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Philosophico-cultural Analysis of the Mechanisms of Transgression of the Vestimentary Fashion

Dissertation Summary

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Statement of research problem

Not all clothes may be considered fashionable but only those that have a certain symbolic component, a superstructure of meaning that enables one to speak of it not as of functional piece of fabric but as of a symbolical construct of identity. The very fact that fashion is the semantic component of clothes makes them different from a costume. Being a ‘set of clothing items characteristic for a specific group of individuals’¹, a costume also conveys information about the sex and the age of its wearer, their social status, state of transition or other circumstances, and about the season². Fashion is remarkable for the variability of semantics of clothes, and that is what makes it a synonym of uninterruptible change and renewal. “Fashion” [Russian: ‘мода’, ‘moda’] is that infrequent instance of the word keeping the historical connection with the Latin adverb modo (‘recently’, ‘just now’), from which it originates, and referencing not just to the “modernity” (modernitas) but to “what is happening now”, therefore to what is passing, changing and constantly renewing itself.

As “a semantic system whose only goal is to disappoint the meaning it luxuriantly elaborates”³, the phenomenon of fashion may be identified as the “compulsion to innovate signs, its apparently arbitrary and perpetual production of meaning – a kind of meaning drive”⁴. Such a definition of fashion as “pulsation of meaning” may be justified with a constant fluctuation of meanings of ‘fashionable/not fashionable’ in relation to sartorial⁵ forms that is brought forth by individuality. As C. Beaton mentioned, “fashion is a mass phenomenon, but it feeds on the individual”⁶. Being the basis of the new in fashion, an individual vestimentary⁷ statement at the same time acts as a violation or wrong interpretation of the already existing codes of costume expressing the habitus⁸ of particular social group. In this sense it can be considered transgressive in relation to the costume.

As a transgressive phenomenon, the manifestation of individual vestimentary preferences within the social order until the second half of twentieth century was only

⁵ Sartorial (Lat. sartor – tailor; sacriēre – mend or alter) – related to making of clothes, and to clothes in general.
⁷ Vestimentary (Lat. vestimentum – clothes) – related to clothes. In this paper, terms ‘vestimentary’ and ‘sartorial’ are used as synonyms.
possible through the mechanism of recognition by the Other. This mechanism was carried out by replicating individual insignia, often of a coercive nature which satisfied the claims of certain social categories (knights, high-ranking officials of the court, couturiers), on the ‘universal effectiveness’ of their personal taste.

The mechanism of recognition is regarded in this research as a mechanism of transgression through which individual preferences become the new vestimentary code of costume. Thus, the mechanisms of transgression will be understood as structures of formation of the semantics of ‘fashion’, which, in their basis, imply the figure of the Other (an individual whose sartorial preferences become fashionable), the insignias of his personality that indicate his authorship of a particular fashion novelty, and the wearers of those insignias. By showing these insignias in their dress the wearers thereby demonstrate the alienation of their identity in favor of the Other. At the same time in the replication of these insignias the individual vestimentary statement of the Other ceased to be transgressive and became socially acceptable to be manifested in the public sphere.

The livery is considered as such mechanism of transgression or, in other words, mechanism of mediated expression of individuality. In this research it will not be regarded as a specific item of clothing but as a vestimentary logic recording the fact of recognition and, in that way, alienation from ones’ identity in favor of the Other within the framework of service as the basis of social relations before the French Revolution that abolished the livery in 1789. For the period of bourgeois society, we analyze the label as such mechanism of recognition by the Other within the context of consumption.

Thus, the research object is the phenomenon of Western European fashion. More precisely, such vestimentary logics, or mechanisms of transgression, as the livery and the label, the functioning of which allows for an explanation of formation of the semantics of ‘fashionability’, based on the sartorial preferences of the Other, who, replicating them by his personal insignias, converts the transgressive status of the singular vestimentary statement into socially acceptable components of the costume.

The chronological framework of the research is the period from the second half of XIV c. (starting point of Western European fashion) to the second half of twentieth century (as the conditional point when the individual vestimentary statement ceased to be understood as a transgressive phenomenon to be manifested in the public space). The regional borders of the research are the English and the French cultures. The chronological expanse of the research is accounted for by its aim: to follow the development and transformation of vestimentary logics throughout the functioning of the Western European fashion in the period when the main source of the semantics of

‘fashionability’ of a clothing item were the individual insignias of the Other, the replication of which was regulated and determined by the livery and, later, the label.

In order to attain this goal, the following objectives were identified:

1. To analyze the key classical and modern theories of fashion to identify the essential traits of the phenomenon and define the connections between the individual and the social in the vestimentary fashion.

2. To identify the cultural and historical context of the emergence of the phenomenon of Western European fashion.

3. To determine the specifics of functioning of the livery as the mechanism of transgression or, in other words, mediated expression of the individuality within the framework of feudal logic of personal relationships.

4. To trace the transformation of the phenomenon of fashion within the court society and its liberation from connotation of the main tool of representation of social identity.

5. To define the historical and cultural context of the label and its role in overcoming the transgressive nature of the individual vestimentary statement in the bourgeois society.

6. To analyze the role of an sovereign fashion subject in the process of leveling of the transgressive nature of the individual vestimentary statements.

The relevance of this research is determined by the role of the phenomenon of fashion in the modern culture. In this relation, the systematic analysis of fashion, following its historical perspective, is to clarify the mechanisms of functioning of this cultural phenomenon within the framework of the proposed approach. The studies made in the past decade that appeal to the concept of transgression in relation to the phenomenon of fashion implement this research in the existing tradition of the analysis of the phenomenon of fashion and make it up-to-date with the contemporary range of problems in the studies of this cultural phenomenon.

The Degree of Elaboration of the Problem

Studies of transgression within the theoretical approach of the phenomenon of fashion are not numerous. Works in the field of philosophical and anthropological tradition were chosen as the starting point for the studies of transgression; in them the phenomenon of fashion is construed as a tool of ‘transgressing the boundaries’ of rules and regulations sanctioned by the society (M. Douglas) expressed in the vestimentary

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codes of costume. This tool is implemented within the liminal (V. Turner\textsuperscript{12}) spaces characterized by the lack or by the weakening of norms and restrictions of behavior set by the society. To name a few of such spaces one may recall knightly tournaments (in the medieval period), promenades of carriages in Tuileries or Bois de Boulogne (XVII-XVIII cc., period of court fashion), horseraces, salons, resorts, certain venues of the first fashion shows, including those in the department stores (period of the bourgeois fashion).

Within the philosophical tradition, various forms of transgression as a means of comprehending the transcendent experience were studied in detail by G. Bataille\textsuperscript{13}. His analysis of the social forms of expression of transgression through violence, similarly viewed in the works of R. Girard\textsuperscript{14} and W. Burkert\textsuperscript{15}, in this research is the basis for the explanation of the functioning of the phenomenon of fashion in the medieval society.

Following G. Bataille the transgression as a term to describe transcendent experience also regarded by M. Foucault, M. Blanchot, P. Klossowski \textit{et al.}\textsuperscript{16}. But in contemporary studies the term ‘transgression’ is not always used in this aspect. The study of the context for the possible use of the term is the main objective of the book by C. Jenks\textsuperscript{17}, who traces the sources of this theoretical discourse in the field of the anthropological (E. Durkheim, M. Douglas, A. van Gennep, V. Turner, S. Freud) and philosophical thought (G.W.F. Hegel, A. Kozhev, F. Nietzsche), in the sphere of art (theatre of A. Artaud, situationism of Guy Debord, A. Rimbaud, the surrealist movement), and within interpretation of the carnival as a form of overturning the social order (M. M. Bakhtin). Considering that “the concept of transgression proceeds from an assumption and a recognition of ‘that’ which can be transgressed” \textsuperscript{18}, the sphere of application of this term is not limited by the conceptualization of transcendent experience, and that is demonstrated by the study of C. Jenks, thus explaining the broad range of application of this term as a methodological unit of interdisciplinary studies of culture.

According to C. Jenks, “transgression becomes a primary postmodern topic and a responsible one”\textsuperscript{19}. It is the post-modernism that promoted a broad application of the concept of transgression in cultural research using the apparatus of philosophy in regard to phenomena that hadn’t been taken before as an object of serious research. Thus, the use of cultural-philosophical theories, in particular, the concept of transgression applied

\textsuperscript{13} Bataille G. The Accursed Share. Sacral Sociology. Moscow, 2006
\textsuperscript{14} Girard R. Violence and the Sacred. Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2010
\textsuperscript{17} Jenks C. Transgression. London, New York: Routledge, 2003
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid, p. 15
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid, p. 8
in this study to the phenomenon of fashion is largely the consequence of the post-modernist project of expansion of borders of philosophy in relation to cultural objects.

Therefore, in philosophical-cultural theories, which were used in this thesis, fashion is not the central object of analysis, yet their application in relation to this cultural phenomenon allowed us to reveal the mechanisms of its functioning. Among these theories are the studies of A. Kojève\(^{20}\), J. Lacan\(^{21}\), V. Mazin\(^{22}\), M. Foucault\(^{23}\), J. Habermas\(^{24}\), M. Douglas\(^{25}\), E. Goffman\(^{26}\), N. Elias\(^{27}\), S. Freud\(^{28}\), F. Jameson\(^{29}\), J. Derrida\(^{30}\), H.-G. Gadamer\(^{31}\).

In this thesis we also appeal to the studies on the history of the costume. Among the Russian researches one might name the works of M.N. Mertsalova\(^{32}\), F.F. Komissarzhevsky\(^{33}\), R.V. Zakharzhevskaya.\(^{34}\)

Within the English-speaking theoretical discourse, one should mention the Courtauld Institute of Art, specifically, the department of “History of Costume and Textile”, where the main methodological approach is the analysis of costume on the material of works of fine art. Opened on the initiative of M.-S. Newton\(^ {35}\) in the 1960s, it had laid the foundation for such approach to the history of costume that was to be found

32 Mertsalova M.N. History of Costume. Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1972
34 Zakharzhevskaya R.V. History of Costume: From Antiquity to Modern Times. 3rd Ed. Moscow: RIPOL Classic, 2005
in the works of such researchers as D. De Marly\textsuperscript{36}, A. Ribeiro\textsuperscript{37}, C. Breward\textsuperscript{38}, R. Arnold\textsuperscript{39}.

Since fashion is not limited to the material aspect of the costume but in its attempt to delineate the boundaries of the body becomes the field where meaning is produced—meanings related to the gender, age, ethnicity and other aspects determined by corporeality—in the field of fashion studies an interdisciplinary approach is also common. Cultural studies within this approach are to clarify the meanings constructed by the culture and the society by means of fashion. Among the institutions within which such research is generally concentrated one may mention the journal \textit{Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture} founded in 1997 by Valerie Steele, the series \textit{Dress, Body, Culture by Berg}, and some separate works published by \textit{Bloomsbury}. The cultural studies of the phenomenon of fashion includes the works of such authors as V. Steele\textsuperscript{40}, E. Wilson\textsuperscript{41}, J. Entwistle\textsuperscript{42}, D. Crane\textsuperscript{43}, C. Evans\textsuperscript{44}, E. Tseëlön\textsuperscript{45}, J. Craik\textsuperscript{46}.

The practices of creation, production, and consumption of clothes are also the object of fashion studies (D. Roche\textsuperscript{47} and P. Perrot\textsuperscript{48}). According to S. Vincent, such theoretical approach goes back to F. Braudel\textsuperscript{49} with his view on the “practices of clothing of some epoch or other as the key to understanding their underlying

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mentality. Aside from the works of D. Roche and P. Perrot, analysis of historical and cultural context of different practices of using the clothes and intuitions connected with it include the works by the following authors: S.-G. Heller, J. Quicherat, J. Jones, B. Lemire, C. Crowston and O.B. Weinstein.

To analyze the historical context of the functioning of the phenomenon of fashion, we refer to the works of the following authors: M. Pastoureau, G. Duby, A.Y. Gurevich, V.I. Dubrovsky, J. Le Goff, J.J. Roy, K.A. Ivanov, N. Saul, Ailes A., E. Man, M.S. Neklyudova, N.A. Khachaturyan, S.K. Tsaturova, V.V.

52 Quicherat J. Histoire du costume en France depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu’à la fin du XVIIIe siècle. Paris: Hachette, 1877
63 Ivanov K.A. Many-Faced Middle Ages. Moscow: Aleteia, 2001
67 Neklyudova M.S. Art of Private Life: the Age of Louis XIV. Moscow: OGI, 2008
The works of the following authors are also considered to be of importance for this dissertation for they present one of theoretical interpretations of the phenomenon of fashion: G. Simmel\textsuperscript{78}, G. Tarde\textsuperscript{79}, H. Spencer\textsuperscript{80}, W. Sombart\textsuperscript{81}, Th. Veblen\textsuperscript{82}, P. Bordieu\textsuperscript{83}, A.B. Gofman\textsuperscript{84}, L.Ya. Yatina\textsuperscript{85}, V.I. Tolstykh\textsuperscript{86}, R.H. Lotze\textsuperscript{87}, Q. Bell\textsuperscript{88}, H. Blumer\textsuperscript{89}, J.

\textsuperscript{70} Shishkin V.V. King’s Court and Political Struggle in France of XVI-XVII cc. St.-Petersburg: Eurasia, 2004
\textsuperscript{72} Hunt A. Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1996
\textsuperscript{74} Pepys S. The Diary of Samuel Pepys, complete [Available online]. URL: http://www.limpidsoft.com/a5/samuelpepys.pdf
\textsuperscript{75} Fitzsimmons M.P. From Artisan to Worker. Guilds, the French State, and the Organization of Labor, 1776-1821. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010
\textsuperscript{79} Tarde G. The Laws of Imitation. St.-Petersburg: F. Pavlenkov, 1892
\textsuperscript{82} Veblen Th. The Theory of Leisure Class. Moscow: Progress, 1984
\textsuperscript{84} Gofman A.B. Fashion and People. A New theory of fashionable behavior. 3rd Ed. St.-Petersburg: Piter, 2004
The methodology of this dissertation research is based on an interdisciplinary approach that implies engagement of research tools of such areas of humanities as philosophy, social history and culture studies. In order to study the key classical and modern theoretical concepts of fashion, analytical approach and contextual analysis will be used. The phenomenon of vestimentary fashion as a phenomenon of history and culture is analyzed in the dissertation with the use of historical and genetic and comparative historical approaches. In the analysis of mechanisms of transgression of fashion a systemic approach is used that implies the use of a structural and functional approach and combines elements of semiology and social phenomenology.

The Personal Contribution of the Author in Problem Development

The contribution to the research field is follows:

1. For the first time the question is asked of transgression in the fashion as the source of possible novelties and changes, and the notion of ‘mechanisms of transgression’ is introduced that allows for an explanation of how the individual vestimentary statement becomes the new sartorial norm of the costume.

2. The phenomenon of fashion for the first time is analyzed in comparison with the ritual as the mechanism of appropriation of ‘transitional states’ of society.

3. Author’s reconstruction of the Western European fashion is proposed through the lens of such vestimentary logics as the livery and the label, which allowed for a new viewpoint on the problem of correlation of the individual and the social in

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91 Davis F. Fashion, culture, and identity. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992
92 Flügel J.C. The psychology of Clothes. London: Hogarth Press, 1930
the fashion and to explicate this correlation by analyzing the subordination of the ‘private’ and the ‘social’ body.

The theoretical significance of this study lies in the systematization of historical and theoretical material on the phenomenon of fashion, and in the expansion of its theoretical discourse as the result of using philosophical and culture study theories as analytical tools hitherto not applied to this phenomenon of culture.

**Statements to be defended***

1. A fashion novelty is always a transgression of the existing sartorial norms. Only special categories of people have the right to make such a transgression that enables them to express, by means of clothing, something that goes beyond the borders of representation of their social status, i.e. their individuality.

2. In the Middle Ages, such a right was held by high-ranking persons belonging to the knightly estate, who, by means of the livery translated their individual vestimentary preferences to the clothes of persons in their service thus expanding the borders of presence of their social body in the public space.

3. With the formation of the bureaucratic apparatus of the state, there occurs the transformation of the individual insignia of the livery, as a means of spreading the latest fashions, to depersonalized status signs of the uniform expressing the fact of delegation of power from a monarch or other authority. It resulted in the costume within the political sphere being liberated from ‘fashion’ connotations.

4. When the phenomenon of fashion ceased to function as the main means of representing the social structure of the society in nineteenth century, fashion transformed into no more than an esthetical phenomenon and became a sign of commercial culture. The main means for the latest fashions to spread was now the label, a sign of individual taste of not a high-ranking person but of a ‘producer’ of fashion (the couturier). The affiliation to the semantics of the label was effected not within the structure of service, as was the case of the livery, but within consumption as the new economic model of behavior of the fashion subject.

5. In the second half of twentieth century the label ceased to function as the foundation of the semantics of fashion. This was manifested by the emergence of a new fashion subject personified by subcultural movements. In the process of consumption that subject appealed to a multitude of Others, embodied in the labels, and in this way demonstrated rejection from following the dictate of the individual taste of the Other as the only possible justification of its social identity.
Contents of the Dissertation

The Introduction provides the justification of the importance of the topic, looks into the current level of research, identifies the goal, the subject and the object of research, states the tasks and explains the novelty and practical importance of the work.

Chapter 1. Theoretical Framework of the Analysis of Fashion is dedicated to an analysis of the main fashion theories which reveals its ambivalent nature and raises the question of the role of individuality in fashion. Paragraph 1.1. Fashion as an ambivalent phenomenon puts down basic theoretical approaches towards analysis of fashion as an ambivalent phenomenon. Paragraph 1.2. From classical concepts of fashion towards their interpretation in the modern theories analyzed key notions used in the classical concepts emerging in the late 19th – early 20th century, and their subsequent interpretation in the contemporary studies. Paragraph 1.2.1. Phenomenon of fashion and the rise of individualism dwells on the approaches of G. Tarde and H. Spencer who point out the role of imitation as the defining mechanism of the phenomenon of fashion, thus proposing one of the first models of studying the fashion as an ambivalent phenomenon. In the Paragraph 1.2.2. “Fashion, an offspring of capitalism” this phenomenon is analyzed by W. Sombart both as a mechanism of the market, and as a specific proper market of vestimentary goods. In this paragraph, works of such authors as P. Bourdieu, H. Blumer, and J. Baudrillard are also analyzed for the connection of the fashion. Paragraph 1.2.3. Class model of interpretation of the phenomenon of fashion: from the ambivalent phenomenon to the sign of consumerist culture is dedicated to the analysis of principal proposals held by classic representatives of the theories of “systems of fashion” that became the foundation for the conceptual framework of the ‘populist model’ (F. Davis) of analysis of the phenomenon of fashion. In particular, in this paragraph the notion of the ambivalent nature of fashion is focused on, the analysis of which by G. Simmel still remains a fundamental study of the question, as well as the role of consumption as a tool of constructing one’s own identity, the basics of theoretical justification of which were laid by T. Veblen.

Chapter 2. The New “Ritual” of Western European Culture focuses on the phenomenon of fashion in the medieval society. Paragraph 2.1. Fashion as the mechanism of appropriation of the otherness looks into the basic theories of the origin of the phenomenon of the Western European fashion and gives a historical and cultural justification of one of the viewpoints on the emergence of the phenomenon of fashion in the middle XIV c., which is one of the most common among researches. This paragraph provides an explanation for the ambivalent nature of fashion that becomes its integral attribute in connection with the change of the status of transgressive elements in
the medieval society, which facilitated the transformation of fashion into a new ‘ritual’ of culture. The mixed attitude to the body, brought in with the Christianity, may be considered as another source of the developed ambivalence of fashion: the idea of the divine incarnation within Christianity made possible the discourse of the expression of individual identity within the boundaries of the body, the forms of representation of which are determined by fashion by means of stating every time the new boundaries of the social body.

Thus, the phenomenon of the Western European fashion characterized by the emphasis on the boundaries of the body, emerged in the second half of XIV c., proclaiming itself as an important cultural mechanism replacing the ritual forms. As a result, changes in the fashion, its class determination and orientation at the new is backed not only by its vestimentary component proper, they rather become indispensable conditions for the existence of fashion as a new ‘ritual’ of culture, within which the permanent change of the boundaries of the ‘social body’ (the remnant of the various bodily manipulations of the body inherent in the ritual) is but a tool of implementation of fashion as the mechanism of appropriation of the ‘transitional’ states of society.

Paragraph 2.2. “Social Body” as a form of violation of the medieval fashion develops the proposition of the close connection of fashion and the ritual by analyzing possible forms of violence within the phenomenon of fashion. As the starting point, the idea of the phenomenon of fashion as one of the tools of the ‘civilizing process’ (N. Elias) was taken: it is aimed at overtaking the ‘power of the individual’ and the manifestations of their private body by the ‘power of society’ (S. Freud) by means of dictating fashion canons of the new boundaries of the ‘social body’ that expresses the cultural positions and social requirements towards an individual. Therefore, the fashionable dress that oppresses and distorts the natural contours of the body may be regarded as a sort of violence in relation to the private body.

In the Paragraph 2.3. Knightly Tournament: the ‘liminal’ space for the manifestation of individual insignias the tournament is analyzed as the most representative form of violence in the Middle Ages, which, due to its isolation from the social order is seen as a ‘liminal’ space (V. Turner), wherein the manifestation of individual preferences in the costume becomes possible as well as overthrowing of the meanings of vestimentary codes prevailing in the public sphere. The establishment of fashion as a social mechanism of normalization of bodies, i.e. as a civilizing tool, which supposed the impossibility of manifestation of the sartorial ‘power of the individual’ within the society had made possible the existence of individual vestimentary statements only in the spaces liberated from the dictate of social regulations, i.e. in the knightly tournament.
Paragraph 2.4. **Livery as the means of replicating of fashion novelties in the feudal system of service:** within the social order, the livery became a form of overcoming the transgressive character of the individual vestimentary statement, for the livery is marked with insignias of the Other, a high-ranking person. By replicating these insignias to the clothing of lower ranking persons the Other’s sartorial preferences surpassed their transgressive nature accounted for by their singularity. Thus the livery was not only the means of representing the social relations of service but of replicating the latest fashions, too.

The feudal discourse of social relations that proposed rejection from the self in favor of the Other in many things predetermined the specifics of the way in which the phenomenon of fashion functioned for it also implied alienation from one’s own body to sartorial forms of the ‘social body’ dictated by the Other. R. Barthes mentions that “clothing guarantees the passage from sentience to meaning”\(^\text{100}\), for “as pure sentience, the body cannot signify”.\(^\text{101}\) Therefore, fashion, a concentration of meaning, becomes the means of designation of private bodies, an instrument of their visibility by means of the Other imposing the new boundaries of the social body and the forms of social identity related therewith.

Chapter 3. The Phenomenon of Fashion in the Court Society is dedicated to an analysis of the specific ways in which the cultural phenomenon functioned in the court society where the transformation of the mechanism of the livery resulted in the assertion of the status as the main signified of the costume during this historical period. Paragraph 3.1. **Livery – a vestimentary form of expression of authority:** considering the fact that the livery, aside from showing one’s having rejected their identity in favor of the Other, is a sign showing and registering the relationship of service, the process of replicating of individual insignias becomes one of the tools (as shown by S. Vincent) of the establishment of the political body. That is, the monarch expands of boundaries of its corporeality in the social space by means of individuals demonstrating the monarch’s insignia within the court society thus transforming the individual taste into public dogma.

In the Paragraph 3.2. **Uniform as a means of surpassing the Other’s individual insignias** an attempt was made to trace the origin of the semantics of depersonalized servitude and subordination characteristic of the uniform in the context of establishment of military uniform in the regular army where the process of depersonalization of individual insignias shown in the livery was most manifested.

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In the Paragraph 3.3. The Court Society: fashion as expression of status distinctions an attempt was performed to trace the process of formation of the political body of the state in the course of whose development the vestimentary forms expressing authority became less caused by the ‘fashion’ connotations and individual sartorial preferences of a particular person of authority. Their liberation from the dictate of the individual insignias of the Other facilitated establishment of such vestimentary logic as ‘class’ uniform that became the tool of personalization of the wearer, considering the inalienable capabilities of the wearer, the control over which was a condition for the economic and political efficiency of functioning of the political body.

As the space for the representation of status differences, the court society implied necessary existence of laws that would legitimize those distinctions. In the Paragraph 3.4. Sumptuary laws and their role in the functioning of fashion within the court society focuses on the purpose of the sumptuary laws and the role of the sovereign in the society’s complying with the hierarchical differences, for that person ‘cultivates’ the required model of vestimentary behavior in a more efficient way than do the orders: a strong example of this is Louis XI. This confirms the connection existing in the court society between the fashion and the forming political body personified by the monarch.

Paragraph 3.5. Overcoming the status semantics of the costume. French Revolution (1789-1799) focuses on the trends of the late XVIII c. aimed at overcoming the status semantics of the costume that found their logical conclusion in the French Revolution which signified the collapse of the entire vestimentary system of the Old Regime.

Chapter 4. The Bourgeois Society: a Field of Development of Individual Taste focuses on the analysis of establishment of individual taste as the main semantic unit of the costume, the emergence of which became possible with the development of the bourgeois society with its postulate of the individual’s inalienable capabilities as the means of the individual’s identification which did not call for channels of vestimentary expression. In the Paragraph 4.1. Ephemerality of fashion: individual taste as the new semantic unit of the costume an attempt is made to trace the genealogy of individual taste as the semantic unit of costume by looking into the historical and cultural context of the various forms of its manifestation.

Paragraph 4.1.1. Femininity and frivolity as main attributes of the new culture of fashion analyzes the process whereby the domain of fashion came to be associated with a woman having transformed into something against the nature of the male sex. In the Paragraph 4.1.2. French Salon of XVIII c.: the space of establishment of non-vestimentary forms of individual identification the French salon is analyzed as a means of formation of the new public sphere in the terminology of J. Habermas, which came to
replace the aristocratic ethos of the court society. The salon becomes a cultural phenomenon within which, instead of the vestimentary representation as the main ‘front’ in the society of the Old Regime, new forms of individual identification in the public sphere as speech, talents and other unalienable capabilities are formed. So the salon from the space of pleasant pastime alternative to the court turned in XVIII c. into the field of critical rationality opposed to it.

Paragraph 4.1.3. Shirt dress, a sign of overthrowing of the Old Regime’s vestimentary values. As the sphere of the ephemeral identified with the female sex fashion originated in the late XVIII c. This gender segregation of social roles of men and women was manifested, among other things, in the appearance of such an item of women’s clothing as a shirt dress which symbolized exclusion of women from the social and political sphere that was accessible only for the representatives of the stronger sex. Therefore, this paragraph attempts at an analysis of the historical and cultural context of the appearance of the shirt dress as the sign of identification of women with the private sphere and the body as the main form of their social identity.

Paragraph 4.1.4. Fashion magazine as a tool of forming the semantics of fashion analyzes the role of the magazine in the sphere of vestimentary fashion within which the novelties, having ceased to be determined by social and political connotations, began to need a verbal discursive field created by the magazine. By giving them a symbolic value of ‘being in fashion’ the magazine turned them into objects of desire. In this way, the liberation of fashion from the social determinatives of its semantics led to the ‘locking’ of fashion in itself and its becoming an ephemeral sphere with its own institutions, one of which became the fashion magazine, a ‘translator’ of meanings of fashion changing from season to season.

Paragraph 4.1.5. Dandy: a new attitude to the corporeality in the sphere of men’s costume looks at the image of the dandy to analyze the changing attitude towards the private body, which was practically invisible in the court society with its total socialization of all spheres of life and the dominant visual representation, and, therefore, was actually non-existent. In the case of women’s fashion it was the discourse formed by the fashion journals from the late XVIII c. that constructed the new semantics of the costume as a form of expression of individual taste. In the case of men’s attire the very image of the dandy in its various manifestations was the triumph of individual taste that was expressed in a special attention towards the body, which, in a way, marked the cult of individuality as opposed to the social meanings of the costume prevailing during the Old Regime neglected the private body per se.

Paragraph 4.1.6. “Clean” body: a rehabilitation of the private body in the practices of fashion of the bourgeois society finds that the ‘rehabilitation’ of the private
body in the public opinion in the nineteenth century was accompanied by the expansion of physiognomic theories that accepted the body as the true form of human identity, and of practices of hygiene, popularization of which also indicated the shift of the focus from the external to the internal.

Bringing the corporeality as the truest form of identity to the forefront, bringing of detail as a new means of marking social distinctions along with the category of ‘cleanliness’ emphasized by F. Nietzsche facilitated establishment of the new semantics of costume. Thitherto unseen in the history of Western European fashion, the manifestation of the natural shapes of feminine body appeared in the neoclassical fashion, the increased value of the lingerie dominating the outer dress, the gradually implemented practices of hygiene – all these manifestations of the private body, along with the emphasis of the role of the rationality in the identification of a person as a sign of the established public sphere (J. Habermas) became the new means whereby the individual expressed their identity. This was the new view of a person: it revealed the human body and rationality as the unalienable forms of social identity, and it determined such a new notion in the fashion as individual taste as a new semantic unit of the costume.

Paragraph 4.2. Who rules fashion: a pre-history to the phenomenon of the ‘couturier’ focused on how the process of creation of latest fashions became a professional competence. In this paragraph the author looks at the guilds that preceded the couturier in their role of the trendsetter of fashion and which were considered to be, to some extent, responsible for fashion novelties starting from the second half of XVIII c.

Paragraph 4.2.1. The guild of modistes and its role in the transformation of the vestimentary system of the Old Regime dwells on the image of the modiste that appeared in the late XVIII c. and embodied in their work the principles that in essence contradicted the regulations of the guild system. Paragraph 4.2.2. The tailor: from a major manufacturer of clothes to the connoisseur of social distinctions is dedicated to the guild of tailors the specific of whose work (customer-made pieces) facilitated the fact that after the French Revolution and the collapse of the vestimentary system of the Old Regime it was the tailor who became the owner of the unique knowledge about the subtleties in the representation of the social status which turned his suits, even his name into the source of the social status for the clients. Thus the images of the modiste and the tailor show the process of the shift of emphasis—from the wearer of fashionable clothes to their maker—in the question of the authorship of fashion novelties.

Paragraph 4.3. Label as the basis of fashion semantics in the bourgeois society analyzes the process of the label’s establishment as the new basis of fashion semantics
in the bourgeois society. Paragraph 4.3.1. *The couturier’s signature: identification of fashion with the sphere of art*: the process of institutionalization of the profession of ‘creator of fashions’ finds its logical conclusion in the image of the couturier who in the public sphere tried to identify with the image of the artist, which assisted identification of fashion with the sphere of art. The desire to appropriate the connotations related to art could be interpreted as an expression of the process of aestheticization of the phenomenon of fashion on the border of 19th-20th century, which may be viewed as a consequence of the liberation of fashion from being determined with socially determined meanings. It facilitated the conversion of fashion into a sign of subjective experience or, in other words, of individual taste that was proclaimed by the couturier as a manifestation of creative genius. The label became the sign of the couturier’s individual taste that referenced in its semantics to the signature of an artist. But the label gained social recognition only having been recognized by the individuals whose high social status legitimized the product of the creative genius of couturiers as socially accepted phenomena. Recognition by opinion leaders made the label—the sign of the couturier’s individual taste—amass the weight of the social status and thus become a marker of class distinctions.

Paragraph 4.3.2. *Models as the ‘testers’ of the couturier’s individual taste in the ‘liminal’ spaces*: since the couturier’s individual taste had no social interpretation of its own, demonstration of latest fashions was done mostly on models, whose depersonalized identity allowed them to act as ‘test subjects’ for the couturier’s creations, to ‘take a risk’ of social resentment when demonstrating, for the first time, latest fashions. It was this socially ‘incomplete’ status of fashion novelties that made possible their demonstration only in the ‘liminal’ spaces: at the races, in salons or department stores, within which the social norms of vestimentary representation are not so strict to be complied with.

Paragraph 4.3.3. *Replication in fashion: establishment of department stores as spaces of ready-made fashionable clothes* looks at how department stores that replicated the slightly altered models of Parisian couturiers assisted change in the attitude towards ready-made clothes, to which the attribute of ‘fashionable’ could never have been applied before.

Paragraph 4.4. *Consumption as a new model of constructing the social identity in the bourgeois society* is dedicated to consumption as a new form of acquiring of fashion novelties that came to replace the servitude and in that way indicated the shift of the fashionable subject from a serving subject to a consuming subject, which was in no small degree assisted by the department store analyzed in Paragraph 4.4.1. *Department store as the space of establishment of the consumer as new fashion subject*. The department store embodied the new practices of social
pastime for women for whom consumption became a form of construction of their social identity.

Paragraph 4.4.2. **Overthrowing the dictate of the Other personified by the couturier: sovereignty of fashion subject:** the subcultural movements of the second half of the twentieth century demonstrated the possibility of expression of individual sartorial preferences without intermediating instances and signs of approval from the Other. Representatives of youth movements manifesting the ‘protest’ against the established system of values by means of clothes which they tried to customize in many ways thus converting consumption into an active process of construction of identity, and in that way demonstrated disregard towards signs of recognition from the Other which had hitherto been the grounds of their social identity. This period saw the emergence of the image of the designer replacing the couturier. The designer’s role was not in the dictate of fashionable forms but in the reproduction of the wearers’ preferences in the created collections; this was also the consequence of the appearance of the fashion subject identified by its independence in the refusal from unconditional following the signs of recognition imposed by the Other.

The **Conclusion** draws on the results and summarizes the main conclusions of this dissertation research.

The notion of the ‘mechanisms of transgression’ introduced in this research was to register the structure of formation of the fashion semantics determined by the recognition of the Other (a privileged class, a couturier), which within the vestimentary logics (the livery and the label) allowed an explanation of how the transgressive in its singular manifestation individual sartorial statement became the new vestimentary code of costume.

Despite the fact that the livery and the label represent the vestimentary logics describing the mechanism of distribution of fashion novelties in the different epochs, the attitude towards corporeality formed within the feudal logic and existing in the bourgeois society remains unchanged: within the structure of labor relations the servant (slave) alienated the body in favor of the Other and was devoid of the right to dispose of it, the subject of fashion in the process of consumption becomes alienated from the body as well submitting it to the prevailing signs embodied in the labels. Therefore the question of the identity of the fashion subject is always that of the subject’s corporeality.

Therefore, one should consider the starting point of emergence of the phenomenon of the Western European fashion characterized by incessant changes occurring due to transformations of the boundaries of the social body, that historical period when the technical skill of the tailors and the cultural context became such that they made possible the identification of the bodily borders in the clothes, which, in the
opinion of P. Post, occurred in the middle of XIV c., when “for the first time the human body was presented for the other to see, with bravery and no fear”.

The body, as the main object of transformations in the fashion, specifically its social representation is something that does not belong directly to the wearer, the borders of the representation of whose social body are determined by the Other (a privileged class and, later, a couturier), who in the transgression of the accepted vestimentary norms of the costume set the new canon of the social representation of the body.

From the second half of twentieth century the figure of the Other in the determination of the semantics of fashion becomes less and less important, making it difficult to describe the phenomenon of fashion within some vestimentary logic or other due to the emergence of the sovereign fashion subject not needing the individual insignias of the Other in order to construct a proper social identity.

Being a social phenomenon, even with the appearance of the sovereign subject fashion in its semantics always implies the figure of the Other, the figure that embodies a set of norms and requirements made by the society towards a private body. In this sense, the ‘individuality’ of the sovereign fashion subject, the right of disposing of one’s own body is determined by the fact that the identity may not be reduced to a set of vestimentary norms imposed by the Other in the form of an indisputable dictate, or by a person of authority, or by a couturier, but is constructed in a mosaic way implying references to a multitude of Others represented by some labels or other. It is in this context that one may speak about the individuality of a fashion subject in the vestimentary sphere of fashion whose social identity constructed in the process of consumption always appeals to insignias of the Other (labels) in order to become socially visible.

Thus, it is the figure of the Other that sets the norms of social representation of the body which every time get re-interpreted by the new fashion, belonging to which by means of alienation of one’s own identity becomes the basis of becoming a fashion body that was analyzed in this research through the lens of mechanisms of transgression—the livery and the label—the analysis of which revealed the way in which the individual vestimentary statement of the Other becomes a new sartorial norm of the costume.

**Publications**

**Main publications:**

2. The Court Fashion: Status as the Main Signified of Costume // Chelovek. 2017. № 3. P. 92-105