

The Historical Influence of Clothing Styles on Architecture and Interior Design

Naila Huseynova^{1*} , Sevinj Hasanova² 

Abstract. *This study fundamentally analyzes the complex and multifaceted relationship between fashion and architectural design, as well as how these two fields have influenced one another throughout history and shaped aesthetic transitions. Clothing, as a “second skin,” and architecture, as a “third skin,” fulfill the human need for physical shelter at different scales. The article examines how clothing forms across various historical periods—such as the Gothic, Baroque, Modernist, and Minimalist eras—have been synthesized with interior and exterior design in terms of structure, materials, and visual language. In particular, the manifestation of vertical lines in both Gothic cathedrals and elongated, pointed garments, as well as the dramatic effects created by the decorative richness of the Baroque period in both interiors and fashion, are presented comparatively. In the modern era, the rise of textile architecture and the use of high-tech fabrics on building façades demonstrate the convergence of clothing and architecture at the material level. The study also proves that both disciplines are shaped by culture, society, and technology, and despite operating on different temporal scales, they share common roots in design concepts. Ultimately, it emphasizes that the boundaries between these two fields are becoming increasingly transparent and that the concept of “wearable shelters” will play a significant role in future urban planning and personal design. This analysis provides both architects and fashion designers with a deep understanding of the aesthetic and functional importance of interdisciplinary interactions and identifies directions for future development.*

Keywords: *clothing, architecture, interior, design, history, transformation*

¹ Azerbaijan State University of Economics, Baku, Azerbaijan

² Azerbaijan University of Architecture and Construction, Baku, Azerbaijan

* Məsul müəllif. E-poçt: naila.huseynova@unec.edu.az

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Geyim stillərinin memarlıq və interyer dizaynına tarixi təsiri

Nailə Hüseynova^{1*} , Sevinc Həsənova² 

Xülasə. *Bu tədqiqat işi geyim modası və memarlıq dizaynı arasındakı kompleks və çoxşaxəli münasibətləri, bu iki sahənin tarix boyu bir-birinə necə təsir etdiyini və estetik keçidləri fundamental şəkildə analiz edir. Geyim "ikinci dəri", memarlıq isə "üçüncü dəri" olaraq insanın fiziki sığınacaq ehtiyacını fərqli miqyaslarda qarşılayır. Məqalədə Qotik, Barokko, Modernizm və Minimalizm kimi müxtəlif tarixi dövrlər ərzində geyim formalarının struktur, material və vizual dil baxımından interyer və eksteryer dizaynı ilə necə sintez olunduğu araşdırılır.*

Xüsusilə Qotik dövrünün şaquli xətlərinin həm kafedrallarda, həm də uzun və sivri geyimlərdə təzahürü, Barokko dövrünün dekorativ zənginliyinin interyerlərdə və geyimlərdə yaratdığı dramatik effektlər müqayisəli şəkildə təqdim edilir. Müasir dövrdə tekstil memarlığının yüksəlişi, yüksək texnologiyalı parçaların binaların fasadlarında istifadəsi geyim və memarlığın material səviyyəsində birləşdiyini göstərir. Tədqiqat həmçinin hər iki intizamın mədəniyyət, cəmiyyət və texnologiya tərəfindən necə formalaşdırıldığını, fərqli zaman miqyaslarına baxmayaraq, dizayn konsepsiyalarında vahid köklərə sahib olduğunu sübut edir. Nəticə etibarilə, bu iki sahə arasındakı sərhədlərin getdikcə şəffaflaşdığı və "geyilə bilən sığınacaqlar" konsepsiyasının gələcək şəhərsalma və fərdi dizaynda mühüm rol oynayacağı vurğulanır. Bu analiz həm memarlar, həm də moda dizaynerləri üçün fənlərarası keçidlərin estetik və funksional əhəmiyyətini dərinlən izah edir və gələcək inkişaf istiqamətlərini müəyyənləşdirir.

Açar sözlər: geyim, memarlıq, interyer, dizayn, tarix, transformasiya

¹Azərbaycan Dövlət İqtisad Universiteti, Bakı, Azərbaycan

²Azərbaycan Memarlıq və İnşaat Universiteti, Bakı, Azərbaycan

*Məsul müəllif. E-poçt: naila.huseynova@unec.edu.az

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Introduction

Although architecture and fashion may initially appear to be entirely independent fields, the fundamental philosophy of both disciplines is to organize the human interaction with the environment and to provide shelter. The relevance of this topic is directly related to the dissolution of boundaries within the contemporary design ecosystem, where architects create clothing collections and fashion houses expand their brand identity through interior design. While clothing functions as a membrane that protects the body on an individual scale, architecture creates a broader, organized space in which that body moves.

The methodology of this study is based on historical-comparative analysis, visual semiotics, and material science perspectives. During the research, the influences of periods such as Gothic, Baroque, and Modernism on both clothing and built structures were examined in a cross-disciplinary manner. The scientific novelty of the study lies in analyzing the relationship between clothing and architecture not only in terms of visual similarity, but also through structure, construction, and material integrity—particularly within the context of contemporary “textile architecture.”

Within the framework of the literature review, the theoretical foundations of the topic are grounded in Gottfried Semper’s idea that textiles are the origin of architecture, Adolf Loos’s theory of the rejection of ornament in modernism, and Bradley Quinn’s contemporary studies exploring the intersection of architecture and fashion. The limitations of the research are primarily related to its focus on Western-centered historical

Main part

The Concept of Shelter and the Scale of the Human Body

From the earliest periods of human existence, clothing and architecture have served the same fundamental need: protection. This relationship, which dates back to the Ice Age, shows that early humans used the same types of materials (such as leather, wool, and plant fibers) for both their garments and shelters. This demonstrates that both fields originated from a unified design logic (Ali & Rebeh, 2021)

The Philosophy of the Second and Third Skin

In design theory, clothing is described as the “second skin,” while architecture is considered the “third skin.” Clothing defines the immediate personal space surrounding an individual, whereas architecture forms the structural framework that encompasses these personal spaces. As Bradley Quinn notes, the architectural quality of fashion is reflected in its ability to enclose space, while the “fashioning” of architecture is expressed through its proportional relationship with the human body. The human body can be perceived both as a machine and as a building; thus, the act of dressing is essentially the construction of an individual shelter system (El-Gammal, 2018)

Structural and Constructional Similarities

Both architecture and fashion require the creation of complex three-dimensional structures. Just as architects use frameworks and support systems to ensure the stability of buildings, fashion designers employ techniques such as draping, folding, and stitching to maintain the form of garments. Coco Chanel’s famous statement — “Fashion is architecture: it is a matter of proportions” — perfectly captures the mathematical and aesthetic harmony between these two disciplines.

Table 1

Comparative analysis of Fashion and Architecture: From the scale of the human body to the permanence of the urban environment

Parameter	Clothing (Fashion)	Architecture
Scale	Human body (small scale)	City and environment (large scale)
Durability	Temporary and seasonal	Permanent and monumental
Material	Soft and flexible (textiles)	Hard and durable (concrete, steel)
Function	Individual shelter and identity	Collective shelter and space for activities
Movement	Moves with the body	Static and fixed

Source: Intersections of Historical Styles: From Gothic to Baroque.

Throughout history, any artistic style that emerged in architecture was soon reflected in clothing as well, either simultaneously or shortly thereafter. This demonstrates the unity of the worldview of people in a given era.

Gothic Style: Verticality and an Engineering Marvel

Gothic architecture (1150–1500) enabled buildings to rise toward the sky through the use of pointed arches, ribbed vaults, and flying buttresses during the Middle Ages. This tendency toward vertical movement was also fully reflected in the clothing of the period. Fashion designers began to directly apply architectural elements to the human body.



Picture 1

A medieval engineering marvel: Architecture liberated from the weight of walls through pointed arches and ribbed vaults

Source: Gemini AI.

1. Silhouette and Height: The height of Gothic cathedrals was reflected in clothing through long and slender forms. The elongated trains in women's garments and the narrow, long tunics worn by men reinforced this sense of vertical elevation.
2. Pointed Headwear: The shaped headpieces known as *hennin* were direct adaptations of Gothic pinnacles (towers) into fashion (Lobo, 2015)
3. Repetition of Architectural Details: Patterns and decorative carvings reminiscent of Gothic window tracery were used on the sleeves and hems of garments.
4. Color and Light: The effect of colored light filtering through stained-glass windows in cathedrals was harmonized with the rich color play and patterns of expensive fabrics (such as velvet and silk) used in clothing of the period.

Baroque: Dramatic Expression, Emotion, and Visual Abundance

The Baroque period (17th century) aimed to unify architecture, sculpture, and painting into a single expressive ensemble. Originating in Italy, this style prioritized luxury, movement, and dramatic effect above all else. The curved lines, complex façades, and richly decorated interiors of Baroque architecture closely corresponded with the fashion trends of the time.

- Theatrical Spaces: Baroque squares (for example, Piazza Navona) functioned as stages where aristocrats in luxurious clothing could display themselves.
- Volume and Exaggeration: The heavy and monumental domes of architecture were mirrored in fashion through crinolines (wide skirts) and large wigs that artificially increased the volume of the body.
- Material and Texture: The fascination with rare materials (porcelain, lacquer, precious stones) was evident both in interior design and in clothing accessories. The flowing drapery in Bernini's sculptures illustrates the inseparable connection between architecture and fashion.

Modernism and the Rejection of Ornament: Theories of Loos and Semper

At the beginning of the 20th century, under the influence of industrialization, both architecture and fashion transitioned toward more efficient and functional forms, eliminating excessive ornamentation. Two key theorists of this period stand out: Gottfried Semper and Adolf Loos.

Gottfried Semper and Textile Architecture

In his 1860 work *Der Stil*, the German architect Gottfried Semper traced the origins of architecture to four elements: the hearth, the platform, the roof, and the wall. Notably, he argued that the earliest form of the wall consisted of woven fences and textiles. According to Semper, architecture is essentially an evolution of the craft of weaving. This theory forms the foundation of what is now called “textile architecture.” For Semper, a building, like clothing, is a “dressed” object, and the façade acts as its garment (Semper, 2004)

Adolf Loos: “Ornament and Crime”

The Austrian architect Adolf Loos revolutionized the design world with his 1908 essay *Ornament and Crime (Ornament und Verbrechen)*. Loos argued that as culture progresses, humans should abandon ornamentation in objects and buildings, viewing it as wasteful and even pathological.

- **Simplicity in Clothing:** Loos believed that modern individuals should express their identity not through decorative garments, but through simple and high-quality clothing (such as the English-style men’s suit).
- **Honesty in Interiors:** While his building façades were completely plain and unadorned, Loos emphasized the natural beauty of materials (marble, wood) in interior spaces. His approach laid the foundation for Minimalism in both fashion and interior design. (Buyukkok, 2022)
- **Interior Design and Fashion: Branding and Personal Expression.** The relationship between interior design and fashion is closer than ever in the modern era. People increasingly align the aesthetics of the spaces they live in with their clothing styles.
- **From the “Runway” to the Room**
- Fashion houses (such as Gucci, Versace, and Fendi) now offer not only clothing but also furniture and decoration collections. In this process, a complete lifestyle is being marketed.

Table 2

Synthesis of Design Styles

Design Style	Fashion Characteristics	Interior Manifestation
Maximalism	Bold patterns, bright colors, Gucci aesthetics	Layered textures, colorful wallpapers, eclectic furniture
Minimalism	Clean lines, neutral tones, Jil Sander style	Open spaces, monochrome palettes, high-quality materials
Industrial	Functional clothing, denim, leather elements	Concrete walls, metal fixtures, exposed systems
Boho-Chic	Ethnic patterns, loose cuts, natural fibers	Rugs, macramé details, plant-based décor

Correlation between Fashion Characteristics and Interior Manifestations.

- Material and Texture Synthesis in Interiors
- Interior designers have adopted numerous techniques from the world of fashion. For example, the draping of curtains, embroidery on cushions, and the selection of upholstery fabrics for furniture are all directly influenced by fashion. Additionally, the concept of a “statement piece” in clothing (a standout element) serves a similar function in interiors through sculptural furniture or luxurious chandeliers.
- Contemporary Textile Architecture: “Dressing” Buildings
- In the 21st century, architecture is moving away from heavy and static materials toward lightweight, flexible, and transformative textile materials.



Picture 2

Modern textile architecture: The concept of "dressing" buildings with high-performance membranes and innovative fabrics

Source: Gemini AI.

Development of Membrane Structures

Modern textile architecture utilizes high-tech membranes that provide both protection and aesthetic appeal for buildings. These materials act as “bioclimatic envelopes,” regulating light and temperature within structures (Quinn, 2003).

- Ferrari World (Abu Dhabi): It is one of the largest roof structures in the world and is covered entirely with a textile membrane.
- Allianz Arena (Munich): The façade of the building consists of inflated ETFE cushions. It functions like a giant “garment” that allows the building to change its color.
- Texoversum (Germany): The façade system, woven from carbon and glass fibers, represents a perfect synthesis of architecture and textile. This façade both regulates the building’s internal temperature and creates visual transparency.
- King Fahad National Library: By combining traditional Arabic patterns (*mashrabiya*) with modern textile technology, the building is given a unique external layer (Sidlauskas, 1982)

Bionics and Woven Structures

Architects apply principles of weaving found in nature to structural systems of buildings. Structures constructed using weaving techniques are both extremely lightweight and highly resistant to

earthquakes. Pioneering works by architects such as Antoni Gaudí, Frei Otto, and Heinz Isler have merged with modern digital design capabilities, leading to the emergence of a new generation of “living buildings.”



Picture 3

Bionics and woven structures: The integration of natural weaving principles into lightweight, earthquake-resistant architectural frameworks

Source: Gemini AI.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The historical influence of clothing styles on architecture and interior design is not merely a superficial similarity, but a profound philosophical and technological process that reflects the development of human civilization. From the vertical aspirations of the Gothic era to the functional purity of Modernism, and from the theatrical drama of the Baroque period to the high-tech textile façades of the contemporary era, both fields have continuously nourished and shaped one another. While clothing expresses an individual’s inner world and identity, architecture forms the social space in which that identity is lived.

Recommendations:

1. **Interdisciplinary Education:** Introducing joint courses such as “Structure and Textile” in architecture and fashion design faculties could enrich students’ understanding of both materials and spatial concepts.
2. **Sustainable Materials:** Both sectors are among the most environmentally impactful industries. The reuse of textile waste as insulation material in architecture (upcycling) and the development of biodegradable fabrics should be prioritized.
3. **Smart Façades:** Technologies from the fashion industry, such as “smart textiles,” should be integrated into building façades, enabling structures to adapt to environmental conditions (such as temperature and light regulation).
4. **Space–Clothing Harmony:** In interior design projects, users’ clothing styles and personal aesthetics should be more deeply analyzed within the framework of “identity design,” thereby creating more personalized and comfortable living environments.
5. In the future design landscape, the boundaries between clothing and buildings will continue to blur, with concepts such as “wearable architecture” and “responsive buildings” taking on a central role. This development will foster a more harmonious integration between humans and their environment, both physically and spiritually.

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