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Construction of Gender through Fashion and Dressing

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Abstract

During the last two centuries, the definitions of gender were bounded by increasingly blurred lines, expressing the cultural uncertainty surrounding masculinity and feminity. Besides it is known that gender is a social construction (and not only determined by biological sex). Two basics social - cultural factors that shape the gender are dressing and fashion. A chorography (especially the last two centuries) shows these different constructions of masculinity and femininity. The battle for the use of trousers by women (from Coco Channel and stars of Hollywood Greta Garbo, Marlene Dietrich and Katharine Hepburn play a significant role) confirm the different treatment of male and female. Fashion, which in essence is the fantasy of escape from the typical role of individuals, guiding and shaping the male and female roles, with the major fashion designers to play the key role in shaping it. Dress movements such as Macaroni (1760 - 1780), Baeu, (early 18th century), Dandies (early 19th century) and Mods (20th century) and various teen subcultures show differentiation trends of certain groups. Unisex style has tried to conceal gender differences showing a masquerade of equality for all (with the hippies and Ravers to have the basic role). On the contrary androgynous style seeks to unite the male and the female body, leading to a return to a primordial cosmic unity that will appease the gender confusion and anxiety. But eventually style and androgynous Unisex highlight the differences between the sexes.

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`ROLE OF FASHION AND CLOTHING IN CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER IDENTITIES' To be blessed as a male or female in any community is more than an easy natural reality. It is a natural reality with social and cultural significance. Fashion and clothing are intertwined with each other in creating a gendered-structure of society predicated on the outlook of clothed human body. Indicatively, most studies of contemporary fashion emphasise female fashion and marginalise attention to male dress." Twigg (2007) wrote "Fashion distorted the natural body through subordinating practices like high-heels, corsets and objectifying fashions that reduced women to objects of a sexualising gaze, rendering them unable to act effectively in the world.