EXISTENTIAL COMPONENT OF HUMAN APPEARANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF CHOOSING AND WEARING BIJOUERIE

Current trends in science show the need to consider many aspects of basic research in a cross-cultural area. The 20th century’s philosophical trends created the basis for the development of psychoanalysis, the foundations of marketing and other unrelated branches of science.

The article considers the basics of existential analysis by Langle’s method to determine the relationship between the concept of existence and the reasons for the choice of wearing bijouterie. A classification of bijouterie has been developed using this theory and the concepts of emotional attachment and demonstrative consumption. As a result, a certain connection was found between the means of self-identification through the choice of bijouterie. Consider trends that help identify through the choice of jewellery to which stratum or subculture, or fashion or religious community he (she) belongs, but do not take into account the variety of religious jewelry that immediately classifies belonging to a particular denomination.

The article examines the evolution of thoughts on the essence and phenomenon of fashion since E. Kant, classical authors and modern Ukrainian researchers. The study deliberately has not considered the issue of purchasing power, because the author believes that this aspect cannot be directly related to the reason for the choice of bijouterie, as the latter is very actively used according to modern fashion trends. Over the past hundred years, bijouterie has stopped to be considered as “fake” jewellery and now can cost more than products made of expensive materials. However, there are so many analogues that one can easily find bijouterie of different styles for a lower price.

The article familiarizes its readers with certain conclusions of the thesis research by the Finnish anthropologist Petra Ahde-Deal which relate to the topic of women’s choice of bijouterie. In her thesis, she views bijouterie as a social product that also gives confidence to a woman. There are a growing number of reasons to wear and possess bijouterie as a social status marker.

Key words: bijouterie, human psychology, fashion, existentialism, Langle analysis, existence, choice of bijouterie
The phenomenon, history and evolution of fashion are studied by many domestic and foreign scientists in connection with psychology, philosophy, art history and other sciences, however, the subject of wearing and choosing bijouterie is not sufficiently disclosed. Archaeological finds show that bijouterie appeared in human life as early as other elements of appearance but survived much better. For example, in the territory of our country, the first items resembling bijouterie were found at the site of Molodov (Bukovyna, Ukraine). These are perforated and painted shells, and they date back to 40 000 to 30 000 years ago in the Neanderthal era. People of this era had not yet built houses, they lived a lifestyle that relied on hunting and gathering, and even their language was just being formed, however, the need for bijouterie already existed.

Many scholars explain this by the fact that these first bijouterie items performed a more conservative, i.e., protective function, and therefore were filled with sacred content.

The purpose of the article is to answer the question – why there is a need to wear bijouterie and what the reasons for its choice are – through the prism of philosophical theories, including existentialism.

1. Kant already tried to explore the essence and phenomenon of fashion. He called fashion a «fickle way of life» and explained the pursuit of fashion by a person’s natural tendency to compare themselves with someone more authoritative and significant. On this basis, the philosopher said that fashion spreads from top to bottom – from the highest state to the lowest. The aspect of gender of fashion was also examined, and the scientist explained that vanity and inclination to all things beautiful are more characteristic of women than men. Both are manifested in fashion. The first is the desire to interest, please men and arouse the envy of women; the second is in the love of beautiful clothes and bijouterie, which are symbols of fashion. The choice of wearing bijouterie as an initial desire to compare oneself with someone more significant may be appropriate for this concept, but it does not explain the choice of other types of bijouterie.

In the context of the development of fashion, such scholars as G. Tarde and G. Simmel (Simmel, 1996) also considered the imitative function of the items of the fashion industry, while T. Veblen (Veblen, 1984) explained the change of fashion patterns by the principle of novelty. But the author believes that it is existentialism, through its postulates about people and their essence, that will allow revealing the meaning of bijouterie in a person’s life.

Existentialism is closely linked with psychology in the search for answers to the question of the soul, which is why many modern scholars include the postulates of this philosophical school in their research. Going deeper into the method of existential analysis, as well as Langley’s psychoanalysis (Langle, 2008), we can explore the need to choose «to wear or not to wear bijouterie». The choice of type of bijouterie lies in existential characteristics or existences in addition to the need for «consumption»:

1. The initial driving force is the basic, fundamental question of existence: I am here, but can I be here? Do I have the space, the protection, the support to be here? People find the necessary space, protection, and support when they feel accepted, which, in turn, makes them capable of acceptance. Thus, the reason for the ability to accept is confidence in one’s existence; while its absent, a person must fight for it. Historically, belonging to a certain group was determined in various ways, such as tattoos or items. This characteristic corresponds to the choice to wear bijouterie as an indicator of their affiliation either to a religious community, or to a certain stratum of the population, and so on.

2. A person is also guided by the fundamental question of life: I live, but do I like to live the way I do? Do I have time for what I find valuable? A person experiences life as a value due to the attention to themselves, through intimacy, for example, love. This allows them to open so that they, in turn, can turn to others (people, things). And it is this basic sense of self-worth that determines the ability to feel value of another person or things related to this person. Therefore, this existence determines the wearing of bijouterie associated with someone, or some date associated with the event, such as wedding rings, or family heirlooms etc.

3. A fundamental spiritual question: me is me – but do I have the right to be like me? Do others respect me, and do I respect myself? Again, having your own recognition makes it easier to pay tribute to other people. And in this existence, the need for human consumption of art items lies along with the understanding of the distinction between what belongs to them and what belongs to others.

4. A person is driven by the matter of the meaning of existence – what should I do today to include my life in a meaningful whole? What, more than myself, do I associate myself with (up to religious ties)? Why do I live? And here we can also say about, on the one hand, the need to show their belonging to a particular society, and, on the other hand, the need to have these values, and hence to collect, although only jewellery was used for such purposes until recently. Experiencing the meaning facilitates agreement with the world and helps to find and embody one’s personal meaning in specific situations. All these
essential characteristics underlie a person’s choice to wear bijouterie. It is also impossible to exclude the need for human consumption as a driving force in choosing and wearing a certain type of bijouterie.

From the perspective of the need to own bijouterie, another aspect must be explored. It is consumption and its role in human choice. On the one hand, it is a complex process related to the available social resource, which has its own laws and rules, depending on the consumer’s status and system of tastes and preferences. On the other hand, the level of an individual’s purchasing power, the ability to buy a real status item or be satisfied with a copy/counterfeit also plays a significant role. And this is due to the existential need of a person to be part of a certain circle of people.

Thus, the Ukrainian researcher O. Gerus (Gerus, 2015) suggests that consumption should be considered «as a process of social construction, a form of social action, socio-psychological phenomenon, which influences the formation of social norms and values». Events in people’s lives have an impact on the formation of their values, and the rating scale includes artistic features and quality of the material of products in the process of choosing bijouterie. Thus, their value for society is a necessary component of the development of the bijouterie itself and determines the choice when purchased by a person.

And if in primitive society the desire for beauty was satisfied only by individuals’ own efforts and creativity, then, with the development of civilization, the so-called «demonstrative consumption» plays an important role in choosing bijouterie which is associated with a certain lifestyle, symbolizes social achievement and life success, allows an individual to reproduce their belonging to the chosen community and stratum thanks to, inter alia, bijouterie. Therefore, for purity of understanding, the subject of study of the choice of bijouterie is the person whose choice is formed not due to purchasing power, but due to the basic characteristics of the person.

Current trends help a person identify oneself, place oneself in a certain stratum of the population or subculture, or in fashion or religious community through the choice of bijouterie. However, modern researchers are also considering another aspect of the human soul – emotional attachment. Jack Katz also considered emotional attachment to bijouterie in his works, focusing on the study of the importance of jewellery in human life. He defined emotions as physical actions in our body that should be explained through social interactions. He noted that emotions are created through communication and interaction, emotions are enhanced when there are other active participants and when they are created together. The stronger the experience and the better the emotions, the better they will be remembered in life.

The importance of the product due to the need to choose bijouterie to wear is a social attribute that depends on the owner, i.e., again we come to one of the main existential characteristics. For a more complete analysis of the choice of bijouterie we should consider the study of Finnish anthropologist Petra Ahde-Deal (Ahde-Deal, 2013). She studied the stories of twenty nine women and analysed the emotions that these jewellery items evoked and determined that women’s choice of bijouterie was related not only to the above but also to the roles that women played in their lives.

The woman herself needs bijouterie as part of the auxiliary settings for managing the role of wife, mother, worker, and many others. Jewellery, according to Petra Ahde-Deal, can help support the role of everyday life and, at the same time, can be used to separate one role from another. Since jewellery is a social product, there are a growing number of reasons to wear and own it for communal and social aspects, which gives a woman confidence. These personal and individual products have a huge social impact and can be called social markers, as women talk about their social relationships through bijouterie.

According to the author of the article, Petra Ahde-Deal’s work leads to the conclusion that the choice in wearing bijouterie lies in the ability to answer a person’s existential questions about the human essence. And if we consider the study of A. S. Doroshkevych (Doroshkevych, 2012), who believed that consumption is an active mode of relations – not only with respect to things but also a group, society – it is a universal response to external influences, it is a basis of the entire culture system.

Conclusions. The choice of bijouterie can be included in the basis of self-identification of modern people, where it performs one of the main means of constructing their own «I». We also consider the opinion of A. Langle regarding the existential-analytical doctrine whereby value is defined as the basis for the superiority of one action (one thing, one form of behaviour) over another. And we conclude that wearing bijouterie and choosing it in accordance with public opinion helps a person in finding meaning in life and determining its place in society. Thus, when choosing to wear bijouterie, a person associates themselves as a person with a certain type of bijouterie. A person tries to express the following:

- that they have an inner need for beauty (aesthetic level),
- that they belong to a fashionable or other elite circle of people.
that they need to relate themselves to the culture of a particular ethnic group or people when they choose traditional bijouterie.

- that they relate themselves to a particular subculture, demonstrating the benefits of the philosophy of this community.

- that they show a connection with a specific religion by wearing sacred bijouterie.

- that they show a tendency to express their own uniqueness by choosing a unique bijouterie.

- that they join a temporary group of the community, such as a political movement or a memorable event through choosing bijouterie with a meaningful load.

- that they belong to a certain circle due to jewellery/status bijouterie (family jewellery).

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