

Opinion

By Prof. Dr. Mariela Gemisheva,

On the dissertation of Nikolay Krasimirov Pachev

**DESIGN PROJECT -
MODERN DESIGN TECHNIQUES IN FASHION**

Under the procedure for the award of Education and Science Degree Doctor in the
scientific field 8.2 "Fine Arts",
Department of Design, NBU

Scientific supervisor: prof. Dr. Elena Todorova

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At the very beginning of this opinion I would like to share with the esteemed scientific jury the fact that I know Nikolay Pachev as a highly professional colleague of active fashion designers and teachers in the design and stylistics of fashion design in Bulgaria. And before I formulate my final opinion, I note some important moments from his creative biography as evidence of his tangible presence on the so-called fashion scene both in Bulgaria and internationally:

I start, of course, with his first prize from the international competition MITTELMODA (Gorizia, Italy) in 2005 and his special award for innovation from Sistema Moda Italia - Mittelmoda in 2005, which I consider a key moment in his development as a professional.

In scientific and applied terms, I also draw attention to the candidate's professional interests and authorial appearances, which provide a logical professional backbone and motivation for this dissertation text. He is a full-time and part-time lecturer at New Bulgarian University in the subjects "Fashion" and "Styling" in the period 2014-18, and has enviable experience as art director and consultant for ALL U RE (a multi-brand store - high-end - of elite brands), art director for NIPPLE and other fashion brands, fashion editor at the famous magazine ONE, and also has numerous professional engagements in key fashion structures.

From the start, I also take the liberty of quoting a paragraph from the present thesis that bears on the main timeliness, significance and persistence of the issues at stake in contemporary techniques and methods in fashion product design:

"The biggest challenge of our generation and the next one is undoubtedly ecology and its problems. The sustainability debate seems to fail to go beyond the issue of recycling, an issue that in itself concerns the end of a garment's life and is beyond the direct control and ability of fashion designers. The creation of fashion is a question related to the beginning of a garment's life and opens up a more fundamental ethical concept of the sustainability of the idea."

As a consequence, I discuss the important SUSTAINABLE conclusions and corresponding theoretical and very important practical analyses that I find to be particularly important contributions to the contemporary theory and practice of fashion design, not only in the design itself, but also in its presentation and implementation:

This dissertation enriches design theory and practice by providing a concrete practical strategy for dealing with voluminous fashion information from leading and dynamically changing trends. It defines how and what the designer or stylist should use in a conceptual, fundamental and pragmatic sense. The research is valuable, which makes the present work applicable to design theorists and researchers as well as practitioners in the relevant field. It responds to the needs for fashion design education in our contemporary education system, which come from the real fashion business.

The dissertation contains five main chapters:

Chapter one deals with the fashion project - it deals with generalities, concepts and objectives that make up the set main theme in its entirety: *fashion, project, contemporary technique* -

insofar as the developed thesis requires an initial clarification of the processes involved in the fashion project.

The second theoretical chapter explores specific structures and covers ranges of information for analysis, aiming to synthesize it to actually meaningful solutions for substantive design. For this reason, this chapter contains two major sections - directly fashion-related themes or trends, and cultural themes from the broader context that make up the idea of the thesis

An important point in the dissertation is the reflection on FASHION as contemporary art - given its nature and multidisciplinary. Contemporary art is multidisciplinary, and along this line fashion is seen as part of it.

In contemporary multidisciplinary art, transfers of philosophies are possible, which in essence represent complete ideas of design techniques.

The third chapter proposes a structural mathematical solution in building the idea and its creative developments to a balanced professional fashion project - with all the necessary segmented parts, coordination links between them, planned volume, justification and commercial balance. The title of this subtopic is *Structure of a fashion collection - the mathematics of design*.

This dissertation has an important and integral technical fourth chapter, as well as a fifth presentation style section.

The volume of the work is 151 pages, and 79 images have been precisely selected to support the fully theoretical study.

The following are, in my opinion, the important "SUSTAINABLE" conclusions and therefore contributions of this dissertation:

In the theoretical part Nikolay Pachev marked all the important steps and issues from the classical education and practices of fashion design, which could be potential guidelines - techniques.

In the creative part: Justifies methodological formulations for an optimally ordered design process. He treats it as a system, differentiates the purely mathematical part of the fashion collection (DNA) and analyses the interaction between the different components.

In the practical part: He adapts to design a system for comprehensive referencing of technical parameters of garments at launch that meet fashion industry standards - with synthesis of those technological specifics that are directly relevant to design and should be a design decision.

The final part of the dissertation is built entirely around the analysis of the achieved objectives and their practical applicability specifically to a fashion project - in the form of stated conclusions, quoting the following:

- *Fashion is highly dependent on modernity. In this sense, it is important to distinguish between the concepts of "technique" and "modern technique". All of the theses developed in this dissertation, including those in the historical analyses, are directly relevant to the present and deliberately sought out as being of contemporary relevance. In order to ensure*

the eventual persistence over time of the questions posed, they have been reduced to the most specifically important for fashion - image, art, technology or colour, form, textile. These are the eternal questions. Developed potential responses are a variable that will likely be different decades from now. The evidence examples included point to phenomena, themes and responses that are relevant today.

- *The familiar classical structure of a fashion project in the way it is set as an academic foundation in the NBU fashion program can be used as a backbone for building the proposed methodological system in the form of a structure of thematic questions. The relationships between popular definitions of portfolio elements are clearly stated, as well as what and how they transform in for the needs of a fashion project in relation to the views in the thesis.*
- *The small issues that these changes concern are tracked and analysed. A distinction is made between generally accepted, outdated and state-of-the-art useful practices in fashion design. Where sufficiently useful and clear information is given, the latter is mentioned and used. Where the views require something new, it is developed in a reasoned way.*
- *Treating the fashion project as a structure of questions without a pre-set topic is a useful methodology in teaching because it enables, trains thinking and prepares students for independent idea development - something they encounter in their real work and is required in the practice of the profession. The structure provides a scaffold of empty boxes to point to potential and varied issues that the framework of a pre-set topic would limit.*
- *Such a methodology is possible and meaningful for the later stages of education in the final years of a Bachelor's degree and especially in a Master's degree. Such a methodology with a real practical orientation for accomplished designers requires a certain accumulation of technological and theoretical knowledge - like going through the history of culture and fashion. The latter allows to use them in the proposed way as a technique or as a very basic knowledge of textile material science, colour science and other topics, well covered as separate subjects in the early stages of the program "Fashion" at the NBU.*
- *In the structure of the fashion project there are themes developed in detail and covered in the professional literature and scientific works on the subject, such as "Модна илюстрация" (Fashion Illustration) by Alexander Gerginov, "Модното прогнозиране в неговия аспект като изкуство" (Fashion Forecasting in its Aspect as Art) by Nikolay Vojilov, "Устойчиви практики в модама" (Sustainable Practices in Fashion) by Yana Dvoretzka, "Стари техники и нови технологии" (Old Techniques and New Technologies) by Anna Avramova, "Мода и култура в техния социален и маркетингов аспект" (Fashion and Culture in their Social and Marketing Aspect) by Lyubomir Stoykov, etc. In order to preserve the integrity of the fashion project, these topics are referenced, cited and included in the bibliography as a reference for a more detailed reading of the authentic authors.*
- *There are themes in fashion design that have been subject to many interpretations and have become blurred and complicated - such as definitions of silhouette. In order for them to be used as technique, suggestions for a simplified working methodology and real practical tips are described.*

At this point, the main view has been completed and argued again:

Fashion design is a system of techniques - manipulative apparatuses to stimulate creative thinking, design concept development processes and design referencing.

As a consequence of all this, I find that the practical-applied contributions of the thesis are the result of very serious and professional work. And right here I would not miss the role of the scientific supervisor Prof. Dr. Elena Todorova, which in my opinion is key, and I congratulate the tandem for this thoroughly analytical and very important work. I highly appreciate the theoretical and practical framework proposed: it is complete, reflects the current state of the art, and handles the terminology of the field with skill and understanding. An important aspect of this habilitation thesis is the accurately selected visual documentation necessary to achieve the correct analyses and conclusions drawn accordingly. The material studied, the procedure of collecting examples, and in terms of the analysis of the information studied, their description and the conclusions drawn are in my opinion of high scientific value. I am convinced that this work could contribute to the training and education of students in the fields of fashion and contemporary arts and as a lecturer in the core subject FASHION DESIGN in the major of Fashion Design at the National Academy of Art I strongly recommend the adaptation of this work into a teaching text for all levels of higher education in Fashion and Design.

The author also handles the chosen methodology and research methodology very well. The dissertation synthesizes analytical, historical and evaluative methods to successfully interpret, explain, summarize, evaluate, specify and classify the main research theses.

Conclusion and proposal:

The dissertation represents a complete and full scientific study, having both theoretical and important practical significance. It meets all the requirements for a scientific paper and deserves a thoroughly positive evaluation.

I propose to the esteemed scientific jury to award Nikolay Pachev the degree of Doctor of Education, scientific field 8.2 "Fine Arts", Department "Design", NBU.

Prof. Dr. Mariela Gemisheva
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