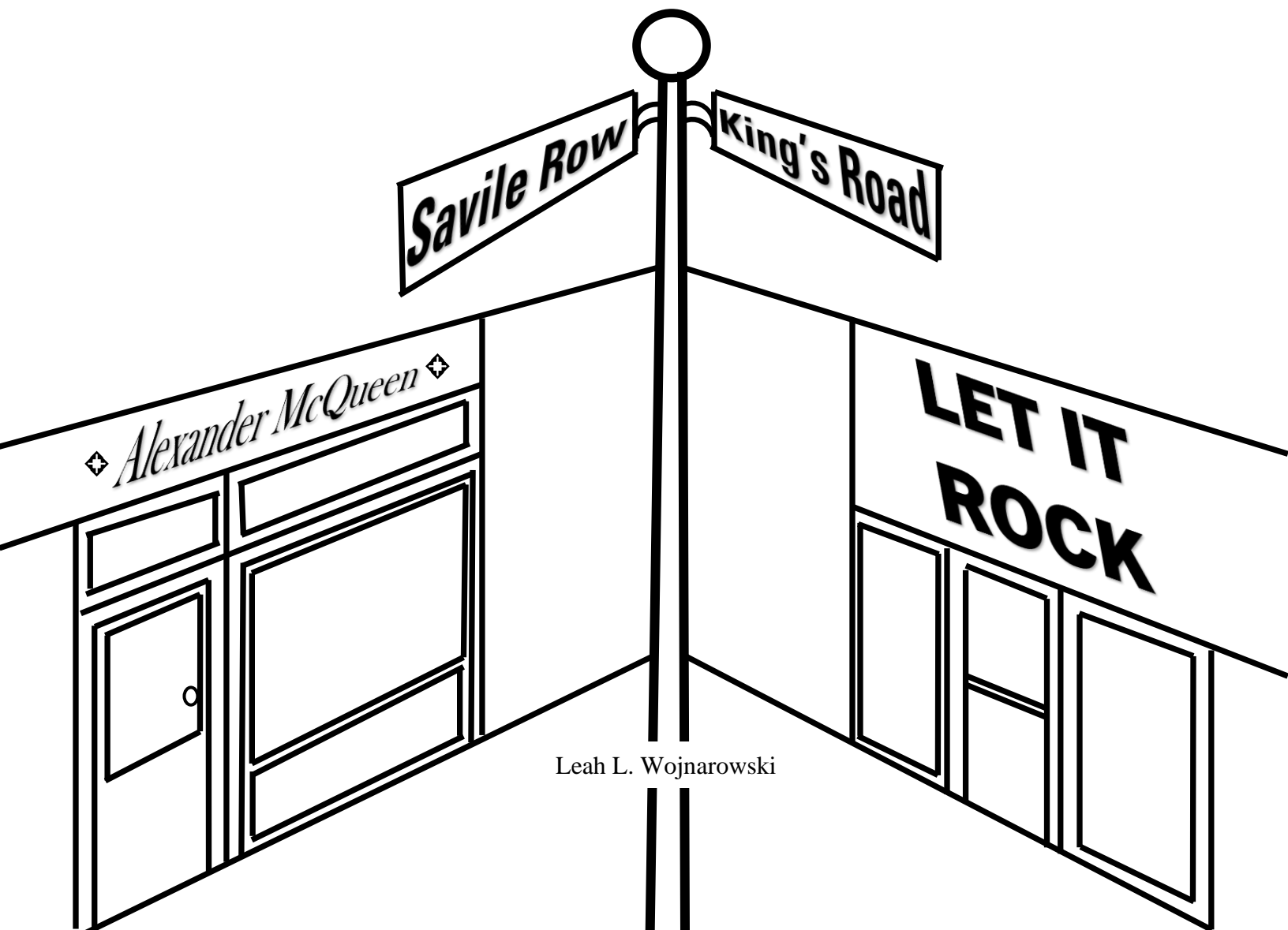


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London, a Place, a Location, a Catalyst for High-fashion Creation:

Alexander McQueen and Vivienne Westwood



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ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the relationship between place and individualised creativity, in particular the attributes of locality that act as a catalyst to individual creativity, and aims to contribute to the definition and categorisation of the locality-based prompts and stimuli to individual creativity by investigating a different sub-sector of the Creative and Cultural Industries (CCI), the high-end fashion design sub-sector. The presented findings in this thesis are a product of actor-network theory used as a method based on secondary accounts containing testimonies taken from autobiographical and biographical texts, which identify the London locality as influencing Vivienne Westwood's and (Lee) Alexander McQueen's individual creativity during the first ten years of the designers' fashion trajectories.

The important attributes of the London locality, according to Westwood and McQueen, are education, museums, social life (including night life and music), specialised creative districts, markets, shops, locality-based narratives, and (less tangible but equally important) the people in the place—creatives and non-creatives. These attributes of importance tend to cluster around localities such as their parents' home, with their education in the proximity, and in the inner-city, where the specialised creative districts are often located. Spatially, most of the localities where both designers have lived during the years included in my study are removed from this gravitational centre. Furthermore, my data suggests five types of locality-based prompts or stimuli for individual aesthetic creativity, which can be categorised as: locality as a resource of visual raw materials and stimuli; locality-based social and cultural networks and activity; locality-specific communities of creative workers; locality as a brand based on reputation and tradition; and locality-based storytelling.

Keywords: Creative industries, Cultural industries, Creativity, Place, Locality, Fashion design, Vivienne Westwood, and Alexander McQueen

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1 Creativity and the creative and cultural industries.....	3
1.2 Creativity in fashion.....	6
1.3 Place and creativity	9
1.4 Research gap and research objective	12
2. Literature review and theoretical framework	15
2.1 Locality/place as a stimulus for the creative and cultural industries	16
2.2 Locality/place as a stimulus for individual creativity	19
2.3 Locality/place as a stimulus for individual creativity in Fashion	24
2.4. Conclusion	26
3. Methodology	29
3.1 The locality, fashion designers and sources of secondary data	29
3.2 Actor-Network Theory.....	33
3.3 Process of research and data analysis	36
4. The spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of London	38
4.1 A brief history of London’s governance	39
4.2 Vivienne Westwood: London localities from 1963 to 1973.....	41
4.3 Alexander McQueen: London localities from 1985 to 1995	50
4.4 The spatial scale and extent of the London-locality	62
5. London-based prompts and stimuli for individual creativity according to Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen	65

5.1 Locality as a resource of visual raw materials and stimuli	66
5.2 Locality-based social and cultural networks and activity	70
5.3 Locality-specific communities of creative workers	74
5.4 Locality as a brand based on reputation and tradition	80
5.5 Locality-based storytelling.....	86
5.6 London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity.....	89
6. Discussion and conclusion	94
6.1 Discussion.....	95
6.2 Conclusion	98
6.3 Recommendations.....	102
6.4 Limitations and future research	104
Works Cited	107

1. Introduction

This is where the journey begins. We follow royalty here, we follow gangs here, we follow brides-to-be here, we follow prisoners here, we follow thieves and sailors here. We walk through the open door and look for what we need.

This is where the journey begins. I leave now, or I will not be gone for months, or I will never leave. Does it hurt? Of course it hurts. Home is where the heart is or home is where the body is. I travel light. I never let go of her hand, home. She is my heart.

—Daphne Gottlieb (lines 7-15)

Here, there, a home, a place, a physical space, a room in the mind with a mental catalogue of past lives and ancient finds: How do places stimulate creativity in the mind? From rolling rivers and Redwoods to the buzz of busy streets, opportunity knocking, roads travelled, and the people we meet; the cultures within cultures, loves of a lifetime, stories, scars, and secrets inside lands we keep— ‘locations,’ ‘places,’ and ‘spaces’ matter.

Throughout history and over time, artists have, unquestionably, referred to ‘places’ as a source of creative stimuli and ideas, and significant to their work—from painters, to poets, musicians, architects, designers and onwards, ‘place’ is acknowledged as important to creativity. Places can be seen in expressions of the self, in spaces the mind and body must sometimes travel to, in order to find the right colours, pigments, pen, or power to let it all out, fuel the fires of creativity—to produce a story of life, light, the dark rooms held dear or at a distance to keep safe or take flight. Places matter—they are in the told tales of maps and legends, things, people, and

expressions of creativity to relay a scene. What can be observed, however, from the same place but different moments in time, different people, and different contexts involved in artists' aesthetic creativity? With wars raging, viruses lurking, communities fleeing, and people passing, maybe now is as important a time as any to ponder the importance of 'place' and individual creativity. So here starts the journey, a study, a trace of British fashion designer "royalty," place-based creativity, networks, and designers' stories woven in between.

This thesis investigates the relationship between place and individualised creativity in the creative and cultural industries (CCI). The aim of this thesis is to contribute to the definition and categorization of the locality-based prompts and stimuli to individual creativity by investigating a sub-sector of the CCI; more specifically, in an inductive, qualitative study, based on second-hand accounts, I analyse and compare the perceived, place-based sources of creative stimuli and ideas as indicated by London-based, 20th and 21st century high-end British fashion designers, Dame Vivienne Westwood and Lee Alexander McQueen. I have chosen these two fashion designers because of their indelible contribution to the British and global fashion industries: for example, both designers have won numerous British and international accolades (including Queen Elizabeth's appointment to Westwood as a Dame in 2006 and McQueen as Commander of the British Empire (CBE) in 2003 for their contributions to British fashion); both designers have had their work chosen for solo exhibitions at major art institutions (such as New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and London's Victoria and Albert Museum); and both have had numerous books written about their life and work (for example, books on Westwood: Fury 2021, Mulvagh 2003, Watson 2013, Wilcox 2004; and books on McQueen: Bolton 2011, Thomas 2015, Watt 2014, A. Wilson 2015).

In this chapter, I first define the broad and disputed concepts of ‘creativity’ in the CCI, creativity in fashion, and sources of inspiration in fashion design from place, location, and space. Next, I identify the research gap pertaining to the study of place-based individual creativity, which leads to my research question: *How does locality act as a catalyst for individual creativity in the domain of high-end fashion design?* In the last paragraph of this chapter, I will give an overview of the structure and contents of the remaining chapters of this thesis: the theoretical framework, methodology, research findings and discussion.

1.1 Creativity and the creative and cultural industries

In order to be able to answer my research question on the relationship between place and individualised creativity in the domain of high-end fashion, it is important to first define the terms I use in my research. Defining creativity is not a simple, stable, or succinct task. According to Sawyer, “defining creativity may be one of the most difficult tasks facing the social sciences” (7); and Tusa asserts that ““Creative”, “Creation”, “Creativity” are some of the most overused and ultimately debased words in the English language. Stripped of any special significance by a generation of bureaucrats, civil servants, managers, and politicians [...]” (5-6). Similarly, Hesmondhalgh suggests that the writings of Bourdieu (1996), Williams (1981), and others, show how “creativity has been a permanent presence in human history, but how its management and circulation have taken radically different forms in different societies” (7). So what is it—creativity, if so used yet obscure? The answer depends on the domain and approach, who is asked, when, and what interests are served, to name a few of the many.

John Hartley et al. claim that the modern usage of creativity, from a Western European standpoint, is a product of the mid-twentieth century and modern West, adopted from the Latin

word *creare* –to produce, to make—to create (66). Throughout the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and nineteenth century Romantic movement (and in some cases, into modern-day), creativity was thought to “conjure something out of thin air,” or solely attributed to the high-status “creative genius,” in which ‘art’ is considered one of the highest forms of human creativity (Hartley et al. 66; Hesmondhalgh 6, 170). However, in the fields of “philosophy, anthropology, sociology and psychology, creativity has come to be regarded as a feature of human intellect and social life,” according to Davies and Sigthorsson, where “the resources of creativity, such as language, skills, raw materials, and techniques, are shared among everyone,” including “talented individuals that share on this pool” (5). Likewise, from an anthropological perspective, Hyde suggests that creativity can be “understood in terms of reciprocal gifts that strengthen human bonds, ties between the living and with past generations”; whereas, Young broke creativity down into elements of a larger process of learning, thinking and experience—from gathering “raw materials” and processing them consciously and unconsciously, to the “a-ha moment” and the work of adapting an idea to artistic, commercial, technological and practical reality (qtd. in Davies and Sigthorsson 5). According to Hesmondhalgh, sociologists and Marxists have argued that artistic work is similar to other forms of labour, in which objects or experiences are produced by the manipulation of symbols for entertainment, information or enlightening purposes (6). Therefore, instead of the term ‘art’, Hesmondhalgh uses the term ‘symbolic creativity’. Additionally, Hesmondhalgh replaces the term ‘artists’ with ‘symbol creators,’ or “symbol makers for those who make up, interpret or rework stories, songs, images and so on” and “[...] incorporates the work of those involved in the production and sharing of knowledge as well as of art and entertainment” (6). Obvious from the numerous definitions and connotations,

the term ‘creativity’ is a highly studied, important, and multifaceted concept that comprises value, expression, activities, and uncertainties.

Moreover, in addition to a process versus product approach to creativity, there are two major traditions of creativity research, according to Sawyer: an individualist approach—which “refers only to structures and processes that are associated with a single person”, and a sociocultural approach—“how groups collectively generate innovation, and the structures and processes of social, cultural, and organizational systems that are creative” (7-8). Evident from the above shortlist of examples, the conceptualizations of creativity can include resources, processes, individuals, and groups, to name a few of the many. No matter the definition assigned or method of study, Hesmondhalgh, Tusa, and others claim that the British Labour government (Australia, America and China, as well) replaced cultural policy and arts subsidy with a focus on distribution, reaching audiences, copyright laws and making profit, whereby the Cultural Industries (CI) were replaced by the Creative and Cultural Industries (CCI) and Creative Industries (CI), with a widespread adoption and usage of the term ‘creative’ instead of ‘cultural’ in new cultural and arts policies started in the mid-1990s, or ‘new economy’ (Hesmondhalgh 166-67, 170-71; Tusa 5-6). In this thesis, I use the term Creative and Cultural Industries (CCI), in order to be inclusive of that which are considered cultural industries and/or creative industries according to various sources and viewpoints.

To conclude this short overview, relative to numerous interpretations and approaches, creativity is a hotly contested topic and phenomenon, used across numerous domains and approaches. However, as explaining the concept and process of creativity is not the task of this thesis, I, therefore, use the broadest term as defined in the literature. Moreover, due to the plethora of creativity models and examples available on the topic of creativity across numerous

continents, peoples, and languages, I use Western-European, English examples throughout this thesis. Therefore, in this thesis, I use Hesmondhalgh's broad cultural industries definition of creativity: 'the manipulation of symbols for the purposes of entertainment, information and perhaps even enlightenment' (6).

1.2 Creativity in fashion

[Fashion] is a commercial industry producing and selling material commodities; a socio-cultural force bound up with the dynamics of modernity and post-modernity; and an intangible system of signification. It is thus made of things and signs, as well as individual and collective agents, which all coalesce through the practices of production, consumption, distribution, and representation. –Rocamora and Smelik (2)

Fashion is more than only clothes, passing fads that come and go with the seasons, or a concept someone is either 'in' or 'out' of. From a theoretical perspective, fashion has been and continues to be studied in the disciplines of anthropology, linguistics, sociology, philosophy, history, and women's studies, to name a few of the many, and continues to be a dynamic and multi-layered arena of debate and study (Rocamora and Smelik 2). From an industry perspective, according to the European Commission, the fashion and high-end industries play a significant role in the EU economy, creative economy, business innovation, growth of manufacturing and reindustrialization, and "operate at the crossroads between arts, business and technology—a strategic position to link creativity to innovation in the new economy" (European Commission). As a multibillion-dollar global enterprise, the fashion industry employs millions of people in the business of making and selling clothes, from mass-produced fast-fashion, small boutique, high-

end and couture, for example (Steele and Major). Due to the rapid pace and rigorous turnover of ‘collections’ or ‘seasons’ designed, produced, and marketed each year, Hartley et al. claim that the fashion industry requires a very high level of innovation and output. The input, inspiration, and ideas necessary to continually design, produce and market such output, or fashion goods, is, therefore, also high—and inevitably dependent on those involved in the various levels of the industry (114).

According to Eric Wilson, there are four main fashion industry levels, from a traditional view of fashion’s infrastructure: primary level—the production of raw materials, such as textiles, fibres, yarn, leather and fur; secondary level—production of fashion goods by designers, manufacturers, and wholesalers, for example; third level—retail of fashion goods, in stores, online, wholesale, and so forth; and the fourth level—the auxiliary level, which connects the previous levels via forms of advertising, promotion, merchandising, and fashion forecasting, for example (E. Wilson 291). Moreover, all levels of the industry are symbiotic and consistently changing, according to Eric Wilson (291). A crossover or synergy between the fashion industry levels is also expected to be present in this thesis. However, the primary focus of this research is the second level of the fashion industry—the production of fashion goods by fashion designers, who, Sterlacci claims, “hold a special place in the world. Their talent and vision not only play a major role in how people look, but they have also made important contributions to the cultural and social environment” (283).

In a broad sense, according to Sterlacci, fashion designers can be seen as responsible for creating a specific, complete or partial look, idea, shape, colour, fabric, and trim, for example; the fashion designer begins with an idea for how a garment or fashion product should look, translates that idea into a design, and makes product specifications for other workers involved in

the product's fruition, such as patternmakers and sewers (283). However, fashion designers also use various methods and work in and across different categories of the fashion business, which also plays a role in the fashion goods designed and produced in each category, including mass-market, ready-to-wear, haute couture and styling, for example.

The Western model of modern fashion and the first fashion designer is widely attributed to British couturier Charles Frederick Worth and Paris in the mid-nineteenth century (Breward, "Charles Frederick" 29; Sterlacci 283). According to Welters, haute couture, or high fashion, offers the most creativity, highest price points, skill, and craftsmanship ("From Haute Couture" 433, 475), and accounts for the smallest percentage of the apparel industry today (Palmer 393-396). For almost a century, however, across England and America, up until the 1960s, couture designs from Paris were copied and/or purchased by dressmakers, tailors (such as those on London's Savile Row), manufacturers, and elite department stores and their clientele (Welters, "From Haute Couture" 433). After the Nazi occupation of Paris during WWII, however, London and New York entered the textile and apparel manufacturing and design scene out of necessity, followed by Milan, Florence, and Rome. Couture designers and houses then started more affordable, *pret-a-porter*, or *off-the-rack*, collections for their clients, similar to the *ready-to-wear* collections seen on the catwalks of Fashion Week in present day. Moreover, the introduction of ready-to-wear fashion also coincides with the onslaught of mass-produced, often-copied, cheap fashion for the working masses—the largest fashion category today (Welters, "From Haute Couture" 433; Palmer 393-396). Although a trickle-down effect can still be seen in these fashion categories, from Red Carpet dresses, to catwalks, to people on the street, a trickle-across and up the categories is also visible (E. Wilson 293).

Nonetheless, there is little dispute that fashion designers are inspired by, as well as inspire, a great many things, similar to those considered ‘artists’. According to Fatima Mete, clothing designers can get ideas and inspiration from “[...] everywhere and everything. Anything visual and tactile, in fact sensual, can be a source of inspiration for a garment. Inspiration for apparel often comes from appreciation of qualities of the world around us” (4). Current events, media, music, movies, museums, far-off places, antique fabrics, culture, and the internet: Chapman claims designers can gain inspiration from them all (477-481). Additionally, although the debate of fashion as art has been going on for centuries between art critics and fashion writers, some claim fashion is art “because it is a visual medium whose creators respond to the same stimuli as painters and sculptors” and involves much creativity and a mastery of techniques and materials, according to Welters (“Fashion and Art” 365). On the other hand, critics argue that fashion is commercial, meant for sale, and that pure art is not functional (365). No matter the position, however, Welters claims, “there is a clear relationship between art and fashion,” and couture designers can be seen as artists for a number of reasons: the level of innovation is very high; the clothes and fabrics are exclusive; the work is mostly done by hand; and the work is seen as an artistic expression of modernity by many art critics (365). Conclusively, the focus of this creativity research is the high-end or couture fashion category because couture products and design are considered to be the most creative and (or due to) least bound by lack of access to funds, skills, resources and talent.

1.3 Place and creativity

The concepts of locality, space, and place varies across different fields of study, peoples, individuals and through time, to name a few of the many. Fashion academic Linda Welters argues that fashion, places and spaces intersect in the field of cultural geography, which include

several theoretical positions and methodologies: from America's "father of cultural geography" Carl Sauer (1899-1975), to anthropological, Marxism-based approaches in Great Britain, and to the cultural studies' interdisciplinary formation of the "new cultural geography"—which also includes a range of issues such as identity, class, race, power, and representation (Welters, "Fashion: Space and Place" 233). Clearly, the definitions and uses are relative.

From a cultural geography perspective, Welters offers definitions of 'space' and 'place.' According to the author, modernism and postmodernism definitions of space vary: "the distribution of objects and activities, the formation of boundaries and patterns of movement, and their effect on the formation of culture," versus Lefebvre's definition of space being "produced through perceptions, conceptions, and lived practices" (qtd. in Welters, "Fashion: Space and Place" 234). 'Place' Welter's claims, "refers to the ways in which specific locations contribute to the making of a cultural world," "is not as abstract a notion as space," and "involves philosophical perspectives" of interest (234). Moreover, Welter's argues that cultural geography discourse and interest include the notions of power, resistance, and representation, which range from the local to global and involve themes such as religion, gender, and ethnicity (234). Therefore, as stressed by the geographer Graham Drake, it is important to see places "as a subjective, imagined and emotional phenomena as well as objective and 'real' entities" (513). A 'locality' in this context, as defined by Drake, is the place where the individual or creative enterprise is based (514). Academics and policymakers hold similar and varying viewpoints.

By the mid 1990s, the concepts of 'creative cities' and 'creative clusters' gained footing in both policy making and academic discussion. Since then, geographers have examined how the CCI are typically clustered spatially and how these geographical clusters share common characteristics, such as job opportunities and a variety of creative influences. One of the more

zealous and influential writers propagating the cluster approach is Richard Florida, who noticed that creative, high-tech, IT workers tend to cluster in, primarily, inner-cities (*The Rise of; Cities and the*). Furthermore, observing the higher than average wages of his sample, Florida argues that policy makers should charm the 'creative class' by fostering 'bohemian enclaves,' and that these enclaves share physical and socio-cultural characteristics which encourage creativity (*Cities and the* 113-128). Although the creative class, creative clusters and Richard Florida have been criticised, for, amongst other points, transforming the CCI and focusing on economic activities subsuming the intrinsic value of culture (Hesmondalgh 172-180), the resulting interest in creative place making led to more attention to the relationship between creativity and place, and the notion that place matters for creativity.

Most spatial theory concerned with the CCI places the emphasis on *collective* creativity and clusters of creative enterprises, and tends to ignore the relationship between place and *individualised* creativity (Drake 511). To bridge this, Chapain and Comunian include the personal dimension in their study of creative clusters and, for both cities and regions, the personal relationship of individuals with place is relatively important (717-734). Including this (often underplayed) personal dimension may enable policy makers and researchers to focus on the development of creative individuals in a spatial context, versus only a cluster or industry approach (721). Whereas several studies such as Florida's have tried to identify the attributes of place or locality for the CCI or clusters, a few of these studies have included the personal dimension (for example, Chapain and Comunian). It is only Drake who attempts to identify and define the attributes of locality that act as a catalyst to individual creativity. In his study of digital design and craft metalwork workers, Drake identified not only communities of creative workers but three other broad categories of prompts or stimuli for aesthetic creativity (518). In a study

similar to Drake, albeit with a different study aim, Felton and Collis loosely confirm the categorisations of Drake, but for creative workers in sub-urban localities versus Drake's urban localities (Felton and Collis 188).

1.4 Research gap and research objective

Few studies have focused on the relationship between place and individualised creativity, in particular the attributes of locality that act as a catalyst to individual creativity. Drake, however, leaves the possibility open for other sub-sectors of the creative and cultural industries or other places to offer different locality-based stimuli, and further studies may improve the reliability of the proposed stimuli (523). Therefore, this thesis aims to contribute to the definition and categorisation of the locality-based prompts and stimuli to individual creativity by investigating a different sub-sector of the CCI. Furthermore, in a larger context, more knowledge of the relationship between place and individual creativity may allow policy makers to focus on the development of creative individuals in a specific place. In response to the above research objective, this study sets out to answer the following main research question:

How does locality act as a catalyst for individual creativity, specifically in the domain of high-end fashion design?

As places, and thus localities, are subjective, imagined and emotional phenomena, as well as objective and real entities, a place cannot be defined by only considering its geographical borders—one has to take the subjective, imagined geography of the place into account. What someone considers London, for example, can differ between individuals: one might refer only to the inner-city, the larger agglomeration, the region, or a 'network' of different smaller places that together form the place. It is not the scope of this thesis to define what the locality is or give the

place boundaries; however, by mapping the qualities of locality that act as a catalyst to individual creativity, one can say something about the spatial scale and extent of the place in the mind of the creative, high-end fashion designer. Furthermore, once the non-human and living actors of the place have been identified, this thesis will describe the locality-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity before any categorizations are made. Therefore, in support of the, aforementioned, research question, the following sub-questions are answered:

1. *What is the spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of the London locality, according to high-end fashion designers Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen?*
2. *What are the London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity, according to high-end fashion designers Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen?*

In total, this thesis consists of six chapters. In the next chapter, Chapter 2, the theoretical framework is discussed, which includes the literature pertaining to the study of place-based stimuli to the CCI, to individual creativity, and to individual creativity in fashion—as well as the implications for my research. Chapter 3 describes the methodology. The presented inductive, qualitative research is based on secondary data, where Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen serve as exemplary cases studies for the London-based, high-end fashion sub-sector of the CCI. To describe and categorize the attributes of locality that act as a stimulus to individual creativity, this study uses actor-network-theory (ANT) as a method. Despite its misleading name, actor-network-theory is more a method than a theory. In ANT, both human and non-human entities have the ability to act or to produce action and can be considered an ‘actor’. By describing and following the actor-networks, ANT is suited for theory development, where the theoretical framework serves as a guide for the categorization and discussion of the results. Next,

the research findings are presented in Chapter 4 and 5. In my analysis of the spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of the London locality, I set the scene for both designers in Chapter 4. Whereafter, the analysis of the London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity, according to both designers, is presented in Chapter 5. The concluding chapter of this thesis contains a discussion of the relationship between place and individualised creativity in the high-end fashion design sub-sector and, more broadly, the relationship between place and individualised creativity.

2. Literature review and theoretical framework

In order to answer my research questions, I will first present a theoretical framework to theorize the relationship between place and individualised creativity in the creative and cultural industries. As mentioned in the previous chapter, few studies exist on the relationship between place and individualised creativity. Drake's is one of the few studies that attempts to identify and define the attributes of locality that act as a catalyst to individual creativity (518). In the (high-end) fashion design sub-sector of the CCI, no such study exists. This study on a part of the fashion industry, two London high-end fashion designers, may offer different locality-based stimuli or may improve the reliability of Drake's proposed stimuli (518, 523). As the aim of this study is to contribute to the definition and categorisation of the locality-based prompts and stimuli to individual creativity, the theoretical foundation is used as guide for the categorization and to aid the discussion of the research findings; additionally, actor-network theory is used as a method to collect and process data and, finally, theory development.

In this chapter, I start with the definition of place and locality. Thereafter, I describe existing literature on locality as a stimulus for the CCI, then I discuss the relationship between locality and individualised creativity. Although no such studies exist in the (high-end) fashion design sub-sector of the CCI, I summarize the limited studies in the third section of this chapter. In the conclusion, I present my conceptual framework, which contains my ideas on the relationship between locality and individual creativity in high-end fashion design, which will be used as guide for the categorization of my research findings and to aid in the discussion of the research findings.

As with many concepts and terms used in this thesis, the concept of place is also subjective and contested. According to Lippard, "our personal relationships to history and place

form us, as individuals and groups, and in reciprocal ways we form them” (9). Because the same place can be interpreted differently by different individuals, it is possible to say that individuals and groups construct place (Drake 513). With this in mind, Drake stresses the importance of considering places “as subjective, imagined and emotional phenomenon as well as objective and ‘real’ entities (513). A ‘locality’ in this context is defined as the place where the individual or creative enterprise is based, for which individuals and groups may perceive the spatial extent of that locality differently, as well (Drake 514). For example, some individuals may consider an entire city as the locality where their enterprise is located, whereas, some may consider only the immediate neighborhood their enterprise is located as the locality. In this thesis, I do not try to presuppose or pre-define the spatial extent of locality, but rather allow the authors to speak for themselves, to identify what they consider as their own locality.

2.1 Locality/place as a stimulus for the creative and cultural industries

Geographical and economic studies of industries have shifted over time from a more national, regional or metropolitan point of view to a clusters approach. Michael E. Porter, a Harvard Business School professor—recognised for his economic theory of competition in the global economy—is one of the driving forces behind this cluster approach to industries in many national economic development agendas (*The Competitive; On Competition; “Location”*). Porter’s view of a cluster is a “concentration of highly specialised skills and knowledge, institutions, rivals, related businesses, and sophisticated customers in a particular nation or region” (“Location” 32). Geographic proximity to these clusters allows companies to enhance their productivity, innovation, and promotes new business formations, leading to a competitive advantage which would be difficult to achieve at a distance (21-25). Furthermore, governments

can implement policies and organize cluster-based economic development activities to strengthen their economy (26-32).

This cluster approach has found its way into the creative and cultural industries literature; increasingly, studies focus on the value of ‘creative clusters,’ sites in which sectors of the CCI benefit economically and creatively by geographical proximity, such as the production and distribution of American motion pictures in Hollywood (Scott, “A new map” 972), the women’s wear industry in New York City’s Garment District (Rantisi 599) or the advertising industry in London’s South Bank (Newman 9). A large body of existing CCI theory, policy and thinking broadly supports Richard Florida’s notions of the *creative class* and *creative cities* (*The Rise of; Cities and the*). In his study of high-tech workers, Florida finds that creativity and the members of the creative class establish themselves in places that possess the 3T’s of economic growth: “Technology, talent, and tolerance” (*Cities and the* 37). Many of these “bohemian enclaves” share physical and socio-cultural characteristics, such as cultural and life style amenities, ethnic diversity and inclusivity, natural features and amenities, authenticity, uniqueness of place, and a collective identity (Florida, *Cities and the* 117, 172; *The Rise of* 294-300). Based on the conclusion that geography and quality of place matter for the CCI, Florida creates an index for cities to calculate their creative potential (*Cities and the*). In Florida’s narrative, regions can be divided into inner urban areas and buzzing, bohemian cities as the hub of creative work, clusters of creative people, areas worth economic investment and further development, and uncreative suburbs called “sprawl” that pose a vexing problem to some regions (*The Rise of; Cities and the* 64-65).

Florida and Porter’s cluster approach to industries, and in particular the CCI, has been widely adopted in policy making and creative place analysis but is not without critique, e.g.

Hartley et al, Felton and Collis and Collis et al. Linking creativity and the CCI to economic growth, where cities try to attract the wealthy ‘creative class’, has led to a cookie-cutter approach, or instrumentalization of cultural policy, ignoring the local reality of cultural production and policy, and subsuming the intrinsic value of culture (Hesmondalgh 172-177). Additionally, many cluster approach studies have an undefined geographical scale (Chapain and Comunian 720). Florida, for instance, uses the terms ‘cities’ and ‘regions’ interchangeably, uses the physical geography of a place, and does not consider the subjective, imagined geography of a place—thus, does not give a complete view of the creative place (*Cities and the*). Many cluster-approach studies, including Florida, focus mainly on the value chain of one category of products or activities (Chapain and Comunian 721). To further fuel the discussion surrounding the exclusivity of inner-city regions with regards to creativity and the CCI, Collis et al. show that sub-urban places have social and cultural diversity, economic activity, and significance, and CCI activity (151). Furthermore, in a quantitative approach to benchmark regions and identify creative hotspots, the authors propose considering the total effect of workforce size on CCI employment, something Florida did not do (*Cities and the*; Collis et al. 155). Taking the workforce size into account in benchmarking regions results in a different ranking and identifies some rural and suburban regions as creative hotspots, despite their small population and large land area (Collis et al. 155).

It is not the scope of this study to add to the discussion surrounding place making and the CCI, nor to define the geographical scale of a place. In this study, I am interested in how locality acts as a catalyst for individual creativity, where locality is the subjective, imagined geography of a place, and the focus is on the individual and not the collective. Although Florida’s focus is on the collective and where creative workers choose to locate themselves, opposed to what

creative stimuli they experience from a place, important aspects to consider are that the creative workers are typically clustered, and that these areas often share physical and socio-cultural characteristics (Florida, *The Rise of; Cities and the*). Furthermore, clusters include creative workers and, therefore, the characteristics of place for clusters should be valid, to a certain degree, for the individuals the cluster is comprised of. The subjective, imagined geography of a place may imply that these places can be comprised of only parts of the city, inner city or suburban, or extend to areas beyond the geographical boundaries of the place. It is, however, important to realize that where creative workers base themselves is not the same as locality-based stimuli conducive to creativity and the creative process. Where a creative worker bases themselves is a highly personal choice and can depend on other, non-creative factors, such as employment and work opportunities or stage-of-life decisions, such as the proximity to school, family or loved ones.

2.2 Locality/place as a stimulus for individual creativity

Contrary to the relationship between locality and aesthetic creativity, where the focus is on the collective processes of creativity, Graham Drake investigates the relationship between individualised creativity and place (511-524). Drake, in his discussion of goods and services and their value within the CCI, stresses significance because individualised semiotic content might be shaped by the attributes of locality. An individual's use and response to place is important to see as subjective and emotional as well as objective and real (Drake 513). He writes that the individual needs to be reconsidered in theory, because if localities are subjective, imagined, and relative to an individual or a firm, then it is also important to study how locality acts as a catalyst for creativity on an individual level (511). Drake builds upon existing theory that identifies a

relationship between place and aesthetic creativity in inner urban areas, specifically London, but not specific to London. He investigates the extent to which creative and cultural industries workers acknowledge that the attributes of the locality in which their enterprise is located forms a resource of prompts, ideas, signs, or ‘raw’ materials that can act as a catalyst during the design process or ‘aesthetic innovation’ (511). The inductive empirical research consists of 31 qualitative interviews with workers who have created, manage or own a micro or small creative enterprise in three British cities: London, Birmingham and Sheffield. To reflect the large diversity of the CCI, workers of the digital design and craft metalwork sub-sectors were interviewed on, amongst others, the relationship between the worker and the locality as perceived by the worker, and the spatial extent of the creative networks (515-516).

Based on Drake’s findings, four broad categories of locality-based stimuli were acknowledged and perceived to be significant in the design process (511). First, similar to the already existing creativity theory with a focus on the collective and social processes of creativity, Drake also states that *locality-specific communities of creative workers* can impact individual levels of aesthetic creativity, which can, for example, facilitate learning that pushes the boundaries of an individual’s creativity. Networking, observing, co-operation, friendships, and competition between creative workers within an area, and not necessarily in the same field, can assist in maximizing innovation and creativity and act as creative stimuli (521-522). Second, the *locality can act as a resource of visual raw material and stimuli*: specific visual prompts and signs, such as bridges, architecture, shops, museums and natural landscapes, or ‘raw materials’ produce motivation and inspiration for the design process (518-519). Third, *locality-based intensive social and cultural networks and activity* can be a stimulus to creativity, even if the creative workers are only ‘bystanders’ or ‘observers’ of that activity. The intensity and frequency

of social and cultural interaction and innovation in the locality can provide an environment supportive of and a stimulus to the individual creative process. Some examples include the ‘buzz’ experienced walking down a street, the zeitgeist of a place, intensity of contacts in an area, events, or proximity to the latest fashions (519-520). Last, *the locality as a brand based on reputation and tradition* can be a stimulus to aesthetic creativity, as well as a marketing tool. For example, artists may be inspired by the widely perceived quality, attention to detail, and/or excellence in the design and manufacture of products that come from a certain place. Additionally, a socially constructed local identity, such as a politically engaged environment or anti-elitist image, can also influence, and inspire the design process (520-521).

The following two studies loosely confirm Drake. Although the focus of Chapain and Comunian is largely on the collective factors that enable or inhibit the development of CCI, the authors do investigate the personal relationship of individuals with the place (717-734). As many of the interviewees proudly express being natives of the place, there is a strong connection between the individuals and place. Both places, Newcastle and Birmingham, are seen as buzzing, and creative workers are inspired by the place, in terms of its people, culture and heritage, and link the place to their social capital and, in general, to the identity and community in the place (Chapain and Comunian 725-726). Additionally, in a study of two governmental funded artist villages in Taipei and Hong-Kong, Grace Siu-fan Tang confirm the manifestation of locality in the creative work and inspiration through visual prompts of the environment and socio-cultural networks (17-35). Both studies loosely confirm the stimuli or prompts as defined by Drake, especially locality as a resource of visual raw material and stimuli and socio-cultural networks (Drake 518-520). However, in both Chapain and Comunian and Tang, the way these artists do their creative work is shaped by the governmental approach to the management of these places,

where the governmental approach can facilitate or inhibit creative processes (730; 32). Although both studies have a methodological setup similar to Drake, Drake nor this thesis are concerned with creative place policy making and its relation to the creative process, only the relationship between place and individualised creativity (511-524).

Contrary to the urban-centric notion of creative places, a growing body of creative city discourse suggests place-based sources of creativity are not solely limited to inner urban areas and densely populated cities. Felton and Collis' empirical and qualitative research indicates that creatives working in outer-suburban localities also express a significant relationship between place and space important to their work, which includes physical and affective attributes (180-181). In a study of 150 interviews with CCI workers from the outer suburbs of Brisbane and Melbourne, methodologically similar to Drake, the authors identified suburban localities to be a resource of visual raw materials and stimuli, as well as stimuli in the form of social and cultural networks (Felton and Collis 186-187). Furthermore, driven by lower rents, natural amenities and stage-of life decisions, communities of creative workers have formed in suburban localities and, subsequently, derived locality-based branding (Collis et al. 157; Felton and Collis 185-186). As outer suburbs have become more ethnically, socially, and culturally diverse, they have become more tolerant; whereas, partly driven by high cost of living and gentrification, inner cities have become more homogenised—therefore, some now see outer-suburban localities “as a freedom from metropolitan-style and conformity” (Felton and Collis 184-186).

While Drake's findings may confirm the cluster-based notion of creative activity, in which the CCI are typically clustered, and that these areas often share physical and socio-cultural characteristics, “it also suggests that inspiration can be gained from intensive activity in localities not noted for clusters of creative enterprises and where creative workers do not participate in

high levels of interaction” (522-523). Although Drake’s study was urban focussed, the results of Felton and Collis, indeed, confirm that localities not typically known for their communities of creative workers may, in fact, support communities of creative workers and can be a source of visual raw material and stimuli, and social and cultural networks and activity (177-190). Felton and Collis show that some individuals seek out physical space, calm and serenity (181-184), the opposite of the “buzz” Drake (519-520) and Florida (*The Rise of; Cities and the*) ascribe to the city. This need for ‘personal space,’ or distance from distractions, is also recognised by some of Drake’s interviewees (522).

For my thesis, I consider Drake’s work the most complete framework of the relationship between place and individual creativity and, therefore, Drake’s study has been very useful, if not indispensable, in categorizing or identifying the actants involved in individual creativity. However, the study is not without its critiques. Although Drake chooses two diverse subsectors of the CCI, the study has not been replicated with the same aim in other subsectors, like high-end fashion, and has a relatively small sample size. While methodologically similar to Drake, Chapain and Comunian and Tang include the personal dimension of place in their analysis of a creative cluster, and Felton and Collis study the periphery of the city to argue against the exclusivity of the inner-city (central to Richard Florida’s narrative)—it is only Drake who attempts to identify and define the attributes of locality that act as a catalyst to individual creativity. In his discussion, Drake leaves the possibility open that other sub-sectors of the CCI or other places may offer different locality-based stimuli; however, the aforementioned studies seem to confirm rather than contradict Drake’s broad categorization of prompts and stimuli conducive to individual creativity.

The only adjustment I make to the prompts and stimuli as defined by Drake is the *locality-based social and cultural networks and activity*, where I leave out the word “intensive.” It is hard to define what is intensive, as it is a personal interpretation and often dependent on the experience of the creative worker. This could, for instance, explain the contradictions in Chapain and Comunian where Birmingham and Newcastle are both seen as ‘buzzing,’ ‘slightly backyard’ and ‘less hectic’ (729); Drake’s ‘distance from distractions’ (522); or the ‘calm and serenity’ factor of Felton and Collis (181-184). What is important are the prompts and stimuli individual creative workers derive from the social and cultural networks and activity beneficial to creativity that take place in the locality, and not necessarily the intensity of the activity.

Based on Felton and Collis’ study of suburban environments and Collis et al.’s study of rural localities, I infer that not only the inner city but that any locality can be a source of prompts and stimuli for individual creativity. Although London is considered urban by most, as my study considers the subjective, imagined geography of the place, in the mind of the creative worker, London may include the inner-city, the larger agglomeration, the region, or a ‘network’ of different smaller places that together form the place.

2.3 Locality/place as a stimulus for individual creativity in Fashion

When looking at the geography of individual creativity in fashion, I have found no studies comparable to Drake’s goal of identifying the locality-driven stimuli to individual creativity in fashion (511-524). Although Nebahat Tokatli’s study focusses on the transterritorial nature of creativity, Tokatli’s case study of secondary accounts by Marc Jacobs on the local-global geographies of fashion confirm some of the locality-driven stimuli to individual creativity as defined by Drake (Tokatli 1256-71). From the Marc Jacobs study, it becomes clear that like

creative workers in general, high-end fashion designers are also stimulated by locality-based prompts and stimuli. Tokatli confirmed the locality-specific raw materials and stimuli, communities of creative workers and the socio-cultural stimuli to creativity fashion designers may experience (1256-71). Therefore, we know that locality is important for individual high-end fashion designers.

What Tokatli adds to the discussion and framework as set out by Drake is that “once you become a global taste maker, people come to you wherever you are: your social networks are no longer grounded in particular places” (Tokatli 1266). Drake also observed that digital designers, compared to craft metalworkers, showed a tendency to be less reliant on locality, with regards to visual raw materials and stimuli, and suggested that the “greater access to, and knowledge of, information and communications technology, digital designers are more able to access prompts, signs, and information from other places and other spatial scales” (519). As creatives have their own highly personalised conceptions of localities, subjective, imagined, or constructed localities become more important than objective or real localities. Furthermore, as one’s focus becomes more global, either due to the nature of the work (digital design) or success (Marc Jacobs), the more locality-based stimuli to creativity can become detached from the original locality.

Tokatli’s study on Marc Jacobs shows that locality is important for individual high-end fashion designers. Therefore, my study on high-end fashion designers (as a sub-sector of the CCI), in order to contribute to the definition and categorisation of the locality-based prompts and stimuli to individual creativity, is relevant. However, to limit the detachment of stimuli from the designers’ original locality, as one’s focus becomes more global due to success (Tokatli 1266), I will only consider the first 10 years of both Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen’s

fashion trajectories, and only consider the period they are based in London and working in the field of design.

2.4. Conclusion

Based on the above literature review, I consider Drake's work the most detailed study of the relationship between place and individual creativity. I have, therefore, chosen Drake's framework for my study of the geography of creativity in high-end fashion design as a guide to define and categorize the locality-based prompts and stimuli for individualised creativity (see fig. 1). High-end fashion designers have their own highly personalised conceptions of localities and their own perception of identities and communities related to that locality. These objective, subjective and constructed localities are as, if not more, important than the real or objective locality (Drake 513). The same place is interpreted differently by individuals. Therefore, in my conceptual framework, it is important to see places as a subjective, imagined, and emotional phenomena, as well as objective and 'real' entities. A 'locality' in this context is defined as the place where the individual or creative enterprise is based. Artists and designers may create products whose place, locality or inspired elements are incorporated into the product. In my conceptual framework, individualised creativity is the manipulation of symbols for the purposes of entertainment, information and perhaps even enlightenment that are associated with a single person (Hesmondhalgh 6). Such theorising also requires acceptance that there are non-place-specific stimuli to individual creativity, such as personal philosophies, preferences, or experiences, or that certain place-specific stimuli can be interpreted as an impediment to creativity. An example is the need for physical space, calm and serenity, found by Felton and Collis, or pace of life, by Chapain and Comunian, where some creative workers choose locations

removed from intensive social and cultural networks. Therefore, in my conceptual framework, I have omitted the word ‘intensive’ in the category of social and cultural networks and activities, to remove the subjectivity surrounding the interpretation of what is intensive and to make this category more inclusive to areas outside the inner city. In the analysis, care should be taken to not allocate non-place-specific stimuli to creativity, such as personal philosophies, preferences, or experiences, to a place. Furthermore, in accordance with the findings of Tokatli and Drake, one’s global focus needs to be taken into account as, either due to the nature of the work or success, the locality-based stimuli to creativity can become detached from the original locality.

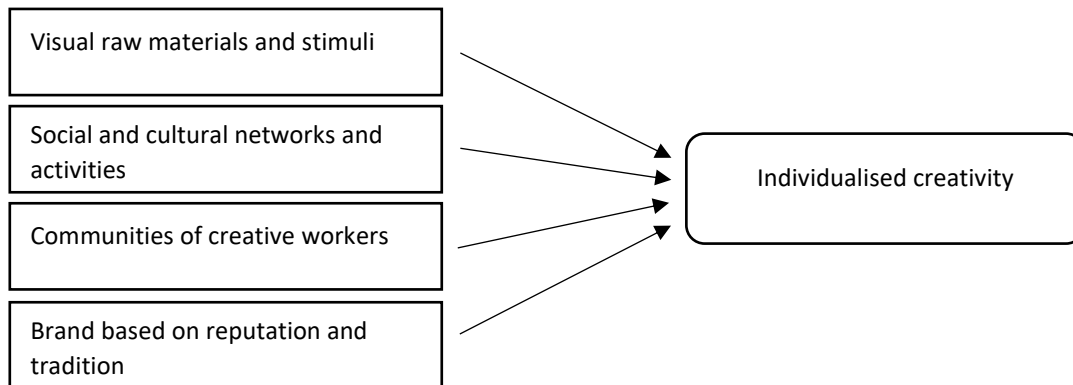


Figure 1: Locality based prompts and stimuli to individual creativity (adapted from Drake)

I have developed the conceptual model based on the theory discussed in this chapter. Based on Drake’s findings, four broad categories of locality-based stimuli were acknowledged and perceived to be important to individual creativity (511). Drake leaves the possibility open that other sub-sectors of the CCI, such as the fashion industry, may offer different locality-based stimuli, and further studies may improve the reliability of the proposed stimuli (523). There is a need for further research into the relationship between place and individual creativity, as Drake is the only study that attempts to identify and define the attributes of locality that act as a catalyst to individual creativity. Studying high-end fashion design as a different sub-sector of CCI is

relevant, as Tokatli shows that locality is important for individual high-end fashion designers. Therefore, in my study, the framework serves as a guide for the categorization and discussion of the results, whereas the inductive methodology used for theory development is presented in the next chapter.

3. Methodology

In this thesis, the presented inductive, qualitative research aims to theorise the relationship between place and individualised creativity. To describe and categorise the attributes of locality that act as a catalyst to individual creativity in the domain of high-end fashion design, I use actor-network theory as a method based on second-hand accounts. However, when the actor-networks are analysed and interpreted, ANT is used in accordance with Drake and my earlier formulated conceptual framework to guide the analysis and discussion. British fashion designers Alexander McQueen and Vivienne Westwood will serve as exemplary case studies for the high-end fashion sub sector of the creative and cultural industries. In this chapter, I describe the research design by first discussing the locality, the designers, and the selection of secondary sources; thereafter, I discuss actor-network theory, and, finally, the research process and data analysis.

3.1 The locality, fashion designers and sources of secondary data

In the literature review, I have identified that locality is given its boundaries by the user and how localities are also subjective, imagined, and relative. The London locality is chosen in this thesis because the city is used in so much existing creative and cultural industries theory and policy, which makes it a good place to figure out what is missing—because so much has already been identified and located in the London locality. Additionally, as one of the cities studied by Drake, it allows me to compare the results for another subsector of the CCI, high-end fashion design, with the same place as Drake. Equally as important, globally, London is considered to be one of the main fashion cities.

There is ample evidence to support the indelible mark and contribution Dame Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen (born Lee Alexander McQueen and known personally as Lee) have left on the fashion world and beyond, both on a local and global scale, and hence my reason for choosing both as the high-end fashion designers to study in this thesis. Westwood's career has spanned over six decades, in which the designer has been named Designer of the Year twice by the British Fashion Council (1990, 1991), awarded the 2004 Women's World Fashion Award in Hamburg, Germany, made a British Dame in the 2006 Queen's New Year's Honours list, and received the Outstanding Achievement in Fashion Award at the 2007 British Fashion Awards in London. Likewise, McQueen won the British Fashion Awards' British Designer of the Year four times (1996, 1997, 2001, 2003) and the 2004 Menswear Designer of the Year Award, the 2003 CFDA Award for Best International Designer, and received a 2003 CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) from Queen Elizabeth II for McQueen's services to the fashion industry.

Although similarities can be found between both designers, such as their numerous accolades stated above, I also tried to afford this study variety in perspectives and inclusivity. Vivienne Westwood is a living, female fashion designer based in London, a mother, grandmother, was born in 1941, and opened her first clothing store in 1971. McQueen, on the other hand, is a London-based fashion designer born in 1969, is male, gay, showed his first collection in 1992, and is deceased as of February 10th, 2010, due to suicide.

In order to conduct this research, I use second-hand accounts taken from autobiographical and biographical texts, which contain numerous sources from magazines, videos, newspapers, news articles, and interviews conducted throughout the designers' careers. Where possible, I include the original source; however, as some sources are in print and not available online, or out

of print and only available through purchase, for example, I use the autobiographical and biographical books in the citation.

For Vivienne Westwood's account, I use two books the designer was herself involved in the fruition of, so as to mimic a first-hand account as much as possible. *Vivienne Westwood* is also Westwood's first book about her own work, which she contributed to for the Victoria & Albert Museum's 2004 'Vivienne Westwood Retrospective Exhibition' (Wilcox). Westwood and prize-winning fashion writer, professor and museum curator Claire Wilcox compiled this book, which describes Westwood's 34 years in fashion, contains 169 pages of supporting photographs, followed by a fashion glossary of terms. The second Westwood book I use, also self-titled, *Vivienne Westwood*, is the designer's own authorised memoir, written with award-winning author and actor Ian Kelly (Westwood and Kelly). This 464-page book describes the life and career of Westwood and includes photos to support the text throughout. Because I was not able to interview Westwood myself, for use of first-hand accounts in this thesis, I used the two designer-endorsed books above to get as close to Westwood's first-hand account as possible.

Lee Alexander McQueen, on the other hand, was not involved in the production of any books about himself or his work, nor is the designer still alive to contribute to his biography, following his untimely death in 2010. For the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art's 2011 exhibition, "Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty," Jonathan Akeroyd, Chief Executive Officer of Alexander McQueen, sponsored the exhibition's book under the same name, *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty*, written by award-winning museum curator and fashion writer Andrew Bolton, with contributions by award-winning editor, fashion journalist and author Susannah Frankel and television broadcaster and fashion writer Tim Blanks (Bolton). The book is

comprised of approximately one hundred photos of McQueen's designs, sources of inspiration, and quotes from interviews throughout the designer's career.

From fashion historian, writer, and educator at Central Saint Martins, Judith Watt's 2014 book, *Alexander McQueen: The Life & the Legacy*, was also used as a reference in this thesis. Watt's book, though not sponsored or endorsed by the designer or brand, is well researched and includes cited quotes from interviews throughout McQueen's fashion career, as well as photos of the designer's work and life to support the text. This book was helpful in the fact that it is compiled chronologically, starting with a brief history of McQueen's childhood, schooling, training and then onto each of the collections he produced. The book also provides separate inserts of information, photos, and interviews with friends, colleagues, and mentors of Alexander McQueen.

Also compiled chronologically and well researched is the award winning, biographer, novelist and journalist, Andrew Wilson's 2015 biography on McQueen, titled *Alexander McQueen: Blood Beneath the Skin* (A. Wilson). This 367-page book chronicles the life and career of McQueen and includes interviews with the designer's family, friends, and colleagues, conducted by Andrew Wilson, as well as interviews with the aforementioned and McQueen throughout his life. Andrew Wilson's book goes into great detail on McQueen, including the designer's family ancestry, childhood, friendships, career and life, in general. The interviews with McQueen's family, including his sister and nephews, shed much light on Lee Alexander McQueen outside of the fashion scene, which, according to his family, was quite different from his public image. Throughout his career, McQueen made several references to the importance of his family; therefore, I found it important to research his family's account of the designer's life and career, as well.

3.2 Actor-Network Theory

Where the data I need in order to conduct this research is from second-hand accounts taken from autobiographical and biographical texts on Westwood and McQueen, actor-network-theory (ANT) is the method used to describe and analyse the collected data. Widely attributed to Bruno Latour, Michael Callon, John Law and their colleagues, ANT dates back to the early 1980s in the fields of science and technology studies and ethnomethodology. Since its inception, ANT has been applied to a wide range of fields, including architecture (Fallan 80-96), information technology (Cresswell *et al.* 1-11), tourism (Arnaboldi and Spiller 641-654), music (Shiga 40-55) and fashion (Entwistle and Slater 161-177) – which places an ‘emphasis on how people ‘do’ the social world’, according to Entwistle (269-271, 281-283). ANT challenges Enlightenment and Modernist thought on nature and culture as distinctly separate entities in which only humans have agency and the ability to act on the natural and social world (Entwistle 270). Anything, human and non-human, with the ability to act or produce action is considered an ‘actor’ in ANT. Agency is extended to the non-human in ANT, which distinguishes the theory from other network theories. As a method, ANT simply follows the human and non-human actors, “observing what they do, where they go and what objects they enrol into particular assemblages” that actively make and “shape how the world comes together” (Entwistle 270-271). ANT allows the researcher to follow the actors based on secondary accounts (for example, Shiga 40-55) or primary research (such as Arnaboldi and Spiller 641-654).

Latour questions the status quo and assumptions that form the current sociology of the social, with its limited, preconceived notions and distinct, ordered categories. Latour claims that society is made of group formation, versus the notion that society is made of groups, and, in which, these groups are the starting point of analysis; groups are built and destroyed by the

actors and controversies involved in that group. And in order to analyse the social, we must “follow the actor’s own ways and begin our travels by the traces left behind by their [...] activity of forming and dismantling groups,” according to Latour (29). Moreover, Latour claims that “anything that does modify a state of affairs by making a difference is an actor” (71). Therefore, the actor is endowed with agency if it makes a difference in the situation, and there is a trace that can exemplify this difference. Latour claims that a strong ANT analysis “allows the writer to trace a set of relations defined as so many translations” (129). This trace makes up the network in actor-network-theory, for which Latour claims the actor and the network provide the best understanding of the social, through the sociology of associations (129).

As a theory, ANT faces epistemological, ontological, and methodological challenges (Cresswell et al. 6). ANT is both critiqued and praised for its flat, non-hierarchical structure, and, therefore, can also be considered a more holistic approach to research. Where ANT is contested is in its approach to understand humans and their interactions with inanimate objects (Cresswell et al. 1-9) and nonhuman agency (Shiga 40). ANT is not so much a theory, as it does not explain how things occur, but gives a detailed account of why things occur (Cresswell et al. 6-8). Therefore, it is best to see ANT as in between theory and method and can best be used in combination with other theoretical approaches in relation to the analysis and interpretation. As a qualitative research method, ANT is suited for theory development, where ANT traces the actors, both human and nonhuman, involved in a network *or assemblage of actors* (Cresswell et al 7-8). ANT actors hold agency *or power* within a network and can be traced back to the moment of their inception, a near boundless task as humans do not yet know or have not yet identified all actors involved in a network across space and time. There is a fluidity and multiplicity of actors (Cresswell et al. 3-5); for example, actors can play multiple roles within a network, and actors

are deactivated from the network when they no longer hold agency or power within a network—thus, networks may consist of several sub-networks and change over time. Consequently, boundaries must be made, and limitations identified in the research. Like all methods and theories, ANT is always prone to bias, due to the subjective boundaries and limitations involved.

As already discussed in the theoretical framework, locality-based prompts and stimuli can be both human (such as communities of creative workers), or non-human (such as visual raw materials and stimuli), or assemblages of human and non-human actors (social constructs such as grunge or zeitgeist, for example). Therefore, one can argue that it is applicable to look at the actors and networks in a non-hierarchical structure to identify and categorize the prompts and stimuli to individualised creativity. The goal is to identify and categorize the prompts and stimuli, not to quantify the impact of the stimuli on creativity. This study uses ANT as a methodology on second-hand accounts to follow the human and non-human actors, observing what they do, where they go and what objects they enrol into particular assemblages related to the London locality and a product of individualised creativity. When the actor-networks are analysed and interpreted, ANT is used in accordance with Drake and the earlier formulated conceptual framework to guide the analysis and discussion. A critique, however, is that data produced with ANT can be too descriptive, and the number of actors in the network(s) is potentially infinite. Likewise, actors may play multiple roles in multiple networks and at multiple moments in time. Therefore, data collection of both designers will be limited to the first ten years of their fashion trajectories, and the primary focus of the data collection and analysis is on the research question and wider study aims. Focusing on the first ten years of their career may limit the fluidity of the identified networks, as well as limit the detachment of stimuli from their original locality as one's focus becomes more global due to success (Tokatli 1266).

3.3 Process of research and data analysis

To begin the process of research for this thesis, I start by making a list of all the Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen quotes which contain testimonies that identify locality as influencing the designers' individual creativity. These quotes come from the two books on Vivienne Westwood, from Ian Kelly (and Vivienne Westwood) and Claire Wilcox, and the three books on Alexander McQueen, from Andrew Bolton, Judith Watt, and Andrew Wilson. After I make a list of the Westwood and McQueen testimonies linking place to individualised creativity, I then select the quotes that are specific to London only, and only those that refer to the first ten years of McQueen and Westwood's fashion trajectories.

The next step in the process is my application of ANT, where I transform the selected testimonies to actor-networks for Westwood and McQueen separately. In order to have a strong scope of the various actors in these actor-networks, I occasionally use additional secondary sources at this stage in the process. When actors other than the primary actor become involved, their roles in the actor-network can be identified through a process of translation. As an actor can be seen as the sum of 'smaller' actors, the number of actors can potentially be infinite; therefore, in the Actor-network figures I make for Westwood and McQueen, breaking up actors into smaller actors will not take place more than three times in a row—so that I keep to the primary focus of this thesis and answer how locality acts as a catalyst for individual creativity in high-end fashion design (without getting lost in an infinite number of 'smaller actors'). Also, I am careful to not allocate non-place-specific stimuli to creativity to a place, such as personal philosophies, preferences, or experiences. Furthermore, in order to depict the spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of the locality, I make a London Locality Map and List of London Localities, based on the corresponding Actor-network figures, for both designers.

In the last step, I critically analyse all actors and networks of actors of Westwood and McQueen and group the stimuli or prompts each actor or actor network represents. In this grouping process, I will try to remain as objective and detached as possible and let the actors speak for themselves. In the analysis, I present a selection of exemplary quotes from each designer to elucidate the established categorisation. For each quote, I will discuss, in depth, the actor-networks that are a stimulus to individualised creativity. In the discussion, I compare the definitions and categorizations resulting from Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen to the theoretical framework, extending our knowledge of the relationship between place and individual creativity to the high-end fashion subsector of the creative and cultural industries.

4. The spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of London

In order to answer sub-question #1 of this thesis, “*What is the spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of the London locality, according to high-end fashion designers Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen?*”, I will first provide a brief overview of the history of London’s governance, in order to afford a spatial understanding of how the greater London area is divided geographically. In order to depict the spatial scale and extent of the locality, I will then provide a brief textual description of the most important actors and their networks important to the creative process that pertain to, first, Vivienne Westwood, followed by Alexander McQueen, during the first ten years of their fashion trajectories. For both designers, I support each textual description with a London Localities Map, followed by a compiled List of London Localities at the end of each textual description. To conclude sub-question #1, I compare the London localities of Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen.

The presented findings in this chapter are based on the quotes I found that contain testimonies, taken from autobiographical and biographical texts, which pertain to the London locality and individual creativity during the first ten years of McQueen and Westwood’s fashion trajectories. Although I use quotes in the text to elucidate the localities of importance to the creative process of the designers, the basis of my analysis are the actor-networks that I created and which I will present in Figures 4 and 6—a product of ANT, where I transform the testimonies to actor-networks for each designer separately. I will not discuss these actor-networks in detail, as, besides fluidity and multiplicity of actors across time and space, the actor-networks contain numerous actors. I will, therefore, focus on answering the (sub) research question and will only discuss the localities that contain attributes that act or are a stimulus to

individual creativity. As, especially, human actors show fluidity and multiplicity across time and space, I will use the localities where these actors and the high-end fashion designer first met, in my analysis of the spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of London.

4.1 A brief history of London's governance

To understand how the city of London is divided and identified geographically, a brief history of London's governance is necessary. Due to the geographic size and population of London, the city was divided into smaller areas of local government, first called "parishes" (for centuries), and then formed into 86 different authorities by 1965. From these 86 local authorities, 32 London borough councils, each with approximately 200,000 residents in them, were created in 1965 (Stanley). These 32 London borough councils provide the "majority of day-to-day services for their local residents, including education, housing, social services, environmental services, local planning and many arts and leisure services" (London Councils). Moreover, each borough council is considered either an "inner" or "outer" London borough council, as seen in figure 2 ("London Boroughs").

The 32 London borough councils are also divided into neighbourhoods, or *wards*, such as Notting Hill in the borough of Kensington and Chelsea, for example. Due to the numerous wards in each borough council, I do not include a representative figure of wards, or neighbourhoods, located in each borough council. However, each borough council (and the wards located within it) are geographically split into five London districts: North, South, East, West, and Central, as depicted in Figure 3 (see fig. 3) (MRSC).

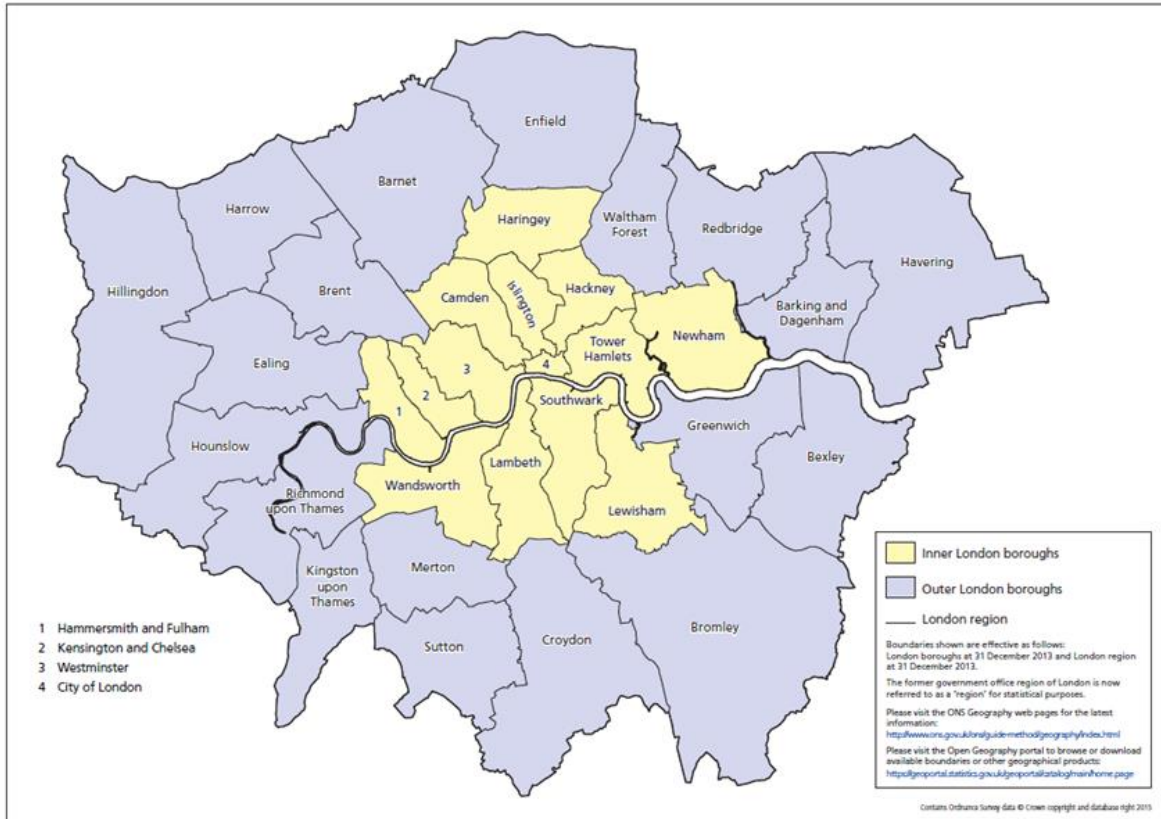


Figure 2: London boroughs council map (“London Boroughs”)

To answer sub-question #1 in this thesis, “*What is the spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of the London locality, according to high-end fashion designers Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen?*”, I provide the London location name, borough council, ward, district, and “inner” or “outer” London borough, in reference to the localities that contain attributes to creativity, according to Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen during the first ten years of their fashion trajectory. In the following two sections of this thesis, Section 4.2 and 4.3, I provide the London localities for, first, Westwood, and then McQueen, during the first ten years of their fashion trajectories, in order to answer sub-question #1 in Section 4.4.

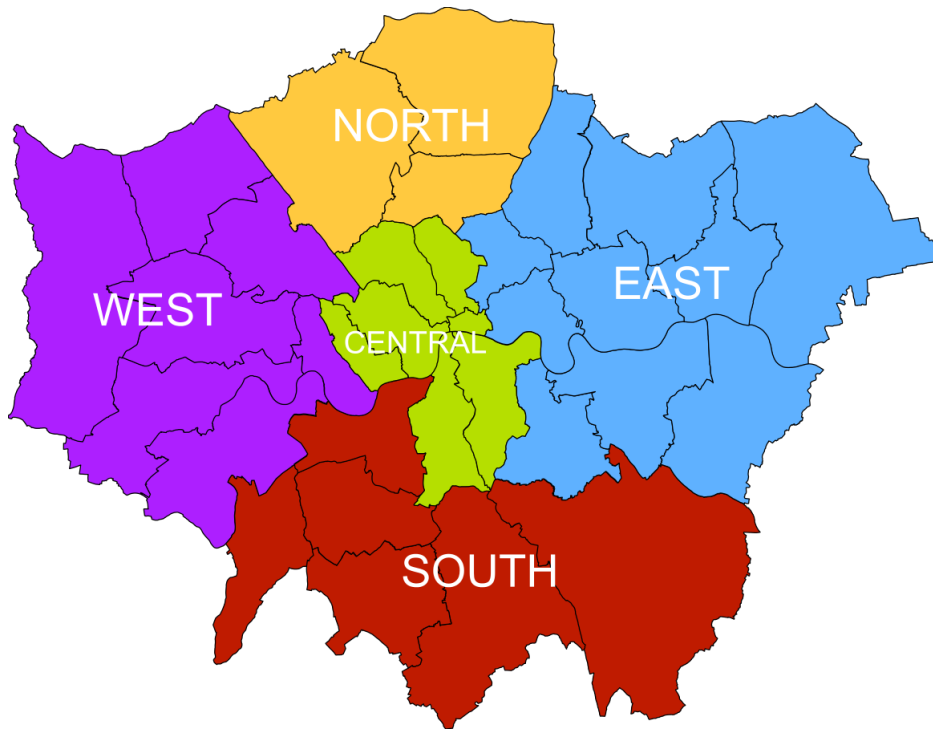


Figure 3: Five London districts (MRSC)

4.2 Vivienne Westwood: London localities from 1963 to 1973

Everything that has happened subsequently for me: London, Malcolm, fashion, art, and politics, I can date to 1958. I was nearly seventeen, and everything in my world changed (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 72).

Although Vivienne Westwood's career officially started in 1963, when Vivienne designed and made jewellery to sell and earn an income on Portobello Road in central London, her connection to London and introduction to some of the attributes that are a stimulus to individual creativity began in early 1958, when Dora and Gordon Swire, Vivienne Westwood's (nee Swire's) parents, moved the family from the countryside in Derbyshire (Manchester) to Harrow, West London (Westwood and Kelly 72, 81-82) (see fig. 5, point 1). Westwood soon, thereafter, entered nearby

Harrow Art School in 1958, where she met like-minded, music and fashion-loving, “Mod” and “Teddy-boy”¹ art students—such as Sylveen Bugg, who introduced Westwood to new London urban fashion (such as sloppy knitted sweaters, full skirts, and petticoats)—and where Westwood discovered her love of dressmaking in a foundation course (Westwood and Kelly 76) (see fig. 4, point 1 and fig. 5, point 2).

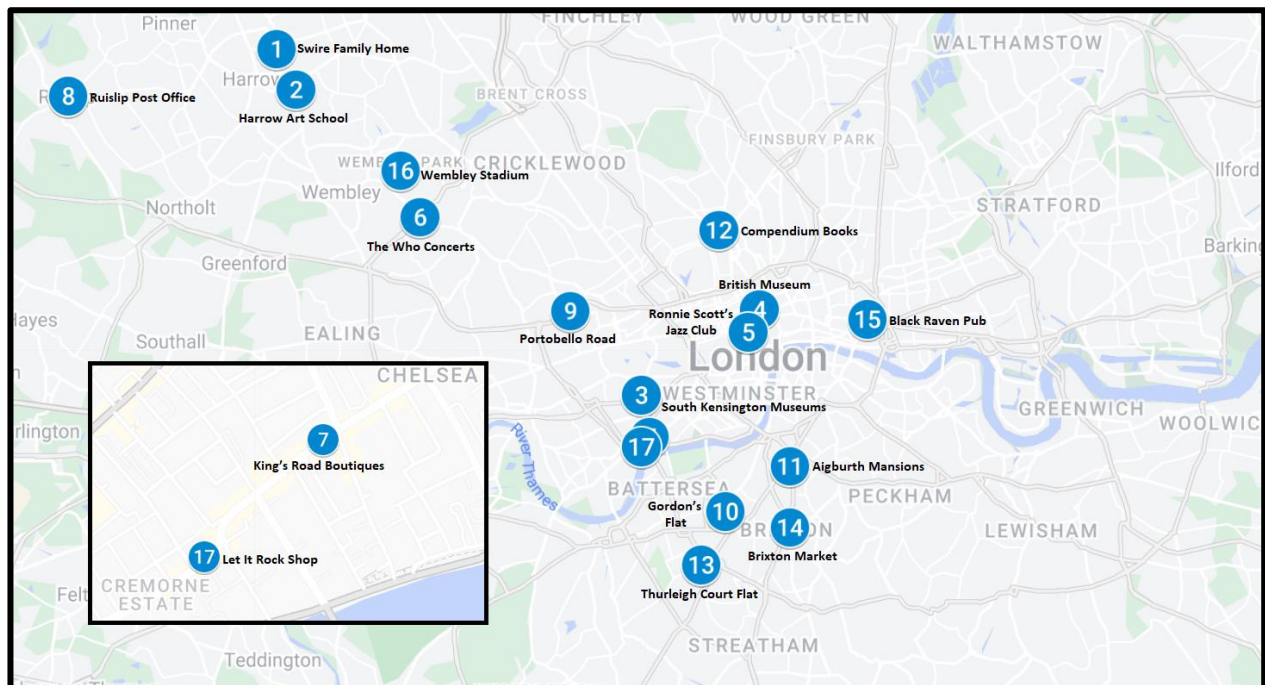


Figure 5: Vivienne Westwood London Localities Map

According to Westwood, “I started making rock ‘n’ roll [sic] things when I was at school. Immediate ‘Do-It-Yourself’ kind of things. DIY became my motto” (qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 65) (see fig. 4, point 2). However, Westwood also found the fashion course boring, inflexible, and not hands-on enough, so she transferred to a silversmithing course and made jewellery instead (Westwood and Kelly 76) (see fig. 4, point 2). These DIY creations, rock and roll influences, sloppy sweaters, petticoats and jewellery all became part of the Westwood’s

¹ Mods and Teds are British youth subcultures, precursors to punk.

collections in the future and part of the “youth rebellion” style of the times (Westwood qtd. in Kelly 82).

Along with her DIY creations and rock and roll influences, Westwood’s schooling also involved traveling to inner-city museums to draw (see fig. 4, point 1). She visited Central London’s South Kensington museums (see fig. 5, point 3) and the British Museum in Camden (see fig. 5, point 4), where she started to “appreciate beauty” and became fascinated with anthropology (at a nearby bookstore), a study and career she had not previously known existed but continued to interest and inspire her (Westwood qtd. Westwood and Kelly, 77-79). Not believing she could make a career as an artist, however, Westwood dropped out of Harrow Art School after one term, in 1958, and went to work at the local Harrow Kodak factory (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 79-80). After one year at the factory, Westwood became disinterested, changed her career trajectory, and went on to a two-year, teacher-training college to specialize in art and was teaching at a school in Harlesden, West London, until 1963 (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 79-80).

Simultaneously, Vivienne Westwood’s love of dancing, rock and roll music and clothes, and having fun took her to dance halls and pubs in and around Harrow in Northwest London, as well as Ronnie Scott’s Jazz Pub in central London’s Soho area (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 89-90) (see fig. 5, points 1 and 5). While out dancing one evening in 1961, Vivienne met ‘Mod-boy’ Derek Westwood and married him shortly after, in July 1962 in Harrow, at the age of 21 (Westwood qtd. Westwood and Kelly 90-92). In addition to the pair’s love of dancing and dressing up in Ted and Mod fashions purchased from King’s Road boutiques in Chelsea, central London (see fig. 5, point 7), Derek introduced Vivienne to the world of professional music and new London bands, in which Derek also managed the band The Who; Vivienne joined Derek’s

musical endeavours and would take tickets at the door in a Stonebridge Park pub, West London, during The Who's concerts (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 87, 92-93) (see fig. 4, point 3 and fig. 5, point 6). The music scene, art schools and fashion are all linked: the education franchise gave way for young people to find outlets for expression in music, clothing, and graphic art, for example, which also paved the way for the rise of consumerism and mass marketing—all of which influenced Westwood's style and the looks she created for herself and those she later sold (Westwood and Kelly 81-85) (see fig. 4, points 3 and 4).

Shortly after Ben Westwood was born in 1963, Vivienne left Derek and moved back in with her parents above their, then, Ruislip post office in Hillingdon, West London (see fig. 5, point 8), where Vivienne designed and made jewellery to sell and earn an income on Portobello Road, in central London (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 97, 105) (see fig. 5, point 9). Vivienne was one of many young designers to start producing designs at home that were sold in markets and boutiques at affordable prices to their peers and followed an anti-conformist, non-mass market, nor couture aesthetic, making way for the lively, hip, rebellious and fashionable youth scene that inspired *Time* magazine to dub London as a “Swinging City” in 1966 (Majer 96-97). In 1965, rebel and long-term art student, Malcolm McLaren started to drop by the Swire's Ruislip apartment to visit Vivienne's brother Gordon and ended up befriending Vivienne and helping her design jewellery (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 105) (see fig. 4, point 5). When an open room in Gordon's Lambeth, central London, flat became vacant, Vivienne and her son Ben moved in—followed by Malcolm when another roommate left, as Malcolm was, at the time, homeless and living in Gordon's car (Gordon Squire qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 110-111) (see fig. 5, point 10). According to Westwood, Malcolm had always been “totally fascinated by clothes” and they were “the most important thing in his life”—he spent most of his student grant

money on clothes for Westwood and transformed the way she dressed, looked and thought about fashion; she went from “a dolly bird into a chic, confident dresser” (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 116). Unbeknownst to Gordon, Vivienne and Malcolm started a quasi-relationship, and Vivienne became pregnant with her second son, Joe, in 1967, despite Malcolm’s objection to becoming a father or family-man—as his interests revolved around fashion, art, music and rebellion (Westwood and Kelly 111, 114).

To accommodate the new “family” of four, Vivienne, Malcolm, Ben, and Joe moved into a central London flat in Aigburth Mansions, also in Lambeth, in 1967 (Westwood and Kelly 119) (see fig. 5, point 11). While Vivienne took care of Ben and Joe, Malcolm continued to influence Vivienne in culture, politics, and society, based upon the French Situationists, anarchy, agitpop, radicalism, graphic design and art found in books, magazines, and porno from, for example, Compendium Books, in Camden, central London (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 116-117) (see fig. 4, point 5 and 5, point 12). These influences became the precursors to punk and the Situationists slogan T-shirts Vivienne made—her art expressed through clothing, and which fit into the scene around King’s Road boutiques, popular amongst Vivienne, Malcolm, and the rebellious youth of the era (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 116-117, 123-124) (see fig. 5, point 7). In 1969, Vivienne and Malcolm moved the family to an art deco-style, Thurleigh Court flat, in Lambeth, which also served as a studio space for Vivienne and Malcolm’s designs throughout their entire personal and professional relationship—and which Vivienne still owns in present day (Westwood and Kelly 128-129) (see fig. 4, point 6 and fig. 5, point 13).

While living at Thurleigh Court, Vivienne and Malcolm often walked along King’s Road, visited its many boutiques, and bought and re-worked clothes from their favourite shop, Mr. Freedom, as well as 50s clothes from central London’s Brixton Market, in Lambeth (Westwood

qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 130-131) (see fig. 4, point 6 and fig. 5, point 14). Brixton Market was once popular among postcolonial African and West Indian communities for printed cotton imports and exports, prior to the mid-1950s-60s influx of young entrepreneurs and tastemakers across London (Ehrman 300-301). Seeing a market for 50s clothes, music and memorabilia in the 2nd wave of Teds hanging around pubs such as the Black Raven in East London, in the borough council of Tower Hamlets, Vivienne and Malcolm decided to try and make a living out of selling such goods and reworked 50s clothing, like t-shirts with Situationist slogans, distressed tops and jeans, and bras as tops (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 130-136) (see fig. 5, point 15).

In 1970, Vivienne and Malcolm started selling in the back of Paradise Garage, at 430 King's Road, previously Mr. Freedom, in central London's Chelsea (see fig. 4, point 6). The duo's first success came from deconstructed and reworked T-shirts from a 1971 Wembley Stadium concert in West London, featuring Little Richard and Gary Glitter. Because the Teds did not like the music of these artists, they appreciated the studded and cigarette-holed T-shirts featuring slogans such as 'Let It Rock' that Vivienne made post-concert (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 134-135) (see fig. 5, point 16). At this time, Vivienne and Malcolm also started trying to confront the establishment with their designs, slogans, and motifs, all which were quickly procured from the trendy, rebellious, and young clientele who shopped on King's Road and Portobello Market (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 143, 155). In 1971, Malcolm and Vivienne took over the Paradise Garage shop and renamed it 'Let It Rock' (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 140-143) (see fig. 5, point 17). In the summer of 1972, after realizing the Teddy-boy style could not sustain them creatively and commercially, the shop was renamed 'Too Fast to Live Too Young to Die', in reference to James Dean (Westwood and Kelly 147-150). Although Westwood and McLaren continued to sell brothel creepers and zoot

suits restyled by Vivienne, their clothing began to transform towards aggressive rocker style, and the designs became more outlandish and outrageous—such as a plain T-shirt printed with a naked breast at chest height, worn by Alice Cooper on a magazine cover in 1973 (Westwood and Kelly 150-153). Although several name changes to the shop have occurred since 1973, a Vivienne Westwood shop still occupies 430 King’s Road in present day. 1973 is where the ten-year scope of this thesis ends. Westwood and McLaren went on to work together until 1983, and launched their first official collection, *Pirates*, in March 1981. Westwood would go on to become an international fashion icon, opening numerous shops in Britain and internationally, designing men’s wear and women’s wear collections, and continues to do so in present-day.

In addition to the Vivienne Westwood London Localities Map, as seen in Figure 4, I also made a compiled list of London localities for Westwood, to support Figure 4. Table 1 provides a detailed list of the names, neighbourhoods (or *wards*), boroughs, districts, and locations considered “inner” or “outer” London for each of the nineteen London locations attributed to Vivienne Westwood (nee Swire) from 1963-1972. Each numbered location also corresponds to the Westwood London Localities Map (as seen in Figure 4).

When looking at the spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of the London locality according to Vivienne Westwood, the majority of the creative attributes and their location are in the inner city (78.6%). Spatially, all these localities cover Central and West London, with the East-London, Black Raven Pub as an exception. An important borough for Vivienne Westwood is Kensington & Chelsea, where she acknowledges the creative importance of museums, nightlife, and shops, including her own shop—the Let It Rock Shop. The borough of Lambeth is also important for Vivienne Westwood, as this is where her brother Gordon lives, through whom she met her creative muse, Malcolm McLaren, and, subsequently, lived with

McLaren in two Lambeth apartments. While living in Lambeth, McLaren and Westwood searched the nearby Brixton Market for 50s clothes that Westwood reworked into pieces they would sell at the Paradise Garage shop, which they later acquired and renamed ‘Let It Rock’. In total, the Kensington & Chelsea and Lambeth boroughs include about half (47%) of all the localities which inspire Westwood creatively. The Hillingdon Ruislip Post Office and the Tower Hamlets Black Raven Pub are the two localities furthest removed from one another, 24.8 km diagonally and 23.0 km east to west. The Swire Family Home in Harrow and the Thurleigh Court Flat, two places where Westwood lived, are furthest apart from one another north to south (15.3 km).

Table 1: List of Vivienne Westwood London Localities

#	Name	Neighbourhood	Borough	District	Inner/outer
1.	Swire Family Home	Unknown	Harrow	West	Outer
2.	Harrow Art School	Greenhill	Harrow	West	Outer
3.	South Kensington Museums	Various	Kensington & Chelsea	Central	Inner
4.	British Museum	Bloomsbury	Camden	Central	Inner
5.	Ronnie Scott’s Jazz Club	West End	City of Westminster	Central	Inner
6.	The Who Concerts	Stonebridge	Brent	West	Outer
7.	King’s Road Boutiques	Various	Kensington & Chelsea	Central	Inner
8.	Ruislip Post Office	Ruislip	Hillingdon	West	Outer
9.	Portobello Road Market	Golborne	Kensington & Chelsea	Central	Inner
10.	Gordon’s Flat	Clapham Town	Lambeth	Central	Inner
11.	Aigburth Mansions	Vassall	Lambeth	Central	Inner
12.	Compendium Books	Camden Town	Camden	Central	Inner
13.	Thurleigh Court Flat	Balham	Lambeth	Central	Inner
14.	Brixton Market	Brixton Hill	Lambeth	Central	Inner
15.	Black Raven Pub	Spitalfields	Tower Hamlets	East	Inner
16.	Wembley Stadium	Stratford and New Town	Brent	West	Outer
17.	Let It Rock Shop	Stanley	Kensington & Chelsea	Central	Inner

In the following section, Section 4.3, I identify the London localities that pertain to Alexander McQueen during the first ten years of his fashion trajectory, from 1985-1995. In Section 4.4 of this thesis, I use Westwood's 1963-1973 London Localities Map (Figure 5) and the List of Westwood's London Localities (Table 1), derived from the actor-network figure (Figure 4), to compare with those of Alexander McQueen.

4.3 Alexander McQueen: London localities from 1985 to 1995

[...] London's where I was brought up. It's where my heart is and where I get my inspiration (McQueen qtd. in Bolton 14).

In 1985, at the age of sixteen, while living with his parent's on Biggerstaff Road in Stratford, located in one of London's East End, working class neighbourhoods, Lee Alexander McQueen dropped out of Rockeby secondary school for boys and attended Stratford's West Ham Technical College to take an evening class in art, which also included an element of dressmaking (see fig. 6, point 1 and fig. 7, points 1 and 2). To make money, Lee worked clearing beer mugs at his uncles bar, Reflection's Pub, one of the roughest bars in London's East End (A. Wilson 41, 50)—serving a clientele belonging and assimilated to what historically has been known as London's toughest area—"an urban pocket surrounding the Port of London that for centuries served as the centre for immigration and manufacturing, and in turn, prostitution, organised crime, gang warfare and acute poverty" (Thomas 64) (see fig. 6, point 2 and fig. 7, point 3). In 1985, while watching the evening television, Lee and his mother, Joyce McQueen, saw an advertisement for central London's Savile Row outfitters in Mayfair—"the epicentre of London's bespoke tailoring trade"—which were in shortage of and in search of apprentice tailors

who had no previous experience, pupils with a clean slate who could, therefore, be easily trained (Thomas 63; A. Wilson 44). At Joyce's suggestion, Lee applied and landed a job at the famous Anderson & Sheppard, at No. 30 Savile Row—the outfitters who held a Royal warrant to make suits for the House of Windsor, and where Lee worked as an apprentice from 1985-1987 (Watt, 17-22) (see fig. 6, point 3 and fig. 7, point 4).

Equipped with a thimble and cutting shears on McQueen's first day at Anderson & Sheppard, apparatuses Watt regards as "ancient tools of sewing and cutting, subconscious symbols of a form of menswear that is uniquely British," McQueen went on to excel in cutting, hand sewing, and tailoring during his apprenticeship (Watt 18). Under Master Tailor Cornelius O'Callaghan, Lee managed to finish a "forward" coat (a temporary, unfinished version used in a customer's first fitting) in two and half years instead of the expected three, and learned the importance of cut, proportion, and colour (Watt 18-19). Moreover, there are a few points of speculation in the literature about McQueen's time at Anderson & Sheppard: 1. In various interviews, Lee stated that he drew a penis and "I am a cunt" on the inside canvas of coats for Prince Charles, and sewed pubic hair into the queen's soldiers' hats—all of which he later denied (A. Wilson 47-49); and 2. McQueen's reason for leaving Anderson & Sheppard in 1987 is unclear—either his mother was ill and he became unreliable, he was bored, and/or a wigmaker from across the street of Anderson & Sheppard ogled him, and so he left (Watt 22). Whatever the reason for leaving Anderson & Sheppard, in January 1988, Lee went on to train as a tailoring apprentice and trouser cutter at Gieves & Hawkes until 1989, located on 1 Savile Row (A. Wilson 46; Watt 22) (see fig. 6, point 3 and fig. 7, point 5).

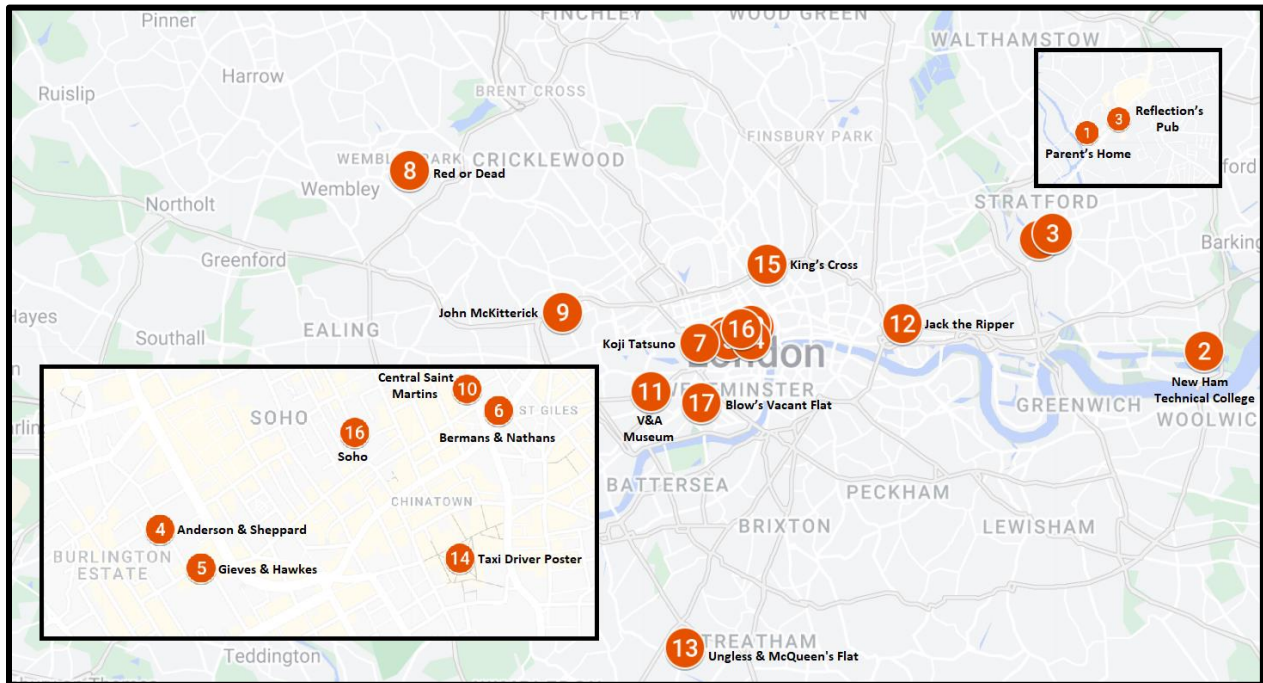


Figure 7: Lee Alexander McQueen London Localities Map

Founded in 1785, Gieves was a supplier of the British Royal Navy, and Hawkes, founded in 1771, was a supplier of the British Army and acquired by Gieves in 1974. Since 1809, the House has dressed British royalty, including Queen Elizabeth, George VI, George V, Princes Charles, Harry and William, and international royal houses, as well (“Our Story”). Today, the outfitters “serves as the global headquarters of a British luxury brand dedicated to the pursuit of excellence” (“Our Story”).

In March 1989, after over a year with Gieves and Hawkes, McQueen said he left due to a homophobic work environment and went on to freelance with a Brighton-based designer who worked with Berman & Nathans theatrical costumiers, located in Camden’s Covent Garden (Watt 23) (see fig. 6, point 4 and fig. 7, point 6). Hired as a freelance machinist and pattern cutter, Lee worked on the Orientalism-inspired costumes for the *Miss Saigon* musical and Victor Hugo’s 1848 French Revolution-inspired musical *Les Misérables*. Tailors worked with and used

Andreane Neofitou's designs and costume sketches, period pattern books, and production stock to recreate the costumes for *Les Misérables*, of which Lee was assigned to make and remake nineteenth-century French coats and waistcoats (V&A, "Jacket").

During this short stint at Bermans & Nathans in 1989, Lee saw a magazine article featuring London-based, Japanese designer Koji Tatsuno, who Lee then visited and landed a pattern cutting job with, on Mount Street in the City of Westminster borough council (A. Wilson 50) (see fig. 6, point 5 and fig. 7, point 7). Tatsuno—also “fascinated by Savile Row tailoring” and located on Mayfair's Mount Street in London—launched his first brand, Culture Shock, in 1982, gained the backing of Japanese designer Yohji Yamamoto, and became known for his “innovative tailoring techniques, working fabric on the stand, tearing, cutting and building up organic forms around the body” (qtd. in A. Wilson 51; Watt 24). According to McQueen, working at Tatsuno was the “next stage [...] to move further into the designer area without losing my tailoring background” (qtd. in Thomas 72).

When Tatsuno's business went bankrupt, Lee's colleague (name unknown) sent him to Red or Dead's head designer John McKitterick, who Lee then worked for on three collections from 1989-1990, in West London's borough council of Brent (A. Wilson 55-56) (see fig. 6, point 6 and fig. 7, point 8). Established in 1982 by Wayne and Gerardine Hemingway, the couple first started by selling second-hand clothes in London's Camden Market and became known for launching the Dr Martens work boot to the fashion market in the 1980s, keeping prices affordable for young people, critiquing elitism and the fashion industry, and winning Streetstyle Designer of the Year Award three times (“Wayne”). It was McKitterick who suggested Lee go to Italy to gain experience in the business of fashion, like McKitterick had previously done (qtd. in A. Wilson 56); and in March 1990, at the age of twenty, Lee followed McKitterick's advice.

According to McQueen, in the early 1990s, “there was nothing going on in London, and the biggest thing at that time was Romeo Gigli, he was everywhere”—and at the top of Lee’s list to pursue for work in Italy (qtd. in A. Wilson 56). McQueen showed up uninvited at Gigli’s studio in Milan and was given a pattern cutting job on the spot, due to Lee’s Savile Row experience, according to Gigli’s assistant at the time, Lise Strathdee (qtd. in A. Wilson 57; Watt 31). Gigli had been showing his collections in New York and Milan since 1983 (“About | Romeo Gigli”); and, according to fashion writer Colin McDowell, Gigli’s designs were “a synthesis of London post-punk street fashion and Japanese avant-garde style presented with Italian refinement and colour [...]” (McDowell). Because McQueen leaves London for Italy in March 1990, the Italy locality is considered outside the scope of this thesis, to which the London locality continues when McQueen returns in the summer of 1990.

By the time Lee returned to London, John McKitterick had started his own, fetish-inspired, label and gave Lee a job as a cutter and machinist at McKitterick’s Ladbroke Grove studio in Kensington and Chelsea (Watt 32) (see fig. 6, point 7 and fig. 7, point 9). According to McKitterick, while McQueen worked on the Spring/Summer ’91 collection, which was “very sexual in nature—tightfitting, in leather and plastics, bright prints, lots of zips and rivet details,” McKitterick told Lee the best way to learn the design process was at school and recommended Lee contact Bobby Hillson, former *Vogue* fashion illustrator, and the MA course director and founder at London’s Central Saint Martins art and fashion school, where McKitterick was also working at the time (qtd. in Watt 32; A. Wilson 63).

Lee showed up at Hillson’s office unannounced, holding an armful of clothing he made, and asked Hillson for a pattern cutting job at the school (A. Wilson 64) (see fig. 6, point 8 and fig. 7, point 10). Intrigued by McQueen’s experience on Savile Row and with Romeo Gigli,

Hillson asked Lee to return with his portfolio of drawings, with the Saint Martins' MA course in mind for Lee, versus a pattern cutting job. The concept behind the MA course, which was “part fashion design, part print design,” was to make the students “more professional,” “to work together as a team, like in the industry” (Hillson qtd. in A. Wilson 65). Despite McQueen not having any BA fashion design qualifications, Hillson immediately offered Lee a spot in the MA fashion course at Central Saint Martins after seeing his portfolio, which Hillson said was “sublime” (qtd. in A. Wilson 64-65; Watt 36-37).

Central Saint Martins was established in 1989 after a merger between two nineteenth century founded colleges, St. Martins School of Art (1854) and Central School of Art and Design (1896, previously known as the Central School of Art and Crafts until 1966) (A. Wilson 66; “About Us”). The school is recognised for its core values in the “fundamental importance of learning through making” and their “radical approach to art and design” (“About Us”). Now situated in London’s King’s Cross (as of 2011), the college was located on the edge of Soho on Charing Cross Road while Lee attended from October 1990 to 1992 (Martins; A. Wilson 63). During his time at Central Saint Martins, Lee visited the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, at least once a week for inspiration (“Fashion in Motion”) (see fig. 6, point 8 and fig. 7, point 11). While studying, Lee met fellow fashion design student Simon Ungless, who contributed to McQueen’s MA final collection, and jewellery design student Shaun Leane, both who went on to work for McQueen after graduating from Central Saint Martins (Watt; A. Wilson; Bolton). McQueen’s 1992 Saint Martin’s graduate show, titled *Jack the Ripper Stalks His Victims*, based on the 1888 serial killer who murdered five prostitutes in London’s East End, Whitechapel neighbourhood (see fig. 7, point 12), caught the eye of fashion editor Isabella Blow, who bought McQueen’s entire graduate collection (in monthly payment instalments), went on to

become his friend, promoter, muse, landlord and collector of his designs (A. Wilson 261; Watt 42, 46). In a November 1992, six-page, British *Vogue* feature on Blow (and her husband, Detmar Blow), Isabella Blow wore pieces from McQueen's *Jack the Ripper* collection (Watt 46; A. Wilson 87) and introduced McQueen to Philip Treacy (Thomas 99-100)—a milliner who would later go on to work with McQueen for years.

In late 1992, Lee moved into Ungless' apartment in South London, at 169 Lessingham Avenue in Tooting Bec, where the pair turned the walls into mood boards, started experimenting with materials, shapes and techniques, and worked the occasional freelance job in fashion and textile design, and for clients Blow referred to McQueen (Thomas 102, 106) (See fig. 6, point 9 and fig. 7, point 13). According to Ungless, this is when McQueen's first post-graduate collection, *Taxi Driver*, "just started to take form," between late 1992 and early 1993 (qtd. in Thomas 106; A. Wilson 93). In an attempt to give London Fashion Week a boost (in the aftermath of the recession's dwindling designer and industry attendees and the Department of Trade and Industry subsidy cuts), the British Fashion Council sponsored six new fashion designers to exhibit their work in a number of Ritz Carlton hotel rooms during the March 1993 London Fashion Week, for which McQueen was one of six designers² (Thomas 107).

McQueen's Autumn/Winter 1993 collection, *Taxi Driver*, drew from several references. At a store near Leicester Square, in central London's City of Westminster (see fig. 7, point 14), Ungless and Lee found a movie poster from Martin Scorsese's 1976 psychological drama *Taxi Driver* (a movie McQueen loved), depicting the scene when Robert De Niro shaves his hair into a Mohawk; Ungless turned the image into a print McQueen used in the collection (Thomas 106). McQueen referenced both Scorsese's film and his father, Ron, a taxi driver, as inspiration for the

² Bella Freud, Amanda Wakeley, Flyte Ostell, Sonnentag & Mulligan, and Abe Hamilton were the other five designers chosen to exhibit their work (Wilson 95).

collection (Thomas 106). According to Ungless, after the Ritz Hotel showing, he and Lee packed the collection up in black trash bags and went straight to one of their many (Soho and King's Cross) gay hangouts, Man Stink, a club in Camden's King's Cross (see fig. 7, point 15); not wanting to pay for coat check, the two hid the trash bags behind garbage containers outside the club but forgot about them until the next morning, to which the trash had already been dumped, along with McQueen's first post-graduate collection—none of which exists today (Ungless qtd. in Watt 59; A. Wilson 96)

Following the Ritz showing, Simon Ungless, Isabella Blow, Bobby Hillson, Alice Smith, and Cressida Pye talked Lee into staging a fashion show for his Spring/Summer 1994 collection, *Nihilism*, which McQueen chose to show at the (1920s Art Deco-style) Bluebird Garage on King's Road in Chelsea (Thomas 111). Around three hundred guests attended, to view models smeared with blood and dirt in their tightly tailored garb, sporting mohawks, cling film fashions, distressed and paint-splattered clothing, bare breasts, exposed female genitalia, and "bumster" trousers: McQueen's version of the empowered "punk" and gay subculture style he witnessed in clubs, such as Soho's Kinky Gerlinky and Freedom Café on Wardour Street (Watt 59-68) (see fig. 6, point 10 and fig. 7, point 16). Of this McQueen and Ungless, Tooting Bec-produced collection, Thomas mentions that nothing was "off-limits" or "taboo," and McQueen didn't try to suppress the brutality of human nature; that McQueen wants to empower women and "help them use the force of their sexuality to its fullest" (112).

McQueen's third collection, Autumn/Winter 1994-1995, *Banshee*, was based on Irish folklore and Luis Bunuel's 1967 film *Belle de Jour*, in which a housewife works as a prostitute while her husband is at his day job (A. Wilson 106, 108). As only one of nine designers showing at London Fashion Week, Lee's collection was shown at Café de Paris in central London, on

February 26, 1994, and featured 16th century-inspired frock coats, fitted military-style jackets, floaty organza and chiffon dresses (with prints by Ungless and Bigwood), a body mould made of chicken wire and dried plaster of Paris, broken beer bottles on garments (worn by Blow on the runway), a highly pregnant model, and McQueen's bumster trousers, once again (Watt 69-73; Thomas 118; A. Wilson 107-108) (see fig. 6, point 9). Despite McQueen producing and showing his collection, he still had no steady form of income to pay rent. Therefore, McQueen moved into his sister's apartment in Chadwell Heath, at a public housing estate that was far out in East London's Dagenham borough (Thomas 114; A. Wilson 104).

In the summer of 1994, David Kappo, fellow Central Saint Martin's fashion student, introduced Lee and Andrew Groves in early 1994 at Compton's pub, a gay hangout in Soho on Old Compton Street (Watt 71; A. Wilson 109) (see fig. 7, point 16). Groves was also a fashion designer under the name Jimmy Jumble (A. Wilson 109). At Blow's invitation, McQueen and Groves soon moved into the basement of a more centrally located (albeit partially condemned), vacant flat that Detmar Blow's mother owned, at 67 Elisabeth Street, in London's City of Westminster (A. Wilson 110; Watt 72-73) (see fig. 6, point 11 and fig. 7, point 17). The two used the flat as their design studio, living quarters and a place of inspiration (Watt 73; Thomas 123-124). McQueen and Groves found palette plastic wrap on Elizabeth Street one night and decided to make a dress out of it for the following Spring/Summer 1995 show, *The Birds* (Thomas 123-124) (see fig. 6, point 11).

Lee heckled a low-cost fashion show location from Bagley's fabric shop, whose King's Cross warehouse in Camden (see fig. 7, point 15) was empty and up for use, as well as sponsorship from Beck's Beer (Watt 73). Before *The Birds* show, scheduled for October 9, 1994, Lee saw fashion stylist Katy England in a Soho bead shop (see fig. 7, point 16) and asked if she

would style his collection and she agreed—this started their long working relationship together (A. Wilson 117). *The Birds* collection was inspired by East London-born, Sir Alfred Hitchcock's 1963 film *The Birds* with additional inspirations pulled from Dutch graphic artist M. C. Escher's bird illustrations, symbolic swallows tattoos from sailors and skinheads, roadkill (A. Wilson 120), and fabrics Ungless "took" from Central Saint Martins (due to lack of funds to buy fabric other than from Soho's, cheap, Berwick Market) (Thomas 123). Also featured in the runway show was a fellow King's Cross clubber and couture corsetiere, Mr. Pearl, who made a corset for his own eighteen-inch corseted waist to model in the show (A. Wilson 120). The models came down the "dirty warehouse floor painted with white road markings" as "powerful Amazonian creatures," some with white contact lenses, crimped hair, and tire-print marks ran across their bodies (achieved with a tire (found in the street) dipped in black paint and then rolled onto the models' bodies) (120-121). Hamish Bowles of American *Vogue* called the collection a "revelation," "astonishing," and "that fashion would never be the same again, and McQueen's low-slung silhouette and savage imagination would come to define the decade" (qtd. in A. Wilson 121). *The Birds* was a turning point in McQueen's career; the designer was, officially, on the fashion radar internationally. Although the ten-year scope of this thesis ends here, in 1995 for Alexander McQueen, the designer went on to be head designer for Givenchy in Paris (from 1996-2001), formed a partnership with Gucci in 2001, and continued to design and produce women's wear and men's wear collections until his suicide in 2010.

In Table 2 below, I provide a detailed list of the names, neighbourhoods (or *wards*), boroughs, districts, and locations considered "inner" or "outer" London for each of the seventeen London locations attributed to (Lee) Alexander McQueen from 1985-1995. Each numbered location also corresponds to the McQueen London Localities Map, as seen in Figure 5.

Table 2: List of Alexander McQueen London Localities

#	Name	Neighbourhood	Borough	District	Inner/outer
1.	Parent's Home	Stratford and New Town	Newham	East	Inner
2.	Newham Technical College	Stratford and New Town	Newham	East	Inner
3.	Reflection's Pub	Beckton	Newham	East	Inner
4.	Anderson & Sheppard	West End	City of Westminster	Central	Inner
5.	Gieves & Hawkes	West End	City of Westminster	Central	Inner
6.	Bermans & Nathans	Holborn and Covent Garden	Camden	Central	Inner
7.	Koji Tatsuno	West End	City of Westminster	Central	Inner
8.	Red or Dead	Tokington	Brent	West	Outer
9.	John McKitterick	Unknown	Kensington & Chelsea	Central	Inner
10.	Central Saint Martins	King's Cross	Camden	Central	Inner
11.	Victoria and Albert Museum	Brompton & Hans Town	Kensington & Chelsea	Central	Inner
12.	Jack the Ripper	Whitechapel	Tower Hamlets	East	Inner
13.	Ungless & McQueen Flat	Tooting	Wandsworth	South	Inner
14.	Taxi Driver Poster	West End	City of Westminster	Central	Inner
15.	King's Cross	King's Cross	Camden	Central	Inner
16.	Soho	West End	City of Westminster	Central	Inner
17.	Blow's Vacant Flat	Knightsbridge & Belgravia	City of Westminster	Central	Inner

The spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of the London locality according to Alexander McQueen is almost exclusively located in the inner city (94.1%), only Tokyngton's Red or Dead in West-London is not part of the inner city. Spatially, besides Red or Dead, Whitechapel's Jack the Ripper, and the flat McQueen lived with Simon Ungless, all other creative localities cover Central and East London. Important boroughs for Alexander McQueen are the neighbouring City of Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea and Camden, where he is influenced creatively by Savile Row tailor outlets, shops, museums, and the (gay) nightlife of

Soho and King's Cross. Also, McQueen's alma mater, Central Saint Martins, was in Camden's King's Cross. During his studies at Central Saint Martins, he met some of the most important people that influenced him creatively until his tragic death—including Isabella Blow, Shaun Leane and Simon Ungless. In total, the City of Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea and Camden boroughs constitute approximately two-thirds (64.7%) of all the creative places that were important during the first ten years of McQueen's career. The two localities furthest removed from one another are Red or Dead and Newham Technical College, 24.0 km diagonally and 23.1 km east to west. Red or Dead and Ungless and McQueen's Flat are furthest apart from one another north to south (13.8 km).

In the following section of this thesis, Section 4.4, I use McQueen's 1985-1995 London Localities Map (Figure 7) and the List of McQueen's London Localities (Table 2) to compare with those of Vivienne Westwood's from 1963-1973 (as seen in Figure 5 and Table 1), in order to answer sub-question #1 of this thesis.

4.4 The spatial scale and extent of the London-locality

Based on the London Localities Maps and List of London Localities (as seen in Figures 5 and 7 and Tables 1 and 2), as derived from the actor-networks for Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen (Figures 4 and 6), I answer sub-question #1 of this thesis: *“What is the spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of the London locality, according to high-end fashion designers Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen?”* When looking at the spatial scale and extent of the London locations that act as a catalyst to individual creativity for both Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen during the first ten years of their fashion trajectories, it is possible to see that the distance between the locations furthest away cover quite

some distance for both designers (about 25 km for Westwood and 24 km for McQueen). The longest distance north to south and west to east is roughly the same for both designers (Westwood: 15 and 23 km; McQueen: 14 and 23 km). Furthermore, spatially, the localities of importance for Westwood cover West and Central London, whereas McQueen has a more East and Central London focus. The overlap between the two designers is in the central inner-city boroughs of Kensington & Chelsea and the City of Westminster—where both designers derive inspiration from nightlife, shops, markets, and museums. Localities of importance tend to cluster around their parents' home, with their school in the proximity, and in the inner-city, which is most pronounced for Alexander McQueen—with clusters around his parents' home and about half of all the localities in the area of Savile Row and Soho. A pronounced difference between both designers is the role of apprenticeships and workplaces: McQueen worked for several outfitters and fashion studios, whereas Westwood started as an entrepreneur and often worked from home during the first 10 years of her career. For both designers, the gravitational centre of the localities of importance is the area on the north side of the Thames, which separates the inner city. What is interesting to note is that, spatially, the location of Westwood and McQueen's parents' home is removed from this gravitational centre and so are most of the localities where both designers have lived during the years included in my study.

Similar to the CCI theory mentioned in this thesis (Florida, Felton and Collis, Collis et al.), my study also confirms that the localities which contain the attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity, according to high-end fashion designers Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen, are clustered. The gravitational centre of the localities is in the inner-city; however, both designers refer to localities that are outside the inner-city. This seems to confirm the inference made in the theoretical framework based on the findings of Felton and Collis and

Collis et al., who argue that any locality can be a source of prompts and stimuli for individual creativity. Although the gravitational centre is in the inner-city, this does not confirm exclusivity of the inner-city as advocated by Richard Florida. Furthermore, the spatial scale and extent of the subjective, imagined geography of London is determined by the attributes to creativity, which, for both designers, are places of social life (for example, family and friends), education, nightlife, shops, markets, creative workers and cultural amenities like museums.

In the following chapter of this thesis, Chapter 5, I answer sub-question #2, “*What are the London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity, according to high-end fashion designers Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen?*”, based on the actor-networks I made for the first ten years the designers’ fashion trajectories (Figures 4 and 6).

5. London-based prompts and stimuli for individual creativity according to Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen

Like the previous chapter, the analyses of this chapter are based on the actor-networks of Vivienne Westwood and Lee Alexander McQueen (Figures 4 and 6)—a product of ANT, where I transformed the designers' testimonies that link the place, London, to individual creativity. I have critically analysed the identified actors and networks of actors of both designers and discuss, in this chapter, the London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity. Furthermore, guided by the conceptual framework of this thesis, I have categorised the stimuli or prompts each actor or actor network represents. In this grouping process, I tried to remain as objective and detached as possible and let the actors speak for themselves. In the analysis, I present a selection of exemplary quotes from each designer to elucidate the established categorisation and discuss, per category, the London-specific attributes to individual creativity. Besides the four types of locality-based prompts or stimuli for aesthetic creativity, as defined in my conceptual framework, my data suggests another type of locality based-stimuli, *Locality-based storytelling*. Therefore, in this thesis, I discuss five types of locality-based prompts or stimuli, which can be categorised as follows:

- Locality as a resource of visual raw materials and stimuli
- Locality-based social and cultural networks and activity
- Locality-specific communities of creative workers
- Locality as a brand based on reputation and tradition
- Locality-based storytelling

To answer sub-question #2, “*What are the London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity, according to high-end fashion designers Vivienne Westwood*

and Alexander McQueen?”, I compare and discuss the attributes to creativity of the London locality for Westwood and McQueen during the first ten years of their fashion trajectories.

5.1 Locality as a resource of visual raw materials and stimuli

The first locality-based prompts or stimuli for aesthetic creativity I compare and discuss is *Locality as a resource of visual raw materials and stimuli*. In the theoretical framework, I refer to the perceived influence of the local visual environment on creative individuals, such as visual raw materials and stimuli acting as a catalyst for creativity. Vivienne Westwood and Lee Alexander McQueen make specific reference to museums, shops and markets in London that act as motivation and inspiration during the design process. For example, in a video interview for the Victoria & Albert Museum, McQueen made the following statement:

The collections at the V&A never fail to intrigue and inspire me. The nation is privileged to have access to such a resource. It's the sort of place I'd like to be shut in overnight, with no tourists. [...] When I was at Saint Martins, studying for a master's degree there, I used to go in at least once a week through the archives (qtd. in “Fashion in Motion”).

McQueen makes specific and explicit reference to London's Victoria and Albert Museum, which houses collections and archives that he visited regularly during his master's program at Central Saint Martins, and which continuously intrigued and inspired him. These collections and archives acted as visual prompts and stimuli, available for free, to McQueen during his time of study: in the early 1990s, the V&A only asked for a suggested £4.50 voluntary contribution as an admission price—a contentious issue between UK's Labour and Conservative

governments since the 1960s, which, in 2001, the Labour government reinstated free admission to permanent exhibitions at national museums (Baily; “Universal Free Admission”). McQueen refers to the value added to the London location because of the museum and the nation’s access to such a place. Likewise, Westwood also mentions that during her time visiting South Kensington Museums and the British Museum for a Harrow Art School course, in which she had to draw at museums, her “imagination was set alight” (qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 77). Therefore, both Westwood and McQueen make explicit reference to the impact of visual prompts contained within the London locality.

Westwood also exploits the raw materials found within the locality, specifically in London markets:

Malcolm and I seared markets for old rock ‘n’ roll [sic] records which we bought for a shilling [5p]. His idea was that we would be able to sell these in the back of 430 [King’s Road] to trendy people who shopped there. ‘Let It Rock’ initially was all these second-hand clothes and bits and pieces you could find in those days, left over from the fifties: fluorescent cardigans from Brixton Market and a market in Wales, I remember, rock ‘n’ roll [sic] things and suburban fifties things. [...] We wanted action; we searched for motifs of rebellion and focused on rock ‘n’ roll [sic]... but everything we did we were designing together. (qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 143)

Westwood exploits the raw materials—cardigans, rock and roll things, and fifties things—she finds at Brixton Market and a market in Wales, which she then redesigned and sold at the “Let It Rock’ shop on 430 King’s Road, where the clientele who wants to buy such

products were located. Westwood makes a clear distinction between the London location she accesses to buy these materials from, versus the London location she accesses to sell the final products she redesigns. Both the market and shop locations are exploited, as well the products within each location. It is also worth mentioning that Westwood also looks outside of the London location—a market in Wales—to find such products, or raw materials, to sell at 430 King’s Road. Although it is significant that she also looks outside of the London locality, the Wales locality is outside the scope of this thesis.

Similar to Westwood finding raw materials and stimuli at local markets, McQueen also exploits London’s Berwick Street Market for cheap fabrics. Although I did not come across McQueen referencing this market, his teacher, Bobby Hillson, and long-time collaborator and fellow Central Saint Martin student, Simon Ungless, both refer to the “cheap,” low-quality, and even “hideous” fabrics McQueen used in his first collections, but which McQueen managed to make something beautiful out of (Thomas 86, 108, 123). In a *W* magazine interview, however, McQueen does refer to the quality of materials found in particular London shops, which he finds inspiring:

I remember when I first started out, I used to walk past what was then Valentino on Bond Street, and just look in amazement at the way the clothes were finished. I was working in Savile Row at the time, and it was about 1985, and it was miraculous, so inspiring (qtd. in Bolton 25).

Stimulus is found in the attributes of the materials found in the Valentino shop on London’s Bond Street, a high-end, luxury shopping street. The London locality grants public

access to shops selling high-end clothing which feature high-end tailoring techniques that inspire McQueen while he works on Savile Row—another street in London with shops that feature bespoke (handmade), tailored clothing. This access to materials with such attributes can be considered a competitive advantage for McQueen over other designers that are, for example, not located within a city where high-end or bespoke fashion shops can be found to visit and work. Another example is the store near Leicester Square, where Simon Ungless and McQueen found a *Taxi Driver* movie poster and used it as inspiration for the *Taxi Driver* collection (Thomas 106). Westwood also makes several references to the visual materials and stimuli found in shops located on London's King's Road, in particular, her favourite shop, Mr. Freedom, at 430 King's Road, where her and McLaren both shopped when the store was called 'Hung On You', then 'Mr. Freedom,' and eventually 'Paradise Garage' (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 130, 134, 139, 140).

According to Drake, artists acknowledge the influence of the visual environment, and explicitly indicate the 'local visual environment as a catalyst for creativity': specific visual prompts and signs, or 'raw materials' produce motivation and inspiration for the design process, which also helps to realize the value of the locality and can contribute to the competitive edge over competitors (518). Some examples of the local visual environment include infrastructure, architecture, shops, museums, landscapes, and the materials it contains (518-519). Unlike many of Drake's interviewees, in my study, Westwood and McQueen do not so much mention the local visual environment itself as a stimulus to creativity; instead, these London-based high-end fashion designers indicate being inspired by visual prompts and material contained within the locality. Vivienne Westwood is an avid visitor of markets, where she finds pieces to be remastered into something new—something Marc Jacobs and his buyers do on a consistent basis

(Tokatli 1260, 1267). McQueen shops Berwick Street Market for cheap fabrics but does not refer to markets as a source of inspiration the same way as Westwood. McQueen refers more to inspiration from materials and stimuli he sees in shops in Soho and the near vicinity. Besides markets, Vivienne Westwood searches for Mod, Ted, rock and roll and punk material and stimuli in shops around Kings Road or finds inspiration in bookshops.

While in art school, both designers are intrigued and inspired by the collections of the various museums found in the proximity. Similarly, in Drake's study, a jewellery designer-maker located in London mentions that the visual environment influences their work and refers to the close proximity— "a ten-minute walk"—to the British Museum and "great" shops (Respondent 21 qtd. in Drake 518). Like McQueen and Westwood, this designer expresses a wider enthusiasm for the local environment, which Drake mentions "engenders motivation and inspiration for the design process and a broader sense of the value of the locality to [the] enterprise" (518).

5.2 Locality-based social and cultural networks and activity

The second locality-based prompts or stimuli I compare and discuss is *Locality-based social and cultural networks and activity*. As I mention in the theoretical framework, creative workers reference the intensity of social and cultural activity—as bystanders, observers, and/or participants of that activity—as a source of inspiration for their aesthetic creativity. Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen also make references to the social and cultural activity happening in London which influences their creative work. For example, McQueen makes the following statement:

There's always an energy in London. The poverty, the unemployment, the drug-induced environment, the nightlife, and it's the way I put together my clothes. It is about the raw energy of London (qtd. in "Cutting Up").

McQueen makes explicit reference to the buzz ("raw energy") and zeitgeist ("poverty," "unemployment," "drug-induced environment") of London during the 1990s, which impact his designs and the way he puts his designs together. McQueen uses these social issues as a source of inspiration and projects these societal issues through his collections, such as in his Spring/Summer 1994, *Nihilism* collection, featuring his portrayal of strong women (McQueen qtd. in Watt 59-62). Additionally made explicit by McQueen is the London nightlife. As previously mentioned in Chapter 4 of this thesis, McQueen often visited Soho and King's Cross gay clubs with friends, as well as worked at one of East London's roughest venues, Reflection's Pub, very near to where McQueen lived with his parents and which is known as a rough, non-affluent, working-class neighbourhood of London with a history of prevalent violence (Watt 61; A. Wilson 50, 105-126). McQueen's exposure to such social and cultural activity act as a catalyst to his aesthetic creativity. Likewise, Westwood refers to the proximity and access to the latest fashions and cultural nuances provided by the Paradise Garage fashion shop location:

[Paradise Garage] opened at maybe one o'clock. A couple of people would put on music and [someone] got a cup of tea. Models maybe would come for a photo shoot—Justin de Villeneuve or Twiggy: the King's Road was like a film set then, a kid's dream. It was where it was all happening. There'd be people looking out for the pop stars who came by: Jagger and Bianca, and Keith Richards and Peter Sellers, Rod Stewart, Freddie Mercury,

Marianne Faithfull, Jerry Hall, Lulu, Britt Ekland, Elton John” (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 141).

When Westwood and McLaren started selling their 1950s memorabilia and redesigned clothing in the back of Paradise Garage, the 430 King’s Road location provided them access to the customers and crowd who frequented the shop and shopping street. The buzz of the location (“where it was all happening”) is referred to, and which acts as a competitive advantage for Westwood and McLaren, versus a non-hip or happening location to market their goods and gain inspiration. In 1955, fashion designer Mary Quant opened her first shop on King’s Road, with the aim to get “people to stop and look” and “shock people” with her designs and shop windows filled with, for example, upside-down mannequins (“King’s Road”). Quant paved the way for the King’s Road ““happening” fashion boutique scene in Chelsea and West Soho in the 1950s and 1960s” (Breward 486), which had been “part of the local, small business economy and cheap rentals until around 1967,” with pawnbrokers and grocery stores (Westwood and Kelly 140). Also important to mention here is that the list of people Westwood mentions in the above quote is not referring to the concentration of creative workers and creative activity but to the social activity among people happening in the location: the “pop stars” would frequent the shop to hang out or make purchases, but not to perform their creative work, and crowds would gather to catch a glimpse of what was happening there.

Westwood also mentions the social and cultural activity, at 430 King’s Road, pertinent to her and McLaren’s creative work, beliefs, and the start of the punk movement (which, on a side note, Westwood claims she and Malcolm started (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 133)):

Punk was everything to me and Malcolm [...] shouting about injustice and making people think, even if it's uncomfortable. I'll always be punk in that sense. Punk, for me and Malcolm and at the shop [430 King's Road], became sort of a bricolage: collecting ideas. Collecting people... (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 133).

Westwood makes explicit reference to the ideas and people attributed to the location, which were a source of creative stimuli that acted as a 'bricolage' and precursor to punk, the punk movement, and the subcultures associated with punk, especially punk music. Clearly, Westwood and McLaren found much inspiration on King's Road and its boutiques, for which Malcolm stated, "all of these stores were the street's visual answer to an authentic musical pop culture' of the era: King's Road was where music and fashion met" (qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 139). Similarly, McQueen found inspiration in London's gay scene at Soho clubs and also the punk subcultural scene—its style and mantras: to be confrontational; the idea of destroying in order to create (Ungless qtd. in Thomas 110); in the need to "fuck everything up" in order to create anew (Westwood's reference to punk, qtd. in Thomas 110). This was often visible in the styling of McQueen's collections, models and himself during runway shows and the music selection played during them—loud, in your face, and made to shock—such as in the *Nihilism* and *Banshee* shows (Thomas 110-111; Watt 59-65).

According to Drake, the presence of "social and cultural interaction and innovation" can be a significant stimulus to the creative process; as bystanders, observers, and/or participants of such activity, creative workers experience the "buzz", spirit or mood of the locality as inspiring, and others speak explicitly about the numerous things going on that may interest the CCI worker (519-520). McQueen confirms the buzz, which he calls "the raw energy of London" and then

goes on to describe the gritty, 90s zeitgeist of blue-collar, working-class London he witnessed in, for instance, the area he grew up— “the poverty, the unemployment, the drug-induced environment”. The latter echoes the socio-economic diversity and associated issues of working-class suburbs Felton and Collis describe as a creative resource (187). Westwood refers to Kings Road as the place “where it was all happening,” the place where music, fashion and her other interests met.

For both Westwood and McQueen, music and their associated subcultural scenes are important, and both designers derive inspiration and creative stimuli from these social and cultural interactions. McQueen makes explicit reference to the gay nightlife scene, the Soho and King’s Cross clubs he often visited with friends, whereas, for Westwood, contact with music and its associated scenes takes place, primarily, at Kings Road; she only refers to nightlife, dance halls and pubs in and around Harrow and in central London’s Soho area, prior to the birth of her son Ben Westwood in 1963. The individual creativity Westwood and McQueen attribute to locality-based social and cultural networks and activity shares many similarities with Tokatli’s Marc Jacobs study, where Jacobs says that, besides music and its associated subcultural aesthetic, simply being in New York and the ability to use his social life are his main influences, in particular “its insomniac, coke-fuelled, disco-lit world of nightlife” (1259).

5.3 Locality-specific communities of creative workers

The third locality-based prompts or stimuli I discuss are *Locality-specific communities of creative workers*. As I mention in the theoretical framework, creative workers acknowledge local networks of creative workers as having an impact on their individual aesthetic creativity. Local networks of creative workers can facilitate learning that pushes the boundaries of an individual’s

creativity and expands their already existing knowledge of creative stimuli. Vivienne Westwood and Lee Alexander McQueen both acknowledge the impact of local networks of creative workers on their individual levels of aesthetic creativity. For example, Vivienne Westwood makes the following statements about Malcolm McLaren, her art student boyfriend, business partner, music and punk aficionado, and father of Vivienne's second son:

Malcolm had been so important to begin with, and was often the initiator of the ideas (qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 240).

I wanted to escape my own upbringing—Malcom did help. He introduced me to things that excited me and made me think (qtd. in Wilcox 10-11).

Malcolm was fascinating. He had so much information that I didn't have—even the fact that he knew London like the back of his hand. I knew I was provincial, without perspective, ill-equipped. I so much needed a way to gain some insight, and through Malcolm I was able to look at society and politics and culture. [...] Malcolm was heavily influenced at that time by the work of the French Situationists, and, in a sense, to understand what we ended up doing with punk, you need to know about Situationism (qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 115-116).

Westwood acknowledges that McLaren plays a vital role in the design process, in the initial creation of ideas that were utilised when she first started designing. Clearly, there was a cooperation between Westwood and McLaren, in which both designers contributed to the

generation of ideas during the design process. Malcolm exposed Vivienne to creative stimuli and ideas not previously known to her before him, and which she looked to Malcolm for. Malcolm was a long-term art student, who attended several art schools, with the intention of remaining a student for as long as possible for the grant money, so he had a continuous pool of rebellious, art student friends and ideas, as well as a lot of time for his interest in music, bands, and involvement in political activist endeavours that acted as creative stimuli for both Westwood and McLaren's designs, such as the Situationist slogans featured on T-shirts Vivienne made (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 110, 114-117).

The following Westwood statement also refers to the cooperation between creative workers involved in the design process:

The clothes sequence was simple, really. First Malcolm bought some Teddy Boy jackets from Sid Green the tailor, and I customised them with different coloured velvet collars, that sort of thing. Then Patrick Casey sourced some vintage zipper jacket with bat wings and a stripe, and I made a copy. And then I made some stripy T-shirts for women (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 134).

In the above statement, it is notable to mention the cooperation between creative workers, from various creative fields, involved in the creative process and production of creative goods: McLaren, an artist trained in installation art, purchased jackets from Sid Green, a tailor; Westwood, a fashion and jewellery designer, customised the goods McLaren bought and made a copy of the jacket sourced by Patrick Casey, an art school friend of McLaren's who was a "speed freak" and started the 'Let It Rock' shop at 430 King's Road with McLaren and Westwood

(Westwood qtd. Westwood and Kelly 141-143). This network of creatives all contributed to what Westwood considers the starting sequence of how she and Malcolm started to design clothes.

Similarly, McQueen also refers to the importance of and cooperation with fellow, London-based creative workers during the design process:

Katy is the most important part of McQueen. She's the tweedled-dee to my tweedled-dum. She fuels my imagination (McQueen qtd. in "Cutting Up").

McQueen stresses the vital role Katy England (a previous fashion magazine director and stylist) plays in his brand and towards fuelling his imagination during the creative process. McQueen already knew of Katy England during his days at Central Saint Martins; however, he ran into her at a Soho bead shop before his Spring/Summer 1995 *The Birds* collections and asked Katy to be his stylist for the show, to which she agreed (Westwood and Kelly 117-118). England went on to work as McQueen's stylist until 2007 and was later known as being McQueen's "second opinion" and "the hippest woman in Britain" (Rickey and Foulkes qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 118).

McQueen also developed relationships with other creative workers that had an impact on his creative process and production of fashion goods, such as Isabella Blow, Simon Ungless and Simon Costin. According to McQueen, in reference to his muse and promoter, the fashion stylist and editor Isabella Blow:

She's like a disease. A terminal disease. Everything she does rubs off on you (qtd. in Thomas 138).

Shortly after Blow haggled McQueen's entire final collection from him, McQueen dressed Blow for her *Vogue*, Hilles photo shoot; designed and produced clothes for clients Blow referred to him; and featured Blow in his *Banshee* fashion show (Watt 42, 46, 69-73). McQueen would later go on to dedicate three of his fashion shows (1995, 2006, 2008) to Blow, as well as make her the muse and concept of his Spring/Summer 2008 collection, 'La Dame Bleue,' after Blow committed suicide in 2007 (A. Wilson 287; Thomas 150). For years, McQueen also collaborated with textile designer Simon Ungless and jewellery and set designer Simon Costin, who all met while Lee was studying at Central Saint Martins. Both Costin and Ungless first collaborated with McQueen on his MA debut fashion show and for several years after. In reference to the team of creatives McQueen chose to have working for him, he said the following:

I chose these people because they are special and individual, the very best in their own professions. It's like a soufflé: if none of the ingredients are right you get sludge; but if they are right the whole thing rises (McQueen qtd. in A. Wilson 164).

Explicit reference is made to the value of the creative workers, the collaboration that occurs between them, and the necessity of these creative workers for the success of the McQueen brand. When McQueen went on to be hired as the Head Designer for the Paris-based couture house Givenchy in 1996, he took his entire London-based team of designers with him, who would travel back and forth, between London and Paris, to work simultaneously on the McQueen and Givenchy collections—instead of hiring a Paris-based team of designers. This elucidates

how important McQueen's London-based team of creative workers was for his creative output and the McQueen brand.

According to Drake, networks of creative workers can also impact individual levels of aesthetic creativity, which can, for example, facilitate learning that pushes the boundaries of an individual's creativity. Networking, observing, cooperation, friendships, pooling of ideas, and competition between creative workers within an area, and not necessarily in the same field, can assist in maximizing innovation and creativity and act as creative stimuli (521-522). Drake's findings are similar to the already existing creativity theory with a focus on the collective and social processes of creativity, highlighting the cooperation and competition needed to maximize creativity and learning (*Cities and the* 83-84, Chapain and Comunian 725-729).

My study reveals that art and fashion schools provide a network of creative workers. It is at Central Saint Martins where McQueen made some of the most important friendships of his career. McQueen makes explicit reference to the value of these creative workers, why he chose them, the collaboration that occurs between them, and the necessity of these creative workers for the success of the McQueen brand. Likewise, Westwood made important contacts during her short stint at Harrow Art School; and through McLaren, who intended to remain a student for as long as possible, she had a continuous pool of rebellious, art student friends and ideas. Westwood acknowledges that McLaren plays a vital role in her creative development by initiating ideas, introducing her to new things, and mentions the cooperation between her, McLaren and other creative workers from various creative fields involved in the creative process and production of creative goods.

Clearly, a community of creative workers is important. My findings confirm the existing theory with a focus on the individual (for example, Drake 521-522) and the collective and social

processes of creativity (such as Florida's *Cities and the Creative Class* 83-84; Chapain and Comunian 725-729), highlighting the cooperation and competition among creative workers needed to maximize creativity and learning. It is interesting to note that neither McQueen nor Westwood make explicit reference to competition with other creative workers in the literature I have analysed. The references to collaborations with creative workers from various creative fields, however, are numerous. Although outside the scope of this study, the importance of a community of creative workers and value to the high-end designer is stressed by the fact that McQueen took his entire London-based team of designers with him, who would travel back and forth, when he became head Designer for the Paris-based couture house Givenchy in 1996—which exactly embodies the detachment of the stimuli to creativity from the original locality “once you become a global tastemaker” (Tokatli 1266).

5.4 Locality as a brand based on reputation and tradition

The fourth locality-based prompts or stimuli I discuss is *Locality as a brand based on reputation and tradition*. As I also mention in the theoretical framework, creative workers exploit local traditions, reputations and/or narratives as a form of product branding. Likewise, I also found Westwood and McQueen stating such examples. For instance, McQueen makes several references to his skills as a Savile Row tailor, attributing the quality and craftsmanship of his collections, as well as the modernization of his designs, to his Savile Row work experience. For example:

I come from Savile Row. What I learned at sixteen is that to change menswear, you have to be like an architect; you work on the cut and proportion. You're not going to put men in all-in-ones and things like that. I've tried it before and it failed, and that was a good

learning process. You've got to know the rules to break them. That's what I'm here for, to demolish the rules but to keep the tradition. You have to move forward because we're not stuck in '30s England, making tweed suits for people to go shooting on the weekend. Let's keep it real (McQueen qtd. in Watt, 19).

McQueen spent four years working on Savile Row, from 1985-1989, acquiring the skills and know-how of bespoke tailoring and cutting techniques and traditions, dating back to the 1700s, while working at Anderson & Sheppard and Gieves & Hawkes. In the late nineteenth century, men's dress was shifting from ostentatious to equalizing, with a fashion system that catered to the aristocratic elite and expanding middle class (Watt 19). Excessive details and embellishments that once adorned male fashion prior to the French Revolution (1789) were replaced by English riding dress inspirations, with a focus on excellence in tailoring, fit and cut, and silk fabrics swapped for wools, resulting in a form of distinctively British menswear and the body-tailored, British male suit (Watt 19). Anderson and Sheppard became famous for their development of the drape coat known as the "London Cut," featuring a more fluid style with softer, non-padded shoulders, a slight drape through the chest, and greater ease of movement for the wearer, including tighter armholes that prevent the coat from riding up when the arms are lifted (A. Wilson 42; Watt 19-20; "History"). Lee mentioned how he "sat for two months padding collars, and two years learning how to cut a jacket," working methodically, under close supervision, and to perfection on one technique at a time: buttonholes, pockets, linings, fabric performance, and so on—skills of a tailor's trade (qtd. in Watt 21; A. Wilson 46). According to Anderson & Sheppard apprentice, Leon Powell, when Lee started his own collections, "he will have looked properly at something, seen a mistake and rectified it by ripping it apart and starting

again. It's easier in fashion to wing it. But that's the thing you learn as a tailor: you see if something's wrong and you fix it" (qtd. in Watt 22).

McQueen also challenges the time-honoured traditions in cutting and sewing by deconstructing garments, tattering fabrics, and splashing paint on clothes—an antithesis of Savile row perfection, while still maintaining an excellence in quality and tailoring. Gieves and Hawkes was known for their specialization in higher cut trousers with a “fishtail” waistband, attributes that allowed the shirt not to show when the wearer bent over (Watt 22). McQueen's introduction of “bumster” trousers were the antithesis of the high-waisted Gieves & Hawkes pants, which sat inches below the waistline and hips, elongating the torso, shortening the legs, and revealing the wearer's *anal cleft*, or butt crack (Watt 61-63). In a June 1996, *Harper's Bazaar* interview, Isabella Blow succinctly sums up McQueen's use and challenge of reputations and traditions in his designs: “What attracted me to Alexander was the way he takes ideas from the past and sabotages them with his cut to make them new and in the context of today”; “it is the complexity and severity of his approach to cut that makes him so modern” (qtd. in Watt 93).

Vivienne Westwood challenges the moral and political reputations and traditions of her London locality through her creative work. One example is as follows:

My job is always to confront the Establishment, to try and find out where freedom lies and what you can do: the most obvious way I did that was through the porn T-shirts” (VW qtd. in Wilcox 12).

Westwood uses T-shirts featuring ‘potato printed’ designs as a canvas to politicise clothing and express her anti-Establishment views, and attempts to push the boundaries of what

society and the law deem “acceptable” or not. According to McLaren, “It started with an interest in any form of youth revolt, so that involved Teddy-boys and Rockers. Then we brought the sex element into it.” (qtd. in Wilcox, 12). Westwood’s T-shirts featured “ejaculating penises;” “urine-yellow cum ropes” and “piss” on Marilyn Monroe’s face (which, supposedly, Marilyn’s estate ended up profiting from); and a band T-shirt for London’s Sex Pistols with “the band’s name in condom pink and featuring a naked prepubescent boy smoking a cigarette” (Westwood and Kelly 155). Westwood’s friend, Alan Jones, was arrested for wearing one of Westwood’s T-shirts in public, which featured “two cowboys, naked from the waist down, facing each other, their flaccid penises almost touching;” the arrest was on the grounds of “exposing to public view and indecent exhibition” (Westwood and Kelly 155; Wilcox 12). Correspondingly, after a King’s Road resident complained about the subversive images on some of Vivienne’s T-shirts, they were also impounded by the Chelsea police (Westwood and Kelly 155).

Like many forms of economic activity, Drake’s study shows that creative workers also exploit local traditions, reputations and narratives and use this in the designs, manufacture process or as a form of product branding (520-521). The diversity of responses in this category is diverse: creative workers may exploit the reputation of the locality or specialised creative districts; use place to live up to the same quality and aesthetic standards; the locality may provide perceived validity and authenticity; or creatives exploit a socially constructed local identity and perceive this as a creative resource.

Similar to a number of Drake’s respondents in Sheffield, McQueen also uses the reputations and traditions of his London locality as a stimulus to aesthetic creativity, as well as a marketing tool. McQueen exploits Savile Row’s reputation for excellence in the technical skills of tailoring and producing high quality garments. McQueen references the long-established,

bespoke traditions and excellence in tailoring and cutting that he learned while working on London's Savile Row, which he uses as a foundation for and exploits in his designs: "I come from Savile Row. What I learned at sixteen is that to change menswear, you have to be like an architect; you work on the cut and the proportion" (McQueen qtd. in Watt 19); "working on Savile Row was about getting a basis. Before you can deconstruct a garment, you need to know how to construct one" (McQueen qtd. in Thomas 86). Likewise, one of Drake's Sheffield-based respondents has "a desire to use place-based expectations to inspire design excellence in his own work" and mentions the "very precise work" that "conforms to the standards of workmanship" that the locality is known for (Drake 520-521). Another of Drake's respondents mentions "using the name Sheffield as a flag for our products. . . people remember that it's a town famous for that—we've always used it to support the design and quality thing—it's the quality of the design and by the way they're made in Sheffield [...]" (520). Sheffield and Savile Row are used by Drake's respondents and McQueen in a similar fashion—both being exploited for the known excellence and quality that the locations are known for. Both Drake's respondents and McQueen incorporate quality and aesthetic standards into their designs and products. Sometimes this implies breaking the local traditions and associated rules: "You've got to know the rules to break them. That's what I'm here for, to demolish the rules but to keep the tradition [...]" (McQueen qtd. in Watt 19). Not only does McQueen utilize the skills acquired on Savile Row in his designs, but Savile Row was also part of his being hired by Koji Tatsuno and Romeo Gigli, who were impressed by his previous work experience on Savile Row (A. Wilson 57; Watt 31), the name providing McQueen's work with what Drake calls a "perceived validity and authenticity," of McQueen's know-how of making high quality garments based on bespoke traditions (521)

Alternatively, Westwood exploits a socially constructed local identity and perceives this as a creative resource. She challenges the moral and political reputations and traditions of her London locality and uses forms of youth revolt present in the music and their associated subcultural scenes of, for instance, Kings Road as a way to confront the Establishment. As Westwood tries to push the boundaries of what society and the law deems “acceptable” or not, the Kings Road locality, with a history of working class and radical-left wing politics, provides her with a place she feels comfortable and a place that inspires her. This resembles one of Drake’s respondents who mentioned that “the sense of creating and serving a community, perhaps as much as any aesthetic sense, is the commonest motivation” and therefore preferred a low status location to support the ‘anti-elitist’ or ‘anti-designer’ image of the enterprise.

It is clear that specialised creative districts, such as Savile Row and Kings Road, or the locality itself provide the high-end fashion designer with prompts or stimuli for individual, aesthetic creativity. Westwood uses a socially constructed local identity to challenge old-fashioned, moral and political reputations and traditions, and give her work an anti-establishment image. McQueen, on the other hand, prides himself on his background on Savile Row and uses the reputations and traditions as a stimulus to aesthetic creativity, as well as a marketing tool. Furthermore, the recognition of McQueen’s know-how of making high quality garments based on bespoke traditions, leading eventually to his enrolment at Central Saint Martins, provides him with perceived validity and authenticity. On the other hand, McQueen might have ended up at Central Saint Martins anyway: in a 2004 interview, Joyce McQueen asked her son, “If you hadn’t trained on Savile Row, how would you have entered the fashion industry?” To which Lee answered, “I’d have slept my way there” (Taylor-Johnson).

5.5 Locality-based storytelling

The fifth, and last, locality-based prompts or stimuli I discuss is *Locality-based storytelling*. During the research for this study, I also came across another source of locality-based stimuli present in the literature—a stimuli not mentioned in the theory I used in this thesis. I believe there is an element of locality-based storytelling as a means of creative stimuli present in the work of Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen. For example, McQueen made the following statements about his Central Saint Martins debut collection, *Jack the Ripper Stalks His Victims*:

I had a fascination with Jack the Ripper. My mum's a genealogist and found out that one of the victims had been staying at one of my relative's pubs in Whitechapel. I was ready to solve the whole bloody mystery (qtd. in Thomas 85).

[The clothes were] day into evening wear inspired by nineteenth-century street walkers (qtd. in A. Wilson 77).

The inspiration behind the hair came from Victorian times when prostitutes would sell theirs for kits of hair locks, which were bought by people to give to their lovers. I used it as my signature label with locks of hair in Perspex. In the early collections, it was my own hair (qtd. in Watt 40).

McQueen uses the 1888 story of the infamous serial killer who murdered five prostitutes in east London's Whitechapel district as a source of creative stimuli for his 1992 MA degree

collection. The attributes of this London-based story, the people it involved, such as the prostitutes, and Victorian style clothing are used as a source of aesthetic inspiration: the collection featured Victorian-style corsetry, tight lacing, bustles, and tight-waisted tailored jackets; McQueen used his own hair sewn into the clothes, which was inspired by Victorian-era London prostitutes who would sell their hair to supplement their income; McQueen also distressed the clothing by burning it and adding paper-mâché magazine articles onto it, in order to mimic the frayed and torn second-hand clothes Jack the Ripper's prostitute victims would have been wearing; and red paint was splattered on the clothes to imitate sprays of the prostitutes' blood (Watt 39-41).

While the attributes of this London-based creative stimuli could be considered part of *locality-based social and cultural networks*, since McQueen's mother, her genealogy background, and a relative's Whitechapel pub is mentioned, the story McQueen depicts in his collection is that of Jack the Ripper's victims (what they would have been wearing, how they made an income, the blood splatters left behind from the murders), not a depiction of the McQueen family nor the Whitechapel pub, for example. McQueen was already attracted to the London, Whitechapel-based story of Jack the Ripper, but when his mother discovered a (far-fetched) link between one of the victims and his family, through the Reflections Pub his uncle owned and where young Lee worked, his interest was sparked and he "was ready to solve the whole bloody mystery." Due to this spark of interest, McQueen starts to investigate the narrative but also studies Victorian-era clothing and the life of London prostitutes during Victorian times and weaves their story into his MA collection, as way of storytelling and to tie the various pieces of his collection together. Note that McQueen is not using the historical narrative to brand his products or himself; although McQueen has some inner-demons, he does not want to brand

himself as misogynist, nor as a murderer, nor as violent—"I've seen a woman get nearly beaten to death by her husband. I know what misogyny is! I hate this thing about fragility and making women feel naïve. . . I want people to be afraid of the women I dress" (McQueen qtd. in A. Wilson 32).

Likewise, Westwood also claims to use narratives or stories as a stimulus to the design process and makes explicit reference to the importance of stories to her creative work:

It's not about fashion, you see; for me, it's about the story. It's about ideas (Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 34).

Westwood even explicitly mentions that the stories she uses as stimulus to her designs is more important than the actual design (or "fashion") itself. However, in my analysis of the London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity, I could not find a clear example where a London-based narrative is used as a creative resource. All the examples of Vivienne Westwood I found in the literature that pertain to narratives, stories and individual creativity are more rooted in her anti-establishment image, where she tries to confront the establishment and challenge norms and values with her designs, slogans and motifs. Here, her influences of the French Situationists, anarchy, agitpop, radicalism, rebellion, and, more general, injustice are, as a story, used to make people think.

Conclusively, I believe locality-based storytelling is an additional London-based stimuli that acts as a catalyst to aesthetic creativity for Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen. Westwood specifically mentions the influence and importance of storytelling in her creative output, and McQueen's Central Saint Martins debut collection serves as a strong example of a high-end designer using locality-based storytelling as a means of creative stimuli presented in

their work—which, in my opinion, is not considered part of *locality-based social and cultural networks* or part of product branding in this particular instance. Moving on to the next section of this thesis, Section 5.6, I answer sub-question #2, based on the actor-networks of Vivienne Westwood and Lee Alexander McQueen (Figures 4 and 6)—a product of ANT, where testimonies that link the place, London, to individual creativity are transformed to actor-networks.

5.6 London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity

When looking at the London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity, according to high-end fashion designers Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen, the importance and presence of some locality-specific attributes can be identified. In the text below, I will discuss each found attribute and explain why these attributes are important for the individual creative process and, where possible, I will compare the identified attributes according to Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen with those identified in the literature, in order to answer sub-question #2 of this thesis: “*What are the London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity, according to high-end fashion designers Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen?*”

Tertiary education: Universities and art schools provide a network of creative workers and provide a platform for learning, collaboration, and pooling of ideas. First of all, Westwood and McQueen both depict their passion for dressmaking during their foundation courses, and a wider appreciation of the arts was stimulated by incorporating museum visits in the curriculum. Secondly, both designers made friendships with other creative workers, some who would remain important during their entire career; Westwood met like-minded, music and fashion-loving,

“Mod” and “Teddy-boy” art students—an introduction to the niche music scenes that inspired her ever since; McQueen makes explicit reference to the value of the creative workers he met in university, why he chose them, the collaboration that occurs between them, and the necessity of these creative workers for the success of the McQueen brand. Furthermore, Westwood made important contacts through Malcom McLaren and his university network. Through Malcolm, who intended to remain a student for as long as possible, she had a continuous pool of rebellious, art student friends and ideas.

Museums and other places where art is exhibited, such as galleries, may provide the high-end fashion designer with aesthetic stimuli and material prompts that act on creativity. While in university, both designers are intrigued and inspired by the collections of the various museums found in the proximity; specific reference is made to the South Kensington Museums, including the Victoria & Albert, and the British museum. Westwood details that “her imagination was set alight” while drawing in the British Museum; whereas McQueen reveals how he was inspired and intrigued by the V&A’s collection. McQueen specifically mentions the added value to the nation (and himself) for having access to places like the V&A Museum.

Like museums, *markets and shops* may provide the high-end fashion designer with aesthetic stimuli and material prompts that act on creativity. Both Alexander McQueen and Vivienne Westwood visit markets: during the years observed in my study, I could only find indirect references of McQueen frequenting markets (and buying hideous fabrics as mentioned by Simon Ungless and Bobby Hillson); whereas it is Westwood that turned the hunt for great market finds into a sport. In markets, both in London and elsewhere in the UK, Westwood (and McLaren) find the raw materials, cardigans, rock and roll things, and fifties things, which she then redesigned and sells to clientele who want to buy such products. Besides markets, Vivienne

Westwood searches for rocker and punk material in shops around Kings Road to remodify or finds inspiration in bookshops. Like Westwood, finding material to remodify is something that is corroborated by research (Tokatli 1260, 1267). Where Westwood primarily shops at markets, McQueen refers more to inspiration from materials and stimuli he sees in shops in and around Soho: he, for instance, makes mention of being inspired by Robert De Niro's *Taxi Driver*—a poster he saw in a shop, and being inspired by Valentino's collection when he walked by after work. Additionally, shops and markets can serve as a meeting place for other creative workers or, in general, social life. McQueen explains how, in a bead shop, he was reintroduced to Katy England, a creative worker he previously met while in university and who became “the tweedled-dee to his tweedled-dum.”

Both designers often indicate their London-based *social life*, including *night life* and *music* as one of their main influences. Cities with active nightlife, music scenes and other forms of entertainment, are often seen as buzzing, where there is always something to do, where something is always happening, and a person can feel the energy by being a participant or an observer (such as in Tokatli 1259). Likewise, both McQueen and Westwood refer to their social life, the music and their associated subcultural scenes, as important. For example, the empowered “punk” and gay subculture style McQueen encounters in London gay clubs he visits with friends, which lead to his *Nihilism* collection—or the creative workers he met while on a night out. Moreover, Westwood's passion for “Mod” and “Teddy-boy” music brought her out dancing in dancehalls and pubs in Harrow and the inner-city. While out one night, she met Derek Westwood, got married quickly and was influenced by him in many ways. Later she met her partner, McLaren, through her brother, as they went to art school together. After the birth of Westwood's second son, most of her social life, which she cites as influential to her work,

evolves in and around 430 Kings Road, a shop and meeting place for all sorts of people, famous or non-famous, where Westwood collected ideas, people and started, according to her, the Punk movement there. Working in the Reflection's Pub, a bar in a rough neighbourhood, provided young Alexander McQueen with stimuli from the rough and criminal underground of London, violence, and a connection to one of Jack the Ripper's victims—influences he later integrated in his work.

Westwood refers to Kings Road as the place “where it was all happening,” the place where music, fashion and her other interests met. It is clear that *specialised creative districts*, such as Savile Row and Kings Road, or the locality itself, provide the high-end fashion designer with prompts or stimuli for individual, aesthetic creativity. Being part of these specialised creative districts gives the high-end designer access to the latest fashions and cultural nuances, access to creative workers and their image, reputations and traditions, a source of materials and visual stimuli, but also gives the designer access to customers interested in the products.

Local narratives and stories can be a stimulus to creativity. McQueen uses the story of the infamous serial killer Jack the Ripper as a creative resource for his MA degree collection. In this case, the local narrative is not used to propel the McQueen brand; it is used to depict a story—a story that inspired McQueen—a concept that ties all the individual pieces of the collection together. In essence, the locality is used a means of storytelling.

Less tangible but at least equally important are *the people* in the place—creatives and non-creatives. McQueen and Westwood have credited several creative workers as one of their main influences, such as Malcolm McLaren, who “had been so important to begin with, and was often the initiator of the ideas “(Westwood qtd. in Westwood and Kelly 240) or everything Isabella Blow “does rubs off on you” (McQueen qtd. in Thomas 138), for example. The people

in the place, their activities, their noise, their whereabouts are the “buzz”—the raw energy, where it is all happening—and their combined characteristics and ideas are the ‘zeitgeist’ of the place—the poverty, unemployment and drug-induced environment mentioned by McQueen, or the free love and progressive thinking of the 60s.

Conclusively, the answer to sub-question #2 of this thesis, “*What are the London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity, according to high-end fashion designers Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen?*”, is as follows. Firstly, *Tertiary education* in London provides high-end designers access to a network of creative workers and provides a platform for learning, collaboration, and the pooling of ideas. Secondly, London *museums, markets and shops* provide designers with aesthetic stimuli and material prompts that act on creativity. Third, London-based *social life*, including *night life* and *music*, and *specialised creative districts* also provide prompts or stimuli for individual, aesthetic creativity. Likewise, and finally, *local narratives and stories* and *people* in London are attributes that act as a stimulus to high-end designers’ aesthetic creativity, according to Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen. The following chapter, Chapter 6, contains the discussion and conclusion to this thesis.

6. Discussion and conclusion

In this thesis, I researched the relationship between place and individualised creativity in the creative and cultural industries (CCI). The main goal of this thesis is to contribute to the definition and categorization of the locality-based prompts and stimuli to individual creativity by investigating a sub-sector of the CCI. Therefore, in response to this research objective, this thesis set out to answer the main research question: “*How does locality act as a catalyst for individual creativity, specifically in the domain of high-end fashion design?*”

In order to answer this main research question, I conducted an inductive, qualitative study based on second-hand accounts, where I analysed and compared the perceived, place-based sources of creative stimuli and ideas, as indicated by London-based, 20th and 21st century high-end British fashion designers, Dame Vivienne Westwood and Lee Alexander McQueen—for whom I chose due to their indelible contribution to the British and global fashion industries. Because places, and thus localities, are subjective, imagined and emotional phenomena, as well as subjective and real entities, a place cannot be defined by only considering its geographical borders; the subjective, imagined geography of the place needs to be taken into account. Therefore, as mentioned in the methodology, once I identify the non-human and living actors of the place, I map the qualities of locality that act as a catalyst to individual creativity, in order to depict the spatial scale and extent of the place in the mind of the creative, high-end fashion designer (sub-question #1). Thereafter, I describe the locality-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity (sub-question #2).

In the discussion of this chapter, Section 6.1, the definitions and categorizations resulting from Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen will be compared to the theoretical framework, extending our knowledge of the relationship between place and individual creativity

to the high-end fashion subsector of the creative and cultural industries—specifically, how locality acts as a catalyst for individual creativity in the domain of high-end fashion design. Furthermore, in a larger context, more knowledge of the relationship between place and individual creativity may allow policy makers to focus on the development of creative individuals in a specific place. Following the discussion in the next section of this thesis are the conclusion, recommendations, and limitations and future research.

6.1 Discussion

Besides the four types of locality-based prompts or stimuli for aesthetic creativity as defined in my conceptual framework, my data suggests another type of locality based-stimuli, *Locality-based storytelling*. Therefore, this thesis discusses five types of locality-based prompts or stimuli used by high-end fashion designers, which can be categorised as:

1. *Locality as a resource of visual raw materials and stimuli can act on individual creativity*, where specific visual prompts and signs, such as architectural objects, shops, museums, and natural landscapes, or ‘raw materials,’ produce motivation and inspiration for the design process (Drake 518-519). This category has been confirmed by Felton and Collis for creative workers in sub-urban localities (186-188) and confirmed by Tokatli for the high-end fashion subsector, where markets are mentioned as a creative resource (1260). Likewise, high-end fashion designers, like McQueen and Westwood, acknowledge creative stimulation from visual raw materials that can be found in the locality. Unlike many of Drake’s interviewees, in my study, Westwood and McQueen do not really mention the local visual environment itself as a stimulus to creativity; instead, these London-based high-end fashion designers indicate being inspired by visual prompts and material contained within the locality. Likewise, Drake observed that digital creative workers did not use the local visual environment as a stimulus to creativity;

instead, due to the nature of their work, these digital designers use online visual prompt and stimuli (519). It appears that creative workers often use visual prompts and stimuli that are connected to their industry; where digital designers find inspiration online, high-end fashion designers are inspired by visual and material prompts and stimuli in places where fashion products can be found, for instance, in shops, markets and museums.

2. Locality-based social and cultural networks and activity can act as stimuli to creativity, even if the creative workers are only ‘bystanders’ or ‘observers’ of that activity. Social and cultural interaction and innovation can provide a local environment supportive of and stimulating to the individual creative process. Examples such as the ‘buzz,’ the zeitgeist, or the intensity of contacts in a location can provide the creative worker with proximity and access to the latest fashions and cultural nuances (Drake 519-520). Whereas Felton and Collis mentioned creative workers in suburban localities choose to base themselves away from the intense social and cultural interactions, high-end fashion designers are stimulated by these high intensity contacts—McQueen confirms the buzz, which he calls “the raw energy of London” and the gritty, 90s zeitgeist as a creative stimulus, and Westwood refers to Kings Road as the place “where it was all happening.” Likewise, Tokatli mentions the importance of buzzing social life and the use of this as a creative resource and influence for the high-end fashion designer (1259). It is clear that social and cultural interaction are important for high-end fashion designers and that they derive creative inspiration from localities where these interactions take place, such as (gay) nightlife, music and associated subcultural scenes, or specialised creative districts.

3. Locality-specific communities of creative workers clearly provide creative stimuli to the creative worker, from Richard Florida (Cities and the 83-84) to Drake (521-522) and other researchers that investigated how communities of creative workers act on creativity (Chapain and

Comunian 725-729; Felton and Collis 185; Collis et al 157). Additionally, Tokatli identifies other creative workers and the collaboration between as important for the high-end fashion designer (1259-1260). Clearly, a community of creative workers is important for peer learning and cooperation and competition, in order to maximize creativity. My findings confirm the existing theory: both McQueen and Westwood acknowledge the important roles of other creative workers in their work, for example, Malcom McLaren, Isabella Blow, and Simon Ungless. McQueen clearly recognises the value these creative workers have on his work, as he “chose these people because they are special and individual, the very best in their own professions” and their creativity “rubs off on you.” It is interesting to note that neither McQueen nor Westwood make explicit reference to competition with other creative workers; the references to collaborations with creative workers from various creative fields, however, are numerous.

4. *Locality as a brand based on reputation and tradition can incite aesthetic creativity, as well as be used as a marketing tool.* For example, artists may be inspired by the widely perceived quality, attention to detail, and/or excellence in the design and manufacture of products that come from a certain place. Additionally, a socially constructed local identity, such as a politically engaged environment or anti-elitist image, can also influence the design process (Drake 520-521). For instance, the products can be branded as “Redcliffe made” (Felton and Collis 186), or the heritage and traditions of specialised creative districts can transcend into the work of creatives (Chapain and Comunian 726). From my study, it is clear that specialised creative districts, such as Savile Row and Kings Road, or the locality itself, provide the high-end fashion designer with prompts or stimuli for individual, aesthetic creativity. McQueen emphasises his background on Savile Row and uses the reputations and traditions of this place as a stimulus to aesthetic creativity, as well as a marketing tool. Furthermore, the recognition of

McQueen's know-how of making high quality garments based on bespoke traditions provides him with perceived validity and authenticity. On the other hand, Westwood uses a socially constructed local identity to challenge the moral and political reputations and traditions which give her work an anti-establishment image.

5. According to my study, *locality-based storytelling can be a source of stimuli to individual creativity*—a stimuli not mentioned in the literature. However, for his Central Saint Martins' debut collection, *Jack the Ripper Stalks His Victims*, McQueen uses the local narrative or story of Jack the Ripper as way of storytelling and to tie together the various garments of his collection. Here, McQueen is not using the historical narrative to brand his products or himself; he does not want to brand himself as a murder, nor make the association between himself and Jack the Ripper, as this has negative connotations, such as violence and misogyny.

6.2 Conclusion

Based on my spatial analysis of the attributes of locality that act as a stimulus to individual creativity, I conclude that like the creative workers themselves (Florida, *The Rise of; Cities and the*), the attributes of the locality conducive to the creative process are also clustered, especially nightlife, shops, markets and museums, which tend to be clustered in and around the inner-city. It is important to realise that where creative workers base themselves is not the same as locality-based stimuli to creativity. My spatial analysis of both high-end fashion designers also shows that the locations where these designers lived, during the ten-year timeframe observed in my study, tends to be further away from the gravitational centre of the attributes of locality that stimulate individualised creativity. For McQueen and Westwood's living situations, other factors, such as funds, appear to be more important than the creative attributes of the location.

My analysis of the London-specific attributes that act as a stimulus to individual creativity shows that an important attribute for the high-end fashion designer is tertiary education, both designers made contacts with other creative workers that remained important during the rest of their career. Westwood was also able to use the network of Malcolm McLaren while he was enrolled in university. Besides a network of creative workers, tertiary education provides the high-end fashion designer a platform for learning, collaboration, and the pooling of ideas. Museums, markets and shops that are available in the locality provide aesthetic stimuli and material prompts that act on creativity. Social life, including night life and music, is often clustered in the specific districts and, besides a platform for meeting other (creative) individuals, also provide prompts or stimuli for individual, aesthetic creativity. Westwood, especially, mentions the importance of music and the associated scenes as important and as a creative stimulus to her designs. Tokatli also mentions the importance of tertiary education, museums, social life, shopping opportunities and (creative) people as attributes that are prompts or stimuli for individual, aesthetic creativity in high-end fashion (1258-1260). My study on Westwood and McQueen confirms the findings of Tokatli. I have not found other studies that focus on the high-end fashion subsector of the CCI that mention specialised creative districts, but my study shows that such attributes provide prompts or stimuli for individual, aesthetic creativity. Drake, in his study of the relationship between locality and individual creativity, does mention the importance of such districts (520-521). Therefore, I conclude that the locality-based attributes, such as tertiary education, museums, shopping opportunities, creative districts and (creative) people, act as a stimulus to individual, aesthetic creativity—not only for the creative worker, but also for the high-end fashion designer. Although not confirmed by other CCI studies on the relationship

between place and creativity, my study also shows that local narratives and stories may act on creativity.

Finally, in the domain of high-end fashion design, locality acts as a catalyst for individual, aesthetic creativity in several ways. First, locality can be a resource of visual raw materials and stimuli. Specific visual prompts and signs, such as shops, markets, museums, or more general ‘raw materials,’ produce motivation and inspiration for the design process. Although similar to Drake (518-519) and Felton and Collis (186-188), high-end fashion designers do not mention the visual environment of the locality itself as a stimulus to creativity; instead, the designers of my study are inspired by visual prompts and material contained within the locality, which correspond to the findings of Tokatli (1260). Second, locality-based social and cultural networks and activity may stimulate the high-end fashion designer. Local social and cultural interaction provides the high-end fashion designer with environments that support or stimulate individual creative processes. My study confirms the buzz and zeitgeist mentioned in many of the studies on the relationship between place and creativity (Drake 519-520; Florida, *Cities and the* 64-65; Tokatli 1259). Third, locality-specific communities of creative workers may act as a prompt or stimuli to creative workers. As many sources on the creative industries as a whole (Florida, *Cities and the* 83-84) to studies on creative individuals (Drake 521-522; Chapain and Comunian 725-729; Felton and Collis 185; Collis et al 157) have identified prompts and stimuli to creativity derived from communities of creative workers, my study is no exception. Clearly, also for high-end fashion designers, communities of creative workers are important for peer learning and cooperation, in order to maximize creativity. An interesting finding of my study is that fashion designers do not seem to mention competition between workers as a stimulus to creativity, something all of the previously mentioned studies do

mention. Fourth, locality may be used as a brand based on reputation and tradition and stimulate creativity. From my study, it is clear that specialised creative districts or the locality itself provide the high-end fashion designer with prompts or stimuli for individual, aesthetic creativity, and that the designers use this as a form of branding. This corresponds to the findings of Drake (520-521) and Chapain and Comunian (726), as the heritage and traditions of specialised creative districts are visible in the work of the fashion designers I studied. And last, locality-based storytelling or the use of local narratives can be a prompt or stimuli to individual creativity. Important here is to emphasise the difference with locality as a brand based on reputation and tradition, as in such instances it is the use of the local story or narrative in the designs themselves and not a way of branding or to market the products. I have not found any reference to locality-based storytelling or narratives in the literature; however, the use of Jack the Ripper in one of McQueen's collections is used to depict a story, something to connect the individual pieces of a collection—not, per se, to brand himself and set him apart from the competition.

Whereas most spatial theory concerned with the CCI treats the relationship between place and creativity as a collective process (such as Scott; Rantisi; or Florida), it is only Drake who attempts to identify and define how locality acts as a catalyst to individual creativity. Theorizing this relationship between locality and individualised creativity, my study confirms that also for the high-end fashion designer, as part of the CCI, the locality provides the creative worker with prompts and stimuli that act on individual, aesthetic creativity. Although Drake's study is based on interview data, whereas, this thesis uses ANT as means for the data collection, the results are comparable: my study also confirms the importance of the environment, social and cultural networks, communities of creative workers, and reputations and traditions as stimuli to individualised creativity. As my study on high-end fashion confirms the broad categorization of

Drake, based on craft metal and digital workers, this may be interpreted as an improvement of the reliability of the proposed stimuli.

However, the differences are in the details. My study objects do not mention the local visual environment itself as a catalyst to individualised creativity; instead, these London-based high-end fashion designers indicate being inspired by visual prompts and material contained within the locality, for instance, in shops, markets and museums. Likewise, Drake observed that digital creative workers did not use the local visual environment as a stimulus to creativity; instead, due to the nature of their work, these digital designers use online visual prompts and stimuli (519). It appears that creative workers often use visual prompts and stimuli that are connected to their industry; where digital designers find creativity online, high-end fashion designers are inspired by visual and material prompts and stimuli in places where fashion products can be found.

Another difference with Drake is locality-based storytelling, which I classify as an additional category of stimuli to individual creativity. The main difference is that in this category, the local narrative or story is not used to brand one's products, but to use the narrative as a part of the design process other than branding, for instance, to tell a story that is part of the product or to tie various components of a collection together. Yes, this can be seen as a form of branding or a way to differentiate from the competitors, but that would also imply that the use of the other categories of stimuli as defined by Drake are a way to brand oneself.

6.3 Recommendations

On the basis of my research, not only I can draw out some general conclusions about the relationship between locality and individualised creativity of the CCI and the high-end fashion subsector, but in a larger context, more knowledge of the relationship between place and

individual creativity may allow policy makers to focus on the development of creative individuals in a specific place..

Florida, observing the higher-than-average wages of his sample, argues that policy makers should attract the ‘creative class’ by fostering ‘bohemian enclaves’ of creativity (*Cities and the* 113-128). Based on my study, I argue that instead of attracting the rich creative class, policy makers should focus on the development of creative individuals in a specific place. Both Westwood and McQueen were still struggling financially during the first ten years of their career and, at times, were unable to pay rent and had to move in with friends or relatives. Later in life, once they had their creative success, McQueen and Westwood could choose where to locate themselves.

I argue that in order to develop creative individuals, policy makers should focus on the following. *Access to cultural resources*—both designers mention the value of cultural places, such as museums, to themselves and the population at large. When such cultural institutions ask a high admission price, young creative workers, at the start of their career, could be left without these valuable attributes of locality and miss out on the creative stimuli such a place can bring. *Access to education*—besides stimulating an interest for and know-how of dressmaking and a wider appreciation of art, both McQueen and Westwood made important connections during the time they were enrolled in tertiary education. Many of the creative workers they met while in art school remained important throughout their career. With rising costs of education, the accessibility of such institutions is under pressure, and this could leave out many potential, successful creative workers who cannot afford such education. *Foster specialised creative districts*—both designers acknowledge the important role such districts have had on their creative development. Work experience on Savile Row provided McQueen with several skills

and knowledge of time-honoured traditions and reputations which he utilised throughout his career. Westwood was greatly involved in and inspired by the youth music scenes during her young adult life. *Housing affordability*—pressure on housing prices may force the creative workers out of their communities (Florida, *Cities and the* 172). Although McQueen and Westwood did not have to leave their communities due to their financial situations, both had to move to apartments more removed from the creative attributes of the London locality, which made access to these creative stimuli more difficult.

6.4 Limitations and future research

Drake leaves the possibility open that other sub-sectors of the CCI may offer different locality-based stimuli, and further studies may improve the reliability of the proposed stimuli (523). My study of the high-end fashion sub-sector filled this research, and I believe my study has scholarly relevance, as my research findings correspond, to a certain degree, to the identified literature. However, all studies have their limitation, and my study is no exception.

In my thesis, I only considered the first ten years of both Vivienne Westwood and Alexander McQueen's career (or fashion trajectory)—a choice made due to a strict timeframe and due to the critiques on the ANT method used. One of the critiques is that data produced with ANT can be too descriptive, and the number of actors in the network(s) is potentially infinite. Also, there is a fluidity and multiplicity of actors (Cresswell et al. 3-5), as actors may play multiple roles in multiple networks and at multiple moments in time. Therefore, my data collection of both designers was limited to the first ten years of their fashion trajectories, and the primary focus of the data collection and analysis is on the research question and wider study aims. This choice may have limited the fluidity of the identified networks, as well as limit the detachment of stimuli from their original locality as one's focus becomes more global due to

success (Tokatli 1266). However, only considering the first 10 years of the careers of the selected designers did limit the data available on Vivienne Westwood, as in comparison to Alexander McQueen it took Westwood longer to become a fashion designer into her own much longer. This has somewhat limited the possibilities to link the identified prompt and stimuli to her creative work, as during the observed timeframe she did not produce her first full collection “Pirate” until March 1981. Including her full career would have made it easier for me to link the identified stimuli to her designs.

This thesis only assessed the London-locality. As both Westwood and McQueen worked, lived, and travelled to other places, further research that includes these places may expand the defined categories or offer different prompts and stimuli to individual creativity. Furthermore, the high-end fashion design subsector of the CCI includes more than only fashion designers, including, for instance, textile designers, seamstresses, and milliners, which could lead to different categorisations of the prompts and stimuli found in a locality that influence individualised aesthetic creativity. In general, additional research that links creativity to place within additional sub-sectors of the creative industries and different locations could further expand our knowledge and the literature on creativity, creatives and places. For, in the words of poet Daphne Gottlieb:

Place is everything. Either you are home or you are not. Either you are on one side of the equator or the other. Either you are safe or. [...] So she sings the song of the machine and the machine sings my blood and swallows, my hands, my heart, the swallows will bring me home when it is time to rebuild; place is everything, you can never go back. There are dragons out there. (Gottlieb, lines 48-50, 56-59)

And so, it is here where this journey, this thesis, stops—where I must end my study of place-based creativity and designers’ stories woven in between. I followed rivers and roads and found that people, places and things do, indeed, stimulate creativity in the mind of high-end fashion designers. Artists and designers matter. Places matter. Creativity can be found there. Age-old traditions, nature and man-made marvels, cultures within cultures, networks of people, and stories can be sewn into the seams of fashion. For mere clothing, it is not. Fashion can be a product of places, where the stories of maps and legends can be found there.

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