

The Development of American Fashion in Comparison to Uzbek Fashion

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### **Abstract**

In this research paper, I will be talking about the development of American fashion in comparison to my country's, which is Uzbekistan's fashion. There is a big difference between those two countries. The only thing that they have in common about fashion is the way some people in both countries wear a t-shirt, jeans, and sneakers. The difference is that America doesn't have its national clothing. Instead, people wear whatever they want, but mostly casual and athleisure wear. Uzbekistan has its own national clothing to wear which represents their culture and tradition. In this paper, I have also talked about how me being an immigrant here helped me come up with a career that I will be working on in the future. So when I immigrated to the U.S. from a country that has a large selection of modest yet fashionable clothing, I have struggled to find the same style of clothes here in the U.S. This desire led me into the fashion world and inspired me to create the clothes I still have trouble finding in the U.S, Therefore I set a goal for myself, to become a fashion designer and create a mix of Uzbek and American fashion and have something of my own. Due to my Muslim background, I am willing to create clothing that reveals less of a person's body and adds more beauty to them while remaining modest. When I become successful in this field, my designs will reflect my culture values and introduce them to a modern world.

*Keywords:* athleisure wear, casual wear, khan- atlas, ikat- adras,

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Fashion is different in every country, For example, fashion is different in America than it is in Uzbekistan(the place where I'm from). National features of every country can be observed through its customs, traditions, cuisine as well as traditional clothing. When comparing America's fashion to Uzbekistan's fashion, American fashion is diverse and generally informal and Americans' diverse cultural roots are reflected in their clothing, particularly those of recent immigrants cowboy hats, boots, and leather are typical of specifically American styles. Also, dress norms in America are generally consistent with those of other post-industrial Western nations and have become largely informal since the mid-20th century. Clothing in the United States also depends on a variety of factors including location, and demographic factors such as ethnicity which makes it differ from the Uzbek fashion in clothing. There are a lot of differences in clothing between the U.S and Uzbekistan, and noticing the differences between my country's fashion world and the U.S.'s fashion world made me more curious about those differences. My major motivation for entering the fashion world was seeing a blank space in our society of more modest and at the same time fashionable clothing. Since my country was one of the pathways for the Great Silk Road it was and is rich with the unique fabrics that emphasize my culture. The main factors that are associated with Uzbekistan's fashion are the fabric Khan Atlas & Adras (Ikat), and covering most of the women's bodies while highlighting their natural beauty. While learning more about my country's history of fashion, and the history of the U.S and observing the beauty of nature, highly helped me notice the differences between those two and discover my passion for this style of clothing. America's fashion is quite different from Uzbekistan's fashion

because America doesn't have its traditional clothes, and American clothes are simple and casual, unlike Uzbek clothes, since Uzbek clothes are part of rich cultural traditions and made with ikat cloth and feature an array of bright pearly colors that are unique.

### **Fashion in America**

In my opinion fashion in clothing depends on tradition. But the U.S. doesn't have "traditional clothing" because we are a nation of immigrants from all over the world, and as such, each group has a bit of influence on fashion, with the biggest being various European styles. If someone asks me to describe America's fashion in appearance I would say "denim jeans" and "sneakers" (fashion or athletic) are traditional American clothing, but that seems far too recent and ordinary in my opinion. The USA has no national costume. The people of the USA are from such diverse backgrounds that no one costume represents Americans. According to the interview from the website "What are the clothes that define the United States," the author said, "I attended an International function at my college where several international students wore traditional clothing from their countries - Sari (Indian), Hanbok (South Korea), Danshiki (North Africa), etc... Which led a young lady to ask me about the traditional clothing of the United States. All I could think to say was, "jeans and a t-shirt." Maybe cowboy boots and hats - and baseball caps. I don't know. There's Native American clothing, which doesn't encompass all of the United States. But those cannot be the only items of clothing that are quintessentially American"(Lutoslawski, 2010). What Lutoslawski said is significant because the clothing that has been worn by the greatest number of Americans over the longest period is the T-shirt and blue jeans. Although these items are not worn by everyone, those Americans that do regularly wear T-shirts and blue jeans are from any background, any age group, any economic or social

level of American society. So jeans and T-shirts don't count as America's national clothes. In the website "Life in the USA," Elliot Essman discusses that the United States doesn't have a national costume the way that the Japanese have kimono or whatever. There also isn't a royal/imperial past involved, so American culture doesn't tend to focus on pomp and circumstance, the way that a lot of European countries do when they're celebrating themselves (Essman 2014). Based on what Elliot Essman stated, it can be seen that America doesn't have any traditional clothing to wear just like how other countries have some national costumes that represent them.

### **Fashion in Uzbekistan**

The clothes of the Uzbeks' ancestors living on the territory of Uzbekistan have been formed by the peculiarities of natural conditions, way of life and tribal traditions. The main factor that influenced the ethnic clothing of the Uzbeks, of course, was Islam. Traditional Uzbek clothing continued to preserve features of archaism until the 20th century. Men's, women's and even children's clothes were practically the same in form and cut. Today in Uzbekistan people dress in different ways. Young people in the cities, and partially in the provinces, wear European-style clothes, though with some elements of the national dress. The elderly, especially women from the country, go on wearing the national dress. The Uzbek national dress will certainly develop further: it will acquire new elements and at the same time will retain the tradition. So even though some people there wear European-style they still have a tradition to follow and dress up according to it, especially during the holidays. According to "Clothes and Beauty in Uzbekistan," "Uzbek national clothes are very bright, beautiful and cozy. Uzbek clothes are a part of the rich cultural traditions and lifestyles of Uzbek people. In urban places, it is uncommon to see people in traditional Uzbek clothes, except during traditional festivities and

holidays. But in rural places, they are still a part of everyday life”(Hays, 2008). This quote is significant because it shows how the Uzbek national costume is a part of the cultural heritage and deep-rooted traditions of the Uzbek people. It also shows that Uzbeks have their traditional clothes that they would wear in their everyday life and during the holidays. One of the most known dresses women wear during the holidays and parties are the “khan- atlas” and “Adras- ikat,” which are the two popular fabrics that would highlight the natural beauty of Uzbek women.

### **America’s fashion vs Uzbekistan’s fashion**

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### **American fashion vs Uzbek fashion**

The development of American fashion in comparison to Uzbekistan is way different because Americans went further down the road of casual outfits than other cultures unlike Uzbekistan because Uzbekistan has its national clothing that they go further wearing it with. The fit of casual clothes that Americans, especially women wear tends to be looser and the fabric tends to be lighter because there's less of it. There's also less covering of the skin in casual wear. But Uzbek clothing is designed very differently than many other forms of clothing; it requires women to cover up all parts of their bodies. It also features a blending of colorful stripes and patterns and is made with shiny silk and cotton ikat. Comparing American clothes to Uzbek, it's more casual and open. According to the article, “Why Americans dress so casual,” the author says “I think that American culture is now associated with casual dress on a global scale. On the world stage, where American culture is so prominent, many countries emulate the way people in the United States dress, and that's almost inevitably more casually than the way people dress in those places”(Ferdman, 2015). Even though America's fashion is different than most of the countries, it still has its own unique style of clothing. Most of the Americans dress the way they want, they dress more casual because that is what mostly represents America's fashion. Casual clothes are the uniform of the Americans. Casual is diverse and made in America. However,

nowadays athleisure wear is worn by more people. Athleisure clothing is taking over closets across the globe. This dominant trend of athletic and leisure clothing marks a fundamental shift in casual dress styles. The athleisure trend also signifies the mass desire to require less maintenance in daily outfits. Athleisure clothes are being worn everywhere: the grocery store, the movies, the mall, to school, out to lunch with friends, or wherever really. So America's fashion occurs most quickly when it is led by the people, for the people. Therefore it can be seen that America doesn't have one specific style of clothing that everyone would go on wearing to represent America's tradition. When comparing Uzbek fashion to American, Uzbeks have a national costume that goes on from generation to generation even the new European style enters the country. For example, Uzbek ikat dress is the tradition that has been surviving and thriving culturally and economically in the 21st century(Lugington, 2014). Also, Uzbek trade cotton had been available since the early 19th century and was used as linings and clothing and furnishing materials but local textile production continued, especially of ikats and other silks. After the independence of Uzbekistan, the factory woven atlas was still the most common of the ikats. Ikats had two sets of meaning, the public part of national Uzbek identity and privately, as a sign of traditional and honorable family life. An example of "ikat- adras" and "atlas" dress can be seen in the image below: (Image #1: Khan Atlas & image#2: Ikat-Adras).



These Uzbek traditional costumes are designed by Shakhzoda Mukhamedova, who is a successful designer in Uzbekistan as well as in Russia. This image shows the unique background of my culture. Based on these images it can be seen that American fashion is way different than the Uzbeks' fashion.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, there are many differences between my country's fashion and fashion here in the U.S. My country has its traditional clothes and America doesn't. American clothes are designed to be more open than the Uzbek women's clothes. Due to my unique background as a Muslim immigrant from Uzbekistan, I have a different perspective when it comes to clothing. As I mentioned before, Uzbek women's clothing is designed more solidly which covers all parts of their bodies. So Ever since I came here from Uzbekistan, I've been keenly aware of the fashion differences within the two cultures. As I mentioned before I have struggled to find the same fashionable styles of clothing that were available in my country here in the U.S., so the particular goal I set for myself is to become a fashion designer here in America and include more Uzbek fashion influences to clothing designs here in the U.S. Uzbekistan doesn't have access to the internet, so people aren't order online. However, there are people from my country who's working in this field. They're bringing Uzbek outfits from Uzbekistan to the U.S and selling them to us- Uzbeks, and that's where I get my clothes from. Although there are people who sell Uzbeks costumes here in New York which we can buy from, I still want to create my own instead of bringing someone else's designs. Therefore my goal is to create a mix of Uzbek and American fashion of my creation to make a new, unique fashionable style. Whenever I see someone dressed up, I take a look at their fashion and style: what they're wearing, the way it's

designed, and how it is sewn. If I like the way a dress is designed, but not the way it flows, I think of ways to make it – in my opinion – better, perhaps closing it off more and adding more design aspects. I've found it easier for me to create my own illustrations rather than recreating other people's designs and just adding more details. Whenever I see new Uzbek materials and fabrics come out, I imagine myself incorporating them into my designs. I'm looking forward to illustrating and creating many clothes and designing them with unique materials inspired by my own mind and life. When I become successful in the fashion industry, I will be able to achieve my goals, which will symbolize that girls in Uzbek society can break any repressing tradition and become independent, resilient women.

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