

***T-SHIRTS,  
PLATFORMS  
AND POLITICS***

***THE SOCIETY-SHAPING POWER OF FASHION***

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Doctoral Dissertation MOME

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# ***T-SHIRTS, PLATFORMS AND POLITICS***

***THE  
SOCIETY-SHAPING POWER  
OF FASHION***

**THINK  
WHILE IT'S STILL  
LEGAL**

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Cover: Vetements' Autumn/ Winter 2021/22 collection - Photo: Gio Staiano

# Theses

The contemporary fashion industry is experiencing a crisis driven not only by aesthetic oversaturation but also by overproduction, market oversupply, and the fragmentation of consumer attention. These factors are catalyzing the emergence of novel communication and sales models, such as the drop strategy. The dysfunctionality of the industry is further evidenced by the increasing predominance of symbolic and experiential narratives over the physical quality of products. Fashion now aspires to maintain its relevance as a medium for identity construction.

Katharine Hamnett's oeuvre signified a paradigm shift in the relationship between fashion and social activism. Her design practice—grounded in radically simple visual messages that convey political positions—exemplifies fashion's potential to serve as an active medium of public discourse. Hamnett's work demonstrates that the designer functions not only as an aesthetic agent but also as a socially responsible actor who articulates perspectives and positions themselves in relation to collective concerns through fashion.

Copenhagen Fashion Week has evolved into an institutionalized platform for ethical and sustainable fashion practices, elevating transparency, ecological consciousness, and social responsibility to the structural principles of the event. Its participation criteria encourage brands to pursue sustainability while simultaneously providing a venue for the articulation of these transformations. The case of Copenhagen illustrates how a fashion event can function not only as a showcase but also as a regulatory and educational agent, actively influencing industry mindsets and contributing to the green transition.

The ongoing material-technological revolution in fashion, exemplified by the development of mycelium-based alternatives, constitutes not only an ecological response to the environmental crisis but also a material articulation of posthuman thought and new materialist philosophy. Designers such as Stella McCartney, through their experimentation with biomaterials, are reconfiguring the human–material relationship and infusing the act of design with ethical and political significance.

Certain directions within contemporary fashion design offer potential responses to the loss of place and emotional attachment. Design strategies that conceptualize clothing not merely as aesthetic objects but as affective and medial carriers possess the capacity to partially reconstruct the experience of homeliness. The conceptual and performative practices of Hussein Chalayan and the nostalgic visual idiom of Melinda Tóth (Daige) exemplify how garments can function as media for the symbolic reconstruction of home, memory, and self in socio-spatial contexts marked by physical and psychological dislocation.