Exploring the Intersections of Fashion, Film and Media

Edited by

Elisabeth Castaldo Lunden

Introduction
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ELIZABETH CASTALDO LUNDEN, *Stockholm University*
Guest Editor

The establishment of multi-level programs in several universities around the globe reflects the growing significance of Fashion Studies as a scholarly field. Elizabeth Wilson argues that Fashion Studies has traditionally been a branch of art history and, as such, it

> has followed its methods of attention to detail. As with furniture, paintings and ceramics, a major part of its project has been accurate dating of costume, assignment in some cases of 'authorship', and an understanding of the actual process of the making of a garment, [a practice that has often locked fashion history] into the conservative ideologies of art history as a whole (Wilson 2007, 48).

However, the relatively recent expansion of Fashion Studies as an academic field has broadened the interest to engage with other areas of study. While some regard Fashion Studies as a new field of research, scholars from various disciplines within the humanities and social sciences have immersed themselves in the study of fashion, costume, and dress for decades despite the absence of a properly established academic program to encompass their interest. The interdisciplinary approach taken by these programs encourages the notion that perspectives and methods from a wide variety of disciplines inform research in Fashion Studies. Such is the case of fashion, film, and media.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the film industry has played a crucial role in the promotion and representation of fashion. Likewise, fashion's mediated character through newsreels, television, newspapers, magazines, photography, and even paintings has facilitated the historical study of costume and dress. Several film scholars have devoted much attention to the conflation of fashion and film. They have explored the fundamental role of cinema in the production, promotion, and representation of fashion, as well as its role in stimulating consumption (See, for example, Gaines and Herzog 1990; Staiger 1990; Higashi 1994; Desser 2000; McDonald 2010; Fuller 2011; Munich 2011; Bruzzi 2012; Church Gibson 2013; McLean 2016; Paulicelli, et al. 2017; among others). However, far from being an exhausted topic, the intersections between fashion, film, and media studies offer a vast potential for research that is increasingly becoming of interest among scholars. Part of the academic potential rests in the multitude of topics to cover, varied angles and methodological approaches these enable, interlinked with questions of identity, class, race, culture, and industrial practices that fashion, film, and media studies share alike.

This special issue belongs to a series of activities under the umbrella denomination "Studying and Exploring the Intersections of Fashion, Film, and Media Studies," created in 2014 by film scholar Anne Bachmann and I. Our goal was to promote an interdisciplinary perspective to the study of fashion, film, and media. This venture was launched with two activities at the 2015 edition of the annual conference of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies, in Montreal. The first activity consisted of a panel featuring the on-going projects of four Ph.D. students working with these combined fields.[1] The second activity consisted of a workshop, in which presentations opened to discussions addressing how the use of archival material and film fan magazines, combined with film studies' methodological approach to history, could benefit fashion research.[2] This workshop expanded into a Symposium at Stockholm University featuring established scholars who pioneered research in these fields of studies combined. This special issue of *Networking Knowledge* seeks to include early career researchers in such conversation, broadening the network of scholars and the combined field of expertise. Since its inception, a historical approach has been encouraged by the founders of this project. Yet, the semiotic roots used for textual analysis of costume design shall not be overlooked. In this sense, this special issue intends to present a panorama of the heterogeneous nature of studies in these interconnected fields.

In terms of media, fan magazines have been sumptuous sources for scholarly interest for studying the early intersections between the fashion and film industries, as well as for tracing discourses of femininity, fandom, and stardom. For decades, film scholars like Richard Dyer, Jane Gaines, and Anthony Slide, among others, have popularized the use of fan magazines as sources for their groundbreaking studies on stardom, fashion, and fandom (Gaines 1990; Dyer 2004; Slide 2010). Film scholar Tamar Jeffers McDonald, for example, is an advocate of the study of fan magazines as contributors to the historical enterprises of gender, stardom, fashion and film (McDonald 2013; McDonald 2016). These magazines, predominantly catering a female audience, had broader reach than any fashion publication of their time. Awareness about the importance of studying film fan magazines has significantly grown in the past 5 years, in great part due to the launch of *The Media History Digital Library*.[3]

Julie Nakama's study focuses on a transitional period for film fan magazines, in which discourses of femininity and adequacy were challenged by an emergent celebrity culture prone to scandal. Nakama follows the media coverage and treatment of Elizabeth Taylor between 1960 and 1965 to "understand the changing attitudes about modes of femininity during the period." (Nakama 2018, 1). Besides tabloid interest in her agitated love life, discourses about her health became central to giving readers an intimate access to Taylor's

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[1] The panel was titled "Industry Crossovers: Key Women in Fashion, Film, and Media," with Michelle Tolini Finamore as respondent, SCMS Conference, Montreal.

[2] The workshop featured presentations by Tamar Jeffers McDonald, Jenny Romero, and Elizabeth Castaldo Lundén. *Because Fashion Matters: Studying the Intersections of Fashion, Film, and Media*, SCMS Conference, Montreal, 29th March 2015.

[3] The Media History project made it possible for scholars around the world to access digitized magazines and trade paper, organized in a user-friendly platform that enables direct searches as well as page-by-page browsing in a PDF simulation of the analogue experience. See The Media History Digital Library, available at http://mediahistoryproject.org/

unknown sides. The body has been a contested territory of ideological survey and, therefore, of interest throughout the humanities at large. Scholars from fashion and film studies have focused on the study of the body in relationship to fashion, film, and media reflecting upon body ideals, gender, movement, identity, race, spectacle, and adornment, among others (Kawamura 2004, Twigg 2013, Entwistle 2015, among others).[4] Nakama's study also belongs to this group of studies by looking at the media treatment given to Taylor's health issues and other bodily matters.

The production of so-called quality television series has inherited the intertextual potential of early cinema, functioning as a disseminator of fashion images for the mass audience. It has also become an ideal scenario for product placement practices. Departing from this premise, Rachel Velody explores a case study of Olivia Pope, the main character in the series *Scandal* (ABC, 2012-). Using the concepts of dandy-flâneuse and self-fashioning, the author embarks on a semiotic analysis, reflecting upon the representation of identity, race, and class. Through her study, Velody looks into the character's appropriation of the discourses of predominantly white-European fashion brands through conspicuous consumption. In Velody's argument, the character of Olivia empowers herself both through the appropriation of these self-fashioning elements and through her sexualized "porn princess" body that integrates her into a white post-feminist identity. These ideas are reinforced by the cross-media hybridization of fashion advertising and fan forums that rapidly capture the essence of these product placement practices enhancing the fashionable nature of the main character.

The cross-influence of artistic inspiration has been subject of debate at least since the days of the Hollywood Studio System. The impact of Hollywood costume design on fashion (and vice-versa) has been broadly discussed in popular media and scholarship, despite the difficulties to support such arguments empirically. Aesthetic inspiration has not been limited to design *per-se*, but also to how new technologies can inspire other forms of cultural production in a cross-media manner. Leonie Häsler takes a technological angle linking the use of stereoscopy for fashion photography to the release of Alfred Hitchcock's *Dial M for Murder* (Warner Brothers, 1954), in which this technology was applied. The study draws from the image collection of the Swiss textile and clothes company HANRO. This cross-media study argues for a formal language of fashion identifiable in the use of this technology. In discussing the nature of the research method, Häsler brings informative insights about the ephemeral nature of archival material, even in the case of a company's home archive. Acknowledging the limitations of arguing for the inspiration/appropriation of aesthetic elements, the study suggests a connection based on the contemporaneity of Hitchcock's film release and the production of this fashionable imagery for this textile company using visual analysis. The paper contributes to a broader network of knowledge that addresses how Hollywood's transnational power has worked as a propagator of ideas, and how cinema at large has inspired fashion photography throughout history.

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[4] The Domitor conference, for example, dedicated its 2016 edition to a full program focusing on corporeality. "Vicera, Skin, and Physical Form: Corporeality and Early Cinema," Domitor Conference, 14-17 June 2016, Stockholm, Sweden. Program available online at https://domitor.org/conference/2016-stockholm-conference/

The study of fashion and costume design is often linked to discourses of national identity, particularly when addressed from an industrial standpoint. Much of the available scholarship addressing this conflation of ideas focuses on the United States, France, and Italy (Landy 1986; Paulicelli 2004; Schweitzer 2008; Arnold 2009; Pouillard 2011; Pouillard 2016; Lundén 2018). Chiara Faggella enters in dialogue with Italian scholarship through a case study of the films *Il Signor Max* (Astra Film, 1937) and *I Grandi Magazzini* (Amato-Era Film, 1939). In her paper, Faggella pinpoints at the complexities of negotiating and translating—figuratively and literally—the ambivalent relationship of Italian Cinema under the fascist regime vis-à-vis French and Anglo-American cultural and ideological production. Central to this study is the promotion of austerity discourses during the interwar period, as a sign of a national identity of resistance against the Western fetishized commodities. In a similar vein, yet situated during the Cold War, Kateryna Novikova presents her study of Soviet Cinema between the 1950s and the 1980s. Novikova addresses questions of class, communist propaganda, and the increasing penetration of Western ideals of fashionable lifestyles that influenced a demand for social differentiation and personal identity construction. Novikova accentuates the role of popular culture to shape perception and taste, in this case, in regards to acceptable and non-acceptable fashions and lifestyles. Both studies provide a refreshing voice to complement the bulk of U.S-centered scholarship, as well as a much-needed historical perspective to the simplified hegemonic discourses about communist regimes as isolated, homogenous, and hyper-coherent propaganda machines lacking any foreign presence of challenging ideas.

Even though the original intention of this special issue was to explore the study of fashion rather than costume, the vast amount of contributions focusing on costume design in response to the call for papers speak for the need to conduct more research in costume as an under-researched area. Due to the visual nature of the topic, publications focusing on costume design tend to fall into the coffee-table format that attracts collectors but rarely contributes to scholarly interest. Whether film or fashion scholars are to take upon this task is not up for discussion. The study of costume offers a broad opportunity for disciplinary collaboration in which tools coming from various disciplines can contribute to building up a substantial corpus of scholarly work. Costume design is the quintessential intersection of fashion, film, and studies.

As a closing remark to this introduction, a special acknowledgment should go to all the peer-reviewers who generously invested their time and effort for this special issue, to Patricia Prieto-Blanco for her promptness and support throughout this process, and to Natalie Snoyman, who participated in the initial stages of this special issue.

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Biography

Elizabeth Castaldo Lundén is a Doctor in Fashion Studies from the Department of Media Studies at Stockholm University. She holds a Master in Cinema Studies from the same institution and a Licentiate degree in Public Relations from Universidad Argentina de la Empresa. Her dissertation *Oscar Night in Hollywood: Fashioning the Red-Carpet From the Roosevelt Hotel to International Media* is a historical study of the Academy Awards' red-carpet phenomenon. Her research interests include: fashion, film, and costume design; public relations, advertising, and marketing practices in the fashion and entertainment industries; stardom and celebrity culture; mass media and globalization.

e-mail: elizabeth.lunden@ims.su.se

Elizabeth Taylor and Illness as a Negotiation of Femininity in Fan Magazines, 1960-1965

JULIE NAKAMA, *University of Pittsburgh*

ABSTRACT

Fan magazines, primarily aimed at female audiences, provide a lens through which to analyze attitudes about female sexuality. In the 1960s, Elizabeth Taylor was o of the most popular stars in fan magazines. While coverage of her often focused on issues related to her marriages and children, another narrative about her health dominated headlines in the early part of the decade. Speculation about Taylor's illnesses stood in for a larger discourse about female appetites, ambition, and containment. This illness discourse gave fans graphic access to Taylor's body in ways that were gruesome rather than erotic as descriptions of her physical maladies reached ecstatic proportions. Public discourse about Taylor's health functioned in complex ways that affirmed and challenged ideologically conservative constructions of femininity and motherhood. This essay explores Taylor's appearances in fan magazines during the period 1960-1965 to examine the relationship between the star and notions of ambition, illness, and domesticity.

KEYWORDS

Celebrity, Fandom, Magazines, Stardom, Feminity

Since their earliest days, fan magazines have appealed to female spectators through content and advertising focused on stars, fashion, and beauty rituals (Slide 2010, 66). While these publications tell us much about the film industry and its products, they also tell us about ideologically dominant conceptions of femininity circulating in public discourse. In the 1950s and 1960s, femininity was closely aligned with notions of domesticity, which manifested in fan magazines through intense speculation about stars' marriages, divorces, and pregnancies. As with other women's magazines of the period, notions of feminine domesticity were linked to capitalism, patriotism, and Americanness in complex ways (Walker 2000, 16). During the mid-century, this constellation of meanings was part of a cultural landscape that was rapidly shifting. One way to analyze these shifts is to trace the treatment of a major star during this period to identify the cultural attitudes that accompanied her. This essay therefore considers the discourse surrounding Elizabeth Taylor in American fan magazines from 1960-1965 to understand changing public attitudes about modes of femininity during the period. Rather than provide a model for accepted feminine social behavior, like her one-time rival Debbie Reynolds, Taylor instead embodied feminine extremes. This essay argues that through narratives of illness, fan

magazines imagined Taylor's body as a contested space in which conflicting notions of sexuality and reproduction played out through a sustained focus on Taylor's health and illness. Discourses about her physical state were tied to notions of female sexuality, domesticity, and modes of consumption. As Taylor became increasingly associated with her outsized appetites, narrative strategies used in fan magazines demonstrate the limits of public tolerance regarding female pleasure and the ways in which female sexuality and ambition were contained.

Female Readerships and Public Discourses on Femininity in Women's Periodicals

Tamar Jeffers McDonald notes that fan magazines were important to film studios because they engendered awareness of stars within fan communities leading up to, during, and beyond a star's appearance in a movie. As such, they also proved to be a valuable resource that enabled fans to revisit news and photos of stars in magazines as much as they wished, sustaining their interest until the star reemerged in another film or magazine spread (McDonald 2013, 35).[1] Anthony Slide writes that the first fan magazine was *The Motion Picture Story Magazine*, published in February 1911.[2] That same year *Photoplay* began its nearly seven-decade long run. Later magazines followed including *Picture Play* (1915-1941), *Screenland* (1920-1952), *Screen Stories* (1929-1978), *Modern Screen* (1930-1985), and *Screen Stars* (1944-1978).[3] The 1920s and 1930s were the heyday of these publications and it is not coincidental that the establishment and popularity of the fan magazine was roughly concurrent with the establishment and growth of the Hollywood studio system. Film scholars have well established the relationship between the growth of the American film industry and the birth and proliferation of trade publications dedicated to film fans.[4] The golden age of fan magazines is associated with James R. Quirk, who was an influential publisher at *Photoplay* (Slide 2010, 47). Under Quirk's influence, fan magazines established a symbiotic relationship with Hollywood that sought to promote and protect the industry. In addition to strictly cinematic fare, other publications existed that spoke to women's wider social interests. *Modern Screen* was among a crop of romance and fan magazines that printed gossip and advice columns, as well as feature-length articles, that were standard among fan magazines. Women were prominently involved in the writing and publishing of fan magazines and the publications operated with a female readership in mind. The intersection between women's interests, fan magazines, and the movie industry was therefore established early in the histories of both media.

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[1] McDonald undertakes an historical study of Doris Day's appearance in fan magazines and their influence on her star image over the course of her career in *Doris Day Confidential: Hollywood, Sex and Stardom.*

[2] *The Motion Picture Story Magazine* became *Motion Picture Magazine* in 1914. It ceased publication in 1977.

[3] See Anthony Slide, Appendix 1, for a listing of fan magazines and their publishing runs.

[4] See the Mary Desjardins and Tamar Jeffers McDonald readings referenced here, also work on stars and fans by Shelley Stamp, Jane Gaines, Adrienne McLean, Marsha Orgeron, and Diana Anselmo-Sequeira.

Fan magazines were aimed toward women with an emphasis on the 'imitative' female fan. Features taught readers how to dress, apply make-up, coif, eat, and furnish their homes like the stars. Reinforcing the connections among reader, star, and film made economic sense because, during the 1930s and 1940s, girls and women comprised one of the largest demographics of moviegoers (Slide 2010, 143). Fan magazines featured spreads of glamorous actresses promoting the latest fashions, and movie tie-ins provided a means to promote both fashion and stardom. As a result of such economic partnerships, fashion manufacturing and wholesaling increased dramatically in Los Angeles during the period. In his seminal essay on the relationship between Hollywood and female consumers, Charles Eckert notes that in the earliest days of the 1900s, Hollywood had one clothing manufacturer. By 1937 there were 130 members in the Associated Apparel Manufacturers of Los Angeles. In addition, the largest American departments stores all kept buyers in the city (Eckert 1978, 106). The relationship between Hollywood, female fans, and fashion was indisputable as magazines increasingly catered to the lives of young women who in turn seemed capable of influencing the growth of multiple industries centered around Hollywood. As film consumption was tied to a larger network of consumer spending patterns, the film industry was eager to protect its product through control over public discourse surrounding its films and stars, a task proved difficult.

Fan magazines continued to flourish through the 1950s with growing readerships; however, tensions between studio publicity departments and fan publications had begun to surface regarding the content of the magazines. In her study of the Association of Motion Picture Producers (AMPP), a trade association comprised of studio publicity and promotion directors that represented the interests of the studios to the fan magazine industry, Mary Desjardins demonstrates that by the mid-1940s studios were increasingly unhappy with salacious content of fan magazines. Particular articles that painted stars unfavorably, or outside of studio-sanctioned terms, were deemed 'destructive.' The AMPP reacted by suggesting that the organization 'present a "united front" toward the magazine editors and publishers,' perhaps by withdrawing advertising dollars from the publications (Desjardins 2014, 39).[5] The AMPP continued to monitor the content of fan magazines and register complaints with their publishers for perceived breeches, but their efforts did not seem to have much effect. This may have been, in part, because in the early 1950s the film industry was itself changing. Anthony Slide writes that while fan magazines continued to remain largely celebratory, studio executives began to worry that the personal and in-depth content on stars' domestic lives was beginning to diminish the glamorous allure of the stars. Therefore, in 1953, MGM announced that it would no longer endorse articles about stars and their children but would instead push glamour pieces on the stars of the day. In conjunction with this move, magazine editors began to recognize that the age of their readerships

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[5] Desjardins analyzed AMPP committee materials, housed at the Margaret Herrick Library, from the years 1945-1952. She argues that despite an early impulse to present a "united front," the AMPP did not seem to pursue that cause beyond their efforts waged during the late-1940s. Desjardins speculates that the incompleteness of the AMPP committee files leaves some questions unanswered and further suggests that the 1948 consent decree rulings may have diverted the committee's attention.

was decreasing. As in many other segments of American popular culture, teenagers were beginning to form a powerful demographic. Publishers were eager to capture the vast and growing youth market. One way to capture this audience was to emphasize romance (Slide 2010, 170-172). Following Desjardins and Slide, it seems that content in fan magazines during the 1950s sought to depict stars in wholesome romantic relationships that were not necessarily domestic in nature, the details of which were designed to pique, but not dangerously stimulate, readers' interests.

The shifting content and demographic focus of fan magazines aligns with editorial changes made by women's magazines like *McCall's* and *Redbook* during the period as well. Particularly during the 1960s, women's magazines sought to move away from notions of family "togetherness" to instead emphasize the female reader as a woman with her own interests outside of the family.[6] Putting fan magazines in conversation with women's magazines during the 1950s and 1960s can tell us something about larger public discourses about changing conceptions of femininity during the period because while fan magazines catered to film fans, one of the editors of *Photoplay*, Adele Whitely Fletcher, noted that the magazine was really a 'young woman's magazine' (Slide 2010, 70). Following Fletcher's claim, it is worth considering the intersections between fan magazines and women's magazines as a way to open possibilities for thinking about ideological constructions of femininity as they circulated among periodicals generally aimed toward female readerships.

Nancy Walker undertakes this work in her study of women's magazines at midcentury. Walker considers who and what was included, and excluded, from the readerships of women's magazines. She wonders to what extent the most popular women's magazines like *McCall's*, *Redbook*, *Good Housekeeping,* and *Ladies Home Journal* responded to political and social shifts and how they conceived of women's primary responsibilities. Walker argues that conceptions of homemaking and the home were tied to femininity, capitalism, patriotism, and Americanness in complex ways, and that women's magazines occupied a contested space within this matrix (2000, 16). Amid these contradictions, then, magazine content and advertising contained multiple meanings available to the women who read them. Walker suggests that rather than read women's magazines, and I would argue fan magazines, through the lenses of coercion or subversion it is more productive to view the magazines as cultural artifacts that negotiate some of the concerns and tensions present in women's lives at the midcentury. As artifacts of everyday life, magazine content and advertising represent one of the primary meeting spaces where

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[6] For example, in 1954 *McCall's* magazine began a "togetherness" campaign to brand itself as a family-oriented periodical rather than one geared mainly towards women's interests, though the two were conflated. The "togetherness" campaign reflected a broader American ideology in the 1950s that valued organization, conformity, and group unity over individuality. This campaign ran through the early 1960s and by the time the magazine reached its peak readership of 8.5 million, it had rebranded itself as the "First Magazine for Women." In the 1970s it again revised its brand as "The Magazine for Suburban Women," reflecting the dominance of its suburban readership. See Sheila Silver (1976).

women mingled with corporate strategies, consumer desires, ideological positioning, household labor, and material culture. With this approach in mind, I would like to look at the discourse surrounding Elizabeth Taylor in fan magazines during the period 1960-1965. Taylor offers an interesting case study because of her prominence in fan magazines over several decades that included a variety of shifting narratives about her personal and professional lives.

Elizabeth Taylor and Illness as Containment

Elizabeth Taylor seemed to be the perfect star for magazine covers. She was a box-office draw who embodied a particular kind of American movie-star glamour. Taylor's titillating romantic adventures could be framed within conventional narratives about the institutions of marriage and family because Taylor was, after all, a dedicated practitioner. By the late 1950s Taylor had married three times and was on her way to a fourth. She had divorced twice, been widowed once, and given birth to two children. Her private life made fantastic copy, but part of Taylor's allure stemmed from her public enactment of a visceral, embodied form of femininity. In her analysis of *Photoplay* during the 1950s, Sumiko Higashi suggests that Elizabeth Taylor embodied romantic fantasies of stardom. Her extraordinary beauty coupled with her considerable appetites for food, drink, jewels, and marriage made her irresistible to fans and fan magazines. Higashi writes, 'she was a prima donna whose shopping sprees and sex scandals invited readers to fantasize on a baroque scale' (2014, 117). For Higashi, Taylor represented an extreme version of fifties consumer behavior most notedly rooted in courtship and marriage. Stories about Taylor routinely focused on her lavish lifestyle in contrast to her role as a dutiful mother and, sometimes, wife.

The cover story of the November 1956 issue of *Motion Picture* demonstrates how Taylor was initially positioned as a figure that balanced the demands of career and family deftly during the era. Taylor appears on the cover dressed in a demure high-necked knit sweater. Her gaze meets the camera through lowered eyelids and she looks alluring, but young and pretty. In the first two paragraphs of an article titled 'A Day in the Life of Liz,' by Howard Eisenberg, mentions Taylor's extravagant $150,000 ranch home, a recent physical ailment, her separation from Michael Wilding, the expense of her latest film *Raintree County*, and her status at MGM. These elements of health, wealth, marriage, and career characterize coverage of Taylor in fan magazines as they did for many other stars. The article devotes a lengthy opening to describing Taylor's morning shower, noting that 'Barefoot Liz' is at her 'happiest when she's shoeless' (Eisenberg 1956, 66). The remaining pages describe Taylor's day in detail as Eisenberg invites the reader into Taylor's life to encourage an intimate exchange between fan and star. The article is laudatory and just hints at a fascination with Taylor's extravagant lifestyle. Over the course of the next ten years, coverage of Taylor would shift significantly from her professional life to an almost exclusive interest in her personal life. This move confirms the MGM directive to focus on romance rather than domesticity but also demonstrates an increasing public appetite for grittier content. As McDonald demonstrates, salacious headlines in fan magazines were nearly as old as

fan magazines themselves, with most major magazines publishing sensational headlines by the mid- to late 1920s (McDonald 2016, 34). The difference in coverage about Taylor, however, has to do with the evolving fascination in her body as a site of gruesome display.

Fan magazines were interested in emphasizing the complex and often contradictory nature of Taylor's romantic life and the domestic aspect that often attended it. As Taylor continued to marry and divorce, Higashi notes that she also continued to give birth to or adopt children with each marriage, 'in keeping with the tenets of domestic ideology and the mandate of consumerism' (2014, 124). Taylor's embrace and flouting of domestic conventions mark her as an interesting figure by which to understand how fan magazines negotiated femininity during the period, particularly because they preferred Taylor to other major stars like Marilyn Monroe. During the 1950s, and until Monroe's death in 1962, Taylor was more often featured in fan magazines. One fan magazine publisher explained this phenomenon, suggesting that Taylor was more progressive, more independent, and that she 'didn't need public sympathy' (Slide 2010, 175). Stories from the 1959-1960 portray this independence as a love triangle between Taylor, Eddie Fisher, and Debbie Reynolds in which Taylor emerged victorious. For example, the cover of the March 1960 issue of *Movie Mirror* depicts Taylor and Reynolds facing off in profile with the headline 'When Liz and Debbie Meet Face to Face!' The photograph shows Taylor with a sideways glance as Reynolds looks at her face-on. In keeping with the conventions of fan magazine writing, the headline over-promises content and rather than report on an upcoming meeting between the two, Brianne Watson's article fantasizes about how one might occur. What is surprising is that the magazine was not shy about reporting on the financial benefit each actress reaped from the scandal. An article in the same issue reported that before the breakup of her marriage to Fisher, Reynolds television appearances were limited. Afterward, ABC paid Reynolds $1,000,000, a share of ownership, and $300,000 per show for a 'series of spectaculars' (Byrnes 1960, 35). In a move that is surprisingly transparent, the magazine reveals the economic benefit Reynolds and Taylor gained from the coverage.

By the end of 1960, coverage of Taylor shifted away from her rivalry with Reynolds and toward questions about a baby with Fisher, although the magazines continued to exploit the fractured domesticity of the Taylor-Fishers. Taylor represented a new kind of femininity defined by a negotiation between tradition and independence, fragility, and power. This dynamic was captured in an ongoing fascination with Taylor's physical problems through the 1960s as they related to child-birth and as they impacted her career. Her appearances in fan magazines during the decade are marked by questions about her health. The March 1960 cover of *Motion Picture* featured a close-up of Taylor with the headline, 'What the doctors can't tell Liz about her hidden illness.' The first page of the article features color photographs of Taylor in her 'glamour life,' dressed in jewels and an evening gown, positioned next to a still of Taylor in a *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1958). The article wonders if Taylor would be able to handle the strain of her demanding roles. In the first line of the article, Bess Kerr describes one of many incidents in which an

ambulance had been sent for Taylor. Kerr wonders why yet another illness had beset Taylor and tells readers that they must go back to the past to understand that Taylor is 'a woman who has experienced too much of good and evil not to break down' (1960, 70). Kerr proposes that Taylor's physical beauty is her great burden. For Kerr, Taylor is at odds with her body, unable to control it and profoundly victimized by it. Kerr describes Taylor as a woman bedeviled by her own flesh. Kerr writes, 'there is no resistance to illness – [there] is instead, almost a welcome for sickness' (1960, 71). Kerr describes Taylor as a woman predisposed to 'sickness' through a body unable to resist it and couples Taylor's physical weakness with her chronic pursuance of romantic relationships, suggesting that she suffered from a moral sickness as well. The article concludes that Liz's hidden illness is her desire for love, mainly, but also for professional success, money, motherhood, and excitement. Thus, the article explicitly makes the connection between Taylor's illnesses and her ambition. Kerr's article is an example of the ways in which progressive conceptions of femininity were still couched in terms that restrained unchecked ambition.

In a continuation of the illness narrative, the next month Taylor appeared on the cover of *Movie Mirror.* In an article a bit more lurid than *Modern Screen's* treatment of the actress, Taylor appears on the cover with Eddie Fisher, looking down at a piece of diamond jewelry in her hands. The headline promises to tell readers, 'Why Liz May Never Have Eddie's Baby!' The article, written by Connee Bates, poses Taylor as a figure deserving of pity and features a full-page photo of Taylor holding her infant daughter Liza to her chest. It is accompanied by other photos of Taylor in full domestic mode as she lounges with her older children at a boardwalk or bottle-feeds her newborn from her hospital bed. The article contrasts these photos of family idyll with the rumor that giving birth to another child could kill Taylor. Bates tells readers that although they may not think of Taylor as a tragic figure, she is indeed one because her health is too delicate to risk giving Fisher a child of their own. Bates recounts Taylor's recent health problems and suggests that despite Taylor's most fervent desires, she should not become pregnant again. Bates worries: 'Liz is too delicate to have a normal delivery. And could she stand another Caesarean?' (1960, 18). Taylor's previous three Caesarean births were often cited as part of her difficult medical history.

Like other articles that narrativize Taylor's illnesses, Bates' article lays out the dominant ideological constructions of matrimony and motherhood before lamenting Taylor's inability to fulfill these roles in traditionally accepted ways. Bates writes that there isn't a 'mother more motherly than she' (1960, 64). Thus, the great tragedy for Taylor, and for the magazine's readers, is that she is unable to be a mother again, to be 'more motherly.' The conservative ideological positioning of the article is apparent in its efforts to explain why Taylor had not had a child with Fisher. Yet while the article offers explanations for Taylor, it positions her as a victim. She is not responsible for a childless marriage to Fisher, but rather suffers because of it. This move absolves Taylor and returns her to a more ideologically stable position of being ill rather than

unwilling. It is interesting to note that the description of Taylor's desire to be "more motherly" hints at yet another form of excess, this one maternal in nature. Narratives about Taylor's body were often accompanied by worries about its resilience, which can be read more broadly as anxieties about female sexuality itself. The compulsion to pathologize Taylor's illness reflects a need in fan magazines to keep in check female pleasure and to frame resistance to motherhood as a malady rather than a desire.

In 1961 Taylor won the best actress award for *Butterfield 8* and Hollywood was ready to forgive her for her role in the Fisher's divorce. That July, *Screen Stories* put Taylor on the cover, though styled in a way that recalled a younger version of herself. Her hair is cut short and worn in curls close to the head. She wears a low-cut red velvet dress with a sweetheart neckline. The lighting is soft and the image recalls a 1950s version of Taylor. It is significant that the magazine recuperated the image of a younger Taylor because it carried with it traditional notions of womanhood embedded in Taylor's dress, particularly via the cut of the neckline. Maureen Turim has analyzed the sweetheart neckline of women's formal gowns and its transformative effect. She argues that the neckline, which emerged alongside Dior's New Look in 1947, came to 'establish the transition to womanhood and marriage for women coming of age in the 1950s' (1990, 220).

As an example, Turim points to Taylor's transformation from teenager to young bride in *Father of the Bride* (1950). Taylor's wedding gown in the film has come to define the traditional wedding dress, thereby becoming a form that marks the transition between adolescence and maturity. *Screen Stories'* decision to put Taylor on the cover in a dress with a sweetheart neckline speaks to a more pervasive desire to recall a more innocent version of the Taylor persona. This is especially striking because Taylor won the Oscar for her portrayal of a call girl in 1961. These conflicting imaginings of Taylor underlie broader contradictory cultural attitudes about female sexuality in which the tension between innocence and experience poses problems. Inside the magazine, the article on Taylor was eager to detail 'How Hollywood Took Liz Back to its Heart!' The feature is accompanied by photos of Taylor as she actually looked in 1961 and the difference between the cover and feature photos points to the growing space between the idealized young actress and the aging, fleshy Taylor of the early 1960s. Of course, preoccupation with the actress's health problems persists. The article describes the night that Taylor won her Oscar as an act of near heroism. Mike Connolly writes that Taylor accepted the award in her 'illness-racked body' before slumping off the stage of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium. Connolly's article revels in the graphic details of Taylor's physical state, which he had witnessed two weeks prior during a visit to her home. He writes, 'Her left ankle, still bandaged, had been punctured countless times for intravenous feedings, blood transfusions and antibiotic injections. Her neck was still bandaged, too, to cover that tracheotomy wound' (1961, 40). Three photographs accompany the text. One is of Taylor disembarking a plane in a wheelchair. The next is of Taylor seated next to Fisher at the Academy Awards ceremony, and in the last Taylor

kisses her children after her win. The photographs capture the facets of her star persona during the early 1960s in their depiction of her illnesses, her career success, and her star-as-mother image. Connolly writes that Taylor's win was a triumph because the conservative members of the Academy had welcomed her back into their community despite her allegedly 'dissolute' lifestyle. Connolly considers Taylor's win to symbolize her return and reinstatement into Hollywood and here depictions of her health shift. Through illness, Taylor is restored to victory.

The status of Taylor's health continued to be a gossip item throughout the next few years. A short piece in the May 1962 issue of *Modern Screen* by Louella Parsons titled 'Elizabeth Taylor's Illness' illustrates the drama of Taylor's medical conditions. Parsons writes, 'After Liz was rushed to a hospital in Rome via ambulance, wild rumors exploded in all directions. Without even a word from her doctor, rumors were flashed around the world: That Elizabeth had suffered a serious throat hemorrhage and was bleeding profusely…' (1962, 15). As it turns out, Taylor reportedly had food poisoning. Another article in the same issue by Bethel Every further describes what 'really' happened in Rome the night of Taylor's hospitalization. It is accompanied by a black and white photograph of Taylor. She lies supine in a hospital bed with just the features of her face visible. The camera is positioned at the foot of the bed, foreshortening her figure in a way dramatically reminiscent of Renaissance paintings of the Christ figure. Indeed, the article nearly treats Taylor's bout of food poisoning as Biblical tragedy before breathing a sigh of relief that a stomach pump had not been necessary. The piece offers sensational details and speculation about the nature of Taylor's illness. Were bad oysters or American boiled beans to blame? As Eddie Fisher rushed to her side, was it true that Richard Burton also rushed in from Paris? Burton and Taylor had just made *Cleopatra* together and the May issue featured Taylor on the cover dressed in a costume from the film. The issue also featured what it declared were the first photos of Taylor's newly-adopted baby Maria. Thus, the issue expresses familiar concern with Taylor's body and health, graphic interest in her appetite for food, gossip about the men who rushed to her side, and a scoop on her new baby.

The stories that relish Taylor's illnesses betray a perverse interest in Taylor's physical failings, however they are gruesome in their detailing, not romantic. Taylor is not a wasting consumptive, rather discussions about her illnesses return to her surgeries and the invasive nature of the procedures. Her Caesarean procedures, "that" tracheotomy, and her back surgeries are all mentioned as if to suggest that underneath Taylor's beauty is a monstrous body that has been sliced and stitched back together many times over. This imagining of Taylor delights in examining her body from the inside out. Her womb, stomach, and spine are more closely examined in fan magazines than her other features besides, perhaps, her face. This fantasy of Taylor as a conflation of bravery, grotesqueness, and beauty is the version that has persisted, and that Andy Warhol elevated to pop art around the same period. The source image for Warhol's 1963 paintings, *Silver Liz,* came from a publicity still from *BUtterfield 8*. Warhol's fascination with Taylor was certainly linked to her stardom, but also perhaps her illnesses. Warhol's own

biography included an affecting bout of childhood illness, the aftermath of which colored his own life. The image of *Silver Liz* features a print of Taylor with a wide gash of red painted over her lips and blue over her eyelids. Her image is rendered mask-like in a way that is simultaneously placid and garish. Warhol's Taylor is an extension of the Taylor that early 1960s gossip columnists crafted in fan magazines. Taylor is depicted as meeting the physical challenges of her suffering with great bravery but there is tremendous delight in detailing the grisly details of her wounds. The fascination with her pain and suffering in fan magazines borders on a sort of ecstatic pleasure that can be linked to other extremes that Taylor embodied including her bodily excesses and appetites.

By 1965 narratives of Taylor's illnesses were on the wane, though some version of the illness narrative would accompany her throughout her career as, indeed, she continued to experience various physical ailments. Her marriage to Fisher had ended and a new relationship with Richard Burton had begun. The Burton relationship came to define another period of Taylor's narrative in which passion played a recuperative role. In 1965 *Photoplay* imagined Taylor's sensual and volatile relationship with Richard Burton in an article titled 'My Nights with Richard,' which begins with a quote from Taylor: 'I never felt so alive before…I've never been so active on so little sleep' (Hoffman 1965, 41). The article is accompanied by a photo spread of the couple dining, kissing, and attending a Hollywood soiree before gathering the children for a Swiss vacation in Gstaad. Through her love affair with Burton, Taylor intimates that she was restored to health and vitality, once again linking her notions of her physical, professional, and moral health.

Conclusion

In the early 1960s, readerships for fan magazines declined dramatically, and by 1963 fan magazines that had once sold almost half a million copies per month now sold just over 150,000 (Slide 2010, 3). This was due, in part, to the dismantling of the Hollywood studio system a decade earlier as shifting industrial models of stardom affected fan magazines in numerous ways. Independent film producers and actors un-beholden to contracts no longer had any incentive to comply with studio wishes or maintain images dictated by studio executives. Performers became interested in promoting themselves, and some stars were more durable against scandal than others, with Taylor serving as an example of a star whose image was fairly resilient. More largely, shifting trends in fan magazines mirrored overall changes in the broader magazine industry. While fan magazines become more exploitive and rooted in tabloid-style journalism during the 1960s, tabloid magazines took up an interest in stars that changed the public discourse around stars and their stories.[7] Rather than an industrially-sanctioned focus on stars, tabloids like

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[7] Anne Helen Petersen writes that in the later part of the decade tabloids themselves turned away from gruesome, sensational stories toward personality-based journalism in which stories were crafted around interest in personal narratives and the private lives of public figures. For Petersen, this shift helped inaugurate a mode of thinking about celebrity in ways distinct from the publicity machine of the studio era.

The Enquirer engaged in gossip, hearsay, informal truths, and storytelling about a myriad of public figures, reorienting the public's thinking about celebrity and its many forms. Scandalous gossip functioned in a progressive mode that challenged ideologically based status quo constructs in ways that were important to celebrities like Taylor.[8]

As fan magazines began to engage in more lurid gossip in the 1960s, they remained an important resource for the film industry because they got moviegoers into theater seats. They therefore continued to be an important tool for the film industry and a significant artifact within the cultural lives of women. As such, representations of Taylor in fan magazines from 1960-1965 speak to the ways in which conflicting attitudes about femininity were framed in the public sphere, particularly in relation to notions of domesticity and motherhood. Taylor proved to be a star that provoked scandal and could weather it well. Scandal enhanced her image. Questions about her health, marriages, and fitness for childbearing attended her entire career, yet Taylor's image coupled sexual vitality with physical fragility as a strategy to navigate these concerns. While insisting that she was rather traditionally devoted to marriage and family, narratives about Taylor simultaneously worked to undermine the stability of these institutions through a discourse of illness that tempered their ameliorative powers. This discourse functioned to establish Taylor's singularity. Through Taylor, fans could imagine femininity as a complex negotiation of pleasure, desire, and duty. The emphasis on Taylor's love of consumer luxuries equated femininity with an appetite for commodified goods; however, fan magazines managed these excesses through an emphasis on bodily toll as way a way to both celebrate and contain Taylor's extremes.

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[8] For a discussion on the relationship between scandalous gossip and citizenry, see Petersen 2011.

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Biography

Julie Nakama, Ph.D is a Visiting Lecturer in the Film and Media Studies Program at the University of Pittsburgh. Her research interests include American film history, gender and industry studies, stardom, costume and fashion history, and material culture studies.

E-mail: jtn8@pitt.edu

The Career Woman and the Princess; Fashioning Black-American Female identity in 'Scandal' (2012-17).

RACHEL VELODY, *Independent Scholar*

ABSTRACT

Fashioning is critical to explorations of television identities and American melodrama-thriller series *Scandal* (2012-17) provides opportunities to explore representations of ethnicity together with depictions of interracial romance and intercourse. Utilising semiotics I explore the contribution of costume designer Lyn Paolo to the construction of the Black-American heroine of the series, Olivia Pope, successful career woman and lover of a white, male President. Arguing for the potential of female spectacle and soft-core pornography as progressive I consider Paolo's influences, suggesting that Olivia's fashioning transformations illustrate her as dandy-flâneuse, one controlling the visualisation of her identity.

KEYWORDS

Television, Race, Semiotics, Fashion, Identity

Introduction

Scandal is a political thriller and romantic melodrama focusing on Olivia Pope, an affluent Black-American woman, in her mid- 30s heading a crisis management firm. The series follows her role in the Presidential election of white Republican Fitz(Gerald) Grant III and subsequent problems with his tenure. Interpersonal plotting and intrigue are complicated through the central melodrama, a passionate love affair and sexual obsession conducted between Olivia and Fitz, (affectionately named *Olitz* by television viewers). Olivia's concealed interracial affair, her management of corrupt, dangerous colleagues and clientele provide the salacious characteristics of this drama.

Olivia's identity is produced within two related, ground-breaking aspects of the series. The first of these is the portrait of the successful black career woman wherein fashioning personifies the heroine as both creative dandy and confident flâneuse, working successfully in the political centre of Washington. The second linked area reflects the *Olitz* affair, relayed through visual motifs of soft-core pornography. Female corporeality, that is the body itself together with the more traditional elements of fashioning such as lingerie, general apparel, outerwear and makeup all contribute to the fantastical, 'porn-tastic' sex.

I situate self-fashioning within the context of 'stagings' considering these as spaces for Olivia's visual transformations from career woman into two permutations of the princess, the traditional romantic-princess and the porn-princess. Olivia's stylings throughout are explored as looks that co-opt and subvert the concept of luxury as the preserve of white identity whilst her fashion transformations are considered as narratives that reveal her agency. Of interest are the ways in which the show's costume designer Lyn Paolo utilises a series of visual 'looks' to communicate these themes and I explore in particular two design genres she deploys, the cape-coat and the ballroom gown. Whilst conscious of the double-risk that women of colour carry in relation to fetishisation, (as women and as black), I suggest that Paolo's costuming helps produce, through her realisations of career woman and these two princesses, feminist aspects both of spectacle and pornography.

Touching on terminology first; 'costume', 'fashion', 'dressage', 'corporeality', 'dandy-flâneuse', 'black', 'African-American', 'Black-American, 'sexing', 'erotica', 'soft-core pornography', *Olitz*. Costume and fashion are expressions used interchangeably to analyse the connotative power of apparel and accessory (Barthes 1985). In relation to dressage I refer to the ways in which Olivia authors herself as a spectacular performance, exemplified in my discussion of her ball room gowns. The theme of corporeality emphasises the Foucauldian sense of the body itself as a site of fashioning. The dandy (Lewis 2015) and flâneur (Jermyn 2004; Feigel 2016) are merged into a single expression, the dandy-flâneuse, to demonstrate how traditional markers of intelligent fashion performance are critical to Paolo's creation of Olivia. Black is a phrase which reflects its positioning within American scholarship and media as an expression of self-identification. I do not dispute its problematic reductionism but adopt the journal's position of the term as one describing the biological aspect of skin colour, so enabling discussion of *Scandal's* sexing as a repudiation of popular U.S. television's fear of so-called 'miscegenation'. Similarly, the term is used in the periodical to communicate the wider context of ethnicity incorporating the idiom of African-American. Black-American is therefore a contraction coined to express black African-American identity within the context of American television. Erotica and soft-core pornography are expressions used reciprocally in the discussion of sexuality and sex, whilst sexing and *Olitz* both signify that a romantic interlude is about to, is taking, or has just taken place between the lovers.

In relation to theory the first section concerning Olivia as career woman develops the model of the dandy-flâneuse and its central conceit of posing. These are themselves attached to themes of distinction and taste (Bourdieu 1984), considered as reflections of creative intellect. Fashioning as agency via the act of posing also arguably links her to the status of fetishized object and Mulvey's work on the gaze is implicated as is literature looking directly at problems of raced bodies in 'Scandal' (Bogle 2016; Erigha 2015). I argue however for the progressive-ness of Olivia's fashion performativity and so utilise optimistic accounts of fashioning, the corporeal and explorations of spectacle within television.

Stage 1. The career woman as dandy-flâneuse

Many of the identifiable fashion 'looks' that Olivia wears in *Scandal* are produced by luxury brands, predominantly 'white' European, for example, *Escada*, *Ralph Lauren*, *Max Mara*, *Prada*. The absence of black female designers here is problematic, supporting arguments that Olivia's power is legitimated through her compliance with the discourses of white culture. This issue of the socio-economic production of costume attaches to questions of the heroine's agency for Lewis argues that to be a black dandy is to incorporate the definably European with "African diaspora aesthetic and sensibilities." (Lewis 2015, 55). Whilst acknowledging such perspectives, an alternative way of interpreting these costuming decisions however is that they express her as a figure working successfully within commerce and immersing herself in tropes typically designated as signifiers of elite white identity. Olivia thus embodies the mythological connotations afforded luxury brands such as wealth, good taste, and so forth. Exploring these themes of embodying and / or surpassing white, Paolo links the poseur (flâneuse) and the urbane character that owns the city through the sartorial (dandy). The star of *Scandal* is consequently a composite of the confident flâneuse discussed by Feigel (2016 cited in Scholes, 2016) and the flamboyant "signature method" of the dandy (Miller 2009, 5). In *'The Last Supper'* (2014) we watch Olivia exit the lift to the Pope and Associates office (figs.1 & 2).

Figure 1 Screen frame of The Last Supper (2014) © ABC Studios

She wears a wide trouser suit but the points of focus are on her outerwear, a white cape-coat, vertiginous stilettos and a huge handbag, again white. The ensemble produces the pleasure of watching what we might call the 'wealth of personality' played out by Olivia in her role as corporate professional. A brief internet 'search' locates its provenance, the *Ralph Lauren* Collection, illustrating the intertextual aspects of such

shows where known designers collaborate with the series costume team, embedding a 'fashion-forward' sensibility (Warner 2009, 181). Here, it is the *Marielle* drape-panel coat. We can only conjecture as to the composition of the fabric, (although *Ralph Lauren*'s website confirms the garment combines the luxury yarn cashmere with wool). With viewer access to this element denied Paolo necessarily directs our eye to pattern-cutting. It is an asymmetric panel design with a section extending as a scarf over the left shoulder. This voluminous section crosses over the front creating a spectacular aspect which itself covers the primary coat, partially hidden by the folds of the magnificent cape. The garment utilises a system of soft concentric circles around the throat, the hem stops at the knee and the entire ensemble dispenses with buttons.
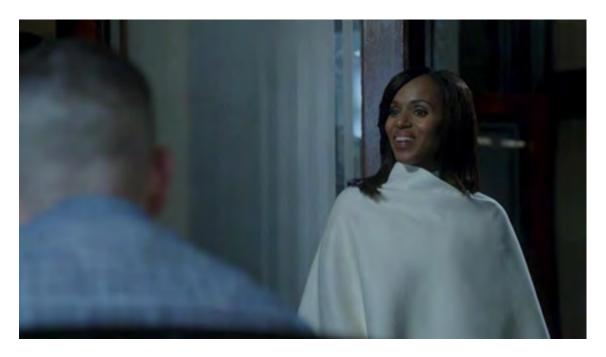

Figure 2 Screen frame of The Last Supper (2014) © ABC Studios

All these details contribute to the garment's relaxed silhouette. It's batwing sleeves create gaps between the upper body and the garment, negating the strictures of outerwear in which the traditionally close-fitting coat maximises heat retention, highlighting thereby the rejection of the utilitarian within Olivia's luxury wardrobe. Whilst the repeated circular 'enclosures' of fabric arguably produce those practical aspects of warmth the cape bespeaks functionality through indexical associations with regulatory uniforms such as militarism. These combined sartorial conversions of spectacle and institution illustrate the protagonist's ingenious experimentation with signifiers of white power.

Paolo develops these twin themes of artifice and flâneuseism in the colour of the cape which is blindingly white. Illustrating the impact of costume and lighting as combined techniques, Olivia is made more luminous as she moves along a dark corridor to the office, where a shaft of natural light strikes the apparel. Of the other numerous impacts in this colour choice I discuss here two. First, the colour contrast between Olivia's

flawlessly made-up facial skin (itself a product of careful cosmetic attention) and the whiteness which envelops her body imitating the narration of the ways by which a woman of colour negotiates her way in the socio-economic environment of white (supposedly post) colonial power. These images of white clothing show us that fashion is defined, consumed and owned by black women thereby disrupting the traditions of the television genre which fixates on whiteness not only as beauty but as the unspoken organising framework of seeing (Dyer 2017, 3). Secondly, they produce melodrama, for being shrouded in whiteness viscerally connects the heroine to Fitz, reflecting her obsessive, taboo affair and building the emotional aspect of Olivia's persona.

Extending analysis from apparel to include accessories the theme of economic prosperity together with motifs of melodrama are persuasively communicated by Paolo. There is the dizzying height of those pointed stilettos added to which is the detectable wobble which star of the show Kerry Washington constructs in Olivia's deportment, hinting at external discomfort and internal fragility. She carries a large white *Prada* double-handbag (fig.1). The object produces the sense of Olivia as the fashion linguist, a woman who appreciates the ability of an accessory to complement and intensify the connotations of the cape-coat by echoing the colour and flair of apparel. Its pale hue also underlines a sense of bricolage in relation to Olivia's overall fashioning here given the inevitably of white materials passing quickly and inevitably from the phase of cleanliness to discolouration. It equally symbolises the stages of sexual undressing of the heroine wherein apparel and accessorising signify precision-purity which, in keeping with themes of female spectacle, will inevitably be soiled. The size of the bag also indents melodrama for it overwhelms Olivia's stature, illustrating a working woman's version of the man's empty briefcase, a repository of artificial power 'full of sound and fury signifying nothing'. These exemplify Paolo's deliberate use of power-dressing as a paradox, a space of self-expression yet one in which the subject is herself controlled through the discourses of economy. Here, the woman's wardrobe whilst a rich space of authority and play is also an emotional vacuum, a hollow substitute for Olivia's alienation. They testify that her sphere of influence within that whitest of houses is one of perpetual oscillation between impact and vulnerability. Paolo visualises thereby the frictions within the public and private axis of *Scandal* essential to melodrama, reflecting the heroine's anxiety that relationships whether commercial or intimate are temporary if not illusory.

In contrast to such a reading is the series' undeniable integration of consumption as pleasure. Washington's red-carpet appearances and media interviews help to fuse this relationship between on/off-screen female fashions. Paolo assists in this process of stardom by carefully subjugating the status of her own role in a collaboration with Washington and Elliott Staples on a commercial capsule interpretation of the show's fashions, the *Scandal* collection for fashion company, *The Limited*, of which Staples is senior VC. Indeed, media articles suggest that the wardrobe is composed of Washington's designs. This role of the black female star as designer and her contribution to high-street fashion helps to bond star and character into those spaces of

'conspicuous consumption' of which Veblen speaks, functioning as points of "access to canons of taste and fashion" (Dyer, 1992, 42-3). It can be argued that in so doing Washington substitutes for the absence of black designers on the show. These aspects of intertextuality also assist in producing the heroine as dandy-flâneuse. Within (fashion) habitus Olivia inscribes and classifies as a lexicographer, creating glossaries which symbolise her creativity and self-expression. She can also stipulate what fashion taste itself is, her patterns of ostentatious consumption and display position her as a poseur of distinction (Bourdieu 1984, xxix). Modernity, eclecticism, a laissez faire attitude to expense, suggested through those teeteringly high carpet to car shoes and the white onetime wear, dry clean only vestments challenge suggestions of fashion as repression instead articulating that black female power has not only arrived but is 'running the show.'

Figure 3 Screen frame of Whiskey, Tango, Foxtrot (2013) © ABC Studios

The serial aspect of *Scandal* means that the characteristics of items such as the cape can be developed in ways that allow the reader to read this motif as a part of Olivia's fashioning sensibility, thereby flattering audience intelligence and encouraging commitment to and interaction with the series, as we comb through the episodes tracking similarities, distinctions, improvements and so on. Paolo thereby situates the distinctive-ness of experiencing fashion in television, that is, costuming constructed as narratology through the serial nature of the show, and designs reflecting its generic corpus of melodrama-thriller. Olivia's identity is constructed through the remit of Paolo's ever-changing designs, creating a drama that is also a fashion show. Fashion on television is thereby shown to be a system distinct from the "gendered nature of spectacle/narrative dichotomy" of fashion on film where the appearance of the spectacle of the female star 'stops' the narrative trajectory (Warner 2012, 126).

Figure 4 Screen frame of Whiskey, Tango, Foxtrot (2013) © ABC Studios

Here fashioning *is* storytelling and speech, replacing the repressed or "the text of muteness" (Gledhill, 1987, 30). In '*Whiskey Tango Foxtrot*' (2013), a stunning cape-coat by Italian fashion house *MaxMara* hugs the contours of Olivia's frame, outerwear guiding us to the corporeal (figs. 3 & 4). It's muted camel-coloured tones draw attention back and forth between garment and accessories, (another) large pale *Prada* handbag and long white gloves which disappear beneath the elbow-length construction of the apparel. The wrinkled construction of these and the relaxed form of the weighty handbag carried on her gloved arm help intimate that the luxury material used for both is leather. Olfactory associations of the object's desirably pungent aroma are thereby visualised and the construction of the 'fifth sense' is matched by the lingering effect of the gloves, their length draws the eye from the fingertips along the arm and up towards the hidden upper body. This sense of outerwear as intimate innerwear is deepened by the apparent softness of the item's material, reflected through those relaxed folds.

Languorous sensations of smell, touch and vision link the ensemble with the mythology of luxury brands, synonymous with apparel utilising indulgent fabrics, fastidious detail, 'classic' or fashion-forward innovation. Such companies frequently connote their items as commensurate with the work of the atelier, a role replete with associations of traditional, exquisite decorative craft skills. These links signify the character's garment and accessories as special, unique. In relation to the gloves, this is reinforced, should we click onto the website of its maker Dorothy Gaspar, who asserts her atelier credentials by emphasising her genealogy as a 3rd generation designer (LinkedIn 2018). There is also Olivia's contribution, wearing these incongruous gloves which belong to the sub-genre of ballroom and opera only more firmly states her confident individuation. Paolo thereby depicts the symbolic power of seemingly trivial pieces such as a handbag and gloves, products projecting Olivia as the flâneuse of the public sphere of Washington

politics whilst absorbing the traits of the dandy who experiments with iconic and fashion-forward pieces.

Highlighting once more the intertextual relationship between luxury brands and television productions, in '*It's Handled*' (2013) Olivia wears a stunning interpretation of the cape-coat, referenced on websites as the *Burberry Prorsum White Cotton Duchesse Satin Cape Trench Coat* (figs. 5 & 6).

Figure 5 Screen frame of It's Handled (2013) © ABC Studios

The pleasure and skills associated with conspicuous consumption of 'real' a la mode items are thereby stitched into the 'costume' garment and the character of the wearer. It also embodies the narrative development for at the beginning of series 3 Olivia has rejected Fitz's offer of marriage and role of First Lady, abandoning her roles as White House advisor and mistress. In this first episode of the series and following the public disclosure of their affair Olivia forces Fitz to meet her in the presidential bunker (!), the lovers adopting adversarial positions as they remonstrate about revelation of their 'scandalous' affair. The rigid costume condenses mise-en-scene and characterisation for Olivia is depicted through the theme of fashion-as-armour, her white outerwear lit, in contrast to the glow of the *Lauren* cape, through a spectrum of cool blues and so markedly contrasting with the grey concrete of the underground shelter itself. These facets of costume lighting and set design construct Olivia's internalising of the docile body together with its strictures of sub/conscious self-disciplining and panoptical self/surveillance (Foucault 1984, 179-187). Here, the apparel is a structured form-fitting white trench coat, tied tightly at the waist, reaching just below the knee, all elements signifying this is both coat and dress.

Figure 6 Screen frame of It's Handled (2013) © ABC Studios

The trench-dress-coat reimagines the first and second iterations of the cape discussed earlier, reconstituting its military origins by referencing two potential denotations of the costume, as an abbreviated 'cape-let' and by contrast extension-through-ornamentation, the epaulette. This component, the capelet-epaulette, working as a double-signifier, crosses over the top of the bust, is split in the middle and is buttoned underneath the collar. These aspects converge to symbolise an image of the medieval, aristocratic courtly knight's breast plate, interlacing romantic pictorial associations of chivalry and of nobility, onto the female body. Such dynamic pattern-cutting also serves to limit the possibilities of yarn composition. The strident white sheen of the trench-coat is suggestive of satin but it is exceptional cut and contour which guide us to read the material's construction as the iconic luxury fabric, that is, pure satin (this despite being a weave that can in fact be composed of varying degrees of silk, acetate and so forth). Like the pattern-cutting of the capelet/ epaulettes such thread denotes the otherworldliness of the garment and intensifies the contrasts between set and costume design, the blue-grey background of the former contrasting against Olivia's body which radiates white-ness. Paolo's skilful costuming decisions here are used to signify once more the ease with which Olivia innovates with fashion design, here post-modern pastiche whilst reinforcing the sequence's theme of female self-determination. For Rhimes meanwhile Paolo's production of this blazing armour-plated gladiator generates visual bricolage useful for the sexual suspense of the melodrama-thriller, as we anticipate these facets of ultra-white regimented self-discipline will, via *Olitz*, inevitably be obliterated.

Through these configurations of the heroine Paolo also shapes a fantastical link between dramaturgy and actuality. Olivia's entrepreneurship which includes working for the White House emulates the ultimate Black-American female icon of political power,

Michelle Obama. Michelle's verbal eloquence is matched by her (seeming) skill as an effective dandy-flâneuse, de-constructing the white conservative uniform of her predecessor, Laura Bush. Relaxed colourful fabrics including the bold appropriation of high-street looks (such as an *Asos* frock worn during the 2012 re-election campaign) emphasise pride and pleasure in the sartorial and such activity, seen through the prism of black female performativity, link these two women. In this first transformation the heroine acting as dandy-flâneuse through her very excessive-ness embodies the emancipatory project of autonomous black female aspirance, discourses espoused by the Obamas. Paolo's smart, successful career woman also creates the necessary contrasting visual precursor to the second stages of transformation of which there are two versions; the romantic-princess and the porn-princess to which I now turn.

Stage 2 version a. From dandy-flâneuse to romantic-princess

Olivia's career at the White House necessitates socialising at its black-tie events, providing Paolo with opportunities to dress her character / star in a range of stunning gowns and illustrating the romantic-princess. In '*Hell Hath No Fury*' (2012) following the presidential election of the Grants, Olivia attends the inaugural gala. Having ended the affair with Fitz we witness her solitary entrance into the frenetic ballroom, wearing a white sheath dress. The camera watches, initially from a high angle as Olivia walks over the threshold of the ball room and then tracks in a medium / medium long shot as she makes her way through a phalanx of black-tie, indistinguishable men along the red carpet (fig.7).

Figure 7 Screen Frame of Hell Hath No Fury (2012) © ABC Studios

Such theatrical performance inculcates associations with *Hollywood Award* parades and thus Olivia's choreographed catwalk dressage produces her as the body of panopticism

(Foucault, 1984, 206). A problematic link emerges here between the surveillance of black women on screen within the historical context of the ball room for as Olivia moves further into the room we notice the First Lady costumed in an evocation of the southern belle, a figure explicitly associated with the antebellum south, plantations, slavery. This then establishes the risk for African-American protagonists and the stars who play these characters in such 'heritage' settings. The question is whether fetish can be moulded in a way that disrupts such readings?

Noting her arrival Fitz is unable to look away, alerting us to follow his contemplation of Pope/Washington as amalgamated spectacle. The simple construction of the sheath shapes her but in contrast to the close-fitting *Burberry* cape coat analysed earlier, Olivia's frame together with sections of her body are emphasised not through constriction but by the ways in which the silken 'second skin' fabric hints at the undulations of the corporeal. We notice the fabric of the gown as both presence and absence. The cloth drapes softly over the breasts and posterior due as much to the lack of bra and VPL as to the weight and structure of the frock. Fabric falls close to floor length creating an illusion of greater height, particularly as, unable to view her shoes, we cannot perceive where her legs start and finish. The design draws attention to dressage as absence in the upper body, finishing in a triangle of fabric above the bust. It reveals décolletage together with part of the flesh of the upper bust, whilst the shoulders and arms are fully displayed. The flimsiness of the dress is intensified by finishing at the tip of the triangle which itself appears dependent for its very functionality on a separate piece of fabric, a gossamer-thin golden tie which requires we look closely to see, so adding to our replication of Fitz's intent gaze. This crosses over the front of the collarbone in an opposing triangle to the dress, emphasising the bone structure of the neck area.

Olivia's diminutive stature and the relatively subdued musculature of her arms link to the apparel where delicacy of material, tininess of fastenings and absence of the utilitarian codes of underwear produce fetishization. Mulvey's exploration of fetish and scopophilia as devices of phallocentric (cinematic) spectatorship (1973, 14-28) contrast with those of Steele (1997, 5-10), whose account privileges fashion apparel and objects as pleasures and methods by which to discuss identity and power and their contrasting perspectives are apposite here. Underwear in this scene is effectively re-imagined through the body of the sinuous, silky dress and as a chemise-like robe it reads as synonymous with lingerie, night wear, the boudoir and other erotica. The garment's delicate construction and colour, working within the genre of underwear, its binary gesticulations of presence /absence, the activation of narrative bricolage, (outwear becoming underwear and pure white as a colour that will be sullied) and so the promise of flesh revealed, produce Olivia as romantic- princess within the requirements of 'polite' spectacle, a characteristic of the heteronormative fairy-tale and one that underlines the theme of sexual masquerade (Steele 1997, 163).

This theme of the romantic princess is though imbricated with the skills of the dandy-flâneuse as Olivia's dressage is dependent on her own appreciation of her disciplined body. Muscle and body form permit the heroine to wear impossible attire, clothing which also fractures formality through its codes of underwear-as-outerwear. Female intelligence in the act of spectacle is also produced by Olivia's adept use of accessories. A small square silver-gold bag held in the right hand renders it classic, understated, subtle, themes echoed and contrasted through a modern silver ring worn on the left, all of which illustrates meticulous, reflective attention to detail.

The fashioning of the adult princess with her promise of eroticism continues in this scene. Following her stunning arrival Olivia congratulates the Fitzgeralds and then moves away to network. Her brilliant execution of self-fashioning thereby underscores dressage as a de rigueur performance, one reflecting the dexterity with which she carries out her job. Thus, whilst styling suggests deliberation on the part of the wearer and so intimates that the heroine acknowledges her role as spectacle and invites the gaze, she is in the actual moments of entering and socialising within the location of specularisation (the ballroom) unaware of her erotic impact. Only at the behest of the First Lady does Olivia hesitantly dance with Fitz and we focus here on the interplay of fashioning within the dynamics of a romantic courtship, as he woos Olivia with declarations of love and continuing the sexual deferral she demurs. As she dances we access the garment's side and back and so notice the tie disappears over the back where it alters to an interpretation of bra straps (fig.8).

Figure 8 Screen frame of Hell Hath No Fury (2012) © ABC Studios

Yet these miniscule bands do not sit at the mid-level as with the typical construction of such lingerie, finishing instead at her waist and so producing an unexpected thrill, the full exposition of the upper back. The side zip positioned below this area of skin on the 'skirt' of the apparel, rather than functioning as indices of discreet dressage is consequently shifted from its original meaning, adopting instead the signifying processes of female striptease. The dress follows Mulvey's narrative conceptualisation of fetish with the woman as the object of Fitz/our scopophilic gaze and it equally functions as an item of erotica displayed knowingly by Olivia and in this reflexive mode articulates Steele's perspective of agency and play.

This stage, in relation to fashion and spectacle, positions Olivia as Fitz's and our encapsulation of desirable yet unobtainable femininity. Such sequences signal the shift of Olivia from her status as the disciplined body of the independent working woman to the second stage of transformation in which the signifiers of work-as-autonomy merge within the role of romantic-princess. Visually outshining her (mainly) white colleagues and clientele through this cultivated interpretation of ballgown attire denotes Olivia as 'civilised' fetish with its disturbing inferences to imperialist ownership of black bodies. Yet this reading can be balanced against her pleasure in creative posing and narcissistic display. By recuperating 'white' fashionology as her own and in surpassing the purview of antebellum performance at the gala, Olivia feasibly owns the field of specularisation, subverting the risk of colonialist discourse and 'othering' white identity. I next look at an alternative transformation, to the role of the high performance, porn-princess.

Stage 2 version b. From dandy-flâneuse to porn -princess

Clothing and the corporeal form soft-core erotica display essential to Rhimes construction of *Olitz* coupling and the two versions of sex within its tenets of melodrama-thriller; good sex and suffering sex. Good sex narrativises denial and surrender to sexual passion and Rhimes produces abundant choreography ranging from glancing, gazing, stroking, through to cunnilingus and fellatio, vaginal and anal sex. Taboos of the marital and interracial these acts extend to illicit locations of sexing, including the White House: *Olitz* do it speedily in the lift, angrily in the communications cupboard, audaciously in the oval office. Deferred intimacy and suffering are equally essential, patternising the cycle of consummation, rejection, reconciliation. The cyclical features of melodrama and soft-core pornographic temporal address mirror one another and so exaggerate romance and sex acts. Are such scenes though conceivably feminist écriture and do they transcend the issue of Olivia 'crossing over'? To consider these areas I explore again couture dress augmenting this discussion of clothing by considering the corporeal, specifically the sexually active body as part of the process of self/fashioning within the production of the high-performance porn-princess (see Dirix and Kirkham 2017, 7-10 for a useful analysis of the relationship between clothing and pornography). The *Michael Kors* dress appears in '*Happy Birthday Mr President*' (2012) a title priming us for what will follow given its palpable link to the Kennedy-Monroe affair. The costume connotes femininity and sexuality and

as with other apparel discussed it operates as bricolage, here adjusting its meanings according to environment and to *Olitz* activity. That process begins with a sequence in Olivia's apartment in the late evening where she sits on a sofa, working. She wears the *Kors* piece, a white wool sheath, we can just see that the hemline sits fractionality below the knee and that the torso of the garment is armless and high necked.

Such dresses bespeak traditional codes of feminine wear, they also communicate contained sexuality by intimating the 'hidden' 'underneath' of the sexual area above the knee. The cut of the dress however, contains the potential of the dress to signify excessive sexuality by articulating the familiar lexicography of classic European dress and its connotations of decorum. Further, the combination of decadent fabrics and the formality of its shape partly situate Olivia as the career woman outlined earlier.

Figure 9 Screen frame of Happy Birthday Mr. President (2012) © ABC Studios

After receiving a phone call, she smiles and action 'cuts to' her opening the door of the oval office and stepping inside, wearing the same garment (fig 9). We see a wide band of black lace inverted 'v's' corsets her waist, building associations of lingerie. The underwear-as-outerwear motif of the dress simultaneously establishes the trajectory of soft-core fantasy narrative in which transformation is projected through the promise of disrobing.

Echoing the white sheath ballroom dress previously discussed the outline of her breasts is revealed as is the flesh of her shoulder and neck whilst the high neckline draws our attention to her flawless facial skin and the waved hair style that frames it. Fitz enters from another doorway signalling the initiation of another infamous *Olitz* act in which the function of Olivia's clothing alters again explicating the visual symbiosis of the lovers. Dressed in her semi-formal black-on-white dress Olivia mirrors Fitz's black-tie

construction so that whilst on opposite sides of the circular room costume unifies the figures. Suggesting Olivia's greater power, it is Fitz who begins the process-proper of narrative striptease, removing his black jacket to reveal a white shirt. Both bodies are now displayed identically with white as the predominant colour and touches of black, her lace and his bow-tie, gendering performativity. The other pronounced dualism is skin colour and its intersection between fashion and the corporeal. Fitz turns up his shirt sleeves revealing the whiteness of hands and forearms, and signifying his binary connection to Olivia's black skin. Intensifying the link is the dyad of fashion and flesh with white fashion (Olivia) and white flesh (Fitz) being synthesised (fig.10). These features provide the momentum to what follows.

Figure 10 Screen frame of Happy Birthday Mr. President (2012) © ABC Studios

As the scene develops the dress imbibes connections between melodrama and factual discourse concerning female power as these relate to erotica, particularly the theme of strip-tease. First, it works in accordance with melodrama's narrative rules of desire as delay, the lovers spend time remonstrating about the immorality of making love in 'that' place before inevitably yielding to passion, allowing us time to 'clock' the entire dress and its binary of formal clothing/underwear. Second, it appropriates the factual discourses accorded to the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal (Kleinbans, 2004, 71-72) thereby progressing a double-thrill, miscegenation takes place in the edifice of patriarchal colonial power. The sexual exploitation of Lewinsky by a powerful politician allows another twist as Olivia challenges this dynamic with 'her' President, controlling much of the foreplay and verbal repartee preluding *Olitz* intercourse. Thereby tropes we associate with soft-core settings are in play, again through the mediatised paratext of the Clinton-Lewinsky sex-scenes and intratextually via the dress which integrates those paratexts into its own clothing-specific narration. Added to this, the combined connotations of uniform (the dress as business suit) and the suggestiveness of lingerie (the band of lace) combine to reinforce the fact that the dress is the focus. It narrativises

movement from Olivia's apartment to the Oval Office and undertakes the act of storytelling within the White House itself. From the moment that Olivia stands in that dress just inside the Oval Office she signifies the mini-storyline of erotica that will follow and so initiates her transfiguration into the role of porn-princess.

Demonstrating the corporeal and fashion as sites of exchange is the act of sex itself which plays through binaries of black and white in costume motifs as well as skin colour. Olivia sits down on the presidential desk, looks at Fitz, appears to partially take down her knickers to just below her groin, the suggestion of underwear commensurate with the "the thrill of exposure" (Steele 1997, 118). She slightly parts her legs and begins to lean back signalling female surrender typified in soft-core pornography mise-en-scene. Fitz moves closer to Olivia who is still fully clothed (minus those panties). The heroine does not take off her dress however and thus echoes the nudity implicit in the white sheath dress of the inaugural gala, dressed yet naked, without underwear. This binary of dressed/undressed heightens erotic pleasure, as Fitz/we imagine Olivia disrobing and revealed and thereby shifted through a second binary process, that is, from the role of powerful career woman to sexual porn-princess. This impact of the dress is balanced by the corporeal for it is Fitz who is initially vulnerable, as the camera in close-up moves down to Olivia's hands and we watch as she unbelts and unzips Fitz, the phallus literally in her hands. She then leans over her lover, kisses him passionately and we cut to a medium reverse shot which focuses on her seated on the desk and her legs wrapped around Fitz's buttocks. In this configuration Olivia is essentially astride in the coupling and so performs as dominatrix. As bricolage process the clothing is now exhausted and the completion of the porn-princess transformation subsequently takes place through visual and auditory interpretations of the sex act, with camerawork and editing emphasising that clothing is being subsumed by the corporeal, the sexually active body, which becomes the site of fetish. It is through the interplay between apparel and body that such sequences are narrativized, costume shifting the lovers and the extra-diegetic viewer from the public sphere of Olivia's work to the public/private spaces of foreplay and on into the intimate realms of fantastical sex. Rhimes and Paolo thereby use mise-en-scene to integrate and subvert the conventions of traditional heterosexual erotica which archetypally fixates on female uniform and power-dressing as motifs by which to produce narratives of feminine striptease-as-acquiescence.

The progressive-ness of such soft-core scenes, of which fashioning is an essential component, is that they position the perspective of the porn-princess as one of primary importance and both this figure and that of the romantic-princess challenge the patternisation of sexual pleasure and consummation as discourse owned by white identities. Moreover, the love scenes repeatedly confront the continuing taboo of interracial sex and this theme returns us to the other important aspect of fashioning, the corporeal black/white dynamic underscored through Paolo's binary use of the colour system in her costumes. This duality, presented in clothing and accessories, symbolises the relationship between the lovers as one of melodramatic friction as it relates to love

and desire, a narrative that inexorably culminates in the romantic and sexual merging of these colours, figuratively and literally collapsing colour and race lines.

Conclusion

The question remains as to whether Olivia's self-fashioning expresses femininity in prime-time American television drama as sanitised, white-legitimated "cross-over Blackness" (Erigha 2015, 14). Certainly, her transformations from career woman to spectacular romantic-princess and to high performance pornographic-princess infer that Olivia is potentially integrated into discourses of white post-feminist identity. Positioning her as self-reflexive fashion spectacle in her role as career woman and White House professional/lover underscores the heroine's responsibility to endlessly mutate. Similarly, glamorous depictions of Olivia within the *Olitz* sex scenes risk situating the heroine as a cipher of hypersexualised identity or through the axis of melodrama, the 'tragic mulatto', both mythologised fetishes of American slavery and colonialism (Bogle 2016). Yet the series arguably creates a progressive view. It produces firstly a Black-American woman controlling commodities and economies and in that setting Olivia expresses through fashion the quirky, aberrant features of the dandy-flâneuse, the woman whose body internalises and reflects her access to, if not ownership of, the external spaces of Washington and its 'corridors of power'. Secondly, interracial sex remains itself covert, a proscribed area for prime-time American television, situating her fashioned body and that of her white lover as spectacle within the setting of soft core pornography contests televisual taboos concerning hybridity. Third, in these contexts of work and sex it is black female perspective and experience that is central. As fashion auteur Olivia is re-writing the rules of fetishisation, communicating that narcissism and spectacle are aspects of self-pleasuring produced on her terms. These visual productions of the protagonist as career woman and princess produces a heroine who confronts the double weight of 'otherness' that burden black femininities within American television. Paolo thus helps to shape Olivia as a three-dimensional woman who 'speaks her mind' through the dynamic linguistics of her self-fashioning, illustrating intellect and curiosity whilst explicating the joy and suffering of sexual desire, with the final irony that her authenticity is produced principally through fashioning melodramatic excess.

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Rachel Velody MA in Media Arts (U.SC. 1990), was course leader for the Fashion Media degree programme (part-time) at the London College of Fashion from 2003 to 2016. At present an independent researcher her areas of expertise concern screen genre, identities and semiotics. Representations of the body within British and North American television drama are of special interest. Her doctoral project starts in Autumn 2018 at the University of Bristol and will explore the fashioning of the female detective in contemporary British television crime drama.

E-mail: r.velody@virginmedia.com

Stereo Imaging In Fashion Photography: How Hollywood (May Have) Inspired a Swiss Knitting Company In The 1950s

LEONIE HÄSLER[1], *FHNW University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland, Academy of Art and Design*

ABSTRACT

Fashion photographs are generally two-dimensional images showing one side of a three-dimensional model. This paper, however, deals with far less well-known *stereoscopic* fashion photographs. Stereoscopy is a technique that creates the illusion of a 3-D image. Based on the image collection of Swiss textile and clothes company HANRO, the article analyzes the composition of 3-D pictures by putting them in a broader media-historical context. The archived stereoscopic photographs date back to the 1950s and show a series of women's fashion. In the same period, Hollywood experienced a 3-D-boom that may have had a technical and aesthetical impact on these photographs. Although fashion is not mediated in moving images in this case study, codes or formal languages of a film are inscribed in the images, as will be shown in the following text. Building on these findings, this paper further discusses the influence of cinematography and other media practices on the fashion industry's attempt to free its fashion imagery from the confines of a two-dimensional page.

KEYWORDS

Fashion; Fashion Photography; 3-D, Stereoscopy, Photography

Introduction

HANRO and Hitchcock, two names that could not be more different. The former may provoke a big question mark, whereas the latter conjures a myriad of images. HANRO was a Swiss textile company located near Basel. The director Alfred Hitchcock, on the contrary, is considered as the "Master of suspense, […] internationally recognized as a technical and stylistic innovator in the history of cinema" (Deutelbaum/Poague 2009, book cover blurb). What is the connection? There is an associative link between Hitchcock's imagery and a series of HANRO fashion photographs from the 1950s. The photographs I am referring to are part of the extensive HANRO archive. These particular images differ from ordinary fashion photographs of those years because they are stereoscopic diapositives.

The 1950s were a decade when many film studios based in Hollywood produced 3-D movies (Hayes 1989). Most were science fiction films or B-movies. One exception is Alfred

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Hitchcock's *Dial M for Murder* from 1954 which helped to popularize this (moving) image format. The film is a thriller about a husband who plans to kill his wife after he finds out that she had been cheating on him. *Dial M for Murder* is Hitchcock's only film shot in 3-D. The story is based on a play by Frederick Knott. Therefore, most of the scenes are situated in the married couple's apartment which produces the impression of a chamber play.

In the same year *Dial M for Murder* was released, HANRO for the first time produced stereographic photographs featuring women's fashion. The essay is conceived as an exploratory work with a focus on the technique and history of 3-D media. It deals with the question whether the compositional similarities between the HANRO fashion photographs and 3-D media are typical for this period or due to the media specificity of stereoscopic images. Three issues are leading my study:

> 1. What is the media aesthetical specifics of the HANRO fashion stereographs?
> 2. Which benefits did 3-D photographs provide as a technique of fashion photography compared to conventional images?
> 3. How can the relationship between body, textile, and space in 3-D imagery be described?

The paper begins by considering the media history and theory of stereoscopic photographs. It moves on to analyze the source materials of the HANRO collection. In this section, I provide a critical interpretation of HANRO's stereoscopic photographs based on the previous part. The concluding section questions the relationship between fashion photography, body, and spatial perception.

Media history and theory of stereoscopic photographs

The term "stereoscopy" represents a technical process of three-dimensional image making to create the impression of space and depth. It is a technique of capturing two images of the same scene from slightly different positions that correlate to the distance between the left and the right eye. *Stereoscope* is derived from Greek *stereos*, solid, and *skopeo*, to see (Brewster 1856, 1). The stereoscopy evolved in the nineteenth century and is attributed to the British physicists Sir David Brewster and Sir Charles Wheatstone who both worked on optical illusions and optical devices.

Stereoscopy builds on knowledge gained in the field of physiology and on subjective, binocular vision (Crary 1999, 118). In 1838, Wheatstone showed that we could see depth because of the disjunction between our eyes. He proved his hypothesis by drawing two images of the same object from different viewpoints corresponding to the spacing between the left and the right eye. Our brain then puts the two images together, and a twin-picture appears to render depth. To perceive the two separate images as one three-dimensional illusion, it is necessary that the left eye is focusing the left picture and the right eye the right one. Thus, Wheatstone invented an optical device called "stereoscope" that amalgamates the two slides.

Another scientist that played an influential role in the development of stereoscopy is Sir David Brewster. In his 1856 treatise "The stereoscope" he describes the function of binocular vision. As Jonathan Crary outlines in his study "Techniques of the observer," Brewster

discovered that the illusion of a stereoscopic image is nothing but a conjuration based on the observer's experience of the differential between two other images (1999, 122). Furthermore, Brewster discussed different fields of application of the stereoscope such as painting, sculpture, architecture, engineering, educational purposes, and purposes of amusement (Brewster 1856).

Stereoscopy and photography were invented at about the same time but entirely independently. Nevertheless, it is a challenge to build stereoscopic images drawn by hand. Consequently, cameras have been used to produce stereoscopic photographs. Technical improvements, e.g., paper photography and special cameras that operated with two lenses, promoted the success of the stereograph (see fig. 1). Mary Warner Marien even underlines the great significance of stereographic photographs for the history and development of photography. According to her, it was the stereograph, which made photography a desired mass medium (Warner Marien 2014, 81).

Fig. 1: A conventional camera, equipped with a stereo lens attachment. Modell from 1931.
H. Lüscher: Stereophotographie. Einführung in die Grundlagen der Stereoskopie und Anleitung zur Erzielung einwandfreier Stereobilder für Liebhaberphotographen, Berlin 1931, p. 31.

Indeed, stereoscopy became one of the most popular domestic media of the nineteenth century. Tourism, for instance, was not yet an industry. Hence, many people collected stereographs of unknown, "exotic" places like the pyramids of Giza to go on imaginary journeys while staying in their parlors. Beside rather harmless and humorous narratives of everyday-life, mountains, steeples and archways or monuments, stereographs included erotic and pornographic scenes as well (Williams 1995, 6–7). In fact, any motif that was qualified for spatial effects was chosen for albums and private collections.

The photographer must place distinctive objects in the near or middle ground of the scenario to achieve the most favorable stereoscopic effect. In Europe and the United States, a true stereograph industry emerged comprising enterprises for photo equipment, picture agencies, and journals. Discursive proponents of stereographs harshly criticized popular motifs. They considered stereoscopic photographs nothing but art, as the following quotation published in the (British) Photographic Society's journal illustrates:

> 'To see that noble instrument prostituted as it is by those sentimental 'Weddings', 'Christenings', 'Distressed Seamstresses', 'Crinolines' and 'Ghosts' is enough to disgust anyone of refined taste. We are sorry to say that recently some slides have been published which are, to say the least, questionable in point of view of delicacy.' (Macdonald 1980, op. cit. in: Wells 2009, 146)

First and foremost, the author criticizes not only the pop cultural "abuse" of stereographs but also attests that photographers and recipients have bad taste. What is more striking in the context of fashion photography is the fact that the author mentions at least two motifs that correlate to clothes: the profession of a seamstress and the crinoline – a frame worn under skirts to increase their circumference. Presumably, textiles and garments attracted a rendering in this media technique. Three-dimensional photographs, especially, have been able to show the vast shapes of Victorian fashion in all its dimensions.

Today's audience is probably not as much affected by static stereoscopic scenes like the one in the nineteenth century due to the changed viewing habits. The visual experience at that time may have elicited a similar effect as virtual reality environments provoke in our days. Contemporaries were overwhelmed by the illusory effect of the stereoscope. As Modrak and Anthes put it, the pleasure laid "more in the effort of achieving the illusion of deep space on a flat plane than in actual picture" (2011, 39). The American physician and poet Sir Oliver Wendell Holmes also commented on stereoscopy and its popularity. He described his impression when looking at a stereograph as follows: "[…] by this instrument [= stereoscope, L.H.] that effect is so heightened as to produce an appearance of reality which cheats the senses with its seeming truth" (Holmes 1864, 140). Holmes certainly believed in photography's ability to show the world as it is, without any distortion, and as a source of information. He considers stereographs as offering immersion and illusion rather than artificiality – as it may appear to today's observers. The quote reflects debates that took place at that time on the nature of photography and raising the question as to whether it is a pure image of reality or rather a filtered, subjective gaze (Solomon-Godeau 1991). Further on in his essay, Holmes is persuaded that the stereoscopic photographs can even replace the pictured object. He asserts:

> '*Form is henceforth divorced from matter*. In fact, matter as a visible object is of no great use any longer, except as the mould on which form is shaped. Give us a few negatives of a thing worth seeing, taken from different points of view, and that is all we want of it. Pull it down or burn it up, if you please. We must, perhaps, sacrifice some luxury in the loss of color; but form and light and shade are the great things, and even color can be added, and perhaps by and by may be got direct from Nature.' (Holmes 1864, 161 emphasis in original)

German media theorist Friedrich Kittler even interprets Holmes' essay as the starting point of media technical information. In his view, Holmes designs stereoscopy as a combined concept of archiving, standardization and circulation of information through stereographs (Holmes 1864, 162–64; Kittler 2010, 41).[2]

A recent study on the history and theory of stereoscopy is Jonathan Crary's already mentioned and well-received study "Techniques of the observer" where he examined physiological optics in the nineteenth century and the advent of geometrical optics at the turn of the century. For him, stereoscopy is an emblem of modernity. But when analog cameras became more affordable and user-friendly, stereoscopic photographs disappeared according to Crary. On the contrary, a second rather opposing study published by Jens Schröter (2014) criticizes Crary's linear historiography on vision and optics and argues that stereoscopy did not disappear at all at the beginning of the twentieth century. Thus, Crary was wrong to assume that one optical regime replaced the other one. Instead, Schröter suggests a co-existence of both, geometrical and physiological optics. He strengthens his argument by giving examples of the stereoscope's use in the first half of the twentieth century that are less known because of their niche role in the history of photography and beyond popular mass media (Schröter 2012, 126–131). He points out that stereoscopic slides have been used in military air reconnaissance to gain additional spatial information of territory, in the sciences (e.g., in particle physics) and arts, especially to get three-dimensional pictures of sculptures from every perspective. Schröter also points out the widely unknown hype of stereoscopy during the so-called "Third Reich" in Germany. During this period, the "Raumbild-Verlag"[3] successfully marketed stereoscopic photographs and well-known NSDAP members such as Albert Speer or Heinrich Hoffmann were stereograph aficionados. Schröter assumes that this phenomenon is related to the general ideology of Lebensraum in National Socialism (2012, 136).

After the Second World War, stereoscopic photographs mainly remained in the range of children's toys whereas three-dimensional *moving* images became popular for a brief time. Hollywood used the stereoscope technique to compete with the new medium of television. Generally, "3-D" was a buzzword to market technical devices. For instance, radios were sold with special "magic" buttons for "3-D surround sound" although the speakers were in one single case and not yet able to play multi-channel sound. In the same period, the Swiss HANRO knitting company produced three-dimensional photographs.

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[2] For a more detailed discussion see Schröter 2014, 378–79.
[3] = stereogram agency, L.H.

HANRO's stereoscopic photographs

Swiss textiles and garments have had a long tradition. The range included a huge silk and passementerie industry, synthetic fiber development and knitted underwear. HANRO was one of the biggest knitting companies, located near Basel on the border of France and Germany. It achieved worldwide recognition as a symbol of the highest quality in the field of knitwear.

In 1884, Albert Handschin founded a small factory. Nine years later a partnership began with Carl Ronus that led to the trademark "HANRO" in 1913, which is an acronym for the names of both leaders. At first, HANRO specialized in the new and growing field of fine knitting, used in women's, men's and children's underwear, e.g., body-shaped tops and pants, knickers and camisole combinations made from wool, silk, and cotton (see fig. 2). Other product lines were nightwear, petticoats, home- and leisure-wear. From the 1930s to the 1980s the product range also contained ready-to-wear double-knits consisting of functionally elegant clothes. Besides Switzerland, the sales markets were primarily France, England and the U.S.A.

Fig. 2: HANRO advertising from the 1920s, body shaped top and pants made from knitted wool.
© Hanro collection, Archäologie und Museum Baselland, Switzerland.

HANRO was sold in 1991 to an Austrian holding company. However, its extensive archive and textile collection of about 20,000 garments remained in Switzerland and became the property of *Archäologie und Museum Baselland*[4]. Both archive and textile collections are still located at the erstwhile company grounds which have since been redeveloped. The stereo photographs were found by chance during an inventory, although they were supposed to have been discarded. This finding is particularly noteworthy because the photographs can provide information about the outer garments. In contrast to the underwear collections that are very well preserved, the reference pieces of the women's fashion were almost entirely decimated in the course of the Austrian enterprise's takeover. Thus, the stereoscopic photographs can tell about color, cut and design, patterns and style. They show many more pieces than the highly-selected advertisements archived over the same period.

The subsequent analysis section is based on the methods of "Bildwissenschaft" and visual culture studies (see for example Bredekamp 2003; Mirzoeff 2002; Mitchell 1995). In contrast to art history, Bildwissenschaft also focusses on advertising, (nonart/mass/amateur) photography, film, video, and political iconography (Bredekamp 2003, 418) – and even on surveillance and technical images or ostensibly insignificant images. Both methodological approaches emphasize considering not only the images' indexical or representational character but also the contexts of production, distribution, consumption, and media techniques. Relationships between other images and media always are reflected as well. In other words, Bildwissenschaft and visual culture studies analyze visual discourses (Rose 2007, see in particular chapters 7–8). This approach seems to be important considering that the stereoscopic photographs differ from "ordinary" flat HANRO fashion photographs in many ways, which I intend to show. They are neither editorial images nor conventional fashion photography for advertising.

The image collection includes approximately 1400 double pictures, more precisely color diapositives. They were created from 1954 to 1958. Half of the diapositives are mounted in aluminum masks, the other half is in paper mounts (see fig. 3–4). Every paper item is marked "Kodachrome Stereo Transparencies Processed by Kodak" at the front. On the reverse, there is the information "view from this side" and "Made in U.S.A.". A HANRO employee, probably, complemented each slide with a sticker that indicates a hand-written item number as well as a season number ("I" for spring, "II" for autumn). Below the stickers, one can find a model name documented such as "Mélancolie," "Métropole," "Celeste" and further imaginative names. The Museum Baselland, which maintains the Hanro collection, has converted all the stereographs into a digital format. Digitized photos enable constant research, regardless of conservation measures. But to understand the value of three-dimensional pictures I also analyzed 50 originals by using a stereo-viewer.

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[4] Archaeology and Museum of Baselland.

Fig. 3: Stereo slide in aluminum mount.
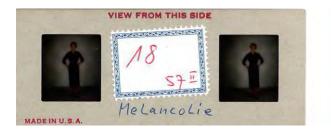Photo by Leonie Häsler © Hanro collection, Archäologie und Museum Baselland. Switzerland.

Fig. 4: Stereo slide in paper mount, front and back side.
Photo by Leonie Häsler © Hanro collection, Archäologie und Museum Baselland, Switzerland.

The fashion presented on the stereographs is mostly elastic knitwear such as dresses, coats, robes, suits, i.e., machine embroidered jerseys, chiffons or heavy double knits. HANRO's women's wear can be characterized by never creasing nor losing shape. It was beautifully tailored, comfortable and mostly made of Australian wool rather than of synthetics. Buttons, belts, and lace were carefully selected and the colors matched perfectly due to the in-house dye works. Studying the stereoscopic photographs, I spotted repetitive patterns and motifs regarding setting, pose and objects. Every chosen image that will be discussed is exemplary and represents the series. Let's start with describing the setting: about half of the stereographs were situated inside a building, the other half outside. I will concentrate on the interior photographs. They were shot in a rearranged private space that probably served temporarily as a temporary photo studio. Skirting boards and curtains evoke the impression that usually the room was not used for photo shoots and only had occasionally been emptied. As Jonathan Crary emphasizes, "[…] stereoscopic effects depend on the presence of objects or obtrusive forms in the near or middle ground" of the image (1999, 124). His finding can be confirmed in my case study. Every HANRO stereoscopic image is composed similarly to obtain spatial depth and the illusion of three-dimensionality: The mannequin is often placed in front of a white wall, near a window, a chimney or various pieces of furniture. She is standing in the foreground, holding an accessory (e.g., a handbag, gloves, a newspaper, a cigarette, etc.). A small piece of furniture is usually placed next to her, for instance, a chair or a side table. Besides, the white wall is decorated with a picture or a simple poster (see figure 6–7). Props, such as flowers or plants, complement the image composition. In cinematographic terms, most of the photos are long shots. Following Bordwell/Thompson, the protagonists are prominent, but the background is clearly visible (2008, 191).

Fig. 5: Stereo twin-picture from 1954. The mannequin's gesture is typical for stereo photographs. The arm seems to protrude from the image.
© Hanro collection, Archäologie und Museum Baselland, Switzerland.

As you can see in figure 5, the mannequin is wearing a grey and white cross-striped afternoon knit-dress in calf-length and i-shape.[5] The robe is contrasted with red gloves and shoes. The mannequin is in the middle of the picture, and her body is turning to the observer. Her right arm is slightly bent but looming to the side whereas her left hand is pointing to a Victorian chair. On the left, behind the model, there is an antique chest of drawers on which a vase of red flowers is placed. Above the drawers, a mirror is hanging on the wall that reflects the mannequin's back so one can see the reverse part of the robe. In the context of stereoscopy, the image composition becomes comprehensible. Remember the imagery of *Dial M for Murder* in which it was necessary to place different objects one behind the other, e.g., a desk lamp or a group of bottles in the Wendice apartment. They are placed very prominently without having a narrative function but to achieve the illusion of spatial depth. This kind of composition is applied to the fashion photography and may explain the mannequin's arm gesture protruding from the screen. Her pose seems a bit rigid and unnatural but may be due to the media specific aesthetics of a transplane image.

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[5] As Schröter points out, "everything that can enter into books has to become plane in the first place" (Schröter 2014, 52). Consequently, the stereoscopic photographs from HANRO only can be displayed two-dimensional. Nonetheless, I provide the images as pairs, yet you must squint in order to achieve a three-dimensional effect.

Fig. 6: Stereo twin-picture from spring collection 1956. The arrangement of objects ensures multi-plane space for composition in depth.
© Hanro collection, Archäologie und Museum Baselland, Switzerland.
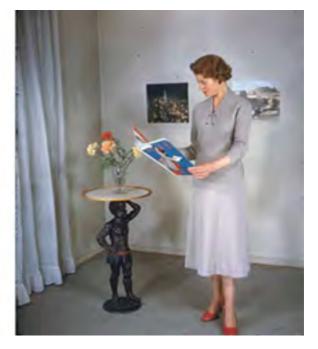

Fig. 7: Stereo twin-picture from autumn collection 1956. Note the posters on the wall as well as the fashion magazine.
© Hanro collection, Archäologie und Museum Baselland, Switzerland.

Many photos are composed in a quite similar style, as figure 6 shows. In this example, the mannequin is also pointing her right hand, namely at a Swiss cheese plant. She is standing in front of a sofa, head to the camera, but looking at something outside the picture frame. The mannequin is stretching her head to the right, so the camera is displaying her profile while her body – she is wearing a yellow dress – is shown in full frontal position. At the left edge of the picture, you can see a white curtain. Invisible spotlights cast multiple shadows on the wall where a framed picture is hanging at the extremity. The mannequin's pose, the curtain, and the shadows reinforce the image's theatrical elements. For today's observer, artificiality dominates the visual impression rather than immersion and illusion, as Sir Oliver Wendell Holmes put it previously.

Considering the accessories and props, I kept making another intriguing observation. At first glance, they seem to be randomly chosen, with no other function than to embellish the mannequins, probably to underline the luxury and glamorous lifestyle HANRO intended to market. These include, for example, suitcases, handbags, ashtrays or long drink glasses. A closer look, however, reveals that some of them are reflecting all three of the spheres of fashion, media, and film rather explicitly and thus become quite self-referential. Figure 7 is a striking example: The attention is drawn not only to the simple grey leisure dress but also to the two posters on the wall, the fashion journal, and (maybe unintentionally) to the colonial style side desk. The posters are surprising because they do not fit into the setting. The left one shows New York's skyline at night (as one can identify by the Chrysler building), the right one pictures a sand desert and a camel rider. Both scenes remind us of early stereoscopic photographs when distant countries and tourist attractions were popular scenarios. The visual vocabulary aligns itself with the visual discourse of exoticism. This impression is intensified by the non-p.c. sculptural side table that represents a small colored, nearly naked boy carrying the tabletop on his head. The *Vogue* magazine, by contrast, recalls the fashion context. The mannequin is browsing through the famous fashion magazine whereas the observer her/himself is looking at a fashion photograph. Many similar stereographs can be found in the HANRO series. To describe it differently, the photo makes its mediality a subject of discussion. In the following figure, too, the photograph adopts media aesthetics in terms of self-referentiality (see fig. 8). Here, the mannequin is represented as a photographer. She is operating a camera that is mounted on a tripod. Though not a stereoscopic camera, it reflects the shooting situation and therefore the specific mediality of the situation.[6] Particularly the fact that the mannequin is posing, not reenacting, reinforces the impression of artificiality. At the same time, it should not be neglected that her pose enhances her outfit. She is wearing a pink and white striped jumpsuit with a white belt and black thongs. It is an outstanding sample compared to the rather conservative HANRO frocks and two-pieces.

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[6] For more on the topic of media aesthetics see Hausken 2013.

Fig. 8: Stereo slide from spring collection 1956, camera as media reflexivity.
© Hanro collection, Archäologie und Museum Baselland, Switzerland.

Furthermore, parallels can be drawn with Hitchcock's movie *Dial M for Murder*. The movie is about a failed attempted murder and a love triangle.[7] Margot (Grace Kelly), the wife of the former tennis star Tony Wendice (Ray Milland), was having an affair with an American mystery writer. Tony became aware of it without Margot's notice. He then starts to blackmail her as the first part of an evil plan. Tony wants to have Margot killed. Thus, to not be suspected of the murder, he forces an old college friend to murder his wife. As the film title implies, the telephone is playing a pivotal role in the plot. The phone ring is the arranged signal for the murderer to kill Margot. Several HANRO photographs pick up the telephone motif, presumably to allude to the movie that had been released a short time before the first stereographs were created. In figure 12, the mannequin is reaching for the phone but in a very cumbersome manner. Both she and the telephone are turned towards the camera, so the telephone gets the viewer's attention as well. Instead of being a simple prop, it clearly comes to the fore (see fig. 9 and 12). The reason why the movie's and the stereographs' imagery is quite similar is probably that of the setting. The film plot is mainly set in the Wendice apartment, making it a chamber play. Many objects are prominently displayed in the immediate foreground to achieve spatial depth such as bottles or a table lamp. Watching the film flat – which has generally been the case even when it was released in 1954 (Hall 2004, 245) – might sometimes provoke confusion regarding these objects (see fig. 10–11).

The HANRO stereoscopic photographs are quite similarly composed. The indoor shots focus on an extremely limited surrounding. Sequentially viewed, the photos give the impression of very limited space and little variety. For technical reasons, the photographs' motifs seem quite exaggerated and a bit overdrawn or overemphasized. It is also apparent that the mannequins were not familiar with the stereoscopic media technique. In researching the personnel files, I

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[7] A very profound film review can be found in Bordonaro 1976.

found out that at least two HANRO mannequins worked in the design department in the mock-up room ("Musterzimmer") and as in-house models. Consequently, they were not necessarily professional models. This may also explain their inexperienced poses.

Fig. 9: Official film poster of *Dial M for Murder*, directed by Alfred Hitchcock, released in 1954. http://fantasy-ink.blogspot.ch/2012/02/crime-murder.html
(02/03/2017). Available under fair use.

Fig. 10 + 11: Screen shots from *Dial M for Murder*. The table lamp has no function other than creating spatial depth.
DVD Warner Home Video, 2004. Available under fair use.

Fig. 12: Stereo twin-picture from autumn collection 1956. The black telephone alludes to *Dial M for Murder*.
© Hanro collection, Archäologie und Museum Baselland, Switzerland.

Unfortunately, due to the limited text size, I cannot expand on the outdoor photographs. Suffice it to mention that they are shot in front of different detached houses, entrances or limousines. Other settings, e.g., in a garden, in the countryside or on the riverbank, rather evoke the impression of pastoral amateur photography (what they might be) than of professional fashion photography. At the same time, they seem more organic than the theatrical and backdrop-like indoor images and therefore communicate more liveliness than the interior shots.

Beyond the information the 3-D photographs themselves can provide, nothing is known about the production process nor their intended purpose and the circumstances of their presentation. As we have seen, technically it is very easy to make stereoscopic photographs, once you have an appropriate lens attachment for the camera. The image composition, however, needs special knowledge about how to achieve different depth layers. Who initially had the idea to make stereoscopic photographs? Who were their intended viewers – customers, agents or maybe salespeople? In this respect, it would also be very interesting to know the context of their reception. Have the stereographs been shown to a group of people in a projection room or individually? Or have they even been mailed to potential clients? For now, unfortunately, those questions will have to remain unanswered.

However, it is certain that the photographs lack any obvious commercial context. There is neither a reference to the HANRO brand nor any information about prices or sizes. Certainly, they have not been used for official advertising, as I could find out based on the data of the advertising department. In contrast to the stereoscopic photographs, most HANRO advertisements placed in magazines in the 1950s were printed in black and white. Besides, the garments were often presented as drawings instead of mannequins (see fig. 13). These images are usually accompanied by a reference to Switzerland whereas the stereographs lack the emphasis on a Swiss product – be it visual or in a textual description. It can thus be concluded that the stereoscopic pictures were not necessarily produced for foreign customers. Further questions arise about the photographs' purpose(s). Can they be interpreted simply as a gimmick? The fact that the stereographs were produced over a period of five years leads to the conclusion that this project was not a spontaneous campaign for entertainment, but rather to document the women's fashion in a particular way. But what is the additional value of three-dimensional photographs indeed? And did HANRO made full use of it?

Fig. 13: HANRO advertising from 1956.
© Hanro collection, Archäologie und Museum Baselland, Switzerland.

Conclusion

Stereographic photographs have been presented here in the context of fashion photography while concentrating on a specific photo series of Swiss Knitting Company HANRO in the period between 1954 and 1958. Notwithstanding, stereographs had already emerged in the second half of nineteenth century and produced double pictures that gave the illusion of a three-dimensional image. This effect made them perfect for motifs where additional spatial information and knowledge about relations between two objects were useful, such as military air reconnaissance, sculptures or architecture, as Schröter demonstrated recently (2014). However, the use of stereoscopy in fashion photography is less common.

The HANRO stereographs unite three interesting concepts regarding fashion and media: firstly, the from today's perspective outdated technology of transplane imagery, secondly the attempt to display clothes in their three-dimensionality, thirdly the stereographs reveal the taste of the time – the 'zeitgeist' and image of women of the 1950s are communicated in this photo series through fashion, setting, make-up, facial expression, and accessories. On account of the fact that little is known about the production context, I can only speculate about HANRO's aims of using this exceptional media technique. Conceivably, the advertising department's employees or whoever was charged with the production were fascinated by this

media technology. From that angle, HANRO deserves credit for its refreshing approach to convey its collections and for varying the traditional static photography. As far as I know, hardly any apparel manufacturer utilized the stereoscopic media technique to promote its items.

It is probably not a coincidence that HANRO's production of stereoscopic slides took place at the same time when Hollywood featured 3-D films to fight against the advent of competing television. Amongst these films is *Dial M for Murder* by Alfred Hitchcock. Although there cannot be verified a direct link between the movie and HANRO stereographs, the visual strategies of both media reveal a visual discourse due to the media specifics of three-dimensional image making. What is striking here is the similar image composition. Space is organized as different linear layers instead of building a rather 'organic' or dynamic 360° surround space.

Clothes need to be modeled and are themselves three-dimensional, spatial textile structures. For a long time in the twentieth century, the usual way to market new collections of Haute Couture was through expensive catwalk shows in Paris, New York, Milan, London, and Tokyo. Nathaniel Dafydd Beard, however, stresses that fashion nowadays is rather mediated through images and films than presented at live catwalk shows (2014, 600). The obvious drawback consequently is that the clothes can only be perceived visually; the tactile and the haptic experience are missing as well as the possibility to watch the clothes from all sides to gain an impression of the drapery and the cut. Regarding HANRO, 3-D photographs then may have offered an acceptable compromise between a flat image and a three-dimensional live demonstration at that time. Nonetheless, I would argue that HANRO did not realize the full potential of stereoscopic photographs, which provide more spatial information. Their affordance is to furnish more spatial information. Applied to fashion, this would mean to show the same dress from different angles, so the observer sees not only the volume but also the garment's proportion and drapery. Taking this into account, 3-D moving images would be a good way to mediate fashion when foregoing a fitting in "real" life. In contrast to the fashion industry, recent works in the artistic field of fashion photography have been experimenting with 3-D, such as the ones of the Slovenian artist Matjaž Tančič. In his series "mimicry china" he combines fashion photography with Chinese architecture to create a new dynamic space by using anaglyphic stereoscopy.[8] However, future exploration of the intersection of fashion, photography, and space should not only focus on semiotic image analysis but also on contexts such as media aesthetics and phenomenon of perception.

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[8] See Tančič 2012, http://www.matjaztancic.com/.

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Biography

Leonie Häsler works as a Junior Researcher at the Institute of Experimental Design and Media Cultures/Critical Media Lab at the Academy of Art and Design FHNW Basel (ixdm.ch). She is a PhD candidate at the University of Basel. Her dissertation takes a look at the design processes and manufacturing in the fashion and textile industry. It is settled in the field of design history and aims at leading the wide-spread concept of designing (in the sense of the German term "entwerfen") back to the industrial context. To gather her data, Leonie is working with the archives of the former Swiss fashion company "Hanro", mostly known for its underwear. Leonie received her B.A. in Literary, Cultural and Media Studies (German/French) from Siegen University in Germany and holds an M.A. in Media Culture from the same institute.

E-mail: leonie.haesler@fhnw.ch

Lifestyle and fashion in Mario Camerini's romantic comedies *Il Signor Max* and *I Grandi Magazzini*

CHIARA FAGGELLA, *Stockholm University*

ABSTRACT

Between the years 1922 and 1943, Italian Fascism revealed quite an ambivalent attitude towards lifestyle.[1] While the regime tried to impose standards of nationalistic moderation, popular entertainment of the time reveals that different aspects of culture never surrendered completely to the diktats of the regime. This article discusses the ways in which two films, *Il Signor Max* (Astra Film, 1937) and *I Grandi Magazzini* (Amato-Era Film, 1939) can provide a perspective into the consumer culture of Fascist Italy and its ambivalences. By presenting recurrent references to lifestyle commodities and fashion, the experiences of consumption in the two films take center stage in spite of the regime's campaigns for modesty.

KEYWORDS

Fascism, Lifestyle, Fashion, Comedy, Film

Introduction

One of the main purposes of Fascism was that of molding a completely new population, though characterized by strong roots in the glorious past of Italy and in the peasant traditions of agriculture, the backbone of its economy. Its ideology comprised a general disapproval for everything that looked foreign, sophisticated and elitist. Conversely, popular entertainment of the time reveals a more complicated picture in which different aspects of culture never surrendered completely to the diktats of the regime, displaying a fascination for foreign fashion and leisure goods. Despite its totalitarian blueprint and what some historians have deemed to be a significant political consensus, Fascism lately proved to be unable, and occasionally unwilling, to restrain the desires of the masses and to direct them according to its own objectives (Gentile, 2003). In this regard, Stephen Gundle has proposed to look at Italian cinema during Fascism as one of those areas of cultural production in which the regime's aims of control were either defeated or struggling against the interests of private, commercial players (Gundle 2013). This position contrasts especially with what Emilio Gentile has been asserting on the pervasiveness of Fascism as a political religion, and the supposedly large consent base that it enjoyed thanks to its energetic censorship over media (mainly radio and journalism) (Forgacs and Gundle, 2007).

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[1] The use of the capital 'f' is employed to specifically indicate the totalitarian regime led by Benito Mussolini, which occurred in Italy between the years 1922 and 1943, and to distinguish it from additional national variations (e.g. Spanish Falangism).

During Fascism, then, it is interesting to witness the developments of a series of films that expressed whims and desires for a glamorous lifestyle within the so-called *cinema dei telefoni bianchi* (white telephones' cinema). This article discusses the ways in which two films, traditionally categorized as belonging to the white telephones genre, can provide a perspective into aspects of consumer culture under Fascism. Far from being subversive, *Il Signor Max* (Astra Film, 1937) and *I Grandi Magazzini* (Amato-Era Film, 1939) distinguished themselves among the many theatrical melodramas, foreign-inspired comedies or historical tragedies. Through reasonably realistic representations of contemporary society, their main characters are ordinary men and women from the lower and lower-middle classes, usually salesgirls or delivery men. The two films present recurrent references to lifestyle commodities, particularly to articles of clothing and leisure activities, with which the protagonists related by means of compulsive relationships. Their stories revolved insistently around on the importance of objects and activities, the experiences of consumption take center stage. As consumerism was opposed by the regime, its presence in the two films is an expression of the typical bourgeois individualism that Fascism overtly opposed.

The controversial 'white telephones'

Traditionally, scholars have regarded *Il signor Max* and *I I Grandi Magazzini* as belonging to the 'white telephone' genre (Mida and Quaglietti, 1980; Landy, 1986; Casadio, Laura and Cristiano, 1991). The peculiarity of the genre was the display of a lavish lifestyle, unattainable for the average Italian audience, which often upstaged the storylines. Its development has been ascribed to the comedy of manners and as the Italian take on Hollywood's screwball comedy, influenced by a certain Hungarian situational social comedy (Landy 1986, 121; Moliterno 2008, 340). The name originates from the profuse presence of white telephones in film scenes, as elements of interior design and signifiers for both affluence and distinctiveness: the possibility of making phone calls at home represented an exclusive commodity, accessible only to the wealthier. Moreover, the color white differentiated the domestic phone from the more popular version in black, generally used in offices and work environments. Drawing a parallel with nineteenth century pictorial art, where nudity was accepted only if the setting was visibly classical, scandalous relationships and social difficulties could only be depicted in Italian cinema at that time using remote settings. Foreign countries, among which Hungary was a favorite, were often chosen as fictional locations: Fascist authorities banned racy themes and crimes from being represented as possible occurrences in the apparently neat and ordered Italian society.

Conversely, white telephones have become a synonym for a shameful past of the history of Italian cinema, during which censorship was masked by attention to décor and formulaic content. For this reason, there had long been the opinion that '[…] the aim of these films was that of inhibiting the Italian population from thinking during one of the darkest moment of our country. The [First World W]ar, especially a lost war, ought to be removed from the collective memory; nothing better than escapist cinema, the most frivolous, the most stupid, the most illusory and unreal show[…]' (Casadio, Laura and Cristiano 1991, 9). When a cultural reevaluation of cinema of the Fascist period started in the late 1970s, as suggested by Gundle, scholars began to question the traditional historiography that had dismissed the white telephone genre on the basis that its '[…] narratives

would seem to merit the disapprobation heaped upon them of being frivolous and inconsequential. On closer inspection, the seemingly trivial characters and situations are an index to familiar bourgeois myths and attitudes' (2013, 121).

Prejudice undoubtedly biased research, as scholars hastily grouped countless productions in the white telephones genre, among which there were films indeed extremely dissimilar from one another (Landy 1998, 45). Due to this inclusion, the negative assessments directed towards the initial genre spread over the totality of cinema produced under Fascism, because of both the poor quality of some of the films and the stigma caused by the historical period in which the white telephones were born. Consequentially, the notion that white telephones films ceased to be produced in Italian cinema immediately after 1945 has long been supported since the formal end of Second World War and the establishment of neorealism (Landy 1986, 230). Yet, as argued by film scholar Carlo Celli, it would be quite imprudent to think that techniques, styles and themes adopted by Italian directors in the immediate post-war years were not in any way related to the experiences of their most recent past (2001, 3-17). According to Marcia Landy, '[…] the popular Italian cinema of the Ventennio, especially those feature films described as escapist […] have much to communicate about fascist culture. Rather than being removed from Italian reality, they are a good indication of how that reality was constructed' (1986, 20).

This article discusses the ways in which the work of director Mario Camerini is particularly relevant in this matter, given his films' predisposition to realism and the recurrence of representations of lower and lower-middle classes. During a career spanning nearly forty years, his film activity approached different themes, yet the average settings in several of his films in the 1930s present an interesting representation of Italian society at that time, at least in comparison to other popular commercial films. As the regime required Italian film directors and producers to mitigate the harshness of realism in their representations of life, optimism was to favor in lieu of distrust in society. Since the early 1930s, the general message that the regime wished for every media to convey aimed at '[…] optimism, trust and confidence in the future. Eliminate alarmist, pessimistic, catastrophic and depressing news' (Cannistraro 1975, 420). Yet, while exact directives for press and radio were a standard procedure, the regime did never organize its actions in the same disciplined manner when it came to national cinema. While there was no case of films openly dissident or critical towards the regime, a number of films did not exactly reflect the same cultural principles and ideologies endorsed by Fascism. In this context, Camerini's comedies provided a fertile terrain for realistic representations of society at that time, featuring popular common sense rather than the grand escapism of luxurious settings of the more 'proper' white telephones films.

Il signor Max

Despite his job as newspaper seller, Gianni (Vittorio De Sica), has 'an obsession', as it is said in the movie, for the upper class. Old high school friend Max Varaldo, a wealthy count, offers him a first-class ticket for a trip aboard a transatlantic liner. Once on board, Gianni is mistaken for his friend Max Varaldo by a group of aristocrats, among which the beautiful Paola (Rubi Dalma) and her younger sister Pucci (Lilia Dale, credited as Adonella) are accompanied by the maid Lauretta (Assia Noris). Thrilled by the lifestyle of his new acquaintances, Gianni decides to continue his charade as

Max Varaldo with Paola once they are back in Rome. There, as he bumps into Lauretta in his ordinary clothes, Gianni pretends to be courting her in order to obtain information on Paola. After a series of misunderstandings, Gianni will eventually realize that Lauretta is indeed his true love.

In a later interview, director Mario Camerini affirmed that, '[…] in contrast to what all the critics believed, those who were saying that it was a satire against the aristocracy, *Il signor Max* was a satire against the blue collar worker who wants to be a snob.'[2] The main character Gianni is torn between what has been decided for him, and what he would actually like to do with his life. After inheriting a newspaper stand from his father, he is forced to abandon high school and start working. His family, ordinary lower-middle class people, would like him to conduct a modest life, instead of vainly admiring the lifestyle of the upper class. Gianni appears concerned only about matters of appearance and is happy when he can pamper himself with small luxuries, such as occasional traveling and elegant clothes, temporarily elevating his ordinary lifestyle.

Unfortunately, even if Gianni tries hard to conceive his humble social status, some aspects of his manners denounce his displacement to the audience. Traveling for the first time in first class aboard a liner, Gianni tries whisky for the first time and casually orders it at the bar, though he does not know any brand nor likes the taste of it. When Gianni explains later that the whisky caused him a stomachache, a friend asks what *is* whisky and if it is good, to which an embarrassed Gianni replies: 'Well, *they* [the aristocrats] drink it all the time.' Yet Gianni's most uncomfortable social inadequacy is, probably, his unfamiliarity with the game of bridge. His attempts to play are fiddly, since Gianni does not understand the rules and makes a fool of himself by trying anyway. The role of this card game as a social marker is loaded with great importance in the film, as it marks both the beginning and the end of Gianni's courtship of the aristocratic Paola. At first, aboard the steamship, Gianni is forced to join a group of players, much to his dismay. He is anyway soon relieved from his obligation thanks to another player, who voluntarily offers to take his place. Back in Rome, Gianni takes classes to learn how to play bridge. At the end of the film, he plays his last game and keeps making mistakes, annoying the other players and completely misunderstanding the biddings. Paola, upset with his behavior, asks another guest to take his place, as Gianni is being scolded because 'bridge is not a game for kids.' Gianni's aspirations to a luxurious lifestyle is in opposition to the archetypal frugality advocated by Mussolini, who stated that '[…] the Fascist man loathes a comfortable life' (Pugliese 2001, 84). In *Il Signor Max*, the protagonist's representation of masculinity contrasts explicitly with the male Fascist aesthetics, characterized by the exaltation of 'manly' manners and virility. Gianni invests in his outer appearance with continuous splurges of money in apparel and commodities, carefully chosen in order to display an appropriate look.

The most crucial scenes in the development of the plot, for this reason, are those in which Gianni handles elements of clothing, or cultivates his aesthetic inclinations. In the beginning of the film, the 'real' Max Varaldo makes sure that Gianni has a tuxedo, because it is required from first-class passengers. Gianni replies that he brought along both a tuxedo and a tailcoat, showing that he knows exactly the dress code required by such an occasion. Furthermore, Gianni's foreign

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[2] Mario Camerini quoted in Sergio Gmerk Germani, 'Conversazione con Mario Camerini', *Camerini/De Sica* (1975-1978; Rome: Ripley's Home Video, 2009), DVD.

magazines lead Paola to believe that he indeed is another sophisticated member of the upper class. Finally, when he is invited to go horse riding by Paola and her friends, Gianni asks his friend Peppe to go to a boutique named *Eleganza Maschile*, 'elegance for men', and to buy him a pair of riding breechs and a pair of riding boots, admonishing him to 'Buy the most beautiful ones, and spend! Spend a lot!' Even if he acts in an environment in which he does not belong, Gianni does not spend money carelessly on random objects, and appears to know exactly what kind of attire and behavior are required in different situations.

Thanks to his job at the newsstand, Gianni is an enthusiastic consumer of magazines, which he faithfully reads in order to be informed on the latest trends suggested to fashionable men, as he reads aloud from a copy of *Esquire*. Gianni's reliance on magazines becomes thus decisive in securing Paola and her friends' approval. Gianni's only contact with the masculine model of behavior encouraged by the regime concerns his interests in sport, though foreign ones (and not, for example, the supposedly *italianissimo* soccer which was renamed *calcio*), and the participation in his uncle's *dopolavoro* (after work activities) (de Grazia, 1981, 24). To convince Lauretta about the good-heartedness of Gianni, his uncle Pietro tells her that the *dopolavoro* is the only place where Gianni spends all his spare time, lying shamelessly on his nephew's inclinations.

The rich sisters Paola and Pucci are Camerini's take on the social élites of the time. Mario Camerini recalled later that, when the film was first screened at Venice International Film Festival in 1937, Luigi Freddi was concerned by the fact that members of the aristocracy in attendance that night might be irritated by Camerini's portrayal.[3] The film, remembered Camerini, was instead a huge success, praised also by those members of Italian aristocracy who attended the screening: 'They understood that the spoof was not directed to them, I pictured them as they actually are, but the spoof was directed to the worker who wanted to be a *signore*.'[4] In particular, Paola appears as international and sophisticated as actual members of the upper class would, when photographed in society magazines of the time. She is pictured wearing dramatic outfits, veiled hats and furs, as in her first scene with Gianni aboard the ship and their encounter at the Grand Hotel. It is quite interesting to investigate the character of Pucci, a thirteen year old girl, whose wealth allows her to experience the world. She spends time in fashionable venues, stays up late during parties, travels around the world and already has a personal assistant, Lauretta. Eventually, the economical possibilities granted by her social status allow Pucci to be a seemingly avid consumer of mass culture, while the prohibitive costs of traveling, cinema tickets, books, novels and illustrated journals prevented the majority of Italian girls to enjoy them (de Grazia 1992, 132).

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[3] Luigi Freddi was president of the Ministry of Popular Culture's Division for Cinema (*direzione generale per il cinema)*, an institution that had the specific purpose of supervising and administering the overall cinema production of Italy. In his leadership and his vision for the Division, Freddi had been originally inspired by a trip to Hollywood during which, for eight weeks, he reportedly '[…] snooped around everywhere, with the only concern of watching and learning in a city ripe with seductions.'

[4] Mario Camerini in Sergio Gmerk Germani, 'Conversazione con Mario Camerini', *Camerini/De Sica* (1975-1978; Rome: Ripley's Home Video, 2009), DVD.

I Grandi Magazzini (1939)

Whereas a few preliminary varieties of department stores existed in large Italian cities since the second half of the nineteenth century, they were largely unknown to the majority of the population, who had largely been accustomed to buy from small family-run retail stores and artisan laboratories. In Milan, *La Rinascente* was the very first department store, whose origins dated back to 1865. It was aimed at customers from the upper and upper-middle classes (Zamagni 2003, 402). The department store in *I Grandi Magazzini* is then a faithful representation of a modern cathedral of consumption, modeled on the real *La Rinascente* in Milan (Reich and Garofalo 2002, 289). In the film, the chief of staff of *I Grandi Magazzini*, Bertini, is stealing from the department store with the help of his accomplices, salesgirl Anna and her brother Pietro, a delivery man. Bertini is also infatuated with salesgirl Lauretta, who is courted by delivery man Bruno (Vittorio De Sica). When Bruno accidentally uncovers Bertini's scheme, Anna attempts to seduce Bruno and invites him on a ski trip. Out of jealousy, Lauretta steals a ski suit at the department store to go meet Bruno on the slopes. When Bertini finds out about it, he blames Lauretta for all the thefts incurred at the department store, in order to cover up for himself. Eventually Bruno will figure out the whole plot, have Bertini arrested, and reunite with Lauretta.

The men and women of *I Grandi Magazzini* are part of that stream of people from all walks of life who fills up the modern cities. Their social condition is nevertheless low, if compared to that of the customers of the department store, but their occupation allows them to come across the exciting novelty brought by both urbanization and advancements in production and marketing of goods. The diffusion of such models of consumption regarded only major Italian cities though, such as Milan, Turin and Rome. The availability of imported prêt-à-porter clothing, make-up and accessories, but also household items and home décor, increased the desirability of the major cities in the eyes of the female population, who was a specific target of the new mass culture of consumption (Reich 1998, 197).

Aware of this aspect, one of the film's producer, Giuseppe Amato, and costume designer Marcello Caracciolo di Laurino established agreements with several Italian brands, in order to regulate the product placement of different sorts of goods.[5] In a scene when Bruno learns from Bertini that Lauretta is accused of stealing, the camera focuses on a box of 'high quality stockings' branded SiSi. Not all of them were Italian brands, though, as the film featured an Elizabeth Arden booth in the cosmetic division of the store's setting. On the one hand, the regime officially discouraged women to buy make-up, whose use was ascribable to the despicable figure of the flapper, *la maschietta* as it was called in Italy, and her decadent lifestyle. Perfumes, a market field dominated by French manufacturers, were also the target of Fascist moralists, who instead advised Italian women to prefer, if necessary, cheaper domestic substitutes (Aspesi 1982, 143-7). The female protagonist Lauretta, on the other hand, is always wearing a bright and perfectly applied make-up, paired with manicured nails and in an intense shade of nail polish. Notwithstanding the official warnings, in fact, analyses of the national press of the late 1930s highlight a constant flow of

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[5] Mario Camerini in Sergio Gmerk Germani, 'Conversazione con Mario Camerini', *Camerini/De Sica* (1975-1978; Rome: Ripley's Home Video, 2009), DVD.

lamentations towards the use of make-up and perfumes. As pointed out by journalist Natalia Aspesi, at the time '[…] nothing seems to stop the offensive feminine frivolity: during Fascism, during the war, and even if ardent patriots, women are resolute in their disobedience when it comes to wear make-up and follow fashion' (Aspesi 1982, 146).

As discussed by film scholar Jacqueline Reich, *I Grandi Magazzini* spurred consumption in different ways that were not limited to the experience of the film itself (1998). The *cineromanzo* or *cineracconto*, which helped the cause of boosting national cinema and spread the success of rising national stars, was one of the ways.[6] Published as supplements of glossy film magazines, *cineromanzi* were photoplay editions of films, illustrated with stills and production pictures portraying the actors in the film. The appeal of *cineromanzi* resided in the quantity of photographs that they included: they could be collected, cut out, posted on walls and therefore enjoyed by the same audience outside the original space of consumption of the cinema theatre. In this way, the experience of the film would go beyond the original space of enjoyment, and persist in the intimacy of one's home. This 'strategy of persistency' was carried out also with the help of frequent references to other successful films. A vivid example is offered by the song *Parlami d'amore Mariù*, musical theme of the film *Gli uomini, che mascalzoni* (Cines, 1932), also directed by Mario Camerini and starring Vittorio De Sica. The song, performed by Vittorio De Sica himself, became a huge success both in Italy and abroad (Cardillo 1983, 24). In a couple of scenes from *I Grandi Magazzini*, Vittorio De Sica/Bruno whistles the theme of *Parlami d'amore Mariù*, reminding the audience of that previous famous film. In the aims of the regime, the campaign for a national cinema was significantly connected to the campaign for a national fashion discourse, as a collaboration of forces that should act together to spread vivid messages in the collective imagery. Unfortunately, this ambitious project failed because of the scarce cooperation between film industry and national fashion houses, with the lack of influent Italian costume designers who wished to follow the example set by Adrian in the US playing a crucial reason (Monti 2009, 127).

A lifestyle revolution

The reformation of lifestyle prompted by the regime implied a pedantic campaign for the adoption of a proper Fascist style, planned to invest most aspects of public and private life, from leisure to sport, from language to media, from shopping to fashion (Falasca-Zamponi 1997, 100).[7] An official style became necessary in order to express the discipline and the orderly fashion in which the dictatorship claimed to have reorganized the nation. For this reason, restructuring fashion and aesthetics was crucial in the establishment of a Fascist style, since the desired institution of a brand-new national lifestyle depended also on a coherent visual identity. In particular, as stated by Eugenia Paulicelli, Fascism understood fashion in particular as '[…] one of the privileged vehicles with which Italy has sought to create, promote and define a national identity for itself' (2004, 2). Indeed, the nationalization of fashion was one of the most crucial goal planned by the dictatorship, an aesthetic crusade conducted by means of diktats on dress code, promotion of the national

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[6] Combinations of cinema and *romanzo*, novel (but also 'romantic fiction'), or *racconto*, short story.
[7] Achille Starace, secretary of the National Fascist Party, was the most strenuous advocate for the adoption of a Fascist aesthetics that would characterize Italian national identity.

manufacturing industry and self-sufficiency. National propaganda increased the advertisements of national products, stressing the need to impose a certain distance against the French dominance in taste for fashion, to instead nurture its own style by means of its own industry and, most important, its own fashion discourse.

Counting on several influent advocates, the regime recognized the cause for a national fashion, which officially took off in 1932 with the establishment of Ente Nazionale della Moda (National Fashion Board) (Gnoli 2000). The board, directly managed by the regime, created a special 'quality seal' to be appointed to those fashion houses that could demonstrate their creations to be non-derivative and authentically Italian, in both design and production. The ENM celebrated national producers of clothing and accessories, publicized domestic traditions of craftsmanship, and pleaded Italian women, especially the wealthier ones, to prefer national fashion to foreign imports (Paulicelli 2004, 21). It was a perfect timing to boost domestic lifestyle productions then, since it was precisely in the 1930s that fashion 'transcended class lines' and women and men from different social strata could follow the same trends, expanding their aspirations for a modern lifestyle (de Grazia 1992, 221).

The language of fashion

The Italianization of foreign words was an important part of the cultural politics of Fascism. The reform of the language was explicitly part of the project for a national Fascist style promoted by the regime, and invaded different linguistic aspects of both public and private life. The reliance on the capillarity of its mass media helped the regime in promoting different campaigns for the cleanliness and integrity of the language. The use of foreign words was unanimously condemned as a threat to the purity of Italian language who led consumers to familiarize with non-Italian terms. Eventually, in 1940, a national law compelled manufacturers to write scrupulous comprehensive descriptions in Italian, with Italian terms, for those products that originally employed foreign names or expressions. This became valid for every possible class of advertising activity, from packaging to billboards to radio ads (Foresti 2003, 60).

Linked to the linguistic propaganda, the campaign for the nationalization of the fashion discourse tried to reach its height with the creation of a specific commentary-dictionary of fashion, commissioned by ENM to fashion journalist Cesare Meano in 1936 (Paulicelli 2004, 57). The text specifically listed all the most important entries connected to fashion, leisure and lifestyle, yet attempts of purging the commonly used lexicon from foreign loans in French and in English were quite rare. In this sense the project of the dictionary can be seen as an attempt to restore the prestige of Italian fashion, both nationally and internationally, and therefore to 'create the culture for an appreciation of Italian taste and fashion both at home and abroad' (Paulicelli 2009, 282). This is a concept that specifically highlights the need for a national discourse in the broader perspective of international fashion capitals.

While the regime condemned the use of foreign words, everyday language was hardly just 'purely' Italian, as it is represented in both *Il signor Max* and *I I Grandi Magazzini*. 'Censored' terms seemingly sounded less familiar than foreign loans themselves. In *Il signor Max*, for instance,

Gianni repeatedly, though reluctantly, drinks 'whiskies', and does not use the purged Italian equivalents *acquavite* or *spirito d'avena* (oat alcohol). When taking lessons in different sports, he starts practicing tennis, but never refers to it with the suggested Fascist name of *pallacorda* (ball-rope). During the dancing night aboard the ship, when he has the first conversation with Paola, Gianni is gifted with French *cotillions*, as nobody ever pronounces the preposterous Italian translation *cotiglioni*.

In *I Grandi Magazzini*, Lauretta suggests a friend to spend her extra money to buy '*un bel tailleur*' (a suit with blazer), instead of a utilitarian '*paletot pesante*', a thick winter coat. It is interesting to note that Lauretta uses the French word *tailleur* and not a '*completo a giacca*', which was the version officially suggested by Meano, and that she could have said *cappotto*, the Italian word for coat (Gnoli 2005, 78).

When examining the translation proposed by the regime one notices a certain lack of creativity. Most of the substitutions consisted in fact of phono-semantic matchings of French loanwords, as in the case of the French words *chignon*, describing a hairstyle, transformed into *cignone* in Italian, and *couturier,* which becomes *cucitore* (Aspesi 1982, 94). Linguists and journalists were asked to spend their efforts in adapting the originals into acceptable Italian equivalents, but their endeavor could not produce anything more than scarce onomatopoetic adaptations. The Italianization of words related to fashion and lifestyle was another pedantic but unsuccessful intervention of the regime, which failed because of the different cultural forces that interplayed at the time, as suggested by Gundle and David Forgacs (2007, 2-3).

Conclusion

The political reticence that accompanied Italian historiography for quite a long time delayed the opportunity to analyze the Fascist *ventennio* of 1922-1943 free from ideological preconceptions. In particular, the film productions of this period had been unanimously dismissed for a long time, largely on the presumption of their overall inferiority in technical, narrative and aesthetic aspects, especially if compared with postwar neorealism. The negative opinions that critics and film scholars directed at the so-called genre of *telefoni bianchi* would come to encompass the whole film production of Italy during Fascism, de facto agreeing with philosopher Benedetto Croce's interpretation of Fascism as an anomaly, an irregularity in the history of Italy, a 'contemporary sickness from which Italy was the first to suffer' (1943, 45). On the other hand, the romantic comedies of Mario Camerini represent the insight that Landy suggests to look for when reassessing this crucial period of Italian cultural history (Landy 1986, 20). Camerini showed a predisposition to realism and an interest for the vicissitudes of the working class, in opposition to the ostentatious escapism of the 'proper' *telefoni bianchi* genre or the bombastic celebrations of Fascism of the (few indeed) propagandist films. By looking at them as representations of the society of the time, the two films *Il signor Max* and *I Grandi Magazzini* are capable of highlighting the innate contradictions of Fascism and its attempts in constructing a new 'Fascist' lifestyle in fashion and culture. In these two films, Camerini was able to condense consistent references to the cultural debate of Italian society of the late 1930s: the rejection of Parisian and Anglo-American references in apparel and luxury goods, the quest for a national image of Italian fashion and the attempts to promote the Italian film

production with intertextual references like the *cineromanzo*. Overall, the two films are a reminder of the attempts of Fascism to establish a consistent national discourse in both fashion and film production. These attempts to the formation of a 'new' national identity, though, were contrasted on different levels by 'a complex network of negotiations, concessions and compromises, as well as various, often tacit, forms of opposition, noncompliance, and resistance' (Forgacs and Gundle 2007, 3), which can be already discerned in the two films.

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Biography

Chiara Faggella is a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of Media Studies at Stockholm University, Sweden. She holds an MA in Fashion Studies from Stockholm University and graduated summa cum laude from Università degli Studi di Pisa with a BA in Communication Studies. Her soon-to-be discussed doctoral thesis is a historical project on the postwar promotion of Italian fashion for export in the international market. Chiara's additional research interests include oral histories of postwar Italian dressmakers and their consumers; history of costume departments of the interwar Italian film industry; and the developments of trade agencies for the promotion of Italian fashion merchandise.

E-mail: chiara.faggella@ims.su.se

Dress as a Reflection of Social Identity and Differentiation in the Soviet Cinema in the 1950s-1980s

Kateryna Novikova, *independent researcher*.

ABSTRACT

The paper is based on the visual and sociological interpretation of the specific element of the Soviet everyday life within the period from 1950s till 1980s. From the very beginning, clothing styles and images were used by Communist authorities to impose some important ideological trends on society. There was collectivism, modesty, simplicity, unselfishness, obedience, respect for authority, and hard work in addition to a variety of features of Soviet morality, as well as even more controversial Soviet ideas. Popular culture in the Soviet Union, especially cinema and television, contained both entertainment and propaganda in different proportions. The presented analysis of stories from the selected Soviet movies concerns the specific perspective of the social identity creation, lifestyle construction and imitation strategies of the common Soviet citizens. Social differentiation within clothing styles as symbols of status is shown rather frequently in the movies, especially in the earlier period, as a way to delineate social and moral borders between working class, on the one side, and intelligentsia, on the other.

KEYWORDS

Soviet, Fashion, Identity, Lifestyle, Film Studies

Introduction

Cinema and fashion have coexisted for many years in harmony and symbiosis; their mutual fascination bonded them from the beginning and it is still flourishing. According to the Polish film researcher and professor of arts Marek Hendrykowski, cinema and fashion have a common origin related to their organic relationship with the history of modern culture. They are both the product of the entrepreneurial and active new middle class from the late nineteenth century. In the first half of the twentieth century they started to bridge stratified social structure with the help of lifestyles that were popular across the society (Hendrykowski 2011, 14).

In the collectivist Soviet society, specific dressing styles were not necessarily a personal choice (as it was to a certain degree in the Western countries) or a means of self-expression. It would be interesting to explore if the relations between cinema and fashion in such specific society as the Soviet one. In what way do movies reflect the Soviet society and lifestyles in their declarative egalitarianism and actual inequality? Or do they represent only element of the totalitarian state propaganda after the World War II? The goal of this paper is to show how certain elements of social identity were created through dress, fashion and diverse lifestyles in the context of social differentiation in the Soviet society.

Soviet cinema masterpieces and some less popular feature films are selected as relevant and interesting. Some of them were box-office hits and therefore could have a significant impact on the Soviet audience. Among them there is *Behind Show Windows* (1955), directed by Samson Samsonov; *Carnival Night* (1956), also known as *Carnival in Moscow*, *Girl Without Address* (1957), *The Zigzag of Success* 1968) and *Office Romance* (1977), all directed by Eldar Ryazanov; *I Love You, Life* (1960) directed by Mikhail Yershov; *The Girls* (1961) directed by Yuriy Chulyukin; *There is Such a Lad* (1964) and *Pechki-ławochki* (1972) directed by Vasiliy Shukshyn; *Diamond Arm* (1969) and *Ivan Vasillievich Changes His Profession or Back to Future* (1973) directed by Leonid Gayday; *Moscow does not believe in tears* (1979–80, the 53rd Academy Award for the Best Foreign Language film in 1981) directed by Vladimir Menshov and *The Most Charming and Attractive* (1985) directed by Gerald Bezhanov. In addition to the selected feature films and references to costume design and fashion in general, particular research problems were chosen for this research. They concern fashion as a social statement in terms of belonging to either current or aspired social class and social group, as well as strategies of self-representation and personal identity creation.

Historical Context

In order to better understand the general social situation, one should remember that the end of the Second World War was overshadowed by the subsequent death of Joseph Stalin. However, society reacted to "the Thaw" not with hope or relief. Overwhelming fear meant that the change would be for worse, not for good. It was not before Khruschev's seminal speech on the personality cult and further public discussions that promising changes and 'symbolic rupture' brought optimism. That optimism signalled improvements in material life, as well as "many people's genuine confidence and pride in their society's ethical and cultural values, political ideas, and prospects for the future" (Gilburd, Kozlov 2013, 32). The Twentieth Congress of the Communist party in 1956 also inspired in some way "the turn to the West" (Gurova 2006, 95). State and party felt not only bigger expectations but pressing demands and impatience for change. Despite various power struggles and some impulse for change, the Soviet political regime remained rather stable. The previous political culture – even the one that was formed under Stalin – persisted. The Khruschev reforms were incomplete along with "the continuing recourse to repressive methods of social discipline, mobilization, and control" (Gilburd, Kozlov 2013, 25). There still was widespread mistrust and secrecy as well as a lasting tendency to blame Soviet society's misfortunes on scapegoats. Despite "the frailty of the Thaw enterprise", as Gilburd and Kozlov emphasized, there was the intense exchange of ideas, growing feeling of greater personal security, and living standards were improving (Gilburd, Kozlov 2013, 25).

The Soviet Union was a deeply divided society "with an almost castelike social system" with top party officials and their families at the top of the social pyramid, followed by the lesser *nomenklatura* (Seliktar 2015). These were the officials in the party and state bureaucracy that used their position for personal gain and possessed multiple privileges constituting "Soviet aristocracy", it was "a life peerage associated with honours" (Seliktar 2015). Behind the official facade of egalitarian austerity, a whole array of special advantages was created. This special privilege system functioned almost as a "second moneyless economy" for the elite with special stores, hospitals, and

various preferences based on informal networks and *blat* connections (Seliktar 2015; Novikova 2015, 191). This extensive system of privileges completely distorted official equality, when society and governmental regime were expected to be "in a transitional stage which will lead increasingly and inevitably to the achievable goal of real equality, i.e. communism, a system without differentiated strata or variations in reward" (Lipset 1973).

Social Differentiation in the Soviet Union

According to the Soviet experts and economists of the day, a fully egalitarian system was not really possible and desirable to legitimize as well, because people would not accept a truly egalitarian "regimen of work and awards" (Seliktar 2015). The official Soviet image of the social structure of Soviet society was very particular: "one in which there are classes without class antagonisms and without class stratification" (Yanowitch, 1977, 10-11). Those classes included the working class and peasantry, associated with different form of "socialist property", state and cooperative respectively. The "socialist intelligentsia" was an additional structural element described as a social "stratum", not a class. However, the lack of egalitarianism in ideological formulations officially referred to the differing merits of individuals and their differential contribution to production, rather than to class or strata privileges (Yanowitch, 1977, 10-11). In the 1960s, the simplistic threefold division of Soviet society gradually evolved into eight or nine "socio-occupational groups" ranging from unskilled manual workers to "organizers of production collectives" (Yanowitch, 1986, vii-viii). They were differentiated by official sociology with respect to economic status, cultural levels, value orientations, and general mode of life. Soviet sociologists did not analysed these groups for the sake of the thorough research of Soviet social groups and social differentiation: the specification was defended on the basis of the practical grounds and the need for social planning and effective management of various social processes in addition to economic planning (Yanowitch 1977).

The Thaw and Lifestyle Changes

At the turn of the 1960s, intensive economic development and accumulation of the previous reconstruction decade resulted in bigger non-industrial expenses included into Five year plans (Zakharova 2013, 402-403). It was accompanied by some changes in public life, the aforementioned growing optimism and overall enthusiastic atmosphere. At that moment the Soviet Union became more open to the world. International exchanges and contacts were actively developed. Various Soviet delegations travelled abroad more often, and the foreign ones returned the visits. The biggest events of the époque were the World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow in 1957 and the launch of Sputnik. The growing openness also led to more intensive contacts between the Soviet Union and the West. The Western influences (both in terms of material goods and cultural achievements) were making their way through the Iron Curtain. West became a new reference point unlike it was in the Stalinist 1930s, when the Soviet lifestyle imitated mostly that of the pre-revolutionary educated class and fashion "was supposed to emanate a home-grown Soviet glamour", it was embellished with ethnic motifs with "opulence, decoration, and femininity, which held a wide appeal for the masses" (Gurova 2006, 95; Bartlett 2010, 89).

In terms of particular ideological limits, fashion was an important process from the very beginning of the Communist rule in Russia and later in other Eastern European countries. During the 1960s, fashion came to the fore of the people's everyday life along with changing art, literature, and public opinion. As Djurdja Bartlett explained in her brilliant book on the development of socialist fashion, "fashion existence – manifested in the regimes' large-scale efforts to maintain it through their central fashion institutions, and to promote it through their women's magazines – showed the socialist system's deep anxieties about the phenomenon of fashion". As she aptly remarked, "fashion was a spectre that haunted socialism. As an ephemeral, incomplete and ever-changing phenomenon, fashion contradicted and seriously challenged socialist values, which were organized around stability, fear of change, predictability, and eternity." (Bartlett 2010, x).

However, at the beginning of the Thaw period "the regimes abandoned harsh repression in favour of more subtle ways of controlling their citizens, and elements of Western modernity were gradually allowed to penetrate everyday life" (Bartlett 2010, 11). These tendencies also concerned fashion in its two main modes – official socialist and everyday fashion, very often home-made or bought as deficit and Western goods through informal connections. Under the conditions of central planning, shortages, and controlled and underdeveloped market fashion, in its classical Western sense, was absent from everyday reality of common Soviet citizens. It required time, money, connections, and respective social status to dress in a fashionable way. An average woman could find only poor-quality clothing in the stores, "the production of good-quality industrial products was unable to meet the demands" (Bartlett 2010, 150). In 1970s, the new idea of dematerialisation confirmed a virtue of modesty in personal appearance and consumption. Commodity fetishism and dependence on things were condemned. Bartlett compared elitism and exclusivity of the "representational socialist fashion" inaccessible for most Soviet people to the everyday fashion. Despite it "existed in an alternative, unofficial modernity and conformed to a different, faster and fragmented concept of time", it was discreetly approved by regime in the form of a controlled and rational practice (Bartlett 2010, 11).

Sources of the Soviet Taste and Fashion

The possession of consumer goods was not entirely perceived as something negative, it was however closely related to the concept of good taste or Soviet taste. It expressed aesthetically "appropriate consumption practices", established socialist "new middle-class" distinctions, formed a common symbolic space and allowed people for some individualisation in choosing clothing and lifestyles. The Soviet society was gradually absorbing competitive individualism and freedom of self-expression through a variety of images and symbols of consumption. As Gurova suggests, the rise of the idea of Soviet taste and the development of specific discourse around it concerned the opposition of the Soviet lifestyle versus bourgeois or capitalist lifestyle at that time (Gurova 2006, 95). It is similar to Bourdieu's understanding of taste and its justification, where the determination of good taste is achieved via rejection of what is a bad one, by opposing various zones of taste (Bourdieu 2010, 8).

The phenomenon of imitation of the West, in general, was rather controversial in the Soviet society. From the very beginning, it stood for the "rotten" or "pernicious" Western influence and servility, which meant extreme disloyalty and was criminally punished under the specific legal clause[1]. The Western unofficial cultural capital that was acquired through various communication channels reflected not only lifestyle differentiation, but social differentiation and distinction in general.

In his book on the sociology of taste, Jukka Gronow shows a particular discussion on whether it was decent for a Soviet person to underline and show off one's social position. He concludes that problem of low quality of design and less popularity of the socialist style in the world is linked not only to the inflexibility of production system or planned economy. There was a very rigid system of social distinctions with "its inherently imposed self-limitations". Acceptable distinctions were not supposed to violate "respectable and cultured manners" (Gronow 2002, 65-66). In her concept of the Soviet *Big Deal,* Vera Dunham explained the division between the intelligentsia and lower middle class *meshchanstvo* with the help of such untranslatable words as *kultura* and *kulturnost'* (culture and 'culturedness'). "*Kultura* is the achievement of the intelligentsia in the sense of a higher culture, a synthesis of ideas, knowledge, and memories". The other word represents a sort of second-hand notion, "a mere program for proper conduct in public" according to some prescribed preferences, "a new kind of self-righteousness – stable, prudent, heavy", "the self-image of dignified citizens (Dunham 1990, 22). According to Dunham, *kulturnost'* conferred the attributes of virtue and dignity to material possessions. Following Dunham, Gronow summarized the morals of "the new Soviet middle class" in a particular way. "Inequality, the aspirations of higher income and better material living standards, and a better life, are legitimate insofar as they are righteously earned by one's own labour and/or talents" (Gronow 2002, 61).

In this paper, social differentiation, as well as status differences or inequality are not considered a basis for fashion and top-down imitation of prestigious lifestyles (Blumer 1967, 278; Svendsen 2006, 42-43; Novikova 2017, 59). However, it is assumed that a dress symbolizes lifestyle and social affiliation, and influences personal image and self. More than one hundred years ago, a German sociologist Georg Simmel emphasized the connection between fashion and identity, which in modern age was no longer provided by tradition. So, in the Western world clothes have become a vital part of the social construction of the self, and fashion is not just about class, status or social differentiation, but just as much as about expressing one's individuality (Svendsen 2006, 19). In the Soviet Union, the nature of consumer culture and fashion was defined not only and not so much by income, but by the attitude toward fashion. It meant that income disparities were necessarily an obstacle to dressing in a stylish way. That was, for instance, the reason for extraordinary development of custom tailoring. "Fashionable clothing was made in various ways: by consumers on their own, by professional seamstresses in tailor shops, and by semi-professional private tailors" (Zakharova 2013, 417-421).

In his analysis of fashion and cinema in the socialist Poland, Hendrykowski mentions a *zero style* concept by Roland Barthes. As a great illustration of a "hopeless greyness" of available mass-produced clothing, it reflected the life philosophy of "go with the flow" and social mimicry. However, in socialist Poland it was caused rather by overall poverty than by deliberate solution of

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[1] "За преклонение перед Западом", that is so called "kowtowing before the West", (Zubkova 2015, 119).

the question "To be different, or to be the same?" (Hendrykowski 2011, 112-113). In the Soviet context, in addition to grey black, beige and white were the real colours of fashion design, neutrality, and "visible invisibility" (Gurova 2009, 84). In the ideology of Soviet taste, such differentiation was related to the opposition between Western style and good Soviet culture, "between authentic beauty and artificial prettiness". Furthermore, "public opinion considered the desire to be different in clothes or appearance to be vulgar" (Gurova 2006, 96). During the later post-war period, the Soviet people made their own choices based on self-expression, self-fulfilment, idiosyncrasy, distinction, and even freedom to escape from the ubiquitous dullness and uniformity.

Cinema in the Soviet Union

These processes have been analysed in this paper on the basis of the Soviet feature films. As Gilburd and Kozlov underlined in their analysis of the social changes during the Thaw transformation period, the movies of 1950s and 1960s not only registered the changes the best, they showed new dress, gestures, bearings, and altered perception and behaviours (Gilburd, Kozlov 2013, 27). New example and looks were accessible to emulate for growing audiences of the greatest pieces of the Soviet cinematic art that performed perfectly as a mechanism for mythmaking (Lipovetsky 2002, 161). Being a source of social skills or 'savoir-vivre' for the Soviet audience, cinema – both of Soviet and Western productions – also represented the source of role models, various images to copy and identities to choose.

The researchers of the Soviet cinema described the Thaw, and the 1960s in particular, as the period of visible change. It was related to relaxing censorship, starting real dialogue with contemporary Western culture, as well as with new discursive concepts of memory, truth and sincerity (Bulgakowa 2013, 476). "Numerous films of the period showed the immediate effect of the Thaw on the present and focused on family life. Filmmakers were encouraged to be truthful and authentic, and to avoid the glossy portrayal and falsification of the Stalin era film" (Beumers 2009, 128). The personalities of main male and female characters are shown full of ordinary human feelings, needs and shortcomings, both during daily routine activities and festive events. However, some social and status markers were applied to show the complex picture of modern society. Among them, dress and consumption of goods occupied a rather important place. One should take a closer look at the selected movies, their plots and characters.

Soviet Films, Fashion and Identity

In one of the earlier post-Stalin movies *Behind Show Windows* (Samson Samsonov, 1955), the topic of retail, consumption and even fashion appears in terms of originality, individuality and identity construction. The scene is laid in the men's suits department of a large department store. Due to some complications – obviously of the socialist planned economy character with no such explanation, of course – suits are of extremely bad quality. The main male character, a department manager is refusing to accept these suits arguing with the garment factory manager, a main female character and his future affection. The argument concerns the mass-oriented production. As a department manager concludes, "every mass-oriented suit becomes deeply personal for our customer!" Each customer has a right for a very good-quality individualized clothing. The movie

shows an extremely romantic, utopian or even propagandist vision of a Soviet department store and its consumers. It echoes, however, the Western lifestyles, but in Khrushchev's way of competition with the West. Even in sartorial terms the Soviet country was supposed to "catch up and overtake" the West (Bartlett 2010, ix). It is interesting that in the movie, there is still no reference to fashion and its changing nature. It is rather about a good Soviet taste and quality in the first place.

During the mid-1950s, another box-office hit came out by the title *Carnival night* or *Carnival in Moscow* (Eldar Ryazanov, 1956). The depiction of Soviet life is also very polished in this musical, especially in the context of the chances and lifestyles of ordinary people and elite. It is clearly referring to the anticipated glorious future of Communism. In the movie, the future is already here. The representatives of Soviet working class and some of intelligentsia stratum enjoy – at least during the carnival night – a really high level of life having their holidays and leisure organized in an almost luxurious style. The entertainment program includes a lot of dancing and singing, jazz band performance, and even magic tricks. All the characters, and especially the main female character, are wearing stylish dresses. There is an opposition in the movie – a bureaucrat, placeman and verbalist – the new director of the cultural played by a popular comedian. This local official is dull and conformist, afraid and subservient to other more prominent officials. In the end, these representatives of the Soviet elite are more approachable and clearheaded than the entrenched bureaucrat who forbids short skirts of the female dancing groups and closes down the performance of jazz orchestra.

The late 1950s and early 1960s embraced the period when Soviet fashion started to get institutionalized on the screen as well. The films shaped the approach towards fashion, fashion houses and in general the role of consumption. In the movie *Girl without address* (Eldar Ryazanov, 1957), a young woman is taking part in a show as a model. While looking for a job in a big city she is convinced to take part by a recruiter and an enthusiastic Soviet designer looking for models on the street. The show was complex and presented many types of dresses from workwear to wedding dresses. The job however was not serious enough for the main character. She is choosing to go somewhere far away – most obviously to the East – to work as a bricklayer on the construction sites and build something more fundamental.

The movie *There is Such a Lad* (Vasiliy Shukshin, 1964) represents another great illustration of the role of fashion and dress in the Soviet society (in this case, of its provincial type). The main male character is a kind, funny, and outgoing person, who loves life. He is informing his friends about a sort of a mobile fashion show, which is going to take place later that night. His enthusiastic attitude to beautiful models refers first of all to their physical appearance. Remark "the legs are that thin" is almost related to the Twiggy type from 1960s in the Western fashion. At the show, there is a presenter explaining dress, its structure, role, and especially its socialist concept: "our clothes are beautiful, simple and comfortable, and functional". According to her, one's dress should correspond with one's profession and job, one should not wear garish clothes because of their tastelessness and so on. The whole show is full of elements of the good Soviet taste and socialist style. The movie is obviously supposed to teach its audience about it.

In the movie, there is another interesting point concerning a certain type of taste, lifestyle, and dress. It is a discussion between the main character, who was a truck-driver, and his fellow road tripper. She is evidently an urban dweller, and they are discussing tastelessness of 'merchant' consumerism and possession of numerous unnecessary old-fashioned things. "Life can be beautiful, even if we start with details". Among her advices, there is minimalism and modern approach. For example, an old frantic bed with lots of pillows should be thrown away, instead, a modern ottoman would be an ideal decoration. Later, the main character develops this point. He is making a great conclusion about one of the most obvious dichotomies or differentiation criteria in the Soviet society: urban vs. rural ("you are so outdated (here, in the village). Guys prefer courting urban girls because one can even talk about interesting things with them)." In the end, he is getting to know a stylish urban girl. A journalist visits him in a hospital and delights him with her stylish look, voice and a generally "cultural" image.

Another criterion of social differentiation is a specific Soviet class and social background. The most interesting situation is shown in a not very popular but really interesting movie *I Love You, Life* (Mikhail Yershov, 1960). The main male character works as an engineer at a candy factory. He has very prominent parents but rather in terms of achievements and merits, including those from the wartime. Also, he has a beautiful, stylish and educated girlfriend, who is also an engineer and has prominent and influential parents. In one of the movie scenes, she is emphasizing current changes, easier life compared to the previous revolutionary and wartime periods. However, she is obviously losing to a modest, less refined Soviet girl, an ordinary worker at the candy factory. Despite the New Look dresses, jazz music, and modish and somewhat strange – as a viewer must think –dances of his girlfriend, the main protagonist ultimately makes his proper choice. He continues his struggle of an ordinary Soviet citizen for the better and glorious future with no penchant for comfort or luxury.

However, not all the urban dwellers or intelligentsia representatives are rich and well-doing. Money is the main topic of the comedy *The Zigzag of Success* (Eldar Ryazanov, 1968), where one of the protagonists cannot afford to buy a beautiful costume from behind the store window. This is the only way she can find happiness in love. A part of a big lottery win let her become stylish and beautiful (that is almost another person) and to find a husband.

The issue of the price of good nice clothes appears in Vasiliy Shukshyn's movie *Pechki-Lavochki* (aka *Happy Go Lucky*, 1972). In this film, the main female character receives a nice and expensive chemisette as an unexpected gift from a fellow train traveller. This thing turned to be from a stolen luggage. At the very beginning, she realizes that this chemisette is not a proper thing for her. It looks too expensive, and she is an ordinary rural woman. She would never spend that much money for a thing to wear and therefore this is not her style.

There is obvious sympathy for the ordinary people, and this is rather logical for such an egalitarian society. In the movie *The Girls* (Yuriy Chulyukin, 1961), there is a noteworthy differentiation. The social background represents the main differentiating factor. Age and experience are of secondary importance. Moreover, the audience is supposed to be sympathetic with the female character who is younger, poorer, more naïve, unremarkable and orphan main character in the movie. She has stronger principles than her more stylish, educated but arrogant, and shameless rival. Certainly,

according to cinematic conventions, the happy end comes to the powerless and humiliated. The distinguishing issue is a moral one though young women desiring to be beautiful, stylish, and happy in their love lives.

The same judgement appears in the famous box-office hit *Ivan Vasillievich Changes His Profession or Back to Future* (Leonid Gayday, 1973). In this movie, the negative fictional counterpart of the main female character cheats on her husband, a noted scholar and inventor of the time machine. As a popular actress, she wears very fashionable clothes and is involved in some informal relations and *blat* to get access to such clothing (an iconic sheepskin coat). In the end, it turns out that the whole fiction is the inventor's dream and his wife is faithful, reserved and down-dressed girl wearing glasses.

Another popular top-box comedy, *Diamond Arm* (Leonid Gayday, 1969), shows the similar difference between classes and their supposed lifestyles and refers to strong elements of shadow economy. There is a good though somewhat naïve male character. He is an accountant, wears ordinary modest clothes, of obviously Soviet production. So do his wife and most of the neighbours. Among the swindlers, there are more stylish characters with Western-styled clothes. One of them is taking part in the fashion show featured in the movie revealing his profession. In the Soviet society, fashion house and modelling raised suspicion and evoked the associations with something uncontrollable or at least something that should be controlled. In the end, richer and more stylish swindlers lose and the good militiamen in a uniform, as well as an ordinary Soviet citizen wearing beige, win the battle.

The *Moscow does not believe in tears* (Vladimir Menshov, 1980) presents the most complex picture. In this movie, social differentiation and inequality draws on the social background. It is also reflected in behaviour, clothing and generally in lifestyle. There is however an allusion to great opportunities of social mobility in the Soviet society. Many people migrated as a result of the intensive industrialisation and urbanisation processes before the war and great reconstruction after it. During the 1960s, one fifth of the population moved from the countryside to cities. Among them, there are so called *limitchiks* in Moscow. This is a specific term for people registered in the Soviet capital or other big cities as a result of the quotas on migration (Boym 2005, 128-129). Most Soviet urban dwellers were first-generation ones. They were pulled out of the traditional rural environment, left atomized in the alien milieu without civil maturity and necessary social skills. On the one hand, social mobility was facilitated by free education, but on the other – regulated with the non-economic restraints, which made education closely connected to specifically Soviet social differentiation, status systems, and prestige. Later on, all this resulted in the closure of the higher social groups and further intensification of social stratification of the Soviet society.

In the movie, one of the female characters is the most stylish, wears beautiful dresses and behaves in a specific "cultural" way to emphasize that she is different. In fact, she chooses this lifestyle to look different, to be distinctive among the people of her social strata and their specific standardized lifestyle, Soviet taste and *kulturnost'*. This distinction is a part of her consistent strategy to get "a better life in this lottery called Moscow". Sadly, in the *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears* the most distinctive and stylish character is unhappy in her personal life.

Personal problems, love and companionship are closely connected with new clothes and new identity in the famous box-office hit *Office Romance* (Eldar Ryazanov, 1977). In general, the film emphasizes the close connection between success, ability to follow fashion trends, and femininity. The main female character is a successful Soviet woman, a head of the fictional statistical bureau in Moscow, relentlessly committed to work, reserved and heartless. Thanks to romantic relationship and assistance of her stylish secretary she becomes a very attractive and charismatic person. A chic dress, make-up and haircut are obviously enough to acquire a new identity or even start a new life. However, there is also a specific type of differentiation of the typically Soviet character. On the one hand, the secretary – a fashion icon – is praised by her colleagues for her ability to "wear only foreign-made clothes despite her modest salary". On the other, there is another character, a man of success. He is promoted to vice-head, but at the same time is implicitly mocked at for his big and expensive Volga car, extravagant home interior design or unimaginable for an ordinary Soviet clerk – the Swiss period in career he mentions on every occasion.

Conclusion

There are more Soviet movies that have numerous relevant references to the topic of fashionable or ordinary clothing, and its connection to the social differentiation or identity in the Soviet Union. For example, *Domestic Circumstances* (Aleksey Korenev, 1977), *The Most Charming and Attractive* (Gerald Bezhanov, 1985), *The Messenger* (Karen Shakhnazarov, 1986), *We are Cheerful, Happy, Talented!* (Aleksandr Surin, 1986), *Lonely Woman Seeks Lifetime Companion* (Vyacheslav Kristofovich, 1986), among others. However, the analysis of the above-mentioned movies gives us several interesting examples of how the perception of clothing and social differentiation can be shaped by popular culture and movies in particular. Among the main themes, there are the differences between rural and urban lifestyles, as well as the Western and local production of clothing. In the Soviet movies of 1950s and 1960s, there is a strong differentiation between artificiality, imitation and hypocrisy of the fashionable looks of the intelligentsia and usually evil-doers, on the one side, and the authenticity of the simple but pure looks of the ordinary workers or representatives of the Soviet people, on the other. Later, however, the issue concerning personal happiness – especially for women – and self-fulfilment, becomes more important as a part of individual, as well as a social identity of the movie protagonists and their viewers. In 1970s-1980s, beautiful, Western, more fashionable clothes result in a prettier look and better future in terms of both private and public life.

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Biography

Kateryna Novikova, PhD in Sociology of Contemporary Societies (John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland), MA in Central European History (Central European University, Budapest, Hungary). Research interests include sociology of work and creativity, lifestyles and leisure, networking and new media discourses as well as the issues of the postsocialist and post-Soviet social and cultural capital.

email: kate_novi@hotmail.com