Towards an Inclusive Fashion System

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Abstract More and more non-Western brands and designers entering the fashion world introducing new values, narratives and aesthetics into a dominant Western Fashion discourse deeply intertwined with notions of conceptualism, modernism and postmodernism. In a moment of history where we are facing a failing fashion system, these new voices are introducing new values and new imaginations that try to transform the system into a more inclusive, fair and decentred discipline. Also, on an academic level transnational and decolonial theories are proposing new and fresh lenses on how to critically re-think the Eurocentric Fashion system using new terminologies as de-linking, precedence and aesthesis and the pluri-versal. Do these new perspectives give us the tools to redefine and modify the Western definitions of fashion into a more inclusive and alternative system?

Keywords De-Westernisation · Transnational · Decolonialism · Altermodernism · Fashion vs dress

1 Introduction

With the increasing globalisation and the raise of non-Western brands and designers entering the market, the conventional Eurocentric fashion discourse has started to include new voices with different traditions and more diverse cultural backgrounds. Therefore, new values, narratives and aesthetics are entering the fashion discourse, which are not originated from the conventional values and notions of the dominant Western Fashion system deeply intertwined with notions of conceptualism, modernism and post-modernism.

In a moment of history where we are facing a failing fashion system in all areas of production, environmental, overproduction and social justice, these new (designer) voices are increasingly important in re-thinking and re-defining the fashion system. These fresh voices from over the whole world are widening the scope by introducing

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new values and new imaginations that might be able to transform the system into a more inclusive and more informed and more decentred discipline.

At the same time, transnational and decolonial theories are proposing new and fresh lenses on how to critically re-think the Eurocentric Fashion system using *de-linking, precedence and aesthesis, pluri-versal* as a terminology to replace the modernist terminology as *the contemporary, the radical new* and *the universal*. The question I would like to explore is: are we able to re-define and modify the Western definitions of a system, which is so strongly rooted in Western enlightenment, industrialisation, capitalism and modernism into a more inclusive and alternative system? I am taking the last twenty years of my work as curator and scholar as a journey to de-ravel the developments in thinking on globalisation, de-Westernisation, identity and inclusivity in fashion.

2 Fashion, Modernity and Focus on the New

Fashion is one of the faces of Western modern life. 'Fashion was the first manifestation of a passion characteristic of the West, the passion for what is "modern," ' describes Gilles Lipovetsky in his renowned book *The Empire of Fashion: Dressing Modern Democracy* [8]. 'Novel became a source of worldly value, a mark of social excellence. People had to keep up with whatever was new; they had to adopt the latest changes' ([8]: 24). This permanent drive for 'change' and for the 'new' is connected to modernity's permanent need to maintain the semblance of *economic* and *narratological* change, always both subverting and improving upon history ([5]: 231). Fashion as expression of modernity has often be perceived as an improvement of society. It is defined as a cultural expression of the effort of human beings to make themselves masters of the conditions of their own existence, a mark of being able to improve and modernise the world. A sign of being able to step out of their birth right and origins and being able to climb the social ladder. As a result, fashion as expression of modernity is rooted in a strong belief that it has made life better, smarter and accessible for everyone.

Exactly, these assumptions are questioned and under review now by a new global generation of designers who are facing and addressing societal changes such as sustainability, social justice and inclusivity. They are questioning and tempting the boundaries of the system, replacing them with new values, frameworks and terminology.

3 The Origin of Modern Fashion

The origin of modern fashion is often situated in the fourteenth century with rise of city states Burgundy, Florence, Venice and the rise of Merchant capitalism ([8]: 21–26) ([17]: 17–18). Suddenly change was no longer an accidental, rare, fortuitous

phenomenon, it became a fixed law of the pleasure of only high society. Early nineteenth century modern fashion transformed in a more 'democratic' system supporting the needs of the modern masses of bourgeois citizens that arose as a result of the Enlightenment, urbanisation and modernisation in the nineteenth century. People acquired the freedom to indicate to which group they wished to belong by means of dress, whilst they retained the freedom to position themselves as individuals within that group ([8]: 82–83) [15].

What happened to the system and meaning of clothing when modern fashion came into life? In the era of the pre-modern, clothing was based on fixed codes, traditions and rules imposed by sumptuous laws where colours, ribbons, fabrics or buttons had fixed meanings communicating the social status of people, the ritual, what religion they embraced, or their civil status [8]. This pre-modern Western dress system offered society various guidelines, certainties and a sense of belonging and was primarily referring *to place.*

In contrast, modern fashion introduced an accessible, open system using a *self-reflective* system which is constantly changing in form and meaning, primarily referring to the (fashion) system itself and referring to *time* (skipping every reference to heritage, local culture and *place*). The consequence of this fundamental change is, that to become familiar with these ever-changing fashion codes, one must move in the right circles and be in-the-know. It is one of the reasons why (fashion) communication became essential. Initially information about new trends were distributed via fashion dolls and little manuals in the eighteenth century, followed by the newly invented (fashion) magazines during the nineteenth century [18]. In the same period a new ephemeral city life with department stores and public venues started for people to stroll and to show off. What defined modern fashion here is that it broke with conventional social roles of custom and tradition and automatically became a *signifier of the new*. Since the system of fashion (pretends) allowing everyone to access the system (provided one has enough money to enter the system) it was perceived as democratic, whereas pre-modern dress used to be a matter a of birth right ([22]: 44).

Lipovetsky argues that the modern fashion system over time has become even more inclusive and democratic foregrounding the 1960s as an example of a second democratisation wave where the youth culture overruled the hegemony of the French pre-scribed fashion trends, allowing different social groups to choose their own clothing style expressing their political ideas, their identity and sense of belonging. Since, the modern fashion system is accommodating different styles at the same time for different social groups and therefore the system (seems) more inclusive. In *Le Sacre de L'Authenticité* [9], Lipovetsky explores a third era of democratisation, defined as 'egomania,' that took place early twenty-first century with the rise of Internet, resulting in a global society obsessed with social media where individuality and self-realisation seem to be completely democratised and commercialised. In this new era, people are able to fully develop themselves without any social restrictions on background. In their search to be authentic, they only are responsible for themselves and the primacy of ego rules. Individuality and authenticity have become part of the consumer culture consisting of clicks and likes, being out there in social media and the urge to make a brand of yourself.

4 Modern Fashion: A System of Exclusion

Although Lipovetsky makes an argument that the modern fashion has become more global, individualised, affordable and accessible for a wider audience over time, the current modern fashion system is still *self-reflective* focusing on *change* and the *new,* and therefore, a system where people have to be in the known of the fashion rules and as a consequence can be classified either 'in' or 'out' of fashion which is fundamentally opposite to inclusivity. How modern fashion as a system of exclusion operates is convincingly explained by Otto von Bush in *The Pschyopolitics of Fashion* [3] where he uses the metaphor of a nation to describe the modern fashion system: a regime obsessed by it borders and who is 'in' and who is 'out.' Where Lipovetsky defines fashion and modernity to be inclusive systems open for everyone to join because global media provides worldwide access and no longer birth right (local culture) is allowing people access to the system, Von Bush argues convincingly modern fashion to be a system of exclusion. With new terms such as *Aesthetic Domination* governed by *supremacy of style* and the concept of institutional *aesthetic apartheid,* Von Bush is unravelling how this is covered under a soft regime of 'democratic' fast fashion, 'always affirming and positive, as it continuously broadcasts the message that "everyone" has equal access to the free expressions of self on offer' ([3]: 71).

In order to develop a truly inclusive fashion system, Von Bush proposes the concept of Deep Fashion, a system that increases agency to the wearer, is pluralistic, more honest and more experimental, through putting depth in the *relations,* in shared attention and in the praxis of togetherness. In order to achieve this, designers need to focus on the *process and passions* of themselves and wearers rather than on the material and the products. Designers are encouraged to use their passion to energise the emotional qualities of life, in a much richer way than consuming ready-to wear ([3]: 138–139). Von Bush proposes to focus on *relations, processes and passion*—as principles to make the system more inclusive. How effective this new approach is to understand a new generation of designers and how much this is in line with decolonial theories I will address later in this article.

5 Global Fashion, Local Tradition: Focus on Regional Heritage, Including Traditions

The first time that I was aware that conventional definitions of modern fashion with a focus on the new (*time*) instead of heritage and tradition (*place*) were not applying to a new generation of designers was when I developed the exhibition *Global Fashion, Local Tradition* (2005) and the aligned publication [19]. With the rise of Internet early twenty-first century, the scope of fashion had widened. No longer Paris, Milan, New York and London where the leading centres where the fashion business took place and where the new trends were launched. Suddenly Fashion Weeks cropped

up all over the world promoting their new local talent with the purpose to put their own country on the cultural map cherishing to a certain extent their local (craft) heritage ([19]: 9) Under these new conditions, fashion designers took on national significance engaging with their local heritage craft and dress tradition, in such a way that it attracted a global audience. Falling back on tradition, using signs of heritage and cultural regional identity were at that time novel and outstanding, something that until than used to be perceived as belonging to the world of dress and not of modern fashion, which excluded any signs of geographical and local cultural background. An interesting example at the exhibition was the Coopa Rooca collective that started in 1981 with women from the Nordestinas using their unique skills in quilting, drawstring applique, macrame and crocheting, providing these handiwork techniques to well-known Brazilian designers such as Carlos Miele and Alexander Herchovitch, who used these handicrafts as signifiers for their Brazilian identity ([19]: 78).

The work from Coopa Rooca used by Carlos Miele and Alexander Herchovitch could no longer be framed and perceived as exotism ([14]: 3–4) or cultural appropriation into the domain of fashion that only deals with temporality, but it was a serious attempt of non-Western originated designers to bring non-Western cultures into the realm of the global fashion system using their cultural heritage and sense of belonging as a distinctive feature.

6 A Divers Eurocentric Fashion System

Another insight that made me question the adequacy of the modern fashion system was the publication of a dedicated Fashion Theory issue (2011, Vol 15, Issue 2) on identity and heritage of European Fashion called: 'New European Fashion Centres: Dreams of small nations in a Polycentric Fashion World' (ed: [16]) which focused on Fashion in small European countries and highlighted their diversity. How did they relate to domination of the modern fashion system, primarily dominated and invented in Paris? How were these countries included or excluded in the system? The contributions in the journal surfaced how Eurocentrism in Fashion needed to be understood as a more nuanced picture taking in account that Europe consisted of big power nations such as France and the UK versus small nations such as Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, Belgian and Holland who found themselves in a position that they were following fashion that was 'dictated' from Paris. From the nineteenth century with the rise of Haute Couture multiple voices and cultures within Europe had to adapt and modify the pre-scribed Paris fashion to a dress style that was acceptable in their own nation ([13]: 133–135) Riegel. In 'Deconstructing Belgian and Dutch Fashion Dreams: From Global Trends to Local Crafts' to the journal I highlighted the remarkable difference between the Dutch and Belgian attitude to modern fashion. Due to their proximity to France, the Belgian manufacturers were closely connected to the couture practice of Paris and the country, therefore Belgium easily adapted the modern fashion system ([20]: 165). The Dutch relation to fashion (or dress), however, was strongly enrooted in its egalitarian ideology, expressed in an iconic

style of sobriety during the seventeenth century Dutch Golden Age, foregrounding the Calvinistic attitude. The same ideology deterred the Dutch in the nineteenth from participating in upcoming French haute couture being afraid to lose their own identity. Instead, the Dutch cultivated the local and regional dress in the nineteenth century with strict coding of belonging to escape from the influence of the frivolous French haute couture, modernisation, urbanisation and consumerism ([22]: 42, [20]: 69).

These examples illustrated that the Eurocentric Western Fashion system, normally perceived as one system, on a micro level included different cultures and approaches to the dominant 'French' Fashion system. Identical to the introduction of European fashion in many non-Western countries ([6]: 10) also in Europe the introduction of modern fashion did not threaten the continuity of local fashions, but rather increased a process of selection, appropriation, hybridisation, reinvention and redefinition. Therefore, we need to take into account that the dominant project of modernity has also suppressed diversity and narratives within Europe and therefore it is also important to include and to listen to these 'others of Europe' ([25]: 188). It made me aware that we needed to learn from the different cultures and heritages that were normally not included into the modern fashion system and history. For me, it raised a further question about a new generation of fashion design practices that took a different and more critical approach to modernity especially around *the new*, emphasising their local heritage and background.

7 The Future of Fashion is Now: Re-thinking Identity, Values and Heritage

In 2014, I developed a new exhibition and publication *The Future of Fashion is Now* (2014, 2015 Rotterdam, Shanghai, Shenzhen) addressing how sustainable thinking, digitalisation, a new approach to materials and craft had become new drivers for change in fashion. No longer the *new* (in the sense of a new silhouette or aesthetic) was a driving force, but a design for a better future reflecting new values, explored new narratives and new stories embedding more inclusive identities and political activism [21]. Again, designers from all over the world were invited to take part, and a few of them were given a commission via an open call.

Different from *the Global Fashion Local Tradition* exhibition where designers tried to become part of the modern fashion system, this generation started to re-think and reshape the classical notions of identities explored by the conventional fashion and art system addressing issues such as globalisation, de-colonisation, political, social and economic systems, whilst using traces of heritage, craft and values of their own cultural and social origins in a space where those elements come together in non-hierarchical ways. Tania Candiani's project *La Constancia Dormida* (2006) (Mexico) for example used a bankrupt textile factory for a period of thirty days where she set herself the goal to make one dress a day, where each dress functioned as a page

from a diary in which anecdotes were embroidered from the time that the factory was still active, mixed with stories from visitors who dropped in to see Candiani. Thus, by means of the dresses Candiani not only made the history of this factory tangible, with its harsh working conditions, but she also exposed the nostalgia of the former workers and those who lived nearby. Her fashion designs referred to a social network on the one hand, but it also envisioned the daily practice of life in the factory ([21]: 160–161).

To understand these new approaches to fashion, I drew on Nicolas Bourriaud's notions of *altermodernism* and *radicant* (Bourriaud: 2009. *Altermodernism* is defined as a further iteration of modernity that does not concern itself with the past, origins and 'authentic' and 'national' identities, but with the future: premised on the destination rather than the source' ([2]: 40). Especially, the term '*radicant*' describing the contemporary subject caught between the need for a connection with its (cultural and local) environment and the forces of uprooting, between globalisation and singularity, between identity and opening to the other seemed an adequate term to describe these designers using their cultural background and values to weave them in the global fashion narrative; *Radicant* as an identity that was globally connected in culturally globalised world, whilst integrating local cultural backgrounds into the future using problem-solving thinking and approaches. As such, initiating a process that Jennifer Craik and Angela Jansen described as a process of selection, appropriation, hybridisation, reinvention and redefinition ([6]: 10; [2]: 22).

Whilst Bourriaud undertook a serious attempt to incorporate different cultures and backgrounds of a new generation into the *Altermodern* contemporary canon, it left one unsolved problem: within his (alter) modernistic ideology there was still a focus on 'novelty' and 'progress' (Bourriaud uses the term future) and therefore the system was not inclusive; still in- and excluding people and cultures.

8 State of Fashion: Searching for the New Luxury: Beyond Progress and Novelty

The exhibition *Searching for the New Luxury* (Arnhem, 2018), developed for State of Fashion (Arnhem Mode biennale), started as a further exploration of this disruptive transition to the fashion system. Via an open call supported by the Prince Claus Fund, we invited designers from all over the world to participate and to share ideas that offer new perspectives on this fashion theme. The selection of the panel as well as further research informed the selection of 50 contributors to the exhibition and deepened the themes.

The exhibition interrogated what constitutes fashion luxury in this era of time where we face big societal challenges and scarcity of our resources? And with what kind of luxury, we want to surround ourselves in the twenty-first century? In more theoretical terms, I explored what 'fashion luxury' meant in a context where we

are re-defining the fashion discourse and fashion system taking in account globalisation, de-colonisation, de-Westernisation and the urgent need for more responsible consumption. It highlighted how the modern fashion system and role of the designer is fundamentally changing. Fashion designers are taking up different roles, not putting themselves in the centre as the creative genius, instead taking a supporting and collaborative role bringing together skills, ideas, narratives, heritage, artisans and engineers to create a sustainable, inclusive, ethical future ([24]: 15–26; [4]: 33). Living in a globally connected and culturally globalised world, the designers created new paths and practices whilst integrating their local cultural backgrounds (Fig. 1).

At the exhibition, Mia Morikawa (1983) and Shani Himanshu (1980) presented *11.11/eleven eleven* the Khadi Way project, a journey of kala cotton and khadi denim, from seed to stitch. Each product within this collection was handmade. The eleven garments had a product code that traces the human imprint on the product and helped to connect the maker and wearer. The project contributed to environmental sustainability by using organic materials and recycled waste materials. The project also contributed to social sustainability by cherishing values such as traceability, transparency and local craftsmanship. In their approach, the product becomes the materialisation of a novel relationship between consumer and the artisan, which is shifting the focus from the 'star designer' to the value of the artisanship, cultural origins and traces behind it whilst putting them in a new global context of ethical sustainability. The project surfaced how (due to the digitalisation) more information can shape new,

Fig. 1 11.11/eleven eleven

horizontal relationships between us and the producers of our garments. With a better understanding of the skills and craftsmanship that go into the creation of a garment (a knowledge that many of us have lost), the artisans involved in making the clothes gain not only recognition, but also better financial rewards.

The example showed how a new generation of designers are moving beyond the traditional concept of a successful famous star designer and profitable brand, to foreground social, inclusive and fair practices. Trying to strive to a world beyond an ephemeral and glamourous phantasy, replaced by an imagination that foregrounds social and embodied practices of fashion culture hand highlights concepts of neighbourhood, nationhood and moral economies ([1]: 7).

It is exactly here where Bourriaud's altermodern terminology no longer seemed to be adequate. Bringing in traces of culture and background values in the global fashion system that is still focusing on *novelty* and *progress* doesn't correlate with the aim of these generation of designers who are focusing on the product, the makers/artisans and the process and values behind it. Improvement for society is not necessary based on 'novelty' which is pushing consumption and technological progression, whilst wiping out cultural values other than only being a materialist consumer.

To be able to include more traditional, cultural embedded practices as sustainable and inclusive solutions there is a need to review the modern fashion system's framework fundamentally. Building on Von Bush concept of Deep Fashion ([3]: 121–137), a truly inclusive fashion system requires deeper listening to culture, heritage and background, bringing back values whilst questioning the overall modern fashion system embedded within an (alter)modernistic system. It is at this point where the decolonial lens is helping us to shape new notions for an inclusive future fashion system.

9 A Decolonial Lens on Fashion Studies

Decolonial theory originated as a critical theory addressing the logic, metaphysics, ontology and matrix of power created by the processes of colonisation and cannot be separated from a history of enslavement, discredited by the forces of modernity and capitalism. As a result, modernity and coloniality are fundamentally intertwined ([12]: 22-32). Therefore, the history of progress and civilisation cannot be separated from the history of enslavement. Decolonial theory offers a way to re-learn the knowledge, values and cultures that has been pushed aside, forgotten, buried or discredited. From a decolonial observation, modernity starts at the beginning of the colonial enterprise in 1492, where Europe as a 'unified ego' poses itself against and above the other, fundamentally excluding non-Western culture ([25]: 186). From the decolonial lens, it is therefore essential to move away from modernity, postmodernism, altermodernism and neo-liberal civilisation completely and to explore alternative way of thinking with different perspectives and other consciousnesses.

Decolonial theory is working towards a vision of human life that is not dependent upon or structured by the forced imposition of one ideal of society over another and

those that differ, which is what modernity in essence does ([10]: 459). These visions of human life and values can be found in local histories that have been marginalised by the temporal and spatial colonial differences ([10]: 492). This process, coined as *de-linking,* does not only change the *content* of the discourse but also the *terminology* ([10]: 459). Crucial terms—where I would like to focus on—to endorse the decolonial thinking are *precedence, aesthesis* and *pluri-versal.*

Precedence is a useful term, because it introduces a different, more holistic concept of time referring to what precedes us, not immanent, not fully contained in the now and present but both ahead of us and before us ([11]: 193). This notion moves away from the conventional modern fashion system time concept focusing on the *contemporary,* the *new* and *the future* wiping out any history, heritage and alternative narratives. Instead, *precedence* deepens the sense and experience of temporalities by bringing already existing genealogies and paths into the to-come ([25]: 185).

Secondly, *aesthesis* as a term is helpful to overcome the restrictive modernistic term of aesthetics which frames aesthetics in a framework of the modern and seeks regulation through a canon, which means for fashion that it is focusing on a combination silhouette, colour and fabric. On the contrary, aesthesis is open and allows for the recognition of the plurality of ways to relate to the world via stories, the sensible, the tangible, the visual and other areas that have been silenced ([11]: pp. 9, 10). Where aesthesis is open for alternatives, aesthetics is restricted by a framework, a canon and norms.

The third and very valuable and useful term for a new inclusive fashion system is *pluri-versal*, which refers to an approach where each knot on the web of the genealogy is point of d*e-linking:* this is about re-introducing multiple voices, languages, memories, different economies, social organisations and double subjectivities and incorporates all viewpoints without hierarchy and without excluding anyone [10].

These new terms enabled me to define and capture the meaning and impact of the latest generations fashion designers that were presented at the latest State of Fashion Biennale: Ways of Caring, June–July 2022 in Arnhem.[1]

10 State of Fashion: Ways of Caring 2022: Multiple Voices

State of Fashion (Arnhem) is a critical platform, supported by the Dutch Government, with the aim to re-define the meaning of fashion. For the 2022, State of Fashion biennale two curator collectives were selected through an open call. The NOT_ENOUGH collective (Andrea Chehada Barroux, Mari Cortez, Marina Sasseron de Oliveira Cabral) and Fashion Open Studio (Tamsin Blanchard, Orsola de Castro, Filippo Ricci, Niamh Tuff) collectively decided to explore the theme Ways of Caring (Arnhem 2022) in different programmes. NOT_ENOUGH addressed caring by challenging the dominant view on being, by making space for unseen feelings and untold stories.

[1] Being a member of the board of State of Fashion I was closely involved in the strategy and the selection of topics and curatorial teams of Ways of Caring 2022.

Fig. 2 Bodies that make, bodies that consume 2022

Throughout the exhibition, they aimed to activate fashion along three themes. Via Transforming narratives they questioned the Eurocentric beauty ideals often exoticising other's identities and challenging notions of gender, identity and vulnerability. Through Exercising Compassion they encouraged collective practices instead of individual actions, using fashion as a tool to connect people via sharing and making. Finally, via Coexisting Knowledges they addressed formal ways of production and distribution of knowledge, creating space for diversity and enabling plural worldviews to coexist. Via an open call, designers from all over the world were invited to respond to those ideas (Fig. 2).

As a result, quite a few transnational collectives were granted to execute their ideas in a commission. Santiago Utima (Columbia), Siviwe James (South Africa) Wide Asari and Riyadhus Shalihin (Indonesia) co-created the installation *Bodies that make, bodies that consume* (*2022*) addressing the gap between 'the hands that make' and 'bodies that consume.' With a series of standard garments—polo-shirts, T-shirts—they foregrounded the various emotional and physical situations textile and clothing manufacturer workers from the global south endure using the label as a place where the manufacturer workers described in detail their effort and personal life.

Here, the three terms *aesthesis, precedence* and the *pluri-versal* helped to characterise and to unfold what has been silenced by the colonial fashion manufacturing practices. Not the aesthetics of the installation garments was crucial, but the aesthesis where the stories and traces of the workers was foregrounded in the stains on the clothes and the stories of the workers making the clothes. The installation was not focusing on the new or the canon of fashion but tried to unfold different temporalities highlighting the unfair mechanism of clothing production, combining different (pluri-versal) stories for each continent.

11 Conclusion

For decades, fashion has been promoting a dominant discourse with a focus on the *contemporary* and the *new* and a narrow-subscribed aesthetic focusing colour and silhouette. In order to do so, the system wiped out elements from heritage, craftmanship, cultural values and local (other) cultures and therefore excluded stories and cultures that where not part of the *self-reflexive* modern fashion system.

On the contrary, the decolonial terminology empowers and above affirms cultures by unfolding and helping to reveal untold and unseen practices in a non-hierarchical way. In a moment of history where the fashion system is failing in all areas of production, environmental, overproduction and social justice, the decolonial lens is very useful to highlight and endorse, new values and new imaginations around fashion, identity, inclusivity and sustainability who are crucial to unfold the failures in the systems and are helpful to define solutions.

Going back to my initial question: are we able to re-define and modify the modern fashion system, which is so strongly rooted in Western enlightenment, industrialisation, capitalism and modernism with its focus on *the contemporary, radical new* and *the universal*? The answer is no. We urgently need to replace the modern fashion terminology and theory by decolonial thinking using *de-linking, precedence and aesthesis, pluri-versal* as a new terminology to capture in more depth the meaning, values and imaginations of the new generation of ground-breaking, engaged fashion designers from all over the world. 'In order to develop a truly decolonial fashion discourse we need to replace fashion as a *noun* defined in terms of temporality and the new and therefore automatically inheriting a system (of power) and an industry (of capitalism) as part of modernity and coloniality,' states scholar Angela Jansen. Instead, we need to start to use the term fashion as a *verb* putting a focus on the act of fashioning the body, which includes all temporalities and geographies and operates beyond the colonial difference ([7]: 1).

Von Bush' concept of Deep Fashion with a focus on *relations, processes and passion* is based on comparable principles and therefore also a serious attempt to create a more relevant fashion system that is not only more inclusive but also centred around the act of fashioning the body to capture different layers of meaning, relations, belonging and deeper cultural values (around environment, inclusivity that fashion and dress traditions/cultures are able to offer us) in a non-hierarchic way ([3]: 138–139).

How exactly the fashion system will transform into a new inclusive fashion system is for future research and exploration, yet decolonial theory and the concept of Deep Fashion will lead us in the right direction.

'It is only through an act of listening to the other, of the understanding itself through the voice of 'others,' that the West can overcome the ignorance of Eurocentrism and recognise itself,' states Vasquez convincingly ([25]: 191).

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