

Investigating the Place of Patchwork in Fashion

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Research Article

Abstract

One type of handicrafts in Iran is the beautiful art of 40-piece embroidery. Forty pieces are a part of popular art and a language that expresses the culture and customs of every nation, and in the first step, they should be examined based on local and climatic components. But it is worth mentioning that these works, in addition to having local characteristics, also have a valuable place in contemporary art and are an inspiration for the creation of works of art for the artists of today's modern world. In forty-piece embroidery, colorful pieces of fabric in different sizes are sewn together, and it is known as forty-piece embroidery because of the juxtaposition of many pieces of fabric. The use of 40-piece embroidery in many items such as quilts, bedspreads, cushions, and today, with its entry into the world of fashion, has created a new evolution. Also, the works that are still sewn and used without any special patterns and methods, unaware that these works can be very valuable for our cultural and anthropological studies, but few people are aware of them. In this article, the art of patchwork and its application in clothing and fashion design have been discussed, and examples of the designs of famous designers in the world have been discussed.

Keywords: Clothing Design; Patchwork; Fashion

1. Introduction

1.1. Literature

In the dictionary, fashion is used in the meaning of taste, style, method, and method, and the term refers to temporary ways and methods based on the taste and taste of the people of a society and lifestyle, including the way of dressing, the type of reception and social etiquette, and the decoration and architecture of the house. Therefore, it can be said: fashion refers to the sudden and frequent change of taste of all or some people of a society and leads to a certain behavioral

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tendency or adopting a certain style in life. Choosing the type of fashion and clothing style depends on various factors such as religious beliefs, beliefs, culture and customs (Bukharai, 2015).

Fashion is a complex and multi-layered concept and has many meanings. In the theoretical literature, we come across various definitions of it that cover a wide range. Definitions that do not necessarily agree with each other and even negate each other in some cases. According to Simmel, fashion is nothing but one of the multiple forms of life and its purpose is the search for individual distinction and change. Fashion is the way in which certain forms of culture spread (Simmel, 1957).

Crane (2000) and Cranebowen (2006) and Tassie (1963) who describe clothing as the "raw material that constitutes fashion", use fashion to refer to the visible styles of clothing that at a particular point in time have they are a great value. By limiting fashion to the realm of clothing, they state that fashion provides important insights about the legitimate norms and contractual customs of society (Crane, 2000; Crane, 2006).

If in these definitions, fashion has become a permanent label of clothes and clothes, Kawamura (2005) inspired by Blumer (1969) uses fashion in a broader sense. According to him, we don't necessarily need visual objects to describe and explain fashion, because fashion has a much wider scope and is not limited to clothes and accessories. Kawamura defines fashion as an "army of institutions" that are involved in the social process of fashion production, distribution, and dissemination. According to him, the understanding and perception of fashion depends on the fundamental role of these mediating institutions, which are all involved in creating the belief about fashion in people's minds. Thus, in defining fashion, Kawamura gives priority to the element of subjectivity and the role of mediating institutions in creating this subjectivity. In this sense, "fashion is a belief that manifests itself in consumer choices, including clothing and people's clothing. Kawamura admits that it is not easy to distinguish between fashion - as an immaterial phenomenon - and clothes - as a material object - but he considers the definition of fashion to be illogical and insufficient. In addition, in the definition of fashion, he points to the element of "general acceptance" and believes that various material goods, including clothing, are considered fashionable only when a large number of people in the society accept and use them. In this sense, "a particular model or style of clothing must be widely spread and then accepted in every way to qualify for the label of being fashionable" (Kawamura, 2005; Blumer, 1969).

In another definition, from Lipovetsky (1994), "fashion is a form of change that is characterized by a limited time period of extensive imaginative movements and the ability to influence a diverse spectrum of parts of the social world". Lipovetsky understands fashion in relation to individuality and innovation, and rather than emphasizing the negative consequences of fashion, he considers it to be the cause of increasing equality and democratization of society. From his point of view, "the era of fashion is an important factor in the emergence of a process that has freed men and women from dark thinking and petrification, created an open public sphere, and shaped a generally more lawful, mature and skeptical human being" (Lipovetsky, 1994).

Finally, it should be mentioned that from the semiotic point of view, fashion is a symbolic system of clothing, whose distinctive feature is excitement and has a very high level of meaning. On this basis, fashion is considered a part of the wider phenomenon of creation and assignment of symbols and symbolic values to material culture and becomes relativistic. Although the definitions presented in some cases obviously conflict with each other, the common theme of most of them is the emphasis on "newness" and "variability" as the two main characteristics of fashion.

The art of clothing design is generally called fashion. Mode is a French word and fashion is an English word. Fashion is a kind of tool that shows existence and independence in a specific time frame and place, through different tools such as clothes, shoes, lifestyle, accessories, cosmetics,

make-up, hairstyle and body posture. Fashion is a definition that is declared as fashion by the fashion industry. The following are true about these words:

1. The words fashion and fashion have the same meaning and refer to the same concept.
2. Fashion is not equivalent to nudity.
3. Fashion is not a new issue and phenomenon specific to the last 100 years, fashion is an issue that has always existed throughout history.
4. Fashion is not only limited to the category of clothing and clothing and can also be seen in architecture, manner of speaking and behavior, diet, etc.
5. Western fashion is only one form of fashion and the concept of fashion cannot be summed up in this particular form.
6. Fashion is a mental issue that appears in different forms in the mind and behavior of each person.
7. Although fashion is used as a tool for sales, the existential philosophy of the need for fashion is not to increase sales.
8. Fashionism is not a disease or problem, but extreme fashionism may cause problems for a person.

High fashion means unique and customized fashion. It is the most expensive and the highest level of fashion, which is made by hand from start to finish. The best and most expensive materials are used in it, and most of the unusual fabrics are sewn with great attention to details. Some people may consider haute couture as very elaborate and sophisticated clothing, while others may define it as very expensive clothing. In fact, fashion is not what we wear, but it is the feeling that we get from wearing clothes, this feeling is different for everyone who intends to move towards the world of fashion. Haute couture was originally applied to the productions of an Englishman named Carl Frederickworth, who worked in Paris in the middle of the 19th century. In modern France, "Haute Couture" is a protected name that may be reserved for specific companies; however, it is used for most custom-made clothing, both in Paris and in other capitals such as London, Milan, New York, and Tokyo. In France, the word haute couture, which means "high fashion", is protected by the law of the French Chamber of Commerce located in Paris so that no one can use it, and permission to use this name is given only to those who are qualified.

Patchwork is a needlework technique in which one or more pieces of different and colorful fabric are placed on a larger background fabric and attached to it. Patchwork in Latin and French comes from the Latin *appliquer* and the French *applicare*, respectively. These two terms mean "joining" and it refers to a type of embroidery used to cover the perforated parts of clothes and other cloth items. A process during which small and large and colorful pieces of different fabrics are sewn together, and because many pieces of these fabrics are placed together, it is called forty pieces. The attraction of a forty-piece work is the colorfulness and diversity of the fabrics used in it (Ostad Agha, 2016).

Forty-piece embroidery is known by different names in Iran, including Khatami embroidery, Landare embroidery, and sometimes patchwork embroidery. What comes from limited documents and documents; It means that Chehl Teke Dozi, especially when it is combined with Ajide Dozi or Matlese Dozi, is included in the group of traditional Iranian embroidery. The term embroidery or facing is an art in which various motifs are created on non-patterned fabrics by sewing or pulling a part of the fabric threads (Esfandiari, 2002: 40).

Although the time of the appearance of embroidery, which was originally used to decorate clothes, is not known exactly, but the existing documents and samples indicate the prevalence of embroidery in ancient Iran (Esfandiari, 2002).

This type of sewing has been common in Iran since the past, however, there is no specific date for its origin. However, the remaining works in the "Leningrad Hermitage" and "Metropolitan" and "Museum of Ancient Iran" museums indicate the prevalence of Khatami embroidery in the Seljuk period. Forty-piece embroidery has various uses in Iran, including: quilt cover, chair cover, screw bed, rug, bedspread, various curtains, very beautiful decorative panels, wall hangings and many other uses (Salman Mahini, and Soleimanieh, 2021).

In other countries in Central Asia, the art of forty-piece embroidery is performed with a sacred attitude. The people of Central Asia have been using talismans for a long time to protect against diseases and remove bad mood, this belief in the form of forty-piece embroidery has the aspect of protection against demonic forces. These colorful and meaningful textiles are even used for celebrations and important occasions in family and community life (Meller, 2013).

In North America and Western Europe, until 1950 AD, the art of forty-piece embroidery was discussed as a popular art that was practical and a part of domestic arts created by women artists, as in Central Asia. But from 1950 onwards, this art took on another color and smell; Because feminist movements confronted the classification of fine arts and which artists were called "artists" and who were called "masters"; Their question was why the art of forty-piece embroidery is considered a secondary art (Lozanoff, 2019). With the transformation that happened in the arts of the 20th century, this art became a medium to express artistic concepts and was placed in the place of fine arts (Lincoln, 2009).

Currently, apart from the practical and artistic aspect, forty-piece embroidery has become an abstract language with a prominent social expression that artists use to express their social-political concerns and difficulties; With its help, they show their family background or use it as a tool to map historical events. In the 60s, during the counter-cultural movements that arose in California, such as the hippies, who were the revivalists of popular culture, there was a transformation in the industries and it changed from traditional crafts to contemporary crafts. As a result of this transformation, home industries were revived. And the young people's approach to the type of clothing and covering became significantly different from before, and the process of converting forty-piece handicrafts, which is known today as (art quilt) in America, was formed in the years after the Second World War.

Since the 1970s, many art historians have acknowledged the similarity of many quilts to abstract art. When the major exhibition of Forty American Pieces and Abstract Designs was held at the Whitney Museum, traditional bedspreads were placed as a kind of painting on the museum's large walls, and this was the first time that a home occupation was presented as an art form. Since then, a new trend called traditional quilting has emerged in the discussion of abstract art. This art was most noticed by women, one of the educated women who worked a lot in this field was Mrs. Jean Ray Lory, who is known as the mother of quilt art. She encouraged women to create personal designs rather than traditional designs that have a specific pattern (Salman Mahini and Soleimanieh, 2021).

From the 19th century onwards, in Western Europe and North America, the creators of the forty-piece art exhibited their works publicly in art exhibitions. Art, which was primarily concerned with its practical aspect, has been concerned with its aesthetics since this time. The movement of crafts and modernism influenced the decorative arts of Europe and America from the beginning of the 20th century. Professionally trained artists and designers, graduates of new art schools, began to make connections between traditional arts and modernist art, while modernist artists looked to traditional arts as sources of inspiration for their contemporary works (Roderick and Elizabeth Johnson, 2004).



Fig 1 An example of Sicilian Patchwork

Patchwork forty-piece embroidery technique will be one of the other trends of this year's cold season, which was revived with the change in the world's attitude about fast fashion and the economic recession after the Corona epidemic. This style was used by hippies after the World War and after the economic recession, especially in the 60s. Today, the patchwork style of fabric is formed by combining fabrics with different motifs together, or printed fabric with the effect of forty patches. This technique is a symbol of the review of the clothing production process and the conscious desire to reduce waste in the textile industry.

2. Results and Discussion

The creative designers of the Dolce & Gabbana brand took help from Italian culture and forty-piece clothing models to present the 2021 spring and summer women's collection. For this collection, the Dolce & Gabbana brand asked different local artists to weave fabrics with local designs to use in this collection. Also, their purpose of using such fabrics was to convey the concept of unity and empathy. (Figure 2, left)

The creative designers of the Dolce & Gabbana brand drew inspiration from their 1993 collection and the 1970s to present their Spring Summer 2021 collection presented at Milan Fashion Week. This collection was full of maximalist style and full of colorful printed collages. Colorful clothes with various designs, among them speckled fabrics, silk fabrics with animal skin designs and even denim fabrics can be seen, and they were perfect for spring and summer. (Figure 2, right and middle)

This type of patchwork can be seen in 19th and 20th century Japanese textiles, which is called "buro". Stitches were used to put together, preserve and extend the life of home textiles. Boro in Japanese originally means patched piece of cloth, but sashiko has become a verb in Japanese.



Fig 2 An example of Dolce & Gabbana embroidery



Fig 3 An example of Sashiko fabric and Buro dress

Patchwork can be done with reasonably sized fabrics. The Dior brand has designed and implemented beautiful embroidered clothes and shoes in the fall and winter collections of 2018 and

2019. The nature of a forty-piece work is often maximal and ultimately, it creates a maximal phenomenon.

By putting together small pieces of fabric and sewing each leaf individually, as well as using colorful autumn leaves, a beautiful and lively design has been created that takes the human soul to the autumn of seven colors and falling leaves. With the use of recycled fabrics, such designs can be created that are strikingly beautiful, and with this creative work, pieces of fabric are prevented from being thrown away in the nature, so that our nature and environment will always remain healthy and beautiful. The attraction of a forty-piece work is in the colorfulness and diversity of the fabrics used in it.



Fig 4 An example of a forty-piece embroidered bedspread

Another advantage of forty-piece embroidery is that if there is little fabric to sew, parts of the dress can be made with small pieces of fabric of different models using the forty-piece sewing technique to create a beautiful and admirable dress (Figure 5).



Fig 5 An example of patchwork on clothes

3. Conclusion

Although the beautiful art of patchwork was completely traditional and primitive in the old days, it has become more popular now and has entered the world of hand-woven carpets in addition to the world of fashion, which has caused quite a stir, and has many fans. The art of patchwork, despite the simplicity of the appearance, which was connected with stitches without any pattern, defined many issues. That a person under the influence of environmental factors used special colors of his living area, or that people who lived in nature, their fabric designs had happy and warm colors and were closer to nature. Finally, patchwork can be considered as a complete cultural phenomenon, from the smallest and smallest part of it, which is a piece of cloth, to its work, in a cultural and social context, it clarifies valuable issues for us in relation to that society. This phenomenon has made a lot of progress in western countries and today it is known as a branch of visual arts and textile art called art quilt, which has a very wide world for itself.

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