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ETHNO-MOTIVES IN THE WORKS OF UKRAINIAN FASHION DESIGNERS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 21ST CENTURY: INNOVATIONS AND TRADITIONS

Костельна М. Етномотиви в творчестві українських модельєрів початку ХХІ століття: інновації та традиції. В статті здійснено комплексний аналіз особливостей застосування етномотивів на рівні декорування і конструктивних рішень сучасними українськими та європейськими модельєрами в контексті інноваційних процесів і збереження традиційних принципів створення художественного образу. Важливим аспектом було встановлення спектра інспірацій, які актуалізуються дизайнерами початку ХХІ в., в частині це стосується звернення до поєднання інноваційних технологій та актуалізації традиції через образне переосмислення декоративно-прикладного мистецтва (не тільки костюма, а й росписів, витинанок і т.д.).

Ключевые слова: інновація, традиція, етномотиви, інспірація, декоративно-прикладне мистецтво, конструктивні рішення, творчий пошук.

Костельна М. Етномотиви у творчості українських модельєрів початку ХХІ століття: інновації та традиції. У статті здійснено комплексний аналіз особливостей застосування етномотивів на рівні декорування і конструктивних рішень сучасними українськими та європейськими модельєрами в контексті інноваційних процесів і збереження традиційних принципів створення художнього образу. Важливим аспектом було встановлення спектра інспірацій, які актуалізуються дизайнерами початку ХХІ ст., зокрема це стосується звернення до поєднання інноваційних технологій та актуалізації традиції через образне переосмислення декоративно-прикладного мистецтва (не тільки костюма, а й росписів, витинанок тощо).

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Kostelna M. Ethno-motives in the works of Ukrainian fashion designers at the beginning of the 21st century: innovations and traditions. The article is intended to give a comprehensive analysis of the peculiarities of ethnic motifs at the level of decoration and design

solutions modern Ukrainian and international fashion designers in the context of innovation processes and the preservation of traditional principles of creating an artistic image. An important aspect was to establish the inspirations range updated by the designers at early XXI century, namely it has to do with their addressing to the combination of technology and updating innovation with tradition through imaginative rethinking arts and crafts (not just costumes, but also paintings, festive embroidery, etc.).

Keywords: innovation, tradition, ethno-motives, inspiration, arts and crafts, designs, creativity.

Fashion undoubtedly belongs to a set of special cultural phenomena since its dimension is way more spacious than aesthetics or a social phenomenon. In reality no other art form besides fashion can involve the aspects of social self-identification and visual expression in such an organic way. The works of Ukrainian fashion designers serve as an excellent proof of this thesis since it forms a tool for a man's transformation into a piece of art through clothing.

We can state that the features of modern fashion are formed by a variety of factors, due to or in spite of which the images of modern creators are born. As a result, the visualization of the post-modernist spirit of the dynamical century occurs. Taking into the account this context, the tendencies which combine innovative technologies and actualization of elements or groups of symbolical motives (at the level of construction, ornament and colour decisions) become popular.

This approach allows fashion designers not only to realize their creative potential, professionalism and creativity, but also guarantees a corresponding result, that will fully open up the potential of visual expression. In addition, it's worth noting that the fragmental experience of artistic design gained by European designers is still not fully used by domestic designers.

On the background of partial interest in innovative design in the sphere of massive domestic clothing production there is a necessity for practical and theoretical research in this field. It's worth quoting M. Morozov who said that innovative design requires a complex approach to solving modelling tasks, where the designer's role is first of all in creation executed via small serial production which is the object of costume design possessing aesthetical, functional, ergonomic, and technological features.

Besides, it's important that the fragmental experience of artistic design gained by European and American designers still isn't fully recognized and applied by domestic designers to a full extent. We can take "dripping" which is an innovative shaping in Europe and America as an example. This principle suggests a possibility of complete design without scalable construction, in fact, clothing can be designed right on a model or during a try-on directly on a client.

Another quite important factor in the modern fashion industry is a series of innovations in the technology of the process. For instance, domestic

designers actively use automatized design systems at the early stage of the whole process. New computerized systems and the software is used for automatization of operations that involve clothing design, basic construction, patterns and their production, use of patterns and implementation. The most famous and most used examples in Ukraine are the products developed by “Gerber” (USA), “Torey” (Japan), “Investronics” (Spain), “Lektro” (France). They offer systems which include specialized workplaces supported and served by the central computer or a system of PCs. These systems can work separately or can be connected with other systems. Quality control machines connected with computers and devices of all kinds for detection purposes—scanning, photoelectrical and etc., which provide control of and register any deviations in width, length and detect defects without visual control.

It’s important to remark that automatic tailoring systems with a cutting head (managed by a computer) are offered for tailoring purposes. A mechanical cutting tool (by “Gerber”, “Lekira” companies), laser (“Lektro” company) or a stream of water (“Durk-Adler”, Germany) can be also used for tailoring. This approach to design and project realization is quite important for innovation in the Ukrainian clothing design industry.

For example, Mr Legenkiy claims that innovative design requires a complex approach to modelling tasks, where the designers’ role is about creation of ideas, projects, fashion products, produced via small serial production or a single author’s model. These are the objects of costume design which have aesthetical, functional, ergonomic and technological features and what’s even more important, this is an inseparable part of modern fashion management and marketing. In addition, innovative design includes creation of new design methodologies and the designer’s creative work itself is focused not only on aesthetical but also on the unity of a composition and function which has a positive impact on efficiency and profit of the production.

It is quite important that a change in demand for various kinds of clothing encourages designers to create innovative forms of design materials, apply new methods in design and simultaneously produce new clothing of the highest demand. But what’s particularly important is that innovative design methods provide unlimited stylistic opportunities for a wide range of a designer’s work. As a result, innovative ways of design are actively employed by the leading fashion houses in the world and partly by Ukrainian designers as well.

A significant aspect in the article’s creation was the goal and importance of the research. In particular, we have analyzed the specifics of modern Ukrainian fashion industry in terms of use of innovation and interpretation of ethnical motives at the level of design and constructive-technological peculiarities of silhouette interpretation. In addition, the specifics of separate elements formation and the application of thematical accessories for providing maximal visual expression were studied. The results of the research

let us make the conclusion that nowadays the artistic search connected to innovative technology application and reproduction of ethno-mental peculiarities of Ukrainian traditional art and decorative writings and painting is very up-to-date.

However, despite this tendency, no appropriate analysis has been conducted yet at the level of theoretical basis of artistic search, neither at the level of practical realization which demonstrates the importance of the suggested article. According to the concept the goal of the article was set where the main accent is about complex artistic analysis of innovative tendencies and their mutual connection with ethno-inspirations in the modern Ukrainian fashion design.

Also, E. Amosova remarks: “Achievements of the scientific progress in clothing industry—from the invention of sewing machines to the invention of chemical fibers have become a real breakthrough in a scientific thought...”. Since textile materials have a maximal impact on the end product, innovations in this field were viewed through their interconnection and inter-influence. Though in the very beginning of chemical fibers development (first half of the 20th century) its influence on the form was minimal, we’ve witnessed a direct connection between innovation in textile materials and the pursuit of new forms and silhouettes since the second half of last century. Particularly, these are works of such designers as Paco Rabanne, Mary Quant, Pierre Cardin and others.

Also, an important component of the research’s goal is finding the sources of experimental application of innovative elements at both levels of images and technology. It should be noted that in the context of problematics historiography it was found that there is no research at the present moment dedicated to the analysis of innovation application and its combination with ethnical motives used nowadays by Ukrainian designers. The majority of information concerning this problematics are short publications for online-media and interviews.

Moreover, Ukrainian fashion designers not only use ethnic motives but also implement artistic rethinking, in this way forming new compositional structures and innovative solutions. One should emphasize that these processes that are probably caused by the actualization of ethno-regional peculiarities gain significance in the context of globalization processes where the need for visual identifiers has reached a new dimension. Since one of fashion’s main social functions is translating the specifics of the recipient’s personality, launching a full fashion line completely oriented on reproducing ethno-motives with the help of symbolic forms, colour combinations and so on seems absolutely justified. The motives and elements linked with local practices and various kinds of techniques intensively serve as sources of inspiration. What should be emphasized in particular is that the traditions of folk painting such as home paintings, elements of furniture decoration and individual painting practices are among major sources of inspiration.

But at the same time we can observe how Ukrainian fashion designers constantly actualize the problematics of innovation. As Myroslav Melnyk notes: “If in the Soviet Union fashion at the state level was mostly characterized by folk decorative motives then nowadays the tradition going through an individual artist’s consciousness filter turns into a new artistic quality signifying folk philosophy and beauty.”

Meanwhile, ethno-motives in the works of Ukrainian designers have a few distinctions in esthetical dimension and Zinaida Lichacheva’s works are a good example of that. This artist and designer’s projects live by their own laws in a special world of decorative fantasies which are the result of deep emotional experiences. A deep study of sacred geometry led to the formation of *Ethnomodern* style which became a conceptual basis of her works. As a whole, we can state that it’s the easiness and elegance that characterizes best the Spring-Summer collection of 2011 by Zinaida Lichacheva. The collection was presented at the major fashion event, namely the Ukrainian fashion Week. The special features of *Ethnomodern* style are the prints based on wood ornamentics displayed through the prism of modern art.

In the 2013 collections Lichacheva used untraditional materials (food and organic objects) for making clothing where form was supplemented with ornamental elements of traditional origin.

Conceptualist-cosmopolitan Lilia Pustovit in her collections likes to “seek common cultural roots of different nations”. The heart of Pustovit’s style is the principles of composite construction and traditional Ukrainian costume tailoring, which the artist combines with minimalistic urban forms and geometrically precise silhouettes. She has organically enriched her work over the years with actual oriental motifs, the elements of the punk subculture or American sports style, applied new technologies in tailoring and different types of fabrics to create an artistic image. For example, in the collections of 2013–2014 L. Pustovit used traditional ethnic motives visualized at that applying new technologies, such as a printer printing on fabric. Thus, it can be argued that a significant factor of Ukrainian designers’ appeal to ethnic motives was the external factor of influence, because the actualization of these elements in the context of current trends had a catalytic role.

It is logical, given that the “second wave of interest in innovative technologies and materials came in the 1980s. When, first of all, the Japanese designers made a breakthrough in the form, in particular, methods of deconstruction. They were all looking for specific materials to express their ideas and actively cooperate with the manufacturers of textiles and knitwear. Hussein Chalayan became a significant figure in the field of technical innovation in the 1990s and early 2000s. His work is based on search of form, often sculptural, as well as an effort to create expressive futuristic images. To achieve his goals Chalayan uses a variety of ma-

terials (such as plastic or silicone) and other technical inventions (LED, mini-lasers, etc.)” [1]. Actually, the combination of factors suggests that the ethno-theme for Ukraine will never be secondary, because it is our identity and our face. It is worth noting that when the fashion world is dominated by cosmopolitanism, then so should we have this on the foreground.

However, cosmopolitanism can be actualized, but then people are looking for inspiration. Gaultier, Galliano came to Ukraine, got inspired by the Ukrainian motives, embroidery and made their own collections. Thus, we can say that analyzing the works of leading international and Ukrainian designers one can distinguish a series of motives, which are interpreted consistently, and fix the key line of costume aesthetics, which is so wide a range that implies deconstruction and ethnic inspirations. In this diversity Ukrainian designers often choose a classic interpretation of images and collections that were shown at the Ukrainian and foreign fashion shows evidence that this approach is more modern in its relevance. So, fashion today is rather a global phenomenon, and doesn’t imply a narrow context that has dominated until relatively recently.

These phenomena are quite complicate and creativity rebels and establishment of its priorities, since those phenomena that were on the sidelines a few decades ago, are now being actively implemented, and even exploited by mass culture, as the images of creative people, intellectuals, loft interiors, etc. And probably fashion has become one of the key engines of this process — the fashion that went beyond traditional ideas, changed its vector for democratization. And the images created by modern Ukrainian designers are open and provide an opportunity for actualizing various recipients with specific aesthetic demands. This approach is one of the defining features of the artistic interpretation of the mainstreaming of innovative elements ratio and preservation of traditions that affect the visual expressiveness, richness of figurative series, are important characteristics of the author’s handwriting.

It is worth noting that it is the creative component and aestheticization that is the foundation for most of the collections of Ukrainian designers, in particular L. Pustovit, O. Telizhenko, R. Bogutska and others. Therefore, the modern fashion and style are primarily visual markers of social status, cultural demands and the form of self-identification. No other phenomenon does reflect as clearly and intensely masculine and gender aspect in today’s globalized world, where the norms of many communities have become a reflection of the worldview and attitudes through the prism of one’s style in clothing, accessories, etc.

This hyper fullness of layers of meaning led to the strengthening of the social role of fashion, so this kind of art has on one hand been gaining actualization in different social groups, and on the other gave it a certain manifestation, so essential for postmodernism. It is important to participate in such a process for

already established designers whose work demonstrates organic combination of innovation, style and individual disclosure of every potential client.

In addition, “Interest in fashion in the latest developments is an important element in the formation of fashion trends with innovative technologies, since their work is widely covered in the media, and authority among fashion-oriented audience is very high, i.e., they can be regarded as agents of influence. Thanks to fashion designers innovation attracted attention of a wider audience. Thus, it revealed an important role of fashion in the promotion and dissemination of innovative technologies, its implementation in mass fashion. The most complete picture of the processes of interaction of fashion and science can only be obtained with the integrated use of qualitative and quantitative research methods. In this regard, the results are supplemented by an analysis of the quantitative characteristics of the formation of fashion trends, due to the influence of innovative technologies. It was found that although the designers play a critical role in drawing attention to the different types of innovation and define the vector of development in their use, extensive use of advanced technology is obtained when adapting their production and mass production. In other words, designers are the driving force in the process of the birth of trends and their widespread begins only with the introduction of innovations into mass production and the arrival of mass fashion” [1].

It should be noted that leading designers define their priorities, as a combination of innovation, update of the tradition and attention to philosophical and ideological content of the collections in which the appeals to fashion trends are more moderate, because fashion provides a broad understanding: stylish always you can be but fashionable only in season.

This trend is significant for the visual expression of a designer’s author style, the continuation of relevance of the images a certain period after their presentation. The gallery of images where the tradition and innovation are connected demonstrates how versatile and laconic silhouette, detailed design and tailoring of models, selection of the various components, and accessories provide a reflection not only of certain trends, but also organic rethinking of the best concepts of the past within the postmodern aesthetics. The sense of internal rhythm of time, its trunk shaped and semantic structures are the defining characteristics of the creative handwriting of designers practicing this approach for modelling the costume. Referring to the collections of leading Ukrainian designers it can be argued that the artist constantly represents the best achievements of their creativity, for which there are no boundaries associated with the fashion industry, and the prevailing free and experimentation process.

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