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 20th Century Dress and Culture
 ARTH 1204 – OL68

Garment Comparison Worksheet: How Do We Describe Garments?

Formal qualities: What does it look like? This includes colors, shapes, form, images, etc. Be specific.

Fill out your worksheet first, then write your narrative.

When discussing fashion, include the following specifics to paint a picture for your reader:

- **SILHOUETTE:** The shape in which the garment is created (e.g. an A-line dress); you can just describe the overall shape if you’re not versed in this aspect of fashion
- **COLOR:** It’s not just “blue.” Blue can be: cerulean, cobalt, periwinkle, etc. Be as specific as possible when describing the colors in the garment.
- **PATTERN:** Describe the pattern on the fabric, or the overall pattern created by colors and shapes
- **FABRIC:** Textiles make all the difference in the language of fashion. Be specific about how the fabric looks and how it adds to the appearance and texture of the garment.
- **TRIM or EMBELLISHMENT:** These are details added to the garment after it’s finished (e.g. embroidery, beads, fur, etc.)

Garment #1 Designer: Paul Poiret Title: Sorbet Dress Date: 1912	Garment #2 Designer: Sonia Delaunay Title: Simultaneous Dress Date: 1913
SILHOUETTE: Silk Chiffon	SILHOUETTE: Jagged
COLOR: Black, blush pink, pistachio, purple/lavender, mauve	COLOR: black, pistachio, silver, gold, dark green, purple, maroon
PATTERN: Floral on sleeve and chiffon	PATTERN: Crochet
FABRIC: silk and satin	FABRIC: various materials
TRIM or EMBELLISHMENT: Trimmed with fur; embroidered with glass beads	TRIM or EMBELLISHMENT: quilting of various material

Sonia Delaunay & Paul Poiret Significant Garment

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Cross cultural and historical influences made a huge impact on the fashion design scene throughout the 20th century. During the 20th century, the improvement of travel and communication allowed designs, fashion, and materials of other cultures to become more accessible to designers firsthand. Also, women's clothing particularly, were often layered, designed with a corset silhouette, and complimented with a hat during this time period. Designers such as Sonia Delaunay and Paul Poiret depicted evidence of multicultural sources. Delaunay created garments and artwork using various fabrics and paints from her travels around the world. Poiret's art and designs were much influenced by the Middle East and India. Both designers found inspiration their own way to create significant garments which are similar but different to one another.

Sonia Delaunay is a well diverse Russian artist, whom also would be considered an avant-garde, that used art as a form of expression and language. Delaunay was born November 4th, 1885 in Odessa, Ukraine and died in Paris on December 5th, 1979. She has spent 60 years invested in her artwork and using it to speak a language for her, as well as others. Between the first and second World Wars, she helped bring art and life together and continued to promote the cause of abstraction as a universal visual language in post war era. Her artistry varied like her artwork; Delaunay indulged in textiles, clothes, paintings, collaborations with poets, choreographers, and manufacturers. Her other artwork consists of the Yellow Nude and Bal Bullier. Delaunay's significant garment, which was made in 1913, is called the "Simultaneous Dress" (figure 2). The dress is consisted of a crochet pattern, the quilting of various materials, and a jagged silhouette. The colors of the garment included black pistachio, silver, gold, dark green, purple, and maroon. The color black was specifically used around the neck and shoulder,

the left forearm, and right arm to contain the explosion of the rest of the colors throughout the gown. It was such a significant garment that Sonia herself even wore it (figure 1).

Paul Poiret would also be known as the King of Fashion in America. Poiret was born in 1879 and died in 1944. In 1901, he joined and worked with Charles Frederick Worth whom was an English born designer whose Paris salon dominated French couture. He made more loose-fitting clothing and strayed away from women wearing corsets and instead created silhouettes that reflected a woman's natural curve. Poiret indulged in perfume and developed the blueprint for the modern fashion industry. He served in the military and founded a school for decorative arts to support his community. Poiret's significant garment, which was made in 1912, is called the "Sorbet Dress" (figure 3). The dress is consisted of a silk chiffon silhouette, floral patterns on the sleeve, embroidered glass beads on the floral pattern, and silk and satin fabric. The chiffon silhouette is trimmed with fur and also has the floral pattern that is embroidered with the glass beads. The colors of the garment included black, blush pink, pistachio, purple, lavender, and mauve; with black being the dominant color. The Sorbet was simply a skirt and tunic.

The "Simultaneous Dress" and the "Sorbet Dress" are aesthetically similar and different, there are different aspects that define them, and they send different messages even though they were made within a year of each other. Each dress is ankle length where the person wearing the garment, feet may not be visible. Also, both dresses used the color black to highlight the different aspects of the garment; such as the "Sorbet Dress" having one side of the top half of the skirt black and trimmed with black fur for the silhouette. Each dress utilized different materials from glass beads, fur and numerous different fabrics are what makes them similar as well. The silhouette of the dresses differs by the "Sorbet Dress" having a chiffon and the "Simultaneous Dress" having a jagged, untailed bottom. The "Sorbet Dress" has a V-neck

while the “Simultaneous Dress” has a crewneck. Also, the “Sorbet Dress” “Simultaneous Dress”
The various colors and shapes define the “Simultaneous Dress.” They create an abstract but
organized and symbolic look; it is a statement piece for almost any occasion. For the “Sorbet
Dress,” it is defined by the chiffon silhouette because it is a skirt, but it is also combined with the
tunic. The message for the “Simultaneous Dress” is to be bold and to make a statement no matter
where you go. The message for the “Sorbet Dress” is to be a classy woman with a statement. The
messages are similar but different even though they were made within a year of each other.

In the early 20th century, there were numerous different looks during this time. There was
something for everybody, but it depicted if you had wealth or not. The designers made garments
with a message and integrated different cultures into their work. Also, these designers had more
than one art craft and were very versatile. During the first half of the 20th century, Sonia
Delaunay spread the experience of abstraction in Europe and advocated a theory of simultaneous
color contrasts throughout her life. Therefore, she believed that fashion and design were ways to
reveal and implement new visual language of abstract paintings to reach broader audience and
possibly in everyday life. Paul Poiret was considered the most creative of the 20th century due to
him changed the course of costume history by steering it in the direction of a modern design
history. Also, he named both his perfume and decorative arts company after his daughters and
did not mind giving back to his community as well. Delaunay and Poiret were significant
designers and leaders during this century because they brought change to the fashion scene. The
“Sorbet Dress” and the “Simultaneous Dress” were significant garments of theirs during these
times.

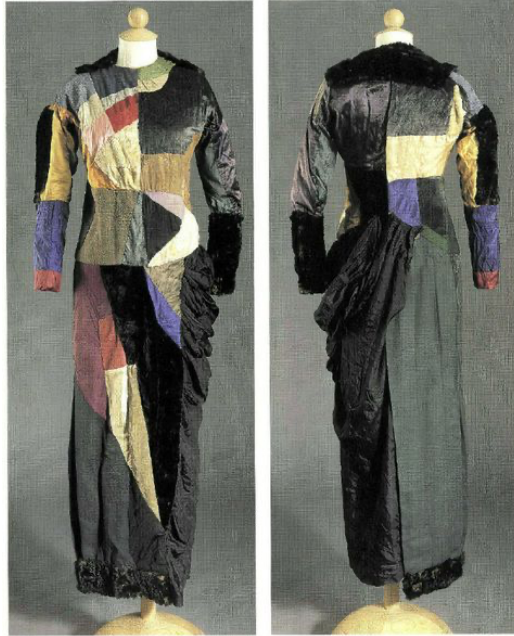


Figure 1: Sonia in “Simultaneous Dress” **Figure 2:** the “Simultaneous Dress” made in 1913;

needlework, crochet, quilting of various materials



Figure 3: Sorbet Dress by Paul Poiret made in 1912; silk chiffon and satin, embroidered with glass beads, and trimmed with fur

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