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Title: Are Fashion Sketchbooks Racist?

Abstract: Drawing on scholar Marc Augé's concept of *non-place*, this paper contributes to growing studies that focus on the ways in which fashion produces racism. Recent years have shown a rise in the scrutiny by social media of racist fashion garments and campaigns which problematically stereotype, appropriate and Other marginalized cultures. However, less attention has been given to how racism is constructed through design practices in education and curricula, such as through the different activities and techniques which constitute the fashion ideation process. Indeed, few studies to date have examined how commonplace design tools such as sketchbooks, measuring tapes or mannequins reinscribe forms of Othering.

This paper sets out to critically examine representations of Othering in fashion design sketchbooks and discuss the role this ubiquitous fashion tool might play in encouraging racist fashion representations. The sketchbooks of undergraduate fashion design students were chosen for this study due to the importance of fashion education as a catalyst for future fashion cultures. From an initial sample of seventy sketchbooks, twelve sketchbooks showed representations of cultural difference through an over-reliance on excessive imagery, with limited text. These strategies showed a pattern of reproducing ahistorical static ideas which reinforce cultural hierarchies.

The concept of *non-place* (Augé 1995) is used in this study to refer to how time and space are mobilized using various design techniques and employed within sketchbooks. Such techniques show paradoxical representations of cultural differences, which lack context-specific histories and identities. The study identifies two key strategies used within fashion sketchbooks: firstly, the *de-contextualization* of cultural difference, and then the *re-contextualization* of cultural difference. Combined, these strategies show how using collaging techniques in sketchbooks in the fashion design process erases meaning by compressing time and space.

Keywords: Sketchbooks, Non-Spaces, Racism, Othering, Fashion Education, Design Process

Introduction

Having taught fashion design for over fifteen years, a common observation has been racist, sexist and other types of problematic designs produced by students. To critically analyze how current fashion design pedagogies are implicated in constructions of the Other and to understand how cultural constructions of difference are brought into being in the fashion design process, a sample of undergraduate fashion sketchbooks were examined. The analysis draws on the concept of *non-places* (Augé 1995) to refer to how time and space are mobilized to represent cultural differences. The age, background and intentionality of the sketchbook author has been excluded from the analysis, focusing instead on *how* specific design strategies give shape to hierarchies of cultural difference and racist representations.

Sketchbooks were chosen due to the increasing number of studies that have emphasized the important role they play in the fashion ideation process, including their value in identifying the techniques deployed by fashion designers to develop their fashion concepts (Gillham & McGilp, 2002). However, it remains unclear why such studies have focused mainly on techniques and strategies and the historical relevance of fashion designer's research process through their sketches, incorporated into monographs on fashion labels, such as, Fendi (Lagerfeld, 2015).

This lack of engagement with the socio-cultural contexts of fashion design is significant given how commonplace it is to see stereotypical representations of non-European and non-Anglo-American cultures produced by fashion students. This paper will demonstrate how the gaps in existing academic research on fashion design education and racial hierarchies is an urgent area that requires attention given continued calls to decolonize the university (Bhabra, Gebrial. Et al, 2018); and, the low number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) designers in the U.K. (13%) (Design Council 2019). As education systems continue to play an important role in reproducing racial inequalities from their selection processes to curricula, teaching and assessment methods (Gillborn, 2008) there is a challenge to better understand how design activities in fashion design education encourage practices that marginalize and Other different racial groups (Puwar & Bhatia, 2003; Kondo 1997; Geczy, 2013).

To critically engage with these topics, this paper is divided in three parts. Firstly, it will reflect on how racial bias is constructed in the fashion design process. Secondly, the paper will discuss the findings from a critical discourse analysis (Rose, 2003) that was undertaken by the author that examined a sample of sketchbooks produced by undergraduate first year fashion design students. Finally, the discussion draws on Marc Auge's theory of *non-places* constituted from three figures of excess: *overabundance of events*, *spatial overabundance* and *individualization of references* to unsettle the commonplace tool of sketchbooks in the fashion design process (Augé 1995).

1.Racial Hierarchies in the Fashion Design Process

The lack of academic engagement with how cultural differences are constructed in fashion education is surprising given increasing attention on how the fashion industry and fashion cultures produce racism; such as, through designs that culturally appropriate different cultures; the exclusion of non-white bodies in the fashion media and catwalk shows; and, the global dominance of European and western Anglo-America led fashion design (Fung, 2006; Garconniere, 2010; Hoskins, 2014; Gaugele and Tilton 2019).

Furthermore, fashion academics have raised concerns regarding the lack of criticality in fashion education. For example, cultural studies scholar Angela McRobbie has noted how an over-reliance on 'fantasy' scenarios in fashion education project briefs means that,

Fashion is removed from any connection with pain or hardship. History (and geography) appear only as a series of set pieces or panoramic stages into which fashion can dip and retrieve some themes and ideas.
(McRobbie 1998:56).

Investigating the meanings of how cultural differences are assembled and represented can offer insights into processes of Othering that occur in the fashion design process; indeed, literature in the field of Othering identifies the importance of examining representations (Hallam and Street, 2001). Therefore, this study does not set out to prove such problematic representations exist – instead, the focus here is to investigate *how* such processes of representation come into being.

Stuart Hall's work on representation, with a focus on 'the systems representation' is helpful here with its emphasis on *sets of practices* which construct and communicate different meanings (Hall 2013 [1997]: xxiv). Hall stresses how 'we give things meanings by how we *represent* them', referring specifically to the important role that words and images produce in culture and society (Hall 2013 [1997]: xix). Thus, choosing to focus on representational strategies in the fashion design ideation process can potentially offer insights into how race, gender and other signifiers are visually and textually constructed and what meanings are shaped by these constructions.

Fashion Design Tools: Sketchbooks

Sketchbooks underpin all art and design Higher Education curricula, providing a record of key evidence of the origins and developments of design concepts. Sketchbooks have therefore been recognised as contributing to a key stage of the creative process for hundreds of years, for example the 2016 exhibition *Under Cover: Artist's Sketchbooks* at the Fogg Museum, Harvard. Further, sketchbooks provide evidence of artists and designer's inner thoughts and inspirations through drawings and text (Brereton, 2009), resulting in the publication of many artist and designer's sketchbooks over the years (Klee, 1973 [1953]; Picasso and Glimcher and Glimcher, 1996). The value of sketchbooks are reflected in examples such as the U.S based *Sketchbook Project* - a crowd funded sketchbook museum and community space; activities encouraging the use of sketchbooks, such as *Sketchmob* at The Design Museum, London; archives which catalogue sketchbooks of artists and designers (see Tate Archive, Public Records Catalogue; British Library Catalogue); and, sketchbooks are now often included in exhibitions about designers as a way to offer insights into the designer's thinking, such as the use of personal sketchbooks in the 2019 exhibition for *Annie Albers* at the Tate Modern, U.K.

Within the discipline of fashion design, a vast array of literature has been published on the topic of sketchbooks, further cementing their important role in the fashion design process (Davies, 2010; Davies 2013). Many are instructional books, providing templates for fashion illustrations; or, provide insights into how to develop sources for design inspiration; many provide guidance on developing and testing design concepts; others emphasize the role of research in the fashion design process (Mbonu, 2014). Thus, the fashion designer's

sketchbook provides an important space for ‘experimenting and taking chances’ (Rotham 2012,p.7) and providing important insights into the design process.

2. Analysing Sketchbooks

However, due to the private and personal nature of sketchbooks, access for research was not straightforward. Access was finally granted to a sample of first year undergraduate sketchbooks in *College B* where the author has taught on a sessional basis since 2015. In contrast to other Higher Education Institutions (HEI) where access had been denied, the gatekeeper at *College B* was keen to incorporate issues related to the politics of fashion into the curricula. The qualitative research process was exploratory using an interpretivist paradigm guided by the author’s prior experiences as a fashion design educator (Ahmed, 2007). Analysing the representational strategies used in the sketchbooks helped to open issues around the nature of power relations and the ways in which racialized, classed and gendered boundaries are produced in fashion design education.

Sample Selection

The sample examined consists of data from a group of seventy sketchbooks produced by a group of undergraduate fashion design students during term 2 of their first year in a U.K. based HEI (*College B* from January to March 2017). This first year of the degree program was chosen because this initial year of education and training is an important place where key ideas about how to design in fashion are first introduced to students. Therefore, the ways in which fashion ideas are shaped takes place and begins to be established during this phase of fashion design education.

The sketchbooks formed part of the work produced in response to a college-set project brief titled ‘Fabric Exploration & Design’. The brief required students to choose one of three themes produced by the trend forecasting company WSGN for Autumn/Winter 2017/18 , formerly known as Worth Global Style Network, and was taught over ten weeks by four tutors; I was not one of the tutors. The themes were named: ‘Nocturne’, ‘Earthed’ and ‘Design Elements’. WSGN is a London-based trend forecasting company that develop themes used by fashion designers for future collections. This approach that links education

with industry is known as a 'live' brief. 'Live' briefs are used across many different educational contexts and disciplines and their aim is to provide students with the opportunity to participate in a project based in a real-life setting and so offer students the experience of working in and with the fashion industry.

Initial Experiences of Examining the Sketchbooks

The analysis of the sketchbooks was taken in three stages. The first stage of analysis was to scan the sample of seventy sketchbooks to gather some initial inferences from the data. The majority of the sketchbooks were A4 size, except for a few that were A3 size and all were manufactured by fine art brands, such as Windsor and Newton. The sketchbooks each comprised of between 40-50 heavy weight white cartridge paper sheets; a few sketchbooks used black cartridge paper. While some sketchbooks were spiral bound, the majority had hard-back case bound black covers with a white sticker with the student's name and class; a minority of students have also decorated their covers with more stickers.

A *constructionist* approach was used to identify representational systems used in the sketchbooks; this meant looking for material objects – images and marks - and effects used in the sketchbooks (Hall 2013 [1997]:11). The most striking initial observation was how most images used in the sketchbooks relied on secondary stock photographic imagery; and, the limited use of written text. Most pages in each sketchbook used the same technique of collage in which either colour photocopies or computer printed images were neatly cut and mostly presented with straight edges – a few purposefully torn - and glued onto sketchbook pages. Most collaged photographs appeared to be taken by others, although, the lack of written references made it difficult to interpret who the photographer was. The most common images used in the collages were taken from popular culture such as fashion media, advertising, street culture and music; next, were images of abstract colours and shapes, many from fine artists. Additional images included sketches by students, these were mainly simple fashion sketches alongside more detailed 'flat' illustrations which are black and white line drawings that show a garment as if it were laid flat to display technical information. There were also fabric swatches and text; very little or none of the original white, or black, cartridge paper could be seen. In general, the whole page was covered in imagery.

The second stage of analysis required searching for examples of non-white or non-western imagery to examine representations of Othering; however, at this stage there appeared to be few examples in the sketchbooks. While this was a considerable surprise, it did, however, point to the overwhelming dominance of white normativity. The third stage of analysis required a close-up examination of *how* the images had been constructed and presented by paying attention to the, ‘three sites at which the meanings of images are made: the site of production, the site of the image itself, and the site of its audiencing’ (Rose, 2003:67). This led to the identification of four significant sites in the sketchbooks:

- individual pages;
- images selected for collage: shape, size, colour;
- technologies and techniques used to produce images;
- and, spatial organization of the images.

By focusing on these sites more closely, a pattern then emerged in some sketchbooks that showed a reductionist binary perception around race and gender in response to two of the themes: some students working on ‘Nocturne’ had developed their inspiration from imagery related to darkness and its cultural associations; this included images such as skulls, voodoo, magic, black sexualized bodies, rap music and crime. In contrast, some students, looking at the theme ‘Earthed’ were drawing on imagery associated with nature and this included images of white bodies, natural landscapes, poetry, and pale colours. Given the author’s prior teaching experiences, it was not a surprise that some students drew on imagery based on over-simplified oppositional binary representations; and, that the theme ‘Nocturne’ had been developed by some students using exoticized imagery.

However, what these representational practices did highlight were the ways in which, hegemonic fashion discourses – in this case the project themes, mechanics of the sketchbooks and techniques of imagery and mark-making - work to subordinate the Other. According to the philosopher Jacques Derrida, the relations of power that operate in binary oppositional thinking result in the dominant binary controlling the lesser opposite within its domain (Derrida 2004 [1972]). So, while these representational practices that Other may appear to legitimize and vocalize marginalized communities, it must be remembered that the Other is positioned in multiple structures of dominance and power as gendered, raced, colonized, and sexualized Others; and, these narratives are dominated by white normativity. However, there

were clear examples that problematized this simple binary oppositions. For example, *Sketchbook A*, drawing on images of rap music and culture did not fall into this simple binary and provided a narrative that instead homogenised rap cultures, eroding categories of race.

The next step of this sampling process was to investigate in more detail how these representations were being constructed and what meanings they effected. The limitations of this research meant that collecting too much data was an issue, therefore, the same decision was taken to analyze those sketchbooks with representations of non-white cultures; this resulted in a series of pages found in a sub-set of twelve sketchbooks. These pages from sketchbooks required a more in-depth critical analysis of how non-white cultures and bodies had been assembled. This process identified two specific and interconnected strategies employed by the fashion design students: decontextualizing and recontextualising.

Representational Strategy 1: Decontextualizing

In the analysis of these twelve sketchbooks, all presented representational strategies which *decontextualized* images presenting cultural differences through three key tactics:



Figure 1: Sketchbook A



Figure 1: *pages (1) and (2), Sketchbook B*

- Dominance of *photographic images, mostly secondary*; almost none were primary with no author or image source referenced;
- Widespread use of *montage*, ‘the conjoining of two or more things that do not belong together’ (Fisher 2016:7)
- *Absence of personal writing*

Photographic Images, Mostly Secondary

Secondary photographic imagery dominates the sketchbook pages and that many of these images depict the human form comes as no surprise, given that fashion is an ‘embodied practice’ (Entwistle, 2001:1). For example, in *pages (1) and (2), Sketchbook B* (Figure 2) explores the theme *Nocturne* by presenting sixteen photographic images. Half of the images present a human form through portraits of heads, skulls and masks; an additional four photographic images depict the skins of animals and are used as borders, none are drawings. The sixteen images are arranged over two pages and the images presented are:

- Three buildings, two external images, one internal., one is crumbling and old;
- Weapons;
- Two black females bodies, shoulders uncovered, faces painted and masked in different materials. Heavy make-up. Women are not smiling but looking provocatively into the camera, gazing at viewer;
- Six masks – no body attached;
- Two bodies dressed in materials - impression is that its ceremonial dress (*image a*). Photograph looks old with no date;
- Images of animal skins and snake skins bordering the pages.

All images are photocopies or computer printed photographs, and in addition to the border imagery, appear without any reference to authorship or where the student has sourced the image. This lack of context means that one photograph which shows a black and white image of two masked people, adorned with elaborate fabrics and dress, offers no clear indication as to whether this image is contemporary; no idea of location; no knowledge behind the purpose for this style of clothing or the gender, race or ethnicity of the subjects. Perhaps this image originates from a non-European or global south location because of the style of clothing and the masking of the faces, but without any references here or analysis of the image by the student, the viewer cannot tell if this clothing is everyday dress or something that is worn for a special occasion.

A similar approach can be seen in *Sketchbook C* where an image of First Peoples or Native American Indians is presented. In contrast to *Sketchbook B*, text has been included alongside images here: geographical details appear with the names of the people with the partial title ‘Cheyenne Indians’ visible and hand-written text stating that ‘they were spiritual and smoked the peace pipe’. While this attempt to make links between different registers of ethnicity gives some context, without any date or authorship, this form of representation continues, however, to support narratives of Othering which present non-western culture as timeless, static and frozen in an historical period (Jansen and Craik 2016).

Cropping images is another representational tactic at play that can be seen in the numerous photographic images to provide a perspective or precise detail; for example, *Sketchbook D* presents several white female bodies, many neatly edited to bring focus to the groin area

resulting in a hyper-sexualized view of white able-bodied normative female forms. Combined with the title 'Lust', these images evoke a pornographic narrative, contrasted with an image of a white religious looking female statue, adding a moral dimension. The opposite page in *Sketchbook D* presents the word 'Greed' above images of ornate, jewel encrusted skulls, dominated by two images: one white semi-nude female with gold jewellery spewing from her mouth and another of a black female cradling her face with her hand dripping with molten gold paint; both images are again highly sexualized. These exoticized images appear to be reconstituted from perfume or make-up advertising campaigns, reflecting continued contemporary global marketing campaigns built on Othering systems (Huggan 2001). The production of Otherness here is built upon a *frisson* (Craik, 1994) - a spark or quiver – constructed by the contrasting bodies so that the black female form develops the simultaneous narratives of familiarity due to her proximity to the white female form and strangeness due to adjacent images of skulls. In this example, exoticism in *Sketchbook D* operates in ways that continue to control cultural translation through the re-coding of



Figure 4: *Sketchbook C*



Figure 5: *Sketchbook D*



Figure 6: *Sketchbook E*

secondary exoticized fashion images *back* into a familiar western fashion design format of the rectangular framed sketchbook pages.

Montage

Alongside an analysis of isolated images, another key representational strategy evident in all the twelve sketchbooks was the technique of montage - the technique of creating a new image from an edited selection of imagery by grouping images together. Images are presented in an uninterrupted stream of interwoven cultural differences. These techniques of montage involve collaging contrasting images together, a method rooted in art and design practices to create tension and edginess. In his book *Weird*, cultural theorist Mark Fisher argues that,

‘the form that is perhaps most appropriate to the weird is montage – the conjoining of two or more things which do not belong together. Hence the predilection within surrealism for the weird.’ (Fisher 2016:7)

Drawing on imagery from different cultures is commonplace in fashion, however, Fisher’s observation is that ‘co-joining’ facilitates the *weird*, ‘that which does not belong’ (Fisher 2016:7), facilitating Othering in the sketchbook.

Representational Strategy 2: Re-contextualizing

Looking through the representations of non-white bodies, imagery and cultures in the twelve sketchbooks, two further key representational strategies appear to license the students to re-work cultural differences in ‘new’ and ‘modern’ ways:

- *Juxtaposition*
- *Re-working images* – by using techniques such as painting on top etc

Does this translation between contexts contribute to the production of a non-critical space within the boundaries of the sketchbook; that is, the sketchbook as an Other space in which cultural differences are repressed and tamed, existing as ‘the dead, the fixed, the immobile’ (Massey 2005:69)? Moreover, do such design practices enable, at least in this case, an erasure of contexts, thus normalizing difference and denying the nonhierarchy of cultures?

Four examples do, however, extend the photographic narrative by re-working images, for example by:

- the addition of 3D materials, as seen in pages from *Sketchbook B*, with a beaded necklace and pages (i) and (ii) from *Sketchbook B* with additional sheets of coloured acetate;
- manipulating photographs so that the photocopied photographs on pages (i) and (ii) from *Sketchbook C* have burnt edges and have been stained sepia, giving an impression that they are aged;
- hand drawn imagery over photographs, for example the addition of paint;
- and, computer printed text. Text appears in *Sketchbook F*. One page has an excerpt of a poem by the author Christy Anne Martine, while the adjacent page provides text of a quote by the British artist Andy Goldsworthy. Both texts are computer printed using a 'handwriting' style font which gives a personal characteristic to the page.

But, in what ways might this re-working of imagery in fact further exaggerate and essentialise cultural difference? Such techniques produce imagery on the pages of the sketchbook which allow fashion design students to *increase* distance from the sources of inspiration so that cultural differences are relegated as something from the 'past', presenting an interwoven, two-dimensional, homogenised idea of diversity.

3.The Sketchbook as a 'Non-place'?

To further discuss fashion design techniques and their application in sketchbooks, this study now turns to theories of place and space. These concepts are important in studies in fashion because, as scholar Susan Kaiser argues in *Fashion and Cultural Studies*, 'a sense of space/place has shaped how people dress.' (Kaiser 2013:190). Kaiser defines place as a specific location, for example a physical site within a space. The work of anthropologist Marc Augé is useful here too because he discusses how place and space work together to construct culture. Augé devised the term *non-places* to describe paradoxical spaces of excessive information and excessive space which lack context-specific histories and identities (Augé 1995). For example, Augé identifies the motorway, supermarkets and airports as examples of *non-places*, where space and time are compressed to render these spaces both spectacular and

uniform. Cultural geographer Doreen Massey's seminal work *For Space* also examines the role of space but from a feminist perspective (Massey 2005). Massey challenges how power relations operate in space, to argue that, 'space be always and ever open, constantly in a process of being made.' (Massey 2005:68). Massey's challenge for a nonlinear and heterogenous concept of space therefore contrasts with *non-places*.

Reading Augé's description of *non-places* during this research, two observations are striking: firstly, how similar the *places* represented on the spaces within the sketchbooks are: vast numbers of pages, all uniformly collaged so that no original paper is exposed; and, secondly, the similarity between student's sketchbook which then make it difficult to identify individual student's identities. In this way the sketchbooks mobilize visual and textual tactics to categorise racialized and gendered differences foregrounding aesthetics. Further, in this approach, the identity of the designer is concealed, obscuring the power relations that underscore processes of Othering. This poses the question: to what extent does the fashion design sketchbook operate as a *non-place* too? A space where designers juxtapose and contrast images through the techniques of montage and collage; thereby, erasing historical, political and socio-cultural contexts to present a vision of homogenised two-dimensional cultural differences to construct racist representations?

Augé describes *non-places* as constituted from three figures of excess: *overabundance of events*, *spatial overabundance* and *individualization of references* (Augé 1995). The findings of this study clearly point to on one hand, an *overabundance* of two-dimensional imagery on each page in the sketchbooks; while on the other hand, a substantial lack of information to contextualise where these images originate. The resulting pages appear overloaded with excessive information with little or no original space left on the page. Such an approach echoes the commonly used mood boards widespread in the fashion industry to communicate fashion trends in fashion media, notable for the marked absence of text and references. Indeed, from the author's experiences in fashion design education, it is not uncommon to hear fashion design educators ask students to paint or glue images onto the white pages of their sketchbooks to avoid leaving 'empty' space. A commonly held belief in art and design education cites a 'fear of the white page' resulting in a design practice which limits and de-prioritizes the space given to writing in sketchbooks, resulting in excessive imagery.

However, Augé goes further by arguing that this *overabundance* not only accelerates history, but this very ‘density of events [...] threatens to rob of all meaning’ (Augé 1995:28). This loss of meanings is significant: images in sketchbooks become disconnected from their context through the never-ending series of montages on each sketchbook page. Combined with the volume of pages, this abundance of imagery elevates aesthetics, privileging imagery to present culture as ahistorical and static. These examples of processes and practices illustrate one of many possible ways that cultural differences can be constructed in and through design processes in fashion design education.

Augé’s third element of excess is described as *individualization of references* in which the ego in its attempt to make sense of the world, in fact reveals more about themselves in their endeavour. Augé warns that this hyper individualistic ethnological approach ‘runs the risk of triviality’ because of its isolated approach (Augé 1995:26). Indeed, the endless reams of montages in these sketchbooks showed each author’s attempt to order and re-order imagery according to their own thinking. None of the work was ever produced collectively and, in this way, the individual fashion design student is encouraged to develop their own private world of fashion narratives, hidden away from others.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that fashion design sketchbooks need to be examined more closely to better understand how they operate as *non-places*. The *non-place* propensity towards excessiveness creates problematic *decontextualized* and *re-contextualised* narratives which can Other marginalized cultures. Such techniques give license to fashion designers to construct problematic and potentially racist representations of cultural differences. Despite the limitations of the research undertaken so far, the study has begun to deconstruct the uniform ways in which the logics of excessive information and excessive space order the fashion ideation process in fashion design education; and, so offers opportunities for educators to intervene and challenge current fashion design pedagogies.

However, if current ways of teaching fashion design continue to unproblematically encourage students to compile images in sketchbooks in ways that erase the socio-cultural contexts, a *non-space* will continue to dominate. Therefore, the need for new approaches which value

socio-cultural contexts in fashion design is urgently needed as scholar Angela McRobbie states,

‘Sociology as a discipline is too associated with challenging hierarchies and elites and with defending both low culture and the masses, for it to play anything other than a negative or even destructive role. If Bourdieu is right and sociology is somehow seen as the enemy of fashion then, not surprisingly, fashion students will be steered away from sociology, while being encouraged to develop a trained eye for relevant social phenomena.’ (McRobbie 1998:56).

So, what alternative tools could be used in fashion education to not only limit negative forms of decontextualization and integrate socio-political issues into fashion design processes; but, also make more of the imaginative possibilities for future anti-racist fashion cultures? This study points to the urgent need for fashion design educators to firstly recognize that the design process is not neutral, and secondly, provide alternative design tools and techniques that enable a new generation of fashion designers to respect cultural differences. It is only through doing this, that a reorientation of fashion design towards a more ethical and political practice can be achieved. For fashion design education to learn from, rather than exploit, marginalized and subaltern groups it must create and offer spaces in which heterogenous concepts of fashion can thrive and flourish.

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Biography:

Tanveer Ahmed (pronouns she/her) is a AHRC funded part-time PhD candidate at The Open University, UK and visiting tutor at The Royal College of Art, London and Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts, London. Her long-term aspiration is to contribute to fashion design educational paradigms by generating alternative anti-racist, post-capital agendas in fashion design.

