

BFA Methodology
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11-25-2024

The global fashion industry has gained inspiration and resources from developing nations, often causing damage to the people, culture, and environment. The research in this collection explores how fashion can establish mutually beneficial relationships with third-world countries by representing and preserving their history, culture, and tradition through cultural clothing.

Designing this collection representing traditional South Asian silhouettes was important for representing South Asian culture in fashion. Over time in South Asia, the loincloth expanded to become the

antriya or the lower drape from which the dhoti emerged.

Sculptures

from the 2nd



Century BC show the ancient dhoti or antriya worn by both sexes (Rao, 2019). Inspired by the traditional way of using a rectangular strip of cotton cloth to cover the genitals, developed the wrap and dhoti pants in this collection. Although the pants in this collection are more than just a rectangular piece of fabric they drape similarly to how the fabric would drape even if it were not sewn or patterned. The choli or the female bodice is said to have evolved from the kanchuki or stanapatta, a piece of cloth worn across the breasts. The most common form of the choli is the tight-fitting bodice that ends just below the breasts or just above the waist and is typically worn under the sari or paired with lehengas and skirts. But early cholis were covered in the front and

fastened at the back with strings. This style can still be seen in parts of Gujarat and Rajasthan. In certain southern parts of India, the choli was called ravike and fastened in the front (Rao, 2019). Creating the Choli as a part of this collection was important to represent the part of traditional South Asian women's wear but also to showcase the parts of traditional South Asian fashion that can be seen and worn as modern bodices. Some researchers believe that sewn cholis were unknown before the British arrived in India, and were mainly introduced to satisfy Victorian ideals of modesty (Rao, 2019). Similar to the Antriya is the Uttariya, an unsewn cloth or scarf draped on the upper part of the body. The Uttariya evolved into the dupatta, also known as chunari or chunni, initially worn by both sexes. (Rao, 2019). Including cloth draped on the upper part of the body in the silhouettes of some of the designs was essential to expressing the art and tradition of Indian and South Asian drapery. This drape was created in two of the looks in the collection; one where the draping starts at the lower hip side hip and goes over the shoulder and the other where the drapery is in the bodice starting below the bust and going over the shoulder. The Indian circle skirt, known as the lehenga or ghagri, finds its origins in the fishtail-style antriya worn by women in ancient India (Rao, 2019). When designing the skirts for the collection I wanted to keep the intense volume of traditional lehenga skirts but give them more shape and curve to the body, making them more appealing to the woman's shape, paying more homage to the origins of the fish-tale skirt worn in ancient India.

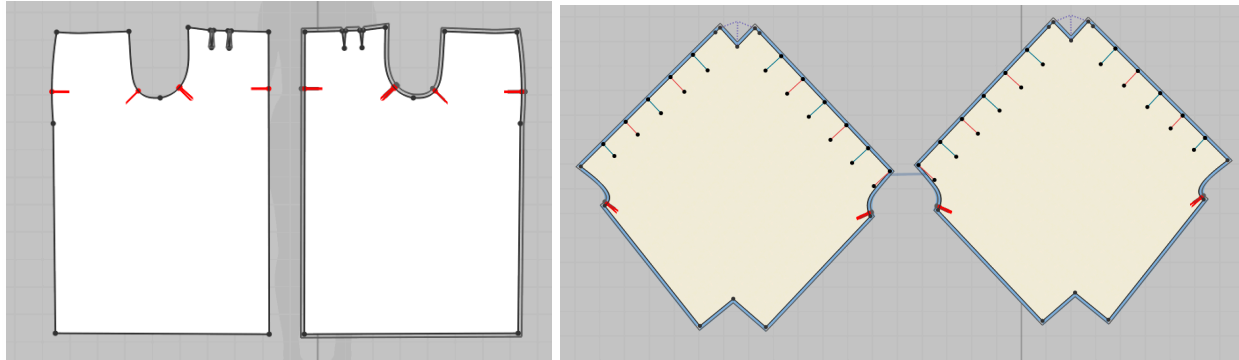


Worn by men and women in the subcontinent, the kurta or kameez traces its origins to tunics worn by Central Asian nomads. The side seams are left open

below the waist giving the wearer greater freedom of movement. The shalwar and kameez were introduced in South Asia with the arrival of Muslim rule in the 13th century (Rao, 2019). Kurtas are traditionally worn and layered with pants such as Shalwar pants are cut wide at the top and narrow at the ankle or Churidars which are narrow around the knees down to the ankles with a more slender silhouette. For this collection I created a sleeveless kurta with darts at the waist to curve to the woman's body as well as keeping the traditional side seams open below the low waist and high hip. For the pants under the kurta, I wanted to make a simple comfortable trouser that is not as baggy as a Shalwar but not as fitted and tight as Churidars. A main source of inspiration for this collection is the costume design in Bollywood films. Designers such as Manish Malhotra began to merge the gap between modern Western clothes and traditional Indian Clothes. “As much as it is essential to create pieces that are more up-to-date with the times, it is essential to incorporate the thing that stands out – the gift of cultural heritage” (Pawa, 2023). Fusion wear as seen in Bollywood costume design is created in this collection and can be seen in the luxury fashion market instead of something that is only seen in the Bollywood film industry. Through traditional South Asian silhouettes and the mixing of them into modern-day luxury wear, women will be able to represent South Asian culture and help keep traditional designs alive. Wearing cultural clothing sparks conversations about the culture it comes from, which provides an opportunity for the customers and designers of the collection to raise awareness of the history, values, and stories behind South Asian culture. Cultural clothing reinforces cultural identity and community bonds.

According to author and historian, Roshen Alkazi, cut and sewn clothing came into South Asia from Central Asia (Rao, 2019). Although sewn attire is now a big part of traditional South Asian clothing, they never gave up the importance of signature drapes which continue to be a

part of the South Asian aesthetic. In pattern making this collection keeping the tradition of dramatic drapes of unsewn cloth was important to maintain with also adding some seam lines and closures to make the garments have a more effortless experience dressing.



By merging seamlines, and pant legs and adding volume the wrap and dhoti pants patterns were created. Using minimal seam lines in the pant legs allows the pants to have the flow and drape intended. In patternmaking the chunni/dupatta pieces on the garments, as well as in some of the skirts and dresses of the collection, the patterns started as a square piece of fabric, and by draping the cloth by hand, adding pleats and changing the grain the volume and shape of the fabric piece was added. Unstitched pleating has been a main practice in South Asian clothing, mainly appearing first in women's saris. When designing this collection it was important to maintain the integrity of the tradition and the people who created it as a stylistic fluid piece as well as modernize it and make it accessible to wear.

Cotton and Silk are the two main natural fabrics traditionally used in South Asian countries. Cotton is a staple fabric of India from where it was shipped to the rest of the world. Silk was a prominent fabric used in the Srivijaya Empire, the Khmer Empire, and the Ayutthaya Kingdom. Jacquard and Brocade looms are seen in many traditional South Asian fabrics. It's believed that even the Rig Veda and Mahabharata have mentioned brocade as 'gold fabric' in them. It

was during the Mughal era, by royals' encouragement and involvement of Gujrati weavers, that Banarasi fabric flourished in India (Kamra, 2024).



When selecting the fabrics for this collection it was important to choose fabrics that are traditional to the area being represented in this collection. For this collection, a brocade, a satin, and a cotton sateen were chosen to express the traditionalism of the luxury collection.

Countries in the Global South, such as Bangladesh, continue to destroy their environment for economic gain. The responsibility lies in the hands of the consumer, the production facilities, and transnational corporations to consider what impact their decisions might have on the communities and people involved in producing their products (Malka, 2021). Many South Asian Countries are used for outsourced labor for American or European fashion brands because these developing nations have cheaper labor. The cost of keeping production, quality, and price low is paid for by the environment and the factory workers making the clothing. The consequences of certain production practices are having serious effects on the environment. This kind of apparel production negatively impacts developing countries. Several factors play into these effects such as the inexpensive material that often sheds microfibres, the disposal of wastewater into bodies of water near production facilities, the use of toxins to create garments, and the emission of greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere through outdated technologies that are used in the industry.

While the world's landfills pile up, the conditions in Bangladesh are unable to be monitored or controlled by protective environmental laws because the industry controlling these factories influences government decisions (Malka, 2021). With more independent designers practicing sustainable practices such as using local labor, minimizing production overseas and consumers leading towards wanting to support small businesses with better quality and cultural value, the amount of damage done to the environment and people will subside. By creating this collection locally and not cutting on price, quality, or production this collection will not harm production employees and have a longer life cycle ensuring it will not have to be discarded shortly after purchase. By guaranteeing these practices the pieces from the collection will be able to represent culture in someone's closet for many generations to come without harming the South Asian culture and countries the collection represents.

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