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Abstract

Architecture and fashion are charged with the responsibility of protecting the human body. Beyond this obvious pragmatic canon, there is the fundamental idea that the identity of a person, as well as a group, is defined by not only what they wear, but also how and where they live. These basic properties - protection and identity – are two of the main seams likening the disciplines of fashion and architecture. The history of nomadic tent structures, as well as the socially sensitive work of contemporary artists and architects, provides support to the argument that protection and identity are vital to sustenance of every living individual.

Historically, fashion and architecture have shared a cultured vernacular expressed through common forms and surface ornament. This language will be made clear through a comparative study of fashion and architecture through Western art. Further, diverse cultures evident in Paris and India will be described through their products of material culture. These products - fashion and architecture - will be examined for aesthetic parallels.

Due to recent political upheaval, there is a new, First World state of heightened awareness for an autonomous means of gestalt protection. Extending beyond this, there is the continual need for immediate protection by the destitute living anywhere from Cincinnati to Mumbai. Regardless of the location or financing, contemporary designers are called to find a new solution to the problems of isolation and exposure.

Acknowledgements

I am continually thankful and amazed at the continual blessings imparted to me through divine circumstance, as well as those given to me by my woven circle of family, friends, advisors and colleagues extending across continents.

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Introduction

Architecture and fashion are charged with the responsibility of protecting the human body. Beyond this obvious pragmatic canon, there is the fundamental idea that the identity of a person, as well as a group, is defined by not only what they wear, but also how and where they live. These fundamental properties - protection and identity - will form two of the main seams likening the disciplines of fashion and architecture.

In less of an anthropological vein, fashion and architecture may also be compared through a study of common forms and surface ornament. The concern of form will be the main purpose in chapter two, as the forms of fashion and architecture are compared through the traditional chronology of Western art history. Chapters five and six provide examples of forms and surfaces of architecture and fashion in the vastly diverse cultures of Paris and India. Beyond form and surface, these two cultures are contrasted as the cultural epitomes of transience and stasis.

In certain instances, the disciplines of fashion and architecture have assumed properties more strongly associated with the other. Chapter three features a contemporary history of artists and fashion designers who use transformable clothing as a means for protective housing and communal identity. Chapter four is a short summary of the use of fabric as house by traditional nomadic peoples. This transience offered by fabric and used by traveling people for thousands of years speaks to our contemporary society of rapid change.

The disciplines of fashion and architecture have been linked since the dawn of time. One need look no further than at simple root words. In German, “wand” translates to “wall”, while “gewand” means “dress”. In regard to fabric or textile, it is the shared

medium of both fashion and architecture. Fashion and architecture are disciplines of three dimensions. Textiles, by nature, are malleable two-dimensional surfaces, whether printed or woven, that may be sculpted into three-dimensional forms.

As products of material culture, fashion and architecture have born the identification marks of social groups. The marking is undeniable and a subjective tendency. Strong cultures have retained an unmistakable aesthetic in spite of foreign occupation. India is a perfect example of this character. Other contemporary societies define themselves by the piecemeal cultural acquisitions, whether tangible or in spirit, that, blended, form an unmistakable, powerful aesthetic. The city of Paris is one founded on contributions of many cultures. It was established by Louis XIV as the capital of fashion culture, and serves as the epitome of time arts, expressed most immediately through its infinite churning by fashion houses for the most recent products to be donned by the flesh. Paris was one of the first cities to host a World's Fair. These fairs, as they included the erection of countless elaborate structures, only for the purpose of later destruction, midwived the conception of transient architecture, or architecture subject to fashion and time.

Time, technology and a dissolution of social solidarity have led to the reality that contemporary people know only the constant of change. As this fact has become known, so a shifting aesthetic in both architecture and fashion has followed. Regarding architecture, massive historical precedent was established through the global use of tents in nomadic architecture. This archetype has inspired contemporary theorists, such as Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari and Krystof Wodiczko, to advance the social structure evident in tribal nomadism as a path toward contemporary social activism.

Postulating a mobile architecture, an architecture defined by gravity and fashion forced to pull the weight of both traditions, is now not unbelievable. Fashion, like architecture inspired by the antithesis of what it has known to be, is enjoying a new freedom of exposed seams and the contorted body as a subject worthy of the pedestal. In sum, fashion and architecture will be compared through the text by any one of the four lenses: form, surface ornament, protection and identity.

Chapter One: Architectural Theorists Lift the Skirt

Architecture, as a discipline, has been interpreted through history to be unmistakably masculine. Textiles, as a microcosm, and fashion, as a macrocosm, have traditionally been thought of as impermanent, ephemeral and feminine. Fashion, in the context of this research, is simply defined as clothing for the body.

Forwarded by historians, architecture's goal was the production of an object for eternity conceived by a solitary male genius. The female product, by contrast, was often made in seclusion or in the quiet, communal craft environment. When architecture had been described, it was white and erected by people following the believed perfect master plans described for them. The origins of architecture have been described by numerous theorists and historians. Fissures in this fictional, idealized masculine form have been forged by a number of writers, including Vitruvius, Gottfried Semper, Anni Albers, Adolf Loos, and Le Corbusier. Especially influential theorists of the last ten years, including Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, have brought the pristine, white, masculine giant of architecture to its knees. Contemporary architects and fashion designers are now operating on nearly a parallel aesthetic inspired by aggressive impermanence.

Vitruvius' main contribution to the discipline of architecture was his manuscript, *Ten Books on Architecture*. In this writing, Vitruvius maintained that solidity and permanence were indispensable canons that architects could not dismiss. However, by the ninth book, Vitruvius described war machines and introduced the symbol of the turtle. As the turtle's shell is protective, which is ideal in times of duress, it is also a mobile

structure. Hence, nomadism was something not beyond Vitruvius' consideration. The tenth book in Vitruvius' series delineates methods and machines for destroying buildings. Keeping in line with militaristic thought, who better than Vitruvius to relinquish the Achilles' heel of potentially foreign architectures? The sequence within the *Ten Books on Architecture* prophesizes the entire historical movement of architecture up to the present day. Today, we know buildings to be erected and demolished within a quarter century. As labor costs for construction continue to soar, while quality and durability of architectural materials continue to diminish, the upholding of Vitruvius' ideals of permanence set out in the first few books of the ten will be exceedingly difficult to uphold.

Vitruvius, a renowned hero of architecture, largely owes his fame to the fact that he helped to continue the notions of architectural longevity by prescribing steps for architects to follow. A less heralded figure of architectural theory is Gottfried Semper (1803-1879). Semper traced both the Western and non-Western roots of architecture to the concept of rugs and tapestries, fixed in place by rigid armatures. From 1860-1863, Semper wrote "Style in the Tectonic Arts or Practical Aesthetics." This writing's main argument was that textiles were the prime means of organizing space. The origin of the wall had its foundations in cladding, or clothing the body through felt robes of braided and twisted fibers. Semper argued that the entire history of architecture could be summarized through the story of exchanged materials and continual reinforcement of the robe (or walls). Semper described the knot as the fundamental component that textiles, fashion and architecture must thank. In Gottfried Semper's "Principle of Dressing," he stated that the essence of architecture is covering rather than material structure.

Architecture begins with ornament.¹ Semper went so far as to explain that the only difference between the Sistine Chapel and cut of man's suit was social space.²

Anni Albers, a renowned weaver of the early 20th century and primary instructor in the field at the Bauhaus, shared a viewpoint very similar to Semper's regarding the similarity of weaving and architecture. She wrote, "Surface quality of material, that is *matiere*, being mainly a quality of appearance, is an aesthetic quality and therefore a medium of the artist; while the quality of inner structure is, above all, a matter of function and therefore the concern of the scientist and engineer. Sometimes material surface together with material structure are the main components of a work; in textile works for instance, specifically in weavings or, on another scale, in works of architecture."³ This theoretical introduction of weaving as the basis of architectural form served not as the solitary force against the pedestal upon which architecture sits. The theoretical investigation of ornament and its motives for employment, were frighteningly similar, whether the context was the body, fashion or architecture.

Adolf Loos, theorist, is most clearly remembered for his text, *Crime and Ornament*. In the writings, he came out clearly against decoration. "The nemesis of this ideal, is the architecture that is encased in ornamental frivolity. Architecture, fashion, and even the body itself have been used as canvases for decoration and ornamentation." Further, Loos specified in his "Law of Dressing," written in 1898, that architectural dressings should not simulate the surfaces they cover. Mark Wigley interpreted this

¹ Mark Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), pp.1.

² *Ibid*, pp. 26.

³ Lloyd E. Herman, *The Woven and Graphic Art of Anni Albers*, (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985), pp. 30.

statement to the severity that a person's perception of a building becomes the perception of its accessories. In other words, we understand the robe or "cladding."⁴

Loos, also in the 1898 "Law of Dressing," explained, "The architect's general task is to provide a warm and livable space. Carpets are warm and livable. He decides for this reason to spread out one carpet on the floor and to hang up four to form the walls. But you cannot build a house out of carpets. Both the carpet on the floor and the tapestry on the wall require a structural frame to hold them in the correct place. To invent this frame is the architect's second task. This is the correct and logical path to be followed in architecture. It was in this sequence that mankind learned how to build. In the beginning was dressing."⁵

Loos, after he admitted this revolutionary sequence for architects, brought the disciplines of architecture and fashion under one roof. Through the story of Diogenes, who had cast off all his clothes only to be protected by a barrel, Loos made this point clear. He explained, "It is a model of purification and the fundamental identity between clothing and housing. The rejection of decoration is not a rejection of clothing. On the contrary, architecture is clothing. Modern architecture, like all the many sciences of artificial limbs, is a form of tailoring."⁶ Because Loos, and his contemporary, Louis Sullivan, did not want the eradication of ornament, and even regarded ornament as necessary, they were thought to have weakened the discipline of architecture itself.⁷

⁴ Wigley, pp. 10.

⁵ Ibid, pp. 18.

⁶ Ibid, pp. 19.

⁷ Ibid, pp. 63.

Furthering the discussion on Loos, he, like Semper, liked to compare the architecture of houses and with the dress of the owners.⁸ Loos was not the only one, as many architects of the last 150 years have designed for the gestalt experience. William Morris, writer, designer and major leader of the Arts and Crafts Movement, helped to reestablish handcrafts as important in light of the Industrial movement. The reign of Queen Victoria in England called for a resurgence of corsets and other binding clothes unfriendly to the normally proportioned body. Morris believed that dresses should not be scaffolding, but rather move and flow with the body. Morris, Rosetti and other pre-Raphaelites helped, through their paintings and designs for clothing, to establish loose, feminine dresses more conducive to health, as a desirable commodity. Morris was sensitive to the health of bodies as well as the environment, for he argued for the use of natural dyes over more damaging synthetic dyes. Morris designed textiles that were used also for residential textiles—whether curtains, wallcovering or upholstery fabric. These products, as they were not durable, were viewed as feminine and changing. Hence, ornament was affected by time, which was supposedly opposite of Vitruvius’ ideal of unchanging structure.

Two architects following in the path of Morris were Henry van de Velde and Josef Hoffmann. Henry Van de Velde was known primarily for his use of incredibly intricate organic designs in architectural spaces. One critic of the architect went so far as to say, “The problem with Van de Velde is not simply that he designs dresses but that he

⁸ Ibid, pp. 60.

confuses the specific demands of architecture with those of dresses.”⁹ Josef Hoffmann, a professor at the Bauhaus, entertained a wide range of disciplines, including fashion.

Le Corbusier, premier architect of the early twentieth century, wielded his theories about the discipline of fashion. In 1925, he relayed his raw thoughts through *The Decorative Art of Today*. Included was a report on the work of the pre-Raphaelites, which he considered, “muses” of organic study and decorative ornament. Le Corbusier believed that the influence of World War I crushed these natural tendencies toward organic study. Of primary concern was industry and the “machine for living” or the house. Architecture was of emotional and physical need, function and culture.¹⁰ Further, Le Corbusier targeted Morris’ belief that the sterility of the machine age should be fought through decorating items of everyday use. “Culture is a progression towards the inner life. Gilt decoration and precious stones are the work of the tamed savage who is still alive in us.”¹¹

Beyond the harsh aesthetic realities swept in through the First World War, Le Corbusier decided that the need for decoration was simply a means to fill the boredom. “First of all regularity, our daily bread. Then background noise to fill in the holes, the emptiness. Musical noise, coloured noise, embroidered or batiked noise.”¹² Beyond this minor entertainment decoration provided, Le Corbusier regarded decoration to be quite base and not of concern to the cultured person. He haughtily proclaimed, “the more

⁹ Ibid, pp. 73.

¹⁰ Le Corbusier, *L’art Decorative D’aujourd’hui* (Paris: Editions G Gres et Cie, 1925) pp. 135.

¹¹ Ibid, pp. 12.

¹² Ibid, pp. 30.

cultivated a people becomes, the more decoration disappears.”¹³ Further, he said, “The naked man does not wear an embroidered waistcoat; he wishes to think. The naked man is a constituted being, who has not need of trinkets. His mechanism is founded on logic.”¹⁴ Saying this with the thought of a pure Diogenes wearing a barrel, Le Corbusier coupled fashion with decoration and advised on the complete eradication of both.

With the advancement of society, Le Corbusier was not unaware of the rise of capitalism. The industrialist said, ... ‘Quite clearly, for an acceptable price I can only produce junk. But decoration will save me; let us cover everything with decoration. Let us hide the junk beneath decoration; decoration hides flaws, blemishes, all defects.’ Desperate inspiration and commercial triumph...Folk culture no longer exists, only ornament on mass-produced junk. Everywhere!’¹⁵ As a solution, Le Corbusier proposed rash recommendations for the purification of decoration. His fantasized “Law of Ripolin” ordered that every citizen would put up white ripolin in place of each individual patterned fabric or paper within the home, for the benefit of cleanliness and purity.¹⁶ Le Corbusier stated most emphatically, “Whitewash is extremely moral.”¹⁷ Le Corbusier’s ethical sensitivity was not far from Morris’ homily for the return of handicrafts and healthy fashion. This awareness held by recent designers has continued to the present day and will be investigated further in chapter three.

Though the field has been considered stereotypically masculine, architectural theorists have revealed the inherent similarity between fashion and architecture, with

¹³ Ibid, pp. 85.

¹⁴ Ibid, pp. 23.

¹⁵ Ibid, pp. 54-57.

¹⁶ Ibid, pp. 188.

textiles as the common means between. In regard to surface, Le Corbusier denied that architecture needed decoration or ornament. However, he wrote the *Decorative Art of Today* for the 1925 World's Fair in Paris. Hence, Le Corbusier attempted to maintain architecture's masculine aesthetic. Wigley, in *White Walls, Designer Dresses*, stated that the problem was not the feminine, but rather the identification of the feminine within the masculine.

¹⁷ Ibid, pp. 192.

Chapter 2: Linen to Tyvek: The History of Fashion through Architecture

Architectural theorists have admitted that fashion and architecture have similar origins in the woven textile and decorative ornament. As this is true, so the comparison of aesthetic forms through Western art history will prove the disciplines an even closer match.

As many early cultures began with first shelter in the cave, so the clothing was also preformed by the skeleton of the animals from which the skins originated. With time, autonomous structures, such as huts and eventually tents, were constructed. Likewise, clothing eventually was woven rather than pieced. As Egypt is one of the first cultures about which we have detailed, written clothing and architectural records, the comparison of aesthetic form between fashion and architecture in Western art will commence there.

In Egyptian times, the use of natural materials in building construction was necessary and commonplace. As architecture for permanence – immortality even – was needed, structures were eventually built from stone. Not abandoning the idea of natural papyrus and lotus especially, these forms were carved from stone to mimic the real, natural materials. As these two plants held symbolic and sacred value with the Lower and Upper regions of Egypt, so other materials, such as flax, were reserved for special use. Most notably, worshippers paying homage to the protective goddess, Isis, were required to wear linen. The translucent dresses crossed one breast, gathered high at the waist, and fell with relative straightness to the ankles.

Other symbols used in Egyptian architecture and clothing were also associated with the Upper and Lower regions of Egypt. The cobra symbolized Lower Egypt and may be found as an edge detail on one Old Kingdom temple at the Saqqara complex. The vulture symbolized Upper Egypt, and may be seen along with the cobra on the New Kingdom mask of Tutankhamun.

Like the Egyptians, simplicity was the hallmark of Greek dress. The fabric was wrapped many times, and gathered or thrown over the shoulder. The primary gift of the Greeks was their establishment of fluted columns that so gracefully swelled mid way to enable visual correction. Regardless of the type of capital, whether plain Doric, Ionic equipped with symmetrical volutes, or Corinthian with organic acanthus leaves, their legacy is not forgotten. Flowing, pleated fashions of the day mimicked the simply fluted columns, and the female swell of the hips may even have been inspiration for entasis, or the slight widening of columns in the center to account for vertical visual distortion.

Francois Boucher noted, “The Greeks transposed into costume the dominant ideas of their architecture, particularly until the end of the fifth century B.C. The dress of the day reinforced the notion of columnar stability and permanence. There was no evidence of dressmakers or tailors, for the simplicity of the fabric and fashion of the time. From one single piece of cloth, many configurations were possible.”¹⁸

Twentieth century fashion designers were very inspired by Greek dress and the idea of the column. Mariano Fortuny was born in Spain in 1871. A few years after his birth, he moved to Paris. By 1897, he had already been recognized within the fashion

¹⁸ Francois Boucher, *20,000 Years of Fashion: The History of Costume and Personal Adornment*, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1965), pp. 103.

industry. In 1910, Fortuny showed a columnar dress, with a high waist and taper at the knee. The dress puddled to the floor, disguising the feet. It is as if the piece were designed for stoic caryatids that had no need of mobility. In the 1920s, Fortuny made sleeveless Delphos and Peplos gowns. He used ribbed gauze dyed in muted shades.



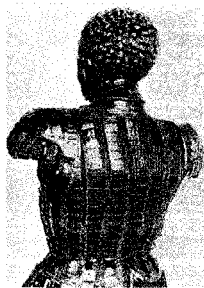
Pleated Classical Dress, Madame Gres

Germaine Emilie Krebs was born in 1903 in Paris, France. Frustrated in her ambition to become a sculptor, she began her career by making dresses with one millimeter pleats. Eventually, the designer became known as Madame Gres. In 1958, she came out with a dress of subtle vanilla white. Dense pleating mimicked slivered fluting that was gathered at the natural waist and asymmetrically led to the left shoulder by means of chunky braiding.

Roberto Capucci was born in Rome, Italy, on December 2, 1930, and studied at the Accademia delle Belle Arti. In 1990, Roberto Capucci showed column sheath dresses at the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence. The majority of the dresses shown were simple, neutral stories of a waist gathering and a fall of pleated fabric to the ankles.

Roman dress was inspired by the Greek simplicity of form. The Romans, in their conquest of broad lands, came to need an efficient military costume. The chest was protected by the cuirass, constructed of leather and articulated metal plates. This was worn over a short tunic and cropped, tight trousers known as perizoma. The helmets were round and equipped with cheek guards.¹⁹

The Romans were incredible engineers and marked every corner of their empire with roads, bridges and especially arches. The Romans made use of the arch not alone, but extended it to form a barrel vault and even a crossed arch, otherwise known as a groin vault. The arch was rotated in a circle to form a hemisphere, the most famous of which is Hadrian's Pantheon erected in 72 C.E. In this ceiling, as well as that of the later rectilinear Christian basilicas, a repeated motif, such as a square, was manipulated to form a coffered ceiling. The Romans made good use of their famous concrete, which enabled them to build with brick and mortar for the first time. The Romans, then, whether repeating stones in a half circle to form an arch, or repeating squares in a ceiling, made use of the linear sequence and grid pattern.



Roman Armor

¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 117.

The design of armor varied according to region, but repousse, or hammered metal decorations, became a common design element used to mimic embroidered fabric. The small embroidery designs were an element transferred to metal, as well as the large pleats evident in fine fabrics. For example, this armor worn by Henry V, 1512-13, of Vienna, featured metal that undulated like pleated fabric. A similar aesthetic may be paralleled with the 1996 work by Michiko Koshino. This “City Sports” collection was one that could be inflated.²⁰



Henry V Parade Armor, 1512-13

Interpreted in the twentieth century, “armor” has become less pragmatic. In 1933, Emanuel Ungaro was born to Italian parents in Aix-de-Provence, France. His father, Cosimo Ungaro, was a tailor who fled fascism in Italy to raise his family in the French countryside. Ungaro left his family for Paris to begin his

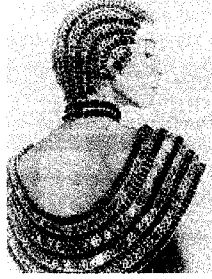
²⁰ Sarah E. Braddock and Marie O’Mahony, *Techno Textiles: Revolutionary fabrics for Fashion and Design*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998) pp. 121.

career as a fashion designer. In 1965, Emanuel Ungaro constructed a dress made of chainmail, which made reference to both his Italian heritage and Roman armor.

Francisco de Rabanne da Cuervo (Paco Rabanne) was born in San Sebastian, Spain in 1934. His mother was the lead seamstress at the Spanish salon of Balenciaga. During the Spanish civil war, the family moved to France. Rabanne studied architecture at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, Paris and graduated in 1964. This architectural background certainly contributed to Rabanne's famous aesthetic of cladding the body with regulated plates. Paco Rabanne's 1967 minidress of hammered aluminum, directly referenced the Roman military uniform of leather and metal plating. Rabanne also created a matching helmet and collar constructed of plastic and steel for his winter 1981-1982 collection. Paris Fashion Week, held in October 2003, again featured these plated dresses for the Spring 2004 collection, this time interpreted by Rosemary Rodriguez for the house of Rabanne.



Rabanne's 1967 minidress of hammered aluminum



Rabanne's helmet and collar, 1982

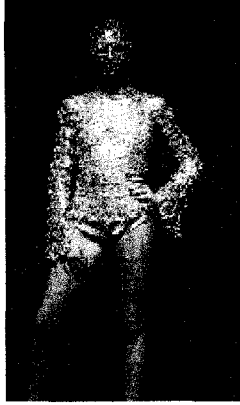
On July 6, 1922, Pierre Cardin was born to French parents in San Biagio di Callalta, outside Venice. By 1950, Cardin had moved to France to begin his longstanding design career. Pierre Cardin's "Cardine" minidress of 1968 is constructed from revolutionary Dynel and bears reticulated pointed squares, punched from behind consistent with metal repousse.²¹

Roberto Capucci enjoyed the inspiration of dramatic form, whether it was a spiral staircase or armor with exaggerated, ballooning arms. "Roben wie Rustungen" of 1990, was a dress of tufted, alternating black and white sleeves, which began their initial circumference at a tailored waist of fine black and white horizontal banding.²² This contemporary work made direct aesthetic reference to Medieval armor with plated arms.

Shaun Leane, emerging fashion and jewelry designer, interpreted the Roman military uniform into a feminine façade for a contemporary public.

²¹ Boucher, pp. 433.

²² Roberto Capucci, *Timeless Creativity*. (Milan: Stazione Editore, 2001), pp.12.



Shaun Leane, Armor

With the Roman conquest of foreign lands came the understanding and appreciation of luxurious textiles. Trading especially with Egypt and the Far East was important. Chinese silk was brought to Byzantium until 522 C.E. when missionary monks imported silkworm cocoons, enabling local production of the material. Some of the embroidery, tapestry and weaving techniques were also employed in the new Empire. This interest in ornamentation did not subside until the twentieth century.

The Middle Ages were a time of religion and kingdoms. The dress of royalty became even more richly ornamented than it had known during the times of Roman conquest. The body became an armature for dizzying repetition. Every human joint became a point of emphasis, especially the waist and collar for both men and women. Ornamentation and detailing similarly may be seen in the attention paid in the construction of palaces and churches. Typical medieval churches were the heart of the city, and association with the king was not far from similar central concern.

Common to church archetypes was the bell tower or campanile. A similar concern with the vertical in costume is evident in the medieval steeple headdress. The headdresses come to a high conical point, and were often embellished

with complementary planes or layers of sheer fabrics.²³ Other hats common of the time are equal in vertical concern, but bear less of a definitive constructional parallel. Head adornment of the late 1600s was more layered and integrated the curl and plasticity of hair with the feathered cranial accoutrements.²⁴ Other structural additions include a large white collar or ruff, typical to both men and women of the late 1500s and 1600s. Often the ruff was rigid and made a half arc or fully circumscribed the head.

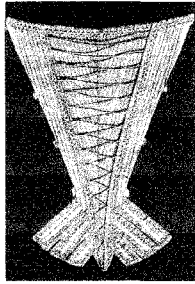


Coiffures and Headdresses of the 1700s

²³ Mary G. Houston, *Medieval Costume in England and France: The 13th, 14th and 15th Centuries*. (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996), pp.32.

²⁴ Boucher, pp. 263.

To aid in the accent of the waist, two opposing structural devices – the corset and the pannier - came into use under the finished top clothes. The corset, stomacher or corps pique employed the use of whalebone and criss-crossed ribbons to ensure the tight clenching of every substance of the torso. Evidence of the corset continued well into the late nineteenth century.²⁵



Corset

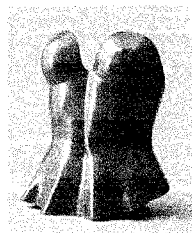
Fashion designers of the twentieth century have taken the corset as form for pure revelation. In 1952 Jean Paul Gaultier was born in Arcueil, near Paris and studied at the Lycee d'Arcueil. When only 14, in 1964 he started sketching his fashion ideas on paper, and, by the age of 18, was invited to work with Pierre Cardin. He has been designing for his own fashion house since 1977. Jean Paul Gaultier appropriately outfitted Madonna in 1990 with only corsets and brassieres, interpreted in their most severe form of aggressive pointed fabric.

²⁵ Ibid, pp. 403.



Jean Paul Gaultier, Madonna 1990.

The corset provided wide design inspiration for designers other than Gaultier. Issey Miyake was born in Hiroshima, Japan in 1939. He graduated from the University of Tokyo in 1964, and by 1965 he moved to Paris to study design at the Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne. In 1966 he left to work as an assistant designer at Guy Laroche and by 1969, Miyake moved to design in New York. Issey Miyake interpreted the corset, and more immediately, the structure of the human torso as container. His plastic bodice from 1980 is a statement of the inflexible female ideal, as well as the ideal of commercial packaging of the consumer-centered 1980's.²⁶



Issey Miyake, Bustier, 1983

²⁶ Christopher Breward, *Fashion*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) pp.97.

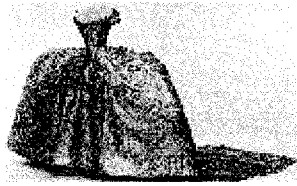
In 1970, Alexander McQueen was born the youngest of six children to working class parents in England. In 1986 he left school and headed for Savile Row, the famous tailoring street of London. There he mastered the art of tailoring. He spent time working for theatrical costumers Bermans and Nathans. He also worked for Koji Tatsuno and for Romeo Gigli. In 1993 McQueen took his M.A. in Fashion Design from Central St. Martins College, London. By 1997, McQueen was asked to design for Givenchy in Paris. In 1998, Alexander McQueen, in his typically raw style, designed a clear female corset for Givenchy, complete with butterflies floating a over visible chest, only disrupted by a masculine, opaque suit jacket with a tapered waist.²⁷ McQueen has continued with his signature, brazen designs especially for the Spring 2004 Givenchy collection.



Alexander McQueen's Clear Corset, 1998

²⁷ Ibid, pp. 234.

Returning to the idealized body of the 1700s, the corset tightened the waist, while additions were made to the hips. The pannier was a stiff underskirt with metal or boned hoops. The source of inspiration for the pannier is debated. Some believe the origin was in England with the hoop petticoat of 1714, while other reports cite that it originated in Parisian theater costumes of 1715. Between 1725 and 1730, panniers took the shape of an oval bell and reached a circumference of eleven feet. The panniers remained in vogue during the reign of Louis XV and until the end of the time of Louis XVI.²⁸ Width to skirting reemerged with the reign of Queen Victoria. In spite of an increase in industry as well as initial violent opposition in England, the wearing of broad crinolines, petticoats and underskirts became popular in the mid to late 1800s.



1700s Dress with Pannier Support

An architectural parallel may be found in sacred structures. First, like the hennin hat and bell tower were similar forms of medieval times, so the church dome may have provided inspiration for introduction of ballooning skirts. An idea for the support of the skirts may have also originated with the arched flying buttresses exemplified in Gothic architecture.

²⁸Boucher, pp. 296.

Unavoidable material for contemporary inspiration, a number of twentieth century fashion designers reinterpreted the pannier and petticoat. Cristobal Balenciaga created an evening coat in 1939 that was a simple look back at the historical fact of dramatic waist emphasis. Similarly, by 1958, Balenciaga created a flared train that started above the bosom and lacked any consideration of an upper support. The entire dress was a play on the emphasis of the posterior.²⁹

Whether referring historically to the pannier or to a more architecturally inspired Roman arch, Roberto Capucci wittingly created a work of complete originality in 1995, entitled *Sagenite*. Here, a bodice with crisply defined cylindrical sleeves, was defined through concentric circling of gold braided rope. A slightly flaring sheet of soft gold satin fell to the floor, but was interrupted by four bending planes stemming from the waist.

Yamamoto was born in 1943 in Yokohama, Japan and graduated from Keio University in 1966. He collaborated with Rei Kawakubo and eventually opened his own Paris boutique in 1981. Yohji Yamamoto, in the work for his 1998 collection, designed a wedding dress and hat so large that they required structural buttressing by attendants. This exaggerated work references the historical photo of a woman being dressed in her pannier. The poles make direct reference to structural support evident in Gothic architectural buttressing.

Like Yamamoto, French industrial designer and architect, Philippe Starke, liked to play with the idea of outrageous scale. In Starke's *Delano* of Miami, Florida, he

²⁹ Breward, pp. 84.

constructed monstrous pendant lamps and highback sofas, so that the participant felt like Alice in Wonderland, always unaware of her size and environment.

Contemporary Los Angeles designer Lun*na Menoh, in her “Spring and Summer Collection 1770-1998”, displayed in 1998, made reference to structural clothing of earlier times. In this installation, translucent clothing of similar color hung from sheer cylinders attached at the ceiling. The sheer quality of the fabric gave an eerie feeling that the clothes belonged to ghosts. Armature, including hoops and panniers, are visible through the sheer fabric.³⁰

A remarkable twentieth century link to this contemporary vision of transparency and wire form is evident through the work of Paul Poiret (1879-1944). Specifically, his Lampshade Dress of 1912 included a neoclassic story of loosely falling pleats. A sheer tunic, pulled at the waist, flared broadly at the hips and was further accentuated by a band of fur.³¹ Poiret's clothes were revolutionary and modern. His last major success was at the Exposition des Arts Decoratifs (Art Deco) in 1925.

Like Menoh and Poiret, changing phases of translucency in architecture are one of the main concerns of contemporary architect Toyo Ito. Exemplified in his project “Tower of the Winds,” the simple, cylindrical building changes levels of opacity with the strength of wind against the structure.

³⁰ Ibid, pp. 15.

³¹ Ibid, pp.37.

Change is the concern of many contemporary fashion designers. For example, Turkish born Hussein Chalayan made a dress in 1999 complete with remote controlled movable panels, similar to those found on airplanes. This brings to light not only the issue of change, but also the machine and the dynamic of control by a foreign entity.



Chalayan, Airplane Dress 1999

Aesthetic form is one means of comparison between fashion and architecture. This argument is continued further in chapter seven, with discussion of modern architects and fashion designers inspired greatly by the aggressive contemporary writings of Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari.

Chapter 3: Clothing as House and Protection

Protection is innate. Most immediately, the body itself acts as housing for new bodies. Beverly Semmons, former University of Cincinnati textiles professor, said in one of her classes, “The human torso is the greatest container ever created.” Hence, as the primary experience of the continuation of the race is the experience of housing bodies, so the occupation of clothing may be likened to this fundamental association of protection. We fundamentally know architecture because the female body is reproductive; bodies house bodies. From this, clothing protects the outer body and housing protects the clothed body.

Many contemporary artists and fashion designers have understood the fact that we live in a society surrounded with technological opportunities and plenty, yet the communal aspect of society and family is disintegrating. Some theorists argue that this need for identity and belonging is as humanly needed as much as physical protection from the elements.

A few contemporary artists have used the medium of fabric as a way to restore social connection and foster ideas of protection and warmth to a lonely public. This was made most clear through the work of Lygia Clark and Joseph Beuys, artists and activists of the 1960s. In the last ten years, two major fashion designers, Lucy Orta and Kosuke Tsumura, have taken inspiration from Clark and Beuys, to create fashions that meet both programmatic needs of protection as well as social identification and connection.

Fashion and architecture are similar through aesthetic form, surface ornament, protection and identity. The summary of western fashion and architecture in chapter two compared the similarity of aesthetic forms of the two disciplines. This chapter highlights the similarity of fashion and architecture through the elements of protection and identity.

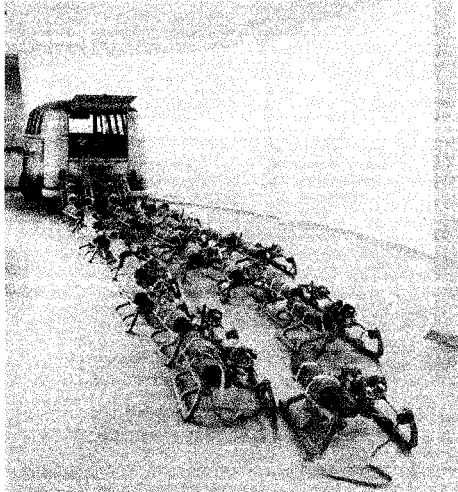
Fashion and architecture have traditionally shared the programmatic responsibilities of protecting the body. Fashion, for reasons of proximity, has been the first line of protective defense for the body. Secondly, architecture has protected clothes that protected bodies. Inspired by the changing roles of architecture, technology and traditional living arrangements, a few fashion designers have risen to the challenge to create clothing that can function in its traditional roles as well as serve as connecting residential structures. Not only the conjoined forms, but also the surface materials have allowed for this radical bridge of disciplines.

Beyond the architectural tent form as a means of inspiration for fashion, the social messages fundamental to many of the artists of the 1960s, was something that these contemporary fashion designers sought to incorporate into their works of art. The social message put forward was one of communal embracing and identification.

Textiles, as a discipline and a medium, fill a great semiotic purpose. As a woven form, textiles symbolize the construction of a flexible solid made from many individual parts. Also, textiles, as they are primarily needed by the body to help sustain warmth, unquestionably conjure the idea of comfort and protection.

Through the medium of textiles, a few artists have communicated these ideas of protection and social identity. Joseph Beuys was one of the proponents of art as compassionate action. Beuys owed his life to nomadic Tartars of Crimea, who found his

unconscious and frozen body after his WWII fighter plane crashed. The Tartars wrapped him in felt and fat and nurtured him back to life. The experience allowed Beuys a new appreciation of life and motivation for the message of compassion in the otherwise cold world. Beuys often employed the materials used to save his life in works.



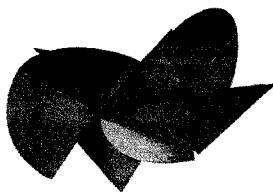
Joseph Beuys, *The Pack*, 1969

A 1969 work by Beuys employed the idea of warmth, care and protection via the use of the important Tartan life-saving media of fat and felt. In this work, entitled "The Pack," Beuys used twenty sleds with rolled up felt, a case of fat for nourishment and a flashlight. These objects for rescue were organized as if a pack of sled dogs, journeying across frigid regions. The piece lent the idea of rescue and preparedness in the case of an emergency.³²

Beuys fervently proposed that there should be no distinction between art and life. By the fortunate experience of his life rescue, Beuys understood the need to restore the

idea of comfort and protection to a world of often isolated individuals. Further, Beuys brought the idea of warmth to the austere world of art that had been on the path to continual reduction and rationalization. Beuys stretched his arms open to all when he proclaimed that “Everyone is an artist.” This warmth was outrageous, as it was in direct opposition to the tradition of snobbishness in art history and contemporary art circles.

Similar in the need to reintroduce life into the cold body of the art world, Lygia Clark made sculptures to invigorate the senses and communal identity. Lygia Clark (1920-1988) lived in Rio de Janeiro the majority of her life, with the exception of a short time in Paris. She worked closely with Helio Oiticica (1937-1980), whose works and life paralleled Clark’s. Clark began with simple black, white and gray paintings created in the 1950s. Clark “folded” these two dimensional planes into hinged sculptures and named them Bichos, which translates to Animals or Beasts. Bichos were made to be manipulated by viewers.



Lygia Clark, Bicho, aluminum, 22x26 in, 1962.

This idea of viewer participation continued to her next series of works of the mid 1960s, entitled “Nostalgia of the Body.” With this series, Clark began with the Mobius strip. This band is known to have no beginning or end, inside, outside, front or back.

³² <http://arts-sciences.cua.edu/art/nmh/332/njc/joseph.htm>, October 2003.

Taking it further, the strip was a symbol of reversible, continuous, limitless space. Hand Dialogue, from 1966, employs the Mobius strip as a means for sensory dialogue.



Lygia Clark, Hand Dialogue, 1966, shown with Clark's and Oiticica's hands inside the elastic Mobius strip.

This is just one work of her many from the Nostalgia of the Body, which concentrated on the experience of two-person sensory investigations. "Abyss Mask" from 1968 is also part of this series. A mesh net covered the head, and the eyes were blindfolded. Stones in plastic bags were attached to the mesh nets, which allowed the viewer a sense of weight. These concerns – texture, weight, scale, temperature, sound and movement – were the variables Clark liked to exert upon bodily systems.



Lygia Clark, Mascara Abismo (Abyss Mask), 1968.

Clark moved to Paris in 1968 due to traumatic events in Brazil. She taught at the Sorbonne from 1970-1975. During this time, she worked with her students to create a body of work she entitled Organic or Ephemeral Architectures. Clark called these events “rites without myths.” One of the works in this series was called Baba Antropofágica, which translates to “Dribble,” “Anthropophagic Drool” or “Cannibal Spit.” The concept for this work came from Clark’s dream of an unknown material endlessly flowing from her mouth for purpose of the loss of her own self. Participants in the work placed a small amount of thread in their mouths and unwound it onto a person who lay on the ground. The experience was supposed to symbolize the relinquishment of psychological burdens.



Lygia Clark, Baba Antropofágica (Anthropophagic Drool), 1973, collective creation with students at the Sorbonne in Paris.

Like Beuys and Clark, a few fashion designers have committed themselves to the creation of products for communal identification and protection from the environment. Two prominent figures in the field are Lucy Orta and Kosuke Tsumura.

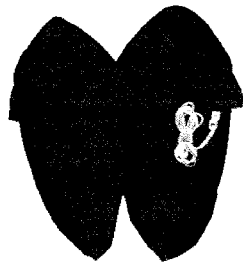
Inspired by 1970s paradigm of social sculpture, Lucy Orta (b. 1966) opened her Paris studio in 1991 for the creation of public activist artworks. Orta's first project, “Refuge Wear,” was developed during therapeutic workshops with the homeless. Orta

dialoged with the homeless to come up with urban survival designs.³³ Orta's first collection, "Refuge Wear", was a pragmatic version of Beuys' 1969 work, "The Pack." This collection featured clothing that transformed into sleeping bags and first aid units for nomadic populations. In 1994, the Modern Art Museum in Paris featured Orta's "Collective Wear" sculptures which were domed tents with appendages. "Collective Wear" was followed by her most recognized "Nexus Architecture" project, which was included in the Venice Biennale of 1995, the Johannesburg Biennale of 1997, the Museum of Contemporary Art Sydney 1998, as well as many other exhibits throughout the world. In 2002, Orta was commissioned by both the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, as well as the Centre for Contemporary Arts in Melbourne, Australia to create new, transdisciplinary works of social concern.³⁴

Refuge Wear



Refuge Wear, 1992



Refuge Wear, 1992



Personnage, 1992

³³ William Jeffett, <http://www.nyartsmagazine.com/60/lucy.htm>, October 2003.

³⁴ Ibid, October 2003.

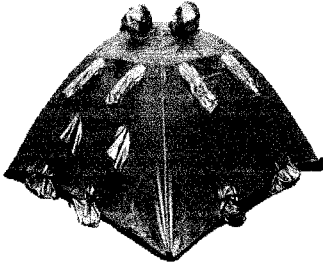
In response to unsuitable social environments of the world in 1992, Lucy Orta began a series of drawings entitled “Refuge Wear.” From the schematics, she constructed these temporary domains that were transformed from clothing items and transport bags. She entitled these works “Body Architecture.” The first construction in this series was named “Habitent,” which was a portable living environment. Further “Refuge Wear” prototypes were fabricated as personal environments that could be converted according to needs and emergencies. “Refuge Wear” became synonymous for shelter and clothing required for extreme conditions. The works allowed for mobile, waterproof shelter for the Kurd refugee population, temporary protection and shelter for the Kobe earthquake and other natural disasters. Also, they served as sleeping bags for the homeless as well as containers for hygienic water and medical supplies needed in Rwanda in 1994.

Orta’s City Intervention is a project that employed the “Refuge Wear” works in urban environments. This stage of Orta’s work made pragmatic use of the works by homeless people in urban environments.



City Intervention, 1993

Collective Wear



Collective Wear, 1994

Connecting to the concept of the community, loved by Beuys as well as Orta, the survival of most animals depends on running with the pack. Orta's recognition of this need of the pack is expressed through her 1994 design collection entitled "Collective Wear." In spite of the fact that men are free, there is the overt need for communal identity. "Collective Wear" may be zipped together with umbilical structures attached at the torso. This form of connection easily forms human links or chains. These have become powerful tools in countries still exercising solidarity. Most effectively, "Collective Wear" was used in a workshop with black women living in South Africa. The clothing that zips together to form domes and tents helps to promote this idea of community. These structures are even used by parents and children, who can remain secure in a zipped structure in spite of their probable domestic fluxuations.

Of her work, Paul Virilio said, "I recall that art has its origins in the body: dance and theatre, war paint and tattoos. Lucy Orta's work struck me as a style of rock painting inscribed on the body,"³⁵ By this utterance, Restany stamped Orta's work with the seal

³⁵ Pierre Restany, *Process of Transformation*, (Paris: Jean Michel Place Editions, 1998), pp.19.

that it recalls something innate, whether it be the need for protection or the need for social identification, Restany upholds Orta's work to the call. However, by the word "inscribed" Restany likens the use of ornament. Like aesthetic form, surface ornament is subjective and often a product of specific cultural semiotics.

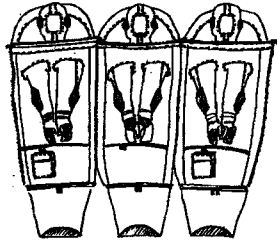
"Collective Wear" is the most basic element of Orta's "Body Architecture" the generic term being, "Nexus Architecture. " Nexus is a link for a series or group. In the work, the fabric constructing the fashions and architectures is viewed as a "second skin." Logically, then, the silkscreened designs on the fabric are likened to tattoos.³⁶

Modular Architecture

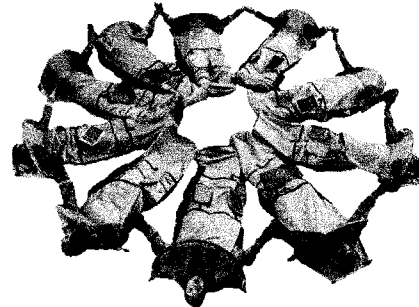
Orta's collection entitled "Modular Architecture" consists of temporary, portable dwellings made up of sections that can be combined to make a number of different forms. As this work leans slightly more towards architecture than fashion, it is similar to Orta's initial leap into protective clothing with the "Refuge Wear" collection. However, this work employed Orta's unmistakable concern for communal identity, so strongly apparent in the "Collective Wear" collection.

For typical use of Modular Architecture, individuals may travel separately during the day and later zip their suits together to form one large, communal space. The fabric is aluminum-coated polyamide, in which myriad pockets store water, food and medicine. Dangling sleeves provide reminders of the original singular nature of the structure.

³⁶ Jen Budney, *Process of Transformation*, (Paris: Jean Michel Place Productions, 1998), pp.23.



Modular Architecture, 1999



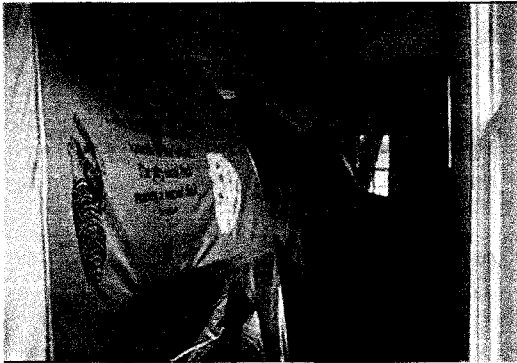
Modular Architecture, 1999

Life Nexus Village

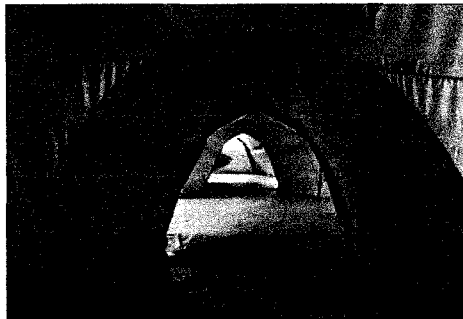
Moving still further toward architectural volume, Orta's Life Nexus Village of 2000, features a series of silkscreened domes via umbilical connectors reminiscent of the "Collective Wear" bodysuits. Life Nexus Village was inspired by the heart, as a symbol of primary bodily functioning and emotional connection. This work was commissioned by the University of Central England for the exhibition "In the Midst of Things," Bournville, July 1999 and the Art Gallery of Western Australia for the exhibition "Home" January 2000.



Life Nexus Village, 2000



Life Nexus Village, 2000

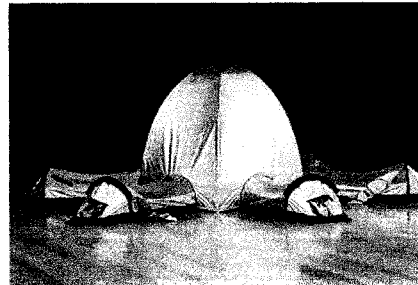


Life Nexus Village, 2000

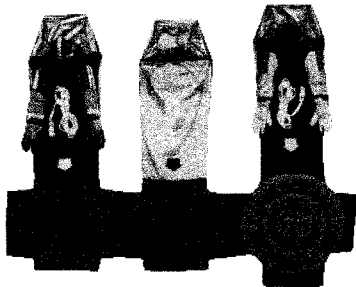
The Connector

The Connector, created in 2000, is a step closer to Orta's original direction of individual fashion works equipped with linking potential. The suits connect into small

groups to form a Sector. The Sectors may be joined through Nodes to theoretically allow for an unlimited number of inhabitants.



Connector, 2000

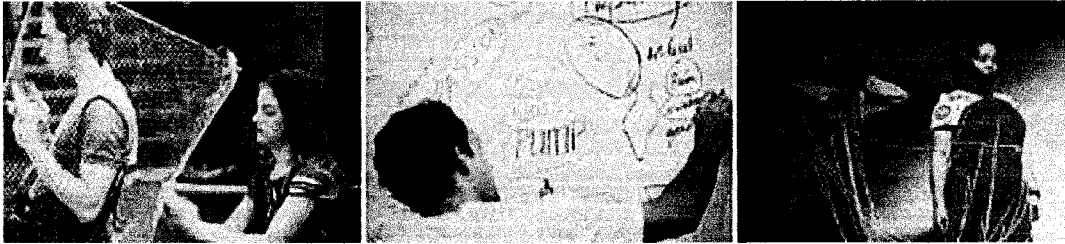


Connector, 2000

Fluid Architecture

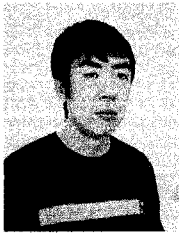
Most recently, Lucy Orta completed a residency in Melbourne in 2002. The result of this work was entitled “Fluid Architecture: Redefining the Relationship between Clothing, Architecture and Social Exclusion.” The workshop was spawned from the idea of the heart, central in Nexus Architecture of 2000. Included below are a number of products made by the artist and her students as a result of the residency.³⁷

³⁷ <http://www.abc.net.au/arts/visual/stories/s552692.htm>, October 2003.



'Fluid Architecture' in progress

Kosuke Tsumura



Kosuke Tsumura was born in Saitama, Japan in 1959. He joined the Miyake design studio in 1993. The following year, Tsumura founded his own company and created the Final Home Collection. Final Home is a collection protective fashions, complete with pockets that may house needed gear or additional padding for warmth.³⁸

In the summer of 1992, Tsumura made the first model of Final Home. By 1993, Tsumura spent a night on the street of Shinjuku Kabuki-cho wearing the third model of Final Home. In March 1994, Tsumura presented Final Home in a Paris fashion show held

³⁸ <http://parallel.park.org/Japan/DNP/MTN/KT/FINALPROj/history/index.htm>, October 2003.

during his first overseas solo exhibition titled "INCOMER." By September of 1995, Tsumura presented Final Home at a fashion show held at Asia Collection Makuhari Grand Prix. Tsumura displayed Final Home at Waste Control Exhibition '95. In 1996, the Final Home designs featured at the Waste Control Exhibition '95 was donated to AMDA (The Association of Medical Doctors of Asia).³⁹



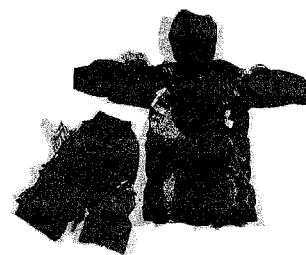
Tsumura on the Streets in Final Home



Final Home



Final Home



Final Home

³⁹ <http://www.ima.fa.geidai.ac.jp/trdproj/TAP2000-E/trap/tsumura.html>, October 2003.



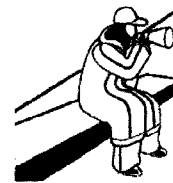
Final Home



Final Home

Designer's Directions: How to Use Final Home

For use in emergencies, Final Home pockets can be used to hold food and



medicine; cushions can be inserted into head and shoulder pockets.

For added comfort while watching sporting events outdoors, cushions can be inserted into the hip pockets. For added warmth outdoors, newspapers can be inserted into the pockets.

Common by their drive to protect people from harsh environments, Tsumura and Orta have realized a similar form through the use of contemporary surfaces known for resiliency, lightness and warmth.

Alicia Framis



Alicia Framis, *The Dreamkeeper*, 1997

Alicia Framis, born in Barcelona in 1967, works in media transcending disciplines as varied as conceptual art, happenings, fashion and architecture. One series of protective fashion was designed specifically for fearful immigrant women living in a particularly Nazi dominant region of Berlin.⁴⁰ Framis lived in Berlin and was told about a certain part of town called Marzahn where she would not be able to walk alone as a woman with dark skin because racist skinheads with their aggressive dogs rule over the streets there. She felt an urge to go, but with a protection against those dogs. All items are produced in Twaron: a dog-proof, bullet-proof and fire-proof material. Alicia Framis stated:

Immigrant women talk about these matters, but secretly because we feel ashamed to be an undesirable immigrant. On the other hand we are immensely grateful to have the opportunity to develop ourselves in another country. Where we live is not our soil by nature, but here we feel more connected to our dreams than in the country we left one day. I feel ashamed to denounce physical and psychological attacks from people that I embrace as inhabitants of my land of

⁴⁰ <http://www.smba.nl/shows/35/35.htm>, October 2003.

dreams and possibilities, but at the same time it is a reality that is there in the shades of our politeness. When I think about anti-violence, it is the place where creativity starts. The brand of products called anti_dog is a mix of creativity and protection. In these days Safety and Protection are high on the agenda of politicians and citizens, but the means they use to achieve that are scary. For instance video cameras everywhere should protect us from other people but they deprive us of our intimacy. The loss of intimacy reinforces the idea of insecurity and un-safety. Video cameras are a closed circuit of: fear - watch / no intimacy / fear - watch / no intimacy / fear - watch / no intimacy. Protection doesn't come from a monitor, the monitor is just a witness of our fear. Safety comes from the feeling you are the owner of your own body and mind.

Framis believes that, as an artist, she can best reach her public through direct emotional and physical contact. Framis creates as few art objects as possible and instead generates the conditions for unusual and personal experiences. Her work has been called social sculpture or new performance art. One of Framis' works, entitled "The Dreamkeeper" involved the artist's accompaniment for twelve hours at night. The artist is there to calm fears and provide psychical protection so that one may sleep.

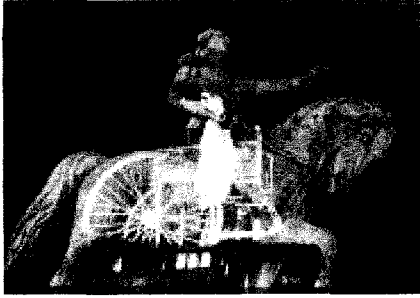
Another work with the motivation for communal identity, was created for a festival in Utrecht entitled Compagnie de Compagnie. The piece was an escort bureau at Utrecht Central Station where lonely travelers could find a companion to accompany them on their trip to one of the festival's locations. The escorts were all identical twins, who were obviously experts at togetherness. The work existed for the duration of the festival.

Regarding architecture, Framis has also dipped her toe. Currently, she has proposed theoretical programs for Nine Remix Buildings. These buildings feature multiple uses of nearly polar function, for the sole purpose of the reaction of the visitor. Like Orta, Framis recently completed a project that revolved around a purpose-built tent

used as a portable venue for discussion. Designed by Dutchman Dré Wappenaar, the tent featured sleeping cubicles surrounding a central area used for meetings, presentations, theatrical performances, debates and dancing. Regardless of the tent's location, Framis invited people from various disciplines to gather in the tent and exchange ideas on 'Loneliness in the City.'

As Framis designed clothing for protection in an urban space that had lost its political neutrality, so Polish artist, Krzysztof Wodiczko, has a similar concern. He uses video and constructions in public places to reestablish identities for the unwanted, namely the homeless and handicapped. He perceived how the masses of the displaced that now occupy the public space of city squares, parks or railway station concourses which were once designed by a triumphant middle class to celebrate the conquest of its new political rights and economic liberties. Wodiczko thinks that these occupied spaces form new agoras, which should be used for statements. "The artist", Wodiczko said, "needs to learn how to operate as a nomadic sophist in a migrant polis."⁴¹ In New York, he led a street-level protest against the problem of homelessness through the erection of a controversial prototype mobile shelter.

⁴¹ <http://www.ljudmila.org/nettime/zkp4/74.htm>, October 2003.



Krzysztof Wodiczko, *The Homeless Projection: A Proposal for the City of New York*, 1986

Fashion inspiration from the domestic environment has continued today through the work of Turkish born Hussein Chalayan. Chalayan, though a graduate of Central Saint Martin's, interpreted fashion and the body as a field for logical discipline that could be equated with rational disciplines as engineering, architecture, mathematics and philosophy.⁴² Hussein Chalayan created a collection called "Minus Now", which featured furniture that became clothing. Models could step into a table and pull the accordion wood layers up over their hips. The work was inspired by the idea of having to collect one's household belongings at the threat of attack during World War II.



Chalayan, *Minus Now*

⁴² Breward, pp. 236.

In light of the events of September 11, 2001, we are all more aware of our need of protection in the most unlikely of times. Architecture has served this need in a large sense for years. However, fashion has recently entered the arena as often we are forced to a place of need with only what we have on our immediate selves.

Chapter 4: Nomadic Tradition

The use of fabric as an architectural material has recently come back in vogue. Engineered protective textiles complies with today's rapidly changing times of technologically intelligent environments. These creative, contemporary solutions to transient, collapsible protection have their typological parallels in a much more longstanding tradition. Nomadic architecture, specifically the use of tents and yurts, is a common phenomenon throughout the rural world.

Nomadic tents provide a unique look into the origins of human structure and progress. Since many nomads occupy marginal areas of the world, they have been less subject to change than many settled peoples. Because of their ability to move, nomadic peoples have continued to be freer than their sedentary neighbors.

Tents were not the first built structures, for the construction is not simple. By comparison, the fundamental building types of the windscreen and the hut are quite basic and contributed to the initial understanding of tent construction.⁴³ The principles mastered by ancient people are the same as those employed by modern architects. For example, multiple triangles fastened together for the construction of the tipi are the same fundamental principles as those required for the erection of geodesic domes. Frei Otto's work, exemplified by the tensile structures at the Munich Olympics and the Montreal Expo, operates similarly to the black tents of the Middle East.⁴⁴

⁴³ Torvald Faegre, *Tents: Architecture of the Nomads* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, Doubleday, 1979) pp. 1.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 2.

The difference between settled life and pastoral, nomadic life, had its mythical origins in the Biblical story of Cain and Abel. The dispute between the two ways was said to have begun when Cain, who tilled the ground, slew Abel, his herdsman brother. Herdsmen, as they are reliant upon the changing tides of the earth's natural produce through wild vegetation, move upon demand. This transience has made the nomad suspect by more stable cultures, who have invested time and emotional stability in restricted geographic locations. To further the dichotomy, nomads have been equated as transient warriors, while cultures employing sedentary architecture, have been regarded as peaceful. Obviously, the stereotypes may have some merit, but are largely untrue.

Regardless of location, one commonality of nomads is the fact that they all lack water. Also, all nomads rely on animals that don't require much water for survival. The reindeer or caribou thrive in Mongolia, while the yak is common in Tibet. The birthplace of the black tent is probably near the Mesopotamia. Its beginning is linked to the domestication of goats and sheep, whose hair provides the material for the tent cloth.

The Black Tent

The geographic breadth of the use of the black tent is massive. Its material and type ranges from West Africa to Eastern China. The form of the tent altered to fit with the climate. For example, the rainy and snowy climates of the Himalayas had tents with pitched roofs to allow for proper bearing. By comparison, the roof of the desert black tent was left flat to shield inhabitants from sun and sandstorms. Black tent dwellers are

weavers, and form not only their homes, but also much of their livelihood, from the craft⁴⁵

The Bible recounts exact measurements for the tent tabernacle in the desert: “You shall also make the curtains of goats’ hair for a tent over a tabernacle; eleven curtains shall you make. The length of each shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of each curtain four cubits; eleven curtains shall have the same measure.”⁴⁶

The primary functions of the black tent are to provide shade, to protect from cold, wind, sand and dust, as well as to allow for privacy. The loose weave of the black allows for the hot air to escape, and the interior of the tent is typically twenty to thirty degrees cooler than the outside. The weave, though open, swells shut with the addition of rainwater. The natural oils in the goat hair allow for mild waterproofing of the thick, blanket-like covering. Very little wood is used in the construction of the black tent, for it operates on the concept of tension. More clearly, the cover and the frame are interdependent. Unlike freestanding structures such as yurts or huts, these tents collapse without the fabric stretched tight.

The Bedouin

Nomadic camel breeders of semi-desert regions of Iraq, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, follow a strict seasonal routine, with occupations in certain regions for specified weeks every year. Three or four pairs of tent poles support strips of woven goat wool. The chief typically has a larger tent, with partitions for guests and women.

⁴⁵ Ibid, pp. 9.

⁴⁶ Exodus 26:7.

Berber

The Berbers occupy the Northern regions of Africa, from Morocco to Libya. The culture consists of primarily herdsman and farmers. The sedentary groups are typically organized around courtyards. The nomadic groups, by contrast, occupy tents and tent-huts seasonally.

Tibetan

Tibetans are typically farmers or herders who establish their homesteads on the slopes of the Himalayas. In summer, the herdsman construct tents (rebo) from cloth of goat or yak wool that is dyed black. The tent is made up of two poles, supported by a crosspiece and ropes anchored to stakes on the outside. The entrance, at the side, and the smoke vent at the top, may be closed off for protection from the elements. The tent is usually constructed on an earthen platform, and is further protected by a wall of mud or loose stones.⁴⁷

Tuareg

Tuareg tribesmen occupy Central and Western African Sahara. The people and animals separately occupy tents or tent-huts. The tents are stretched irregularly with drawstrings and pegs, typically measuring 13 by 16 feet. The center pole is typically curved and terminates at the ground with a solid, curved block of wood. Minor poles at

⁴⁷ Enrico Guidoni, *Primitive Architecture*, (New York; Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1975) pp. 354.

the perimeter support the outer edge. The tent cloth is varied, from the use of wild sheep skin in western regions to the skin of red goats in the central districts. In the East, the cloth is woven from a mixture of camel hair and sheep's wool. Often, the tent cloth is supported by parallel wooden arches, which give a domelike appearance.

Tipi

Tents of the North American Indians varied in form and material per the culture and region. The Cheyenne Indians were hunters and farmers that lived between the Arkansas and Missouri Rivers. When horses were introduced to the group in the eighteenth century, the Cheyenne became buffalo hunters. This change required a less permanent architecture and the Cheyenne adopted the tipi, which had been more typical of the Prairie Indians. Summer circular encampments included a thousand or more tents that stretched to a diameter of two-thirds of a mile.

The tipi was round or slightly oval in plan. The frame was made of a pyramid of poles and the size varied greatly. The first pole, placed near the entrance, was the most important because it represented the sky. The four other poles represented the four parts of the world and, furthering this idea, four stars cut out of skin were placed on the exterior of the tent. Typically, the tent cloth had openings at the entrance and top, both of which could be closed by a loose flap. The hearth was in the center of the tipi, while sleeping quarters lined the perimeter.⁴⁸

The Iroquois of central New York state and the eastern Great Lakes organized in the sixteenth century into the Ongwano Sionni, or "those who all belong to the big tent."

The group had complex economic, political and religious ceremonial systems. The structures actually employed by the Iroquois were more sedentary, and consisted of materials more durable than tipis.

Early and contemporary nomadic cultures have applied these principles of clothing - folding and transportability- to fabric architecture. The use of fabric as an architectural element has become popular in recent years. The fabric, as it is translucent, easily transported, and may serve as a screen to receive projections, is a medium which fits perfectly with our society of rapid change and technology.

⁴⁸ Ibid, pp. 342.

Chapter 5: Saris and Expressway Encampments: India

The architecture and fashion of India are similar primarily through the element of ornament. In spite of industrial and technological advancements, the forms of fashion have changed little, while Western fashions have undergone innumerable revisions. This dedication to fashion's form is a testament to the resiliency of Indian culture, especially in consideration of British occupation until 1947.

Vernacular Ornament through Transient Architecture

An adventure to India in the summer of 2003 allowed the author the opportunity to document a few examples of urban and rural architecture typical of the country. Transient architecture encompassed everything from tents and yurt-like forms in Rajasthan, to more haphazard organization of found materials found in every city from Mumbai to Amritsar. Unquestionably, Mumbai had the greatest concentration of haphazard building encampments. Huge communities of people lived under expressways. Many made houses and hammocks from sheets or plastic blue tarps tied to fence mesh at the perimeter.



Mumbai expressway encampments including tent at left, photo courtesy of the author 2003.



Fabric cradle at Mumbai expressway encampment, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

Other groups erected sticks no more than two feet high and lived under the stretched fabric. Nearing the Mumbai railway terminal, the main street was lined for miles with small houses constructed from a combination of brick, aluminum, cardboard, plastic and fabric. Because each hovel was not without bright colors, none lacked in visual interest.



Rajasthani architecture, photo courtesy of the author 2003.



Rajasthani yurt, photo courtesy of the author 2003.



Rajasthani fiber tent and concrete well, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

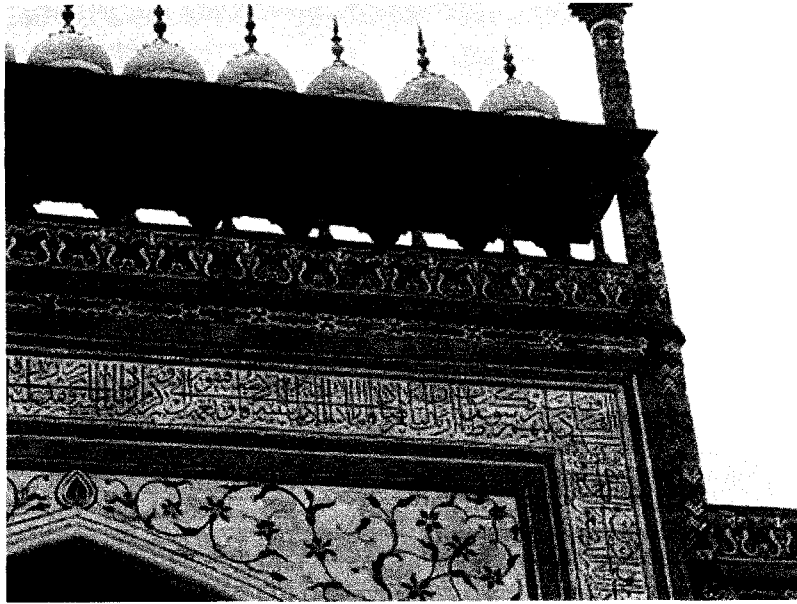
Further to the north, in the desert of Rajasthan, two main architectural types were common. First, a cylindrical structure with a conical roof, also known as a yurt, completely constructed of reeds and grasses, was placed at the far edges of irrigated rice and grain sections. Some of the structures may have been used for residential purposes; but, more often than not, a small tent or conglomeration of residential materials was placed in close proximity to this grain storage cylinder. Occasionally between these areas were groups of mud or manure houses. The houses were a natural color, sometimes with hand-embossed patterns grazing the sides. Some of these houses had woven thatch roofs. Speeding through Rajasthan, one particularly strong woman dressed in pink stood on her roof weaving thatch, while ignoring sandy winds.

Textiles and architecture are undoubtedly intertwined at this level of transient residential architecture, obvious through the use of fabric as a building material, woven thatch construction as well as the embossed designs in mud houses. At a grander and more permanent architectural scale, architecture becomes textile in nature through the use of extravagant ornament on wall surfaces. Specifically, examples of the Indian architectural ornament evident at the Taj Mahal and Fatehpur Sikri, both of Agra will be featured.

Taj Mahal

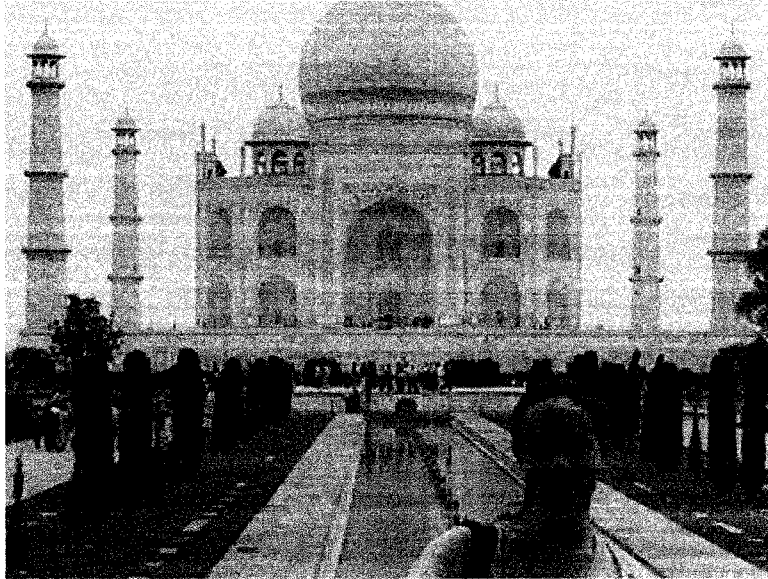
Relieved at the sign of the car, we piled in and headed in the dark across the desert to Agra. Arriving in the hotel, there was every Western comfort. The showers were hot and fortunately not contingent upon the availability of water in a small heater. The power in the city did waver, and there were times of complete blackness.

The morning was an awakening to a steamy view of the Taj Mahal, located not more than 5 miles from the entrance of the hotel. After a short drive to the base parking lot, we walked up the long drive, tailored by green lawns and trees. The red sandstone low wall was the first welcome to the complex after the entrance fee, which was higher for Westerners, of course. The low, red wall led to the looming entrance gate, covered in contrasting white ornament. The decoration was geometric, floral organic and Arabic. The high volume and huge portal provided the perfect frame for the ethereal white structure beyond. Walking from the red gate, the huge processional walk, grasses and reflecting pools lay in front of me.



Taj Mahal, Red Gate Detail, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

Walking up the left sidewalk, two oxen pulled a large blade, shearing the grass to its shortest dimension. The minarets pulled out of sight, and the multitudes of white volumes of the mausoleum pulled in focus. The script around the main, central space was Arabic. Either side of the main white building was a red sandstone gate complex, identical to the main one we were required to pass through for admittance. Behind the white tomb was a cliff that descended to the Jammu River, which irrigated the plains to a lush green. A small herd of cattle grazed to the south, and further beyond lay the Red Fort. Originally, a bridge was to be erected across this river, for the creation of an identical black marble tomb for Shah Jehan.



Author and the Taj Mahal, 2003.

White marble covered every vertical, horizontal, and curving surface. There were inlaid semi-precious stones of carnelian, lapis lazuli, malachite and agate laid in swirling floral designs covering every eye-level surface. The inner volume, created by the central cylinder and dome, was ornamented in the same format. A large marble screen shielded view and trespass over the sacred central tomb space. The central tomb, crafted in delicately detailed white marble, housed the body of Humayun. Stairs to the lower level crypt fall in line with the main axis of the garden complex. The building and grounds follow the plan of a four part garden divided into quadrants by water channels. Here, they are meant to symbolize the four rivers of Paradise.



Taj Mahal, Floral Dado and Visitors, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

By comparison to other architectural Islamic works, the Taj Mahal was very restrained in its use of decorative ornament. Floral arabesques, made from inlaid semiprecious stones, decorate the interior and exterior tomb. The main vaults are carved with mathematically precise designs evocative of crystalline structures. Original ornamentation employed in the Taj Mahal was the waist high dado that runs from the exterior entry through the interior of the tomb. The dado is decorated with full flowering plants, complete with mounds of earth from which they rise. This full illustration of a plant was evident in a manuscript of Jahangir of 1620, that closely followed the European

engravings of herbals popular in the early seventeenth century. As the complex was thought to be a garden paradise this gestalt botanical symbolism is quite apropos.⁴⁹

A Persian verse of Shah Jehan written on the Taj confirms the symbolism:

“Like the gardens of heaven a brilliant spot,
Full of fragrance like paradise fraught with ambergris.
In the breadth of its court perfumes from the nose-gay
Of sweet-heart rise...”⁵⁰

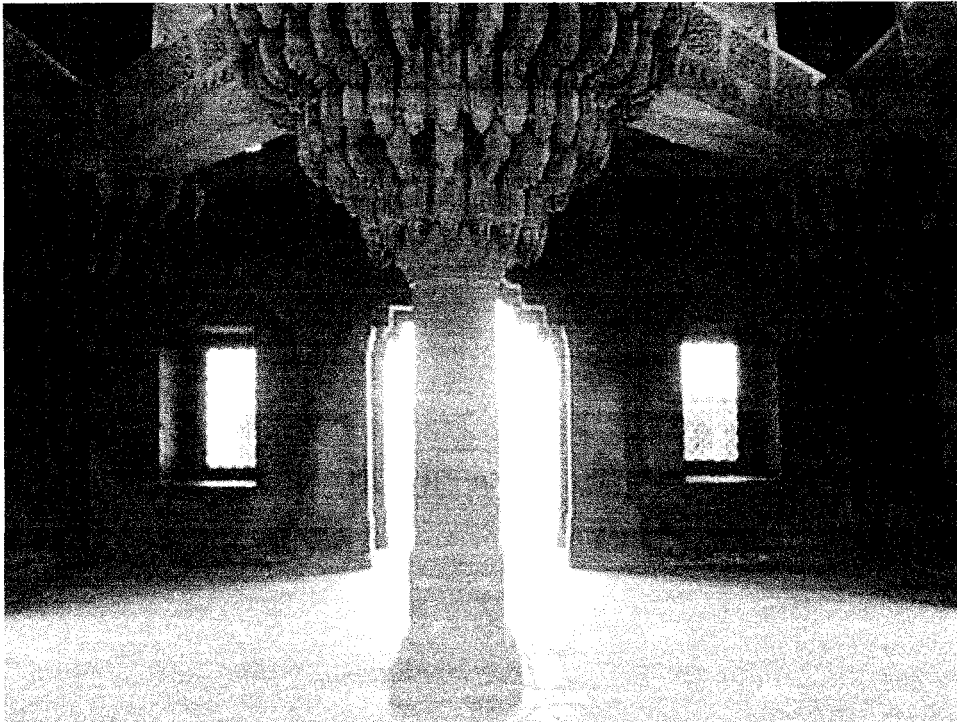
Fatehpur Sikri

At the age of twelve, Jalal al-Din Akbar (1556-1605) began his reign of the Mughal Empire. His first building project, the Delhi Gate of the Fortress (1564-1566) was erected at Agra and still survives. Akbar was greatly influenced by the teachings of Sufi Shykh Muin al-Din Chisti, who proposed a tolerance and even interest in Hinduism. Akbar’s many Rajput wives were allowed to practice the religion of their choice, which included Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. In 1579, from the seat of authority at Fatipur, Akbar declared himself infallible in regard to religion. Three years later, he found a new religion, called the Din Illahi, which blended ideas from Islam, Hinduism, Janism, Zoroastrianism and Christianity with emphasis on sun worship. Scholars understand that

⁴⁹ John D. Hoag. *Islamic Architecture*, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1987.) pp. 184-186.

⁵⁰ Maulvi Moin Ud Din Ahmad, *The Taj and Its Environments*, (Agra, 1907) pp.121-22.

Akbar believed himself to be the ancient Babylonian and Vedic sense of the Lord of the four quarters. In early Indian texts this figure was known as cakravartin, whom the celestial wheel (sun) guided to dominion over all regions.



Fatehpur Sikri, Column with Patterns Representing Seven World Religions, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

Sikri is located about 25 miles west of Agra and was the home of Salim Chisti, a notable mystic, who predicted in 1568 that Akbar would have a son. In August of 1569, Maryam al-Zamani gave birth to Akbar's first son, aptly named Salim. Akbar vowed to build a city at Sikri, not only due to this prediction, but also to celebrate the triumph over Gujarat in 1573. Going to Chisti's tomb, the tradition maintains that if one ties a thread on the sacred screens of the interior chamber, one will be granted the gift of a child.

Geographically, the palace complex at Fatehpur Sikri lies along a sandstone ridge that runs northeast-southwest, and was bounded on the north by a now empty artificial lake. It was due to this inadequate water source that the incredible architecture was abandoned in the early 1580s. Part of the complex includes a mosque, which is properly oriented toward Mecca, in spite of Akbar's departure from fundamental Islam. The main political structure of the complex was the Diwan-I-Khas. This was a square, but a radially balanced building anchored centrally by a column complete with patterns symbolizing the world's main religions. This column was anchored by great ceiling brackets. Around the second floor perimeter are pierced stone screens. Four bridges connect these to the four corners of the room, which repeated the religious notion of Akbar as overseer of the four corners.

West of the Emperor's private apartments lies the harem or zenana. The Panch Mahal is located at the northeast corner of the harem enclosure and structurally was a five story baradari. Jali screens once enclosed the five terraces, which allowed for women to view the functions in the outdoor pavilions. In spite of the large harem, each of Akbar's three wives had a palace. Maryam, as she gave Akbar the prophesied son, was given two palaces, one for summer and another for winter.

Craftsmen from Gujarat were commissioned to help construct the complex at Fatehpur Sikri. Because of their Hindu heritage, many ornamental details common to Hinduism were blended with traditional Islamic characteristics. Having experienced Fatehpur Sikri in the peak of summer, the greatest impression was the heat captured by the great, red complex. Stone enclosures were good protection from the sun, but no foliage anywhere provided relief from the light and heat. Based on this experience of the

intense climate there, it is understandable why Fatehpur Sikri was deserted due to lack of water.⁵¹

Indian Textiles



Bike Riders in Rajasthan, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

Mumbai, as mouthpiece for the country of India, was a place of extreme contrast. One primary method of separation was the difference among religious, governmental and residential building forms. Another huge contrast was the range of human skill, from the extremely technological savvy to the impoverished children begging in the streets. One picture describes the culture entirely. That photo recorded a woman wearing an aerodynamically styled motorcycle helmet, driving a Vespa-like motorcycle, while still wearing the traditional Indian dress, a salwar chameez. Most other women in the urban

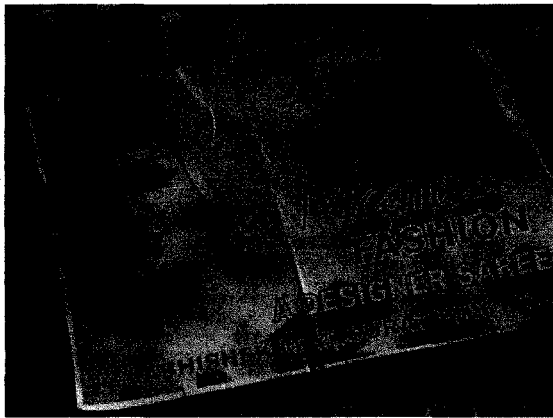
⁵¹ Hoag, pp.187.

areas and the North, wore traditional saris, and rode sideways on motorcycles advancing at very high velocities. It is amazing that although India has advanced in the process of textile fabrication and materials, the overall form has remained relatively petrified.



Women of Rajasthan, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

After my trip to India, I found primary resource on the art and fashion of India, which was authored by T.N. Mukharji for the Glasgow Exhibition of 1888. I was curious whether my experience of the tradition of textiles had changed much since the author's writing 115 years ago. I was greatly surprised to find the author's primary, objective descriptions still to be true in 2003. This feat is incredible, especially in the light of English occupation in India until 1947, the influence of Mahatma Gandhi, as well as all the potential changes thanks to revolutions in technology. The text that follows is a blend of the observations made separately by Mukharji and myself.



Sari Label from Sanganer Textile, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

Mumbai Embroidery District

Avoiding the goat standing in the street next to our bumper, I hopped over the puddles to the sidewalk. A small vendor sold polyester and nylon thread, as well as many variations of sequins in clear boxes. Passing the stores, I walked quickly to keep pace through the labyrinth to the small embroidery factories in Mumbai. The first one that we encountered featured two small shops on the first floor of residences. A small six feet by

eight feet stone courtyard separated the workshops. The one company had five workers, both men and women, constructing black pants on sewing machines. The group across from this one was for tiny embroidery. Men worked the floral designs slowly on sewing machines. Small boys cut the newspaper from the design, which was stitched with the fabric for support.



Mumbai Boy Cutting Away Embroidery Reinforcement, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

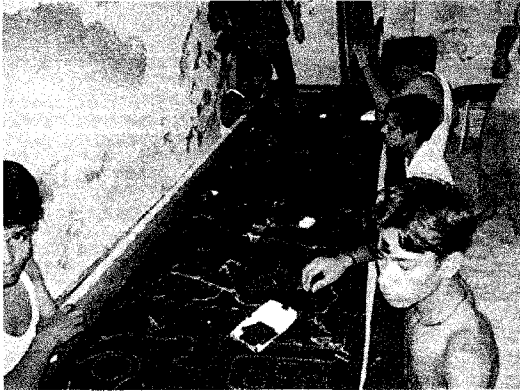
Passing open doorways, a glimpse of kitchens and living rooms was easily in view. We always caught the complete attention of any domestic group upon our passing. The second company was located above a residence. We carefully climbed up a very steep wooden ladder propped up the open edge of the floor. Here, men sat cross-legged on the floor around two low frames stretched with dark green translucent polyester. The men followed the light chalk lines and sketches, using metal zari thread, polyester and bright sequins to create the intricate embroidered designs.



Exterior Housing Maze of Mumbai Embroidery District, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

The third company was similar to the second, in that it featured all men embroidering on the floor. However, the fabric was opaque black wool, and the stitching was thick, white thread. The manager of the group held up a coat with the label *Comme des Garçons*. The jacket was typical of the design company, in its use of simple boiled wool. The design on the back was a very minimal appliqué with sharp edges and contrasting white thread. The men were working for the production of goods by this Japanese company. The fourth shop we attended was similar to the second, in that men were underway in the elaborate detailing of translucent dress fabric. The density of the threads and sequins indicated that the fabric was most likely intended for a wedding gown. In 1888, Mukharji had identified an establishment of Muslim embroiderers

originally from Delhi that had gathered along Kalbadevi Road in Mumbai, which employed about 200 workers at that time.⁵²



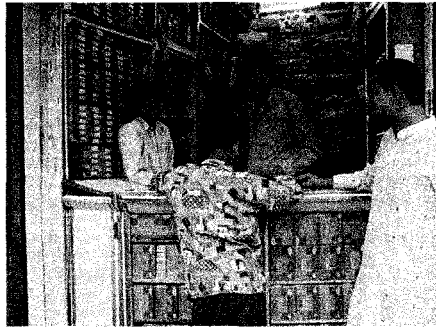
Mumbai Embroiderers for Comme des Garçons, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

Contemporary Wedding Embroidered Fashions

The next day, which also happened to be our last in Bombay, we passed a large window full of heavily embroidered gowns. As my friend was recently engaged, the fact that this turned out to be an enormous wedding boutique was quite ironic. The shop, which was detailed completely in cherry hardwood, featured undulating walls of encrusted gowns. At least thirty male tailors of varying ages lined the perimeter of the shop. We sat on the elevated seats, while at our every whim the tailors pulled wedding

⁵²T.N. Mukharji, *Art Manufactures of India: Specially Compiled for the Glasgow International Exhibition, 1888*. (Calcutta: 1888) pp. 384.

gowns and bridesmaid gowns. The designs were traditional Indian sets, complete with a two piece bodice and skirt, and a choli to throw over the shoulders.



Vendors selling thread and sequins to Mumbai embroiderers, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

The contemporary Indian bridal industry keeps the demand for embroidery high. Typical weddings require a fully embroidered gown for each of the four days of celebration. Especially popular is heavy embroidery called *bharat-kam*, which means “work filled in.” The ornament is first worked in relief in a coarse cotton thread and afterwards with gold.⁵³

⁵³ Ibid, pp. 381.



Embroidery with metallic zari thread and sequins, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

Textiles for Sacred Purpose

In Mumbai at the temple of Laxmi, vendors sold brightly colored fabrics, along with fruit, flowers and sweets, to present at the temple. Similar vendors were present at the Hindu temples dedicated to female goddesses, such as Kali, in northern India.



Vendor at Laxmi Temple, Mumbai, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

In Maharashtra, the masses were gathered at a sunken, open floor space at the temple of Krishna. The crowd, gathered at the birthplace of Krishna, celebrated the god's birthday. An attendant stood on a shallow stage and held the edges of a Kelly green curtain. The crowd cheered and threw flowers, whereupon the attendant would yank the curtain back, revealing the image of Krishna. The attendant would let the curtain fall, and the crowd would cheer and chant louder to receive the image of the Hindu god again.

In the outer districts of the city of Agra, there was the Moghul-influenced palace and temple complex at Fatehpur Sikri. As detailed earlier, Sikri was a the home of Salim

Chisti, a notable mystic, who predicted in 1568 that Akbar would have a son. Going to Chisti's tomb, the tradition maintains that if one ties a thread on the sacred screens of the interior chamber, one will be granted the gift of a child. Each screen was completely covered with tiny, knotted threads of red and gold.

Textile Economy

T.N. Mukharji, in 1888, made a severe commentary about the state of Indian textile manufacturing,

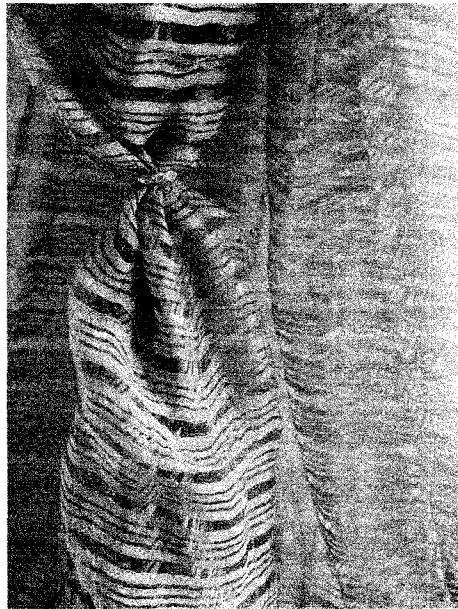
Notwithstanding the extent of their present production, cotton manufactures in the old style are in their last gasp. The few small pieces of wood and bamboo are tied with shreds of twine and thread which the weaver calls his loom, and which he can easily make himself as buy from his neighbor the village carpenter, can no more compete with the powerful machinery worked in Lancashire than a village cart of western Bengal can run a race with the "Flying Scotchman." Yet the wonder is that cotton fabrics can still be manufactured with the old primitive loom all over the country. In one sense it is a misfortune that it should be so; for it shews the low value of human labor in India. Machinery, with all its modern improvements, seems to contend in vain with a moribund industry, that must linger on as the worker in it has nothing better to do than to produce from it fourpence a day as the joint earnings of himself, his wife, a boy and a girl. Those that wield the machinery should lay their heads together and devise means to teach people how better to employ their hands in other crafts. Another reason why Indian looms can still compete with Lancashire goods is that the European process of manufacture has not yet been able to give to the fabrics the strength for which native manufactures have a reputation. Nor has machinery been able to make those gossamer fabrics for which a wealthy Indian always paid a fabulous price.⁵⁴

Also in 1888, Mukharji noted that many dhotis, chadars and saris were imported from England, but those made in India were more durable and more popular because they

⁵⁴ Ibid, pp. 316.

were produced domestically. Mahatma Gandhi utilized this fact of domestic pride, symbolized by the spinning wheel, as a means to empower Indians. Eventually, the fruits of Gandhi's efforts were rewarded with the overthrow of British rule in 1947.

In 1888, the fineness of muslin, measuring twenty yards long by one yard wide, was passed through the small aperture of an ordinary sized finger ring.⁵⁵ A contemporary handmade silk shawl bought in 2003 at Crawford market in Bombay, measuring one yard by two yards, passed the ring test. Condensed, it compares to the diameter of an orange.



Muslin passing the ring test, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

⁵⁵ Ibid, pp. 318.

Silk

Silk, though it might have been originally discovered in China, did not take long to make its way to India. There was no mention of it made in the Vedas, but it was common at the time when the great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, were composed. Fabrics are made of mulberry silk, of tasar silk, of eri or silk produced by worms fed the castor-leaf, muga silk, cricula silk and burma silk. Large quantities of silk were produced by the East India Company, which were then exported to Europe. However, at time of the publication, the production had largely ceased, and the company was forced to buy quantities of silk thread directly from China for the manufacture of woven goods. Mukharji wrote that if the East India Company was to find its past prosperity, it should owe thanks to the work of Mr. Thomas Wardle of Leek, Staffordshire, England. Shockingly, Mukharji thought the direct words of Mr. Wardle noble and worthy for publication in 1888:

“Under European careful supervision the native Indian works beautifully. He cares more for patient manual labor and real handicraft traditional work than he does for progressive thought or invention, and it is not to be wondered at that it has been left to the quicker brain and the desire for development that characterizes the people of the west to produce the results which find a readier market than his own unaided and unguided efforts can secure’.”⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Ibid, pp.332.

Wool



Tibetan vendors selling Himalayan wool goods, Dharamsala, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

In 1888, the chief center of woolen manufacture in India was the Panjab (today Punjab). From sheep wool the most common product is the blanket. Considerable quantities of woolen stuffs are now made in the Himalayan states. The mountain shepherd, or “gaddi,” wears a warm gray wool blanket, secured by a brown wool rope that is felted. Traveling through the Himalayan cities of Kullu and Manali, I found this clothing description of a few very old gentleman to be true, even in spite of the harsh heat of June.



Woven goods from Himalayan city of Kullu, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

The fabrics prepared of the wool or down formed under the hair on the skin of the goat in Tibet and Central Asia is referred to as pashmina, and of it are made the celebrated Kashmir shawls. Besides regular shawls, which are elaborately embroidered either in loom or by needlework, other kinds of plain fabrics are made of this material, such as plain soft shawls. ⁵⁷This 1888 description of the state of wool manufacturing, was compliant with what I witnessed in 2003.



Embroidered pashmina wrap from Kashmir, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

⁵⁷ Ibid, pp. 343, 344.

Dyeing and Printing

Stated by Mukharji in 1888, “Until recently this was an important industry in many parts of India. It has, however, suffered greatly in competition with European goods. Plain dyeing is practiced by a class of people called rangrez, and printing by the chhipi or chhipigar. The dyers and printers are mostly Muhammadans.”

Mukharji featured a list of natural dyes of 1888, which I found to be in use, alongside synthetic dyes, when observing printing in Jaipur and Sanganer. The list of dyes included: “Black ..sulphate of iron, myrobolam and alum. Grey is obtained from indigo and oak-galls combined. Lavender – safflower, oak-galls and alum. Purple – Indigo and safflower in proportion different from the above. Blue – indigo, vitriol and lime. Green – Indigo..or sulphate of iron, turmeric, pomegranate rind and alum; or turmeric and blue vitriol. Yellow – turmeric, pomegranate rind and alum; or yellow ochre. Orange – turmeric, safflower and acidulated water.pink – cinnabar. Red – safflower, madder, myrobalam and alum, or only lac. Brown – sulphate of iron, catechu, and myrobalam; or lac and sulphate of iron.”

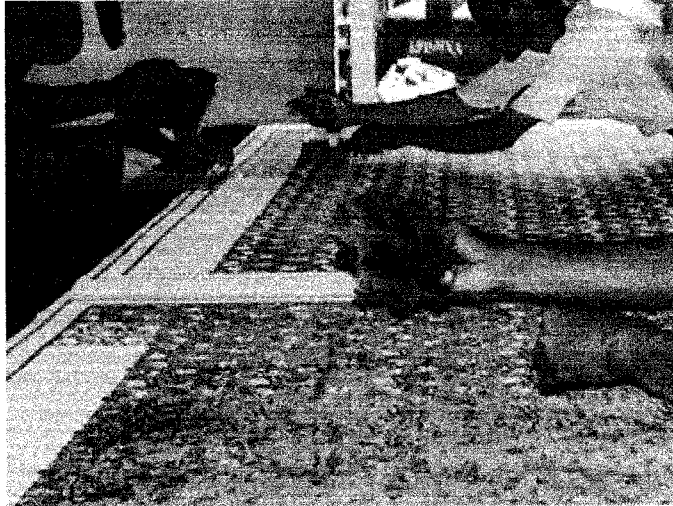
Further, the block printing process of 1888 was detailed: “In calico printing the first process is the washing, which is done by the washerman. The cloth is then bleached by a low-caste people called the Chamars and washed again. A mordant consisting of myrobalams, galls and Acacia arabica legumes is then applied to the cloth, which when dry is placed on a flat block of wood and beaten with a club to obtain an evenness of

surface. The cloth is then printed with different kinds of prepared dyes by means of wooden stamps on which the patterns are cut.”⁵⁸

Printing in 1888, as is true now, is mostly restricted to Northwestern provinces. The type and use of printed textiles is rather extensive. “Fard or razai are sheets worn as shawls in the cold weather, quilted or not. Lihaf, a night cover in the cold weather, quilted and used as a substitute for blankets; Toshak, quilted and made into a thin mattress; Palangposh, or bed-cover, thrown over the bed during the day to keep off dust...Jazim and Farsh, printed coarse cloths spread on the floor; Shamiana, used for awning; Chhint Zarda, cloth dyed with yellow ochre, made into tents. Many of these printed cloths are suited for curtains and dados in European houses...”⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Ibid, pp. 349-350.

⁵⁹ Ibid, pp. 351.



Men printing with wood blocks, Jaipur, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

“In Rajputana (now Rajasthan), Sanganir in Jaipur is famous for its printed fabrics. Both English and country cloths are used for the purposes of printing, but largely the latter. Al root is extensively used as dye. There is an export trade in Sanganir calicoes. Jaipur itself, as well as Bagru, another town in the state, produces a quantity of chintzes.”⁶⁰

While visiting the city of Jaipur, blockprinting process conducted by men was available for view at the shops surrounding Jaipur. However, blockprinting is largely carried out by women in private homes. Large screenprinting houses are becoming more popular, for their quantity of production is far greater than those artists employing the use of wood blocks.

Traveling to Sanganer, south of Jaipur, I happened upon a screenprinting company in a small concrete building. The structure attracted my attention because of the large screens and streaks of dye staining the concrete. Entering the complex, it was a

rather small family-run company. Three male relatives ran the company from a small office, while four thin, bare-chested men in stained, white aprons slung a huge squeegee back and forth over a large screen frame. Upon asking, the design for the screen had been made using a burn-out process. The screen is coated with a photo-sensitive emulsion and then is exposed to a black pattern and light. The screen is washed, and wherever the black pattern was, the emulsion dissolved to leave the open screen. These open punctures in the screen allow for the passage of dyes through to the fabric surface.



Sanganer screenprint detail, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

The pigment was mixed in a small closet and kept in buckets. The printers poured the dye over the one edge of the screen. One man pushed the squeegee to the middle, where the other man on the opposite side of the table caught the squeegee and sent it back. Each screen measured approximately six feet by eight feet, and would be used about 8 times to fill the length of the fifty-foot printing table. I spent some time with the family, and they explained that they were manufacturing sheets to be sold at urban

⁶⁰ Ibid, pp. 355.

districts in India. I bought a sheet, measuring about eight feet by ten feet, for under two dollars.

Dr. Bidie, a contemporary of Mukharji, included his thoughts on Indian prints and color schemes of 1888. Again, the level of Western superiority is nauseating:

Amongst Hindus everything connected with clothing is more or less regulated by the ancient and rigid laws of caste, so that articles in this class possess more or less of an ethnological interest. The brilliancy of the colors and their grouping in Indian textile fabrics are generally very different from European conceptions, but it will be found that some of their most characteristic designs are, so far as the choice and arrangement of colors are concerned, copies from nature, and therefore not unpleasant. The results, however, are often so remarkable that no European would venture to wear articles presenting such combinations, although on a dark skinned people they do not seem at all out of place, and often have a most picturesque effect.⁶¹

Resist

Mukharji's description of the resist process in 1888 was unchanged in 2003. The making of knots on cloth to be colored is known as the Bandhana process, and the spotted cloth produced by it is called chunri cloth. In regard to process, the fabric is washed first, and the places where the spots are made are marked out with red earth or pins. The spots are produced by isolating these places from the dye in which the cloth is dipped, and this is done by tying them up in knots. The process is very difficult and is generally done by females. The chunri is worn by women only and was primarily manufactured in Muttra (now Maharashtra). In 1888, large quantities of chunri cloth were sold in July to

⁶¹ Ibid, pp. 356-357.

celebrate the birthday of the city's principal deity, Krishna.⁶² In June, 2003, quite a bit of chunri cloth was also available in the region.



Knotted chunri cloth, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

Weaving

Carpet weaving is still greatly practiced in India, especially in the regions of Rajasthan. Woolen pile carpets are known as kalin, kalicha or galicha. Regions north of India were traditionally known for the finest carpets, for their cold weather allowed for the production of soft wool required for the most luxurious creations. Muslims from the North introduced the methods of carpet production to India. Interestingly in 1888, many jails were places for the production of woven carpets.⁶³

Undoubtedly, many of the textile traditions, clothing forms and architectural ornamentation of India have endured for thousands of years, and even have not changed significantly in the last one hundred and fifteen years. This culture of stability is in great contrast to the fickleness of the West.

⁶² Ibid, pp. 353.

⁶³ Ibid, pp. 391.

Chapter 6: A Fickle Girl Reflected in the Seine: Paris

Four means used to compare architecture and fashion in this text have been the lenses of form, ornament, protection and identity. Beyond these, there is the consideration of time. Vitruvius, through his *Ten Books on Architecture*, established the idea that architecture should be stable and unchanging. "...All these must be built with due reference to durability, convenience and beauty. Durability will be assured when foundations are carried down to the solid ground and materials wisely and liberally selected; convenience, when the arrangement of the apartments is faultless and presents no hindrance to use, and when each class of building is assigned to its suitable and appropriate exposure; and beauty, when the appearance of the work is pleasing and in good taste, and when its members are in due proportion according to correct principles of symmetry." ⁶⁴

Paris, as it was established by the Romans, and incorporated many cultures into its fabric, has at its core nature, the idea of transience. This will be traced through the examination of changing architectural forms in Paris, as they have been influenced by a multifold foreign architectural vernacular and mingling religions.

Architecture and fashion, as products of material culture, undoubtedly are subjectively marked with the brands of the time and social group. An examination of

⁶⁴ Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture*, translated by Morris Hickey Morgan. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966) pp. 17.

ornamentation in architecture, whether translated into stone, metal, tapestry or glass, reveals the need for ornamentation as a communicator of cultural values and symbols.

With the foundations of Paris squatting on many traditions, so the assimilation of new cultural identities was not often met with resistance. Louis XIV worked to establish Paris as the fashion capital of the world. In doing so, he not only created centers of avant-garde textile production, but also invited his people to royal events demanding that they be dressed in only the finest clothes. This combination of resources and expectation helped to establish Paris as the center of Western fashion.

This expectation of constantly changing forms and patterns of fashion definitely influenced Paris' appetite for only the best avant-garde products, from fashion to building. Hence, Paris, as the epitome of a nexus of changing arts, will be investigated for parallels in architecture through the study of form, ornament, protection and identity.

Roman Roots in the Seine

The experience of Paris has always been multifold. Its roots are fundamentally Roman, with the foundations under Ile de la Cite being formidable memories, hidden under the plaza surface of Notre Dame. Included in the drawings depicting the construction of Notre Dame, were the images of a statue of Asklepios. With origins in Greece, Asklepios was the god of medicine, to whose temples the ill would venture in the hopes of a cure. Similar to the organization of the island in the Roman Tiber, Ile de la Cite had both a hospital and a religious center fulfilled through Notre Dame. Hence, the root of the city of Paris is Rome. This precedent of surface over structure continues throughout the history of the city.

For the Greed of Glass and Thread: Medieval Europe

With the rise of Constantine came the rise of Christianity. With this advancement came the notion that the body was the source of sin. Hence, the skill of anatomically correct sculptures and paintings mastered during the Greek and Roman times, were subverted for more morally correct, clothed and flattened figures. Pilgrimages to holy cities were characteristic of medieval life. Common also were town plans, which were centered by both the church and reigning power, with the lesser classes occupying their places in the surrounding periphery.

The intricacies of detail in the vertical to inspire the soul toward thoughts of heaven, also become evident in the structure of Sainte Chapelle. The structure is a story of light, told both in the pure organic, as well as the observable figures involved in the biblical stories. Commissioned by King Louis IX and designed by Pierre de Montreuil, Sainte Chapelle was completed in 1246 C.E. The tiny church was built to house the crown of thorns brought from Constantinople. The lower chapel for use of the parish, consisting of squatty columns and condensed groin vaults, provided excellent support for the second story chapel. This volume, woven of pure light, is mysterious in its dissolution of structural solidity.

The rectilinear church is supported in part by exterior, engaged columns that act as buttressing before the courageous flying buttresses were employed. The exterior support was needed to allow significant punctures for the spacious glass allowances. Here, the curtain wall of glass was first employed in architectural structure. The windows, illuminated in intricate, brilliant color, depict stories of the Bible. These

stories, previously translated into textile, stone or wood images for the illiterate, were now available in luscious colors illuminated by light pouring through glass.



Sainte Chapelle

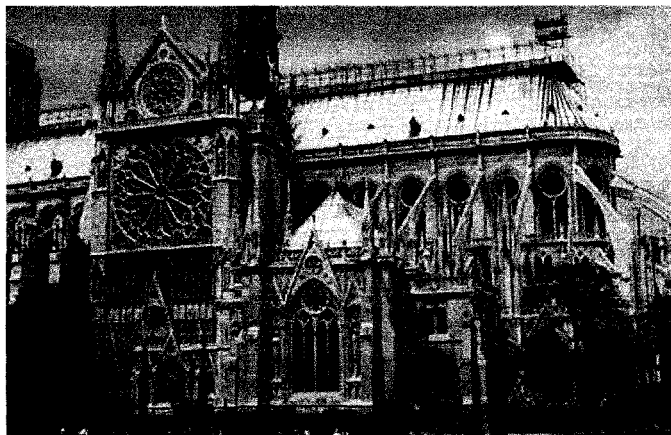
Called by some “the I.M. Pei of Gothic Architecture,” Pierre de Montreuil not only built Sainte Chapelle, he also was responsible for much of the detailing on Notre Dame. Montreuil brought his knowledge of Sainte Chapelle to Notre Dame and orchestrated the outward surface of especially the south transept façade, which was constructed during the 1260s.

The challenge to the builders of Notre Dame was to allow stone to be a thin framework for light. By comparison with Sainte Chapelle, Notre Dame is a story of dark mass rather than open light. The manner of support, though, is the revolutionary element. Though engaged buttresses were employed at Sainte Chapelle, Notre Dame’s apse was supported through the use of flying buttresses. In this action, the experience of the external apse is suppressed for the potential of the interior, divine light. It is one of the

first times when function over form inherent mandates an exterior aesthetic. For the sake of interior light, the exterior form changed.

Hence, buttresses were necessary for the primacy of structural integrity. However, the structure of Notre Dame is scattered with dollops of detail, ranging from simple stone details to elaborate gargoyles and figures. The combination of structural need and ornamented detail in the same environment allowed slight difference between each art for purpose and aesthetics.

Like Sainte Chapelle, glass was employed for both didactic and illuminative purposes. The difference, however, in overall effect, is the fact that Sainte Chapelle was designed for a very small courtly audience. This structural scale was intimate enough to allow for large expanses of glass for a relatively small amount of floor space. By comparison, Notre Dame was built to accommodate thousands of parishioners. The construction is masonry, with very little light able to pour through the glass windows along any of the three vertical strata of the church.



Notre Dame, south facade

Though the flying buttresses were employed to allow height and vertical punctures, the effect was not great enough to relieve the structure of dark, cold

weightiness. The bravery of employing the flying buttresses sacrificed the exterior for the sake of the interior experience. In this way, elevating function over form, at least in consideration of the external, is a very modern decision. Echoes in modern architecture may be taken to the Parisian work by Piano and Rogers, who exposed every function of the Pompidou to the eye of the public.

The Lady and the Unicorn

The coldness of Notre Dame was not a foreign aesthetic to people living in Medieval Europe. Structures of stone especially were aided in the daunting task of insulation through the use of woven tapestries on the walls. The woven tapestries were provided by guilds for the wealthy sacred and secular uses. Easily, one could understand Sainte Chapelle to be a stone structure blessed by the light of glass tapestries. Gottfried Semper, architectural theorist, advanced the idea that the root of architecture was in woven structure.

One very famous series of tapestries resides in the Cluny museum, which featured the best medieval collection of artworks anywhere in the world. One room, cylindrical in plan, houses the “Lady and the Unicorn Tapestry” also known as “A Mon Seul Desir,” created between 1490 and 1500 C.E. Each panel of the series featured a maiden and a unicorn, in different relation. The panels are symbolic of the senses.

Weaving for the Castles, Finery for the Lords

Just as the wealthy sacred and secular buildings were worthy of fine, handwoven tapestries, so the best textiles for wear were available to the lords and ladies of medieval

Europe. As these textiles were costly, clothing became an obvious means of class distinction. At this time, townspeople were forbidden to wear the same clothing as royalty. Due to its trade and commercial prowess, medieval Italy was more economically able than the rest of Europe to support a fetish for fashion. By the 14th century, the royal craving for fashionable attire spread from Italy to the court of Burgundy. This region was reported to have been more well dressed than the King of France.

The Sun King Turns it All Around

With the rise of power of Louis XIV, the embarrassing fashion years came to a screeching halt. Louis XIV reigned with the slogan, "Fashion is the mirror of history." At his wedding in 1660, Louis XIV put his bride, Infanta Maria Theresa of Spain, to shame with his exorbitant dress. In a sweep of haughty democracy, Louis XIV spread his love for fashion indulgences to the people of Paris, when he extended a wedding invitation to the people at large for the marriage of his grandson in 1697. This let open the floodgate for desire and consumption of new fashions.

Part of the royal court of Louis XIV included the appointment of Jean Baptiste Colbert to his court. Colbert served a number of functions, but was most remembered for realizing France's potential to become a world leader in the textile and fashion industry. By the late 1600s, the French government initiated legislation to protect a certain type of silk weaving. Fine velvets, satins, damasks and embroidering were all available in France. Opening in 1663, Colbert directed the Gobelins Royal Factory, which produced

textiles and tapestries in the heart of Paris. Colbert aided Louis XIV in the conversion of Versailles from a hunting lodge to the famed palace we know today.⁶⁵

Fashionable Revolt

Versailles provided respite for Marie Antoinette of Austria and her husband, Louis XVI, from the tumult and cacophony of urban Paris. As the tale goes, the people of the French revolution stormed the Bastille in 1789. Eventually, Marie Antoinette and her husband were forced from the garden palace of Versailles to the Parisian urban reality and their forthcoming fate.

Years prior, Marie Antoinette became known for her love of fashion and fine things. As she became queen at the young age of 19, she was often criticized for acting her age. One of these frivolous qualities was the queen's love of fashion. In 1783, the famous woman artist, Madame Vegee-Lebrun, painted a portrait of Marie Antoinette in a very casual gossamer frock. The queen received very harsh criticism for this portrait, as it confirmed her behavior as opposite that of a queen.

This casual dress sported by Marie Antoinette was not atypical of Vegee-Lebrun's style. The artist was known to have thrown parties, where she threw off the powdered wigs of the high class guests, and gave them long, simple swaths of cloth from her studio to don in classical Greek style

In 1792, the August Tuileries Palace was stormed, and Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI were captured. By 1793, Marie Antoinette died by means of the guillotine.

⁶⁵ Valerie Steele, *Paris Fashion: A Cultural History* (Oxford: oxford University Press, 1988) pp. 23.

Years after this event the Revolutionaries could still be identified by their casual dress of red, blue and white colors. Red and blue had only been the color of princes while white symbolized unity with the new king. Eventually, Napoleon rose to power and advanced his armies across Europe. These military uniforms influenced high fashion. As he was Emperor, he reestablished the idea of court dress. This edict ended the idea of dress as a means of establishing equality.⁶⁶

Revolt for Religious Freedom

Paris has come to be known for its changing nature. The Revolution of 1792 emblazoned the idea of political and religious freedom on French hearts forever. After the revolt, even Notre Dame underwent a time of secular use and minor aesthetic revisions to suit the change of philosophy against the church.

Islam is one of the many denominations included in the Parisian embrace. One unforgotten cannon of Islam, rooted in the Koran, included the order that ornament must not be made in the likeness of humans or animals, for fear of idolatry and the suppression of the light of Allah. Therefore, religious glorification through architectural ornament was limited to geometric and organic motifs. Numeric orders and sequence provided an overt system of praise to Allah.

Within the city of Paris, there are a number of Islamic religious structures and mosques. The common divisions of Islamic structures include the mausoleum, the caravansarai, the palace and the mosque. Muhammed originally called for simple burials in plain boxes, under floorboards or with flat stone markers. These mausoleums became

⁶⁶ Ibid, pp.52.

more elaborate in advancing times. The caravansarai was a place to house caravans and animals, but originated with students sleeping in teachers' houses. Eventually both structures evolved to separate forms.

The main forms of religious Islamic architecture include the mosque and the minaret. Islamic religion was established with the sword and encountered many religious architectural types. The mosque began as simple marking of ground and often had a courtyard at the center and halls surrounding perimeter. In a mosque, shoes must be removed to signify a sacred place.

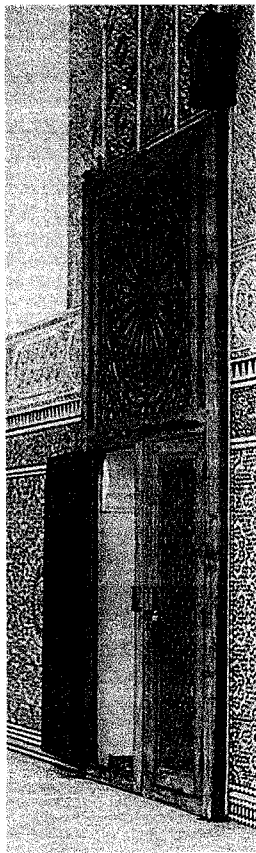
The minaret is a not necessary architectural feature adjacent to the mosque. The form was an obvious outgrowth of the need for a person brought to the top of the mosque to give a call to prayer. Due to the need to project sound, a minaret at a height greater than 50 feet was impractical. Sometimes a minaret was established by a simple set of stairs on the side of a mosque, or at times it also served as a lighthouse

The experience of the mosque type was available to even the most timid of visitors in Paris. Elements proving inclusion in Islamic categorization were both structural and skin-like in nature. As part of this mosque, men and women had separate bathing areas. From the lower-level bathing areas, one would proceed around the courtyard to the designated worship areas. These sacred spaces also insured gender division during times of ritual.

The decoration of the courtyard proved consideration of detail as the highest form of worship. This fact, was proven through every inch of wall, ceiling and floor being covered with surface detail, both organic and geometric in nature. The majority of the wall and ceiling details had been created by pressing intricate molds into wet plaster. All

without the consideration of structural support, the ornament simply acted as a means to overwhelm the eye with intricate beauty. In thanks for the infinite complexity of life, eyes soar from the courtyard to the thoughts of Allah above.

Many artists residing in Paris have been inspired by Arabian ornament, architecture, literature and the artifacts of an ancient culture pulsating steadily into the future. Marc Chagall, Russian born and an immigrant to Paris, made many illustrations of the famous tale, “A Thousand and One Nights.” In 2001, the Louvre featured a major exhibit entitled, “The Strange and the Marvellous in the Land of Islam.” Hence, the arms of Paris are broad enough to include Islamic traditions.



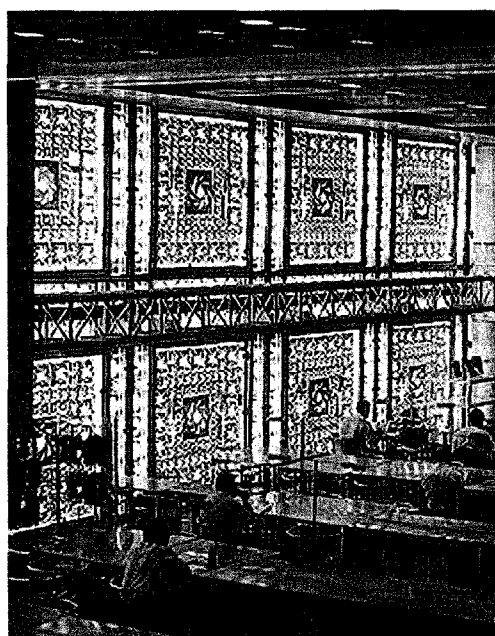
Islamic designs in tile, wood and plaster at Parisian mosque, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

One contemporary architect who recently translated the canons of the Koran into geometric symphonies is Jean Nouvel. Furthering the precedent already set, Jean Nouvel took Arabic designs and translated them into kinetic metal surfaces, stretched across the surface of L'Institut du Monde Arabe. Each window of the south-facing garden courtyard is divided into square modules. The modules then are divided into one main diaphragm, that whirrs open and closed depending on the amount of light striking the surface of the building. The main diaphragm of each window is bordered by smaller punctures with a similar aperture ability. Though most are stationary, the corner punctures of each module operate in concordance with the main iris. In all, there are 30,000 light-sensitive diaphragms.

L'Institute du Monde Arabe was completed in 1988 and exists as the smallest of President Mitterand's 15 billion franc building program to construct modern monuments representative of France's pivotal role in art, politics and the world economy in the twentieth century. The structure is located only a short distance from Notre Dame. Its form is divided in two, with a sharp plane on the north side, edging the Seine. The south form and courtyard include the dynamic wall of kinetic metal screens. Inclusion of the courtyard at L'Institut du Monde Arabe was an important decision by Nouvel, as it hearkened back to the original typology of the mosque. The garden and fountain were particularly important elements in the construction of sacred space.



Author outside L'Institut du Monde Arabe, February, 2000.



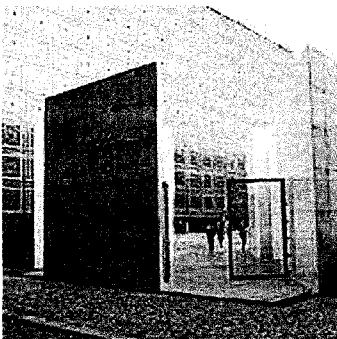
L'Institut du Monde Arabe, interior

Contemporary Malaysian-born fashion designer, Yeohlee, took inspiration for her one of her collections from Jean Nouvel's Arabian project. Not citing any primary Arabian ornament, the designs for Yeohlee's fashion collection were inspired by not only the contemporary patterns, but also the metallic finishes created by Nouvel in this building. Transgressing the idea of form, 20th century fashion designers have often found inspiration through architectural ornament. Like Hussein Chalayan, Yeohlee Teng firmly

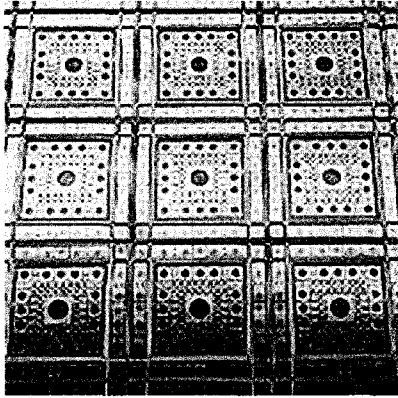
believed in a fashion sense as rational as architecture. In her early years, Yeohlee was surrounded by a family of architects. Yeohlee has been inspired by architectural influences of Afghanistan, as well as the California Arts and Crafts architects Greene and Greene.



Yeohlee, Spring 2001



Jean Nouvel, L'Institute du Monde Arabe



Jean Nouvel, L'Institute du Monde Arabe

Construction for Something Other

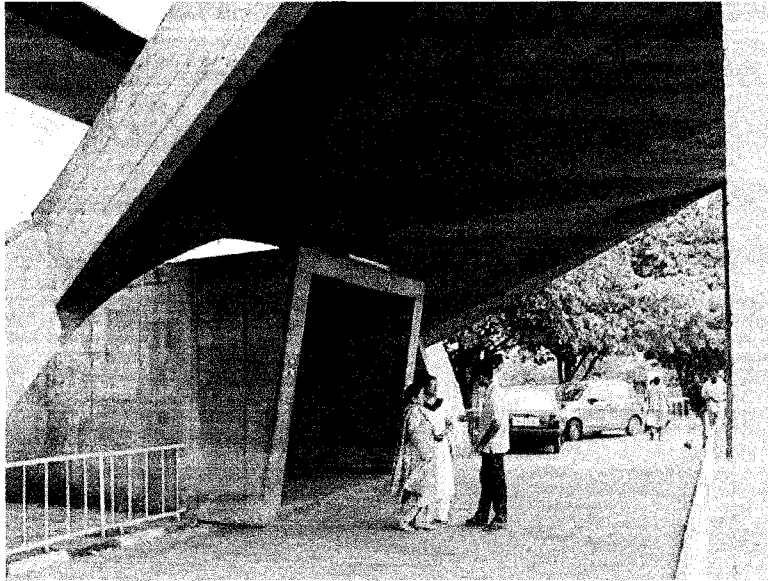
As the foreign religion of Islam came to find a home in Paris, so did many other traditions of very distant cultures. This assimilation of cultures is largely due to the contemporary exploration furthered by Napoleon III, who lived between 1808 and 1873. Napoleon III was the President of France between 1848 and 1852, and later, during 1852-1870, he became known as the Emperor of France. It was Napoleon's decision to eradicate 60 percent of existing Paris, which was largely medieval, for the contemporary building plans of Baron Haussmann.

As well as the realization of modern city planning and broad streets, Napoleon III managed to complete the Grand Plan for the Louvre, which had been in continual development towards a museum for years before Napoleon III. Three prominent figures in the field of contemporary design further contributed to the built environment of Paris. Like many other entrants, Gustave Eiffel hoped his entry for the iron tower for the 1889 International Exhibition would be accepted. Referring to the obelisk at Place de la Concorde as a symbol of Egyptian longevity, Eiffel erected the tower intended for only

short display. At the approval of the people of Paris, the tower was agreed to remain as a sharp landmark in the Parisian topography.

As Eiffel was inspired by Egyptian culture and made the contemporary translation with metal, similarly, I.M. Pei took the hint. Pei's glass and metal pyramids in the plaza before the Louvre, provide simultaneous ancient and contemporary architectural reference. Entering the museum through the pyramids, guests are led to the underbelly of the museum. Fittingly, ancient collections are partially featured at this level. The repetition provided through metal and glass grid of the pyramid is not a far aesthetic cry from Jean Nouvel's newer tangible conception, L'Institute du Monde Arabe.

Eiffel, Pei, and Nouvel were allowed their architectural innovations in the city of Paris. Another adopted Parisian, Le Corbusier, found not as warm a welcome for his planning ideas. Though he created the famous statement of architectural purity in the French suburban creation of Villa Savoye at Poissy, Le Corbusier always wanted to have the chance to make an impacting planning contribution to the city of Paris. In spite of his many proposals, Le Corbusier was never allowed planning privileges like Baron Haussmann. Interestingly, Le Corbusier was given the chance to bring Western planning fashions to India after the country's liberation from the English in 1947. Specifically, he was given the right of completely planning the north Indian city of Chandigarh. The streets are wide and opposing paths of traffic are separated by green patches of lawn and trees. The city is set up on a relative grid, with the addition of circular roundabouts, not far from the Parisian style.



Le Corbusier, University at Chandigarh, India, photo courtesy of the author 2003.

Inverted Seams and Tent Ropes

Paris is a perfect example of the patchwork garment, constructed over time. Like Egypt, Rome and Greece, each early culture provided artistic heritage in either literal foundations or more ephemeral foundations of an enduring culture. Jean Nouvel and Yeohlee are two artists contributing directly to the patched fabric of Paris. Nouvel reinterpreted the vast tradition into contemporary metal and glass. Yeohlee went further, making a grandfather of Islamic ornament, and claimed her derivatives from the echo of the source.

This contemporary third translation of the secondary source is just one way in which the city of Paris is becoming the actuality of contemporary French theorists. Le Corbusier got his wish for planning, but his bedpartner was switched, and the result was a Parisian aesthetic zipped over a sari in northern India. Disguise aptly fits with Derrida's definition of "differance." Differance is as accurate and as sincere as Louis XIV's self-

designation as the Sun King though he was never the Greek god Apollo. The king's residence at the Versailles attempted to subvert the reminder that urban Paris was then not at its knees. Artist, Vegee-Lebrun, painted Marie Antoinette as a commoner that she wanted to be. Vegee-Lebrun, in her trashing of the royal wigs for classical costume, denied the costume of the day only for the dressing of a costume more comfortable and compliant with the past, but still not representative of the present. Every part of Paris is costume and longing for another time, another place to be.

Because of the want of height and light, 12th century Parisians sacrificed solid architecture for one where stone planes were supported through the equivalent of tent ropes in stone. In this way, Yamamoto's wedding dress and hat of 1998 that required pole supports was a perfect description of Paris through the years. Like flying buttresses, the poles helped support a white wedding dress grown to monstrous proportions. These multiple cultural influences of Egypt, Greece, Rome, Islam, as well as many others, contributed to the fantastic, mythical quality of the city of Paris. Certainly a bride in her gown, Paris is swollen with the burdens of the past and expectations of the future.



Yamamoto, 1998 collection

Conclusion

“The only way the discourse can control the dress-like condition of modern architecture is to deny that it is a dress, let alone a garment suspended within the unreliable world of fashion rather than the supposedly reliable world of modern technology and functional rationalization. More precisely, it is to deny that modern technology is the technology of the surface, that all modern architectural forms are but new forms of clothing, understood as prosthetic extensions of the physically and culturally fragile body.” – Mark Wigley⁶⁷

Architecture and fashion are similar through their need to protect and establish identity, whether singular or social. Further, architecture and fashion are similar through common form and surface ornament. Throughout time, architecture and fashion have served to protect the human body. In a very literal sense, a circle may be first drawn around the body to indicate the proximity of protective fashion. A second circle may be inscribed outside the first circle, indicating architecture’s role of protection around clothed bodies.

In light of the happenings of September 11, 2001, Lucy Orta and Kosuke Tsumura worked prophetically in the 1990’s towards a protective, immediate architecture that could be easily transformed from clothing worn on an individual. Since this time, Americans especially have become defensive in mindset. They are more ready to act and more prepared for another assault. There is greater acceptance of protective tools for personal and communal use, especially in dense urban areas. There will be the continual advancement of autonomous, insular forms for the protection of individuals.

⁶⁷ Wigley, pp.362.

In viewing the case of identity, technology has helped to create a rapidly changing global culture. Pockets of groups unexposed to mass media have remained less changed, but are still riddled with the advancements in transportation and the machine industry. Cultures, as those seen in India, seem to be relatively immune to today's climate of rapid change.

Fashion and architecture serve to give identity to individuals and social groups. As individuals, we understand the idea of "home" and "our clothes" and place great attachment on our individual things. Similarly, forms and ornament act as signs and symbols for social groups. This manner of identification has been true since the commencement of humanity.

As technology has helped to revolutionize the idea of time and place, so it also has impacted the realities of form and ornament. Contemporary MIT educator, artist and theorist, Krystof Wodiczko, has used projection as a means of social activism. By projecting images of the unwanted, namely the homeless and handicapped, onto grand public monuments, he has disabled their anonymous place in the social framework. Through the application of virtual ornament, Wodiczko established identity for this group.

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, in *Nomadology: The War Machine*, have recommended this path of activist behavior. The authors described the space occupied by nomadic cultures as "smooth" and continuous, as opposite that of the organization of the State, which is central and hierarchical. Deleuze and Guattari described the actions of Moses, when, in the Old Testament story, he left Egypt behind for the uncertain desert, "...launching into the desert, he begins by forming a war machine. This is the machine of

the Just, already a war machine, but one that does not have war as its object.”⁶⁸ Hence, the state of mind and state of social groups that Deleuze and Guattari propose are one of activism rather than compliance with the homogenous state.



Author's work, *Divine Rain* (video projections from above), Autumedia Video Installation, Cincinnati, Ohio. October, 2003.

⁶⁸ Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Nomadology: The War Machine*, (New York: 1986), pp.. 112.

Autumedia featured outdoor video installations by 13 professional artists and occurred on October 11, 2003, at Elm Street and Central Parkway in urban Cincinnati. The show allowed me an opportunity to translate activism through projection and construction. For the project, I constructed 5 white umbrellas, one of which was screenprinted with black dials. When held by adults, the white fabric of the umbrellas fell nearly to the ground. This generous fabric allowed for greater protection from the elements, isolated “cocoon” space, as well as plenty of room for the projection from above. I stood at the roof of the three-story building at Elm and Race, and held a projector down onto the umbrellas and crosswalk. Themes of the video ranged widely from windows, fabric, grass and fences to religious images from Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity.

Near the end of the show, I viewed from my privileged perspective at the roof, an old man pick up the umbrella with the black designs, retract it, and fold the frame and all the yards of fabric under his arm. I left my projector and ran to the street to ask the man why he took it. Mumbling incoherently, I managed to understand the man’s words that he had no idea to whom the umbrella belonged. Unkempt, alone and incoherent, I assumed the man to be homeless. I could not think of a better gift to me than him seeing a need in what I made.

This situation of the destitute, whether in Cincinnati or Mumbai, needs the attention of the design community. The events of September 11, 2001, have heightened our awareness of the need of autonomous means of gestalt protection. One predictive, economically affordable design solution that hovers between fashion and architecture is the creation of umbrella-like structures. These forms, being temperature and water

resistant, offer a means of temporary shelter. Translucent umbrella fabric that falls to the ground would provide protection while walking. The handle, extended, could support the umbrella if a person decided to remain seated or standing.

This is just one design solution, hovering between architecture and fashion, amid a myriad of others for the protection of bodies in an emergency or just the factors of daily life. The disciplines of architecture and fashion are called to this social responsibility. Advancements in textile technology will help provide a means to foster this collaborative work.

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