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A Study on the Functionality of Supermodern Fashion appeared
in the 21st Century

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As realities of life become fluid with the demand for the acceleration of globalization and autonomy, the environment surrounding man and their lifestyle are changing in consumers' urban space. In the new environment, fashion design has started to be interested in the functional aspect of the clothes that protects man.

The term 'supermodern' is borrowed from the anthropologist Marc Auge, who describes the supermodern condition as an overabundance of space, of information and of individualization. Auge argues that the supermodern condition finds its natural expression in transitional spaces or what he calls 'non-places'. These 'spaces' exist in opposition to 'places', which Auge defines in anthropological terms as places that have acquired meaning as a result of human activities.¹⁾

While anthropological 'spaces' relate to a halt resulted from language, localism, and lifestyle, 'non-places' connect with a temporary stop for travelers or guests. Typical non-places are areas of passage: for example, temporary accommodations (hotels, motels, etc.), train stations, refugee camps, and airports. Calling modern times as the age of supermodernism, Marc Auge thinks this very supermodern day produces non-places. Supermodernism is characterized by such flowing world of non-places.

In his concept of supermodern clothing Bolton identifies a dimension central to the evolution of techno fashion: its engagement with the urban environment. Part of the momentum driving techno designs is the proliferation of public areas and open spaces typical of most modern cities.²⁾

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1) Andrew Bolton, *The Supermodern Wardrobe*, V&A, 2002, p.7.

2) Bradley Quinn, *Techno Fashion*, Berg, 2002, p.11.

Supermodern clothing is defined by the contemporary urban metropolis. More specifically, it is designed to respond to the physical and psychological demands of transitional spaces such as roads, railways, airports and the street. In recent years, these spaces, in which the visual transactions of modern life take place, have been the focus of much academic interest and creative activity.

The designers included in *The Supermodern Wardrobe* attempt to respond to these problems by creating practical, functional clothing. This clothing facilitates bodily movement: provides shelter against inclemencies of the weather as well as against noise and pollution from traffic.

The fleeting, fragmentary nature of transitional spaces has altered our perception of public and social space, and this change has affected the way we dress.

This study will survey the definition and concept of supermodernism, and examine its relation with the 21st century's transitional spaces or 'non-places'. It then will study multi-functionality, modern technology and transformation pursued by representative designers with strong supermodern features through an analysis of their works. The understanding of supermodern fashion clothing can be an important tool for grasping the sensibilities of the times in modern fashion, and it can also be a motive for suggesting a future-oriented new style. As for the research method, supermodernism appeared in the 21st century fashion will be examined through literature research and visual data analysis focusing on previous studies and relevant materials.

Many designers of supermodern clothing suggests serviceability. It is an aesthetic that has led many fashion journalists to use the term 'utility clothing' or even 'utility chic'. but the term 'supermodern clothing' is perhaps more appropriate, since much of it is designed to function in transitional spaces or non-places, spaces in which supermodernity finds its natural expression.

Review of representative designers of supermodern were as follows.

Lucy Orta's design are developed into ranges of multi-functional clothes for the urban environment, including parkas that convert into tents and sleeping bags. Problems of air pollution and noise are solved by jackets that feature anti-smog masks and detachable headphones plugged into the

hood's lining. These garments are made functional by new high-tech fabrics that are both wind-and rainproof.

Yeohlee Teng's design approach is not to echo lines of contemporary edifices in the cut of fabric, but to assimilate visual and intellectual principles of architecture into fashion. Fashion and architecture operate along the same principles. For example, a button-fronted shirt has to do with egress. Egress is an essential consideration for both disciplines. There is an aspect of clothing as portable architecture. In other words, our clothes play an role of shelters which is the main function of buildings. Yeohlee's understanding of the body's contours means she cuts the fabric to define a feminine shape in her garments, mirroring the architect's approach to integrating a building into a landscape. Yeohlee's process and methodology extend beyond the garment and the wardrobe, into the living sphere of the wearer's everyday world. She explores this vision of human life through the micro-shelter provided by a garment and the macro-shelter of architecture and technologized spaces. And other techno-fashion designers are appropriating elements of military and police uniforms. Most supermodern fashion is designed with principles of menswear in mind, like the functionalism inherent in sportswear. With military camouflage in mind, hues of brick, concrete and stonework - the color palette of non-places - were chosen to blend the garments into the urban landscape.

Hussein Chalayan takes an architectonic ideas to provide the glue that binds fashion and space together. he sees all objects, structures and architecture as externalizations of the body. Chalayan's strategy is to integrate clothing with its surroundings not by merely making dresses look architectural, but by rendering a comprehensive understanding of different environments and diverse factors. The most striking of Chalayan's garments were those designed with the potential to transform into pieces of furniture. The chairs featured to transform into pieces of furniture. the chairs featured slipcovers that could be worn as dresses, and they could be converted into suitcases by collapsing their frames.

CP Company introduced a range entitled 'Transformables'. Designed by Moreno Ferrari, all the pieces were made from waterproof and windproof nylon mesh. The collection included a multi-pocketed suit that Changes

into a long trench coat through zippers and a long orange hooded cloak that turns into a kite. CP Company produced a blight blue polyurethane inflatable jacket which turns into an armchair and an inflatable waistcoat in transparent PVC which turns into a cushion.

Many of the physical functions of supermodern clothing address the problems and possibilities of transitional space or non-place.

The results of this study on the Functionality of Supermodern Fashion were as follows.

First, All clothes have social, psychological and physical functions. with supermodern clothing, the physical functions of the garments are accentuated. Practicality and utility are paramount, not only in the construction of the garments but also in their appearance. Designers of supermodern clothing are problem-solvers, their design ethos is more akin to engineering and architecture than it is to fashion. They aim to create clothes with realistic lifestyle applications, clothes that are designed to 'able' and 'equip' the body. To this end, every design detail suggests multi-functionality.

Second, Many designers of supermodern clothing embrace battlefield metaphor of metropolitan center and look to military and occupational uniforms for their design inspiration to befit the contemporary city life. So they adopt certain physical characteristics of the uniforms, or rather 'quasi uniforms'.

Three, While some designers of supermodern clothing respond to the multiple functionality of transitional spaces by incorporating the technological apparatus of these spaces, others create garments which literally transform themselves. The cape that converts into a kite and the jacket which turns into an armchair almost transgress multiple functionalist to become non- functional concept apparel.