

REVIEW

Of the dissertation for acquiring the scientific degree of Doctor in professional direction 8.2 Fine Arts, of Ariana Gjoni, on the topic of “ THE ROLE OF DESIGN AND ESTHETICS IN DEFINING FASHION STYLES“

Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Maria Blajeva

I have been appointed reviewer by Order No.3-PK-110/31.01.2023 issued by Prof. Plamen Doinov, d.s.– Rector of the New Bulgarian University, on appointing a scientific jury for defending a dissertation for the acquisition of education and science degree of Doctor to Ariana Gjoni – an independent candidate in the Design doctoral program at the Design Department, professional direction 8.2. Fine Arts, with the theme: „The role of design and esthetics in defining fashion styles“, dissertation supervisor Prof. Dr. Elena Todorova.

Re: dissertation work presented for acquiring the educational and scientific degree of doctor in professional direction: 8.2 „Fine Arts“ – NBU

Dissertation author: Ariana Gjoni – an independent candidate in the Design doctoral program at the Design Department, professional direction 8.2. Fine Arts, NBU

Dissertation theme: “*The Role of Design and Esthetics in Defining Fashion Styles*“

Scientific supervisor: Prof. Dr. Elena Todorova. Review presentation: member of the scientific jury, as per Order No.3-PK-110/31.01.2023 by the Rector of NBU, Prof. Plamen Doinov, d.s.

The review was made in accordance with the Academic staff development law of the Republic of Bulgaria, The regulations of its application, and the Act for developing NBU’s academic staff..

1. Importance of the problem under research in scientific and scientific-applicable respect.

The choice of the theme „*The Role of Design and Esthetics in Defining Fashion Styles* “ is particularly important both theoretically and practically. In this sense, the research problem chosen is directly connected to the challenge of setting a clear and precise theoretical framework of the problem. The theme is a survey of the connection between concepts of esthetics as a leading component of design, the importance of style, the role of business in the fashion industry; a historic journey in the development of clothing has been made as well. The basic creative tools of design’s esthetic and intellectual impact on the socium have been studied consecutively. As per fashion dictionaries a style refers to „image and original characteristics of a person and its apparel“. Accordingly, style is a philosophic question in the first place, referring to the attitude to one’s own self, of intimacy, of personal identity. „*Identity is also characterized by naturalism, i.e. non-separation of man and human communities from nature; by integrity, expressed by profound inter-coordination of a person’s roles; by cyclic recurrence – reproduction of human’s individual and social life in relatively unchangeable limits; by predictability and repetition ensuring the calm harmony in social development. Sociality builds on the grounds of self-consciousness*“. This is the sign of an individual moving in and comprehended in the collective. To put it more clearly, this is the fact of defining clothes

through the image individuals send to others. A style exceeds frequent metamorphoses accompanying this or that trend in fashion. Attention has been drawn to the fact that it is a component of features and elements characterizing a medium that is typologically and historically determined – a group, and it is not locked in a dominating stylistic personal profile, but it is investigated within common characteristics and similarities. Style as part of an artistic trend is a basic factor in determining fashion esthetics. The accent is on design's search for new sources, approaches and analysis methods, conceptualizing, discovering and supporting talent, according to the contemporary understanding of development in this genre. The basic production factors in fashion industry are in fact creation and non-material capital (intellectual, innovative), and this suggests creative accumulation. As a visual art fashion design is capable of innovations, of creating concepts and ideas of fundamental competitive advantage, turning it into one of the mightiest industries of the world. Based on her scientific research Ariana Gjoni felt the need of theoretical clarification of problems and search for possibilities of practical application in the good design esthetics. It is through style that she studies the success strategy of fashion industry and the growth of a fashion designer's individual creativity. The logics of the basic thesis has been developed and followed by the author. The research is focused on the thesis that talent is about the capability of building one's own creative viewpoint, based on esthetic categories growing into an individual handwriting, following or creating a style in fashion design. This determines the importance of the dissertation both in theoretical and in practical application aspect.

2. Exact formulation of aims and tasks of the dissertation.

The dissertation develops and analyses the connections between: design, product and fashion style; esthetic aspect of product and fashion style; esthetics and its impact on determining style. The aim of this work is to prove following hypothesis: design is a basic factor in determining fashion style; esthetic aspects in determining fashion styles and assistance in product differentiation; good design esthetic is a successful strategy for fashion styles. The aim of the research has been formulated clearly and to the point, so is the historic survey. The main purpose of the research connects the role of design and esthetics affecting the determination and creation of a style and the creative identity of fashion designers: apparel esthetics; technical means in realizing the design; draping as a modelling technique; the role of textile and color; historic samples in the development and perfecting of style; positioning a fashion product in trading space. Object, subject and basic research thesis have been correctly defined in the introduction. The basic purpose and the sub-purposes have been formulated precisely and clearly. Their realization has been well stated in the conclusion. Actual methods and tools of successful strategy for fashion styles are systematized. In the space between theory and practice Ariana Gjoni is consciously trying to apply talent and professional experience. I would like to point out that as a result of working on the topic, the purpose and tasks have been fulfilled.

2. Degree of recognizing the problem and conformity of the literature used.

Ariana Gjoni is well aware of the problem researched and the scientific apparatus of the field under investigation. It has been used correctly, there are no noticeable logical contradictions and affirmations. The achievements of scientific literature concerning fashion design have been

presented in full length and volume. The whole exposition and the concrete scientific literature survey show good knowledge on the contemporary state of theory and practice of the problem researched. Necessary and sufficient scientific literature has been surveyed which is in accordance with research aims and the contemporary researches on the problem. The author's opinion and critical scientific thinking is clearly stated. A rich conceptual apparatus has been used showing deep knowledge of literary sources. The scientific style shows free application of scientific terminology. A large amount of information has been correctly processed, analyzed, generalized and estimated. As a conclusion it can be stated that the dissertation shows good knowledge of the problem under research and author's own attitude.

4. Citing correctness of a representative number of authors.

The necessary and sufficient number of authorities and authors have been correctly cited. There is no incorrect citing of literary sources.

5. A well-founded and developed theoretical research model.

The research model has been connected both to the contents features and the assigned parameters of the theoretical and application framework as stated by the author in Chapter 1 of the dissertation, as well as to the research methodology – systematization of methods applied for their data research, establishment and analysis, as presented in the dissertation. The dissertation comprises two operation methods, one of them to do with practical activities when creating fashion products, and the other one making it possible to apply methods of theoretical preparation in finding conceptual design solutions. Through the model presented Ariana Gjoni has researched, scientifically precisely, analytically, generalizing themes and aspects to do with the creation and affirmation of a fashion style based on esthetic criteria of the historic development in the fashion space, studying the specific features of the achievements in the field through world-wide achievements of affirmed designers. He author has found the connection between the esthetic aspect of the product and the fashion style, as well as the connection to the fashion industry.

6. Conformity of the chosen methodology and research methods to the stated purpose and tasks of the dissertation.

The research is mainly based on methods such as: analysis and synthesis, abstraction and generalization:

- Critical – analytical method of the respective literature;
- Research on individual cases determining and supporting the conclusions of chosen examples of contemporary designer practices;
- Assessment method.

Research methods – the research methods used are modern. The methodology applied conforms to the object character and the research tasks. For the purpose an original combination of clear criteria and indices has been constructed, based on contemporary theoretical models. The concept of fashion style, the style development in the dissertation have been clarified through

research and analysis of scientific literature on the theme, as well as good world practices. In the research the author applies three approaches, developed in a way as to be logically interconnected, so as to reflect the dissertation conclusions in the most appropriate way.

7. Own contribution to empirical data collecting and analyzing.

The author has used a bibliography of 145 sources. A huge amount of research work has been made as certified by the number of bibliographic applications, leading to the respective conclusions and analyses in the dissertation. In my opinion Ariana Gjoni has collected and analyzed the empirical data strictly, precisely, critically and reliably.

8. Description of contributions:

8.1. Brief characteristics of the nature and reliability estimation of the material serving as basis of the dissertation contributions.

The dissertation has both theoretical and practical contributions. It gives a realistic idea and a science-based concept of the complicated and extremely dynamic process of fashion design. In my opinion an essential contribution is the precise systematization, as well as the theoretical and practical elaborations of the doctor candidate in: style identity/ a combination of color, form and pattern, creative elements, draping, application of various techniques/; style as a basic factor and driving force in the creative process; apparel esthetics in the brand's reputation; esthetics as beauty philosophy and its reflection on fashion styles.

Her professional experience is the basis of her own contribution in collecting and analyzing of empirical data. The dissertation is abundant in information from the focal point of researches made. The theme is topical and can be considered a contribution to design and economics in the scope of fashion industry.

8.2. Description of the candidate's contributions and their classification.

The contribution reference hereto applied correctly reflects the results achieved by doctoral candidate Ariana Gjoni. The abstract objectively reflects the scientific and scientific-applicable achievements of the author.

Dissertation contributions:

- 1.** The dissertation is the first of its kind theoretical research and analysis of costume history in the Republic of Kosovo.
- 2.** A generalized research on apparel as an element of economic and social life. An original approach has been applied to the research of fashion processes as a whole, and of individual designer practices specifics.
- 3.** Determining the most important changes in fashion and the importance of these changes for the future development of fashion as a form of art and as industry.

4. An analysis of the psychological impact of fashion design from the viewpoint of individual psychology, and in social- psychological aspect as well. Such a synthesized approach has been used for the first time in Kosovo's scientific literature and it can be applied to other art subjects as well.

5. Defining the role of „style“, as one of the most essential elements of fashion design.

6. Defining the role and importance of „esthetics“, as the other leading element in the creation of a successful designer project.

7. The research reveals opportunities for the development of fashion design, as well as the conditions for its successful development. In this case a systematic analysis has been applied comprising both economic and technological development conditions, as well as the social circumstances under which it can be accomplished.

8. An essential contribution of this dissertation is the inclusion of two operation methods, one of them to do with practical activities when creating fashion products, and the other one presenting an opportunity for applying methods of theoretical preparation in finding conceptual design solutions. The combination of both methods will enable the creation of a special lecturing course for teaching fashion design.

9. The contributions of this research are not limited only to the sphere of fashion design theory. An essential practical contribution of the research is the presentation of Ariana Gjoni's author's collection of ladies' clothes.

A particular contribution is also the fact that there are no such researches so far in Kosovo's research literature.

Dissertation impact on the media.

The defense materials contain two publications in reviewed issues:

1. *Ariana Gjoni, Design: Aesthetics as a Promoter of Selling Products in Kosovo Open Journal of Business and Management, 2021, 9, 1104-1120*

<https://www.scirp.org/journal/ojbm> ISSN Online: 2329-3292; ISSN Print: 2329-328

3. *Ariana Gjoni, The Impact of Covid-19 on the Creations of Fashion Designers, Arts and Design Studies www.iiste.org, ISSN 2224-6061 (Paper) ISSN 2225-059X (Online) Vol.92, 2021*

Personal feature of the author (if known to the reviewer).

I do not know Ariana Gjoni personally, my impressions are based only on her dissertation. I consider the theme chosen as very thoroughly researched, with the necessary investigations and personal practical experience.

Opinions, recommendations, notes.

The work is very well structured, with very appropriate chapter and sub-chapter titles, a precious quality are the concrete conclusions. I consider the dissertation wholesome and complying with all requirements. Doctoral candidate Ariana Gjoni should continue with her scientific and applicable work in the field of fashion design.

Conclusion.

The dissertation on the theme *“The role of design and esthetics in defining fashion styles“* represents an up-to-date, individual, important and very profound research. It indisputably possesses the necessary qualities and research methods. The dissertation totally complies with the mandatory legal requirements of the Scientific Staff Promotion Law and the Regulations for its application, as well as with the NBU Regulations.

Based on the quality of the work as pointed out, and on the scientific and applicable contributions, I propose and support Ariana Gjoni to acquire the educational and scientific degree of „doctor” in the Design doctoral program at the Design Department, NBU, professional direction 8.2. Fine Arts”.

Dated: 3.05.2023

Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Maria Blajeva