

The "Non-human" Turn in Fashion Design under the Emotion Theory

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ABSTRACT

With the inspiration of affective theory on human physical and mental problems, in the field of clothing design, "emotional fashion" has become a new way of existence that has been explored by many clothing designers. Through analysing the case of "non-human" clothing, this paper points out the form replacement, object generation and state presentation of clothing design under the guidance of emotional motivation, and at the same time clarifies the emotional expression of Deleuze's philosophical concepts in the field of clothing. Finally, by linking the "non-human" expression of clothing with the concept of "emotional motivation", it is concluded that fashion is not only the creation of ideal standards of female beauty, but also an inner energy realised through sensory experience and bodily empowerment combined with technology.

KEYWORDS

affective movement; costume design; non-human; Deleuze.

In his philosophical reflections, Nietzsche delved into the proposition "What will the world be like after mankind?", a forward-looking and profound reflection that touches on the possible scenarios of the decline of a civilisation, the disappearance of existing human beings, and the subsequent emergence of a new phase of human evolution. It asks whether a new, "non-human" being will be born, one that is neither exclusively animal nor exclusively human, neither alien nor mechanical, neither futuristic nor bound to the past. The core task of this paper is to fully explore how to use clothing as a medium to shape the human image, and then simulate and present this "non-human" future.

By analysing the case of "non-human" clothing in fashion, the question that arises from the affective dimension is how clothing can change the body. In order to address this question, the author proposes a test of sensory fashion, bodily empowerment, and technological collision, in which emotional motives hold clothing hostage to the body's ability to use it and force it to 'generate the other', and then to transcend the dominant modes of the body's original organisation. Emotionalism in clothing is more concerned with its spiritual significance. In contrast to the narrow view of clothing as a tool to bind women's bodies, a view of clothing's emotional capacity reinforces its power and thus acquires a more intrinsic value. Designers such as Comme des Garçons, Alexander McQueen, and Hussein Chalayan, who are the focus of this paper, have used animal bionics and mechanical techniques to create "non-human" forms of life in clothing. At the same time, the concept of binary oppositions such as human or animal, organic or inorganic, male or female has been questioned. The issue of clothing transformation can be addressed through emotional intervention and coordination to control the transformative potential of the body and objective objects, thus constructing an ideal and open future.

1 Sensory Fashion and Morphological Replacement

Experiencing clothing and fashion in terms of affective theory is a series of sensory-induced displacements in which the body and the other undergo a common morphological change. In the Ethics, Spinoza argues that the "body" has the capacity to affect or be affected by the other. In this view, emotions are accompanied by a constant displacement of capacities, as bodily fashions undergo ceaseless morphological displacement from their emergence to eternity, and this transformative capacity is interlinked and in constant motion, with the necessary condition of sensory orientation required for its change.^[1] The body is always transformed in its dealings with the senses, and all clothing fashion has an inherent capacity for transformation. Fashion in this sensory capacity is a new way of being, in the form of a confrontation between the human subject and the "non-human" organic parts that make it up.

Comme des Garçons designed a series of fashion garments that broke with the traditional way of experiencing the garment and the body (Fig. 1) by emphasising the ambiguity of the model's 'natural' body, and by locating the focus of the garment design in places on the body that are not often shown at the beginning and end of the garment. At the same time, the cut and craftsmanship of these garments is not elaborate, with a single layer of fabric wrapped around the model's body, creating a monstrous effect of 'bulging lumps' underneath the thick wrapping of the fabric material. This ill-fitting shape, in fact, points to the maximum threshold of visual inclusion as a fundamental way of connecting with fashion: it makes people want to touch these garments and imagine what it would be like to wear them on one's body. Comme des Garçons titled the series "The Body Becomes the Clothing Becomes the Body, They Are One," and here she provides the basic idea of sensual fashion clothing. Her work can be understood as a fusion of the body and the garment in form, or as some other object "merging" the body in the form of a prosthesis. The point of these sensory latitudes is that in a process of concomitant symbiotic movement, the garment and the body are inextricably linked and their differences are dissolved.



Figure 1 Comme des Garçons
Spring/Summer 1997 <Body Meets Dress, Dress Meets Body>

The role of fashion in the body needs to be understood in terms of a universal conceptualisation of the body and external objects. Under "denotation", we take the "referent" of the term "object" to be the material material attached to the organic body, i.e. clothing and accessories. This insight stems from the famous concept of "agglomeration" developed by the philosopher Gilles Deleuze in his ontological framework. With a unique perspective, Deleuze reveals to us a new understanding of the nature of everything in the universe: in his view, all entities in the world, whether they are organic bodies full of vigour and vitality, or inorganic substances that seem to be silent and senseless, are, in the final analysis, the manifestation of "agglomerates". This assertion transcends the boundaries of traditional dichotomous thinking, incorporating life and non-life, spirit and matter into a broader, dynamic continuum. In Deleuze's philosophical conception, "agglomeration" is not merely a static notion of collection, but a dynamic process of evolution and continuous generation.

It emphasises that in the infinite and eternal flow of change in the universe, matter does not exist in isolation, but remains connected and interpenetrates through a subtle and complex interaction. This connection is the basis for the continuous flow and transformation of matter in the river of time, and also the mystery of the body's form in the endless changes of gathering and scattering, transforming and displacing. Therefore, Comme des Garçons's sensual fashion garments are fabrics, fibres, and structures that are folded inside and out on the body surface, displacing the seemingly integrated forms of body and garment, biological and non-biological, material and non-material.

Sensual fashion, like Comme des Garçons's, utilises this ability to inspire the body to make substitutions and transformations to form the "other". This is also the ability of clothing to distinguish itself from "ordinary" clothing based on the theory of affective movement. Clothing transforms the wearer and converges with the body, and when the meaning of fashion is understood on this level, haute couture or any avant-garde design becomes ordinary. This change of form is therefore the embodiment of a theoretical dimension of affectivity inherent in all fashion, which makes the garments of sensual fashion unique, as designers strive to capture and amplify the inherent affective capacity of the garment, thus identifying paths of morphological displacement of the "non-human" component in the human body.

2 Body Empowerment and Physical Generation

Whereas, in Deleuze's work on human ontology, the discussion of the process of the formation of the body is described as follows; the body confers the ability to control affect in the process of eliminating hierarchical roles under the mechanisms of dominant power, while at the same time circumscribing its body itself. This philosophical conception of the body as a product of affective action can be summarised as: generation as degradation. In this theory, the minority of subjects rejects the easy way of defining themselves through their exclusion from the dominant social sphere, and this group of people wants to maintain their identity as a "minority", to be "de-territorialised" in hierarchical modes of organisation, and to create their own affirmations. They want to maintain their identity as a "minority", to be labelled as "de-territorialised" in a hierarchical organisational model, and thus to create values that they themselves affirm, values that are generated by the separation and degradation of the hegemonic class.

From a feminist emotional point of view, looking at the way in which Deleuze depicts the generation of objects, clothing can indeed serve as a special way of generating a "woman" empowered by the body. Comme des Garçons's womenswear collection is a manifestation of the emotional significance given to the body, in which parts of the female body are deliberately exaggerated and deformed to give the body unnatural lines and curves. Comme des Garçons poses the question of whether the female body is real, or whether it is not so important, given its false state of perfection. Or is it not so important? If clothing has the ability to generate a certain body state in an unnatural way, why is it that this ability is mostly used to shape the ideal female form under patriarchal rule? Thus, Comme des Garçons's form of costume design can be understood as "affective camouflage": her designs are a de-layered reconstruction of the envisioned standard female body. In this process, the body is given a satisfyingly harmonious silhouette, a counter-conventional asymmetrical structure, and a value of its own. This is precisely what Deleuze's philosophical conception of the "generative" woman means, not in terms of a biologically structured "feminine" generation, but rather in terms of a "feminine" materiality of thought, power and desire. Generation, i.e. the process of "de-territorialisation" in the hierarchical organisation.

Emotional movement not only provides us with a theoretical framework to conceptualise and understand the nature of pervasive bodily change, but on this basis it further plays an important



Figure 2 Alexander McQueen
Spring/Summer 2001 <Voss>

role in categorising and differentiating the body. Emotional movement theory is like a fine key to help us unlock the multiple dimensions of bodily experience and expression, and reveal the deep-seated emotional drives and psychological mechanisms behind different bodily states, responses and changes. In this process, affective movement not only considers the body as a dynamic and changing system, but also makes a meticulous categorisation and differentiation of the body based on different patterns of emotional flow and response. This distinction goes beyond simple physiological differences to the level of how the body interacts with the external environment, how it responds to internal emotional fluctuations, and how it constructs its self-identity in a socio-cultural context. Through the lens of affective movement, we are able to gain insight into how even seemingly similar bodily changes may contain very different emotional meanings and life experiences. Emotionally driven results are formed in a way that changes the human being, in addition to our behavioural activities in the human sphere, interaction with the "non-human" can also be achieved through the aggregation of fabric materials with living organisms, but at the same time, the "non-human" state given by such human bodies generates new energies. At the same time, the "non-human" status conferred by such a human body generates new energies. Alexander McQueen is keen to create works that express the animal force, which he sees as possessing the same power and awe as sex, and suggests a metaphorical 'non-human' power in human erotic emotions. Elizabeth Grosz also researched the association of animals with sexuality and art through a wide range of literature, incorporating Deleuze's ideas. They serve the human being by giving animals and sexuality "non-human" emotions in their clothing work.

Alexander McQueen's garments incorporate animals and other natural features, giving the body a zone of proximity between the object and the human body. By designing with an abundance of shells, animal skins, horns and other elements, he attempts to eliminate the "molecular distance" between the wearer of the garment, the human, and the animal, giving the body a "non-human" material form. The design attempts to eliminate the "molecular distance" between the wearer of the garment, the human and the animal, and to give the body a "non-human" physical form.^[2] In a show called "VOSS", McQueen presented a series of dramatic garments in which the process of generating the animal was visualised: birds seemed to hover between the models, or seemed to tear their silk skirts, and the generation of the likenesses of bird species could be seen in the design of the models' lower halves (Fig. 2). In short, the model in the show is no longer simply and clearly as a human being in feathered clothing, but rather is in the midst of an avian field of capture, a field in which it is difficult to make any kind of clear definition of the generation of both humans and birds of prey. Many of Alexander McQueen's garments mimic an animalistic aspect of human movement, attempting to show that the "other" is not just a material element, but anything that can be allowed to exist on various levels, even as a special form of movement, and that it is in infinite proximity to

another being. of it. Understanding this notion of affective movement, and looking at McQueen's work, the garments encompass immaterial movement and speed, while at the same time aggregating with material materials, such as feathers, animal fur, silk fabric, etc., the arbitrary dimensions of different beings, thus evolving into the "generative other", a completely new hybrid.

Fashion has the ability to bring humans into contact with "non-human" elements, in line with what Deleuze calls the "generative animal", which can be realised through the use of fabrics to wrap the body and trigger an aggregation effect, as described above. Through carefully designed fabrics and silhouettes, fashion is able to subtly shorten the distance between humans and animals, blurring and weakening the boundaries between the two through both visual and tactile experiences. This blurring is not a simple imitation or reproduction, but a deep emotional and cognitive resonance that prompts people to reflect on the complex relationship between humans and the "non-human" world, and how we can find our own place on this multifaceted and symbiotic planet. Further, fashion's ability to remove hierarchical boundaries is also evident.

3 Technology Collision and Status Presentation

If Alexander McQueen successfully approached the boundary between clothing and the "non-human" realm with his fashionable bionic design concepts, Hussein Chalayan has done so through the use of technological aids and the incorporation of mechanical elements. Hussein Chalayan's experimentation with the emotional movement of clothing is accomplished through the use of technology to show the diverse forms of clothing. Donna Haraway describes this interesting experimentation as a powerful and taboo fusion of science and technology.^[3]

If reality is as general as Donna suggests, and discursive composition and biotechnology are capable of re-organising the human body, then Hussein Chalayan can attempt to appropriate this ability and thus reach multiple realms of what the body and society might be in a way that circumvents systems oriented towards the subject's emotional control. His female bodies under those mechanical costumes, for example, avoid or transcend the fantasies under the male emotional gaze. This includes his "111" series of garments, which incorporate mechanical components and make a number of stylistic and structural design point shifts. The characteristic hat seems to inhale the dress, leaving only the complete nude body (Fig. 3). Although at first glance the garments seem to fit the apex of male fantasy, with the women's skirts removed, there is actually a more fundamental connotation in that the complex relationship between the garments and the models cannot be viewed with a simple superficial understanding. For example, as the length of the garment increases, so does the bust, which lifts the breasts and is more exposed, yet when a gown becomes a short dress, the zip rises to the neckline. Thus, a mechanised garment cannot simply be understood as a model 'undressing'. In fact, it is the skirt that disappears into the hood, effectively transferring itself, suggesting that the wearer is actively disrobing rather than stripping the garment from a patriarchal perspective. These garments grapple with the relationship between masculinity, technology and control, and face the difficulty of colliding the human and technological spheres.

Hussein Chalayan resists any apparent difference between biology and technology, presenting a fashion in which the human and the mechanical are combined in a "biocontrol body". Diana Krill uses the concept of Deleuzian agglomeration to define the way in which the cyborg's physical and technological states are presented: the technology does not collide with the body, but rather it is the body's techniques and energies that are linked to the qualities and materials of the technology, and the different states of the body and the diversity of the technology are presented in detail.^[4] Thus, Donna Haraway's cyborgs do not emphasise the change between the "human" and the "non-human", whereas Hussein Chalayan shakes up the logic of ontology and attachment by creating

aggregates on this issue. In such a state construction, the garment is not 'added' to a pre-existing body, but rather, the skin and capacities that form the body are associated with the materials and technologies that form the garment, generating a new agglomeration organised by the power of the self and the arrangements of the other. Therefore, such clothing design does not only focus on the physical form or material entity of clothing itself, but also focuses more deeply on the unique and expressive state of agglomeration that clothing reveals under the drive of specific emotions and motives. This kind of design goes beyond the simple pursuit of form and function in the traditional sense, and instead focuses on how to convey the wearer's inner emotions, psychological state and interaction with the social environment through clothing. Under this design concept, clothing becomes a dynamic, living medium of expression, which can present different outlooks as the wearer's emotions change. Whether it is joy, sadness, anger or calmness, clothing can transform these emotions into a visual language in a subtle and precise way, allowing onlookers to intuitively feel the fluctuations and changes in the wearer's heart.



Figure 3 Hussein Chalayan

Spring/Summer 2007 <One Hundred And Eleven>

Among the many conceptual clothing designers, they all focus on being as a wearer and how the clothing sets together. Similar to what Comme des Garçons has shown, how does the garment and the body become one? What kind of connections and abilities are needed to achieve such a convergence? When we examine clothing under the notion of affect, the issue is no longer limited to a simple interpretation between humans and "non-humans", but rather shifts to a more complex and profound material connection - "mechanical Agglomeration". This kind of agglomeration not only involves the material exchange and energy flow between clothing and body, but also covers multi-dimensional communication and fusion of emotion, memory and culture. It breaks the boundaries of the body surface and penetrates into the inner world of the wearer, making clothing a form of artistic expression that can touch people's hearts. Therefore, the clustering effect in conceptual clothing design is a kind of deep connection beyond the material level, which requires the establishment of an all-round and multi-dimensional interactive relationship between the designer and the wearer. Through this relationship, clothing not only fits the body perfectly, but also touches the heart deeply, becoming a bridge connecting the individual and the world, the past and the future, the inner and the outer.

4 Conclusion

The designers maintain a focus on the artistic and conceptual function of their creations, which are not created to be sold, even though "real people" can't fully afford such clothing. Thus, the dimensions that distinguish emotional clothing from everyday clothing are different. If, as Deleuze

argues, art is the direct product of an emotional mode of thinking, then the work created under the guidance of affective theory is undoubtedly a purely artistic expression for the designer, rather than a mere commodity produced to satisfy a market demand. This creative process is deeply rooted in the designer's emotional world and thinking mode, which transcends the boundaries of material interests and pursues the true flow of emotions and profound exploration of thinking. Although the unique charm given to the works by the ability of affective action can indeed be a highlight to attract consumers and promote sales, there is a counter-intuitive logic hidden at a deeper conceptual level. That is, the pieces created on the basis of affective theory are often not designed to be worn by "real people" on a daily basis. By "real people" we mean individuals who live in the real world and are limited by daily norms and practical needs. These works are geared towards art lovers and thinkers who aspire to go beyond the norm and explore the unknown. While the everyday wear of the moment and those garments produced and sold are designed for the needs of realism, ideal body shape, masculinity, and so on. Emotional Clothing seeks to replace these basic requirements through the creation of forms that "displace", "generate", "present" new aggregates and generate an emotional energy.

Human clothing is undifferentiated by the scale of production in the marketplace, as many people own clothing of the same design. This has become the norm in consumer culture, like the "other", but has been rewritten by Deleuze as a concept called "formative imperceptibility", which emphasises that the "inner end" of any material formation is an imperceptible change, meaning: the body has become unrecognisable in the world, i.e. "the body has become unrecognisable in the world". This concept emphasises that the "inner end" of any substance is an imperceptible change, which means that the body has become unrecognisable in the world, i.e. it has "become like the masses".^[5] That is to say, the body can form everything not only by generating a woman or an animal: because the body has become a necessary world of communication, because the body stops itself from occurring and developing, and thus prevents us from establishing a correlation between things and their inner growth. The body cannot, of course, hold on to this state of affairs, because generation cannot be transformed into being, but only all bodies can carry out the process of generation in a way that is made possible by affective interventions. What the designer insists on is to create, from the body and matter, a "non-human" world where discourse can flow, where the wearer is not occupied by the dominant patterns of the old organisations, but rather makes connections and grows between things.

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