

**The hunting of the fashion city: rethinking the relationship between fashion and the urban in the twenty-first century**

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## **Abstract**

This paper argues that a focus on the idea of the “fashion city” can prove counter-productive in thinking about the relationship between fashion and urbanism. We suggest four provocations about the “hunt for the fashion city”. First, we argue that the hunt for a singular fashion city is misguided, and seek to move away from a model set by a limited number of established fashion capitals. In particular we propose a “field” of fashion city types, an approach that both acknowledges the diversity of relationships between fashion and cities, and recognises the different paths that cities have taken. Second, we ask for new maps in the hunt for the fashion city, seeing cities as nodes in wider fashion geographies, and arguing for more extensive and complex cartographies of sites and roles of fashion within cities. Third, we argue that the focus on the “fashion city” gives an inappropriate priority to fashion, and ask whether we are better served by thinking about how fashion works in imperial cities, authoritarian cities and neoliberal cities. Finally, we ask whether the “the fashion city” and particularly the relationship between great metropolises and fashion authority has a particular periodization, and whether our quest might shift in the twenty first century to think about the wider systemic nature of fashion urbanization.

Keywords: fashion city, fashion capital, ideal types, urbanization, geography.

## 1. Introduction

Let us start with a provocation, certainly in a special edition of *Fashion Theory* that seeks new perspectives on “the fashion city”. Perhaps, just perhaps, using this term gets in the way of critical thinking about the changing relationships between fashion and cities. If we are not quite in the world of Lewis Carroll’s *The Hunting of the Snark*, the hunt for “the fashion city” shares some qualities of that fruitless quest through language and meaning. However, unlike Bellman’s crew, our problem is not so much an emptiness into which we project our imaginative ideas about the nature of the Snark, as an over-powerful sense of what the fashion city is and should be. In many ways, those places variously termed “fashion capitals” or “fashion’s world cities” shape both our explicit and implicit expectations about the fullest expression of fashion’s relationship with cities. When we talk of “the fashion city”, our discussions are shot through with traces of Paris or New York, particularly in their twentieth century formations, as very particular sites and containers of the fashion process. These cities (and a very limited number of other examples) combined high-end design, globally significant collections, shows and event, manufacturing, skilled finishing, spectacular retailing and consumption, and media that promote these cities as a central site of the fashionable (Jansson and Power 2010; Skivko 2013).

The temptation is to measure other cities against this template, and to hunt for the fashion city in microcosm in smaller cities, or for emergent or potential fashion capitals for the twenty-first century. What we explore here is how we might change the hunt for the fashion city from this model, and to think differently about the relationship between fashion and cities. To do this we set out four further suggestions about how we might change that hunt. First, we argue that the hunt for a singular fashion city is misguided, and suggest a move from a model set by the ‘usual suspect’ fashion capitals. In particular we propose a “field” of fashion city types, an approach that both acknowledges the diversity of relationships between fashion and cities, and that recognises the different paths that cities have taken historically. Second, we suggest that we need new cartographies or maps in the hunt for the fashion city. We argue for the importance of thinking about cities as nodes in wider geographies, and that we need more extensive and complex cartographies of the sites and roles of fashion within cities. Third, we argue that the focus on the “fashion city” gives an inappropriate priority to fashion. We suggest that it is important to think about how fashion is imbricated in other kinds of approaches to the city. How for example, is our understanding of the relationship between fashion and urbanism changed by thinking about imperial cities, authoritarian cities and neoliberal cities. Finally, we ask whether the “the fashion city” and particularly the relationship between great metropolises and fashion authority has a particular periodization. Perhaps in the twenty-first century we might need to hunt for new ways of thinking about fashion and urbanization.

## 2. Stop hunting for *the* fashion city.

We need approaches that both acknowledge the diversity of relationships between fashion and cities, and that recognise the different paths that different cities take. We need approaches that break the grip of what we might describe as a particular urban fashion formation on the ways that

we analyse the fashion city. An extreme example of this kind of thinking can be found in the economic geographer Allen Scott's (2002) paper on strategies to shift Los Angeles into the front-rank of fashion's world centre, which runs through a composite check-list of different dimensions of the fashion city. We have argued elsewhere that even in 2002 this proposal was as much an attempt at time-travel as restructuring, seeking to make LA more like what New York, Paris and London were fast ceasing to be (Gilbert 2013).

While Scott's suggestions did at least consider a wide range of aspects of the nature of fashion, including design, manufacturing networks, media, events and place-specific symbolic qualities of the city, other approaches to the fashion city over-emphasise one particular aspect of the fashion system. This is particularly evident in approaches that treat fashion design as an example of a creative industry (CIs), and the central activity of fashion cities (Hu and Chen 2014). There are many examples of local CIs-oriented policies that have invested in fashion design industries for the promotion of urban growth, creativity and cultural distinctiveness (Wenting 2008). These strategies have mainly focused on the development of "fashion districts", where a variety of actors and institutions like specialist manufacturers, educational institutions and suppliers are concentrated, on the adoption of "slow fashion models" focusing on small-scale production, artisanal techniques and local resources, as well as the use of brand channels for enhancing the value of local fashion design industries (Leslie, Brail and Hunt 2014; Rantisi and Leslie 2015; Aakko 2018). For example, local governments in Johannesburg (Rogerson, 2006), Auckland (Larner et al. 2007), Toronto (Leslie and Brail 2011), Copenhagen and Stockholm (Melchior 2011) have allocated significant resources to the development of fashion design clusters with the aim of promoting their creative economy and fostering economic growth.

In such formulations other aspects of fashion become secondary. There is a danger here, that an older form of writing about fashion cities, that highlighted the genius of individual designers and their relationship with the *genius loci* of a city (Santagata 2004; Tokatli 2011), is translated into the language of networks, clusters and urban milieu (Boontharm 2015). Manufacturing, retailing, education, consumption and other aspects of fashion are reduced to factors that support the success of the design industry, while synergies and co-location with other creative industries become keys to success.

What if we didn't seek a single type of fashion city, whether matching the characteristics of the great historic centres or as creative design clusters, but instead thought more about different ways that fashion and urbanism intersect? One way of exploring this is highlighted by the work on "second-tier" or "not-so-global" fashion cities (see, e.g., Rantisi 2011; Skov 2011; Larner, Malloy and Goodrum 2007). Such work moves away from measuring Antwerp, Toronto, Auckland and other cities against the models set by established global centres to think about the distinctive kinds of fashion formation possible in smaller cities in particular economic and cultural contexts. The promotion of such cities often emphasises their distinctiveness from the characteristics of the great fashion centres. Some forms of elite fashion consumption and tourism, notably in the world-view of publications such as *Monocle* actively encourage a hunt for the undiscovered fashion city, searching for a combination of design and geographical novelty off-the-beaten track. (See for example *Monocle's* promotion of the fashion scenes in Beirut, Cartagena, Honolulu and other unexpected cities. See [monocle.com](http://monocle.com))

In recent work, we have suggested an alternative, that it may be best to think of fashion cities in terms not of a fixed list of attributes, but as a *field* of different possible urban fashion formations (Casadei 2018; Casadei and Gilbert, 2018). Our suggestion uses Weberian ideal types as a heuristic device. Ideal types are mental constructs that, as Weber suggested, are created through a one-sided analytical ‘accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct’ (Weber 1949: 90). For Weber the utility of this “one-sided accentuation” came from judgements about how closely real-world examples approach these constructions. We used this method to construct ideal types of the “manufacturing fashion city”, “the design fashion city” and “the symbolic fashion city”; these are not types where solely manufacturing, design or symbolic production of fashion take place, but are types where those aspects of the fashion system dominate (and it might be suggested for example that the kind of fashion city aimed for in the CCI literature approaches our ideal type of “the design fashion city”).

Recognising the complexity of fashion and its relationship with urbanism, this analysis does not just put cities into these different groups and think about how closely they fit these ideal types. Instead we use the types as the corners of a triangular conceptual diagram, defining a field of fashion city types. As a heuristic device we can then discuss how we appropriately position urban fashion formations in this field. Thus the “classic” modern fashion capitals of Paris and New York with their complex, multi-faceted fashion economies and cultures occupy positions close to the centre of the diagram. Other urban fashion formations are positioned more towards one corner of the diagram. It can for example be argued that London, which has seen the biggest decline in manufacturing of fashion’s major centres (Evans and Smith 2006), which has a significant but relatively small fashion design sector (certainly as compared with Paris, New York or Milan), but which has important fashion media, events, place-specific fashion cultures and histories, and strong fashion-related cultural and educational institutions, sits much closer to the symbolic fashion city corner. The diagram can also help us to think through and visualise changes in urban fashion formations over time, and we include suggestive pathways for the major fashion centres. For most established fashion centres, the offshoring of manufacturing and the development of fast fashion production systems has not only reduced the volume of garments produced but has also weakened the significance of local flexible production and led to the loss of local craft skills. Such changes shift the nature of fashion city (and on the diagram are associated with moves downwards away from the top corner).

Other cities are positioned as representations of their twenty-first century formations. So, for example, Johannesburg and Toronto are positioned in the bottom left corner of the diagram due to the significant resources these cities have allocated to the growth and consolidation of fashion design clusters as part of Cls-oriented policies (Rogerson 2006; Leslie, Brail and Hunt 2014). Antwerp and Barcelona are positioned in the bottom right corner because of their emphasis on city branding processes that have prioritised events, fashion tourism, shopping activities, and museums initiatives rather than production or design (Chilese and Russo 2008). Those cities positioned near the top of the diagram (e.g., Mumbai, Shanghai) have a reputation for being manufacturing hubs, where firms from cities in advanced countries have offshored production processes. Berlin, Copenhagen and Amsterdam occupy positions close to the bottom centre of the diagram because of their further investments in events (particularly fashion weeks) that significantly contribute to the promotion of

local fashion design sectors (Melchior 2011; McRobbie 2013). Similarly, Los Angeles and Florence are closer to the top centre of the diagram due to the growing significance of events (e.g., Pitti Uomo, LA Fashion Week) aimed at showcasing local production and enhancing the reputation of these cities for manufacturing (Williams and Currid-Halkett 2011; Casadei 2018).

The diagram provokes questions about new fashion cities, particularly those closely associated with growing manufacturing sectors. What we are not claiming is that there is a kind of unilinear “modernization” of the relationship between fashion and cities, marking a progression from manufacturing through design and on towards symbolic fashion cities. However, the position near the manufacturing corner of both historic centres and emergent fashion centres invites a number of questions. It asks us to think about the relationships between manufacturing and other elements of the fashion system in different periods. It also invites us to think comparatively about the historical and potential future pathways of fashion cities, particularly in a context where urban geographies of design and symbolic production are strongly embedded elsewhere.

*Insert Figure 1 around here*

### **3. Get better maps to hunt down the fashion city**

There is a danger that many accounts of fashion cities have a very circumscribed sense of their geographies. Certainly, this is true in more popular accounts of the great fashion centres, where the focus is on specific design houses, on shows and performances, on designer stores and fashion consumption in certain streets and districts, and sometimes on particular street cultures. We get a different sense of the fashion city, however, if we look for different cartographies and rethink their spatialities.

The first of these thinks of fashion cities as part of extended networks and systems, a common-place observation in human geography and urban studies, but an aspect which still gets underplayed in fashion studies. To be sure, there is recognition that major fashion centres are tied into networks and systems of competition and sometimes complementarity. The pattern and timing of major fashion events and shows is indicative of this kind of system and interrelationship. In a much more sophisticated way, Nancy Green’s classic study of the relationship between the fashion cultures and economies of Paris and New York indicates how the character of a fashion city may be bound up with changes in other cities (Green 1997). The paths that we identify in our diagram are not independent; as well as the influence of wider forces such as offshoring and deindustrialisation, there are opportunities and pressures created by changes in other cities.

Green’s study was also exemplary in thinking about cities as nodes in networks of flows, particularly of skilled populations. The garment industry in the great fashion cities was an “industry of passage”, dependent on migration not just for cheap labour, but for specialist skills, influences and fashion innovation. Green quotes the art-critic Charles Richards praising the contribution of Jewish Eastern European migrants to early twentieth-century New York for “the particular genius ... for merchandising, their highly developed individualism, their artistic perception and their thorough

training in the craft of tailoring” (Richards 1922, quoted in Green 1997, 189). We can broaden this to think about the positioning of particular cities in flows of goods, ideas, money, as well as different kinds of people, including designers, entrepreneurs, in addition to skilled and exploited migrant labour. For example, our conceptualisation of the fashion city changes if we adopt what Ian Cook described as a ‘follow-the-thing’ methodology (Cook 2004).

A heightened awareness of issues such as fashion sustainability, fair trade, and the working and living conditions of garment workers has seen this methodology becoming more and more significant in thinking about the geographies of fashion. At one level, this changes our map of the fashion city from a contained space of creativity and distinctive consumption cultures into a point in a journey from raw materials to consumer. Our attention is drawn to what changes and how as fashions move through this spatialized system. At another level, this method draws attention to the power of the idea of the fashion city in commodity fetishism, and in the obscuring of knowledge about the sources and routes of garments. Paris fashions, New York fashions, London fashions are place-brandings that distract from a more holistic understanding of the geographies of fashion. As Louise Crewe has argued powerfully, following-the-thing thinking is a strategy to counteract what she describes as the “disassociating” effects of the geographical positioning of luxury brand in global cities. Our understanding of the fashion city is changed if for example, we “flesh out” the “commodification of animal parts across a range of integrated spaces ... from the crocodile, fox and mink farms of Russia, Norway and the USA, and the python farms in South East Asia, via global tanneries and manufacturing plants in China, Malaysia, Singapore and Bangladesh, to the flagship stores of Louis Vuitton, Hermes, Gucci, and Prada in global cities, and on to the bodies of the wealthy super-rich in world fashion capitals ... ” (Crewe 2017, 47).

Our cartographies of the fashion city can be extended and enriched internally too. Christopher Breward (2006) has written of the “front” and “back” spaces of fashion cities, drawing on Irving Goffman’s ideas about identity and social performance. Breward shifted attention from the conventional geographies of post-war London, of Mayfair couture, new boutiques, and the King’s Road and Carnaby Street, towards the back spaces of the fashion city, not just the East End manufacturing sector, but also the small finishing workshops off the West End, the sites of wholesale warehouses, and the changing geographies of transport and supply.

That decentring of the internal maps of fashion cities is taken a step further in Cheryl Buckley and Hazel Clark’s recent book *Fashion and Everyday Life: London and New York*. At first sight, this is yet another story of the usual suspects, another survey of the history of two of fashion’s world cities. Yet what we find are strangely unfamiliar fashion cities, with attention paid as much to the suburbs or working-class districts as to Fifth Avenue, Bond Street or either of the Chelseas. Buckley and Clark pick up on the theorisations of the everyday in the work of Michel de Certeau, Henri Lefebvre and Walter Benjamin, and this changes the map of the fashion city. Focus shifts from the familiar fashionable places to thinking about the habitat and habitus of the fashionable masses in these cities, and particularly on the decisions and pleasures of new kinds of consumer that emerged in the twentieth century.

#### 4. Hunt for the *more-than-fashion city*

One of the strengths of thinking about fashion and everyday life is the way that such ideas help us to escape the fashion bubble, and to think about how fashion sits alongside other aspects of urban living. A danger of hunting for the fashion city, is that we fail to understand the significance of fashion precisely because we are so preoccupied with fashion itself. Cities are of course never mere containers for fashion, and we can argue that it might be better to shift towards thinking about, for example, fashion in the history of cities, rather than the fashion histories in cities. Rather than hunt for the fashion city, perhaps one aim of our work should be to think about the significance of fashion as just one thread in a complex weave of cultural, social and economic changes within a city.

The terms “fashion capital” and particularly “fashion world city” can be read in two ways. One mode concentrates attention on fashion systems and the hierarchical nature of the fashion industry itself. But another mode focuses attention on the way that fashion sits within wider urban systems and how it relates to the changing nature of major urban centres. For example, thinking about the long-term rivalry between fashion’s world cities, necessarily opens up questions about imperial, economic and geopolitical rivalry. Understanding fashion in nineteenth and early twentieth century London and Paris necessarily needs to think about these cities as “imperial cities”, particularly about how the economics and culture of imperial centrality (and anxieties about that status) shaped the nature of fashion. Any credible sense of Paris as, in Benjamin’s words “the capital of the nineteenth century” in the face of its objectively superior cross-channel rival (certainly in terms of economics, population, imperial reach, and political and military power) drew on the soft power of a different kind of centrality in the arts and culture, and in the character of urban life and cityscape (Clayson and Dombrowski 2016). Paris’s claim for fashion leadership was part of that wider promotion of its cultural and aesthetic centrality, and should not be understood in isolation. The later interrelationship and rivalry between Paris and New York fashion also depended on positioning in wider changes to the cultures, geopolitical position and architectures of those cities (Gilbert 2019).

Of course, some of the best work in fashion history has been strongly contextual, thinking about the relationship between fashion and wider urban change. London has been well served in this respect, and Christopher Breward’s *Fashioning London* (2004) and Alistair O’Neill’s *London: After A Fashion* (2007) are important examples of such melding of urban and fashion history, in which there is a strong sense of fashion as one part of wider cultural, social and artistic change. This sense of positioning of fashion as an element in an analysis that has the city as its primary focus is most obvious in times of extreme stress, under authoritarian regimes, during warfare, and in periods of economic disruption. Irene Guenther’s work on fashion in Berlin during the Third Reich and in the aftermath of defeat is not so much a hunt for the fashion city, as an understanding of how fashion was shaped and survived in extremist and extreme urban environments (Guenther 2017).

Our point is that we get a different take on the relationship between fashion and urbanism if we work not through the idea of the fashion city, but start with other ways of conceptualising the city, such as the imperial city, or the global city, or the neoliberal city, and then move to think about how fashion is configured in such frameworks. For example, in thinking about the neoliberal city, attention turns towards fashion’s relationship with urban property markets, inequality, gentrification, the privatisation and surveillance of public space as well as more direct and



immediate changes in the corporate structure and organisation of the fashion industry itself. It is not coincidental that fashion's capitals are among the places most marked by socio-geographic divisions. As even Richard Florida has come to recognise, one of the contradictions of urban boosterism of the creative industries model is that successful cities succumb to hyper-capitalization, often driving the genuinely creative out of the urban spaces (Florida 2017). The fashion economy of the neoliberal world city is very far from the complex and multi-layered formations of earlier fashion capitals.

## 5. Perhaps the hunt is over ...

The power of the idea of the fashion city derives in part from the way that both fashion and the city have been read as key features of modernity, and how both in their modern forms are products of the economic, political and technological changes of the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Breward and Evans 2005, 1-2). In her classic *Adorned in Dreams* Elizabeth Wilson linked the history of fashion and the history of the great metropolises together. Modern fashion was a product of the shift from courtly style to the experience of modern urban life, not just in the development of manufacturing and new shopping spaces, but in the performance of fashion on streets, the significance of the "silent gaze that typifies city life", and "the dreamlike anonymity of the crowds and the inhumanity of a new environment that both fascinated and alarmed." (Wilson 2005, 135) The idea of the "fashion capital" has been a long-running recognition of the significance of certain urban milieu as sources of fashion authority, and a recognition of the importance of metropolitan life, both actual and as a symbolic fantasy, in the fashion system.

But perhaps that formation is coming to its end. There is much focus on the "death of fashion", on the erosion and decline of the structures of the nineteenth and particularly twentieth century fashion systems. The main collections are far less important, and exist more as spectacular events and branding exercises, as significant influences on wider styles and tastes. As Agnes Rocamora has pointed out the "mediatization" of fashion associated with social media profoundly alters the relationship between the consumption of material goods in physical space the consumption of the "photogenic" qualities of digital fashions (Rocamora 2017). The fashion print media is in close to terminal decline and is being replaced not so much by formal online publications, but by a radically transformed fashion social media ecosystem of bloggers, influencers and the opinions of consumers, that is becoming the primary space of performative fashion display (Casadei and Lee, 2020). That dreamlike anonymity of the urban crowd, and the use of fashion to project and protect on the street of the metropolis, is being replaced by new virtual spaces of pleasure and anxiety (Rocamora 2011). While some designer flagship stores in city centres strive to be ever more spectacular and affective experiences of elite fashion, physical fashion shopping across market segments is in sharp decline, increasingly substituted by online shopping.

These developments may not mark the death of fashion, and in many ways indicate an acceleration of fashion cycles and the emergence of powerful new corporate influences on what we wear, what it means, and where and how it is produced. But what is undeniable is that they mark not just fundamental changes in fashion, but also a bookend in its relationship with the modern city. The twenty-first century equivalents of the metropolitan *grand magasins* look increasingly likely to be giant distribution depots in out of town locations. The full multi-dimensional formation of the classic modern fashion city is under threat from many sources. If deindustrialisation and offshoring of

manufacturing was a feature of the second half of the twentieth century, in the past 40 years fashion's great metropolises have experienced a hollowing out of other activities, associated particularly with that hyper-capitalisation of urban property markets. In London, New York and Paris, the kinds of urban interstices that once allowed independent designers, small specialist manufacturers and distinctive boutiques to flourish, have increasingly been eliminated in central and inner-city districts by high rents, property investments and large-scale redevelopment.

In measures of the symbolic power of particular fashion cities, like the content analysis of global print and online media undertaken by *Global Language Monitor*, the usual suspects of fashion's urban hierarchy, Paris, New York, Milan and London continue to appear at the top of lists of fashion cities. The more sophisticated approach of the IFDAQ Global Fashion & Luxury Cities Index uses algorithms and AI to rank 'fashion capitals and emerging cities based on their global market power, work volume, reputation and influence in the industry.' (<http://research.ifdaq.com/cities/>) In some ways the work of Frédéric Godart and his IFDAQ team measures a more rounded version of the fashion city, that still includes data on brands, agencies, print media, events and job opportunities, as well as shifts in online and social media presence. Yet their 'data lake', artificial learning and near real-time sensitivity to the impacts of events, news and advertising reflect the direction of travel and the increasing disconnection from the physical, material realities of cities as fashion ecologies. To be sure, modern fashion has always been as much about mythologies and symbolic production as the making and selling of clothing, but in a world increasingly driven by search terms and algorithms, the ideas of "Paris fashion", "New York fashion", "Milan fashion", "London fashion" have never been so free-floating from the material realities of those places.

The end of the era of the fashion city, an epoch that started in the urban, industrial and consumer revolutions of the late-eighteen and nineteen centuries, is as much about the nature of twenty-first century urbanism as specific changes in the relationship with fashion. As we have become an urban species on an urban planet, the nature of cities and urbanism has been changing profoundly, and perhaps the experiences and influence of the great modern metropolises far less significant. Much of the growth of urban population has been taking place in cities with very different geographies, consumption cultures and politics from those that characterised earlier "fashion cities". China now has over 100 cities with a million or more people, and a huge garment manufacturing industry. Even in Shanghai, the city that many see as most likely to become a new front rank fashion capital reflecting China's twenty first century economic and geopolitical power, the nature of the planned economy and the fashion education system, and the absence of a vibrant independent creative sector are obstacles to the city's development. Shanghai may well come to be routinely described as a new global fashion city, but it will have very different characteristics from earlier centres, or indeed from its own pre-revolutionary identity as the "Paris of the East." (Beward 2020) As Antonia Finnane suggests, the Chinese Communist Party's "Belt and Road" initiative also promotes a different kind of geography of the fashion industry that is about networks rather than elite stand-alone cities: "Fashion in relationship to Belt and Road means routes snaking across Eurasia or down the China coast and around the archipelagos and land masses of southeast and South Asia. Along these routes will flow not only massive quantities of goods but also Chinese culture." (Finnane 2019, 137.)

More generally most urban growth is taking place away from the great metropolises, with implications for their cultural and demographic significance. Where once cities like London, Paris and

New York where at the heart of the urban experience, for millions they are now primarily just tourist destinations or places in the imagination. Roger Keil (2017) has written of a “suburban planet”, suggesting that the urban century manifests itself at the peripheries. This is not simply an argument about sprawl, but an argument about the urban experience, and one that suggests that dynamism and change will increasingly sit outside of the old centres, challenging assumptions about the sites of creativity and cultural change. Even more profound are calls to think about “planetary urbanization”, that suggest that we should think less about people in cities, and more about a global urban society (Brenner and Schmid 2015; Wilson and Jonas 2018). These ideas think about the way that urbanization has planetary reach, and that nowhere on earth sits outside the influence of an urban age. It is a change in our urban imagination that has clear synergies with moves in critical fashion studies away from a narrow focus on elite spaces in a handful of fashion capitals. Instead we find ourselves thinking about the role of fashion in the lives of millions of workers and consumers on an urbanised planet, and particularly about fashion’s environmental and climate consequences (Grose 2019; Taylor 2019; Fashion Revolution 2018). A hunt that starts out looking for fashion capitals and “the fashion city” in our times might better shift to a new quest, to understand the planetary nature of twenty-first century fashion urbanization.

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Caption:

Figure 1. A conceptual model of fashion cities as a field, using ideal types of the manufacturing, design and symbolic fashion city (see text for details). It is a ternary diagram, and the closer a city to each corner, the more closely it fits that ideal type.

