New Frameworks in Deconstructivist Fashion: Its Categorization in Three Waves, Application of the Notions of Plasticity, De-design and the Inclusion of Bora Aksu and Hussein Chalayan as the Third Wave Turkish Deconstructivist Designers

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Contents

Abstract

This thesis analyses deconstructivist fashion in a wider framework: from the ways it is defined and its designers. Arguing against positions that classify both material and conceptual features within the single area of "deconstructivist" fashion, it proposes Malabou's plasticity as an additional methodology to Derridean deconstruction. By utilizing Malabou's plasticity and introducing the concept/process of de-design(ing), the project claims deconstruction to be a twofold process: 1.The technical de-designing of a garment 2.The conceptual deconstruction caused by the de-designed garment.

In terms of its designers, the thesis applies these two processes to the unconventional garments of what it classifies as three different waves of deconstructivist fashion: Japanese, Belgian and Turkish. The thesis also proposes the emergence of a third wave deconstructivist fashion by focusing on the unconventional designs of Bora Aksu and Hussein Chalayan. To study these designs of the third wave and further examples of the previous two waves, the thesis utilizes designer and curator interviews, observation of Turkish local wears and motifs and garments displayed on exhibitions and fashion shows as primary research.

The thesis focuses on the concepts of transformation/metamorphosis and culture to establish links between the third wave and the first and second wave designers as well as within the third wave itself. Further, it studies the garments of deconstructivist design from a wider framework, which positions the thesis closer to a cultural studies approach.

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With Great Patience...

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Introduction

Jacques Derrida's theory of deconstruction, taken as an approach to thinking about ideas, offers a new perspective for the ways in which we perceive the world by means of showing the 'contradict(ing) aspects of Western values and assumptions' (Williams, 2005, p. 29). Applied as a method and concept, deconstruction appears across the disciplines of architecture (Salingaros, 2008), cinema (Spindler, 2008), science (Norris, 1997), art and media (Brunette & Wills, 1994), graphic design (Samara, 2003), and theories of media (Johnson, Wigley, & York, 1988; Byrne & Witte, 1989; Brunette & Wills, 1994).

The Derridean senses of deconstruction offer a challenge and an undoing through the creation of forms that carry both a philosophical and a non-philosophical aspect. Its critical premise is that it is a useful tool for critical analysis, able to be adapted across a variety of disciplinary fields. As Flavia Loscialpo (2010), Senior lecturer in Fashion and MA coordinator at Southampton Solent University, points out:

> Through the decades, the possibility of a fertile dialogue between deconstruction and many diverse areas of human creation has been encouraged and ensured by the a-systematic and transversal character of deconstruction itself, which does not belong to a sole specific discipline, and neither can be conceived as a body of specialistic knowledge (p. 3).

While deconstruction was initially confined to the realms of philosophy and literature, its conceptual premise and language soon entered the mass market as an aesthetic category and as a definition of form. Deconstruction

became prominent in fashion through the works of experimental Japanese designers such as Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto, Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons, Junya Watanabe and the Belgian designers Martin Margiela, Ann Demeulemeester and Dries Van Noten (Gill, 1998).

Deconstruction in fashion has been evaluated from a range of perspectives. It has been described as a subversion against fashion that is absorbed in the fashion system (M. Margiela, personal communication, July 29, 2013); as a strategy of scrutinisation that goes against conventions (Calderin, 2013), and as a way of understanding the structural meanings in fashion objects (Gill, 2015). Some scholars even interpret the deconstructivist designers' garments as art (Kawamura, 2004; English, 2007; Gray, 2011; Wilcox, 2011). Further, a considerable number of scholars link the path that deconstructive designers follow to a significant trajectory in philosophy and to the critical analysis of deconstruction (Gill, 1998; Arnold, 2001; Hoggard, 2002; Loreck, 2002; Evans, 2003; Benesh, 2009; Kelley, 2009; Moloney, 2011). This is because of the designers' provocative design thinking, and use of specific methods, which challenge the commercialized "key processes" of fashion and the preconceived norms of fashion.

"Deconstruction in Fashion" (Sudjic, 1990; Spindler, 1993; Gill, 1998; Arnold, 2001; Wilcox, 2001; Loreck, 2002; Quinn, 2002; Evans, 2003; Vinken, 2005; English, 2007; Loschek, 2009; Loscialpo, 2010) exhibits strong links with 'art forms such as architecture, graphic design and new media as well as contemporary

literature and film theory' (Bromley & Wojciechowska, 2008, p. 146). Further, the movement carries a 'social' aspect and a social 'interpretation' (Bromley & Wojciechowska, 2008, p. 146). Thus, deconstruction in fashion highlights the fact that fashion is a realm not only about appearances, but it is also a domain that embraces 'cultural and political' dimensions (Bromley & Wojciechowska, 2008, p. 146).

Deconstruction in fashion refers to the 'unfinished', 'coming apart' and 'recycled' garments that started to appear in the fashion scene at the beginning of the 1980s (Gill, 1998, p. 25). Deconstructivist fashion is an avantgardization of and an innovation in conventional fashion's design thinking and garment construction norms.

Loscialpo (2010) interprets deconstruction in fashion in terms of its significance for the understanding of fashion history, claiming:

> Deconstruction fashion, which is always already in-deconstruction itself, involves in fact a thorough consideration of fashion's debt to its own history, to critical thought, to temporality and the modern condition (p. 6).

So while deconstruction in fashion engages a specific history, it also involves what Caroline Evans (2003) described as a 'rethinking (of) the formal logic of dress' (p. 250), through the way it breaks away from conventions related to garment construction and design thinking. In order to address how deconstructivist fashion exactly is able to achieve this process, this introductory chapter first delves into the theories of deconstruction in deeper detail, before introducing the concept of "de-design(ing)".

Derrida and Deconstruction

Deconstruction is a philosophical approach founded by Derrida explained in his book *Of Grammatology* in 1967. Derrida uses the method of deconstruction to show contradictions that exist in classical Western thinking (Best & Kellner, 1991; Sarup, 1993). Through this strategy, using the texts of Rousseau, Saussure, Hegel and Husserl, Derrida, highlights and critiques the problematic and irrational points that have been accepted as the components of the grand narratives in Western thought since Plato. In *The Critical Difference: Essays in the Contemporary Rhetoric of Reading*, literary critic Barbara Johnson (1981), defines deconstruction as follows:

> Deconstruction is not synonymous with "destruction", however it is in fact much closer to the original meaning of the word analysis itself, which etymologically means "to undo" – a virtual synonym for to "de- construct". If anything is destroyed in a deconstructive reading, it is not the text, but the claim to unequivocal domination of one mode of signifying over another. A deconstructive reading is a reading, which analyses the specificity of a text's critical difference from itself (p. 5).

Johnson identifies the "undoing," and the attention to an internal "critical difference" as core principles of Derrida's conception of deconstruction.

Derrida argues that deconstructive techniques offer challenges for the Western canonical realms of philosophy, written textual ideas and systems of thought. In an interview with Christopher Norris, which took place in the International Symposium on Deconstruction in London in 1988, Derrida commented:

> Deconstruction goes through certain social and political structures, meeting with resistance and displacing institutions as it does so. I think that in these forms of art, and in any architecture, to

deconstruct traditional sanctions – theoretical, philosophical, cultural – effectively, you have to displace... I would say 'solid' structures, not only in the sense of material structures, but 'solid' in the sense of cultural, pedagogical, political, economic structures (as cited in Esch, 1992, pp. 82-83).

Derridean deconstruction is critical of the Western classical tradition of representational philosophy. Derrida applies a critical analysis to texts by focusing on their history, tradition and production. As he explains:

> To 'deconstruct' philosophy, thus, would be to think — in a most faithful, interior way — the structured genealogy of philosophy's concepts, but at the same time to determine — from a certain exterior that is unqualifiable or unnameable by philosophy — what this history has been able to dissimulate or forbid, making itself into a history by means of this somewhere motivated repression (1981, p. 6).

Deconstruction claims that opposing ideas are constructions. It highlights the ways that binary oppositions are established. However, these terms are not equal opposites since one is always considered to be of greater value or worth over the other. Binary oppositions operate by a process of negation: good/evil, speech/writing, subject/object, body/soul, man/woman, West/East, appearance/essence and Western philosophy asserts the superiority of the former concept of a binary over the latter one (Derrida, 1967; Sallis, 1987; Best & Kellner, 1991; Sarup, 1993; Reynolds & Roffe, 2004; Williams, 2005). As Derrida (1988) explains in the "Afterword" to *Limited Inc*:

> The enterprise of returning 'strategically', 'ideally', to an origin or to a priority thought to be simple, intact, normal, pure, standard, self-identical, in order then to think in terms of derivation, complication, deterioration, accident, etc. All metaphysicians, from Plato to Rousseau, Descartes to Husserl, have proceeded in this way, conceiving good to be before evil, the positive before the negative, the pure before the impure, the simple before the complex, the essential before the accidental, the imitated before the imitation, etc. And this is not just one metaphysical gesture among others, it is the metaphysical exigency, that which has been the most

constant, most profound and most potent (p. 236).

It is the binary oppositions that generate a hierarchical system of ethics and values, and which have determined the ways in which one concept is held as superior to another. Derridean deconstruction, on the other hand, seeks to 'undermine false pretensions to absolute truth' that are established by such binary oppositions (Williams, 2005, p. 25), by engaging with 'these unexamined presuppositions, with their relation to fixed distinctions and with the assumed goodness and naturalness of the goals that follow from them' (Williams, 2005, p. 29). As Derrida (1982) points out in *Margins of Philosophy*:

> An opposition of metaphysical concepts (speech/writing, presence/absence, etc.) is never the face-to-face of two terms, but a hierarchy and an order of subordination. Deconstruction cannot limit itself or proceed immediately to neutralization: it must, by means of a double gesture, a double science, a double writing, practice an overturning of the classical opposition, and a general displacement of the system. It is on that condition alone that deconstruction will provide the means of intervening in the field of oppositions it criticizes (p. 195).

Derrida deconstructs opposing concepts and the ideologies and perceptions created by them, in order to reconstruct a new understanding and vision (Sarup, 1993; Best & Kellner, 1991). In this vein, deconstruction works on an *abstract* framework based on challenging *intangible* values, ethics and concepts.

Plasticity and Malabou

Catherine Malabou (2012 [2009]) provides an example of how the notion of

deconstruction can be applied creatively. Malabou uses deconstructive techniques to consider an aspect of the brain's functioning, as a form of deconstructive 'plasticity' (Malabou, 2012). Malabou describes "plasticity" as a neuro-scientific concept 'from Greek *Plassein*, meaning to take or receive form, to mould or to give form' (Shread, 2011, p. 373). Malabou then develops this conception of plasticity in metaphorical as well as literal terms. In her work *Ontology of the Accident: An Essay on Destructive Plasticity* (2012 [2009]), Malabou talks about the threefold material capacity of the brain, which neuroscientists utilize to explain the way our brain operates. This material three dimensionality of the brain is explained as, 'the ability to receive form (as in the plasticity of clay), the ability to give form (as in the plasticity of the plastic arts), and the ability to destroy form (as in the French verb *plastiquer*, meaning to 'blow up') (Rand, 2011, p. 351).

Malabou claims that neuroscientists, Damasio and Changeux, understand the brain as an organ of synapses, and consider the synapses as plastic. Yet, the same neuroscientists display 'unjustifiable, explanatory limits that block appeal to plasticity as itself designating a deep ontological reality', which amounts to a 'structure overlaid atop a mechanistic, and thus flatly non-plastic explanatory model' (Rand, 2011, p. 353). As a result, Malabou challenges neuroscientists by arguing that they have adopted an ungrounded, unjustifiable position with regards to the conception of the brain. So, 'Malabou's interpretation of contemporary neuro-science is thus, oriented not toward a criticism of scientific practice... but toward a criticism of the meta-scientific ideological discourse surrounding science' and the structure of brain (Rand, 2011, p.

353).

Critiquing and developing neuro-scientific ontology, Malabou applies her notion

of plasticity in daily life with plasticity's deconstructive and reconstructive

qualities. As she points out:

> Construction is counter balanced by a form of destruction.
> This much we know and accept. The fact that all creation
> can only occur at the price of a destructive counterpart is a
> fundamental law of life. It does not contradict life; it makes
> life possible (2012, p. 4).

As Malabou explains, very similar to the material structure of brain, life depends

on a deconstructive and reconstructive cycle of change based on plasticity. Life,

as a result, reveals an infinite process of plasticity, 'in principle, we are capable

of every mutation ... our plastic possibilities are actually never-ending', writes

Malabou (Malabou, 2012, p. 10). How the continuity of change maintains, lies

in the ontology of the accident, as it is evident in Malabou's work's title.

According to Malabou, accidents (unintentional occurrences) are the main

factors that render change possible both in form and being. In this respect,

'substantiality amounts to determinability by accidents or changeability so that

constancy itself is just "exposure" to accidentality' (Rand, 2011, p. 354).

'Constancy' here refers to the endless deconstruction and reconstruction

(caused by accidents) that maintain change in life. As it is evident in the

material, plastic structure of the brain (the deconstruction and reconstruction of

synapses), for Malabou, materially, 'beings (also) have "the ability to change

form and generate new forms in a manner that is consistent with plasticity" '

(Shread, 2011, p. 372).

Similar to how Derrida criticizes Western tradition, Malabou criticizes

conventional neuro-scientific discourse as it contradicts with the two

dimensionality of change (deconstruction, reconstruction) that involves both the

body (material/matter) and the spirit (abstract/mind):

> Metaphysics constantly instigates the dissociation of essence and
> form... In metaphysics, form can always change, but the nature of
> being persists. It is this that is debatable... we must find a way to
> think a mutation that engages both form and being (p. 17).

Malabou's focus on how forms change engages the creative aspects of the

deconstructive process. With regard to creation and innovation, Derrida

(1998) states, 'invent in your own language if you can or want to hear mine;

invent if you can or want to give my language to be understood' (p. 57). In

this sense, deconstruction is also a reconstruction. Paul Patton (2004) notes

that in:

> 'Psyche: Invention of the Other', first presented as a series of
> lectures in 1984, Derrida announces that 'deconstruction is
> inventive or it is nothing at all'. He immediately adds that, in order
> for this to be true, deconstruction must call into question the
> traditional concept and status of invention. Traditionally, 'invention'
> refers to the coming of something new, something that is therefore
> other to what has gone before and that 'at the moment when it
> comes about' conforms to no pre-existing status or rule (as cited in
> Reynolds & Roffe, 2004, p. 29).

The Notion of De-design(ing)

This thesis argues that existing fashion theory limits the ways in which deconstructivist fashion is defined, in both its material and conceptual aspects. The thesis argues that in the fashion system, the process of de-designing is what precedes the process of deconstruction. The thesis claims that there is a two-fold process that takes place in deconstructivist fashion: 1. The technical/material *de-designing* of a garment 2. The conceptual *deconstruction* that is caused by the de-designed garment. The thesis asserts that "De-designing" is the material process, the technique and design thinking that negates orthodox construction methods related to garment making. De-design(ing) causes a conceptual deconstruction across different domains. In this vein, de-design(ing) is a concept that I propose to introduce the assembly process of the 'unfinished', 'coming apart' and 'recycled' (Gill, 1998, p. 25) clothes. Many scholars and critics use the adjectives "deconstructivist", "deconstructive" or "deconstructed" to refer to the clothes that are constructed through these subversive un-making processes in fashion (Sudjic, 1990; Spindler, 1993; Gill, 1998; Arnold, 2001; Wilcox, 2001; Loreck, 2002; Quinn, 2002; Evans, 2003; Vinken, 2005; English, 2007; Loschek, 2009). In this thesis, the process and its final product are titled: de-designing (process) and de-designed (final product, un-made, coming apart, recycled garment). 'De'-construction takes place by the challenge of the preconceived construction *norms* and *conventions* of mainstream fashion. Mainstream construction norms of garments can be observed in commercialized fashion such as the classic

methods of garment making in *haute couture* or the system based on

sizes that exists in *pret a porter*. The thesis claims that an additional concept

of differentiation or individuation is needed for deconstruction. This proposed

concept differentiates what is abstractly challenged (norms, conventions) from

what causes this challenge of subversive garment construction (un-doing, un-

making, unravelling, left incomplete, intentionally defected). At this stage, the

proposed de-designing concept comes into play. The thesis argues that every

conceptual deconstruction begins with the material de-designing process that

is applied on the established construction techniques of mainstream,

commercialized fashion. As a result, the thesis explains and divides what has

been labelled as deconstruction in fashion, as it is in philosophy, into two

categories: technical and conceptual (concrete and abstract), by introducing a

new concept, de-design. In respect to this objective, by observing the

garments and collections of Bora Aksu and Hussein Chalayan, the thesis aims

to explore how the material negation in garment construction (de-design)

causes an abstract subversion (deconstruction) in fashion and the areas with

which fashion interacts.

Reconstruction

Reconstruction refers to the material and conceptual system of change

through reciprocal innovation in fashion and other domains with which fashion

collaborates. This innovation suggests a challenge to the existing systems,

norms, concepts, forms and techniques of the fashion system and also leads to

innovation in other realms. With these innovations, brand new creative forms

and perspectives are generated. British writer Nigel Cawthorne (1998) notes

that so as to have a 'revolution', deconstruction leading to reconstruction is a must (p. 153). For Cawthorne, this revolution would start from adopting a challenging position regarding the established techniques and traditions (1998, p. 153). This way, we 'feel the pain of realization that certain things that have served us well are no longer the truth' (Cawthorne, 1998, p. 153).

Main Research Question

- How can the concepts of plasticity and de-design be applied to deconstructivist fashion and how do Aksu and Chalayan illustrate plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction on their creations and collections?

Sub-questions

- How are plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction also illustrated in the first and second wave deconstructivist designers?
- Are there any cases/issues where plasticity cannot be applied?

Aims of the Thesis	Objectives of the Thesis
- Argue against positions that situate both material and conceptual aspects within the single area of "deconstructivist" fashion by showing what is referred as deconstruction to be a two-fold process in	- Apply plasticity, de-design, deconstruction, and reconstruction to the case studies of Aksu, Chalayan and provide further examples of these concepts found in the first wave Japanese and the second

fashion (1. De-designing 2. Deconstruction).	wave Belgian deconstructivist designers.
• Identify the three historical/cultural deconstructive waves in fashion by focusing on the commonalities they share (1. Japanese, 2. Belgian and 3. Turkish).	• Show the common elements of subversive design Aksu and Chalayan have with the first and second wave deconstructivist designers. Also, show the commonalities between the first and second wave deconstructivist designers.
• In relation to Kim and Mida's (2015) methodology, illustrate what conceptual information, personal reactions and supporting materials specific deconstructivist garments of Aksu and Chalayan observed in the museums provide.	• Approach specific case studies of Aksu and Chalayan, which apply plasticity, de-design, deconstruction, and reconstruction with Kim and Mida's (2015) object-based methodology (The *Turkish Crochet Slippers/Shoes,* The *Remote Control Dress*, The *Coffee Table Skirt,* The *Mechanical Dress*).
• Show what cultural, political,	• Approach the analysed

religious, historical and social aspects deconstructivist creations are influenced by and convey.	deconstructivist fashion creations also with an interdisciplinary understanding by focusing on their cultural, political, religious, historical and social aspects.

In reference to the previous discussion of the roles of Aksu and Chalayan, the thesis seeks to explore, in the light of their innovative style, the concepts of plasticity, de-designing, deconstruction and reconstruction. It highlights the important contribution of these two Turkish designers, and argues that they constitute a third wave of Turkish deconstructivist designers. This analysis therefore takes into consideration other deconstructivist designers identified by nationality such as Japanese designers Issey Miyake, Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons, Junya Watanabe and Yohji Yamamoto (English, 2011a) and Belgian designers, Martin Margiela, Ann Demeulemeester, Dries Van Noten, Walter Van Beirendonck, Dirk Van Saene, Dirk Bikkembergs, and Marina Yee, (Fenoulhet & Martin, 2014, p. 148). The thesis classifies deconstructivist fashion into three waves based on the date they occurred and the designers' nationality as well as how they were characterized by critics, theorists and the designers themselves. The Japanese deconstructive designers appeared at the beginning of the 1980s, the Belgian deconstructive designers appeared in the second half of the 1980s and the Turkish designers, the thesis argues, appeared in the 1990s and 2000s. Although there are other

deconstructive designers of various nationalities that showed in the fashion scene during the 1990s and 2000s (Rick Owens, Victor and Rolf), the thesis focuses on two Turkish designers, and their inclusion in a third wave.

Literature Review

Taking into consideration the critical range of deconstruction theory, this chapter shows the range of topics that this approach invokes in fashion theory and visual culture. The chapter begins with examining what the concept of avant-garde fashion means. The chapter goes on by explaining avant-garde fashions of the 20th century (Schiaparelli and Punk style), which have challenged established norms through unconventional design thinking. The chapter, then, continues with a focus on the perceived concepts of the shape of the body and how it is de-designed by Schiaparelli and Punk style. It examines the works of scholars who have pointed out the deconstructivist designers' adaptation to the capitalist system, the range of style, its relation with philosophy and themes of deconstruction, as it is addressed in theory and within other aspects of visual culture.

1. Avant-garde Fashion

First used in performance and visual arts, "Avant-garde" as a French term appeared at the beginning of the 20th century (English & Pomazan, 2010, p. 218). Avant-garde fashions differ largely from the commercial narratives of fashion. This is because avant-garde garment construction, its design thinking, techniques, and aims are significantly different from the commercial realms of high and mainstream fashion. Avant-garde fashion carries an 'anti' stance against what is accepted by the mainstream. It creates the irrational, the unacceptable, and the unexpected and features the reversal of established

hierarchical norms. It creates experimental, sometimes challenging and most importantly innovative designs (Ambrose & Harris, 2007, p. 118). Through pushing the boundaries of what has already been offered in the fashion scene, avant-garde fashions contribute to the fashion system through the novelty they generate. Avant-garde fashion confuses rather than clarifies. It suggests 'momentous change' and defies the 'status quo', and it offers a shift in fashion in 'aesthetic, technical or cultural terms' by its innovative approach (English & Pomazan, 2010, p. 219).

Avant-garde practices in fashion cannot be consumed as easily or as quickly as mainstream fashion. This is because 'to be in the avant-garde is to be in a perpetual state of rebellion' against what is accepted as the mainstream (Harding, 2000, p. 6). In the book *The Dehumanization of Art and Other Essays on Art, Culture, and Literature,* José Ortega y Gasset (1968 [1948]), Spanish liberal philosopher, states that with regards to the concept of avant-garde, there are 'those who understand it and who do not' (p. 6). On this account, avant-garde fashion requires a consumer segment that is more intellectually endowed. Thus, instead of looking fashionable, avant-garde fashion requires comprehending the incomprehensible, understanding what is being challenged and how it is being challenged.

All these qualities related to the concept of avant-garde can be observed in deconstruction in fashion, as the following chapters of the thesis will discuss.

2. Elsa Schiaparelli and Punk Movement

This section sets the scene for avant-garde approaches that identify what avant-garde means. The designs of Elsa Schiaparelli and Punk style could be argued to be the precursors of deconstruction in fashion.

The design thinking of Schiaparelli has been an important influence on Punk style, which scholars have emphasized (Tynan, 2010, p. 939; Sklar, 2013). The Punk movement and surrealists share the goals 'to shock and to smack in the face things of "good taste"' and both movements 'sounded alarms on popular culture, consumerism, and mainstream lifestyles' (Sklar, 2013, p. 53).

The designs of Schiaparelli build on the creations of the surrealist artists of her time. These artists include Cocteau, Berard, Giacometti and Dali (Cawthorne, 1998, p. 78). One of the basic innovations generated in the fashion scenario by Schiaparelli lies in the way the avant-garde designer blends art and garment construction. As Cawthorne (1998) writes:

> Just as the traditional art world had been deconstructed through the modern movements of Impressionism, Dadaism, Cubism and Surrealism, Elsa wanted to break down the barriers in pattern and print to feature more modern, relevant images geometrics and stripes reflected the machine aesthetic of the 20s but Elsa's *trompe l'oeil* designs more deeply fused art and fashion together (p. 78).

The unusual creations of Schiaparelli have challenged the fashion of her time and generated innovation in the fashion scenario. The creations of the designer can be defined as an 'intellectual expression drawing upon interesting references and influences' which 'attracted her to artists and vice versa' (Cawthorne, 1998, p. 78). For example, a garment she designed in collaboration

with Vertes, had 'eclectic patterns' of 'fairgrounds, animals, flying birds and insects as well as bold florals in modern Art Deco style' (Cawthorne, 1998, p. 80). Schiaparelli 'took the form of an insurrection against all that was pompous, conventional or even boring in the arts' (Chipp, 1973, p. 367). As a nonconformist designer, her engagement with unusual design thinking included 'memorabilia from popular culture' (English, 2007, p. 52).

According to Cawthorne (1998), Schiaparelli 'gave the world and avant-garde zest that influenced Punk's take on dress' (as cited in Sklar, 2013, p. 53). For example, 'Schiaparelli ... used non-functional zippers as ornamentation, which Vivienne Westwood later popularized' (Sklar, 2013, p. 53). A further influence on Punk style was Schiaparelli's *Tear Dress*. The *Tear Dress* and:

> Its accompanying veil were constructed from a blue viscose rayon and silk blend fabric, which has since faded to white. The fabric was printed with a pattern of *trompe l'oeil* tears, implied by pink strips that are positioned just below dark purple spots of equal shape and size. The designers used dark outlines around the pink strips as a shadowing effect to suggest that they hang limply like shreds. The matching veil had a design akin to the dress, but whereas the pattern on the dress was an illusionistic design printed onto the fabric, the magenta spots and pale pink strips on the veil were appliqués. Although the appliqués were cut in hard, geometric shapes that were less organic than the tears on the dress, this element added another dimension to the outfit (Arriaga, 2013, p. 2).

The dress was interpreted as the first reference to the intentionally ripped and cut designs of Punks. In addition to the *Tear Dress* influencing Punk style, Schiaparelli's introduction of the colour 'shocking pink' was later revived by Punk style in the 1970s.

The punk style and the surrealist designs of Schiaparelli have basic differences. First and foremost, Schiaparelli is a named person while Punk is a self-

generated social movement. Further, although both movements have similar attitudes in design, the basic difference is that Schiaparelli makes *couture*, and Punk is a street style, a politically situated, organically developed fashion movement from the lower segments of society up to high fashion. In this regard, one represents high fashion while the other suggests a subcultural style.

Punk style draws from a range of cultural variations, including aesthetic, political and artistic, and then moves through avant-garde changes in the industry where it becomes less of an underground to a more commercial movement.

By the late 1950s and early 1960s, problems related to modernism reached their ultimate point. There was widespread disillusionment brought about by the end of the world wars. The scepticism against the utopian world promised by modernism started to be felt (Crosthwaite, 2009). As a result of this, postmodernism started to emerge with a sceptical attitude that re-evaluated the ideals promised by modernism. As Ernst Breisach (2007) points out, 'postmodernist challenge to history occurs at a moment when the exuberant hopes and the excessive zeal generated by modernity have diminished' (p. 193). The emergence of postmodernism had impacts on the fashion world as well. Postmodernism's impact on fashion resulted in a wide range of different styles. These different styles provided a visual catharsis to the political and economic problems the world was facing at the time. With postmodernism, the change that took place in fashion was radical and reactionary. This was because 'postmodernist fashion ... reli[ed] on a hypothetical visual paradox: propriety in dress can be replaced by a total lack of respect for status display and value systems', in this vein, what mattered in postmodernism in fashion was to be

'provocative' (English, 2007, pp. 92 and 113). As regards to the emergence of reactions and provocations that took place in the realm of fashion, Bonnie English (2007), Art and Design historian at Griffith University, explains that, 'from 1960s onwards, fashion changes have accelerated at a more rapid pace than ever before. This is reflected in the proliferation and diversity of styles promulgated until the end of the century' (p. 92). From this point onwards, individualism and fragmentation of styles became important elements (Loschek, 2009). With postmodernism and the fragmentation of styles in fashion, clothing became 'a prime form of personal and political expression' (Kohn, 1989, p. 147). The emergence of subcultural styles reinforced this fact with their destruction of established systems, oppositional connotations and reactions against political ideologies (Crane, 2000; Barnard, 1996; Polhemus, 1996; Wilson, 1985). 1960s witnessed hippies and their flower-influenced style signifying peace. Further, the early 1970s until the middle of the decade 'brought economic recession and political strife that created a darker mood for the youth', which led to the emergence of the subcultural style of Punk (Sklar, 2013, p. 46).

Rebecca Arnold (2001), lecturer in History of Dress and Textiles at the Courtauld Institute of Art, interprets Punk as a 'social movement' that emphasizes 'disrespect for social hypocrisy' and a 'discontent of a generation' (p. 24). In other words, Arnold mentions Punk as a style that reflects dissatisfaction. Further, the scholar points out that Punk style 'fractured previous notions of the need for a pre-ordained idea of beauty and perfection. Punk entered fashion's vocabulary as a signifier of amoral revolt' (Arnold, 2001, p. 47). Punk style was interpreted as a 'nihilistic attitude' (Arnold, 2001, p. 102)

and an 'anti-fashion statement' that 'was designed to disturb and disrupt the complacency of wider society' (Arnold, 2001, p. 115). Further on Punk, Cawthorne (1998) notes that anarchy was the trademark of the style. English (2007), on the other hand, argues that Punk style's major aim was to 'shock' and that the style had a strong connection with 'distasteful' things (p. 104). Additionally, 'highly priced slashed and torn garments symbolized an economic irrationality- a social paradigm where a new ethic was embraced and the deconstruction of the fabric reflected, quite literally, the deconstruction of past values' (English, 2007, p. 115). Victoria Kelley (2009), coordinator of staff and research degrees at the University for the Creative Arts in Rochester, further explains how values of the past were deconstructed by Punk style, 'the artificially frayed or worn garment seems "edgy" and interesting, with just a hint of rebellion against social norms, because of the memory of a time when the authentically frayed or worn garment signalled poverty and abjection' (p. 222). Being a Punk meant to have a soul of nihilism and this nihilism was similar to that of what the Dada artists had at the beginning of the 20th century. The Dada advocates state that:

> Dada knows everything. Dada spits on everything. Dada says "know thing." Dada has no fixed ideas. Dada does not catch flies. Dada is bitterness laughing at everything that has been accomplished, sanctified.... Like everything in life, Dada is useless, everything happens in a completely idiotic way... we are incapable of treating seriously any subject whatsoever, let alone the subject: ourselves (Kleiner 2009, pp. 754-755).

Like Dadaists, who were disillusioned by the political situation of their time, unease and nihilism dominated the generation of Punk. Punk resistance showed itself in various forms of art. As English (2007) explains:

> In Britain, the young railed against the dominant ideology and Punks replaced their more passive hippie counterparts... It was a time when youth reacted heatedly against the hypocrisies of the establishment. Unemployment breeds a sense of worthlessness and desperation. This socio-political disorientation contributed to a social backlash in their music, their fashion and their lifestyle (p. 103).

The Punk style lacks a stylistic completeness (Polhemus, 1996, p. 56). This is because of the style's 'rich eclecticism embracing anything from old school blazers to dog collars, charity-shop peculiarities of previous decades to children's plastic sunglasses...' (Polhemus, 1996, p. 56). The style displayed 'such a rich ragbag of alternatives and contradictions that no coherent Next Big Thing could possibly have evolved from its eclectic diversity' (Polhemus, 1996, p. 59).

Despite the cynically critical position adopted, being a Punk meant carrying an optimistic side in relation to the future. As Polhemus (1996) explains:

> Our reading of Punks' 'no future', now as than, simplistically focuses on images of endless dole queues and Mad Mex-style Armageddon. But 'No Future' can (and could always) be equally read as 'no futurism' – a stepping out from the inhibiting shadow cast by the glare of a brighter tomorrow that both Modernism and the Age of Aquarius imposed. In this, as in its creative bricolage, its rich eclecticism, its determined fragmentation of consensus, its determined fragmentation of consensus, its spirited deconstruction of hackneyed images and ideological platitudes, Punk- for better as well as for worse – paved the way for the next millennium (p. 65).

Punk style made the fluctuating state of postmodern condition evident by means of recycling and transforming every single item possible. It was Punks that 'converted everything they touched... creating a post-modern world in which anything may be transmuted into everything and nothing is what it appears' (Polhemus, 1996, p. 62).

The designs of Elsa Schiaparelli, Punk style and deconstructivist fashion form a

significant avant-garde fashion signature of the 20th century. However, there are differences between Schiaparelli's designs, Punk movement and the subsequent deconstructivist fashion waves. While the avant-garde fashion creations of Schiaparelli carry humour and sarcasm in the way they critique reality through surrealism, Punk style communicates feelings of nihilism and disrespect to critique society. The deconstructivist fashion waves, on the other hand, intentionally challenge the established systems of fashion and the key processes related to it.

In addition to Schiaparelli, Punk style and deconstruction in fashion, there are also commercialized realms of fashion producing avant-garde designs. This shows that the borders amongst commercial and non-commercial realms are blurred. Paco Rabanne's *Metal-link Shift Dress* (1967- 1970) (figure 1) and Pierre Cardin's *PVC Boots* (1966 – 1969) (figure 2) are exemplars of such relationship between the commercial and avant-garde realms. These designs are important because they show that *haute couture* brands can also produce avant-garde designs and that it would be wrong to say that each fashion realm, be it commercialized or avant-garde, only creates within its own sphere.

(Figure 1) Paco Rabanne, 1967- 1970, *Metal-link Shift Dress. Manus x Machina* (2016), The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

(Figure 2) Pierre Cardin, 1966 – 1969, _PVC Boots._

3. Elsa Schiaparelli, Punk Movement and the Subversion Against the Norms Related to Femininity and the Conventional Body of the Western Woman

Schiaparelli's creations suggest an insurrection against the conventional body silhouette of commercialized and mainstream fashion. It was Schiaparelli's feminist stance that led to the transgression of the mainstream understanding of femininity in fashion (Evans, 1999). Schiaparelli introduced the first purple lipstick and named it 'frolic' and it was the same designer who created red, ash blonde and silver wigs that were combined with evening dresses (Evans, 1999, p. 19). Palmer White (1986) points out the designer's influence on women in a horror-like way, 'her establishment on the place Vendôme is a devil's laboratory. Women who go there fall into a trap, and come out masked or disguised' (p. 179). Traditional segments of society received the change that took place in women's fashion as 'the work of devil' (Evans, 1999, p. 20). The change of 'the new woman was seen as a crisis of male power' that resulted from 'make-up, (and) masquerading fashions' (Evans, 1999, p. 20). Schiaparelli created designs of feminist embodiments for she was a feminist in spirit. She once said that,

'strong women... intimidate men, so they are rarely happy in love' (Thurman, 2003, p. 58). Further on her feminist position, Saint Laurent remarked that Elsa 'didn't wish to please. She wanted to dominate' (Thurman, 2003, p. 58). A client of Schiaparelli notes the empowering creations of the designer as follows:

> I asked Schiap to make me the lamb chop hat. My husband was outraged; he didn't want to pay for it. I wore it all the same. Schiap's hats were such a 'concentrate' of chic and audacity... At that time men thought of themselves a bit like a pheasant, who drags the modest hen pheasant in his shadow (as cited in Madeleine, Jacqueline, & *Societe de l'Histoire du Costume Delpierre*, 1984, p. 123).

With her provocative creations and feminist stance, the designer created a new form of beauty she idealized for women. This led to her rebellion against the concept of femininity in mainstream fashion. One of the ways in which this new form of beauty was generated was through the subversion the designer featured on the conventional form of the female body fit. According to Thurman (2003):

> She squared the lines of the jacket, tapered them like an inverted trapezoid, and bulked up the shoulders to minimize the natural pear shape of the average woman, who was exhorted, in another commandment, to train her body to the modernist geometry of her clothes rather than fit her clothes to the baroque curves of her body (p. 58).

The *Skeleton Dress* (figure 3) of Schiaparelli, which reveals the skeleton and bones of the women's body in a creature like way is designed in contrast to the ideal female body form. This is because the dress intentionally plays with and reveals the structure of the body of woman hidden underneath the flesh in a subversive way. Schiaparelli's unconventional *Dress with a Lump* designed in 1951 (figure 4) had a lump-like motif on the sides and it displays a similar position to the *Skeleton Dress* with its unusual display of body structure.

(Figure 3) Elsa Schiaparelli, Spring/Summer 1938, *Circus* Collection, The *Skeleton Dress*.

(Figure 4) Elsa Schiaparelli, 1951, *Dress with a Lump*.

Similar to the designs of Schiaparelli, Punk style generated a massive aesthetic

shift with regards to the way women dressed. Accordingly, 'while such imagery

was disturbing, it did at least free women from the need to aspire to a particular

fashionable ideal of beauty, or to attempt to fit their bodies into the current

silhouette' (Arnold, 2001, p. 47). Under the influence of postmodernism's

fragmented cultural and sexual identities, Punk style manifested a new form of

woman who was dangerous and overtly aggressive (Arnold, 2001, p. 47).

Mohawk hairstyles, tattoos, and body modifications such as piercings are some

examples that Punk style created. These body modifications and hairstyles as a

whole exemplify a shift against the perfect feminine fashion and the body of

Western woman.

4. Capitalist Adaptations

Some positions on deconstruction and fashion take the socio-cultural analysis of

the fashion object further. Loscialpo (2010) claims that deconstructivist fashion

designers question consumer culture through their creations that defy glamour

(p. 8). She remarks that Margiela's *Artisanal* collection, 'does not mean the

employment of some precious materials, but rather indicates the amount of

hours worked for the production of each piece' (2010, p. 9). Loscialpo argues

that the designer emphasizes human labour as the most important aspect each

garment can have, stating:

> Maison Martin Margiela reconciles then the consumer with the process of
> production. It doing so, it remarks its debt towards the tradition and
> history of fashion, while at the same time it deconstructs the mechanisms
> of fascination and re-discusses our assumptions regarding fashion (2010,
> p. 10).

Arnold (2001) considers how aspects of consumerism operate as a way of

concealing the negative effects of cultural traumas (pp. 25-26). Identifying the

deconstructivist designers from Antwerp, Ann Demeulemeester, Dries Van

Noten, and Martin Margiela, she argues:

> The poverty and decay that consumerism seeks to mask have been appropriated by designers as a theme in their work, becoming at once a reaction to such dark elements of contemporary life and yet inevitably also a consumable object. Wilson describes this process: 'Postmodernism expresses at one level a horror at the destructive excess of Western consumerist society, yet in aestheticizing this horror, we somehow convert it into a pleasurable object of consumption' (Arnold, 2001, pp. 25-26).

Taking a similar position to Arnold and Loscialpo (reactionary garments that are created against the defects of contemporary life end up serving the consumption aspect of the same life), Agata Zborowska (2015), co-founder of Fashion and Design research team at the Institute of Polish Culture, University of Warsaw, wrote the article "Deconstruction in contemporary fashion design: analysis and critique". In this article, Zborowska (2015) puts forward the idea that instead of undermining the conventional system of fashion, deconstructivist fashion reinforces it (p. 2). Zborowska argues that deconstruction in fashion is a 'strategy' rather than a 'tactic' (2015, p. 2). As she writes, '...[Michel] de Certeau divided cultural practices into two types: strategies and tactics. Strategies, connected with institutions, create and impose specific methods of operation. Tactics can, at best, capture and manipulate these strategies' (2015, p. 13). Deconstructivist fashion, in this respect, is a strategy because despite its 'self-critical' process, it 'operates from within the established system... It is a critical dismantling, but the designers definitely do not aim at denying the very system in which they operate' (Zborowska, 2015, p. 16). Deconstructivist fashion practices 'do not attempt to demolish, but rather show the arbitrariness of the foundations of the fashion world' (Zborowska, 2015, p. 16). It was De Certeau who had 'pointed to the potential risk of tactics changing into strategies when taken over by official institutions' (Zborowska, 2015, p. 17). In agreement

with De Certeau, Zborowska argues that 'causing outrage or simply a lack of understanding, it took little time for the fashion system to entirely absorb its own critique, turning it into an attractive product' (2015, p. 17). The author takes jeans as a garment of consumption to explain this, noting that, 'an example can be torn Jeans as an ostentatious opposition against consumption, which then, with the participation of the biggest brands, obtain a purely aesthetic character and are accepted as fashionable' (Zborowska, 2015, p. 14). Zborowska points out the similarity deconstructivist fashion has with jeans as both styles feature a worn-torn look associated with Punk movement and grunge style. She states that the term deconstruction 'came to fashion from the outside, brought by commentators and critics, who- imposing a specific interpretative frame on selected designers' work- simultaneously associated the aesthetics of the collections with the crisis of 1970s and 1980s Punk and grunge' (Zborowska, 2015, p. 12). Yet, Zborowska argues that deconstructivist fashion designers 'occupy a privileged position in the dominant system as producers, selling commodities which utilize the language of their users' (2015, p. 14). Here, Zborowska argues that deconstructivist fashion designers adapt the worn-torn look of the subordinate and present it as a new subversive style, which again similar to the history of jeans, become adapted to the mainstream fashion as a recognized trend.

5. Derrida and Deconstruction in Fashion

Similar to the critical analysis of Derridean deconstruction, deconstruction in fashion exhibits a contradictory attitude against the conceptual binaries in fashion such as glamour/shabbiness, hiding/revealing, beautiful/ugly and a

garment being complete/incomplete. In her book, *Radical Fashion*, Claire Wilcox (2001), Senior curator of Fashion at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), writes with regards to the deconstructivist designers as follows, 'their work is optimistic and ultimately liberating for they challenge every preconception and, at the same time, present solutions' (p. 5). The designers prove the realm of commercialized fashion wrong by showing that one binary's worth cannot be considered to be of greater value to another in fashion. As regards to deconstruction in fashion and its rebellious attitude against hierarchical binaries, Arnold (2001) provides a useful explanation in the following words:

> This is an approach to fashion that seeks to highlight rather than eliminate its inherent contradictions, and to examine and reflect cultural and physical imperfections, instead of constructing a lie of transcendent beauty. The process of the design and construction itself is brought to the surface of the garments, instead of being concealed as part of the mystique of the designer as creative genius. An attempt is made to reconcile the oppositions of new/old, rich/poor, masculine/feminine, that are continually reasserted in Western visual culture, reflecting a value system that has tended to favour the former definition in each case (p. 23).

The contradictory creations of these designers are not in opposition to the concepts of perfection, symmetry or proportion. Instead, they are about showing 'the false conventionality of Western fashion', which is based on binaries and the superiority of one binary over another (Vinken, 2005, p. 70). In this respect, by these creations, the deconstructivist designers display an 'auto-critique of the fashion system' (Gill, 1998, p. 27). By featuring, yet not holding superior other binaries that are less favoured by the commercial realms of fashion (imperfection, ugliness, asymmetry, incompleteness...) in their collections, the designers prove the preconceived norms of commercial and mainstream fashion wrong. This is because they show that garments can also

be constructed through the less favoured concepts. By doing so, deconstructivist designers highlight the fact that oppositional concepts depend on each other and that not only the one held superior to the other, but the less favoured binary can also be used in fashion to generate collections. For example, rather than perfection, the designers provide a look of imperfection, as Arnold (2001) points out:

> To recognize imperfection is for these designers an imperative, a route to authenticity, to reconciliation with the past and foregrounding the marginal, in contrast to fashion's traditional role as the purveyor of ephemeral perfect fantasies (p. 26).

By focusing on various respects and drivers of texts, Derrida shows that the grand narratives of texts are all fabricated. By showing that there is no unique meaning of a text, Derrida suggests that a process of an infinite interpretation is possible. He argues that everything that composes a text is through a process of intertextuality, 'everything we thought of as spirit, or meaning separable from the letter of the text, remains within an "intertextual" sphere' (as cited in Hartman, Derrida, Bloom, Man & Miller, 1995, p. viii). In other words, meaning is self-referential and cannot be thought to escape the realm of the text itself. A similar position related to intertextuality is also applicable to fashion. Intertextuality, Gill (2015) writes, is an important point in understanding texts and also fashion objects. As she writes:

> What does Derrida's close reading add to our understanding of text and textuality that might be identified in the fashion object? His description of textuality is suggestive of a way of thinking about fashion objects and images as intricately woven inter-texts, rich with traces of meaning to be decoded (p. 256).

According to Agnès Rocamora (2015), reader in Social and Cultural Studies in

London College of Fashion, 'fashion design is like Derrida's writing that can underscore an instability in the text or garment to paradoxically express both construction and destruction, making and unmaking' (p. 255).

Philosophical and literary deconstruction further shows that concepts cannot exist without other concepts (Best & Kellner, 1991; Sarup, 1993). This means that each concept is rendered meaningful in relation to other concepts. Through this relation, the existence of a concept is intertextually determined. With regards to this dependency amongst concepts, Rodolphe Gasché (1987), Chair of Comparative Literature at the University at Buffalo State University of New York, points out that:

> All major philosophical concepts (being, essence, the good, the one, truth, logos, etc.) are values of unbreached plenitude and presence. Yet concepts are not point like simplicities, because in order to be what they are, they must be demarcated from other concepts to which they thus incessantly refer. In addition to such referentiality to other concepts with which they form binary oppositions, they are, moreover, caught in systems and conceptual chains. The aimed-at conceptual homogeneity is, thus, "contradicted," in a certain manner, by the concepts' constitutive relation to other concepts (as cited in Sallis, 1987, p. 4).

By uprooting the hierarchical binaries, deconstruction reveals what is hidden between the lines.

Change is one of the key concepts which deconstruction reinforces. For Derrida, a final point cannot be the subject matter with regards to meaning. This is because meaning can never be grounded as it is always changing. An infinite phase of meaning reconstruction, then, is inevitable. This is due to the constant shaping of the intertextual forces of texts that lead to change. As a result, deconstruction should not be perceived as a destruction of the meaning of

texts. On the contrary, it should be understood as a creative reading of them that generates productive outcomes. On this account, Derrida (1988) asserts that deconstruction is an 'incessant movement of recontextualization' (p. 136). Derrida's deconstructive readings of texts displace grand narratives to reconstruct new meanings and perceptions that go beyond traditional thinking. As a result, deconstruction creates new perceptions with regards to truth by going beyond the hierarchical binaries and fixed assumptions of texts. As Derrida states in *On the Name*, 'go there where you cannot go, to the impossible, it is indeed the only way of coming or going' (as cited in Derrida & Dutoit, 1995, p. 75).

The foundationalist approach of Western philosophy that Derrida challenges is described as "Metaphysics of Presence". Metaphysics of presence is based on the so-called truth that Western tradition provides its subjects with the unquestionable facts, the main reality through the hierarchy oppositional dynamics manifest (Best & Kellner, 1991; Sarup, 1993). Grand narratives and their hierarchical position, Derrida argues, is a structuralist approach that suggests a fixed centre of truth. With deconstruction, Derrida (1978) aims to play, subvert and relocate Western thought that confines concepts to a fixed and ungrounded hierarchy of unquestionable, undeniable truths. As he explains:

> Structure- or rather the structurality of structure- although it has always been involved, has always been neutralized or reduced, and this by a process of giving it a centre or referring it to a point of presence, a fixed origin. The function of this centre was not only to orient, balance, and organize the structure-one cannot in fact conceive of an unorganized structure-but above all to make sure that the organizing principle of the structure would limit what we might call the free play of the structure. No doubt that by orienting and organizing the coherence of the system, the centre of a structure permits the free play of its elements inside the total

form. And even today the notion of a structure lacking any centre represents the unthinkable itself (1978, p. 278).

Similar to Derridean deconstruction and its strategy, which challenges classical Western thinking, deconstruction in fashion offers a new perspective to the fashion world through defying the established commercial grand narratives of fashion, as the chapters on Aksu and Chalayan will illustrate. Calling deconstructivist designs post-fashion, Barbara Vinken (2005), literary scholar and Professor of Literature and Romance at the Ludwig-Maximilians University in Munich states that:

> The designers of 1980s seal the end of the era of fashion creations, and, with some self-irony, favour trends, which lie outside the absolute perception of the fashionable. They destroy the ideas on which the Western Paris- based fashion system is based (p. 64).

6. Fashion and Philosophy

Alison Gill (1998) in "Deconstruction Fashion: The Making of Unfinished, Decomposing and Re-assembled Clothes", aligns the deconstructivist movement of the late 1990s with Derridean deconstructivist philosophy. Gill defines deconstruction in fashion as a 'literal dismantling of clothes and embodiment of aestheticized non-functionality and an expression of nihilism' (1998, p. 25). Gill refers to the analysis of deconstruction as a 'critique' (i.e. locating and undoing the essence of an argument), using it as a legitimate late 20th century 'emblem for change and risky transformation, specifically with reference to the undoing of modernist cultural forms' (1998, p. 26). Gill (1998) writes that:

> Deconstruction in fashion is something like an auto-critique of the fashion system: It displays an almost X-ray capability to reveal the enabling conditions of fashion's bewitching charms (i.e., charms conveyed in the concepts ornament, glamor, spectacle, illusion, fantasy, creativity,

innovation, exclusivity, luxury repeatedly associated with fashion) and the principles of its practice (i.e., form, material, construction, fabrication, pattern, stitching, finish) (p. 27).

Gill argues that any discipline that involves deconstruction embraces a 'new movement or direction for practice', which aims at exploring the 'underlying principles and conditions of operation of these disciplines, bringing challenging questions about the nature of disciplinary and modes of practice to these inquiries' (1998, p. 27). Gill goes beyond defining deconstruction in fashion as merely an attempt to break apart or to destroy and gives a four-fold structure for considering the different types of approach to deconstructivist fashions. These are: 1. Deconstruction as anti-fashion 2. Deconstruction as recession *zeitgeist* 3. Deconstruction as eco-fashion and 4. Deconstruction as theoretical dress. Anti-fashion deconstruction refers to 'the additional tones of playfulness, provocation and parody frequently used' in garments (1998, p. 27). Recession *zeitgeist* deconstruction signifies 'a mirror image in these decaying garments of social stress and degradation brought by economic recession in the early 1990s' (1998, p. 27). With the practice of eco-fashion Gill writes as follows:

> On the environment, the aesthetic of "patching", combining mismatched fabrics or reworking "salvaged" jackets, might reflect what it is to live with an "ensuing environmental crisis that may well bring dramatic reductions in resources. The aesthetic of reuse and recyclability provides an image that correlates with a popular notion of the environmental imperative, the 4R's imperative (reduce, reuse, recycle, recover) to resist obsolescence to recycle materials, and use resources efficiently (1998, p. 27).

In her final point, the deconstruction as theoretical dress, Gill refers to applied examples of theory to the construction of garments. In this vein, 'deconstruction has been defined very generally as a practice of "undoing", deconstructionist fashion liberates the garment from functionality, by literally undoing it' (1998, p.

28). Gill (2015) adds more detail to these ideas regarding deconstructivist fashion and its relation with Derrida's critical analysis in her article "Fashion Under Erasure". Gill's article applies the texts of Derridean deconstruction to an analysis of Martin Margiela's designs. Gill quotes Judith Butler (2004), Maxine Elliot Professor of Comparative Literature and Critical Theory at Berkeley, and states that 'Derrida questioned the limits of authorial intention to "fully govern everything we end up meaning by what we say or write" ' (as cited in Gill, 2015, p. 256). Derrida's technique, Gill argues, is similar to Barthes (1967) and Foucault (1969) who 'question[ed] the intentions of the author' (2015, p. 256). She argues that 'while Derrida did not write directly about fashion, French semiotician Roland Barthes has been influential in developing ways to interpret fashion as a language that communicates meaning' (Gill, 2015, p. 256). Gill argues that Derrida's method of close attention to the structure of a text can similarly be applied to garment structures. Gill's approach to deconstructive fashion is not so much a focus on a disruption or disintegration, but about a recovery of the actual "fashion object." Gill paraphrases Derrida's 1966 lecture on "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," to describe the "redoubling" of meaning that occurs with a re-reading of a text, so that 'understanding them [fashion objects] as constructed texts with an underpinning logic and an interplay of signs that account for their sometimes contradictory signification' (2015, p. 256), offers an important method for understanding the structural meanings offered in fashion objects. As she writes:

> What does Derrida's close reading add to our understanding of text and textuality that might be identified in the fashion object? His description of textuality is suggestive of a way of thinking about fashion objects and images as intricately woven inter-texts, rich with traces of meaning to be

decoded (2015, p. 256).

In the 'authorship' section of her article, Gill writes that a garment tag with no signature of its designer 'bring[s] one's attention to the clothes' (2015, p. 264). Providing Margiela's refusal to claim himself as the only authorial power over his Maison's designs, and linking this condition to Derrida's refusal of a single author of texts, Gill argues:

> Margiela's refusal to assume any individual part as lead author, producer or visionary risks debunking the designer's ideas to activate the text. He prefers to disperse authorial agency to the atelier team and respect for their collaborative work... and to the wearer who is invited to interpret the challenging clothes. Like Derrida, he refuses the position of the master, the source of a critique of the fashion system, and the experimental agency of the clothes seems to come from them, as the deconstruction goes on between the clothes, their un-making and their invitation to the wearer (2015, p. 264).

The 'Innovation' section of Gill's article focuses on Margiela's Replica pieces that have been produced since 1994. Gill argues that through the Replica pieces, 'the house refuses the force of now-time to make *tabula rasa* of fashion history on which conventional innovation is premised' (2015, p. 265). Gill argues that resisting innovation is similar to 'Derrida's conception of time that emphasizes paradox and double-movement that defers experience, provides the tools to make use of an unconventional, non-linear temporality' (2015, p. 265). Changes in Margiela's garments, in this respect, are:

> Not driven by a fashion imperative to generate new looks, rather they are accretions in fabric and shape through age and use ... the Maison's recycling of linings, basting threads, fabrics, patterns, trench coats and whole iconic garments is a material expression of a temporal language introducing returns and deferring pauses to derail fashion's conventionally forward cycle of material and symbolic re-use' (Gill, 2015, pp. 265-266).

Gill's highlight of the temporal aspect of the event of redoubling through the

"recycling" of materials through the processes of deconstruction highlights the dynamic nature of theories of reconstructive practices.

7. Deconstruction within Visual Culture

In addition to philosophy and fashion, deconstruction composes a significant part of visual design, especially within the domains of architecture and graphic design. Before going into detail, it is worth providing definitions of both realms in relation to the notion of deconstruction. Zborowska (2015) defines deconstruction in visual design as 'a form of critique of the established order, a non-conformist gesture, which exposes not only the structures themselves, but also in a metaphorical sense, the structures of our thinking and perception' (p. 10). On the other hand, Loschek (2009), explains deconstruction in architecture in detail:

> Deconstructivist architecture localizes the emotions inherent in buildings, and it breaks down the relation of load-bearing and load as well as traditional statics. It alienates constructive elements by dismantling (deconstructing) functions and forms into their individual components. As a whole, it is an approach almost approximating the shattering of structure. In the sense of conventional visual habits, the collision of different materials, spaces and constructions appears disharmonious, resembling a collage or even a chaotic muddle, as is the case with Frank O. Gehry's house in Santa Monica dating from 1978. It appears dismantled, thrown into confusion and apparently reassembled quite by chance (p. 190).

Zborowska (2015) explores deconstruction within the realm of visual design. She focuses on the realms of architecture and graphic design. Zborowska writes that the realm of architecture necessitated an 'institutional gesture' for the characterization of deconstruction (2015, p. 10). She states that this

institutional gesture was provided by an exhibition curated by Philip Johnson

and Mark Wigley (2015, p. 10). Zborowska explains the exhibition as follows:

> In a short description, the curators wrote about projects that are
> supposed to deliberately disturb and distort characteristic features of
> modernist architecture. Cubist shapes and right angles were replaced by
> diagonal lines, curved planes and arches. The classical principles
> organizing not only the architectonic forms but the way of
> conceptualizing the reality become inverted. Harmony, unity and clarity
> are displaced by disharmony, fracturing and mystery (2015, p. 10).

Despite all these efforts, Zborowska writes that, deconstruction in architecture

received negative criticism and it was labelled as ' "anti-architecture" - inhuman

and detached from the needs of its users' (2015, p. 12).

Zborowska carries on the article with the influence of deconstruction in graphic

design. Mentioning Ellen Lupton and J. Abbott Miller's article "Deconstruction

and Graphic Design: History Meets Theory" (2010), Zborowska (2015) writes

that Lupton and Miller talk about 'the influence of Derrida's texts on graphic

design and apply his category of a "Parergon" in their analysis of design

practices' (p. 12). However, she states, 'the authors try to prove that, in

contradiction to fashion and architecture, graphic design does not offer easily

classifiable deconstruction methods' (2015, p. 12).

In *Fashion, Writing and Criticism*'s, 'Being Critical About Deconstruction:

Theoretical Approach or le Destroy' section, Sanda Miller (2014), Senior lecturer

in Media and Visual Arts at Southampton Solent University, refers to Gill's 1998

article where Gill asserts that deconstruction was popularized in the

Deconstructivist Architecture exhibition that took place in MOMA, New York in

1988. Miller argues that deconstruction as a concept and style became

fashionable despite its anti-fashion stance. This is because it formed part of the conceptual theoretical background that was emerging at the time (2014, p. 118). Referring to the 1980s, the first and early era of deconstructivist fashion, Miller (2014) argues that fashion "needed" a philosophy of its own:

> It is simple, as a new field of academic endeavour, 'fashion studies' which emerged in the 1980s needed its own theoretical framework and so philosophy was regarded, alongside sociology and so on as a suitable candidate (pp. 118-119).

While Gill (1998) proposes that, 'deconstruction fashion indicates an engagement of fashion and philosophy in a dialogue of mutual effect,' (p. 30) Miller (2014) questions the conceptual links between deconstruction in the visual realm and the philosophy of deconstruction, asking: 'can architecture be viewed as a visual language and subjected to deconstructive analysis just like a literary or philosophical text?' (p. 120). Miller puts forward architectural historian Kenneth Frampton's idea of deconstruction in architecture as 'elitist and detached' (2014, p. 120). When it comes to fashion, Miller asks the question, 'why "deconstruction" in fashion?' (2014, p. 120). Miller argues instead that it can be related to Marx's 'fetishism of commodities or to some such form of ideological criticism against fashion regarded as a frivolous luxury commodity' (2014, 120). However, she stresses that:

> The punters will not buy a 'falling apart' (deconstructed) garment to wear, unless on its back we have the mysterious blank White label, which is no longer that mysterious, for everybody knows that it is the 'deconstructed' signature of Martin Margiela, who never appears in public or allows himself to be photographed, but whose name alone brings in business (2014, p. 121).

Miller (2014) criticizes Gill's (1998) position that argues deconstructivist fashion to be 'an anti-fashion statement (a wilful avant-garde desire to destroy fashion)'

(Gill, 1998, p. 1). Unlike Gill, Miller's position argues that deconstructivist fashion is just another style for the market, and in no way does it offer any subversion or critique to the mainstream fashion. Miller joins the discussion of deconstruction in fashion to a political theoretical discussion of fashion as commodity, whereas Gill situates deconstructive fashion as a trans-disciplinary cultural form that can clearly be linked to changes across the visual cultural forms, like architecture, but also evidenced in other design forms such as sculpture, painting and performance art.

This section has analysed the aforementioned scholars so as to show how the notion of deconstruction was interpreted, related to and critiqued within the domain of visual culture encompassing architecture, graphic design and fashion. How the notion of deconstruction was received and how these receptions resulted to contradictory perspectives amongst scholars have been mentioned. What follows will give a detailed account of deconstruction and architecture, as it is important to explore how architecture, as part of visual culture, forms an important spark in the notion's entrance into the visual realm.

Modern architecture, its death and its transformation into postmodern architecture constitute a significant framework in understanding deconstruction's links with unconventionality and insubordinate design perspective. The following will provide a general picture of modern architecture, its disconnection with society, its downfall and the rise of postmodern architecture and deconstruction in architecture.

In *An Introduction to Architectural Theory: 1968 to the Present* by Harry Francis

Mallgrave and David J. Goodman (2011), it explains two significant events that

defined deconstruction. The first event was a one-day symposium on

deconstruction. The symposium took place in TATE London in April 1988

(Mallgrave & Goodman, 2011, p. 155). The second event was an exhibition

entitled *Deconstructivist Architecture*. The exhibition took place in MOMA, New

York. The exhibition is explained as follows:

> The exhibition catalogue carried none of the theoretical weight of the
> London colloquium. Johnson, in the Preface, was adamant that no new
> style was materializing, no new movement was afoot, and the moniker
> "deconstructivist" was chosen simply for the formal similarity of this work
> with the Soviet Constructivists of the 1920s. Hence, the unifying motif to
> be found in the work of these different architects was "the diagonal
> overlapping of rectangular or trapezoidal bars" (Mallgrave & Goodman,
> 2011, p. 157).

The exhibition featured seen architects: Gehry, Libeskind, Koolhaas, Eisenman,

Hadid, Coop Himmelblau, and Tschumi (Mallgrave & Goodman, 2011, p. 157).

These architects' 'works represented both a "decontextualization" and a

"defamiliarization" of such time-honoured architectural tenets as the idea of

enclosure' (Mallgrave & Goodman, 2011, p. 157).

In "Charles Jencks and the Historiography of Post-Modernism" Elie Haddad

(2009), Dean of LAU School of Architecture and Design, addresses Charles

Jencks' books on architecture, modernism and postmodernism. *The New*

Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-Modern Architecture (2002)

which firstly appeared in 1984, 'went into eight editions, in each case

readjusting the defining parameters of the new movement that was predicted

by its author to supersede the Modern Movement' (Haddad, 2009, p. 496). In

the first part of the book, 'the author articulated his argument on the "death of

modern architecture", a death that he situated precisely on 15th July 1972'

(Haddad, 2009, p. 496). Criticizing modernism and its failure to 're-establish

[the] lost connection between architecture and its public, and ultimately (its

failure) to "communicate" in a legible language' (Haddad, 2009, p. 496), Jencks

wrote as follows:

> So we see the factory is a classroom, the cathedral is a boiler house, the boiler house is a chapel, and the President's temple is the School of Architecture. [...] Of course Mies didn't intend these propositions, but his commitment to reductive formal values inadvertently betrays them (as cited in Haddad, 2009, p. 496).

Haddad states that Jencks was critical of the architects 'who had only come to

terms with the change in social values out of despair' (2009, p. 496). As Jencks

notes:

> Architecture obviously reflects what a society holds important, what it values both spiritually and in terms of cash. In the pre-industrial past the major areas for expression were the temple, the church, the palace, agora, meeting house, country house and city hall; while in the present, extra money is spent on hotels, restaurants and all those commercial building types I have mentioned. Public housing and buildings expressing the local community or the public realm receive the cutbacks. Buildings representing consumer values generate the investment (as cited in Haddad, 2009, p. 497).

Haddad (2009) writes that Jencks criticized the commercial aspects of the

Modern movement and he highlighted that 'the heroic attempts of the

Modernists to establish a universal language expressive of and conducive to

greater social goals had clearly failed' (p. 497). The third chapter of *The*

Language of Postmodern Architecture pointed out the emergence of the

postmodern architecture. As Jencks wrote:

> Several architects are moving beyond modern architecture in a tentative way, either adapting a mixture of modernist styles, or mixing these with previous modes. The results as yet are not convincing enough to speak

of a totally new approach and style; they are evolutionary, not a radical departure. And it is the nature of the case that practicing architects now in their forties and trained in modernism can only make hesitant, evolutionary changes. When the present students of architecture start practicing, we should begin to see much more convincing examples of radical eclecticism, because it is only this group, which is really free enough to try their hand at any possible style–ancient, modern, or hybrid (as cited in Haddad, 2009, p. 498).

In the early 1980s, Jencks pointed out the 'American and European architecture'

and the works of 'Graves, Moore, Stirling and Hollein' (Haddad, 2009, p. 500).

In doing so, he described postmodernism as 'an eclectic mix of traditional or

local codes with Modern ones' (as cited in Haddad, 2009, p. 500). In the

introduction of his book, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The language of*

Post-Modern Architecture, Jencks (2002 [1984]) wrote an essay entitled 'Death

for Rebirth', where he criticized scholars that 'since 1982, had been announcing

the immanent death of postmodernism' (p. 501). Jencks:

> Conceded that movements do reach an end, and that Post-Modernism would not escape this predicament, but unlike the previous dogmatic movements, its death could be a liberating event, which would free it once again from any dogmatism (Haddad, 2009, p. 501).

Haddad (2009) remarks that postmodernism led to the emergence of

deconstruction and deconstruction was:

> Reflected around 1990 in some major review magazines, especially Architectural Design, which gradually shifted its attention from Post-Modernism to new themes such as Deconstruction (1988, 1989, 1990), New Spirit in Architecture (1991), Free Space Architecture (1991) and other topics (p. 502).

Later, Jencks worked on 'the principle of complexity', which is a 'new conception

of the universe' that:

> Opens the possibility for a diverse and inclusive reading of architectural works that fall within this new paradigm, under the different labels of

'Organic' architecture (Bruce Goff), 'Green Architecture' (James Wines/SITE), 'Organi-Tech' (Calatrava), 'Cosmic Architecture' (Isozaki, Mozuna, Hasegawa) and the ultimate 'Cosmogenic Architecture' of a completely rehabilitated Peter Eisenman (as cited in Haddad, 2009, p. 503).

Haddad writes that Jencks argued postmodernism to transform into a 'new paradigm' entitled "Critical Modernism" (2009, p. 505). Accordingly, critical modernism reconciled modernism and postmodernism, past and future (Haddad, 2009, pp. 505-506). As she quotes Jencks:

> Such are the movements under way towards a more hybrid, integrated world — a mongrelised globe from one point of view — a world in constant and instantaneous communication across its boundaries. At the same time, I will argue, there is also at work a hidden tradition of reflection and reaction to all this cross-border modernization, the Critical Modernism of my title. Unlike many of the other trends and agendas discussed here, this is not yet a conscious movement but an underground or tacit process, the activity of modernism in its constantly reflexive stage, a stage that looks back critically in order to go forward (as cited in Haddad 2009, p. 506).

Jencks further marks the dependence of postmodernism and modernism:

> This is the taste for the hybrid moment, the instant of creation, when two different systems are suddenly conjoined so that one can appreciate both sides of the equation and their union (as cited in Haddad 2009, p. 506).

Haddad points out that critical modernism has three significant aspects, 'critical iconography, critical coding and critical spirituality' (2009, p. 506). In relation to bringing together and overcoming hierarchical binaries, Haddad defines critical spirituality as follows:

> The third level, 'critical spirituality', is a rather new addition to the theoretical framework. Here Jencks posited what appears to be an original thought, the overcoming of the historical dichotomies of body/mind and matter/spirit to result in a new conception that brings together these opposites into a comprehensive unity (2009, p. 506).

Jenks' concept of critical spirituality has a direct link to Derridean deconstruction and one of its core principles: the dependence of binaries rather than their

presupposed oppositional structures. It is significant to understand the concept as it provides a deeper and more comprehensive perspective in understanding Derridean deconstruction and its extensions of critical thinking.

Conclusion

As this literature review chapter has explored, although not deconstructivist, the designs of Schiaparelli and Punk style, with their position against mainstream and commercialized realms of fashion, could be argued to be the precursors of deconstruction in fashion. This is because of the ways both Schiaparelli's creations and Punk style go against the preconceived visual conventions related to sexuality, perfection, norms related to femininity and the conventional body of the Western woman. Further, the chapter has also shown that issues of deconstructive stylistic change engage debates about the cultural mainstream, philosophy, postmodern theory, as well as the style's adaptation by capitalism. The chapter has also explored deconstruction within the visual culture with regards to graphic design and the influence of Charles Jencks on architecture. The chapter's focus on visual culture is significant because it provides the information of how the notion has developed before it emerged within the domain of fashion.

Methodology

The thesis examines the concepts of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction with a focus on Aksu and Chalayan's creations. The thesis also considers practical methodology and theoretical methodology that is based on Derrida's philosophy of deconstruction and Malabou's philosophy of plasticity. Further, the thesis utilizes Alexandra Kim's and Ingrid Mida's (2015) object-based research in fashion, which proposes a three-fold phase of reading fashion objects (Observation, Reflection and Interpretation). The thesis uses Kim and Mida's methodology on specific garments of Chalayan from the museums and exhibitions the author visited (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Manus x Machina* (2016), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum, *Across Art and Fashion* (2017)) and the images the author captured from Aksu's Autumn/Winter 2014 collection.

The thesis also utilizes designer and curator interviews the author has conducted. Further, it includes authentic photographs of traditional Anatolian *patiks* and Turkish women wearing *patiks.* These photos are taken from an Aegean village of Izmir called Seferihisar. The thesis also includes texts, catwalk shows, catwalk performances, designer monographs; museum displays, exhibitions, and catalogues for its analysis. Further, it includes an analysis of Turkish cultural and traditional motifs (*Oya, Nazar Boncuk,* the Ottoman Tulip motif, and the traditional Anatolian hand *Crochet Slippers/Shoes*) as well as the Anatolian and Islamic dresses.

Using plasticity, deconstruction, and Kim and Mida's object-based research as the theoretical and practical methodologies of conceptual and material frameworks, the thesis proposes that de-design is the materialized step of the experimental garments that leads to conceptual deconstruction(s). In specific dresses of Chalayan (The *Remote Control Dress*, The *Coffee Table Skirt,* The *Mechanical Dress*) and fashion objects of Aksu (The *Turkish Crochet Slippers/Shoes*), the thesis brings into play Kim and Mida's object-based research in fashion (as case studies). In accordance with this analytical method, the thesis firstly "observes". Observation involves 'factual information to be able to create a rich description of the artefact that can provide a visual image of the garment if the text was read aloud' (Kim & Mida, 2015, pp. 28-29). Secondly, in "reflection" stage, 'the researcher is invited to pause and reconsider their experience of examining the garment, making written notes that are more personal in nature' (Kim & Mida, 2015, p. 29). The final stage is "interpretation". This stage 'requires the researcher to draw widely from their (own) experience, as well as from fashion theory, in order to synthesize the material gathered during the Observation and Reflection phases of research' (Kim & Mida, 2015, p. 31). This final stage brings into perspective the notions of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction.

It is important to note that the application of the notions of plasticity, de-design and deconstruction also includes other creations of Aksu and Chalayan in addition to the case studies analysed with Kim and Mida's object-based methodology. In addition, further examples from the Japanese and Belgian deconstructivist designers will be analysed with the application of the concepts

of plasticity, de-design and deconstruction.

Plasticity, in the thesis, is the methodology that underpins the notion of de-design. Plasticity's three-fold capacity: to receive form, to give form and to destroy the received form can be applied to conventional structural forms of fashion. Similar to how plasticity registers on the synaptic functions of the brain, de-design *takes* conventional fashion forms, *recreates* them, and *annihilates* their original structure. Deconstruction, in the thesis, is the methodology that supports the abstract challenge caused by de-design to the conventional *norms* and *notions* of fashion.

Hussein Chalayan and Bora Aksu illustrate how plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction take place in what is named as deconstructivist fashion. Although the thesis focuses on Chalayan and Aksu as case studies of the third wave deconstructivist fashion, it further provides examples of the first wave Japanese and the second wave Belgian deconstructivist designers. The inclusion of the former examples is to further reinforce the application of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction to all deconstructivist fashion waves.

Building on these points of reference, the thesis spotlights Aksu's and Chalayan's creations. It demonstrates how deconstructivist designers *materially de-design* garments and *conceptually deconstruct* the norms related to mainstream fashion and other domains with which fashion interacts. Thus, by utilizing Malabou's plasticity and Derrida's deconstruction, Kim and Mida's

object analysis, the thesis provides a model of how technical/material de-design(ing) leads to conceptual deconstruction in fashion design. Through this methodology, the thesis analyses previously underexplored aspects of Aksu and Chalayan's designs. Their Turkish cultural backgrounds and their creations that present transformation and metamorphosis on their structures are seen as the main influences on their de-designs. Their cultural background and transformed garments also lead to the emergence of a third wave of Turkish deconstructivist thinking in fashion. This section contains two parts: 1. Practical method 2. Theoretical method.

Practical Method

As part of practical methodology, this study utilizes designer and curator interviews. The designer interviews (Bora Aksu and Martin Margiela) were conducted through E-mail. A personal interview was held with the curator Beral Madra, the curator of Chalayan's Absent Presence project. Although initially an in-depth interview was planned with Aksu and Chalayan, the latter designer decided not to give an interview. Madra who is an experienced curator with whom Chalayan, himself, wanted to work in his Absent Presence project filled in the gap that an interview would have provided. Madra knows and understands Chalayan's design aesthetics, philosophy and inspirations. In addition to the interview with Madra, interviews that the designer had given in magazines, books, monographs and online sources were helpful to consolidate his design philosophy.

Aksu was the person contacted directly and who was able to answer the

interview questions in a month, as he had promised. The designer returned a Word document with the questions along with his answers. The questions of Aksu's interview were prepared in line with some common themes of the designer's collections such as: how his Turkish background influences his creativity, what the purpose of using different Turkish motifs is in his collections, or the importance of bringing together different fashion periods in his collections. The importance of art and the designer's creations' relation with artworks were also asked to be evaluated by Aksu. Further, how the designer distinguishes his creations from *haute couture* formed another question of the interview.

The second wave designer Margiela's team was prompt to reply and sent the designer's answers in two weeks. Margiela's questions also focused on the common themes of beauty, intertextuality and the making of incomplete garments. In addition, more general questions regarding deconstructivist design were also addressed such as why deconstructivist fashion has been embraced in Paris and the role of the conceptual fashion shows of deconstructivist fashion.

Beral Madra was very enthusiastic and granted an interview. Madra, as a curator, was the second choice after Chalayan because of the designer's interest in inter-disciplinary projects that mostly involve the engagement of curators. Questions relating to the way Chalayan defines the concept of beauty in his works, how his garments depict a continuous process, and the means by which the designer challenges *haute couture* and mainstream fashion were among the questions asked. The role of his conceptual catwalks shows that

form an alternative marketing strategy were also some of the questions similar to those asked of Aksu and Margiela.

Although all Japanese deconstructivist designers (Issey Miyake, Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons, Junya Watanabe, Yohji Yamamoto) were asked to participate in an online interview, they declined citing their busy schedule.

Personal interview was the method chosen for the thesis as it provides the appropriate platform to reveal the links that exist amongst the design perspective, creativity process of the deconstructivist designers whilst making links amongst the concepts of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction, and reconstruction. The explanations of the designers and the curator were the means of constituting the links amongst plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction.

Further in the practical method, Aksu's Autumn/Winter 2014 London Fashion Week Show, which the author attended by personal invitation, provided a unique opportunity to observe the *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* of the designer. It allowed the chance to take close-up photographs of them worn by the models on the catwalk, visually analyse and experience the new collection. After the collection show, the designer and his team were kind enough to have an informal chat with the author over his design thinking and creations.

The author's visit to the village of Seferihisar, Izmir and the observations she made of the Turkish village women wearing traditional *patiks* provided the background of the old-style elements of the designer's Autumn/Winter 2014

collection. This opportunity of visiting the Aegean village and observing traditional women verified and strengthened the link the author established between Aksu's *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* and the conventional Turkish women's footwear.

Kim and Mida's object-based research's observation and reflection stages fit into the practical methodology as they involve the analysis of specific fashion objects of Chalayan in museums. The *Mechanical Dress* was observed in The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2016). Others (The *Remote Control Dress*, The *Coffee Table Skirt*) were examined in Salvatore Ferragamo Museum, Florence (2017). During the author's visit of the exhibitions, alongside pictures, she also took notes, especially for "Reflection" phase.

Theoretical Method

The thesis takes the concepts of plasticity, and deconstruction and applies them to analyse the three waves of deconstructivist fashion but with a focus on the third wave Turkish designers Chalayan and Aksu as case studies. By introducing the concept of de-design and offering a materialized perspective put forward by plasticity, the thesis develops additional perspectives in deconstructivist fashion.

In the same way that Malabou applies the notion of deconstruction to neuro-scientific ontology, and thus discusses the material realm, similarly fashion needs new means that can distinguish the concrete (material, technical subversion) from the abstract (nonconcrete, conceptual) processes of deconstruction. De-designing is used with such intention in the thesis.

Malabou's notion of plasticity is the first framework the thesis uses, as it provides the foundation to refer to the technical, material subversion in the creations of the deconstructivist designers. The thesis argues that the introduction of the term de-design corresponds to Malabou's conception of plasticity as de-design connotes the materially subverted designs in fashion that lead to a conceptual deconstruction. De-design, which will be used in the following chapters of the thesis, is built on Malabou's plasticity, which materializes deconstruction and separates it from the conceptual aspects of deconstruction. In this vein, de-design building on plasticity, contributes to fashion theory. It provides the new idea that helps explain deconstructivist fashion in the material aspect rather than referring to both material and conceptual aspects under the title of deconstruction.

Deconstruction is the second framework the thesis uses as it provides the basis to explain how the system of fashion, similar to texts, cannot be confined to fixed rules and conventions related to concepts, norms, conventions, and hierarchical binaries. Further, deconstruction provides the framework that shows the way non-conformity to norms and conventions in fashion results in innovation and change in conceptual terms.

The thesis brings together Kim and Mida's object-based research in fashion and deconstructivist fashion practice to construct a methodology that combines material, practical aspects with conceptual, theoretical aspects. The

third stage of Kim and Mida's methodology, interpretation, fits into theoretical methodology, as it deals with the conceptual sides of the fashion garments and objects rather than the observation and reflection stages that are more identifiable with the material aspects of the fashion objects. Interpretation stage involves the application of the concepts of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction on the case studies of Aksu and Chalayan.

The Turkish cultural forms and motifs Aksu and Chalayan feature in their collections are analysed in the thesis; they highlight the fact that the Turkish designers not only de-design the conventional forms related to fashion but also treat their traditions and conventions as objects and motifs to be de-designed, deconstructed and reconstructed. In this respect, Turkish cultural motifs are used as tools that lead to de-designing, deconstruction and reconstruction in fashion, Turkish culture and tradition.

Further, the thesis discusses the material and conceptual innovations and reconstructions generated by the de-designs and deconstructions of Aksu and Chalayan. How domains other than fashion such as technology, culture, politics and religion intertextually influence both designers' creations and lead to innovation and reconstruction by the de-designing and deconstruction they cause are examined in the thesis.

Chapter One: Theoretical Qualities of Deconstructivist Fashion Design

The First Wave Japanese Deconstructivist Designers: At the beginning of the 1980s designers (Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto, Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons, Junya Watanabe) from Japan started to appear with an avant-garde and experimental design perspective. These designers were the first of three subversive fashion waves that would carry on till the present day. Referring to Japanese deconstructivist fashion, Bernadine Morris (1982), former fashion writer for The *New York Times*, argues that, 'the fashions that have swept in from the East represent a totally different attitude toward how clothes should look from that long established here. ... They cannot be described in conventional terms...' (n.p.). Scholars declared it as a milestone. It is recognized as a historic landmark, when the Japanese designers completely changed the 'conventions of construction methods' (Bromley & Wojciechowska, 2008, p. 146) and 'offered a meaningful alternative to the superficial, regressive and over-designed work of so many of the Western designers' (English, 2007, p. 128).

Additionally, English (2007) writes:

> Ignoring stylistic trends, the Japanese designers work within a postmodernist visual arts framework, appropriating aspects of their traditional culture and embracing new technological developments and methodologies in fashion design. Yet, at the same time, they infuse their work with meaning and memory (p. 117).

In another essay, English (2011a) explains as follows:

> They made their mark in an industry far too long dominated by the hegemony of Eurocentric design, opening the way for greater multi-cultural involvement and a broader interpretation of what constitutes beauty on the catwalks of Paris (p. 85).

The "*Arte Povera*" (poor art) movement of the Italian art world influenced the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers (Bartal, 2015, p. 66). The

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Japanese designers were also under the influence of the '1960s Italian anti-design trend created by groups like Studio de Pas, D'Urbino, Lomazzi, Gatti, Paolini, (and) Teodoro' (Bartal, 2015, p. 66). These creators of anti-design went against the "Good Design" ideals of modernism, which 'believed in functionality, perfect ergonomics, timeless design solutions, and classic aesthetic values' (Bartal, 2015, p. 66).

Kawakubo was very interested in how the Italian artists deconstructed 'the imagery of the object' and the reconstruction of brand new ones. The eccentric creations of the Italian avant-garde artists offered new possibilities that went against 'user expectations regarding the function of the object' (Bartal, 2015, p. 66). These avant-garde objects asked questions about the aim of design in general. The unconventional Italian designers of *Arte Povera* movement created artworks that 'blurred the social class issues and sought new visual strategies' that reconstructed the function of design, the role of the designer and the link between design and society (Bartal, 2015, p. 66). As a result, the creations of these artists were called as 'anti-class, anti-consumer, anti-marketing, and thus anti-design' (Bartal, 2015, p. 66). These anti-designs carried 'social and political messages' and these messages distinguished these designs and designers from the capitalistic system (Bartal, 2015, p. 66).

With all their innovative design perspectives and techniques, alternative approaches contradicting the preconceived norms of conventional Western fashion and close relation with the art world, the designers from Japan swept the realm of fashion with a non-European avant-garde zest. This avant-garde zest continued with the second wave of deconstructivists led by the Belgian

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designers.

The Second Wave Deconstructivist Belgian Designers: Having appeared

in the second half of the 1980s, Belgian designers (Walter Van Beirendonck,

Ann Demeulemeester, Dries Van Noten, Dirk Van Saene, Dirk Bikkembergs and

Marina Yee) referred as the "Antwerp Six", started to draw attention to their

experimental designs. Belgian designer Martin Margiela (the seventh) later

joined the Antwerp six. As Arrojo (2015) broadly explains the Antwerp Six:

> After construction, their garments were purposefully pulled apart to
> create raw, frayed, tapered edges and beautiful silhouettes. The
> philosophy of the Antwerp six was to deconstruct the traditional shapes
> and styles of fashion by using displaced seams and surface incisions. The
> results featured loose, elegant tailoring symbolized by the deconstruction
> in texture and "lived-in", perfectly imperfect feel (p. 5).

Ann Demeulemeester and Martin Margiela have been regarded as the most

important designers of the Belgian deconstructivist fashion (Loschek, 2009, p.

187). According to Tamsin Blanchard (1998), fashion editor of *The*

Independent, Ann Demeulemeester:

> Is not interested in the idea of clothes as product. There has to be
> something more. Designing a new collection, she sets herself a problem
> to be solved (para. 7).
>
> Each item has to have a reason to exist. Each piece is only worked on by
> Ann. She does not have a team like other designers. She even makes her
> own lasts for her shoes, sculpting until she arrives at the perfect shape
> (para. 8).

Further, Ingrid Loschek, Professor in the History and Theory of Fashion at the

University of Applied Sciences Pforzheim, (2009) writes with regards to Margiela

and his unusual qualities in design as follows:

> Belgian Martin Margiela is regarded as a programmatic fashion designer
> of deconstructivism. Martin Margiela makes the fragmentary aspect of

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deconstructivism visible by bringing together things that do not belong together, such as a sleeve that is too wide in an armhole that is far too small (p. 187).

Compared to the first wave, the Belgian designers' creations do not show any cultural or nationalistic references specific to Belgium. However, their emergence has a direct link to their country. As explains Zborowska (2015):

> Importantly, the notion of 'deconstruction' was emerging simultaneously with large- scale activities aimed at a revival of the rich traditions of the Belgian textile industry. 'The Textile Plan', announced on 1 January 1981, comprised a number of actions aimed at not only restoring the importance of Belgium among the fashion capitals, but also creating from scratch Belgian fashion as a brand. The plan (implemented by the Institute for Textile and Clothing of Belgium) envisaged both financial support and promotional activities under the slogan '*Dit is Belgisch/C'est belge*' (p. 4).

The lack of cultural references of the second wave Belgian deconstructivist design compared to the first wave Japanese designers may have resulted by Belgium's Western geographic location, which would not make an obvious fundamental difference in visual terms. Thus, Belgium's cultural affinity with Europe and Paris may account for the lack of cultural references of Belgian designers.

Despite the fact that Belgian deconstructivist designers' creations display a direct subversion to the conventional techniques and design perspective of Parisian fashion, Margiela is based in Paris and makes *couture* garments in an avant-garde way (except for his H&M project). Margiela is pointed out as a gifted dressmaker and the designer is further explained as follows:

> Margiela is another talented dressmaker, whose work has always centred on the techniques and disciplines of *couture*- he literally takes apart old garments and reworks them in a modern idiom, and has done more to elevate recycling to an art form than any other designer. His approach may be intellectual (he is fascinated by the construction of garments),

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but his finish is stitch-perfect - as Hermés, which has recently appointed him as its chief designer, knows only too well. It may seem surprising that the polished, glossy house of Hermés should appoint a designer whose trademark is deconstruction, but any designer who can deconstruct with Margiela's finesse can almost certainly construct with equal skill (Brampton, 1997, p. 152).

In contrast to the concept of newness and innovation in their design thinking, as a second wave deconstructivist designer, Margiela highlights the technique of reworking already existing pieces as a key principle to his garment fabrication. The designer explains as follows, 'we find inspiration in the least likely of places and expose it through our collections. We rework forms by elevating them through our designs, and redefine the way to wear certain garments' (M. Margiela, personal communication, July 29, 2013). On this account, he and his team show that the new in fashion can be created out of old items and this way a balance of binaries can be maintained (new being formed through the old). Further on Margiela, Loscialpo (2010) explains the designer's interest in the vocabulary of garment construction as follows:

> Making a parody of the already excessive and, in a certain extent, orthodox fashion of the times would have in fact been redundant. By the making of deconstructions and reproductions, Margiela's work rather concentrated in disinterring the mechanics of the dress structure and, with them, the mechanisms of fascinations that haunt fashion (p. 5).

Having briefly introduced the first wave Japanese and the second wave Belgian deconstructivist designers, what follows will provide a more detailed account of information regarding the two waves and their subversive ways of designing. It will engage with deconstructivist techniques and visual reconfigurations of deconstruction in fashion. The majority of these manifests as a statement of anti-fashion, a rebellion against mainstream dress, and offer an alternative conceptualization of the key concerns of fashion.

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General Definitions and Qualities of Deconstructivist Fashion

Across its various incarnations, deconstruction in fashion, which the thesis has

so far classified in two waves is described by different scholars, practitioners

and designers in a range of ways. Deconstruction in fashion stages an

insurrection against the creations, techniques and the design thinking of

mainstream and commercialized fashion as Kawamura (2004) points out:

> They stretched the boundaries of fashion, reshaped the boundaries of fashion, reshaped the symmetry of clothes, introduced monochromic clothes, and let wrapped garments respond to the body's shape and movement. They destroyed all previous definitions of clothing and fashion (p. 202).

Kawamura (2004) further explains that, the deconstructive designers' 'concepts

were undoubtedly different, original, and new compared with the rules of

fashion set by orthodox legitimate designers such as Chanel, Dior, and Saint

Laurent' (p. 202). In *Knitwear in Fashion*, Black (2002) lists the qualities of

deconstruction in fashion as follows:

> 1. Asymmetry in terms of left-to-right-side body balance, and hemlines. 2. Utilization of non-traditional textiles and yarns. 3. Combining of contrasting weight fabrications. 4. The cutting up of traditional tailored shapes into broken and unfinished sections. 5. The purposeful use of unfinished edge to create aesthetic effect and 6. Distortion of the proportions of the body through fit to shape (p. 99).

Belgian designer Martin Margiela gives a typical position of contemporary

approaches, who explains:

> Deconstructive fashion is just as much of an art as traditional *haute couture*, and now the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Though deconstructive fashion began in opposition to commodified fashion, subversive designs have become intellectually accepted by the industry. In this vein, it is essential to continue to scrutinize norms through design in order to escape convention (M. Margiela, personal communication, July 29, 2013).

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Margiela's comments exemplify the heart of the deconstructive approach by the designer; as a process of staged "subversion" which is an opposition to the mainstream fashion that then becomes absorbed. This, in turn, creates a renewed requirement for the review of "norms". The following section examines other such statements, in order to glean a sense of what links can be drawn on the thematics of the topic. In particular, the section focuses on those theorists and practitioners who look at the methods of construction the deconstructivist designers display through what the chapter describes as a different design thinking to that of normative, mainstream fashion. Normativity can be described as:

> An evolving and incoherent cluster of hegemonic promises about the present and future experience of social belonging that can be entered into in a number of ways and that can best be tracked in terms of affective transactions (Berlant, 2007, p. 279).

Different designers agree with Margiela's claim that deconstructivist fashion is driven by its challenge to established norms of garment making. Yet, it is marked by the inevitable recycling back into the market, where it is transformed into a consumable commodity.

In *The Fashion Design Reference and Specification Book: Everything Fashion Designers Need to Know Every Day* Jay Calderin (2013), director of Creative Marketing at the School of Fashion Design in Boston, offers the following definition on deconstruction in fashion:

> Deconstruction in fashion design challenges rules and breaks down traditions. The aesthetic includes unfinished, decomposed, and reassembled applications that bring the hidden workings of a garment to the surface. These fashions show construction details that are usually removed, such as basting, or disguised, such as inside-cut pockets,

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zippers, pinked edges, zigzag stitching, and seam work (p. 81).

Calderin takes Margiela's "scrutiny" to be a strategy, one that is concerned with

a sense of the "break down" of "traditions", achieved through attention to the

material details of a garment's literal deconstruction through the "removal" of

hidden details. English (2011b) similarly emphasizes the significance of a

strategy of detail revelation and attention, noting that in deconstructive

garment construction:

> Techniques were deliberately compromised: hems were scissor-cut and uneven; fabric was knotted; deliberate holes or dropped stitches appeared in knitting; threads used for seaming were of an opposite colour and they took on the effect of broad basting, normally used in the preliminary stages of construction. Pattern-making moved away from the modernist tropes of standardisation and modularisation, and form became divorced from function. While only the finest fabrics were used, haute couture techniques were sabotaged; traditions of fine finishing broken; and spatial concepts re-positioned themselves in relation to the body underneath (p. 83).

English adds, "divorce" to Calderin's "break down," and a sense of a "broken"

body is a pattern in this form of fashion theory. The deconstructed details are

also taken up in theory that emphasize an abstraction of garment making,

where the design ideas come to signal as much content as the material design

structure and details. In *Basic Fashion Design 01: Research and Design* Simon

Seivewright (2012), head of Fashion Department at Northbrook College, defines

deconstruction in fashion as a movement that builds on a quality of an object so

as to concentrate on a 'detail' to reach an 'abstract idea from the original

source' (pp. 88-89). Referring to its reconstructive quality, Seivewright further

adds that deconstruction in fashion is all about 'breaking the information up'

similar to a 'jigsaw puzzle' so as to recreate it through 'new lines, shapes and

abstract forms' (2012, pp. 88-89). Extending Seivewright's "break up" of the

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fashion body, Herbert Blau (1999), Professor of Humanities at the University of Washington, applies deconstruction as a political metaphor, noting 'if there is a politics of fashion, leaning left or right, the practice of deconstruction, as it was in the early nineties, might have been considered the last anti-aesthetic gesture of the socialists of style' (p. 175). Taking the surface semiotics of the deconstructive design as a social indicator, Blau further suggests that the deconstructivist designers go against 'glitter, and ornament' so as to serve a 'flea-market austerity or anaplasia of dress' (1999, p.175).

Calderin, English, Seivewright, and Blau note the deconstructivist designers' attention to details as a literal breaking down and breaking apart. This type of garment construction places its style of theory to claim it to be an insurrection against conventionality in fashion. In addition to the focus on the deconstruction of functional details, theorists also attend to the questions of style that these new forms generate.

The Designers and Their Styles of Undoing

This section will focus on the deconstructive designers of the first (Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons, Yohji Yamamoto, Issey Miyake) and second wave (Martin Margiela, Ann Demeulemeester), and the basic qualities of their design thinking. It will address various scholarly sources to treat the designers and their creations in detail.

Some theorists of deconstructive fashion appear unsympathetic, hostile, or ambiguous in their account of the processes involved, and tend to focus on the surface style effects of the deconstructive practice. Typical of these are writers

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Iain Bromley and Dorota Wojciechowska (2008), who describe the garments of

Comme des Garçons and Yohji Yamamoto as designs that render their wearers

incapable of 'interpret[ing]' what they wear (p. 146). Bromley and

Wojciechowska (2008) state that these designers' creations, 'can be worn in

more than one way, for example upside down or back to front (p. 146). They

argue that the wearer becomes as important as the designer, stamping their

own identity onto the garment' (2008, p. 146). Bromley and Wojciechowska

(2008) describe that as a deconstructivist designer, Kawakubo revealed inner

parts of garments that were initially exclusively seen by their purchasers. They

write that the designer 'deconstruct[ed] and reassembl[ed] clothing to create a

new aesthetic and feminine sensuality' (p. 148), but caution that certain clothes

of Kawakubo needed 'diagrams' to clarify how to be worn (p. 148). They

comment that Margiela is a designer who creates garments with 'a poetic

appreciation of imperfection, personality and eccentricity' (p. 158), whose 'niche

market' is a distinctive trait of the designer:

> The idea of being unique is clearly where Margiela has established a
> niche market utilizing Artisanal vintage clothes. Garments from the past
> are reworked, for example a nineteenth century huntsman's waistcoat, to
> create a customized and very individual, desirable piece (2008, p. 158).

Regarding the basic qualities of Margiela, English (2007) argues that similar to

'Hausman, Schwitters, Rauchenburg and the *Arte Povera* artists, the designer

methods of deconstruction highlighted a brand new anti-fashion' (2007, p. 62).

English further marks that Margiela made use of an 'objective, scientific manner'

whereby he 'analysed, dissected and recontextualized his garments' (2007, p.

62). English states that evoking an ambiance of a 'laboratory', the designer and

his assistants were clothed in 'knee-length lab coats, an eccentric mode of dress

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that was copied by his devotees worldwide' (2007, p. 62).

In contrast with the approach to deconstructive methods by Bromley and Wojciechowska, or English, Rebecca Arnold (2001) evaluates the deconstructivist designers' works in terms of their ambiguity of offering a political counter movement, as well as the stylistic change of fashion, because of the sense of "unease" as a kind of discontent that they display in various contexts (p. 25). Arnold also interprets deconstructive fashion as one that illustrates the designers' appreciation of individuality (2001, p. 25). As she writes:

> Japanese designers Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons and Yohji Yamamoto echoed a feeling of unease in their collections. Each sought to explore new ideas about fashion, which would show an appreciation for 'people's flaws and weaknesses', rather than attempting to design new personalities for the body's natural asymmetry (2001, p. 25).

Contrasting Dior's take on the designer's quest of obtaining perfection, Arnold argues that both Margiela and Kawakubo rebel against a perfection of the body, and of fashion itself (2001, p. 26). Arnold states that going against perfection, Margiela and Kawakubo, see imperfection as an 'imperative, a route to authenticity, to reconciliation with the past and foregrounding the marginal, in contrast to fashion's traditional role as the purveyor of ephemeral, perfect fantasies' (2001, p. 26).

With regards to Yohji Yamamoto's design thinking, Roger Tredre and Brenda Polan (2009) write that the designer's garments were hard to make sense of and that they were 'loaded, like a difficult poem or painting, with references and symbols- often disguised or distorted- and layers of meanings' (p. 181).

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Tredre and Polan also comment on the deliberate "insurrection" that is staged by the designer's creations, as they carry 'a sort of theatrical ugliness which makes unusual demands on the understanding of the observer' (2009, p. 181).

Mary Tilton (1992), writer in *Threads* magazine, highlights Issey Miyake's deconstructive difference. The details of making and unmaking pleats and folds are stressed in the garments, as part of the basic design motifs the designer uses to comprise their language of abstract deconstruction. In addition, as Tilton notes, the same elements are used 'unpredictably to model and shape rectangular shapes' (1992, p. 47). Tilton further points out that Miyake is meticulous with his attention to the materials of his making, noting that he:

> Works with cloth the way a sculptor works with clay: He smells it, squeezes it, carefully examines both sides, and creates his designs by wrapping and draping, referring to this process as 'manual labor'. He has used quilted cottons; basket-woven straw, *ikats*; and Japanese tie-dyed, puckered, and paper cloth (1992, p. 47).

Issey Miyake carried out collaborations with many people. One was carried out with Yasumasa Morimura, as Benesh (2009) explains:

> For the polyester Morimura's Doll Dress, a delightful post-modernist take on the nude, in this case from the painting La Source by Jean- Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867). At the dress bottom is Morimura himself, inverted with hands clasped in prayer. Miyake provided the garment shape and Morimura contributed the computer- processed photographs (p. 19).

The representation of contrasts is a significant aspect in deconstructivist fashion design. In *Fashion Design, Referenced: A Visual Guide to History, Language, and Practice of Fashion*, Alicia Kennedy and Emily Stoehrer (2013) argue that what marks Ann Demeulemeester distinct from the other deconstructivist designers is the way she engages with contrasts. Kennedy and Stoehrer claim

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that the way the designer deals with contrasts leads to creations that marry 'toughness' with 'tenderness' and a 'sharp strength' with a 'slouchy insouciance' (2013, p. 362). To illustrate, Kennedy and Stoehrer describe that 'a signature look pairs the military-tailored lines of a long coat with softly draped asymmetrical pieces, sturdy boots with delicate feather jewellery' (2013, p. 362). They state that the designer's creations combine 'supple fabrics' such as 'rayon, silk, and even linen painter's canvas with harder materials like leather and fur' (2013, p. 362). Additionally, they write that, the colours the designer makes use of include 'black and White' however; she also uses 'deep shades' and 'pulls out the nuances off form, textile, and detail' (Kennedy & Stoehrer, 2013, p. 362).

Evans (2003) argues that in his Spring/Summer 1996 collection, Margiela used visuals of the processes of garment making as design patterns to his garments (p. 250). She argues that this was done when a cocktail dress from the 1950s was redesigned by the designer and the 'original lining' of the garment was photographed and made into a design motif to be printed on the dress (Evans, 2003, p. 250). Evans adds that another experimental design thinking was displayed when Margiela reinterpreted 'the tailors dummy as a linen waistcoat', transforming the outerwear into 'underwear' and rendering body as a form of dress (2003, p. 250). Evans explains that half of the dress was made of silk chiffon, which would usually be used on a 'stockman dummy' while working on a dress (2003, p. 250). Evans notes that the experimental design of Margiela shows the garment as always-in-process; unfinished in its significations, and structure:

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> Although Margiela made the chiffon study wearable by fitting it to the waistcoat with corset bones and elastic bands, nevertheless the look was of a garment in progress, and the design gestured to a garment that would remain forever unfinished, like a deconstructed work in progress (2003, p. 250).

Also pointing to aspects of deconstructive style and form as an on-going, unfinished process, Sally Brampton (1997), former editor of *Elle* magazine, notes the half-finished creations of Margiela, which:

> Dresses appear half-finished, a lining is clearly visible, a sleeve is missing, the traces of basting stitches still gleam across a bodice. Margiela, with astute irony, offers shoulder pads on the outside of garments or detachable sleeves, made in calico, to be added or left on at will; slotted under the body of a jacket or sprucing up the torso of an apparently incomplete cable-knit sweater (p. 148).

Conclusion

By focusing on some of the key fashion theorists' theoretical arguments on deconstructivist fashion design, this chapter has laid the foundation for deconstruction in fashion, specifically the groundwork for the general understanding of what the thesis categorizes as the first wave Japanese and second wave Belgian deconstructivist fashion design. Chapter three will introduce the third wave Turkish deconstructivist designers and this way it will have established deconstruction in fashion in three different waves to understand and examine them with regards to their commonalities in the themes they explore, their own local cultures they are inspired by in garment fabrication, and their unconventional approach to orthodox fashion norms. The next chapter will focus on some of the basic concepts that the first and second wave deconstructivist designers hold. These include defiance of accepted fashion norms, the various channels of deconstruction that are used

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on their subversive garment creations. Further, while analysing these garments,

the chapter will fully explore the terms of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction

and reconstruction.

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Chapter Two: Observing Plasticity, the De-designs and Deconstructions of the First Wave Japanese and the Second Wave Belgian Deconstructivist Designers

Introduction

This chapter demonstrates the application of the concepts of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction. It lays the foundation on which the Japanese and Belgian deconstructivist designers are distinguished and expressed in their avant-garde designs. The aim of this chapter is to build a framework including the basic qualities of what is considered deconstructivist fashion. This includes a discussion of unravelling, deconstructing the concept of new in fashion, the deconstruction of glamour and perfection, the deconstruction of time through anachronistic designs, deconstructing the conventional understanding of garment and body forms, the use of architectural inspirations in deconstructivist fashion design, conceptualization and fashion marketing and the deconstruction that takes place through tradition.

Unravelling

Experimentation in garment production goes against the strict codes and orthodox methods of mainstream fashion and *haute couture*, which have been put as 'sovereign and dictatorial' (Martin & Koda, 1995, p. 13) and 'unique and painstakingly perfect' (Core, 2014, para. 1). The uncommon techniques of deconstructivist designers are a direct reaction against the established ways of constructing garments. In this respect, instead of strict codes, each deconstructivist garment is made as a singular piece of art, which is designed individually with no respect to any code or any specific method. Deconstructivist

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designers generate new garments by techniques that negate preconceived methods of garment manufacture in mainstream design thinking. By conceptually scrutinizing and deconstructing the conventional norms of garment making, deconstructivist designers deliberately generate de-designs that go against conventional sartorial methods and visual conventions. As Martin Margiela states, 'in deconstructive design we play with contradictions. Proportion and inversion are also highlighted' (M. Margiela, personal communication, July 29, 2013).

Margiela's designs, especially his *Semi-Couture* Autumn/Winter 1997-1998 collection (figure 5), expose the hidden structure of garments, which, in *haute couture* and mainstream fashion, is normally hidden under what is worn and seen. In his *Semi-Couture* collection, the designer:

> Believed in showing precisely what he was doing, with hemlines unfinished, stitches visible and even the tailor's markings retained. Fashion, he believed, was not an art- it was a craft, 'a technical know-how' for the wearer to explore and enjoy (Tredre & Polan, 2009, p. 230).

Regarding the purpose of exposing the hidden structure of garments, the designer explains that his team 'often purposefully reveal garment construction in order to highlight the design process, and as an act against conventionalism' (M. Margiela, personal communication, July 29, 2013).

Apart from its unconventional structure, beige linen was used to create the garment. "Semi-Couture Paris" was printed on the hem. The length of the garment is 71.5 cm and its collar is 8 cm. Further, its shoulders are 40 cm and the waist is 72 cm.

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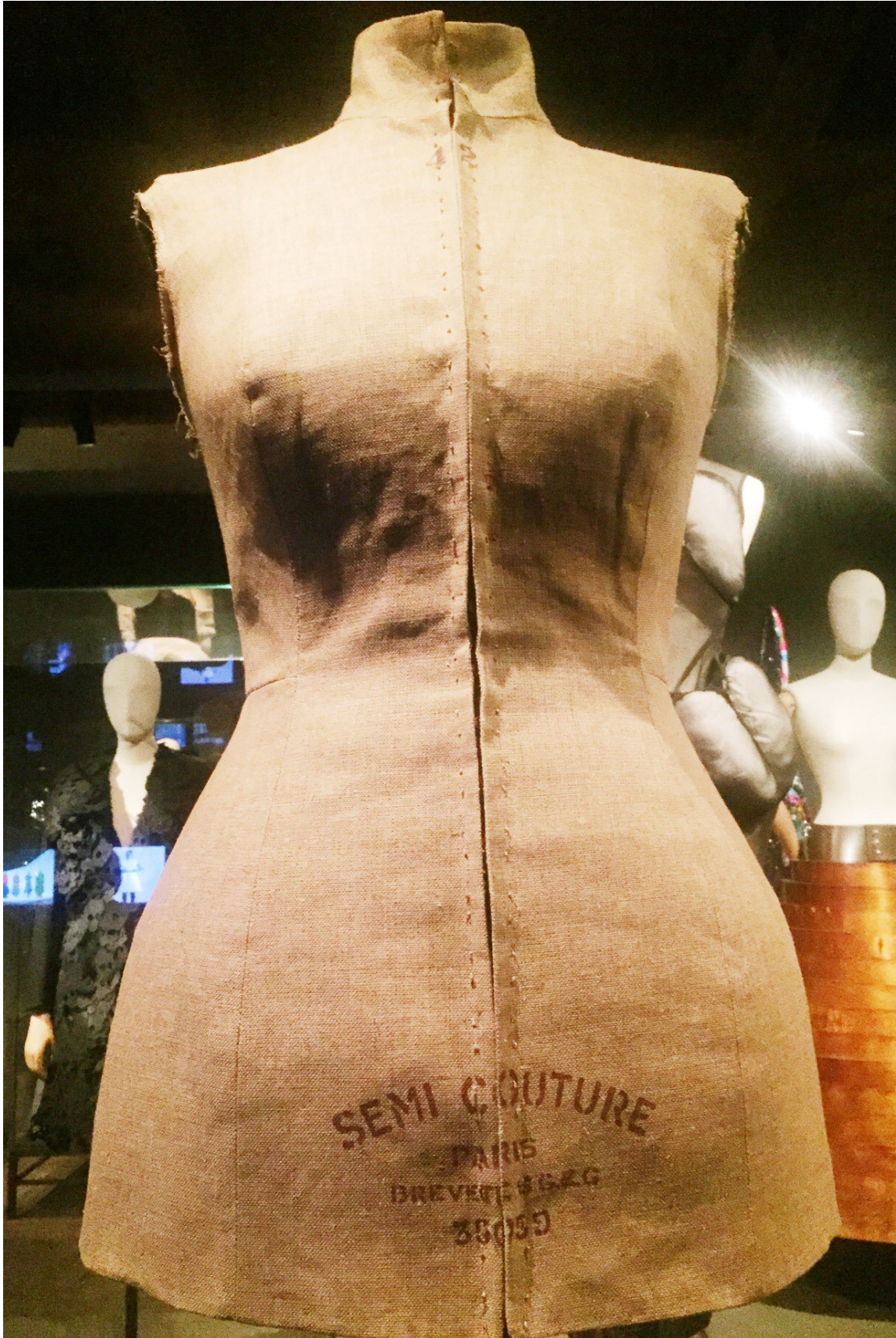
(Figure 5) Martin Margiela, Autumn/Winter 1997-1998, *Semi-Couture* Collection. *Across Art and Fashion* (2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

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Vinken (2005) explains the unravelling Margiela features on his garments as follows:

> The jealously guarded secrets of production, the hem, the dart, etc. Come to the surface; hidden functional accessories, such as zips or press studs are emphatically visible. Then the clothes are not worked through to a finished state; the ends of the fabric, for example, are not over-edged. The individual phases of the process of production remain visible in the smallest details (p. 142).

Margiela's de-designed *Semi-Couture* collection displays a break away from the garment construction techniques such as hiding the stitches, seams, lines and shoulder pads. To visually solidify it, Margiela designs his collection with a similar look of a tailor's dummy. As Loscialpo (2010) explains:

> The reflection upon the border, the containment, the inside/outside demarcation is crucial for designers pursuing deconstruction, whose contribution regularly manifests itself in overturning this supposedly pacific relation. Indeed, a staple of Margiela's aesthetics is the recreated tailor's dummy, worn as a waistcoat directly over the skin, which tends to reverse the relationship between the garment and the wearer (p. 7).

The way the second wave designer brings the hidden craftsmanship to the forefront can be correlated to a methodology akin to plasticity. Margiela spotlights an already existing, yet, hidden structure of a garment. He does not make any changes on its construction motifs, (the stitches, the hem, the dart, the unfinished motifs). Rather, he uses these motifs to create the exterior of the garment and thus destroys the preconceived visual garment creation techniques. This reversal creates more mystery by creating a façade of what is hidden behind and not seen. In doing so, as it is in plasticity, the designer takes a form, re-forms its structure and destroys the visual traditions of what should be seen and hidden on a garment. These three plastic processes render the collection as de-designed.

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The garment fabrication of Margiela's collection is similar to how Derridean deconstruction shows the 'neglected cornerstones' in texts that are hidden underneath the grand narratives of classical Western thought (Derrida & Man, 1986, p. 72). The de-designed *Semi-Couture* collection suggests a similar position to the critical analysis of Derridean deconstruction as it deconstructs and unravels the hidden areas that carry aspects of garment construction. Akin to how Derrida's strategy aims at seeing through and beneath the dominant preconceptions, Margiela's collection *shows* what is hidden under the dominant structure of mainstream fashion garments. The designer makes this possible by a methodology in line with plasticity, which plays on existing forms by de-designing conventional structures of commercialized mainstream fashion. This, leads to the deconstruction of the orthodox norms related to what shall be hidden and seen in garments in *haute couture* and mainstream fashion.

In addition to Margiela's *Semi-Couture* collection, the androgynous suit from Yohji Yamamoto's Spring/Summer 2009 collection displays a similar unconventional position by the lack of seams at the cuffs, which presents a dismantled look. Seams, in conventional garment construction are used to hinder this look. By intentionally not using seams reveals a look, which is normally avoided. As figure 6 shows, the seams usually located underneath the garments in mainstream fashion are revealed and they have been utilized as the most conspicuous design detail and decoration of the dress. The de-designing detail of the dress creates an uncanny narrative of the garment and its structure as it deconstructs the preconceived norm of hiding seams. On this account, unravelling seams renders the dress anti-normal as opposed to the mainstream garment construction. The

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unconventional design is as if flaunting the undesirable truths about garment

construction on purpose as opposed to hiding them away. Erin Manning (2014),

university research Chair in Relational Art and Philosophy in the Faculty of Fine

Arts at Concordia University, points out that:

> When deconstruction is theorized in relation to Kawakubo's work (as well as to other Japanese designers such as Yamamoto, for instance) it tends to denote the making apparent of the seams of a garment in a way that creates a conversation about the garment's form (p. 21).

(Figure 6) Yohji Yamamoto, Spring/Summer 2009 Collection, Unravelling Stitches.

Further, Barbara Creed (2005), Professor of Cinema Studies in the School of

Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne, remarks that, 'the

key to the uncanny, Freud argued, is repression. The uncanny is that which

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should have remained repressed (a different meaning from 'secret' or 'hidden') but which has come to light' (p. 5). In accord, by unravelling what has been hidden by the mainstream design thinking, the deconstructivist designers uncover what is 'repressed' by the mainstream and commercialized fashion realms. Thus, these de-designs illustrate a break out of what has been repressed by conventional norms.

Deconstructing the Concept of New in Fashion

The mainstream realm of fashion uses materials and fabrics that arrive new to the market. The materials vary in colour, texture, weave, fibres and thus maintain the illusion of constant change and renewal of fashion. As a second wave deconstructivist designer, Martin Margiela deconstructs the preconceived conventional notion that requires the use of new materials in garment construction. He does this by his de-designs, which marry the binaries of the old with the new. With regards to his design perspective on "Recycling" and giving new forms, the designer explains as follows, 'throughout history, fashion has developed and shapes have morphed in response to cultural and political events of the previous era. The reactive nature of this art is essential to the Maison Martin Margiela approach to design' (M. Margiela, personal communication, July 29, 2013).

In relation to the concept of newness, "Recycling" emerges as an important technique within the construction of Margiela's de-designed garments. Recycling is the technique that differentiates the designer's garments and design thinking from the established techniques and norms of mainstream fashion. As Loscialpo

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(2010) explains in detail:

> The deconstruction and reconstruction of clothing has been a leitmotif of Maison Martin Margiela's repertoire for years. Such a peculiarity finds its most significant expression in the "Artisanal collection", for which existing clothes or humble materials, such as plastic, or paper, are re-worked in order to create new garments and accessories. The collection can be interpreted as the Maison's answer to the haute couture of the classic fashion system. The unique items of the Artisanal Line are in fact fabricated with the same labour-intensive manufacture as in haute couture. The term 'luxury', however, undergoes here a semantic shift: it does not mean the employment of some precious materials, but rather indicates the amount of hours worked for the production of each piece. By declaring such precise amount of hours, Margiela's "*Artisanal* collection" unmasks human labour as the real source of the value that a certain garment holds (p. 9).

Margiela's *Artisanal* line (figures 7, 8, 9) constructs garments out of ordinary, used objects such as pens, gloves, and hats. The *Artisanal* line features the connotational metamorphosis of items; the line reveals that objects used in the garments are no longer situated in their ordinary context and that they have lost their utility as they are now transformed to a new use.

With regards to the use of recycling in fashion, Italian semiotician Umberto Eco (2004) points out that, 'having come to the end of their cycle as consumer goods, now supremely useless, these objects are in some ironical way redeemed of their uselessness, of their "poverty", even of their wretchedness, to reveal an unsuspected beauty' (p. 409). In relation to Margiela's fashion garments, recycling can be described as designing for the re-creation of the already created or existing items. This design process involves de-designing old, existing items and reconstructing them into completely new forms. In a broader sense, making use of second-hand materials or garments, bringing together or reconstructing what has already been designed can be observed in the works of

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the second wave deconstructivist designer Margiela as a dominant technique.

Margiela is a deconstructivist designer who cuts and brings together old garments to generate 'a new life and history' (Evans, 2003, p. 249). The designer recycles, re-uses garments or objects to generate new designs out of them (Gill, 1998, p. 494; Arnold, 2001, pp. 60-61; Evans, 2003, p. 82). Explaining his "Replica" pieces, Margiela remarks how his 'Maison' reconstructs existing objects as follows, 'every season, we constantly reinterpret and recreate existing creations via our "Replica" pieces. Every season, we take a number of inspirational vintage pieces and re-imagine them with the Maison's world, following our codes' (M. Margiela, personal communication, July 29, 2013). In the designer's *Artisanal* line (figures 6, 7, 8) old accessories and old items were reused to reconstruct new fashion designs. Regarding his recycled garments and collections that lead to new creations, the designer explains that:

> We rework existing garments, fabrics and objects to recreate new garments and accessories. We first adopted this approach for our *Inaugural* collection for Spring/Summer 1989 and it has been an integral and important element of each and every one of our collections since. This quest to transform garments is born from a wish to treat the strictures of the structure of a particular garment as a design challenge. Often, more than one garment is combined to produce a new design so one consideration is that the initial garments are used as a raw material of which often only small elements of their original structure serve in shaping the new (as cited in Danyelle, 2007, p. 129).

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(Figure 7) Martin Margiela, Spring/Summer 2001, *Artisanal* Line, Garment Made from Old Gloves.

(Figure 8) Martin Margiela, Spring/Summer 2006, _Artisanal_ Line, Jacket Made of a Swiss Army Bag.

(Figure 9) Martin Margiela, Autumn/Winter 2005, *Artisanal* Line, Cape Made Out of Wool Hats.

As it is in plasticity, Margiela receives forms, and recreates new forms out of them by giving new forms to them. As a result, the designer obliterates the original forms of the objects or garments with the reconstructed new versions of them. This stage leads to the generation of de-designed garments. Secondly, because this process utilizes existing and old objects, it deconstructs the notion of the new, which mainstream fashion and *haute couture* presuppose for the

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creation of garments.

Evans (2003) compares Margiela's designs with the situationist artist of the 1950s, Asger Jørn, who recycled elements from past and remade his paintings over and over again 'as radical art' (pp. 81-82). Margiela, like Jørn, Evans argues, uses his earlier pieces over and over again (2003, p. 82). Margiela, in this respect, annihilates and de-designs forms and patterns continuously through constantly recreating the already used items (Evans, 2003, p. 82).

Mentioning Margiela's recycled designs, Brampton (1997), on the other hand, argues that the designer:

> Literally takes apart old garments and reworks them in a modern idiom, and has done more to elevate recycling to an art form than any other designer. His approach may be intellectual (he is fascinated by the construction of garments), but his finish is stitch-perfect - as Hermés, which has recently appointed him as its chief designer, knows only too well. It may seem surprising that the polished, glossy house of Hermés should appoint a designer whose trademark is deconstruction, but any designer who can deconstruct with Margiela's finesse can almost certainly construct with equal skill (p. 152).

Loscialpo (2010), on the other hand, approaches the designer's technique from a critical point:

> Margiela's practice of recollecting and reconstructing, rather than being an explicit critique to the consumer culture and the fashion system, is an index of the awareness that any critical fashion is always anchored in a specific moment of capitalistic production, consumption and technological change. It performs a critical reflection on fashion, unmasking its crystallized myths and commercial roots. The uncanny re-creations that finally emerge are characterized by a respectful attitude, and by the belief that individuality and contingency cannot be replicated, or better, that any replication would bear a significant difference (p. 10).

Evans mentions the inferior status of 'second – hand' clothing in the system of fashion and its close relation with an aesthetic of the impoverished (2003, p.

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249). Evans explains that Margiela's reassembling of the old garments deconstructs this relation and creates a superior value:

> Margiela's refabricated rags... did the reverse, bestowing on their wearers the cachet recognised only by a discrete, and élite clientele. Like the 19th century rag – picker who gathered scraps for recycling, Margiela converted the low status of second – hand clothing into the high status of a unique fashion piece. Similarly, when he made t-shirts out of plastic carrier bags and waistcoats of broken crockery, he converted urban refuse into something of rare value (2003, p. 249).

Under the influence of Baudelaire (1952 [1857]) and his concept of 'the nineteenth-century rag-picker', which is from his poem *The Ragpickers' Wine (Les Fleurs du Mal (1857))*, Evans interprets Margiela's recycled designs as a way of transforming garbage into a 'commodity form' (2003, p. 249-250), which is the same thing the rag-picker of the poem does on the streets of the 19th century Paris. Arnold (2001) writes that the 1980s' Belgian designers' garments were regarded as equal by to the 'mix-and-match look' of the 1990s (whose influences include the grunge rock band Nirvana) (p. 26). However, Arnold argues that the creations of these designers did not have any resemblance to the grunge style of 1990s instead:

> They represented souvenirs from a collective past, rather than the bland retro borrowings that were so much a feature of 1990s fashion. Each garment was both old and new; designs were repeated in later collection, breaking the tyranny of seasonal dressing (2001, p. 26).

Arnold's take on transforming and re-using old pieces into new creations is in agreement with Evans' metaphorical depiction of the 19th century rag picker:

> Margiela's transformations of abject materials in the world of high fashion mark him out as a kind of golden dustman or rag picker, recalling Baudelaire's analogy between the Parisian rag picker and the poet in his poem "Le Vin de Chiffoniers" "(The Rag pickers Wine). Like Baudelaire's nineteenth -century poet- rag picker who, although, marginal to the industrial process... recovered cultural refuse for exchange value",

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Margiela scavenged and revitalized moribund material and turned rubbish back into the commodity form (Evans, 2003, pp. 249-250).

Mentioning deconstructivist trends and techniques in the late 1990s' fashion in the forms of recycling and a juxtaposition of past and present, Evans (2003) writes as follows:

> Margiela and Cianciolo described their re-use of second hand clothing as giving it a new life, as did Ogden whose clothes, made from second-hand fabrics patterned with biography, bore the trace of the past in their stains, darns and hand-sewn seams. She described her garments as if they were sentient, capable of bearing traces (p. 257).

Evans (2003) argues that these recycled designs signify 'a second chance of a better life' (p. 258). However, these conceptual designs which are imbued with past and a sense of nostalgia are only a 'simulated mark or trace of the past' thus, they are merely 'fictional', states Evans (2003, p. 258). As a result, fashion can be defined as a realm where 'fiction' dominates so as to constantly generate new narratives out of old ones.

Including a variety of scholarly discussions, this section has discussed Margiela's *Artisanal* line and Replica pieces with regards to the technique of recycling. Employing a plastic design thinking, which receives, gives and destroys form, it has pointed out how these de-designed creations deconstruct the concept of new as for the first time in mainstream fashion and *haute couture*.

The Deconstruction of Glamour and Perfection

Haute couture, commercial high fashion and mainstream fashion use basic design thinking, fabrics and materials to generate their designs. These elements can be of high quality or meet a certain visual standard to create the look of

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glamour, perfection and smartness. One of the innovations created by the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers lies in the way they deconstruct glamour. The designers engage with an intentional look of poverty so as to generate de-designed garments that deconstruct the notions of glamour and perfection, which mainstream fashion and *haute couture* display. To illustrate, Comme des Garçons created designs with intentional 'flaws' to present the significations of 'patina and ageing' for the first time in Paris (Evans, 2003, p. 249). The designer exposed the linen pieces of the garments to the sun to get the aimed look (Evans, 2003, p. 249). Further, the garments of Kawakubo were exposed to acid, had intentional cuts, slashes and were boiled (Evans, 2003, p. 249).

The first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers manipulate tailoring techniques, symmetry, and conventions related to beauty to go against the look of glamour and perfection. As Akiko Fukai (1994), director and chief curator of the Kyoto Costume Institute, writes:

> Rei Kawakubo (b. 1942) and Yohji Yamamoto (b. 1943) jolted the fashion world in the early 1980s. Their work embodies concepts of Japanese beauty different from that of earlier Japanese designers, reflecting the use of materials, structure, and lack of external decorative elements. This "imperfection"—holes that made cloth look like rags, the removal of all ornamentation, deliberate fragmentation or deconstruction, and the resulting tolerance of a look of poverty and seediness—shook the foundations of fashion. Their enigmatic clothes transcended Western rationalism, ignored shaping seams and darts, and broke the symmetry of what had previously been regarded as fashion in the West. Labelled avant-garde, they exerted considerable influence on young designers such as John Galliano (b. 1960) and Martin Margiela (b. 1957) (p. 10).

Harold Koda, fashion historian of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in "Rei Kawakubo and the Aesthetics of Poverty" (1985) describes such designs as

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'conscious destitution' which refers to the intentional poverty significations that these creations feature. Koda (1985) points to the ironic aspect of the deconstructivists' aestheticization of poverty, as highlighted in a protest that took place in 'an in-store boutique at Bloomingdales in New York' (as cited in Arnold, 2001, p. 25). Koda argues:

> Worn by alienated British youths, the exaggerated, theatrical aspects of the poverty references suggest self-satire and the nihilistic hedonism of economic frustration... [In America] the necessarily ironic posture of the middle-class purchasers becomes the trivialization of poverty, or worse, tasteless 'slumming' (as cited in Arnold, 2001, p. 25).

The look of poverty de-designs the conventional garments of perfection and glamour that mainstream fashion and *haute couture* fashion produce. This intentional subversion of the look and fabric can be identified with the notion of plasticity by the negation of the expected appearance of normality and perfection of garment materials such as fabrics and textiles. Creating deliberate defects and imperfections in the fabric defines this negation. The garments' expected form of perfection is intentionally destroyed. As a consequence, the de-designing process conducted by a methodology like plasticity leads to the deconstruction of the concepts of glamour and perfection. In other words, the intentionally de-designed garments feature signs of imperfection and defects, which are there to contradict the expected visual conventions of glamour and perfection. The orthodoxy of the perfect look is taken as a target to be assaulted and forced into a new form through utilizing conflicting signals articulated in the textiles or the fabrics of the garments. The illusion of reality finally vanishes by the de-designing that takes place on the garment. As the de-designed garments materially feature contrasts to the expected conventional

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look of perfection, the notion of glamour is conceptually deconstructed.

Deconstructivist fashion's close connection with the concepts of poverty, imperfection and aging build on the Zen Buddhist philosophy that connotes impoverishment, minimalism and an anti stance against perfection (Leong, 2003). According to Vinken (2005):

> The ascetic ideals of Zen Buddhism, such as it was developed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (are) in reaction to the protocol, ceremony and ostentatiousness of court life. But in the West, too, poverty as scarcity, as an aesthetic category opposed to the lustre and false appearances of the idle world, and related ideals, such as ascesis, self-sufficiency, freedom from desire, and isolation from the distraction and confusion of society, are not entirely new (p. 101).

Further, with regards to deconstructive fashion design and its connection with the Zen philosophy, Bonnie English (2011b) writes:

> For the Japanese, the literal dismantling of a material, a construction technique, or an idea was closely linked to concepts of Zen Buddhist beliefs where beauty is found in objects which are aged with time and use and where individuality or difference appealed to the humanistic spirit. That which is omitted, whether in literary writing or the visual arts, creates an ambiguity, which, in turn, becomes a 'suggestion' of meaning that is the source of its beauty. The Japanese concept of imperfect beauty could be interpreted as dignity masked in the garb of implied poverty, or a fragile perishability (p. 83).

Japanese deconstructivist designers Yohji Yamamoto and Rei Kawakubo build their work on the same philosophy. In Yamamoto's biography *Talking to Myself* (2002), the designer tells that 'dirty, stained, withered, broken things seem beautiful to me' (as cited in Yamamoto & Washida, n.p.). In another quote, the designer states that 'I like old clothes ... clothes are like old friends ... what makes a coat truly beautiful is that you're so cold you can't live without it. It's like a friend or member of the family. And I'm terribly envious of that' (as cited in Chenoune, 1993, p. 305). Further on the matter, Kawakubo writes as follows:

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> The machines that make fabric are more and more making uniform, flawless textures. I like it when something is off – not perfect. Hand weaving is the best way to achieve this. Since this isn't always possible, we loosen a screw of the machines here and there so they can't do exactly what they're supposed to do (as cited in Koren, 1984, p. 117).

Further, in another occasion the designer explains as follows:

> If you take the example of the tailcoat, for example, that kind of tailoring, and the fact that it has been worn for centuries without ever changing is something that I feel very strong about. It has been worn over the ages, it's comfortable to wear, and then based on that historical shape you can make something that is totally new but which also has the authenticity of being old. What I find tasteful is something you can wear and wear over and over again, so often that it becomes your own and when it becomes your own, your sense of style is expressed. That's why I've always been interested in the concept of the uniform: because it's worn over and over. Then the way you wear it becomes your own statement' (as cited in Sims, 2004, p. 122).

Kawakubo is mentioned as a designer that 'purposely deconstructs the traditional meaning of beauty' (Benesh, 2009, p. 18). Kawakubo explains herself in the following words, 'what is beautiful doesn't have to be pretty' (as cited in Benesh, 2009, p. 19). As Kawakubo's words suggest, in addition to the deconstruction of the notion of glamour, the designers reveal the reconstruction of the notion of beauty through the experimental plastic methodology they follow on the conventional structure of garment design.

In relation to evaluations regarding deconstructivist fashion's "style", Rebecca Arnold quotes Elizabeth Wilson's expression 'Aestheticization of Dystopia' (as cited in Arnold, 2001, p. 25), which offers an alternative interpretation of the expression of aestheticization of poverty that Blau invoked. Arnold construes Wilson's statement from the cultural perspective that fetishized modernist inventiveness, when she describes deconstructive style as follows, 'such fashions (are) symptomatic of a late twentieth-century malaise of postmodern

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existence' (2001, p. 25).

In relation to the look of poverty, Angela Carter (1982), English writer and
journalist, states that for deconstructivist fashion, 'a poor fit is essential because
garments must look twice-used, as if rescued from some nameless disaster. In
its own unique way, the rag trade has acknowledged the recession' (p. 92).
Taking the style as indicative of this perceived culturally impoverished moment,
Evans (2003) argues that the deconstructivist designers narrate stories of
disillusionment, disaster and trauma (p. 4). Linking it to art as well as society,
English (2011a) explains the poor look of the deconstructivist designers as:

> Fashion's response to similar deconstructivist anti-art movements that
> dominated from the 1980s onwards. One might also argue that the
> economic recession of the early eighties with the subsequent growth in
> unemployment created a consumerist environment, which embraced this
> 'aesthetic of poverty' (p. 84).

Leonard Koren, (1984) and Andrew Juniper (2003) argue that the Japanese
aesthetic of Wabi-Sabi has a significant influence on the imperfect creations of
the Japanese deconstructivist designers. Wabi-Sabi finds beauty and superiority
in the 'flawed artefact' and 'materials' (Koren, 1994; Evans, 2003, p. 261;
Juniper, 2003). Evans (2003) argues that in the contemporary consumption
realm, Wabi-Sabi is considered to be invaluable when it is found in the context
of the avant-garde (p. 261). Despite being made from poor materials and
looking defected, garments under the influence of Wabi-Sabi become valuable
through their unusual techniques and their 'labour intensive' garment-making
process (Evans, 2003, p. 261). This is because the Japanese designers
'fetishized craft techniques, emphasizing the beauty of the flaw and the value of
the mark of the hand' (Evans, 2003, p. 261). Referring to the imperfect

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garments of the Japanese deconstructivist designers, Evans comments that, 'these shredded, toasted, scorched, felted and scarred materials bore the trace of the hand, and were sold as luxury goods in specialist shops, a poor aesthetic produced out of hard labour' (2003, p. 261). Evans argues that from the beginning of the 1980s, with designers such as Kawakubo, and Comme des Garçons, the first collections under the influence of Wabi-Sabi featured models in bleak and dull garments (2003, p. 256). Evans also construes the adaptation of the creations of the deconstructivist designers into the commercial realm as a 'paradox' and as being 'locked' inside the capitalist operations that deconstructivist fashion tries to rebel against (2003, p. 262).

Some of the creations that the first wave deconstructivist designers design manifest 'deliberate holes woven into crinkled fabrics' (Mears, 2008, p. 97). This is one of the reasons why designs of deconstructive fashion have been described as 'ragged chic' (Mears, 2008, p. 97). Employing a sample of Comme des Garçons' design, the intentionally holed *Black Wool Sweater* (figure 10), Wilcox (2001) points out that the sweater is 'punctured with seemingly random holes, the hand knitted garment is a challenge to the flawless perfection of machine knitting' (p. 31). The garment is intentionally created flawed and defected and in this respect, it is de-designed. As it is in parallel line with Malabou's concept of plasticity, the fabric and texture of a usual sweater is *taken*, but they are *given* a new interpretation as opposed to the usually expected flawless, perfect look. Thus, a normal sweater emerges as de-designed due to the intentional defects and imperfections that feature on it. Consequently, its perfect look and visual conformity are materially *destructed*

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and in this sense, de-designed.

(Figure 10) Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons, 1982, The *Black Wool Sweater*.

As a final example of this section, the *Black Wool Sweater* has a de-designed

look that signifies a critique and deconstruction of the ideals of perfection,

glamour and symmetry that are predominant in mainstream and

commercialized fashion. As Kelley (2009) argues:

> Ever since Rei Kawakubo first sent a (carefully and deliberately) holed
> and frayed jumper down the catwalk in Comme des Garçons' first Paris
> show in 1981, high fashion has been alert to the possibilities of decay
> and degradation as an aesthetic strategy (p. 221).

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This section has focused on the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers, their de-designs of aestheticized poverty and how plasticity can be considered as an appropriate method that has influenced their materially subverted designs that deconstruct the notion of glamour and perfection in fashion. The section has also talked about the influence of Zen and Wabi-Sabi philosophies on the de-designs of the first wave.

Deconstruction of Time through Anachronistic Designs

Time is the functioning operand on which fashion moves forward. Seasons in fashion reflect the change of the passage of time. Deconstructivist fashion garments deconstruct the concept of time and normative change through their designs, which defy the conventional understanding of time. This section will discuss the deconstruction of time through the de-designs of Margiela in a metaphorical way. Its main focus will be on Margiela's exhibition collection, *Martin Margiela (9/4/1615),* and how its anachronistic de-designs deconstruct the concept of time in fashion. Time, in this sense, is derailed from its linear journey.

The conventional fashion system works on a timeline based on seasonal changes. Each season's new looks have validity till the next new season and in this sense, each season is temporal and highlights the ephemerality of the fashion system. This ephemerality is most dominant in the mainstream and commercial fashion realms. However, the technically de-designed structure of deconstructivist garments deconstructs the concepts of time and temporality on which commercial fashion and *haute couture* operates.

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"Timelessness" is a significant quality of the avant-garde that deconstruction in fashion features. Since deconstructivist fashion displays a defiant and continuous state of rebellion, any de-design goes against time as well. In other words, avant-garde, de-designed creations defy the boundaries of time, the present, the past and the future. According to Vivian Liska (2007), Professor of German Literature and director of the Institute of Jewish Studies at the University of Antwerp, Belgium:

> Avant-garde is no longer assessed in terms of its actuality but rather of its untimeliness. While the concept of actuality assumes the possibility of appropriate judgment of one's own time and of the art that corresponds to it, the more complex criterion of untimeliness oscillates between two meanings: on the one hand, it implies a perspective of critical distance, of independence and refusal to how to the demands of the day. The presumptuousness conveyed in the concept of actuality, which presupposes an ability to designate and name the respective here-and-now and take it as the measure of things, is also implied in judging something as untimely if one thereby means that it is unfit to meet the expectations, requirements and criteria of the present. Yet, in alluding to Nietzsche's *UnzeitgemässeBetrachtungen* (Untimely Reflections), untimeliness also evokes the implicit precondition that art "can only hope to speak to its time truly insofar as it does not belong to this time" and does not subject itself to its fashions and dictates (p. 195).

In this vein, deconstructivist fashion creations can never go out of fashion because they have never been a part of mainstream fashion. Thus, deconstructivist fashion creations are not designed for a commercially situated seasonal time form that reflects or dictates the fashion trends of a particular time. The de-designed garments of deconstructivist fashion exhibit the fragmentation of time in various respects. To illustrate this argument, what follows is an example from the second wave deconstructivist designer Martin Margiela.

Margiela's 1997 exhibition entitled *Martin Margiela (9/4/1615)* (figure 11),
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featured clothes that were infused with 'agar', 'pink yeast', 'fuchsia', 'yellow bacteria' and 'green mould' (Evans, 2003, p. 253). The aim was to create a biological change on the garments by generating more bacteria and mould. In this collection, the designer worked collaboratively with a microbiologist in the use of bacteria on the clothes. After the exposure of various materials and organisms on the garments, the clothes were left in greenhouses for four days in a continuous decaying condition. Later the garments were featured on Stockman dummies (Evans, 2003, p. 253). After these four days, the garments displayed the look of destruction that under normal circumstances would take years to obtain. Until then, this exhibition collection of Margiela was the only one that dealt with organics.

The plastic quality of the brain synapses put forward by Malabou may further illustrate the plasticity of this collection. This plastic quality is evident by taking into consideration that the garments had already been constructed as they were featured in former collections of the designer. The metamorphosis comes to light by the creation of new forms in their interaction with organics such as bacteria, yeast, and fuchsia since their former design details and looks were annihilated. The intentional destructed look, which was generated in a very short period of time, rendered the garments de-designed. The de-designed garments, after their phase in the greenhouses were also reconstructed and they emerged as completely new pieces.

The garments of the exhibition were described as 'melancholy ghosts' (Evans, 2003, p. 254). Evans writes that:

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Their textiles fluttering in the breeze, giving new life to garments that were, paradoxically, revivified by the deathly process of mould and decay. Benign sentinels in their tattered second-hand clothes, the eighteen mannequins along the glass wall evoked a ghostly presence that brought the past into the present (2003, p. 254).

Evans argues that the garments of the exhibition were 'completely modern' with 'curious and unexpected historical resonances' that are due to the deconstructivist nature of the textiles (2003, p. 254). Evans states that evoking a bricolage of history and past, the clothes deployed 'Napoleonic' and 'Victorian' meanings (2003, p. 254).

Arnold further speculates upon the concept of the past with a focus on a particular piece from Margiela's exhibition that took place in the Rotterdam Gallery. One garment from the designer's collection was a heavy greatcoat, which brought to mind 'the Napoleonic era in its wide lapels, double-breasted cut and big buttons' (Arnold, 2001, p. 60). The scholar describes Margiela's designs as 'dream fetishes' and 'fossilized traces of history' and she adds that they embody the 'patina of age' as well as elements of the old that are rejected by the present fashion designers (2001, p. 60). Further, Arnold says that Margiela's obsession with the past can be interpreted as follows:

The transience of fashion by continually referring to its cast-off past, making explicit fashion's distaste for the old for anything that bears the mark of time that betrays the lie of newness and innovation. He places old garments *sous rature*, under erasure, visible and yet erased by the outline of the new silhouette, thereby enhancing rather than denying their meaning (2001, pp. 60-61).

Further to depicting fashion's close relation with the past, Arnold points referring to Margiela and his designs as follows:

By reusing fabrics, his clothes bore a distinctive patina, quietly but proudly displaying the small signs of age that accumulate on the surface

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of objects. Their status was validated by their recognition of the heritage of style, the anathema of fashion's usual denial of its immediate past. While the garments themselves were made individual by this patina, Margiela's approach undermined the notion of designer as a unique, individual creator, by conceding that each design is the product of fashion's history (2001, p. 26).

(Figure 11) Martin Margiela, 1997, *Martin Margiela (9/4/1615)* Exhibition, Rotterdam Gallery.

According to Joe Hughes (2008), lecturer in English at the University of

Minnesota, 'Husserl, points out that there is a specific kind of temporality

implied in the progressivity of determination' and accordingly, 'it takes time to

move from one variant to another' (p. 109). In addition:

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> For Deleuze, the continuity in which ideas are progressively determined has the character of the future. This is because the 'future' does not refer to those actual presents that are coming my way, but to the horizon on which the indeterminate becomes progressively determined the closer it comes to the future. The future is the general element in which 'the new' takes shape. The time, which it takes to progressively determine and then actualize an idea- where the actualize means to make present- therefore corresponds to the time it takes for time itself to pass (Hughes, 2008, p. 110).

As the ideas of Husserl and Deleuze suggest, for objects and materials to come into existence or to be generated, shaped and clarified, a certain amount of time is required. Applied to fashion, time and temporality is needed for garments to visualize certain effects.

In this regard, it is a fact that the effects, impacts and damages of time can be observed on objects, our bodies and textiles based on temporality. Kelley (2009), explains that, 'textiles, objects, more generally, do have very particular and not at all free-floating histories. These histories are directly inscribed upon their surfaces, and determined by influenced from without (the world around) and within (the body of the wearer)' (p. 219). However, what Kelley points out takes time to be visibly observable on the surfaces of the garments.

With the de-designs that featured in his Rotterdam Gallery display *Martin Margiela (9/4/1615)*, the designer arguably, deconstructs time and the effects time has on garments and textiles because he breaks the authentically caused cycle of decay and damage through the way he fast-forwards time. The deconstruction of time is caused when the phase necessary to cause damages and generate effects on garments is facilitated artificially by the act of putting them in greenhouses and infusing them with various organic materials. As a consequence, a de-designed look of decay is created in a very short time as

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opposed to the normal time phase needed to generate organic effects and traces of decay. Further, it could be argued that this deconstruction is a metaphorical depiction of how de-designs of deconstructivist fashion go against the normative change of fashion.

Deconstructing the Conventional Understanding of Garment and Body Forms

The commercial and *haute couture* realms of fashion construct their garments according to the conventional body form and silhouette, which are used as models for garment construction. Deconstructivist garment design draws attention to the way it works with and subverts the conventional norms of mainstream and commercial fashion related to the body. In this regard, the de-designed works of experimental designers deconstruct the conventional visual norms related to the perfect female body fit and the silhouette of commercialized Western fashion. To illustrate, the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers engage with asymmetry through their radical tailoring methods (Wilcox, 2011, p. 155). For example, Kawakubo's 'concept of mutable form' brought about 'an idiosyncratic and ever-changing relationship between body and garment' (Wilcox, 2011, p. 155).

Deconstruction in fashion has been described as a movement that 'redefined contemporary fashion', altered the 'aesthetics of fashion' (Mears, 2008, p. 95) and changed the 'silhouette creation' of mainstream fashion design (Bromley & Wojciechowska, 2008, p. 146). Thuy Linh Nguyen Tu (2011), associate Professor of Social and Cultural Analysis and director of the Department of

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American Studies at New York University, explains the unusual creations of the deconstructivist designers as follows:

> If these designers' creations were not exactly an attack on fashion, they were challenges to some of its fundamental norms. In distinction to much European culture, which has traditionally sought to accentuate the body, these clothes offered a different way of relating to it. With their additional neck holes and sleeves, they refused the primacy of the physical body in dictating the forms of dress. For these designers, there seemed to be no primal, natural body that must be expressed or accentuated by the artifice of clothing. The "fact" of gender, for instance, was not easily represented by their garments, which could often be worn by either men or women. These clothes, moreover, failed to privilege an ideal body, since they did not require one to be of any particular size. (Models for these collections were, however, traditionally thin) (p. 182).

According to Bromley and Wojciechowska (2008), the body invoked by deconstructivist design re-adjusted the 'proportions and curves' of the conventional body (p. 146). The notion of a physical "modification" or emphasis on the body – as a deconstructed assemblage that is a part of the whole of the fashion object or style – provides a focus area for deconstructive design theory and practices.

To render their creations as de-designs, a design thinking parallel to the process of plasticity is utilized. The conventional form of the ideal body fit of the Western woman is *received* as a structure to be utilized, this structure is *given* a new form. This new form de-designs the ideal body fit of the Western woman. This process leads to the conceptual deconstruction of the visual norms related to the perfect body fit of mainstream and *haute couture* fashion. What follows will provide various examples of de-designing the accepted body fit of conventional Western fashion. The section will deal with examples of the first wave Japanese and the second wave Belgian deconstructivist designers.

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The modifications to the body that are made through industry are noted by a number of different theorists who focus on deconstructive fashion objects, styles, and material discourses. With regards to the deconstruction of the body and silhouette, Comme des Garçons' Spring/Summer collection of 1997, *Body Meets Dress, Dress Becomes Body*, which featured bumps on the body, Terranova (1996) states that the collection touched upon the issue of body and the external factors' relationship to it in various eras of history. As Terranova writes:

> In the nineteenth century bodies became dress via the corset; in the twentieth, cosmetics 'became body' in the form of liposuction and cosmetic surgery. The 'post-industrial' body was further reconfigured by the technology of the 1980s: the personal computer, the Sony Walkman, portable telephones, soft contact lenses. These 'harmless devices' contributed to a new body, 'one thoroughly invaded and colonised by visible technologies' (as cited in Evans 2003, p. 269).

Kawakubo's *Body Meets Dress, Dress Becomes Body* (figure 12) collection is an exemplar of the challenge taken against the ideal Western symmetry. Kawakubo's collection featured de-designed dresses with lumps and hunchbacks that disfigured the symmetrical figure of the body (Arnold, 2001, p. 94). The designs of the collection were described as the 'deliberated avoidance of the conventions of beauty' (Arnold, 2001, p. 94). According to Vinken (2005), with this collection, the designer:

> Questioned the monopoly of the French in matters of elegance, and the expertise of French *couture*. Worse yet, she had begun to challenge the dearest-held belief of this culture, the pillar that holds the whole social order in place: the social construction of the 'woman', as beautiful, graceful gender (p. 100).

Kawakubo's collection deconstructed Western notions by means of extra-large de-designs that 'explode[d] the arguments surrounding the size of the flesh'

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(Vinken, 2005, p. 94). This way, the designer deconstructed the established

norms related to the perfect slim and sexually attractive body figure of the

commercialized fashion (Vinken, 2005, p. 94). As Kawakubo states, 'fashion

design is not about revealing or accentuating the shape of a woman's body, its

purpose is to allow a person to be what they are' (as cited in Jones, 1992, p.

72).

With regards to the receptions of the collection, Tu (2011) writes as follows:

> Bumps added onto backs and hips further disguised - or disfigured,
> according to Vogue Great Britain, which dubbed Kawakubo's "bump
> dress" the "ugliest dress of the year" - the natural body, as if to suggest
> that it could no longer dictate its exterior covering: instead the two must
> work together (p. 182).

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(Figure 12) Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons, Spring/Summer 1997, *Body Meets Dress Becomes Body* Collection. *Across Art and Fashion* (2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

Evans (2003), on the other hand, states that the modifications and reinterpretations played on the body by the deconstructivist designs have the effect of creating a brand new 'subjecthood', which emphasizes ways that can "reconfigure" the body through 'new networks and new communications' rather than merely 'contain[ing]' it (p. 269). Both Evans and Terranova see the modifications played on the body as creative of new ways of defining the body, through the relationships generated between the body and the concepts of perfection, imperfection, proportion, disproportion, garment and its surrounding.

Loscialpo (2010) also describes the extent of the deconstructive modification to the body, noting that:

> By playing with an idealized body, deconstruction fashion challenged the traditional oppositions between a 'subject' and an 'object', an 'inside' and an 'outside'. It finally showed that the subjectivity is not a datum, but is rather continuously articulated, through time and space, according to different myths, needs, affirmations, or just oblivion (p. 6).

According to Loscialpo (2010), the subversions of the physical body 'hold an immense critical importance, as they show that any departure from the perfection of some crystallize paradigm should not be understood as insufficiency or limit' (p. 7). To illustrate the change to the body, Loscialpo provides various examples. With regards to the body in Comme des Garçons' *Body Meets Dress, Dress Becomes Body* collection, (featuring lumps, imperfection and flaws in the form of the bodies it featured), Loscialpo (2010) notes, 'no longer contained or morphed by its standardized and rigid representation, the body begins to react to the garment; it animates it and finally encompasses it' (p. 6). Further, certain collections of Martin Margiela

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'reverse[d] the relationship between the garment and the wearer: the body actually wears the dummy', states Loscialpo (2010, p. 7).

Despite the commercialized domains of fashion that offer a perfect fit to the body, deconstructivist designers, 'exploit the full-width of their loosely woven and pre-washed fabrics to create oversize garments that moved sensually with and independently of the wearer', states Amy De la Haye, Professor and Rootstein Hopkins chair of Dress History and Curatorship at London College of Fashion, (2001, p. 30). In this respect, 'the idea of the dress as second skin, the relation of dress and body, is conceptualized in a radically different manner, and subjected to experimental modifications' (Vinken, 2005, p. 70). On this matter, Kawakubo's and Yamamoto's garments are explained by Vinken (2005):

> Kawakubo's clothes were no longer cut to the body, no longer sat as if they had been poured on- the most important criterion of *haute couture*. On the contrary, these clothes could be altered by the wearer, turned inside out, jacket could become a pullover, a skirt could become a dress... Sometimes, the body is wrapped up and tied like a package. In Yamamoto, the shape of the body is completely estranged by three-dimensional sculptures, alluding to the paper folds of origami. In Miyake, the movement of the body, transmitted to the clothing through fine foldings, is transformed into an unexpected event. The result is surprising indeed: the dress, and with it the body, forms itself into another sculpture with every breath. The flow of movement is arrested as a film in slow motion is cut into single images (pp. 70-71).

Figure 13 from Kawakubo's Autumn/Winter 2012 collection illustrates an anti-poured on, turned inside out (showing the stitches, which are usually hidden in *haute couture*) de-designed garment.

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(Figure 13) Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons, Autumn/Winter 2012 Collection, Dress Revealing the Seams.

The 2012 collection of Kawakubo was not the designer's only collection that attempted to challenge the conventional body shape of the Western woman. In 1994, the designer collaborated with the American postmodern artist, Cindy Sherman, to present her fashion line (figure 14) (Glasscock, 2003). Sherman, as an artist is 'renowned for her interpretations of mass media stereotypes of femininity' and for Kawakubo, she 'produced a series of unconventional photos which "centred on disjointed mannequins and bizarre characters, forcing the clothing itself into the background" ' (English, 2007, p. 129). With this project, Kawakubo questioned and deconstructed the mainstream norms and processes of how we see and interpret the body of the woman through de-designed photographs of the female body.

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(Figure 14) Cindy Sherman for Comme des Garçons, 1994.

The designer maintained her collaboration projects with artists and continued to distort the female figure through de-designed images. In 2010, she collaborated with the American conceptual artist, Stephen Shanabrook so as to promote her shirt collection. Distortion, looking crumpled, and uncertainty of the female figures' faces were central to the collection photos (figures 15, 16).

Regarding the artist's project with the designer, Bonnie English (2011b) points out as follows:

> His work deals with addictions and the images of his crumpled 'Paper Surgeries' as he called them — distorted faces of women reminiscent of De Kooning's Women series of the 1960s — played on the concept of psychological as well as a physical distortion (pp. 83-84).

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(Figure 15) Stephen Shanabrook for Comme des Garçons, 2010.

(Figure 16) Stephen Shanabrook for Comme des Garçons, 2010.

The above-mentioned images of women were shot in the usual manner but

then distorted through the modification of their original structure. By this

modification, the proper image of the Western woman is de-designed. This

could be argued to be a deconstruction against the orthodox visual norms

related to the presentation of the female face and figure, which are usually

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depicted as sexually attractive and perfectly proportioned.

In addition to Kawakubo, Yohji Yamamoto, particularly, defies the look of conspicuous sexuality depicted in 'high heels, seamed stockings and body hugging dresses' (Mears, 2008, p. 98). Yamamoto's creations for womenswear are under the influence of menswear as they present a 'reversed reference to a gender-bending aspect of his Japanese heritage, namely the Professional female impersonators (*onnagata*) that have been a main stay of the Japanese performing arts for centuries' (Mears, 2008, p. 98). The de-designed androgynous suit from the designer's Spring/Summer 2009 collection exemplifies an unconventional look by its structure that resembles a businessman's suit. Despite its masculine look, a woman model wears the creation (See figure 6). The de-designed creation clearly deconstructs orthodox norms attached to women such as sexuality, attractiveness and desirability.

Eliminating models, wooden puppets presented the second wave deconstructivist designer Margiela's Autumn/Winter 1999-2000 collection. The puppets were made to move by two puppeteers, which appeared to be smaller than the puppets (Evans, 2003, p. 181). The ideal size and body fit of the Western fashion were the targets of the collection. The designer, in various collections, has dealt with the same themes. According to Loscialpo (2010):

> In the enlarged collection derived from doll clothes, Margiela's work explicitly refers to the problematic of the standardized body, for it ironically unveils the inherent disproportions of garments belonging to a body metonymically calling into question an idealized body of the doll. Several collections (A/W 1994-1995, S/S 1999) contain in fact pieces that are reproduced from a doll's wardrobe and are subsequently enlarged to human proportions, so that the disproportion of the details is evident in the enlargement. This procedure results in gigantic zippers, push

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buttons, oversized patterns and extreme thick wool. In such a way, Margiela's practice of fashion questions the relationship between the means and the representation of the means, between realism and 'real', between reality and representation. The clothes produced for the line a Doll's Wardrobe are faithfully 'translated' from doll proportions to human size, with the effect of producing an exaggeration of the details (p. 7).

Margiela, like the first wave designers, comments on the subversion of the female body figure in his collections. These negated creations are de-designs as they deconstruct not only the ideal female body figure of mainstream fashion but also the normal biological structure and existence of it.

All the mentioned creations and collections related to the distortion of the female body establish a link with the plastic qualities of the brain as advocated by Malabou. Just as the way existing synapses of the brain are endlessly transformed through deconstruction and reconstruction, the predominant, visual depiction of the Western woman is given different forms and structures, and these new forms destroy the ideal female form. All these creations, thus, are de-designs because they are negations of the preconceived visual look and fit of the female body. As can be observed, the correlation of the dynamic interaction of synapses is reflected in the de-designing of the established form of the female body.

This section has engaged with the first wave deconstructivist Japanese designers and the second wave deconstructivist Belgian designers and their de-designs that deconstruct norms related to the perfection of the body fit and mainstream visual patterns dictated by commercialized and *haute couture* fashion. What follows explains plasticity, de-design and deconstruction in relation to architecture.

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The Use of Architectural Inspirations in Deconstructivist Fashion Design

The influence of architecture in deconstructivist fashion design gives way to an exaggerated structural creation. These creations deconstruct the wearability and sellability of fashion garments. The architecturally influenced de-designed garments go against the use of conventional structures and forms of mainstream and commercialized fashion. A design process that could be explained by plasticity de-designs the conventional structure and forms of mainstream fashion garments. This situation leads to the deconstruction of norms related to wearability and sellability of garments. The de-designed creations that this section will talk about are incompatible with wearable fashion garments. They are utilized as a part of successful commercial strategies. This marketing ploy attracts attention to the wearable and sellable pieces of the deconstructivist designers.

Fashion and architecture's connection with environment and multi-dimensionality is a significant point that the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers build on their work. As regards to space and volume, *Skin + Bones: Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture* exhibition catalogue explains that:

> Both fashion design and architecture deal with creating space and volume out of flat, two-dimensional materials, albeit on different scales. Increasingly, with the aid of new technologies and materials, each has been able to develop shared techniques that provide texture, form and volume in new and intriguing ways, often introducing shapes and silhouettes that confound conventional ideas of proportion and form. Surprisingly, the new shapes in seem to find echoes in one another (Hodge, Mears, & Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006, p. 19).

With regards to the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers, their

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relation with space and their distinct position from the West, Adam Geczy

(2013), Senior lecturer at Sydney College of the Arts, explains as follows:

> One thinks of Miyake's concept of 'a piece of cloth' that begin in the mid
> 1970s, his 'handkerchief' dresses in 1970. Comme des Garçons 'wrapped
> collection' of 1983, or Yamamoto's cavernously thick layers of cloth the
> year after. These designers embraced that Japanese fashion has a
> different sense of space than that of the West, being far more
> architectonics- in the sense of structure- and works from a whole
> downwards to the smaller elements, whereas Westerners fashion is
> always conscious of the local elements and how they aggregate to the
> whole. All emphasize freedom of form and movement (p. 170).

The above designs suggest that the volume of a dress and its relation to space

provide a reciprocal dialogue and a significant link between fashion and

architecture. This interrelationship signals a path that runs close between the

two areas. This path provides a model for understanding the relation between

fashion and architecture not only as a covering us but as one that establishes

connections amongst fabric, space, form and texture.

Yohji Yamamoto is a designer who engages with creations that depict a close

relation with space and architecture. According to Bradley Quinn (2002),

independent scholar in fashion, the designer:

> Creates visually striking yet simple clothes, which often have more in
> common with architecture than traditional clothing construction.
> Yamamoto knows how to conquer space. Understanding his highly
> aestheticized clothing is to position modern minimalism against an urban
> dreamscape. As much as he is pioneering a new direction for clothing,
> Yamamoto is creating a new environment for them. Whether it is virtual
> or tangible, makes little difference to him-he imbues form and shape
> with emotions and ideas and releases them to metamorphose on the
> wearer. The garments themselves are designed to hang unambiguously
> or drape romantically around the body. Precise seams intersect the
> planes of fabric fitted against the body or extending from it, like joins
> between walls that tell the story of how the building is constructed. Every
> cut he makes is an act of defining space (p. 147).

As figure 17 illustrates, the drapings that feature in the designer's
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Autumn/Winter 2009 collection suggest this fact.

(Figure 17) Yohji Yamamoto, Autumn/Winter 2009 Collection, Drapes Creating Artificial Space.

Yamamoto's garment from his Autumn/Winter 2009 collection de-designs the

preconceived body fit of conventional fashion by creating artificial space

between the body and the garment. Through a design perspective akin to
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plasticity, a conventional form is *received*, *given* a new form through architectonic qualities, and the former form is *destroyed*. The model's slim body and the garment form expected to fit it are de-designed through shapes influenced by architecture. The exaggerated structure and look of the garment destroy the expected garment body fit and this destruction renders the dress as de-designed. As a result, this leads to the deconstruction of the visual norms related to wearability and, thus, sellability. A very similar creation of Yamamoto that bares architectural shapes was featured in *Across Art and Fashion* exhibition in 2017 (figure 18). The design consisted of a top and a dress and was part of Yamamoto's Autumn/Winter 1991-1992 collection. Irregular wooden slats and pieces of wood were joined together by hinges. The design had architectural contours and its form and material were non-wearable. The length of the top is 50 cm, the shoulders of the dress is 50 cm and the bust is 50 cm as well. The skirt length is 100 cm and the waist is 50 cm.

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(Figure 18) Yohji Yamamoto, Autumn/Winter 1991-1992 Collection. *Across Art and Fashion* **(2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

In addition to Yamamoto, Miyake's Autumn/Winter 2011 collection (figure 19) is another de-designed illustration of how much an influence the intersection of fashion and architecture can have on subversive creativity. In this collection, Miyake's de-designs revealed geometric three-dimensional shapes.

The collection reflects the influence of origami, the art of paper folding. As an experimental part of the catwalk show, as well as the collection, assistants got on the catwalk and added three-dimensional pieces to the dresses the models were wearing. The collection is explained as follows:

> Origamis were the main inspiration behind this collection: the opening tail coats, dresses, skirts and jackets were indeed made out of folded and stapled paper reproducing giant origami.... Garments in different shades of grey- from dove to charcoal- or in black and white, characterized by houndstooth and herringbone patterns were clearly inspired by the previous origamis and by their precise angular and geometric shapes and silhouettes (Brination, 2011, para. 7).
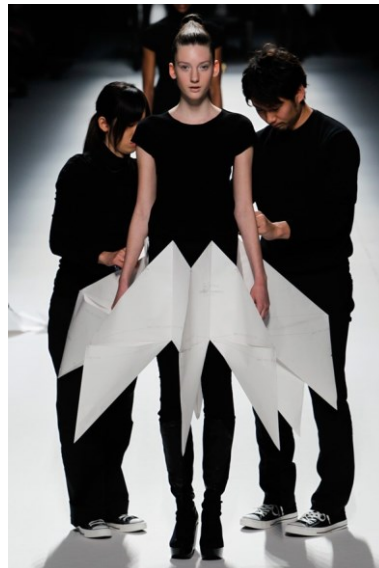
(Figure 19) Issey Miyake, Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection, Origami Influenced Design.

Miyake's collection was inspired by the geometric shapes and forms most commonly used in architecture. The catwalk assistants who got on the runway

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and recreated Miyake's designs reminds one of workers on a construction site who are responsible for constructing buildings. As a result, the models that were being equipped with design accessories with architectonic qualities resemble buildings with construction workers around them. In addition to that, the models wearing the dresses echo the surreal look of walking buildings because of their architectural looks, forms and shapes.

As for Miyake's Autumn/Winter 2011 collection garments inspired by origami, plain, conventionally structured creations were presented but as a second step, they were *given* architectonic forms on the catwalk. This resulted in the *destruction* of the initially presented and conventionally structured garments. In this respect, the initial garments were de-designed with the architectural structures later added to them. Similar to Yamamoto's de-designed garment mentioned earlier in this section, the architectural structure added to the garment in Miyake's collection deconstructs norms related to wearability and sellability.

This section has analysed the way usual garments are taken, given an unconventional look through architectonic motifs and how their wearable forms are annihilated. In this respect, these garments are de-designed. Further, these garments exemplify the notion of plasticity, which is based on giving new forms and destroying received forms. This process makes the garment wearability and sellability impossible. In these de-designs, the placement of architectural motifs on the garments reconstructs the space around the wearer and the outlying boundaries- just like buildings that are being constructed. It is a compliment to the notion of the space surrounding wearer and the garment. By highlighting

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the space rather than the body, these de-designs also deconstruct the norms related to the ideal body fit of mainstream fashion.

Techno Textiles in the First Wave Deconstructivist Fashion

The first wave Japanese deconstructivist garment construction involves the use of technology. The creations of Japanese designers particularly feature 'technological developments and methodologies in textile design' (English, 2011a, p. 6). Wilcox (2011) describes the designers' creations as 'textile-led "artistic" dresses' (p. 31). Further, the use of technology in deconstructivist fashion displays itself through the 'advanced textile technology' of the Japanese fashion designers, states English (2011a, p. 1).

It has been recognized that in deconstructivist Japanese designers' works, 'two of the most significant new developments are seamless, integral garment knitting on flat knitting machines and A-POC tubular clothing made from warp-knitted circular construction' (Lynch & Strauss, 2007, p. 100). This is not surprising because:

> In its intense use of the latest synthetic textiles, chemical treatments and sophisticated technology, Japanese fashion leads the field... Most of the leading fashion designers working with new materials and technologies are from Japan- the pre-eminence of Japanese research means that they have first access to the new developments (Braddock & O'Mahoney, 1999, p. 116).

Wilcox (2001) also points out the significant influence of the deconstructivist Japanese designers in textile innovation in the following manner:

> As part of post-war regeneration, Japan built up its industrial base and now leads in the development of 'techno textiles'. Working with specialist technicians and factories, these designers have been central in

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harnessing and advising textiles' technologies to replicate commercially the appearance of labour-intensive fabric techniques and develop new fibre, weaving, dying and fabric manipulations (p. 32).

The textile innovation generated by the first wave deconstructivist Japanese designers renders their creations de-designed. The way the garments are assembled deconstructs norms related to the use and the making of textiles in mainstream and commercialized fashion. The first wave Japanese designers create textiles, adapt them to the body of the wearer and make use of computer programs so as to reconstruct innovative approaches to generate textiles. While deconstructing conventional fashion norms related to the use and the making of textiles, these creations also generate a massive reconstruction in textile design and making. In this respect, the fabrics used by the deconstructivist designers can be defined as an innovation in garment fabrication. The Japanese designers gave fabrics new characteristics and further fabrics were also made use of in 'new and creative ways – e.g., fabrics can be moulded or heat-sealed' (Bromley & Wojciechowska, 2008, p. 146). With all these properties, the de-designs of the deconstructive designers are metaphorically interpreted as 'wearable sculptures' (Bromley & Wojciechowska, 2008, p. 146).

A significant number of first wave deconstructivist designers have generated innovative, de-designed creations through integrating technological qualities into the process of garment construction. One of these designers is Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons, whose works depict an advanced use of textile and innovative techniques. The designer has made use of various disciplines to generate techno textiles in her garments. This unconventional

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stance helps the designer create experimental designs with playful techniques.

According to Susan Braddock and Maria O'Mahoney (1999), the designer:

> Has worked with the latest synthetics, often experimenting with dying and finishing treatments in close collaboration with the specialists. She has a playful approach to textile machinery, sometimes tampering with computer- controlled looms to create random 'flaws' to escape from monotonous 'soulless' textiles and uniformity. She uses sophisticated computer programs, with their random effects and self-generating patterns, to help her create wonderful textures and irregular surfaces, both traditional in Japanese clothing (pp. 120-121).

In addition to Comme des Garçons, Miyake's 1991 women's line, *Fête*, which means colourful in French featured technological textiles that were 'cut into complex patterns using ultrasonic waves that emitted heat vibrations' (English, 2011, p. 12). Further, the same designer's *Pleats Please* line (figure 20) reveals another technologically innovative technique. *Pleats Please* was 'borne out of the realization that a lightweight, stretch polyester could be permanently pleated' (Gale & Kaur, 2004, p. 66).

(Figure 20) Issey Miyake, *Pleats Please* Line.

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Pleats Please line was influenced by the Spanish couturier Fortuny who 'used ancient methods to revive a Grecian pleating system' (English, 2011a, p. 10). Building on Fortuny's technique and blending it with 'new-technology synthetic fabrics as an innovative approach to pleating', the designer created his line (English, 2011a, p. 10). *Pleats Please* line features garments that are 'cut two-and-a-half to three times larger than the finished garment and sewn together first, then they are sandwiched between layers of paper and individual pieces are hand-fed through a heat press, when they are pleated' (English, 2011a, p. 11).

In addition to *Fête* collection and *Pleats Please* line, Miyake has created a design technique, which he coined as "APOC". APOC refers to A Piece of Cloth. APOC has been going on since 1997 and textile engineer, Dai Fujiwara, collaborated with Miyake while creating Apoc. This advanced technique:

> Transforms a single thread into clothing *sans coudre*. The designer develops a pattern program, funnels a single thread into the knitting machine and Preston-out comes a tabular piece of cloth, size and shape dependent on its intended use. Sewing is superfluous. Reliance on sweatshops disappears, as do long hours of hand sewing in Parisian ateliers. In a way, then, A-POC piggy-backed on the work of Miyake's earlier work, the of using technology to bring new vigour and innovation to the fashion industry (Benjamin, 2008, para. 5).

Quinn (2002) further explains APOC:

> Each garment is made distinct by the ribbed outline demarcating its shape. After the patterns have been knitted into the tube it comes out in a roll; once unfurled, an entire wardrobe is revealed. Dresses, skirts, jumpers, socks, underwear and even bags are stitched into the tube. Once the garments are cut free with a pair of scissors, they are ready to be worn (p. 153).

Both *Pleats Please* and APOC deal with the potential of textiles and aim at further developing them.

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Similar to Miyake, the first wave Japanese deconstructivist fashion designer Junya Watanabe exemplify the experimental quality of Japanese design thinking in relation to innovative textile usage. The designer utilizes 'laminated synthetics, Tyvek, Neoprene, glass fibre and industrial fibre for insulating computers or for chemical filters' (Braddock & O'Mahony, 1999, p. 125). Many collections of the designer emphasize his innovative use of textiles. For example, Autumn/Winter 1995-1996 collection of the designer, which was created under the theme of futurism and, which was influenced by Fritz Lang's film *Metropolis* (1927), featured technological textiles and 'cyber-like cutting and contour seaming' (Braddock & O'Mahony, 1999, p. 126). Additionally, the same collection used 'cellophane gels used for theatre lighting' (Braddock & O'Mahony, 1999, pp. 126-127).

Plasticity takes place in all of the above-mentioned de-designed techno-textile-made garments. It is significant at this point to note that plasticity affects fabrics and textiles' way of giving and taking new forms. Thus, the designers obtain fabrics and textiles with their innate qualities and endow them with additional as well as innovative qualities. In other words, usual fabrics and textiles are taken and they are given advanced qualities. As a consequence, garments with such textiles can be put as de-designed because of the way they deconstruct the expected and existing norms related to textile and fabric use and capabilities.

The deconstructivist Japanese designers make use of technology that aims at advancing and reconstructing textile usage. Developing advanced textiles increases the potential and use of fabrics and textiles and serve to create

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experimental de-designs. This deconstructs norms related to the conventional usage and quality of fabric and textile of mainstream fashion. However, it is worth noting at this point that the Japanese designers generate garments with technologized *soft* textiles and fabrics similar to the mainstream fashion; these textiles and fabrics are not *hard* in their material. Yet, these textiles' advanced qualities and developed structures mark an innovation in the realm of fashion with the new vision they bring into textiles and their making.

Conceptualization and Fashion Marketing

One of the basic qualities of deconstructivist fashion is that it makes use of conceptual ideas in their collections. A large and growing number of scholars consider fashion to be about conceptual ideas (Brampton, 1997; Evans, 2003; English, 2007; Coffey-Webb, 2010; Gray, 2011). The deconstructivist designers narrate stories through their conceptual approach (Hoffman, 2009) rather than using concepts solely as inspiring elements for the creation of their collection pieces. On the conceptual catwalk shows, Wilcox (2001) writes that:

> The constant hunger for renewal in fashion is driven not only by a commercial imperative, and the consumers' delight in 'newness' by also by a fascination with image and narrative. Many catwalk shows have a fictional theme, located in the theatrical time of the performance (p. 2).

It was Elsa Schiaparelli who first created conceptual catwalk shows at the beginning of the twentieth century (Evans, 1999, p. 11). Following her conceptual *Circus* collection came the *Pagan* and *Astrology* collections. Later in 1938, the designer delivered *Commedia Dell'arte* collection, which featured the theme of 'masquerade' (Evans, 2003, p. 11).

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As Schiaparelli was the first fashion designer to conceptualize the conventional catwalk show, deconstructivist fashion designers have followed her steps.

There is a large and growing interest in multi-disciplinarily constructed conceptual garments and conceptual fashion shows within the realm of fashion. According to Jessica Bugg (2009), director of programs for performance at the London College of Fashion:

> The subject of fashion design and communication has become more diverse, collaborative, and interdisciplinary and some high-end designers are clearly reacting against the commercial focus of contemporary fashion, moving away from the traditional fashion cycle, seasonal restrictions, and market-led processes towards a more conceptual, experimental, and process-driven approach (p. 12).

A number of fashion theorists note that, a significant aspect of deconstruction in fashion is its focus on conceptualization through the catwalk show of the collection (Brampton, 1997; Wilcox, 2001; Evans, 2003; English, 2007; Coffey-Webb, 2010). According to English (2007):

> As opposed to the Western designers, the Japanese deconstructivist designers do not follow the conventional catwalk display. Miyake, Yamamoto and Kawakubo are often described as niche designers-designers who do not follow stylistic trends or directions. Unlike their European and American 'stylist' counterparts, they have not exclusively embraced the revivalist or popular cultural imaging that has inundated Paris catwalks for decades (p. 127).

With its conceptual focus, the deconstructivist designers deconstruct the seasonal understanding of fashion as Wilcox (2001) points out, 'with such designers, time seems immaterial, as if they are beyond trend or even fashion' (p. 2). In the conceptual catwalk shows of deconstructivist designers, ideas are generated and conveyed through garments, which are 'as much a statement of philosophy as they [are] of design' (McDowell, 1987, p. 178). According to

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Marcarena San Martin (2009):

> The conceptual fashion show is more reserved and concentrated. Its main focus is the message of the collection, transmitted with maximum efficiency and a minimum of resources. It is often the choice of designers interested in a production format much removed from the glamour of entertainment fashion shows, as it is the case of Belgian designers Martin Margiela and Walter Van Beirendonck or Japanese designer Rei Kawakubo of Comme des Garçons (p. 178).

The conceptual fashion shows run counter to the established catwalk shows as

Julia Conway (2004) argues:

> These shows tend to be more commercially based, i.e. taking place to promote and sell products to the mass market. Therefore, the styling of these shows tends to be more conventional, reflecting current trends that the mass market is able to relate to (p. 175).

De la Haye, Rocamora, Entwistle, Thomas, Root, & Black (2013) on conceptual

fashion shows and the Japanese deconstructivist designers in *The Handbook of*

Fashion Studies observe that:

> The exceptional and innovative thing about Japanese designers such as Kawakubo, Yamamoto, or Issey Miyake was their focus on the underlying process of clothing design and garment construction, which they turned into visual properties (of their designs). Comme des Garçons and Yamamoto purposely held small scale shows where the public was allowed to sit very close to the runway, allowing them to inspect the clothes' fabric and construction. In the process they have been redefining the catwalk from a space where the "identity/concept" of the product/label comes to expression (p. 202).

With regards to the conceptual catwalk shows and the second wave

deconstructivist designer Margiela, Stella Bruzzi and Pamela Gibson (2000) point

out:

> The Belgian Martin Margiela pioneered the use of derelict urban spaces for his shows; on one occasion the show invitation so closely resembled a cheap publicity flyer that rumour had it that fashion editors threw them away without recognizing what they were (p. 87).

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For his Autumn/Winter 1997 collection, Margiela made fashion journalists visit different places of Paris, which he had chosen as his catwalk areas for the collection. English (2007) explains the unconventional aspects of the show:

> Models were transferred by bus and dressed in zany fur wigs with shoulder pads pinned to the outside of the clothes. He then videoed the show on its side so each of his majors buyers had to physically turn the television monitor over to watch the tape (p. 145).

In similar manner to Margiela, Rei Kawakubo is another designer with a parallel design thinking in fashion marketing and deconstructivist processes in fashion shows. Kawakubo uses a 'silent, understated and minimalist setting', which 'consists of a procession of models with no lights, no catwalk, no music'; as a consequence, 'a focused contemplative, Zen-like setting is achieved' (English, 2007, pp. 145-146). Moreover, the designer accepts only sixty people to her shows (English, 2007, p. 146).

Deconstructivist designers have featured their de-designed works of their conceptual catwalk shows in museums and exhibitions based on their conceptual design thinking, unconventional structures, non-sellability and non-wearability. A number of exhibitions have been organized so as to bring together the conceptual creations of many deconstructivist designers.

Japonism in Fashion, which was the 'first large-scale exhibition of material illustrating the impact of Japonisme- or the assimilation of Japanese aesthetic principles—on fashion' was carried out by Kyoto Costume Institute (KCI) at the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto in 1994 (Mears, 2008, p. 10). The exhibition named *Martin Margiela (9/4/1615)* at the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam was featured between the dates of June 1997 and

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August 1997. *Issey Miyake: Making Things*, on the other hand, took place at the gallery of the Fondation Cartier pour l'art Contemporain in Paris 1997. Mears (2008) defines the Miyake designs that featured in the exhibition as follows:

> Miyake pioneered the use of ethnographic materials such as Asian *ikats*. He showed a particular interest in fabrics that had a rough-hewn look and were hand-made by rural people. He was also one of the first globally influential designers to find creative uses for the latest, technologically advanced synthetics being produced in Japan. The use of such fabrics combined with innovative construction techniques allowed Miyake to make some of the most extraordinary garments ever seen (p. 96).

Miyake's creations with pleats deconstructed the conventional patterns of garment making with their unconventional structure and the avant-garde design thinking:

> His fantastic pleated creations that morph from flat pieces of cloth into three-dimensional geodesic forms; these garments were revelations when they first appeared in the late 1980s. More recently, his A-POC (an acronym for "A piece of Cloth) line of seemingly endless numbers of identically laser- seamed dresses that arrive at the store attached and rolled into bales of tubular jersey knit, actually allow each wearer to customize her garment as it is cut away from the others (Mears, 2008, p. 96).

Further, the exhibition *Radical Fashion* displayed the works of the experimental designers Yohji Yamamoto, Issey Miyake and Comme des Garçons from 18 October 2001 till 6 January 2002. *Correspondences: Yohji Yamamoto* at Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Palazzo Pitti Firenze, Italy took place in 2005 while *Breaking the Mode: Contemporary Fashion from the Permanent Collection*, featured in Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) between the dates of September 17, 2006 and January 7, 2007. The exhibition was an 'intellectual' one that challenged its visitors to 'make aesthetic or cultural connections heretofore unrealized' (Coffey-Webb, 2010, p. 120). The 'materials' part of the exhibition,

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through a comparison of the 'old guard Fortuny Pleats' with 'avant-garde Miyake pleats' displayed how high-tech textiles were used (Coffey-Webb, 2010, p. 120). This part also presented 'the Japanese Nuno studio', Kawakubo's 'paper/plastic' designs, Margiela's recycled designs and Yamamoto's 'braided straw' (Coffey-Webb, 2010, pp. 120-121). The 'form' section of the exhibition observed the changing 'silhouette' and it had designs from Azzedine Alaïa, Margiela and Kawakubo (Coffey-Webb, 2010, p. 121). The clothes in the exhibition displayed an 'intellectual creativity and the layering of construction ideas with maverick fabrication and historical reinterpretations' even when the clothes and dresses were deprived of luxury elements like 'lace' and 'embroidery' (Coffey-Webb, 2010, p. 127).

Further, *The Mary Baskett Collection* was displayed at The Textile Museum, Washington from October 17, 2009 to April 11, 2010. Margiela's *'20' The Exhibition* was displayed at Somerset House, London from 3 June to 5 September 2010. Yamamoto displayed a closed exhibition between the dates of 12 March and 10 July 2011 in Victoria and Albert Museum in London. Further, between 1 November 2014 and 15 February 2015, *Future Beauty: 30 Years of Japanese Fashion* was exhibited at the Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA).

The thesis argues that the garments mentioned in conceptualization and fashion marketing section are considered de-designs because of the way they deconstruct fashion's norm of appealing to the mass consumer market (wearability). Further, they deconstruct the understanding of a conventional catwalk show through their conceptual qualities. These de-designs serve as one of a kind pieces that are displayed in museums and exhibitions. However, what

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is important to note is that these de-designs do not have a plastic side to them. This is because they mainly deal with *concepts* and *the conceptual.* In other words, they are displayed on catwalk shows and museums to present or form *abstract* ideas. In this respect, they do not need a materially transformative aspect to deconstruct norms or concepts. This way they are rendered as de-designs and lead to the deconstruction and reconstruction of the conventional catwalk and fashion marketing.

These conceptual pieces do not have a plastic quality to them. However, plasticity, as previously explained, relates directly to what is material. This is of great importance in that it shows that not every de-design that deconstructs established norms is caused by plasticity. To summarize, as these pieces deal with the abstract and the conceptual related to various matters, they do not involve a material (plastic) quality to deconstruct norms; their main function is to bring to life stories, ideas and concepts.

Deconstruction through Tradition

As a reaction to Western fashion's dominance over the global fashion world, the Japanese designers generated reactionary designs that are derived from their own cultural heritage. It is worth pointing out how the first wave deconstructivist Japanese designers have been defined in relation to their cultural specificity. The designers' and their practices have been characterized as different to the European designers, in other words made 'other' (Monden, 2014, p. 11), and a problematic "us and them" theoretical binary appears in many uncritical, often overtly colonial accounts of this era. The Japanese

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designers have been crudely defined as 'ragged chic', 'Hiroshima bag lady'

(Mears, 2008, p. 97), 'the day after' and 'post Hiroshima' (Withers, 1987, p. 52)

in relation to the similarity between the historical holocaust Japan faced and

their "unglamorous" designs. English (2007), on the other hand, interprets the

designers' garments as an insurrection against their own historical past; staged

as protest, comparing the "Japanese designers" [Miyake, Yamamoto,

Kawakubo] with British Punk in a broad comparison:

> While Punk in Britain could be discussed within the context of a
> generational protest- one that relied on provocation, visual obscenity and
> hard-core sexuality- deconstructivism in the garments of Japanese
> designers could symbolize, in a more passive and discreet way, their
> reaction to Japan's historical position in the post-war years (p. 120).

Carnegy (1990) argues that Japanese deconstructivist designers' creations have

been interpreted in terms of their reverence for their own cultural heritage and

a rebellion against the influence of the West (p. 20). Designers such as Miyake,

Yamamoto, Kawakubo, Watanabe have noted their own interest in

deconstructive technical work with the Japanese kimono. For example, referring

to the structure of the Kimono, Kawakubo points out that, 'fashion design is not

about revealing or accentuating the shape of a woman's body, its purpose is to

allow a person to be what they are' (as cited in *The story of Fashion*, 1985,

n.p.). Further, critic, curator and fashion historian Richard Martin (1995), writes

that:

> With a layering, cloaking propensity offered as a fundamental alternative
> to tailored clothing comes as well a completely different body vis-à-vis
> subverting or at least posing or at least posing an option for dress
> beyond simple erotics and mechanics of underlying and visible body.
> Wilful scorn of tailoring is also indicative of a nonchalance and preference
> for the irregular and unconstrained with clothing composed on the body
> in a kind of informal pastiche not like even earlier sportswear in the

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West, but also a function of the kimono mind as it has been introduced to the West. This is not to say that Kenzo, Kawakubo, Miyake, and others cannot employ tailoring to a purpose, but the ethos of their clothing is about the piling on of layers a construction of continuous, tissues on the body (p. 215).

Different theorists and scholars have looked at how the Japanese designers have used their traditional culture as an inspiration in creating their collections.

In the introduction of the book, *Japanese Fashion Designers: The Work and Influence of Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto and Rei Kawakubo*, English (2011a) argues that the 'legacy of an understated elegance', has turned out to be a key characteristic of Japanese deconstructive fashion and is influenced by the 'Samurai origins' of the culture of Japan (pp. 1-2). English quotes Eiko Ikegami (2005):

In terms of dress, when the role of the samurai changed by the late 17th century, and their military duties were replaced by bureaucratic duties, their lavish and luxurious custom-made kimonos, made from expensive fabric and worn especially for ceremonial purposes (which had been seen earlier as appropriate to their rank in society), were replaced by a more sober style of everyday clothing. Instead, the wearing of darker clothing, especially black which symbolised self- discipline, became accepted as more sophisticated urban attire and a sign that good taste was expressed by subtle stylistic differences and intelligence in design (as cited in English 2011a, p. 2).

Pointing out the simplicity and minimalism of the Japanese deconstructivist style, English (2011a) writes that:

For the Japanese, elegance and refinement do not concur with glamour, or with status or class... throughout history, a love of restraint, a special type of subtle beauty, incomplete perfection, a cult of refinement based on simplicity and austerity have always been elements of Japanese aesthetics (p. 2).

In connection with simplicity's influence on the designers' creations, English mentions the traditional Japanese tea ceremony. Building on the book,

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Appreciations of Japanese Culture written by Donald Keene (1981), English

argues that 'the symbolic reference inherent in the tea ceremony reflects the

importance of simplicity and perishability in the Japanese aesthetic' (2011a, p.

3).

A number of the first wave deconstructivist Japanese designers have made use

of their own traditional elements, especially in textile design. For example, Issey

Miyake adopted the technique of *sasiko* (cotton quilting) whereby he created

coats and mixed it with materials such as 'polyester jersey' (Gale & Kaur, 2004,

p. 65; English, 2007, p. 125). Further, Miyake adopted *tabi-ura*, which is a

'fabric' that is 'reserved for the bottoms of the fitted Japanese sock' (English,

2007, pp. 125-126). In addition to *sasiko* and *tabi-ura*, the designer engaged

with the 'oil-soaked paper used so commonly in the traditional Japanese

umbrella', which is 'to form a translucent coat' (English, 2007, pp. 125-126).

The Japanese designer Kawakubo, on the other hand, featured a blend of

cultural heritages in her designs inclusive of her own tradition. Kawakubo

featured an 'eclectic combination of Global cultures... chopp[ing] away at the

traditional trench coat and clip[ping] up the tail of the dinner jacket, mixing

Western tradition with Indian elegance and Japanese style' (Jones, 1992, p.

72). Further, Manning (2014) in "Dress becomes body: Fashioning the Force of

Form" emphasizes the designer's Japanese background through her use of

tatami. *Tatami* is explained as follows,

> The tatami as it is used architecturally can be seen as an activator of
> space's malleability: the *tatami* room, in a traditional Japanese context,
> keeps the environment bare enough that the space can become the
> conduit for more than one kind of activity. Furniture is kept to an
> absolute minimum, the space itself open to continuous reorganization. In

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this regard, the *tatami* room can be seen as an architecting of mobility in a tentative holding in place that reminds us that the design process never starts and finishes (para. 36).

At this point, it is worth focusing on a quintessentially Japanese garment, the Kimono, and how it serves as a muse to the first wave deconstructivist Japanese designers.

The ruling class – the Samurai, primarily wore the kimono. In the Edo period, the new market contributed to the flourishing Japanese textile arts. As a result, 'the kimono developed into a highly expressive means of personal display, an important indicator of the rising affluence and aesthetic sensibility of the *chōnin'*, which means 'the merchant and artisan classes' ("A History of the Kimono", n.d., para. 2). Throughout the interwar years, Western styles became popular amongst Japanese women due to the Japan textile Industry's use of Western science and technology. Despite Western influences, the Kimono continued to be worn, 'the traditional cut of the garment remained the same, but the motifs were dramatically enlarged and new designs appeared, inspired by Western styles such as Art Nouveau and Art Deco' ("A History of the Kimono", n.d., para. 9). From the beginning of the 20th century till the 1950s, brand new silk types and techniques of patterning were introduced. The introduction of them led to 'inexpensive, highly fashionable garments available to more people than ever than before' ("A History of the Kimono", n.d., para. 10). Starting with the ending of World War II, the Japanese have been wearing Western styled clothes. However, it is the elderly Japanese people who carry on wearing the Kimono as well as 'geisha, actors, and those serving in traditional restaurants or engaged in activities such the tea ceremony' ("A History of the

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Kimono", n.d., para. 11). It should also be noted that kimonos are sold for very high prices for their limited use. This, also points out their culturally high position. Despite the fact that the Kimono is worn much less today, symbolically its importance has increased. It could be said that:

> As Japan has come to define itself within the Western world since the late 19th century, the kimono has come to mark a boundary with the foreign, to stand for the essence that is Japanese. This is reflected in the fact that most contemporary textile designers working with traditional techniques still use the kimono as the primary format for their artistic expression.... After the Second World War kimono were often viewed as a product of Japan's feudal past or a symbol of woman's oppression, but today they are just another choice in a woman's - and even occasionally a man's - wardrobe. They are an item of fashion, just as they were in their Edo heyday ("A History of the Kimono", n.d., para. 12).

The Japanese designers started their careers in fashion by means of using their cultural intellectual property, the Kimono, as the main driver for their collections figures 20, 21, 22) (Gale & Kaur, 2004, p. 65; English, 2007, p. 123; English, 2011a, p. 4). The Kimono's influence on the Japanese designers' creations can be explained in a specific respect: the Kimono emphasizes the space between the body and the garment. As regards to the space between the body and the garment, Miyake points out that, 'I learned about space between the body and the fabric from the traditional Kimono... not the style, but the space' (as cited in Knafo, 1988, p. 108). The importance given to space undermines the Kimono-inspired garments' close relation with the body, yet, highlights the traditional understanding of the Japanese silhouette and the creative power of the kimono. Figures 21, 22 and 23 visually manifest the influence of the Kimono on the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers.

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(Figure 21) Issey Miyake, Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection, Kimono Inspired Garment.

(Figure 22) Yohji Yamamoto, Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection, Kimono Inspired Garment.

(Figure 23) Junya Watanabe, Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection, Kimono Inspired Garment.

The collection figures reveal that the Japanese designers use the Kimono and its relation to space as a primary source of inspiration for their collections as they create new designs out of its structure. The Japanese designers' use of their traditional kimono as an inspiration for their creations points out plasticity as a design thinking method, and a de-designing process reflected on the kimono; the traditional motif's original structure is taken, given a new form and

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it is destructed through the Western touches given to it.

With the influence of the Kimono, the first wave Japanese designers deconstruct norms related to the Western body fit and silhouette that can be observed in *haute couture* collections (figure 24). This is achieved by emphasising the Kimono-inspired designs that highlight the space around the body. This is interpreted as a 'symbolic gesture made against the methodical structure of the Parisian *haute couture'* (Isozaki, 1978, p. 56). In this respect, this deconstruction renders the kimono-inspired creations as de-designed.

(Figure 24) Zuahir Murad, Spring/Summer 2012 Collection, *Haute Couture* Dress.
In opposition to the clothes of *haute couture* that display a perfect fit to the body 'as if they had been poured on' (Vinken, 2005, p. 70), the de-designed Kimono-inspired garments of the first wave Japanese designers emphasize the space around the body rather than the body. As Isozaki (1978) explains in the

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following words:

> In Western clothing the fabric is cut to the bodyline and sewn. The form of the attire is modelled after the body, with a shell similar to the shape of the body thus being created. In doing so, the space between the two is eliminated. In the case of Japanese attire, a technique which simplifies cutting to the minimum is predominate; the set width of the material itself, like an invariable constant, given importance (pp. 55-56).

These de-designs inspired by the traditional Kimono, as explained earlier in this chapter, deconstruct the notion of the ideal body fit of mainstream fashion. In this respect, these de-designs cause a deconstruction against mainstream fashion through a traditional Japanese costume. As a result, tradition becomes an important notion that the first wave designers build on to deconstruct mainstream fashion forms.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the various channels of deconstruction such as unravelling, deconstructing the concept of new in fashion, the deconstruction of glamour and perfection, the deconstruction of time through anachronistic designs, deconstructing the conventional understanding of garment and body forms, the use of architectural inspirations in deconstructivist fashion, techno textiles in the first wave deconstructivist fashion, conceptualization and fashion marketing and deconstruction through tradition. It has analysed the concepts of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction and the links amongst these concepts by focusing on the deconstructivist creations of the first wave Japanese and the second wave Belgian designers. In chapters four and five, these various channels of deconstruction will be applied to the works of Chalayan and Aksu.

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Chapter Three: Third Wave Turkish Deconstructivist Designers: Hussein Chalayan and Bora Aksu

Introduction

Having built a framework including the basic qualities of what is considered deconstructivist fashion in the previous chapter, starting with this chapter, the rest of the thesis focuses on Hussein Chalayan and Bora Aksu. They are two Turkish designers who have established a reputation outside of Turkey by their innovative designs and alternative garment construction methods. The thesis focuses on Aksu and Chalayan because they have similar qualities as the first wave Japanese and the second wave Belgian deconstructivist designers.

The thesis argues that Aksu and Chalayan manifest the emergence of a third wave of deconstructivist Turkish designers. In part, this is because both designers are similar to the first wave Japanese designers who used their own cultural motifs and their cultural past for inspiration in their designs. Further, both Aksu and Chalayan, who were trained in Europe, employ change, transformation and metamorphosis in their deconstructivist designs, just as the way the process of fashion works. This is very similar to the second wave designer Martin Margiela's designs, which involve change and recreation through the technique of recycling and garment reconstruction through organic means. Such subversive designs challenge mainstream European fashion. The designers of all three waves have a non-Parisian background but have exhibited around the world through their deconstructivist methods and designs.

Aksu and Chalayan's reliance on their cultural past histories and traditional

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motifs that have passed down from older generations and their interest in depicting structural changes through metamorphosing or transformed garments similar to how the process of fashion operates constitute the reasons that connect both designers to the first and second wave deconstructivist designers. Further, the same reasons form a platform, which links both designers to one another, the thesis will explore in chapter five.

Valerie Mendes, chief curator in Textile and Dress at the Victoria and Albert Museum, points out that the deconstructivist designers are 'motivated by markedly different impulses and with diverse educational and geographic backgrounds' and that what they 'have in common [is] a strength of purpose and desire to challenge convention' (Mendes, 2001, p. ix). Though the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers' cultural heritage has been mentioned in deconstructivist frameworks (Carnegy, 1990; Skov, 1996; Mitchell, 2005; Benesh, 2009; Monden, 2014), Aksu and Chalayan's cultural background has not been recognised in the realm of deconstructivist design thinking.

Further, despite Aksu and Chalayan's unconventional designs, which are very similar to the first and second wave deconstructivist designers in terms of the mutiny against certain conventions and orthodoxies in fashion, these designers' creations have not been accepted as constituents of an emerging deconstructivist third wave with similar and additional deconstructivist techniques and approaches.

Hussein Chalayan

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Hussein Chalayan (1970-) is a London-based Turkish/Cypriot designer. Born in Nicosia, the designer graduated from Türk Maarif Koleji and after that he and his family fled Nicosia, Cyprus and moved to the UK due to the political unrest in 1974. The designer graduated from Central Saint Martin's in 1993 with his graduation collection entitled *Tangent Flows*. The collection was later displayed in the fashion boutique, Browns, in London. A year later in 1994, he founded his own label and named it "Cartesia Ltd". Having won the British designer of the year award both in 1999 and 2000, Chalayan has become well-known for his experimental fashion design (figure 25) ("Hussein Chalayan", n.d.).

(Figure 25) Hussein Chalayan by Nick Knight for British *Vogue,* December 2008, Experimental Creations.

 Referring to Chalayan and his designs, English (2007) argues that the

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designer redefined the concept of fashion and transformed it from an

'aesthetically' based concept to a 'technologically' grounded one (p. 62).

Positioning him with other postmodern artists, English (2007) points out that

the designer's 'cerebral work became allied with multimedia' that provided

new chances and 'possibilities' (p. 62). It is this sense of a "staging" of

deconstruction that becomes one of the devices of the different design

perspective that deconstruction highlights.

Chalayan stages unconventional fashion shows in which he transforms the

conventional catwalk into a completely different ambiance to present his

creations. As English (2007) comments:

> Questioning the conventions of fashion, Hussein Chalayan creates
> special sets in which to show his clothing. Bright white cubes, distorted
> by mirrors and walls, create a maze-like construction. He suspends
> chiffon dresses from helium balloons, and mails his unrippable paper
> dresses, neatly folded and placed in envelopes, to his customers (p.
> 145).

As mentioned earlier, his past along with its political and sociological ordeals

forms a very important source of inspiration to the designer's creations. Sue

Maton (2010), writer and lecturer on the MA Textile Culture Program at

Norwich University College of the Arts, depicts Chalayan's own past along

with touching upon ethnic and racial issues of subjectivity:

> Living across two cultures means belonging to both and not belonging
> to either, and it is this paradox that prompts Chalayan to challenge
> the euro centricity of conventional Western fashion, whose only
> acknowledgement of different cultures appears in the recurring theme
> of ethnic appropriation and the spectacle of the exotic 'other.' For
> Chalayan there is no 'other.' Chalayan uses the platform of fashion to
> plunder his own past and an imagined future as he draws upon
> personal narrative and collective experience to create visions of a

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culturally nomadic future, where travel and movement become a permanent state of being and the only constant is flux (p. 247).

According to Peppe Orrù (2009), writer and lecturer on the MA Textile Culture program at Norwich University College of the Arts, in *After Words* collection, the designer created garments that were influenced by 'refugees and asylum seekers' and worked on the theme of ' "wearable, portable architecture" with tables, chairs and cupboards transformed into skirts, dresses and tops' (p. 306).

PA (2004) explains the commonalities between Chalayan's *After Words* (2000) collection and his installation *Place to Passage* as follows:

> Like the pod it constituted a self-contained world in which the same objects could be configured as furniture, clothing or luggage. That some of the objects could be transformed into suitcases alluded to the immigrant's permanent state of transience also suggested by the return voyage from London to Istanbul in the video installation (p. 236).

As regards to the theme of journey and objects related to it, Evans (2005), in Groninger Museum exhibition catalogue, points out that, 'the theme of travel so prevalent in Chalayan's work can be understood, both literally and figuratively, as a journey of alienation and loss, as much as it is one of self-discovery and self-fashioning' (p. 12). Chalayan re-explores not only his own past but at the same time he re-explores what his nation had to go through because of the political turmoil Cyprus faced during 1975. As a result, the concepts of seeking refuge, loss of safety and security, resettlement, and adaptation are commonly explored in the designer's works in relation to his past.

Further, in relation to his cultural and political past, concepts of

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transformation, change and metamorphosis are largely addressed by the subversive creations of the designer. As it is reported:

> His first collection was titled Buried dresses: the clothes were buried in his garden for three months before the show. Processes such as oxidation, metamorphosis, change, and alteration of the fabric have become part of his expressive palette since the beginning locating him among the most controversial, brave and stubborn artists existing in the scene ("Robotic Identity: Multimedia Fashion Shows by Hussein Chalayan", n.d., para. 3).

His 2013 *Rise* collection was another collection that featured change on the structure of its specific garments. As Balbo (2013) points out 'without any help from stylists and dressers, these kinetic clothes actually morph before your eyes into completely different looks' (para. 1).

Chalayan is a designer who makes subversive creations. His deconstructivist garments encompass many different concepts and aspects. However, cultural, political, religious issues related to his Turkish/Cypriot past and the concepts of transformation and metamorphosis similar to the way fashion sustains itself are what the thesis will particularly pay attention to in the fifth chapter.

Bora Aksu

Bora Aksu (1969-) is a London-based Turkish designer who was born in Izmir, Turkey. Like Chalayan, Aksu graduated from Central Saint Martins in 2002. Immediately after completing his BA, the designer started his MA at Central Saint Martins. He won the New Generation sponsorship in 2002. Through this award, in 2003, Aksu had his first off-schedule show at London Fashion Week. Later in 2004, the designer had his first official show at London Fashion Week and since then, he has been featuring his collections

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twice a year at London Fashion Week. Aksu is a designer known for avant-garde fashion creations as figure 26 illustrates ("Bora Aksu", n.d.).

(Figure 26) Bora Aksu, Autumn/Winter 2014 Collection, Avant-garde Fashion Creations, London Fashion Week. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

Similar to Malabou's take on accidents, accidents form a very significant aspect in deconstructivist garment construction. In terms of generating innovation in garment construction, 'experimentation' is a personal technique that Bora Aksu has developed. The designer explains how he designs his garments as follows:

> I started out manipulating fabric and draping it on dress forms to achieve a certain shape or silhouette, almost like a sculpture would. If

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my "inspiration" passes this "incubation" and "evaluation" phase then I go straight into the actual work (as cited in Doyle, 2016, para. 7).

With regards to experimental design thinking, the designer explains what he calls "Accidental Design Ideas" in the following words, 'my ability to drape cloth at times directly on a person, also resulted in accidental design ideas, which is at the heart of some of my most important work' (as cited in Swan, 2011, para. 7). The atypical way Aksu experiments with the techniques of garment making is similar to how the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designer Rei Kawakubo creates her garments. English (2011a) explains that 'Kawakubo relies on spontaneity in her works. As Kawakubo was not formally trained in fashion, initially she had no preconceptions about the design or the fabrication process' (p. 74). Regarding the concept of spontaneity in her design process, the designer points out that, 'I could say that my work is about looking for accidents. Accidents are quite important for me. Something is new because it is an accident' (Lamche, Koppel, & Judelson, 1998, n.p.).

According to Aksu, what distinguishes his designs from Parisian *haute couture* lies in the fact that he designs *demi-couture*. He describes *demi-couture* in the following words, 'the finishing technics and the quality always aims to be on the *couture* level' (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013). Further, the designer describes the catwalk as the perfect context to express the power of individuality as a designer. With regards to the connection amongst individuality, the catwalk shows and his 'visual language', Aksu notes as follows, 'I believe fashion is more a way of expressing someone's individuality rather than just a simple way of covering the body parts. It is a

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unique language, which does have a visual voice. Fashion show is a perfect platform to display this visual voice' (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013).

Further, Aksu explains what he tries to achieve with his unconventional designs, 'It's true that my design philosophy always aims to challenge the classical beauty and it searches to define beauty in new ways' (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013). He maintains, 'I am searching for the perfect beauty (which does not exist) and on another level, I am searching the perfect imperfection. This is presented in my work as conflicts' (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013). He explains what he tries to do in connection with beauty:

> One of the other reasons is to define the term "beauty" each season in a totally new way... For me beauty is the reason behind each design process... But it is not the beauty we are dictated to; it's the beauty we find in ourselves (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013).

Collaborations and inter-disciplinary design thinking are other major concerns for the designer. As he points out:

> I think collaborations are really good in terms of working with creative people from totally different fields. Collaborating with these different fields creates great results. I think it's also very inspiring to work with people who are from different creative fields as they have a totally fresh approach to what we are doing. For me, anything can drive fashion. It can be a movie, a piece that you find in a local car-boot sale, even a t-shirt that you have been wearing since you were fifteen (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013).

Aksu also comments on the importance he gives to the interdependence and balance of everything on an equal basis:

> Through designing I constantly search for a balance point... The texture, weight of different fabrics and structure are all important in their own way. As a designer, it is very important to find a balance

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point in a specific design and make everything work together in harmony... Details and structure all play different roles and sometimes one of them is more dominant than the other. However, what is important is that all the elements in that design work together... That is why I usually have a long trial period before I design (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013).

The designer tells that the concepts of transformation and change are significant quests each time he designs. He states as follows:

I think the whole concept of taking fashion as a career choice came to me when I realised that fashion is much more to me than just drawings fabrics or clothes. It was the time when I created my own world through illustrations and suddenly I had a revelation. I discovered the amazing link between 2D drawings to 3D garments. And this transformation brings such amazement to the whole concept of fashion. That is probably why I explore the borders of this transformation each time I create (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013).

His fascination with transformation owes a lot to the juxtaposition of Eastern and Western elements. As Hande Eagle (2013) in *Aesthetica* magazine writes, 'what is so fascinating is Aksu's skill in putting together an incredible spectacle with his choice of music and fabrics, designs and emotions, cultural differences and a synthesis of Turkish culture and Western tastes' (para. 1).

In addition to his interest in exploring the concept of transformation in his designs, what differentiates his aesthetics from the other designers, according to Aksu is 'individuality connected with his past'. As he explains, 'It's true that when I start designing I always start out with something very personal like childhood reminiscences, then comes other elements' (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013). Turkey and Turkish cultural elements are also inspiring sources for the designer and these elements establish a connection between Aksu's creations and his past, 'I like the cosy, knowing feel of things from the past', states Aksu and goes on to how

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explain where the concept of change comes into play, 'It is like they come with their own set of memories. But then I challenge myself and add a little Punk or gothic element to it, and this is where things start to change' (as cited in Szmydke, 2012, para. 2).

Compared to Kawakubo, Miyake, Yamamoto and Chalayan, Aksu is a new designer and to date, very little critical analysis has been published on his work. The following chapters examine material found in online interviews, the catwalk show the author attended in 2014 and the pictures she took from it, and also the information derived from the personal interview conducted with the designer.

Conclusion

This chapter has given the cultural and historical background of Hussein Chalayan and Bora Aksu and introduced them as the third wave of Turkish deconstructivist designers. The next chapter focuses on various deconstructions the de-designed creations of Aksu and Chalayan cause. The final chapter of the thesis will focus on Chalayan and Aksu and explore their de-designs in relation to 1. The concepts of metamorphosis and transformation 2. Their cultural background and heritage. Also, the final chapter will address the common elements Aksu and Chalayan share in terms of subversive design and how these elements form a third wave deconstructivist design.

Chapter Four: The De-designs and Deconstructions of the Third Wave Deconstructivist Designers: Hussein Chalayan

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and Bora Aksu

Introduction

This chapter addresses the technical, material (de-designed) dimensions of the third wave Turkish deconstructivist designers Aksu and Chalayan and their subversive de-designs that lead to a deconstruction of some key principles on which mainstream fashion operates. The chapter examines garments of Aksu and Chalayan to show their links to the first wave Japanese and the second wave Belgian Designers. In this respect, the issues this chapter discusses are parallel to the themes discussed in chapter two. The chapter will focus on showing the relationship amongst the concepts of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction by examining specific collections and de-designs of Aksu and Chalayan.

Unravelling

This section engages with the notion of informed playfulness and the unravelling conducted by the de-designed garments of the third wave Turkish deconstructivist designer Hussein Chalayan. As regards to unravelling the construction process of garments, deconstructive fashion employs the key notion of playfulness. In connection with postmodernism, playfulness and deconstruction, Kelley (2009) points out as follows:

> A historical analysis specifically focused on the period immediately preceding the late twentieth century contributes to an understanding of the playful postmodern deployment... because it is this history that gives modern deconstruction whatever frisson and power it possesses (p. 222).

Playfulness is a metaphoric way of describing what the de-designing process

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does. Deconstruction in fashion brings an intellectual approach that displays and visually explains the "hows" and "whys" of garment fabrication and construction methods. This is done through a material as well as noncompliant playfulness generated on the garments.

This nonconforming playfulness manifests a methodology akin to plasticity, as this section will explain. As a result of this plastic design thinking, similar to the critical analysis of Derridean deconstruction that questions the way we perceive the world, deconstructivist designers conceptually scrutinize how a garment is constructed, what it is constructed of, what is hidden in it and what is revealed on it.

One of the main elements for deconstructivist designers is for their works to be understood and accepted as intellectual creations (M. Margiela, personal communication, July 29, 2013). In order to accomplish this, it is necessary to continue to question how clothes are traditionally and conventionally constructed. Referring to deconstructivist designers, what they challenge and the practice of unravelling, Kennedy and Stoehrer (2013) explain that:

> The deconstructivist approach challenges the traditional rules of garment making by exposing the very process of constructing a garment. What is usually finished is left raw and fraying. What is usually eliminated, like basting, or hidden, like pinked edges, seams, linings, or shoulder pads, is brought to the surface. It is an aesthetic of reverses and reassemblings (p. 125).

Hussein Chalayan's *Memory Dress* (figure 27) from his *Echoform* (1999-2000) collection is in agreement with Kennedy and Stoehrer's words. The *Memory Dress*, the thesis argues, is a de-design. The dress visually displays the

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vocabulary of garment making. It unravels the construction process of a garment by using the absence and presence of details such as missing lapels and added stitches. In this collection, the designer 'preoccupied with themes of memory and echo, produced a wide range of near-identical denim dresses that he imagined as imbued with the memory of other garments' (Evans, 2003, p. 57). The *Memory Dress* was presented in different versions in the photographs taken by Courtesy Marcus Tomlinson. Each new photographic image captures the dress and replicates it with minor modifications in the ensuing pictures. As the photographic images illustrate, the dress has cut off pockets and lines and features the absence and presence of stitches on its lapel and design structure (Evans, 2003, p. 57). Like a puzzle, each time the garment is presented, another part has been removed, and a part that had been missing in the previous version is restored.

(Figure 27) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 1999-2000, *Echoform* Collection, The *Memory Dress*.

Technically, through a repetitive design technique displayed in four different

versions of the de-designed *Memory Dress*, Chalayan highlights the concepts of

absence, presence, completion and incompletion. By doing so, the designer de-

designs the conventional structures of mainstream fashion, which are always

completed and finalized. What Chalayan does could be explained in accordance

with plasticity: The designer takes a usual form of a garment and by scrutinizing

the preconceived elements related to the hidden aspects of garment fabrication

and the process of garment construction, he structurally re-forms its

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preconceived motifs and elements. And finally, he destroys the structure of the conventional garment. The de-designed dress does not conform to the visual and technical conventions of mainstream or high fashion in the way it is cut, or in the way they the design details such as the pockets or the collars are placed. Thus, the garment materializes a negated perception related to the ways garments should be designed by de-designing the expected structure.

Conceptually, through an intentional playfulness regarding garment construction, Chalayan deconstructs the norms of mainstream, commercialized fashion; the designer subverts mainstream design thinking by revealing what should be hidden and completed. As a consequence, in designing such a garment, Chalayan 'def[ies] standard fashion vocabulary', which is normally hidden (De la haye, 2001, p. 37). Like a child making fun of the realities of the world, the designer turns the realm of fashion into a playground of puzzles and the game of hide and seek. In this respect, Chalayan manifests an intentional playfulness against the mainstream fashion techniques and design thinking. This way, the de-designed *Memory Dress* suggests a 'more intellectual approach, which literally unpicks fashion, exposing its operation ... to the structures and discourses of fashion' (Wilson, 1985, p. 250). By materially exploring and unravelling the processes of garment construction through these de-designed versions of the *Memory Dress*, Chalayan deconstructs mainstream fashion orthodoxies related to garment construction and visual design by using fashion itself. Thus, de-design causes deconstruction and deconstruction leads to reconstruction and innovation both in structural (material) and in conceptual terms.

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In addition to the material de-designing and conceptual deconstruction processes, Chalayan's *Memory Dress* exemplifies the visual illustration of Derrida's concept of deferral. For Derrida, meaning can never be in the present because it always defers. As Derrida, in an interview with John Caputo (1997), American philosopher and Professor of Philosophy Emeritus at Villanova University, points out:

> What is really going on in things, what is really happening, is always "to come" every time you try to stabilize the meaning of a thing, try to fix it in its missionary position, the thing itself, if there is anything at all, slips away (p. 31).

As a result, it could be said that, 'deconstructivists understand the creation of clothes as a process of searching for meaning and the continual creation of fresh meaning' (Loschek, 2009, p. 187). Like meaning being constantly deferred, the four pictures of Chalayan's *Memory Dress* reveal the lack of a design completion. Rather, each new capture leads us to the next picture in the quest for the design's finalization. In this respect, the design of the dress is always deferred and never captured. This is why its full design is forever denied.

Lastly, it should be noted that Chalayan's *Memory Dress* has a lot in common with Martin Margiela's Semi-*Couture* collection. Through a methodology akin to plasticity, both Chalayan's dress and Margiela's collection de-design preconceived structures of mainstream fashion but at the same time they conceptually deconstruct preconceived norms, and orthodoxies related to garment construction. Further, the androgynous dress revealing the stitches from the Spring/Summer 2009 collection of Yamamoto, as mentioned earlier in

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chapter two, like Margiela's *Semi-Couture* collection, is very parallel to Chalayan's *Memory Dress* in the way both de-designs reveal what should be hidden. This way both de-designs deconstruct the established norms of garment fabrication, what should be revealed and kept hidden.

Deconstructing the Concept of New in Fashion

The deconstructivist characteristics of re-using and re-making can be applied to the third wave deconstructivist designer Hussein Chalayan. In his Spring/Summer 2002 *Medea* collection (figures 28, 29, 30), the designer recreated his previous collection pieces and integrated them into new ones (English, 2011a, p. 162). In terms of design, the *Medea* collection engages with a similar design thinking with Margiela's Replica pieces, as mentioned earlier in chapter two.

Similar to the Replica pieces of Margiela that make use of already-used objects, in the *Medea* collection, Chalayan reworked his garments from older collections and combined these pieces with new ones. *Medea* collection featured multi-layered, de-designed garments, which looked shabby, torn apart, crumpled and unfinished. Some dresses had missing collars and parts, undone buttons, uneven cuts and asymmetrical designs. The garments were composed of different textures and fabrics one on top of another. Other old and second-hand garments were parts of the creations and they were matched with the designer's previous garments. The used and worn pieces of the garments were intentionally placed underneath the new fabrics. The new fabrics were torn, cut or ripped to reveal the old patterns and fabrics resting underneath (Kooij &

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Zijpp, 2005, p. 112; Violette, 2011, p. 76). With this collection, the designer states that he achieved 'deconstructed outfits whose origins could be told from the various layers' (as cited in Violette, 2011, p. 76).

As it is in plasticity, in this collection Chalayan receives his previous garment forms and recreates them by combining them with new pieces. By doing so, the designer obliterates the original forms of the garments from his previous collections. These three steps lead to the creation of de-designed garments and the reconstruction of new garments.

(Figure 28) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 2002, *Medea* Collection, De-designed Dress.

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(Figure 29) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 2002, *Medea* **Collection, De-designed Dress.**

(Figure 30) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 2002, *Medea* Collection, De-designed Dress.

In addition to Chalayan, Bora Aksu, as a third wave deconstructivist designer engages with a similar technique in his unconventional designs. The designer recreates existing forms related to fashion objects. A notable example is as his designs inspired by the Converse sneakers. With these designs, Aksu recreates new garments and fashion objects by de-designing the form and structure of the Converse sneakers (figure 31). Very similar to Malabou's plasticity and its three stages, Aksu takes the existing form of the Converse sneaker, gives a new form to it by generating new dresses and fashion objects from it and eventually destructs the original form of the Converse sneakers. This way, the designer de-designs an existing form of a fashion object. As it can be observed in figure 31,

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the form and structure of the Converse sneaker is de-designed and transformed into new creations: dress and bag.

(Figure 31) Bora Aksu, Spring/Summer 2007 Collection, Creations Influenced by the Converse Sneaker

Conceptually, these de-designed creations of Chalayan and Aksu suggest a different take on the concept of 'the new' in fashion. Fashion operates on change, as it is an extension of capitalism (Wilson, 1985; Craik, 1993; Bruzzi & Gibson 2000; Barnard, 2007; Entwistle, 2000; Khoo, 2007; Manlow, 2007; Felton, Zelenko, & Vaughan, 2012). As Stuart Ewen and Elizabeth Ewen (1992) explain:

> Fashion, perhaps more than any other area of consumption, was a piece of the marketplace that displayed an interaction between spontaneous choice and mass-produced goods. The process by which social desire was translated into commodified forms was more present within the realm of fashion- on the surface of things- than anywhere else in the unfolding consumer society.... The capitalist process of producing fashion on a mass scale, rather, was a fusion of expressed, popular desire and the powerful ability to replicate that materialization in a mass-produced, mass-marketed form (p. 169).

For mass consumption, mass production is a must and for mass production, the constant generation of the 'new' is compulsory. Roland Barthes (1967) states

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that, 'every new fashion is a refusal to inherit, a subversion against the oppression of the preceding fashion' (p. 273). However, de-designing through plasticity and reconstructing new designs out of existing objects or garments deconstruct and redefine the concept of normative change, novelty and the creation of the new in mainstream fashion. This is because these designers take existing or *old* forms, objects and items, de-design their structure and reconstruct them as *new* creations. By de-designing their original structure, the designers evolve and reconstruct existing items into completely new design forms. The de-designing of the items marks their death and their reconstructed new forms highlight their reincarnation. In this respect, through de-designing old objects and reconstructing new creations, these designers conceptually deconstruct the concept of newness through normative change because they generate innovation through *old* items.

As Chalayan and Aksu juxtapose the concepts of the old and the new in these de-designed creations, the generation of a 'new' that deconstructs the understanding of newness as 'for the first time' and 'not existing before' is created. Lars Svendsen (2004), Professor in the Department of Philosophy at the University of Bergen, Norway, argues that, 'the cultivation of novelty by the avant-garde was fuelled by the aim of creating the definitely new that could not be surpassed by anything newer' (p. 27). The thesis contends with Svendsen who refers to modernist design thinking because much as the designs of Chalayan and Aksu are avant-garde, they are definitely 'old' in the materials they use (a postmodern position of design). Yet, innovation comes into play at this point: The designers de-design existing, old objects and reconstruct them

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into new forms. On this account, the technique of de-designing old forms and presenting them as new creations lead to the juxtaposition of the old and the new. This leads to the reconstruction of the understanding of what is *new* in fashion. This reconstruction also conceptually deconstructs modernist design thinking.

Barthes (1975) argues that 'our evaluation of the world no longer depends ... on the opposition between noble and base but that between Old and New' (p. 40). Svendsen (2004), on the other hand, writes as follows 'the aim of fashion is the ceaseless continuation of a system that replicates the already existing one with something new, without any justification other than that the new is preferable to what already exists' (p. 33). Yet, the deconstructivist designers deconstruct the hierarchical binary of the new over the old by showing the dynamics between the opposites. In agreement with this conceptual deconstruction, Derrida (1967) argues that a way to undermine the hierarchy of binary oppositions is to show that their existence depends on each other, as mentioned earlier. De-designing that causes this type of deconstruction shows that the new cannot come into existence without the old. In this respect, these de-designs of Chalayan and Aksu connect binaries and deconstruct the hierarchy of the new over the old.

In addition to that, the abovementioned designs create a "Crisis of Representation". Before going further, it is necessary to explain what crisis of representation means. According to Malcolm Barnard (2014):

> This is the phase used by Roy Boyne and Ali Rattansi in their 1990 account found in Postmodernism and Society... the crisis that Boyne and

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Rattansi refer to comes about when the structures of representation begin to break down or lose their certainty. The crisis happens when the link or the connection between the signifier and the signified becomes less trustworthy. The argument is that where the link or the connection between the signifier and the signified becomes less trustworthy. The argument is that where the link between signifier and signified (between the thing doing the representing and the meaning or value that is represented) was once stable, reliable and predictable (as in modernism), that link is now unstable, unreliable and unpredictable (postmodernism) (p. 152).

The crisis of representation due to the unreliability of the signifier and the signified echoes Derrida's point of view on the meaning of a text, which is described as "undecidability". According to Jack Reynolds (2004):

Derrida contends that in all texts there are inevitably points of undecidability that betray any stable meaning that an author might seek to impose upon his or her text ... It is why his key terms are always changing, because depending upon who or what he is seeking to deconstruct, that point of undecidability will always be located in a different place (p. 46).

The de-designed garments this section has addressed conceptually suggest a crisis of representation and undecidability because the designers present literally 'old' and existing objects as 'new' garments. Thus, it becomes difficult to decide what they really are: are they old or new? Are they still accessories/items or garments to be worn? As a consequence, these creations' unclear and undecidable position enables infinite possibilities of interpretation that result from the unclear connection between their signifier and the signified. In this vein, the conceptual certainty related to what the fashion object is, is deconstructed.

The Deconstruction of Glamour and Perfection

As mentioned earlier in chapter two, *haute couture*, mainstream and high

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fashion realms use basic fabrics and materials to create their designs. These fabrics and materials can be of high quality and they provide the look of glamour and perfection. Hussein Chalayan, similar to the first wave deconstructivist Japanese designers, deconstructs the notions of glamour and perfection with his intentionally defected, de-designed creations.

Chalayan's Spring/Summer 2003 *Manifest Destiny* collection displays distortion, imperfection and a sense of incompleteness through unconventional design thinking and fabrics. As Loschek (2009) points out:

> Elastic fabrics were draped to leave openings in the front part of the dresses, from which the 'fabric nets' of discernible parts of clothing (sleeves, collars) swelled like organs from the body. The clothing is inverted and distorted; hollow areas appear to reveal the body in an arbitrary manner. The 'injured' clothing discloses not only the body but also the soul, comparable to a geographical introspection (p. 48).

In similar manner, Chalayan's Central Saint Martins graduation collection, *Tangent Flows* (figure 32), which was displayed in 1993 was experimental as it metaphorically collaborated with nature to create the de-designs of the collection. *Tangent Flows* 'featured garments that he [Chalayan] had buried with iron fillings in a friend's garden for six weeks and then exhumed just before the show' (Hoffman, 2009, p. 37). The aim of the collection was to create the effect of rust on the garments. The garments of the collection buried with iron fillings transformed by contact with earth and with the presence of water. The designs manifested change by means of nature's impact on them. The organic change nature created on the garments was a de-designing process to their forms prior to burial. The same organic change was also a reconstruction of the designs as the clothes revealed a transformation into

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completely different creations post-exhumation.

(Figure 32) Hussein Chalayan, 1993, *Tangent Flows* Collection, De-designed Dresses.

As it is in plasticity, this collection highlighted three important structural stages. Firstly, already existing garments were taken and their forms and structures were de-designed by the transformation they were exposed to when they were buried. This transformation marked the obliteration of the original forms and structures of the garments and thus, rendered them de-designs.

Similar to the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers, Chalayan's *Tangent Flows* collection revealed unconventional design thinking and an avant-garde technical process of garment construction, which manifested the look of poverty and imperfection. De-designing garments through their interaction with earth achieved the look. Conceptually, these organic garments not only deconstruct the understanding of mainstream materials used and craftsmanship in fashion through the de-designing process they are exposed to, but they also

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deconstruct the commercialized high fashion norms of perfection and glamour. In this respect, Chalayan's collection illustrates a connection with the first wave Japanese deconstructivist creations that carry significations of imperfection, destitution and poverty. The collection garments present the looks of age, shabbiness and defects. They intentionally use experimental techniques to obtain that look. These creations signify a brand new way of design thinking that deconstructs the key processes of fashion related to mainstream and *haute couture* fashion's concepts of perfection, glamour and beauty. These de-designed garments question these established norms of commercialized high fashion through the experimental materials and techniques they feature. Robin Givhan (1997), former fashion editor for The *Washington Post*, writes in the article "The Problem with Ugly Chic" as follows:

> Customers aren't really supposed to like these clothes. This is fashion with a message, a point of view. There are plenty of pretty frocks already in the stores. These clothes are intended to make folks rethink their notion of beauty, reassess their idea of fashion (and, of course, give them something completely different). Perhaps this is why ugly has passed muster as intellectual fashion (p. 267).

These creations uproot the binary of beautiful over ugly by showing that what is beautiful cannot exist without ugliness. As Eco (2004) writes, 'beauty could now express itself by making opposites converge, so that ugliness was no longer the negation of beauty, but its other face' (p. 321). Eco also says that:

> The created universe is a whole that is to be appreciated in its entirety, where the contribution of shadows is to make the light shine out all the more, and even that which can be considered ugly in itself appears beautiful within the framework of the general order (2004, p. 148).

However, no matter how subversive their position is against glamour, perfection and beauty, which are ideals suggested by the commercialized Western fashion

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(Vinken, 2005), Chalayan's designs still end up serving fashion and fuelling

capitalism despite their mockery of the concept of glamour, perfection and

beauty. According to Lynch and Strauss (2007), 'the radical experiments of a

workshop of creative designers create a stylistic shift that becomes widely

adopted and accepted as a mass fashion' (p. 100). In addition, Prudence Black

(2002) writes:

> Radical designers and radical ideals appear at intervals in fashion, as in other design disciplines, throwing existing ideas into question, challenging assumptions and the aesthetics of established taste. Shocking as they are at first, we gradually absorb these new ideas until they become less strange to our sensibilities, and slowly there develops a fundamental shift in perceptions and we reach another plateau of acceptance (p. 90).

With regards to the worn out look of experimental designs and their adoption

into the mainstream fashion, Kelley (2009), on the other hand, states that:

> Wear and tear, in our affluent society, no longer have such a meaning, but only a memory of it, that they are able to become aestheticized, sanitized, absorbed into the fashion system rather than posing a threat to it (p. 222).

In *Modern Art in the Common Culture* Thomas Crow (1996), Professor of

History of Art at Yale University, deploys the marginal and subcultural items of

culture and how they are integrated into the realm of mass consumption. By

doing so, he establishes connections between avant-garde art items and the

modern mass culture. Crow (1996) remarks that:

> In our image-saturated present, the culture industry has demonstrated the ability to package and sell nearly every variety of desire imaginable, but because its ultimate logic is the strictly rational and utilitarian one of profit maximization, it is not able to invent the desires and sensibilities it exploits. In fact, the emphasis on continual novelty basic to that industry runs counter to the need of every large enterprise for product standardization and economies of scale. This difficulty is solved by the very defensive and resistant subcultures that come into being as

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negotiated breathing spaces on the margins of controlled social life (p. 34).

Building on Crow's argument, the thesis proposes that the unusual, avant-garde creations' adaptation to capitalism is a form of avant-garde aesthetics being integrated into mass culture. This is also applicable to deconstruction in fashion despite its position against glamour and perfection. With regards to the contribution avant-garde fashion makes to luxury, De la Haye et. al. (2013) writes, 'today the luxury fashion market caters for the wealthy aristocracy through the avant-garde' (p. 104). In this vein, no matter how oppositional their stance is against the capitalistic domain of glamorized fashion, the unconventional designs of deconstructivist fashion get caught up in the vicious circle of capitalism. To illustrate, Chalayan's *Tangent Flows* collection was displayed at Browns, which is a 'luxury' boutique in London. As a second wave deconstructivist designer, Margiela, on the other hand, like his deconstructivist Belgian contemporaries Dries Van Noten and Ann Demeulemeester, is described as 'clearly manufactured in the interests of market capitalism' (Mosley, 2001, p. 24). Further, it is argued that these designers' 'images [are] mobilized to promote consumerist fantasies' (Mosley, 2001, p. 24).

Deconstruction of Time through Anachronistic Designs

In chapter two the thesis has argued that deconstructivist fashion garments deconstruct the concept of time and normative change in fashion through their de-designs, which defy the conventional understanding of time. The chapter has talked about the deconstruction of time through the de-designs of the second wave designer, Martin Margiela's Rotterdam gallery display. Chalayan's

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1993 graduation collection, *Tangent Flows,* is very similar to Margiela's gallery

display. This section will talk about how Chalayan's anachronistic de-designs of

his *Tangent Flows* collection deconstruct the concept of time in fashion.

With regards to his *Tangent Flows* collection, Chalayan explained that he was

looking at 'Isaac Newton, Renè Descartes, and Carl Jung' (as cited in Ryan,

2014, p. 154). The designer points out that the collection was 'about a

character' who tried to 'integrate Eastern and Cartesian thought' (as cited in

Ryan, 2014, p. 154). As discussed in the previous section, the garments of the

collection were buried for six days before being unearthed. Colin McDowell

(2014) in *The Business of Fashion* points out that, *Tangent Flows*, 'provoked

shock, even outrage, along with a great deal of sceptical merriment' (para. 2).

Similar to Margiela's Rotterdam Gallery display, as discussed in chapter two,

Tangent Flows collection displayed a look of destruction that, under normal

circumstances, could only be obtained over a very long period of time.

However, in *Tangent Flows*, the destructed look was obtained only in six days.

According to Kelley (2009):

> The deliberate achievement of a torn, frayed, or distressed look through
> artificial and accelerated means is very different from the sort of wear
> and tear that happens as a consequence of everyday life and the
> duration of time. It might reference the body and its processes, but it is
> not a direct result of them - rather, a simulation (p. 221).

Chalayan's *Tangent Flows* collection emphasizes Kelley's words. The collection

offers a simulation of decay and defects by the way the designer manipulates

time. Chalayan generates an organic artificiality that utilizes the earth to

simulate the effects of time. In this respect, the de-designed garments of

Tangent Flows collection suggest that the linear flow of time is deconstructed.
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In other words, the *organic* process of de-designing generates the *artificial* effects of time on the garments that lead to the deconstruction of the linear perception of time and its effects.

The three stages of plasticity (receiving, giving and destructing forms), which could be observed on the creation of the anachronistic garments of *Tangent Flows* collection, are what lead to the deconstruction of time. The sequential flow of these three processes remains the same however time is accelerated. In this respect, Chalayan's collection garments evoke Lynda Nead's crumpled handkerchief metaphor, which Evans (2003) touches upon in *Fashion at the Edge* (p. 21). As Evans explains:

> Nead's metaphor of the crumpled handkerchief evokes a topological concept of time as folded whereby distant points become 'close or even superimposed', and tears in the cloth can bring unconnected periods into proximity. She argues that our experience of time resembles the crumpled version of the handkerchief, rather than the flat ironed one: 'modernity, in this context, can be imagined as pleated or crumpled time, drawing together past, present and future into constant and unexpected relations and the product of a multiplicity of historical eras' (2003, pp. 20 and 22).

The de-designed anachronistic garments of *Tangent Flows* collection reveal that they are similar to the metaphor of the handkerchief. With the artificial acceleration of time, these designs show that the impact that is generated by long periods of time can be created in a very short time span. In this respect, these de-designs deconstruct the ordinary cycle of time. They juxtapose past and present, future and past, similar to the crumples of a handkerchief that brings together different parts of a linear material. According to Toby Slade (2010), associate Professor at the University of Tokyo researching Asian Modernity and the History and Theory of Fashion:

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> Resurrecting old forms and investing them with fresh significance and value as emblems of a past whose worth and moment has been newly clarified and acknowledged is an essential, though mainly reactionary, facet of fashion. What fashion may predominantly be, then, is a new way of ordering time and the forms that constitute milestones in it (p. 12).

Slade refers to the recycling of already used materials and how these materials are endowed with signifiers related to novelty and newness. He argues that the objects of the past that form the present new look result in a redefinition of the conventional understanding of the concept of time in fashion. What Chalayan does in this collection is just the opposite of what Slade argues: ageing new forms as opposed to re-presenting old forms. However, the result is the same as what Slade argues: the deconstruction of time. In this sense, by conceptually deconstructing the conventional norms of time, the designer reconstructs the conventional understanding of time.

Further to the matter, by deconstructing the linearity of time, the de-designed creations of Chalayan suggest a time phase that has never occurred. This argument is akin to the time hypothesis described as "Phantom Time". The German writer Heribert lllig put the hypothesis of phantom time forward. The historical conspiracy theory was first published in 1991. According to the hypothesis:

> The three centuries of the middle Ages did not exist in reality. The creation of these centuries was a conspiracy by the lords of Rome, the German-Roman Empire, and Byzantium. The time between 614CE and 911CE is argued to be a falsification (Aitamuto & Simpson, 2014, p. 233).

According to Jamie King (2015), writer of *Conspiracy Theories*:

> The apparent reason for this conspiracy between Roman Empire III, Pope Sylvester II, and perhaps also the Byzantine Emperor Constantine VII, who wanted to change the dating system so that they would be placed as central figures at the millennium. To do this involved rewriting history- including, apparently, inventing Charlemagne (p. 213).

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Further on the hypothesis, Louis Komzsik (2011) in *Cycles of Time: From*

Infinity to Eternity points out that:

> There are some historical and even archaeological facts that seem to
> prove the missing years hypothesis. The historical facts hinge on the so-
> called "dark ages". The years between the 600s and 900s are called such
> because they are barely any credible references actually written in that
> time period. References written later, but describing events and lives of
> historical figures during those years, are considered to be forgeries by
> some (p. 52).

When the hypothesis is applied to the de-designed creations of Chalayan's

Tangent Flows collection, it turns out the actual years that would take the

garments to look that old and defected are lost; they have never occurred. The

falsification of these years is embedded in the artificial effects that are featured

in the designs of the garments. The time-related fake defects of the garments

are parallel to the implausible references related to the 600s and 900s. Similar

to the unoccured (a phase that never happened or a gap in time) time phase of

the 600s and 900s and its so-called evidences, the marks and defects of the

designer's de-designed garments are just artificial creations; they are not a

consequence of the natural development of time. Rather, they are falsified

references of a so-called time phase that has never occurred. In this respect,

biology through its de-designing capacity, in these collections, is used as a tool

that deconstructs the conventional understandings related to the notions of

time, temporality and duration. The de-designed garments also feature a

reconstruction of the same notions through the way they offer alternative

formations of time that exist outside the preconceived definitions attributed to

it.

Further to the matter, it could be said that, the de-designed garments of

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Tangent Flows collection deconstruct the conventional flow and effects of time through bringing together the binaries of future and past. The juxtaposition of future and past eliminates the actual time phase needed and results in a look of artificial effects.

Deconstructing the Conventional Understanding of Garment and Body Forms

As a third wave deconstructivist designer, Bora Aksu has various de-designed creations that deconstruct the conventional understanding of the Western women's body figure. These creations of the designer align with the first wave deconstructivist designers. In addition to Kawakubo's and Miyake's creations and Comme des Garçons' projects with Sherman and Shanabrook as discussed in chapter two, the distorted de-designed tights of Aksu compose a significant deconstruction against the conventional understanding related to the proper figure of women's legs (figure 33). This subversion is commonly employed in the designer's collections.

Comparable to the three steps of plasticity, Aksu takes the proper form of women's leg shape and with cracked patterns, fishnets with intentional holes and ripped designs, the designer gives a new de-designed look and form to them and this way he destructs the conventional shape of the legs. For these reasons, the tights are de-designs. The fact that these tights are featured on models with perfect body figures yet, look distorted further reinforces their de-designed quality. As a consequence, the de-designed tights of Aksu deconstruct the notion of the sexually attractive legs of the commercialized mainstream

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fashion. This deconstruction leads to the reconstruction of a new leg form and understanding, which forms an alternative to Western fashion.

(Figure 33) Bora Aksu, Spring/Summer 2010 Collection, Deconstructed Tights.

Additionally, the designer's Autumn/Winter 2014 collection (figures 34, 35), which the author attended during London Fashion Week displayed many oversized garments that could be defined as de-designed. The designer's mother Birsen's letters written in the 1950s formed the inspiration for the collection:

> The mid '50's were a fragile period with mixed emotions as Birsen left her home to study. Missing her family but forging life-long friendships, her letters home with schoolyard snaps enclosed begins to tell our tale (Aksu, 2014, para. 2).

On the leaflet of the catwalk show it wrote:

> The juxtaposing ideas of uniformed society and individual will is what Bora Aksu has played upon through colour, form and texture... Combining formality and structure with a touch of rebellion the pieces have been crafted... In a world where one is expected to conform, we can all take inspiration from a teenager's letters full of dreams and

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wonder (Aksu, 2014, para. 5).

As stated in the leaflet of the catwalk show, the collection pieces were intentionally designed to highlight a challenge to conformity. The challenge against conformity also leads to the challenge and deconstruction against the notion of the perfect body fit of mainstream, commercialized fashion. This challenge and deconstruction have a direct link to plasticity. For Malabou (2012), the transformation of forms is a quality of the human body. Aksu's de-designed tights not only suggest a subversive design thinking process in relation to garment construction but the de-designs also reconstruct a new form of the body. This connects to Malabou's perception of the human body and its plastic capacity that constantly transforms. As it is in plasticity, Aksu takes the perfect form of the human body, reshapes it through unconventionally structured garments and visually destructs the preconceived female body figure. These garments are de-designed and being structurally and visually de-designed leads to the deconstruction of the conventional norms related to the ideal female body of Western fashion. In addition, as discussed in chapter two, these de-designs are very similar to the first wave Japanese and the second wave Belgian designers' creations that challenge the notion of the ideal female body.

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(Figure 34) Bora Aksu, Autumn/Winter 2014 Collection, Unconventionally Structured Garment, London Fashion Week. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

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(Figure 35) Bora Aksu, Autumn/Winter 2014 Collection, Unconventionally Structured Garment, London Fashion Week. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

These abovementioned creations are de-designed because they have a look

that questions conventional body proportions. Their appearance is bizarre and

dysfunctional. They subvert bodily and symmetrical limits. These de-designed

creations echo the ways Derrida talks about texts and their infinitely interpretive

capacity. As mentioned earlier in the methodology chapter, the strategy of

deconstruction goes against the understanding of the fixed, single meaning

texts have. Rather, texts are endowed with an infinite web of meanings and

interpretation capacities. Applied to body forms, Aksu shows that there are

various forms of displaying the body and that the human body cannot be

confined to a single visual silhouette as dictates mainstream and *haute couture*

fashion.

These de-designed creations also exhibit a grotesque display of the human

body with lumps, hunchbacks, oversizing and asymmetry that are intentionally

designed as parts of the garments to create distorted body figures. With these

de-designs, Aksu, arguably, deconstructs the conventional figure of the Western

women's body through the juxtaposition of the binaries of perfection,

imperfection, real and ideal on the models' bodies. Further, the designer

questions the notion of prettiness by unsettling the conventional, perfect

symmetry of a woman's body. With all these qualities, these de-designs can be

linked to the concept of the "Uncanny". Royle (2003) gives a useful definition of

what the uncanny means:

> The uncanny involves feelings of uncertainty, in particular regarding the
> reality of... what is being experienced... the uncanny is a crisis of the
> proper: it entails a critical disturbance of the very idea... Of properness
> of proper... It is a crisis of the natural, touching upon everything natural,
> touching upon everything that one might have thought was 'part of

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nature': one's own nature, human nature, the nature of reality and the world… it can take the form of something familiar unexpectedly arising in a strange and unfamiliar context (p. 1).

The third wave deconstructivist designer Aksu's featuring the concept of the uncanny in his collections suggest the deconstruction of 'properness' and the disturbance of the usual for the unfamiliar, which highlights a link that exists between the concept of the uncanny and deconstruction in fashion. All of the abovementioned examples distort the visual and natural reality of what we are used to seeing and accepting as logical enough for things to be real.

Rosemary Jackson (1981), teacher educator in the Department of Special Education and Administration at Georgia College and State University in Milledgeville, Georgia, remarks that the uncanny 'functions to subvert and undermine cultural stability' through creating 'fantasies of violating these taboos' (p. 40). In addition to Jackson, Creed (2005) writes that, 'the uncanny has the power to undermine the social and cultural prohibitions that help to create order and stability' (p. 4). Jackson's and Creed's arguments, when applied to the context of deconstruction in fashion show that deconstructive fashion adopts a counter position against the orthodox and orderly garment construction and body norms of mainstream and commercialized fashion. These designs have a chaotic look because of their anti-conformity against the conventional garment construction techniques and body silhouette that create an orderly and poured on look in mainstream, commercialized fashion. In this regard, they can be considered as uncanny because they uproot the expected norms that generate stability in visual fashion norms.

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The Use of Architectural Influences on Chalayan's Deconstructivist Fashion Design

'Fashion is architecture" states Annette Fischer (2009), Senior lecturer specializing in 3D Development on Fashion at the University of the Creative Arts, Epsom (p. 11). According to English (2011a):

> In her essay entitled 'Undressing Architecture: Fashion, Gender and Modernity', the architect Mary McLeod (1994: 92) makes a link between the lexicon of concepts such as structure, form, fabrication and construction that both fashion and architecture share. From this point onwards, fashion journalists including Amy Spindler of the *New York Times* (1993) began to refer to deconstructivist fashion as a means to loosely reference methodological analysis and critique of fashion's unfinished appearances (p. 83).

The link between fashion and architecture reveals a history of long standing as the symbol of architecture as dress can be traced back to Leonardo da Vinci's *Vitruvius*, even further back into ancient times (McLeod, 1994, p. 92). Furthermore, Karen A. Franck (2000), Professor at the School of Architecture and the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at New Jersey Institute of Technology, marks that, 'the continuing overlap of terms [fashion and architecture] suggest a deep commonality between building and clothing-in experience, ideas and design' (p. 94). Franck maintains that:

> Both buildings and garments are made by hand and machine to enclose and yet display the human body in all its physical, cultural and psychological dimensions. Each is an extension of that body. Each touches and is touched, seen and felt (2000, p. 94).

Blueprint which focuses on fashion and architecture began publishing in 1982. This corresponds with the emergence of the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers. The magazine brought together the domains of fashion, architecture and industrial design. In 2006 an exhibition entitled *Skin +*

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Bones: Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture (24 April - 10 August) took place in Somerset House, London. The catalogue of the exhibition explains the link between fashion and architecture with regards to form and appearance in the following manner:

> Their relationship is a symbiotic one, and throughout history, clothing and buildings have echoed each other in form and appearance. This seems only natural as they not only share the primary function providing shelter and protection for the body, but also because they both create space and volume out of flat, two-dimensional materials (Hodge, Mears, & Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006, p. 2).

McLuhan (1994), on the other hand, approaches the two domains from a similar yet also distinct perspective:

> Clothing, as an extension of the skin, can be seen as a heat-control mechanism and as a means of defining the self socially. In these respects, clothing and housing are near twins, though clothing is both nearer and elder; for housing extends the inner heat-control mechanisms of our organism, while clothing is a more direct extension of the outer surface of the body (pp. 119-120).

There is a compatibility of design thinking between fashion and architecture as both areas relate to each other. Beyond the similarities between fashion and architecture, the intentional design thinking that emphasizes architectonic qualities on clothes is something widely engaged in deconstructivist fashion, especially in the creations of the first wave Japanese and the third wave Turkish designers. The de-designs with architectonic qualities are used as a way of bringing an alternative perspective into mainstream design thinking of fashion and they deconstruct the norms related to the garment construction of the mainstream and commercialized fashion realms. Architectural qualities used in fashion garments prove as experimental ways of generating de-designs that are unfit to the conventional ones. In her PhD thesis *Scale-Body-Architecture*,

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Gabriella Lucia D'Angela (2008) writes the reflections of the recent interactions between fashion and architecture as follows:

> With their stated similarities, their relationship to materiality, permanency, and scale indisputably differ. While clothing is often thought of as delicate, feminine, and interchangeable, architecture explores the other aspect of robustness within its monumental masculinity and permanence. However, within recent decades, fashion and architecture alike have begun to challenge these stereotypes in which they find themselves. Fashion, in a sense, has manipulated the drawn boundaries of its implied nature by presenting instead garments infused with a flexibility that has rendered it masculine, surreal, sculptural and spatial (pp. 23-24).

Architectural influences on fashion garments offer a stimulating and enriching context for the generation of unconventional as well as experimental de-designs. As deconstruction in fashion seeks inspiration from various different fields to produce non-sellable garments that question mainstream norms in fashion, architecture emphasizes discerning perspectives from the conventional and it heightens the difference between mainstream fashion and deconstruction in fashion with the subversive inspiration it provides.

It could be argued that the architecturally inspired garments are an extension of the previous section dealing with body distortion. However, the de-designs of this section feature such obvious architectural qualities that these garments are discussed in a different section.

Hussein Chalayan's dress made of bubbles (figure 35) from the designer's Spring/Summer *Before Minus Now* (2000) collection is a de-designed creation that displays volume and its relation to space. Chalayan explains as follows:

> Everything around us either relates to the body or to the environment. I think of modular systems where clothes are like small parts of an interior, the interiors are part of architecture, which is then a part of an

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urban environment. I think of fluid space where they are all a part of each other, just in different scales and proportions (as cited in Quinn, 2005, pp. 29-30).

The dress of bubbles was from the designer's *Before Minus Now* collection. This collection was inspired by 'intangible phenomena like gravity, the forces of expansion and the weather, as well as the tectonic forces that cause all kinds of shapes in nature' (Kooij & Zijpp, 2005, p. 70). In this collection, there were various de-designed creations, which deployed 'the forces of expansion that are responsible for crystalline forms in nature. These forces are represented by '"hard", irregular, geometrically shaped and stiffly protruding panels' (Kooij & Zijpp, 2005, p. 74). The *Bubble Dress* was one of them. The garment reveals an unconventional design that is emphasized within the realms of architecture and fashion in relation to multi-dimensionality, space and volume.

The de-designed *Bubble Dress* is a milestone of architecture and fashion coming together because the geometric circular shapes of bubbles create the structure of it. As figure 36 reveals, the dress presents an asymmetrical look with bubbles of various sizes. These bubbles are attached to the skeleton-like structure, which is situated underneath the multilayers of the artificial bubbles. Akin to a see-through skeleton-like foundation of a building covered with glass, The *Bubble Dress* features a look of both an architectonic structure and a cloth that covers the body.

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(Figure 36) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 2000, *Before Minus Now* **Collection, The** *Bubble Dress*.

In this de-designed creation, the shapes and forms of bubbles create the dress in an unconventional way. An ordinary bubble has a weak structure, which pops as soon as it touches something. However, the materials used for the bubbles extend the structural quality of the bubble. In this case, bubbles do not pop but remain intact. Therefore, the bubbles produce a dress instead of disappearing. In this respect, the dress displays an absent presence with the existence of something that would, under normal circumstances, disappear. Further, with its geometrical various sizes of bubbles, the dress, like an architectural structure, takes up space. In this sense, through its voluminous structure, the design metaphorically dresses its environment as well.

The dress of bubbles is a de-design because through a design perspective akin

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to plasticity, the traditional structure of the human body is received, given a new form through architectonic qualities, and not only the body but also the conventional structures of clothes that are made to fit the human body are destroyed. The architectonic qualities of the de-designed dress lead to the deconstruction of the visual norms related to wearability and, thus, sellability.

Further to the matter, the de-designed dress is as the architecturally influenced de-designs of the first wave Japanese designers, which are discussed in chapter two. The similarity stems from the way they emphasize the space around the wearer rather than the body of the wearer.

Architectural influences' juxtaposition with postmodern fashion design marks a design perspective that blends areas together. In the article "Postmodernism: from the Cutting Edge to the Museum" published in *The Guardian,* Kunzru (2011) points out that:

> This is the essence of postmodernism: the idea that there is no essence, that we're moving through a world of signs and wonders, where everything has been done before and is just lying around as cultural wreckage, waiting to be reused, combined in new and unusual ways. Nothing is direct, nothing is new. Everything is already mediated. The real, whatever that might be, is unavailable. It's an exhilarating world, but uncanny too. You look around at your beautiful house and your beautiful wife and you ask yourself, like the narrator of the Talking Heads song: 'Well, how did I get here?" After that, it's only a short step to deciding that this is not your beautiful house and your beautiful wife at all. The world of signs is fast, liquid, delirious, and disposable. Clever people approach it with scepticism. Sincerity is out. Irony is in. And style. If modernism was about substance, about serious design solving serious problems, postmodernism was all manner and swagger and stance (para. 7).

> For designers, postmodernism meant making material things that felt like signs of themselves. The Italian pranksters of the Memphis group defined the aesthetic of the late 70s and early 80s with household objects that looked as if they'd materialized from cartoons, absurdly

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juxtaposed simple forms presented in bright, artificial colours. LA- based Peter Shire created candy-coloured furniture that always seemed on the verge of retreating back into two-dimensionality. His *Bel Air chair* of 1982 is the very avatar of postmodern weightlessness, an object that could exist at any scale, at home by a pool, in an aquarium, at the bottom of a cocktail glass. But postmodernism, protean, ever hard to pin down, wasn't just about a cartoon future. The taste for historical pastiche, for country kitchens and neo-Georgian kitsch, was also part of the same tendency. Laura Ashley, Merchant Ivory and the fake past of Poundbury are (whether Prince Charles knows it or not) just as postmodern, in their way, as the fashion designs of Rei Kawakubo or the graphic riot of Arata Isozaki's Team Disney building (para. 9).

Chalayan's de-designs that marry fashion with architecture are specific reflections of postmodern design thinking. These creations' framework is ambiguous as they feature characteristics of both realms of fashion and architecture; the significations are fluctuant, blurry and ambivalent. They are the perfect examples that make it evident that all alternatives have been exhausted.

Most of Chalayan's de-designed creations of postmodern thinking serve as fetishes because they deconstruct norms related to wearability and sellability. According to Clive Dilnot (1984), Professor of Design Studies in the School of Art and Design History and Theory at Parsons New York:

> The effects of advertising and design styling combined to make "things" less things in themselves and more totems, or images or fetishes of other things. And the curious situation that has arisen now is that, amongst the values expressed or represented by the design things, are those of "design" and "style" themselves. Design itself gradually became a fetish or a value (p. 10).

Further, John Albert Walker (1989), British art critic and historian, points out that, 'present industrial products' are like artworks that are 'isolated from people and the everyday environment, surrounded by a halo of light, the designed object becomes a fetish' (p. 58). These postmodern designs that bring

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architecture and fashion together strip off the original qualities of both realms. These creations are neither buildings to be inhabited nor fashion garments that could be worn on a practical basis. Rather, most of them, because of their non-wearability and non-sellability, end up in museums. On this account, they become totem pieces of the collections where the emphasis of a fashion show is applied and the trademark of the collection is marked.

Technology Oriented Deconstructivist Designs of Hussein Chalayan

The rest of this chapter will talk about creations constructed mainly with the influence of technology. It will look at intelligent clothing examples in non-commercial contexts and establish a link between these areas and third wave designer Chalayan's creativity. What follows will discuss Chalayan's technological showpieces under the concept of "Cyborgization". Further, it will illustrate how these designs exceed not only conventional fashion but also the use of techno textiles of the first wave Japanese designers. Chalayan takes the use of techno textiles a step further by the use of unconventional materials and in the way he reconstructs the fabric and material use. After making links amongst intelligent clothing's non-commercial realms and innovative textile use, and Chalayan's technological designs, the section will illustrate the relationship Chalayan's techno designs have with architecture under the concept of "Hybridization". Next, the section will explain how the designer reconstructs the body, garment and space relation due to his creations' architectural qualities that establish a unique relation with space.

Technology and its relation with wearables is not a subject limited to the

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domain of the first wave Japanese and the second wave Belgian

deconstructivist fashion design, as discussed in chapter two. It is also a topic of

interest to other contexts such as academia, medicine, military and security.

The following section will explore non-commercial designs specific to these

areas, which are generated through the interaction of clothes, textiles,

technology and electronics. To understand Chalayan's technology-oriented

designs, it is important to explain various types of intelligent clothing and

textiles that are created in non-commercial contexts; these creations and their

design thinking could be argued to be what influences Chalayan's de-designs.

Intelligent Clothing in Non-Commercial Contexts

Fashion is a realm that develops under the influence of technology yet

technological developments not only contribute to the way new materials in

fashion are generated but also feed other areas such as 'performance and

work-related products' (Gale & Kaur, 2004, p. 163). In other words, the

integration of technology into garments is not specific to the realm of fashion as

non-commercial contexts utilize technology for various purposes. According to

Colin Gale and Jasbin Kaur (2004), 'clothing is being reborn as a paradigmatic

concept, not within the world of fashion *per se* but within the worlds of

information technology, textiles and lifestyle marketing' (p. 158). De la Haye et.

al. (2013) points out that, 'while the major fashion companies are driven by the

requirement for commercial returns, the industry as whole looks for radical

innovation to individuals and small design teams, often as they emerge from

their respective academic institutions' (pp. 433-434). The multifarious use of

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technology has been influential in facilitating improvements in various kinds of domains. Some of these areas reveal a close relation with clothing and what follows will examine different disciplinary accounts on technology and wearables. Before exploring designs of intelligent clothing, it is necessary to explain what these non-commercial creations of different disciplinary accounts are. As Gale and Kaur (2004) explain:

> (They) require a range of core devices and performance properties. These will ultimately result in textiles and clothing that exhibit starting properties. These properties will range from fabrics that 'feel' or 'hear' to garments that 'know'. The majority of the ways that we access entertainment and communication through our senses-televisions, phones, music system's-will find technological equivalents in our clothes (p. 161).

These garments are called "Wearable Technologies" (Gale & Kaur, 2004) and they are defined as 'the electrical engineering, physical computing and wireless communication networks that make a fashionable wearable functional' (Seymour, 2008, p. 15). Similarly, Gale and Kaur (2004) simply define the term wearable technologies as, 'clothes that incorporate technology that is worn' (p. 174). These designs engage with 'soft computation', which uses 'conductive threads and materials to integrate electronics into fashion clothing' (De la Haye et. al., 2013, p. 432).

With regards to the historical context of products of intelligent clothing, in 1914 Giacomo Balla, Italian artist and founding member of the Futurist movement in painting, mentioned 'modifiers' which enabled dress wearers to 'not only modify but also invent a new dress for a new mood at any instant' (Lee, 2005, p. 115). Further, it was Filippo Marinetti, founder of the Futurist movement, who created 'tactile resonant metaphorical dress tuned to the hour, the day, the season and

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the mood to convey sensations of dawn, noon, evening, spring, summer, winter, ambition, love, etc.' (Lee, 2005, p. 115). In addition to these developments, 'the concept of integrating greater functionality into clothing developed strongly in the post-war II period, when investment was made in the technology of space exploration' (Lee, 2005, p. 432). It was in 1963 when NASA declared why cyborgs were needed for space exploration.

With regards to performance and work-related garments of technology in contemporary context, Natick Soldier Centre (NSC) designed an intelligent cloth called *Future Warrior* (FW) (figure 37), which is a 'visionary concept' related to the soldier of 2025 (Braddock & O'Mahoney, 1999, pp. 164-165). Webster (2012) explains the project as follows:

> In the shoulder of the *Future Force Warrior* uniform is a fabric filled with nano machines that mimic the action of human muscles, flexing open and shut when stimulated by an electrical pulse. These Nano machines will create lift the way muscles do and augment overall lifting ability by 25 to 35 per cent (p. 101).

(Figure 37) Natick Soldier Centre, 2010, *Future Warrior*.

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Future Warrior is a soldier combat ensemble, which is a more developed version of the *Objective Force Warrior* project of 2010 (figure 38). *Objective Force Warrior* project involves similar qualities such as protection from biological and chemical threats, body defence, communicative qualities and systems of control, and command (Erwin, 2002). The design of *Objective Force Warrior* features, 'a protective outer layer, a power centric layer and an inner life critical-each layer integrating a range of sophisticated and practical technologies' (Gale & Kaur, 2004, p. 166).

(Figure 38) Natick Soldier Centre, 2010, *Objective Force Warrior*.

The field of healthcare is another area that utilizes technological garments. According to Swift (2005), 'medico-scientific discourses have normalized the bodily construction of the cyborg, through the development and adoption of medical image technologies, advanced reproduction technologies, replacement body parts, etc.' (p. 100). For instance, Starlab has created a ' "health care"

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tier' that could be worn. The garment has 'sensors that monitor, administer medications via the epidermis and relay medical data to a physician who could diagnose the patient without a visit to the surgery' (Quinn, 2002, p. 111). In addition to healthcare, security system experts, Xybernaut, are working on developing *Mobile Assistant 5.28*, which is a technological garment designed for airport security. This wearable computer is designed for recognizing faces of suspicious travellers (Quinn, 2002, p. 115).

Technological Textiles in Non-Commercial Contexts

Apart from the designs with technological qualities, a considerable amount of literature has pointed out the large and growing number of designs of non-commercial contexts, which utilize technological textiles (Braddock & O'Mahony, 1999; Bolton, 2002; Quinn, 2002; Gale & Kaur, 2004; Seymour, 2008). Electronic Brands, academic and scientific institutions display an increasing interest in "Electronic Textiles". An electronic textile can be defined as 'a material that incorporates capabilities for sensing (biometric or external), communication (usually wireless), power transmission, and interconnection technology' that 'allow sensors other computational devices to be networked together within a fabric' (Sommerer, Mignonneau, & King, 2008, p. 138). Electronic textiles have unconventional capabilities that enhance the physical capabilities of the body and life in general. These improvements are provided by the advanced qualities of the textiles that have a close relation with technology. What follows will provide some examples of electronic textiles used in non-commercial contexts.

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In 2001, the *Oricalco Shirt* (Figure 39) was designed in Empoli, Italy in collaboration with European Space Agency (ESA). The textiles on the shirt's sleeves could 'recover any shape, pre-programmed, upon heating' (Seymour, 2008, p. 188). The shirt functioned as follows:

> The fabric used on for the sleeves of the *Oricaloco Shirt* could be programmed to shorten immediately as the room temperature became a few degrees hotter. The fabric can be screwed up into a hard ball, pleated and creased and then automatically pop back to its original shape with just exposing it to hot air (even a hair dryer) (Seymour, 2008, p. 188).

(Figure 39) European Space Agency, 2001, *Oricalco Shirt*.

Another type of techno textiles was generated within the Japanese scientific academia. Susumu Tachi is the founding director of the Robotics society, Japan. His creation was named as the *Invisibility Cloak* (Figure 40) and it was designed in 2003. The *Invisibility Cloak* was created in Tokyo University. The design is a see-through cloak that, in fact, is a screen. Smith and Topham (2005) explain how the cloak operates:

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Images are shot by a camera placed directly behind the subject, relayed through a computer and then projected on to the front of the coat. Ordinarily, this process would not be possible in broad daylight, as the projected image is not bright enough to be noticeable. Tachi's cloak is made using retro-reflective material, the same type of material applied to road signs and bicycle reflectors. When light is projected on to a non-retro-reflective surface, such as cinema screen, it bounces off in all directions. When an image is projected onto a retro-reflective surface, such as Tachi's cloak, the light bounces back only in the direction from which it came (n.p.).

(Figure 40) Susumu Tachi, 2003, The *Invisibility Cloak*.

Furthermore, Philips is a brand of electronic products that has been carrying out cross-disciplinary scientific experiments, which reconcile electronic textiles and digital clothes with other fields. It was Philips that:

Catalysed new thinking by engaging textile and fashion designers with industrial designers and engineers in the 1990s, setting up a design lab within their UK research base with a specific remit to create clothing prototypes with embedded electronic functionality (De la Haye et. al., 2013, p. 430).

The headquarters of Philips design is in Eindhoven, Netherlands. Here, a non-sellable, non-commercial design was generated. The design was created collaboratively with the Skin Probe Project. This design features qualities that act like the human skin. These qualities involve 'an electrical sensor, a display, a thermal regulator, a chemical filter' (Seymour, 2008, p. 140). Further, the design 'explores the kind of materials that could emulate some of the skin's

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particular functions' (Seymour, 2008, p. 140).

Another experimental project of electronic textiles at Philips is the *Blush Dress* (figure 41). The Skin Probe Project also generated the *Blush Dress* in 2006 in Netherlands. The Skin Probe Project 'examines more "analog" phenomena such as emotional sensing, and explores technologies that are "sensitive" rather than "intelligent" ' (Seymour, 2008, p. 141). The *Blush Dress* basically reacts to its wearer's body so as to display the feelings of the individual on its design (Seymour, 2008, p. 141).

(Figure 41) The Skin Probe Project, 2006, The *Blush Dress*.

European Space Agency designed *K-Cap* (figure 42) in 2007 in Empoli, Italy.
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The garment and its special textile were created for 'high altitude use'
(Seymour, 2008, p. 186). Its materials included a 'shape memory membrane'
and a 'binary-stretch warp-knit fabric' (Seymour, 2008, p. 186). The design had
'a memory active membrane, which modifies its physical structure according to
variations in temperature, copying the behaviour of human skin' (Seymour,
2008, p. 186).

(Figure 42) European Space Agency, 2007, *K-Cap*.

Cyborgian De-designs and Chalayan

Cyborgian Times

Having explained technological garments and textiles in non-commercial
contexts, this section will focus on the concept of the "Cyborg" before moving
on to analyse Chalayan's cyborg de-designs. In connection with the
technological qualities that blend with wearables, the next section will talk

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about scholars who have interpreted technology as an extension of the human body. The scholars take it a step further and claim technology to be an 'organ' of the human body. The electronic textiles used in intelligent clothing are different in that they are created with the aim of providing the human body with an external support.

Long before the term cyborg was coined, technology and technological tools, as extensions of our bodies, had been a topic of discussion. Various scholars and philosophers have touched upon how technology and devices of technology could be interpreted as elements that increase the capacity of our bodies, like artificial organs. Aristotle (1981 [350 B.C.E]), in his work *The Politics* talks about various extensions of the human body. He points out that:

> Now instruments are of various sorts; some are living, others lifeless; in the rudder, the pilot of the ship (the *kybernetes*) has a lifeless, in the look-out man, a living instrument; for in arts (*techne*), the servant is a kind of instrument (p. 31).

Political economist Karl Marx (1993 [1939]) is another name who interpreted technology as 'organs' of the human body in his work *Grundrisse: The Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*. According to Marx:

> Nature builds no machines, no locomotives, railways, electric telegraphs, self-acting mules, etc. These are the products of human industry; natural material transformed into organs of the human will over nature... They are organs of the human brain, created by the human hand (p. xviii).

In addition to Aristotle and Marx, in his work *Grundlinieneiner Philosophie der Technik* (Outlines of a Philosophy of Technology) written in 1877, Ernst Kapp, German philosopher of technology, mentions tools of technology as organs of the human body. He writes as follows:

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Since the organ whose utility and power is to be increased is the controlling factor, the appropriate form of a tool can be derived only from that organ. A wealth of intellectual creations thus springs from hand, arm and teeth. The bent finger becomes a hook, the hollow of the hand a bowl; in the sword, spear, oar, shovel, rake, plough and spade, one observes the sundry positions of arm, hand, and fingers (as cited in Mitcham, 1994, pp. 23-24).

Lastly, in 'Frenzy, Mechanism and Mysticism', philosopher Henri Bergson points out technological devices and tools as extensions of our organs. According to Bergson (2002):

If our organs are natural instruments, our instruments must then be artificial organs. The workman's tool is the continuation of his arm, the tool- equipment of humanity is therefore a continuation of its body. Nature, in endowing each of us with an essentially tool-making intelligence, prepared for us in this way a certain expansion. But machines which run on oil or coal ... have actually imparted to our organism an extension so vast, have endowed it with a power so mighty, so out of proportion with the size and strength of that organism, that surely none of all this was foreseen in the structural plan of our species (p. 332).

In contemporary studies, Farren and Hutchison (2004) argue that 'the term "cyborg" is now being used to describe our dependency on technology to articulate our physical being' (p. 463). Similarly Gray (2001) writes that:

The few of us who are not already "forged" through immunizations, interfaces, or prosthetics are embedded nonetheless in countless machine/organic cybernetic systems. From the moment your clock radio wakes you up in the morning, your life is intimately shaped by machines. Some of them we merge with almost unconsciously, such as the car we drive, the computer we work with, or the television we zone out in front of. Others involve more conscious interfacing. Overall, the effect is an extraordinarily symbiosis of humans and machines (p. 19).

Anything that our body is incapable of doing but rendered possible by technology makes us half cyborgs. Mobil phones, tablets, prosthesis, sensitive cameras etc. -anything that is being carried approximately on everyone when we take a look around and anything that endows our bodies with an artificial

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improvement, whether of need or want, render us half cyborgs.

Having explained technological wearables and techno textiles in relation to various non-commercial realms and shown that a considerable number of different disciplines are interested in designs that marry technology and clothes for various purposes, the section has also talked about technology as an organ of humans by various scholars. The following section will examine the evolution of the term cyborg in the twenty-first century.

Defining the Cyborg

The concept of "Cyborg" is defined as 'a being who consists of both biological and artificial parts. The cyborg is a mixed being between living organism and machine' (Loschek, 2009, p. 125). It has been suggested by Professor in the History of Consciousness Department at the University of California, Donna Haraway (1991), that the cyborg is a 'hybrid of machine and organism' (p. 149).

According to Quinn (2002), 'the concept of the human cyborg resulted from Manfred Clynes and Nathan Kline's theories of how humans could survive in extra-terrestrial environments by being equipped with medical implants and prostheses' (p. 53). They 'discussed the possibility of altering human bodily processes through the implementation of artificial, self-organizing biochemical, physiological and electronic modifications' (Swift, 2005, p. 100). It was again the two who 'joined the "cybernetic" and "organism" into "cyborg" signalling the possibility that living and non-living could be combined into one harmoniously organized system' (Farren & Hutchison, 2004, p. 463).

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Farren and Hutchison (2004) argue that 'the body-garment relationship involves technological-human evolution, the often theorized "post human" condition' (p. 473). By this argument, it is suggested that garments develop in agreement with technology and the developed technological wearables lead to the term post human. This is because technological wearables reveal a close interaction with the human body. Chalayan's designs display a fine demonstration of what Farren and Hutchison claim with technological garments that operate in relation to the body and the space around it. In this respect, the thesis claims Chalayan's technological creations to be cyborg de-designs. The following section will examine specific de-designed garments and collections of Chalayan which, as opposed to the *non-commercial* designs discussed in the previous section, are *commercial* creations endowed with technological properties.

De-designing the Use of Conventional Materials through Techno Textiles

This section will talk about Chalayan's technological textiles, as textiles of technology are a significant quality of the designer's cyborg de-designs. The cyborg creations this section will talk about are described as de-designed because they come to existence by way of plastic design thinking that results in a subversion of materials. These de-designs deconstruct norms related not only to mainstream and commercialized fashion but also to the first wave deconstructivist Japanese designers' use of textiles. Chalayan's de-designed cyborg creations deconstruct the first wave deconstructivist Japanese design and the understanding of conventional materials of commercialized fashion realm with the use of *technology as textile*.

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Chalayan created de-designed techno textiles when he collaborated with Swarovski and produced dresses with LED (light-emitting or luminescent diodes) lights for his Autumn/Winter 2007 *Airborne* collection. Seymour (2008) explains the collection in the following manner:

> The collection uses climate as a metaphor and reflects our primal feelings towards nature and the cycles of weather. An LED dress consisting of 15.600 LEDs, combined with crystal, displays short abstract films that correspondents the arrival of a particular season (p. 30).

A similar technology was used in the designer's Spring/Summer *Readings* collection of 2008 (Figure 43), which featured 'dresses with fitted laser lamps' that:

> Symbolize worshipping the sun. Although in this collection Chalayan was concerned with the historical development from sun worship to glorification of individual personalities, these dresses that glowed by means of laser could also be interpreted as a visualization of the energy radiated by the wearer, the rays of which may be binding (Loschek, 2009, p. 69).
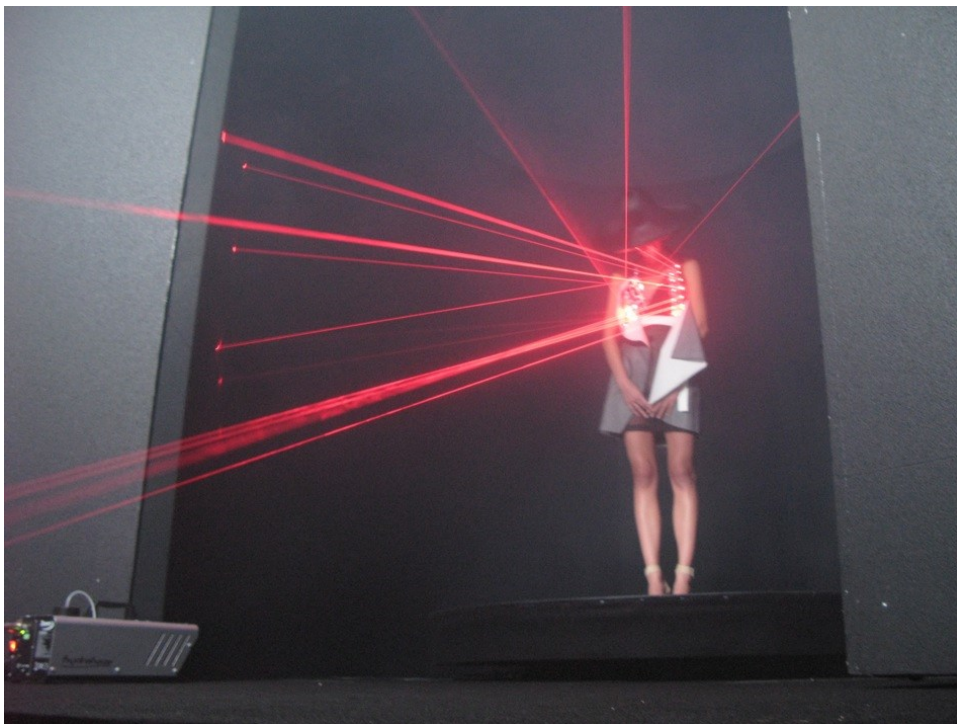
(Figure 43) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 2008, *Readings* Collection, The *Laser Dress.*

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The mentioned collections of the designer display an intense innovation related to technology and textiles. In the garment construction of these collections (specific de-designed dresses), materials are taken, given a new form and their textile-based structure is destructed. These three steps result in the garments' being plasticised. These garments are not only developed through technology but they are a *display* of technology. In this respect, a comparison between the first wave deconstructivist Japanese designers and Chalayan reveals that Chalayan's designs are not textile or fabric oriented. Rather, the way the designer treats textile is technology and electronics oriented. While the Japanese designers improve fabric and textile with the latest technological developments, Chalayan makes use of technology as textile. In this respect, Chalayan's designs exemplify a cyborgization of textiles.

Chapter two has pointed out that the first wave deconstructivist Japanese designers generate de-designed garments with advanced textiles by means of technology. This way, chapter two has argued that the Japanese designers deconstruct and reconstruct norms related to mainstream fashion design and its understanding of conventional textiles by offering new, unconventional horizons of generating experimental textiles. Yet, Chalayan goes beyond this innovative approach. Chalayan deconstructs and reconstructs norms of garment making that the first wave deconstructivist Japanese fashion displays. The designer does so through his de-designed cyborg creations that traverse boundaries of cloth, dress, fabric and textiles. Chalayan, in a metaphorical sense, designs 'wearable machines' through his wholly technological creations. It is his de-designed cyborg creations that deconstruct the first wave Japanese designers'

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use of techno textiles. This is because the materials of his creations oppose the fabric and textile use of the Japanese designers. Chalayan's designs have hard and unconventional materials that belong to fields outside of fashion such as parts of aeroplane and automobiles, nanotechnology, engineering, architecture, new technology and machine aesthetics (Evans, 2005, p. 9). As a result, Chalayan's garments deconstruct the conventional understanding of textile by redefining it through technology-based, hard and electronic materials.

As mentioned earlier in chapter two, it is undeniable that the Japanese designers de-design the conventional materials of mainstream fashion through integrating technology into fashion to create an advanced use of textile. However, the thesis argues that Chalayan goes beyond what Japanese designers do with technology and textiles; he de-designs, redefines and reconstructs the concept of textile. As a consequence, technology is both the tool and the virtual product in his creations.

Hybridization of Cyborg Garments

Chalayan is a fashion designer who makes links between architecture and fashion, as discussed earlier. With regards to his deconstructivist de-designs with architectonic qualities, the designer explains as follows, 'my thinking is on a parallel with architects, sometimes I borrow concepts from architectural theory and apply them to something else' (as cited in Kooij & Zijpp, 2005, p. 48). These designs of architectonic qualities display deconstructive and reconstructive qualities as explained in *Landscapes of Mobility: Culture, Politics, and Placemaking*:

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Appropriated from architecture, deconstruction in fashion design articulates a process of taking apart and rearranging panels, pieces, layers and fastenings and putting them back together in order to make visible the garment's construction. Reconstruction, on the other hand, as defined by Quinn (2002: 130), characterizes garments that "appear to be in mid-manufacture. Like deconstruction, the process of construction is highlighted, but the emphasis is on completing the process rather than destroying it (Johung & Sen, 2013, p. 23).

Johung and Sen (2013) argue that, Chalayan's designs:

Both protect and are protected by the body, as formidable enhancements of the skin, as well as hidden objects and structures. As transformable clothing and as wearable architectural sites, Chalayan's garments are both structurally solid and permeable, both furniture and second skin (p. 24).

In addition to the use of architecture and fashion in his design perspective, the designer produces garments through technology. He adopts technological properties such as cables, devices and computerized performances into the context of fashion and endows technology with an artistic touch. As he explains:

For me, technology essentially broadens my language as a designer. I'm interested in languages that allow you to go beyond consideration of the body or 'normal' clothing to create new ways of looking. The importance of technology in my work is that it presents a fresh means of expression (as cited in Kooij & Zijpp, 2005, p. 95).

Technology's brush with architecture generates a "Hybrid" process that manifests itself in the de-designed cyborg garments of the designer. Hybridity is reinforced in Chalayan's own words, 'this way of thinking about fashion is still quite new to the fashion world, but it's what is moving things forward. The fashion audience doesn't really know about technology or architecture... But they soon will' (as cited in Clark & Brody, 2009, p. 390). The section argues Chalayan's cyborg designs to be hybrids because their artificial aspect brings

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together qualities of architecture and electronics. The designer's showpieces are neither purely technological nor purely architectural designs, but a combination of both. These hybrid, cyborg de-designs deconstruct the notions of wearability, sellability, use of materials, construction norms and design thinking in fashion, which encompass almost the whole fashion framework.

The following garments and collections will seek to explore Chalayan's de-designed cyborg creations with regards to their hybrid qualities. The first garment, the *Remote Control Dress*, will be observed through an object-based methodology by Kim and Mida (2015). The following object-based research is made in *Across Art and Fashion* exhibition that took place in Salvatore Ferragamo Museum the author attended in Florence, Italy in 2017.

The Remote Control Dress

Observation

General

One of the creations of *Before Minus Now* Spring/Summer 2000 collection is the *Remote Control Dress*, which is an example of the designer's hybrid, cyborg designs. Figure 44 illustrates an image of the dress from the catwalk show before presenting the images the author took from the *Across Art and Fashion* exhibition to analyse the creation. The dominant colour of the dress is white and the other colour is pink. It is a minimal design, as it does not feature any patterns. The most unusual aspect of the garment is that it features 'remote controlled Perspex panels' (Wills, 2010, p. 93). Further, another unusual aspect of the garment is its unconventional robotic, mechanical look.

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(Figure 44) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 2000, *Before Minus Now* **Collection, The** *Remote Control Dress.*

Construction

The design had a plain sleeveless structure and its rear fiberglass panels uncovered a feminine-looking pink tulle, which revealed a contrasting transformation to the dress' masculine style and material structure. The dress' front and back were composed of matching parts: two same looking different parts (the front and the back of the dress) were held together by metal clasps or silver metal closures (figures 45 and 46). Also, the same metal clasps were used over the shoulders. The panel at the back of the dress looked very similar to an airfoil, opening to reveal the tulle, as figure 47 illustrates. Underskirt was a machine-sewn pale pink cotton plain weave with hand-gathered tufts of machine-sewn white synthetic tulle. The front of the dress looked like it had different compartmental parts (figure 48). The upper left side of the dress, on the other hand, seemed more complex in terms of its structure as there were

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deeper and more lines that constituted the borders of the compartments. The length of the dress is 102 cm. Its width is 66 cm and its thickness is 29 cm.

Textiles

The dress revealed a cotton plain weave with hand-gathered tufts of machine-sewn white synthetic tulle at the back. The structure of the dress involved architectural shapes and technological aspects. The design was embellished with silver metal hardware and formed through hard materials. The dominant materials used in the dress were fiberglass, metal, cotton, synthetic and nylon tulle. There were no labels attached to the skirt for its care because of it is non-wearable and non-textile qualities.

Use and Wearing of the garment

The dress shows no evidence of wear. There is no damage observed.

Supporting Material

The *Remote Control Dress* was featured in exhibitions such as *Hussein Chalayan: Fashion Narratives* in Les Arts Decoratifs in Paris (2011) and *Blog Mode: Addressing Fashion* Exhibition at Metropolitan Fashion Institute, New York (2008). The dress was also featured in *Across Art and Fashion* exhibition in the Salvatore Ferragamo Museum, Florence, Italy (2017).

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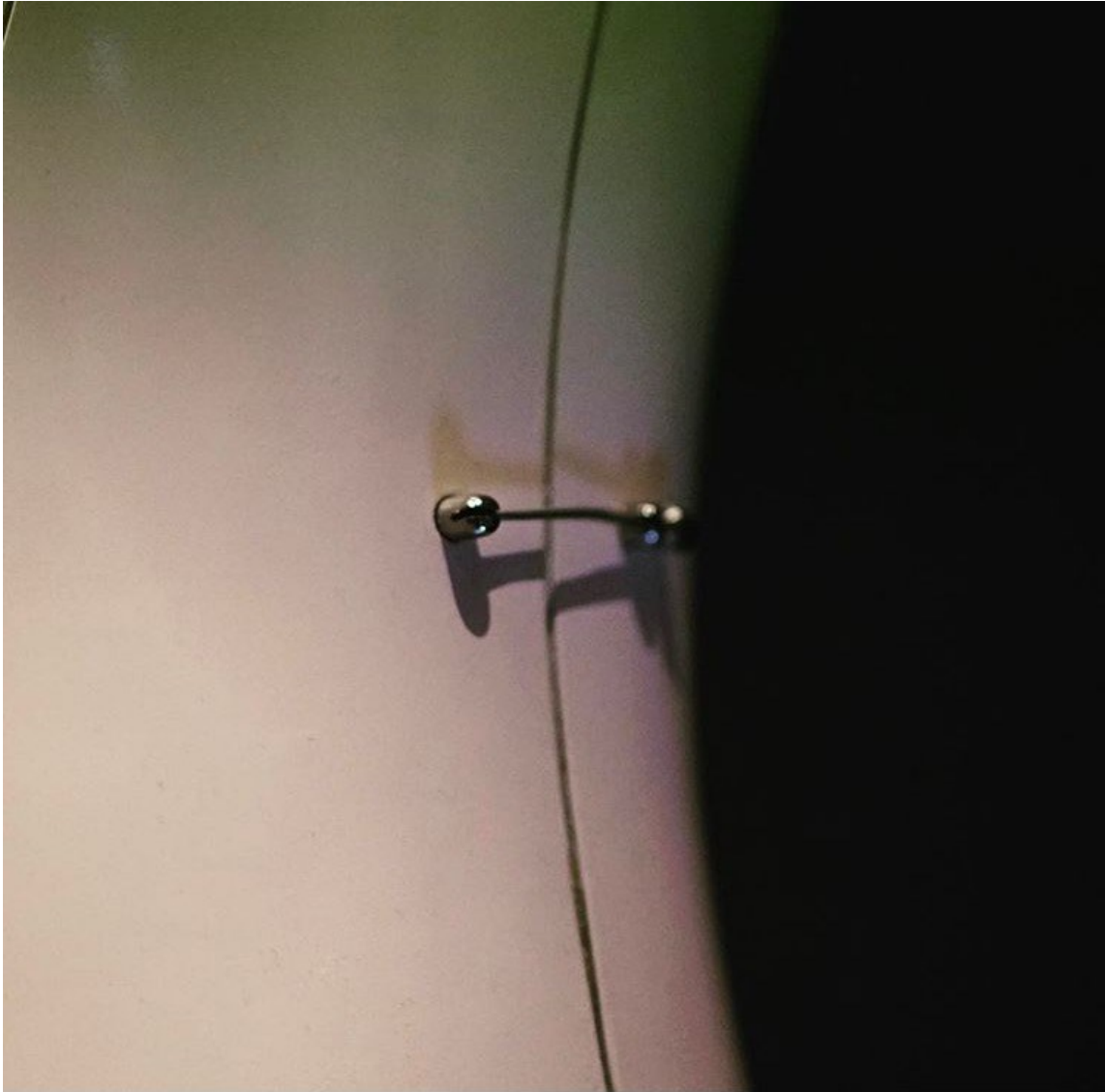
(Figure 45) Detail of the Metal Structure That Looks Like Safety Pins. *Across Art and Fashion* **(2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

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(Figure 46) Details of the Metal Structures That Look Like Safety Pins. *Across Art and Fashion* **(2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

(Figure 47) Detail of the Back of the Dress Similar to an Airfoil, Revealing the Tulle. *Across Art and Fashion* **(2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

(Figure 48) The Front of the Dress Resembling Compartmental Parts. *Across Art and Fashion* **(2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

The *Chair Dress*, a similar garment from *Across Art and Fashion* exhibition, had

a similar hybrid and cyborg look and quality (figure 49). The garment's

hybrid/cyborg look immerged from its electronic and architectural qualities. The

Chair Dress was from Chalayan's Spring/Summer 1999 *Geotrophics* collection.

Plastic and metal were the materials used in the design's construction. Further,

'chrome catches made for the motor industry' were also used (Evans, 2003, p.

271). The length of the design is 59 cm. Its width is 63 cm and its thickness is

18 cm. The design had a cyborg look due to its robotic form, unconventional

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materials and non-textile quality. The light green *Chair Dress* was composed of three parts: the headrest, the backrest and the seat. All three pieces were held together by a piece of black metal bar in the posterior of the garment (figure 50). Further, the dress also had a hybrid look as it suggested technology, and the architectural structure of a chair.

(Figure 49) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 1999, *Geotrophics* Collection, The *Chair Dress. Across Art and Fashion* (2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

(Figure 50) Three Pieces Held Together by a Piece of Black Metal Bar in the Posterior of the Garment. *Across Art and Fashion* **(2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

Reflection

The *Remote Control Dress* has a mixture of masculinity and femininity in terms of its look and it evokes the look of a cyborg. It suggests at once a masculine

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look by its minimal design and hardware material but also projects femininity with the pink tulle it features at the back, which evokes the look of a ballerina tutu. It is hard to call it a garment and talk about the existence of real textiles and fabrics except the tulle that appears underneath when the dress is operated with a remote control. One would expect to see care instructions tag as in a usual fashion garment. However, it would be ironic to look for one on this design as it seems to need a full handbook of instruction for its care, operation and functions similar to a service handbook belonging to an electronic item. The concept of cyborg is further reinforced at this point as *human beings* are expected to wear the dress, which electronically functions and which can be controlled. The *Remote Control Dress* draws attention to how it 'operates', instead of how it is 'worn', by its technological structure. Also, its structure echoes the architectural interior structure of an airplane, which renders the garment a hybrid that intersects the domains of technology and architecture. The type of construction is consistent with the dating of the design as the year was the millennium and the cyborg dress deployed the connection amongst humans and technology.

Contextual Information

Nick Knight photographed the *Remote Control Dress* for British *Vogue* in 2008 (figure 51). Scholarly documents and exhibition catalogues have referenced the *Remote Control Dress*. With regards to the links between the dress' technology and architectonic qualities, the catalogue of *Skin + Bones: Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture* (2006) exhibition explains the *Remote Control Dress* as follows:

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> Made from the same material used in aircraft construction and change[ed] shape by remote control ... An appreciation of this kind of dress design is in formed by the language of architecture. The dress is independent of the body but is made to fit the body (Hodge, Mears, & Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006, p. 6).

The dress responds to its surroundings and reveals a transformation in its design with respect to the space around it (Clark & Brody, 2009; Loschek, 2009).

Further, Quinn (2002) explains the dress in a metaphorical way, 'the contours of the dress [is] characteristic of vehicle construction, while [its] hard exterior gives shield-like properties reminiscent of snails and crustaceans' (p. 363). The dress has been described as 'a high-tech triumph that married fashion and architecture technology' (Geczy & Karaminas, 2013, p. 71). Swift (2005) argues that, 'cyborg technology responds to changes in the lived environment' (p. 104). Similarly, it can be observed in the *Remote Control Dress* that:

> A degree of flexibility is provided by the presence of flaps that move and open the surface partially... Movement occurs along defining lines, which form the stitches/joints/seams of the fabric/fibre. The dress mediates a uniform appearance in terms of the material used (one visible material), the white colour (monochromatic) and the line of axis (expect when folds open). It has an iconic form that is dissolved into several bits and pieces (Reinhardt, 2006, p. 18).

As regards to architecture, the *Remote Control Dress* is a design, which reveals the relationship between body and space as Chalayan explains:

> If you alter the way the body comes across in the space around it, then the body alters everything in the space that affects it... The dress can also be transformed invisibly by the environment. The idea was a technological force between the environment and the person (as cited in Quinn, 2002, p. 53).

Further, curator Madra states that:

> He has a line, he has a beginning and he is following a path. He is very

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conscious about what he is doing. I mean I don't think there are coincidences in his work. Maybe there are different inspirations but not coincidental inspirations. He is chasing these inspirations with consciousness (B. Madra, Personal communication, July 3, 2013).

It could be argued that a dynamic of cause and effect exists in the way Chalayan makes his clothes and his *Remote Control Dress* fits into his *oeuvre* as a designer.

The impetus to examine the garment lies in the way it forms a signature of Chalayan's technological and architectural hybrid/cyborg de-designed garments and for this reason the garment demonstrates a complexity of construction.

(Figure 51) The *Remote Control Dress* by Nick Knight for British *Vogue,* December 2008.

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Interpretation

The unconventional form, weight and material of the *Remote Control Dress* suggest a range of research possibilities including:

1. An analysis of visual hybridity that juxtaposes architecture with technology and the organic with the artificial. This way, the creation evokes the concept of a hybrid cyborg.

2. The garment's interpretation from the perspectives of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction.

The dress is a hybrid as it features technological and architectural qualities. It has architectural details within its structure and the fact that its operation can be controlled reveals a design thinking of technology. Further, the dress echoes the look of a cyborg because; although it has a mechanical look, a human is meant to wear it. This creates the appearance of a cyborg generated out of the unity of the animate and inanimate.

The dress can also be interpreted by a design perspective of plasticity. The material and visual notions of the conventional dress are taken, given a new form through architectural and technological elements. This results in the reconstruction of a garment that is non-sellable as well as non-wearable. With its unusual construction, the *Remote Control Dress* de-designs the use of conventional materials and the structure of conventional dress. Further, with this de-designing process, the dress deconstructs as well as reconstructs notions related to *haute couture* and mainstream fashion such as sellability, wearability.

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Moving away from the analysis of the *Remote Control Dress* from the perspective of Kim and Mida's methodology, Chalayan's Spring/Summer 2008 *Readings* collection featured the *Laser Dress* as illustrated earlier in figure 43. The dress 'reflect[ed] light from the garment and bounc[ed] it off mirrors surrounding it, thus represent[ed] the interplay between the scrutinized figure and the audience' (Seymour, 2008, p. 29). The garment was an 'e-electronic' creation, which means 'functional electronic objects (were) integrated into clothing' and this way, 'portables become wearable and clothing becomes a user surface- in other words, an electronic interface' (Loschek, 2009, pp. 122-123). Similar to the *Remote Control Dress*, the *Laser Dress* is also a hybrid as it features technological and architectonic qualities. The dress has electronic LED lights that act as technological details within its structure, thus, revealing a design thinking of intense technology. The qualities of the dress, which are related to architecture, are explained as follows:

> The graphical rays that the effect creates are intended to represent the aura of performance. In reality, the outfits delineated the space surrounding them to the extent that they suggest fashion as not only architecture of the body, but also one of space (Hodge, Mears, & Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006, p. 56).

The *Laser Dress* echoes the look of a hybrid cyborg because the layers of lasers create the dress' non-existent volume. With the beams of red lasers, the dress takes up a large amount of space and constitutes an intangible volume. In creating such a design, technology is an indisputable force that has been utilized. The dress looks like a female version of terminator. With its beams of lasers pointing at various directions, it reminds one of a gun's lasers used for aiming at a target to be shot. Despite the intensity of the use of lasers, which creates a mechanized look, the model that wears the dress is still human, which

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creates the appearance of a cyborg generated out of the unity of the animate and the inanimate.

The *Laser Dress* manifests plasticity in the way it takes conventional fashion items (dress) and accessories (hat) and gives them a new subversive look through the use of LED lights and the integration of space into the design's construction. In these regards, the usual form and structure of garment and accessory are destructed. These three plastic steps result in the creation's being a de-design, which deconstructs the conventional understanding of wearability, sellability, materials, and construction norms.

The *Remote Control Dress* and the *Chair Dress* the author observed in *Across Art and Fashion* exhibition and the *Laser Dress* are all cyborg/hybrid de-designs, which deconstruct notions related to orthodox construction norms, use of conventional materials, wearability and sellability. This is because they bring together the binaries of the artificial (the juxtaposition of architectural qualities- the use of space and architectural structures- with technological and electronical elements- remote-controlled operational mechanisms, the use of LED lights and mechanical devices) and the organic (the human body) in the their atypical design structures.

The Reconstruction of Body Garment and Space Relation

According to Marie-Eve Faust and Serge Carrier (2014), 'our clothing forms a portable environment close to the moving active body with extraordinary requirements of fit in order to be physically and psychologically appropriate for our needs' (p. 18). Taking their words one step further, Chalayan's de-designed

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hybrid, cyborg creations suggest an active position in relation to the body.

Chalayan's cyborg garments create a 'special relationship with [their]

surroundings', states Loschek (2009, p. 67). The thesis argues that these

garments create a further relationship to the human body with their

technological qualities. As the designer points out:

> For me technology essentially broadens my language as a designer. I'm
> interested in languages that allow you to go beyond consideration of the
> body or 'normal' clothing to create new ways of looking. The importance
> of technology in my work is that it presents a fresh means of expression
> (Lee, 2005, p. 95).

According to Seçil Uğur (2013), designer of Social Skin Project made at the

Wearable Senses Research theme at the Industrial Design Department at the

Technical University of Eindhoven, 'with shape changing smart garments, the

human body can obtain a dynamic silhouette that changes according to stimuli,

and transforms into different shapes' (p. 21). Further, regarding the interaction

amongst the body, space and motion, Fortunati (2005) notes that:

> Clothing influences the gait of the individual (high heels and tight skirts,
> for instance, certainly do not make for fast walking), the tempo and
> rhythm of gestures (narrow shoulders, for instance, certainly slowdown
> the movements of the arms), in other words, it disciplines all the
> movement of the body. As a consequence, it conditions the psychological
> attitude of individuals in relation to the space that surrounds them and
> their capacity to act while they are in movement (p. 40).

Uğur's words point out the enhancing of the capabilities of the human body

through technologized garments while Fortunati suggests the relation amongst

the concepts of body, space and motion. It could be argued that Chalayan's

cyborg designs do not enhance the capabilities of the body but they enhance

the 'relation' amongst the body, the garment and space. As the designer

remarks, 'clothing for modern life should be a machine itself- a dynamic

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interface between the body, its physical capabilities and the environment' (as cited in Quinn, 2002, p. 34).

As discussed earlier, the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers' textile-oriented creations are generated by means of an advanced use of technology. However, the textile-wise technologically de-designed garments of the Japanese designers, which deconstruct the mainstream understanding of material and textile are *static* and *passive*. Although highly developed, their structure is similar to the soft, usual fabrics and materials used in conventional fashion design. They do not change, cannot be operated or electronically function in any way possible. In contrast to the Japanese designers, Chalayan's cyborg de-designs operate and transform in relation to the space around them and change on the body that is wearing them. By developing and reconstructing the utilization of technology, as a third wave deconstructivist designer, Chalayan deconstructs the first wave Japanese fashion's use of technology through offering a more advanced use of it. Through technology, the designer gives life to the inanimate. In his cyborg de-designs, technology gives life and renders the artificial alive. Thus, we see the duality of a live biological being carrying an artificial, yet, *active* entity.

The use of electronic and architectural creations provides a unique path of marketability to Chalayan's designs. Though the hybrid, cyborg de-designs of the designer may not be designed to be worn, they are designed to create publicity and eventually become art pieces that are displayed in museums and they garner a larger audience. In this respect, Chalayan redefines the understanding of non-commercial designs through incorporating them into his

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marketing strategies. His cross-disciplinary collaborations for his cyborg creations not only help him generate experimental de-designs but also recontextualize these disciplines' designs' non-sellability aspect through using them as his commercial pieces. In this respect, the designer explains as follows, 'it would be too contrived to expect people to buy the clothes just for the ideas behind them ... The showpieces inspire the wearable clothes' (as cited in Kooij & Zijpp, 2005, p. 47). As a result, the designer's cyborg de-designs which incorporate the design thinking of non-commercial realms into the commercial realm of fashion reconcile binaries of the marketable and the unmarketable. The juxtaposition of binaries end up serving Chalayan's marketing strategies.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed various garments of Aksu and Chalayan that run parallel to the issues mentioned in chapter two (unravelling, deconstructing the concept of new in fashion, the deconstruction of glamour and perfection, deconstruction of time through anachronistic designs, deconstructing the conventional understanding of garment and body forms, the use of architectural inspirations in deconstructivist fashion design and the use of techno textiles in deconstructivist fashion). The issues discussed in this chapter have been handled from the perspectives of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction, reconstruction. A specific garment, the *Remote Control Dress*, has been explored with an object-based methodology and have later been related to the core concepts of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction. This chapter is significant in two respects: 1. Establishing and exemplifying the links between the first, second and third wave deconstructivist designers 2.

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Demonstrating the relationship amongst the concepts of plasticity, de-design,

deconstruction and reconstruction by focusing on the third wave

deconstructivist garments.

Chapter Five: Commonalities of the Third Wave Turkish Deconstructivist Designers: Metamorphosis of the Fashion System, Deconstruction through Culture

1. Metamorphosis of the System of Fashion

This section will analyse the way fashion sustains itself on the de-designed garments of Hussein Chalayan and Bora Aksu through a metamorphosis caused by a plastic design thinking of giving and destroying existing forms. The design thinking parallel to plasticity results in differences in looks, forms and structures of fashion garments and collections. Arnold (2001) argues that the process of fashion can be observed on deconstructivist fashion garments (p. 25). However, such a study has not been conducted to examine the third wave deconstructivist fashion designs as structures that deploy the content of fashion. Firstly, this section will address how the concepts of deconstruction and reconstruction can be used to explain the process of fashion. The concepts of plasticity, deconstruction and reconstruction will be discussed in the de-designed garments and collections of the third wave deconstructivist designers Chalayan and Aksu. Building on Arnold's claim, and with the aim of further reinforcing Chalayan and Aksu as deconstructivist designers, this part will show that the garments of Chalayan and Aksu offer a new semiology whereby the content of fashion can be explained through the transforming/metamorphosed structure of their de-designed creations.

As explained in my introductory chapter, the concept of de-design is a material subversion in garment construction and it is what leads to a conceptual deconstruction. The garments and fashion objects that are discussed in this

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section are de-designs as they exemplify the plastic processes of giving and destroying forms in their 'structure'. The plastic process relayed on forms and structures result in the deconstruction of stasis in fashion. In other words, similar to how fashion conducts a conceptual deconstruction of stasis and reconstruction through change in its process, the de-designed creations to be discussed in this section involve the material processes of giving and taking forms. In this respect, the de-designs in this section are symbolic of fashion's self-destructiveness, metamorphic and innovative characteristics and resistance to stasis. The section explores the concept of de-design in a different way; it *demonstrates* how de-design operates materially and how it leads to deconstruction and reconstruction as applied to the creations of Aksu and Chalayan.

The Processes of Fashion

Deconstruction and Reconstruction in Fashion

Roland Barthes wrote a significant number of books on semiology such as *Empire of Signs* (1983), *The Semiotic Challenge* (1983), *Image Music and Text* (1977), and *Elements of Semiology* (1968). In addition to these works, the philosopher wrote *The Fashion System* in 1967. The book is the first work that describes fashion as a "System" and it is also the first study that applies semiology to fashion. Regarding Barthes' work, it was written that Barthes has 'situated himself in relation to fashion' which was 'radically new and which remains impregnantly original' (Burgelin, 1974, p. 16). Further, *The Fashion System* is described as a 'crucial and repeatedly useful reference point for any theorisation of fashion worth its salt' (Stafford & Carter, 2006, p. 120).

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Fashion operates on a conceptual deconstruction of stasis because through giving and destroying new designs and structures, it materially features a constant resistance against the stability of the looks and styles it creates. The process of deconstruction in fashion is revealed through change and innovation by means of a disregard against what has already been created (Baudrillard, 1976, p. 465; Carter, 1977; Behling, 1985; Steele, 1985; Wilson, 1985; Murray, 1989; Ewen & Ewen, 1992; Barnard, 1996; 2007; Cawthorne, 1998; Crane, 2000; Evans, 2003; Svendsen, 2004; Vinken, 2005; Black, 2009; Hoffman, 2009, p. 35; Lynch & Strauss, 2007; Kim, Fiore, & Kim, 2011). For change and innovation to take place, the existing look must constantly be annihilated and something to replace it must continuously be regenerated. Through a constant phase of change and innovation, fashion resists custom, orthodoxy and tradition in seasonal collections. Similar to a God that gives life and takes away life, fashion gets rid of the existing looks and creates new ones. Baudrillard (1976) puts this process as 'the spectral death and resurrection of forms' (p. 463). On this account, anything can be in fashion as long as the rule of change is maintained through the annihilation of what has been materially presented, and the material reformation of what has been annihilated is created and put as the new look. In this respect, every new season of fashion materially de-designs the prior seasons by creating completely different designs to that of the prior seasons.

Fashion constantly does away with what it has declared as the new look to render it old and this leads to the generation of the next new look. This way, fashion rejects elements that would jeopardize the change of new looks and styles that have to get created in each new season. In this respect, fashion

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perpetuates new looks through a plastic process of taking forms, giving new

forms and destroying the previous forms. This is what makes each new season

de-designing the previous one. This de-designing process fashion displays is a

subversive one because it creates the opposite of what was dominant in the

previous season. This process is very similar to the one that takes place on the

de-designed creations of deconstructivist fashion. This is because the de-

designs of deconstructivist fashion go against what is dominant in mainstream

fashion. In this vein, fashion maintains itself on deconstruction and

reconstruction that result in change and a constant metamorphosis of looks and

styles. The proofs that metamorphosis takes place in fashion are contrasts and

differences amongst looks and styles that appear in different seasons.

Contrasts and Differences in Fashion

Previous studies have argued that fashion is a system of contrasts and the

oppositions and differences amongst looks maintain change and continuity

within the system of fashion (Barthes, 1967; Davis, 1992, p. 130; Evans, 2003,

p. 306; Svendsen, 2004; Corrigan, 2008, p. 53). Each season in fashion has to

feature different forms and reveal particular contrasts to the previous season.

As Manning (2014) states:

> Each new season in the fashion world does bring something new, and the
> purchasers of fashion do tend to be open to trying out a change in shape,
> in cut, in texture. Sure, we collectively say, lengthen and accentuate the
> legs with skinny jeans! And then, the next year it once again seems
> perfectly plausible to widen the pant for the shortening of the leg that
> accentuates the waist. Despite the normative directions of fashion's
> operations, mutability does have its place. As long as its tendings are
> relative to what came before, fashion's mutations tend to be accepted as
> the continuation of the norm. That difference must remain relative to what
> came before is the important point here (pp. 6-7).

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Aksu and Chalayan provide a perfect example of this argument in their Spring/Summer 2011 and Fall/Winter 2011 collections. With regards to the following collections, it is apparent that there are major differences stemming from contrasting design motifs of the same designers' different seasonal collections. Further, designers other than Aksu and Chalayan show distinct collections within the same seasons revealing basic contrasts and differences.

Accordingly, while Chalayan's Spring/Summer 2011 collection featured short dresses and shorts with bright colours (figure 52), the designer's Autumn/Winter 2011 collection exhibited longer designs with dark colours and accessories such as gloves (figure 53).

(Figure 52) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 2011 Collection.

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(Figure 53) Hussein Chalayan, Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection.

As the figures show, Autumn/Winter 2011 collection of the designer has de-designed the previous Spring/Summer 2011 collection by featuring the opposite of what the prior season had manifested as the new look. It could be said that the de-designing process takes place because what has previously been dictated as what should be *in* fashion, is, with the latter collection, rendered *out* by the structural contradictions and differences in details.

Aksu's Spring/Summer 2011 collection, on the other hand, displayed colourful designs (except for the colour black) with drapes (figure 54). Whereas, Autumn/Winter 2011 collection of the designer presented garments that were oversized but minimal, plain and less colourful (figure 55).

(Figure 54) Bora Aksu, Spring/Summer 2011 Collection.

(Figure 55) Bora Aksu, Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection.

Similar to Chalayan's collections, structural oppositions and differences can be observed in Aksu's collections. Spring/Summer 2011 collection of the designer is de-designed in the Autumn/Winter 2011 collection through the way the latter collection displays differences of details and forms. On this account, the Autumn/Winter 2011 collection de-designs the creations of the Spring/Summer 2011 collection designed by Aksu.

As the abovementioned collections suggest, one of the main factors that leads to the creation and recreation of subsequent seasons is revealed in the way seasons are materially de-designed in opposition to one another in terms of design details (dark, light colours), and structural forms (big and small proportions). In other words, contrasts and oppositions are displayed both in structural forms (short, long, large, small) and details (colours, design patterns) of the garments. As a consequence, contrasts and oppositions become necessary elements for the reconstruction of new looks and styles and the de-designing of previous ones. This way, after a certain period of time through the deconstruction of what has been conceptually labelled as *in*, change and a metamorphosis of looks and styles are constantly and conceptually sustained

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within the system of fashion.

Change through contrasts generated by deconstruction and reconstruction in fashion can be examined through the lens of Franz Kafka's (1996 [1915]) novella "The Metamorphosis", the key work of the writer produced at the beginning of the twentieth century. Kafka's work is about the metamorphosis of the protagonist Gregor Samsa. The protagonist goes through a painful bodily transformation and metamorphoses into a cockroach driven by various factors. The metamorphosis Gregor Samsa experiences is a deconstruction of his human existence and a reconstruction of his animal being; it is a 'death and rebirth' (Ryan, 1999). As a result, this transformation reveals a contrast of his human existence against his animal form. This uncanny story of the protagonist reflects the seasonal transformation fashion faces. Samsa's metamorphosis shows the process of the evolution fashion experiences through the processes of de-designing, deconstruction and reconstruction.

Having argued that a metamorphosis of forms can be observed in fashion through contrasts as a result of the process of de-designing, the next part of this section will show how a metamorphosis of forms and structures can be observed on certain garments and collections of Chalayan and Aksu. Change in fashion works on the basis of de-designing design details and structural forms. This fact has been highlighted in the comparison of Chalayan and Aksu's seasonal collections. However, the rest of this section looks at how change and metamorphosis can be observed on the *structural forms* of the *garments* of Aksu and Chalayan. The section will demonstrate how the concept of de-design

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applied to the garments and fashion objects of Chalayan and Aksu leads to deconstruction, reconstruction and a metamorphosis. Thus, the following section will demonstrate plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction not on different seasonal collections, as previously discussed, but in particular garments and fashion objects of Chalayan and Aksu.

Hussein Chalayan: Metamorphic Creations

This section argues that many garments of Chalayan deploy a metamorphosis, similar to that of seasonal changes in fashion collections through displaying the processes of plasticity, de-designing, deconstruction, and reconstruction in their structure. The concept of metamorphosis is observable in specific collections of the designer such as Autumn/Winter 2000 *After Words* (with a focus on the *Coffee Table Skirt*), Spring/Summer 2007 *One Hundred and Eleven* (with a focus on the *Mechanical Dress*), Autumn/Winter 2002 *Ambimorphous* and Autumn/Winter 2013 *Rise* collections. The *Coffee Table Skirt* from Chalayan's *After Words* collection and his *Mechanical Dress* from his *One Hundred and Eleven* collection are examples of special dresses that transform and change into completely new designs. *Ambimorphous* and *Rise* collections, on the other hand, reveal differences on a structural basis. That is to say, in these collections and specific creations, change and metamorphosis can be found on the structure of garments. This metamorphosis is the result of the processes of plasticity, de-designing, deconstruction and reconstruction that occur on the creations. Through a change of structure by the plastic de-designing process that takes place on a *garment*, many different versions of a single design are displayed. Different versions of designs reveal the conceptual deconstruction of

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sustainability and stability of seasons in fashion and a reconstruction of a

conceptual newness through change. The processes of plasticity and de-

designing illustrated on the garments of Chalayan are similar to the material

changes (de-designing) that take place in seasons in fashion, which lead to the

conceptual deconstruction of sustainability and stasis in fashion and a constant

reconstruction based on metamorphosis and change.

The designer's Autumn/Winter 2000 *After Words* collection (figure 56)

emphasized concepts of transformation, transportation and change. Quinn

(2003) interprets the collection to show the way fashion 'could become a

danger zone and a refuge, a means of transportation for what could be carried

and a camouflage for things left behind' (p. 125). In similar manner, in

Landscapes of Mobility: Culture, Politics, and Placemaking Jennifer Johung and

Arijit Sen (2013) write with regards to the show as follows:

> Translating modes of flight into the design and the use of his clothing,
> Chalayan offers the potential for familiar settings to be replaced in new
> locales, in support of those who must carry their possessions and indeed
> what they can of their homes with them. This process of replacement is
> initiated through the modular operation of Chalayan's garments, whose
> parts can come together and apart to continuously reform a unified spatial
> situation in any given site covering the skin, they frame a body that is
> vulnerable, threatened, out of place. Yet the activation of these variable
> garments by those wearing them affords the wearer the choice to take
> part of their homes with them (para. 3).

Further, Lora Sarıaslan, curator and project coordinator at Istanbul Modern

Museum of Art, evaluates on the show as follows:

> *After Words* presents "wearable furniture," a table that opens up like a
> telescope and becomes a skirt, chair covers that fold out into dresses.
> Another idea here is the human attachment to an architectural space, how
> we add value to objects as we use them and accumulate memories
> associated with them. Wherever these items are, they can transform an

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impersonal space into a home (as cited in Erez, 2010, para. 13).

(Figure 56) Hussein Chalayan, Autumn/Winter 2000, *After Words* Collection Show.

The metamorphic structure of the de-designed garments of *After Words*

collection included a creation that transformed into furniture and furniture that

morphed into a garment. A notable exemplar is the *Coffee Table Skirt*, which is

furniture that gradually transformed into a skirt. The following will observe the

Coffee Table Skirt through an object-based methodology introduced by Kim and

Mida (2015). The observations are made through *Across Art and Fashion*

exhibition the author attended in 2017 Florence, Italy.

The Coffee Table Skirt

Observation

General

The designer's *Coffee Table Skirt* (figure 57) from his Autumn/Winter 2000

After Words collection reveals architectural qualities operated by intrinsic

technologies as the design manifests the transformation of furniture into a skirt.

Designed as a skirt, it contains no fabric but a leather belt that helps the

garment to be attached to the dummy. Being a skirt renders the design with a

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gender-specific quality. The *Coffee Table Skirt* shows a fascination with the aesthetics of furniture design as in the collection it featured as furniture and a skirt. The structure of the creation did not emphasize any part of the body. Quinn (2005) writes that, 'creating environments plays an important role in Chalayan's process, and his architectonic ideas provide the glue that binds fashion and pace together' (p. 50).

(Figure 57) Hussein Chalayan, Autumn/Winter 2000, *After Words* Collection, The *Coffee Table Skirt.*

Construction

The construction of the *Coffee Table Skirt,* as mentioned earlier, shows a fascination with the aesthetics of furniture design (figure 58). The front and back of the design are made from natural wood and the dominant colour is caramel brown (figure 59). The skirt is constructed by using concentric circles of wood in a tiered pattern (figure 60). The design is placed on the dummy by two metal chains. The chains are hung on two metal hooks, located on both sides of

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the dummy's dark brown, leather belt. They are fastened by metal buttons (figure 61). The skirt is varnished and highly polished so that it glows under the lights. The length of the skirt is 1.30 cm. The width of it is 100 cm and the skirt's thickness is 30 cm.

Textiles

No care label for the skirt is provided due to its non-wearable nature and its non-textile quality. The material of the skirt is natural wood.

Supporting Material

(Figure 58) Hussein Chalayan, Autumn/Winter 2000, *After Words* Collection, The *Coffee Table Skirt. Across Art and Fashion* (2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

(Figure 59) The Front and the Back of the Garment, Caramel Brown Natural Wood. *Across Art and Fashion* **(2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

(Figure 60) Detail of the Skirt Constructed by Using Concentric Circles of Wood in a Tiered Pattern. *Across Art and Fashion* **(2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

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(Figure 61) Detail of the Chains Hung on Two Metal Hooks, Located on Both Sides of the Dummy's Dark Brown, Leather Belt (They Are Fastened by Metal Buttons). *Across Art and Fashion* **(2017), Salvatore Ferragamo Museum. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

The Use and Wearing of the Garment

The skirt shows no evidence of wear. There is no damage observed.

Reflection

One of the most visually arresting elements of the skirt is its non-traditional materials and unconventional structure that juxtaposes different elements. It seemed apparent that the skirt's heavy and unorthodox structure was

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contradictory to a conventional designer garment. Further, due to its material, it seemed uncomfortable to wear it.

The skirt demonstrates a complexity of construction by the influence of architecture and technology on its design. The *Coffee Table Skirt* points to the concept of personal space through its architectural structure within the platform of fashion. The skirt/table has become a personal item by being worn by the dummy. As it unfolds downward, it takes up space and this space is automatically rendered personal. Further, the skirt is suggestive of luxurious furniture due to its polished look of natural wood.

The skirt establishes a close relation with garments and objects. At this point, it is worth referring back to Schiaparelli to highlight a significant similarity. Here, mentioning Schiaparelli is relevant in the name of not identifying Chalayan as the first and only designer that engaged with object transformation within the process of garment construction.

The *Desk Suit* of 1936 by Schiaparelli evokes Chalayan's *Coffee Table Skirt*. The *Coffee Table Skirt* enabled furniture to be worn as it transformed into a wearable garment. The *Desk Suit* of 1936 was not created with such intricate qualities, as was the *Coffee Table Skirt*. However, the design structure which juxtaposes furniture and fashion garments reveals a significant similarity in terms of design perspective.

In 1936, Schiaparelli created the *Desk Suit* (figure 62). The design was inspired by an artwork of her close friend artist Salvador Dali. Dali's work was named as

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the *Anthropomorphic Chest of Drawers* (figure 63).
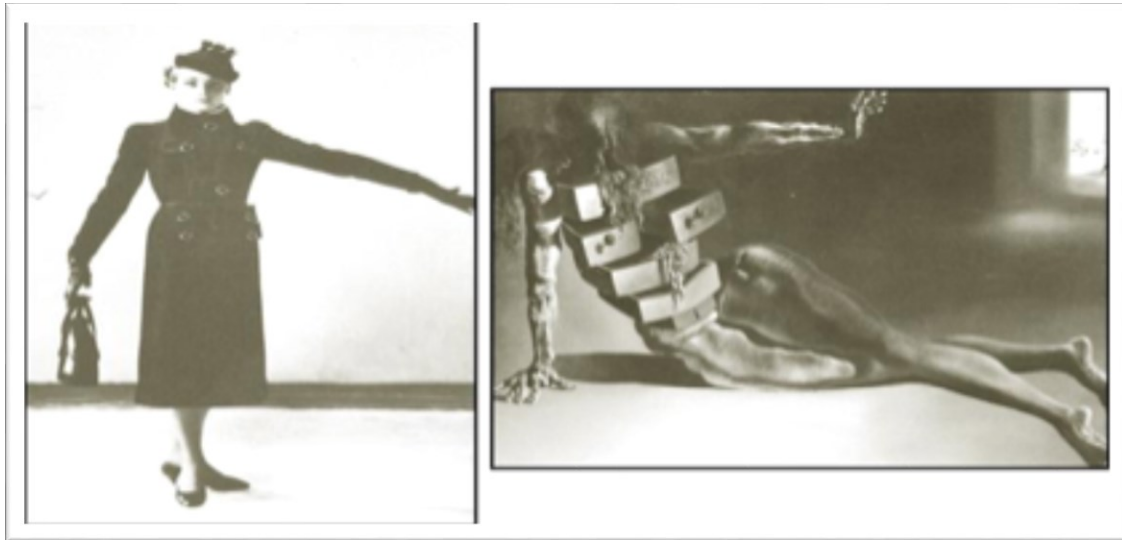
(Figure 62, Left) Elsa Schiaparelli, 1936, The *Desk Suit*.

(Figure 63, Right) Salvador Dali, 1936, *Anthromorphic Chest of Drawers*.

The suit was endowed with 'pockets simulating a chest of drawers' (Richards & Ebrary, 2013, p. 107). English (2007) gives a detailed description of the garment stating that it 'incorporated a vertical series of true and false pockets, that were embroidered in strong raised relief (*bourrè*) to look like drawers, with buttons for knobs' (p. 56).

Chalayan's *Coffee Table Skirt*, at first glance, echoes Schiaparelli's *Desk Suit* and, in this sense, makes an iconic reference to the early 20th century.

Contextual Information

Nick Knight photographed the *Coffee Table Skirt* for British *Vogue* in 2008 (figure 64).

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(Figure 64) *Coffee Table Skirt* **by Nick Knight for British** *Vogue,* **December 2008.**

The creation was also featured in Tate Modern's *Century City* exhibition (2001) because of its 'expression of the evolving dynamic between the built environment and the physical transients of urban life' (Quinn, 2002, p. 28). The *Coffee Table Skirt* was also featured in *Hussein Chalayan: 1994-2010* at Istanbul Modern between the dates of 15 July 2010-24 October 2010. *Across Art and Fashion* exhibition (2017) in Florence also featured the skirt.

The creation fits into Chalayan's *Oeuvre* as a designer because of the way the designer likes to go against the conventional norms related to the meaning of dress and design by means of getting involved in areas outside of fashion. His "Absent Presence" project curator I have interviewed argues that 'he is looking into different fields of knowledge and he is also being loyal to his political or cultural background' (B. Madra, Personal communication, July 3, 2013). This sits

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very well with the *Coffee Table Skirt's* position in *After Words* collection because the collection is about his nation's background but the skirt is designed by the influence of the discipline of architecture.

After Words collection also had other garments similar to the *Coffee Table Skirt* such as the covers of the chairs, which were also worn by the models as dresses (figure 65).

(Figure 65) Covers of the Chairs Worn by the Models as Dresses, *After Words* **Collection.**

Interpretation

The *Coffee Table Skirt* could be used to explore:

How seasons and fashion operate on change and metamorphosis through plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction. As Arnold suggests, Chalayan's design illustrates a deconstructivist garment, where the process of fashion based on deconstruction of stasis and reconstruction on change could be observed.

The metamorphosis displayed in the *Coffee Table Skirt* of *After Words* collection is caused by the de-designing process conducted on the structural forms of designs and the recreation of new forms out of them, which inevitably, reveal a contrast between the new and the previous forms of the same designs. The plastic design perspective is what causes the de-designing process: A form (the table) is taken, given a new structure by its transformation into a skirt and the initial form and structure of the table is destroyed. Thus, the difference between the former and the latter form of the designer's garment points out a structural metamorphosis. The de-designing process observed on the *Coffee Table Skirt* leads to a deconstruction of a fashion garment as a static entity. It marks a reconstruction of it through the metamorphic change and transformation that takes place on its form and structure. This structural transformation is akin to the way seasons in fashion change and transform through the processes of de-designing, deconstruction and reconstruction. As a result, justifying Arnold's claim, the *Coffee Table Skirt* could be argued to be a deconstructivist garment, which reveals how the process of fashion operates.

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The second garment to be observed with an object-based methodology and from the perspective of structural metamorphosis is the *Mechanical Dress* from Chalayan's *One Hundred and Eleven* collection. *Manus x Machina* exhibition (2016), which the author attended in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York featured the dress.

The Mechanical Dress

Observation

General

The designer's Spring/Summer 2007 *One Hundred and Eleven* collection featured the *Mechanical Dress* that transformed from one fashion decade to another. These decades ranged from 1947 (Dior's *Bar Suit Jacket*) and 1967 (Paco Rabanne's *Metal-link Shift Dress*). In this collection, the designer worked 'in cooperation with the company 2D: 3D he had mini motors built into some dresses. These served the purpose of historical morphing' (Loschek, 2009, p. 67). With a single garment, which was endowed with a transformative quality, Chalayan featured the structures of Dior's and Paco Rabanne's innovative designs (figure 66).

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(Figure 66) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 2007, *One Hundred and Eleven* Collection, The *Mechanical Dress*.

Construction

The skirt of the dress was composed of six separate aluminium plaques with hand-glued Swarovski rhinestones (figure 67). The plaques' under structure was moulded plastic (figure 68). The upper segment of the design featured a silk organza bodice, which was grey and machine-sewn. The sides of the bodice were endowed with machine-sewn grey cotton-synthetic sateen tabs (figure 69).

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Textiles

The bodice of the dress was composed of organza and cotton synthetic sateen. Further, rather than ordinary textiles, monofilament wires, pulleys, geared and electronically controlled motor components constituted the design.

Supporting Materials
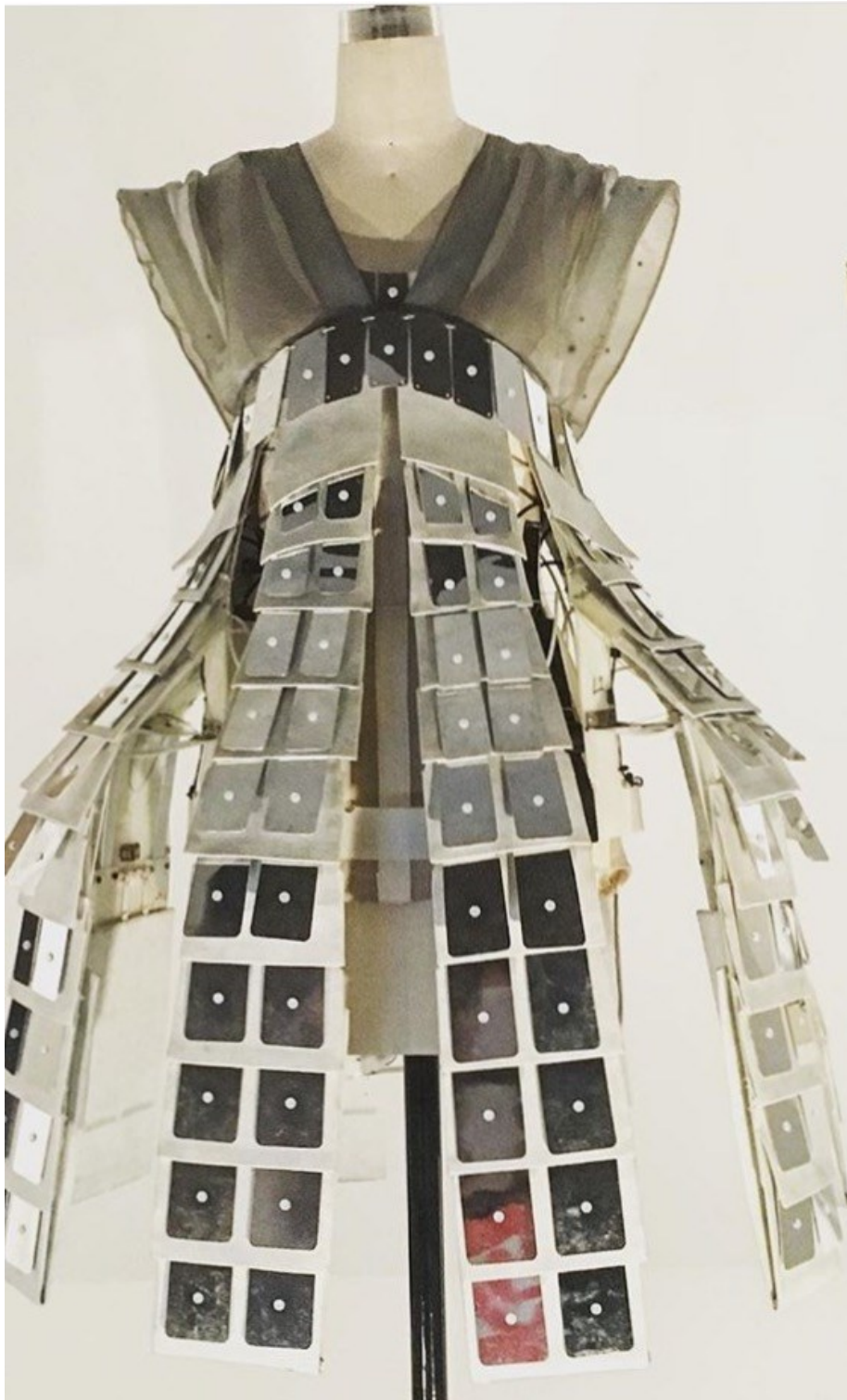
(Figure 67) Detail of Aluminium Plaques with Hand-glued Swarovski Rhinestones.
Manus x Machina **(2016), The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

(Figure 68) Detail of Plastic Under Structure of the Plaques. *Manus x Machina* (2016), The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.
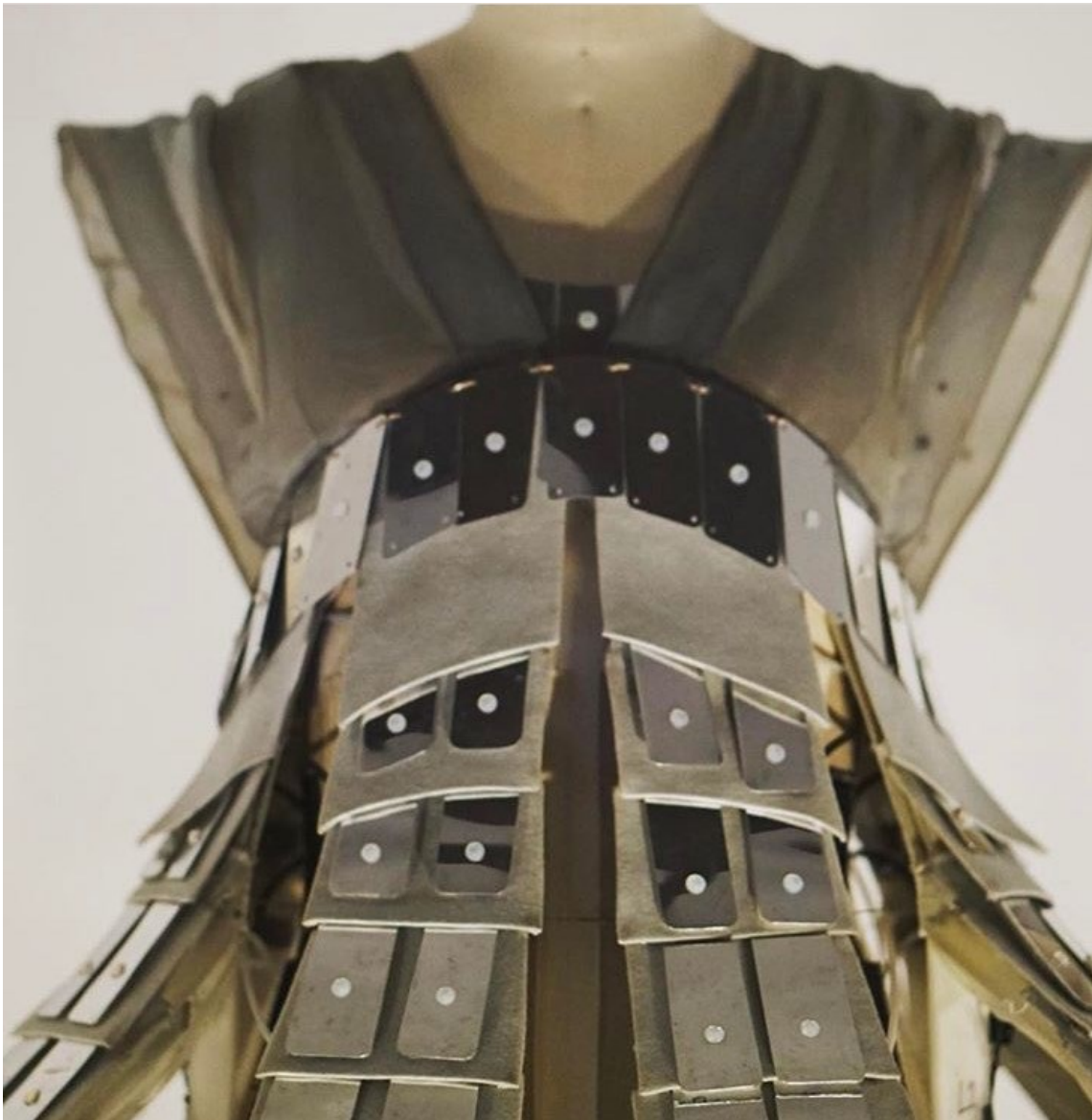
(Figure 69) Detail of the Sides of the Bodice Endowed with Machine-sewn Grey Cotton-synthetic Sateen Tabs. *Manus x Machina* **(2016), The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

In the exhibition, the *Mechanical Dress* was put together with Paco Rabanne's *Metal-link Shift Dress* (machine-cut silver aluminium, hand-punched and linked with silver metal jump rings) from 1967 and Dior's *Bar Suit Jacket* (machine-sewn beige tussore silk plain weave, hand-stitched button holes, hand-pad-stitched interlining) from Spring/Summer 1947 collection (figure 70), as the designer's aim with the *Mechanical Dress* was to show a historical change in the fashion scene.

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(Figure 70) *Mechanical Dress* **Put Together with Paco Rabanne's** *Metal-link Shift Dress* **from 1967 and Dior's** *Bar Suit Jacket* **from Spring/Summer 1947 collection.** *Manus x Machina* **(2016), The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.**

The Use and Wearing of the Garment

The skirt shows no evidence of wear. There is no damage observed.

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Reflection

When the *Mechanical Dress* is placed along the side of Paco Rabanne's *Metal-link Shift Dress,* we immediately see the similarities in colour, style and look. Also, the structure of Chalayan's dress is similar to that of Dior's suit starting from the waist and opening up like a crinoline; the hourglass New Look of Dior is perfectly achieved in the dress' structural form. In this respect, the dress successfully juxtaposes a retro look with avant-garde touches. The *Mechanical Dress* demonstrates a complexity of construction and an element of mastery in the way it demonstrates historical change and metamorphosis in its structure.

Contextual Information

Vogue described the *Mechanical Dress* as a creation that 'moved through decades—one from the hourglass Dior New Look to the Paco Rabanne's metal-link shift' (Mower, 2006). Further, how the dress operates was referenced in scholarly written materials as follows:

> Designed dresses powered by machine-driven levers that opened and closed to reconfigure the garment's shape and silhouette. The technology embedded in the garments enabled hemlines to rise autonomously, a bustier to open its own accord, and a jacket to unfasten itself and pull away from the model's torso. These designers were made possible through collaboration with the team behind the special effects for the *Harry Potter* films such as *The Prisoner of Azkaban*, who incorporated microchips into fabric panels so that they would move according to the sequences Chalayan programmed them to (De la Haye et. al., 2013, p. 446).

Regarding Chalayan's ideas on *One Hundred and Eleven* collection and with regards to the *Mechanical Dress*, he explains as follows, 'Probably the most dramatic was a dress that morphed from Christian Dior's new look of the late 1940s to Paco Rabanne's *Metal-link Shift Dress* of the 1960s' (as cited in Bolton

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2016, pp. 60 and 63). The garment perfectly fits into Chalayan's *oeuvre* because of its transformative, metamorphic nature and unconventional materials used in its construction, which could be observed in many other collections of the designer. It is possible to access the dress easily on the internet, the designer's monograph and magazines.

The *Mechanical Dress* was featured in many museums around the world such as: Istanbul Modern (2010), Design Museum (2009) and The Metropolitan Museum of Art (2016).

Interpretation

The *Mechanical Dress* could be used to examine:

How seasons and fashion operate on change and metamorphosis through plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction. As Arnold suggests, Chalayan's design illustrates a deconstructivist garment, where the process of fashion based on deconstruction of stasis and reconstruction on change could be observed.

Chalayan's *One Hundred and Eleven* collection mainly dealt with time and the *Mechanical Dress* was one of the pieces that directly referred to the changes brought about by time. In this respect, a strong link can be made between the collection and the way seasons in fashion change through time.

In the *Mechanical Dress*, as it is in the way plasticity operates, we see a form and through mechanical transformation, the form is given a new form. The new form leads to the destruction of the given form. In this dress, the transformation of form revolves around the notion of decades. The way forms

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of decades materially and visually change suggests a de-designing process that runs parallel to plasticity. This de-designing process leads to the conceptual deconstruction of the understanding of fashion and seasons in fashion as static entities. The transformation of the *Mechanical Dress* shows the way fashion operates on change and how it resists stasis. In this respect, the garment displays how fashion renews and reconstructs itself on its structure.

Ambimorphous Collection

Similar to the designer's *After Words* collection, *Ambimorphous* Autumn/Winter 2002 collection involved de-designs carrying traces of morphing and metamorphosis blended with nationalistic elements related to the designer's background. Regarding the designer's *Ambimorphous* collection, Polhemus (2005) states that:

> The theme of multicultural juxtaposition is, in my view, most perfectly and incontestably displayed in Chalayan's Autumn/Winter 2002 collection entitled *Ambimorphous* where a definitive 'little black dress' is morphed step by step into a magnificent, breathtakingly colourful traditional Turkish costume and then, step by step, morphed into another minimal black dress (p. 107).

In his *Ambimorphous* collection, the designer displayed the de-designing of the traditional Anatolian dress of his own culture:

> The first model emerged wearing a vivid traditional dress from Eastern Turkey with touches of chinoiserie in a silk shawl tied at the waist, walked to the end of the catwalk and stood there, stock still and alone, for fifteen minutes. Things started to make sense when she was eventually joined by a succession of models wearing outfits, which, in sections gradually replaced the beading and tapestry with plain black wool, beautiful coat (Cartner-Morley, 2002, para. 3).

Further, in the website of Groninger Museum, it states that *Ambimorphous* is a, 'project that covers cultural change, [and it] can be seen … as a kind of journey
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from one culture to another, both geographically and temporally' (Groninger

Museum, 2005, para. 4). The same collection was, later, displayed at MOMU

gallery between the dates of 21.09.2002 and 26.01.2003. Regarding the

collection, Chalayan, as the curator of the project points out that:

> The aim of the project is to explore the shady territory between realism, surrealism, power and powerlessness. As an example, I intend to examine the connections between *Alice in Wonderland* as a representation of a surreal entity and war as a real life force... The ultimate object is to demonstrate the man-made theories of reality and our power over this reality can reverse, and that surreal situations themselves are a part of life and do not remain as fragments of the imagination (as cited in "Contemporary Fashion Archive", n.d., para. 2).

Chalayan featured the Anatolian traditional dress of Turkish culture. Employing

a deconstructive methodology, with a sequential presentation of models

morphing from traditional to the modern, the collection displayed the utilization

of the designer's own cultural background situated both in East and West. With

this collection, the designer shows that the East can be integrated into West

and by showing so; he gives the message that any binary (realism/surrealism,

power/powerlessness, East/West) is part of another.

In the same collection, through a traditional element, a deconstructive narrative

is created. Like a child playing with clay, Chalayan gives form and regenerates it

to another form. Through his morphing designs, the designer re-explores his

culture as evidenced in *After Words* collection. Similar to *After Words*,

Ambimorphous (figure 71) is a collection, which engages the designer's

background and national identity. With this collection, Chalayan reveals

contrasts, differences and metamorphosis through the de-designing process to

which the Anatolian dress is exposed. The sequential change of structural forms

of the traditional Anatolian dress into a modern little black dress visually

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exhibits what the designer went through in his past and how he managed to juxtapose and balance binaries related to his Eastern past with his Western present/future. This presentation with the changes and contrasts it involves, is very similar to how seasonal changes operate and maintain the system of fashion. This is because each dress is shown with basic differences to the previous one.

(Figure 71) Hussein Chalayan, Autumn/Winter 2002, _Ambimorphous_ Collection.

The collection exhibits plasticity and de-design in a very clear material and visual depiction. According to this depiction, the form, materials and motifs of a dress sequentially changes. In other words, as it is in plasticity, the form of the Anatolian dress is taken and given a new form with each model wearing the dress. The final version of the dress, when compared to the first version, reveals a destruction of the original form, material and structure of the Anatolian dress. Thus, the Anatolian dress is de-designed in each new version presented by the models. With the material de-designing process the Anatolian dress is exposed to, a conceptual deconstruction of Turkish culture and tradition

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takes place. This is because the traditional Turkish dress gradually transforms into a Western garment.

Further, the contrasts and differences that visually and materially take place in the collection are very similar to the way seasons in fashion change. Each new model wearing a dress displays a different material, structure and colour just like the way every new season in fashion does. These material and structural changes conceptually deconstruct the understanding of a fashion garment as a static entity. The same changes also reveal how fashion and seasons in fashion operate on change and deconstruct stasis.

Rise Collection

A similar collection to *One Hundred and Eleven* was Chalayan's Autumn/Winter 2013 *Rise* collection (figure 72), which featured three de-designed dresses that morphed 'from mid-length casual chic to floor-skimming elegance' (Azhar, 2013, para. 9). Despite their transforming qualities, these dresses were 'wearable and practical' (Azhar, 2013, para. 10). *The Telegraph* described the collection in the following words, 'he [Chalayan] charmed with short dresses which, with one elegant tug of the neck-line, turned into patterned maxis; or colourful, textured shifts that became plain black ones' (Peh, 2013, para. 3). Change, transformation and metamorphosis were the key concepts the designer had concentrated on the *Rise* collection. Chalayan had put the act of 'peeling walls' as the main inspiration for the collection. As he explains:

> I feel that the constant state of flux is what keeps life going. With this in
> mind, I always want to work from inspiration, which involves movement
> and change so that the clothes have a sense of life within themselves (as

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cited in Peh, 2013, para. 4).

(Figure 72) Hussein Chalayan, Autumn/Winter 2013, *Rise* Collection, Morphing De-designed Dress.

The *Rise* collection exemplifies plasticity by a single motion made by the models on the dress they are wearing. Accordingly, the models appear on the catwalk with a specific design of a garment. However, the design of the garment is not static; it is given a new design on the catwalk by the models. This is accomplished by the models' "tugging" on a particular part of the garment. And this "tug" removes a piece of the garment and a new design is created. Thus, the initial form and design of the creation becomes annihilated.

These three plastic steps that were displayed on the garments point out a de-designing process that changes the original form and design of the collection garments. This process, similar to the aforementioned collection pieces,

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deconstructs the idea of the garments as static pieces. Rather, it highlights metamorphosis, change and transformation, which are similar to the ways the processes of fashion operates.

All of the abovementioned collections of Chalayan feature morphing designs and depict concepts of change, metamorphosis and transformation. Thus, the transformation of the garments creates a sense of evolution within the clothes themselves. The structures of the designer's morphing garments that build on plasticity, de-design and transformation are akin to the metamorphosis that takes place in the process of fashion. Similar to the way fashion resists a stationary state of looks and styles, these particular creations of Chalayan do not make do with a single form of design or structure. On the contrary, through a design thinking that runs parallel to plasticity, they reveal a metamorphosis of forms, which is synonymous with the way garment structures change through seasons, as exemplified in the Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter collections of Chalayan and Aksu. In these collections, the way the garments transform into different creations de-designs their earlier forms and structures. Their de-designed, transformed versions, on the other hand, are the reconstructed new versions of themselves. Because of the de-designing process that can be identified with plasticity, the reconstructed designs have structural differences and oppositions against their previous forms such as long skirts becoming short, fitting forms turning into loose structures. Thus, the morphing structure of the collection pieces semiotically interprets the process of fashion that maintains itself on a metamorphosis. This process of de-designing leads to differences in looks. In other words, the transforming dresses of Chalayan's collections can be

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interpreted to visually exemplify how looks and styles in fashion change as time progresses.

Chalayan's de-designed metamorphic garments can be appreciated by Zygmund Bauman's approach, which he coins as "Liquidity". In his work *Liquid Life*, Bauman (2005) describes 'liquid life' as a concept that 'cannot keep its shape or stay on course for long' (p. 1). Further, in his later work entitled *Liquid Times*, by linking it to modernity, Bauman (2007) describes the term 'liquidity' as a condition where:

> Social forms (structures that limit individual choices, institutions that guard repetitions of routines, patterns of acceptable behaviour) can no longer (and are not expected) to keep their sharp for long, because they decompose and melt faster than the time it takes to cast them, and once they are cast for them to set. Forms, whether already present or only adumbrated, are unlikely to be given enough time to solidify, and cannot serve as frames of reference for human actions and long-term life strategies because of their short life expectation (p. 1).

Very similar to plasticity, both fashion and Chalayan's de-designed creations are change-driven, transformative and accord with Bauman's concept. As for Chalayan's designs and their link to the process of fashion, it could be said that, differences get generated between the previous and latter structures of his designs and this is similar to how contrasts and differences amongst different seasons form change and transformation within fashion

Bora Aksu: A Metamorphic Deconstruction and Reconstruction

Specific garments of Aksu reveal a form-wise metamorphosis akin to the seasonal form changes of fashion. One of the most noteworthy qualities of Aksu's de-designed garments lies in the way the designer acts on forms and the

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way he reinterprets them. With regards to how he de-designs existing forms and structures, the designer explains as follows:

> For me pushing the limits of everyday objects and to invent the "new" are the ideas behind each collection. I usually take an item of everyday life, translate it into a whole new form. My work is usually based on the same process of taking the cliché forms of daily life and giving them a new identity (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013).

This quote is significant in that it tells a lot about the designer's vision on creativity and this vision's similarity to the notions of plasticity and de-design. As it is in plasticity, Aksu receives an existing form, gives it a brand new form and identity. This whole process displayed on material objects leads us to the notion of de-design.

Presenting what he does as art and himself as an artist rather than a designer, Aksu states that, 'I believe that an artist has a duty of seeing things through different perspectives. This enables others to understand the wider options we have in life. I guess artists and art constantly break the mind-sets and prepare people for the "new" ' (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013). In this respect, when designing, Aksu takes an existing form and de-designs its structure by means of recreating a new form out of it. The designer, generally, works on recognized forms related to his traditional and national background along with other existing forms of fashion objects.

The following sections will focus on three different de-designed creations of the designer: 1. Dresses from his collaboration with Converse sneakers 2. Tulip shaped dresses 3. Turkish *Crochet Slippers/Shoes*. The sections will explore how the process of de-designing is applied to fashion objects that include an

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icon of the popular culture: the Converse sneaker and traditional forms related to his culture such as the Ottoman tulip and the traditional Turkish *Crochet Slippers/Shoes*. These creations visually display the metamorphic process of fashion, which operates on plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction.

The Converse Dresses

In Spring/Summer 2007 collection, the designer collaborated with Converse and created unconventional dresses. Regarding his collaboration with Converse and the integration of the sneakers' form into his designs, the designer explains as follows:

> I collaborated with Converse Sneakers for SS 07 collection. This collaboration contained the idea of challenging the concept of sneakers without turning it into something totally decorative. I wanted to keep the functional side of it in a *new* way. This was interesting because the laces of the sneakers and the form of tying the shoe laces interestingly have so much in common with the good old underwear essential: the corset. Having these similarities makes it even more interesting. Creating a crochet upper sole with print details is to take the form of the Converse Sneaker into a new art form (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013).

Parallel to plasticity, with this collaboration, the designer takes the existing form of the Converse sneaker, gives it a new form and structure by transforming it into a dress. As a result, Aksu annihilates the original form and structure of the Converse sneaker. In this plastic methodology, the Converse dresses depict the de-designing of a shoe structure and they also depict its reconstruction by means of the metamorphosis to which the shoe structure is exposed. The main structural difference and contrast is the original form of the Converse design's being transformed into a dress. Thus, an item used for the covering of the feet

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such as the sneaker is now being used to cover the body. This metamorphic

process is similar to how looks and styles within seasons operate; one season

evolves into another and another's material/structural de-designing process

leads to the reconstruction of the next one.

Aksu's reinterpretation of the Converse sneakers can be evaluated as a

"Détournement" which is described by Amy Elias (2010), Professor of English at

the University of Tennessee, as 'a method of interpretation and reinterpretation:

reordering pre-existing materials in order to expose their banality or their

function within a system of spectacular control and creatively reconstructing

them in the service of authenticity' (p. 824). Having been articulated by Guy

Debord (1981), the concept was:

> A mirroring of capitalist recuperation- spectacle's perpetual reintegration
> and redefinition of existing social elements- but was intended to have
> opposite effects. Instead of neutralizing existing reality, it denaturalized
> and parodied it to expose and counter alienation (p. 824).

This insurrection performed against capitalism by Debord and Vaneigem is

performed against fashion by Aksu. In other words, Aksu's application of the

process of de-designing of existing forms is a détournement of fashion objects.

Through détournement, the situationists Debord and Vaneigem sought to

'subvert spectacular (commodified) representations and practices' that served to

the system of capitalism (Trier, 2007, p. 274). In similar vein, Aksu takes forms

in fashion, twists and de-designs them in such a way that destroys

their original structure and purpose. The situationist, Debord (1981) explains

that 'our central idea is the construction of situations, that is to say, the

concrete construction of momentary ambience of life and their transformation

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into a superior passional quality' (p. 22). Debord's words point out a deconstruction against images and representations of capitalism and a reconstruction of them through parody and inversion. Aksu's de-designed Converse dresses reveal a similar transformation and metamorphosis. This de-designing process leads to a conceptual deconstruction - a semiotic one. This deconstruction takes place when the sneaker's original connotation of being a shoe is assaulted and its function is lost (figure 31). Just as the system of fashion demonstrates, the Converse dresses show that fashion objects can also be exposed to change, transformation and metamorphosis, as opposed to being static pieces.

The Traditional Tulip Motived Dresses

The tulip shaped dresses that many collections of Bora Aksu display, manifest the de-designing of the traditional tulip motif of Ottoman Empire (figure 73). Accordingly, as it is the same with plasticity, the Ottoman tulip is taken, given a new form and its original structure is annihilated. This three phase performed on the Ottoman tulip points out the de-designing of it. Before going into more detail about the de-designed tulip shaped dresses of the designer, the following will provide historical information on the Ottoman tulip motif.

The tulips are originally known to have grown in Middle Asia and became ubiquitous in Iran in 1050. However, the tulip and its influence on design culture were initiated in Anatolia by Turks (Tuna, Khabbazi, & Yazgan, 2015, p. 163). Tulips have a great significance in Turkish culture and Ottoman Empire as Tuna et. al. (2015) explains:

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The period between 1718-1730 is called the "Tulip Era" in the Ottoman history... This era is known to be "joy and pleasure". It was named after the tulip flowers grown in Istanbul and then its fame spread to the whole world... Sultan Ahmet the third (III. Ahmet) and especially his grand vizier Damat Ibrahim Pasha started the tulip era... Tulips were used in glazed tiles in the sixteenth century in one of the tablets located in the upper side of the windows in Sehzade Mehmet shrine to fill empty spaces between writings. Glazed tiles have become an indispensible theme similar to our classical poets, along with roses, hyacinths and carnations (p. 164).

(Figure 73) The Traditional Tulip Motif of Ottoman Empire.

The tulip motifs have been used 'ever since the 13th century and are observed in Seljuk monuments, hand written books and their covers' (Tuna et. al., 2015, p. 163). According to, Pehlivanoğlu and Elinç (2012), 'tulips had an important role in global arts, especially in Turkish arts for centuries. The Ottoman carried their love for this plant into the interior designs as well' (p. 352). In Ottoman culture, the tulip motif was used as a common motif in handcraft, especially, in the making of porcelain, carpet and rug design. The motif was also used in various colours and shades in architectural structures (Atasoy, 2002). Further, tulips hold a sacred and spiritual place in Islamic culture 'because of its written characters similar to writing the name, Allah in Arabic "(الله)" ("Tulip and

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Redpud", n.d., para. 7).

Karabacak and Sezgin (2013) argue that 'in today's Turkish society where the traces of Ottoman cultural heritage influenced the everyday life with various popular culture products, these products and spaces in the appearance of cultural heritage of Ottoman are commoditized as popular culture products' (p. 304). Bora Aksu is a popular designer who engages with the commodification of the tulip figure through its use in his garment constructions. As it is evident in figure 74, the tulip shape is used on both sides of the hips. The de-designed leggings' vertical layers that reach up to the hip area are similar to the stems of tulips. The tulip shape, on the other hand, is reversed, emerging from the sides of the belly and follow the curves of the body. The shape between the stem-like layers of the de-designed tights and the black area stuck between the reversed tulip shapes on both sides of the body compose another tulip shape. The process of de-designing is visually, and materially generated on the garment as forms related to the tulip shape and the female body are constantly given a new form and as a result of this, their initial forms and structures are destroyed, depending on the perspective of the observer. Accordingly, in one look, one can see the tulips and in another, one can see the exaggerated shape of the female hips, which is also a deconstruction and reconstruction to the conventional norms related to the perfect fit of the female body. The designer remarks that he has a design perspective that de-designs and changes the 'female form through historical costumes; Emphasizing the hips on the garments and creating exaggerated tulip shapes are all part of this process' (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013). In this design, plasticity, de-design,

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deconstruction and reconstruction are synchronically achieved as follows: the traditional Ottoman tulip is de-designed by metamorphosing it into the shape of female hips; as it is in plasticity, the motif is taken, given a new shape and the original motif, thus, is destroyed. The exaggerated female hips, on the other hand, deconstruct the understanding related to the ideal female body fit of conventional fashion and the hips are reconstructed through an alternative visual interpretation. This way of de-designing existing forms and their synchronic deconstruction and reconstruction are, arguably, parallel to the structural changes between seasons in fashion.

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(Figure 74) Bora Aksu, Autumn/Winter 2010 Collection, Garment Influenced by the Ottoman Tulip Motif.

Figure 75 illustrates a similar example to the previous design. The dress' structure is constructed in line with the shape of a tulip and the layers within and around the dress resemble the organic layers of the tulip. As the previous garment, this dress has a reversed tulip figure, starting from the neck and going down to the stomach. In this design, the tulip shape is de-designed as it is no longer presented as a flower or a traditional Ottoman motif. Rather, it is now taken out of its usual context and given the form of the female hips. Further, despite being a "dress", the garment carries masculine traces such as the lapels of a male jacket and a bow tie. Plasticity, de-designing, deconstruction and reconstruction are, once again, synchronically achieved when the garment's design plays with the eye of its audience by emerging as a feminine tulip figure with masculine signifiers. The tulip figure is generated as a feminine dress but its femininity is also materially de-designed and conceptually deconstructed by elements of masculinity. The fact that signifying contrasting elements are presented in a single garment leads to the synchronic de-designing (building on plasticity), deconstruction and reconstruction processes to take place on it. In this respect, the garment constantly evolves and metamorphoses through de-designing, deconstruction and reconstruction, as does fashion.

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(Figure 75) Bora Aksu, Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection, Garment Influenced by the Ottoman Tulip Motif.

The Turkish Crochet Slippers/Shoes of Autumn/Winter 2014 Collection

Observation

General

Wool, used in Anatolian traditional garments, was the main material used to make hand-woven *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* of Aksu's Autumn/Winter 2014 collection. The colours and patterns of the crochets varied and during the fashion show of the collection, the crochets were worn over black ankle socks (figure 76). Figures 77 and 78 illustrate close-ups of the designs I captured from Autumn/Winter 2014 collection. The most unique aspect of the semi-traditional creation was its juxtaposition with the leather-made stiletto heels of Western culture.

Construction

The creation's structure signifies both a slipper and a shoe. It is a slipper because the wool hand-crochet is traditionally worn as a slipper over socks all around Anatolia during the winter. However, the *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* in Aksu's collection show were worn within modern open leather stiletto heels. Designed like that, the creation has a look, where the stiletto looks like the traditional Anatolian crochet and the traditional Anatolian crochet looks high heeled. The most remarkable feature in the construction is the depiction and dependence of Eastern, Western, traditional and modern elements on a single design.

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(Figure 76) The *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* Signifying Both a Slipper and a Shoe.

Textile

Wool and leather are the dominant textile and materials used in the *Crochet Slippers/Shoes*. Different stripes and patterns are hand woven.

Supporting Material

(Figure 77) Bora Aksu, Autumn/Winter 2014 Collection, Patterns of *Crochet Slippers/Shoes*. London Fashion Week. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

(Figure 78) Bora Aksu, Autumn/Winter 2014 Collection, Patterns of *Crochet Slippers/Shoes*. London Fashion Week. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

Reflection

The *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* have clear traditional references related to the Anatolian Turkish culture. The artistic motifs and elements are directly related to the hand-made Turkish *patiks* as illustrated in figure 79. The *patiks* in the figure are taken from the village of Seferihisar, Izmir, Turkey. They belong to an old woman living in the village. The red ones are said to be over 50 years old but the black ones are new. Aksu's *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* and ordinary *patiks* and their merging into each other consisted the impetus to examine them from the perspective of metamorphosis. A further reason lies in the way how Aksu establishes the link between the Anatolian women and *haute couture* style: how

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the traditional Turkish women wear their crochet slippers over their socks and how they wear ordinary slippers over them (figures 80, 81) are reconstructed with Aksu's design. Figures 79, 80, 81 were taken from the village of Seferihisar, Izmir. Old, traditional women over seventy years were kind enough to allow me to take pictures of their everyday footwear: socks, *patiks* and slippers. Aksu recreates the look with the modern stiletto. In this respect, Aksu is very successful in the way he gets his inspirations from the very traditional people of Anatolia. Their customary footwear is juxtaposed with Western elements with the aim of appealing to the European society.

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(Figure 79) Hand-made Turkish *Patiks* Taken from the Village of Seferihisar, Izmir/Turkey (2017). Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

(Figure 80) Traditional Turkish Woman Wearing Crochet Slippers Over Socks and Ordinary Slippers Over Them (2017). Taken From the Village of Seferihisar, Izmir/Turkey. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

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(Figure 81) Traditional Turkish Woman Wearing Crochet Slippers Over Socks and Ordinary Slippers Over Them (2017). Taken From the Village of Seferihisar, Izmir/Turkey. Photo by Gizem Kızıltunalı.

Contextual Information

The *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* fit perfectly into Aksu's *oeuvre* as a designer. As he

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explains in an interview, 'in Turkey, every household will have someone with amazing handcraft skills. It could be crochet, needlework, knitting or weaving, but these skills never disappoint. I always take these craft elements and turn them into something different' (Anniss, 2017).

Interpretation

The *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* could be used to examine:

1. How the concepts of metamorphosis and change through de-design (building on plasticity), deconstruction and reconstruction can be applied to *Crochet Slippers/Shoes*. As Arnold suggests, Aksu's *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* illustrate deconstructivist creation, where the process of fashion based on deconstruction of stasis and reconstruction on change could be observed.

2. How multi-cultural significations used in a design leads to deconstructivist creativity; a creativity that renounces oppositional and hierarchical binaries, which is in line with Derridean deconstruction.

Instead of creating new forms, Aksu recreates existing ones. Akin to Malabou's first step, reception of forms, Aksu selects a form and through reworking on the existing form that he has selected, the designer gives form and reconstructs a brand new creation. Finally, he reveals a destruction of the selected form by de-designing its original structure. The de-designing process occurs when the designer reinterprets the existing form. In this respect, Aksu reveals a flexible position in relation to objects and existing structures as opposed to a static one.

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Like Malabou's conception of plasticity, for Aksu, creativity is an ever-ending process and in this vein, structures and forms get produced and reproduced in an endless fluctuating process as the designer explains:

> For me designs can never be completed... It's more of a journey rather than the end result. Even the collections do not have a starting and end points in their processes. It's very organic; some of the ideas give birth to new ideas and some of them dissolve or they overlap with each other... So, for me it's very hard to see the design process as an end product (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013).

In Aksu's crochet creation, the traditional structure of the crochet slippers of Turkish culture is altered by means of materially recreating it through a new design form: the stiletto heels of modern Western culture. The way an orthodox, traditional form changes into a modern creation materially and visually suggests a de-designing process that is built on contrasts and differences. The designer explains his interest in blending contrasting and different elements and how this leads to a metamorphosis as follows:

> I believe designing is more like making a soup. The more you add into it the taste gets better. The reason for blending ideas from different cultures or drawing inspiration from totally unrelated subjects is to make the end product more interesting. I believe "East meets West" will turn into "gypsy meets Punk and goes to Mongolia nomads and blends with new romantics and then get married to Edwardian lace" (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013).

As argued earlier, Aksu's stages of dealing with a form goes hand in hand with Malabou's conception of plasticity, which features a triple dimension of taking, giving and destroying forms. For the designer, things, not just "are" but they can constantly "become" more than what they have already been by means of transforming their existing forms and structures. Aksu's varying stance in relation to the existing structures displays a connection with the concept of

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metamorphosis and how the process of fashion draws on it. In fashion, styles change in an on-going, infinite phase. In other words, the existing looks and styles are constantly regenerated and reinterpreted (Svendsen, 2004). This indicates that the 'existing' new look in fashion is always given a new structure, design and form with no end to this process. As it is in plastic design thinking, the existing look is always taken and provided with a new stylistic interpretation by the process of de-designing, which leads to a constant metamorphosis, as discussed earlier. What Aksu does to existing forms fits in perfectly with the way fashion operates. As in the way the existing new look in fashion has to metamorphose into a new form, style and structure through de-designing that builds on a plastic design thinking, Aksu metamorphoses existing forms into new structures through the process of de-designing. The de-designed and reconstructed new creations both in fashion and Aksu's designs display contrasts and differences to their earlier existing forms and structures, which highlight the basic fact that they have changed and transformed. As a result, similar to the way fashion operates on change, the de-designed garments of Aksu semiotically display how innovation and change through metamorphosis appear in fashion by their reconstructed versions.

The depiction of Eastern and Western elements on a single design metaphorically and visually illustrates Aksu's transformation as a designer from Turkey to London. Aksu demonstrates how his multi-cultural experience leads to deconstructivist creativity; a creativity that renounces oppositional and hierarchical binaries. As a postmodern theorist, Jacques Derrida undermined 'deep-laid conceptual oppositions' (Norris, 1987, p. 82) and argued that a binary

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cannot be over another but can only exist in relation to one another (Derrida, 1967). Aksu's de-designed slippers are a postmodern creation, which confirms Derrida's words. Through the agreement of oppositional elements (traditional, modern, Eastern, Western), the designer constitutes a new structure and form of postmodernism. By means of creating a design of oppositional concepts, Aksu transforms an existing traditional form into a whole new design. As a result, the designer metamorphoses a traditional structure into a postmodern form, which comes into existence through the negotiation of binaries and the process of de-designing.

The transformation of the traditional *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* is very similar to Chalayan's deconstructed Anatolian dress from his Autumn/Winter 2002 *Ambimorphous* collection. As discussed earlier, the traditional Anatolian dress morphs into a modern black dress and in this respect, reconciles binaries of the traditional and the modern. In very similar design thinking, Aksu's de-designed *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* juxtapose binaries and deconstruct the dominance of tradition by reconstructing it through modern touches.

Conclusion

This section has explained how fashion operates on change through contrasts and differences amongst seasons. To demonstrate, the section has analysed different collections and creations of Aksu and Chalayan. Following that analysis, the section has looked into certain garments, collections and fashion objects of Aksu and Chalayan (using Kim and Mida's methodology in specific creations) so as to illustrate how the process of fashion can be observed on

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them. While examining them, the section has utilized the concepts of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction. The de-designed creations discussed in this section are identifiable with how fashion constantly negates and metamorphoses itself in every new season in the way it de-designs the previous one through structural forms and details that reveal contrasts and differences. Through this de-designing process, a conceptual deconstruction of what is *new* takes place, as the previous seasons are rendered *old* and stasis is avoided in favour of change. The section has also drawn attention to the way the designers feed on their cultural heritage and background in creating de-designs that depict the process of fashion through change and metamorphosis. It could be said that both designers draw parallels between how they got integrated to a new Western culture and how one design can evolve into another.

Arnold's claim that the process of fashion can be observed in the deconstructivist garments is justified as the evolving process of the creations composed of plasticity, de-designing, deconstruction and reconstruction constitutes a new semiology related to how fashion operates. This section has also addressed one of the two common elements Chalayan and Aksu share in terms of subversive design (observing the change and metamorphosis of the system of fashion in the creations of Chalayan and Aksu) and how this element forms a third wave deconstructivist design. The following section will address the second common element that both designers share: The influence of Turkish culture on their designs.

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2. Deconstruction through Culture

Introduction

Focusing mainly on culture, this section is composed of two different parts. It examines how Chalayan and Aksu build on their own personal Turkish cultural experience, motifs and traditional elements to deconstruct: A. Conventional fashion marketing and consumption B. Orthodoxies related to Turkish culture.

A. Deconstruction of Fashion Marketing and Consumption through Cultural, Conceptual De-designs

This section looks at Hussein Chalayan's culture-oriented conceptual fashion and its product marketing. It also illustrates how his unconventional commercial strategies highlighted by the fashion shows affect the perception, wearability and consumption of his designs. The section also explores Chalayan's de-designed works and the deconstruction and reconstruction they cause within the conventional ways of fashion marketing and consumption. The section will focus on three different conceptual shows of the designer, which are based on his cultural background in various aspects: *Temporal Meditations*, *Between* and *After Words*. Regarding his works and fashion shows that are based on his background, Chalayan states as follows:

> There are certain things that are imbued with my background, but it also goes a bit further than that. What happens is that I look also at other scenarios through the emotive, and through, let's say, the historical aspect (as cited in Violette, 2011, p. 45).

At the beginning of this section, it is important to note that although the garments that will be discussed are de-designs in various respects; these

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garments do not have a quality of plasticity. This is because they mainly deal with *concepts* and *the conceptual.* They do not need a materially transformative aspect to deconstruct norms or concepts as they are there to present or form *abstract* ideas.

Chalayan has integrated the non-commercial realms of technology into the commercial realm of fashion. The designer does not only bring together different concepts and realms, but he also reshapes their meanings through re-contextualizing them within the domain of fashion. His work contains a bricolage of different versions of knowledge, which can be observed in the designer's creations. According to Seymour Papert (1993), Professor of Applied Math and founding faculty member of the MIT Media Lab, bricolage, similar to eclecticism, involves gathering different concepts and things and using them to convey meanings. Creativity, on the other hand, is an activity that involves the collection, re-contextualization and integration of different concepts and materials so as to generate what has not been produced before (Amabile, 1988; Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin, 1993; Drazin, Glynn, & Kazanjian, 1999; Unsworth, 2001). Chalayan acts like a bricoleur of knowledge who is inspired by his cultural background, technology, architecture, art and many other trans-disciplinary accounts. The designer brings together these disciplines like a bricolage, and like the process of creativity involves, re-contextualizes them within the domain of fashion.

Chalayan's interdisciplinary design perspective, unconventional marketing strategies that encompass conceptual and performative fashion shows and museum displays are key elements that this section will discuss. The

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conceptual, cultural fashion shows of the designer will be discussed as 'performance art' and his de-designed non-wearable and non-sellable creations will be argued to be 'conceptual art works' to be displayed in museums. Regarding Chalayan's designs, curator Beral Madra explains as follows, 'his work contains the very objectives of pure modernism and also abstraction. He abstracts everything and comes to a very pragmatic and a very minimalist aesthetic' (B. Madra, Personal communication, July 3, 2013). She further adds that, 'what he is producing on the catwalk you can wear, but what is showing in as contemporary artwork you can think about [referring to the non-wearable]' (B. Madra, Personal communication, July 3, 2013).

The fact that Chalayan's conceptual, artistic works are not for sale does not mean that they are bad fashion. Rather, these designs are created intentionally as non-sellable pieces because they are made to be art works that could end up in museums. Further, these pieces are significant in that they serve as the core elements of the designer's unconventional marketing strategy. In the article entitled "Is Fashion a True Art Form" published in *The Guardian*, Alice Rawsthorn (2013), former director of the Design Museum London, suggests that fashion has a practical function while art works do not. The fact that Chalayan's museum pieces are non-wearable and non-sellable positions them into a non-practical context, which renders them more 'artistic' than 'fashionable'. This could be argued to be one of the main reasons that situates the designer's creations closer to the realm of art. In addition, the same reason is a significant quality of the marketing strategy of his label and a key element that distinguishes the designer from other mainstream designers.

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Chalayan's conceptual fashion shows with de-designed showpieces deconstruct the concept of the conventional catwalk. This is because the designer presents his collections by means of shows and de-designed showpieces, which are staged like performance art; they are dramatic, provocative, and challenging to the understanding of a mainstream fashion show. Loschek (2009) points out that, 'Hussein Chalayan is famous for presentations beyond the conventional catwalk and his intellectual staging of creations, which explode the boundaries between fashion, design, performance and art' (p. 83). Further, Quinn (2005) writes that, 'Chalayan's quest for new platforms has enabled him to augment the meaning of his clothes by creating event spaces for them in the form of films, installations and exhibitions' (p. 48). Every single catwalk show of the designer features specific non-sellable and non-wearable designs. Such designs of Chalayan are de-designed creations because they deconstruct the conventional understanding of wearability and sellability of mainstream fashion garments; they are not constructed in a conventional way to be sold or worn. Rather, these creations are the showpieces of his collections. In this vein, the de-designed showpieces and performative catwalk shows illustrate a strong link with performative art. On his performative shows, Chalayan remarks that:

> My interest in performance stemmed from my interest in art. In my late teens, I would see a lot of stuff, and, I thought, why not introduce this way of thinking into fashion? Even at St Martins, my graduation show was a bit like a performance. At the end of the day, whatever is or said formed, it is all about perception. And I guess all the things I've been exposed to, including cultural clashes, have greatly contributed to this (as cited in Violette, 2011, p. 47).

Further, Polhemus (2005) writes on Chalayan:

> Chalayan presents us with intriguing rituals which are described as performance art: furniture becomes clothing, balloons and a beautiful

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trampoline help a model to reach for the divine, a coffin boat is pushed out everything morphs into everything else, life jackets are provided, the band plays on (p. 111).

The performative catwalk shows of Chalayan can be regarded as trans-

disciplinary mediums that bring together bodies, music, dance and design.

Bolton (2002) notes Chalayan's unconventional fashion shows:

> His shows cannot be seen as a designer showing and it may be more appropriate to compare them to a medium such as performance art. Live music, or live transmission of sound instead of soundtrack, unusual use of space and choreography that differs from the conventional parading up and down a catwalk, and most of all an overall sense of design that follows themes and ideas rather than specific trends (p. 119).

All fashion shows revolve around a concept and present its creations building on

that particular concept. Yet, in Chalayan's catwalk shows, the concept he

presents gradually emerges with each revelation of his de-designed creations.

Thus, the de-designed non-wearable and non-sellable creations that are

featured in the designer's fashion shows reinforce the narrative and conceptual

side of his collections. In other words, these creations are generated not to be

worn but to make a statement.

Chalayan's performative shows mark the consumption of fashion in other ways.

According to Dejan Sudjic (1990), director of the Design Museum, London, 'in

the past thirty years, the traditional catwalk has changed from a private

commercial transaction behind closed doors into a public spectacle regarded as

part theatre, part performance art and part entertainment' (p. 25). Chalayan's

marketing strategies and fashion consumption are in agreement with Sudjic's

words. The designer has engaged in ways beyond traditional magazines or

photography and focused on other areas such as art, museum display, visual

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narration and performance. In this respect, he has become a promoter, an unconventional designer whose fashion practice, marketing and consumption are made through delving into different realms and methods drawn from various disciplines and marketed through performative art, and museum display.

What follows will focus on the designer's *Temporal Meditations*, *Between* and *After Words* collection shows and examine them in detail with regards to their 'performative' quality. In addition, the next section will place the de-designed garments of all three collections in a position closer to an artistic and theatrical disciplinary practice with a focus on the designer's emphasis on his own culture.

Temporal Meditations Collection

Spring/Summer 2004 *Temporal Meditations* (figure 82) is a collection inspired by the designer's personal background. The collection of the designer featured garments with prints that 'depict[ed] the Turkish Cypriot seafront' (Kooij & Zijpp, 2005, p. 18). Regarding the collection, it is explained that:

> During the show, an image of a large aeroplane was visible in the background as a symbol of migration... With this collection, Chalayan used the history of his native country in a light-hearted and unconventional manner. He did this by connecting his creations- as symbols of the present day- to the multi-layered, rich and turbulent past through which cultural diversity has become an inevitable component of the national identity, one that is of on-going influence on the individual's identity (Kooij & Zijpp, 2005, p. 146).

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(Figure 82) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 2004, *Temporal Meditations*
Collection, Garment with Turkish Cypriot Seafront Prints.

The collection was staged like a performance with elements that created a

theatrical ambiance. As Camille Bélanger (2011) explains:

> The short and almost squared catwalk was divided at the third of its
> length by a large screen showing a photograph of a deserted airport with
> a plane parked on the tarmac. Under the plane was placed a table with
> two empty chairs. Although it was not screened at the fashion show, this
> picture is actually a still photograph from a short film directed by
> Chalayan... the decor and the music contributed in creating an
> atmosphere, one that transported the viewers into Chalayan's thought

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process (p. 27).

According to Chalayan, *Temporal Meditations* collection 'can be viewed as an archaeological talisman, which morphs slivers of past and present, ultimately and perhaps paradoxically becoming a frozen fragment of its own archaeological quest' (as cited in Violette, 2011, p. 272). The collection highlights significant cultural implications that date back hundreds of years ago such as the Ottoman Empire. This collection displays a bricolage of time in that it features images of Ottoman Empire, the designer's country Cyprus' past, and its diversity in the present. This is, arguably, why Chalayan refers to the collection as a morphing of the past and present. In this respect, it could be suggested that the depiction of an archaeological talisman also highlights the designer's Turkish identity's deepness.

The narrative depiction composed a significant part of the conceptual show. In this collection, the designer narrated his cultural story by focusing on 'a short cotton strapless dress with an off-the-shoulder neckline', which was later exhibited in Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean (Mudam) in Luxembourg (Bélanger, 2011, p. 28). Despite seeming to carry simple Hawaiian prints, the dress revealed and told much more related to the designer's cultural background:

> The textile print reveals a very interesting aspect of the collection. What looks like a fun Hawaiian print is, in fact, composed of scenes from the sixteenth-century battle between the Ottomans and the Venetians transposed onto the modern beaches of Nicosia filled with holiday resorts. This reference to Cyprus' violent past marked by war is not the only element related to Chalayan's heritage that informed the dress and the collection (Bélanger, 2011, p. 28).

Thus, the prints 'hint[ed] at less picturesque truths about the continuously

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worn-torn island' (Kooij & Zijpp, 2005, p. 18). By narrating the pain, trauma,

and suffering the war caused, with this collection, the designer visually

commemorated his nation's bitter past. As Gordana Vrencoska (2009)

highlights:

> Through narrative illustrations of historical routes of migrations, he once
> again wants to remind on his ethnical roots and preserve the heritage of
> his people's history. The illustrations are printed on the fabrics used for
> the separates (pp. 877-878).

The dresses of *Temporal Meditations* collection are ironic in that while they

seem to depict hedonistic Hawaiian prints, when observed closer, a

contradicting framework is revealed: war and tragedy. In this vein, an optical

illusion that brings together binary oppositions is created.

Optical illusions that are displayed on garments can be observed in the second

wave deconstructivist designer Martin Margiela. In his Autumn/Winter 2014

collection, Martin Margiela had a garment that featured the upper layer of a

shoe as a blouse (figure 83). Without close observation, the ties of the blouse

seemed like a bow tie and the leather upper segment of the shoe seemed like

the texture of a blouse. Both Margiela and Chalayan, in these creations, play

with the eyes by making use of distance and the difference it makes in eyesight

and comprehension. Chalayan juxtaposed hedonism with trauma while Margiela

turned logic upside down by presenting something worn on the lower

extremities (feet/shoes) worn on the upper extremities (neck/collar).

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(Figure 83) Martin Margiela, Autumn/Winter 2014 Collection, Shoe as a Blouse Garment.

Between Collection

The performative show of Spring/Summer 1998 *Between* collection (figure 84) of the designer critiqued the radical cultural Islamic approach towards the way women are expected to dress by uncovering what is expected to be fully concealed. The collection show displayed 'traditional Middle Eastern Burqa head dress, but [the models] were naked from the waist down' (Bruzzi & Gibson, 2000, p. 120). Regarding this politically provocative collection, Chalayan rather

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broadly points out that, 'the collection was about defining your cultural environment with your clothes' (as cited in Quinn, 2005, p. 50). The designer, on another occasion, states that, 'you are born nude and, through this cultural conditioning, you become like a mummy in a sense, and then of course, it was controversial because it is chador' (as cited in Violette, 2011, p. 47).

The chador has been a controversial subject all around the world. In Turkey, it has been a matter of friction since Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, secularized the country (Hardy, 2002). The chador is also banned in France as former president Nicolas Sarkozy once articulated, 'in our country, we cannot accept that women be prisoners behind a screen, cut off from all social life, deprived of all identity' (Allen, 2009, para. 4). In addition, in Israel, once a Rabbi said, 'there is a real danger that by exaggerating, you are doing the opposite of what is intended [which leads to] severe transgressions in sexual matters', which puts the chador in a fetishist position (as cited in Blomfield, 2010, para. 4). The chador has drawn attention in various aspects: religion, feminism, politics and sexuality. Presenting a controversial as well as serious concept as such, has also added to Chalayan's definition as an intellectual fashion designer who creates garments against the superficiality of fashion. Regarding the performative show, *Between*, Evans (2005) explains that:

> *Between* collection (Spring/Summer 1998) brought traditional Islamic dress to his London Fashion Week catwalk. Chalayan sent six models onto the catwalk wearing black chadors of varying lengths and nothing else underneath, exploring the capacity of traditional dress to define and de-individuate the body as it concealed the wearer's identity. The shortest chador exposed the model's body from the navel downward, while another model roamed the catwalk in only yashmak (p. 50).

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(Figure 84) Hussein Chalayan, Spring/Summer 1998, *Between* Collection.

With clothes that ranged between the over exposure of the body and the radical

covering of it, in this collection the designer 'explored the space between

cultures, between Eastern and Western culture', as Bolton identifies (2002, p.

119). Further, Quinn (2005) interprets the collection from the metaphorical

perspective of architecture, as it relates to the formation of a sense of culture in

its territorialisation of bodies:

> In Chalayan's work, veiling is interpreted as an architectural device, and
> the veil itself is in many ways emblematic of the themes featuring in his
> work. The veil separates, conceals, defines space and demarcates
> cultural boundaries.... To Chalayan, a veil can function as both a
> boundary and border, and symbolize isolation and dislocation too (p. 50).

In the article "La Vida Nuda: Baring Bodies, Bearing Witness" (2012), Hamid

Dabashi, Professor of Iranian Studies and Comparative Literature at Columbia

University, writes that:

> In gestures ranging from running naked in a soccer stadium with joy, or
> in protest, to highly stylized photograph or video installations- is an act
> of stage formal destruction that disrupts the "normality" of socializing

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norms for a deliberate pause. It is the staging of the body for a momentary reflection (para. 12).

In addition, Karina Eileraas (2014), visiting faculty in Gender Studies at USC, states that 'nude protest has a special capacity to reconfigure the body politic by framing vulnerability as a basis for exchange and staging intimate zones of disruption and disidentification' (p. 42). Recent examples illustrate "nudity" as a way of protest. Minou Arjomand, an Iranian woman who has participated an HIV/AIDS advocacy group (ACT UP), displayed a demonstration of nudity outside Madison Square Garden, New York, at the time when the Republican National Convention was held. Through being naked, she demonstrated her stance against President Bush's policies related to AIDS (Dabashi, 2012). Further, Egyptian activist and blogger Aliaa Magda Elmahdy put pictures of herself on her blog (figure 85) so as to question the social norms of her country related to visibility, sex and women's rights. In her blog, *A Rebel's Diary*, Elmahdy (2011) wrote as follows:

> I am not shy of being a woman in a society where women are nothing but sex objects harassed on a daily basis by men who know nothing about sex or the importance of a woman. The photo is an expression of my being and I see the human body as the best artistic representation of that. I took the photo myself using a timer on my personal camera. The powerful colours black and red inspire me.

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(Figure 85) Aliaa Magda Elmahdy, 2011.

Eileraas (2014) argues that Elmahdy 'elevat[es] gender and sexuality to the forefront of local and global geopolitical conversations' (p. 42). This section suggests that Chalayan does the same with the conceptual catwalk show of *Between* collection. Thus, in a similar way to what Elmahdy did, the performative collection show, *Between*, deploys another way of feminist protest against the norms of a fundamentalist Islamic culture. According to Madra, Chalayan 'looks to the identity of women in a very democratic way' (B. Madra, Personal communication, July 3, 2013).

The designer displays a sequential presentation of six different models in various degrees of undress. He, arguably, manifests that being completely

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covered up and being completely naked are the same. In this sense, it could be argued that extremities can only be counter attacked by extremities and the binaries of two extremities are dependent on each other. Like the two sides of the same coin, by putting two extreme sides on the same stage, the designer shows that being wholly covered up is the same as being completely naked for both positions are extreme. Chalayan visually articulates this by putting the first and last models at both ends of the line of models. The figure from the collection visually expresses that even if a woman is completely naked, she cannot 'speak' (see the model's face mask that covers her mouth) and if she is completely veiled up, her situation is the same because she cannot be 'seen'. In both respects she is 'unable' and 'incapable'. In this vein, Chalayan shows that women are invisible and radical cultural implications on women are absurd in every single way. This narrative aspect related to culture and women is significant in that more than showing garments, the collection conveys messages. This, arguably, reinforces the show's performative characteristic.

With this collection, the designer deconstructed the norm of 'fashion garments' on the catwalk as he featured 'costumes' related to a culture's radical aspect. These creations are costumes because they appear as components of a theatrical staging and because they communicate a message. On this account, the designs that are featured in this collection are de-designs because their construction deconstructs the concept of 'fashion garments' by displaying 'costumes' related to a radical culture. By displaying a fundamentally religious culture through the vehicle of fashion iconography, the designer establishes an unconventional marketing strategy through his non-wearable de-designed

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fashion garments. Thus, what he does is still fashion but his marketing strategies involve other realms such as religion and politics. This collection of the designer re-emphasizes his conceptual side of seeing fashion as art pieces.

After Words Collection

Chalayan's *After Words* collection (figure 86) is another conceptual catwalk show with a strong performance element and narrative related to the designer's cultural background. Before moving on to what the designer's show depicted, it is significant to understand the political tragedies that the Turkish/Cypriots suffered. In 1960, the bi-communal state that depended on the partnership between the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots was broken due to the *Akrias* Plan. This plan:

> Put forward a deliberate campaign for changing the state of affairs created by the constitution and ultimately realizing the ideal for enosis, the Greek Cypriots proposed amendments to the Constitution, known as the Thirteen Points that entailed usurping the rights of Turkish Cypriots and degrading their equal co-founder status to that of a minority on the Island ("Historical Background- Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Ministry of Foreign Affairs", n.d., para. 8).

The friction between the two parties resulted in the war in 1963 in which many Turkish Cypriots died. The Greek Cypriots 'ejected all Turkish Cypriots from state organs and unilaterally amended the fundamental articles of the constitution' ("Historical Background- Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Ministry of Foreign Affairs", n.d., para. 9). As a result of the inter-communal war, Turkish Cypriots were made to live in 'confined enclaves corresponding to only 3 % of the territory' ("Historical Background- Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Ministry of Foreign Affairs", n.d., para. 10). As a result, between the

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dates of 1963 and 1974 meant a tragic period for the Turkish Cypriots. Finally:

> With the imminent danger of further bloodshed on the Island, Turkey militarily intervened on 20 July 1974 under Article IV of the Treaty of Guarantee of 1960, removing the threat of further violence and even greater loss of life on the Island. At the inter-communal talks held on 2 August 1975 in Vienna, the Voluntary Exchange of Populations was agreed, and Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots were respectively transferred to the north and the south of the Island with the assistance of the UN ("Historical Background- Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Ministry of Foreign Affairs", n.d., para. 13).

(Figure 86) Hussein Chalayan, Autumn/Winter 2000, *After Words* Collection.

The collection show of *After Words* was composed of the concepts of 'enforced migration, refugee status, politics, personal memories, evacuation' and further, 'ethnic and racial issues were assembled within the context of fashion so as to form a conceptual show' (Maton, 2010, pp. 246-247). The show, which took place in Sadler's Wells Theatre in London, was presented in a plain white surrounding that resembled a room with ordinary objects like chairs, TV, a shelf

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and a table. A mother, father, grandmother and children later occupied the room like space. Subsequently, models joined the family and started to put the objects in the room into the pockets of the clothes they were wearing. With regards to this performance, Quinn (2002), states as follows, 'they transported the garments by bringing them into contact with the body, rescuing them as one would carry a child to safety' (p. 29). In one occasion, Chalayan explains with regards to memories embedded in objects and their quality of being carried around as portable objects, 'you could collect your memories and take them with you' (as cited in Johung & Sen, 2013, p. 29). Following the placement of the objects into the pockets, other models entered the room. They, in turn, removed the remaining items such as the chairs by placing them on themselves as garments. Chalayan explains the reasons for this, 'the idea was to hide those possessions that mean a lot to you- so you carry your environment with you' (as cited in Hoggard, 2000, p. 35). Quinn (2005), in a similar manner, puts the designs of the collection, as 'wearable habitation' with their capability of carrying items that make one's habitat (p. 47). Johung and Sen (2013) explain how carrying possessions through the pockets of the clothes results in a 'transitory spatial experience' (p. 30):

> For Chalayan, pocketing an item makes possible a future social interaction that in turn offers the possibility of replacing a neutral, abstract, transitory special experience with another that is just as transitory, but that is nonetheless specific to each body and contextualized through the objects housed within each of the garments (p. 30).

Finally, all the items in the room were 'worn' as well as placed into the pockets of the dresses of the so-called family members and the room was left barren (Violette, 2011, p. 240). The book *Landscapes of Mobility: Culture, Politics, and*

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Placemaking states with regards to the garments of the collection as follows:

> Transformable clothing must therefore also acknowledge the forced mobility of other kinds of nomads who have no choice but to seek refuge in the very fabrics that cover their bodies. Acknowledging these kinds of potential wearers, the London-based Cyprus-born Hussein Chalayan addresses the forced migration of bodies within the field of *haute couture* fashion. Chalayan's fashion designs and shows attest to the growing phenomenon of global dispersions through his re- imagination of individual garments as portable architecture (Johung & Sen, 2013, p. 24).

Chalayan explains how the idea of the show was generated in the following words:

> This project started off from the war Kosovo and then I connected it to what happened in Cyprus which was quite similar, when Greek EOKA sympathizers, in an attempt to unite Cyprus to Greece, were terrorizing Turkish Cypriot homes (as cited in Violette, 2011, p. 240).

On the other hand, Megan Hoffman (2009), interprets the show as a postmodern performance:

> As an example of a distinctly postmodern performance. *After Words* promoted 'plurality over unity' in the multiple, seemingly disjunctive meanings it attempted to communicate as an overtly commercial spectacle that also theatrically explored the reality of wartime migrancy (p. 6).

Similar to the designer's *Between* collection show, it becomes ambiguous and hard to tell if the creations of the show are 'fashion' garments or 'costumes'. However, the show's performative element and its strong narrative, arguably, mark the designs as 'costumes'. This stems from the designs that are equipped with pockets to serve as 'bags' to carry the belongings, which compose the key motive in communicating the narrative of evacuation. The narrative power of the costumes render them de-designs as they serve more to the story told than the fashionable garment to be worn. Further to the matter, the show, just like

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the previous *Between* show, is a postmodern performance because it uses the 'fashion' context as a stage to display a performance akin to a 'theatre' staging. Yet, it is still labelled as a 'fashion show'. Similar to a lyric dance performance that features no words but only movements to communicate feelings, the catwalk show of *After Words* collection depicts a non-verbal theatrical performance, which narrates a historical event's effects on people's lives. In short, with this collection's show, the designer generates a semi-theatrical performance with de-designed garments that serve as costumes and this way he communicates a narrative. In this respect, the show marks the redefinition of concepts such as the fashion garment, costume, catwalk, stage, fashion show, and performance. The selection of Sadler's Wells Theatre in London underlines the collection's performative quality. Yet, it still differs from a theatrical performance because the creator, Chalayan, considers and presents himself as a fashion designer and the performance as a catwalk show.

The designer's performative collection shows, which transform the catwalk into a theatrical stage, are similar to the theatre director Bertolt Brecht's plays. Brecht was a director of epic, insurrectionary and political theatre, which drew on using theatre as a tool for social change and use.

Similar to Brecht's theatre, through touching upon his own cultural and personal background, Chalayan addresses social matters as an activist who tries to make a difference in the way we think. Yet, he still is a fashion designer who generates seasonal shows in fashion weeks. This dichotomous stance of the designer is, arguably, what renders him distinct from other designers.

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Another element that makes the designer's catwalk shows unique and distinct from others is the emotional quality that is generated through feelings, especially, melancholia. Regarding melancholia and Chalayan's works, Evans (2005) remarks as follows:

> Although Chalayan's design motifs in many of his collections were the modernist ones of technological progress (flight, engineering, travel and mobility), they were shadowed by the darker motifs of dislocation, migrancy and exile. For all modernity and refusal of obvious nostalgia and historicism in his designs, there is a melancholy edge to the great modernist icons (p. 12).

Temporal Meditations and *After Words* collections compose significant examples of such melancholia. Both shows deal with tragedies, consequences of war and pay attention to socio-political matters more than marketing fashionable garments.

In the article "Affective Spaces, Melancholic Objects: Ruination and the Production of Anthropological Knowledge" Yael Navaro-Yashin (2009), Senior lecturer in Social Anthropology at the university of Cambridge, writes:

> As in my ethnographic account of looted objects and ruined spaces in Northern Cyprus, 'the lost object' is not only a person (a Greek- Cypriot). Rather, in this case, the lost object (the person) is present in the life of the melancholic in the form of an actual material (or non-human) object (such as a household item, fields of olive trees, or animals). This object (whether it be a piece of furniture, the house, or the land on which it is built) reminds the persons who use or inhabit it that it, itself, is a loss to the persons who were its original owners. The affect of that loss experienced by members of the other community (in this case, Greek-Cypriots) lingers uncannily in the spaces and objects, which they have left behind. And Turkish-Cypriots inhabit many of these spaces and employ, still, many of these objects. Here, melancholia is mediated through objects and non-human environments. Therefore, we can speak, in such instances and historical contingencies, of melancholic objects, things which exude an affect of melancholy, and spatial melancholia, an environment or atmosphere which discharges such an affect (p. 16).

In the conceptual show of *After Words* collection, it is not the objects but the
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catwalk that bears a 'spatial melancholia' (Navaro-Yashin, 2009, p. 16). This is

because the catwalk, which is transformed into a room is rendered an 'object'

that is left behind and that is going to be inhabited by others. On this account,

it carries the melancholy of abandonment, tragedy and grief. In addition to that,

by doing so, the designer goes beyond communicating narratives and ideas; he

communicates *feelings*. Further to the matter, turning the catwalk into a space

reminds us of a long abandoned room and evokes a sense of nostalgia for a life

that may have existed there.

The designer's unconventional position in marketing his works has solidified his

position as a third wave deconstructivist designer. Through this position, he has

deconstructed the grand narratives related to fashion marketing; the designer

uses the catwalk as a platform to deconstruct the conventional perceptions of

superficiality related to fashion. Regarding his works and design thinking, he

states that:

> It's an experiment about how something can be perceived. I'm like a
> storyteller in sound and form. I think of it as a world science, but using
> clothes, I mean I live in all these co-related worlds I can just slip in and
> out of (as cited in Violette, 2011, p. 46).

Chalayan makes use of themes and concepts in his shows that are uncommon

to the fashion world and calls what he does a 'world science'. With this position

taken, and de-designs parallel to this position, the designer deconstructs the

perceived superficiality of the catwalk. Chalayan broadens the fashion

audience's perception of the catwalk as a platform solely dedicated to display

fashion garments. The designer extends the catwalk as a context that stages

artistic performances, costumes and non-verbal theatrical narratives related to

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global matters. Through his avant-garde fashion shows and the de-designs that these shows feature, Chalayan deconstructs the superficiality of fashion and he also reconstructs it as a serious context that encompasses academic, artistic, scientific, historical and political matters.

As the designer touches upon controversial topics, his shows carry the potential of leaving an effect on their audience and they can be powerful performative pieces that can change perceptions related to intrinsic topics. This is one of the main reasons why the designer can be described as *intellectual* rather than *fashionable*. Further on the matter, the main originality of Chalayan as a fashion designer lies in the way he loads the fashion framework, both garment construction and the catwalk, with various domains such as art, religion, history and politics. In this sense, the designer *intellectualizes* the fashion realm by the complex and intricate showpiece de-designs and artistic catwalk performances. Thus, he *expands* the fashion context.

Narrating particular events related to politics, religion and history puts the designer in a position of 'sophisticated marketing'. Chalayan still sells wearable pieces of garments, but he markets them with serious concepts and contents, which are mostly irrelevant to the fashion scenario. As a consequence, for Chalayan, fashion runs deeper than the making of garments. In accord, the catwalk shows of Chalayan are created as anti-conventional contexts of fashion display, where performances related to various historical, artistic, political, social and cultural events and concepts take place.

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Against Seasonal Trends

In addition to the deconstruction of the understanding of conventional catwalk and the wearability and sellability of garments, the three collections with de-designs mentioned earlier in this section deconstruct the concept of seasonal collection. According to Violette (2011):

> The narrative content of this (*After Words*) and other Chalayan collections raise questions about the relationship between what something is and what it represents. A fashion show is in itself a highly ritualized affair, a consumerist harvest festival promising the possibility of constant renewal. By bringing elements such as the family onto the catwalk, grouping that raises the spectre of aging and death, Chalayan creates a powerful friction against the idea of a seasonal collection (p. 10).

Further on the matter, Loschek (2009) points out that:

> He (Chalayan) does not necessarily develop new creations on a seasonal basis; he takes up his own ideas repeatedly and continues to develop them. In this way, he meets the constant pressure for innovation in fashion with something constant and consistent: his creations are timeless. As a conceptual designer, Chalayan is devoted to the wearable as well as the aim to realize abstract theses and ideas. However, many of his creations are not intended for everyday wear or for sale; they are the realizations of ideas (p. 62).

As with the mainstream commercialized fashion labels, the designer's collections and shows change quickly and he uses the notion of a seasonal collection and shows to a fashion schedule. Similar to the mainstream fashion labels' use of concepts for their collections, Chalayan also uses themes for his collections. A difference between Chalayan's fashion shows from other seasonal catwalk shows is that he features *ideas* and *narrations* by means of non-sellable and non-wearable artistic de-designed collection pieces. In this respect, the designer uses fashion (as evidenced in his de-designed creations) to narrate his concepts but not concepts to present his garments, as it is the case for the mainstream

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and commercialized fashion shows. This way, the designer deconstructs the understanding of seasonal trends in fashion. His de-designs as embodiments of concepts and narratives render his collections timeless and permanent as the stories they communicate on the catwalk are related to world history, culture, religion and politics.

Fashion, Art and Museum Displays

Having explained the performative aspects of the designer's culture oriented collections, this section will focus on Chalayan's de-designed conceptual works, which illustrate a strong link that exists between fashion and art. Since these designs are non-wearable compared to the mainstream wearable garments, these de-designed creations end up in another context: the museum. The fashion displays in museums bring the realms of art and fashion together. Adam Geczy and Vicky Karaminas (2013) point out the similarities fashion has with art:

> Both fashion and art are aspects of visual culture, involving form, colour, and texture. The aesthetics of art and fashion also have in common what Radford calls "access to the poetics of associated ideas". Like art, fashion can be technically and conceptually rich (p. 24).

There is a large and growing interest in fashion display in museums. Starting with the late 1960s, many exhibitions that featured fashion and art together took place in museums. As Bonnie English and Liliana Pomazan (2010) point out:

> In October 1967, an exhibition opened in the Costume Institute, Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York entitled The Art of Fashion. It was a singularly important event in the fashion world, as it was one of the earliest exhibitions that acknowledged the significant interplay

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between fashion and art, with their shared notions of social expression, cultural heritage and current ideals (p. 82).

Additionally, The FIT gallery in New York showed an exhibition entitled *Fashion and Surrealism* in 1987 and the same exhibition was later displayed at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London in 1988. Further, *Mode et Art*, another exhibition that joined art and fashion, took place in Brussels and Montreal in 1993. In addition, a considerable number of museums have opened specifically for the display and exhibition of fashion garments such as Musèe de la Mode Les Arts Decoratifs, Paris (1986), Mode Museum, Antwerp (2002), Fashion and Textile Museum, London (2003), Museo de la Moda, Santiago, Chile (2006), MUDE Museo do Design et da. Moda, Lisbon (2008) and Palazzo Morando-Costume Moda Immagine, Milan (2010). The growing interest in bringing together fashion and museums renders fashion as a realm that is becoming more and more academic. As Bruzzi and Gibson (2000) explain:

> Over the past thirteen years, museums and galleries have continued to enjoy an unprecedented success in terms of the content and interpretation of their fashion-related programmes. Two consecutive special issues of the academic journal *Fashion Theory* (12:1 March 2008: 'Exhibitionism' and 12:2 June 2008: 'Fashion Curation') have explored in some detail the various curatorial methods and approaches involved in gallery practice and the resulting controversies that have accompanied new approaches to the collecting, display, sponsorship and marketing of fashion curation in the museum sector (p. 138).

A significant number of de-designed pieces of Chalayan's conceptual collections have been displayed in museums and exhibitions around the world (figures 87, 88). In 1994, *Cartesia*, was displayed in West Soho Galleries, London. In 2005, a retrospective of the designer's work was featured in Groninger Museum, Netherlands. Further, in 2006, designs of Chalayan were exhibited in *Skin and Bones: Parallel Practices in Fashion and Architecture* exhibition at The Museum

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of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles till March 2007. Once again, in the year 2007, at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, the exhibition of the designer's *LED Dresses* from his Autumn/Winter 2007 collection took place. The same dresses were also displayed in Istanbul Design week of the same year. The year 2008 presented many other exhibitions, where the designer's creations were featured. In the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the *Elastic Mind* exhibition featured the *Mechanical Dress* of Chalayan's Spring/Summer 2007 collection. Further in the same year, his *Remote Control Dress* from Spring/Summer 2000 collection was displayed as part of the *Blog Mode: Addressing Fashion* exhibition at The Costume Institute at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. In 2011, Autumn/Winter 2004 *Anthropology of Solitude* collection dresses were featured at *Neue Masche – Gestrickt, Gestickt und Anders*, Museum Bellerive, Switzerland. The *Tulle Dress* of 2012 and *LED Dresses* were shown in *British Design 1948-2012: Innovation in the Modern Age* exhibit in 2012. In addition to these displays, the designer's solo exhibitions featured in The design Museum in London (2009), the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo (2010), Istanbul Modern (2010) and the Musee des Arts Decoratifs in Paris (2011).

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(Figure 87) Hussein Chalayan, *Ambimorphous* Collection, *From Fashion and Back* (2009), Design Museum, London.

(Figure 88) Hussein Chalayan, *Temporal Meditations* Collection*, From Fashion and Back* (2009), Design Museum, London.

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Chalayan's de-designed non-wearable and non-sellable works' marketing in museums marks further the designer's deconstruction of the traditional fashion cycle, which is from the catwalk onto the consumers. Instead of following this conventional pattern, his cycle can be defined as 'from the catwalk into the museum'. This way, the designer shows that fashion is not a realm producing garments to be worn, but it can be used as a device to create art. According to Svendsen (2004):

> Many fashion designers have used strategies normally associated with contemporary art rather than the world of fashion by creating clothes that are better situated to exhibitions in galleries and museums than for actual wear. Hussein Chalayan's shows often seemed more like art installations than fashion shows. At a 1994 show, for example, the clothes were accompanied by a text that gave an account of how they came into being, and of how they had been buried underground for works before being dug up and shown on the catwalk. He has claimed, with some justification, that many of his creations would do better on a museum wall than on a human body (p. 92).

Further on Chalayan's creations' relation with art, Beral Madra states:

> What he is bringing into fashion is actually modern art because when I look at his early works, I see that he really is an extension of Oskar Schlemmer. He is getting his inspirations from the very early modernist abstractions, even from Russian constructivism or supremacy (B. Madra, Personal communication, July 3, 2013).

Svendsen's and Madra's ideas are agreeable. However, this section adds that Chalayan's works can be interpreted as "Conceptual Art Pieces". In Sol Lewitt's article entitled "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art" (1967), it is written that:

> In conceptual art, the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work. When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art (p. 79).

Ideas are what Chalayan holds as singularly the most important aspect of his

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work. The designer remarks that, 'I really think I am an ideas person. Ideas are very valuable. The concept is more important than the dress itself' (as cited in Frankel, 2001, p. 68). Further on his ideas influencing his works, the designer states as follows, 'I am a storyteller and I create processes, which involve a story, or a way of thinking, or an idea, so that it can help me to design' (as cited in Grau, 2011, para. 8). As conceptual art and the designer's quotes suggest, Chalayan builds his catwalk shows around a narrative, an idea or a concept and feature de-designed garments that serve as embodiments of his stories, narratives and concepts.

One of the key points that conceptual art possesses is the response sought from the audience. According to Michael Newman and Jon Bird (1993), 'conceptual art proposed an informed and critically active audience who were expected to work in order to fully engage with the objects, texts, installations' (p. 6). Similarly, Godfrey (1998) remarks that:

> Conceptual art is not about forms or materials, but about ideas and meanings. It cannot be defined in terms of any medium or style, but rather by the way it questions what art is. In particular, conceptual art challenges the traditional status of the art object as unique, collectable or saleable. Because the work does not take a traditional form, it demands a more active response from the view, indeed it could be argued that the conceptual work of art only truly exists in the viewer's mental participation (p. 4).

Chalayan challenges traditional norms related to garment making and the fashionability of a garment, just as conceptual art questions the realm of art. In this respect, *understanding* what Chalayan's designs mean, go against, and communicate are significant elements in perceiving and consuming his alternatively marketed works.

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Chalayan's museum displays offer an alternative way of consuming fashion. Like conceptual art, it is about understanding an idea, interpreting and questioning a creation, which is more than a wearable item, and more like an incarnation of a concept. In this sense, similar to conceptual art, Chalayan's de-designed museum pieces deconstruct the conventional status of traditional fashion garments merely as sellable and wearable items. Feminist writer Virginia Woolf states that, 'clothes change our view of the world and the world's view of us ... There is much to supportable view that it is clothes that wear us, and not we them' (as cited in English, 2007, p. 152). As art pieces connoting certain meanings and significations, instead of following the conventional path of being worn by people, Chalayan's de-designed conceptual garments metaphorically embody meanings. These meanings are constituted through the designer's ideas, concepts and messages he aims to communicate before constructing his de-designs.

English (2007) points out that:

> The art industry now seems to be envious of fashion's ability to be more than a rhetorical device, or a cultural object, used by artists to comment on the seduction of popular culture in our society. Perhaps designers are using fashion more effectively to communicate ideas and emotions to an audience, the majority of which has lost touch with meaning in art practice (p. 151).

English's words mark the cultural importance of fashion and its power of signification that makes it easier to convey meanings. The scholar suggests that, in a contemporary context, fashion is becoming situated in a position that shares a superior stance to that of art with regards to communicating meanings. On this account, English highlights the art world's inclination towards fashion. Chalayan, in this vein, is a vital designer who establishes strong links

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between the domains of fashion and art through his de-designed works that convey meanings to us.

The designer's de-designed conceptual museum pieces not only acknowledge the cultural significance of fashion displayed in an academic context but also highlight the commercial significance of his designs. However, this commerciality is in stark contrast to celebrity designers. According to Margaret Bruce (2004), Professor of Marketing and Design Management:

> Leading designers become associated with major fashion members, creating great new stories, which are inevitably supported by arresting photographs of extravagant personal style, attendance of parties and runway collections. For example, the brand Christian Dior is as likely to be featured in fashion media as much for interest in its artistic director and chief designer, John McCarty... and Julien MacDonald ... are regularly in the news due to interest in celebrity... The designers' glamorous lifestyles and the lifestyles of those who wear their clothes reinforce consumers' aspiration and desire for the products, which have exclusive and luxurious associations (p. 157).

Instead of conventional marketing strategies similar to that of luxury and celebrity designers who 'are usually transformed into superstars and in many ways are seen as being the brand themselves', as a 'major marketing force behind the brand' (Hamedie, 2011, p. 114), Chalayan makes his name through the museum. Fukai (2010), in the article "Dress and Fashion in Museums" argues that exhibiting fashion garments in museums attracts more academic attention to the realm of fashion (p. 288). In this vein, as a museum-named designer, Chalayan establishes his name more on an intellectual, academic stance and endows his label with an alternative commercial strategy. With this strategy, the designer, arguably, broadens his audience circle and displays an inter-disciplinary approach not only in the way he creates his designs but also in

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the way he markets them.

This unconventional marketing strategy manifests Chalayan as a postmodern designer as he blurs boundaries in every step of his creation and marketing processes. As Bugg (2009) argues:

> In contemporary culture, artists and designers are increasingly drawing upon interrelated stimuli and methodologies. Those trained in one discipline are working within another and this in itself makes the boundaries of subjects difficult to define. In a number of cases designers are working in cross-disciplinary spaces for more than promotional reasons, and this can be seen as an important indicator of the erosion of boundaries, resulting in very positive sharing of knowledge between disciplines (pp. 29-30).

Fashion Consumption

No longer is fashion consumption solely defined as the acquisition of a garment. Disseminating and displaying conceptual de-designed pieces in museums raises questions regarding how a fashion label is perceived and consumed. 'Context can affect the concept of clothing and the body on which it is worn and the space in which it is viewed, all impacting on the way the work is received', states Bugg (2009, p. 26). Further, according to Marie Melchioir and Birgitta Svensson (2014), 'due to the evident interest of museum visitors in fashion (given the often record-breaking visitor numbers), and the growing research interest in the discipline of fashion studies, fashion has become increasingly legitimized as museum-worthy' (p. 5). They further point out that:

> The strength of fashion in museums is its public engagement; it heightens the appeal of the museum and thereby gives it access to new audiences, both in terms of age and socio-economic background... This is paradoxical in itself as the goal of new museology was never intended to be achieved through popular culture (such as fashion), but rather through the communication of critical thinking that would deconstruct

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the existing modernist authority of the museum and thus, open it up to representations of multiple truths and interpretations of past and present society, art and culture (2014, pp. 6-7).

Displaying fashion in the context of museum renders Chalayan and his de-designed creations more artistic, intellectual and academic. The museum displays of his creations transform them into objects of art; they no longer serve as fashion garments. This is why the designer's garments necessitate an informed audience that is capable of interpreting their intellectual stance, which is presented through the de-designed conceptual pieces. His works are not simple garments to be seen and worn. Rather, they are designs to be *understood* and *interpreted*. This fact directly influences the way Chalayan's de-designs are consumed. All these reasons lead to the fact that Chalayan deconstructs the understanding of the conventional fashion consumption and the conventional audience that consumes it.

Culture for Catharsis

As all three catwalk shows reveal, Chalayan's non-sellable, de-designed, artistic pieces, arguably, serve as cathartic elements that help him reconcile with his past. Catharsis can be explained as a ' "purge" revealing the oppressed ideas to the conscious. Catharsis as a psychological process constitutes the main elements of Aristotelian Tragedy' (Erdem, 2014, p. 280). Additionally, 'catharsis may be defined as the experience of relief or release of emotional tension as well as decrease in felt distress or physiological arousal' (Nyklícek, Temoshok, & Vingerhoets, 2004, p. 276). It could be argued that Chalayan's performative shows that are endowed with cultural elements are a tribute to his past, a

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remembrance, a redemption of pain and tragedy. Through sharing his de-designs with the world, blended with art, the designer goes through a catharsis related to his past, religious tensions and political dramas. Chalayan communicates 'feelings' of melancholy, abandonment, longing, pain and trauma through his past and traditional background.

The conceptual and de-designed works of the first and second wave deconstructivist designers, which are displayed in museums and exhibitions point out the fact that they are pushing the boundaries of how fashion is marketed and in this manner, they offer new alternatives as to how it could be consumed. An important point to make is that these designers all come from a culture and background that are distinct from the celebrity designers who have a background and who 'maintain the French hegemony in fashion' (Kawamura, 2006, p. 53). On this account, their non-Parisian background may be a key element that triggers the designers' desire to traverse the orthodox patterns of mainstream and commercialized fashion as to how and where fashion shall be presented and consumed. As a designer of Turkish background, Chalayan's creations that end up in museums further reinforce the terms of their experimental marketing and consumption, which go against the preconceived grain of conventional fashion. What distinguishes Chalayan from the first and second wave deconstructivist designers lies in the importance he gives to his cultural background and nationality, the way he displays his view of his religion and how he uses fashion to deal with his unresolved pain of his past. His de-designs serve as cathartic elements to resolve his cultural conflicts.

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Conclusion

This section has focused on the idea and product marketing of Hussein Chalayan and how the designer's performative catwalk shows and de-designed museum pieces have situated his works closer to the realm of performative and conceptual art. In this respect, the alternative shows and de-designed works of the designer deconstruct norms such as a garment's wearability, sellability, seasonal trends in fashion, the conventional fashion shows, fashion marketing and consumption. The designer generates unique perspectives related to fashion through the way he blurs the boundaries between fashion and art. In addition, through his de-designed works, the designer deconstructs the superficiality of fashion by stretching the fashion framework with serious concepts, which are displayed on the catwalk. Chalayan is a postmodern designer who successfully blends art, politics and religion under the subject of fashion. He establishes his name as a very unique designer who adopts a position distinct from the rest of the mainstream and commercialized fashion designers. Most importantly, the designer with his unconventional fashion marketing that leads to alternative ways of its consumption, brings together the binaries of frivolousness and seriousness.

There is a special significance to this section as it displays a critical approach towards the relation between plasticity and de-design. This section has shown that the de-designed showpieces of Chalayan that end up in museums are not endowed with a plastic capacity. They are de-designs since they deconstruct a lot of grand narratives related to fashion. Yet, as these de-designs are

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generated through ideas, concepts and narratives, they mainly deal with the

conceptual. This is the reason why these de-designs do not have a material

aspect that could be related to plasticity. It depicts that plasticity cannot be

applied to every de-design, however, every de-design leads to a deconstruction.

B. Deconstructing Orthodoxies Related to Turkish Culture.

This section will analyse the cultural deconstruction of the third wave avant-garde deconstructivist designer Bora Aksu who displays de-designed garments in his Spring/Summer 2006 collection. The section will provide insight into Turkish cultural objects and motifs such as *Oya* (the traditional Turkish lacework) and *Nazar Boncuk* (the evil eye bead). The designer explains his interest in his culture in the following words, 'Turkey has such a cultural richness and diversity. I love the things happening in the East, it still has an effortless vibe' (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013). In addition, he points out that his homeland is a major influence in his creativity and design thinking, 'being raised in Turkey and surrounded by such historical and cultural richness of course have influenced my design language. It's almost a genetic cultural richness that I carry wherever I go' (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013).

As the designer explains, his design language is composed by motifs of his own culture and the signifiers of his Turkish heritage enrich his design vocabulary. This section will focus on the traditional Turkish lacework, *oya*, and how its structure, through a design thinking that could be related to plasticity, is de-designed by the subversion Aksu's collection features on it. Through this de-designed form of *oya*, the section will discuss the resulting deconstruction against the non-commercial aspect and the traditional as well as cultural quality of the motif. The section will further mark how powerful the de-designing and deconstruction of a traditional motif could be in reconstructing new creations. It will explain this with regards to the concepts

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of repression, the resulting liberation from that and time.

Cultural Inspirations in Western Fashion: *Haute Couture* and Ready To Wear

Western fashion has been appropriating superficial cultural motifs from non-Western cultures and it has been creating new forms of fashion designs since the 18th century (Gale & Kaur, 2004, p. 67). Inge Boer (2006), Professor at the Institute for Literary Studies at the University of Amsterdam, interprets the use of Eastern cultures' motifs in Western cultures as 'produc[ing], promot[ing] and recycl[ing] powerful images of otherness' (p. 165). Many Western *haute couture* and Ready to Wear collections in fashion have been created under the superficial nationalist motifs of various non-Western cultures (Bruzzi & Gibson, 2000; Kaiser, 2012; Gale & Kaur, 2004; Maynard, 2004; Craik, 1993). As a result:

> A cursory glance through the archives of *Vogue* and *Elle* reveals fashion designers like Yves Saint Laurent, Zandra Rhodes, Rifat Özbek and Christian Dior, to name but a few, whose collections have been influenced in varying degrees by ethnicity and global culture (Gale & Kaur, 2004, p. 67).

Contemporary Ready to Wear and *haute couture* collections manifest the use of superficial nationalistic motifs of non-Western cultures. For example, While Burberry *Prorsum* Spring/Summer 2012 collection (figure 89) featured decoration motifs of African elements, Dior's Spring/Summer 1997 collection (figure 90), which was John Galliano's first collection for Dior, was created under the influence of the East African Masai tribe and the tribe's nationalistic elements were used as the appropriated motifs for the collection.

Appropriation as a concept is defined as the 'taking of a sign in use by one
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culture for use in another culture, giving it new meaning in the process' (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1993, p. 168). As it is clear, by appropriating the motifs of the other cultures, these Western fashion labels generate new collections. In this sense, the collections designed under the theme of 'the East in the West' result in these labels' construction of their new seasonal collections' identity in relation to the "other". The Western nationalities of *haute couture* and Ready to Wear fashion brands indicate that they are not affiliated with the culture of any of the nations their collections present. In other words, these brands do not have their own tradition in their background as Burberry is an English, and Dior is a French fashion house (Scott, 2013). In addition to that, by using non-Western motifs in a Western context, these labels also contribute to the notion of hybridity. According to Edward Said (1978), 'partly because of empire, all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated and unmonolithic' (p. xxix). As a result:

> Drawing on concepts such as the socio-cultural contexts of diversity and hybridity, and the psycho-cultural processes of racialization, 'othering', ambivalence, desire, resistance and complicity, helps us to investigate the cultural complexity of our decolonizing world and its diverse and interacting systems of meaning (Hickling-Hudson, 2006, p. 9).

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(Figure 89) Burberry, Spring/Summer 2012, *Prorsum* Collection.

(Figure 90) Dior, Spring/Summer 1997 Collection.

Edward Said (1978) worked on the connotations and denotations of the term "Orientalism" so as to show the ungrounded social constructions that work on the binaries of us and them, the West and the East. Thus, he tried to show how the Western world (the oriental other) establishes superiority over the East (the other) (Said, 1978). Said asserted that the Western world claims its power over the East by their knowledge of the orient. This knowledge brings power as it helps the West to make claims related to their culture and being (Fischer-Tiné, Gilley, Willenberg, & Paulmann, 2010).

Aksu re-explores a motif of his 'own' culture like an ethnographer, similar to the way Western brands explore a culture foreign to their own. In a similar way, this section analyses how Western labels explore non-Western motifs in their collections. As the abovementioned fashion labels, which appropriate motifs that are outside their culture, this section will show how Aksu exploits a motif of

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his own ethnic culture with which he is not familiar. Further, the section will discuss how the designer turns his cultural heritage into a source of financial capital through the extrapolation of the de-designing process he reveals on the motif.

What follows will explain *oya* and *nazar boncuk* as the key elements of Aksu's Spring/Summer 2006 collection by situating and analysing them in the Turkish cultural context.

Bora Aksu and Cultural Implications in Fashion Design

This section looks at two Turkish motifs, *oya* and *nazar boncuk,* both of which are used as elements in Aksu's Spring/Summer 2006 collection's creation process. This section also aims to provide insight into another culturally inspired collection of the designer, Spring/Summer 2014.

The Spring/Summer 2006 collection was inspired by the designer's homeland, Izmir. With regards to the collection, the designer explains that:

> For my Spring/Summer 2006 collection, I spent three months travelling through different villages and towns in the Aegean region... For me, it was a way of getting to know the Turkish culture in a way that I have never experienced before (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013).

This is interesting as the culture Aksu explores is his own culture from which he has distanced himself by living in London. Further to the matter, the quote also situates the designer into the role played by major Western designers investigating foreign cultures. This is because both parties deal with cultural implications with which they are not too familiar. In this respect, Aksu's words point out the fact that culture is something that necessitates a thorough insight

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even if it is one's own.

As it can be observed in figure 91, the *oya* motifs that featured in the garments of Spring/Summer 2006 collection were highly composed of flowers. The *Oya* flower is a trademark of the Aegean region of Turkey and the designer's use of it can be interpreted as a direct reference to his hometown. According to Emine Nas (2012), Lecturer in the Department of Handcrafts Education at Selçuk University, Konya:

> Flowered *oya* used in the Aegean and Marmara regions of Turkey express another set of ideas. In this tradition, which was more widely observed in the past, women used to ornament their heads with flowered *oya*, representing the most beautiful gifts of nature. While young girls, brides, and married women wore (and some still wear) *oya* featuring roses of many types, carnation, jasmine, hyacinths, daffodils, dahlias, or fuchsia, older women used wild flowers, symbolizing the approach of death and return to the earth. Each of these flowers has a message communicated both through shape and colour (pp. 42-43).

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(Figure 91) Bora Aksu, Spring/Summer 2006 Collection, *Oya* Motif with Flowers.

Oyas shall not be considered as motifs that appeal merely to women because

the Aegean coast of Turkey is known for its male "*Efe*" figures (figure 92),

whose roots date back to the late 16th and the early 17th century. *Efes* are

famous for the success they attained in the Turkish revolutionary war and they

are labelled as the folk heroes of the Turkish villages ("Zeybekler - Türk Halk

Müziği Bilgileri", n.d.). *Efes* are also known for their famous dance *Zeybek* that

can be watched in http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udRl7lsvtj0. The

traditional costumes of *Efes*, especially their headdresses, feature the motif of

oya as it can be observed in figure 93. According to Nas (2012):

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Occasionally, *oyas* are made to be worn by men. These are embroidered on the edges of the *poşus* (headscarf or bandana which may be made of silk, cotton, or wool, with fringed edges), *kaffiyehs* (Arab-style headdress consisting of a square of cloth folded to form a triangle and held in place by a cord) and on kerchiefs that are wrapped around the headgear worn by *Efe* (local heroes) in cities including Aydın, Muğla, and İzmir (in the Aegean region of Anatolia) (p. 43).

(Figure 92) The Headdress of an *Efe*.

Created under the influence of the Aegean motifs, most of the pieces in the collection of Spring/Summer 2006 were asymmetrical and they were constructed through the traditional Turkish lacework, *oya*. Dark and light blue, beige and red were the colours the designer had chosen for his collection. Another traditional motif, *nazar boncuk*, accompanied the *oya*-made designs (figure 93).

(Figure 93) Bora Aksu, Spring/Summer 2006 Collection, *Nazar Boncuk* Motifs in *Oya*-made Deconstructed Designs.

Nazar boncuk (figure 94) refers to a superstitious belief that the blue eye beads protect individuals from *nazar*. *Nazar* can be explained as follows:

> Originally an Arabic infinitive based on the "N-Z-R" root. It has such meanings as "looking, seeing, perception of the eye, surveying, glancing, gazing, squinting, compliment, esteem, intention, waiting, contemplating, considering, paying attention to ..." It changed meaning as it passed onto Turkish, and have been being used in place of "ayn=eye" in Turkish. While *nazar* means evil eye in Turkish, it is used more along with such verbs as coming, being subjected to, and inflicting, to mean

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coming to the [evil] eye, being subjected to the [evil] eye, inflicting the [evil] eye (Kuzey, 2007, p. 4).

At this point, it is worth pointing out that although dating back to the earliest times of Turkish culture, as a person of Turkish nationality, I would say that the evil eye beads have become a highly commercial motif of Turkish culture. The evil eye bead is now used in the context of Turkish trade and commerce.

Although my grandmother still tells me to wear my *nazar boncuk* in public to be protected from evil, nowadays, the evil eye beads are used more as products to earn money rather than as cultural elements to ward off evil. *Nazar boncuk* can be found in various touristic sites of Turkey to be sold as souvenirs. One particular example is the Mediterranean holiday site, Bodrum (figure 95). The evil eye bead has also been used as a trademark of Turkey in EXPO (exposition) 2008, which is a highly commercial organization held all around the world (figure 96). Further, the motif was used in the stand of Turkey in World Travel Market (WTM), which took place in 2009 (figure 97).

The evil eye bead is a ubiquitously commercialized Turkish cultural motif and Aksu is, arguably, well aware of it. This is why the designer features the evil eye bead both as a traditional and commercial motif of Turkish culture in his Spring/Summer 2006 collection. As a result, it is not surprising to see the evil eye bead as an element used in another commercial context: the catwalk show of a fashion collection. In this vein, what Aksu does is equivalent to the display of the bead in EXPO 2008 or in Bodrum as an attraction to tourists as all serve to the purpose of transforming the cultural capital into a financial capital.

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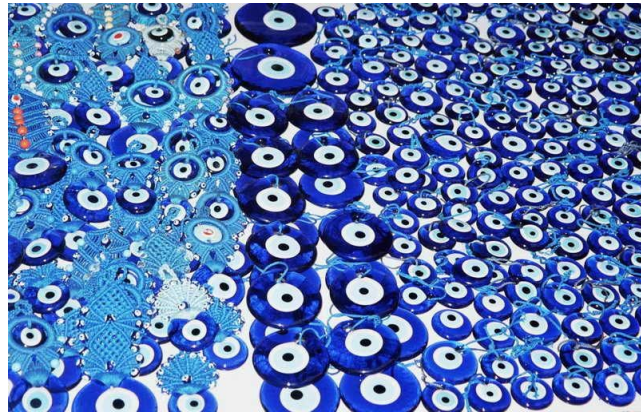
(Figure 94) Nazar Boncuk.

(Figure 95) Evil Eye Beads in Bodrum.

(Figure 96) EXPO Turkey in Bangkok.

(Figure 97) Turkey Stand in World Travel Market, 2009.

A similar collection where the designer engaged with the Turkish cultural motifs

was his Spring/Summer 2014 collection. Evil eye beads and Iznik tiles (a place

in Turkey well-known for ceramic tiles) were the basic inspirations to generate

the 2014 collection. Blue was the predominant colour of the collection as it was

created under the influence of the blue-coloured evil eye beads. Regarding his

collection of Spring/Summer 2014, the designer explains that:

> In Turkey, we all grow up with the *nazar boncuk* (evil eye beads). When
> you're born, they put a bead on you to ward off evil. I grew up
> surrounded by that belief. I wanted to emphasize that part of our
> culture, and the blue shade of the *nazar boncuk* became the starting
> point for the collection, as well as the traditional Iznik tiles, which can be
> found on the Hagia Sophia or the Topkapi palace ("LFW Opening Show:
> Exclusive Interview with Bora Aksu", 2013, para. 4).

Deconstruction and Reconstruction in Spring/Summer 2006 Collection

This section will firstly explore how Aksu, through a design thinking parallel to

plasticity, de-designs the Turkish cultural motif, *oya*. Secondly, by de-designing

the structure of the Turkish cultural motif, the section will examine how the

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designer reconstructs innovative garments out of this materially subversive process for his Spring/Summer 2006 collection. Next, this section will also point out how this de-designing process reinforces the traditionally Turkish motif even more. The section will also focus how *oya*, akin to *nazar boncuk*, is used as a cultural motif that serves *commercial* processes, resulting in the deconstruction of the motif's *traditionally* situated context.

The Spring/Summer 2006 collection of the designer featured imperfect, worn-out looking de-designed garments. What made these garments de-designed accords perfectly with the notion of plasticity. Firstly, it could be observed that the *oya* motif is taken, given a new form, and these two processes result in the destruction of the motif's original form and structure. The new structure is given to the motif through the incomplete layers of fabrics that rest on top of one another (figure 98). Further, the unexpected gaps, exaggerated holes amongst the *oya* laces and the imperfect look that the garments display are all parts of the new form the designer gave to the traditional motif. This new structure endowed the garments of the collection with a worn-out and ripped look. Through the de-designing process applied to the motif, the garments of the collection reveal that an overworking and an underworking of *oya* have transformed the precise needlework of the Turkish lacework. Laces of *oya* are de-designed either by being over needled or left unfinished. This way, the collection pieces look dissolved and asymmetrical. Due to the new form given to the traditional motif, which is to be displayed in the commercial context of the catwalk, a traditional form becomes de-designed and reconstructed. In other words, the same de-designed creations generate new garments and in this

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sense, they manifest a reconstruction of the traditional motif's form and structure.
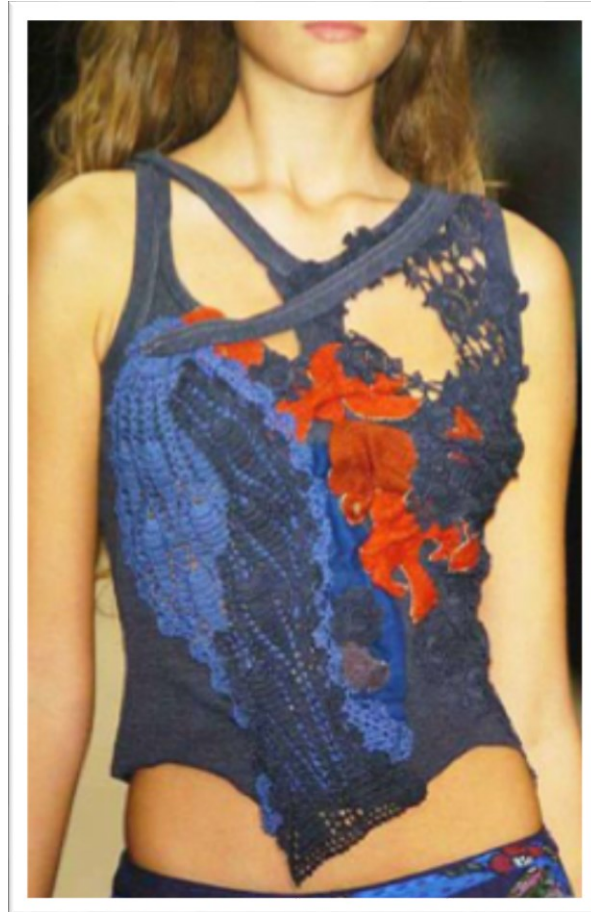
(Figure 98) Bora Aksu, Spring/Summer 2006 Collection, Dissolved Looking Garments.

By means of de-designing the traditional lacework, the designer, reinforces it even more. Some scholars have emphasized that 'traditions are always in the process of being recreated' (Negus & Pickering, 2004, p. 111) and that they are 'continually reinvented in a range of different contexts' (Edensor, 2002, p. 6). The designer's reinterpretation of the traditional lacework is in agreement with the above arguments of Negus, Pickering, and Edensor. The reason for this is that by de-designing the original structure of the cultural motif, Aksu contributes to his own tradition; he recreates the traditional motif and

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appropriates it into a contemporary context.

David Kasuga, Creative Design director of Premiere Fabrics, points out that, 'tradition plays an important part of fashion and, in fact, tradition can be a fashion trend in itself' (as cited in Tarrant & Jolles, 2012, p. 70). In agreement with Kasuga's view, Aksu reconstructs new designs out of an old tradition and labels them as 'fashion'. It is very interesting how he does it: the designer generates change and innovation out of his cultural orthodoxy by approaching and exploring it as a foreigner. By approaching as an ethnographer, he arguably, honours his own tradition by rendering it 'fashionable'. On this account, he reinforces the words of Kasuga by bringing forth a traditional Turkish cultural motif and highlighting its existence in fashion once again. As a consequence, the designer evolves and progresses his traditional lacework by creating contemporary de-designed creations under the influence of its structure.

In the article "Redesigning Turkish Cult Objects: from Tradition to Modern?" former Vice Rector of Yaşar University and Professor of Architectural Design, Tevfik Balcioğlu (2012), writes as follows:

> It is important to underline that the first debates on Global versus Local took place in the mid 1990's with a slightly different vocabulary but with great significance. 'Cultural identity' has been advanced and highly emphasized. It was recognized and proposed as a legitimate channel to deal with the objects of global markets as well as a vehicle of survival within globalization. Actually, at that time, it was felt that globalization was forcing design towards the production of similar, mundane and monotonous objects, perhaps, valid and functional all around the world, universal in that sense but with no identity belonging to a place. The suggested solution was cultural diversity. Some designers had already begun to use, make reference to, or be inspired by the rich historical culture of Turkey. Since then, aspects of 'cultural identity' within

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globalization have been studied regularly (p. 130).

Aksu's use of motifs that belong to his local culture accords with the words of Balcıoğlu. In this collection, the designer juxtaposes a commercialized motif that belongs to his own cultural identity, the evil eye bead, with an uncommercialized motif of his culture, *oya*. In this vein, by doing so, the designer commercializes the traditional lacework through the way he shifts its context. Similar to what Balcıoğlu argues, Aksu in 2000s establishes a dialogue with the global market through his own cultural identity in his Spring/Summer 2006 collection. He generates innovation through transforming what is local into something global. In this respect, the motif of *oya* becomes an artistic element for consumption, which is displayed in a capitalistic platform, the catwalk show. By doing so, tradition becomes a trend, it evolves from its cultural context in which it is situated. Thus, similar to the way the evil eye bead has already been made, *oya* becomes transformed into a highly commercialized element through the way the designer contributes to cultural diversity within the fashion scene. In this respect, the de-designed garments with *oya* motifs mark a deconstruction of *oya* motif's *traditionally* situated context due to its display on the *commercialized* catwalk.

Referring back to Spring/Summer 2014 collection, it could be said that this collection is special for the designer because Aksu's own family prepared most of the handwork of the garments. The creation process of the collection had involved quintessentially Turkish aspects because the designer's family did the collection's basic motifs, the laceworks, in a culturally traditional way. As the designer explains:

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She'll (my mum) gather all her neighbours and they'll hand crochet together. I find it really sweet. It's part of the culture. They all get together and there's lots of tea and coffee and gossip. They never know how I'm going to use the pieces (that they make) so they're always asking me what I'm going to do and making suggestions. They like to bring their own ideas into it ("LFW Opening Show: Exclusive Interview with Bora Aksu", 2013).

As the designer's words point out, in Spring/Summer 2014 collection, Aksu took a Turkish traditional motif, both made by and that belongs to his own culture. Yet, the approach he takes highlights a crucial fact: the de-designing of the traditional lacework and the resulting reconstruction of it through the innovation that takes place on the lacework's original structure. Spring/Summer 2006 collection reveals a similar approach. This is because, based on a design thinking parallel to plasticity, the designer de-designs and reconstructs the Turkish lacework, *oya*.

Repression and Liberation: Innovation through Tradition

This section will analyse deconstruction and reconstruction with regards to the concepts of tradition, repression and its release. Richard Bernstein (1998), points out the strong connection between tradition and, under its influence, how repression leads to release. He writes that:

> What is communicated from one generation to the next is not only explicitly stated or what is set forth by precept and example, but also what is unconsciously communicated. Unless we pay attention to these unconscious dynamics of transmission, we will never understand the receptivity (and resistance) to a living tradition. What is repressed in the memory of a people is never "totally" repressed in the sense of being hermetically sealed off from their conscious lives; there are always unconscious memory-traces of what has been repressed. This is why there can be a "return of the repressed," a return that can break out with great psychic force in an individual or in the history of a people (p. 59).

Tradition carries traces of the past no matter how open it is towards innovation

and as a result, it would be appropriate to say that novelty within tradition, to a certain extent, is repressed. As regards to the link between tradition and domination, 'tradition ... was the cultural equivalent of repressed material in the consciousness of the individual', states American literary critic Harold Bloom (2005, p. 408). Further on the connection, associate Professor in the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning at the University of Sydney, Duanfang Lu (2004), points out that:

> Traditions store and pass on the repressed even without people being conscious of it. Thus, as time goes by, some traditions may grow more and more powerful and ultimately allow the return of the repressed as a force strong enough to decisively influence the thought and activity of a people (p. 212).

Novelty is one of the things that tradition represses and the breaking of oppression leads to innovation. The return of the novelty that is repressed, arguably and metaphorically, articulates itself on the de-designed and reconstructed traditional Turkish lacework, *oya*. The breaking away from repression is evidenced in the de-designing process that features on the original structure of the lacework. The reconstruction is displayed through the visual innovation brought over the structure of the traditional lacework through de-designing.

In a similar position with regards to oppression and its reflection on fashion, Evans (2003) proposes that the creations of the designers of 1990s reveal a release from the subjugation placed on them the last century, which had been enforced on the global world. Evans explains in the following words:

> The historicism of 1990s fashion imagery, which continually revisited the past only to reformulate it in the present, was paralleled by rapid

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changes in social and economic life at the end of the century. Perhaps the return to the commodity culture of the past helped to make sense of the present when both the commodity form and its appeal to consumer desire were being so rapidly restructured. In this context, the compulsive return to the historical imagery by a range of designers in the 1990s, both in the mass market and the designer spectrum, suggests factors beyond merely picturing or reflecting such change; they may equally, and also be a way of accommodating and understanding its potentially unsettling nature, and such operate a kind of "return of the repressed" in which fashion becomes a symptom to articulate cultural trauma.

Whereas early twentieth-century 'modernism' thought it could produce a brave new world, the post-modern period was marked, rather, by the sense of an ending. This shift was reflected in the 'cultural poetics' of contemporary designers whose evocations of history and the passage of time suggested a sense of crisis or trauma in the present. The compulsive repetition of their turns and returns to history closely mimicked the structure of trauma itself (pp. 37-38).

Evans' words suggest that, fashion provides a suitable context for the visual deployment of what has been repressed. This suppression results in the imperfect, dissolved and de-designed looks and creations. Aksu's Spring/Summer 2006 collection is an exemplar, which reveals how fruitful the link between tradition and domination can be in relation to creativity and design perspective. The inevitable thirst for a break out is evidenced in the innovative garments of the designer.

A Collection: A Time Warp

Aksu's Spring/Summer 2006 collection displays a dramatic fracture in time as a result of the tension between tradition and novelty. British literary critic, Frank Kermode (2000) expresses the present's 'complementarity with the past' in his work 'The sense of an Ending' (p. 60). With this expression, Kermode points out the juxtaposition of the past with the present. Aksu's contemporary Spring/Summer 2006 collection reveals a link with the past

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similar to Kermode's argument as the designer remarks his interest in bringing together different timely phases, 'the contrasts of different cultures and different eras have always been an attractive source for fashion designers' (B. Aksu, Personal Communication, September 13, 2013). This section argues that, the garments of the collection are torn in a rift between the past and the present. This is reflected through the garments' de-designed look, imperfection and the absence and the presence of certain layers of the traditional lacework *oya*. The collection garments made of *oya* are no longer either traditional, or completely new because tradition has been reconstructed and the original structure of *oya* has been metamorphosed. On this account, the garments belong neither fully to the past, nor to the present or to the future, they are not anchored in time.

In stark contrast to modernist position, Lu (2004) proposes that the present constantly accommodates the past in itself. In addition to that, the influence of nostalgia is always felt in the future and the present. As Lu explains in the following words:

> In modernist thinking, events are considered to be moving forward irreversibly, and historical time is divided into lineally developed periods. From the nineteenth century on, with the spread of colonialism, such a western pattern of temporality reordered the spatial relationships of people and things into evolutionary series... Thus, societies and artefacts that were less progressed were termed traditional, in contrast to those considered modern. Freud's view, however, proposes that the past is constantly contained in the present as repeated flashbacks and, amongst other things, this provides a way to circumvent the progressive bias in modernist thinking. Here, the past always rests upon the present, competes with the present, and at times thrusts forward to shape the future (pp. 212-123).

Aksu's engagement with a traditional motif to create a collection is in agreement with Lu's thinking. The designer generates new looks and styles out

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of an old traditional motif. Here, it is apparent that the past carries a flexible stance; it is responsible for the retro, the present and the future. It cannot be put as 'gone' as it has the potential of coming back to the present and shaping up the future. In this vein, the past is ambivalent. This flexible stance of the past can be observed in the collection of the designer because it features the influence of the past in the present. We see that 'now' is created traditionally and retrospectively and novelty is generated out of the customary.

Thus, Spring/Summer 2006 collection's strong connection with the past suggests the concept of a "Usable Past". The concept was first mentioned in critic Van Wyck Brooks' work, "On Creating a Usable Past", written in 1918. The term usable past refers to the elements of history that could create the present existences. Building on the term usable past, this section shows that through utilizing a traditional motif, Aksu makes use of the past and recreates its existence in the present. On this account, Aksu's collection brings together the binaries of past and present, old and new and he shows the significance of their dependence on each other.

In addition to the notion of the useable past, the designer's collection can also be approached by the notion of "Cultural Memorization". According to Mieke Bal (1999), Dutch Cultural theorist and Professor Emeritus in Literary Theory at the University of Amsterdam, cultural memory, 'for better or worse, links the past to the present and future' (vii). She further points out that, cultural memorization is 'an activity occurring in the present, in which the past is continuously modified and re-described even as it continues to shape the future' (1999, p. vii). In similar manner to cultural memorization, Aksu modifies the past through

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a design thinking parallel to plasticity and the process of de-designing. With this

modification his de-designed garments with *oya* motifs become endowed with

the potential of shaping up the future. Bal explains the past's presence as

follows, 'the memorial presence of the past takes many forms and serves many

purposes, ranging from conscious recall to unreflected re-emergence, from

nostalgic longing for what is lost to polemical use of the past to reshape the

future' (1999, p. vii). For Aksu's collection, it could be said that the memory of

the past (tradition) presents itself as a dynamic force to reshape the present.

This use directly points us back to the relation with the term useable past.

Conclusion

The focus of this section has been on Turkish cultural motifs, which are

affiliated with Aksu's Spring/Summer 2006 collection. In relation to this focus,

the section has explained how the designer evolves the traditional lacework *oya*

through the way he re-evaluates its original structure by de-designing its form.

Through Aksu's Spring/Summer 2006 collection, the concepts of repression, its

liberation and time have been explained in how strong an influence tradition

can have in generating new designs within the context of fashion.

This section has also shown how the design thinking parallel to plasticity and

the material de-designing process applied to the traditional lacework *oya* cause

deconstruction to the traditionally situated context of the motif. It has explained

how Aksu offers a new contextual perspective to the traditional Turkish

lacework, *oya*. It has argued that with his Spring/Summer 2006 collection, the

designer metamorphoses the lacework's traditional context into a commercial

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platform. Further, *oya* has been put as a cultural element that is situated in close position to *nazar boncuk* with its capitalized position.

Conclusion

The thesis has referred to deconstructivist fashion as an innovative vanguard that has material/technical and abstract/conventional aspects. It has examined deconstructivist fashion in terms of its historical, political, social and conceptual lineage. The thesis has analysed deconstructivist fashion in classification of three different waves: Japanese, Belgian and Turkish designers and designs. The thesis set out to apply notions of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction on the creations of these three waves but its primary focus has been on Chalayan and Aksu's creations.

The thesis has focused on the deconstructivist type of work produced by the Turkish fashion designers Hussein Chalayan and Bora Aksu and it has evaluated their work in relation to the deconstructivist first wave Japanese and second wave Belgian designers and designs. The thesis has argued that Chalayan and Aksu hold a unique place amongst other Turkish fashion designers because they push the boundaries of conventional fashion by: 1. Creating avant-garde designs that change, metamorphose or are transformed 2. Delving into their own cultures and non-Parisian backgrounds with an innovative design perspective, which embraces the areas and trajectories outside of traditional fashion.

As primary research, the author has observed deconstructivist creations at exhibitions and analysed them with a focus on Kim and Mida's object-based methodology. The *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* of Aksu's Autumn/Winter catwalk

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show the author attended in 2014 and photographs of traditional women wearing *patiks* taken from the village of Seferihisar, Izmir were also analysed by Kim and Mida's research methodology. Further, designer interviews (Aksu, Margiela) and a curator interview (Madra) have been conducted as primary research.

The original contribution and significance of the thesis has been the establishment of a larger framework related to deconstruction in fashion. The theory of deconstruction in fashion is expanded to include the new concept of de-design. Accordingly, the thesis has proposed Malabou's concept of plasticity to be used as an additional analytical tool on which the notion of de-design(ing) is based. By the inclusion of the concepts of plasticity and de-design, the thesis has accommodated deconstruction in fashion both in the concrete (material and technical) and abstract (conceptual) construction. These fundamental ideas have led deconstruction in fashion to be analysed in a wider conceptual aspect. In this respect, the thesis has argued against positions that situate both material and conceptual aspects within the single area of "deconstructivist" fashion by claiming deconstruction to be a twofold process in fashion. The designs the thesis has discussed (except the ones that merely deal with conceptual aspects and ideas) display the three steps of transformation on which plasticity operates: a form being *received* or *taken*, a form being *given* a new form i.e. being transformed and the received forms' being *destructed*. These three steps of material and technical transformation, the thesis has argued, lead to various concepts of deconstructions. Further, creations that feature these three plastic stages have been defined as de-designs. Proposing

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plasticity and de-design, the research has filled the void in fashion theory, which limits and undervalues the disruptive techniques and the conceptual results of these techniques solely to the concept of deconstruction. Thus, the thesis has sought to support Malabou's notion of plasticity into the inclusion of the accepted deconstructive theory. Malabou's plasticity is the link to illuminate deconstructivist fashion's material/technical side, which has also been accepted under the Derridean notion of deconstruction.

The establishment of a larger framework also contributes the inclusion of the cultural aspect found in the de-designs of Aksu and Chalayan. Aksu and Chalayan's designs and collections, the thesis examined, have been connected to Turkish culture and include cultural elements such as *patik, nazar boncuk*, *oya*, and the Ottoman tulip. Further contemporary realms such as non-commercial technological scientific, academic and military domains have been examined as additional cultural aspects.

With all these elements: 1. The thesis has expanded the meaning of deconstruction in fashion by its in-depth analysis that differentiates the material (concrete) subversion from the conceptual (abstract) subversion. 2. The thesis has studied the de-designs of Aksu and Chalayan with historic, cultural, and local textures. 3. By focusing on Aksu and Chalayan's de-designs that include metamorphosis and their Turkish background/culture, the thesis has introduced the classification of a third wave made up of Turkish deconstructivist designers.

Chapter two and four have focused on the de-designs of the first wave

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Japanese, the second wave Belgian and the third wave Turkish deconstructivist fashion design. Chapter two has discussed the de-designs of the first and second wave deconstructivist fashion, and chapter four has analysed the de-designs of Aksu and Chalayan in relation to the first and second wave deconstructivist designers to establish and exemplify the links among all three waves. These chapters have demonstrated the relationship amongst the notions of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction and discussed them in relation to various issues. By touching upon basic issues related to deconstructivist fashion (unravelling, deconstructing the concept of new in fashion, the deconstruction of the conventional understanding of glamour in fashion, the deconstruction of time, garment and body forms, and architectural and technological influences on deconstructivist fashion), these chapters have challenged previous research, which has collected all of these elements without any kind of material or conceptual differentiation, under the singular category of deconstruction. The chapters have contributed to fashion studies by highlighting a material/technical aspect to deconstructivist fashion by devising the notion of de-design.

The thesis has also focused on particular qualities of Aksu and Chalayan's de-designs. These qualities are: 1. Their de-designs' engagement with change, transformation and metamorphosis, 2. Their use of their own cultural motifs as well as their own personal past history for inspiration in their designs. These qualities have been introduced in chapter three and discussed in chapter five to: 1. Show the commonalities of Aksu and Chalayan 2. Link

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them to the first wave Japanese and the second wave Belgian deconstructivist designers. The linkage has also exemplified the reason the thesis has focused particularly on Aksu and Chalayan as Turkish deconstructivist designers to be studied.

In chapter five, the first part focused wholly on Aksu and Chalayan and their commonalities from the perspectives of change and metamorphosis that take place within the process of fashion. This part has largely consisted of cultural motifs and narratives related to Turkish and Turkish/Cypriot culture. With an object-based methodology, this part has analysed the *Coffee Table Skirt* and the *Mechanical Dress* of Chalayan. As a result of this analysis, the thesis has interpreted both de-designs from the perspectives of plasticity, de-designing, deconstruction and reconstruction and linked their structure to the process of fashion that operates on change and metamorphosis. In doing so, the thesis has confirmed Rebecca Arnold's claim (the process of fashion could be explored on the structure of deconstructivist garments) and illustrated how the process of fashion can be observed in the structure of the deconstructivist garments of the third wave. By showing that Arnold's claim is applicable to Aksu and Chalayan's garments, the first part of this chapter has reinforced both designers' status as deconstructivist designers and members of the third wave.

This part is significant in that it has observed the interplay amongst the concepts of de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction on the design *structures* of the third wave Turkish designers. These observations have then been related to how fashion sustains itself and how it resists the notion of

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stasis. On this account, the garments of the Turkish third wave have proven to be self-explanatory in terms of the process of fashion, bringing us back to Arnold's claim that the process of fashion can be explained in the structure of deconstructivist designers.

This section is also important in that it expands the characteristics of the concepts of plasticity, de-design, deconstruction and reconstruction. It shows that these concepts are not solely limited to enlightening the material and conceptual frameworks of deconstructivist fashion but that they also work in explaining the metamorphic process of fashion based on seasons.

The thesis has offered a critical perspective to the relation between plasticity and the notion of de-design(ing). As part 'A' of chapter five's second part has shown, the culture-oriented conceptual non-sellable showpieces of Chalayan's conceptual fashion shows (*Temporal Meditations, Between, After Words*) are similar to conceptual art and they feature de-designs. Yet, these de-designs (except the *Coffee Table Skirt*) do not have a quality of plasticity. They do not require a materially transformative aspect as they mainly deal with concepts and the conceptual. The section has shown how Chalayan's unconventional commercial strategies built on his conceptual shows and showpieces, similar to conceptual art, deconstruct and reconstruct the perception, wearability and consumption of his designs.

The section has argued that in all these three collections of the designer, there is an intellectualization of the fashion realm and an expansion of the fashion context based on Chalayan's de-designs' cross-disciplinary and

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conceptual approach that exceed the traditional understanding of fashion.

Further, the discussed collections have also been argued to go against the

grain of seasonal trends and in doing so, the thesis has situated the de-

designed showpieces of these collections under the realms of conceptual and

performative art and museology. These reasons have been claimed to show

how the designer deconstructs and reconstructs fashion marketing and

consumption.

Through providing insight into Turkish cultural objects and motifs such as *patik*,

oya and *nazar boncuk*, part 'B' of chapter five's second part has focused on

Bora Aksu and explained the de-designing process *oya* has been exposed to in

the designer's Spring/Summer 2006 collection. As opposed to Chalayan's

conceptual and cultural de-designs, the thesis has explained that Aksu's cultural

oya motif is in agreement with the notion of plasticity. The traditional motif is

received, given a new form and its reformation causes the obliteration of *oya*

motif's traditional structure. As a result of this material de-designing process,

tradition is conceptually deconstructed but this deconstruction leads to a

structural, material and conceptual reconstruction as well. In this respect, the

section has also shown how the designer turns his cultural heritage into a

source of financial capital through the extrapolation of the de-designing process

he exploits on the motif.

It is important to note that compared to Chalayan, Aksu does not deal with

the abstract *notions* such as history, politics or refuge related to Turkish

culture. Rather, the designer deals with traditional *motifs* of Turkish culture.
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Aksu does not re-write narratives related to his culture or cultural background but to the contrary, he reinforces Turkish traditional culture by a plastic design thinking that causes de-designing, deconstruction and reconstruction on certain Turkish cultural motifs.

This research has also demonstrated that both Aksu and Chalayan have commonalities between them as well as with the first wave Japanese and the second wave Belgian designers. Similar to the first wave Japanese deconstructivist designers, both Turkish designers draw on their cultural and historical background and heritage to generate de-designed garments and collections. Yet, it should be noted that although Aksu and Chalayan form the third wave Turkish deconstructivist designers, the findings of the thesis has shown that both Turkish designers relatively differ in their engagement with the notions of past and culture. For Chalayan, the catwalk show and his creations are not tools solely to present fashion. Rather, fashion is a stage where he re-explores and narrates his own cultural identity and his nation's political and historical past. In this respect, the designer approaches the past on a more personal level. He focuses on the culture of Turkish/Cypriots' political tragedies, religious conflicts and historical past through a personal perspective. By means of this perspective, he conveys messages, memories and views on his culture. Starting from 1998 and lasting till 2004, it could be observed that the designer's garments and catwalk shows largely deal with his own background and the dramatic past he and his nation had to experience.

Aksu, on the other hand, builds on the established traditional and cultural

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motifs of the Turkish culture. The designer builds on visual customs and traditions of Anatolia. Yet, as opposed to Chalayan, his designs have neither social nor political aspects or narratives related to his national identity. His use of cultural elements merely serves as influential factors that compose garments and motifs of his collections. Yet, his use of cultural elements also means that his garments are open to interpretation from the perspectives of anthropology and cultural studies. Chalayan's use of culture, on the other hand, is a much more personal approach and life journey that communicates narratives of himself and his nation to his audience.

Similar to Aksu, Chalayan also uses Anatolian motifs in his designs as well (the traditional Anatolian dress from his Autumn/Winter 2002 *Ambimorphous* collection). Yet, where Chalayan differs from Aksu lies in the way he uses these motifs to narrate stories, express and critique issues relate to his nations' culture and history. Building on these points, the thesis claims that while Aksu reinforces Turkish tradition by reconstructing it through de-designed creations, Chalayan, by his conceptual shows and de-designed showpieces, re-creates and re-evaluates events related to his nation's and his own past.

In addition, like the second wave deconstructivist Belgian designer Margiela, Aksu and Chalayan's de-designed garments and collections involve the notions of transformation, change and metamorphosis. Aksu reworks Turkish cultural, traditional motifs (the Ottoman tulip, *oya*, *patik*) as well as reinterpreting existing objects (the Converse sneaker); He de-designs existing forms and cultural motifs by playing on their preconceived structure. This way, the thesis has argued that his designs could visually and semiotically be interpreted to

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display the concepts of change, transformation and metamorphosis. Chalayan's certain garments and collections, on the other hand, demonstrate the same concepts in the way they reveal change and metamorphosis on their design structure. Transformation in Chalayan's garments appears on the catwalk shows of his collections as an element of attraction. It takes place during his fashion shows as observed in particular designs of his *After Words, One Hundred and Eleven, Ambimorphous and Rise* collections.

Further to the matter, transformation and metamorphosis in Aksu's designs are disseminated elements that could be observed in most of the pieces of his collections. An example is the transformed *oya* motif in his garments of Spring/Summer 2006 collection, the *Crochet Slippers/Shoes* of his Autumn/Winter 2014 collection that was worn by the models under every garment and the Ottoman tulip shaped dress structure found in Autumn/Winter 2010 and Autumn/Winter 2011 collections. However, transformation and metamorphosis are observed in certain and limited number of showpiece garments in Chalayan's fashion collections as opposed to Aksu's disseminated pieces that feature transformation and metamorphosis.

The research into deconstructivist fashion has also shown that de-designed garments are innovative; what they deconstruct leads to a reconstruction of something brand new. Building on it, the thesis has further suggested that change, as the main drive of fashion, can be visually observed through de-designed garments as manifested in Aksu's and Chalayan's interventions into fashion.

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Deconstruction in fashion is an intellectual extension of fashion that goes deeper than the idea of what to wear. For this reason, the thesis has engaged in and explored with various interdisciplinary areas such as technology, architecture, museology, conceptual art, politics, religion, culture and many more. Thus, in addition to fashion studies and fashion theory, the thesis has intended to contribute to the disciplinary discourse in cultural studies, identity politics and visual culture.

This research has been an introduction to the notion of de-design(ing) and the consolidation of Malabou's plasticity into deconstructivist fashion as an alternative methodology. Further research resulting from this project could be made in the realms of unconventional and avant-garde art and fashion, which transgress norms and orthodoxies through subversive designs and techniques. Further, the Turkish fashion design competition entitled "Koza" that the author attended in 2015 in Istanbul showed a particular interest in deconstructivist fashion design amongst the upcoming generations of Turkish designers. These new Turkish designers constitute a potential of expanding the third wave Turkish deconstructivist designers, whose designs could be explored through the terms of plasticity, de-designing deconstruction and reconstruction.

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Fashion Collections

Bora Aksu

Autumn/Winter 2010 Collection.

Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection.

Autumn/Winter 2014 Collection.

Spring/Summer 2006 Collection.

Spring/Summer 2007 Collection.

Spring/Summer 2010 Collection.

Spring/Summer 2011 Collection.

Spring/Summer 2014 Collection.

Burberry

Prorsum, Spring/Summer 2012 Collection.

Dior

Spring/Summer 1947 Collection.

Spring/Summer 1997 Collection.

Elsa Schiaparelli

Astrology, Autumn/Winter 1938-1939 Collection.

Circus, Spring/Summer 1938 Collection.

Commedia Dell'arte, Spring/Summer 1939 Collection.

Pagan, Autumn/Winter 1938 Collection.

Spring/Summer 1951 Collection.

Hussein Chalayan

After Words, Autumn/Winter 2000 Collection.

Airborne, Autumn/Winter 2007 Collection.

Ambimorphous, Autumn/Winter 2002 Collection.

Anthropology of Solitude, Autumn/Winter 2004 Collection.

Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection.

Before Minus Now, Spring/Summer 2000 Collection.

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Between, Spring/Summer 1998 Collection.

Cartesia, Autumn/Winter 1994 Collection.

Echoform, Autumn/Winter 1999-2000 Collection.

Geotrophics, Spring/Summer 1999 Collection.

Manifest Destiny Spring/Summer 2003.

Medea, Spring/Summer 2002 Collection.

One Hundred and Eleven, Spring/Summer 2007 Collection.

Readings, Spring/Summer 2008 Collection.

Rise, Autumn/Winter 2013 Collection.

Spring/Summer 2011 Collection.

Tangent Flows, Graduation Collection, 1993.

Temporal Mediations, Spring/Summer 2004 Collection.

Issey Miyake

APOC Line, since 1971.

Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection.

Fète Line, Since 1991.

Pleats Please Line, Since 1989-1993.

Junya Watanabe

Autumn/Winter 1995-1996 Collection.

Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection.

Martin Margiela

Artisanal Line, since 1988.

Autumn/Winter 1994/1995 Collection.

Autumn/Winter 1999-2000 Collection.

Autumn/Winter 2014 Collection.

Doll's Wardrobe Autumn/Winter 1994-1995.

Inaugural, Spring/Summer 1989 Collection.

Martin Margiela, 1997 (9/4/1615) Exhibition Collection.

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Semi Couture, Autumn/Winter 1997-1998 Collection.

Spring/Summer 1996 Collection.

Spring/Summer 1999 Collection.

Paco Rabanne

1967 Collection.

Rei Kawakubo for Comme des Garçons

Autumn/Winter 2012 Collection.

Body Meets Dress, Dress Becomes Body, Spring/Summer 1997 Collection.

Yohji Yamamoto

Autumn/Winter 1991-1992.

Autumn/Winter 2009 Collection.

Autumn/Winter 2011 Collection.

Spring/Summer 2009.

Spring/Summer 2009 Collection.

Zuahir Murad

Haute Couture, Spring/Summer 2012 Collection.

Interviews

Appendix 1: Bora Aksu

Aksu, B. (2013, September 13). Email interview with Gizem Kızıltunalı.

Questions are posed by Gizem Kızıltunalı, answers by Bora Aksu.

1. What do you think distinguishes your designs from Parisian *Haute Couture*?

Haute Couture and Ready To Wear collections and their concepts are completely different... Although *Haute Couture* always stands as an inspiration source for RTW designers, it is a different platform. It has a totally different price range and it also targets small and high end audience... I describe my collections as Demi-*Couture* as the finishing technics and the quality always aims to be on the *Couture* level. Yet, they still have the RTW audience...

But, if you ask me what differentiate my aesthetics from others, the answer is
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individuality. Fashion does not have the same dictating power as it had in the past decades. It is moving more and more towards individual fashion. The trends do not dictate fashion anymore. This has to do with how people's approach has changed towards the way they dress and the desire of being different. Therefore, I would like to carry on what I love doing and people who loves my style can still follow it for years and still be able to get the same taste. It's true that when I start designing I always start out with something very personal like childhood reminiscences, then comes other elements.

2. What kind of a relation do art and aesthetics have in your designs? Do you see your designs as artworks?

Fashion and art have such a sensitive relationship... Although art has such an influence on fashion, there is still a very distinctive borderline between them. As a designer, I do like to keep the artist spirit when it comes to creativity because I believe that an artist has a duty of seeing things through different perspectives. This enables others to understand the wider options we have in life. I guess artists and art constantly break the mind-sets and prepare people for the "new". This is also very important for a fashion designer. The whole starting point for fashion to me was the raw drawing ability that I had when I was a child. I find the drawing part highly sensitive because it opens doors to my imaginary world. I have always had a secret admiration for fashion and I have been observing it since my childhood. Drawing was the initial step before I got into fashion. When I was little a little child, I enjoyed creating my own world through drawing for days and days...

3. How do you define detail and structure in designs, which one do you play with the most?

Through designing I constantly search for a balance point... The texture, weight of different fabrics and structure are all important in their own way. As a designer, it is very important to find a balance point in a specific design and make everything work together in harmony... Details and structure all play different roles and sometimes one of them is more dominant than the other. However, what is important is that all the elements in that design work together... That is why I usually have a long trial period before I design.

4. What kind of a role does intertextuality play in your designs? How important is to bring different elements together in your creations?

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It's very important to have different elements. I always mix completely unrelated things to create a collection. This is the way my design language works. For example, I can mix a pinch of Punk, a pinch of Edwardian and a pinch of memory to create a garment.

On the other hand, street always creates a source of inspiration for me. When I say "street", the term covers all aspects of life that is being lived outside. I believe in contrasts as well, because in real life you always have contrasts. It's very rare in life that everything goes well together. But, this adds colour to life. The contrasts make life livable. Contrasts create better results than the matched ones.

I think collaborations are really good in terms of working with creative people from totally different fields. Collaborating with these different fields creates great results. I think it's also very inspiring to work with people who are from different creative fields as they have a totally fresh approach to what we are doing. For me, anything can drive fashion. It can be a movie, a piece that you find in a local car-boot sale, even a t-shirt that you have been wearing since you were fifteen.

5. How important is to bring together different fashion periods (past, *zeitgeist*, future) in your collections?

The contrasts of different cultures and different eras have always been an attractive source for fashion designers. When I came to London, I could visually experience the blend of so many different cultural elements in my being. I believe designing is more like making a soup. The more you add into it the taste gets better. The reason for blending ideas from different cultures or drawing inspiration from totally unrelated subjects is to make the end product more interesting. I believe "East meets West" will turn into" gypsy meets Punk and goes to Mongolia nomads and blends with new romantics and then get married to Edwardian lace".

6. Can you name two collections that you interpret the most intertextually created? What elements composed them?

There is the SS07 collection; my main inspiration for Summer 2007 season initially came from my collaboration with the Cathy Marston Project from Royal Opera and Ballet. I created costumes for their latest show. Even though I totally enjoyed designing costumes for dancers, the technical complexities of designing for a dance show were a fascinating challenge for me: how to provide an ease of movement

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without losing sense of beauty, how to combine comfort and elegance with costumes which look great on stage, yet are easy to wear. Comfort, strength and beauty had to go hand in hand as they are all equally essential.

SS11 collection is also quite significant as it contained so many separate elements. The main inspiration came from spending a lazy summer afternoon sitting on a balcony watching a colony of ants march in and out of a crack in the wall. I was struck by how the ants- dozens of them worked and marched together in formation, creating intricate patterns and shapes. As I looked more closely at their bodies, they weirdly reminded me of 1950s padded undergarments. Their shape echoed the padded, corsetry garments that were tucked in waists complimented by armour-like skin. I started to look at their shape and imagine how I could create a new type of female body shape in my collection. I wanted the protective edginess of the ant form but I also wanted to accentuate the soft shapes and curves... On the other hand, my mums black and white photos from the sixties were another inspirational source. I wanted my collection to have a captivating timeless style of the sixties elements, an alternative edge and a sense of humour.

7. How do you define "beauty" in your fall 2010 collection?

Fall 2010 collection is based on the imaginary marriage of Edward Scissorhands and Marie Antoinette- The collection is a blend of signature romantic elements with a darker technological edge. The paleness and extravagant embellishments of the handmade gowns of Marie Antoinette mixed with the Goth icon Edward Scissorhands' grunge edged deconstructed costumes...This collection probably embraces the term Dark Romantic more than any others. The whole collection is a way of embracing the innocence of late adolescence as well as dark and light contrasts... Blush, dusty pinks, ice-baby blues and lilac dresses worn with tight black deconstructed leggings bring a tough edge to the collection.

8. Some motifs and details belonging to Turkish culture are observable in your spring 2006 collection like" *boncuk*" and "*oya*" combined by Western influences, what brought these elements together, was there a specific concept or idea you wanted to narrate?

For me, my collections really depend on the seasonal mood I am in... Some of the collections become more personal than others... Some of them have a more cultural edge... For some seasons I have longer researches, trips and lots of visual references... For my SS 06 collection I spent three months travelling through different villages and

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towns in the Aegean region... For me, it was a way of getting to know the Turkish culture in a way that I have never experienced before...

Where you live and what you see on a daily basis are necessary factors for inspirational references. I try to use them as a 'tool' instead of a 'crutch.' When it comes to inspirational sources I don't put any boundaries. Anything or anyone can be an inspiration to me. It's usually a big pot of ideas. As soon as an idea comes to mind, I like to sketch it out. When you mix ideas or blend them, there appears an ethnic quality mixed with a spiritual vibe... Whether it's the past or the present, all my ideas come from what's going on around me. Therefore, the city I live and also the city I came from have a huge impact on my creativity.

Turkey has such a cultural richness and diversity. I love the things happening in the East, it still has an effortless vibe. It's funny though once you break your comfort zone then the *being at home* feeling actually changes a lot. It's almost the borders around yourself expands in such a way that you can never go back to have that "cosy/being at home" feeling. I guess it is good in a creative sense. I also travel a lot and see other parts of the world and get to know different cultures. It is not so much about what the designers do but it is more about how they do it. It's about the design process, thinking process and end product. Thinking outside the box of your own surrounding is the first step.

9. Do you see your fashion as a way of expressing ideas, your own narrations to your audience? How important is it to narrate ideas to your audience through your fashion shows?

Fashion show is a platform to display your seasonal work in a 10-15 minute presentation. Even though it seems like a short frame of time, this 10-15 minute presentation defines your work in the fashion industry and generates sales and press. It is quite difficult to simplify and define the driving powers of fashion in today's world. I believe fashion is more a way of expressing someone's individuality rather than just a simple way of covering the body parts. It is a unique language, which does have a visual voice. Fashion show is a perfect platform to display this visual voice.

10. Some of your designs go against the perfect Parisian body fit with intentional bumps around the hips and oversized asymmetrical creations, what do you evaluate as "beauty" in them?

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I guess this question refers to specific collections (AW 10) or (SS 11)… It's true that my design philosophy always aims to challenge the classical beauty and it searches to define beauty in new ways. This challenge does not use the same tools every season. The seasons I mentioned above have a specific approach of challenging the corsetry and female form through historical costumes; Emphasizing the hips on the garments and creating exaggerated tulip shapes were all part of this process...

The world is changing so quickly and women are more aware of what they like and who they are rather than following the mainstream fashion trends.

11. Do you see your incomplete, dissolved, deconstructed and unfinished looking designs as static works of creativity, or are they active pieces exhibiting an on-going process?

For me designs can never be completed... It's more of a journey rather than the end result. Even the collections do not have a starting and end points in their processes. It's very organic; some of the ideas give birth to new ideas and some of them dissolve or they overlap with each other... So, for me it's very hard to see the design process as an end product... I am searching for the perfect beauty (which does not exist) and on another level, I am searching the perfect imperfection. This is presented in my work as conflicts.

12. What is "beauty" in your deconstructed, incomplete looking garments? Can you relate these designs to art?

For me pushing the limits of everyday objects and to invent the "new" are the ideas behind each collection. I usually take an item of everyday life, translate it into a whole new form. My work is usually based on the same process of taking the cliché forms of daily life and giving them a new identity. To give a more visual example: I collaborated with Converse Sneakers for SS 07 collection. This collaboration contained the idea of challenging the concept of sneakers without turning it into something totally decorative. I wanted to keep the functional side of it in a *new* way. This was interesting because the laces of the sneakers and the form of tying the shoe laces interestingly have so much in common with the good old underwear essential: the corset. Having these similarities makes it even more interesting. Creating a crochet upper sole with print details is to take the form of the Converse Sneaker into a new art form. Creating a 3D art object by using all different technics on the Converse Sneaker was the starting point of this project.

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13. How important is your Turkish cultural background to your creativity?

It is very important how a designer processes his culture into his design signature. For me, London always represents the individual style and this fits perfectly with what I am doing. London is a very important creative source, which holds such different cultural references and artistic movements. This is a city that constantly feeds me with such unpredictable surroundings. It also offers such freedom to individuals. But, being raised in Turkey and surrounded by such historical and cultural richness of course have influenced my design language. It's almost a genetic cultural richness that I carry wherever I go.

14. There are some common motifs in your collections like dissolved looking garments, patterned tights, asymmetrical and oversized designs ... Can you evaluate on your why you chose these designs, patterns, motifs?

In my fashion design, I do have a very clear vision... I am very specific in things that I like and don't like. I actually haven't questioned the way my creativity has evolved... I think the whole concept of taking fashion as a career choice came to me when I realised that fashion is much more to me than just drawings fabrics or clothes. It was the time when I created my own world through illustrations and suddenly I had a revelation. I discovered the amazing link between 2D drawings to 3D garments. And this transformation brings such amazement to the whole concept of fashion. That is probably why I explore the borders of this transformation each time I create. One of the other reasons is to define the term " beauty" each season in a totally new way... For me beauty is the reason behind each design process... But it is not the beauty we are dictated to; it's the beauty we find in ourselves...

I think my first fashion ideas came through the people around me. My family, my mum, through observing their attitudes… The way they dress, I almost wanted to capture it. I think people are born with different gifts but it is up to us to nurture them, keep them or abandon them. When your gift becomes a passion you don't even think of it because you can not help doing it. I guess that was the case for my fashion design path. I love it so much that I don't know how would it feel without having it. I think it's a blessing in life to be able to do what you love doing and I wouldn't change it for anything

15. What different elements inspired your Fall 2005 collection?

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Fall 2005 collection was named *Promised Land* and it was based on a biblical story from the Old Testament. It was about travellers, long journeys and hope that drives all other elements... It was a collection of harder textures such as leather, canvas and wool... But it was romantic because of the emotion it contained.

Appendix 2: Beral Madra

Madra, B. (2013, July 3). Personal interview with Gizem Kızıltunalı.

Questions are posed by Gizem Kızıltunalı, answers by Beral Madra.

1.How does Chalayan challenge Parisian *Haute Couture*?

This is not my field of expertise, but I would like to answer this question because Chalayan has been a very important artist for me, a contemporary artist. I had known that he was a top fashion designer before he worked with me. I was following his style. Why was I following it? Because he really changed the trends of the so-called *Haute Couture,* which is very luxurious and which is very alienated from the rest of the world. There was only a privileged group of people who could reach *Haute Couture* but Chalayan has opened the way to larger customers, to larger audiences. Most of these audiences are young people. This change is also related to cultural globalization. Decentralization of creativity through globalization has been a challenge for Parisian *Haute couture*.

2. In your opinion, what does Chalayan go against in the mainstream fashion?

I can only talk about the aesthetics of his work because I'm not a market evaluator. I think he is not going against it but he wants to make a transformation against the *Zeitgeist*, which means the spirit of the time. He is working parallel to the spirit of the time and probably this has a lot to do with the marketing and economic developments taking place in the world. What he is bringing into fashion is actually modern art because when I look at his early works, I see that he really is an extension of Oskar Schlemmer. He is getting his inspirations from the very early modernist abstractions, even from Russian constructivism or supremacy. So, he is not against mainstream fashion but he is changing the inspirations of the mainstream fashion world.

3. With every new project or collection, Chalayan manages to surprise his audience how do you think the designer provides such change and innovation in his projects and

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designs?

First of all, Chalayan had a very good education and he knows modernism, 20th century art and culture very well. Besides, he had British fashion education. He found a fertile ground for his works. I think he is also political because he is an immigrant and he had to leave his country and his country is also divided – the Greek part and the Turkish part. I think this political drive made him make this kind of inter-disciplinary, innovative designs. Probably he has a very good team working with him.

6. Have you observed any common motifs or details in Chalayan's works?

Yes, his work contains the very objectives of pure modernism and also abstraction. He abstracts everything and comes to a very pragmatic and a very minimalist aesthetic... These are the common motifs. And also, what he proposes to women is very pragmatic. I think he looks to the identity of women in a very democratic way. This is his position.

7. What do you think about for example, *Tangent Flows*, his graduation collection... There were garments buried under earth that's not minimal that's maybe something new so what do you think about it, where do you put that collection?

This is archaeology, another discipline... I think he is a very curious person and he looks into different fields of knowledge and of course he has to create almost every year a new collection. This is a very difficult... I mean how can you create something new every year? I think the fashion designers have this kind of a challenge and difficulty. He is looking into different fields of knowledge and he is also being loyal to his political or cultural background.

8. What do you think the concept of beauty means in Chalayan's works?

Yes, as we said, minimalism, practicality and democracy. He doesn't look at women from a traditional way. He does not see the woman as an object of consumption. He sees the identity of woman very important in the global development. He has a very democratic way, this is real democracy...

9. If you consider "Absent Presence" and Chalayan's collections and designs as a whole, do you see the works of the designer as static pieces or do you think he favours an on-going, fluctuant, as well as continuous process in his collections?

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He has a line, he has a beginning and he is following a path. He is very conscious about what he is doing. I mean I don't think there are coincidences in his work. Maybe there are different inspirations but not coincidental inspirations. He is chasing these inspirations with consciousness. This is important and yes it is a continuous process. Yes, definitely an ongoing process-like fashion itself- However, the fashion designers never forget that there was fashion before them. They always respect what has been done before but they also add new inspirations to what has been done before. There are many other techniques now, different textiles… There is a very powerful industry behind Chalayan and this industry is also based on knowledge. So, the industry creates a new material and the designer takes this material and puts it into an aesthetical pool. He is very successful in doing this.

11. How do you evaluate the narration and the conceptual side of Chalayan's catwalk shows and his art project Absent Presence?

There is a style, which makes us immediately say this is Chalayan. What he is producing on the catwalk you can wear, but what is showing in as contemporary artwork you can think about.

Appendix 3: Martin Margiela

Margiela, M. (2013, July 29). Email interview with Gizem Kızıltunalı.

Questions are posed by Gizem Kızıltunalı, answers by a representative for the Maison Martin Margiela team.

1. Why do you think deconstructive fashion is embraced in Paris-despite its oppositional stance against the glamourized *Haute Couture*?

Deconstructive fashion is just as much of an art as traditional *Haute Couture*, and now the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Though deconstructive fashion began in opposition to commodified fashion, subversive designs have become intellectually accepted by the industry. In this vein, it is essential to continue to scrutinize norms through design in order to escape convention.

2. As a deconstructive designer, why do you favour an incomplete look of an on-going process rather than a finished one?

We present our collections as finished, deconstructivist works. Often purposefully reveal garment construction in order to highlight the design process, and as an act

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against conventionalism. However, our pieces are indeed finished, as we complete the looks we designed and hoped to achieve.

3. What kind of a role does intertextuality play in your designs?

Intertexuality is key to Maison Martin Margiela, as we constantly reinterpret and recreate existing creations via our 'Replica' pieces. Every season, we take a number of inspirational vintage pieces and re-imagine them within the Maison's world, following our codes. Throughout history, fashion has developed and shapes have morphed in response to cultural and political events of the previous era. The reactive nature of this art is essential to the Maison Martin Margiela approach to design.

4. How do you define the concept of beauty in your deconstructive designs?

The basis of deconstructive design is unconventional and uncommodified beauty. We find inspiration in the least likely of places and expose it through our collections. We re-work on usual forms by elevating them through our designs and redefine the way to wear certain garments by breaking the boundaries that convention previously imposed.

5. What is the importance of detail and deconstructive designs?

Deconstruction is as technically challenging as construction, as it doesn't mean fragile and as deconstructed pieces are still designed to hold together and fall on the body in a certain way. In deconstructive design we play with contradictions. Proportion and inversion are also highlighted.

6. How do you interpret the role of philosophical and narrative fashion shows in the deconstructive fashion?

Fashion shows are away to present to collections and often echo the designs. We choose the venue, lighting and music so that any themes specific to the collection are enhanced. We don't plan our shows around deconstructivism, rather around the unique qualities of a collection.

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