

## **Consumerism and Female Iconography**

### **Women in the advertising campaigns of the major Italian luxury brands, years 2010 – 2015**

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#### **Abstract**

In the history of fashion photography, the images of women have constantly been anchored to a limited number of archetypes. These archetypes include those of the androgynous woman, of the exotic woman and of the diva woman (Muzzarelli, 2013). Although they can be traced back to ancient myths and observed throughout the centuries these archetypes acquired distinctive and new iconographic shapes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Nochlin, 1999). As a result, in fashion photography advertising campaigns we can find a lot of different “Fashion Bodies”. (Grandi, 2001). As Aby Warburg’s analyses have shown (Gombrich, 1970), in order to be aware of the role played by a specific iconographic custom in contemporary society, it is important to trace back its tradition. The iconographic method can certainly also be applied to the image of the woman in contemporary society. Does the medium used, the fashion photography, affect the social significance of images? Has the so-called lo-fi, digital media and the subsequent “Democratization of Fashion” (Barile, 2011), changed women's iconography and experimented new styles? Lipovetsky (2007) argues that fashion luxury is “feminized”: can we find new female representations in the contemporary Italian luxury fashion advertisements? What can we discover looking at the Fashion Brand Advertisements, starting from the Goffman’s essay Gender Advertisements (Goffman, 1979) and from the artistic iconographic method (Gombrich, 1970)? My research will analyze the different female’s representations and “Fashion Bodies” in the Italian Luxury prêt-à-porter Fashion-Wear Advertisement Campaigns during the years 2010-2015. I will concentrate on the richer Italian Luxury Brands, following the Pambianco Research realized in 2014 (in [www.pambianconews.com](http://www.pambianconews.com)).

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"Fashion does not have to be something people wear,  
fashion is also an image."

(Viktor and Rolf in Shinkle, 2012: 17)

"The fashion the photography wants to communicate becomes narrative, scene, image. [...] An image that wants to be contaminated by the present, to give form of the spirit of the time".

(Maria Luisa Frisa in Frisa *et al.*, 2005:152)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Gender is not something biological, but a reality built up by culture and context, by performances and history (Butler, 2013). This is linked to what George Gerbner states about the vital role played by media in contemporary society to build up narratives: "Today television tell most of the stories to most of the people, most of the time" (Gerbner, 1993). The power of representation and the story told by images is also exploited to build the identity of the observing subject. In all this, fashion, luxury and advertising play an important role. According to Gilles Lipovetsky (1989), since the end of the Middle Ages, fashion has been crucial to the process of democratization and the growth of individualism. At the same time, individualism and attention to oneself have increased the desire of construction and affirmation of identity in society, including gender. This process has been particularly true for women.

This study is partly the outcome of my MA research on *Bodies, faces, eyes and feelings. A path in the Italian film poster of the Second World War Years* (Marrella, 2012). This first analysis highlighted how the iconographic method (Gombrich, 1970) can be used not only in the classic and historicized art, but also across different artistic languages. What has also emerged is that some motifs and signs have been repeatedly used in advertising posters, as examples of "construction of gender" in man - woman relationship and in female identity. The research findings show how, along with the well known Warburg's Nymph, other iconographic motifs have come to the fore. These include *the Pietas, The Kiss, the Venus,*

*the Ecstasy* and the *Crucifixion*. Indeed, in art iconographic motifs may develop in unpredictable ways. Talking about Warburg's Nymph, for instance, Huberman identified it as a woman who seems to have collapsed, falling to the ground, but who will never really die in the history of image (Didi-Huberman, 2004).

Thinking about the extent to which images are linked together during the centuries, it is interesting to make a parallel with the essay of Gabriel de Tarde, the first critic who theorized fashion. De Tarde went beyond the frivolous appearances of fashion, recognizing its social and cultural value. In his essay *Les lois de l'imitation* (1890), he affirms that the preservation of ancient beliefs is necessary to maintain the chain of generations unbroken. Thanks to the imitation of past models, generations continue to resemble and form a unitary society. However, Gilles Lipovetsky (1989) speaks out against the application of this theory to fashion. On the contrary, he affirms that fashion has its roots in whatever is absolutely *new*.

Although acknowledging the validity of both theories, I will adopt De Tarde's idea as a starting point to analyze recurring motifs in visual communication.

From this perspective, it is fundamental to look at advertising as a form of *art*. As Gilles Lipovetsky claims, the era of advertising as "propaganda" is over. During the twentieth century, creative communication has become increasingly linked to art and cinema (1989: 19). By contrast, advertising campaigns have not been so innovative. Fashion photography, in particular, has not changed its motifs and iconography. With reference to the so-called *Street style* years (1980-1990), Eugénie Shinkle states:

Though realist fashion photographs may challenge conventional codes, they [advertisement images, *author's note*] are simply coded differently, designed to appeal to a market that eschews the conventions of more traditional imagery. (Shinkle, 2012: 218)

Paradoxically, fashion photography for advertising campaigns is the form of communication that is closest to the iconographic motifs and signs of the past, and for this reason it makes them universal and good for all times. Although obsessed with the idea of the changing seasons, fashion photography becomes the reassuring epitome of immutability.

Finally, it is necessary to underline the importance that women bodies have in advertising campaigns, above all in *fashion* advertising campaigns. As also stated by Shinkle:

Though many discussions of fashion photography focus closely on the body of the model (often casting it as passive and superficial, shaped by language and by culturally determined repertoire of poses), the body of the photographer is only occasionally mentioned, and the body of the viewer is rarely, if ever, taken into account. (Shinkle, 2012: 219)

The body is the focus of the spectator's attention, above all in the western culture (Frith *et al*, 2005), and it has been so during the art history of all time. The body explains a story, a narration. The body is something the spectator tries to understand and live, behind the glamour and the *Aura* (Benjamin, 1936) of the work of art.

## 2. THEORETICAL ISSUES

“Grâce à la Photographie, le visage éternel de la Mode poursuit ses inépuisables mutations. Il rejoint ainsi le bas-reliefs égyptiens, la statuarie gréco-romaine, les fresques de Pompei, le portrait d’Agnes Sorel par Foquet, les aurores de Botticelli, l’or de Rembrandt, la suie de régentes de Franz Hals, les vaisseaux argentés de Velazquez, les rocailles nacrées de Watteau, les brumes des Majas de Goya, la somptuosité barbare de Delacroix, le piège académique d’Ingres, le romantisme sensuel de Rossetti, les capitons ouatés de Renoir, et Sartre ne se fait-il pas l’écho de tout cela lorsqu’il écrit: “le réalisme de Vermeer est si poussé qu’on pourrait croire d’abord qu’il est photographique”.

(Saint-Laurent, in H.- Duncan, 1978: 4)

This study analyzes the representation of women in the advertising campaigns of the most important Italian luxury brands, during the years 2010 – 2015. In this path it focuses on three basic areas of study: I) *gender studies*; II) iconography and art history; III) advertising and fashion photography.

With regard to the field of *gender studies*, the current bibliography mainly adopts a post-feminism perspective, analyzing the representation of women in society and the power of advertising. All these topics are treated, for instance, by Butler (2013), Capecchi (2006, 2011), and Grebowicz and Merrick on Donna Haraway (2013). We can find a new way of studying the contemporary woman in *Il corpo delle donne – Women’s bodies*, a documentary made by Lorella Zanardo in 2009, which describes the representation of the female body in the Italian commercial television (2009).

This documentary film has stimulated a wide debate in Italy on the female image, often linked to the issue of “femicide”. The essays written by Eva Illouz are also interesting to read with reference to this project, since the author studies from a sociological perspective the image of women and their affective relationships (2007; 2013). In fact, relationships are fundamental to understand the female image in advertising campaigns, particularly in connection with the sociologic changes that the new media have brought also in love affairs. Finally, in the study of fashion images it can also be interesting to mention Susan Bordo’s essay (1997), in which the thinness of the female body is the focal point, as an expression of power and status, but also of restrictions.

With regard to the theme of the iconography, the cardinal texts are those written by Ernst H. Gombrich on Aby Warburg (1970), and by Georges Didi-Huberman (2004; 2006; 2011). For what concerns the female iconography in art history, it is certainly important to mention *Representing Women* by Linda Nochlin (1999), a collection of essays that explores some female archetypes in the history of art of the Nineteenth Century. With regard to the iconographic study in advertising, the main reference text is *Gender Advertisements* by Erving Goffman (1979) and other studies related to it (Kang, 1997; Bell, Marko, 2002; Gill, 2003; Lindner, 2004). This essay by Erving Goffman has transformed the Seventies’ feminist critics in empirical research, through the analysis of some advertising campaigns. Erving Goffman indicates some “ritualizations” and “hyper-ritualizations” of the female representation. These ritualizations are divided into “six categories”: 1- relative size; 2- touch; 3- functional hierarchy; 4- ritualization of subordination; 5- authorized alienation; 6- family.

Finally, for what concerns fashion photography and advertising, the bibliography focuses on the presence of different female bodies: the *doll body* (Olivares, 2014), archetypical women such as the *diva woman*, the *exotic woman* and the androgynous woman (Muzzarelli, 2013), and all the so-called “Fashion Bodies” (Grandi, 2001).

Muzzarelli’s archetypes and Grandi’s fashion bodies represent only the starting point of this study. I have actually investigated other recurring images in contemporary women's representation. To do this, it has also been necessary to understand and study in depth the different luxury brands. The three different patterns of brand structuring identified by Andrea Semprini (2007) - I) surface level (themes, spaces, actors, styles, rhetoric, time), II) narrative level (narration, assigning duties and narrative syntax) and III) axiological level (the values of the brand and its identity) - have been essential. Beside the fundamental works by Gilles Lipovetsky (1989; 1997; 2007) and Eugénie Shinkle (2008), the link between creativity and

management in fashion is also explored by Stefania Saviolo and Salvo Testa (2005). These, too, have been a precious source of information.

Currently, the only historical monograph on fashion photography is *Histoire de la photographie de Mode* (Halle-Duncan, 1978). Most contemporary research focuses on women's fashion magazines as a whole, combining advertising campaigns, editorials, and outline pictures (Englis *et al*, 1994; Kang, 1997; Kuipers *et al*, 2013; Frith *et al*, 2005; Capecchi, 2011; Norval, 2011). Unlike these essays, my research only focuses on fashion photography, in particular on the advertising campaigns. In the preface to *Histoire de la photographie de mode*, Yves Saint-Laurent describes fashion photography as a form of art which is a true reflection of its time: “L'apparition de ce procédé miraculeux fait que l'histoire descriptive d'une société n'est plus l'apanage de la peinture, de la sculpture ou de l'écriture. Le photographe de Mode va créer un art tout à fait à part en accord parfait avec son temps” (Hall-Duncan, 1978: 3). Shinkle extends this concept by comparing fashion photography to classical art: “George Steiner once described as classical art "art by privation" - art that still managed to deliver a message even though it had recourse to rigorously limited means. It is time that this argument was extended to fashion photography” (Shinkle, 2012: 13).

As we have seen at the beginning of this paragraph, fashion photography, as underlined by Yves Saint Laurent (Hall-Duncan, 1978: 3), has always been linked to the art of all time and it has tried to represent all the changes occurred during the centuries. But, ultimately, what we understand is that art has always aimed at the *idea* of photography, driven by the desire to catch the reality, the truest gaze on nature and life. Quoting Sartre, Yves Saint Laurent affirms: “ [...] et Sartre ne se fait-il pas l'écho de tout cela lorsqu'il écrit: -le réalisme de Vermeer est si poussé qu'on pourrait croire d'abord qu'il est photographique- ” (Hall-Duncan, 1978: 4). Fashion Photography and Art are linked together. They have inspired each other, even when one of the two did not exist, yet.

### **3. OBJECTIVES**

The main objective of this research is to study the representation of women in advertising campaigns of Italian *Luxury prêt-à-porter* brands (the wear-section) in the years 2010 - 2015. I have started from a survey made by Pambianco in 2014 about the Italian brands of higher turnover ([www.pambianconews.com](http://www.pambianconews.com), 2014). I decided to work on advertising campaigns because of the stronger force of their aesthetics – as well as their iconographic research and the level of investment on great photographers, scenic construction and study of the image -

in comparison to the realization of editorials or outline articles in magazines. As also stated by Paolo Landi:

Photo features for clothing brands become veritable productions with a photographer, technical assistants, stylists, assistant stylists, casting directors, art directors, hairdressers, make-up artists, skin specialists, dressmakers, pressers, producers. A variegated world, a wide spectrum of highly professional figures involved in the production of the final result of an image that will evoke possible worlds and that, hopefully, will be an extension of the style and taste of the creator of the clothes. (Landi, in Frisa *et al*, 2005: 304).

Furthermore, in *Haute Couture* and *Luxury*, the connection between art, avant-garde and fashion is much stronger compared to the brand of *Pret-à-porter* and *Fast fashion*. As Lipovetsky claims, the *Haute Couture* is like a two-face building, not only economic and bureaucratic, but also aesthetic and artistic (1989: 102). As also confirmed by the fashion photographer Giovanni Gastel:

I don't think I have altered my philosophy for fashion, and no one has ever asked me to give up my style. Nevertheless, it is true that fashion photography is always a compromise: between a commercial component and an esthetic component. The difficult balance, the friction, the subtle understanding between the two fields has always fascinated me. (Gastel, in Frisa *et al*, 2005: 152)

Another goal has been that of joining the iconographic method to a new object of research, that of fashion photography. I have investigated possible new ways to describe the female body, beyond already known representations, which are reassuring and recognizable to the viewer.

Finally, a key objective has been that of considering the connection between society and image. As stated by Maria Luisa Frisa: "Therefore very often fashion images succeed, better than all essays on history, sociology, or anthropology, in being the perfect, universal synthesis of the *zeitgeist*. (Frisa *et al*, 2005: 152).

Thus, image and society inspire each other, and so many times society imposes its desires in the aesthetic image. Based on a careful analysis of *gender studies*, we see how important the role of representation is for the construction of a new female identity in society. The "feminization of luxury" treated by Lipovetsky (2007) explains how the female subject is the

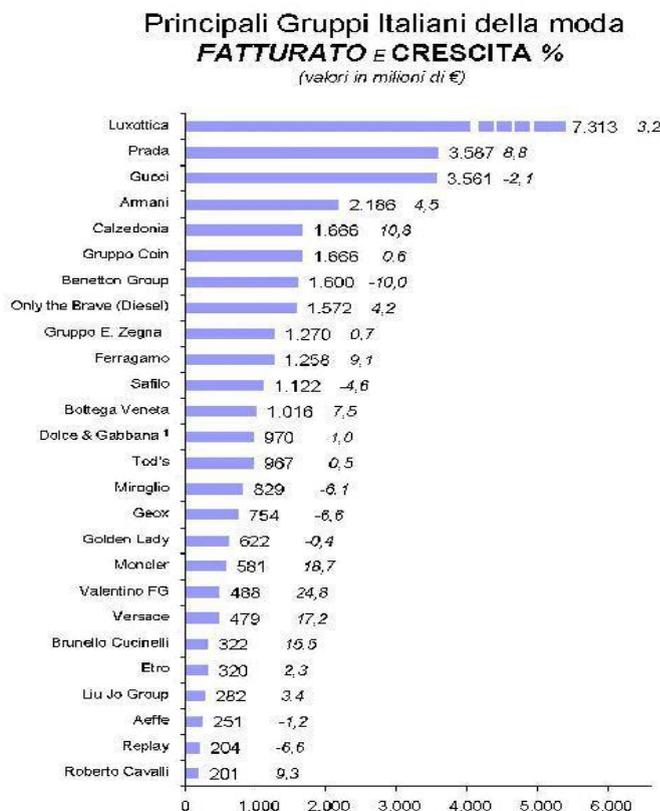
first spectator and so often the main subject of advertising campaigns. In fact, typical of the *Luxury* sector is the link with the desire and the psychology of the female viewer. As Gilles Lipovetsky claims, *Haute Couture* psychologizes fashion. Women, according to the clothes they wear, may seem wistful, casual or elegant, naive, fancy or romantic, happy, young, funny and sporty. Fashion magazines like to stress these psychological types with a “psycho-customization” of elegance (Lipovetsky, 1989).

#### 4. METHOD

As previously mentioned, I chose the *Corpus* of images by examining the official photographic campaigns of the eight major Italian *luxury prêt-à-porter* brands appeared in recent years, from 2010 to 2015. I have analyzed only brands of luxury clothing, following the order proposed in Pambianco’s graph (2014): *Gucci, Prada, Giorgio Armani, Ferragamo, Bottega Veneta, Dolce e Gabbana, Versace* and *Roberto Cavalli*. The analysis focuses on women's representation between academic art and fashion photography, in order to fill the “artistic gap” found in the studies on contemporary fashion photography. Here is Pambianco’s graph:



Tab. 1



<sup>1</sup> L'esercizio fiscale 2013/14 è il primo esercizio completamente privo di ricavi dalle vendite a marchio D&G, la cui ultima stagione di commercializzazione è stata la Primavera/Estate 2012 (esercizio fiscale 2012/13).

I have selected one image for each campaign, coming to a total of 88 images. For what concerns the advertising campaigns, I have consulted these websites and Fashion Magazines:

- [www.vogue.it](http://www.vogue.it)
- [www.fashiontimes.it](http://www.fashiontimes.it)
- [www.verycool.it](http://www.verycool.it)
- [http://moda.pourfemme.it/;](http://moda.pourfemme.it/)
- [www.stylosophy.it](http://www.stylosophy.it)
- [www.wikipedia.it](http://www.wikipedia.it)
- [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)
- [www.alfemminile.com](http://www.alfemminile.com)
- [www.philoandphil.blogspot.com](http://www.philoandphil.blogspot.com)
- [www.indiereader.com](http://www.indiereader.com)
- [www.styleandfashion.blogosphere.it](http://www.styleandfashion.blogosphere.it)
- *Elle* (Italy), March 2014; *Vogue* (Italy), February 2014; *Vogue* (Italy), March 2014.

## 5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The identification of eight “typologies of looks” (Classic Beauty, Feminine, Sensual, Exotic, Cute, Girl Next-door, Sex Kitten, Trendy) realized by Englis, Solomon and Ashmore (1994) has been an interesting starting point for my analysis. However, like other studies on this topic, Englis’s research tries to find some pre-defined representations in a corpus of images. In my research, on the contrary, I also look for *new* representations, following the iconographic method.

My research starts with the identification of female representations from an artistic, philosophical and archetypal point of view. First, my analysis focuses on the archetypes and “fashion bodies” in fashion photography and fashion advertising, described by Muzzarelli and Grandi:

- The three female archetypes or “fashion Icons” in fashion photography proposed by Muzzarelli: the *Diva Woman*, the *Exotic Woman* and the *Androgynous Woman* (Muzzarelli, 2013);
- The eight “fashion bodies” proposed by Grandi: I) the natural and the artificial body; II) the blurred and fragmented body; III) the skeletal body, IV) the gender-ambiguity body, V) the altered body, VI) the *body-thing* and mutant body, VII) the virtual body, VIII) the dissolved body (Grandi, 2001). I have looked for these representations in my corpus of images; then I have searched for new female images, starting from the female iconography of the art of all times. In Table 1 (a, b, c), we find Muzzarelli’s types, Grandi’s “fashion bodies”, archetypes and, finally, the new representations and “Fashion Bodies” that

I have found in the first eight Italian Brands following the order of the Pambianco research: Prada, Gucci, Giorgio Armani, Ferragamo, Bottega Veneta, Dolce e Gabbana, Versace.

## 6. THE INTERPRETATIVE FRAMEWORK

As a result of the iconographic analysis that I realized (Marrella F. M., 2019: 137 – 169), looking at Table 2, it can be underlined that the *Femme Fatale* (8 brands) and the *Androgynous Woman* (6 brands), are the most repeated female representations of all. But it is also noted that five of my new representations, the *Ecstatic Woman*, the *Danae Woman*, the “*Welcoming*” *Woman*, the *Portrait Woman*, the “*Sola et Pensosa*” *Pre - Raphaelite Woman*, and the *Double Woman* - these are the new representations found with the iconographic method - are reiterated in 4 or 3 brands. The *Diva Woman* and the *Exotic Woman*, Federica Muzzarelli's “*fashion icons*”, are utilized in 3 and 2 brands. The *Nymph - Maenad Woman* by Aby Warburg is present in only 2 brands. Among the most popular “*fashion bodies*” there is the *Skeletal Body* and the *Virtual Body*, for 5 brands. But again for 5 brands, the use of my *new* “*fashion bodies*” found, should be emphasized: the *Lying Body* and the *Body in Motion*. In 4 brands we find the *Multicultural Body* and the *Natural Body*. The *Out of Focus Body*, the *Curved Body* and the *Curvy Body* are present in 2 brands. The other “*fashion bodies*”, the representations and the archetypes have been found in only 1 brand.

After analyzing the data from the advertising campaigns of the 8 richest Italian luxury brands, I can draw a general conclusion: what I have found is a schizophrenic representation of women, the portrait of a dissociated woman.

Firstly, we observe a constant contrast between “*fashion bodies*” representations and archetypes. On one side the powerful and emancipated ones - the *Androgynous Woman*, the *Femme Fatale*, the *Ecstatic Woman*, the *Delilah Woman*, the “*Cozy*” *Woman*, the *Double Woman*, the *Portrait Woman*, the *Multicultural Body* – on the other side the traditional and weak ones - the *Danae Woman*, the *Defenseless Woman*, the *Faceless Woman*, the “*Cozy*” *Woman*, the *Double Woman*, the *Laid-back body*, the *Skeletal Body*, the *Curved Body*, the *Virtual Body*. This representation brings to a confused and conflicting Identity of the contemporary woman: the representation of a fragmented woman.

Second, this dissociated woman is the result of representations, archetypes and fashion bodies that are themselves contradictory. The “*Cozy*” *Woman* and the *Double woman* are two representations that can be read in a double way.

At first sight, the *Skeletal Body* and the *Androgynous Woman* are two powerful representations; however, we realize that to become powerful a woman has to lose her weight, her instinct (Bordo, 1997), her femininity, her body. Finally, the *Femme Fatale*, which is the contradictory archetype *par excellence*: she is the woman who brings with her *Love* and *Death*, *Eros* and *Tanathos*, like the famous Judith or Salomé. This reminds us of the “logic of Neototalitarianism” described by Nello Barile: the desire to be what you cannot be, without giving up any of the options that life gives to you (2008: 63-64). This *represented woman* wants to be everything, but so many times everything is the contrary of everything. And everything could also be the same as nothing.

Another element that stands out is a contrast with society and the contemporary star system. The new “fashion icons” that are appearing in the eyes of the viewer, in magazines, printed and online, are curvy women: Jennifer Lopez, Beyoncé Knowles, Rita Ora, Kim Kardashian, Nicki Minaj, and also in the world of fashion, Candice Huffine, model photographed by Steven Meisel for the 2015 Pirelli Calendar. The Curvy body is a recent theme of discussion, a daily topic in every fashion magazine, books and essays. Yet, in luxury brands, there is relentless use of the Skeletal Body and of the Virtual Body: two “fashion bodies” that refer to illness, weakness and the lack of feelings and life. The Curvy Body, on the other hand, was found only in two brands, a symptom that in the world of the image of luxury prêt-à-porter the revolution of curves is still a long way off. A theme that instead seems to want to develop and expand in the future, looking at the numbers in Table 2, is the presence of the Multicultural Body that imposes itself on the image of the Exotic Woman: a symptom that the search for different ethnic groups and cultures in the fashion image is becoming a fundamental point of change. A transversal research for women of every culture. What is still distant for what concerns the *form* of a body, it is – on the contrary - developing in the variety of faces, features and colour of the skin.

**TABLES**

**Table 1 – MY NEW REPRESENTATIONS, “FASHION BODIES” AND FEMALE ARCHETYPES ARCHETIPI FEMMINILI IN THE EIGHT BRANDS**

**1. Prada**

“Fashion Icons” by Muzarelli (2013)	“Fashion Bodies” by Grandi (2001)	Other Archetypes	My new Representations and “Fashion Bodies”
Androgynous Woman	Skeletal Body, Virtual Body	Femme Fatale	Ecstatic Woman, Defenseless Woman, “Sola et Pensosa” Pre – Raphaelite Woman, Multicultural Body, Lying Body, Curved Body

## 2. Gucci

“Fashion Icons” by Muzarelli (2013)	“Fashion Bodies” by Grandi (2001)	Other Archetypes	My new Representations and “Fashion Bodies”
Androgynous Woman	Skeletal Body, Virtual Body	Femme Fatale	Ecstatic Woman, Danae Woman, Double Woman, “Welcoming” Woman, “Sola et Pensosa” Pre - Raphaelite Woman, Multicultural Body, Lying Body

## 3. Giorgio Armani

“Fashion Icons” by Muzarelli (2013)	“Fashion Bodies” by Grandi (2001)	Other Archetypes	My new Representations and “Fashion Bodies”
Androgynous Woman	Out of focus Body	Femme Fatale	<i>Dalila</i> Woman, Faceless Woman, Portrait Woman, Body in Motion

#### 4. Ferragamo

“Fashion Icons” by Muzarelli (2013)	“Fashion Bodies” by Grandi (2001)	Other Archetypes	My new Representations and “Fashion Bodies”
Exotic Woman	Skeletal Body, Virtual Body, Natural Body	Femme Fatale, Nymph - Maenad Woman (A. Warburgh, E. H. Gombrich, 1970)	<i>Danae</i> Woman, “Welcoming” Woman, “Borghese” Woman, Mother Woman, “Sola et Pensosa” Pre - Raphaelite Woman, Portrait Woman, Body in Motion, Lying Body

#### 5. Bottega Veneta

“Fashion Icons” by Muzarelli (2013)	“Fashion Bodies” by Grandi (2001)	Other Archetypes	My new Representations and “Fashion Bodies”
Androgynous Woman	Skeletal Body, Virtual Body, Natural Body, Out of focus Body	Femme Fatale	“Sola et Pensosa” Pre -Raphaelite Woman, Portrait Woman, Body – Conflict Relationship, Multicultural Woman, Body in Motion

6. Dolce e Gabbana

“Fashion Icons” by Muzzarelli (2013)	“Fashion Bodies” by Grandi (2001)	Other Archetypes	My new Representations and “Fashion Bodies”
Diva Woman	Ambiguity of Gender Body, Natural Body	Femme Fatale, Warrior Woman (L. Nochlin, 1999)	Woman of the Neorealist Italian Cinema (Housewife - Lover - Mother), All Ages Woman, Melodramatic Woman, Botticellian Woman, <i>Sicilian Madonna</i> Woman, Body in Motion, Multi – Age Body, Curvy Body

7. Versace

“Fashion Icons” by Muzarelli (2013)	“Fashion Bodies” by Grandi (2001)	Other Archetypes	My new Representations and “Fashion Bodies”
Diva Woman, Androgynous Woman	Skeletal Body, Virtual Body, Body as a thing	Femme fatale, Donna Bambola-Manichino (A. Olivares, 2014, R. Barthes, 1967)	“Welcoming” Woman, <i>Danae</i> Woman, Ecstatic Woman, Double Woman, Dark Woman, <i>Woman in Pietà</i> , Lying Body, Curved Body

8. Roberto Cavalli

“Fashion Icons” by Muzarelli (2013)	“Fashion Bodies” by Grandi (2001)	Other Archetypes	My new Representations and “Fashion Bodies”
Diva Woman, Androgynous Woman, Exotic Woman	Natural Body	Femme Fatale, Nymph - Maenad Woman (A. Warburgh, E. H. Gombrich, 1970)	“Welcoming” Woman, <i>Danae</i> Woman, Ecstatic Woman, Double Woman, Portrait Woman, Multicultural Body, Lying Body, Body in Motion, Curvy Body

**Table 2 - EXPLANATORY SUMMARY OF MY NEW REPRESENTATIONS, OF THE FASHION BODIES, AND OF FEMALE ARCHETYPES IN THE EIGHT BRANDS**

EXPLANATORY SUMMARY REPRESENTATIONS AND ARCHETYPES	EXPLANATORY SUMMARY FASHION BODIES
<p>Femme Fatale <b>8</b></p> <p>Androgynous Woman <b>6</b></p> <p><i>Ecstatic Woman</i> <b>4</b></p> <p><i>Danae Woman</i> <b>4</b></p> <p><i>“Welcoming” Woman</i> <b>4</b></p> <p><i>Portrait – Woman</i> <b>4</b></p> <p><i>“Sola et Pensosa” Pre - Raphaelite Woman</i> <b>4</b></p> <p><i>Double Woman</i> <b>3</b></p> <p>Diva Woman <b>3</b></p> <p>Exotic Woman <b>2</b></p> <p>Nymph - Maenad Woman <b>2</b></p> <p>Warrior Woman <b>1</b></p> <p>Doll Mannequin Woman <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Defensless Woman</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Dalila Woman</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Faceless Woman</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>“Borghese” Woman</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Mother Woman</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Woman of the Neorealist Italian Cinema (Housewife – Lover - Mother)</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>All Ages Woman</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Melodramatic Woman</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Botticellian woman</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Sicilian Madonna Woman</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Dark Woman</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Woman in Pietà</i> <b>1</b></p>	<p>Skeletal Body <b>5</b></p> <p>Virtual Body <b>5</b></p> <p><i>Lying Body</i> <b>5</b></p> <p><i>Body in Motion</i> <b>5</b></p> <p><i>Multicultural Body</i> <b>4</b></p> <p>Natural Body <b>4</b></p> <p>Out of focus Body <b>2</b></p> <p><i>Curved Body</i> <b>2</b></p> <p><i>Curvy Body</i> <b>2</b></p> <p>Ambiguity of Gender Body <b>1</b></p> <p>Body as a Thing <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Body – Conflict Relationship</i> <b>1</b></p> <p><i>Multi – Age Body</i> <b>1</b></p>

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Isn't it wonderful how advertising agencies create symbols for a common state of mind?

(M. McLuhan, 1984: 181)

As preliminary results, I have found a strong link between the iconography of historicized art and the iconography of contemporary fashion photography. I have adopted a combined methodology for the study of imagery, between Aby Warburg's and Erving Goffman's studies of advertising campaigns, hence between art and advertising.

The analysis has also revealed that female representations are more than those listed by Muzzarelli (2013) regarding the first photographs of fashion, and they also extend beyond the "fashion bodies" described by Grandi (2001). There are new experiments and new female representations in contemporary *Luxury prêt-à-porter* advertisements, including a close connection between the world of fashion, literature, art, cinema, social history and music.

Finally, I can suggest a social link between imagery and contemporary society. A repeated archetype can become a translation of female identity in real life. With the recurrence and the democratization of the digital image (Barile, 2012) there is a greater power in the construction of the female ideal. Art may have lost its aesthetic *Aura* (Benjamin, 1936), but not its iconic power. As also stated by Maria Luisa Frisa: "So fashion photography is the hybrid icon of the present, an image made of all other possible images, remote and aggressive at the same time" (Frisa *et al*, 2005: 152).

Among the possible further researches, it would be especially stimulating to deepen the union between the iconographic study of images and contemporary social reality. Furthermore, it would be interesting to develop research, in the same years, both of the female iconography of foreign brands and, even more in line with this path, of the male representation always in Italian brands. This would allow us to reach a more complete vision of gender studies in Italian brands, and would also allow us to discover both the male and female vision proposed by luxury clothing brands. A parallel path could also be that of studying female iconography in fashion artistic photography, a form of art therefore detached from advertising and commercial power. It would also be interesting to deepen the feminine gaze on the woman, that is the woman photographer who looks at the subject woman, in order to reveal, or not reveal, some changes in the iconography used to portray the female image. And also it could be interesting to study the advertising campaigns of these brands in different countries, to make a parallelism and a social analysis of the woman image all over the world.

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