

How Do Culture Impact Clothes Design?

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Abstract

Fashion designers and manufacturers create apparel and accessories that align with the cultural norms and practices of a specific geographic area. It assumes the status of a prevailing trend within the locality. Individuals tend to embrace a particular fashion style solely if it aligns with the cultural norms and values of the region. The cultural dynamics of a particular area undergo transformation over the course of time. Fashion trends are subject to the influence of evolving cultural norms within a given region. Fashion trends are commonly acquired by individuals through exposure to various forms of media. Individuals endeavor to emulate their preferred actors, actresses, or models with regards to attire and fashion. Alternatively, individuals may become cognizant of their peers' attire and endeavor to emulate their fashion choices. This is the process by which a particular trend gains popularity within a given geographic area. Individuals are expected to adhere to certain social norms and conventions regarding their attire and are discouraged from wearing clothing that deviates too far from these expectations, even if such clothing is aesthetically pleasing. The adoption of a particular trend within a given region is contingent upon its acceptance by the dominant cultural norms and its potential to generate a significant influence. This research aims to employ the Dominican and Latin American cultures as case studies to evaluate the manners in which cultural norms impact the design of clothing. This study aims to assess the influence of culture on clothing design, with a specific focus on the Dominican and Latin American cultures.

Keywords: culture, fashion, clothes, design

Introduction

Many people get the impression that the fashion industry is all about superficiality and not much more. Nevertheless, art has been a major source of motivation for the fashion industry for many decades. According to Davis (2014), many famous contemporary designers have found inspiration in famous works of art. The works of Diego Velazquez, Francisco de Zurbaran, and Francisco Goya were major influences on the Spanish fashion designer Cristóbal Balenciaga. Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana, two Italian fashion designers, drew substantial inspiration for their Fall 2013 collection from the Byzantine mosaics in the Cathedral of Monreale on the island of Sicily (Davis, 2014).

Isabelle de Borchgrave, a Belgian artist, has made paper costumes based on famous artworks. This research examines exhibition catalogs, secondhand interviews, reviews of recent fashion collections, and art history textbooks to demonstrate how today's leading fashion designers have been influenced by the works of these renowned painters (Davis, 2014). Additionally, the paper examines these creators and their works, as well as the clothing lines that sprang from their influence. Artistic expressions in the realm of fashion have been shown to profoundly impact viewers (Davis, 2014). Fashion is more than a profession; it's a pervasive part of global culture that has persisted for centuries. Both the arts and the fashion industry represent our shared humanity and cannot function independently. In this study, the Dominican and Latin American cultures will be used as case studies to assess the ways in which cultural norms influence clothing design. This paper will evaluate how culture impacts the clothes design by paying close attention to the Dominican culture and the Latin American culture.

Dominican culture and clothe design

Dominican folk wear owes a great deal to both Spanish and African fashion traditions. Even if the Taino population hadn't collapsed during Spanish domination, they wouldn't have passed down many heirloom garments. Considering how little clothing they wore, this seems sense (Alcantara et al., 2022). "The people of this island... all go naked, men and women, as their mothers bore them," Columbus wrote to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. On the other hand, he did mention that some ladies like to wear a loincloth. Married Taino women were the only ones subject to the customary requirement of modest dress. The women wore miniskirts known as *nagua*.

Cotton or pulverized bark fibers were used to create the little cloth the Taino wore. Some of the few Taino artifacts we have are from their jewelry, that was made of bone, shell, and gold. During ceremonies or before war, they would also paint their faces. Historians have noted that the Taino could smell the approaching Spaniards before attempting an ambush (Alcantara et al., 2023), despite the fact that the Spaniards' heavy clothing would have appeared just as unusual to them as the Taino's lack of clothing. But the Spanish and their way of life won out in the end. Interracial marriage between Taino and Spanish was frequent despite the people of both cultures' dire circumstances.

Women of mixed Taino and Spanish ancestry were encouraged to adopt Spanish culture, particularly the wearing of long, colorful garments. Dominicans continue to celebrate Carnival, a holiday with medieval European origins. Characters wear extravagant clothes and masks, and one even has horns (Alcantara et al., 2023). Dominicans have mainly accepted American fashions in recent years, yet many continue to take pleasure in their traditional attire. For instance, despite the heat, most men continue to wear long trousers and formal shirts to work. Visitors who want to blend in should pack their best formal wear for any religious services they may attend.

How the Dominican Culture has Impacted Oscar de la Renta's Clothe Designs

Oscar De La Renta was a fashion designer who hails from the Dominican Republic. Specifically, the garden, the Orient, and Spain all served as sources of inspiration for de la Renta, who skillfully blended these disparate ideas in his designs (Cabezas, 2019). A closer inspection of four outfits from the Museum's permanent collection (all included in the show) illustrates how he combined these inspirations. Oscar de la Renta, whose clothes are widely considered as the pinnacle of femininity and elegance, displayed his breadth of creativity in these outfits spanning the decades from the 1960s to the 2000s.

Oscar De La Renta caters to the elite with his *prêt-à-porter* designs, even though he was primarily a *couture* designer. Some of the most recognizable faces in the world have been dressed by him, including Jackie Kennedy, Barbara Walters, Hillary Clinton, and Sarah Jessica Parker. Beginning with a perfume collection in 1977 (Cabezas, 2019), his label started to attract younger ladies. Some of his styles are now available for middle-class ladies, although he continues to cater mostly to the affluent. Oscar de la Renta has introduced O. Oscar in 2004 for the American market, Oscar de la Renta for children in Spring 2012, and Oscar by Oscar de la Renta, a commercial line, to cater to specific demographics. (Cabezas, 2019). Oscar de la Renta, his flagship label, debuted in 1965 and has been consistently feminine and red carpet focused ever since. While he still serves as the fashion line's creative director, he delegated day-to-day operations to his son-in-law in 2004 and currently serves just as chairman.

Oscar de la Renta's colors is heavily inspired by the vibrant blues and fiery reds of Spanish culture. Embroidery, fringe, and sequins are just a few of the unique embellishments he

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often employs. He's not hesitant to include international flair into his designs (Horne, 2015). By incorporating Russian and Gypsy traditional designs into his high-end ranges in the 1970s, he helped usher in the age of ethnic apparel while remaining true to his signature silhouette. In addition, he sometimes used ruffles in novel and unexpected ways. He does not wear a lot of bold materials or designs since most of his outfits are meant for the red carpet (Horne, 2015). He was never a designer who incorporated male elements into his collections for ladies. In his fall/winter designs, Oscar de la Renta also incorporates fur and textural elements into his outerwear. Silk, lace, and rouching are all common materials in his designs.

The early 1950s, when de la Renta was an art student in Madrid, was when she was first exposed to Spanish culture. His image of Spanish culture was profoundly influenced by his exposure to flamenco and bullfighting (Simmons, 2020). De la Renta creatively integrated garden and Spanish motifs into the design of a 1960s evening dress. By adding a bolero jacket to a formal gown, de la Renta reimagined a classic Spanish look for the modern world, one that is often worn by matadors during bullfights. The fabric, which has a turquoise and pink butterfly design, reflects his interest in nature (Simmons, 2020). The dress's neckline, back, and waist are all adorned with bands of beads, sequins, and metallic thread, a hallmark detail of Oscar de la Renta's designs.

Typical of how De la Renta worked, he started with the fabrics, in this case a gorgeous leaf-patterned woven cloth. The elaborate clasps on the coat are a nod to traditional Chinese fashion, while the fur edging alludes to a romanticized vision of Russia (Simmons, 2020). Catherine the Great's lavish royal court in St. Petersburg piqued De la Renta's interest in the history of clothing (Simmons, 2020). The dramatic gigot sleeves, sometimes known as "leg-of-mutton" sleeves, were popular in the 1890s and were brought back by him for this evening outfit. The flower embroidery on the bodice was inspired by the needlework seen on traditional Russian court attire.

Impact of Cultural identity on the Latin American Designers

Taller Flora, Carla Fernandez's fashion line, was launched in 1998. It was originally conceived as a project brand that would carry on indigenous peoples' customary textile production by employing local craftsmen to make all the company's fabric and garments (Penix-Tadsen, 2016). The company Taller Flora, which evolved by modeling its goods on those of indigenous Mexican artists, has established a fair-trade network and ecologically conscious procedures that are innovative in their field (Penix-Tadsen, 2016). This framework has helped boost regional education (Penix-Tadsen, 2016) and bring traditional fabric production techniques into contemporary fashion design. Consequently, Taller Flora is now a reliable, future-focused fashion brand since it connects the historical textile production technique with contemporary fashion design.

Carla Fernandez's father, the head of Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History, allowed the family to travel extensively, exposing Carla to the old attire of the country's many regions. The lessons she learned from them have inspired her to keep looking for new methods to combine the old attire of Mexico with Western influences (Penix-Tadsen, 2016). The redesign process offers locals an opportunity to rethink not just their cultural identity but also the position of women in their community and the difficulties they face economically. Additionally, the brand was able to build up and extend to a system where individuals began to generate profit rather than just the basic minimum for self-sufficiency by making and selling the items via a fair distribution procedure (Penix-Tadsen, 2016). It's a system in which the designers are paid more to create higher-quality goods, that are then sold via a more equitable distribution system. This

results in a system where firms don't benefit from the low pay of their employees but rather from the sales of high-quality goods (Penix-Tadsen, 2016). The Taller Flora studio combines modern techniques with time-honored methods to create one-of-a-kind pieces of art.

Social agenda of fashion trend

Clothes may convey a lot of different ideological messages. Fashion trends depict a sartorial culture that represents the consumer's identity in a certain setting. These fashion movements have a social objective, which is to reflect the consumer's identity via their attitude and way of life (Testa et al., 2020). From one era to the next, people's lifestyle preferences shift. In other words, they imply the style and demeanor of attire appropriate for a benchmark event. According to research (Testa et al., 2020), societal values and people's emotional expectations provide the basis for these fashion norms. Collar and necklines, hem lines, waistlines, shoulder lines, sleeve lines, and hip lines are all areas where the fashion trend is focusing its attention and highlighting its intricacies.

Waist trainers, joggers, palazzo pants, tulle skirts, and midi skirts are all on the increase in popularity. Seasonal increase has been seen for the white lace dress, the high waisted bikini, the romper, the shift dress, and the white jumpsuit (Testa et al., 2020). Besides bringing a touch of class and natural beauty to modern life, they also dispelled some myths about fabric (Testa et al., 2020) such as the belief that knitted stretch denim is only perfect for lounging and the belief that tulle is only proper for formal party wear or Haute couture. The light weight and airy silhouette of a tulle skirt or the simple to don and doff jumpsuit have all incorporated on a regenerating feature and pepped up the current look (Testa et al., 2020). Jogger pants for example, provide kinematic comfort and are a good option for frail customers who want to avoid heavy trousers that can cause skin bruises. Each new style has as its primary goal improving the way its target demographic looks and feels.

Conclusion

A region's culture evolves through time. Likewise, a region's culture might have an impact on its fashion trends (Kochhar, 2021). Most of the public follows the latest styles set in the media. A lot of people strive to dress like their favorite celebrities or models because they like the way they look. However, if they see their peers following a certain trend, they may feel pressured to do the same (Kochhar, 2021). This is how a fad spreads across a community and becomes widespread (Kochhar, 2021). Even if it's fashionable, they cannot wear anything that would make them social outcasts. Anything that has enough of an effect on the dominant culture to become fashionable there. As a result, a region's style is heavily influenced by its cultural norms and values. Culture may be seen reflected in a society's fashion trends and vice versa (Kochhar, 2021). Fashion evolves as society does. It is also true that trends in clothing may have an effect on an area's way of life.

Abstract

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