

Institutional logics of fashion design in the People's Republic of Poland

Michał Wójciak

Jagiellonian University, Poland

Marta Połec

Jagiellonian University, Poland

Abstract

Background scientific research: Fashion in the Eastern Bloc countries, like other issues in the field of private consumption, was a state affair (Gronow, Zhuralev, 2016). According to Bartlett (2010), in the Soviet Union and countries under the political influence of Moscow (Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia) were three main socialist sartorial narratives: utopian dress (practical work uniform for new privileged working class), socialist fashion (combination of various cultural elements for the political needs of the Stalinist system), and everyday fashion (a series of individual practices of citizens, such as sewing garments or purchasing clothes on the black market). The clothing sector was a centralized structure of interdependent institutions. In the People's Republic of Poland, this system included, i. a. Moda Polska (Rzechorzek, 2018), Telimena Fashion House, Cepelia, Cora (Boćkowska, 2015) or the Hoffland brand created by Barbara Hoff (Łukoszek, 2014). For many years after the fall of communism, the history of fashion in the People's Republic of Poland was not analyzed, today it is discussed and more and more often treated as part of our cultural heritage, as evidenced by book publications (Boćkowska, 2015; Stockholm, 2015; Antkowiak, Janas, 2015; Tomasiak, 2016), which appeared in recent years, and museum exhibitions organized by public institutions in Krakow, Łódź, Wrocław and Gdynia.

From today's perspective, Fashion design in the People's Republic of Poland is often presented as an element of opposition to the communist system. Did the designers perceive the design process in terms of a political activity? In order to answer this question, we refer to neo-institutionalism, which is a contemporary take on the field of institution studies, which is present in economics, sociology and political science, among others (Scott, 2008). Thus, institutions are relatively stable over time social structure, which shape the behavior of individuals, guarantee a sense of shared values and have consistent reference points to identify the meanings of actions (Peters, 1999). The systematic behaviors of individuals are dependent on the determinants of the institutional environment and create lasting social rules (Sadowski, 2014).

Corresponding author's email:

michal.wojciak@uj.edu.pl

The institutional logics perspective assumes that actors are nested at different levels of the interinstitutional system: individual, organizational, organizational field, and society (Thornton et al, 2012). This perspective presents how the situation of individual and organizational actors at different social levels in the interinstitutional system affects these actors through unique organizational rules, practices, and symbols. This is a legitimate approach in fashion studies where fashion itself can be seen as a kind of institution which shape individuals, society and culture (Crane, 2000; Davis, 1994).

Research issue to be addressed: The research problem of the project concerns institutional patterns of fashion design in the times of the Polish People's Republic - with particular emphasis on the period of the 60s, 70s and 80s of the 20th century from the perspective of management sciences. The following auxiliary questions were proposed: What did inspire and motivate designers to act in the times of the People's Republic of Poland? How did they deal with institutional and resource constraints? Did they see fashion design as an expression of opposition to communist conditions?

Methodology used: The project is being conducted as a part of first edition of Heritage Priority Research Area competition of the Jagiellonian University. The adopted paradigm of social sciences is an interpretative paradigm (Burrell & Morgan, 1979), assuming the relativity of social reality and focus on its meaning and description. The qualitative research will be conducted in 2021, including anthropological interviews with several designers and desk research (literature, documents, photographs). f4 transcript & analyze software will be used to transcribe, code and analyze gathered data. The project results will be presented according to the notion of action nets (Czarniawska, 2010), indicating the main actions, the connections between them and the main involved actors. Diversified selection of data, methods, researchers and theories will ensure methodological triangulation (Gibbs, 2019).

Expected results: The perspective of institutional logics makes it possible to answer questions about the micro perspective - individual units, the meso perspective - represented by organizations, and the macro perspective - concerning societies in the context of design process management in the People's Republic of Poland from the point of view of the designers. It is undoubtedly an important element of the history of the Polish fashion market and heritage of Poland. The research results may be important not only for researchers interested in this particular context, but also for everyone looking for a reference to the currently popular ideas of less waste, DIY, upcycling, which are the base for the new business models in the fashion industry.

Keywords: fashion studies, fashion design, socialist fashion, management, neoinstitutional theory

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