

Todorović Tijana¹, Toporišič Tomaž² and Alenka Pavko Čuden¹

¹University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Engineering, Department of Textiles, Snežniška ulica 5, 1000 Ljubljana

²University of Primorska, Faculty of Humanities, Titov trg 5, 6000 Koper

Clothes and Costumes as Form of Nonverbal Communication

Oblačila in kostumi kot oblika neverbalne komunikacije

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Abstract

Clothing presents an inseparable part of the human body. Linking art with clothing synthesizes the spiritual and social nature of human conduct, and it also creates metaphors and symbolic relationships in the anthropogenic environment. The aim of this synthetic view is to help us understand our internal worlds. The body represents the only support or shelter that a person (or humankind) can rely on. Through clothing, a person can make their first step in non-verbal communication towards the world. Clothing not only shows our appearance, but also represents our interior world. We attract attention with the help of our clothing. With apparel, we communicate with others, express acceptance or rejection, or collective attitudes in relation to understanding something that is likeable, sociable, moral etc. Clothing can be interpreted as a transmission of information between a carrier and recipient through symbolic messages in the general or specific scope of the clothing culture. In such open communication, a person creates their individuality through appearance. Messages and information about ourselves are visually sent and received.

Keywords: clothing and its importance, culture, subculture, modern clothing, communication, sign of affiliation, form, function, clothing and semiotics, costume

Izvleček

Oblačila so neločljiv del človeškega telesa. Povezovanje med umetnostjo in oblačili združuje duhovno in socialno naravo človekovega vedenja, kakor tudi ustvarja metafore in simbolna razmerja v človekovem okolju. Namen takšnega sintetičnega pogleda je pomoč pri razumevanju posameznikovih notranjih svetov. Telo je naša edina podpora in zavetje, na katero se lahko posameznik (ali človeštvo) zanese. Prek oblačil naredi človek prvi korak k neverbalni komunikaciji s svetom, saj oblačila ne kažejo le naše podobe, ampak tudi naš notranji svet. Oblačilo nam pomaga biti opažen. Skozi oblačila vzpostavimo komunikacijo z drugimi osebami, izražamo sprejetje, zavrnitev ali naše družbeno stališče v odnosu do nečesa ljubeznivega, družabnega, moralnega itn. Oblačenje si lahko razlagamo kot prenos informacij med pošiljateljem in prejemnikom prek simbolnih sporočil tako na splošno kot na specifičnem področju kulture oblačenja. Prek takšne oblike odprte komunikacije si skozi način oblačenja ustvarimo individualnost. Sporočila in informacije o nas so vizualno poslani in sprejeti.

Ključne besede: oblačilo in njegov pomen, kultura, subkultura, modno oblačenje, komunikacija, znaki pripadnosti, oblika, funkcija, oblačenje in semiotika

Corresponding author/Korespondenčna avtorica:

Tijana Todorović

Tel. 00 386 41 530 780

E-mail: tijanaart@gmail.com

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1 Clothing and its importance

The article discusses the semiotics of clothing as a kind of culture hybrid in time, tradition as well as clothing as aesthetics of the person in terms of artistic messages. Garment and clothing represent a specific type of social sculpture. According to Joseph Beuys, art represents a social sculpture and an active factor in society, where it occurs, can be expressed even through political activism. Beuys discusses the aspect of man as a social and political being and the problems of public disclosure and expression of attitudes, social status as well as general and individual security [1]. Placing links between art and clothing would synthesize the spiritual and social nature of human conduct, as well as the realization of metaphors and symbolic relationships in an anthropogenic environment. The aim of his synthetic view is to help us understand the individual's internal worlds.

The body represents the only support or shelter that a person (or humanity) can rely on. When perceiving modern art in this way, a conclusion can be drawn that the art is a catalyst of experience for individual images of life's realities and a medium for questioning as well as for new alternative opportunities in society. The importance of clothing as a significant medium in the articulation of individual and collective identity has been highly stressed. Clothing is an inseparable part of the human body. Through clothing, a person makes a first step in non-verbal communication to the world. Clothing not only shows our appearance, but also represents our interior world. We draw attention with the help of clothing. Throughout apparel we establish communication with others, express acceptance or rejection, or collective attitudes in relation to understanding of something that is likeable, sociable, or moral, etc. Clothes can represent aesthetical/ designed costume. Behind it a person can hide his/her face. If observed in this way, clothing can be used as a mediator between person and his/her environment/society. The clothing could help a person to achieve a defined goal. Clothing is a specific manifestation of person's identity and society, individual and collective, and the identification of an individual or group. It is manifested through tribalism, or denial – the appropriation of identity. Through clothing, we semiotize, encode, and make our bodies artificial. The clothing is defined as a shelter,

cover, and capsule for the body. Clothing is associated with the meaning in private and public space, and it represents the relationship between person/personality through dressing, which is tied with one's surroundings/environment.

Observing this relation between person and society, one notes that clothing belongs to the medium of interaction between body and synchronous interactions of transcultural urban landscape. A person with clothing stands out with national, wealth, and status background, and within it, certain attitudes and affinities can be pointed out toward specific cultural, professional, artistic, and distinct lifestyles.

Clothing has been created causally and chronologically as a person's need to be protected from external climatic conditions. The first traces of dressing can be found 100.000 years BC. The growing need for covering the body was followed by a complex of human motivation for giving aesthetic sense to garments [2]¹.

2 Clothing as an expression of time

Clothing culture, therefore, belongs to one of the most important anthropological paradigms, not just from the theoretical point of view, but also from the empiric point of view. If we consider clothing as a physical object that is real in human society, one can say that it represents an inevitable constant in daily life. The moment a person is aware of relations: other people and I, the importance of what is worn is going to be more visible through verbal or nonverbal communication. At the same time, we will change our approach to our consciousness. The interest for dressing was reached in the distant past, in time when the leather, various stones, ceramics and other barely processed materials originating from nature, were the only protective or decorative elements for the human body. During this time clothing and its accessories received different functions: from protection, through aesthetic, erotic, moral-religious, as well as: showing off social status, or prestigious positions in society, stressing out affiliations, sub-cultural groups, emphasizing a lifestyle, or expressing spiritual and emotional states, all the way to the economic dimension, that culminates in

¹ in this paper we use the term garment as defined by Cunningham Rebecca [2]

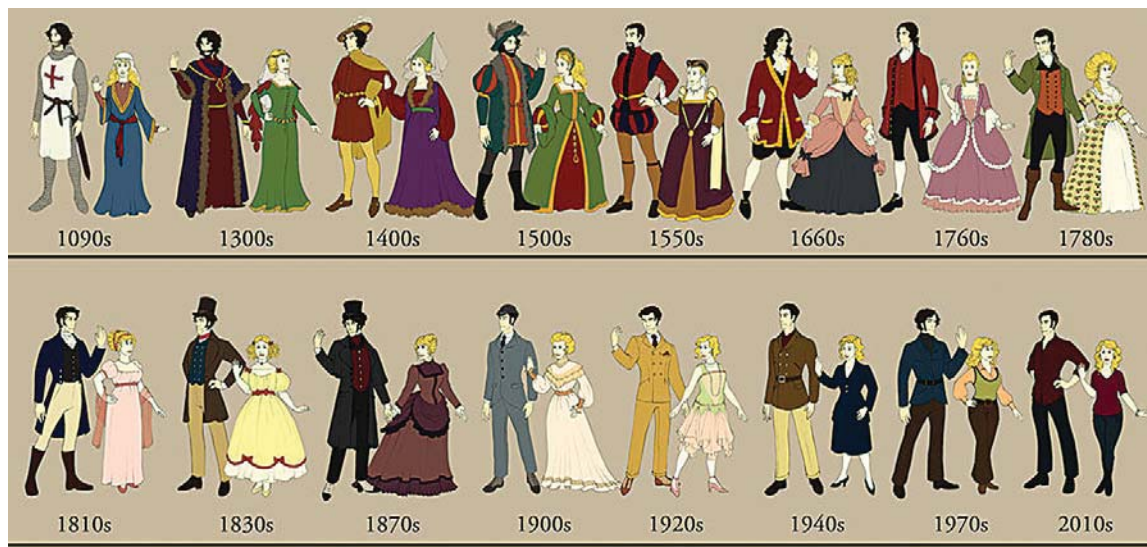


Figure 1: Terrizae's Western fashion timeline [3]

modern consumer society. Some of these meanings gradually changed under the influence of mass culture; they lost or gained completely new meanings (Figure 1).

3 Clothing: form, function and meaning

Members of a group use nonverbal communication within a specific clothing. Through it, they can transmit personal, social acceptance, social engaging and accustomed opinions about values, aesthetic criteria and ideas, and equally express and emphasize the existing social stratification and diversity. Indirectly, clothing presents many social events in society, allocating rules or dominant way of dressing (the so-called mass or street/public fashion), and thereby providing insight into the lifestyle of a certain time. A way of dressing, apart from discovering the universal constants that could be overdone, is not subjected to the strongest laws of fashion i.e. transience, and it shows many variables, cultural and social "borrows", changes in value and aesthetic innovation.

The concept of communication is usually treated as a basic carrying concept, and may imply an important aspect of nonverbal interaction and exchange of information in society through clothing. Clothing can be interpreted as a transmission of information between carrier and recipient through

symbolic messages in the general or specific scope of dressing culture. In that open communication, a person creates his/her individuality through his/her appearance. Messages and information about oneself are visually sent and received. The more complicated-multilayer and more complex communication among individuals and groups are crossing in many dimensions and meanings in their nonverbal-visual communication. Continuous interaction in symbolic plan, among individuals, is in the transmission function of subjective content, brought in the form of meaning in the area of social events – which, after all, explains and shows the meaning of communication. Through this, communication presents statement, with a sense of introducing in the familiar external public, joint action or social space. Inside a group of people, as well as within the certain culture, showing the internal, physiological, or social condition of a person reveals the structure of that group etc.

Culture represents the most general worldview that determines social existence and human life. Worldview is universal in the sense that a certain degree of coincidence of a person and common values are reached.

Depending on what kind of values society recognizes as desirable, this type of reflection has been created in science, economics, management, art, architecture, and the way of dressing. Regardless the discussion about culture, items (fabric products) such as clothes, correspond or even emphasise their

social and psychological interpretation within the context formed in social space which may be limited through subcultural, regional, professional, national, confessional, historical or some other border. Connection of concepts, culture and dressing gives the meaning on several levels and is in interaction with many subjects, as well as many interpersonal and intercultural relations. Under the “auspices” of all these subjects, it is possible to decode behaviour i.e. different information between persons in a group of subcultural system. These subcultural systems send and receive messages to each other through external-visual marks/dressing symbols. Items are recognized directly or, in some cases, they intentionally stand out as a symbol of communication, within the wider cultural phenomena and culture in general as a system of signs [4]².

3.1 Clothing and culture

Symbolism also determines a person and what is worn in the broader social and cultural milieu. The dominant mode of dressing (nowadays mass fashion and national costume) reflects the current cultural trends, and above all, valuable and aesthetic standards. It provides the most picturesque insight into the lifestyle of a particular social environment. Fashion in clothes reveals the universal constants that generally show the cultural and physical similarity in a certain time, as well as a series of cultural processes, borrows, or specificities. The clothes are treated as a collective and individual visual medium and with the help of it, a specific group in contemporary culture can be successfully “decoded”. This holds true also for a person in the social milieu or in several other levels (starting from its financial status to the spiritual state of mind, social position, and work engagement). Each of these structures has its place in the system of social signs of similarities and differences. These kinds of signs are fitted into group’s roles and choices that society limits as informal or imposed. The choices are made when dressing confirms the messages that are transmitted through “precisely certain differences of a number of interlinked sets of class and status, self-image and

² Taking a general semiology (gr. *sema* or *semion* = sign), as a separate part of this science can be semiology of vesture (clothing = sign), taking into consideration the definition of semiology given by Umberto Eco: that all the cultural phenomena is “system of signs, or communication phenomena”.

attractiveness” [5]. In the retrospective look at the culture of garments, we can make a conclusion that in today’s dressing a considerable freedom has been gained, i.e. very wide range of possibilities and freedom in dressing related to history.

3.2 Clothing as a symbol – sign³

Generally speaking, the existing clothing items and the process of receiving subjective meaning through semantic code are in their very existence and the original intended function – “visible”. This leads to two-dimensionality and in case of clothing this is interpreted in the fabric and its symbolic view. If we look at clothes as a code, one can classify it into several categories. Such divisions will not be done just by purpose and function of the garments, but by the richness in symbolism that must be taken into consideration. Observing clothes in this way makes it possible to distinguish between everyday, festive, ceremonial, uniform, costume, etc. All these groups have their own special meaning and represent a symbolic value [6].

3.3 Clothing - a sign of affiliation, clothing of subculture, modern clothing

Up to the beginning of the twentieth century, it was very easy to decode social or professional status of the person (although the changes in dressing had occurred at the end of the seventeenth century). In that period, for the first time, there was a distinction between clothing for daily activities and/or formal dressing/work, etc. Despite these innovations, well-established rules of the past were valid until the beginning, and almost, to the middle of the twentieth century.

Within today’s trends and fashion, the strict rules accumulated all previous manners in dressing and this has become a large gallery of variety styles or images in clothing. Range of these styles vary from classic, sporty, dandy, romantic, punk, hip-hop, to ethnic style, and many others through their different variations, mixing, etc. Modern expressions of dressing are always found in a limited and identifiable (sub) cultural group, which gives us the opportunity to relatively easily understand the way to interpret garment or visual/art signs on communicative level as well as symbolic.

³ sign, symbol- these terms in article are defined by Roland Barthes [6].



Figure 2: Example of punk's style of dressing [7]

The right for particular iconography and visualization can be taken by accepting a certain kind of lifestyle, but the fact is that this is dominated by the symbolism of everyday life especially in popular culture, in which exists a much bigger need to emphasize the distinction.

Personal experience of oneself within his/her visual representation has become the main channel for expression in modern era. Through this channel, the category of created image started that emphasized the uniqueness. This term is often an object of manipulation, because the image of an artificial structure has the ability to be easily changed. Despite the freedom in the visualizing lifestyle, the environment

often does not accept styles. Most condemnation in society gets prominent everyday clothes representing "deviance", as opposed to "normal".

Behind the group image of a person, common interests and activities are based; members of subcultural groups, their identity and visualization reflect the choice of garments and specific details. Subcultural groups violate the established rules, giving new meanings and context to the usual clothing, estimating or neglecting strictly conventional clothing. This consists of a clear purpose to provoke and to confront. A member of a subcultural group selects elements by basic criteria – to remind us of the attributes ascribed to a specific social group.

As an example, we can take the members of the punk (Figure 2) – movement that insisted on the negation of the existing values, strict social conventions, and they along with their clothes were in the spirit of these principles. Chaotic, worn-out, made from the used second hand fabrics, striking colours with the addition of heavy makeup and dyed neon hair colours, and ruff of hair. On the other hand, there is iconography of a radical skin-head who wears boots, leather jackets, and short haircuts and association of the characteristics that is typical for their foreground belligerence, discipline, and chauvinism. The clothing is the most striking item in subculture and it is usually tied to



Figure 3: Styles in subcultures [9]



Figure 4: Converse - All Star (a), John Lennon glasses (b), Punk's Cherokee hairstyle (c) [13-15]

and followed by a special language – argot⁴, rituals, mutual behaviour, social engagement, game, music, etc.

Based on this classification, we can visually distinguish the context of styles in subcultures such as: hipsters, rockers or fans of a certain team/national team, rappers, hippies, neo – hippies, etc. (Figure 3). A hippie movement fashion from 60's of the XX. Century can serve as an example together with its ideological message that had challenged the rigid social norms, civilization consumption, and “defended the nature through using natural products derived from soft-technology”[10] as well as turned to the ideals of love and freedom. Hippies were wearing breathable fabrics, natural materials, often with floral patterns or op art design.

When analysing their garments, one can recognize politicians, their followers, and their activists. Communists wore red ties, scarfs or other items with this colour, and thereby manifesting their ideological beliefs. In addition, there is a specific complex language of the clothing that politicians, political leaders use in case of negotiations or meetings. For example: if two presidents are meeting and their ties are loose, not clamped, in the case of semi – formal dialogue, and if the ties are red and clamped there is going to be a harsh discussion. In addition to this, the general rule used to be: if someone in the diplomatic corps wore brown shoes that could mean that he/she worked for a secret organization, etc. Such nonverbal communication is intentional, conceived, and directed toward environment. Style as a mean

⁴ Argot, fr. (argot)-slang, the language of people in one group or society and it is hard to understand for the persons out of that circle – language of certain society class and occupations (i.e. soldier or student argot) (*Rječnik stranih riječi*, p. 51) [8].

of subculture expression can communicate to a different identity and attitudes.

When objects of subcultural styles become available to the masses, comprehended within the industry in the commercial way, they automatically become “united in commodity form” [10], and those items will be turned into the bare products, which will be away from any ideological orientation and finally meaningless, because the garment is taken over by persons whose personality generally does not coincide with the original meaning of the clothes that she/he wears. This is in line with the spirit of every subculture, because they have fans, their opponents, and their own places. Such ideology begins “to live” by breaking of old social meaning throughout the creation of new conventions and codes until it is transformed into a “post-subculture” [11].

Actually, until it is adopted by the members who are not necessarily focused on maintaining the primary ideological and stylistic differences compared to other groups, the fact is that each current (sub) culture clothing loses, not only the meaning, but also the recognition, and it becomes less obvious due to the fact the mass – consumption, and popular culture is more in “fragmentation and pluralist that the boundaries between subcultures and mass culture have become extremely vague “Within the same pattern, the subcultural meaning drowns itself into a multitude of being similar” [12]. Mass culture becomes a comprehensive disability category for any subculture and counterculture. Examples of this, in the clothing, can be found in popularizing and symbolism that are maintained in i.e. all star shoes, bell trousers, Cherokee hairstyle, round glasses known as Lennon's, ray ban glasses, pilot glasses, jean pants, loafers, etc (Figure 4).



Figure 5: Catholic vestment in England and Wales (a), a Russian honour guard wearing their dress uniforms during an official ceremony (b) [16, 17]

3.4 Uniforms and traditional garments

Apart from classified categorization of clothing items, distinguishing between professional clothes as the most obvious external clothing feature has its service in determination of relations between personal and social reality, and that has a certain use in determining affiliations toward certain social and professional groups that is known as uniform.

Compared to personal clothes, uniforms present the only form of dressing that does not have symbolic personal touch, sign or communication. Uniform indicates strictly business, official ideology of company, institution or society.

Basically, uniforms can be divided into institutional (military or religious vestment), professional (catering industry, hospital...), sports and cultural activities (jersey, orchestral, and choral suits) (Figure 5). There is a distinction between class uniform and dressing style of aristocracy, citizens, or lower classes, and similar to this, function of ethnical origin has national uniforms known as national costumes. National costumes are an external mark of ethnical identity, which makes a primary place and belongs next to the category of sharing clothes. This is an expression of traditional culture, not only in ethnical sense, but also has a wider recognition of certain regional culture, and in particular place, over the time it has synthesized social, economic and political opportunities, along with art (artistic, fabric, craftsman) terms and skills.

National costumes reflect the spirit of epoch, indicating constants of a community, and certain cultural borrowings, processes, and consequences that are emanative on space and people in that community.

Researching processes in occurrence, duration, and changing of certain clothing elements and their composition have the impact in global value system that is identified, along with precise conditions under which a particular ethnic community has been formed and developed. From this position, each costume with national foretold in certain ethnical community is a reliable benchmark of political history and valid illustration of all social – economic relations and cultural appearance (Figure 6). There are examples in which the same ethnic community has differences in costume, and there is a certain



Figure 6: Different national costumes in following order: Albania, Poland, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania (a), different cultural tastes, traditional dress, different cultures (b) [18, 19]

distinction between elements and their shape, type of fabric, presence, or absence of decoration. These differences in national costumes resulted in creation of numerous factors, and, perhaps, without possibility to choose fabric, way of crafting in different circumstances when it comes to voluntary or imposed social and cultural mingling, also there is big impact of crucial climate conditions. On the other hand, there is a city costume that was reckoned as a segment taken from the dominant culture, and outside foreign influences, which dictated the way of clothing in submitted cultures (e.g. rural).

The difference between costumes depends on persons who are wearing them and national groups. These divisions were made during time (there is a division that can be separated into two phases; the first one is from birth to adolescence, and the other from the beginning of physical maturity to death). Consequently, the costumes did not only differ by ethnic and religious affiliation, but also depending on elderliness, as the period in the linear aging life of every individual, as well as imitating the chosen style, taste, aesthetic criteria as well as the moment of transition to the new clothing complex and its different meaning.

Beside the listed types of clothing, there are also occasional and ceremonial wear. Their functions are very similar with slight but not substantial differences. Occasional wear would be the clothes that are worn in mourning, or on a wedding, clothing for the award ceremony, prom, and so on. These kinds of clothes have a special significance for a person who wears them, and within them, tradition, or the

current convention is established. In some cases, ceremonial wear can overlap with occasional wear and this rule is not always applicable. As an example, ceremonial or diplomatic clothing can be used and they can be worn on the announcement of award winners and diploma ceremonies. This style of clothing is fully adapted for the occasion of the certain event.

In the second part of the 20th century and early 21st century, there is series of collections from various designers inspired directly from military uniform, some of them draw their inspiration from the distant past or military uniforms from the 20th century. Observing social groups, it can be perceived that people who are listening rap and hip-hop music and live within the spirit of this music, wearing American military pants of uniforms from the 20th century. However, elements taken from different military uniform can be found among members of other groups and aspirations, and also there can be found other favourite parts of the costume for the performances and those parts can be seen as a part of great music stars' performances. As shown it was shown in Figure 7. It is believed that the famous wearing of Jimmi Hendrix, who had, in his first performances start using military symbols in the anti-war purposes visual impact on the appearance of rap music and rappers, like most of his successors, famous Jimi Hendrix who in his first performances, started using military symbols for anti-war purposes, had a visual impact on the appearance of rap music and rappers, as well as most of his successors.

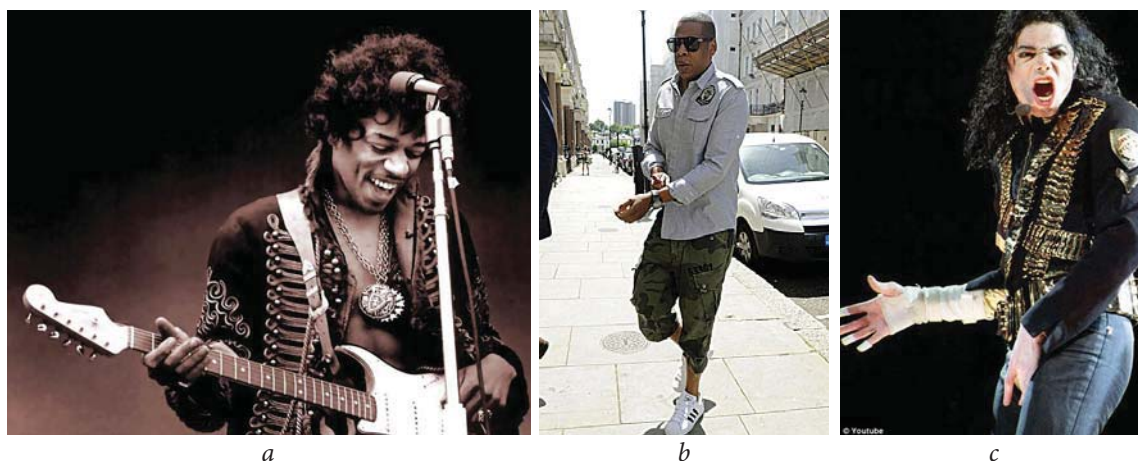


Figure 7: Jimie Hendrix's clothes inspired by the 19th century military jacket (a), Jay-Z clothes inspired by US army uniforms (b), one of the military jackets designed by Michael Bush who was Michael Jackson's costume designer (c) [20-22]



Figure 8: Example of uniform usage in fashion design by Alexander McQueen [23]

During 2000 to 2010, the collections were focused more on historic costume and uniform, while individual collections, after 2010, are much closer to the 20th century. Also it can be noted that this trend is parallel in male and female fashion. As an example of uniform usage in fashion design with the aim of communication and winning public eye, was the collection of Alexander McQueen's autumn-winter 2008, part of it has been shown at Figure 8.

The well-known designer said about this collection: "I've got a 600-year-old elm tree in my garden", he declared, "and I made up this story of a girl who lives in it and comes out of the darkness to meet a prince and become a queen." The designer worked like a fiend for months in his studio, with images of Queen Victoria, the Duke of Wellington, and the Indian Empire running through his mind. They were transformed into ballerina-length multi-floenced dance dresses, each more insanely exquisite than the last: A miraculous red-feather-fronted number turned to burst into a froth of creamy frills in back; another came covered in baby-fine knitted lace; a third had a pair of peacocks again fashioned from cutout black lace with their tail feathers fanning out over ivory, tulle, petticoats. Interspersed were rigorously cut military tailcoats with taut pants detailed with military frogging, and slim brocade and cloque pantsuits with crisp white high-necked shirts. Then there was a stately parade of imperial-red and velvet jackets bedecked with millions of

dollars' worth of antique Indian diadems and diamond neckpieces, and yet more incredible rich Empire-line saris and wispy dishabille transparencies. These were followed by a sequence of gold-encrusted, ermine-coated glory, echoing the heyday of Norman Hartnell and Hardy Aimes' fifties British couture as worn by Elizabeth II.

McQueen used these elements of costumes, and uniforms and they served him to tell the story of a princess, strong, woman with the aim to elevate the human female as a hero who is not only a body, a doll, a mere phenomenon but something much more deeper than that.

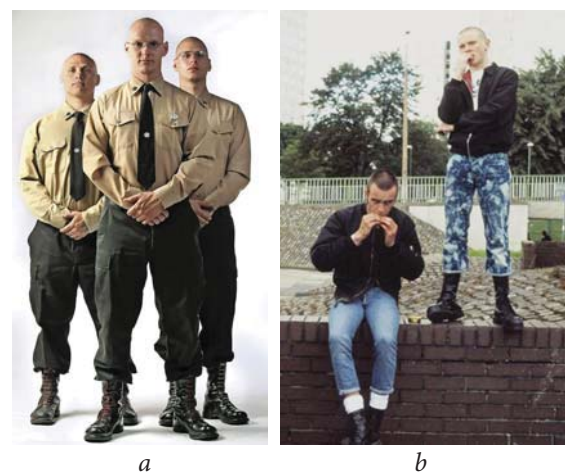


Figure 9: Example of neo-nazi skinheads clothes (a), example of skinheads street clothes (b) [24, 25]

Additionally, observing a group of people that combines ideology, we can mention the skinheads who directly communicate, recognize and are different from others because of the usage of Nazi symbols, and not the parts of military uniforms as military boots. This expresses their affiliation, commitment and behavior. Their aim is to use wardrobe and appearance to separate from the other people in the spirit of their beliefs. As it was shown in picture (Figure 9). This example is cited as an ideal view of reading the same or similar visual symbols in many different ways that during the consideration of these visual signs that as the moment of ideological identification. Moreover, the usage of national motifs, elements of national costumes derived from all countries of the world, within old techniques of embroidery, painting, and painting of fabrics is the promotion of a country. In the fashion design and fashion industry in the last 10 years there has been an expansion of the revival of national costumes through the “ethnic look”. Today, national costumes are seen as a basic unit of recognition of a nation and culture, as well as the language of a people, and we are testing old traditional ways and approaches for clothing in order to transmit to future generations preservation of tradition and enrichment of cultural heritage. Therefore, an increased number of workshops, exhibitions, and competitions encourage young designers to follow their national heritage regardless their preservation of culture, history, and customs. Encouraging designers to use traditional production of fabrics and clothing, catches the public eye concerning awareness of environmental and ecological clothing, as shown on Figures 10.

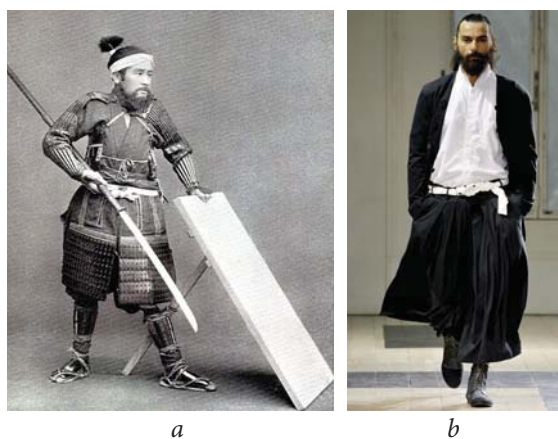


Figure 10: Samurai warrior clothes (a), Yohji Yamamoto collection inspired by samurai clothes (b) [26, 27]



a



b

Figure 11: Issey Miyake design inspired by traditional kimono (a), traditional kimono (b) [28, 29]

Besides this, the fashion industry is familiar to designers such as Yamamoto, Kawakubo, Miyake, because all their collections are based on the fabrics from their country as a way of processing and forming oneself (Figures 10 and 11).

One of those projects is “Roots of European Design” The main aim of the project is to reveal the relationship between the modern and the traditional art in the fields of applied arts and design. The project wants to study the artistic tradition in European countries and to show how these ancient motives, symbols, and techniques influence some contemporary artists (Figure 12). This project will demonstrate how a common heritage in Europe can participate in a better historical understanding and

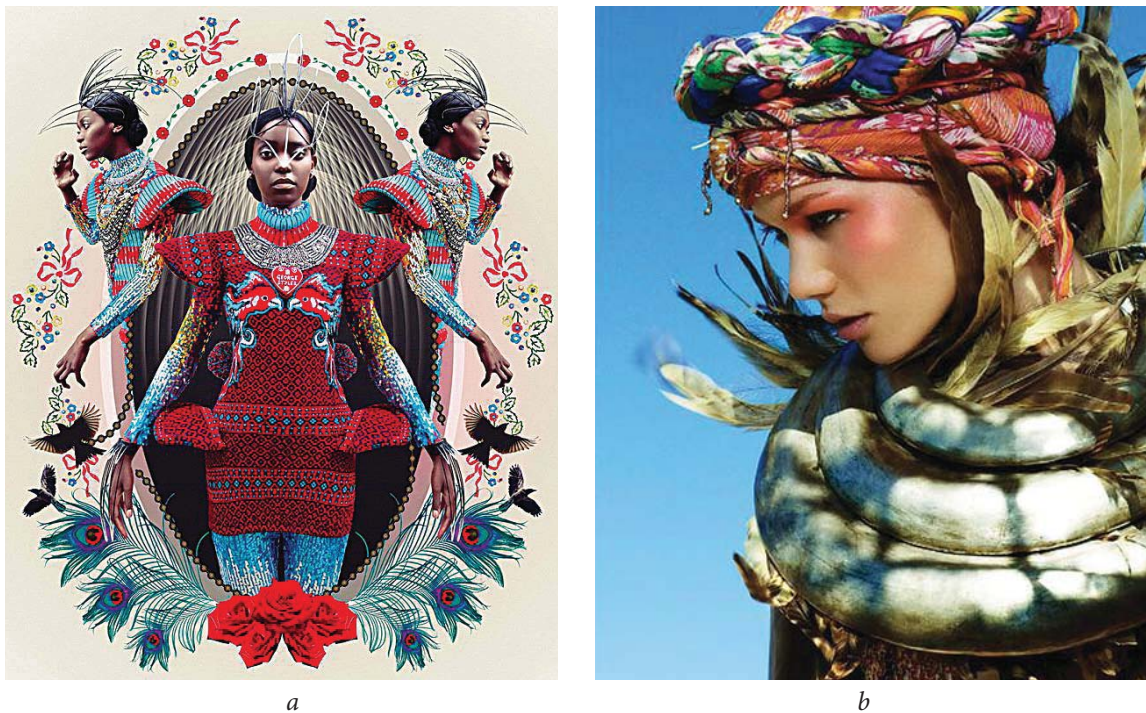


Figure 12: Example of ethno design in contemporary fashion by Styler George (a), example of ethno design in contemporary fashion by Gucci “Ethno pop” collection (b) [30, 31]

intercultural dialogue among European citizens. The project wants to show the actual existence of tradition in the contemporary applied arts and design in the neighbouring countries. The project wants to reveal the common connection points of these different cultures, to find the bridges between traditional and modern.

This categorization of clothes has been made according to its function, group and the style, and under special group of clothing can be used clothes for expressing grief, masks, and ritual clothing, as well as clothes that helps during and after transgenering. Clothing for symbolic meaning in artistic sense within this categorization besides daily, private, and formal wearing also follows categorization on costumes. Nowadays in clothing, it is succeeded in preservation of traditional understanding and symbolism of uniforms, national costume, and ceremonial costume along with its elements, visual signs and symbols, and with the assistance of design, there is an implementation in every day clothing, haute couture, conceptual fashion, and photography as the symbols of recognition between social groups and conception.

4 Conclusions

From the paper (essay) one can draw a conclusion that a person's clothing has never been just a shelter from the weather, but also a means of expression, identification, and communication. Clothing can be interpreted as a transmission of information between carrier and recipient through symbolic messages in the general or specific scope of dressing culture. In that open communication, a person creates his individuality through his appearance. Messages and information about oneself are visually sent and received. The more complicated - multilayer and more complex communication among individuals and groups are crossing in many dimensions and meanings in their nonverbal-visual communication. In addition to this, clothing is the media to express person's personality, opinions, background, and expression of creativity, as well as a balance of somebody's feelings. It can be concluded that that the clothing from the beginning was intended for the recognition of people. Through the clothing ages, sexes, culture, class, work, and affiliations of any kind can be distinguished. Within closer study of

the visual language of clothing, we are getting amazing discoveries about the people, human habits, characteristics, secrets, etc. In nowadays, fashion designers increasingly use studying of people and their habits from the beginning until today, and with that, very often, on runaways, magazines, advertising, and, at the end, on the street, elements that was taken can be seen, processed and re-used precisely through studying of the culture and needs. Increasingly, we testified to the appearance of elements, messages, signs of military uniforms, ethnic and ethno-look in fashion that directly origin from studying of the history of a certain nation. Designers often play with ceremonial and parade clothing in order to in this way better reach out to every man and send a message. The message that is sent through designers' clothing is very complex, sometimes hard to comprehend, but if we look at the entire designers' body of work, it can be seen that every detail, every piece of clothing has a story that is being sent to people all over the world, this story continues to live independent in space, time, and from the designer, it becomes available to every individual who would, therefore, wear certain part in order to get into a deeper visual communication. Then the story becomes more intimate, personal, and very direct. Observing these facts, we can come to the conclusion that clothing, fashion, fabrics, and fabric's design never, even in abstract form, cannot exist without the human, history, culture, and habits.

With the help of clothing, many skills can be developed along with the possible developments within the field of textile technology, joining techniques in the creation of fabrics followed by art skills and previous experiences. The development of clothing took place along with the progress of the basic visual elements such as form, line, colour and texture.

The first traces of dressing can be found 100.000 years BC. The growing need for covering the body was followed by a complex of human motivation for giving aesthetic sense to garments. From this process, a diverse and rich symbolism of clothing has emerged, as well as decorations for the face and body (masks, jewellery, coverings, tattoos, etc.).

It can be concluded that person's primary need is the protection of body, which is followed by the development of cultures, nations, and civilizations. Everything that is mentioned here has its own contribution to the development of art and technology.

Clothing along with cave painting has always been a place for expression, memorising of certain event, and communication with the environment. If we look at clothes as a code, one can classify it into several categories. Such divisions will not be done just by purpose and function of the garments, but by the richness in symbolism that must be taken into consideration. Observing clothes in this way makes it possible to distinguish between every day, festive, ceremonial, uniform, costume, etc. All these groups have their own special meaning and represent a symbolic value. Clothing is a key witness of human development as we know it today. Generally speaking, the existing clothing items and the process of receiving subjective meaning through semantic code are in their very existence and the original intended function - "visible".

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