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Master's Thesis in Textiles, Merchandising and
Fashion Design

New Expressions of Masculinity
Demonstrated through
Design Characteristics of
Contemporary Men's Suit Collections

August 2021

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Abstract

Today, global menswear lines are sharing more than ever common ground with the colorful discourse associated with womenswear (McCauley–Bowstead, 2018). With important changes in social/cultural backdrops, it is crucial that this fashion phenomenon is examined. Interesting questions arise from this scrutiny, whether this phenomenon is a response to an issue of gender subversion as a social demonstration, or to an issue of development in taste by men as a genuine interest in fashion. These recent changes are especially noteworthy in men’s suits since 2015S/S. It is therefore necessary to study the unprecedented scale of these new colorful design features in men’s suits, garments that have quintessentially symbolized formality and hegemonic masculinity with 200 years of tradition. The aim of this research is to analyze new design characteristics in men’s contemporary suits, to reveal how expressions of masculinity have evolved and investigate their socio-cultural factors.

For this investigation, a thorough literature research and photo content analysis were conducted. Through the color coding of fashion reports (*WGSN*, 61 pages; *Vogue Runway*, 236 pages) and content analysis of the selected images (2015S/S–2020F/W, total 1155 photos), feminine design elements shown in the suits of global collections have been analyzed. This was carried out in terms of silhouette, detail, color, fabric, pattern, accessories, and coordination. Regarding the scope, a suit here means a set, consisting of a jacket, innerwear, and pants (or skirt), in the form of a suit. Also included are those with which length/size have been modified. For brand selection, 5 specialists have been asked to pick brands of notable reputation in men’s fashion from their own perspective. The top 20 brands most mentioned, also showing a prominent tendency of ‘feminine’ design elements, have been selected in the end. The findings from this research are as follows.

Firstly, it was during the Victorian era that the difference between masculinity vs. femininity became more oppositional than ever. The concept of masculinity continued to develop based on this binary to reach what is known as ‘hegemonic masculinity’, coined by Connell et al. in 1987. This hegemonic masculinity justifies men’s dominant position in society and legitimizes subordination of women and other marginalized males. Hegemonic masculinity can also be characterized by 8 norms/acts (pp.16–18). However, it was in the 1980s/90s that scholars began the ‘masculinity in crisis’ argument. This led to the birth of ‘multiple masculinities’ in the 2000s. This included Protest Masculinity (e.g. non-conforming genders); Gays; Metrosexuals; Ubersexuals; Crosssexuals. The most recent ones in scholarship are hybrid/inclusive masculinities. But the problem though with these masculinities is that they are still

somewhat limiting, in terms of their definition. They still use phrases like incorporating ‘feminine’/‘gay’ elements into white heterosexual males. They also interpret their expressions with only ‘feminine’ related images like ‘romantic’. This reveals that scholars are still trapped in the binary interpretive framework.

Secondly, the development of men’s suits in the 19th/20thC shows that there were only relatively few cases where suit designs changed drastically. In fact, there still were not noticeably dramatic changes in suits of the 2000s, apart from extremely skinny silhouettes or using some different colors. Suits’ image before 2015 can be summarized as: traditional classic & retro; strong & muscular; sophisticated & chic; elegant & romantic; kitsch & sensual; functional & practical; unconventional & free. There were some sporadic instances of feminine suits in history, like the Peacock Revolution(1960s), but they were worn mostly by people who had a license for play or by society’s minorities.

Thirdly, it has been discovered through the empirical analysis of contemporary men’s suits in 2015S/S–2020F/W that major formal changes to design elements are taking place on an unprecedented scale.

For silhouette, there now exists more variety. At least 8 types are notable, from X, Y, fitted/boxy H, A, I, distorted lines, and many others. Some skinny X–lines continue from the 2000s, but they no longer show feminine images only. Overall, the silhouette has become relaxed for increased comfort. There are innovative suits such as the cut–off. Suit design is expanded to provide more choices for men of various physiques.

For detail, there are enlarged shawl lapels, which draw attention to men’s large chests. There are new embellished innerwear to replace dress–shirts; and inside–out jackets covered in braids, or embroideries. Also, practical details are added with bold contrast colors, to add fashionable street/outdoor narratives. Thus, decorative details no longer show effeminacy, but are used as a creative means of expression.

For color, suits now present every shade ranging from warm, bright, and high–chroma colors to subtle tints and pastels. Designers have even devised ways that less confident men can try these colors, by giving active–inspired looks. Also, most notable are the artistic color field suits.

For fabric, there are various usages such as all–silk pajama suits. Designers are using their clever designs to help men try softer fabrics, e.g., voluminous fur suits with a Greek hero image. Also, there are novel athleisure and suit hybrids with colorful, stretchy fabrics and bio–coatings. Furthermore, today there are crafty contrast sleeve jackets using deadstock, and suits in novel materials, to reflect digimodernism.

For pattern, there are numerous varieties of flamboyant patterns such

as artwork motifs; floral & vegetation (unique patchwork ones from upcycled prints and digital close-ups/aerial shots of nature). Various animal prints, ranging from fantasy beasts to smaller birds/dinosaurs, exist for less bold men as well. Money prints also show men aspiring to success. Lastly, there are doodle suits with social statements.

For accessories, even those that were once considered as feminine can be re-appropriated by men to show charismatic strength. There are exaggerated accessories for men who want to express a rebellious identity. Colorful collaborations with streetwear brands to create bright sporty accessories are attracting youths. Finally, there are restored bags for sustainability and size-manipulated bags for digital screens.

For coordination, there are now a myriad of unique combinations, forged by designers and intriguingly the men themselves on runways, according to their own tastes. There are bolder styles: unexpected mix & matches; cross-overs; riots of layering; matching sets in the most couture like fabric/pattern; and finally, coordinating Whatever-I-Want styles.

Based on this analysis, the following 12 expressions have emerged:

Expression of Masculinity	Image/Design Features	Social-Cultural Factors
‘Don’t Care Gender’ Modern Romantics	Not feminine; true to their emotions; sophisticated sexiness, elegance. Not restricted to skinny X. Decorative lapels, embroidery; subtly see-through; mini bags; riots of layering.	Hyper-modernism. Performatism; Perception change
Subverted Americana Cowboy	Want to look sensual, but not overtly androgynous, therefore borrowing elements from cowboys; also, can look strong, tender toughness. Skinny. Western details, accessories.	Resurgence in pop culture of Wild West themes.
‘Against Gender’ Poet Maudits /Glam Rockers	A cross between poet living outside/against society & subcultural glam rocker; blurring gender; show real pains of LGBTQ+; satire; anarchic; camp; playful; exaggerated; distorted; flamboyant design elements, accessories, styles.	Youth-driven, gender issue; social movements vibrant today.
Visual Artist	Love artwork-like dynamic elements in their fashion; independent-mind like artists. Color/Pattern deployments & Accessories key. Colors inspired by artists. Color fields.	Millennials/Gen Z search uniqueness – art has this quality
Active Commuter	Athletic modernity; Combine hyper-modern dandyism of street culture; Dressed in haste; boxy; running pants/shorts; sporty details, colors, fabrics, accessories; mix & match.	Commuting time↑ with house price↑ Warmer summers.
Homebody	More comfortable, relaxed than active commuters; home-wear features, loose-fit, sinuous fabric - silk matching set; lightweight accessories -clutch, bucket hat, Birkenstocks.	Covid Pandemic – many workers remain home
Adventurer	More survivalist-led, functional; military; hyper-athletic details, color, fabrics, accessories, styles – e.g. parka, short suits, leggings, fleeces, hiking boots, harness rucksacks.	Gen Z like extreme experiences; Urban /Country pursuits↑
Street Youth/Skater	Fusion of sartorial skater & smarten up; tough or chilled-out; baggy silhouettes; sneaker lace looping through jacket; patchwork panel fabrics; skater accessories, many layers.	Collabo with street giants; Curate own skater looks. Fresh.
Technology Fanatic	Adapt to rapidly changing technology (e.g. Tik Tok). Fabrics & Accessories manipulated for digital screens; science-fiction pattern; bags with new tech, also like artisanal craft.	Digimodernism – Fashion reporting↑ men’s own channel

Strong Man But Family Focused	Closest to conventional image; strong, muscular, caring; but difference is fashionable, daring; use Ghillie tassels to reference old heroes; enlarged shawl lapel – focus on chest	Slow move of men disregarding toxic masculinity.
Environmentally/ Socially Conscious Man	Concerned with climate change, racism. Source materials locally; vintage shops; recycling centers; upcycled offcuts. Pattern: patchworks from deadstock, collabo with national parks/charities, meaningful statements. Repurposed bags.	More men seeking to consume values. Sustainability & Diversity.
WIW (Whatever-I-Want) Man	Draws different elements from different expressions above (or others). Mix & Match styling according to their own unique taste. Self-curated; a mix of color, texture, pattern, accessories. Young influencers selecting own for runways	Utmost emphasis on respecting each individual taste in societies today.

Overall, contemporary suits ensure male suit fashion will transcend its outmoded images and strict formal TPOs. Some expressions of masculinity have evolved from former ones and suit's images, but they are updated with new features. Others are completely new regarding suits. Perhaps though, the most significant factor for the popularity of the colorful men's suits and these 12 expressions is the utmost emphasis on personal taste given by contemporary societies and cultures. In fact, non-conforming gender identities are in a broader sense also one's taste as well. As the 12 expressions above illustrate, more men today are expressing themselves in ways unlinked from 'the feminine', revealing that they no longer really think about gender issues. With the finding of these new expressions and the problems raised by the author previously, these require a new term. This has been coined as Flexible Masculinity in this research. It refers to fashionable men who select flexibly decorative design elements, accessories, and coordination according to their own personal taste. These men perceive colorful design elements purely as creative/functional means, and therefore, can explore various expressions. By self-curating, they also influence designers back. This flexible masculinity is regardless of one's sexual orientation.

This paper has suggested a new masculinity in scholarship that is more comprehensive, overcoming the existing problems of masculinity still trapped in the binary interpretive framework. Also, it will entice more men to open themselves to diverse, colorful designs as ways to express themselves, and thus, move away from toxic masculinity. There is a limit in analyzing expressions of masculinity only with runway looks. These looks tend to be more exaggerated, compared with actual clothes worn in daily life. Thus, as a follow-up study, it would be helpful to also study how men in everyday life wear suits by interviewing various men. Finally, as this is a study on the change in expressions of masculinity, it would be interesting to do a follow-up study on how expressions of femininity by women have changed as well.

Keywords: Men, Suits, Menswear, Masculinity, Flexible Masculinity, Personal Taste, Freedom of Expressions.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background & Need

There are now increasingly a multitude of social and cultural shifts providing individuals a greater variety of choices in life, which are also reflected in contemporary fashion. As such, global menswear designers have been enjoying a much wider profile in the past two decades. The articulation in which new lines are now played out has come to share common ground with the colourful discourse generally associated with high-end womenswear (Beward, 2016; McCauley–Bowstead, 2018). Beginning with feminism in the 20th century, which used to be a social movement largely concerned by women only as they were marginalized in a male-centred society, gender perception has changed from biological sex to a nurtured one, strongly influenced by upbringing (Entwistle, 2000). Therefore, as a part of women’s and minorities’ liberation movements, the fashion world promoted unisex looks without gender distinction in the sixties, and androgynous looks with coexistence of masculinity and femininity in the seventies and eighties. As men’s personal taste and sartorial expression developed in the twenty-first century, there emerged crosssexual men in the 2000s, who out of genuine interest for fashion adopted ‘feminine’ design elements in their look.

Unfortunately, these past instances have largely occurred in sporadic subcultures or among a somewhat limited number of men who could fit into the crosssexual fashion’s quintessential skinny fit (Lee, Kim & Ha, 2020). However, the phenomenon of conscious incorporation of ‘feminine’ or ‘colourful’ design elements in global menswear since Spring/Summer 2015 has propagated on an unprecedented scale. In fact, new and significant changes are now evident in men’s fashion today compared to that of the 2000s, and thus, this new phenomenon has been given numerous renewed terms such as ‘non-conforming gender’ terms (e.g. ‘genderless’, ‘gender-fluid’, ‘gender-bend’) and ‘neo-crosssexual’ (Chung, Yim & Suh, 2018; Lee, Kim & Ha, 2020).

This reflects the changing social and cultural backgrounds in which men's clothing is designed, sold and consumed currently. As the fashion theorist, Jose Teunissen claimed, due to the specific contexts and changes in paradigm, male sartorialism has been able to thrive; 'global luxury brands have been able to direct high-performance products to a discerning male market while sales to women have stagnated.' (Breward, 2016). Many heterosexual men today are indeed demonstrating a much more heightened interest in fashion, now spending '43% more on clothes every month than women do', according to a 2018 study conducted in the UK (Davis, 2018).

Recent vibrant feminist movements, such as #MeToo, have also contributed to the expression of sexual equality through sartorial choices. While women's rights movements in the past have helped to propagate the masculinization of womenswear, today, they are actively encouraging fashion designers to launch more colourful menswear collections so that men can equally enjoy fashion and take a role in this cultural revolution (Baker, 2015). Major changes in perceptions and values are other important factors in the proliferation of this new phenomenon, and have now even extended to the general public, in contrast to earlier fads. In an American survey of 3416 randomly selected people in 2019, over 74% stated that they found 'feminine expressions on men attractive', with extra 17% finding 'some' attractive, thus amounting to 91% (Izett, 2019). Furthermore, the gaze of the narcissistic man towards himself has been further enhanced recently through the development of cosmetics and sports (Breward, 2016). All of these contribute towards the ever more novel tastes pursued by both men and the fashion world currently.

With these important developments in social and cultural backdrops, it is crucial that this fashion phenomenon by men regarding changes in their expressions of masculinity is examined under scrutiny, which will be the focus of this thesis. Thought-provoking questions arise from this phenomenon, whether menswear designers are responding more to an issue of gender non-conformity, i.e., subversion or denial

of gender as a social demonstration, or to an issue of development in taste by men, i.e., increase in the liking for novel or flamboyant clothing as a genuine interest in fashion. In the 2000s, when the adoption of skinny silhouettes occurred in menswear, the Western culture generally viewed it as a gender issue, as a social protest against hegemonic masculinity. In contrast, the Eastern culture largely interpreted it as ‘crosssexual trend’ with an outlook of men’s keen interest in fashion, especially since Confucian traditions had still a strong objection to non–binary gender identities (An, 2007). Therefore, it will be meaningful to investigate answers to these questions, how images of men have developed to express their renewed masculinity; and what are the social/cultural reasons, whether gender, taste, or some others, contributing to these changes.

Interestingly, previous scholars simply described men who followed these colourful trends in the past as only portraying feminine sartorial images or those related to women. However, a recent London–based menswear designer’s ‘collection featured all manner of feminine detail, of which it is said that ‘intriguingly the attitude of the clothes was so incontrovertibly masculine at the same time’ (Singer, 2014; Lee et al, 2020). This now demonstrates that men can keep their masculinity while trying on ‘feminine’ design elements. In fact, they can also show confidence through them and portray images of themselves beyond those limited to femininity.

These design innovations are evident in major global menswear brands today. From 2015S/S onwards, a colourful variety of ‘suits of every shade’, made with ‘the most feminine, couture–level fabrics’ with intricate ‘prints all–over’ dominated on a wider scale (Farra & Yotka, 2018; Lee et al, 2020). In addition, ‘ingenious cut–off suits’ with ‘super short shorts’ (Black, 2018) are now dominating and conveying a new image of masculine sensuality and casual relaxation. Evidently, menswear designers and consumers are following new, extended, yet tangible definitions of masculinity.

What is crucial to take account here is that these recent changes are

especially notable in men's suits. In the past, colourful design elements in menswear developed largely in casualwear, but since 2015S/S, suits have made a new comeback on menswear runways and the re-appropriation of conventional feminine design elements in suits is unparalleled. In the London Review of Books in 2014, O'Hagan explored the state of men's dress after visiting the menswear shows at the London Fashion Week; he put an emphasis on the suits and described them as 'crisp white suits...emblazoned with flowers from an imaginary oasis' (Breward, 2016). This is due to their revival in popular blockbuster films such as the *Kingsman* series (2014; 2017; due 2020), *Mr Sherlock Holmes* (2015), *James Bond: Spectre* (2015) and *La-La-Land* (2016), along with recent and rapid technological advancements in the suit industry (Flammia, 2017). The suit itself is 'now more open to avant-gardism than ever', its classic lines have proved 'irresistible' to recent generations of menswear designers 'eager to prove their iconoclastic intent' (Breward, 2016). It is therefore necessary to study and analyse the large, unprecedented scale of these new design features in men's suits, garments that have quintessentially symbolized formality and hegemonic masculinity with more than 200 years of tradition.

There are previous studies in Western and Korean academic literature, chiefly focusing on delineating various characteristics of non-conforming genders, sexualities and/or their application within fashion, but lack meaningful analysis of such fashion worn by heterosexual men as a sartorial expression of personal style and taste, especially on suits (Kim, Jekal & Lee, 2010; Ricciardelli, Clow & White, 2010; McNeill & Douglas, 2011; Kosmala, 2013; Eldridge, 2013; Kim & Yim, 2015; Egner & Maloney, 2016; Mauriès, 2017; Chung, Yim & Suh, 2018; Park, 2019). In Korean journals also, studies on crosssexual (or metrosexual) fashion are largely limited to fashion analysis of menswear collections before 2011 and casualwear; on average, 91.8% of clothing analysed were casualwear (An, 2007; Kim, 2011). Park & Yim (2017) studied both casualwear and suits, but their research only used Hedi Slimane's designs prior

to 2015 as a specific case study. Lee, Kim & Ha (2020), which the author has worked on, specifically looked at suits to look at this new fashion phenomenon. However, it largely examined analysis of design elements only, and did not really delve into how masculinity has evolved nor socio-cultural factors to this evolution today.

Regarding men's suits, a variety of academic studies exist on their history, meanings, and functions (Hollander, 1995; Breward, 2016; Barry & Weiner, 2017), and overview of design trends occurring before 2010 (Bang, 2009; Lee, 2010). A few of these works roughly mention feminizing trends noticeable in men's suits, but simply concerning silhouette or colour, and no thorough, in-depth research on this new fashion phenomenon in suits since 2015S/S has been undertaken yet. Research published since 2014 is largely confined to a specific suit brand identity or to a particular country (Cedrola & Silchenko, 2016; Jacomet, 2017). Ultimately, a thorough and comprehensive analysis of this new colourful fashion phenomenon observable in contemporary men's suits and as part of menswear history is evidently lacking.

1.2. Research Aim, Questions & Implications

Therefore, the current thesis will examine this new phenomenon observable in men's suits today, demonstrated in major global menswear brands, focusing on suits from Spring/Summer 2015 up to recent collections Fall/Winter 2020. The collections of men's global brand fashion can serve as important examples to understand men's current aesthetic standards, changing expressions of masculinity, and social or cultural implications behind these masculinities of today. The aim of this research is to analyse new design characteristics in men's contemporary suits, to reveal how expressions of masculinity have evolved and investigate thoroughly what socio-cultural factors have contributed to this evolution. To achieve this aim, the following research questions have been set:

- I. Consider theoretically on notions of ‘masculinity’, and how they have changed historically. Next, consider ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ aesthetics in fashion.
- II. Examine overall changes in men’s suit throughout history, suit’s sartorial image, and few ‘feminine’ instances before 2015.
- III. a) Analyse major formal changes in colourful design elements appearing in the recent past 6 years (2015S/S – 2020F/W) in contemporary men’s suits.

b) Examine based on III. a), masculinity expressions of today and socio–cultural factors that have contributed to these expressions.

Ultimately, this research will have important implications. It is meaningful to analyse how designers and men today adopt conventionally classified feminine or colourful design elements in suit fashion, how this redefines the importance of major brand’s suits, and makes a fundamental impact on history of men’s fashion. This study will also illuminate on how contemporary men’s suits innovatively and freely change, and thus aid predictions of future trends. Finally, it will help researchers to understand how expressions of masculinity by men have evolved today along with this pivotal point in menswear history.

1.3. Research Method & Scope

For answering research questions 1 & 2, a comprehensive literature research will be used. For research question 3, both literature and photo content analysis will be carried out in depth. Representative global menswear designer brands have been selected to examine their innovative suits for this empirical analysis. Literature research will include various sources including books; journals; renowned companies' trend reports such *WGSN*; the official *Vogue Runway* reports on *Vogue Runway* webpages; and magazine or new articles by authors with professional knowledge in fashion.

For photo content analysis, *Vogue Runway* images will be used from the website: <<https://www.vogue.com/fashion-shows>>. During the first stage of image selection, the author will collect all photos of male suits from every collection of each brand (2015S/S–2020F/W). Due to the scope of this thesis (it is difficult to analyse thoroughly over 10,000 suit images within the scope), the author will carry out a second stage of selection. During the second stage, the author will pick 5 different suit images from each collection (there are in total 231 collections between 2015S/S–2020F/W, made by the 20 brands selected in this thesis) that are the most representative of that collection. For verification and validation, 2 fashion specialists (Ph.D. students majoring in Fashion Design at Seoul National University) will double-check each photo, to see if all images do indeed show suits, and if the selected 5 overall represent the suits shown in each collection of the 20 brands. Only when both specialists agree, will the images be included in the final selection for analysis. With hindsight, this amounted to a total of 1155 suit images after the final selection.

Through colour coding of fashion reports (*WGSN* reports from 2015S/S–2020F/W, total 61 pages; *Vogue Runway* reports from 2015S/S–2020F/W, total 236 pages) and visual content analysis of the selected images (2015S/S–2020F/W, total 1155 photos), feminine design elements shown in the suits of global designer brand collections will be analysed. This analysis will be carried out in terms

of silhouette, detail (structural/decorative), colour, fabric, pattern, accessories, and styling coordination. <Table.3>(pp.55–56) at the end of Chap.2.2.1 shows which design elements will possibly be examined in detail, especially regarding suits.

Regarding the research scope, a ‘suit’ in this research means a set, consisting of a jacket, dress–shirt or innerwear, vest (optional) and pants (or skirt), in the form of a suit. Also included are those with which length/size have been modified. In addition, other modified suit forms (e.g., cut off suits, matching set suits, long blazer suits) will also be included if WGSN or Vogue has called them as suits. These modified forms have been verified by the 2 specialists as well. The suits from 2015S/S to 2020F/W will be selected because more than 3 renowned newspapers and magazines (The New York Times, BBC, GQ) have emphasized how in 2015 many recent menswear collection suits have prominently eroded “the once rigid demarcation between conventionally feminine and masculine clothes” (La Ferla, 2015; Baker, 2015; Garbarino, 2015). It is true that a few menswear collections started to show more colourful design elements in suits from 2013. The author of this research also went through each collection of the 20 brands chosen (see below) from 2010S/S to 2014F/W, and found that only 5 brands show these elements from 2013S/S, and then only 10 brands accumulate from 2014S/S. All 20 brands prominently display colourful elements in their suits since 2015S/S, especially with the appointment of the new Creative Director Alessandro Michele at Gucci in 2015.

Through a review of press and studies on fashion, representative menswear brands have first been chosen; those that have made a major impact on the global market and have almost consistently released their menswear collections at the Big Four Fashion Weeks (London, Milano, Paris, New York) during the analysis period of this paper. With this list, a specialist group of 5 individuals, majoring in fashion design at postgraduate–level or above, have each been asked to pick brands of notable reputation in men’s fashion from their own

perspective. The top 20 brands most mentioned, also showing a prominent tendency of 'feminine' design elements, have been selected in the end:

Dolce& Gabbana, Givenchy, Gucci, Zegna, Giorgio Armani, Valentino, Ann Demeulemeester, Dries van Noten, Balmain, Dior Homme, Kenzo, Louis Vuitton, Maison Margiela, Saint Laurent, Alexander McQueen, Burberry, Charles Jeffrey Loverboy, Paul Smith, Thom Browne, Calvin Klein.

Although the other 19 brands are well-known to fashion specialists, and even to the public, *Charles Jeffrey Loverboy* is relatively a new, brand (first London Fashion Week show in 2018S/S). However, this brand has still been added in this research scope as more than 3 authoritative fashion magazine articles have emphasised this menswear brand for being the future of 'genderfluidity' (Cochrane, 2018; Maoui, GQ Magazine, 2018; Sanders, Vogue, 2019).

Chapter 2. On Masculinity & Suits

This chapter will theoretically consider some important concepts of masculinity throughout history and up to the current scholarship; and male suits prior to 2015. This is to provide points of comparison with Chapter 3, which will empirically analyze contemporary men's suits and changing expressions of masculinity since 2015. Thus, in the 1st section, it will firstly outline the definition of masculinity; how its notion has changed historically; characteristics of the most notable ones discussed in current scholarship; and their problems raised by the author. This is to see how expressions of masculinity have evolved and how we should next interpret these to avoid the same problems. Secondly, it will summarize the conventional masculine aesthetics in fashion compared with the feminine. Thirdly, it will look at various instances of feminine fashion appearing in menswear history prior to 2015, to demonstrate how today's re-appropriation of 'colorful' design elements is occurring at an unprecedented scale. In the 2nd section on suits, its definition and history; sartorial image; few instances of novel or feminine design elements cropping up; and how the suit has come to symbolize masculinity prior to 2015 will be examined. This is to see how significant the change is in men's suits today.

2.1. Masculinity

The concept of masculinity itself is very expansive and has long been a subject of much debate, especially since the late 1980s when its academic scholarship received increased attention (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Therefore, it will be impossible to mention every argument or debate on masculinity within the scope of this thesis. Only the most representative masculinities that were cherished throughout history will be discussed in order, starting from the earliest record (from 1000BC), but especially dealing with philosophers and arguments that were most influential since the

Victorian era^①. Next, it will discuss the major argument of ‘hegemonic masculinity’, which has an impact until the present–day, and how this normative masculinity is exercised through hegemonic men’s qualities and acts. Then, it will examine how there was ‘a crisis in masculinity’ at the turn of 21st century, which gave birth to ‘multiple masculinities’, discussing the most notable ones recently mentioned in scholarship and media prior to 2015. Finally, it will discuss the author’s views and problems raised on these existing masculinities.

2.1.1. On its Concept, History & Characteristics

The term ‘Masculinity’ is defined in the English dictionary as ‘the qualities or nature of the male sex’ (Merriam–Webster, 2020). Hence, it is a set of qualities, roles, and behaviors associated with men. Up to the modern time, it was often argued that masculinity lies in genetic make–up or in prehistory, that it was fixed, universal, singular, inevitable, and ‘containing natural model of best practice’ (Whitehead, 2002: 17). However, the proof for biologically given masculinity–femininity difference is not plausible. Masculinity is distinct from the definition of the biological male sex, since males and females can both demonstrate masculine qualities (Farrell & Sterba, 2008). In this regard, the category “males” is not the same as “man” and “masculinity”. To be taken as “a man”, it is generally understood that an individual male ‘must put on a convincing manhood act’ (Schwalbe, 2005; 66). The society that a man belongs to propels him to learn ‘a set of conventional signifying practices’ through which the identity of man and masculinity is supported in interaction (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009; 279). Masculinity is thus socially and culturally constructed, and also changes over time, as is seen in representative ones throughout history, shown below. It is not fixed, nor singular.

^① This is the period that scholars cite as when the binary between ‘masculinity’ vs. ‘femininity’ became most apparent (Entwistle, 2000). The ‘most influential’ here means an argument or scholar on masculinity that has been mentioned in 5 or more academic books or journals.

2.1.1.a) Development of Masculinity up to the Victorian Time.

Historically, expectations of masculine ideals can be first found in ancient literature dating back to 3000BC–1000 BC. In the Hebrew Bible of 1000BC, King David of Israel told his son Solomon ‘...be thou strong therefore, and show thyself a man’. (Sally, 2000). Historian James Doyle (1995) categorized the masculine roles into 5 historical periods, up to the 18th century, which the gender sociologist Lindsey has further clarified (Lindsey, 2005: 237). Firstly, from the Greek–Roman era, masculine ideal, as shown in epic sagas, was “the Epic Male”. This included major traits such as ‘physical strength’, ‘action’, ‘aggressiveness’, ‘courage’, ‘loyalty’, and ‘beginning of patriarchy’. Secondly, there was “the Spiritual Male” in the early Christian period of 400–1000AD, involving ‘self–renunciation’, ‘restrained sexual activity’, ‘anti–feminine and anti–homosexual’, and ‘strong patriarchal system’, as seen from the writings of the church and monasteries. Thirdly, the medieval masculinity was essentially feudalistic and Christian (Richards, 1999), and was thus marked by “the Chivalric Male”. This consisted of ‘self–sacrifice’, ‘courage’, ‘strength’, ‘honor and service to all women’. Fourthly, “the Renaissance Male” was formed by the 16th century social system, with emphasis on his study of humanities and sciences. Thus, for men, qualities such as ‘rationality’, ‘intellectual endeavors’, ‘self–exploration’ and ‘strength’ were treasured. Finally, “the Bourgeois Male” with ‘success in business, status and worldly manners’ was venerated in the 18th century and onwards (as cited in Lindsey, 2005: 347). However, as seen from the example of the Renaissance man, King Henry VIII, infamous for dancing, singing and sharing his deeper emotions (Whitehead, 2002; 14), there have always been exceptions to the most ideal or revered masculinity throughout history.

2.1.1.b) Development of Masculinity from the Victorian Time and up to the Birth of Hegemonic Masculinity.

It was during and after the Industrial Revolution and the Victorian era

that the difference between masculinity vs. femininity became more than ever opposing to each other (Entwistle, 2000: 155). Work was separated from home and, though a large number of working-class women went to work, bourgeois women 'were confined to the home in the role of mother' (Ibid). Therefore, being a man meant 'more openly not feminine', and more linked with 'physical trial, denial of luxury and endurance in the face of torment' (Newsome, 1961; Whitehead, 2002: 14). This can be traced back to the needs of the British empire during the Victorian era, as there was a public concern about men's physical and emotional weakness at a time of defending colonial territories (Segal, 1990: 107). What this shows is that the concept of masculinity is likely to be constructed outcomes, symbolizing the social conditions and dominant ideological or discursive truths of the period (Whitehead, 2002: 16). Therefore, by the end of the 19th century, an idealized version of masculinity – comprising 'neo-Spartan virility', 'Christian virtue', 'morality & civility' (Mosse, 1996), 'intellectual achievement' (Newsome, 1961), 'industrialism & the Protestant work ethic' (Roper, 1994) and 'paternalism' had risen to importance (cited in Whitehead, 2002: 16).

In the 20th century, sociologists, psychoanalysts, and feminists became much interested in the study of what 'masculinity' is and how it is innate or gained/educated. Firstly, for Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), adult masculinity demanded men to both identify with males and to stay competitive with them, for the attention of females (Whitehead, 2002: 24). He also claimed that males are the natural superior sex, equating 'normal' human psychology with male development, and women and femininity being a deviation from this 'norm' (Segal, 1997). Secondly, Carl Jung (1875–1961) also remains significant in the sociology of masculinity. He argued that masculinity and femininity were 'rooted in the timeless truths about the human psyche' and in concepts of 'a public self' and 'a private self' (Connell, 1994:21; Whitehead, 2002: 26). Jung insisted that all men have 'a feminine essence' in them (calling this 'disorder'), which can be reached and healed through therapy by talking to one's

‘private self’ (Ibid). Although both Freud and Jung’s arguments carry misogynistic viewpoint, it is nevertheless plausible that the notion of masculinity is partly formed due to men wanting to identify with other men, and at the same time being in competition to each other, wanting to stand out and look good among their female counterparts. Furthermore, it is also true that the gap between ‘the public self’ and ‘the private self’ have been much larger for men as expectations from them as breadwinners are still somewhat substantial. This large gap has been known to cause many psychological problems among men.

After Freud and Jung, the sociologist Talcott Parsons in the 1950s made significant contributions on theories of ‘functionalism’ and ‘sex roles’ regarding masculinity. Functionalism saw roles of men and women as naturally different but complementary. It endorsed the gender dichotomy and sex roles, and tried to justify the inequalities that arise from it by showing them as naturally–occurring and inevitable for the orderly operation of the society (Whitehead, 2002: 18). For example, the professor (reasoned, unemotional, rational, distant stereotypically) must be male, whereas the nursery teacher (maternal, compassionate, caring, emotive stereotypically) must be female (Ibid.). These roles (re)produce ‘ideal’ models of behavior, conveying dominant stereotypes, and this role performance in turn promotes a sense of belonging to a group, although it suppresses individual taste (Ibid). However, these theories were heavily criticized in the 1970s. The sex–role paradigm insists on historically invariant model, a type of ‘static sex–role container into which all biological males and females are forced to fit’ (Kimmel, 1987: 12). Pleck & Sawyer (1974) went far as to claim that they can reduce male sex role models to simply two: ‘stay cool’ or ‘get ahead’ (Whitehead, 2002: 20). Evidently, functionalism and sex role theories are reductionist and can have negative effect on both women and men, as they suggest each should follow a certain model.

The notion of ‘patriarchy’ (“men holding primary power and predominating in roles of industry, technology, universities, science,

political office, finance and social privilege”) to describe masculinity also became important in the second-half of the 20th century, when the feminist Kate Millett (1970) introduced the term officially into feminist masculinity scholarship (Millett, 1970:25). Men exercise their power through ‘ritual, tradition, law, and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labour’(Rich, 1976:57). In addition, although patriarchy often refers to male domination, some view it as “the rule of the father” too; not only male power over women, but power based on age as well, such as older men over women, children and younger men (Mitchell, 1974: 409). These younger men might follow or rebel instead, which is still relevant today. Hence, age plays an important factor in masculinity.

Unfortunately, none of the theories on masculinity mentioned above considered thoroughly how masculinity is also about power relations among different types of men (not just between men and women) in terms of various factors such as ethnicity, sexuality, profession, age. The former theories also did not explain the link between masculinity and heterosexuality by taking gay sexuality seriously, thus they betrayed their blindness to power among men (Ibid.). Consequently, in 1985, Tim Carrigan, Bob Connell and John Lee came up with the important concept of ‘Hegemonic Masculinity’. This is defined as a set of value and behavior ‘that legitimizes men’s dominant position in society and justifies the subordination of the common male population and women, and other marginalized males’ (Connell, 2005). Thus, ‘hegemonic’ refers to the socio-cultural dynamics by means of which a particular male group inhabits positions of power and wealth in social hierarchy (Carrigan et al, 1987: 179). Thus, hegemonic masculinity represents culturally normative ideals of masculinity.

One of the most conspicuous elements of hegemonic masculinity is the dominance of heterosexual men and the subordination of homosexual men. This has been demonstrated in street violence, legal and economic discriminations, and cultural and political exclusions (Connell, 2005). However, though gay masculinity has

been the most notable subordinated masculinity, it is not the only one. Heterosexual boys and men with effeminate taste or features also run the risk of being discriminated.

Overall, the keywords associated with stereotypical hegemonic masculinity are often summarized as the following: strength, courage, independence, leadership, non-nurturing, dispassionate, etc. (Berger et al, 1995; Whitehead, 2002). This is in contrast to those stereotypical feminine traits such as gentleness, passivity, vulnerability, openness, expressiveness, nurturance, sensitivity, empathy, affection, tenderness, etc. (Burke et al, 2009; Windsor, 2015). These stereotypical male inner qualities have been acted out by men, which in turn set institutionalized norms/acts of masculinity, and vice versa. The most prominent 8 norms/acts have been outlined below, some of which still resonate today. These have been listed here so that it can be decided in Chapter 3 whether current expressions of masculinity in men's suits still accept or reject them:

Firstly, there is the 'anti-feminine norm'; this norm entices men to denounce and reject stereotyped feminine characteristics and traits associated with women, including 'feminine' fashion (Lindsey, 2005: 241-242). Also, homophobia is considered such a crucial part of hegemonic masculinity that 'being a man' (not being a sissy) signifies not being a homosexual. For a long time, and even today still, a lot of feminine fashion on men have been labelled as homosexual fashion. Consequently, there has been a taboo about wearing such fashion for the fear of losing their stance in hegemonic masculinity.

Secondly, there is an 'emotional restraint' on men, and rationality is demanded of them even among personal relations. Men are associated with the rational, non-emotional decision-making that is regarded vital to achievement within increasingly competitive systems (Whitehead, 2002: 176). However, restraints in emotional openness have personal costs such as higher rate of suicide. It will be interesting to check how men are now expressing their emotions more, thus their renewed masculinity through fashion today.

Thirdly, there is the ‘career success norm’; men are motivated to succeed in his career at all costs. It is also tied with the notion that money makes man and satisfies his breadwinner role. Because prestige is achieved from their outside career (public) rather than from inside home (private), capability as a parent is less significant than capability in paid labor (Lindsey, 2005: 242–243). This also further supports the notion of public (masculine) vs. private (feminine) dualism, which is linked with a separation between work vs. family. Men nowadays expect that their wives will be wage earners, but they also think that good amount of childcare and chores should stay with a wife and that her career should be interrupted if these responsibilities are threatened (Ibid.). Occupations have become gendered also; men who becomes successful in ‘feminine’ nurturing jobs (e.g. nurse, nanny) are often stigmatized as less able than those who succeed in ‘masculine’ jobs (e.g. fund analyst, surgeon) (Lindsey, 2005: 243). Based on this, fourthly, there is also the ‘intellectual success’ where not only economic career success but males are willing to show intellectual superiority over women.

Next is the ‘toughness norm’. This norm demands men to be unbending, self-reliant, and tough. This not only includes physical toughness, but he must also show self-sacrificial endurance and resilience to achieve insurmountable organization goals. For instance, Cooper (2000) showed how computer programmers obtained manhood status by displaying “nerd masculinity” that entailed suffering long work hours to attain production goals and to gain a reputation for expertise, just like athletes who were willing to suffer pain to convey their masculine self (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009: 287).

Similarly, there is the ‘aggression norm’; motions of aggression, force, hardness are also markers of manliness. Boys learn from young age that they are expected to fight one’s way out of difficulties rather than turning the other cheek. Media endorses these images by glorifying violence, war, and revenge for good cause (Lindsey, 2005: 244). Furthermore, even men’s body posture and attitude are

carefully portrayed in media images so that the masculine body dominates the space, and demonstrates readiness to put one's body at risk (Whitehead, 2002: 189). This is to show men's aggression.

Then there is the 'sexual assertiveness/superiority norm' (Macho man). In this image of macho man, men are primarily sexual beings, having constant interests in sexuality; they are judged according to their sexual conquest (Lindsey, 2005: 245). Furthermore, sexual receptivity or sexual passiveness is regarded feminine, whereas sexual desire and assertiveness are often regarded masculine (Thesander, 1997). They feel driven, when in all-male groups, to be willing to objectify women.

Finally, there is the 'sport fanatics norm'; whether as professional sportsman or spectator, sports have filled this need of validating masculinity instead of war. Sports encourage comradeship, build character, afford role models, and provide stories of courage and the conquering adversity (Lindsey, 2005: 239). Through sport, bodies and emotions are damaged also, but they are ignored or hidden for the higher cause of teammanship, efficiency and winning (Ibid.: 240).

Overall, these stereotypical masculine norms/acts became the standards among men with which masculinity is judged. Although hegemonic masculinity has made an important influence in understanding gender and sexuality relations, and is the most ideal representations of masculinity in mass media, critics argue that it is heteronormative (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Furthermore, only a relatively small number of men can actually embody them, as the cultural ideal of masculinity is often a fantasy figure (e.g. Rambo). Thus, it is not surprising that contemporary men report body dissatisfaction through comparison with body ideals associated with hegemonic masculinity (Ricciardelli et al, 2010: 65). Ultimately, it enforces a set of ideal traits which claims that men can never be masculine (unfeminine) enough, making it an unattainable ideal.

Thus, gradually, it was in the 1980s/90s that scholars began to argue

that “masculinity in crisis” emerged, as some men felt guilty and exhausted with these norms. The destructive nature of the masculine norms has been labeled as ‘toxic masculinity’ (Kupers, 2005). At the same time, men were confused about which qualities to take (or abandon) with the change in labor market and more women entering the labor force (Beynon, 2002: 76). These men were expected with new roles, as the birth of the term ‘New Man’ in the 1980s illustrates.

2.1.1.c) Development of Masculinity from the New Man to Present Debate in Scholarship (Multiple Masculinities).

This ‘New Man’ was primarily a consumerist culture and media driven phenomenon, where men were expected to be more ‘caring, and sensitive, or alternatively, more narcissistic, passive and introspective’ (Edwards, 1997: 39). A good number of men did follow this culture and seemingly looked satisfied at first. However, according to Faludi (1999), modern New Man has actually been ‘betrayed’ by a mix of socio/cultural factors, such as ‘the decrease in or loss of economic authority’; ‘the weakening and reshaping of men’s relationship to work’; ‘the sexist consumer culture that commodifies and objectifies the male’; and nevertheless, the still on-going ‘public exposure of dominant masculinity notions to ridicule and censure’. Although feminist attacks on masculine norms have propelled men to reconsider previously held beliefs about male roles, it has also left them with a crisis of confidence at the turn of the 21st century (Ibid).

All these factors have led to the birth of various ‘multiple masculinities’ – what in Connell and Messerschmidt’s view simply called them other forms of subordinated masculinities in comparison to the present hegemonic masculinity in their recent article of “Rethinking the Concept’ of hegemonic masculinity” (2005). Nevertheless, what this phenomenon of ‘multiple masculinities’ reveals is that cultural shifts are beginning to take place so that gradually men are provided with more masculinity choices in life. There are also other important socio/cultural factors to the rise of

these multiple masculinities. Firstly, with the long postmodernist influence, men were demanded to express more of their sensibilities, accordingly with various lifestyles in the 21st century (An & Park, 2007; Lee et al, 2020). Secondly, the social unrests and anxiety caused by the recession at the turn of the new century, further undermined the confidence of men, and thus, they tried to re-find confidence in the form of new, challenging masculinities (Ibid.).

Below are some notable examples of different “subordinated” masculinities, that were given full attention by scholarship at the turn of the second millennium. It has to be pointed out first though that some of these masculinities have always existed before throughout history such as ‘Protest masculinity’ or ‘Gay masculinity’. However, what is noteworthy is that these masculinities have only begun relatively recently to be a subject thoroughly studied in its own right.

Firstly, there is the ‘Protest masculinity’ which can be understood with a rebellious pattern of masculinity constructed in low working-class settings, often (though not always) among ethnically marginalized men (Connell et al, 2005). Working-class men were valued for their body built for labor but now research on men in low-status jobs demonstrates another form of compensation: these men seek to show that they cannot be controlled (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009: 285). Their ‘manly’ acts depend on verbal jousting, joking, and often ‘sabotage to assert autonomy vis-à-vis bosses’ (Ibid.). There are also some working-class men who enjoy underground music and bar culture in which they symbolize masculine selves through aggressive posturing and heavy drinking (Eastman & Schrock, 2008). As seen, ethnic, economic, social and cultural backgrounds play as important factors in forming masculinities.

Other rebellious protest forms of masculinity include ‘Laddism’ (the youth) or young college boys who turn to binge-drinking and high-risk behaviors (Peralta, 2007) to parade that they are indomitable and fearless. They also enjoy hedonistic consumption, bachelorhood, objectification of women and sexual conquest (Ricciardelli et al, 2010:

65) Even so, their youth is often praised by same age-group boys or other men as their carefree, skilled bodily activity and behavior becomes a source of envy (Connell et al, 2005: 851).

There are also biological males with subversive non-conforming gender identities^②, which include non-conventional genders such as nongender, agender, gender-bender. These collective gender terms focus more on denoting a person's gender identity and how that person identifies oneself, in contrast to more fashion-oriented terms such as androgynous and crosssexual (Lee et al, 2020: 6). These males use markers such as speech patterns, gestures, behaviors to inform others of their non-conforming identity, as someone who either challenges, subverts, or denies conventional gender (Ibid.).

Secondly, another form of marginalized 'multiple masculinities' is 'Gay masculinity', which refers to homosexual men. Gay men have throughout history been associated to 'deviate from the masculine norm' and stereotyped as "refined", "gentle" and "effeminate" (Tatchell, 1999). In reality however, as seen in the documentary "The Butch Factor" (gay men were asked of their opinions on masculinity), effeminacy is wrongly tied with homosexuality since not all were effeminate. Furthermore, a study at Charles University, Prague found notable differences among the faces of gay and heterosexual men, with gay men having more "stereotypically masculine" features, "undermining stereotypical notions of gay men as more feminine looking." (Saul, 2013). This demonstrates that effeminate fashion does not mean gay fashion at all, and that even within the gay masculinity, multiple forms of masculinity exist.

Thirdly, there are multiple masculinities that have been completely formed new at the turn of the 21st century, the most representative ones being metrosexual, ubersexual and crosssexual. According to Marian Salzman (2005) in her book *The Future of Men*, the instability

^② There are many non-conforming gender terms such as gender-bender, gender-fluid, but this paper considers them collectively under the umbrella term 'non-conforming genders', which reveal a form of protest masculinity.

of the male masculinity and role model have been a reaction to the rise of equal rights for women, creating a number of different masculinities (Valeo, 2005). Firstly, ‘metrosexual’ is defined as: “a young man with money to spend...living in metropolis – where all the best shops, clubs, gyms and hairdressers are...”(Simpson, 2002). Thus, the term refers to men who pursue a city-based and consumer-driven lifestyle, who love caring about and grooming their appearance. Metrosexual is best represented by David Beckham in the 2000s who delighted in conspicuous consumption (Coad, 2008).

Secondly, the term ‘ubersexual’ was coined by Marian Salzman (2005) and means “a masculinity that combines the best of traditional manliness (physical strength, muscularity, honor, character) in his looks with positive traits traditionally associated with females (nurturance, cooperation, communicativeness)”. Thus, ubersexual showed masculine norms and fashion looks, but at the same time having caring nature, and is best symbolized by George Clooney (fig.7d) (Ibid.). However, ubersexual is less concerned with fashion (Valeo, 2005). Furthermore, a ubersexual’s “best friends are male; he doesn’t consider the women in his life his ‘buddies’”(Salzman, 2005).

In contrast, the term ‘Crosssexual’ was coined in Korea in 2006. It was used for heterosexual men who, beyond being simply well-groomed, ‘genuinely enjoy or select feminine design elements and accessories as part of their fashion codes’(Kim & Kim, 2006). However, ‘apart from their fashion, they behave and speak as a man’, recognizing and declaring their sex and gender as male (cis-male), and being also perceived still by others ‘biologically and physically as a man’ (Kim & Kim, 2006; Lee et al, 2020). These men with a crisis of confidence at the uncertain turn of the new millennium tried to pursue challenging spirits in the form of this unique fashion instead. The crosssexuals also emerged due to other socio/cultural factors such as the Asian mass-media and publicity. They promoted kkot-minam (‘flower-like handsome man’), popularized by male celebrities

at the time, who pursued ‘an effeminate image’ through light make-up and very skinny looks (Kim, 2011). Their fashion and looks stirred up protective instincts among many female fans, and therefore, these delicate men were in vogue. Eventually, these ‘kkot-minam’ spread to the West as well, as can be seen by male figures like Justin Bieber.

Finally, the latest studies on multiple masculinities have claimed that new ones emerged during the late 2000s that were made based on a combination of the “subordinated” masculinities mentioned above. The key ones are ‘Hybrid masculinities’ and ‘Inclusive masculinity’ (coined in 2009). Hybrid masculinities refer to gender projects that ‘incorporate bits and pieces’ (Demetriou 2001) of ‘marginalized and subordinated masculinities and, at times, femininities.’ (Bridges, 2014: 59). ‘Hybrid’ is usually adopted in the social sciences to mean processes and practices of cultural integration or mixing (Burke, 2009; Ibid.). Thus, this term ‘hybrid masculinities’ signifies the incorporation of elements coded as “feminine”, “gay” or “black” into white, heterosexual masculine identities and performances (Ibid.). Inclusive masculinity means young straight men who ‘reject homophobia’; ‘include gay peers in friendship’; ‘are more emotionally intimate with friends’; ‘are physically tactile with other men’; ‘recognize bisexuality as a legitimate sexual orientation’; ‘embrace activities and artefacts once coded gay or feminine’; and ‘eschew violence’ (McCormack & Anderson, 2014; 2018: 548). However, while the behaviors of these men are more open and less damaging – hence, more ‘inclusive’ – the ‘inclusivity’ here refers to ‘inclusivity of gay men’ only (Ibid.).

On the whole, examples of different masculinity throughout the history, reveal that expressions of masculinity are in fact variable and versatile, and are undoubtedly intertwined with other important factors such as culture, society, sexuality, class, ethnicity, and age. At the turn of the 21st century, with the strong influence of multiculturalism, a variety of ‘multiple masculinities’ emerged and were noticed by scholars (some which had existed already and others that

were formed new). Thus, to start with, the term ‘masculinity’ meant conventional ‘masculine’ images associated with males, but gradually, ‘masculinity’ came to mean any qualities/behaviors a man takes. However, this does not mean the conventional hegemonic masculine norms have now all disappeared; the binary gender distinction still exists to place some kind of “order” on society, as Butler (2006) stresses. They still resonate to a good number of men today.

Interestingly, the above mentioned masculinities have some problems; they are crucial to be discussed as it will help us to examine correctly what expressions of masculinity are men conveying today. Firstly, all these countless different terms of masculinity produce a lot of conceptual confusion and constraints. Each category of masculinity puts a limit, as it has a strict set of characteristics to tick off (a must) for a man to see whether or not he is eligible to belong to this static category and can be called as such. For example, even the term ‘inclusive masculinity’ means ‘inclusive of gay men’s stereotypical characteristics’ only, thus referring simply to reducing homophobia. Therefore, it is not inclusive of all forms of social difference.

Secondly, scholars at the moment are too focused on revealing only how each masculinity (whether ‘hegemonic’ or ‘subordinated’) is part of power inequality in cultures (Bridges, 2014; Anderson & McCormack, 2018). They claim that masculinities that exist today are either a hegemonic one, or a subordinated one in relation to this. Even the concept of ‘hybrid masculinities’ is based on incorporation of subordinated masculinities into the hegemonic white, heterosexual masculine identities (Demetriou, 2001). Furthermore, the fact that inclusive masculinity is on the premise of ‘including’ what is called ‘gay men’s stereotypical characteristics’ means that it is still looking at ‘gay men’s masculinity’ as a “subordinated” one. However, not all men today think hard about reproducing power inequalities when they get dressed or speak to their ‘peers’ in their daily lives.

In fact, another key aspect of masculinity focuses on how maleness ‘relates to presentation’ and how one presents themselves through

fashion (Whitehead, 2002) to express their own self and liking. This gives us a valid reason to look at current men's runway images in order to investigate masculinities in trend. It could just be that men are not trying to fight for dominant power nor endorse it nor challenge it. Rather, today it could be that men are searching for expressions to convey their flexible masculinities, based on each man's freedom of choice and their liking. Ultimately, masculinities are multiple and flexible. Hegemonic and subordinated positions are not the only masculinity views available in today's society.

In order to check new expressions of masculinity today in Chap.3 and see how they are different to the ones mentioned in this chapter, a table has been formulated on the following pages to outline the key masculinity expressions throughout time<Table.1>(pp.26–27). Then, in Chap.3, expressions of men from the analysis of design elements and commentaries (*Vogue* & *WGSN*) will be derived. These expressions of masculinity will be compared with the ones in <Table.1>, to see which new expressions have emerged or which have continued to stay.

<Table.1.a> Outline of the most popular masculinity in scholarly discussion throughout time since the Victorian 19th century and up to the Hegemonic masculinity:

	Most Ideal/Popular Idea of Masculinity	Characteristics & Issues
19th C	<p><u>“Victorian male masculinity”</u> (Newsome, 1961; Mangan&Walvin, 1987; Mosse, 1996; Whitehead, 2002)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Binary - masculine vs. feminine became most discrete ✓ Being a man means ‘more openly not feminine’ – physical strength, trial, denial of luxury and endurance ✓ Physicality; Neo-Spartan virility; Christian virtue; Morality & Civility; Nationhood; Intellectual Endeavor & Success; Industrialism & Protestant work ethic; Paternalism
First half of 20th C	<p><u>“Freud & Jung’s ‘natural superior sex’ masculinity”</u> (Freud; Jung; Connell, 1994; Segal, 1997; Whitehead, 2002)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Demands men to both identify with males and to stay competitive against each other (for female attention) ✓ Equates ‘normal’ human psychology with male & women/ femininity being the deviation ✓ Any feminine essence in men = ‘disorder’ ✓ Masculinity vs. Femininity = public self vs. private self ✓ Large gap between ‘public self’ & ‘private self’ (cf. recent research shows gap causes psychological issues)
1950s	<p><u>“Functionalism & Sex Role”</u> (Parsons, 1950s; Pleck & Sawyer, 1974; Brannon; 1976; Kimmel, 1987; Whitehead, 2002)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Men&Women’s role naturally different but complementary; inequality of power = natural ✓ Men&Women each have jobs that are suitable/ functional ✓ Functionalism endorses sex roles – necessary for the orderly working of the society ✓ Roles (re)produce ideal models of behavior, dominant stereotypes, promotes a sense of belonging to a group ✓ Male sex role can cause oppressive behavior & a ‘fixed container’ into which men & women are forced to fit.
1960s -	<p><u>“Patriarchy”</u> (Attack from second-wave feminists – Millett, 1970; Rich, 1976; Mitchell, 1974)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Men takes primary power & dominates over industry, military, technology, universities, science, finance, political office, moral authority & social privilege ✓ Men exercise power through ‘tradition, law, language, customs, etiquette, education & the division of labor’ ✓ Male power is also based on age – younger men might rebel against older men. Age important factor. Youth rebellion.
1980s/90s -	<p><u>“Hegemonic Masculinity”</u> (Carrigan, Connell, Lee, 1985, 1987; 2005; Berger et al, 1995; Whitehead, 2002; Kupers, 2005; Lindsey, 2005; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Pringle, 2005; Burke et al, 2009; Ricciardelli et al, 2010; Windsor, 2015)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A set of value, status, behavior and practice that ‘legitimizes men’s dominant position in society’ -justifies subordination of women, and other marginalized males. ✓ Considers power relations - ethnicity, sexuality, profession, wealth, age, etc. ✓ Firece competition, hardly admits to weakness or dependency, incapcity to express emotions except anger, devaluation of feminine attributes in men. ✓ Heterosexual=Dominance/ Subordination=Homosexual (Heterosexual boys&men with effeminate taste also likely to be discriminated) ✓ Stereotypical inner qualities: courage, independence, strength, leadership, assertiveness, virility, non-nurturing, unemotional, dispassionate, etc. ✓ The 8 norms/acts of hegemonic masculinity: 1.Anti-feminine; 2. Emotional Restraint; 3.Career Success in masculine jobs – separation between work vs. family, public vs. private; 4. Intellectual Success; 5. Toughness – achieve difficult goals, sacrifice; 6. Aggression – glorify violence, revenge, men’s pose in media; 7. Sexual Prowess – sexual assertiveness, superiority; 8. Sport Fanatics

<Table.1.b> Outline of the most popular masculinity in scholarly discussion throughout time since the New Man(1980s) and up to the present time:

<p>1980s/90s -</p>	<p><u>“Masculinity in Crisis”</u> & <u>“New Man”</u> (Edwards, 1997; Faludi, 1999; Beynon, 2002; Kupers, 2005)</p>	<p>✓ <i>Masculinity in crisis</i> – men feeling guilty & exhausted about the set hegemonic norms above (destructive nature e.g. some forced to accept homophobia - toxic masculinity), also confused about which qualities to take or abandon, with more women now entering work. ✓ <i>New Man</i> – expected to be more caring, sensitive, nurturing, care about their looks, introspective, etc. -Primarily consumerist culture & media driven phenomenon -Commodification, Objectification of Males -Reshaping of men’s relationship to work, Childcare, etc. -Drives some men to reconsider their roles & dominant masculinity BUT also has left them with lack of confidence</p>
<p>2000s -</p>	<p><u>“Multiple Masculinities”</u> (Connel & Messerschmidt, 2005, called these ‘other forms of subordinated masculinities’) (Simpson, 2002; Poynting et al, 2003; Connell et al, 2005; Salzman, 2005; Valeo, 2005; Kim & Kim, 2006; Peralta, 2007; Coad, 2008; Schrock et Schwalbe, 2009; Ricciardelli et al, 2010; Pleck, 2012; Saul, 2013; Lee et al, 2020)</p>	<p><u>Protest Masculinity:</u> ✓ Rebellious form of masculinity constructed in low working-class context, often among ethnically marginalized men, youths, or people with non-conforming gender identities. 1. <i>Working-class men</i> – body built for labour, underground music culture, aggressive posturing, alcohol, uncontrollable 2. <i>Financially difficult men of color</i> – fights, sexual conquests 3. <i>Laddism</i> – youths, binge-drink, high-risk behaviors, fearless indomitable, hedonistic consumption, carefree, backlash 4. <i>Non-conforming gender</i> –use markers such as gestures, behaviors, excessive fashion to show subversive identity</p> <p><u>Gay Masculinity:</u> ✓ Refers to homosexual men – still a hierarchy exists, as a dichotomy of homosexual vs. heterosexual male ✓ Stereotyped as refined, gentle, effeminate – not necessary</p> <p><u>Metrosexual:</u> ✓ Young men with money, lives in city, enjoys luxury shops, clubs, gyms, hairdressers, male vanity products, etc. ✓ Love caring, grooming their appearance; Narcissistic. ✓ Conspicuous consumption; Consumerist.</p> <p><u>Ubersexual:</u> ✓ Traditional manliness(strength, honor, muscularity) in his looks with nurturance, cooperation, communicativeness; less concerned with fashion; his best friends are male; concerned with principles & values.</p> <p><u>Crosssexual:</u> ✓ Heterosexual men, beyond simply well-groomed, enjoy or choose feminine design elements, accessories, coordination as fashion – but behave and speak as a man, recognize their sex/gender as male (Cis-male). Less extreme looks. ✓ Still interpreted as having ‘feminine’ images though.</p>
<p>Late 2000s, 2010s -</p>	<p><u>“Hybrid Masculinities”</u> (Burke, 2009; Bridges, 2014; Barry, 2018.)</p> <p><u>“Inclusive Masculinities”</u> (McCormack & Anderson, 2014; 2018; Magrath & Scoats, 2019)</p>	<p>✓ Combination of subordinated & hegemonic masculinity ✓ Incorporate bits & pieces of ‘marginalized and subordinated masculinities, and, at times, femininities’. ✓ ‘Hybrid’=processes & practices of cultural integration/mix ✓ Incorporation of elements coded as ‘feminine’, ‘gay’, ‘black’ into ‘white, heterosexual masculine identities and performances’.</p> <p>✓ Combination of subordinated & hegemonic masculinity ✓ Young straight men who ‘reject homophobia’; ‘include gay peer in friendship’; ‘more emotionally intimate with friend’ ‘physically tactile with other men’; ‘recognize bisexuality’; ‘embrace activities & artefacts once coded gay or feminine’; ‘eschew violence’. – More open, Less damaging. ✓ Not ‘inclusive’ of all forms of social difference – Only gay.</p>

2.1.2. Conventional Masculine Aesthetics in Fashion Compared with the Feminine

Often, people in a society ‘expect men to dress to “look like” men and women to “look like” women’ (Woodhouse, 1989: 9). Indeed, clothing items and design elements frequently work to connote ‘masculinity’ or ‘femininity’, to portray a person’s overall fashion and manner as more ‘masculine’ or more ‘feminine’. In fact, clothing is one of the most powerful and immediate examples of the way in which bodies are gendered. It produces part of social signaling system, ‘to indicate belonging’ and ‘above all, to demarcate gender and sexuality’ to give order in a compulsory heterosexuality^③ society (Ibid.: 13). For instance, 16th century men to show off their aggressive masculinity used excessive padding around the shoulders and genitals as codpieces, which became more exaggerated as time went by.

In the current period, the Western cultures, and other cultures (those that are strongly influenced by the Western ones) are still affected by what has conventionally been considered masculine and feminine aesthetics in fashion, notions which have firmly developed through the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution and the Victorian era. This major historical phenomenon has often been called ‘the Great Male Renunciation’. It is recognized as a major turning point in the history of fashion, as men relinquished their claim to beauty and decorative adornments. Thus, men and women were described and defined by the end of the 19th century with the following aesthetics, to quote from Roberts (1977):

‘Men were serious (they wore dark clothes and little ornamentation),

^③ According to Rich(1980) who came up with this term, heterosexuality is deeply rooted in our society and everyday lives. It seems that heterosexuality is innate or freely chosen, however, it is ‘the result of “compulsory” social arrangements that normalize opposite-sex relationships while erasing, marginalizing, and pathologizing same-sex affection, sexuality’ and any associated traits with homosexuality. Rich also claims that compulsory heterosexuality promotes men’s domination of women. (Hidalgo et al, 2017)

women were frivolous (they wore light pastel colors, ribbons, lace and bows); men were active (their clothing allowed them movement), women were inactive (their clothes inhibited movement); men were strong (their clothes emphasized their broad shoulders), women were delicate (their clothing accentuated tiny waists, sloping shoulders, and a softly rounded silhouette; men were aggressive (their clothing had sharp definite lines and a clearly defined silhouette, women were submissive (their silhouette was indefinite, their clothing constricting)' (Roberts, 1977; Entwistle, 2000)

Many of these stereotypes have survived, over 100 years since. Women's dress is often more brightly-colored, even garish, and with a variety of flamboyant patterns at-hand to explore more freely, whereas men's common clothing items are largely sold in darker colors, with non-patterns or patterns restricted to stripes, cheques and at most floral shirts. Furthermore, fashion commentators still tend to link women's runway with the relentless movements of fashion, 'each new season bringing a new line which changes the contours of the female form' much more drastically, compared to men 'whose dress seems (relatively) frozen, their clothes unyielding to the fickleness of fashion' (Entwistle, 2000: 158).^④ When we think of typical 'masculine' fashion images, two central ones dominate in men's fashion: 'the corporate power look' and 'the outdoor casual' (Edwards, 1997: 41). The corporate power look, where formal work clothes (the suit) are used to cover yet emphasize 'the masculine, mesomorphic physical shape', and 'the outdoor casual' is usually depicted outside as 'a muscular hunk', 'stripping off his T-shirt and easing himself into or out of his jeans', sometimes seen as 'a working-class' or 'football maniac' (Ibid).

In fact, there is actually no natural connection between fashion behaviors or specific fashion items/elements and 'masculinity' and

^④ This idea is dominantly carried on at least until the new millennium with the birth of Hedi Slimane, who brought about a drastic change in male fashion, as shall be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

‘femininity’, but only ‘an arbitrary set of associations which are culturally specific’.(Entwistle, 2000: 143). For instance, the most common association, blue for boy and pink for girl is a recent historical, cultural invention: ‘in the early years of the 20th century, before WWI, boys wore pink (“stronger, more decided color” by famous literature of the time) while girls wore blue (meaning to be “delicate” and “dainty”)(Garber 1992:1; Entwistle, 2000:140). Also, pants were traditionally associated with men only, and thought of as indecorous for women to wear in the west. However, they have been enjoyed by women for centuries in the Middle East (Ibid.:144). Since the 20th century, they are now fashionably and comfortably used by Western women, who no longer think that they are subverting gender. Evidently, distinctions of gender difference are arbitrary; through their fashion, what we see is only their “gender/sex appearance”, and presuppose that this is the right marker of their sex and sexual identity (Entwistle, 2000: 141). Ultimately, these examples illustrate that masculine and feminine aesthetics in fashion are always open to change, and with time, such fashion perceptions, tastes, behaviors, and trends evolve. It allows the possibility that both men and women can more and more recognize a fashion item/design element, conventionally restricted to the opposite sex, from a different view and have different meanings associated with them, to enjoy them as fashion purely (Lee et al, 2020).

Based on various fashion research, books, surveys, and articles on conventional classifications of masculinity and femininity in fashion, including all mentioned above, the author of this thesis has summarized design elements, attributes and images popularly grouped as masculine and feminine, since the end of the 19th century in <Table.2>(pp.30–31) (DeLong, 1987; Entwistle, 2000; Bolich, 2007; Han & Lee, 2012; Kissick, 2014; McCauley–Bowstead, 2018; Lee et al, 2020).

<Table.2> Design elements, attributes & images that are popularly categorized as Masculine and Feminine (DeLong, 1987; Entwistle, 2000; Bolich, 2007; Han & Lee, 2012; Kissick, 2014; McCauley-Bowstead, 2018; Lee et al, 2020):

	Design elements and attributes conventionally categorized as Masculine	Design elements and attributes conventionally categorized as Feminine
Silhouette	Emphasis on linear; Y- or H-silhouette; exaggeration on broad shoulders; wide and large; clear-cut silhouette; clearly bifurcated garments - legs in trousers.	Emphasis on curves; X-silhouette, tight waist; skinny; pipes; tight; soft-edge; dropped, narrow shoulders; explicit showing of bare legs such as hotpants; hiding of bifurcated legs through skirts.
Detail	Small and simple details, generally limited to seams and darts; not many decorative details; occasionally dominant, bold, directed, thick line; straight linear neckline, lapel and sleeves (linear details); continuous straight lines.	Much decorative detailing through seams, darts, gathers, etc.; curvilinear decoration(s) on neckline, collar, sleeves; décolletage to emphasize throat, breasts, back, and shoulders; lightweight lines; bonnets, veils, trains; ruffle, flounce, embroidery, beads, sequins, ribbons, feathers, bows, eyelets, etc.
Color	Achromatic colors; dark, cold colors; colors of low-chroma; value contrast; colors reminiscent of sooty smoke from factory	Bright; colors of high-chroma; colorful; pale tones; pastel shades; warm colors; tints of warm or cool hues, etc.
Fabric	Thick material; not see-through; non-shiny; matt; homogeneous surface (usually using one type of fabric); heavy fabric; coarse textured fabric.	See-through; smooth; shiny; lustrous; flexible and thin; minute variations; often printed and/or blurred; silk, velvet, lace, chiffon, organza, fishnets, fur, quilting, etc.
Pattern	Generally, not much emphasis on decorative pattern; hardly any pattern, or stripes at the most usually.	Colorful or flamboyant patterns, allover; motifs from nature or abstract ones; vegetal, floral, animal prints, curvilinear geometry; bold or minute motifs in many numbers.
Accessories	Not much emphasis on accessories; limited to simple, undecorated ones such as cufflinks, watch, etc.; backpack; necktie; sunglasses; dark shoes without decorations	Ornamental scarves, jewelry, precious stones, pearls, bags, purse, socks, shoes, heels, sandals, uggs, etc., of various colors, patterns, and/or with extra details of decoration.
Images	Strong, virile, decisive, success, rigid, unkempt, stiff, corpulent, serious, active, somber, sober, aggressive, clothing to enhance social status. Imply a public role. For practicality.	Delicate, soft, voluptuous, fleshy, slender, thin, fragile, round, self-indulgent, frivolous, foppish, garish, bright, fashion to make women more sexually attractive. Decorative. Imply an individual private identity.

2.1.3. Various Terms & Instances of Feminine Fashion Appearing in Menswear History up to 2015

In this section, subversive instances and terms of “feminine” fashion appearing in menswear history since the 20th century (the end of the Victorian era) will be discussed and clarified, as it was at the end of the 19th century that the binary between “masculine” and “feminine” fashion became the most discrete (Entwistle, 2000). Thus, it will look at the sporadic changes in menswear in the first–half and the second–half of the 20th century, but particularly focusing on the big change in the 2000s and prior to 2015, in order to compare with what is happening since 2015S/S. The 2000s was an important period as more men started to adopt colorful fashion with the turn of the millennium. Therefore, this period would make a good comparison.

It is important to note first however, that before the French Revolution, there were prominent men, such as the French aristocracy and King Louis XVI (fig.1a), who kept a powerful image, yet adopted ‘an even more feminized style’ (Brandes, 2000: 139). They indulged themselves in flamboyant fashion: ‘rich in lace, curls,scented, powdered...they explicitly tried to imitate la femme’ (Ibid). Although Brandes has called these men as ‘feminized’, ‘imitating women’, at the time these ostentatious design elements were not regarded as feminine but used as a means to parade wealth and status. This is supported by Flügel and Entwistle’s argument that historically, men have ‘always had a taste and natural drive for exhibitionism and decorative fashion’, but since they have been suppressed from the Victorian era, modern men have been seeking compensation and are doing so by ‘displacing this desire to “show off” onto other things’ such as high–tech gadgets (Entwistle, 2000; Lee et al, 2020). Hence, the issue is more about how one or the society perceives such design elements and that such perceptions are always open to change.

In the first half of the 20th century, there was a small group of young British aesthetes who had a love for cross–dressing, especially in

the 1920s. Led by the artist photographer Cecil Beaton, these delicate, bohemian young men ‘put on lavish, ostentatious displays of effeminacy’ and ‘challenged’ the overwhelming conformity of British society at the time (Mauriès, 2017: 87). These men were ‘provocative’, making ‘strenuous efforts to defy...all the rules that applied to his sex’ (Ibid). As can be seen from fig.1b, slender Cecil Beaton shows off his medieval robe made of lustrous fabric, with sparkling jewels to highlight his face. However, evidently, these looks were not choices that were aimed to set an example or a trend, but for these few artists to subvert and protest against the society.



Fig.1a Callet, 1781
Portrait of Louis XVI



Fig.1b Cecil Beaton,
c.1925



Fig.1c Michael Fish,
1967



Fig.1d Mick Jagger,
1969

Unfortunately, because of the two World Wars in the 1910s, 1930s–40s, there was not much change in menswear. It was not until the 1960s that there was a radical discontinuity; this came from the whole series of minority people’s movements, i.e. second–wave feminism, student protests, gay liberation, civil rights, and rising conflicts around racism (Edwards, 1997: 102). The romanticism and utopianism of these movements challenged establishment values and led to a re–evaluation of ideas in fashion, giving birth to the ‘Peacock Revolution’ (Mauriès, 2017: 116). Coined by the Esquire columnist, George Frazier, the term is used to describe the styles from London’s young Carnaby Street designers, especially Michael Fish, who promised to restore ‘the lost glory of flamboyant menswear’ (Paoletti, 2015: 59). There was a sudden burst of choices for men, ranging from ‘Romantic revival (velvet jackets, flowing shirts, lace cravats,

brocade waistcoats) to a pastiche of styles borrowed from Africa and Asia (flounced tunics, multi-colored silk shirts, bold prints)' (Ibid.; Mauriès, 2017: 116). As fig.1c shows, Mr. Fish is wearing a pink Nehru-style jacket in silk with beaded decorations, and bright purple roll-neck. Indeed, extended color palettes, softer fabrics and a profusion of decorative details demonstrated a direct subversion against the drabness of menswear (Paoletti, 2015: 59). Mr. Fish created a new kind of elegance, that is 'effete and flamboyant', and this is inextricably linked with rock icons such as Mick Jagger; he even designed the famous Baroque court dress inspired, white voile tunic with ribbons and flounces, worn by Mick Jagger at the Hyde Park concert in 1969 (fig.1d) (Mauriès, 2017: 116).

However, the Peacock Revolution and Mr. Fish were reserved only for a limited clientele, especially for the icons of subversive pop culture; it privileged only a few of the white, heterosexual, upper-class men and the reality was that many men, even young men did not really succumb to this trend, as they were burdened by the 'too feminine' looks (Hrynyk, 2015: 83). Nevertheless, they did herald a much more contemporary approach to fashion, as Mauriès (2017: 117) has emphasized, seen in today's designers such as Alessandro Michele for Gucci.

The 1960s menswear were also influenced by the hippie culture. They had a color palette influenced by acid phantasmagoria (fig.2a); wore long, silky flowing skirts and trousers for both men and women alike, sharing each other's clothes; and both sexes grew their hair long (Eldridge, 2013: 30). Thus, they almost merged into one another, for which scholars have often used the term 'unisex movement' as a subculture; hippie style indeed tried to conceal and subvert gender differences by showing 'a masquerade of equality for all, obscuring the identification of sex' (Arvanitidou, 2013; Schulte, 2016: 22). However, the youth hippie culture's protesting and subversive nature meant that it was a direct challenge against hegemonic masculinity, and thus was limited in reaching a wider general male public.

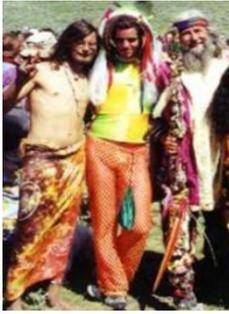


Fig.2a Hippies, 60s



Fig.2b Bowie,1970

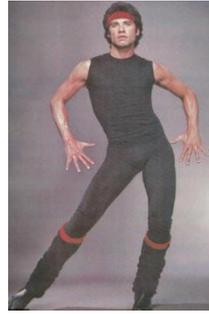


Fig.2c John Travolta,1977



Fig.2d Sears Catalog 74

In the 70s', androgyny fashion with even more unclear gender identities were quintessentially represented by rebellious rock and pop icons like Jimi Hendrix and David Bowie. Hendrix wore colorful blouses and high heels often, and Bowie celebrated 'outrageous sexuality and created his alter ego, Ziggy Stardust in 1972' (Eldridge, 2013: 31). Bowie had been introduced a year earlier to the underground New York culture, where men wore blouses, women's makeup, crochet dresses with tights, and he hoped to introduce this in England (Ibid). He claimed that he wanted to 'embrace an alternate reality' (Powers, 1997). He was also seen often in 'a vulnerable pose' that evoked 'a strong feminine feel' in his dress (Eldridge, 2013: 31). Fig.2b shows Bowie in such pose, wearing a silk drapery dress with flamboyant patterns and long curly hair. Therefore, the term androgyny has even today that connotation of 'strong fusion of masculine and feminine features to make their gender appear much ambiguous' to rebel against the gender norms (Lee et al, 2020).

Indeed, Hendrix, as representing black, ethnically marginalized masculinity and Bowie, as bisexual, sexually marginalized masculinity were all rebelling against the norms and hegemonic masculinity. Even John Travolta, known for the androgynous male in *Saturday Night Fever* (1977), represented working class youth in counter-culture disco era of the 70s (Rehling, 2010). He was daring enough to wear tight leggings and legwarmers (fig.2c), which were strictly women's fashion at the time. Thus, his role, as an economically marginalized man, was also rebelling against the hegemonic masculinity.

However, it is shocking to know that these marginalized people were also exploited at the same time by the hegemonic masculinity. It was only the working class youths, men with ambiguous sexual identities and African models that appeared on mainstream catalogs to display the most colorful or exotic styles at the time (Paoletti, 2015: 86). Thus, fashion that were subversive against the norm were thought of largely as something to be observed and promoted as something only the subordinated masculinities would wear (fig.2d).

The unisex and androgynous movements in the 60s/70s were followed by the rather gender defined fashions of the 80s, with boxy, padded suits back in fashion for men (Schulte, 2016:23). However, there were exceptions and the rise of avant-garde designers like Jean Paul Gaultier pioneered in bringing a new level to androgynous fashion for men (fig.3a). In 1983 and 1984, he offered a collection of striking variations on the theme of 'the objectified male' and his male models wore skirts and walked like their female models (Mauriès, 2017: 120). His 'One Wardrobe for Two' collection in 1985 even featured 'backless tops, plunging necklines, figure-hugging fabrics, the use of voile and lace' (Ibid). He was highlighting seductiveness in an erotically charged way, claiming men can also be "a-looked-at-gender" (Edwards, 1997:102). Gaultier's early work was so 'ground-breaking', 'humorous' and 'subversive' that many examples are housed in museums permanently (Baker, 2015).

This style by Gaultier has often been called 'punk', and is linked with subcultural icons at the time such as Boy George (fig.3b) and Leigh Bowery (fig.3c). They all wore strong, almost masquerade make-up, sequins, jewels, elaborate hair and wigs. These fashions have often been described as 'otherworldly', 'transcending the existing concept of sexuality', and 'worn by a third sex' (Fischer, 2018; Lee et al, 2020). Their 'perverse and daring' fashions are created 'to stun, provoke and dismay us'; and they are 'signs of licensed play, not of serious action' (Hollander, 2000: 153). Indeed, here these androgynous fashions are engaged by relatively 'powerless people',

who are unharmed performers and allowed to make extreme claims that may cause strong personal responses but have no serious official prominence (Ibid). Because of their extreme fashion, this has often been associated with cross-dressing, drag and transvestism (Ibid: 154; 162). Thus, again, because of these androgynous fashions' rather shocking implications they were again not widely accepted.



Fig.3a Jean Paul Gaultier, 1983



Fig.3b Boy George, 1980s, for his concert



Fig.3c Leigh Bowery, 1985, for his club Taboo

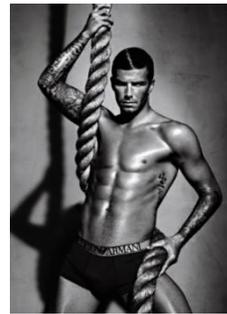


Fig.3d Beckham, 2009 Armani ad

During the 1990s and 2000s, metrosexuals emerged but this term had mistakenly taken on some “feminine” connotations for their interest in fashion, since the acts of shopping and preening were still regarded as feminine (Lee et al, 2020). True, they did challenge and undercut the Victorian and Post-Victorian idea of masculinity (the display of restraint in a disciplined body), in being narcissistic and self-conscious (Craik, 1994; Edwards, 1997: 45), but metrosexuals turned out to be just another form of reconstructed hegemonic masculinity, centered on consumption naturally along with the changes in society and era. In fact, metrosexuals do not mean that they choose feminine fashion specifically; most researchers define them with English or American middle-class, urban Caucasian men, who link personal appearance, and grooming, to career success and consumer culture (Pompper, 2010; Lee et al, 2020). Thus, they now simply mean ‘well-dressed’ men with a lot of money to spend. Metrosexuals are best represented by David Beckham, who conspicuously grooms and shows off his narcissistic looks and has close ties with many luxury brands (fig.3d).

Compared to the 20th century androgynous fashions, the 2000s was marked by crosssexual fashion, which became relatively more adopted beyond subcultures by both men in the West and Asia (Lee et al, 2020). They adopted feminine design elements not to radically transform how they look but to claim confidence as a fashion-conscious man. Thus, this crosssexual fashion had the possibility to spread to a wider male public compared to androgynous fashion (Lee et al, 2020). Here, the characteristics of the crosssexual fashion prior to 2015 will be discussed in detail, as they will make good points of comparison with the empirical analysis in Chap.3.

Firstly, this fashion was characterized foremost by its skinny silhouette, tightly fitted to the body (“men’s skinnism”). Hidden curves were forced on men so that a thin, X-line waist, round hips and narrow shoulders were emphasized (Davis, 2011). ‘Effeminate images’ were conveyed mainly through highlighting this silhouette, rather than using other design elements. This trend was due to Hedi Slimane, who designed trousers with a leg-opening of 17cm in diameter (fig.4a) (Woolf, 2016). Influenced by Slimane, other brands also experimented with this ‘feminine’ silhouette; Dries van Noten used a tight, knitted bolero cardigan to give a curvy shoulder and waistline, and Paul Smith also exploited tight jackets (fig.4b).



Fig.4a Dior
Homme, 2005S/S



Fig.4b Paul
Smith, 2008F/W



Fig.4c Issey
Miyake, 2005F/W



Fig.4d Gucci,
2006F/W

In terms of feminine decorative details, ruffles, flounces, embroideries, ribbons, sequins, and beads were used, however, with suits, they were largely adopted as small simple points of decorative

emphasis (An, 2007). For instance, small cross-stitches on parts of suits' jacket seams were placed, rather than embellishing the whole in order to avoid extravagant attention (fig.4c). With casualwear, tightly fitted lace was used to draw attention to a skinny waistline (Kim & Kwak, 2010) and at most, ample flounces, or ribbon decorations on the front chest of blouse-like shirts were designed to endow the wearer with soft, romantic images (fig.4d) (Park & Yim, 2017). Some daring details appeared like plunging necklines, and this made the males objects of sexual desire with sensual images.

As for colors, Ahn and Park (2007) argued that crosssexual fashion uses daring feminine colors such as pink, yellow and pastel tones, but it is noteworthy that 89.1% of items under research were casualwear, thus these colors were largely limited to men's cardigan, jumpers, t-shirts and running shirts (fig.5a). Investigating the suits designed at this time by global menswear brands reveals that dark cold or achromatic colors were used in the vast majority, and sometimes brown or beige was adopted (Lee et al, 2020). The use of crosssexual colors were primarily limited to dress-shirts or ties, or occasionally added as a small accent color to suits. For instance, brands like Gucci and Louis Vuitton (fig.5b) used solid suit colors of black, grey, navy or brown, with pink, purple, yellow or gold as a point accentuation.



Fig.5a Jean Paul Gaultier 2005S/S



Fig.5b Louis Vuitton, 2007S/S



Fig.5c Gucci, 2007S/S



Fig.5d D&G 2005F/W

For fabric, silks, fishnets, knits, and laces were often introduced, however, they were mainly utilized for a minute point of emphasis, or to demonstrate the thinness of the wearer (Lee et al, 2020).

Occasionally, knit fabrics or velvet were used in vests/jackets to impose a tight X-silhouette, in both casuals and suits (Kim et al, 2020). For instance, Gucci has used brightly colored knit sweaters to reveal the male models' skinny arms and waistline in his casual look (fig.5c). Dolce&Gabbana has also often paraded lustrous figure-hugging velvet suits, putting an emphasis on the model's rather skinny waist (fig.5d). Such fabrics and their usage were commented as giving men with delicate and soft mood (Morrigan, 2016).

In terms of pattern, there was relatively small emphasis on flamboyant patterns in the 2000s crosssexual fashion; in many of the studies, patterns were either briefly mentioned regarding simple floral, paisley or dot patterns, or excluded from analysis altogether (Kim & Kwak, 2010). In some cases, Dior Homme (fig.6a), for instance, has used black dots on white jacket to show dalmatian-like fur patterns, but this type of pattern was not relatively common. As can be seen from Ahn & Park's study (2007), only 10% of the crosssexual fashion items under research had simple floral or animal patterns, and over 63% of them were non-patterns. Especially on suits, patterns were primarily limited to plain stripes such as dots in achromatic, dark or cold colors (fig.6b) (Lee, 2010; Lee et al, 2020).



Fig.6a Dior
Homme 2005F/W



Fig.6b D&G
2006S/S



Fig.6c Alexander
McQueen, 2006F/W



Fig.6d Louis
Vuitton, 2007S/S

Regarding accessories, a high-waist leather (fig.6c) or ribbon belt to tighten the waist was often used on blouses, jackets or even on high-waist trousers, as shown by Alexander McQueen and Dries van Noten (Ibid). In order to give 'a feminine mood', drop-style earrings,

chokers and pendants were used with plunging neckline shirts (Lee, 2006). There were also uses of big bags, bandanas, and long scarves in casualwear. However, with suits, the use of ‘feminine’ accessories was a lot more limited, and included relatively inconspicuous scarves, charm bracelets and/or necklaces in small chains or rather plain colors, as demonstrated by Louis Vuitton (fig.6d) (Lee et al, 2020).

Finally, with coordination, experiments were tried such as mix-and-matching different colors/items, even going as far as using cross-over coordination. For example, Jean Paul Gaultier and Dries van Noten used flannel skirt to do a cross-over with solid black male cardigan and a brightly colored shirt (fig.7a). However, these unexpected styles were generally experimented more with casualwear. Another instance of this is that some 2000s men enjoyed ‘layering look’ of differently colored polo t-shirts with popping collar. They wore these usually with skinny jeans and decorative chains. Men also followed one-color or one-fabric coordination such as the all-bright blue denim look, as shown by Givenchy (fig.7b). In comparison, suits coordination with ‘feminine’ design elements was more restrained. The tight skinny look with minutely patterned shirt shown by Saint Laurent (fig.7c) is toned down and unified with neutral tone-on-tone colors. Thus, suits were generally unified through one colour/tone or one fabric coordination, to stay formal.



Fig.7a Dries van Noten, 2005S/S



Fig.7b Givenchy, 2006F/W



Fig.7c Saint Laurent, 2007S/S



Fig.7d George Clooney, 2000s, ubersexual, GQ

It is noteworthy that the crosssexual fashion in the 2000s (and the

non-conforming gender appearance in the 20th century also) was limited to 'extreme youth' only; the tendency of male body to resemble female one in his late maturity was still regarded ridiculous and deplorable (Hollander, 2000: 154). In addition, crosssexual fashion largely occurred through casualwear only, as it had more freedom for licensed play in contrast to suits, which was still considered a major symbol of hegemonic masculinity.

Finally, studies on crosssexual fashion claimed collectively that such fashion made men show a 'romantic, sensual, dainty, elegant, or soft image' (Lee et al, 2020). However, these studies and many crosssexual men at the time have still unconsciously fallen into binary interpretive frameworks (Ibid). They have understood such fashion as simply giving men limited images traditionally related to women, presuming only a limited range of interpretations are to be associated. This is not surprising given how Hedi Slimane also claimed that he had created the skinny silhouette, inspired by the stereotypical look of gay men (Manning, 2015). Thus, it was ultimately confronting still the dominating power of hegemonic masculinity; this confrontation, along with crosssexual fashion's obsession with tight, skinny silhouettes, fundamentally limited the trend's widespread adoption.

Overall, the terms that were used such as 'androgynous' in the 20th century for men have kept too strong a connotation still to involve heterosexual or cis-male men (Lee et al, 2020). This was because, as seen, such radical fashion was a direct challenge against hegemonic masculinity. In order to disrupt or subvert this hegemonic masculinity, pop icons, artists, performers, gender minorities from subcultures all the more tried to exhibit rather shocking fashion, thus making it difficult for general male consumers to follow. In comparison, metrosexuals were not really a challenge against hegemonic masculinity, but in fact, a metamorphosed form to make hegemonic masculinity stronger, as they meant rich white men who had money to spend. Finally, with the crosssexual fashion in the 2000s, which took on a less radical look relatively to androgynous

fashion, more men were able to try it and this meant that the phenomenon was less about gender subversion and power struggle, and more about issue of men's individual taste. However, ultimately, this phenomenon was somewhat still a challenge against the hegemonic masculinity because this fashion was nevertheless interpreted by the vast majority and even academic scholarship as conveying only "feminine" visual images and identities.

Interestingly, since 2015, unprecedented changes are taking place in men's fashion globally, where many more men are now skillfully 're-appropriating the codes of a womenswear wardrobe' (Compain, 2016) to express whatever image of themselves they desire. There are more daring designs, as well as less radical, cleverly subtle ones so that men can truly select a look freely, as it shall be examined in Chap.3. This is so that men can choose according to their liking and taste, regardless of whether they are heterosexual, gay, or gender-bending. This new fashion phenomenon occurs surprisingly not only in casuals, but in suits widely also. Suits had up to now been a key symbol of hegemonic masculinity, which we shall now turn to.

2.2. Men's Suits

This section will carry out literary research on men's suits since its beginning and up to 2015, looking especially at its definition, origin, and development. It will also examine suit's norms, sartorial image, and finally, few instances of feminine or novel design elements appearing in men's suits before 2015, in order to compare with the changes happening on menswear runways recently.

2.2.1. Definition & History

The term 'suit' first appeared in the 17th century and has its origin from the Latin word 'squit'; the French had borrowed this to make it into the word "suivre/suite" to mean "follow", and then it became 'suit' in English (Antongiavanni, 2006; 73). Thus, a 'suit's definition is 'a set' of matching garments, usually characterized by a long-sleeved, buttoned jacket with lapels, a sleeveless waistcoat worn underneath (if 3-piece), and long trousers (Breward, 2016; 15).

The 17th century suit was still an ornate outfit with deep associations of aristocratic expense and effeminacy such as bright colors and ribbon decorations. However, it was in this century that some sort of loose-fitting buttoned coat and a waistcoat became the most chosen garments by men, and their breeches have lost all their padding, and became low-slung, loose and soft (fig.8a) (Hollander, 1995: 63). Soft shirt collars and cuffs also replaced stiff, hard ruffs, and for the first time some kind of cravat went around the neck (Ibid.) Thus, the abstract 'tripartite envelope' was now born. Then, throughout the 18th century, due to the rise of merchants and professional classes especially in Protestant countries, suits gradually became simpler. A dark, plain suit, styled with modest white linen reasserted its old associations with clerical intelligence, probity and integrity. At the same time, simple but thick textures, including wool, leather and plenty of buttons, suggested a strong, military virility (fig.8b) (Ibid: 79). Towards the late 18th century, with the Industrial Revolution

and Neo-classicism putting reason, progress, and beauty of line as the highest ideals, this key point in history established further the austerity in menswear design (Finkelstein, 1991; Edwards, 1997: 18).



Fig.8a Men's suit in 17th c



Fig.8b Men's suit in 18th c



Fig.8c Dandy, first half of 19th c



Fig.8d Lounge suit, late 19th c

By the first half of the 19th century, the 3-piece suit exercised its role as a critical marker of gender and now emphasis was also placed on the fabrication and fit of the shirt as a meaningful garment to convey notions of masculinity (Rangel, 2020: 168). This emphasis intensified due to the efforts of the English dandy George Brummel (1778–1840), who linked the importance of the clean, white dress-shirt with masculine ideals of responsibility and respectability (Ibid). High-starched collars were also crucial in exhibiting male superiority and dominance by highlighting the upward slope of the head and the gaze of the eyes (Ibid.). From around 1815, trousers had largely replaced the pantaloons, and men's arms and legs became clad in smooth cylinders of yielding fabric, but it still did not have to be made of the same fabric for trousers and coat (Hollander, 1995:101). Thus, the upper-class fashion introduced by dandies became comprised of tight-fitting, somber colored (black, brown, sometimes dark green or blue) tailcoat with non-matching (usually pale) pants, waistcoat, white shirt, cravat and long boots (fig.8c) (Ibid: 93). This style suited to demands of English aristocrats who required dress appropriate for commercial transactions and leisured display expected of gentlemen in town (Breward, 2016; 162).

In the late 19th century, formal daytime wear for urban gentlemen

(dukes, solicitors, businessmen or politicians) was still made using different cloth for coat and pants (Hollander, 1995: 108). Instead, what one now calls 'suit', that is all parts made of a single fabric, in a combination of short, loose-fitted jacket, high waistcoat, and tapered trousers, have begun to appear by the 1880s (Breward, 2016: 52). This combination was called the lounge suit (fig.8d), but this was emphatically informal; it was intended for leisured sport, country life or for very private city use, to be worn only at home among intimates (Hollander, 1995: 109). It was made of a soft tweedy or checked material with a rather easy coat to match; its relatively rough texture, lighter brownish color and one-fabric form gave a kind of cozy ensemble of garments to have a relaxing effect on the wearer (Ibid). A man might travel in this comfortable suit to the seaside, but it was not acceptable to wear for his work, church nor formal events (Ibid). From this, it can be argued that menswear history has developed to provide more and more comfort to men as time went on, since these 'informal' lounge suits would later on become 'formal' garments.

In the early 20th century, King Edward VII (r.1901-1910)'s suit style became in fashion, which included the Norfolk suit (fig.9a) for sportswear. This suit involved wearing knickerbockers, trousers that just came down below the knee, and a buttoned-jacket with a shallow v-zone (Lee, 2010: 16). He pursued a practical and elegant style, especially preferring a look that emphasized his broad chest to look dignified and affluent. By now, frock coats were also in decline, as the morning coat was favored instead on relatively formal occasions. Lounge suits were beginning to be seen outside its original TPO, gradually becoming a garment to be worn in town. In America, the informal 'sack suit' (fig.9b), which takes the silhouette of lounge suits, became in vogue. It had a very loose-fit, with no darts. With the turn of the new century, menswear retail magnates such as Austin Reed (founded 1900) advertised and established a common understanding of these suits as the symbol of a healthy and respectable masculinity among the public (Breward, 2016: 61).

By 1910s, scientific advancements allowed the development of ready-to-wear suit industry. Modernism, which puts importance on “the universal idea and style” coincided with the ideal of male suits, and thus, suits’ popularity rose greatly, promoted by mass production (fig.9c) (Bang, 2009: 23). Since lounge suits were easier to produce and more comfortable to wear, this became accepted now even for business-wear in both Europe and America. Its sleeker form and lighter weight were a natural complement to the modern male’s fit physique (Breward, 2016: 29). Furthermore, with the influence of sport, the silhouette of the suit became more and more a tapered shape of an inverted triangle, with padding on the shoulders.



Fig.9a Norfolk suit, early 20th c



Fig.9b Sack Suit Early 20thc, 1900s



Fig.9c Mass produced suit, 1910s



Fig.9d Jazz suit 1920s

The 1920s was called the Jazz Age and urban metropolises with new trends based on music and Broadway started to emerge (Baek, 2014:11). Materialism and excessive luxury consumption were prevalent. With this backdrop, the jazz suit (fig.9d) became popular especially in Chicago and New York between 1919 and 1923. It usually consisted of a single-breasted jacket (occasionally double-breasted ones also) with a natural-shoulder silhouette, maintaining a tight-fit from the chest to the waist, but slightly spreading from the waist to the hem of the jacket (Ibid). The pants were straight and relatively narrow, with now pleats on the front and folded cuffs at the hem, to give a classic shape. They were worn at very high-waist throughout the 1920s and this remained in fashion until the 1940s. This Jazz Age before the World War II also promoted men to

incorporate colors such as town browns, sand–dune, rustic greens into their wardrobes, and also to try on less popular shades like pink, and gold(Flusser,2002: 19). Briefly in the UK, Oxford bag suits (fig.10a) rose in popularity from 1924 among young college men. A natural–shoulder jacket that fitted the chest was matched with wide legged trousers that had an opening as large as 23 inches each(Baek, 2014: 12). This was a form of peaceful youth demonstration among college students to wear what they want against the normative look endorsed by older males. Thus, because it was against the hegemonic masculinity then, the fashion only lasted very shortly.

Because of the Great Depression and World War II, the 1930s marked a period where suits were expressed as more conservative, and more mature expressions of masculinity became popular(Lee, 2010:18). The influence of short uniforms during the war also meant that men’s suit jackets became somewhat shorter. Furthermore, the shortage of dye in markets meant that exaggerated style disappeared, and fabric colors went back to purely adopting practical shades of black, brown and gray(Bang, 2009: 25). Around this time, the Crown Prince of Windsor’s visit to America drove the ‘English draped suit’(fig.10b) to be in vogue; Hollywood actors such as Fred Astaire and Clark Gable promoted this trend even further(Lee, 2010:19). The jacket shape portrayed wide shoulders, and the volume of the chest was further emphasized by narrowing down the fit from high–waist to hip and by making the sleeves narrow. This conveyed a lean but sturdy look.



Fig.10a Oxford bag suit, 1924



Fig.10b English draped suit, 1930s



Fig.10c The gray flannel suit, 1940/50s



Fig.10d Bold style, 1940/50s

During the post-war period of the 1940s and 50s, male suit fashion became even more intensely sober, rigid and purposefully reticent (Hollander, 1995:156). The suit became standardized and streamlined, giving birth to the 'gray flannel suit'(fig.10c); straight single-breasted jackets without an indication of waistline were favored over double-breasted ones. The image of the man in 'gray flannel suit' style is one of the most enduring icons of masculinity: the organization man, struggling to maintain his identity while conforming to professional standards(Paoletti, 2015: 62). Similar to this style, the Bold style(fig.10d) was also in trend from 1949. This look featured a wide shouldered jacket with wide lapels; a shirt with wide collars also; and finally with a bold-stripe patterned tie. The trousers had deep folds on the front and thick cuffs(Baek, 2014: 13).

Through the 1950s, the US became the most affluent country, and thus, the Ivy League students and their advancement into the society as businessmen made them the key male fashion consumers globally. The Ivy League look(fig.11a) was characterized by a 3-button, single-breasted jacket with natural shoulders, un-darted fronts, flap pockets, center vent and plain-front trousers(Flusser, 2002; 81). Its shape was overall undifferentiated and unsexy, providing the wearer 'a soft-spoken, calculated anonymity', with hardly any individuality (Ibid) but to emphasize smartness. At the same time, the continental style(fig.11b) was made, which revolved around Italian fashion. This style had a severity of line consisting of high squarish shoulders and tight-waist, cutting close through the chest and hips(Ibid.). The coat was generally single-breasted with high notched collars and flapless pockets(Ibid.) The pants were also figure-hugging. Therefore, the continental style gave men a wedge-like torso and lean(Ibid.).

In early 1960s, the dominant business wear consisted of a white shirt, a single-breasted suit in solid dark neutral color(black, gray, or navy) and a rep tie (diagonal stripes)(Paoletti, 2015:66). However, with the Peacock revolution from 1964, new options in young men's suit became apparent, arranging from vivid colors, patterns to youthful,

effeminate X-silhouettes. Even Playboy, a quintessential male magazine, which distributes ideals of normative masculinity, featured this new style in the September 1966 volume. It showed a photo of two urban guys in American adaptations of English mod attire: one wearing ‘a herringbone tweed double-breasted jacket with epaulets, a cotton floral shirt with...a polka-dot tie’ and the other ‘a 3-piece suit with a double-breasted short vest cut straight across and a wide paisley tie in green and blue’ (Paoletti, 2015: 69). Thus, from the late 1960s, double-breasted jackets, narrow trousers, and colorful dress-shirts and ties (fig.11c) were in vogue, which somewhat broadened the definition of masculinity.



Fig.11a Ivy League look, 1950s Fig.11b Continental style, 1950s Fig.11c Peacock suit, 1960s. Fig.11d Return to ‘quieter elegance’ of the olden days suit, 1970s

By the 1970s, menswear press had been predicting the end of the peacock revolution; there was a return to a ‘quieter elegance of the olden days’ with the release of films such as *Godfather*(1972), the death of the once fashion icon, Duke of Windsor(1973) and the shock of oil crisis and inflation(1973) (Paoletti, 2015: 84). Men generally wore a boxy, two button, single-breasted jacket with darts to fit the waist, wide notched lapels, and a broad tie (fig.11d). Suit pants went from fitting ones with slight flare, to baggy ones through the decade. Overall, the color palette of these suits became fairly neutral (Bang, 2009:24). The Esquire magazine advised men in 1974: “Gentlemen should look like Gentlemen, not bougainvilleas (pink flowers)” (Paoletti, 2015: 84). Even resort clothing went back to classics of white linen suits (Ibid.). In 1977, the waist-coat returned, and this

3-piece style became popular because of disco culture and the film *Saturday Night Fever*. However, the suit's color palette still remained overall neutral, as can be seen by Travolta's famous suit in the film.

In the 1980s, the post-modernist and androgynous culture by now had become prevalent in the high-fashion world due to pop culture. However strictly speaking, if one examines images of just male suits in the 80s' *Vogue* magazine volumes, there is still no tendency of feminization, in contrast to casualwear (Bang, 2009). This surge in more formal or work-related dress occurred because of the aspirational Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher's policies, recession, and unemployment at the time (Edwards, 2002: 16).

Therefore, the 80s' was marked by 'power-dressing' suits (fig.12a) with the use of excessive shoulder paddings to make an inverted triangle Y- or boxy H- silhouette (sometimes with a slight pinch in the waist). This conveyed a heroic, authoritative, wealthy, and powerful look where the suit was reinvested with an intensely masculine charge, especially with the use of center deep V-gorge and wide shoulders in the jacket (Edwards, 2002: 27). Jackets usually covered the man's hips, with single & double breasted, and notched & peaked lapels, used in same proportions respectively (Bang, 2009; 47). Suit pants were very spacious also and covering the man's shoes. The overall color palette remained achromatic, navy, brown or beige, appearing as non-patterned solid color suits, and at the most pinstripes. Typical materials for suits such as flannel, gabardine, wool and cotton were still used generally. However, designers like Giorgio Armani and Dolce&Gabbana newly made these materials into softer ones (fig.12b) in the late 80s and early 90s, to fit men's muscular, burly physique. This was to reflect the motion of their body and the ideal masculinity of the era. This was in line with functionalism at the time, being relatively simpler and more modern.

It was well into the 1990s that men started to discard power suits and instead opt for slimmer, softer and more delicate tailored outfit with sloping down shoulders (fig.12c). The mass media called these

men “New Men” and portrayed them in a gentler look (Bang, 2009: 51). Y- and H- silhouettes were still prevalent, but they became less baggy and more fitting, as well as shoulder pads being no longer excessive, compared to the previous decade. The number of buttons on jackets increased also, and thus the length of lapels was shortened, but the proportion of notched and peaked lapels used remained the same. The jackets still generally covered hip, and the pants’ standard length covered shoes as before. However, the pants were a lot slimmer by now with a pleat in the middle on each leg and no cuffs at the end, with a few exceptions of some novel suits like Comme des Garçons’ exaggerated baggy suit pants (Watamanuk, 2019).



Fig.12a Power suits, 1980s



Fig.12b Armani suit with softer material, 1992S/S



Fig.12c 1990s suit Helmut Lang, 1998S/S



Fig.12d Gucci 1995F/W

Although the majority of these 90s’ suit colors stayed achromatic, navy or brown, other colors began to appear. In the 80s, there were hardly any warm or pastel color suits, however, over 3% of the men’s suits shown in the 90s’ *Vogue* magazine portrayed such colors including red, yellow, purple, and pink (fig.12d) (Bang, 2009: 52). These colors were in general adopted as a solid color with non-pattern. In terms of fabric, it stayed similar to that of the 1980s, but by now some designers began to explore ‘feminine materials’ from time to time. For example, silk, jacquard, velvet, which had been solely limited to women’s suits before, started to be used partially in men’s suits to give a gloss effect (Kim Heesun, 1999). Finally, 3-piece suits enjoyed their last popularity during this decade, and usually men would wear a colorful vest such as red inside a somber colored suit, to give an accent in men’s style coordination.

In the 2000s, due to the popularity of crosssexual fashion, there was a slight trend of feminization in male suits, but this was largely through the slim, elongated fit or the tightly pinched X-silhouette (fig. 13a) (Lee et al, 2020). Thus, single-breasted jackets, with basic shoulder padding, were much preferred and double-breasted ones went out of fashion. Pleats in suit-pants almost disappeared in order to tightly-fit the legs, and pants also became relatively low-rise like skinny jeans. However, still a good number of conventional suits had silhouettes of Y or H, to meet the needs of larger male audience. Furthermore, the fact that 98% of men's suits shown in the 2000s *Vogue* magazine volumes had shoulder-pads still (although more natural now); that 96% still adopted peaked or notched lapels; and that the majority lengths of jacket and pants were not largely changed (jackets covering the hip and pants covering the shoes), demonstrates the garment still adhered mostly to suits' classic design elements (Bang, 2009: 58). There were a few exceptions though such as cropped pants to reveal ankles or even more rare, short pants that came up to knees, as seen in Thom Browne's 2007S/S collection (fig. 13b). In addition, details such as frill, ribbon and trimming decoration were sometimes used as a small accent on jackets or shirts, and this added "feminine mood to the suits in modesty" (Lee, 2006).

Surprisingly, in terms of color, suits' palette became more achromatic or navy again compared to the previous decade (Less than 2% belonged to the warm color range in the 2000s, Lee et al, 2020). This was due to the development of casualwear, which pushed suits to be used for more limited TPOs. However, a few designers did try to break away from the existing dull masculine image in suits by using brighter tones of yellow or pink as an accent color on some jackets, shirts and ties (Lee, 2006). Regarding pattern, there was not a big emphasis on them in suits due to the influence of minimalism; most suits used non-patterned materials and a few times stripes, checks or at most geometric patterns were seen (Bang, 2009: 59).

The use of "feminine materials" such as silk became relatively

common by the 2000s, but it was still largely limited to point decoration in suits. Even for the fabric of innerwear, women enjoyed a wide range of variety from shirts to see-through blouses, however, there was no significant change in men’s innerwear; the vast majority still continued to wear dress-shirts or turtlenecks inside their suit, except for minor decorative points occasionally (Lee, 2010). Some design houses like Zegna focused on developing functional fabrics for their suits; Zegna famously produced ‘Superior High Torsion Yarn’ to reduce creases significantly (fig.13c) (Standen, 2008).



Fig.13a Dior Homme, 2007F/W



Fig.13b Thom Browne, 2007S/S



Fig.13c Ermenegildo Zegna, 2009S/S



Fig.13d Versace 2013F/W

Finally, looking at some noticeable changes in suit from 2010 to 2015, pattern started to appear more, but largely restricted to neutral geometric patterns such as stripe, tartan check, hound’s tooth, herring bone, glen check and windowpane check (fig.13d) (Ahn&Joo, 2016). Furthermore, some uses of chromatic colors began to increase; especially around palettes of purple-blue, yellow-red, yellow and green, used particularly for accent colors (Park, 2015). On the other hand, the color of pants showed overwhelmingly achromatic colors, although by now their length ranged from cropped ones to those long ones which covered the shoes (Cho, 2013; Park, 2015). There were only a few cases relatively where design of men’s suits changed drastically (Ibid.), and instead change was generally limited to relatively small features such as minor silhouette details, pants’ length, pocket type, hem type, and a slight increase in different colors.

Overall, there were not noticeably dramatic or innovative changes in

suits in the new millennium still, apart from the skinny silhouette, and some development in colors or improving the properties of existing fabrics used quintessentially for suits such as wool. Regarding suits' adoption of new, innovative length, color, pattern, detail elements, fabrics, accessories and style coordination, their variation was relatively insignificant. As Breward(2016) has emphasized, this was due to the more rapid, skewed development and expansion of casual items, in contrast to the suits(Lee et al, 2020). Based on the development of suits discussed above and other previous studies on suits, a table with an outline of important suit design elements have been outlined below<Table.3>. This will help the researcher in Chap. 3 to decide which elements need to be examined, especially in suits.

<Table.3> Suit Fashion design elements to be noticed and examined in this research

(De Long, 1987; Bolich, 2007; Peres, 2007; Bang, 2009; Han & Lee, 2012; Kissick, 2014; McCauley-Bowstead, 2018):

	Fashion Design Elements
Silhouette	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Straight: fitted (I-line, long & slim, long & lean, skinny); boxy (slouchy, H-line) -Curvy: Hourglass, X -Inverse triange: Y-line -Emphasis on shoulders, waist and/or curves -Wide or Dropped shoulders -Clear-cut silhouette, Clear bifurcated legs through trousers
Structural & Decorative Detail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lapel: shape; length; size; peaked, notch, or shawl -Sleeves: shape; length; size; fit -Single or Double breasted -Buttons and/or Pockets: existence or non-existence; size; location -Folds and/or Cuffs on trousers; Seams; Darts; Gathers -Bold, directed, thick, straight line as decorative detail -Shape of Neckline: linear -Ruffle, Stitches, Beads, Ribbons, Feathers, Eyelets, etc.

Colour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Hue, Brightness, Chroma -Warm color(s) vs. Cold color(s) -Tints of warm or cool hues; Pale tones; Pastel shades; Achromatic colors. -Mild Color contrasts -Colors reminiscent of sooty smoke from factories vs. Colourful
Fabric & Texture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Thickness (Thick or Flexible/Thin); Sheer or Non-sheer; Lustrous or Matt; -Homogenous (usually using one type of fabric) vs. Non-homogenous -Textured, Rough or Smooth; Big or Minute variations (printed or blurred) -Cotton, Linen, Wool, Silk, Velvet, Lace, Fishnets, Quilting, etc.
Pattern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Stripes; Herringbone; Window-pane plaid; Checks; Dots -Motifs from Abstraction or Geometrical shapes -Location & Amount of pattern on surface, on small patch or allover
Accessories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cufflinks, Watch, Backpack, Necktie, Sunglasses, Shoes, Scarves, Jewelry; Precious stones, Bags, Purse, Socks, Heels, Sandals, Ribbons, Hats, etc. -Accessories of colors, patterns and with/without extra decoration
Styling Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Piece coordination; Optional coordination; Seasonable coordination; Colour coordination; Texture coordination; Pattern coordination; Layered coordination.

2.2.2. Suits' Norm and Sartorial Image before 2015

This section discusses the suit's normative range of design elements and sartorial image before 2015, based on previous discussions.

Firstly, one can tell that over the 200 years of suits' history, the silhouettes have in general changed minorly back and forth from straight ones, either boxy (H-line, slouchy, spacious) or fitted (I-line, long & slim, skinny); Hourglass (X-line); or Inverse triangle (Y-line, narrow pants with relatively larger jackets). Also, there was generally the emphasis (or no emphasis) on shoulders through the use (or no use) of paddings, which helped to form wide (or dropped)

shoulders. Finally, a man could reveal or hide more their body such as legs, for example, showing his ankles through cropped pants; or revealing his bi-furcated legs through fitted trousers.

Secondly, with structural or decorative details in suits, lapels' type (peaked, notched, shawl), and length have changed depending on the trend. The same is true for the jacket's sleeves and their fit; whether the jacket is single- or double-breasted; and the use of buttons/pockets. The existence of seams, darts, folds and/or cuffs on pants and jackets also varied over the decades. Finally, there were minor decorative details such as shape of neckline (linear V-line); small uses of stitches, ribbons, and decorative lines (directed, straight).

Thirdly, with color, suits have mostly remained achromatic such as black, gray (i.e. colors of sooty smoke from factories), or navy, brown or beige. These colors are now a classic in many of 'men's power wardrobes' and give sophisticated or urban image (Gross et al, 2000). However, away from neutral or cold colors, there were few times when warm or pale colors, pastel shades or mild color contrasts were adopted, but by the 2000s, these colors became mostly restricted again to shirts or tie, or as a small decorative point color.

With fabric, suits are generally made in finely woven wool or wool mix, with a canvas or cotton (or synthetic cotton) interlining to provide structure. The fabric used is an important marker of the suit's quality. Sometimes silk, velvet, or fur were used but largely limited to an item like dress-shirt, waistcoat, jacket, tie or as a small decorative detail for accent. Furthermore, fabrics could be thick or thin (flexible), lustrous or matt, rough or smooth, textured or non-textured, and finally homogenous (one fabric) or non-homogenous.

In terms of pattern, suits have mostly enjoyed solid colors, but some are striped, checked, or window-pane plaided. In fact, many patterned jackets trace their origin to the leisurely pastimes of hunting and fishing in Scotland, which explains the names of these sporting-inspired designs: herringbone (chevron), houndstooth,

etc(Gross & Stone, 2002). There were also the uses of patterned shirt, with motifs from nature (e.g. floral) or from abstraction or geometrical shapes (e.g. dots, paisley). The patterned shirt gives a less formal and more casual look(Ibid). Finally, the amount of pattern on surface matters. For example, in the 2000s, when patterns were used in suits, they were limited mostly to a small patch for accent.

Accessories in suits may include cufflinks, watch, boutonnière, handkerchief, sunglasses, necktie, shoes, scarves, jewelry, briefcase, socks, hats, etc. Especially, the tie has been important and a brilliantly colored one usually asserted itself, to give a phallic emphasis to the basic ensemble(Hollander, 1995: 55). Recently, men's accessories have also started to become more colorful, although in the 2000s, they were largely worn with casualwear.

Finally, suits' coordination style remained mostly monotonous, consisting generally of jacket, pants, dress-shirt, and the waist-coat and tie being optional these days for better comfort. These items can be coordinated depending on the season (seasonable coordination, e.g. wearing a matching wool coat and hat on top in winter); or by using same/similar flannel fabric (fabric coordination); or by color (color coordination). Contrary to elaborate headwear, footwear, and other extraneous items common in womenswear, items and accessories in men's suits were integrated within the overall scheme, so that nothing sticks out, slides, or twists around(Hollander, 1995:9).

Overall, one can evidently see that there is still a 'staying power' of men's suits in that their basic form, design elements, accessories and coordination style have not changed much up to recently. Perhaps one of the reasons why the suits' basic form has been resistant to change is because even in the 2000s still, they did not really combine different uses and programs, as women freely have been doing; that is men still did not wear the sweatpants with the tuxedo jacket for instance(Barnard, 2002: 103). There was still the notion that a single suit satisfies 'a single aesthetic purpose (the correct propriety)' and demands 'a single idea to unify its visibly separate parts'(Hollander,

1995: 112), especially with the rise of casualwear. Therefore, if a man typically checks his wardrobe, the more colorful casual and activewear (e.g. sweatshirts) form striking contrasts with his business-suits.

Nevertheless, the suits' popularity has remained for more than 200 years because its sartorial image has been able to satisfy and reflect each period's ideal expression of masculinity. For example, in the 20th century (and even until now), the suit has upheld notions of hegemonic masculinity, by providing an image of rationality, respectability, physical self-control, and authority due to its unique paradox. The suit demonstrated rationality by its perfect cut and proportions, discrete colors and shapes, and by 'hiding the male body and sexed characteristics...(this body being) normative within the public sphere and...represent neutrality', thus men were able to focus on their public work (Collier, 1998; Entwistle, 2000: 174). At the same time, the suit also added masculinity and masculine sexuality by widening shoulders, chest and connecting larynx to crotch through collar and tie (Edwards, 1997: 16). This unique paradox is achieved by the suit only, hence its continued existence and appeal to men.

Furthermore, other normative images can be given by the suit such as honesty and moral strength with the use of natural material (wool), which conveys unpretentious simplicity and aesthetic purity without artifice (Hollander, 1995: 91). The dressed form of suit by men is also an 'abstraction of classical nude form', thus portraying stoicism. In addition, the suit portrays wealth, business power, success, diplomacy, and civility (Ibid: 113). A man in his suit looks serious and intellectually assertive, with his erect posture and self-possessed gaze reiterating his power over the viewer (Rangel, 2020: 171) thus, evoking expressions of hegemonic masculinity. As seen from the millions-sold book *Dress for Success* (1975; 1988) by John T. Molloy, who did an extensive research into corporate culture, men who 'dressed according to the codes of business would be more successful than those who attempted too much expression or

experimentation' (Paoletti, 2015: 84). Finally, the suit has an image of being functional as many men still do not want to wear drapery or shawls; his body must stay 'articulated', 'never swathed' with 'loose fabric' (Ibid.: 112). This image is though debatable today, as by the 2000s, the suit has gained connotations of being uncomfortable and stuffy, due to the development of casualwear.

There are also changing, or new, emerging images demonstrated by the more recent suits, in line with the multiple masculinities (which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, the analysis of contemporary men's suits). But this had already slowly begun in the late 80s/90s. The New Men, supposedly 'narcissistic', but also 'caring' males have been publicly visible, and seen to be 'as happy to hold the baby as he was to wear an Armani suit' (Entwistle, 2000: 175). In addition, scholars claimed that the skinny silhouette of suits in the 2000s have generated and endowed 'feminine' image to men.

Based on the analysis of design features in men's contemporary suits, it is possible to derive and categorize sartorial images. By sartorial image here, it means the moods or associations derived not only from the appearance of the wearer and his fashion (design elements and coordination style), but also from the interaction between the wearer's appearance and the observer. Hence, the sartorial image of men's suits can be defined as the observers' perception of overall image formed from the external design features of the suit, as well as the internal symbol and content that reflects the socio-cultural factors of the time. In order to make the deduction of these sartorial images easier in Chap.3, below is a framework <Table.4> made based on considering previous studies on men's sartorial images in menswear. The consideration of these previous studies is given here:

Firstly, Chae (1996) carried out a research on Men's suits and their evolution, focusing on their aesthetic features; he deduced 3 images, which were simple, plain, and understated image of the modest, traditional British fashion; nature image that reflects a taste for nature and sports; and sensual male image that exposes his muscular

physique. Secondly, Kim(2004) did a research on male sartorial images shown in the Paris Runway collection and categorized them into retro image based on the classic; sexy androgynous image; functional image with practicality; and modern and sporty image. The last two images can be grouped under the umbrella ‘functional male image’, which has been done so in the framework. Thirdly, An(2006)’s research was on distinguishing types of gender images in men’s fashion and thus came up 4 broad categories: authoritative, strong male image; masculine image that embraces femininity inside; androgynous image; and bold, modern male image. These can all be regrouped separately into ‘strong, muscular male image’; ‘sophisticated & chic male image’; ‘kitsch & sensual male image’; and ‘unconventional & free male image’ respectively.

Next, Kim(2006)’s study was on male suits, with a focus on dandies and he grouped the male sartorial images into 5: simple & understated image; pure natural image with natural silhouettes; sensual image of bold volume through exposure of the body; decorative feminine image; functional male image; and finally, image with emphasis on individuality. The first two images can be grouped together under ‘classic retro image’, and the third image of sensuality can be separated into that of ‘masculine sensuality’ and ‘feminine, kitsch sensuality’ and hence, has been put into ‘strong, muscular male image’ and ‘kitsch and sensual male image’ in the new framework. The decorative feminine image can also be separated and re-grouped into ‘elegant & romantic male image’ and ‘kitsch & sensual male image’.

Kim(2007) did a research on the theme of romanticism in menswear and deduced 4 images which were: feminine sensual image through emphasizing the curves and exposure; fantastical romantic image based on rich details and decorations; oriental or folklore exotic image; and eclectic image from deconstruction. The last two images can be grouped together under ‘free, unconventional, male image’.

Lee(2010)’s research on differing images of men’s suits depending on their country of origin (UK, France, Italy and US) categorized the

images as: classical male image (standardized, straight silhouette, frugal, classic, traditional, retro, simple and understated); emphasis on the masculine male image (strong muscular body exposed and bold volume); emphasis on the feminine male image (effeminate thin silhouette, curvy, soft, decorative, romantic and elegant); functional male image (dynamic, practical, comfortable, casual); and finally, free male image (innovative, avant-garde, grunge, exotic). The ‘emphasis on the feminine male image’ can be re-grouped into ‘sophisticated & chic male image (thin silhouette)’ and ‘elegant & romantic male image’ (curvy, soft, decorative, romantic, and elegant)^⑤.

Finally, Hong et al (2014) carried out a relatively recent research on ‘the different types and characteristics of modern men’s fashion images’ and came up with the following types: traditional, classic image; feminine, elegant, romantic image; chic, mods style, urban image; exotic image inspired from folk costume; and avant-garde image. The last two images ‘exotic’ and ‘avant-garde’ can be re-grouped together under ‘free, unconventional image’ in the new framework. Hong et al (2014) also demonstrated other types of images such as ‘basic casual image’ and ‘urban casual image’, but they have been left out in the scope of this research’s framework (below), as they were concerned with men’s casualwear only.

Overall, the discussed images above can be categorized in the new framework with sartorial images on the following page (see <Table.4>, pp.63–64), with each of their description and design features:

^⑤ The ‘feminine image’ suits that Lee (2010) studied were either sophisticated & chic or elegant & romantic, rather than being ‘kitsch & sensual’ as she selected overall more conservative, not extreme, suits.

<Table.4> Sartorial images of suits before 2015, and their characteristics:

Sartorial Image	Definition & Description (based on previous research)	Design Features (based on previous research)
Traditional, Classic & Retro Male Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Simple & understated based on the frugal and modest fashion of the British tradition. ✓ Classic, traditional, pure natural image, linear, standardized, retro, unpretentious, refined. ✓ Often Worn by conservative, minimalist men 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Silhouette: H-line, Straight -Minimized details, accessories. -Color&Pattern: black, gray, dark shades, beige, neutral, brown, wine, dark green, solid color. Glen, tartan check, herringbone, stripes. Minimized. -Fabric: to emphasize simple design, high-quality wool, tweed, corduroy, etc
Strong, Muscular Male Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Absolute authority given to his male body and penis ✓ Strong, muscular, authoritative ✓ Masculine sensual image with bold physique& volume through exposure and distortion ✓ Exaggerated, Macho, Heroic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Silhouette: Y-line, angular shoulders -Color&Pattern: achromatic or skin colors, non-pattern, minimum. -Exposure of underwear or bold outline of the muscular body (broad shoulders, chest, abs) by wearing tight or see-through materials, or omit innerwear.
Sophisticated & Chic Male Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Urban, metropolis male ✓ Masculine image that embraces femininity inside - delicate ✓ Sophisticated and modern. ✓ Mods style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Silhouette: slim, skinny, straight, I-line -Color&Pattern: achromatic, neutral, dark shades, beige, dark blue, mods style, non-pattern. Slim jacket, pants, tie -Fabric: cotton, jersey, leather, wool
Elegant & Romantic Male Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Embraces Feminine, Decorative image without exposure, rich details, fantastical, romantic. ✓ Curvy, soft, elegance, delicate, gentle, cute, lovely, sweet, emotive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Silhouette: X-silhouette, emphasis on the waist, flowing lines. Decorative. -Fabric: Velour, Velvet, Satin, Silk, Tweed, soft materials, blouses. -Color&Pattern: pastel, colorful prints of various colors. Use of accessories.
Kitsch & Sensual Male Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Decadent, Sexually objectified, sexy, sex appeal, Androgynous, Sensual image through emphasis on curves, exposures, distorted body. ✓ Look of a soft, fragile person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Excessive exposures & decorations, pattern, accessories. Pop culture style. -Silhouette: extreme, oversized, slim, skinny, X-line. Tight to show bodyline. -Fluorescent, vivid, shiny, colorful. -Fabric: Artificial, glossy, see-through
Functional & Practical Male Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dynamic, active, sporty, casual, comfortable, versatile. ✓ Combines modernity & sportiness, an image of nature that reflects a taste for nature and sports. Non-decorative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Silhouette: relaxed, H-line that does not stick to the body. -Fabric: Practical cotton, denim, jersey, polyester. Color: Natural colors, pastel. -Practical pocket details, hood, zippers, strings, match with sneakers.

Unconventional & Free Male Image	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Playful, bold, creative, values individuality, multi-culturalism, avant-garde, heterogenous, ✓ Grunge, oriental, folklore, use of contrasts, eclectic, deconstructive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Silhouette: deconstructive, deviating from traditions. Irregular. -Color&Pattern: experimental, folk, flower, jacquard patterns -Combination of heterogenous material Jersey, Cotton, Polyester, Synthetic.
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2.2.3. Few Instances of Novel or Feminine Design Elements Appearing in Men’s Suits before 2015.

This section discusses some sporadic instances of novel or feminine design elements appearing in suits before 2015, so that in Chap.3, a comparison can be made to demonstrate how significant the changes are in contemporary men’s suits today.

The first noticeable counter-cultural form of suit against the normative one was the macaroni suit (fig.14a) in the mid-18th century. They were worn by a few young men who had gone on the Grand Tour in Italy, and consisted of wearing huge wigs with long curls, excessive decorative details like large buttons, tiny hats, and very bright stripes (Hollander: 1994: 77). They were regarded as a symbol of effeminacy and bourgeois excess, and design historian Peter McNeil has claimed that “some macaronis have utilized aspects of high fashion in order to effect new class identities, but others may have asserted what we would now label a queer identity” (Murphy & O’Driscoll, 2013: 267). Whether the macaroni was about making new class identities or queer identities, this was a direct challenge against the normative masculinity at the time, therefore, it did not last long.

The macaronis however brought about the dandies, who were a more masculine reaction to the effeminacy of the macaroni; the dandies have wrongly taken the present meaning of femininity because Beau Brummel emphasized somewhat body-conscious, tight x-silhouette suits, impeccable cleanliness to his appearance (‘spotless linen’) and spent excessive money for the sake of grooming this fashion

(McDowell, 2012; Lee et al, 2020). The dandies actually pursued dark sober colors of new cities and it was simply their keen interest in fashion that has wrongly connected them to effeminacy (Breward, 2016: 162). However, what the dandies do show is that some men have inherently had genuine interest in fashion even during the Victorian era, and they have started to take all responsibility for the construction of a fashionable identity in their own hands and tastes.



Fig.14a Macaroni suit, mid-18thc



Fig.14b Printed silk smoking suit, 1906



Fig.14c More exaggerated form of jazz suit, 1920s



Fig.14d Zoot Suit, 1940-42

Although not common, in the late 18th and throughout the 19th century, some wealthy British men pursued Indian textiles. These were more marked in women's fashion than in men's, nevertheless, a few men took an idiosyncratic and subtle adoption of the fashion, as the waistcoats of the period show the incorporation of these fine textiles (Breward, 2016: 87–89). These silk waistcoats and suits were sometimes embellished with Oriental motifs (fig.14b), such as the paisley leaf design (*boteh*) (Ibid). However, these suits were for the bourgeois men to parade their wealth, and imperialistic conquest of the British colonies, and furthermore, such extravagance were more restricted to garments for private spaces, within the comfort of home.

In the first half of the 20th century, there were some unconventional forms such as a few extreme versions of jazz suits in the 1920s and the zoot suits in the late 1930s and 1940s. The jazz suit jacket was pinched by a raised waist and by a three-quarter up back belt, and some of the even more extreme forms looked from behind as if the man were wearing a skirt that was flared by a 12" long center vent

(fig.14c) (Session, 2013; Baek, 2014). However, these extreme ones were only followed by a few young men and not by the majority. Men's Dress Reform Party(1930) also encouraged new suits, such as 'open-neck, roomy shirts, soft collars and lightweight fabrics' but soon they were ridiculed as being 'effeminate' and perceived as 'a threat to destabilize the masculine position in society'(Rangel, 2020: 168).

In the 1930s and 40s, the zoot suit(fig.14d) became popular but largely accepted only by young Italian, African and Mexican Americans, or jazz-band members. Its features included 'excessive use of fabric in its pleated and pegged trousers and wide-shouldered, long-skirted jackets; vivid color and use of print; exaggerated accessorizing from brimmed hat...to tall collars and ostentatious jewelry'(Breward, 2016: 134). However, the zoot suit's wearers were assaulted because they were accused of attacking Anglo-American women, and thus the suit gained negative racial and sexual connotations(Ibid). The sartorial image of this suit was clear: to its critics, it meant 'decadence in the time of war', to its supporters, it was a symbol of 'defiance'(Ibid). Evidently, the suit was a direct challenge against the hegemonic masculinity on behalf of the subordinated, ethnic minority men, as seen by the Zoot Suit Riots of June 1943, and therefore, it could not last long.

In the 1950s, the Teddy boys(fig.15a), a subculture that started among teenagers in London and strongly associated with rock and roll music, paraded their high-waist drainpipe trousers, long drape jackets. They were usually in dark shades, and often with a velvet trim collar, brocade waistcoat and high-necked white shirt, all topped up with light make-up of eyeliner and eyeshadow(Lee et al, 2020). The teddy boys opened up the way for making male interest in fashion socially and publicly more acceptable and the Mods of the 1960s inherited the teddies' 'narcissistic and fastidious fashion tendencies'(Casburn, 2021: 2). Mod youths also wore a sophisticated tailor-made suit with narrow lapels, thin ties, and few even adopting

lipstick against the gender norm. For these working class youths, the subcultures' focus on music and fashion provided a release from 'the humdrum of daily existence at their jobs' (Jobling & Crowley, 1996).



Fig.15a Teddy boy suits, 1950s



Fig.15b Nudie suit, 1970s



Fig.15c Leisure suit, 1970s



Fig.15d David Bowie, ice-blue suit, 1973

The 1960s' Peacock Revolution also made designers like Michael Fish and Pierre Cardin introduce polka dots, bright colors, prints, wider ties (up to 5 inches) and Nehru jacket in men's suits. This Nehru jacket was worn by the Beatles, made in traditional suiting materials but decorated with beaded necklaces or medallions dangling on chains (Paoletti, 2015: 70). In the 1970s, the nudie and leisure suits were also popular as fads in the States. The nudie suits (fig.15b) were flamboyant, cowboy outfits, worn by country-western singers; they were characterized by free use of rhinestone gems, and bright colors. The leisure suits (fig.15c) reached the height of its popularity around the mid to late 1970s, which consisted of matching jacket and trousers in polyester fabric, often in bright plaids (Adato & Burnett, 1996). They were influenced by the informal style associated with the hippies, and though they never were really accepted as business dress, they were worn by youths for discos and parties (Ibid.). They are associated with the 1970s disco culture. David Bowie too at the time paraded extreme looking suits such as the turquoise, ice-blue suit (fig.15d) in his music video 'Life from Mars' (1973).

However, overall, these suits' heyday was short, and although these styles were purchased by some men, few were worn much in reality if at all (Paoletti: 2015: 70). These deviations in color, pattern, cut

and style coordination were largely worn by people who had a license for play or by society’s minorities, i.e. musicians, pop icons, youth subculture, ethnic minority men and few eccentric old men. They were seen as reacting against the dominant culture and society which structurally subordinated them in relation to their social status, economic position, unemployment, and so on (Edwards, 1997: 110). Thus, these fashion suit items and trends went strongly against the hegemonic masculinity, and thus they were non-persistent.

In the 80s and 90s, designers like Rei Kawakubo (Comme des Garçons Homme) and Jean Paul Gaultier created innovative ‘de-centered’ suits, that is to say, suits which have been removed or displaced from its primary role (Breward, 2016: 110). Comme des Garçons (fig.16a) has shown asymmetrical button-up shirts, blazers, pin-stripe pants at once inflated, wide-legged, cropped and tapered (Watamanuk, 2019). Gaultier (fig.16b) went further and introduced skirt to his suits; he tried to re-define gender and bring androgynous-wear into men’s clothing. However, at the time, this was received by the general public as an outright challenge against the normative masculinity, as critics continued to link these suits to ‘queer culture’ (Ibid). The ‘androgynous’ for men then still had a too strong connotation, such as being ‘extreme’ and ‘provocative’, to involve larger audiences of heterosexual men (Lee et al, 2020).



Fig.16a Comme des Garçons, 1987S/S



Fig.16b Jean Paul Gaultier, 1993F/W



Fig.16c Comme des Garçons, 2007S/S



Fig.16d Alexander McQueen, Late 90s show

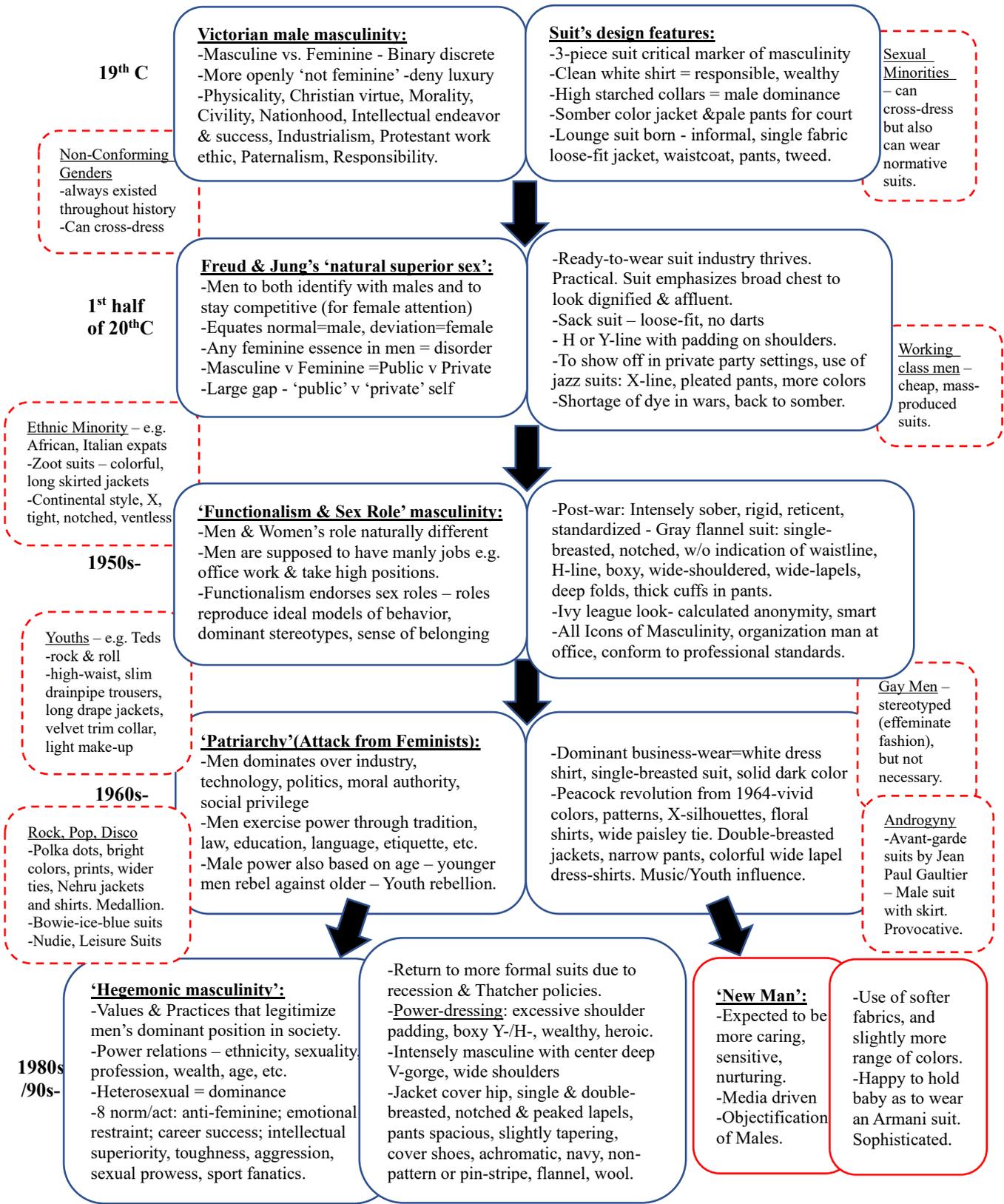
At the turn of the new millennium, some novel designs of men’s suit came out, such as the skinny X-silhouette suits paraded by many

design houses; the golden solid-color suit by Comme des Garçons (fig.16c); and a suit with an unusual matching of a skirt by Alexander McQueen (fig.16d).

Along with the birth of and more interest in the study of ‘multiple masculinities’, these novel menswear suits became accepted by more men relatively, as can be seen by the crosssexuals. However, as has been discussed, the spread of these suits was limited in the end because the studies on these fashions still labelled their wearers as giving them ‘feminine image’. This paradoxically refutes these scholars’ claim that such fashion substantiates the complete freedom of expression in menswear (Lee et al, 2020). The larger male public still felt hesitant to try these new fashions on because the interpretation on these new expressions of multiple masculinities in the 2000s was still based on the binary in reality and took the meaning of ‘the feminine’.

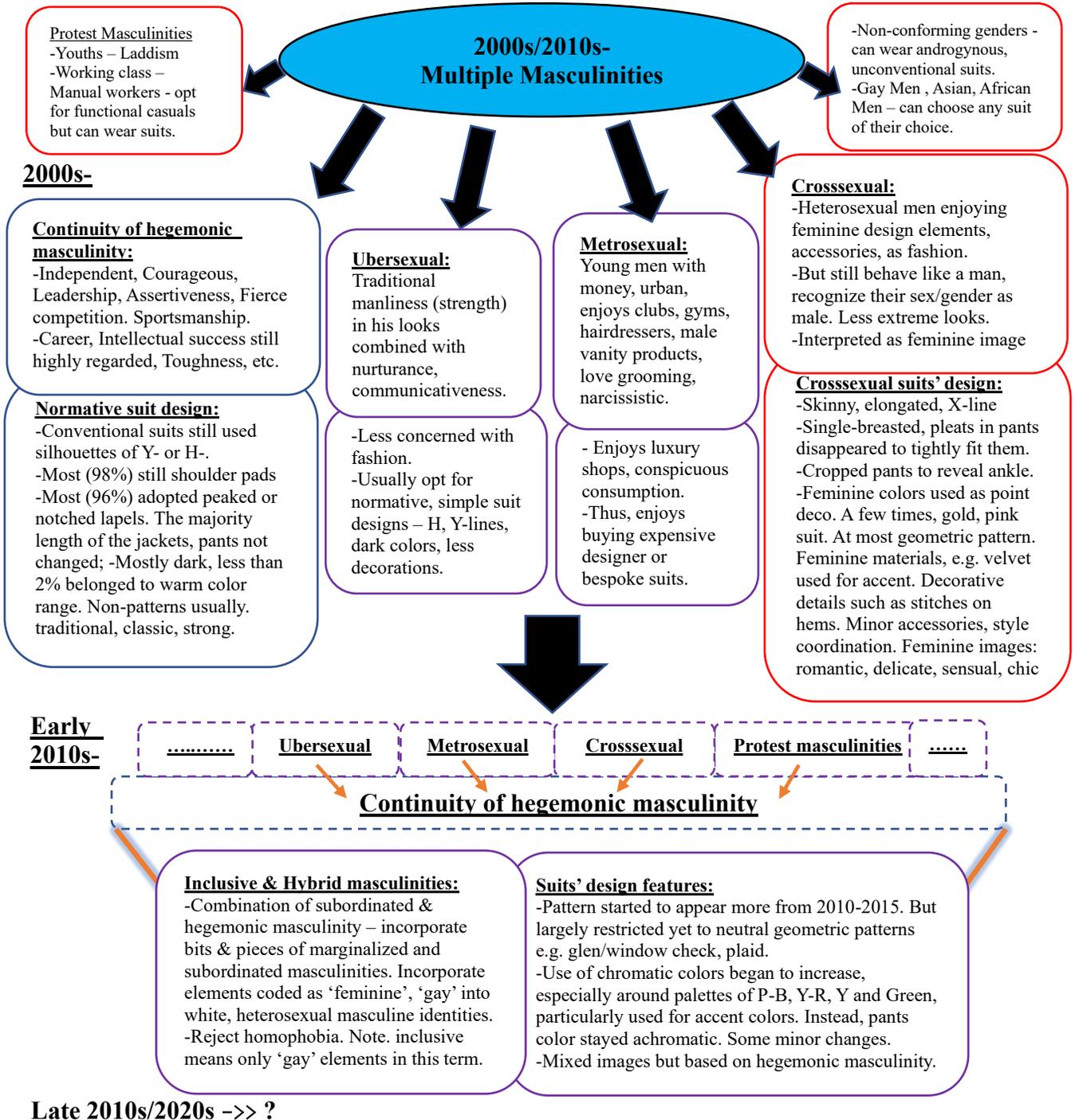
Ultimately, over the course of the suit’s history, some variations of the suits and shirts were introduced, but the basic form has still stayed, ‘essentially unchanged’ and ‘any extreme deviations were restricted’ in the end (Rangel, 2020: 168). The suit for many men still embodied masculine ideals and any attempt to change it radically was understood as a threat to hegemonic masculinity and was met with sharp criticism, being labelled still as ‘feminine’ even in the 2000s. Thus, they did not last long, especially when the suits were a form of outright subversion or challenge. Those unique suits that did last relatively longer, such as the use of Indian textiles in the 19th century, were a form to show off their hegemonic masculinity on part of men, but still limited to private setting and rarely seen in public.

<Diagram.1.> Outline of the link between the development of most idealized/popular masculinity in scholarship & of men's suits from the 19th century up to the 1980s/90s.



<Diagram.2.> Outline of the link between the development of most idealized/popular masculinity in scholarship & of men's suits from the 2000s to the present day.

The masculinities since 2000s have been labelled as 'Multiple Masculinities' and include various ones. However, due to space, only major ones in scholarship have been shown here: Hegemonic masculinity; Protest masculinities, Metrosexual, Ubersexual, Crosssexual, Inclusive & Hybrid masculinities.



Chapter 3. Empirical Analysis of Contemporary Men's Suits in 2015S/S–2020F/W

This chapter will empirically analyze the design characteristics of men's suits in 2015S/S – 2020F/W through content analysis of the collections' representative images (validated by 2 Ph.D. candidates in fashion design) and literary research of trend reports from *WGSN* and *Vogue*. Based on this analysis, the author will derive and categorize the types of sartorial image, and hence expressions of masculinity that men are pursuing today. Next, based on reports from *WGSN*, *Vogue* and other news sources, socio-cultural factors will be discussed to help explain these expressions of masculinity today. Finally, a general discussion based on the overall results will be given.

3.1. Design Characteristics of Contemporary Men's Suits in 2015S/S–2020F/W

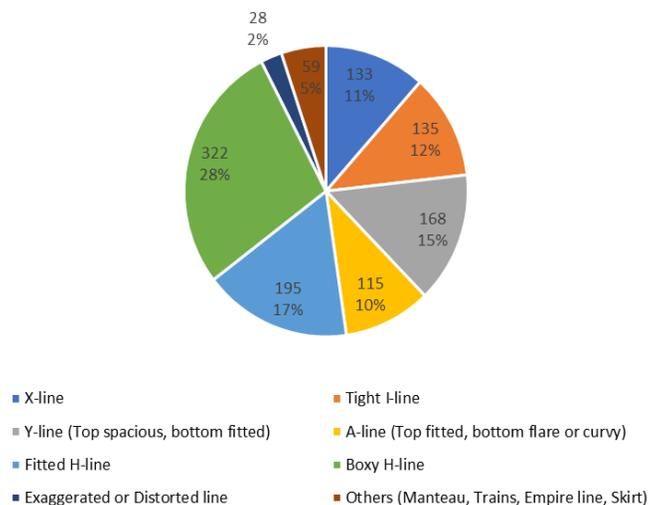
The design characteristics of contemporary men's suits will be analyzed here in the order of silhouette, detail, color, fabric, pattern, accessories, and coordination style.

3.1.1. Silhouette

The most prominent feature of contemporary suits' silhouette in 2015S/S – 2020F/W is that there now exists a much more variety of silhouettes. In fact, experimental and innovative suit silhouettes that were hardly demonstrated in a suit before make their presence noticeably. This is evidently shown when the suit silhouette types in the 2000s are compared with those in contemporary suits today. Bang's comprehensive research (2009) on suits showed that in the 2000s, the suit silhouette type consisted of only 3 (H-, Y- and X-line) largely and the proportion of each was represented as 54% (H-), 28% (Y-) and 18% (X-). In fact, both in the 1980s and 1990s, H-, Y-, X-line represented approximately as 62%, 35% and less than 4% respectively, and the reason that the X-line had increased by

significant amount in the 2000s (18%) was due to Hedi Slimane’s influence of the skinny silhouette in crosssexual suits. However, from 2015, the representative suits from the 20 key global brands demonstrate that today there now exists such a multiplicity of silhouette types as shown by the pie chart below (Chart.1). The silhouettes range not only from X–line (emphasis on the waist; 11%), Y–line (top spacious, bottom fitted; 15%), to relatively fitted H–line (17%) or boxy H–line (28%), but also there are A–line (top fitted, bottom flared or curvy; 10%), tight I–line (12%), exaggerated or distorted line (2%), and others (manteau, train, empire line, skirt; 5%) as well. Clearly, there are many more choices for men to select depending on their personal preference and physique, in contrast to the monotonous ones in the past.

Chart.1. Pie Chart to show frequency and proportion of the different silhouette types of representative men's suits in 2015S/S-2020F/W (total: 1155 suits)



If one looks closer above, the use of X–line and tight I–line is still somewhat noticeable to demonstrate at times crosssexual or androgynous masculinity, and were actively adopted by brands such as Ann Demeulemeester, Balmain, Dior Homme, and Saint Laurent. Various trend reports have labelled these silhouettes as “very body conscious”; “asparagus lean boys” and “super slim versions take on androgynous qualities” (Leitch, Saint Laurent, 2015; Mower, Dior

Homme, 2018). The creative director at Dior Homme went even further and brought an expert from the Christian Dior women’s atelier to help him to incorporate ‘the manual know–how of Dior’s late 40s’ and early 50s’ women’s tailoring silhouette’ into men’s suits (Ibid).



Fig.17a Ann Demeulemeester 2015F/W



Fig.17b Givenchy 2020F/W



Fig.17c Zegna 2015F/W



Fig.17d Alexander McQueen 2016S/S

However, it is interesting to point here that these tight I or X–lines were not just used to show only crosssexual or androgynous masculinities. For instance, Ann Demeulemeester (fig.17a) used ‘the skinniest’ pants and vest sets to portray ‘brooding(mood)...lanky, melancholic characters who look like a cross between a poet maudit (protesting) and a rock star’ (Flaccavento, AD, 2015). Fig.17b also shows a tight X–line suit, putting the closure way above the waistline and diagonally, but the look portrays an image of ‘subverted Americana’ cowboy, especially the sharp–shoulders ‘adding power’ to this look (WGSN, Subverted Americana 2020F/W). These subverted Americana cowboys have especially been shown by Givenchy and Saint Laurent as they both pursue urban chic elegance, and target youthful consumers around the age group 18 to 35.

Overall, the use of skinny I or X–silhouette is still seen. However, the proportion of other silhouette types have increased significantly in contrast to the 2000s, because it limits the number of men who can actually wear such fit. Even the Vogue analyst admitted that such skinny silhouette can only “speak to the new generation of dandies of South Korea and China, (i.e.) the men with the youth, physiques, inclination, and income...to do it full justice” (Mower, Dior Men, 2017).

Therefore, much more generous fits of X-silhouette are also found, by using spacious suits but adding a large high-waist belt/bag to blazers such as by D&G and Zegna. As emphasized by Tim Blanks, these blazers make ‘the masculine/feminine loucheness (blur) of the clothes stand out...’(Blanks, Zegna, 2015S/S). At the same time though, they portray a strong image of an adventurer: “...(like) travelling aventurier...a strong man discovering the world’(Ibid). This takes literal and figurative meaning, that these men are exploring X-silhouette without forsaking their masculinity, and also actually look like adventurous travelers literally (fig.17c). The generous fits are also highlighted by the prominent increase in the use of double-breasted suits, which allow a relatively looser fit. The WGSN reports from 2015S/S–2020F/W have emphasized ‘double-breast’ as a major trend and mentioned it more than 17 times (WGSN Reports on Tailoring, 2015S/S–2020F/W). Fig.17d shows looser double-breasted jacket with a slight curve on the waist, however it nevertheless reveals the man’s toughness as a rocker through an accentuation on the angled shoulders (Lee et al, 2020). The double-breasted suit was associated with mature businessmen in Wall Street in the 80s, thus have been regarded as ‘old-fashioned’ since the 90s. It has now shaken off these old connotations, and the ‘softer’ versions have attracted new younger market today (WGSN tailoring, 2017S/S).

However, the most marked silhouette feature of the men’s suits in 2015S/S–2020F/W is that designers are not simply relying on the tight I or X-silhouette to show expressions of ‘gender-fluid’ or ‘crosssexual’. Rather, it is actively adopting various boxy H-lines in a free manner, which the author of this research has coined and labelled it as part of ‘neo-crosssexual’ design characteristics and phenomenon in her recent research (Lee et al, 2020)^⑥. Such boxy H-

^⑥ Even though the crosssexual fashion phenomenon in the 2000s was marked by the use of skinny I or X-silhouette, the neo-crosssexual men today also adopt boxy H-lines or other various silhouette types, by putting curves partly or extending the jacket or innerwear like a dress (Lee et al, 2020).

silhouette usually signify strength, but curvilinear lines have partly been put in the trousers or softer, more flowing materials have been used to give more relaxing and charming suits to men.

For example, Louis Vuitton, Armani and Maison Margiela have all placed sophisticated curves in the suit pants to make them look like spacious jogger pants (fig.18a). The excess fabric carries through from the jacket to the ‘voluminous pants’, making a ‘larger than life silhouette...’ (WGSN Tailoring, 2018S/S; 2019S/S). Thus, these men have been endowed with soft charisma, their expressions widely ranging from cute ‘friendly next-door’ image with ‘slouchy sophistication’ to ‘gritty active edge’ image, all helping to portray a homebody or a comfortable active commuter (WGSN Tailoring, 2017S/S & 2017F/W). Armani also designed curvy ‘Japanese-inspired wide pants’; and Saint Laurent and Paul Smith (fig.18b) went further to creatively combine boxy jackets with curvaceous bloomer pants, symbolizing the 19thC women’s liberation movement (Lee et al, 2020). These looks have given men ‘Bohemian, mystical escape with free spirits’ and evidently, ‘some of the gender-fluidity came in less expected forms’ (Holgate, Saint Laurent, 2020S/S).

Dior Homme has also paraded baggy ‘skater’ suits with curvaceous wider-hip pants (fig.18c). It has fused two masculinity expressions together ‘#sartorial skate’ & ‘#smartenup’, incorporating ‘casual-inspired’ features into the suit silhouette (WGSN Tailoring, 2017F/W). Overall, these ‘skater’ suits look sporty and modern.



Fig.18a Louis Vuitton 2018S/S



Fig.18b Paul Smith 2015S/S



Fig.18c Dior Homme 2016F/W



Fig.18d Valentino 2019S/S

In addition, there are new ‘sinuous suit’ silhouettes which have taken inspiration from ‘bath-robés’ and ‘loungewear’ with the help of drapery, softer materials, as shown by Ann Demeulemeester, Valentino, Gucci, Dries van Noten and Louis Vuitton (fig.18d). The unstructured flow was ‘as fluid as pajamas’ and formed ‘a comforting, indulgent cocoon’ (Blanks, Valentino, 2015S/S, Dries van Noten, 2015S/S). They endow male wearers with Zen-like calm.

Furthermore, within the boxy H-line, designers have cleverly extended the length of the blazer, shirt or vest until knee line to give an impression of an apron or long dress. For example, Alexander McQueen (fig.19a) has elongated the men’s jacket and placed a belt across the high chest to create an Empire dress silhouette that were adopted by women in the Neo-classical era (Blanks, AMQ, 2015S/S). These have given men aristocratic elegance and romance. Other designers such as Maison Margiela, Dior Homme, Thom Browne and Paul Smith instead have elongated the men’s vest or innerwear inside the jacket, like hanging leg-aprons. In particular, Dior Homme’s model (fig.19b) appears to be wearing a vibrant, yellow-patterned dress under his boxy suit, because of the bold, extended vest (Lee et al, 2020). Givenchy (fig.19c) also demonstrated extended rectangular skirt-like vests with colorful pattern, which remind one of kilt over pants, thus giving men an image of ‘warrior’, even with such ‘feminine’ design element (Blanks, Fury, Givenchy, 2015F/W). Paradoxically, this dress-like design element does add ‘images of sunshine’ and ‘note of affection rather than aggression’ to these ‘warriors’ (Ibid).



Fig.19a Alexander McQueen 2015S/S



Fig.19b Dior Homme 2015F/W



Fig.19c Givenchy 2015F/W



Fig.19d Thom Browne 2017F/W

As seen, even these boxy silhouettes can work well together with other ‘feminine’ silhouette design elements in suits to portray various expressions of masculinity. This also helps to provide a more relaxed and casual look to men. Indeed, relating to these tendencies, Paul Smith emphasizes that he wants more men to enjoy ‘feminine’ design elements, by providing more comfortable silhouettes (Lee et al, 2020).

Finally, there are also new, exaggeratedly distorted and manipulated proportions experimented in a much more daring manner, especially by 2017. This is a calculated push, to ‘gain exposure among potential Millennial and Gen Z male consumers’ (WGSN, Tailoring, 2018S/S). Firstly, the theme of architectural deconstruction is prevalent, whereby the traditional suit silhouette is broken down and rebuilt into something new. For instance, the gray flannel suit is the ‘ultimate expression—in-cloth of white male conformity’ and ‘hegemonic masculinity’; but Thom Browne aimed, through extreme distortion, to reveal it in the flat 2-D sum of its parts from the pattern, to lead the audience to think about the silhouette’s intricacies in 3-D (Leitch, Thom Browne, 2017F/W). Fig.19d indeed displays knit tights as suit-pants, but the suit jacket has been enlarged to adopt an exaggerated, planar shape like a work in cubism. The overall look portrays tough strength, as well as revealing the male models’ leg lines with subtle sensuality. Thom Browne was playing with the previously understood suit proportions and he commented that the wearer of this suit would be making a comment about the world today gripped by events that seem to defy all previously understood proportion (Ibid.).

In other collections by Thom Browne and Maison Margiela, ‘conventional suit silhouette was aggressively shredded’ and all the pieces formed into ‘a trompe l’oeil dress suit’ (fig.20a). Both designers commented on how ‘it is an interesting time, that guys are really open to so much more right now...’ (Leitch, Thom Browne 2019F/W). A *Vogue* trend analyst even asked ‘a muscled young model, a butch-looking Adonis’ in a such suit how the look felt, and

he replied with a grin ‘it feels great!’(Leitch, Thom Browne, 2018S/S). Thus, this positive openness is not simply the opinion by designers only and the male opinion on such ‘dress–suit’ has become more flexible. In particular, these new silhouettes have been emphasized with staple menswear colors and fabrics, to make it feel much less like drag among male wearers of this silhouette(Ibid). Evidently, designers are not simply forming extreme androgynous looks to cause shock among the public as was the case in the 20th century, but actually working hard to explore ways and help more men, especially the Millennials and Gen Z–ers, to ‘erase gender categorization that they grew up with’(Mower, Maison Margiela, 2019F/W).

There are also other playful silhouettes such as the transformation of the men’s wedding tuxedo with a long train at the back. From the front view, it is a tight–fit black tuxedo suit, but from the back, the look is of ‘a full–skirted wedding dress, with the bride’s sleeve inlaid into the small of his back to allow him to clutch his bouquet’(Leitch, 2017; Lee et al, 2020). This ‘fusion suit’ is also explored by Gucci(fig.20b) where the suit’s top and bottoms are fused together like a tight jump–suit to create a sensual workwear, revealing the whole natural body line of the model. In the 2000s, these kinds of tight I–line suits purposefully showed or imposed male models with narrow shoulders and tight curves, but today it can be seen that the male models’ angular shoulders and pelvic bones are emphasized to express the man’s build naturally. Charles Jeffrey Loverboy went even further with this ‘fusion’ and explored the more shocking theme of ‘camp’, by introducing Dior–like pannier skirt, baby–doll dress, Elizabethan doublet silhouettes and fusing them with asymmetric suits. These evidently shout for men ‘the freedom to dress–up’, highlighting a cheerful and fun image(Mower, 2017, CJL, 2018S/S). In addition, these subversive brands (Gucci, Thom Browne, Charles Jeffrey Loverboy) are known for being inclusive of defending the LGBTQ+ rights that have been protected in law only very recently.

One might argue that it is natural for these subversive brands to adopt unconventional silhouettes. However, even some more conservative suit brands, such as Armani and Zegna, have come up with new suit silhouettes that are designed to be modular. Like a ‘Swiss Army knife’, these suits were packed with detachable straps, collars cuffs and add-ons that permits the wearer to change his silhouette without swapping his garments (Leitch, Zegna, 2019F/W). These are to create more active-inspired suits.



Fig.20a Thom Browne 2019F/W



Fig.20b Gucci 2018S/S



Fig.20c Maison Margiela 2020S/S



Fig.20d Dior Homme 2018S/S

The final feature of innovative suit silhouettes is the ‘cut-off’ suits. Multiple brands, such as Gucci, Alexander McQueen, Thom Browne, Burberry and Calvin Klein, have presented these suits. They include jackets cut off latitudinally; sleeveless jackets; or suit-pants cut high above the thigh to create a hot-pants like pair (Lee et al, 2020). Some have even cut off both the suits’ arms and legs to expose the men’s bare skin. Fig.20c shows Maison Margiela’s ‘subverted airman’s uniform’ suit, where the jacket has been cropped to the midriff over high-up pleated trousers (Mower, Maison Margiela, 2020S/S). Dior Homme has also creatively made ‘cut-off’ suits with ‘short shorts’ in chic black (fig.20d) to bring bold sexiness. Interestingly, cultural sociologist Entwistle has argued that ‘men’s suit primarily obscures sexual characteristics by erasing the male body’, whereas ‘women’s suit highlights her sexual body as a key aim’ (Entwistle, 2000; Lee et al, 2020). But the confident bare exposure of the male body is a notable feature of the contemporary men’s suits today. True, there were suits with plunging necklines in the past, but these are not as

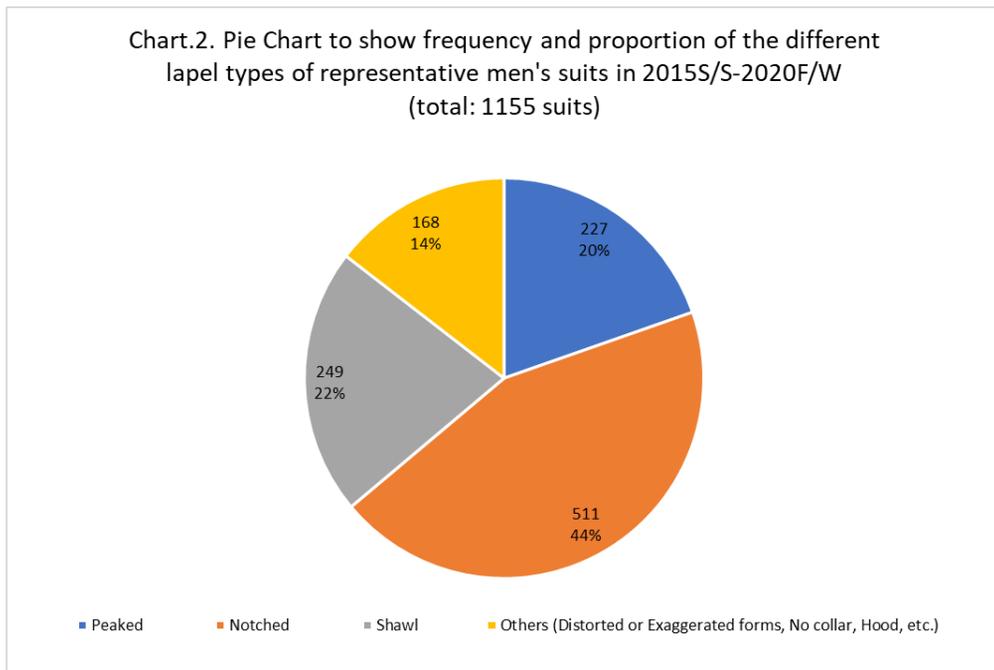
bold exposures as now (Lee et al, 2020). Evidently, this emphasizes men's unique sensuality and lets him gain self-confidence.

These short suits have functional utility of being able to stay cool in the heat as well, especially if these short suits are made by more functional and minimalists target brands such as Calvin Klein (fig.28c) or Burberry. These shorts tend to be slightly longer in length and less figure hugging, to provide comfort when commuting. Their inspiration is from boy's school uniforms, gym shorts, and American sportswear, so they are 'tailoring-sportswear hybrids' (WGSN, Tailoring, 2018). This innovative take on tailoring will gather the following of a younger audience, and allow them to approach suits in a more light-hearted, youthful manner.

Overall, suit silhouettes in 2015S/S-2020F/W have much greater variety and versatility today. There is certainly some continuity with the tight X or I silhouette, but more diverse looser fits are also available at hand and they do not necessarily show 'feminine' masculinities only. On the whole, tailoring has become much more relaxed in contrast to the skinny looks championed in the 2000s. Even the boxy H-silhouette has actively been introduced to portray various masculinities ranging from 'homebody', 'comfortable active commuters' to even 'romantic' or 'gender-fluid' masculinities. There are also innovative silhouettes that were hardly demonstrated in a suit before to play with the notions of architectural deconstruction, sensuality, and camp. Today, among the great variety of silhouettes, a man can pick and select according to their taste and body shape, with flexibility. Therefore, today's suit fashion is developing to become both convincingly 'young' but at the same time 'accessibly wearable for many ages and physiques' (Mower, 2017). This means that many more men will be able to explore suits, now that it has comfortably stepped into the zone of cross-generational normality.

3.1.2. Details (Structural and Decorative)

With details, the 2015S/S–2020F/W suits are first characterized by a notable increase in the use of shawl lapels and other novel lapel forms. There is clearly a new emphasis on this shawl lapel through making this structural detail into a decorative one. The round shawl lapel is marked by their curvaceousness to give softness on their wearers (Lee et al, 2020). In the 2000s, the suit jackets had by far majority either a notched or peaked lapel (over 96% of the men’s suit jackets shown by *Vogue* magazines used notched or peaked, from Bang, 2009, p.70) and less than 4% of the jackets had a shawl lapel (Ibid). In contrast, one can see from the pie chart below (Chart.2) that the proportion of shawl lapels used has been increased to 22% and other novel forms instead of the conventional lapels have taken 14% of the total representative suits in 2015S/S–2020F/W.



Numerous WGSN reports throughout 2017S/S to 2020F/W make note of this trend ‘contrast shawl collars’ by designers playing on color; texture; or with pile fabrics, jacquards and foulards; or with some variance in the cut of the shawl itself (WGSN Key Details & Trims,

2017S/S–2020F/W). For instance, even the ‘masculine’ suit designer Giorgio Armani paraded a line of velvet suits in blue or bottle–green with glossy satin–fronted shawl collars, as kind of new ‘integrated cravats’(Leitch, Armani, 2018F/W). Furthermore, D&G and Paul Smith made clever use of the contrast shawl lapel by putting exuberant sequins or colorful coral reef embroideries on the whole of their lapels, to give romantic images to men(fig.21a).



Fig.21a Paul Smith
2018S/S



Fig.21b D&G
2015F/W



Fig.21c Gucci
2017F/W



Fig.21d Charles Jeffrey
 Loverboy 2019S/S

One also notices from the chart above(Chart.1) that ‘Other’ unconventional forms of collars have increased significantly, through distorting, exaggerating, or enlarging the shape of suit lapels. However, these interesting lapels do not express ‘feminine’ associated moods only. For example, Balmain in 2019S/S with their tailcoats extended their lapels to make it look like a strong, charismatic ‘Ninja’ hood with Japanese inspirations; they clearly show a celebration of assimilation and multi–culturalism(Leitch, Balmain, 2019S/S). Furthermore, D&G, even though it has used shawl lapels in its long blazer suits, the designers have cleverly enlarged them and made them even more curvilinear. Paradoxically, these decorative lapels draw attention to the male model’s chest, especially since models with large pectoral muscles have been selected, thereby, also showing an image of toughness(fig.21b). D&G specifically stated that through this enlarged soft shawl collar on a tough muscular man, they wanted to convey a man who is strong but loving and caring towards their family(“homage to traditions...notion of family”; Blanks, D&G, 2015F/W).

Even with peaked or notched lapels, they have been exaggerated by putting dots or flower embroideries inspired from 17th, 18th century Chinoiserie by numerous brands such as D&G and Gucci (fig.21c). They all attract focus to the broad chest of a man, making him stand out with a confident image (Lee et al, 2020). All these novel forms bring sophisticated sexiness, highlight cultural diversity, and allow a less stiff take on formalwear, which will help to garner the following of youth audience. Evidently, they are moving towards ‘a new kind of decorative masculinity’ (Mower, Burberry, 2020S/S).

However, there is also now the new option of collarless jackets, created by more subversive brands like Maison Margiela and Charles Jeffrey Loverboy (fig.21d), for those men who want to defy against the suits’ norm. Stiff collars on suit jackets have been a primary symbol of masculinity throughout the history of suits as they draw attention to the men’s face (rather than their fashion). Now, designers can confidently take them out of their suits, to be ‘minimalist’, ‘futuristic’, and ‘versatile’; in future, the collarless blazer will become a practical work garment that can help in making a modular, trans-seasonal wardrobe (WGSN, Tailoring, 2017F/W).

Secondly, there is a new interest in decorating the suit jackets’ arms. Both Louis Vuitton and Ann Demeulemeester in 2018F/W and 2020F/W have put either flamboyant flounce details on the arms, or have greatly augmented the cuffs ‘outward like architectural forms’ (Verner, Ann Demeulemeester, 2018F/W; Mower, Louis Vuitton, 2020F/W). These decorative details make a reference to poetry and wildflowers, giving a great mood of romanticism (Ibid.) As Fig.22a demonstrates, there is evidently romantic notions at play here, but cleverly there is also ‘moody masculine edge’ to it as well.

Thirdly, many menswear designers have created decorative fasteners on their suit jackets. For example, Givenchy (fig.22b) placed sparkling diamante ‘brooch-like jewels’ for buttons or used ‘multicolored toggles’ on their suits (Mower, Givenchy, 2017F/W), all making a contrast with the fabric of the suits. Evidently, they exist

more for their decorative purpose, rather than for their function. Ann Demeulemeester and Valentino also exploited more than 30 buttons, unbuttoned here and there, revealing and hiding the men’s body. These looks clearly appeal to the young. Whereas what was regarded sartorially accepted used to be dictated by ‘the dominant, wealthy, and middle-aged’, now it is ‘the young’ who are actively influencing ‘their fathers, uncles, and bosses’ generation (Mower, Valentino, 2018F/W). They were trying to transmit the expressive and romantic side of masculinity (Ibid.).



Fig.22a Ann Demeulemeester 2018F/W



Fig.22b Givenchy 2017F/W



Fig.22c Dries van Noten 2015F/W



Fig.22d Calvin Klein 2017F/W

Other young men targeting brands such as Dries van Noten and Maison Margiela have also added novel closures to their suit blazers, inspired from the traditional Eastern costume but adding a futuristic tone to it. Dries van Noten thoroughly researched on how the idea of protection was universally portrayed in clothing by ‘horizontal bands’, from firefighter’s jackets to ethnic minority Miao utility-wear (Blanks, Dries van Noten, 2015F/W). Therefore, he exploited grosgrain ribboning (fig.22c) to duplicate these bands and made them as novel fastenings for his suits, showing the man as bordering on the looks of romantic and wearable gender-blurring.

Fourthly, there is a marked emphasis on creative embellishments in dress-shirts or innerwear throughout the recent years. WGSN makes a noteworthy mention in all of their trend reports such as “challenge longstanding norms when it comes to shirting” and ‘embrace classically feminine details (on innerwear) that reflect a

turn to soft masculinity’(WGSN Tailoring; 2015S/S–2020F/W). In particular, Louis Vuitton, Gucci, and Ann Demeulemeester have paraded chiffon pussy bows, crocheted ruffs, and also what looks like a doily draped around young men’s throat. Frequently, there were flowers too resting under their chin. At first glances these look like ‘old–lady–ish’ touches. However, as Blanks have emphasized, these decorations now signify ‘recontextualization’; it is no longer a granny’s pussy bow when a teenage boy is wearing it; it is ‘a renewal of possibility’(Blanks, Gucci, 2016S/S). The overall masculinity expressions that these models portray are that of ‘romantic’, ‘Bohemian’, or some of the more extreme versions show ‘insinuations of kink’, ‘new punk’ and ‘going coed on the sly’(Ibid). There is evidently the blurring of gender here, and more men are trying these out of their original context because of their developing fashion taste.

There are even more interesting innerwears where the whole garment is turned into a novel form. For instance, collections of heavily sequined and beaded nude tops, from artisanal(complete handcraft), were created to look like ‘a patchwork of tattoos splashed’ across the body, taking their colors from varsity college sports(Carter, Maison Margiela, 2015S/S). These collections were paraded by Maison Margiela and even Calvin Klein(fig.22d), a brand known for its emphasis on functional garments. As Fig.88 shows, the red tape–like detail certainly looks like tattoos especially these details placed on a largely see–through fishnet material. This decorative variation on a suit innerwear endows the model with subtle but unique sensuality.

Not just novel innerwear, but the whole surface of suit jackets too is embellished with novel decorations, unlike the 2000s crosssexual suits when they usually had a feminine detail as an accent. Fig.23a shows abundant ruffle made of strips of black wool across its jacket, with cut stones detailing over the left chest. This entire jacket was sourced from up–cycled off–cuts from Alexander McQueen’s cutting room floor(Leitch, AMQ, 2019S/S). This reflects the rising needs of

smart male consumers today who are environmentally– and socially– conscious of current affairs, looking for sustainable options wherever possible. There are also other novel jackets where it is entirely decorated with crafted details, such as textured appliqués, exotically sequined or studded embroideries, and intricate metal or beadwork, by numerous brands including Dior Homme, Gucci and Valentino. They are suitable for parties as they portray men with images of being carefree, especially demonstrating the themes of ‘#modern romantics’, and ‘#hautehippie’ (WGSN Tailoring, 2020F/W). The creative director of Gucci, Michele, highlights that this new entirely decorative fashion phenomenon in menswear is promoting the power of youth. They are now the vanguards of the new world. However, what he means by the youth here are not only young people in chronological time, but also means a state of mind: “the very young and the very old want to be free”(Ibid.) Thus, men, regardless of their age, are now longing to be more fashionable and liberal–minded in what they choose to wear. They are no longer scared to select full decorative details on their suit.



Fig.23a Alexander McQueen 2020S/S



Fig.23b Dior Homme 2016F/W



Fig.23c Dior Homme 2017S/S



Fig.23d Givenchy 2017S/S

In fact, there are now even decorative jackets created by crafty designers which help to portray men as strong and charismatic, as opposed to showing simply ‘feminine’ or ‘soft’ masculinity. In particular, Givenchy and Saint Laurent have conveyed traditional Western saddle–inspired details to promote americana cowboy hero pieces; their suit–jackets got infinitely rhinestoned, glittering away with crystals and gleaming copper rivets the size of a large

coin(WGSN Key Details & Trims, 2020F/W; Fury, Givenchy, 2016F/W). They convey a colorful cowboy feel to tailored jackets, giving a tender toughness. D&G and Gucci also have shown suits with braided brocades or Ghillie tassels; they remind one of bull fighters or an army of men advancing, since these decorative details were used by noble military generals in Europe before the 18thC.

Another ingenious decorative detail that covers the whole surface of men's suits is the 'inside-out blazer'. This creative design is a major trend noted by many WGSN trend reports between 2017S/S and 2020F/W; designers have thoroughly looked at negative spaces and the principles of deconstruction, bringing out the linings, facings, and interior details of the blazer to its outer shell(WGSN Tailoring, 2020F/W). As Fig.23b demonstrates, both Gucci and Dior Homme's suits look as if unfinished, with noticeable basting stitches tracing the seams and raw edges elsewhere. At first glance, they look purely decorative, but by revealing the structural aspect of these suits, they emphasize the advanced technical skill in making men's suits. Consequently, these detailing elements grab attention of the viewers and help to portray men as very charismatic and rebellious. Dior Homme has also tried to break free of the restrictions of tailoring by making many red sneaker laces loop through eyelets and let them hang freely as the models walked(Fury, Dior Homme, 2017S/S). These sneaker laces remind one of strong ropes, highlighting a colorful, yet tough, coarse, skater youth image (fig.23c).

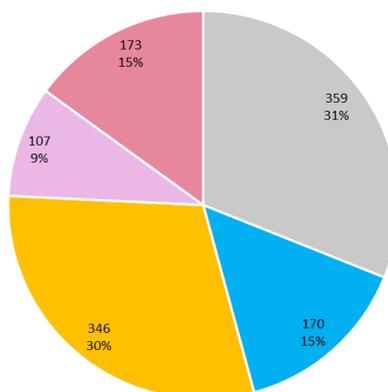
The final key feature of structural and decorative detail in suits today is the hybrid of sport and suit blazer. Trims and details such as contrast zips, magnetic buttons, tapes & bindings, and pockets are utilized as tools to blend suit sartorial elements with 'sport', 'outdoor street' and 'utility narratives'(WGSN Key Details & Trims, 2020S/S). In particular, Givenchy (fig.23d) has shown multiple zippered panels or pockets (some attached to the suitcoats, others strapped into a harness) that seem to 'effervescently lift up and away from the body'(Fury, Givenchy, 2017S/S). The models wearing these suits

look as if walking in a combat commuter gear, but strangely with an ‘image of sunshine’; the sunshine is literal also, light reflecting off from multiple mirrors embroidered across hems and tramlining zips (Ibid). Accentuating functional pockets through contrasts in color or fabric have been added to suits as well by brands like Louis Vuitton. These bagged out pockets and obvious flap details completely change the mood of these suits, conveying themes of ‘adventure’ and ‘jungle-trekker’ (WGSN, Tailoring, 2020S/S). It has now become confusing to tell whether these zips or pockets act as functional or as decorative. In addition, suits of numerous brands including Dior Homme and Kenzo have been transformed through putting contrast sport bindings on them. They are light-reflective, waterproof tapes and piping (WGSN Key Details & Trims, 2019F/W). They reflect the current preference by men, having a liking for functional, outdoor details, ‘#urban utility and pursuits’ and ‘#future-commuter’ expressions (WGSN, Tailoring, 2019F/W).

Overall, contemporary suits in 2015S/S–2020F/W demonstrate that many ingenious structural or decorative details have been created to help formal pieces cross-reference street, sports, utility and/or flamboyant, romantic, gender-fluidity themes. Practical details have also become decorative features at the same time, creating hybrids. In particular, what is noteworthy is that in contrast to the 2000s, decorative details do not simply convey effeminacy, but are skillfully and cunningly adopted by designers as a novel means to communicate other images too. A lot of these details are done by customization, available as a choice for the customers.

and Black) and Mixed (if two or more colours exist dominantly on a suit) colour groups (MacEvoy, 2005). The proportion of achromatic colours have especially decreased to 31% and the proportion of ‘mixed’ colours has been added as an analysis item due to the significant rise in flamboyant patterns decorating the entire suit surface today. Furthermore, all 20 brands have significantly adopted solid suit colours from warm colour range and many new unique artificial colours (see Chart 4 below, the warm colour group comprise over 30%). In fact, brands such as Kenzo, Gucci, Paul Smith, and Louis Vuitton have all shown an extraordinarily diverse palette even within just one collection. Fashion critics have praised how painterly menswear designers have exploited colours by putting together ‘tangerine’, ‘mustard’, ‘pale mauve’, ‘electric blue’, ‘odd pastels’, ‘splash of red’, ‘deep shades of forest green’, ‘cornflower blue’, ‘absinthe’, ‘turquoise’, ‘brown Bordeaux’, ‘primary yellow’, etc., running from chiffon washes to punchy solids even in one single collection (Mower, Maison Margiela, 2020F/W). Pastel suits are making a significant appearance as well (comprising 9%), ranging from lavender to lemon pastels, and is part of the #soft masculinity trend. They send ‘an uncomplicatedly positive message about where the limit (of colour) lies’ for men (Leitch, Paul Smith, 2020F/W).

Chart.4. Pie Chart to show frequency and proportion of the different colour mood types of representative men's suits in 2015S/S-2020F/W (total: 1155 suits)



■ Achromatic colours ■ Cool colours ■ Warm colours ■ Pastel colours ■ Mixed

Not just pastels, but more and more bold flamboyant colours are being adopted as a ‘head-to-toe’ colour in suits and they evidently ‘shout for confidence’ and is ‘not for the faint-hearted’, as emphasised by WGSN(WGSN, 2015S/S; 2020S/S, ‘The Bright Suit’).

‘#The Pink Suit’ has been recorded clearly on WGSN’s Fashion Feed, constantly coming up even on fashion week streets (WGSN, Tailoring, 2020S/S). These ‘pink suits’ have been shown by numerous brands such as Kenzo, Alexander McQueen, Louis Vuitton and Dior Homme. True, pink suits have been shown in the past but they were always interpreted as simply ‘feminine’. However, now designers have exploited much more vibrant pink such as ‘fierce magenta’ to ‘make a statement’ about something meaningful and also convey men as if they are truly ‘in an indulgence’ of their fashion taste (WGSN, Colour, 2020S/S). Fig.24a shows an almost ‘outré’ fluorescent pink satin suit with pagoda shoulders. Not only this look portrays the man as bold and confident, but also Michele has highlighted that he wanted to portray someone who is socially conscious of the ‘melancholy’ and ‘dissonance’ that the contemporary world feels and has reflected this in fashion(Mower, Gucci, 2018S/S).

Dries van Noten(fig.24b) has also shown more wearable pink and red suits that are ‘fresh and all about colour’; he got inspiration from the optimistic colours and patterns of Verner Pantoni, a famous Swiss furniture designer/artist(Mower, Dries van Noten, 2019S/S). The colours in this suit are visually artistic, as several colours are inserted in dynamic patches of harmony. This suit is also ideal as ‘vivid summery escape-wear’(Ibid.), thus, it is expressive and can be worn on holidays and parties. Ann Demeulemeester also explored the colour of red, but with the meaning of falling in love and being true to one’s emotion; “we become a bit red when we are in love...I wanted to give something that was a bit shy – emotion”(Leitch, Vogue, AD, 2017S/S). This now supports the idea that it is completely fine for men to admit to their own true emotions such as love and shyness.

Even Dior Homme, who in the last few decades provided

‘conventional grey suits’ only for ‘middle–management upward’, has paraded an army of men in rose pink suits, as well as D&G in solid red suits(23 men); Kim Jones has strictly commented that people should no longer interpret these suits as ‘feminine’, and if it is romantic, it is simply ‘romantic’(Mower, Dior Homme, 2019S/S). Indeed, previous literatures have restrictively interpreted these warm colours of pink and red as giving only a ‘feminine’ image to men; however, it is now evident that meanings which these warm colours connote can extend far beyond(Lee et al, 2020). In particular, bold reds such as ‘pop red’ and ‘preppy red’ demonstrated by Balmain(fig.24c), Louis Vuitton and Givenchy’s suits show ‘modern’, ‘crisp’, ‘clean styling’ with ‘a sporty sense of masculinity’ that gives athletic and actively commuting moods(WGSN, Colour, 2019F/W).



Fig.24a Gucci
2018S/S



Fig.24b Dries van
Noten 2019S/S



Fig.24c Balmain
2020F/W



Fig.24d Thom
Browne 2017S/S

In fact, even bolder and brighter colours that were hardly used in suits before are now exploited as well, such as ‘lemon drop’ yellow, ‘amber’ or ‘tangerine’ orange, and ‘lemon–lime’ colours. Orange has risen to become one of the fastest–growing colours in menswear, up by 38% in the UK and 36% in the US(WGSN, Colour, 2020F/W). Men want to now indulge themselves in such bright colours, and have commented about how yellows and oranges can help them to be more upbeat and ‘Empower (them) up!’(WGSN, Colour, 2017S/S). Thom Browne(fig.24d) has also created ‘beach short suits’ revealing brilliant, poolside cocktail shades of orange, sorbet, and pina colada (Fury, Thom Browne, 2017S/S). Although these yellow summer cut–off suits touch on the idea of camp, the yellow tone–on–tone

coloration highlights a cool, refreshing image, which will help to gain young Gen-Z followers (Lee et al, 2020). In addition, Gucci has paraded lime-yellow suits, as fig.25a shows. This reminds one of Peter Pan, and Michele has asked men to 'recollect, revise and reconsider' the characteristics of today's masculinity through an allegorical journey in clothing back to childhood and boyhood, when more freedom was allowed (Leitch, Gucci 2020F/W). These kind of looks clearly convey childlike pleasure and innocence, and such notions are often played by more progressive, provocative brands.

Within the flamboyant colour theme, 'rainbow' has also been a prominent feature in many brands such as Kenzo and Burberry. Christopher Bailey has spoken about the hope that every men can have in his final collection of 2018F/W at Burberry. Even he was originally from a working-class, homosexual, and once bullied and looked down on (i.e. subordinated masculinity) but now he is admired. He tried to fully express this hope in his collection 'full of the symbolism of gay pride' (Mower, Burberry, 2018F/W). There were rainbows everywhere, painted on a skirt under suits to represent LGBTQ+ rights, and also there were models wearing a bright, fluorescent orange safety jacket under a black suit (fig.25b), to show how a worker's wear can be combined with a suit to look chic (Ibid).

Kenzo, known for its bright, eclectic colours inspired by arts & cultures, demonstrated also rainbow suit collections in 2018S/S and 2019S/S. These suits (fig.25c) were colour-saturated and the palette looked as if inspired from the Memphis Movement (bright bold patterns) with dynamic effects (Verner, Kenzo, 2018S/S). All these rainbow collections are trying to get across the message today that all colours, nationalities, identities and generations can be fully integrated, that is kind of a 'multi-cultural adventure' (Mower, Louis Vuitton, 2018S/S). Furthermore, by using these bold bright colours, it is trying to convey the 'gender non-binary' idea very much relevant today, that there is no longer difference between the male and female offerings in fashion.



Fig.25a Gucci
2020F/W



Fig.25b Burberry
2018F/W



Fig.25c Kenzo
2018S/S



Fig.25d Calvin
Klein 2016F/W

There are even clever ways devised by designers to help less confident men try different colours other than conventional suit colours (i.e. achromatic or navy). For instance, Dries van Noten has shown a palette of plaster pink, teal, beige, tobacco brown, khaki and mustard but has combined a military feel to the collection, to make it more wearable for men (Mower, Dries van Noten, 2018S/S). These military-referenced looks in fact speaks to ‘the strife-torn times’ men live in today, the sense that there is a war going on in the background of their daily lives (Ibid). They are trying to portray themselves that they are using fashion as an outlet for their inner and outer conflict. Furthermore, Calvin Klein (fig.25d) cleverly exploited lustrous colours such as gold, platinum, and rose-gold to frame buffed-out, tanned and toned models (typical of Calvin Klein shows); these men almost look like ‘semi-clad demi-gods’, like ‘gilded Catholic icons of good-looking saints’ (Fury, Calvin Klein, 2016F/W). Thus, these men look strong and tough, but the shiny gold colour gives warmth to show that they are also caring.

In addition, there are active-inspired looks with a colourful approach. This reflects the current trend of ‘active commuter looks’ with energizing colour and active comfort (WGSN, Colour, 2020S/S; F/W). Consequently, many brands including Louis Vuitton, Paul Smith, Kenzo and Dior Homme have adopted colours ranging from ‘digital blue with electric shades’, ‘ultra-cyan’, ‘fresh, oxygenating neo-mint’ to bold, warm hues such as ‘glowing digital red’ and ‘cantaloupe’ (WGSN, Colours, 2020S/S; F/W). Since some men might

not be so familiar with ‘a feminine’ hue like cantaloupe (fig.26a), both Dior Homme and Kenzo have devised suits that mix this ‘sweet and playful’ hue with neutrals (e.g. black or white) to keep it relatively simple and make summer-focused smart-casual items (WGSN, Colours, 2020S/S). Evidently, by bringing in military or tough, muscular theme, or fusing sporty casuals with suits, designers have cleverly been able to adopt less conventional colours in suits, and helping more men to try these new colours.

Classic colours like brown and black are still important but now they are exploited to portray a modern, sophisticated, or casual look. Zegna, in particular, has adopted natural colourways of undyed wool and cashmere such as vicuna brown, turmeric orange and soft brown pastels (Leitch, Zegna, 2017F/W). By integrating the whole looks with such colour and conveying them as a casual adventurer, Sartori, the creative director at Zegna, employed diverse models in their 40s and their 20s; he wanted to create an ideal of what could bring different generations of men together rather than separate them as apart, which is ‘taste’ for classic colours (Ibid.). Burberry too in 2015S/S displayed men as an incessant traveller using a unique brown colour, to demonstrate his careless insouciance to wander wherever and whenever he pleases (Blanks, Burberry, 2015S/S).

Furthermore, although the ‘black suit’ had long been reserved for formalwear and funerals, today black is significantly ‘trickling into’ casual suiting, with flamboyantly coloured t-shirts, sweatshirts or suit jackets layered under another loose-fitting black suit jacket/coat, often paired with trainers or sandals (WGSN, Colours, 2017F/W). As shown by D&G (fig.26b), a boxy black long blazer is matched on top with an intricate floral motif suit of red, yellow, lime-green and blue underneath, to propose a solution to men who might still feel awkward by such an ornate array of colours. Leitch has highlighted that these suits will be enjoyed even by ordinary men going for a night-out with his friends after work (Leitch, Kenzo, 2017S/S). Also, as some consumers today pursue sustainable solutions, trends that last longer

than one season become relevant. Hence, black will still partly stay important in men's wardrobe (WGSN, Gentle Retro, 2020F/W).



Fig.26a Kenzo
2020S/S



Fig.26b D&G
2017F/W



Fig.26c Gucci
2017S/S



Fig.26d Paul
Smith 2016S/S

The last key feature of colour application is that a suit is divided into separate colour blocks. A contrasting colour is placed in each jacket, pants and dress-shirt (WGSN, Tailoring, 2019F/W). This graphic colour-blocking can be seen in suits by Gucci (fig.26c), Paul Smith and even Zegna. Paul Smith matched an exquisite turquoise jacket over yellow suit-pants, which is making a reference to the artist David Hockney's colour palette (fig.26d); Hockney is a regular customer of Paul Smith and the designer has claimed that he wanted men to have 'an independent mind' like the artist (Leitch, Paul Smith, 2016S/S). Interestingly, these colour-block suits remind one of the Colour-Field movement of the 1950/60s, which experimented with expressive colours in large fields (Lee et al, 2020). These colour-block suits portray men almost like visual artists themselves, which can be worn from 'informal meetings' to 'summer Fridays' (WGSN, Tailoring, 2018S/S). This leisurely look signifies that the traditional restrictive TPOs of men's suits are collapsing, which invites men to recognize suits' function more and more as versatile.

Overall, the colourful hues in men's suits today, its range and application, have developed so much to become much broader and sophisticated. In fact, it is now possible to portray various images due to this introduction of diverse colours and their deployment, and as a result, more men can try suits on multiple TPOs.

3.1.4. Fabric

The major features of fabric in contemporary suits today are that numerous experiments are carried out in the whole suit to bring unconventional fabric(s) out itself more, in its entirety. This is in contrast to the 2000s when ‘feminine’ materials were mainly used to emphasize a tight waistline, or as a point detail (Lee et al, 2020). Classic fabrics such as wool, flannel, tweed, and bouclé can still be seen at times, but unconventional, new fabrics have been adopted too to bring a hybrid of casual sportswear and suit. Furthermore, fabrics have been exploited to create ‘crafty patchworks’, or to make novel suits based on sustainable or new media technology ideas.



Fig.27a Paul Smith
2015S/S



Fig.27b Saint
Laurent 2020S/S



Fig.27c Thom
Browne 2017S/S



Fig.27d Zegna
2016S/S

Firstly, it is notable that that silk has been amply used in the entire suit to flow smoothly, as if it will billow in a breeze. Numerous brands such as Paul Smith, Gucci, Armani and Ann Demeulemeester have exploited silk voluminously in their entire boxy suit, however, because of the ample drapery, it even gives an impression of the male models wearing a long silk skirt (Lee et al, 2020). Silk has long been associated with a romantic image due to its lustre and softness, but as one can see from Paul Smith’s suit (fig.27a), the man here shows more of a cool, laidback, easy-going and easy-to-wear image with the silk being in harmony with the boxy silhouette. ‘Suits as easy as pyjamas’ are becoming fashionable, optimizing light-weight, fluid fabrics like silk (WGSN, textiles, 2020F/W). Gucci has created much more colourfully patterned, Chinese chipao- and Japanese silk

gown– inspired silk pyjama suits with mixed cultural references (Fury, Gucci, 2017S/S). On the other hand, Armani, due to its brand aesthetics of understated elegance, and its target range of older age group (35–50 years old), have made these silk pyjama suits in a much more restrained tonal palette and pattern (fig.31b). Saint Laurent (fig.27b) too, even though it is famous for its tight silhouette, has used ample amount of silk to create genie–like pantaloons, giving the freedom of comfort. This is to attract younger generations who are accustomed to the freedom of streetwear, to try tailoring for the first time (Holgate, Saint Laurent, 2020S/S). These ‘pyjama’ suits overall give a relaxed and serene mood to men (WGSN, Tailoring, 2019S/S).

Not just silk, but there are suit jackets, trousers, or both, made entirely of lace or half see–through linen, by brands such as Balmain, Thom Browne, Alexander McQueen, Gucci, Burberry and Zegna. Fig.27c shows a suit by Thom Browne in 2017S/S, made of white hibiscus flower lace with embroideries of surfboards, islands and sharks; it demonstrates a cool, lively, playful image. Zegna (fig.27d) has also demonstrated a carefree, sexy tailoring by applying a ‘lightness and transparency’ to its white linen suit, even though linen suits used to be the sturdy conventions of menswear (Blanks, Zegna, 2016S/S). WGSN has repeatedly emphasized these lace and see–through suits, depending on how much it is see–through (e.g. semi, complete) as defining either ‘modern romantic’, or ‘gender–fluid’ and ‘transcending boundaries of gender...with couture finery’ (WGSN, Textiles, 2020S/S). These materials indeed portray men as ‘daring’, and ‘intellectual’ (because they are using these light fabrics to stay cool), and the suits made out of these materials are ideal for summer parties and holidays, showing optimism in ‘inclusivity’ (Ibid.) Michele at Gucci has stressed how it is all about taking this sort of materials, and then ‘taking it, and making it yours (in whatever way you like)’ (Blanks, Gucci, 2015F/W). Thus, more men are no longer worried about its conventional ‘feminine’ associations, but using it for their own taste. This questions traditional notions of masculinity; men are now more up to “having fun” (Isaac–Goize, AD, 2020F/W).

Interestingly, there are today many suits that have been made to take strong, tough images overall, even when selecting conventional feminine materials such as velvet, fur, and silk. For instance, Zegna has shown lustrous velvet suits, matched with a large leather bag placed frontally, to convey an overall impression of a body–armour, and thus embodying a powerful ‘tour de force’ image (Lee et al, 2020). Fig.28a shows a notable example, and portrays the man as if ‘going on a bike ride’, showing ‘function’ and ‘sophistication’, and an ideal of ‘world travellers’ (Blanks, Zegna, 2015F/W). On the other hand, Ann Demeulemeester (fig.28b) has made a short–sleeved ‘long blazer suit’ in honey that featured an ‘impressive blow–dried poodle eruption of volume’ made of camel mohair (Leitch, AD, 2016F/W). Borrowing the words of the designer, she said she wanted to portray a strong God figure, “Apollo and his beauty” through this suit. All these clever novel suits open the possibility of more men trying on traditionally ‘feminine’ materials without fearing they might be overwhelming themselves with effeminacy.

Secondly, it is noteworthy that fabrics have often been exploited to create hybrid of casual sportswear and suit (‘bringing athleisure into the realm of relaxed tailoring’) by blending performance functionality into men’s suits (WGSN, Tailoring, 2018S/S). This is achieved by using jersey–like, very stretchy Lycra–infused wovens, which allow ‘unparalleled range of motion’ (Ibid). Some textiles even offer wind– and weather–proof membranes by putting tight water–repelling structures and bio–based coatings, or have technological functions such as having headphone–jack ducts within the textile (WGSN, Tailoring, 2019S/S). These sporty, functional suit jackets have been labelled as ‘commuter blazers’ and ‘ergonomic jackets’ (Ibid), and they have especially been developed by Zegna, Calvin Klein and Kenzo. They can withstand all trials of a vigorous commute and protect their wearers (ibid). For instance, in Zegna’s collections, a series of suit looks were made of stretch silk and jersey blends, designed to stretch and flex even ‘with dancers’ bodies’ (Cardini, Zegna, 2018S/S). Deep round–neck silk sweaters were worn instead

of dress-shirts underneath these blazers, which were only 200g in weight. This gave so much ease and freedom. Zegna has evidently shown here a malleable style, ‘deconstructing the formal codes’; he made the suits ‘breathe, creating an airy, outdoorsy feel’ (Ibid).



Fig.28a Zegna
2015F/W



Fig.28b Ann.
Demeulemeester, 2016F/W



Fig.28c Calvin
Klein 2015S/S



Fig.28d Kenzo
2020S/S

Calvin Klein went further and has combined a double-breasted jacket with layers of poplin and mesh boxers and a tank top made from glossy eel-skin for active commuters (fig.28c) (Blanks, Calvin Klein 2015S/S). However, by far, the suits that showed most ‘hyper-athleticism’ were by Kenzo, where it demonstrated a sophisticated suit entirely made of neoprene (fig.28d). These ‘hyper-athletic’ suits in this filmy fabric were in underwater coral hues evoking ‘mermaids’ and ‘haenyeo’ (‘fisherwomen from Korea’) for men who enjoy aqua adventures and travel (Verner, Kenzo, 2020S/S).

Furthermore, because of this rise in the popularity of casual themes in suits, men’s suit forms are boldly modified to let various fabrics co-exist as eclectic patchwork panelling, to grab attention of the youth. Many times, WGSN has made notable comments on it using the following keywords: “split-personality panelling”, and “contrast sleeves” (WGSN, Tailoring, 2017S/S; 2019F/W; 2020F/W). For instance, Dior Homme (fig.29a) has replaced a soft black suit jacket’s sleeves with comfortable, rounded, wine-coloured velveteen ones, to give a more youthful skater boy look (Lee et al, 2020). These panelled suits evidently convey the men as looking ‘chilled-out’ and ‘urban’, allowing the men to wear them outside while they are hanging

out with friends. In addition, designers have incorporated deadstock or leftover materials in these panelled looks, for a more responsible approach; thus, this look is not only attractive but can be sustainable as well (WGSN, Tailoring, 2020F/W).

In fact, to cater the needs of men who are environmentally– and socially– conscious, many suits today are made out of fabrics that have thoroughly considered sustainable issues, such as fabrics sourced from organically grown naturals, to socially responsible processes and lower–impact finishes (WGSN Textiles, 2020S/S). For instance, Zegna has made suit blazers with new fabrics whose dyes were all chemical–free and sourced from natural ingredients; the rust in the jacket (fig.29b) came from tea and tobacco, and the violet against it was produced from crocus flower (Leitch, Zegna, 2018F/W). Soon the social value system will consider ‘recycled/upcycled/carbon neutral’ materials as more precious than those which ‘represent ecological depletion’ (Leitch, Zegna, 2020S/S). Maison Margiela also in its 2020S/S collection made most of its suits from materials that already existed in thrift shops: ‘from “memories” of bourgeois classics...recut, turned inside out, collaged...’ (Mower, Maison Margiela, 2020S/S). This was all done for today’s new generation of men who are into being repurposers. Furthermore, Charles Jeffrey Loverboy highlighted the importance of ‘localism’ (sourcing fabrics nearby); he went back to Orkney Islands, his Scottish roots, and got ideas and materials from there (Mower, CJL, 2020F/W). As fig.29c shows, there are elaborate hand–crafted costumes, based on the love of nature and rural families living there.

Finally, futuristic suits from novel textiles can be found, to reflect men who are into technology. Most noticeably, the 2018S/S collection by Maison Margiela reflected today’s phone–camera/ social–media phenomenon as the audience members were asked to turn their cameras to flash; each taking ‘their own images of fabrics as they strobed and refracted into high–tech prismatic rainbows as they moved’ to capture the moment (Mower, Maison Margiela, 2018S/S).



Fig.29a Dior
Homme 2018S/S



Fig.29b Zegna
2018F/W



Fig.29c Charles Jeffrey
Loverboy 2020F/W



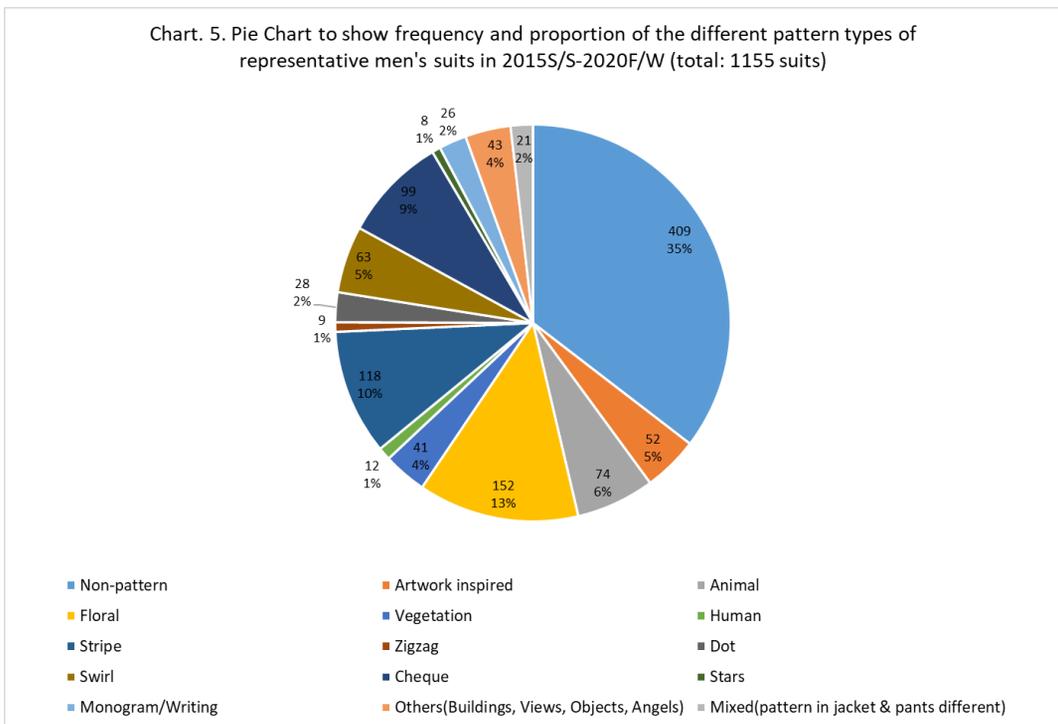
Fig.29d Maison
Margiela 2018S/S

The fast speed of modern consciousness, and changing technology were what this collection was about; it was formatted as a double vision experience, the human eye showing one reality, and the screen another (Ibid). This is the way men live today, their brains trained to judge every event depending on how they will look on computer screens or Instagram. So Galliano made a research and developed the materials for this collection: “it’s scientific...we recorded every moment of what we were making, then looked at the photos and altered what we were doing (with the fabrics)”(Ibid). Therefore, the reaction of polyurethane to camera flash and the illusionary images that show when holographic materials is layered over, were all taken into account (Ibid.). As fig.29d demonstrates, these futuristic material suits make the men look casual, sporty, and spontaneous.

Overall, there is a more diverse range and usage of fabric materials in men’s suits today, enabling men to freely try them for various images and situations. Some fabrics are openly modern romantic or gender–fluid, but there are also clever usages devised by designers to help men try softer fabrics without fearing they might look too ‘feminine’. There is also the blurring of casualwear and suit today, to make more comfortable suits that can even be worn as home–wear; youthful urban streetwear; or even commuter–wear and outdoor–wear. In addition, futuristic technological suits in novel materials have been created, and sustainable materials too have become particularly important to meet the demands of environmentally conscious men.

3.1.5. Pattern

The most noticeable pattern feature of suits in 2015S/S–2020F/W is the significant increase in the variety of flamboyant patterns on the entire suit surface. This contrasts with the 2000s, when patterns did not make an important appearance in menswear suits relatively, thus they were mainly restricted to non-patterns, or sometimes stripes (Bang & Ha, 2010). However, as Chart.5 demonstrates, there exists today a myriad of colourful patterns, such as floral, vegetation, animal, lettering/monogram, objects, and novel visual artwork inspired motifs.



Firstly, classic patterns have returned as well, such as checks (grid, glen, prince of Wales, tattersall, dogtooth, houndstooth checks) and chalk stripes. Although these patterns show a ‘timeless luxury’ and give ‘a dandy attitude’ to suiting (WGSN, Tailoring, Textiles, 2020S/S), there have been reinventions to give them a much more modern feel today. For instance, patterns have been made larger and bolder by using graphic overchecks and plaids, as seen by Charles Jeffrey Loverboy’s suit (fig.30a). Jeffrey has somehow made

‘decadence’ and ‘innocence’ happily co-exist, by giving a comfortable pyjama look but with fish-net socks peeking through, to give individuality (Mower, CJL, 2019F/W). The look can be either worn comfortably at home or even when going to nearby grocers. Furthermore, although chalk/pin stripes have conventionally been associated with the ‘power suits’ of finance titans, they are now given a casual look with unstructured double-breasted jackets, sportier baggy trousers with jogger cuffs and elastic waists; both McQueen and Dior Homme have shown them to convey a smart skater message (WGSN, Tailoring, 2017F/W). Evidently, as the 2010s have closed, men now live in a world where even the most staid and stuffy tropes can be flipped and re-invented (WGSN, Textiles, 2019F/W).



Fig.30a Charles Jeffrey
 Loverboy 2020S/S



Fig.30b D&G
 2018S/S



Fig.30c Dior Homme
 2015S/S



Fig.30d Louis
 Vuitton 2015F/W

Secondly, innovative and flamboyant patterns are seen, all-over on a suit, especially inspired by original artworks or with actual artist collaborations, as ‘menswear continues to forge new ground’ (WGSN, Prints, 2020S/S). This all-over print suit is ‘an aspiration garment championed by those looking to maximise their self-expression’ (WGSN, Tailoring, 2018S/S). D&G (fig.30b) has presented a full-patterned suit with pink cherry-blossoms and portraits of beauty from the Japanese ukiyo-e woodblock prints (Lee et al, 2020). Alexander McQueen exploited flamboyant colour-daub prints, referencing the artist Francis Bacon and photographer John Deakin (Leitch, AMQ, 2019S/S). Both men were denizens of 1950s Soho, a free space in Britain where homosexuality was officially banned and both were gay (Ibid). These suits endow men with romantic/soft

images, or if patterns are bolder, even showing gender–fluid images.

However, there are not just ‘romantic’, ‘passionate’, ‘gender–fluid’ suits in artwork–inspired suits; there are other such suits which show men’s strong, energetic charisma. For instance, Dior Homme (fig.30c) has shown suits as if it has been stroked randomly with colourful paints of red, yellow and blue, reminding one of Jackson Pollock’s Abstract Expressionist paintings, hence highlighting an image of energy and visual dynamism (Lee et al, 2020). Kim Jones at Louis Vuitton (fig.30d) also chose 4 original prints from the archives of the artist, Christopher Nemeth, and reproduced them in laser–etched pattern blazers; they look so ‘fresh’ and ‘energetic’ even though they are in toned–down beige for less confident men to try a bold pattern as well (Blanks, Louis Vuitton, 2015F/W). Finally, on many of D&G (fig.31a)’s suits, what simply looks like ‘feminine’ decorative motifs are actually Napoleon’s imperial family emblems, a bee and crown, embroidered all–over (Lee et al, 2020). This heraldic symbol represent ‘resurrection’ and ‘royal dignity’, thus connotate bravery and toughness (Ibid). In the same collection, D&G also demonstrated in their suits families, from Renaissance makings of the Nativity, to innocent cartoons of the classic nuclear mum, dad and two kids images; the designers wanted to stress the notion of family, how it is important today for men to stay at home and have a loving relationship with their family (Blanks, D&G, 2015F/W).

Thirdly, there is a prominent use of vegetation and floral motifs. Unlike in the past, when most of these floral patterns were worn by few old, eccentric men, today these patterned suits have youth–led energy, ideally worn by both youth and older generations for a summer party or even on daily occasions (WGSN, Patterned Suit, 2015S/S). Dark or neutral achromatic grounds make these patterns more wearable and offer the versatility to coordinate (Ibid.). For example, the Eastern–motifs influenced suit with peaceful, calm orchids shown by Armani (fig.31b) can even be worn as a home–wear with its serene neutral ground.



Fig.31a D&G
2015F/W



Fig.31b Giorgio
Armani 2019S/S



Fig.31c Gucci
2017S/S



Fig.31d Alexander
McQueen 2018S/S

Floral or vegetation patterns are actually adopted by all 20 brands in at least one or more of their collections; there are even really bold floral pattern of reds and pastel–sky blues but from 2017, there are also numerous minute floral variations. This indicates that men’s perception has transformed to now even enjoying such dainty motifs on a whole suit. For instance, suits by D&G and Gucci (fig.31c) give ‘lavish’, ‘opulent’ eveningwear feel with their soft florals; these florals are emerging as a key print for ‘the #soft masculinity’ and ‘the modern romantics’ looks (WGSN, Tailoring, 2020S/S). They are perfect for holidays or parties (Ibid.). For men also, ‘life needs emotions’ and these romantic floral suits today are certainly read as men’s call ‘to the next generation to celebrate its sensitivities’ (Ibid.). Furthermore, it is better that these flamboyant patterns are on suits because ‘suits’ are archetypes of men; designers have called this ‘archi–fluidity’ (Leitch, Dries van Noten, 2020S/S). Thus, designers can be more fluid with conventionally ‘feminine’ patterns because it is based on a suit, which still has that link to ‘masculinity’.

Nevertheless, there are floral and vegetation motifs that do not only give ‘feminine, romantic, connotations’, for men who still want to look charismatic and strong. For instance, an image of awe–inspiring, strong, confident, and unpolished charisma has been conveyed by Alexander McQueen’s suit (fig.31d), where a prodigious tree of life motif has been embroidered frontally in gold and crystal, combined with hanging decorations of coarse black yarn from each of the branches and roots (Lee et al, 2020). It is like ‘a rockstar’

embellishment, such shiny and precious decorations having been turned into a masculine idiom (WGSN, Tailoring, 2018S/S). Evidently, floral and vegetation motifs can be utilized to give an image of confident and imposing charisma.

Furthermore, there is a consumer appeal for personal items and customisation today, so there is a demand for #patchwork floral/vegetation prints made from upcycled printed deadstock or waste fabrics, for ‘repurposed’ looks, as a sustainable approach (WGSN, Tailoring, 2020S/S; 2020F/W). Also, recently, D&G (fig.32a) has created suits with prints of tropical fruit salad, ranging from watermelon to pineapples, in order to make a comment about global warming, and how the recent climate change has brought Italians to even grow unusual tropical fruits. WGSN has highlighted that brands are even considering ‘collaborating with national parks on charitable donation collections’, and ‘introduce patterns inspired from national parks’, as ‘deforestation and wildfires’ stay prevalent in global news (WGSN, Prints & Graphics, 2020F/W).



Fig.32a D&G
2017S/S

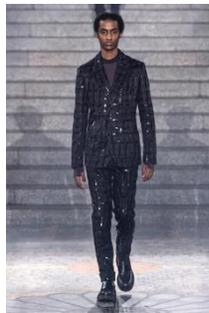


Fig.32b Zegna
2019F/W



Fig.32c Balmain
2016S/S



Fig.32d D&G
2016S/S

In addition, many designers have taken extreme close-ups or aerial shots of nature for all-over crisp photo print designs, in order to employ new technology and digital printing (“#photoflorals”, ‘#digital filters’, ‘#naturestexture’, ‘#realtreecamo; WGSN, Prints & Graphics, 2020S/S; 2020F/W). Consequently, organic prints such as tree camouflage are reimagined into geometric shapes that remind one of blueprints and urban renderings used by city planners (Ibid.).

Fig.32b shows one example of these suits, by Zegna, which portray the man as ‘neo–futuristic’ (Leitch, Zegna, 2019F/W).

Fourthly, there are bold trending animal prints such as animal skin prints; prints of animal themselves; and flamboyant animals mixed from various geographical regions and cultures. Both Gucci and D&G have migrated animal markings ‘over from womenswear’, such as snakeskin, appaloosa spots, and leopard prints (WGSN, Tailoring, 2020F/W). In particular, Gucci has shown a sensual snakeskin suit, which has mashed up masculine stereotype; it is ‘genderless’ and ‘romantic’, especially demonstrating menswear mixed with womens–wear (Fury, Gucci, 2016F/W). These suits will certainly drive male individuals to attempt to escape restrictions in menswear, through more of their obsession with style and taste (Blanks, Valentino, 2015S/S). However, there are also other animal skin print suits which does not portray men as sensual or romantic, but as an ‘adventurer’. These suits are part of the ‘#jungletrekker’ theme and have been shown as a key example by the tiger print Balmain suits (fig.32c).

In addition, there are prints of animal themselves for those men who might feel burdened by animal skin looks, and thus, there are novel inventions of big animal patterns which portray a tough image. For instance, Louis Vuitton has shown male models wearing a shirt with African Masai– and Savannah– inspired enlarged giraffe patterns, casually carrying the same patterned suit–jacket on his holdall (Lee et al, 2020). These suits, according to the designer, were ‘recontextualized punk’ and presented what ‘rebellion’ could mean for more conservative men (Fury, Louis Vuitton, 2017S/S). These big, mutated animals overall impart a wild punkish charm. Valentino and Paul Smith too have shown enlarged, hard–to–miss, repeating animal prints such as fantasy beasts, and large ants the size of one’s hand. The ants were there because they symbolized ‘a hive mentality’ that Paul Smith said he was engaged in rejecting, “it’s just about being your own character” (Leitch, Paul Smith, 2016S/S). They portray the men as subversive and not belonging to the societal norms.

Paul Smith in his other collection has shown teeth–baring dinosaurs and D&G has also shown soaring free birds; however, because they are relatively small and are in dark or muted colour palette, they do not look so subversive. Paul Smith’s suits with their ‘active dinosaurs’ have been matched with sunglasses and comfortable shoes, thus portray the men as dynamic, active commuters, being cheerful and dignified on his way to work. Indeed, Paul Smiths’ frequent customers are city businessmen, who like classic with a twist (quirky gentlemen). D&G’s suits (fig.32d) with the birds have been combined with relaxed double–breasted fit, short pants, and espadrille sandals, and they are in smooth flowing silk in light, serene palette, so convey men as a relaxed homebody, as if he is shortly out to go to a nearby café.

There are outright openly ‘kitsch’, ‘camp’ animal prints, mixed from various cultures, as presented by Gucci and Thom Browne in their suits as over–all pattern. This includes parades of sea animals, peacocks, dragons, etc, in the middle of bamboo forests, or even Disney characters peeking through, thus designers are colliding and mixing cultural references like ‘alchemists’ from the East, Europe, and Hollywood (Mower, Gucci, 2017F/W). These suits were ‘destined to proceed straight onto the steps of the Metropolitan Museum’ (Ibid.). As fig.33a clearly demonstrates, the man and the suit look surreal enough with giant crabs, lobsters, and whales, and he was walking while the music was playing with Bowie singing ‘There is a Happy Land’ (Leitch, Thom Browne, 2019S/S). Altogether, the colourful bold pattern and the music present the man as playful and happy.



Fig.33a Thom Browne 2019S/S



Fig.33b Alexander McQueen 2018S/S



Fig.33c Louis Vuitton 2018F/W



Fig.33d Givenchy 2017S/S

Fifthly, there are novel patterns of typography in men's suits today, especially logos or monograms play into suit styling by adopting graffiti style prints, and these letterings have become a part of customised looks (WGSN, Tailoring, 2020S/S). In particular, there is a '#super-supporter' typography that reflects UK football subculture (WGSN, Prints & Graphics, 2019F/W). In addition, there are 'doodle' shirts or suits, as demonstrated by Alexander McQueen (fig.33b) and Louis Vuitton. Based on the writings, WGSN has stressed that this is 'a retort to the recent political uncertainty felt across the globe' (WGSN, Tailoring, 2018S/S). As fig.33b shows, bewildered and carefree sketches and letterings create a playful undercurrent to satirize the current political situations.

Furthermore, there were short 'short suits' with scratchy rock-textured prints in Louis Vuitton's 2018F/W collection, also matched with same patterned leggings but with Louis Vuitton monograms on them (fig.33c). These leggings and short suits were where the extra genius twist came from, as in the past, men did not really associate with these items, but here they have been further highlighted by putting novel patterns and monograms on them. In fact, these prints and monograms were developed from the creative director's own high-tech aerial landscape photographs taken from a helicopter in Kenya in summer 2017 (Mower, Louis Vuitton, 2018F/W). As fig.33c shows, the overall look portrays the man as an active adventurer, or due to its graphic pattern and monogram, he looks like one of the 'young men in the age of social media' who can show-off on Instagram which brand he is wearing openly and confidently (Ibid).

Kenzo is another design house, which has also portrayed men as technology-friendly by using hieroglyph-like letterings and spaceships on its suits. Borrowing the words from the Vogue commentator, this pattern by Kenzo looks like 'the jottings of some locked-up alien abductee or a graffiti artist who's watched too much Stargate' (Leitch, Kenzo, 2015F/W). Stargate is a TV series based on military science fiction, thus it is another flexible approach for men

to try somewhat flamboyant pattern without worrying that they look too 'feminine', as these patterns have an association with what men are conventionally interested in.

Lastly, there are novel patterns on men's suits that are inspired from daily objects, such as musical instruments, candy floss, comics, and interestingly prints of money. In particular, Givenchy (fig.33d) has shown 'a key decorative motif with the dollar bill imagery' (Fury, Givenchy, 2017S/S). This digital print of money has been combined with same-patterned combat bags and comfortable trainers, showing an 'active commuter' image as if he is eager to face a day of hard 'money-earning'. Borrowing a motif which men are more familiar with (i.e. money), can certainly make it easier for more men to be decorative and enjoy such bold patterns, just like women enjoy.

Taken together, the vast use of colourful, vibrant patterns in men's contemporary suits such as bold check, art-inspired, floral and vegetation, animal, typography, and daily object motifs, invite men to a much wider range of images and expressions of masculinity today. Men can choose any one of these expressions according to their wishes, and even within this expression, they can select a range from subtle ones to much bolder ones, depending on how confident the man is. All this has allowed men's suits to become an item that can be adapted for various TPOs, not simply restricted to formal ones.

3.1.6. Accessories

Many novel accessories, even those that were regarded as women's accessories only, are prominently used with contemporary men's suits. It is now possible for men to reappropriate these "feminine" accessories and communicate a more variety of images. True, women's accessories were used in the past by men such as pendant necklaces and ribbon belts, but their usage was mostly limited to casual androgynous looks. However, today, these can be exploited even to give men charismatic strength, as one shall see. Furthermore, there are interesting sports accessories creatively matched with suits, as well as exaggerated shoes, bags, masks, and face-piercings. Finally, there are novel restored bags and protective gears for those who are conscious of the environment and technology-friendly.

There are some traditional 'masculine' suit accessories still used such as corsage, cuff links, briefcases, glasses etc. These accessories signify how traditional, retro looks can be re-invented today to be made more modern; for instance, 'squared aviator frames' and 'elegantly upgraded wayfarer (sunglasses)', 'plaque belt' and 'big weekend bags' (to put many things in for a family holiday) (WGSN, occasional 80s, 2020F/W). These accessories help to convey men as strong and tough, but at the same time having a care for their families.

However, the most noticeable suit accessories of 2015S/S–2020F/W are firstly the "conventional women's" accessories and how they are re-appropriated by men in their suit looks. They show not only 'romantic mood' but other various expressions as well. For instance, there is a vast adoption of long colourful silk scarfs that stand out themselves, casually hung over a capacious flowing silk suit to embody men's comfort and relaxed spirit (Lee et al, 2020). Paul Smith has paraded these looks, and added to this near-louche scarf is a relaxing paisley patterned silk bag, matching slip-on trainers, and friendship rings, overall giving feather lightness (fig.34a). This new suit style can even be worn as a beach or resort-wear, or going

somewhere lightly to meet his friends; it is, as Paul Smith has pointed out, “pursuit of leisurely perfection”(Carter, Paul Smith, 2015S/S). Dior Homme too has completely renewed its famous grey suit (“once thought impervious to fashion and strictly separated in the masculine gendered category”) by adding a diagonal sash, an idea from “the women’s couture side of the house”(Mower, Dior Homme, 2020S/S). Clearly, accessories are no longer “assigned by gender” as Dior Homme has perfectly amalgamated “feeling into elegance and romance...dissolving barriers between classes and categories” (ibid.).



Fig.34a Paul Smith 2015S/S



Fig.34b Dries van Noten 2020F/W



Fig.34c Gucci 2016F/W



Fig.34d Dior Homme 2017F/W

There is a wide use of fur accessories to men’s suits also; this is part of soft and romantic masculinity to show ‘modern romantics’ (WGSN, modern romantics, 2020F/W) in general. For example, Armani has shown ‘beautiful men’ by the vast use of fur scarves to add texture to the luxe (Blanks, Armani, 2015F/W). However, different images can be portrayed with a novel twist to these fur covers. This is most perfectly demonstrated by the fur accessory that Dries van Noten (fig.34b) has created, the brand which tend to make more wearable gender-blurring items for young men in 20–30s. Indeed, Leitch here has pointed out that though the fur covering is ‘women’s item for men, it is not being transgender at all’, but actually showing ‘strong power’ and ‘alpha-everything’ (Leitch, Dries van Noten, 2020F/W). This has been achieved by making the fox fur (fake) show tooth and claw, and it has been matched with boxing boots to give an image of ‘Mexican wrestling attire’ (Ibid). Clearly, it shows the man as strong and tough.

Decorative, colourful shoes such as espadrilles, pumps, or loafers in velvet or fur have been used widely in suits. Both Valentino, Givenchy, and D&G have exploited flamboyant espadrilles (Spanish summer footwear) or T-bar sandals. In particular, the espadrilles used to be ‘peasant shoes’ and enjoyed more by women, but now they have been embroidered and beaded to make ‘peasant footwear made fit for a king’ (Blanks, D&G, 2016S/S). Because of their comfort, lightness, and good air flow, they emphasize a serene mood to suits, thus portray men as a holiday relaxer, or homebody who has come out for a walk nearby. On the other hand, there are also winter shoes, pumps or loafers with soft boudoir inspirations; they are amped up even with pussy bows or gold hardware details (WGSN, modern romantics, 2020F/W). For instance, Gucci (fig.34c) has shown some mink-lined shoes with velvet theme. Overall, these “boudoir” shoes convey the men as modern romantics, and when they become more extravagant, have also subverted the gender divide (Blanks, Gucci, 2016F/W).

Interestingly, designers today are embellishing their suits with bright orange accessories. For example, Dior Homme (fig.34d) has created fluorescent orange gloves to be worn by men with their yellow-tinted brown suits. However, as *Vogue* underlines, ‘Orange is the new Black’ for menswear, hence, the orange is now being perceived by men to give that charismatic strength (Compain, 2016; Lee et al, 2020). The creative director at Dior Homme has highlighted how he wants to form ‘the right tailoring’ so that young men can self-indulge in suits, and here he wanted to create a look of active commuters or even the sybaritic escapism of clubbing after work (Mower, Dior Homme, 2017F/W). The look certainly does give a sporty image.

There are also decorative headpieces and face-piercing jewellery with meaningful narratives. These jewellery pieces have become much bolder, borrowing from pearl, flower and foliage motifs; in particular, Ann Demeulemeester (fig.35a) has shown theatrical tailored look emphasized by metallic creep of ivy jewellery (Isaac-Goize, AD, 2020F/W). Not only has the designer romanced his ballet

themed suits, but has portrayed the men as visual/performative artists with sculpture like crisp jewellery. Gucci(fig.35b) too has created a sensational headpiece; suited men were hooded in what looked like shiny ‘lavender–lace allusions to burkas’ (Mower, Gucci, 2018F/W). This headpiece was to show how men today construct their identities(a population going through self–regeneration through the powers of technology, media, etc); it sought to search truths around fashion as a medium for transmitting inner states – an image of what is happening as human brains have become irradiated in the LED light of the information age (Ibid). Michele has accentuated how this is positive, ‘the possibility of being liberated from the confines of the natural condition we are born into’ and also allow the possibility of the breakdown of binary gender roles(Ibid.). There is not a specific definition of being what a woman or a man is today, one just decides what he/she wants to be. This unique accessory was one that gained numerous Instagram commentaries. It portrays men as gender–fluid, and also technology–friendly (eye–catching for Instagram).



Fig.35a Ann Demeulemeester 2020F/W



Fig.35b Gucci 2018F/W



Fig.35c Valentino 2020F/W



Fig.35d Dior Homme 2020S/S

A lot of miniature cross or waist bags in leather, at times with hand–painted motifs, have decorated men’s suits, adding another layer of luxury (WGSN, Accessories, 2020F/W). Both Dior Homme and Valentino have stressed that luxury for men and women is being dissolved into a median category, as the male models have segued seamlessly into carrying small cross–body or waist bags (Mower,

Valentino, 2020F/W). If things can be put in, they can be utility pouches or bags, and give more an overall look of light-hearted active commuters, as fig.35c from Valentino 2020F/W demonstrates. In contrast, if these bags are so tiny that they are indistinguishable from micro mini-bags on chains, then they give the men a look of ‘modern romantics’ as fig.35d by Dior Homme illustrates (Ibid; Mower, Dior Homme, 2020S/S). This is largely a youth phenomenon, but Piccoli at Valentino has pointed out that as a father seeing his children growing into twenties and taking these accessories, he can sense a positive direction in that he can also follow them (Ibid).

The second most noteworthy feature is how suits are matched with very colorful sporty accessories. This includes fashionable sneakers, beanies, desert boots, aqua shoes, even Birkenstocks, and eye-catching sling bags, worn frontally on suits. These reinforce athletic-inspired messages (WGSN, Tailoring, 2017F/W). For instance, D&G had sneakers ‘dipped in resin’, given ‘elegant brand signature’, scribbled and sketched on ‘in teen-dream mosaic’ (fig.41c); and Valentino had sneakers their own individual collage ‘of multi-coloured knitted textiles’, as well as ‘flashes of metallic, totemic symbol; and striped binding’ (Leitch, D&G, 2017F/W; Mower, Valentino, 2018S/S). Clearly, each pair was so individualistic. Zegna too created decorative, fringed slip-ons for its suits, which is unusual for quite a conservative brand. Pilati at Zegna specifically stated that he wanted to target new breed of businessmen in the digital era, ‘for whom a suit stands for something other than a regimental uniform for the office’ (Blanks, Zegna, 2016S/S). To these sneakers or slip-ons, draw-string slouch bags can be worn (Leitch, Paul Smith 2020S/S); or a backpack with an inbuilt wireless speaker (“boom box 2.0: a sort of Lego-like system of click-together portage”) (Leitch, Zegna, 2019F/W). These looks all allow men to build their own commuter harness, to show them as active commuter and/or technology friendly.

There are even more directly sport-inspired shoes to suits, such as desert boots and aqua shoes. For instance, Rousteing at Balmain

conceived his open-toe sport boots inspired from the Olympic 3-time gold medallist ski champion, Jean-Claude Killy, to make a kind of hybrid between desert boots and gladiator sandals (Verner, Balmain, 2015S/S). In addition, Kenzo's designers created scuba-style aqua sandals (fig.28d), inspired from 'hanyeo (Korean fisherwomen)' and surfing (Verner, Kenzo, 2020S/S). To these shoes, jungle trekker suits or neoprene suits were matched respectively, to convey them distinctly as extreme adventurer or traveller. To accentuate this outdoor mood, 'adventure bags' have been designed to go with suits by many brands such as Burberry and Louis Vuitton. Louis Vuitton's creative director, having known from personal experience what real travellers need, has made bags/cases that could be opened to reveal 'a portable writing desk', for instance (Blanks, LV, 2015S/S). Interestingly, Gucci has made cross-body strap of a large semi-duffel bag, like a military sash, to give 'military' and 'nautical' associations to its travelling men. This is perhaps to emphasize the strong character one needs when they are travelling for outdoor activities.



Fig.36a Louis Vuitton
2017F/W



Fig.36b Thom
Browne 2019S/S



Fig.36c Saint
Laurent 2015S/S

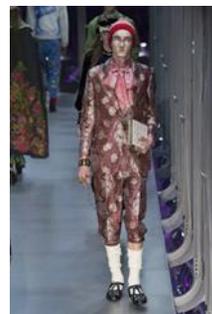


Fig.36d Gucci
2017F/W

There are even unique collaborations with sport or casual brands to integrate casualwear into suits and make them more relevant today. For instance, Valentino made a collaboration with Birkenstock; "It is a shoe that has universality, like denim. It has no gender, no status...it is even seasonless too...just wear them with socks" (Mower, Valentino, 2019F/W). With the Birkenstock slippers, the man looks more comfortable than ever in his spacious 'pyjama-like sleek suit',

making him look like a homebody. Louis Vuitton also collaborated with Supreme to make sling bags, skateboard trunks, duffels, bandanas and phone cases. As fig.36a demonstrates, the suit, long belt and the Supreme sling bag overall give a look of ease, and are influenced by ‘street style’ skate culture, from ‘the uptown–downtown social mix’(Mower, Louis Vuitton, 2017F/W). These interesting collaborations clearly give more diverse images to suits, and help suits to become inclusive and open to new opportunities.

Thirdly, extremely distorted or exaggerated shoes, socks, bags, hats, masks, and face–piercings have been used with suits. They have been inspired from teddy boys to punk rockers, and give a rebellious attitude to these tailoring looks(WGSN, Tailoring, 2019F/W). For instance, boldly mismatched socks and chunky shoes, whether boots or trainers, were built up into exaggerated proportions by Gucci, Thom Browne and Charles Jeffrey Loverboy(WGSN, Tailoring, 2020F/W). These 3 brands are known to provoke reaction and stir gender trouble the most among the 20 brands. As fig.36b shows, the colourful platform shoes and unmatched socks, as well as a straw bowler with a flower affixed to its bright ribbon reinforce the sense of ‘stretched dialectic’ concerning binary genders(Leitch, Thom Browne, 2019S/S). Thom Browne is suggesting that there is no pale beyond which men should ever feel prohibited from dressing(Ibid). In addition, brands like Givenchy and Saint Laurent(fig.36c) have designed 8 cm high Cuban heeled boots, polished hardware elements, and to these they have matched also a bolo tie, rodeo motif belt buckle, studded bag and/or a Stetson in felt(WGSN, subverted americana, 2020F/W). These looks impart men with a cowboy insouciance(Leitch, Saint Laurent, 2015S/S; Mower, Givenchy, 2020F/W).

Eccentric bags with suits have been demonstrated also by brands such as Gucci and Kenzo. For instance, Michele was fascinated with the idea of ‘the aristocratic English–eccentric’ theatricals, so he created small clutch bags, chained to manacle bracelets, in the form of an Austen book(fig.36d)(Mower, Gucci, 2017F/W). With this

unique clutch bag, the man is wearing Mary Jane shoes and an ostentatious knee-length suit with superfluous pattern inspired from the Eastern Chinoiserie. He has clearly bowed to the West and the East, showing multi-layered cultural consciousness. In addition, Kenzo (fig.37a) has created exaggerated shape bags. They are square-in-circle zippered clutches, directly referencing the famous French architect Le Corbusier. They show men as visual artists-like, with the bold block colour/shape, ideal for standing out from crowd.

Furthermore, there are face-covering large hats, masks or jewellery, hiding the face or deforming it. For instance, Ann Demeulemeester (fig.37b) has shown an androgynous figure who looks to be in mourning; a large-brimmed hat covered with black tulle conceal the face, a languid black suit extend down the body, and a hand gloved in lace hold a blackened rose (Verner, AD, 2019S/S). The designer for this collection cited both the Symbolist and Decadent movements from the latter half of the 19thC, from the uncanny prints of artist Odilon Redon to Huysman's book *Against Nature* (Ibid). The lace and tulle accessories transferred to men were rather 'seductive', and have suggested decadence and moral decay (Ibid). It is evidently rebellious and anarchic with youth-driven fervour, and the designer has been successful in blasting gender norms wide open. In addition, Burton's 'McQueen men had their own contemporary savage beauty', with pierced cheeks, 'seemingly impaled on' safety pins or dribbling chains. They look a bit grotesque but at the same time beautiful, which play on the notion of camp. Overall, these exaggerated accessories have evidently been used to give rebellious attitudes, to get across the message of gender fluidity and/or camp.

Fourthly, classic briefcases, bags, and pouches have been re-invented for storing new technology gadgets such as the latest hybrid cameras or iPhones; or specially created in Tik-Tok friendly square proportions to grab attention of their active users. For instance, Zegna's accessories include many special cross-bodied bags, made through collaboration with the German hybrid camera brand (Leitch,

Zegna, 2020F/W). Balmain’s men also wore iPhones on metal–hardware leather harnesses, faced out on the chest, to express a sense of scrutiny, a statement about perspective in a digital world (Leitch, Balmain, 2019F/W). Interestingly, D&G has invited numerous house–dressed TikTok influencers in 2020F/W, to give them first–hand experience of front row fashion; in fact, D&G had done the same in 2009 to be the first house to put ‘bloggers’ in its front row, then in 2015, the house had invited a new wave of Instagram/YouTube influencers (Leitch, D&G, 2020F/W). Naming it as ‘artisanal influencing’, D&G has given these first experiences to ‘3 micro–generations of platform defined digital denizens’ because the house wanted these influencers to closely observe their artisanal accessories closely, and learn how artisanal skill is just as important as technology, as the current technology fanatic generation has come down from these artisans (Ibid.). Thus, it was to explore the value of craft, as seen by the specifically designed ‘watch–repairer’ men (fig.37c), their suits ‘punctuated by several sophisticated sling and chain–borne bags’ to show their artisan skills (Ibid). In fact, these models with their sophisticatedly constructed bags are actually designed specifically to look good on Instagram and TikTok screens.



Fig.37a Kenzo
2015S/S



Fig.37b Ann
Demeulemeester 2019S/S



Fig.37c D&G
2020F/W



Fig.37d Maison
Margiela 2020F/W

Fifthly, there are vintage or recycling experiments with accessories; designers are keen on vintage finds and coming up with novel ways to put together different detailing, colour and/or fabric inserts to make unique items (WGSN, gentle retro, 2020F/W). For instance, Maison Margiela in 2020F/W has created wicker bags (fig.37d), which

Galliano and his team ‘restored from the 1920s through the 1970s’ and the 52C signature handbags, which were made ‘entirely from offcut leathers that come from the manufacturing of other people’s bags’(Mower, Maison Margiela, 2020F/W). Galliano has also listed specific provenance and details as to where these materials all came from, to make each of these unique bags(Ibid.). They have all been touched by human hands, and are not identically mass-produced, forming to be the new definition of luxury(Ibid.). These upcycled bags will undoubtedly be liked by men who are environmentally conscious.

Finally, there is the vast addition of protective gears to suits today, in the face of global warming, to portray men as ‘eco-warriors’ seeking ‘to save (themselves and the earth) from humankind’s depredations’(Blanks, Zegna, 2015F/W). Consequently, numerous brands like Zegna(fig.17c) have adopted in their suit looks with Dr Martens like resilient boots or substantial footwear, worker’s gloves, and bags made in coated fabrics(Ibid.). In the present day of what global climate is like, these accessories are substantial, and sought by many men who are concerned with climate change.

Overall, the numerous accessories and the handling of these for suit fashion today are bringing a significant change to conventional ‘formally restrained with propriety’ men’s suits. This contemporary suit fashion with their diverse accessories will ensure male suit fashion to transcend the old, outmoded images and TPO barriers, to promote diverse expressions of masculinity.

3.1.7. Coordination Style

There are many novel suit coordination styles today cleverly devised by both menswear designers and surprisingly the men themselves on runways according to their unique taste. There are much bolder styles ranging from daring mix-and-match (with very sporty casual items) or cross-over coordination (borrowing from conventional women's items), to numerous layering looks (ponchos, lace, dress, even jockstrap), matching set (in the most couture like fabric or pattern), and finally WIW (coordinate myself, Whatever-I-Want) styles. This is a striking contrast to the suits' coordination in the past, where they were much more restrained overall through unifying the top and bottom by one colour or fabric, to remain formal.

Firstly, there are unexpected mix-and-match or cross-over coordination styles through making hybrids of suit and 'colourful sporty casual' and 'conventional feminine' items.



Fig.38a Louis Vuitton 2018S/S



Fig.38b Giorgio Armani 2016S/S



Fig.38c Zegna 2018S/S



Fig.38d Givenchy 2020S/S

One key feature is how many conventional evening suit jackets have been matched with casual jogger or skater pants, leggings, or even pyjama-like shorts. Thus, the evening jackets are given a new context, as it is pulled into daywear and restyled with easy casual separates (WGSN, Tailoring 2015S/S). For instance, Louis Vuitton (fig.38a) in 2018S/S has shown relaxed boxy jackets with comfortable and stretchy Lycra jogger shorts or silk pyjama-like shorts, as if he is going somewhere near his home, but still wanting

to look fashionable. Louis Vuitton's male target segment has been called as 'Actualisers' (age range: 18–50), men who are determined, successful with their jobs, and want to always look perfect with their fashion, even if just out for quick. Even Armani (fig.38b), which is quite conservative in terms of their suit designs has used casual wide-pants to mix-and-match with suit jacket and waistcoat ('curated 3-piece ensembles'), to break the style codes. As fig.38b shows, waistcoat is closed diagonally over bare chest, and together with the generous volume of the trousers and fishermen sandals, they give a look of indolence. Because of the large bare chest, the overall look portrays the man as strong and tough, but the sandals and comfortable pants also portray him as a more serene man who has enough time to look after his family as well. Finally, brands like Dior Homme have incorporated skater baggy pants with layers of hoodies, t-shirts and a suit jacket, to give the look of a 'sartorial skater' (WGSN, Tailoring, 2018S/S).

Interestingly, numerous brands by 2018S/S are styling formal suits as an athleisure combination with colourful open-toe sandals or sneakers, a small clutch bag, and topping it all with a bucket hat (fig.38c). The small 'feminine' coloured clutch bags are usually harmonized with pastel-shade boxy suits, and these looks overall convey men's relaxed, carefree confidence, as if they are going to an informal meeting with a friend nearby or even to a grocery shop (Lee et al, 2020). The men look as if they need not to care about whether to put sunscreen or not, due to the bucket hat (WGSN, boy next door, 2019F/W). This distinct coordination style has been shown by many brands including Zegna, Louis Vuitton, and Calvin Klein, which tend to be more functional. However, more colorful brands have also adopted this style; Valentino (fig.18d) even went far to put ostrich feathers (but not 'overly done') on men's bucket hat and trainers. Piccioli at Valentino has claimed that even middle-aged men, who are unpretentiously himself, can enjoy this homebody look too.

Another noticeable styling coordination with suits today is that a

second sporty casual jacket or parka is put on top of the first suit jacket. For instance, Zegna has shown a sophisticated double-breasted suit with a chic dotted scarf, but another jacket is loosely fastened around the waist, almost like a skirt. His overall look is carefree enough, as if he has just finished his work and is going to a sports game with his friends (Lee et al, 2020). There are also many blazer-parka or blazer-windbreaker hybrids, some even in nano weights (WGSN, Tailoring, 2018F/W). This is all for the comfort of commuters; the commuter wardrobe includes performance outerwear, and easy formalwear that are structured lightly or not at all (WGSN, reactivated formal, 2019F/W). Maison Margiela has shown a giant yellow puffer parka with shearling edging on top of the man's black suit; it gives the notion of 'dressing in haste' as men are usually in hurry to go to their work in the mornings (Mower, Maison Margiela, 2018F/W). For these active commuters not to miss out on looking fashionable at the same time, Givenchy (fig.38d)'s designer got ideas from the hyper-modern dandyism of today's Korean street culture. She looked at young men in Seoul 'who are meticulous about fashion, sort of cultish and highly accessorized...' (Mower, Givenchy, 2020S/S). Thus, she has come up with decorative flashy membrane-fine parkas and sunglasses on top of a bold cobalt-coloured suit, making a statement on the current tailoring vs. athleisure debate.

In addition, there are styles where suits have been coordinated with even more highly technical proofs, gears and equipment, for weather protection and thermoregulation. For instance, Louis Vuitton (fig.39a) has incorporated a long parka and leggings into their short knee-length suit, all topped with a large rucksack in the safety warning colour of neon-orange. Instead of a dress-shirt and shoes, layers of fleece top and hiking boots have been given as well, which even more accentuate urban mountaineering alpinist theme. Kenzo also tucked its suit jacket and coat into its trackpants, all made of silky finished nylon (materials one would use for parachuting), and matched this suit look with bags and trailing ripcords, which themselves looked like 'messily rolled up parachute canopies' (Leitch, Kenzo, 2016S/S).

Young men today from the Millennial/Z generations have experiential preferences (Mower, Louis Vuitton, 2018F/W), so such coordination by Louis Vuitton and Kenzo have been devised to give a strong adventurer image. Clearly, suits are not worn on formal events only.

There are suit looks where casual vintage overcoats or padded downs with recycled polyester or Re:Down feather fillers have been put on top (WGSN, Tailoring, 2017F/W), to satisfy the needs of men who have sustainable option in mind. Most notably, D&G (fig.39b) has shown this red brocade suit worn under an overcoat of ‘ripped-up and re-fashioned denim jeans’ for mix & match, demonstrating ‘maximalist opulence’ (Leitch, D&G, 2018F/W). It illustrates that men can look regal even when having sustainability in mind and using upcycled items for their suits.

Exaggerated and voluminous downs (fig.39c) with large ‘feminine’ fur-linings and distorted legwarmers have been matched with down-filled suits, and hence, the fabrication of the outerwear reflected the suit garment underneath. This ‘luxuriously fabricated winterwear’ has been demonstrated by Thom Browne, and is worth mentioning, as the designer has claimed that he wanted to show a possible futuristic route that suits can go, by mixing hyper-sportswear elements. This much exaggerated sport+suit look can look camp yet to men, but perhaps is indeed showing a route for the future, i.e. the blurring of suit and sportswear, and of menswear and womenswear.



Fig.39a Louis Vuitton 2018F/W



Fig.39b D&G 2018F/W



Fig.39c Thom Browne 2018F/W



Fig.39d Balmain 2018F/W

The second big theme of coordination style in suits today is how there is a riot of many layering such as putting sheers on (or under) an opaque shirt/jacket; voluminous knits on suit jacket; layering cut-out jackets or vests on top of one another; vintage layers; and layers with unimaginable items. ‘Layered sheers’, especially on printed or stitched pattern shirt is a key look, as emphasized by *WGSN*, and is notably demonstrated by Dior Homme, Louis Vuitton and Balmain (*WGSN, Tailoring, 2020S/S*). This layering of sheers gives a semi-sheer appearance overall, giving a refined modern romantic or glam rocker look, depending on how much of the skin/body figure is shown through. For instance, Balmain (fig.39d) put a sheer material inside another semi-sheer jacket, thus a part of the chest of the man is showing through, and this combined with the extreme skinny pant legs reveal the man as sensual and glam-rock.

A man can also look extremely romantic by layering voluminous taffeta long blazers. For example, Dior Homme (fig.40a) has shown ‘a swirling pearl-grey moiré taffeta swing coat’ on its suit jacket and pale turtleneck, and on top of all this, layering with a big rosette (*Mower, Dior Homme, 2020F/W*). The man has one white velvet opera-gloved hand, casually stuck into his pocket, the sleeves are pushed up, and the turtleneck is half-tucked, which all look as if he has ‘inherited the theory of every point of style from (his) grandmothers, but then forgot about them, and carved something new for themselves’ (*Ibid*). This look is on the borders between a modern romantic and camp; the voluminous layers of taffeta coat and rosette might be camp, but because they are unified in tone-on-tone grey, the man can also look like a sophisticated romantic, depending on how the man regards himself as.

For those less confident men who might be burdened by sheers or voluminous taffeta coat layering in their suits, many designers have cunningly come up with clever layering coordination styles for subtler romantic styles. For instance, novel shape knit sleeve scarves or ponchos form ‘a riot of layering’ to look like double jacketing.

Armani(fig.40b) here has creatively designed a soft sleeve scarf of ‘two disembodied tubes connected by a membrane of differently textured knit’, and used this ‘in recurring salvos(acts) as top layers’(Leitch, Armani, 2017F/W). As fig.40b shows, it illustrates how men can be creatively romantic with a suit but at the same time not overly doing it and also staying warm. This is in line with Armani’s brand aesthetic, how it pursues understated opulent elegance for its target of relatively older men (35–50 years old). Furthermore, as seen by Dior Homme(fig.40c), ‘a tactical jacket’ has been created by layering a beaded vest (“with what look like a cat’s face”) on top of a dark grey suit(Mower, Dior Homme, 2019F/W). The designer is making a reference to statues of French heroes in Paris, as many of them are wearing armour(Ibid). Although the man looks somewhat romantic due to the cat–face beads pattern, he does not look ‘feminine’ but actually looks strong and tough at the same time. He is evidently in a suit coordination style of ‘whatever he wants’ to layer, to show several expressions all at once.



Fig.40a Dior Homme 2020F/W



Fig.40b Giorgio Armani 2017F/W



Fig.40c Dior Homme 2019F/W



Fig.40d Saint Laurent 2016S/S

In addition, there are overlapping looks consisting of clashing simulacra cheap items (such as ‘frayed–hem check shirts, jackets, etc.’) that once could be found in any disposal sales, to encourage thrift shop vintage looks. This has notably been illustrated by Saint Laurent(fig.40d), and to these male models and the designer, ‘the word ‘curator’ truly applies’, through many unique overlapping layers.

Finally, there are exaggerated flamboyant layering with unimaginable

items, playing strongly with the notion of camp and non-binary genders. For instance, Gucci (fig.41a) has put a 'bedazzled jockstrap' over white or pastel-sky blue suit pants, and thus, the models certainly seemed like 'visiting the sybaritic nightclub' (Mower, Gucci, 2019S/S). Evidently, Michele has his own perception of masculinity which includes being 'playful'. In a collection by Ann Demeulemeester (fig.37b), this theme of 'exaggerated layering' was also played out: 'a composite of ingredients were presented in differently disassembled combinations' (Leitch, AD 2017F/W). The 'gossamer lightness of the shirting in lace, gauze or cotton, and double layered at different lengths, contrasted finely against the moody heaviness above it' (Ibid). This overall showed the men like a rebellious poet Maudit ('accursed poet'), a poet who lives a life outside or against the society. Dries van Noten (fig.22c) too has shown poet Maudit like figures by layering some tribal hinterland garments – 'coats over coats over kilts over pants' (Blanks, Dries van Noten, 2015F/W). These looks appropriate a lot of layering of unexpected items from different cultures.

Thirdly, another prominent feature of coordination in men's suits today is 'the matching set'. These are 'coordinated separates', which take on 'a tailored look', usually with loafers/slip-ons for a carefree look; they range from 'proletariat-inspired blue collar uniforms to Eastern-influenced workwear' (WGSN, Tailoring, 2018S/S). As a part of this matching set, both Dior Homme and Balmain have shown 'denim suits', which reinforce workwear tropes (Ibid). They convey men as active commuters. However, when the matching set is in silk, it offers a much more relaxed look. This is a totally non-traditional category, with tonal textures lending a polished feel (WGSN, Tailoring, 2019S/S). D&G (fig.32d) in fact has shown these silk pyjama-like matching sets throughout their entire collections, sometimes printed with 'birds', 'fountain pens or umbrellas' for instance, which presented men like 'a collector and aesthete' (Leitch, D&G, 2019F/W). Collecting objects is one characteristic of a man who likes staying at home, thus portrays the man as a homebody. In contrast, when the

matching set is in coordination through a very bold, crazy pattern, it touches on the notion of camp, as illustrated by the look that Charles Jeffrey Loverboy (fig.41b) has created. The designer has stressed that through this bold pattern coordination, he wanted to depict LGBTQ+ realities, which are inevitably entwined with ‘wild escapism’ and ‘expressions of pain’ (Mower, CJL, 2019F/W). This time he said he had been ‘more sensitive to trans people’; rather than depicting them as falsely joyful, he showed the real pains/sadness that they have to fight against on daily basis (Ibid.).

The last, most important feature of coordination styles in suits today is the WIW (Whatever–I–Want) style. Suiting looks are envisioned in ‘however–you–want–it’ separates, offering a versatile ‘curated look’ and reflecting the ongoing trend for ‘streetwear piercing the veil of traditional menswear’ (WGSN, Tailoring, 2016F/W). Through a mix of colour, texture, and pattern, these curated ensembles give a freedom of expression, as opposed to classic sartorial dressing (Ibid). There is no longer a rulebook, as suiting is fused with an endless list of track jackets, hyped sneakers, graphic T–shirts, and so on. Variations of the similar hue or tone play an important role (ranging from soft neutral to rich bright), acting as a unifying thread between disparate items that should not work together, but somehow result to a harmony (Ibid). Many brands are working hard to re–establish the suit as a covetable item with a youth market, who are into branded hoodies and jogger pants (WGSN, Tailoring, 2020S/S).



Fig.41a Gucci
2019S/S



Fig.41b Charles Jeffrey
Loverboy 2019F/W



Fig.41c D&G
2017F/W



Fig.41d Burberry
2018F/W

In fact, D&G has invited a vast group of young influencers from Instagram and YouTube to be models, and they have been encouraged to choose their own coordination style from the endless garments that D&G had got ready backstage. Dolce said many of his ‘choose-it-yourself’ models’ had surprised him by selecting ‘tailoring’ (Leitch, D&G, 201F/W; 2018S/S), but matching it carefully with surprising items like for instance, putting on another casual denim jacket on top and a cool animal hood scarf to look like a carefree skater youth, punk, and Instagram friendly all at the same time (fig.41c). To top all of this, bag accessories included some Memphis printed D&G logo totes with ‘hashtag handles’ (Ibid). As Dolce has highlighted, these guys represent ‘millions of young people’ so it is interesting ‘to understand what they love or do not love’, and many influencers clearly stated that they ‘wore only what they wanted’, according to their taste (Ibid). Valentino as well showed a differently coloured pair of sneakers with each of their suits, all chosen by each young model, and the spectrum of choice ‘seemed to allude to the generational individualism’ (Mower, Valentino, 2017F/W). Finally, similar collections were shown by Paul Smith and Burberry, with the theme of ‘rainbow coordination’. Paul Smith highlighted that this allowed a lot of ‘self-expression’ (Leitch, Paul Smith, 2017S/S). This rainbow coordination is most accentuated by Burberry (fig.41d), even putting rainbow check skirt on suit pants, with a jacket in rainbow as well, giving a punk look. The collection was full of symbolism of gay/nonbinary-gender pride, with a large donation gathered from it having gone to youth charities, to illustrate socially-conscious men as well.

Overall, the numerous novel approaches to coordination style devised by designers and surprisingly men themselves, in their own unique way, have allowed various images and expressions of masculinity to be conjured up by them. This is bringing about a compelling change to the formally coordinated suits of the past, which were like an impenetrable fortress-like symbol of hegemonic masculinity.

3.2. Pursuing Images & New Expressions of Masculinity

After the analysis of the 7 design characteristics (silhouettes, details, colours, fabrics, patterns, accessories, and coordination styles) in contemporary men's suits of 2015S/S–2020F/W, the author of this thesis could categorize 12 major expressions of masculinity today.

As seen in the previous section, for each sub-design element mentioned under each of the 7 design characteristics, it has also been mentioned frequently what image (expression of masculinity) such sub-design element and photo tends to portray (this has been done by the keywords/adjectives/moods given from the official trend reports). For example, 'Poet Maudits'/'Glam Rockers' are actually terms that were often used by *WGSN* and *Vogue* themselves in numerous collection reports, thus the author decided to use these keywords directly to name one of the 12 expressions. However, the author also noticed that this expression was about a subversive gender issue, hence the reason for having coined and added the adjective 'Against Gender' to this expression. The expression was only categorized and derived, if such expression/image (or relating keywords) has been mentioned at least 4 times in different collections or trend reports. Under this heading of expression, the design characteristics that were discussed have been gathered, and coded again, to derive the repeating characteristics (e.g. for 'Against Gender Poet Maudit/Glam Rocker', relating keywords are 'rebellious', 'subverted', 'strong gender blurring', 'anarchic', 'camp' etc.). These repeating descriptions and design features have all been outlined in <Table.5> ("Pursuing expressions of masculinity, their description and design features, demonstrated through the contemporary suits in 2015S/S–2020F/W", pp.149–152). This coding of sentences and deriving repeating descriptions/design features have been carried out for all the 12 expressions categorized in this thesis.

For some other expressions though (Visual Artist, Homebody, Technology Fanatic, Environmentally/Socially Conscious Man and

WIW Man), their names had to be coined by the author completely new, as the keywords used under each were quite long. The 12 expressions of masculinity that have been derived are the following.

1. 'Don't Care Gender' Modern Romantics:

This is different to the romantics in the past that these men are 'no longer feminine'. It is about being truer to one's emotions; more open towards their sensitivities and feelings such as falling in love and being shy. Another name for this expression includes '#soft masculinity' and '#beautiful men'. They often, though not always, convey sophisticated sexiness, aristocratic elegance, opulence, and positive images of affection. They are decorative men inspired from various themes such as boudoir, and/or cultural diversity. However, these men are different to glam rockers/poet maudit in that they do not put on extravagant looks; they take elements from the themes above and make it more subtle relatively in their overall looks. They reject hive mentality, and amalgamate clothes with feeling and romance. This image is often shown by brands like Dior Homme, Alexander McQueen, and Paul Smith, as they pursue sophistication and elegance, transferring techniques from women's couture side of the house, but not going so far as to scare off existing customers.

Under this image, the silhouettes are not restricted to skinny or X, like it was in the 2000s crosssexuals; they can take a variety even boxy H-lines, by putting curvilinear lines partly or using softer materials to give looser fit. Some specific silhouettes do show romanticism today such as extension of the length of the jacket, innerwear or vest; empire dress-line; and cut-off suits also if not much bare skin is showing. Details include decorative contrast shawl, peaked or notched lapels with embroideries; flounces or augmenting cuff forms in jackets; multi-coloured brooch like buttons; bows, doily and/or flowers; and textured appliques. Colours tend to be pastels, pink or red, and fabrics can be subtly see-through. As for pattern, there can be portraits of beauty; florals ranging from bold to soft minute ones; animal skins and animal patterns that are enlarged or

repeating. For accessories, these men can put on sash; shoes, pumps or loafers with boudoir inspirations like mink–lining or gold hardware details; and miniature cross bags with hand–painted motifs. Finally, for coordination, these men can have riots of layering: layered sheers for semi–sheer appearance; novel knit sleeve scarf, fringed knit shawls or ponchos on blazers; or voluminous taffeta coat layering for overtly bold romantic look.



Fig.42a Alexander McQueen 2015S/S

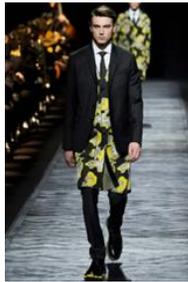


Fig.42b Dior Homme 2015F/W



Fig.42c Paul Smith 2018S/S



Fig.42d Gucci 2016F/W

2.Subverted Americana Cowboy

This expression is for those men who want to look sensual, but not overtly androgynous, thus borrowing some elements from cowboys. They have a ‘very body–conscious’ look, often labelled as ‘asparagus lean boys’. However, it must be noted that although these skinny looks, they do not look completely ‘feminine’ or ‘androgynous’; at times they even look charismatic or strong, especially with cowboy elements and angular shoulders. These men tend to portray ‘tender toughness’ and ‘cowboy insouciance’. This expression is often shown by Givenchy and Saint Laurent, brands which pursue chic styles and target youths who can have a slim physique.

Under this expression, men usually enjoy wearing super slim or very tight silhouettes (skinny I or X), and often they wear suits with closures above the waistline, to emphasize a tiny waist. Combined with this, they accentuate sharp shoulders to add power. In terms of details, their suits have western saddle–inspired details, for instance, rhinestoned jackets with glittering crystals or copper rivets. They

also make a good use of various accessories ranging from high Cuban heeled boots (high as 8cm) detailed with polished metalware; bolo tie; rodeo belt buckle; studded bags; and a Stetson hat in felt.



Fig.43a Givenchy
2020F/W



Fig.43b Saint
Laurent 2015S/S



Fig.43c Saint
Laurent 2015S/S



Fig.43d Saint
Laurent 2015F/W

3. 'Against Gender' Poet Maudit/Glam Rocker

This is a rebellious expression, a cross between poet Maudit (a poet who lives a life outside or against the society) and subcultural glam rocker. It is much more of a subverted look than modern romantics. The blurring of gender or even going against gender stand out the most in this look. Therefore, it is especially inclusive of defending the LGBTQ+ rights. Although in the past, these looks usually portrayed them as falsely joyful, today designers try to reveal the real pains and protests that these neglected men must fight against on daily basis as well. There are also frequently (not always) bold exposures of the male body, showing distinct sensuality. In addition, there is strong assimilation of various cultures, nationalities, generations, and identities at play in their suits. Other keywords for this expression include: playful, fun of boyhood, free, eccentric, theatrical, symbolist, deconstructive, anarchic, satirizing and/or camp. There is a youth driven fervour behind this expression, thus will stimulate young millennial and gen Z consumers. This look is often pursued by more provocative youthful brands like Gucci, Thom Browne and Charles Jeffrey Loverboy, who like to stir gender trouble. Under this image, the silhouettes can take exaggerated, distorted, or playfully manipulated forms, experimented in a daring manner. For

instance, there are architectural deconstructions of conventional suit silhouettes, making them planar (cubism); or aggressively shredded and the pieces re-formed into a trompe l'oeil dress. Extravagant cut-off suits that reveal the bare arms and legs completely are rebellious too. Regarding details, much distorted suit lapels (such as asymmetric and Ninja hoods); novel closures inspired from ethnic minority groups; and new innerwear made from unconventional materials or with tattoo-like details exist. There are also inside-out blazers to bring out interior details to its outer surface.

As for colours, much more flamboyant colours cover men from head-to-toe, than modern Romantics. Bold colours such as fluorescent hot pink and poolside cocktail shades are in much use and take the entire suit as a solid colour. There are also rainbow themes, showing all 7 colours even in one look; these colours illustrate that different nationalities and identities can be fully integrated. Regarding fabrics, an entire suit can be made with much see-through materials, such as inlaid panels of lace. With patterns, there can be eye-catching colour daub prints or prodigious motifs embroidered in gold/crystal. There is often a colliding mix of kitsch prints, comprising animals mixed from various cultures. For accessories, men can get ideas from unknown cultures or adopt extremely distorted shoes, bags, face-covering hats, or face-deforming jewellery. Finally, for coordination, these men can wear their suits with exaggerated downs; put on purely sheer materials to show a lot of skin; or layer unexpected items like jockstrap; or exploit matching sets in crazy bold patterns.



Fig.44a Thom
Browne 2017F/W



Fig.44b Gucci
2018S/S



Fig.44c Thom
Browne 2019S/S



Fig.44d Charles Jeffrey
Loverboy 2019F/W

4. Visual Artist

These visually artistic men put on suits that emphasizes artwork-like colour/pattern and accessories, with dynamic effects. Thus, these men are shown with bold colours and/or shapes in blocks/swirls. The suits are depicted by the following keywords: colour saturated; cacophonous, energetic, powerful; expressive; and visually dynamic. They give men an independent mind like artists. The suits are ideal as vivid summer escape-wear, and even for informal client meetings. This expression is often explored by Paul Smith, Dries van Noten, and Kenzo who like to play with colours based on culture & art.

Suits take inspiration from artists, architects, or product designers such as Verner Panton and David Hockney. The palette looks as if from the Memphis Movement. Colour deployment is also crucial, with one bold or several bold colours inserted in patches of harmony. For instance, a contrasting colour can be placed in each item like graphic colour blocking, reminding one of Colour Field paintings (Lee et al, 2020). It is notable that the colours and their meanings in these paintings are to be reflected upon freely by the viewer, rather than identify those given by the artist (Zegeye, 2018; Ibid.). This notion can be also applied to these ‘Colour Field’ suits, so that each man can flexibly give an original meaning to their colours (Ibid.). As for pattern, there are bold patterns influenced from Abstract Expressionism. Finally, for accessories, men can wear sculpture-like jewellery like the metallic creep of ivy covering the whole suit. There are also art form bags, like square-in-circle clutches referencing Le Corbusier.



Fig.45a Paul Smith 2016S/S



Fig.45b Dries van Noten 2019S/S



Fig.45c Kenzo 2018S/S



Fig.45d Kenzo 2015S/S

5.Active Commuter

This is a notable statement on the hybrid of tailoring and athleisure. Men wear crisp suits with athletic modernity and utility narratives ('a sporty sense of masculinity'). These men are portrayed as '#future-commuter or combat-commuter expressions'. The suits can breathe, and allow unparalleled range of motion. In addition, the suits can also withstand any trial of a vigorous commute and protect their wearers. The suits overall impart a confident look on his way to work. These men can even escape into club/sports game after work as well, and thus the suits are evidently for a new breed of businessmen. Not just functional, but these men also want to look fashionable; it is possible to combine hyper-modern dandyism to these looks. Active Commuters are frequently illustrated by more functional-oriented brands like Louis Vuitton, Zegna and Calvin Klein, whose target men are 'actualisers' (men who aspire success in their career).

The silhouette is usually relaxed and spacious, for instance a boxy jacket with running pants or gym shorts. These short suits also have the functional utility of being able to stay cool in the heat. In terms of detail, there can be contrast zips, magnetic buttons, tapes and bindings, and multiple zippered panels or pockets. As for colours, men can use energizing sporty colours like electric blue; neo-mint; pop red; and cantaloupe. For fabric, jersey-like, stretchy, lycra-infused ones or poplin mesh can be used, and textiles even offer wind-proof membranes. Fabrics now only weigh half the weight of what they used to be in suits. Regarding pattern, it is relatively small; there can be cute active dinosaurs or prints of money. For accessories, men can take bright sporty ones like sport gloves; utility pouches or bags like commuter harness; beanies; and/or unique decorative sneakers or slip-ons. Finally, for coordination style, there is a great variety of unique mix-and-match to make hybrids of suits and sporty casuals. This includes making blazer-parka or blazer-windbreaker hybrids in nano-weights, made of flashy, membrane-fine nylon. Many of these looks also portray as if dressed in haste, as men usually do not have much time when getting ready for work.



Fig.46a Calvin Klein 2015S/S



Fig.46b Louis Vuitton 2018S/S



Fig.46c Dior Homme 2017F/W



Fig.46d Givenchy 2020S/S

6. Homebody

Under this expression, men look more relaxed, carefree, serene, laid-back, and easy-going than active commuters, and put on suits that put utmost emphasis on home-wear features like providing easy-to-wear comfort and freedom. Thus, these men look as if they have come out from their home for a walk or to meet a friend nearby Café or to go to the grocers, but still wanting to look fashionable. These suits are also ideal for home-wears. They like collecting objects, as these are features of men who like staying at home. In addition, because of the utmost comfort, they can even be worn at resorts. They also give a look of Boy-Next-Door, refreshing, and light. These suits are the ultimate pursuit of leisurely perfection. This homebody style is adopted by almost all 20 brands today from more functional brands like Calvin Klein and Zegna, to even more colorful brands like Gucci, Valentino, and Charles Jeffrey Loverboy.

For this image, which is a non-traditional category, loose silhouettes, tonal textures and soft sinuous fabrics are most important to give still somewhat a polished feel. Therefore, there is a wide adoption of boxy silhouettes, inspired by bathrobes or loungewear with the help of drapery materials. The unstructured flow is as ‘fluid as pyjamas’, and excess fabrics carries through from the jacket to the voluminous pants. Men can also make use of bloomer pants, pantaloons, or Japanese-inspired wide pants. As for fabric, men can optimize light-weight fluid fabrics like silk, to give body-limning caress. For colours, light serene palette can be used usually, but not necessarily, as men

can adopt bolder colours for their resort holidays. Regarding patterns, men can exploit a variety ranging from graphic overchecks and plaids; to eastern motifs (e.g. calm orchids with serene neutral ground); and animals & objects (presenting men like a collector). For accessories, silk scarfs, patterned bags, Birkenstocks, and espadrilles can be used to give lightness. Finally, for coordination, men can mix-and-match: suit jacket with jogger shorts or pyjama like pants; or suits with open-toe sandals, a small clutch bag, and bucket hat (no need for sun cream). Men can also opt for a matching set wholly in silk.



Fig.47a Paul Smith 2015S/S



Fig.47b Charles Jeffrey Loverboy 2020S/S



Fig.47c D&G 2016S/S



Fig.47d Zegna 2018S/S

7.Adventurer

This expression puts emphasis on hyper-athleticism (extreme, outdoor sports like alpine mountaineering, parachuting, etc.). Thus, these suits give men a strong image of an incessant world adventurers and extreme travellers. He looks as if he has the freedom to wander wherever he desires. The suits look sophisticated and functional at the same time, accentuating on survivalist-led structural elements. There can be military looks, reflecting ‘the strife-torn times’ and ‘wars’ men live in today, so going on an adventure is like an outlet for them. Men needs too a strong character for extreme outdoor activities. In particular, they show confidence with armour-bearing looks. These looks are popular because young men today from the millennial and gen Z generations love having extreme experiences. This expression is especially adopted by more active, sport-inspired brands like Kenzo, Balmain and Louis Vuitton.

Under this image, the suits take on much more functional and technical elements than the active commuter look. The silhouettes can either be X (with armour-like bags worn on the waist or chest) or boxy silhouette. As for details, functional pockets are highlighted through contrasts in colour, dimension, or fabric, and/or with flap details. Zips also on men's suits act as a structural, functional detail, and at the same time being decorative. There are sporty, light-reflective, waterproof tapes and pipings as well. Regarding colour, a palette of warm, earthy tones such as beige, desert brown, khaki, and mustard; or of sporty colours such as pink and orange can be selected. For fabric, suits entirely made of neoprene or nylon exists. Pattern is not necessary, but sometimes animal skin prints like tiger can highlight jungle-trekker themes. Also, there can be 'super-supporter' sporty typography that shows UK football subculture. Functional accessories are key such as desert boots; aqua shoes; storage rucksacks; and protective gears (e.g. harness-looking bag placed frontally to give an armour). Finally, men with suits are coordinated with even more highly technical proofs and gears, for protection and thermoregulation. For instance, a long parka, short suits, leggings, fleece layers, hiking boots and rucksack can be unified in protective warning colour of neon-orange. Men can also tuck in their nylon suit jacket into its nylon set pants, for safety, if he is up for parachuting.



Fig.48a Zegna
2015F/W



Fig.48b Kenzo
2020S/S



Fig.48c Balmain
2016S/S



Fig.48d Louis
Vuitton 2018F/W

8. Street Youth/Skater

These boys have fused the two expressions, '#sartorial skate' and

‘#smarten up’ together. The expression highlights a tough or chilled out, skater youth image; thus, these boys in general show the most youthful look out of all the 12 expressions listed here. They also look urban and seem to be easily hanging out with their friends on streets, wearing their suits almost like streetwear. The suits are evidently influenced by street culture, based on the uptown–downtown social mix. Also, this expression is often pursued by youthful brands which have expanded their target range into teenagers, such as Louis Vuitton and Dior homme. Thus, to make suits more relevant to gen Z, these brands have borrowed the image of skaters and their elements.

Boys tend to take casual–inspired skater features into their suit silhouette, such as putting baggy skater pants together with a suit jacket. As for details, they might use eye–catching sporty ones to be put on their jackets, such as making many red sneaker laces loop through eyelets and letting them hang freely. Concerning fabrics, men’s suit forms can be boldly modified to let various fabrics co–exist as eclectic patchwork panelling, to grab attention of the youth. Usually, these skater youths use non–pattern to look chic, but sometimes can exploit chalk/pin stirpes on their baggy pants. Skater accessories are key in this look, and they are even better if using ones that have been made with sport brand collaboration, such as Supreme labelled sling bags, skateboard trunks, duffels, bandanas, gloves, long belts, etc. Finally, for coordination, boys can put on many layers of hoodies, t–shirts and a suit jacket, and also put skater wide–pants and unique canvas sneakers together.



Fig.49a Dior
Homme 2016F/W



Fig.49b Dior
Homme 2017S/S



Fig.49c Dior
Homme 2018S/S



Fig.49d Louis
Vuitton 2017F/W

9. Technology Fanatic

These are men who love technology and can easily adapt to the fast speed of modern consciousness and of changing technology. They like being scientific, so can put on suits that are made of futuristic materials, giving them sporty and spontaneous looks. They also have a predilection for expressing a statement about their own view in the current digital world. Interestingly, these men also have a keen interest in artisanal garments/accessories, and thus in artisanal influencing as well, not just technology. This is the key difference compared to men in the past who were into techno-gadgets too.

There is an emphasis on fabrics, patterns and/or accessories in their suits. Thus, for fabrics, they are manipulated to show how our brains are trained to judge everything depending on how they will look on digital screens. This reflects today's phone-camera/social-media phenomenon. For instance, fabrics are altered according to their reaction to camera flash. Designers are also stressing illusionary images that pop up when holographic materials are layered over colourful patterns. Furthermore, these men love military science fiction motifs and pattern designs that make use of new digital printing. The subjects include extreme close-ups or aerial shots of nature. Often, these organic prints are re-created into geometric shapes and monograms that look like urban blueprints. Ultimately, these further encourage men to post their high-tech patterns.

For accessories, they can have bags with new technology built in or to store new gadgets by collaboration with tech companies. These accessories are also especially created in TikTok/Instagram friendly square proportions. However, it must be noted that these high-tech accessories do not mean that the technology fanatic men ignore artisanal crafts. They know that today's exquisite technology come down from elaborate artisanal products of the past. Thus, they love exploring the value of craft and share this on their social media, such as fine bags made by artisans (in fact ironically these bags themselves have been crafted to look good on screens too). This has

been labelled as ‘artisanal influencing’, combining technology & craft.



Fig.50a Maison Margiela 2018S/S



Fig.50b Louis Vuitton 2018F/W



Fig.50c Zegna 2019F/W



Fig.50d D&G 2020F/W

10.Strong Man but Family Focused

These men portray the most traditional image out of all 12 expressions. They look strong, tough, and alpha—everything, but at the same time they are also loving and caring towards their family. It is important for them keep a good body, but this is so that they are healthy, to grow a loving relationship with their family. Thus, their looks focus on paying homage to traditions and family. They tend to be ‘buffed-out’, almost looking like ‘a wrestling player’ or ‘a strong hero-like figure’. They can use military or nautical/naval themes in their fashion, sometimes even referencing old heroes. Ultimately, they show ‘masculine depth’ with ‘timeless richness’, making them similar to ubersexual. However, there is a difference in that these men today are more daringly open and flexible to fashion. This expression is especially well shown by D&G and Giorgio Armani, as their brand aesthetics tend to pursue prestige & heritage, and target older men (up to the age of 50).

With silhouette, these men tend to take boxy H-silhouette. As for details, they can adopt enlarged, curvilinear shawl lapels, which in fact draw attention to the male models’ large chest, emphasizing an image of toughness paradoxically. Suits can also have braided brocade or Ghillie tassel details, which are associated with noble military generals. As for colours, classic ones like brown, black or grey can be used. For fabrics, wool, flannel, tweed, and bouclé can still be

observed, but there are more daring ones such as voluminous use of camel mohair. Classic patterns have returned (checks/chalk stripes), however, these men can also now try an all-over pattern of imperial family emblems to show dignity. There is an adoption of pattern showing the importance of family too, such as the Nativity motif or modern cartoons of family. For accessories, men can use cuff links, briefcases, wayfarers, weekend bags and even fur covers. Finally, for coordination, there is a style emphasis on the strong broad chest, but because of the more comfortable shoes/sandals and wide-pants that he puts on, they convey him as a more chilled-out man who has enough time to look after his family.



Fig.51a D&G
2015F/W



Fig.51b Ann
Demeulemeester 2015F/W



Fig.51c D&G
2015F/W



Fig.51d Dries van
Noten 2020F/W

11. Environmentally/Socially Conscious Man

This expression portrays male consumers who are socially and environmentally conscious of current affairs. They are concerned with global issues such as climate change, and thus seek sustainable options wherever possible. This includes pursuing slower trends that last longer than one season; or becoming ‘repurposers’ or ‘repairers’. They also often convey themselves as ‘eco-warriors’ to save from humankind’s destroying nature. Ultimately, these young men today are wanting more to have their own voice spoken out loud, that they want people to be more including, not excluding, concerning social and environmental issues around the world. This socially responsible movement is followed by many brands today, such as Zegna, which puts a strong importance on its ethical fabrics.

Often, these men enjoy wearing suits with unique details and fabrics, acquired from nearby sources (localism), recycling centres, or upcycled off-cuts from fashion companies' cutting room floors ('recycled', 'upcycled', 'carbon neutrals'). This includes using recycled nylon, cashmere, and wool, and also making these fully recyclable again in future incarnations. Even new virgin fabrics need to have thoroughly considered sustainable issues, such as sourcing them from organic naturals; using natural dyes; and making them go through lower impact finishes. Furthermore, materials that already exist in vintage shops, can be recut/collaged to make unique hand-crafted suits. As for colours, timeless deep shades of forest green or black are often used in line with slow trend but not necessary, as variety of colours can also be selected from thrift shops. For pattern, these men can opt for patchwork prints made based on using printed deadstock. There are also suits with pattern inspired from collaboration with national parks, with some profit made as donations; or from meaningful letterings/doodles that satirize current social issues. Regarding accessories, these men can choose unique ones made from vintage or recycling experiments (e.g. restored wicker bags; handbags made from offcut leathers). These men also like protective gears, such as resilient bags and boots. Finally, for coordination, a padded down with recycled polyester or feather fillers can be mix-and-matched with suits. In addition, a coat made of re-fashioned old denim jeans can also be worn over suits. Layering of simulacra cheap items that once could be found in second-hand sales are also popular, as they encourage vintage looks for these men.



Fig.52a Zegna
2015F/W



Fig.52b Zegna
2018F/W



Fig.52c Alexander
McQueen 2018S/S



Fig.52d D&G
2018F/W

12. WIW (Whatever-I-Want) Man

This last expression is more of a comprehensive one, where men can select different elements from different categories of masculinity above (or even others), and mix-and-match according to their own unique fashion sense and taste. Thus, these men have been labelled by the author as ‘WIW’ men. This is possible since the 11 categories mentioned above are not mutually exclusive, and men can take and convey a combination of expressions at the same time. For instance, the first image below looks like a strong dad, with emphasis on his reliable broad chest through the classic 3-piece ensemble (jacket, pants, vest), however because of his light-hearted Mary-Jane sandals and voluminous wide-pants, he also conveys some images of a modern romantic and a calm homebody. There are also many looks which lie on the border between the modern romantic and the poet maudit/glam rocker expressions. For instance, there is the grey suit layered with a flamboyant cat-face beaded vest, referencing to armoured statesmen statues in Paris. In fact, this style shows the man as a modern romantic (beaded pattern); a rebellious glam rocker with camp elements (the exaggerated cat face making satire of the statesmen); and also a strong/tough man (the armour reference) all at the same time, depending on how the man regards himself as. Ultimately, this WIW men and their coordination style allow them to convey various expressions of masculinity simultaneously.

These WIW men and phenomenon are evidently supported and reflected by numerous fashion brands, including all 20 brands in this research, as they try to pursue various expressions. For example, D&G was the first brand in 2017 to invite young influencers to be models, and were asked to choose their own style from the garments and accessories that D&G got ready in advance. Surprisingly, most of them chose suits. A notable example is shown below where a young boy selected a colourful foliage motif patterned suit, and mix& matched it with unexpected items like denim jacket, animal hood scarf, and unique sneakers, to look like a chilled-out skater youth, colourful punk, and Instagram-friendly youth at the same time. Other brands

such as Burberry have done similar, asking young men to come up with rainbow coordination; these collections were full of nonbinary gender symbolisms, to promote socially aware young men. Overall, this cacophonous but totally working, self-curated, ensemble/mix of colour, texture, pattern, accessories, and style, impart men evidently with unprecedented freedom of expression.



Fig.53a Giorgio Armani 2016S/S



Fig.53b Dior Homme 2019F/W



Fig.53c D&G 2017F/W



Fig.53d D&G 2017F/W

The 12 expressions, their description (keywords & adjectives) and design features are outlined in <Table.5> on the following pages (pp.149–152):

<Table.5> Pursuing expressions of masculinity, their description and design features, demonstrated through contemporary suits in 2015S/S-2020F/W:

Expression of Masculinity	Description (Keywords & Adjectives)	Design Features
‘Don’t Care Gender’ Modern Romantics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Not about being ‘feminine’ ✓ True to one’s emotions – more open towards their sensitivities & feelings such as love, shyness. ✓ Soft masculinity, Beautiful men. ✓ Often, but not always, show sophisticated sexiness, elegance, opulence, affection. ✓ Boudoir, cultural diversity. ✓ Not extravagant/androgynous. ✓ Amalgamate clothes with feeling and elegance/romance. ✓ Often shown by Dior Homme, Alexander McQueen, Paul Smith & Others – transfer techniques from women’s couture side of house; but not going far as to scare off existing customers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Silhouette</u>: not restricted to skinny nor X; can take a variety even boxy H-lines by putting curvilinear lines; Extension of the jacket, innerwear or vest; skirt over pants; empire dress-line; cut-off suits (if not much bare) ➤ <u>Detail</u>: Decorative contrast shawl, peaked or notched lapels; flounces, augmenting cuff forms; coloured brooch-like buttons; embroidery, etc. ➤ <u>Colour</u>: pastel, pink, red, not always ➤ <u>Fabric</u>: can be subtly see-through ➤ <u>Pattern</u>: portraits of beauty; florals; animal skin or repeating animals. ➤ <u>Accessories</u>: colorful sash, fur, shoes with boudoir, berets, scarf, mini cross/waist bags with hand-paints ➤ <u>Coordination</u>: riots of layering
Subverted Americana Cowboy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Want to look sensual, but not androgynous, thus borrowing elements from cowboys. ✓ Very body-conscious, skinny. ✓ At times, even look charismatic/strong – e.g. angular shoulders ✓ Tender toughness & insouciance. ✓ Often shown by Givenchy & Saint Laurent – pursue chic style, target youths with slim physique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Silhouette</u>: enjoy wearing super slim or very tight line (Skinny I or X); closures above the waist-line to stress tiny waist. Sharp shoulders ➤ <u>Detail</u>: Western saddle-inspired e.g. rhinestoned jackets with crystals, copper rivets. ➤ <u>Accessories</u>: Cuban heeled boots (8cm) with polished metalware, bolo tie, rodeo belt, studded bag, Stetson
‘Against Gender’ Poet Maudit/ Glam Rocker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Rebellious expression, a cross between poet Maudit(poet living life outside or against the society) and subcultural glam rocker ✓ More subverted than modern romantics; blurring gender – inclusive of defending LGBTQ+ ✓ Portray real pains/protests that these people go through daily ✓ Often bold exposures of body ✓ Assimilation - various cultures, nationalities, generations, identity ✓ Playful, fun of boyhood, free, surreal, eccentric, theatrical, deconstructive, symbolist, anarchic, sensual, satire, camp. ✓ Youth driven gender issue– liberated from natural conditions ✓ Provocative youthful brands like Gucci, Thom Browne, Loverboy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Silhouette</u>: exaggerated, distorted, playfully manipulated forms, experimented in a daring manner ➤ <u>Detail</u>: distorted lapels; novel closures inspired from ethnic minority groups; innerwear with unconventional materials/tattoo deco ➤ Inside-out blazers to show interior ➤ <u>Colour</u>: More flamboyant head-to-toe, than romantics, Rainbow theme ➤ <u>Fabric</u>: entire suit made of much see-through or shiny materials ➤ <u>Pattern</u>: color daubs, giant motifs in embroidery; colliding mix of kitsch ➤ <u>Accessories</u>: distorted or eccentric shoes, socks, bags, face-covering hats, masks, face-deforming jewelry ➤ <u>Coordination</u>: Layer unexpected or exaggerated items/materials; matching sets in crazy bold patterns

Expression of Masculinity	Description (Keywords & Adjectives)	Design Features
Visual Artist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Visually artistic men, putting on artwork-like dynamic effects ✓ Colour/Pattern deployments & accessories are key. ✓ Inspired by color/pattern of artists, architects, product designer ✓ Shown with bold colours and/or shapes in blocks or swirls. ✓ Colour saturated, cacophonous, energetic, expressive, dynamic. Independent-mind like artists ✓ Vivid summery escape-wear, for holiday, parties, informal meeting ✓ Paul Smith, Van Noten, Kenzo – play with colours from art/culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Colour</u>: as if from the Memphis Movement (bright colours & bold patterns). Deployment also crucial – graphic colour blocking e.g. contrasting colour placed in each jacket, shirt, pants. Colour Field. Colours’ meanings are freely & flexibly given by the wearer. ➤ <u>Pattern</u>: bold, can be mitigated by using core colours, laser-etched, Abstract Expressionist inspired motifs. ➤ <u>Accessories</u>: decorative, sculpture-like headpieces/jewellery; art form bags – e.g. square-in-circle clutches.
Active Commuter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Notable statement on the hybrid of tailoring & athleisure. ✓ Modern, crisp suits with athletic modernity and utility narratives (‘sporty sense of masculinity’) ✓ #Urban utility; #future-commuter, #combat-commuter, active. ✓ Garments can breathe, by blending performance functionality into suits ✓ Unparalleled range of motion ✓ Withstand any vigorous commute, protect wearers. Commuter harness ✓ Confident look on way to work, escape into club/sport game after. ✓ Fashionable too – combine hyper-modern dandyism of street culture ✓ Dressed in haste look. ✓ More functional brands like Louis Vuitton, Zegna & Calvin Klein, whose target are actualisers (men aspiring to success in career). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sportwear+Suit hybrid, gritty edge ➤ <u>Silhouette</u>: relaxed, spacious, boxy jacket with running pants, gym shorts, etc. -can stay cool in the heat ➤ <u>Detail</u>: contrast zips, magnetic buttons, tapes, bindings, multiple zippered panels or pockets. ➤ <u>Colour</u>: energizing sporty colors e.g. electric or purist blue, neo-mint, pop red, cantaloupe. Sporty black layer. ➤ <u>Fabric</u>: jersey-like, stretchy, lycra-infused, poplin-mesh, weather- or wind- proof, extremely lightweight ➤ <u>Pattern</u>: relatively small, muted palette, active dinosaurs or money ➤ <u>Accessories</u>: bright, sporty ones e.g. gloves, utility pouches/bags, beanies, unique sneakers, slip-ons, etc. ➤ <u>Coordination</u>: unique mix-&-match between suits & sporty casuals e.g. blazer -parka or -windbreaker hybrid
Homebody	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ More comfortable, relaxed, light, serene, laid-back, casual, & easy-going than active commuter ✓ Homewear features e.g. easy-to-wear, thus can even wear at home ✓ Also look as if out for a walk, go to grocers, meet a friend at nearby Café casually but fashionably ✓ Like collecting objects or nurturing animals (features of homebody) ✓ Also worn at resorts –bolder color ✓ With free spirits -escape to home or to relaxing holidays ✓ Boy-next-door, refreshing, ultimate pursuit leisurely perfection ✓ By both functional/colorful brands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Non-traditional category – loose fit, tonal textures & sinuous fabrics key ➤ <u>Silhouette</u>: boxy, H-line, bathrobe, loungewear inspired; wide pants, bloomer pants, genie pantaloons, etc ➤ <u>Fabric</u>: excess, fluid as pyjama, silk light-weight, body-linings caress ➤ <u>Colour</u>: light serene palette, but can also adopt bolder colours for resort ➤ <u>Pattern</u>: graphic overcheck, plaid, eastern motif (calm orchid, serene neutral ground), animals&objects ➤ <u>Accessories</u>: silk scarf, hats, clutch, patterned bag, Birkenstock, espadrille ➤ <u>Coordination</u>: mix&match - jacket&jogger shorts, bucket hat; silk set

Expression of Masculinity	Description (Keywords & Adjectives)	Design Features
Adventurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Emphasis on hyper-athleticism (extreme outdoor sports/activities) More functional & technical than the active commuters. ✓ Incessant world adventurers, extreme travellers, freedom to wander wherever and whenever ✓ Sophisticated, eclectic, functional, survivalist-led structural elements weather protection & thermo-regulation. ✓ Military referenced, ‘wars’ men live in today – adventure is outlet ✓ Look strong, armour-bearing ✓ Popular among young men today, millennial & gen Z generations love having extreme experiences. ✓ More active/sport-inspired brands like Kenzo, Balmain & LV. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Silhouette</u>: boxy or can even be X (armour-like bags worn on chest, waist). Enough room for comfort ➤ <u>Details</u>: functional pockets highlighted by contrasts in color, dimension, fabric, flaps; functional & decorative zips; sporty, light-reflective, water-proof tapes, pipings ➤ <u>Color</u>: warm, earthy or sporty tones, beige, brown, neon-orange, khaki, etc ➤ <u>Pattern</u>: not necessary, animal skin prints sometimes, sporty typography ➤ <u>Accessories</u>: aqua shoes, sports boots, adventure bags, protective gears, gloves, rucksack-harness look ➤ <u>Coordination</u>: mix-and-match, tuck-in, layer with high technical proofs, gears e.g. long parka, short suits, fleece, hiking boots, leggings.
Street Youth/ Skater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Fusion of ‘#sartorial skater’ & ‘#smarten up’, sporty, modern, highlighting tough, coarse or chilled out skater youth image. ✓ One of the most youthful looks ✓ Urban, look like easily hanging out with their friends on street, wearing suits like streetwear ✓ Influenced by street style culture & circuits, based on uptown-downtown social mix. ✓ By exploiting chalk/pin stripes (long associated with Wall Street finance titans) and using them on sporty baggy trousers, making fun of hegemonic masculinity ✓ By brands which have expanded target to gen Z -Dior Homme, LV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Silhouette</u>: baggy, curvaceous skater pants together with a suit jacket ➤ <u>Detail</u>: eye-catching sporty, casual details such as red, sneaker laces loop through eyelets, freely hanging. ➤ <u>Fabric</u>: suit forms can be boldly modified to let various fabrics co-exist as eclectic patchwork panelling ➤ <u>Pattern</u>: often non-pattern, chic, but can exploit chalk/pin stripe to give more casual look with baggy pants. ➤ <u>Accessories</u>: important, skater accessories, better if collaborated with sports brand e.g. Supreme. sling bags, skateboards, duffels, long belts, bandanas, gloves, phone cases. ➤ <u>Coordination</u>: many layers – hoodies t-shirts, blazer, wide-pants, sneakers.
Technology Fanatic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Men who love technology (technology- friendly) ✓ Easily adapt to the fast speed of modern consciousness and changing technology. Phone cam, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok. ✓ Like being scientific & futuristic ✓ Sporty, casual, spontaneous look ✓ Predilection for expressing a statement - their own perspective in the current digital world. ✓ Like artisanal garment&accessory Artisanal influencing - difference to men in the past who were also into techno-gadgets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fabric, pattern, accessories – key ➤ <u>Fabric</u>: manipulated considering how our brains are now trained to judge things on how they look on screens. e.g. reaction of polyurethane to flash illusions made when holographic materials layered over patterns ➤ <u>Pattern</u>: military science fiction motifs, photo-print pattern – use of new technology & digital printing. Organic prints made into geometric shapes&monograms – parade brand. ➤ <u>Accessories</u>: bag with new tech, or store new gadget; in screen- friendly proportions; also love artisanal craft

Expression of Masculinity	Description (Keywords & Adjectives)	Design Features
Strong Man but Family Focused	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Most close to conventional image ✓ Strong, brave, tough, alpha-everything. But at the same time, also loving & caring to family ✓ Buffed out, toned, hero-like figure ✓ Important to keep a healthy body, to nurture loving relationship. ✓ Looks focus on paying homage to traditions & family. ✓ Often use military, nautical/naval themes – old heroes, statemen ✓ Masculine depth with timeless luxurious richness – similar to ubersexual – but now more daring and flexible to fashion. ✓ Often by D&G, Armani (prestige, heritage) and also target older men 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Silhouette</u>: boxy, loose, H-line ➤ <u>Detail</u>: enlarged, curvilinear shawl lapels that draw attention to the large chest (tough paradoxically); braided brocade or Ghillie tassel (generals) ➤ <u>Color</u>: classic e.g.brown, black, grey ➤ <u>Fabric</u>: wool, flannel, tweed, bouclé, but also big volumes of fur like camel mohair ➤ <u>Pattern</u>: classic- checks, stripes, but all-over pattern of heraldry(dignity) Or Nativity, family cartoon motifs ➤ <u>Accessories</u>: cuff links, briefcase, aviator, wayfarer, weekend bags, fur ➤ <u>Coordination</u>: style emphasis on the large chest, but matching with more comfortable shoes/pants-family time
'Environmentally/ Socially' Conscious Man	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Male consumers who are socially &environmentally conscious of current affairs. ✓ Concerned with global social or environmental issues- e.g. climate change, human rights. ✓ Seeking sustainable options wherever possible. e.g. pursue slower trends, re-purposers, repairers with used materials. ✓ Not identically mass-produced - use unique detailing, color, fabric ✓ Eco-warriors – save from humankind's destroying nature ✓ Want to have more of their own voice spoken out loud – to be more including (against racism) ✓ By many socially responsible brands e.g. Zegna - ethical fabric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Fabric</u>: nearby sources(localism), vintage shops(unique, handcrafted), recycling centres, upcycled off-cuts (recycled, upcycled, carbon neutrals) e.g. nylon, cashmere, wool recycled, and also make them recyclable; from organically grown naturals; chemical free; low impact finish; natural dyes. ➤ <u>Color</u>: timeless shade, black (slow trend); colours from thrift shop. ➤ <u>Pattern</u>: patchwork, floral/vegetation from upcycle deadstock or vintage; collabo with national parks, lettering ➤ <u>Accessories</u>: restored wicker bags, unique handbags from offcut leather, protective gears -workers' boots ➤ <u>Coordination</u>: Mix&Match - Down (recycled polyester/feather fillers); coat made of old jeans; layer vintage
WIW Man (Whatever – I –Want)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ More comprehensive expression - men can select different elements from different categories of masculinity above(or even others) ✓ Mix&Match according to their own unique fashion sense&taste ✓ The 11 categories mentioned previously not mutually exclusive – thus, a combination possible. e.g. a man looks strong, but if with Mary-Jane sandals, voluminous pants also romantic, homebody. ✓ Various expressions simultaneous ✓ Reflected by all 20 brands here – key emphasis on individual taste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Importance on Coordination</u>: cacophonous but totally working, self-curated ensemble/mix of colour, texture, pattern, accessories&style. – unparalleled freedom of expression ➤ Invitation of young influencers from Instagram/YouTube to be models, asked to choose their own styles - garments&accessories backstage ➤ E.g. foliage motif suit mix&matched with another denim jacket, animal hood scarf, unique sneakers – a chilled-out skater, punk, Instagram-friendly look all at same time. ➤ Rainbow coordination: symbolism

3.3. Social–Cultural Factors to these Expressions of Masculinity

The social–cultural factors explained below cannot simply be the only reasons to explain the popularity of the 12 expressions of masculinity today, discussed in the previous section of this chapter. However, these factors will give some ideas and clues as to why men are exploring and selecting these key expressions, which have become much more subdivided, but at the same time more inclusive and comprehensive, compared to the masculinity expressions/images that men could achieve in the past (refer to pp.26–27; pp.63–64; pp.70–71, in Chap.2). These social–cultural factors have been investigated through the author’s own research on the most recent journal or news articles within the last 6 years. It must be noted that depending on how influential each sociocultural factor mentioned below is, the respective expression of masculinity also differs in its prevalence. For instance, if the socio–cultural factor is relatively a small trend of music culture, like the wild west music in vogue at the moment, then the importance of Subverted Americana Cowboys is relatively less, than say, Homebodies, who have been formed globally due to the vast impact of the Covid Pandemic, as shall be seen.

1. ‘Don’t Care Gender’ Modern Romantics:

These ‘Don’t Care Gender’ Modern Romantics can be explained partly by the aesthetic and cultural aspects of hyper–modernism and performatism prevalent today. Firstly, the hypermodern society means that pleasures derived from plentiful consumption are great. Men are fervently in constant search for expressiveness and novelty in fashion, seeking hedonistic impulse, but at the same time, they have grown tired of fast fashion and cheap items (Morgado, 2014; Lee et al, 2020). This has generated an emphasis on more splendid abundance and diversity of decorative design elements and styles, ranging from flamboyant embroideries, colours, patterns, sumptuous fabrics to riots of layering styles, which focus on expressing colorful

emotions of the wearer (Ibid.)

Secondly, due to performatism encouraged in contemporary society today, there is an emphasis on promoting ‘subjects who have authorial power’ to control ‘time, space, and causality’ for their own personal preference and interpretation (Ibid.). This demonstrates that subjects can today perfectly erase or view differently existing interpretive categories; with fashion as well, they can thus ‘reconsider ideas regarding individuality and its expression in dress, as well as the roles and functions of dress’ (Morgado, 2014). Consequently, these factors have allowed more and more men to comfortably adopt what was conventionally interpreted as ‘feminine’ design elements, now purely as part of their new expressive choices (Lee et al, 2020). These men are not about being socially subversive, stirring gender issues; in fact, they do not really care about gender and their key aim is to have pleasure in choosing colorful fashion to express more of their emotions and sensitivities. Because of these factors, these ‘Don’t care gender’ modern romantic men can also be labelled as neo-crosssexual men.

2. Subverted Americana Cowboy

At the moment the Wild West theme is enjoying a good, healthy resurgence in pop culture. Westworld, and Diplo’s singles and music videos are extremely popular, as well as Netflix’s recent cinematic collaboration with the Coen Brothers, ‘The Ballad of Buster Scruggs’ speaks for the current popularity of this cowboy theme among men (Cvetkovic, 2019). In fact, Western cowboy themed menswear has never really been out of fashion, especially if one thinks of Ralph Lauren’s cowboy boots, wide-brimmed hats, etc. However, the big difference to the past cowboys is that these men today like to adopt skinny I or X silhouette, hence the name ‘subverted’ Americana cowboys. By borrowing a long associated masculine theme of cowboy, men can now enjoy skinny silhouettes without worrying that they might look too feminine as crosssexuals were in the 2000s.

3. 'Against Gender' Poet Maudit/Glam rocker

This is a separate category to modern romantics, and is necessary because there are strong arguments being put forward currently by people with non-binary gender identities that heterosexual men who simply enjoy colourful clothes should not be called gender-fluid, nor genderless, gender non-conforming, etc. This fashion phenomenon by heterosexual people is wrongly labelled and viewed as gender politics, simply to exploit and commodify gender issues (Tobia, 2017; Lee et al, 2020). These non-binary gender names should actually remain with people with such gender identities. Furthermore, these people tend to like (although not always) more rebellious looks. They can display playful and joyful expressions such as glam rockers, but there are also men who look in anguish and sadness such as Poet Maudits (poets who are against, or outside society).

It is true that this LGBTQ+ creativity follows in the footsteps first made by the androgynous fashion of Westwood, Gaultier, and Galliano in the 1980s, however, the big difference now is that the political backdrop has changed much (Mower, Charles Jeffrey Loverboy, 2018S/S). In the past, it used to be models/students dressing up and showing off falsely 'a brave and joyful standing-up' against a world 'where all kinds of rights are under attack daily'; however, today, collections are also revealing and admitting honestly 'the growing pains one has to go through if one is (actually) gay (or has a non-binary gender identity)' (Ibid.). There is an honest exploration of that anger and sadness, and thus providing a more growing awareness of and sensitivity to the real experiences of trans and gender non-conforming individuals; people for whom the bending of gender is not merely a style, but an identity (Sanders, 2019). Thus, there is a more truthful move towards admitting the myriad ways as to what gender can or cannot do.

4. Visual Artist

Many menswear brands and designers are relying on the aura and creativity of artists, in order to compete for the attention of the

increasingly fickle Millennial and Gen Z consumers (Diderich, 2019). These young men are looking for interesting colours and shapes, that remind them of art, especially since art has the quality of being rare, unique, and one of a kind. As Paola Cillo, professor of Management and Technology at Bocconi University, Milan, has emphasized, ‘fashion today thrives on novelties, special editions, or personalized products because it increasingly needs, in a crowded market, to create (artistic) storytelling authentically tied to the brand’ (Ibid.). Sonja Prokopec, professor of Luxury Brand Management at the ESSEC business school, has also highlighted that art speaks to both male and female observers on an emotional level, with scientific studies demonstrating that it can ‘even reduce stress’ (Ibid.). Thus, men can also use their artistic suits as an outlet of their emotions.

5.Active Commuter

This is a new category of men that have risen recently. There were in the past more practical suits (such as looser fit) to give some convenience to their wearers in workplaces, but today the emphasis is on ‘commuters’. The reason for this is because commuting times are soaring at the moment, with house prices booming globally (Wood, ABC news, 2019). Therefore, there is a demand from many men, for more colorfully active and functional elements in their suits that will provide both comfort and fashion. In particular, thanks to new technology, Anja Cronberg at London College of Fashion has highlighted that ‘we can create fabrics that stretch and shoes that allow us to run to catch the bus; it is no wonder we prefer leggings, t-shirts and sneakers (in our suits...)’ (Tomes, 2017). Furthermore, with issues like ‘global warming’ becoming increasingly significant, there have recently been workers demonstrating to wear shorts (or a skirt) with their suit jacket in hot summer months (Sini, BBC, 2017). In fact, recently, a BBC news announcer presented his news whilst wearing a pair of shorts to his suit jacket, on ‘the hottest day so far’ (Percival, 2021). This is all pointing towards more active-inspired suits for the ease of daily commuting to work.

6.Homebody

Due to the severe hit of Covid, there is a high demand for ‘pyjama-like suits’, as some workers are forced to work from their home. This is the latest hybrid of the suit and loungewear, and is made of the same fabric as pyjamas but looks like a suit, from its cut to the buttons on the sleeves (Elan, 2021). In fact, Aoki, a men’s suit retailer in Japan, has pivoted completely to pyjama suits, and it has been a success, with men placing orders in the US, Canada, Spain, and Indonesia. Designers came up with this idea of ‘homebody relaxer’ suits as they saw many men having to inconveniently take time and change into office clothes to attend Zoom video meetings; thus, designers thought it would be good to have loungewear that also look formal, and let men enjoy their time working from home (Ibid.).

Currently also, there is an urge to nest; men are going through an uncertain future, therefore, clothing will become more an extension of their homes, ‘offering comfort and reliability amidst global turbulence’ (Jacobs, BBC, 2020). Men’s priorities have ‘shifted to ask for maximum comfort’, and many of them are more likely to value ‘cosy’ and ‘worn-in’ garments that allow them to move with ease (Ibid.). Also, because of this urge, many designers have shown easy-to-wear coordination styles, just simply throwing on a parka/windbreaker on their pyjama-like suit, for these men to go to a nearby grocery or café. These ‘homebody’ suits are so comfortable that they will also likely to be seen often at holiday resorts.

7.Adventurer

The reason for the popularity of these even more sporty, functional and easy-care suits is due to men’s current predilection for all things technical and outdoor (‘#love for travel’, ‘#country calling’, ‘#urban pursuits’) (WGSN, tailoring, 2019S/S). Millennials and Generation Z love having extreme experiences; their ‘tastes lean towards experiences...’ (Bethune, 2017). At the same time, athletes are no longer the only celebrities of the outdoor world; Instagram and

YouTube influencers with honest and authentic physical activity contents are gathering thousands of dedicated followers (Ibid.). One will question however, why combine outdoor elements with suits though. Many urban-dwelling outdoor consumers were not actually raised on traditional outdoor activities, and ‘do not define themselves (very) outdoorsy’, yet the activities they enjoy frequently take them outside (Ibid.). Combining outdoor and functional elements with suits mean men can enjoy this look for urban pursuits as well. These trends are evidently broadening definitions and blurring industry lines between outdoor sportswear and formalwear.

8. Street Youth/Skater

As many fashion reports and news have emphasized, ‘hip-hop, skater culture is helping to make clothing company popular’ (Noble, 2019). This expression of masculinity has been made through menswear brands collaborating with streetwear giants such as *Stussy* and *Supreme*. This fashion expression is not made for the consumer, rather curated and developed by the consumer; these men ‘love seeing their favourite brands come together to collaborate on something new and fresh’ (Noble, 2019). Thus, brands were ‘sought out by consumers wanting to be ‘in’ on the exclusivity of streetwear clothing combined with suits, which were in the form of capsule collections, limited editions, artistic collaborations, etc. Furthermore, by combining streetwear with suits, it appeals to more mature men as they can look younger; and also attracts younger gen Z market as this street collaboration make suits young and more relevant for them.

9. Technology Fanatic

These men can be partly explained by the prevalence of digimodernism today. There is an unprecedented increase of men using and/or even running their own fashion blogs, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok channels; they have democratized fashion reporting, resulting in the rise of acceptance and respect for individual taste and much more decorativeness in male fashion

(Morgado, 2014; Lee et al, 2020). As of 2021, there are currently, 1221 million and 2291 million Instagram and YouTube users respectively, around the world, and of these users, 42% (Instagram) and 55% (YouTube) users are males (Statista, 2021). In line with this, there is a growing rise of male influencers who consistently posts unboxing videos of their luxury shopping hauls. For instance, '@marc.unbox' has dedicated his entire TikTok account to these videos, having more than 3 million likes on all his videos (Malzahn, 2021). To reflect this popular phenomenon on social media by young men, many menswear brands are specifically designing suits and accessories that look particularly good on screens.

10.Strong Man but Family Focused

A recent *GQ* feature about Instagram's influence on fitness reported that over 43% of men take photos or videos regularly at the gym (Chander, 2018). Therefore, young generation of males are exposed to images and videos of others working out every day. The ongoing popularity of this expression demonstrates that there is still the continuance of traditional masculine qualities to some extent, and this is perhaps the most classic masculinity form than the other 11 expressions. In fact, this is similar to ubersexual men.

However, there is a key difference in that these strong men have also become more fashionable and daring, using bolder patterns and volumes of fur, for instance. These men are also much more nurturing and caring towards their family. This shows that they have become more flexible. This is in line with how there is a significant demand in society to ask men to discard toxic masculinity today. Toxic masculinity is 'an adherence to the limiting and potentially dangerous societal standards set for men (e.g. not displaying emotion; emotional insensitivity towards family) (White, 2021). This toxic masculinity can lead to ultimately damaging men's mental health, thus, there have been a strong call in society today to let men undo toxic masculinity. This involves men being much truer to themselves and to their family, which has also been well reflected in the fashion world.

11. Environmentally/Socially Conscious Man

Male consumers today are seeking garments that not only supports their lifestyle, but allows them ‘to express their beliefs and values through the brands they choose to wear’, and ‘to feel good about the consumption decisions they make’ (Bethune, 2017). Thus, men are seeking to consume values, especially with the global advent of social movements towards sustainability and diversity. Furthermore, men have even started demanding more insight into the garments that they wear, and so fashion businesses have been providing increased clarity concerning the condition of their factories and the environmental impact of their fabrics (Jones, 2021). In fact, some brands offer QR codes to allow consumers to learn the history behind individual garments, and to know their eco-friendliness, and labor practices (Ibid). The ethical clothing market is evidently growing; data from *ResearchAndMarkets* expects the market to grow from \$6.3 billion in 2019 to \$8.2 billion in 2023 (Ibid.). This is why many menswear brands have started to upcycle pieces from previous collections (‘understanding that we might actually have enough out there already...has led to a resurgence of interest in making & mending’); to launch travel bags made from sustainable, plant-derived leather; or to offer vegan-friendly sneakers (Bethune, 2017; Jacobs, 2020). There are also brands which have collaborated with national parks, to make nature motif patterns (profit to charities).

Not only environmental issues, but men today have become much more aware of social issues as well. Following the protests due to the unfair death of the black man, George Floyd, fashion lovers have ‘called out the industry for failing to fight racism and embrace (diverse) representation’ (Magnusdottir, 2020). Because of this, many people have demanded more efforts from the fashion industry to reconsider its approach to DEI (Diversity, Equality, Inclusivity) (Ibid.). Hence, the recent rainbow collections that support LGBTQ+ rights have been praised by many. This is a big breakthrough, as in the past, such collections were heavily criticized by the vast majority males.

12.WIW ('Whatever-I-Want') man

This is a completely new category of men, that has risen due to today's young Millennials and Gen Z putting an utmost emphasis on respecting each (his and other's) individual taste. In fact, the whole society's atmosphere is also changing towards respecting personal taste. In a national survey of randomly selected 1000 people, over 82.3% thought that giving importance to personal taste has become a notable trend, and over 79.0% felt that there are now many services or products aiming at specific personal tastes (Embrain statistics, 2019). Furthermore, this national survey found out that the younger the generation, the more actively they are revealing their 'personal preference and taste' (Ibid.). For these young generations, personal taste judgements of likes and dislikes are evidently crucial.

Concerning the formation of an individual's taste in contemporary society, Skeggs(2004) has pointed out the significance of the individual's resources, such as learning, information, social networks, investment in the body, and fluidity between cultural boundaries (Lee et al, 2020). With so much information today, flowing in and out from different cultures and media, it is inevitable for men's taste to become more and more subdivided. In particular, with the rising attention to a construction and expression of an aesthetic-self, it is becoming crucial to enlarge the role of one's individuality, increasingly having a liking for standing out from the crowd, to be different and special, with a more personal sense for beauty (Lee et al, 2020). Bennett et al(2009). has also argued how 'versatility' and 'novelty' are key resources for forming a stylish taste (Lee et al, 2020). This is the reason why many menswear brands today have invited young influencers to coordinate their own style backstage, in whatever way they want, and walk the runway to show off their 'versatility' and 'novelty'.

3.4. General Discussion Based on the Results

As a result of analysing contemporary men's suits in 2015S/S–2020F/W, it could evidently be demonstrated how much decorative and colourful suit designs have become today for men, both in terms of scale and range, compared to the suit designs of the past. In fact, this has been achieved through all of the 7 design characteristics, silhouette, detail (structural and decorative), colour, fabric, pattern, accessories, and coordination style.

In terms of silhouette, there now exists a more variety and versatility, compared to the past conventional suit silhouettes. The past ones in general consisted simply of H, Y, and X, but today there are at least 8 types, ranging X, Y, fitted or boxy H, A, I, exaggerated or distorted line, and many others (train, empire line, etc). Furthermore, X-lines no longer simply show a 'feminine' image only, and boxy H-lines can show various images such as 'modern romantics' and 'gender-fluid' expressions as well. Overall though, the suit silhouette has become much more relaxed, to provide comfort. There are also innovative silhouettes that were hardly demonstrated in a suit before to play with notions of sensuality. This includes the cut-off suits; both bolder and subtler ones have been created, so that any man can try, whether due to hot weather or for fashion. Clearly, there are more silhouette choices for men of various physique to select today.

Regarding details, there are now many ingenious colourful details. This includes a prominent use of flamboyant shawl lapels; or even enlarged, decorated peaked/notched lapels to draw attention to men's large chest. There are augmented cuffs, flounces on arms; novel fasteners inspired from ethnic minority cultures; new embellished innerwear (using materials that are artisan homespun and tattoo details); jackets with decorative strips made of offcuts; or 'inside-out' jackets entirely covered in braids, embroideries or cords. There are also colourful zips, tapes, and bindings to blend suit with fashionable outdoor, street and utility narratives. Evidently, practical

details have become decorative features too, creating hybrids. Thus, what is notable is that these colorful details do not convey effeminacy but are used as a novel means to communicate other images.

For colours, less than 2% of the suits belonged to the warm colour range in the 2000s, as seen from Bang (2009)'s research, but today, contemporary men's suits present 'every shade', and mood; even selecting suit colours from warm, bright, pastel, high-chroma ones to tints, on their entire suit surface, either as a solid or a pattern. There are not simply flamboyant colour palettes inspired from artists, but designers have skilfully devised ways that less confident men can try some unconventional suit colours, such as cantaloupe, digital red, by giving active-inspired looks. Most notable are the colour block or colour field suits, inspired from Colour Field paintings, which portray men as confident and relaxed, and thus can be worn variously from informal client meetings to summer Fridays.

Regarding fabric, there is a much more various usage of fabric materials in men's suits, ranging from all silk pyjama suits; to sensual lace and linen suits. Again, there are clever usages made by designers to help men try softer fabrics without fearing they might look 'too feminine' such as the velvet suits with a leather bag placed frontally to look like an armour; and voluminous fur suits that portray the man like Greek heroes. There are also colourful, stretchy fabrics such as Lycra with water-repelling bio-based coatings for suit and athleisure hybrids. In addition, there are crafty patchwork or contrast sleeve jackets, that uses deadstock, to give a sportier look, and satisfy sustainable movements. Finally, there are futuristic suits in new novel materials, to reflect how men's eyes are trained to see everything on digital screens today.

For pattern, there now exists a myriad of flamboyant patterns, which is in a striking contrast to the past, when such patterns did not really make a significant appearance in suits. Today, there are unique visual artwork inspired motifs (portraits of beauty; abstract expressionist; kabuki; nativity paintings; brave heraldry; etc.); and numerous

unseen variations on floral & vegetation pattern (serene Eastern orchids; soft dainty or big bold floral motifs; prodigious tree of life with gold/crystal embroidery; patchwork floral/vegetation from printed deadstock; and digitally taken extreme close-ups or aerial shots of nature). In addition, there are diverse animal prints (animal skin; animal themselves enlarged; fantasy beasts from mixed cultures; or for less confident men, relatively smaller soaring birds/dinosaurs). Finally, there are 'doodle' lettering suits (making social statements); and prints of object (money, spaceship, to show men who aspire to career success or who love technology).

For accessories, many novel and colourful ones are matched with suits today, even those that were regarded as only women's before, such as decorative miniature cross-bags, clutches, silk scarf/sash, loafers with boudoir motif (velvet/fur), coloured/lace gloves, face decorating jewellery or headpiece, etc. Today, these can be re-appropriated to even give men strong, active, charismatic strength. There are also very exaggerated accessories for men who want to convey a rebellious identity. In addition, there are interesting sports accessories, which are colourful at the same time, including Supreme collaboration sling bags. Finally, restored/repurposed bags for environmentally conscious men; and manipulated bags/pouches for Instagram or TikTok screens, for social-media lovers exist.

Lastly, with coordination, there are countless unique ones with men's suit today, cunningly forged by both designers and surprisingly men themselves on runways, according to their own personal taste. This is a notable change to the past suit styles where they were overall restrained through unifying top and bottom by one colour or fabric. There are now bolder coordination styles, ranging from unexpected mix & match (with colourful sporty casual items); or cross-over (borrowing from conventional women's items); to numerous riots of layering (sleeve-scarf, jockstrap, etc.); matching set (in couture like fabric or pattern); and lastly, WIW (coordinate Whatever-I-Want) styles, where a man can pick/select freely his own style.

Overall, the numerous novel and unique approaches above to all 7 design features, cleverly devised by designers and men themselves today, have allowed various expressions of masculinity to be conjured up by them. The most notable expressions have been derived and categorized as the following:

‘Don’t Care Gender’ Modern Romantics; Subverted Americana Cowboy; ‘Against Gender’ Poet Maudit/Glam Rocker; Visual Artist; Active Commuter; Homebody; Adventurer; Street Youth/Skater; Technology Fanatic; Strong Man but Family Focused; Socially/Environmentally Conscious Man; and WIW (Whatever–I–Want) Man.

All 12 expressions and their description & design features have been outlined in detail on pages 149–152<Table.5>. Below is a summary for the definition of each expression, and possible social–cultural factors as to why these expressions have become significant today.

‘Don’t Care Gender’ Modern Romantics are men who are no longer about being ‘feminine’; they do not really care about gender issues. They are truly expressive of their feelings (even open to shyness, love). They are often called soft masculinity/beautiful men, but they can also look strong; the reason that they are called ‘soft’ is because they can easily adapt various colourful design features to their own style, and make them malleable. They show sophisticated sexiness, elegance and opulence. However, they usually do not portray as extravagant/rebellious looks as Poet Maudit/Glam Rockers do. This expression is often shown by brands like Dior Homme, Alexander McQueen and Paul Smith. They tend to use warm colours or patterns; subtly see–through materials; decorative lapels, embroideries; mini–bags with hand–paint; and riots of layering. Also, these men are not restricted to using skinny or X–silhouette, as it was the case for crosssexuals. Factors such as hyper–modernism and performatism today have contributed towards the prevalence of these men.

Subverted Americana Cowboys are men who desire to look sensual, but not overtly androgynous, so borrows elements from cowboys.

They show very body-conscious, skinny looks, but at times they even look charismatic/strong with angular shoulders. Thus, they tend to show 'tender toughness' and 'cowboy insouciance'. Brands like Givenchy and Saint Laurent have often shown this as they seek chic style and target youths with such physique. They often use Western saddle-inspired details and accessories (e.g. Stetson). The reason for the popularity of these men is not only the resurgence in pop culture of Wild West theme, but also because they can enjoy skinny silhouettes without looking too feminine.

'Against Gender' Poet Maudits/Glam Rockers are people who use fashion to make a statement against binary gender, as they want to express their nonbinary gender identity. Thus, these men often, though not always, convey more rebellious expressions. They are a cross between poet maudit and subcultural glam rocker. It is true that there were androgynous looks in the past, but the difference today is that designers and models are admitting more honestly the painful anger/sadness of these people, rather than simply looking hopeful. They can look satirizing, and anarchic, but at times they can also look playful/child-like, playing with camp notions. They can take, if they want, exaggerated silhouettes, details, accessories and coordination, and also opt for more flamboyant colours, fabrics and pattern. Overall, this phenomenon is a youth driven gender-issue, aided by vibrant social movements today, to provide more sensitivity to the real experiences of these people, for whom gender-bending is not merely a style, but an identity. More provocative, LGBTQ+ parading brands like Thom Browne, Gucci and Loverboy often support this expression.

Visual artists are men who love putting artwork-like dynamic effects in their fashion, having an independent-mind like artists. Thus, colour/pattern deployments and accessories are key for them, and often show bold colours inspired by artists, architects, etc. They portray looks that are colour-saturated, cacophonous, expressive, and visually dynamic. The suits can be worn as vivid summer escape-wear or for even informal meetings. There is a high demand for this

artistic expression among fickle Millennial/Gen Z consumers, as they continuously search for something rare and unique, and art shares these qualities to satisfy their needs and tastes. Paul Smith, Dries van Noten and Kenzo show this expression a lot as they like playing with colours based on art and culture.

Active Commuters show colourful athletic modernity in their suits, thus portray energizing, active looks. These suits allow unparalleled range of motion to give comfort on his way to work, and at the same time, they are fashionable (combining hyper-modern dandyism of street culture). Thus, these men can escape into clubs or a sports game even after work as well. They can often give a look of 'dressed in haste', to save time. These men exploit energizing colours; sporty details such as contrast colour zips, tapes, pockets; and jersey-like, Lycra-infused fabrics. Accessories and coordination are key as these men uniquely create mix & match between suits and sporty casuals, also adopting bright sporty gloves, bags, and sneakers. This expression is significantly popular today, as commuting times are constantly soaring, with house prices booming. Also, with the heat of global warming, men now want to wear shorts with suit. It is often pursued by more functional brands like Louis Vuitton, Zegna and Calvin Klein, whose target are actualisers (career success important).

Homebodies portray a much more comfortable, relaxed, light, serene and easy-going look than the active commuters. These suits have home-wear features, thus can even be worn at home. They also look as if they have come out briefly from their home for a walk or to go to nearby grocers/café. These men show ultimate pursuit of leisurely perfection. This is a non-traditional category; loose fit, tonal textures and sinuous fabrics are key. They often use fluid pyjama-like fabrics like silk (silk matching set), and use lightweight accessories such as clutch, silk bag, bucket hat, Birkenstock or espadrille sandals. The reason for the rise of these men and their suits, is due to Covid, as many workers are forced to remain at home.

Adventurers put the utmost emphasis on hyper-athleticism. Thus,

they have even more survivalist-led, functional elements in their suits (extreme weather protection & thermo-regulation) than the active commuters. They give an image of incessant world travellers. Sometimes they make military references such as camouflage. Hyper-athletic details, fabrics, accessories, and coordination are crucial, such as water-proof tapes, neoprene fabrics, aqua shoes, hiking boots, protective gears, and harness-looking rucksacks. They often show mix-and-match, tuck-in, layering with highly technical proofs. This look is popular among young millennial and gen Z youth today who love extreme experiences; they can combine very outdoor elements with suits to be unique, and enjoy not only countryside but urban pursuits as well. It is pursued often by more sport-inspired brands like Kenzo, Balmain and Louis Vuitton.

Street Youth/Skater is a fusion of 'sartorial skater' and 'smarten-up' looks. These men have a tough/coarse, or chilled-out skater youth image. Their fashion looks urban, and can be worn to hang out with their friends on street. They often take baggy silhouettes, and can use decorative details such as sneaker laces looping through their jackets. Patchwork panelling with more casual fabrics is important as it provides comfort. Skater-inspired accessories and styles are crucial (e.g. sling bag, long belt, sneakers, many layers of hoodies, t-shirts under blazer). This expression has been made popular by appealing to young consumers, especially suit brands collaborating with streetwear giants such as Supreme. It is also fresh for them, as they can curate and develop their own skater looks, and thus also make a huge influence on menswear brands in return. This image is well shown by brands which have expanded their target to gen Z.

Technology Fanatics are men who love technology and can easily adapt to the fast speed of modern consciousness. They like being scientific, futuristic, and shows looks which are casual and spontaneous. Thus, they like fabrics, patterns and accessories which use modern technology, or which have been manipulated for digital screens. The key difference to men who liked technology in the past

is that these men today also love garments/accessories with artisanal craft, since they realize today's technology has come down from craft of the past. These men can be explained by digimodernism; there is an unparalleled increase of men running their own fashion TikTok, Instagram and YouTube channels, democratizing fashion reporting.

Strong Men But Family Focused are most close to the conventional image of men; they tend to portray themselves as strong and muscular. However, they are also caring towards their family. It is similar to ubersexual, but the crucial difference today is that these men are now more fashionable and daring. They can use decorative details like Ghillie tassel to reference old heroes; or enlarged shawl lapels that draw attention to their large chest. The ongoing popularity of these strong men demonstrates that there is still some continuance of traditional masculine qualities. However, the reason that these men have been able to become more expressive is because there is a move in society today to invite men to disregard toxic masculinity. This expression is often pursued by brands which emphasize prestige and heritage, and also tend to extend their target range to older men.

Environmentally/Socially Conscious men are male consumers who are concerned with environmental/social issues. They try to seek sustainable options such as using garments/items with materials sourced from nearby (localism); vintage shops (handcraft); recycling centres and cutting room floors (upcycled off-cuts). Thus, these men also like goods that are not mass-produced. They like timeless black as well, for slow trends, although they can choose more colours if they are from thrift shops. They can wear patchwork patterns from deadstock; patterns that have been collaborated with national parks or make a meaningful statement in letters. Carrying restored or repurposed bags, and layering coats made of vintage materials or recycled fillers are popular styles. More men are seeking to consume values, with the move towards sustainability and diversity today. Many brands are socially responsible today, like Zegna which try to use ethical fabrics for their suits, wherever possible.

Finally, WIW (Whatever-I-Want) Man is a more comprehensive expression; these men can select different elements from different categories above (or even others). A combination through mix & match styling is possible, according to each man's unique sense and taste. Thus, there is an importance on coordination styles; they seem cacophonous but actually are self-curated to form a working ensemble/mix of colour, texture, pattern, accessories, etc. Even young influencers as models devised their own style for the runways, rather than designers choosing a style for them. Some even adopted rainbow coordination in their look. This is a completely new group of men, that has risen due to today's young Millennials and Gen Z putting an utmost emphasis on respecting each individual taste. Importantly, this expression is well reflected by all 20 brands in this research.

Overall, the above 12 expressions shown in contemporary men's suits today evidently demonstrate that suits' conventional sartorial images (pp.63–64) have become much more extended to include new ones, and at the same time, more segmented, along with the development of personal tastes today. The conventional Traditional and Strong images continue today in the form of 'Strong Men But Family Focused', but these men have also become relatively more experimental with their fashion. Sophisticated & Chic males can also be shown by the skinny Subverted Americana Cowboys today, but the latter no longer means being 'feminine'. The same is true for Elegant & Romantic males in the past; they have evolved to become 'Don't Care Gender' Modern Romantics, but they are definitely not about being 'feminine' and they can even look strong, as the cat-face beaded armour suit shows (fig.53b). Kitsch & Sensual and Unconventional male images somewhat continue in the form of 'Against Gender' Poet Maudit/Glam Rocker and Visual Artists, but today's men can be more decorative and colourful in novel ways, as well as being subtler (e.g. layering black boxy coat on fully patterned suit), so that a man can choose according to his preferences and needs at different times. The Functional & Practical image in the past have become much more fragmented, creating new men such as

Active Commuters, Technology Fanatics, Adventurers and Street Youths/Skaters. Finally, today there are fresh new expressions shown through the contemporary suits only. They include Homebodies; Environmentally/Socially Conscious men and WIW men. These are new as suits were generally only considered as formal public wear, that required the utmost cleanliness and newness (materials from waste deadstock/off-cuts were unimaginable), and coordinated only in relatively simple styles to keep its decorum.

Next is the comparison of the current expressions of masculinity with the 8 norms/acts endorsed by the hegemonic masculinity (pp.16–18, p.26). There are some norms/acts that partly continue today such as the ‘toughness norm(achieve difficult goals, sacrifice)’; ‘intellectual success’; ‘career success(in masculine jobs, separation between work vs. family, public vs. private)’; and ‘sport fanatics’. As seen, the toughness norm still exists, through Strong Man, but rather than sacrificing only, they try to also spend quality time with Family, and going on travels and adventures. Intellectual/Career success is still highly desired, as seen by the Active Commuters. However, in the past, they had to wear only stifling grey suits, but now they are no longer sacrificing comfort, but actively putting bright functional elements into their suits to give ease as well as fashion to commuting looks. Furthermore, today the notion of ‘masculine public jobs’ are more and more being disregarded, especially with many men forced to work from home with the global Covid pandemic, giving rise to Homebody suits as well. Finally, there is still big continuity with sport themes, as shown by the hyper-athletic Adventurer’s suits.

In contrast, the anti-feminine (heterosexual or homosexual men with ‘effeminate, colorful taste’ being discriminated); emotional restraint; aggression (glorify violence); and sexual assertiveness norms/acts have almost ceased to be expressed/supported by men, at least in the fashion world. For instance, not only ‘Don’t Care Gender’ Modern Romantics, and Visual Artists, but today Active Commuters and Adventurers also use bold sporty colours, patterns, and accessories.

In fact, even the more 'masculine' 'Strong Men with Family Focused' are actively using all-over decorative pattern of heraldry. In terms of emotional restraint as well, modern romantics openly show their emotions such as shyness and love, as well as Poet Maudits/Glam Rockers honestly reveal their sadness/anger, through novel prints on their suit. Furthermore, there is no longer aggression; men use this aggression instead to fight for good cause such as 'the eco-warriors'. Finally, there is no longer sexual assertiveness/superiority. Strong muscular men exist but so do sensual men, and regardless of who these men are, they tend to use colourful fashion to satisfy their own personal taste. As seen, there is a constant call for men to move away today from those masculine norms/acts, which cause harm (i.e., toxic masculinity) by giving a selection of much more diverse expressions.

In comparison to the multiple masculinities from the 2000s (pp.19–25, 27), there are also some continuities as well as important changes in current expressions of masculinity today. Protest masculinity in the form of non-conforming genders continue as Poet Maudits/Glam Rockers; these people continue to challenge, subvert, or deny binary gender. Interestingly though, there is a change now; not just ethnically or sexually marginalized men, but many white heterosexual models are also enthusiastically shown on runways wearing colourful elements. This shows that today, effeminate fashion does not mean gay nor Black/Asian people's fashion at all. Furthermore, many menswear designers are adopting in their suits, themes like workers' wear from blue collar men, in order to be more inclusive.

On the other hand, other expressions from the 2000s, such as metrosexual, ubersexual and crosssexual cannot continue to be used today. Metrosexuals only involve wealthy white Caucasian or Asian men. Ubersexuals still somewhat persists, but these strong men today actually do care about fashion. Finally, Crosssexuals are simply interpreted by the majority and even the academic scholarship as 'feminine' and related images only, thus it is still inevitably outright against the hegemonic masculinity, limiting their spread ultimately.

Lastly, the 12 expressions must be compared with the most recent notion of masculinities in scholarship, which are hybrid/inclusive masculinities (pp.23–25, 27). Many elements from hybrid/inclusive masculinities are in fact relevant today, for instance, men have become much more open; reject homophobia; more emotionally intimate; and physically tactile with other men. However, the main problem with these masculinities is that they are still defined as ‘incorporating elements coded as ‘feminine’, ‘ethnic minority (black)’ and/or ‘gay’, into white, heterosexual masculine identities and performances’. This is still labelling the colourful, novel design elements and accessories as either ‘feminine’, ‘gay’ or ‘inspired from black people’ etc. Furthermore, not just white, heterosexual masculine identities try these suit fashions today, but many other types of men enjoy them too. Thus, these hybrid/inclusive masculinities and their definition/features are rather disparaging, as well as limiting and narrow, only involving a certain type of men.

Ultimately, there is a need for a new term of masculinity, that includes other socially, ethnically, and/or sexually marginalized men, and at the same time not completely disregarding hegemonic masculine men, as these men will continue to exist inevitably. The focus should now be on each individual male (‘Me’) today. Indeed, many more men are now gradually choosing fashion as a means to satisfy one’s own taste rather than really scrutinizing or worrying over whether he looks more superior than the others or not. It is their personal taste and preference that matters the most, as can be seen from the 12 expressions, especially the WIW men. Therefore, the author of this research has coined a new fashion term ‘Flexible masculinity’ to describe fashionable global men today.

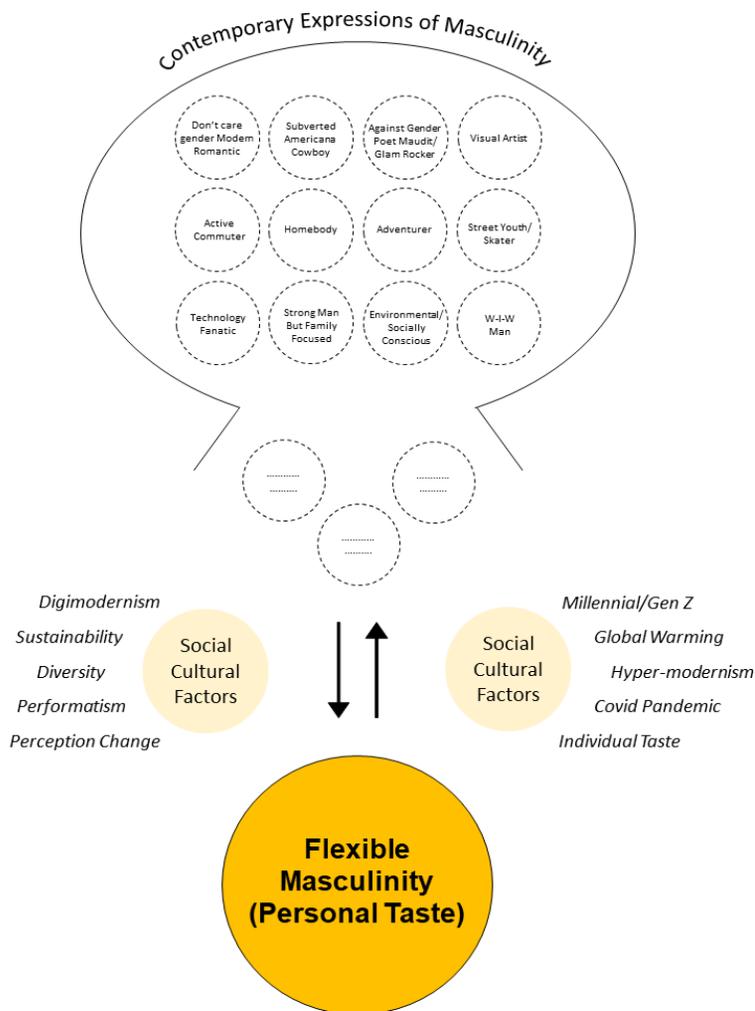
Flexible masculinity is a new feature of masculinity that men has globally come to acquire today; they are fashionable men who select flexibly diverse decorative, colourful design elements, accessories, and coordination (even those that were conventionally categorized as feminine, for example) according to their own personal taste. These

men now perceive these colourful elements and items purely as creative and/or functional means, thus can follow various expressions. This is regardless of whether these men are heterosexual, gay, gender-bending, or ethnically/socially marginalized. They can pursue various expressions besides feminine ones, and can even portray several expressions all at the same time, if they desire. This has helped and will continue to help many more men to try such colourful elements. The contemporary man with Flexible masculinity can be described by the diagram on the following page<Diagram.3> (p.175). An individual male is at the centre, and it is his personal taste that is the most important (thus, highlighted in the most notable yellow). From various expressions available today (here, shown the 12 expressions, but there can be more), the man can select freely different elements, to come up with a look that he desires according to his liking and preference. By self-curating, the man can also influence designers back, hence the interactive, two-way arrows. There are also many social cultural factors, which influence the diverse expressions and the man today.

Going back to the question raised in the introduction, are the colourful design elements appearing in men's suits today due to issue of gender or of taste? For some men like the rebellious Poet Maudits/Glam Rockers, the issue of gender identity is more important, since gender bending is not merely a style but is their identity. However, for many others, their own individual fashion taste is the most significant factor. The fact that today numerous men are using these colourful elements to portray so many diverse expressions, some of which are not even linked to 'the feminine' (e.g. Homebodies, Street Youth/Skaters, etc.) reveal that they no longer really think about gender issues. In fact, non-conforming gender identities are in a broader sense also one's taste and preference. Evidently, there is no longer a distinction between the binary genders in fashion. The most inflexible men's fashion, i.e. suits, have shown this, which speaks automatically for men's other fashion items as well. Of course, there are other factors that have contributed towards the rise of the 12 expressions, such as

the Covid pandemic, need for hyperathletic experiences, and soaring commuting times. However, even with these functional needs, they still want to be fashionable and decorative, which ultimately attest to the significant role that colourful personal tastes are playing today.

<Diagram.3.> Diagram to show a contemporary man with flexible masculinity today, evidently demonstrated by the contemporary men’s suits from 2015S/S.



Chapter 4. Conclusion

The concept of masculinity is a constructed outcome, symbolizing the dominant social, cultural conditions and discursive truths of the period. It was during and after the Industrial Revolution and the Victorian era that the difference between masculinity vs. femininity traits became more than ever opposing to each other, and the concept of masculinity continued to develop based on this binary to reach what is known as hegemonic masculinity, coined by Connell et al. in the late 1980s. This hegemonic masculinity justifies men's dominant position in society, legitimizes subordination of women, and other marginalized males. In line with this, men's suits have also evolved since the Industrial Revolution and the Victorian era, and they have been a key fortress-like symbol of the hegemonic masculinity for the last two centuries. Of course, there have been few instances of 'feminine' or 'novel' designs cropping up, such as the subcultural, rebellious musician suits, or the skinny crosssexual suits. However, these suits did not ultimately last long as they were regarded as a threat against this normative hegemonic masculinity, and were met with sharp criticisms, being labelled still as 'feminine' by both the fashion world and academia, even in the 2000s.

In contrast, the unprecedented scale and range of colorful, decorative design elements, accessories and coordination style appearing in contemporary men's suits 2015S/S–2020F/W must mean that there is a significant change taking place in expressions of masculinity, and thereby, an important shift in the social, cultural conditions and discursive truths relating to men today. This has called for the need of this research, and its aim, 'analyze new design characteristics in men's contemporary suits, to reveal how expressions of masculinity have evolved and investigate thoroughly what socio-cultural factors have contributed to this'. Thus, 3 research questions have been set (p.6) and to solve these, an in-depth study of literature and content analysis of men's suit images have been conducted together, and the results are as follows.

Firstly, the concept of ‘masculinity’ has changed throughout history, being constructed according to the needs of men, society, and culture in each period. Masculinity theories were studied by numerous scholars in the 20th century such as the ‘functionalism & sex role’; ‘patriarchy’; and then culminating into the ‘hegemonic masculinity’ in the late 20th century. However, with the emergence of various lifestyles and women calling for more equal rights, there emerged new terms, such as ‘masculinity in crisis’; ‘new men’; and ultimately, leading to the birth of ‘multiple masculinities’ in the 2000s. The most recent ones in scholarship are hybrid/inclusive masculinities. The problem though with the multiple and hybrid/inclusive masculinities is that they are still somewhat limiting, in terms of their definition and features, with many conditions to tick off, if a man wants to belong to it. These terms still use their definition as incorporating ‘feminine’ or ‘gay’ elements into ‘white heterosexual males’, and interpret their expressions with only ‘feminine’ related images. This ultimately reveals that these scholars are still trapped in the binary interpretive framework. Thus, even until the 2000s, and up to the early 2010s, there still existed design elements and images that were popularly categorized either as masculine or feminine, and this has been outlined in <Table.2>(pp. 30–31) of this research.

Secondly, with the discussion of the development of men’s suits in the 19th and 20th century, one can see that there were only a few cases relatively where the design of men’s suits changed drastically; change was generally limited to small features such as minor silhouette details (changing in between X, H, Y), pants’ length, pocket, pleat and hem types, and using some different colors. Furthermore, there were still not noticeably dramatic changes in suits of the new millennium, apart from the skinny silhouette and some development in improving the properties of existing fabrics. As Breward(2016) has highlighted, this was due to the more rapid, skewed development and expansion of casual items, in contrast to suits. There was still the notion that a single suit satisfies a single purpose(correct decorum) and demands a single idea to unify its separate parts. There

were some sporadic instances of ‘feminine’ suits in history, like the Peacock Revolution in the 1960s, but they were largely worn by people who had a license for play or by society’s minorities, i.e. pop icons, youth subculture, Africans and few eccentric older men. These men were viewed as reacting against the dominant culture and society, which structurally subordinated them in relation to their social status. Thus, often, these suits were labelled as ‘deviations.’

Thirdly, it has been discovered through the empirical analysis of contemporary men’s suits in 2015S/S–2020F/W that major formal changes to design elements and styles are taking place colorfully on an unprecedented scale, regarding the suits’ silhouette, detail, color, fabric, pattern, accessories, and especially, coordination style.

With silhouette, there now exists a much more variety and versatility; at least 8 types are notably seen, ranging from X, Y, fitted or boxy H, A, I, exaggerated/distorted lines, and many others. Some X–lines continue from the 2000s, but no longer show ‘feminine’ images only. Overall though, the silhouette has become more relaxed for comfort. There are also innovative silhouettes such as the cut–off suits, which men can try due to hot weather or to look sensual. Evidently, there are more choices for men of various physique to select today.

Regarding details, the most notable is the proliferation of flamboyant, enlarged shawl lapels, and even decorative peaked/notched lapels, which all draw attention to men’s large chest. There are also new embellished innerwear to replace dress–shirts; jackets with upcycled decorative strips; and inside–out jackets completely covered in braids, embroideries, or cords. Also practical details have been added with bold contrast colors, to add fashionable street and outdoor themes to suits. Thus, these decorative details no longer show effeminacy, but are now used as a creative/functional means.

As for color, contemporary suits present ‘every shade’, ranging from artist–inspired, warm, bright, pastel, high–chroma colors to tints, on their entire surface. Interestingly, designers have even devised ways

that less confident men can try some of these unconventional colors, by giving active-inspired looks. Also, the most noteworthy is the color field suits. These new colorful vivid suits can now be variously worn from informal client meetings to summer Fridays.

Concerning fabric, there are many more unique usages, to bring out the fabric more, such as all silk pyjama suits. Again, there are clever usages made by designers to help men try softer fabrics including velvet suits with leather bag armour; and voluminous fur suits with a Greek hero image. There are also new, colourful, stretchy fabrics with water-repelling bio-coatings for athleisure and suit hybrids. Furthermore, there are crafty contrast sleeve jackets, that use deadstock, to satisfy sustainable movements; and finally, futuristic suits in novel materials, to reflect digimodernism today.

Regarding pattern, there is now a numerous variety of flamboyant patterns such as innovative artwork motifs; and unseen floral & vegetation motifs (patchwork from upcycled prints, and extreme digital close-ups/aerial shots of nature). Various animal prints, ranging from fantasy beasts to relatively small birds/dinosaurs exist for less bolder men. Prints of money show men aspiring to success. Lastly, doodle suits with statements are making meaningful impacts.

For accessories, even those that were considered as women's before are now matched with suits fashionably today. These can be re-appropriated by men to even show active and charismatic strength. There are also newly created, exaggerated ones for men who want to express a rebellious identity. Colourful accessory collaborations with streetwear giants are also making suits relevant for young generations. Finally, restored bags for sustainability and size-manipulated bags for digital screens have been creatively fabricated.

With coordination, there is a myriad of unique ones with suits today, forged by both designers and intriguingly men themselves on runways, according to their own tastes. There are now bolder styles, ranging from unexpected mix & matches; cross-overs; to numerous

riots of layering; matching sets in most couture like fabric/pattern; and finally, coordinating Whatever–I–Want styles.

Overall, these countless novel, colourful design features and styles in men’s suit fashion today are bringing about a compelling change to the decorously formal suits of the past, which were like an impenetrable symbol of hegemonic masculinity. These contemporary suits ensure male suit fashion to transcend its old, outmoded images and strict formal TPO barriers. Furthermore, they extend and promote diverse expressions of masculinity, which in this paper, the most notable 12 have been grouped as the following <outlined in detail, in Table. 5, pp.149–152>: ‘Don’t Care Gender’ Modern Romantics; Subverted Americana Cowboy; ‘Against Gender’ Poet Maudit/Glam Rocker; Visual Artist; Active Commuter; Homebody; Adventurer; Street Youth/Skater; Technology Fanatic; Strong Man but Family Focused; Environmentally/Socially Conscious Man; WIW (Whatever–I–Want) Man.

Some have evolved from older expressions of masculinity and suit’s sartorial images, but they have become more segmented and specific, or updated with new features; others have been created completely new regarding suits. It is also notable that some expressions are shown specifically by certain brands, depending on the brand aesthetics and target range of men. Nevertheless, the above 12 expressions are all to satisfy the contemporary men’s needs and tastes of the current period. These categories are not mutually exclusive, nor does a man have to satisfy every single element and feature to express one. In fact, a man can even select and combine different elements from different categories to show several expressions all at once.

These diverse expressions are all due to various social/cultural factors, such as the Covid pandemic; increased commuting times due to house prices; and vibrant social movements towards sustainability. Importantly, there is also the increased sensitivity towards non–binary gender people today, opening more towards the reality that

they are going through daily. Gender identity is a vital aspect for them and continuing to explore many colourful themes in men's fashion will certainly help more people to understand and embrace the countless beautiful ways which nonbinary gender can bring. Perhaps though, the most significant factor and reason for the popularity of the colourful men's suits today is the utmost emphasis on personal taste by the contemporary societies and cultures. In fact, gender identity in a broader perspective is also one's taste and preference as well. As the 12 expressions above evidently illustrate, more and more men today are showing expressions that are not in any way even linked to 'the feminine', revealing the simple fact that they no longer really worry about gender issues.

With this finding of new expressions in men's colourful suit fashion and the problems raised by the author on the masculinity terms in current scholarship, these call for the necessity of a new term. This has been coined as 'Flexible Masculinity' in this research. It is a new feature of masculinity that many men have come to acquire today. They are fashionable men who select freely and flexibly diverse decorative, colourful design elements, accessories, and coordination according to their own personal taste. These men perceive colourful design elements purely as creative/functional means, thus enjoying them to their own unique coordination. This is regardless of whether these men are gay, heterosexual, gender-bending, or ethnically/socially marginalized. They can pursue various expressions and can even convey several simultaneously. Through self-curation, these men also influence designers back interactively.

This research has some important theoretical and practical implications. Firstly, this paper has suggested a new masculinity in scholarship. It is more comprehensive and inclusive, overcoming the existing problems of masculinity still trapped in the binary interpretive framework. With this more Flexible masculinity, it will entice more men to open themselves to diverse, colourful designs, even those who feel less confident, to help them express themselves

and thus, move away from toxic masculinity. Secondly, this paper has illuminated on how men's suit designs are freely and innovatively changing in recent years, and consequently, it will aid with forecasting various future trends.

However, this study has some limitations. Firstly, although Flexible masculinity includes men of various backgrounds, unfortunately this study only carried out its analysis on global luxury menswear brands. It has been noted that this same colourful trend in suits is also prominently appearing in Asian brands and in segment markets other than luxury as well. Thus, this research will need to encompass more of such brands. Secondly, there is inevitably a limit in analysing expressions of masculinity only with runway looks. These looks tend to be more exaggerated for media attention, and also stand somewhat apart from the expressions of masculinity shown by men universally, especially when compared with the actual clothes worn in daily life. Nevertheless, these collection looks are a good prediction of the men's fashion and masculinity to come in near future, which support the validity of this research. It would therefore be helpful to study also how men in everyday life wear suits today by interviewing various men, as a follow-up study. Finally, as this is a study on the change in expressions of masculinity, it would be interesting to do a follow-up study on how expressions of femininity by women have changed. As seen in Chap.2, femininity also had its own set of conventional design elements and images, but by accepting masculinity in the 20th century, it became 'modernized' as claimed by Hollander(1994). Over 20 years have passed since this claim, and thus, one notices today how the labelling of 'masculine' and 'feminine' elements/images is almost disappearing. By doing a follow-up study on the changing expressions of femininity, academics could get an idea of how to teach the difference (or likeness) between men's and women's fashion from today on.

To conclude, suit was an ultimate fortress symbol of hegemonic masculinity within menswear, but today even this fortress is

disintegrating after 200 years. Not just mature men, but suits are also appealing to the young today. Ranks of teenage boys are congregating outside luxury shows to get a glimpse of the decorative suits (Mower, Louis Vuitton, 2019). Thus, the contemporary suits are more than ever dissolving barriers between ages, genders, and classes. This attests to the fact that the definition of masculinity is definitely changing and becoming much more comprehensive and at the same time much more segmented within it. Indeed, perhaps in future, the notion of masculinity will even be gone, with the current menswear fashion gradually moving from the issue of gender to the issue of personal taste. With so much information today, flowing in and out from different cultures and media, it is inevitable for men's taste to become more subdivided and personal, and thus, important.

Ultimately, the new, diverse, colourful, contemporary suit fashion will help more and more men to find their own personal taste and individuality. This will in turn allow men to present their own personal image and narrative, letting him become the author of his story, and make a powerful influence back to the fashion world as well. Men can now genuinely express freedom from the myriad of expressions at his hand and at his choice today.

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국문 초록

현대 남성 수트 컬렉션의 조형적 특징과 새로운 남성성의 표현

오늘날 남성복은 그동안 여성복과 연관되어온 다채로운 조형적 특징과 담화를 그 어느 때보다 많이 공유하고 있다. 이러한 패션 현상이 사회적 시위의 일환으로 젠더 이슈에 민감하게 반응한 때문인지, 아니면 패션에 관심이 커진 남성의 취향 때문인지 흥미로운 질문들이 생기고 있다. 이런 변화는 2015년부터 특히 남성 수트에서 두드러지게 나타나고 있다. 따라서 예절과 형식, 헤게모니적 남성성을 상징하는 수트에서 대거 등장하고 있는 화려한 디자인을 연구할 필요가 있다. 이 연구의 목적은 현대 남성 수트의 새로운 조형적 요소를 분석해 남성성의 표현(expression of masculinity)이 이전에 견주어 어떻게 발전하고 있는지 밝히고, 이들의 사회문화적 요인들을 조사하는 것이다.

이를 위해, 다양한 심층 문헌 연구와 패션 사진의 내용분석이 이루어졌다. 특히 패션 트렌드 리포트 (WGSN 보고서, 61pg; Vogue Runway 보고서, 236pg)의 코딩분석과 선택된 사진의 내용분석(2015S/S-2020F/W, 총 1155장의 사진)을 통해 글로벌 남성 수트 컬렉션에 나타난 ‘여성적’ 디자인 요소를 분석했다. 실루엣, 디테일, 색상, 소재, 문양, 액세서리, 코디네이션 측면에서 분석이 수행됐고, 이를 토대로 남성성의 표현들을 도출했다. 연구 범위와 관련하여, 본 연구의 ‘수트’는 재킷, 이너웨어 및 바지(또는 스커트)로 구성된 ‘세트’를 의미하지만, 과감하게 수정된 세트도 트렌드 리포트에서 ‘수트’라 지칭하면 포함시켰다. 브랜드 선정을 위해, 패션 전문가 5명들에게 남성패션에서 주목할 만한 명성을 가진 브랜드를 선택하도록 요청했고, 가장 많이 언급된 상위 20개와 ‘여성적’ 조형 요소가 두드러지게 나타나는 브랜드를 최종 선정했다.

연구의 결과는 다음과 같다.

첫째, 빅토리아 시대부터 남성성과 여성성의 차이가 어느 때보다 크게 벌어졌고, 1987년 코넬과 그의 연구진이 창시한 헤게모니적 남성성에 도달하기까지 남성성의 개념은 이분법적으로 발달해왔다. 헤게모니적 남성성은 사회에서 남성의 지배적 위치를 정당화하고 여성과 소외된 남성의 종속을 당연시한다. 또한 헤게모니적 남성성은 8가지 규범과 행위로 특정할 수 있다. 하지만 1980/90년대부터 일부 남성들은 ‘위기의 남성성’(masculinity in crisis)을 겪기 시작했고, 이는 2000대에 ‘여러가지 남성성’(multiple masculinities)의 탄생으로 이어졌다. 여기에는 항의의 남성성(e.g. 논바이너리 젠더); 게이; 메트로섹슈얼, 우버섹슈얼, 크로스섹슈얼 등이 포함된다. 학계에서 논의된 가장 최근의 남성성은 하이브리드 또는 포용적 남성성이다. 하지만 여기서 언급된 남성성의 용어들 속에는 여전히 비하하는 의미도 들어있다. 이들은 여전히 ‘백인 이성애자 남성’이 본인 패션에 ‘여성적’ 또는 ‘게이’

요소를 결합하는 것과 같은 표현을 사용한다. 이 용어들은 ‘로맨틱’의 경우처럼 ‘여성적인’ 이미지로만 해석된다. 이는 학자들이 여전히 이분법적 해석 틀에 갇혀 있다는 사실을 드러낸다.

둘째, 19~20세기 남성 수트의 역사는 수트 디자인이 급격하게 바뀐 경우가 상대적으로 적다는 점을 보여준다. 심지어 2000년대 수트에서도 극도로 다른 실루엣이나 좀 더 다른 색을 사용한 것 외에 극적인 변화는 없었다. 2015년 이전에 나타난 수트 이미지는 다음과 같이 요약할 수 있다: 트레이셔널 클래식 & 레트로; 강한 & 근육질; 세련된 & 시크한; 우아한 & 로맨틱; 키치 & 관능적; 기능적 & 실용적; 과격적 & 자유로운. 1960년대 피콕 혁명처럼 남성 수트에 여성적 요소가 산발적으로 나타나기도 했지만, 이러한 옷은 하위문화나 소수 집단내에서 주로 착용이 허용됐다.

셋째, 2015S/S-2020F/W의 현대 남성 수트 실증분석을 통해 조형적 요소와 남성성의 표현에 큰 변화가 진행되고 있음을 확인했다.

실루엣의 경우, X; Y; 슬림/박시한 H; A; I; 과장/왜곡된 라인 등 최소 8가지 유형이 두드러지게 나타나고 있다. 일부 스키니 X나 I라인이 2000년대부터 계속되지만, 더 이상 ‘여성적인’ 이미지만 보여주지는 않는다. 또한 전반적으로 실루엣이 편안해진 것을 관찰할 수 있다. 수트의 팔이나 다리통을 과감히 잘라낸 cut-off 수트와 같은 혁신적인 수트도 나타난다. 오늘날은 다양한 실루엣이 체격이 다른 남성들에게 많은 선택권을 주고 있다.

디테일의 경우, 숄카라의 증가와 함께 이 카라가 장식적으로 확대/과장되어 남자의 큰 가슴이 더 도드라져 보이게 만드는 기법을 발견할 수 있다. 와이셔츠를 대체할 새로운 장식적 이너웨어; 숄/자수로 뒤덮인 재킷; 내부 구성선을 밖으로 장식처럼 드러낸 인사이드아웃 재킷도 발견된다. 또한 실용적인 디테일에 과감한 색상대비를 추가하여 수트에 세련된 스트릿/아웃도어 이미지를 부여했다. 따라서 화려한 디테일은 더 이상 여성스러움만 보여주지 않고, 오늘날 창의적인 수단으로 사용된다.

색의 경우, 오늘날 수트는 아티스트로부터 영감을 받은, 난색, 고명도, 고채도, 파스텔 등 다양한 색상의 모든 색조를 보여준다. 뿐만 아니라, 디자이너들은 수트에 액티브 아웃도어 느낌을 더함으로써 익숙하지 않은 색을 남성들이 시도해 볼 수 있게 했다. 주목할 만한 것은 컬러필드 페인팅에서 영감을 받은 컬러필드 수트다.

소재의 경우, 오늘날 ‘실크 파자마 수트’처럼 여러 소재가 다양하게 수트에 사용되고 있다. 또한 부드러운 직물을 남성들이 더 시도해볼 수 있도록 돕는 참신한 방법들을 디자이너들이 고안해냈다. 그리스 영웅 이미지를 나타내는 볼륨감 있는 페이크 모피 정장은 한 사례다. 애슬레저를 접목한 하이브리드 수트도 두드러지게 나타나는데, 알록달록한 신축성 있는 소재나 방수 바이오코팅이 된 소재를 사용한다. 마지막으로 테드스톡 소재를 사용한 ‘대비 소매’(contrast sleeve) 재킷과 디지모더니즘(digimodernism)을 반영한 참신한 소재의 수트도 있다.

패턴의 경우, 아트워크, 꽃/식물/자연(업사이클 패턴 소재로 만든 독특한 패치워크, 자연의 디지털 클로즈업/고공 사진 등); 동물(환상의 동물부터 공룡과 작은 새까지); 지폐(부의 축적과 성공을 열망하는); 낙서나 레터링(사회적으로 의미 있는 문장) 등 다양한 모티프가 등장한다.

액세서리의 경우, 이전에 여성 것으로만 여겨지던 것들도 남성들에 의해 카리스마 넘치게 사용되고 있다. 반항적 정체성을 가진 남성들을 위한 과장된 액세서리도 있다. 새로움을 제공하기 위해 스트리트 브랜드와 수트 브랜드가 협업한 밝고 스포티한 액세서리들도 Z세대의 관심을 끌고 있다. 또 디지털 화면으로 잘 보이도록 모양이나 크기가 조절된 가방이나, 지속가능성을 위한 가방들이 수공예 기법으로 만들어지고 있다.

코디네이션의 경우, 디자이너 또는 런웨이에서 남성 개인이 자기 취향에 따라 조합한 독특한 스타일들이 대거 발견되고 있다. 예상치 못한 믹스&매치, 크로스오버, 무수히 많은 레이어링, 쿠튀르의 소재나 패턴으로 통일된 매칭 세트 등 과감한 스타일들이 나타난다. ‘무엇이든 내가 원하는 것’(Whatever-I-Want)을 스스로 조합해 입는 스타일도 늘어나고 있다.

위 분석 토대로 다음과 같은 12개 남성성 표현 유형과 사회문화적 요인을 도출했다.

- ① ‘Don’t Care Gender’ 모던 로맨틱 남성: ‘여성스러움’을 의미하지 않음; 감정에 충실한 남자; 세련된 섹시함; 우아함; 스키니 X-실루엣에 국한되지 않음; 장식적인 라펠, 자수; 시스루 가능; 미니백; 화려한 레이어링 등. 사회문화적 요인으로는 hyper-modernism, performatism, 인식변화 등이 있다.
- ② Subverted 아메리칸 카우보이: 섹시함 추구; 노골적으로 앤드로지너스한 모습은 원치 않아 카우보이 요소와 결합; 부드러우면서 터프함; 스키니 실루엣; 웨스턴 스타일 디테일과 액세서리. 와일드 웨스트 팝 문화의 부활로 생긴 남성 스타일.
- ③ ‘Against Gender’ 반사회적 시인, 글램 록키: 사회에 저항하거나 속하지 않는 아티스트 시인 또는 글램 로키; 하위문화적; 젠더 블러링; LGBTQ+의 실제 차별과 고통을 있는 그대로 표현; 풍자; 캠프; 장난기 많은; 과장되거나 왜곡된, 화려한 디자인, 스타일; 성 소수자를 위한 다양하고 활발한 젠더·사회 운동.
- ④ Visual 아티스트: 예술작품을 연상시키는 역동적인 색상, 패턴 또는 액세서리 활용; 예술가처럼 대담함; 예술가들이 영감을 준 색깔; 컬러필드 페인팅에서 영감을 받은 ‘컬러 필드’(color field) 수트; 최근 MZ세대가 유니크함을 더 추구하고 있고, 예술의 유니크함이 이를 충족, 따라서 예술적 영감의 수트 증가.
- ⑤ Active 커뮤니티(출퇴근자): 아슬레틱 모더니티; 스트리트 문화에서 영감을 얻은 하이퍼모던 댄디즘과 수트의 결합; 손쉬운 착용; 박시; 조깅 팬츠/반바지 매치; 스포티한 디테일, 색상, 소재, 액세서리; 믹스&매치; 도시의 집값 상승, 출퇴근 시간 증가, 지구 온난화, 더워진 날씨 때문에 시원하고 편안한 출퇴근룩 요구.

- ⑥ Homebody 집돌이: 위 액티브 컴퓨터보다 더 편안하고 휴식을 취할 수 있는 룩; 홈웨어, 파자마 같은 수트; 루즈핏, 헐렁한 핏의 소재; 실크 매칭 세트; 작은 클러치 백, 버킷햇, 버켄스탁 슬리퍼 등 가벼운 액세서리와 신발; 코로나 전염병 유행, 재택근무 증가에 따른 더 편안한 수트 룩.
- ⑦ Adventurer 모험가: 기능적인 디자인 요소 강조; 밀리터리; 하이퍼-아슬레틱 디테일, 색상, 소재, 액세서리. 스타일; 파카, 반바지 수트에 스포츠 레깅스, 플리스 재킷, 등산화, 배낭 등; 최근 MZ세대 익스트림 아웃도어 경험 추구.
- ⑧ Street 청년, 스케이더: 스마트-업 룩과 스트리트 스케이더 룩의 융합; 터프하면서 쿨한 룩; 헐렁한 배기 실루엣; 운동화 끈 등 참신한 장식적 요소를 재킷 표면에 부착; 패치워크 패널 원단 사용 가능; 스케이더 액세서리, 겹겹 레이어링; 스트리트 브랜드와 신선한 협업 증가, 남성 본인이 직접 큐레이팅.
- ⑨ Technology 열광자: 끊임없이 변화하는 기술/미디어에 빠르게 적응 (e.g. TikTok); 디지털 스크린에서 잘 보이도록 조작성 소재/액세서리 활용; 공상과학 테마 패턴; 새로운 기술을 접목한 가방; 장인 공예도 존중; 최근 디지모더니즘과 패션 리포팅 증가로 남성도 개인 채널 운영.
- ⑩ Family 중시하는 강한 남성: 전통적인 남성 이미지에 제일 가까움; 근육질, 힘센, 아내/아이를 잘 돌봄; 이전보다 훨씬 패셔너블; 대담한 패션; 옛 영웅이나 장군을 연상시키는 술 장식 활발히 사용; 확장된 솔카라가 남성의 큰 가슴에 시선을 집중시킴; 일반적인 남성들도 패션 관심 대폭 증가.
- ⑪ Environmentally/Socially (환경/사회) 의식 있는 남성: 기후 변화, 인종차별 등 환경/사회 이슈에 큰 관심; 재활용 센터, 빈티지 샵, 인근에서 조달한 소재 사용; 업사이클링; 문양 들어간 데드스톡 소재 사용한 패치워크 패턴; 자선단체나 국립공원 협업을 통한 패턴 개발; 사회적으로 의미 있는 문구를 패턴으로 활용; 최근 지속가능성과 다양성에 관심 갖는 남성들 크게 증가, 가치 소비 중심.
- ⑫ WIW (내가 원하는 모든 것을 추구하는) 남성: 위 다양한 남성성의 표현 또는 그 밖의 표현에서 서로 다른 디자인 요소들을 자기가 원하는 대로 취사선택/결합할 수 있음; 남성의 취향에 따라 믹스&매치 스타일링; 셀프-큐레이팅; 색상, 텍스처, 패턴, 액세서리의 다양한 혼합; 런웨이에서 인플루언서 모델들이 자신만의 룩 직접 코디; 오늘날 개인취향 존중 증가.

오늘날 현대 남성 수트는 본래의 수트가 가지는 구속적인 이미지와 TPO를 초월할 수 있게 한다. 12개 남성성 표현 중 일부는 전통적인 남성성 표현과 수트의 이미지로부터 파생되어 발전한 것이지만 새로운 특징들이 추가되었다. 나머지 대다수 표현은 수트에서 완전히 새롭게 나타난 것이다. 12개 표현에서 가장 중요한 사회문화적 요소는 현대 사회와 문화가 부여한 개인 취향일 것이다. 사실 반항적 젠더 정체성을 표현하는 것도 넓은 의미에서 한 개인의 취향이기도 하다. 위 12개가 보여주듯이, 오늘날 많은 남성들은 더 이상 여성적 이미지와 관련 없는 여러 표현들도 채택한다. 더 이상 젠더 이슈에 관해 크게 고민하지 않고 다채로운

수트를 착용할 수 있게 된 것이다.

이 논문에서 새로운 표현을 쓰고 남성성 관련 기존 학술용어에 문제를 제기했기 때문에 새로운 용어 정의가 필요해졌다. 이 논문에서 새로 명명한 ‘flexible masculinity’는 ‘개인의 취향에 따라 유연하게 장식적 디자인 요소, 액세서리, 코디 등을 선택하는 패셔너블한 현대 남성’을 일컫는다. 이런 남성은形形色색의 디자인 요소들을 순전히 창조적 또는 기능적 수단으로 인식하기 때문에 진정으로 자유롭고 다양한 표현들을 사용한다. 또한 셀프-큐레이팅 스타일을 통해 수트를 입는 남성이 디자이너에게도 영향을 줄 수 있다.

이 논문은 더 포괄적이고 다양하면서도 개별적인 남성성을 새로 제시했다는 점에서 이분법적 해석의 틀에 갇혀 있던 기존 연구의 문제점을 극복했다는 데 의미가 있다. 또한 이 연구는 더 많은 남성들이 다양한 디자인으로 자신을 표현하도록 도와줘서 ‘해로운 남성성’(toxic masculinity)에서 벗어나게 해줄 것이다.

하지만 이 연구는 런웨이룩과 트렌드 리포트만으로 남성성 표현을 분석했다는 점에서 한계도 있다. 오늘날 일상 생활에서 남성들이 실제 어떻게 수트를 착용하는지 인터뷰해서 남성성 표현의 후속 연구를 할 수도 있을 것이다. 여성들에 의한 여성성의 표현도 어떻게 발전해왔는지 후속 연구가 필요해 보인다.

키워드: 수트, 남성복, 남자, 남성, 남성성, 유연한 남성성, 개인 취향, 표현의 자유.

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