



## Classic Suit and Polystylism: Modern Parallels of Fashionable Forms Development Based on the Tendencies Analyses within the Framework of Great Britain and Ukrainian Fashion Week-2013

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**Abstract:** The active cultural information exchange between countries assists the origin of many general objective lines, particularly in the fashionable clothing intended for the democratic groups of consumers. The most resistant style in clothes is the classic style. Modern fashionable tendencies in classic suit change into the works of designers, that results in the new sounding of style with typical and complicated forms, enriching it with new elements that interpret the ideas of classics in different shape, texture, color and other combinations.

This study presents the analysis of contemporary forms of classical costume and synthesis of classic forms with other styles and fashion substyles based on the analysis of collections of British and Ukrainian designers during a fashion season 2013 (London: Paul Smith, Burberry Prorsum, Zoe Jordan, Richard Nicoll, Jasper Conran; Kyiv: concern «Voronin», «Soboleva-Vronskaya», Julia Aisina, Lilya Pustovit, Sergiy Smolin).

The analysis that took place helps to compare the interpretations of classics in both countries and identify the most typical common and different features in the trends.

**Key words:** Classic Suit, Polystylism, Form, Proportion, Colour.

The art of suit of the XXI century extends stylish and vivid limits in every way, that opens space to the new understanding of various polystylism displays as to the style constituents. The active cultural information exchange between countries assists the origin of many general objective lines, particularly in the fashionable clothing intended for the democratic layers of consumers. The classic suit forms, have been transformed in time, successfully exist today in "clean" style, keeping constancy of main signs, but life dynamism, the ungrasped man's aspiration for changes and variety is caused the processes of synthesis of the whole form or separate elements with other styles and substyles, and also different culture collaboration in suit.

The research actuality of classic suit forms with other styles is conditioned by not only scientific interests but also by the necessity of the state exposure highly sought of the classics in all its displays for today as the most stable fashion form, as when planning the store clothes, designers lean on the standart forms in a suit.

As a suit is a dynamic system, indissolubly related to the man and can be considered only in intercommunication with ones character, proportions and motion, we deem it reasonable to use as the sources of analysis the photo- and video- materials from the collections of leading designers of Great Britain and Ukraine within the framework of fashion season 2013. Such cross-cultural analysis is interesting as it gives possibilities to see the classics displays in a country's modern fashion, that is the universally recognized as the motherland of classic suit – Great Britain, and the country, that with fascination, together with Russia and many European countries absorbed in its cultural and historical fund the classic forms in a fashion in the second half of the XIX century-Ukraine.

Thus, the aim of the following research is: on the basis of collections show casts analysis of the British and Ukrainian designers during the fashion seasons in 2013 (London, Kyiv) to fix the modern state of classic suit, educe the varieties of forms, that today actively collaborate with classic forms.

The classic suit absorbed the main characteristic signs during the first half of the XIX century, and in the first half of the XX century its forms were fully formed. Developing in time, they were concentrated on fixed contemporary characteristics and phenomena on every stage of the history and as a result became the international and the most democratic. History of suit that in time got the name "classic" is described in many editions of art critics, fashion historians.

The British historian of suit C. Blackman dedicates considerable part of material to the features of classic suit basic forms from Edwardian period to the beginning of the XXI century in the multilustrated edition. Author marks that in upper and middle classes it was accepted to adhere to the same standards in clothing, that were in the second half of the XIX century at changes in cutting out up to completion of the First World War: put a frock-coat on or morning coat for an official, semi-official and business events, for the unofficial meeting and journeys outside a city befitted three-piece suit with free cut. "This suit was named the "sack", which was known more as a coat pair, and it consisted of one or double-breasted coat thighs long, the same color waistcoat or pantaloons, and it was sewed from various fabrics, including tweed" [1]. A frock-coat became old fashioned after the First World War, and a morning coat exists now only in dressing for triumphs. It is mentioned that a coat pair, which is now more often named as a business suit, began to put on any events, unless for especially official, and its free silhouette, which was popular before the war, has been changed for more direct cutting out [1]. The indisputable birth center of classic fashion is Seville Row with the numerous amount of firms with high professional masters, such as Henri Pool, where the primary objective of suit creation is "unsurpassed high standard of sewing for lady and gentleman" [4].

On persuasion of the Russian author T. Kozlova, the researcher of changes and suit fashionable forms development, "a classic form is characterized by most viability, as it not only represents progressive tendencies maximally of presents, but it also to forestalls them. Equilibrium between aesthetic and utilitarian functions is found in a classic form" [3]. Among the examples of classic forms in a fashion the author, in the first turn, names the English suit and underlines that principles of form organization which became standard for the next generations after the XIX century and they are expressed in the presence of clear characteristic structure, stable parts correlation for a while, unity of principles connection between form parts of geometrical kind, structural and silhouette lines, and also proportional and rhythmic location of parts and their symmetry, material, texture and décor restrained character.

Going beyond the scopes of "clean" style became the widespread phenomenon in the second half of the XX century. As O. Kosareva, the Russian researcher of fashionable suit forms of the XX century comments, connection and cross flow of numerous styles establishes one in one was named in 1970 as mixture of styles, and later – by "diffuse style" [2]. One cannot but agree with the author's conclusion that "in all variety of ideas that man materializes in a suit – from the personality's self expression to the reflection of objective social values, it is possible to trace and educe one, global general orientation – expression of maintenance and sense of human life from certain society position" [2].

Suit form is complex spatial structural formation and it requires research of its different levels. According to T. Kozlova "... the form of suit is the dynamic model of the spatio-temporal system, that has a multilevel structure of connection between its elements, figure and environment" [3]. The author marks that a form can be examined in three aspects: as a single elementary model system that characterizes concrete man's character; as a type that expresses the general idea of group products, and as a base form that characterizes a system-maximum and expresses the generalized idea of time. The third aspect analysis will become our main task – to educe the expression of the generalized idea of time in relation to classic forms in "clean" style and in a synthesis with other styles and substyles of fashion that is presented on podiums 2013.

Modern fashionable tendencies in classic suit change into work of designers, that results in the new sounding of style with typical and complicated forms, enriching it with new elements that interpret the ideas of the classics in different shape, texture, color and other combinations. The object of the research is superficial, material layer that carries various suit descriptions. Determination of concrete form of models action on a podium is an extraordinarily difficult task, and at the same time is one of the most substantial factors in form determination, as its perfection highlights suit according to the body art natural plastics. Permanent suit motion in accordance to man's body motion, copulas with the posture of figure is foremost determined by character, development, co-operation of elements and unit, and is the major property of suit form. To set the necessary descriptions may be possible due to video- and photo materials analysis from different perspectives.

Therefore when analyzing the form of the suit we consider it necessary to focus on the following parameters:

Silhouette (geometric outline of the shape, the degree of clinginess); The proportion and kind of relation between the pieces; design features; texture-material solutions, décor, decoration; color solution; the connection of form with the purpose and figurative characteristics.

The fashion of 2013 is presented by the great amount of styles, and in our research by means of the selective methods we would analyze some of the photographs of London and Ukrainian fashion weeks.

The themes of classic are developed in the collections of such fashion houses as Paul Smith, Burberry Prorsum, Zoe Jordan, Richard Nicoll, Jasper Conran and others. We will try to observe every one of the listed above within the analysis of the main parameters of the shape.

The autumn-winter Paul Smith's collection, presented during the fashion weeks in London [10], described today's interpretation of the classic of the outstanding master. We might see collection models on illustrations 1-4, which are based on the classic forms but with fantasy elements – by drapery, shuttlecocks, separate details. In this kind of synthesis of classic fantasy elements in the pattern with soft materials softens the severity of rational



rectangular shapes. The basis of the collection consists of jackets, trousers, comfortable light coats, cardigans, sweaters, dresses, blouses made of light wool, silk, gloss surfaces with glitter effects. Monotone surface is contrasted by the geometric patterned picture (fig 3). The silhouette solution for the blouses and jackets is their customized fit, the trousers are presented as loose (fig.1) and narrowed forms (fig.2-4). Pragmatism, femininity and true "English tone" in combination with deep rich colors – that's the way you can describe creative solutions of the collection.

Burberry Prorsum Spring-Summer 2014 male collection headed by creative director Christopher Bailey entitled «Writers and Painters» [7]. It demonstrates festivity of the artistic and intellectual spirit, easy and fun attitude in the male fashion that is shown by many different factors: brave combination of knitwear pullovers, linen jackets, trench coats with shortened trousers and shirts with thin ties in joyful parade of colors – blue, green, yellow, red, introducing polka-dotted fabric completing the sets with bulky scarves, polka-dotted and small floral printed shirts that can be seen in Fig. 5,6. Creating his collection the designer was inspired by the colorful style of David Hockney and Alan Bennett. He used cashmere, cotton and linen, for the shirts – silk and cotton. Classic style is not dominant in this collection, it is more of the casual youth style emphasizing sportiness, the introduction of classical forms in separate sets only reveals aesthetic taste, which is the bearer of fashion. Besides the ties and scarves there are other accessories – such as handbags, sunglasses, shoes and watches, that compliment the image, and are all combined in a vibrant color palette.

We pay special attention in the collections of Zoe Jordan [14] to several models with a mix of feminine and masculine elegance in the moderate androgynous style (Fig. 7, 8). The pattern of the classic tuxedo was used as the basis, though it was refreshed by changing the proportions and shape of the collar and lapels – they were not unfolded as in the traditional version, but become a part of the jacket, and were connected at the place where there used to be a button. These tuxedos have no buttons, in combination with the blouse with a collar of the same silk fabric, collar and lapels or knitted turtle neck on one side is closer to the conservative classics in shape, but on the other – by one piece – collar and lapels, changed the proportions and design makes us classify these models as avant-garde solutions. In general, the collection combined several popular themes and movements of multicultural capital city of London: elements of graffiti, street art of the 90-th and urban clothing.

The following original variation of classic we can observe in several models of female Richard Nicoll collection [12]. As a starting point for this collection was a male suit and previously analyzed suits-jacket and pants and jacket-top-skirt combinations (Fig. 9, 10) demonstrate designers ability to skillfully adapt silhouettes of men to women. The forms are fitting loose on the figure, only the trousers are narrowed, the width of the shoulders is enlarged, dominating geometric structure, emphasizing the pieces: lapels, flaps pockets, collar blouse (fig.9) the upper details of the top and the slit of the skirt (Fig10). Restraint image is created by the cold steel fabric color, clear-cut, structuring and balancing of the items, smooth hair styles, very discreet makeup, no jewelry and accessories, and low heels.

When Richard Nicoll transforms male silhouette into the female one, the collection of Jasper Conran [8] is riddled with boyish levity and retro of the 60s of the XX century. As an inspiration for this collection the image of Mia Farrow was served, who with her slenderness, teenage awkwardness and big bright-eyes became a muse for fans of American cinema and fashion of the 60's. Various outfits, suits, dresses represented in the system of form development and minimal decor of submission to the romanticized and fantastic images with complex layers of rounded and other plastic items. Especially unique is the color solution set: bright lime, purple, orange, brown, black observed in two analyzed models (fig.11, 12). They can serve as the examples of diffuse style that incorporate classic, casual and sport styles: loose jacket silhouette, skirts slightly trapezoidal in shape, elastic fabric, pockets and accented belt (fig.11). Classical accuracy of the overall shape, surrounded by exquisite details, creates a fresh, light-hearted image.



Fig. 1-4 Paul Smith. Autumn / Winter 2013

Fig. 5,6 Burberry Prorsum. Spring/Summer 2014



Fig. 7,8 Zoe Jordan. Autumn / Winter 2013

Fig. 9, 10 Richard Nicoll. Autumn / Winter 2013

Fig. 11, 12, Jasper Conran. Autumn / Winter 2013

Let's review the collections presented by the Ukrainian designers during Ukrainian fashion week-2013. The traditional suit represented by «Michael Voronin» enterprise as we can also observe in the collections of «Soboleva-Vronskaya», by the designers Julia Aisina, Lilya Pustovit and Sergiy Smolin, that appeals to the motives and forms of the classic.

The collection of "Voronin" enterprise is dedicated to wanderers and aesthetes [5]. The inspiration for this collection was the mascot of long distance journeys, the aquamarine, that reflects marine spirit and freshness of the clear water. Men's and women's collection designed in the same classical style. It contains casual double ski-suits, original sleeveless suits or ones with short sleeves combined with shorts, form-fitting outfits of associated materials. The coloration includes charcoal gray, blue, black, rich tones of warm brown to pale sand, and all shades of blue – from deep to light ones.

Women's part at fig.13 – is an original combination of traditional classic and romantic style that is achieved by adding light coats of transparent chiffon with wavy ruffles, it connects to a jacket by two buttons. The pants are narrowed and shortened at the bottom. Presented in white, the image is unusually light and fresh. The model at the fig.14 demonstrates masterful blend of classic and romantic motives: what draws special attention is the jacket with draped wavy inserts on the sides that accentuates the close fitting to the silhouette. The light accessory on the arm of the same white chiffon is adding some romance to the look. Male images at Fig. 15, 16 supplemented by the Mediterranean touch, presented by the sophisticated silhouette shapes of the tuxedo and suit with the morning suity made in the colours of the lightweight wool collection. In the pattern and the detail – the accentuated elegance is expressed.

The collection Spring/Summer 2013, created by the tandem Soboleva & Vronskaya, extends the classic boundaries by combining textiles and knitwear [13]. The creation of the collection began with the trip to the Washington DC to the jewellery exhibition that inspired the collection '925 – the finest silver'. Thus, the coloration is based on various shades of gray, black and white, interspersed with restrained shades of orange, platinum and terracotta. The model at the fig. 17 – the traditional tuxedo but it is not taken as the office wear, because it was combined with a sweater instead of a shirt and tie, and with a light knitted coat with fancy details such as large ruffles going down the chest. The outfit at the fig.18 – represents the original style mix, and trousers here are traditionally classic. The knitwear jacket combines two trends: classical form in silhouette, rectangular lapels and embossed texture of the front piece of the jacket, patch pockets, contrast edging of the collar and pockets looks very casual. The final piece of the image is the knitwear coat combining the intellectual classic and the romantic light attitude.

The women's collection of Julia Aisina's modern house Autumn/Winter 2013/14 is named «Loom» [9] and it is represented as an elegant classic women style. Dresses, suits, coats and form-fitting silhouettes successfully accentuate the curves of the body. The collection is made of tweed, wool, silk and velvet, the color palette includes dark colours – black, gray with the introduction of milk. Suit at the Fig. 19 consists of a shortened jacket loose rectangular in silhouette enhanced slop, fur collar and lapels, straight below the knee length skirt. The model at fig. 20 is made of dense silk. Loose patterned blouse also decorated with hand-made embroidery, stones on the collar and pockets. High waist trousers of the loose silhouette identically decorated on the sight seams. Smooth and volumetric hair with headbands and other accessories such as gloves and bags also contribute to the look. The main character of the collection is soft and feminine, but at the same time has the inner power.

Lily Pustovit's women's collection Fall / Winter 2013-14 addresses the image and silhouette lines to the 60's – early 70-ies of the last century [11]. The collection prototype was a French singer, actress and iconic figure in the fashion industry Francoise Hardy. Designer was inspired by her young spirit, honest, confident and romantic personality – so all the silhouettes that dominate the collection are typical for this period of time. Even though



the dress is the major element of the collection, the suits also play an important role and two of them we are about to analyze. In Fig. 21 we can observe an absolutely feminine variant of the jacket in which the clear lines and natural volume is combined with original prints of polka dots. An open collar, lapels and three buttons – the designer keeps it simple, but smart. The shape of the jacket resembles Chanel jackets that were extremely fashionable in the 60s of the last century. The skirt flared at the bottom with an inserted detail. As for the jacket at the fig. 22, it imitates the male ones in its pattern, but the author maintains it's feminine by adding a tight leather belt, which emphasizes the slender waist. The skirt has the same identical form as the first one but without any segmentations. The author uses the contrast method, by combining feminine lines with coarse shoes that gives a sense of fragility and tenderness. It was performed in collaboration with «Braska» trend. In the overall sense these images are very eclectic, designed for individuality, spontaneity and at the same time confident.

The fashion house «IDoL», headed by its author Sergiy Smolin works exclusively on mens clothing, and they represented their collection «Joan! Joan! Joan!», that also includes women's line in a male style [6]. While his trip to Spain the author is highly inspired by the works as well as the personality of the Spanish painter Joan Miro. His work are in surrealist style, with graceful decorations, and appeal to illogical situations and forms. The designer presents a man as a creators, embodied in the fashion world of the artist extravagant images (Fig. 23, 24). The vivid image of uniqueness is added by the "sculpted" accessories and jewelry based on the works of Juan Miro (designed by M. Diordiychuk. and I. Borymskoho). The original aesthetics and classical forms are balanced by the author in his collection.



Fig. 13-16 "Voronin". Spring / Summer 2013

Fig. 17, 18 Soboleva Vronskaya. Spring / Summer 2013

Fig. 19, 20 Julia Aysyna. Autumn / Winter 2013-14

Fig. 21, 22 Lily Pustovit. Autumn / Winter 2013-14

Fig. 23, 24 IDoL ». Autumn / Winter 2013

Therefore, when observing the collection of British and Ukrainian designer presented during the fashion seasons 2013, we were focusing on the collections of the designers who created classic styles or collections of interpretations and the development of classical motives. Analysis of modern interpretations of classics features and its interaction with other styles and substyles of the fashion involved consideration of such components as form, silhouette, proportions, the relation between the pieces, design features, texture and material solutions, decor, color resolution, the connection of the form to the purpose and figurative characteristics. The analysis that took place helps to compare the interpretations of classics in both countries and identify the most typical common and different features in the trends:

1. Silhouettes of the models are based on a rectangular shape of different lengths, volumes and proportions. The interpretation of the traditional silhouette solution is achieved by applying to the retro styles (Jasper Conran,

fig. 11, 12), Liliya Pushtovit (fig. 21, 22). Retro models provide possibilities to vary basic features of the suit, details, articulation of form and texture.

2. The proportions of the details preserve traditional correlation only in the classical forms of "pure" style (Voronin, fig. 15, 16, Richard Nicoll, fig.9). Thus, in order to enhance the feminine character in the suite. J. Aysina enlarges and shapes the lapel of the jacket into the semi oval and significantly reduces the length (fig. 19).

3. The romantic traits overlap with classic by adding an additional layer of the light transparent fabric with plastic edges (Voronin, Fig. 13) or by the soft pleated detailed jacket and accessories (fig.14).

4. The fantastic image is reached by acquisition of the suit by adding the elements of fantasy to the pattern (Soboleva & Vronskaya, Fig. 17th, 18th; Paul Smith, fig.2; Richard Nicoll, fig.10).

5. The combination of classic and sporty style allows to vary proportions of the length, the clinging degree, to combine soft and geometrical shapes, pattern and division (Burberry Prorsum, Fig. 5, 6; IDoL, Fig. 23).

6. The classic substyle – casual – occupies a prominent place on the podium and gives more freedom to classic interpretation, including the addition of knitwear articles (Soboleva & Vronskaya, Fig. 17, 18).

7. The brave avant-garde transformation of traditional forms is achieved by various techniques – from the bright color palette to alteration of shape and proportions (Paul Smith, fig.1-4; Zoe Jordan, fig.7-8), and the inclusion of accessories and items based on the works of art (IDoL, fig. 23, 24).

After analyzing the collections by means of selective methods we discovered many interpretations of classics and its elements. When one combines two or three stylistic trends we can observe interaction of such elements as lines, details, color, decoration and texture. Analyzing transformation of classical forms and their interaction with other styles, we can come to the conclusion that there is a variety of geometric and plastic configurations that determine all the structural diversity of the suit. Processing and analysis of the creative works of British and Ukrainian designers in today's methods of formation on basis of classic will serve as a background to determine cross-cultural modern tendencies and will help make measured project decisions.

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