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**HANDMAID’S TALE” ТА ЙОГО ЕКРАНІЗАЦІЇ**

студентки групи МЛа 57-21  
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за спеціальністю 035 Філологія  
Міщук Анни Сергіївни

Науковий керівник:  
кандидат філологічних наук, доцент  
Кириченко Ірина Сергіївна

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**STYLISTIC AND MULTIMODAL ASPECTS OF WOMAN IMAGE  
CONSTRUAL IN MARGARET ATWOOD'S "THE HANDMAID'S TALE"  
AND ITS SCREEN ADAPTATION**

**ANNA MISHCHUK**

Group LLE 57-21

Department of Germanic Philology

Research Adviser

Assoc. Prof. **I. S. Kyrychenko**

PhD (Linguistics)

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## INTRODUCTION

Woman image construal is always a relevant topic, especially in the time of loud feminist movements. In the novel “The Handmaid’s Tale” by Margaret Atwood women have complicated and often tragic life. In the centre of the story is the confrontation between the main character, Offred, and patriarchal, totalitarian theonomic state known as the Republic of Gilead. Women’s images take a significant place here and require a more detailed study.

Image is a necessary constructive element of any literary work. The concept of the image has a long history and has its place in philosophical, Christian, literary, and aesthetic studies. The functioning of the artistic image and its structural components are closely connected with the development of its systems. Lexicology, stylistics, and cognitive poetics are some of the areas of its study that are related to varied interpretations of the term “image”.

The image includes a variety of elements: the concepts of name, artistic detail, speech, evaluative statements, and interior. Each of these things reveals the personalities and emotions of the heroes and might provide information about their past, social standing, environment, and others. They are the key factors of a character’s inner world and the comprehension of their choices in action.

Multimodality stylistics, a new area of study, has recently emerged at the intersection of stylistics and social semiotics. It focuses on researching how meaning is formed in the context of not only verbal but also spatial, auditory, visual, and other modes of expression. Therefore, a variety of genres including movies, songs, dramas, comic books, and even literary texts are the objects of multimodal stylistics research.

A choice of stylistic and multimodal aspects lets to understand the feelings and inner state of characters, and also makes them unique and memorable. Research of women in literature for the first time begins to rise together with gender issues. Women are unique figures, delightful and brilliant. Therefore, it is not surprising that women are examined from different perspectives in many literary works.

**The topicality** of this research is determined by a general tendency of modern linguistics towards multimodal studies of discourse, as well as undying considerable interest to the study of the image of women in film and fiction.

**The object** of the paper is a woman image portrayal\* in Margaret Atwood's novel "The Handmaid's Tale".

**The subject-matter** of the present study is the stylistic and multimodal aspects of woman image construal in the analysed novel.

**Theoretical value** of the master's paper lies in introducing the theoretical basis for a further research in the study of image, providing a more detailed insight into stylistic and multimodal aspects of woman image construal.

**Practical value** of the results is stipulated by the possibility to apply its results to teaching university students Stylistics and Text Interpretation. They can also contribute to a profound reading and interpretation of fiction texts. The results might also be helpful in writing students' research papers.

**The aim** of this work is to reveal and multimodal aspects of woman image construal in "The Handmaid's Tale".

The aim of this study is achieved by the following **tasks**:

- to survey the notion of the image in modern linguistics;
- to elicit stylistic means of image construal;
- to define the notion of multimodality and its means in conveying various aspects of image;
- to reveal the stylistic means of women's images portrayal in M. Atwood's "The Handmaid's Tale";
- to outline the specificity of multimodal representation of a woman in the screen adaptation of the novel.

**Methods of research** used in the paper include lexico-semantic analysis, semantic-stylistic analysis, and multimodal analysis.

**The novelty** of the paper is in the detailed analysis of stylistic and multimodal aspects in woman image construal in "The Handmaid's Tale".

**Compositionally**, the paper consists of the introduction, three chapters, conclusions to each chapter and general conclusions to the whole paper, and the list of references.

In the **Introduction** the paper sets up the object and subject of the research, emphasises the topicality of the problem under study, states the novelty of the obtained results, the main aim and the tasks of achieving it, as well as the methods of research used in the paper and the content of each chapter separately.

**Chapter One** presents general theoretical framework for the study of stylistic and multimodal aspects in portraying a character.

**Chapter Two** considers stylistic aspects of a woman image portrayal in “The Handmaid’s Tale.

**Chapter Three** demonstrates multimodal aspects of a woman image construal in “The Handmaid’s Tale.

The **General Conclusions** summarize the obtained research results, suggest theoretically valuable inferences and outline the main perspectives for further research of the problem under consideration.

## **CHAPTER ONE. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY OF LITERARY IMAGE IN FICTION**

Image is an essential and obligatory part of every literary work. Researchers have learned this notion for centuries and divided various groups. Also, there are some approaches to studying images. The image includes multifaceted components, so a character is revealed through a name, objects, speech, interior, and evaluation statements. If a novel has a screen adaptation, it may be a reason for analysing images through the prism of multimodal linguistics, a relatively new field of research.

### **1.1 The Notion of Image in Present-day Linguistic Studies**

Image is a form of reflection of reality, experience, and knowledge of a person, which has a specific-sensual basis with the instruction on the underlined-emotional character of expression of a certain opinion and differs by the generalization of content, which transmits (Колесова, 2012, с. 14). The artistic image is a generalizing, national, syncretic formation that is based on the verbal images, localized within the context (Кухаренко, 2013, с. 11).

The specificity of the artistic image is determined by the fact that it is a means of both understanding reality and creating a new, invented world. An artist seeks to find certain phenomena and implement them according to his idea of life and understanding its tendencies and laws. The concept of “artistic image” in literature is conditioned by historical, scientific factors and interaction with the reader, which has been an active subject of the artistic process for many generations.

In O. Piterska’s research (2020, с. 51), there are several types of classification of artistic images:

- in historical age – ancient, medieval, Renaissance;
- in ideological-artistic direction or style – baroque, classical, romantic, realistic, modernist, post-modernist;



- philosophy – humanistic, educational, existentialistic, and others;
- by the subject of the image – images of people, animalistic images, objects, feelings, mood.

Also, she notes that based on visual and concrete-sensual perception and creation, images are divided into plastic (life-like images in the novel by G. Flaubert “Madame Bovary”) and non-plastic (images of smells in the book by P. Süskind “Perfume: The Story of a Murderer”, images of thoughts in the story “The Odor of Thought” by R. Sheckley). Composition features of the work are conditioned by the presence of images of a narrator, which usually represents the linguistic centre of the story. Moreover, there is an image-character which is an artistic reinterpretation of a particular person, such as the image of Yarema from “Haydamaky” by T. Shevchenko. According to the degree of socio-historical significance, semantic loading, aesthetic value, there are traditional, original, and stereotypical images. The level of normative-value orientations and collective unconscious are specific to the images-archetypes, which record mentality, ideas, and motives of behaviour, which are characteristic for many generations. The most used models of literary archetypes are images-symbols of the world of nature (lotus flower in the works of Y. Kawabata, eternal images (Prometheus, Cain, Hamlet, etc.), particular types of heroes (images of mother, step-mother, orphans, etc.), among which there is an image-trickster, a demonized-comic doubler of the main hero (Panurge from the novel “The Life of Gargantua and Pantagruel” by F. Rabelais. Often the individuality of a writer becomes the basis for the creation of the archetypal image of the author, as evidenced by the creative heritage of G. Byron and M. Gogol (Пітерська, 2020, с. 52).

## **1.2 Approaches to the Study of Image**

Image is a necessary constructive element of any artwork. The functioning of the artistic image and its structural content is closely connected with the evolution of its systems. The idea of the image is rooted in the deep past. The term “artistic image” is found in philosophical, Christian, literary, and aesthetic studies.

Several interpretations of the term “image” are associated with various aspects of its study: lexicology, stylistics, and cognitive poetry.

### **1.2.1 Lexicological Approach to the Study of Image**

The lexicological approach shows the revealing the nature of an image as a linguistic category, as a phenomenon inherent to the word – a discrete unit of the language system (Беззубикова, 2010, с. 43).

In lexical semantics, the primary sensory-rational image is considered in connection with the content of words and expressions that can cause this image in the human mind when perceiving a lexical unit (Беззубикова, 2010, с. 12). When an author tells about, for example, a character, their appearance, clothes – how this person or another creation would look in real life. Thus, the human brain evokes a mental image of an object or a phenomenon denoted by a word. The expressions of a character’s description, their place of living, etc., are shown in the mind.

According to E. A. Yurina, the bearers of primary perceptual images in the lexical system of language are nouns, qualitative adjectives, denoting the physical property of objects, and verbs of specific physical activity in their primary meanings (2005, с. 14). In this connection, many scientists distinguish in the structure the meaning of the word “empirical” or “figurative” component. Thus, I. A. Sternin defines the figurative element of definitions is the generalized, sensual, and visual image of an object called a sign (1979, с. 129).

According there is the meaning that the figurative component is an integral part of the meaning of the word. However, along with the verbal units, the semantics of which imply the presence of an image representation (words referring to a specific vocabulary, as a term for the sensual phenomena of reality), there are verbal units that are devoid of this semantic feature, for example, words referring to abstract vocabulary that does not allow sensual concretization. The semantic structure of such linguistic signs should be considered as containing a null-shaped value (Загородская, 1983, с. 17).

O. Potebnya (1985) distinguished the usual cognitive image, formed by each person with the concrete-sensual perception, conception and is a bunch, a snapshot of real things, and an artistic image, developed on the variety of connections, which arise in the consciousness of the people because of the capture of ideas and thoughts, because of actualization of some signs, details.

### **1.2.2 Stylistic Approach to the Study of Image**

Stylistics has an aim to study the image in a functional aspect. From this point of view, a word – a minimal semantic unit of the literary text – is characterized by the image in a case when functioning in a specific context, and acquires an additional sense, broader meaning, and becomes a mean of language image (McKee, Sheriffs, 1957, p. 6).

The artistic image is one of the primary linguistic means – the semantic heterogeneity of the component, which appears at its semantic reorientation, at simultaneous combination in one language sign of its old and new gnosiological relations (Синиченко, 2007, с. 4).

In a narrow sense, means of language images are speech figures. However, the images arise not only through notable stylistic figures. Due to the discursive influence, the usual “nonfigurative” words in artistic language become figurative (Вольперт, 1979, с. 69). However, O. M. Peshkovskiy considered that the term “image” is inadmissible abused because it is only that which is expressed by the figurative meaning of the word (trope) or particular lexical-syntax method (figure) (Пешковский, 2006, с. 58).

Stylistics often operates with the meaning of the word “image” as a way of the world’s vision and method of its reflection in the language, and the meaning, which is practically realized in the artistic means of speech – paths, figures.

Without going into the philosophical interpretation of the image (the result of the person’s cognitive activity, following objects and phenomena in its consciousness, the forms of the world’s reproduction in the process of consciousness, etc.), it is possible to say about linguistic understanding of the

image. A verbal image is a word or word combination that carries the subject and the image (artistic) information. This image makes it possible to interpret it as a property of words. Words can be transmitted not only logical but also concrete-sensual, emotional-evaluation information.

### **1.2.3 Notion of Image in Cognitive Poetics**

The theory of the image in cognitive poetics is based on the study of linguistic-thinking mechanisms of the creation of a verbal image, which is a specific form of reflection of the objective world in a language consciousness (Lakoff, 1975, p. 26). However, unlike cognitive poetry, linguistics is oriented toward studying the image in a functional aspect.

The definition of the image is oriented on its cognitive nature in the process of “decoding”, “decoding” of the figurative content at the perception of the language unit, or in other words, it appears a fundamental property of language units of different levels, which causes in consciousness a visual representation, bright pictures, on the background of which the subject-speech and intelligible content is perceived (Синиченко, 2007, с. 4).

When we talk about cognitive poetics, the image is seen as a linguistic-cognitive text construct that incorporates the pre-conceptual, conceptual, and verbal hypostases (Белехова, 2005).

The pre-conceptual component of any image of a woman is a pure sense of the image, its archetype, which is unconsciously activated through cognitive operations (Лакофф, 1990). The form of the unconscious is the archetype, which is filled with content because of the correlation with mythological images and symbols (Франк-Каменецкий, 1984, с. 63). Archetype is a pre-conceptual understanding that cannot be explained; emotional state (Франк-Каменецкий, 1984, с. 90-98). Categorization of emotions and emotional experience of a person forms an internal emotional lexicon, which is a mandatory component of the structure of knowledge represented in consciousness (Воробйова, 2006, с. 132).

The conceptual hypostasis is an internal image structured by conceptual schemes, which are being taken out or reconstructed by the ways of conceptual analysis of the components of the realm of the aim and the source of an image based on the theory of conceptual metaphor, metonymy, etc. Verbal hypostasis is the embodiment of its pre-conceptual and conceptual structure in the verbal fabric of the artistic text using various linguistic-cognitive operations and procedures (Белыхова, 2002).

The verbal image, transferring a particular idea, shows not only the opinion but also influences feelings and imagination. If the source data is known, then the process of solving the problem is subordinated mainly to the laws of thinking; if these data are challenging to analyse, then mechanisms of imagination act as the ability to see the whole before its parts (Белыхова, 2002, с. 197). The concept stands in unity with a mind-set in the process of an activity. The addition of the vision, along with the mind-set, the activity process is determined by the degree of uncertainty of the problem situation, completeness, or lack of information.

### **1.3 Means of Conveying Images in a Literary Work**

The image consists of many aspects, among which there are such notions as name, artistic detail, speech, evaluation statements, and interior. It combines the general, typical for a certain social group, epoch, nationality, and individual, inherent only to this hero. Every this thing discloses heroes' personality, feelings, emotions, can tell about the past, social status, surroundings, and others. They are the keys to characters' inner world and understanding of their actions and life choices.

#### **1.3.1 Specifics of Characters' Names**

A name is a part of every human image. It is the best description of characters and a key to their world. In a literary work, it often is not chosen randomly, so through it, readers can find out some information or even crucial facts about a character. A name in world history could show a person's status in

society. For instance, Charles the Great – this is clear that he is a king. Also, every name, even the most ordinary, has a meaning and origin. In literature, an author often uses various stylistic devices in creating a character's name.

Sometimes names are constructed using antonomasia. It is a form of metaphorical transfer of meaning or renaming. In literature work where all components form a particular system, a hero's name is also stylistically significant, as it is a component of the system. The proper name gained stylistic significance in the history of literature in various ways. In classicism, so-called "speaking names" were widely used, which directly and unambiguously characterized the characters or pointed to their moral and ethical qualities (Мороховский et al., 1984, с. 169).

Also, characters can get their names due to their native land or another person, which is an example of antonomasia. Moreover, an author uses this stylistic device to avoid repeating one of the same names in a text. This stylistic device makes characters more interesting and memorable for readers, so they are associated with a particular book.

Examples of antonomasia in literature are: Scrooge (A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens) – this name was used later to identify a stingy person; Casanova or Don Juan – about a person with romantic adventures. Also, characters can be named Mrs. Know-it-all, Mr. Right, etc. Such names are sometimes used as irony or sarcasm to ridicule or criticize a person.

For an author, the readers must remember their book heroes and have particular associations with them. Therefore, literary creations may have such names that show their character, so there are metaphors to them (Dictionary.com, 2019, para. 2). Besides, a person can also be named in honour of someone (Sherlock Holmes – a violinist Alfred Sherlock), inspired by some old languages (Galadriel's name from Lord of the Rings has the Sindarin origin), or even be built in the result of a word combination (Voldemort – French "vol de mort" means "flight of death").

### 1.3.2 Artistic Detail as Part of Character's Image

It is crucial to consider an artistic detail that functions as an essential data carrier in an image construal. It can be an interior element, clothes, or natural and hand-made things. These objects may become decorations, a background of some actions, indicators of time, signs of thoughts or feelings, etc.

In L. Ginzburg's opinion, artistic details are examples of various phenomena – both external and internal light. She writes that things are signs of spiritual experience and mental processes as if they are an asymmetry of the material environment surrounding a person (Гинзбург, 1974, с. 338). In the section of her book "Association Poetry", she thinks details in a literary text are associative and not accidental. Without using the term "intertextuality", she reveals it in the concept of communication systems of poetic images with mythology, history, and art – objects become landmarks of cultural structures, historical goals – architectural details, elements of clothing, literary characters or musical motives (1974, с. 392).

The researcher involves objectivity to substantiate the system of poetic associations, consecutive development of the meaning, and creation of an integral artistic impression, arguing the object basis of metaphor, detail, and image. "In any poetic image – even the most objectless one – one way or another the reality is reflected. But this image can preserve material traces of reality, or may be in an unlimited distance from it" (Гинзбург, 1974, с. 391). In other words, the object is an integral component of the artistic image.

L. Ginzburg does not manage theoretical considerations about the object, peculiarities of its creation or functioning – she analyses the object world not even near, but within such categories as image, motive, plot, hero, author's "I" etc.

An author enters into the work of artistic details not by chance; in work, there are no extra subjects. Instead, each "works" for a certain result: mood, impression, or picture. An artistic image is a source of imagery and unites visual, intellectual, and emotional moments, forming the understanding of time, place, and character.

### 1.3.3 Speech Features of Literary Characters

The character's speech reveals the character's character and the author's attitude to it. Speech portrait of the character's personality in the artworks performs specific functions. First, he points to the belonging of a character to one or another group and serves as a means by which it is possible to show who the character of creation is. For instance, positive characters in an artistic work often become a movement of the author's ideas, and their vital position reflects the author's concept of good and evil.

Speech portrait is a combination of features of language personality, which are adjusted by linguistic means and characterized by different features and are shown directly in the language situation created by the participants of communication (САВЕЛЬЕВА, 2018, с. 121). One of the most significant things in speech portraits is the characters' lexicon. It often corresponds to their age, social and ethnic group, gender, etc. (Kalinyuk & Yudina, 2020, p. 109).

As the theorists point out, the language of the characters should be correlated with the main features of oral speech, such as emotionality, spontaneity, situationality, and so on. The emotional colouring of speech can be found in a particular choice of morphemes, words, structures, communicative type of speech, in intonation pattern of phrases and speech. Spontaneity and situationality are shown in the predominance of simple, incomplete, and simple sentences; situationality and contactability – are in the use of pronouns, exclamations, and nouns (Образцова, 2015, с. 87). A character's speech characteristic is built based on the consolidation of a specific vocabulary, certain expressive-syntactic, and stylistic-phraseological forms, individual system of mimic and pantomimic expression. The researchers pay particular attention to the linguistic composition of phrases and texts in general since the choice of words can become a significant feature of the character, its "zest", emphasizing the peculiarities of education or professional belonging.

While analysing a character according to their speech, different stylistic means can be mentioned. For instance, syntactically, their speeches may be formed



with the help of many stylistic devices and expressive means such as ellipsis, aposiopesis, nominative sentences or asyndeton, some types of repetition, parallelism, rhetorical questions, and so on. Besides, there are such figures of quantity as hyperbole, meiosis, litotes; figures of qualifications – metaphor, metonymy, periphrasis, euphemism, allegory, irony, etc.; figures of identity – simile, synonyms-substitutes and -specifiers; figures of opposition – antithesis and oxymoron; figures of inequality – climax, anticlimax, pun, and zeugma (Мороховский et al., 1984).

Diachuk N. V and Biliuk I. L., in their research (2022), show how a character's speech is essential. The constant usage of certain words, imperative sentences, polite requests, etc., in the example of Dorian Gray, creates his language image and is significant in discovering this literary figure and understanding his feelings and intentions.

Every figure has its functions. For example, it makes an utterance more rhythmical, creates some emotions and atmosphere. Often, this means allows understanding of a person's feelings and attitude toward others.

#### **1.3.4 Evaluation Statements as Part of Image Construal**

Each literary work complies with specific rules – a sort of arrangement by a writer of events. In a canvas of an artistic text, an important role has one who conducts a story – a narrator, i.e., a person invented by an author. This literary person may be an author, a character, or any other person. It is a narrator as a key aspect that defines the peculiarities of revealing the content of a work, and the nature of a story in a text. This is an essential subject of the narration space that verbalizes artistic information.

In literature, there are first- and third-person narrations. A first-person narrator is present in the text as its character; the point of view is subjective. A third is an author, so the point of view is objectivized. There is no author's name in work itself. It is a concentrated embodiment of the essence of a work, uniting the whole system of speech structures of characters in their relation to a narrator, and

through them is the ideological-stylistic centre, the focus of the whole. The author's image does not usually match the narrator's fairy tale form. In this case, the narrator is the conditional image of the person on whose behalf the story is narrated.

Linguists who deal with the expression of evaluation in an artistic text elect a multidimensional holistic approach to current research. In particular, J. Thompson and S. Hunston (2000) proceed from the theoretical position that in the framework of the artistic text, the author's assessment of events and characters is comprehensively expressed through elements belonging to the lexical, grammatical, and actual textual levels. At the same time, however, the researchers argue that the isolated consideration of specific evaluation elements exclusively at one of the specified levels, apart from funds belonging to other levels, is a useless task (Thompson & Hunston, 2000, p. 22). In other words, the different-level means of expression of an assessment act in an artistic text in a complex relationship with some common conceptual essence.

The creation of an artistic narrative resembles the initiation of a certain power over a reader (Toolan, 2001, p. 3). Therefore, a reader has to trust the narrator's evaluations and judgments. A storyteller-character, leading the first-person narrative, potentially directing the reader's reactions in the communicative channel required by the author, is endowed by the author with more authoritarian power than any other character and may be associated to some extent with an author of the text (Александрова, 2013, с. 15). A storyteller-character, while wearing a mask of characterless and not participating in the main action, also acquires some authoritarianism, though discovering himself of herself exclusively within their own virtual worlds. Readers perceive this type of narrator as an omnipresent "voice after frame", and do not question the information that this voice presents.

So, a narrator is a source of evaluation statements in a text. From this point of view, a reader can understand a lot about a book's characters, situations, and atmosphere.

### **1.3.5 Interior as Representation of Character's Inner State**

Both literary and linguistic studies perceive the interior as a description phenomenon, and the term “interior description” is common for them because their object of analysis is ordinary. However, they differ in objects and methods. The interior description acts as a portrait, landscape, or text element and does not stand out as a separate concept.

Those few linguistic works, which draw attention to the description of the interior, analyse it first in the dimensions of linguistics. It is not surprising because the subject of the latter is the combination of the language used in the artistic creation, which provides the aesthetic influence necessary for implementing the ideological-artistic idea.

The most systematic attempt at linguistic comprehension of the interior belongs to D. Musatova, the first in the philological community to devote a separate dissertation to the interior (1990). Her analysis raises and resolves the issue of two mutually interdependent levels of analysis – extra- and intralinguistic. In the first case, we are talking about the peculiarities of the interior description in English art literature, which require considerable background knowledge from the reader regarding the specific English features of the interior decor. In this way, the custom factor connects with the “vertical context” of the work, which is simultaneously associated with the intralinguistic element of interior “decoration”.

From the positions of linguists, prove D. Musatova, even a purely informative interior description becomes an essential means of image creation. At the same time, “even the most emotionally coloured interior contains a considerable amount of information, which allows placing the reader in a certain social context” (Musatova, 1990, c. 217). In linguistic measurements, she writes about the interior and N. Arutiunian. Equating the interior to the “second shell” of a person, she finds that it complements its “inner appearance” and becomes a material reflection not only of biological but also of spiritual life and can tell about a person more than a verbal characteristic of its behaviour and appearance

(Арутюнян, 2010, с. 8). The closed space of the room is filled with different things, causes in the story different feelings.

Often, the room image becomes a projection of the opposite nature of the hero, the inconsistencies between his external action and the inner essence. At the level of language means, it is expressed in the use of techniques of contrast, antithesis, and discharge (Арутюнян, 2010, с. 10). It proves that the interior is an integral part of the human life world that the artistic work always finds its subjective-author reflection and carries out specific aesthetic influence on the addressee (Арутюнян, 2010, с. 11). Unlike a portrait, the interior can serve as a background for creating a portrait, so it performs an additional background function.

Whatever the parameters of the interior, it always appears before the researcher as an integral part of human living space and always finds his subjective-author reflection in artistic discourse. While accepting the artistic text, a reader carries out a particular work on his as well, as a result of which, in his consciousness, a specific fragment of the general picture of the world is created – an integral part of artistic communication.

#### **1.4 The Notion of Multimodality in Various Fields of Study**

Recently a new field of research – multimodality stylistics – has appeared on the junction of stylistics and social semiotics. It focuses on the study of methods of the construction of values and the formation of the meaning in the frame not only verbal, but also audio, spatial, visual and other moduses (Murray, 2013). Thus the objects of the research of multimodality stylistics are many genres such as films, songs, theatrical performances, comics, and even a literary text.

##### **1.4.1 Background of Multimodal Studies**

The prerequisites for the appearance and installation of multimodality are analysed in detail by T. Van Leeuwen (2011). Although multimodality dates back to the 1920s, now, as researchers notice, it is in the “embryonic” stage of

development (Van Leeuwen, 2011). In the 1920s, psychologists began investigating the sensory system in general and the organs of hearing in particular. Speaking about the evolution of written means of literature, this is necessary to pay attention to the fact that the first works devoted to poetic graphics (Винокур, 1991; Томашевский, 1999), book design (use of fonts, the attraction of colours, decorative elements) (Реформатский, 1933), also dated between 1920 and 1930. In 1930–1940, the representatives of the Prague Linguistic Centre paid attention to the non-verbal components of visual and theatrical art. Some researchers viewed the theatre as a polycode environment, where all components matter, ranging from scenery to stage to ending the actors' clothing and stage play.

Already then, scientists noted that these components are the semiotic resources that generate meaning and, at the same time, act as new sources that have semantic value (Макарук, 2021, с. 306). In the 1960s, P. P. Pazolini noted that any symbolic system is reflected in a particular dictionary. The function of the person who perceives the sign in this situation is to choose the appropriate character units from the dictionary. Unfortunately, there is no single dictionary for a person who has a deal with an image. All the symbols are not organized in the dictionary and, in the process of communication, should be a public extension (Пазолини, 1984, с. 45). The researcher raises a significant issue, which in modern studios is a similar concept of multimodal literacy in general and multimodal perceptual in particular. The perception and reading of a complicated semiotic text is a complex problem that modern scientists actively study and substantiate.

More detailed analysis of incorrect resources as decorative elements of the periodicals and as components of various and different texts received in 1960–the 1980s. In 1960 structuralists used linguistic concepts during the analysis of non-linguistic moduses in art and mass media. The work of R. Barthes “Image. Music. Text” (1977) was a crucial event in the research of non-verbal means. He analysed the pictures in detail and noted that they not only illustrated reality but also transmitted abstract ideas that form in the consciousness of the indicators some ideas about the environment turn into concepts.

It is worth giving due to R. Barthes (1989) also because he first discovered three types of relationships and interdependency of a text and a picture, separated those in which pictures and text complement each other; the text plays a leading role, it depends on the meaning of the picture, precisely due to verbal text addition of the value of the picture more accurate; and texts in which the predominant image, on which actually depends the verbal component. R. Barthes highlighted the peculiarities of analysis of different moduses, noting that on television, in the cinema, and advertising value of signs depends on the interaction of image, sound, and type of drawing (Barthes, 1977). The researcher also noted that the site order is significant only when duplicated or rebroadcasted (Bartes, 1977, p. 114).

#### **1.4.2 Modern Stage of Multimodal Studies**

Multimodality as a separate phenomenon did not attract much attention from scientists till the end of the 20th century, but all practice of communication and writing of artworks (artistic texts, pictures, music, films) has always been multimodal (Kress, 2010, p. 79). Gunther Kress defines multimodality as a communication process involving different modules (letters, verbal language, gestures, visual images, and others). According to him, modus is a communication channel, a culturally recognizable way of transferring information from one interlocutor to another (Kress, 2010, p. 114).

K. O'Halloran believes that multimodality expands the limits of the language, increasing its possibilities due to other resources: images, symbols used in scientific searches, gestures, music, and sounds. The study of the phenomenon of multimodality is based on printed materials, video recordings, websites, three-dimensional images, and daily situations due to a combination of semiotic-resource modules and modalities (O'Halloran, 2011, p. 120). F. Serafini and J. Clausen from Arizona State University are concerned that printed texts are multimodal because they include images, various graphic design elements, and writing tools (2012).

K. O'Halloran and B. Smith, analysing the work of scientists devoted to problems of multimodality, also think that multimodality is multifaceted. Hence, both printed texts and video recordings with writing and verbal language elements are multimodal (2011).

W. R. Deborah highlights the specifics of the multimodality index analysis in detail. There are gestures, movements of the head, proxemics, looks, spatial placement of objects, ways of their placement, printed and other text materials and ways of their representation, and images in its focus (Deborah, 2012, pp. 4–5). Considering the concept of multimodality, A. Gibbon believes that this is a daily reality. It is our life experience; it is multimodal because we perceive the surrounding reality with the help of sounds and moves. Even the simplest conversation covers language means, gestures, intonation, and others (Gibbons, 2012, p. 8). C. Jewitt argues that multimodality refers not only to the language and verbal means of expression but also to a whole range of other forms that people use: images, views, attitudes, and relationships (Jewitt, 2009, p. 14).

C. Jewitt, J. Bezemer, and K. O'Halloran defined multimodality in a broad understanding: people use a large set of resources (look, speech, gestures) to produce something; in a narrow sense, people use several resources in specific cases to produce complete multimodal constructs (Jewitt, Bezemer, O'Halloran, 2016, p. 158).

T. Van Leeuwen, analysing the concept of multimodality in detail and comparing different ages of its development, notes that recently linguists, who use this term, have expanded it and under it understand the integrated use of communicative resources such as language, images, sound, and music in multimodal texts. Gradual work on this problem led researchers to realize that communication is multimodal; that spoken language cannot be understood without taking into account the non-verbal component; that many forms of modern writing are also challenging to understand if images, text placement, typographical features, and colour are not taken into account. Approximately in the last twenty years, this has resulted in the development of multimodality as a field of research,

which examines both the usual and distinctive properties of different modules, how they are integrated into multimodal texts and communicative situations (Van Leeuwen, 2011, p. 668).

J. Bateman, analysing text and images within the limits of multimodality, believes that in its focus, there are different imaging moduses and their combinations (Bateman, 2014, p. 6). On the other hand, G. Kress emphasizes writing arrangement, image, and colour (Kress, 2010, p. 10).

As we can see from the definitions mentioned above and the views of modern researchers, the term can cover both the sphere of oral and written speech. It is also the coexistence of different resources, which are included in at least two systems used in communicative acts. When we speak about oral speech, we mean language means (as a separate system of signs) and accompanying characteristics. For example, there are voice options such as tone and pace. It also includes gestures, s, space and time characteristics, and tactile parameters – all that matters in the communication act. Besides writing resources, different images are used, the placement of items on a page, their size, text positioning, colour, fonts, and others.

### **1.4.3 Multimodality in Cinematic Discourse**

The sphere of multimodal linguistics includes various discursive formations – comics, films, theatrical productions, own artistic discourse in the complex of its verbal graphic, polygraphic, including, for example, the design of cover and texture of paper, hypertext parameters (Пирс, 2000, с. 47).

Cinematic discourse is a semiotic system that has an iconic heterogeneity. The iconic system of this discourse is divided into linguistic and non-linguistic. Each group also shares icons, indexes, and symbols. C. Pirs proposed such classification within the logical concept, in which the relation of the sign to the object plays a differential role. Icons are signs whose attitude to the object is based on the identities of specific characteristics of this object, the relation to the object of signs-indexes is characterized by correspondence of facts; symbols have the character of the attribute (Пирс, 2000, с. 57-60). The verbal component of the



cinematic discourse is symbols that can be written (titles, inscriptions, posters) and verbal (voices of actors, behind-the-scenes voices, melodies) (Слышкин & Ефремова, 2004, с. 18). There are few language indexes and iconic signs, but they are all used in cinema. Among the connoisseur of natural language, there are intonation, exclamations, and shifters (Мечковская, 2004, с. 140).

The non-verbal component of the cinematic course includes icons and index marks, which can also be visual and audible. The sound part (all that creates an atmosphere of cinema pictures, for example, music and sounds of nature) and documentary footage, which also takes place in the film, refer to index marks. The visual part is represented by a video, which includes the central figures that perform certain actions, move, and gesture (Слышкин & Ефремова, 2004, с. 19). Also, in the cinema, there are signs-symbols which have acquired symbolic character during the development of the cinema (a calendar – a symbol of time and others) (Зайченко, 2011)

The cinematic course is a synthesis of two symbolic systems. Such inhomogeneity of the iconic systems was also characteristic of the silent movie, which was characterized by subtitles and verbal support of special commentators (Мечковская, 2004). Also, the movie used gestures and mimics of a hero that expressed emotions nonverbally. With the appearance of sound, movies have never been as we see them now because of the lack of coherence between picture and sound. In more modern films, verbal and non-verbal components have the same meaning: the text carries an image, and the image turns into text (Метц, 1993/1994).

The cinematic course can also be characterized by its functions as a semiotic system. This discourse is responsible for the transfer of relevant information, the transfer of experience, participation in developing new knowledge, and performing regulatory, ethical, and metalinguistic functions. Particular attention should be paid to the aesthetic function associated with “the message for the message itself”, that is, how the content is expressed and not the content plays a significant role. The aesthetic component is shown in the emotional and sensual estimation of the

message from the point of view of its “beauty”. The most substantial aesthetic experience people feel when watching movies or watching the picture (Мечковская, 2004, с. 231).

So, speaking about multimodality in linguistics, this is quite a new research direction. In a narrow sense, the competence of multimedia linguistics includes stylistic analysis of ways of designing meaning and creating meaning with verbal and other seven-code codes – visual, audio, and others, which are the only whole. In such a meaning, any text can be multimodal. In a broad sense of words, one can talk about hidden or built-in multimedia of video overdraft text in its accented character.

### **1.5 Historical Perspective on the Image of a Woman in Fiction**

Women are unique figures, delightful and brilliant. Therefore, it is not surprising that women are examined from different perspectives in many literary works. Research of women in literature for the first time begins to rise together with gender issues.

The problem of forming the spatial existence of women in the European culture is best represented by the repressive factors of the patriarchal society of the Victorian era. It was at this time that an understanding of the limited private space of women and ways to overcome these forced limitations were formed (Откович, 2010, с. 9).

Earlier in history, women did not have the same rights as men. The situation is much better now, but it is only in some places. However, we know about Cleopatra, Queen Victoria, Catherine II, and Margaret Thatcher. Each of them, as well as the other women who managed to reach the top of the board, became a legend because they were an exception to the general and universal rule: women do not have a place in government. Nevertheless, even without legal power, women often had an actual one, carried out through a man, for example, when they became regents with underage heirs.

It was difficult for women to tell about themselves, their wishes, and their fears with her help. Instead of them, these were done by men-writers. The absence of women's voices in literature until the middle of the 19th century resulted from the government's attitude toward them. Women could not share their experiences regarding the unfair distribution of power in a patriarchal society and their desire to correct this situation. Nevertheless, men, for whom the opportunity to gain greatness and power in wars, various competitions, or through personal qualities was much more natural and closer, could tell and write a lot.

Among literary works, readers can seldom see images of female government representatives; male ones significantly prevailed. The matter is that in our history, there were many more male government representatives who also became prototypes in literature. For instance, in the dystopian novel by George Orwell "1984" Big Brother was a man, perhaps an allusion to Stalin. Therefore, it is not surprising that he had a man's face on the posters — totalitarian regimes did not know female leaders.

There are still a great number of literary texts about powerful men. In each of them, a woman is conquered, unremarkable, removed from the creation of history, and serves a strong man. The peak in the image of the problem of women's lack of power was the dystopia of Margaret Atwood's "The Handmaid's Tale". The world of this novel is the militaristic theocracy of Gilead, which lives on the freely interpreted attributes of the Old Testament. Here women spend all their time, in the best case, in the garden and doing needlework. Women are oppressed economically – they do not have property and have material dependence on men. Also, socially – men make all vital decisions for them, intellectually because reading is prohibited, and biologically since appropriate reproductive services must give to their children to the families of possible commanders).

English writer Virginia Woolf was one of the first who analyses the situation of a woman writer and a woman character in society (Откович, 2010, с. 10). Her own body, family, bedroom, but not a working room – this is the limit of the spatial stay of a female. The woman, according to researchers, is associated with a

closed space, deprived of the presence of people, with something hostile, unpleasant, and aggressive to her, in the cultural space of the XIX century is imagined as being closed in a room (Kelley et al., 2003, p. 444).

Portrait description is the dominant property during the creation of female images by many authors. Therefore, they pay great attention to the portrait description: for example, to such details as eyes, lips, hands, skin, and body in general.

In the relationship between women and men, authors often show stereotypes in the worldview associated with gender inequality, as seen from the laws of nature itself. The woman is part of the man, his natural environment. The woman exhibits excellent knowledge of male psychology, has a talent for understanding men more than they understand themselves, and is a source of inspiration for men.

### **Conclusions to Chapter One**

1. The concept of the image has been studied for many centuries. Each stage had its peculiarities of image construal. As a result, there are some classifications of the image where they are handled according to a historical era, ideological-artistic direction or style, philosophy, and the subject of the image. Also, images are divided according to visual and concrete-sensual perception and creation, the degree of socio-historical significance, and the level of normative-value orientations.

2. There are three ways to study the image: lexicological, stylistic, and with the help of cognitive poetry. Lexicological one shows the revealing nature of an image as a linguistic category, a phenomenon inherent to the word. Stylistic one demonstrates the image in a case when functioning in a specific context, and acquires an additional sense, broader meaning, and becomes a mean of language image. Finally, cognitive poetry describes creating a verbal image, a specific reflection of the objective world in a language consciousness.

3. The image consists of many factors, including name, artistic detail, speech, interior, and evaluation statements. A name is the best description of

characters and a key to their world, having some information or even crucial facts about a character. Characters can get their names due to their native land or another person, in honour of someone, inspired by some old languages, or even as the result of a word combination. Talking about artistic details are architectural details or elements of clothing. They also indicate some particular features and characters' place in society. Character's speech points to the belonging of a character to one or another group and serves as a means by which it is possible to show who the character of creation is. Evaluation statements from book heroes or a narrator are sources of evaluation statements in a text. From this point of view, a reader can understand a lot about a book's characters, situations, and atmosphere. Finally, the interior always appears before the researcher as an integral part of human living space and consists of many things that reflect a character.

4. A text and its screen adaptation can be analysed through the prism of multimodality. It is a new field of study and dates back to the 1920s. Then, researchers paid attention to the non-verbal components of visual and theatrical art and the peculiarities of analysis of different moduses, noting that on television, in the cinema, and advertising, the value of signs depends on the interaction of image and sound. Now multimodality deals with images, symbols used in scientific searches, gestures, look, speech, music, sounds, music, and others, especially in cinematic discourse.

5. As for women from a historical perspective, women were described as housekeepers for many years, while men were represented as those with power. That is why the theme of gender inequality is often approached in the 20th and 21st centuries. In addition, feminists are often depicted in writing as women who try to restore historical justice because earlier women were forbidden to write and publish books in general.

## **CHAPTER TWO. STYLISTIC SPECIFICITY OF WOMAN IMAGE CONSTRUAL IN “THE HANDMAID’S TALE”**

### **2.1 Genre Characteristics of “The Handmaid’s Tale”**

For a long time, men were more important in society than women. Only men could rule a country, vote, and even get an education, unlike women, and it had been so for centuries. Even now, in many countries, we observe this tendency in a significant part of the world. However, now women mostly have all these rights but are suppressed in other ways. For example, almost all over the world, there are rallies and demonstrations for women’s rights, especially regarding the right to abortion.

Inspired by political views and attitudes toward women in some countries, Margaret Atwood, a Canadian writer, wrote and published a book named “The Handmaid’s Tale” in 1985. This novel has become the background to a feminist manifest worldwide. The book turned the attention of American producers and directors and was adapted as a TV series. Literature experts define the novel as a feminist dystopia. It is now the genre to which modern readers pay attention, and gender issues have recently become popular worldwide.

Dystopia is that popular genre to which the high literature has always been favoured, and also 1980-s have been marked by a wave of feminism, which has just mentioned women’s reproductive health, plus demographic and social crises.

The story is in the first person. The main hero is Offred, who was once called June. However, now she is owned by the Commander in the name of Fred. She belongs to the “caste” of the Handmaids, as a reader can see from the name.

White hat and red cloak are a uniform that should emphasize the subordinate position of the Handmaids. This image has been firmly entrenched in people’s imagination for three decades. It appeared on the cover of the novel, the posters for the film 1990, and the commercials of the 2017 series. It is also used by real women who, in costumes of the Handmaids, take part in marches for their rights.

This image, first of all, is associated with the main character and storyteller of the novel.

Behind the window – the territory of the USA after a coup d'état and an abolition of the Constitution, which now has the name Gilead. It is a dictatorship with signs of religious fundamentalism, such as a theocracy like modern Iran, but instead of Islam, people are forced to obey the requirements of Christian texts. There is an opinion that the Christian religion is one of the most bloody in the world: we can recall at least the Crusades and the Inquisition.

Gilead, as the state's official policy, uses the sacred texts' passages as a basis. Because of the birth crisis caused by artificial and environmental disasters, most women became sterile. However, men also suffer from this problem, but officially they are capable of conception; the matter is only in women. For this purpose, the local government creates the caste of the Handmaids, fertile women, mostly non-married or in the second/civil marriage, provided for the use of the families of the higher castes – the Commanders, the first persons of the newly created state, and their wives. She should give birth to a child for a certain period and then go to another family. In the case of unsuccessful three attempts, she is punished by the transition to the cast of the Unwomen – the worst social group, engaged in all dirty work – from farming to radioactive waste disposal or falling into the colony.

Gilead has a branched social structure among women. In addition to the Handmaids, the Wives, and the Unwomen, there are the Marthas – domestic servants, and the Econowives – wives of poorer men. June, who has a child and is the second wife of her husband, gets into the category of the Handmaids. In general, we see the world of Gilead through the prism of its perception.

This system is a fertile ground for the development of misogyny among women. One social group of women feels hatred, envy, or disrespect for another. Women control women, severely punishing them for disobedience if they have power. The author skilfully shows that in such conditions, not only women are depressed, but also supposedly privileged men of all social states. Another idea of

the novel, which is read between the lines, is that even in absolute disorder, it is possible to fight, and more intensive it is, more coherently both women among themselves and women together with men work.

In the world of Gilead, there is one such important point: in the text, there is no element that would not have been tried in human history; there is no fantastical element. Each episode of the novel was a reference to the social and political events of the early 1980-s when Atwood worked on the novel. After the publication of the novel in 1985, visiting every interview, she brought here newspaper clippings that were a living illustration of the truthfulness of the events depicted in her work (Armstrong, 2018, para. 4). That is why the novel creates a strange feeling of the present moment, which is preserved in the following adaptations of the work.

The novel reflected conservative changes in American society after Ronald Reagan became President of the USA. The Christian right and influential lobbyist organizations “Moral Majority”, “Focus on the Family”, and “Christian Coalition” have gained significant power in the country (Armstrong, 2018, para. 4). It is at this time that the active spread of religious ideas through television – televangelism.

Christianity was preached through the television screen by one of the novel’s main characters, the wife of Commander Serena Joy. But her ardent religious views lead to the fact that her role now, as well as all other women in Gilead, is limited by her home.

In the US in the 1980-s struggle against abortion began – propagandistic videos like “The silent cry”, attacks on clinics where the operation was conducted, and a draft law giving an unborn child civil rights.

The image of Offred is a product of the feminism of the 1970 years. She finds herself in an imaginary situation, which is a direct consequence of the oppression of women’s rights that began in 1980. There are thoughts of a professor of English and Literature, Shirley Neuman (2006, p. 860), in an article published in the University of Toronto magazine in 2006.



In “The Handmaid’s Tale”, readers usually see feminist warnings and criticism of the sexism of the Book of Genesis. However, some of what Atwood describes is based on other historical events.

As was noted by the writer, the story of the novel is partly referred to the policy of increasing the birth rate in Romania, which was conducted by Ceausescu (Ourkiya, 2019, para. 8). Its consequences were the ban on abortion and family planning, as well as police surveillance of pregnant women. It is also a mention of the military-police regime of Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines, for which all this who disagreed were executed. However, Margaret Atwood said that it was not only in these countries “but within Western society, and within the “Christian” tradition itself” (Atwood, 2012, para. 11).

The idea of “giving” children of lower classes to the families of the elite comes from Argentina. Since 1976, when the government was captured by the military junta, about five hundred children disappeared into the country and later found themselves in the families of elected leaders.

Nevertheless, of course, the novel’s main point is the puritanism of American society in the 1980-s, which Atwood compares with the society of the first settlers in New England in the XVII century.

Radical forms of government never appear in an empty place: the Soviet KGB, for example, appeared in the place of the secret royal police and so on, – wrote Margaret Atwood in *The Guardian* (2012, para. 8). In her opinion, the deep foundations of the American society were not achieved by Enlightenment for its reasons of equality and separation of the state from the church, but the strict theocracy of the puritan New England of the XVII century with the biased attitude toward women.

Moreover, we can draw more parallels between the real world and the novel:

- Dark-skinned enslaved people were given the names of their owners; the Russian serfs were given the names of their owners too.
- Disciplinary structures, in which women lead women, subordinate to men – from monasteries to mental institutions.

- Political criminals work on production, which is fatal to health – GULAG.
- Light-skinned colonizers stole aborigines' children to bring them up in “the right way” – it is a part of the history of indigenous people.
- Public executions with the participation of all members of the community.
- The country in the novel has a closed regime, which allows tourists and diplomats to show only those places and things that are profitable to its government – does not this sound like today's North Korea?

So, the fate of women in the novel and all the events is based on real-life; nothing is fictional.

Why did people psychologically change and adjust to new laws? First, there is the Stanford experiment. It was held just at the time of publication of this novel and was then on everyone's lips. A group of young people was taken; some participants were appointed prisoners, others – as security guards. In less than two weeks, they began to act as real prisoners and guards (Wikipedia). Gilead educates its citizens correctly and at least gives the maximum result.

## **2.2 Stylistic Aspects of Woman Image Construal**

The novel has six main casts of women: Handmaids, Wives, Aunts, Marthas, Econowives, and Unwomen. Each caste of women is unlike another because it has its peculiarities, particular names, and clothes. Also, they differ in their place of living and features of speech. Moreover, readers can learn a lot from evaluation opinions from the meeting, which at the same time is the main hero of the work. All these aspects are the image of a woman.

### **2.2.1 Specifics of Women's Names**

Many literary critics believe that one of the reasons for the phenomenal success of the novel, which was written more than thirty years ago and is very popular today, is the characters' chosen names. In the text, every woman's cast tends to have a particular type of name. Every name is chosen because of specific factors and has its functions and meaning.

The Handmaids do not have the right to use their birth names. They reminded their previous life when they had a voice in society and an opportunity to do everything they wanted. In Gilead, there are other rules that cannot be allowed. Therefore, the names are entirely changed and sound according to the owner's name. For example, if a Handmaid belongs to Commander Fred, her name is Offred, which means property of Fred. Also, there are Ofglen, Ofwaren, Ofwayne etc. Here it uses antonomasia, so the owners' names are transferred to the Handmaids. Some different factors can cause this:

- In Slavonic tradition, all people have the second name of a man, his or her father.
- In most countries, a woman takes the surname of her husband.
- Sometimes, enslaved people's names consisted of their owners' ones, for instance, in Ancient Rome.

Besides, the name of the main character and the narrator – Offred – may be a kind of pun: there is a similar word, “offered”, that means signifying a religious sacrifice. She had to be sacrificed to crazy totalitarian ideas. Furthermore, this name may mean “of red”, which is a red color attached to the Handmaids. The most common expression of belonging in English is by possessive nouns with the apostrophe s, but Atwood expresses a preposition “of”. This approach particularly highlights the status of the Handmaids.

The situation is better with the names of the Wives. In public, they are called by their last names, more precisely, by their husbands' last names, for example, Mrs. Waterford. Nevertheless, she has the right to be named by her, as it seems first, real name – Serena Joy. This name has Latin origin – “serēnus” and means “clear, tranquil”. The blue colour of clothes also means “clear”. Indeed, this woman cannot have children, so she is sterile, “clear”. “Joy” can be an example of antonomasia because this word means “happiness” and “pleasure”.

Nevertheless, it is a kind of oxymoron: Serena is a pretty gloomy woman. “*Her real name was Pam*” (Atwood, 1985, p. 34), – says the narrator. The name “Serena Joy” is probably chosen to be more appropriate to a singer, as she

was earlier. “Pam” is too simple. In social networks, there is a thought that she is “a siren without the voice”. There can be some parallels – between Serena and siren. She wanted to be heard, but she is voiceless now. Once, she was a singer. *“She wasn’t singing anymore by then, she was making speeches”* (Atwood, 1985, p. 34). Now she is a hostage to the regime and the rules that she took part in their creation.

The caste of the housekeepers of the Commanders’ families is called “Marthas”. There is also an explanation because this name is not simple. Margaret Atwood expresses this name through allusion. The name “Martha” is exactly a direct one to Martha, a biblical character from the Gospels of Luke and John, a sister of Lazar and Mary of Bethany. Its name has an Aramaic origin (מרתא – Martā) and means “mistress” or “lady (Wikipedia). Mistress means not only “lady” or “lover”, but also “hostess”. Indeed, Martha is a domestic servant in a Commander’s family. In the Gospel of Luke, Martha was a kind woman who welcomed Jesus in her house, was a real hostess, and did all household chores (BibleGate, 10.38). Therefore, the cast is named “Marthas”. However, these women can use their names, such as Rita and Cora.

Also, there are Aunts. They are named Aunt Lydia, Aunt Helena, and Aunt Elizabeth. As it can be seen, they do not use their full names, but at least have the right to save their first names. At first glance, they have run-of-the-mill names. However, some have a connection with the beauty industry: Aunt Lydia – Lydia Sarfati, Aunt Helena – Helena Rubinstein, and Aunt Elizabeth – Elizabeth Arden. For instance, Lydia Sarfati was the guru of natural purification and rehabilitation in the 1980s. Ritual purity is the parish of Aunt Lydia, for sure. They are the woman who made a sensation in the beauty sphere. So, these names are chosen to sound peaceful and cause women’s favour. However, this is sarcastic because the Aunts are like nightmares for the Handmaids.

One more cast has the name “Econowives”. The name of this cast is a blend of the words “economy” and “wife”. Also, in the novel, there are Unwomen. The prefix “un” means “not”, so its name has a direct definition that there are no

women. In other words, the rulers of Gilead defined the word “woman”, which went away with a modern vision. The use of the previously mentioned concept was caused by fear of words: whore, lesbian, and abortion. That is why the commanders used such a specific classification. It was pretty standard in Gilead, which is a sort of manipulation of the Commanders and attempts of the rulers of the Republic to intimidate and control the inhabitants. Euphemisms replace vulgarisms or unwanted vocabulary that can be interpreted differently. Generally, euphemisms testify to a frightened society, which cannot call things their names and therefore manages to use euphemisms, which mainly change the meaning of the word and the association it causes.

The names indicate social status in society and have peculiarities of their origin. Such an interesting approach to choosing names has made the novel unique and its characters memorable to readers. The name gives much information about the character and has a hidden sense and history. That is why the choice of names in the text is incredibly successful.

### **2.2.2 Artistic Detail as Part of Woman’s Image**

Speaking about a woman’s image construal, quite an essential component of it is an artistic detail. Mainly because all the women cast in Gilead have their dress code, the details of these clothes have particular meanings.

The artistic details that characterize the Handmaids are total red clothes with white wings. The clothes cover their bodies so that nobody can see their body forms. They are only shapes, according to the narrator – “*A shape, red with white wings around the face, a shape like mine, a nondescript woman in red carrying a basket...*” (Atwood, 1985, p. 16). This metaphor means that the Handmaids are like shadows. They are shapes devoid of femininity and all they had earlier. As proof, there is another statement: “*The skirt is ankle-length, full, gathered to a flat yoke that extends over the breasts, the sleeves are full*” (Atwood, 1985, p. 8). The Handmaids in Gilead cannot be a source of temptation. Thus they are like Muslim women – in clothed clothes.

The red colour of their dresses is not chosen randomly. “*A Sister, dipped in blood*” (Atwood, 1985, p. 8), said the main character. This metaphor does not mean that she is immersed in blood, but it is about her outfit – a total red dress and cloak (and white wings when the Handmaid goes outside) (Picture 2.1). “*Everything except the wings around my face is red: the colour of blood, which defines us*” (Atwood, 1985, p. 8). The red colour and the blood here have the same semantic meaning. Furthermore, thus, colour is chosen not casually. It not only shows to which cast of society she belongs but also means fertility. Historically the “red” has a Sanskrit origin: “rudhirā” is translated as “blood” (Mishchuk, 2022, p. 343). Because of this metaphor of blood, it was significant to create a specific hue of red, said Ane Crabtree, a costume designer of the screen adaptation. She said that this colour symbolized a womb, a fertile woman. Therefore, it was essential to choose the most appropriate shade of it to contrast grey Gilead and the Handmaids (Vanity Fair, 2017, para. 11). As we can identify blood on different surfaces in such a way, citizens can distinguish the Handmaids. The bloody-red outfits of the latter contrast with the grey streets of Gilead.



Picture 2.1



Furthermore, such object as wings is also not accidental. *“The white wings too are prescribed issue; they are to keep us from seeing, but also from being seen”* (Atwood, 1985, p. 8), said Offred. Every Handmade is intended for a Commander; thus, there is no need for someone to see her face.

Speaking about the Wives, they are always associated with blue clothes. *“It’s light blue, the colour for Wives”* (Atwood, 1985, p. 162). They have blue dresses, coats, gloves, veils, and umbrellas. Blue colour, long time related to the noble origin of aristocracy, “blue blood,” and becomes the main sign of the image of Serena Joy, the Wife (Picture 2.2).



Picture 2.2

Her blue bathrobe, accessories, “blue waist,” and even blue smoke cigarettes promote the image of a once-refined but now tired and untired woman who cannot have children and has to suffer in her own home, another who should give her the first coat. In Christian tradition, it is a colour of holiness, and it was Serena. Even before the appearance of Gilead, she had Christian broadcasts on television and sang religious songs.

Blue also means water. Water – clear, pure. The Wives are mostly sterile. During the Renaissance, many works had such colour scheme: blue = Virgin Mary, red = Mary Magdalene (Vanity Fair, 2017, para. 4). Also, purity may be the reference to the Puritans when a woman had no more rights than women in the text. Besides, this colour is associated with loyalty, honesty, consistency, and chastity. In addition, the blue colour is cold, so the dress wives testify their cold blood and indifference to other women. Also, there is an opinion that their dresses are a kind of blue ribbon, an award for winners who not only won first place but also got power (Тимейчук, 2013, с. 267). In the screen adaptation, the Wives' clothes are not light blue but more turquoise. In the series production, designers must demonstrate all their creativity, so in one season, Serena appears in clothes of a different shade of blue. After her changes, she has suits that resemble the images of Jackie Kennedy and Grace Kelly – solid and free women, says Natalie Bronfman, a designer of the last seasons of the series (Zelmer, 2019, para. 4).

Aunts wear brown outfits (Picture 2.3). In the American Indians, brown colour meant self-discipline and order, which is the main feature of the Aunt.



Picture 2.3



However, the brown colour was the main in the form of the Nazis and Hitler's regime during the Second World War. Probably, that is why the Nazis were called "brown plague" because the brown colour associated with diseases, and therefore got a negative subtext. On the other hand, this colour also evokes feelings of strength and peace because it is the colour of the earth. That is why people dressed in this colour are considered reliable and rational. It is not strange that Margaret Atwood's choice stopped on this colour because the Commanders in Gilead would see the Aunts precisely the same. They must possess their own emotions and teach the Handmaids to strive for harmony with the world's obedience. In addition, they have such accessories as "*electric cattle prods slung on thongs from their leather belts*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 5). Their image is thought out to the last detail and indicates all this strictness and even cruelty.



Picture 2.4

Martha's clothes are not remarkable. "*Some in the dull green of the Marthas*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 20). They wear dull-green aprons and dresses resembling the clothes of surgeons (Picture 2.4), the uniform that allows them to

move freely and do all the housework. This color does not attract attention because nobody cares about Marthas. *“The dress is much like mine in shape, long and concealing, but with a bib apron over it and without the white wings and the veil”* (Atwood, 1985, p. 9). Dull green is used in the military uniform to make the army members almost imperceptible. The same thing is with these women: they try not to cause trouble to their hosts and be invisible, remaining in the shadows.

As for Econowives, they have *“the striped dresses, red and blue and green and cheap and skimpy, that mark the women of the poorer men”* (Atwood, 1985, p. 20). In Gilead, these women are considered to be the most unhappy. This segment of society includes the wives of minor officials who are obliged to do household, cook, give birth to children, and satisfy a husband. *“Their striped dresses are worn-looking, as are their faces”* (Atwood, 1985, p. 33). Stripes are often a feature of prisoners’ clothes; they are cheap and low quality.

Unwomen’s clothes are not mentioned in the text. However, in the series, they wore the same clothes as low-grade workers at a factory in a totalitarian country. The grey colour is inconspicuous and does not contrast with the equally grey streets of Gilead. There is a great solution to make women “invisible”.



Picture 2.5

A minimum number of words is required for the existence of Gilead. Therefore, people cannot speak, speak, signal, or induce action. To “try” a different role, it is enough only to put on a “different” colour of clothes: No one doubts that a woman in the brown cloak is an Aunt, and a woman in the blue cannot be anything but a Wife. The word is too valuable to be spent on clarification and explanation — that is why the colour of clothes becomes a sufficient basis for all other rituals and forms of behaviour between people.

### **2.2.3 Stylistic Peculiarities of Women’s Speech**

A reader can understand women’s character and attitude toward others through the prism of speech. Every woman in the novel is unique, as shown in her speech. Thanks to the dialogues, we understand that broadcasting in Gilead was one of the means of suppressing the inhabitants, trying to keep their actions and conversations under control. So we follow their attitude toward each other, notice stereotypical thinking, vulnerability, and emotionality.

Because of the repetition of certain words, clichés, and other language units, the author reaches the truth, making the heroes feed the system and become part of it. Margaret Atwood finds substitutes to the words of everyday life like “Hello”, “good morning”, or “thank you”. This element forms ideology, forcing the inhabitants to repeat these cells repeatedly. In particular, instead of “hello,” heroes use a specific lexicon: “*Blessed be the fruit.*” ... “*May the Lord open*” (Atwood, 1985, p. 16). Such greetings, which the inhabitants of Gilead used, had great power. They declared their dependence on the system because it controlled and determined their broadcasting, making them self-made. The words and greetings were often borrowed from biblical texts. Such borrowing from the Bible met the statutes of Gilead because women’s primary goal was to get pregnant and give birth to a healthy child.

These greetings were used to bind a conversation with no emotion. Thus, the heroes keep their distance, and such greetings make it impossible to establish contact. This alienation helped the author create an atmosphere of fear and

alienation: *"We've been sent good weather." "Which I receive with joy."* (Atwood, 1985, p. 16). Margaret Atwood is quite successful in using such a technique because he understands the psychology and motives of the residents of Gilead.

The greetings used in the past meant disharmony, rebellion, or implacable spirit. "Welcome" was a sign for others, such as in the situation with Janine: *"Hi there," ... "How are you doing?" ... "Janine," I say. But she's let go, totally now, she's in free fall, she's in withdrawal"* (Atwood, 1985, p. 195). The rejection of ideology and freedom illustrates this example only with one greeting.

The narrator and, simultaneously, the main character, Offred, tell the story, recording it to the tape. Thus almost all of her text may be considered to be her speech. Her narrative is detached and emotionless, despite the horrors she is witnessing. Without fear or trembling, she describes the corpses of the executed hanging on the walls: *"We stop, together as if on signal, and stand and look at the bodies. It doesn't matter if we look. We're supposed to look: this is what they are for, hanging on the Wall. Sometimes they're gonna be days, until there's a new batch, so as many people as possible will have the chance to see them"* (Atwood, 1985, p. 26). This calm attitude helps the heroine not to go mad with fear and horror of what is happening. In psychology, such distance from events that usually cause fear is an act of psychological protection.

The Wives behave arrogantly because they feel their power over others. Therefore, they consider themselves to be righteous women. A reader can see it in the language they use. For instance, in the series, Commanders' Wives use the demonstrative pronoun "this" instead of the servant's name or do not completely ignore their presence in the room. In this way, they demonstrate their power and importance in the house. However, they do not have such advantages; they depend on their husbands.

"The main" Wife in the novel, Serena Joy, is an intelligent and educated author of several books. Margaret Atwood proves her education with dialogues showing Serena's exquisite literary language. However, she remains silent and

rarely speaks, leaving each other with herself. Moreover, the inability to give birth to a baby has made her fanatic and violent, unable to analyse their actions. For example, we understand the degree of cynicism of the Commander's wife, Serena Joy, when she asks Offred to try to get pregnant by another man. She gives her a photo of her daughter: *"A picture," she says, as if offering me some juvenile treat, an ice cream, a trip to the zoo. I look up at her again, puzzled. "Of her," she says. "Your little girl. But only maybe"* (Atwood, 1984, p. 143). That is, Serena cynically uses what he knows about the daughter of Offred in order to reach her own goals.

Speaking about Marthas' speech, readers can understand that they do not like the Handmaids. *"Nobody asking you, Cora said. Anyways, what could you do, supposing? Go to the Colonies, Rita said. They have the choice. With the Unwomen, and starve to death and Lord knows what all?- said Cora. Catch you"* (Atwood, 1985, p. 9). The attitude of Rita to Offred is traced in dialogues and instead in their absence, which symbolizes unwillingness to establish contacts and hatred for "unworthy women". The absence of emotionally coloured words means being rejected and followed by distance from other people; using gestures instead of the dialogue shows disrespect for the interlocutor. Rita tried to stay aloof, without paying attention to the events next to it, as if they did not concern about it. Rita often ignores the presence of the Handmaid in the house and does not care for her words and deeds. In general, the language of Marthas was not expressive or eloquent; they used templates for everyday communication.

These peculiarities show the presence of female misogyny in the dystopia because instead of understanding and having a kind attitude to June, which also appears in such a situation, Rita condemns her. She also offends June when she does not hear. This phenomenon is reasonably up-to-date. Instead of supporting one another, women often hate and despise.

Speaking about Aunts, they are real chiefs. *"Think of it as being in the army, said Aunt Lydia"* (Atwood, 1985, p. 7). They promote totalitarian rules and do everything to ensure that the Handmaids obey. *"Aunt Lydia said it was best not to*

*“speak unless they asked you a direct question”* (Atwood, 1985, p. 12). Women in this social group are usually inexorable and cold-blooded. They are a fanatical supporter of this regime. It can be seen in their conversations: *“There is more than one kind of freedom, said Aunt Lydia. Freedom to and freedom from. In the days of anarchy, it was freedom to. Now you are being given freedom from. Don't underrate it”* (Atwood, 1985, p. 20). They believe that the Gilead regime is salvation; they are faithful to him. They also are the group of women with the most rights and power among women. Also, the Aunts had to teach the Handmaids the rules that the future would help them to give birth to a healthy child: *“You have to get your vitamins and minerals, said Aunt Lydia coyly. You must be a worthy vessel. No coffee or tea though, no alcohol. Studies have been done”* (Atwood, 1985, p. 48). Aunt Lidia used short and laconic sentences that contained only essential information. Such communication is characteristic of military men, who use words very carefully, try to maintain distance, and keep discipline. Using “you”, “you are a woman”, she points a clear distance between the Handmaids and her cast, as if not referring herself to women.

When speaking about the characters of “The Handmaid’s Tale” by Margaret Atwood, you can notice that the characters are significantly different from the typical characters of the dystopia. Since the main heroes were women and their speech was deprived of bright epithets and emotionally-coloured vocabulary, which is usually common to women. Most dialogues were neutral and suspended, filled with clichés, which, in turn, allowed considering female characters differently.

#### **2.2.4 Narrator as a Main Source of Evaluation Statements**

In the novel “The Handmaid’s Tale”, Offred (June) records her story on tape. She is an immediate participant in all events, so it is most appropriate to speak about it as the primary source of evaluation statements. From her point of view, the idea of the Gilead and its inhabitants is formed.

Offred has an ironic attitude to herself. She often compares herself using similes and metaphors: “... *like a distorted shadow, a parody of something, some fairy-tale figure in a red cloak...*” (Atwood, 1985, p. 8). She does not consider herself human, as she was in her previous life. Now she is only a shadow in this gloomy world. These thoughts show that the Handmaids are nobody; they exist, but only for one reason. Proof of this is the phrase of Mrs. Waterford: “*I want to see as little of you as possible*” (Miller et al., 2017, 1st episode). Thus the Handmaid must be quiet and “invisible”.

Through the motive of memory, the novel addresses the issue of corporeality and violence. Offred discusses his own body about self-knowledge, the importance of the body and reproductive function for the social role of women, and the perception of the body by society, comparing the conceptions of corporeality before and after the advent of a totalitarian power: “*My nakedness is strange to me already. My body seems outdated. Did I wear bathing suits, at the beach? I did, without thought, among men, without caring that my legs, my arms, my thighs and back were on display, could be seen. Shameful, immodest. ....*” (Atwood, 1985, p. 46)

She describes her partner, Ofglen, in such a way: “*She walks demurely, head down, red-gloved hands clasped in front*” and simile “*with short little steps like a trained pig’s, on its hind legs*” (Atwood, 1985, p. 16). The narrator considers her to be obedient and that have a fear of taking the wrong step.

June shows Commander Waterford’s Wife, Serena Joy, as a cold, distant woman. In the Handmaids, she sees only a means to achieve her goal, not trying to show women’s solidarity and share a common trauma or distress with the heroine: “*I wanted, then, to turn her into an older sister, a motherly figure, someone who would understand and protect me*” (Atwood, 1985, p. 13). Instead, the narrator shows her as a woman who falls into the trap of her lies and symbolizes the separation of a woman’s society. She hates Serena, but at the same time, she empathizes because she believes that the Wife of the Commander is an unhappy woman who cannot give birth to her husband: “*Partly I was jealous of*

her; but how could I be jealous of a woman so obviously dried-up and unhappy?" (Atwood, 1986, p. 111).

The narrator assesses Marthas as a kind of media because they transfer information from home to house, communicating with each other. Furthermore, they often used this information for their purposes, helping May Day agents: "*The Marthas know things, they talk among themselves, passing the unofficial news from house to house. Like me, they listen at doors, no doubt, and see things even with their eyes averted*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 10). This element shows the dedication and far-sightedness of Marthas because when they take responsibility, they have been trying to find out crucial information for agents, which in turn has contained reconnaissance elements.

According to the narrator, the Aunts, especially Aunt Lydia, are strict and unpleasant women. Aunt Lydia seems to be solid. However, June perceives her as a mentor. Although Aunt Lydia seems like a religious fanatic, she gives good pieces of advice that June often mentions: "*Not all of you will make it through. Some of you will fall on dry ground or thorns. Some of you are shallow-rooted*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 16). She looks like a negative character, but she is a strong-willed woman who wants to destroy Gilead, as readers can see in the next part of this story, "The Testaments".

So, readers perceive all information in the text from Offred's point of view. Readers' attitude to the characters is caused directly due to the attitude of the narrator because of her evaluation statements. That is why all the information and statements about other characters are subjectivized.

### **2.2.5 Interior as Representation of Woman Image**

As June spends the most time in his room, many of her thoughts are devoted to her place of stay. She has few activities, so in order to reduce time, she is investigating her room.

In the novel, the narrator describes the interior in detail. For example, her room: "*A chair, a table, a lamp. ... A window, two white curtains. Under the*



*window, a window seat with a little cushion. ... A bed. Single, mattress medium-hard, covered with a flocked white spread*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 7). That is, the room has nothing superfluous, a minimal set of furniture for life. It is ironic, but even her attic bedroom reminds her of the rules: "We set the table there, but you cannot write". As an enslaved person in the fictional nation of Gilead, Offred is bound by treacherous laws and a repressive system of social codes.

The room is almost empty. It is filled with some furniture, but still, there is nothing; the room has no soul. As well as the ministers, in which the soul is empty in the new life. Also, no single subject in the room can damage or shorten life. "*On the wall above the chair, a picture, framed but with no glass: a print of flowers, blue irises, watercolor*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 7); in other words, the potential suicide thoughts of such are also taken into account. Offred has such thoughts when she first appears here: "*There must have been a chandelier, once. They've removed anything you could tie a rope to*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 7). Moreover, the door here even does not have a locker: "*The door of the room — not my room, I refuse to say my — is not locked. In fact, it doesn't shut properly*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 8). So, there is nothing the Handmaids could hurt themselves with, so this is a political message about women's rights.

"*I saved the cupboard until the third day*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 37), said the main character. She knows he will spend a lot of time with her, so she divides the room into several parts. That day she finds a phrase: "*Nolite te bastardes carborundorum*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 37). It is a Latin phrase that means "Do not let the bastards grind you down". Also, the symbolic thing is that she has found it on the floor under the hat in the darkest place. People should always find the light in the dark. This phrase has become her life credo and the slogan of the struggle for independence.

At first, the main hero does not want to call this room his own: "... *I refuse to say my*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 8). Nevertheless, later, she says: "*Was he in my room? I called it mine. ... My room, then. There has to be some space, finally, that I claim as mine, even in this time*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 37). It shows that the

character is willing to have her home even in such a situation. She has reached the point where she cannot return to her previous life. Now her house is the one of Commander Waterford.

In the novel, the narrator mostly mentions her room, but there is some description of Serena's one. For example, June tells about "*the outsized colonial-style four-poster bed*", "*the white carpet, the sprigged curtains and skirted dressing table with its silver-backed brush and mirror set*" (Atwood, 1985, p. 66). As the Wife of an influential and wealthy person, Serena's room is like a royal one. After all, once only royal persons had such gorgeous beds with canopies, and white carpets, which are always associated with luxury and wealth. However, Serena is also rather unhappy, so her luxury room can symbolize what she is trying to fill and improve her condition by filling the interior.

Thus, the rooms and their interior are represented according to the status of women. The Wife's room is luxurious, and the minister lives in a room with a minimum furniture set. The interiors of Offred and Serena's rooms have an extraordinary contrast. In the same house, the bedroom of the Handmaid looks like a bedroom of a poor worker, but next to the bedroom of the Wife, which is filled with everything possible, with the royal scope. The furniture is expensive and high-quality. The house itself is in Victorian style, so the furniture also has such features, while the room of the Handmaid is simple and minimalist.

### **Conclusions to Chapter Two**

1. Thus, in the dystopian novel "The Handmaid's Tale", women's images are multifaceted and different. The author portrays women wholly or partly dependent on men who govern the new state and are concerned with the laws that violate them themselves. In the Republic of Gilead, all women, despite the external signs of supposed happiness, are depressed because they have removed the right to choice and freedom.

2. The author thought these images so thoroughly that even every name and name of the caste of the cast. Some names are created as an allusion to biblical

characters. There are also names composed of several parts. Each one has a specific meaning, carries essential information, and better opens the hero to readers.

3. Also, each caste of women is associated with such an artistic detail as clothes. With the help of clothes, it is possible to determine the social belonging of the character. Each colour is chosen not by chance, has a semantics value and reflects the essence of each caste. Historical events and personalities also are the reasons for choosing colours.

4. The women's speech also reflects each character and caste in general. Residents in the Gilead should speak according to specific patterns, short biblical phrases, and not show particular interest to other people. Women who have more rights can use more complex designs in communication. Therefore, speech is an indicator of the character and status of women in society.

5. Offred, the narrator, is the subject of evaluation statements in the text. Since the story is conducted on her behalf, these ones are heard mainly from her. This information is subjective. However, from the novel, readers understand that this woman is sufficiently educated and intelligent, so she knows well what is happening and who is who in the newly created country.

6. The interior is one of the components of the image of a woman. However, the room's interior is opened only by two characters – Offred and Serena. The room content reflects women's internal state, emotions, and role in society.

## **CHAPTER THREE. MULTIMODAL ASPECTS OF WOMAN IMAGE CONSTRUAL IN “THE HANDMAID’S TALE” AND ITS SCREEN ADAPTATION**

The screen provides for the transfer of written text to a multimodal environment, where sense-formation occurs due to language signs and other means. In the screen adaptation of “The Handmaid’s Tale”, such multimodal aspects as footage specifics, music, body movements, facial expressions, and peculiarities of the voice are essential to woman image construal. The series creators act as interpreters who determine how the book, its plot, and its characters will be in front of a viewer.

### **3.1 Footage Specifics as Part of Woman Image Construal**

The original work will inevitably change because a director/producer decides which details to keep and which to omit, what to emphasize, and what to introduce as secondary. In addition, in the artistic text of the characters’ emotions, their experiences are described verbally.

At the same time, within the film, they are transmitted by the language of the character’s body and the music support of a particular scene. Building his reality, a film creator becomes a co-author, which corresponds to the ideas of a prescription aesthetics, which provides that the text is updated only in the interpretation of a separate reader, who puts his sense in it.

A great example of this transformation is the screen adaptation of the novel “The Handmaid’s Tale”. The novel’s author shows a woman who, in the story, follows the way from the attempt to save his identity to the entire subordinate system to survive only. However, the filmmakers skilfully maneuver events in the book and how they perceive the heroine to show a person ready to fight not only for herself, her children, and her love but also for her country, becoming part of the enemy’s movement much earlier than it happens in the novel. Such changes are probably due not only to the creative vision of producers but also to the

peculiarities of the audience of the film, which is much broader than the circle of intellectual readers of the anti-utopian novel.

Excellent operator work reproduces the oppressive atmosphere in the series. Flashbacks from the past life of June were shot using a more diagonal approach to characters in the frame to show the previous life. While the current life of June is difficult and unfair, the show creators show it in a rectangular frame and with the use of hard lines in the shooting.

Also, the chosen colour gamma perfectly conveys this atmosphere, especially the state of women. The series is shown in a grey-green colour to show all the tension and emptiness of the characters. The only bright colour is red. The Handmaids in the red clothes look like spots of blood with white accessories on the grey streets of Gilead. Such clothes look bright and contrast with grey, deprived of ordinary life and joys, the country, and with other characters that have more neutral colours (Picture 3.1).



Picture 3.1

The creators show the scenes from the previous life of June in warm tones. So, it shows that once June was pleased with her life, she worked and raised her daughter. Warm tones create comfort and relaxation. Also, they show happy memories, while cold tones demonstrate the depressed life, anxiety, and fear of living in Gilead.

### 3.2 Music as Characters' Soul

In cinema, music is not just an additional tool. Music can reflect characters' interests, be an element of attention, strengthen ethnic features, represent a particular epoch, depict space, or show characters' emotions.

For example, in one episode of the series, when Offred finds the phrase "Nolite te bastards carborundum", she has the strength to fight for her freedom. In this episode, the melody "Perpetuum Mobile" (2008) by Penguin Cafe Orchestra sounds. Music is a powerful tool in film creators' arsenal, as it conveys heroes' emotions, complementing the complex meaning which should broadcast a scene. For example, "Perpetuum Mobile" is a musical work in a fast tempo, which has no clear start or end. In the series, it is very close to the heroine's thoughts who realize that the Handmaids, despite their position, can regain their strength if they want; that every new Handmaid will join the opposition. Besides, the band Penguin Cafe Orchestra performed music in folk style and in the aesthetics of minimalism, which sometimes resembles works of famous composers. However, such style in music corresponds to modern tendencies but not to the suppression and fear which covered Gilead.

In the scene when Offred refuses to throw stones at another Handmaid, all her colleagues follow her example. This act of disobedience means that no one in Gilead has the right to protest, especially collectively. It is not accidental that when the Handmaids return to their homes, the song "Feeling Good" by Nina Simon plays, whose chorus sounds as: *"It's a new dawn. It's a new day. It's a new life for me. And I'm feeling good"* (Bricusse & Newley, 1965). This motive underlines the importance of what happened, as a new stage in the life of the Handmaids as a faceless army begins here.

At the end of the novel and the first season of the series, a black van comes to her. Such ones take those who committed crimes against Gilead. However, the driver of the Commander tells Offred to go there. If in the novel, she does so from despair, relying on fate, the heroine of the series takes it with a high raised head. However, even before coming to the van to the house, she does not feel fear. Inside

she hopes for a new beginning. When Offred goes to the van, a tense melody sounds, but the last series of the season is finished with the song “American Girl” (1978) by the American rock group Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers. This highly well-known musical work has firmly entered the cultural space of the United States, playing in many films and even political campaigns (Тященко, 2021, с. 108). This song glorifies a woman who believes in his “American dream”. As well as the heroine of the series has the desire for freedom and the ability to fight for it.

Classical music is often heard in the series, written primarily for screening. Such music is a remarkable artistic means that successfully performs various distinct functions, from the addition of the image of the main hero to the generalization of global events. For example, the effect of anxiety and uncertainty reinforces dramatic music. Thanks to music, the internal state of heroes and their experiences are clear.

Music can enhance the artistic effect of the whole film, adding a certain hidden sense and reflecting the feelings of heroes. It is also essential to pay attention to the words heard in the song because the director chose it not just so but by putting some information and influence.

### **3.3 Body Movements in Woman Image Construal**

The position of the head of an individual during a conversation speaks about the attitude to the conversation and the personality in general. The body language also reveals the characters’ social status, role in society, temperament, and internal state.

The Handmaids move with their heads down, looking into the ground. It is facilitated by white wings too. However, they are hardly the most depressed caste in society, so they have no reason to walk, proudly lifting their head. They avoid the views of the interlocutors. It suggests that they are frightened or do not tell the truth. For example, when a foreign delegation arrives and the members ask the Handmaids whether they are satisfied with their lives, Offred does not raise her

head, saying that she is pleased to live in such a way. However, it shows a reluctance to answer truthfully because of fear of execution.

Also, on the screen, they slouch. This pose is not just a sign of weakness and uncertainty. Persons who detect power usually try to fill the maximum space around them. Such features are straightened back and shoulders. A slouched person shows the opposite. The Handmaids do not have a voice, so their position says for itself. Moreover, they cannot brightly express their emotion, so, for example, irritancy of Offred is marked by clenched fists.

Showing disobedience, one of the Handmaids, Janine, crosses her arms and turns her body back. It shows her sceptical attitude and mockery, using the same tone accordingly. It is an example for other women that such behaviour is unacceptable and will be punished. Therefore, they must behave following the new rules of the Gilead.

An arrogant, lofty head often testifies to conceit. The Wives have the same feature. They always walk with their heads up and their backs straight. Moreover, they behave like natural aristocrats, from the manner of speaking to posture and the ability to demonstrate themselves.

It applies to the Aunts too. However, when Wives show that they are aristocrats, Aunts resemble generals of Hitler's army. Looking at how they behave, it is clear that they tend to subdue others. They walk with their hands behind their backs, with their raised head and chin, which is a gesture of authoritarianism and shows self-confidence and superiority over others. Aunts are always dismissive; they are commanders and demonstrate that they have the most rights among women.

The language of the body is an essential factor that demonstrates the character of heroes and their essence. It is crucial for the character interpretation in the screen adaptation. Thanks to body movement, much information is transmitted from the novel. The image of a woman opens in a new way and allows reading a woman due to her movement and gestures.



### **3.4 Facial Expressions of Woman as Component of Image**

Facial expressions are significant among all body language elements. No other part of the human body has a diverse wealth of false expressions. Sometimes, it can tell us more than the words that people speak at the moment. Facial expression, like a mirror, reflects all hidden thoughts.

The cast did an incredibly successful work of reproducing the characters as successfully as possible. For example, the main character, June (Offred), from the beginning of the series, has a frightened face. However, she is forced to obey the rules; otherwise, her life will be even more problematic. The series has five seasons, but the events from the book are only in the first one. Therefore, in other seasons the creators of the series had complete freedom in the implementation and development of the plot. Therefore, the main hero in each season has a more confident expression on her face, which testifies to her power of will and desire to fight.

Offred is often silent or has short remarks, but the actress transmits all her emotions to her face. Elizabeth Moss received many rewards for this work because of incredibly successfully reproducing Offred/June on the screen. The Handmaids, especially in the series' first season, are very strained. The tension of facial muscles shows these people are nervous and fearful for their lives. They have no rights and can be punished because of any trifles. This information is read on the face of the actors who play the Handmaids. Their extinguished eyes show all the embarrassment of the situation in which they are.

The Wife, Serena, rarely smiles. She often has lowered corners of her mouth, which testifies to her dissatisfaction with the whole situation and the fact that she is also unhappy. Her raised eyebrows and upper view show that she despises Offred. Only after the news of the Handmaid's pregnancy does Serena's mimics changes to a more joyful one. Her facial expression says she is looking forward to this child, and she begins to smile. Before that, she is always gloomy, not emotional. The actress conveys the whole atmosphere of this woman, showing

her other sides and character. It is incredibly successful in tandem with body movements.

Speaking about the Aunts, they are more emotional. According to their emotional and loud speeches, their mimics show the same emotions as the voice. It is especially evident in the example of Aunt Lydia, the main Aunt there. Her spectrum of emotions is vast – from anger to sincere joy. As a skilled speaker, she combines different non-verbal means the strengthening her speeches.

Marthas, having an indifferent voice, do not have facial expressions that indicate interest in other characters. Instead, they do their work; for them, a Handmade is a temporary person in the house, so there is no sense in paying much attention to her. However, since only the first season of the series corresponds to the book, in the following seasons, the attitude of Martha to June changes; they begin to cooperate, and therefore her mimics and tone of communication change.

Facial expression is part of the woman image construal in the adaptation of the novel. It makes it possible to understand the characters' emotions, the peculiarities of their character, education, status in society, and attitude toward other people and the situation as a whole.

### **3.5 Voice Characteristics as Representation of Women**

The voice of characters on the screen is essential to forming their image. Each character or caste in general, speaks differently and has a different tone, tone, rhythm, and tone. They form their character and identity. Actors must convey their characters' stories and show hidden information through their voices.

The Handmaids have a quiet voice. Usually, low voice volume indicates that a person is restrained, modest, and probably well-educated. A quiet voice can indicate a lack of self-confidence and the absence of the need to dominate the conversation or attract attention. They are frightened; they have no rights in the newly created country. Every defiance is cruelly punished. Therefore, in this screen interpretation, the voice identifies the Handmaids' personalities after they become the "slaves".

One of the women decides to show disobedience, her rebel character. Her mockery and manner of speaking do not correspond to the totalitarian system of Gilead. Therefore she is severely punished. After her tone of voice is pathetic, she regrets her actions. Her voice has become quiet, and she is calm. It shows that the Handmaids do not have the right to express themselves but should act only according to the rules.

In the series, there are flashbacks from the past life of women. For example, there are scenes where June and her best friend, Moira, are suppressed and without the right to vote in Gilead, and there are scenes of memories where they have everyday life with carefree communication. In flashbacks, they have a relatively fast speaking tempo, and the tone of voice is relaxed and friendly. However, in Gilead, they whisper, and the tempo is slower and tense.

Offred has a friend Ofglen, who is called Emily. First, women communicate with short learning phrases without showing their emotions and not showing interest in each other. Nevertheless, they understand that they have common interests, which is why their intonation becomes more enthusiastic, and their tone of voice is friendlier. They smile and recall their past. When they go for purchases, they pass around those buildings where previously there were entertainment objects and share their memories. Thus, they try to communicate as they would in pre-revolutionary times.

The Wives speak slowly, calmly, and not very loudly, as the people are self-confident. Distinctly words are an indicator of internal discipline, an aspiration to show their position clearly. The series' actors, primarily the performer in Serena's role, are embodied in these images and demonstrate their high status. Serena's style of speech resembles a royal person. However, when Serena in the book is more restrained, she sometimes shows her emotions in the series, and her voice becomes cruel and aggressive. Also, in the book, Serena is an older woman, but in the series, she is a pretty young and beautiful woman, the main over Offred, and wants to achieve her goals shown in her voice. Serena is ambiguous; she is cold

and indifferent to the Handmaid, but when there is hope for Offred's pregnancy, her voice becomes caring and friendly.

The Aunts have confident, strict, and loud voices. In general, they behave as full-fledged commanders. At the general meeting, their speeches are similar to those of dictators. People who want to be sure that others will hear their words and take them into account usually speak loudly. The most common voice belongs to people who try to control the situation and people. The volume sometimes scares other people. Therefore, people who seek domination use an authoritarian management style often use this technique. Also, such a voice is suitable for greater confidence. Such a way of speaking is effective for frightened, weak, uncertain people. Such a voice is also a great way of putting pressure on others, which is what the Aunts need. They are the leading women in Gilead and therefore are well-performing.

The Marthas show mostly indifference. Even if they want to make friends with the Handmaids, most likely, it is forbidden. Their voice reflects indifference and uninterested in communication with these women. They are engaged in domestic work and have no desire to spend time on one more Handmaid.

The voice of women in screen adaptation is a way of achieving goals and shows their emotions and character features. For each caste, its manner of speaking is inherent. Actors try to convey characters as accurately as possible through their voices. Volume, pace, timbre, and intonation are essential factors in a woman's image construal on the screen.

### **Conclusions to Chapter Three**

1. By interpreting the novel as a screen adaptation, a large team of people does extraordinary work to reproduce the characters and convey the whole meaning of the book. When images are transmitted in the book by mostly stylistic means, in the series, this is done using various multimedia aspects such as peculiarities of footage, music, body movements, facial expressions, and voice.

2. In the series “The Handmaid’s Tale”, the peculiarities of shooting convey the book’s atmosphere and reflect women’s status in the Gilead. It is clear where June talks about past life and where actual events take place. These details are transferred through the prism of colour gamma and aspect of the angle of view.

3. Music conveys the atmosphere, emotions, and opinions of the characters. In this screen adaptation, its creators do not choose the music randomly. Each song or melody has its meaning and reflects the characters themselves. Songs and music testify to the development of certain events or the beginning of a new stage in the heroes’ lives. It is also essential to pay attention to the text of songs that sound in the series because they have parallels with the novel itself and carry additional important information about the characters.

4. The voice of women, such as timbre, tempo, and intonation, demonstrate belonging to a particular caste. Also, it is the identity of the internal state of women. The peculiarities of the voice are changed during the series. It means a change in attitude to certain characters, a reconsideration of life, and a realization of the role in society.

5. The body language demonstrates the character’s emotions and social status. It reflects the heroes’ character features, relationship with others, and internal state in different situations. At the same time, it is necessary to note the facial expression of characters. The analysis of these two factors in tandem helps to understand the emotions and feelings of the characters. In addition, they carry much additional information, which is vital in understanding heroes’ actions and their vision of the world.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The concept of the image has been studied for many centuries. Each stage had its peculiarities of image construal. It is a multifaceted notion that includes lots of aspects of its creation. There are many approaches to studying images, among which are stylistic and multimodal.

The image includes various elements, such as name, artistic detail, speech, interior, and evaluation statements. The easiest way to describe characters and provide insight into their world is through their names, which can also reveal important information about them. Artistic details are aesthetic things that highlight certain traits and social standing of persons. Character speech indicates whether a character belongs to one group or another and can be used to reveal the identity of the created character. Evaluation statements in a text can come from the narrator or the novel's heroes. From this vantage point, a reader can learn a lot about a book's characters, circumstances, and environment. Last but not least, the interior is always presented to the researcher as a crucial component of human living space and involves numerous elements that express a character.

Multimodality analyses a text and its screen adaption. It is a recent subject of study that first emerged in the 1920s. After then, academics focused on the non-verbal elements of theatrical and visual art and the unique characteristics of analysing various media, noting that the importance of signs in television, movies, and advertising depended on the interplay between image and sound. The term "multimodality" now refers to studying images, gestures, looks, facial expressions, music, sounds, and other things, particularly in cinematic discourse.

From a historical standpoint, women were long portrayed as housekeepers, while males were seen as people in positions of authority. Because of this, gender disparity has received much attention in the 20th and 21st centuries. Additionally, feminists are frequently portrayed in literature as women fighting to uphold historical justice because in the past, women were prohibited from publishing and writing books.

Therefore, women's representations in "The Handmaid's Tale", a dystopian novel, are multifaceted. First, the author depicts women as totally or partially dependent on men who rule the new state. Despite the seeming happiness on the outside, all women in the Republic of Gilead are miserable since they no longer have the ability to make their own decisions.

Even the cast members' names were carefully considered by the author when creating these images. Some names make references to figures from the Bible. Each one better introduces the hero to readers, has a special significance, and conveys important information.

Additionally, each category of women has a unique artistic detail linked with it. It is possible to ascertain a character's social standing from their clothing. The author deliberately chose the appropriate colour with semantic significance to draw parallels to historical events and persons.

Moreover, each character and caste generally are reflected in the women's speech. Short sentences, precise speech patterns, and a lack of particular interest in others are all expected of Gilead residents. Therefore, a woman's speech can reveal a lot about her personality and place in society.

The narrator, Offred, is the source of evaluations in the text. She is the narrator and the main character, so her information is subjective. However, readers can infer from the book that this woman is sufficiently well-educated, so she knows what is going on and who is who in the newly formed nation. One more element of a woman's image is her interior, which reflects her internal states, feelings, and social roles.

A large team of people performs tremendous work to recreate the characters and convey the entire essence of the book by adapting the novel for the big screen. When images are conveyed in the novel mainly through stylistic means, they are conveyed in the series through a variety of multimodal elements, including the peculiarities of the footage, music, body language, facial expressions, and voice.

The features of shooting “The Handmaid's Tale” mirror the situation of women in Gilead and independent America. The series’ creators show June’s memories and her real-life using different colour gammas and angles of view.

The characters’ attitudes, feelings, and environment are all expressed through music. The writers did not pick the soundtrack in this cinematic adaption randomly. Each tune or melody conveys a specific message and depicts a particular character. The lyrics of the songs in the series are vital, too, because they are similar to the novel and contain additional vital details about the characters.

Women’s voices, including their timbre, pace, and intonation, reveal their caste identity. Additionally, it represents the identity of women’s internal states. The voice of the characters changes throughout the series. It entails a shift of the attitude to particular people, a re-evaluation of life, and understanding of one’s place in society.

The character’s emotions and social standing are expressed through body language. At the same time, paying attention to their facial expressions is essential. Combining the analysis of these two elements makes it easier to comprehend the characters’ feelings and emotions.

Stylistic and multimedia aspects of the novel and its screen are harmoniously combined, complement each other and create unique images of women. Furthermore, the novel does not have any fictitious events, so the reader or viewer can conduct parallels with real life and learn certain historical events or personalities by analysing the elements of the image.

Thus Margaret Atwood and the team of the series creators have developed and reproduced unique female images, which are relevant from the moment of the book’s release to the present day, with the help of various aspects. The novel “The Handmaid’s Tale” was created as a manifest of feminism and the struggle for women’s rights and remains the same nowadays.



## RESUME

Поняття образу в літературі вивчається протягом багатьох століть. Існують різні види образу, а також підходи до його класифікації. Він складається з багатьох факторів, серед яких стилістичні аспекти. Також у конструюванні образу варто відзначити мультимодальні чинники, які мають на меті передати специфіку невербальних компонентів екранізації роману.

У даній роботі були проаналізовані аспекти формування жіночих образів у романі Маргарет Етвуд «Оповідь служниці» та його екранізації. Було зосереджено увагу та таких чинниках, як ім'я, одяг як вид художнього предмету, мовленнєва характеристика, риси інтер'єру та оціночні судження у книзі, а також особливості зйомки, музики, рухів тіла, виразу обличчя та властивості голосу в однойменному серіалі.

Результати показали, що всі складові образу продумані до деталей, мають алузії до певних історичних або релігійних подій та несуть у собі багато значущої інформації. За допомогою їх можна дізнатися приналежність жінки до певної касты, її соціальний стан, характер, відношення до інших героїв, емоції, внутрішній стан тощо.

Стилістичні та мультимодальні аспекти в романі та його екранізації гармонійно переплітаються, доповнюють один одного та створюють унікальні образи жінок. Роман не має вигаданих подій, тому читач або глядач може провести паралелі зі справжнім життям й впізнати певні історичні події або персоналії за допомогою аналізу складових образу.

Таким чином Маргарет Етвуд та команда творців серіалу за допомогою різноманітних аспектів придумали та відтворили унікальні жіночі образи, які є актуальними з моменту виходу книги і до сьогоднішнього дня. Роман «Оповідь служниці» був створений як маніфест фемінізму і боротьби за жіночі права й залишається таким у наш час.

**Ключові слова:** стилістичні аспекти, мультимодальні чинники, образ жінки, дистопія, екранізація.

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