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Future-oriented Characteristics Examined through the Identity and Modernity of Sonia Delaunay's Work

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to derive the future-oriented characteristics Sonia Delaunay presented at the time based on the identity and modernity shown in her works and diverse activity. The scope of study spans from 1907 to the start of World War II and includes both applied and fine arts, with a focus on textiles and fashion. The research method is a literary study that includes old documents, exhibition booklets, and explanations from museum curators. The visual materials are actual works observed at exhibitions and digital images of various exhibitions. As a result of the research, she was a practitioner who expressed her identity in marriage, artwork, textiles, and fashion. In order to embody her design and express modernity, she showed geometric and modern motifs and she incorporated a sense of bright color and modernized light into her work by following the principle of simultaneous contrast in color. Additionally, she applied Hungarian embroidery techniques to simple materials and created geometric abstraction with her simultaneous colors, which contributed to both originality and the mass production of textile design. The future-oriented characteristics she presented are the dynamism of modern rhythm, the expansion of convergence and collaboration, the innovation of new production and exhibition, the media of consumer society, and the femininity of modern life. She recognized the mass consumer society and mass production of the early 20th century and actively utilized various media and genres to evoke a dynamic sense necessary for modern life and presented a design to be seen as a modern woman.

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1. Introduction

Sonia Delaunay (1885–1979) has a long career of 70 years, so there are many studies and various records about her. In overseas research on Sonia Delaunay, Hicks(2015) regard her as multi-talented Delaunay and Carelli (2016) viewed her as a key figure in the Parisian avant-garde who presented diverse works in the fields of painting, fashion, and design. Regarding her fashion, Ferreira (2020) viewed it as closely related to modernity and women's liberation, and specifically, Albritton (2005) studied her first simultaneous dress, and Bellow (2009) studied the modernity of fashion focusing on stage costumes.

Additionally, large-scale special exhibitions of Sonia Delaunay's work have recently been held in major exhibition halls around the world, and she has been called "a recognized master of the Parisian avant-garde and a skilled practitioner of the decorative arts" (Gronberg, 2002, p. 275). However, Sonia Delaunay's achievements were overshadowed by sexism, to the extent that she was introduced as having created highly popular fabrics inspired by her husband's work (Mann, 1996), and her position as the wife of her husband, Robert Delaunay, gave the impression that she was an artistic collaborator, so in-depth research and independent evaluations of her have not been properly conducted.

Other exhibitions include "Maison Sonia: Sonia Delaunay and the Atelier Simultané" at the Haus Lange & Haus Esters Museum in Germany, "Woman Pioneers of Abstraction" at the Sainsbury Center for Visual Arts in the UK, "Sonia Delaunay and the World's Fair in Paris 1937" at the Skissernas Museum in Sweden" and "Women in Abstraction" at the Guggenheim Bilbao in Spain, all taking place in 2022 and 2023, highlighting her contributions and developments in abstract painting and her achievements as a modernist. As such, the reason she has gone from being simply mentioned as one of the avant-garde figures of the early 20th century to being reemerged today is because she is a pioneer who presented and practiced future-oriented modernity by

referring to contemporary issues. However, so far in Korea, many research has been conducted focusing on research from the perspective of Simultanism and Orphism, reflection based on Synthesis of Arts, deriving characteristics from textile design and fashion design, and in detail, the origins of color and modernity. As with other overseas studies, research on her vision from a future-oriented perspective has not been properly conducted. While many artists and designers of the time focused on modernism and were faithful to their work, Sonia Delaunay work her art in addition to presented directions for the future of art as well as fashion through lectures, article, autobiography and writings left behind through interactions with artists.

The content of this study is to examine the identity and modernity that became the basis of her artistic activities. The specific research details are as follows. First, it examines how Sonia Delaunay's identity was reflected in her life, works of art, and textiles and fashion. Second, it examines the way Sonia Delaunay, who has been active in the fields of fine and applied art, implemented designs in terms of her form, color, and materials, and the modernity she showed through this. Thirdly, it is to derive the characteristics contributed by this identity and modernity. The scope of study is the fine arts produced by Sonia Delaunay from 1907, when she began producing her works, until the outbreak of World War II, as well as applied arts with a focus on textiles and fashion. The research method is a literary study examining books and papers related to Sonia Delaunay and a visual data analysis examining her works. Research materials include old documents from *Bibliothèque nationale de France* in Paris, digital images and texts in *Gallica*, and explanations and exhibition booklets from curators of museums that store Sonia's works or were in charge of planning large-scale exhibitions. Old literature includes major periodicals and newspapers of the time such as *The Paris Times*, *L'Amour de l'art* (Figure 1), and *Art et décoration*, as well as lectures and contributions by Sonia Delaunay, her husband, and artist friends. The visual materials are actual works observed at exhibitions held at *Musée*

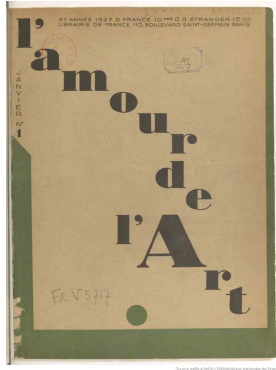


Figure 1. Cover of *L'Amour de l'art*. 1927
(www.gallica.bnf.fr)

National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, in Paris and Tate Modern in London, as well as works encountered through catalogs and digital images of various exhibitions. The purpose of this study is to derive the future-oriented characteristics presented by Sonia Delaunay based on the identity and modernity shown in her works and diverse activity. Furthermore, this study is significant in further solidifying Sonia Delaunay's position as a modernist who left behind differentiated and unrivaled achievements. As a result, this study will contribute to providing data for her reevaluation as well as providing a new perspective on her through her experimental attitude and the works she presented in recognition of the mass consumer society.

II. Sonia Delaunay's identity and artistic activities

1. Early life and identity

Sonia Delaunay(1885–1979) is widely acknowledged as having been born in Odesa, Ukraine, some sources give her birthplace as Gradizka, Ukraine (now Poltava region) (“Sonia Delaunay—Queen of the Twentieth-century Avant-Garde,” n.d.). Her parents were Jewish and had a difficult life, so she was adopted by her maternal uncle when she was 5 years old. Her real name was Sarah Ilinitchna Stern, but she was named Terk after her maternal uncle, Henry Terk. Thanks to her uncle, a

wealthy lawyer, she grew up in St. Petersburg with a good cultural environment and a privileged upbringing. That means she was exposed to art and she also learned several foreign languages. She took a special interest in her mathematics at school. Later she was to say that “color was the hue of number”(Seidner, 1982). she had a memory of her childhood in Ukraine and later mentioned the costumes at a Ukrainian peasant wedding. However, as a person of Jewish descent, she had to move from place to place for fear of being arrested during the war. Because of her middle name, 'Stern', she was at risk of being arrested if the Germans discovered her, but she managed to escape through her ingenuity.

In 1904 she attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Karlsruhe in Germany. After two years, she moved to Paris and enrolled at the Académie de la Palette. She also studied printmaking with Rudolf Grossman (Julio, 1999). In Paris As a Russian immigrant, Sonia was exposed to both French and Russian avant-garde ideas and was able to achieve a radical fusion in her work. she associated with artists including the Dadaist writer Tristan Tzara and the French poet Blaise Cendrars, all of whom later became her collaborators.

In 1908 she married Wilhelm Uhde, a German art dealer and gallery owner. Since he was homosexual and Sonia Delaunay wanted to stay in Paris legally rather than return to Russia, their marriage was a kind of "marriage of convenience". With her husband's support, she was able to hold her first solo exhibition at Montparnasse Galerie Notre-Dame des Champs. Through Uhde's connections She met many artists including Robert Delaunay, who would become her second husband. Sonia wrote of Robert. “I found a poet in Robert Delaunay, A poet who wrote not with words but with colours” (Baron, & Damase, 1995, p. 20). He was her soulmate. She co-founded the Orphism art style, with her husband Robert Delaunay. They were the couple in the Parisian avant-garde. She already has two nationalities, two names, and has been married twice. In other words, considering her birth, growth, and marriage, her identity has aspects that are difficult to define in one word.

2. Identity represented in works of art

“That which, in his childhood, a man has drawn into his blood out of the air of time cannot be taken from him” (Zweig as cited in Montfort & Godefroy (Eds.), 2015, p. 19). Likewise, Sonia Delaunay's memories of her childhood as well as the influences she received from her education and environment are clearly revealed in her works. The work *Jeune Finlandaise, 1907* stands out in blue, which is the color of Russian folk art and is associated with Russian iconography. Looking at the Russian style, the brilliant colors of the 'Russian sense' influenced and contributed to creating very soft and bright works. It also contributed to creating very soft and bright works within her geometric and cold logic (Lee, 1993). Additionally, the floral patterns that appear in the background of *Philomène, 1907* and *Finka, n.d.* represent the culture of Ukraine and Central Asia.

The State Hermitage Museum located in St. Petersburg, where she received her elite education, was a significant influence on her art. Then she married Robert Delaunay and created a type of pure, abstract painting in which color was both form and subject. Sonia is generally known for her contribution to the development of abstract art in the early 20th century. However, her early paintings are reminiscent of Fauvism and Cubism. The work *Yellow Nude, 1908* (Figure 2) seems to be color of Fauvism. Like other artists of her time, she painted female nudes as subjects. It shows a woman with her breasts and buttocks exposed, and her skin also appears to be painted bright yellow, but it doesn't even



Figure 2. *Sonia Delaunay, Yellow Nude, 1908*
(www.images.navigart.fr)

look smooth due to the black angular lines. The woman's face also looks depressed. Overall, bold outlines and intense colors catch the eye. Also, there is no sense of volume in the body. It exudes a blunt and modern feel rather than a feminine charm. Although it is impossible to determine based on her work alone, her gender identity may be related to her androgynous expression that gives it a modern feel. This is because she was rather open about her own sexuality, to the point where her first marriage was to a gay man.

Her monumental work *Prismes électriques, 1914* shows various geometric shapes such as arcs, rectangles, and ovals radiating out from two concentric circles. These concentric circles and arcs also appear on the catalog cover of the Stockholm exhibition held in 1916 (Figure 3). This figure is also a work of art that expresses her identity to the extent that it is called a self-portrait. Circular compositions and swirling arched depictions continued to appear in *Flamenco Singer, 1916* and *Flamenco Dancer, 1916*. Carrie Noland (1999) claimed that the rainbows, arcs, triangles and trapezoids often depicted in Sonia's designs were borrowed from Russian folk art motifs. Buckberrough wrote “the self-portrait series from 1916 does not suggest that the name Sonia is Russian, but she identifies the artist both personally and symbolically. Her circular abstract 'head' is a nest of multicolored semicircles” (Castro, 2015, p. 48). Like this, her environment influence the formation of her aesthetic and Jewish identity. Sonia Delaunay's identity can be found in her early works.



Figure 3. *Sonia Delaunay, Self-Portrait, 1916*.
(www.spectacles-selection.com)

3. Identity in fashion and textiles

"In Petersburg" by Jean-Claude Marcadé and "Paris in Russian" by Sherry Buckberrough show that Sergei Diaghilev, Ukrainian and Russian sewing and craft traditions had a significant impact on Sonia's art. She was reluctant to mention her childhood, but in fact, her colors were influenced by her memories. She particularly described the Ukrainian folk culture of her childhood and the sense she received from the adopted environment of her childhood (Baron, & Damase, 1995). A typical example is a patchwork crib blanket made up of various pieces of fabric. The blanket she sewed for her son Charles in 1911 was a patchwork of irregular squares in pink, cream, green, maroon, and black. This not only shows that Russian peasant crafts influenced her work, but also shows the fusion of Russian folk crafts and Parisian avant-garde. Also, since Russian folk art was popular in Paris at the time due to the performance of the Russian Diaghilev Ballet, she did not hesitate to show that she was inspired by Russia. As such, Sonia was a multicultural multilingual person who is accustomed to translating and changing the ways of expressing her works and creating a new breed (Jamie, 2015).

She was interested in clothing from a young age, but when economic support to her hometown was cut off due to the Russian Revolution, she entered the fields of fashion, textiles, and interior design instead of painting as a means of making a living. She, like Russia's Natalia Gontcharova, designed her costumes for the Ballets Russes. She made tunics, raffia hats, and parasols for the four daughters of the Marquis of Urquijo. The success of her work for the Marquis of Valdeiglesias gained her a wealthy clientele, allowing her to open her Casa Sonia store on Calle Columela in Madrid in 1919. She went so far as to open her own subsidiaries in Barcelona and Bilbao (Stern, 1992).

Her interest in costume, dance and poetry led her to design bold, modern stage costumes for Cleopatra, then complete set and costume design for the play <The Gas Heart, 1923>. Also she designed costume for the films

<Vertigo, 1926> and <Little Parigot, 1926>. As interest in the Dada art movement grows, she also created <Dress-poem(*Robe Poème*)> in collaboration with Tristan Tzara and illustrated the cover of Vogue.

The success of "Fashion Barak," a clothing stand held by Sonia Delaunay at the Grand Bal Travesti-Transmental organized by the Union of Russian Artists in Paris in February 1923, attracted the attention of fur designer Jacques Heim (Stern, 1992). She opened a fashion studio at *boulevard Malesherbes* in 1924. And during the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts held in Paris in 1925, a pavilion called *Boutique Simultanée* was set up where one could buy not only dresses designed by Sonia but also accessories, scarves and fabrics. Figure 4 is a reproduction of Sonia Delaunay's "Boutique Simultanée" from 1925 for the 2011 exhibition "Color Moves: The Art and Fashion of Sonia Delaunay" at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum. In 1925, *Simultanée* was registered as a trademark and brand name in France and the United States. It is such a symbolic term for her that her nickname is 'Mme La *Simultanée*'. In this way, *Simultanée* is not only her artistic spirit, but also represents the atelier and brand and symbolizes her identity. Her Atelier Simultané in Paris presented radical designs such as swimsuit, scarves, shoes, and hats throughout 1920s and 1930s, including the clothes (Carelli, 2016). In the 1920s, Sonia worked mainly for hand-printed textiles and tapestries. Her designs were sold not only in Europe but also in the United States. Although these attempts could be seen as her capitalist attempts to commercialize her own work, she was uneasy about the commercial aspects of her own activities. It can be seen that she temporarily gave up her painting because she suddenly had to earn her living, but we must take into account that this was before her economic problems arose, as in 1913. This situation did not represent any artistic frustration for her. She also expressed her belief that "the October Revolution, the end of our income... we will have to renew contact with society and try to apply our discoveries to the art of decoration and fashion"



Figure 4. *Replication of Boutique Simultané, 2011*
(www.artnet.com)

(“Simultaneous Dresses,” n.d., para. 2). She believed that the world could be changed through her visual art, and it was a brave attempt based on her simultanism. She also hoped to revolutionize culture and communication rather than confine art to museums or exhibition halls.

III. Design implementation method and modernity of Sonia Delaunay

1. Motif and structure of form

In 1927, Marie Dorno wrote about Sonia Delaunay's textile designs in *L'Amour de l'art*. “Fabrics are always surrounded by geometric figures. This is what gives his work a balance and solidity. We find no anecdotes, no easy curves, no monotonous twists and turns. Everything is intended, ordered, and strictly structured. Printed fabrics are the most abundant, at least for now, and the combinations a talented artist can draw of circles, triangles, diamonds, squares, etc. can be endlessly varied” (Gallica, 2020 b, p. 98). According to the description of “Sonia Delaunay's Textiles” introduced in *Art et décoration* in 1926, it can be seen that her geometric forms were not intended simply to express the volume of objects and did not follow Cubism. Geometric forms is the theme that Sonia Delaunay uses to decorate her fabrics. The introduced design examples, 'Bathrobe, printed crepe de chine' and 'Dress hem, printed crepe de chine', are both composed of triangles, diamonds, and

squares (Figure 5) (Gallica, 2011 a. 142). Her textile designs were popular in the fashion world during the Art Deco era of the 1920s. Moreover, these matrix of squares resembles or even anticipates the flow of 20th-century abstraction, from de Stijl and Paul Klee to Barnett Newman and Kenneth Noland (Nathan, n.d.).

At The Menswear Gala held at the Grand Palais in 1927 the geometric features of the triangular pattern are also seen in the men's “Simultaneous fabric” pajamas presented by Sonia Delaunay (Figure 6). On 15 July, *Adam: revue des modes masculines en France et à l'étranger* reported that the success of the Menswear Gala exceeded all our expectations, not only displayed masculine elegance worthy of evaluation, but also received enthusiastic applause (Gallica 2020 a). Geometric forms also appear in the Harlequin jacket, afternoon dress, Gloria Swanson's coat, indoor jacket worn by Jean Coutrot, and swimsuit, which were designed during the late 1920, all housed in the Palais Galliera, *musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris*. Introduced in 1930 as “my little house,” the interior and all furniture were designed with geometric paintings on the walls as a motif. In 1922 gouache painting of an interior scene, both the walls and clothes are geometric shapes. The 1924 scarf featured in *L'Amour de l'art* is also embroidered with triangles and squares.

The structural characteristic of these geometric forms is asymmetry. Rather than shocking with boldness, it adds admiration and enjoyment, and shows a calm boldness. In “the influence of painting on clothing design” Sonia Delaunay mentioned, “They may announce with each new season that geometric designs will soon go out of fashion and be replaced by new designs taken from old patterns. They are in a profound error: geometric designs will never “It's not going to go out of style” (Sonia Delaunay as cited in Stern, 1992, p. 147).

2. Use of color and light

Sonia Delaunay's early works (Philomene, 1907) and (Yellow Nude, 1908) were influenced by Matisse's works that transformed ordinary things into vivid colors,

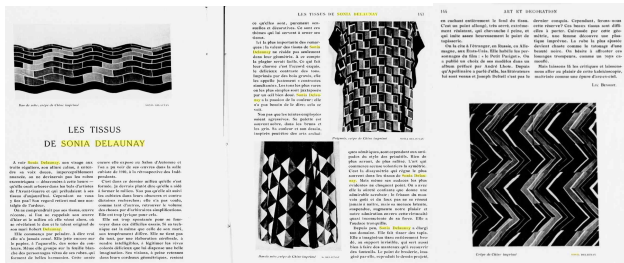


Figure 5. *Sonia Delaunay's Textiles* (www.gallica.bnf.fr)



Figure 6 .*"Simultaneous Fabric" Pajamas* (www.gallica.bnf.fr)

Gauguin's flat color composition, and Van Gogh's intensity of color (Carelli, 2016). However, regarding her colors, according to *L'Amour de l'art* dated January 1, 1927, Sonia Delaunay, who discovered the charm of color that only northerners could discover, wanted to solve the problem of color pursued by previous painters in her own way. She reveals that she was not satisfied with loving colors without discernment, but wanted to use them only with her intuition (Gallica, 2020 b).

She also tried to recreate the impressive glow of the newly installed electric lanterns on the Boulevard Saint-Michel. She sketched quick, semi-circular lines of color in an attempt to translate the way artificial light projected color onto the sidewalk below. Recalling Chevreuil's claims, she demonstrated that light could be created on canvas by manipulating color. In other words, she created the work based on the fact that bright or dark effects can be created depending on the combination of colors. Her color theory is that when contrasting or complementary colors come together in interlocking or overlapping compositions, they enhance each other, adding intensity and vibrancy of color to a painting.

The 1913 work *Le Bal Bullier* consists of patches of vivid primary and secondary colors (Figure 7). This is her work exploring the visual effects of color with her interest in simultaneous color theory and her discovery of ways to intensify color in her work simply by manipulating the placement of color on her canvases. She experimented with 'simultaneity' not only in works of art

but also in the field of decorative arts. She was fascinated by the effect of color created by blankets made by gluing pieces of fabric side by side. This was a figurative work of abstract art based on simultaneous color relationships and her first textile work. The colors in Sonia Delaunay's pattern design are not aggressive, but rather an exquisite harmony and delicious contrast of tones. Her palette is often muted, with browns and grays. Although it is inspired by ancient Semitic art, it is very different from the primitive style (Gallica, 2020 b).

A notable example of color use in fashion design is The first "simultaneous dress" in 1913, worn by Sonia Delaunay and her husband Robert (Figure 8). Robert presented himself dressed in "a purple jacket, a beige vest and black pants" or "a red coat with a blue collar, red socks, yellow and black shoes, black pants, green jacket, sky blue vest, tiny red tie". Sonia was dressed in "a purple suit, a long purple and green belt and, under the jacket, a bodice divided into zones of bright, soft and faded colors, where old pink, tango color, and basket blue mingle scarlet." These outfits caused a sensation and, according to Blaise Cendrars (Stern, 1992, p. 51) From 1910 to the 1930s, black was used in most costume designs. This was inspired by the city's transition from gas lighting to electric lighting in the early 20th century, and uses the primary colors of red, yellow, and blue, seen after passing through a prism, along with black. The contrast of bright, strong primary colors and the use of black not only stand out, but also emphasize each primary color. In addition, black was used to



Figure 7. *Sonia Delaunay, Le Bal Bullier, 1913*
(www.wikiart.org)



Figure 8. *Simultaneous Dress at Tate Modern, 2015*
(taken by author)

further highlight various primary colors to create a dynamic feel (Lee, 2019). As such, she was a modernist polymath who charted the rhythm of color not only in painting but also in textiles and fashion.

Her use of color not only deviated from the traditional way of using color to describe or explain objects, but was also visual and instinctive rather than intellectual and erudite. She also viewed color as the skin of the world, a combination of numbers, and furthermore, that color had its own vitality, so an infinite variety of images were created depending on color relationships and effects. Based on color contrast, "simultaneity" left painting and entered the world of objects to flourish "in all situations of life." However, in 1927, in "The Influence of Painting on Fashion," Sonia noted that the study of these new color relationships, full of as yet undiscovered mysteries, was only at the beginning (Stern, 1992, p. 147). It means that color needed to be enriched and further developed.

3. Materials and techniques

Typically, paintings are drawn using various paints on paper or fabric and are two-dimensional. These are made using materials such as pencil, charcoal, ink, watercolor, oil paint, and acrylic paint. In addition to painting materials, Sonia Delaunay experimented with materials such as sand, mosaic, and lacquered stone. Her work in the field of decorative arts such as painted

furniture or lampshades, oil on wood toy box or equestrian shoes allowed her to use a variety of fabrics and introduce new techniques. Sonia participated in the Salon d'Automne held in Der Sturm, Berlin in 1913. She appeared with an exhibition of five paintings, collage bindings, paint boxes and abstractly titled textiles. Her radical work baffled critics. The clothing and homewares she designed were made from fabric combinations of various colors and materials. In 1911, she created a patchwork quilt for her son to place on his bed. It was sewn using traditional Slavic techniques from pieces of fabric similar to those seen in the homes of Ukrainian peasants. The fabric manipulations were arranged in a way reminiscent of Cubism. She attempted to apply this work process to paintings as well as other objects (Arscott, & Scott, 2000).

Simultaneous dress by Sonia Delaunay is juxtaposed taffeta, tulle, pilou, moire and silk poul. This was made up of a variety of fabrics, but the variety did not go unnoticed. Rather, it seems to have added fantasy to elegance (Gallica, 2008). The fabric shown previously in Figure 5 is printed crepe de chine. Figure 9 shows designs made with block printing on cotton canvas, printed cotton canvas, and cotton jersey embroidered with silk thread. Figure 10 shows fashion item made with viscose canvas embroidered with wool in Hungarian stitch, wool twill, polychrome wool thread embroidery, silk clutch with flap lined with beige moire, silk and moire, and topstitched wool application. Gowns and



Figure 9. *Tunic & Beach Shorts, Beach Set, Bathing Tunic,* 1928
(www.spectacles-selection.com)



Figure 10. *Coat, Scarf, Clutch, Shoes,* 1924-1925
(www.spectacles-selection.com)



Figure 11. *Embroidery of Foliage,* 1909
(www.spectacles-selection.com)



Figure 12. *New and Pretty Embroidery for Coats,* 1924
(www.gallica.bnf.fr)

coats are covered in embroidery that can be compared to the work of “abstract” painters. She used soft textured fabrics like Resha for the background and woven them with wool. She also made embroidered hats from wool.

Sonia Delaunay has expanded her field. She has carpets weaved. She imagined a fully embroidered fabric, with an invisible backing, which is used both to make coats and to cover armchairs. The embroidery stitch, imagined by her, reproduces the projected design, completely hiding the background of the fabric (Gallica, 2011 a). It is an elongated, very tight, extremely strong stitch, which barely overlaps, and which quite happily imitates tapestry stitch (Gallica, 2011 a). Made from simpler materials, but with a more sumptuous appearance, are embroidered fabrics. On a light weave, generally cotton, Sonia Delaunay uses so-called “Point du jour” stitches, which is a type of Hungarian stitch. The design is always provided by the play of geometric shapes, but the color become nuanced as the wool or

silk used is in gradient tones that seem to slide, mix and oppose each other in an unexpected way (Gallica, 2020 b, p. 98). The Center Pompidou in Paris houses one of her early embroidery works, embroidery of foliage which is wool embroidery on canvas (Figure 11). This craft exemplifies the use of thread in a painterly way.

In 1924, Paris Vogue introduced Sonia Delaunay's coat under the title “new and pretty embroidery for coats” (Figure 12). Double-breasted coat in gray kasha is entirely covered with geometric embroidery in several shades of gray. This very new embroidery, created by Sonia Delaunay alone constitutes the entire thickness of the fabric. She has also adapted geometric designs interpreted in a very personal way to embroidery (Gallica, 2013). “A dress, a coat, for her – wrote Robert Delaunay – are a portion of space ordered and designed by material and dimensions, forming a whole organized according to laws which become a standardization of her art” (Delaunay as cited in Stern, 1992, p. 54). Additionally, there is a wool-embroidered coat worn by

Gloria Swanson (circa 1925) and a indoor canvas jacket entirely embroidered with wool threads worn by Jean Coutrot (1928). There is also a canvas linen jacket with wool embroidery on leaves (1928) at the Palais Galliera, *Musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris*.

Her abstract textile designs were hand painted and hand sewn. Although the material was simple, she gave the exterior a luxurious feel through embroidery. Her designs, which began with traditional Russian crafts but were inspired by the frenetic cities of modern times contributed popularized harmonious and practical textiles.

IV. Sonia Delaunay's future-oriented characteristics

1. Dynamism of modern rhythm

Sonia Delaunays' friend and art critic Guillaume Apollinaire coined the term Orphism to describe her 1913 work. It is named after the legendary master musician Orpheus, and just as he had the power to charm all living things and inanimate objects with his lyre, the colors in Orphism also have such power (Orphic, n.d.). In *L'Amour de l'art*, André Warnod defines certain aspects of Orphism well. "If Cubism aims for integrated drawing, Orphism pursues pure color. Unlike Cubist paintings, which are generally neutral tones, Orphic paintings will be dazzling with color that studies color relationships across planes" (Gallica, 2020 b, p. 247). In other words, unlike Cubism, which was mainly monochromatic, Sonia Delaunay's colors used a variety of colors, and the colors gave movement, light, and musical characteristics. Her colors are based on the research of *Michel Eugène Chevreul*, who discovered the phenomenon of 'simultaneity', in which colors appear differently depending on the colors around them, and was called Simultanism, a branch of Orphism. Later, her Orphism manifested itself in the flattening of pure color and its opposition by simultaneous contrast, creating new forms composed not by chiaroscuro, but by the depth of the color ratio itself.

Inspired by Cendrars' poem "La prose du Transsibérien et de la Petite Jehanne de France," Sonia Delaunay's

work not only visually expressed the movement of a train rolling in a swirling circle, but also expressed the synchronous rhythm of language and color (Castro, 2011). Another of her works, <Le Bal Bullier, 1913>, depicts people dancing tango in bright lighting, with bright colors divided into abstract areas and a bright sense of rhythm through color contrast. The dynamic energy of dancehall and the dancers' rhythmic movements were well expressed.

Fascinated by the sense of movement created by juxtaposing contrasting colors, she continually transformed her work and applied it to various fashion designs. Cleopatra's stage costume designed by Sonia Delaunays was shaped like a circle rising from the chest and wrapped around the body, creating the illusion of dancing. One critic said the dancers were "wearing movement costumes that already simulated movement" (Carelli, 2016, p. 73). Additionally, she integrated the body as a component of her work because she believed that clothing should accompany the body rather than cover it. So she wrote poetry on the dress and designed the words to move together as her body moves. This dynamism constitutes one of the main concerns of simultanism, so the new support proved ideal, since the motility of the body increases the dynamic effect of the pictorial composition (Stern 1992).

In this way, she expressed poetry in language and tango in dance with the rhythm of color in her work. In other words, she broke the convention of subordinating color to subject matter and created vibrant dynamics of color and form through her books, illustrations, costumes, and textile designs. Color interaction based on the rhythmic composition of the color field was the basis of all work. Her work exemplifies the dynamism of rhythm, as she aimed to create rhythm, movement and depth through overlapping patches of vibrant hues. Because a harmonious rhythm was created with colors taken from modern materials such as urban rhythm, prisms, lighting, and dance hall, a modern sense of rhythm was able to create dynamism. The visual movement seen on the surface of the fabric was similar to the movement comparable to chords in music. As

such, her work can be said to be the most avant-garde and modern at the time, as she continued to pursue abstract compositions with dynamically contrasting colors and shapes throughout her daily life.

2. Expansion of convergence and collaboration

Sonia Delaunay took her artistic talents beyond her canvases and ventured into her decorative arts. She expanded into interior design, graphics, collage, book or magazine covers and bindings, photography, illustration and other decorative arts. She especially brought her own ideas into her real life through tapestry, textile design, and fashion. She even paints sports cars with multi-colored geometric patterns, showing us an idea of how diverse her work is. On November 15, 1924, the Paris Times published an article titled "Woman Innovates In Costume Design" introducing Sonia Delaunay as one of the boldest and most sociable modern designers active in Paris today. She also worked as a modernist painter. Then, an article saying that she had expanded the scope of his work to include dress design, embroidery, and textiles (Gallica. 2018 a, p. 7). Also, in the article titled "A women artist in Paris applies the abstract" dated June 2, 1929, "After studying the relationship between abstract forms and colors for several years, she received good reviews in the field of practical design. A visit to her studio at 19 Boulevard Malesherbes reveals her versatility" (Gallica. 2018 c, p. 3).

Sonia Delaunay created a series of "poem-paintings" together with Blaise Cendrars. This is the "first simultaneous book" with text by Blaise Cendrars and brightly colored panels by Sonia Delaunay, printed in gouache on Japanese paper, on the theme of an imaginary journey from Moscow to Harbin. Cendrars was satisfied, saying, "Sonia Delaunay has created a book with such beautiful colors that my poetry is more immersed in light than my life" (Bingham, 2015).

Sonia Delaunay was convinced that the "simultaneous book" "created the beginnings of a new vision of the world." She also decorated the covers of poets' books bound in natural cowhide leather. She created "Dress

Poetry," a fashion collaboration with Dadaist poet Tristan Tzara. In addition, she also designed several "dress poetry" based on the writings of Surrealist writer Joseph Delteil. As such, she was active in collaborating with many artists.

She also ventured into the field of fashion, where artistic exploration had not yet taken place. In 1913, Sonia went to dance her tango at Bal Bullier in a dress she had designed herself. The dresses she made by sewing pieces of cloth were made by replicating the colors and shapes of the paintings she had painted, so Apollinaire called them "living paintings" and "sculptures of living forms" ("Simultaneous Dresses," n.d.). And she made these types of dresses, as well as geometric vests, and scarves for her friends. In addition, cushions, hangings and ties in "simultaneous colors" were provided to friends. Tristan Tzara wore a simultaneous scarf designed by Sonia Delaunay. She became known to the world for creating coats covered in geometric embroidery designs that could be compared to the works of abstract painters. She also designed dresses, driver's hats, swimsuits, shoes, and scarves. She believed that fashion design like this was a way to bring the new visual language of abstract painting into everyday life and reach a wider audience. Her creations maintained a close relationship with her couturiers and she continued to expand her own range.

She always changed everything around her. She also collaborated with Parisian architect Mallet-Stevens to design interiors and create an immersive art installation in her apartment. She first created white walls and designed furniture to make the paintings more visible. In addition to designing, producing and selling her clothing in her own fashion boutique, she has also designed costumes for a variety of performing arts disciplines, including theater and dance.

Her pioneering work in collaborating with artists and expanding the scope of her work led to her foray into the art industry. At the time, the artist's move into commerce was seen as a mere shake-up, but Sonia Delaunay founded Casa Sonia, an interiors and fashion boutique, in 1918, and with the hallmarks of her work



Figure 13. *Textile Design by Sonia Delaunay at Tate Modern, 2015*
(taken by author)

remaining intact, she opened a boutique and fashion house and registered *simultané* as her brand name in France and the United States. In 1923, she received a design request from a silk manufacturer in Lyon and began selling fabric designs. In 1924, she established an atelier for fabric printing and clothing production. The stock market crash of 1929 forced the company to close its dressmaking business and lay off its Russian seamstresses. Instead of the high-end customers of boutiques, the public was introduced to decorative and popular pattern designs. In particular, the collaboration between Sonia Delaunay and Jacques Heim was a great help in making textile design industrially successful. Figure 13 shows various fabric designs for mass production. The blossoming of Sonia's textile and fashion designs in the '20s gave rise to clothing sought after by the haute bourgeoisie and cultural elite and still a popular design today (Cooke, 2022).

She not only showed how art intersects through fine arts and decorative arts, she went beyond the boundaries of the art and injected creativity into areas of life through the various possibilities of art but also achieved industrialization. Her collaborations with artists draw on numerous sources of inspiration, such as Russian craft traditions, modern metropolises and experimental trends in art. Therefore, it went beyond the relationship between crafts and decorative arts and achieved a cultural fusion between Russia and Paris, as well as a fusion of painting and literature.



Figure 14 . *Simultaneous Textile Exhibition at Tate Modern, 2015*
(taken by author)

3. Innovation of exhibition and production

According to L'Amour de l'art, Sonia Delaunay is inherently too innovative to follow her natural path (Gallica, 2020 b). On November 21, 1924, The Paris Times described the innovation of Sonia Delaunay's exhibition of textile designs: Our most recent contribution is a way to display moving textiles. This idea was originated by M. Delaunay and can now be seen in action at the Salon d'Automne in the Grand Palais in Paris. The purpose of this way of displaying fabrics is not only to attract attention but also to demonstrate the effect of the fabric when actually worn. In other words, this exhibition is an innovative way of displaying the fabric by rotating it up and down using a patented device designed by her husband Robert (Gallica, 2018 b, p. 7). Figure 14 is a textile display at the Tate Modern exhibition hall that recreates that time.

Another innovation in Sonia Delaunay's textile design is that she worked with costume production in mind before designing the textiles. The first attempt was in collaboration with the Redfern house, with the cut of the dress designed by the maker, Mr. Courtot, and the decoration by Sonia. The cut dress was designed by its creator, simultaneously with its decoration. Then, we printed on the same fabric the cut and the decoration appropriate to the shape. So first collaboration of the model creator with the fabric creator, and is very modern and innovative in terms of standardization. In

particular, the fabric pattern will allow, with a minimum of costs and material loss of fabric, to be reproduced verbatim on the other side of the world (Stern, 1992, p. 147). She also considered the female body before designing fabrics. She believed that a copy of a painting should not be move to the body for women's clothing, so when she created works for women, she composed them all in relation to the body. She knew it was important to consider the human body first when designing textiles, rather than simply designing them and later shaping them to fit the body. The specificity of her approach is the concept that the shape of clothing is not determined by cutting according to trends, but by contrasting colors and materials. She did not try to innovate the shape of the cut, but to reuse new materials with different colors to brighten and lively the art of clothing (Sonia Delaunay as cited in Stern, 1992, p. 52).

After World War I, the times of fashion changed. Women became increasingly active and demanded freedom of movement. Clothing was simplified not only in form but also for comfort by removing applied decorative elements. An article about Sonia Delaunay published in *La Femme de France* in 1928 is as follows: "At that time, fashion was going through a critical period, which corresponds to a revolutionary era. She was looking to free herself from fashion designer academism. We get rid of the corset, the high collar, all the elements of feminine costume which were required by the aesthetics of fashion, but which were contrary to hygiene and the freedom of movement of women" (Gallica, 2011 b). Also, in 1926, Guillaume Apollinaire also wrote in an article titled "The currently active painter Robert Delaunay and his wife carry out a clothing reform" that the innovative clothes they produce are made using new materials with an infinite variety of colors (Stern, 1992, 148).

Sonia Delaunay presented the following vision for the future of fashion. "Today, while art is making innovations, fashion does not reflect these art trends and is merely a collection of elaborate details." She also deplored that clothes were being made in a complicated

manner, following only the tastes of buyers or exporters, without adapting to the needs and movements of daily life. She emphasized the need for design research centers for practical implementation and the importance of research on materials. She also suggested that she explore mass production, cost reduction, and large-scale sales (Stern, 1992, p. 148). In "The Artist and the Future of Fashion" in 1927, she explained her concept of modern dress in democratic terms, supporting the coming ready-to-wear era and suggesting future directions.

4. Media in consumer society

The simultaneous stand, which a patented device designed by Robert, allowed for a "simultaneous cinematic representation" of the motifs and fabrics painted by Sonia at the Salon d'Automne in 1924, was a unique exhibition method ("Sonia Delaunay: Les couleurs de l'abstraction", 2015). The method of displaying the products, that is, the device of rolling rollers against the background of the store window, was not only a creative way of showing the furniture fabrics that were widely used at the time as well as demonstrate her commercially minded ("Sonia Delaunay at Tate Modern", 2015). In 1925, the *Simultané boutique* was installed at the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in Paris, displaying coats, jackets, scarves and bags. It focused the audience's attention and laid the foundation for popularization.

Also introduced in 1925, her fashion video projections brought her textiles and costumes to life (Figure 15). She



Figure 15. *Films for Simultaneous Clothing and Textiles at Tate Modern, 2015*
(taken by author)

featured her model to film it. She showed off the contrasting effects of motifs and colors in the fabric design, and even had models show off the fabrics themselves. It also shows the model wearing clothes and changing their state of being dressed.

In her 1925 'Casa Sonia' poster (Figure 16), she transformed the Eiffel Tower into a woman's body, using her name 'Sonia'. This design expresses her unique identity and modernity (Slevin, 2013). The symbol of modernity at the time was the Eiffel Tower, so to express and expand the synchronicity in her city's daily life, she designed her own trademark with the Eiffel Tower motif. She intended for her Eiffel Tower drawing to blend strategically with her self-designed clothes. This was an expression for publicity appropriate to the times.

She also had a special interest in photography, especially fashion photography. There are portraits of Miss Molitor and Mrs Monnier wearing large scarves made of Simultane fabric, swimsuit models relaxing on a bench or walking with a parasol, and a photo of a model wearing a coat and hat by Sonia Delaunay posing in a modern car. In some cases, these picture were also used for advertising purposes. There is also a photo of him posing with the cubist trees at the International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts, Paris, 1925 (Figure 17). Among these photos is the work of her friend Germaine Krull. She work for VU magazine, major French weekly illustrated. By 1928 she was recognized as one of the best photographers in Paris (Sichel, 1999). Krull also took pictures of Sonia working in her studio on boulevard Malesherbes (Figure 18).



Figure 16. *Sonia Delaunay's Advertisement, 1925-26*
(Slevin, 2015, p. 47)

Records show that in addition to his work with Paul Poiret, Krull worked extensively with Sonia Delaunay, producing her own work and photographs of the designer herself. In this way, Sonia Delaunay promoted not only her designs but also her brand through fashion photography. Photos of models wearing Sonia's clothes began to be distributed, and the media response was enthusiastic. These media representations of modern women who wore Sonia's clothes were closely tied to the growing consumerism in Germany and France at the time. Graphic design and presentations, with photography and illustration, were an expression of the advancing consumerism of the time. In particular, women's short skirts, bobbed hair, and cars were signs of a newly developing consumer society.

Examples of her public awareness and expansion of her work include a gouache-painted Vogue cover project in 1916, followed by a watercolor illustration for the cover of the monthly newsletter 'Le Vieux Montmartre' in 1922, and a fashion illustration from the 1925 Vogue magazine (Figure 19). The work presented as "Three Women, Forms, Colors" at the exhibition held at the Grand Palais in Paris in 1926 looks as if a mannequin is wearing a costume, and the dress in the work was commercialized. It was also proven by wearing it by Gloria Swanson that it had entered the realm of consumption. In this way, she penetrated the mass consumer society through exhibitions, videos, photos, posters, magazines, and fashion illustrations, and showed her ideas in the area of collective consumption through various expression methods and media.



Figure 17. *Two Ladies in Woven Coats Designed by Sonia Delaunay c. 1925*
(www.i.pinimg.com)



Figure 18. *Krull, Sonia Delaunay in Her Studio at Boulevard Malesherbes, 1925* (www.artblart.files.wordpress.com)

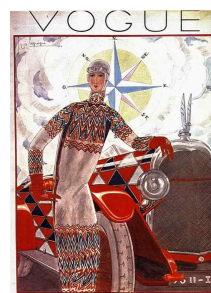


Figure 19. *Cover of British Vogue, 1925*, (www.wikiart.org)

5. Femininity in modern life

Sonia Delaunay reacted quickly to the modern world of rapidly changing technology and progress. The abstract forms she embodied in her work celebrated light bulbs, trains, airplanes, and the Eiffel Tower. Her descriptions of modern technology are evident in her Trans-Siberian prose. Between World Wars I and II, she devoted herself to textile and clothing design for women who were ahead of their time (Majer, 2013). In particular, she actively participated in and embraced the era of modernity and technological innovation, firmly establishing herself in the fashion avant-garde (Timmer & Leeuw-de, 2011). She is a pioneer of abstraction and is classified as a modernist artist, but her worldview is closer to postmodernism. This is because she assumed modernity, not modernism, and saw her abstract art as important only when the old meets the distant future.

The UK's first Sonia Delaunay retrospective held at Tate Modern also demonstrated her modernity. She brought exceptional originality to her diverse body of work, which in every way celebrates the modern era. Her Sonia broke with her traditional behavior in the way she expressed herself and literally practiced her own art, positioning her as a progressive woman synonymous with her movement and modernity (Bingham, 2015). And this exhibition clearly shows how Sonia Delaunay's designs portrayed her as a progressive woman (Carelli, 2016). Not only did she contribute to the representation

of modern women in the 1920s, but she also shaped herself by connecting it to modern life.

“If painting has become part of our lives, it is because women have been wearing it” Delaunay declared (Steel, 1991, p. 74). In this way, her art is wearable and has created a new typology, which expresses the lifestyle of the creative modern woman. She contributed to the development of women's fashion after World War I, when European women abandoned tight corsets and adopted clothing suited to an active, modern lifestyle. Her dresses have a tubular silhouette, designed to conform to the shape and movement of the human body. Her beach-ready dresses, ensembles and beach gowns are simple, yet original and striking design. It symbolized women's agency, style, and independence. She also designed driver's hats for modern women who drove cars at the time. This was her modern design and also a metaphor for herself as a creative visionary who enjoyed the pace of her time. Figure 20 shows two women wearing modern fur coats and driver's hats designed by Sonia Delaunay with a Citroën B12 car.

Furthermore, Sonia spread the image of modern women. Photos of women wearing simultaneous dresses, as well as wearing swimsuits by the pool or walking with parasols, show not only women's independence but also the lifestyle of the time. Sonia's dress designs combine simultaneous colors and prints, rich and rough fabrics, short hemlines and sleeves, and lightweight shapes. It was evaluated as a completely modern image



Figure 20. *Delaunay and Her Matching Decorated Citroën B12, 1925*
(www.phaidon.com)

(“Simultaneous Dresses,” n.d.).

Her first simultaneous dress expressed a modern image by combining simultaneous colors, prints, and fabrics such as velvet and silk. The cut lines in the fabric followed the wearer's body, emphasizing the shape of the torso, giving it a Cubist look. This was a clothing design to break away from clothes that were not only monotonous and tasteless but also looked like mourning (Elizabeth, 1986), as well as a design to provide movement in harmony with the female body (Slevin, 2013). It was also an appropriate outfit for a lifestyle that included electricity, automobiles, and airplanes (Gronberg, 2002). It was a costume that implicitly the sensuous and vivid experience of Parisian modernity.

As the art of Simultaneous design is linked, modern women wore Simultaneous Dresses to supplement the evidence of Simultane's avant-gardeism in the 1920s. Moreover, these attempts relied on and contributed to Paris's mythical status in making art and women's consumption the world center of the times. Furthermore, Simultaneous Dresse was significant in that it gave her a reputation as a modern woman. In this way, her clothes are not only suitable for modern life, but are also a way for modern women to express themselves and define the wearer as a modern woman.

V. Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to derive future-oriented characteristics presented in the early 20th century based

on Sonia Delaunay's identity and the modernity shown in design implementation. The research results are as follows.

She was a practitioner who expressed her identity in weddings, works of art, textiles and fashion, creating works and establishing brands, as well as working as a model and muse. In other words, she was inspired by the Ukrainian folk culture and Russian folk art of her childhood, and *Simultanée*, which developed from Parisian modernity and the artistic trends of the time, was her own artistic spirit and identity.

In the design implementation method to express modernity, the geometric form adopts an asymmetrical structure, does not follow the trends of the times, and the motif is modern. Colors were given intensity and vitality through a composition of contrasting or complementary colors according to their visual and instinctive color use, and modernized light was incorporated into the work to create an exquisite and delicious contrast of tones. The material was simple fabric with point du jour stitching completely covering the surface of the fabric, sometimes patched with various fabrics, and geometric abstract prints, which contributed to the mass production of textile designs as well as originality.

The future-oriented characteristics she presented are as follows. The dynamism of modern rhythm showed rhythm or depicted rhythmic movements in the form of contrasting bright colors and geometric abstractions using motifs taken from modern Paris, and the dynamism was increased according to the movement of the human body in costumes. The expansion of convergence and collaboration has led to the expansion of the scope of work from pure art to various decorative arts fields, convergence between genres through collaboration with many artists, and further cultural convergence as well as industrialization. New production methods and exhibition innovations include the development of creative display methods that anticipate the drape of the fabric and overall print motif, working with fabric and garment design simultaneously, and determining the shape of the garment with fabric designed with the body first in

mind. It is a new concept in making costumes. Medianess in the consumer society recognized the increasing consumerism at the time and showed commercial thinking and ideas of experimental attempts by utilizing various media such as exhibition participation, video production, fashion photography, posters, and fashion magazine. Femininity in modern life contributed to defining clothing suitable for modern life, clothing worn by women to express themselves, and the wearer as a modern woman at a time when women's roles were changing.

In this way, Sonia Delaunay presented a new vision for the world through various creative activities with a future-oriented and experimental personality. This recognized the mass consumer society and mass production of the early 20th century and actively utilized various media as well as various genres, not only evoking the dynamic sense necessary for modern life, but also contributing to being seen as a modern woman. Therefore, this study can be used as a case study that contributed to ready-made clothing design, mass production of textiles, media diversification and development, collaboration between art and industry, and feminism, which were carried out in earnest in the 20th century.

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