

# 핀업스타일이 패션에 미친 영향에 관한 연구\*

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## The Research of Pin-up Style's Influence on Fashion

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### ABSTRACT

핀업은 제2차 세계대전기간동안 매력적인 여성들의 성적인 사진들을 군인들이 그들의 숙소 벽에 부착함으로써 생겨난 신조어이다. 이러한 핀업들은 영화의 발달로 인하여 헐리우드 스타들과 같은 발전된 형태로 나타나게 됐으며, 그들의 스타일은 하나의 패션 트렌드를 만들었다. 본 연구의 목적은 핀업의 스타일을 역사적 관점에서 고찰하여 특성을 분석하며 핀업 스타일이 역사적으로 어떠한 변화를 통하여 오늘날의 현대패션까지 영향을 미치게 되었는가를 연구하는 것이다.

연구방법은 관련된 문헌고찰을 통한 역사학적 이론적 배경을 토대로 하여 핀업의 범주를 설정하고 관련 자료를 수집하였다. 그리고 핀업 스타일의 공시적, 통시적 고찰, 역사적 변천과 특성을 분석하여 이들에 내재된 문화적 가치가 패션에 어떠한 영향을 미치고 있는지를 연구해보았다.

연구 결과 핀업 그 스스로는 역사적 고찰을 통하여 그 가치를 지니며, 핀업 스타일의 변화는 구조적으로 이루어지며, 구조는 세대와 취향에 따라 변화하며 패션에 지속적으로 영향을 미치고 있었다.

Key Words: Pin-up(핀업), Historical Value(역사적 가치), Synchronism (공시성),  
Diachrony (통시적 변화)

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## I. Introduction

The majority of students and scholars of fashion and clothing in the past have approached the academic understanding of clothing and fashion through the perspective of history of costume. In particular they researched the history of changing styles and the contribution of important designers. Traditionally, this perspective focused on form and its aesthetic qualities. Furthermore, fashion changes tended to be explained in terms of influential individuals or the creative genius of individual designers.

As the methodology of fashion developed, various approaches have subsequently been adopted following the self-conscious establishment of a school of new art historical thinking in the late 1970s, in which social and political contexts were prioritized over older concerns of authorship and appreciation or connoisseurial value. The arising debates undoubtedly challenged those assumptions that had underpinned the serious study of fashion in the first place. Indeed many of the defining aspects of new art historical approaches, which drew on ideas from Marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis and structuralism or semiotics, encouraged a fresh prominence for debates incorporating problems of social identity, the body, gender and appearance or representation<sup>1)</sup>.

In the face of a potentially confusing and contradictory conflict of costume history-writing, this research aimed to incorporate elements of both art and design historical approaches in an attempt to offer a coherent introduction to the history and interpretation of pin-up style.

Also, costume historians encounter in their practice the same basic methodological and theoretical problems as do all historians. The study of these problems is known as historio-

graphy. Using a historiographic approach, this study was researched the pin-up girls influence on contemporary fashion through the characteristics of pin-ups.

### 1. The difference between style and fashion

#### 1) Style

The definitions that follow are based on the work of Dr. Paul H. Nystrom, one of the pioneers in fashion merchandising<sup>2)</sup>. In general terms, a style is a characteristic or distinctive artistic expression or presentation. Style exists in paintings, sculptures, architecture and music, as well as in popular heroes, hobbies, flirtations behavior and weddings. In apparel, style is the characteristic or distinctive appearance of a garment the combination of features that makes it unique and different from other garments. For example, T-shirts are as different from camp shirts as they are from peasant blouses. Riding jackets are as different from safari jackets as they are from blazer jackets.

Although styles come and go in terms of acceptance, a specific style always remains a style, whether it is currently in fashion or not. Some people adopt a style that becomes indelibly associated with them and wear it regardless of whether it is currently fashionable.

Some styles are named for the period of history in which they originated Greek, Roman, Renaissance, Empire(Fig.1), Gibson Girl era (early 1900s) and flapper era (1920s). (Fig.2) When such styles return to fashion, their basic elements remain the same. Minor details are altered to reflect the taste or needs of the era in which they reappear. For example, the flapper style of the 1920s was short, pleated, and body

skimming. This style can be bought today, but with changes for current fashion acceptance.



<Fig.1> Empire Style

<Fig.2> Flapper Style

### (1) Reappearance of certain style

The idiomatic expression there is nothing new under the sun, applies to fashion as it does to everything in life. Certain styles, which are intrinsically beautiful, seem to appear and reappear century after century with only slight modifications.<sup>3)</sup> For example, Greek styles predominated in the period of the Renaissance and again held sway during the Napoleonic period.<sup>4)</sup> Ruffs, one of the most outstanding features of attire at the time of Henry III, appeared again in full glory during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and still again during the latter part of the last century.

The circle which fashions run in is thus similar to the appearance and disappearance of a child's toy. As soon as a child shows signs of becoming bored with a particular toy, a clever mother would put it away until it is forgotten. Later, it can be brought out again when searched for. The same is true in clothing fashions. What has once been in favor is sure to be worn at a later date, after sufficient time has elapsed for the owner to have forgotten it.

### 2) Fashion

A fashion is a style that is accepted and used by the majority of a group at any one time, no matter how small the group. A fashion is always based on some particular style. But not every style is a fashion. A fashion, which is a fact of social psychology, is a result of social emulation and acceptance. A style may be old or new, beautiful or ugly, good or bad. While a style is still a style even if it never receives the slightest acceptance or even approval, a style does not become a fashion until it gains some popular acceptance. Consequently, it remains a fashion only as long as it is accepted.

## II. The pin-ups influence as the perspective of history-writing

### 1. Fact and historical value

All recorded items of information are facts surviving from the past. Although billions of facts are available to scholars, it would be physically impossible to cite the entire history. Consequently, a dramatic process of filtering must take place. In order to be selected, a fact must be considered significant in some way; significance varies according to the conceptual framework and objectives of the historian.<sup>5)</sup> Moreover, all conclusions reached are dynamic because new evidence may cause them to be constantly revised. In addition, because scholars are intellectually independent, they may interpret historical events differently. The existence of pin-ups during World War II was a historical fact; however, the problem was how people assign historical value to the pin-ups.

Scholars insist that Paleolithic cave men painted fine pictures of hunters and animals on the walls to give their sons better luck in their main purpose the hunting of animals, such as aurochs and mammoths, to feed their families. Further, scientists claim that the so-called Venus figures those Neolithic stone and clay figurines of rotund and hippy ladies are fertility objects. These figures supposedly have mystic powers that help cave ladies become more family-oriented more quickly.

Certainly, archaeologists must be right in attributing primitive religious aspects to these ancient paintings and sexy carvings. But people have always decorated the places in which they lived or worked or drank with representations of things they loved. Is it possible that these archaic paint-ups and carve-ups are distant ancestors of the pin-up? Yes, indeed, assuming we all agree on the definition of a pin-up. Literally, the term came into existence during World War II to describe the photographs of beautiful girls mostly movie stars and starlets which were distributed and placed on bare walls to increase the morale of American fighting men. In time, pin-ups referred to photographs of prototypical girls, such as Betty Grable (Fig. 3), Rita Hayworth (Fig.4), and Chili Williams.

What were the qualities of a pin-up girl? She was extremely attractive, and usually voluptuous, though in a pert, saucy, wholesome way. She was rarely sultry or provocative and almost never nude. However, as time passed by, the pin-up girl became more pervasive. Nevertheless, the main point is that, the pin-up picture turned out to have been with us Western civilization for quite a while. It continues to flourish today and is expected to thrive for many more centuries.



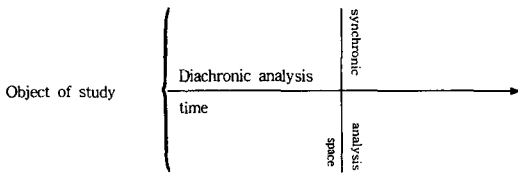
<Fig.3> Betty Grable, queen of pin-ups during World War II(Left)

<Fig.4> Rita Hayworth, in this famous picture from Life magazine, was a close second to Grable in popularity(Right)

## 2. Synchronic and diachronic

Historians have been characterized as scholars who are concerned with development taking place through time. However, all historians have to occasionally pause time to describe what was happening simultaneously with a particular fact or event under review. In other words, historians tend to alternate between the diachronic (time, or chronological-evolutionary) and the synchronic (space, or descriptive-systematic).

These two terms were introduced in an influential text, *Course in General Linguistics* (1916), written by Ferdinand de Saussure. According to Saussure, a language can be studied in two ways: first, by looking at changes taking place through time; and secondly, by looking at a language as a logical system. The two modes of analysis are the possible ways of dissecting the same object of study. They are generally visualized in terms of a diagram with two axes. (Fig. 5)



<Fig.5> Synchronic and Diachronic

Nevertheless, Saussure held that the two perspectives were radically different: One is a relation between simultaneous elements (the synchronic); and the other the substitution of one element for another in time, an event (the diachronic).<sup>6)</sup> One can argue that the two modes of analysis are interdependent. A text directly influenced by the linguistics of Saussure, which is explicitly and self-consciously synchronic in its conception and method, is Barthes's *The Fashion System* (1985). Wishing to analyze a particular state of fashion without having to consider the extra complication of change over time, Barthes focused most of his time on written works appearing in magazines, such as 'Elle' and 'Le Jardin de Modes', between June 1958 and June 1959. In his introductory reflections upon method, he states: the synchrony of fashion is established by fashion itself: the fashion of the year (that is, the line laid down annually).<sup>7)</sup>

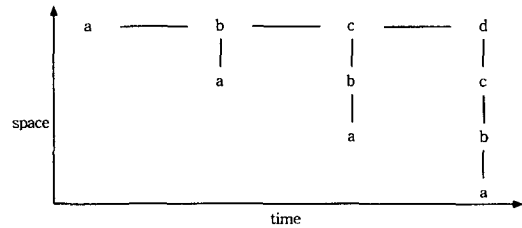
Because the diachronic is mainly concerned with change and the synchronic with system or structure, it is not simply a question of the historian alternating between the two modes of analysis but of the historian explaining the relation between change and structure. As Peter Burke remarks: Change is structured, and structures change.<sup>8)</sup>

Considering this theory, we can say that the characteristics of pin-ups are structured, and structures change. In other words, the pin-up style was similar at one moment in time; but its

structure has changed due to elements such as generation and taste.

### 3. J. Mukařovskys prague prism

To understand how material from that past is preserved and experienced simultaneously, J. Mukařovsky (of the Prague school of structuralism) subjectively devised a diagram called the Prague Prism (Fig. 6) to supplement the cross-design of Saussure.



<Fig.6> The Prague Prism

One misleading feature of this diagram is the assumption that as time passes, all elements from the past are carried forward, whereas of course many disappear from the record altogether. For example, consider the appearance of a medieval building. How a medieval person viewed this building would be much different than how a modern person would view it. Although there are flaws to this diagram, there are also many positive points worth mentioning. The value of this diagram is that it highlights the density and complexity of any historical moment: a multiplicity of styles, fashion designers at different stages of their careers, mixture of the old and the new, the ascendent and the descendent, all coexisting.

An awareness and acceptance of the simultaneous existence of the styles of many ages has been one of the major factors leading to the revivals

and eclecticism of fashion.

Like most designers, fashion designers have adopted revivals of styles for their contemporary costume design. In addition, fashion designers also have adopted the design of old fashion designer for their contemporary fashion design. (Fig. 7, 8)

Wishing to survey revived styles in England from the mid-sixteenth century to the present day, Barbara Baine wrote the four types of revival in her book *Fashion Revival: from the Elizabethan age to the present day* (1981). *Broadly speaking revivals fall into four types: first, revivals of styles and types of dress originally established by the Greeks and Romans of classical antiquity; second, dress known to have been worn at periods of more recent history, from mediaeval times and after; third, dress drawn from rural life; and fourth, dress of exotic origins, transplanted and revised for English usage.*<sup>9)</sup>



<Fig.7,8> The black and white gown(Left) which Jeanne Lanvin designed in 1926 for theater director Jane Renouante, was called La Nuit de Paris. John Galliano, who is inspired by fashion history, slightly changed Lanvins design for his 1998 collection for Dior(Right).

Considering her opinion, the pin-up style is equivalent to the second type. When this theory

applies to the pin-up style, the pin-up style is revived in contemporary fashion by using multiple viewpoints. However, as you have seen in the diagram, the elements from the past were carried forward; moreover, the style should have at least similar distinctions or characteristics for adopting this theory. The problem with the pin-up style was that the characteristics of this style change depending on the persons preference during that period. Nevertheless, in spite of non-fluid characteristics of the pin-up, there are some characteristics that are maintained. Furthermore, we can state that the pin-up style is a fashion because various group of people accept this style.

### III. Pin-up

#### 1. The definition of pin-up in the dictionary

- Noun : 1. a. A picture, especially of a sexually attractive person, that is displayed on a wall.  
 b. A person considered a suitable model for such a picture.  
 2. Something intended to be affixed to a wall.

- Adjective : 1. Suitable for a pinup.  
 2. Designed to be attached to a wall.

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language: Fourth Edition. 2000

#### 2. The definition and the origin of pin-up in the perspective of history

Pin-up is an American word coined during World War II to describe sensual photographs of

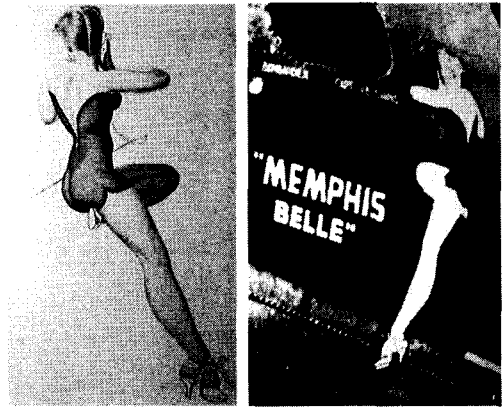
attractive women. Millions of young men enjoy viewing and studying photographs of their dream girls. It was a known fact that young soldiers and sailors would literally pin up photographs of their favorite models on the walls of their barracks and the bulkheads of their warships, and somehow fasten them to the crumbling earthen sides of their muddy foxholes.<sup>10)</sup> (Fig. 9) Moreover, some pilots drew pin-ups on their aircraft. (Fig. 10,11,12,13) They placed such pictures to remind them of their deprivations and to gain confidence during military conduct.



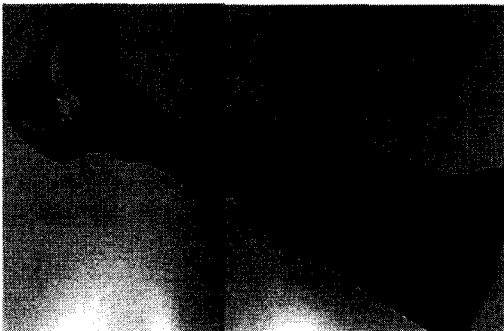
<Fig.9> An overwhelming pin-up display at an American base located in Burma during World War II



<Fig.10,11> Espire gatefold, November 1941 and The Vulgar Virgin aircraft with its crew, North Africa, 1943



<Fig.12,13> Original painting for Esquire, April 1941 (Courtesy Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas: gift of Esquire, Inc.)(Left) World War II aircraft Memphis Belle (Clarence Simonson)(Right)



During World War II, young soldiers could get pin-up photographs in weekly issued army magazine, such as *Yank*. (Fig. 14) Certainly, *Yanks* once-a-week pin-up pictures (Fig. 15) were relatively *nothing compared to* artistic Hollywood photographs that engulfed not only soldiers, sailors, and airman, but also millions of citizens not drafted.

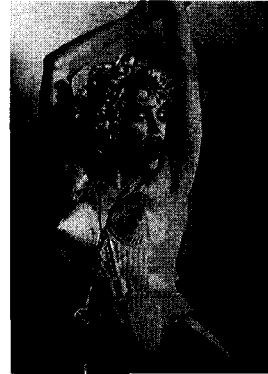


<Fig.14,15> Yank, the U.S Army's weekly magazine, was edited, written, and illustrated by enlisted men(Left), Yank's once-a-week pin-ups(Right)

### 3. Pin-ups as a sexual attraction

Most people would agree that part of the reason for wearing clothes is to appear attractive to the opposite sex. This idea applies to the origin of clothing as well as to contemporary practices. (Fig. 16) Through long separations and horrible experiences of the Second World War, huge, gentle, unsophisticated farmboys of agricultural states, and black and white GIs yearned for home. Sir Hugh Greene, ex-Director-General of the BBC, recounts in his boo, *The Third Floor Front*, that a powerful anti-German propaganda be used. The repetition of just two words, pus, Mother, pus Mother, would be very effective because the vulnerable point in the morale of the enemy could be reduced to two simple concepts, fear of wounds and homesickness.

What makes pin-up girls interesting is the synthetic nature of the shape and consistency of her prized possessions. This was surely done because while young soldiers dream of their mothers and their home, they often dream of making love with their girlfriend. Since sex with their mother is inadmissible, those female attributes must be potent in their mate.



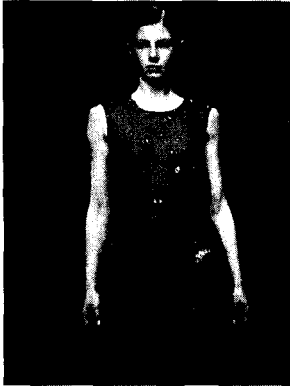
<Fig.16> Madonna attracts sex in a corset by Jean-Paul Gaultier

### 4. The characteristics of nude pin-ups

Through history we have had trends toward nudity but the bare look would be followed by fashions that covered and concealed, so that the wearer directed, then diverted attention by covering and subsequently exposing various parts of the body.<sup>11)</sup> Hemlines and necklines have moved up and down, but seldom in opposite directions at the same time; that is, short skirts and low necklines were not worn together until the 1960s.<sup>12)</sup>

Since the origin of pin-ups blossomed when soldiers were isolated from society and women, it was natural for men to instinctively miss a women's style. Because of this reason, most pin-up style emphasized more nudity and sensual clothing than general contemporary fashion. This nude characteristic of pin-ups helped promote nudity in fashion design. For example, Yves St. Laurent designed his costume using sheer fleshcolored chiffon with clusters of shimmering bangles. Prada also designed her costume using sheer fabric.(Fig. 17)





<Fig.17> Prada design in 1999 forest fairy collection.

## 5. Pin-ups develop hollywood movie stars

Hollywood movies changed everything, even fashion. *Vogue* rightly posed the question: Which influences which? Certainly, each had a great effect on the other, and this helped to broaden fashions influence enormously and made couturiers even more famous. While female movie stars, such as Vivien Leigh, and Audrey Hepburn. (Fig. 18, 19, 20) became more popular and influential, pin-ups were also becoming more well known.

With this phenomenon, people state that Hollywood sets the trend.<sup>13)</sup> Today's stars tend to follow existing trends as they change their look with every public appearance, whether a party in Versace, an opening in Gucci, or the Oscar in Dior. During the 1930s and 1940s, Hollywoods Golden Age, movie stars set trends: Marlene Dietrich as a female Don Juan in a made-to-measure suit and shirt with cufflinks; Jean Harlow as a fallen angel in white satin that flowed over her body like oil; Joan Crawford as a self-reliant woman in a broad-shouldered, tailored suit. These were just a few of many actresses, who became models for millions of women. Before *Vogue* and *Harpers Bazaar* were

widely circulated, people drew their fashion sense from the silver screen.(Fig. 21)



<Fig.18> Vivien Leigh as Scarlett in *Gone with the Wind*



<Fig.19> Audrey Hepburn in *Roman Holiday*.



<Fig.20> Audrey Hepburn in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*



<Fig.21> Sheer lace, satin Lastex, and jeweled straps adorn this bathing suit worn by Esther Williams in Million Dollar Mermaid (MGM, 1950)

*never go out of style.*



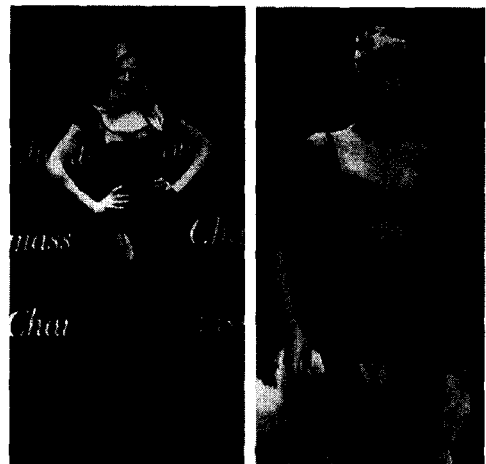
<Fig.22,23,24> Magazine examples of trend of pin-up style in the 1990s

#### IV. Examples of pin-up styles influence on contemporary fashion

##### 1. Pin-up star betti page influence on contemporary fashion

In the 1990s, fashion magazines from around the world including France, Germany, Spain, Italy and England published models of Bettie Page. Magazine idolized her for defining her era, for reviving the pin-up style in fashion today, and even for inspiring the Pulp Fiction look. (Fig. 22, 23, 24) In addition, some designer such as Chantal Thomass used the term, Bettie Page as an adjective that described a certain style. This is explicitly observed in the book, Bettie Page: the life of a pin-up legend. (Fig. 25, 26)

*The pin-up look is popular again because people need beauty. Now all the models are very sexy. It is part of the lot of a woman to be seductive. And it has been forgotten for many years. Women forgot to be women. We can have both We can be business women and also seductive women. Thats why Bettie Page will*



<Fig.25,26> The seductive dresses designed by Chantal Thomass as a pin-up style.

The contents of pin-up Bettie Pages private closet whips, riding crops, corsets, garter belts, stockings, boots, sheer black fabrics, leopard prints gloves halters, leather and rubber garments

of all kinds have gone public on the runways of Paris, Milan, London and New York. Long before Versace, Gaultier, Dolce & Gabbana, Westwood, Blumarine and others, Bettie glorified fetish, seduction and voyeurism, anticipating the day they would become fashion. Her contribution to modern style climaxed in Paris when John Galliano used her image to signal the return of seductive glamour. (Fig. 27)



<Fig.27> Pin-up star Bettie Pages fetish fashion influence on contemporary fashion

In October of 1995, the magazine *Fashion Today* which was published in Korea reported that contemporary designers revived pin-up girl style. It reported that 1995 Milan collection was inspired by romantic and erotic Hollywood stars and pin-up girls of the 50s. In this magazine, the editor used the term pin-up style to describe the revival of seductive and glamorous style in contemporary fashion.

## V. Conclusion

Historically, the pin-up originated from past events, such as World War II. Because of the isolated setting of this society, it was natural for

men to miss the characteristics of a woman. Pin-ups not only existed during World War II, Vietnam War, and Gulf War, but also during the ancient age. Furthermore, they also exist in contemporary society. During the Gulf War, the pin-up style was much more pervasive than that during World War II because the image of a mans dream girl changed. Moreover, contemporary teenagers place photographs of their favorites singers and movie stars on the walls of their rooms.

How do people define fashion with regards to pin-ups? Because fashion trend change, people have a tendency to change pin-up styles. Even though the change of fashion is the result of conscious human decision, it seems inappropriate to assign values to the myriad fluctuations of modern fashion. Fashion only seems to become historical; Changes in fashion appear regular if we consider a relatively long historical duration, and irregular if we reduce this duration to the few years preceding the time at which we place ourselves. Fashion appears to possess two duration: one historical, the other what could be called memorable

In terms of pin-up style, this style appears irregular if we consider the historical duration of mankind. However this style seems to be relatively significant when considering its timing. From the viewpoint of synchronic analysis and duration, people should call pin-up style as fashion because people accept a specific pin-up style during specific period of time.

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