

Call For Papers - International Journal of Fashion Studies

Special Issue on Decolonizing Fashion as Process

Theme Statement:

Decolonizing fashion is not an isolated event, an act that happens and completes itself. This is the case whether we are talking about symbols of political independence, production practices against economic neo-colonialism, design practices against cultural imperialism, or efforts to decolonize education, writing, museums and ethnographic research. As process, these all involve fashion in a continuum, a decolonization that has already been going on, and that has no ending, no final conclusion.

Decolonizing efforts are necessarily incomplete. The process incorporates different moments of history in different locations, constant reinterpretations of colonial oppression and decolonial liberation. Each generation picks up a different task from the generation before. People reflect upon their life experiences using new words, new awareness, new lenses on the past and the present.

These processes unfold through contradiction. For instance, decolonial fashion practices can mesh inextricably with neo-colonial, exploitative practices. Or a practitioner faces conflicting claims (or planes): for example, she has the responsibility to keep alive and advance ancestral craft values and at the same time she must fight for economic equality in the global marketplace.

As scholars, designers, artisans, educators or curators, we will face these contradictions. We will have to untangle and reflect upon the conflicting threads of our particular moment and place of fashion practice. Our decolonizing efforts will not be pure. They will be mixed and ambivalent. We have to devise ways of thinking and acting with and through these contradictions, using the resources— intellectual and material—we have to hand. We insert ourselves into the process and do our part, with and around our own constraints. We take the risk of acting, writing, teaching, or producing, without the comfort of finding a perfect solution. Avoiding the façade of a final solution or conclusion, we can start with an intention to arrive at a given result, knowing fully that the outcome may not reflect our intention.

This special issue invites papers that highlight the opportunities and pitfalls that come with any examination of or attempt to decolonize fashion. These may be historical or contemporary. We welcome proposals from diverse approaches that acknowledge and explore the incomplete, ongoing, and contradictory process of decolonizing fashion.

Guest Editors:

Sarah Cheang, Senior Tutor
History of Design, Royal College of Art, London

Leslie Rabine, Professor Emerita of Women's Studies and French
University of California, Davis

Arti Sandhu, Associate Professor
DAAP (Design, Art, Architecture, Planning), University of Cincinnati, Ohio

Dates and Deadlines:

Abstracts of 250-300 words along with author bio should be emailed to arti.sandhu@uc.edu
by June 30, 2020.

In addition to research articles (no more than 8000 words), we also welcome shorter/creative pieces for the open section of the special issue.

The deadline for the first draft is December 15, 2020. Guidelines to the Intellect house-style are available at <https://www.intellectbooks.com/journal-editors-and-contributors>