

UDC 316.728:130.2A. M. TORMAKHOVA^{1*}^{1*}Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv (Kyiv, Ukraine), e-mail tormakhova@ukr.net, ORCID 0000-0001-7178-850X**ANDROGYNY IN THE CONTEXT OF CURRENT VISUAL FASHION SPACE: PHILOSOPHICAL AND CULTUROLOGICAL ASPECT**

Purpose of the article is to highlight the peculiarities of the androgyny presentation in current visual culture, in particular in fashion and its philosophical and culturological comprehension. Determination of the leading trends associated with the offset of gender stereotypes and denial of the established separation into the feminine and masculine beginnings is due to the attention to the latest theories, such as transfeminism. **Theoretical basis** is the works of contemporary authors who develop such concepts as "gender", "gender identity", "androgynе" and move within the limits of the theories of transfeminism and transgenderism. The leading French thinker J. Baudrillard outlines philosophical measurements related to the justification of fashion. The interaction issues of the feminist theory, aesthetics of gender and androgyny, which are manifested in visual images, are presented in the writings of P. Auslander, R. Crepax. Transformation of the androgyny idea is considered in the works of B. Řiháková, F. J. Galarte. S. Stryker, T. Bettcher and J. Halberstam also address the problem of transgenderism and transfeminism in their writings. **Originality** is to highlight the main aspects associated with actualization of androgyny, its visual presentations in fashion, and the connections with contemporary theoretical discourse. A number of concepts related to the transformation of gender stereotypes have been identified. It was revealed that the logical continuation of changes in society, science and technical development is the actualization of androgyny as an individual's freedom in self-presentation and self-identification. It was emphasized that during the last century androgyny also serves as the basis for forming new trends in theoretical discourse, in particular, transfeminism, as well as it finds many visual manifestations in fashion and fashion industry. **Conclusions** contain the results of the study that describes the role of androgyny in the context of today's culture as a measurement of personal freedom, aimed at avoiding gender stereotypes and the usual dichotomy of masculinity and femininity, which manifests itself in contemporary visual practices.

Keywords: gender; gender stereotypes; androgyny; fashion; visibility; transfeminism

Introduction

Modern culture is characterized by numerous transformational processes associated with human existence. Changes in technological processes, the development of scientific knowledge lead to a review of the basic postulates, which remained unchanged for a long time. The problem of understanding the essence of gender has almost the most ancient roots. Understanding the roles and functions that were initially associated with the sexual division (the division of labour in primitive society), preserved its "traditional" established meaning for extremely long time. However, during the last century, there is an expansion of understanding that neither sex nor gender are stable and unchanged. Under conditions of possibility emergence of self-realization for the person of the XXI century, there are prerequisites for the formation of a new understanding of the individual's functions, his/her purpose, freedom of will, self-awareness. At the forefront is androgyny, which, in a sense, denies the need not only to be attached to certain problems that were faced by a person in a traditional society, but also allows acting as a being that is devoid of sexual integrity, has a "neutral" gender, is androgynе. Covering the specifics of the views of contemporary authors about androgyny in the context of visual studios is an urgent development, since it is among the most relevant ones in the Western European and American theoretical discourse of the present. The leading French thinker J. Baudrillard (2000) outlines philosophical measurements related to the justification of fashion. The interaction issues of the feminist theory, aesthetics of gender and androgyny, which are manifested in visual images, are presented in the

writings of P. Auslander (2006), R. Crepax (2016). Transformations of the androgyny idea are presented in the works of B. Řiháková (2012), F. J. Galarte (2017), V. Woolf (1993). S. Stryker, & T. Bettcher (2016) and J. Halberstam (2018) address the problem of transgenderism and transfeminism in their writings. Gender research in the context of the global challenges of modern times is disclosed in the works of domestic authors, in particular V. Kravets (2013). N. Kopylova (2013; 2015) in her articles outlines the mythologeme and the motives of androgyny and gender aspects of contemporary culture in the Ukrainian context. D. Melnyk (2012) analyzes androgyny as utopia in the works of Ingeborg Bachmann. L. Nester (2012) studies the interaction issue of the fashion and gender in the T. Meinecke's novel "Tomboy". O. Pavlova, & A. Tormakhova (2018) in their work justify the philosophical aspects of fashion. The issue of developing the idea of androgyny is outlined by M. Eliade (1998).

Purpose

The purpose of the article is to highlight the specifics of the visual presentation of androgyny in the field of fashion and its philosophical and culturological substantiation. Determination of the leading trends associated with the offset of gender stereotypes and denial of the established separation into the feminine and masculine beginnings is due to the attention to the latest theories, such as transfeminism.

Statement of basic materials

It can be noted that a series of certain visual "standards" associated with the transmission of male and female images, masculinity and femininity are recorded in the culture. It is appropriate to even talk about gender stereotypes of masculinity-femininity. Characteristics of these stereotypical notions are given in the monograph of domestic authors devoted to the problem of gender studies.

"Active" characteristics, instrumental features of the personality, such as activity, dominance, self-confidence, aggressiveness, logical thinking, ability to be a leader are attributed to "stereotypical representation of masculinity". The femininity, on the contrary, is considered as "passive-reproductive beginning", which manifests itself in expressive personal characteristics: dependence, caring, low self-esteem, and emotionality.

(Kravets, 2013, p. 13)

These gender stereotypes can be quite easily read and implemented not only at the level of corporeality, but can also be represented through fashion codes that are inherent in a particular cultural age and at the same time have more universal meaning. Domestic author L. Nester notes this characteristic of the visual standards that exist when describing specific images. "Cultural representations also offer a set of imitation patterns, models of "right" and "wrong", "successful"

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and "unsuccessful" masculinity and femininity. That is, society defines a certain set of standards that must also be characteristic of a particular type of gender personality" (Nester, 2012, p. 305).

Gender determinancy is very clearly manifested in clothing. It acts as a certain symbol that makes sense and expresses the qualities of a particular sex. The authors emphasize that contemporary culture creates conditions for blurring the distinction between gender identity as a manifestation of individual freedom.

Gender identity is one of the important components of personal identity.

An individual can identify him/herself as a feminine, masculine or androgynous person. In recent times, culture has tended to blur gender boundaries. Today, it is emphasized that a person should have the freedom to choose behavior, temperament, and, therefore, social roles.

(Melnyk, 2012, p. 322)

Actualization of the new vision of identification freedom is manifested in a special visual presentation of androgyny. Mircea Eliade defines androgyny as a new type of person,

"In which the synthesis of both sexes generates a new consciousness, free of opposition", it is referred, so to speak, to the sensual perfection generated by the active presence of both sexes. ... In ancient culture, only ritual androgyny was considered an ideal, since he was not characterized by the presence of both sexual characteristics, but the symbolic integrity of the magical-religious forces associated with both sexes. (Eliade, 1998, p. 178)

Actually, gender determinancy in clothing has not always been some kind of unchanged factor. The garment could have a universal character, such as in ancient Greece. Before the fashion emerged in the context of the medieval space, the garment could have not only "androgynous" character, but also the same cut for the representatives of different social strata. Androgyny was constantly present in the culture of Western Europe, but quite often it remained a marginal phenomenon, not a mainstream. For many centuries, fashionable narratives and their visual characteristics have served as the basis for gender determinancy. Both in clothing and in sign non-verbal communication, one can find the keys to unravel the instructions for a particular gender. Clothing itself, which is an inalienable and most frequently mentioned factor of changes in fashion, also served as a sign of social position of a person and had an extremely important communicative function. T. Veblen mentioned this in his work. In his work "The Theory of the Leisure Class" 1899, he interprets clothing as a factor demonstrating the material status of a person. The author emphasizes that the fashion is first of all the fashion for clothing, which is

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extremely uncomfortable, its regular change shows that a man has the opportunity to pay for all the fashion novelties. Women's clothing is not adapted for physical labour, emphasizing that for her there is no need to carry out certain labour activities.

One of the functions of clothing is its ability to be a solvency certificate. In addition, clothing must demonstrate the ability of its owner to be deprived of the need to earn a living by physical work. Actually pretentious women's hats, French heels, long skirts and corset create conditions where labour becomes impossible. (Pavlova, & Tormakhova, 2018, p. 184)

It should be noted that from the last decade, the theme of androgyny has become one of the leading trends in the field of fashionable western brands. The fashion industry offers a fundamentally new, positively coloured look at alternative gender identity. On the one hand, it acts as a manifestation of certain attitudes of mind in society. On the other hand, it forms them at the same time, gradually preparing another perception of sex, gender and actually corporeality. This tendency is directly related to the decrease in the level of influence of gender stereotypes and is mostly manifested at a fairly young age, necessarily associated with an increase in the level of androgyny. The high fashion industry has always been perceived as the one that is not an indicator of consciousness of the majority of the population. It is ahead of time, it sets new trends, and when they become the property of the majority, it leaves, giving way to others. According to J. Baudrillard, fashion can be perceived as a certain symbol or emblem of an epoch. It relies on something that was fashionable once, and now it is reviving as a certain cause. The fashion is untimely, related to wastefulness, its essence correlates with aesthetic pleasure, it is associated with holiday and acts as a doubling of communication.

At first strives for sociality (figure of the dandy in its bright loneliness proves it from the Fashion, like the language contrary). However, unlike the language that strives for sense and is eliminated before it, fashion tends to the theatrical society and admires itself. Thus, for each of us, it turns out to be a place of particular tension, a mirror, which reflects our desire for our own image. Contrary to the language that seeks to communication, it acts communication, involves it into play without reporting anything about the significations. (Baudrillard, 2000, p. 182)

It should be noted that, according to Baudrillard's conviction, the high fashion industry challenges the system of economic feasibility, since in order to create one fashionable "masterpiece"

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many people of higher qualification are required that can produce several models of complex cut, which probably will never be repeated and will not become the property of majority.

Ukrainian researcher N. Kopylova (2013) emphasizes that on the daily basis, one can track changes in gender stereotypes, accompanied by constant search for one's own gender identity. In her opinion, it is useful to say that within the cultural practices of Ukraine there is a shift of gender representations towards individual ones, when androgyny acts as an instrument for constructing one's own gender. In fact, the fashion becomes the field where the new trends arise and are clearly represented, and the theme of androgyny starts to be actively promoted. This applies not only to the fashion for clothing; even the advertising of perfumes starts to emphasize the idea of experimenting with scents when men's and women's olfactory notes are mixed. It is rather indicative that androgyny often penetrates into the world of women's fashion, which traditionally attracts more attention of designers.

There is a question as to what causes the similar activation and accentuation of androgyny. Based on social factors it turns out that androgyny, which is an alternative to gender determinancy, offsets the sex factor. Androgyny acts as a sign of reality, which does not emphasize the expediency of self-reproduction in children. The possibilities of reproductive medicine reduce the need for those factors that have played an important role by now – a natural selection that is impossible without gender differentiation. In a sense, the obsession with gender-ambiguous clothing is symptomatic concerning the broad perception of gender and sexual diversity. Androgyny became extremely bright part of women's fashion in the 20's of XX century. With the abandonment of the corset, the fashion for short female hairstyles "a la boy" and dresses that opened the lower part of the legs began. At the same time, the visual characteristics that were manifested in fashion became a sign of women's emancipation, the process of gradually taking over other gender roles. Or if it is not functions, then at least greater freedom from men. Such an aspiration for the demonstration of androgyny will also be manifested in artistic works of the avant-garde direction – pictorial and photographic. Such images can be found in the art of Marc Chagall, Marcel Duchamp and Claude Cahun. Researchers of their work point out that they differently perceive androgyny. If Marc Chagall's mythology of androgyny is the embodiment of the unity of the male and female beginnings, which are aimed at finding their second half, then for Duchamp, the irony and the game of "feminine" and "masculine" comes to the fore. Photo artist Claude Cahun (her true name is Lucy Schwob) seeks to eliminate the tradition of tender dichotomy, sexuality, demonstrating the exclusiveness of androgyny as a self-sufficient individual (Kopylova, 2015).

Androgyny in the culture of the XX century, especially from the 60's, is perceived as a challenge to society, as an attempt to change the look at the familiar things. P. Auslander (2006) points out that David Bowie's activities have led to changes in the sense of sexual identity. "Affirming gender and sexual performance through the pseudo-speaker Ziggy Stardust, Bowie questioned both the traditional sexuality of rock culture and the concept of basic sexual identity" (p. 106). A similar interpretation of androgyny starts to develop in culture. The men who emphasize the androgynous features start to come to the forefront. Rethinking of androgyny and its perception also takes place. If by the 20-th century it is perceived as being an embodiment of non-traditional sexual orientation, as the embodiment of exclusively negative qualities of a carrier, at the end of the century, androgyny is filled with other meanings. English author Rosa Crepax emphasizes such features of the contemporary cultural space.

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If in dominant culture, over the decades, androgynous attires have been associated with evil and doom, used to distinguish people with non-traditional sexualities and to mark them as negative examples, the development of underground culture, as a silent parallel history, had been gradually negotiating different kinds of meanings and representations. During the late 1960-s, 1970-s and early 1980-s emerged a wave of predominately male androgyny that played with the line between femininity and masculinity and resisted dominant ideas about appropriateness and morality. (Crepax, 2016, p. 21)

It is ambiguous that, although in the 1990-s the unisex style and certain androgyny became the leading tendencies in trendy podiums, however, the anonymity of this style had to emphasize the differences in gender. Totality of the progress of the androgynous types in the XXI century is primarily due to the ability to transform corporeality. Top models embody the images that can now be achieved, not only because of clothing, but also due to changes in the physical body.

If one tries to analyse how androgyny appears in the space of photographic images related to the fashion field, one should highlight the following. B. Řiháková (2012, p. 30) suggests to assess the visual image, starting from hair, physical characteristics and clothing; analyse the manner, expression of the person, the model's posture; decode the specificity of the representation of activity or passivity, which is presented to the viewer. The models that show the embodiment of the idea of androgyny are aimed at undermining gender dichotomy, actually destroying the concept of sex. Albeit androgyny follows from the gender category, but it extends it, breaking its dichotomous boundaries. This broken dichotomy opens the space for the integration of the alternative sex. The editorial policy of the Vogue Turkey Magazine emphasize similar ideas. In 2010, it presented the ANDROJEN project related to blurring and metamorphosing, merging and blending of feminine and masculine traits. Andrii Pezhych (currently transgender model Andrea Pezhych) and Yana K. were the models. Their images were presented through the prism of vision of the photographer Matthew Brookes. When analysing the photos presented in this publication, one can find some gender signs, but we cannot classify them because of the lack of the context for understanding. «"Mixed" gender type is used by combining dichotomous features, which leads to a unique behaviour. There are no reasons why we could not understand this abstract term, unique, as a description of ambiguity» (Řiháková, 2012, p. 42). Virginia Woolf in her essay "A Room of One's Own" raises the question of whether there are two sexes for the mind that would correspond to two sexes of human body and the extent to which they need to be united. She points out that it is:

Disastrous to anyone writing to think about his/her sex ... It is pernicious to be simply and exclusively a man or a woman, one should be feminine-masculine or masculine-feminine... A certain cooperation between a man and a woman should take place in the mind of [the artist] before the creation. (Woolf, 1993, p. 94)

One of the way to combine masculine and feminine is to create a neutral coloured clothing. Thus, Stuzo's clothing from Stoney Michelli and Uzo Ejikeme, based in Los Angeles, in the design industry and in the colour dimension is gender free (Galarte, 2017). Such demonstration of androgyny is closely related to the feminist trends in modern scientific thought. In particular, transfeminism, which is one of the most relevant trends in the depths of socio-cultural discourse, emphasizes that stereotypes related to a particular gender should be constantly reviewed. Transfeminism can be attributed to the third wave of the feminist theory development. The area of interests of all transfeminism supporters includes an expansion of the personal possibilities of all women and girls, including trans-women and girls. The right to be free of pressure associated with certain humiliation of women that have developmental disorders, overweight or underweight, with a racial factor is defended. "It [transfeminism] often analyses and interprets pop culture texts and artefacts criticizing consumption practices, especially if they relate to the female culture of beauty" (Stryker, & Bettcher, 2016, p. 12). In addition to the proliferation of such a trend as transfeminism, the theoretical discourse begins to focus on the term "trans", which is understood as rejecting accusations of certain stereotypes and emphasizing total liberty. "The term trans* may be the name of a wide variety of different forms of knowledge of the changing modes of being" (Halberstam, 2018, p. 5).

Originality

A number of concepts related to the transformation of gender stereotypes have been identified. It was revealed that the logical continuation of changes in society, science, and technical development is the actualization of androgyny as an individual's freedom in self-presentation and self-identification. It was emphasized that during the last century androgyny creates the basis for forming new trends in theoretical discourse, in particular, transfeminism. It has a lot of visual manifestations in fashion and fashion industry.

Conclusions

In recent decades, the actualization of the attitude change towards gender stereotypes takes place. Instead of the "traditional" perception of femininity and masculinity that was present in modern era, the idea of androgyny, as the freedom to reveal one's own sex, the essence and significance of social development, comes. The most brightly the androgenisation tendencies are distinguished in the visual sphere – in art and fashion. The systematicity of this phenomenon is connected with the emergence of an array of theoretical works that focus on the need to destroy all stereotypes and the right to freedom of individual, regardless of gender, race or appearance.

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At the moment, the formation of transfeminism and transgenderism, as large-scale trends takes place, where various modes of modern life, including the visions of its seeing, are substantiated.

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АНДРОГІННІСТЬ В КОНТЕКСТІ СУЧАСНОГО ВІЗУАЛЬНОГО ПРОСТОРУ МОДИ: ФІЛОСОФСЬКО-КУЛЬТУРОЛОГІЧНИЙ АСПЕКТ

Мета статті полягає у висвітленні особливостей презентації андрогінності в сучасній візуальній культурі, зокрема у моді та її філософсько-культурологічному осмисленні. Визначення провідних тенденцій, пов'язаних з нівелюванням гендерних стереотипів та відкиданням сталого поділу на фемінне та маскуліне начало пов'язане з увагою до новітніх теорій, як-от трансфемінізму. **Теоретичний базис** становлять праці сучасних авторів, які розвивають такі концепти, як "гендер", "гендерна ідентичність", "андрогін" та рухаються в межах теорій трансфемінізму та трансгендеризму. Філософські виміри, пов'язані з обґрунтуванням моди, окреслено провідним французьким мислителем Ж. Бодріаром. Питання взаємодії феміністичної теорії, естетики гендеру та андрогінності, що проявляються у візуальних образах, представлено в працях П. Ауслендер, Р. Крепакс. Трансформації ідеї андрогінності розглянуто в роботах Б. Ріхакової, Ф. Дж. Галарте. Проблема трансгендеризму та трансфемінізму піднімається в працях С. Страйкер, Т. Бетчер та Дж. Халберстам. **Наукова новизна** полягає у висвітленні основних аспектів, пов'язаних з актуалізацією андрогінності, її візуальних презентацій в моді та зв'язків із сучасним теоретичним дискурсом. Виділено ряд концептів, пов'язаних із трансформацією гендерних стереотипів. Виявлено, що логічним продовженням змін у соціумі, науці, технічному розвитку виступає актуалізація андрогінності як свободи особистості у самопрезентації та самоідентифікації. Підкреслено, що впродовж останнього століття андрогінність виступає і в якості підґрунтя для формування нових течій у теоретичному дискурсі – зокрема трансфемінізму, а також віднаходить чимало візуальних проявів у моді та фешн-індустрії. **Висновки** містять результати проведеного дослідження, де вказана роль андрогінності в контексті культури сьогодення як виміру особистої свободи, спрямованої на уникнення гендерних стереотипів та звичної дихотомії маскуліності та фемінності, що проявляється у сучасних візуальних практиках.

Ключові слова: гендер; гендерні стереотипи; андрогінність; мода; візуальність; трансфемінізм

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АНДРОГИННОСТЬ В КОНТЕКСТЕ СОВРЕМЕННОГО ВИЗУАЛЬНОГО ПРОСТРАНСТВА МОДЫ: ФИЛОСОФСКО-КУЛЬТУРОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТ

Цель статьи заключается в освещении особенностей презентации андрогинности в современной визуальной культуре, в частности в моде и ее философско-культурологическом осмыслении. Определение ведущих тенденций, связанных с нивелированием гендерных стереотипов и отвержением устойчивого разделения на феминное и маскулинное начало связано с вниманием к новейшим теориям, например, трансфеминизму. **Теоретический базис** составляют работы современных авторов, которые развивают такие концепты, как "гендер", "гендерная идентичность", "андрогин" и движутся в пределах теорий трансфеминизма и трансгендеризма. Философские измерения, связанные с обоснованием моды, определены ведущим французским мыслителем Ж. Бодрийяром. Вопросы взаимодействия феминистской теории, эстетики гендера и андрогинности, проявляющихся в визуальных образах, представлены в работах П. Ауслендер, Р. Крепакс. Трансформации идеи андрогинности рассмотрено в работах Б. Рихаковой, Ф. Дж. Галар. Тематика трансгендеризма и трансфеминизма поднимается в трудах С. Страйкер, Т. Бетчер и Дж. Халберстама. **Научная новизна** заключается в освещении основных аспектов, связанных с актуализацией андрогинности, ее визуальных презентаций в моде и связей с современным теоретическим дискурсом. Выделен ряд концептов, связанных с трансформацией гендерных стереотипов. Выявлено, что логическим продолжением изменений в социуме, науке, техническом развитии выступает актуализация андрогинности как свободы личности в самопрезентации и самоидентификации. Подчеркнуто, что в течении последнего столетия андрогинность выступает и в качестве основы для формирования новых течений в теоретическом дискурсе – в частности трансфеминизма, а также находит немало визуальных проявлений в моде и фэшн-индустрии. **Выводы** включают результаты проведенного исследования, где указана роль андрогинности в контексте культуры настоящего как измерения личной свободы, направленной на избежание гендерных стереотипов и привычной дихотомии маскулинности и феминности, что проявляется в современных визуальных практиках.

Ключевые слова: гендер; гендерные стереотипы; андрогинность; мода; визуальность; трансфеминизм

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