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## BORAKOVSKA M. O.

## SUPERWOMAN AS A TRANSITIONAL LINK IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF CORPORALITY (REFLECTIONS ON THE DISCOURSE OF MODERNITY AND POSTMODERNITY)

Розлом парадигми свідомості актуалізує тему тілесності, евристичний потенціал якої малодосліджений. Розпорошення дискурсів про концепт тіла висвітлює недостатність його філософського осмислення, а також певні недоліки концептуалізації і незначної методологічної впевненості. Образи супервумен і супермен, які реалізуються в мас-медіа, дають можливість зрозуміти сучасну репрезентацію тілесності. Це дає нам можливість виокремити особливості і напрямки цих репрезентацій у різних вимірах кіно.

**Ключові слова**: тілесність, superwoman, мас-медіа, виміри кіно, візуалізація.

Разлом парадигмы сознания актуализирует тему телесности, эвристический потенциал которой мало исследован. Рассредоточение дискурсов о концепте тела показывает нехватку его философского осмысления, также как и определенные недостатки концептуализации и методологической неуверенности. Образы супервумен и супермен, которые реализуются в масс-медиа дают возможность понять современную репрезентация телесности. Это дает нам возможность выделить особенности и направления этих репрезентаций в разных измерениях кино.

**Ключевые слова**: телесность, superwoman, масс-медиа, измерения кино, визуализация.

Each change of the human being meets a certain transformation of the human body, changing its physical and sensual components. Human nature, which is divided into male and female, creates a theory of moral and identification. The image of Superwoman that becomes an option for understanding the modern woman appears as a claim to identity, as imposed image that challenges modern woman to identify herself. Breaking of the paradigm of consciousness actualizes the theme of physicality, the heuristic potential of which is unexplored. Images of superwoman and superman which are implemented in the mass-media give the opportunity to understand the modern representation of physicality. This gives us the opportunity to highlight the features and direction of these representations in different film dimensions.

Keywords: corporeality, superwoman, mass-media, dimension of cinema, visualization.

Actuality. Metaphysical paradigm has been focusing on mind until the twentieth century. But later on a certain crisis happens. In the context of the crisis of metaphysical paradigm of consciousness where body is not considered as it is, philosophical discourse gives way to a new look at the human body. The concept of corporeality becomes relevant. Postmodern deploys new ideas and transforms the concept of Mind-Body in Body-Mind. The idea of corporeality has become one of the dominant philosophical researches for Nietzsche, Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger, Deleuze, Foucault. Therefore, the interest in this topic gains particular momentum in the XXI century among domestic and foreign scientists (L. Hazniuk, O. Homilko, I. Kolyieva, M. Kukhter, L. Starodubtseva, O. Chapny, Yu. Shychanina).

Methodology. The problem of human is integrated

in a fairly wide range of direction and approaches to research which cannot be brought under a common methodological denominator in modern philosophy. Spreading of discourses about concept of the body illuminates its lack of philosophical understanding, certain disadvantages of conceptualizing and little methodological certainty. This lack is topical for our theme. Our task is to expand methodological approaches to the study of physicality, referring to the findings of modern cinema. Our analysis is based on anthropological approach and the phenomenological method, structuralism method with emphasis on the philosophical-cultural approach.

**Novelty**. The article examines new dimension of physicality to the example of the image of Superwoman that has a tendency to spread from genres of cinema in

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contemporary mass culture.

Main part. It is obvious that each change of the human being meets a certain transformation of the human body, changing its physical and sensual components. Human nature, which is divided into male and female, creates a theory of moral and identification. Since this article deals with primarily female physicality, it is necessary to focus on the analysis of trends that have developed over recent years for clarity those transformations that take place in the present. In our opinion, such transformations are influenced by feminist researches in understanding the female body, first of all. Second, the gender dimension becomes relevant in this process, which raises the problem of identification. Any identification means socialization, the assumption of a particular social position, role.

The culture of modern had a male character. It was described very clearly by Georg Simmel: "Art, patriotism, morality in General and social ideas in particular, correctness of practical judgment and the objectivity of theoretical knowledge, energy and depth of life – all of these categories, the shape and orientation belong to all mankind, but in their actual historical configuration they are thoroughly masculine. Assume that all of these things, viewed as absolute, we define a single word "Objective". Then we find out that in the history of our race next equality has weight: objective=male" [1; 12].

But the image of Superwoman that becomes an option for understanding the modern woman appears as a claim to identity, as imposed image that challenges modern woman to identify herself.

Superwoman is the name of several fictional characters from DC Comics. DC Comics, Inc. founded in 1934 is one of the largest and most successful companies operating in the market for American comic books and related media. Most of them are, like Supergirl, women with powers similar to those of Superman. The first appearance of the name "Superwoman" in a DC comic was a story where Lois Lane dreams that she has gained superpowers from a blood transfusion from Superman and launches a career as Superwoman. Afterwards numerous versions of the character appeared: Lois Lane, Luma Lynai, Alternative versions of Wonder Woman, Earth-Three, Antimatter Earth, Earth-3, Mxyzptlk's Superwoman, Laurel Kent, Kristin Wells, Dana Dearden, Lucy Lane etc.

What plays a huge role to implement feminist and the gender aspect is visualization. We can talk about two types of visualization: passive and active. Active visualization involves interaction with the audience. So far theater, for example, is a space for elitist culture realization, while cinema implements mass culture. Central role in popular culture plays passive visualization. However, passive visualization progresses in arts today either. That is why such theories as the death of the author, death of the novel, the death of the reader, etc. appears.

It's important to realize also that nowadays the existence of mass culture is being implemented in 2 planes: the real and the virtual. Virtuality becomes a part and a symptom of reality. "Virtual realities in culture are those toposes, which are directly activated and provoked by desire and imagination force. People exist "as gods" in virtual toposes. Because, only God's word it is already a direct action, and every thought is a transformation of being. Virtual realities free one from the effort and work to make dreams come true. In fact, they eliminate the experience of life that until now was a necessary link between "I want" and "I have achieved". Instead it establishes a new form of reality: "wish – fulfilled" [2; 272]. Distributed media actively affects cultural, social and psychological values, shaping and changing our attitudes and behaviors. Television is one of the most popular types of media and is very influential. TV can serve as a source of social comparison in body image processes. Also women's and Fashion magazines like «Vogue» or «Cosmopolitan» are geared toward female audiences with certain characteristics.

The female body image has changed over time. Today, we're familiar with the societal pressure that goes along with "ideal body image" among females. Women have always been under some form of pressure to look a certain way. Besides being extremely thin, women are also expected to look young. The use of these unrealistic images sends implicit messages that a woman must be unhealthy in order to be beautiful. Some girls and young women compare themselves to models in ads, in terms of their physical attractiveness [3, p. 19].

As claimed by A. Holozubov, among the features of cultural space of postmodern we can select "the inclusion of mass culture in the field of cultural researches" [4, p. 143]. Exploring the phenomenon of visualization of physicality, let's consider the image of Superwoman in the movie.

The focus of our study is comparative analysis of the implementation of the phenomenon of corporeality, which is preferable to do comparing diametrically opposed images of women in film. In the Soviet cinema there were next images:

Girl from the people in 1960's (e.g. Tosya-cook from the movie «Girls»), Intellectual woman in 1970's (e.g. Barbara Brilska in "Irony of the fate"), Activist-social worker in 1980's like Nadya Klyueva in the movie "The Most charming and attractive". In the former Soviet Union one could observe the following trends in women's image in films: Battle friend in 1990's, Independent woman in 2000, On a par with men in 2010's.

We see that since middle 90-ies in films to the fore began to appear women hitherto unusual type. They were not housekeepers, not farmers, not nurses, but aggressive warriors with super strength and abilities. She has enough of those to fight on par with men and even to save them. The image of superwoman, by magic, begins to show itself everywhere: from children's cartoons to drama series and feature films.

Heroic women have always existed, such as ancient Amazons, or heroines of World Wars. But heroine of the World War, who worked as nurses, operators and sometimes intelligence agents, defeated not only by muscles, but rather by mind and a great spirit. Amazons have trained from birth. Today small chiseled female figure can

knock out with one hit of a fist a man who is twice stronger, who cannot reach her because he misses. Although it doesn't look like that she was visiting gym or spent most of her life studying martial arts. That is the most ordinary-looking woman who immediately begins to fight like Bruce Lee (Frozen, Avengers, the Croods, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, etc.). In movies they don't show that women's and men's impact has a fundamental difference in harming the enemy. This relieves the age-old taboo that "female gender must not be beaten."

The image of the superhero-woman gradually made its way to the screens. We may remember the role of Carrie Fisher (Leia Organa-Solo, fictional character in the universe of "Star wars", one of the main characters in the "original trilogy" (1977-1983), Sigourney Weaver (the main protagonist of all films about "Aliens"(1979 – 1997), Linda Hamilton (Sarah Connorone of the main characters in the movie "Terminator", 1984), Cameron Diaz, Drew Barrymore and Lucy Liu – "Charlie's Angels" (2000).

In the period 1995–2001 on the screens comes out the fantasy genre series "Xena – warrior Princess" with Lucy Lawless as Xena. Probably, this character identifies itself with the hunter, Amazon. But then we can see a transformation of the identification of Superwoman since 2000's. That brings new norms of socialization and shows us a brand new image, which penetrates into popculture. This image becomes an option that raises philosophical and art questions and actualizes the following dimensions.

First of all, popcultural. Today, young people prefer to visit cinema instead of philharmonic concerts and choose with more enthusiasm to watch a movie about superheroes. In past years, shooting comics stories about Superman, Spider-Man and Iron Man gained extraordinary popularity. While female comic's heroes are hardly worthy their own films, only Catwoman. Though, they have a bright future. The highlight was the appearance of actress Margot Robbie with her amazing transformation into an icon of super criminal beauties Harley Quinn.

As we know, they usually dress in carnival costumes on Halloween. The film industry has a strong influence on trends in this regard. The most popular images for Halloween 2016 according to the rating of the company "Frightgeist" were heroes of the "Suicide Squad" Harley Quinn and Joker. Young girls socialize on these movies, identify themselves with Harley Quinn and become similar one in one. That is a sign of culture of masculine nature.

Philosophical-artistic dimension emphasizes the smooth transfer of standard images of Superwoman from films to Computer Games. Computer games are a kind of art. It is virtual material. In computer games a warrior woman is always dressed in an armored bra and similar costumes that are completely unsuitable for protection and armor, but perfectly emphasize the sexually traced forms of the heroine, causing certain associations and feelings. But there is also a reverse process: they shoot original computer games. For example films with Angelina Jolie – "Lara Croft: Tomb Raider" (2001) and "Lara Croft: Tomb Raider 2 – The Cradle of Life" (2003), are screen version of the Tomb Raider series of computer games. These are

also games that turned into a movie: "Mortal Kombat" (1995), "Silent Hill" (2006), "Resident Evil" (2002), "Warcraft" (2016).

Political-ideological dimension goes global. We can relate to this archetype Carrie-Anne Moss, who played Trinity in the trilogy "Matrix" (1999 – 2003), one of the most beloved and charismatic characters - Lily Dallas from the movie "5th element" (1997), these women saves not one or two persons but whole humanity. Again these women's images generate a feeling that beautiful and attractive girl or woman must be perfect and must be able to fight cool.

"Post-modern deconstruction is one of the attempts to overcome the contradictions between how the body is perceived by the culture, and what it is essentially. The way in which it happens, is denaturalization of the human body – from the body it becomes a social construct. The postmodern concept of the person excludes self-creativity, every feature of the body is the product of social manipulation....The body becomes a repository for the realization of political ideologies that perform (doing bodily fixed) social and cultural interests and needs" [2; 287].

Gender aspect is the next dimension which opens up female experience of life, of world. The typical character of superwoman is drawn very clearly: she hopes only for herself, not used to accept help, it is written in her eyes that she can destroy anything on her way. Remember the female characters in the films "BloodRayne", "Buffy", "Lara Croft", "Charlie's Angels", movies about superheroes — "the Avengers", "Catwoman", "Fantastic four", movies by Tarantino, Rodriguez, etc.

Remember the famous scene from "Mr. and Mrs. Smith" movie (2005), when Brad Pitt's hero is knocking his wife down. The Angelina Jolie's heroine feels healthy, fit and happy woman instantly, while one punch is enough to cause injury even for strong man in real life. What to say about the fragile female body? In addition, women's militant aggression and superpower begin to be touted as a standard of beauty and good behavior.

That is, if masculinity or masculine qualities are artificially formed in girls, young men gain femininity – a typically female role. There can't be two leaders, two warriors in one family. American cinema in addition to the image of a strong woman and encourage image of a weak men. You may recall the TV series "Xena – warrior Princess", "Catwoman", "Bandidas", "Once upon a time" and so forth, where physically and mentally strong women are comparable to weak men who can not only protect their women from danger, but they need a strong shoulder of a girlfriend.

The masculine dominates the feminine. We observe overlapping of 2 discourses: masculinity and femininity, and the first is given priority.

Ontologically – biological dimension. Often on the screen one can see young heroine in a tight costume that shows all body lines, while strong man with silly faces are patiently waiting in a queue for their shot. A costume of super heroine is usually tight jumpsuit that emphasizes natural biological beauty, natural female form, but at the same time looks like modified object of masculine culture. We observe a hybrid.

Sometimes in those movies they even mock femininity: in the film "Mr. and Mrs. Smith," Jolie's character was frankly not good at regular conversation about family matters in women's company. Or remember series about Buffy, where the character of the school beauty Cordelia was shown as a hysterical girl. Thus the spectator is offered a meager choice of either aggression, or a boring life of "broody", or the image of a beautiful but dumb doll. The variant of wisdom, womanhood, without magic or weapons in her hands, not even considered, as if it never existed.

Such type – the type of aggressive women, promoted through movies, affects the very essence of woman and her role in society: to be a faithful wife who supports her husband in a difficult moment, to be a caring mother, to create, not destroy. Natural ontological role of women remains unfulfilled.

Women are shown in many feminine commercials such as: soap, laundry detergent, toilet paper, and child care commercials. They are displayed as the cleaners, nannies, and cooks. In other hand skinny actresses and models appear everywhere in today's media. They are seen as the most successful and socially desirable people on the planet.

"Reduction of human being to a social function makes one's full existential life impossible. Looping on one's personality eliminates the need of another person. Identity becomes the main criterion of the correctness of attitudes. However, the pursuit of one's bodily identity (already known to us as flash-image) gives rise to another problem that Western man is particularly concerned today, the problem of resistance imposed by culture identification" [2; 288].

**Summary.** Breaking of the paradigm of consciousness actualizes the theme of physicality, the heuristic potential of which is unexplored. Images of superwoman and superman which are implemented in the mass-media give the opportunity to understand the modern representation of physicality. This gives us the opportunity to high-

light the features and direction of these representations in next dimensions: popultural, philosophical—artistic, political—ideological, gender, ontologically—biological.

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