Collectively Fashioned: Women, Fancy Dress, and Networks of Representation in British Visual Culture, 1750-1900

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Volume I

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Abstract

This thesis furthers the claim that dress was a vital tool for the expression of identity, particularly for women, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by considering how women utilized images of dress as part of a networked process of representation. In doing so, it seeks to revive the important role of women in the creation of visual representations of dress, both as subjects and patrons. This thesis demonstrates that, as in the creation of physical costume, costume that is represented in art and visual culture was the result of the agency of a network of individuals, whose relationships were bound through kinship and social networks. Each of the three case studies explores a different visual representation of dress, including painted portraiture, fashion plates and photographs from an ephemeral costume ball.

Although each of these chapters engages with a different type of dress and medium of art, they are all united by their focus on historic and exotic impulses in costume: real, imagined and fashionable. Through each of these examples, this thesis charts how fashions migrate across time and space in visual representations of dress, and in the process contribute to the empowering act of representing the collective ideals of women's networks at regional, national, and international levels.

The aims of this thesis are twofold: to draw attention to the importance of visual images of dress to the study of women's history on account of the messages of representation embedded within them; and secondly to demonstrate the degree to which the creation of such images was a networked process in which women exercised a level of agency that is often not attributed to them in the literature.

Table of Contents

Vol. I

Abstract 2
List of Illustrations 5
Acknowledgements 25
Author's Declaration 27

Introduction. Fashion Across Borders and Seas: Networks of Dissemination and Representation 28

I. The Evolution of a Project 35
II. Framing Fashion 43
III. Networks of Representation 57

Chapter 1. Cosmopolitan Style in Colonial Boston: Female Networks and Regional Definitions of Ideal Womanhood in John Singleton Copley's Turquerie Portraits, 1763-1774 64

I. Turquerie: Women and the Style 71
II. Copley's Turquerie Portraits: Invention or Imitation? 80
III. Authoresses of Female Independence 91
IV. Networks of Dissemination 100
V. Conclusion 108

Chapter 2. Subscribers of Style: Fashionable Dress and the Art of Allusion in Nicholas Heideloff's *Gallery of Fashion*, 1794-1803 113

I. Subscribing for the Nation 120
II. A British Language of Classicism 134
III. The Politics of the Picturesque 148
IV. Conclusion 161

Chapter 3. Envisioning and Enacting the Eighteenth Century: Networks Across Time and Space in The Duchess of Devonshire's Diamond Jubilee Ball Album of 1897 164

I. From Ball to Album: A Total Work of Art 169
II. Kinship & The Art of Allusion: The Craven Sisters and their Daughters 173
III. A Rococo Vision Disrupted: The Spencer-Churchill Family 185
IV. A Network Across Time: Painters, Photographers & Sitters 200
V. Conclusion 213

Conclusion 216

Bibliography 219

Manuscripts 219
Primary Sources 219
Secondary Sources 226
Dissertations and Theses 266

Vol. II

Illustrations 270

List of Illustrations

0.1 John Singleton Copley, *Judith Sargent Murray* or *Mrs. John Stevens*, c. 1769-72. Oil on canvas, 127.0 x 101.6 cm, Terra Foundation for American Art, Chicago, p. 270.

0.2 Attributed to Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu with her son, Edward Wortley Montagu, and attendants*, c. 1717. Oil on canvas, 69.3 x 90.9 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 271.

0.3 Orpha North Hart, Swatch Book, 1812. Paper paged book with fabric samples pasted in, Ms. 1978.1.807, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, p. 272.

0.4 Orpha North Hart, Swatch Book, 1812. Paper paged book with fabric samples pasted in, Ms. 1978.1.807, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, p. 273.

0.5 Mary Appleton Aiken, Diary, 1885. Paper paged book, Ms. 84364, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, p. 274.

0.6 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. I, 1861. Paper paged book, Dimensions unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, p. 275.

0.7 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. XVIIII, 1892. Paper paged book with fashion illustrations pasted in, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston p., 276.

0.8 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. II, February 1862. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, p. 277.

0.9 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. V, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, p. 278.

0.10 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. VII, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, p. 279.

0.11 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. IV, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, p. 280.

0.12 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. VII, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, p. 281.

0.13 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. X, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, p. 282.

0.14 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. X, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, p. 283.

0.15 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. XIV, c 1870. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, p. 284.

0.16 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. XVII, c. 1880. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, p. 285.

0.17 Caroline Jenkins Keith Journal, 1797-1819. Ms. SBd-167. Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, p. 286.

0.18 Scrimshaw, c. 1870-1880. Engraving on whale bone, Dimensions unknown, Mystic Seaport, Connecticut, p. 287.

0.19 Doll with Accessories, Made in England, 1755-60. Wooden and carved doll in an 18th century costume, 60 x 42 x 43 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 288.

0.20 Charles Willson Peale, *Lady Louisa Gilmor and Her Daughters*, 1788. Oil on canvas, 91.4 x 73.7 cm, Collection of Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, p. 289.

0.21 Pashmina Shawl, Made in Pakistan, 1820-1830. Wool, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, p. 290.

0.22 Muff Trimmed with Chenille Embroidery and Printed Scene, Made in France, 1785-1810. Silk satin, paint, chenille and gauze, cotton stuffing, metallic sequins and bullion, 35.56 x 40.64 cm, Collection of Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, p. 291.

0.23 Fan, Tiffany & Co., Late-Nineteenth Century. Silk, ivory, metal, 20.3 x 27.9 cm, The Metropolitan Museum, New York, p. 292.

0.24 Fan, Sold by E. Cruesy, Paris, c. 1890-1900. Silk, ivory, metal, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford, p. 293.

0.25 Advertisement for Pears Soap, May 2, 1900. Printed with illustration, Dimensions Unknown, John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera, Bodleian Library, Oxford University, p. 295.

0.26 John Singer Sargent, *Madame X*, 1883-4. Oil on canvas, 208.6 x 109.9 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, p. 296.

0.27 Sir Anthony Van Dyck, *Lady Elizabeth Thimbelby and her Sister*, c. 1635. Oil on canvas, 132.1 x 149 cm, The National Gallery, London, p. 297.

0.28 Jean Étienne Liotard, *Maria Gunning, Countess of Coventry*, 1749. Pastel on parchment, 23.5 × 19 cm. Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva, p. 298.

0.29 Francis Cotes, *Elizabeth Gunning, Baroness Hamilton*, 1751. Pastel on blue paper, 59.1 x 43.8 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 299.

0.30 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Elizabeth Gunning, Duchess of Hamilton and Argyll,* 1760. Oil on canvas, 238.5 x 147.5 cm, Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight in Wirral, Merseyside, p. 300.

0.31 Peter Paul Rubens, *Portrait of Helena Forument*, c. 1630-2. Oil on panel, 186 x 85 cm, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon, p. 301.

0.32 Thomas Hudson, *Mary Bertie, Duchess of Ancaster and Kesteven*, 1757. Oil on Canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Grimsthorpe and Drummond Castle Trust, Bourne, Lincolnshire, p. 302.

0.33 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Mary Darby, Mrs. Thomas Robinson as "Perdita",* 1782. Oil on canvas, 77 x 63.7 cm, Rothschild Collections, Waddeson Manor, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, p. 303.

0.34 Peter Paul Rubens, *Portrait of Susanna Lunden (?),* or *Le Chapeau de Paille*, c. 1622-5. Oil on oak, 79 x 54.6 cm, The National Gallery, London, p. 304.

0.35 Elisabeth Vigee-Lebrun, *Self Portrait in a Straw Hat*, after 1782. Oil on canvas, 97.8 x 70.5 cm, The National Gallery, London, p. 305.

0.36 Thomas Gainsborough, *Giovanna Baccelli*, exhibited 1782. Oil on canvas, 226.7 x 148.6 cm, Tate, London, p. 306.

0.37 Sir Thomas Lawrence, *Julia, Lady Peel*, 1827. Oil on canvas, 90.8 x 70.8 cm, The Frick Collection, New York, p. 307.

0.38 John Singer Sargent, *Jennie Jerome, Lady Randolph Churchill*, c. 1890. Oil on canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Location Unknown, p. 308.

0.39 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire*, c. 1775-6. Oil on canvas, 239.4 x 147.5 cm, The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, San Marino, California, p. 309.

0.40 Francis Cotes, *The Honourable Lady Stanhope and the Countess of Effingham as Diana and her Companion*, c. 1765. Oil on canvas, 240 x 152.2 cm, York Art Gallery, Yorkshire, p. 310.

0.41 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Lady Sarah Bunbury Sacrificing to the Graces*, 1763-65. Oil on canvas, 242.5 x 151.7 cm, The Art Institute of Chicago, p. 311.

0.42 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Afternoon Dresses', Figs. 361 and 362, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. IX, March 1803, Printed by W. Bulmer and Co., Cleveland-Row, St.

James's. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 312.

0.43 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Sarah Wilson as Madame de Pompadour,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 313.

1.1 John Singleton Copley, *Elizabeth Murray*, *Mrs. James Smith*, 1769. Oil on canvas, 126.05 x 101.6 cm. Museum of Fine Arts Boston, p. 314.

1.2 *Maria Countess of Coventry*, by Richard Houston, published by Carrington Bowles, after Jean Étienne Liotard, 1752 or after. Mezzotint, 15.2 x 11.5 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, NPG D2533, p. 315.

1.3 *Habit of the sultaness, or empress of the Turks in 1700* or *La sultane Asseki ou Sultane reine*, Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, originally engraved by G. Scotin for Monsieur Comte de Ferriol, *Recueil de cent estampes représentant différentes nations du Levant,* Vol. 1, Plate 4, reproduced in Thomas Jefferys, *A collection of the dresses of different nations: antient [sic] and modern.* Hand-Coloured Engraving, New York Public Library, p. 316.

1.4 *Femme Turque qui feume sur le Sopha*, Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, Engraved by Gérard Jean-Baptist Scotin, c. 1701-1708. Etching and stipple, 48 cm x 34 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 317.

1.5 Charles-Antoine Coypel, *Young Lady in Turkish Costume*, c. 1740. Oil on Canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Private Collection, p. 318.

1.6 Rosalba Carriera, *Felicita Sartori in Turkish Costume*, c. 1730-40. Pastel on Paper, Dimensions Unknown, Uffizi Gallery, Florence, p. 319.

1.7 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Caroline Spencer, Duchess of Marlborough*, c. 1759. Oil on canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Goodwood House, Sussex, p. 320.

1.8 Sir Peter Lely, *Elizabeth, Countess of Kildare*, c. 1679. Oil on canvas, 123.4 x 100.0 cm, Tate, London, p. 321.

1.9 John Singleton Copley, *Mrs. Jerathmael Bowers*, c. 1763. Oil on canvas, 126.7 cm x 101 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, p. 322.

1.10 *Lady Caroline Russell* or *Caroline Spencer, Duchess of Marlborough*, by James McArdell after Sir Joshua Reynolds, early 1760s. Mezzotint, 34.8 x 25.0 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, NPG D38249, p. 323.

1.11 John Singleton Copley, *Martha Swett, Mrs. Jeremiah Lee*, 1769. Oil on canvas, 241.3 x 149.9 cm, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum, Hartford, Connecticut, p. 324.

1.12 John Singleton Copley, *Jeremiah Lee*, 1769. Oil on bed ticking, 241.3 x 149.9 cm, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum, Hartford, Connecticut, p. 325.

1.13 John Singleton Copley, *Mary Boylston, Mrs. Benjamin Hallowell*, c. 1766-67. Oil on canvas, 119.4 × 95.3 cm, Detroit Institute of Arts, Michigan, p. 326.

1.14 John Singleton Copley, *Lucy Boylston, Mrs. Timothy Rogers*, c. 1766-67. Oil on canvas, 127.63 x 101.92 cm, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, p. 327.

1.15 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Lady Louisa Conolly,* 1775. Oil on canvas, 136.53 x 99.7 cm, Fogg Museum of Art, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, p. 328.

1.16 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Catherine (Kitty) Fisher*, 1762. Oil on canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Private Collection, p. 329.

1.17 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Anne Lennox, Countess of Albemarle*, c. 1760. Oil on canvas, 126.5 x 101 cm, The National Gallery, London, p. 330.

1.18 John Singleton Copley, *Sarah Morecock Boylston, Mrs. Thomas Boylston*, 1766. Oil on canvas, 129.5 x 102 cm, Fogg Museum of Art, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, p. 331.

1.19 John Singleton Copley, *Rebecca Boylston*, 1767. Oil on canvas, 127.95 x 102.23 cm, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, p. 332.

1.20 John Singleton Copley, *Margaret Kemble Gage*, c. 1771. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.6 cm, Timken Museum of Art, San Diego, California, p. 333.

1.21 Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, called 'Guercino', *The Cumaean Sibyl with a Putto*, 1651. Oil on canvas, 222 x 168.5 cm, The National Gallery, London, p. 334.

1.22 George Willison, *Nancy Parsons in Turkish Dress*, c. 1771. Oil on canvas, 57.2 x 47.6 cm, Yale Centre for British Art, New Haven, Connecticut, p. 335.

1.23 *Maria, Lady Broughton*, John Finlayson after Francis Cotes, 1772. Mezzotint, 49.9 x 34.9 cm, British Museum, London, p. 336.

1.24 *Elizabeth Barrington, The Hon. Mrs. Barrington*, Published by Carrington Bowles after Sir Joshua Reynolds, c. 1760s. Mezzotint, 15.3 x 11.5 cm, British Museum, London, p. 337.

1.25 *Habit of a Turkish Lady in 1700*, Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, originally engraved by G. Scotin for Monsieur Comte de Ferriol, *Recueil de cent estampes représentant différentes nations du Levant,* Vol. 1, Plate 4, reproduced in Thomas Jeffreys, *A collection of the dresses of different nations: antient [sic] and modern.* Hand-Coloured Engraving, New York Public Library, p. 338.

1.26 John Singleton Copley, *Catherine Osborne, Mrs. Epes Sargent II*, 1764. Oil on canvas, 124.5 x 99.1 cm, Private Collection, p. 339.

1.27 John Singleton Copley, *Sarah Sargent, Mrs. Nathaniel Allen*, c. 1763. Oil on canvas, 125.73 x 101.6 cm, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota, p. 340.

1.28 Frontispiece to *Letters of the Right Honourable. Lady M-y W-y M-e: written, during her travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa, to persons of distinction, men of letters, &c. in different parts of Europe*, printed in London by S. Payne, A. Cook, and H. Hill, 1767. Bodleian Library, Oxford University, p. 341.

1.29 John Singleton Copley, *Elizabeth Byles* or *Mrs. Gawen Brown*, 1763. Pastel on paper, 44.5 x 36.8 cm, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas, p. 342.

1.30 Thomas Frye, *Ladies, very elegantly attired in the fashion, and in the most agreeable attitudes*, 1761. Mezzotint, 50.3 x 35.2 cm, British Museum, London, p. 343.

1.31 John Singleton Copley, *Sarah Sherburne, Mrs. Woodbury Langdon*, 1767. Oil on canvas, 147.32 x 121.92 cm, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas, p. 344.

1.32 John Singleton Copley, *Mr. Joseph Sherburne*, c. 1767-70. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.6 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, p. 345.

1.33 John Singleton Copley, *Elizabeth Storer, Mrs. Isaac Smith*, 1769. Oil on canvas, 127.3 x 101.9 cm, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut, p. 346.

1.34 John Singleton Copley, *Nicholas Boylston*, 1767. Oil on canvas, 127.3 x 101.1 cm, Harvard University Portrait Collection, Cambridge, Massachusetts, p. 347.

1.35 John Singleton Copley, *Joseph Green*, 1767. Pastel on paper mounted on canvas, 60.64 x 45.4 cm, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, p. 348.

1.36 John Singleton Copley, *Elizabeth Cross, Mrs. Joseph Green*, 1767. Pastel on paper mounted on canvas, 60.01 x 45.4 cm, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, p. 349.

1.37 John Singleton Copley, *Nicholas Boylston*, c. 1769. Oil on canvas, 127.32 x 101.6 cm, Museum of Fine Arts Boston, p. 350.

2.1 *Mary Isabella Somerset, Duchess of Rutland*, Robert Smirke after Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1816. Oil on canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Private Collection, p. 351.

2.2 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Evening Dresses', Figs. 295 and 296, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. VIII, April 1801, Printed by W. Bulmer and Co., Cleveland-Row, St. James's. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 352.

2.3 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Afternoon Dress', Fig. 68, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. VII, September 1795, 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 353.

2.4 John Hoppner, *Mrs. Parkyns*, c. 1794. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.6 cm, Present Location Unknown, p. 354.

2.5 *Mrs. Parkyns,* Printed by Charles Wilkin by after John Hoppner, 1795. Stipple engraving, printed in colour, 36.2 x 27.5 cm, British Museum, London, p. 355.

2.6 James Gillray, *Fashion Before Ease; - or,- a Good Constitution Sacrificed, for a Fantastick Form*, Printed by Hannah Humphrey, 1793. Hand-coloured etching, 34.5 x 25.0 cm, British Museum, London, p. 356.

2.7 A.B. Duhamel after Defraine, 'Plate 7', *Magasin des modes nouvelles, françaises et anglaise*s, Vol. III, 1787. Engraving, 18.7 x 32.3 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 357.

2.8 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Morning Dresses', Figs. 204-206, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. V, January 1799, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 358.

2.9 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Court Dress', Fig. 15, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, February 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 359.

2.10 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Ranelagh Evening Dresses', Figs. 65-67, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, August 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 360.

2.11 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Vauxhall Evening Dresses', Figs. 72 & 73, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, October 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 361.

2.12 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Opera Dresses', Figs. 101-103, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. III, June 1796, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 362.

2.13 Thomas Gainsborough, *The Three Eldest Princesses: Charlotte, Princess Royal, Augusta and Elizabeth*, 1783-4. Oil on canvas, 129.7 x 179.8 cm, Royal Collection, London, p. 363.

2.14 *Princess Augusta Sophia; Princess Elizabeth, Landgravine of Hesse-Homburg; Charlotte Augusta Matilda, Princess Royal*, Arthur N. Sanders after Thomas Gainsborough, c. 1860-1900. Mezzotint, 49.5 x 35.0 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 364.

2.15 Nicholas Heideloff, 'A Peep Into Kensington Gardens: Morning Dresses', Figs. 10-12, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, June 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 365.

2.16 Thomas Gainsborough, *Princess Augusta*, 1782. Oil on canvas, 59.4 x 44.2 cm, Royal Collection, London, p. 366.

2.17 Thomas Gainsborough, *Princess Elizabeth*, 1782. Oil on canvas, 59.5 x 44.2 cm, Royal Collection, London, p. 367.

2.18 *The Right Honourable Lady Charlotte*, Charles Wilkin after John Hoppner, 1799. Etching, 24.8 x 19.6 cm, British Museum, London, p. 368.

2.19 *Lady Banks*, Joseph Collyer the Younger after John Russell, c. 1790. Stipple engraving, 15.7 x 12.8 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 369.

2.20 *Mary Isabella, Duchess of Rutland*, Valentine Green after Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1780. Mezzotint, 59.2 x 38.5 cm, British Museum, London, p. 370.

2.21 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *George, 3rd Earl Temple (later 1st Marquess of Buckingham) and his family*, c. 1780-82. Oil on canvas, 241 x 183 cm, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, p. 371.

2.22 Monsieur le Brun, '2nd Cahier', *Journal de la mode et du goût, ou Amusemens du salon et de la toilette*, Paris, Buisson, March 1790. Engraving, 19.4 x 12.0 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 372.

2.23 A.B. Duhamel after Defraine, 'Plate 33', *Magasin des modes nouvelles, françaises et anglaise*s, Vol. IV, 1788. Engraving, 18.7 x 32.3 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 373.

2.24 Nicholas Heideloff, ‘Morning Dresses’, Figs. 16-19, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, July 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 374.

2.25 Nicholas Heideloff, ‘Evening Dresses’, Figs. 160 & 161, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. IV, November 1797, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 375.

2.26 Nicholas Heideloff, ‘Watering Place: Morning Dress’, Fig. 71, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, October 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 376.

2.27 Jacques-Louis David, *Madame de Recamier*, 1800. Oil on canvas, 174 x 224 cm, Louvre Museum, Paris, p. 377.

2.28 Nicholas Heideloff, ‘Two Men Wearing Top Hats’, *Gallery of Fashion*, 1796, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, British Museum, London, p. 378.

2.29 Jean Victor Dupin after Pierre Thomas Le Clerc, ‘Les Delassemens du Bois de Boulogne’, Plate 69, 12er Cahier, 6^{e} Suite, *Galerie des Modes et Costumes Français*, 1778. Reprinted in *Galerie des modes et costumes français 1778-1787: dessinés d'après nature, réimpression accompagnée d'une préface par M. Paul*, 1912. Engraving, 40.8 x 19.4 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 379.

2.30 Jean Victor Dupin after Pierre Thomas Le Clerc, ‘La Distraite’, Plate 68, 12er Cahier, 6^{e} Suite, *Galerie des Modes et Costumes Français*, 1778. Reprinted in *Galerie des modes et costumes français 1778-1787: dessinés d'après nature, réimpression accompagnée d'une préface par M. Paul*, 1912. Engraving, 40.8 x 19.4 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 380.

2.31 Jean Victor Dupin after Pierre Thomas Le Clerc, ‘Talleur Costumier Essayant un Cor à la Mode’, Plate 49, 15er Cahier, 9^{e} Suite, *Galerie des Modes et Costumes Français*, 1778. Reprinted in *Galerie des modes et costumes français 1778-1787: dessinés d'après nature, réimpression accompagnée d'une préface par M. Paul*, 1912. Engraving, 40.8 x 19.4 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 381.

2.32 Le Beau after Pierre Thomas Le Clerc, ‘Femme en Robe à la Poloise’, Plate 37, 7th Cahier, 1st Suite, *Galerie des Modes et Costumes Français*, 1777. Reprinted in *Galerie des modes et costumes français 1778-1787: dessinés d'après nature, réimpression accompagnée d'une préface par M. Paul*, 1912. Engraving, 40.8 x 19.4 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 382.

2.33 Nicholas Heideloff, ‘Afternoon Dresses’, Figs. 37-39, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, January 1795, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 383.

2.34 Johan Wilhelm Tischbein, *Lady Charlotte Campbell*, c. 1789. Oil on canvas, 197.20 x 134.00 cm, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, p. 384.

2.35 John Hoppner, *Lady Charlotte Campbell*, 1796. Oil on canvas, 236.2 x 147.3 cm, Collection of the Duke of Argyll, Inveraray Castle, Argyll, p. 385.

2.36 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Three Ladies Adorning a Term of Hymen*, 1773. Oil on canvas, 233.7 x 290.8 cm, Tate, London, p. 386.

2.37 *The Graces Comparing Sandals*, Laurie & Whittle, Fleet Street, London, 4 July 1798. Mezzotint with etching, 31.5 x 23.0 cm, British Museum, London, p. 387.

2.38 James Gillray, *Characters in High Life*, Published by Hannah Humphrey, London, 20 June 1795. Hand-coloured etching, 35.9 x 25.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 388.

2.39 James Gillray, *Modern Elegance: A Portrait*, Published by Hannah Humphrey, May 22, 1795. Hand-coloured etching, 35.7 x 24.6 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 389.

2.40 James Gillray, *Ladies Dress, as it soon will be*, Published by Hannah Humphrey, January 20, 1796. Hand-coloured etching and stipple engraving, 32.5 x 23.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 390.

2.41 *The Gallery of Fa*shion, S.W. Fores, 50 Piccadilly the Corner of Sackville Street, March 23, 1796. Hand-coloured etching, 31.7 x 42.9 cm, British Museum, London, p. 391.

2.42 Nicholas Heideloff, ‘Two Ladies at Breakfast in their Dressing Room’, Figs. 29 & 30, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, November 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 392.

2.43 Nicholas Heideloff, ‘Hyde Park: Riding Dress’, Fig. 138, *Gallery of Fashion,* Vol. IV, May 1797, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 393.

2.44 George Stubbs, *Lady Laetitia Lade*, 1793. Oil on canvas, 102.5 x 128.2 cm, Royal Collection, London, p. 394.

2.45 Nicholas Heideloff, Fig. 25, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, September 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 395.

2.46 *Fashionable Dresses in the Rooms in Weymouth*, *The Lady's Magazine*, 1774. Engraving, 16.5 x 11.0 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 396.

2.47 Thomas Gainsborough, *The Mall in St. James's Park*, 1784. Oil on canvas, 120.7 x 147 cm, The Frick Collection, New York, p. 397.

2.48 *Jar and Lid*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in blue underglaze and overglaze enamels, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 398.

2.49 *Plaque*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted on the biscuit in polychrome enamels, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 399.

2.50 *Vase and Lid*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in blue underglaze, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 400.

2.51 *Cup and Saucer*, Jingdezhen, c. 1690. Porcelain painted in blue underglaze, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 401.

2.52 *Plate*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in blue underglaze, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 402.

2.53 *Vase*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in overglaze enamels, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 403.

2.54 *Dish*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in overglaze enamels, Victoria & Albert Museum, p. 404.

2.55 *Vase*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in overglaze enamels with gilding, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 405.

2.56 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Morning Dresses', Figs. 148 & 149, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. IV, August 1797, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 406.

2.57 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Morning Dresses', Figs. 140-142, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. IV, June 1797, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 407.

2.58 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Morning Dresses', Figs. 23 & 24, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. 1, September 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 408.

2.59 Nicholas Heideloff, 'A Lady going out on Horseback', Fig. 55, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, June 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 409.

2.60 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Ladies in the Great Concert Room', Figs. 51-53, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, June 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 410.

2.61 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Morning Dresses', Figs. 63 & 64, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, August 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan, p. 411.

3.1 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Duchess of Devonshire as Zenobia Queen of Palmyra,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 2 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 412.

3.2 Dress designed by M. Comelli, created by House of Worth, 1897. The Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth House, Bakewell, Derbyshire, p. 413.

3.3 Dress designed by M. Comelli, created by House of Worth, 1897. The Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth House, Bakewell, Derbyshire, p. 414.

3.4 Dress designed by M. Comelli, created by House of Worth, 1897. The Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth House, Bakewell, Derbyshire, p. 415.

3.5 Henry Van der Weyde, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Mrs. Chaine as Madame Sans Gene,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 416.

3.6 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Mrs. Leopold de Rothschild as Zobedia,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 417.

3.7 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Farquhar as Duchess de Mailly, Lady in Waiting to Queen Marie Antoinette,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 7 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 418.

3.8 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Mrs. Arthur Sassoon as La Dogaressa,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897,

published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 419.

3.9 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Tweedmouth as Queen Elizabeth. Lord Tweedmouth as the Earl of Leicester*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 10 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 420.

3.10 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Marchioness of Londonderry as Maria Theresa,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 27 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 421.

3.11 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Countess of Warwick as Marie Antoinette,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 20 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 422.

3.12 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Viscountess Raincliffe as Catherine of Russia,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 423.

3.13 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Wolverton as Britannia,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 424.

3.14 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Countess of Derby as the Duchess of Orleans,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 425.

3.15 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Countess Cadogan as Elizabeth Queen of Bohemia (after Honthorst),* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 22 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 426.

3.16 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Sophie Scott as Megaera,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 20 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 427.

3.17 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lord Stanley, M.P. as an Officer of the Grenadier Guards XVII Century,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress

Ball Album, 6 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 428.

3.18 Layette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Alice Stanley as Diana,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 429.

3.19 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Lurgan as Alecto,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 20 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 430.

3.20 Elliot & Fry, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Countess of Coventry as Barbara St. John, Countess of Coventry after Liotard,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 431.

3.21 Elliot & Fry, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Anne Coventry as Serena after Romney,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 432.

3.22 Elliot & Fry, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Dorothy Coventry as Serena after Romney,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 433.

3.23 Lafayette, 'The Countess Cadogan', frontispiece to *Country Life Illustrated*, Vol. I, No. 16, Saturday April 24, 1897, p. 434.

3.24 Lafayette, 'Lady Sophie Scott', frontispiece to *Country Life Illustrated*, Vol. I, No. 17, Saturday May 1, 1897, p. 435.

3.25 Lafayette, 'Lady Lurgan', frontispiece to *Country Life Illustrated*, Vol. I, No. 18, Saturday May 8, 1897, p. 436.

3.26 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Emily, Lady Ampthill as the Princess de Lamballe,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 27 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 437.

3.27 Detail of Image from *The Queen* (19 July 1897), p. 438.

3.28 Detail from 'The Duchess of Devonshire's Ball'. *The Gentlewoman* (July 10, 1897): 55, p. 439.

3.29 Lafayette, Portrait of Ladies Lurgan and Sophie Scott, 20 July 1897. Glass Plate Negative, The Lafayette Negative Archive, 38.1 x 30.48 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 440.

3.30 Lafayette, Portrait of Ladies Lurgan and Sophie Scott, 20 July 1897. Glass Plate Negative, The Lafayette Negative Archive, 38.1 x 30.48 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 441.

3.31 Alfred Ellis, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *H.R.H. Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein as Princess Elizabeth, eldest daughter of James I,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 442.

3.32 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Meysey Thompson as Elizabeth Queen of Bohemia*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 2 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 443.

3.33 Gerrit van Honthorst, *Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bohemia,* 1642. Oil on canvas, 205.1 x 130.8 cm, The National Gallery, London, p. 444.

3.34 Gerrit van Honthorst, *Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia,* c. 1630. Oil on canvas, 208.5 x 145.5 cm, Government Art Collection, British Embassy, Prague, p. 445.

3.35 *Princess Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia and Electress Palatinate,* engraved by Henry Thomas Ryland after Gerrit van Honthorst, published 1836. Line engraving, 27.6 x 17.9 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 446.

3.36 George Romney, *Serena*, c. 1780s. Oil on canvas, 35.75 x 26.75 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 447.

3.37 George Romney, *Serena Reading*, c. 1780-5. Oil on canvas, 180 x 145 cm, Harris Museum & Art Gallery, Preston, Lancashire, p. 448.

3.38 George Romney, *Serena*, c. 1780s. Oil on canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Private Collection, p. 449.

3.39 *Serena*, Engraved by John Raphael Smith after George Romney, published in London 1782. Mezzotint, Dimensions Unknown, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 450.

3.40 *Serena*, Engraved by John Jones after George Romney, published in London, March 1, 1790. Colour stipple with some etching, 36.4 x 28.1 cm, British Museum, London, p. 451.

3.41 Alexander Bassano, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Duchess of Marlborough as the wife of the French Ambassador at the Court of Catherine of Russia,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 452.

3.42 Alexander Bassano, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Duke of Marlborough as the French Ambassador at the Court of Catherine of Russia,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 453.

3.43 Alexander Bassano, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Ladies Churchill as Watteau Shepherdesses*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 454.

3.44 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Georgiana Curzon as Maria Leszcynska,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 6 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 455.

3.45 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Duchess of Roxburghe as Bess of Hardwicke,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 27 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 456.

3.46 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady de Ramsey as Lady Burleigh,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 457.

3.47 Carolus-Duran, *Consuelo Vanderbilt*, 1894. Oil on canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire, p. 458.

3.48 Photogravure based on Carolus-Duran, *Portrait of Consuelo, Duchess of Marlborough*, Swan Electric Engraving Company, reproduced in *The Book of Beauty (late Victorian era). A collection of beautiful portraits, with literary, artistic, and musical contributions by men and women of the day,* 1896. Engraving, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 459.

3.49 Gunn & Stuart, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Terence Blackwood as Flora Goddess of Flowers*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 460.

3.50 Henry Bullingham, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Mrs. Chamberlain as Madame d'Epinay*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 461.

3.51 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Hon. Mrs. George Curzon as Valentina Visconti of Milan, A.D. 1447*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 462.

3.52 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Miss Leiter*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 463.

3.53 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Miss Goelet as Scheherazade*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 464.

3.54 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Randolph Churchill as the Empress Theodora, wife of Justinian,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 17 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 465.

3.55 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Arthur Paget as Cleopatra*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 466.

3.56 Lafayette, Portrait of Lady Sarah Wilson, 3 July 1897. Glass Plate Negative, 38.1 x 30.48 cm, Lafayette Negative Archive, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 467.

3.57 Francois Boucher, *Sketch for a Portrait of Madame de Pompadour,* c. 1750. Oil on canvas, 62.5 x 46.0 cm, Rothschild Collections, Waddeson Manor, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, p. 468.

3.58 Francois Boucher, *Madame de Pompadour,* 1759. Oil on canvas, 91 x 68 cm, Wallace Collection, London, p. 469.

3.59 Lafayette, Portrait of Lady Georgiana Curzon, 6 July 1897. Glass Plate Negative, The Lafayette Negative Archive, 38.1 x 30.48 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 470.

3.60 François Albert Stiémart, *La reine Marie Leszczynska en costume de religieuse devant la Maison Royale de Saint-Cyr par Santerre*, c. 1726. Oil on canvas, 133.6 x 101 cm, Palais Versailles, Versailles, France, p. 471.

3.61 Jean-Baptiste van Loo, *Marie Leszczynska*, c. 1725. Oil on canvas, 81.5 x 66 cm, Palais Versailles, Versailles, France, p. 472.

3.62 Henry Bullingham, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Evelyn Ewart as the Duchess of Ancaster, Mistress of the Robes to Queen Charlotte, 1757, after a picture by Hudson*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 473.

3.63 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Beatrice Herbert as Signora Baccelli after Gainsborough*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 474.

3.64 John Vanderbank, *Portrait of a Young Lady* (possibly the artist's wife), c. 1731. Oil on canvas, Private Collection, p. 475.

3.65 Joseph van Aken, Sketch based on Rubens' *Portrait of Helene Fourment*, c. 1740-9. Dimensions Unknown, Location Unknown, p. 476.

3.66 Joseph van Aken, Sketch based on Rubens' *Portrait of Helene Fourment*, c. 1740-9. Dimensions Unknown, Location Unknown, p. 477.

3.67 James McArdell, *Rubens 2d Wife from the Original at Houghton Hall in the Collection of the Earl of Orford*, after Peter Paul Rubens' *Portrait of Helene Fourment*, c. 1742-1765. Mezzotint, 35.4 x 25.2 cm, British Museum, London, p. 478.

3.68 Thomas Jefferys, *Habit of Rubens Wife in 1620, la Femme de Rubens,* from *A Collection of the Dresses of Different Nations, Antient and Modern*, Vol. I, first published 1757. Etching, 24.7 x 19.8 cm, British Library, London, p. 479.

3.69 Louis Simonet, *Signora Baccelli in the Ballet Les Amans Supris*, published in *Bells British Theatre*, May 15, 1781. Engraving, 21 x 16 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 480.

3.70 Angelica Kauffman, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1780-5. Oil on canvas, 76.5 x 63 cm, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, p. 481.

3.71 *An August Picture Hat* reproduced in *The Washington Post,* August 8, 1897, p. 482.

3.72 Thomas Gainsborough, *Portrait of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire*, c. 1785-87. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.5 cm, Chatsworth House, Bakewell, Derbyshire, p. 483.

3.73 George Romney, *Charlotte, Lady Milnes*, c. 1788-92. Oil on canvas, 241.6 x 149.2 cm, The Frick Collection, New York, p. 484.

3.74 Photogravure based on George Romney*, Charlotte, Lady Milnes,* reproduced in *Fair Women.*, 1894. Collotype, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 485.

3.75 Photogravure based on Sir Joshua Reynolds*, Mary Robinson as 'Perdita*', reproduced in *Fair Women.*, 1894. Collotype, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 486.

3.76 Photogravure based on Ellis Roberts, *Portrait of Ethel Grenfell,* Swan Electric Engraving Company, reproduced in *The Book of Beauty (late Victorian era). A collection of beautiful portraits, with literary, artistic, and musical contributions by men and women of the day,* 1896. Engraving, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 487.

3.77 Photogravure based on Ellis Roberts, *Portrait Violet, Countess of Mar & Kellie*, Swan Electric Engraving Company, reproduced in *The Book of Beauty (late Victorian era). A collection of beautiful portraits, with literary, artistic, and musical contributions by men and women of the day,* 1896. Engraving, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 488.

3.78 Photogravure based on Edward Hughes, *Duchess of Portland*, Swan Electric Engraving Company, reproduced in *The Book of Beauty (late Victorian era). A collection of beautiful portraits, with literary, artistic, and musical contributions by men and women of the day,* 1896. Engraving, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 489.

3.79 Photogravure based on Edward Hughes, *Portrait of Georgiana, Countess of Dudley*, Swan Electric Engraving Company, reproduced in *The Book of Beauty (late Victorian era). A collection of beautiful portraits, with literary, artistic, and musical contributions by men and women of the day,* 1896. Engraving, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, p. 490.

3.80 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Mrs. J. Graham Menzies as Titania Queen of the Fairies*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 491.

3.81 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Edith Villiers as Lady Melbourne after Cosway*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 492.

3.82 'Dame Beauty's Picture Hat', reproduced in *The Washington Post,* September 26, 1897, p. 493.

3.83 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Eva Dugdale as her great aunt Lady Anne Bingham*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 494.

3.84 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Portrait of the Hon. Lady Anne Bingham*, 1786. Oil on canvas, 74.9 x 62.2 cm, Althorp Estate, Althorp, Northamptonshire, p. 495.

3.85 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Marchioness of Granby as Mary Isabella Duchess of Rutland after Cosway*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, p. 496.

3.86 John Singer Sargent, *Mrs. Carl Meyer and her Children*, 1896, exhibited 1897. Oil on canvas, 201.4 x 134 cm, Tate, London, p. 497.

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Author's Declaration

Except where stated, all of the work contained within this thesis represents the original contribution of the author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university and no part of it has been published. All sources are acknowledged as references in accordance with the University of York's standards.

Introduction. Fashion Across Borders and Seas: Networks of Dissemination and Representation

Intimately connected to the mind and body, clothing is a vital tool for self-representation, reflecting not only how people saw themselves, but projecting how they wish to be seen. A tight alliance of people, identity and apparel was deeply embedded in eighteenth-century culture: William Hogarth wrote in his *Analysis of Beauty* that, 'We know the very mind of people by their dress'.[1] Cultural historian Daniel Roche has argued compellingly that a new culture of clothing, which emerged during the eighteenth-century's consumer revolution, played a supporting role in the birth of modern individualism.[2] Moreover, philosopher Gilles Lipovetsky has suggested that these changes to the commercial culture of the eighteenth century contributed towards a more democratic society.[3] Fashion provided women with liberating possibilities for expression, and historians have recently uncovered a rich trove of stories and images that reveal the ways in which women used fashion to express ideas about self and other, perceptions about their ideal role within their communities, their faith and their political beliefs, their aspirations, and even their fears.

With these associative powers for self-expression and female agency, it is perhaps surprising that the women most associated with women's empowerment during the eighteenth century viewed fashion as an oppressive force. Hannah More, for instance, wrote of an anthropomorphized male tyrant known as 'Fashion' in her 1805 essay entitled 'Hints towards forming a Bill for the Abolition of the White Slave Trade, in the Cities of London and Westminster', in which she held fashion responsible for exploiting women and enslaving them to men's selfish desires.[4] Meanwhile, More's contemporary, Mary Wollstonecraft, described fashion as a 'gilded cage' in her famous *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), arguing that fashion imprisoned women and prevented them from becoming active citizens.[5] Wollstonecraft's and More's hostile feelings towards fashion were certainly not without foundation, with sad stories of women

[1] As quoted in Ribeiro, *Clothing Art*, 158.
[2] Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*.
[3] Lipovetsky, *The Empire of Fashion*.
[4] As discussed by Kowaleski-Wallace in *Women and Material Culture*, 148-159.
[5] Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Women*.

losing their life through arsenic poisoning for the sake of beauty and reminders of the very real cage of women's undergarments, which by the nineteenth century quite literally restricted women's movement and even deformed the very bodies such undergarments were meant to enhance.[6] But the fire behind these authors' pens was also ignited by the words of a man whose attitude towards women belittled their abilities in an aspiration towards forever banishing their influence in the public sphere.

In his famous novel *Emile* of 1762, Rousseau delineated an unfavourable distinction towards men's and women's sensations, writing 'boys seek out movement and noise: drums, sabots, little carriages: girls prefer that which they can see and use as an ornament; mirrors, jewels, rags, and above all dolls'.[7] Throughout his novel, Rousseau stressed the superiority of men in judging issues of moral importance or reason, while denigrating women's authority strictly to matters of the senses. It was under this same rationale that Rousseau famously proclaimed that, 'The needle and sword must never be wielded by the same hands'; words which helped to naturalize fashion and all matters related to dress as distinctly feminine.[8] To add more weight to the insults ushered in through Rousseau's philosophies, Rousseau believed that women gravitated towards fashionable dress because nature decreed for women be beautiful in order to please men.[9] It is unsurprising that with voices like Rousseau's tainting fashion's gendered role that women like More and Wollstonecraft came to view it as an oppressive force, and it was perhaps for this reason that many proto-feminists such as their American contemporary Judith Sargent Murray wrote against teaching female children to aspire towards beauty and fashionability, instead urging that with an education equal to men, sisters were as capable as their brothers to become active and productive citizens of the new Republic.[10]

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[6] The reality of women's suffering in attempt to conform to fashionable ideals is not something that this thesis takes lightly, nor is the fact that so many women employed in the business of making clothes worked in terrible and often life-threatening conditions. There is a strong counter-narrative to the story of fashion and women's empowerment that this thesis traces. See David, *Fashion Victims*; Day, *Consumptive Chic*; and Harris, *Famine and Fashion*.
[7] As quoted in Jones, *Sexing la Mode*, 136.
[8] As quoted in Jones, *Sexing la Mode*, 81.
[9] Jones, *Sexing la Mode*, 185.
[10] Murray, 'On the Equality of the Sexes'.

This emphasis on female education in the feminist historical record, in turn, positioned fashion as a trivial topic for women. The image of the female consumer was that of a mindless follower of fashion obsessed by consumption. This sat alongside the relative absence of serious scholarly inquiry into the study of fashionable dress of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Rather than analyse and interpret the meaning and significance behind fashions in women's dress, much of the early literature in the history of dress reads as an encyclopaedic survey of individual fashion changes over time, with little reference to the historical context of its creation and reception.[11] While this approach may well correspond with the formalist principles that dominated the study of art and aesthetics in the first half of the twentieth century, at least some of this divorce between subject and substance appears as a remnant of the associations of frivolousness and inconsequentiality with fashion that authors such as Rousseau had helped to establish. Even the very people devoted to the study of dress history appear to have been disillusioned by dress's value for study beyond that of satisfying an idle curiosity, with Aileen Ribeiro concluding her important text *The Art of Dress* in 1995 with the pessimistic claim that, 'Dress is not a profound art. It is functional and it can delight the senses, but in itself it cannot express the complex human emotions that are revealed in such arts as literature, music and painting. No one would disagree with [William] Hazlitt in his judgment that 'those who make their dress a principal part of themselves, will, in general, become of no more value than their dress'.[12] This unfortunate viewpoint is representative of a conflicting attitude has plagued dress history throughout much of its existence: with scholars such as Ribeiro arguing for the importance of the subject as a field of study, on the one hand, while diminishing dress's claims to the powers of expression and cultural revelation that the study of the fine arts can be said to provide historians. The dismissal of fashion as the subject of important social, cultural and political insights even by those who devote their energies to studying it has unfortunately denigrated dress history's reputation, and only recently has it begun to resume its rightful place as a subject of serious inquiry within academe.[13]

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[11] This can be said to be true of the early work of C. Willett and Phyllis Cunnington, Vyvyan Holland, and Anne Buck.
[12] Ribeiro, *Art of Dress*, 235.
[13] Christopher Breward, Valerie Steele, and Elizabeth Wilson represent key voices in the development of fashion studies as a serious field of inquiry. See especially Breward, *Culture of Fashion* and *Fashion and Modernity*; Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams* and Valerie Steele's work as editor of the peer-reviewed journal *Fashion Theory*.

The Britain of the eighteenth century has long been seen as marking the birth of a consumer society, and as such, the major changes to the consumption patterns of the eighteenth century's so-called consumer revolution has filled the pages of the work of economic historians who use such research to identify the eighteenth century as the time in which the modern world began, with Britain as its birthplace.[14] In these studies, individual consumers emerge as agents of economic change. However, material culture studies have more recently turned attention to the objects themselves, uncovering the lost voices of eighteenth-century objects – voices that speak richly of their contributions to the culture, politics, economics, and social world of the eighteenth century. For these were products of enlightenment and modernity – novel goods shaped by new technologies, whose existence depended on a world of global trade. Furthermore, as Peter McNeil and Giorgio Riello have tracked in their recent study of luxury in the eighteenth century, these objects were not defined by the old perceptions of possessing something that was expensive and unique but were valued on account of their fashionability. These were objects whose value rested less on their material form, than on their immaterial relations to the world of fashion that consumed them and gave them value through a kind of sociability of consumption.[15] Naturally, in tracing the lives of these objects, from the moment of their creation, to the time of their purchase and their eventual life of use, historians have accorded these objects their appropriately dynamic place within eighteenth-century Britain's cultural landscape. However, in tracing such lines of sociable consumption, they have also empowered women as the active contributors to the consumer revolution and the birth of the modern world that they were.

As Jennifer Jones charts in her important study on the increasingly feminized character of fashion in the eighteenth century, *Sexing la Mode*, this gendering process was not only the result of the politics of fashion that spewed from the pens of philosophers such as Rousseau and de Vise eager to keep women in their purportedly natural subordinate position, but was also a construction that reflected very real practices of production and

[14] The consumer revolution has occupied the work of many scholars. See especially Brewer, McKendrick and Plumb, *Birth of a Consumer Society*, Berg and Clifford, *Consumers and Luxury* and Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*.
[15] McNeil & Riello, *Luxury*.

consumption.[16] As the eighteenth century progressed and modern notions of identity became solidified around the concept of stable, gendered selves, men increasingly turned to other tools to express their identity as modern, individual selves, valued for their unique personal qualities of enlightenment and learning, rather than using the opulence of their dress to signal their station as one of power and privilege. Just as men's dress became more sombre and less embellished, women's toilettes began to reach both literal and figurative heights with their feathered, frizzled and flowered headdresses towering over the elegant *robes à la française* and *l'anglaise*. In France and in England, these accomplishments represented quite literally the pinnacle of the *marchandes des modes* art, with such embellishments revealing sartorial bravura that has never been surpassed. Previously relegated to only adding the finishing touches to the work of male tailors, by the latter half of the century, this collective of women claimed to produce not only clothing, but *la mode* itself. For it was these embellishments which defined fashion, with the cut of women's gowns changing very slowly during this period.[17]

With their nuanced use of colour, texture and pattern, famous *modistes* like Rose Bertin, drew upon a wide range of inspirations from the literary to the political to give visual form to the imaginative fantasies of the time. However, the shape of fashion rested not only on the work of milliners or *modistes*, like Bertin, but to the selective powers of taste of the women of fashion who wore them. During the eighteenth century, women's consumption patterns began to diverge dramatically from those of men, and by mid-century women are reported as often owning five to ten times more items of clothing than their husbands.[18] It was in part on account of their increasing habits of consumption that Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace has argued that women's consumption, which necessary laid 'waste to what men would otherwise preserve' was seen to be 'symbolically emasculating'.[19] Centuries later in his study *Theories of the Leisure*

[16] For the important role of women as consumers, see Jones, *Sexing la Mode*; Greig, *Beau Monde*; Styles and Vickery, *Gender Taste and Material Culture* and Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects*.
[17] For more on the role of women as *modistes* or milliners, see Chrisman-Campbell, 'The Face of Fashion', Parmal, 'Fashion and the Growing Importance of the *Marchande des Modes*', Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce* and Sargentson, *Merchants and Markets*.
[18] Jones, *Sexing la Mode*, 74.
[19] Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects*, 3.

Class, Thorstein Veblen would define the course of women's consumption as a form of activity that conferred prestige on their male-led households, effectively reducing women to the economic dependence of men.[20] Yet far from being mindless consumers, engaged like Denis Diderot claimed in search of serving their own vanity, women's consumption patterns provided a vital tool for creativity and empowerment.[21]

By the mid-eighteenth-century, women who aspired towards polite society also, as a necessary matter of achieving such recognition, sought to cultivate the *tout ensemble*, a distinction which rested not just on one's selection of costume and accessories, but equally on one's ability to wear them with style.[22] While elite *modistes* such as Rose Bertin and the most eminent of the nineteenth-century couturier's such as Charles Frederick Worth directed the constructions of such *ensembles* from head to toe, the majority of fashionable toilettes were the result of a far more collaborative exchange of materials and ideas. Women might purchase the fabric for their dress at one place, their trimmings at another, have their gown made by a tailor or seamstress, and have their finished garment embellished by a local milliner.[23] Meanwhile, the perfect hat, gloves, parasol or fan might be acquired at a series of other specialized boutiques.[24] Just as it is today, shopping was not merely an act of consumption, but a means of exercising taste through selection.[25] As Daniel Roche's feminist intervention into the study of women as consumers demonstrates, as women became leaders of the theatre of fashion, they acquired a role that was 'less oppressive than liberating', for in doing so they became the 'universal instructors in the attraction of objects and in the social organization of appearances'.[26]

In a fashion system, what is restricted and controlled is taste.[27] As was recounted in a London publication of 1747, 'Of all of our favourite Words lately, none has been more in Vogue, nor so long held in its Esteem, as that of TASTE'.[28] This was perhaps

[20] Veblen, *Theories of the Leisure Class*.
[21] Ribeiro, *Art of Dress*, 56.
[22] Ribeiro, *Art of Dress*, 36.
[23] Batchelor and Kaplan, *Women and Material Culture*; Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*.
[24] Adburgham, *Shopping in Style* and *Shops and Shopping*.
[25] Ribeiro, *Clothing Art*, 13.
[26] Roche, *Culture of Clothing*, 499.
[27] Batchelor and Kaplan, *Women and Material Culture*, 7.
[28] As quoted in Styles and Vickery, *Gender, Taste and Material Culture*, 14.

because in the modern world of the enlightenment of free persons, taste came to symbolize one's personal and cultural worth in place of traditional discriminatory judgments based on class and breeding.[29] Yet in Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, taste was a form of cultural currency precisely on account of its ability to bind groups and classes of people together.[30] Central to the definition of taste, then, was its role in affirming the value system of a group or class of people to which individuals belong. Although individuals acquired distinction on account of their ability to exercise a judgment of taste, such tastes were not the whims of a single enlightened individual but were instead affirmative of a collective class of individuals. While we might take this to mean that this process was less revolutionary than the eighteenth-century persons who were responsible for exercising taste might have believed, this is not to say that their agency in relation to fashion is not illuminating, or indeed, empowering.

As this thesis will show, women such as Judith Sargent Murray made use of fashion's power even as they shunned it.[31] In sitting for a magnificent portrait in fashionable Greco-Turkish dress, Murray demonstrates that it was through dress that women acquired a vial language for self-expression, which in many cases allowed them to carry their personal, political, religious and social attitudes into the public sphere.[32] Seventeenth-century Frenchman Jean Donneau de Visé early recognized that fashion was one area of the public sphere in which women's influence truly mattered, for it was through women's networks that news about fashion travelled.[33] But together women did far more than disseminate pre-existing information about fashionable dress. They not only shared the latest developments in fashion and inspired its creation, but through this process they endowed its forms with meaning. Given that taste and indeed fashion were in fact reflective of cultural and class identity, studying fashion is a vital means of

[29] Jones, *Sexing la Mode*, 117.
[30] Bourdieu, *Distinction*.
[31] Murray's writings have been reprinted in several forms. See especially Murray, 'On the Equality of the Sexes' for her opinions on fashion.
[32] For information on women's use of fashion in the public sphere, see Greig, *Beau Monde*; Russell, *Women, Sociability and Theatre*; and Parkins and Sheehan, *Cultures of Femininity in Modern Fashion*.
[33] Jones, *Sexing la Mode*, 36.

reconstructing not only the interests of a single individual, but of the collective body of taste that they belonged to.[34]

One of the primary means by which fashions' connotations were shared, codified, and transformed was through visual imagery, and it is this process and the agency of women in relation to it that serves the central underlying theme of this thesis. Through a study of three different types of images, ranging from the fine art of painted portraiture and the popularization of a particular style of dress in John Singleton Copley's Turquerie portraits, to the reproductive engravings of contemporary fashion of Britain's first fashion journal, the *Gallery of Fashion*, concluding with photographs taken of an ephemeral costume ball in celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee at Devonshire House, this thesis argues for the vital role of images in the theatre of fashion. In charting the active engagement of women's networks as sitters, patrons, artists, and participants, each of these case studies reveals how these networks used visual images of fancy dress to formulate empowered, and dare I say modern, femininities. The goals of this thesis are twofold: first, to reinsert the importance of women's active engagement with fine art and visual images to the study of dress history; and second, to uncover the means by which women's engagement with images of fancy dress contributed to the fashioning of individual selves and group identity through networks composed of women whose lives intersected at regional, national, and international levels.

I. The Evolution of a Project

At its heart, this thesis poses central questions about how fashion migrates across time and space, and in doing so, enables vital possibilities for the expression of individual and collective identities. The questions guiding this thesis derive from a long-standing personal curiosity about networks of cultural exchange, and how women such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu literally came to embody such transcultural explorations as they sat for portraits in the exotic costume of the 'Other' (Fig. 0.2). The clothing styles of

[34] The concept of fashion and group identity can be traced back to one of the earliest theorists of dress, Georg Simmel. Simmel, *Fashion*.

neo-classical chemises made from imported muslin from India and the turbans, *robes à la turque* and the many other forms of dress inspired by the Near East and Far are an exciting meeting of new materials and ideas. However, at the heart of all of these moments of cultural exchange was the transcribing and visualization of Empire. It was this last process that I wished to uncover when I formulated the initial aspirations for my project: how were such textiles and fashions disseminated throughout the Empire; how did this process of cultural exchange enable imperial identity to be literally transcribed on the bodies of wearers throughout the Empire. In taking women as central to the popularization and wearing of these items of dress, reasserts the central, if not morally problematic, role that women played in the literal fashioning of the British Empire.[35]

Rather than focusing on a single artist, cultural centre or type of fashion object, my thesis explores the transmission of fashion information through a diverse range of objects. In charting objects as varied as fashion illustrations, reproductive engravings of painted portraits, and even fashion objects themselves, it develops a nuanced understanding of the processes of cultural exchange that such differing types of objects afforded. I aim to demonstrate that even when fashion's movements followed a conventional progress from urban centres to provincial peripheries, the meanings generated within the specific locations of their reception were not. Although goods travelled far and wide during this period, during the eighteenth century there was no truly national market.[36] Even when styles of dress, both real and imagined, spread, artists and couturiers developed their own version of the prevailing international style. Taking fashion as a form of communication, it can, at times be unreliable and confusing, as Kate Haulman explored in her study of the variety of styles prevalent in colonial port cities in colonial America.[37] This is because, if fashion is to be compared to language, there is not a single language that expresses it. By comparing fashion objects to words, and their assemblage to sentences, it is possible to see how different cultures might make use of a single object of dress or fashion accessory in a different way. Although the languages of British and colonial American dress might be similar,

[35] The literature on women and empire is in many ways still developing. For an introduction see Levine, *Gender and Empire* and Woollacott, *Gender and Empire*.
[36] Brewer, McKendrick and Plumb, *Birth of a Consumer Society*, 89.
[37] Haulman, *Politics of Fashion*.

they, and indeed the languages of dress within individual cities in each of these geographies were in fact composed of interrelated, but in fact, culturally distinct vocabularies and grammars.[38]

Throughout this thesis, I consult letters, journals, and albums of women in order to understand the resonances of dress at an individual level. It is here in the pages of these personal records that the greatest evidence of the powerful meanings ascribed to fashion by women across a wide spectrum of class levels, cultural origins, and time periods emerges. Such personal resonances are to be found within the pages of the quaint keepsake swatch book of 'Bits from the Gowns of Orpha North Hart' (Figs. 0.3 & 0.4), in which one woman collected the swatches of her dresses over the course of many years and pasted them into a small book whose beautifully illustrated cover of a dresser serves as a visual metaphor for the book as the location for the storage not just of the memory of dresses, but of the life and identity reflected in the mirror above it.[39] A half a century later and just a few towns away, Mary Appleton Aiken carefully delineated a number of her dresses (Fig. 0.5) in a series of sketches which are annotated with the precise colours and materials of her personal fashions in a journal dating to the 1880s.[40] Such personal recordings not only invoke the pleasures of remembrance, but they also document these women's active exercise of taste. North's through the lifetime of fabric swatches which reveal a gravitation towards muted tones and conservative floral and geometric prints, and Aiken's through a veritable recipe of the particular elements of her *tout ensemble*, down to the hidden but discretely chosen 'black silk stockings' and 'patent leather ties' that only she could see.

Perhaps none of the resources consulted in this thesis so richly reveals a single woman's relationship with fashion than the collection of Sarah Gooll Putnam's diaries which cover her life from her childhood at the age of nine in 1860 to the time of her death in 1912 at the age of sixty-one.[41] Through charming sketches and personal anecdotes, we watch Sarah's sartorial life unfold from the time of her drawing her eldest sisters' fashions (Fig. 0.6), a sketch which reveals her gleeful pleasure as she imagines the

[38] I rely on Lurie's metaphor regarding dress and language. Lurie, *Language of Clothes*.
[39] Hart, Fabric Swatch Book.
[40] Aiken, Diary.
[41] Putnam, Diaries.

fashions and lifestyle that she would one day assume as an adult, to her later years when she pasted fashion plates of the day as a means of both describing and critiquing the fashions of the day (Fig. 0.7). In one sketch, Sarah reveals the disjuncture between real fashion and imaginary ideals through her commentary on a single fashion plate's forecast, in which she delineates that very few women in her community actually wore such fashions. Meanwhile, she further embellishes that which fashion plates cannot possibly describe when delineating beneath one glamorous image of a woman's long skirts that despite the beautiful ideal represented by this image, this popular practice involved women wearing dresses long enough to 'sweep the disgustingly dirty side walks'.[42]

The importance of dolls as part of female education is recorded when she writes of a doll's party that took place at her school, an event which encouraged her to ask a female friend or relative to help her make her doll a new dress in what must have been an adult outfit consisting of a 'green, and white' dress 'with a low neck' and 'trimmed with a red ribbon, which looked very pretty'.[43] We can imagine that her new doll's dress was a joint effort between an adult seamstress and the young Sarah, and a careful illustration of this memorable occasion is recorded (Fig. 0.8), as evidence of the importance not just of the dress, but of its important moment of creation. Throughout the journal's pages are the commonplace representation of women sewing, knitting and mending, evidence of both what a necessary and common activity this was, as well as its important role within a homosocial sphere of feminine behaviour. In one image representing two women engaged in the act of sewing and needlecraft together (Fig. 0.9), the fabric that one woman holds falls across her dress and touches the hem of her companion's skirt, a sign of the closeness that they share and the fact that this bond was facilitated through the pleasures that such craftwork invited.[44]

Throughout the journal's pages Sarah records her own fashions with sketches, fabric swatches and descriptions which reveal her personal thoughts about them. An image representing one of her dresses introduces us to her 'best hat' (Fig. 0.10), which is then

[42] Putnam, Vol. XVIIII, 111.
[43] Putnam, Vol. II, 118-9.
[44] Wigston Smith discusses the sociability of women's craft in Wigston Smith, 'Fast Fashion'.

repeated in a number of other illustrations, revealing her pride in wearing it as well as her role in relation to others in her community.[45] She draws a number of small hats under the heading of, 'This is the kind of hats they wear now' (Fig. 0.11), with an arrow pointing towards the hat. Beneath this are a number of other hands followed by the text 'mine is'. While these three hands are perhaps a reflection of her practicing how to draw a hand, what this note reveals is that she saw her hat as part of wider trends in hat fashions, and she proudly draws a picture of herself wearing this hat next to this text as if to insert her figure within this narrative of identification.[46] She again contemplates her identity in relation to fashion trends, this time by situating herself in a drawing which features this same hat, only this time in relation to adult women (Fig. 0.12). Here she states, in reference presumably to adult women, that 'people wear bonnets now, made so as to allow people to wear cascades under them'.[47] It is clear that even from a young age Sarah was attuned to the patterns of fashion that united women in her community.

We see her enjoy the important rite of passage of finally being able to wear a long dress to a Thanksgiving celebration at her aunt's house (Fig. 0.13), which she carefully sketches herself in in the polite act of offering a chair to one of the gathering's guests, 'Yes this is her first long dress and dont [sic] she feel proud!'.[48] Pasted just to the right is a swatch of the fabric used to make it, itself a testament of the collective acts involved in the making of fashion, with the material previously belonging to one of her sister's 'old silks'. Just a month later in recognition of her entry into adult life, Sarah received a number of gifts of fashionable dress and accessories, from a pair of beautiful emerald green earrings and a matching heart pin embellished with birds (Fig. 0.14), presumably crafted from enamel, to a 'necklace from the Phillipses', a 'splendid present from Miss Brewer' in the form of an entire outfit, with 'a pink sash, and fan, all to match!'.[49] In Sarah's social circle, as was the case with many of her contemporaries and indeed women of the century before her, items of dress and accessories were both acquired and gifted as part of a sociable exchange of fashion and taste.

[45] Putnam, Vol. VII, 19.
[46] Putnam, Vol. IV, 25.
[47] Putnam, Vol. VII, 47.
[48] Putnam, Vol. X, 38.
[49] Putnam, Vol. X, 111.

We see countless examples of the links between fashion and sociability, such as when she went 'about dress-making business' with her sisters or commissioned 'an overdress for Mother', and we are walked through the process of purchasing a new outfit, revealing the multiple steps involved in this process. Sarah often purchased her fabric and trimmings in separate locations, before bringing such materials to be assembled into a garment of her design.[50] Sometimes she and her sisters re-used materials from each other's dresses. Even when they were older dresses were updated and dress fabrics were recycled into entirely new garments, sometimes taking on a new life even in terms of their colour through the practice of dying.[51] Even before new garments were completed, Sarah often describes what the finished items will look like, sketching such garments (Fig. 0.15), and in some cases even imagining what she herself will look like.[52] One such drawing records a 'plush cape' that she had designed, which she drew 'as well as I can from memory' (Fig. 0.16), pictured with her wearing it from both from the front and in profile.[53] Drawings like these are not simply mechanical drawings that record the fashions of their wearer. Central to each of these sketches is the dynamic act of self-representation, with such images of either of past or future selves revealing how someone such as Sarah saw herself and how she saw her fashions as contributing to this ideal vision of herself. As seen throughout Sarah's journal, images of dress were vital tools for the construction of self and identity, even when we can imagine that they were intended to be viewed only by the illusory reader of her journal.

Charting how women such as Sarah learned about fashion of course involved a consideration of the conventional methods ascribed to the dissemination of fashion. Sometimes a single illustration from a costume book informed ideas about the distant places and times that they represented. Through these networks we see how such Britons and Americans came to embody these perceived identities through the wearing of masquerade costume designed from these images. A plate might inspire an artist who in conjunction with his sitter might create an imaginary costume using the medium of paint alone to shape their sitter's identity on canvas. In some cases, fashion plates might travel as far as rural New Hampshire, where a single illustration from rural New

[50] Putnam, Vol. XI, 236; Vol. XII, 197-8; and Vol. XIII, 27-8.
[51] Putnam, Vol. XVIII, 40.
[52] Putnam, Vol. XIV, 17.
[53] Putnam, Vol. XVII, 342.

Hampshire of 1796 might serve to guide an entire community in following the latest fashions in headdresses. (Fig. 0.17)[54] In other examples, plates might be pasted into women's albums as commemoration of the fashions of the year or collected *en masse* for personal admiration and enjoyment of historical fashions, as in the case of a beautiful album of prints ranging from 1776 to 1876 compiled by Sarah Augusta Mannings Sage and gifted to her granddaughters in 1914.[55] Sometimes such plates can be found in the most surprising of places: etched into the sides of whale teeth by men on seafaring voyages far from home (Fig. 0.18), a haptic act of remembrance of the femininity that they yearned for, and perhaps a gift for the special woman or child that they missed upon their return.[56] In considering fashion dolls, questions develop which centre less on the notion of the physical fashions that they may or may not have been responsible for transcribing between various cultural centres (Fig. 0.19), and more on account of their symbolic function and educational potential in the hands of the women and children who possessed them.[57] As seen in in a portrait by Charles Willson Peale of *Lady Louisa Gilmor and Her Daughters* of 1788 (Fig. 0.20), the presence of a fashion doll served as an embodiment of fashion itself; a complement to the equally vital tool for female education and shaping of ideal femininities as the book that serves as its counterpart.

Material items of fashion also bear the traces of their global alliances, from pashmina shawls imported from Pakistan once worn by women in Connecticut (Fig. 0.21), to dresses made from Paisley fabric inspired by such motifs in later decades.[58] What I aim to do in charting these processes of translation is to come to understand how such objects not only represent precise styles of fashionable dress but are also reflective of the processes of cultural exchange and representation which effectively transformed attitudes towards pattern and ornament which shaped the visual vocabulary of such fashion cultures. By exploring the idea that the images on these material objects, whether the pattern on a textile, printed onto silk muffs or fans (Figs. 0.22 & 0.23), or framed by the canvas provided by the expanse of a woman's panniered skirts, were

[54] Jenkins, Journal.
[55] Sage, Journal.
[56] Frank, *Ingenious Contrivances.*
[57] Reinhardt, 'Serious Daughters'.
[58] Breward, Crang and Crill, *British Asian Style*; and Rizvi and Ahmed, *Pashmina*.

spaces in which ideas of fashion and taste were shared and exchanged, I consider how such images could express ideals of femininity and modernity, even on one of the late-nineteenth-century's most historicizing of fashion accessories, the fan. Small and portable, fans were imported and exported on both sides of the Atlantic, reproducing images of popular culture, fine art, and often fusing the two in scenes such as one rather comical fan, which in a scene of a Watteauesque *fête galante*, two cupids communicate on either side of the fan by way of a surprisingly modern method: the telegraph (Fig. 0.24).

My research also follows less conventional visual images as sources for shaping fashionable femininity. I believe that even when items such as trade cards did not include representations of fashionable dress, as in the case of the Pears' Soap advertisements (Fig. 0.25), that filled women's albums, these small images of popular culture were responsible for shaping attitudes towards fashion and ideal femininity.[59] The same could be said to be true of the reproductive engravings of portraits that circulated across the pond. Even when such portraits did not represent women in contemporary fashionable dress, they gave visual form to ideal perceptions of womanhood, and when translated onto the canvases of American painters such as John Singleton Copley, they carried associations of belonging to the fashionable world from which they originated. I consider how it was that a single style of dress, Turquerie, came to dominate the portraits of Copley's female sitters during the 1760s and early 1770s long after the emergence of this popular style in European portraits,, such as in his portrait of Judith Sargent Murray (Fig. 0.1). In charting the popularity of this style, I aim to demonstrate that Copley's sitters played a vital role in popularizing this style and shaping its meaning. It was here in my first significantly researched case study that my research took a surprising turn in direction.

Schooled in the 'New Art History' of the 1970s, I base my study of art on an understanding of the social, cultural and political climate of the world in which a work of art is produced or received. My analysis also draws on the methodology of sociologists such as Georg Simmel and Arjun Appadurai, who argue that in order to

[59] Trade cards have received surprisingly little historical study. See Wigston Smith, 'Clothes Without Bodies'; Kim, 'Race Sells', Matsukawa, 'Representing the Oriental'.

understand the importance of material objects, and indeed dress, we need to understand how exchange served as the source of value and not vice versa.[60] Inspired by Appadurai's methodological prescription that in order to understand the value of things, I believe fashion items are living objects, and by considering their forms, uses, and their trajectories I aim to uncover the life of objects such as dress. I am empowered by Appadurai's prescription that consumption, or indeed fashion, was 'eminently social, relation, and active rather than private, atomic, or passive'. However, even still I have been surprised by the extent to which my interpretation of such objects rests on the reconstruction of the social networks that surrounded and encompassed the production of fashion images. That is, while I recognized the importance of single women as part of this process of selection and representation, I did not realize that in order to truly understand this process of representation I would need to research each sitter and her familial and social networks in order to truly understand her agency in this process whereby identity and feminine ideals were represented. But first, before I delve into the development of my methodology and the case studies that I investigate in this thesis, I think it is important to lay out that most dynamic of relationships which this thesis is shaped by: that of the relationship between fashion and art.

II. Framing Fashion

Fashion and portraiture are inexplicably connected. The central defining feature of an artists' greatest masterpiece might rest on their representation of dress, as in the case of John Singer Sargent's iconic portrait of the scandalously clad *Madame X* (Fig. 0.26). While some of the most celebrated names in fashion such as Charles Frederick Worth and Christian Dior considered themselves to be artists, with Dior stating that 'we couturiers are like poets'.[61] During the nineteenth century artists aspired towards creating the *gesamtkunstwerk* or total work of art and entered into the design of textiles and clothing as part of a unified aesthetic experience that included one's entire environment.[62] Some of the most talented painters of fashion, from artists as diverse as Thomas Gainsborough, Hogarth, and Van Dyck were guided in their efforts by the

[60] Simmel, *Fashion*; Appadurai, *Social Life of Things*.
[61] As quoted in Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*, 88.
[62] Ribeiro, *Clothing Art*, 33.

experience of having a family member working the fashion trades.[63] Art and fashion influence each other in a circuitous relationship: the fashion of the past inspires the art of the present, while present fashions often mirror historic ones represented in art. Despite the profusion of overlapping relationships that wed fashion and art into a productive union, the question of whether fashion is a form of art is one that will perhaps never truly gain a consensus of opinion. With fashion's association with consumption and the pleasure that that affords, many have argued that it does not aspire towards the supposedly higher goal of art to elevate the soul.[64] Regardless of the definition one grants the purpose and substance of art to be, art and fashion share certain fundamental similarities, for both invariably communicate by sight.[65]

The physical structure of dress is formed through lines, shapes and colours. As in the case of fine art, these properties can be viewed and interpreted according to principles of art and design. As approaches to utilizing these principles in the production of a painting or sculpture fluctuate according to the aesthetic theories of the time, so too do the formal aspects of dress change according to a set of accepted standards. Only certain ones will do at a particular time, and these were often determined by the same set of social and cultural forces to those driving the desired appearance of fine art at the time.[66] Writing in 1978 in the first book to survey the relationship between dress and art, Anne Hollander began her analysis with a provocative statement that dress 'has more connection with the history of pictures than with any household objects or vehicles of its moment – it is more like a Rubens than a chair'.[67] This, she claimed, was on account of clothing's relationship with figurative art, which continually shapes both how clothing is interpreted and seen. According to Hollander, people 'dress and observe other dressed people with a set of pictures in mind'.[68] These mental pictures affect how one feels about the clothes that they wear and how they imagined themselves to appear

[63] Van Dyck was the grandson of a haberdasher. Gordenker, 'Rhetoric of Dress', 96. Hogarth's sister sold fabric and clothes to a lower-middle and working-class clientele. Ribeiro, *Clothing Art*, 160. Gainsborough's father and sisters were engaged in the fashion trade, with two of his sisters working as milliners. Sloman, *Gainsborough in Bath*.
[64] Jones, *Sexing la Mode*, 118.
[65] Ribeiro, *Art of Dress*, 236.
[66] Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes*, 312.
[67] Hollander, xiv.
[68] Hollander, 311.

while wearing them, while also shaping how they saw others through the clothes that they wore. Returning to Sarah Gooll Putnam's illustrations of her dress and of herself represented wearing them, in both sets of images produced before and after the time of owning these garments we are granted insight into the mental pictures which related to how Sarah both saw herself and the ideal image of feminine behaviour that she sought to embody. Such mental pictures, although personally modified and edited, are in fact related to actual images of dress. To understand how ideal conceptions of femininity were formed and communicated, this thesis will look at the figurative images of dress that women both created, patronised and ultimately projected such ideals through.

Before I delve into the specific communities and images of dress that my research navigates in order to answer these questions, it is necessary to reconstruct the way in which fashion was treated in art during the rather lengthy time that this thesis traverses. To do so inevitably involves a careful look at the work of Aileen Ribeiro, whose career has been dedicated to answering the important and sometimes perplexing question of how artists represent dress in art.[69] Within the tradition of British art her story begins during the early modern period, when the virtuoso Flemish court painter Sir Anthony Van Dyck visited England at the Caroline court. It was here with sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of his sitters that Van Dyck sought to convey their innate sense of virtue and authority through a different language than the opulence of the intricacies of contemporary fashion that he represented when he painted the Genoese nobility. With true invention, Van Dyck did this by painting the costumes of his sitters not as they came from the dressmakers but stripped down to a simplified looser form, devoid of the lace collars and cuffs of fashionable dress (Fig. 0.27).[70] Such costumes, with only the slightest suggestion of ornament in the form of a sash or pearl embellishments, grant an antiquated or exotic air to Van Dyck's portraits and through their associations with history painting, such costumes helped to suggest the power and status of his sitters without the conventional trappings of fashionable dress.[71] Van Dyck's innovative

[69] Ribeiro's range of publications is extensive. For an introduction, see Ribeiro, *Art of Dress*; *Clothing Art*; and *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe*.
[70] I am also indebted to Gordenker, 'The Rhetoric of Dress'.
[71] Gordenker, 95.

approach to the editing of contemporary fashions into a form of generalized portrait dress would persist in British art for centuries.[72]

Jonathan Richardson's *Essay on the Theory of Painting* written nearly a century later in 1715 echoes the influence of Van Dyck as he highlights the virtues of generalized costume to reaching the higher aims of portraiture. To Richardson and the many artists who followed his teachings, 'the great Business of Painting is to relate a History or Fable', which he believed could be achieved by artists not painting 'the Habits of their own Times'.[73] As the first president of the Royal Academy, Sir Joshua Reynolds would take up this theoretical beacon with vigour. Although his attitudes towards the representation of dress in painting were to become more relaxed with time, he ultimately encouraged his peers to apply their own invention towards representing dress, favouring a generalized approach to representing fashion, with the careful inclusion of similar classical and historic references that Van Dyck had utilized as a means of dignifying his sitters. Just as artists were encouraged to look to the art of the past for guidance in matters of composition and the construction of allegorical narratives, so too did they turn to the work of Old Master painters, the canvases of Van Dyck, Rubens, Titian, and Raphael, for inspiration in how to represent dress in their art.[74] Yet rather than simply representing the higher aims of a set of abstract theoretical principles, the forms of the generalized portrait dress that Reynolds and his peers represented were also the result of a number of outside cultural influences.

Reynolds was eager to criticize the work of artists who painted the minutiae of dress, most especially the notorious painter of Turquerie portraits, the Swiss pastellist Jean-Etienne Liotard. Prompted by the popularity of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's travels to Turkey, and the letters and portraits that inspired a romantic vision of this strikingly distant place (Fig. 0.2), women across Europe sat to Liotard in costumes that fairly accurately represent contemporary Turkish costume.[75] In 1749, he captured one of the famously beautiful Gunning sisters in such a dress while lounging on a Turkish *sofa*

[72] Hearn, *Van Dyck in Britain*; and Wilton, *Swagger Portrait*.
[73] As quoted in Ribeiro, *Art of Dress*, 22.
[74] Francis Haskell's work on changing attitudes of taste towards the art of the past has influenced my own work on the importance of historical dress. See especially Haskell, *Past and Present in Art and Taste* and *Rediscoveries in Art*.
[75] See, Ribeiro, 'Dress Worn at the Masquerades' and 'Turquerie'.

(Fig. 0.28). Two years later, her sister Maria would sit to Reynolds' peer, the English portrait painter Francis Cotes (Fig. 0.29), in a slightly less realistic half-length Turquerie portrait in which the exotic embellishments of her costume are reduced to an ermine border and gold trimmings. Although the costume is certainly less detailed than that represented by Liotard, it would take the realization of Reynolds' Grand Manner style before Turquerie would become the classicizing, generalized style of portrait dress that served to dominate the canvases of artists in Britain for decades.[76] Here in yet another portrait of Elizabeth Gunning, painted nine years later in 1760 when the Duchess of Hamilton (Fig. 0.30), Reynolds portrays Gunning in a full-length gown whose very materiality is elusive. Like many of the portrait dresses dating to the latter half of the eighteenth century, her gown is white, a colour whose classicizing power alluded to the Graces and other mythological beauties. She leans against a classical plinth as she turns her head in melancholy contemplation, perhaps of an idealized historic past, while the luxurious expanse of her court robes reference her prominent position of power in the present. Here the references to Turquerie are so subtle that, when subsumed by an overtly classicizing image, they almost become imperceptible. Yet the rose-coloured jewelled belt that helps to define the elongated curve of her hips and the presence of her ermine-trimmed robe were common elements of Turkish dress at this time. As this thesis will explore time and again, in the eighteenth-century imagination it was possible for the classical and exotic to exist side by side.[77]

Inspired by the inspiration of distant travels and foreign goods was arguably one of the most culturally significant phenomena of the eighteenth century: that of the masquerade.[78] It was here in these vibrant, colourful explorations of self and 'other' on the masquerade's enchanted ground that 'all nations met' as Britons of both sexes and across a wide social spectrum donned one of the many popular styles of masquerade

[76] The importance of dress as part of Reynolds' Grand Manner style is continuously repeated in scholarship. See especially Gill Perry, 'Women in Disguise: Likeness, the Grand Style, and Conventions of "Feminine" Portraiture in the Work of Sir Joshua Reynolds' in *Femininity and Masculinity in Eighteenth Century Art and Culture*, ed. Perry and Rossington.
[77] I am indebted to Caroline Winterer's interpretation of classicism in the eighteenth century, who describes Turquerie as part of the stylistic vocabulary of classicism during the period. Winterer, *The Mirror of Antiquity*.
[78] Ribeiro's work remains among the most engaging on the subject. Ribeiro, *Dress Worn at the Masquerades*.

costume.[79] Broken into their three component parts, these can be said to include the gender-neutral and vaguely defined 'domino' which originated in Venice, 'character dress' which involved the performance of a specific historical or allegorical character, or one of the many varied forms of 'fancy dress', a form of simplified fashionable dress with a few choice romantic or pastoral features, such as ruffs, feathers, flowers or floating scarves.[80] The basic form of this 'fancy dress' shared many similarities with the type of generalized portrait dress formulated by Van Dyck and Reynolds, both in terms of the fact that they each represented a simplified or classicized form of fashionable dress, and that they carried the same historical, exotic and pastoral embellishments that artists purportedly included as a means of dignifying their sitters. Both in creating real masquerade costume and imaginary painted 'fancy dress', images from costume books, most especially that of Thomas Jeffrey's *A Collection of the Dresses of Different Nations, Ancient and Modern* guided the way. These same classical, historical, exotic and romantic touches are to be found in fashionable and fancy dress both on and off the canvas throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[81]

Perhaps no painting within the history of art can be said to have exerted such a powerful influence on fashion both in portraiture and in real life than Peter Paul Rubens' magnificent full-length *Portrait of Helena Fourment* (Fig. 0.31), commonly referred to during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as simply 'Rubens' Wife'.[82] Painted sometime between the years 1630 and 1632 while Van Dyck was working in England, this painting was sometimes mistakenly identified during the eighteenth century as being painted by Van Dyck; consequently it is sometimes difficult to know to which artist contemporaries were referring to when they identify fashions by this master.[83] It is rather ironic given Van Dyck's reputation for introducing generalized costume in portraiture, that the adage 'Vandyke' is often used to refer to all aspects of seventeenth-century fashionable dress throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries.

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[79] As quoted in Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization*, 60.
[80] Castle, 58.
[81] Ribeiro discusses the influence of this portrait at length in *Dress Worn at the Masquerades*.
[82] Painted sometime between the years 1630 and 1632 while Van Dyck was working in England, this painting was sometimes mistakenly identified during the eighteenth-century as being painted by Van Dyck, and so it is difficult to know to which artist contemporaries were referring to when they identify fashions by this master..
[83] Hearn, *Van Dyck and Britain*, 206.

While in the collection of Sir Horace Walpole, this painting became such a popular source of inspiration for Masquerade dress that the women wearing it were referred to in the plural. Among these was *Mary Bertie, the Duchess of Ancaster* (Fig. 0.32), who posed in a costume that she wore at Ranelagh painted by Thomas Hudson in 1757 with the famed Rotunda of Vauxhall Gardens in the background. This fascinating portrait is evidence that masquerade costume was not a straightforward reproduction of the fashions represented in the art of the past or in Jeffrey's costume book but was an interpretation of such dresses through a contemporary fashion lens. Steely blue instead of black, with a bell-shaped silhouette in-line with evening wear of the 1750s rather than the loosely gathered polonaise of seventeenth-century Dutch costume, the designer of this costume has clearly taken liberties with Rubens' original. However, her fawn-coloured hat, the ostrich feather she carries and her be-ribboned sleeves were more than necessary to relate her costume to that of Rubens' wife. Such was the powerful presence of this costume within the popular imagination. Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that the aim of such costumes was not accuracy, but imagination. This costume clearly succeeded in representing a certain historicizing feminine ideal, for the Duchess's interpretation of this dress became so popular as to spark a style of its own.[84]

It is here that the line that separates fashionable dress from fancy dress becomes quite blurred, for the number of relationships between dress in painted portraiture and actual costume are often difficult to trace. Representations of Rubens' wife's costume on canvas may relate to actual masquerade dress, as in the case with Thomas Hudson portrait of the Duchess, or it might simply be imaginary portrait dress. Such a costume might have been directly inspired by Rubens' original painting, or it may have been created in reference to another artist's interpretation of the dress, like the Duchess of Ancaster's popular portrait. It might be a direct copy of a costume worn at a masquerade such as that worn by the Duchess, or it might be completely imaginary, loosely inspired by one or a combination of portraits. To make matters more complicated, by the 1770s many aspects of masquerade costume had entered the vocabulary for contemporary fashionable dress, and portraits that appear to represent fancy dress may in fact include one of the 'Rubens' hats', 'Vandyke collars' or Turkish

[84] Ribeiro, 'Eighteenth-Century Masquerade Dress', 175.

turbans that were popular within fashionable dress throughout the eighteenth century.[85] By the nineteenth century, attitudes towards representing fashion in art had shifted towards an embrace of representing contemporary fashions as a means of visualizing modern life, however, perhaps no greater period was fashioned by historicism than during the Victorian era, so much so that it is difficult to keep track of all of the historic and exotic influences that shaped contemporary fashions across this colourful century. From the medieval to the Rococo, Victorian women found endless pleasure in referencing the art and fashions of the past, however, they now did so through the intermediary eighteenth century. Once referred to as a 'Rubens' hat', by the nineteenth century such hats came to be referred to as 'Gainsborough' hats, before finally being called simply 'Picture Hats', a reference not only to their art historical origin, but also a sign of how important these over-sized slanting hats had become as part of the sartorial vocabulary for representing late-Victorian femininity.[86]

Unquestionably no other scholar has contributed more to the study of fashion in art than Aileen Ribeiro, whose work spans three centuries and navigates a vast geographical terrain. It is thanks to her work that historians of art and dress are attuned to the subtle clues in the representation of dress which she argues hint at artists' processes and intentions. Throughout her work, she encourages the meticulous study of even the most minute details of dress – the presence of a small, but purposeful seam, the way in which a garment gapes as it follows the form of a sitter's body, the unconvincing weight of sleeves that slide off its wearer, the sheen of satin and the muteness of paint. Ribeiro's aspirations rest clearly on the side of determining first and foremost whether fashions in art are real or imaginary, and alongside this process she situates such works in correlation with the theoretical attitudes towards art and fashion of the time. Taking Thomas Hope as a mantra, she proposes that 'without truth of costume' in works of art, 'the story cannot be clearly told'.[87] While she admits that her intention is to look at dress mainly from the point of view of the artists who represent it, in doing so has sometimes had the unfortunate consequence of denying the voice of the wearers of such

[85] Ribeiro, *Dress Worn at the Masquerades*, 107.
[86] Maynard, '"A Dream of Fair Women"'.
[87] As quoted in Ribeiro, *Art of Dress*, 236.

costumes, real or imaginary.[88] For regardless of whether we have an exact record of the specifics of such negotiation, we can begin to assemble the agency of sitters as part of this representation through the same types of visual clues that she bases her distinctions between truth and fantasy.

From the outset of my research I have attempted to rediscover and re-evaluate the agency of women in relation to their engagement with images of fashion in art. My research has been inspired by the work of feminist historians of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century art and culture across a wide range of subjects. However, I owe my greatest debt to the work of Gill Perry and Kate Retford, whose work and that of those their edited volumes have cohered has collectively investigated a wide spectrum of women's engagement and consequent self-fashioning by the commissioning, collecting and curating of artworks, the design and decoration of houses, and even the very physical terrain of their estates from which their family's power stemmed.[89] What each of these studies has shown time and again is that even when the paper trail of who paid for such projects suggests otherwise, women were at the heart of all of these crucial aspects of eighteenth-century cultural life. Within portraiture studies, Perry, Robyn Asleson and several other scholars have uncovered the vital means by which female actresses marketed themselves to the public through the commissioning of portraits by the most fashionable painters of their day.[90] Actresses were uniquely positioned due to their professional role and the status accorded to them as fashion leaders and celebrities to orchestrate public performances of themselves. Some of these actresses, including Frances Abington, were so influential as to guide the fashion tastes even of the aristocratic women of fashion themselves.[91] However, the social position that was ascribed to actresses was often a dubious one, denigrated on account of their public role

[88] Ribeiro defines her intention as to 'look at dress mainly from the point of view of the artists who represent it' in *Clothing Art*, 31.
[89] See especially their recent edited volume, Perry and Retford, *Placing Faces*, as well as Retford's individual publications *The Art of Domestic Life* and *The Conversation Piece*.
[90] The literature on eighteenth-century actresses is filled with interesting stories, and many of these works have contributed towards renewing our appreciation for their agency in their self-fashioning. See especially Asleson, *Notorious Muse*; Engel, *Fashioning Celebrity*; and Perry, *Spectacular Flirtations*.
[91] Gill Perry, 'Ambiguity and Desire: Metaphors of Sexuality in Late-Eighteenth-Century Representations of the Actress', in *Women, Popular Culture, and the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Tiffany Potter.

and the nature of their performance which naturally involved the presentation of their bodies.[92] As the number of portraits of leading actresses of the eighteenth century attest, however, many actresses turned to portraiture as a means of elevating their status in the face of such criticism.

It hardly seems likely that a group of women accustomed to adopting public performances not just on stage, but in life, would relinquish their representation to someone else.[93] Turning to a series of portraits dating from 1782 by Reynolds, Gainsborough, and the exceptionally talented female artist Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, we see evidence of both artists and sitters who made use of a particular historical portrait as a means of enhancing the status of both. Although this collection of paintings contains a self-portrait painted across the Channel and the work of two rival masters who espoused largely different approaches to both art-making and the representation of fashion, we see in the example of each of these canvases the negotiation of representation through the works of the same past master who inspired the Duchess of Ancaster's masquerade costume: Rubens. Out of these three portraits, that of *Mrs. Robinson as "Perdita"* by Reynolds (Fig. 0.33) bares the most striking resemblance to Rubens' *Chapeau de Paille* (Fig. 0.34), which Reynolds had recently seen in Antwerp. With a similar colour scheme consisting of black and white seventeenth-century Dutch costume danced with red drapery, Robinson turns her head slightly towards the viewer in an expression that conveys the seriousness of her theatrical role. In doing so, her black feathered hat forms a striking diagonal, once again referencing the famous *Chapeau*. By referencing Rubens' famous *Chapeau,* Reynolds has not only associated his art with this canonical masterpiece, but as Mark Hallett suggests, he has shown Robinson in a role that is both theatrical and art-historical, which in the process aligned her representation with a deeply revered pictorial ideal for feminine beauty.[94] In yet another interpretation of the same portrait, Vigée Le Brun paints herself in the type of light-weight muslin chemise wrapped in a shawl that she liked to represent her sitters wearing (Fig. 0.35), an invention which she attributed to her study of Raphael. Yet it is the feathered straw hat that tops her head in reference to the *Chapeau de Paille* that Vigée Le Brun most directly references. Through this process, Catherine Montfort argues that Lebrun

[92] Perry, *Spectacular Flirtations*, 67.
[93] Asleson, *Notorious Muse*, 8.
[94] Hallett, *Reynolds: Portraiture in Action*, 396.

demonstrated to the attendants of the *Salon de la Correspondance* in 1782 that a woman could be more than just the passive object of a painter's gaze: she could also be the painter of a masterpiece as lively and nuanced as Rubens' celebrated *Chapeau de Paille* (Fig. 0.34).[95]

Perhaps no monograph has posed such a significant feminist intervention into the cultural resonances of a single artist's work through an artist's engagement the representation of dress than that produced in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name, *Thomas Gainsborough and the Modern Woman*. Benedict Leca boldly argues how, in conjunction with his sitters, Gainsborough's paintings of women in fashionable dress serviced progressive femininities.[96] By representing women of the *demi-reps* with all of the vivacity and opulence of contemporary fashionable dress, Gainsborough drew attention to the exact objects that they were faulted for in accordance with their association with illicit liaisons. However, in representing these women of questionable reputation in the same gentile landscape settings that he did his more elevated sitters, Gainsborough brought what Leca describes as 'heightened visibility' or 'power' to women.[97] This can be said to be true in Gainsborough's 1782 portrait of Giovanna Baccelli (Fig. 0.36), which captures Baccelli in the moment of her dance in a theatrical costume that she wore as part of her professional performance.[98] As I will explore in more depth in Chapter 3, in referencing both portraits of Rubens' wife (Fig. 0.31) through certain elements of Baccelli's costume, and by situating her performance within the respectable context of a rural estate, Gainsborough, and Baccelli through her commissioning and posing for this role, have created an image that elevated her status as a professional artist in much the same way that Vigée Le Brun had done in asserting her status as an accomplished portrait painter.[99]

Actresses certainly exhibited a privileged status as arbiters of taste and had a level of control over their image that many eighteenth-century women unfortunately did not have. However, I do not agree with Ribeiro that only a 'particularly forceful character'

[95] Montfort, 'Self Portraits', 10.
[96] Leca, *Gainsborough and the Modern Woman*, 14.
[97] Leca, 45.
[98] Leca, 127.
[99] Perry, *Spectacular Flirtations*, 71.

would have been involved in decisions regarding how they were to be represented in their portraits.[100] There is a tendency which sometimes persists even today to treat portraiture as the result of an inspired artist-genius who was given free rein to represent a sitter as they saw appropriate in accordance with their own personal theoretical principles of ideal representation. However, as two other portraits of women dressed *à le Chapeau de Paille* can attest (Fig. 0.34), painters were often encouraged to represent women as they so desired. Although Sir Thomas Lawrence's portrait of *Julia, Lady Peel* is often singled out as his greatest masterpiece (Fig. 0.37), he often professed a dislike for fancy dress in portraiture. The decision to paint Lady Peel in the costume of Rubens' wife was undoubtedly her own, inspired by her and her husband's possession of the famous masterpiece, both as a playful tribute to it and a means of representing her as possessing this unceasing ideal of femininity.[101] Some years later in painting a portrait of *Jennie Jerome, Lady Randolph Churchill* (Fig. 0.38), Sargent painted the American heiress in a striking black sequined dress with the oversized sleeves of the 1890s equipped with an even more amplified interpretation of the *Chapeau* than that found in eighteenth-century interpretations of the accessory. Although the records surrounding this portrait are scarce, Sargent's careful articulation of the structure and ornament of this dress suggests that it was likely either a fashionable, if not very theatrical evening gown, or fancy dress for a costume ball. Either way it captured Lady Randolph Churchill's fashionability both through its adherence to the fashionable ideals of the 1890s, as well as the canonical emblem of feminine beauty found in Rubens' masterpiece that was now part of the collection of London's National Gallery.[102]

Indeed, it is important to keep in mind that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries portraiture, like fashionable dress, was an undeniably commercial enterprise.[103] In the commissioning of a portrait, it was common for sitters to be offered a portfolio of the artists' work for consultation, and it was through looking at the artists' work in printed and painted form either within the artist's studio, at one of London's spaces of exhibition such as the Royal Academy, in the windows of print shops, or in

[100] Ribeiro expresses this view on more than one occasion, most recently in Ribeiro, *Clothing Art*, 340.
[101] Howarth, *Rubens and His Legacy*, 228.
[102] Howarth, 228.
[103] Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, 43.

the surroundings of theirs or their family and friends' homes, that sitters would be afforded with a variety of possibilities for representation.[104] From the outset of their portrait commission, sitters would be faced with a number of questions, starting with both the medium and size of the portrait in question: Paint, or pastel? Half, three-quarter, or full-length? They might express a preference in terms of dress, selecting a similar style to one found within an artists' oeuvre, or they might enter the studio with the aims of being represented in a fashionable costume that they actually owned. Even the very act of commissioning a portrait was in itself a powerful act of selection to begin with: of choosing the artist who would paint their portrait. Finally, we know from the innumerable number of unclaimed and unpaid canvases of even the most fashionable painters that sitters had the option of forfeiting their purchase, which is perhaps the strongest evidence of the powerful position of sitters as consumers.[105]

Due to their equally heightened visibility and agency within the public sphere to actresses that aristocratic and other women of fashion exhibited, elite women were more likely to be represented in portraiture and as a result, this thesis often finds itself following women of this particular social class as a means of tracking women's engagement with visual representations of dress during this period. Not only were women of the *beau monde* leaders of fashion who possessed ample opportunities for public display, as Elaine Chalus, Hannah Greig and Gillian Russell have demonstrated, their active engagement within the public sphere was a form of political activity in its own right.[106] Through fashion these women not only gave visual form to ideals of aristocratic feminine beauty, but they also influenced the status accorded them in the social and political world of the time. Given that women such as the Duchess of Devonshire were famed for implementing new fashions and setting the social tone of their set, it is unlikely that they would have completely surrendered their representation to the mind of a fashionable painter. Even in the first portrait commissioned by her mother by Sir Joshua Reynolds at a young age (Fig. 0.39), Georgiana is portrayed with

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[104] Tim Clayton, 'Figures of Fame: Reynolds and the Printed Image', in *Joshua Reynolds: The Creation of Celebrity*, Postle, Hallett, Clayton and Tillyard, eds.
[105] Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, 50.
[106] The political implications of women's activities in the public sphere is brought to the fore most especially by Elaine Chalus, Hannah Greig, and Gillian Russell. See Chalus, *Elite Women in English Political* Life; Greig, *Beau Monde*; and Russell, *Women, Sociability and Theatre*.

the pallor of white make-up and her contemporary hairstyle is adorned with the ostrich feathers that she was largely responsible for popularizing.[107] Georgiana must have not only directed Reynolds in how he was to paint her portrait then, but through wearing this fashionable style of headdress both in the public sphere and on canvas, and indeed in a number of reproductive engravings that were produced of Reynold's portrait, she must have influenced the popularity of this hairstyle's appearance in Reynolds' portraits, which appears in the vast majority of those that he painted during the second half of the 1770s.

Leading society figures such as Georgiana were not only likely to shape the representation of fashionable dress in their portraits but were also likely to exercise agency in the selection of fancy-dress costume. However, in some ways, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century women of fashion were equally skilled in performance and the art of allusion as professional performers on stage, not only through their experience as leaders in the theatre of fashion, but through their active engagement both with literary and theatrical culture. The classical and allegorical figures that so many of the eighteenth-century's portraits reference were eminently familiar as part of female education during this period. However, aristocratic women not only explored such roles through the act of reading, but often performed them.[108] Not only were many of the characters that artists represented on canvas ones that they had possibly performed at masquerades or at costume balls, a number of women engaged in the staging of private theatricals during this period. Indeed, it is highly suggestive that Lady Stanhope and the Countess of Effingham were painted by Frances Cotes as Diana and her companion at the same time that they were engaged in the staging of private theatricals with Lady Stanhope's brother (Fig. 0.40).[109] Lady Sarah Bunbury likely commissioned Reynolds to paint her in the act of sacrificing to the graces for this same reason (Fig. 0.41), for she was part of the well-known Holland House circle that performed such private theatricals.[110] It was perhaps for this reason that Reynolds has represented Lady Sarah's performance through what Ribeiro has described as a 'clumsily designed, over-long,

[107] Russell, 193.
[108] The participation of women in private theatricals is recounted in Hallett, *Reynolds*, 204 & 215; Ribeiro, *Art of Dress* and *Van Dyck in Check Trousers*.
[109] Ribeiro, *Art of Dress*, 213.
[110] Hallett, *Reynolds*, 204 & 215.

trailing gown', for such costume through its lack of precision could be said to cleverly reference the fact that Lady Sarah was not only an idealized allegorical figure, but herself an actress in amateur theatrics.

However, just as such theatrical performances involved multiple actors, the theatre of fashion and the staging of visual images was itself a collaborative process. As in the case of purchasing a new dress, sitting for one's portrait was a social occasion. This was particularly the case with female sitters, who visited public exhibitions of art alongside one another as a polite form of female sociability during this period.[111] In visiting an artist's studio together, a woman's companions would voice their opinions on how they, too, thought she ought to be represented. Moreover, these decisions were, like the popularity of actual items of fashionable dress, shaped by ideals that resonated within their social and cultural network. These networks were crucial to women's collective fashioning through visual images of dress, and it is through the reconstruction of these networks that this thesis seeks to reposition women's agency as part of this process of representation.

III. Networks of Representation

The thesis is in no way a comprehensive study of the work of a single artist, style of dress, or even time period. It does not seek to paint a continuous narrative of the nature of ideal femininity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, nor is it a study of women of a particular locale. What it does do is trace, via three distinctive but thematically overlapping case studies, the complex and vivid relations between women, fashion, sociability and networks. The images of dress it analyses were produced between a period spanning roughly one hundred and fifty years, and they represent a variety of different media ranging from painted portraits, hand-coloured aquatints, to photographs reproduced by the callotype process. These images by the nature of their media were displayed in a variety of places: framed on the walls of private residences, in circulation as prints that made up a single issue within a particular volume of a journal, and curated within the pages of a privately printed album. The agency of women in connection to

[111] Russell, *Women, Sociability, and Theatre*.

these images extends to a variety of roles as subjects, producers, patrons and viewers. Bound loosely to the Britannic Empire, the women encountered through these images range from the pinnacle of this Empire in the form of the Royal Family itself, to the upper echelons of the aristocracy and gentry, and the middling sort of the rising merchant class. These women certainly do not represent a uniform elite. However, all of them, by nature of their ability to commission and engage with artistic practice can be said to at least aspire to polite society. It was largely for this reason that this vibrant collection of images of dress exist, for fashion is a powerful tool for establishing and defining social groups.[112] In assembling this diverse selection of case studies, it is my aim to demonstrate the degree to which images of dress were used by women in a multitude of methods of representation, and in the process give visual form to social, political and gender ideals.

If there is one through line that connects all of these images, it is that they were created at a time in which women still largely communicated through forms of iconic representation, in which they utilized art and dress to convey their identities.[113] To attempt to understand what these visual and material forms communicated, it is necessary to turn to the moment in which these images were created and used. Adopting a post-structuralist semiological methodology, I explore how the fashions represented in these images conveyed particular meanings related to the social groups which employed them. I argue that it is this process of communication through visual representations of dress that served to create the social and cultural identities of the women who made use of these signs. Thus, I take the women who are either represented in these images or responsible for their creation in some other way to be equally responsible for their meaning as the artists who manually gave them form.

Both objects and images of dress essentially represent arbitrary signs.[114] Placed outside of the social world in which they were created, their original meaning ceases to exist. To reconstruct both the specific resonances of a particular style of dress, and the empowering act of representation they provide for women who made use of its representation, it is necessary to fully reconstruct the entirety of the network which

[112] This concept was possibly first proposed by Simmel. See Simmel, *Fashion*.
[113] Jones, *Sexing la Mode*, 214.
[114] Barnard, *Fashion as Communication*, 88.

governed its creation. Such a network naturally includes the artist and any studio assistants, his or her social and creative circle, as well as the subject, either model or sitter, and their social and familial circle as well as any other patrons involved in its production. However, this network is not limited only to social agents, but to any influence over the image's creation. This might include textual sources, images by other artists both past and contemporary, as well as the physical objects of dress and other studio props which the artist sought to mimetically represent. As Bruno Latour and other proponents of Actor-Network Theory have proposed, things not only carry meanings, but are active participants in the production of culture.[115] Thus, in the social world of things, fashions and artworks are active participants in the creation of culture alongside the social networks of production and consumption that act in conjunction with them.

To give life back to these images and the meanings bestowed on them, I have attempted to trace such networks at the broadest level of their production. Central to this process has been the revitalization of the women who both popularized such fashions within their social circle and helped to endow them with meaning by adopting them as part of their community's fashions. Given the importance of such female networks to determining the meanings associated with fashions, I have chosen my case studies specifically on account of the fact that each presents a traceable network of women associated with it from which to base my research. I follow the narrative of these women's lives through genealogy, memoirs, biographies, and the reporting's of newspapers. Through these sources, I have been able to reassemble the kinship and social networks that were responsible for exchanging information about fashion and shaping its representation in art. As it is the primary aim of my thesis to reconstruct the vital agency of women in the representation of dress in art and visual culture, this thesis does not follow the involvement of men in this process. An alternative narrative could focus on the father who paid for the portrait of his daughter by Copley, the men who supported the textile industry by subscribing to the *Gallery of Fashion*, and the husbands and sons who posed alongside photographs of their wives and mothers in the

[115] Latour, *Reassembling the Social*.

Devonshire House Album.[116] While these men were equally significant agents within these networks, this thesis unfortunately does not have space to engage with these highly interesting multi-gendered collaborations.

I have also selected images which present evidence of a circular relationship between dress and images of dress from distant places, as I believe these interactions present further insight into both the meanings inscribed within such fashions, and women's agency through the superimposition of these styles as part of visualizing ideal representation. Fashion by the very nature of its medium involves an active act of imagining on the part of its wearer, for in dressing up we can be said to be taking on the character of our clothes, or at least the character of what we imagine our clothes to represent. The imaginative possibilities of clothes can be traced back to their ancient origins and associations with magic and ritual, a relationship which underscores the primordial use of dress in enacting shared fantasies. In the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries, fashion was still endowed with the power of fantasy, only such dreams had shifted towards a contemplation of temporal and geographical distance. As David Lowenthal has charted, the proliferation of the printed images of the dress of different nations and histories and the collecting and display of historical costume allowed Britons to conceive of the past as a different reality.[117] Timothy Campbell has furthered this argument in attributing the rise of historical consciousness to an increasing understanding of Britain's recent past, which was largely achieved through an increased familiarity with the visual history of dress of their own and distant nations. Drawing on such images, Britons contemplated their identity as both different from and an extension of these past realities, and for the first time in history, past styles of dress were consciously reproduced through textiles and paint.[118] Although each of my three case studies demonstrate women's agency in relation to a variety of different styles of dress and the cultural resonances of such fashions shift across each chapter, throughout this thesis I have focused on historical and exotic impulses within both real and imagined

[116] All of these examples are encountered in this thesis, however, given the focus of my thesis is on women's agency, I have perhaps done these actors an injustice by not focusing on their contributions more closely.
[117] Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*.
[118] Campbell, *Historical Style*.

dress as a means of uncovering how women utilized such styles as part of their collective representation of ideal femininity.

My first chapter takes a collection of portraits by John Singleton Copley of women wearing Turquerie dress in colonial Boston as its subject. Although a highly fashionable form of dress in portraiture in Europe for decades, Turquerie did not enter into the fashionable vocabulary for portrait dress until 1763 in colonial Boston. This year happens to be the same year in which Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's letters were published, who was admired as a remarkably independent woman traveller whose portraits (Figs. 0.2) and letters sparked a widespread curiosity for the Ottoman Empire. This chapter considers how this specific sartorial expression was adapted for use by the tight-knit community of women in colonial Boston, and it considers the degree to which the symbolic potential of this style has been transformed on account of Montagu's influence to suit a specifically regional definition of ideal womanhood. Furthermore, in demonstrating just how closely related Copley's sitters were, bound together through a close geography, shared church attendance and mercantile trade, I consider how it was Copley's female sitters such as Judith Sargent Murray (Fig. 0.1), rather than Copley acting from the position of a privileged artistic vacuum, who selected and integrated this style of dress within these portraits as part of their ideal representation.[119]

Taking the subject of Nicholas Heideloff's *Gallery of Fashion* as my second chapter, this chapter looks at a very different medium in the form of reproductive aquatint engravings rather than singly-produced painted portraits. These hand-coloured plates depict images of contemporary fashions, rather than imaginary portrait dress, however, just as in Copley's portraits, these fashions make use of the vocabulary of exoticism and historicism so central to the fantasies of femininity of the time (Fig. 0.42). Here the link between women and agency rests not on their direct representation, but instead through the power invested in them by means of their patronage through subscription to the journal. I consider how women's agency can be traced in the journal's pages, both because such illustrations represented ideals that met with the approval of Heideloff's subscribers, as well as on account of the fact that such ideals were directly inspired by

[119] Jules David Prown's extensive research into Copley's sitters serves as the cornerstone of many of the observations I draw on the relationships that connected them. Prown, *John Singleton Copley*.

his female subscribers' wardrobes, lifestyles, and values. It is through the representation of fashion in the journal that Heideloff and his subscribers both assert the relationship between fashion and the identity of these women, while confirming these women's social and political authority through these ideal representations of polite, sociable femininity.

My third and final chapter flashes forward nearly one hundred years in time to explore how a single important ephemeral event, the Devonshire House Ball held in honour of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, was commemorated by those who took part in its pageantry through the collection of portrait photographs of a choice selection of the ball's attendants in their costumes. Although this chapter revisits many of the same families who subscribed to the *Gallery of Fashion*, it finds itself faced with a strikingly different Britain whose social ranks were united not only by class, but through economic relationships which situated them in an increasingly more international world. I explore how aristocratic women, in relation to their familial and social networks, presented a palpable challenge to the threats to their social order through their performance both at the ball and in the posing for their portraits, and how women who had married into the aristocracy from outside the peerage were prevented from fully utilizing fancy-dress in this same empowering act. Turning once again to the language of historic and exotic dress, this time to include that of the eighteenth century (Fig. 0.43), the photographs in this album demonstrate how this fraught network was both empowered and limited by their use of fancy-dress on account of the problems imposed by these fashions' long-standing relationship to lineage and past definitions of femininity, which themselves in turn had been shaped by many of the visual representations that the ball's attendants modelled their costumes after.

While each of these case studies reaches different conclusions about the networks it encounters, as is the goal of my thesis, all of these chapters help to recover the role that women played in the creation of these artworks, even when there is little anecdotal evidence to recreate the precise nature of the negotiations that occurred between artists and their female sitters and patrons. By recreating the largely homosocial world that women occupied during this period through genealogy and social history, it is possible to trace associations between social groups and artworks that might otherwise be overlooked. Furthermore, as I hope that this thesis will demonstrate, during the

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries women can be seen to have played an active role in the creation of culture at many levels, which was accomplished in no small part on account of their sartorial interventions in the public sphere both through their physical embodiment of the ideals associated with such fashions and through the multitude of mimetic representations which were disseminated through a surprising range of sources. We begin with an eclectic group of women in early America, who exploited dress and portraiture to fashion sophisticated and worldly images of themselves that reached across the Atlantic to the visual culture of London.

Chapter 1. Cosmopolitan Style in Colonial Boston: Female Networks and Regional Definitions of Ideal Womanhood in John Singleton Copley's Turquerie Portraits, 1763-1774

In the eighteenth century, both the commissioning of a portrait and the ordering of a new garment were important opportunities for self-fashioning.[120] A portrait recorded a sitter's personality and appearance, but like the fashionable garments that women wore in the third dimension, the style of a sitter's clothing on canvas – even when it adopted the numerous imaginary styles popular throughout the eighteenth century – was an important opportunity for women to represent themselves as part of a wider community of fashionable taste. The striking similarity among the portraits painted by a single artist, such as those John Singleton Copley painted in colonial Boston, has been used as one more piece of evidence in favour of the creation of these likenesses as having been the result of a single individual. While Copley's sitters would have certainly deferred to his judgment on many aesthetic criteria, it is important to keep in mind that in the eighteenth century, portraits, like fashionable clothes, were statements of collective identity and allegiances, rather than the reflection of a single individual.[121] Even when women were not direct relatives and the relationships binding them were more tenuous, women saw themselves as part of a wider community of taste and they were eager for their portraits to reflect this. Dress was a powerful means of visualizing these important relationships.[122]

Although the popularization of a particular style of dress in portraiture was the result of continually revised ideas regarding 'general' and 'individual' truths in painting, which determined the degree to which costume in art could mirror current modes in dress, it

[120] As I laid out in my introduction, my work is built around the understanding that the art market during the eighteenth century was a commercial enterprise. See Pointon, *Hanging the Head*; Solkin, *Painting for Money*.

[121] Drawing on Dror Wahrman's account of the evolution of selfhood during the eighteenth century, dress, and more specifically uniformity of dress, can be seen as evidence of an understanding that identity revolved around specific types of individuals. See Wahrman, *Making of the Modern Self*.

[122] In addition to identifying an individual as a particular social type, the repetition of fashions in portraiture were also a means of signalling important relationships, as Margaretta Lovell has demonstrated through her study of the repetition of a single blue dress in portraits of some of Copley's sitters who were related through blood or marriage. Lovell, *Art in a Season of Revolution.*

was also subjected to influences initiating from outside the artistic establishment.[123] The same could be said to be true of fashionable clothing during the period. While milliners on the Rue St. Honoré continually revised what was fashionable, with such ideas gaining currency through fashion dolls and prints, their ideas were not integrated into fashionable dress in a uniform manner throughout the places that they travelled. The Scottish-born milliner Elizabeth Murray, for instance, recognized this fact when in 1753 she broke with convention, leaving her adopted city of Boston for London in search of a 'ne[a]t assortment of goods' that would 'suit the Boston market very well'.[124] As a shopkeeper, Murray was distressed by the out-of-season merchandise that was sent to her store, but she also felt that much of what was sent to her was unsuitable for the community of women she served in Boston. Murray's store entertained great success not only because of the quality and selection of the goods she had for sale, but because she understood that although women in colonial Boston were engaged with what was fashionable in London, they brought their own set of interpretations to such fashions and were accountable to internal forces of influence within their community.

Years later upon the death of her husband, Murray visited Copley's studio alongside her close friend Christian Barnes on September 26, 1769.[125] What resulted from this outing – undertaken in hopes of cheering the recent widow – was an elegant portrait of a confident Murray swathed in voluminous burnt sienna robes (Fig. 1.1). In choosing to sit for an artist who was both engaged with current trends in art-making in London while appealing to the tastes and interests of his Boston sitters, Murray again demonstrated her aptitude for both embracing cosmopolitan style, while effortlessly adopting a persona on canvas that was in keeping with local tastes. At first glance, these timeless robes might be written off as barely distinguishable from the classicizing drapery that filled the canvases of numerous other eighteenth-century beauties on both sides of the Atlantic, especially given the plush assortment of peaches and grapes that Murray caresses between the curtain's dark folds. However, following the trail of the diaphanous azure scarf that is gracefully pinned to her bosom, its semi-transparent quality echoing the delicacy of her fair skin beneath, another significant sartorial detail

[123] By 'general' and 'individual' truths, I am referring to Reynolds' principles as laid out in his *Discourses*. These are discussed at length later in this chapter. Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*.
[124] Cleary, *Elizabeth Murray*, 66.
[125] Barratt, *John Singleton Copley and Margaret Kemble Gage*, 28.

becomes evident: regally balanced atop Murray's head, and receding against the dark curtain backdrop, is a bronze turban braided in glowing pearls.

At first glance, this turban might appear jarringly incompatible with the Pomona that Copley has painted. However, rather than being seen as the two opposing forces they would come to be understood at a later date, in Murray's time Orientalism was embraced alongside Classicism as two points along the same continuum, both in terms of their shared remote Mediterranean history, and their modern geographies.[126] This fashionable style, popularly known as Turquerie, was for years written off by historians of eighteenth-century art as a passing vogue for the exotic, or as a means by which artists flattered the sensibilities of their aristocratic patrons.[127] Although the women who donned Turquerie *en masque* or on canvas were often drawn to such a style as an instrument for status-enhancement through the opulence that such a style of dress entailed, such an explanation does not begin to account for the multiplicity and variety of images of women *en Turque* that swept across Europe throughout the eighteenth century, eventually making their way to the American colonies. For as Murray realized in her own day, regional identity played an important role in women's self-fashioning, resulting not only in the popularity of different styles, but also influencing what they signified within different communities.[128]

As one of the first truly cosmopolitan styles, Turquerie was one of the most popular styles of fancy dress across Europe, and it was equally prevalent among ladies at fashionable European courts in Venice, Paris, and Vienna, as it was among elite Britons. However, without the culture of the masquerade to encourage its popularity, Turquerie did not become fashionable in portraiture in distant colonial Boston until the 1760s.

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[126] Winterer, *Mirror of Antiquity*, 7.

[127] In their respective disciplines, Nebahat Avcıoğlu and Mary Sheriff have brought attention to the tendency in art and architectural history to treat *Turquerie* as a passing fancy that had no lasting influence on European culture, and consequently is unworthy of serious study today. Nebahat Avcıoğlu ardently demonstrated in her study on Turquerie in architecture that the style represented far more than just passive role-playing to the eighteenth-century people who engaged with it. Avcıoğlu describes this process of adopting Turquerie as one of 'self-representation', a term which she uses to describe how one's public identity is constructed through the endorsement of 'exotic' stylistic vocabularies in order to state and impose a new identity. Avcıoğlu, *'Turquerie'*; Sheriff, *Cultural Contact*.

[128] Kate Haulman's work has demonstrated the degree to which fashion was regionalised in eighteenth-century colonial port cities. Haulman, *Politics of Fashion*.

How such a style spread, and the reason it entered the consciousness of those without the need for exotic masquerade dress is the story of print culture. This story has been told before, with art historians recognizing that American art is indebted to a long history of trans-Atlantic artistic fertilization through prints, which acquainted artists with the work of both Old Masters and their famous contemporaries.[129] What has not been adequately considered, however, is the degree to which women themselves were involved in this process of cultural exchange and expression. As Marcia Pointon has presciently argued, in societies where women were virtually powerless with no right to own anything, vote, or 'place in the rationale for civic humanism', women were particularly invested in 'exercising sight and controlling how one was seen'.[130] Recognizing they were always on display would have certainly affected the way in which women dressed and behaved both at public gatherings such as masquerades, as well as the more intimate occasion of entertaining one's social circle at home. Because of this, women maintained a significant interest in the permanent fixture of their visage within their households, as Kate Retford and Gill Perry and others have made admirable efforts to elucidate.[131] This was especially crucial to women whose portraits were not only intended to grace the stairways of their residences, but for those painted by fashionable artists such as Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose portraits might eventually circulate within the wider public sphere through their exhibition and reproduction through prints.[132] However, this was also the case for women whose portraits hung in otherwise less opulent surroundings across the Atlantic by the hands of the aspiring painter, John Singleton Copley. Like the fashionable items of clothing that Murray sold in Boston, the transatlantic circulation of ideas through print culture facilitated new

[129] Waldron Phoenix Belknap, Jr. was one of the first to draw attention to the influence of European prints on American art-making, and numerous other scholars have substantiated this fact in their research on individual artists. For a survey of Belknap's original work, see Sellers, *Mezzotint Prototypes of Colonial Portraiture*.
[130] Pointon, *Hanging the Head*, 143.
[131] As was highlighted in my introduction, Kate Retford and Gill Perry's recent work has done much to demonstrate that women maintained an active interest and agency regarding portraiture of both themselves and their family members. Retford, *Conversation Pieces*; Retford, *Art of Domestic Life*; Perry, Retford & Vibert, *Placing Faces*.
[132] Amanda Vickery's pioneering research into the lives of Georgian women has demonstrated their involvement in making sure that an orderly, elegant home was presented to the public, thus dismantling the notion that homes were exclusively private, domestic environments, and that women, who spent the majority of their time at home, were not engaged in the public sphere. Vickery, *Gentleman's Daughter*.

modes of seeing the self through dress – a process which involved the agency of not only artists, but also sitters and even milliners like Murray.

Prints after both historic and contemporary works of art were certainly available to persons without artistic training, and in fact portraits were one of the most popular genres found in American print collections. Included among these illustrious persons were not only figures of religious influence or military power, but also women 'illustrious by virtue of their beauty'.[133] Just as fashion plates were in the collections of individual women and not the exclusive prevue of dressmakers, the audience for reproductive engravings of portraits certainly included women.[134] With this in mind, it is likely that at least some of Copley's sitters would have also been familiar with this stylish mode in portraiture, carrying their own ideas to the studio as they sat for a portrait painted by Copley. While the conversations that occurred between artists, such as Copley, and visitors to their studio were not recorded, important prototypes would have been suggested by the entire company present and the resulting likeness, like the dresses constructed locally or brought to women through family and friends, were the outcome of a series of complex negotiations involving multiple people, rather than the vision of a single individual.

[133] The 2005 Tate exhibition, 'Joshua Reynolds and the Creation of Celebrity', demonstrated how prints after Reynolds' work and the exhibition of his portraits impacted the celebrity of both the artist and his sitters. Although Lucy Peltz suggests that such portraits did not circulate widely, and were intended for private consumption, I think the numerous reproductive engravings of the same portraits of beautiful women produced in London, often to be later copied in Dublin, suggests otherwise. The vast quantity of surviving examples of the same likenesses of aristocratic women suggests that these portraits were not the exclusive purview of members of a woman's family. It is entirely probable, however, that these likenesses circulated without the involvement or approval of the sitter's family.
Postle, Hallett, Clayton, and S. K. Tillyard, eds., *Joshua Reynolds: The Creation of Celebrity*.

[134] Just as many women visited dressmaker's studios eager to create a garment inspired by ideas from their personal collection of fashion journals, or modelled after a dress they had seen worn by another member of their community, Copley's female sitters were likely to have ideas on how they wished to be represented based on reproductive engravings of historic figures and their famous contemporaries, as well as painted portraits of women in their social circle. Likewise, just as the dresses that women wore were the result of a complex process whereby fashion information and objects were exchanged – with women collaborating with family members and professionals to obtain the latest modes, adjusting such fashions to suit their own needs, fashions in painted portraits were also likely the result of a collective search for acceptable modes of representation.

Indeed, the fact that Turquerie does not appear within Copley's *oeuvre* until 1763 – years into its popular ascent in European portraiture – suggests that this style's success in colonial Boston was determined by forces largely outside of the artistic establishment.[135] It was during this year that Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's celebrated *Turkish Embassy Letters* were printed.

Upon her return from Turkey, Wortley Montagu cultivated an identity as a woman enlightened through her travel to a distant, foreign land, which she described as a place whereby women enjoyed the entire liberty to follow their own pursuits.[136] By capitalizing on the distinction that her travels brought her and projecting her identity as synonymous with the independent women she described from her travels in Turkey, Wortley Montagu forged a new conception of ideal womanhood characterized by female independence, which found its visual expression in the Turkish costume she adopted in portraits.[137] Her *Letters*, which circulated these controversial beliefs regarding Turkish women became so popular upon their publication as to warrant a complete reprinting in colonial America in 1766 and 1769 – a hefty undertaking which could only reflect a large readership.[138] Given the vast popularity that her writing

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[135] Copley's first exercise in Turquerie was his portrait of *Elizabeth Byles, Mrs. Gawen Brown* in 1763, as will be discussed at greater length later. Although this marked the first example of his use of this style, it does not become truly popular within his work until later in the decade, with numerous women sitting to Copley in Turquerie dress from 1766 until his departure in 1774 in this style.

[136] Even before she embarked on the life-changing voyage that would forever distinguish her from her peers, Wortley Montagu maintained a level of independence and freedom of thought uncharacteristic of even some of the most senior aristocratic women of her day. She freely socialized with a wide circle of friends that included some of the greatest thinkers of her day, such as Samuel Johnson and Alexander Pope – friends who respected Wortley Montagu as their intellectual equal. Wortley Montagu entertained a notorious reputation in her lifetime as a woman whose brazen openness of opinion and relationships with other men led to her eventual separation from her husband and isolation from British society. For the most complete biographical study of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, see Grundy, *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*.

[137] Wortley Montagu's portraits are discussed in detail by Marcia Pointon. See Pointon, *Hanging the Head,* 141-158.

[138] By the time Copley leaves Boston, Turquerie had overtaken other forms of generalized portrait dress as well as the previously popular historicizing seventeenth-century styles. I wish to suggest that Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Letters,* first printed in London in 1763 by T. Beckett & P. A. de Hondt, and later printed in colonial America in Providence by Goddard in 1766 and in Philadelphia by Charles Thompson for Robert Bell 1769, was in no small way responsible for the popularity of this style. This is not to say that every woman who donned Turquerie did so because of a strong-held feeling for its associations with female independence, but as I hope that this chapter will demonstrate, Turquerie's distinctive visual appearance as one of strength and independence was in no small way shaped by its association with a strong woman like Wortley Montagu.

entertained, and the fact that her identity was virtually inseparable from her time in Turkey, Turquerie soon took on strong connotations of the independent womanhood symbolized by Wortley Montagu's example and that of the Turkish women described in her writing. As this chapter will argue, it was largely account of its association with Wortley Montagu that Turquerie became such a highly popular style for dress in portraiture, particularly in colonial America, which did not have the cultural heritage of the masquerade weighing on its associations.

Although this chapter centres on networks of women's style as opposed to study of the specific biographies of the women Copley painted in Turquerie, a compilation of these biographies has revealed them to be a set of remarkably independent women that included entrepreneurs, writers, and activists. These were women, then, who likely recognized the important role that the commissioning of a portrait presented as part of their self-fashioning. All of these women, moreover, were united by one shared quality: for months out of the year, at some point in their lives, they, their mothers, or their sisters, were responsible for managing their households and their male relatives' mercantile affairs. This was not a solitary responsibility, but one that required women to work together alongside other members of their community. This sense of collaboration and shared responsibility was a key aspect of what constituted ideal womanhood in colonial Boston, and as this chapter will argue, it shaped the commissioning of a portrait from start to finish.[139] Notably, for instance, Elizabeth Murray did not enter Copley's studio alone but in the company of a female friend. The portrait that resulted from this joint visit would not only have met Copley's approval, but also that of his female sitter and her companion. As well-read women, Copley's Bostonian sitters would have undoubtedly been familiar with Wortley Montagu's highly popular *Letters* and her association with Turkey would have in no small way shaped their understandings of Turquerie. This close social community would have naturally played a role in Turquerie's prevalence as a stylish mode in portraiture, but they were also responsible for shaping its departures from European precedents. This chapter investigates these departures as a means of examining the degree to which eighteenth-century fashion was subjected to regional sources of influence by way of the network of women that

[139] According to Carrie Rebora Barratt, Copley conferred with his sitters, and also perhaps their family and friends in the commissioning of a portrait. Barratt, 'Transforming Colonists into Goddesses and Sultans', 4-37.

composed his sitters in colonial Boston, while highlighting portraiture's important role as a tool for collective self-fashioning. With its close association with the independent female traveller Wortley Montagu, Copley's Bostonian sitters adopted a style that allowed them to carefully construct an image of independent, virtuous womanhood that spoke to the values they shared as active members of a prominent mercantile community.

I. Turquerie: Women and the Style

By the time Copley began to experiment with Turquerie in his portraits of elite Bostonians in the 1760s, the style had taken on a substantially different appearance from portraits that were painted of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu nearly half a century before. Eager to establish himself on par with his contemporaries in London, Copley made a persistent effort to familiarize himself with acceptable modes of dress and deportment in portraiture in the capital, including the numerous romantic interpretations of fancy dress inspired by Van Dyck, the Orient, and a romanticized pastoral ideal. Through the influence of his printmaker stepfather Peter Pelham, he became an avid collector of mezzotints after works by Reynolds and other prominent portraitists of his day.[140] Copley corresponded regularly with artists in England and on the continent, soliciting their assistance in acquiring the best artist materials available, while earnestly seeking their opinion of works that he sent to London for exhibition. It was through his correspondence with other artists that Copley gained access not only to Jean-Etienne Liotard's pastel medium, but also the 'Turkish painter's style', recognizing through exposure to prints that Turquerie was the preferred costume in portraiture for many of Britain's most influential women.[141] Liotard's popularity rested on his ability to represent women across Europe in exotic Turkish dress, as in his famous portrait of a reclining English woman, *Maria Gunning, Countess of Coventry* (Fig. 0.28), which circulated through a number of popular prints on account of her identity as a famed

[140] Staiti, 'Accounting for Copley,' in Barratt, *John Singleton Copley in America*, 29-33.
[141] Copley's interest and use of prints will be discussed later when accounting for the evolution of Turquerie, and the networks in place responsible for its popularity.

beauty (Fig. 1.2).[142] While we might consider Liotard's and Jean-Baptiste Vanmour's portraits of elite women to be more 'authentic' in their use of costume, which more closely resembles that worn by Turkish women than the numerous masquerade portraits painted throughout the 1740s and well into the eighteenth century, all of these portraits must be considered to be the product of Western artists' and sitters' imaginations.[143] By inserting themselves into the realm of the Turkish 'Other', Western women might imagine a number of fantasies – of romantic intrigue, of an exciting lifestyle foreign to them, or even, in the case of Wortley Montagu, of having a mastery over a culture once alien to herself.

In commemoration of her voyage to Turkey – a journey that few Westerners, male or female, had taken, Wortley Montagu was painted numerous times in Turkish costume in portraits that are now among the early eighteenth century's most iconic. Like Wortley Montagu's contemporaries, most scholars interpret these portraits of Wortley Montagu as accurate representations of contemporary Turkish dress, suggesting that the costumes she wears in her portraits were likely to have been her own.[144] Wortley Montagu certainly wore Turkish costume while in Turkey, a fact that she recounted in her letters as part of her self-fashioning as an enlightened traveller. Her descriptions of the Turkish costumes worn by both herself and the Turkish women that she observed share some similarities to that which she dons in one of the most famous of these portraits, painted by Vanmour of Wortley Montagu and her son shortly before their departure from Constantinople in 1717 (Fig. 0.2). Through the 'perpetual masquerade' provided by

[142] Liotard painted multiple examples of women on sofas that are compositionally virtually identical to Copley's portrait. At least one of these has long been attributed to be a portrait of one of the famed Gunning sisters, Maria, however a recent study by Duncan Bull at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam revealed that evidence for this fact is shaky, despite the fact that numerous prints of this portrait exist with Gunning's name engraved beneath. Bull suggests that this was added by print sellers to increase the demand for this image. For our purposes, I refer to this print by the title it circulated under, for this is likely how Copley would have understood it if he had access to it. Bull, 'Princess, Countess, Lover or Wife? "Liotard's Lady on a Sofa",' 592-602.

[143] For information on the forces that encouraged Turquerie's popularity emanating from outside of England during the eighteenth century, including the important visit of the Turkish ambassador Said Effendi's visit to Paris in 1742, see Stein, *Exoticism as Metaphor*; and for details of the Dutch ambassador Cornelis Calkoen's visit to Istanbul in 1727 and Vanmour's portraits of Calkoen and other sitters including Wortley Montagu see Sint, Renda, and Bull, eds. *The Ambassador, the Sultan, and the Artist*.

[144] Grundy states that if these were not the exact clothes that she wore in Adrianople, then they were a westernized version created for Wortley Montagu upon her return. Grundy, 201.

their far more comfortable dress, and the veils they wore that covered 'the whole dress of [their] head', Wortley Montagu was in awe of Turkish women's ability to wander the streets with the 'entire liberty of following their inclinations without danger of discovery'.[145] On top of these trousers, Wortley Montagu is shown wearing a shimmering gold *entari*, which she compared to a waistcoat with long sleeves closed by diamond or pearl buttons, sometimes embellished with decorative elements such as fringe. Seductively looped at her side, the shimmering folds of this garment contrast with the solidity of a heavily ornate girdle. Although girdles were not often present in later Turquerie portraits such as those painted by Copley, this accessory provided an opportunity for its Turkish wearers to demonstrate their wealth by encasing the entire width of the girdle in diamonds and other jewels. Atop this luxurious outfit, she wears a *cuppe*, or loose robe of rich brocade, which is lined with ermine.[146] Wortley Montagu's ensemble is completed with a *kalpak* or headdress – a turban of 'light shining silver stuff' – which alongside the hanging ermine *cuppe* was to become the most prominent symbol of Turquerie in later decades.[147]

The incredible detail in which Vanmour rendered this costume, matched by the authenticity provided by Wortley Montagu's own description of contemporary Turkish dress, grants this portrait an aura of realism. However, a comparison with another visual model for Turquerie costume suggests it may be illusory. Three years prior to painting Wortley Montagu's portrait, the French ambassador to Constantinople Monsieur de Ferriol published a costume book in Paris of illustrations by Vanmour of Turkish dress under the title 'Receuil de Cent Estampes representant differentes Nations du Levant'.[148] This book became immediately popular and underwent a number of pirated editions before many of the plates were re-engraved in 1757 in Thomas Jefferys' pattern book, 'A Collection of the Dresses of Different Nations both Ancient and Modern'.[149]

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[145] As written by Wortley Montagu in a letter to her sister Lady Mar from Adrianople on 1 April 1717. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, 'Letter XXX', in *Turkish Embassy Letters*, 71-2.
[146] The presence of ermine trim would have also referenced her status through its association with the aristocracy.
[147] Wortley Montagu described her Turkish habit in a letter sent to her sister Lady Mary from Adrianople on 1 April 1717. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, 'Letter XXX', in *Turkish Embassy Letters*, 70.
[148] Scotin, van Moor, and Ferriol, *Recueil de cent estampes representant differentes nations du Levant*.
[149] Thomas Jefferys, *A Collection of the dresses of different nations, antient and modern*, 1757.

Both Ferriol's book and Jefferys' later edition circulated widely as they fed the public's interest and need for information regarding foreign dress to serve as source material for creating masquerade costumes.[150] Unsurprisingly, Wortley Montagu's dress bears close similarity to the fourth illustration in Ferriol's book, which depicts the *Habit of a Sultaness, Empress of the Turks in 1700* (Fig. 1.3). While we might consider this to establish the veracity of Wortley Montagu's costume, we know the costumes represented in this book to have been in no small way the product of Vanmour's imagination given the distance that separated men like Vanmour from Turkish women. Just as Rococo details were added to the interior scene of the popular ninth plate from this same volume, *Femme Turque qui feume sur le Sopha* (Fig. 1.4), the costumes that Vanmour represents were also tempered for popular consumption by a Western audience.

Clearly then, Vanmour's portrait of Wortley Montagu was shaped by his training in France. However, they were also likely to have been shaped by his sitter's own expectations for her portrait. Slightly left of centre of the canvas, Wortley Montagu makes direct eye contact with the viewer turning as if to suggest she has just left the outdoors. The softness of light and topography of the outdoor space she has just left are more akin to an Arcadian paradise than the bustling city of Constantinople, while the idealized space she enters as she strolls across a luxuriously expansive Persian carpet is located somewhere between the Orient and the ancient past, with its draped classical columns and overstuffed velvet cushions. Seated on the cushions below her, a woman in nearly as sumptuous Turkish dress plucks a *tambour*, while a turbaned older gentleman approaches the scene from the right edge of the canvas with his attention fixated on the radiant Wortley Montagu. The letter that he carries serves as a reminder of Wortley Montagu's role as a professional travel writer, who recorded her observations of the people and customs she encountered during her travels as she maintained correspondence with friends and relatives. In one such letter, Wortley Montagu related to Alexander Pope that in reading Homer she found 'several little passages explained' by observing the culture of Ottoman Istanbul, finding it to be remarkably similar to that

[150] For information into the use of costume books in the creation of masquerade dress, Aileen Ribeiro, *Dress Worn at Masquerades in England, 1730 to 1790*; and Ribeiro, 'Turquerie'.

which Homer described. She expressed her joy that even the 'snowy veil that Helen throws over her face here is still fashionable'.[151]

A romantic attraction to classical antiquity would not have been far from either artist or sitter's mind, shaped as they were by an eighteenth-century education that emphasized a thorough familiarity with the classics. Vanmour's portrait, however, was also subjected to European ideas regarding standards for contemporary forms of cultural expression, including those governing fashionable dress and art making. As part of fashionable dress in Turkey, women were meant to wear an embroidered smock of fine silk gauze with 'wide sleeves hanging half way down the arm … closed at the neck with a diamond button' over their trousers.[152] However, in this portrait Wortley Montagu has relinquished this garment entirely in favour of exposing the fashionable lower neckline of eighteenth-century European dress. While this was a decision likely to have been her own, internal vestimentary codes in Turkey would have also prevented Wortley Montagu from fully assuming the appearance of a Turkish woman, with strict laws dictating what colour overmantle and shoes Muslim and non-Muslim women could wear as well as the colour and style of their veils.[153] It is interesting to note that in Vanmour's representation of Wortley Montagu, she breaks the proscribed dress for non-Muslim women of pale coloured overmantles and dark shoes by wearing a dark overmantle of sapphire blue and golden shoes to match her *entari*. It is possible that her costume's departure from these laws was a deliberate challenge and further attempt by Wortley Montagu to fashion herself as a Turkish woman. However, it is more likely that this deviation, like the Arcadian paradise that showcases her figure, was motivated by a desire to create an image that appealed to European viewers on account of its carefully balanced colour scheme. In either case, what this information reveals is that the appearance of Turkish dress in Vanmour's portrait of Wortley Montagu must not be

[151] As written by Wortley Montagu in a letter to Alexander Pope on 1 April 1717, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, 'Letter XXXI', in *Turkish Embassy Letters*, *75*.
[152] Although she claimed that this was of a material so fine as to be virtually transparent so that 'the bosom is very well to be distinguished through it,' this is not readily detectable in Vanmour's representation of the Turkish sultan. Either Vanmour aimed for greater legibility by the lack of transparency in this garment's representation, or perhaps by the time Wortley Montagu was writing, the fine white silk gauze of this garment was newly fashionable. As written by Wortley Montagu in a letter to her sister Lady Mar from Adrianople on 18 April 1718. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, 'Letter XXXIV', in *Turkish Embassy Letters*, 87.
[153] These vestimentary codes are recorded in Sint, Renda, and Bull, *The Ambassador, the Sultan, and the Artist,* 37.

taken as a straightforward representation of her time in Turkey, but like any representation of fancy dress in portraiture must instead be considered in light of the aesthetic and cultural conditions that shaped the appearance of this style.

Given that Turkish dress allowed for sumptuous displays of the finest fabric, jewels, pearls, and fur, it is unsurprising that it became one of the most popular styles of dress that eighteenth-century beauties wore as they dressed for the canvas and costume balls. As Terry Castle emphases in *Masquerade and Civilization*, the Turkish costume depicted in portraits such as Charles-Antoine Coypel's *Young Lady in a Turkish Costume* of around 1740 (Fig. 1.5), provided opportunity for liberating transgressions that allowed people to express hidden desires.[154] Heavily rouged and with a bow tied around her neck as prominent as her turban, Coypel's sitter looks as though she has slipped on an ermine robe more akin to those worn by the French aristocracy than those recorded in prints of Turkish costume. She wears this over an equally unconvincing fashionable striped silk gown that matches her ribbon necklace, which could have just as easily been worn as part of a shepherdess' costume. What Turkish accessories that she does wear, such as the sash tied around her waist which is meant to stand in for the traditional girdle of Turkish dress and the turban balanced upon her head, appear almost as an afterthought, with the portrait's emphasis resting on the tension between viewer and sitter created through her demure expression and the awkward gesture of her left hand.[155]

A relatively contemporaneous portrait by Rosalba Carriera of *Felicita Sartori* (Fig. 1.6) again departs from traditional Turkish dress in her masquerade costume, for Sartori forgoes the traditional ermine overmantle entirely. She has instead replaced it with a robe of fabulous Eastern-import silk, popular in Italy, over an *entari* that seductively fastens asymmetrically, mirroring the Rococo curve of her body. What these portraits share in their different interpretations of fashionable Turkish masquerade dress is the suggestion that to don such attire, these women were embodying a tantalizingly erotic persona.[156] However, as Nebahat Avcıoğlu has demonstrated in her study on Turquerie

[154] Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization*.
[155] This disparity between appearance and reality is typical of masquerade portraits.
[156] Terry Castle discusses the erotics of Turkish masquerade costume in *Masquerade and Civilization*.

in architecture, Turquerie represented far more than just passive role-playing to the eighteenth-century people who engaged with it. Avcıoğlu describes this process of adopting Turquerie as one of 'self-representation', a term which she uses to describe how one's public identity is constructed through the endorsement of 'exotic' stylistic vocabularies in order to state and impose a new identity.[157] For women in portraits such as those painted by Coypel and Carriera, this new role must have entailed the freedom for romantic and sensual pursuits. However, for women such as Wortley Montagu, such a style represented an escape from a different set of societal expectations.

Returning to Wortley Montagu's portrait by Vanmour (Fig. 0.2), her interest in this style could not have been further removed from romantic seduction. Rather than coyly blushing or looking at the viewer through doe-eyes, Wortley Montagu makes direct eye contact, and her assertively regal posture mirrors this confidence. By continuing to adopt Turkish costume in her portraits upon her return from Turkey, Wortley Montagu constructed her identity in correlation with the independent Turkish women she described in the letters she sent to her wide-ranging correspondence network, and through this process established a public persona as a capable and intelligent individual.[158]Although Wortley Montagu's interest in Turquerie extended beyond an interest in romantic seduction through her beauty, each of these portraits were shaped by ideal standards for feminine beauty and aesthetics specific to the context of their creation. Even if the reasons motivating the creation of the portraits thus far discussed were hardly consistent, the visual tradition shaping their appearance was in many respects similar, particularly when situated in relationship with the Turquerie portraits John Singleton Copley painted in Boston. Such differences are so striking in Copley's work that at first glance many of these portraits are not recognized as examples of Turquerie. Gone are the patterned textiles, the distracting glimmer of gemstones and embellished fabrics, and the heightened blush of Rocco femininity. Rather, Copley's interpretation of this style owes more to his English contemporaries, especially Reynolds, whose work he was familiar through the more than four hundred prints that were produced after the master's work within the artist's lifetime.[159] It was through prints that Copley became

[157] Avcıoğlu, 14.
[158] I am again indebted to Avcıoğlu's theory of self-representation for the conclusions that I have drawn regarding Wortley Montagu's continued employment of *Turquerie*.
[159] Clayton, 'Figures of Fame' in *Joshua Reynolds: The Creation of Celebrity*, 50.

familiar with the ideas regarding dress in portraiture that Reynolds would later record in his famous *Discourses*.[160]

In his desire to elevate the status of painting to literature and other more esteemed forms of cultural expression, Reynolds became increasingly interested in achieving a visual language that resonated with his academic idealism.[161] Reynolds believed that the 'whole beauty and grandeur of art' consisted of rising above 'singular forms, local customs, [and] particularities and details of every kind'.[162] Like Jonathan Richardson before him, Reynolds believed that the ancient Greeks and Romans had 'the truest taste in this matter'.[163] In a letter sent to Sir Charles Bunbury in 1770 when describing his choice of costume for Bunbury's second wife's portrait, Reynolds explained his selection, claiming that the 'Eastern dresses are very rich, and have one sort of dignity; but 'tis a mock dignity in comparison to the simplicity of the antique'.[164] Reynolds would later defend his argument in favour of classical over modern dress in his *Discourses*, believing the familiarity of modern fashion was 'sufficient to destroy all dignity'.[165] As Gill Perry has suggested, Reynolds's formulation of his Grand Style in portraiture was motivated not only by his wish to 'give to painting its true dignity, which entitle[d] it to the name of a Liberal art, and ranks it as a sister of poetry', but also by his desire to elevate the women he painted through a selection of symbolic and aesthetic conventions capable of conveying his aristocratic patrons' elite status.[166]

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[160] Criticized as 'a low genius, or no genius at all', Liotard's descriptive attention to fine details was unwelcome to artists such as Reynolds, who dismissed such an approach to art-making as lacking invention in its reliance on observation and empirical analysis. Reynolds wrote of his rival that 'The only merit in Liotard's pictures is neatness; which, as a general rule, is the characteristic of a low genius, or no genius at all. His pictures are just what ladies do when they paint for amusement; nor is there any person, how poor soever their talents may be, but in a very few years, by dint of practice, may possess themselves of every qualification in the art which this *great man* has got', as recounted in numerous published compilations of Reynolds' writings, including Northcote, *Memoirs of Sir Joshua Reynolds*.

[161] As quoted in Avcıoğlu, 19.

[162] As quoted in Avcıoğlu, 19.

[163] Reynolds was deeply influenced by Jonathan Richardson's *Essay on the Theory of Painting* of 1715, from which this quote was taken. Perry, 'Women in Disguise' in *Femininity and Masculinity in Eighteenth-Century Art and Culture*, 28.

[164] As quoted in Ribeiro, *Dress Worn at the Masquerades*, 242.

[165] Perry, 20.

[166] Perry, 18.

I agree with Perry's argument that Reynolds's Grand Style provided women with a cultural identity that illustrated their noble breeding, but I also think it is important to emphasize that Reynolds's words do not always reflect his practice. Despite Reynolds' professed opposition to 'Eastern dresses' and modern fashion in portraiture, several of his most successful portraits were painted in both styles. Take, for example, Reynolds's portrait of *Caroline Spencer, Duchess of Marlborough* (Fig. 1.7). Caroline's loose-fitting gown might at first glance appear to be a classicizing interpretation of fashionable dress at the end of the 1750s. However, her overmantle of the same hue as that worn by Wortley Montagu and matching sash around her waist were not part of contemporary fashionable dress. Rather, these sartorial details were instead part of the popular vocabulary for imaginary portrait dress during the period, which incorporated a wide array of influences similar to those found in masquerade dress, including the overmantles and belted waists of Turkish costume. Reynolds might have delineated a clear distinction between classical and 'Eastern' dress in his writing, however, elements of Turquerie often slip into his Grand Style vocabulary. Although Reynolds' professed that his ideal conception for dress in portraiture found its genesis in classical antiquity, these fashions were not taken from the classical world of ancient sculpture but were instead more akin to the loosely fitting gowns worn by Greek and Turkish women in the modern-day Ottoman Empire.[167]

Reynolds's aesthetic theories regarding dress were not new but can be situated within a longstanding tradition in British art for simplicity in dress dating back to Sir Anthony Van Dyck and his follower Sir Peter Lely. Just as the dress in *Caroline Spencer, Duchess of Marlborough*'s portrait (Fig. 1.7) was not modelled after an actual garment, seventeenth-century artists such as Van Dyck and Lely also painted imaginary costumes in portraits. Take, for example, Lely's portrait of *Elizabeth, Countess of Kildare* of 1679 (Fig. 1.8), which was likely inspired through studies of drapery wrapped around models. This imaginary, generalized, portrait dress which relates to that devised by Van Dyck before him, can be said to depict the foundation for the type of simplified costume

[167] The costume to which I refer is the costume worn by Reynolds' contemporaries in the Ottoman Empire, which was in many respects similar to that worn throughout the height of the Empire during the sixteenth and through to the eighteenth century. The same can be said to be true of history paintings produced during the Renaissance representing scenes of classical antiquity. The costume worn by sitters in these paintings is often less based on ancient Greece, but instead similar to that worn by Renaissance artist's Greek and Turkish contemporaries.

found in the majority of portraits painted of women in Britain during the eighteenth century. A flounce added to a sleeve or a lace collar could transform a basic loose gown into seventeenth-century dress out of Rubens or Van Dyck, while the inclusion of a shepherdess's hat or staff would grant that same sitter an air of pastoral simplicity and innocence. Likewise, the addition of fabric or pearls wrapped through a sitter's hair, or tied around her waist, would transport this same sitter into the imaginative realm of Turquerie. While Copley did not have access to a drapery painter, he and his sitters also preferred simplicity of dress in portraiture and this interest was shaped not only by prints after Reynolds' work, but also by other earlier artists such as Joseph Blackburn, who continued in the tradition Van Dyck and Lely. Returning to Copley's portrait of *Elizabeth Murray* (Fig. 1.1), Murray's dress is in keeping with Reynolds' Grand Style's classical lines, while the azure scarf pinned to her bosom and voluminous white sleeves demonstrate Copley's debt to seventeenth-century masters such as Lely (Fig. 1.8). Considering that Copley shared Reynolds's aesthetic proclivities and painted a number of Bostonian women in historicizing, rather than contemporary dress, the fact that he does not begin to incorporate Turkish sartorial elements into his work, such as turbans or sashes, until after 1763 is surprising given the tremendous popularity that such details enjoyed in British portraiture. For this reason, I wish to argue that the surge in popularity of Turkish-style costume among Copley's Bostonian portraits was not only determined by artistic convention but was also shaped by an outside source: the recent publication of Wortley Montagu's *Letters* and their circulation within this colonial port city. I now wish to turn to the subtle differences which distinguish Copley's Turquerie portraits from those produced by his London-based contemporary, which offer clues into the different reasons governing Copley and his sitters' attraction to this style.

II. Copley's Turquerie Portraits: Invention or Imitation?

Given that Copley's Turquerie portraits are among the most striking likenesses that he painted in colonial America, it is unsurprising that they often find themselves at the centre of discussion of Copley's work. To date, art historians have primarily adopted one of two attitudes when accounting for the significance of this style within his work. First, in American art history's attempt to establish a distinctive canon away from European art, Copley has been discussed as a solitary figure who was able to create a

distinctive style that spoke to uniquely American needs and interests. More recently, Paul Staiti and Aileen Ribeiro have argued that this style became popular because of Copley's interest in fulfilling his sitters' desire to mimic portraits from across the Atlantic by directly copying motifs made available to them through printed images after the work of European artists.[168] It is understandable why Staiti and Ribeiro have been eager to conceptualize Copley's work in this manner when looking at examples such as *Mrs. Jerathmael Bowers* (Fig. 1.9), which bears little alteration from the print produced by James McArdell (Fig. 1.10) after Reynolds' portrait of *Caroline Spencer, Duchess of Marlborough* of 1757 (Fig. 1.7).[169] However, as Margaretta Lovell has rightly pointed out, Copley was engaging in a practice common not only to artists working in America, but also to those working in England. Although Copley did not have access to a drapery painter like his English peers, who sent their work off to be finished by a trained specialist according to a print, he would have been aware of this process.[170] While Copley would have been familiar with both the practices and final products of his contemporaries in London, the forces motivating his and his sitters' interest in this style were at once cosmopolitan as well as focused according to their own specific regional needs and desires. For this reason, the presence of Turquerie in his work can be seen as both a mixture of imitation and innovation, leading to works that at once resonated with cosmopolitan standards of taste in London, while also representing an image of ideal womanhood that was entirely distinctive.

Women in colonial port cities such as Boston certainly imagined themselves in connection with their English contemporaries, and this would have been particularly true of those with mercantile connections, such as *Martha Swett, Mrs. Jeremiah Lee*

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[168] This was the prevailing attitude of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's 1995 exhibition, *John Singleton Copley in America*. See, in particular, Staiti, 'Accounting for Copley', and 'Character in Class', and Ribeiro, '"The Whole Art of Dress": Costume in the Work of John Singleton Copley,' in *John Singleton Copley in America*.

[169] Copley's portrait of *Mrs. Jerathmael Bowers* is a direct copy of Reynolds' 1759 portrait of *Caroline Spencer, Countess of Marlborough*. This is the clearest evidence that Copley was directly familiar with, and influenced by, Reynolds' work. It is curious that this portrait is virtually identical to that produced by Reynolds', which to me suggests that either his sitter and her family came to him requesting a likeness modelled after this portrait, or that Copley used this portrait as a didactic exercise for mastering Reynolds' approach to portraiture. As will be discussed later in this chapter, this portrait was originally believed to have been produced in 1763, but according to Jules Prown may have actually been painted as late as 1767. Prown, *John Singleton Copley*.

[170] Lovell, 76.

(Fig. 1.11), and women of the prominent Boylston family. However, this does not discount the fact that as within Britain itself, forces specific to the culture of their reception contributed to the reasons whereby Turquerie became an acceptable elite style in colonial American portraiture. For, as Isabel Breskin has noted, not every British style was integrated into American portraiture.[171] While Copley was certainly familiar with the aesthetic thinking about dress common during his time which emphasized general, timeless costume as opposed to modern dress in portraiture, another aspect of Bostonian culture must have motivated his and his sitters' acceptance of Turquerie. For the heritage of Puritan piety continued to leave its mark on Bostonians, even when society was less directly influenced by religion as it underwent the process that of Anglicisation that T.H. Breen has described. In her interpretation of Bostonians' private writings on dress, Nicola Shilliam has followed a common thread over the period of about a hundred years whereby women writing in the 1760s all the way to the 1860s continued to shun fashion on the basis of its Puritan connotations of vanity and sinfulness. Extravagant dress was viewed as a sign of weakness of character, and an interest in fashion could also be taken as a testimony to the wearers' lack of virtue.[172] As one congregational minster preached in Lexington, Massachusetts in 1762 in a sermon which later circulated as a broadside:

> External beauty, great riches, and the like, may make us admired and revered by a croud (sic) of stupid, unthinking mortals, like ourselves; but will be far, very far, from rendering us glorious or acceptable in the eyes of God, or good men.[173]

To the many persons of faith in colonial Massachusetts who shared this minister's views on fashion's sinfulness, the best way to avoid the character flaw of vanity was to focus one's energies on inward beauty, which could be acquired through the 'practice of virtue and religion'.[174] It is clear that similar attitudes towards dress existed in relation to portraiture, as one petition featured in the *Boston Gazette* on March 15, 1756 written to an imaginary painter satirically urged:

> Artful Painter, by this Plan
> Draw a Female if you can.

[171] Breskin, 'On the Periphery of a Greater World', 107.
[172] Shilliam, 'The Sartorial Autobiography', 5-6.
[173] Clark, *The best art of dress*.
[174] Clark, 14.

Paint her Features bold and gay,
Casting Modesty away;
Let her Art the Mode express,
And fantastic be her Dress;
Cock her up a little Hat
Of various Colours, this and that;
Make her Capt the Fashion new,
An Inch of Gauze or Lace will do:
Cut the Hair the shortest Dock:
Nicely braid her Forehead Lock:
Put her on a Negligee,
A short Sack or Sheperdee
Ruffled up to keep her warm,
Eight or Ten upon an Arm,
Let her Hoop extending wide
Shew her Garters and her Pride,
Her Stockings must be pure and white.
For they are seldom out of Sight.
Let her have a high heel'd Shoe,
And a glittering Buckle too;
Other Trifles that you find,
Make quite careless her Mind,
Thus equipp'd she's charming Ware
For the Races or the Fair.[175]

Copley came of age as a painter in the midst of these moral debates, and he must have approached the dress of his sitters with care with ideas like this in circulation.[176] For this reason, Copley's distinctly simplified style can be seen as having been a deliberate decision on the part of the artist and his sitters to meet the visual expectations for dress as a means of representing ideal femininity within the particular religious climate of the Massachusetts Bay Colony of the mid-eighteenth century.[177] Copley's interpretation of Turquerie has been described as diluted in its Atlantic crossing, however this was

[175] As reproduced as the frontispiece to *John Singleton Copley in America*.
[176] The moral impact of increased accessibility to luxury goods was hotly debated, with many sharing the author of the above poem's belief that such the possession of such goods had a corrupting influence on society. A selection of essential texts into the debates surrounding luxury during this period include Berry, *The Idea of Luxury*; Sekora, *Luxury*; Berg and Clifford, *Consumers and Luxury*; Berg and Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth* Century; Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain*.
[177] I do not wish to suggest that this attitude was specifically confined to colonial Boston, for similar puritanical attitudes towards dress were present not only in other colonial cities, but also within certain more conservative pockets of British society, as expressed through women's conduct literature. However, the religious climate of puritan piety in colonial Boston certainly contributed both to the delay of Turquerie's presence as a popular portrait style in Boston, as well as its eventual acceptance as it was redefined in the public imagination through its association with Wortley Montagu.

certainly not the result of a misinterpretation of fashionable Turquerie in Britain.[178] It is likely that Turquerie as a style appealed greatly to Copley's sitters not only on the basis of its stylish connotations on both sides of the Atlantic, but also because the simplicity of its loose gowns and flowing robes that were associated with it would have resonated with their Puritan piety.

By the later 1760s, Turquerie as a style clearly appealed to Copley's sitters, for in 1769, the same year that Copley painted Elizabeth Murray, he was also invited from Boston to the nearby Massachusetts port city of Marblehead, where he was commissioned to paint two full-length portraits of *Martha Swett* (Fig. 1.11) and her husband *Jeremiah Lee* (Fig. 1.12).[179] Mrs. Lee's portrait graced the stairway of their new mansion – one of the grandest in colonial America, and was surrounded by expensive hand-painted wallpaper reproducing European paintings of classical antiquity.[180] Although Copley's conception of Mrs. Lee certainly bears closer similarity to Reynolds's Grand Style in its simplicity and classicizing lines than the masquerade portraits described earlier, this painting was not prompted by Copley and his sitters' desire to emulate their superiors across the Atlantic, as Ribeiro and others have argued.[181] As T.H. Breen has demonstrated in his work on colonial America, Boston was undergoing an intense period of Anglicisation from the 1740s onwards, with more than five hundred ships carrying 24,000 tons of British goods from Britain to Boston each year, along with information and ideas that prompted women such as Mrs. Lee to consider themselves as Georgian gentlewomen in their own right.[182] Identifying oneself as British, however, did not preclude colonial

[178] Breskin, 101.
[179] Barratt, *John Singleton Copley in America*, 66 & 258-9.
[180] The Lees' mansion in Marblehead, which is today open to the public, has been written about in Anderson, *Glorious Splendour.* For a wider study of American interest in classism during the eighteenth century, particularly in relation to women and material culture, see Winterer, *Mirror of Antiquity*.
[181] Aileen Ribeiro describes Mrs. Lee's portrait as one marked by 'an over-genteel pose and gestures and an extravagant costume,' concluding that this portrait exhibits very little influence of an interaction between artist and sitter. Ribeiro, '"The Whole Art of Dress",' in *John Singleton Copley in America*, 107.
[182] Breen, 'An Empire of Goods', 467-99. Phyllis Whitman Hunter draws the fascinating conclusion that although Connecticut Yankees and the Massachusetts commercial gentry shared certain attributes, including a search for profit, within a wider transatlantic context these two groups were remarkably different. She claims that the leading merchants of Boston and Salem would have seen themselves as Georgian gentleman, rather than Yankee traders. Hunter, *Purchasing Identity in the Atlantic World*, 9.

Bostonians from maintaining a specific regional identity, and by comparing Mrs. Lee's portrait with similar full-length portraits painted by Reynolds such as his portrait of *Elizabeth Gunning, the Duchess of Hamilton and Argyll* (Fig. 0.30), painted just five years before Mrs. Lee's portrait, it becomes evident that Copley and Mrs. Lee have presented us with a portrait entirely different in style and conception than by those of the London-based master.

As in portraits of her British peers, Lee's crossover dress of sumptuous gold silk is tied at the waist with a striking aubergine belt, which stands-in for the traditional girdle worn by women in earlier Turquerie portraits. Rather than wearing a turban like Murray, Lee's hair is braided with a few single stands of pearls, which complements the elegant pearl choker that graces her neckline. It is Copley's mastery of colour that makes this painting so successful; but by becoming enchanted by Lee's golden robes and the rich royal blue of her over mantle, it is easy to overlook a crucial detail of her imagined wardrobe. As she lifts her gown in unconvincing support of a selection of fruits, which are presumably from the Edenic paradise that she has exited, the viewer must look carefully in order to notice the edge of a pair of brick red trousers that peek from beneath her dress and blend against the steps she climbs of the same hue. This subtle clue is a reminder that Lee was not interested in being represented as a classical goddess as one might expect, given she and her husband's choice in wallpaper, but in another type of classical figure – and one with explicit Turkish connotations. Although both ladies are portrayed out of doors, standing, and in classicizing dress, one could argue that the similarity between these portraits ends there. While the Duchess of Hamilton's white dress and posture are reminiscent of the gracefulness of classical sculpture, the golden sheen of Lee's dress has a solidity and tangibility about it that is both powerful and alluring. Both women's attire can be described as of the Turquerie style, in terms of their belted dresses and ermine overmantles. However, the Duchess's girdle is placed higher, and is more reminiscent of Diana as seen through the eyes of the Renaissance than the modern-day Greco-Turkish dress women such as Wortley Montagu wore. Indeed, with her ermine robes, more akin to those worn by royalty, and the classical plinth that she regally balances against, the Duchess of Hamilton is a classical goddess with a distinctly aristocratic identity.

Copley's signature realism has been criticized as one of his fatal flaws by historians and connoisseurs of eighteenth-century art, but it was his attention to surface detail and observation of the real world that grant his portraits a tangibility that appealed to his sitters' ideas and desires. Copley's departure from a Reynoldsian conception of the picturesque is at its strongest when one compares certain aspects of his paintings that are overlooked at first glance — such as the landscape that sets the stage for Mrs. Lee's grand entrance. The landscape Copley has painted is just as idealized as the charming trees and roses surrounding the Duchess of Hamilton, however, just as Reynolds' imaginary landscape is similar to a garden the Duchess might well have owned, Mrs. Lee's Arcadia has been interpreted through a New World lens. This subtle distinction would have signalled Mrs. Lee as a landowner, and her posture, dress and overall demeanour would have communicated her to be a powerful one at that. Fully in control of her environment, Lee's dress and demeanour is more similar to that captured by Vanmour of Wortley Montagu (Fig. 0.2), than Reynolds' portrayal of the *Duchess of Hamilton* (Fig. 0.30). Although it does not appear that Vanmour's portrait of Wortley Montagu circulated through print culture during this period, the similarities between these portraits in terms of colour alone does make one wonder if Copley would have been familiar with Vanmour's portrait, at least through visual description.

Regardless of whether or not Copley was directly familiar with Wortley Montagu's portraits, the overall demeanour of this and other portraits, such as those painted of the Boylston family between 1766 and 1767, suggests that Copley and his sitters were interested in representing an ideal of womanhood closer to that espoused by Wortley Montagu than represented by Reynolds's graceful aristocratic goddesses. When first encountering the Boylston's portraits, it is tempting to view Copley's sitters in line with Reynolds's countless examples of seated women in classicizing dress. However, when pressed to find a visual precedent that closely corresponds with these portraits, a number of differences emerge between the Boylston's portraits and those painted by Reynolds of their contemporaries in London particularly when focusing on portraits such as his portrait of *Mary Boylston, Mrs. Benjamin Hallowell* (Fig. 1.13) and her sister *Lucy Boylston, Mrs. Timothy Rogers* (Fig. 1.14). Searching through David Manning's *catalogue raisonné* of Reynolds' work, it becomes apparent that although Reynolds often composes his three-quarter portraits of sitters in a seated position, rarely are these women shown in chairs, but are more often depicted as though their bodies

merge seamlessly in the landscape of an otherwise idealized space (Fig. 1.15).[183] With the rare exception of portraits of actresses such as Kitty Fischer (Fig. 1.16), the seated women Reynolds did paint in chairs were often elderly (Fig. 1.17), which is also the case with Copley's portrait of Mary and Lucy's mother, the senior *Mrs. Thomas Boylston* (Fig. 1.18). One suspects that in these instances this was a decision based not only upon artistic dictates, but also on account of convenience.[184]

Why then, returning to the Boylston family, did Copley choose to represent two of these women, sisters (Figs. 1.13 & 1.14), as well as their mother (1.17) in chairs that so prominently occupy their canvas? While it is possible that such a decision was motivated by a desire to create visual harmony between these three portraits, their sister Rebecca Boylston's (Fig. 1.19) decision to be painted standing suggests that visual harmony alone did not motivate the very large presence of these chairs. Although both women are shown in costume that is entirely in keeping with generalized portrait dress with elements of Turquerie, Copley's portrayal of Mary and Rebecca present two very different personalities, likely the result of their own ideas as to how they wished to be portrayed. Sadly, their sister Lucy's portrait (Fig. 1.14) was painted posthumously, and it is perhaps for this reason that her portrait appears to be the most generalized. By depicting a very real, and indeed very prominent chair, Copley broke from the standard formula of representing idealized spaces. Such a departure could have only been acceptable if the resulting likeness appealed to his sitter. Therefore, this decision was likely to have been directed by Mary Boylston and her mother and was not Copley's alone, illustrating a dialogue between painter and his clients. Reynolds's chairs certainly add a touch of the real world to his portraits, but they are operating under one of two circumstances: either to draw an idealized image closer to the real world – to allow his sitter's beautiful and often mildly flirtatious expression to become even more tantalizing – *or*, to create an image of contemplation – a virtue made more tangible and desirable through this reminder of the everyday world. Mary Boylston's expression and demeanour are anything but passive or contemplative. Rather, the viewer is confronted

[183] Mannings and Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds: A Complete Catalogue of his Paintings*.
[184] Mannings. After conducting a thorough search of Reynolds portraits, I was only able to compile a short list of paintings that featured seated women in chairs. These portraits are a minority within a collection that mostly represent women as floating in space when seated. These examples include Reynolds' portraits of *Mrs. Abington* (1757-60), *Lady St. Aubyn* (1759), *Mrs. Way* (1761), and *Kitty Fisher* (1762).

with a strong and confident woman every bit as physically grounded as the chair she sits on. Balancing a bird against one's fingertips was a standard motif for representing graceful femininity at the time, but rather than representing a gentle bird of peace such as a dove, Copley has replaced both this bird and this chair with North American examples. Like the oversized bird that Mary holds, this chair, likely produced in Massachusetts, has a largeness and strength about it that borders on the masculine.[185]

Although notably not a Bostonian, similar distinctions between Copley's work and that of his English contemporaries can be found in his portrait of Margaret Kemble Gage (Fig. 1.20), the wife of General Thomas Gage noted beauty whose portrait remains the signature example of Copley's engagement with Turquerie. Gage's distinctive recumbent pose and the richness of her gem-encrusted cardamom-hued gown, make this portrait a remarkable example of Turquerie within not only Copley's *oeuvre*, but also within American art more generally. In their enthusiasm over this portrait's spectacular merits, some scholars have described this portrait as exceptional within art history more generally. Yet as Staiti and Leslie Reinhardt have rightfully demonstrated, Copley's portrait is indebted to both historic and contemporary sources for Turquerie, pointing to traditions as diverse as Guercino's *Persian Sibyl* (Fig. 1.21) and George Willison's 1771 *Portrait of Nancy Parsons* (Fig. 1.22) as possible influences on Copley's representation of Gage.[186] I wish to add to this list by drawing attention to portraits painted during the period in which Copley was working which might have also influenced Copley's portrait of Gage, including Jean-Etienne Liotard's portrait of *Maria Gunning* (Fig. 0.28), which was circulating through popular engravings (Fig. 1.2), as well as the numerous other prints after Reynolds' and Cotes' work of turbaned women supporting and framing their face with their hand (Figs. 1.23 & 1.24). Given that these printed reproductions were circulating widely during the period in which Copley was

[185] Furniture historian Gerald R. Ward states that the chairs that Mary, Lucy, and the senior Mrs. Thomas Boylston, are Chippendale chairs, which were also known as 'elbow chairs' or 'French chairs'. These chairs were extremely stylish in America, and the ones in which the Boylstons sit were likely produced in Massachusetts. This was established by Carol Troyen in a conversation with Ward, and recorded in *John Singleton Copley in America*, 224. Paul Staiti describes the bird that Mary Boylston holds as a large rock dove. This bird is significantly different from the caged birds often represented in portraits of Boylston's British contemporaries and are again testament to a different model of femininity in Boston. See *John Singleton Copley in America*, 62.

[186] Staiti, 'Character and Class'; and Reinhardt, '"The Work of Fancy and Taste"', 9.

working, it is more likely that he would have had access to prints after these popular works, rather than after a relatively obscure old master painting or a contemporary work painted the very same year that Copley painted Gage. Yet none of the engraved editions of these works include a full representation of a woman on a sofa, even when their original paintings made use of this piece of furniture. For this reason, I also wish to include Vanmour's engraving from the ninth plate of Ferriol's popular costume book of a woman lounging on a sofa (Fig. 1.14), which was interpreted for Thomas Jeffreys' costume book in a later engraving of 1757 (Fig. 1.25), and as such was probably the most familiar example circulating of this conventional Turquerie motif. It is through a comparison of these works, which Copley would have almost certainly been familiar with, that the clearest arguments in favour of Gage's portrait's exceptionality within eighteenth-century art emerge.

Given that Gage's likeness is visually different in many respects from those he painted of her Bostonian contemporaries – being one of only two sitters Copley painted in a recumbent pose – and the fact that her gown and turban are more characteristically 'Turkish' in terms of their embellishments, it is unsurprising that her portrait has been discussed within a framework more typical for Orientalist art than Copley's other Turquerie portraits. Staiti likens Gage's portrait to Willison's portrait of Nancy Parsons not only because of the similarity of its subject – a portrait of a contemporary woman adopting the guise of a Turkish lady reclining on a sofa – but also because he believes that Copley wished to represent Gage as a courtesan.[187] Unable to participate in the masquerades popular in Britain, Staiti argues that Gage was eager to embrace masquerades' 'erotically liberating possibilities' by participating in such a vogue virtually.[188] Carrie Rebora Barratt likewise reads Gage's costume as motivated by its connotations of 'pleasure, liberality, and exoticism',[189] while Leslie Reinhardt has made the somewhat surprising conclusion that women like Gage adopted Turkish or Persian dress not only for its exotic distance from contemporary European dress, but on the basis of the 'idea of the recessiveness from public view and the modesty of the oriental woman'.[190] Rather than interpreting Gage's distant gaze as one of 'dreamy sensuality'

[187] Staiti, 'Character and Class', 67.
[188] Staiti, 'Character and Class', 68.
[189] Barratt, *John Singleton Copley and Margaret Kemble Gage*, 20.
[190] Reinhardt, 14.

as Isabel Breskin and others have done, Reinhardt expostulates that 'the turban is perhaps better described as the suggestion of a veil, the sign of these feminine virtues'. She ultimately concludes 'painters like Copley created enduring images of women both perfectly beautiful and impeccably virtuous'.[191] This contradicts, however, contemporary views that the veil, as Wortley Montagu noted, enabled Turkish women to pursue their own interests in public without limitation.

Returning to the imaginary list of sources for Copley's portrait of Gage, the most striking departures between these comparative examples from Gage's portrait lies not in the style of Copley's sitter's costume, but again, as in the case of those portraits painted of Lee and the Boylstons, in that of his sitter's deportment. Guercino's *The Cumaean Sibyl with a Putto* of 1651 (Fig. 1.21) also represents a woman wearing a turban whose gaze is directed outwards to the left of the canvas, but other than these shared elements, it is difficult to find similarities connecting this Old Master painting with Copley's portrait of Gage. Similarly, although George Willison also represents a woman reclining on a sofa in Turkish dress (Fig. 1.22), Nancy Parson's forward-facing posture and direct eye contact with the viewer, combined with the arch formed by her arm make this portrait remarkably different from that produced the same year across the Atlantic in New York City of Margaret Kemble Gage. Even when comparing Copley's portrait to those painted by Reynolds and Liotard of women with their head resting on their hands, Gage's portrait is again strikingly different. The strong diagonal formed by Gage's arm combined by the clearly indicated disinterest of her forward gaze make this a portrait not about dreamy contemplation, but instead of carefully controlled poise. The rigidity of her posture framed by the bold navy surface of the ominously heavy sofa on which she sits would have forbade any suggestion of Gage surrendering to the erotic sensuality of the Turkish harem. Had Copley represented Gage on a sofa even slightly more 'Turkish', as in the case of dresses like those worn by Wortley-Montagu in Vanmour's portrait (Fig. 0.2), Nancy Parsons in Willison's portrait (Fig. 1.22) or Liotard's famous portrait of Maria Gunning (Fig. 0.28), Staiti and Barratt's argument might have greater currency. However, Gage's controlled posture and the strong message implied by another solid piece of American furniture suggests that Copley and his sitter had different motivations for rendering her in the guise of a reclining Turkish woman.

[191] Reinhardt, 14, and Breskin, 98.

The mixed scholarly assessments of this portrait overall fail to consider the sitter's agency in the creation of her portrait. As Barratt rightly asserts in her essay, 'There is every reason to believe that Mrs. Gage was responsible for her own image, with Copley's guidance, and that she would have selected a guise that was both fashionable and pertinent'.[192] In contrast to other studies, Barratt connects Gage's attraction towards this style primarily to her biography, claiming that Gage desired to pay tribute to her Greek ancestry.[193] While Barratt makes a convincing argument that this was a motivating factor for Gage's desire to be staged in Turquerie, a passing detail towards her conclusion is perhaps more telling. As Barratt states, any number of American women read Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Letters* after their publication in England and subsequent republication in America, and it is likely that women such as Gage and her Bostonian contemporaries would have owned copies of this book and possibly even saw themselves in its pages.[194] It was these popularly printed volumes of her *Letters*, as well as reproductive engravings after Reynolds' and Cotes' Turquerie portraits, which not only shaped Copley's Bostonian sitters' attraction towards this style, but also endowed this style with the associations of independent womanhood which shaped it into a popular tool for visualizing ideal femininity within this community.

III. Authoresses of Female Independence

Around the time that Copley painted Margaret Kemble Gage, he also painted the daughter of two of the wealthiest members of the merchant community in Gloucester, Judith and Winthrop Sargent. Judith Sargent married twice, but it is under her first married name of Mrs. John Stevens that her portrait is generally known, as it is believed to have been commissioned to celebrate her marriage to John Stevens in 1769 (Fig. 0.1).[195] Sargent's portrait would later hang in the west parlour of the three-story house that her father bought for her and her husband atop a hill overlooking the Gloucester

[192] Barratt, *John Singleton Copley and Margaret Kemble Gage*, 38.
[193] Barratt, *John Singleton Copley and Margaret Kemble Gage*, 34.
[194] Barratt, *John Singleton Copley and Margaret Kemble Gage*, 35.
[195] I rely heavily for information into Judith Sargent Murray's personal life on Sheila Skemp's recent biography, *First Lady of Letters*. To avoid confusion with Copley's other sitter, Elizabeth Murray, I have chosen to refer to Judith Sargent Murray by her maiden name throughout.

Harbour. This portrait of an eighteen-year-old Sargent, draped in pearlescent satin while holding a basket of roses, has been read as a symbol of the young woman's fertility and is among Copley's most seductive with the beautiful young woman's languid body and direct gaze captivating viewers of Copley's masterpiece.[196] It is perhaps for this reason that its creation has been accounted for on the basis of its sitter's desire to present an image of idealized sexuality and gentility. Sargent was eager to note that Copley was sought by even 'London's principal nobility'; an exaggerated claim based on his recent success at the Society of Artists.[197] While this certainly would have made the opportunity to sit for Copley all the more exciting, Sargent's desire to participate in what was fashionable in London may have extended beyond participating in a vogue for fashionable representation.

As a young woman, Sargent scavenged her family's library, reading whatever books of literary, historical or moral importance she could buy or borrow.[198] Two years before she sat for Copley at the age of sixteen, the young woman wrote inside a well-worn copy of *The Oeconomy of Human Life*, described in its introduction as a 'system of morality', that this was 'the best book that ever was written'.[199] Her studied interest in theology, awareness of current literary figures, and desire to access works of literary and historical interest, even when penned in other languages, are all testament to a woman whose portrait was likely shaped by her active mind. While Sargent struggled against an attitude that forbade women from considering anything other than 'fashion' and 'scandal', she also recognized the 'creative faculty' behind continually changing fashions.[200] I believe her portrait, so far away from the 'ribbons, and other gewgaws' of

[196] Although Skemp describes this portrait as commissioned to celebrate Sargent's marriage, I think it was possibly painted later for several reasons. First on account of the style of this portrait, which has a seductive darkness about it that is uncharacteristic of portraits painted up until this date, and which does not emerge in Copley's work until after his visit to New York in 1770-71. Secondly, portraits of young women were not always commissioned to celebrate a marriage but could be painted before a woman's marriage as a celebration of their impending womanhood, or later in their union for other reasons. Sargent and her husband did not move into their three-story mansion until later in the 1780s. Skemp, 98.
[197] As quoted in Skemp, 33. Sargent's comment was likely inspired by Copley's recent successes at the Society of Artists, where he exhibited a portrait of Henry Pelham entitled *Boy with a Squirrel* in 1765, and *Young Lady with a Bird and Dog* in 1767. *John Singleton Copley in America*, 39-40.
[198] Skemp, 22.
[199] Murray and Dunlop, *Judith Sargent Murray: Her First 100 Letters*, 10.
[200] Murray, 'On the Equality of the Sexes', 133.

fashionable dress, demonstrates her intervention into this sphere, and indeed, her mastery of fashion's charms in influencing perceptions of its wearer.[201] Sargent's first marriage would leave her increasingly unhappy on account of her husband's financial failures as well as her commitment to a relationship that did not allow her to follow her interest in self-improvement.[202] However, Sargent would find herself liberated from such restrictions upon her second marriage in 1788 to a minister by the name of John Murray, who is today best remembered as the founder of American Universalism.

It was as the wife of this pioneering religious leader that Sargent would go on to meet some of the most important men and women responsible for building the Young Republic, including Abigail and John Adams, as well as Martha and George Washington.[203] Yet in her own day, Sargent was as well-known as both of these women as the author of numerous poems, essays and plays.[204] At the time of the 1997 exhibition *John Singleton Copley in America*, Judith Sargent Murray's identity must have remained a mystery, with her portrait, residing in a private collection, only receiving a passing mention in a catalogue entry on Rebecca Boylston's as a comparative example of a portrait featuring a woman carrying a basket of flowers.[205] Yet this portrait and the woman it represents offer tremendous insight both into the persistence of this style within Copley *oeuvre*, as well as the ideas and thinking prominent among Massachusetts' leading women during this period.

Sargent would publish her first work, an essay entitled 'Desultory Thoughts upon the Utility of Encouraging a Degree of Self-Complacency, especially in Female Bosoms', in October 1784 in the Boston publication the *Gentleman and Lady's Town & Country Magazine* under her penname 'Constantia'. It was here that Sargent would begin her lifelong quest of arguing for women's education in the popular press, urging young women to not be content with beauty being their sole virtue by endeavouring to 'adorn your mind' with knowledge, expressing her regret that so many women grow up with

[201] Murray, 'On the Equality of the Sexes', 223.
[202] Skemp, 35.
[203] Murray and Hurd Smith, *Mingling Souls Upon Paper*, 13.
[204] Skemp, x. It is unfortunate that Murray remained a footnote in American history until the 1990s when a Unitarian-Universalist minister went on a search for her letters and personal papers. He discovered nine of her letter books and close to 2,500 personal letters in Natchez, Mississippi.
[205] *John Singleton Copley in America*, 229.

the idea that they possess 'few, or no personal attractions, and that [her] mental abilities are of an inferior kind'.[206] Sargent later revealed that the publisher of this essay did not agree with the views she expressed within it and did not invite her to submit more work.[207] Without the support of a publisher, and perhaps under the fear of public scrutiny, Sargent did not publish 'On the Equality of the Sexes' until 1790. Here Sargent argued forcefully not only for women's education and equal abilities to contribute to society, but even more radically, questioned the boundaries between the sexes:

> Yet cannot I their sentiments imbibe,
> Who this distinction to the sex ascribe,
> As if a woman's form must needs enrol,
> A weak, a servile, an inferiour soul;
> And that the guise of man must still proclaim,
> Greatness of mind, and him, to be the same:
> Yet as the hours revolve fair proofs arise,
> Which the bright wreath of growing fame supplies;
> And in past times some men have *sunk* so *low*,
> That female records nothing *less* can show.
> But imbecility is still confin'd,
> And by the lordly sex to us consign'd;
> They rob us of the power t'improve,
> And then declare we only trifles love;
> Yet haste the era, when the world shall know,
> That such distinctions only dwell below;
> The soul unfetter'd, to no sex confin'd,
> Was for the abodes of cloudless day design'd.
> Mean time we emulate their manly fires,
> Through erudition all their thoughts inspires,
> Yet nature with *equality* imparts
> And *noble passions*, swell e'en *female hearts*.[208]

Sargent goes on to state that if women are 'deficient in reason', it is because of a want of 'opportunity of acquiring knowledge', rather than an imperfection based on nature.[209] In support of this claim, she mentions that 'as many females, as males' have 'merited the crown of applause; who *thus unassisted* have seized the wreath of fame'.[210] Sargent

[206] Murray, 'Desultory Thoughts upon the Utility of Encouraging a Degree of Self-Complacency, especially in Female Bosoms'.
[207] Skemp.
[208] 'On the Equality of the Sexes', 132.
[209] 'On the Equality of the Sexes', 133.
[210] 'On the Equality of the Sexes', 134.

does not elaborate on this point in this poem, but she continues upon this subject in her three-part essay 'Observations on Female Abilities' in her 1798 compilation of essays and plays in *The Gleaner*, where she gives examples of women throughout history who show evidence that women are:

> *First*, Alike capable of enduring hardships.
> *Secondly*, Equally ingenious, and fruitful in resources.
> *Thirdly*, Their fortitude and heroism cannot be surpassed.
> *Fourthly*, They are equally brave.
> *Fifthly*, They are as patriotic.
> *Sixthly*, As influential.
> *Seventhly,* As energetic, and as eloquent.
> *Eighthly*, As faithful, and as persevering in their attachments.
> *Ninthly*, As capable of supporting, with honour, the toils of government.
> *Tenthly*, and *Lastly*, They are equally susceptible of every literary acquirement.[211]

Sargent's beliefs regarding female equality were clearly shaped by the ideas and events of the American Revolution, where she witnessed 'young women forming a new era in female history'. In her validation of women's equality on account of their bravery, Sargent reminds her readers that,

> Women, in the heat of action, have mounted the rampart with undaunted courage, arrested the progress of the foe, and bravely rescued their besieged dwellings! They have successfully opposed themselves to tyranny and the galling yoke of oppression! Assembling in crowds, they have armed themselves for the combat – they have mingled amid the battling ranks – they have fought heroically – and their well-timed and well-concerted measures have emancipated their country![212]

Sargent's rhetoric of women's equality was not only concerned with secular notions of independence through action but was also strongly shaped by her religious predilections.[213] Through her religious beliefs, which emphasized the cultivation of the soul, physical differences of sex were considered irrelevant because they were defined

[211] Murray and Adams, *The gleaner*, 198.
[212] Murray and Adams, *The gleaner*, 192.
[213] Skemp, 7.

according to the physical, rather than spiritual self. Sargent continually calls into question the importance of one's physical self in determining self-worth – first, through her admonition against prizing women for their beauty, and again in her assertion that the frailty of the human body does not reflect the power of the mind within. Sargent supports this claim in 'On the Equality of the Sexes' through Alexander Pope's example: '… I fancy that Mr. Pope, though clogged with an enervated body, and distinguished by stature, could nevertheless lay claim to a greatness of soul…'.[214]

Sargent's familiarity with the literary world indicates another source influencing her perception regarding female equality. Both the examples provided by way of the example of independent women whose stories were told in the books that she read, as well as those whose literary genius reflected a greatness of mind and soul also shaped her understanding of female abilities. Sargent continually emphasized the importance of reading to furthering education, and she, significantly, stressed the importance of reading works on a variety of subjects, rather than solely focusing on those of theological import. Rather, her summary of world history, equal in its comprehension to those recounted by her male peers, reveals that she read works relating to the sciences, religion, and history, as well as important literary works both past and present. Among these works almost certainly included the writings of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. It is difficult to establish with precise certainty whether Sargent was referring to Lady Mary or Elizabeth Montagu, when she lists 'Chudleigh, Winchelsea, Monk, Bovey, Stella and Montague' as important literary figures.[215] However, it is likely that it is to Lady Mary that Sargent refers. Elizabeth Montagu did not publish much within Sargent's lifetime, and Sargent not only mentions Pope, who obsessively wrote about Wortley Montagu, but she also includes Mary Astell among her list of great female writers, who wrote the introduction to Wortley Montagu's *Letters*.[216]

Sargent is recorded as having begun to make significant use of her family's library in 1765, two years after the publication of the first edition of Wortley Montagu's *Letters* in 1763. Sargent's view of her own abilities owed a tremendous influence to her aunt who

[214] 'On the Equality of the Sexes', 135.
[215] 'Observations on Female Abilities', 217.
[216] 'Observations on Female Abilities', 216.

she recorded gave her a 'zest for *mental* pleasures'.[217] Her aunt was a woman who knew her mind, breaking with conventional modes for representing women when she sat for Copley in her riding habit in 1764 (Fig. 1.26). This portrait remains a distinctive anomaly within Copley's *oeuvre*, and for this reason, it is likely that this new costume was Catherine's idea and not Copley's. This becomes all the more convincing when faced with the fact that Catherine's sister-in-law, Sarah Sargent, who was painted in the same year, and is represented in a much more customary historicizing costume equipped with a shepherdess hat (Fig. 1.27). That Sargent maintained a closer relationship to Catherine than Sarah, even when her other aunt was also related to her first husband through marriage, is telling.[218] This indicates that a longstanding relationship between these women likely existed before her marriage, and that Sargent was surrounded by a woman with strong beliefs regarding women's abilities and female education from a very early date. Could this woman have purchased a copy of Wortley Montagu's *Letters*, and shared it with the young Sargent?

It is impossible to know for certain if, or how, Sargent read Wortley Montagu's *Letters*. However, given that her words regarding women whose literary merits she described as worthy of 'the wreath of fame' echo those of Mary Astell in her introduction to Wortley Montagu's *Letters*, it is difficult to imagine that she would not have been familiar with a text that urged readers to 'offer her [Wortley Montagu] the palm which is so justly her due; and if we pretend to any laurels, lay them willingly at her feet.[219] The editor of Montagu's *Letters* also goes on to suggest that Wortley Montagu's words are not only a testament to her abilities, 'with and solidity of [her] judgment, the extent of her knowledge, the elegance of her taste, and the excellence of her *real* character', but that Wortley Montagu's example provided 'an ornament and model' to 'women of fashion' who read for improvement.[220] Sargent was certainly included among this readership, and we can imagine that as a woman whose work bridged the gap between genteel and

[217] Skemp, 20.
[218] Multiple members of Sargent's family were painted by Copley, and their portraits as well as their family trees are represented in Prown, 190-91.
[219] Sargent, 'On the Equality of the Sexes', 134. Mary Astell's essay on Wortley Montagu was written in 1724 after Wortley Montagu allowed her to read her letters and appears as a 'Preface by a Lady' in numerous editions of Wortley Montagu's *Letters*.
[220] The editor of Wortley Montagu's *Letters* wrote an essay entitled 'Advertisement of the Editor,' which appeared alongside Astell's essay in most editions of her work until the twentieth century.

professional writing, Wortley Montagu provided a particularly significant model justifying her own literary ambitions. At least two editions of Wortley Montagu's *Letters* also included a frontispiece portrait of her titled 'Lady M-y W-r-t-l-y M-nt-g-e, The Female Traveller, *In the Turkish Dress*' (Fig. 1.28), and inscribed beneath this portrait are words that draw attention to Wortley Montagu's accomplishment as a female writer; words that would have appealed greatly to Sargent in justification of her own literary pursuits, and which find their echo in Sargent's own writing:[221]

> Let Men who glory in their better sense,
> Read, hear, and learn Humility from hence;
> No more let them Superior Wisdom boast,
> They can, but equal M-nt-g-e at most.

Wortley Montagu's *Letters* were incredibly popular and were reprinted numerous times while Copley was painting in Boston. While not every woman would have read Wortley Montagu's *Letters* directly, or even shared her rather liberal ideas regarding the freedom exhibited by the women she encountered there, many women, especially well-read and progressive women such as Sargent, would have at least been familiar with the ideas expressed in these *Letters* and this would have been embedded in their subconscious interpretation of Turkish dress. Regardless of whether or not every woman shared Sargent's opinion regarding women's equality, it is likely that this style gained currency because independent women like her were at the helm of fashionable society in Boston and Gloucester. For, although Sargent did not publish her 'On the Equality on the Sexes' until 1790, she states that this manuscript was in circulation among friends and family shortly after it was written in 1779.[222] Writing and reading were not solitary pursuits during this period, but were activities that encouraged the debate and discussion of new thoughts, ideas and stories among one's friends and family.[223] It was in her west

[221] This frontispiece appeared in at least two editions of Wortley Montagu's *Letters*, including the two-volume edition printed in London by A. Homer and P. Milton in 1764, and the single volume edition printed in London by S. Payne, A. Cook, and H. Hill in 1767. The portrait that accompanies the frontispiece to Montagu's *Letters* does not appear to be based off of any known portraits of Wortley Montagu, but instead owes significant debt to the fourth plate of Ferriol's costume book, 'Habit of a Sultaness, of Empress of the Turks'. Wortley Montagu's pose is virtually identical to that in this print, albeit in reverse, and her costume, aside from the further embellishment of additional jewellery, such as a Christian cross, is identical to that represented in Ferriol's book.
[222] Sargent, 'On the Equality of the Sexes', 132.
[223] Skemp, 22-3.

parlour where Sargent would invite guests for tea using her matching tea service that she might have first shared her poems and essays.[224] It was also here that she would have discussed what she was reading with her friends and family, forming a collective interpretation of what they read. All the while, Sargent's portrait by Copley would have been a silent participant in the conversation at hand, whose prime location highlighted both Sargent's gentility, and, possibly, her burgeoning interest in female independence espoused by a woman such as Wortley Montagu.

Wortley Montagu's *Letters* would have also likely appealed to Sargent and other women who shared her desire to explore the world around them. Writing from Gloucester, Sargent confessed that 'I regret the shackles of my sex, which chain me to this remote spot—it would be my choice to traverse every part of the inhabitable globe'.[225] As members of Massachusetts' merchant community, women watched their husbands, brothers and fathers go away for months on end, returning with stories about the exotic places and new people that they had met during their time away.[226] Although she and other women in her community could not join their male relatives on these journeys, reading allowed them to travel to distant places, at least mentally.[227] It is likely that Wortley Montagu's *Letters*, which describe her experience as a female traveller, would have appealed to the interests of the American women left at home as the men in their circle undertook similar lengthy trips. For this reason, her letters might have resonated with American women on an even more personal level than their British peers. For, although they lacked the adventure that travel overseas brought their male merchant relatives, they were forced to acquire a level of self-reliance unrequired of many women of their time out of necessity as their husbands were away for months on end. While their husbands were away, women assumed responsibility for their husband's business, and in the process of managing both their family's and their husband's affairs were encouraged to rely on a network of relatives and friends to ward off loneliness and support them during difficult times.[228] It was through this same network that information which included ideas regarding fashionable taste in portraiture

[224] Skemp, 98.
[225] As quoted in Skemp, 27.
[226] Skemp, 17.
[227] Skemp, 26.
[228] Skemp, 18.

and dress circulated. I now wish to examine the complex web of relationships that bound Copley's sitters together, for such a study reveals that the spread of Turquerie in portraiture was not the result of a single individual's interest, but rather of the collaboration of a network of men and women that crossed familial, professional, religious, and political boundaries.

IV. Networks of Dissemination

Copley created his first portrait of a woman in fashionable Turquerie dress in 1763 in a pastel portrait of *Elizabeth Byles, Mrs. Gawen Brown* (Fig. 1.29). This portrait was produced after a print by Thomas Frye (Fig. 1.30) in 1761 as part of the second in a two part series of mezzotint heads, entitled *Ladies, Very Elegantly Attired in the Fashion, and in the Most Agreeable Attitudes*.[229] The print Copley selected was possibly based after a portrait Frye painted of Maria, Countess of Coventry, however, although these prints were probably drawn from real life, they were issued without titles and were instead presented not as portraits but as a series of 'fanciful heads' arranged in diverse poses. One can imagine that prints such as these would make for excellent study material for an artist, who following the prominent portraitist Joseph Blackburn's departure from Boston, was in search of the most fashionable trends in portraiture.[230] It is also, perhaps, for this reason that Copley wrote to the eminent Swiss pastellist on September 30, 1762, requesting a pastel set of 'the very best that can be bought'.[231] Although less expensive than oils, portraits taken in pastel were fashionable, particularly among women, and they were often purchased by some of Copley's wealthiest clients.[232] With Blackburn's departure, Copley gained access to a new market

[229] Thomas Frye was a skilled portraitist working in many media, including pastel, and it is likely that these portraits were based off of pastels. Whether this engraving was based upon a portrait taken from life is difficult to know because Maria Gunning had died in 1760, with Frye dying in 1762.

[230] Joseph Blackburn did not leave for London until 1763, but was away from Boston painting in Portsmouth, New Hampshire from 1760-61. Prown, 26.

[231] Copley placed orders with artists and dealers abroad and in 1762 he wrote to Liotard asking for a set of pastels, emphasizing that he wanted the highest quality available. Copley, letter to Jean-Etienne Liotard, Sept. 30, 1762, first recorded in Jones, ed., *Letters and Papers of John Singleton Copley and Henry Pelham, 1739-1776,* 26.

[232] Copley's first experiment in pastel appears to have been in 1758, in a portrait of Hugh Hall (1693-1773), a Bostonian merchant and chief justice. He does not seem to take this medium up with any seriousness until the period of 1763-64, when he produced a number of pastels

for commission that included some of Boston society's most elite. All of this might indicate a reasonable hypothesis centring around Copley as the primary instigator of the Turquerie style of dress prominent in his work: In search for the most fashionable trends in European portraiture, Copley imported prints such as that produced by Frye and developed a successful formula for representing Bostonians that appealed to his sitters' desire of cosmopolitanism. Yet, as discussed earlier in this chapter, Copley's Turquerie portraits took on a radically different appearance from London examples of the style, which was shaped in no small part by Copley's sitters.

Elizabeth Byles' father was among Copley's most educated sitters, and in addition to being the minister of the Hollis Street Church and being a graduate of Harvard University, Mather Byles was also a poet, and he corresponded in his youth with Isaac Watts, the English hymnodist, as well as the famous English poet, Alexander Pope.[233] With this in mind, we can imagine that Elizabeth's father would have also been familiar with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, given Alexander Pope's published attacks on her and her own reputation as a published poet. It is possible that Elizabeth Byles came to know and admire a figure such as Wortley Montagu through her father's tutelage. Another fact complicates this supposition, however. Elizabeth died at the young age of twenty-six on June 6, 1763, the same year in which this portrait was executed. It is possible that this, and the other portrait of her in oil on canvas wearing a riding hood, were both executed posthumously.

While Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *Letters* would not have likely made it to America at this point, their popularity would have certainly been known by well-connected persons with literary interests such as Elizabeth's father Mather Byles. One can speculate that it was perhaps for this reason that artist, patron, and possibly sitter, decided that Thomas Frye's print would make for an appropriate source for Elizabeth Byles' portrait. Copley's interpretation of Frye's engraving is not a slavish copy after its

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including a portrait of Elizabeth Pitts (1764), and a pair of pastel portraits of Mr. and Mrs. John Powell II (1762-64). Despite being less expensive than oils, pastels were an enormously fashionable medium. By the later 1760s he was commissioned to create pastels of several members of the Brattle Square Congregational Church and King's Anglican Church, two of the most fashionable churches in Boston. It is possible also that Copley recognized that some people would be eager to purchase a pastel portrait that was less costly, rather than commit to the more significant investment of an oil painting.

[233] Information on Mather Byles can be found in Gates, *The Trials of Phillis Wheatley*, 10.

original, however. While Frye's engravings are notable for the fine detail of their opulent jewellery and accessories, Copley has not only removed any suggestion of 1760s fashions in the way of lacy, beaded Rococo accessories, but has reduced ornamental details to the presence of a single strand of pearls running through Elizabeth's hair and an elegant three-strand pearl necklace. The ermine trim of her robe combined with the classicizing simplicity of her portrait's composition are more reminiscent of Reynolds and Cotes than Thomas Frye's study of fashionable accessories. Copley has used this source to its advantage, as both a compositional model and template for his sitter's costume, and the resulting portrait already demonstrates Copley's aptitude for creating an image of understated elegance that would characterize much of his later work.

Copley produced several portraits after prints during this crucial moment for developing his career, including the most notorious of these examples, *Mary Sherburne, Mrs. Jerathmael Bowers* (Fig.1.9), which was a direct copy after Reynolds' portrait of *Caroline Spencer, Duchess of Marlborough* (Figs. 1.7).[234] Copley's studio included an anteroom, where he would show his sitters a portfolio of prints as inspiration for his sitter's own portrait. His sitter must have been particularly delighted with McArdell's print (Fig. 12), because they decided to replicate the portrait in its entirety. It is likely that because Mrs. Bowers got married in 1763 and Copley produced several portraits after prints in this year that this portrait has been tentatively attributed to this date. However, Prown draws into question both the attribution of this portrait's sitter and its estimated date, claiming the sitter appears to be too old to be Mary Sherburne who

[234] Included among these portraits produced after prints is another example of a portrait painted in Turquerie of the young *Elizabeth Ross, later Mrs. William Tyng*, c. 1766-67. Ross was the daughter of Captain Alexander and Elizabeth Duguild Ross of Falmouth, Maine. However, we know that she was in Boston during the later 1760s when she attended a sewing school and learned how to embroider the Ross family's coat of arms, which is now in the collection of Historic Deerfield. This sewing school, first under the direction of Janette Day, and later by the Misses Cummings after 1768, was financially supported by Elizabeth Murray. It is likely that during this trip to Boston, which was meant to fashion the young woman into a lady, that Ross sat for her portrait painted by Copley. The resulting portrait of a young Ross in a voluminous ermine-trimmed overmantle, was directly inspired by Reynolds' portrait of 'Ladies Amabel and Mary Jemima Yorke' of 1760, currently in the Cleveland Museum of Art, which circulated both in printed form through an engraving by Edward Fisher, as well as a single-figure representation of Amabel Yorke as 'Miss Watson'. Thus, even though Ross was living outside of Boston, as an elite New Englander she too was exposed to the ideas and thinking prevalent in this important city, and this would have played a vital role as part of her self-fashioning.

would have been twenty-eight in 1763. For this reason, he argues that this is more likely to have been a portrait of Joseph Sherburne's third wife, Mary Plaisted, who would have been forty-two in 1763. Prown also suggests, furthermore, that this portrait appears more to be in Copley's later style rather than that of the early 1760s.[235] I agree with Prown that this portrait appears to be in Copley's more mature style, however, I think one reason for this might be because this was one of, if not the very first, portrait Copley painted in oils on canvas in the Turquerie style.[236]

A number of Copley's portraits from the later 1760s, including that of the sitter's relative *Sarah Sherburne, Mrs. Woodbury Langdon* (Fig. 1.31), incorporate details that are clearly informed by this print (Fig. 1.10). Sarah Sherburne married Woodbury Langdon in Portsmouth, New Hampshire in 1767, the year her portrait is believed to have been painted. However, Sarah was born in Boston and in her youth attended Brattle Square Congregational Church alongside her uncle, Joseph Sherburne, who was painted by Copley sometime around this date in a loose informal Turkish-style robe (Fig. 1.32), as well as his daughter, Mary Sherburne and third wife, Mary Plaisted.[237] Sarah's form-fitting low-cut bodice, trimmed in gold braid and the loose, billowing sleeves of her over mantle are remarkably similar to those worn by the sitter of the earlier portrait based on Reynolds' print. For this reason, it is likely that Copley first painted the portrait based after Reynolds' print before embarking on Sarah Sherburne's more innovative portrait.[238] Regardless of whether this is a portrait of Joseph

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[235] Prown, 60.

[236] Up until this point, Copley had only produced portraits in pastel of women dressed in Turquerie attire. Included among these are *Mary Oxnard, Mrs. Edward Watts* of 1765 and Elizabeth Pitts' portrait of 1764 of the Detroit Institute of Art. Although Elizabeth Pitts' portrait is commonly attributed to 1764, possibly on account of its pastel medium and the fact that Copley's signature Turquerie pastel of *Elizabeth Byles, Mrs. Gawen Brown* was created just one year before, I believe Elizabeth Pitts' portrait was actually created later. The majority of Copley's pastel portraits date to the later 1760s, and Elizabeth Pitts would have known many of these sitters as a number of them attended Brattle Square Congregational Church alongside her. Furthermore, Pitts' first cousin, Elizabeth Bowdoin, sat for a pastel portrait now in the collection of Vareika Gallery in Newport, Rhode Island of a remarkably similar character in 1767 in celebration of her marriage to John Temple. The fur trim of both of these women's robes, pearl necklaces, and gathering of fabric at their bust situate Elizabeth Pitts' portrait more naturally among those produced by Copley in the later 1760s, than that which he produced in 1763 of *Elizabeth Byles, Mrs. Gawen Brown*.

[237] For the Sherburne's family tree see Prown, 196-7.

[238] Even if this is a portrait of *Mary Sherburne, Mrs. Jerathmael Bowers*, there is no reason to believe this portrait was painted in 1763 simply because the sitter got married in this year.

Sherburne's wife or daughter, we know that this woman belonged to one of Boston's wealthiest families and was well-connected by her attendance at a church that included some of the most influential women of her community.[239]

Shortly before painting Sarah Sherburne, Copley received an enormous commission to paint six members of the Boylston family, including the sisters Mary (Fig. 1.13), and Rebecca (Fig. 1.19), whose portraits are discussed above. This series of portraits exceeds the originality of his earlier examples in Turquerie. The luxuriance of the velvet and lace used in Rebecca's portrait, combined with the unusual vibrancy of colour of Mary's gown, suggest a confidence on behalf of his sitters that warranted such individualized likenesses. It was perhaps on account of her relationship through her marriage to Rebecca and Mary's sister's son, Isaac Smith, that *Elizabeth Storer* (Fig. 1.33) sat for a portrait in style and composition remarkably similar to that of Mary Boylston.[240] The arresting rust of Elizabeth Storer's over mantle, trimmed in iridescent satin matching the cobalt blue of her gown are as striking as that worn by Mary Boylston, while the Chippendale chair that she sits in is virtually identical to those featured in other portraits of the Boylston family. Storer moved in the same social circle as her aunts through marriage, not only because of their shared family connection, but also because they were relatively close in age and members of the same fashionable community at Brattle Square Congregational Church. It is possible that the portraits Storer and her husband commissioned for their house on King Street were meant to demonstrate these alliances. Although I have so far focused on charting women's relationships with one another as crucial to the dissemination of Turquerie, this process was also indebted to their male relatives and their friends and colleagues, who both worked within and contributed to this network of taste.

The Boylston sisters' portraits were paid for by Nicholas Boylston, who was painted alongside them in a fashionable eastern-important dressing gown and turban in 1767, and together they were displayed at his grand house on School Street known as 'Mansion House' (Fig. 1.34). Unlike the costumes worn by his sisters, however,

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Countless examples exist of portraits painted within a year or two of a sitter's marriage, rather than immediately preceding it.

[239] Copley's sitter's congregational affiliations are delineated in Prown, 123-5.

[240] The Boylston and Storer family trees are mapped in Prown, 142-3, 182-3, & 192-3.

Boylston's attire was part of contemporary male dress, and it was generally worn in informal settings. To sit for one's portrait in such attire indicates a confidence and familiarity between sitter and viewer by allowing the sitter to be seen in a costume ordinarily worn at home in their private study – but such a choice in costume would have also signalled its wearer to be both refined and learned. Several other men were painted by Copley in similar eastern style robes, and some of these men were in fact responsible for trading in eastern imports, including Joseph Sherburne (Fig. 1.32), who was active in the East India Company trade.[241] Yet even men who were not directly involved in the East India Company would have viewed themselves and their families as part of this cosmopolitan network of trade, for nearly every man painted by Copley was engaged in some sort of mercantile pursuit, including Nicholas Boylston, who formed a mercantile firm by the name of 'Green and Boylston' alongside Joseph Green.[242] Both Joseph Green (Fig. 1.35) and his wife Elizabeth Cross (Fig. 1.36) were portrayed by Copley in Turkish-style costume in a set of pastel portraits in 1767, the same year in which Nicholas Boylston sat to Copley.

Although described by Prown as a 'distiller' Joseph Green was an incredibly dynamic man, who both sourced the sugar for the rum he produced in Boston directly from the West Indies, while also serving as an ordained minister.[243] Remarkable even further still, Green was a noted poet and satirist, and he attended Harvard alongside his long-standing friend and fellow poet Mather Byles. As a poet and a friend to a known correspondent of Alexander Pope, Green was a well-read individual, and he was likely familiar with Wortley Montagu's *Letters* which would have been circulating freely by the time Green and his wife sat to Copley in 1767. It was perhaps on account of Turquerie's association with Wortley Montagu that Green decided to don a foppishly artistic turban, of the same hue as that worn by his wife. Always the comedian, Green's smirk and his wife's comically pursed lips almost appear to parody this fashionable mode. This does not necessarily suggest that Green did not recognize Wortley Montagu's talent as a writer, or the importance of what her identity symbolized, for Green wrote parodies of nearly every text written by his close friend Mather Byles – a man who he no doubt respected. Indeed, these portraits suggest quite the opposite – by

[241] Barratt, 'Faces of a New Nation'.
[242] *John Singleton Copley in America*, 224-9.
[243] For more on Green see Gates, 10-12, and Ketterell, *Specimens of American poetry*.

parodying this style, Green might well have been expressing his familiarity and admiration for Wortley Montagu's work.[244] Like Judith Sargent Murray, Green certainly discussed what he was reading with his friend Mather Byles, but it is also likely that he shared his interests with Nicholas Boylston, whose portrait was not only commissioned the very same year, but who also commissioned a copy of this portrait of himself that was likely intended as a gift for his esteemed colleague (Fig. 1.37).[245]

Also included among Green and Boylston's colleagues was John Stevens, who was serving as their trading agent in Bermuda from as early as 1759.[246] John Stevens would go on to marry Judith Sargent in 1769 (Fig. 0.1), and it is possible that through her marriage to Stevens, Sargent would have known her husband's employer's sisters, Rebecca and Mary Boylston. Thus, even situated on the North Shore in Gloucester, Sargent was in a social position that would have familiarized her with the thoughts and ideas of elite members of Boston. It was perhaps on account of her husband that Sargent was painted upon her marriage to him draped in a pearlescent silk gown, holding flowers in a basket whose similarity to those in Rebecca Boylston's has already been noted.[247] Could Sargent have visited Nicholas Boylston's home, surrounded by the Boylston's sister's enchanting likenesses? Or could her husband have expressed

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[244] This becomes all the more compelling when we know that Green was among those who attested to the veracity of Phyllis Wheatley's authorship of *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, for this demonstrates that Green was someone who valued and respected the work of women writers. Gates, 10.

[245] I believe this second portrait of Nicholas Boylston was intended as gift for his business partner Joseph Green, as this portrait was in the possession of Joseph Green at some point during the 1770s before it descended through the Boylston family. I think it is likely that Boylston gave this portrait as a gift to Green, and Green was forced to leave it behind when he fled Boston in 1778 on account of the Massachusetts Banishment Act. The portrait's provenance is recounted on the Museum of Fine Arts Boston's website at Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 'Nicholas Boylston,' Accessed 11 September 2014, on http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/nicholas-boylston-32060.

[246] As evidenced by a letter sent from Joseph Green from Boston to Mr. John Stevens and Mr. John Phillips, Jr. on 10 of February 1759. Accessed on an antiquarian bookseller's website at Richard Ford Books, Ephemera and Manuscripts, 'Autograph Letter Signed ('Josh: Green, Junr:') from the Boston poet Joseph Green, giving instructions regarding an 'Adventure' to his agents in Bermuda 'Mr. John Stevens & Mr. John Phillips Junr.', Accessed on 11 September 2014 on http://www.richardfordmanuscripts.co.uk/catalogue/11273. Although it is impossible to know from this letter whether the John Stevens in question was Judith Sargent's husband, John Stevens was ten years Judith's senior, and thus would have had a career by 1759. He is also described in Skemp's biography of Judith as a West Indies trader, who later moved to Bermuda to escape persecution for his debts. Skemp, 159.

[247] *John Singleton Copley in America*, 229.

admiration for Rebecca Boylston's portrait, and this piece of news was taken to Copley's studio?

It is unlikely that each of Copley's sitters possessed strongly held views on what the costume they wore in their portraits signified, however, what is clear is that such decisions were not driven by a single individual's interest but were instead directed by an entire community that determined Turquerie to be an acceptable mode for representing its needs and interests. This community not only extended beyond geographic boundaries – in sometimes surprising ways – but was also not confined to members of a particular religious or political background.[248]Although both Mather Byles and Joseph Green were Tories and Congregationalists, Green's friend and business partner was a Whig whose family, among whose members included John Adams, would go on to play a leading role in the Young Republic. As tensions ran high leading up to the outbreak of the American Revolution this community of taste disintegrated, with many of its members loyal to the crown, including Joseph Green, returning to England. Copley would have to search harder and further afield for commissions, and he painted very few Bostonians after 1770 before his own departure from Boston in 1774. During the 1760s, however, this was a community whose allegiances were not built upon religious or political distinctions, but instead on the basis of their shared identity as a community whose wealth was built by trade.[249] Turquerie undoubtedly resonated with Copley's male and female sitters on account of its cosmopolitan allure, signalling their participation in this international community of

[248] Of a sample of fifteen of Copley's sitters painted in *Turquerie* with known denominational affiliation, ten out of fifteen of these women or 66.67% attended Congregational churches, while only five or 33.3% of them were members of Anglican churches. This is perfectly consistent with the data Prown collected in respect to Copley's entire *oeuvre*, with 67% attending Congregational churches, 31% attending Anglican, and the remaining 2% members of other denominations such as the Presbyterian, Quaker, and Baptist churches. Prown, 123-5. Similarly, a look at a group of fifteen women painted in *Turquerie* whose husbands' political affiliations are in keeping with Prown's data, with 52.8% of these women's husband's identifying with the Tory Party, and 47.2% the Whig Party. The majority of those identifying as Whig are listed by Prown as moderate Whigs (40%), however, while the majority of sitters who identified as members of the Tory were of a High Tory bent (40%). These statistics are only a slight departure from the 55% Tory versus 45% Whig that Prown delineates for Copley's sitters as a whole. Prown, 125-6.

[249] The vast majority of Copley's female sitters represented in Turquerie dress were either married to a merchant, the daughters of a merchant, or related to a brother or grandparent who was a merchant, thus the importance of global trade to their family's livelihood would have never been far from their perceptions of self and family.

taste. However, this style's success was also shaped by this community's interest in being represented as a people whose enterprising spirits encouraged new business ventures that often included foreign travel, and whose tenacity allowed them to persevere in a New World that was at times as unpredictable and full of hardship as the places Wortley Montagu encountered in her travels.

V. Conclusion

Throughout her travels from places as disparate as Vienna and Adrianople, Wortley Montagu wrote back to her friends and her sister Lady Mar about the incredible variety of fashions that she witnessed on her journey. She described the dresses of the women in Vienna as so 'monstrous and contrary to all common sense and reason' that it was impossible for her sister to imagine them.[250] More disturbed still by what she saw, Wortley Montagu wrote again to Lady Mar of the women in Prague:

> They are after the fashions there [Vienna], as people at Exeter imitate those of London; that is, their imitation is more excessive than the original and 'tis not easy to describe what extraordinary figures they make. The person is so much lost between headdress and petticoat, they have as much occasion to write upon their backs 'this is a woman' [f]or the information of travellers, as ever signpost painter had to write 'this is a bear'.[251]

Wortley Montagu had more favourable things to say of the women in Hanover a month later when writing to Lady Rich:

> All the women here have (literally) rosy cheeks, snowy foreheads and bosoms, jet eyebrows and scarlet lips, to which they generally add coal-black hair. These perfections never leave them, till the hour of their

[250] Letter IX to Lady Mar, Vienna, 14 September 1716 in Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, *Turkish Embassy Letters*, 17-20.
[251] Letter XIV to Lady Mar, Prague, 17 November 1716 in *Turkish Embassy Letters*, 30-1.

> death, and have a very fine effect by candlelight; but I could wish they were handsome with a little more variety.[252]

What all of these descriptions have in common – whether positive or negative in their evaluation – is Wortley Montagu's assessment that fashions were specifically controlled in each of these instances according to regional standards. Also common throughout her description of her encounter with women from the courts of Prague to Hanover is an expressed inability to understand both the significance or appeal of such fashions, as well as to distinguish any differences among its wearers. This is because fashionable dress, even in the cosmopolitan environment of these early eighteenth-century courts, was ultimately accountable to influences specific to the society in which it is worn. The subtle difference of a cut of a sleeve, the colour of one's shoes, or the amount of jewellery a man or woman would wear are all part of a complex code for deciphering identity.

Fashion is a valuable clue into issues of politics, religion, and gender, as well as cultural and national identity, but unfortunately the passage of time has made it difficult to study fashion through extant garments alone. Although fashions in portraiture were often based off of imaginary or generalized costumes specific to art-making and not worn in the everyday world, costumes painted on canvas were in many ways susceptible to the same cultural forces and attitudes responsible for governing wearable fashions. Furthermore, the process whereby portraits were painted, and the network in place responsible for the circulation and popularization of fashionable styles in portraiture was in many respects similar to that responsible for disseminating ideas and information regarding fashion, as well as actual garments and accessories. As this case study of Copley's Turquerie portraits has sought to demonstrate, the popularization of a particular style of dress in portraiture and its appearance was the result of a complex process whereby information and ideas travelled through printed texts and images, to be utilized and interpreted by both artist and sitter. It is only by unravelling this process of dissemination that we can begin to understand and account for this style and its meaning within the specific environment in which it was produced.

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[252] Letter XVIII to Lady Rich, Hanover, 1 December 1716 in *Turkish Embassy Letters*, 36-8.

I return here to the portrait which opened this chapter, of the shopkeeper Elizabeth Murray (Fig. 1.1). Murray's portrait might at first glance appear to be in keeping with the countless examples of classicizing Turkish dress in English portraits. Her portrait could even be written off as a woman who wished to emulate her superiors by engaging with this cosmopolitan style. Murray's role in the creation of this portrait might even be diminished to the point of not existing at all, surrendering all control as she entered the studio of an artist who selected this style as an attempt to compete with the artistic establishment across the Atlantic. Yet an understanding of Murray's identity, who her biographer Patricia Cleary describes as an 'extraordinary, ordinary woman', makes all of these suppositions unlikely. Murray undertook multiple ocean crossings in her lifetime, leaving her home in the Scottish borderlands and exploring distant parts of the British Empire with her brother.[253] Like many Scottish women who were also shopkeepers in Edinburgh, Murray began her own business that carried imported goods from London.[254] However, unlike her contemporaries in Britain, Murray did so in a culture different from that which she grew up in, and in an environment that required even more assertiveness for a business' survival, which may have prompted her to take more direct control over the selection and importation of merchandise as she travelled to London to acquire goods for her store. Murray may have also felt the pressure of the established gender roles of her time, for as an orphan she was considered accountable to her older brother, who brought her to live in North Carolina in her youth against her own interests where she served as his housekeeper.[255] Yet Murray pushed against acceptable notions of feminine behaviour throughout her life. By middle age she had acquired a fortune that far exceeded that of her brothers. Rather than deferring to her eldest brother, as she had in asking for his approval to settle in Boston and become a shopkeeper, Murray ended her life as the respected head of her family.[256]

Although Murray did not have children of her own, she maintained a close relationship with her niece Dolly, playing an influential role in her upbringing especially after her father came to depend upon his sister for financial support.[257] Murray became a mentor

[253] Cleary, 2.
[254] Cleary, 42.
[255] Cleary, 8.
[256] Cleary, 64.
[257] Cleary, 53.

for her young niece, bringing Dolly with her on her visits to shops that her friends owned long after she had personally retired from retail upon her marriage. It was here that her niece learned not only an appreciation for fashionable goods, but also for feminine conversation, with such spaces serving as the functional equivalents of coffeehouses and taverns for male sociability.[258] Upon the death of her husband, Murray prepared to leave the grand house they had shared together for London.[259] With the political situation in the city growing increasingly tense, Murray and her friends were unsure of when her return to the United States would be.[260] The portrait that she sat for by Copley shortly before her departure, like those he painted of Lee and Gage, was a tribute to her identity as a person of taste through her engagement with the cosmopolitan fashion for Turquerie. However, rather than intended for a public audience, this portrait may have been designed for a very special viewer: the niece who she so cherished.[261] By presenting her niece with an image of herself as a confident woman, her cornucopia suggesting her wealth and generosity – Murray may have intended this portrait of herself to serve as a final lesson in her niece's education. With its powerful metaphoric potential to signal female independence, Murray's adoption of Turquerie may have contained a visual message to her niece that no one – not even her father – should restrict her ambitions, as Murray had decided for herself many years ago when she abandoned her role as his housekeeper, and embarked on a highly successful business plan that would help to make her one of the wealthiest women in America.

Murray was certainly one of the most enterprising and dynamic women in her community, but her attitudes towards life and her perception of her role within society were not altogether unique among women in Boston. Indeed, Murray often emphasized her Bostonian identity and described herself as an outsider while in Britain. Upon arriving in London, Murray recognized that she was unprepared to be seen by society on account of her wardrobe and chose to stay indoors until her new outfits were ready. Murray submitted to London fashions, making major adjustments to her attire in order to appear presentable. However, even as a storekeeper responsible for importing

[258] Cleary, 94.
[259] Cleary, 55.
[260] Cleary, 110.
[261] Cleary, 113. Cleary suggests that this portrait may have been intended for Murray's niece, given that her friend Christian Barnes, who accompanied her to Copley's studio and was under this impression.

London fashions, Murray, like Wortley Montagu, found humour in having to adapt to the fashions specific to the place in which she was visiting. Although Murray demonstrated a willingness to submit to the codes and proscriptions of fashionable dress in London, she also acknowledged her own role in this process of self-fashioning through her complacency to adopt certain components of fashionable dress in London, while expressing her freedom to forgo certain aspects of fashionable dress she found disagreeable.[262] It is likely that she maintained a similar attitude when she entered Copley's studio to sit for her portrait. Murray would have certainly recognized Turquerie to be a fashionable style in portraiture within elite society in Boston, but the subtle nuances marking Murray's portrait might have been the result of similar negotiations to assert her identity in relation to those of her peers. Murray's portrait can be understood both as an example of her desire to participate in a cosmopolitan vogue for a fashionable style, as well as evidence of a woman interested in engaging in a style that held particular currency within colonial Boston during the late 1760s – a style that spoke to a specific definition of ideal womanhood in a community whereby many women were as accomplished as Murray, or even Wortley Montagu. By studying Murray's portrait and those of other members of her community, it is possible to reconstruct what this perception of ideal femininity meant to the women who entered Copley's studio alongside their friends, as Murray did, or their husbands, brothers, and sisters. Between London and Boston, women engineered networks of taste, fuelled by print and visual sources for Turquerie, that allowed them to affirm their complex identities and their participation in a community of style. As we shall see in the next chapter, such print and visual networks of fashion and style continued to inspire artistic expression for women in the later eighteenth century.

[262] Murray wrote to her friend Christian Barnes back in Boston upon transforming her appearance that 'I have submitted to all forms of Dress except blacking my hair'. As quoted in Cleary, 121.

Chapter 2. Subscribers of Style: Fashionable Dress and the Art of Allusion in Nicholas Heideloff's *Gallery of Fashion*, 1794-1803

> A Gallery of Fashion is a work long wanted, and long wished for, and now makes its appearance upon a very extensive plan. It is a collection of all the most fashionable and elegant Dresses in vogue.
>
> This work, so necessary to point out the superior elegance of the English taste, is the first and only one ever published in this country; it surpasses any thing of its kind formerly published at Paris, and shews [sic] at once the different fashions invented at different periods; in short it forms a Repository of Dress.[263]

As the advertisement accompanying the *Gallery of Fashion* attests, this journal was intended to be read as a 'Repository of Dress' representing the 'superior elegance of English taste'. Heideloff's journal succeeded in this not merely on account of his meticulous rendering of the particularities of the 'most fashionable and elegant Dresses in vogue', but through his own careful fashioning of the polite sociable world of the women of fashion.[264] These were women who both inspired and supported the journal from the creation and staging of the fashions that Heideloff sought to represent, to the fashionable lifestyles that they cultivated, and finally, through their direct patronage by subscription to the journal. Throughout, the journal conveys an affinity for historical and 'Oriental' references, which had moved into fashionable English dress from the fancy-dress portraits of the previous chapter. As this chapter will explore, Heideloff looked to the British genre of Grand Manner portraits, many of which featured his own subscribers, as guidance for creating images that gave visual credence to the superiority of British dress. Through this process, he not only granted the fashionable dresses he represented a distinctive allure, but he also elevated the status of those women of fashion whose influence can be felt throughout the journal's pages.

In a characteristic image taken from the ninth and final volume of the *Gallery of Fashion* (Fig. 0.42), two figures are represented in minutely rendered toilettes with a delicacy of touch betraying Heideloff's skills as a highly-adept miniature painter, while his use of the new medium of aquatint and the subtle placement of gold paint is a

[263] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I (London: Nicholas Heideloff, 1794).
[264] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I.

testament of the costly processes involved in the production of the journal, and the high social level ascribed to it. A long-fringed sash tied just above the right-hand figure's natural waist allows the light-weight muslin fabric popular at the time to follow the natural lines of the figure's body, while a *bandeau* tied up within the figure's neatly cropped coiffure hangs past the figure's shoulders, gesturing toward an image of exotic turbans.[265] She stands confidently next to her seated companion whose dress matches hers in its light-weight white material and the simplicity of its silhouette. However, rather than including the striking embellishments of Turquerie, a gossamer Vandykean ruff instead transports its wearer to the realm of England's own storied past. With their elaborate turbaned and feathered headdresses and simple gowns similar to those worn by the *Duchess of Rutland* painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds (Fig. 2.1), or even *Margaret Kemble Gage* by Copley (Fig. 1.20), it might be tempting to interpret these dresses as representing the same Orientalizing and historical fancy dress found in portraits such as those painted by Copley. In one image, two ladies are presented in elegant black crape evening dresses (Fig. 2.2), with a cross necklace and lace ruffs making a clear reference to the Vandykean dress made popular by the masquerade and subsequent portraits inspired by it painted by Thomas Hudson and Reynolds. In another, a single figure wears a 'white satin hat à l'espagnole' (Fig. 2.3), 'turned up at the side with a diamond button and loop'.[266] Although described as Spanish, this hat was also commonly referred to as a *chapeau de paille*, a fashion that was inspired by Rubens' highly influential *Portrait of Helene Fourment,* commonly referred to by its familiar name the *Chapeau de Paille* (Fig. 0.30), whose iconic representation of a prominent black fur hat intriguingly placed askance atop the sitter's head captured the imagination of artists and sitters as seen by the countless paintings it inspired.[267] Yet the simplicity of these styles

[265] According to my observations, 231 out of the *Gallery of Fashion*'s 359 figures are described as wearing muslin in some form, either as the primary material of their garment or as embellishment as part of another garment or accessory. That means that roughly 64% of the *Gallery of Fashion*'s figures are represented wearing this highly popular late-eighteenth-century material. For a thorough history of Muslin see Ashmore, *Muslin*.

[266] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II (London: Nicholas Heideloff, September 1795).

[267] As suggested in the introduction to this thesis, the influence of Van Dyck and Rubens on fancy dress in painted portraiture in Britain is an immensely popular subject and is discussed in greater detail in Ch. 3 in relation to Rubens' famous *Chapeau de Paille* of 1630-2. See Hearn, *Van Dyck and Britain* and van Hout and du Bourg, *Rubens and his Legacy*.

and their exotic and historical embellishments were very much a part of contemporary fashionable dress.

Two portraits of one of the *Gallery of Fashion*'s gentile subscribers, that of a *Mrs Parkyns*, the first a painting by John Hoppner of 1794 (Fig. 2.4), and the second a print largely based upon the painted portrait by John Wilkin in 1795 (Fig. 2.5), reveal just how close the relationship between fancy dress and fashionable attire was at the close of the eighteenth century.[268] In the first painted portrait*, Mrs. Parkyns* wears a gold-belted gown similar to those painted by Reynolds only decades before him, with only slight modifications to be found in the higher placement of the belt in-line with the silhouette of the high-waisted dresses of the 1790s. Draped around her shoulders is the slightest suggestion of a robe, more suggestive than actually material. She stands against an autumnal landscape background with soft rolling hills and a tiny castle emerging from a rich canopy of trees. A lush complement to the golden tones of the foliage and the embellishments of golden fringe epaulettes at her shoulders is to be found atop her head in the form of a single olive-green feather, which crowns *Mrs Parkyns'* head and directs viewers' eyes back down into the centre of the canvas. With her lips and cheeks brushed with a delicate apricot hue and her face brightened by paint to the same pallor as her gown, *Mrs Parkyns* resembles a classical goddess as she stands at the top of a set of steps about to descend into an Edenic paradise.

These illustrations were meant to capture the 'superior elegance of English taste', and the fashions found within them were intrinsic to the fashionable spheres of sociability that served as their backdrop.[269] Returning to the first image (Fig. 0.42), as is evidenced by their fashionable over-sized muffs and the seated figure's dainty spyglass, this is an image of women of the *beau monde* engaged in fashionable public life. They are at once both spectators of a public performance and actors on the stage of public life with their fashions drawing on the same rich associations of history, fantasy and the exotic

[268] Despite the importance of the 1790s as a decade marked by the innovative distancing of British fashion from that worn in France, the fashions of the 1790s are rarely the subject of study in British fashion history. Aileen Ribeiro has made the earlier part of the eighteenth century the primary focus of her career, with only brief references to the political impact of the French Revolution on dress in Britain at this time. The Cunnington's canonical encyclopaedia of the particularities of fashionable dress remains a useful reference. C. Willett and Phillis Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century*.
[269] Cunnington, *Handbook of English Costume in the Eighteenth Century*.

found at the heart of this thesis. It was, moreover, a set of associations that distinguished British fashion from Parisian style. For more than a century beginning with the reign of Louis XIV, France had strategically positioned itself as the leader of fashionable dress across Europe, with Parisian dressmakers' ideas being eagerly sought out and incorporated into the wardrobes of fashionable elites in places as far afield as London and Vienna.[270] These ideas had the power to influence not just what people purchased but could also effectively transform consumption patterns across an entire spectrum of fashionable goods. The important economic potential harnessed by controlling the market for consumer goods became increasingly evident to a newly expanded mercantile and commercial elite in London and in Paris, and by the end of the eighteenth century, Britain was granted an unprecedented opportunity to capture the market for one of the century's most lucrative industries: that of fashionable dress.[271] As the Reign of Terror destroyed the lives and fortunes of *ancien régime* society, fashion communication between Paris and London was also silenced.[272] With it, an influx of enterprising artists and *modistes* crossed the Channel in hopes of securing safety and building a new livelihood in the commercial city of London.[273] Among them was the German-born miniature painter Nicholas Heideloff, who seized upon the opportunity of creating England's first journal devoted exclusively to the subject of fashion in 1794, giving it a title that justifiably alluded to a set of images every bit as artfully inventive as the fashions contained within: the *Gallery of Fashion*.[274]

Heideloff took care to ground his ensembles in reality, assuring readers that they were not 'imaginary, but real existing ones'.[275] This description, however, also constituted a

[270] French dominance of the fashion industry has been the subject of several important studies. For studies focusing on the eighteenth century, see Roche, *The Culture of Clothing*; Jones, *Sexing la Mode* and for a larger history, see Steele, *Paris Fashion*, and DeJean, *Essence of Style*.
[271] Greig, *Beau Monde*; Riello, *Spinning World*.
[272] Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution*.
[273] Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell explores the possibility of the immigration of one of the eighteenth-century's most famous Parisian dressmakers to London, see Chrisman, 'Rose Bertin in London?'.
[274] Heideloff's *Gallery of Fashion* has only recently become the subject of scholarly study, most notably in Chloe Wigston Smith's recent chapter, Chloe Wigston Smith, 'Fast Fashion', in *Women's Periodicals and Print Culture in Britain, 1690-1820s,* ed. Batchelor and Powell, 441-457. The journal receives passing mention in several introductory surveys on the history of fashion illustration. See Holland, *Hand Coloured Fashion Plates* and Ginsburg, *An Introduction to Fashion Illustration*.
[275] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II (London: Nicholas Heideloff, 1795).

cunning editorial and marketing move, as Heideloff went on to insist that his fashions were inspired by 'particular study' of the 'magnificent dresses, in which the Ladies appear at the routes, the opera, the playhouses, and the concertrooms [sic]; as well as those elegant morning dress of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens'.[276] Yet Heideloff alone was not responsible for the journal's creation. A subscriber list was published at the back of the *Gallery of Fashion's* first three volumes which contained the names of many women who would have frequented these fashionable spaces, including the notorious beauties the Duchess of Rutland and Lady Charlotte Campbell. These women not only supported the journal through the important act of patronage by means of their subscription, but it was also their fashions and their own active lifestyles as leaders of fashion which both inspired the fashions represented in its pages and shaped the way in which they were depicted. A study of the names on this list, which other scholars have mistakenly described as representing the highest level of fashionable society, however, reveals a distinctive trend among its subscribers that has often been overlooked.[277]

Although a number of elite women subscribed to the journal, including aristocratic women like the Duchess of Rutland, they represented a minority within a list composed largely of untitled women who subscribed to the journal. Moreover, something other than aristocratic status bound together the members of the *beau monde* who subscribed to this journal. Not only were these women some of the most influential and fashionable women of their day, they were also among society's most politically active. Many of them, furthermore, were directly involved in the patriotic mission of promoting the British textile industry. Likewise, included among the journal's male subscribers were not just the artists and print sellers one might expect to see on a subscription list for a journal on this subject, but also members of Britain's burgeoning political elite, including John Pearse, the Director of the Bank of England. Many of these men, including the wealthy woollen merchant and Member of Parliament James Milnes, had earned their place in the political system on the basis of wealth earned through trade. As Chloe Wigston Smith and Ann Bermingham have argued before me, the political

[276] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I (London: Nicholas Heideloff, 1794).
[277] Ginsburg describes the journal's subscribers as comprising an elite audience that steadily increased in social tone. Ginsburg, *An Introduction to Fashion Illustration*, 8-9, while Alice Mackrell states that the *Gallery of Fashion*'s subscribers were 'not in trade, but from the upper strata of society'. Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion*, 102.

implications of fashion journalism has often been overlooked in historical study.[278] In my investigation of the journal's subscribers, I consider how they were not only interested members of the public – eager to learn of the latest trends in fashionable dress, but as this chapter will argue, were persons directly engaged with ensuring the success of a new British fashion system. Through this study, I hope to reclaim the patriotic momentum behind the *Gallery of Fashion*'s creation and the sophisticated political messages embedded in the wearing and representation of these fashions.

The jingoistic rhetoric used to promote the *Gallery of Fashion* would have certainly appealed to a British public eager to see their country praised in the face of the recent loss of the American colonies and the threat posed by a potential French invasion, but they would have also felt reassured by the characteristically British quality of the fashions and illustrations contained within. No longer would British women be forced to wear clothes that went against a British sense of propriety and rationality – a fear represented in James Gillray's caricature of Madam Britannia made a prisoner by the restrictive corset that Thomas Paine forcefully ties her into against her will (Fig. 2.6).[279] These prints distributed an image of modern British womanhood that was at once modest, stylish, and worldly; elegant in its gravitation towards classical forms, while maintaining an interest in fine materials that were a match for the cultivated backdrop of British gentility that its prints represented. Heideloff departed from French plates not only in terms of the way in which he depicted fashion, adopting an increasingly more naturalistic style, but also in how he rendered female sociability, with groups of women actively engaged in leisure pursuits of reading, going on walks, and in conversation with each other. The model of femininity represented in these pages was one in which women dressed not merely to capture the attention of male admirers, but for themselves and one another. By contrast, the suggestion of a male admirer was often unashamedly present in the eroticized representations of fashionable women in French fashion plates

[278] In an engaging analysis of late eighteenth-century fashion periodicals, Chloe Wigston Smith draws attention to the political implications of late eighteenth-century fashion journalism, an argument related to Ann Bermingham's claim that the consumption of clothes, particularly those of foreign countries, was hardly an apolitical act, but was a vital means by which Britain confirmed its status as an economic and political power. See Smith, 'Fast Fashion', 441-457, as well as Bermingham, 'The Picturesque and Ready-to-Wear Femininity', in *The Politics of the Picturesque,* ed. Stephen Copley and Peter Garside, 81-119.

[279] Emma Major discusses the perceived corrupting influence of French fashions on British womanhood. See Major, *Madam Britannia*, 202-14.

produced prior to the Revolution. Take for example a characteristic plate from the *Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* from 1787 (Fig. 2.7), which shows a female figure seductively reaching towards a hypothetical admirer to beckon their attention. In representing women in everyday pursuits, elegantly attired in the latest modestly classical fashions, the *Gallery of Fashion* instead adhered to the philosophy that following fashion was a means by which women could demonstrate their mastery of good taste, and, in the process, demonstrate that they possessed this most respected of values within British society.

The journal's very title in its use of the word 'Gallery' at once elevated the status of the journal, by placing the journal's illustrations within a space reserved for fine art. However, the framing of the journal in this way also could be said to raise the status of the fashions represented within the journal's pages by placing such fashions in relation to the fancy dresses of Reynolds, Copley and Van Dyck. As Aileen Ribeiro has noted, it is entirely appropriate that fashion, in the hands of the English, would draw on such historical influences.[280] These elements were part of a long-standing vocabulary for Britishness within the visual arts, and by drawing upon these familiar points of reference, the journal solidified a vision of British fashion that carried the same associations of historical continuity, imperial conquest, and knowledge that came from each of these. However, the network of fashionable women Heideloff represents did more than just adorn themselves and these plates with the fashionable embellishments of British art – in a sense, they became it. As Alison Adburgham has suggested, the *Gallery of Fashion*'s plates adopted the compositional formula of conversation pieces.[281] This chapter will further expand on Adburgham's assertion while also engaging with the influence of Grand Manner portraiture on the construction of the *Gallery of* Fashion's illustrations. Through the proliferation of fashionable elements of dress previously confined to the canvas and the staging of fashionable pursuits within the visual formulae of these characteristically British art genres, the *Gallery of Fashion* presents a cohesive vision for ideal British dress that both elevated and empowered the network of women who adopted it.

[280] Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution*, 129.
[281] Adburgham, *Women in Print*, 206.

I. Subscribing for the Nation

For centuries France had dominated the European market for fashionable goods in no small part on account of Louis XIV's vested interest in establishing France as the leader in all aspects of arts and culture.[282] A crucial element of this programme for controlling the market for fashionable goods can be seen in the proliferation of journals dedicated to disseminating the latest French modes, including *Le Mercure Galant*, founded as early as 1673, with later publications including the *Galerie des Modes et Costumes Français* (1778-1787), the *Cabinet des Modes ou les Modes Nouvelles* (1785), *Magasin des Modes Nouvelle Françaises et Anglaises* (1786-1789), and the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* (1790-1793).[283] New sources for fashion guidance were abruptly required, however, when in the spring of 1793 all fashion journals in France ceased publication, not to resume production until the summer of 1797.[284] Recognizing the important economic potential in controlling and shaping the fashion industry in Britain, Heideloff and his network of subscribers chose to capitalize on this opportunity, and as this chapter will argue, they created the *Gallery of Fashion* as a means not only of capturing this important economic market for Britain by shaping the way in which fashions looked and the origins of their materials, but also the meanings that such fashions carried.

As luxury goods became accessible to an increasingly larger segment of the public a latent home demand for useful, beautiful and exotic goods was unlocked, and with it, new responses to debates on the moral implications of possessing luxury emerged. Previously considered to be indicative of vice and moral degradation, some sought to redirect cultural attitudes towards luxury goods by arguing for their immense economic benefit to the nations which produced them. As Dr. Johnson reasoned, 'you cannot spend in luxury without doing good to the poor'.[285] Later Joseph Priestley was to publish an article in the *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure* in 1772, where he begged the question, 'What can be more universal than the effects of riches on

[282] DeJean, *The Essence of Style*.
[283] Despite its somewhat misleading information, the most comprehensive overview of the history of fashion plates remains Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion*.
[284] Mackrell, *An Illustrated History of Fashion*, 84.
[285] McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, 25.

manners in England?'.[286] To acquire and own fashionable goods was no longer the purview of elite society, corrupted through their indulgent acquisition of luxury goods.[287]

By the close of the eighteenth century there had been an astonishing four-fold increase in printed literature of all kind in London.[288] This volume of literature was largely composed of journals that were, like the *Gallery of Fashion,* the product of the Enlightenment's interest in circulating information that was both interesting and useful. The Enlightenment turned the consumption of culture into a commodity and knowledge into information, giving birth to an increasingly more diverse range of published written and visual material. A great many of these new periodicals, however, were intended for an enlarged female reading public, who, with their increased leisure time, became a prime target for publishers. The earliest scholarly investigations of women's journals treated women readers in much the same way as the eighteenth-century philosophers who promoted the publication of fashion literature as a means of 'guiding their [women's] tastes and behaviour' through dress.[289] However, as literary historians such as Chloe Wigston Smith have recently argued, women readers were hardly the passive pawns of a male-dominated fashion press. Through engagement with these texts, women were granted an opportunity of becoming active agents within a fashionable community of dress. In Smith's investigation of the women's copying the styles and patterns delineated in paper patterns found in fashion journals such as *La Belle Assemble*, women positioned themselves as part of a sociable community of craft, which both empowered and defined the women who engaged in this tactile experience.[290]

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[286] As quoted in Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure*, 4. For information regarding the precarious place of luxury during the eighteenth century, see Styles, *Dress of the* People, and Lemire, 'Second-Hand Beaux'.
[287] The expansion of the market for consumer goods is the subject of many studies. See, for example, McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society*.
[288] White, *Women's Magazines*, 25
[289] Although primarily concentrating on periodicals from the Victorian era to the present, in part on account of the increasing proliferation of women's periodicals after this date, Cynthia White's book presents a helpful, if somewhat dated, analysis of women's engagement with printed literature. White, *Women's Magazines*.
[290] Smith, 'Fast Fashion'.

As is evidenced by the incredibly detailed descriptions of the dresses and hairstyles that accompanied each figure illustrated in the journal and Heideloff's own admonition that such 'a plain and particular description of every article' would make it 'impossible to err in the arrangement of the dress', the *Gallery of Fashion* was fully intended to be used by its readers as they fashioned their own wardrobes.[291] In adopting a particular arrangement of party-coloured feathers in their hair or incorporating Vandykean 'scollops' on the border of their dresses, readers of the *Gallery of Fashion* became active agents in the promotion of a particular vision of fashionable dress – one which, as shown in an illustration found in the journal's fifth volume (Fig. 2.8), was composed of a community of women at its core. Seated at the centre of a fashionable neoclassical interior, a woman dressed in 'Scotch cambric' with 'Vandyke cuffs' holds the *Gallery of Fashion* within her gloved hands.[292] The central figure's grey gloves match the frontispiece of the journal she holds – a testament not only to the woman's absorption in the content's pages, but also, perhaps, her role within it.[293] Framing the central figure are her two highly curious children; daughters of varying ages, which draw attention to the central figure's role as a mother. By placing the central figure within this distinctly female grouping, both the reading figure and viewer of the journal are reminded of the important network that formed the basis of the journal's readership of engaged – and indeed in the image's reference to native textile industries and the plate's overall colour scheme of red, white and blue – patriotic women.

Nationalistic jargon surges from the *Gallery of Fashion*'s enthusiastic advertisement, which claims the distinctive prerogative of the journal in pointing 'out the superior elegance of English taste', surpassing 'any thing of the kind formerly published at Paris'.[294] Such a sensationalistic claim would not have fallen on deaf ears. With the recent loss of the American colonies and the threat of a possible French invasion looming on the horizon, patriotic sentiment was at an all-time high in Britain, and it was likely on account of this that the concept of a journal which represented British dress for

[291] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I (London: Nicholas Heideloff, 1794).
[292] Heideloff, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. V (London: Nicholas Heideloff, January 1799).
[293] In Smith's analysis of this print, the common colour used to illustrate both the central figure's gloves and the journal's cover is symbolic of the fact that the circulation of fashion and knowledge about fashion is dependent on the periodical culture that produces such knowledge. Smith, 'Fast Fashion', 454.
[294] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I (London: Nicholas Heideloff, 1794).

British women would be met with such a favourable reception. It is unsurprising then that Heideloff's journal was able to attract an illustrious subscriber list, which included not only those interested in keeping abreast of current fashions, but also persons who had a vested interest in the political and commercial stability of the nation.

Many British women observed the influence of politics on the fashions being worn in Paris. According to Georgiana, the Duchess of Devonshire, the Revolution 'stopt all fashions'.[295] And in a sense, it did. One only has to glance at the pages of the *Journal de la Mode et du Goût* to see that fashion had taken an increasingly more politicized tone as the Revolution advanced, for the journal contains an abundance of *tricolore* symbols and references to Rousseau.[296] As Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell has demonstrated, by the outbreak of the Reign of Terror, the very concept of fashion was at stake due to its historical associations with the aristocracy. Those who not did adhere to the changing tone of fashionable dress faced the possibility of becoming quite literally fashion victims.[297] During this rare moment in a period of seemingly unceasing French dominance of the market for fashionable dress, the British sought to secure this industry for themselves, describing and visualizing fashion like never before in the pages of the *Gallery of Fashion*.

Although Britons had been eager to see the French enjoy the liberties associated with a constitutional monarchy at the beginning of the Revolution, as peasants and the lower orders marched on Versailles many began to fear the Revolution's rhetoric of equality and the 'levelling tendencies' it was successful at evoking.[298] With the fall of the monarchy and the September Massacres of 1792 as well as the spread of war to the Continent, most of the Anglican, aristocratic, agrarian and professional interests of the country were strongly against the Revolution in France.[299] John Bowles of the

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[295] As quoted in Chrisman, 'Rose Bertin in London?', 45-51. Their desire for information into the latest modes was fulfilled by the most eminent fashion journal of its time, which began its life as *Le Cabinet des Modes* in November of 1785, before being retitled as the *Magasin des modes nouvelles Francaises and Anglaises* from 1786 until 1790, when it finally adopted the name of *Le Journal de la mode et du gout* until it ceased production entirely in 1793. Roche, 471.
[296] The most authoritative text on fashion during the French Revolution remains Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution*.
[297] Chrisman-Campbell, *Fashion Victims*.
[298] For a concise history of the French Revolution, especially as it pertains to its impact on Great Britain, see Palmer, *The World of the French Revolution.*
[299] Palmer, 200.

Association against Republicans and Levellers argued in his *Real Grounds for the Present War with France* that by offering 'aid and fraternity' to all peoples, the ultimate goals of the French Convention was in fact to overthrow the British and all other governments.[300] In the midst of such threats looming large in the public consciousness, Heideloff placed the names of the royal princesses prominently at the top of the *Gallery of Fashion's* subscriber list, no doubt conscious of the political significance of this gesture. The appearance of the princesses' names within the *Gallery of Fashion*'s subscriber list might seem commonplace, or even expected, but their support of a fashion journal during the very year that Marie Antoinette was executed – having been relentlessly attacked in the press for her extravagant wardrobe – was a daring move. By granting their support for Heideloff's journal representing British dress, the family must have hoped to contribute to the journal's success and in the process, help maintain order and shape the direction of the nation. Heideloff and his subscribers undoubtedly shared this sentiment, for references to the court abound throughout the journal, with illustrations of court dress regularly making their appearance during the birthday month celebrations. Heideloff emphasized the urgency involved in the sharing of such news when showcasing the latest fashions in court dress, and the ninth plate of the first volume of the *Gallery of Fashion* from February of 1794 illustrates a luxurious silver tissue gown trimmed in lilac bulrushes (Fig. 2.9). The description accompanying this dress describes its sleeves as being made of Rutland gauze, encouraging the journal's readers to infer that the plate was a portrait of the acclaimed Duchess of Rutland (Fig. 2.1).[301] The *Gallery of Fashion*'s advertisement promised that:

> Several Ladies of rank and fashion have not only approved of this plan, but they have at the same time granted permission to the Publisher to make drawings of their new dresses, and to insert them in this Gallery;

[300] Palmer, 210.

[301] A description of the dresses worn at court for the Queen's birthday was published in the *Oracle* and notes that the Duchess of Rutland wore 'A rich white and gold embroidery in drapery, with wreathes of black velvet and pink flowers'. The accounts of these dresses, however, are sometimes inconsistent between newspapers, and they are not nearly as detailed as those provided by Heideloff accompanying his illustrations of court dress. For this reason, it is virtually impossible to identify the original wearer of the dresses Heideloff chose to incorporate into the pages of his journal. Certain similarities exist between dresses that he illustrates, however, and those described in the pages of the journal. But Heideloff would have almost certainly not had access to the actual court proceedings, and therefore must have observed these dresses within the ateliers of dressmakers, or perhaps in the homes of their wearers.

> thus the credit of the invention of the different dresses, will be secured to those Fair Subscribers who contribute to the embellishment of this work (if they have no objection to being mentioned). And they will find the Publisher always ready to represent their dresses in that style of elegance, and that original taste, which is so peculiar to the British Ladies.[302]

It was perhaps on account of Heideloff's own boasts for the journal's attraction of 'several ladies of rank and fashion', along with the appearance of court dress in its pages, that fashion historians have classified this work as one that catered exclusively to high society readers. As the subscriber list printed at the back of the first three volumes reveals, Heideloff's journal did attract the support of several ladies of rank and fashion. However, these were a minority within a list that included not only women of fashion, but also a number of men and women with professional and political interests. Furthermore, those women of fashion who did subscribe to the journal, patronized it for reasons beyond that of seeing the fashions of their circle documented for the enjoyment of an exclusive community. There was certainly a degree of flattery involved in supporting a venture that glamorized the sartorial habits of one's own social circle. However, this journal was definitely not a private album for the amusement of a certain elite 'in crowd' but was instead the product of a group of politically active women's interest in promoting national industry and shaping opinions towards women's roles in society as patriotically engaged individuals.

In the case of representing court dress, such fashions were certainly not illustrated so that readers could copy them. Not only were the number of courtiers who subscribed to the journal a small group, but these images would have no longer been helpful after the celebrations were over, for the fashionable embellishments found on court dress changed as quickly as other accessories did during the period. Courtiers instead took their cue from milliners who lavished foil, fringe, and floral decorations onto the fabric canvas provided by court dress's wide hoops.[303] Certain colours, notably court dress's

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[302] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of fashion*. Vol. 1 (London: Nicholas Heideloff, 1794), 1.

[303] There is an interesting and developing literature on milliners, see Chrisman-Campbell, 'The Face of Fashion', and Lemire, *Dress, Culture and Commerce*.

traditional colours of gold and silver, appear popular throughout the 1790s in court dress, but with each season a colour such as lavender, yellow, or blue, made their mark.[304] While some courtiers may have taken pleasure in seeing themselves or their friends in the pages of this journal, this was not the primary purpose behind their inclusion. Rather than guiding people in what to wear, plates like this satisfied the reading public's need for information about the inner-workings of the fashionable world or *beau monde*. Such a curiosity had previously been satisfied in newspapers, which continued to print descriptions of costumes worn by men and women at major celebrations. The presence of such long descriptions of proceedings at court were intended to honour the monarch by their attention, but they also flattered the public who read them, allowing them at once to not only feel connected to the established order, but also giving them a sense of pride in their nation which effortlessly governed itself with elegance and civility. These images provided a window into a world that attracted the hopes and aspirations of an upwardly mobile public who visited the spa towns of Bath and Tunbridge Wells, the pleasure gardens of Ranleigh (Fig. 2.10) and Vauxhall (Fig. 2.11), and the opera (Fig. 2.12), in hopes of catching a glimpse of the royal family or possibly engaging the attention of members of the peerage that they someday hoped to join.[305]

In visualizing the social activities of the elite, Heideloff glamourized this elite world, and in the process such images served to reinforce the importance of social rank and the established order. This was perhaps another, more personal reason, that the princesses Charlotte, Augusta and Elizabeth pledged their support for the journal and even allowed themselves to be represented within its pages. In demonstrating their support for a journal that clearly sought to maintain the established order, the royal family was shown to be confident and engaged in its usual affairs despite the threat of a possible French invasion. However, the inclusion of their portrait and the prevalence of the highly symbolic court dress was not just intended to shape contemporary perceptions, but as

[304] Hannah Greig describes the inner workings of the eighteenth century's most fashionable inner circle, commonly referred to as the *beau monde*. She provides an illuminating account of one family's struggle, and failure, to infiltrate this elite circle, and details the steps they took to fashion themselves as a part of this group. Greig, *Beau Monde*.
[305] For an interesting account of London's pleasure gardens, see Curl, *Spas, Wells, & Pleasure Gardens of London*, and for a more specific study on Vauxhall see Coke and Borg, *Vauxhall Gardens*.

Heideloff himself insisted in the advertisement leading the second volume of the journal, he hoped that it would 'become much more so at a remote period, *being a complete history of the Fashions of the day*.'[306] In these words, Heideloff appears to have seen himself as writing the history of his time. It is possible that in representing the royal family he considered himself to be engaging in permanently sealing their position during this highly volatile time. Such images fixated the importance of the court and the monarchy in the face of the revolutionary currents that dominated the 1790s, and through this act of representation they challenged any threat to the Royal Family's significance at the centre of British society.

As an extension of this aspiration, the *Gallery of Fashion* afforded the royal family an opportunity to shape their public image in a way that more formal portraits were often incapable of doing, even as these portraits, such as Thomas Gainsborough's *The Three Eldest Princesses: Charlotte, Princess Royal, Augusta and Elizabeth* of 1783-4 (Fig. 2.13), circulated widely through print reproduction (2.14).[307] In the journal's first volume, the three princesses were illustrated in a plate from June of 1794 (Fig. 2.15). The very title of this plate 'A Peep Into Kensington Gardens' playfully invites the viewer to catch a glimpse of the royal family in one of its most informal and familiar environments. Rather than representing the princesses in evening attire like they would have worn to the opera, or even stylish afternoon dress, the princesses are instead shown in the informal and familiar costume of morning dress. Stripped of gems and any sign of their status, the princess' heads are instead crowned with beribboned bonnets. These youthful informal costumes are worlds away from the feathery pearl-enlaced fancy dresses that Gainsborough painted in 1783, or the graceful classicizing satin robes featured in the single portraits that he painted of Princess Augusta and Elizabeth in 1782 (Figs. 2.16 & 2.17). What is perhaps most striking about these images, however, is the fact that Heideloff's princesses appear to be virtually the same age or even younger than they would have been in 1783, despite the fact that more than ten years had passed since they were painted by Gainsborough. It is likely that the royal family hoped that this

[306] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II (London: Nicholas Heideloff, 1795).
[307] This incredible portrait, which remains in the Royal Collection, was unfortunately cut down as it was later fitted into an overdoor space. Royal Collection Trust, The Three Eldest Princesses: Charlotte, Princess Royal (1766-1828), Augusta (1768-1840) and Elizabeth (1770-1840),' Rct.uk. https://www.rct.uk/collection/400206/the-three-eldest-princesses-charlotte-princess-royal-1766-1828-augusta-1768-1840 (Accessed January 10, 2019).

image would instil a feeling of familiarity and affection towards the princesses, whose portrait provided a reassuring image of a pleasantly secure, yet charmingly available ruling family.[308] Heideloff certainly capitalized on this sentiment, and in securing such an image for the very first volume of his journal he gave his claims of their patronage a stamp of authenticity, while further establishing his authority in representing British fashion. Heideloff thus presented a decidedly more accessible vision of the royal daughters in contrast with the frequently derided fashionable excess of the now executed French king and queen.

Although a number of the journal's female subscribers including the Duchess of Rutland and Lady Charlotte Campbell made regular appearances at court and personally knew the princesses, these women represented a minority of high-ranking peeresses among the *Gallery of Fashion*'s subscribers. Rather surprisingly given the journal's reputation as catering to elite society within the literature on fashion periodicals, in actuality, very few courtiers subscribed to the *Gallery of Fashion*.[309] The names of courtiers that do not appear on Heideloff's subscriber list are perhaps a more telling indicator as to the journal's intended audience. In comparing the list of persons in attendance at Queen Charlotte's birthday celebrations in January of 1794, the year of the journal's beginning, and two years later, aside from the royal princesses only three of Heideloff's female subscribers were present each year in a company which included at minimum seventy other women.[310] This means that roughly ninety-six percent of the women in attendance at court during this period were not subscribers to Heideloff's journal. These women would have had access to the journal without subscription, viewing it in a print shop or in the company of friends, and they would have certainly been aware of its existence. However, the fact that so many women of fashion opted out of publicly subscribing to this journal is a testament to the fact that the journal's

[308] Heideloff also produced a portrait of *Charlotte Augusta, Princess Royal of England*, which was printed in 1797 and issued separately from the *Gallery of Fashion*. Charlotte is here also represented in fashionable informal dress outdoors, with an English flag-waving castle the only clue as to her identity.
[309] While never the only focus of fashionable society, the court was always an important one. Colley, *Britons*, 200. As Hannah Greig has demonstrated, elite Britons vied for positions at court. Greig, *The Beau Monde*.
[310] These included Lady Audley, Lady Charlotte Campbell and the Duchess of Rutland in January of 1794, and the Countess of Cholmondeley, Marchioness of Townshend and Lady Charlotte Campbell again in January of 1796. As reported in *The Oracle*.

subscribers were composed of a much larger social network than previously accounted for.

Although this journal enjoyed aristocratic patronage, its primary readership was the upwardly mobile gentry and professional classes who could afford the journal's hefty subscription fee of three guineas and the fashions contained within it, but who were not necessarily fashion leaders themselves. Among the fashion leaders that were included, many notably used fashion to advance political and nationalist causes. Subscribers including *Lady Charlotte Campbell* (Fig. 2.18), *Lady Banks* (Fig. 2.19), the *Duchess of Rutland* (Fig. 2.20), the Marchioness of Buckingham, Lady Lade and even *Mrs. Parkyns* (Fig. 2.5), were members of the *beau monde*, and as these popularly printed portraits of them attest, were fashion setters in their own right. However, like the royal princesses, these women too had important reasons for pledging their support for the journal that extended beyond that of a casual interest in fashionable dress. Although a noted beauty and a fashion setter in her own right, women like Lady Campbell were also at the forefront of patriotic activity and through their example helped to secure the important role of women within the British nation state. In a speech made near Edinburgh in 1799, Lady Campbell addressed the Major of a regiment as she presented them the Colours in honour of their service.[311] As the 'celebrated beauty of London', Lady Campbell spoke with patriotic fervour, cautioning that 'should an inveterate enemy, the disgrace, no longer the terror, of Europe, presume to land a hostile force on the shores of Scotland, every feeling tells me that under the banners which I now present will be found a body foremost in anxiety to oppose their efforts and chastise their insolence.'[312]

Although the threat of a French invasion had largely dissipated by 1799, patriotic fervour was at an all-time high in the face of the revolutionary currents across the Channel. As Linda Colley has summarized in her influential account of the formation of British national identity, the French were perceived during this period by most Britons as 'superstitious, militaristic, decadent and unfree'. These qualities not only became enshrined in perceptions of the French, but it was through these perceived differences

[311] Cousin, *A Short Biographical Dictionary of English Literature*.
[312] *Courier and Evening Gazette* (London, England), Thursday, August 15, 1799; Issue 2180.

that notions of Britishness were formed.[313] Britons demonstrated both their loyalty to their country and gave credence to this perception of Britishness by pledging their support to any cause that served to undermine this rival power. For the majority of women in Britain, such support was shown through the traditional feminine virtues of charity, nurture, and needlework, and indeed, a number of the women who subscribed to the *Gallery of Fashion* were also prominent supporters of such charities.[314] The notorious equestrian and 'Dame of Hyde Park', Lady Lade, subscribed to a fund for the Naval Monument to 'The Glories of the British Navy', while the courtier Lady Jones supported a fund for the Relief of the Suffering Clergy of France.[315]

Rather than delivering celebratory speeches or contributing to charitable societies already in existence, women such as Lady Banks, Lady Sinclair and the Marchioness of Buckingham sought to undermine French authority at one of its most palpable sources of influence: by attempting to influence what people wore. The events they hosted created a space for other women to support their causes, thus forging a network of feminine activity through fashion and textiles. Alongside her husband Sir John Sinclair, Lady Sinclair held a sheep-shearing festival in July of 1791 that celebrated the British woollen industry. The women in attendance dressed 'in white muslin, with flowers, and various coloured ribbands; and each bore a shepherdess's crook, decorated with taste and fancy'.[316] A few years earlier in 1787, the Marchioness of Buckingham held a birthday celebration in honour of the Queen's birthday in February in which her husband was dressed in a suit of Irish manufacture.[317] It was noted in the press the following year that 'The Marchioness of Buckingham has already secured no small share of popularity in Ireland, by her positive direction, through her suite, to appear in Irish manufactures'.[318] It is possible that her desire to be seen in textiles native to Ireland encouraged Reynolds to paint her in contemporary costume in a portrait of the Marchioness and her family of 1780-82 (Fig. 2.21), which shows the Marchioness

[313] Colley, *Britons*, 6.
[314] According to Linda Colley, this form of political involvement was socially acceptable because so many of these activities were framed around what were considered to be traditional feminine virtues. Colley, 261-2.
[315] *Morning Post and Gazetteer* (London, England), Friday, June 20, 1800; Issue 9915; *Diary or Woodfall's Register* (London, England), Monday, March 4, 1793; Issue 1233.
[316] *Star* (London, England), Thursday, July 7, 1791; Issue 997
[317] *World* (1787) (London, England), Tuesday, January 29, 1788; Issue 338.
[318] *World* (1787) (London, England), Monday, March 3, 1788; Issue 367.

seated in a voluminous gown of white material which very well could have been made in Ireland, as was the case with a number of the domestically-produced materials singled out in descriptions of the dresses included throughout the *Gallery of Fashion*.[319]

Another of the *Gallery*'s most socially active subscribers, Lady Banks, the wife of the naturalist Sir Joseph Banks, also used her influence to promote native manufacturers by holding a ball at the assembly rooms in Lincoln for the encouragement of the 'Lincolnshire Stuff Manufactory'. An advertisement appeared in the British Evening Post which encouraged, 'All ladies to be admitted gratis, who shall appear in gown and petticoat of Worsted Stuff, made of materials grown, spun, woven, dyed, and finished, in the County of Lincoln, and of the colour appointed by the Patroness, on producing a ticket, to be delivered by manufacturers for that purpose'.[320] Such interventions into the realm of politics were socially acceptable on account of their associations with traditionally female virtues, and with the increasingly femininized realm of fashion. However, this is not to undermine what these women accomplished. By taking such a proactive stance towards the promotion of this vital native industry, women were demonstrating that their concerns were by no means relegated to the domestic sphere.[321] The same can be said for the women who made the proactive choice of wearing such materials, most particularly in the case of those who chose to make the same type of overt political statements through their dress as French women were doing by wearing *tricolore* ribbons.

French fashions, previously recognized as symbols of French luxury and frivolity, had become increasingly politicized as the Revolutionary's *tricolore* was metamorphosed into red, white and blue striped textiles, while many French ladies showed their support for the fall of the bastille on their shoe buckles (Figs. 2.22 & 2.23). The *Gallery of Fashion* was not shy about representing British women making similarly overt political

[319] The *Gallery of Fashion* contains many references to domestically-produced materials, including reference to 'Irish poplin', in Vol. II (April 1795); 'Scotch cambric', in Vol. IV (February 1798), Vol. V (January, 1797), Vol. V (Nov. 1798), Vol. V (Dec. 1798), Vol. VI (April 1799), Vol. VI (June 1799), Vol. VI (Aug. 1799), (Sept. 1799), Vol. IX (May 1802); 'Salisbury Drugget,', Vol. VII (January 1801); and 'Striped British Muslin', in Vol. V (October 1798).
[320] *St. James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post* (London, England), September 8, 1789 - September 10, 1789; Issue 4429.
[321] For additional information, see Colley, especially pages 261-2.

statements through their dress, as can be seen in plate such as that featured in the first volume of the journal in July of 1794 (Fig. 2.24), whereby each of the three female figures wear an anchor necklace – itself symbolic of the Britannic empire whose naval power and presence at sea brought them great economic wealth and prestige. Three years later in November of 1797, a lady in evening dress again wears this popular accessory, while her waist is marked by an 'emblematic sash of British colours' (Fig. 2.25).[322]

According to Adam Anderson in his *Historical and Chronological Deduction of the Origin of Commerce* of 1764, the British Empire was 'most peculiarly indebted' 'to the instrumentality of commerce *alone*', a fact hinted at by throughout the *Gallery of Fashion*'s pages.[323] Particular care is given to identifying the origins of the materials that are used to create the journal's dresses within the illustration's accompanying descriptions. Meanwhile, there are also numerous representations of the coastline and even the nation's seafaring vessels (Fig. 2.26), which were potent reminders of the island nation's dominance of global trade. Importantly, since the war of Spanish Succession, French trade had expanded at a faster rate than any other country, including Great Britain.[324] The British attributed the French commercial success not to technology or workmanship, but to fashion and ornamentation.[325] In 1745, the Laudable Anti-Gallican Association was founded to 'promote British Manufacturers, to extend the commerce of England, to discourage the introduction of French modes and oppose the importation of French commodities'.[326] British policy makers sought means of securing this advantage, and the manufacturing of consumer goods became a national project. The *Gallery of Fashion*'s promotion of an ideal vision of British dress was a crucial component of this scheme as is evidenced by the numerous men of commerce who subscribed to the journal. While women such as Lady Banks understood the importance of supporting native manufacturers to the local and national economy, many of Heideloff's male subscribers' own fortunes were won on account of their pioneering mercantile endeavours. Charles Thelluson was a partner in his family's mercantile firm,

[322] Heideloff, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. IV (Nov. 1797).
[323] As quoted in Colley, 60.
[324] Colley, 79.
[325] Berg, 94.
[326] As quoted in Colley, 89.

and along with his brothers he signed the London merchant's declaration of loyalty against the French on 2 December 1795.[327] Thelluson served as a Member of Parliament between 1796 and 1806 and was one of seven MPs to subscribe to the *Gallery of Fashion* along with James Milnes, the son of wealthy woollen merchant, and John Pearse, the son of a Blackwell cloth fact who later served as the director of the Bank of England.[328] These men were a minority of mercantile and professional MPs in a House of Commons that continued to be made up of a landed elite as late as 1867.[329] For many of these men, their decision to subscribe to the *Gallery of Fashion* must have been motivated by a sense of loyalty to the British textile industry that grant their own position, but they also may have very well have studied the journal for their own policy making decisions. The *Society of Arts* was founded in 1754 with the expressed desire of acquiring the appropriate artistic skills to enable Britain to dye their cloth at home, rather than sending it abroad. If Britain was going to compete with France, it needed to be able to match its cultural reputation and status as a leader in luxury goods.[330]

In addition to these economic incentives, persons like Lady Sinclair and Charles Thelluson may have also wished to free British fashions from the shackles of French influence for another reason linked to national identity. The French fashion press had always maintained a goal of promoting French style, taste, and way of life to the world, recognizing the powerful influence associated with controlling *la mode*.[331] Imbued with meaning, fashions were believed to have the power of spreading the political and social message associated with their creators. By controlling the market for fashionable goods and their production, a British national taste could be forged which mirrored the needs and interests of the British people. It was through literature, fine art and publications like the *Gallery of Fashion* that this 'British taste' was visualized and disseminated,

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[327] See David R. Fisher, 'Thelluson, Charles (1770-1815), of Finsbury Square, London and Brosworth, Yorks.', historyofparliamentonline.org. https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1790-1820/member/thellusson-charles-1770-1815 (Accessed Sept. 17, 2014).
[328] See Brian Murphy, 'Milnes, James (1755-1805), of Thornes House, nr. Wakefield, Yorks'. Historyofparliament.org. https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1790-1820/member/milnes-james-1755-1805 (Accessed Sept. 17, 2014), and R. G. Thorne, 'Pearse, John (?1760-1836), of 50 Lincoln Inn Fields, Mdx. And Chilton Lodge, nr. Hungerford, Berks,' historyofparliamentonline.org. https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1790-1820/member/pearse-john-1760-1836 (Accessed Sept. 17, 2014).
[329] Colley, 61.
[330] Colley, 90-1.
[331] Ginsburg, 8; and DeJean.

consequently playing an important role in the formation of British national identity during this crucial period in its formation.

Recognizing the degree to which fashion and politics could be interconnected and how taste and morality were inseparable then, Heideloff promised to represent those who allowed him to study their dresses 'in that style of elegance … so peculiar to British Ladies.'[332] Like the modern consumer goods Britons sent out into the world, Heideloff presented British women who both subscribed and contributed to the journal to the wider world as representing those values of liberty and commerce both through the elegant simplicity of the fashions and the delicate way in which he rendered them using the newest technology of aquatint. Moreover, the naturalistic style he adopted flattered the classicizing lines of the 1790s and consequently elevated the way in which such fashions were perceived, resulting in images altogether unique from prior fashion illustrations, French or British.

II. A British Language of Classicism

Using the newly invented medium of acquaint, Heideloff's skills as a miniature painter are evident in a work which carries the double distinction of being the first journal in England devoted exclusively to the subject of fashion, as well as the first journal of its kind to be issued entirely in colour.[333] The importance of exercising good taste in terms of aesthetic matters was considered by many to be an essential component of being an enlightened individual, and by the end of the eighteenth century, classicism as an artistic language was considered to have no equal. With the opening of the Louvre in 1793, the popular influence of classicism extended not only to the fine arts of painting and Palladianism in architecture, but to the art of dress, with classical statuary becoming a significant source of study for women's dress.[334] The resulting neo-classical chemise was considered an important symbol of the new times, carrying the weight of centuries'

[332] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I (London: Nicholas Heideloff, 1794.
[333] Mackrell, 100.
[334] Mackrell, 66-7.

old associations with the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome and the excellence of their art, philosophy, and political systems.[335]

There might seem to be little difference in the fashions represented in the pages of *The Gallery of Fashion* and those seen in paintings by artists prominently associated with neo-classical style like Jacques-Louis David, who represented the classicizing costumes popularized by women such as *Madame de Recamier* (Fig. 2.27). However, as Madeline Ginsburg rightly points out, the fashions Heideloff rendered with such diminutive care were 'not at all French'.[336] Reclining on a sofa that took its lines from ancient Rome, *Madame de Recamier*'s white muslin chemise is rendered in a style of stark realism whose crisp lines hardly suggest the suppleness of its material. As Ginsburg rightly suggests, the version of neoclassicism found in Heideloff's images of British society, with their emphasis on fantastical embellishment, boldly contrasting colourful accessories and eclectic references both exotic and historical, conjure up a vision of classism that is worlds apart from the simplicity of French neoclassical style. In looking at the *Gallery of Fashion*'s illustrations, it would appear that British milliners approached the white muslin dresses popular in the 1790s as a blank canvas for fantasy and invention. However, it was not just the fashions themselves that differentiate those found in the *Gallery of Fashion* from French fashions across the Channel, but the way in which they were represented and repackaged for British consumers. As we shall see, it was through the divergent compositional repertoire stemming from British art that Heideloff employed that British women's dress found a distinctive voice in his journal's fashion plates.

One of the most important and recognizable distinctions between Heideloff's new vision for fashion illustration and fashion journalism produced in France prior to the Revolution is the journal's notable absence of men. With its associations with ornamentation and external appearance, fashion had largely been naturalized as a female interest in Britain by the 1790s. While men had historically maintained an

[335] See Aileen Ribeiro's *Fashion in the French Revolution* for a discussion on the classical influence on French fashion during the 1780s and 90s, particularly relating to the one-piece chemise inspired by classical drapery which became increasingly fashionable. Ribeiro, *Fashion the French Revolution*.
[336] Ginsburg, 9.

interest in fashionable dress that matched their female companions, using fashion as a tool for demonstrating personal wealth and announcing their position in society, Enlightenment philosophy which emphasized the equality of mankind and prized learning and ambition above all else made extravagances in dress unnecessary and even unwelcome.[337] With these cultural forces in play, the need for disseminating information about men's fashion, which changed very little and slowly, had considerably diminished by the time Heideloff produced his *Gallery of Fashion*. It is perhaps for this reason that only one plate by Heideloff exists representing male dress (Fig. 2.28), and even this was not included within the pages of his illustrious journal but was instead issued separately in 1796.

The absence of male dress from the pages of the *Gallery of Fashion* was a significant departure from French publications, which gave nearly equal attention to male dress, often illustrating the latest trends in menswear on the very same plate (Fig. 2.7). Even when representations of men were not included in French illustrations, the suggestion of a male presence was common across fashion plates. Women in French plates are often shown with flirtatious gestures and facial expressions, indicating an unseen viewer: in *ancien régime* France such an audience was decidedly male. The primary purpose of fashion according to the *Cabinet des Modes* was to make women more '*jolie*' and '*belle*' in order to please men.[338] The constant transformation of a woman's toilette was accorded in order to provide her husband, or lover with 'the pleasures of variety'.[339] From its beginning in 1777, the longstanding leader of French fashion illustration, the *Galleries des Mode*, was censured for depicting women in a sexually suggestive manner, with scenes of women tying their garters in front of men (Fig. 2.29), a woman washing her feet (Fig. 2.30), and even a male tailor adjusting a lady's corset (Fig. 2.31) serving as illustrations for fashionable attire in the journal's pages. Antoine Basset, an engraver and *marchand mercier* made a formal complaint against this publication, describing these images as 'Toutes figures obscenes qui choquent l'oeil honnete, et

[337] Jennifer Jones's highly nuanced account of the feminization of fashion and the consequent abandonment of elaborate embellishment in men's fashion remains one of the most concise and illuminating treatments of the subject. see Jones, *Sexing la Mode*. For a more recent discussion of the sexing of fashion in a British context, see McNeil, *Pretty Gentlemen*.
[338] Jones, 185.
[339] As quoted from the *Journal de la mode* (November 5, 1790): 1; and reprinted in Jones, 185.

n'amuse que les libertins'.[340] A year after Basset's complaint, the *Galleries des Modes* continued to produce eroticized images of women as is noticeable in a print produced in 1778, which features a young woman who exposes her leg as she props it on top of a rock in order to tie her blue garter, all the while suggestively leaning towards the picture plane in order to make direct and inviting eye contact with the viewer (Fig. 2.32). By staging women in such erotically charged scenes, fashion and the woman of fashion can be said to be reduced to a frivolous pursuit at best, while teetering on the edge of reducing such women to the object, and perhaps even the subject of libidinous desire.

Heideloff's vision for representing British women's dress involved more than just the rendering of a distinctive set of British fashions. At the heart of his project was an entirely different imaging of fashion whose conception was shaped by British art. A characteristic image from the *Gallery of Fashion*'s first volume displays three different afternoon dresses worn by three female figures who stand closely together in a grouping which display their dresses from both the front, back, and in profile (Fig. 2.33). With their fashionable feathered *chiffonet* headdresses and the vibrant array of classicizing *robes à la polonaise* worn over white lawn petticoats, these figures represent the height of fashion.[341] Neo-classicism reigned supreme across Europe during this period, with Lady Hamilton performing her famous 'attitudes' at Naples in 1794, just a year prior to this print's production.[342] As the Revolution raged across the Channel, Britons turned to the sensuousness of Greek classicism – a familiar and important means of negotiating Britishness in the arts – on account of the style's association with liberty and democratic freedom.[343] Proof that Heideloff saw his fashions as related to those of classical Greece exists in the Advertisement that prefaced his second volume, which reads:

> In our memory France has given her dresses to other nations; but it was reserved for the Graces of Great Britain to take the lead in

[340] As quoted in Ginsburg, 7.
[341] Heideloff, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I (January 1795).
[342] Emma Hamilton has attracted significant scholarly interest in recent years as an early example of celebrity, and her engagement with classical art and form is an exciting example of a woman's agency in art-making that lies beyond the more established field of women as artists. For more information on her attitudes, see Colville and Williams, *Emma Hamilton*.
[343] Ribeiro distinguishes between French neo-classicism as emulating the 'austere virtues of Rome, rather than the more seductive charms of classical Greece,' which she claims was the basis of neo-classicism in Britain. Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution,* 82.

> Fashion, and to show that, if they do not surpass, they certainly equal the elegance of the most celebrated Grecian dresses. In short, beauty, shape, and taste are no where more general, nor any where better united, than in England.[344]

As Heideloff here suggests, perhaps no medium proved a more fruitful means of propagating this distinctive image of Britishness than that of the classicizing fashionable dresses of the 1790s and the images that faithfully represented such fashions in the *Gallery of Fashion*.

Returning to a plate from the first volume, two figures join together, arm in arm, while the other stands as if in the act of ascending a quarried piece of stone (Fig. 2.33). The weighty stone floor that they stand upon and large stone ledge form a non-distinctive backdrop. They could be indoors or out, as they enjoy each other's company as part of an afternoon's sociable entertainment. However, rather than engaged in conversation, each figure looks in a different direction with none of the figures directly interacting with one another. This serves to disrupt the appearance of polite sociability, and instead conveys a feeling that these women are consciously posing, with the figure at left who ascends the step shown in the act of assuming her staged role. Yet the viewer is cut off from seeing the precise location of this stage. A shadowy form casts a diagonal line across the picture plane, serving to elevate the figures by bringing them forwards in space, while at the same time effectively ending the suggestion that this step leads to an actual physical space. This subtle act of shading grants the image depth, while balancing the colour and size of the figures in a compositionally interesting way. However, it also effectively disrupts the feeling that these figures are inhabiting a real space, creating a distinction that might be less about indoor versus outdoor space, and more related to real versus imagined space. With their regal upright postures and the delicate blush that highlights their whitened faces the viewer is presented with the tantalizing notion that these figures are not just fashionable women in contemporary costume, but the graces incarnate.

[344] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II (London: Nicholas Heideloff, 1795).

Allegorical references to classical antiquity formed a longstanding tradition in female portraiture in British art, with Sir Joshua Reynolds having revived the practice as seen in portraits such as *Elizabeth Gunning, the Duchess of Hamilton* of 1760 (Fig. 0.30). Represented as Venus with the romantic attributes of doves and roses, portraits such as these served to flatter Reynolds's sitters just as the words penned in 'A Morning Hymn to the Duchess of Hamilton' of 1753 did, which helped to cast her not only as Venus but also as Aurora, the goddess of dawn: 'Awake, bright Hamilton, arise / Goddess of Love, and of the day; / Awake, disclose thy radiant eyes, / And shew the sun a Brighter ray.'[345] The Duchess of Hamilton's daughter, Lady Charlotte Campbell, would become a leading society 'beauty' like her mother, and she was to become one of the first and arguably most influential women to subscribe to the *Gallery of Fashion*.

To complement this role, Charlotte was painted in similar allegorical roles, first at the age of fifteen by Johan Wilhelm Tischbein in 1789 (Fig. 2.34), in a wooded glade accompanied by a deer in total harmony with the natural world around her, with weighty classical robes and a rose garland rendering her into a muse of mythological goddess. Ten years later in 1796, John Hoppner painted her as Flora (Fig. 2.35), in an even more fantastical vision, which shows her floating among the clouds as she sprinkles flowers from her outstretched arms. What all of these images of aristocratic 'beauties' have in common is that each of these fantasy-laden identities served to elevate the sitters from roles previously ascribed to them in British portraiture.[346] The statuesque images of women in classicizing dress in Heideloff's *Gallery of Fashion*, would have naturally carried many of the associations between classical dress and the attributes alluded to by means of their reference to these allegorical figures. Chief among these associations must have been to their reference to the Graces, which Heideloff himself alluded to in the aforementioned quotation. For, as Antoine Banier stated in the *Mythology and Fables of the Ancient*, 'Among the many Divinities invented by the Ancients, none were more amiable than the Graces, since it was from

[345] As quoted in Mark Hallett's prolific study of Reynold's work, Hallett, *Reynolds: Portraiture in Action*, 151.
[346] See Mark Hallett's chapters 'Painting the Graces' and 'Pall Mall Pastoral' in *Reynolds: Portraiture in Action* for a tantalizing discussion of how Reynolds made use of complex allegorical references to elevate the status of his sitters. See also Marcia Pointon's interesting proposition that such references often contained conflicting, and sometimes controversial messages, which captivated viewers, Pointon, *Strategies for Showing*.

them the rest borrowed their Charms.'[347] Moving between portraiture and fashion plates, classicized femininity, like the Turquerie of the previous chapter, constituted a network of visual associations between different forms of media.

It was perhaps for this reason that Heideloff chose to pose his sitters so often in groups of three, as in the striking image from the first volume of the *Gallery of Fashion* (Fig. 2.33). In one of Reynolds' most ambitious allegorical paintings of women, *Three Ladies Adorning a Term of Hymen* of 1773 (Fig. 2.36), the three daughters of Sir William Montgomery, Barbara, Elizabeth, and Anne form a beautiful arc united by a bountiful floral garland. This image is at once a portrait as well as a devotional image to the sanctity of marriage. By representing these sisters in the act of adorning the term, they became the symbolic embodiment of this virtuous female role. What makes these images so tantalizing is this tension between reality and fantasy – of the real, individual biographies of these sisters on their path towards marriage, and their symbolic equation with the Graces.[348] One of these women, Anne, would go on to become the Marchioness of Townshend, and she would also patronize Heideloff's journal. She, like Lady Charlotte Campbell and the network of women who subscribed to the journal, would have internalized this method of reading allegory. These resonances of fantasy and myth were carried out by women through the act of wearing classicizing costumes. When viewing the *Gallery of Fashion*'s plates, women would have internalized these associations just as they did when interpreting allegorical portraits of women in classicizing attire by Reynolds. Such associations were not lost on satirists, who ridiculed not only the classicizing fashions worn by these women, as seen in a print produced on 4 July 1798 (Fig. 2.37), but also, perhaps, the belief that such women could possibly carry the virtues of the Graces. Two women of fashion pull up their robes to show off their fashionable Grecian footwear, while looking both literally and metaphorically down upon a third figure whose simple costume and unadorned head serve as a simple, chaste contrast to the fashions of the day, the simplicity of her costume perhaps alluding to a purer, less adorned vision of classicism than that worn by fashionable society.

[347] As quoted by Hallett, 206.
[348] See Hallett, 8-9 & 19, and most especially, Pointon's chapter, 'Marriage and its Boundaries: The Montgomery Sisters Adorning a Term of Hymen', in *Strategies for Showing*.

As Aileen Ribeiro posits, it was on account of a belief in the incompatibility between luxury and liberty that the French favoured the austere fashions associated with ancient Rome, rather than the more sensuous draperies of ancient Greece. However, her position that the classical style was more popular in France than in England, where she describes such fashions as 'diluted with fussy decoration or the kind of historical features which British women have always loved' overlooks the longstanding importance that these elements had within a specifically British vision of classicism.[349] As mentioned at the outset of this chapter, the fashions that Heideloff represents (Fig. 0.42) bear a close similarity to the imaginary Greco-Turkish dresses that filled the canvases of Reynolds and Copley—and were circulated in printed engravings of their portraits and costume books. As such, sartorial details like the *robe a la circassiane* were every bit as classical in the minds of late eighteenth-century Britons as the simple white chemises popularized in France by Marie Antoinette and Jacques Louis David. In fact, it was through these distracting 'fussy decorations' that British women can often be seen to have been asserting their own voice within the sartorial system, but one that offered a national variation on French style. The wearing of exotic embellishments alluded to the world beyond and Britain's powerful influence through trade, while historicizing details transformed their costumes into a tribute to the longevity of Britain's perceived greatness.

Other striking accessories, as well, symbolize attempts to project a patriotic image of strength—perhaps none more so than in the tall ostrich feathers that adorn so many of the plates within the *Gallery of Fashion*, as they do in the plate of the three figures (Fig. 2.33). Although feathers were a popular accessory in both France and England from the 1770s onwards and are represented with equal popularity in French fashion illustrations from the period, those represented by Heideloff relate to a 'curious English fashion', whereby one or more ostrich feathers are placed vertically as part of a turban or *chiffonet*.[350] First introduced by the Duchess of Devonshire, these feathers were reintroduced as part of fashionable dress in the 1790s likely on account of their ability

[349] Aileen Ribeiro states that the classical line of English dress in the 1790s was 'diluted with fussy decoration or the kind of historical features which Englishwomen have always loved'. For additional information on the differences between British and French versions of neo-classical fashion during the Revolutionary decade of the 1790s, see Ribeiro, *Fashion in the French Revolution*, 129.
[350] Mackrell, 102.

to complement the simple classicizing silhouette of fashionable dress, by serving to provide wearers with additional height, and emphasizing the linearity of the cut of such dresses by lengthening them.

From their inception, such tall feathered coiffures were ridiculed on account of their perceived excessiveness, and they continued to be the subject of satire in the 1790s as shown in a satirical print of 1795 by James Gillray of the Duchess of Rutland and an unidentified female relative (Fig. 2.38). In this popularly printed caricature, the Duchess of Rutland wears a voluminous gown with drapery twisted around her waist in an incongruous and over-embellished way accompanied by an unrealistically shorter female companion, whose small frame is made ridiculous by a violent profusion of red feathers and a ridiculously oversized fan that is nearly half the figure's size.[351] The title of the print, 'Characters in High Life', parodies both the perceived ridiculousness of high fashion, and most particularly the high headdresses that every figure shown behind the Duchess is wearing. Shortly before this print was released, Gillray created a print that sought to parody the classicizing fashions that Lady Charlotte Campbell sought to popularize, which she accomplished in no small part through her patronage of the *Gallery of Fashion*. In 'Modern Elegance' (Fig. 2.39) Lady Charlotte Campbell is shown seated in a chair that conforms to a rather overstuffed representation of her body which serves to condemn such form-fitting clothes as unflattering. Her sexual availability is suggested by the way in which the dress both gapes and follows the profile her legs, while she looks in mirror, with her face reflecting a hardly classical profile beneath the ridiculous towering feathers that take up nearly one third of the picture. Less than a year later, Lady Charlotte's costume is again satirized (Fig. 2.40), with such a satire taken to new extremes: standing in profile, her naked body is revealed through the sides of her clinging dress, while her breasts hang fully exposed. Stripped of all embellishment, the only adornments Lady Charlotte possesses is a single red ribbon tied to draw attention to her exposed hip and a triad of multi-coloured feathers of increasing heights that balances against a contrasting red *chiffonet*. The title of this

[351] The amplified hairstyles of the later eighteenth century are the subject of a special issue in *Eighteenth-Century* Studies. See especially Rosenthal, 'Raising Hair', and Powell and Roach, 'Big Hair'.

print, ‘Ladies Dress, as it Soon will Be’, parodies both the individual figure of Lady Charlotte, as well as the fashionable women who took her lead in following her.[352]

These biting critiques are not surprising, for as Gillian Russell has demonstrated, high headdresses were transgressive on a number of levels, notably on account of their ability to amplify the importance of wearers, with the head’s long-established conception as a site of authority.[353] It is perhaps for this reason that feathers obtain such dramatic significance in a scathing satirical print of 1796 critiquing the *Gallery of Fashion* (Fig. 2.41). This plate contains five figures, each described by a critique that references the origin of the style ‘a la Turk’ or its wearer ‘a la St Giles’, thus staging a two-pronged assault on both the foreign vocabulary of fashion, and its immoral consequences, with its association with the lower classes. While this print might on the one hand be seen to criticize the journal on account of its circulation within a wider realm of society while also parodying what were seen as some of the more excessive fashions of the time, what this print really seeks to accomplish is to undermine the authority women of fashion sought to evoke through such fashions by equating them with everything antagonistic to the power these women sought to shape their identity upon. For such fashions created a group identity for women of fashion *as* women of fashion.[354] Moreover, when placed across the *chiffonets* and twisted turbans that his women so often wear (Fig. 36), these feathers have an undeniably Orientalizing effect, effectively conjuring up images of Indian turbans covered with fine jewels and topped with feathers. These feathers, then, are the crowns of Empire; visible reminders of the material and metaphorical source for the authority that these women so confidently assert.

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[352] Lady Charlotte Campbell’s role as a leader of fashion is established through the mention of her costume in several publications. However, such mentions were sometimes less than flattering. Her early adoption of the lighter-weight form-fitting dresses of the 1790s resulted in an unfortunate accident in March of 1793, when it was noted a few ladies of distinction, including Lady Charlotte Campbell and the Marchioness of Abercorn, were in Hyde Park when it was ‘boisterously visited by the gales that bring in the Equinox.’ It was then, in ‘trusting their graceful forms to the winds’, they had the unfortunate instance of ‘shewing [sic] somewhat more of them, than could otherwise have happened’. *Morning Herald* (London, England), Monday, March 4, 1793; Issue 4357.

[353] Gillian Russell discusses the fashion for feathered headdresses and the significance of high hairstyles more at length in Russell, *Women, Sociability, and Theatre in Georgian London*.

[354] Russell, 180.

Signs of Britain's growing interest in global trade and its dominance in world affairs are everywhere to be found in the *Gallery of Fashion*. The French had previously recognized the value of naming fashion items, realizing that even when a clothing item remained the same, a change of name created a sense of novelty and variety that helped to stimulate fresh demand.[355] While the French had previously gravitated towards names that conjured up the Rococo fascination with a pastoral ideal and images of feminine frivolity, the *Gallery of Fashion* is full of accessories whose names imply a global source of inspiration, with endless descriptions of *robes a la turque*, Mandarine Chinese bonnets, Nankeen coloured gloves, and of red, blue and green 'Morocco slippers'.[356] Such descriptions conjure images of the foreign places from which such fashions were loosely based, and because of this their female wearers' wardrobes were liberated by the romance of the exotic. These terms also must be understood in light of Britain's growing consciousness of its rising place in the world, with such names undoubtedly conveying to many of the *Gallery of Fashion's* readers an image of the spoils of overseas trade that daily arrived at London's docks and included many of the clothing trades' raw materials.[357]

Fashions for accessories changed far more rapidly than those for gowns, and it is possibly for this reason that they occupy such a central place in the descriptions that accompany every figure in the *Gallery of Fashion*.[358] Accessories endowed gowns with a sense of time and place through their references to exotic and historic places, and for this reason, they can be said to be of crucial importance to reading a woman's ensemble. This is particularly the case since women had an arguably more direct role in the fashioning of their accessories than they did with other aspects of their dress, with many readers looking to the *Gallery of Fashion* for inspiration on how to embellish their headdresses or embroider the border of a scarf.[359] It was in their arrangement of such accessories – of colour, pattern, and adornment – that women exercised their privileged

[355] Jones, 191.
[356] Names like these became customary in later periodicals such as Ackermann's *Repository of Dress*, who was himself a subscriber to the *Gallery of Fashion*, but names that conjure up exotic locations were not popular in the French press, and their popularity appears to originate with the *Gallery of Fashion*.
[357] Porter, *The Chinese Taste*; Zuroski, *A Taste for China*; and Yang, *Performing China*.
[358] For information on the increased pace of the market for accessories during the eighteenth century see, Smith, 'Fast Fashion'.
[359] Chrisman-Campbell, 'The Face of Fashion'.

position as arbiters of taste, while the appearance of such fashion items and their associations with foreign lands and distant times allowed wearers to signal specific messages about their identity. In the popularization of a particular fashion accessory, as in the case of feathered headdresses, such fashions both shaped their wearers' identity on account of their visibility within the public sphere, while also serving to establish their identity as part of a particular community of taste.

A slightly subtler reminder of Britain's growing imperial power in these prints than this process of naming these numerous Orientalizing fashions is the inclusion of the goods imported from distant lands themselves: 'fine India callico', Chinese Imperial silk, and shoes made from Spanish leather. The *Gallery of Fashion* also represents an imported commodity so naturalized into British culture that it was no longer presented as a foreign novelty, but as a very symbol of the British people and their civility.[360] Taking tea was synonymous with English gentility, and it carried with it particularly feminine connotations by the eighteenth century. Indeed, this ritual was so feminized by the 1790s that the tea table began to be considered as a locus for feminine power, and it was the place at which a woman reigned supreme in her household.[361] With this in mind, it is unsurprising that this important feminine ritual appears in the pages of the *Gallery of Fashion* and countless fashion illustrations thereafter.

In a plate entitled 'Two Ladies at Breakfast in their Dressing Room', of November 1794 (Fig. 2.42), Heideloff represents two women taking tea in fashionable morning dress with the private space of the women's dressing room. A small oval table at the centre of the picture is set with an expensive and highly coveted silver tea setting. Both women wear fashionable white morning dress. At left, a figure sits in a small neoclassical chair with her body turned towards the picture plane allowing her voluminous petticoat to be fully on display. Her lap is full of the folds of her muslin peignoir, a loose jacket that is tied with a single red ribbon just under her bust. She holds a letter in her hands, and looks intently across the table at her companion, who turns as if to acknowledge the viewer with a smile. Her hand gently opens as she approaches the table, a gesture that both acknowledges her interaction with her companion and delivery of the news, and,

[360] Ray, 'Storm in a Teacup? Visualizing tea consumption in the British empire' in *Art and the British empire*, ed. Barringer, Quilley, and Fordham, 205-222.
[361] Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects* and Ellis, Coulton and Mauger, *Empire of Tea*.

with her other hand placed towards the centre of her body as if to hold her robe, a feeling of anticipation and a sense of happiness in oneself. This illustration is as much about the fashionable morning dresses it so delicately represents as the exchange of information as part of polite society – a pleasurable activity that placed these women, and indeed, the readers engaging in this narrative, into a network bound together by female companionship.

We can only speculate as to the conversation that is taking place between these two women and the contents of the letter that has been received and is in the process of being read, however, what we can discern just from looking at this image is that its contents are pleasing to the woman at right, who the letter presumably pertains to. Her smile and cautiously engaging gestures suggest that she is not only pleased by what is being read to her, but that this information has in some way given her a sense of pride. Whether this letter was from a close family friend, a distant relative, or a potential suitor is unknown. However, what this letter symbolizes is the importance of women and the nurturing of relationships as part of genteel behaviour. Through the rituals of visiting, the arranging of dinners, and even the rituals of the tea table in one's private dressing room, women played a valuable role not only in extending the visibility of their family's status, but in actively enhancing the power accorded to it.[362]

Many scholars have discussed the power dynamics at play between men and women or a group of family members at tea, arguing that at the tea table women reigned omnipotent. It was here that in serving this special beverage, with their 'ivory hands mov(ing) with noiseless daintiness' as they poured the warm liquid into a teacup that they conveyed their good taste.[363] In order for such a ritual to take place, however, a woman must first reign supreme of her own body, with the liquid beverage itself serving as a reminder of a woman's fluid nature. The female body has been historically associated with fluidity, liquidity and water for centuries. However, by adopting the appropriate curve to their wrist as they held a teacup, or modestly bending their neck as the tea streamed forth from their carefully selected teapot, a woman ceremoniously

[362] These rituals of polite female behaviour are discussed in detail by Amanda Vickery. See Vickey, *Behind Closed Doors*.
[363] Kowaleski-Wallace, 20.

offered up an image of her own 'essential nature' controlled.[364] Moreover, her mastery of this highly regulated ritual also symbolized on an even grander scale her mastery of this colonial resource. As Kowaleski-Wallace has convincingly argued, 'Orientalism was brought home in feminine hands' during this moment. The woman in control of serving this imported beverage positioned herself in a place where 'the East would yield to the West.'[365]

The tea table was also a place in which a woman offered herself up for inspection, demonstrating that her fluid nature was firmly in check and regulated by the appropriate manners befitting her social station, while also exhibiting her feminine charms as she served it with grace and elegance. This was communicated not only through her gestures, however, but also to a significant extent through her costume. The loose-fitting robes of informal day dress, a very English fashion in and of themselves, were, during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries often white as they are in Heideloff's print of 1794. Whiteness not only conjured up the classical statuary that informed the line of 1790s couture, but also the purity of its female wearers. One might consider the way in which the loose-fitting robes of fashionable undress both mirror and resist woman's fluid nature.[366] Imagine for a moment the sound of a dress such as that featured in Heideloff's print as it gently drapes along a floor; its lightweight cotton fabric gracefully following its slender young wearer without a sound. In this moment, a woman's costume and demeanour mirrored that of a stream or a rippling body of water, yet as part of her it remained firmly under her control. Meanwhile, the light-coloured fabric of her dress would have not only emphasized her innocence, but also her purity, both racially as belonging to the pure enlightened race of Britons, and in terms of cleanliness as its colour resists any suggestion of heavy manual labour or the bodily excrements that a woman's fluid body naturally dispels. The issue of race is also problematically brought to attention through Heideloff's inclusion of a sugar bowl; a highly politicized decision given that 1794 was a year in which many women abstained

[364] Kowaleski-Wallace, 21-39.
[365] Kowaleski-Wallace, 60.
[366] See Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race* and Bindman, *Ape to Apollo*. For a more specific case study into whiteness in women's dress in relation to conceptions of race, see Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar, and the Culture of Refinement*.

from taking sugar in their tea as a statement against the cruelty imposed against those slaves who had helped to produce it.[367]

The tea table was one of the few places in which women would gather and indulge in exclusive conversation, and it was also a location where a woman's place within her social circle was exhibited and enacted through the important set of gestures that this ritual required. Power relations between mothers and daughters, and between friends and relatives were reinforced in this normalizing of the upper-class female body.[368] This was demonstrated not only through the demure body language of the server, as she asserted her power over the service while perfectly submitting to her role, but also through an exercise of her good taste in her selection of the tea service, and of her costume.[369] By displaying such material goods, a woman communicated her identity through her choice of china pattern, and most especially, her dress in this personal space where female relationships were codified and nurtured. In representing these scenes of polite sociability in the taking of tea, Heideloff represents the daily practices of polite sociable behaviour which enabled women to shape how they were seen. However, it was arguably within the open spaces of the English countryside rather than the distinctly feminine space of a woman's dressing room that Heideloff is able to transport his readers to a space in which female sociability is used to define an ideal image of British dress that resonated with his network of subscribers' ambitions most fully.[370]

III. The Politics of the Picturesque

So abundant are images of country estates and garden settings in the *Gallery of Fashion* that Vyvyan Holland and others after her have noted that most of the journal's plates take the outdoors as their setting.[371] Although access to the full print run reveals this not

[367] For information on this important political issue, see Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar, and the Culture of Refinement*.
[368] Kowaleski-Wallace.
[369] The importance of demonstrating taste through the acquisition of decorative objects is discussed at some length in Ruth Kenny's recent discussion of women's dressing rooms. See Ruth Kenny, 'Apartments that are not too large': pastel portraits and the spaces of femininity in the English country house,' in *Placing Faces*, eds. Perry, Retford and Vibert.
[370] Jon Mee elaborates on the power of readers' networks in Mee, *Conversable Worlds*.
[371] Holland, 43 and Mackrell, 102.

to be the case, Holland is right to draw attention to how many images adopt an outdoor setting, particularly as the many plates which visualize women in outdoor pursuits comprise some of the most visually striking and detailed of the journal's images. This is not surprising for a publication that sought to represent 'that style of elegance, and that original taste, which is so peculiar to British Ladies', as the British love of nature and the countryside was long attributed to be a central component to what defined 'Britishness'.[372] Rousseau and his French contemporaries found much to enthuse about British life, but what they were most drawn to was the comparative lack of privilege and simplicity which they believed was expressed through the British fondness for humble fabrics such as wool, linen and cotton.[373] Chief among the garments most associated with this British style was the *redingote*, or riding dress, which women like the notorious horsewoman Lady Lade wore both on their country estates and in London's parks while taking exercise and enjoying the beauty of the British landscape, as she notoriously did in Hyde Park during the season.[374] Represented at least once in the journal's pages in an image (Fig. 2.43) that owed much to an earlier painted portrait by George Stubbs (Fig. 2.44), Lady Lade exemplified a particular type of aristocratic femininity encapsulated by the ideal of the 'country gentlewoman' which can be said to be a persistent motif within the British imagining of ideal femininity. Thanks to the visibility of women such as Lady Lade, the raw materials used to compose such dresses and the simple styles that a life spent in the countryside inspired had by the 1790s come to symbolize the highly coveted quality of British liberty on a global stage, and it is perhaps for this reason that Heideloff dedicated extensive coverage to images of women actively engaged in outdoor pursuits. Although the picturesque might be imagined to be a masculinist mode, given that it privileges property and male ownership of it, by the later eighteenth-century it had taken on increasingly more feminized associations in its emphasis on variety and surface detail. As I now wish to explore, women utilized picturesque theories of ideal representation not only through the shaping of their estate's landscapes, but as Ann Bermingham has argued, in their cultivation of an ideal image of themselves through fashionable dress.

[372] Heideloff, 'Advertisement', *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I (London: Nicholas Heideloff, 1794).
[373] Mackrell, 80.
[374] Mackrell, 81.

A plate with a particularly detailed outdoor setting from September of 1794 (Fig. 2.45) encapsulates many of the ideals associated with the British countryside and the simple fashions associated with it which are so crucial to understanding the values that shaped the *Gallery of Fashion*. Through an adoption of many of the visual motifs found in the tradition of representing the British landscape in art, most especially in relation to portraiture, Heideloff sought to naturalize the styles of the 1790s as distinctively British, and in the process endow his wearers with the cultural authority that such a merit provided. Standing just to the right of the centre of the picture plane, a single figure wears a white round gown made of lawn cotton equipped with a cheerful white and yellow gispy hat and jonquille coloured gloves. A long yellow sash tied just below her bust falls in gentle ripples behind her as if to mirror her graceful progress across the landscape. She holds a green parasol in front of her – a sign of her enjoyment of the outdoors, while carrying a small bunch of freshly picked flowers – a tribute to her delicate femininity. These bright accessories are complemented by a striking black netted cloak and a single black ostrich feather, which are the only other adornments in what is otherwise a simple yet very chic dress suitable for morning walks and afternoon strolls. Behind her is the expansive prospect of a British country estate, with rolling hills, a manmade lake and trees leading the eye towards a palatial manor house. This image at once represents the ideal of British aristocratic femininity as one that prizes simplicity and a close relationship to landscape, while highlighting this woman's status as an extension of the powerful symbol embodied by the British landed estate.

The importance of pastoral romance to definitions of ideal aristocratic femininity had long been explored as part of the British art tradition, as can be seen in portraits of *The Duchess of Rutland* by Reynolds (Fig. 2.1), *Mrs. Parkyns* by Hoppner (Fig. 2.4), and the *Duchess of Hamilton* (Fig. 0.30) and her daughter *Lady Charlotte Campbell* (Fig. 2.34). Each of these full-length portraits present a single figure in a romanticized pastoral setting of wooded glades, secluded retreats and thick forests. Such settings served as appropriate backdrops for the allegorical roles that these sitters adopted, but they also helped to convey the fantasy of an idealised pastoral life that was so crucial to conceptions of British gentile behaviour during the eighteenth century. The habit of walking, particularly alone on a country estate, was considered to be an important opportunity for reflection, and it was a fundamental rhythm of aristocratic country

life.[375] These activities were considered to be a calming counterpoint to the bustle and pomp of the city and because of this, portraits set within idealized landscape settings helped to communicate this greatly valued practice within British culture, particularly as they were designed to hang in the country estates at which such pleasures were to be enjoyed.[376] However, never far from the surface of such imaginings was an underlying sense of ownership and possession, which penetrated even the most fantastical representation of the British landscape in the art of the time.[377] Its presence is palpably felt even in the images of upper-class femininity's imagined activities within the *Gallery of Fashion.*

Even when divorced from a particular individual, as in the *Gallery of Fashion*'s plate from 1794 (Fig. 2.45), representations of the country house served as a powerful symbol of familial and dynastic identity. The permanent home of family portraits, it was a place that reflected generations of a family's legacy.[378] Aristocratic families were identified by the name of their country estate as much as by their surname – the Duchess of Rutland was a member of the Manners family of Belvoir Castle, while the Duchess of Hamilton was equally associated with Hamilton Palace. Despite English landscape's connotations of liberty and lack of privilege within contemporary discourse, the English landscape also conveyed a strong message of power and influence, for it served as the fundamental source by which the ruling classes owed their dominance. As the landowning class became increasingly powerful in the eighteenth century, property and land became a vital measure of status.[379] For the aristocracy and gentry, their rural properties represented the source of their wealth and pride. At the centre of these estates was the country house, at once the focal point of the estate and a representation of a family as part of the ruling class. Those who owned land and those who did not were assigned different roles by the landscape, for it was through land ownership that male Britons were granted the right to political citizenship, and in some cases a seat in parliament.[380] Heideloff's decision to include a meticulous rendering of an expansive baroque house not only situated this figure in a particular environment of rural

[375] See Hallett, 'Pall Mall Pastoral', in *Reynolds: Portraiture in Action*.
[376] Perry, Retford, Vibert and Lyons, *Placing Faces*, 3.
[377] *Placing Faces*.
[378] *Placing Faces*, 3.
[379] *Placing Faces*, 16.
[380] Rosenthal, *Prospects for the Nation*, 17.

enjoyment then, but it served as a reminder of the distinctive landowning community that such fashions were intended to represent.

An equally powerful symbol of Britishness is to be found in Heideloff's rendering of the English landscape itself in this same image (Fig. 2.45) The picture plane is composed of three diagonally intersecting triangular spaces – of a rolling hill lined with trees in the foreground, of a placid lake crossed by a neoclassical bridge in the middle ground, and a distant passage of land in the background crowned by the figure's own palatial country house. Heideloff's very construction of this image can be said to reflect picturesque practices of viewing, which involved the appreciation of landscape under the same terms as one would a painting.[381] His construction of the landscape into these three registers, like the irregular placement of the trees throughout the grounds, was meant to appear natural and uncalculated. English landscapes such as this, constructed as they were against the rigid symmetries of French landscape design, were considered to represent the same value of English liberty embodied by the simple fabrics and dresses contained in the *Gallery of Fashion*.[382]

Just as landscape was a surface to be decorated by trees, winding streams and characterful rocks, the simple white neoclassical dresses of the 1790s can be said to be a canvas whereby women were able to construct an ideal image of oneself.[383] Picturesque viewing practices which delighted in detail encouraged the appreciation of change, variety, and the juxtaposition of contrasting textures, colours and materials. In teaching people to look at the landscape, the Picturesque as an ideology became a tool for appreciating all aspects of visual experience, and for women it empowered them to engage more thoughtfully with the arrangement of their surroundings and their costumes.[384] It was perhaps for this reason that English women's dress came to promote visually interesting contrasts such as those found in this plate's use of black against white, yellow mixed with green, of smooth lawn cotton and knobby netting, of tall ostrich feathers and petite floral bouquets. As the *Mirror of the Graces* noted, 'an

[381] Symes, *The Picturesque and the Later Georgian Garden*, 8.
[382] Symes, *The Picturesque and the Later Georgian Garden*.
[383] Bermingham, 'The Picturesque and Ready-to-Wear Femininity', *The Politics of the Picturesque*, 82.
[384] Bermingham, 'The Picturesque and Ready-to-Wear Femininity', 81-2.

English woman has the extensive privilege of arraying herself in whatever garb may best suit her fancy. The fashion of every nation and every era are open to her choice.'[385] A sophisticated use of the elements of dress from different nations and times endowed women with a powerful language of feminine expression, which enhanced her sense of identity just as the carefully composed Edenic world that she so gracefully adorned.

Given that the English landscape was strongly valued as a space of feminine retreat in British art, it is perhaps surprising that so many of the images in the *Gallery of Fashion* represent women in groups out of doors rather than on their own. This must certainly be accounted for by Heideloff's need to represent multiple figures in order to visualize multiple toilettes for his subscribers. However, even if these group representations were intended to serve a particular function, the resulting images still can be said to present a striking departure from the English tradition of artmaking. With the rare exception of group portraits of women such as *The Montgomery Sisters Adorning a Term of Hymen* (Fig. 2.36), women were rarely represented together on the same canvas. When represented in groups, women were generally painted as matriarchs of their family, as in the portrait of the Marchioness of Buckingham (Fig. 2.21), alongside their husband, or as adoring mothers cradling their children. Images of non-related groups of women are virtually non-existent during the eighteenth century, with the rare exception of handful of popular images such as fashion plates produced for *The Lady's Magazine* (Fig. 2.46). Thomas Gainsborough's iconic painting of fashionable society, *The Mall at St. James* (Fig. 2.47), gives ample space and attention to the frothy toilettes of women of the *beau monde*, however, they are still accompanied by the careful placement of a couple of male admirers and a handful of energetic canine companions. In visualizing polite groupings of women engaged in such sociable activities, Heideloff not merely represented the fashions of the day, but in the picturing of such groupings signalled the importance of women's networks to fashionable dress.

Despite Heideloff's commitment to British fashions, sociability and estates, the closest artistic precedent for the polite sociability of women in beautiful garden settings was arguably to be found outside of the European canon of artmaking altogether. Indeed, these images potentially draw on the delicately painted images of groups of women on

[385] As quoted in Bermingham, 'The Picturesque and Ready-to-Wear Femininity', 102.

the same vessels of Chinese porcelain that filled many women's dressing rooms during the eighteenth century. The collection of Chinese porcelain in England first began with Queen Mary, but many affluent collectors such as the Duchess of Portland and Lady Betty Germaine followed suit shortly thereafter.[386] By the second half of the eighteenth century, 'china mania' had its followers from nearly every social stratum in England, and in the year 1778 alone, eight vessels returned to Britain carrying an astounding 345 tons of porcelain.[387] Given that chinaware was an important accoutrement for the female dominated ritual of taking of tea and that its glistening surfaces were notoriously fragile, it is unsurprising that this imported luxury item carried distinctly feminine associations.[388] Despite the fact that chinaware was often concentrated in women's intimate spaces, Heideloff would have undoubtedly been exposed to far greater quantities of Chinese porcelain than he ever would have been in France or Germany. Several of his subscribers were notable collectors of Chinese porcelain, most notably Lady Banks, whose collection was famously housed in her estate's former dairy, which she remodelled as a spectacular china cabinet.[389] It is possible that Heideloff would have taken the lead from his subscribers' tastes in collecting and sought to accommodate their artistic preferences. However, even without a direct point of contact between the illustrator and his subscribers, Heideloff was part of an artistic community in which the aesthetic merits of Chinese art were heavily debated by connoisseurs of taste from David Hume to William Hogarth – a debate that was also shaped in no small part by the activities of women collectors like Lady Banks.[390]

As a visually astute person in tune with his surroundings, it is unlikely that Heideloff would not have spent some time speculating on the different modes of representation to be observed on the sides of these porcelain vessels. As mentioned earlier, images of women in landscape settings were rare in the western tradition, and as others have pointed out before me, where such images exist the woman is almost inevitably either being 'groped, seduced, or raped by a lascivious male or suckled by the son of god.'[391]

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[386] Porter, 57.
[387] Berg, 56.
[388] Kowaleski-Wallace and Porter both discuss the feminization of Chinoiserie.
[389] The story of Lady Banks' collection and those of many other female collectors of Chinese porcelain is recounted in Pierson, *Collectors, Collections and Museums*, 49 and Kerr, 'Chinese Porcelain at Spring Grove Dairy: Sir Joseph Banks's Manuscript', 30-4.
[390] Porter, 79-90.
[391] Porter, 60.

Heideloff and his subscribers would have certainly been drawn to imagery so far removed from the western canon of representation on the sides of Chinese porcelain, where women are shown relaxing in small groups in garden-like settings, unfussed by the pressures of the outside world, and in enjoyment of each other's company as they played board games, danced, read, or admired works of art. By the late Tang dynasty (618-907), images of groups of women such as these had become so common that they formed an entire genre within the tradition of Chinese art known as *shinuhua*, or 'paintings of women'.[392] Within these images, there is an almost complete absence of the opposite sex, aside from the occasional elderly sage or a group of young boys.[393] As the genre's name implies, these are truly images solely devoted to the representation of women, just as fashion illustration had become by the 1790s, with the *Gallery of Fashi*on paving the way.

The Victoria and Albert Museum is today one of many institutions within the United Kingdom that possesses outstanding collections of East Asian porcelain, most especially originating from the 'porcelain city', Jingdezhen, which was once the largest industrial operation in the world.[394] The majority of these beautiful objects were once part of British collections, and a striking number of these objects relate to the Chinese tradition of *shinuhua*, or paintings of women. *Shinuhua* can be found on nearly every kind of porcelain object in production, from jars (Fig. 2.48) to plaques (Fig. 2.49), tall vases (Fig. 2.50) to dainty tea cups (Fig. 2.51). They are rendered in the deep cobalt and white so popular in Europe (Fig. 2.52), as well as in soft pastel greens, reds, and yellows (Figs. 2.53 & 2.54), which are sometimes accentuated with gilding (Fig. 2.55). Although the types of scenes they represent vary from enjoying the serene surroundings of a terrace to playing chess in sheltered garden settings, all of these images share in their celebration of female sociability, insulated from the world of men. Moreover, it is through these images' non-naturalistic use of space, which winds around the surface of objects leading its figures to float within barely defined different registers, coupled with the exotic nature of the figures and their settings, that European viewers of these objects are transported to a place of fantasy and retreat. Rather than representing the real spaces

[392] Porter, 62.
[393] Porter, 61.
[394] Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure,* 61.

of the familiar, viewers are invited to explore an alternative, almost otherworldly realm of female sociability.

The visual similarities between Heideloff's numerous fashion illustrations depicting women in garden settings and those characteristic depictions of women in utopian garden oases on Chinese porcelain are so striking that such visual evidence alone is enough to suggest that he would have taken such objects as a source of inspiration for the way in which he imagined his fashionably dressed English women. A striking example of such a print was included in the *Gallery of Fashion* in August of 1797 (Fig. 2.56), in which women in morning dresses like those depicted in the 1795 print of women taking tea (Fig. 2.42), are instead shown arm in arm as they wander through a rocky garden. Two women are framed at the centre of the picture plane against a backdrop of irregularly formed rocks, which fill more than a third of the image and consequently present a strong feeling of horizontality which gives the image an exotic quality on account of this unusual compositional device. Standing arm in arm, one figure is represented completely in profile, while her companion turns towards her but does not make direct eye contact. This image is striking not only because of the incredible juxtaposition of bright splashes of colour against the typical white muslin of their morning dresses, but also because of the way in which the brilliantly contrasting pink and yellow, and blue and green are showcased against a garden backdrop so reminiscent of those delicately painted on Chinese vessels.

Although the fashions' names hardly betray any possible source of Asian influence in the illustration's accompanying description, which describes the figure at right's dress as a 'Dress a la Wurtemberg', this dress carries a distinctly Asian quality. Her close-fitting 'mellon ribbed hat of blue crape' is similar in form to the Mandarine bonnets worn by other figures, while her dress, which forms an S-curve as a blue ribbon wraps diagonally across her bust and is continued at the border of her dress, which she gathers up in folds under her arm.[395] She carries a brilliant emerald green parasol, which she opens directly to her right, forming a contrasting diagonal line that gives off an air of nonchalance and once again complements the picturesque aesthetic of irregularity. However, it is the rocky backdrop, an element of actual picturesque gardening practices

[395] Heideloff, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. IV (August 1797).

informed by Chinese landscape models, which transports viewers of this image so firmly to a place of fantasy and retreat, much like the viewing of similar images found on Chinese vessels accomplished.[396]

Heideloff's illustrations certainly represent women from a very different world who shared very different types of social relationships, daily habits and cultural ideas from those covering Chinese vessels, however, a careful viewing of these images exposes more similarities to the illustrations found in the *Gallery of Fashion* than one might expect of this pillar of English fashion journalism. Take for example two further images of women in outdoor settings (Figs. 2.57 & 2.58), this times in pairs of two and three figures in lush garden scenes sitting on a bench, both of which feature groups of women reading and enjoying one and other's company. For all their differences, these figures possess the same serene quality of pleasant sociability as the groups of women playing chess, drinking tea, and dressing themselves do in *shinuhua* paintings. Just as in the images commonly shown on porcelain vessels, these scenes are all framed within a distinctive space which is often bounded by architectural details such as the lines of a terrace or plants.

This mode of distinguishing space, less by perspectival devices, and more through a flattening of space into a single layer of overlapping elements, is very different from the deep recessional backdrops of Grand Manner portraits and conversation pieces. Heideloff constructs both of these images with this distinctive flattening effect, which is accomplished through the dark tree that emerges diagonally in front of the standing figure in the first image (Fig. 2.57) serving to define the space that they occupy. At first glance, the other image (Fig. 2.58), which is full of rich details of trees and rose bushes, a beautiful wrought iron bench and two seated women, appears to set the figures in a deeply secluded garden setting. However, this fact is achieved by a very flat sketchy outline of the overall shape of greenery in the backdrop, much like the splotches of colour used to indicate the shape of trees and rocks in the recesses of space on Chinese porcelain. With this flattening of space, Heideloff is able to position his figures' toilettes as the central subject of these images, rather than allowing them to fade away as they do in more naturalistically rendered representations of figures and the spaces that they

[396] Symes, 21.

occupy. Yet aside from this crucial accomplishment, Heideloff's particular use of space has another slightly more allusive effect. Divorced from the customary method of naturalistically rendering space, viewers are invited to explore a different type of aesthetic experience, which I wish to argue is transportive precisely on account of its separation from the real world. The resulting effect communicates images of female empowerment, in which women retreat together to find pleasure and sociable exchange in each other's company.

Rarely in the *Gallery of Fashion* do the settings featured in its illustrations take on any semblance of a realistic use of space, with the rare exceptions notably to be found in the more detailed representations of the English country estate. The majority of the journal's prints feature a non-descript backdrop with a few choice elements in the form of furniture or a sloping terrain to suggest the location in which the scenes transpire. Even when the mode of representation and fashions represented are less directly related to Chinese porcelain, the overall effect of this approach to representation is the same. Through a combination of non-naturalistic and de-individualized representation, female viewers of Heideloff's prints may have been transported to the same imaginary place that they retreated to when viewing the parallel images of female sociability that filled their china cabinets. David Porter has convincingly argued that images of female sociability found on Chinese porcelain catalysed 'new possibilities for (female) self-awareness and fulfilment', contributing to attitudes that enabled the development of female love poetry.[397] The same might be said to be true for stimulating new means of visualizing the world of fashion as a place in which women expressed their inner aspirations through the powerful feminine tool of dress. Heideloff's figures – and by association his subscribers – emerge then as the embodiment of a current taste that amalgamates a broad range of cultural references.

As mentioned earlier, particular fashions, such as the fashion for high headdresses, empowered the women who wore them, both in conveying their status as active participants in fashionable society, while situating them as part of the powerful group of women that led it. Such fashions and the women who wore them were caricatured in the press precisely on account of their association with the enhanced visibility and influence

[397] Porter, 73.

of women across all aspects of society, from the influencing of trends in art and design, to the electing of government ministers.[398] Through fashionable dress's associations with the public roles that eighteenth-century women increasingly adopted, fashionable dress was viewed by many as a sign of society's increased feminization and its consequent decay.[399] Heideloff's journal made a vital contribution to the promotion of English fashion as an important national industry, but it was also crucial in shaping how the network of women who composed fashionable society as represented through their dress were perceived. Central to this accomplishment was Heideloff's representation of women engaged in polite sociable activities, which was carefully balanced between their private and public roles.

Perhaps the single clearest determinant between these two conflicting, yet essentially corresponding roles was the setting in which Heideloff chose to represent his figures, with landscape scenes nearly always serving as a foil to the representation of women in London's fashionable venues. Every month, subscribers to Heideloff's journal received two meticulously illustrated plates, which contained between the two of them on average between three and five figures. Although as one might expect it is certainly the case that these plates were positioned to represent figures wearing costumes intended for different times of day, what is perhaps a more accurate differentiator was the balancing of private versus public roles. As can be seen in the many pairs of prints issued through the *Gallery of Fashion*'s publication, this was chiefly accomplished through the picturing of women both indoors and outdoors. Take for example a pair of prints issued in June of 1795, which included both a characteristic image of *A Lady going out on horseback* (Fig. 2.59), followed by an image of three *Ladies in the Great Concert Room* (Fig. 2.60). Here the public role of women as connoisseurs of music is

[398] I am indebted to Elaine Chalus's study of women's involvement within a type of political activity she defines as social politics, and Gillian Russell's concept of 'domiciliary sociability', in her study of women's active roles in the public sphere through the attendance of balls, and the hosting of other events, which she defines as falling under Elaine Chalus's umbrella of social politics. See Russell, *Women, Sociability, and the Theatre in London*; Chalus, 'Elite Women, Social Politics, and the Political World of Late Eighteenth-Century England', and *Elite Women in English Political Life c.1754-1790*.

[399] For the association of social malaise and the feminization of culture, see McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze* and Guest, *Small Change*.

placated by an image of an active British country gentlewoman, dressed in scarlet cloth with 'York tan gloves'.[400]

A similar juxtaposition of images was released just two months later in August of 1795, when Heideloff represented the three graces of Ranelagh (Fig. 2.10) alongside a virtuous representation of a mother and her young daughter at their country estate (Fig. 2.61). Raneleagh remained one of London's chief arenas for sociable gatherings, and it was here in the glittering surroundings of this pleasure garden that women paraded their status through up-to-the-minute costumes such as those which are so delicately rendered by Heideloff. Dressed serenely in white muslin, taffeta and with the towering symbol of their status as women of fashion in the form of impeccably tall white ostrich feathers that crown their heads, Heideloff again transports his viewers to an imagined realm whereby these highborn ladies become the graces incarnate. Yet the similar qualities of white fabric and silver embellishments do more than just allude to the mythological narratives that so ennobled women in British portraiture: they also serve to emphasize these figures' relationship to one another.

In addition to being poised to show off their fashions, Heideloff also positions these figures so that they are directly engaged with one another. The figures at left and right make direct eye contact with one another, while the figure at the centre looks to the figure at left whose arm she takes. Although the left-hand figure does not meet the central figure's gaze, her head directly mirrors her companion's, giving the illusion that they are in fact looking at one another. Each of these carefully posed interactions serve as a visual reminder that it was through their relationship with others that women both affirmed theirs and their family's status. Even in the public setting of London's pleasure gardens which were often thronged with people, these women remain intensely focused on each other. As Hannah Greig advances, it was through 'the cultivation and display of interpersonal connections and networks rather than merely the ownership of property that underpinned what it meant to be a member of London's 'world of fashion'.[401] It was through these networks, which were primarily built through the same rituals of

[400] Heideloff, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II (June 1795).
[401] Greig, 20.

polite sociability that Heideloff represents here, that a woman's place in society was secured.

Recognizing the potential threat images such as this posed to those who would criticize women's increasingly dominant role in the public sphere, Heideloff mollified any fears that such images provoked through the proliferation of images that feature women socializing in the idealized surroundings of the British country estate and its gardens. In a companionate image, Heideloff gives form to the exact foil of the active woman in society: that of a mother with her young daughter as they walk together through the rolling hills of their estate's grounds (Fig. 2.61). Both mother and daughter are dressed in white, with the mother's white cloak gracefully floating in the breeze behind her. Perhaps suggestive of the shelter which she gently provides her daughter, she tenderly takes her daughter's hand while looking towards her with a peaceful expression that resonates with her love for her child. Their perfectly proportioned neoclassical manor beckons in the distance of what appears to be a space devoid of any outsiders. This companionate image is worlds apart from the vibrant social milieu of London's pleasure gardens, but Heideloff is careful to not make it seem so. For not only do both of these plates make use of the same overall colour palette of white costumes and light blue accessories, but in placing these images together, he naturalizes these roles as two distinct, but complementary component parts of the woman of fashion's life. In doing so, he presents a cohesive vision for ideal British womanhood which carefully followed that of the 'women of fashion' who both inspired and supported the *Gallery of Fashion*.

IV. Conclusion

As this chapter has explored, the *Gallery of Fashion* redefined the role of fashion illustration and in doing so by extension the vital role of the woman of fashion. Yet despite the journal's references to the particularities of fashionable dress and the sociable activities that were so central to the showcasing of such fashions, Heideloff's fashion illustrations are endlessly deflected from the here and now. This is in part on account of the fact that so many of his illustrations feature a non-descript backdrop, as in the case of his representation of two women taking tea in an all-too-familiar, but completely deindividualized dressing room. With just enough detail to suggest a certain

type of space, in prints such as this his figures are never quite shown in a specific location. Meanwhile, in a print representing two women, the plate's rocky garden topography floats somewhere between China and Great Britain (Fig. 2.56). Moreover, as has been remarked by one critic of the journal's aesthetic merits, the women in the *Gallery of Fashion* have very little to distinguish themselves in terms of their perfectly rendered features, which lack any suggestion of them being actual individuals.

Far from diminishing the *Gallery of Fashion's* success, however, I wish to argue that it is these qualities that allowed it to be so successful that it would later serve as a source of inspiration for numerous fashion publications, setting the standard for the 'well dressed doll' of future illustrations, which featured women 'doing not very much against a fitting, sometimes fussy but never over-assertive background.'[402] By removing any traces of individuality from these women's faces and placing them in the company of one another, Heideloff presents his viewers with an opportunity to imagine themselves as part of his *Gallery of Fashion*. Through this transportive activity, Heideloff's subscribers both become the subject of the illustration and active members of a feminized network of style.

Crucial to the materialization of this network were the fashions that bound their wearers together as visibly prominent fashionable women. In alluding to the grace and cultural weight of classical Greece, or the charming allure of an exotic 'Orient', such embellishments transformed the woman of fashion into a powerful emblem of female empowerment. Through this collective act of imagining, women presented themselves as active members of society. No longer linked to the French court or given the purpose of making the female sex more attractive, fashion was imagined through the delicate renderings of female dress which line Heideloff's *Gallery of Fashion* as having the power to bind women together, while they explored their identity as modern individuals capable of self-expression through their sartorial decisions. It was here in a delightful realm of female sociability, where the male gaze was frankly dismissed as powerless,

[402] Ginsburg, 10. The influence of the *Gallery of Fashion* must also be understood in relation to the fact that Heideloff's previous employer, Rudolph Ackermann, subscribed to the journal before later publishing *Ackermann's Repository of Arts* from 1809-1829, which although not exclusively dedicated to fashion, did notably include high-quality illustrations, thus potentially furthering the influence of Heideloff's vision for fashion illustration.

that his female readers were given the opportunity to imagine the power of fashion in achieving self-fulfilment as they cultivated their image using the distinctly feminine tool of dress.[403] A densely allusive set of visual gestures, from Britain to China, established the image of a network of fashionable women, enjoying style in each other's company, even as they presented themselves as tasteful, active consumers in the fashion marketplace. In the next chapter, we shall see how the intersection of print and visual culture served to inspire another group of women to create an equally complex and richly allusive set of fashion allusions.

[403] Jones, 216-217.

Chapter 3. Envisioning and Enacting the Eighteenth Century: Networks Across Time and Space in The Duchess of Devonshire's Diamond Jubilee Ball Album of 1897

More than one hundred years after John Singleton Copley painted portraits of sitters in classically-inspired draperies and the *Gallery of Fashion* promoted ideal English women's dress using the language of neoclassicism and historicism, leaders of British society would again be enchanted by the fantasy evoked by wearing fancy dress. In celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, on July 2, 1897, the then Duchess of Devonshire, Louisa, Countess von Alten, held an entertainment in that great tradition of eighteenth-century opulence: a costume ball. As previously discussed in Chapter 2 in relation to the *Gallery of Fashion*, the wearing of such historicizing and exotic fancy dress was an assertion of imperial power, and such fashions carried with them the powerful associations of history. The Duchess of Devonshire designed a broad and complex network of guests for her costume ball. Seven hundred invitations were extended to the brightest and most important figures in British society, inviting foreign dignitaries, leading members of the aristocracy, and the future King's friendship circle of leading financiers and industrialists.[404]

It was here at the ball that Britain's leading socialites crafted costumes that drew on many of the fancy dress trends discussed throughout the entirety of this thesis – from the seventeenth-century 'Vandyke' dress found in portraits of their ancestors, to exotic Orientalist robes, and more popular still, the then highly fashionable styles of eighteenth-century's Rococo court dress and the romantic pastoral attire depicted in Thomas Gainsborough's by then iconic portraits. While elements of historicizing and Orientalizing fashion had been part of the language of fancy dress in Britain for more than two centuries, the Duchess's guests engaged with these fashions in a way that could have only happened in 1897. By then, the fabric of British society had changed significantly, with the landed establishment incorporating new and often foreign blood to salvage its declining financial situation. It was on account of these changes both in terms of the higher stakes of entertaining on a grand scale encouraged by the unprecedented wealth infiltrating the aristocracy through marriage to industrialists, and

[404] The most complete account of the ball is to be found in Murphy, *The Duchess of Devonshire's Ball*.

tensions regarding these changes to the composition of society, that the ball's guests placed new and increased energy into the creation of their costumes. This chapter investigates how it was that the ball's guests leveraged their position in society through historical dress, particularly dating from the eighteenth century. Through the associations of power and grandeur that the eighteenth century had come to represent, the international beau monde of 1897 presented their entitlement, which in the case of the largely aristocratic circle in attendance at the ball, had largely been formed on the basis of their family's achievements during this time. They did this not only through their participation at the ball, but also, significantly, through a series of photographic portraits that would eventually serve not only as a memento of the ball, but also as a physical and tangible embodiment of what the ball and its attendants aspired for it to represent.

It was the Duchess of Devonshire herself who sought to preserve the ball's importance by creating a visual record of her guests and their costumes. Recognizing the ephemeral nature of the ball as social entertainment, the Duchess invited of one of the leading photographers of her day, James Stack Lauder, professionally known as Lafayette, to set up a tent on the grounds of Devonshire House on the night of the ball. It was there that Lafayette preserved the appearance of more than 400 of the Duchess's guests in a special photographic studio tent, labouring until 4:00 am the following morning – a remarkable feat given the time-consuming methods of late Victorian photography.[405] Additionally, many of the ball's attendants sat for later portraits by Lafayette and other photographers with the hope that their roles would be immortalized through additional and more personalized visual means.

A large number of these portraits were included in a privately printed album, which was produced in 1899 by twenty of the Duchess's closest friends in acknowledgment of the considerable energy and expense that went into organizing the ball.[406] The Duchess and

[405] Lafayette had recently been honoured with the distinction of the Queen's official photographer in Dublin, and as such decided to capitalize on this honour by opening a London studio just five months prior to the ball, thus making him an ideal candidate to photograph the Duchess's guests in honour of the Queen. Pepper and Vickers, *High Society Photographs*, 17.
[406] As Sophia Murphy recounts, the Duke and Duchess paid for the ball and hired the photographer themselves. They were one of the few leading members of the aristocracy at the time who could afford to hold such an extravagant affair. Murphy.

her guests exerted their agency in a number of ways throughout the album's creation, but their agency in both participating in the ball's performances and the resulting portraits was also the result of collaborative effort. From the adoption of a particular role, the commissioning of their costume after considerable research, and the staging of their portrait, women worked together alongside family members and friends to project an ideal image. As the culmination of these efforts, the album presented an opportunity to capture the ball's attendants in the most flattering way possible. When meaningfully placed within the pages of the album, these portrait photographs take on increased significance as they communicate messages of historical continuity, power, and influence through their engagement with elaborate fancy dress. Like Wagner's operas and the architecture of Walter Gropius and Victor Horta, the album is, on account of these many layers of creative agency and the networks responsible for its creation, a total work of art. While each guest worked within their social and familial networks to enact their roles and to design their portraits, all of their efforts cohere in the album on account of the many layers of representation negotiated through and by these networks.

Among those photographed was of course the Duchess herself, whose elegant portrait by Lafayette (Fig. 3.1) is every bit as stately as those painted of Georgiana, the Duchess of Devonshire more than a century before by Sir Joshua Reynolds (Fig. 0.39).[407] However, like her eighteenth-century predecessor, Louisa's power and influence over society was without equal in her day, and her authority was felt not only as a leader of society, but like Georgiana, her impact extended to the realm of politics as well. Standing in front of a specially-commissioned backdrop of the grounds of Devonshire House, the Duchess's portrait (Fig. 3.1) does more than simply commemorate this most memorable of affairs. The use of this significant backdrop put herself and her guests that were photographed in front of it in direct relation to the eighteenth-century forebears whose existence largely assured their special role within Victorian society. Playing the part of Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, Louisa chose to adopt the role of what was viewed as one of the most powerful and commanding of female rulers. From the eighteenth century onwards, Zenobia's heroism had been celebrated on the stage in a

[407] Often referred to as the Double Duchess, it was not without some irony that she held this most significant of tributes to Queen Victoria's reign, given that the Queen had voiced her disapproval of the fast society that the Duchess led. Murphy, 23.

number of operas.[408] Capitalizing on Zenobia's associations with powerful femininity, the enterprising Louisa adopted the role of this important female ruler for the ball.

Through a specially commissioned costume by M. Comelli, designer of costumes at Covent Garden Opera House, Louisa created a costume that was not only worthy of the role, but also precisely communicated the power and opulence that she hoped her role would convey (Figs. 3.2 - 3.4).[409] Described in *The Times* in detail, her dress was richly encrusted with gemstones, while symbols of the Orientalist role she embodied were embroidered on her dress's vibrant green velvet and gold tissue.[410] Her gown's rich embellishments included lotus flowers in rubies, sapphires, emeralds and diamonds, and her costume was completed by a dramatic feathered headdress festooned in pearls. These embellishments were certainly considered to be suitable to her role, but they were also very much emblematic of her own culture's vocabulary for Orientalism, with such feathers and pearls bearing many similarities to those symbols of classicism and Empire found in the fashion plates of the *Gallery of Fashion*. Indeed, as was also mentioned in Ch. 2, it was Louisa's title's forbear who largely popularized such dramatic plumage in the 1770s, as is seen in Georgiana's own portrait of 1777 (Fig. 0.39). Just as Turkish-style dress became synonymous with the brave travels of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and the Turkish women she chronicled in her *Letters*, the role of Zenobia would become associated with the later travels of Lady Hester Stanhope and her own legacy of powerful leadership. Thus, like Copley's Bostonian sitters before her, the Duchess chose a role that endowed her Orientalist fashions with an equally palpable image of empowered femininity – an image that appropriately expressed her reputation as the prominent wielder of society that she was.

While there are noticeable visual similarities between both the Duchess's Oriental costume and the Grand Manner-inspired portrait taken by Lafayette, important points of contrast exist between the Duchesses' engagement with Orientalist fancy dress, and the

[408] It was later that her significance as a symbol of powerful femininity would be further cemented in British society by Lady Hester Stanhope, who had herself travelled to Palmyra with the desire of demonstrating the might of her sex. Harris, 'Duchess of Devonshire, Neg. No. (L) 1350 Print'. Lafayette.org.uk (http://lafayette.org.uk/dev1350.html (accessed May 10, 2018).
[409] Until recently, it was commonly believed that this was the only costume from the ball known to have survived. Recently, a few others have surfaced at auction, and more likely remain in private collections, saved as family heirlooms from this highly memorable affair.
[410] 'The Devonshire House Ball', *The Times* (July 3, 1897): 12C.

women who donned Turquerie-inspired costumes at masquerades at the eighteenth-century's famous masquerades. In a comparative study on costume balls of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries, Rebecca Mitchell brings to light in her argument an interesting point of contrast between the eighteenth-century masquerades discussed earlier in this thesis, and the opulent costume balls of the Gilded Age. While in the eighteenth century the wearing of such costumes were valued both as a vehicle for disguise and as a means of highlighting points of contrast between wearers and their imagined role, by the Victorian period, costumes were selected as an opportunity to present oneself in an ideal light.[411] Costume guide books such as *Fancy Dresses Described* aided sitters not only in what costumes for particular roles should look like, but also in the appropriateness of certain roles based on one's age and social type.[412] With this in mind, the portraits contained within the album's pages are to be read not merely as an act of fun in dressing up, but as a highly codified image of the ball's guests' collective ideals.

To date, much of the literature concerning this crucial period of change in decline for the British aristocracy privileges men in terms of what the leading social historian David Cannadine describes as the 'preponderantly masculine attributes' of 'wealth, status, power, and class-consciousness'.[413] Yet, in the pages of the album it becomes clear that it was through their collective agency that women sought to negotiate these very same concerns. As this thesis has sought to demonstrate throughout, women played an active role in each of these spheres of influence, and it is through their engagement with fantasy dress in visual works that we see not only their agency in the creation of their own image, but also their desire to be seen in relation to these important categories for self-definition. By engaging with the language of historicizing and Orientalizing fancy dress as their ancestors had done for generations, the women in attendance at the ball underscored a continuity in terms of the social fabric of their world. However, by emphasizing the importance of women to their nation's and their family's history, the ball's attendants also imagined for themselves a different, more empowered female heritage. This chapter investigates how the album communicated this vision of an idealized, powerful aristocratic heritage.

[411] Mitchell, 'The Victorian Fancy Dress Ball, 1870-1900'.
[412] Holt, *Fancy Dresses Described*.
[413] Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, 7.

I. From Ball to Album: A Total Work of Art

Although the album represents a collection of individuals from diverse backgrounds – ranging from leading members of the aristocracy to foreign dignitaries – and each person represented a distinctive historical or fictional figure, the album maintains a semblance of cohesive unity, which is largely communicated through its carefully curated organization and overarching visual schema. Like the *Gallery of Fashion's* subscriber list, the album opens in order of precedence, with twenty-six members of the Royal Family followed by foreign ambassadors and other notables in attendance to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.[414] After these most obvious orders of precedence, the remaining guests' portraits follow in loose familial groupings, with a web of social, familial, and professional networks connecting each of these sitters from start to finish. The presence of duchesses behind that of politicians and between opera singers and financiers is itself a testament to the openness of the Marlborough House Set surrounding the Prince, with the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire at the centre of this elite social network.

Unlike many photographic albums from the period which contain portraits of varying size and style, the album's physical qualities again speak to the uniformity of approach and vision behind its production. This stately album, whose portraits measure a quarto at roughly 6.5' x 5' each, contains 286 portraits of 309 individuals.[415] All but two of these portraits are in vertical orientation, and although they were the result of more than twenty-four different photographers, the overall approach to these portraits falls within the tradition of formal, Grand Manner portraiture, despite the small scale in which these photographs take. This uniformity of approach is further emphasized by the style in which they were engraved by W& D. Downey, whose sepia photogravures are offset by

[414] Most of the foreign dignitaries in attendance were invited on account of respect for the special relationship their countries enjoyed with Britain, rather than on account of an individual's perceived status within British society. Murphy, 12.

[415] Several of these portraits contain images of multiple individuals, either husband and wife pairs, parents with their children, siblings, or groups of friends. A handful of portraits contain depictions of children, some of whom as in the case of the portrait of Alexandra, Princess of Wales, represent individuals cast in the role of servants.

a border of the heavy paper they are printed on, with elegant script beneath detailing the name and role of each sitter.

Despite these important visual similarities, the album also reveals the extent to which British society was changing. The list of persons responsible for the organization of the album not only contains members of the British aristocracy, but, importantly, also includes several members of the Rothschild and Sassoon families, whose introduction to society was encouraged by the Prince, who enjoyed surrounding himself with some of the most powerful and interesting people of his day. The list of the album's organizers, which was inserted as a frontispiece at the beginning of the album, introduces its organizers in terms of precedence based on their position within the peerage, with the little-known but aristocratic Mrs. Chaine (Fig. 3.5) coming before the wife of the powerful Leopold de Rothschild (Fig. 3.6). However, the visual record suggests that titles were not the only consideration behind the album's creation. The layout of the album itself and the stylistic consistency among the portraits suggests a uniformity of approach to the treatment, and consequently, the importance of each sitter. This is most apparent when comparing portraits of sitters from different social backgrounds, as in the case of portraits of Lady Farquhar (Fig. 3.7) and Mrs. Arthur Sassoon (Fig. 3.8). Both of these sitters come from vastly different families, with one firmly within the ranks of the British peerage, and the other the wife of a Jewish financier, however, these women's portraits have more in common with each other than not: both reveal a shared visual language of power, wealth, and refined femininity. By looking away from the viewer, both of these women direct the viewer's gaze upon the opulence of their dress and the elegance of their deportment, with their resulting portraits each emphasizing both women's powerful place in society.

Further contributing to the sense of uniformity and cohesiveness within the album was the pageantry of courts performed at the ball, whose performance is visually commemorated through the many figures from each court that are interspersed evenly throughout the album's pages. To please the Prince and her guests, the Duchess invited a handful of society leaders to organize a series of five courts representative of some of history's most illustrious rulers, with each court contributing to a brilliant procession before the Royal Family, culminating in the performance of a special selection of

historically accurate quadrilles.[416] The first of these courts represented the court of Victoria's most significant predecessor, Queen Elizabeth, headed by Lady Tweedmouth (Fig. 3.9). This was followed by the magnificent Austrian court of Maria Theresa, led by Louisa's only serious rival as the leader of British society, Theresa, Marchioness of Londonderry (Fig. 3.10). The King's own mistress, the highly popular Daisy, Countess of Warwick (Fig. 3.11), personified the role of Marie Antoinette, with many members of the eighteenth-century French court played by prominent members of the Spencer-Churchill family. Meanwhile, the regal Viscount Raincliffe took on the role of Catherine the Great (Fig. 3.12) in an equally opulent recreation of the Russian court, which included among its participants the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough in splendid Rococo attire. The Duchess of Devonshire herself led an 'Oriental' procession containing some of the most elegant and daring members of society, featuring a number of American socialites. The five courts were also supplemented by a small procession of Italian figures and a grouping of allegorical characters which was appropriately concluded by the presence of Lady Wolverton as Britannia, who was photographed by Lafayette in the same pose as that found on the British penny until 1895 (Fig. 3.13).[417]

Interspersed evenly throughout the album's pages, portraits of guests who had participated in these courts formed a series of discrete networks which served to negotiate another layer of meaning throughout the album. Although there were certainly a number of guests who attended the ball without aligning their role with a particular court, a significant portion of those selected for representation in the album chose their role and designed their costumes in relation to one of these courtly performances. This was likely on account of the fact that the album represented some of the Duchesses' closest friends, and it was many of these same people who were part of the privileged social circles of the Duchess's friends that enacted the courts. For many, the decision to participate in a court was formed in conjunction with their familial and social circles. When they later sat for their portraits, many of those participating in these courts did so with inspiration from their friends' and family's portraits. This is evidenced by the fact that often several members of a particular court sat for their

[416] Murphy.
[417] Pepper and Vickers, 22.

portraits by the same photographer, with some guests even sitting for their portrait on the same day.

A comparison of these portraits reveals a number of overarching visual similarities between how various networks conceived their portraits. However, another narrative, told through the identities of the roles represented is perhaps most revealing of the aims of these social networks: although their roles range across a wide chronological and geographic scope, all of the Duchess's female guests represent women of particular historical significance. While this certainly could be said to reflect the ball's guests' interest in reinforcing their elevated position in society, another more intriguing aspiration is suggested when placing these portraits within their appropriate place in the album's pages, beginning with the courts themselves. As a suitable celebration of Victoria's reign, the courts designed by the Duchess could have been selected to represent leading monarchs from the pages of Britain's history. However, with the exception of Queen Elizabeth I, these monarchs were chosen from across Europe's leading courts. This would have underscored Victoria's membership within the network of Europe's nobility, but it also served to emphasize her importance as one of many illustrious female rulers. This narrative of female leadership was further enhanced by the number of important female historical figures represented both as part of these five courts, and the many other figures individually selected by the Duchess' guests. As this chapter will discuss, it was through the portrayal of these roles using fancy dress, which were often selected on account of the attendant's personal family history, that the ball reveals an image not just of an entitled aristocratic social network, but of a network whose power and influence was largely shaped and maintained by the role of important women.

Despite the vast effort put into conveying these assertions of power and influence that we see in the album's pages, this album was never intended to be viewed by those outside of the elite social sphere that formed the Duchess' social circle. The fact that only three copies of this album have surfaced in public collections only serves to emphasize the very private function of this album. Viewed from within, the nuances within the organization of the album's interconnected web of connections, and the subtle differences between the posture, deportment and mannerisms of these sitters would have carried greater significance. The vision behind these images is examined in

relation to a series of three case studies, with each revealing the agency of women through their engagement with fancy dress to meet these aspirations. First, I will look at how two aristocratic sisters and their daughters made use of references to art and literature to underscore a shared set of values and present an ideal image of their family. Secondly, I look at how another family group in the case of the Spencer-Churchills attempted to present a similar idealized image of themselves using eighteenth-century fashion, but how this vision was ultimately disrupted on account of class tensions, with the inclusion of the wealthy, but untitled Consuelo Vanderbilt as the Duke of Marlborough's wife. Finally, these networks are extended outwards, not only in terms of the extensive family connections that bound so many of the ball's guests together, but across time to include ancestors whose presence is commemorated by their descendants' carefully staged representations of their portraits. The networks within the album thus extend both allusively and literally to include the eighteenth-century figures who gave rise to the ball as a social entertainment, and who shaped the historicizing and Orientalizing elements of fashion that the ball's attendants employed. An understanding of the familial, social and artistic networks that bound these sitters together and their importance to the creation of this album allows a unique opportunity to understand the elite social world of late Victorian society and its members' desire for recognition, hopes and aspirations, and even fears.

II. Kinship & The Art of Allusion: The Craven Sisters and their Daughters

With a careful understanding of the key figures relating to the album, most notably in the form of the Duke and Duchess's social circle and the group of women responsible for creating the album, one can begin to trace the web of overlapping circles of social, political, and economic importance that connect many of the sitters within the album's pages. Yet among these networks, nothing was more important to both the organization of the album and the photographs contained within than the bonds of kinship that would have been easily recognizable to those – most exclusive members of society – who would eventually pore over the album's pages in their private possession.[418] Many of

[418] By the close of the nineteenth century, British society was composed of over 4,000 families – a sharp contrast to the small, interconnected web of some three to four hundred families that composed elite eighteenth-century society. However, even in the face of such growth and

these circles originate with those responsible for creating the album, and among the nineteen creators of the album, three in particular were closely related to one another: the Countess of Derby (Fig. 3.14) was first cousins with Beatrix, Countess Cadogan (Fig. 3.15), and the Countess Cadogan's own daughter, Lady Sophie Scott (Fig. 3.16), also assisted in the album's organization. Through the Countess of Derby's own son, Lord Stanley, M.P. (Fig. 3.17), this elite family was also related to the Duchess through the marriage of her daughter, Alice Montagu (Fig. 3.18), from her first marriage to the Duke of Manchester. Through this influential family, which represented a stronghold within the Conservative Party, twenty-two of the album's sitters were closely related, and these close ties of kinship helped to facilitate the presence of many of these men and women in the album.[419] The Countess Cadogan and her daughters, Lady Sophie Scott (Fig. 3.16) and Lady Lurgan (Fig. 3.19) were highly active in elite circles – the Earl Cadogan was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and together the family was responsible for hosting numerous social occasions.[420] Meanwhile, the Countess's sister, Blanche (Fig. 3.20), who had also married an earl and become the Countess of Coventry, attended the ball and was included in the album alongside her daughters Lady Dorothy and Anne Coventry (Figs. 3.21 & 3.22).

It is through portraits of these four women – two sisters and their daughters – that we see the collective agency of a familial network at work very clearly – with each portrait the result of a multi-faceted process of exchange, negotiation, and ultimately, the realization of a shared vision of ideal selfhood. From envisioning a role, designing a costume, selecting a photographer, and finally, editing and ultimately selecting their portrait from a range of negatives, each sitter managed a high level of creative agency that extended to their families and their social networks. Thanks to the wealth of biographical information on these women and records from the ball, these women's

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transition, the foundation of society and one's social circle was still predominantly based upon kinship. Davidoff, *The Best Circles*, 20-27. Brian Masters describes the practice of marrying within one's rank, particularly in relation to dukedoms, as 'a vast incestuous dance'. With this in mind, it is unsurprising that so many of the portraits in the album are of sitters who were related to one another. Masters, *The Dukes*, 11.

[419] I am indebted to Retford's work on kinship in the eighteenth century, and to Patrizia di Bello's work on kinship and women's albums. See Perry, *The Art of Domestic Life* and Di Bello, *Women's Albums.*

[420] The Countess Cadogan's charitable activities were extensive, and these along with her personal interests and that of her daughters were regularly reported of in the press.

collective agency can be unravelled through an analysis of their shared vision for fashioning these portraits. This included, in the case of Beatrix and her sister Blanche, the adoption of roles based on portraits of particular family importance, and in the case of their daughters' representations of ideal femininity taken from literature and visual culture. Through this parallel program of representation which consisted of allusions to art and literature, the Craven sisters and their daughters drew attention to their bonds of kinship within the album, while strengthening their family's reputation and claims to their position in society by doing so.

Like many other society figures, the Countess and her daughters made considerable use of photography to fashion an ideal image of their family. In fact, unlike the majority of those photographed by Lafayette in the album, with their ties to Ireland, the Countess Cadogan (Fig. 3.15) and her daughters (Figs. 3.16 & 3.19) were already familiar with Lafayette and had sat for him in Dublin shortly before the opening of his new London studio. As fashionable women of the day, both the Countess and her daughter were featured in three consecutive issues of *Country Life Illustrated*. Each of the women were profiled between April and May of 1897, with their portraits and brief biographies featured as frontispieces to this weekly publication. With a glowing description of the Countess as a 'leader of London society' who enjoyed 'the friendship of Royalty in a marked degree', the Countess (Fig. 3.23) and her daughters (Figs. 3.24 & 3.25) demonstrate their elevated position in society through the carefully curated series of portraits taken by Lafayette.[421] The Countess is shown wearing a glittering tiara and with all of the regality of state portraiture, while her daughters follow her lead in succeeding issues, posing in highly-fashionable white tulle. When sitting for their portraits by Lafayette in the commemorative album from the ball, the Countess and her daughters would look to the photographer to project an image of the family that presented the women not simply in the guise of the specific roles that they adopted for the ball, but as leaders of Society in much the same way as their portraits had conveyed in *Country Life Illustrated*.

[421] 'Countess Cadogan', *Country Life Illustrated* 1, no. 16 (April 24, 1897).; 'Lady Sophie Scott', *Country Life Illustrated* 1, no. 17 (May 1, 1897).; & 'Lady Lurgan', *Country Life Illustrated* 1, no. 18 (May 8, 1897).

The Craven sisters and their daughters' collective agency in the use of artworks to project an ideal image of their family was not unusual, and we see many examples of families working together to craft their costumes and roles in this way throughout the album. The Countess of Derby (Fig. 3.14) and her own sister, Emily, Lady Ampthill (Fig. 3.26) each determined to represent notorious figures from the court of Marie Antoinette. Yet even the Princess de Lamballe was tame in comparison to the unconventional roles adopted by Lady Sophie Scott (Fig. 3.16) and her sister Lady Lurgan (Fig. 3.19). Together they chose to represent two sisters born of the blood spilled by Uranus when Cronus castigated him: Megara and Alecto respectively. Known as the furies in Greek mythology, these women famously appear in Dante's *Inferno* as punishers of sin within the furthest circles of the Underworld. Draped in classical robes of crimson gauze shot through with gold, with ruby and emerald jewel-encrusted serpents forming their headdress, girdle, and decorating their arms and bodices, these women broke the mould when it came to representing classical figures in their role's associations with hellfire and evil.

Yet the portraits created by Lafayette offer a very different image of the sisters, one in which their sartorial references to the Underworld are encased in shadows, with an image of gleaming neo-classical beauties taking centre stage instead. Notably absent from the photographs are a pair of wings that each of the sisters wore to the ball. Meanwhile, with both of the sisters tuning their back towards the viewer their vivid red robes are reduced to glistening sepia-toned drapery, with the elongated folds of these dresses emphasizing their wearers' lithe figures. Lady Lurgan stands fully erect, while pensively gazing at her torch held firmly in front of her in classical rigidity. Her sister, Lady Sophie Scott, offers a more languorous pose. With the heavy folds of her dress gracefully draping from the tops of her shoulders down to the bottom-most left-hand corner of the frame and her arm gently outstretched, Lady Sophie Scott gazes at her torch with a dreamy and almost melancholic absorption. If Lady Sophie Scott's gaze is otherworldly, however, her thoughts are hardly those of a dark tormentor ready to punish the sinful.

Although very few of the ball's photographs featured in the album entered into public circulation – aside from a select number taken of the Royal Family – the ball was eagerly reported on in the press and a few of these publications included illustrations of

some of the ball's most famous attendants and their spectacular costumes. The sisters' costumes as the furies must have attracted attention, as two illustrations were featured in publications of Lady Sophie Scott (Figs. 3.27 & 3.28) the better known of the sisters. While it unlikely the illustrators of these sketches saw Lady Sophie at the ball or were able to observe her costume in person, these images are helpful in clarifying certain sartorial details not visible in Lafayette's portraits. Moreover, it is through notable departures from these illustrations and Lafayette's portraits that we are able to understand both alternative contemporary imaginings for the sisters' roles, and to appreciate better their desires when fashioning their portraits.

An illustration in *The Queen* (Fig. 3.27) presents us with a remarkably different representation of Lady Sophie Scott as a Fury. [422] With her hair falling heavily in a mass of wildly expressive long curls, and a torch that is supported by the tip of its handle almost like a wand, there is something magical and mysterious about this figure.[423] Furthermore, her figure is overwhelmed by a pair of impossibly large feathered wings, which stand almost ominously atop her shoulders while framing her serpent-clad headdress. The sharp contrast between these wings to the petite glittering wings illustrated in *The Gentlewoman* (Fig. 3.28), suggests that this illustrator was drawing from his imagination, rather than having actually seen her costume in person. Thus, we are presented with an alternative contemporary imagining of this role, which only enhances the particular vision behind the portraits taken by Lafayette of the sisters. *The Gentlewoman* (Fig. 3.28) presents us with a much more likely to be accurate representation of Lady Sophie's role – here we see a graceful woman in classical robes with the subtle accoutrements of her role as one of the Furies.[424] Rendered in sketchy black and white, this illustration is barely suggestive of her identity as guardian of the underworld, and she could just as easily represent any number of classical figures here, were it not for her wings. When they chose to sit for Lafayette less than a week after the ball, this departure from their original costume was realized, and were it not for contemporary records of the ball, we might imagine that these wings never existed. However, this piece of information, along with the survival of several glass plate

[422] *The Queen* (19 July 1897).
[423] Lady Sophie Scott and Lady Lurgan both famously wore their hair in hairnets to maintain a semblance of propriety, but also possibly to help keep their serpentine headdresses in place.
[424] 'The Duchess of Devonshire's Ball'. *The Gentlewoman* (July 10, 1897): 48-58.

negatives, gives us critical insight into the type of image these sisters wished to project when they selected their final portrait by Lafayette for the album.

With at least seven negatives as a record of Lady Sophie Scott and her sister Lady Lurgan's sitting to Lafayette on July 20, 1897, we have a special opportunity to visualize their agency at work in the final selection of their portraits for the album. Two of these portraits feature the sisters together (Figs. 3.29 & 3.30), but the sisters each selected a complementary portrait of themselves on their own to be included in the album. It is possible that the sisters chose not to include a portrait of them together on account of a necessity to represent the two different households that they each belonged to as married women. This may have also been viewed as a necessary means of distancing themselves from the pairs of younger women who were photographed together. Groups of figures were common in nineteenth-century imaginings of the classical world by Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Frederic Leighton and Edward Burne-Jones. By showcasing themselves as single figures, these portraits do little to convey the type of narrative often suggested by the interactions of multiple figures characteristic in the paintings of late Victorian artists like Alma-Tadema or Leighton.[425] However, it is possible that in selecting images of themselves as single figures, the sisters had a different artistic precedent in mind.

Perhaps most telling is the pose the sisters eventually selected: by facing away from the camera the snakes emblazoned on their bodices are hidden, and with this act, their headdresses are further abstracted beyond recognition. Thus, the viewer is left with no signs of the specific role as furies that these women represented. With this compositional decision, the viewer is left to imagine that these women are wearing yet another vaguely classical portrait dress akin to those worn in countless painted portraits in the Grand Manner tradition. This decision, combined with the selection of a shadowy nondescript landscape backdrop with subtle painted neo-classical sculptural elements, grant these portraits all of the grace and elegance of the single figure Grand Manner portraits painted by Romney and Reynolds. With their wings cast aside, the brilliant red of their dresses substituted for the monochrome of sepia, and their serpentine accessories abstracted and obfuscated, the resulting image is of an ideal classical type,

[425] Prettejohn and Trippi, *Lawrence Alma-Tadema*.

and these women could much more easily drift onto a canvas by Sir Joshua Reynolds from more than a century earlier than an illustration from Dante's *Inferno*. With their hair contained in hairnets, these sisters also presented an image of idealized, controlled sexuality, also symbolized by the pure associations of classical drapery.

The final touch in creating this image of idealized femininity, however, can be attributed to neither the sisters nor to Lafayette, but to one of his studio assistants, whose embellishment of the plate transformed the electric light of the torch to one of smoke and fire akin to that held by that colossal neoclassical representation of ideal womanhood completed in 1875: the Statue of Liberty. Although their gracefully lithe and draped figures are hardly the monumental strength embodied by Statue of Liberty whose towering outstretched arm firmly grasps her torch overhead as if to show it off to the world, the visual similarities between the sisters' classically draped figures and the flaming torches they carried would have been too close to be overlooked, especially when so soon after its completion it remained so palpable within memory. This allusion, then, would have further endowed the sisters with the virtues associated with classical dress – virtues that Lafayette and his sitters emphasized through the language of the eighteenth-century's Grand Manner tradition in portraiture.

Contributing to this vision of their family's aristocratic lineage, the Countess Cadogan sat for her portrait at Lafayette's studio just two days after her daughters had done so (Fig. 3.15). Rather than turning to the realm of literature for inspiration, however, the Countess modelled her role after a portrait of a figure of particular family interest, and through this allusion was able to project an image of her family's distinguished heritage. Far removed from the mythological furies, the Countess instead chose to represent a woman from the pages of Britain's own history: the daughter of James I, Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia. Like the eighteenth-century women who sat for their portraits with Vandyke fancy dress in portraits by Hudson and Cotes, the Countess and many others in the album drew on the language of timelessness that such seventeenth-century fashions evoked. However, the Countess's costume is far from the generic, and its references to the seventeenth century are far more involved than just the romantic pining after Old England that is often aroused by references to the Stuart period. Instead, the Countess presents us with a many-layered representation of herself as someone whose family has a direct and longstanding support of the current royal family. Even more suggestive,

however, through subtle sartorial clues she drew attention to her identity as someone patriotically engaged in the promotion of national industry. While these associations might at first be lost to us in the overwhelming emphasis on Tudor-bethan style, these associations would have been very clear to the Countess' family and members of her social circle.

Although a relatively minor figure in British history, Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia must have captured the imagination of late Victorian women, for she was the chosen role for at least three women featured in the album, comprising one her descendants, Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein (Fig. 3.31), as well as Lady Meysey-Thompson (Fig. 3.32). Yet the care and attention to accuracy that the Countess Cadogan poured into her own representation of the Queen of Bohemia was motivated by an arguably more tangible and personal link to the Queen than that of even her own descendant. It was on account of the first Earl of Craven's support of the Queen's attempts to reclaim her throne that the Craven family earned its position within English society. Upon the Queen's death, she gifted her estate to the Earl, which included a famous portrait. It was this portrait by Gerrit van Honthorst that would later serve as the source of inspiration for Countess Cadogan's costume (Fig. 3.33).[426]

At the same time the Countess' portrait bears far closer similarity to a portrait that was in the collection of the Earl of Romney (Fig. 3.34) at this time than the one which continued to be owned by her father (Fig. 3.33).[427] In looking at the prints produced after this portrait in 1836 (Fig. 3.35), it becomes clear that it was in fact these later prints after the portrait that served as the direct inspiration for both the Countess' costume and her portrait, rather than the painted portrait. While the overall composition – of a woman turning stiffly to her left while placing an object on the table before her – is consistent between the painting and the print, notable departures are to be found in the placement of Elizabeth's pearls around her wrists, the construction of the sleeves of

[426] Ronald G. Asch, 'Elizabeth, Princess [Elizabeth Stuart] (1596–1662), queen of Bohemia and electress palatine, consort of Frederick V'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (4 May. 2018). http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-8638.

[427] It is not clear whether the Earl owned another copy of this portrait at this time, and, given the fact that prints similar to the one owned by the Earl of Romney were attributed as belonging to the Earl of Craven, this is certainly a possibility.

her dress, which appear similar to the cut of early nineteenth-century costume, and most notably, the substitution of her coronation staff for that all-important eighteenth- and nineteenth-century fashion accessory: the fan.[428] It is this tiny yet significant compositional shift that immediately alerts us to the Countess's turn to this nineteenth-century reproductive engraving for guidance in adopting her role, rather than the original painted portrait.

It is perhaps surprising that the Countess saw in this portrait a representation of Elizabeth that she found appealing and, in some way, superior to that embodied by the portrait by Honthorst in her father's possession. There is no doubt that the portrait owned by the Earl of Romney possessed a far greater opportunity for the display of embellishments than the simple, yet very elegant Vandyke dress represented in the later image of the widow. The endless ropes of pearls would have established her as a woman of some wealth and status, even in the relative simplicity of her costume in relation to those of other actresses of this role. However, it is the festoons of lace which take centre stage in this image. Lace was a highly fashionable embellishment at the close of the Victorian period, but the Countess had an even more personal reason for valuing it. As the wife of the Lieutenant of Ireland, she was involved in a number of charitable activities, including her avid promotion of the Irish textile industry. Like the lace worn by her daughter upon her marriage to Sir Samuel Scott the year prior, this lace would have almost certainly been crafted by one of the many nuns who exhibited their convent's handicrafts at an exhibition of Irish textiles the following month in London and would have served as an advertisement of both the forthcoming fair and a testament to her commitment to supporting domestic textiles.[429] Thus, in her selection of both her role and her costume, the Countess drew attention not only to her family's illustrious history, but to her own accomplishments and contributions to society as well.

[428] It is possible that the alterations were motivated by a political decision, as Elizabeth was the source of a conspiratorial plot to overthrow James's son and marry her to a Catholic and place her on the English throne.
[429] 'The Textile Exhibition', *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* (August 30, 1897).; 'Latest Patterns', *Le Follet: Journal du Grand Monde, Fashion, Polite Literature, Beaux Arts & c. & c.* 620 (August 1, 1897): 6.

Similar to her sister Beatrix, Blanche Craven, Countess of Coventry also chose to represent a historical figure centrally important to her family's history, and in doing so emphasized her family's illustrious history that was shaped in no small part on account of the role of aristocratic women. Taking as her role her title's most famous namesake, the eighteenth-century beauty, Maria Gunning, the Countess of Coventry, Blanche and her daughters each sat for their portraits at the acclaimed photographic studio of Elliot & Fry (Fig. 3.20). Blanche took a very similar approach to crafting her role for the ball, and also fashioned her identity through the use of a key portrait of the ancestral figure: that most famous of pastel portraits by the acclaimed Turquerie artist of the eighteenth century, Jean-Etienne Liotard. Liotard's portrait immortalized the Countess's beauty (Fig. 0.28), however, it was not his pastel which inspired the Countess. Like Copley who searched Liotard's prints as a guideline for his Turquerie portraits, Blanche also referred to one of the many reproductive engravings after Liotard's work found in print collections of the time as the primary source for her role (Fig. 1.2).

These prints were easily accessible at the British Museum, and Liotard's portrait of Gunning was reproduced so widely that it is highly likely that she would have had an original in her own collection. By bringing Gunning's visage closer to the picture plane and cropping the canvas to a three-quarter view, the eighteenth-century printmaker Richard Houston (Fig. 1.2) highlighted the most significant details of her dress in the form of her turban, girdle, and the beautifully embellished Turkish tulips of the fabric of her dress. Blanche's costume carefully follows the original. Blanche even wore a wig to achieve the heavy braids of hair wrapped up in the turban's loose fabric. But unlike her title's forebear, she does not transport us to an imagined exotic location. This decision might have been motivated by the fact that Turkey did not hold quite the same exotic distance in the minds of viewers, given the far more interconnected travel available to the late Victorian world. However, countless other Orientalist fantasies present in the album belie this explanation. Rather, a close look at the Countess' upright posture, and the fact that she is sitting on a nondescript Western dining chair suggest that the Countess was not interested in conjuring an image of dreamy sensuality but was instead thoughtfully and politely doing credit to her husband's illustrious family through a

recreation of one of its most recognizable and celebrated family portraits.[430] Furthermore, just as white costume and controlled posture was a sign of refined aristocratic femininity in the *Gallery of Fashion*'s representations of women wearing Orientalizing white Muslim dresses, the Countess's portrait emphasizes the same values through both her composure and the whiteness of her dress and visage. These same eighteenth-century qualities of whiteness were again seen as a contrast to the Turkish women who would have worn such costumes, and such a contrast again served to emphasize the purity and moral ascendency of aristocratic femininity.[431]

The Countess and her family would again turn to the associations of aristocratic purity found in white eighteenth-century costume when fashioning her daughters' Lady Anne and Dorothy Coventry's roles for the ball (Figs. 3.21 & 3.22). Her daughters' portraits have given pause to contemporary viewers as each of her daughters chose to portray identical representations of the heroine of William Hayley's poem *The Triumphs of Temper*, as represented in Romney's multiple representations of Hayley's heroine Serena (Figs. 3.36 – 3.38), which were reproduced widely in print (Figs. 3.39 & 3.40).[432] Sophia Murphy considered this choice to be unusual, suggesting that this was perhaps on account of economy, or the result of their mother's desire to prevent the sisters from being jealous of each other's costumes.[433] However, there are many examples of sisters taking on the same role within the album, including their own cousins who each wore identical costumes as the Furies. It is perhaps on account of their costumes' relative plainness, or the fact that a duplication of this role was

[430] The most distinctive insight to this motivation, however, is not to be found in the image itself, but in the portrait's subscript, which indicates that this is a portrait of Barbara St. John, Countess of Coventry, *rather than* the actual sitter of this portrait, Maria Gunning. While it is possible that the people responsible for creating the album – which included her own sister and niece – made a mistake, it is far more likely that this identification was meant to mute Maria Gunning's reputation of sexual licentiousness that continued well into the nineteenth century. Her successor Barbara St. John left a far more palatable reputation to Victorian sensibility Given the hastiness of this incorrect attribution, it is perhaps more accurate to describe the Countess's role for the ball to be that of the famous family portrait, renowned for the sitter's bold adoption of Turkish dress, rather than of the specific historical individual that this portrait represented. Joan Lane, 'Coventry [née Gunning], Maria, countess of Coventry (bap. 1732, d. 1760), figure of scandal.' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (4 May. 2018). http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-6481.
[431] Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race*; and Bindman, *Ape to Apollo*.
[432] Hayley, *The triumphs of temper.*
[433] Murphy, 155.

considered as that of an actual individual that these portraits have been misunderstood. But to understand these portraits, one must realize that although Serena was a specific fictional character, her likeness and story had begun to represent an ideal type.

Painted by Romney innocently absorbed by the story of Frances Burney's heroine *Evelina*, Serena is portrayed as every bit the virtuous heroine. Hayley's poem praises her lack of interest in the frivolous pursuits of fashion and her patient temperament that enabled her to forgive her father who had prevented her from attending a masked ball. Serena's faultless behaviour is rewarded, all too appropriately for the Coventry sisters, at the end of the poem's close with her meeting her perfect match at the ball. This narrative would have been perfectly flattering to the story of the pair of twenty-three and twenty-five-year-old unmarried Coventry sisters (Figs. 3.21 & 3.22), whose embodiment of this role drew attention to their attributes of modesty, intellect, and in their state of highly-covered up relative undress, their purity and availability as well. Unlike in Romney's representations of the fictional heroine, however, the sisters give an individual face to their roles by meeting the eyes of the camera. This was perhaps considered necessary on account of their both representing the same character, but their direct eye contact also suggests a subtle element of intimacy between sitters and viewers. Dorothy's and Anne's loose flowing tresses would have been highly seductive for the time, particularly for someone their age, but this costume brought this choice of hairstyle within the realm of social acceptability and was still remarkably modest in comparison to that worn by the enterprising American heiresses who adopted roles as seductive as Cleopatra. While drawing on the polite language of chaste femininity originating in the eighteenth century, the Coventry sisters present themselves as suitably eligible on account of their family's longstanding position of meeting these ideals as ladies with an illustrious aristocratic lineage.

Both the Countess Cadogan and Countess of Coventry then looked to historic painted portraits and prints for inspiration for their roles, while the Ladies Dorothy and Anne Coventry and their first cousins Lady Sophie Scott and Lady Lurgan each were inspired by the realm of literature and visual culture. While at first glance there might appear to not be two more disparate roles than that of the Furies and that of the virtuous eighteenth-century heroine Serena, each of these figures can be said to uphold virtuous behaviour. Moreover, in their loose flowing robes, each of the four cousins project

certain elements of an idealized, neo-classical womanhood. An even more surprising parallel between the cousins' roles, however, is to be found in the narrative of Haley's story itself. In the midst of a dream, Serena herself visits the depths of the Underworld, and it is there that she meets the very same Furies found in Dante's *Inferno*. The parallels between these narratives was highlighted by the author, who introduced his poem with a quotation from Dante's *Inferno* on the title page, and the cousins would have certainly been familiar with this literary migration between stories. Just as their mothers chose to embody historical likenesses from the realms of family portraits, these cousins' roles and costumes were shaped by and in conjunction with one another. In the pages of the album each of these women's portraits, spaced closely together, reflected an image of a family bound together as the virtuous upholders of a position in society that had been elevated since the publication of Hayley's poem and even the time of Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia.

III. A Rococo Vision Disrupted: The Spencer-Churchill Family

The Spencer-Churchill family would also turn to a similar iconographic program of allusions to the art of the eighteenth century as the Craven sisters and their daughters had done. However, their resulting portraits do not present an image of a united family group with a shared vision, but instead a group fraught with internal tensions. This is most clearly expressed in a portrait of one of the family's newest members, Consuelo Vanderbilt (Fig. 3.41), the famous American heiress whose marriage to the ninth Duke of Marlborough (Fig. 3.42) and the dowry she brought with her allowed the Spencer-Churchill family to recover from their desperate financial situation.[434] At first glance, Consuelo's portrait fits neatly within the significant grouping of Spencer-Churchill portraits, which included portraits of both the Duke (Fig. 3.42), his younger sisters (Fig. 3.43), and several of his aunts (Figs. 0.43, & 3.44 – 3.46). Consuelo's role as the wife of the British ambassador to Catherine the Great's court was crafted directly in relation to her husband's role as the British ambassador, while her elaborate court dress is similar in style and equal in opulence to that worn by her husband's aunts Lady Sarah Wilson (Fig. 0.43) and Lady Georgiana Curzon (Fig. 3.44). However, despite these visual

[434] Vanderbilt Balsan, *The Glitter and the Gold*.

similarities, a more careful analysis and comparison to portraits of her fellow Americans represented in the album's pages, Consuelo's portrait becomes a testament to the precarious position that American women, even of such great wealth, occupied in British society during the highly volatile decade of the 1890s.[435] Consuelo may have joined the ranks of the British aristocracy, but it is through her engagement with eighteenth-century fashions that we see that she was not able to fully assume the associations of gentility and influence that such fashions had come to symbolize. Consuelo's portrait shows us a woman caught between two overlapping, but discrete networks. It is ultimately through her engagement with eighteenth-century fashion that we see how the networks within the album were struggling to reconcile changes within their order.

While the Vanderbilts were furnishing their chateau on Fifth Avenue and Newport mansion The Breakers, the Spencer-Churchills experienced the humiliating dispersal of their family's centuries-old collection of art and antiquities. With the reversal of his family's fortune, the ninth Duke quickly began a program of spending that included the purchasing not just of luxury goods, but the commissioning of artworks as well. In doing so, he not only confirmed his social position, but re-established his family's legacy as arbiters of taste through art collecting. The ninth Duke and his family likely had similar aspirations when they attended the Duchess's ball in opulent Rococo fashions as part of the courts of Catherine of Russia and Marie Antoinette. Like the Craven sisters and their families, the Spencer-Churchill family also worked alongside each other as they prepared for the ball. Two of Lady Tweedmouth's (Fig. 3.9) sisters participated in her Elizabethan Court, with the Duchess of Roxburghe attending as Bess of Hardwick (Fig. 3.45) and Lady de Ramsey as Lady Burleigh (Fig. 3.46), while two of the Duke's other aunts, Lady Sarah Wilson (Fig. 0.43) and Lady Georgiana Curzon (Fig. 3.44), impersonated the wife and mistress of King Louis XV. Together, alongside their couturiers, photographers, and with the aid of books and prints of historic figures and costumes, these women took on the role of a historic person and immortalized their representation to commemorate the ball and relive this moment of fantasy that this elaborate role-playing inspired. These portraits serve as vibrant reminders of not just the enchanting ball that these sitters contributed to, an opulent display of pageantry, but also

[435] Fowler, *In A Gilded Cage*.

to the memories of specific individuals and their desire to stage their identity through the nostalgic overtones of history.

Yet positioned among these family portraits and in relation to other leading members of the aristocracy who donned elaborate eighteenth-century toilettes, the young American Duchess's portrait reveals more differences than similarities. Although she was both titled and adorned in the same sumptuous costume as these women, the image that Consuelo presents is not one of confident authority like that of her husband and his aunts, but instead of a figure who appears frozen, her face virtually unresponsive in its expressionlessness. In fact, even her role for the ball, which appears to have been hastily attributed as a 'Louis XV costume', suggests a lack of certainty, and could even be said to reduce her part to little more than an anonymous fashion plate. Even when she was later prescribed a role in the album, as the counterpart to her husband's role as the wife to the British ambassador at the court of Catherine of Russia, she fails to achieve the level of independence that most other women of her status commanded through their rendition of important historical figures. Very few women fashioned their roles so directly in line with their husbands, and no one else in the album did so as an anonymous courtier of little importance. As the historically insignificant counterpart to her husband's role, Consuelo becomes little more than an appendage to her husband's performance.

The Duke and Duchess of Marlborough clearly aspired for their portrait to convey a level of artistic distinction when they sat for Alexander Bassano for their portraits, who was not only one of the leading photographers of the day, but a photographer who notably engaged with 'fine art' in a way that few of his contemporaries did. The Duke and Duchess of Marlborough (Figs. 3.41 & 3.42) and the Duke's sisters Ladies Lilian and Norah Spencer-Churchill (Fig. 3.43) each sat for their portraits at Alexander Bassano's prestigious studio at 25 Old Bond Street, which was singled out by the photographer Henry Peach Robinson in his 1890 publication *Photography as Business* as, 'A handsome suite of rooms on the first floor in a fashionable thoroughfare'. It was there that the Spencer-Churchills would have been greeted by a series of large carbon prints that lined the walls of the elegant drawing room of Bassano's reception area by the artist himself, as well as a series of plaster busts of the Duke of Connaught and the Prince Imperial, also executed by Bassano. These objects helped to establish Bassano as

more than just a common picture taker and would have instead encouraged the family to think of this experience as similar to visiting the studio of a portrait artist equipped to create a representation that met their demands, much like Copley's studio had done before.

The first step in this process would have undoubtedly involved the selection of an appropriate backdrop, where they were allowed to select from a variety of outdoor scenes and court backgrounds from an 80-foot panoramic background on rollers.[436] Working in conjunction with Bassano, the Spencer-Churchills opted for a masonry backdrop depicting large and imposing concrete blocks. In addition to exposing his clients to his portfolio of works, Bassano also set himself apart from his contemporaries in his use of real furniture and oriental carpets, rather than the *papier-mâché* rocks and cardboard balusters used by most photographers during this period. [437] The Spencer-Churchills included such a carpet and a French neo-classical chair in each of their portraits, both accessories being highly fashionable status symbols during this period.[438] However, it the stark simplicity of the masonry backdrop and the resulting strong contrasts of light and dark in their portraits that distinguish their portraits from the often unconvincing stage sets overladen with detail that so many of the album's other sitters opted for to embellish their roles.

Consuelo's portrait's strong contrast of light and dark, along with the relative austerity of her portrait's composition, reveal that Bassano was influenced by Diego Velazquez's characteristic chiaroscuro, whose work was admired in a study by R.A.M. Stevenson in 1895. [439] This was in sharp contrast to the even lighting and overfilled compositions of so many other portraits in the album and is a testament to the Spencer-Churchills' familiarity with the fine art of their and their desire for their portraits to embody the same qualities represented in the works of the leading society portraitists such as Giovanni Boldini and John Singer Sargent. The Spencer-Churchills thus selected a

[436] Pepper and Vickers, 89.
[437] Pepper and Vickers, 32.
[438] Coffin, *Rococo*.
[439] McConkey, *Edwardian Portraits*, 25. Like many of London's best society photographers, Bassano studied the Old Masters, and as someone who trained in the studios of Augustus Egg and the watercolourist and scene-painter William Beverley, he would have been familiar with conversations occurring in fine art circles of the 1890s. Pepper and Vickers, 89.

photographer whose work was capable not only of projecting an image of the family as worthy of their position, but in selecting a photographer who was engaged with the progressive artistic trends of his time, they reaffirmed their role as arbiters of artistic taste, as their family had been for centuries. However, although the portraits of Consuelo, her husband and his sisters all include the same decorative elements of the background and decorative objects, and contain similar contrasts of light and dark, it is here that the similarities between their portraits end.

Through the shadowy background of classical solemnity lies the blank, expressionless gaze of Consuelo, Duchess of Marlborough (Fig. 3.41), who, although she meets our eyes, does not do so confidently. Her famously long neck delicately supports her titled face as she turns slightly to our left, allowing her fantastic court gown embellished with the sinuous curves of asymmetrical Rococo ornament to be fully on display. However, despite her ornate toilette, which matches even the Marchioness of Londonderry's in opulence (Fig. 3.10), Consuelo does not present herself as the regally confident society figure that she was. Her frozen expression almost appears melancholic, but it is not the type of romantic melancholy for the fantasy of the eighteenth-century past that we see with so many of her peers in the album, but rather a disenchanted detachment. Symbolized by the eighteenth-century fan that she delicately opens before us, Consuelo is fully aware that she is subjected to the gaze of her viewers. However, her clenched fist suggests that while she acknowledges our view, she is not altogether at ease with it. In her frozen passivity, Consuelo becomes almost a statue for onlookers to explore, with viewers' eyes allowed to freely wander the details of her costume without feeling as though they are facing an actual individual. In a sense, it is through her detached expression and stationary deportment that the subject of the young duchess's portrait is not of Consuelo herself, but that of her elaborate costume.

Perhaps most revealing to the conflicting vision presented by Consuelo's portrait in comparison to those of her family is to be found in a portrait painted just one year before Consuelo's marriage to the Duke in 1894 by Carolus-Duran (Fig. 3.47), which shows a remarkably more confident and engaging young woman. This portrait fits neatly within the tradition of the Grand Manner portraits by Reynolds, Romney and Batoni. She stands majestically next to a classical column just as many of Reynolds' sitters do, with a sunny landscape backdrop behind her. Her dress is white and flowing,

like many of the classical draperies found on canvases dating back to the seventeenth century, but there is a different aura to this portrait that is altogether of the moment in which it was painted. To begin with, Consuelo's upswept hair and billowing sleeves are very much in the fashion of the 1890s, and indeed this dress was only a slight modification of contemporary day dress with the pink bow, lengths of lace and walking stick an obvious departure from portraits by Reynolds or Romney. But a closer look reveals that even the classical setting so central to such portraits is, too, of the modern era. The balustrade behind her and the earth tones of the flat earth tone of the terracotta column are not the intellectual abstractions moulded by Reynold's enlightenment ideology that promoted ideal forms, but appear to represent a very real, and very tangible stage that the future Duchess ascends. The goal of Carolus-Duran's portrait is not merely to fit Consuelo to her future husband's family portraits, but to convince the viewer that Consuelo possessed the many attributes which the role of presiding over a great estate required. Through her successful engagement with the visual codes of Grand Manner portraiture indicative of idealized aristocratic femininity, Consuelo claimed a place within this network. Her success in achieving this can be attested not only by her marriage to the ninth Duke of Marlborough, but in Carolus-Duran's portrait's future inclusion in a celebrated publication of 1896 (Fig. 3.48), the *Book of Beauty*, as an example of perfect aristocratic femininity.[440]

To play the part convincingly as a member of her husband's aristocratic family, Consuelo consistently turned to the power of dress as she had done when sitting for her portrait by Carolus-Duran. When Consuelo married the 9th Duke her trousseau consisted of over seventy-five dresses by several of Paris's top dressmakers.[441] Consuelo later described the transformation in her autobiography, 'Tulle must give way to satin, the baby décolletage to a more generous display of neck and arms, naiveté to sophistication'.[442] On the day of her wedding, Consuelo was gifted with both an elaborate fan by her mother with her name emblazoned on its sticks in diamonds, as well as two exceedingly long strings of pearls.[443] These pearls were described at the time in a newspaper as being 'without equal in the world', for the first string of these

[440] Williamson and Kipling, *The Book of Beauty*.
[441] 'The Marlborough-Vanderbilt Wedding', *Bow Bells* 32, no. 411 (Nov. 15, 1895): 499.
[442] As quoted in MacColl and Wallace, 153-4.
[443] 'The Marlborough-Vanderbilt Wedding', 499.

pearls originally formed 'the once glorious strand of Catherine of Russia'.[444] The second string, which had been collected by Mr. William K. Vanderbilt for his wife, was long enough to hang over the bodice of a dress and wrap three times around her neck, with these pearls measuring fully half an inch in diameter.[445]

The Duke and Duchess must have chosen to capitalize on the historic origin of this valuable family heirloom for it had recently been admired in the fashionable periodical *Bow Bells*, thus securing a direct and tangible link to an eighteenth-century ruler that few of their peers could rival. However, another fashion accessory represented in Consuelo's portrait may have been a source of even more pride for the family. Barely noticeable, tucked into the corner of the back of the beautiful floral tapestried chair in Consuelo's portrait is a white handkerchief that has been gently cast aside. For at least their closest friends, this piece of fabric would have been a familiar symbol of the family's claim to one of the oldest dukedoms. On her wedding day, the Duke gave to Consuelo a lace handkerchief once given to Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough by Queen Anne.[446] All of the brides of Blenheim carried this same handkerchief before her, and it is entirely possible that the Duchess would have carried this handkerchief with her to the Diamond Jubilee ball, drawing her into a network of familial relations that extended beyond those that were with her, while reminding Consuelo of her role as duchess in continuing the Spencer-Churchill's service to the crown on this auspicious occasion.

Rendered in monochrome, Consuelo's gown shines against the stark background and takes on the appearance of white satin, and in its weight and colour appears very similar to the heavy white satin gowns characteristic of Reynolds portraits of the 1770s. In this, Consuelo's portrait engages with many of the same feminine ideals originating in the eighteenth century, most especially the values of whiteness both in terms of costume and complexion.[447] As has been discussed earlier in this thesis, whiteness was as valuable of a fashion accessory during the eighteenth century as the diamond girdle Consuelo wore in her portrait for the album. Cracks in the British aristocracy's perfect control of economic, social and political power had begun to form on the surface of the

[444] *Bow Bells* 36, no. 471 (January 8, 1897): 692.
[445] *Bow Bells* 36, no. 471 (January 8, 1897): 692.
[446] 'The Marlborough-Vanderbilt Wedding', 499.
[447] Bindman, *Ape to Apollo*.

late Victorian aristocracy, and in the awareness that their economic authority, social supremacy, and even political power were beginning to be challenged by newcomers to their social circle in the form of the Rothschilds, Sassoons, and even Vanderbilt families, an undercurrent of anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism was never far from the surface.[448] The British aristocracy had in previous decades been a very insular group of a few hundred families, each connected through a web of principal individuals and familial ties. While they were happy to consider themselves as part of a wider European nobility, in some cases marrying members of noble European families, they ultimately viewed their position as superior even to members of other European aristocratic families. While they were happy to ignore the inclusion of the occasional foreign ambassador or *nobelesse* at such social occasions as the Devonshire House Ball, the introduction of these non-landed and non-aristocratic families within their ranks was viewed as nothing short of a corruption of their social class and race. A description of Consuelo Vanderbilt in the *London Journal* shortly after her marriage is telling:

> 'Her features are quite irregular, although there is something decidedly piquant at the contour of her face, which lends great charm to the ensemble. Some people have likened it to a pretty Japanese girl's. Her head is small and shapely, and she carries it in a way that would do credit to one of mature years. Her soft, dark-brown eyes are eloquent, with their full lids opening obliquely, hence the Japanese comparison'.

The author later adds that she is very 'fastidious about her boots and prefers 'Louis Quinze' heels upon all her footgear. She rather prides herself on her exquisitely arched instep, which is a heritage of her Southern ancestors.'[449] While not altogether unflattering, this description of the mother of the future heirs of Blenheim does much to distance Consuelo from the ethnic and cultural heritage of Anglo-Saxon Britons, and it is a picture that above all emphasizes her as an outsider. This narrative of racial distinction is apparent throughout the press of the period, with one paper reporting that British matrons had begun to encourage their daughters to imitate their American

[448] Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*.
[449] 'The New Duchess of Marlborough'.

cousins, to exert more success in the marriage market. American women were described in the press by one critic, whose tone expresses both admiration and critique:

> 'Their women may be eccentric, unconventional, and even sometimes what might be called fast, but they are rarely, if ever coarse. An innate refinement and coolness of temperament saves them from vulgarity, and gives to their manners the daring courage of originality that foreigners admire'.[450]

While a number of Americans attended the ball – as is established by descriptions of their costumes in the press – Consuelo was one of just fourteen to be included in the Duchess's commemorative album. When Americans were included in the album, their presence was granted on account of their connection to the upper ranks of the British aristocracy, rather than on basis of their wealth and social position, as is evidenced by Mrs. Bradley-Martin's lack of invitation – who had held an equally grand ball in New York that same year.[451] Although these women represented a variety of roles, ranging from the exotic allure of 'Oriental' princesses, to the enchanting magnificence of Renaissance noblewomen, a careful look at the select number of Americans who did attend the ball reveals an interesting pattern. Unlike the vast majority of their British contemporaries, none of these women took on the roles of members of the European nobility. What emerges instead is a collection of allegorical characters such as Flora, the Goddess of Flowers by Mrs. Terence Blackwood (Fig. 3.49), and historical figures of literary interest such as Madame d'Epinay by Mrs. Joseph Chamberlain (Fig. 3.50). When American women did represent historical figures in positions of power, they selected individuals from southern European courts that operated in a more Republican fashion, such as Valentina Visconti of Milan, represented by Mrs. George Curzon (Fig. 3.51), whose fortunes were associated in the minds of the Victorians with the great trading empires of the Italian city-states, rather than through the wealth of land that was the backbone of the British aristocracy's power.

[450] 'The New Duchess of Marlborough'.
[451] Marshall, 'Mrs. Bradley Martin Not Invited'.

In the instance where American women did participate as northern European aristocratic women like Consuelo, their role was ambiguous, and in some cases was not identified at all. Mrs. George Curzon, the future vicerine of India's sister, then Miss Leiter (Fig. 3.52), represented an eighteenth-century woman in a highly detailed and superbly fashionable toilette, yet for all of her efforts to create an authentic costume with her hair piled high with stately feathers, the masses of asymmetrical folds of satin and lace and even the delicate addition of a beauty patch placed seductively near her mouth, Miss Leiter chose to keep her role as one of anonymous beauty and elegance, as is evidenced by a lack of inscription identifying her role in the album. As a representation of an ideal type, rather than a specific historical figure whose character would have carried certain associations in the minds of her viewers, Miss Leiter may have had a different goal in mind in choosing to don this costume: like Consuelo Vanderbilt who was previously painted by Carolus-Duran, Miss Leiter has submitted an audition through this portrait to join the ranks of the British aristocracy. The classical column and feathers in her hair, like those present in portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds and in the pages of the *Gallery of* Fashion were symbols of knowledge, power, and Empire. And while the beauty patch next to her mouth appears to be ever so slightly seductive, what it accomplishes is far more than flirtation. This small fashion accessory emphasized her white complexion and the ideal contour of her features just as such accessories had done in the eighteenth century.

It was this courage, as well as an ample dowry that enabled women such as Miss Leiter (Fig. 3.52) and Miss Goelet (Fig. 3.53) to secure marriages to some of the highest-ranking members of the English aristocracy. But these marriages, like their costumes and portraits, were also the result of something else: a shared network of taste and collaboration. It was through this collaborative network that American women settled in London not only introduced their cousins across the Atlantic to London society, arranging fashionable marriages that no doubt in turn would benefit their social position, but that their collective identity was forged through visual means. Realizing that they were limited to playing the role of the outsider, many American women capitalized on this otherness by taking on the role of the 'exotic Other'. At least six American women, including the Duke of Marlborough's own aunt Lady Randolph Churchill (Fig. 3.54), Miss Goelet (Fig. 3.53), and Mrs. Arthur Paget (Fig. 3.55) participated in the Oriental court led by the Duchess of Devonshire herself, more than

any other social group, and it was through these elaborate costumes with more gems, more imagination, and of course, more attention that these women set themselves apart as a network of powerful and confident women.

While Consuelo's costume certainly met the requirements for representing opulent eighteenth-century Rococo style dress, and even outdid many of her peers with the inclusion of such significant fashion accessories, a comparison of her costume with that found in portraits of her husband's aunts who also donned Rococo dress suggests an important contrast with Consuelo's costume. Two of the Duke's aunts participated in the eighteenth-century French court of Marie Antoinette, with Lady Sarah Wilson representing Louis XV's famous mistress Madame de Pompadour (Fig. 0.43), and her sister Lady Georgiana Curzon representing the king's wife, Maria Leszczyńska (Fig. 3.44). Although both women wear costumes close in historical style to Consuelo, each of these women present very different representations of fashionable aristocratic dress of the mid-eighteenth century. This must, at least in part, be taken into account on the fact that each of these women represented particular roles and were photographed by different artists. However, these differences are also further evidence of the influence of social class on how one was enabled to engage with the visual and cultural codes of eighteenth-century dress.

Although she was photographed by Lafayette on the night of the ball (Fig. 3.56), Lady Sarah Wilson must not have been satisfied with her portrait, for she decided to sit for a new set of portraits in John Thomson's fashionable Grosvenor Square studio. Her costume was described in detail in the *Queen* as:

> 'a Pompadour costume of rich china-blue satin, the quaint bodice with deep point in front, fastened with old fashioned bows of vieux-rose silk, graduating in size to the waist; the tight satin sleeves had deep frills of silk, pinked at the edged at the elbow with an inner frill of lace; the dress was trimmed with white blonde lace and pink Banksia roses; the skirt was of blue satin,

with very full panniers, and flounced with two frills, edged with blonde lace and pink button roses'.[452]

Her dress was designed in conjunction with the London dressmaker Mrs. Mason at 4 Burlington Street, and was likely based upon a portrait by Francois Boucher of 1750 (Fig. 3.57). This portrait, which was then in Waddeson Manor, would have once been in her family's possession before the house was bought by Ferdinand de Rothschild. Like Madame de Pompadour, who had a strong hand in her own fashions, Lady Sarah almost certainly made the decision to copy this dress.

But it was likely another 1759 Boucher portrait (Fig. 3.58) of Madame de Pompadour, presently in the Wallace Collection, that John Thomson had in mind when he created Lady Sarah's portrait. There are many compositional similarities between these two portraits – both Lady Sarah and Madame de Pompadour stand in a garden setting with their ruffled full panniers filling the frame – which contributed to an image of feminine power in Pompadour's original portrait as part of her aims of securing her position as a modest, loyal companion to the king. Both also have small floppy furry companions. While it is unlikely that Lady Sarah, a respectable if not somewhat stuffy society hostess, saw a direct correspondence between herself and Madame de Pompadour, she almost certainly identified with the romanticized privileged life of the eighteenth-century *ancien régime*, like so many of her peers who popularized Rococo interiors on account of the fantasy of magnificence and status that this style evoked.

The British aristocracy was faced with remarkable financial pressures from the 1880s onwards, as David Cannadine aptly argues in his comprehensive survey of the subject, however, there were very real limits to what the aristocracy actually knew about themselves, from what they owned, how rich they were, to who all of their ancestors were.[453] While this may have been the case with many attendants at the ball, allowing them to fully assume the grandeur of the Rococo without hesitation, this was certainly not so for Lady Sarah Wilson. In the case of the disastrous financial decline of the Marlborough family, the Spencer-Churchills were aware that their position in society

[452] *Queen*, (10 July 1897): 76.
[453] Cannadine, 22.

was not secure on account of the drain of their financial assets. However, challenges to their position in society were felt even more tangibly through changes to the makeup of their very family. Lady Sarah Wilson saw her father and both brothers marry American women, in no small part because of what they could offer financially, and this would have been a strikingly new challenge to someone from a cultural background the privileged one's social class and family history to such an extent. These changes must have weighed heavily on Lady Sarah's mind, and like many of her aristocratic peers, the romantic nostalgia of the eighteenth-century *ancien régime* presented an opportunity to reimagine the world through role play as it once was. Her disconnected gaze, far off into the horizon, takes us to a place in which memory, fantasy, and history act together as both a pleasurable and painful reminder of a mythic lost past, as Angus Trumble and Andrea Wolk Rager discuss.[454] To wear this costume, then, was a very different experience for Lady Sarah than her nephew's American wife – one marked with the memory of loss and sadness for the passing of a different era. Thus, in posing for such a portrait tinged with romantic melancholy, Lady Sarah claimed membership to a network of aristocratic sensibility that had valued melancholic contemplation as part of appropriate feminine behaviour since the eighteenth century, as discussed in Ch. 2 in relation to the *Gallery of Fashion*.[455]

Although the portrait produced by Lafayette on July 6, 1897 of Lady Georgiana Curzon, Lady Sarah Wilson's sister contains not a trace of melancholy (Fig. 3.44), her portrait does with equal fervour draw upon the language of eighteenth-century grandeur to reinforce her elevated potion within the British aristocracy. In the resulting portrait, Georgiana embodies the glorious splendour of an eighteenth-century queen– someone who would have been familiar to Madame de Pompadour as the wife of the king, Queen Maria Leszczyńska. A negative that has survived from her sittings (Fig. 3.59) shows just how sumptuous Lady Curzon's costume for this role was: embellished with pearls, and encased in satin and tulle, this was a dress every bit deserving of a Queen of France. And yet, it matches no known portraits of the Queen. Twenty-first-century knowledge of this historical figure shows that this costume, and the rather seductive reclining pose Lady Curzon adopts, is in sharp contrast to the image that Queen Maria Leszczyńska

[454] Trumble and Wolk Rager, *Edwardian Opulence*, 4.
[455] Mark Hallett discusses the stylish connotations of melancholy in portraiture in Hallett, *Portraiture in Action*.

actually projected as part of a careful political program.[456] The daughter of the Polish King Stainslaw I, Maria was the longest reigning queen consort of France, and her reputation for generosity and piety made her one of the monarchy's greatest propaganda assets.[457] Sitting for portraits dressed as a nun (Fig. 3.60), and with several stately images of her as a queen (Fig. 3.61), Maria projected an image of pious devotion and enlightened rule – an image that was far removed from the glamorous boudoir scene conjured up by Lady Curzon. While it is certainly true that these portraits of Maria were not as publicly accessible through print to Lady Curzon as Madame de Pompadour's image and biography were to Lady Sarah Wilson, this is unlikely to have been the primary reason behind such discrepancies in the fashioning of her role as Maria Leszczyńska. Rather, the number of negatives featuring flirtatious poses and unrestrained nonchalance from her photographic session with Lafayette suggest that Lady Curzon was less concerned with representing a specific historical individual. Instead, Lady Curzon sought to position herself within a network of late Victorian opulence by engaging with the visual language of splendour of eighteenth-century France's *ancien régime.*

Surrounded by a Louis XVI-style canapé and fabric folding screen and seated in an oversized *bergère* chair with delicate cabriole legs, Georgiana could just as easily be in a fashionable contemporary boudoir at The Breakers in Newport or Waddeson Manor in Buckinghamshire. A revival of interest in the eighteenth century at this time, prompted by the reimagining's of the brothers Goncourt, imbued these objects with a mark of unquestionable taste and credibility.[458] Lady Curzon meets the viewers gaze in an expression of familiar ease. The sumptuous texture of the overstuffed pillow she sits atop grants her a certain regality in her slight elevation, while the mass of silk of her skirts which cascade before her is tantalizingly sensuous, with both of these elements working to create an image of casual elegance.

Lady Sarah and her sister Lady Curzon may present different visions of refined eighteenth-century aristocratic womanhood, however, what both of these women share in their portraits is a sense of confidence, grace, and the entitlement that came with

[456] Germann, *Picturing Marie Leszczinska*.
[457] Germann, *Picturing Marie Leszczinska*.
[458] Badea-Păun, 135.

being a member of the imagined *ancien régime* elite. Consuelo's costume might be equally elaborate, and her jewels were without question even more valuable, but the image she projects is ultimately not of someone who confidently embodies her role. This unusual exception becomes even more apparent when placed in relation to other the posture and language of other women of rank at the ball, such as the Marchioness of Londonderry, whose portrait by Lafayette taken at her home presents us with the familiar language of power found in state portraiture. Positioned above her viewers, and intentionally facing away from us, the Marchioness conveys her power and status as if she is the literal embodiment of the queen Maria Theresa whose court she led at the ball. The only rival to the Duchess of Devonshire's status in society, the Marchioness practically was, and the famous Londonderry jewels are perhaps the only jewellery capable of outshining Consuelo's illustrious pearls.

The Marchioness and Consuelo's husband's aunts' position in society and inclusion in the album may have been securely established by their centuries-old link to the same eighteenth-century aristocracy that paid court to such queens. However, like other Americans at the ball, Consuelo's reputation in British society hung by the loose thread of her husband's family name. While Americans present at the ball could confidently enact the role of 'Oriental' princesses, when attempting to assume the legacy of the eighteenth-century past in the form of the titled nobility, such roleplay was disrupted. Consuelo's dress may have been equally opulent, and her accessories far superior to the majority of her peers, but her social class and racial difference prevented her from fully assuming the power and grandeur that such sartorial statements conveyed. The Duke may have aspired to project an image of his family as equally influential to how it had been in the eighteenth century through their shared employment of opulent Rococo fashions. However, in drawing on such Rococo elegance to do so, he exposes his familial network as one that is ultimately fraught with internal tensions. Although her portrait is positioned closely to her husband's family's portraits in the album, and she fashioned her role for the ball in fulfilment of her husband's Rococo iconographical program, Consuelo's portrait shows us a woman who is both part of something – her family – and not – the British aristocracy. Ultimately, it was through their engagement with the codes of eighteenth-century Rococo fashion that this underlying tension of exclusion is brought to the fore, thus disrupting the fantasy of entitlement and ease that Rococo fashions evoked.

IV. A Network Across Time: Painters, Photographers & Sitters

By the close of the nineteenth century, a culmination of interests across fine art and fashion – of large hats, the popularity of feathered accessories, and most especially, of Grand Manner portraits of women wearing them – prompted a number of artists and sitters to turn to a particular painting as a source of inspiration for costume and portraits as at the Devonshire House Ball. Within the British tradition of portrait painting and fashionable dress, no painting, or indeed group of paintings, can be said to have exerted a more lasting and noticeable influence than Rubens's celebrated paintings of women wearing striking black beaver hats trimmed with the poetic flourish of ostrich feathers.[459] These portraits, commonly believed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to be of Rubens's wife *Hélène Fourment* (Figs. 0.31 & 0.34), were to provide one of the most popular styles of dress for both the masquerades of the eighteenth century, and for extravagant costume balls like the Devonshire House Ball.[460] While no one attended the Duchess's ball explicitly in the character of Rubens's wife, the influence of her famous portraits inspired several of the costumes worn at the ball indirectly by way of a series of eighteenth-century portraits shaped by Rubens's iconic portrait. Among these were Lady Evelyn Ewart's portrait by Henry Bullingham (Fig. 3.62) in the guise of her ancestresses the Duchess of Ancaster, whose own portrait by Thomas Hudson represented her in the role of Rubens's wife that she herself had adopted for a masquerade at Ranelagh (Fig. 0.32). Meanwhile, the gentlewoman photographer Alice Hughes captured Lady Beatrice Herbert in the guise of Gainsborough's iconic portrayal of the opera dancer Giovanna Baccelli (Fig. 3.63), whose more nuanced engagement with Rubens's portraits alludes to the master through Baccelli's off-kilter hat, beribboned polonaise dress and the vivacious capturing of a

[459] It is important to mention that there has been some confusion as to whether these are portraits of his second wife, *Hélène Fourment*, or her sister Susanna. In this chapter, I will discuss these portraits as being representations of Rubens's wife *Hélène*, as this is how they were understood in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

[460] Aileen Ribeiro recounts the popularity of the Rubens's wife costume in her Ph.D. thesis, published in 1984, *The Dress Worn at Masquerades in England, 1730 to 1790,* In a chapter entitled, 'Fantasy and Fancy Dress' in *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe, 1715-1789*, Ribeiro gives credit to the costume of Rubens's wife as having been more popular than any other in eighteenth-century England.

single moment in time (Fig. 0.36).[461] For the photographers who captured the Ladies Evelyn Ewart and Beatrice Herbert, the striking visual qualities of Rubens's iconic portraits and those of his eighteenth-century admirers were not to be forgotten. By alluding to Rubens' portrait, both in terms of the formal qualities of their portraits and in the fashion accessories that made up their fancy dress, photographers and sitters formed a network that spanned across time. This not only placed both parties in direct relation with the cultural and social values that references to these paintings carried, but it also allowed both artists and sitters to challenge such narratives, and in the process, reasserted the role of women both within the practice of artmaking, and to the position of aristocratic women in society, both past and present.

This artistic network placed these photographers and sitters not just in relation to the eighteenth-century artists Hudson and Gainsborough whose portraits they directly copied, but to the seventeenth-century master that had before inspired them. This double reference shaped not only an ideal representation of the sitters who posed in fashions inspired by Rubens's iconic *Chapeau de Paille*, but it also enhanced the reputation of the photographers who boldly faced the challenge of following in these great master's footsteps in the new medium of photography. However, these photographs represent a long history of interactions between artists and sitters in the tradition of Rubens' own masterpieces. The engagement of both the sitters and photographers of the 1890s with Rubens's work placed them among a network that spanned not merely the social and artistic networks of Gainsborough, Hudson, and Rubens, but to the many other artists who had engaged with Rubens's famous portraits, as these prior experiments continued to shape the cultural context in which these photographers were viewed. To fully appreciate this, a history of this fashion in Britain, which I first began in my introduction, must be accounted for.

Rubens's paintings had been the subject of intense artistic study from as early as 1730, when one of these portraits (Fig. 0.31), then believed to have been painted by Van Dyck, but which is today commonly thought to be a portrait of *Hélène Fourment*, entered the collection of Sir Robert Walpole. Virtually immediately after it went on

[461] Hudson's 1757 portrait of the Duchess of Ancaster was in the collection of Lady Evelyn Ewart's family home Grimsthorpe and Drummond Castle in 1897, where it remains today.

display, Rubens's portrait began to influence artmaking in Britain, with Walpole's vast circle of friends which included members of the aristocratic elite, as well as the leading literary and artistic figures of his day coming to view it.[462] Rubens's full-length portrait would eventually be sold along with a significant portion of Walpole's art collection to Catherine the Great, but this painting would leave a lasting impression in Britain, both because of its reproduction in prints and through the vast array of portraits of ladies equipped with Rubens's portrait's famously slanting hat.[463] The first recorded portrait painted after Rubens's wife in Britain was by John Vanderbank (Fig. 3.64), who appropriately as an artist adapted the fashions in a portrait painted of his own wife in 1732.[464] However, it would take one of Rubens's own countrymen to refine and adapt this costume into one of the most popular styles of dress in portraiture in the early eighteenth century. This artist, Joseph van Aken, from whom a number of sketches based on this portrait survive (Figs. 3.65 & 3.66), was a skilled drapery painter, working in the studios of the most celebrated portraitists of his day, comprising Thomas Hudson and Allan Ramsay, was to paint dozens of ladies in various iterations of this style.[465]

Soon after van Aken's death, Hudson was commissioned to paint what was to become his most illustrious portrait of a woman dressed as Rubens's wife in a painting of the Duchess of Ancaster (Fig. 0.32), the same portrait that Lady Evelyn Ewart later styled her role after for the Devonshire House Ball (Fig. 3.62).[466] In a remarkable parallel, the Duchess is represented in a costume that she actually wore while attending a

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[462] Ribeiro, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe, 1715-1789*, 276.

[463] Although Walpole's *Portrait of Hélène Fourment* was still in Catherine the Great's collection in Russia in 1897, before it moved to its permanent home in the Gulbenkian Museum in Lisbon, it remained a familiar source in British art, and was accessible through a myriad of reproductive engravings after it and the portraits it had previously inspired. David Howarth, 'Elegance', in van Hout and du Bourg, eds. *Rubens and his Legacy*. During Rubens' own day, such wide feather-trimmed hats were highly fashionable, and were often used in paintings either as a symbol of the vanity that such fashions entailed for its wearers, or in scenes of well-to-do members of Dutch and Flemish society enjoying themselves in the open air.

[464] According to Karen Hearn, John Vanderbank's painting of his wife from 1732 is now lost. Could this recently rediscovered painting of an unknown woman from 1732 be the half-length portrait of his wife? Hearn, *Van Dyck and Britain*, 7.

[465] Ribeiro describes Joseph van Aken's great influence on popularizing Rubens's wife's costume in British portraits in the early eighteenth century in 'Eighteenth-Century Masquerade Dress Based on Seventeenth Century Fashions', in Ribeiro, *Dress Worn at the Masquerades*, as well as in her article, 'The Hudson Exhibition at Kenwood'.

[466] It is unknown who assisted Thomas Hudson with the painting of drapery in this portrait, but Ribeiro suggests that this may have been completed by Joseph Wright of Derby, who was at this time working in Hudson's studio, 'Thomas Hudson Exhibition at Kenwood', 598.

masquerade at Ranelagh, whose famous Rotunda is represented as a striking classical structure behind her.[467] With evidence that this was a costume that the Duchess actually wore, we have unusual proof to suggest that she would have entered Hudson's studio with a clear idea of how she wanted to be represented. The Duchess of Ancaster would have, like those in her circle, been familiar with Rubens's celebrated painting. Even if she had not visited Walpole's Norfolk home, his painting was circulating widely through printed engravings by James McArdell (Fig. 3.67). The year 1757, however, marked a time of particular interest in the painting, as it was then that Thomas Jefferys' *A Collection of the Dresses of Different Nations, Antient and Modern* was published.[468] Recognizing the need for a guide that would assist in the production of masquerade costume, Jefferys included a plate of Rubens's wife (Fig. 3.68), which would undoubtedly serve as guidance for the production of Rubens's wife costumes for decades to come.[469]

The costume that the Duchess wears, however, is far from a straightforward copy of the original dress painted by Rubens. To begin with, the black satin of Rubens's portrait has been replaced by the highly fashionable blue lustring of the eighteenth century.[470] Her bunched-up open gown takes on new size with the bell-shaped profile of a hooped skirt. Even the square bodice and collar have been replaced by layers upon layers of lace. This might be fashionably ruffled as it was in the eighteenth century, however, it also could be said to reference the prominence of lace in seventeenth-century dress, if not in Rubens's portrait. Although she has kept the gauze sleeves of the original costume, tied with shiny blue ribbons just above her elbows, the shape of these, too, also speaks to the style of Vandyke fancy dress in mid-eighteenth-century Britain. Like so many interpretations of historical dress, the characteristic hat with ostrich feathers and single ostrich feather fan have been adapted to suit the tastes of the 1750s. To complement her blue gown, Mary's hat is fawn-coloured rather than the stark black of American beaver. Meanwhile, the lines of the feathers that top it and the single ostrich feather fan that she holds in her left hand are used by the artist to create a series of vertical lines which lead

[467] Ribeiro, *Dress Worn at the Masquerades*, 151.
[468] Campbell, *Historical Style*.
[469] Campbell, *Historical Style*, 284.
[470] I am indebted to Ribeiro for her identification of the material of the Duchess's dress. 'The Hudson Exhibition at Kenwood', 599.

the eye across the canvas from left-to-right, while pausing in the middle at the similarly asymmetrical chains of her jewelled timepiece. Not only has her costume been adapted to suit the tastes of her time, but the resulting portrait is Hudson's most successful foray into the aesthetics of Rococo serpentine lines.[471] Hudson, with the aid of his drapery painter, has succeeded in creating a portrait with all of the vibrancy of a figure captured in a single, perfect moment in time, thus placing him in direct conversation with his seventeenth-century predecessor Rubens, who had similarly accomplished this before him.

Lady Evelyn Ewart likely selected her role not only on the fact that this ancestral portrait was so famous, with Rubens' wives costumes at the masquerades coming to be described by the press as representing the 'Duchess of Ancaster', but also because of the important contributions her ancestress had made in serving the royal family. As mistress of the robes to Queen Charlotte, the Duchess was one of the most influential women of her day. Her beauty was the subject of poetry, and her portrait circulated widely through printed form. In fact, even by 1897, the Ball's attendants were likely familiar with the subject of Ewart's portrait not through the original portrait painted by Thomas Hudson, but through one of their own ancestors' portraits, with the proliferation of costume after Hudson's portrait of the Duchess of Ancaster being as extensive as it was during the mid-eighteenth-century.[472]

Perhaps no one was rmore esponsible for popularizing the improbably oversized Rubens-inspired hats of the 1780s than Thomas Gainsborough, who painted such hats so gracefully that his own portraits came to influence how such hats would be worn by the late nineteenth century. It was likely on account of his association with painting such oversized hats that were popular in the eighteenth century that so many women modelled their roles for the ball after his paintings, as Lady Beatrice Herbert (Fig. 3.63) did when she chose to attend the ball in the guise of his painting of *Giovanna Baccelli* (Fig. 0.36). Like Hudson before him, Gainsborough continued to turn to Rubens's

[471] Among his many artistic influences are listed Gravelot and Mercier in the 1979 exhibition catalogue, *Thomas Hudson 1701-1779*.
[472] The lasting impact of the Duchess of Ancaster's portrait and its influence on representations of Rubens' wife's dress is to be found in *Thomas Hudson 1701-1779: Portrait Painter and Collector*, as well as by Ribeiro in *Dress Worn at the Masquerades*, 151-2.

Portrait of Hélène Fourment (Fig. 0.31) as inspiration for his work. However, by the time he was painting *Giovanna Baccelli,* the relationship between these his paintings and the art of the seventeenth-century master is tenuous in the extreme. When the acclaimed opera dancer Signora Baccelli sat for Gainsborough sometime around 1782, it was likely of her own volition.[473] Gainsborough was friends with many of the most celebrated female performers of his day, and he painted a number of portraits of them that were, at the time, rather scandalous. However, such scandal had long faded by the time Lady Beatrice Herbert chose to model her role after this important opera dancer, and it is very likely that she chose to model her role after her on account of the exuberantly positivity that her portrait she exudes.

Emerging joyfully from an expansive English landscape against the backdrop of luminous, full, pink clouds, Baccelli greets her viewers as if they were her audience, in the very act of dancing (Fig. 0.31). With one arm tucked delicately behind her back, and the other gracefully holding a frothy swathe of drapery formed by her apron, Baccelli balances in her *pointe tendu*, just before she steps forward onto the ball of her foot into a *demi-coupe*.[474] Baccelli is charming not only because she appears natural, graced by the lovely landscape surroundings Gainsborough so loved to paint, but because of her welcoming posture and the cheerful appearance of her fashionable blue and white striped polonaise gown. While at first glance Gainsborough's portrait might appear very different from the frontal representation of Rubens's wife clad in elegant, but subdued, black, there are certain notable similarities between both of these two portraits, as well as to paintings produced by British artists such as Hudson in response to it. Gainsborough has simplified Baccelli's costume represented by J. Thornthwaite (Fig. 3.69), most notably the layers of ribbons which gather her sleeves into a series of puffs, and instead shows a costume with gauzy sleeves tied up before the elbow in ribbon bows quite similar to those painted by Rubens.[475] It is possible that Gainsborough had

[473] Baccelli was then the mistress of the Duke of Dorset, who, although paid Gainsborough to paint both his and her portraits, was not a tremendous fan of the artist's work, instead, preferring the work of Gainsborough's rival, Reynolds. Gainsborough already had a more than causal relationship with Baccelli's theatre, the King's in Haymarket, and was known to maintain a friendship with a number of musicians and theatrical professionals. Einberg, *Gainsborough's Giovanna Baccelli*, 11.
[474] I am grateful for historian of dance Karen Kliot's adept analysis of Baccelli's pose in her article, Kliot, 'A Little Business for the Eye', 1-27.
[475] This print is reproduced in Kliot, 10.

in mind Hudson's portrait of the Duchess of Ancaster, as the colour palette and composition are quite similar, and both ladies gesture towards the canvas as if poised to continue off of it. Furthermore, the way in which Baccelli's hat is propped upon her masses of frizzed hair at an angle could also be seen as a subtle nod to Rubens.

The similarities between Baccelli's portrait and Rubens's paintings would have been heightened at the time in which it was exhibited in 1782 at the Royal Academy based on the presence of another painting on display by Reynolds. In another portrait of a celebrated performer, *Mary Robinson as 'Perdita'* (Fig. 0.33), Reynolds presents viewers with his response to Rubens's *Chapeau de Paille* (Fig. 0.34), the other portrait by Rubens featuring a striking black hat previously mentioned. Reynolds had just seen this portrait in Antwerp, and although he was not willing to purchase it for the price that its owners were willing to part with it for, the painting possessed him, and he immediately produced a painting in response to it.[476] With a similar composition featuring a half-length figure with hands crossed in front of her, a colour palette of dramatic black, white and red, enhanced by Robinson's rouged and whitened complexion, and of course, the signature black feathered hat positioned on her head at an angle, Reynolds created one of the most intriguing portraits both of the famous actress and author.

As was discussed in the introductory chapter to this thesis, at this same time across the Channel in Paris, Reynolds' and Gainsborough's colleague and friend, Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, was also enchanted with the Antwerp painting, and she painted a portrait of herself in response to it. Her *Self-Portrait with a Hat* (Fig. 0.35), exhibited that same year, represents the talented female painter in the familiar language of Rubens's wife, although her costume is very different, and represents her vision for the simple neo-classical fashions that she helped to popularize.[477] By the 1780s Rubens's masterpieces were so famous that a feather on a slightly off-centre hat like this was all one needed to achieve the allusion.[478] A few years later, the first female member of the Royal

[476] As recorded in Howarth, 228, and Perry, *Spectacular Flirtations*, 67.
[477] Vigée-Lebrun's engagement with Rubens' portrait is discussed in two articles. Montfort, 'Self-Portraits, Portraits of Self', and Radisich, 'Que peut définer les femmes?', 441-67.
[478] Ribeiro, 'A Most Extraordinary Figure, Handsome and Bold', in *Thomas Gainsborough and the Modern Woman*, ed. Leca, 135-7.

Academy, Angelica Kauffman, would also paint a *Self-Portrait* with a familiar oblong black tilted hat (Fig. 3.70) – a nod not only to Rubens, but perhaps to Vigée-Lebrun as well. What each of these paintings have in common, from Gainsborough and Reynolds in Britain, and Vigée-Lebrun and Kauffman on the continent, is the fact that they all four represent women artists and performers. Through the guise of Rubens's wife, these women become both the object of the artists' desire, and, through their connection with the master, these artists sought to strengthen these women's professional reputations.[479]

More than one hundred years after Gainsborough painted the sprightly opera dancer Baccelli, and two and a half centuries after Rubens painted his dazzling portraits of black-feather-hatted ladies, photographers capturing sitters from the Devonshire House Ball would continue to look to these artists' work for inspiration. Contemporary fashion again directed attention towards these masters' iconic representations of hats in portraiture, only now rather than being called 'Rubens hats', the over-sized hats popular in the 1890s were commonly referred to as 'Picture Hats' or, perhaps even more appropriately, 'Gainsborough Hats' (Fig. 3.71), after those dramatic representations of over-sized hats in his portraits such as his *Portrait of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire* (Fig. 3.72).[480] With such hats now again back in style, artists and the public approached paintings representing such hats with renewed interest, with their admiration for such portraits such as George Romney's portrait of *Charlotte, Lady Milnes* (Fig. 3.73), and Reynolds' *Mrs. Robinson as 'Perdita'* (Fig. 0.33) evidenced by their exhibition at the Grafton Galleries 1894 *Fair Women Exhibition* (Figs. 3.74 & 3.75).[481] Meanwhile, society portrait painters like Ellis Roberts and Edward Hughes were drawing from the rich repertoire of fashions found in Gainsborough, Romney, and Reynolds' work. In *The Book of Beauty*, a volume epitomizing ideals of feminine

[479] This was unfortunately not the case with Mary Robinson, whose association with the role of Perdita was damaging to her reputation. See Perry's work, who makes a compelling case on how the exhibition of actress's portraits, particularly within the same space and using the same visual language as their social superiors, played a crucial role in buttressing their professional reputations. See especially Perry, *Spectacular Flirtations*.

[480] As described in Leca and Ribeiro, *Gainsborough and the Modern Woman*, 6, and found in periodicals from the time such as 'Day of the Picture Hats: How the Fashionable Women Pose for Photographs', *The Washington Post* (Sept. 26, 1897); 24.

[481] Grafton Galleries, *Fair Women.: Reproductions by the Collotype Process of Some of the Principal Works Exhibited at the Grafton Galleries in 1894* (London: Blades, East & Blades. 1894). For more information on the Grafton Galleries' *Fair Women* exhibition see Maynard, 'A Dream of Fair Women', 322-41.

beauty of the day, several portraits painted by Roberts and Hughes display such hats in portraits that represented many of the same women who attended the Devonshire House Ball. The vast majority of the portraits included, however, are in the tradition of the type of Grand Manner portraits painted by Ellis Roberts (Figs. 3.76 & 3.77) and Edward Hughes (3.78 & 3.79), which made ample use of historicizing elements of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century dress.[482]

No artist was to become more associated with the fashion for representing ladies in oversized hats than Edward Hughes's own daughter, the first 'gentlewoman' photographer, Alice Hughes. Acclaimed for her portraits of beautiful women and children, and an adept student of the Grand Manner tradition in portraiture, Hughes, like her father, admired Reynolds' work. As a result, she encouraged her sitters to wear white in portraits.[483] It was perhaps on account of this self-proclaimed philosophy that a number of the women who sat for her in their costumes from the Devonshire House Ball were wearing the type of simple, classicizing dress, which were the mark of both Hughes and her father's work (Figs. 3.80 & 3.81). This includes Lady Beatrice Herbert's portrait as a rather timid Giovanna Baccelli (Fig. 3.63). Controversial in its own day on account of the attention to the dancer's body in movement and her visible cosmetics, Baccelli's portrait disappeared from public awareness for some time, before it resurfaced in 1895 amidst intense interest in Gainsborough.[484] With its pastoral overtones and what would have been seen as an innocent, almost shepherdess-like costume to Victorian eyes, Baccelli's portrait must have been seen as an appropriate role for the young Herbert, and there was perhaps no one better suited to capture her

[482] As seen in these portraits, both Hughes and Roberts were heavily influenced by the English Grand Manner tradition in portraiture. Their portraits often include the type of 'bedgown' characteristic of Reynolds' portraiture, with a belt hanging low on the waist. The sleeves of these dresses are even more profuse examples of hanging folds of fabric, while the presence of loose drapery hark back to Van Dyck. Reproductions of their work are to be found in Williamson and Kipling, *The Book of Beauty*.

[483] 'A Lady Photographer who Never Photographs Men: A Talk with Miss Alice Hughes'. *The Harmsworth Magazine* 11 (1899), reprinted in Heron and Williams, *Illuminations*.

[484] Perry describes the controversy surrounding Gainsborough's portrait of Baccelli in Perry, *Spectacular Flirtations*, 68-81. Gainsborough's portrait of Baccelli did not circulate widely within the public sphere until in 1894, with increased interest in the artist, it was engraved and included in a monograph on the artist. When mention of the portrait appears in the popular press, it is not described in any significant detail, and indeed it is not described at all in this text, suggesting that it was admired more as a representation of an ideal eighteenth-century beauty, than as a portrait of Baccelli and the controversy that surrounded her biography during her lifetime. 'Thomas Gainsborough', *The Portfolio: Monograph on Artistic Subjects* (Sep. 1894).

portrait in this guise than Alice Hughes, the fashionable lady photographer whose fame rested on her ability to gracefully capture women and children.[485]

Like Gainsborough before her, Hughes looked to the art of the past for inspiration on how to pose her sitters. She used hats to add a touch of elegance to her photographs as she played with a medium in which shapes when rendered in monochrome, obtain increased compositional significance. Hughes became so well known for encouraging the wearing of hats in her portraits that she was credited for introducing the style more broadly to the era's photography. In a self-promotional interview published in *The Harmsworth Magazine* in 1899, Hughes testified, with some confidence to both interviewer and reader, alike, that:

> 'I daresay you have noticed that many people nowadays are fond of being taken in a low dress and a large picture hat. This really may be called the revival of the Gainsborough or Joshua Reynolds type of photograph. I was the first to revive this style of portrait, which produces in many cases an exceptionally charming result'.[486]

Shortly after the ball and two years prior to this testimony, a fashion in Washington appeared with the title 'Day of the Picture Hat: How the Fashionable Women Pose for Photographs – Many Wear the Gainsborough' (Fig. 3.82). The article goes on to elaborate that:

> 'Dame Rumor has it to a new woman that the development of the picture hat fad is due. The lady is Miss Alice Hughes, a young American who went to London, England, a year or two ago with the idea that she would there find a better field for a new idea she had than the United States offered. That idea was to pay special attention to posing, to make every sitter appear in the photograph as if she was

[485] Hughes recounts the tremendous popularity that she and her father enjoyed and the cache of aristocratic sitters, which included not only the Duchess of Devonshire, Ladies Beatrice Herbert and Evelyn Ewart, but also the Princess of Wales in her daughters, in her autobiography, Hughes, *My father and I*.
[486] 'A Lady Photographer who Never Photographs Men: A Talk with Miss Alice Hughes'.

> taken from a painting. The result was delightful, and fortune smiled on Miss Hughes at once. The development of the idea naturally created new methods and the picture hat is one of the most charming of them all. It took, it will be seen, an American girl to teach the artistic old world what the most artistic of one of the greatest of arts really was'.[487]

While this quote is full of inconsistences, most particularly in terms of the false identification of her nationality, what this quote demonstrates is that by 1897, Alice's reverence of Gainsborough was well known not only to her clients, but to the larger public. One can imagine, then, that Hughes would have seen in the commissioning of Lady Herbert's portrait after one of Gainsborough's most masterful portraits an opportunity to demonstrate her aptitude as both a photographer and as an inheritor of the tradition of portraiture which included the likes of Gainsborough and her father. Therefore, just as Vigée-Lebrun and Kauffman looked to Rubens to assert their professionalism as painters, Hughes saw in this commission a challenge to validate the work of both her medium and her sex.

In taking a photograph that was devoid of colour and with the new challenge of creating a sense of movement when capturing a completely still figure, Hughes focused her energy on that which she had control: the manipulation of light and shade, done largely through contrasting elements of dress. Lady Herbert's dress, which carries with it the preferences of the 1890s in its narrow silhouette, stands as a bright and simplified contrast to the gothic revival stained glass windows that frame her upright figure. Meanwhile, the tilted circle of her beribboned hat is given equal prominence when placed against the dark folds of the curtain that fills the remainder of the frame. In a notable contrast to the original portrait, Hughes makes use of a backdrop of gothic revival windows. Hughes may have considered this to be a suitable backdrop on account of the style's association with the literature of the Romantic period, which was

[487] 'Day of the Picture Hats: How the Fashionable Women Pose for Photographs', *The Washington Post* (Sept. 26, 1897); 24.

itself of great interest to women in the Victorian period.[488] Through this portrait, then, Hughes has created her own interpretation of what the art of the eighteenth century meant to her, and in so doing, she has put her vision in competition with male artists like John Singer Sargent, or even her father, and their engagement with the work of Gainsborough and Romney. And perhaps, one would like to imagine, with the capturing of her sitter's jaunty straw hat, Hughes was also paying tribute to Vigée-Lebrun, whose *Self-Portrait in a Straw Hat* (Fig. 0.35), had been purchased that same year by the National Gallery.[489]

Returning to Lady Evelyn Ewart's portrait (Fig. 3.62), Ewart was one of many of the ball's attendants who chose to fashion their roles after an important ancestor. Lady Eva Dugdale (Fig. 3.83), who went as her great aunt Lady Anne Bingham (Fig. 3.84), while the Marchioness of Granby attended the ball as her celebrated ancestress, the *Gallery of Fashion*'s subscriber Mary Isabella, Duchess of Rutland (Fig. 3.85).[490] While modern viewers might not find this surprising, this was a radical departure from the general narrative of familial history during the nineteenth century. As it had done for centuries, titles and property almost always descended through the male line. In drawing attention to the role of an important female figure, sitters such as Ewart could be said to be challenging the degree of agency accorded to women within popular narratives of British history during the period. By taking such a figure from her own side of the family, rather than the family that she had married into Ewart was also redefining her own place within the social structure of the time.

In faithfully representing a portrait of her acclaimed ancestor, Ewart sought to both highlight the important role that her ancestor had played in society, while aligning her personal identity with that of her own family's history, a notable departure from her status as a married woman. Not only is the costume virtually identical to that worn by

[488] The work of Romantic authors such as Jane Austen, Byron, Mary Shelley and the Brontë sisters continued to remain popular in the 1890s, as it is today, as is evidenced by the large number of copies in circulation of their works during the period.
[489] After a recent cleaning, Vigée-Lebrun's portrait at The National Gallery is believed to be a self-authorized copy after the original. Howarth describes the acquisition of Vigée-Lebrun's *Self-Portrait* in van Hout and du Bourg, *Rubens and his Legacy*, 250.
[490] Lady Anne Bingham is notably wearing a *chapeau de paille* in her portrait painted by Reynolds in 1786, however, unfortunately for the interests of this chapter, her descendant's costume bears little resemblance to the original portrait.

the Duchess, with very few alterations, Bullingham has granted this portrait a sparkling feeling of movement altogether missing from the vast majority of portraits in the album: a rare feat indeed for photography during this period. The softening of the background as it meets her feet give the photograph a pictorialist aesthetic, while her arm, gently outstretched, looks as though she is reaching towards the viewer, or perhaps, towards something immaterial – to the very past that she is imagining in her act of representation. The most striking departure in Ewart's portrait photograph from the painted portrait of her ancestor though is in the giant profusion that is the feathers which cascade from the side of her hat and the full ostrich feather fan that is held in her left hand. These feathers become the brightest and most noticeable attribute of the entire portrait. While this might be on account of the tastes of the time, with such ostrich feather fans being part of contemporary fashionable dress, as well as dramatic trimmings on headgear, their presence might be owed to more than just trends in contemporary fashion.

With their clear legibility, these feathers are featured so prominently in the photograph and presumably as part of her costume at the ball, that it is likely that Ewart invested these feathers with a particular meaning. As was the case in the fashion illustrations of the 1790s *Gallery of Fashion*, such feathers signified a regal elegance and the exclusivity of court culture, but seen in this context, they are also, perhaps, a direct reference to the prominent use of feathers popularized by Georgiana, the Duchess of the Devonshire found in the Grand Manner portraits by Gainsborough and Reynolds, whose refinement was shaped in no small part by the influence of portraits by artists such as Rubens.[491] Feathers also remained a prominent symbol of participation at court, and her family had recently received a crucial raise in their station. Although her father had descended from the Dukes of Ancaster and Kesteven, this dukedom became extinct in 1809 with the death of the 5th Duke without an heir. In honour of his political service as Lord Great Chamberlain, he was elevated to the title of Earl of Ancaster in 1892. In representing portraits which carried the rich associations of Rubens's wife's portrait, whose prominent hat had assisted in elevating the status of countless sitters before them, both artist and sitter sought to advance their own status as influential women within art and society respectively. Just as Hughes viewed her portrait of Lady Beatrice Herbert in

[491] Russell, *Women, Sociability and Theatre*.

the guise of Giovanna Baccelli as an opportunity to bolster her reputation as a professional photographer, Ewart saw the chance to position her identity in relation to her family's newly elevated status through the eighteenth-century art and social world that was so central to their identity and place in society.

V. Conclusion

In 1897, allusions to the art and dress of the eighteenth century abounded. The opulence of Rococo interiors and the elegance of eighteenth-century fans are just a few examples of the influence of the eighteenth century on the vocabulary of fashion at the time. However, such styles were valued not simply on account of their elegance, but as this chapter has demonstrated, for their rich associations with the unsurpassed grandeur and power of the eighteenth-century aristocracy. Women in the 1890s found in historical eighteenth-century dress the benefit of the multi-faceted layers of associations: of elegance, an unparalleled sense of refined femininity, and the unquestionable aura of power and influence that eighteenth-century aristocratic women before them had enjoyed. In the hands of their *beau monde* descendants, families like the Spencer-Churchills and the Craven sisters emphasized their family's longstanding power and influence through their engagement with eighteenth-century paintings and costume.[492] Such associations could certainly be used to reinforce the current status quo. However, by employing the powerful allusions of eighteenth-century art and fashion, Victorians also subverted the traditional social order.

Just as the Duchess's guests were ascending the steps of Devonshire House in a series of countless historical costumes and sitting for portraits shaped by the art of the eighteenth century, John Singer Sargent was exhibiting a portrait at the Royal Academy that drew on the very same associations with power and grandeur that the art and fashion of the eighteenth century had come to represent. Yet the resulting portrait is of a very different type of figure than the largely aristocratic social circle that attended the

[492] The nostalgia for the eighteenth century is discussed in Cannadine, *The Decline of the British Aristocracy*, and is described particularly in relation to the visual culture and portraiture in a variety of studies, especially in Trumble and Rager, *Edwardian Opulence* and Wilton, *The Swagger Portrait*.

Duchess's ball, for *Mrs. Carl Meyer* was a member of the *nouveau riche* (Fig. 3.86). However, unlike Consuelo Vanderbilt, Meyer remained untitled and as such, her portrait and her engagement with eighteenth-century art and costume was not bridled by the same set of expectations. Indeed, her portrait can be said to make use of the tool of eighteenth-century aristocratic sartorial elegance only to subvert it.

A veritable confection of pale pink satin, with a petticoat of diaphanous chiffon filling the canvas almost completely, Mrs. Meyer's portrait is full of allusions to the eighteenth century. The Louis XV *settee* on which she sits, and the voluminous profile of her gown exude the glamour of Rococo France, while touches of black and her highly powdered face and frizzed hair are equally palpable reminders of *ancien régime* France. With her lengthy pearl rope necklace, which dangles asymmetrically like the chain of Rubens's wife's watch, and the ribband accents of black bows atop her gauzy sleeves, Sargent may well be painting another portrait with the same tantalizing allusions to Rubens's masterpiece as can be found in the work of Gainsborough. Indeed, her son wears Vandyke costume as do many of the children featured in Sargent's portraits, and the black feather atop her head might be a creative reference to the feathered black hat of the *Chapeau de Paille.* Yet for all her stylish elegance, with her dramatically open fan, and tender gesture towards her playful children, this is a painting of remarkable intimacy and, one could even argue despite the incredible extravagance of her toilette, of a certain intangible informality brought about by the openness of the composition and her seated position. She may be holding court, but Mrs. Meyer is wholly accessible to all.

The carefully staged portraits discretely placed within the Duchess's album tell a different story – one in which the art and fashions of the eighteenth century are used to bolster their sitters' power and assert their rightful place in society. However, that is not to say that the Duchess's guests and their photographers made use of such fashions solely for the purpose of maintaining the status quo. Rather, as this chapter has shown through sitters' engagement with the art, fashion, and literature of the eighteenth century, such references were often employed in service of a different narrative, one in which women of the past and present were accorded a greater level of influence. With courts led by important society figures representative of some of the most powerful female rulers throughout history, and countless representations of influential female

ancestors, the image that coheres again and again in the album's pages is that of a network of influential women. Just as the exotic fashions of Turkish fashions had done for Copley's sitters, and the historicizing fashions represented in the *Gallery of Fashion,* the album's sitters turned to the fantasy of the eighteenth century and the fashions it inspired to present themselves as a network that represented important values of stability, cultural authority, and most importantly, empowered womanhood.

Conclusion

This thesis has jaunted through the field of British art at a rapid pace, and along the way it has confronted a diverse array of media ranging from painted portraits from colonial Boston by John Singleton Copley, to hand-coloured aquatint engravings for Britain's first fashion journal the *Gallery of Fashion*, before finally spending time at the nineteenth century's close with an album of photographic portraits taken in commemoration of the Duchess of Devonshire's Diamond Jubilee Ball. Rather than focusing on a single artist, medium, or even time period, this thesis has taken as its focus a central underlying argument: that women, in conjunction with their communities, utilized fashion as a tool in visual art as a means of solidifying their collective ideals. And although each chapter encounters an eclectic range of women, from mid-eighteenth-century merchant's wives, to Gilded Age aristocrats, all of these women can be said to share a common habit of using dress to communicate.

In Chapter 1, the reception of a single imaginary style of dress, that of Turquerie, and its divergence from tradition at the hands of John Singleton Copley, is unravelled by tracing the social, familial, religious and commercial lines that connected each of Copley's female sitters who choose to be represented in this style. In doing so, Copley's sitters prove to be a remarkably well-connected group whose identity they sought to establish at this crucial moment before American independence. Through the example of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, whose writings on her travels in distant Turkey, Copley's sitters found an ideal model of empowered womanhood. In assembling the intellectual interests of the precise moment of Copley's employment of Turquerie dress, as well as the networks that connected each of his Turquerie sitters, this chapter recovers the agency that these women enlisted when they, alongside other members in their community, chose to be represented in this style.

While my first chapter considers a discrete regional network in order to illumine the interconnected social and familial networks that composed a portrait painter's sitters, my second chapter visits a group of men and women whose only connection in some cases was their shared subscription to a fashion periodical dating to the 1790s. There, in chasing the diverse biographies of subscribers to Nicholas Heideloff's *Gallery of Fashion* – a community which included persons of fashion, commercial, and political influence – a shared subject of interest within the group emerges: nationalism. Rather than comprising a fashionable elite as one might assume of a journal of this

calibre, this far from homogenous group was discovered to be bound together by their patriotic goal of promoting the British textile industry. With this social-historical context, the journal's visual resonances to British art genres and the stylistic vocabulary and materials of Britain's global empire can be seen to reflect the goals and interests of Heideloff's female subscribers, who supported the journal not only through the important act of patronage, but served as models for the journal in the fashions that they wore both on and off the canvas.

Flashing forward nearly a century in time to the end of Victoria's reign and the impending demise of the British Empire, Chapter 3 investigates an international collection of individuals who attended one of the most important social events of the century – that of the Duchess of Devonshire's costume ball held in honour of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The photographic album resulting from this occasion is composed of a number of portraits that were reengraved of the guests as monochromatic full-length photogravure portraits. These portraits' composition and style reveal a shared iconography formed in the shadows of eighteenth-century Grand Manner portraits by Gainsborough and Reynolds. Yet for all of their uniformity of composition, an analysis of the identities of the individuals whose portraits are contained within the album, and a historiography of the costumes and roles that they donned reveal that this was a network very much fraught with internal tensions. The iconography of fashion in art is here shown to be a divisive path for expression, with some figures prohibited from fully engaging with the visual weight of eighteenth-century art and fashion traditions.

Each of these chapters are connected through their interest in the power of fantasy and allusion to the representation of fashion in art. Whether imaginary fancy dress, costume, or actual fashionable dress, all of the images this thesis investigates continue to follow the same trajectory of historic and exotic associations. It is through these powers of association that we see women across nearly two centuries drawing in some cases on the very same images time and again. With repeated references to Van Dyck, Turquerie, and the eighteenth-century artists who engaged with these fashion tropes, each of the three chapters relate to each other in sometimes surprising ways. However, this is not to say that this thesis and the arguments it proposes could not be put forth in any other way. While each of these chapters was selected on account of the accessibility of a concrete network of women in relation to the artworks under consideration, any number of different case studies could have been analysed. Indeed, the possibilities for future research using this methodology are quite rich, and with the

consideration of different media, social, cultural and historical contexts, there is a potential to reveal any number of dynamic relationships between women, art-making, and dress.

No matter the time or the place, women can be said to learn about and share information about dress with others in their community. As this thesis has shown, dress was procured and gifted by family and friends, and the act of shopping was and is a group activity. Just as they do today, women often dress according to their social and cultural milieu. However, this is not to say that women were passive subjects in the consumption of dress. Even shopping, the most basic act of consumption, provides a rich tool for the expression and translation of ideas through fashion. These ideas can be found not only in the form of the physical objects of dress, but as this thesis has shown, in the visual representations of dress which often blurred the boundaries between the real and the imaginary. While this thesis is limited in scope to women whose privileged background allowed them the opportunity to engage with high fashion and art, similar levels of agency can be found in the portraits of itinerant and provincial artists, thrifty *cartes-de-visite* photographs, snapshots, and even the social media selfies of the twenty-first century. It is the aspiration of this thesis to propose a methodology which makes use of semiotics, social history and reception theory as a means of enabling new insights into all of these media, by tracing women's collective engagement with dress as a vital tool for communication.

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Collectively Fashioned: Women, Dress, and Networks of Representation in British Visual Culture, 1750-1900

Anna Merrick Bonewitz

Two Volumes

Volume II

Ph.D.

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March 2019

Table of Contents

Vol. II

Illustrations 270

Illustrations



Fig. 0.1 John Singleton Copley, *Judith Sargent Murray* or *Mrs. John Stevens*, c. 1769-72. Oil on canvas, 127.0 x 101.6 cm, Terra Foundation for American Art, Chicago.



Fig. 0.2 Attributed to Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu with her son, Edward Wortley Montagu, and attendants*, c. 1717. Oil on canvas, 69.3 x 90.9 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.

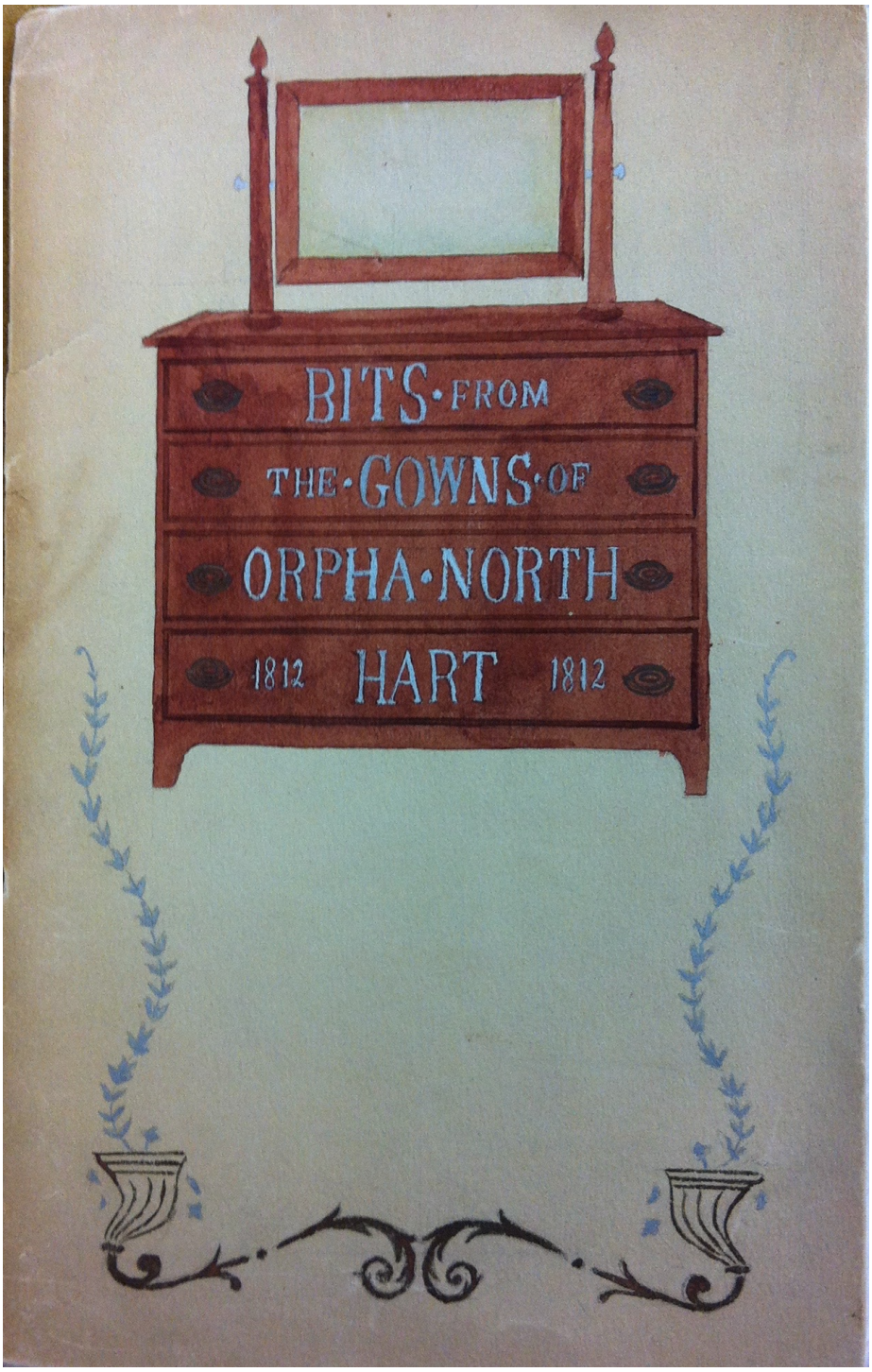


Fig. 0.3 Orpha North Hart, Swatch Book, 1812. Paper paged book with fabric samples pasted in, Ms. 1978.1.807, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.



Fig. 0.4 Orpha North Hart, Swatch Book, 1812. Paper paged book with fabric samples pasted in, Ms. 1978.1.807, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.

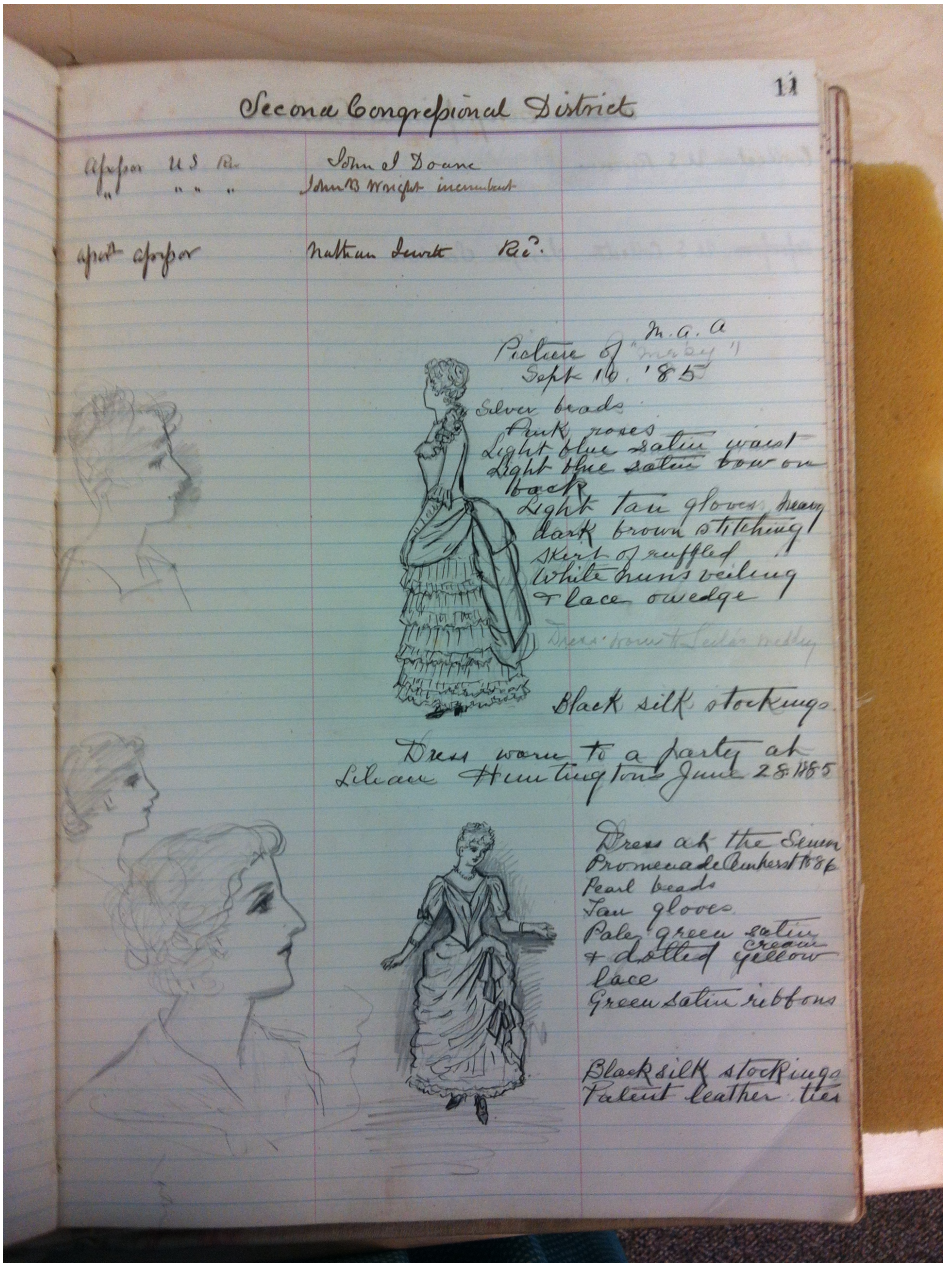


Fig. 0.5 Mary Appleton Aiken, Diary, 1885. Paper paged book, Ms. 84364, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.



Fig. 0.6 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. I, 1861. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

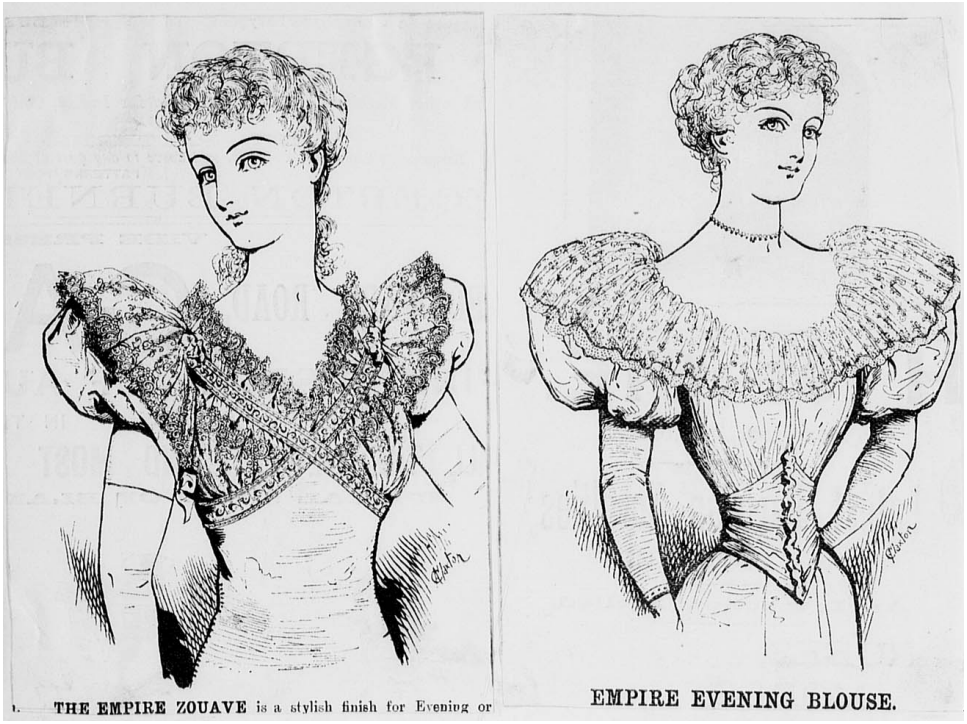


Fig. 0.7 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. XVIIII, 1892. Paper paged book with fashion illustrations pasted in, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

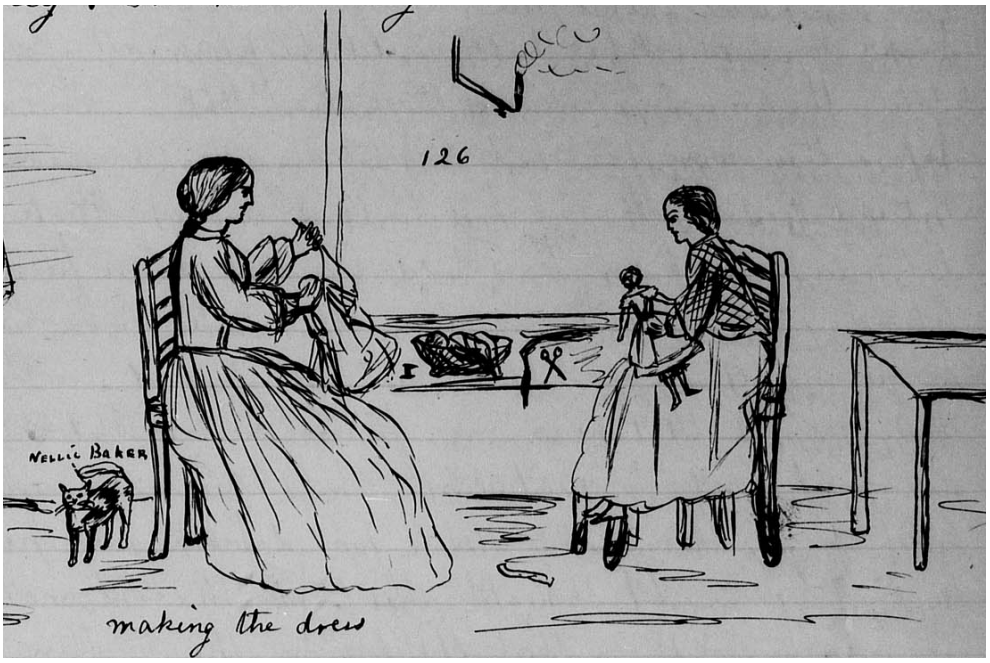


Fig. 0.8 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. II, February 1862. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.



Fig. 0.9 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. V, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.



Fig. 0.10 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. VII, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

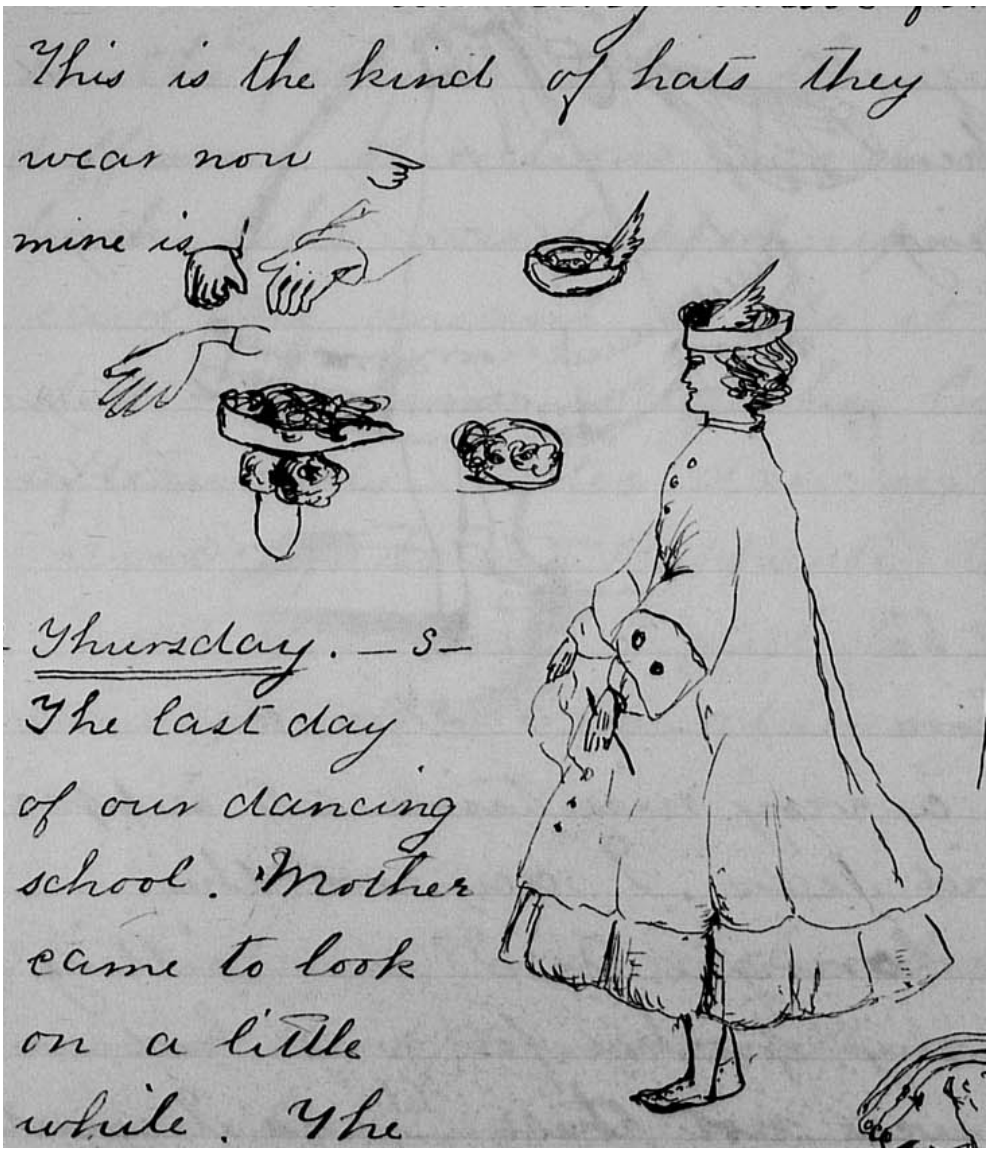


Fig. 0.11 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. IV, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.



Fig. 0.12 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. VII, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.



Fig. 0.13 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. X, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.



Fig. 0.14 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. X, c. 1865. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

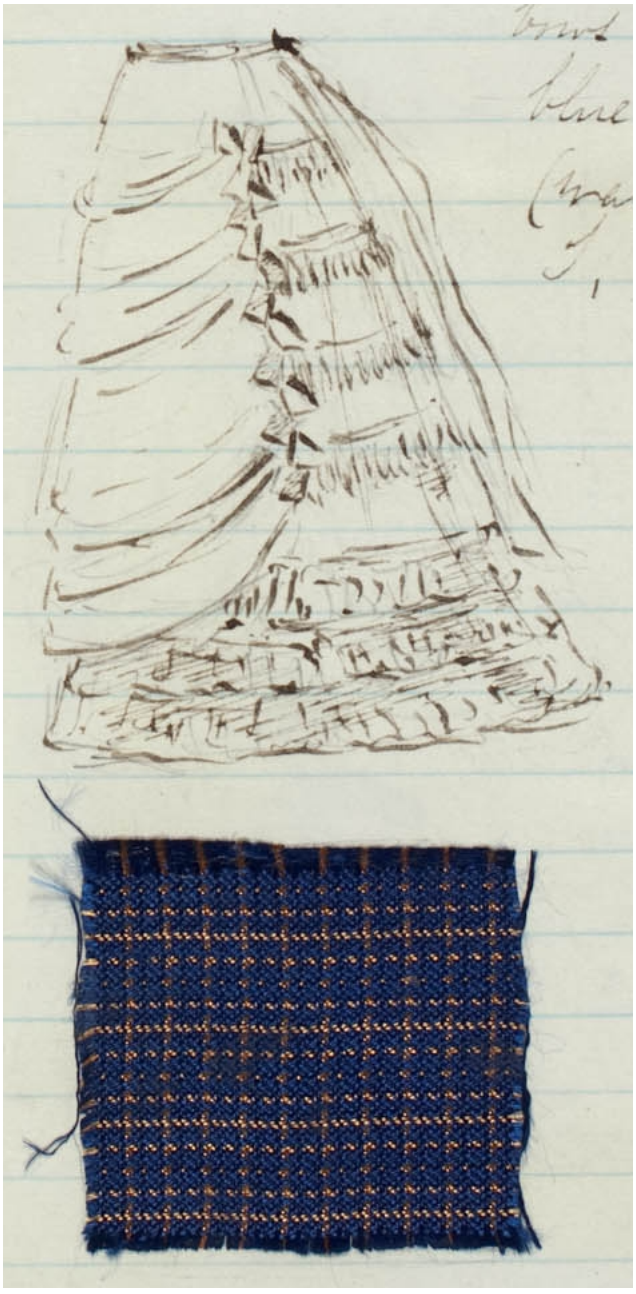


Fig. 0.15 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. XIV, c. 1870. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.

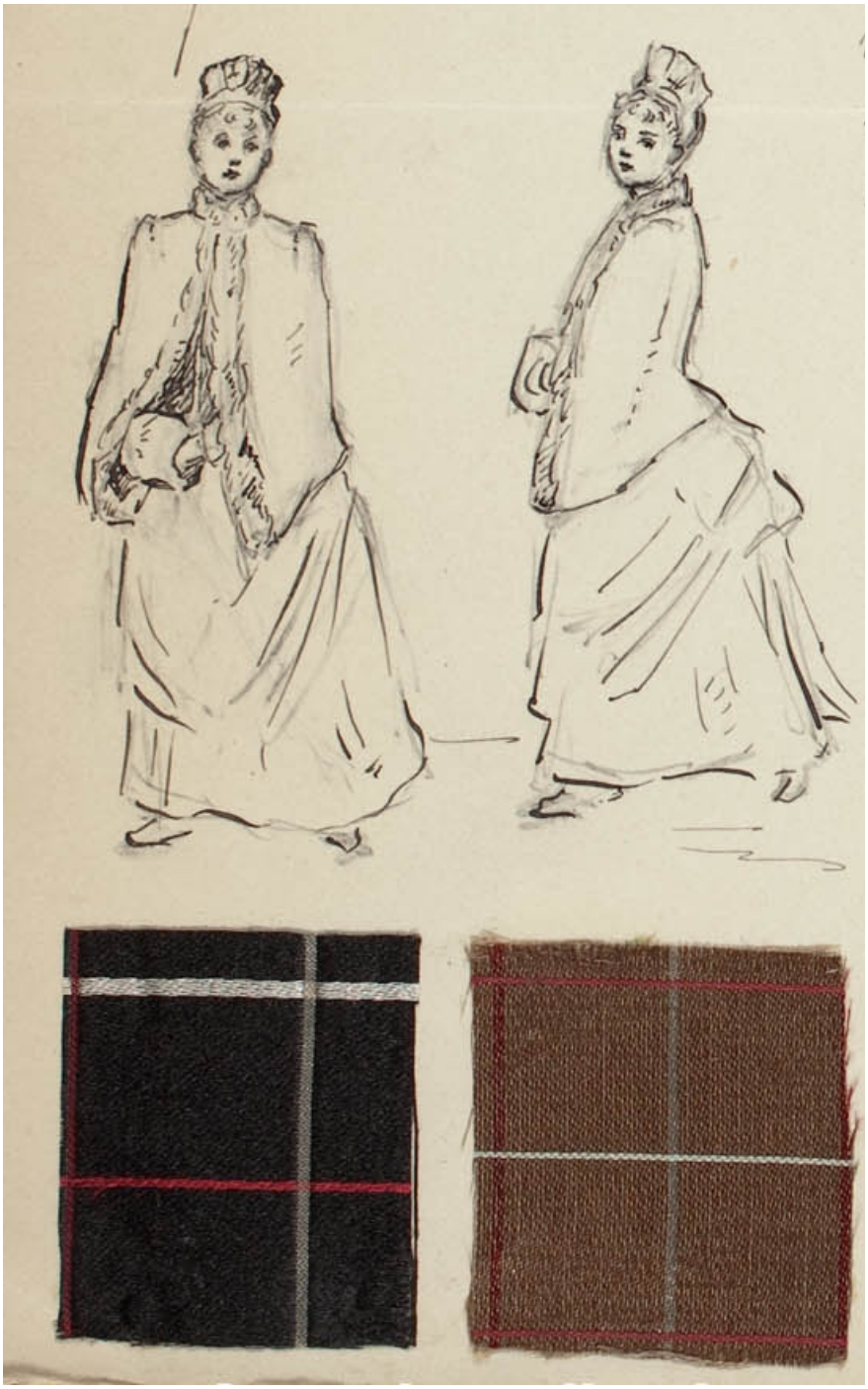


Fig. 0.16 Sarah Gooll Putnam, Diary, Vol. XVII, c. 1880. Paper paged book, Dimensions Unknown, Ms. N-758, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.



Fig. 0.17 Caroline Jenkins Keith Journal, 1797-1819. Ms. SBd-167. Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston.



Fig. 0.18 Scrimshaw, c. 1870-1880. Engraving on whale bone, Dimensions Unknown, Mystic Seaport, Connecticut.



Fig. 0.19 Doll with Accessories, Made in England, 1755-60. Wooden and carved doll in an 18th century costume, 60 x 42 x 43 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 0.20 Charles Willson Peale, *Lady Louisa Gilmor and Her Daughters*, 1788. Oil on canvas, 91.4 x 73.7 cm, Collection of Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia.



Fig. 0.21 Pashmina Shawl, Made in Pakistan, 1820-1830. Wool, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.



Fig. 0.22 Muff Trimmed with Chenille Embroidery and Printed Scene, Made in France, 1785-1810. Silk satin, paint, chenille and gauze, cotton stuffing, metallic sequins and bullion, 35.56 x 40.64 cm, Collection of Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia.



Fig. 0.23 Fan, Tiffany & Co., Late-Nineteenth Century. Silk, ivory, metal, 20.3 x 27.9 cm, The Metropolitan Museum, New York.



Fig. 0.24 Fan, Sold by E. Cruesy, Paris, c. 1890-1900. Silk, ivory, metal, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.



Fig. 0.24 Detail Fan, Label E. Cruesy, Paris, c. 1890-1900. Silk, ivory, metal, Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford.



Fig. 0.25 Advertisement for Pears Soap, May 2, 1900. Printed with illustration, Dimensions unknown, John Johnson Collection of Printed Ephemera, Bodleian Library, Oxford University.



Fig. 0.26 John Singer Sargent, *Madame X*, 1883-4. Oil on canvas, 208.6 x 109.9 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Fig. 0.27 Sir Anthony Van Dyck, *Lady Elizabeth Thimbelby and her Sister*, c. 1635. Oil on canvas, 132.1 x 149 cm, The National Gallery, London.



Fig. 0.28 Jean Étienne Liotard, *Maria Gunning, Countess of Coventry*, 1749. Pastel on parchment, 23.5 × 19 cm. Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva.



Fig. 0.29 Francis Cotes, *Elizabeth Gunning, Baroness Hamilton*, 1751. Pastel on blue paper, 59.1 x 43.8 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 0.30 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Elizabeth Gunning, Duchess of Hamilton and Argyll,* 1760. Oil on canvas, 238.5 x 147.5 cm, Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight in Wirral, Merseyside.



Fig. 0.31 Peter Paul Rubens, *Portrait of Helena Fourment*, c. 1630-2. Oil on panel, 186 x 85 cm, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon.



Fig. 0.32 Thomas Hudson, *Mary Bertie, Duchess of Ancaster and Kesteven*, 1757. Oil on Canvas, Dimensions unknown, Grimsthorpe and Drummond Castle Trust, Bourne, Lincolnshire.



Fig. 0.33 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Mary Darby, Mrs. Thomas Robinson as "Perdita",* 1782. Oil on canvas, 77 x 63.7 cm, Rothschild Collections, Waddeson Manor, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.



Fig. 0.34 Peter Paul Rubens, *Portrait of Susanna Lunden (?),* or *Le Chapeau de Paille*, c. 1622-5. Oil on oak, 79 x 54.6 cm, The National Gallery, London.



Fig. 0.35 Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun, *Self Portrait in a Straw Hat*, after 1782. Oil on canvas, 97.8 x 70.5 cm, The National Gallery, London.



Fig. 0.36 Thomas Gainsborough, *Giovanna Baccelli*, exhibited 1782. Oil on canvas, 226.7 x 148.6 cm, Tate, London.



Fig. 0.37 Sir Thomas Lawrence, *Julia, Lady Peel*, 1827. Oil on canvas, 90.8 x 70.8 cm, The Frick Collection, New York.



Fig. 0.38 John Singer Sargent, *Jennie Jerome, Lady Randolph Churchill*, c. 1890. Oil on canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Location Unknown.



Fig. 0.39 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire*, c. 1775-6. Oil on canvas, 239.4 x 147.5 cm, The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, San Marino, California.



Fig. 0.40 Francis Cotes, *The Honourable Lady Stanhope and the Countess of Effingham as Diana and her Companion*, c. 1765. Oil on canvas, 240 x 152.2 cm, York Art Gallery, Yorkshire.



Fig. 0.41 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Lady Sarah Bunbury Sacrificing to the Graces*, 1763-65. Oil on canvas, 242.5 x 151.7 cm, The Art Institute of Chicago.



Fig. 0.42 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Afternoon Dresses', Figs. 361 and 362, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. IX, March 1803, Printed by W. Bulmer and Co., Cleveland-Row, St. James's. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 0.43 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Sarah Wilson as Madame de Pompadour,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 1.1 John Singleton Copley, *Elizabeth Murray*, *Mrs. James Smith*, 1769. Oil on canvas, 126.05 x 101.6 cm. Museum of Fine Arts Boston.



Fig. 1.2 *Maria Countess of Coventry*, by Richard Houston, published by Carrington Bowles, after Jean Étienne Liotard, 1752 or after. Mezzotint, 15.2 x 11.5 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, NPG D2533.



Fig. 1.3 *Habit of the sultaness, or empress of the Turks in 1700* or *La sultane Asseki ou Sultane reine*, Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, originally engraved by G. Scotin for Monsieur Comte de Ferriol, *Recueil de cent estampes représentant différentes nations du Levant,* Vol. 1, Plate 4, reproduced in Thomas Jefferys, *A collection of the dresses of different nations: antient [sic] and modern.* Hand-Coloured Engraving, New York Public Library.



Fig. 1.4 *Femme Turque qui feume sur le Sopha*, Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, Engraved by Gérard Jean-Baptist Scotin, c. 1701-1708. Etching and stipple, 48 cm x 34 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 1.5 Charles-Antoine Coypel, *Young Lady in Turkish Costume*, c. 1740. Oil on Canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Private Collection.



Fig. 1.6 Rosalba Carriera, *Felicita Sartori in Turkish Costume*, c. 1730-40. Pastel on Paper, Dimensions Unknown, Uffizi Gallery, Florence.



Fig. 1.7 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Caroline Spencer, Duchess of Marlborough*, c. 1759. Oil on canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Goodwood House, Sussex.



Fig. 1.8 Sir Peter Lely, *Elizabeth, Countess of Kildare*, c. 1679. Oil on canvas, 123.4 x 100.0 cm, Tate, London.



Fig. 1.9 John Singleton Copley, *Mrs. Jerathmael Bowers*, c. 1763. Oil on canvas, 126.7 cm x 101 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Fig. 1.10 *Lady Caroline Russell* or *Caroline Spencer, Duchess of Marlborough*, by James McArdell after Sir Joshua Reynolds, early 1760s. Mezzotint, 34.8 x 25.0 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London, NPG D38249.



Fig. 1.11 John Singleton Copley, *Martha Swett, Mrs. Jeremiah Lee*, 1769. Oil on canvas, 241.3 x 149.9 cm, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum, Hartford, Connecticut.



Fig. 1.12 John Singleton Copley, *Jeremiah Lee*, 1769. Oil on bed ticking, 241.3 x 149.9 cm, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum, Hartford, Connecticut.



Fig. 1.13 John Singleton Copley, *Mary Boylston, Mrs. Benjamin Hallowell*, c. 1766-67. Oil on canvas, 119.4 × 95.3 cm, Detroit Institute of Arts, Michigan.



Fig. 1.14 John Singleton Copley, *Lucy Boylston, Mrs. Timothy Rogers*, c. 1766-67. Oil on canvas, 127.63 x 101.92 cm, Museum of Fine Arts Boston.



Fig. 1.15 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Lady Louisa Conolly,* 1775. Oil on canvas, 136.53 x 99.7 cm, Fogg Museum of Art, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.



Fig. 1.16 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Catherine (Kitty) Fisher*, 1762. Oil on canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Private Collection.



Fig. 1.17 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Anne Lennox, Countess of Albemarle*, c. 1760. Oil on canvas, 126.5 x 101 cm, The National Gallery, London.



Fig. 1.18 John Singleton Copley, *Sarah Morecock Boylston, Mrs. Thomas Boylston*, 1766. Oil on canvas, 129.5 x 102 cm, Fogg Museum of Art, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.



Fig. 1.19 John Singleton Copley, *Rebecca Boylston*, 1767. Oil on canvas, 127.95 x 102.23 cm, Museum of Fine Arts Boston.



Fig. 1.20 John Singleton Copley, *Margaret Kemble Gage*, c. 1771. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.6 cm, Timken Museum of Art, San Diego, California.



Fig. 1.21 Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, called 'Guercino', *The Cumaean Sibyl with a Putto*, 1651. Oil on canvas, 222 x 168.5 cm, The National Gallery, London.



Fig. 1.22 George Willison, *Nancy Parsons in Turkish Dress*, c. 1771. Oil on canvas, 57.2 x 47.6 cm, Yale Centre for British Art, New Haven, Connecticut.



Fig. 1.23 *Maria, Lady Broughton*, John Finlayson after Francis Cotes, 1772. Mezzotint, 49.9 x 34.9 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 1.24 *Elizabeth Barrington, The Hon. Mrs. Barrington*, Published by Carrington Bowles after Sir Joshua Reynolds, c. 1760s. Mezzotint, 15.3 x 11.5 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 1.25 *Habit of a Turkish Lady in 1700*, Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, originally engraved by G. Scotin for Monsieur Comte de Ferriol, *Recueil de cent estampes représentant différentes nations du Levant,* Vol. 1, Plate 4, reproduced in Thomas Jeffreys, *A collection of the dresses of different nations: antient [sic] and modern.* Hand-Coloured Engraving, New York Public Library.



Fig. 1.26 John Singleton Copley, *Catherine Osborne, Mrs. Epes Sargent II*, 1764. Oil on canvas, 124.5 x 99.1 cm, Private Collection.



Fig. 1.27 John Singleton Copley, *Sarah Sargent, Mrs. Nathaniel Allen*, c. 1763. Oil on canvas, 125.73 x 101.6 cm, Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota.



Fig. 1.28 Frontispiece to *Letters of the Right Honourable. Lady M-y W-y M-e: written, during her travels in Europe, Asia, and Africa, to persons of distinction, men of letters, &c. in different parts of Europe*, printed in London by S. Payne, A. Cook, and H. Hill, 1767. Bodleian Library, Oxford University.



Fig. 1.29 John Singleton Copley, *Elizabeth Byles* or *Mrs. Gawen Brown*, 1763. Pastel on paper, 44.5 x 36.8 cm, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas.



Fig. 1.30 Thomas Frye, *Ladies, very elegantly attired in the fashion, and in the most agreeable attitudes*, 1761. Mezzotint, 50.3 x 35.2 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 1.31 John Singleton Copley, *Sarah Sherburne, Mrs. Woodbury Langdon*, 1767. Oil on canvas, 147.32 x 121.92 cm, Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, Texas.



Fig. 1.32 John Singleton Copley, *Mr. Joseph Sherburne*, c. 1767-70. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.6 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Fig. 1.33 John Singleton Copley, *Elizabeth Storer, Mrs. Isaac Smith*, 1769. Oil on canvas, 127.3 x 101.9 cm, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Connecticut.



Fig. 1.34 John Singleton Copley, *Nicholas Boylston*, 1767. Oil on canvas, 127.3 x 101.1 cm, Harvard University Portrait Collection, Cambridge, Massachusetts.



Fig. 1.35 John Singleton Copley, *Joseph Green*, 1767. Pastel on paper mounted on canvas, 60.64 x 45.4 cm, Museum of Fine Arts Boston.



Fig. 1.36 John Singleton Copley, *Elizabeth Cross, Mrs. Joseph Green*, 1767. Pastel on paper mounted on canvas, 60.01 x 45.4 cm, Museum of Fine Arts Boston.



Fig. 1.37 John Singleton Copley, *Nicholas Boylston*, about 1769. Oil on canvas, 127.32 x 101.6 cm, Museum of Fine Arts Boston.



Fig. 2.1 *Mary Isabella Somerset, Duchess of Rutland*, Robert Smirke after Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1816. Oil on canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Private Collection.



Fig. 2.2 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Evening Dresses', Figs. 295 and 296, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. VIII, April 1801, Printed by W. Bulmer and Co., Cleveland-Row, St. James's. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.3 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Afternoon Dress', Fig. 68, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. VII, September 1795, 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.4 John Hoppner, *Mrs. Parkyns*, c. 1794. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.6 cm, Present Location Unknown.



Fig. 2.5 *Mrs. Parkyns,* Printed Charles Wilkin by after John Hoppner, 1795. Stipple engraving, printed in colour, 36.2 x 27.5 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 2.6 James Gillray, *Fashion Before Ease; - or,- a Good Constitution Sacrificed, for a Fantastick Form*, Printed by Hannah Humphrey, 1793. Hand-coloured etching, 34.5 x 25.0 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 2.7 A.B. Duhamel after Defraine, 'Plate 7', *Magasin des modes nouvelles, françaises et anglaise*s, Vol. III, 1787. Engraving, 18.7 x 32.3 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.8 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Morning Dresses', Figs. 204-206, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. V, January 1799, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.9 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Court Dress', Fig. 15, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, February 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.10 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Ranelagh Evening Dresses', Figs. 65-67, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, August 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.11 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Vauxhall Evening Dresses', Figs. 72 & 73, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, October 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.12 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Opera Dresses', Figs. 101-103, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. III, June 1796, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.13 Thomas Gainsborough, *The Three Eldest Princesses: Charlotte, Princess Royal, Augusta and Elizabeth*, 1783-4. Oil on canvas, 129.7 x 179.8 cm, Royal Collection, London.



Fig. 2.14 *Princess Augusta Sophia; Princess Elizabeth, Landgravine of Hesse-Homburg; Charlotte Augusta Matilda, Princess Royal*, Arthur N. Sanders after Thomas Gainsborough, c. 1860-1900. Mezzotint, 49.5 x 35.0 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 2.15 Nicholas Heideloff, 'A Peep Into Kensington Gardens: Morning Dresses', Figs. 10-12, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, June 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.16 Thomas Gainsborough, *Princess Augusta*, 1782. Oil on canvas, 59.4 x 44.2 cm, Royal Collection, London.



Fig. 2.17 Thomas Gainsborough, *Princess Elizabeth*, 1782. Oil on canvas, 59.5 x 44.2 cm, Royal Collection, London.



Fig. 2.18 *The Right Honourable Lady Charlotte*, Charles Wilkin after John Hoppner, 1799. Etching, 24.8 x 19.6 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 2.19 *Lady Banks*, Joseph Collyer the Younger after John Russell, c. 1790. Stipple engraving, 15.7 x 12.8 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 2.20 *Mary Isabella, Duchess of Rutland*, Valentine Green after Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1780. Mezzotint, 59.2 x 38.5 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 2.21 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *George, 3rd Earl Temple (later 1st Marquess of Buckingham) and his family*, c. 1780-82. Oil on canvas, 241 x 183 cm, National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin.



Fig. 2.22 Monsieur le Brun, '2nd Cahier', *Journal de la mode et du goût, ou Amusemens du salon et de la toilette*, Paris, Buisson, March 1790. Engraving, 19.4 x 12.0 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.23 A.B. Duhamel after Defraine, ‘Plate 33’, *Magasin des modes nouvelles, françaises et anglaise*s, Vol. IV, 1788. Engraving, 18.7 x 32.3 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.24 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Morning Dresses', Figs. 16-19, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, July 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.25 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Evening Dresses', Figs. 160 & 161, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. IV, November 1797, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.26 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Watering Place: Morning Dress', Fig. 71, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, October 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.27 Jacques-Louis David, *Madame de Recamier*, 1800. Oil on canvas, 174 x 224 cm, Louvre Museum, Paris.



Fig. 2.28 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Two Men Wearing Top Hats', *Gallery of Fashion*, 1796, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 2.29 Jean Victor Dupin after Pierre Thomas Le Clerc, 'Les Delassemens du Bois de Boulogne', Plate 69, 12er Cahier, 6e Suite, *Galerie des Modes et Costumes Français*, 1778. Reprinted in *Galerie des modes et costumes français 1778-1787: dessinés d'après nature, réimpression accompagnée d'une préface par M. Paul*, 1912. Engraving, 40.8 x 19.4 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.30 Jean Victor Dupin after Pierre Thomas Le Clerc, 'La Distraite', Plate 68, 12er Cahier, 6e Suite, *Galerie des Modes et Costumes Français*, 1778. Reprinted in *Galerie des modes et costumes français 1778-1787: dessinés d'après nature, réimpression accompagnée d'une préface par M. Paul*, 1912. Engraving, 40.8 x 19.4 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.31 Jean Victor Dupin after Pierre Thomas Le Clerc, 'Talleur Costumier Essayant un Cor à la Mode', Plate 49, 15er Cahier, 9e Suite, *Galerie des Modes et Costumes Français*, 1778. Reprinted in *Galerie des modes et costumes français 1778-1787: dessinés d'après nature, réimpression accompagnée d'une préface par M. Paul*, 1912. Engraving, 40.8 x 19.4 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.32 Le Beau after Pierre Thomas Le Clerc, 'Femme en Robe à la Poloise', Plate 37, 7th Cahier, 1st Suite, *Galerie des Modes et Costumes Français*, 1777. Reprinted in *Galerie des modes et costumes français 1778-1787: dessinés d'après nature, réimpression accompagnée d'une préface par M. Paul*, 1912. Engraving, 40.8 x 19.4 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.33 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Afternoon Dresses', Figs. 37-39, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, January 1795, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.34 Johan Wilhelm Tischbein, *Lady Charlotte Campbell*, c. 1789. Oil on canvas, 197.20 x 134.00 cm, Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh.



Fig. 2.35 John Hoppner, *Lady Charlotte Campbell*, 1796. Oil on canvas, 236.2 x 147.3 cm, Collection of Duke of Argyll, Inveraray Castle, Argyll.



Fig. 2.36 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Three Ladies Adorning a Term of Hymen*, 1773. Oil on canvas, 233.7 x 290.8 cm, Tate, London.



Fig. 2.37 *The Graces Comparing Sandals*, Laurie & Whittle, Fleet Street, London, 4 July 1798. Mezzotint with etching, 31.5 x 23.0 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 2.38 James Gillray, *Characters in High Life*, Published by Hannah Humphrey, London, 20 June 1795. Hand-coloured etching, 35.9 x 25.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 2.39 James Gillray, *Modern Elegance: A Portrait*, Published by Hannah Humphrey, May 22, 1795. Hand-coloured etching, 35.7 x 24.6 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 2.40 James Gillray, *Ladies Dress, as it soon will be*, Published by Hannah Humphrey, Jan. 20, 1796. Hand-coloured etching and stipple engraving, 32.5 x 23.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 2.41 *The Gallery of Fa*shion, S.W. Fores, 50 Piccadilly the Corner of Sackville Street, March 23, 1796. Hand-coloured etching, 31.7 x 42.9 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 2.42 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Two Ladies at Breakfast in their Dressing Room', Figs. 29 & 30, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, November 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.43 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Hyde Park: Riding Dress', Fig. 138, *Gallery of Fashion,* Vol. IV, May 1797, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.44 George Stubbs, *Lady Laetitia Lade*, 1793. Oil on canvas, 102.5 x 128.2 cm, Royal Collection, London.



Fig. 2.45 Nicholas Heideloff, Fig. 25, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. I, September 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.46 *Fashionable Dresses in the Rooms in Weymouth*, *The Lady's Magazine*, 1774. Engraving, 16.5 x 11.0 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 2.47 Thomas Gainsborough, *The Mall in St. James's Park*, 1784. Oil on canvas, 120.7 x 147 cm, The Frick Collection, New York.



Fig. 2.48 *Jar and Lid*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in blue underglaze and overglaze enamels, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 2.49 *Plaque*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted on the biscuit in polychrome enamels, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 2.50 *Vase and Lid*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in blue underglaze, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 2.51 *Cup and Saucer*, Jingdezhen, c. 1690. Porcelain painted in blue underglaze, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 2.52 *Plate*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in blue underglaze, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 2.53 *Vase*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in overglaze enamels, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 2.54 *Dish*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in overglaze enamels, Victoria & Albert Museum.



Fig. 2.55 *Vase*, Jingdezhen, c. 1662-1722. Porcelain painted in overglaze enamels with gilding, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 2.56 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Morning Dresses', Figs. 148 & 149, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. IV, August 1797, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.57 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Morning Dresses', Figs. 140-142, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. IV, June 1797, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.58 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Morning Dresses', Figs. 23 & 24, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. 1, September 1794, No. 9 Southampton Street, Covent Garden. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.59 Nicholas Heideloff, 'A Lady going out on Horseback', Fig. 55, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, June 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.60 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Ladies in the Great Concert Room', Figs. 51-53, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, June 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 2.61 Nicholas Heideloff, 'Morning Dresses', Figs. 63 & 64, *Gallery of Fashion*, Vol. II, August 1795, No. 90 Wardour Street. Hand-coloured Aquatint, 34 x 26.5 cm, Bunka Gakuen Library, Tokyo, Japan.



Fig. 3.1 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Duchess of Devonshire as Zenobia Queen of Palmyra,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 2 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.2 Dress designed by M. Comelli, created by House of Worth, 1897. The Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth House, Bakewell, Derbyshire.



Fig. 3.3 Dress designed by M. Comelli, created by House of Worth, 1897. The Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth House, Bakewell, Derbyshire.



Fig. 3.4 Dress designed by M. Comelli, created by House of Worth, 1897. The Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth House, Bakewell, Derbyshire.



Fig. 3.5 Henry Van der Weyde, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Mrs. Chaine as Madame Sans Gene,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.6 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Mrs. Leopold de Rothschild as Zobedia,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.7 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Farquhar as Duchess de Mailly, Lady in Waiting to Queen Marie Antoinette,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 7 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.8 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Mrs. Arthur Sassoon as La Dogeressa,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.9 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Tweedmouth as Queen Elizabeth. Lord Tweedmouth as the Earl of Leicester*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 10 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.10 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Marchioness of Londonderry as Maria Theresa,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 27 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.11 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Countess of Warwick as Marie Antoinette,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 20 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.12 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Viscountess Raincliffe as Catherine of Russia,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.13 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Wolverton as Britannia,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.14 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Countess of Derby as Duchess of Orleans,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.15 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Countess Cadogan as Elizabeth Queen of Bohemia (after Honthorst),* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 22 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.16 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Sophie Scott as Megaera,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 20 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.17 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lord Stanley, M.P. as an Officer of the Grenadier Guards XVII Century,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 6 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.18 Layette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Alice Stanley as Diana,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.19 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Lurgan as Alecto,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 20 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.20 Elliot & Fry, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Countess of Coventry as Barbara St. John, Countess of Coventry after Liotard,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.21 Elliot & Fry, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Anne Coventry as Serena after Romney,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.22 Elliot & Fry, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Dorothy Coventry as Serena after Romney,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



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Photo. by LAFAYETTE, 179, New Bond Street.

THE COUNTESS CADOGAN.

Fig. 3.23 Lafayette, 'The Countess Cadogan', frontispiece for *Country Life Illustrated*, Vol. I, No. 16, Saturday April 24, 1897.



Fig. 3.24 Lafayette, 'Lady Sophie Scott', frontispiece for *Country Life Illustrated*, Vol. I, No. 17, Saturday May 1, 1897.



Fig. 3.25 Lafayette, 'Lady Lurgan', frontispiece for *Country Life Illustrated*, Vol. I, No. 18, Saturday May 8, 1897.



Fig. 3.26 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Emily, Lady Ampthill as the Princess de Lamballe,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 27 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.27 Detail of Image from *The Queen* (19 July 1897).



Fig. 3.28 Detail from 'The Duchess of Devonshire's Ball'. *The Gentlewoman* (July 10, 1897): 55.



Fig. 3.29 Lafayette, Portrait of Ladies Lurgan and Sophie Scott, 20 July 1897. Glass Plate Negative, The Lafayette Negative Archive, 38.1 x 30.48 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.30 Lafayette, Portrait of Ladies Lurgan and Sophie Scott, 20 July 1897. Glass Plate Negative, The Lafayette Negative Archive, 38.1 x 30.48 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.31 Alfred Ellis, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *H.R.H. Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein as Princess Elizabeth, eldest daughter of James I,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.32 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Meysey Thompson as Elizabeth Queen of Bohemia*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 2 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.33 Gerrit van Honthorst, *Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bohemia,* 1642. Oil on canvas, 205.1 x 130.8 cm, The National Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.34 Gerrit van Honthorst, *Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia,* c. 1630. Oil on canvas, 208.5 x 145.5 cm, Government Art Collection, British Embassy, Prague.



Fig. 3.35 *Princess Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia and Electress Palatinate,* engraved by Henry Thomas Ryland after Gerrit van Honthorst, published 1836. Line engraving, 27.6 x 17.9 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.36 George Romney, *Serena*, c. 1780s. Oil on canvas, 35.75 x 26.75 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.37 George Romney, *Serena Reading*, c. 1780-5. Oil on canvas, 180 x 145 cm, Harris Museum & Art Gallery, Preston, Lancashire.



Fig. 3.38 George Romney, *Serena*, c. 1780s. Oil on canvas, Dimensions Unknown, Private Collection.



Fig. 3.39 *Serena*, Engraved by John Raphael Smith after George Romney, published in London 1782. Mezzotint, Dimensions Unknown, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.40 *Serena*, Engraved by John Jones after George Romney, published in London, March 1, 1790. Colour stipple with some etching, 36.4 x 28.1 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 3.41 Alexander Bassano, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Duchess of Marlborough as the wife of the French Ambassador at the Court of Catherine of Russia,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.42 Alexander Bassano, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Duke of Marlborough as the French Ambassador at the Court of Catherine of Russia,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.43 Alexander Bassano, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Ladies Churchill as Watteau Shepherdesses*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.44 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Georgiana Curzon as Maria Leszcynska,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 6 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.45 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Duchess of Roxburghe as Bess of Hardwicke,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 27 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.46 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady de Ramsey as Lady Burleigh,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.47 Carolus-Duran, *Consuelo Vanderbilt*, 1894. Oil on canvas, Dimensions unknown, Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire.

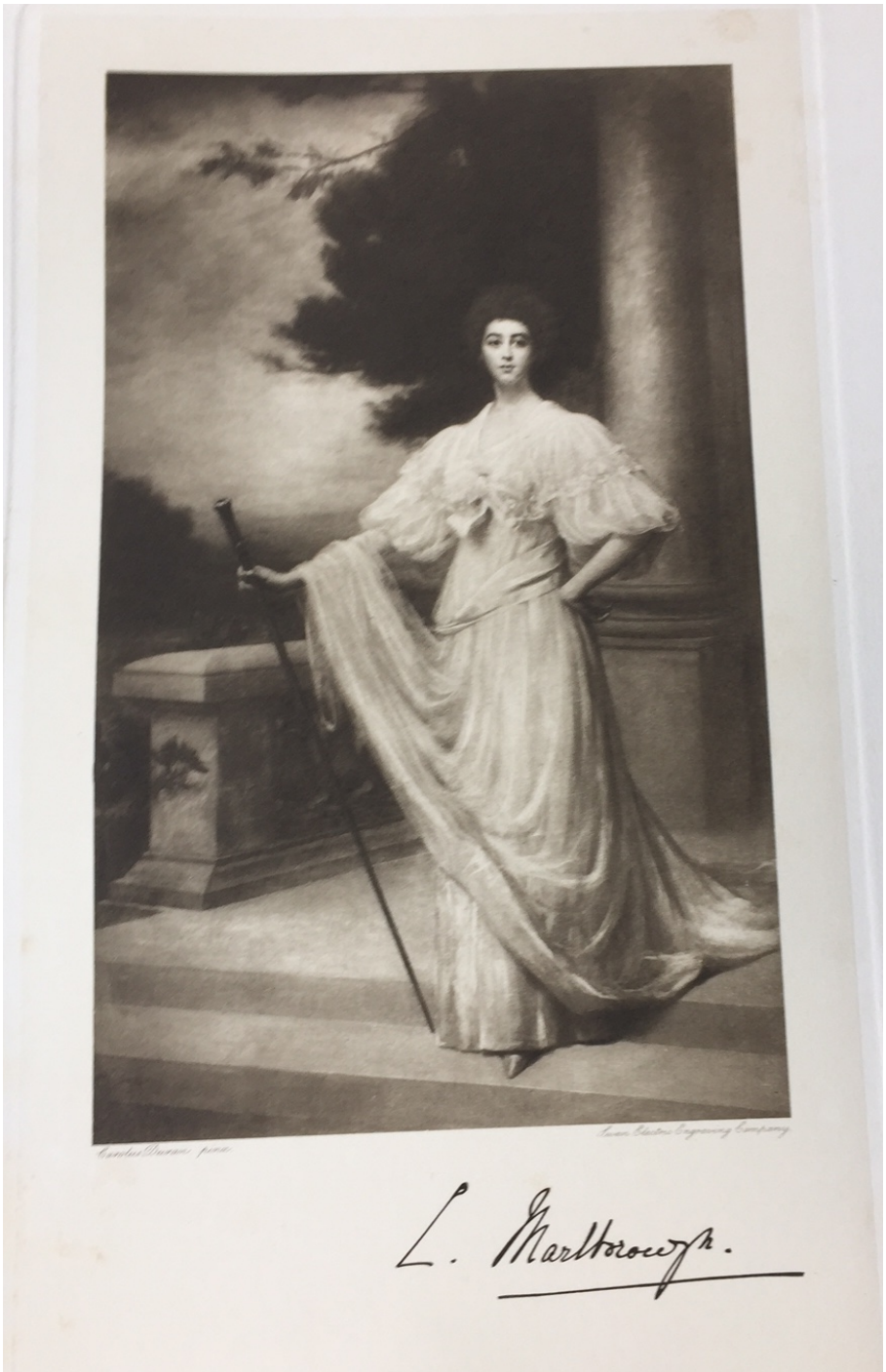


Fig. 3.48 Photogravure based on Carolus-Duran, *Portrait of Consuelo, Duchess of Marlborough*, Swan Electric Engraving Company, reproduced in *The Book of Beauty (late Victorian era). A collection of beautiful portraits, with literary, artistic, and musical contributions by men and women of the day,* 1896. Engraving, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.49 Gunn & Stuart, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Terence Blackwood as Flora Goddess of Flowers*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.50 Henry Bullingham, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Mrs. Chamberlain as Madame d'Epinay*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.51 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Hon. Mrs. George Curzon as Valentina Visconti of Milan, A.D. 1447*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.52 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Miss Leiter*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.53 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Miss Goelet as Scheherazade*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.54 Lafayette, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Randolph Churchill as the Empress Theodora, wife of Justinian,* from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 17 July 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.55 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Arthur Paget as Cleopatra*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.56 Lafayette, Portrait of Lady Sarah Wilson, 3 July 1897. Glass Plate Negative, 38.1 x 30.48 cm, Lafayette Negative Archive, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.57 Francois Boucher, *Sketch for a Portrait of Madame de Pompadour,* c. 1750. Oil on canvas, 62.5 x 46.0 cm, Rothschild Collections, Waddeson Manor, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.



Fig. 3.58 Francois Boucher, *Madame de Pompadour,* 1759. Oil on canvas, 91 x 68 cm, Wallace Collection, London.



Fig. 3.59 Lafayette, Portrait of Lady Georgiana Curzon, 6 July 1897. Glass Plate Negative, The Lafayette Negative Archive, 38.1 x 30.48 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.60 François Albert Stiémart, *La reine Marie Leszczynska en costume de religieuse devant la Maison Royale de Saint-Cyr par Santerre*, c. 1726. Oil on canvas, 133.6 x 101 cm, Palais Versailles, Versailles, France.



Fig. 3.61 Jean-Baptiste van Loo, *Marie Leszczynska*, c. 1725. Oil on canvas, 81.5 x 66 cm, Palais Versailles, Versailles, France.



Fig. 3.62 Henry Bullingham, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Evelyn Ewart as the Duchess of Ancaster, Mistress of the Robes to Queen Charlotte, 1757, after a picture by Hudson*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.63 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Beatrice Herbert as Signora Baccelli after Gainsborough*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.64 John Vanderbank, *Portrait of a Young Lady* (possibly the artist's wife), c. 1731. Oil on canvas, Private Collection.



Fig. 3.65 Joseph van Aken, Sketch based on Rubens' *Portrait of Helene Fourment*, c. 1740-9. Dimensions Unknown, Location Unknown.



Fig. 3.66 Joseph van Aken, Sketch based on Rubens' *Portrait of Helene Fourment*, c. 1740-9. Dimensions Unknown, Location Unknown.



Fig. 3.67 James McArdell, *Rubens 2d Wife from the Original at Houghton Hall in the Collection of the Earl of Orford*, after Peter Paul Rubens' *Portrait of Helene Fourment*, c. 1742-1765. Mezzotint, 35.4 x 25.2 cm, British Museum, London.



Fig. 3.68 Thomas Jefferys, *Habit of Rubens Wife in 1620, la Femme de Rubens,* from *A Collection of the Dresses of Different Nations, Antient and Modern*, Vol. I, first published 1757. Etching, 24.7 x 19.8 cm, British Library, London.



Fig. 3.69 Louis Simonet, *Signora Baccelli in the Ballet Les Amans Supris*, published in *Bells British Theatre*, May 15, 1781. Engraving, 21 x 16 cm, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.70 Angelica Kauffman, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1780-5. Oil on canvas, 76.5 x 63 cm, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.



Fig. 3.71 *An August Picture Hat* reproduced in *The Washington Post,* August 8, 1897.



Fig. 3.72 Thomas Gainsborough, *Portrait of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire*, c. 1785-87. Oil on canvas, 127 x 101.5 cm, Chatsworth House, Bakewell, Derbyshire.



Fig. 3.73 George Romney, *Charlotte, Lady Milnes*, c. 1788-92. Oil on canvas, 241.6 x 149.2 cm, The Frick Collection, New York.

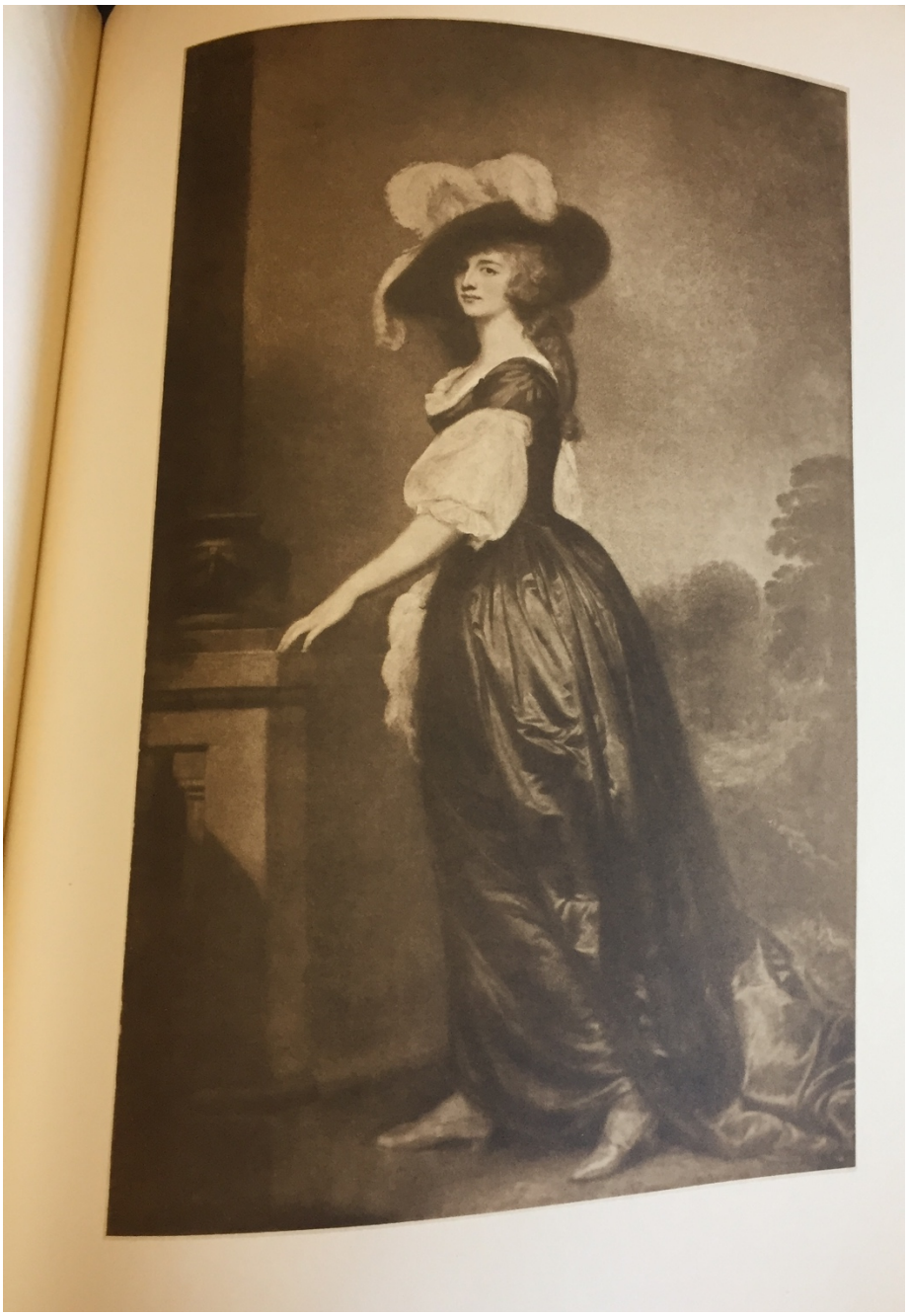


Fig. 3.74 Photogravure based on George Romney*, Charlotte, Lady Milnes,* reproduced in *Fair Women.*, 1894. Collotype, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

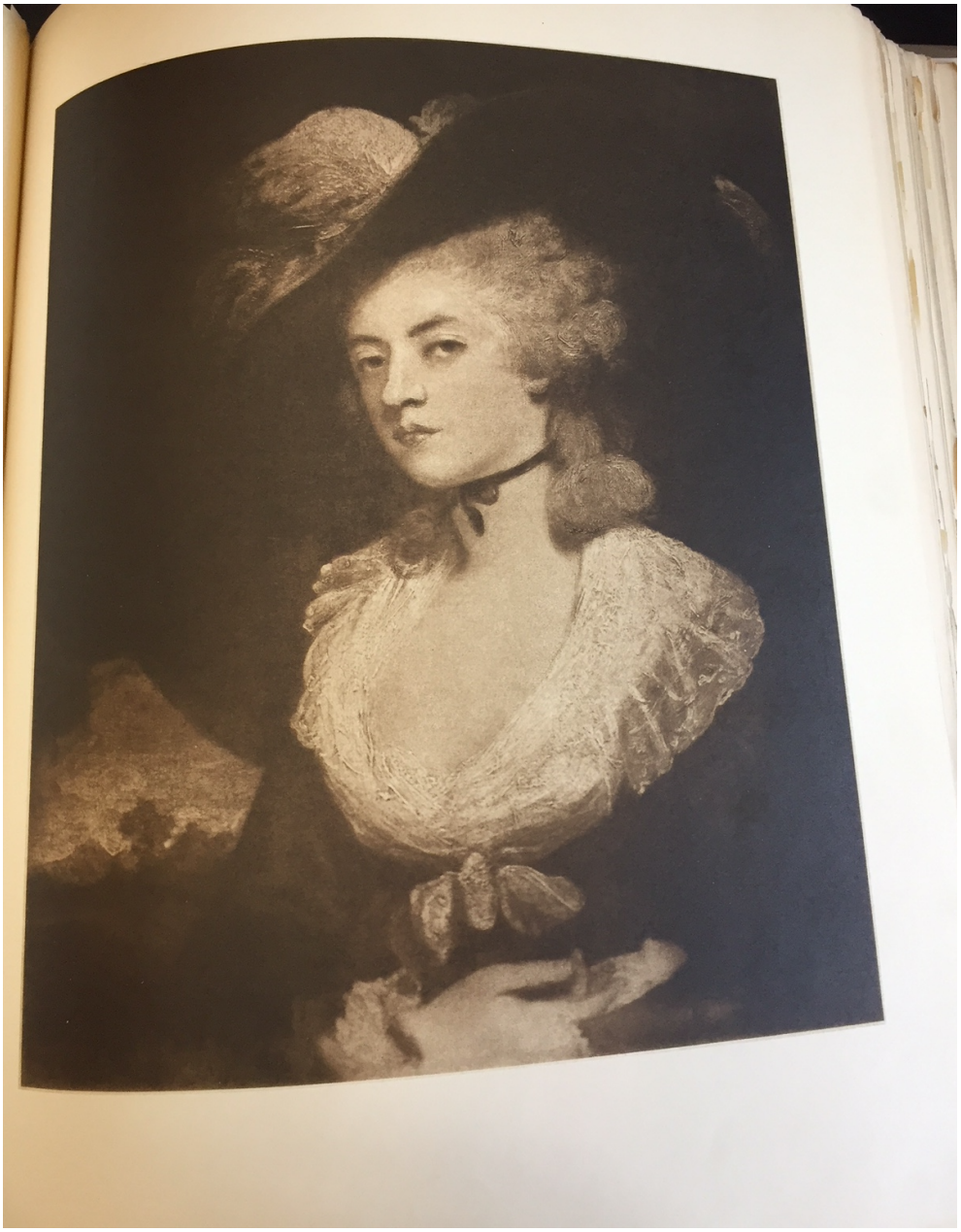


Fig. 3.75 Photogravure based on Sir Joshua Reynolds*, Mary Robinson as 'Perdita*', reproduced in *Fair Women.*, 1894. Collotype, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.76 Photogravure based on Ellis Roberts, *Portrait of Ethel Grenfell,* Swan Electric Engraving Company, reproduced in *The Book of Beauty (late Victorian era). A collection of beautiful portraits, with literary, artistic, and musical contributions by men and women of the day,* 1896. Engraving, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.77 Photogravure based on Ellis Roberts, *Portrait Violet, Countess of Mar & Kellie*, Swan Electric Engraving Company, reproduced in *The Book of Beauty (late Victorian era). A collection of beautiful portraits, with literary, artistic, and musical contributions by men and women of the day,* 1896. Engraving, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.78 Photogravure based on Edward Hughes, *Duchess of Portland*, Swan Electric Engraving Company, reproduced in *The Book of Beauty (late Victorian era). A collection of beautiful portraits, with literary, artistic, and musical contributions by men and women of the day,* 1896. Engraving, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.79 Photogravure based on Edward Hughes, *Portrait of Georgiana, Countess of Dudley*, Swan Electric Engraving Company, reproduced in *The Book of Beauty (late Victorian era). A collection of beautiful portraits, with literary, artistic, and musical contributions by men and women of the day,* 1896. Engraving, Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Fig. 3.80 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Mrs. J. Graham Menzies as Titania Queen of the Fairies*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.81 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Edith Villiers as Lady Melbourne after Cosway*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.82 *Dame Beauty's Picture Hat* reproduced in *The Washington Post,* September 26, 1897.



Fig. 3.83 Alice Hughes, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *Lady Eva Dugdale as her great aunt Lady Anne Bingham*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.84 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Portrait of the Hon. Lady Anne Bingham*, 1786. Oil on canvas, 74.9 x 62.2 cm, Althorp Estate, Althorp, Northamptonshire.



Fig. 3.85 John Thomson, photogravure by Walker & Boutall, *The Marchioness of Granby as Mary Isabella Duchess of Rutland after Cosway*, from the Devonshire House Fancy Dress Ball Album, 1897, published 1899. Photogravure, 18.4 x 12.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Fig. 3.86 John Singer Sargent, *Mrs. Carl Meyer and her Children*, 1896, exhibited 1897. Oil on canvas, 201.4 x 134 cm, Tate, London.