

An introduction to the influence of genderlessness on the silhouette of clothing

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Abstract

In the context of postmodern pluralism, clothing is no longer classified simply through men's and women's clothing, but through the unique style of genderless to break the stereotypes between the sexes. This paper analyzes the genderless style of clothing, starting from the concept of genderlessness and briefly outlining the trend of genderlessness in the history of clothing. To highlight the style characteristics of genderless clothing, the difference between it and men's and women's clothing, and the difference between it and unisex clothing, the application of genderless style in clothing silhouette is analyzed, and the future development of this clothing style and its general direction of fashion trends are summarized.

Keywords

Genderlessness; Clothing styles; Silhouettes.

1. Introduction

People's pursuit of beauty has become more diverse as modern aesthetic consciousness has improved, and genderless clothing is at an unprecedented stage of development. Throughout the history of clothing development, from the early 20th century feminist awakening to the present, genderless clothing has been slowly integrated into people's daily wear in recent years, such as T-shirts, sweatshirts, sweaters, jackets, pants will find its figure, because of its embodied connotation, can set aside gender to follow the inner choice, the wearer also has their different forms of self-confidence, no need to please others, everyone has The right to show themselves, which is loved and pursued by young people.

2. Overview of genderlessness

The concept of genderless, which blurs the gender line between men and women, is translated into English as "unisex" in clothing. The early Chinese translation of "Unisex Clothing" is unisex clothing. The term applied to both men and women and was used and spread by Life magazine in the United States in 1968. Unisex is the idea that the world is no longer simply divided between men and women, but rather that the distinction is made based on psychological or socio-cultural backgrounds, that gender is a weakening of sex, and that the boundaries of gender are eliminated, that gender should not be limited by biology alone, and that the biological component is one of the criteria for measuring gender, but not the only one. Genderlessness can include the idea of "both men and women", which not only refers to women's clothing for men or men's clothing for women but also the central idea of genderless clothing is to transcend gender androgyny, uniqueness and diversity.

3. The origin and development of genderlessness in the history of clothing

When it comes to genderlessness, it is important to talk about the transformation of women's clothing brought about by the rise of feminism in the West. In Western culture, since the establishment of the male two-part style, trouser suits have become a male symbol, representing male status and authority, and have become exclusive for men, while women can only wear skirts. The germination of the feminist movement began with the Enlightenment and the French bourgeois revolution, which widely spread the concepts of freedom, equality and democracy, and women's self-awareness slowly began to awaken.

The real sense of women's clothing began to change the period is in the First World War, when most of the men in Europe were involved in the war, which drove the women, then as a vassal of men, to replace the men involved in the production of munitions supplies, to protect the military needs of the front. At this time, the long skirt seriously hampered the production of women's work, we have changed to simple men's work pants, it can be said that the war, so that women temporarily put on pants.

At the beginning of the 20th century, a great fashion designer brought women's trouser suits into the fashion industry, breaking the stereotypes between men and women and opening the beginning of masculine women's clothing. She was Coco Chanel, who changed the structure of women's clothing and designed one of the first women's pants based on her boyfriend's suit pants, allowing women to go closer to the male dressing style. In the 1950s, Claire McCardell designed the wrap dress as a representative garment of feminism. He replaced the skirt's support with an elastic band and belt to make it more convenient and comfortable for the wearer. It was the most popular garment for new-age women who had to balance work and family and was especially popular with working women in the city and female students in college. Women wearing wrap dresses in advertisements at the time were often portrayed as independent career women. Despite the fact that trouser suits had become a branch of women's wear at the time, women were still not welcome to enter formal occasions in trouser suits, and this lack of formal occasions was completed in the 1960s with a patchwork.

In 1966, Yves Saint Laurent launched the famous "smoking suit" to complete the revolution in dressing for women who could wear pants or even a full suit for formal occasions. This design caused a sensation at the time. For example, the mini skirt and bikini, representative of the time, were created as a result of the post-war population explosion of young people and the feminist movement, women's clothing placed more emphasis on controlling their bodies and sexual release, and the appearance of the ultra-short skirt and bikini filled the gap. With the increase of Op, Pop and abstract art, clothing began to be more and more integrated into the art. Yves Saint Laurent's "Mondrian Dress", inspired by Mondrian's red, yellow and blue composition, is a perfect explanation of the genderless style of clothing design.

The most iconic figure who started the genderless era was David Bowie in 1972, who appeared in the public eye with a shocking image of a unisex man from Mars, and has since profoundly influenced menswear and fashion. On the cover of the album "The Man Who Sold the World", David Bowie subverted gender boundaries. He wears long curly hair, a velvet dress and boots, and reclines in a chair, showing Androgyny's temperament.

Some research scholars have expressed different opinions on genderlessness, and have proposed a trend of men wearing women's clothes and women wearing men's clothes. These seemingly "irrational" and "alien" ideas have been adopted and absorbed by many fashion designers. Jean Paul Gaultier, for example, was a pioneer in reinterpreting the concept of mixing and matching men's and women's clothing in fashion. In the spring/summer of 1985, he introduced the first dress designed exclusively for men and emphasized that the use of men's and women's clothing would not affect the style and privilege of the garment, and in 2000, he

designed the stage costume for Leslie Cheung's "He's In" love concert, which also conveyed this concept. As you can see, he has always adhered to the principle of gender equality in his designs. To sum up, gender distribution patterns, gender identity and sexual orientation are all more or less influenced by postmodern feminism, and the insecurity of gender and sexual orientation as well as the invisibility of gender and sexual orientation are expressed through clothing, reflecting the continuous and profound spread of genderless trends in the contemporary world.

4. Definition of genderless clothing

4.1. The difference between genderless clothing and men's and women's clothing

Male and female clothing is not a natural product, but a product of history and culture. Some scholars point out that in the history of Western clothing, it was not until the 17th or even the 18th century that gender differences in clothing began to be explicitly reflected. From the 19th century to the 21st century, for more than 200 years, based on political and social habits, traditional men's clothing the past was crowned with "masculinity" as the standard for men's clothing, and men's clothing has been mainly practical and comfortable, which is the opposite of elegant and sophisticated clothing, because people like simple and practical clothing, so they are regarded as men's clothing. On the contrary, when they see complicated and romantic clothes, they are considered women's clothes. There is no seemingly logical sample of the "correct" male and female clothing. Today, what the public recognizes as "menswear" and "womenswear" are simply political, economic, and cultural ascriptions of male and female appearance.

The public view of men's and women's clothing is that which adheres to the social system, with specific clothing styles or details being culturally defined as menswear or womenswear. But genderless clothing is beyond the boundary between men and women, and this type of design is designed for men, women, and all people in marginalized groups besides men and women, and is extremely inclusive and selective. It could be said that genderless clothing breaks the distinction between traditional male and female clothing at the beginning of design.

4.2. The difference between genderless clothing and unisex clothing

The so-called "unisex" clothing, mainly refers to the neutralization of women's clothing, women's clothing from men's clothing to absorb the relevant elements into the design of women's clothing to reflect the characteristics of men, such as a sense of strength, courageous-and-resolute, courage and challenge. But in fact, the unisex style still does not leave the topic of gender opposition, but only incorporates the characteristics of female-to-male clothing into women's clothing, and retains the characteristics of female softness, this blurring of gender, from the clothes themselves rather than gender. Therefore, the concept of "unisex" is only to confirm and strengthen the binary opposition and gender system.

The word "genderless" is based on the uncertainty of gender as a starting point, and it is easier to express oneself, whether it is a man or a woman, from one's starting point, what kind of clothing one wants to wear. Genderless clothing is not based on the existing male and female clothing design thinking, but to break this conventional aesthetic standard, with a new blurred gender regardless of gender to design clothing, showing more diverse clothing in front of the public.

There is no difference between genderless clothing and unisex clothing in terms of visual effects. The distinction between the two is found in the purpose of designing the clothing as well as the language of expression. There is no fixed standard for genderless clothing, and it can be regarded as a kind of conceptual clothing. The pursuit of diversity has grown in recent years,

and designers have used the concept of genderless clothing to express gender-blurred temperament to the outside world.

5. The application of genderlessness in the clothing silhouette

5.1. Overall clothing silhouette classification

Garment silhouette is the first element of garment style modelling, which contains overall modelling and local modelling. The classification method we often use in life is the alphabetical classification method created by the famous French designer Christian Dior, which is a method of expressing the characteristics of garment modelling with English letters. According to this classification method, the silhouette can be divided into six types: A-type, H-type, T-type, V-type, Y-type, X-type, O-type, etc.

Genderless style clothing, the main form of clothing silhouette expression mostly H-type, O-type and T-type appear, but not specifically bound to a fixed silhouette, which X-type, Y-type, and the irregular silhouette is also being widely used by fashion designers. The true sense of gender ambiguity, the courage to break through the bondage and absolute compliance with the creed, the original clothing deconstruction, the same will be out of the silhouette outside the gender tendencies. Genderless clothing can also be unique in terms of the silhouette to see its uniqueness, and to face up to their differences in gender, this aesthetic change can be a variety of options, through the scrutinising of their own to determine what they like, what type of clothing they like. Taking Giorgio Armani's classic power suit as an example, the most prominent feature of the power suit in the 1980s was the emphasis on the shoulder silhouette, while the power suit in 2005 featured significantly contracted shoulders, a waist that focused on female curves through dart processing, and a slimmer collar, along with exquisite hats, bags, gloves and other accessories to reinforce the sexy and independent side of women.

In genderless clothing design, daily ready-to-wear contact is mainly based on minimalism casual wear, sportswear, etc. These types of clothing silhouettes are mainly O- and H-shaped and specific clothing styles include T-shirts, sweatshirts, sports outerwear, sports pants, casual pants, casual suits, etc. For the common suit styles in the market, there are still distinct variations in the silhouette of men's and women's suits. Most men's suits are H-shaped, while women's suits are mainly T-shaped. To blur the body curves, X-shaped ones rarely appear among the genderless style suits, but mainly H-shaped and O-shaped silhouettes are more common, mainly because O-shaped versions are loose and widely used by people.

5.2. Genderless clothing silhouette subverts femininity

From the perspective of clothing silhouettes, the main clothing silhouettes that subvert femininity in genderlessness are T-shaped and H-shaped. This is because the key element of femininity is the "beauty of curves", so to abandon or hide this characteristic, "beauty of straight lines" is used instead of "beauty of curves". The clothes that subvert femininity are often derived from the linear modeling of men's clothes, such as the shoulder shape of "military uniforms," the collar and pocket design of "suits," and "waistless shirts. These are typical examples.

Local styling details, such as wide shoulder styling followed by modern independent women, this kind of detail is mostly used in T-shaped silhouettes, giving a strong and confident temperament, regardless of the bottom with a half skirt or pants, can look like the overall look with momentum. Nowadays, broad-shouldered style modeling is mainly applied in various garments such as shirts, sweatshirts, and trench coats.

5.3. Genderless clothing silhouette subverts masculinity

Genderless clothing styling has overturned the masculine temperament. Under the influence of pioneering fashion designers, men's need for the pursuit of self as well as the pursuit of

diversity has begun to break with tradition towards new looks. The fashion week shows featured layered and layered, cutting-edge silhouettes and prints, bold colorways, and feminine clothing elements. This type of style seems to have started with the peacock style in the 1970s. In particular, the "skirt", which is a key style of genderless clothing and a representative of female symbols, is not yet worn by men as a "mainstream" phenomenon. Gucci is often seen as a key brand in the genderless movement, and Alessandro Michele's first show at Gucci in 2015, with bow shirts, sheer embroidered red tops, and gender-blurring models, constituted Gucci's new identity. Considered the most active designer in breaking gender boundaries, Michele eschewed traditional gender-divided designs and worked to blur the masculinity and femininity of clothing, breaking the mandatory gender binary structure model. At women's fashion shows, male models were allowed to walk the runway in feminine garments and vice versa. Michele influenced many designers, who gradually adopted co-ed shows to interpret clothes at fashion weeks, tearing down the gender label for clothing. It wasn't until one day when there were a few men wearing skirts among the throngs of fashionistas on the street that it was realized that genderless clothing expression was slowly being integrated into the fashion market.

5.4. Diverse expressions of genderless clothing

The first type is a pure style, as opposed to decoration, focusing on simple style and functionality, weakening gender, using simple lines, precise proportions, and clean cutting, highlighting the power of silhouette clothing, design methods are mostly used to repeat the method of equality, eliminating superfluous decoration, so that everyone's attention falls on the "people" and "things" themselves. The material of the garment highlights the textural characteristics of the original fabric, and the color palette is quite neutral and soft, which is a classic representative of the "sexually cool" pure genderless clothing style popular in 2017.

The second category is the deconstruction style, through exaggerated techniques, reverse thinking will be the structure of the clothing split, and then reorganized, subversive, destructive techniques will produce uncertainty, ambiguity, and irregularity effect. For example, Rei Kawakubo and Issey Miyake are famous masters of deconstructive clothing design. Their clothing style is characterized by taking apart and reorganizing the structure of ordinary clothing making, emphasizing the clothing itself with rich design forms, not caring about the gender of the wearer.

The third category is the mix-and-match style, where genderless clothing can take advantage of regional characteristics and integrate with traditional regional or ethnic characteristics of clothing through the concept of genderless inclusive design, so that the clothing pieces have more social significance. For example, a small part of Scotland still has men wearing skirts, and most people have adopted the skirt as the exclusive symbol of women.

5.5. Future trends in genderless clothing

The future development direction of genderless clothing is still mainly in the direction of blurring gender, diversity, and inclusiveness. Nowadays, women who wear men's clothing are gradually recognized by most people in society. It has become the norm for some women to wear ladies' suits to highlight their temperament and image in the workplace environment. Historically, the feminist movement has fought for many social rights for women, specifically in the history of genderless clothing, the most typical of which is the new style of women's clothing based on men's formal wear. In turn, genderless clothing is to get rid of the gender restrictions between men and women, the wearer does not have to think about whether their gender should choose what clothing, but the complete realization of this genderless clothing, men wearing women's clothing, especially wearing women's dresses, become an insurmountable gap, both psychologically and socially, it will take some time to slowly accept.

6. Conclusion

In today's rapidly developing society, genderless clothing development space will be broader, and not subject to gender limitations and prejudiced views, especially in the current clothing trends, breaking the trend of traditional concepts, and guiding the new trend of clothing, is undoubtedly one of the keys to the future development of clothing. No Gender No Boundaries is suitable for a wider range of people, it can be different age classes as well as different economic classes of groups. It inspires people's perception of self, and the dress of each person not only shapes an external social image of the self, but also the most intuitive identity of the self. We look forward to the day when both genders can respect each other, dress freely and express their own opinions.

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