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### Beauty Practice: Corset

With the development and changes of the times, more and more beauty practices, rituals, and products appear in people's daily life, not only invented for women but also used by men, such as threading, jade roller, and so on. People want to "become" more beautiful through these beauty practices, rituals, and products. Some of those products may have disappeared for years and then have been trending again now. Corset is an example of this situation, it is one of the beauty practices that trending recently, as can be seen from the name "corsets," which has a close relationship with the shape of the body. The corset is considered one of the most horrific beauty practices in history (O'Neill, 2021). This means this beauty practice imposes some disadvantages on the person wearing it. The corset came out as early as 1600 BC, but it has not been used very much. It was widely used in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance period, and it often appeared among the members of the European royal family (Jagannathan & Das, 2022).

In the past, corsets were considered one of the tools that could "make" the waist thinning and accentuate the bust, but now corsets are classified as clothing (Britannica, 2023). But their purpose is not the same as that of ordinary clothing such as short sleeves and coats. Short sleeves and coats are used to keep warm or as a way to express oneself, like what your favorite styles, colors, and trends are, or what mood you are in the day you wear this clothing. Corsets were not only used to shape women's bodies but also represented that women's status in society at that time was much lower than that of men (Jagannathan & Das, 2022). Corsets of different periods

were made of different materials. Corsets in the 15th century were made of a material called paste; In the 16th century, wood, bone (especially whalebone), or horns took the place of paste; Reed was used as an ingredient in corsets in the 18th century; In the 19th century, a new material appeared, metal, the above materials were used to reinforce corsets (Britannica, 2023).

Although the corset has a long history, it has always been controversial. It has brought harm to people's health. One used to wear a corset to make one's (her) belly appear smaller, but there was no noticeable effect and the damage that followed. When one sat down in a corset and felt that she could not breathe well compare to sitting down without wearing a corset. Doctors have confirmed that this feeling is one of the hazards to the human body caused by wearing it for a long time, and what is more serious is that it will cause damage to the organs of the human body, such as organ shedding, and even cause rib fractures (Tahseen, 2013).

The resurgence of corsets as one of the most recent beauty practices serves several purposes. First of all, relationships with women are indispensable. The different types or versions (tops, dresses, skirts, and even lingerie) and sizes (small, medium, large, and extra large) of corsets reflect that modern women are freer and less constrained than women in the 15th or 16th century because women in that time have lots of restrictions (Walsh-Spelman, 2022). Secondly, unlike traditional corsets, which are designed to "shape" a small waist, modern corsets are described as casual and comfortable clothing (Michie, 2022). This sends a message that beauty nowadays is no longer based on a small waist, it is just a personal stereotype of beauty, now is a diverse society, everyone's body shape and size is different, and they all have their own unique beauty, nowadays people choose the clothing that suits them best is known for comfort. Third, corsets are now appearing on many occasions, which is one of the reasons why they are popular now. It not only exists as underwear, but it can also be worn on top of a T-shirt (outwear); corsets

are associated with costume, and costume design involves the elements of corsets (Corsetstory, 2022). The second reason that it is popular now is that modern corsets have appeared in various forms, such as dress versions or performance costume versions (Kaplan, 2021). There are many choices not only in color but also in size and pattern. And corset is no longer known for being “tight,” even obese people can be able to buy corsets that fit them. The modern corset seems to be more concerned with human health, people are able to breathe smoothly when wearing them nowadays (Kaplan, 2021).

Corsets from different periods had different cultural uses for different cultures. Different cultures have different understandings of corsets, their own using purposes, and their own cultural significance. Although corsets were introduced to France from other cultures (countries) and were introduced by Catherine de Medici in the 16th century, in the eyes of the French court culture, the existence of corsets is used to show the beauty of the human figure (Das, 2019). In French court culture, females wore corsets as underwear, and they wore them under their clothes, which makes women’s waists look slimmer (Das, 2019). This reflects the aesthetics of the French court at the time.

Compared with the corsets of the French court period, although the corsets of the United Kingdom culture in the Victorian era had similar purposes to the French court culture, the two cultures want to show different things. In the Victorian era, the corset was representing another type of beauty, which is the curvaceous, known as the S shape (Aikin, 2020).

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