

Reviewing Orientalism and Re-orienting Fashion beyond Europe

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The idea of re-orienting fashion denotes the cultural phenomenon in which some Asian societies—mainly from Southeast Asia—returned to or rather reinvented national and historical clothing styles. This idea is part of larger and ongoing considerations about the term “fashion” in relation to non-Western cultures. The main criticism of these considerations addresses a Eurocentric position within fashion studies, and specifically the notion of change inherent within it. Change and innovation are seemingly rejected in the case of fashion systems of non-Western cultures. The Eurocentric position presumes that fashion is the result of a Western market economy with the middle class as its main actor.¹ When Sandra Niessen, Ann Marie Leshkovich, and Carla Jones’s anthology, *Re-orienting Fashion: The Globalization of Asian Dress*, was first published in 2003, it was a response to the ongoing globalization process of “designing” Asian societies through fashion.²

The concept of re-orienting fashion can be used as a tool within postcolonial studies to understand and analyze fashion practices in Asia today. Niessen, Leshkovich, and Jones put forward three main points of focus in their book: first, the general meaning of dress in the context of the globalization of Asia; second, the potential of Edward Said’s concept of Orientalism, which is applied to this specific topic; and third, the process and meaning of a particular Asian national dress in the context of globalization.

The introduction of *Re-orienting Fashion* refers to one major paradox in the globalization of Asian dress styles, namely, that “Asian styles may be re-orienting global fashion” while at the same time this process also contributes to “re-orientaliz[ing] Asia and Asians.”³ The idea that fashion—a concept that previously only connected to the West—also exists outside of non-Western contexts relies on the notion of change and innovation. This concept refers to the relationship between fashion processes and European rural dress cultures, which are also considered “timeless and stable”; Jennifer Craik barely addresses this issue. But which factors shape the relationship between local dress cultures and the current fashion phenomena? In Germany and Austria, local dress cultures often define cultural spaces and social hierarchies in agricultural economies. Small-scale dress cultures are usually based on different ontological requirements. In Myanmar, for example, there is a lack of hierarchical separation between inside and outside the self, implying that one considers dress and material as substance, thus allowing for the worship of dress items as substitutes for real

1 See M. Angela Jansen, *Moroccan Fashion: Design, Tradition, Modernity* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015); and Jennifer Craik and M. Angela Jansen, “Constructing National Fashion Identities,” *International Journal of Fashion Studies* 2, no. 1 (2015): 3.

2 Sandra Niessen, Ann Marie Leshkovich, and Carla Jones, eds., *Re-orienting Fashion: The Globalization of Asian Dress* (Oxford: Berg, 2003).

3 Niessen, Leshkovich, and Jones, 5.

people.⁴ The surface of the person—which in Western eyes is considered as something that is not to be trusted—is seen in the culture of Trinidad as “real,” but “by contrast what is held deep inside them is seen as false.” How people dress, in this case, argues Daniel Miller, opens the door for understanding the real character of a person.⁵ Can the term “re-orienting” be used to describe and explain postcolonial strategies rightly? Or does it evoke a return to conventional colonial bias?

My interest in this subject was inspired by two research projects that took place in Uzbekistan between 2010 and 2014. For the project, I investigated the role of textiles in relation to nation-building processes. In my first visit to Uzbekistan in 2008, I encountered a strong national discourse on textile heritage and fashion design, which was shared by state representatives as well as fashion consumers, teachers, and designers. Central to this essay is the argument that fashion/dress cultures—and material culture in general—allow for an understanding of the materiality, aesthetics, and sensuality of postcolonial processes and transformation processes from the grassroots up. By looking at the specific case of Uzbekistan, I will question the concept of re-orientalization as useful tool for postcolonial fashion studies in highlighting whether the concept can be considered as a component of a decolonizing strategy.

Othering Europe and the West via Fashion

What fashion studies sometimes neglect is the simple fact that Europe, as well as its Asian counterpart that has been the “colonized Other” since the Middle Ages, is not a homogenous force and culture with clearly defined boundaries. Throughout the centuries, we can identify different kinds of Europe: the traditional Latin Europe with Rome as its center; the Byzantine Europe, the Slavonian Europe (with Moscow as its center); Protestant Europe (developing in London and Amsterdam); and the Latinized, rationalistic Europe with Paris as its center. Whether or not this type of categorization is correct, it gives an idea about the complexity as well as the diversity of colonization processes.⁶ Colonization processes within Europe were similarly dominated by biases as external processes of colonization—discourses as anti-fashion tendencies, timelessness—and simplicity with regard to regional dress cultures also play a role here. To discuss postcolonial situations, one should highlight how these processes of internal and external colonization are connected to each other, and how they influence today’s processes of nation building. Therefore, when thinking about fashion and post-colonialism, it is more useful to investigate how smaller fashion narratives are interrelated within and through transnational contexts in a global framework.

The trouble with the Eurocentric view of fashion is that it also stems from a disagreement on the words, terms, and categories used in fashion discourses,

as well as from the differences between dress studies and fashion studies. This could possibly be avoided if fashion studies employed and put forward a definition, which is identical to the one used in European ethnology studies, whereby fashion is defined as an “assemblage of modifications of the body and/or supplements to the body,”⁷ a definition that locates the actor/body and their gender at the center, and includes issues such as materiality, aesthetics, techniques, taste, and consumption. This, however, is one definition that continuously needs to be questioned in the changing historical as well as spatial/sociocultural context.

A Case Study: Uzbekistan

In South and Southeast Asia, there is currently a displacement of geopolitical centers and pivots of fashion cities as well as a change in how fashion design and production practices are viewed. Within fashion and design industries an Asian Other emerges that is different from Europeans—however, this change in view occurs under different sociopolitical circumstances than it previously did in Central Asia, and supports what Raymond L. M. Lee once described as “Asian modernization.”⁸ Uzbekistan is a country in Central Asia: this geographic location is of special interest when questioning how postcolonialism operates within the frame of fashion discourses and practices, because nation-state building is quite different from other Asian and African contexts. As Laura Adams frankly asks: “Can we apply postcolonial theory to Central Eurasia?”⁹ This means questioning in which ways the Soviet empire can possibly be characterized as colonial, whether and how we are dealing with a postcolonial

- 4 Georg Noack and Inés de Castro, eds., *Myanmar: Das Goldene Land* (Darmstadt: Verlag Philipp von Zabern in Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2014).
 Georg Noack, *Local Traditions, Global Modernities: Dress, Identity and the Creation of Public Self-Images in Contemporary Urban Myanmar* (Berlin: Regiospectra Verlag, 2011).
 5 Daniel Miller, “Introduction,” in *Clothing as Material Culture*, ed. Susanne Küchler and Daniel Miller (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 3.
 6 Rüdiger Korff, “Wo ist Europa?,” in *Auf der Suche nach Eurasien: Politik, Religion und Alltagskultur zwischen Russland und Europa*, ed. Markus Kaiser (Bielefeld: transcript, 2004), 27. In a similar way, Said’s concept of the postcolonial

- successor is criticized by Andrea Polaschegg; see Felix Wiedemann, *Orientalismus*, “Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte,” April 19, 2014, http://docupedia.de/zg/wiedemann_orientalismus_v1_de_2012.
 7 Joanne B. Eicher, Sandra Lee Evenson, and Hazel A. Lutz, *The Visible Self: Global Perspectives on Dress, Culture and Society* (London: Fairchild Books, 2000), 4.
 8 Raymond L. M. Lee, “Modernization, Postmodernisms and the Third World,” *Current Sociology* 42, no. 2 (1994): 1–66; and Rüdiger Korff, “Wo ist Europa?,” 21–35.
 9 Laura Adams, “Can We Apply Postcolonial Theory to Central Eurasia?,” *Central Eurasian Studies Review* 7, no. 1 (2008): 2–8.

context today, and also how the historical and contemporary textile and fashion cultures were affected by the postcolonial strategies.¹⁰

According to Bhavna Dave, the Soviet rule should be considered as “a hybrid entity, combining elements of a centralized empire and high modernist state”¹¹ that is different from other colonizing European states because it intensely dominated the private sphere of its subjects.¹² However, how did the Soviet rule impact the material and dress cultures of Central Asia? In general, dress practices in Central Asia were considered backward and in need of adaptation to the Western European style, also employed in the Soviet Union by a gradual updating of style and by creating of syntheses between traditional Uzbek and Western European clothing—a process of the transformation of Uzbek society already started under the Tsarist regime in the 1880s and '90s that finally culminated in the permeating Soviet modernization of 1920s and '30s. The Uzbek shirt was combined with European trousers, the suit with the quilted coat, the skirt was worn with a jacket and the bodily shape was molded according to European dress patterns.¹³

Fig. 39
Women's coat
“Munisak” (*minsak*,
mursak), also
called “Kaltacha”,
silk *ikat*, lining
printed cotton
from Russia,
Uzbekistan, 1900



During the entire Soviet rule in Uzbekistan, Islamic rituals such as circumcision, marriage, and funeral were maintained. At the same time, a curious synthesis between an orientally accentuated Western dress style emerged—with a Western cut, but of particular colors and length,¹⁴ and even the colorful *ikat* fabrics and the headgear *duppi* remained popular as well (fig. 39). Nevertheless, the core of traditional textile-craft manufacturing was transformed into industrial production, causing some textile crafts and the knowledge connected to them to disappear. Traditional Uzbek dress cultures were officially remembered only as an illustration of multiethnic folklore of the Soviet empire, which was construed as an artificial ethno-national entity with regard to

Central Asia. Ethnicity, under Soviet rule, had become a decisive category of research as well as of the governmental technology,¹⁵ a strategy becoming a material and visible reality in textiles and dress in order also to distinguish the different Central Asia nations newly created (1924) under Soviet rule. Ethnic festivals, with the presentation of ethnic dress style and music organized by the Soviet state, pursued the goal of stressing the multicultural feature of the Soviet Union.

To understand the postcolonial process, one has to understand that the path to independence in Uzbekistan was far different from other Asian countries and for countries within the Baltic states. Uzbekistan, together with today's other four Central Asian states, more or less unexpectedly became an independent state because of the collapse of the Soviet Union. That means that the Uzbekistan people involuntarily had to face the challenge of creating their own nation-state based on the regional borders created by the Soviet Union in the 1920s. The presidential regime, which emerged after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 and has lasted over twenty-six years, has made great efforts to revive traditional textiles crafts by effectively supporting the production of natural silk and *ikat* weaving and by encouraging the use of Central Asian dress traditions, including the design of *ikat* fabrics and headgear. At the same time, a vivid scene of fashion and textile designers has evolved all over the country by (re-)discovering forgotten textile techniques and by fusing different techniques and ornaments into a new, orientalized design and fashion style.

10 For an instructive survey on academic debates concerning the particular nature of the Soviet regime see Deniz Kandiyoti, “Post-colonialism Compared: Potentials and Limitations in the Middle East and Central Asia,” in special issue, “Nationalism and the Colonial Legacy in the Middle East and Central Asia,” ed. Fazil Aq Fayeze, *International Journal Middle East Studies* 34, no. 2 (2002): 279–97, in particular 289–97.

11 Bhavna Dave, *Kazakhstan: Ethnicity, Language and Power* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 15.

12 Adams, “Can We Apply Postcolonial Theory to Central Eurasia?,” 2.

13 D. A. Fakhretdinova, *Dekorativno-prikladnoe iskusstvo Uzbekistana* [The decorative and applied art of Uzbekistan] (Tashkent: G. Gulyam, 1972), 12–13. The efforts to modernize dress also included campaigns against the traditional veiling of Uzbek women, mainly during their

twenties. See Marianne Kamp, *The New Woman in Uzbekistan: Islam, Modernity and Unveiling under Communism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006); and Douglas Northrop, *Veiled Empire: Gender and Power in Stalinist Central Asia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004).

14 Eckert has termed this a “style syncretism.” See Julia M. Eckert, *Unabhängiges Usbekistan: Auf dem Wege von Marx zu Timur: Politische Strategien der Konfliktregulierung in einem Vielvölkerstaat* (Münster: Lit, 1996), 77–78.

15 Kandiyoti, “Post-colonialism Compared,” 289–91. See also Wim van Moers, “Sowjetische Ethnographie: Jäger oder Sammler,” in *Inszenierungen des Nationalen: Geschichte, Kultur und die Politik der Identitäten am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Beate Binder, Wolfgang Kaschuba, and Peter Niedermüller (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2001), 107–35.

The Uzbek government not only actively supports designers, but also encourages exhibitions, fairs, fashion shows, and events to show that the country is a modern and legitimate heir to the ancient Silk Road. However, this does not suggest there is a tacit involvement among designers in the political regime. Rather, they each try to forge a path between state control, individual creativity, and business. But still, they cannot escape the nationalistic discourses initiated by the government to establish a new national identity with patriotic and patriarchal/Islamic values within an authoritarian political regime. Since the state discourses and measures intensely address the revival of (textile) crafts—nurtured by state measures¹⁶—and the usage of traditional dress culture, items like the traditional headgear, such as *duppi*, and *ikat* items made of silk or cotton fabrics have become strong signifiers of Uzbek nationhood. Even under Soviet rule, clothing made from *ikat* fabrics was seen as symbols of Central Asian culture, but at that time they were also a silent protest against Soviet rule. Nowadays, traditional styles have become part of the national project, a project that aims to set the region apart through its national traditional heritage.¹⁷

What is traditional in Uzbekistan is treated by the state as equal to national values. This not only invites the neo-traditionalization of practices (e.g., rituals, festivities), but also strongly encourages the installment of traditional gender roles and ethnicity discourses as a means of demarcation in relation to the Central Asian neighbors. A slow but continuously stronger covering up of the body (i.e., legs, arms, and shoulders, and the covering of the neck and head with the Islamic headscarf, etc.) is integrated into this process—a factor indicating the growing influence of Islamic dress codes.

Thus, traditional fabrics and dress become crucial as identity markers of Uzbek nationhood. To middle-class actors on the micro level, traditional or national dress helps to transmit values and norms between the generations. Moreover, the idea of tradition evokes and relates to “a certain habitat of meaning and memory” of an imagined non-colonized past that simultaneously presents a historical and a present Central Asia.¹⁸ At the same time, it is interesting to see how a general criticism of Soviet times is activated to define new boundaries between a so-called West and Central Asia, with Asia essentially using similar techniques to produce a “Western Other.”

The touristic gaze, on the other hand, in search of the exotic Orient contributes to the promotion of an image of Uzbekistan as the natural heir to the Silk Road. In this way, the postcolonial discourse about tradition is turned upside down. Melanie Krebs describes how the invention of tradition is negotiated between both the native population and Western tourists: while traditional textile colors for American tourists mean natural dyes, traditional colors for the Uzbeks mean chemical dyes used during the times of the Soviet Union.¹⁹

State processes are geared toward different objectives and target groups: first, they are used to overcome both Tsarist colonization and Soviet modernization; secondly, they are directed toward other post-Soviet Central Asian nations and, albeit in a different way, toward the Western world mainly represented by tourists and the media. The Uzbek government uses many different techniques of representation, according to Timothy Mitchell, to create an image of a modern, open-minded Uzbek society with a clearly defined national identity.²⁰ Fashion, in this case, becomes an object of strategic cultural interests and planning. “Self-orientalization” via fashion becomes an opportunity to symbolically consolidate territorial claims. Thus, this newly orientalized fashion soon becomes a geopolitical argument to symbolically define the new national borders in Central Asia.

Categories: Orient, Orientalism, Orientalization

The concept of “orientalizing fashion” calls for a deeper discussion. Before the publication of Niessen, Leshkovich, and Jones’s *Re-orienting Fashion*, Dorinne Kondo had discussed the terminology in depth with regard to theater, media, and fashion by considering Japanese fashion designers in particular.²¹ Above all, Kondo stresses the relationship between Orientalism and politico-historical moments of Japanese history in the twentieth century when Japan desired to share a common culture with Thailand and to compete with Western states as a powerful nation.

But does Said’s concept of Orientalism work at all in this context? According to Said, the conception and imagination of the Orient as a cultural entity is the

16 Svenja Adelt and Lola Shamukhitdinova, “Die Wiederbelebung zentralasiatischer textiler Handwerkstechniken im Prozess der Nationsbildung in Usbekistan,” *Zentralasienanalysen* 72 (2013): 2–6.

17 See Orvar Löfgren, “Das Verschwinden und die Wiederkehr des Nationalen: Die schwedische Erfahrung, 1950–2000” [The disappearance and the return of the national: The Swedish experience, 1950–2000], *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 51 (2006): 23–42.

18 Gabriele Mentges and Lola Shamukhitdinova, eds., *Textiles as National Heritage: Identities, Politics and Material Culture; Case Studies from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Algerian and Peru* (Münster: Waxmann, 2017). See, in particular, my essay “Between Design, ‘National Dress’ and Nation Branding: The Dynamics of Textile Culture

in the Process of Uzbek Nation Building,” 31–66.

19 Melanie Krebs, “Of Dyes and Colors—Cultural Change in Uzbek Textile Crafts,” in Mentges and Shamukhitdinova, *Textiles as National Heritage*, 119–36.

20 Timothy Mitchell, “Die Welt als Ausstellung,” in *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus: Postkoloniale Perspektiven in den Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften*, ed. Sebastian Conrad and Shalini Randeria (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2002), 148–76. Its latest invention is the so-called Museum of Resistance in which the time of Soviet rule is described as a colonial regime and Uzbekistan as the hero of resistance—an interpretation that obviously does not tie in with historical facts.

21 Dorinne Kondo, *About Face: Performing Race in Fashion and Theater* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 84, 86.

result of colonial hegemonial discourses based on administration, military knowledge, and science. From a philosophical perspective, Felix Wiedemann has recently commented that the concept of Orientalism as a metonym for the European Other does not seem appropriate because Said's categories ignore the fundamental difference between the production of the Other (with regard to oneself) and the idea of the stranger (with regard to what is familiar).²² Said's groundbreaking thoughts are affected by a binary-coded structure, which seems to have also influenced *Re-orienting Fashion*. Re-orienting or orientalizing—as the authors have formulated as referring to the emergence of national dress styles seen on international catwalks and other global locations—once again suggests an essentialist idea of the Orient and an oriental aesthetic, even if the case studies provide more nuanced examinations. Orientalization in terms of fashion is far more complicated. It evokes questions about which part of dress heritage is used as a cultural design argument, and hence it refers further to issues of cultural property and national heritage claims and, above all, to strategies of internal and external segregation and the establishment of internal peripheries and centers.

Thus, we can conclude with Kondo that auto-orientalization is not a playful or reflexive mise-en-scène of the self, but a partaking in constellations of power relations by way of consumption and nostalgia.²³ At this point, it makes sense to highlight these practices and discourses of representation within the framework of the rise of Occidentalism, with its goal to put forward the concept of an Asian modernization, as Raymond Lee suggests in his analysis on *Modernization, Postmodernisms and the Third World* (1994).

Re-orientalization

Are the fundamental ideas and arguments of *Re-orienting Fashion* helpful in understanding the ongoing postcolonial processes outside of Europe? The editors of the book infer that orientalizing is closely linked to femininity. Self-exoticization is a measure of gaining control “over the process of defining who is Other,” and is a technique that turns “Western Orientalism on its head.”²⁴ But if self-exoticizing means controlling who is defined as the Other, we need to ask who is speaking and acting and when and how. For instance, local dress cultures merge with national mainstream fashion. When attacking the relation between femininity and nation building as an essential component of Orientalism, we have to recall that even Rabindranath Tagore in his writings interpreted womanhood as a symbol of rebirth in India.²⁵ In Europe, the concept of nation was also closely intertwined with ideas of femininity. This is not a specific trait of orientalizing discourse. Rather, orientalizing discourses relate to a specific mode of thinking on binaries, such as tradition versus modernity, temporal stagnation versus the progress of time, the center versus the periphery.

This mode of thinking also characterized colonization processes within Europe and becomes mirrored in many museological discourses throughout the twentieth century,²⁶ in which Western European rural cultures were becoming the exoticized Other or, as was the case mostly for Eastern Europe, the symbolic gatekeepers of national identity lost during the Ottoman occupation.

Comparing old colonial Orientalism and globalization, the editors of *Re-orienting Fashion* expound that globalization, contrary to what one might assume, produces differences based on race, gender, and tradition as past colonial situations.²⁷ This idea relates to Stuart Hall's definition of postcolonialism in an interesting way. He argues that what differentiates the postcolonial situation from its colonial predecessor is the relocation of difference and its allocation to new places.²⁸

Thus, fashion practices and the discourses connected to them mirror categories and value systems of the colonial past. They repeat and reproduce the orientalist discourse in which “globalization as an Orientalizing and gendering phenomenon becomes apparent through an ethnographic focus on dress practices,”²⁹ a statement that presupposes an in-depth analysis of the particular colonial contexts and the specific ways of colonization. The case of Central Asia, in particular my case study in Uzbekistan, seems to apply the same strategy, but unlike other postcolonial states that Hall is referring to, Uzbek discourses and practices about re-orientalization seem to end up in a modern essentialism of nation, nationhood, and nation-state. The strategies and governmental technologies, however, are not organized in the traditional (European) way of nation building. Rather, they are linked to the surface policies of the actual catwalk economy in which medias play a crucial role. This means that the process of nation building is slightly transformed into nation branding, in which the “re-orientalized” textile culture is turned into a commodity with Uzbek fashion actors becoming their own spectators.

22 Wiedemann, *Orientalismus*.

23 Concerning Japan see Kondo, *About Face*, 94.

24 Niessen, Leshkovich, and Jones, *Re-orienting Fashion*, 28.

25 See Rabindranath Tagore, *Gora*, trans. Gisela Leiste (Düsseldorf: Albatros, 2004).

26 See recent publication on this subject as an example: Karen Ellwanger, Andrea Hauser, and Jochen Meiners, eds., *Trachten in der Lüneburger Heide und im Wendland* (Münster: Waxmann, 2015), 341–54; and Adriaan De Jong, *Die Dirigenten der Erinnerung: Musealisierung und Nationalisierung der Volkskultur in den Niederlanden, 1815–1940* [The conductors of memory: Musealization and nationalisation of folk culture in the Netherlands, 1815–1940] (Münster: Waxmann, 2007).

27 Tagore, *Gora*, 12. See also Valerie Wilson Trower, “Review: Re-orienting Fashion: The Globalization of Asian Dress,” *Journal of Design History* 17, no. 2 (2004): 197–99.

28 Stuart Hall, “Wann gab es ‘das Postkoloniale,’” in Conrad and Shalini Randeira, *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus*, 232–33.

29 Niessen, Leshkovich, and Jones, *Re-orienting Fashion*, 6.

The *who* becomes decisive in order to identify and dismantle the precise power constellations and entanglements during postcolonial processes between the different actors, and also plays into the ways the colonial past is referred to. In the Central Asian case, we are dealing with two different kinds of colonization, both with different claims of modernization: first, the Tsarist rule, and, second, the Soviet rule that followed. For both periods, Dave states that “postcolonial studies as a whole had failed to incorporate Central Asia and the Soviet Empire and with that the failure to discuss the status of the Soviet rule as colonial power.”³⁰

To analyze this particular process, it is necessary to highlight the relation between the colonized and the hegemonic imperial power, as well as the relations between local elites and groups and the hegemonic power, between center(s) and peripheries. In contemporary Uzbekistan, there is still a strikingly visible cultural gap between the upper and middle classes who were educated—Russified—in previous times because of different access to cultural resources such as fashion, taste, and consumption.

Conclusion

Re-orienting fashion is an excellent platform to reexamine and discuss these processes, because it provides a theoretical framework for a new empirical phenomenon to be discussed and places it into existing theoretical frameworks of postcolonialism. Meeting Hall’s outline of postcolonialism in some ways, still, a clear attempt to evaluate and redefine postcolonial situations via fashion is missing.³¹ But it is exactly Hall’s definition that suggests the relocation of difference and its assignment to new locations to help evaluate the political and social impact of fashion processes in the new global order. Or, to phrase this as a question: Can these developments contribute to “provincializ[ing] Europe,”³² and more specifically, to a decentering of still existing fashion hierarchies and conceptions?

First, to better understand these processes, in-depth investigations are needed to differentiate between the hierarchies within different groups of actors, the micro-macro levels, and the interconnection of elites and other groups of society, as well as a clear identification of the hegemonic groups, which are often inter-linked by the same concerns and strategies as the former colonial power, while going beyond colonial interests. Who defines what textile cultural heritage is and to whom it belongs? A discussion about legal claims to culture is needed. This raises the question of how to identify the colonial Other and non-colonial discourses.

Second, colonial and postcolonial processes must be interpreted in the light of their different historical stages and geopolitics. Today, globalization connects economic strategies with cultural issues, which, for example, are well illustrated

by nation branding as a symbolic economy. The question that needs to be asked now is why contemporary fashion has manifested itself as such an important constituent in national and even in religious contexts, with the latter becoming more and more evident of late. In this context, the different platforms of representation need to be taken into account.

Third, we need to be aware of nation-building processes more than ever before. This includes the invention of tradition and—this may be of major importance—the fact that nowadays these processes take place in a postcolonial context, which is quite different from nation building during colonialism. Following Eric Hobsbawm, the central difference when compared to the first stage of nation building is related to the fact that contemporary national-formation processes are centrally built on differences. Wolfgang Kaschuba emphasizes racial and ethnic differences in the context of these processes taking place today.³³ These differences become obvious in developments in fashion, which in turn produce colonial binaries.³⁴ Above all, we have to take into account the actual strong economic neoliberal tendencies that are evaluating nations as markets and transforming national symbols and cultural heritage into marketing instruments. In this process of nation branding, fashion design turns into a key instrument to represent and sell values, aesthetics and imagery as national commodities.

Fourth, such a critical analysis requires the consideration of fashion processes in the larger setting of material culture of different scales and with a focus on historical and contemporary global perspectives.

30 Dave, *Kazakhstan*, 9; see also Kandyoti, “Post-colonialism Compared,” 286. Concerning the Tsarist colonialization, Said’s Orientalist assumptions have to be much more differentiated. Marcus Köhler, for example, claims that the Tsarist colonial reign was realized by systematic extension of natural frontiers, less by conquest, see Marcus Köhler, *Russische Ethnographie und imperiale Politik im 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: V & R unipress, 2012); for discussion on the concept of “Russian Orientalism,” see Vera Tölz, *Russia’s Own Orient: The Politics of Identity and Oriental Studies in the Late Imperial and Early Soviet Periods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

31 Hall, “Das Postkoloniale,” 232–33.

32 Dipesh Chakrabarty, “Europa provinzialisieren: Postkolonialität und die Kritik der Geschichte,” in Conrad and Randeira, *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus*, 283–312.

33 Eric Hobsbawm, *Nation and Nationalism since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Wolfgang Kaschuba, “Geschichtspolitik und Identitätspolitik,” in *Inszenierungen des Nationalen. Geschichte, Kultur und die Politik der Identitäten am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Beate Binder, Wolfgang Kaschuba, and Peter Niedermüller (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2001), 21; and Gabriele Mentges, “Introductory Remarks,” in Mentges and Shamukhitdinova, *Textiles as National Heritage*, 31–66.

34 Kondo, *About Face*, 85.

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**Fashion and Postcolonial Critique:
An Introduction**

Elke Gaugele and Monica Titton

Fig. 1

Young women cutting and fitting clothing in class at Agricultural and Mechanical College, Greensboro, NC, 1899. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, DC; b/w film copy neg reproduction number: LC-USZ62-118917, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/97510089/>. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

Fig. 2

Photograph of exhibit of the American Negroes at the Paris exposition, 1900. Taken from the *American Monthly Review of Reviews* 22, no. 130 (November 1900): 576. Library of Congress Washington, DC, reproduction number LC-DIG-ppmsc-04826 (digital file from original), LC-USZ62-132752 (b&w film copy neg.) <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2001697152>. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

Fig. 3

"The problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color-line," chart prepared by Du Bois for the "American Negro" exhibit at the 1900 Paris World Exposition to show the routes of the African slave trade and the economic and social progress of African Americans since emancipation. Drawing, ink, and watercolor on board, 710 x 560 mm. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, DC; Digital ID: ppmsca.33863, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.33863>. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

Fig. 4

Portrait 1899, displayed at the "American Negro" exhibit at the Paris International Exposition, 1900 [African American woman, half-length portrait, seated, facing right]. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, DC, Digital ID: (b&w film copy neg.) cph.3c24691, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c24691>. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

Fig. 5

Portrait 1899 displayed at the "American Negro" exhibit at the Paris International Exposition, 1900 [African American woman, three-quarter length portrait,

seated with left arm over back of chair, facing front]. Gelatin silver photograph. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington DC; Digital ID: (b/w film copy neg.) cph.3c24687, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c24687>. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

Fig. 6

Portrait 1899 displayed at the "American Negro" exhibit at the Paris International Exposition, 1900 [African American woman, half-length portrait, facing slightly right 1899/1900]. Gelatin silver photograph. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.; Digital ID: (b/w film copy neg.) cph.3c24796 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c24796>. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

Fig. 7

Portrait 1899/1900 displayed at the "American Negro" exhibit at the Paris International Exposition, 1900 [African American woman, head-and-shoulders portrait, facing slightly right 1899/1900], photographic print: gelatin silver. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.; Reproduction Number: LC-USZ62-124722 (b/w film copy neg.) <http://cdn.loc.gov/service/pnp/cph/3c20000/3c24000/3c24700/3c24722v.jpg>. Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

Fig. 8

The Hidden Fashion Library, exhibition photo, staterooms Alte Post, Vienna, April 26–29, 2017. Gangart/Heinrich Pichler 2017. Courtesy of Gangart/Heinrich Pichler.

Fig. 9

Walé Oyéjidé, "After Migration," Ikeré Jones lookbook (Fall/Winter 2016/17). Walé Oyéjidé/Ikeré Jones 2016. Courtesy of Walé Oyéjidé.

The Implementation of Western Culture in Austria: Colonial Concepts in Adolf Loos's Fashion Theory

Christian Kravagna

Figs. 10–13

Heinz Frank, performance as a commentary to Adolf Loos's "Zur Herrenmode" (1898), 1970. Photo: Gabriela Brandenstein. Courtesy of Gabriela Brandenstein.

Fig. 14

Adolf Loos, *Das Andere*, no. 1, 1903

Fig. 15

Adolf Loos, Advertisement for *Das Andere* no. 2, 1903

La Revue du Monde Noir: Nos Enquêtes
Louis Thomas Achille, Jean Baldoui,
Marie-Magdeleine Carbet, Paulette Nardal,
Rosario, and Clara W. Shepard

Fig. 16
Revue du Monde Noir/Review of the Black World, no. 2 (1931): 60.
Figs. 17–21
Revue du Monde Noir/Review of the Black World, no. 3 (1932): 50–54.
Figs. 22–24
Revue du Monde Noir/Review of the Black World, no. 4 (1932): 50–52.
Source: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

(Re-)fashioning African Diasporic Masculinities

Christine Checinska

Fig. 25
Bust of Jean-Jacques Dessalines.
© National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, Michael Graham-Stewart Slavery Collection. Acquired with the assistance of the Heritage Lottery Fund.
Fig. 26
Portrait of General Jean-Jacques Dessalines. [Jean-Jacques Dessalines (Jacques 1er), fondateur de l'Indépendance d'Haïti] Rouzier, Sémexan. *Dictionnaire géographique et administratif universel d'Haïti illustré ... ou Guide général en Haïti: avec gravures, illustrations, plans, cartes et vues dans le texte, et une carte coloriée de l'île d'Haïti*. Paris: Imprimerie brevetée Charles Blot, 1891, p. 89. Manioc, Bibliothèque numérique Caraïbe, Amazonie, Plateau des Guyanes. <http://www.manioc.org/images/SCH1300901131>. Courtesy of Manioc, Bibliothèque numérique Caraïbe, Amazonie, Plateau des Guyanes.

Last Stop Palenque: Fashion Editorial

Hana Knížová and Sabrina Henry

Figs. 27–35
Hana Knížová, *Last Stop Palenque*, 2016. Fashion editorial for *Nataal.com*, styled by Sabrina Henry. Photo: Hana Knížová. © Hana Knížová and Sabrina Henry.

A Brief History of Postcolonial African Fashion

Helen Jennings

Fig. 36
Designer: Wanda Lephoto – AW17 lookbook, Photo: Andile Buka, Models (left to right): Tebogo Gondo and Raymond Sibeko, Creative Direction and styling: The Sartists. Courtesy of Wanda Lephoto.

Fresh Off the Boat: A Reflection on Fleeing, Migration, and Fashion (Theory)
Burcu Dogramaci

Fig. 37
Alice M. Huynh, *Fresh Off the Boat*, 2015. Six looks from the collection. Courtesy of Alice M. Huynh.
Fig. 38
Hussein Chalayan, “After Words,” Fall/Winter 2000. Photo: Chris Moore. [Robert Violette, *Hussein Chalayan* (New York: Rizzoli, 2011), 242–43] Courtesy of Hussein Chalayan.

Reviewing Orientalism and Re-orienting Fashion beyond Europe

Gabriele Mentges

Fig. 39
Women’s coat “Munisak” (minsak, mursak, also called “Kaltacha”), silk *ikat*, lining, printed cotton from Russia, Uzbekistan, 1900.

212 Magazine: Picture Spread

Heval Okçuoğlu

Fig. 40
212 Magazine 1, “Strange Days” (2016). AES+F Group, *Allegoria Sacra*, 2011. Taken from *212 Magazine*, no. 1, “Strange Days.”
Fig. 41
Sandrine Dulermo and Michael Labica, *Strange Days—Visions of Futures Past*, 2016. Taken from *212 Magazine*, no. 1, “Strange Days.” Photography by Sandrine Dulermo and Michael Labica. Styling by Laurent Dombrowicz.
Fig. 42
Ekin Ozbicer, *Strange Days—The Bravest Tailor in the East*, 2016. Taken from *212 Magazine*, no. 1, *Strange Days—The Bravest Tailor in the East*, photography by Ekin Ozbicer, styling by Handan Yilmaz.
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Hellen Van Meene, *Romance Is the Glamour Which Turns the Dust of Everyday Life Into a Golden Haze*, 2016. Taken from *212 Magazine* Issue I, *Strange Days – Romance Is the Glamour Which Turns the Dust of Everyday Life into a Golden Haze*, photography and styling by Hellen Van Meene.
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Emre Dogru, *Local Fantasy Global Reality*, 2016. Taken from *212 Magazine* Issue II, *Locality – Local Fantasy Global Reality*, photography by Emre Dogru.
Fig. 45
Servet Koçyiğit, *Golden Lining*, 2016. Taken from *212 Magazine* Issue II, *Locality –*

Golden Lining by Servet Koçyiğit, 2016. All images courtesy of *212 Magazine*.

Fig. 46
Murat Palta, *Modern Miniature*, 2016. Taken from *212 Magazine* Issue II, *Locality – Modern Miniature*, exclusive artwork by Murat Palta.

Fashionscapes, Hybridity, and the White Gaze
Birgit Haehnel

Fig. 47
Stella Jean, Pre-Fall Collection, 2017. <http://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows/pre-fall-2017/stella-jean/slideshow/collection>. Courtesy of Condé Nast.

Remodeling the Past, Cross-dressing the Future: Postcolonial Self-Fashioning for the Global Art Market

Birgit Mersmann

Fig. 48
Yinka Shonibare, *Diary of a Victorian Dandy*, 11 hours, 1998. Courtesy of the artist.

Re-mastering the Old World: Picture Spread from the Ikiré Jones Archive
Ikiré Jones/Walé Oyéjidé Esq.

Figs. 49–53
Walé Oyéjidé, *Re-mastering the Old World*, 2016–17. The Ikiré Jones Archive. Courtesy of Walé Oyéjidé Esq.

Textiles Designing Another History: Wael Shawky's Cabaret Crusades
Gabriele Genge and Angela Stercken

Fig. 54
Wael Shawky, *Cabaret Crusades: The Secrets of Karbalaa*, 2014, film stills, 54a | On-screen billing, 54b | Film scene *Mecca 681*, 54c | Film scene *Ramla 1192*; figs. a–c: courtesy of Wael Shawky and Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Beirut/ Hamburg; 54d | *Perpetual Calendar*, Tab. II from “Catalan Atlas” by Abraham Creques, 1375 ©Bibliothèque National, Paris (<http://expositions.bnf.fr/ciel/catalan/index.htm>, 2017/05/12).
Fig. 55
Ebstorf Map, ca. 1290, reconstruction, ill. quoted from Ute Schneider, *Die Macht der Karten: Eine Geschichte der Kartographie vom Mittelalter bis heute* (Darmstadt: Primus 2004), 3. extended and updated ed. 2012), 160.
Fig. 56
World map from the Apocalypse commentary by Beatus von Liébana, 1086,

Burgo de Osma, fol.: 34v–35r, ill. quoted from John Williams, ed., *The Illustrated Beatus: A Corpus of the Illustrations of the Commentary on the Apocalypse*, vol. 1 (London 1994), 51, ill. 21. (DadaWeb, Universität zu Köln, Kunsthistorisches Institut)
Fig. 57

Wael Shawky, glass figures from *Cabaret Crusades: The Secrets of Karbalaa*, 2014, 57a | *Eleonore of Aquitaine*, 57b | *Ludwig VII of France*, 57c | *German King Conrad III*; ill. a–c: installation view, MoMA PS1, New York, 2015, photo: Nick Waldhör, 57d | *Muzalfat ad-Din Kawkaboori*, 57e | *Fatimid caliph Al Adid li-Din Allah*, 57f | *Yusuf (Salah ad-Din)*; ill. d–f: quoted from Wael Shawky: *Cabaret Crusades*, exh. cat., ed. Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf (Bielefeld: Kerber Verlag, 2015). All illustrations courtesy of Wael Shawky and Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Beirut/Hamburg.
Fig. 58

Relics textiles, 9th/10th century, polychromed silk samite, Ev. Church Community Bad Gandersheim, Inv.-No. 396; ill. quoted from Christian Popp, “Reliquien im hochmittelalterlichen Weiheritus,” in *Seide im früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Frauenstift: Besitz – Bedeutung – Umnutzung*, ed. Thomas Schilp and Annemarie Stauffer, Essener Forschungen zum Frauenstift, vol. 11 (Essen: Klartext, 2013), 160, ill. 3–4. Figs. 59a + b

Cathedral Treasury of Essen, textile relic cover, 10th to 11th century. Fig. 59a Silk textiles, 59b | Textile relic cover, 10th to 11th century, Cathedral Treasury of Essen; can r1 and r2, Inv.-Nr. E/r1 and E/r2-a1; ill. quoted from: Annemarie Stauffer, “Seide aus dem Frauenstift Essen: Befunde, Herkunft und Kontexte,” in *Seide im früh- und hochmittelalterlichen Frauenstift: Besitz – Bedeutung – Umnutzung*, ed. Thomas Schilp and Annemarie Stauffer, Essener Forschungen zum Frauenstift, vol. 11 (Essen: Klartext, 2013), 105, ill. 2 and 106, ill. 3.

Fig. 60
Cross of Otto and Mathilde, or: Cross of Abbess Mathilde, before 982, Cathedral Treasury of Essen, overall view and detail; ill. quoted from Klaus Beuckers, *Die Ottonen* (Petersberg: M. Imhof, 2002), 94. Fig. 61
Theophanu Cross, 1039–1058, Cathedral Treasury of Essen, overall view and detail;

ill. quoted from Anne Kurtze, *Durchsichtig oder durchlässig. Zur Sichtbarkeit der Reliquien und Reliquiare des Essener Stiftschatzes im Mittelalter*, Studien zur internationalen Architektur- und Kunstgeschichte, 148 (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2017) 142, ill. II.3.3.

Fig. 62

Wael Shawky, *Cabaret Crusades: The Secrets of Karbalaa*, 2014. Four film stills from the "Battle of Hattin" scene. Courtesy of Wael Shawky and Sfeir-Semler Gallery, Beirut/Hamburg.

Traveling Fashion: Exoticism and Tropicalism Alexandra Karentzos

Fig. 63

Aldemir Martins, "Brazilian Look," collection for Rhodia, collection Brazilian Look, 1963. Dress above: print with abstract floral pattern design by Aldemir Martins. In *Manchete* 1963 (595): 44–45.

Fig. 64

Izabel Pons, "Brazilian Primitive," collection for Rhodia, collection Brazilian Primitive, 1965. Left: dress by Izabel Pons, bird-patterned print; right: dress with symbols of the Afro-Brazilian religion Candomblé by Aldemir Martin. In *Jóia* magazine, 1965.

Fig. 65

Hélio Oiticica, Nildo of Mangueira with *Parangolé* P4 Cape 1, 1967. Courtesy of Projeto Helio Oiticica, Rio de Janeiro. In *Tropicália: Die 60s in Brasilien*. Edited by Gerald Matt, Vienna: Kunsthalle Wien, with Verlag für moderne Kunst, Nürnberg, 2010. Exhibition catalogue, p. 41.

Fig. 66

Singer and composer Caetano Veloso wearing the *Parangolé* P4 Cape 1, 1968, Hélio Oiticica: P 04 *Parangolé* Cape 01 1964. Photo: Andreas Valentim. Courtesy of Projeto Hélio Oiticica. In *Hélio Oiticica. Das große Labyrinth*. Edited by Susanne Gaensheimer, Frankfurt am Main: Museum für Moderne Kunst, with Hatje Cantz, 2013. Exhibition catalogue, p. 99.

The Production of African Wax Cloth in a Neoliberal Global Market: Vlisco and the Processes of Imitation and Appropriation Christine Delhaye

Fig. 67

Vlisco, collection "Splendeur", 2014, Photo: Vlisco. Photo: Frtiz Kok. Courtesy of Vlisco.

Fig. 68

Vlisco, collection "Celebrate with Style", 2017. Photo: Vlisco, Photography: Floor Knapen. Courtesy of Vlisco.

Fig. 69

Design 13/0036, Vlisco (Ankersmit), 1912. Photo: Vlisco. Courtesy of Vlisco.

Fig. 70

Design Lino, ABC 1906 (after Indonesian design "Tambal Miring"). Archive ABC (A RV-B110-2) Photo: Helen Elands. Courtesy of Helen Elands and ABC, Hyde.

Incommensurate T-shirts: Art/Economy from Senegal to the United States

Leslie Rabine

Fig. 71

Streetwear designer Poulo (Mohamadou El Amine Diallo) sets up his heat-film laser printer in Dakar, Senegal, April 2015. Photo: Leslie Rabine.

Fig. 72

Graffiti artist Kemp Ndao prepares a T-shirt for heat-film transfer on the press in Poulo's first atelier in Dakar, Senegal. February 2012. Photo: Leslie Rabine.

Fig. 73

Graffiti artist Nourou (Mohamadou Nouroul Anwar Ndiaye) at a graffiti festival in Saint-Louis du Sénégal, December 2015. Photo: Leslie Rabine.

Fig. 74

Nourou, working at the atelier, has designed a T-shirt inscribed with "RSPCT EVRYBDY / TRST NBDY/ Build'Other," Dakar, Senegal, February 2017. Photo: Leslie Rabine.

Fig. 75

Nourou, at the atelier in Dakar, separates the laser-cut design element from the sheet of heat-film, March 2017. Photo: Leslie Rabine.

Fig. 76

Nourou places a piece of heat-film design element on a T-shirt before pressing it, March 2017. Photo: Leslie Rabine.