

Gender, Identity, and Power: Social Values and Cultural Changes Reflected in Clothing Design in Historical Periods

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Abstract: Clothes are significant cultural and social instruments to mark important events, ceremonies, and performances. Cloth designs and styles have evolved with the changing social and cultural landscape throughout historical periods. However, the developments have not been investigated and reported at great lengths. The research delved into a critique of social values and cultural changes emerging from clothing designs, unmasking fundamental dimensions of gender, identity, and power-related aspects. Fundamentally, cloth styles differentiated members of societies through social classes based on cloth styles, ornaments, and aesthetics. The evolution has seen the maintenance of class differences between the rich and the poor. Cloth styles mark gender differences, roles, and positions in ancient societies. The study uncovered evidence of the clothing styles that differentiated males from females. However, the cultural changes and social values saw the fusion of male-female clothing styles in the 20th century. Similarly, the native and indigenous cultures influenced clothing styles in the contemporary world. Significantly, cloth designs shaped community and individual identities. These historical accounts impact the growth and development of the cloth industry.

Keywords: Cultural Changes; Social Values; Clothing Design in Historical Periods; cultural landscape

1. INTRODUCTION

Gender defines cultural, social, and physiological features or roles described by societies and attributed to members of societies based on perceived biological sex. Historical contexts attune gender to distinct garments and clothing styles associated with femininity and masculinity to differentiate males and females. However, gender is not defined by

biological factors but by societal expectations, cultural norms, and individuality. The historical accounts demonstrate an evolution of gender issues, accompanied by sociocultural changes in clothing styles and expression of identities. Further, historical accounts dispense social status, classes, and power dynamics intersecting with cloth styles. Cloths, especially regalia, have been used to assert authority and power by aristocrats, monarchs, religious leaders, and kings. Likewise, clothing styles and designs differentiate the elite and the noble. Social and cultural values define the limits of clothing styles and designs throughout the history of human beings. The most fascinating element of the evolution of clothing styles regards sociocultural changes. Interestingly, some old cultural and social features evolved and implicated changes in views, perceptions, and attitudes toward cultural attire. Varieties and developments in clothing styles are crucial for understanding the course of clothing styles and sociocultural changes. Clothes are basic needs. However, the importance of clothes spans beyond mere clothing as they can serve as customs, identity, and differentiation of individual uniqueness (Tajuddin, 2018). In many communities, individuals' choice of clothing depends on inherited socio-cultural values, the immediate environment, family, personal character, and fashion trends. In ancient times, body decorations, especially clothing, reflected individuals' identity based on ethnicity, age, gender roles, religion, and social status, among other important factors related to sociocultural values (Marcangeli, 2015; Özdil, 2021; VanPool et al., 2017). Evidence of these accounts has been obtained from different parts of the world, with Casas Grandes effigies being examples that have lasted more than 1000 years. Fashion and clothing items from the North American Southwest show that fashion is a sociocultural element (VanPool et al., 2017). The present study investigates social and cultural changes concerning clothing styles. The investigation contextualizes the critique of clothing styles within gender, identity, and power dynamics for better understanding.

2. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTS AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

From an anthropological point of view, physical appearance and dress designs reflect visible cultural meanings and systems (Lynch & Strauss, 2007). Thus, individual dress presentation enhances comprehension of meaning within different periods and unique contexts. The changing dress designs are signs of dynamic cultural systems and attitudes. Fundamentally,

recurrent dress designs appear and reappear in many societies worldwide, embodying unique meanings in each period. The reappearance of cloth designs helps predict future meanings and styles. American society, especially the Western frontier, is an excellent example of clothing designs that appear and reappear, influenced by cowboy mythology and Native American culture (Lynch & Strauss, 2007). The reappearance of cloth designs arises from inspiring historical periods, transmitting salient messages on social affairs in the respective eras. Social constructs and historical contexts are pivotal in shaping the association of societal values and clothing designs. Throughout history, cultural expectations and social norms tremendously influenced dressing and gender expression through attire. In ancient civilizations, Mesopotamia and Egypt served as examples; cloth designs marked gender roles and social status and accentuated gender differences through unique designs and embellishments for women and men (Gansell & Bloomsbury, 2016). In the Roman Empire, cloth designs implied that women belonged to the low social order and defined femininity through culture. These early examples portray deeply rooted social constructs on gendered issues constrained by cloth designs, with unique attires emerging as visible representations of power dynamics and cultural norms. The table below gives an overview of the social constructs and historical accounts of cloth designs. Fundamental aspects of social values and cultural changes or differences emerge, defining the landscape and designs of cloths.

Table 1(a): A Review of Social Constructs and Historical Accounts on Cloth Designs

| Theme | Context | Significance and Implications |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cultural Meanings and Systems Reflected by Dress Designs | Anthropological perspective of clothing design | Comprehending cultural changes and social values via attire |
| Changing Designs Suggest the Dynamic Nature of Cultural Systems and Attitudes. | Fashion trends and dynamic aspects of cloth designs | Evolving societal attitudes over time |
| Recurrent Cloth Designs Reappear and Appear Across Different Periods | Consistency in unique cloth designs | Cultural symbolism through clothing |
| The Influence of Cowboy Mythology and Native American Culture on Western Frontier Clothing Styles and Attire | American society as influenced by cultural narratives | Interconnection between clothing designs and historical events |

Table 1(b): A Review of Social Constructs and Historical Accounts on Cloth Designs

| Theme | Context | Significance and Implications |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Social Constructs and Historical Contexts Shaping the Association of Societal Values and Clothing Designs | Relationship between societal norms and clothing designs | The representation of power dynamics and cultural norms |
| Gender Roles and Social Status are Reflected in Ancient Civilizations' Clothing Designs. | Mesopotamian and Egyptian culture | Reinforcement of gender and social hierarchy |
| Roman Empire's Clothing Designs Imply Women's Lower Social Order and Define Femininity Through Cultus and Ornatus | Clothing as a marker of social status | Manifestation of power dynamics and gender expectations |

Fundamentally, shifts in power structures and societal attitudes reflect cloth designs in many ancient civilizations and periods. Shifting cloth designs indicate the sociocultural dynamics and changes and the emerging landscape of gender, power dynamics, and social values. A case in point is the Renaissance era through the resurgence of Roman and Greek clothing ideals that fundamentally impacted European designs. This was reflected in the development of European cloth designs, which became more complicated and obtrusive, with restrictions on the attire worn by persons within different social tiers and classes (Özdil, 2021; Tajuddin, 2018; VanPool et al., 2017; Wilson, 2011). In the meantime, it is a fact that the new roles of women were found in different societies, and they were expressed in the cloth designs of the time with a higher level of refinement and the highlighting of femininity. In addition to the Industrial Revolution, however, the production and consumption of cloth underwent immense transformations, serving as another of the multiple sociocultural changes that have taken place in Europe and other parts of the world. During this period, the Industrial Revolution began in mass clothing production, particularly in creating unique designs and combinations of cultural ideas and creative skills. Standardized clothes emerged mainly from this development, showing social changes and acceptance of multi-layered designs adopted in cloth patterns. Furthermore, global trade and colonialism contributed to cultural exchanges, changing cloth styles and artistic reflections. Different parts of the world, such as the Americas, Africa, and Asia, had experienced European influence and assimilation processes. These processes entailed absorbing the tribe's traditional cloth designs into the community. European colonialism commodified and

appropriated indigenous cloth designs, influencing identities and practices surrounding clothing. Similarly, contemporary communities adopt modern or Western ideals in cloth designs, practices, and identities. From ancient times to modern society, cloth design dynamics demonstrate the interplay between cloth designs, identities, and power or social classes and their implications on social and cultural life (Figure 1). These developments are crucial for comprehending historical contexts and social constructs surrounding culture and clothing.

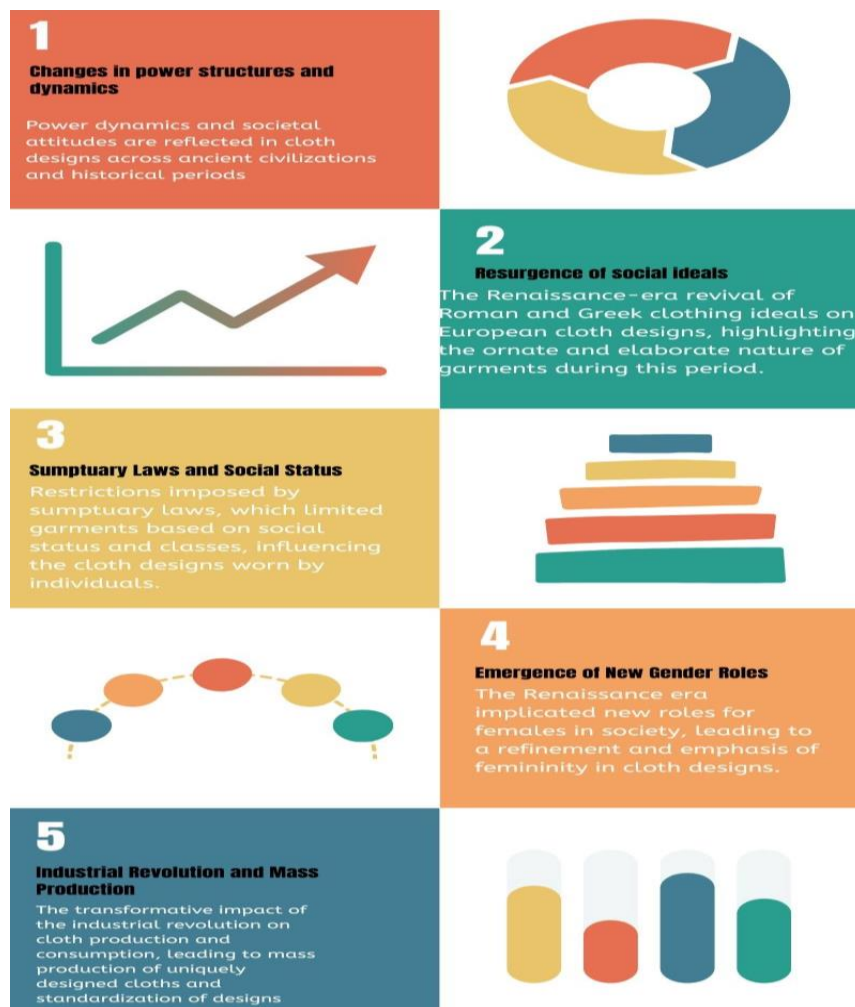


Figure 1: An Illustration of the Landscape of Social Constructs in Clothes Design

3. REPRESENTATION OF GENDER THROUGH CLOTH DESIGNS

For centuries, clothing designs have reflected the landscape of sociocultural values, power dynamics, gender, and identities (Marcangeli, 2015). From ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia to the contemporary world,

clothing designs have been utilized as profound symbols of culture embedded in narratives of societal hierarchies, gender roles, and evolving perceptions of self. The clothing designs contextually and uniquely define gender, identity, and power. Characteristically, unique clothing designs for males and females emerge as crucial elements of sexual orientation within the cultural context (Özdil, 2021). The evolution of social values and cultural changes accompany the portrayal of clothing designs within individual contexts. To begin with, historical accounts uniquely portray sociocultural changes in gender identities through cloth designs. The construction of gender identities through clothing started in the Middle Ages (Marcangeli, 2015). The 17th and 18th saw a rebellion against gender aspects of fashion, leading to borrowing ideas from male fashion. Unique clothing designs differentiated females from males. For instance, while females' erotic body elements, like busts, arms, breasts, and hips, were emphasized in clothing designs and dresses, their legs were ignored and hidden. Conversely, male legs were emphasized as erotic zones (Marcangeli, 2015). This trend ended in the 20th century when females boldly demonstrated supremacy by showing their legs through Chanel. The 20th century was a significant era in cloth design as the Orient introduced more erotic designs to Europe, including sleeves, layered dresses, and heightened veils and waistlines (Marcangeli, 2015). In the mid-17th century, King Philippe IV of Spain and King Louis XIV of France adorned more feminine than masculine clothes. This development would be found in the French journal "*French Cabinet des Modes*" in June 1786 (Marcangeli, 2015). The fusion of male and female cloth designs saw women adorning masculine riding dresses, waistcoats, and ties. This evolution proceeded to modern times, where women wear trousers. The sociocultural evolution that saw the fusion of male-female cloth designs encouraged women to view themselves as men (Özdil, 2021). The image portrayed by females in males' traditional clothes is hegemonic to femininity, shifting the interpretation from passive attitudes to power relations. Fundamentally, these social changes have seen the conception of masculine standards among females. Table 2 captures the aspect of gender within the context of social values and cultural changes.

Table 2(a): A Summary of Cloth Designs on the Aspect of Gender

| Key Points | Context | Significance/Implications |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Clothing Designs Reflect Sociocultural Values, Power Dynamics, Gender, and Identities. | Historical accounts of social values and cultural changes in clothing | Clothes symbolize culture and self-expression. |

Table 2(b): A Summary of Cloth Designs on the Aspect of Gender

| Key Points | Context | Significance/Implications |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Evolution of Gender Identities Through Clothing Designs Since the Middle Ages | Rebellion against gender norms in fashion | Differentiation of cloth designs based on gender, dwelling on physicality or body parts |
| The Fusion of Male and Female Clothing Designs in the Modern Era Encouraged Women to View Themselves as Men. | Introduction of masculine elements in women's fashion | Shifting interpretations of femininity and power dynamics |
| Victorian Era Marked Clear Distinctions in Male and Female Clothing, Reflecting Restrictive Social Attitudes Towards Women. | Political and legal changes influencing clothing styles | Cloth designs represent gender issues based on social roles and responsibilities |
| Rise of Feminism and the Advocacy for Women's Rights and Roles, Challenging Traditional Clothing Norms | Historical accounts of gender and cloth styles | Clothing as a tool for subverting gender norms and asserting identity |
| Butler's Theory Asserts Femininity as a Mechanism for Enforcing Gendered Norms. | Historical accounts of gender and cloth styles | Modern approaches to gender |
| Reinforcing Gender Roles to Limit Choices Within Societal Expectations | Victorian Era | Impact of clothing on social roles, occupations, and economic dependence |

The fusion of male and female clothing designs marked a fundamental cultural change. The evolution of cloth designs demonstrates how females move from traditional clothing patterns to masculine-like designs. Notably, women's bodies were no longer hidden under layers of frills and fabric in the late 19th and 20th centuries, as in the ancient times and Middle Ages (Marcangeli, 2015). Interestingly, gender distinction based on clothing was unclear until the 19th century. In the 18th century, men and women in the upper nobility and bourgeoisie jointly displayed quality silks, rich velvets, lace, embroidery, fancy hats, and shoes. They were equally fascinated with making wigs, hair, and cosmetics (Özdil, 2021). This would change in the 19th century through the proposals of differentiated social roles between men and women. The Victorian era marked a clear distinction between male and female clothing following the political and legal rights granted to women, irrespective of class. For the first time, cloth designs reflected the general restrictive attitudes and views towards women's social responsibilities. The rise of feminism marked a critical era in the advocacy for women's rights and roles in many societies. Even though the idea exists,

it was never developed in ancient times due to social obstruction and limitations. Historical accounts of clothing and gender issues suggest manipulation and changes of cloth designs as an act of "subversion of identity" (Marcangeli, 2015). These accounts indicate that individual manipulation of cloth designs, alongside repetitive styles, challenged the mainstream or the predetermined clothing styles dictated by the community and the gendered system (Marcangeli, 2015). Thus, deviation from the cloth designs defined by the gendered system marked a fundamental sociocultural change. In this change, cloth designs emerge as a resource for portraying the female gender. The intricate landscape of gender and cloth designs over historical times is complicated and complex, as demonstrated in Figure 2.

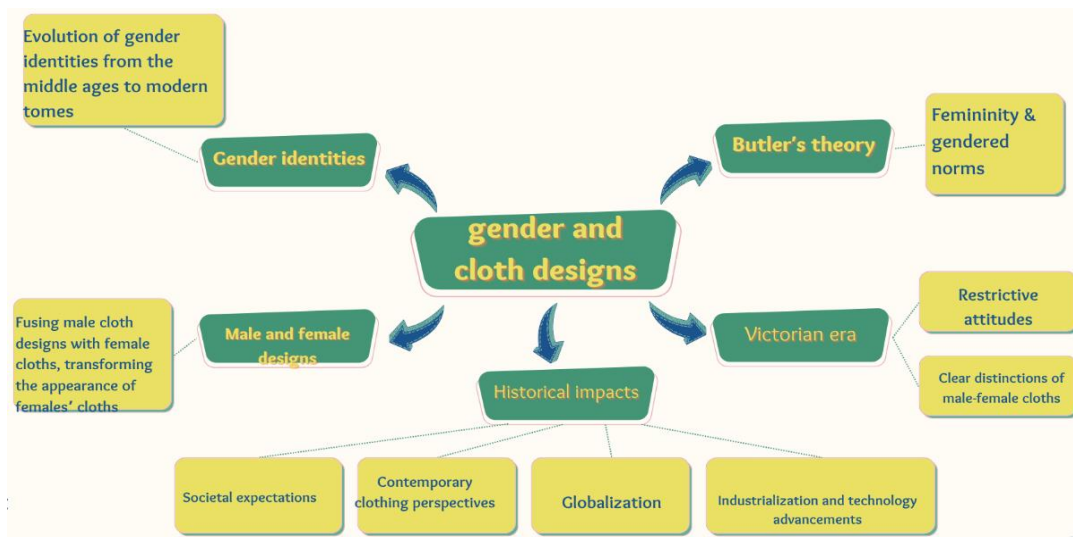


Figure 2: The Intricate Landscape of Gender and Cloth Designs

Butler theorized that femininity enacts and reenacts gendered norms, which surface through cloth designs and physical appearance (Marcangeli, 2015). Butler's theory proposes a contemporary approach to gender issues within the context of sociocultural changes. Over the years, such sociocultural changes have been implicated in cloth designs, changing perceptions of women and gender. Alexander McQueen and Coco Chanel emulate Butler's theory by breaking their era's gender definitions through unique cloth designs, challenging predetermined gender positions (Marcangeli, 2015). In the last two centuries, cloth designs have been used to identify gendered individuals in many countries, including the United States of America, England, and France. In these eras, individuals were not encouraged to choose cloth designs based on preferences. Instead, they were conditioned to select clothes that would reinforce gender roles defined by their societies. For instance, cloth designs in the Victorian era narrowly reinforced gender roles appropriate to males and females. Male

cloth designs reinforced them over females by restricting the latter's bodies, capping time for substantial social input. Consequently, the limitation implicated the exclusion of women from male occupations and portrayed economic reliance on their male relatives and husbands.

4. EXPRESSION OF IDENTITIES THROUGH CLOTH DESIGNS

The integration between identity and clothing unveils insights into sociocultural changes through the emergence of postmodernism and its assertions on identities. This association unfolds in multiple ways, one being social class. To date, sociologists have studied clothing as a determinant of class identity, with cloth designs trickling down social hierarchies and abandoned or adopted by elites while members of low social groups embrace the designs (Özdil, 2021; Twigg, 2009). The studies reveal that dresses are cultural capital, a method through which the elite establish themselves, maintain and reproduce power positions, or reinforce subordination and dominance (figure 3). A given community wears clothes approved by the extensive social system or grouping (Tajuddin, 2018; VanPool et al., 2017). Competing social classes emulate the hierarchical order or patterns of cloth designs and fashion mystery. However, fashion democratization, alongside the emergence of street styles, rendered the dynamic aspects of poor fashion. The rise of other features of identities complicates the role of clothing in the definition of identities in recent times.



Figure 3: Cloth Styles Symbolizing Social Identities

Another profound way of demonstrating the integration between identity and clothing emerged through sexual differences in the biological sex. Mainly, clothing and sexual identities are signaled through gender-related assumptions in clothing codes (Özdil, 2021; Twigg, 2009). Previous

studies assert that gender decisions are at the center of fashion. Fundamentally, cloth designs have been used to conceal sexual differences, reproduce gender as a structural feature of the physical body, and elucidate the complex association of gendered identities and sexed bodies (Özdil, 2021). Historical accounts of cloth designs and gender identities lean towards feminist analysis. Figure 4 summarizes how gender identities emerge through unique aspects of cloth designs.

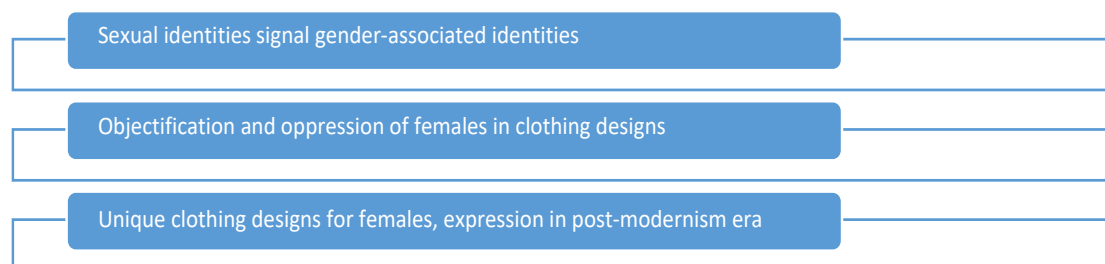


Figure 4: Gender Identities Emerging Through Cloth Designs and Styles

The second wave of historical accounts was crucial for the fashion system, especially cloth design, and its implications on females. For a considerable period, cloth designs oppressed women and limited and objectified them (Özdil, 2021; Twigg, 2009). These cloth designs locked women into inauthentic and defensive representation and reinforced cultural links with triviality and narcissism. More recently, feminist fashionists have taken an opposing view and aspects of fashion as they embrace inescapable themes of cultural formations and styles of body appearance and physicality (Özdil, 2021). These are the effects of postmodernism that see women embrace unique cloth designs as distinctive elements of women's culture and an opportunity for expression and pleasure that transcends the reproduction of capitalism and patriarchy, as represented in Table 3.

Table 3: The Application of Unique Aspects of Clothing Styles

| Aspect of clothing style | Implementation of relevance in social and cultural contexts |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Theorizing Cloth Designs to Represent Linguistic Code | Communication of ambiguous and complex themes |
| Clothing and Body Styling | Group boundaries, identities, and cultural identities |
| Self-Management | Clothing enables reinforcement and expression of individuality. |

Clothing has been theorized to represent linguistic code, marking another fundamental link between clothing and identity. Since historical periods, individuals have been communicating through cloth designs (Özdil, 2021; Twigg, 2009). Cloth styles, as a code, present the aspect of the image presented by the wearer and the societal interpretation, which

has been observed to be straightforward. Empirical works on cloth designs present the contest between the meanings of different cloth designs and observers' interpretation, which can be shared or fixed among other persons. Also, empirical works regard cloth designs as codes, especially with low semanticity. Mainly, the codes are perceived as aesthetics but not linguistic and communicate complexity and ambiguity (Özdil, 2021). The meanings of cloth designs and styles are masked and imminent, leaving them to uncertainty through interpretation. Identity and clothing have been attributed to performativity, emphasizing presentation and realization. The historical accounts of performativity strongly indicate gender's profound influence on the dynamic interaction of dress, body, and self. They acknowledge the embodied features of clothing as they express identity to the external world and reinforce individual identity at the physical level. Thus, clothed bodies are regarded as a “tool for self-management” (Özdil, 2021). In addition, clothing designs and identity are viewed through subgroup analysis, where body styling and clothing are regarded as markers of group boundaries (Özdil, 2021). The literature on cloth design reveals that clothing has been profoundly used to register a belonging and stabilize identity in many cultures worldwide. Notably, cultural identities focused on the youth culture, counter-culture, and street styles to pronounce stabilized identities and a sense of belonging (Özdil, 2021; Twigg, 2009). In this context, clothing designs are a symbol of culture. Besides rendering messages and hidden meanings, the cloth is a self-imaging tool (Tajuddin, 2018). However, dominant or conventional groups hardly express or apply such principles. Additionally, clothing guided the expression of identities in different settings. In the historical era, cloth designs formed community ideologies in stylish dimensions within sociocultural aspects of life (Tajuddin, 2018). Each community controlled the expression of ideas and perceptions through cloth designs.

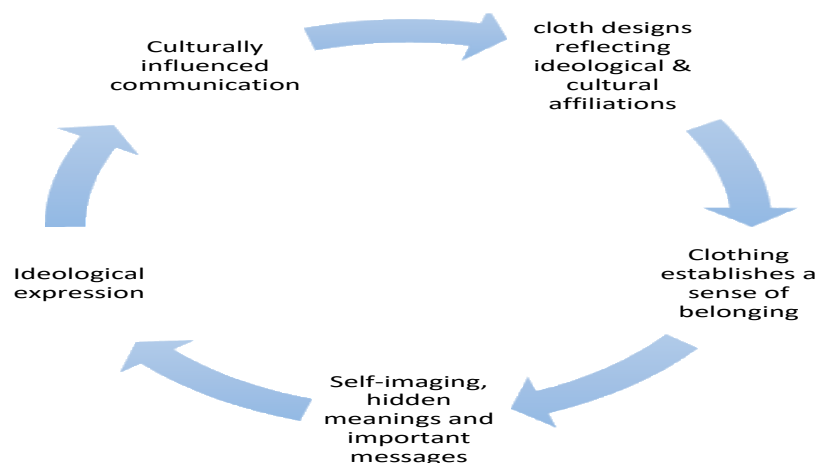


Figure 5: Intricates of Cultural Identities Based on Cloth Designs.

5. CLOTHING, POWER DYNAMICS, OR SOCIAL CLASSES

Even though cloths were designed to protect human beings from cold and other harsh weather conditions, specific cloth designs drifted away from the primary functions they should have served. For instance, cloth designs symbolize social classes and status, differentiating low and high-social status members based on clans or family units (Özdil, 2021; Tajuddin, 2018; VanPool et al., 2017). Historically, individuals dressed and accentuated their appearances to match their high social status. Unlike people with low incomes, individuals of high social status wore prestigious clothes and jewelry. Generally, the cloth styles differentiate individuals' lower and higher social status based on the designs and related costs. As clothes class out individuals of similar profiles, wearers of similar styles of clothes must match the prices. Ancient Pueblo people displayed visual clues of self-dressing and made suppositions on others' identities based on physical appearance (VanPool et al., 2017). Cloths' cultural importance shifts perceptions from a fundamental need to an artistic element. Irrespective of social class, clothes are a cultural need (Tajuddin, 2018). By defining critical cultural elements, cloth designs mark vital social and cultural features, especially power, solidifying the argument that unique cloth designs define and differentiate members of society. In ancient Mexico, members of different ethnicities and social classes adorned different clothes and ornaments (GONG & STEINHILPER, 2014). As a cultural value-constrained clothing design, the law provided for the decoration of clothes worn by members of higher and lower social status. In distinguishing cloth designs between the prolific members of the society and nobles, the law provided for the specifications guiding the production of cloths. For instance, while members of higher social status wore gold sandals and garments decorated with precious stones and bright features, the nobles refrained from such clothing. For example, chiefs wore gold-colored clothes, signifying their cultural positions as power wielders (GONG & STEINHILPER, 2014). On the other hand, enslaved people in the Mexican community wore clothes for modesty purposes. Otherwise, they would not be allowed to wear prestigious clothes, let alone have any clothes on. At times, the law required that they walked barefoot. In the Ottoman Empire, enslaved people wore cloth designs tailored for racial and class differences (Özdil, 2021). In the same period, black Muslims were banned from dressing as Orthodox Greek or Muslim Circassian. The contrast suggests that artists applied the attribute of social classes when designing clothes in the historical period, marking fundamental differences

between the different social classes. Religion and clothing mark yet another fundamental cultural element. In the context of power, wearing religious garments symbolized the manifestation of spiritual life and religious affiliations (Özdil, 2021). The literature on cloth designs in the historical era indicates that religious leaders embraced religious cloth designs to merit recognition and attract people's attention. The unique cloth designs present religious power by reflecting their religious roles and functions. Similarly, biblical accounts suggest priests, kings, and prophets were recognized through unique dress designs (Özdil, 2021).

6. CULTURAL CHANGES AND CLOTH DESIGN TRENDS

The historical account of cloth designs and cultural changes unveils shifting societal attitudes, global influences, and technological advancements shaping the production and evolution of cloth items. Fundamentally, the emergence of subcultures and social movements are critical cultural changes implicating innovation and unique norms in the design of contemporary clothes. For instance, countercultural movements like the hippie movement of the 1960s declined traditional cloth designs and embraced alternative styles that prioritized political activism, non-conformity, and individuality (Moretta, 2017). This era saw the popularization of unique clothes, including bell-bottom pants and tie-dyed fabrics alongside peasant blouses, to reflect broad cultural changes. Mainly, cultural changes have moved away from traditional cloth design approaches to the experimentation of new approaches. In many cultures, fashion designers rebelled against traditional cloth designs, especially those that insinuated the superiority of men over women. Technological developments throughout the historical period fundamentally altered cloth designs through advanced production, created unique clothes and changed social and cultural perspectives on cloth designs. The Industrial Revolution marked the fundamental impacts of technological advancement in cloth design through mechanizing design processes and production. The mechanization of cloth designs and production yielded ready-to-wear clothes and enhanced availability for all members of the societies (Phuyal, 2022). Sociocultural changes towards cloth designs emerge when society members appreciate contemporary cloth designs produced by modern technologies, including digital design tools, innovative practices, and sustainable practices. Technological advancements have revolutionized how individuals perceive cloth designs, as represented in Table 4.

Table 4: A Summary of the Landscape of Cultural Changes and Implications on Cloth Designs

| Key themes | Relevance |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Subcultures and Societal Movements Influencing Contemporary Cloth Designs | Cultural changes reflected in cloth designs |
| Countercultural Movements: The Hippie Movement, Prioritizing Political Activism and Individuality in Cloth Design | Societal impacts on cloth designs |
| Technological Advancements Shaping Cloth Designs Through Mechanization and Design Changes | Technological impacts on cloth designs and production |
| The Industrial Revolution Mechanized Cloth Production, Yielding Ready-to-Wear Clothes. | Historical context of technological effects on cloth design trends |
| Contemporary Cloth Designs due to Modern Technologies | Adoption of innovative practices and sustainability in cloth design |
| Globalization, Cross-Cultural Exchanges, and Influences on Cloth Designs | Impact of globalization on cloth design trends |
| Enhanced Aesthetics of Cloth Designs From Cross-Cultural Interconnectedness | Evolution of cloth design aesthetics and quality |
| Modernized Cloth Designs. | Evolution of cloth designs in contemporary contexts |

Cross-cultural changes due to social interactions based on trade and globalization affected cloth designs in many communities. Increased interconnectedness led to the exchange of cloth styles, ideas, cultural influences, and the sharing of materials at a global scale (Casciani et al., 2022). In conjunction with technological advancements, globalization, interconnectedness, and cross-cultural influences amplified the development of the garment and fabric industry, further changing the landscape of cloth designs within the contexts of power, identity, and gender. A key outcome of these developments is increased aesthetics and clothing styles. A critical review of historical accounts reveals a progression in the cloth design advances, exhibited by evolving aesthetics and quality. In contrast to previous societies, modern societies have embraced modernized cloth designs and suggest even more developments in the future.

7. LEGACY AND IMPACT

Historical clothing undoubtedly impacts the contemporary clothing industry as social and cultural factors shape the designs and economics of

the clothing industry. A significant legacy of the development is the influence of designers on contemporary cloth designs, aesthetics, iconic fashion, and designs (Johnson & Koech, 2022). Characteristically, the minimalist cloth designs of the Bauhaus movement have inspired modern cloth designs since the 20th century, emphasizing specific geometric shapes, clean lines, and functionalism. Likewise, between the 1970s and 1980s, the Punk movement introduced anti-establishment approaches and do-it-yourself aesthetics resonating with the present subcultures and acting as supplementary cloth styles in the contemporary world. Figure 6 summarizes the fundamental outcomes of historical clothing styles and design accounts. Remarkable developments have been attained, revolutionizing the clothes industry.



Figure 6: Illustration of the Impacts of Historical Accounts on Cloth Designs

The historical accounts of clothing transcend social and cultural aspects to environmental and economic factors. The rapid development of the clothing industry in the 20th century transformed the environment and financial aspects of communities worldwide. Significantly, the advancements increased the consumption of uniquely designed cloths, expanding the economics of the cloth industries through advanced research marketing. Industrial development has been governed by laws prohibiting environmental degradation and advocacy for environmental preservation (Phuyal, 2022). These developments have been fundamental for sustainability in the clothes industry and attracting investments for further economic growth.

8. CONCLUSION

Despite being basic needs, clothes are cultural factors that mark significant aspects of sociocultural life, mainly gender, identity, and power

dynamics. Cloth designs have evolved over historical periods and centuries. However, the intricate landscape of cultural and social changes that influence gender, power, and identities has not been elaborated. The present study found that clothing styles are a marker of individual cultural and social identities and social class. Influential members of societies, including chiefs, kings, religious leaders, and queens, adorned the most aesthetic and unique styles of clothes and ornaments. These clothes would be worn during cultural functions, differentiate their social class, and demonstrate their power within the community. Additionally, cloth designs marked male-female differences in many communities. Fundamentally, the dynamics of trends in clothing designs, sociocultural changes, and the influence of cultural interconnectedness show the developments surrounding clothing designs in many societies worldwide. The literature on cloth designs throughout human history shows remarkable advancements and changes, mainly pointing at improved quality, designs, and aesthetics. Technological advancements coupled with cultural interconnectedness and exchanges will enhance the designs and styles of clothes. Critically, producing ready-to-wear garments is a significant breakthrough in the clothing industry. The historical accounts of cloth designs implicate fundamental outcomes on gender, power, and identities by shaping the aesthetics, qualities, and designs. The new developments change societal attitudes and approaches to cloth designs, consumption, sustainability, economic aspects of the clothes industry, and environmental sustainability. The unfolding sociocultural interplays with historical cloth designs and the unfolding changes indicate how the industry has evolved and reinforced newer and better clothes. Characteristically, globalization and colonialism triggered cross-cultural interactions and exchanges that distributed ideas on cloth styles, materials, and designs across diverse cultures. The European colonization led to the assimilation of indigenous clothing concepts, commodification, and appropriation of Western designs. Similarly, globalization led to copycats and sharing Western clothing ideals in different cultures. Interestingly, a review of American cloth design communities revealed the influence of indigenous cloth designs on the Native American culture.

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