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the favorite period setting for much theatrical drama of the time.

Crinoline Style

The fundamental style of the 1830s continued into the 1840s, but the more extreme embellishments, such as *gigot* sleeves, gradually went out of fashion and calmer designs were restored. Waistlines, nonetheless, grew continuously smaller, and skirts kept expanding. The swelling contour of the skirt was formed through the consecutive layering of petticoats underneath, and their bulk must have proved a severe limitation on women's activities. However, since physical exertion was considered unladylike in high society at the time, heavy clothing was viewed less as a restrictive element than an indicator of affluence. In addition to increased width, skirts were also lengthened again to sweep the floor, thereby emphasizing a woman's modesty. Skirts in the 1850s were characterized by flounces layered horizontally to accentuate the cone shape. The *gigot* sleeves were beginning to disappear. Puffy shoulders gave way to fuller wrist areas. Hats also shrank to small, moderate bonnets or capote shapes, which demurely hid the face. The painter Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres accurately depicted these fashion trends and changes in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The end of the 1850s saw a drastic change where skirts were concerned. Thanks to the invention of new clothing materials, the "cage crinoline" or hooped petticoat appeared. In the 1840s, the term "crinoline" referred to petticoats made of *crin* (French for "horsehair") interwoven with hard *lin* ("linen"). After the 1850s, the term came to mean a petticoat with a cage frame constructed out of steel or whalebone hoops, or any wide skirt that included such a cage. With the coming of crinoline, skirts took on extraordinary width. The development of steel wire, major advances in the textile industry, and the practical use of sewing machines all meant that crinolines were enlarged even further. The continuing improvement of looms and dyes made possible a wide variety and quantity of material for skirts. The large demand for fabrics during the time of crinolines continued into the next period as well; the bustle-style skirt was much reduced in girth, but required a great deal of material for its tremendous ornamentation of ribbons and flounces.

The French clothing industry, and in particular the silk textile market of Lyons, received the full benefit of this increased demand for fabric. Napoleon III supported the textile industry as part of his political strategy, and the French bourgeoisie welcomed the policy. Famous couturiers like Charles Frederick Worth designed dresses using technically advanced and artistically refined silk from Lyons. These developments helped Lyons regain its reputation as the distribution center of materials for Parisian fashion.

Bustle Style

From the end of the 1860s, skirts began to grow voluminous at the rear, but markedly flat in the front. This silhouette was made possible by the support of an undergarment called a bustle (*tournure* in French). Bustles were pads that were placed over the buttocks, framed and stuffed with various kinds of material. Skirts or overskirts were sometimes bunched up at the back to lend them an exaggerated shape. With only minor changes in detail, the bustle style continued through the 1880s. The typical silhouette of the 1880s dress can be seen clearly in the painting *A Sunday Afternoon*

on the Island of *La Grande Jatte* by Georges Seurat (1884–1886, The Art Institute of Chicago; ill. pp. 254/255) depicting a weekend scene among the general public. This painting also reveals the fact that the high fashion style of the bustle had definitely filtered down to the lower classes. In Japan, the bustle style was known as the Westernized attire worn in “*Rokumei-kan*,” the official guesthouse, which functioned as the center of Westernization in Tokyo during the Meiji Restoration (1867–1912).

Most dresses after the mid-nineteenth century consisted of two separate pieces, a bodice and a skirt, and as the century drew to a close the desire for decorations and details increased. Dresses came to be adorned at every fold with various and complicated ornaments. As a result, the wearer’s natural bodyline was nearly impossible to detect. The only exception to this rule, a one-piece dress that displayed some of the wearer’s true shape, emerged in the early 1870s. The dress was dubbed a “Princess Dress,” as it was named in honor of Princess Alexandra (1844–1925), who later became Queen of England.

Hairstyles toward the turn of the century reflected a preference for voluminous chignons. Headwear, almost a requirement in the nineteenth century, evolved into small hats with a thin brim, so as to avoid covering the elaborate hairstyles. Toques, with virtually no brim, became especially popular for this reason.

S-shaped Style

The period between the end of the nineteenth century and the outbreak of World War I was referred to as “*la Belle Époque*,” when brilliant decadence mingled with a joyful liveliness brought about by people’s expectations for the new century. The transitional atmosphere brought a breath of new life to women’s fashion. This period saw a dramatic change from nineteenth-century artificial clothing figured by structural undergarments to twentieth-century styles, which pursued the expression of the female body itself. Marcel Proust captured and precisely described in *Remembrance of Things Past* the substantial transition in the structure of women’s inner garments.

Important developments emerging from this period were the S-shaped silhouette and the tailored suit for women. The S-shaped silhouette involved a dress that emphasized an extremely small waist by forming large, forward-projecting breasts, and protruding rear. Underwear companies concocted various corsets to achieve the tiny waists sought for this style. The S-shaped figure of women resembled the sinuous, organic forms that were the ideals of Art Nouveau. In particular, the floating line of the bell-shaped skirt with train resembled the floral motif often adopted by Art Nouveau artists. In the field of decorative arts, such as accessories and above all jewelry, the innovation and outstanding quality of Art Nouveau design is clearly evident.

Prior to the nineteenth century, women had already worn tailored suits (*amazone*) with elements borrowed from men’s clothing for horseback riding. The fad of suits as clothing for sports and travel began to catch on in the latter half of the century. Finally, between the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, women started to wear tailored suits for a wide range of general occasions. Women’s tailored suits of the time consisted of two pieces, a jacket and a skirt, worn with a shirtwaist (or blouse) underneath the jacket. Because of this preference for suits, the blouse began to be recognized as an important element of women’s fashion, and the trend was accelerated by the appearance of the “Gibson Girls,” as portrayed by the American illustrator Charles Dana Gibson (1867–1944).

In the case of dresses, contrary to the tendency to simplify and follow the natural line of the female body, gigantic *gigot* sleeves made a fleeting comeback in the 1890s, but the trend faded away around 1900. Similarly, hats were enlarged and decorated with outrageously extravagant ornaments such as stuffed birds, and these remained popular until the beginning of the twentieth century.

The Development of Undergarments

By the latter half of the nineteenth century, industrial modernization improved the average lifestyle, and clothing was in abundance. A strict social etiquette arose regarding attire, and women had to change their garments seven or eight times a day to meet the dictates of society. The following dress names for example are indicative of the occasions for which women were obliged to change their outfit: morning gown, afternoon tea gown, visiting dress, evening dress (for the theater), ball gown, dinner dress, home gown (before bed), and finally, night gown.

Numerous new kinds of undergarments were created to fill out these new dresses. In addition to the chemise, drawers and petticoats appeared, and all female undergarments took on decorative qualities. Various undergarments supported the rapid changes in silhouette. Crinolines, bustles, and corsets, all essential to the sculpted silhouette of the nineteenth century, were introduced in new models with various novel devices and inventions, many of which were patented.

Dramatic advances in steel manufacturing made possible this new expanded selection of crinolines and bustles. Steel wires and springs began to make an appearance in undergarments, in addition to the usual cloth, horsehair, whalebone, bamboo, and rattan supports. The invention of steel eyelets in 1829 made corsets extremely effective silhouette-makers. They continued to be considered by women the most important undergarment until the beginning of the twentieth century.

The Beginning of the Fashion System

The textile industry accomplished astonishing improvements for certain sections of society in the nineteenth century. The first half of the century witnessed the mechanization of printing and improvements in spinning and weaving machinery. In 1856, the invention of aniline, the first synthetic dye, brought a dramatic change to the color scheme of clothing. The blues, vibrant mauves and deep reds that aniline produced were so fresh that they were quickly embraced by the bourgeoisie. Additionally, sewing machines, made practical by American Isaac Merrit Singer in 1851, showed remarkable performance in garment construction and immediately caught on in the fashion industry. The notion of "ready-made" clothing arose naturally in such an environment. In America, methods of producing ready-made clothing had improved rapidly during the Civil War to meet the increased demand for military uniforms. In France, the first mass-produced clothing, known as "*confection*," was cheap, but came in imprecise sizes.

In contrast to an industry in simple and functional ready-made women's clothing, a high-end *haute couture* market also got off to a good start during this period, and turned out to be equally prosperous. An English couturier, Charles Frederick Worth, established the basis of *haute couture* as it exists in today's system. He opened his *maison* in 1857 in Paris, and introduced the practice of presenting a new collection of his own designs for each season. Moreover, by putting them on live models, he radically changed the method of the presentation of the clothes. Through Worth, the modern fashion system in which multiple people may purchase one couturier's creative work was successfully established.

Clothing for Sports and Resorts

By the latter half of the nineteenth century, the common standard of living for certain sections of society was so improved that people had more opportunity to enjoy leisure activities. Travel to resorts to escape from hot or cold weather became possible with the advancement of public transportation, and rapidly grew in popularity. A love of sports activities, too, spread to the general public. In this period, the principal elements still present in men's clothing today, such as jackets and three-piece suits, appeared as informal clothing for activities such as travel and sports. Women's clothing for sports such as horseback riding, hunting, and tennis was somewhat practical but not significantly different to their town clothing. Even though sea bathing was considered a medicinally healing practice at the time, women were meant mostly just to frolic at the edge of the sea rather than go swimming in the water. Their bathing dresses were meant to double for sports and for beach excursions. More practical swimming outfits, swimsuits consisting of tops and trousers, finally came about in the 1870s.

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, skirt lengths began to climb due to the popularity of more active sports like golf and skiing. Knitted sports sweaters were introduced and a men's jacket called a "Norfolk jacket" was adapted into hunting wear for women. Scottish tartans, practical to use and unique in colors and patterns, became fashionable as resort clothes after they were worn by Queen Victoria. Furthermore, trouser-shaped "bloomers" finally became accepted as functional cycling clothes for women in the 1880s. First advocated in the mid-nineteenth century by the feminist Amelia Jenks Bloomer, from whom they took their name, the arrival of bloomers coincided with newly begun campaigns for women's rights.

Japonism and Parisian Mode

With the opening of Japan to international trade in 1854, European interest in Japan grew rapidly, and "Japonism" emerged as a trend in the early 1880s, lasting until around 1920. Japonism influences in fashion appeared in various ways. First, the Japanese kimono itself was worn as an exotic at-home gown, and kimono fabrics were utilized in the making of Western dresses. Fine examples of bustle-style dresses made of *kosode* (visiting kimono) material survive. Japanese motifs were also adapted and applied to European textiles. In textiles produced at the time in Lyons, for example, Japanese patterns such as natural motifs, small animals, and even family crests can be found. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the custom of wearing a kimono as an at-home gown can be seen in *Madame Hériot* by Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1882, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg; ill. p. 290). Eventually the garment evolved into a more thoroughly Westernized, kimono-shaped at-home gown. The word "kimono" came to be used in a broader sense in the West, encompassing a variety of lounging robes. Ultimately, in the twentieth century, the silhouette and flat construction of the kimono would exert a great influence on three-dimensional Western clothing and the world of fashion.

Miki Iwagami, Lecturer at Sugino Fashion College



The high waistline was in fashion from the end of the eighteenth century, but the waist returned to its natural position around the mid-1820s. Consequently, a thin waist became important, and the corset was once again in demand. From then on the thin-waistline obsession escalated, and the corset, although changing in material and shape, continued to tighten the waist until the beginning of the twentieth century.

The corsets shown here are of the type worn when thin waists came back in the 1820s.

This type has a soft feel to it, and the pressure that it puts on the waist when tightened is not excessive. Shown on the bottom right are sleeve pads to be worn under the fashionable *gigot* sleeve so that the puff of the sleeve would stand out.



Left and above right
Corset, Chemise and Drawers
 1820s

White corset of quilted cotton satin with soft busk and bone (bust: app. 80 cm; waist: app. 49 cm); chemise and drawers of white linen.

Inv. AC5140 85-24, AC2827 79-24-21, AC5661 87-33-1

→ **Corset, Chemise, Petticoat and Sleeve-pads**

1830s

White corset of cord-quilted cotton satin with embroidery; white cotton chemise; linen petticoat; sleeve-pads of cotton chintz stuffed with down.

Inv. AC219 77-11-59, AC564 78-2-18, AC1149 78-35-4, AC9455 97-18-2AB





In the 1840s, the exaggerated *gigot* sleeve disappeared from the fashion scene. Skirts became larger, with layered petticoats, and the waist was lowered and became yet thinner. In the early 1840s, horsehair crinolines made their first appearance. This made it easier to expand women's skirts without layering so many petticoats. Shown here are all the typical fashion features of the 1840s: a wide-open décolleté, small sleeves which cover the round shoulders, a pointed waistline to emphasize the thin waist, and a softly puffed-up skirt. All of these styles put emphasis on the sensitive, graceful and feminine features of a woman.

← **Evening Dress**

c. 1845

Green silk brocade with white floral pattern; two-piece dress; silk satin piping on bodice.
Inv. AC553 78-2-9A, AC555 78-2-9C

→ **Wedding Dress**

c. 1845

White silk taffeta with embroidery.
Inv. AC551 78-2-7



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Day Dress

c. 1845

Blue and purple chargeable silk taffeta; smocking at front bodice, two flounces at shoulder.

Inv. AC4474 83-11-10





The word "dandy" first surfaced as a name for refined men in England in the early nineteenth century. Encouraged by the Restoration in 1815, aristocrats who had fled to Britain returned to France, and the dandies who returned to Paris became a feature of the city. Their clothes were in the simple and functional style of English fashion. Since the style was simple without decoration, a cut-to-fit, perfect tailoring technique and the use of superior-quality fabric were stressed.

The carefully combined color scheme, and the cut that perfectly fits the body line, make this typical 1830s-style dandy suit almost a work of art.

Man's Ensemble

1830s

Dark brown tail coat of wool broadcloth with velvet collar; waistcoat of black silk satin with cut-velvet woven floral pattern; trousers of plaid cotton twill; silk pongee scarf.

Inv. AC7765 93-19-6AD







Until the eighteenth century, the concept of "children's clothes" did not exist. A child was considered a miniature version of an adult, and children's wear was just a reduced version of adult clothing. With the influence of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's "return to nature" theory, attempts to find practical and comfortable clothing for children finally started at the end of the eighteenth century. Yet women's fashion still had a strong influence on children's clothes.

← Day Dress

c. 1850

Green and white plaid silk taffeta; skirt with five flounces with scalloped edges.

Inv. AC21 77-5-10

→ Girl's Dress

1845–1849

White cotton muslin with embroidery; skirt with three flounces.

Inv. AC1013 78-3-25

→→ Day Dress

c. 1855

White silk and wool mixed organdy with print; double-tiered skirt with border pattern; pagoda sleeves with fringe.

Inv. AC885 78-24-60AB





During the mid-nineteenth century, skirt shapes became even rounder and more voluminous. In the 1850s it was a trend for girls as well as women to wear skirts with many layers of horizontal flounces, which served to emphasize the skirt's bell shape.

← **Evening Dress**

Early 1850s

Light blue silk taffeta brocade with woven rose pattern; silk satin and tulle decoration on bodice front; triple-tiered skirt with scalloped edge.

Inv. AC3082 80-3-5

→ **Day Dress**

c. 1855

Silver-gray silk taffeta brocade with woven pattern of silver lace and flowers; fringe at hem of bodice and double-layered pagoda sleeves; white lace at neck; double-layered tiered skirt.

Inv. AC4473 83-11-9AB



Ingres was acclaimed for painting portraits that precisely captured the personality and social background of the model. His clients were from the newly powerful bourgeoisie, and the extravagant clothes that signified the social position of this class were depicted by Ingres' exceptional skill.

→ Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres
Madame Moitessier (detail), 1856
National Gallery, London

Evening Dress

c. 1855

Crème silk and wool mixed gauze with floral print; triple layered tiered skirt.

Inv. AC9475 97-23-6AB







The invention of petticoat made with horse-hair (*crin* in French) suddenly made it unnecessary to wear lots of layers of petticoats. Towards the end of the 1850s, an innovative cage crinoline, made by connecting a series of hoops made out of steel and whale-bone, was produced. Cage crinolines were easy to put on and take off, so skirts continued to expand, reaching their maximum size in the 1860s. The cage crinoline grew out of proportion, and it was troublesome just to walk or pass through a door; this made everyday life difficult, and criticism of the crinoline gradually spread. The crinoline phenomenon was often satirized.

← Day Dress

c. 1858

Navy silk taffeta with striped pattern of cut velvet.

Inv. AC287 77-12-4AB

→ Day Dress

c. 1850

Green and beige plain-weave plaid wool; pagoda sleeves; trimming of silk taffeta ribbon.

Inv. AC2197 79-9-2AB

→→ Day Dress

c. 1850

Wool and silk mixed in barège weave of blue and white stripes; pagoda sleeves with fringe; five horizontal tucks on skirt.

Inv. AC2232 79-10-5



Day Dress

c. 1865

Tobacco-brown silk taffeta brocade set of bodice and skirt, braid and lace on bodice.

Inv. AC825 78-24-1AC

Day Dress

c. 1865

Purple silk taffeta set of bodice and skirt, white lace and fringe on bodice.

Inv. AC2234 79-1-7AB



Day Dress

c. 1865

Light blue silk taffeta set of bodice and skirt,
chenille and fringe on bodice.

Inv. AC1063 78-30-74AB

Day Dress

c. 1865

Brown silk taffeta set of bodice and skirt,
decoration of organdy and velvet.

Inv. AC2202 79-9-7AD





In the mid-nineteenth century, cashmere as well as lace shawls were favored. Lace, which until the eighteenth century had been extremely labor-intensive to produce, could be made by machine in the nineteenth century. Because of industrial developments, large lace shawls became affordable. French towns like Valenciennes and Alençon were the major centers of lace production.

Day Dress
c. 1865

Tobacco-brown silk taffeta brocaded with floral pattern; braid and lace on bodice; large triangular shawl of black Chantilly lace.

Inv. AC825 78-24-1AC



Tarlatan, a thin plain-weave cotton, dyed or printed and given a starched glaze, became fashionable in the 1860s. Despite its thinness, its firm cloth made it suitable for use with the large skirts of the crinoline style. Here is an example of a tarlatan dress, which can be seen in the work of such painters as Manet and Monet from the same period. In their outdoor scenes these artists precisely captured the effect of the light, airy, and partially translucent tarlatan.

Day Dress

Late 1860s

White cotton tarlatan with woven stripes; set of bodice and skirt; ribbon of red silk satin and cotton lace; belt of silk satin ribbon; rosette at center front; bow at center back.

Inv. AC4324 82-17-43AE

→ **Claude Monet**

Women in the Garden (detail), 1866
Musée d'Orsay, Paris







The evening dress from the 1860s shows the characteristic outline of the crinoline expanding toward the back. The front and back hems are approximately 1.5 meters apart, and the circumference measures about 4.7 meters. The apron style of the overskirt shows rounding at the back, and is starting to expand in size.

Evening Dress

c. 1866

Bodice of sheer ivory striped silk with pink silk taffeta; triple-layered skirt (sheer ivory striped silk skirt and overskirt, and pink silk taffeta underskirt).

Inv. AC9380 96-27-1AE

In 1857 Charles Frederick Worth opened a *maison* in Paris, and built the foundations of haute couture. The Empress Eugénie was first in a long line of aristocratic customers, and with penetrating foresight and skillful strategies Worth controlled the *Paris mode* for about half a century.

This vivid mauve example is dyed using aniline, a chemical dye invented in 1856. Worth was quick to pick up on the new trend, and was the first to use these hitherto impossible vivid colors. These dresses are all from the transitional period in which fashion was changing over to the bustle silhouette.



← **Charles Frederick Worth**

Reception Dress

Label: WORTH 7, RUE DE LA PAIX,
PARIS

c. 1874

Purple silk faille set of bodice and skirt;
silk lace and velvet bows at neck and cuffs;
apron-shaped overskirt with fringe at front;
skirt with three alternating flounces of fabric
and velvet.

Inv. AC9167 94-35AB

→ **Anonymous**

Day Dress

1870-1874

White linen organdy printed with blue
striped pattern; bodice and skirt set; flounce
decoration.

Inv. AC2210 79-9-15AB

→→ **Anonymous**

Day Dress

c. 1869

White cotton organdy bodice and skirt set;
pleated decoration; underdress of blue linen
organdy.

Inv. AC1859-1860 79-1-16AD



The princess dress was named in honor of Alexandra, Princess of Wales (later Queen of Britain). It had no horizontal waist seam, but used vertical tucks to fit closely to the waist, emphasizing the bust and hips. It was fashionable around 1880, and though it was only

in style for a short time, it can be seen as an example of a nineteenth-century "body-conscious" style. This example is made of organdy, inlaid with three different varieties of plant-patterned Valenciennes lace. Approximately 50 meters of laces was used for this dress.



Anonymous

Reception Dress

Label: (illegible)

c. 1880

White linen organdy and Valenciennes lace;
one-piece princess dress; train with dust ruffle.

Inv. AC679 78-20-4AB

James Tissot

The Reception (detail), 1878

Musée d'Orsay, Paris





The thickness and stiffness of high-quality silk fabric was ideal for creating the clear, sharp lines of the bustle style. Of all the quality silks of the time, Lyons silk was the very best. The fashionable silhouettes at that time used large quantities of Lyons silk fabric.

This example, a combination of the complimentary colors blue-green and red, shows the new taste in colors, which was made possible with the new chemical dyes that appeared in this period.

N. Rodrigues

Reception Dress

Label: N. RODRIGUES Paris

1875-1879

Blue-green silk satin brocade with woven pattern of red roses; two-piece dress; lace at neckline, front opening and cuffs; silk satin bows at cuffs; train with silk thread fringe and wooden beads.

Inv. AC9232 95-19-6AC



Many rich Americans were among Worth and Pingat's clientele, a major Parisian *haute couture* house at the time, and such designer's garments were frequently sold in America. This example, with its impressive and beautiful textile, is a two-piece bustle-style dress. The floral designs woven into the cloth look like small chrysanthemums, flowers that had become popular thanks to the influence of Japonism. Delicate and complex decorations can be seen: fringe was generously applied to the bodice and bustle, and narrow pleats were used for decoration on the skirt.

Emile Pingat

Day Dress

Label: E. PINGAT 30, RUE LOUIS-LE-GRAND 30 PARIS

c. 1883

Purple silk cut velvet with floral pattern; bodice, skirt and train set; fringes of ribbon and chenille; metal buttons; pleated decoration at hem of skirt.

Inv. AC10343 2000-26-2AC

Charles Frederick Worth used large amounts of silk from Lyons, a city whose industry had outshone all others with its skill and artistry. The voluminous dresses of the period, which used large quantities of Lyons silk, were a brand-new fashion that spread through the whole world. Lyons became firmly established as the source of the fabric used in the Paris mode. This example is a creation that shows the great skill that went into the making of Lyons silk. The imposing beauty of the materials lends even greater effect to this dramatically designed dress.

Charles Frederick Worth

Reception Dress

Label: WORTH 7, RUE DE LA PAIX.

PARIS

c. 1883

Wine-red silk satin cut velvet with stripes and leaf pattern; figured additional cut velvet layer on leaf pattern; set of bodice and skirt with bustle; tulle and silk satin bows at cuffs; apron-shaped overskirt draped toward back.

Inv. AC9712 98-29-2AB







At the end of the nineteenth century, exquisitely intricate material was fashionable. These are especially good examples of woven designs that used large quantities of cut velvet. As the weaving industry developed and machinery improved, technology caused a transformation in the development of quality fabrics, and it became possible to create intricate and high-quality designs. Soon after, however, from about 1900 onwards, there was a major change, and the use of light materials such as chiffon and lace became a trend in fashion.

→ **Anonymous**

Coat

c. 1885

Gold ground with black cut velvet and solid black cut velvet; feather trimming; large slit at back for bustle-style dress worn underneath; bead and chenille decoration at back of waist.

Inv. AC1057 78-30-68,

→→ **Anonymous**

Walking Dress

c. 1883

Brown cut velvet set of bodice and skirt; plain velvet draped from front to back and continued to bustle.

Inv. AC303 77-12-18AB





The *visite* was a type of coat considered fashionable in combination with the bustle style. It has a slit to accommodate the projecting back of the dress, and decorations are concentrated at the back to emphasize the design of the bustle. These decorations are extremely complex and finely detailed.

← **Charles Frederick Worth**

(See also pages 266/267)

Visite

Label: WORTH 7, RUE DE LA PAIX,
PARIS

c. 1885

Off-white silk faille; braid trimming with wooden bead wrapped by silk threads at front opening, cuffs and hem; decoration of silk threads untwined at collar; front opening fastened by hooks and silk satin ribbons.

Inv. AC540 77-16-1

→ **Anonymous**

Visite

c. 1885

Black cut velvet with floral pattern; fringe of black beads and chenille at cuffs, center back and hem; three-dimensional beaded decoration of leaf and nut shapes at bustle.

Inv. AC5366 86-17-6



In the latter half of the 1880s the bustle reduced in size, and the entire dress changed to a more simple style. At the rear of the skirt, vestiges of the bustle style remained, but the extreme forms of the bustle style were simplified and toned down.

On the left is an impressive silk brocade with woven patterns of ferns, similar to Japanese *basho* plants, giving a Japanese flavor.

← **Rouff**

Ball Gown

Label: Rouff Paris

c. 1888

Pale green silk satin embroidered with silver threads and sequins; bodice and skirt set; train of gold silk brocade with plant pattern.

Inv. AC7068 92-5-3AB

→ **Charles Frederick Worth**

Dress

Label: PARIS C. WORTH PARIS

c. 1888

Ivory silk satin brocade with floral pattern of morning glories and silk faille stripes; bodice and skirt set; bodice with silk tulle and jabot; tulle at neckline and cuffs; silk tulle flounces on front of skirt.

Inv. AC9377 96-25AB



Throughout the nineteenth century, narrow waists were greatly admired. Women used corsets in an effort to get closer to a perfect physical form. This forcible distortion and squeezing of the body continued up until the beginning of the twentieth century. With the development of modern technology, inventors created corsets of considerable ingenuity. In particular, the introduction of steel allowed great improvements in the tightening of the waist with a corset.

Corset
1880s

Blue silk satin; steel busk; bone.
Bust: 76 cm. Waist: 49 cm.
Inv. AC212 77-11-52AB

→ **Edouard Manet**
Nana (detail), 1877
Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg



1. Corset

c. 1868–1873

White cotton; steel busk; bone.

Bust: 84 cm. Waist: 54 cm.

Inv. AC4036 81-25-150AB



1

2. Corset

Label: I. C. A LA PERSEPHONE

1890s

Black silk satin embroidered with small floral pattern; steel busk; bone.

Bust: 85 cm. Waist: 56 cm.

Inv. AC3674 81-1-21AB



2

3. Corset

1870s–1880s

White cotton net; steel busk; bone.

Bust: 66 cm. Waist: 45 cm.

Inv. AC2876 79-26-19AB

4. Corset

1860s–1870s

Brown raffia and cotton; steel busk.

Bust: 84 cm. Waist: 67 cm.

Inv. AC9246 95-29-AB

5. Corset

1865–1875

White cotton coutil; steel busk; bone.

Bust: 84 cm. Waist: 52 cm.

Inv. AC3159 80-5-49

6. Corset

1880s

Blue-gray cotton satin; steel busk; bone.

Bust: 104 cm. Waist: 81 cm.

Inv. AC2843 79-25-6AB

7. Corset

Label: LOOMER'S

1885–1895

Brown cotton satin; steel busk; bone.

Bust: 81 cm. Waist: 51 cm.

Inv. AC5144 85-27AB

8. a/b Corset (front and back)

Label: THOMSON'S

1885–1889

Wine-colored silk satin; steel busk; bone.

Bust: 89 cm. Waist: 59 cm.

Inv. AC1495 78-39-29AB



3



4



7



5



8a



6



8b

In the late 1820s skirts began to expand once again. Women wore several layers of petticoats beneath their skirts to increase their volume. The simple idea of weaving horsehair (*crin* in French) into the petticoat cloth appeared in the early 1840s, and the crinoline was born. Skirts could then be held out with a single layer of cloth. In the late 1850s people began using connected horizontal hoops of wire or whalebone to produce new and original versions of the crinoline. But with the appearance of this light, easy-to-wear crinoline the transition to larger skirts accelerated, and they reached their maximum size in the 1860s. This structure carried over to the next trend, the bustle style, in which the skirt was expanded towards the rear.



→ **Bustle**

1870–1874

Steel-wire hoops and white linen tape.

Inv. AC2856 79-26-1

→→ **Crinoline**

c. 1865

Forty steel-wire hoops, eleven white linen tapes.

Diameter from left to right: app. 95 cm;

from front to back: app. 98 cm; circum-

ference of hem: 303 cm.

Inv. AC3863 81-19



Left
Crinoline
c. 1865

White and purple cotton with twelve steel-wire hoops.

Diameter from left to right: 73 cm; from front to back: 81 cm; circumference of hem: 244 cm.

Inv. AC2899 79-28-3

Center
Crinoline
Label: THOMSON'S
c. 1875

Red cotton with twelve steel-wire hoops.

Diameter from left to right: 58 cm; from front to back: 59 cm; circumference of hem: 189 cm.

Inv. AC1064 78-30-75

Right
Crinoline
1865-1869

White cotton with nineteen steel-wire hoops.

Diameter from left to right: 105 cm; from front to back: 98 cm; circumference of hem: 318 cm.

Inv. AC2227 79-9-32





The use of crinolines allowed the overall expansion of the skirt, but in the mid-nineteenth century this expansion quickly became restricted to the back of the dress. The large lower hem of the crinoline skirt was scaled down, the skirt became flat over most of its surfaces, and only the rear projection remained in the new silhouette. This shape was supported from the inside by the bustle. In the period from the 1870s to the 1880s, there were many variations on the now fully developed bustle, supporting the form from the inside, and fashionably emphasizing the posterior. A variety of bustle constructions appeared, including cushions filled with horsehair, stiffly starched cloth, and frames of whalebone, bamboo and rattan.

Above Left

Bustle

1880s

White and red striped cotton with steel wire.

Inv. AC9456 97-18-3



Above Right

Bustle

1880s

White cotton lace with coiled steel wire.

Inv. AC3157 80-8-47



Below Left

Bustle

1880s

Wire mesh with cotton tape.

Inv. AC3382 80-22-4



Below Right

Bustle

1880s

Wire mesh with cotton tape.

Inv. AC341 77-12-55



→ **Georges Seurat**

Les Poseuses (detail), 1886–1888

The Barnes Foundation, Merion (PA)

Bustle

1870s

Red and brown striped cotton with steel
wire.

Inv. AC1929 79-1-81



Bustle, Corset, Chemise and Drawers

1870–1880s

Bustle of brown and beige striped cotton with thirteen steel wires placed at back; corset of black silk satin with yellow silk ribbon and embroidery; chemise and drawers of white cotton.

Inv. AC237 77-11-75, AC3103 80-4-3AB, AC714 78-20-37, AC1372 78-37-86



→ **Bustle**

Label: (illegible)

1870s

Brown and polychrome striped cotton with steel wire.

Inv. AC3178 80-7-1

↳ **Bustle**

Label: SCARBOROUGH Y.C. & O.

1870s

Red cotton twill with steel wire.

Inv. AC2833 79-24-27

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Bustle

1870s

Brown cotton satin with fifteen metal wires placed at back; black silk taffeta pleats at lower back. (By fastening the inside straps, the fifteen wires can be lifted in order to adjust the volume to fit the dress.)

Inv. AC347 77-12-61







As the 1880s drew to a close, the bustle reduced in size. The line of the skirt changed to a funnel shape, a neat, slender shape with a flaring hem. In contrast to this, around 1890 the shoulders expanded, and *gigot* sleeves made a comeback. The upper parts of the sleeves were stiffened and greatly enlarged, reaching their largest size in around 1895.

This example has very large sleeves, and the chrysanthemum designs spread all over the textile surface are impressive. In the middle of the nineteenth century, chrysanthemums brought from Japan to Western Europe received a great deal of attention, and around 1880, Western European countries created "Chrysanthemum Associations." In 1887, Pierre Loti published his *Madame Chrysanthème*, and the image of the chrysanthemum as a symbol of Japan was established.

← **Charles Frederick Worth**

Reception Dress
Label: C. Worth
c. 1892

Off-white silk satin with woven chrysanthemum pattern; large velvet *gigot* sleeves; lace decoration on cuffs and collar.

Inv. AC9206 95-7

→ Design of evening dress by Worth on flier of the *Exposition universelle de Lyon*, 1894



A.D.

Robe de Soirée
Grand Damastrophe Chrysanthèmes fond noir
Etoffe de la Maison F. Bachelard & Co
Exposition Universelle de Lyon 1894.

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On the next page is a skirt that flows neatly into a funnel shape, complemented with large *gigot* sleeves that gives the dress a fashionable Western European shape. However, the prominent "morning sun with clouds" motif forms a powerful association with Japan, the "land of the rising sun." The motif structure is asymmetrical. This composition had not previously been seen in Western Europe, and is clearly influenced by Japanese arts and crafts, especially the kimono.

Charles Frederick Worth

Evening Dress
Label: none
c. 1894

Ivory silk satin; silk chiffon bodice with *gigot* sleeves; skirt with sunbeam and cloud pattern of bead embroidery.

Inv. AC4799 84-9-2AB



Charles Frederick Worth

Ball Gown

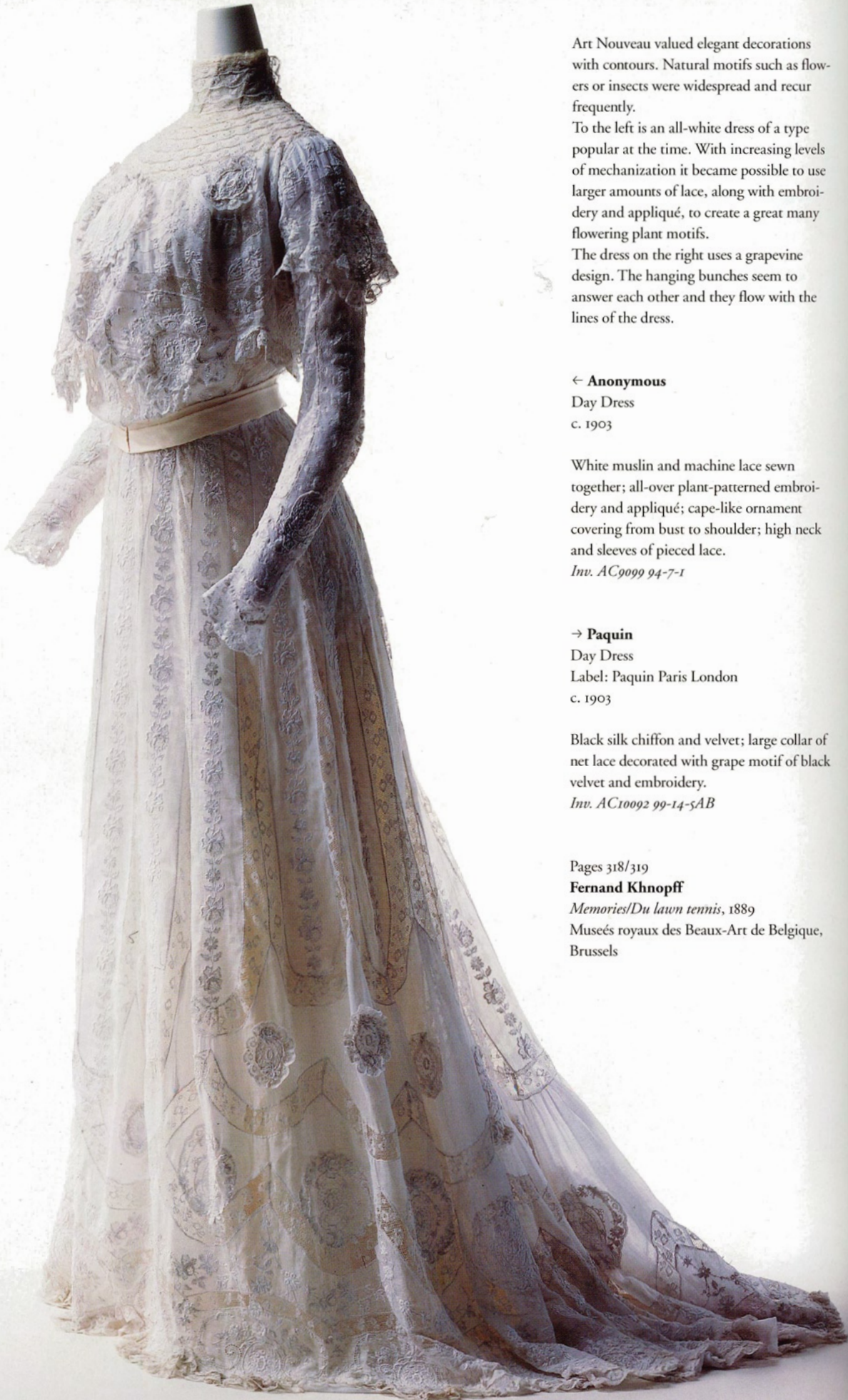
Label: PARIS C. WORTH PARIS

c. 1894

Yellow silk brocade with tassel pattern; two-piece dress with *gigot* sleeves; silk taffeta bow at breast; silk chiffon decoration at hem of skirt.

Inv. AC9167 94-35AB





Art Nouveau valued elegant decorations with contours. Natural motifs such as flowers or insects were widespread and recur frequently.

To the left is an all-white dress of a type popular at the time. With increasing levels of mechanization it became possible to use larger amounts of lace, along with embroidery and appliqué, to create a great many flowering plant motifs.

The dress on the right uses a grapevine design. The hanging bunches seem to answer each other and they flow with the lines of the dress.

← **Anonymous**

Day Dress

c. 1903

White muslin and machine lace sewn together; all-over plant-patterned embroidery and appliqué; cape-like ornament covering from bust to shoulder; high neck and sleeves of pieced lace.

Inv. AC9099 94-7-1

→ **Paquin**

Day Dress

Label: Paquin Paris London

c. 1903

Black silk chiffon and velvet; large collar of net lace decorated with grape motif of black velvet and embroidery.

Inv. AC10092 99-14-5AB

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Fernand Khnopff

Memories/Du lawn tennis, 1889

Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique,
Brussels

At the end of the century, women's clothes still had a shape distorted by the corset, and were heavily decorated with frills and lace. However, at the same time, people were searching for new ways of life for women, and the rationality of men's clothing became a model to follow. Tailored jackets in particular, which were forerunners of twentieth-century unisex fashion, took on an increasing importance for women's fashion. Illustrated below is a distinctive dress, with its greatly expanded sleeves and lack of decoration on the simple skirt. It is an example of a tailored-suit type of design.

Charles Frederick Worth

Day Dress

Label: C.WORTH PARIS 79 876
1895

Brown wool twill; large *gigot* sleeves; bodice and skirt trimmed with velvet and leather; stand collar and belt of velvet ribbon.

Inv. AC3887 82-25-3AB



World War I quickly and completely demolished the old social systems and values that had begun to crumble at the end of the nineteenth century. Society changed, and consequently the whole look of society changed too. The rise of a powerful middle class brought about a new lifestyle, and as women stepped out of the home to participate more fully in the world at large, they discarded the corset and sought more functional clothing. Fashion designers as well as artists thought hard about new types of apparel. While it is important to understand the impact that the two World Wars had on fashion, it is also true without a doubt that *haute couture* functioned as the central influence leading fashion in the first half of the twentieth century. Also during this period, various vital media systems were established which spread the fashions of Parisian *haute couture* around the world.

The Quest for a New Type of Clothing and The Escape from the Corset

World War I accelerated shifts in various aspects of society and culture. An increasing number of highly educated and professional women, the more frequent use of automobiles, and a growing fascination with sports were just some of the developments that resulted in a whole new lifestyle. Clothing, too, evolved to acquire the shape of the new epoch. For active women in this period, day-to-day clothing gradually achieved a certain degree of functionality in the form of tailored suits.

On the other hand, prominent dress designers such as Charles Frederick Worth, Jacques Doucet and Jeanne Paquin, who had all started *haute couture* houses during the previous century, still adhered to an *Art Nouveau* sensibility, aiming for ultimate beauty through a combination of elegance and opulence. Their ornate creations required long corsets to achieve the desired effect, an artificial S-curve silhouette. Long corsets distorted the natural body and hindered mobility so much that, although women followed such styles in public, they understandably sought release from such restrictive attire inside their own homes. The popular at-home garments were tea gowns with loose silhouettes, since they allowed women to loosen their corsets underneath.

It was Paul Poiret who first put forward a new line of fashion that did not require the use of a corset. His "Confucius Coat," with its straight cut and ample shape, first appeared in 1903. Next, in 1906, he created the "Hellenic Style," a corset-free and high-waisted design. With few exceptions, since the time of the Renaissance western women's clothing had required a waist-cinching corset as the main shaping element. Poiret rejected the use of a corset in female garments, shifting the supporting point of gravity from the waist to the shoulders. According to his autobiography, Poiret's designs arose not from a desire to release women from the centuries-old tyranny of the corset, but from an ardent quest for a new form of beauty. His garments, nevertheless, achieved something that even the disapproval of feminist activists and medical doctors during the late nineteenth century had failed to do: they liberated women from the corset. Consequently, fashion in the twentieth century evolved from a corseted, artificial form to a more natural shape supported by a brassiere.

Poiret's work was decorated in a splendidly exotic style, and employed strong, bold colors. He created harem pants, as well as the aptly named narrow-hemmed hobble skirt, and turbans inspired by the Orient. His designs fed into a nostalgia for foreign lands that characterized this period of the twentieth century. Orientalist painting, popularized in the late nineteenth century, and the publication of *A Thousand and One Nights* in translation in the early twentieth century fostered a yearning for the Orient. The sensational debut of the *Ballets Russes* in Paris in 1909 was applauded for its exotic magnificence and certainly added to the trend. Attention turned increasingly to Japan, which opened its doors to the West in the late nineteenth century. By the time of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), Japan's cultural influence had been dubbed "Japonism." Both Orientalism and Japonism made an impact on various fields of art and literature. Poiret

and another fashion house, Callot Sœurs, found inspiration in exoticism and the sensuous beauty of the East. They were drawn to the patterns and colors of fabrics as well as the structure of garments such as loosely fitted harem pants and the exotic Japanese kimono. The flat shape and openness of the kimono, in fact, suggested one direction that the new relationship between the body and clothing would go.

The search for a new style in clothing was observed in other European countries aside from France. Spanish-born Mariano Fortuny, inspired by Greek shapes and forms, created a classically pleated dress and named it "Delphos." The "Delphos" was an innovative design combining functionality with decoration. Fine pleats gently encased the body, and ornamentation was supplied almost entirely by movement, as the slightest stir changed the glow and hue of the textile. The Wiener Werkstätte founded in 1903 by Josef Hoffmann and others also created new clothing. The Wiener Werkstätte started business mainly to engage in the production of architecture, craft works, and bookbinding, but it opened a fashion department in 1911 with its own clothing line, including such items as loose-fitting sack dresses.

Around the turn of the century, the media necessary to transmit fashion news were developed and their realm of influence spread rapidly. Fashion magazines such as *Vogue* (1892-, New York) and *Gazette du Bon Ton* (1912-1925, Paris) established a method of informing the world of fresh developments in fashion. Fashion pictures played a dominant role in such magazines; many new artists such as Paul Iribe and Georges Lepape caused this era to be known as the golden age of fashion illustration. Poiret was the first to use the fashion catalogue as a medium for individual designers to display their work to the world, publishing *Les Robes de Paul Poiret by Paul Iribe* (1908) and *Les Choses de Paul Poiret* (1911), illustrated by Georges Lepape.

Because buyers and fashion journalists from many countries subsequently began to crowd into Paris to obtain information on the latest fashions, the Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne was set up in 1910 to control the scheduling of collections and prevent the proliferation of unauthorized, imitation merchandise. Paris was then well on the way to establishing a system to maintain its dominance as the fashion center of the world.

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 halted much activity in the fashion world. Women, who found themselves taking on the responsibility of men's tasks in society and industry during the War, needed practical clothing rather than decorative and elaborate costumes. Simple designs and shorter skirts were in demand, and tailored clothing fit the bill. The functional tailored suit became an essential women's fashion item of the time. In contrast to the dramatic changes in women's clothing, men's fashion saw only minor alterations, such as a slightly looser fitting jacket and narrow hemlines on trousers, both created to permit greater freedom of movement.

New Women

Although they lost their jobs when men were discharged from military service after World War I, nothing could turn back the tide for women who had acquired a taste for the excitement of the outside world. Jazz became popular. A dance craze for the tango and the Charleston boomed. Everyone seemed to be racing around in high-speed automobiles, getting suntans, and swimming. New rules were applied to a society that now included a burgeoning *nouveau riche* class alongside the old-money upper class, and an avant-garde sensibility alongside traditional ideals of elegance. Caught up in the dynamic energy of the time, the cycle of fashion trends grew shorter.

Female looks changed significantly. Hairstyles went from full, upswept arrangements to short bobs. Hemlines shot up from below the ankle to flirt with the knee. Since a youthful, slender style found more favor than a mature and voluminous one, women accordingly dressed up like boys. *La Garçonne*, from the eponymous novel by Victor Marguerite

(1922), was the symbolic image that women aspired to achieve. The new woman acquired a higher education, had a profession, and enjoyed romantic relationships without hesitation. She led society into new customs such as driving cars, playing golf and tennis, exercising, and even smoking.

The androgynous *garçonne* style, which eschewed any emphasis of the bosom or the waist, achieved general recognition at the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes held in Paris in 1925, the exhibition that gave the style known as Art Deco its name. A short hairstyle with a close-fitting cloche hat and a loose-fitting drop-waist dress with a knee-length skirt characterized the *garçonne* look. The extreme simplicity of the dress was supplemented with surface decorations of spangled embroidery, a feather boa, and assorted bright accessories. Underwear consisted of a brassiere, teddy, and natural flesh-tone stockings; makeup included red lipstick, white powder, and blush; eyebrows were plucked into a fine line, and the eyes were accentuated with a dark line of kohl to complete the look.

With the boyish bent of the period, it was only natural that a demand for sports clothing emerged. French tennis champion Suzanne Lenglen also helped to foster the production of sports clothing by demonstrating her matchless strength in functional tennis wear. The bathing suit, exposing more of the body than ever before, appeared on beaches everywhere in the late 1910s. Beachwear was also introduced, and the fashion of wearing pants became popular at resorts.

Gabrielle ("Coco") Chanel played a decisive role in this new aspect of women's fashion. She designed clothing for comfort, simplicity, and chic appearance with an innovative combination of jersey material and shapes borrowed from men's clothing. After her jersey dress caused a sensation, she designed cardigan ensembles, sailor-style "yachting pants," beach pajamas, and the renowned must-have item, a simple black dress. Another of Chanel's contributions to fashion was the idea that fashionable, ostentatious costume jewelry could represent real wealth as surely as jewels. The perfect embodiment of both the *garçonne* style and the independent woman, Chanel created a whole new dress ethic and proposed a style for women who were ready to pursue their own active lives.

In the golden age of *haute couture* during the 1920s and 1930s, many rising names in fashion design such as Jean Patou, Edward Molyneux and Lucien Lelong actively worked alongside the older established houses of Paquin and Callot Soeurs. Female designers were especially influential, and in the 1920s Chanel and Madeleine Vionnet played the most important roles. While Chanel's role was that of a media-savvy stylist, Vionnet was more an architect of fashion. Her technique of cutting garments from geometrically patterned fabric with a superb sense of construction brought about genuine innovations in dressmaking. Vionnet invented a wide variety of detailed designs like the bias cut, circular cut, cut with slash or triangular insertion, halter neckline, and cowl neckline. Inspired by the plain construction of the Japanese kimono, she also created a dress constructed from a single piece of cloth.

The association between fashion and art gained an unprecedented intimacy in the 1920s. Designers teamed up with artists for inspiration. New movements in art like Surrealism, Futurism and Art Deco proposed that the entire living environment, including clothing, should be harmonized as a single artistic manifestation. Collaboration with avant-garde artists, and the influence of Surrealism and Futurism in particular, brought radical artistic design to clothing. The decorative accessories and textiles of Art Deco emerged from this rich collaboration, which included the adaptation of a number of artistic techniques such as Oriental lacquering.

But the Great Depression of 1929 brought an end to much of the postwar prosperity enjoyed during the 1920s. Many of *haute couture's* wealthy clients lost their assets overnight, and the streets thronged with homeless people. The middle classes who survived the worst of the period became much more interested in sewing at home.

Art and Fashion

These difficult economic circumstances meant that the abstract and straight silhouette favored in the 1920s gave way to a more natural form in the 1930s. The slim line of clothing remained, but the bosom was reasserted and the waistline was once again nipped into a standard position. Long dresses came back for eveningwear and hair regained a more traditional feminine length with a soft curl.

But not everything regressed. Day to day clothing continued to feature practical dresses with short skirts, and increasingly popular items of sports clothing. The rich spent long periods of time at resorts and common people also enjoyed vacations at the beach. As a result, fashion for outdoor activities gained in importance. Although the term *prêt-à-porter*, or "ready-to-wear," had yet to appear, *haute couture* houses had started to move in that direction by including sweaters, pants and bathing suits for sports in their boutiques.

Elsa Schiaparelli started her career as a designer of sportswear like sweaters and beach clothing. She gradually expanded her line to include town wear and evening dress, and established herself as one of the most important designers in the 1930s. Schiaparelli is known to have employed great wit to create her unique fashions, epitomized by the famous black woolen sweater with a *trompe-l'œil* white bow that launched her career in fashion.

Schiaparelli was the designer who most closely worked with artists during her time. She was influenced by Dadaism, and adopted ideas from Surrealism for the creation of her eccentric dresses and hats. But art for her was not simply a source of inspiration; she also integrated it directly into her designs. Original sketches by Salvador Dalí and Jean Cocteau were printed or embroidered on her dresses. She eagerly exploited new materials and experimented with rayon, vinyl, and cellophane. However, her intentions did not extend to reshaping clothing itself, and no dramatic new silhouettes figure in her work. The square shoulder and marked waist characteristic of her designs were the mainstream fashion in the 1930s, and remained the dominant style during World War II.

During the 1930s, such female designers as Gabrielle Chanel and Madeleine Vionnet, who had enjoyed international acclaim since the 1920s, as well as Schiaparelli, represented the vanguard of the fashion world. But a male designer, Cristobal Balenciaga, opened his Paris salon in 1937, offering designs with a completely modern structure that garnered much attention.

American films exerted a powerful influence on fashion during the 1930s. Famous Hollywood stars like Marlene Dietrich and Greta Garbo wore dresses made by costume designers such as Adrian. These costumes looked relatively conservative and simple in cut compared to *haute couture* fashion in Paris, but they appeared magnificent on the screen because of their luxurious fabrics. The number of women in the general public who watched Hollywood films – with an eye out for fashion tips – gradually exceeded the number who read fashion magazines featuring Paris *couture*.

Photography, invented in the nineteenth century, grew in importance in fashion magazines. Fashion photos appeared in magazines at the turn of the century, and as the quality of images improved, they became more prevalent. Photographers like Adolphe de Meyer in the 1910s and Edward Steichen in the 1920s are credited with the invention of fashion photography. In the 1930s, when color photography first appeared, the key images in fashion magazines became photographs rather than paintings or drawings. Through the efforts of many photographers, individual expression thrived; George Hoyningen-Huene and Horst P. Horst expressed modernity with sharp images; Toni Frissell pioneered outdoor photography under natural light; Man Ray and others experimented with the various possibilities of photography techniques.

The S-curve silhouette was most popular around 1900. To achieve a flowing line, light and soft materials such as chiffon and charmeuse were often used. The severe tightening of the body by the corset reached its peak around this time, and this later led to the quest for a new style that resulted in liberation from corsets. These are typical of the Belle Époque style. The elegant dress on the left with overlaid decoration is a style characteristic of Doucet.

→ **Jacques Doucet**

Evening Dress

Label: DOUCET 21. RUE DE LA PAIX
PARIS

c. 1903

Black silk lace with bead embroidery and velvet; silk chiffon sleeves with inset lace; belt of gold grosgrain ribbon.

Inv. AC9465 97-21-3AB

→→ **Anonymous**

Day Dress

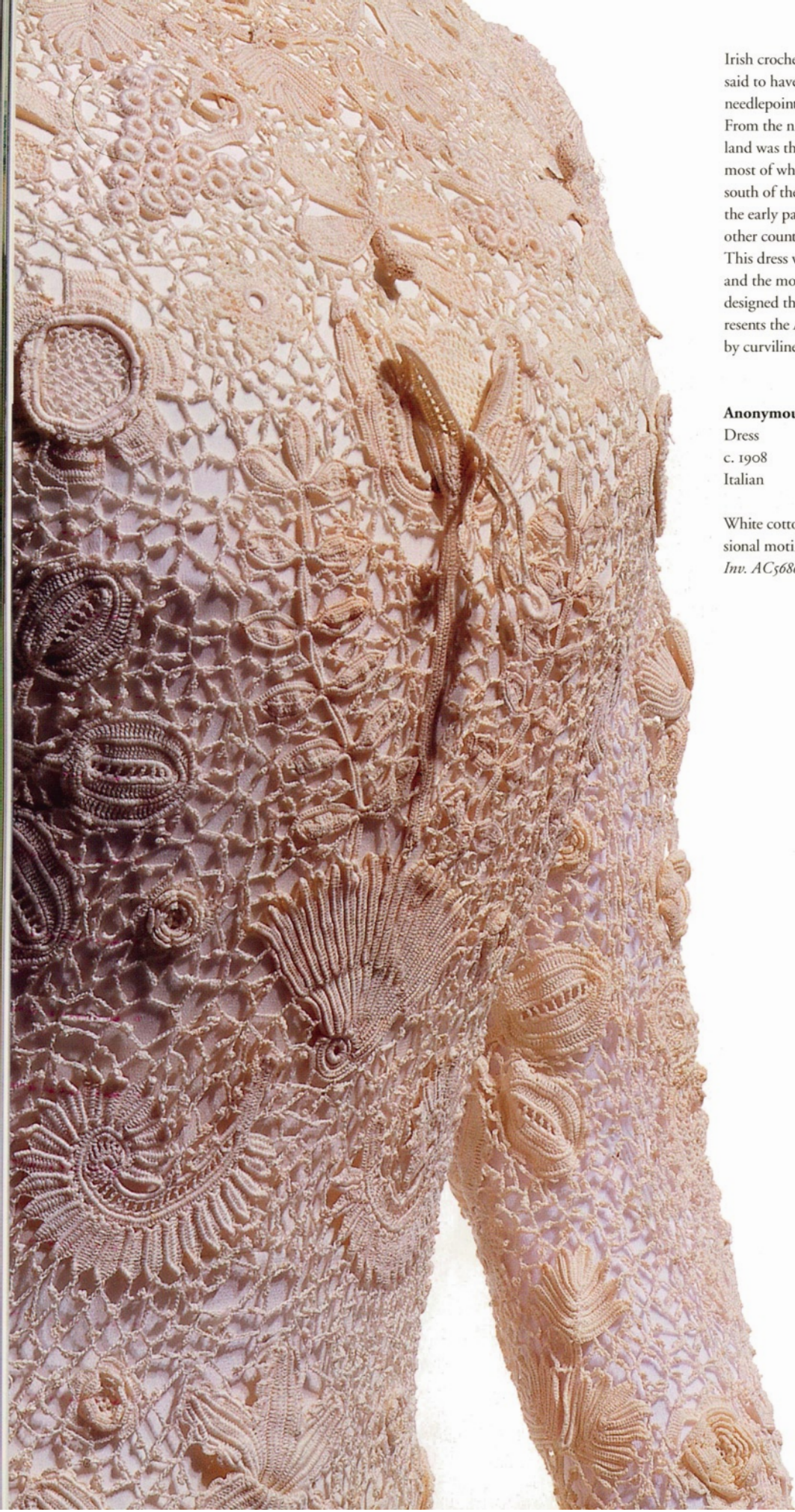
c. 1903

White silk chiffon two-piece dress with S-curve silhouette; high-neck collar and yoke of bobbin lace.

Inv. AC3638 80-29-19AB







Irish crochet lace was knitted by hand. It is said to have originated from elaborate Italian needlepoint lace in the seventeenth century. From the nineteenth century onward, Ireland was the main producer of this lace, most of which originated in convents in the south of the country. It became popular in the early part of the twentieth century, and other countries began to produce it as well. This dress was knitted to fit the S-curve, and the motifs of the insects and plants were designed three-dimensionally. The dress represents the Art Nouveau style, characterized by curvilinear and organic forms.

Anonymous

Dress

c. 1908

Italian

White cotton Irish crochet; three-dimensional motifs of flowers and dragonflies.

Inv. AC5680 87-36-1



The female body was squeezed most tightly into corsets in the early days of the twentieth century. The body had to be forced to fit the artificial S-curve of the dress, which emphasized the bust and hips, while making the waistline as small as possible. Poiret introduced the corset-free dress in 1906, although women were not completely freed from the corset until after World War I. Both of these corsets are supported by a long straight steel busk at the front and solid boning around the body. These reinforcements were needed to suppress the abdomen and emphasize the hips.

A woman wearing corset, chemise and drawers, 1900



← **Corset, Chemise and Drawers**

Label: VELVET GRIP (on corset)

c. 1900

Black corset of cotton brocade with small floral pattern; steel busk; garters at front; chemise and drawers of white linen.

Inv. AC727 78-20-50AB, AC4273 82-17-4A, AC4274 82-17-4B

→ **Corset**

c. 1907

Black cotton jacquard with small floral pattern; silk lace decoration with ribbon at top; garters at front.

Inv. AC4679 83-26-19AB

