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A digital fashion gaze to menswear

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to offer a descriptive study of how the digital fashion language has refashioned menswear, through the distinctive features that define the new aesthetic of menswear and how the digital narrative is echoed on the catwalks.

The methodological approach consists of a theoretical study of the historical development of menswear in the digital context and its main characteristics, as well as a succinct comparative analysis of two events that represent the origin and the current state of this process: the menswear fashion shows of some key brands reflected in images and reviews published in vogue.com of the Spring / Summer 2008 and 2017 seasons.

The analysis of insights provided by this study confirms the authors' initial hypothesis: the resulting new digital narrative made up of sartorial individualities has become an authoritative reference and, as an act of remediation, designers find inspiration in the cyberspace.

The vast majority of the literature on digital fashion has focused on its relationship with womenswear. However, in this paper we show the relevance of how the cyberspace has influenced men's fashion to understand of the new language of contemporary menswear.

This is a work in progress part of the seminal research of the thesis (PHD). Hence, being in the first phase there are still no definitive conclusions, although is intended to make a deeper and more representative research of what we want to show.

Keywords
Menswear, digital fashion language, neo-dandyism, hypermodernity, details, eclecticism.

Article Classification
Research paper

Introduction

In the recent years, menswear is witnessing a global renaissance. This men's apparel 'revolution' is evident in the increased sales, the creative proposals of the designers who offer new bold aesthetics, as well as the growth and consolidation of a digital community around men's fashion that creates a visual narrative characterized by its owns style codes and visual symbols. The causes of these changes could be different. On one hand, the "great recession" of 2008 deepened the neoliberal tendency of men, traditionally producers, to shift towards an economy of consumption that reinvests the "male gaze". Another instigator could be the last feminist wave. Each time women move forward in the conquest of their rights and new boundaries of identity, men are forced to replace privileges, costumes, and roles, and this is reflected in their lifestyles and apparel. Likewise, the technological advances and the boom of the Web 2.0 are the cause of the emergence of the aforementioned online platforms.

This study focuses on the last point, with emphasis on the 'fashion remediation' between new media and traditional press, as well as digital trendsetters and designers. In order to understand the power of influence acquired by the fashion cyberspace in the dictation of the new millennial fashion zeitgeist, it is necessary to examine a brief narration of the birth of the menswear culture, born in a 'preblogs' landscape where forums are the platforms in which users share their opinions or search for information about clothes and mens' style. This movement, initiated in the early 00's, found a revulsive with the rise of personal blogs in the mid 00's platforms like Tumblr, websites specializing in menswear and sneaker culture, and the emergence of street style photographers like The Sartorialist, The Facehunter and Tommy Ton.

This was a fertile and democratic breeding ground for the creation of the neo-dandy figure, characterized by cultivated narcissism, an inordinate taste for detail, and eclecticism. Street style photography is the perfect medium to capture the sartorial individualities and the most original outfits of these men looking to break the fixed men's fashion rules and break away from the homogenized male appearance that has reigned since the French Revolution and brought the birth of the bourgeoisie. Although the digital *flâneurs* find a real source of information of style and fashion, as well a ground to sow new fashion trends among others neo-dandies or peacocks 2.0, those looks are only intended to be seen through the screen.

With the purpose of analyzing all these statements in a practical way, this paper includes a brief comparative study about the Spring Summer 2008 menswear collections and the Spring Summer 2017 menswear collections of 16 different designers (Balenciaga, Dior, Dolce & Gabbana, Dsquared2, Fendi, Givenchy, Gucci, Lanvin, Louis Vuitton, Maison Margiela, Moschino, Prada,

Raf Simons, Roberto Caballi, Salvatore Ferragamo and Versace), in order to highlight through graphic materials the evolution of menswear over this period and the remediation among the digital and the analog context.

A fashion remediation

The relation of co-dependence and mutual influence between blogs and new media is referred to by Agnès Rocamora in *Hypertextuality And Remediation In The Fashion Media* as a 'fashion remediation'. New media, she writes, brings what Kelly Fuery called a 'transformation of vision' (as cited in Fuery, 2009) and this conversion seems to be due to the reciprocal way new and old media refashion each other. Although they reshape reciprocally, they never supplant one another. As Rocamora points out, fashion blogs have brought some changes "to the production, circulation and consumption of fashion discourse" (Rocamora, 2012: 93). This hypertextuality is related to the concept of rhizome, a notion explained as units linked to other units in a nonlinearly woven structure that always leads to other units.

The blogosphere as a hypertextual space, where texts and images are linked in never-ending layers, is an arena that brings to the center voices that were on the peripheral and leads to "a decentering of the voice of traditional fashion experts, print fashion journalists, whose authority has been displaced by the shifting into focus of other voices such as that of bloggers" (Rocamora, 2012: 100).

This new digital discourse, remediated by print magazines and the fashion industry in general, has it owns traits. All the forms of fashion represented in digital images are well-explained by Vanessa Rosales in *The Digital Fashion Gaze,* which claims that the hypertextual narration is "defined by eclecticism, stylistic variety, a voracious sense of speed and a dizzying temporality" (Rosales, 2014: 3). The particular tropes and forms of representations of digital fashion images refer to contemporary subjectivity and identity. Sartorial individualities are rendered in unexpected blendings that are shared in virtual spaces in order to be seen by other users. These digital ensembles, exaggeratedly eclectic because of the context in which they are displayed, are photographed capturing all kinds of details, and the way people look at them are mediated by the ways images are represented; that is to say, in a personal and decentralized manner, from a subjective perspective of style. In Rosales's thesis, hypermodernity, a concept coined by Giles Lipovetsky in the essay *Hypermodern Times* written in 2005, is a fundamental notion to explain the *zeitgeist* of digital aesthetics, governed by the logic of fashion. Hypermodern times are those characterized by hyperindividualism, hyperconsumption and the empire of technoscience. The

freedom of choice distinguishes this paradoxical concept that is governed by the logic of fashion, that is to say, the "pursuit of novelty".

The visual language of the fashion digital images, conceived speedily for an immediate consumption and for swift replaceability, impacts not only how people dress themselves, but how fashion is created today. This reality refers not only to the traditional press reinterpreting the digital fashion tropes, but to the design and tailoring of clothes.

The #menswear culture

The Internet played a relevant role in creating and disseminating the modern aesthetic of men´s fashion. Web 2.0 was the ideal platform for watching, finding inspiration, displaying personal aesthetic, selling products, buying fashion brands or sharing opinions about menswear. Forums, weblogs, blogs, Tumblr, or social media such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, was the digital context in which an organic community that prescribes trends beside the fashion industry was developed. The rise of the menswear network finds its origins in a wide variety of online initiatives that have helped bring attention to new ways of understanding men´s fashion and lifestyle.

Steven Vogel, Schonberger & Gordon argue in *Contemporary Menswear: A global guide to independent men's fashion* that a substantial collective arose from the blogs of the late 2000s. They stated the following: "These outlets led to a community of people with shared tastes and values that has shaped and re-imagined both the retail landscape and how men dress. Important to that growth is the transfer of conversation from online to physical space. Bloggers, not buzzword wielding marketers, were voicing the realities of the shopping man. And, in proactive stance, they also took charge in shaping an ideal commercial environment" (Vogel et al., 2014: 100).

Forums: the birth of a digital movement

Before the emergence of blogs and social platforms, there were a lot of forums dedicated to men's fashion in which users expected to discover something different than what was in the traditional magazines for male audiences.

Since the early 2000s, *forums* such as *Ask Andy About Clothes*, *SuperFuture*, *NikeTalk*, *StyleForum* or *StyleZeitgeist* functioned as meeting points where guys were able to discuss men's clothing in a safe and anonymous way. These platforms were the perfect places for men to

discover the multiple options of bespoke suits or streetwear they couldn't find in GQ or Squire. Sneakerheads or Goodyear-welted lovers came upon a new arena in which they were able to talk about common interests, last trends, tips about how to wear a garment, or where to buy the coolest sneakers.

What Are You Wearing Today? (WAYWT) and *What I Wore Today* (WIWT), two of the most popular threads of these years, were a huge phenomenon considered a "street style's precursors" of the new millennium. Both turned into websites such as Lookbook.nu, a new site that came out in 2008 and was the inheritor of this culture. As Jian Deleon states in *Board of Education: What Forum Culture Taught Us About Style*, "Much like Reddit's Male Fashion Advice Subreddit, brave guys (and a small number of girls) post photos of their outfits, effectively throwing themselves to the wolves. Other times it was merely clueless guys just wondering if their outfit matched" (Deleon, 2012). The ritual of sharing in the forums the latest purchases was the embryo of the current "haul photo", a fundamental practice in today's performance of digital fashion.

Tumblr: the #menswear hashtag

In 2010, #menswear went live, a Tumblr tag that gave a voice to a lot of men who wanted to talk about clothes and style. The most popular profiles were *How To Talk To Girls At Parties, Fuck Yeah Menswear,* or *Nice Try, Bro.* These, among others, impersonated this fashion movement and curated a conversation in which new trends and brands started the men´s fashion culture of the 21st century. Was this hashtag what made possible the menswear culture to become mainstream? This community of men discussed a wide range of issues regarding men's clothing, from classic tailored clothing to rap music. A lot of these men became trendsetters, such Nick Wooster, Eugene Tong and Josh Peskowitz. In 2011, #menswear reached its highest point when a group of blogger's editors were sent to represent Tumblr at New York Fashion Week.

The power of menswear blogging

During the same decade, new bloggers started writing about menswear. *A Continuous Lean, Put This On,* and *A Suitable Wardrobe* are examples of sites where information about basic classic menswear can be found. Others like *Fatlace, Hypebeast* and *Highsnobiety,* focused their efforts during the first years toward the sneaker culture. *FuckingYoung!,* by contrast, emerged in 2010 with the intention of covering everything that happened in the field of men's fashion. Scott Schuman with *The Sartorialist,* and Yvan Rodic from *Facehunter* were the photographers who

put the men's street style aesthetic on the digital landscape. Gradually, bloggers and magazines started to adapt this habit in its own codes.

Despite the success of these new online fashion tropes among readers, the fashion industry initially closed the door and ignored these blogs until the stream was unavoidable due to the crowded platforms filled with nourished conversations about the latest products in the market. Jeff Carvalho, one of the founding members of *Hypebeast* and *Highsnobiety*, recognized in an essay included in *Contemporary Menswear: A global guide to independent men's fashion* the little attention that the big brands paid to the blogs that covered their products for free and even how some corporations ignored them when they asked about information. The situation changed when a product went viral and spread exponentially because of an online conversation. Then, "brands began adding the blogging platform to their marketing strategies, understanding fully well that the platform would continue to move forward at an even more rapid rate (…) many shops launched blogs of their own to help keep the shopper and conversation on their sites"(Vogel, Schonberger & Gordon, 2014: 122).

From neo-dandyism to peacocking 2.0

Bonnie English states that fashion has become the culture of the street in this new millennium (2013, English: 161). She describes it as a culture based in nonconformity looking to feel secure in unstable times. In the age of globalization and homogenization, individuals search for signs of personal difference. With the digital revolution, the world has no limits and everybody can travel through the screens of our mobile devices. Street style platforms and ego-blogs let the people know different ways of understanding fashion all over the world. Besides, these platforms is developed a new aesthetic characterized by an eclectic style, a ubiquitous sense, and a particular mode in which the detail makes the distinction in a democratized fashion.

This decentralized interpretation of fashion araused in the 2000s brought a collective narrative that broke the old way of relating it. The old temporality of the biannual fashion week circuit has been changed due to the speed of the Internet, the anxiety of newness, and the need of hyper-consumerism. Also, the traditional, prevailing aesthetic has been questioned and it boundaries have been diluted. Monica Titton argues that many bloggers simply reintroduced new beauty canons, body images, racial traits, and gender-fluid identities through a new media format in an old photographic genre (Titton, 2013: 135).

These new digital spaces with a specific visual language invite to look at fashion from fresh perspectives and have been the perfect field in which to sow the seeds for a new menswear revolution. Users started experimenting with bolder outfits, breaking the fixed men´s fashion rules and feeding their styles with multicultural elements, accessories and clothing traditionally reserved for women. These eclectic combinations show that men are starting to adopt more daring attires without fear of diminishment. Despite the fact that there have been other men´s clothing insurrections during the twentieth century, this could be the one that will result in "The Great Masculine Renunciation", a historical phenomenon that began after the French Revolution and coined by psychoanalyst John Flügel in 1930 in *The psychology of clothes*. In these circumstances, with the newborn bourgeoisie, men were looking to dress in a way that emphasized equality and fraternity. Currently, at least in a digital context, they are gaining more expressive freedom.

As mentioned before, Scott Schumann from The Sartorialist and Yvan Rodic from Facehunter were the pioneers of the digital street-style photography. The visual language of these types of images is key to understand the contemporary fashion representation. But, as Rocamora and O'Neill pointed, the street as a framework for fashion began to gain its status with the straight-up portrait from the 1980s in printed magazines like i-D (Rocamora and O'Neill, 2008: 189). As they argued, the street as a background to fashion shoots is currently a recurring trope that turns the Internet into a virtual city. The network is now viewed as a democratic metropolis of fashion where 'real' people, beside the dictates of the industry, set their own standards through a creative performance, and at the same time, have the opportunity to access new information anytime and anywhere. On the other hand, these new rules are characterized by a distinctly global and decentralized style. Although the street-style influencers frequenting the outside of the fashion shows put into question the naturalism of these images with an artificial and careful staging, the visual content of these blogs reflect the way people perceive clothes and styles today.

Flaneur 2.0

Rocamora and O'Neill signaled that it was during the post-war period, coinciding with the emergence of lifestyle magazines aimed at men, when the image of the flâneur like a 'man about town', began to be visualized in fashion photography. A flâneur is known as a male stroller-spectator, a casual wanderer and observer of street-life in the modern city. The concept, historically associated to the nineteenth century Parisian streets, and its relationship with fashion was explored in the essay written by Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life,* published in 1863. Precisely, Jess Berry, in *Flâneurs of Fashion 2.0.,* uses this figure as a model to study of conceptions of fashion in a digital context in which the new media act as "arbiters of style". As

she points out, this character is "a useful analytical tool with which to consider the practices of observation, indiscriminatory taste, consumption and production". (Berry, 2010: 2). That is to say, beyond recognizing and examining the metropolitan spaces, the act of flânerie also implies the fact of originate content to feed the digital fashion narrative and the construction of style with images, texts, comments, etc. Not just the owners of the new media with its posts, but the users with its opinions as well, construct a virtual and globally city without boundaries located in the cyberspace.

The flâneur, understood as an aesthete and a dandy, is a reference for understanding urban phenomena and the idea of modernity in society. As Berry defends, at this time in contemporary fashion, the nuance, and not the ostentation, is what marks the social distinction. "The fashion industry has continued its trajectory toward the democratization of style through the technology of the Internet. However, when the democratization of fashion was responsible for the collapse of social class differentiations in the twentieth century, in the twenty-first century the democratization of fashion appears to be directed toward the collapse of geographical style distinctions" (Berry, 2010: 3). These hues in fashion not only mark the distinction, but also delete it in several ways, blurring the differences between genders, the urban and the rural, the analog and the digital, the races and the locations. Are the flâneurs, through the Internet, beside the catwalk, or in the traditional media, who procure the discourse and meaning of fashion and style in the virtual landscape.

Street style and personal fashion blogs are a fertile breeding ground for new trends and an important source of information not only for consumers but also for producers such as professionals of the fashion industry. In this sense, the inspiration travels in a bidirectional sense, feeding people imagination with infinite fashionable details, on the one hand, and on the other, providing designers with a lot of practical information about what the street wants to wear and how users define themselves through clothes and accessories.

Details make the men

How do men dress now? What options do they have to communicate their personal vision? According to Davies contemporary menswear is about communicating individuality. In order to express the essence of personal identity and style, men are demanding more clothing options and new solutions in order to create eclectic mixes and hybrid genres. "Menswear is no longer status-led or solely rooted in tradition. It is driven by the personality of the consumer. Men will take elements from a range of designers and create a distinct personal style" (Davies, 2008: 11).

Consistent with this view, other authors (Leach, 2014: 6) also argue that menswear has traditionally been characterized by subtexts and codes perceived only by trained eyes, that is to say, by the details.

These hidden and discreet details of manufacturers, up to now, have been focused mainly on fabrication, scale and proportion, and its function where a social position or economic power is reflected . These are the rules of men´s fashion since the end of the eighteenth century and the birth of the bourgeoisie. At that time, despite the air of democracy and equality that the French Revolution brought, the differences between the old nobility, the new bourgeoisie, and the laborers were still active. Theoretically, apparel was mostly practical, sober and austere, notwithstanding, in practice, class distinctions were maintained through formal differences, and it was the detail that was responsible for exercising the distinctive function of attire. It was Roland Barthes, in *Dandyism and Fashion* (1962)*,* who explained how fashion killed dandyism with the birth of the ready-made suit during the industrial age of the nineteenth Century. Even though in those years aroused *boutiques* where men could buy exclusive products and accessories, the inability to acquire handcrafted and custom clothes marked the end of the personal creation. "Even a luxury item acquired in a boutique becomes a standard: to buy a shirt, a tie, or a pair of binoculars in the house X or Z, involves conformity to a certain style, renouncing to all personal invention (we could say: narcissistic) of singularity" (Barthes, 1962: 406).

Nevertheless the current obsession with detail can be translated as a demonstration for personal taste, individuality, and a lifestyle that depends less on hierarchies and more on personal choices. Men´s fashion is about ornaments and accessories, now more than ever, in almost the two last centuries, and because of its unyielding framework, each subtle variation adds much more new information. The Internet -through street style images, personal blogs, and social media, especially Instagram- is the perfect mirror in which to seek the ideal reflection. Computer and telephone screens act as canvases on which all kinds of fashion details appear, allowing the spectator to immediately access an infinite amount of resources for inspiration. Close-ups, zoom-ins, head-to-toe shots, and straight-up photography are visual tropes that provide unique information about outfits and fashion ensembles. These digital mirrors invite users to look at fashion in a new way and perceive every singularity of each styling from different angles, making it easier to imitate or reinterpret. Are there new technologies that have proved "that the details might speak more loudly than the whole"? This statement made by Prudence Black in *The detail: Setting fashion systems in motion* perfectly sums up the essence of modern fashion and, more specifically, avant-garde menswear, increasingly defined by the visible details and traits that make the differences and uniqueness, creating new aesthetics and leading "fashion into the future (…)

linking that older system with some new reality with which it may not have been associated before" (Black, 2009:5). Black theorizes about the functions of fashion details as indexical signs in direct correlation to the coordinates of a position in time and space. She retakes the exposition of Barthes in relation to the idea that details have been traditionally a mark of haute couture. And detail, in this context, means items or adornments, but also the degree of craftsmanship and hours of work invested in each garment. In other words, the high-quality and good workmanship are the indexical signs and refined manners of dress that Barthes referred to when he talked about details used to distinguish the superiority of status and the more subtle social differences. Thus, in the nineteenth century, dandy figure appears.

New media, like street style and personal blogs, including Instagram, inherits this spirit of distinction and revives the practices of dandyism, but in a sense that refers to individual and lifestyle more than class or status. Also, Monica Titton agrees in *Styling the street - fashion performance, stardom and neo-dandyism in street style blogs,* with the idea that there are shared features or tropes between dandies and those who practice street style. For Titton, beyond a meticulous care for details, the most apparent commonality "is the use of the city as performance space for fashionable self-representation (Titton, 2013: 132)". Accurately, the work of Tommy Ton, one of the most outstanding fashion photographers of the panorama since 2007, is recognized because it normally zooms into detail. These close-ups show every minuteness and trifle that allows the observer to analyze and understand the nature of how the outfit has been combined. This way of looking at fashion led to the creation of a parallel digital discourse made up of the same visual tropes: bold colors, original ensembles, daring accessories, unconventional silhouettes, and exotic adornments. The high-powered dynamic encourages the user not just to post details of their looks but also to dress details accessories and elaborate garments for share their images in a vicious cycle that started in the mid 2000's and is more accentuated today. As Jian Deleon states in *What the Hell Happened to #Menswear?* "Thanks to Tumblr's image-first, context-second interface, #menswear created a well-heeled monster: The modern day peacock—a man who dresses for the Internet, not himself" (Deleon, 2013).

Digital fashion tropes on the catwalk: a comparative approach
In order to answer the research question, a comparative study must be conducted on the Spring - Summer 2008 menswear collections and the Spring - Summer 2017 menswear collections of 16 different designers, which is carried out by consulting the vogue.com archive. The limitation that implies the use of one single source is easily outweighed by the editorial criteria of this media. On the other hand, although the selection is notably limited, the purpose of this analysis is to offer a succinct comparison of two key moments of fashion evolution: the bloom of the digital media

and the immediate future, and its relation to the influence and transfer of the digital sidewalk to the analog catwalk.

Although there were so many more designers showing their works during the Fashion Weeks, not all were published on the digital edition of the American Vogue. In other cases, some of them didn't had a Fashion Show in June 2007 (Acne Studios, Balmain, Brunello Cucinelli, Issey Miyake, among others) or June 2016 (For example Burberry, Helmut Lang, Rick Owens and Saint Laurent).

On the other hand, there were also some concept-lead designers, whose proposals are always distinguished on their approach of an avant-garde vision. This is the case of Thom Browne, Comme des Garçons, Yohji Yamamoto, Alexander McQueen, Dries Van Noten and Ann Demeulemeester. For these reasons, the analysis focuses just on the designers who present their collections in both periods and are known for being rooted in reality and reinterpreting the classical codes of menswear.

In this respect?, and following this criteria, included in the final selection are: Balenciaga, Dior, Dolce & Gabbana, Dsquared2, Fendi, Givenchy, Gucci, Lanvin, Louis Vuitton, Maison Margiela, Moschino, Prada, Raf Simons, Roberto Caballi, Salvatore Ferragamo and Versace.

On one side, the research is based on the images and texts published on the website of Vogue USA: a corpus of 3484 images and 44 text reviews. In addition, the book reports of *Peclers Paris* of the SS2008 and SS2017 has been consulted to associate the previous literature published by one of the most prestigious trend forecasting agencies with the collections showed after on the catwalk, compare the significant data of the difference in the amount of images between one season and another. While the quantities in the "collection" category are almost the same (652 in 2008 and 825 in 2017, increased by 26%), those of the "details" section increases significantly (168 in 2008; 858 in 2017, increased by 410%). The difference: more than the double could be translated as a sign of the increased attention to detail.

This quantitative increase obviously is not due to technological advances, but to a trend developed by the users of the digital arena, which, as a remediation, has been adopted by the online version of a traditional fashion magazine. This detail, on the other hand, must also be shown because the sum of accessories, ornaments and decorations has increased considerably. Despite the impossibility of offering an approximate measure of this increase, these remarkable differences can be appreciated just by observing the images.

In the digital context, one of the preferred forms of consume fashion images is through the "close-up" shots. Designer and fashion houses are now conscious of this reality and adapt their creations

to the media, in which people are going to know and scrutinise each garment. As Rosales states, "the way fashion is visually rendered today coincides with the reality of the fashion being represented in digital images" (Rosales, 2014: 5). This acclimatisation? is evident in the current catwalks. If in 2008 almost all the collections are based on traditional cuts, functions, shapes and colors, as well as on core references like sportswear, military uniform and tailoring ; in the collections of 2017 there are really estimable changes. All types of clothing and styles are mixed in an eclectic way. Not just those associated to western menswear that look to the past for inspiration, but those which break the old rules and transgress classic silhouettes and also others in which the sartorial individualities blurred the cultural boundaries.

Based on this observation, this study establishes three general types that can be used to categorize the proposals from 16 designers. Due to the huge quantity of images and in order of make this analysis more understandable for the reader, it has been decided to offer the classification of the designers and then proceed with the description of the collection most representative of each group.

The Breaker: decoding the classic rules

Nietzsche stated that in order to create first is necessary to destroy, dismantle and undo. Looking for a new aesthetic canon for men's fashion some designers first decode the classic rules. That is the case of fashion houses as Balenciaga, Givenchy, Maison Margiela, Raf Simons or Dsquared2. In order to illustrate this type, the case of Balenciaga is one of the most representatives. The transformation of brand is very significant because, despite being a very conceptual and avant-garde proposal, its influence is felt in the most mainstream fast fashion. In a remediation exercise, Demna Gvasalia, in the front of the creative direction since one year, borrows many of the digital tropes and creates a collection where subjectivity and individualization are reflected in the original de-structuring of classic patterns, resulting in some shapes difficult to associate to any particular aesthetic. The proposal for Spring / Summer 2008 designed by Nicolas Ghesquière was based on traditional menswear with some variation: the shapes are not new and the most transgressive bet is to dress the models with shorts. However, the latest serves as interlocutor between the visual discourse of the internet and the style trends being adopted by the market. With this last proposal, Balenciaga breaks all the codes. If the Ghesquières' collection is functional and designed for the real man, Gvasalia's is most conceptual and produced to put the focus on the ancient order and then destroy it.

Balenciaga, SS2008

Balenciaga, SS2017

The Blender: mixing the perfect lifestyle

The Mixer is a traveler who ruled the world in the past and now understands the world like a place without real borders. He has known a lot cultures and so many way of lives. At this moment he decides to choose what fits better with his own personality, without being limited by the social status or economic power. This new man search, overall, dress according to his lifestyle. Hence, he mixes business garments with travel clothing and accessories or sportswear. In this category of 'blenders' of core references can be included Prada, Ferragamo, Versace, Fendi or Louis Vuitton.

Prada is a good example to portrayed this traveler, business man, urban warrior and sport man all in one. If in 2007 Miuccia Prada proposed a man dressed in three-piece suit, mostly with dark, muted colors and devoid of ornament, this year the house has launched a collection very difficult to classify and where the influences are not identifiable. Alexander Fury, in its review for vogue.com uses word like 'otherness', 'different', 'alien' or 'unfamiliar' to describe it. Homewear acquires the same identity as sportswear; black or grey three-piece suits are combined with hiking backpacks. Multicolored headbands, shocks and belts end up defining these multi-layer compositions in which the formal business pieces and multicultural garments are mixed with technological and analog touches. In short, an heterogeneous collection in which new codes of menswear are reflected.

Prada S/S 2008

The Chaotic Wizard: looking for the 'self'

Like magic, this type of man is able to blur all de binary codes of race, gender and status, has the power to travel to the past and come back to the future bringing original ways of reinterpreting the menswear. Feminine or masculine are concepts that this magician changes their meaning. This eclecticism doesn't means that a man is dressed like a woman just because he borrows some codes of the feminine aesthetic, but just that a man is able to use fashion as a 'technology of the self' in order to build his own sartorial individuality. Among these 'illusionists' we can find brands as Gucci, Moschino, Dolce & Gabbana, Cavalli, Lanvin or Dior.

Gucci is another representative case of this assumption of the digital fashion tropes. Although in 2007, for the Spring / Summer 2008 collection Frida Giannini proposed some bold colors like green, yellow or red and uses many printed fabrics with stripes and plaids, the cut and shape are rooted to classical codes. Even the inspiration is associated with the past, more specifically to the fifties at the legendary film studio Cinecittà in Rome. Conversely, the last collection designed by Alessandro Michele for Gucci is absolutely eclectic, even rhizomatic and designed to be viewed in detail. Embroidery, ribbons, lace, animals, flowers, and endless motifs decorate satins, velvets, or leather. Cultural references, from Asia to Africa, make a new creole aesthetic that blends homewear with travel clothes, tuxedos, and school uniforms. Michele plays freely with the silhouettes, using large coats that seem like gowns or modern negligees that could be confused with evening dresses. Codes and signs shown are so frequent and so different that it seems necessary to study the proposal through a zoom-view on the screen in order to grasp the whole ensembles of these "peacocks 2.0".

Gucci S/S2008

Gucci S/S2017

Findings and conclusions

With the emergence of blogs and social media in the mid 2000's, a new visual discourse that feeds the fashion narrative has surfaced, focusing not only on the digital arena but also on the real world. Both the traditional media and the catwalk are taking as reference everything that happens in the network and reinterpreting that aesthetic adequately according to their own needs. The scrutiny of the everyday person's fashion choices is viable not only because users post each item and portion from different perspectives, but also due to the technical inventions that permit them to look at the images with a hyperreal quality. Beyond the curated outfits and the latest digital innovations, the newness binging by advances in technology is the alteration of vision and the way we understand fashion. In this sense, this study concludes that, if users dress based on an influence of the digital fashion, designers create clothing that can be displayed on screens 2.0 in order to capture the attention of the clients.

The digital tropes fostered largely by users have collaborated in the creation of original ways of looking at fashion. The taste for the details, along with the overthrow and agitation of the

traditional codes, are prominent features of contemporary menswear. Therefore, consumers have had an important impact in this new style. The digital fashion representations are meticulous and precise. This accurate staging, showed in multiple perspectives, allows the observer to grasp how the styling is composed, which influences are reflected, and what kind of elements are used in the fashion ensembles. In this sense, sartorial individualities have become an authoritative reference for the *flâneurs* and consumption trends seem to be increasingly dictated by costumers and less by press or designers.

Similarly, the atomization of the influential voices of fashion not only transfers a legitimate power from the industry to the individuals, but also from classical fashion capitals such as Paris, Milan or New York. In this sense, the monopoly has faded for the benefit of other cities. The decentralization of fashion, which is no longer governed by elites, results in greater visibility of different personal interpretations and eclectic styles. The boundaries of cyberspace are unlimited. This allows visitors to observe everywhere in every moment and to make connections across the world with people wearing local fashion customized in a personal way, mixing different cultures and traditions, low or high fashion, from diverse eras.

The new language of fashion that has emerged in the digital environment is reflected in the way people dress, and therefore in the creations of designers that are tailored to the demand of the costumers. Today, men`s wardrobes are more casual and the dress codes reflect a level of relaxation. There are works that do not need the uniform of a suit and it is possible to dress it in a creative way. Exercise and travel are part of everyday life and this casual vibe is combined with the traditional three-piece suit.

Currently, the degree of expression in men's fashion overall, in the cyberspace and on the catwalk, begins to be comparable to that of women. Beyond the class and status divisions, men are looking to freely represent their personal identities through the expression of their lifestyles. Creativity in menswear is an increasingly important component and because of this, costumers are more experimental in their choices. Although this trend is more solid on the Internet or in the context of the fashion industry, its prevalence in everyday life is becoming more common. Additionally, as GQ Style editor Will Welch said to Lauren Sherman in an interview for BoF, "When you see a guy who looks like trends exploded on him, you can't help but mock him a little bit. But we all need that guy to pull the culture forward." (Sherman, 2016)

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