ON THE NATURE OF TRENDS

A study of trend mechanisms in contemporary fashion

"Are Trends Going Out of Fashion?"

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A Study of Trend Mechanisms in Contemporary Fashion

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PREFACE

This dissertation is the result of a collective effort. Without the support from some wonderful individuals this would have remained a dream. I am grateful to former Head of Research at The Danish Design School, Thomas Schødt Rasmussen, who was instrumental in securing the funding for the project. I also wish to thank my two wonderful supervisors, Rector at The Danish Design School, Anne-Louise Sommer, and Associate Professor Julie Sommerlund at The Danish Design School, who have backed me all the way with unwavering optimism and persistent encouragement.

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Maria Mackinney-Valentin, January 2010
Trends: Wanted dead or alive?
Trends in fashion confuse and fascinate. Are trends created or do they create themselves? Do they reflect the surrounding context or are they essentially arbitrary? Are trends about movement or meaning; part of social interaction or simply the oil that helps grease the motor of capitalism? What is the purpose of trend theory: Marketing strategy, politics, ‘contemporary seductiveness,’ sartorial rush, social identity, escaping boredom, or analyzing consumer behavior? Do trends contribute to the survival of the human species? Or worse: Are trends on the verge of extinction?

Theories analyzing trend mechanisms might soon become irrelevant if one is to believe the rumors that trends are going out of fashion, killed off by the acceleration of change and the fragmentation caused by decentralization and democratization. The rumors began already in the early 1990s. In summing up the year of fashion in 1990, fashion journalist Woody Hochswender predicted that fashion trends seemed to be moving away from the traditional mechanisms: “The cycles in fashion get shorter and shorter. How many times have the 60’s been revived since the 60’s? They’re never out long enough to be completely out. Soon all the decades will overlap dangerously. Soon everything will simultaneously be out.”

The doomsday speculations concerning the end of trends proved to be persistent. In 1995, Efrat Tseëlon announced the rise of "post-fashion" and suggested that trends only refer to themselves and therefore might be said to no longer exist. In 1999, Teri Agins, covering the fashion industry for The Wall Street Journal, also declared that the end was near: "It’s not only the end of the millennium, but the end of fashion as we once knew it.”

Almost a decade later in "Fashion for All," fashion writer for The Guardian Jess Cartner-Morley also explores the question of whether trends are going out of

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2 The Masque of Femininity, 124.
3 The End of Fashion, 6.
fashion. Covering the s/s 2008 fashion shows in Paris, she concludes that after 90 shows there was not a trend in sight: "Don’t expect key looks next season."5

The year after, fashion writer Erin Magner does a three-piece feature for the trend agency JC Report6 entitled “The Death of Trends” in which she suggests that the apocalyptic predictions might in fact be coming true. She explores what she calls the changing face of fashion trends where the notion of seasons has given way to a ‘24-hour fashion news cycle.’ As Magner states:

“When it comes to fashion in 2008 the only prevailing trend is that there are no prevailing trends. From excess to minimalism, free-spirited ingénue to tailored sophisticate—and everything in between—designers are mining just about every culture, decade and mood to create a distinctly ‘anything-goes’ aesthetic.”7

The condition of trend mechanisms according to this ‘anything goes’ paradigm seems to be close to impossible. To support her argument, she quotes Ben Whyman, writer and lecturer at London College of Fashion for saying: “It’s always been difficult to define an era’s trends without generalizing, but nowadays, it’s difficult to even define what a trend is.”8

The point of departure of the dissertation is to define trend mechanisms in the Noughties9 when doom and anarchy rather than coral and denim seem to be predictions for next seasons’ trends. The question then is whether this development is the end of trends – or the beginning of understanding the trend mechanisms in a new way.

Because, the notion of ‘anything goes’ and the prospect of a ‘24-hour fashion news cycle’ or ‘seasonless cycles’10 severely challenges the concept of temporal gaps that are assumed in the organization of the majority of trend theory – between new and old, in and out, inception and demise, innovators and laggards. This suggestion of the elimination of time lags raises the possibility that a different approach, a spatial one, might be included in the existing body of trend theory in which the focus on

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9 I.e. the first decade of the 21st century.
10 Deluxe, 316.
dimensions, expansions, mutations, and variation may correspond better to contemporary trend mechanisms than temporal organization and ‘ceaseless revolution.’ One of the implications in this addition is that trends move slowly rather than rapidly, which should hopefully save trends from their imminent doom.

**Structure and methodology**

The method employed in this dissertation draws on iterative processes and loosely on Sandra Harding’s notion of “strong objectivity” with focus on multidisciplinary. However, method is also a theme in itself in the development of the Rhizomatic Position in Chapter 6, which attempts to offer inspiration for a new method for describing trends and trend mechanisms as well as possibly understanding contemporary consumer behaviour.

I have chosen to integrate the presentation of the structure of the dissertation with the concerns of method to sharpen the focus as well as show the integration of these aspects.

**Chapter 1: Terminology** is concerned with clarifying and developing the terminology of trend studies within a historical framework, which allows for a more precise and comprehensive analysis of trends. The chapter is as such an attempt to consolidate the field of trend studies by foregrounding *trend* as the operational term rather than *fashion*, which tends to be the preferred term in the theory on fashion change. Though there are trends in everything from pets to politics, I have chosen to look at trends in fashion because the trend mechanisms are very clear in both the production and practice of fashion due to especially social, cultural, seductive, and economic factors.

**Chapter 2: Fashion Systems** is concerned with the historical development of the three main fashion systems, understood as the various actors and institutions that constitute the framework of fashion production. The chapter looks at how factors such as developments of globalization, advances in production methods, the digital revolution, and social and cultural changes have led to a progression towards a more

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11 *Statement of Some New Principles on the Subject of Political Economy*, 266.
democratic and decentralized fashion system which in turn has altered the premise for
trend mechanisms. The chapter outlines the platform for the Analysis.\textsuperscript{12}

\textbf{Chapter 3: Mapping of Trend Theory}\textsuperscript{13} is an attempt to organize almost 200 years
of trend theory into five Positions: Social Mechanism, Neomania, Market, Seduction,
and Zeitgeist that together form a \textit{Toolbox}. A multi-disciplinary approach in the
Mapping brings together a wide range of approaches. The purpose is to bring out the
composite nature of trends and the analytical potential of the Positions without
simplifying the trend mechanisms. The Toolbox might be compared to a prism in
which light is broken into its constituents that each have a distinct color but also form
an important part of the whole.

The method for the Mapping is loosely inspired by Sandra Harding’s notion of
‘strong objectivity’ as developed in \textit{Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?} (1991). In
her work on the meaning and method of science, she suggests joining two seemingly
conflicting standpoints namely on the one hand objectivism associated with ‘value-
free, impartial, dispassionate objectivity;’\textsuperscript{14} and on the other hand relativism
associated with the understanding that what might be a reasonable claim in one social
or cultural context might not be in another.

In her research, Harding is concerned with people and groups who have
traditionally been excluded from the production of knowledge. While studying trend
mechanisms in contemporary fashion is clearly a different endeavor, I still find that
Harding’s approach has contributed to clarifying my double role as a researcher and
has helped me motivate the approach to the Mapping of Trend Theory, an approach
that also weaves into the Analysis.

Harding’s project is to make the author or scientist responsible for the
knowledge that is produced by being explicit about the writer’s point of view, rather
than operating from a blurred perspective. Harding argues that this is what both
objectivism/positivism and relativism have done in laterally reversed ways. In other
words, she allows for a way for me to position myself in relation to the dissertation.
This is particularly pertinent when considering my double role in relation to the

\textsuperscript{12} Henceforth the ‘Analysis’ will refer to Chapter 5 and part of Chapter 6 in which the
application of the five Positions in the Mapping of Trend Theory is performed.
\textsuperscript{13} I will generally refer to this as the Mapping.
\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?} 138.
Eurowoman material. The potential of looking at the term ‘strong objectivity’ is the possibility of writing off both objectivism and relativism. Part of Harding’s political project in addition to the concern with marginalized groups is about the extrapolation of the authors’ relationship with the material. This approach holds potential for my double role in connection with the empirical material the production of which I have been part of, and which I also analyze. In that sense, Harding’s political project becomes a question of the politics of knowledge and is about responsible production of knowledge rather than solely concerned with marginalized groups. Instead of being a limitation, my double role as both insider and outsider can be used in my analyses. However, the knowledge I have from being an insider is not made explicit in the research rather it is internalized and in that sense constitutes a premise for my research.

Another potential for the methodology of the dissertation lies in Harding’s multidisciplinary approach with the emphasis on textual interpretation as part of the scientific project that offers a conceptual framework for the Mapping. Harding encourages analysis of academic texts from a variety of disciplines and calls for historical, sociological, and cultural relativism from the point of view that ‘all human beliefs’ are socially situated. Harding argues that to achieve what she calls ‘strong objectivity,’ it requires “a scientific account of the relationship between historically located belief and maximally objective belief.”

I shall not go further into what this means in relation to Harding’s work on for instance feminist epistemology nor move any further into the full potential of ‘strong objectivity.’ The Mapping relates to ‘strong objectivity’ in the sense of attempting a balance between saying something general or universal about trend mechanisms while still maintaining that the theories as well as the trends themselves are historically, socially, and culturally situated in various ways.

The Mapping is a key part of my attempt to consolidate trend studies as a more independent, composite field by organizing the material, and thus creating the basis for updating and challenging the Positions.

Chapter 4: Retro Case motivates the case study and defines the Retro Trend\textsuperscript{17} as the case, which constitutes the testing ground for the Toolbox. Because of the aggregate nature of trends, it was important to choose empirical material that could support this complexity rather than reduce it. In addition to being an expression of a collective effort with a multitude of actors, magazines themselves constitute a complex site for generating and reflecting current trends containing as they do both commercial mechanisms and input from fashion practice.

All the empirical material gathered from the Danish fashion magazine *Eurowoman* (EW)\textsuperscript{18} is viewed as discursive as an empirical term. That is to say that discursive is used to define a type of data material rather than types of theory. The discursive material found in *Eurowoman* ranges from text (features, ads, editorial, texts accompanying fashion spreads…) to visual material (illustrations, fashion spreads, lay-out…), and all the material is in principle treated as equally relevant and valid.

The case is analytically grounded rather than empirically from the point of view that the research question is theoretical while the empirical material serves as an analytical vehicle. The case study operates with two periods: The intensive study of 2000 and 2001 and extensive study of 2002-2009.

The choice of *Eurowoman* is motivated by two factors: 1. Danish material being narrower than for instance American offered a stronger focus to the Analysis. 2. I worked as a managing editor for the magazine in 1999-2000, which in Harding’s terms offers the opportunity to exercise reflexivity understood as the attempt to promote the mutual exchange between the agent and object of knowledge.

The choice of the Retro Trend as the case is motivated by the fact that retro per definition raises issues important to the dissertation of newness, origin, and speed.

\textsuperscript{17} The ‘Retro Trend’ will be used in this dissertation to refer to the trend for revivals that is seen in Denmark and other places in the period 2000-2009 not to be confused with ‘retro’, which refers to the phenomenon as such or a trend for revivals in another period.

\textsuperscript{18} In my examples and in much of the theory employed, I will mainly be referring to women’s fashion though there are of course trends in men’s fashion as well. That I have made this priority has to do with the fact that change in women’s fashion – at least since the 18\textsuperscript{th} century – has been more prominent and dramatic than in men’s. This is in part due to the role of seduction in the strategy of change in fashion as will be discussed in Chapter 3. In addition, the case material is collected from a women’s magazine, which as a result intensifies the focus on women’s fashion and the role of trends in it.
reviving as it does past trends. In the 1990s, retro was linked to the turn of the millennium as described by Ted Polhemus. In *Stylesurfing: What to Wear in the 3rd Millennium* (1996). He talks about “the sense of occasion wrought by a change of millennium,”19 and how this occasion is hoped to be “A point when all the looking back nostalgically, with its endless cycles of revivals, gives way to something new and fresh.”20 While the Positions suggest a more objective approach, the Retro Trend is historically situated. Therefore the exchange between them should offer ample and fruitful material for exploring trend mechanisms in contemporary fashion.

**Chapter 5: Analysis** is where the analytical potential of the five Positions is unfolded by being applied to the Retro Trend case. The method in the analysis is iterative. The iterative process is seen in the general structure of the dissertation where each chapter informs the next, and in a more pronounced way in the Analysis in both Chapters 5 and 6. Iterative processes are often associated with a method of calculation in mathematics, in software engineering, or more generally in business consulting where iterative project planning allows clients to learn from previous projects as well as reduce risks of poorly defined needs and requirements.

In the Analysis, the iterative process is understood simply as a repeated cycle of operations defined as the application of the five Positions to three versions of the Retro Trend. The process might be described as successive approximations to reach a more refined analysis the purpose of which is both to update the Toolbox and to foreground the problematic issues in the Positions. The process might be visualized as a helix that it is organized according to cyclical repetition that cover the same ground but from higher and higher planes.

**Chapter 6: Rhizomatic Position** is the development of a contribution to the Toolbox. This sixth Position might be described as an organic approach that offers the tools for visualizing and describing the complex trend mechanisms, which are operating on an increasingly democratic, decentralized premise. One of the aims is to create alternative ways of approaching the changes in trends that neither locks trends in a

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19 *Stylesurfing*, 135.
20 *Stylesurfing*, 126.
dichotomy of ‘‘in’’ or ‘out’’\textsuperscript{21} nor anarchistic in assuming that everything is ‘simultaneously out.’\textsuperscript{22}

As opposed to the other Positions that often represent academic or professional standpoints or agendas, the new Position endeavors to explore the possibility of a ‘pure mechanism’ that attempts to come closer to the nature of trends. The Rhizomatic Position offers a spatial rather than temporal approach to trend mechanisms that sets it apart from the majority of the material in the Mapping of Trend Theory.

Inspiration for the new Position is found in the botanical term and philosophical concept of the rhizome. The emphasis is on the subterranean sprawl of trend mechanisms with vegetative propagation and plant physiology among the horticultural concerns.

The chapter also continues the iterative process both in developing the new Position on the basis of the four Issues raised in the Analysis – Dichotomy, Point of Origin, Hierarchy, and Line of Development – and by holding the new theory up against the same three versions of the Retro Trend.

The title of the dissertation – \textit{On the Nature of Trends}\textsuperscript{23} – alludes both to the comprehensive approach to trends as a complex whole, as opposed to highlighting a certain facet of trend mechanisms; and to the organic fabric of the sixth Position.

The rumors that trends are going out of fashion are the result of especially developments in globalization, cultural and social orientation and communication, and the digital revolution, which have led to an increase in the decentralization and democratization of the fashion industry, influencing the role of the consumer in fashion, and altering the premise of trend mechanisms as such. This presumed hazardous development calls for a consolidation of trend studies through an organization, update, challenge, and development of the various theories about how and why trends change, which in turn may offer new ways of understanding consumer behavior.

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{Old Clothes, New Looks}, 200.

\textsuperscript{23} Let it be noted that I am aware of the article with a similar title: “Notes on the Natural History of Fads” (1956) by Rolf Meyersohn and Elihu Katz. The article focuses mainly on the Social Mechanisms of trends.
This leads up to the research question of this dissertation that is concerned with why trends change, how trend mechanisms work in contemporary fashion, whether there is a need for developing new ways of describing and understanding trend mechanisms, or whether trends are simply going out of fashion as a result of decentralization and democratization.

The research question is theoretical in that it looks at the theory explaining trends and trend mechanisms. The aim is to consolidate and update the field of trend studies as well as develop a theoretical contribution to trend studies that approaches trends spatially rather than temporally.
CHAPTER 1: TERMINOLOGY – Defining Fashion, Trend, Trend Mechanism, and Style

Before dealing with the condition and premise of trend mechanisms in the first decade of the 21st century, it is necessary to establish the terminology that will be employed in the dissertation. This chapter will give a brief outline of the history and definition of the terminology concerning changes in fashion as well as define the distinction between the terms fashion, trend, and style. The purpose of this chapter is to establish the terminology employed in the dissertation, and thereby taking the first step in consolidating trend studies as a field that is linked to fashion studies while still a distinct field.

Trends and trend mechanisms
Trends are characterized by change, which makes the effort to define trends a cumbersome task. As will become clear in the course of this chapter, there are several additional obstacles to the phenomenon and the definition of the term trend will not be completed until the Conclusion of the dissertation. This chapter will offer the building blocks used in answering the research question concerning why trends change, and to what extent the premise of trend mechanisms have changed, and whether this is threatening to end trends.

I will distinguish between trend mechanisms as the motor of change, and trend as the result of these mechanisms. The following example offers a simple illustration of the difference: “Soup is not old-fashioned, plain fare, but a super trendy food. Soup is in.”24 The example serves to bring attention to what the trend is – soup is in – but not why it might be a trend – the trend mechanisms causing the trend. The example also documents how the Retro Trend moves beyond fashion and into for instance the culinary field. Finally, the example brings attention to how the dichotomy ‘in’ and ‘out’ is central to the understanding of trends; a contention that will be a key focus throughout the dissertation.

While the various trend mechanisms will be organized and discussed in Mapping of Trend Theory in Chapter 3, I wish to bring up the term style as a

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24 From Eurowoman 37, 140. “Supper er ikke gammeldags fattigmandskost, men en super trendy spise. Suppe er in.”
synonym for trend in order to clear up some potential confusion concerning terminology.

The term *style* is widely used in the sense of trend. In *A la Mode* (1971), it is stated: "Fashion is a periodic change of style." Independent researcher, Elizabeth Wilson defines fashion as: “Fashion is dress in which the key feature is rapid and continual changing of styles.”

This is similar to saying that fashion is defined by changing trends understood as shifts in visual expressions in fashion. As for the distinction between clothes and fashion in relation to style – in the meaning trend – I follow the definition made by director of *The Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology*, Valerie Steele:

“Clothes is the general and inclusive term for all the various coverings and articles of dress designed to be worn on the human body. Fashion is a particular kind of clothing that is ‘in style’ at a given time. The concept of fashion therefore implies a process of style change.”

To sum up, fashion is a specific category of clothes, and is determine by a process of style change – trends – that are caused by various trend mechanisms. Or to rephrase former director of *Parsons The New School for Design*, Frank Alvah Parsons (1868-1930); ‘trends are trend mechanisms crystallized in a fixed form.’ Style will be used in the general sense of sort, kind, or type (of look, dress, design…). An example from the *Eurowoman* material is: "Clean lines, clear style."

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26 *Adorned in Dreams*, 3. There are many instances of fashion being defined according to its ability to change such as Gilles Lipovetsky who defines fashion according to "its endless metamorphoses, its fits and starts, its extravagance," *The Empire of Fashion*, 15. The term ‘metamorphosis’ is interesting in relation to the future of trend mechanisms and will be looked at in Chapter 6.
27 While ‘changes in visual expression’ will be used here to refer to trends, it should be noted that there are examples when the visual expression is the same but considered to be a different trend as discussed with the example of the *hoodie* that remains the same but is attributed various meanings as will be discussed in Chapter 5.
28 *Fifty Years of Fashion*, 3.
The role of innovation and diffusion
Generally speaking, there are two factors fundamental to trend mechanisms: Innovation and diffusion. Innovation is an ambiguous term. While innovation has to do with the creation or appearance of novelty, the question of what constitutes novelty – and whether it is even possible – is a central theme in the dissertation and will be unfolded in more depth in the remaining chapters especially in relation to the decentralization and democratization of fashion. It is safe to say that there is a sense of relativity in the concept of innovation that forges certain paradoxes and complications in understanding and describing trends. As American sociologist Everett Rogers (1931-2004) describes in *Diffusion of Innovation*: “If the idea seems new to the individual, it is an innovation.”

As for diffusion, this term is generally related to how a perceived innovation is spread to and among consumers. This is what former Assistant Professor in Consumer Affairs, Evelyn Brannon describes as “characterized by building awareness of this new look and an accelerating demand among consumers.” Diffusion is also understood as the ‘fashion adoption process,’ which will be unfolded more in Chapter 3 in the Mapping of Trend Theory.

It is important to note, that trend mechanisms are not just about what is worn, i.e. a certain fashion item, silhouette, material, color or pattern; trend mechanisms are also concerned with how something is worn. Often the two aspects are integrated. This is illustrated when the designer Charles Frederick Worth (1825-1895) as one of the first showed haute couture on live models in his Parisian fashion salon. When his wife and muse, Marie Vernet, came into the salon modeling a shawl, the focus

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31 The question of obsolescence is also central to trend but will be dealt with in relation to for instance the Market Position in the Mapping as well as in the question of increased cycles and retro.
32 Note that innovation is a field of study with proponents such as Peter Drucker with *Innovation and Entrepreneurship* (1986) and Prahalad, C. K. and M. S. Krishnan with *The New Age of Innovation: Driving Cocreated Value Through Global Networks* (2008). I will not go further into this as the thesis is concerned with the nature of trends rather than developing methods for creating innovation in for instance the fashion industry.
33 *Diffusion of Innovation*, 11.
34 *Fashion Forecasting*, 60.
36 “Multiple, Movement, Model, Mode: The Mannequin Parade 1900-1929” in *Fashion and Modernity*. 
was not just on the material product – the shawl – but also how it was draped around her shoulders.

The what and how of trend mechanisms have become increasingly disjuncted. A recent example is a trend among Danish girls and boys, where tennis socks are worn over the bottom of the pants.\(^{37}\) Here it is less the particular brand, design, or color of the tennis socks but the way they are worn that constitutes the trend. Another example operating on a more global scale is ‘sagging pants’ which refers to the trend among mainly young men of wearing their oversized jeans low revealing the wearers underpants. Again it is less the actual pants and more the way of wearing them that is in focus.\(^{38}\)

While trends generally encompass concerns of innovation and diffusion, what is worn and how it is worn, it will become clear in the Mapping how the degree of focus on these themes varies according to Positions. This is viewed as a potential in that it suggests multiple perspectives on the same aspect of a trend.

Confusion between trend and fashion
As the Mapping will show, the meaning of the terms ‘trend’ and ‘fashion’ are often used interchangeably and their meaning varies. Often fashion is used both to refer to trend as shifts in the visual expression in fashion and other fields, and to trend mechanisms that cause these shifts.

This confusion in terminology evidently poses an obstacle to my effort to consolidate trend studies. I will attempt to clarify the way I will use the terms fashion and trend by looking at how they have been used. I will then move on to motivate why I chose to focus on trends in fashion despite the obvious potential for adding to the bewilderment compared to looking at for instance crafts or industrial design.

While fashion is often used in the meaning trend or trend mechanism the opposite is not the case. An example of how fashion is used in the meaning trend is

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\(^{37}\) This is documented with interviews in a pilot program for DR produced by Fourhands Film, April 2009.

\(^{38}\) Attesting to sagging pants as a trend concerned with the way an item of clothing is worn is the fact that the trend is considered a criminal offense in certain American communities. The style carries a fine of as much as $500 or up to a six-month sentence according to “Are Your Jeans Sagging? Go Directly to Jails” in the New York Times, August 30, 2007.
provided by Fred Davis. He defines the term fashion as “a new ‘look’, a new visual gestalt, a pronounced shift in vestmental emphasis, etc.”

Some examples of this variability are seen in *Fifty Years of Fashion* (1997), in which Valerie Steele uses phrases like “fashions in running shoes,” “the latest trendy fashions” and “the latest trend in hats.” While this might not disturb the reader’s understanding of the text, because a context is provided, working with trends in research makes the confusion in terminology a problem. If this dissertation is to achieve the goal of consolidating trend studies as a field through organization, analysis, and theory development, it demands clarified terminology. In that sense, removing the obstacle of entangled terminology is in itself a step towards this aim.

Historically speaking, fashion has been the most common term applied to shifts in visual expressions and the motors generating them. Therefore, the literature on trends specifically is somewhat scarce and mainly concerned with forecasting and the sociological aspect of trends. There are a number of books written specifically for trend forecasting such as *Trendstudies* (2003) by founder of the Danish trend agency *pej gruppen* Poul Erik Jakobsen and *Trend Forecasting* (2005) by Evelyn Brannon. In *Anatomy of a Trend* (2007), Senior Communications Advisor Henrik Vejlgaard attempts to dissect trend dynamics from a sociologically point of view. Another example of works on trends is Barbara Vinken’s *Fashion Zeitgeist: Trends and Cycles in the Fashion System*. However, the original German title of the book *Mode nach der Mode: Geist und Kleid am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts* (1993) seems to be a more precise description of the content and purpose of the book, which is more an analysis of the role of the designer as an auteur in a fashion history perspective than an exploration of trends as such. A recent publication is *Changing Fashion: A Critical Introduction to Trend Analysis and Meaning* (2007). While the book is also concerned with the various meanings and motivations for fashion change and also takes a multi-disciplinary approach, trend is linked here to the trend analysis performed by the trend forecasting industry rather than as the comprehensive term it is in this dissertation referring to the various mechanisms causing change in fashion and other fields.

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39 *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 103.
40 *Fifty Years of Fashion*, 3.
41 Ibid., 3.
42 Ibid., 10.
These examples are fairly recent and generally employ the term trend in a similar sense to mine. However, as will become clear in Chapter 3, the majority of the literature in the Mapping of Trend Theory employs the term fashion in the meaning trend and trend mechanism, which might initially seem confusing. However, the importance of using trend as a specific term to refer to the mechanisms of change rather than fashion which is a more ambiguous term should outweigh the initial confusion, and the awkwardness of treating for instance the pivotal article “Fashion” (1904) by German sociologist Georg Simmel (1858-1918) as being about trend mechanisms.

In *Recurring Cycles of Fashion* (1937), American art historian Agnes Brooks Young (1898-1974) offers an early instance of fashion used in the meaning of both trend and trend mechanism: “Fashion is transitory usage which regulates the form of material objects, and particularly furnishings, clothes, and finery.” Fashion here clearly refers to the trend mechanisms that ‘regulate’ the trends in fashion. An interesting point to notice is that a trend is not confined to fashion alone but relates to ‘the form of material objects’ as such. This supports the suggestion of trend as the primary term considering that there are trends in everything from pets to politics, but speaking of fashions in politics suggests other issues. In addition, as Young also points out, the ability of trends to move simultaneously in several fields also calls for a more precise and neutral term than fashion.

The need for an independent term for what governs this ‘transitory usage’ has increased with the progression in fashion industry and practice towards a more democratized and decentralized system. When viewed in a historical context, this might explain why the term has gradually entered into first the English language and later the Danish. A possible suggestion of this development is seen in *Time* from 1947, in which Christian Dior is quoted for saying: “You can never stop the fashions.” A decade later, Dior uses the term trend several times in his autobiography *Dior by Dior* (1957): “it was time for a new trend in fashion” and “every passing trend of fashion.” It is difficult to say whether the inconsistency in the use of terminology reflects a development over time, translation issues, or that the

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43 *Recurring Cycles of Fashion*, 200.
45 *Dior by Dior*, 8.
46 Ibid., 12.
terms were simply synonymous to Dior. However, the examples do attest to the confusion of the terms, and a possible replacement of terms on the way.

While the motivation for the use of trend and trend mechanisms rather than fashion to refer to the process of change should be clear now, I will include an example of how I will use the term fashion in the dissertation. In 1999, Teri Agins argues: “Never before had fashion been so out of style.” The quote is ambiguous in suggesting that fashion is ‘out,’ and I include it here to demonstrate how trends and fashion are linked but independent fields. Because implicit in Agins’ statement is that if fashion is out of style then there must be parts of fashion that are not concerned with trend mechanisms. And as we saw with the example of soup, trends are also concerned with other fields than fashion. That fashion is considered out alludes to new conditions for trends and fashion, which will be taken up in Chapter 2 in relation to decentralization and democratization of the fashion systems.

**Motivation of fashion as focus**

Since there are trends is most everything, I might have avoided this confusion of terminology, had I chosen a different field of study than fashion. As Lowe and Lowe (1985) argue: “Much of modern human life is immersed in fashion, from names bestowed at birth to the form of gravestones and funeral services at death. Fashions exist even in theories of fashion.” However, as the quote shows, the confusion occurs when fashion is used to mean trends or trend mechanisms in other fields. However, while some confusion might have been avoided, fashion is still ideal for studying trends because it – in contrast to for instance mortuary practice – can be defined as dependent on change in order to be fashion rather than simply clothes. As Elizabeth Wilson argues: “Fashion, in a sense is change.” Fashion is the site of complex issues and agendas. The strong economic interest in fashion change, the intimate nature of clothes, and the themes of sexuality, identity, and communication in fashion, further confirm the potential of fashion as a suitable field for trend research.

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47 *The End of Fashion*, 282.
48 I.e. trend mechanisms.
50 *Adorned in Dreams*, 3.
51 “Dress, then, forms part of our epidermis – it lies on the boundary between self and other.” *Body Dressing*, 93.
Thus although there are trends in a wide range of areas, fashion seems to offer richer material for this research into trend dynamics as opposed to other fields such as architecture which operate with longer cycles, body language which is more separated from any mercantile interests, transportation that does not raise obvious issues of gender and seduction, or food that is less connected to questions of identity.

**Definition of fashion**

By now, it should be apparent that fashion is a complex phenomenon. Christopher Breward offers an expansive definition of fashion that attests to the complexity of both fashion and trend mechanisms: "Fashion as material artifact and idea is clearly the directed result of a creative and industrial process, a system of 'innovation' engineered to meet and encourage seasonal consumer demands and fulfilling cultural requirement to define ever-shifting social identities and relationships."  

Fashion is defined here as a 'system of innovation' revolving around an industry and consumers in the context of social and cultural agendas. The fashion system as a term is the focus of Chapter 2. Suffice it to say here, that I follow the relatively straightforward definition formulated by Japanese sociologist Yuniya Kawamura who argues: "Fashion is a system of institutions, organizations, groups, producers, events and practices, all of which contribute to making fashion."  

Fashion, then, in this dissertation refers to fashion system as an expansive and general field that includes elements that are not primarily concerned with the mechanisms of change such as mercantile matters of production, CSR, and sustainability as well as other issues pertinent to fashion such as identity, nationality, and gender, whereas trend is concerned with the various mechanisms that motivate change. In this sense, trend is part of the fashion system as well as related to other fields.

Not all fashion studies are concerned with trends just as not all trend studies are concerned with fashion. There are many examples of studies where the main focus is on fashion where trend mechanisms figure only at a small or insignificant level. One such example is the ethnographic work on the everyday act of dressing as demonstrated by Sophie Woodward in *Why Women Wear What they Wear* (2007), which looks at how dressing relates to issues of anxiety, comfort, and creativity.

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52 *Fashion*, 63.
53 *Fashion-ology*, 43.
Other examples are the question of national identity in the fashion industry as explored by for instance ethnographer Marie Riegels Melchior in her Ph.D. dissertation *DANSK PÅ MODE! En undersøgelse af design, identitet og historie i dansk modeindustri* (2009); issues of gender as explored in *The Fashioned Body: Fashion, Dress and Modern Social Theory* (2000) by Joanne Entwistle; and the cultural history of fashion as seen in Valerie Steele’s *Paris Fashion* (1988). Other examples of fashion studies where trends and trend mechanisms play a minor role are two books analyzing fashion as a means for understanding modernity as in Ulrich Lehmann’s *Tigersprung: Fashion in Modernity* (2000) and *Fashion and Modernity* (2005) edited by Caroline Evans and Christopher Breward. Fashion as a subcultural strategy is seen in *Streetstyle: From Sidewalk to Catwalk* (1994) by Ted Polhemus, who takes an anthropological approach to the dress practice of subcultures. Subcultures represent a stable expression and therefore form a contrast to trends. Additional examples are fashion as business for instance in relation to the change in the role of luxury through globalization as analyzed in Dana Thomas’ *Deluxe: How Luxury Lost Its Luster* (2007), and fashion as art as seen in *Artwear: Fashion and Anti-Fashion* (2005) by Melissa Leventon. While it might be argued that nothing is outside the influence of trend, the examples show that there is a vast area of fashion studies where at least the main focus is other than trends.

**Definition of trend and trend mechanisms**

Before dealing with the definition of trend and trend mechanisms in this dissertation, it is necessary to clarify the term *cycle* since it often figures in the definition of trend and trend mechanisms. The meaning of cycle can generally be categorized into two separate but increasingly related categories.

The first is the cycle understood as a *season* in relation to the fashion industry. Here cycle is understood as the institutionalization of trends in relation to seasons. This structure creates a regular cadence or cycle of trends. Each season introduces new trends that at least in principle go through a cycle until the next season. More generally, the cycle refers to the lifespan of a trend, the process of which consists of a rise, culmination and decline.\(^{54}\)

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\(^{54}\) *Fashion Forecasting*, 18. Harold Koda also talks about how “fashion is predicated on the rather accelerated cycle of innovation and obsolescence,” *Goddess*, 11.
The second is the cycle understood as a *revival* of former trends what is referred to in this dissertation as *retro*. An early example of this understanding of cycle is seen in the title of Agnes Brooks Young’s *The Recurring Cycles of Fashion* (1937). More recently Brannon discusses cycles in *Fashion Forecasting* (2005).

With the reduced time lag, the decentralization and democratization of the fashion systems, and gradual fragmentation of trends, which will be discussed in Chapter 4, the two terms have become increasingly integrated. In *Fashion, Culture, and Identity* (1992), Fred Davis uses the term cycle to refer to the cadence of change in fashion, but also more specifically to retro. Davis argues that the cycles have accelerated since World War II, a thread taken up by Christina Goulding when claiming that trends as a consequence have become retro over the past decades: “caught in a constant process of reinvention and recycling.” This seems to indicate that especially the presumed acceleration of trends has led to the integration of the two meanings of the term cycle. The term then becomes increasingly complicated and perhaps less relevant as will be discussed in the course of the dissertation in relation to the possible prospect of ‘seasonless cycles.’

However, in order to define the term trend, it is still necessary to employ the term cycle as it figures in much of the material on the subject. To confuse matters, “fashion cycle” and “fashion process” are sometimes used as synonymous for trend. Davis distinguishes between process and cycle though he acknowledges that the two are also used interchangeably.

*Cycle* is defined as “the phased elapsed time from introduction of a fashion… to its supplantation by a successive fashion.” This is relevant in relation to the notion of seasonal cycles as discussed above.

*Process* refers to “the complex influences, interactions, exchanges, adjustments, and accommodations among persons, organizations and institutions that

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55 *Fashion Forecasting*, 7. Here she is addressing what she refers to as "the binge for logos" in the late 1980s and early 1990s, which was revived at the turn of the millennium.
56 *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 105.
57 “Corsets, Silk Stockings, and Evening Suits: Retro Shops and Retro Junkies,” 55.
58 Deluxe, 316.
59 For instance Fred Davis in *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, "Fashion as Cycle, Fashion as Process.” 103-120. Davis takes a sociological approach understanding the reason for the changes as rooted in identity ambivalence in Western society, 103.
60 *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 103.
animates the cycle from its inception to its demise.”  

What Davis refers to as fashion process roughly corresponds to what I term trend mechanism. Through the Mapping, I will flesh out the process through the establishment of the Toolbox of five Positions on trend mechanisms. The Mapping intends to open the definitions provided by Davis as well as update and widen the scope. Davis takes a sociological approach understanding the reason for the changes as rooted in identity ambivalence in Western society.  

Thereby his approach is limited compared to the multidisciplinary approach in the Toolbox.

History of the term trend

When asked to write an entry for the Berg Encyclopedia of World Fashion and Dress, an ambitious project of ten volumes, which markets itself as “the largest reference source on dress and human adornment worldwide,” it was only upon my suggestion that the term trend was allotted its own entry. This seems to support my argument that trend studies is still an under-developed field. Even such recent works as Microtrends: The Small Forces Behind Tomorrow’s Big Changes by Mark J. Penn (2007) does not include a single entry on trends in the index despite the prime position of the term in the title of the book.

Although there have been changes in fashion throughout the history of fashionable dress, the phenomenon has only recently been appointed ‘trend’ as its own term. Trend was originally a nautical term from the 1600s, referring to a turn of a river or coastline. By the late 1800s, the meaning of trend broadened to mean ‘a general tendency.’ Since the middle of the 20th century, trend has been used in the current sense namely to refer to both the trend mechanisms generating trends and the visual manifestations themselves.

Agnes Brooks Young is the source of the earliest examples I have been able to locate where trend is used in relation to fashion change. In Recurring Cycles of Fashion, Young explores her thesis that universal laws govern fashion cycles.

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61 Fashion, Culture, and Identity, 103-104.
62 Ibid., 103.
64 There is one entry on ‘trend-spotting.’
understood as fashion revivals. Part of her study is a statistical approach to what she calls ‘fashion trends’: “The fundamental principle that is always valid is that fashion changes are continuing processes or trends.”65 Young seems to be in accordance with Davis employing the term processes to fashion change. However, rather than the trend mechanisms as such, Young uses trend in the statistical sense of average in her quantitative study of skirt yokes: “the light line of the diagram on page 148 shows the fluctuations of percentages monthly.”66 The line in the diagram is the trend understood as the statistical term “moving average.”67 This average is the key to establishing the “underlying trend”68 which is located in the middle of the small fluctuations in the development. The same use of trend is seen today in stock markets. The expressed aim of Young’s statistical work is to use the theory of the recurring cycles to forecast future trends.69 In that sense, her definition is too specific to warrant a general definition of the term, which in the Mapping will become unfolded as a highly composite phenomenon that is concerned with far more than trend forecasting.

Young’s idea of trends as moving averages echoes a tendency in trend theory towards linear approaches. Also operating within forecasting, Evelyn Brennan has a similar take on trend offering this short definition: “A trend is a transitory increase or decrease.”70 In *Webster’s New Encyclopedic Dictionary*, the word ‘trend’ is defined as a “line of development” and Ted Polhemus sees trend as a direction.71 The question of line of development will be a central theme in Chapter 6 with the discussion of whether trends really begin and end. As we uncover current trend mechanisms in the Retro Case using the Positions from the Mapping as tools, it will become clear that the linearity at least in a temporal sense of a trajectory that can be traced seems to give way to a spatial understanding of trends.

**From fad to craze and beyond**
Fashion, trend, and trend mechanisms are not the only terms used to describe changes in fashion. While style has already been discussed, there are other common terms

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65 *Recurring Cycles of Fashion*, 147.
66 Ibid., 147.
67 Ibid., 149.
68 Ibid., 149.
69 Ibid., 150.
71 Streetstyle, 9.
such as ‘fad’ and ‘taste.’ The two terms will be dealt with here while other less common terms such as ‘craze,’ ‘look,’ ‘mode,’ ‘vogue,’ and ‘rage’ will not.\textsuperscript{72}

There are examples where fad is used synonymously with fashion – in the sense of trend – such as “Notes on the Natural History of Fads” by Rolf Meyersohn and Elihu Katz (1956). However, generally fad refers to a more short-lived phenomenon. Trend forecasters generally distinguish between a 'fad' that might last a few months,\textsuperscript{73} a ‘fashion trend’ that is said to last from three months to three years, and the more general concept of ‘mega trends,’ 'giga trend,’ 'paradigm,’ and 'types of society’ that might last anywhere from decades to centuries.\textsuperscript{74} What is interesting in relation to fads is whether the acceleration of the fashion cycle is replacing trends with fads, or whether the entire temporal approach is outmoded, so to speak.

In fashion forecasting and marketing, \textit{trends} are generally seen as a succession of chronological steps, and trends are therefore measured according to their duration and process of adoption rendering trends a temporal rather than a spatial phenomenon. This is often visualized as a linear model in the shape of a curve that marks the rise, climax, and fall of a trend. An example is seen with Everett Rogers’ use of the ‘S-curve’\textsuperscript{75} in \textit{Diffusion of Innovations} (1962). The model describes the trajectory or adoption process of a new product, trend or idea in a certain social context. The first to adopt an innovation are the ‘innovators’ then the ‘early adopters’, ‘early majority’, 'late majority’, and finally the ‘laggards.’ The process describes the rise of the trend over time and the gradual saturation.

As for the term \textit{taste}, there is an early example from one of the first fashion magazines \textit{La Dernière Mode} that was famous for having French poet Stephane Mallarmé as editor. In the fifth issue of the magazine from November 1874, fashion writer Marguerite de Ponty refers to taste in the sense of trend: “Fashion: Or to be more precise, the Taste of the Season.”\textsuperscript{76} Other examples are the titles of \textit{Taste and Fashion} (1937) by James Laver and \textit{A Matter of Taste} (2000) by Stanley Lieberson in which taste is equivalent to trend. The potential of the term lies in the implication of personal preference, which corresponds to the sense of individualism, discussed in

\textsuperscript{72} Though craze, look, and vogue may be used to describe specific issues in the dissertation such as “The Victorian Fern Craze” in Chapter 6.
\textsuperscript{73} Brannon refers to fad as a ‘short trend’ in \textit{Fashion Forecasting}, 6.
\textsuperscript{74} \textit{Trend sociologi}, 169.
\textsuperscript{75} Also referred to as the ‘S-shaped curve’ or the ‘sigmoid curve.’
\textsuperscript{76} \textit{Mallarmé on Fashion}, 121.
Chapter 3. However, as a term for an entire field of study, taste seems too specific to encompass the variety of mechanisms at play that are not only concerned with individualism but also with collectivism as in group identity.

**Trend ambivalence**

While taste and style might have offered alternative choices of term, I find trend to hold greater potential due to the history of the term and the link to the industry of trend forecasting, which seems to render trend more open and neutral than taste and style. However, the term trend is not without problems. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there are trends in most everything – also terminology. It might even be argued that the term trend was a result of a trend from the point of view that the fashion media, designers, and consumers grew tired of using fashion to describe changing styles, and adopted trend as a new and fresh term. Recently, as similar process has been seen in Denmark where the word *fashion* is increasingly used instead of the Danish word *mode* both in fashion media and colloquially. One example is seen in the design school Fashion Design Akademiet where fashion is used as a Danish word.\(^77\) While the material on the history of the term trend is not substantial enough to support this, the development of the term itself might indicate the role trends have played in terminology.

Giving a presentation of my research at the fashion agency Style Counsel,\(^78\) co-owner Uffe Buchard told me that fashion designer Stella McCartney during an interview he was conducting with her exclaimed: “I hate the word trend.” The story is indicative of the ambivalence of trend as both something that creates direction in relation to visual expressions and consumer concentration but also a sense of creative restriction and loss of exclusivity.

In an interview for the Danish fashion magazine *Cover*,\(^79\) Japanese designer Rei Kawakubo heralds former creative director for H&M Margaretha van den Bosch for creating new products in line with her own ideal of beauty without looking at trends. This observation, which came just before the release of the Comme des

\(^77\) And the tendency seems to move further so that 'fashion' used in a Danish context is coming to mean trend. An example is found in Danish *Elle*, November 2009 in which Uffe Buchard states "Økonomisk bevidsthed er fashion” *Elle*14, 39, which translates into "Financial sensibility is trendy."

\(^78\) At the Style Counsel office in Copenhagen, March 2, 2009.

\(^79\) *Cover* November 2008 by Charlotte Torpegaard. 92-93. My translation.
Garçons capsule collection for H&M, is ambiguous considering that H&M and most of the other mass fashion corporations are highly trend-driven. The example demonstrates the ambivalence both consumers and designers seem to have towards trends.

A final example of the ambivalence towards the term trend is seen in Negotiations (1990), in which French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) mentions that he has been criticized for wanting to be “trendy” when coining the phrases for his philosophical concept ‘the rhizome’ or ‘line of flight.’ While he finds this criticism to be both “stupid” and “malicious,” his philosophical concepts might prove to be trendy after all but in a rather different sense.

Whether this ambivalence towards the term trend is indicative of the presumed impending death of trends as suggested by Erin Magner in JC Report is unlikely. As the Mapping and the Analysis will show, trend mechanisms are still important forces in fashion and will continue to be so because of the important role trend mechanisms play in relation to for instance identity, communication, interaction, and reflection.

This chapter has sought to establish a vocabulary and chart the premise for the dissertation. A comprehensive approach to such a composite phenomenon as trends demands clear terminology in order to carry out the organization of the trend theory and the subsequent challenge and development of the theory. Because of the ambiguity of fashion representing both a field and a process, trend was viewed to be a more neutral and comprehensive term that would enable for instance the exploration of how trends move simultaneously in several fields as once, as the Retro Trend will demonstrate.

In this dissertation, fashion is defined as the fashion system while trend and trend mechanisms are defined as part of the system while also an independent field related as they are to other areas than fashion. Trend is understood as a change or tendency in the visual expression of fashion cause by various trend mechanisms.

The potential for distinguishing between fashion and trend in the dissertation is, despite the initial confusion of the former being used in the majority of the literature in the Mapping in the meaning of the latter, to assign a specific field for trends that allows for an in-depth analysis of what trends are, how we use them, how

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80 Negotiations, 32.
they change, and whether trend mechanisms are succumbing to chaos on the increasingly decentralized and democratized premise of fashion.
CHAPTER 2: FASHION SYSTEMS - The Definition and Historical Development of the Fashion Systems

In order to understand how the changes in the fashion industry and consumption relate to the trend mechanisms, this chapter will give a historical overview of the development in how fashion has been produced, distributed, and consumed and the way this development has influenced the dynamic of trends. While this has been a gradual process, three distinct but related systems can nevertheless be identified: Centralized, polycentric, and decentralized. While each system represents a simple hierarchy of price, they also reflect various degrees of exchange between the fashion industry and consumers as well as shifts in the social and societal conditions. As we shall see, the three systems have become increasingly interlaced posing new challenges and conditions in both trend theory and fashion practice.

Democratization of fashion

Democratic pertains to the regard of the interest of the people, and the persuasion of social equality.\textsuperscript{81} Overall, the democratization of fashion relates to the general historical development towards an increased focus on the interest of the people and social equality as developments in production and communication that have advanced the development. Within the framework of this dissertation, there are several understandings of the term democratization. Democratization is primarily understood as the development of the fashion systems which as a process can be described as the gradual increase in terms of availability of fashionable clothes – mainly in terms of supply at more affordable prices – to a still wider mass of consumers. Democratization also refers to increased authority of the consumer on trends as seen in for instance customizing, blogging, and DIY.\textsuperscript{82} Finally, democratization is also understood in terms of a design aesthetic with a broad appeal and high functionality, which is less important in relation to trends as it is to for instance understanding a possible DNA of national fashion such as Danish.\textsuperscript{83}

What the process of democratization with its reorganization of the fashion system and the dismantling of hierarchical structures have led to is a shift in the role

\textsuperscript{81} According to \textit{The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language.}
\textsuperscript{82} As in ‘Do It Yourself’ or ‘Design It Yourself’ as attested by for instance Amy Spencer’s \textit{DIY: The Rise of Lo-Fi Culture} (2008).
of the designer as well as the understanding of exclusivity that has moved away from material wealth associated with luxury toward what might be considered a more immaterial understanding involving for instance surplus of time or creative potential as sources of exclusivity.

In addition to outlining the development of the fashion system and the effect this development has had on trend mechanisms, I will also briefly look at the history of trend forecasting as an industry growing out of the increased complexity of the fashion system in the 1960s, which spurred a need for guidance in relation to future trends. This development can be seen as increasing the focus on trend and thereby encouraging the consolidation of trend studies as an independent field.

**Definition of fashion system**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, I follow the definition set forth by Kawamura who states that fashion is ‘a system of institutions, organizations, groups, producers, events and practices, all of which contribute to making fashion.’ However, Barthes can be credited with the introduction of the concept of a fashion system. In *The Fashion System* (1967), Roland Barthes explores the semiology of women’s clothing as described in fashion magazines through structural analysis. This semiological approach marked a departure from the focus in many previous studies on especially the history of dress as seen with for instance *Krop og Klær: Klædedragtiens kunsthistorie* by Rudolf Broby-Johansen (1953).

An extensive analysis could be made on the differences between various understandings of the fashion system for instance in relation to the question of the extent to which the system is a production or a meaning system. However, for the purpose of this dissertation, the term is useful not as a subject in itself but to describe a premise for trend mechanisms in a historical context and flow. I will just mention that anthropologist Grant McCracken and Kawamura are two of the central theorists on the topic. They both operate with an understanding of the term similar to that of Fred Davis who distances himself from Barthes in his use of the term fashion system: “My own usage means to point to the more or less established practices of the

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84 *Fashion-ology*, 43. Note that it is implied that the fashion system is equivalent to what for instance Jennifer Craik refers to as ‘the Eurocentric fashion system’ in *Fashion: The Key Concepts* (2009). The possible variations of fashion systems on a global scale will not be dealt with here as it is far to comprehensive in relation to the topic of trend theory.
complex of institutions (design, display, manufacture, distribution, sales, etc.) that processes fashions as they make their way from creators to consumers.”

However, where McCracken is focused on the structure and movement of consumer goods in a fashion system, Kawamura is more specifically concerned with the institutionalized system clothes go through in order to become fashionable. She is generally in line with the understanding of the fashion system by other fashion researchers such as Elizabeth Wilson (2003), Christopher Breward (2003), Gilles Lipovetsky (1994), and Joanne Entwistle (2000).

Since the topic of the dissertation is not the development of the fashion industry as such nor the various definition of the fashion system but rather how the development of the fashion system has influenced trends and trend mechanisms, only a brief outline will be given here. This description of the development of the fashion system is intended to give a historical overview that supports the Mapping of Trend Theory rather than being a theme that will be dealt with in depth.

Early fashion
Art historian and museum curator James Laver (1899-1975) describes how fashion was “the dress of idleness and pleasure,” and therefore an indulgence for the privileged few with especially the French aristocracy playing the role of trend dictators. In this fashion order, as James Laver argues, “there seemed little reason up to about 1780 why clothes should ever vary beyond very narrowly prescribed limits.”

Though Elizabeth Wilson argues fashion might be defined by change, there were also changes in dress before fashion became a phenomenon with the rise of

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85 Fashion, Culture, and Identity, 200.
86 “an instrument of meaning is the fashion system... this system, too, serves as a means by which goods are systematically invested and divested of their meaningful properties. The fashion system is a somewhat more complicated instrument for meaning movement than advertising.” “Culture and Consumption: A Theoretical Account of the Structure and Movement of the Cultural Meaning of Consumer Goods,” 71.
87 For more on the fashion system see for instance Culture and Consumption by Grant McCracken (1990). For a Danish perspective see the anthology Snit: En antologi om industrialismens tøj i Danmark (forthcoming 2010).
88 Laver was the Keeper of the Prints, Drawings and Paintings for the Victoria and Albert Museum (1938-1959),
89 Taste and Fashion, 114.
90 Taste and Fashion, 114.
mercantile capitalism in the late 1300s. However, they operated according to longer time lags and were often generated by external factors such as innovation in production methods and tools, settlement patterns, trade routes, customs, and even sumptuary legislation, which might have governed English dress in the late 14th century.

From the court of Louis XIV (1638-1715) to the rise of haute couture in the 1860s, Paris played a dominant role as the generator of most fashion trends though as Valerie Steele points out in *Paris Fashion: A Cultural History* (1988), Italy was also an important center for fashion during the Renaissance as was England as discussed in *The London Look* (2004).

In early fashion history, trend information was spread in various ways for instance by Pandora dolls. The dolls were dressed in the latest fashion and sent by horse-drawn carriage to the most prominent courts in Europe. This laid the ground for the future position of Paris as the primary center for fashion and trends. Barbara Vinken points out, that the dolls were eventually banned by Napoleon because they were used to transport secret messages. In stead, fashion plates – introduced in the late 18th century – were used as a cheaper and more efficient way of diffusing French fashion to tailors, tradesmen, and consumers. The fashion plates, that will be further discussed in Chapter 4 on magazines, reached their height of popularity in the middle of the 19th century.

**Haute couture and the centralized fashion system**

The first fashion system coincided with the establishment of ‘haute couture’, French for “high sewing,” which became a protected name in 1945 referring to made-to-order luxury clothing. The founder of haute couture is generally considered to be Charles Frederick Worth (1825-1895) who founded his fashion house in 1858 in Paris, which was already considered a fashion center at the time. He had worked as a textile salesman in London until he traveled to Paris in 1845 in search of fame and fortune. Not even two decades later House of Worth dominated Parisian fashion by creating a structure and rhythm to fashion that is still evident today. As Steele argues, it was

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91 *Adorned in Dreams*, 3.
92 The question of the effect of sumptuary laws on practice and whether they contributed to the lack of change in the period 1363-1463 is difficult to determine and will not be dealt with further here. See Sylvia Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London*, (1300-1500).
93 *Fashion Zeitgeist*, 62.
Worth who contributed to the reorganization and transformation of the practice of
dressmaking from craft to big business that established Paris as the center of couture
fashion. “By asserting his creative authority and proposing that women choose from a
series of models, Worth achieved greater fame than other dressmakers.”94 Thereby, he
to a large extent also dominated fashion trends in the rest of Europe where the
visionary designer and his Parisian colleagues were copied.95

Gilles Lipovetsky refers to the period in fashion history from 1850 to 1950 as
“A century of fashion”96 where the main focus was on handmade couture and
industrially produced copies of couture.97 The period is characterized by a beginning
democratization understood as a development from wealthy women being the fashion
leaders towards a premise in which material luxury gradually lost ground to other
understandings of exclusivity. This process was in large promoted by the
development in production that made the copies cheaper, quicker to make, and
available to a wider group of consumers. This process of democratization that also
marked a move away from Paris as the dominant center of fashion trends took a leap
forward with World War II, which as American Vogue wrote in September 1, 1940
was ‘the first time in memory, an autumn mode is born without the direct inspiration
of Paris.’98 This process of democratization was to increase dramatically during the
rest of the 20th century.

Ready-to-wear and the polycentric fashion system
The loosening of the social norms and structures as well as the technological
development evident in the fashion of the 1950s turned into what might be described
as a revolution when the industrial fashion – generally referred to as prêt-à-porter or
ready-to-wear – seemed to take the lead in the 1960s. Ready-to-wear became an
important factor in the changed relationship between production and practice
according to which there was a greater degree of dialectic exchange between designer

94 Fifty Years of Fashion, 1-2.
95 See Valerie Steele Paris Fashion: A Cultural History.
96 The Empire of Fashion, 55.
97 The process of copying couture was also seen outside the fashion hubs. An example is
Danish couture designer, Holger Blom (1905-1965) who was copied in a local Danish
context.
98 Fifty Years of Fashion, 6.
and consumer. 99 Where haute couture designers had been almost sovereign when it came to dictating trends, the role of the designer shifted as the mass of consumers grew and became more independent. 100 The development also meant that Paris as the most dominant source of trends was challenged giving cities such as London a renewed status as fashion capital. 101

However, the postwar licensing practice of designers also contributed to paving the way for ready-to-wear. Christian Dior (1905-1957) was one of the first designers who understood how to take advantage of the rise of consumer culture that came in the wake of World War II. He made lucrative licensing deals for parts of his collections and lines of side products such as make-up, stockings, and bijouterie for especially the American market that was booming at the time. Licensing was good for business in more ways than just turnover; it was also an effective way to spread the brand Dior.

In relation to trend mechanisms, this meant that the notion of exclusivity was altered in the sense that more people had access to the haute couture brand Dior if not the actual haute couture. This was a step in the direction of reorganizing and perhaps ultimately dismantling the hierarchy of fashion where traditionally only members of the social elite were in a position to both influence and pursue an interest in fashion trends. With the initiatives of designers such as Dior, the middle class also had access to fashion, which in turn influenced the dynamic of trends, as we shall see in the Mapping.

In the 1950s, there were signs that the era of young people dressing like their parents was ending. Valerie Steele emphasizes that the 1950s was not the first time that young people had their own way of dressing, but it was perhaps the first time that young people had their own way of dressing, but it was perhaps the first time that

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99 In *Adorned in Dreams*, Elizabeth Wilson brings attention to the fact that ‘a ready made clothing trade already flourished in the late seventeenth century’ (248) but does not elaborate on the effect on the dynamic of trends and therefore more attention to this trade will not be brought here.

100 *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 141.

101 By fashion capital, I mean a center for high-end fashion catering especially to women since women’s fashion has been the most subject to trends at least since the rise of haute couture. Exemplified by Savile Row, London had been a center for the production and exchange of fashionable goods in the shape of fine tailored clothing for especially men from the late 18th century to the middle of the 20th century. The notion of London as a fashion capital comes in part out of a reaction to the polite and understated tradition coupled with the social, political, and economic changes taking place after World War 2 as argued in more depth in Christopher Breward’s *London Look: Fashion from Street to Catwalk* (2004) and *Fashion* (2003) “Fashion Capitals” pp. 169-215.
the young people were setting the trend. Steele describes the rise of the teenager as a postwar phenomenon that had contributed to a change in the socio-economic conditions. This development created the premise for the ‘Youthquake’ in the 1960s, which gave “young people around the world a self-conscious awareness of themselves as a distinct unified group that they were able to respond to political events, in the process creating their own culture.” This development boosted the process of democratization bringing the dominant social forces in fashion from the leaders of society to the young and restless.

Into the 1960s, licensing was an accepted and institutionalized practice as attested in the 1961 article “New Chanel-Fords” where it is mentioned five times that the ‘suit is copied in America by Davidow, at Lord & Taylor.’ However, some copying was difficult to control and despite the fact that Dior released mass-produced retail collections, copies of his creations were often in department stores before the couture customers got their original. This can be seen as signs of the gradual destabilization of the fashion cycle.

The tendency marked a departure from the tradition of the 1950s where especially Dior became famous for launching a new line each season from A to H and of course Dior’s famous debut collection Ligne Corolle, nicknamed “New Look” by Carmel Snow, editor-in-chief of Harper’s Bazaar. Yves Saint Laurent (1936-2008) continued the strategy when he took over as Dior’s successor after his death in 1957. It might have been perceived as needless manipulation of hemlines, but the tactic of creating hype when revealing the new silhouette each season was efficient. Novelty was institutionalized. As Terry Agins illustrates: “When Balenciaga changed the width of a seam, that was news.” The countercultural movements in for instance the US and the UK against the conservative norms of the time and the social conformity of the 1950s took off in the 1960s. This sparked a revolution ranging from public revolt to the Vietnam War to the continuation of the Civil Rights Movement in the US. The youth culture of the 1960s was characterized by a sense of personal freedom to define one’s own existence through experimentation with drugs, sex, and

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102 Fifty Years of Fashion, 50.
103 According to Valerie Steele, a catchword coined by Vogue, Fifty Years of Fashion, 50.
104 Fifty Years of Fashion, 50.
106 The End of Fashion, 24.
107 Ibid., 26.
108 Ibid., 61.
alternative lifestyles. The changes in the 1960s spurred an increase in cultural relativity seen in the arts, music, and fashion. This development was coupled with the development in production methods during that period. One of the new forces to fuse the new youth culture and the possibilities in industrial fashion was the young, British designer Mary Quant (b. 1934) who in many ways personified the culture of the 1960s.

As opposed to the couture designers who produced ready-to-wear as a sub-line, Quant made only ready-to-wear. She contributed to making standard sizes in fashionable clothing more widespread. She also worked towards dissolving the boundaries between casual and evening wear according to the philosophy that modern women did not have time to change out of their work clothes before going out at night. As opposed to the generations before them, these young women wanted their own wardrobe rather than a copy of their mother’s. Consequently, the flourishing youth culture and street style became a great source of inspiration for new trends.

These ambitions of Quant and other designers at the time such as André Courrèges (b. 1923) might be described as democratic in the attempt to make fashionable clothes available to women regardless of economic status. This vision was reflected in the price as well as design, and functionality of the clothes. As Quant puts it in her autobiography: “There was a time when clothes were a sure sign of a woman’s social position and income group. But now, snobbery has gone out of fashion, and in our shops you will find duchesses jostling with typists to buy the same dress.”109 Whether or not a designer’s autobiography can be considered a qualified source, it is nevertheless a historical document, and her approach to fashion does testify to the challenges that faced the centralized fashion system at the time both in terms of Paris as the uncontested fashion center and the designers as the creative forces determining trends.

It might be argued that the rise of ready-to-wear marked a shift in trends from hemlines to attitude. What might have been perceived of as the divine inspiration from the designer was no longer enough, and to take his place was street style. Even the designers acknowledged this development. As Yves Saint Laurent told fashion industry trade journal Women’s Wear Daily in 1968: “Real fashion today comes from

109 Quant by Quant, 75.
the young people manning the streets.”\textsuperscript{110} Yves Saint Laurent demonstrated this by being the first couturier to bring street fashion into haute couture by introducing leather jackets and turtleneck sweaters in his 1960 winter collection. This seemed to confirm Quant’s bold statement a few years later: “What ready-to-wear does today, the couturiers – even the Paris couturiers – confirm tomorrow.”\textsuperscript{111}

Ted Polhemus describes this shift as “creative democracy”\textsuperscript{112} and argues that trends no longer originate from within the creative sphere of the designer and then trickle down to the street. Rather the opposite movement is at play according to which trends start on street level only to be soaked up by the designers and reproduced in a more designed version\textsuperscript{113} as was the case when Yves Saint Laurent brought the Beatnik-trend from the Parisian streets to the runway in the 1960s.

Fast fashion and the decentralized fashion system
The third fashion system took off in the 1990s with mass fashion or ‘fast fashion’\textsuperscript{114} which is characterized by more rapid and cheaper production than ready-to-wear. By sourcing the production to low cost areas such as the Far East, low-priced, multi-national retail chains such as H&M, Zara, Mango, Topshop, and Danish Vero Moda and ONLY have been able to produce copies of trends from both haute couture, ready-to-wear and the streets at a pace and a price that have altered the conditions for the dynamic of trends. Fred Davis predicted this development already in 1992 before fast fashion revealed its true potential, when he explained how the development in production methods, rise in the standard of living, social changes in society, and more rapid exchange of information with the revolution in digital media would speed up the pace of trends:

“Intensive capitalization and rationalization of the apparel industry, consumer affluence along with democratization and a loosening of class boundaries, and the

\textsuperscript{110} \textit{WWD}, July 3, 1968.
\textsuperscript{111} \textit{Quant by Quant}, 116.
\textsuperscript{112} \textit{Streetstyle}, 12.
\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Streetstyle}, 10. He gives as one example the ‘Bronx’ leather jacket which was reinterpreted by Katherine Hamnett in her Winter 1990 collection, John Richmond in his s/s 1993 collection, and Gianni Versace in his s/s 1994 collection, \textit{Streetstyle}, 11.
\textsuperscript{114} The term is used in for instance “China and Italy: Fast Fashion versus Prêt à Porter, Towards a New Culture of Fashion,” 2005.
greatly quickened flow of information via the electronic media are cited typically as factors accounting for the progressively shortened span of the fashion cycle.\textsuperscript{115}

Over the past two decades, the globalization of the chains of distribution and production have only been made more efficient in the fashion industry. In addition, the new means of digital communication have opened up for new possibilities in terms of being able to take orders and make corrections far away from where the design is being produced.

The notion of the designer as the autonomous, creative vehicle for trends has been challenged and the consequence has been an increase in the decentralization that began with ready-to-wear. Although the seasonal cycle established by Worth is still evident in most of the prominent fashion houses still showing two annual collections – spring/summer (s/s) and fall/winter (f/w) in ready-to-wear and/or haute couture at fashion weeks – a radical shift has taken place over that past century and a half. Though Paris, London, Milan, and New York are still important fashion venues in their own way, there are fashion weeks all over the world from Shanghai and Reykjavik to Ulaanbaatar and Copenhagen.\textsuperscript{116} Both in terms of production, distribution, and consumption, fast fashion has prompted a more decentralized fashion system that might be understood as more democratic in terms of fashion accessibility and consumer influence.

Cycle changes
The traditional seasons as described in the centralized and polycentric systems were built on the notion of new trends being presented at the beginning of each season. The new trend was implicitly designed to last until the next season when a new cycle began and rendered the previous trend ‘out of fashion.’ However, with the decentralized fashion system, the cadence is a flow rather than a cyclical movement. Zara offers ten thousand new products a year; Top Shop generates up to three hundred new designs a week; and H&M can turn something out in two to three weeks if something hits fast.\textsuperscript{117} This indicates that at least certain parts of the fashion system

\textsuperscript{115} Fashion, Culture, and Identity, 107.
\textsuperscript{116} For an investigation of the role and development of fashion cities see Fashion’s World Cities (2006).
\textsuperscript{117} Deluxe, 317.
seem to be witnessing Davis’ prediction that cycles would end up expiring altogether.\textsuperscript{118} Anna Wintour, editor-in-chief of American \textit{Vogue} uses the term ‘a seasonless cycle’ from the point of view that the notion of shelf life integral to the notion of cycles has dropped to a few weeks rather than the traditional six months between the seasons.\textsuperscript{119} And Erin Magner operated with the term the ’24-hour fashion news cycle.’\textsuperscript{120} The reorganization, if not exactly a dissolution of the cycles is also seen within the centralized and polycentric systems with the introduction of new lines outside the two seasons in the shape of Pre-Fall, Pre-Spring, Cruise, Resort, and Holiday.

These new seasons might be seen as a response by the fashion industry to these more fluid conditions. These additions to the haute couture and ready-to-wear-collections can be perceived of as a challenge from the inside to the structure of the established fashion system. The concept of \textit{guerilla or pop-up stores} is another example of how fashion houses develop new concepts to market themselves outside the traditional fashion system. Japanese fashion house Comme des Garçons has had several guerilla stores that stay in the same place for only a short time, as seen in Warsaw in 2003. In these guerilla stores, the current collection is mixed with items from previous seasons. In this sense, Comme des Garçons is challenging the whole understanding of fashion seasons where the new season renders the previous obsolete. Fashion writer Rebecca Voight explains this as “the radical notion that great fashion is not necessarily past its sell date at the end of the season.”\textsuperscript{121} Guerilla stores are also seen outside fashion. A 2006 example is Nike that opened a guerilla store in SoHo, New York for just four days for the sole purpose of selling 250 pairs of special edition \textit{Zoom LeBron IV NYC} basketball shoes. Another example from the same year is Gap where a school bus was used as a traveling pop-up store that made appearances in Los Angeles and New York stocked with beachwear.

Considering the increased frequency with which new clothes arrive at stores and the speed of changing styles among consumers in the current decentralized system, there are signs that trends change too fast even for fast fashion. One example

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{118} \textit{Fashion, Culture, and Identity}, 107.
\item \textsuperscript{119} \textit{Deluxe}, 316. Not all fashion has followed the seasonal structure directly. In the 1970s, Danish manufacturers produces what they called ‘nu-kollektioner’ which translates into ‘now collections’ which were smaller collections that copied current trends between seasons.
\item \textsuperscript{120} “The Death of Trends: Part II” August 11, 2008.
\item \textsuperscript{121} “Striving to get beyond exclusive” \textit{IHIT}, October 6, 2004.
\end{itemize}
of how fast fashion seems to be trying to slow itself down was seen when H&M introduced the store concept COS – The Collection of Style – that caters to a more quality oriented consumer group. Another example is the fast fashion phenomenon ‘capsule collections’ – also referred to as ‘luxury fast fashion’ or ‘mass-clusivity’ – which refers to the one-off collection available for a brief period and designed by a high-end designer for a fast fashion corporation. One of the early examples was seen in 2004, when H&M released a collection designed by Karl Lagerfeld at only a little above fast fashion prices, an event Suzy Menkes described as “marking a seismic cultural shift.” Since then H&M has released similar collaborations with designers such as Stella McCartney, Viktor & Rolf, Roberto Cavalli, Comme des Garçons, Matthew Williamson, Sofia Rykiel, and shoe brand Jimmie Choo; Target has released capsule collections by Behnaz Sarafpour, Luella Bartley, and Proenza Schouler; and Gap has collaborated with Alexander Wang.

The capsule collections can be seen as an attempt to slow the pace down in order to introduce if only for a brief period, the sense of anticipation and excitement previously seen when there were time lags incorporated between each introduction of new collections. However, capsule collections might also be seen as a devaluation of the designer and another crucial step towards the democratization of fashion. This seems to be reinforced with the rise of the celebrity designer. H&M has used pop icons Madonna and Kylie Minogue as designers, Top Shop uses Kate Moss, and a series of celebrities, from Justin Timberlake and Sarah Jessica Parker to Jennifer Lopez and Victoria Beckham have released collections in their own name suggesting that brand wins over skills in the contemporary definition of a designer. This reduction of the designer as an authority is also seen in the tendency towards user driven innovation such as customization as seen with Nike iD where the consumer gets to ‘create their own’ sneakers online through a series of choice of color and decoration.

However, the role of the consumer as designer has moved beyond the

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122 Deluxe, 317.
123 Deluxe, 318. The term is rooted in the fact that these limited editions combine mass distribution with exclusivity in a new way. The products were exclusive because getting access to the products was through being there physically on a specific day.
124 “Is fast fashion going out of fashion?” IHT, September 21, 2008. Menkes compares the event to when couture houses started to produce ready-to-wear in the 1960s, and when designer such as Georgio Armani launched his more affordable sub-label Emporio Armani in 1984 and inspired others to do the same.
customization of existing products. Web-based T-shirt company www.threadless.com is entirely user-driven in that the users submit their T-shirt designs that are left online for seven days to be scored by other users. The ones with the best scores, which often run into the thousands, are put in production. The users also post pictures of themselves in the T-shirts replacing models and thereby adding yet another democratic layer to the decentralized structure www.threadless.com represents as a sort of materialization of the Youtube-generation.

While ready-to-wear introduced a stronger dialectic between fashion production and practice, fast fashion shows a tendency to capitalize on street styles and subcultural styles often diluting any sources of origin in the process. To illustrate this, I will return to the example of ‘sagging pants’ that refers to the trend of wearing oversized pants so low that the underpants are revealed. Sagging pants are understood to originate from American prisons where convicts were not allowed to wear belts for fear that they would hang themselves. This look has come to be associated with American hip-hop culture where sagging pants are “worn as a badge of delinquency, with its distinctive walk conveying thuggish swagger and a disrespect for authority.” The look spread from the American ghettos and around the world only to end up in Danish kindergartens among other places through for instance the style of sagging pants with the top of the underpants sewn on being available for children from the age of two and up at for instance H&M and Danish supermarket Føtex. Evidently, the original reference is watered down considerably. The example is symptomatic of how subcultures, in this case the myth of the touch gang member from the streets of urban America, are emptied of the original meaning.

A final example illustrating the paradoxes and possibilities within the decentralized fashion system is Levi’s Capital E jeans that proposes a curious fusion of the industrial and the handmade, and thereby a flexibility of categories that challenges the more hierarchical and cyclical structure of the centralized and polycentric system.

Trend forecasting

While the description of the three fashion systems followed a historical progression, it is also important to bring forth the rise of *trend forecasting*[^126] as a phenomenon that runs across the systems. This industry is important to the dissertation because it says something about the role information about fashion trends plays in the trend mechanisms within the fashion systems. The product of this industry is trend information concerning the predictions of the colors, silhouettes, materials, cuts, and moods of future trends in fashion.

It might be argued that the Pandora dolls were examples of early forecasting but the trend forecasting industry came out of the development in industrialization after World War II. A wider interest in fashion and the changes in consumer culture as well as the rise of the teenager as an distinct target group created more competition and thereby also a need for guidance among especially designers, buyers, producers, and media, looking for fashion directions in which to aim.

The Swedish ethnologist, Ingrid Giertz-Mårtenson is one of the only sources I have found that outlines the historic development of this industry. In her Master’s thesis *Att se in i Framtiden: En undersökning av trendanalys inom modebranschen* (2006), she charts the origins of the industry to companies such as ICI Paints and DuPont as early as the 1930s in the shape of color prognosis for the fashion industry. At the same time color- and form prognosis were also undertaken by federations such as British Colour Council, Comité International de Mode in Paris and Comitato Moda in Milan as well as Swedish Internationella Ullsekretariatet and Bomullsinstitutet[^127]. Giertz-Mårtenson mentions Mafia established in 1960, Promostyl in 1966, and Peclers Paris in 1970 as the first actual trend agencies all established in Paris. One of the most prominent forecasters today is Li Edelkoort, founder of Trend Union. The phenomenon also reached Denmark with for instance pej gruppen established in 1975 by Poul Erik Jakobsen. Since then a number of Danish agencies have started such as Style Counsel in 1997.

Generally speaking, there are two different kinds of forecasting. First, forecasting for production driven companies that need recipes that are easily

[^126]: The term *fashion forecasting* is also common but to avoid additional confusion in terminology, the term *trend forecasting* will be employed. In Danish the term is ‘trendforskning’ which translates to ‘trend research’ i.e. the attempt of this thesis. That the forecasting industry understands itself to be performing research on a par with that of academic institutions seems indicative of the lack of systematic analysis and theoretical development in the field and hence supports my endeavor.

[^127]: *Att se in i Framtiden*, 17.
transformed into clothes through for instance Pantone numbers as seen with the forecasts by for instance Peclers Paris. Second, forecasting for more design driven companies that need material that can inspire through a mood or narrative as seen with the forecasts by for instance Trend Union.

In time, variations within trend forecasting have occurred such as when larger brands use designers to make trend presentations. In addition, larger fashion companies have their own trend department while smaller companies outsource the considerable task of staying in tune with trends to trend agencies. Trend agencies employ various methods to track and organize trends. Generally speaking, though, following fashion shows, traveling to fashion cities, and keeping up with street fashion, art, and cultural events constitute the bulk of the tools used in trend forecasting.

Information concerning the prediction of future trends is communicated to each individual company or presented at trend seminars for a larger group of clients. In addition to an audio-visual presentation, there is often a ‘trend book’ that normally comes out twice a year, a year or two before the season in question. In a typical trend book, the trend consultants have condensed their input to four-six themes that the clients can use as guidelines. These predictions are evidently not hard science, but to a certain degree based on the tools mentioned and the consultants’ intuition coupled with the needs, profile, and target group of the specific client. In other words, trend forecasting is a service that is offered to fashion companies and media that need a simplified insight into trends as the trend patterns become increasingly complicated. Though designers rarely follow the forecasting strictly to the point but more as inspiration, the service is also used to check designers own ideas as well as ensure the same level of information as competitors.¹²⁸

While trend forecasting primarily grew out of the field of fashion, it has since moved into other fields. Most forecasting agencies put out 10-20 books a season on anything from cooking and gardening to interior design and even wellness. This development seems to indicate the greater focus on trends, and in turn supports the effort of this dissertation to establish the field of trend studies on firmer ground.

¹²⁸ Source: Interview on July 12, 2007 with independent trend consultant, Lene Hald former forecaster with Peclers Paris (French), Sign of the Times (Dutch), and pej gruppen (Danish). Other sources: Participation in trend seminars Li Edelkoort/Trend Union October 12, 2005, Nelly Rodi, February 8, 2006 and Peclers Paris February 7, 2007 all at Bella Center, Copenhagen.
Web-based trend agencies such as www.trendwatching.com and www.wgsn.com have become increasingly prominent in the first decade of the 21st century because digital media can react far quicker to the changes in fashion than the traditional forecasters who operate according to the traditional seasonal cycle of fashion. Web-based trend agencies enable consumers and fashion houses to receive insight about real-time trends, i.e. information about trends while they are happening as opposed to years in advance. This makes it difficult for the traditional agencies with their seasonal trend books to compete with for instance www.wgsn.com with their reputed 500,000 web pages, and two million images on their site, which are constantly updated by ‘coolhunters’ – professional trendspotters – who deliver trend reports from all over the world directly to the users. In that sense, the web-based trend agencies are far more contemporary in speed and accessibility compared to the trend seminars and trend books.

Recently, forecasting has also taken place within more informal networks of the second generation of the Internet, also termed Web 2.0. In the Noughties, communities, blogging, podcasting, and other forms of many-to-many communication have created completely new possibilities for developing and spreading trends in fashion. Especially blogs have become a factor in trends. While still a new phenomenon, blogs mark a democratization in fashion communication with their nano-publishing threatening to turn the traditional fashion magazine into a dinosaur. The effect of fashion bloggers as fashion leaders has been evident in the prestigious front row seats of fashion shows, which have been conquered by such blogger as Style Rookie (http://tavi-thewnigirlintown.blogspot.com), the 13-year old fashion blogger sensation, Tavi Gevinson.130

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129 The range of fashion bloggers is wide: From the independent such as Diane Pernet www.ashadedviewonfashion.com and Style Bubble http://stylebubble.typepad.com to the more centralized such as Style File with staff and guest contributors and The Sartorialist both for www.style.com, Sofis Mode at Swedish Aftonbladet (www.aftonbladet.se/sofismode), and Cover magazine with a host of five different bloggers: Anywho, In the mood, That’s Life, Champagnegaloppen, and Créol Brothers, www.cover.dk.
130 See Maysa Rawi. “Move over Geldof girls: Meet Tavi, 13, the ‘tiny’ blogger with the fashion industry at her feet,” The Daily Mail, September 2009. Accessed on December 8, 2009 at www.dailymail.co.uk
What the democratization and decentralization of the fashion systems have ultimately meant for the consumer is a greater availability of fashionable clothes at a lower cost and often a more functional design. Though the fashion system has an ability to absorb anything that might threaten its power such as the example of Tavi shows, the frequency with which trends change as a result of the democratization and decentralization described in this chapter, still poses challenges to the basic structure of the fashion systems.

Because if the process continues towards complete democratization, what will that mean for trend mechanisms? The notion of difference is implied in the process of change in fashion – between fashion leader and follower, designer and consumer, new and old, in or out. What the trend mechanisms are and how they might be organized is the concern of the next chapter.
CHAPTER 3: MAPPING OF TREND THEORY – The Organization of Two Centuries of Trend Theory in Five Positions

In this chapter, a mapping\textsuperscript{131} will be performed that is intended to organize almost two centuries of theories concerning trend mechanisms. Most theorists covered in the Mapping are aware that the emergence and diffusion of a trend is the result of various mechanisms that are informed by many actors and factors. As Fred Davis argues, trends cannot be explained in terms of ‘any single psychological motive, human propensity, or societal exigency.’ Rather, the process of fashion change “is sustained through some complex amalgamation of inspiration, imitation, and institutionalization.”\textsuperscript{132} The Mapping is an attempt to unfold and organize this amalgamation that includes even more factors than the ones suggested by Davis. The categories were not defined prior to the mapping. Instead, I attempted to let the material ‘speak’ and organized the various theories and approaches accordingly. The result is five key trend mechanisms – referred to as Positions\textsuperscript{133} – which are gathered in what is intended to be a theoretical Toolbox offering a comprehensive set of tools for understanding how and why trends change and how contemporary consumer behavior can be decoded. The five Positions are: Social Mechanism, Neomania, Market, Seduction, and Zeitgeist.

As discussed in the Introduction, the method for the Mapping is inspired by Sandra Harding’s notion of ‘strong objectivity’ as unfolded in Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? (1991). In order to establish Positions with a sound analytical potential, the aim of the Mapping is to achieve an organization of trend theory that is historically, sociologically, and culturally situated, while offering perspectives that are as universal as possible.

A multidisciplinary approach, and the emphasis on interpretation of a variety of academic text offers a conceptual framework for the Mapping in which texts are

\textsuperscript{131} I refer to my treatment of the theoretical material on trend mechanisms as a mapping rather than for instance a literature review, which seems to connote a general orientation of the literature of a particular field whereas a mapping attempts to be comprehensive in order to make the material operational for instance in an analysis. In the dissertation, I will refer to this chapter as the Mapping.

\textsuperscript{132} Fashion, Culture and Identity, 124. There are many such listings of factors necessary in trend mechanisms. Another example is Grant McCracken who states that a new fashion trend is dependent on “leader adoption, historical continuity, marketing strategy, mass availability, social appropriateness, and the pressures of social conformity,” Culture and Consumption, 43.

\textsuperscript{133} ‘Position’ refers to the perspective, site or approach from which the trend mechanisms are understood.
included from a wide range of fields – from material culture, sociology, psychology, forecasting, cultural history, and economy to anthropology, philosophy, forecasting, and marketing.

Though it would have been interesting to include material from a broader spectrum – from the evolutionary approach of Richard Dawkins in *The Selfish Gene* (1976) to the complex adaptive systems rooted in physics and biology of Stuart Kauffmann in *At Home in the Universe: The Search for the Laws of Self-Organization and Complexity* (1995) – I have opted to maintain the focus on trend mechanisms in fashion in order to economize with the limited space of the dissertation. Therefore by far most of the textual material in the Mapping is concerned specifically with trends in fashion.¹³⁴

**Question of commensurability**

While the Positions will be compared to a certain extent both in the Mapping but particularly in the Analysis, this is not a comparative analysis of the Positions. Any comparison is used as a way of bringing out potentials and problems of the Position in terms of determining the analytical potential of the Position. While Positions at times overlap and all deal with the same matter, each one constitutes its own unit of measurement and they are hence non-commensurable. That is to say, that comparing two Positions would be like comparing liters and kilometers. One cannot be used to measure the other.

As mentioned in the Introduction, the five Positions might be seen as constituting a prism where trend as a phenomenon is broken into its constituents. Each Position is an integrated component of the whole. Therefore what might seem as incommensurability, for instance in terms of autonomy versus context, is in fact an expression of the complexity of trends and hence a potential rather than a limitation.

**Overlapping and other possible Positions**

There are, of course, many other ways I could have organized the Positions. For instance, I could have included a psychology/psychoanalytical approach. However,

¹³⁴ Though there are some examples where the focus is more generally on trends but might still include fashion such as Everett Rogers’ *Diffusion of Innovations* (1962), Stanley Lieberson’s *A Matter of Taste* (2000), and Malcolm Gladwell’s *The Tipping Point* (2000).
the psychological aspect runs through several of the Positions most clearly in the Seduction Position. I might have added a Position that looked at the role of intuition and embodied knowledge in trends as unfolded in “The Field of Fashion Materialized: A Study of London Fashion Week” (2006) by Joanne Entwistle and Agnès Rocamora. Yet, this aspect is inherent to the Market Position and is briefly discussed in Chapter 6 in relation to the question of inner logic. Another possibility was a Position on communication. However, I find this perspective is already covered by other sections in the dissertation such as the Position on Social Mechanism and Zeitgeist as well as Chapter 4 on magazines.

I could also have included more obscure approaches such the theory developed by psychologist Ernest Dichter (1907-1991) that fashion changes are a remedy against death in the sense that every time we put on a new dress and shed an old, we feel renewed: “Fashion is one of the oldest fountains of youth.”

Another aspect I considered was for some of the Positions to be grouped together such as Zeitgeist and Neomania if postmodernity was to be considered a sign of the times. However, not all Zeitgeist is postmodern and as we shall see Neomania and Zeitgeist each offer different analytical potentials and raise different issues.

To sum up, the purpose of the Mapping is to develop as Toolbox of five Positions that constitute the theoretical tools for the Analysis in Chapter 5 and 6. The Analysis sets out to consolidate the field of trend studies by qualifying, updating, and challenging the validity of the Toolbox through a case study of the Retro Trend in the period 2000-2009. While the Analysis will unfold the analytical potentials of the Positions, the limitations and problems will also be unfolded. These issues will motivate the development of a sixth Position, the Rhizomatic Position, which is inspired by the botanical and philosophical concept of the rhizome.

The Mapping divides the theory into five main Positions:

1. Social Mechanism: Process of social distinction and imitation
2. Neomania: Expression of the postmodern condition
3. Market: Market forces
4. Seduction: Sexual allure
5. Zeitgeist: Reflection of current spirit of the times

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Position 1: Social Mechanism

As the saying goes: ‘The clothes make the man.’ While this may apply more to women than men, the role of fashion and social identity is fundamental to understanding trend mechanisms. Fashion is a deeply social phenomenon. We use clothes to communicate who we are, or rather who we aspire to be. Clothes are like a second skin and one that we pick ourselves. It is what we meet the world with and in turn what protects us from the world. As argued by Curator in Charge of the Costume Institute at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, Harold Koda, clothing has been a bearer of identity as far back as ancient Greece, for instance in relation to age, class, gender, profession and ethnicity.136 As opposed to architecture and gardening, fields also subject to trend mechanisms, fashion is literally something close to our hearts. Not surprisingly then, social theories on how and why trends in fashion change constitute a long and substantial tradition in trend theory.

In the Social Mechanism Position, trend mechanisms are fuelled by status ambivalence understood as a person’s desire to reach a different social status. This process is rooted in individuals with high status making social agreements about what creates visual expressions in clothes that demonstrate social status at a given time and place. This agreement is then copied by those with aspirations of attaining this particular version of social status. As the emulation reaches a certain point, the agreement has to be renegotiated and the process starts over.

The various academic approaches and changing historical contexts have created diversity and even contraction within the Social Mechanism Position. However, keeping the method of strong objectivity in mind, the focus is on determining how it is possible to say something universal about the role of social identity in trend mechanisms, while maintaining that the theories are historically situated.

Historian Sylvia Thrupp (1903-1997) describes clothing before the Middle Ages as a key tool in the strategy for demonstrating social standing: "Dress was perhaps more purely a symbol of status than any other item in medieval standard of living.”137 Where the changes in clothing might historically be seen as an expression of a development in social customs, Lipovetsky argues that fashion — as opposed to

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136 *Goddess*, 16.
clothing has been subjected to the process of distinction and imitation at least since the end of Middle Ages. He argues that this shift from custom to fashion is linked to a shift in the construction of values in society. As he phrases it, the shift happened at the time when “The renewal of forms became a social value.”

As the fashion system developed, an inherent paradox of the Social Mechanism became still more evident. While the fashion system moved towards an increased democratization in terms of availability and design, the Social Mechanism is dependent on social differentiation in order to function. In that sense, the democratization has potentially posed a threat to the Social Mechanism. The response has been a radical change in the premium that causes social distinction. An example provided by Valerie Steele is the shift from social status as the premium the 1950s to youth in the 1960s. The focus of the Analysis will be on what is the premium in first decade of the 21st century. But as suggested in Chapter 2 the new source of exclusivity implicit in the Social Mechanism tends to involve the demonstration of the surplus of time or creative potential as sources of exclusivity.

When the Danish designer Henrik Vibskov is mistaken for a homeless person and tells the story with an obvious amount of pride on primetime Danish television, it can be seen as an example of this deliberately ambiguous social strategy, which seems to be motivated by the resistance most people will feel towards the trend. As managing editor of Eurowoman, Maise Njor put it in January 2001: “In times when it is untrendy to be trendy, and where you are ugly if you are pretty.” The result might be described as the Logic of Wrong. This strategy is intended to stall emulation by scrambling the codes so that they are either difficult to understand or intentionally easy to misunderstand. This has contributed to the sense of fragmentation and chaos that has cause the rumors of the death of trends as discussed in the Introduction.

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138 As argued in Chapter 1, clothes is an inclusive term referring to various coverings and articles of dress, while fashion is a particular kind of clothing defined by changes.
139 The Empire of Fashion, 15.
140 Fifty Years of Fashion, 42.
141 Another example of this was seen in a Danish television program, Fashion (2007), in which the Danish designer Henrik Vibskov recounts an anecdote where he is mistaken for a homeless while throwing out his trash by his home in Copenhagen; an episode that did not seem to bother him, on the contrary. The example is interesting in terms of social distinction because it seems to indicate a trickle-across effect where the mechanism is base on what is wrong in the sense of ugly or repulsive rather than right or pretty.
142 Kort nyt ”Tarok, tak” EW34, 29. ”I en tid, hvor det er utrendy at være trendy, hvor man er grim, hvis man er pæn.”
This development might be seen as a shift from the celebration of classical female beauty as described by Christian Dior on his famed ‘New Look’: “Girls could safely feel that they had all the trappings of a fairy-tale princess to wear”\footnote{143} towards a notion of the wrong being the new right. Examples of this approach are *Homeless Chic* as seen with the Vibskov-example and *Geek Chic*\footnote{144}.

Three trickle theories

In mapping the Position, I will move chronologically through the material in order to follow the historical development in society and industry which affected the Social Mechanism in trends and hence also the theories.

One of the earliest references I have found to explaining trend mechanisms as a social process is William Hazlitt who in September 1818 tried to make sense of fashion change in *The Edinburgh Magazine*. In an essay entitled “On Fashion,” he describes fashion trends as “an odd jumble of contradictions, of sympathies and antipathies. It exists only by its being participated among a certain number of persons, and its essence is destroyed by being communicated to a greater number.”\footnote{145} The description is still valid in bringing attention to the social nature of the adoption process of trends as well as the paradox of trends holding the seed of their own destruction. He describes the process as a ‘race of appearances’\footnote{146} concerned with the endless tension between ‘sympathies and antipathies.’ This translates into the opposition between ‘in’ and ‘out’ that is a basic organizing principle of fashion trends, even in contemporary trends that operate under more decentralized and democratized conditions than the ones Hazlitt is describing.

\footnote{143} *Dior by Dior*, 34.

\footnote{144} This tendency of wrong being the new right is seen in for instance ‘Geek Chic’ as documented in the article "Geek Chic" by Hadley Freeman, *The Guardian*, 27 June, 2008. Accessed on November 8, 2009 at www.guardian.co.uk; and ‘Homeless Chic’ as documented in "Aware of the Homeless? Well, You Could Say That” by Guy Trebay, The *New York Times*, September 12, 2009. Accessed on November 8, 2009 at www.nytimes.com. A striking example of Homeless Chic is seen on www.lookbook.nu that describes itself as “The internet’s largest source of fashion inspiration from real people around the world.” The site features the members of the community and their looks, which are organized according how much hype they get. The site also refers to where each item in the look was purchased linking it to the framework of a fashion magazine. Daniel Jay who scores Hype 63 with his “basement party”-look describes himself on his profile as “23-year-old homeless guy from Detroit.” While the norm of the site is to have quirky descriptions of oneself, the choice of homeless is still striking. Posted and accessed on November 4, 2009 at www.lookbook.nu.


\footnote{146} Ibid., 380.
Since the purpose of the Mapping is to highlight the material with analytical potential for understanding trend mechanisms in contemporary fashion, the focus is on the theory I have found to hold most potential. The focus will be on the general mechanism of distinction and imitation driven by status anxiety – ‘chase and flight’ – according to which social aspirations motivate the chase or emulation of higher classes, who in turn take flight into a different style only for the process to start over. I will go into detail with the trickle-theories: trickle-down, trickle-across, and trickle-up, which mark a specific direction of this chase and flight mechanism.

1. Trickle-down or class competition
The trickle-down – or top-down – theory is concerned with the process of emulation that starts at the top of a social hierarchy and is fuelled by social aspirations proceeds to filter down through the social layers. The notion of trickle-down is rooted in the late 19th century and early 20th century and is therefore situated in stricter hierarchies in terms of social morals, society, gender, and fashion system than in the Noughties. However, in spite of the shift in the conception of hierarchies, the dynamics of distinction and imitation remain fundamental to trend mechanisms in contemporary fashion.

While a theoretical work such as Statement of Some New Principles on the Subject of Political Economy (1834) by Scottish economist John Ray (1796-1872) also looks at the potential in fashion to create social distinction, it is with Georg Simmel and his essay “Fashion” (1904) that trend mechanisms as a social process is really established. Not only are there theorists working on these ideas before Simmel. Contemporaries such as Norwegian-American economist and sociologist Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929) also explores similar ideas in The Theory of the Leisure Class (1899).

Veblens considers elegant dress to be a sign of wealth and leisure time, and he bases his notions of ‘conspicuous consumption’ and ‘pecuniary emulation’ on this assumption. The terms describe how the wearer demonstrates his or her privilege of being able to consume without producing. Considering the balance between situated knowledge and universal relevance, Veblen’s text still seems rooted in an actual class

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148 As mentioned in Chapter 1, Simmel’s essay “Fashion” is understood as dealing with trends despite the title.
competition when reading it more than a century later. Simmel’s essay is also situated in a class context, however, it allows for the theory to be viewed according to a class competition that is more *symbolic*. I therefore find Simmel’s theory to hold a more universal relevance for this dissertation and Veblen will play a lesser role as will other prominent theorist in the field.  

Supporting this choice is that “Fashion” is pivotal for much of the later theory on the trickle-movements. Therefore, focusing on Simmel should allow for a more concentrated approach with operational results for the Analysis.

The essence of Simmel’s approach to fashion trends is that they are ‘merely a product of social demands.’ He looks at fashion as a transformative structure that is motored by the upper classes:

> “the fashions of the upper stratum of society are never identical with those of the lower; in fact, they are abandoned by the former as soon as the latter prepares to appropriate them. Thus fashion represents nothing more than one of the many forms of life by the aid of which we seek to combine in uniform spheres of activity the tendency towards social equalization with the desire for individual differentiation and change.”

Simmel argued that this tension between *social equalization* and *individual differentiation* creates a vertical dynamic from a social elite at the top through the middle classes to the masses at the bottom of the hierarchy. Simmel understands this ‘trickle-down’ movement as generated through the double movement of distinction and imitation. Simmel is less concerned with what changes in fashion than the way in which it changes. This means, that the mechanism is the same regardless of the particular trend. This forms a contrast to for instance the Zeitgeist Position according to which each trend means something different.

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149 This also means that theorists such as American sociologist Bernard Barber (1918-2006) or French philosopher and sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) will not be dealt with here. In a different project it would be interesting to explore how Bourdieu’s theories on the connection between social stratification and the internalization of taste dispositions. Because of the volume and complexity of Bourdieu’s work on the topic, the dissertation does not allow room for a further treatment of it.


151 Ibid., 296.
In the early 20th century, several theorists reacted to Simmel’s theories. One was the American anthropologist and linguist Edward Sapir (1884-1939). In “Fashion” (1931), he brings out the symbolic quality in the process of ‘chase and flight’ as a way of escaping the confines of classes psychologically, if not economically. In ”The Economics of Fashion Demand” written 30 years later, Dwight Robinson highlights how the social process of distinction and imitation does not concern all social groups but only contiguous groups. This points to the weakness of Simmel’s theory as too general, a critique later taken up by McCracken. In the Analysis, this question of the general versus the specific is accentuated when the Social Mechanism operates under the conditions of contemporary trend mechanisms. It is interesting, though, that this is highlighted in 1961 as the democratization of fashion takes a leap forward.

In “From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection” (1969) American sociologist Herbert Blumer (1900-1987) criticizes Simmel for placing too much emphasis on prestige and social status in his analysis of trend mechanisms. He proposes the idea of ‘collective selection’ based on observation of buyers at the women’s fashion week in Paris. He concludes that fashion buyers develop a common or collective taste, because they are so intensely involved in the process, resulting in their preferences coinciding and thereby stimulating a particular trend.\(^{152}\) Since his work is concerned specifically with the buyers within the fashion system I have found it too specific to unfold any further.

**Trickle-across or simultaneous adoption**

One of the most direct attacks on Simmel’s trickle-down understanding of the chase and flight mechanism came from scholar of industrial management Charles W. King\(^{153}\) with “Fashion Adoption: A Rebuttal to the ‘Trickle-Down Theory’” in 1963. His theory has become known as *simultaneous adoption theory, trickle-across theory* and *Mass Market Theory*\(^{154}\) and is perhaps less prominent than the other two trickle-movements but promises analytical potential as we will see in the Analysis.

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\(^{152}\) Joanne Entwistle develops the concept of collective selection in *The Aesthetic Economy of Fashion* which is based on ethnographic observation of the women's wear fashion buyers at Selfridges. It book was published in December 2009 which was too late for me to include the material any more than I do here.

\(^{153}\) I have been unable to find biographical information about King.

\(^{154}\) *Fashion Forecasting*, 400.
Similarly to Simmel, King argues that trends change according to a social process; what he refers to as “a process of social contagion by which a new style or product is adopted by the consumer after commercial introduction by the designer or manufacturer.”

The theory is a critique of the trickle-down theory or what King calls “vertical flow hypothesis.” He argues that the trickle-down theory has not followed 60 years of development: “the modern social environment, mass communication, and the fashion industry’s manufacturing and merchandizing strategies, however, almost impede any systematic vertical flow process.” While this is not entirely true as will become clear in the Analysis, King does provide the Toolbox with an approach that proves to have potential.

Interestingly, as early as 1963 social patterns, communication, and fashion production are noted for making simultaneous adoption of new styles possible at all levels of society. King is foresighted when he argues, “The time lag for vertical flow of fashion adoption at the consumer level is almost non-existent. From creation to mass market introduction, there may be virtually no opportunity for vertical flow.”

King outlines the coming of the seasonless cycles and implicitly the doom of trends well before the free flow of trend information of the Internet, the rise of everyman as fashion leader and expert – exemplified by the blogger – and the revolution in style, price, and availability of fast fashion that has meant a giant leap towards democratization of fashion and trends. In other words, King’s suggestion that simultaneous adoption was obstructing ‘the vertical flow’ has only grown more urgent during the half a century since King wrote his article.

What will be interesting in the Analysis, is that both trickle-across and trickle-down have analytical potential that offer various perspectives within the Social Mechanism Position.

Considering the historical location of Simmel’s text, King’s critique is not unexpected. It is important to note that King sees this social contagion as inextricably linked to the adoption process of a commercial process whereas Simmel was concerned with the Social Mechanism at a more abstract level, which puts trickle-

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156 Ibid., 110.
157 Ibid., 111.
158 Ibid., 112.
across at a disadvantage in the Analysis. King’s theory is based on an “exploratory consumer survey of the key figures in fashion adoption.” In looking at a season of women’s hats in Boston in the fall of 1962, he distinguishes between early buyers and late buyers among adult women. The aim of the survey is to determine whether the early buyers are the elite esotery as in the trickle-down theory or fashion leaders, what he calls influentials.

Curiously, King chose to study a traditional target group and product, rather than the teenager and a newer product such as jeans that were symptomatic of the change in trend mechanisms at the time. Nevertheless, it is relevant when he concluded that the early buyers were higher status but not higher class. On investigating who talks to whom, he concluded that: “Personal transmission of fashion information moves primarily horizontally rather than vertically in the class hierarchy.”

The arguments for a trickle-across theory are explained as fashion adoption moving across socio-economic groups simultaneously in a market where consumers have the freedom to choose from all styles. Rather than the economic elite playing the key role in directing fashion adoption, it is the influentials, who inspire change not vertically across strata but horizontally within specific social groups. As we will see, the magazine providing the material of the Retro Trend, Eurowoman, is envisioned as a ‘friend’ suggesting that the very premise of the Analysis is associated with a particular socio-economic group. The trickle-across theory will bring attention to many instances in the Eurowoman material of fashion leaders operating a strategy of chase and flight horizontally within the specific social strata, which will attest to the analytical potential of the theory.

Trickle-up or status float

In “The Status Float Phenomenon – The Upward Diffusion of Innovation,” business administration scholar George Field looks at what has later become known

159 “Ibid., 115.
160 Ibid., 122.
161 King was not the only one to react to the hierarchical understanding of fashion change. In 1971, German sociologist Rene König (1906-1992) argues that the wealthy are no longer fashion leaders: “One might even hazard the statement that the very rich display a tendency to inconspicuousness which, among men as well as women, results in a distinct conservatism as far as fashion is concerned. ... The middle income groups, in contrast, are particularly responsive to fashion today.” A la Mode, 178.
162 Business Horizon, Volume 8, August, 1970.
as the \textit{trickle-up theory}, or \textit{bubble-up/bottom-up effect}.\footnote{164} Just as with King, Field’s theory is a reaction to Simmel’s and the idea of fashion adoption as a trickle-down effect. Writing in 1970, he is clearly influenced by the development described in Chapter 2 when the young people and street styles took the lead in fashion that became gradually more polycentric and democratic. Field finds that this has led to new adoption processes:

“For a number of years, extremes in fashion have been adopted by the youth market, perhaps to express rejection of the older generation, the Establishment, the conventional, or perhaps out of boredom or need for self-expression. Now certain youthful fashions have been adopted by the middle-aged.”\footnote{165}

This marks a shift and even a reversal from the Social Mechanisms described by Simmel and King in terms of the direction in which the social process of assimilation moves. Field argues that the movement trickles up from the lower classes the styles of which holds a source of distinction. One of the key examples Field uses is the ‘white collar’ imitation of ‘blue collar’ lifestyle and clothes preferences. He refers to camping, pick-up trucks, and bowling as trends that have emanated from the lower classes and filtered up through the social strata. In fashion, he discussed the development of denim jeans. In the 1950s, jeans were a symbol of resistance to conformity worn by young rebels personified by James Dean. By the 1960s, jeans became mainstream, and by the 1970s they were almost a uniform across classes in the US and other Western countries. This diffusion and differentiation of denim jeans has only increased since the 1970s reaching something of a culmination when Karl Lagerfeld used denim for an extravagant gown in Chanel’s f/w 2006 haute couture collection. And denim has continued to be an interesting source for exploring contemporary trend mechanisms, as we will see in Chapter 6.

Field can be criticized for an anecdotal style and lack of empirical material in his examples for instance in his claim that Parisian prostitutes initiated the use of high heels, cigarettes and rouge.\footnote{166} However, the example does suggest the shift from

\footnote{163}{I have been unable to find additional biographical information about George Field.}
\footnote{164}{Which is similar to what Paul Blumberg calls ‘subcultural leadership’ in \textit{Industrial Democracy: The Sociology of Participation} (1974).}
\footnote{165}{“The Status Float Phenomenon,” 47.}
\footnote{166}{Ibid., 52.}
conspicuous consumption to other sources of distinction – The Logic of Wrong – with the increase in democratization and decentralization. As discussed in Chapter 2, the traditional social hierarchy was turned on its head and fashion leaders were no longer to be found among the elite, as other means of creating distinction were introduced.

There are early examples of fashion practice of the lower classes being incorporated in the upper strata of society, such as the rustic taste of Marie Antoinette (1755-1793) and her affinity for polonaise gowns that were more extravagant versions of the dresses worn by the local milkmaids. However, trickle-up as understood by Field is only possible within the framework of relaxed social norms and the wider access to fashion that came with the polycentric fashion system as described in Chapter 2.

The trickle-up theory brings attention to how this decentralization and democratization renders the Social Mechanism of chase and flight more complex. New sources of distinction are sought in the process of social equalization and individual differentiation such as subcultural styles. In Chapter 2, the sagging pants were discussed as one example of trickle-up from the American prisons to Danish kindergartens. The pants illustrate how a style can offer distinction by being ‘a badge of delinquency’ and demonstrate the capitalization of subcultures. There are related examples such as the boom of hip-hop styles in the 1980s represented by the likes of Run DMC with their uniform of loosely fitting black sportswear and Adidas sneakers, and other subcultures such as punk, which will figure in the Analysis.

An interesting perspective concerning the trickle-up of punk is how British designer Vivienne Westwood, who was both part of the punk movement while also letting the anarchistic aesthetic loose on the runway in the mid-1970s. This seems to indicate that while the trickle-up movement is evident, the direction of the movement is not as uni-linear as first assumed. In the example of punk, it is clear that the relation between the subcultural style of punk and high-end designs of Westwood is one of exchange. This issue of uni-directionality of the trickle-movements will prove to be a limitation in the Analysis. When each one offers analytical potential and might be applied simultaneously to the same trend, the result is trickle movements in several directions at once suggesting a multi-linear dynamic.
The dialectic of the chase and flight
In his attempt to create what he terms a “culturally sophisticated trickle-down theory,” 167 Canadian anthropologist Grant McCracken (1951-) addresses issues of uni-directionality and context in Simmel’s trickle-down theory.

In “The Trickle-Down Theory Rehabilitated” (1985), McCracken states that the main problems with the trickle-down theory is that it does not actually describe a vertically flow down through the social hierarchy. Rather it operates according to a more dialectical dynamic between the social strata involved in the process. In other words, the innovation starts at the upper level while the emulation moves upwards, since the lower classes prompt the change by imitating the higher social classes: “What drives the dynamic is an upward ‘chase and flight’ pattern created by a subordinate social group that ‘hunts’ upper-class status markers, and a superordinate social group that moves on in hasty flight to new ones.” 168 These “two conflicting principles” 169 are the motor in the social mechanism that moves both up and down. 170

McCracken also draws attention to how the process of chase and flight often includes more that two social strata governed by status aspirations. Status differences also relates to issues of gender, sexuality, age, and ethnicity. This means that each group may “have occasion to act sometimes as imitators and sometimes as differentiators.” 171 Adding this differentiated perspective to the process of distinction and imitation offering an opening for viewing the process as multi-directional rather than uni-directional as seen in the trickle-movements.

McCracken also brings attention to the lack of specificity in the trickle-down theory related to a lack of appreciation of the cultural context in which the processes of imitation and differentiation take place. 172 McCracken’s revision of the theory is what he perceives to be a more detailed understanding of the motives, logic, and substance of imitation: “Simmel’s theory treats change as the effort to achieve the new; it does not treat it as an effort to escape the old.” 173 However, considering the premise of cotemporary trend mechanisms, this lack of concern with context may

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168 Ibid., 40.
169 Ibid., 39.
170 This does not, however, seem to correspond with what Rene König refers to as ‘trickle-up-and-down,’ Menschheit auf dem Laufsteg: die Mode im Zivilisationsprozess.
172 Ibid., 45.
173 “Ibid., 47.
prove to be an advantage since the Social Mechanism is rendered more abstract and therefore also more adaptable.

I will conclude this Position by mentioning a more recent trend theory proposed by Malcolm Gladwell in *The Tipping Point* (2000). Gladwell transfers the science of social epidemics to the diffusion of trends moving towards what her calls *the tipping point*, the equivalent of a domino effect. The aim of his theory is to provide marketers with a powerful new strategy for developing new products and services by focusing on contexts as well as consumers.\(^\text{174}\)

Gladwell uses the term *connectors* – which corresponds roughly to what King calls *influentials* and McCracken calls *differentiators*, and what I refer to as fashion leaders. These connectors operate through word of mouth as the means of setting off a trend. Gladwell’s notion of *social epidemic* is also similar to what King calls *social contagion*.

The strength of Gladwell’s theory is acknowledging the tendency, especially among young consumers to listen more to their peers than traditional marketing linking him to the trickle-across theory. However, since the tipping point is designed for viral marketing strategies, the theory is too specific to hold adequate analytical potential for the purpose of the Analysis.

**Analytical potentials: Social Mechanism**

Social Mechanism is motored by status aspirations. The analytical potential of the Position falls mainly in two categories. The first is the general tension between the social equalization and individual differentiation proposed by Simmel. The second is the directional approaches of the trickle-theories: trickle-down/symbolic class struggle, trickle-across/simultaneous adoption theory, and trickle-up/status float phenomenon all operate according to social distinction and imitation in a process of contagion. The dichotomy of them and us is also ingrained in all trickle-movements,

\(^{174}\) The premise of the theory is that understanding trends is the key to a lucrative business. Gladwell uses the metaphor of the virus as a way of unlocking the potential of a new product. Gladwell sees trends as a social phenomenon that can be controlled because it moves in specific patterns. If you understand his concept of trends as social epidemics you will be able to create an epidemic on demand. In that sense, the theory of the tipping point could also belong in the Market Position. However, the basic premise of the Market Position is that understanding trends is part of staying on top of the game. In this sense, the theory does not add to the Market Position as it does to the Social Mechanism Position.
as is the understanding of a point of origin in the shape of fashion leaders. Though all the trickle-movements go in different directions, they operate according to a process of contagion and therefore convey a sense of stratification and hierarchy.

The multi-directionality is anticipated by McCracken’s suggestion that trickle-down is in fact a dialectical movement. The question is whether the lack of specificity in Simmel’s text, raised by McCracken, might actually be a potential considering the decentralized and democratized premise of trends and the ensuing Logic of Wrong that operates according to intentional disorientation to stall the process of emulation. Being abstract, the chase and flight mechanism could actually have more analytical potential than had it been more specific in relation to for instance context, motive and substance. The Social Mechanism Position is concerned with the dynamic alone. As such, there is no substantial difference between trends or even versions of the same trend that are visually contrasted. The potential of this will be unfolded in the Analysis.

**Position 2: Neomania**

Fashion is defined according to change as discussed in Chapter 1 and 2. In the Neomania Position, change is concerned with the explicit understanding of novelty as an illusion. While this ‘celebration of a continual carnival of change’ can be viewed as an affirmation of the nature of fashion trends, it is also at the root of this position. Neomania – the ‘mania for the new’ – is concerned with how trends are generated through the postmodern condition according to which the individualism of personal choice has replaced master narratives that order and explain our existence.

**Modernism and postmodernism**

The final poem of *Une Saison en Enfer* “Adieu” (1873-1875), Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891) famously exclaims: “Il faut être absolument moderne.” Much has been made of this phrase, and this is surely not the place for determining what went through the young poets mind when writing the piece. What is relevant here, however, is the expression of not merely wishing to be modern, but the unconditional demand of

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175 *Adorned in Dreams*, 248.
176 “One must be absolutely modern.” “Farewell” in *A Season in Hell*. Translated by Paul Schmidt.
being up-to-date or ‘just now.’ Whether Rimbaud is a proponent of modernism or considered a pioneer of postmodernism, and whether the two ‘isms are opposed or inextricably linked, is too expansive an issue to be dealt with in depth in this dissertation.\textsuperscript{178}

However, when reviewing the language of the poem and its use of fragmentation, paradox, and a narrative voice expressing a fluid sense of subject, this strategy of disruption coupled with the urgency of being modern does ring true with the Neomania Position.

While the focus of this Position is on how postmodern thought can aid in the understanding of contemporary trend mechanisms, rather than on the comparison between postmodernism and modernism, one overall observation will be made. Observations on the fashion show made by Caroline Evans from \textit{Fashion and Modernity} bring to light the overall difference between the perspectives of modernism and postmodernism in this dissertation: “movement is a trope of modernity… The modernist fascination with speed and motion is a symptom of the same drive that produced the fashion show; an imperative not so much to represent modernity as to materialize it.”\textsuperscript{179} Modernism as materialized through movement is understood as a condition of fashion in general and fashion shows in particular.

Neomania offers more than an expression of this modernist trope of movement and change. The condition of Neomania is the “failure of the new”\textsuperscript{180} as a result of the end of a universal sense of meaning and order. This premise for fashion becomes – somewhat paradoxically – the “celebration of the new”\textsuperscript{181} not in the sense of innovation or improvement, but what Lipovetsky calls “personal satisfaction.”\textsuperscript{182} The failure of the new reduces fashion trends to what Baudrillard calls ‘imitation of dead styles.’\textsuperscript{183} While this might appear to render all trend retrospective and thereby questioning the choice of the Retro Trend as the case study of this dissertation, the

\textsuperscript{177} According to the \textit{American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language}, ”modern” is derived from Latin ‘modernus’ meaning ’just now.’

\textsuperscript{178} An example of one of the arguments is that a certain version of modernism was constructed to make postmodernism possible. The seminar in 2006 entitled “The Return of Modernism on Postmodern Conditions” can be seen to further attest to this conflict. It took place 1-3 December, 2006 organized by Fondet for Dansk-Norsk Samarbeid in Denmark.

\textsuperscript{179} \textit{Fashion and Modernity}, 133.

\textsuperscript{180} \textit{The Anti-Aesthetic}, 132.

\textsuperscript{181} \textit{Streetstyle}, 9.

\textsuperscript{182} \textit{The Empire of Fashion}, 145.

\textsuperscript{183} \textit{The Anti-Aesthetic}, 132.
potential lies exactly in challenging the notion of novelty which in turn should highlight the trend mechanisms.

I will not distinguish here between the various divisions within the postmodernism for instance postmodernism perceived as a movement in arts and culture as suggested by Frederic Jameson in “Postmodernism and Consumer Society” (1983) and Jean-François Lyotard’s more ideological representation of postmodernism in *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1984).184

**Neomania as term**

When considering the term for this Position, Rene König’s *neophilia* in *A la Mode* initially appeared to be a good option. However, though the definition of the term seemed suitable for describing trend mechanisms as motored by ”an urge for innovation,”185 the link to displaced sexuality associated it too closely with the Seduction Position. Roland Barthes coined the term *neomania* in *Mythologies*186 with basically the same meaning. However, while Barthes argues that “the new is a purchased value,”187 suggesting that it belongs in the Market Position concerned as it is with the exchange of goods, the motivation for choosing Neomnia lies not in Barthes’ work as such but in the word itself indicating as it does a craze for the new. The sense of longing for the new for its own sake – what Lipovetsky describes as “the intoxication of sensation and novelty”188 regardless that novelty is an illusion.

In the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, ‘mania’ is linked to manic-depressive psychosis. Leaving aside the pathology and concentrating only on the description in the Dictionary, mania seems apt: “characterized by profuse and rapidly changing ideas.” By adding the ‘neo’ to reach Neomania, the result is a term that covers the profuse and rapidly changing ideas of newness in fashion trends.

Adding to this craze for the new is the sense of “pleasure for its own sake”189 as a personal pursuit rather than for instance the need for social recognition. Lipovetsky argues that the ‘code of the new’ was previously the exclusive property of the aristocracy and bourgeoisie, but with mass production, rise of the middle class and

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184 Postmodernity is often understood to be rooted in the architectural criticism of the 1960s. See *The Historical Mode*, 7.
185 *A la Mode*, 77.
187 *The Fashion System*, 300.
188 *The Empire of Fashion*, 146.
189 *The Empire of Fashion*, 145.
the increasing focus of modern individualism, the ‘thirst for novelty’ now concerns all levels of society.\textsuperscript{190} This change in conditions, as also described in Chapter 1 and 2, relates to the postmodern condition implicit in the Neomania Position.

The meaning of the meaningless

Postmodern individualism is characterized by a certain level of nihilism in that it presupposes the loss of master narratives and ensuing destabilization of meaning. The severity of this nihilism varies from the lighthearted version represented by designer Karl Lagerfeld. In an interview in \textit{Time Magazine} on novelty in fashion, he states: “I’m a kind of a fashion nymphomaniac who never gets an orgasm. I’m always expecting something from the next time.”\textsuperscript{191} To the more sepulchral versions as formulated by one of the key proponents of postmodern thinking, philosopher Jean Baudrillard. He describes the postmodern condition as lacking any ‘controlling idea,’ which in turn allows for ‘all previous history to be resurrected in bulk.’ I will return to the prospect of whether Baudrillard is suggesting that all trends are retro, which would limit the Retro Case in the Analysis. The point of here is that Neomania offers a focus on how the postmodern condition is expressed through trends. Baudrillard describes this condition as “Anything serves to escape this void, this leukemia of history and of politics, this hemorrhage of values… everything is equivalent and is mixed indiscriminately in the same morose and funeral exaltation, in the same retro fascination.”\textsuperscript{192}

While the Retro Trend is hopefully more joyful than the \textit{funeral exaltation} described by Baudrillard, the description does sum up the key themes of Neomania namely the resurrection of history as both an escape and demonstration of a void; the notion of simultaneity when everything is equivalent; the absence of a controlling idea and therefore relativity in relation to for instance values, history, and identity; the indiscriminate mix within the framework of the retro fascination which will be addressed in the Analysis.

This postmodern condition in which the loss of a controlling idea has given rise to relativity and existential boredom the temporary relief of which is offered by

\textsuperscript{190} Ibid., 154.
\textsuperscript{191} September 24, 1984 by Jay Cocks and Dorie Denbigh, “Monte Karl on a Roll,” in \textit{Time}.
\textsuperscript{192} \textit{Simulacra and Simulation}, 44.
consumption, what Norwegian philosopher, Lars Fr. H. Svendsen describes as “The pell-mell rush for diversions precisely indicates our fear of the emptiness that surrounds us.”193 He argues that ‘we live in a culture of boredom’194 within the framework of which “consumption is a form of entertainment. It is becoming a more and more common remedy against boredom.”195 This sense of boredom as related to fashion trends will be explored in the Retro Case in which the restless craving for the new is achieved through what Polhemus – echoing Baudrillard – describes as “eclecticism, fragmentation, surreal juxtaposition and synchronicity [are] simply a particularly explicit, up-front realization of the Post-Modern condition.”196 In the Analysis these key concepts will be used in exploring how the Neomania Position opens up perspectives of contemporary trend mechanisms moving beyond the notion of trends being so chaotic that they must be going out of fashion.

The decentralization of the fashion system runs parallel to the description of the postmodern condition in the way it reduces hierarchies and seems to equalizes or synchronizes history in what has been described as the ‘perpetual present.’ As early as in 1946, James Laver applies the term “Perpetual Present”197 to describe women’s short memories in the matter of fashion trends:

“They will never admit that they really liked any recently past fashion, still less a fashion that just failed to establish itself. Many women have no ‘sense of period’, especially of a period that is only just over. Like Gertrud Stein, they are the creators of a ‘Perpetual Present’.”198

The notion of perpetual present brings to mind the importance of being ‘just now’ in Rimbaud’s sense of being absolutely modern. Baudrillard’s thoughts in “The Dance

193 A Philosophy of Boredom, 27.
194 Ibid., 7.
195 Mode – et filosofisk essay, 115. My translation. There are some examples of theorists dealing with similar issues of boredom before postmodernity became a phenomenon. An early example is offered Edward Sapir in 1931 echoing Veblen: “The fundamental drives leading to the creation and acceptance of fashion can be isolated. In the more sophisticated societies boredom, created by leisure and too highly specialized forms of activity, leads to restlessness and curiosity. This general desire to escape from the trammels of a too regularized existence is powerfully reinforced by a ceaseless desire to add to the attractiveness of the self. “Fashion,” Perspectives of Fashion, 24.
196 Stylesurfing, 97.
197 Taste and Fashion, 216.
198 Ibid.
of the Fossils” (1992) resonate these observations at a more abstract level and of course on a different historical premise when he describes the ‘perpetual present’ as “neither past nor forgetting.” Any semblance of a stable order or meaning is set up only to be demolished and thereby brings attention to the artificiality of such a construction. The strategy for demonstrating this sense of artificiality is seen in the Analysis with for instance stylization, irony, or decadence, of joining improbable or opposing elements, which are meant to attest to the fragmented, decentralized premise of postmodern existence.

**Anything goes?**

The rise of *anything goes* as described by Teri Agins, is linked to both the escape from boredom and the existential void through the personal satisfaction and pleasure for its own sake through consumption. While class, region, and religion have decreased their importance in relation to society in general and fashion in particular, Polhemus argues that in the postmodern condition, the subcultures have also become simulations. He states that *ravers* were the last subculture, and as the culture dissolved in the late eighties, individuality replaced the sense of stylistic belonging and ideological commitment in the subcultures. This individuality assumes that everything from any era is available – Baudrillard’s ‘everything is equivalent’ – like products on a supermarket shelf. Polhemus refers to this as the “Supermarket of Style,” understood as a laboratory in which subcultural styles are available to be reprocessed with what he describes as “a delightful sense of irony, deconstructing the old into something new.” This image attests to the popular notion that *anything goes* in fashion trends, because the postmodern condition proposes to suspend notions of time and space.

With regards to fashion practice and dressing as an act of self-construction, ethnographer Sophie Woodward offers a slightly different perspective to the role of postmodernity in fashion: ”One of the supposed characteristics of postmodernity is that ‘everyone can be anybody’… which translates sartorially into the wealth of often

199 The Illusion of the End, 73.
200 Baudrillard refers to the “age of simulation,” Simulacra and Simulation, 43.
201 He refers to subcultures as for instance Zooties, Hipsters, Beats, Rockers, Hippies, Rude Boys, Punks. Streetstyle, 14
202 Stylesurfing, 93.
203 Streetstyle, 132-134.
contradictory styles and identities to experiment with." Woodward sets out to make clear how there are numerous constraints, which prevent this free exertion of agency through clothing. However, she implicitly outlines a premise to an understanding of contemporary trend behavior as determined by the postmodern notion of being able to play with a potentially endless number of available identities. In this masked ball of variable surfaces, it is the celebration of change that is significant rather than the visual makeup of the surfaces.

It is important to clarify what is meant by *personal style* and ‘*individual style*.’ The former relates to the notion of ‘the death of the subject’ as put forth by for instance Jameson. Jameson bases this termination on the departure in literature from the modernist notion of “a personal, private style, as unmistakable as your fingerprint.” Translated to fashion terms, personal style is not possible within the framework of the Neomania Position, due to the lack of a stable notion of subject. However, the notion of individual style suggests a trend mechanism that operates according to postmodern strategies. The visual result of these strategies is fragmented and subversive showing experimentation with visual identities that may be described as individual style. To illustrate this understanding of individual, the Monty Python movie *Life of Brian* (1979) offers a good example. When the Messiah figure of Brian addresses his followers with: ”You are all individuals,” they answer: “We are all individuals.”

However, though simulation has replaced the unique individual as a stable feature, the celebration of change – albeit as an escape of the void – fuels the trend mechanism according to Neomania. The term *mash-up* describes how the change is operated on this postmodern premise of simulation, quotation, juxtaposition and synchronicity. Mash-up refers to the recombination of pre-existing sources to form something ‘new’ for instance a piece of music and digital media content. Mash-up places the individual in the role of the creator, or sampler of something that is essentially more derivative than new. The focus in this reconfiguration is hence not so much *what* is mashed up but *how*. In this sense, the equalization of everything should be understood as a potential, rather than how trends actually appear. That is to say,

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204 *Why Women Wear what they Wear*, 81.
205 *The End of Fashion*, 183.
206 *The Anti-Aesthetic*, 131.
207 Ibid., 131.
that anything goes is also a potential illustrating how the Neomania Position offers shape – albeit a fragmented, unstable one – that could save trends from extinction.

**Analytical potentials: Neomania**

The analytical potential lies in the ability of the Neomania Position to add form and function to the apparent chaos of contemporary fashion trends by formulating a strategy of the trend mechanisms from which the trends come. While the personal satisfaction in the experience of the new as an escape from the postmodern void is an important motor in Neomania, the experimentation of individual style in a demonstration of how ‘everyone can be anybody’ are also important factors. In the Analysis, Neomania will also allow for an understanding of the versions of the Retro Trend as parts of various trend mechanisms, rather than representing *style tribes*\(^\text{208}\) that are more stable.

Simulation, irony, joining together disparate elements as well as quotation, artificiality, lack of constraint, subversion and the irrelevance of categories are all part of the expression of the postmodern condition.

**Position 3: Market**

The Market Position is concerned with the relation between trade, commercial agendas and trends. The approach of this Position differs from that of for instance Rudolf Broby-Johansen who explored the connection between economic conjectures and hemlines in *Krop og Klær: Klædedragnens kunsthistorie* (1953), which was essentially a study of social mechanisms. Rather the Market Position is concerned with the exchange of fashion goods with particular focus on the production, distribution, and consumption of clothes and accessories.\(^\text{209}\)

Christian Dior described the business of fashion as “a trade where novelty is all-

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\(^{208}\) A phrase used by among others Ted Polhemus in *Streetstyle* to refer to the practice of dressing to show membership of a particular group. I also understand the term to mean being a certain *type*.

\(^{209}\) I follow the understanding of the term ‘market’ according to for instance Michel Callon who in “Introduction: The Embeddedness of Economic Markets in Economics” describes market as the abstract mechanisms concerning supply and demand and the places, processes, and institutions relating to the exchange of goods, (p. 2). Unfortunately the limited space in this dissertation has meant, that I will not go into further discussion of various studies of the market nor have I found it relevant to go into market in relation to Marxism and class struggle as described in for instance *The Communist Manifesto* (1848).
important.™ Here novelty refers to the motor of change that is essential for stimulating business and growth on the marketplace. Fashion is considered to be a fast moving consumer good, a category in which trends are understood to have a shorter life span than for instance cars that tend to have longer product cycles.™

The Market Position is closely connected to the structure and historical development of the fashion systems the evolution of which was dealt with in Chapter 2. The centralized fashion system and to a certain extent the polycentric fashion system held what could be described as a controlling influence on trends. The designer or manufacturer were often the generators of an innovation or a trend while the diffusion was maintained by the fashion system. Teri Agins sums up this fashion food chain:

“apparel makers, designers, retailers, and their symbiotic agents, the fashion press, were the omnipotent forces pushing fashions revolving door. They have been responsible for creating new fashion trends and inducing people to shop until they dropped, to scoop up the novelties the industry promoted. This order was a mighty mandate that prevailed throughout the 1980s, a system which established a consensus that kept millions of consumers moving in lockstep.”™

The changes since the 1990s with increased sourcing to low-cost factories in the Far East has led to a decrease in the influence of these formerly omnipotent forces and hence altered the conditions for the Market Position. Decentralization has cleared a place for the consumer as a creative factor in the market with the rise of such concepts as user driven innovation, co-creation, DIY, and customizing. As suggested in Chapter 2, this has marked an increase in the democratization of fashion, which in turn poses a threat to trends. Because, as Teri Agins argues, this reversal is symptomatic of the weakened ability of the market to dictate trends.™ While the commercial mechanisms still plays a key role in trend mechanisms, an increase in the dialectic

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™ Dior by Dior, 7.
™ Car brands such as Jaguar and to a lesser degree Mercedes, Audi, and BMW have a relatively long product cycle of about two years. More affordable cars have shorter product cycles.
™ The End of Fashion, 7.
™ Ibid., 8.
between consumer and designer/manufacturer has altered the conditions for the
Market Position.

Within the framework of the Market Position, trend mechanisms are linked to
capitalism. As Jennifer Craik argues “[f]ashion becomes the mechanism of capitalism
and its maintenance.”214 The material on the relationship between fashion trends,
consumption and capitalism is rich and plenty. It ranges from the more neutral
descriptions by for instance Elizabeth Wilson who mentions that “fashion stemmed
from capitalism’s need for perpetual expansion, which encouraged consumption,”215
to Ulrich Lehmann who finds that “in capitalism no commodity is as pronounced as
the sartorial one. Its ephemeral character, its quest for changing appearance, demands
constant consumption.”216 The Market Position is also subject to critique because of
this link between fashion trends and capitalism217 to the point where consumers are
seen as the equivalent of marionettes of the fashion industry.218 While this provides an
interesting perspective, the ideological approach does not seem to add substantially to
the analytical potential of the Position since the critique is often more political in
nature than concerned with the trend mechanisms as such. Therefore, I will not go
further into this theme.

According to the Market Position, the textile industry, trade fairs, trend
forecasters, designers, manufacturers, buyers, marketing, advertisers, and media are
the main actors stimulating and often generating trends. The Market operates with two
levels: Immaterial and material.

At the immaterial level, trend information is the product pushed by
forecasters. Therefore their approach is focused mainly on the direction of a style or a
mood. The message they sell is that understanding trends is the key to success in
fashion. As described by Evelyn Brannon: “Because trends signal the emerging needs,
wants, and aspirations of the consumer, canny manufacturers and retailers capitalize

214 “Fashion, Clothes, Sexuality,” 71. Arjun Appadurai describes fashion as “the crucial link
between production, merchandising, and consumption in capitalist societies,” Modernity at
Large, 75.
215 Adorned in Dreams, 49.
216 Tigersprung: Fashion in Modernity, 244.
217 For a critique of capitalist issues in fashion see among others Distinction: A Social
Critique of the Judgment of Taste (1979) by Pierre Bourdieu; For a Critique of the Political
Economy of the Sign (1981) by Jean Baudrillard; and The Theory of the Leisure Class: An
Economic Study of Institutions (1899) by Thorstein Veblen.
218 As suggested by Wolfgang Fritz Haug in Warenästhetik und kapitalistische Massenkultur,
155.
on their potential for turning a profit.” In other words, understanding trends is the key to gaining market control.

At the material level, the Market controls trends through availability. This approach to trends is reflected in the statement made by Teri Agin who argues that trends are created not by what is shown on the catwalk but what sells: “It makes no difference whether Tom Ford is the first to come up with fringes if you can’t find them in the stores.” Here the role of textile producers and trade fairs is essential because buyers select from the shown collections and in that way decide what will be available for the consumer the coming season. The seasons are a construction that formalizes the time lags that generates an impression of novelty. As Anna Wintour puts it in *Letter from the Editor*: “Of course, fashion’s ceaseless allure lies in its promise of beautiful upheaval, twice yearly.”

Designers are also part of the commercial equation though they do not necessarily openly comply with it. When Dior was accused of using vast amounts of material for his New Look to stimulate Monsieur Boussac’s textile interests, the designer argued that fashion does not vary according to the dictates of commerce: “any fashion inspired by that sort of consideration would have no chance of surviving, still less of succeeding and developing.” This example reflects an inherent ambivalence of many designers to the commercial outcome of a creative process also dealt with in Chapter 1.

Planned obsolescence

Though the term was coined later, planned obsolescence is ingrained in what John Rae describes already in 1834. In “Of the Nature and Effects of Luxury,” he refers to the complaint of French economist Jean-Baptiste Say (1767-1832):

“Any thing which a person has provided himself with, to serve some useful purpose, is preserved as long as possible, its consumption is gradual. An object of luxury is of no use from the moment it ceases to gratify either the senses, or the vanity, of its

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219 *Fashion Forecasting*, 5.
220 “Derfor kan det være lige meget om Tom Ford er først ude med frynser, hvis man ikke kan finde dem i butikkerne,” EW25, April 2000, 129.
222 *Dior by Dior*, 22.
possessor. It is destroyed, at least in greater part, before having ceased to exist, and without having supplied any real want."\textsuperscript{223}

In the Market Position, the trend mechanisms operate according to obsolescence understood as the process of introducing new products each season designed to make the older products appear outdated and therefore useless. A classic example is the changing hemlines from season to season, where the new length implicitly rendered the old obsolete. This was seen when designers such as Balenciaga and Dior were able to dictate to a world of fashionable women the length of a skirt as well as silhouette, cut and pattern.

From a Market perspective, whether the perpetual change in fashion – what Rae calls the ‘ceaseless revolution\textsuperscript{224} – is caused by Social Mechanism, Zeitgeist or Seduction is only relevant in so far as it contributes to more profit through for instance more effective marketing, product development, or production methods. The Market Position is concerned with higher sales and a rapid level of symbolic, social or cultural deterioration of value to keep the economic wheels turning. Each actor in the fashion system contributes to promoting fashion change and diffusion in a process of what Lipovetsky describes as ”orchestrated obsolescence.”\textsuperscript{225} The idea is that fashion is produced not to last as opposed to other areas such as architecture, which gives at the very least the illusion of lasting until it is functionally obsolete.

Planned obsolescence has been described as the basis of market economy.\textsuperscript{226} There are various attitudes to obsolescence. It is criticized for being a strategy that deliberately aims at making products last as short as possible in the name of profit, which is regarded as both a waste of resources and exploitative of customers. This sort of criticism has especially been brought up in fields where function is of prime importance. Cellular phones are an example of a product that tend to be rendered obsolete relatively quickly by consumers even when they remain functionally intact. This example of planned obsolescence forms a contrast to products that become obsolete because of technical improvements such as the replacement of televisions designed for analogue transmission to those designed for digital transmission.

\textsuperscript{223} ”Of the Nature and Effects of Luxury” pp. 245-276 in \textit{Statement of Some New Principles on the Subject of Political Economy}. No source is given for Say.
\textsuperscript{224} \textit{Statement of Some New Principles on the Subject of Political Economy}, Ibid. 266.
\textsuperscript{225} \textit{Empire of Fashion}, 144.
\textsuperscript{226} \textit{The Waste Makers}, 46.
Supporters of planned obsolescence claim that a short product lifespan increases innovation and strengthens the economy. Actors on the Market are like sharks that have to constantly move to avoid sinking. To a certain extent, an increase in product cycle is a way of obtaining a stronger position on the market. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, the acceleration of the fashion cycle towards the condition of seasonless cycles threatens to be an act of self-cannibalism if trends end up transpiring altogether.

Fashion falls in a category, which could be called *style obsolescence*. As we have seen, there are several explanations for the increased pace of style or trend changes. The explanations range from the technological innovations allowing for an increase in production at a faster rate and a lower price through to the democratization of fashion that has allowed more people the privilege of following fashion. *Planned style obsolescence* refers to the efforts made by fast fashion companies such as H&M who instead of collections have a constant flow of new products potentially leading to a shorter lifespan of products.

There is often a correlation between short lifespan and low price when it comes to for instance toy fads such as the toy Bakugan, where the symbolic and functional value deteriorates exponentially. The same is not necessarily the case in the relation between high-end and fast fashion. Though mass fashion is designed for a shorter lifespan than designer clothes, there is a common logic of lifespan that seems to apply to all levels of the fashion system. Symbolically, a Chloé-dress may last longer than one from H&M but not necessarily in proportion to the variance in the price and the expected lifespan. This tendency confirms the move towards a more horizontal structure of fashion within the framework of the Market Position.

Fashion does to a certain extent operate according to what in technical terms is referred to as ‘value engineering.’ Simply put, this means that a product is designed to last only for as long as the marketer expects it to take before a replacement is introduced. Depending on the product in question, the lifespan will vary. In fashion there is a certain amount of value engineering, though not to the same extent as with for instance a car or a cell phone since what becomes obsolete in fashion is generally the style rather than the technical or material function of the clothes. Value engineering is evident in capsule collections where mass fashion and high-end designers produce one-off collections. Value engineering is about reducing the cost of
production and the market price at the expense of quality. Often this is of no great importance for the consumer if the lifespan is expected to be short.

The Market Position today

Historically, there has been a tendency to see the Market as an independent force or agent, giving rise to expressions such as: “The market is starting to say…” and certain labels are “leading a trend.” However, the development in society and the fashion system has challenged this understanding of the role of the Market. A famous example of this was the lowering of hemlines in the early 1970s. As Valerie Steele explains, the attempt of the fashion system to lower hemlines had started already with the hippies in 1967 but the exposure to the masses did not happen until the turn of the decade. The Paris collections in January 1970 promoted midi-skirts after almost a decade of rising hemlines. However, this change in hemlines coincided with economic recession, which meant that many women could not afford to change their entire wardrobe to follow the trend. In addition, many manufacturer and retailers would not be able to sell the considerable stock they had of mini-skirts which led to resistance against the long dresses both by consumers and fashion professionals. Though the midi did experience some success, there was a delay of a year or two, which has since been interpreted as symptomatic of the weakened power of the Market to dictate trends.

Fashion historian Marylene Delbourgo-Delphis is referred to in Fifty Years of Fashion as having observed that before 1963 women did in fact for the most part follow fashion dictates. The great hemline controversy demonstrated that since the revolt in the 1960s, where the sidewalk to a certain extent won over the catwalk, terms such as choice and freedom became key with the 1970s. A development that has only become more pronounced in the 21st century prompted by digitalization, mass fashion and the Internet leaving the designer weakened and the consumer strengthened. This development mirrors the general spirit of anti-authority, subversiveness, activism, and informality evident in Western societies such as

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227 The End of Fashion, 117.
228 Ibid., 117.
229 Fifty Years of Fashion, 82-87.
230 Ibid., 79.
Denmark in the Noughties. The result is a more fragmented use of planned obsolescence and a fashion system that operates more horizontally.

Though trend mechanisms in fashion are concerned mainly with *how* something is worn than *what* is worn, there is usually a product involved. Though the market has become decentralized since the 1980s and the designers’ role has changed with the increase in democratization, the exchange of goods continues to be a key factor in trend mechanisms as will become clear in the Analysis.

**Analytical potentials: Market**

Though the historical power of the fashion system to dictate trends has decreased in the face of decentralization and democratization, the Market Position still holds analytical potential for understanding and describing trend mechanisms in contemporary trends. Trends are most often concerned with consumption, and therefore also the notion of planned obsolescence and the organization according to seasons. While shedding light on these conventional commercial factors in trend mechanisms, the Market Position also offers perspectives of the remarkable ability of the fashion system to adapt to new premises and even capitalize on the forces working against it.

**Position 4: Seduction**

Though fashion might be said to be an endless series of promiscuous, amnesic love affairs with history, the Seduction Position is more specifically concerned with erotic drive as a trend mechanism. Because clothes are worn as a second skin, fashion is part of the strategies of attraction and seduction. The Seduction Position offers the tools for exploring how trend mechanisms operate materially through means such as fabrics, color, fur, leather, etc. and immaterially through the way these are worn. Together they form a system of sexual signals and gestures that convey information about intentions and preferences.

**The seductress**

The Seduction Position is mainly concerned with women’s fashion for reasons rooted in historical, cultural and biological factors. Psychoanalyst John Carl Flügel (1884-1955) focuses on the sexual libido in relation to trend mechanisms. In *The Psychology*
of Clothes (1930), he links desire and sexual allure to fashion trends. He argues that after the Middle Ages and the first décolleté, “[w]omen introduced the principle of the deliberate mutual reinforcement of the attractions exercised by clothes and nakedness.” This tension between covered and exposed as a drive in trend mechanisms is similar to what Davis refers to as ‘the dialectics of the erotic and the chaste’ and what James Laver calls ‘the game Seduction plays with prudery.’

Why this principle of revealing and concealing concerns women’s dress and not men’s is according to Flügel explained by the difference in the sexual libido, which he argues is more diffuse in women than it is in men. In his opinion, the whole female body is sexualized, whereas the male libido is more definitely concentrated around the genital zones. Though there is a mutual desire to see and be seen at play in the change of fashion trends, Flügel argues that the exposure of any part of the female body works more erotically than the exposure of the corresponding part of the male. However, surveying the history of men’s apparel shows how men from the Middle Ages to the 18th century were also bearers of fashion and status symbols, and hence could also be said to be part of the race for contemporary seductiveness – despite the alleged difference in libido.

In The Psychology of Fashion (1971), René Flügel ascribes the shift in men’s fashion from the elaborate and decorative to the utilitarian, austere, and uniform at the end of the 18th century to the political and social effects of the French Revolution. He calls this shift “The Great Masculine Renunciation,” that describes the development from the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries when men demonstrated their rank and wealth through conspicuous consumption. With the fall of the aristocracy and the rise of the notions of ‘Freedom Equality Brotherhood,’ it was considered distasteful for men to demonstrate difference. The result was the uniformity and asceticism of men’s dress that expressed the new sense of common humanity. Flügel also makes the point that the notion of conspicuous leisure was replaced by the ideal of work, duty, and self-control.

231 The Psychology of Clothes, 106.
232 The title of Chapter five in Davis, Fashion, Culture, and Identity, 79-99.
236 Ibid. 104-105. Let it be noted that Flügel assigns these traits to men’s dress. Considering Veblen’s The Theory of the Leisure Class that was published exactly a century after the end
Because women’s – rather than men’s – fashion has tended to cater more to erotic interest since the 18th century coupled with the empirical material for the Analysis being gathered from women’s magazine, the Seduction Position will be mainly concerned with women.

**Contemporary seductiveness**

Historically, there have been trends in what was considered suggestive in women both in terms of body adornment and which part of the body was considered erotic. Running at the base of the Seduction Position is the historic development of gender roles and perceptions of sex and body in relation to fashion. Useful insight into this expansive field is provided by for instance Jennifer Craik in “Fashion, Clothes, Sexuality” (1984); Diane Crane in *Fashion and Its Social Agendas: Class, Gender, and Identity in Clothing* (2001); and Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson in *Body Dressing* (2001). The exhibition *Seduction*\(^{237}\) that addressed the evolution of sexuality and gender politics through a survey of 250 years of sexuality in fashion is another example.

While the historical development of moral standards and social norms is linked to the relation between fashion and erotic drive, the Seduction Position is specifically concerned with how trend mechanisms are governed by the complex interaction between seduction and clothing.

In this sense, the Seduction Position does not take a consumer point of view by studying how fashion products *seduce* the consumer; nor does it view fashion trends as an instrument of pleasure in "the age of Seduction."\(^{238}\) While sexuality is a theme in the Position, it is not the main focus in the way sexual preferences are examined in *Fetish: Fashion, Sex & Power* (1997) by Valerie Steele.

While the Seduction Position does not voice an opinion concerning feminist issues, it is obvious that much of the material in the Position is rooted in gender roles that are very different from today. This means that some of the material included in this Mapping may seem offensive to some. Bearing in mind the notion of ‘strong

\(^{237}\) The Museum at FIT, December 9, 2008 through June 16, 2009.

\(^{238}\) Lipovetsky is referring to the 1990s. *The Empire of Fashion*, 132.
objectivity,’ the Position will attempt to maintain that the material is historically situated while also containing contemporary relevance.

Some of the early theory on Seduction as a trend mechanism comes out of the 1930s when a certain level of equality of the sexes had been achieved in Europe with the equal right to vote thanks mainly to the suffragette movement. Though the process of female emancipation was under way, many women were still to a certain degree dependent on men. As Sylvia Thrupp describes: “in modern industrial societies women derive their social class position from their relationship to men, unmarried young women from their fathers, and adult married women from their husbands.”

In 1937, Agnes Brooks Young explains how this condition for woman influences trend mechanisms in the sense that women used fashion to capture and maintain the interest of men and thereby achieve social status. This process necessarily involves a change in appearance by which it becomes a trend mechanism:

“In the competition among women for the notice of the opposite sex and for social recognition, change of fashion plays an important part. The function of clothing … is to attract the attention and stimulate the interest of men, and the multifarious kinds of suggestive disclosures which dress assumes are solely for this purpose.”

She goes on to argue that the type of disclosure must be altered as the current revelation becomes commonplace and hence looses its allure. This is a perpetual process of alteration to achieve what James Laver describes as “the race for chic – that is, for contemporary seductiveness” also in 1937. While this notion of contemporary seductiveness is situated in a vastly different context in terms of gender roles and women’s rights, the term actually holds analytical potential, as we shall see.

Laver’s description of women’s role is antiquated. I does, however, establish the roots of the Seduction Position, which is important if the analytical potential is to be determined:

“woman as a whole is a desirable object, but the mind of man is too weak to take it all in at once. He must be persuaded to concentrate on one bit of that object, and it is the

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239 The Merchant Class of Medieval London, (1300-1500), 149.
240 Recurring Cycles of Fashion, 166.
241 Taste and Fashion, 203.
function of fashion to emphasize and exaggerate that little bit until the whole thing becomes a bore causing the erogenous zone to shift.”

Objectification aside, Laver formulates the notion of shifting erogenous zones, a trend mechanism that is still operational despite the obvious progress of women’s position politically, socially, and culturally.

Laver describes how the attraction between the sexes might be seen as increased when the part of the body that is exposed – arms, legs, shoulders, neck, bust etc. – changes allowing a part or zone that has been concealed to come into focus again. In the 1920s, the legs were in focus with the flapper dress, while it was the slim waist and low neckline with the New Look in the post-World War II years and so on.

Laver refers to ‘The Seduction Principle’ as the motor of the trend mechanism: “the Seduction impulse lies at the back of all change in women’s dress.” The Seduction Principle, which causes the erogenous zones to move, is motivated by an erotic strategy that plays on the tension between what is revealed of the body and what is concealed:

“the female body consists of a series of sterilized zones, which are those exposed by the fashion which is just going out, and an erogenous zone, which will be the point of interest for the fashion, which is coming in. This erogenous zone is always shifting, and it is the business of fashion to pursue it, without ever actually catching it up. It is obvious that if you really catch it up you are immediately arrested for indecent exposure. If you almost catch it up you are celebrated as a leader of fashion.”

242 “Fashion: Detective Story.” Boredom relates here to saturation rather than the existential boredom discussed in the Neomania Position. Davis brings attention to the fact that the theory of the shifting erogenous zones is outlined by Flügel though he never actually uses the phrase. *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 83.

243 In “She’s Got Legs: Sizing up Fashion’s Current Erogenous Zone,” Style.com, accessed and posted 21. April, 2007. Valerie Steele is quoted for saying that the shifting erogenous zones are about saturation and are closely connected to the notion of novelty in trends: “When fashion shifts its attention it’s usually because that part of the body hasn’t recently been exploited. Legs are novel again.” Another example is “Designers Shoulder On For Spring” Style.com, accessed and posted 11. December, 2008 in which the upper arms are presented as the erogenous zone of that particular moment.

244 “Fashion: A Detective Story.”

245 *Taste and Fashion*, 19.

246 Ibid., 20.
In 1938, Laver offers a demonstration of the analytical potential of the notion of the shifting erogenous zones by looking at the corset. Here the zones are understood on a less literally level – less as the erotic zones and more as contemporary seductiveness. The process is fuelled by the tension between opposites in the case of the corset between liberty and restriction. When one erotic possibility is exhausted – the loose silhouette of the 1930s – restriction in the form of a corset becomes “a new Seduction”\(^\text{247}\) i.e. a trend. So the dialectics between the opposition of erotic and chaste, covered and uncovered, restricted and liberated are among the organizing principles in the Seduction Position.

**Displacement of erotic curiosity**

A slightly different approach to Seduction as a trend mechanism is found in *A la Mode* (1973), in which German sociologist Rene König (1906-1992) unfolds what he calls “the close relation between fashion-oriented behavior and the sexual sphere.”\(^\text{248}\)

While sexual ambivalence and erotic curiosity might drive trend mechanisms, König argues that the drive is ‘displaced’ in the Freudian sense:\(^\text{249}\) “Fashion-oriented behaviour is thus embedded in the complex necessary for the preservation of the species, and the urge to dress up as the fashion decrees accordingly acts with the same elementary force as any other urge serving the continuation of the human race.”\(^\text{250}\)

Though König argues that fashion with its versatility must be approached from a number of angles, he does takes what might be termed a biological stance in suggesting that trends operate with the purpose of preserving the human species.\(^\text{251}\)

This sort of evolutionary approach has not sat well with particularly the part of fashion theory concerned with gender issues. Jennifer Craik, for instance, states her resistance specifically to König’s linking of fashion change and preservation of the species in her essay “Fashion, Clothes, Sexuality.”\(^\text{252}\)

\(^{247}\) *Taste and Fashion*, 214.

\(^{248}\) *A la Mode*, 133.

\(^{249}\) König refers to Freud’s *Totem and Taboo* (1912) as the source of the term displacement.

\(^{250}\) *A la Mode*, 75.


\(^{252}\) “In this curious but common account, fashion is cast as a major social force and as a replacement for/displacement of ‘sex’ itself; ‘sex’ is fragmented into a game played through clothes and display, a game dissociated from sexual activity, influenced more by the aesthetic than the erotic. In this move, ‘the body’ of sexual practices is subjugated to the social order of
König compares the ambivalence of taking fashion studies seriously to the suppression of the libido as described by Freud. The tension seen in fashion between modesty and attraction reflects this ambivalence towards sexuality. König also links Seduction with the cycle of trends. According to him, the relaxing of sexual norms and progression of the equality of the sexes in the home and the workplace has contributed to accelerating the speed of trends: “the modern woman wants to appear always attractive and always different.”

Locating the Seduction Principle within the individual woman herself as a need to feel attractive through changing styles adds an important dimension to the Position as does the notion that changes in morals and social norms have lead to an increased speed with which trends change. The Seduction Position is not only about woman’s desire to attract but also about a personal experience as it unfolds according to an understanding of change as an ideal.

However, in *Fifty Years of Fashion*, Steele presents an argument that might be read as being against the Seduction Position using the controversy over the ‘Sack’ dress introduced by Givenchy in 1957. There was popular protest against this waistless dress because it was considered unsexy. She quotes Kenneth Collins from *Women’s Wear Daily* in an attack on Lucie Noel, fashion editor of *The Herald Tribune* who was among those lamenting the trend: “You still believe that women adorn themselves to entice men... Well, it just isn’t so. The ungainly chemise is everywhere, yet boys date the girls as eagerly as ever. So clothes, evidently, have nothing to do with these masculine urges.” What she seems to be advocating is what Laver calls the race for ‘contemporary seductiveness,’ rather than the more radical understandings of the role of Seduction in trends, as governed by biological determinism.

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253 Fifty Years of Fashion, 42.

254 An example of a more radical version of the Seduction Position is seen the psychoanalytical approach in “Why We Dress the Way We Do” (1985) by Ernest Dichter who was among the first to apply Freud’s theories to business. In the article, he argues that the rise of the mini skirt in the 1960s can be seen as revealing the knee as a new erogenous zone – what Dichter refers to as “the Cape of Good Hope” (33) because it is seen to represent an erotic promise. His approach is psychoanalytical which is evident in this and other examples. He talks about a sharp crease in the pants as a “permanent erection,” and the symbolic potency of the tie and cutting it off equaling symbolic castration. (34).

255 *A la Mode*, 173.
So although one might expect some difficulty translating a theory developed in the 1930s to the 21st century, the Seduction Position is prevalent in descriptions of trend mechanisms today. An example is offered in the December issue 2008 of Danish Elle in which it is declared that ‘the back is back.’ Curiously, Laver also mentions the bare back – ‘backlessness’ – in relation to the 1930s bathing suits. While his focus relates to shifts in moral and social attitudes, the concern with contemporary seductiveness and shifting erogenous zones is similar.

Analytical potentials: Seduction
As we will see in the Analysis, the presence of the Seduction Position is evident both in the textual and visual material concerning trend mechanisms in the empirical material from Eurowoman magazine. The Seduction Position holds potential for unlocking an understanding of trend mechanisms as rooted in the body and as part of an erotic strategy concerned with the expression of erotic allure and the personal experience of feeling attractive. As we have seen through the various sources on which the Seduction Position is based, the approach is focused on two tools: The more literal concern with shifting erogenous zones and the more abstract notion of contemporary seductiveness, which operates according to the dialectics between for instance the erotic and chaste, covered and uncovered, restricted and liberated.

Position 5: Zeitgeist
The Zeitgeist Position is concerned with how the ‘spirit of the times’ or ‘mood’ can be seen as somehow materialized in fashion trends through fashion practice or the creative expression of designers. The Zeitgeist Position resembles a semiotic approach, where the trend can be viewed as a sign with the visual manifestation as the signifier, and the meaning of the sign as the signified. The Zeitgeist Position differs

256 Costume and Fashion: A Concise History, 241. Laver argues that the focus on the back had to do with the evolution of the bathing suit, which were modest in the 1920 but became more revealing of especially the back in the 1930. This was a result of the increased popularity of sunbathing, which naturally demanded bare skin. This explanation leads up to the Zeitgeist Position and shows how the Positions offer various explanations to the same trend.

257 What Blumer defines as the collective taste as reflection of social and cultural events in “From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection,” 283.

258 Adorned in Dreams, 249.
fundamentally, however, from the semiotic theory outlined by Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) in *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916), inasmuch as the relation between signifier and signified is arbitrary. However, the Zeitgeist Position is defined exactly by the opposite, namely that there is a direct relation between the form and the content of a trend.

Traces of the Zeitgeist Position go as far back as Louis XIV (1638-1715) who is supposed to have said: “Fashion is the mirror of history.” While he is the only known state leader to comment on Zeitgeist as a trend mechanism, the Position consists of contributions from a diverse set of academic and professional backgrounds from art history, psychology and sociology to journalism and fashion writing. Considering that the Zeitgeist Position is concerned with the stories fashion trends might tells us about a given time, the media is a rich source for exploring this Position.

Fashion editor for the *International Herald Tribune*, Suzy Menkes confirms the narrative approach of the media to trends: “Fashion inevitably reflects the culture of the surrounding society.” She provides an instructive example of how the Zeitgeist Position is used for understanding contemporary society through fashion trends. Under the heading “The New Sobriety: Covering Up the Body,” she outlines a tendency in the Paris f/w 2006 ready-to-wear collections to cover up the body. She argues that the use of veils, layering, hoods and length might be a symptom of a “muslimization of fashion.” She bases her article on anonymous interviews with designers and her own observations of the collections. The designers express a need for giving their customers protection in uneasy times. As one designer says “People need to be reassured. There is a pervasive concern – bird flu and the disturbing feeling that the world is a war.” Menkes concludes that the season reflects current events such as the Danish ‘Cartoon Crisis,’ the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and social unrest in for instance France. As she states: “John Galliano’s dramatic disquieting Dior couture show, which featured Marie Antoinette and the bloody terror that followed the French Revolution, was directly connected to the riots spawned by the grievances of immigrant, many of them Muslims, in the Paris suburbs.” This interlacing of fashion

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trends and Zeitgeist seems to confirm what James Laver wrote in 1937: “Fashion is never arbitrary. It has its roots in the unconscious, the Collective unconscious if you will, and the hopes and fears of a whole society are reflected in the cut of a dress.”

A wide range of theorists have addressed the Zeitgeist Position. From Cecil Beaton who considered fashion trends to be reflections of the times: "Fashion is the subtle and shifting expression of every age" in 1954; to German sociologist Ingrid Brenninkmeyer who in 1962 describes how fashion trends mirror the interplay of social, economic, political and religious influences. Brenninkmeyer argues that "Clothing is symbolic of the values and aspirations of an age," and it is exactly this symbolic or metaphoric quality of trends that is essential to the analytical potential of the Position. This relation between trends and times is dialectic. As Ernest Dichter explains in 1985 the two mutually inform one another: “Fashion expresses the Zeitgeist, the spirit of the times, and in turn can influence it.”

Zeitgeist categorized

In *Economics of Fashion* (1928), American marketing professor Paul Nystrom (1878-1969) took a more specific approach by categorizing the Zeitgeist factors that influence the character and direction of a trend. These factors were intended to structure the understanding of the formation of the Zeitgeist, and how it operated as a trend mechanism. In order to bring the theories into the 21st century, Evelyn Brannon incorporates Nystrom’s ideas into a contemporary context in *Fashion Forecasting.*

The five factors determining Zeitgeist are: Dominating events, ideals, groups, attitudes, and technology. While, the factors inevitably overlap at times and are also linked to the other Positions, I will pin them out in order to add depth and perspective to the Position. I will look at Nystrom who provides the title of the first three factors as well as Brennan who has added the last two while I will add theory and examples when deemed necessary.

1. ‘Dominating events’ relate to the influence historically of for instance world fairs and more recently events spanning from 9/11 to the Oscars. Early examples inevitably

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262 *Taste and Fashion*, 213.
263 *The Glass of Fashion*, 337.
264 *The Sociology of Fashion*, 87.
266 *Fashion Forecasting*, 16-18.
link dominating events to the Market Position, because a dominating event might increase availability and hence stimulate consumption and thereby diffusion of a trend as well as stimulate the overall democratization of fashion. An example is when Napoleon Bonaparte brought back new materials from his Egyptian Expedition (1798-1801). The material was made into shawls for Josephine, which set off a trend for shawls in the European courts.\textsuperscript{267} Other examples include the invention of synthetic substitutes for natural products in dyes and textile fibers, which led to the partial replacement of the expensive natural indigo synthetic blue dye in the late 19th century,\textsuperscript{268} and the invention of synthetic fibers by DuPont in 1938 that led to the production of for instance nylon stockings.

The Retro Trend in the Case Study is concerned with the millennium as a dominating event.

2. ‘Dominating ideals’ are concerned with for instance patriotism and Greek ideals after the French Revolution. More specific examples seen in the Noughties could be hip-hop or Latino culture in the United States reflecting multicultural ideals; the wave of charity reflecting humanitarian ideals, and the green wave in fashion with for instance Danish Noir Illuminati II by Peter Ingwersen and Stella McCartney’s Green Line reflection ideals of sustainability.

The Retro Trend shows an ideal for nostalgia.

3. ‘Dominating groups’ falls in the Social Mechanism Position and has been dealt with in the above.

4. ‘Dominating attitude’ distinguishes between periods that are dominated by either fitting in as seen in the Depression in the 1930s, the conformity of the 1950s, and the causal style emerging in the 1990s; or standing out as seen in the flapper era of the 1920s, the Youthquake of the 1960s, and the fragmented look of the Noughties. This example of dominating attitudes differs from Social Mechanism concerned with the dialectic of fitting in and standing out as part of a process of establishing social status. In the Zeitgeist Position, these conditions are not dialectic but successive and general.

\textsuperscript{267} Taste and Fashion, 22.
While the Social Mechanism Position operates on the basis of difference, the Zeitgeist Position is concerned with the collective similarities.

As we will see in the Analysis of the Retro Trend, standing out is a constant part of the Social Mechanism, while the Zeitgeist Position highlights the same trait as part of a general trend that reflects a dominating attitude of individualism — what Lipovetsky calls “a feeling of independent individuality.”

5. ‘Dominating technology.’ Writing in the 1920s, Nystrom could not have fathomed the impact technology would have on trend mechanisms. In the Retro Trend Case, the dominating technology is seen directly with the rise of the Internet and more generally with the decentralization of the fashion system and the democratization of fashion practice that are largely motivated by technological advances. As Brennan states: “Without computers and rapid worldwide communication, quick response strategies and global apparel production would not be possible.”

An addition to the five dominating factor could be the notion of the designer – the dominating medium – possessing seismographic powers to sense and visualize the Zeitgeist of the imminent future as understood by for instance designer Karl Lagerfeld: “Fashion is also an attempt to make certain invisible aspects of the reality of the moment visible.” An example of this could be André Courrèges’ collection entitled ‘Couture Future’ from 1967, reflecting the fascination with space travel at the time. A more contemporary example is designer Anna Sui’s f/w 2006 collection, which was inspired by early American wars as a vehicle for visualizing contemporary issues of war. However, considering the challenges posed to the designer with the increased democratization and decentralization coupled with the fact that the above examples might also fit into dominating events this addition was not realized.

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269 The Empire of Fashion, 154.
270 Fashion Forecasting, 18.
271 Chanel, 15.
272 Fashion reporter Eric Wilson in an interview with designer concludes that “this is an example of how the fashion world is really effected by what is going outside of the borders of what you might associate with a really glamorous world of fashion… these designers are really in touch with the times and what they show on the runway is relevant to the world in more ways than merely decorating us.” New York Times Video Library, accessed on February 16, 2009 at www.iht.com.
Critique of the Zeitgeist Position
Taking a critical approach to the Zeitgeist Position is American sociologist Stanley Lieberson. In *A Matter of Taste: How Names, Fashions, and Culture Change* (2000), based on a quantitative study of first names, he describes the Zeitgeist Position or what he calls ‘reflection theory’ as a “search for substantive significance behind each new fashion.” He believes that ‘social commentators make more of ‘reflection theory’ than is justified’ because they engage in ‘after the fact’ explanations of trends that thereby become self-fulfilling prophecies.

This relativity in the understanding of trends as a reflection of dominating events, ideals, or attitudes, does not harmonize with the normativity often associated with the explanations of trends according to the Zeitgeist Position.

In addition, the fragmentation of society as outlined in for instance Social Mechanism and Neomania seems to reduce the sense of commonly shared perspective in industrialized nations assumed in the Zeitgeist Position. Lieberson brings up this point with reference to German writer and journalist Levin Schücking (1878-1964): “a new taste appearing anywhere is the expression not by any means of the ‘spirit of the age’ but only of the spirit of a particular group, which may fail to represent the spirit of the age.” While Schücking is concerned with literary taste, Edward Sapir points out the same tendency towards relativity specifically in regards to fashion trends as early as 1931: “the same expressive elements tend to have quite different symbolic references in different areas.”

While this may seem to undermine the analytic potential of the Zeitgeist Position, it could actually be considered an advantage. What is important is not whether the explanations the Zeitgeist Position is able to provide are true or false. Rather, the explanations offer an insight into the function of trends and trend mechanisms as common ground on which we play out our collective hopes and fears through the narrative material provided by trends.

An example from far back in the annals of fashion history is the crinoline. The trend for voluminous skirts had reached its peak in the 1860s. I will illustrate how after the fact explanations can come out in complete contradiction. One might say that

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274 Ibid., 273.
275 A point also put forth in *A Matter of Taste*, pp. 69-73.
276 *The Sociology of Literary Taste*, 745.
the crinoline with the discomfort of the corset and immobility due to the voluminous skirt attests to the suppression of women at the time with the crinoline coming to symbolize a cage. An opposing narrative interpretation might be that the construction of the dress was something of a revolution at the time the fullness of the skirt being created by means of steel hoops rather than layers of petticoats. In that sense the crinoline was far lighter, gave more freedom for the legs and was also a hygienic improvement.

These conflicting readings of the crinoline offer insight into the themes of an age concerned with the status of women, technological advances, and hygiene. Whether one or the other understanding is true is less relevant. Rather, it is the exchange between the trend and the time that offers an analytical potential.

Analytical potentials: Zeitgeist
The example of the crinoline briefly outlines how the Zeitgeist Position constitutes a space for reflection – on status, identity, current moods, and events – and herein lies one of the key potentials of the Position. Instead of creating order, the approach allows for complexity to unfold while remaining rooted in a specific context.

Trends seem to constitute a flexible space in which to create stories that can aid in the understanding of contemporary society and ultimately in the understanding of ourselves, each other, and our role in the world. In being this type of vehicle, trends might say something about the Zeitgeist in the way we ascribe meaning to them rather than what they are actually expressing – if they indeed express anything at all.

To sum up, this multidisciplinary Mapping of 200 years of literature concerning trend mechanisms has now been organized in a Toolbox containing five Positions – Social Mechanism, Neomania, Market, Seduction, and Zeitgeist – which are considered to have the strongest analytical potential in an analysis of fashion trends and trend mechanisms.

The purpose of the Mapping is not to dismiss any of the Positions but rather to determine how they might shed light on trend mechanisms within the framework of a contemporary trend. This will be carried out in the Analysis that will serve to update the Positions and thereby contribute to the consolidation of the field of trend studies, as well as expose potential limitations of the Positions. These limitations – referred to as Issues – are the basis for an expansion of the Toolbox by adding Position 6, the
Rhizomatic Position that attempts to describe how trends operate on a decentralized, democratized basis. These issues are Dichotomy, Point of Origin, Hierarchy, and Line of Development.

The Rhizomatic Position is based on the rhizome as a botanical phenomenon and philosophical concept, and considers trends to move slowly rather than rapidly, to have no cycle rather than accelerated cycles, to move according to horizontal flows rather than vertical or hierarchical structures. The Rhizomatic Position differs from the rest of the Toolbox in having a spatial understanding of trend mechanisms rather than a temporal, offering new possibilities for resolving the Issues with the five Positions and thereby strengthening the overall potential of the Toolbox and trend studies as such.
CHAPTER 4: RETRO CASE – Motivation of Case, Period of Study, and Eurowoman Magazine as Empirical Material

This chapter clarifies the potential of magazines in general and Eurowoman magazine in particular as empirical material, and motivates the choice of the Retro Trend in 2000-2009 as the suitable case for the Analysis in Chapter 5. A case is necessary for the dissertation because it offers the testing ground for the Analysis in which the five Positions – the Toolbox – established in the Mapping of Trend Theory in Chapter 3, will be applied to the Retro Case for the purpose of determining the analytical potential of the Toolbox as well as revealing its limitations.

Approaches to the study of fashion magazines

My review of the studies of fashion and women’s magazines showed next to no examples where magazines were used to explore trend mechanisms. A main concern in the literature is with gender issues. In Reading Women’s Magazines (1995), professor of media and culture, Joke Hermes provides a critical overview of this approach according to which women’s magazines are understood as somehow suppressing woman by making them passive. She mentions examples such as Betty Friedan’s The Feminine Mystique (1963) and Gaye Tuchman editor of Hearth and Home: Images of Women in the Mass Media (1978). Hermes argues that with the rise of postmodernism, psychoanalysis, and poststructuralism in the study of magazines in the 1980s, the field opened up to the pleasure of reading women’s magazines.

In Understanding Women’s Magazines (2003), Anna Gough-Yates follows in the footsteps of Hermes arguing that much of the academic work on women’s and fashion magazines is concerned with ideology or ethics in relation to the potentially manipulative role of magazines: "media representations are seen as a key site through which oppressive feminine identities are constructed and disseminated."278 Gough-Yates sets out to explore the social and cultural processes of understanding women’s magazines which cover a range of publications including ‘glossies’ that are the equivalent to fashion magazines. Gough-Yates outlines how in addition to the ideological approach to women’s magazines where the texts are viewed as ‘pre-existent messages waiting to be decoded,’279 there are also the postmodern and

278 Understanding Women’s Magazines, 7.
279 Ibid., 11.
poststructuralist perspectives on discourse according to which the magazines are approached as forms of culture and practice.

In her exploration of the social, economic, and political discourses of women’s magazines in the 1980s and 1990s, Gough-Yates examines the ‘wider relationships between the producers and consumers of commercial media aimed at women and, as such, explores more general questions about commercial cultures and identity.’

Though part of my use of magazines does imply understanding the material as forms of culture and practices, the ideological and discursive elements of the approaches briefly outlined here are only relevant in this dissertation in so far as they relate to trend mechanisms. As noted in the Introduction, the term discourse is not associated with any particular theory or theorist in the dissertation, but refers simply to the text and visual material in the magazines. The case is analytically grounded rather than empirically from the point of view that the research question is theoretical and the empirical material serves as an analytical vehicle.

**Fashion plates as communicating trend information**

My approach to magazines as a way of studying trend mechanisms is part of a long tradition. An example is *Fashion Through Fashion Plates 1771-1970* (1971), in which Doris Langley studies fashion plates to examine ideals and preferences at a particular time. She argues that fashion plates are neither costume prints nor caricatures, but rather one of the earliest ways of communicating information about fashion trends: “The fashion plate has no other raison d’être than to impart information about the current or the coming mode.”

Fashion magazines, just as fashion plates, communicate trend information and are therefore a source of documentation of trends.

While the fashion plates can be argued to be the first instance of relatively large-scale popular communication of trend information, there are earlier examples. Moore lists the following:

> “Verbal description, display of merchandise for sale, the sight of novelties worn at church or wherever clothes worthy of imitation were paraded, the recommendations of tailors and dressmakers to their clients, the suggestion of adventurous clients to

280 *Understanding Women’s Magazines*, 25.

tailors and dressmakers, the reports of agents commissioned to buy materials or merely to collect intelligence, and the circulation of dolls clad in miniature replicas of full-scale garments.\textsuperscript{282}

While the Pandora dolls were impractical, costly, and as it turned out a threat to national security as described in Chapter 2, some of the other methods of diffusing trend information are still efficient for instance ‘parading clothes worthy of imitation.’ However, gathering fashion trend information in a publication and illustrating this information has proven to be a viable concept for consumers and fashion system alike.

Providing news about fashion trends through fashion papers began in France in 1763 with \textit{Le Mercure Galant}. In the United States, the first periodical for women, \textit{Lady’s Magazine}, dates back to 1792, but it was \textit{Godey’s Lady’s Book}, published between 1830 and 1898, that is considered to have laid the editorial groundwork for fashion journalism as a genre.\textsuperscript{283} As some of these early examples show, the publications mixed trend information with information on hairdressing, interior decoration and even transportation as well as society news. Magazines in addition to comprising a series of voices or points of view on fashion trends, were also complex sites of exchange between a number of related fields. So though fashion magazines have changed along with the rest of the fashion system and society as such, magazines still constitute a space that contains the intricate amalgamation of trend mechanisms.

There was a boom in women’s magazines in the late 19th century on the American and other markets. This was linked to both the development in print technology as well as market demand. At the time women’s magazines served the purpose of ‘informing, assisting, and advising.’\textsuperscript{284} This was at an age, when the sewing machine, invented in 1846, had made it possible for more people to create their own fashionable clothes. The clothing industry for women grew in the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century and with that a new type of female consumer who became a prime target for manufacturers, businesses, and department stores.\textsuperscript{285} The boom in the economy increased the number of women with leisure time and the privilege for consumption.

\textsuperscript{283} \textit{In Vogue}, 4.
\textsuperscript{284} Ibid., 4.
\textsuperscript{285} Ibid., 4.
Relating to Veblen, what women wore and how they lived could be seen as a way of demonstrating their husband’s status in society. Therefore women’s magazines became crucial for guiding women in the right direction in terms of “latest trends in color, cut, fabric, trim, and accessories.” Though the context has changed dramatically with the rise in living standards, the liberation of women and the recent rise of the fashion blog, fashion magazines still function as a guide to contemporary trends.

Magazines as research material
As my research question is theoretical rather than empirical, the choice of magazines as my case material is motivated by the ability of magazines to illustrate and challenge theoretical questions in relation to trends.

In keeping with the notion of strong objectivity, the magazine material is situated both temporally and geographically, while also conveying something general about trend mechanisms. In that sense, the EW material is not to be considered an objective or neutral registration of the Retro Trend. Not only is a magazine a collective effort and therefore polyphonic, there are numerous agendas taking place within the framework of a magazine that make the material anything but objective. However, because the material contains such diversity and even conflict, it offers potential for studying trend mechanisms that are themselves complex and conflicting as exemplified by the Toolbox.

One of the most marked tensions in fashion magazines occur between the marketing department of a magazine and the creative and editorial teams. This is seen when for instance an advertiser finds an article or fashion spread offensive and therefore not in line with the advertisers’ product. In an interview, former head of advertising and later fashion and beauty editor for Eurowoman, Charlotte Torpegaard describes the relationship as a balance, in which it is important to keep the advertisers happy, but never at the expense of journalistic principles. This should be seen in the

286 In Vogue, 4.
287 This is seen in for instance the widespread use of imperatives and descriptions in fashion magazines: ‘Get the look: This fall is all about the right accessories. Jewelry is in focus as never before, and silver is back. Mix crucifixes, chains, and diamonds with a basic T-shirt and the indispensable leather jacket.’ Cover 37, 31, September issue, 2008. My translation.
288 Understanding Women’s Magazines, 143.
light of the fact that up to 65-70% of the magazine’s income comes from advertisers rather than subscriptions and newsstands.\textsuperscript{289}

While this might make magazines seem unreliable as research material, it is in fact the ambiguity and paradox evident in magazines as a site of exchange between fashion forecasters, advertisers, stylists, fashion editors, fashion writers, photographers, models, celebrities, fashion practice and designers as well as street fashion that are part of communicating and co-producing trends within the framework of a magazine. Because a magazine is a result of this collective effort of a variety of actors pertinent to trends, the material is both substantial and wide enough for updating and challenging the existing Positions as well as developing the Rhizomatic Position.

The double role of magazines as a site for both generating and reflecting current trends in a process that is both independent and commercial adds to the potential of the magazine material.\textsuperscript{290} Implicit in this understanding of trends and magazines, is that neither are solely concerned with dress practice but necessarily concern issues of identity and society as well. Magazines also explore the world that they reflect and to a certain extent also shape. As proclaimed in \textit{Vogue}: “not only of fashion but of the women themselves, how they choose and wear clothes, interpret beauty, assume a changing role in society.”\textsuperscript{291}

Supporting this perspective is the article “The Big Conspiracy,”\textsuperscript{292} in which the fashion writer Camilla Alfthan explores the role of the fashion magazine in relation to trends. She quotes Carine Roitfeld, who at the time was a stylist and in 2001 became the editor-in-chief of French \textit{Vogue}: “We want to be the ones who show a trends first or perhaps create it. And we see it all the time that \textit{Vogue} does something special where others follow or even copy us.”\textsuperscript{293} It is also pointed out in

\textsuperscript{289} The informal interview took place on January 26, 2009.

\textsuperscript{290} This is similar to the role of fashion magazines as described by Brian Moeran: “fashion magazines are both cultural products and commodities; and magazine production is characterized by a ‘multiple audience’ property, which includes readers, advertisers and the fashion world itself. These enable magazines to link cultural production to the reception of fashion – on the one hand, helping form a collective concept of what ‘fashion’ is, on the other, transforming fashion as an abstract idea and aesthetic discourse into everyday dress.”

“More Than Just a Fashion Magazine”, 725.

\textsuperscript{291} \textit{In Vogue}, xvi.


\textsuperscript{293} “Vi vil gerne være dem, der først viser en trend eller måske skaber den. Og vi ser hele tiden, at \textit{Vogue} laver noget specielt, hvor de andre så følger efter eller decideret kopierer os” In \textit{Eurowoman} 25, 128. April 2000.
the article that the consumer might be open to the suggestions made by the magazine but will not necessarily allow herself to be dictated to. The article mentions the attempt made at the time to promote tights, which was not assimilated by consumers.\textsuperscript{294} The dialectic between the designer and consumer and the changed role of the relation between the two was explored in Chapter 2, and will also be highlighted in the Analysis.

**Choice of Eurowoman**

The choice of *Eurowoman* as the source of my case material is motivated by three factors.

Firstly, a specific Danish magazine naturally offered a narrow focus that I found necessary when dealing with such sprawling material as trends. Had I chosen to compare two or more Danish magazines or had I chosen an international focus, the material would have been much more difficult to organize which I find would have weakened the analytical potential considerably. As it will become clear in Chapter 5 and 6, the extent to which I have found it necessary to operate with several matrixes in order to make the navigation possible supports the choice of a narrow focus, which in turn should result in a stronger Analysis.

Secondly, I was a staff writer for the magazine from 1998-2004 and a managing editor from 1999-2000, which has provided me with an almost physical appreciation of how the magazine is produced. Let it be noted that I will not quote any of my own work in the Analysis and only make reference to a few article that I have written myself but none of them play a central role in the Analysis. I did not directly take part in the work of the fashion editors and was not part of the production of the fashion and beauty spreads, which constitute the bulk of the material used in the Analysis.

Thirdly, when *Eurowoman* first came out in 1998, it created quite a stir. The new magazine took fashion seriously in a way Denmark had not seen before. Fashion was

\textsuperscript{294} She also references certain popular but undocumented conspiracy theories in relation to the role of fashion magazines. Two of the most widespread theories are on the one hand that fashion editors organize secret meetings where they decide what the future trends are going to be; and on the second hand that insider trade takes place when the editors in chief of influential magazines are allowed to view designers’ collections before they are shown to determined what that particular magazine might consider showing and hence implicitly suggests what the designer should focus on. Years after the article was written, the latter theory is confirmed in the documentary *The September Issue* (2009), in which editor-in-chief of American *Vogue*, Anna Wintour, is seen suggesting designers such as Jean-Paul Gaultier and Oscar de la Renta what looks would be given editorial coverage and which would not.
not only a product that could be consumed, but also as a social, cultural, and historical phenomenon. This means that from the very beginning, the magazine attracted some of the most qualified and fashion forward photographers, writers, editors, art directors, stylists, and illustrators in the country. For this reason the Eurowoman material is best suited for the purpose of this dissertation, namely to study contemporary trend mechanisms because in order to fully update and challenge the five Positions, it is crucial to have material in which fashion trends are taken seriously not just in terms of what to wear but also the complex issues of trend mechanisms concerning identity, communication, business, seduction, and contemporary ideals and events.

The position of Eurowoman

When it first hit the stands in April 1998, Eurowoman was named ‘the feisty little sister’\textsuperscript{295} of the popular men’s magazine, Euroman published by independent publisher, Peter Linck of Euroman Publications. In that sense, Eurowoman stood a good chance of coming off to a flying start both with the readers but also with advertiser. The first issue had ads from high-end brands such as Gucci, Ralph Lauren, Cartier, Calvin Klein, Giorgio Armani, and Mulberry. This was unusual for a new magazine, which is indicative of the respect Peter Linck and Euroman enjoyed among international advertisers at the time and the potential of the fashion profile Eurowoman had from the very beginning.

There were already a number of magazines available to women, such as Alt for damerne and Femina in the late 1990s. But the newcomer promised to be a magazine with an international perspective that appealed to a younger generation, and most importantly Eurowoman saw itself as a fashion magazine which set it apart from the existing magazines. In an interview for the Danish national newspaper Politiken, Peter Linck describes Eurowoman as ‘a mix between Harper’s Bazaar, Vogue and Loaded… a magazine with an international look but also a local touch.’\textsuperscript{296}

The interest and excitement surrounding the release of Eurowoman was seen when the first issue had a print run of 65,000 issues, which in itself was double the regular circulation of Euroman. It was practically sold out and some places sold out

\textsuperscript{295} “En skrap lillesøster.” Berlingske Tidende 27 March 1998.
\textsuperscript{296} “Et egotrip for kvinder.” Politiken 29 March 1998.
the day it was released.297 The next issue had a higher print run. A search on
Infomedia on the coverage of the release of Eurowoman reveals an intense interest in
the new magazine. Most of the national newspapers covered the event with at least
one article or interview.298

So why was there such public interest in something as seemingly insignificant
as a new women’s magazine? One aspect highlighted by some journalists such as
Karen Margrethe Schelin in “Eurowoman vil for meget”299 in the newspaper
Berlingske Tidende is bringing an international air to magazines in Denmark. She
concludes that Eurowoman is “a much needed change in the Danish magazine
press.”300 Part of the steering committee of the new magazine and later managing
editor and editor-in-chief, writer Maise Njor, was interviewed in connection with the
release of this first issue. In the interview, she describes Eurowoman as different from
the other women’s magazines, which tend to promote the idea of a ‘Superwoman’301
who can do everything and more while looking perfect all the way.

In contrast, Eurowoman was understood as a good friend and the mood in the
magazine is described by Maise Njor as ”two friends talking.”302 This personification
of the magazine will be an important facet when applying the Social Mechanism
Position in the Analysis. As she explains: ”I don’t think the traditional women’s
magazines are acting like a very good friend when they on the one hand come up with
recipes for delicious food, cakes and treats, and other hand throw diets in your face,”
says Maise Njor.303 This ‘new friend’ is described as based on thorough analysis of
markets and target groups. Peter Linck defines the target group as women between 18

297 According to ”Magasinet Eurowoman øger oplag” Jyllands-Posten, Reuter Finans, April 28, 1998.
298 Information, Berlingske Tidende, Politiken, Information, B.T., Ekstra Bladet,
Jyllandsposten.
299 March 27, 1998.
300 ”en tiltrængt fornyelse i den danske magasinpresse” in ”Eurowoman vil for meget”
Berlingske Tidende, March 27, 1998.
301 This corresponds to the image evoked by Brian Moeran: “As cultural products, magazines
may be said to circulate in a cultural economy of collective meaning. They provide how-to
recipes, illustrated stories, narratives and experiential and behavioral models – particularly in
the realms of fashion and beauty – in which the reader’s ideal self is reflected and of which
she can herself reflect and act.” “More Than Just a Fashion Magazine”, 727.
302 ”som to veninder der sidder og snakker” Maise Njor in ”En skrap lillesøster” Berlingske
Tidende 27 March 1998.
303 Maise Njor in ”En skrap lillesøster” Berlingske Tidende, March 27, 1998.
and 35, who are well educated, and involved in society and the environment. She is independent and interested in fashion.\(^{304}\)

However, according to Maise Njor\(^{305}\) what makes Eurowoman special is not only because it is based on the target group analysis. The intuition and taste of the people involved in the production of the magazine is also important. This adds the personal touch implied in the notion of the magazine as a new friend, and judging from the material this friend is not only fashion forward, she is also fun, smart and quirky. This is seen in a regular in the magazine called Slik, an entire page devoted to candy in each issue in the same way as the other regulars in the magazine on film, books, and music. Slik in particular and the quirkiness in general is highlighted as a positive quality of the magazine.\(^{306}\)

Choice of period: 2000-2009
The Analysis studies the Retro Trend in the period 2000-2009. This period was selected because I was curious to see what would come after the retro trend in the 1990s, which was often explained as a reaction to the impending millennium. As attested by Suzy Menkes in “The Shock of the Old” when reporting from the runways in 1993: “What’s new in fashion? You should be asking, ‘What’s old’? For the hottest trend on and off the international runways is thrift-shop chic.”\(^{307}\) As discussed in the Introduction, the turn of the millennium seemed to hold the promise of ending the retrospection, giving room for something ‘new and fresh.”\(^{308}\)

The same expectation was apparent in “Two Steps forward – and a Glance Back,” the introduction in Eurowoman to the trends projected for the coming season, s/s 2001. In the piece, Suzy Menkes is quoted for saying: “Now we have been through the 1970s and 1980s, then come the 1990s, and after that fashion will be up to speed with the rest of the world, ready to begin a new millennium.”\(^{309}\) Menkes is evidently linking the retrospection with the millennium, suggesting that the phenomenon will end with the Noughties. This premise is interesting in exploring for instance the

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\(^{304}\) ”Et egotrip for kvinder.” Politiken 29 March 1998.

\(^{305}\) ”En skrap lillesøster.” Berlingske Tidende, March 27, 1998.

\(^{306}\) ”En skrap lillesøster” and ”Eurowoman vil for meget” Berlingske Tidende.


\(^{308}\) Stylesurfing, 126.

\(^{309}\) ”Nu er vi ved at være igennem 70erne og 80erne, så kommer 90erne, og derefter er moden ved at komme op på højde med resten af verden, klar til at tage hul på det nye årtusinde.” Eurowoman 35, ”To skridt frem og kig tilbage” EW35, 59.
The period of study is divided in two: The first is the intensive period from January 2000 to December 2001, which corresponds to 24 issues of *Eurowoman* (EW22-EW45). The length of this period is motivated by the definition made by some forecasters that a fashion trend lasts from 3-6 months and up to 2-3 years. The choice of a two-year period is understood to allow for a study of the Retro Trend as it presumably runs its course.

However, considering that the 1990s also saw a retro trend, the case of this dissertation cannot be said to necessarily begin in 2000. This suggests interesting concerns with the notions of beginning and end of trends. In order to explore this, I will also perform an analysis of an extensive period, from January 2002 to December 2009 (EW46-EW141). This long period will be explored in the final part of the Analysis, which is performed in Chapter 6, which will allow for an examination of how fast – or how slow – contemporary trends are actually changing, in order to determine whether trends are going out of fashion.

The way I approached the data was to record everything and anything in the magazines in text and image that related to the Retro Trend according to three categories: Material revival, immaterial revival, and literal revival as will be defined in the section on the Retro Trend. The data was gathered from the fashion material in the magazines but also in other areas such as interior design, food, books, music, editorial concepts, and magazine design. This was included to determine how expansive contemporary trends are.

I registered the data according to each issue, and when all the material was collected, the amount was overwhelming. I started to study the data to determine whether there were any patterns or themes that might organize the data, since it was clear that approaching the Retro Trend as a whole was too complex to be conducive to the Analysis. I decided to focus on three versions of the trend, which I have entitled ‘Granny Chic’, ‘Glam,’ and ‘Mix.’

These versions will function as the testing ground for the five Positions established in the Mapping of Trend Theory. The empirical material will be used to illustrate the potential of the theories as well as the limitations. It is important to

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310 *Trendsociologi*, 162.
emphasize that the research question in the dissertation is theoretical and not empirical. In other words, the data is used as a means for determining to what extent the Positions can be updated and brought into the 21st century and at the same time highlighting the aspects of the theories that are more difficult to maintain because of the changes that have taken place in society, communication, and technology in general and the fashion system in particular since the trend theories were developed.

Defining and organizing the Retro Trend
The Mapping of Trend Theory in Chapter 3 outlined the various functions of trends which suggested that trends are not going out of fashion because we need them in social strategies of communicating affiliation; we use them to avoid boredom or escape the void of postmodern existence; an entire industry is organized around trends changing to stay in business; fashion trends play into seduction in that changes are necessary to elude saturation and boredom; and we attempt to understand current events and ideals through fashion trends.

While the five Positions from the Mapping offer tools for describing and understanding trends on a general level, it is necessary to apply them to a case trend to determine both how they work on a specific level and to what extent they work in the context of the decentralized, democratized Noughties.

While the Retro Trend is studied in the Noughties, the 1990s also saw a retro trend (Brown 2001, Gregson and Crewe 2003, Palmer and Clark 2005), as did the 1980s (Jameson 1982, Polhemus 1996, Koda and Martin 1990) and the 1970s (Davis 1979). In fact, retro seems to be a recurring trend phenomenon throughout fashion history (Baines, 1981). In order to perform a strong Analysis, it is necessary to define what constitutes a retro trend in general and what characterized the Retro Trend in particular.

As Heike Jenß points out in “Sixties Only: The Consumption of the Past in a Retro Scene”, there does not seem to exist a common understanding of the term Retro.311 By organizing the Retro Trend in three categories, I will attempt to move towards a clearer definition of the Case Trend. The Retro Trend is understood here as revivals in primarily fashion though other fields will be drawn in for perspective:

311 Old Clothes, New Looks, 179.
1. **Material revival**: This category is concerned with the physical, material revival of an item that has been excluded from the fashion system as some point, and which has often been previously owned. ‘Vintage’ will be used when referring to material revivals, and the motivation of this choice of term will be discussed later in this chapter.

2. **Immaterial revival**: This category is concerned with how the fashion system incorporates the immaterial expression of the Retro Trend. Designer labels such as Marc Jacobs, Levi’s, and Dolce and Gabbana are examples of how the Retro Trend – including vintage – has been incorporated in new designs, but also fast fashion retailers such as H&M and mid-range Finnish brand Ivana Helsinki, and Danish brands such as Baum und Pferdgarten and Dixie Grey were exponents of the immaterial revivals of the Retro Trend – the *look or style* – rather than the material.

3. **Literal revival**: This category is concerned with the literal revival of a past trend in the sense of a direct copy of past fashion items. This is seen when Gucci and Sonia Rykiel re-released exact copies of classic items from their archives as part of the Retro Trend. An interesting example of the literal revival is offered by Diane von Furstenberg – perhaps capitalizing on the existing Retro Trend – who reemerged in 1997 by re-launching her famous wrap-dress from 1972. The literal revivals were also seen in the field of design such as when Verner Panton’s *Flowerpot*-lamp was put back in production in 2000. Another slightly different example of literal revival is the rediscovery by consumers, stylists, manufacturers, or magazine editors of existing products that have lain dormant for a period of time such as gloves from the Danish company Randers Handskefabrik; as well as the rediscovery of archive photos as seen in the design of EW.

While the three categories offer distinct insight into the constitution of the Retro Trend, they also overlap. Some retailers such as H&M and Top Shop have had both immaterial and material categories of the Retro Trend in their stores. However, the three categories will still offer some structure in the understanding of the Retro Trend

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313 www.dvf.com. A Danish example of the same is seen when designer Margit Brandt re-released collections from the 1970s in 2006 after years away from fashion.
as the Case material, which might otherwise appear too sprawling to be suitable material for the Analysis.

**Vintage as term**

Just as retro trends have figured many times in fashion history, the use of secondhand clothes has also been part of trends from especially from the 20th century and on. The history of secondhand clothes – understood as an item of clothing changing owners – is presumably as long as the history of fashion itself. However, the motives for reusing clothes have varied and have not always been related to trends. Historically, one of the key motives has been pure necessity due to scarcity for instance after a war or because of poverty. This is seen throughout the history of Western culture and is seen now especially in developing countries.\(^{314}\)

Tradition in many Western cultures has also played a central role in the practice of reusing discarded clothes. In general, the custom for a bride to include ‘something old, something new’ is often upheld. Here the use of secondhand offers a sense of continuity and heritage.\(^{315}\) Secondhand clothes have also been used in counter-cultural strategies by for instance punks and hippies (Goulding 2003, Steele 2006, Polhemus 1994).\(^{316}\)

In this dissertation, vintage refers to secondhand clothes as related to the Retro Trend. This material revival covers the entire spectrum of fashion – from the highest to the lowest and everything in between. As Alexandra Palmer explains: “‘vintage’ is used to identify an enormous range of clothes, from a couture dress of the 1920s to last year’s ‘must have’ Fendi baguette bag.”\(^{317}\) However, vintage in this dissertation refers to more than the material revival of high-end fashion and antique or museum

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\(^{314}\) Though as Karen Tranberg Hansen points out in *Salaula: The World of Secondhand Clothing and Zambia*, secondhand clothing in Africa is not just a question of charity or passive imitation of the West, but also relates to trend mechanisms such as the Social Mechanism. As she argues: “a cultural economy of judgment and style is at work in local appropriations of the West’s unwanted clothing” *Salaula*, 248. In other words, some of the same mechanisms at play with vintage as a trend are also present in the case of Zambia.\(^{315}\) This is also the case with the Danish Royal family as seen with the veil Danish Princess Mary wore at her wedding to Crown Prince Frederik of Denmark in 2004. The veil was handed down to her from Queen Margrethe’s mother Ingrid who in turn had been given the veil by her mother.\(^{316}\) A key publication in the field is *Old Clothes, New Looks: Second Hand Fashion* (eds. Clark and Palmer, 2005) that approaches secondhand clothes through a wide range of topics including themes of power, trade, and charity over a period of more than 500 years with a global perspective from India, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Germany and more.\(^{317}\) *Old Clothes, New Looks*, 200.
pieces. Vintage also refers to generic brands sold in vintage boutiques where buyers have handpicked the items they considered to be vintage. Here the vintage items are subject to trend mechanisms to a larger extent than with the high-end pieces. And finally, there is the thrift store vintage, which is more ambiguous since it might be considered either vintage or waste depending on the context.

Included in the material revival category is also the notion of heirlooms, dumpster finds, gifts, and flea markets which operate on the edge of the fashion systems, and will serve as illustrative examples in for instance the altered strategies of the Social Mechanism, and the juxtaposition of high and low in Neomania.

As argued in Chapter 1, there are trends in most everything, also terminology. This is evident with the category of material revival in the Retro Trend. In the period studied, the term used in EW for material revival seems to have moved from the Danish word for secondhand, ‘genbrug’ towards a more general use of ‘vintage’.

Based only on personal observation, the tendency among students at The Danish Design School seems to be going back to ‘genbrug’ and ‘genner’ slang for ‘genbrugsbutik’ (thrift store). While trend mechanisms in language would be a fascinating topic to pursue, I will not go into the possible reasons for this development in terminology, but point out that while the terms are used interchangeably, vintage becomes gradually more dominant and is therefore the term chosen here. That secondhand has a more general meaning while vintage refers more specifically to fashion is also a reason for choosing the latter term.

Another important motivation for choosing vintage is a number of paradoxes associated with the term, which is seen to enrich the material in relation to the Analysis. As mentioned previously, the effort to determine the analytical potential and limitations of the Toolbox demands material that is complex. I will briefly outline the paradoxes of the term.

\[318\] IHT first mentions vintage in "Out with the New: Where the Japanese Shop for Old Clothes" by David Tracey, May 12, 1995. Here the word vintage is used in quotations marks which seems to indicate that the use is new: “For those who have never considered taking out a loan to buy a pair of ‘vintage’ trousers, Tokyo offers a plentiful variety of secondhand selections at reasonable prices, especially in the Shibuya-Harajuku area popular with trendy young shoppers.” Note that Denmark is often behind in the development of a global trend such as vintage, which explains why the term vintage might be on the rise in Danish media while it is already in decline in for instance IHT.

\[319\] It is interesting to note that the term ‘fashion’ seems to gradually be taking over the Danish term ‘mode’ in the Danish fashion media suggesting a trend in terminology under way. An example is seen in Danish Elle July 2009.
The most immediate ambiguity concerning vintage is the conflict between the *durable* qualities assumed in vintage clothes similar to those of vintage cars and wine, while trends in fashion are defined by the exact opposite quality namely constant *change*.

The very fact that something that was once produced within the fashion system and later rejected only to be re-incorporated as vintage years later is paradoxical in itself. Many vintage items were originally mass-produced. However, when rediscovered as vintage, they are desired for the exact opposite reason namely that the vintage items are considered one-of-a-kind and therefore unique. When this perception of uniqueness then goes on to becoming a mainstream phenomenon, the ambiguity only seems to grow stronger.

Another paradox is present in the tendency for secondhand clothes to become fashionable at a time when more people have access to more new fashionable clothes than ever before at least in the Euro-American markets due to globalization and increase in living standards. However, vintage might in fact be regarded as a product of globalization. Because fashion becomes available to larger consumer groups, it is increasingly difficult to distinguish oneself from the mainstream through the established fashion circuits. Therefore other means of social distinction are sought as we saw in Chapter 3. In fashion history there has been a tendency to achieve social distinction through demonstration of economic status. However, what the consumer is able to demonstrate by wearing vintage is a sense of style and a surplus of time. In other words, the skill of discovering vintage among the mass of secondhand coupled with the prime commodity of the late 20\textsuperscript{th} century namely time adds to the distinctive power of vintage.

These paradoxes in vintage are part of the motivation for choosing the Retro Trend as the case for the dissertation. The paradoxes attest to the complexity of contemporary trends and contribute to bringing out both the analytical potential and limitations of the Toolbox in the Analysis.

However, it is important to note here that there is also some confusion in the relation between ‘retro’ and ‘vintage.’ In “The Vogue of Vintage: Victim of its own success”\textsuperscript{320} Jessica Michault describes the difference: ”Retro applies to anything with the look of the past, from an Edwardian caplet to a pair of ’60s platform shoes.\textsuperscript{320}

Vintage, on the other hand, carries a similar resonance to furniture described as ‘antique’; experts believe that clothing, too, must have an appropriate, if not official, time lag.” Here retro is concerned with the immaterial revival and an imitation of style, while vintage is understood as a material revival and an original, whereas both terms are part of the Retro Trend in the dissertation. The two terms are also contrasted. As in “A Vintage Year, or Merely Retro?” in which Suzy Menkes, as the title also suggests, associates retro with the repetitive, negative quality and vintage with a timeless, positive quality. In a later article by Menkes, vintage seems to be connoting a negative quality: “It was just a pleasing nonvintage flea market look at Miu Miu.” This might suggest that the term vintage was going out of fashion perhaps due to saturation and over-exposure.

However, I do not find that this variation in the understanding attached to the two terms clouds the way they are used in this dissertation, since here they are rooted in a specific theoretical and analytical context.

Development of the Retro Trend and vintage

In order to understand vintage as the material revival of the Retro Trend, it is important to note certain events and developments that are considered to have paved the way for vintage and by implication have also boosted the Retro Trend.

The watershed moment for vintage is considered to be when Julia Roberts wore a vintage Valentino dress when she won the Oscar for “Best Actress” in 2001. Fashion writer Jessica Michault quotes Valentino for saying: “The huge impact that Julia Roberts made in my vintage dress will never happen again,’ [Valentino] said. ‘She did not just make an enormous impact as a fashion statement, but she created the vogue of the vintage dress so much that today also a dress of this season worn by Jennifer Aniston at the Golden Globes was labeled ‘vintage’ by the press’.” However, even before Roberts, celebrities’ taste for vintage was boosting the trend.

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322 In the article, she reviews designer Marc Jacobs’ a/w 2000 collection and concludes that he is retro in a negative sense because he is “Remaking vintage clothes piece by pattern piece.” And she asks: “Why is Jacobs, 37, so fixated on the fashions that women wore when he was in diapers?”
As fashion writer James Sherwood explains in 2000: “Celebrity endorsement has made vintage mainstream.”

The development among collectors also had an impact on the vintage phenomenon. Since the 1980s, what was regarded as collectible has been widened to include anything from gabardine pants to Hawaii-shirts, which broadened the understanding of what could be regarded as vintage. When an auction house such as Sotheby’s started having fashion auctions, it further contributed to validating clothing as valuable, which also served to stimulate the development of vintage in fashion.

There are two opposing understandings of retro: The first sees the revival of past trends as part of trend mechanisms. The second refers to subcultures that choose to practice a lifestyle of a different decade, for instance the Rockabilly subculture of the late 20th century. Retro according to Polhemus has to do with the desire to actually relive a particular historical period: “Retroland, where people in the 1990s live out their lives as if it was actually 1955.” Retro then is not a trend here, but rather holds the more stable preferences of a subculture.

In “Sixties Dress Only: The Consumption of the Past in a Retro Scene,” cultural anthropologist Heike Jenß demonstrates a similar understanding of retro in her study of a retro subculture “whose members practice a lifestyle marked by an affinity to ‘everything sixties,’ which is expressed in their daily dress practice, domestic interior, lifestyle.” Here retro is less about trend mechanisms and more about the self-performance and the construction of individuality within the framework of a subculture. However, though retro in the subcultural sense is opposite to the Retro Trend, they are connected in the sense of the Retro Trend capitalizing on the subcultures in strategies of social distinction and personal pleasure.

Vintage fashion was also boosted by the coming of the Internet and e-commerce, which opened private closets, collections, and warehouses from everywhere to everyone with an Internet connection and a credit card. Vintage clothes started to move in completely different ways and became far more accessible.

326 Based on an interview with Megan Howard, manager of the vintage department at Trans America Trading Company, wholesale and processor of used clothing, wiping rags, fiber, and textiles, Brooklyn, NY. February 28, 2006.
327 Stylesurfing, 93.
328 Old Clothes, New Looks, 177-195.
329 Ibid., 177.
330 Ibid., 194.
Consumers could see what was available regardless of where they were geographically but also what was valuable because sites like eBay played a role in stating the market value.

So by the 1990s, the interest in vintage moved from being part of a subcultural strategy and collectors’ items to being the material revival of the Retro Trend.

The past in the present
While the Retro Trend holds great potential in the process of updating and challenging the five Positions, because it raises issues concerning the basic organization of the Toolbox in relation to for instance topics of history, origin, and novelty; the Retro Trend also holds – and for the same reasons – potential for the opposite: Confusion.

Considering the etymology of the term, this is to be expected. Retro is from Latin meaning ‘back or backward.’ However, this might both refer to the revival materially, immaterially, and literally of past trends as seen in the Retro Trend, and to the basic premise of looking back as seen in all cultural production including fashion.

Here the distinction made between fashion and trend in Chapter 1 on terminology becomes useful. While fashion and trend were understood as two distinct but related terms, the main difference was that trend was defined by change alone while fashion as a more comprehensive term also covered aspects not primarily linked to trend mechanisms such as issues of gender, identity, creative process, and nationality as well as mercantile and environmental concerns of production, CSR, intelligent textiles, and sustainability.

The distinction between the Retro Trend and the premise in fashion can be seen as a subdivision of the terminology distinction in the sense that the Retro Trend uses historic material as the visual vehicle of the various trend mechanisms, while a certain level of historic awareness is always present in fashion. However, since this distinction is obviously difficult to clarify and important to the Analysis in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, a more elaborate account is called for. I will start by outlining the understanding of history and tradition in relation to creative and cultural expression.

Reflections on the role of the past in the present are widespread in academia. Useful insight in the relation between creative expression and the past is offered by

331 The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 1110.
author and poet T. S. Eliot (1888-1965) in the essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1922) in which he reflects on the relationship between poetry and tradition, the poet and the past. Here he argues that ‘the past is altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past.’ Translated from poetry to fashion, Eliot is describing the premise as a dialectical process between past – fashion history – and present – fashion designer.

While this observation is concerned specifically with the role of the ‘individual talent,’ which as we saw in the Mapping of Trend Theory is not the sole source of trends, other perspectives on how the past and present mutually constitute each other must be brought in to widen the perspective.

As Harold Koda and Richard Martin argue in The Historical Mode (1989), the role of the past in the present is described as a premise: “Every decade flirts with period recreations.” No cultural expression comes out of nothing but must necessarily, whether explicit or implicit, consciously or subconsciously, relate to what came before in a process of "reconstitution, reexamination, and revelation of the past.”

In "Theses on the Philosophy of History,” Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) uses the term ‘tiger’s leap’ – “Tigersprung” – as a figure that might serve to illustrate the presence of history as a premise in and through fashion: “The French Revolution viewed itself as Rome incarnate. It evoked ancient Rome the way fashion

332 The Sacred Wood, pp. 39-49.
333 The Sacred Wood, 41.
334 An image describing this process is a palimpsest, where previous texts are scraped away to allow for reuse of the parchment. The result is a layering of texts, where the old texts are still visible through the new. This image translates well to fashion trends that are always a product of this ‘archeological’ process.
335 The Historical Mode, 9. The book was published on the occasion of an exhibition at the Museum at FIT in New York, November 1 – January 1990.
336 The Historical Mode, 7.
337 Illuminations, 261. According Lehmann, the term was inspired by Engels. For a detailed account, see “Benjamin and the Revolution of Fashion and Modernity,” in Tigersprung, pp. 199-278.
338 In The Arcades Project, (1972), Benjamin developed another concept that might also shed light on the question of the past as premise: The ‘dialectical images.’ This is not to be understood as a comparison between past and present but rather as an exchange in which the two in the process come to constitute a third meaning transforming past and present in the process. A more in-depth discussion of the use of Benjamin’s notion of dialectical images in relation to fashion is seen in Caroline Evans’ "Yesterday’s Emblems and Tomorrow’s Commodities” (2000).
evokes costumes of the past. Fashion has a flair for the topical, no matter where it stirs in the thickets of long ago; it is a tiger’s leap into the past.\textsuperscript{339}

In addition to introducing the theme of Græco-Roman dress, which will be dealt with later in this chapter, the quote shows how fashion through this tiger’s leap is always a result of a negotiation between past and present. However, the image also brings out Benjamin’s political agenda that makes fashion an accomplice to the class system of capitalism, as the text continues: “This jump, however, takes place in an arena where the ruling class gives the commands.”\textsuperscript{340} While the constant negotiation between past and present is enrolled in morals and politics for Benjamin, the tiger’s leap still offers potential for describing the general premise of fashion.\textsuperscript{341}

Another aid in distinguishing the Retro Trend from the condition of creative expression, is the exhibition and book \textit{Spectres: When Fashion Turns Back},\textsuperscript{342} for which Benjamin was also an inspiration. As the title suggests, the exhibition explores the complex relationship fashion has to recollection, influence, history, and genealogy. Particularly, Benjamin’s understanding of the image of the labyrinth to describe the development of time and history in fashion proves fruitful in relation to describing the premise of fashion as different from the Retro Trend. As Caroline Evans argues in the book:

"Benjamin described how he once drew a diagram of his life as a labyrinth. The metaphor of history as a labyrinth allows the juxtaposition of historical images with contemporary ones; as the labyrinth doubles back on itself what is most modern is revealed as also having a relation to what is most old. Thus distant points in time can become proximate at specific moments as their paths run close to each other."\textsuperscript{343}

What is being described here is the premise of fashion as always taking the historical

\textsuperscript{339} "Theses on the Philosophy of History" in \textit{Illuminations}, 261.
\textsuperscript{341} The image has inspired several academic works most notably Ulrich Lehmann’s \textit{Tigersprung: Fashion in Modernity} (2000).
\textsuperscript{342} The exhibition was on display at the Victoria and Albert Museum, 24 February-8 May, 2005.
\textsuperscript{343} \textit{Spectres}, 19. Quote from Caroline Evans’ \textit{Fashion at the Edge}, 9.
into consideration. The labyrinth is a space in which the distinction between near and far is distorted and the passage through the labyrinth might seem disorienting. As an image for the link between fashion and history, the labyrinth seems apt. In relation to *Spectres*, the labyrinth as this disorientation or “drunken space” is understood as the designer’s process of getting lost in history, so to speak, as a means of finding one’s way in creation. In *The Fold* (1993), Deleuze also explores the concept of the labyrinth in its capacity as a Baroque figure, and describes it as ‘an infinite series that forms a webbing of time and embraces all possibilities.’ This understanding of time in fashion as ‘webbed’ and the inebriated space is seen among fashion designers around the turn of the millennium such as Dries Van Noten, Jean-Paul Gaultier, Comme des Garçons and Matthew Williamson.

“Counter Revolution” from 1947 featured in *Time* magazine, looks at the reaction in the US to the monumental presence of Christian Dior’s New Look, which was presented the same year. The article offers an insight into how the past is always present in fashion in the labyrinthine way of embracing the possibilities of the past. In the article, an interview is conducted with Sophie Gimbel, designer and head of the department store Saks Fifth Avenue’s Salon Moderne. She caused a stir at the time by reinterpreting the New Look with a shorter skirt and more comfortable waist that was, argues the article, perhaps even more popular than the original.

What is interesting in this context is the way her use of historical material is described: “like all other designers, she constantly combs over the styles of the last 5,000 years. One of her most fertile hunting grounds is the Brooklyn Museum, which she likes because it lets her take costumes back to her shop for copying.” Gimbel is quoted for saying that her inspiration for the current collection was found in everything from a man’s hunting coat to a 75-year-old camisole. As she states: “This year’s much touted ‘domino coat,’ which makes a woman look as if she were peering out of a tent, is nothing but the pyramid coat of 1866.”

These various renditions of past fashion seem to visualize both the presence of the dialectics between past and present as seen in the image of the tiger’s leap as well

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344 *Against Architecture*, 58.
345 *The Fold*, 62.
346 Among the designers featured in *Spectres*.
as the drunken space of the labyrinth in which the paths of the past converge and diverge in negotiation with the present.

**Retro as a trend**

Having now established how the past is present in fashion through the images of the tiger’s leap and the labyrinth, I will move on to how the Retro Trend is defined on this premise. As explained in Chapter 1, a trend is the visual manifestation of the trend mechanisms. A trend might be viewed in terms of a certain item of dress, a way of wearing an item, or a certain style, silhouette, material, color or pattern.

Continuing the focus on the designers, I will attempt to illustrate the difference between the fashion premise and the Retro Trend through the example of two different designers. Since 1970, American designer Ralph Lauren (b. 1939) has continuously worked with an aesthetic associated with the American West and the myth of the cowboy coupled with the preppy heritage of American culture. While the collections have varied from season to season, Lauren has continuously worked with the palimpsest of the ‘American text’ so to speak. While this is also part of Lauren’s brand story, the example still shows how a designer negotiates his past in the present as a premise of creation.

A designer working with the past in a Retro Trend context is Marc Jacobs who offers a good example with his a/w 2000 collection, which was a ladylike jumble of Mary Quant floral-patterned PVC raincoats, geometric Courreges coats and jumper dresses from the 1960s. While viewed isolated, this might be seen as the tiger’s leap. However, considering the history of Jacobs aesthetic, the grunge collections he did in both 1992 and a/w collection 2006, this pendulum swing between ladylike and grunge suggests the historical references are used according to the trend.

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348 Though it was argued in Chapter 2 that the role of the designer has been diminished in relation to trend mechanisms, the example should still be illustrative of the difference between trend and premise.
349 For Perry Ellis' s/s 1993 collection.
351 Pendulum, as formulated by Dwight E. Robinson in “Style Changes: Cyclical, Inexorable, and Foreseeable” (1975), refers to the tendency for trends to swing from one extreme and then, when the possibilities are exhausted the trend swings to the opposite extreme. The classic example of the pendulum swing is the rise and fall of hemlines but the swing is also seen between formal and casual, slim and full silhouettes and so on. The pendulum logic is driven by a notion of saturation that is inherent in positions such as Seduction and Market.
mechanisms. That is not to say, that Lauren is not influenced by trend mechanisms and Jacobs does not operate on the tiger’s leap premise of fashion.

The issues of premise versus trend will be intensified in the Analysis from the point of view that this question is made increasingly complex by the development in trend mechanisms in the Noughties. It is not difficult to find examples where the distinction between premise and trend is difficult to maintain. However, I still find that the distinction between premise and the Retro Trend is now clear enough to avoid unnecessary confusion.

**Anticomanie** and other retro trends

Retro trends are nothing new, so to speak, and neither is the theory about them. As Agnes Brooks Young wrote as early as in 1937: “Of course it is true that over many centuries and in numerous literatures there are to be found statements to the effect that fashions which were formerly in favor have reappeared after having been entirely out of use for many years.” While Young explores the possibility of laws of recurring trends through quantitative analysis of fashion plates in the period 1760-1937, she is referring here to the general presence of revivals or cycles throughout fashion history.

An obvious example for discussing the retro trends throughout fashion history is the revival of ancient Greek dress. Not only is it one of the most persistent sources of revivals; it also became subject to perhaps the first retro trend ever when the Romans reinterpreted the style. The revival of the Græco-Roman styles will be explained in more detail here to allow for a clearer impression of retro trends as a universal phenomenon and what is specific to a particular version. This will be useful in the Analysis of the Retro Trend in relation to determining whether trends are going out of fashion.

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352 For instance: Is it retro when Yves Saint Laurent begins to reference his own work as was the case from 1979? *The Mondrian*-dress from 1965 reappeared as a jacket in 1979, a blouse and full skirt from the Opera collection 1976 reappeared in 1980, and then there was the repeated reworking of *le smoking*, *le blazer*, *the trouser suit*, *safari jacket*, *le trench*, and the *peacoat*. *The Beautiful* Fall, 279.

353 In the meaning of trends in this context.

354 *Recurring Cycles of Fashion*, vii. She does not, however, include sources nor does the book have a bibliography.

355 After the Roman revival of Greek fashion, the two tend to merge into what Koda in *Goddess* terms ‘classical’ or ‘Græco-Roman’. I will use the same terms.
In *Goddess: The Classical Mode*, Harold Koda brings attention to the fact that “components of classical attire have appeared throughout Western fashion’s six-hundred-year history.” The components might vary from construction (draping and cinching), columnar silhouettes, pleats, white, and decorative elements such as key and wave meander patterns.

Perhaps the most comprehensive Graeco-Roman revival was seen in the period from the 1790s to the 1810s – what Laver refers to as *anticomanie* and Benjamin referred to as ‘Rome incarnate’ – as linked to the French Revolution (1787-1799). From the crowning of Napoleon Bonaparte as emperor in 1804 to the architecture of L’Église de la Madeleine in Paris, inspiration was sought in Antiquity. The political atmosphere at the time also seemed to be reflected in women’s fashion with inspiration drawing on togas and tunics as well as the omnipresence of white. Women’s bodies were liberated from the constricted corset that was replace with lighter ones (short stays and regency stays). Shoes were flat and materials as light as nightgowns. The silhouette was flowing with the waist gathered just beneath the bosom – the *empire* waist – lending an overall impression of an ancient pillar. In tune with fashion, interior decoration was also influenced by anticomanie with the rise in popularity of pillars and white marble.

However, the classical elements during for instance the *Directoire* and *Empire* periods are not static visual expressions, but rather they develop continuously during the course of the anticomanie trend in terms of for instance material, hemline, and décolletage. It is interesting that the notion of profusion in trend mechanisms was evident this far back in fashion history.

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357 *Goddess*, 18.
359 *Taste and Fashion*, 17.
361 French Directoire period ca. 1795-1804 and the Empire period ca. 1804-1820. Periods according to *Kleeddragtens Kavalkade*, 76-81.
363 An interesting point here is that anticomanie appear to represent a gradual development in fashion history towards more liberated conditions for women. This was, however, not the case. On the contrary, the empire dress gave way to more constricted forms first with the renewed focus on the waist with Biedermeier (ca. 1820-1835) and later with the crinolines of the neo-rococo period (1835-1879).
The point of foregrounding the anticomanie trend is to illustrate that the revivals in a retro trend are not concerned with the premise of creative expression, the tiger’s leap. Rather the revival is used to feed the various strategies of the trend mechanisms. In other words, the continuous revival of classical fashion is not concerned with the imitation or recreation of the past as was the case with the retro subcultures. In this sense, the Græco-Roman style in particular and retro trends in general become a constantly growing assemblage of all the classical revivals.\textsuperscript{364}

Since the publication of \textit{The Classical Mode} in 2003, the Græco-Roman styles have continued to resurface. In the s/s 2008 collections, there was a strong presence of tunics and togas in Donna Karan, Alberta Ferretti, and Very Wang. And the summer of 2008 saw a surge of gladiator-sandals in Copenhagen as well as in the UK and USA. As recent as January 2009, Style.com announced in its \textit{Spring 2009 Trend Report}, that “Goddess Worship” with Grecian draping would be a top trend.\textsuperscript{365} This suggests that the classical mode is the longest running trend in fashion history which in turn raises the issues concerning the speed of trends – or the lack thereof – and whether trends actually move towards a demise.\textsuperscript{366} These issues will be returned to in Chapters 5 and 6.

\textbf{Time lag}

As suggested in the Introduction, the apparent shortened trend cycles – giving rise to the ‘24-hour fashion news cycle’\textsuperscript{367} and the notion of ‘everything being simultaneously out’\textsuperscript{368} – were among the key sources to the imminent death threat to trends. This raises the question of the importance of time lag in fashion trends. Here the Retro Trend is a particularly pertinent case, because of the way it complicate notions of past, time, recollection, and continuum.


\textsuperscript{365} Posted and accessed on January 14, 2009.

\textsuperscript{366} \textit{Fashion, Culture, and Identity}, 103-104.


To establish a point of reference, I will bring up a chart made by James Laver describing the temporal organization of time lags in fashion, which he described in 1959, and what was later termed “Laver’s Law.”

“We can therefore draw up a chart and say: the same dress is indecent ten years before its time; daring one year before its time; chic (contemporarily seductive) in its time; dowdy five years after its time; hideous twenty years after its time; amusing thirty years after its time; romantic one hundred years after its time; beautiful one hundred and fifty years after its time. It would have been quite impossible to revive the fashions of the mid-twenties until thirty years had elapsed. Thirty years elapsed and behold! Those fashions or modes very like them came back again.”

While describing the by now familiar process of inclusion, exclusion and re-inclusion of trends in fashion over a span of 160 years, Laver attempts to add another level of order to the process. While this chart may have applied to the period preceding the time in which he was writing, it has evidently gone out of fashion when bearing in mind the Valentino dress on Julia Roberts in 2001 as a catalyst for vintage. In an article confirming the importance of the dress in relation to vintage, Suzy Menkes dates the dress to the 1980s. Evidently, the dress falls outside Laver’s Law, according to which it would reside somewhere between ‘dowdy’ and ‘hideous’. Considering that the dress is in fact even younger dating from Valentino’s a/w 1992 couture collection, this additional reduction of the time lag only emphasizes the point.

The importance of time lag as an organizing principle in fashion in general and retro trends in particular is ingrained in most of the Positions in the Mapping of Trend Theory, which in turn suggests that the collapse of this chart will pose certain challenges to the analytical potential of the Toolbox in the Analysis. Time lag

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370 In Retro: The Culture of Revival, 160.
372 “It started with Julia Roberts and the graphic black-and-white ‘vintage’ Valentino dress from the 1980s she wore to the Oscars to critical acclaim. Since then, any star worth the name is swapping new designer clothes for old.” “Fash File: Thrill of the Search, Joy of the Unique” IHT Suzy Menkes June 5, 2001.
assumes a temporal gap – between new and old, in and out, inception and demise, innovators and laggards – and the difficulty in maintaining these dichotomies will be a central theme in the Analysis in Chapter 5 and 6. The development of the Rhizomatic Position will offer a spatial approach to trends that might resolve the issues of time lags in particular and the temporal approach to trends in general.

Is it all garbage?
The Retro Trend brings up the interesting perspective of whether everything within the framework of fashion history is caught up in what is described as a “potentially endless cycles of de- and revalorization”\(^{374}\) in *Second-Hand Cultures* (2003). This would mean the elimination of the entire notion of ‘rubbish,’\(^{375}\) when considering vintage as the celebration of waste and the notion of everything being simultaneously ‘out.’

However, while the Retro Trend does challenge these previous standards of organization – such as the dichotomy of in and out – the answer would be negative to the question asked by Stephen Brown in *Marketing: The Retro Revolution*: “Is the Retro Trend the normal state of affairs?”\(^{376}\) Although it is clear now that the conception of new is more than the equivalent to an innovation, an invention, or a functional improvement, there are still new occurrences in fashion trends in the Noughties that are not retrospective such as graffiti and skater culture often referred to as *streetwear*, as well as sustainability, charitable fashion and a widespread focus on organic materials, CSR, and fairtrade.

Motivation for The Retro Trend in EW as Case
The role of history in fashion is a vast and complex issue, as the source material I have dealt with also indicates. I have merely scratched the surface here but sufficiently, I feel, to be able to distinguish the tiger’s leap and the labyrinth as a premise of fashion, on the one hand, and retro as a trend, on the other.

The Retro Trend is relevant as a case here not only because it looks back but in the way it looks back. The purpose of the case study is as a testing ground for the five Positions established in the Mapping in Chapter 3. What will be important in the

\(^{374}\) *Second-Hand Cultures*, 200.
\(^{375}\) *Second-Hand Cultures*, 201.
Analysis in Chapter 5 is not to determine which is the right trend mechanism, but to study the analytical potential and limitations of each of the Positions. The case is analytically grounded rather than empirically from the point of view that the research question is theoretical while the empirical material serves as an analytical vehicle.

Because of the paradoxes and complexity of the Retro Trend, it should provide ample material for this purpose. A number of tensions have been outlined already in relation to the challenges in maintaining certain dichotomies that are basic to the organization in most of the Positions, such as the temporal dichotomies listed above. There are a number of other dichotomies that were rendered complicated particularly by the material revival – vintage – between mass-production and one-of-a-kind, classic and ephemeral, old and new, right and wrong.

Another important point in the Retro Trend are the subversive strategies at play which seem to indicate a development in the trend mechanisms towards a larger degree of destabilization and disruption. As we will see in Chapter 5, these strategies bring in the use of kitsch to achieve as specific effect. Here the exploration of kitsch by Christa Lykke Christensen is relevant. She traces the origin of kitsch to the industrialization and urbanization at the end of the 19th century and the ensuing notion of imitation as bad taste. However, kitsch in the 1990s is more concerned with the deliberate celebration of bad taste as effect. What is important is no longer whether or not something is beautiful; rather it needs to be interesting. Christensen mentions irony, stylization, and artifice among the strategies for achieving this effect, which will be evident in the Analysis.

Magazines should prove suitable for this purpose. As a product of a collective effort with a multitude of actors, magazines themselves constitute a complex site for generating and reflecting current trends while also containing both commercial mechanisms and input from fashion practice. This composite constitution should allow for all the Positions to be properly tested without reducing the complexity of either the Retro Trend or the Positions.

377 “Tingenes tidsalder: Kitsch, camp og fetichisme,” 30. Christensen argues that kitsch was associated with the notion of inauthenticity linked to the industrialization of the late 19th century that allowed for ‘cheap mass-produced imitations of the style of the elite,’ which were considered in ‘bad taste.’ “Tingenes tidsalder,” 29. In addition, the urbanization from that period on resulted in a sense of ‘being rootless in relation to the traditional folk culture and as well as the cultural forms of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie’ “Tingenes tidsalder,” 30.

378 “Tingenes tidsalder,” 33-34.
CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS – of the Retro Trend by Applying the Five Positions of the Mapping

The previous chapters have laid the ground for the Analysis by defining the five Positions that are tools for analyzing trend mechanism as well as motivating the choice of the Retro Trend as case, Eurowoman as the empirical material, and intensive period 2000 and 2001 of study. The purpose of the Analysis is to update, challenge, and develop trend studies in an effort to consolidate trend studies as a field as well as explore the validity of the rumors that trends may be going out of fashion. The Analysis will be concluded in Chapter 6 that explores the Line of Development of the Retro Trend in the extensive period of study 2002-2009.

The turn of the millennium seemed to hold a promise of wiping the slate clean and putting an end to the retro trend of the 1990s: "Now we have been through the 1970s, the 1980s, and then the 1990s, and after that fashion should be back in line with the rest of the world, ready to start the new millennium." However, as we will see, retro did not go out of fashion with the millennium, but continued to develop throughout the first decade of the 21st century.

The iterative process of the Analysis

As described in the Introduction to the dissertation, the Analysis unfolds according to an iterative process according to which a cycle of operations is repeated to refine the Positions as well as foreground the issues that are problematic in the Toolbox through these cycles of successive approximations. For an illustration of the iterative process (see FIGURE 1 in the Appendix). The first cycle of analysis looks at the first version of the Retro Trend, Granny Chic, which forms the basis for the rest of the analytical process. The second cycle looks at the second version, Glam, which is compared to the first whereby the result is refined. The third cycle looks at how the two first versions are merged which adds additional depth and perspective to unraveling the analytical potential of the Toolbox.

379 “Two steps forward and a look back” “To skridt frem og et kig tilbage,” EW35, 59. The article paraphrases Suzy Menkes, ”Nu er vi ved at være igennem 70erne og 80erne, så kommer 90erne, og derefter er moden ved at komme op på højde med resten af verden, klar til at tage hul på det nye årtusinde.” The original source is not given.
Since the intensive study is concerned with trend mechanisms in the Retro Trend as such rather than the progression – Line of Development – which is the focus of the extensive period of study, the EW material from 2000 and 2001 will be viewed as a whole rather than a temporal progression.

As described in the Introduction and Chapter 3, the five Positions are non-commensurable in the sense that the purpose of the Mapping and the Analysis is to unfold the analytical potential of each Position rather than a comparative analysis between the Positions themselves. While there will be comparisons made between the Positions, the purpose is to strengthen the analysis of each Position.

The organization of the Retro Trend material and Analysis has come from the material itself. In other words, I have not attempted to place pre-defined structures onto the material but have attempted to look at what the material was ‘saying’ while balancing the objective and the relative according to the notion of strong objectivity. While the iterative approach might yield a complicated structure of matrixes and the successive approximations might generate some redundancy, the result should highlight the potentials as well as limitations of the Toolbox without reducing the complexity of trend mechanisms.

**Retro as premise or trend**

In Chapter 4, an attempt was made to distinguish between history and tradition as part of the premise of fashion trends on the one hand and the Retro Trend on the other. Inevitably the two are linked, since the Retro Trend operates within the framework of the fashion premise. The main difference highlighted was the relatively stable condition of premise – visualized as the *tiger’s leap* and a *labyrinth* – on the one hand, and the necessity for change and novelty in the trend mechanisms on the other.

**Three Versions of Retro**

After going through the EW material from 2000 and 2001, it became clear that the material on the Retro Trend was so extensive it was necessary to narrow the focus. As there were many versions of Retro within the same trend, I decided to concentrate on three versions of Retro: *Granny Chic, Glam* and *Mix*:
1. **Granny Chic** refers to a prim and pretty version of the Retro Trend inspired by grandmothers – both imagined and real – with emphasis on the era of the 1940s as well as the 1950s.\(^{380}\)

2. **Glam** refers to the sexy, extravagant style of the early 1980s.

3. **Mix** is about juxtaposing and connecting Granny Chic and Glam as well as other material.

Focusing on three version of Retro should hopefully allow for detailed and comprehensive exploration of the Positions. There are several other versions that could have been equally suitable for the Analysis such as Punk.\(^{381}\) Another possibility might have been to focus on the revival of a decade alone such as the 1970s, which are prominent in the period rather than a style or visual expression related to a decade. This organization was abandoned to avoid unnecessary complication since a decade can be a problematic construction. As Japanese designer Rei Kawakubo has argued: “We find it completely irrelevant to categorize according to decade. It does not serve any purpose and is far too simplified.”\(^{382}\)

The choice of the three versions was motivated by volume alone rather than what might fit the research question best. After registering all the Retro Trend material in the EW material, I proceeded to organize the data in themes and found that the three versions were the ones with the most volume and therefore should provide ample material for the Analysis.

Before moving into the actual Analysis, I will first describe what is meant by Granny Chic and how the version operates in the intensive period of the EW material. While this may seem to be a rather lengthy endeavor, I have found it necessary in order to establish a solid visual framework to support the Analysis.

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\(^{380}\) Granny Chic is not to be confused with the notion of the *grey gold* according to which the older generation, grandmothers for instance, have the interest and means to follow fashion trends.

\(^{381}\) Punk held a rich potential as a version, because it challenges the notion of time lag, confirms the Logic of Wrong, mutates in the extensive period, and has a special status in being considered one of the last subculture, at least according to Polhemus who states that ‘after punk everything had been done and the only way forward was in reverse,’ *Stylesurfing*, 71.

\(^{382}\) Interview in *Cover* November 2008 by Charlotte Torpegaard, pp. 92-93. My translation.
First version: Granny Chic – general description

Considering the struggle teenagers had with conquering a wardrobe of their own in the 1950s and 1960s, the occurrence of Granny Chic might seem ironic with its taste for all things Granny. However, upon analyzing the Granny Chic version it will become clear that much more is at play than a paradoxical return to the closets of the older generation from which the younger generations have previously fought to escape. This version of the Retro Trend moves beyond the realm of clothes and into other fields such as beauty – how would she wear her hair and makeup? – and lifestyle in general – what would she prefer to sit on, live in, sip her coffee from, eat and eat on, read, do in her spare time, and even what her household remedies were. In addition, Granny appears herself in many guises in the EW material acting as a personification of this version of Retro. Granny Chic is a highly complex version of an already complex Retro Trend, which should make it suitable for unfolding the analytical potentials of the Positions and identify the problems.

While Glam and Mix are terms used in the EW material, Granny Chic is not mentioned verbatim though there is one example of the Danish equivalent being used: "bedstemorstilen er over os” which translates into “Granny Chic is here.”383 The Danish words for Granny – bedstemor, farmor, mormor – are found throughout the EW material384 without however being concentrated in one term. Therefore I have found it useful to use the English term Granny Chic because the term needed to be precise enough yet sufficiently broad to encompass such a sprawling and complex version of Retro as Granny Chic.

Choosing Granny Chic was also motivated by the wide use of the term in Anglo-American media385 in the period 1999-2009, which I found would provide an

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383 EW44, 24.
384 Some examples are: The title of interior spread “Mormors Kolonihavehus” EW38, 130-133, fashion description “Pelskrave som vor mormo kunne lide det” EW25, 34, Tendens entitled “Vintage-Style:” “farmors gamle kjoler blev også luftet” EW37, 26, Tendens: "Bedstemor med slag i” (EW44, 24) to name a few.
international perspective that would supplement the EW material while still maintaining the focus as Danish.

Since the research question is concerned with exploring trend mechanism in contemporary fashion and determining whether trends are going out of fashion faced with decentralization and democratization, it is important to allow for room to show how this complexity operates in some detail. If the result of this research is to move beyond the conclusions of “anything goes” or the death of trends, foregrounding the full complexity of trends is of the essence.

Now that the purpose of the strategy employed in the Analysis has been explained and the choice and definition of the first version of the Retro Trend, Granny Chic, has been defined, I will move on to look more specifically at Granny Chic in the EW material.

Even within just one version of the already complex Retro Trend, Granny Chic is a sprawling phenomenon. In order to create structure to the material, I will organize the description of the three versions according to the three categories of retro as established in Chapter 4. Though the categories literal, immaterial, and material each hold different potentials for bringing out the analytical potential of the Toolbox, they will be interwoven in the Analysis.

1. **Material revival** – secondhand clothes, but also accessories, and furniture
2. **Immaterial revival** – specific styles in clothing as well as interior decoration, beauty, cooking, music, living, illustration, styling, editorial and more.
3. **Literal revival** – re-releases of fashion items from archives, the revival of style icons as the embodiment of the Retro Trend and archive photos used as illustration.

**Granny Chic and literal revival**

All three categories of Retro are present in Granny Chic. The *literal revival* is seen in for instance the theme of the classic handbag in the shape of Dior’s *Windsor*-bag.\(^{387}\)

\(^{386}\) “Alt er tilladt,” in *Stil*, EW24, 35.
and Hermès’ *Kelly*-bag\textsuperscript{388} and *Birkin*-bag\textsuperscript{389} and the revival of the Burberry trench coat, which before might have been considered part of the Granny uniform.\textsuperscript{390} There is also the renewed interest in existing items such as gloves from the old store, Randers Handsker.\textsuperscript{391} In a broader sense, the literal revival is seen in Danish Modern classics by for instance Arne Jacobsen and Verner Panton (1926-1998) that were put back in production in their original form as were products by international designers such as Charles (1907-1978) and Ray (1912-1988) Eames. Design objects are both revived and recontextualized as seen in for instance the fashion spread “Optik obskur”\textsuperscript{392} where a Le Klint 172 lamp designed by Poul Christiansen in 1971\textsuperscript{393} is foregrounded by being the only object on a page. The lamp comes to function as a fashion accessory, which is further highlighted when the lamp is credited in the same way as the clothes with a price (see Illustration 1).\textsuperscript{394}

Granny Chic as a literal revival could be extended to include bars where she might have come in her younger years, such as the old-fashioned Palæ Bar in Copenhagen, which is featured in a Tuborg-ad.\textsuperscript{395} Literal revival is also seen in the references to style icons that are suggested to personify Granny Chic – from Margaret Thatcher to Queen Margrethe II – as well as the widespread use of archive photos for editorial illustration that often also refer to design classics (see Illustration 2).

Finally the literal revival is seen in the return of certain everyday practices often associated with the 1950s housewife such as handiwork, which will be treated later in the chapter, and household remedies that are often included in the regular *Delikatesse*, which might describe how to remove burnt food from a pot\textsuperscript{396} or encourage women to drink milk.\textsuperscript{397} Here archive photos are often used to illustrate the short stories some of which refer directly to the housewife.\textsuperscript{398} The housewife is also in

\textsuperscript{388} EW27, 20.
\textsuperscript{389} EW33, 120.
\textsuperscript{390} See EW23, 90-93.
\textsuperscript{391} Some examples are EW41, 12; EW42, 20; EW45, 24. On their website www.randers-handsker.dk it says ”Randers Handskefabrik byder Dem velkommen” confirming the deliberately old-fashioned brand identity
\textsuperscript{392} EW25, 130-139.
\textsuperscript{393} The design feature “I lyset af Le Klint” EW27, 122-125 looks at Le Klint as a design icon illustrated with archive photos.
\textsuperscript{394} All Illustrations are in the Appendix.
\textsuperscript{395} EW30, 41.
\textsuperscript{396} EW37, 142.
\textsuperscript{397} EW36, 132.
\textsuperscript{398} Two examples are found on EW33, 176 with two pictures of housewives making the bed.
focus in the design spread, “My favorite things”399 where there is an image of a prim lady presenting a tray of food, and one where the woman is vacuum cleaning (see Illustration 3).

Not only are Granny’s clothes, make-up, and hairstyles celebrated, but her hobbies and tastes on a more general level are as well. The classic Granny crafts of sewing, knitting and crocheting – generally referred to as DIY – are prominent in the EW material. One example is the Tendens entitled: “Bedstemor med slag i” which refers both to a traditional Danish card game and an expression for a spunky grandmother. The text reads: “Grab your crochet hook, go through Granny’s attic, or go to night school to learn embroidery, because Granny Chic is here. Now lace and flowers, bead embroidery and needlepoint are no longer old-fashioned”400 (see Illustration 4). This craftiness is linked to a strong interest in customization401 in the sense of putting your own touch on your outfit be it by making it yourself or simply adding a personal touch. One Podium encourages the readers to make their own T-shirt,402 while a Tendens offers a more elaborate approach: “Customizing is hot right now. For some people clothes in their original shape and color are no longer enough. They have to be re-sewn, cut off, ripped and decorated with prints, needlepoint and sequins.”403

Granny Chic and immaterial revival

The immaterial revival of Granny Chic is seen in the widespread presence of what EW calls Ladylike (see Illustration 5) that is the style Granny might have preferred in her prime – had she been Grace Kelly404 – but might also refer to looking like a grandmother as seen with for instance the 80-year-old socialite Varvara Hasselbalch,405 veteran fashion writer Didder Rønlund, who is considered one of the

399 EW26, 114-121.
400 “Fat hæklepinden, rod på mormors loft, eller tag et aftenskulekursus i finere broderi, for bedstemorstilen er over os. Nu er blonder og blomster, perlebroderi og korssting ikke længere gammeldags!” EW44, 24.
401 What is later referred to as DIY (Do It Yourself).
402 Podium, EW36, 24. ”Lav din egen t-shirt.”
404 Examples of references to Grace Kelly include EW24, 70, EW27, 80, and EW27, 89.
405 EW22, 30-34.
"10 best-dressed women,"406 (see Illustration 6), and British author Barbara Cartland, who is featured showing off a wardrobe of extravagant, pink gowns.407

At first glance, it seems surprising that a fashion magazine that is concerned with the new and targets a younger readership within a framework of a culture that celebrates youth,408 would promote a theme such as Ladylike. In addition, the strong attention given to classics in fashion and design in the EW material also seems paradoxical considering the assumed stability of a classic in the face of the necessity of change in trends. What then is at play, when a fashion forward magazine such as Eurowoman promotes a Ladylike revival in the years 2000 and 2001?

In EW, Ladylike is most obvious in the fashion and beauty elements. The style is described as mainly 1940s but also 1950s with materials such as tweed, fur, wool, fur, chiffon and silk.409 The style is covered and prim, with handbags and brooches as primary accessories.

The Ladylike style is seen in the fashion spreads such as “‘Je reviens’”410 that describes the 1940s as ‘one of the most dominating trends of the moment.’ The look is characterized by tweed jackets, pearl earrings, and brooches. Hair and make-up styles are also inspired by the 1940s.411 The fashion spread "Summer Chic,"412 mentions Ladylike and the fashion spread: “Én på frakken”413 shows Ladylike, 1940s clothes and the models are styled to suit the decade. The description reads: “The new coats of the season are reminiscent of the original form of the lady’s overcoat. The materials are old-fashioned, thick and heavy.”414 Another fashion spread clearly showing the Ladylike look is the fashion spread: “Repulsion: This is Not a Dream. This is Reality.”415

406 "Stilissimo” EW43, 83.
407 "En lyserød sky” EW29, 31.
408 As documented by for instance Heike Jenß in “Dressed in History: Retro Styles and the Construction of Authenticity in Youth Culture,” and seen in examples such as the rise of the mini in the 1960s as an example of a new trend targeting a young audience and celebrating youth culture by creating distance to older generations and former fashion trends.
410 EW32, 76-85.
411 EW32, 76.
412 EW28, 66-73.
413 EW31, 106-115.
414 “Sæsonens nye overtøj sender tankerne tilbage til damefrakkens oprindelige form. Materialerne er gammeldags, tykke og tung” EW31, 106.
415 EW37, 84-91.
Several fashion elements are entitled “Ladylike,” such as the fashion spread in on EW25, 116-119 and Podium on EW27, 20. The latter is interesting in the sense of attempting to personify the trend through several famous icons: “Cool girls should be Ladylike with the classic elegance of Miss Moneypenny, Catherine Deneuve, Audrey Hepburn, and our own neurotic Maude.”

While the classic Hollywood stars such as Audrey Hepburn and Grace Kelly are widely used both in images and text, visualizing the Retro Trend in general and Granny Chic in particular through icons is not limited to the classic stars but also covers a range of unexpected characters. The quote above mentions Maude who is the unhappy wife of the bank manager in the Danish TV-show Matador set in the period 1929-1947 in the provincial Danish town of Korsbæk. Matador and Maude are used as a reference many times over the period in question suggesting the subversive, destabilizing forces described in the Mapping. Some examples are the fashion spread: “Trend Show 2000,” which presents the most dominant trends of the season one of which is described: “A Perfect Lady: When Maude and Miss Friis strolled down the streets of Korsbæk, it was with an enviable and sophisticated femininity”, and the fashion spread “Prêt-a-porter” where the Prada collection is described as “klassisk 40er” with reference to both Maude and Miss Friis.

Immaterial revival of Granny Chic – here coupled with the material revival – is also documented at street level for instance in Tendens “Vintage-Style” where someone’s grandmother is referred to as a fashion leader: “This incredible shirt is an heirloom from Granny – she must have been a funky lady.”

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416 “Fikse tøser skal være dame med alt, hvad dertil hører af klassisk elegance a la Miss Moneypenny, Catherine Deneuve, Audrey Hepburn og vores egen neurotiske Maude,” EW27, 20.
417 Some examples are EW27, 20, EW30, 20, EW36, 22.
418 Some examples are EW27, 20, EW27, 80, EW27, 86, EW24, 70, EW27, 89.
419 The show ran 1978-1981.
420 EW26, 98-105.
421 Maude’s sister in Matador. Features as part of a Top 20 for Winter 2000/2001 EW, 84.
422 “A perfect lady: Når Maude og Frøken Friis spadserede ned ad gaderne i Korsbæk, var det med misundelsesværdig og sofistikeret kvindelighed” EW26, 99.
423 EW30, 76-85.
424 EW24, 71.
425 “Denne fantastiske skjorte er et arvestykke fra farmor – hun må have været en funky dame” EW37, 26.
Immaterial revival of Granny Chic is also seen in beauty for instance in Podium Look “Let’s Twist again”\(^\text{426}\) in which the hairstyles are neat and sensual “bordering on boring”\(^\text{427}\) emphasized by the return of the hairnet while also hinting at the Logic of Wrong, outlined in the Mapping, by highlighting the look as boring. A similar example is seen in the beauty spread “Close Up” that features a fusion of the ugly and the beautiful\(^\text{428}\) (see Illustration 7).

Granny’s taste in design is also revived. An interesting example is the revival of an entire category within design seen in the renewed interest in ceramics as seem in the feature “Cool Keramik”\(^\text{429}\) in which young Danish ceramicists such as Ditte Fischer\(^\text{430}\) as a proponent of the new ‘cool ceramics’ is coupled with the material revival of classic Danish ceramicists such as Bjørn Wiinblad (1918-2006). Finally, there is the material revival of generic ceramics as described in Delikatesse,\(^\text{431}\) which relates to vintage.\(^\text{432}\)

Interior decoration is also influenced by Granny Chic perhaps most persistently with the return of wallpaper such as in interior special: “Four Trends: Wood, Tradition, Materials, and Glass,”\(^\text{433}\) the interior spread ”Moderne nostalgi”\(^\text{434}\): ”We are going to see a lot of different types of wallpaper on our walls again in the future,”\(^\text{435}\) and interior spread ”Klædt på i papir,”\(^\text{436}\) which predicts ”the comeback of wallpaper in interior design."\(^\text{437}\) The spread plays on the image of a cut-out doll which shows how the Retro Trend joins various fields – interior design and fashion in this case.\(^\text{438}\)

\(^{426}\) EW29, 83.  
\(^{427}\) ”grænsende til det kedelige” EW29, 83.  
\(^{428}\) EW29, 84-93.  
\(^{429}\) EW30, 118.  
\(^{430}\) EW26, 128.  
\(^{431}\) EW41, 120.  
\(^{432}\) Other examples are seen in EW30, 118; EW31, 152-153.  
\(^{433}\) ”Fire Tendenser: Træ, tradition, materialer og glas.” EW32, 128-131.  
\(^{434}\) EW25, 148-151.  
\(^{435}\) ”Vi kommer i den nærmeste fremtid til at se mange forskellige typer tapet på vores vægge igen” EW25, 148.  
\(^{436}\) EW44, 94-97.  
\(^{437}\) ”Tapeternes comeback in boligindretningen” EW44, 94.  
\(^{438}\) Wallpaper also forms the backdrop in a portrait of American actress Cameron Diaz, which indicates how the Retro Trend contributes to setting a mood in areas of the EW material that are not directly linked to fashion and design EW23, 16.
Kitchenware and food are also influenced by Granny Chic both immaterially and materially. The interior spread “Gris på gaflen” presents a mix of old and new cutlery and kitchenware. The food presented is traditional Danish open-faced sandwiches, *smørrebrød*. This indirect reference to the eating habits of Granny are seen several places such as “It’s Christmas, It’s Cool” with updated versions of classic, Danish Christmas dishes. There are examples where recipes are given for classic Danish desserts such as *koldskål* and *citronfromage*. In “A Good Danish Lunch” featuring classic, Danish dishes such as fish cakes are served on classic Danish tableware such as the Mågestel pattern from Royal Copenhagen.

Immaterial revival is also seen in drawn illustrations that are inspired by the age of the Granny in style and figuration. An example is seen in a feature on why women are attracted to older men: “Getting Married to Daddy.” In addition to referring to the title of a classic song by Danish singer Gitte Hænning from 1955, the illustrations by Dorte Naomi Nielsen are a pastiche of the 1950s style while also including what appears to be revivals of design items such as a Panton-lamp and a Krenit bowl by Herbert Krenchel (see Illustration 8).

**Granny Chic and material revival**

The *material revival* will deal with what Granny might actually have worn – referred to as vintage – and what she might have used in her home. Vintage refers here to pre-owned designer items, generic secondhand, and heirlooms. The various paradoxes of vintage discussed in Chapter 4, challenges the entire notion of ‘novelty’ implicit in trend mechanisms. When looking up the word ‘new’ in the *American Heritage*...
Of the three versions of Retro, the material revival is strongest in Granny Chic. Vintage ranges from what Granny actually did wear such as “Sporting Granny’s old dresses”\textsuperscript{447} in Tendens “Vintage-Style”\textsuperscript{448} (see Illustration 9) to what she was imagined to have liked in her day such as “vintage Pucci” seen in for instance the street fashion images from New York Fashion Week.\textsuperscript{449} In the same spread reference is made to a vintage dress of generic origins. In other words, connections between vintage and Granny are at times direct and at other times indirect. Other examples are when new and old versions of the same look are juxtaposed as in “Gucci og Genbrug.”\textsuperscript{450} Here the vintage items are anything from hats, bags, shoes, belts, and sunglasses to capes and shirts. The text encourages readers to look for the vintage items in “secondhand stores or Granny’s attic.”\textsuperscript{451} A rich source of vintage items are the editorial elements where women present their personal things such as for instance “Stilissimo: The 10 Best Dressed Women in Denmark.”\textsuperscript{452} The ten-page feature opens: “They love vintage clothes and high heels.”\textsuperscript{453} One example is stylist Andrea Nielsen’s answer to the question: “Do you have a style trait?” and she answers: “I wear a lot of secondhand.”\textsuperscript{454}

Designers such as Verner Panton\textsuperscript{455} and Charles and Ray Eames\textsuperscript{456} are also part of the material revival as are Hans Wegner (1914-2007) and most prominently Danish architect and designer Arne Jacobsen (1902-1971). He figures in the material from stories about the Jacobsen cutlery used in Stanley Kubrick’s 2001, A Space Odyssey (1968) on the smallest scale to how the Radisson SAS Royal Hotel in Copenhagen which was designed by Arne Jacobsen is being taken back to its original style on the largest scale. Specific objects such as Jacobsen’s The Egg Chair is seen in several

\textsuperscript{446} American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 883.
\textsuperscript{447} “Farmors gamle kjoler blev også luftet.”
\textsuperscript{448} EW37, 26.
\textsuperscript{449} EW33, 120-123. Pucci is seen other places in the EW material such as ”Mode: Pucci er igen tilbage i modebilledet” EW30, 20.
\textsuperscript{450} EW43, 122-123.
\textsuperscript{451} ”Igenbrugsbutikker eller mormors loftsrum”, EW43, 122.
\textsuperscript{452} ”Stilissimo: De 10 bedst klædte kvinder i Danmark” EW43, 79-89.
\textsuperscript{453} ”De elsker vintagetøj og høje hæle” EW43, 79.
\textsuperscript{454} ”Har du et stiltræk?” ”Jeg går meget i secondhand” EW43, 87.
\textsuperscript{455} EW26, 126, EW27, 46, EW32, 34, EW37, 34.
\textsuperscript{456} EW22, 92, EW27, 129, EW29, 106-109, EW32, 32, EW32, 147.
version and contexts such as Next Issue\textsuperscript{457} that is also an example of the wide use of archive photos in the material (see Illustration 10). New editions of the chair are also seen when fashion company Birger Christensen Living has created special editions of The Egg in fur, which might both be seen as a literal and immaterial revival.

Granny’s taste in dwelling – at least in the summer – is also brought back in the shape of the kolonihavehus, which roughly translates to allotment garden. This is done most explicitly with the interior spread “Mormors kolonihavehus,”\textsuperscript{458} which in addition to paraphrasing an old popular Danish song from 1977, also refers directly to the house where the photo spread is shot. The house has been left to the stylist by her grandmother and in the fashion spread, the house works both as the location where new and used items are presented and as an object in itself. The original objects belonging to the house are highlighted and images of the grandmother are shown suggesting them as part of the vintage experience (see Illustration 11).

The elements of the magazine perhaps the least associated with fashion, beauty and design, are also influenced by material revivals such as the regular travel feature Hip City which often includes a guide to vintage stores for that particular city.\textsuperscript{459}

It is worth noting that the term vintage also comes to be associated with new items such as Levi’s historical collection called Vintage Clothing,\textsuperscript{460} which are to be understood as literal revivals.

While it was difficult at times to maintain the distinction between literal, immaterial and material revivals of Granny Chic, I nevertheless found the categories useful in organizing the substantial EW material, which was the purpose of the section. Having thus outlined and visualized how Granny Chic operates in EW in 2000 and 2001, the platform should be established for performing the Analysis. Each Position will be applied to Granny Chic in order to determine the analytical potential of the Position as well as shed light on possible Issues of Dichotomy, Points of Origin and Hierarchy as illustrated in Figure 1. In accordance with the notion of strong objectivity, it is the intention of this Analysis to determine which parts of the Toolbox contain universal

\textsuperscript{457} EW43, 170.
\textsuperscript{458} EW38, 130-133.
\textsuperscript{459} Some examples are “Hip City: Cape Town” EW35, 124-125; ”Hip City: Amsterdam” EW29, 124; ”Hip City: Barcelona” EW25, 160-161; and ”Hip City: Paris” EW26, 137.
\textsuperscript{460} EW22, 111.
potential for analyzing contemporary trend mechanisms while maintaining that the Positions are historically, socially, and culturally situated.

**Analysis: Applying the five Positions**

Having now defined what is meant by Granny Chic and described *how* this version of the Retro Trend operates in the EW material in 2000 and 2001, I will move on to the actual Analysis in which each of the five Positions will be applied to Granny Chic to find explanations of *why* Granny Chic was a trend in the period. This exercise will be based on the description of Granny Chic established above and move across the literal, immaterial, and material categories of retro. The Analysis is intended to clarify the analytical potentials of each Position and thus advancing the field of trend studies while at the same time challenging the Positions by foregrounding the problematic Issues within the Positions. These Issues will motivate the development of a contribution to the Toolbox, the Rhizomatic Position that will bring trend studies into the 21st century.

**Position 1: Social Mechanism and Granny Chic**

As seen in the Mapping, the Social Mechanism is among the most developed, and multi-facetted of the five. The Position is mainly rooted in sociology though economics, marketing, and anthropology are also important fields. The Positions was based on the thoughts of John Rae, Georg Simmel and Thorstein Veblen and later developed most prominently by Charles King, George Field and Grant McCracken that all related to the trickle-theories. This part of the Analysis will determine the analytical potential of the general mechanism of ‘chase and flight’ and the more specific trickle-theories.

The motor of the Social Mechanism is social status, affiliation, and identity that are achieved by a perpetual process of distinction and imitation. While the Social Mechanism plays out across the fields in the EW material, the main focus of the Social Mechanism is on fashion because of the intimate nature of clothes functioning as they do like a second skin that forms the canvas for presenting to the world who we are or rather, who we would like to be.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the development of the fashion systems as well as society as such have gradually shifted the understanding of what qualifies as
exclusive. Since the notion of exclusivity is basic to the Social Mechanism, the shift from exclusivity being linked to material luxury towards a more subversive understanding is important here. However, the basic process of creating distinction and thereby initiating the process of emulation is the same regardless of the objective material value of the means enabling the process.

As argued by Georgina Howell, luxury fashion has changed its meaning since “the greatest luxury is always the thing in shortest supply. Luxuries today are, perhaps, time and peace.”\textsuperscript{461} Though referring to the 1970s, this statement is strikingly accurate in describing what seems to be at play in the EW material three decades later. Luxury in the traditional sense is at least in principle available to most people in Denmark. This opens up to new understandings of what constitutes luxury or exclusivity as that which is in short supply. In the EW material it no longer seems to be wealth and status that is considered luxury, but rather what is difficult to find or to copy.\textsuperscript{462}

It might be argued that since EW is envisioned as a ‘friend’ as argued in Chapter 4, the reading of the magazine is essentially a social interaction making the Social Mechanism prevalent at many levels of the magazine. This social premise of the magazine proves to be interesting in this Position, because analyzing the material reveals both the potential and problems of the Position.

While the mechanism of chase and flight is basic to human communication of social affiliation, the process of democratization and the ensuing decentralization and notion of seasonless cycles have altered the premise of the Social Mechanism and opened for new social strategies of distinction, which is evident in the EW material.

There is an obvious paradox in young, fashion-forward women dressing to look old-fashioned. This is both the case when seeing the direct representations of Ladylike in the fashion spreads as well as Podium and Tendens. The same can be said for the promotion of Granny Chic style icons such as Maude and Grace Kelly. Also on editorial level, the subversion between young and old is seen for instance in the interview with Danish photographer and socialite Varvara Hasselbalch\textsuperscript{463} (1920-

\textsuperscript{461} In Vogue: Six Decades of Fashion, 306.
\textsuperscript{462} This is in keeping with Polhemus’ statement that throughout most of our history, the message has been, ‘I am rich’ or ‘I am powerful’ whereas it today seems to be about asserting ‘I am authentic.’ Streetstyle, 7.
\textsuperscript{463} EW22, 30-34.
While Hasselbalch’s fascinating life is unfolded in the piece, the strong focus on her style and home seems to indicate that she is presented as an 80-year-old.

Fashion writer Hadley Freeman phrases the tension between dressing older than your age already in the title of her article: “Putting on Years.” And this tension or paradox is the crux of Granny Chic according to the Social Mechanism Position. The potential for social distinction lies in the sense that only the minority – fashion leaders – would be daring enough or have the creative surplus to look old or old-fashioned in the context of a culture that at least since the 1950s has seen youth and innovation as a value.

Vintage items offer some obvious advantages in the Social Mechanism by being considered one-of-a-kind – despite them often being originally mass-produced – and thereby making them more difficult to copy. Having the time and capability to select the item that is vintage from the mass of discarded clothes and doing it at the right time becomes a tool in the strategy for social distinction. As Alexandra Palmer describes the process: “The danger exists of making a faux pas and being merely out of date; a situation that is avoidable by purchasing the latest designer styles. Vintage highlights the complex requirements of proper timing that signals ‘in’ or ‘out’ of fashion.” The source of distinction is not wealth or elite status, but rather the courage or imagination to do something that will cause resistance among the mainstream and thereby stall the process of imitation – as described in the Logic of Wrong in Chapter 3.

Collector of vintage haute couture and owner of three vintage stores in Paris, Didier Ludot argues that this notion of wrong in relation to vintage has to do with breaking taboos of wearing other people’s old clothes, which counteracts the entire notion of novelty in trend mechanisms. However, breaking the taboo goes beyond wearing old clothes, it also means looking old-fashioned, and perhaps even smelling old. This confirms what was concluded in the Social Mechanism Position, namely that the progression towards a decentralized fashion system and the increased democratization of fashion has opened up for strategies of distinction that operate

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466 “Det er ikke længere tabu at gå i vintage-tøj som der var for 15 år siden’ fastslår Didier Ludot” EW37, 94.
467 Ludot talks about the smell of second-hand clothes that is so characteristic of most vintage stores and maybe also part of the experience, EW37, 94.
outside the traditional categories of status and wealth. In stead notions of creative
courage – as seen in looking, feeling, and smelling old – becomes a new way of
creating distinction that might delay the process of emulation.

Another example of this Logic of Wrong in relation to vintage is seen in
subverting the traditional means of status and wealth by demonstrating that ones
clothes were a bargain. An example of this is seen in Ud af skabet468 where store
owner, Helle Høgsbro makes a point of wearing secondhand clothes and only
spending money on shoes.469 It is not because she cannot afford to buy expensive
clothes – after all she owns a store – but she is demonstrating distinction through
doing the opposite of others within a context where everyone potentially has access to
fashionable clothes.

Trickle-theories and Granny Chic
We have established that Granny Chic can be understood on a general level as part of
a process of social distinction and imitation both on a material and immaterial level
through a social strategy of wrong. Taking the Analysis a step deeper, how then do
each of the three trickle-movements fare when applied to Granny Chic? Each one of
the three trickle-movements is rooted in some sense of fashion leadership but the
direction of the emulation process varies down, across, and up. The question in this
section is whether it still makes sense to operate with three distinct directions in the
Social Mechanism Position or whether they operate simultaneously and therefore
become aligned with the general mechanism of chase and flight. I will focus on the
EW material that brings out the analytical potential and problematic issues the best,
which means that I will concentrate on the material revival in this section.

Trickle-down and Granny Chic
*The trickle-down theory* is traditionally rooted in a more hierarchical, class-conscious
society than that of Danish society in the early 21st century. Nevertheless, the theory
is useful if the sense of class hierarchy is translated to modern terms of social
hierarchy. Despite the radical change in society, celebrities can be said to constitute

468 EW33, 58-59.
469 "Hun bor med sin søn og mand i København i en funky blanding af rustik romantik og
secondhand hip. Hendes garderobe fungerer på samme måde – på nær sko. 'Det er det eneste
jeg bruger penge på'.”
‘the new aristocracy’ from which trends trickle-down in a similar sense of the example mentioned previously with the shawl of Napoleon’s wife Josephine.\textsuperscript{470}

An example of the influence of celebrities on the development of vintage as the material category of the Retro Trend, as discussed in Chapter 4, is seen when American actress Julia Roberts won the Oscar for best actress in 2001. For the ceremony she wore a vintage Valentino dress, which might be considered a turning point for vintage. In the EW material, it is mentioned that the strategy brought Roberts to the top of the Best Dressed list for 2001.\textsuperscript{471}

In a later fashion feature in EW entitled ”Nye magthavere i modebranchen,”\textsuperscript{472} the new power holders in trends are described as celebrities and their stylists which is seen when they are given front row seats at the fashion shows. One of the instruments used to ignite a trend for a specific designer is ‘VIP Wardrobing’ where members of this new aristocracy agree to wear certain designers’ styles – celebrity endorsement – in exchange for free clothes.

The way celebrities constitute a new aristocracy from which trends trickle-down is demonstrated in several ways in the EW material. From small stories such as “Shop amok” which talks about where celebrities buy their secondhand clothes.\textsuperscript{473} To longer features such as the portrait of American actress Sarah Jessica Parker\textsuperscript{474} who was the star of the popular television show \textit{Sex and the City}.\textsuperscript{475} She talks about how she could never have imagined the effect the clothes on the show would have.\textsuperscript{476} By clothes she means vintage, which was preferred by particularly Parker’s character Carrie Bradshaw. She came to epitomize a look in which vintage was an important factor. Fashion writer Andréa Voucher describes the look as a “wild array of haute

\textsuperscript{470} Though trickle-down movements are seen in both Denmark and France, the two societies are evidently different historically speaking in relation to social and political structure. Since this dissertation employs Danish material, it should be noted that Denmark is one of the oldest democracies in the world, and has been a welfare state since the 1890s, which has historically been associated with the Social Democratic ideology of redistribution of income through taxes, rates, and dues. While societies such as the French, American, and British historically have a more class-based society, the trickle-down mechanism does apply to a Danish context while perhaps in a less hierarchical way than say a French.
\textsuperscript{471} EW45, 42.
\textsuperscript{472} EW106, 44-46.
\textsuperscript{473} EW44, 26.
\textsuperscript{474} ”Temmelig sexet” EW36, 44-45.
\textsuperscript{475} In ”Miami is Heaven for Vintage Fashion,” James Sherwood describes how the TV-show, \textit{Sex and the City }"woke New York up to the vintage vibe.” October 12, 2000.
\textsuperscript{476} ”I seriens første sæson var vi ikke helt klar over den effekt, tojstilen ville have” EW36, 44.
couture and vintage finds that transformed both fashion and television’s glamour quotient when the series aired from 1999 to 2004.”

In other words, Sarah Jessica Parker represents the top of the social hierarchy that gradually trickles down to the masses through the TV-show and media. In the period, it seemed that simply wearing a designer dress was not enough for celebrities to demonstrate sufficient distinction to warrant fashion leadership. However, if the dress were vintage, it would add an air of uniqueness. And for fashion icons such as Kate Moss and Chloë Sevigny, a vintage item of dress did not necessarily need to have a designer name attached to it, because it being vintage had enough cachet in its own right.

While not all vintage is Ladylike, as will become even more clear when looking at the Line of Development, the example of vintage and celebrities shows how trickle-down still holds analytical potential in explaining Granny Chic as generated by the Social Mechanism. That the examples appear in the authority of a magazine like Eurowoman, Granny Chic is literally trickling down from the pages and onto the readers.

On a general note, it can be concluded that the trickle-down effect is seen through the role of celebrities in fashion trends and how vintage has been used as part of a social strategy to demonstrate the status of this new aristocracy. Though celebrities also constitute a high status economically they do not in this case demonstrate it through conspicuous consumption but rather values of time and capability to determine what is vintage. This sense of distinction as more than a purchased value is emphasized in the use of the verb ‘found’ when describing the source of vintage such as “Red boots and shoes found secondhand.”

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477 “Sex and the City Returns: With Fashion to Spare” IHT, October 2007.
478 James Sherwood sums up the diversity of vintage here in relation to celebrities: “Chloë Sevigny earned her place on the International Best Dressed List with her ’70s Yves Saint Laurent look. Winona Ryder is famed for her collection of ’50s Charles James, ’60s Pauline Trigere and ’70s James Galanos gowns. The models Kate Moss, Naomi Campbell and Amber Valletta raid designers’ archives for ’80s Alaïa, Mugler and Montana.” “Miami is Heaven for Vintage Fashion” IHT, October 12, 2000.
479 “Røde støvler- og sko fundet secondhand” EW23, 62. Other examples are: “Gold belt found secondhand” “Guldbælte fundet secondhand” EW23, 60. Tummychain with simili found secondhand” “Mavekæde med simili, fundet secondhand” EW23, 56 in “Baby in Blue” EW23, 56-63, and “paper found at a flea market” “papir fundet på et loppemarked,” Ting “Guldkorn” EW44, 103.
treasure hunt is coupled with the courage to break taboos by wearing old clothes that among the majority is considered wrong.  

**Trickle-across and Granny Chic**

*The trickle-across theory* is the lesser known of the three trickle theories. It was developed in “Fashion Adoption: A Rebuttal to the ‘Trickle-Down’ Theory,” as the ‘simultaneous adoption theory’ by Charles King. The *rebuttal* came after the development in society and the fashion system in especially the 1950s and until the publication of the article in 1963. The basic idea in the theory is that the greater freedom for people as individuals and consumers means that trend mechanisms no longer operate between social strata or classes but within social systems. The emulation happens horizontally – *across* – a social group or strata without, however, eliminating the important notion of fashion leaders.

For exploring the trickle-across effect, ideal material is provided by “Stilissimo: The 10 Best Dressed Women in Denmark,” and *Ud af skabet* that feature trends in operation as opposed to staged fashion spreads with models. Both elements feature stylists, storeowners, designers, make-up artists, hairdressers, and model bookers that are all fashion leaders within the fashion system. The trickle-across effect is visible in the way the editorial pieces create the framework for the fashion leader to stage a process of emulation but within the social context of *Eurowoman* as a friend.  

One such example in the presentation in *Ud af skabet* of designer and one half of the label Baum und Pferdgarten, Helle Hestehave. She offers an interesting statement when describing her affinity for vintage: “I rarely buy clothes and always only secondhand.”

It might be argued, that there is a presence of class hierarchy in a Veblen sense implied in the role of heirlooms in the EW material as seen in: “Denne fantastiske skjorte er et arvestykke fra farmor” “This incredible shirt is an heirloom from Granny” EW31, 24 and “Mom’s old jewelry” ”Mors aflagte smykke” EW33, 120 from the point of view that not all families are in possession of items that are considered worth inheriting – regardless of the role kitsch plays in the EW material.

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481 “Stilissimo: De 10 bedst klæde kvinder i Danmark” EW43, 79-89.

482 “Jeg køber sjældent tøj og altid kun secondhand.” EW32, 52-53.
It could also be argued that the media has developed in such a way that celebrities and fashion leaders can be felt to be part of one’s social group. With especially digitalization and the Internet, we have access to the lives and personal details of celebrities to an extent that we might potentially know more about them than we do our real friends. This development suggests that the trickle-down and trickle-across mechanisms might at time overlap to a degree that makes them difficult to distinguish from each other.

**Trickle-up and Granny Chic**

George A. Field developed the *trickle-up theory* in “The Status Float Phenomenon – The Upward Diffusion of Innovation” (1970), and since then it has only become more prominent. From originally bringing attention to how clothes of the working class moved into the mainstream, the trickle-up effect now draws on subculture and street-fashion as a primary source of distinction. The increased prominence of the trickle-up effect is closely linked to the process of democratization that allows everyone but also anything to be potentially fashionable. Also decentralization of the fashion systems, which allows anyone to be a designer, has contributed to promoting the trickle-up effect. The Logic of Wrong is especially operational here.

Trickle-up operates on the premise of exclusivity as being beyond notions of wealth and power. Street fashion obviously lends itself to the trickle-up theory. In the EW material this is seen in *Tendens* that features some fashion leaders but mainly ‘ordinary’ women though there has of course taken an editorial process place both with the photographer producing the material and the editorial staff of the magazine. The presumably regular women demonstrate a strategy of distinction because their looks are considered to be unique and therefore authentic which seems to confirm that the premium in the Noughties is still one of authenticity.

An obvious example of the trickle-up effect in Granny Chic, which includes material as well as immaterial categories, is the presence of crafting and customizing. It is seen on several levels in the EW material. One of the explicit examples is in the

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483 In “Dressed in History: Retro Styles and the Construction of Authenticity in Youth Culture,” (2004) fashion scholar Heike Jenß looks at how members of a German 1960s-subculture “immerse themselves in a re-creation of the authenticity of the period” (388) and how that becomes a source of authenticity in the fashion industry. What she is describing is how the trickle-up effect is something that has also become institutionalized in what Jenß calls “commodification of authenticity,”397.

484 *Streetstyle*, 7.
fashion spread “Midsommer” (see Illustration 12) that features a skirt made from a blanket knitted by the stylist’s grandmother.\textsuperscript{485} Other examples are seen in the design spread “My favorite things”,\textsuperscript{486} in which the stylist has made the accessories herself\textsuperscript{487} or when Tendens encourages customizing: “The only limit is your imagination when you are your own designer.”\textsuperscript{488} In terms of trickle-movements, the crafts are difficult to copy and thereby demonstrate a strategy of distinction. In addition, the relativity of who can be a designer – Granny, the stylist, you? – suggests trickle-up while the staging of the stylist’s handiwork in the magazine is also trickle-across.

Whether coming from a grandmother stylist, or yourself, the distinctive quality of customizing, crafting, and DIY as with vintage are about creating social distinction through means found outside the established fashion system. Alexandra Palmer and Hazel Clark explain this social strategy of escaping the fashion industry in order to create distinction: “Just as being able to sew for oneself is a symbol of fashion independence, so too is being able to find and wear vintage clothing. Each displays an individual’s ability to operate outside of the fashion industry’s seasons and dictums by being one’s own designer.”\textsuperscript{489}

Through the perspective of trickle-up, Granny Chic can be seen as symptomatic of the shift in trend mechanisms from a centralized structure with Paris as the source of trends to a more fragmented, decentralized structure. However, the trickle-movements operate simultaneously with both centralized and decentralized mechanisms at work. This is seen in the focus on Paris and haute couture in the interview with Didier Ludot on vintage while the provincial town of Korsbæk is elevated to the status of fashion capital.\textsuperscript{490} Of course the latter statement is intended to be humorous and most of the clothes in the spread are high-end brands such as Prada and Dolce & Gabanna. However, the promotion of Korsbæk still destabilizes the notion of a centralized structure. The celebration of for instance Maude as a style icon can also be seen as a subversive strategy where trends trickle up from perhaps not working class as Field suggested, but out of popular culture as seen with Matador.

\textsuperscript{485} “Tæppet strikket af stylistens mormor,” EW39, 87.
\textsuperscript{486} EW26, 114-121.
\textsuperscript{487} Necklace and brooch made by stylist EW26, 120 and 121.
\textsuperscript{488} “Kun fantasien sætter grænser, når du er din egen designer” EW36, 20.
The communication of affiliations is intentionally complicated in order to make emulation difficult and thereby stall the process of distinction and imitation.

**Discussion of Social Mechanism and Granny Chic**

The Analysis shows that the chase and flight mechanism in general and the three trickle theories in particular shed light on how we engage in the endless process of social distinction and imitation through fashion. Considering that Granny Chic was explored in magazine material this was perhaps to be expected. Looking at the history of fashion magazines, they have always served a purpose for social distinction and imitation. Doris Langley Moore documents this in her study of "social aspiration" as seen through fashion plates over a period of 200 years.

However, though the Social Mechanism might be essentially the same as the one Moore describes, the tools and strategies are different in the sense of working on many levels and in several forms because of the increased difficulty in achieving social distinction as we have already seen in applying the trickle-theories to Granny Chic. One of the ways this difficulty is demonstrated is seen in several of the fashion spreads in the EW material. For instance in the fashion spreads which have been discussed that hardly show any clothes or show clothes that cannot be bought either because they are vintage, were found in the attic of a grandmother, were made by a stylist, or by a grandmother and are therefore one-of-a-kind. Looking at the fashion spread “Dogme” it not only shows a secondhand dress and leather collar made by the stylist (see Illustration 13), the image is also blurred, which might be a demonstration of the importance of disorienting the enemy to stall the process of emulation. So the Social Mechanism on a whole seems to offer the potential for demonstrating and visualizing new ways of creating distinction as part of the perpetual construction of social identity.

A limitation of the Social Mechanism is seen in the difficulty in maintaining the uni-directionality of the trickle-theories. The impression in the Analysis was that the trickle-theories often operate simultaneously giving the appearance of multi-directional lines rather than distinct directions and destinations of development. At

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492 Such as "Midsommer," EW39, 84-91.
493 EW23, 82-89.
494 EW23, 84.
times, the trickle-theories offered contrasting perspectives to the same example for instance when Granny Chic could be seen as trickle-down when considering the role of celebrities, as trickle-across when looking at vintage as presented by fashion leaders in *Ud af skabet* and *Stillissimo*, and as trickle-up when the fashion practice of regular women on the street were highlighted as the fashion leaders of vintage.

**Neomania and Granny Chic**

The Neomania Position offers insight into how the postmodern condition is demonstrated through Granny Chic. Key to the Position is the emphasis on ceaseless and seemingly random change in fashion. According to Neomania, the ‘failure of the new’ has lead to a condition where innovation has been replaced with ‘imitation of dead styles’ in a state of perpetual present. The analytical potential of Neomania is to add form to what might appear to be chaos – that is threatening the existence of trends – by rooting contemporary trends in a postmodern context. Neomania brings attention to the presence of postmodern markers in the EW material such as quotation, simulation, and artificiality that are all part of the deliberate demonstration of incoherence. It is also seen in the lack of constraint and the irrelevance of categories which allow for unlikely fusions of for instance high and low both within the fashion system and in the role popular culture plays in trends. Finally, there is a focus on the personal pleasure of experiencing the new as a temporary escape from the existential void or simply from boredom.

While there might not seem to be anything postmodern about an actual grandmother, the contrary might very well be the case when considering Granny Chic as a version of Retro. As already established, Neomania considers all trends to be Retro, which means that everything described as Granny Chic is already in the category of imitation of dead styles. While this might seem to confirm the impression of trends as a myriad of haphazard expressions from the Supermarket of Style, Granny Chic is in fact a distinct version of Retro even within the framework of Neomania.

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495 *The Anti-Aesthetic*, 132.
Neomania brings attention to how the fusion of disparate elements across the field of fashion might be understood. By styling a young girl like a grandmother as in “Pret-a-Porter,” presenting used clothes or Granny’s kolonihavehus as something new when they are all so obviously old, is a way of demonstrating the postmodern condition by making a stable order impossible but also creating constructions that by escaping categorization come to represent a new fragmented or distorted order. The notion of subverting existing order is essential to the strategies unfolded by Neomania. Even considering the term itself suggests this by being a craze for the new while acknowledging that the new is an illusion.

Looking at the various personifications of Granny Chic in the shape of style icons, this motley crew seems to confirm the Neomania strategy both of endless quotation, and of irreverence for categories mixing fictional and actual, classical and quirky. Joining hands in this version are among others Grace Kelly with her iconic handbag, the Danish Queen Margrethe with her particular hairdo (see Illustration 14), 80-year old socialite Varvara Hasselbalch, the sexy secretary Miss Moneypenny, the neurotic Maude, and several genuine grandmothers of fashion leaders. Standards of sexy and age are not only challenged but mixed up randomly adding to Granny Chic a sense of lack of constraint and artificiality of any construction. Granny Chic is rendered stylistically promiscuous to the extent of having multiple personalities, which again goes towards demonstrating incoherence. Heike Jenß concurs that Retro fits into postmodernity: [Retro] epitomizes the idea of space/time compression in dress, evoked through globally circulating images of other times and places.” Of course, vintage in Granny Chic contributes to this by representing the compression of time and place in a material way.

While the Social Mechanism Position saw style icons as the embodiment of trends or a fashion leader, Neomania sees both the individual icon and the sheer volume of them as another attempt to break down order by continuously piling one icon on top of the next to the extent that one cannot be distinguished from the other. The compilation makes no sense – what do Nina Hagen and Margaret Thatcher

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496 EW30, 76-77.
497 EW38, 130-133.
498 “Dressed in History: Retro Styles and the Construction of Authenticity in Youth Culture,” 398.
499 EW25, 32.
500 EW30, 66.
have in common after all? – which renders the entire concept of style icons either absurd or simply humorous. This absurd enumeration of style icons is seen in the beauty feature “Hår special”\(^{501}\) where the multitude and diversity of the style icons is evident: Shirley Temple, Grace Kelly, Lauren Bacall, Mia Farrow, Madonna, Jerry Hall, and Malcolm McLaren. This pell-mell of fashion leaders seems to both suggest that everyone can be anyone while at the same time bringing attention to the simulation of the entire construction. This in turn might be seen as the foregrounding of the postmodern sense of void and impossibility of true individualism.

What Neomania might bring attention to here is that the promotion of the classic ideals of femininity in Ladylike are imploded by being juxtaposed with displaced figures such as Margaret Thatcher. The mechanism is a source of change in the Retro Trend that needs to constantly move on in order to maintain the subversive agenda.

Irony is often employed in this subversive strategy as seen in the unlikely revival of household remedies such as “Pure Madness”\(^{502}\) in *Delikatesse*\(^{503}\) that offers cleaning advice, as well as in the prominence of cultural history in the editorial material. An example of the latter is seen in features such as “Light-Headed.”\(^{504}\) Taking a high-brow approach to a low-brow topic by looking at the cultural history of blondes, the feature comes to represent the characteristic aspect of Neomania of juxtaposing disparate elements. A similar example is seen in the feature on the cultural history of Granny’s favorite hairspray Elnett that employs irony to destabilize the seriousness: “The Higher the Hair, the Closer to God.”\(^{505}\)

Along the same vein, the role of the magazine as a guide for the reader in issues of fashion and lifestyle is also played with as seen in the promotion of a traditional cookbook on pickling and preserving, *Den grønne syltebog*. It was originally published in 1938 and is presumably a prided possession of grannies. The text reads: “This classic has it all”\(^{506}\) and this hyperbole again points to the artifice of stability.

\(^{501}\) EW27, 80-90.
\(^{502}\) “Det rene vanvid.”
\(^{503}\) EW30, 122.
\(^{504}\) “De lyse hoveder,” EW26, 52-55. The feature is illustrated with archive photos of among others Grace Kelly, which links it visually to the Granny Chic version.
\(^{505}\) “Jo højere hår, jo nærmere gud.”
\(^{506}\) “Denne klassiker har det hele” EW41, 120.
Slik is an example of how a regular is in effect based on the subversive premise of postmodernity when seen through Neomania both in the sense of bringing the childish into the adult sphere, and by taking something as banal as candy seriously. By viewing candy as an expression of cultural identity and history, and by placing it within the context of fashion trends, the distinction between high and low culture is blurred.

The Neomania Position is also seen in the reinterpretation of Danish furniture design. An example is “Untrue to Tradition”507 where the design student at the Danish Design School Ask Emil Skovgaard reinterprets the classic 7-chair with extremely long legs that were either marching or tangled. The example shows how the notions of good taste and design classics are warped. Similar to the style icons, this treatment of design icons represents the impossibility of constants.508

The same tendency to distort or reinterpret classics is seen in classic tableware. In the feature, “Revolt against the Coffee Party in Jutland,”509 ceramicist Birgitte Mørk Winter subjects the most traditional of Danish tableware – the epitome of the perfect ladies’ tea party – Royal Copenhagen’s Blue Fluted510 to subversive strategies. While maintaining the intricate delicacy of the original pattern, Winter has replaced the blue flowers with little skulls. This distortion has the effect of deconstructing a classic and thereby alluding to the impossibility of classics as such. Also the sense of original seems to be questioned. The pattern has been used by Royal Copenhagen since 1775, and it is considered part of the cultural heritage of Denmark.511 Winter’s own understanding of the project is to add new dimensions to a pattern that she loves and which reminds her of her own grandmother. In that sense, the lack of origin and the deconstruction of a classic also constitutes a sense of juxtaposition of the classic and personal, and a concern with finding the personal pleasure in products. This sense of linking disparate elements is continued in the collaboration between Winter and the Danish fashion brand Baum und Pferdgarten who used the pattern as lining as well as print on underwear and T-shirts in their fall collection in 2002. An interesting point is that the collection was exhibited in the

507 Design ”Traditionen utro” EW36, 32.
508 For more on crafts as a space for reflection and critique see Ph.D. dissertation SUPEROBJEKTER (2006) by Louise Mazanti, The Danish Design School.
509 “Oprør mod det jyske kaffebord” EW42, 32.
510 Musselmalet.
511 The pattern has also been used by other companies such as Bing & Grøndahl and in fact originally from China.
Royal Copenhagen store in Copenhagen\textsuperscript{512} adding the unexpected twist of returning the classic pattern to its assumed home.

**Discussion of Neomania and Granny Chic**

The postmodern notion that everyone can be anyone and ‘anything goes,’ does not equal anarchy. Standards for what offers the strongest demonstration of this condition vary, and Neomania offers the tools for providing the apparent chaos of fashion trends with contours. It might be argued that Neomania describes a condition where innovation has ceased to be a possibility, and the strategy of subversion offers at least a substitution of novelty albeit one that demonstrates its own artificiality. In the Analysis, Neomania opened for the perspective of how accumulating style icons, distorting classics, subjecting low-brow themes to high-brow investigation, celebrating candy, and the personal satisfaction in customizing were unfolded through the Neomania Position that counted irony, artificiality, simulation and irreverence of categories among its main strategies for demonstrating a postmodern sense of incoherence. Though the result was destabilizing, the Neomania Position added depth to the understanding of how the chaos and sense of void in the postmodern condition is navigated through fashion trends.

The potential weakness of the Neomania Position is that the answers are always the same regardless of visual expressions as will become clear in the comparison between Granny Chic and Glam. If I had analyzed a different trend than Retro such as streetwear, sustainability, or artwear, Neomania would probably have offered very similar insight. However, when comparing for instance the Mix version of the Retro Trend according to Line of Development in Chapter 6 it is clear that the strategy of distortion has a clear expression that changes over time.

A different concern with Neomania is the fundamental suggestion that trend mechanisms are motivated by the postmodern fear of the existential void or boredom, which is linked to what Lars Fr. H. Svendsen calls ‘living in a culture of boredom.’\textsuperscript{513} Considering the material on Granny Chic so far, there has been evidence of clear postmodern characteristics, but the playfulness of the examples and pleasure of expression gives the impression of a more constructive than deconstructive motor at play.

\textsuperscript{512} “Mode med Mussel” November 9, 2002.
\textsuperscript{513} *A Philosophy of Boredom*, 7.
Position 3: Market and Granny Chic

As argued in Chapter 3, the Market Position is concerned with the exchange of goods and capitalist logic and how trend mechanisms are designed to stimulate consumption. The Market is seen as a force that attaches arbitrary conceptions of expiration dates to products that become only symbolically rather than functionality obsolete. The process of orchestrated obsolescence has increased with the democratization and decentralization of the fashion systems to a degree that the notion of seasonless cycles has been introduced.

The Market Position sheds light on the condition of the fashion system in the Analysis of Granny Chic. The material revival offers a clear example of the shift in power that has taken place from the centralized and polycentric fashion systems towards a decentralized condition. Secondhand clothes that were once deemed obsolete and excluded from the fashion system are now heralded as desirable as documented in the EW material. In other words, the source of vintage – as well as the personal handicraft – as the material revival of Granny Chic is found outside the fashion system posing a substantial challenge to the fashion system and perhaps confirming that the Market has lost its ability to dictate trends. However, as was suggested in the Mapping, what might be at play here is an increased degree of exchange between consumers and designers. Because of its substantial impact on fashion, vintage is an especially illustrative example of this exchange. As Suzy Menkes states: “Jacobs produces clothes from the vintage store of your dreams.”

However, at times vintage seems to upstage the designer further destabilizing the previous trend ‘dictators.’ As described by fashion writer Amy Larocca:

“The notion of a designer armed only with a sketch pad is largely a myth. It may come as a shock to customers, but most designers regularly dispatch staff worldwide to scour vintage depots in search of inspiration… These designers buy up bags, belts, or even a coat and then limit their pilfering to the details: the stitching here, perhaps,

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514 The End of Fashion, 8.
or a buttonhole there. But they usually stop a hemline short of producing a direct copy.”

Implied in this account is that vintage dealers are assigned a position that is similar to traditional fashion buyers in holding the power to control who gets access to the vintage clothes. This means that vintage can be seen as either a catalyst or a symptom of a development in the business of fashion. Another example of the role of Retro and especially vintage in a Market context is linked to the category of literal revivals, which can be seen as the attempt of the fashion houses to capitalize on an existing trend. An example in the EW material is the mention of the clothing line “Levi’s Vintage Clothing.”

Some examples of this found outside the EW material are noted in “The Vogue of Vintage: Victim of Its Own Success,” in which Jessica Michault mentions how high-end designers put out new vintage-lines based on their own archives such as for instance “Dolce & Gabbana Vintage” and Sonia Rykiel’s “Modern Vintage.” While this business strategy might appear to be symptomatic of a lack of innovation, it might also suggest that by going back to the archives that signify something considered original, these fashion houses are able to strengthen their brand identity, which might make it easier to win over the consumer overwhelmed with so many choices.

As mentioned earlier, it is difficult – and not necessary in this dissertation – to distinguish clearly between innovation and diffusion of trends. Both seem to be at play in the Granny Chic examples in the EW material. When Prada presented a


517 This is documented by Christina Goulding in “Corsets, Silk Stockings, and Evening Suits: Retro Shops and Retro Junkies”: “while fashion currently capitalizes on the nostalgia boom, it is less concerned with authenticity and more focused on recycling styles in a form of bricolage that will appeal to a wider market than the purists who scour rag alleys and retro shops for the real thing.”


520 In the EW material, it is mentioned how some houses in fact go into the archives of other houses for inspiration: “The YSL archives were the basis of inspiration for both Gucci and Prada,” EW24, 74. “YSLs arkiver danner grobund for inspirationen hos såvel Gucci som Prada” as as attested by the catwalk report: “Sexy Sassy Woman,” EW24, 70-77.
Ladylike collection in 2000\textsuperscript{521} it might be seen as generating a Ladylike trend and Burberry’s ad campaigns\textsuperscript{522} also play on Ladylike and English gentry, which might be seen as both diffusing the trend while also adding new perspectives that might be considered an innovation (see Illustration 15).

The Burberry example shows the exchange between innovation and capitalization both within high-end fashion but also beyond as illustrated by the regular Design: "It’s a Sweet Dog’s Life"\textsuperscript{523} with Burberry outfits for dogs. Judging from the trench in street fashion also documented in the EW material,\textsuperscript{524} the exchange between designer/brand and consumer is evidently dynamic.

A final point in relation to the literal revival of the Burberry trench is the apparent dissolution of target groups as suggested in the fashion feature, “Burberry: De berømte tern.”\textsuperscript{525} Here a reference is made that places Granny and her grandchildren in the same consumer category: “Both teenagers and their grandparents want Burberry.”\textsuperscript{526} Burberry becomes the materialization of the sense of democratization according to which one coat seems to fit all.

While the way vintage figures in *Ud af skabet* and *Stillsimo* offered material on the new strategies of social distinction according to the Social Mechanism Position, the Market Position adds a different perspective that relates vintage to branding. It might seem paradoxical when Marlene Bernth, owner of a clothing store with the Retro-inspired name, Holly Golightly, is asked: “What is your best fashion moment?” and she answers: “When I got my red vintage coat with polka dots”\textsuperscript{527} which she is also wearing on the picture. To the question: “Which brand name is most often seen in your closet?” she answers: “Vintage, that my mother has given me – or that I have found myself.”\textsuperscript{528} What is interesting here in addition to referring to vintage as a brand is that she is the owner of a store that sells mainly new, high-end designer clothes, and here she is promoting vintage.

\textsuperscript{521} As seen in for instance “Korsbæk revisited” EW31, 98-105, and “Sexy Sassy Woman” EW24, 70-77.
\textsuperscript{522} The literal revival of Granny’s trench coat is seen in several of Burberry ads such as EW25, 21, which highlight the ideal of the old-fashioned by being in black-and-white, and the reference to the heritage of the English gentry as played on in EW30, 21 and EW31, 15.
\textsuperscript{523} “Det søde hundeliv” EW37, 38.
\textsuperscript{524} As seen in for instance *Tendens*, EW35, 20.
\textsuperscript{525} EW23, 90-93.
\textsuperscript{526} “både teenagere og deres bedsteforældre vil have Burberry,” EW23, 91.
\textsuperscript{527} “Da jeg fik min røde polkaprirkede vintage jakke,” EW43, 86.
\textsuperscript{528} “Vintage som min mor har givet mig – eller selv har fundet,” EW43, 86.
It is interesting that her store did in fact carry some vintage items at the time among the high-end designer labels, which is documented in several fashion spreads in the material. This might say something about the effect vintage as a brand has on other items by framing them in a certain way. If selling fashion is about point of difference, it seems to be an interesting strategy at play here. The designer clothes in Holly Golightly have already been through a long process of selection, beginning with the designers and ending much later with Bernth buying them for the store where the final choice is made in the space of consumption not only within the physical context of the store but also by the association with vintage promoted here by the owner.

Holly Golightly is not the only example of this use of vintage as a sort of branding strategy for a store. The short piece "Customizing take-away," talks about how the store Flying A has a vintage section where the shoppers can have their vintage purchases customized. Supporting this peculiar notion of vintage as a brand is Heike Jenß: “Retro clothes may have already become a brand. Today’s original vintage clothes function like designer labels, as markers of distinction.” She mentions several examples such as Adidas and Retroframe, who capitalize on this demand for ‘the real thing’ by re-inventing themselves as vintage brands. These examples confirm the increase in the dialectic between market and consumers.

A different aspect of vintage highlighted by the Market Position is concerned with vintage being desirable because it is cheaper than new items, which is different from vintage as something that might add brand value. One example of this is seen in the fashion spread “Gucci and Secondhand” that features designer originals alongside visually similar secondhand versions for less. This approach to vintage is linked to what Teri Agins refers to as ‘cheapskate chic,’ that will be further unfolded when dealing with Mix.

In the Market Position, the rise of vintage is closely linked to the new market conditions introduced with the rise of the Internet. While secondhand was previously locally purchased, e-commerce opened up not only the closets of grannies all over the

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529 Such as scarf and top in “Denim,” EW42, 108-115.
530 H&M and Selfridges have also had vintage sections in selected stores at the time.
531 "Dressed in History: Retro Styles and the Construction of Authenticity in Youth Culture", 396. Retroframe buys preselected used clothing, like promotional T-shirts, track suits, and army clothing imported from an American wholesaler. These garments are then sold with the Retroframe label, sewn or printed inside the garments.
532 “Gucci og genbrug” EW43, 122-123.
533 The End of Fashion, 284.
world, but also the exchange of fashion items and trend information as such across economic, cultural and geographic boundaries.

EW documents the interest in e-commerce which was still a novel phenomenon at the time, and considered innovative judging from an article such as "Klik og køb”\(^{534}\) in which the scope of the purchasing possibilities of the new media is outlined: “Curtain fabric from New York, secondhand designer clothes from London, and a case of beer from the local supermarket.”\(^{535}\)

Discussion of Market Position and Granny Chic

The Market Position brought attention to the increased dialectic between consumer and designer, and the way the market attempts to accommodate the shifts brought on by e-commerce and increase in consumer involvement. It also focused on how the fashion industry capitalizes on the rise of vintage by incorporating the immaterial revival of Granny Chic in new collections; using vintage archives for inspiration; reviving its own fashion archives; or staging new clothes with vintage as a branding strategy.

So in addition to describing the obvious mercantile premise of Granny Chic as integrated with the fashion system and promoted within the commercial framework of a magazine, the Market Position can also say something about trend mechanisms on an increasingly decentralized and democratized marketplace.

Position 4: Seduction and Granny Chic

The Seduction Position deals with how seductive strategies are part of trend mechanisms. While the Ladylike look generally includes knee-length skirts\(^{536}\) and a covered, proper look, no particular attention is paid to the question of ‘shifting erogenous zones’. However, the notion of contemporary seductiveness offers rich material for coming a step closer to understanding the trend mechanisms at play in Granny Chic.

It might be considered curious that Granny Chic represents the coupling of seduction and grandmothers, which goes against the general association with youth as

\(^{534}\) EW29, 52.
\(^{536}\) An example is the fashion spread “Prêt-a-porter” EW30, 76-85 in which the 1940s-inspired Prada-look is described as having a knee-length skirt, EW30, 76-77.
the epitome of sex and attraction. However, the Seduction Position is less concerned with norms of society and more with the trend mechanisms. In the Mapping these were described as a dialectical movement between the erotic and the chaste by Davis as the source of seductive tensions. This removes the apparent incongruence of the sexy Granny to the prim and proper look of Granny Chic as a demonstration of contemporary seductiveness not because of any particular role of women at the time, but rather according to shifts motivated by saturation according to Laver. While the analytical potential of shifting erogenous zones seemed weak at least in its literal translation, Laver’s assertion of how “once a focus of interest loses its appeal another one has to be found” still seems to hold true regardless of the fundamental changes since 1959, when James Laver describes the Seduction Mechanism as driven forward by women’s – described as ‘desirable objects’ – wish to maintain the interest of a man in order to sustain a certain lifestyle.

Examples in the EW material of the immaterial Ladylike as demonstrating contemporary seductiveness can be seen in “The ABC of Fashion,” which lists the most important trends for the coming season in alphabetical order: “L is for lady-like” is described: "One of the strongest trends this summer is without a doubt the Lady-look. The light, feminine material, the little bows, silly print and the prim and proper look of Miss Moneypenny are the key ingredients. The look has to be carried off convincingly, sexy and sophisticated. More hot secretary, less Margaret Thatcher, please.” Here the seductive ideal is presented as the suggestive, playful sexiness of the lady.

537 The title of Chapter five in Davis, Fashion, Culture, and Identity, 79-99.
538 What Flügel called ”the attractions exercised by clothes and nakedness” in The Psychology of Clothes, 106.
539 “Fashion: A Detective Story.”
541 “Fashion: A Detective Story.” The article was source from www.gbacg.org, Greater Bay Area Costumers Guild, that featured the article in its entirety, though not with the original page numbers which are therefore not noted here. I was unable to retrieve the original issue of Vogue in which the article was originally published.
542 “Modens ABC” EW25, 72
543 EW25, 69.
544 For instance a Prada dress with a lipstick pattern.
545 “En af de stærkeste Tendenser denne sommer er uden tvivl lady-stilen. Lette feminine materialer, små binde-sløjfer, fjollede print og tækkelig opknappethed a la Miss Moneypenny er hovedingredienserne. Looket skal bæres overbevisende, sexet og sofistikeret. Mere hot sekretær, mindre Margaret Thatcher tak.”
Another example is given in the fashion spread with the suggestive title “Lady Behave.” The introduction reads: “The floaty robes, light powder colors, polished hairstyle and simple makeup of the 20s and 40s characterized the innocent, self-assured lady. But like a true lady, she can still be playful.” Again the contemporary seductiveness is presented as the chaste being a cover of erotic possibility. The fashion spread “Trend Show 2000” continues the celebration of the traditional lady as the sexy ideal: “A perfect lady: When Maude and Frøken Friis strolled down the streets of Korsbæk, they did so with an admirable and sophisticated femininity.” And finally, from the catwalk report “Sexy Sassy Woman: “The suburban lady look is hot and very sensual.”

To sum up, while the Seduction Position is difficult to unfold any further until the comparison with Glam, it did offer an explanation of Granny as a sex symbol through the notion of contemporary seductiveness, which was motored by saturation.

Position 5: Zeitgeist and Granny Chic

A common perception in trend theory is that trends mirror the spirit of the times – or the Zeitgeist. As discussed in Chapter 3, the Zeitgeist Position is concerned with what a trend can say about dominating events, ideals, and technology viewed in a specific time and place. According to this approach, external events rather than social or psychological mechanisms are what operates trend mechanisms.

Within the framework of the Zeitgeist Position, trends take on metaphoric qualities and constitute narratives created to make sense of our time. What is complicated about the Zeitgeist Position is that the intention of constituting a space for reflection and contemplation of our time and our place in it, might actually end up increasing the confusion. Therefore I have found it necessary to narrow the focus additionally in this part of the Analysis if the analytical potential of the Zeitgeist Position is to be properly examined. I will focus on nostalgia as the dominating ideal

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546 EW27, 108-117.
547 “20ernes og 40ernes lette gevandter, lyse pudderfarver, polerede hår og enkle makeup kendtegrer den uskyldige og selvbevidste lady. Men selvom man er en rigtig dame, kan man godt være legesyg.” EW27, 108
548 EW26, 98-105.
549 “A perfect lady: Når Maude og Frøken Friis spadserede ned ad gaderne i Korsbæk, var det med misundelsesværdig og sofistikeret kvindelighed” EW26, 99.
550 EW24, 70-77.
551 “Det småborgerlige damede look er hot og meget sensuelt” EW24, 72.
of the period as expressed in Granny Chic. While much more might have been said about other parts of the zeitgeist – such as the Internet as a dominating event or individualism as a dominating attitude – the theme of nostalgia is so fundamental to understanding the Retro Trend and will therefore be further explored here.

Turning Back Time

Nostalgia is generally perceived of as a negative condition that might stem from the origin of the term. In “Same as it Never Was: Hypochondria of the Heart,” Craig Lambert traces the origin of nostalgia back to 1688 when a Swiss doctor, Johannes Hofer identified a new medical syndrome, *nostalgia*, among Swiss citizens living abroad such as soldiers or domestics. Lambert quotes Hofer’s description of the syndrome: “the sad mood originating from the desire for return to one’s native land.” Lambert explains how the nostalgia syndrome removed people from present reality making them indifferent to their surroundings. Interesting in relation to the Retro Trend is that Lambert explains how sufferers of nostalgia tended to confuse past and present.

Many theories have been developed in attempts to understand nostalgia. With a focus on the 1970s, which also experienced a wave of nostalgia, Fred Davis offers a different definition of: “Essentially, nostalgia is memory with the pain removed. It is a positive orientation to the past that reflects a negative appraisal of self in the present. Its rise has been ascribed to feelings of alienation and fragmentation in the present.” Although Davis contributes a less pathological definition of nostalgia, the phenomenon is still associated with negative sentiments that seems far from the playfulness seen in the EW material on Granny Chic.

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552 Granny Chic is not the only version of Retro related to nostalgia in the EW material. Other examples include *Podium*: “Nostalgi og avantgarde” (EW32, 24) which is linked to 1920s fashion; furniture: “50er-nostalgi” (EW25, 148); and beauty: “60er-nostalgi” (EW42, 84). And even Slik “Den gamle stil” (EW35, 33) “The Old Style” which suggests that ”just as with fashion and furniture, the style-savvy consumer wants history, authenticity, and tradition when buying candy.” “på linie med mode og møbler vil den stil-bevidste kunde gerne have både historie, baggrund og tradition med sit slikkøb.”

553 “Same as it Never Was: Hypochondria of the Heart” from www.harvardmagazine.com. A source for Hofer is not given.

554 As documented by for instance Fred Davis in chapter six ”contemporary Nostalgia” of *Yearning for Yesterday*, pp 118-142.

555 *Yearning for Yesterday*, 37.
Christopher Lasch (1932-) offers a similar definition in 1991: “Nostalgia appeals to the feeling that the past offered delights no longer obtainable. Nostalgic representations of the past evoke a time irretrievably lost and for that reason timeless and unchanging.”

Approaching the millennium, Polhemus argues that our apparent determination to live in the past is linked to the experience of harsh realities economically, ecologically, politically, socially, and culturally. As he states: “the present and the future seem to have little to commend them… Unable and unwilling to face up to the future, seeking something authentic, we turn back upon a mythologized past.”

In 2001, Brown mentions that events such as the Gulf War, collapse of communism, 1992 European integration project, and ensuing turmoil have created conditions for the advent of the Retro Trend at least in the 1990s. In addition, the rise in ecological awareness as a result of climate change has led to a tendency to want to conserve, restore, and protect the past. Finally the technological revolution has set a much higher pace in society, which in turn produces a longing for simpler, slower times. In this way he demonstrates a Zeitgeist approach to Retro, which as such might also apply to Granny Chic.

A recent example from 2004, offered by Heike Jenß, does not mention nostalgia directly but links the Retro Trend and the search for stability in uncertain times: “The appropriation of history and the familiar may generate a feeling of stability in otherwise unstable conditions.”

Though rooted in various periods, the theories on nostalgia listed above share a similar negative appreciation of nostalgia. There seems to be agreement that the revival of past trends must be equal to the desire of escaping the present though not

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556 *The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics*, 82.
559 “Dressed in History: Retro Styles and the Construction of Authenticity in Youth Culture” 398.
560 It might be considered problematic to link unrest and nostalgia since this presumes that there were times without conflict and unstable conditions. Considering the year 1967 in which designer André Courrèges launches his famous space-age collection entitled *future couture*. This year marks the Six Day War in Israel, the tensions of the Cold War, and continuation of the Vietnam War to mention just a few events that might suggest uneasy times. Nevertheless, *Encyclopædia Britannica* describes the collection by Courrèges as showing “complete lack of nostalgia.”
necessarily to relive a historical past. Rather, the ‘mythologized past’ is seen as a tool used to understand or cope with the present.

When considering the presence of handicraft, life in a kolonihavehus, traditional Danish food, good manners and better housekeeping, and the physical return to the past with vintage clothes, this longing for simpler, slower times to escape an unbearable present might appear to be an obvious explanation of Granny Chic. In other words, Granny Chic should not be seen in the literal sense of wanting to relive the life of Granny – which the understanding fashion as a mirror might seem to encourage – but this escape fantasy is in fact concerned with what Goulding describes as a chance to “escape the pressures of the working week.”

An interesting point in relation to Granny Chic confirming this focus on the present, is that while the 1940s but especially the 1950s with the clear gender roles and sugar-coated finish were actually also subject to escape fantasies in their own historic context. As Cecil Beaton describes in 1954: ”The ladies of Poiret who strode the lawns at Longechamps like fine Flemish horses have been replaced by a line of starlets, pin-up girls in bathing costumes and calendar art.” Beaton is lamenting the passing of luxurious fashion of yore where the privileged ladies of leisure acted as fashion leaders because they had the time, means, and status to do so. Or as he says so poetically, there had ”passed a little glitter from the earth.” So clearly Granny Chic has to do with the revival of an imagined period rather than a historic in a nostalgic process that is not unique to the period.

Worth noting here is that the dominating event of the millennium is obviously a global not a local Danish event. Therefore I will include an example from Anglo-American media that testifies to the general connection between nostalgia and Granny Chic. In “Why, Grandma, what big heels you’ve got!” in The Independent on August 1, 1999, Cayte Williams links Granny Chic and nostalgia as a growing trend on the doorstep of the new millennium. In the article, she quotes Ian Glenville, fashion historian for describing Granny Chic as a way of escaping the ‘bite of the millennium bug’: “Granny Chic is about the comfort factor… It’s that fin de siecle thing again, but now with added angst.”

561 The Sociology of Fashion, 176.
562 She uses the 1970s as the example but I find that the comment still applies.
564 The Glass of Fashion, 335.
565 Ibid., 335.
Granny Chic and nostalgia

The millennium as a dominating event is most evident in the first issue of the period (EW22, EW23), which are naturally devoted to measuring and weighing the century and millennium left behind.⁵⁶⁶

However, nostalgia as a dominating ideal is evident throughout the intensive period. One example linking vintage and nostalgia is seen in Tendens “Vintage-Style”: “The imagination is great and nostalgia even greater when it comes to the ‘old rags’.”⁵⁶⁷ Also relating to vintage, Didier Ludot describes the rise of vintage as “a search for true values and qualities”⁵⁶⁸ which seems to suggest the sense of alienation or what Lasch described as the past offering delights no longer obtainable.⁵⁶⁹ Again, this search for something true is more concerned with the imagined past than a historic period. A more indirect expression of nostalgia, also linked to vintage, is seen when model Mia Hessner, is asked: “Whose closet would you like to rob?” And she answers: “my mother’s when she was a young woman.”⁵⁷⁰ Implicit in vintage when viewed as an expression of Zeitgeist, is the sense of confusing past and present as suggested by Johannes Hofer as a characteristic of nostalgia. It is a positive orientation of the past, that reflects not necessarily a negative appraisal of the self as suggested by Davis, but perhaps more specifically a negative appraisal of what fashion has to offer which is supported by Agins’ statement that the market has lost its ability to dictate trends.⁵⁷¹

What seems to be another prominent presence of Granny Chic in EW as an expression of a nostalgic Zeitgeist is the role cultural history plays in the editorial material both in text and image. This tendency to look back is seen in the feature “Take a Look at My Beautiful Lips”⁵⁷² that unravels the cultural history of lipstick.

⁵⁶⁶ Some examples outside fashion are the book page Bøger EW22, 90-91 and Film EW22, 96.
⁵⁶⁷ “Fantasien er stor og nostalgi enendnu store, når det gælder de gamle klude’” EW37, 26.
⁵⁶⁸ ”En søgen efter sande værdier og kvalitet” EW37, 94.
⁵⁷⁰ EW43, 82.
⁵⁷¹ The End of Fashion, 8.
⁵⁷² “Vil du se mine smukke læber” EW24, 48-50. The title is a play on the movie Vil du se min smukke navle directed by Søren Kragh-Jacobsen, 1978. The feature is illustrated with archive images of How to Marry a Millionaire (1953). Both the textual and visual references add to the Retro and Ladylike quality of the feature.
The feature “Hug en hæl og klip en tå”\textsuperscript{573} is a similar example in describing the cultural history of the relationship between women and shoes.\textsuperscript{574}

An advertorial on the cultural history of Chanel No. \textsuperscript{575} demonstrates how the Zeitgeist moves beyond the choices made by editors of the magazine and into the market.\textsuperscript{576} An example that relates directly to Granny Chic as a housewife is seen in the review of the book *Tupperware: The Promise of Plastic in 1950s America*.\textsuperscript{577} Again, the piece indicates that the interest in cultural history as indicative of a nostalgic Zeitgeist moves beyond the pages of *Eurowoman*.\textsuperscript{578}

**Discussion of Zeitgeist and Granny Chic**

In the application of the Zeitgeist Position to Granny Chic, the trend mechanisms were seen to generate a flexible space in which to create narratives that could aid in the understanding of contemporary society and ultimately in the understanding of ourselves and each other at a specific time and place. In being this type of vehicle, trends might say something about the Zeitgeist in the way we ascribe meaning to them rather than what they are actually expressing – if they are indeed expressing anything at all.

As for the potential limitations of the Zeitgeist Position, the main issue is concerned with the relativity of the narratives contrasted with the normative tendency of the content. While the issue of simultaneous narratives will become more prominent in the comparison between Granny Chic and Glam, an example from outside the EW material might prepare for the topic. In recent years, the hooded sweatshirt – the *hoodie* – has been considered part of the uniform for members of the skater culture, as well as the Danish activist movement, *De autonome*. At a trend

\textsuperscript{573} EW27, 56-58. Untranslatable expression from *Cinderella*.

\textsuperscript{574} The title is a reference to Cinderella, a Ladylike reference, and the feature is illustrated with archive photos. Other examples are the feature: ”Jo højere hår, jo nærmere gud” EW35, 97, which is a cultural history of hair spray; ”Rrring, rrring” EW38, 38, the cultural history of telephones; and “Eternity on your Finger,” “Evigheden på din finger” EW23, 26 on the cultural history of diamonds illustrated with an archive photo of Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton.

\textsuperscript{575} EW45, 50-51.

\textsuperscript{576} The advertorial is illustrated with archive photos of Coco Chanel, ads, and Catherine Deneuve emphasizing the nostalgic mood.

\textsuperscript{577} EW24, 24.

\textsuperscript{578} There are other examples of this apparent nostalgic interest in the 1950s as a mood such as the piece on a new 1950s-themed American diner, Morgan’s that opened in Copenhagen at the time EW, 122.
The seminar in Bella Center on February 7, 2007, fashion forecaster Marie-Francoise Gane from Peclers Paris announced two curious predictions: The first was that the hoodie was back, and the second was that the hoodie was to function as symbolic shelters protecting us from climate changes. What is important here is not what the hoodie really means, if anything, but that conflicting narratives explaining the Zeitgeist through a simple item of clothing exist simultaneously. Translating this to the complexity of the Retro Trend inevitably suggest confusion. However, the critique raised against the Zeitgeist Position by Lieberson – what he called ‘reflection theory’ – in Chapter 3 concerning the ‘after the fact’ explanations of trends is not as prominent as one might expect. This has to do with the EW material being more descriptive and less reflective than newspaper material is in general.

The trend mechanisms of Granny Chic

Having completed the first analytical exercise, it is clear how rich an understanding we have already reached by applying the five Positions to Granny Chic as a version of the Retro Trend. Even when looking at just one of three categories of Retro in the version offers a plethora of perspectives. Vintage as the material revival of Granny Chic was seen to offer strategies slowing the emulation process in the Social Mechanism of creating distinction; it was seen as an expression of the postmodern condition in Neomania by disrupting the conventional understanding of new and old; vintage became part of a branding strategy, as well as a symptom of the challenges posed to the Market of decentralization and democratization; vintage was linked to the contemporary seductiveness of the prim and proper Granny; and finally, vintage was seen as an expression of a nostalgic Zeitgeist brought on by the unrest of the millennium.

This simple outline shows how each Position though different and often conflicting, all offer a valid contribution to understanding trend mechanisms through Granny Chic. Returning to the image of the prism, the Analysis using the Toolbox served to break Granny Chic into its constituents that each have a distinct color and form an important part of the whole.

Having finished the first cycle of the iterative process of exploring the analytical potential of the Toolbox, it is important to increase the focus on the

579 A point also put forth by *A Matter of Taste*, 69-73.
potential weaknesses that will motivate a development of the Rhizomatic Position. The issues that are raised in the Analysis will become clearer in the next section in which the analyses of Granny Chic and Glam will be compared. However, certain issues seem to be taking form across the Positions already now based on the outline seen in Figure 1. They will be referred to as the four Issues:

1. There is a strong sense of *Dichotomy* in the Positions that became clear in the Analysis of Granny Chic. In addition to the basic distinction between in and out, there were more specific concern with new and old, past and present, high and low, young and elderly, right and wrong, consumer and designer. These dichotomies became complicated in the Analysis of for instance vintage, Ladylike, crafting, and literal revivals of for instance Burberry.

2. There is an understanding of a *Point of Origin* in the sense of a designer, an event, a fashion leader, or a significance. This was also complicated with Granny Chic through for instance vintage, and the subversion of novelty and originality.

3. There is a sense of social, market, and creative *Hierarchy*. These were complicated by social strategies of wrong, customizing, and the opportunities in communication and trade through the Internet.

4. There is a sense of an acceleration of the *Line of Development* in trends and a problem of maintaining a sense of inception and demise of a trend, as well as a clear trajectory in the life of a trend. This issue needs the extensive period to be fully unfolded but already within a two-year period there tends to be growth according to variation rather than revolution in the sense of radical change.

**Second version: Glam**

The function of the Analysis of Glam as the second version of Retro is to continue exploring the analytical potential of the Toolbox by looking at a different version of the same Retro Trend; and to explore to what extent the four Issues outlined at the end of the Analysis of Granny Chic pose a challenge to the Toolbox, and whether there is potential for developing a new trend theory based on resolving these issues. Instead of
simply repeating the exercise performed with the first version of Retro, the results of the Analysis of Granny Chic will be activated in a comparative analysis with Glam. What will be compared are not so much the two versions themselves as the results of the Analysis of the two versions. For this reason the second Analysis is not as extensive as the first.

At first glance the two versions of Retro seem to be in opposition. Granny Chic was characterized by the revival of the 1940s and 1950s through the prim and proper image of the elegant lady coupled with the homeliness of the grandmother and her interest in crafts and slow living. Glam, on the other hand, is focused on the revival of the 1980s,\textsuperscript{580} and represents the image of the extravagant, glamorous, decadent, and vampish Power Woman. The contrast between the two versions is obvious: Classic versus transitory, authentic versus artificial, \textit{good} versus \textit{bad}, and chaste versus erotic.

Just as with the Analysis of Granny Chic, I will start by describing what is understood by Glam to set the scene for the Analysis. In the EW material, Glam is the revival of the extravagance and glamorous side of 1980s not to be confused with the style of glam- or glitter rock of the late 1970s as embodied by the David Bowie alias \textit{Ziggy Stardust} with its gender bending and sexual ambiguousness.

While Glam is present in all three categories of Retro, the immaterial is by far the most prominent, and will constitute the main focus of the Analysis. While there are examples of material revivals in Glam, this category is far less integrated in the version as it was with Granny Chic according to which the idea of wearing what resembled – or actually was – Granny’s old clothes was closely integrated to the trend mechanisms operating the version. An example of the different role of vintage in Glam is seen in the fashion spread: “Tropical glam,”\textsuperscript{581} which expresses the extravagant, conspicuous mood associated with Glam to which vintage does not seem to add anything (see Illustration 16).

As for the literal revival, it is especially the style icons and the archive photos that are dominant rather than the design archives being a source of inspiration. This might be due to the shorter time lag of Glam to the present, as well as the 1980s being associated with ‘bad taste’ and are therefore not an obvious source of revival as were the 1940s and 1950s associated as they were with classic design and quality.

\textsuperscript{580} With a few references to the 1970s.
\textsuperscript{581} EW28, 50-57.
The description in the fashion spread “Le Rac Rocheur”\(^5\) sums up the Glam: “Excess, luxury, and status symbols are the key concepts in this new extravagant fashion”\(^6\) (see Illustration 17). The most prominent personifications of the immaterial revival of Glam are the Power Woman and the Trashette\(^7\) (see Illustration 18). The 1980s ‘Power Woman’ is the strong, independent woman with references to the 1980s yuppie\(^8\) as seen in “Powerpoint”\(^9\) (see Illustration 19). The look borrows from menswear with reference to the notion that in the 1980s women had to look like a man to be taken seriously as seen in “Dressed Like a Man.”\(^10\)

Glam is about looking expensive, which makes gold a prominent feature of the version: “Gold is more glamorous than silver, and the 1970s and 1980s Retro signal is much clearer. That is why gold goes well with the current fashion.”\(^11\) The concern is with looking the part rather than actually being it as seen in Podium "Golden girl": "It is not all that glitters that is made of gold. And it isn’t important when you put on the 1980s ostentatious and ultrafeminine glam look"\(^12\)

The link between ostentation and Retro is also clear in Logomania, as seen in Podium "Logomania" (see Illustration 20). This is the part of Glam concerned with flashing brands: "N is for namedropping:" “Logomania is here. Just like in the 1980s, you need to flash your status and class with your clothes and accessories. The best examples were seen with Celine, Louis Vuitton, and Chanel that used their famous logos in cool graphic ways.”\(^13\)

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5. EW31, 120-129.
7. Title of Tenden\(s\) EW29, 20.
8. EW30, 91.
9. EW32, 86-93. Among the other examples are “Like a virgin” EW32, 110-113 where the revival of Madonna’s 1980s look is described as “The power look of the 1980s is back. "80ernes power look er tilbage" EW32, 111.
10. “Som man(d) går klædt” EW45, 118-120. Another example is seen in Tenden\(s\) "Logomania" EW34, 17: “1980s style with lots of glamour and head dress inspired by menswear is still cool for women” “80er-stilen med masser af glamour og herreinspireret hovedbeklædning holder stadig hos kvinderne”
11. “Guld er mere glamourøst end sølv, og 70er/80er Retro-signalet er langt tydeligere. Derfor passer guldet langt bedre ind i moden lige nu” EW25, 78.
The fashion houses were inspired by the 1980s in the intensive period as seen in the catwalk report “Prêt-a-porter” in which for instance Versace is clearly inspired by the 1980s. Designer Michael Kors offers a description of the attitude, associations, and implications of the Glam look: “You’re the richest, sexiest, most beautiful woman in St. Tropez. You shop, you sleep, and dance the night away, men want you and women hate you. Be all that, super-sexy and glamorous. You’re so gorgeous. Make them jealous!” The pep talk was given to the models backstage at the Celine show before they went onto the catwalk to the theme music from the TV-show Dynasty, (1981-1989). Dynasty plays a prominent role in communicating Glam in EW especially with the power dressing and Glam attitude of Alexis Carrington played by British actress Joan Collins (b. 1933).

Alexis is referred to frequently in the EW material. Some examples are the beauty feature “Hvæs, hvæs – riv, riv,” which is a catty reference to Alexis as “the real 1980s Power Woman.” Alexis is mentioned directly as a Glam-icon: “Big hair, glitter and gloss are back… remember to send a kind thought to the glam icons Bianca Jagger and Alexis, when you roll your hair up.” In interior design, Alexis is also celebrated: “Alexis and Dynasty have not lived in vain.” Alexis Carrington not only figures in the fashion and beauty material but also in editorial such as when an archive photo of Alexis in a catfight with another Dynasty character, Krystle is used in a feature on gender roles. Other examples are the feature “To old for all the fun stuff,” in which Joan Collins is celebrated as a role model for aging if not with grace then with a lot of fun. Collins has deserved this privilege, according to the article, because she makes a point of looking not like an aging housewife but an aging

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591 EW30, 76-85.
592 EW30, 84.
593 “Catwalk 2002” EW29, 65.
594 Her full name was in fact Alexis Morrell Carrington Colby Dexter Rowan.
596 “en ægte 80’er-powerwoman.” EW30, 91.
597 ”stort hår, glitter og gloss er tilbage... husk at sende en kærlig tanke til glam-ikonerne Bianca Jagger og Alexis, når du ruller håret op.” ”Tropical glam”, EW28, 50-57. Other 1980s Glam revivals in beauty are seen in ”Glam Slam” (EW29, 85) where the reference to Glam is direct, and ”Femme fatale” (EW29,90) that introduces the return of the red lips of the 1980s ”80ernes kræftige røde læber.”
598 ”Alexis og Dollars har ikke levet forgæves.” ”Materialer” EW32, 130.
599 ”En køn historie” EW37, 152.
600 “For gammel til alt det sjove” EW45, 73-74.
vamp understood as an unscrupulously seductive woman. Alexis Carrington/Joan Collins as the representative of Glam becomes the antithesis of the homeliness of Granny. As one writer explains, she would rather look like Joan Collins when she is 68 than a grandmother, because “Joan Collins is sure to have more fun.” The issue this raised in relation to the Toolbox will be brought up below.

A final remark, which is also evident with Alexis, is the twist added to the ostentation and glamour. Because part of the flashing of brands and the excessive style is also meant to go over the top: “In a time when expensive fashion is supposed to look cheap.” The term used to describe the personification of this look is the Trashette, which is similar to vamp.

Glam is less sprawling than the Granny Chic and falls mainly in the category of immaterial revival and is mainly concerned with fashion, beauty and accessories as opposed to Granny Chic, which moved into a range of fields such as interior design, food, hobbies, and dwelling. This is to say that two versions of Retro operate not only with different visual expressions but also reveal different potentials and problems in the Positions, which supports the choice of an iterative method.

Having now outlined the second version of the Retro Trend as it operates in the EW material, I will move on to applying the five Positions to Glam to further study the analytical potential of the Positions, and to explore how prevalent the four Issues are.

601 American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 1415.
602 “Joan Collins har det helt sikkert sjovere” EW45, 74.
603 “I en tid, hvor den dyre mode skal se billig ud” in the fashion spread “Le Rac Rocheur” EW31, 120.
604 More might be made of other personifications of Glam such as the more wholesome revival of the 1980s as seen in seen with the three characters from the TV show Charlie’s Angels which in the EW material is considered 1980s though the show in fact ran from 1976-1981. The show plays a strong role in Glam as seen in for instance Podium ”Glam” EW26, 24 where photo and text refers to the show as a 1980s Glam revival; in the catwalk report “Sexy Sassy Woman” EW24, 70-77 where Charlie’s Angels are mentioned as a source inspiration EW24, 70; and “The Fashion ABC” “Modens ABC” EW25, 66-79 where one of the trends for the season is “’e’ for engle” where Charlie’s Angels are presented in text and image as Glam icons EW25, 69; in Mode where the revival of aviator sunglasses is linked to Charlie’s Angels EW24, 39; and in a review of Madonna’s album Music EW31, 46 where Charlie’s Angels are credited for her look. However, while the presence of Charlie’s Angels is substantial and might have constituted suitable material for the Analysis of Glam, the example only figures in the immaterial revival and does not sprawl into other fields, and hence does not add anything crucial to the Power Woman and Trashette other than illustrate yet another example of how prolific the Retro Trends is.
Position 1: Social mechanism and Glam

The most immediate understanding of Glam in general and Logomania in particular would be to see it as an example of Veblen’s notion of ‘conspicuous consumption’ and ‘pecuniary emulation’ according to which class status is demonstrated through excessive expenditure. This is supported by statements such as: “The most important thing is that you look expensive,” and the Michael Kors quote from above. However, knowing that society and social structures have changed since the publication of The Theory of the Leisure Class in 1899, this direct translation seems unlikely. Though the trickle-down movement is still an operative mechanism in relation to for instance the role of celebrities as discussed in Granny Chic, the movement is different that one might at first assume.

Here it is important to remember that Glam is a version of a trend and therefore concerned with change rather than the more static demonstration of wealth. Glam as part of a Social Mechanism is to be viewed in relation to the decentralized premise that has opened for new sources for demonstrating social status. Just as with Granny Chic, Glam is not about what is being revived, but how. So paradoxically, what appears to be a classic case of trickle-down is in fact no different than Granny Chic in focusing on the skills of timing and taste required to navigate in the complicated fields of social distinction. In other words, Glam as the excessive and ostentatious version and Granny Chic as the modest and classic version – with vintage as the generic opposition to Logomania – might appear to be in contrast, but the strategies behind are in fact similar if not the same. Both are concerned with the Logic of Wrong: The old clothes, looking old of Granny Chic and the vulgar clothes, looking cheap with Glam.

As for the trickle-movements, the confusion concerning direction as seen with Granny Chic also seems to hold true with Glam. In Glam there is the tendency towards trickle-down with the extravagance which both holds true – the designers did in fact design clothes and the stylists are not on a subversive mission – but at the same time there are twists such as the Trashette icons that suggest a trickle-up effect from a white trash or bad taste level. As for the trickle-across effect, looking rich or even

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605 "Det vigtigste er at du ser dyr ud" EW33, 111 in fashion spread “Cocktail” EW33, 110-119.
606 EW29, 65.
trashy as a source of distinction seems like a strategy that works within the particular social strata that read *Eurowoman*.

One of the sources of distinction in Glam is the potential for scrambling the signals in the wrong – as in right – way, which is especially relevant in trickle-across that deals with the social systems on a personal rather than societal scale. Because, while much of the visual expression of Glam is part of a trend mechanism, it also relates on a material level to the fashion practice of groups not immediately linked to the EW readership. To give an example the same Logomania bag presumably plays into different social strategies depending on social, cultural and geographical context. This ambiguity parallels what we saw in Granny Chic but instead of young women looking like grandmothers, we here have young, fashion forward women looking like upper-class housewives.

The key is of course to confuse the *enemy* in order to stall the process of emulation as long as possible. Logomania adds a particular edge to this process. As textile designer Gary Page explains in the feature “The Big Conspiracy:” “The Logomania trend is a good sales idea. Logos are something that have made us nauseous for some time, for instance with Hilfiger, but now it is done in an ostentatious and ironic way, so it becomes fun too.”607 This notion of a trend working because is makes us sick confirms the Logic of Wrong. Because of the democratization of fashion, the access to fashion and trend information has forced fashion leaders to explore strategies for distinction such as looking vulgar, ugly, or simply wrong to gain and maintain distinction.608 This was seen in young women looking old or boring in Granny Chic, and the fashion forward dressing to look cheap and in bad taste as in Glam. In EW, this sense of *reluctance* as a necessary part of the new mechanism in the Social Mechanism is expressed as a love-hate situation: “Everything we hate from the 1980s, we have to consider making room for again.609

608 A direct allusion to this notion of wrong is seen in *Podie Look* on make-up trends: ”Ugly or Genius?” ”Grimt eller genialt” EW45, 147. Another example is *Tendens* ”Shlong” – on the revival of the mullet hair style, EW28, 22.
609 EW32, 130. ”Alt det vi haderfra 1980erne, skal man overveje at gøre plads til igen.” Another example is ”80er-electro og alt det andet, vi ellers lige havde besluttet os for ikke at kunne lide” EW37, 36.
An extreme example is seen in an advertisement by shoe brand Bianco that takes the ugliness to the extreme (see Illustration 21).

To sum up, the comparative Analysis of Granny Chic and Glam shows how the Social Mechanisms were in fact similar despite the apparent contrasts between the two versions. Granny Chic was more expansive in including other fields such as interior decoration, food, and design, which confirms that this version forms the best base for the Analysis. Because of this similarity, nothing substantial was added to the four Issues. Dichotomy is still in focus in the them-and-us logic of the Social Mechanism and by implication also a social Hierarchy though the multi-directional trickle-movements seem to challenge the sense of vertical structure. The Point of Origin is related to the promotion of style icons, which are metaphorical rather than actually engaging in the Social Mechanism. The staging of fashion leaders was present though not as strong as in Granny Chic, perhaps due to the less sprawling nature of Glam.

Position 2: Neomania and Glam
The Glam version lends itself well to the Neomania Position for the obvious reason that much of the theory used to develop the Neomania Position is from the 1980s. That the Retro Trend revives a period that was particularly concerned with the display and assimilation of historic motifs intensifies the effect of the Glam version. In quoting and simulating an era that is already an imitation of dead styles, the application of Neomania to the Glam version foregrounds the postmodern condition with its celebration of artifice and disregard of categories.

Comparing the Analysis of Granny Chic and Glam enhances a sense of promiscuity in trends. The visual clashing between the versions shows how the Retro Trend as a whole excels in joining together disparate elements – the high of Ladylike with the low of Trashette – from the vast Supermarket of Style. There is a sense of equalization according to which trashy and classy are the same, as are the 1940s and the 1980s. Popular culture as seen in the celebration of Dynasty holds the same status as haute couture.

__610__ As Koda points out: “While no era is without a consciousness of the past, the decades since 1980 have been particularly rich in the variety of strategies that fashion designers have employed to infuse their work with historical narratives,” Goddess, 11.

__611__ As Baudrillard argues: “At some time in the 1980s, history took a turn in the opposite direction… and things began to run in reverse.” The Illusion of the End, 10.
Because the material in Glam is already postmodern it allows for a more excessive and indulgent use of the strategies of Neomania. Where Granny Chic generally twisted the expression for subversive effect – such as promoting Queen Margrethe as a style icon – Glam tends to take it a step further – for instance when staging Barbie as a the ‘Queen of Glam.’\(^{612}\) While there was a sense of comfort and class in Granny Chic, also within the Neomania Position, Glam is all surface. This mood is evident in the fashion spread “Last Christmas”\(^{613}\) featuring 1970s and 1980s fashion revivals. The spread appears highly stylized and decadent, which in the context of Neomania serves to bring attention to the artifice of any structure or order. The fact that the mood of ennui and boredom is linked to Christmas, the very institution of togetherness and tradition, seems to further emphasize this (see Illustration 22). More specific examples of Glam are seen in the foregrounding of a Chiffon bottle\(^{614}\) – a similar bottle is seen in “Tropical Glam”\(^{615}\) linking it to the version – as a present for a boyfriend, which highlights the meaningless of an object which is used merely for the momentary enjoyment of discovery.

To sum up, the Analysis of Glam serves to bring out more nuances in the Neomania Position as the expression of a postmodern condition. The potential is still to offer a framework for relating to the apparent chaos and anarchy of fashion trends. In terms of the Issues, adding the second version of Retro emphasizes the presence of Dichotomy as a prerequisite for the subversive strategy of Neomania. Though Neomania is about the destabilization and relativity, it might nevertheless be argued that there is a sense of Point of Origin in that all of the EW material is seen as coming back to the same namely postmodernity. As for Hierarchy, this is to a lesser degree a prerequisite in the subversive strategy though present. Lines of development will be taken up in Chapter 6.

**Position 3: Market and Glam**

The Market Positions looks at how the Market in general and the fashion system in particular influences the trend mechanisms through trade and commercial agendas.

\(^{612}\) EW26, 24.
\(^{613}\) EW45, 110-117.
\(^{614}\) EW45, 87.
\(^{615}\) EW28, 50-57.
The prominence of Logomania – "1980s brand flashing is back"\textsuperscript{616} – coupled with the entire sense of ostentation makes Glam a more accommodating version of the Retro Trend than Granny Chic. Where customization and vintage in Granny Chic had a subversive effect on the Market, which made the dialectic between consumer and designer/brand more pronounces, Glam is more traditional in letting the Market set the trends and the presence of democratization is not strong.

To what extent the Market is capitalizing on an existing trend cannot be determined from the material. However, the clear demonstration of the desire for high-end brands shows that at the very least Logomania and the notion of looking expensive is rooted in the industry. Supporting this are some of the ads in \textit{Eurowoman}. One example of a Trashette is seen in an ad for Versace Jeans Couture\textsuperscript{617} featuring a blond, vampish woman lying in bed with tight jeans and a pink top looking very available (see Illustration 23).

To sum up, the Analysis of Glam quite surprisingly demonstrated how strong the role of the Market still is in the inception of trends despite the decentralization and the democratization. In comparison with Cranny Chic, it is interesting to note how these various market forces operate, co-operate and counter-act each other within the same Retro Trend.

As for the four Issues, the dichotomy between designer/brand and consumer as well as the fashion house as the point of origin of a trend are still distinct forms of organization in the trend mechanism as is the trickle-down effect according to an institutional hierarchy.

\textbf{Position 4: Seduction and Glam}

What is striking at first when comparing Granny Chic and Glam according to the Seduction Position is the difference between the opposites of covered and exposed, chaste and erotic. Having two opposing versions of contemporary seductiveness present simultaneously in one trend is confusing and seems to weaken the Position. Adding to this bewilderment is considering that within Glam as one version of one trend, there are also opposition: On the one hand, the Trashette with her almost stereotypical expressions of female desirability; and on the other, the Power Woman with her appropriating masculine traits in a seductive strategy. Even if the two sides

\textsuperscript{616} "80ernes mærkeblær er tilbage" EW28, 18. \textit{Podium} "Logomania."
\textsuperscript{617} EW31, 12.
might be combined in the figure of Alexis Carrington, it still seems that the process Davis referred to as ‘the dialectics of the erotic and the chaste’ is difficult to maintain.

To sum up, the Seduction Position operates by a Dichotomy of saturation and boredom. This approach became confusing in the Analysis of Glam, which in turn questions whether organization according to Dichotomy corresponds to contemporary trend mechanisms. Point of Origin is not as relevant as with the theory of shifting erogenous zones, which was understood in the Mapping to not have enough potential to play a key role in the Analysis. Hierarchy is not relevant to the Position.

**Position 5: Zeitgeist and Glam**

If trends are reflections of ideals and events of an age, then what are the values expressed in Glam? Though Glam is part of the Retro Trend, the sense of nostalgic longing for slowness and quality evident in Granny Chic is absent. Glam is concerned with life in the glamorous fast lane and the artifice of the 1980s. The narratives within Glam also counteracted each other, Power Woman being about empowerment and the Trashette about reducing women to desirable objects. While this might at first seem contradictory when understood at a literal level, Glam might be approached at a more abstract level to indicate a Zeitgeist where women are free to experiment with identities or they are able to perform many roles.

The question is whether the narratives that come out of the Zeitgeist Position can become so relative that they are rendered meaningless. However, here it is important to consider the function of the Zeitgeist Position. Rather than assuming to tell the truth about times through trends, it has been suggested in this dissertation that trends constitute a space for reflection in which to create stories that can aid in the understanding of contemporary society and ultimately in the understanding of ourselves, each other, and our role in the world.

An interesting twist to the revival of the 1980s as a tool for understanding the characteristics of our own age is offered in *The Historic Mode: Fashion and Art in the 1980s* (1989), in which Harold Koda and Richard Martin suggest: “our Retrospection is a kind of introspection; our fascination with history is a means of understanding

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ourselves.\textsuperscript{619} The sense of serial revivals adds a level of depth to Glam as an expression of Zeitgeist as a continuous process of introspection.

To sum up, in the context studied in this dissertation trends in fashion constitute a common ground for reflection and introspection that is less profound than the one offered by religion, and more substantial than the one offered by the weather. In both Granny Chic and Glam, the Zeitgeist Position brings attention to how trends seem to constitute a flexible space in which to create stories that can aid in the understanding of contemporary society and ultimately in the understanding of ourselves. In being this type of vehicle, trends might say something about the Zeitgeist in the way we ascribe meaning to them rather than what they are actually expressing if they are indeed expressing anything at all.

As for the four Issues, there are Dichotomies in Retro brought out by comparing Granny Chic and Glam, for instance between modest and conspicuous, classy and trashy, authentic and fake. The sense of Point of Origin is strong in this Position in that it assumes that trends constitute narratives rooted in the context of a specific time and place. As for Hierarchy, as mentioned, there is a diffuse sense of a vertical structure of meaning in the Zeitgeist Position that within the fashion system places the designer or forecaster at the top as a special medium able to ‘read’ and therefore translate the signs of the time.

Third version: Mix
As with the other two versions, I will begin with a description of how Mix as the third version of the Retro Trend is seen in the EW material, before proceeding with the application of the five Positions. While this is the final version of Retro, the Analysis will not be completed until Chapter 6 in which the extensive period will be analyzed and the Rhizomatic Position developed.

While Granny Chic and Glam to a certain extent seem to run their own course albeit within the framework of the same Retro Trend, they are also fused, which is what will be explored in Mix. One example of this is seen in Tendens "Logomania"\textsuperscript{620} featuring a “Corsage sewn out of old Louis Vuitton travel bags”\textsuperscript{621} which joins elements of the craftiness of Granny Chic and the conspicuous consumption of Glam.

\textsuperscript{619} The Historical Mode, 15.
\textsuperscript{620} EW34, 17.
\textsuperscript{621} ”Korsage syet af gamle LV-rejsetaske.”
Other examples are seen in the fashion spread “Cover Up.”\textsuperscript{622} “It is all about mixing and twisting. The 1940s classic look combined with Harlem soul and the addition of the shabby elegance of the fille de joie.”\textsuperscript{623} The mix is however, not restricted to specific looks or types. Another personification is suggested in 

\textit{Podium} “Crazy” that predicts ‘mix and match’ for “Crazy Cinderella.”\textsuperscript{624}

As the variations in these quotes show it is about the process of mixing itself that becomes the focus of interest. As suggested in the fashion spread “In the Mix:” “What you express lies in the way you chose to combine the things.”\textsuperscript{625} An example in the beauty spread “Remix”\textsuperscript{626} offers a longer account of how the Retro Trend in the Mix version is more about \textit{how} something is mixed than \textit{what} is mixed:

“Gourmet chefs mix traditional dishes, and top DJs remix old hits like never before. The result moves effortlessly across historical boundaries and time zones ending up characterizing the time in which we live. Mixing also takes place in fashion, and in this beauty spread we have dipped into the historical fashion archives for inspiration. The main trends at the moment – the prim glamour of the 1940s and the wild, provocative style of the early 1980s – are freewheeling, but what happens when they are fused? How does it look when Hollywood Hills meets trailer park trash – or to stay in DJ lingo: Can you sample Nina Hagen and Rita Hayworth so it sounds good?”\textsuperscript{627}

\textsuperscript{622} EW27, 72-79.
\textsuperscript{623} “Der skal mixes og twistes over hele linien. 40ernes klassiske look kombineret med Harlem-soul og tilsættes glædespigens lurvede elegance.” EW27, 72.
\textsuperscript{624} EW38, 26.
\textsuperscript{625} EW39, 76-86. “Det, du udtrykker, ligger i den måde, du vælger at sætte tingene sammen på.”
\textsuperscript{626} EW33, 146-151.
The quote is interesting because it documents a general tendency within fashion as well as food, music and beauty for sampling or mixing elements in a way that appears to be more about the synthesis of elements rather than the elements themselves. This horizontal movement between the various examples of the Mix version seems to indicate a different mechanism that operates with many expressions simultaneously while still rooted within the same trend.

What seems to enforce this approach is the fact that not only does Mix connect various Retro versions but elements that are not Retro are also mixed in. A visualization of this is seen in the Introduction to an interior special where the opening picture features the Danish design legend Nanna Ditzel (1923-2005), an immaterial revival in the shape of a Thomson Kitchen Life mini TV, and the interior of a minimalist café in Malmö with blackboard with a Japanese menu written on. Another example is the Christmas spread “Eurowoman’s Sense of Christmas” which combines an archive image of a running Santa with a stylized shot of rice used for Danish Christmas pudding, and close-up of tinsel. The result is a mix of Retro and contemporary, humor and minimalist aesthetic.

In the interior spread “En god dansk frokost,” new ceramics by young ceramicist Ditte Fischer are mixed with the traditional Mågestel with a seagull pattern from Royal Copenhagen and disposable cutlery. Though not a fashion spread, the example is interesting in terms of its three basic components: up-and-coming Danish designer, classic design, and disposable which in the EW material seems to constitute a recipe – motored by Mix – which in fashion terms translates into the combination of up-and-coming fashion Danish designer, vintage (or heirlooms) and fast fashion often with high-end design and souvenirs thrown in for measure. This particular combination is seen in for instance the fashion spread “Repulsion: This is Not a...”

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628 An example of this is given in Delikatesse EW27, 129 with a story on a new restaurant, Delicatessen, that specializes in the traditional Danish dish biksemad and sushi.
629 In Musik “Den store smeltedigel” (EW24, 32) Beastie Boys and Beck are talked about as exponents of the hybrid music genre.
630 Another example that fuses the 1940s Granny Chic and the 1980s Glam is seen in ”Femme fatale” EW29, 90: ”Dette look er en sjælden kombination af tre årtier tilsat det 21. århundredes sans for at bringe det hele et skridt videre. 40ernes eyliner trækkes også under øjet, 20ernes blege matte hud får et sart pift af en fersk rød rouge, og 80ernes kraftige røde læber fuldender looket.”
631 EW32, 119.
632 “Eurowomans fornemmelser for jul” EW33, 98-103.
633 EW33, 99.
634 EW44, 104-105.
Dream – This is Reality” where one shot features the combination of an H&M top, Paul & Joe skirt, and vintage hat.635

The same tendency towards eclectic mixes is seen in fashion spreads such as “The Sixties”636 (see Illustration 24). In addition to presenting another decade not covered in the Analysis and thus hinting at further complexity of the Retro Trend, the spread is interesting in that it mixes vintage, new Danish designers such as Rene Gurskov, high-end such as Prada, and handicrafted elements such as a homemade necklace. Another example is Podium “Vinterhvid” that on a single page features a mix of high-end such as a Chanel-bag and vintage denim skirt from the store Flying A as well as gloves from the classic glove store, Randers Handsker and an undershirt from Femilet that is sold in supermarkets.637

Common to these diverse examples is that it seems to be the act of mixing itself that is in focus, as suggested in the statement: “the mix is new.”638 This seems to indicate that the mix rather than the sum of individual parts is the motor. How this motor is dealt with when subjected to the five Positions is the purpose of the next section.

Social Mechanism and Mix

Mix seen through the Social Mechanism Position seems to be about making emulation as difficult as possible by combining vintage which is both one-of-a-kind and takes a certain skill to find combined with high-end items that take a certain economic status to obtain. In addition there are heirlooms, which are by definition unique and kitsch that takes a certain amount of courage to pull off. Overall, it is about sending crypted signals as seen when a store owner describes how she dresses her young son: “my son looks like a Polish refugee even though his clothes cost as much as designer clothes.”639

While it seems clear that Mix is an efficient method in relation to the general mechanism of chase and flight, it is more uncertain how the trickle-movements fare. The regular Ud af skabet is interesting here because in being invited into the homes

635 EW37, 87.
637 EW45, 24.
638 “Glamrock og punk er atter over os - men mixet er nyt,” EW25, 32.
639 “min søn ligner en polsk flygtning, også selvom hans tøj koster det samme som mærketøj” in Ud af skabet, EW33, 58.
and closets of fashion forward women, we are included in a social sphere in which the particular woman is staged as the fashion leader. An example of a fashion leader demonstrating the complex recipe of Mix in a trickle-across setting is *Ud af skabet* with designer Rikke Baumgarten\(^\text{640}\) (see Illustration 25). She presents items that are a combination of high-end designer accessories, customized souvenir T-shirts, clothes found at flea markets in Paris and London, her grandmother’s snakeskin wallet, items from IKEA, and ballet-shoes from a sale at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen.

Stylists are also fashion leaders in their capacity to select what the magazine as a ‘friend’ communicates in relation to fashion trends and how it is communicated. Therefore, there is a trickle-across effect indirectly in the fashion spreads they make and how they are presented as individuals. So when stylist Karina Ørnsted is presented as a contributor who is known for mixing, she is also a fashion leader engaging in a process of distinction: “*Eurowoman* has benefited from her flair for combining new and secondhand.”\(^\text{641}\) A similar example is given in a travel guide to Paris, which highlights elements of Granny Chic and Glam: “Stylists and fashion aficionados prefer to combine expensive designer clothes with secondhand rags.”\(^\text{642}\)

However, the trickle-up and -down movements are far more difficult to trace considering the composite nature of this third version of Retro. This has to do with them running linear courses on a larger, societal scale as opposed to trickle-across that operates within a more narrow social system. Granny Chic was relatively straightforward when celebrities instigated a trickle-down movement with vintage; and with Glam, Logomania demonstrated a classic trickle-down movement located within the fashion system. As for the trickle-up movement, vintage was again an example of how street practice moved upward through the fashion system and social hierarchies. The influence of popular culture with for instance the TV shows were examples of a trickle-up movement for instance when Celine was clearly influenced by *Dynasty*.

Though the new strategies for creating social distinction through for instance irony and subversion complicated the trickle-movements, they were still detectable. However, while the basic process of distinction and imitation are still prevalent in

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\(^{640}\) EW37, 54-55.

\(^{641}\) “*Eurowoman*, der har nydt godt af hendes flair for at kombinere nyt og secondhand” EW26, 12.

\(^{642}\) “Stylist og mode-afficionados foretrekker dog at kombinere det dyre designertøj med genbrugsklude” in "Hip City: Paris” EW26, 137.
Mix, it seems that at least the trickle-up and -down movements become too vague to be operational because of the uni-directionality that did not correspond with the social strategies in contemporary trend mechanisms.

**Neomania and Mix**

Mix seems at first to be the ultimate example of Neomania as the expression of the postmodern condition. As Baudrillard was quoted for saying in characteristically nihilistic terms in the Mapping: “everything is equivalent and is mixed indiscriminately in the same morose and funeral exaltation, in the same Retro fascination.”\(^{643}\) Here, Mix is a demonstration of the impossibility of innovation and ‘the imitation of dead styles.’ As Polhemus explains: “striving to remix the past to come up with a ‘new’ result.”\(^{644}\) The set of quotation marks are significant, since novelty is an illusion.

What is implied here is that the entire notion of novelty is under constant construction and is in fact undermined by being recirculations of former styles. However, looking at the EW material, Mix is characterized by the combination of Retro elements with other non-Retro elements as a force advancing the trend. A clear example of this is *Ud af skabet* as a whole. All the women presented in the regular share the same affinity for surrounding themselves with an eclectic collection of disparate elements that cover the mentioned prescription of vintage, high-end, and mass-fashion with the addition of souvenirs, kitsch, heirlooms, customized or handmade items, and quirky objects. The fact that these spaces are private and not designed for public display might indicate that the motivation for this Mix is the exploration of the anything goes dogma rather than part of a social strategy. What Neomania brings out of this material is what appears to be a clear illustration of the roots of the Position according to Polhemus who was quoted in the Mapping for stating: “eclecticism, fragmentation, surreal juxtaposition and synchronicity [are] simply a particularly explicit, up-front realization of the Post-Modern condition.”\(^{645}\)

On a more specific level, the material also illustrates how this condition prompts attempts to escape the void or the boredom by the distraction offered by

\(^{643}\) *Simulacra and Simulation*, 44.
\(^{644}\) *Stylesurfing*, 71.
\(^{645}\) *Stylesurfing*, 97.
fashion and consumption. An example is seen when hairdresser Marianne Jensen,\textsuperscript{646} describes how she ‘feels most comfortable among a disparate mix of things that are secondhand, homemade, or purchased abroad. The rest is too boring.’\textsuperscript{647}

Though Mix seems to be the ultimate example of a postmodern trend, the EW material clearly indicates that it is not about anything goes. There is still a sense of the right mix as seen with the prescription. Mix is not determined by relativity since not everything is foregrounded at once. Neomania highlights Granny Chic and Glam as part of a trend mechanisms rather than examples of various style tribes in the Supermarket of Style. This perspective becomes accentuated in Mix when the scrambling of the two first versions are what drives the trend mechanisms forward making the notion of stable style tribes less probable.

Market and Mix
Looking at Mix through the Market Position, the challenges brought out with especially Granny Chic seem to be enhanced. In Mix, the question of what constitutes fashion is challenged with the notion of ‘cheapskate chic,’\textsuperscript{648} which in this case refers to the tendency to buy fashion items cheaply as in ‘a pair of sunglasses for DKK 20.’\textsuperscript{649} or by transforming mundane items into fashion such as a “Netto T-shirt”\textsuperscript{650} and “T-shirt with Madonna made at the main station in Copenhagen.”\textsuperscript{651} It is interesting that these examples of cheapskate chic – which are also linked to Granny Chic – are found in the Podium "Logomania” that by being part of Glam is intended to do the opposite namely look expensive. This disorientation posed challenges for the Market Position in terms of navigation. This is intensified by the fact that Mix is not about what is mixed but how. Since the Market Position is concerned with the exchange of goods, the predicament is obvious.

\textsuperscript{646} Ud af skabet, EW30, 56.
\textsuperscript{647} “Hun trives nemlig bedst i et samsurium af ting, der enten er secondhand, hjemmelavet eller indkøbt i udlandet. ‘Det andet er for kedeligt’,” fortæller hun.” EW30, 56.
\textsuperscript{648} The End of Fashion, 284. An example outside fashion of connecting cheap and fashionable is seen in the Moschino perfume ‘Cheap and Chic,’ EW33, 140.
\textsuperscript{649} Tendens ”Sun glasses” ”Solbriller” ”20er på loppemarked,” EW28, 20.
\textsuperscript{650} Netto is the name of a Danish discount supermarket.
\textsuperscript{651} EW37, 26.
\textsuperscript{652} ”T-shirt med Madonna kreeret på Københavns Hovedbanegård” EW34, 17.
Seduction and Mix
The joining together of the two opposing notions of contemporary seductiveness in Granny Chic and Glam in Mix seems to implode the Seduction Position. The premise of the Position does not seem to allow for co-existing ideas of contemporary seductiveness such as prim and vampish. However, in the Mix version two versions might be combined as seen in the encouragement: “Combine the sexy and the tough style with the glamorous and the extravagant.”653 Judging from the quote, what is essential is not what the types of sexiness are but the very fact that they are combined. The question is whether any theoretical model is able to contain this complexity, but the existing theory of shifting erogenous zones and contemporary seductiveness seems too vague to contribute anything substantial.

Zeitgeist and Mix
What the Zeitgeist Position might say about Mix is that it expresses the dominating ideal of individuality, not in the ambiguous sense in Neomania, but according the pleasure of change itself as in “the intoxication of sensation and novelty.”654 That is to say, that the sign of the times in the context of Mix seems to be concerned with the value of change and individual taste. There are several indications of this Zeitgeist in the EW material. In the interior spread “Kontrast”655 (see Illustration 26) opposite elements are joined together: “Because we appreciate individualism.”656 Another interior spread also characterized by mixing new and old, raw and elegant from several decades is ”Moderne nostalgi:”657 “Right now, creating a personal style in your home is as big a trend as creating your own personal wardrobe.”658

As in the previous two versions, the Zeitgeist offers narratives designed to aid us in the process of understanding through trends the particular context in which we live. However, the three versions gave rise to highly diverse narratives within the

653 “Kombiner den sexede og rå stil med det glamourøse og ekstravagante” EW25, 32.
654 The Empire of Fashion, 146.
656 ”For vi sætter pris på individualisme,” EW29,106. Another example is the fashion spread “Individualist” EW37, 95-104.
657 EW25, 148-151.
658 ”At skabe en personlig boligstil er i øjeblikket lige så stor en trend som at skabe sin egen personlige garderobe,” EW25, 148.
same temporal context, which reduces the potential of the reflective space formed by the Position. 659

To sum up, the EW material proved to yield an overwhelming amount of data on the Retro Trend as a contemporary case. The intensive period of two years offered the opportunity for a thorough treatment for updating and challenging the five Positions on trend mechanisms.

The Positions have all demonstrated analytical potential and the Retro Trend proved to be an ideal case both because it focuses so squarely on the issue of novelty essential in the question of whether trends are going out of fashion, and because of its ability to operate on many levels and fields simultaneously.

However, the Analysis also brought attention to limitations of the Toolbox, and this raised Issues that fell in four themes: Dichotomy, Point of Origin, Hierarchy, and Line of Development that will motivate the development of the sixth Position, the Rhizomatic Position.

I chose to focus only on three versions of the Retro Trend rather than the trend as a whole, because the material was so prolific it was necessary to take a narrow focus to make the result of the Analysis as sharp as possible. However, this also means that only part of the Retro Trend was studied, which seems to indicate that the trend is far more prolific than seen in the Analysis. This also means that the four Issues might potentially be even more prevalent than suggested here.

One example illustrating this proliferation is seen when pursuing just one aspect of Granny Chic namely crafting. This renewed interest in handicrafts was linked to customization, which encouraged personal touches and DIY. But customizing was simultaneously linked to an urban cowgirl trend with inspiration from denim and 1950s rock ‘n’ roll culture with James Dean and Elvis as style

659 The individualist Zeitgeist is also seen in perfumes: "the tendency shows that we all dream about the unique, and therefore we are more attracted to individual, personal scents” EW31, 138. "Næsen er erotikkens øje,” EW31, 138-140. The article goes through the trends in perfumes since the 1970s: “The perfumes of the future have to speak to our positive memories of the good life – with inspiration from for instance the poetic summer garden of childhood, picking berries, summer days and playing at the beach in a light breeze.” "Fremtidens parfumer skal tale til vore positive minder om det gode liv - med inspiration fra bl.a. barndommens poetiske sommerhaver, bærplukning, sommerdage og leg ved stranden i en let brise” EW31, 138. Here, individualism is coupled with nostalgia placing the perfume trend within the realm of the Mix version.
In the same vain, the customizing trend was linked to a hair trend for an asymmetric, childish look described as the “I cut my own hair-style,” and the celebration of toys such as Kay Bojesen’s Little Monkey designed in 1951. This is in turn linked to the childish tendency in EW exemplified with the regular candy page Slik (see Illustration 27) and editorial concepts borrowed from children’s games – S, P eller K and Truth or Dare – all of which are both obviously retro and diametrically opposed to Granny Chic.

This expansive development of a single side of Granny Chic challenges the Positions additionally. An example outside fashion is seen in the revival of classic, Danish cuisine which is linked to a simultaneous trend for the local – perhaps a reaction to globalization – as seen in the interest in Danish modern classics in furniture design and the new boom of Danish fashion designers at the time as seen in the fashion spreads “Danish delight” and “Made in Denmark.” A short piece on the award-winning magazine Copenhagen Living illustrates that the rediscovery and celebration of Danish cultural history was also prominent outside the EW material. The piece features fashion-forward images of the classic Danish dessert ‘rødgrød med fløde’ and the Grundtvig’s Church that is furnished with classic chairs designed by Kaare Klint.

I find that although much more material could have been included – comparative studies of several Danish women’s magazines, comparisons between national versions of Retro, or a closer inspection of the Retro Trend of the 1990s leading up to the Noughties – the narrow focus allowed for a detailed analysis that

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660 Podium, EW36, 24. "Lav din egen t-shirt."
661 "jeg har klippet mig selv'-stil" EW41, 82.
662 EW38, 134.
663 While Slik is retro in the sense of referring to childhood, some of the candy presented is also retro as seen in "Den gamle stil” ”The Old Style” EW35, 33.
664 EW22, 22-28.
665 "Sandhed eller konsekvens,” EW24, 42-46.
666 There are many other examples of this sprawling tendency such as the link between vintage which was related to Granny Chic in the Analysis but is also linked to the tougher, masculine trend as seen in the fashion spread “Garçonne” EW42, 116-118 that features ‘denim vintage pants from Roger, a military surplus store” EW42, 116.
667 Exemplified in the food feature “Svineheld” EW40, 102-103 in which the preservation of Danish delicacies is encourage, EW40, 102.
668 EW24, 78-87.
669 EW30, 96-105. See Marie Riegels Melchior’s Ph.D. dissertation DANSK PÅ MODE! En undersøgelse af design, identitet og historie i dansk modeindustri.
670 Design ”Rene linier, klar stil” EW28, 24.
was necessary for both uncovering the potential of the Positions as well as the limitations. The iterative method with the repetition of cycles allowed for a process of successive approximations. While the Analysis might at times have seemed redundant, I still find that we are left with an updated Toolbox with the analytical potential for understanding and working with contemporary trends. The results of the Analysis demonstrated a balance in the strong objectivity between the Toolbox saying something general about trend mechanisms while still maintaining that the Positions as well as the Retro Trend are historically, socially, and culturally situated in various ways.

So while the relevance of the Positions is clear, there are still four Issues that seem to limit them. Resolving these Issues will therefore serve the double purpose of both adding a new Position to the Toolbox – the Rhizomatic Position – that is able to describe contemporary trend mechanisms as a pure mechanism while at the same time strengthening the analytical potential of the existing Positions, which in turn contributes to the consolidation of the field of trend studies. Both purposes are an important step in the effort to answer the part of the research question of whether trends are going out of fashion.
CHAPTER 6: THE RHIZOMATIC POSITION - Developing the Sixth Position and the Analysis of the Extensive Period

The *Rhizomatic* Position proposes a new model for understanding how contemporary trend mechanisms operate on an increasingly democratic, decentralized premise. According to the Rhizomatic Position trends are a spatial rather than temporal phenomenon, which opens for new ways of understanding trend mechanisms. The aim is to find an approach that neither views trend mechanism as locked in the opposition between either “‘in’ or ‘out’”\(^{671}\) nor as anarchy where everything is ‘simultaneously out’.\(^{672}\) The Rhizomatic Position will attempt to conceptualize and visualize what might be considered the ‘pure mechanisms’\(^{673}\) of trends through resolving the Issues that were raised in the Analysis.

While the previous chapters have offered an account of the functions, motors, and historical development of trends in fashion, the demonstration of the analytical potential of the five Positions, also left us with four unresolved Issues: Dichotomy, Point of Origin, Hierarchy, and Line of Development. These Issues seemed to constitute an obstruction to the goal of achieving a precise and comprehensive Analysis of trends that might contribute to consolidating trend studies as a field.

These Issues also bring up new perspectives in relation to the doomsday speculation raised in the Introduction voiced by for instance Woody Hochswender who predicted that soon everything would be out, and Erin Magner who declared trends dead. Whether trends are in fact going out of fashion will be dealt with in this chapter, because rather than going out of fashion terminated by speed and

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\(^{671}\) *Old Clothes, New Looks*, 200.


\(^{673}\) Exploring the nature of trends might raise issues of how the Rhizomatic Position relates to the question of ontology. Does this notion of a pure mechanism presuppose an ontology and what are the metaphysical perspectives of the Rhizomatic Position? These issues are highly complex and would demand an inclusive treatment ranging from notions of fractal ontology related to the philosophical universe of Deleuze, to the Experimental Factor Ontology that deals with new methods of structuring plant components such as a rhizome related. While this would be interesting to explore in a different project, I will not move into the question of ontology within the already quite expansive framework of this dissertation.
fragmentation, the Rhizomatic Position might show how trends are still in fashion and actually move quite slowly.\textsuperscript{674}

The Rhizomatic Position and Neomania might at first seem to share a certain kinship. On a general level, both are rooted in a postmodern or post-structuralist mindset,\textsuperscript{675} and on a specific level both look at trend mechanisms as ‘continuous, deliberate, and promiscuous.’\textsuperscript{676}

However, where Neomania is concerned with destabilization, the Rhizomatic approach is more holistic in its attempt to approach trends as a complex unity of alliances. And where Neomania views trend mechanisms as operating on conditions of a perpetual present in which everything is equalized, the Rhizomatic Position attempts to take a spatial approach replacing temporal notions of seasons, expiration dates, and first movers with the spatiality of dimensions, expansions, and variation.\textsuperscript{677}

The four Issues
The discussion of the Issues will point both back to the five Positions – the Toolbox – as a critique as well as forward towards developing the sixth Position. The Issues are not organized according to Position but are understood in relation to the Toolbox as a whole. The Issues are concerned with the difficulty in maintaining the following four constructions that might be viewed as integral to the understanding of trend mechanism within the framework of the Toolbox and as unfolded in the Analysis:

\begin{itemize}
    \item As it will become clear in the following, this slowness is different from what Hazel Clark calls “Fast Life, Slow Fashion: A New Theory of Fashion” which is mainly concerned with sustainability. The paper was given at “Rethinking Fashion: FAST Life, SLOW Fashion;” a panel discussion at Parsons School for Design, November 9, 2008.
    \item The limited space of the dissertation does not allow for an elaboration on the differences between postmodernism and poststructuralism, nor will I be able to go into whether Deleuze might be considered a poststructural thinker.
    \item To a certain extent, this understanding of trend mechanisms is related to Recurring Cycles of Fashion (1937) in which Agnes Brooks Young performs quantitative analysis of the shape of dresses in the period 1760-1937 in an attempt to determine whether there are universal laws governing changes in fashion trends. While her concept of studying skirt yokes as a parameter of change and her assumption that trends move in cycles of 30-40 years is not applicable to the current fashion premise, her suggestion that fashion trends change according to “variations and modifications” (3) is an early indication, that trends are perhaps not motored by oppositional forces – continuous revolutions overthrowing the trend in power to install a new sovereign – but rather tend to move according to variation, mutations and expansions.
\end{itemize}


**Issue 1: Dichotomy** understood as the opposition between innovators and late adopters, high and low, new and old, unique and mass-produced, in and out, cheap and rich, young and old, right and wrong, consumer and designer, erotic and chaste, covered and exposed, past and present, new and used.

**Issue 2: Point of Origin** understood as fashion leader, designer, brand, dominant event, ideal, attitude, technology, erogenous zone, postmodernism.

**Issue 3: Hierarchy** understood as social, creative, and economic hierarchies implicit in for instance the first and second fashion systems, and the trickle-movements.

**Issue 4: Line of Development** understood as temporal, traceable trajectory however the term also holds potential if understood in a spatial sense.

While the first three Issues come out of the Analysis of the intensive period studied (2000 and 2001), the fourth has yet to be unfolded in an Analysis of the extensive period studied (2002-2009).

The approach in the Rhizomatic Position is inspired by the rhizome understood as both a botanical term and a philosophical concept. Roughly speaking, the botanical approach will offer the image that visualizes trends according to the sixth Position as an organic, relational process, while the rhizome as a philosophical concept will offer the analytical tools for developing the new Position.

**Rhizome as botanical term**

I have chosen the oak fern (*Gymnocarpium dryopteris*) as the vehicle for visualizing the Rhizomatic Position. The rhizome is not unique to the fern and there might have been potentials in choosing a different plant with rhizomes such as dangerously lovely lily of the valley or the invasive couch grass with medical properties. However, because of the fascinating cultural history, visual elegance, and sense of mystery shrouding the fern, I opted for the oak fern⁶⁷⁸ (see Illustration 28).

The botanical diversity of the fern also lends itself visually to the world of fashion trends with their continuous variation of styles, fabrics, colors, textures, patterns, silhouettes, and the multitude ways of wearing them. The majority of ferns

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⁶⁷⁸ In fact, not all types of fern have a rhizome. Nevertheless, I will be looking at the fern as such when unfolding the cultural history of fern. As the role of the fern in the Rhizomatic Position is a vehicle for visualizing the model rather than an actual botanical phenomenon, this inconsistency should be acceptable.
make their homes in moist tropical forests, but they also venture into cold temperate zones, bodies of water, and even the desert. Dating back more than 300 million years, there are about 12,000 different species. The highest ferns can reach an impressive 12 meters, and the colors range through the full spectrum of green but also white, silver, golden yellow, red, pink, copper, burgundy, and even blue. Fern fronds come in different textures and can be thick and leathery, succulent, hairy, waxy, or wafer-thin. And while fern can be used for purely decorative purposes in landscaping, as houseplants, or cut foliage, the spectrum of fern – as with fashion trends – is polymorphous ranging from the delicious fiddleheads of the cinnamon fern to the dangerous Japanese climbing fern. And relevant within the framework of this dissertation – at least at a metaphoric level – is Ceratopteris or C-fern, which is generally perceived as a model plant for teaching and research.

Unfurling the fern

It seems natural, so to speak, to take a botanical approach to something as organic and sprawling as trends in fashion. And the distance between the catwalk, the sidewalk, and a walk in the woods is not as far as one might first assume. The natural world of the fern is as visually complex and geographically diverse as that of trends. Flora and the nature of trends have quite a bit in common. Not in the sense of floral patterns, sustainable design, or hula skirts with coconut bras. The connection between plants and trends lies at a deeper level, literally subterranean.

Rhizomes – also referred to as creeping rootstalks or rootstocks – are horizontal, underground stems that strike new roots down into the soil, and shoot new stems up to the surface. While the oak fern propagates through spores, it also spreads by vegetative reproduction through its rhizome. Depending on the context, this underground procreation might be described as invasive by gardeners trying to rid their flowerbeds of the vigorous bishop’s weed; or inspirational by trend researcher interested in understanding the nature of trends through the sprawling network of the fern rhizome. This organic approach is concerned with the complicated, subterranean structure – the trend mechanism – that produces these surface manifestations – the trend. As we will see, one of they key potentials in this approach is the tools it provides for understanding trends as moving slowly according to variation rather than

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679 A Natural History of Ferns, 46-47.
rapidly according to what John Rae called ‘ceaseless revolution.’\textsuperscript{680} Returning to the image of the oak fern, the underground rhizome keeps growing, changing, and moving while the overground fronds wither and others are shot up. This process will be explored in the Analysis concerning the way the Retro Trend has developed in the first decade of the Noughties.

The Victorian Fern Craze
As discussed in the Analysis, trends are not exclusive to fashion. There are trends in everything from food and power tools to management theories and children’s books. There are even trends in the down-to-earth world of plants. Not only in decorative flower arrangements but also in such wild growths as the fern. One example is seen in 1830, when England was swept by an insatiable appetite for ferns, that was later referred to as the ‘Victorian Fern Craze,’\textsuperscript{681} or \textit{pteridomania} to use the Latin term.

The trend was initiated by the increased interest in ferns by both professional and amateur botanists, which by 1860 moved indoor to become a decorative motif until he 1890s.

Ferns of all types were collected from the countryside and shipped in from the colonies. It was also the trend to decorate the home with china, textiles and furniture with fern motifs.\textsuperscript{682} Victorian book publishers also benefited as well as fuelled the Fern Craze\textsuperscript{683} as did Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward, who invented the almost airtight containers – referred to as \textit{Wardian cases} – used for storing and transporting the popular plants. The example of the Fern Craze demonstrates that already in the 19th century, social, mercantile, seductive, and zeitgeist motors were driving trends.

True to form, the Fern Craze gave rise to especially Zeitgeist explanations of the rise of the trend. Some suggested, that the ruffled ferns and coiled fiddleheads went well with other elements of Victorian style. Others ascribed the fern trend to how it reflected the somber mood of the time because the plants supposedly “love a dull, quiet atmosphere.”\textsuperscript{684}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{680} \textit{Statement of Some New Principles on the Subject of Political Economy}, Ibid. 266.
  \item \textsuperscript{681} “At Home with Ferns,” \textit{Landscaping Indoors: Bringing the Garden Inside}.
  \item \textsuperscript{682} \textit{A Natural History of Ferns}, 250.
  \item \textsuperscript{683} According to Moran, 14 books were published on ferns during the Craze. He quotes the \textit{Phytologist}, a journal of the times, saying: ”The literature of ferns ... surpasses that of all the other branches of botanical science together,” 254.
  \item \textsuperscript{684} “At Home with Ferns,” \textit{Landscaping Indoors: Bringing the Garden Inside}. Moran is quoting “one Victorian writer,” 32.
\end{itemize}
The fern experienced a revival in the 1980s when especially the waxy Boston fern, *Nephrolepis* – and its plastic counterpart – was found in countless windowsills next to other graceless houseplants such as the yucca. And the fern is about to be subjected to an entirely different type of fashion revival thanks less to its delicate green leaves than to how the plant is structured underground. Because the ruffled fern does have all the frills required in the fashion world. Just think of the transparency of the lacy leaves when the sunlight hits the paper-thin structure, or the seductive drama of the unfurling fiddleheads in the spring. And the fern is not just beautiful and sensuous; there is even a natural history of sexual mystery, which never hurts in fashion trends.

The mystery stems from the fern’s lack of seeds and flowers, an absence that shrouded fern propagation in ambiguity for centuries. Until the invention of the microscope in the 17th century, it was assumed that fern seeds existed but were invisible simply because no one had ever seen one. It was believed that if anyone ever did see one, invisibility would be conferred to that special person. It was also held that the seed could only be collected at midnight on Midsummer’s Night Eve, the exact moment it fell from the plant. “You could catch it by stacking twelve pewter plates beneath a fern lead; the seed would fall through the first eleven plates and be stopped by the twelfth. If you came up empty-handed, it was because goblins and fairies, roaming freely that one night of the year, had snatched the seed as it fell.”

The sense of mystery concerning how and why trends change still applies to contemporary trend theories as we have seen for instance in relation to fashion and trend forecasting. The forecaster is assumed to be a sort of medium that possesses a special sense that is able to register future trends.

While the mystery of fern propagation was eventually solved in the 17th century, when botanists discovered that ferns reproduce sexually by tiny dust-like spores, the process never lost its poetic, even magical air not unlike the ephemeral wonder associated with trend mechanisms.

The fertile fern connections are invisible and only the physical manifestation in the triangular shape of the leaves can be grasped. The same can be said of trend mechanisms, at least at first glance. The procreation of trends is not evident, but we see the result of the hidden process in the concrete shape on the surface.

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685 “At Home with Ferns,” *Landscaping Indoors: Bringing the Garden Inside*, 16.
Rhizome as philosophical concept

The rhizome is popular outside its earthy origin. Carl Jung (1875-1961) took up the rhizome as an image of life. In the prologue of his memoirs Erinnerungen, Träume, Gedanken (1962), he states: “Life has always seemed to me like a plant that lives on its rhizome. Its true life is invisible, hidden in the rhizome. The part that appears above the ground lasts only a single summer. Then it withers away – an ephemeral apparition.”

While a fitting metaphor for life, the rhizome also seems to hold potential for describing the invisible mechanisms generating the overground ‘ephemeral apparitions’ in fashion. However, Jung does not go as far in exploring the philosophical nature and structure of the rhizome as do French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) and psychoanalyst Félix Guattari (1930-1992). They take the rhizome to new conceptual heights in A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism & Schizophrenia (ATP) (1987). Here the rhizome is used as part of a philosophical reaction to knowledge based on binary logic, what Deleuze and Guattari imagine as a tree. This brings to mind the diagram in Ferdinand de Saussure’s Course in General Linguistics (1916) that describes the two faces of the linguistic sign. The diagram shows the signifiant as the word ‘arbor’ and the signifié as the drawing of a tree. In ATP, this is referred to as ‘arborescent systems:’ “It is odd how the tree has dominated Western reality and all of Western thought, from botany to biology and anatomy, but also gnosiology, theology, ontology, all of philosophy.”

The stable structure of the tree with its vertical trunk, roots, and crown is perceived of a system organized according to Dichotomy as in signifier and signified, true and false, self and other; as well as Hierarchy and Point of Origin: “Arborescent systems are hierarchical systems with centers of significance.” This dense statement with its reference to a centralized system organized according to hierarchies, brings to mind what has been treated in the previous chapters:

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687 Because the rhizome offers such historic, visual, organic, and philosophical material with which to develop the Rhizomatic Position, the result should yield enough analytical potential to justify the use of a relatively short text – “Introduction: Rhizome” ATP pp. 3-25 – as one of the main sources of inspiration for this Position and the exclusion of such prominent concepts in ATP as ‘Body without Organs’, ‘Plane of Immanence,’ and ‘Abstract Machines.’
688 Not made by Saussure but inserted by a publisher posthumously.
689 ATP, 18.
690 ATP, 16.
centralized and polycentric fashion systems with the fashion cities, brands and designers at the top of the Hierarchy, and the meaning of a trend as a direct reflection, or the body as the stage of shifting contemporary seductiveness all associated with a conception of a center of significance; and the arborescent system of the social elite, fashion leaders and the process of emulation motivated by the symbolic class struggle and social contagion.

In contrast to the arborescent system, the rhizome is an open and dynamic system without a center that operates horizontally seemingly by motoring itself, what Deleuze in an interview in Negotiations (1990) refers to as “an uncertain system.”\(^\text{691}\) The rhizome is dynamic in the sense of being constantly in a state of transformation. Or what in ATP is referred to as becoming which is a process that is not to be judged by some final result but by the way it proceeds and its power to continue.\(^\text{692}\) With reference to the notion of the ‘vertical flow hypothesis,’\(^\text{693}\) discussed in relation to trickle-down in Chapter 3, the Rhizomatic Position proposes what might be termed the ‘horizontal flow hypothesis’ that is concerned not with the Social Mechanism but with the pure mechanisms of trends as such. The rhizome as a pure mechanism is described in ATP as “a model that is perpetually in construction or collapsing […] a process that is perpetually prolonging itself.”\(^\text{694}\) While the focus in each of the Positions in the Toolbox was on something else extending the trend – status anxiety, sexual allure, trade opportunities or current events – the Rhizomatic Position explores the potential of a pure mechanism in trends that cultivates itself. What this involves and how it may strengthen the Toolbox is the focus of the following parts, which will bring in the Eurowoman material from the extensive period bringing the Toolbox up to date.

**From temporal to spatial**

While both the Mapping and Analysis demonstrated the analytical potential of the five Positions, attention was also brought to limitations of the Toolbox. In comparing the three versions of the Retro Trend – Granny Chic, Glam, Mix – a number of weaknesses – Issues – were brought out among others the direction of emulation

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\(^{691}\) Negotiations, 149.
\(^{692}\) Ibid., 146.
\(^{693}\) “Fashion Adoption,” Perspectives of Fashion, 32.
\(^{694}\) ATP, 21.
within a fragmented social Hierarchy; a complication of the role between consumer and designer; the confusion of opposing notions of Contemporary Seductiveness; clashing narratives concerning dominant moods and ideal; and the rise of the seasonless cycle that questioned the lifespan and even the future life of trends.

The Rhizomatic Position is an attempt to organize and resolve these and other questions that were raised in the Analysis. Most of these concerns are rooted in an understanding of trends as related to a temporal process. However, what seemed like inconsistency and contradiction in the Analysis of the intensive period might turn out to be symptomatic of a shift in trend mechanisms when studying the extensive period. Thereby, the study of the Line of Development of the Retro Trend holds the key for developing new approaches to trend mechanisms while at the same time resolving limitations within the existing Positions.

The conceptual framework provided by the rhizome opens for new ways of approaching and describing trend mechanisms as a spatial rather than strictly temporal phenomenon. In ATP, the rhizome is described in spatial terms that might be transferred to the Retro Trend: “The rhizome operates by variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots.” This spatial approach is organic and should allow for an open and dynamic model that can contain the contradictions, describe trends as they evolve rather than after the fact, and introduce a multi-direction process of development that moves according to variation rather than revolution.

The rhizome is not a closed, isolated system but defined exactly by being open and connectable: “any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different from the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order.” This arborescent approach was seen in the Analysis on a general level for instance when the Social Mechanism attempted to fix a social order, which as we saw becomes difficult when fashion leaders range from Alexis Carrington, Granny, and the homeless; and when the Zeitgeist Position attempted to plot the dominant mood as modest and proper in Granny Chic and conspicuous and vulgar in Glam which came to pose a contradiction.

While the EW material proved abundant in visualizing the five Positions, the material is also rich with examples of how trends might be moving according to spatial conditions. Especially the third version, Mix, outlines how the Retro Trend

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695 ATP, 21.
696 Ibid., 7.
could be said to constitute an open and connectable system that seems to be
prolonging itself rather than other forces – for instance social, economic, or erotic –
motoring the change. Because Mix is characterized by bringing the two first versions
of Retro together, it is by definition open and connectable. This was seen in the
beauty spread “Remix” that connected the glamorous 1940s as represented by Rita
Hayworth and the provocative early-1980s as represented by Nina Hagen. It seems to
be the alliance between the two, the force of conquest and curiosity of offshoots that
fuels the version rather than Hayworth and Hagen as centers of significance. The pure
mechanism is found in the process of joining the two in a spatial construction rather
than a temporal.

With “Remix” in mind, it is interesting to study the Line of Development in
the extensive period of what is in fact just a small detail of the Retro Trend:
Hayworth. I bring this up to give an impression of the dimensions and expansion of
the three versions when observed through the Rhizomatic Position, before going into
detail with each of the four Issues. What will be interesting to determine is to what
extent the Retro Trend has changed through mutations, variations and alliances, and
whether some of the elements are varied in more subtle ways without however
remaining the same.

In the December 2009 issue of Eurowoman, Rita Hayworth is presented as an
embodiment of 1940s glamour described as the “Timeless Classic-type of
glamour” in the fashion feature “Glamorous in 5 Ways.” Just as in the intensive
period, Hayworth was associated with the classic elegance of Granny Chic but in
association with Nina Hagen for effect. Here she is also in the company of various
fashion icons and immaterial revivals. Audrey Hepburn as seen in Breakfast at
Tiffany’s (1961), who was featured several times in Granny Chic is a
personification of the “Hollywood-type of glamour with actress Scarlett Johansson
wearing a “vintage-look” suggesting the mutation of the material revival into the
immaterial. More of the threads from the intensive study are woven into this single

697 EW33, 146-151.
698 “Tidløs klassiker.”
699 EW141, 55.
700 “Glamourøs på 5 måder,” EW141, 54-56.
701 Some examples are EW27, 20, EW30, 20, EW36, 22.
702 EW141, 56.
fashion feature such as the reference to model Jerry Hall in the type of glamour termed “1980s Goddess” as well as more references to Dynasty: “the revival of the 1980s style brings up memories of the TV-show Dynasty” (see Illustration 29).

While also illustrating the latest installment of the Græco-Roman revival in the image of model Kate Moss in a draped golden dress described as ‘an interpretation of the 1980s goddess,’ the piece illustrates the expansion of Dynasty from the intensive period to the extensive. The role of Dynasty has not demised in the course of the extensive study nor is it the same. Rather it has prolonged or cultivated itself through expansion, offshoot and, variation according to the spatial logic of the Rhizomatic Position.

Exploring the development of Podium “Vinterhvid” from December 2001, which followed the recipe of high-end, fast fashion, literal revival, cheap chic, and vintage illustrated with a b/w archive image, the recipe is more or less the same in December 2009 in Tendens “White Elegance” bringing together fast-fashion from Top Shop and H&M, high-end from Derek Lam, Stella McCartney, and Chloé, fashion forward labels such as Swedish MTWTFSS by Weekday, and sportswear such as Adidas sneakers. In the 2009 promotion of white, the focus is on Alexis, which is different from the conspicuousness and exaggerated opulence associated with Glam in general and Alexis as the ostentatious Trashette in particular in the intensive period: “Be inspired by the extravagant ladies Alexis and Krystle from the cult TV-Show Dynasty, when letting white into to your wardrobe” The look is still glamorous and flashy, but in a far more subdued way. What is interesting in relation to the three versions of the Retro Trend in the extensive period is that there are

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703 Highlighted in the intensive period in EW27, 86.
704 “1980’er-gudinden.”
705 “de genkomne 80’er stil vækker minder om serien Dollars.”
706 See for instance EW28, 50-57, EW29, 20, EW30, 91, EW32, 130, EW37, 152.
707 EW45, 24.
708 “Hvid elegance” EW141, 24.
709 Weekday launched a collaboration with Danish designer Stine Goya in 2009 illustration how the collaborations move not only between high-end and fast fashion but within fashion forward frameworks.
710 There are other examples in which the recipe is made very explicit. This is seen in the fashion spread “An ordinary day” EW141, 130-141: “Mix different materials such as delicate lace, fur, and wool – it gives a cool and unique effect,” “Bland gerne forskellige materialer som delikate blonder, pels og uld – det giver en cool og unik effekt,” EW141, 141.
711 “Lad dig inspirere af de ekstravagante damer Alexis og Krystle fra 80’er-kultserien Dollars, når du skal have hvid ind i din garderobe.”
references made both to “ladylike” and “androgynous look” which in the intensive Analysis where associated with Granny Chic and Glam respectively.

While perhaps not as edgy as in “Remix,” the presence of Alexis and white in these brief examples show how certain elements from Granny Chic, Glam, and Mix seem to operate according to this process of variation and mutation rather than ceaseless revolution from December 2000 to December 2009.\textsuperscript{712}

The question is whether the Rhizomatic Position is best suited as a tool in the Toolbox that ads a constituent to the prism, or whether the Rhizomatic Position will turn out to hold more potential for defining the pure mechanism or nature of trends as such which will mean that the other Positions operate on the premise described by the Rhizomatic Position. In order to answer this question, I will move on to dealing with the key Issues raised in the Analysis. This will serve to explore the potential of the spatial approach to trends as well as resolve the Issues in the Analysis.

The four Issues: Problem or potential?
Continuing the iterative process of the Analysis, the four Issues will be dealt with by first summing up each Issue as it appears in each Position and then proceeding to deal with these Issues using the tools established in the Rhizomatic Position.

\textbf{Issue 1: Dichotomy}

Perhaps the most important issue raised in the Analysis is Dichotomy because the binary structure is fundamental to the traditional way of understanding trend mechanisms. It is therefore important to explore this issue of Dichotomy in relation to the prospect of trends going out of fashion. The question is whether trends can operate without Dichotomies?

\textbf{Position 1. Social Mechanism}: Fashion leaders and followers, them and us, right and wrong, young and old. In the Analysis it became clear how these dichotomies became difficult to maintain because of the new destabilizing strategies employed to create and maintain a position of social distinction and delaying the point of saturation. These strategies were referred to as the Logic of Wrong seen in for instance promoting grandmothers as fashion icons; showing fashion spreads with homemade

\footnote{\textsuperscript{712} I will not take into account the change of Eurowoman-staff in the period and how this may have affected the content and look of the magazine.}
clothes or heirlooms that cannot be purchased in stores, or showing clothes that are blurred and hardly visible, which serves as consumer guides to this disruptive strategy. This apparent confusion creates trend patterns that are less cyclically determined and therefore less temporally organized. In order to understand the mechanisms in trends other approaches are necessary; approaches that do not operate according to temporal, uni-linear models such as the S-curve that describes the adoption process. Rather a multi-directional approach might replace the impression of chaos with a different kind of dynamic order.

**Position 2. Neomania:** Though the Neomania Position operates by destabilizing orders it still moves according to dichotomies by fusing opposites: Good taste and bad taste, contemporary and historic, expensive and cheap, new and old. This lends a sense of paradox to the Position because it promotes chaos while remaining within a traditional framework of dichotomies.

**Position 3. Market:** The Market Position finds itself in the precarious situation of needing to produce and promote novelty within the context of increased decentralization and democratization while institutionally caught in the dichotomy of especially consumer and designer, high-end and high-street, and the cyclical structure of fashion production and presentation.

While the market is working to accommodate this disjunction with for instance capsule collections, the introduction of new seasons, and the redefinition of exclusivity, the operation according to Dichotomies – of old and new, this season and last – still poses challenges when faced with the decentralized forces seen in DIY and web-based, user-driven fashion companies.

**Position 4. Seduction:** The dichotomy of right and wrong, in and out is inherent to the notion of Contemporary Seductiveness, which assumes that a previous understanding of seductiveness has been rejected. In addition, the Seduction Position assumes a tension between for instance the erotic and chaste, covered and uncovered. As was clear in the Analysis, the Position faces problems when confronted with the simultaneous presence of opposite versions of Contemporary Seductiveness within the same Retro Trend.

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\[713\] By 2009, DIY is no longer a practice reserved only for the fashion forward but reaches way into mass fashion. This is seen in December 2009 on COS’ website www.cosstores.com on which tips are offered on how to customize your COS purchases and make your own Christmas ornaments, studded boxes, accessories and even recipes for Christmas treats.
**Position 5. Zeitgeist:** The basic assumption in the Zeitgeist Position is that there is a truth to be found in understanding fashion trends as the reflection of the current mood i.e. a dichotomy between true and false, content and surface of a trend. In the Analysis, it became clear how these reflections took on the shape of a cabinet of mirrors. The multiplicity of these reflections worked against each other because of the normative feature of the Zeitgeist Position making it difficult to maintain the dichotomy.

**Dichotomy and the Rhizomatic Position**

The basic motivation for developing the rhizome in *ATP* was as a reaction to the Dichotomy of the arborescent system. As we have seen, the various Dichotomies in the Positions were rendered problematic in the Analysis and created confusion that weakened the analytical potential of the Toolbox.

Within the rhizomatic framework, these contradictions are part of the polymorphous structure of the trend mechanisms. As stated in *ATP* concerning the rhizome and dichotomy: “there is no dualism, no ontological dualism between here and there, no axiological dualism between good and bad.”\(^7\)\(^1\)\(^4\) The versions of Retro are integral to the same trends, so rather than seeing for instance the contrast between the two forms of Contemporary Seductiveness represented by Granny Chic and Glam as a clash, which would be the result of a dualistic approach, the multiplicity might rather be seen as adding a deeper understanding to the Retro Trend without reducing the complexity. When considering that trend mechanisms in the Rhizomatic Position are understood as an open system without a center or ‘general’\(^7\)\(^1\)\(^5\) motored by mutation, variation and connection. In this context, the sense of simultaneity of two conflicting versions becomes an asset rather than a weakness. If there is no center, the Retro Trend is not rooted in one place, one person, one brand, one look, one meaning, or in this case one seductive ideal or erogenous zone.

Without a center, it is possible to imagine trends beyond Dichotomies. Not as chaos, but as ‘an uncertain system’ that is relational rather than oppositional and always in a state of construction or destruction. The three versions of the Retro Trend, Granny Chic, Glam and Mix are all part of the subterranean network and therefore

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\(^7\)\(^1\)\(^4\) *ATP*, 20.

\(^7\)\(^1\)\(^5\) *ATP*, 21.
each surface manifestation – from the reincarnation of Maude to the impersonation of Alexis – are rooted in the same, open system.

What might be argued to be at play here is that the Retro Trend moves away from the arborescent way of understanding trend mechanisms and replaces it with a more spatial organization that is not simply a dialectic between oppositions. That is to say, that the visual expressions in the Retro Trend are neither the same nor in contrast. Rather they seem to be working according to a different dynamic that is more relational and like an alliance, than a dichotomy.

When discussing the Issues of Dichotomy that was raised in the Analysis, it is important to remember that the rhizome is seen as the trend mechanism while the fronds are seen as the visual manifestation i.e. the trend. In other words, the trend is only interesting in so far as it contributes to an understanding of the nature of trends. The relevant point is then less how the fronds and rhizome relate to each other than exploring what the rhizome can offer in terms of understanding the nature of trends as something that moves according to spatial dimensions according to alliances rather than temporal trajectories operating by Dichotomy.

**Issue 2: Point of Origin**

Each Position operates with its own notion of Point of Origin. Retro is such a complex trend that it offers a multitude of interpretations of creative starting point, a center of power or a meaningful content that all contribute to understanding the drive of Retro as a trend but were also problematic at times in the Analysis.

**Position 1. Social Mechanism:** Because conceptions of status, luxury, and prestige were revealed as terms being redefined, the Point of Origin understood as fashion leader gave way to multi-directional trickle-movements.

**Position 2. Neomania:** Though Neomania does not operate with the notion of origin, the fact that the Position is envisioned as an expression of the postmodern condition, this might somewhat ironically be termed a Point of Origin.

**Position 3. Market:** The market in general and the role of the designer in particular as sources of creativity and innovation were considered to be operating on a more decentralized premise, which complicated the previously more transparent notion of Point of Origin.
**Position 4. Seduction**: Conflicting notions of Contemporary Seductiveness and erogenous zones understood as physical Point of Origin.

**Position 5. Zeitgeist**: Events such as the millennium as explanation of Point of Origin for Retro was rendered problematic as the trend continued a decade into the 21st century.

**Point of Origin and the Rhizomatic Position**

To use a specific example from the Analysis, there were notions of centers of significance in the Zeitgeist Positions, according to which trends are a mirror of a context, and therefore operate according to a center of significance. Considering that there were several centers of significance operating simultaneous and often working against each other in the Analysis, this notion of centers was made problematic. A way to relieve this tension is by replacing the notion of trends as *being*, as in organized with a stable center, origin, meaning, with the notion of trends as *becoming*, understood in *ATP* as: “A line of becoming is not defined by points that it connects, or by points that compose it; on the contrary, it passes between points.”716 While the questions of line and linearity will be discussed below, what is relevant here is the focus on the spatiality of trend mechanisms as being concerned with the process of change itself – the becoming – and the sense of the ‘passing between’ rather than points. Rather than a temporal perspective, trends are seen as developing dimensionally rather than diachronically. This perspective makes irrelevant a sense of beginning and end because they are considered static points. Trends in this sense are seen as growing from the middle717 that in turn means that the “discernibility of points disappears.”718 This perspective is useful in that it offers an alternative to anarchy and chaos as suggested by Erin Magner by adding form to the conception of anything goes.

An example that might illustrate this ‘growing from the middle’ is seen with jeans in the September 2008 issue of *Eurowoman* though jeans are both linked to the Retro Trend as discussed in Chapter 5719 and a category of clothing. In a feature on

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716 *ATP*, 293.
717 Ibid., 20.
718 Ibid., 294.
719 *Podium*, EW36, 24. ”Lav din egen t-shirt.”
the hottest jeans trends and labels of the season the variation is evident: Flared, skinny, 1980s, wide leg, boyfriend fit, and bootcut. What is interesting here is that while the impression might be that any fit, wash, and cut are in, there are in fact styles that are not in focus such as stonewashed, sagging pants, carrot-fit and bellbottoms. The impression then is that rather than anything goes for denim jeans, the trend seems to be moving by incremental steps and rather than temporal, uni-directional trajectories these mutations are spatial in the Rhizomatic sense of growing out of the middle in various dimensions and expansions: “[The rhizome] is composed not of units but of dimensions, or rather directions in motion.”

While jeans offers a relatively simple example of this growing from the middle, the Retro Trend presents more complex examples as we will see that support the potential of understanding trend mechanisms spatially.

**Issue 3: Hierarchy**

The Toolbox operate with several types of hierarchies but the strongest are seen in the Social Mechanism and Market Positions that to a certain extent were motored by social, creative, and economic hierarchies. Any sense of time lag and obsolescence in the adoption process assumes a Hierarchy. However, the very notion of decentralization and democratization assumes a development away from a vertical organization towards a more horizontal structure which logically threatens to dismantle the very idea of hierarchies. This was clear in the Analysis in relation to the role vintage and street fashion played.

**Position 1. Social Mechanism:** The social elite has entered into the complex social exchange across strata of society and made the notion of social Hierarchy if not extinct then at least more complicated and multi-dimensional.

**Position 2. Neomania:** The sense of Hierarchy is understood as a construction created for subversive purposes in the destabilization of systems as such. However, again this exercise paradoxically assumed the presence of Hierarchy.

**Position 3. Market:** Though the fashion systems still assume a Hierarchy – from designers, labels, and fashion weeks to media and celebrities – the Hierarchy of the fashion industry has been gradually flattened as a result of globalization, and the free

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720 EW126, 94-95 “De nyeste jeansmærker, du skal kende.”
721 *A TP*, 20.
flow of digital trend information, democratization of the design process that scrambles high and low, the consumer as designer, and the disruption of fashion cycles. The concern is that trends are moving so fast that the conditions of trends are no longer there.

**Position 4. Seduction:** Hierarchy is not relevant in relation to Seduction in that there is no sense in Hierarchy of body parts or similar constructions.

**Position 5. Zeitgeist:** The Zeitgeist Position might be viewed as a force instigating hierarchies by proposing contemporary narratives. In being normative, the Zeitgeist Position implicitly poses a Hierarchy of what dominating issue, event, or person occupies the top of the meaning Hierarchy at a given time.

**Hierarchy and the Rhizomatic Position**

The rhizome is described as “an acentered, nonhierarchical, nonsignifying system”\(^{722}\) that is, one that operates through difference and relation, rather than according to binary oppositions or phenomenological dialectics that set out to eliminate difference. Difference in the vocabulary of Deleuze and Guattari is not a boundary, but rather a potential. The question is not one of difference *between*, but difference *per se*, since everything is always already differentiated. In that sense dismantling hierarchical structures through decentralization and democratization is not replaced by chaos but by an open, unstable system that sees differences as fundamental to trends.

In the Rhizomatic Position there is no singular instance that directs or controls trends, what is described as a “system without a General and without an organizing memory.”\(^{723}\) It was clear in the Analysis, that there was an army of *generals* or actors placed in all corners of the arena. The emphasis was on the dynamic and relations between these both human and non-human actors rather than the actors themselves.

As for the absence of ‘an organizing memory,’ the Retro Trend Case was interesting in its demonstration of a lack of causal progression and accumulative knowledge considering the prolific repetition and proliferation of the same material. This aspect will become even more prominent in exploring the role of the Line of Development that brings the Retro Trend into the present.

It might be argued that *Eurowoman* in maintaining a position at the top of the media Hierarchy uses narratives concerning the zeitgeist as a means to maintain this

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\(^{722}\) ATP, 21
\(^{723}\) Ibid., 21
position by demonstrating that the magazine has access to this information which in turn places its readers lower in the Hierarchy. However, the media also accommodates the democratization of fashion and media alike but inviting the readers into previously restricted areas such as fashion shows, back stage areas, and fashion shoots.

However, when applying the Zeitgeist Position the narratives tended to be conflicting for instance between Ladylike and Trashette, 1940s and 1980s. If viewed in terms of a ‘narrative Hierarchy,’ this conflict is problematic. However, if considering trends to be ‘unsignifying’ as opposed to signifying a specific dominating event or mood, these differences constitute a potential by fleshing out the dimensions of the Retro Trend and the directions in motion according to which the trend mechanisms expand.

The multiple stories no longer operate in a Hierarchy but rather horizontally by morphing and connecting. The Mix version of Retro brought out the sense of the Rhizomatic prolonging itself through ‘variation, expansion, conquest, capture, offshoots.’ In Mix, the concern was not what was mixed – i.e. the points – but exactly the ability of the trend to proliferate according to these spatial themes. So rather the passing between points, this focus on difference per se, growing from the middle, the between and becoming is evident in Mix, and in this way what seemed to be a weakness in the Analysis thus becomes a potential when exposed to the Rhizomatic Position.

If we consider the way Retro operated in the EW material this description of something that is constantly changing, taking on new territory, and shooting off in unexpected directions seems to apply. And this is not even considering Retro in its entirety but only the three versions that were analyzed. If the Retro Trend is to be studied not only in the two years in question but as it has developed until 2009, then it demands a theoretical position that is able to contain this complexity and contradiction without reducing it since the ambiguity and pluralism is part of the trend mechanisms. When considering the above quote specifically and the rhizome in general, the Issues raised in the Analysis cease to pose limitations. Rather they contribute to demonstrating how trend mechanisms work on a decentralized,

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724 ATP, 21.
democratized premise; a premise that in the words of Deleuze and Guattari is seen to operate “under conditions of discontinuity, rupture, and multiplicity.”

Before moving on to the Line of Development and the extensive Analysis of the EW material, it might be concluded that the five Positions were able to both show how and why trends change, while also revealing interesting perspectives about the function of contemporary trends as a space for expression, communication, and interpretation. The rhizome does not in that sense reveal anything about these agendas dealing as it does with the pure mechanisms of trends. The Rhizomatic Position attempts to describe how the trend cultivates itself through connecting disparate elements, exploring new territories, and perpetually prolonging itself and thus offers the tools for describing trends as a phenomenon in which difference and multiplicity are inherent to the mechanism.

**Issue 4: Line of Development**

As mentioned in Chapter 1 on terminology, the word ‘trend’ is sometimes defined as a ‘Line of Development’ the deeper meaning of which is the topic of this section. What is interesting in the exploration of the Issue of Line of Development in the Retro Trend is the dynamic and dimensions of trends rather than the duration.

Analyzing a trend over a longer period of time might suggest the presence of a megatrend. However, while megatrends do tend to run over a period of a decade mirroring the period of extensive study, they are concerned with large-scale shifts in cultural indicators and “involve shifts in lifestyles, reflect changes in generational cohorts, or mirror cycles in the economy.” While Retro is inevitably influenced by these aspects of a megatrend, it is still to be considered a fashion trend from the point of view that it moves across general changes in lifestyle as we will see with vintage that moves from millennium over nostalgia to charity and sustainability in the period of the case study. In addition, the Retro Trend is associated with the established trend mechanisms of fashion trade, consumer adoption behavior, social identity, zeitgeist, seduction, and communication, whereas a megatrend operates on a general, societal level. However, it could also be argued that the Retro Trend is not a trend after all taking into account that trend forecasting operates with a definition of a trend as

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725 *ATP*, 16.
726 *Fashion Forecasting*, 11.
lasting from three months to three years. Here it is important to note that this perspective is temporal. A spatial approach opens up the possibility of trends operating as a horizontal flow without notions of inception and demise and therefore the notion of timelines becomes irrelevant.

The main question of this section then is to explore whether trends are in fact moving so quickly and erratically that they might be going out of fashion or whether they in fact might be moving slowly and thereby explaining this potential confusion between trend and megatrend. In order to approach this question, it was necessary to add an extensive period (2002-2009) of Analysis to the intensive (2000 and 2001) in order to determine the mechanism of the Retro Trends as it unfolds over a longer period of time.

**Line of Development as cartography**

It is important to remember that the motivation of Retro was to explore how a trend that was described as a pre-millennial phenomenon would behave in the first decade of the 21st century. As became clear in the Analysis, the Retro Trend material was abundant and expansive offering rich data for answering questions of how and why trend change while also raising new questions. The first three Issues – Dichotomy, Point of Origin, and Hierarchy – have been treated already. Remaining is the issue of Line of Development. To paraphrase a question uttered by Jean Baudrillard in *Illusion of the End*: “How far can this Retrospective form go?” What he proposes is “the end of linearity” which is an interesting starting point for discussing the notion of Line of Development in the Retro Trend.

To answer this question, it is important to distinguish between what Deleuze refers to as ‘linear forms of causality’ in terms of history and time evident throughout the Toolbox for instance in relation to seasons and adoption processes. Instead of the temporal understanding of lines, Deleuze and Guattari suggest an emphasis of the spatial. I have also touched upon the notion of ‘a line of becoming’ that passes between points occupying the space of the between. The Analysis is full of these lines of development and Deleuze suggests understanding these lines as

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727 *Trendssociologi*, 169.
728 *The End of Illusion*, 10.
729 *Negotiations*, 32.
730 ATP, 293.
constituting a map: “We think lines are the basic component of things and events. So everything has its geography, its cartography, its diagram.”731 In other words, it is perhaps not the end of linearity as linear forms of causality but perhaps the beginning of a spatial understanding of trend mechanisms through lines.

The trend mechanism in the Rhizomatic Position does not constitute a linear development of a beginning and end, nor does the Line of Development chart a trajectory that can be traced in a temporal or semiotic sense.732 Rather the Line of Development is understood as a ‘line of becoming;’ multiple lines that operate spatially according to dimensions and directions in motion. As described in ATP in relation to the arborescent system: “There are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a structure, tree, or root. There are only lines.”733 These lines are conceptualized spatially by Deleuze and Guattari in the form of a map:

“the map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting […] A map has multiple entryways as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back to ‘the same’.”734

Taking the last first, this notion of tracing always coming back to the same is evident in all the Positions, the ‘same’ referring to for instance the same postmodern expression in the Neomania Position or the same process of chase and flight in the Social Mechanism. The Rhizomatic Position constitutes a more abstract and therefore also more open and comprehensive approach to trend theory focusing as is does on the pure mechanism.

Both in Granny Chic and Glam but especially in Mix, it became clear how the Retro Trend was ‘connectable in all of its dimensions.’ The Retro Trend in general and Mix in particular prolonged itself by being always susceptible to modifications and by having multiple entryways. As these lines are torn and reversed, taking part in variation and expansion, the map of Retro Trend is constantly mutating and proliferating while still identifiable as a map or a trend mechanism.

731 Negotiations, 33.
732 “All tree logic is a logic of tracing,” ATP 12.
733 ATP, 8.
734 Ibid., 12.
Deleuze and Guattari introduce the term ‘line of flight’\textsuperscript{735} to describe this process. A line of flight and a Line of Development are understood here as similar. Neither have an absolute origin nor a final destination. The progression is concerned with the process of \textit{becoming} rather than a state of \textit{being}. What is relevant to trends in this process is the ability of this pure mechanism to move on by cultivating itself.

Continuing the iterative method, I will analyze the progression of the three versions of Retro, namely Granny Chic, Glam, and Mix in the extensive period 2002-2009.

\textbf{Line of Development: Granny Chic}

Granny Chic was the key version of Retro and the backbone of the Analysis. Here the focus will be on Ladylike as the main immaterial revival, vintage as the material revival, and handbags and the trench coat as an example of literal revivals. This section looks at the development of this version of the Retro Trend to explore issues of demise, destination, and whether there is any evidence of the extinction of trends in the near future.

If the intensive study provided an overwhelming amount of material, it is no surprise that the extensive study tops that by many lengths. While it would be interesting to look at the development according to each Position,\textsuperscript{736} or focus on specific notions such as the Logic of Wrong,\textsuperscript{737} the limited space of the dissertation only allows for a focus on how the versions have progressed in order to determine whether trends are in fact going out of fashion. Because this section aims to point out

\textsuperscript{735} There is continuous reference to ’lines of flight’ throughout \textit{ATP}, but the term is introduced on page 3.

\textsuperscript{736} Though the Line of Development here is concerned with the mechanisms of the Retro Trend and not the specific Positions, it is still interesting to note a development that has taken place in relation to the trickle-movements that seem to have moved closer to the democratization and hence an increase in the multi-linearity of the trickle-movements. There does seem to been an increased alignment between fashion leaders and fashion on the street implying a more horizontal relation. This seems to be suggested in “Eurowoman Shopping & Style Guide to all of Denmark,” EW126, 73-82, ‘ordinary’ consumers figure alongside fashion icons such as models Helena Christensen and Agyness Deyn.

\textsuperscript{737} Some examples from the extensive study are when trendspotter As Øland describes her bag: ”I can’t figure out if it is gorgeous or ugly, but I love it.” ”Jeg kan ikke finde ud af om den er flot eller grim, men jeg elsker den” EW83, 96. Stylist Andrea Nielsen proclaims: “My style is sort of scavenger” ”Jeg har sådan en blandet klunserstil” \textit{Ud af skabet}, EW107, 38-40. Other examples from the period are Geek Chic with the intellectual look of “Four-Eyes” (“Brilleabe”) EW107, 38. Or when designer Karen Bagge talks about shoes that are ‘so ugly that they are awesome’ EW83, 25, ”nogle sko, der er så sindssygt grimme, at de er skønne.” \textit{Ud af skabet} EW83, 24-26.
possible contours of a development, the number of examples will no be as considerable as in the Analysis.

1. Immaterial revival: Ladylike

Ladylike was described as the style Granny might have preferred in her prime – had she been Grace Kelly\(^738\) – but also referred to looking like an actual grandmother. Over the extensive period, Ladylike is still prominent in several variations. In the fashion spread ”Nye Tendenser”\(^739\) one of the eight biggest trends for the spring season 2005 is ”Ladylike with a modern twist”\(^740\). The style of the fashion spread: “Cut-out Lady”\(^741\) from April 2006 not only refers to Granny Chic, but is also Retro in being a play on cut-out dolls. The text promotes the idea of ‘dressing up like a lady – in a fun way’\(^742\) and presents a variation or mutation from Ladylike in the intensive period (See Illustration 30). In September 2008, one of the favorite trends of the season is “Ladylike,”\(^743\) which is a 1940s look with a slim silhouette, hemline above the knee and focus on strong shoulders that ties into Glam as we will see.\(^744\) Granny Chic has also been visible in the more grandmotherly forms seen in statements such as: “It’s Granny – it’s cool”\(^745\) in August 2006, and “I have inherited the boots from my grandmother who was a real shopaholic”\(^746\) in February 2007. The description of the grandmother as a shopaholic seems to demonstrate a variation or offshoot of Granny as a presence in the Retro Trend. Another example of mutations is when Granny is turned into grandpa as seen in Shop ”Cardigans” “There is a little bit of grandpa about the long cardigans of the season.”\(^747\)

\(^738\) Grace Kelly as a Ladylike icon is still present in EW 2009 as seen in the beauty spread ”Makeup-garderobe” EW134, 70 in May and in December 2009 with the feature “Et glamourøst eventyr” “A Glamorous Adventure” about Grace Kelly and her family EW141, 58-61. This ties into the continuous interest in the cultural history of fashion as seen with the feature on Estee Lauder, an icon in the beauty industry EW134, 65-67, and an interview with French actress Audrey Tautou who plays Coco Chanel in a movie about the early life of Coco Chanel Coco avant Coco, EW141, 37.

\(^739\) EW83, 68-75.

\(^740\) ”Ladylike med et moderne twist” EW83, 68.

\(^741\) ”Påklædningsdame” EW97, 96-103.

\(^742\) ”klæde sig ud som en dame – på den sjove made” EW97, 97.

\(^743\) EW126, 101.

\(^744\) ”efterårets nye look” – the new look of the fall - is referred to as ”real 1950s style”, ”ægte 1950’er-stil” EW126, 101 though it is in fact 1940s.

\(^745\) In a short piece on cardigans. ”Det er morfar – det er smart” EW101, 46.

\(^746\) ‘Set på gaden’ EW107, 34. “støvlerne har jeg arvet fra min farmor, som var en ægte shopaholic.”

\(^747\) ”Der er lidt morfar over sæsonens lange cardigans,” EW104, 130.
While the strong shoulders are ascribed to the 1980s, the fashion of the 1940s also had boxy shoulders. An interesting point in relation to the return of the shoulder pads is how it connects with the customizing or DIY side of Granny Chic. In the fashion spread “An ordinary day,” the description of a bouclé-jacket, accompanied by the instruction to: “Buy some shoulder pads to get the sharp shoulders that are hot right now.” The same is suggested in “72 Vinterhits:” “you can add some character to your silk shirt yourself with shoulder pads.” Granny’s handiwork seems to take on a feminist edge. The feature “Feministisk design rykker” presents the work of Swedish designer Anna Hansson who decorates aprons and potholders with pornographic embroidery.

Evidently variations and extensions of Granny Chic have continued to be among the ephemeral apparitions in the extensive period.

2. Literal revival: The trench coat and handbags

As for literal revivals, the revival of the Burberry coat was described as part of the Granny uniform in the intensive Analysis. The trench coat is still visible both in the vintage version as seen when designer Lene Sand answers that her best fashion purchase ever was: “A trench coat in wool from the 1970s that I bought secondhand in Paris,” and in exclusive versions as seen in the tailored Icon Limited Edition from Burberry at the high price of DKK 10,300. The interest in Burberry is still evident but in a more contemporary way as seen in the feature on designer Christopher Bailey creative director of Burberry. An interesting example of how the image of Burberry in the intensive study – the Ladylike look with a touch of English heritage – has captured other brands namely D&G who in an ad merge English gentry and 1970s folklore which adds a subversive edge to Granny Chic (See Illustration 31).

748 EW141, 130-141.
749 Køb evt. et par skulderpuder for at skabe tidens skarpe skuldre” EW141, 132.
750 EW141, 122-127.
751 “du kan selv give din silkebluse lidt karakter med et par skulderpuder,” EW141, 126.
752 EW91, 150.
753 See EW23, 90-93.
754 EW141, 32.
755 EW107, 105
Other examples of the mutations taking place in the literal revival category of Granny Chic is seen in the shift from classic handbags such as Dior’s *Windsor*-bag, Hermès *Kelly*-bag and *Birkin*-bag in the intensive Analysis, to a more contemporary understandings of the link between icon and bag as in the *Charlotte*-bag by designer Gérard Darel named after actress Charlotte Gainsbourg (b. 1971). However, it might be noted that parts of Granny Chic seem to have remained the same as seen with for instance the *Kelly*-bag in "The Past is the Future from Hermès."

There is still some focus on the classic design associated with Granny such as Royal Copenhagen’s Blue Fluted tableware. However, the development seems to be moving towards a more dormant phase though there are still examples in for instance the feature “Fra skam til nydelse.” The piece also features a mutation of the tableware pattern in the shape of Mega Mussel. The pattern continues to morph as seen in the series *Elements* by designer Louise Campbell. As for the revival of ceramics as seen with the classic designs by Bjørn Wiinblad in the intensive period, this line prolongs itself in the extensive period to include new work from for instance Kähler ceramics founded in 1839.

3. Material revival: Vintage

Vintage is present throughout the period studied, though not necessarily in the same way. There is a sense of vintage still offering a source of distinction in the Social Mechanism, while at the same time having lost some of its cachet in the Market Position according to which vintage has been capitalized upon by rendering it an immaterial version of Retro. The latter point is illustrated by Suzy Menkes’ change of heart concerning Marc Jacobs’ incorporation of vintage ‘looks’ in his collections. In

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757 EW30, 64.
758 EW27, 20.
759 EW33, 120.
760 EW107, 62.
761 “Fortiden er fremtiden fra Hermès” EW103, 92.
762 EW97, 60-67.
763 EW97, 63.
764 EW141, 122.
765 EW141, 124.
766 An example of how vintage is still used in a social strategy of distinction is seen in the interview with Swedish designer Carin Wester in EW May 2009. To the question of which is her best fashion purchase ever, she answers: “My 1970s Chanel bag.” EW134, 32 “Min 1970er Chanel taske.”
2000, Menkes stated: “Jacobs produces clothes from the vintage store of your dream.”\(^{767}\) By 2007, Jacobs’ vintage fantasy no longer charms the fashion editor of *International Herald Tribune* (*IHT*): “Jacobs seemed to be lost in a dark and none-too-original vision of vintage clothes.”\(^{768}\)

Vintage not only morphed in an immaterial direction. In the first years of the Noughties fashion grew a conscience – again.\(^{769}\) As described in the feature: "Fashion in a Good Way."\(^{770}\) "Fashion companies and celebrities are tripping each other in their efforts to help poor children in India, cure AIDS in Africa, and stop the climate changes. It has become a serious must to be good."\(^{771}\)

This shift from in vintage from Retro to sustainability, from dream to reality, from wrong to right is seen in the short piece "Viva vintage"\(^{772}\) about two new vintage stores. One takes clothes in commission – a new version of the vintage store – and DKK 5 of each sold item goes to charity. Another example is a competition organized by Folkekirkens Nødhjælp (DanChurchAid), where secondhand clothes were to be redesigned under the label Fisk.\(^{773}\) This connection between charity and secondhand clothes in November 2006 developed over the next years, mirroring the development of vintage in fashion, and in November 2009 the same competition was about sustainable development of the environment\(^{774}\) in line with the increased focus on organic products and fairtrade.\(^{775}\) This affected the vintage version in the sense that it

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\(^{767}\) “A Vintage Year, or Merely Retro?” *IHT*, February 10, 2000.

\(^{768}\) “Marc Jacobs Disappoints with a Freak Show,” *IHT*, September 12, 2007.

\(^{769}\) One of many examples is “Hot jern – nu i pink” EW83, 33 about how the proceeds from a curling iron helps research in breast cancer. Another is the fashion spread: ”Meaningful Fashion” ("Mode med mening") featuring 12 designers that will show at a Dansk Flygtningehjælp (Danish Refugee Counsel) charity event (EW 89, 62-71). ”Support a Good Cause” ("Støt en god sag”) T-shirt by Hush where part of the proceeds go to Livlinien for troubled youth, EW 89, 35. Ad for InWear: "Let’s fight breast cancer” (EW103, 90).

\(^{770}\) ”Mode på den gode måde” EW116, 88-90.

\(^{771}\) ”Modefirmerne og de kendte er ved at falde over hinanden i deres iver for at hjælpe fattige børn i Indien, udrydde aids i Afrika eller stoppe klimaforandringerne. Det er for alvor blevet et must at være god” EW116, 88.

\(^{772}\) EW85, 42.

\(^{773}\) EW104, 48.

\(^{774}\) According to www.noedhjaelp.dk accessed on November 11, 2009.

\(^{775}\) ”The Green Direction of H&M,” “H&M’s grønne vej” EW126, 88 about their new organic collection. “Strategen” was feature about Peter Ingwersen who founded Noir that was one of the first organic, sustainable fashion brands that was also sexy EW107, 50-55. Subversive elements such as Diesel ad with the pay-off: “Global Warming Ready” featuring an image of Piazza san Marco in Venice with colorful parrots having taken over from the pigeons. EW107, 8-9, February 2007.
moved in a ‘green’ direction, recycling now being associated with sustainability. As argued in “What Lady Gaga’s Wearing Next?” on Style.com: “By its very nature, vintage clothing is as green as you can get.” There are also other dimensions of the mutation of vintage seen in the fashion spread “Verden rundt” that features vintage kimonos that seem to fuse globalization and fascination with the Far East as well as the branding effect of vintage as discussed in the Analysis (see Illustration 32).

This development from vintage as first concerned with Granny, then charity and finally turning green would according to the Zeitgeist Position pertain to several different trends, which in turn would seem confusing in that vintage in a spatial optic has not changed radically but mutated gradually and continuously. A similar development is seen with Granny Chic as an expression of nostalgia. By 2008, Granny Chic is associated with the recession: “'Granny chic’ a hit as times get tougher” with reference to the Ladylike, 1940s looks of the New York Fashion Week in February 2008.

However, within the framework of the Rhizomatic Position this development is concerned with the trend operating according to a spatial dynamic that is always prolonging itself through connections and expansions that grow out of the middle eliminating the notions of beginning and end in the process. The progression is part of the subterranean sprawl that seems to grow according to dimensions rather than destinations.

When considering the increased awareness of CSR and charity both in and through fashion in the period, this move from vintage as Retro towards vintage as

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776 This development might be linked to the general concern with the climate changes and the specific event of United Nation Climate Change Conference (COP15) in Copenhagen in Denmark which affected the cultural production as such as seen in for instance the art scene: “Klimakunst” “Climate Art” EW141, 38.
777 Style.com, posted and accessed on April 22, 2009. A local example of how secondhand clothes have morphed from vintage as seen in Granny Chic to the greener pastures of sustainability is seen in a fashion show held by the Danish design school KEA in Copenhagen on December 16, 2009. The title of the show was “Trashion” which showed how 30 fashion students had deconstructed discarded clothes in a contribution to promoting the innovation of sustainable fashion.
778 EW126, 116-127.
780 There are other examples of how vintage and Ladylike have morphed into a different kind of Granny Chic as seen in the beauty feature: "It's vintage, darling” EW104, 144-145 about the return of talcum powder, vintage packaging and classic perfumes which seems to suggest nostalgia and the material revival have moved into beauty. The interest in cultural history associated with Granny Chic and nostalgia in the analysis still seem present in 2009 when considering the feature on Estée Lauder, an icon in the beauty industry, EW134, 65-67.
green is an indication of how trends can be said to operate according to variation, expansion, and conquest, which is a spatial rather than temporal approach. In that sense, this development from retro to green is less a question of revolution and more of variation, expansion and dimensions.\textsuperscript{781}

**Line of Development: Glam**

Glam was used in comparison with Granny Chic as two versions of the same Retro Trend. Logomania, Power Dressing, and the Trashette were seen as the main immaterial revivals in this extravagant, ostentatious version of Retro, while the notions of material and literal revivals were as not dominant. This section looks at the Line of Development of Glam.

1. Immaterial revival: Logomania, Power Dressing, Trashette

The version of Retro entitled Glam has gone through interesting mutations and progressions in the extensive period. As seen in the intensive Analysis, Logomania was a strong part of the Glam version.\textsuperscript{782} In January 2005, *Harper’s Bazaar* declared Logomania back based on collections by Louis Vuitton and Gucci; and in September 2008, Logomania was seen in Ralph Lauren as illustrated in a Polo Eyewear-add featuring a supersized logo on the polo.\textsuperscript{783} The s/s 2009 collections by Yves Saint Laurent, and Chanel were also characterized by Logomania.

Evidently Logomania has continued to mutate though, it is not as prominent as it was in the intensive period. However, in terms of Line of Development it is interesting to note that while Logomania was seen as a revival of the 1980s, it is also linked further back in time associated as it is with the notion of conspicuous consumption. In this sense, the understanding of trends as mutating over a long period of time rather than changing radically is emphasized.

Power Dressing was part of Glam and the 1980s revival in the intensive Analysis. Though menswear as a source of inspiration can be traced back to at least

\textsuperscript{781} There are also other dimensions of the mutation of vintage seen with for instance vintage kimonos that seem to fuse globalization and fascination with the Far East as well as the branding effect of vintage as discussed in the analysis, EW126, 126 in the fashion spread “Verden rundt” EW126, 116-127.

\textsuperscript{782} For instance in ”N for namedropping:” “Logomania is here. Just like in the 1980s, you need to flash your status and class with your clothes and accessories,” EW25, 73.

\textsuperscript{783} EW126, 25.
Coco Chanel, the notion of the revival of Power Dressing is specifically linked to the 1980s as seen in the intensive Analysis with for instance "Powerpoint"\textsuperscript{784} and “Dressed Like a Man”\textsuperscript{785} in the intensive period to the focus on the androgynous \textit{boyfriend}-look in September 2008 and December 2009.\textsuperscript{786} The mutation in-between is seen in for instance the fashion spread “Like the Boys”\textsuperscript{787} from April 2006 that shows elements of the 1980s\textsuperscript{788} and the Logic of Wrong understood as being ”Sexy in an unsexy way.”\textsuperscript{789} In November 2006, the image of the Yves Saint Laurent collection is described as being ‘the new Power Woman.’\textsuperscript{790} By 2008, Power Dressing awoke the broad shoulders\textsuperscript{791} that had laid dormant since the 1980s.

In the intensive Analysis of Glam, the Power Woman was linked to the notion of the Trashette\textsuperscript{792} characterized by dressing ostentatiously for the intentional purpose of looking cheap.\textsuperscript{793} This is taken up in October 2006, this time referred to as “Cheap Chic: Be Cheap in a Really Expensive Way.”\textsuperscript{794} The extravagant, glamorous version of Glam is still evident in the extensive period as in the fashion spread “Glamour Girl”\textsuperscript{795} (see Illustrations 33) from December 2009; as is the more trashy, ostentatious version as seen in the fashion spread “22 Interpretations” from October 2005 (see Illustration 34).

In September 2008, a similar Glam look is seen in a Gucci ad where 1980s Glam has morphed with hippie traits.\textsuperscript{796} While I did not choose to focus on the 1970s version of Retro in the intensive period of the Analysis, the interaction with the version, which is also still present indicates the alliances formed between the versions.

\textsuperscript{784} EW32, 86-93.
\textsuperscript{785} “Som man(d) går klædt” EW 45, 118-120.
\textsuperscript{786} Seen in EW126, 36 and EW141, 125.
\textsuperscript{787} "Ligesom drengene” EW97, 104-111.
\textsuperscript{788} Such as “En Boy George-hat,” EW97, 108-109.
\textsuperscript{789} “sexet på den usexede måde” EW97, 110.
\textsuperscript{790} Tendens: ”Yves Saint Laurent” ”Den nye powerkvinde” EW104, 26.
\textsuperscript{791} For s/s 09 Balmain showed pagoda style shoulders, and Louis Vuitton had more classic 1980s style square padding.
\textsuperscript{792} Title of Tendens EW29, 20.
\textsuperscript{793} ”Det er ikke alt, hvad der glimrer, der er af guld. Men det er heller ikke det afgørende, når du ifører dig 80ernes prængete og ultrafeminine glam-look,” EW33, 28.
\textsuperscript{794} ”Cheap Chik: Vær billig på den rigtig dyre måde” EW103, 132.
\textsuperscript{795} EW141, 106-119.
\textsuperscript{796} EW126, 8-9. The hippie influence might also have been a possible focus as a version of Retro. At the time of the Gucci ad the hippie style as seen in July 2008 Tendens ”Tilbage til Woodstock” EW124, 16: ”Hippiestilen er tilbage på catwalken” which in turn might be seen as a mutation from earlier resurfacings in April 2005 such as ”tidens hippie-look” EW85, 38.
Trashette was linked to among others Joan Collins and her role as Alexis Carrington in the TV-show *Dynasty*. While the focus in the intensive period of study was the association with the Trashette, the focus has mutated to a stronger focus on the 1980s in general and the broad shoulders in particular linking Trashette to the Power Woman. In *The Sunday Times*, Joan Collins traces her own personal passion for shoulder pads to when she first saw Joan Crawford in *Mildred Pierce* (1945), which indicates an even more expansive Line of Development. Collins comments that broad shoulders “were more flattering than an Italian waiter” and welcomes the return of the shoulder pads as Contemporarily Seductive.

On a general note, Glam as one version of the 1980s mutates to include other versions of the 1980s. Some examples are the introduction of the *Miami Vice*-look inspired by the TV-show (1984-1990) drawing a Line of Development from St Tropez to Miami. An example is the fashion spread “Get the Look from the Catwalk” from May 2009 with the “*Miami Vice*-look” emphasizing the pastel suites with loose silhouette and shoulder pads. Another example showing a different 1980s power palette in the same issue is: “The Happy 1980s" that highlight "cobalt blue, pink, and shoulder pads." So from mainly embodying either the ostentatious Trashette or the Power Woman, the dimensions of the 1980s Retro Trend become more expansive as they move in the direction of silhouette – the broad shoulders, which is a nod to a new version of contemporary seductiveness – as well as the colors of the 1980s.

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797 Another mutation is seen in the fashion spread “Metallics” EW107, 96-103, which might be seen as a morphing from the focus on gold in the intensive period in for instance ”Golden girl” ”Det er ikke alt, hvad der glimrer, der er af guld. Men det er heller ikke det afgørende, når du ifører dig 80ernes prangende og ultrafeminine glam-look,” EW33, 28.


799 In her article “They’re Flattering, Fabulous, and Back in Fashion,” September 20, 2009.

800 “Catwalk 2002” EW29, 65.
801 ”Få stilen fra catwalken” EW134, 48-53.
802 EW134, 52-53.
803 “De glade 80’ere” EW134, 38.
804 ”koboltblå, pink og skulderpuder.”
805 For instance ”Wear 1980s colors” ”Gå i 80er-farver” EW103, 144. Tendens “Bull’s-eye from the 1980s” ”Pletskud fra 80’erne” EW107, 28. *I tiden* ”Neon” ”80’er-agtige flashbacks” EW106, 16.
2. Literal revival: Archives
While the literal revival is not strong in the extensive period, it is worth mentioning that literal revivals of Glam are introduced in the extensive period though not documented by the EW material. While previously connected to the immaterial revivals, *Dynasty* is now also a reference in the literal revivals. In her review of the Balenciaga f/w 2009 RTW show, Sarah Mower writes that “The designer [Nicolas Ghesquière] had mined the Balenciaga archive […] Anyone on the lookout for eighties influences might see something *Dynasty.*”  

3. Material revival: Vintage
The material revival of Glam also surfaces in the extensive period. While only Granny Chic was linked to material revival in the intensive study, clothes and accessories from the 1980s are gradually considered vintage in the EW material. In January 2007, it is noted that “the boots are my mother’s old ones from the 1980s,” which might be seen as a conquest of new territory made by the Retro Trend. It is interesting to note that this expansion is so strong that now even a belt from the 1990s is considered vintage. This marks a clear mutation from the intensive period, where 1980 items were not considered vintage. Or as it is put in the fashion spread on the 1980s “Flashdance” from April 2001: “What a shame we threw out all those badges, belts, and leggings.”

Finally, it might be brought to attention that secondhand clothes in the 1990s were considered to be what Suzy Menkes has described as “fashion’s purging of the excesses of the 1980’s.” This notion has been turned on its head in the Noughties where in fact vintage becomes a celebration of the excesses of the 1980s. The point is

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807 In *The Historical Mode* (1989), Harold Koda and Richard Martin use the term vintage and imply that the 1980s was also characterized by secondhand dress practice: “The resurgence of vintage clothing as a favorite mode of dress for the youthful vanguard typifies the pertinence of the historical past to the 1980s.”
808 EW106, 26 ”støvlerne er min mors gamle fra 80’erne.” Another example of the 1980s being a new source of vintage is *Ud af skabet,* EW101, 36-38 with Louise Thstrup owner of Blond Management. She dreams of raiding Cher’s closet in the 1970s and 1980s EW101, 38.
809 According to ‘Set på gaden’ EW107, 34.
810 ”Så kan man da kun ærgre sig over alle de badges, bælter og gamacher, man har smidt ud,” EW37, 104-110.
that understanding the Line of Development in Rhizomatic terms, these two apparitions of vintage do not pose a conflict. Rather they bare witness to the many entryways of the Retro Trend, and how the various lines of the map are reversed, torn and adapted to various mountings.

**Line of Development: Mix**

It is especially in Mix that the concept of the notion of lines of development forming a map is fleshed out. Rather than operating with points, Mix showed us how the trend mechanisms ‘occupies the space of the between.’ This spatial approach emphasizes the ability of the trend mechanism to constantly proliferate by forming an open system that is connectable in all of its dimensions.

We have already brought up how Rita Hayworth formed an alliance with Nina Hagen in a *remix* in the intensive period only to be re-emerge in 2009 as the embodiment of 1940s elegance demonstrating how Granny Chic is susceptible to constant modification. An interesting example of the latest modification in the EW material is seen in the shape of the glamorous burlesque performer Dita Von Teese (b. 1972) in an interview “15 Things You Didn’t Know about Dita Von Teese”(812) (see Illustration 35). Dita Von Teese is a vision of the iconic pin-up model Bettie Page (1923-2008), fusing the elegance of the 1940s Granny Chic with the 1980s vamp in Glam. In that sense, the two have grown into a femme fatale version embodied by Dita Von Teese while also supported by other EW material that offers tips for becoming “a real femme fatale.”(813)

Broadening the perspective, Dita Von Teese also represents the tendency towards increased democratic organization of the fashion systems continuing the strategy of capsule collections and celebrity designers as discussed in Chapter 2. Dita Von Teese has not only designed a T-Shirt for H&M’s *Fashion Against AIDS-campaign* (2009), she has also launched a lingerie collection for Wonderbra, which in EW is described as “vintage-inspired.”(814) The example of Dita Von Teese illustrates how trend mechanisms according to the Rhizomatic Position operate according to a horizontal flow that is susceptible to constant modification. Using the Rhizomatic Position for analysis of Granny Chic does not come back to the *same* such as a social

812 “15 ting du ikke vidste om Dita Von Teese.”
814 EW141, 53.
strategy or dominating event. Rather it forms a map of lines of becoming that cultivates itself by being open and connectable. The role of new media has served to emphasize the rhizomatic understanding of trends. Throughout EW141, there are references to the magazine’s website, that offer more material on a given topic, such as for instance beauty tips from Dita Von Teese on Eurowoman TV, www.eurowoman.dk/tv.\textsuperscript{815}

Also within the magazine, this development towards a more open, democratic mode of operation is seen. A feature like “Get Behind the Scenes of a Fashion Shoot”\textsuperscript{816} demonstrates how spaces that were previously privileged are now opened up to the public. It serves to create intentional cracks in the shiny surface of the fashion spread, which reduces the distance between the magazine and its readers, which in turn reduces the authority of the magazine and thereby flattens the hierarchy.

The Line of Development will aim to continue the focus on the Mix between the first two versions of Retro in the Analysis to visualize the progression of the Retro Trend. While Granny Chic moves in a sustainable direction, Glam takes on the rougher look of Punk, which was back already in the intensive period.\textsuperscript{817} Punk is still morphing in August 2005, as in "A Hint of Punk"\textsuperscript{818} and "Soft punk"\textsuperscript{819} which is understood as a soft version of 1980s Punk as opposed to the neon and high ponytails of the decade.\textsuperscript{820} By February 2007, the 1980s have expanded from Punk and new dimensions are added. In Tendens ”Bull’s-eye from the 1980s” the emphasis is on the decade in general.\textsuperscript{821}

\textsuperscript{815} EW141, 44. The Internet is a descriptive parallel to the rhizome. We do not think of the Internet as the sum of all the servers, computers and users in the world but rather the interaction, the endless new connections that can be brief or lasting, that are a result of a controlled process or the spontaneous result of a few or numerous factors. Trend mechanisms just as the Internet are nothing if not always in development, moving in new directions, and making new connections. Rather than understanding the Internet – or trend mechanisms – as chaos, the Rhizomatic Position offers concepts that can incorporate this multiplicity without reducing it. It might be argued that choosing a web-based fashion media might have proven to be more accommodating for unfolding the analytical potential of the Rhizomatic Position. However, since the extensive study was important to the dissertation there were no web-based fashion media suitable for providing empirical material considering the young age of the media.

\textsuperscript{816} “Kom med bag om skydningen af modeserien” EW141, 119.

\textsuperscript{817} Podium ”Punk” EW25, 32, ”Punk is back” ”Punk er atter over os.”

\textsuperscript{818} Set på gaden ”Et strejf af punk”, EW89, 29.

\textsuperscript{819} I tiden EW89, 17.

\textsuperscript{820} ”de rå 80ere. Ikke i form af neonfarvede T-shirts og høje bestehaler, men som en blød udgave af årtiets punk.”

\textsuperscript{821} ”Pletskud fra 80’erne,” EW107, 28. ”Nu skal du tage for dig fra hele årtiet.”

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Other alliances between the mutated versions of Granny Chic and Glam are seen in the connection between rock and sustainability as seen in “Organic rock-chick,” a beauty piece on Jo Wood Organics. The level of revivals is manifold. 1980s rock chick is linked to the revival of the biker jacket which in the 1980s was a revival of the 1950s as a uniform of rebels as seen in Tendens ”Biker-jakken” and ”Biker Chick,” which is illustrated with an image of Marlon Brando from The Wild One (1953). Again, it is difficult to organize the Glam version according to Point of Origin, however, the examples show another line of flight within the Retro Trend placing emphasis on the space between. The sense of the continuous mounting as part of the process of becoming is evident as new dimensions are added to the lines of becoming. The focus on the mix remains the same, but the way the elements are mixed mutates as seen in the fashion spread “Play Days” where the ballerina meets Granny’s cottage bringing to mind the Crazy Cinderella of the intensive period (see Illustration 36). These examples might suggest that it is in fact true as Polhemus suggests, that trend mechanisms operate according to Polhemus’ Supermarket of Style rendering all trends essentially Retro; a perspective echoed in Lieberson’s notion of ‘existing stock.’ In A Matter of Taste, Lieberson operates with three factors that influence trends: ‘External events’ and ‘idiosyncratic historical developments’ that fall under my categorization of Zeitgeist, and ‘internal mechanisms’ that similar to the Rhizomatic Position looks at ‘the force that generates change even in the absence of external shifts.’ Part of the internal mechanisms deals with what Lieberson calls ‘incremental replacement mechanism.’ This term is useful in relation to the rhizome in suggesting that a trend operates by gradual change based on existing trends.

In this discussion of Issue 4 concerning the Line of Development, it seems clear how trends change gradually according to variations rather than revolutions. When studying the vegetative propagation of subterranean sprawl of the Retro Trend in the EW material 2002-2009, there are signs that trends do in fact build on current

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822 EW107 18.
824 EW106, 18.
825 EW116, 28.
826 “Legedage” EW107, 80-87.
827 EW38, 26.
828 A Matter of Taste, 92.
trends, and draw on what Lieberson calls “existing stock.” Because this ‘stock’ is so expansive most of it lies dormant before parts of it are rediscovered. This is an interesting observation when relating it to the statement noted in the Introduction where Hochswender states that ‘the 1960s are never out long enough to be completely out.’ While this was probably not what he meant, the quote can be read as a condition under which the trend mechanism operates with degrees of hibernation and surfacing according to a gradual variation of existing trends.

While this idea of incremental replacement mechanism and existing stock add perspective to the Rhizomatic Position, the main difference lies in Lieberson’s understanding of mutations as dead ends that ‘go nowhere.’ This forms a contrast to the Rhizomatic Position, according to which mutations are an integral force in the progression of a trend.

It is interesting to see that while the encouragement of the Mix recipe as a strategy for creating a personal style is seen throughout the extensive period, the visual expressions vary. In February 2005, *Tendens* ”Cool Mix” describes the current trend as “a mix of unique secondhand finds. The style is anything from a 1950s-inspired dress, a hippie poncho, colorful 1980s bags and Granny’s old fur coat to the hardcore leather jacket. The conclusion is still: Anything goes, as long as it is combined in a creative and personal way” (see Illustration 37). In September 2008, *Tendens* is called ”Mix and Match” which moves along the same lines: “There is no limit to what you can put together. Wear your flowy dress with your boyfriend’s wool coat, or mix your floral vintage dress with a tough leather coat” (see Illustration 38). While giving an impression of complete relativity, considering Mix as a visualization of Retro as an open and connectable system, there is still a line of becoming. Comparing the two *Tendens*, the visual expressions are both different from

829 *A Matter of Taste*, 114.
831 *A Matter of Taste*, 123.
833 Miks og match” EW126, 36. ”Der er ingen grænser for hvad du kan sætte sammen.”
834 ”brug din flerlette kjole sammen med din kærestes uldfrakke eller miks din blomstrede vintagekjole med en rå læderjakke.”
each other and from the Mix version in the intensive period because the
conglomeration is different.

The illustration shows a new alliance between mutations of Ladylike and
Glam. An interesting point to this Line of Development from one look achieved
through a particular recipe of Mix to another, is the Life of Brian-parallel in which it
is suggested that we might all be individualist in the same way as discussed in
Chapter 3. In the January 2007 issue of EW, this paradoxical individualism is clear in
the pay-off of a Canon ad: "My trend, my way" – communicating an ambiguous
message of collective individualism.

The Mix version of the Retro Trend can also be seen as having morphed into
various other types of connections for instance between fashion, performance, and art
as represented by Vilsbol de Arce; the introduction of street art in fashion
documented in I tiden "Gadens kunst;" the collaboration of two of more designers
as unfolded in the feature “Get Together;” and the collaboration between
WoodWood and Adidas. Illustration has continued to reveal new potentials
according to the Logic of Wrong that mixes kitsch and fashion as seen in the
feature "Elsker, elsker ikke, elsker, elsker ikke, elsker ... elsker aldrig" that shows a
portrait of American actress Sarah Jessica Parker drawn in the style of the 1970s
medical romance (see Illustration 39).

New version of Retro: 1990s grunge

Just as in the intense Analysis, there are several other possible versions of Retro I
could have looked at such as the mutation of the 1950s, 1960s, and the 1970s. The
1990s grunge revival – an addition to the Retro Trend in the extensive period – is not
part of the Analysis. It will nevertheless be discussed briefly here because of the
interesting perspective it might add to issues of fashion cycles and time lag, and
therefore also to the question of the possible death of trends.

As described in Chapter 4, grunge came out of Seattle with the rise of the
musical genre, and moved into high-fashion from there, famously with Marc Jacobs’

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835 EW106, 32.
836 EW126, 48.
837 EW91, 24.
838 EW101, 118-119 “Fælles skal man være.”
839 EW97, 52.
840 EW91, 60-64.
first collection for Perry Ellis in 1992. The second wave of grunge was seen in 2006,\textsuperscript{841} and the grunge trend developed a luxury edge by the end of 2007 as seen in the fashion spread: "Luksus grunge."\textsuperscript{842} The version continues to morph through to the end of 2008 with more "Luksus grunge"\textsuperscript{843} coupled with a more general 1990s revival seen in for instance “90s-inspired light denim jacket"\textsuperscript{844} and statements such as “For the right touch of the popular 1990s look of the season.”\textsuperscript{845} Adding a layer to the question of origin of trends, Woody Hochswender argued in 1991: “the trends of the 90’s are old trends”\textsuperscript{846} which echoes the layers of Retro in the 1980s trend seen in for instance the biker jacket.

The fact that grunge is revived at such short intervals and so soon after the first version came out – which was already considered retro at the time – indicates how the sense of simultaneity in fashion trends is intensified and the time lag reduced. What is interesting about grunge in this case is how it represents a new line or territory within the map of the Retro Trend.

**Territorialization**

This brings me to the final aspect of the rhizome, which I wish to bring to the development of the Rhizomatic Position. The notion of *territorialization* is linked to the concept of lines of flight. In *ATP*, it is argued that lines of development can become *stratified* for some reason. Because these lines of flight are concerned with occupying the space between, they will break away and start up somewhere else to avoid being fixed in a point. Deleuze and Guattari refer to this as a process of territorialization and deterritorialization, which seems to offer a different way of understanding trends over a longer period of time. As described in *ATP*:

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\textsuperscript{841} For instance “Grunge” EW103, 133.
\textsuperscript{842} EW116, 106-113.
\textsuperscript{843} EW126, 100.
\textsuperscript{844} "90’er-inspireret lys denimjakke,” EW126, 144.
\textsuperscript{845} EW125, 145. “For det rette strejf af sæsonens populære 90’er look.” Other aspects of the 1990s were also revived such as the 1990s supermodels seen in a D&G Fragrance Anthology ad featuring Naomi Campbell, Claudia Schiffer, and Herzigova, EW141, 6-7. As Laura Roberts noted in *The Daily Mail*, “20 years on and the world’s greatest supermodels are back - without a wrinkle between them.” August 26, 2008.
"Every rhizome contains lines of segmentarity according to which it is stratified, territorialized, organized, signified, attributed, etc., as well as lines of deterritorialization down which it constantly flees. There is a rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentary lines explode into a line of flight, but the line of flight is part of the rhizome. These lines always tie back to one another. That is why one can never posit a dualism or a dichotomy." ⁸⁴⁷

While the full potential of this notion of territorialization will not be unfolded here, the concept offers a final tool for conceptualizing the trend mechanisms according to the Rhizomatic Position. As we have seen both in the intensive and especially in the extensive study of Retro, part of the pure mechanism of the trend seemed to be moving into new territory, when the lines of flight became too fixed or stratified. This dynamic places extra emphasis on how the Rhizomatic trend mechanism is concerned with its ability to transform – rather than what is being transformed.

In addition, the quote emphasizes the relational rather than oppositional nature of trends that leads to progression of trend through variation rather than revolution, hibernation rather than death, gradual mutation rather than rapid replacements.

Dichotomy after all?
The role of the sixth Position was originally intended to complete the Toolbox developed with the Mapping of Trend Theory. However, as the development of the Rhizomatic Position proceeded, it became clear that the potential of the Position is more fundamental to understanding the nature of contemporary trend mechanisms rather than constituting a Position that offers an explanation for why trends change. In stead, the Rhizomatic Positions can be used to describe the dynamic of how trends change.

There is a potential paradox in the sense that the rhizome represents this relational, horizontal concept that can ‘never posit a dualism,’ while the botanical notion of a rhizome might in fact be viewed as part of a dualistic construction between what is above and below ground, visible and invisible.

The understanding of the relation between the creeping rootstalks and the fronds is also relational rather than oppositional in that both trend mechanisms and the

⁸⁴⁷ ATP, 9.
surface manifestations – the trends – are part of the same process. However, one aspect that will be explored in the Conclusion is that if the Rhizomatic Position in fact holds most potential for describing the pure mechanism of trends i.e. the basic premise of trend mechanisms rather than representing a Position in the Toolbox analogous to the other Positions, which was the initial idea, then there might be a potential in maintaining a certain degree of leveling between above and below ground despite the seeming contradiction. This potential is concerned with the link between trend mechanisms and fern propagation. As noted already, some fern such as the oak fern, propagate both through vegetative reproduction through the rhizome that takes place below the ground, and the reproduction through spores that takes place over ground. If we argue that the Rhizomatic Position does actually provide tools for describing the vegetative reproduction, this process constitutes the basis on which the Toolbox operates. In other words, the four Positions – leaving Neomania out – all take place above ground and are categorized as reproduction or proliferation through spores i.e. a process that assumes a collective of fern (Social Mechanism), the air (Zeitgeist), sexual reproduction (Seduction), and pushing the image also a sense of Market if we imagine some of the fern in the wild while others are in horticultural settings.

Concluding remarks on the Rhizomatic Position

The development of the Rhizomatic Position is now complete as is the extensive part of the Analysis. The result is intended to constitute a step towards understanding trends as relational rather than oppositional, formative rather than stemming from a specific Point of Origin, horizontal rather than hierarchical, spatial rather than temporal.

The Rhizomatic Position was described as an open system that similar to a map was open and connectable in all of its dimensions. The Position suggests replacing a temporal approach with a spatial that operates according to dimensions, directions in motion, and expansions into new territories. According to the Rhizomatic Position, a trend prolongs itself by growing out of the middle and occupies the space of the between. The analytical potential of the Rhizomatic Position was its ability to view what appeared to be contradiction and even chaos as an inherent part of the trend mechanism of the Retro Trend that moves according to mutations and variations rather than revolutions according to spatial parameters of
“determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions.” The result was that the three versions of Retro could be seen as part of the sprawling proliferation of the Retro Trend. Granny Chic, Glam and Mix seem to allow for maximum discontinuity and rupture. In that sense, Retro did not mark the end of linearity as suggested by Baudrillard but rather the presence of what Deleuze and Guattari call “the line-system of becoming” in which the Line of Development frees itself from Dichotomy, Point of Origin, and Hierarchy within the framework of “a multi-linear system.” Trends do not seem to be going out of fashion, but they do seem to be continuously cultivating themselves in prolific ways from the middle according to an organic, horizontal dynamic.

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848 ATP, 8.
849 Ibid., 294.
850 Ibid., 297.
CONCLUSION – Outcome of the Research, Perspectives for Future Research, and Commercial Potential

In the Introduction, it was suggested that perhaps the pluralism of trends have become so prolific that it has become difficult to determine what a trend is at a given time, and as a consequence it was suggested that trends were going out of fashion or indeed expiring altogether. The outcome of the research in this dissertation has shown that it is possible to view the conception of ‘anything goes’ in fashion trends from a more optimistic perspective by providing an alternative approach that is spatial rather than temporal. The results hold academic and commercial potential as discussed below.

In On the Nature of Trends: A Study of Trend Mechanisms in Contemporary Fashion, I have attempted to consolidate the field of trend studies by creating the theoretical platform for determining how and why trends in fashion change. This was used to explore whether other trend mechanisms have emerged in the first decade of the 21st century that require new approaches for understanding and describing them. Only then was it possible to offer a qualified answer to whether or not trends ever made it into the 21st century.

I have shown how trends and trend mechanisms are alive and well in the Noughties. Teri Agins’ predictions that the end of the millennium would also be the end of fashion as we once knew it, did not at first appear to hold true in the dissertation. The retrospective trend in the 1990s continued in the shape of the Retro Trend in the Noughties, implying that fashion was still old news. Yet, Agins might not have been completely off since there did seem to be new mechanisms at play.

The consolidation was attempted through the Mapping of Trend Theory with the organization of almost 200 years of theory on trend mechanisms in fashion. The result was a Toolbox consisting of five Positions: Social Mechanism, Neomania, Market, Seduction, and Zeitgeist. The Toolbox was intended to determine the analytical potentials and limitations of the existing theories. While the use of ‘strong objectivity’ was bastardized in the sense of being removed from Harding’s concern with marginalized individuals and groups, the inspiration her notion brought to my approach was fruitful. As demonstrated in the Analysis, the method succeeded in bringing to light the analytical potentials of the Positions allowing me to say

852 The End of Fashion, 6.
something general about trend mechanisms while maintaining that trends and the theories about them are historically, socially, and culturally situated.

The iterative method employed in the dissertation as a whole and in the Analysis in Chapter 5 and 6 in particular operated with a procedure of repetition in which each level of the process served to inform the next. The repetitive process and multiple matrixes – the five Positions, the three categories of retro, three versions of the Retro Trend, and the four Issues – may have seemed confusing to the reader. However, I find that the iterative method fulfilled the purpose of breaking a trend into its constituent parts in a process of successive approximations to achieve a contemporary and refined understanding of trend mechanisms in contemporary fashion.

Unfurling the frilly perspectives
The rhizome metaphor brought in the image of vegetative propagation that brings to life the delicate frond of an oak fern; its feathery green tutu engaging in an elegant sway on the scented floor of the woods. The leaf of the oak fern is deciduous and when it withers, the rhizome remains, growing in new directions shooting up new leaves from the subterranean sprawl.

In the Introduction, it was suggested that “it’s difficult to even define what a trend is,” however, the research has suggested that what a trend does is more important than what it is. This approach allows for trends to be analyzed as they grow rather than fixing them in arrested development. This approach shifted the focus from being to becoming. This becoming is concerned with trends as a constant process of transformation that is determined by how it proliferates rather than the origin, meaning, or destination of a trend. In this framework, trends are a work in progress, neither chaos nor order but a multi-linear, uncertain system; an organic matter of transformation.

Trend mechanisms understood in spatial terms frees the trend mechanisms from the strict organization according to Dichotomy – between inception and demise, in an out, true and false, erotic and chaste, high and low, this season and last, designer and consumer; Point of Origin – fashion leader, postmodern condition, brand, the body, dominating ideals and events; and Hierarchy – social, economic, creative,

communicative. The Rhizomatic Position opens up to a different understanding of trend mechanisms that is spatial in the sense of moving in relation to dimensions, expansions, and variations. The Rhizomatic Position is relational rather than oppositional, a continuous, horizontal flow that is multi-directional rather than a hierarchical, linear trajectory. The multitude of crossing Lines of Development or becomings form an open and connectable map within which trends expands out of the middle rather than operating according to a process of inception and demise. This dynamic places emphasis on what happens in the between and trends are seen to prolong or cultivate themselves rather than being motored by something else such as a social, cultural, or economic agendas. In that sense, the Rhizomatic Position does not come back to the same result, but operates by a pure mechanism.

Future research

To what extent the Rhizomatic Position is related to the process of decentralization and democratization in fashion or whether it in fact bears witness to a pure mechanism of trends per se would be an interesting pursuit for future research. There are indications that trends have been understood to be chaotic throughout fashion history implying that the Rhizomatic Position could offer tools for understanding trend mechanisms on a more general level rather than describing a particular condition of the Noughties. For instance, considering the expansive nature of trends as seen in the Retro Trend which operated in several fields simultaneously, the rhizomatic dynamic seems applicable to the fern-crazed Victorians sitting in their fern-patterned chair, eating from bone china decorated with fern designs while reading *A History of British Ferns, and Allied Plants* before rushing off on pilgrimages to the countryside to collect even more ferns for their precious Wardian-cases.

The tendency towards anarchy in trends is seen throughout fashion history if we consider Hazlitt’s statement in 1818 that fashion trends are ‘an odd jumble of contradictions’ and Elizabeth Wilson’s argument that ‘fashionability,’ i.e. trends, historically speaking “displays a crazy relativism.” This sense of the end of trends is evidently not reserved for the millennium. In the same vein, Koda describes Græco-

855 *Adorned in Dreams*, 6.
Roman dress as more diversified than later accounts suggested: “apparel in ancient 
Greece was subject to modifications and variations over centuries that affect even the 
most static and persistent traditions of dress.”856 This seems to indicate the sense of 
anarchy and relativism but within a relational system as far back as Antiquity while, 
of course, not entirely comparable to contemporary fashion considering the dramatic 
development in production, society, communication, and so on. The examples do 
indicate that the Rhizomatic Position might be applied to older trends than Retro to 
shed light on the spatial logic. As Marguerite de Ponty stated already in November 
1874 in the fifth issue of La Dernière Mode: “Profusion is not confusion.”857

The Logic of Wrong – the intentional disorientation to stall the process of 
emulation – was highlighted in the Analysis. However, indications of this social 
strategy in fashion trends is also seen further back in the annals of fashion history, and 
might therefore not be reserved for the Noughties. In Vogue in 1972, readers were 
encouraged to: “Wear at least one thing you wouldn’t be caught dead in.”858 This 
resembles statements brought up in the Analysis such as: “some shoes are so ugly, 
they’re awesome.”859 The sense of anything goes is also evident in the period 
considering these assertions from Vogue in 1971: “There are no rules in the fashion 
game now. You are playing it and you make it up as you go;”860 and “This year marks 
the height of fashion anarchy, when there is no leading right look, but every style adds 
to the vocabulary of the fashionable woman… there have never been so many 
different looks in fashion.”861

Finally, the research in On the Nature of Trends holds commercial potential 
for developing new methods for decoding consumer behavior on the decentralized, 
democratized premise of trend mechanisms. Because what was examined in the 
dissertation in general and in the Analysis in particular was the role trends play for us 
in terms of understanding ourselves, each other, and the world around us. This insight 
is potentially a resource for the fashion industry as well as for the business concerning

856 Goddess, 17.
857 Mallarmé on Fashion, 121. Interestingly the column talks about the “changes in fashion 
over the last few evenings.” 121 suggesting that there was an understanding of changes in 
fashion happening rapidly even before the rise of mass fashion or even of pret-a-porter not to 
mention the conditions in the digital- and computer age.
858 In Vogue: Six Decades of Fashion, 325.
859 EW83, 25.
860 In Vogue: Six Decades of Fashion, 322.
861 In Vogue: Six Decades of Fashion, 322.
fast moving consumer goods in general. The rise of consumer influence moves beyond fashion, rendering knowledge of the trend mechanisms that drive consumer behavior a key to gaining market control. This takes the traditional market logic a step further: “Because trends signal the emerging needs, wants, and aspirations of the consumer, canny manufacturers and retailers capitalize on their potential for turning a profit.”

Trends have not kicked the champagne bucket yet. Despite the crazy relativism and the prospect of seasonless cycles, trend mechanisms are still flourishing because they perform important functions in relation to social identity, communication, seduction, business, and zeitgeist. The Rhizomatic Position showed how trends in a spatial context are not tripping themselves in an accelerated series of revolutions. Instead, trends appear to be moving quite slowly by gradual variation, mutation, and expansion. Trends seem to be safe. For now…

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862 Fashion Forecasting, 5.
DANSK RESUME


SUMMARY

The Ph.D. dissertation *On the Nature of Trends: A Study of Trend Mechanisms in Contemporary Fashion* was motivated by the concerns that trends might be expiring as a phenomenon due to the acceleration of the fashion cycle. The purpose of the research was to determine how and why trends in fashion change, and whether the increase in decentralization and democratization in fashion had altered trend mechanisms. This endeavor demanded a clarification of the terminology concerning trends as well as establishing the historical framework of the fashion systems that to a certain extent constitute the premise of trend mechanisms. Through a mapping of almost two centuries of literature on trend mechanisms, I organized the material in an attempt to determine the analytical potentials and limitations of the material. The result was five positions: Social mechanism, neomania, market, seduction, and zeitgeist. These positions were gathered in a toolbox that was applied to a case, the retro trend as it operated in the Danish fashion magazine *Eurowoman* in the first decade of the 21st century. To strengthen the focus, I concentrated the attention on three versions of the retro trend: Granny Chic, Glam, and Mix. These three versions were analyzed using the five positions and the result was an updated toolbox. In the analysis, four issues – dichotomy, point of origin, hierarchy, and line of development – were raised that were considered limiting in the positions. In an attempt to resolve these four issues, an addition to the toolbox was made in the shape of the rhizomatic position. This position attempted to describe trend mechanisms as a spatial dynamic rather than a temporal trajectory. The sixth position was inspired by the *rhizome* as botanical term and philosophical concept as formulated by French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) and psychoanalyst Félix Guattari (1930-1992) in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism & Schizophrenia* (1987). The main potential of the Rhizomatic Position was to understand trend mechanisms as an organic dynamic that moves rather slowly according to spatial dimensions of variation, expansion, conquest, and off-shoots instead of changing according to a rapid series of revolutions at an ever increasing pace. In that sense, trends were viewed as moving according to new dynamics rather than going out of fashion. Thereby the Rhizomatic Position resolved the issues that were raised in the analysis of the retro trend and thereby the five original positions were strengthened and a contribution was made to consolidating the field of trend studies.


---. *Year in brackets is the original year of publication.*


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APPENDIX

FIGURE 1 AND ILLUSTRATIONS