

Doctoral thesis abstract entitled
"Symbolism of clothing of members of subcultures and countercultural
movements in the period of the communist Poland (PRL)"

The subject of this thesis is the symbolism of clothes worn by members of subcultures and countercultural movements. Moreover, not only the clothing and its origins, but also the meaning of various symbols used by the youth movements have been presented and described. The time frame of the thesis is the so called PRL (Polish People's Republic) era which is considered to be in the years between 1952 and 1989. The author used archival sources, periodicals from this PRL period, third-circulation press (the so-called fanzines), accounts of movement participants and eyewitnesses, articles in collective works and compilations. The author has analysed, reviewed and elaborated both on these historical sources as well as on non-written sources which were in the form of eyewitness accounts. Moreover, photographs in magazines of the period are also an important resource. The topic of subcultural clothing and its symbolism is a novel one, as many researchers have only focused on hinting at the issue of specific clothing without attempting to give it a substantive consideration.

In the first chapter of the thesis, the author presented the first Polish subcultures, namely the *stilyagi* (style hunters), the so-called "gitowcy" (members of 1970s Polish subculture inspired by the criminal underworld) and hippies. The latter are recorded in history as participants in the sexual revolution in the 1960s. In the 1970s and 1980s, groups of young people gathered around music bands or performers and identified with the promoted content or ideas of their idols. Musical subcultures included Rastafarians, punk rockers, goths (gothic rock fans) and Devotees (Depeche Mode fans). The last group is made up of countercultural anarchist movements, the Orange Alternative and politicized skinheads.

The author presented the origins of the clothing of the aforementioned subcultures in the next chapter, proving the fact that Polish youth willingly adopted foreign patterns, although they also created their own original image. This image is presented by the author in the following subchapter, addressing each and every element of the outfit. The predominant function of clothing was ludic (playful) one, although, as the author points out, clothing also played other, no less important roles. The main body of the thesis is chapter three, in which the author described the symbolism of subculture clothing, and chapter four containing information about symbols and the context of their use.

The presented doctoral thesis aims to emphasize the value of clothing not only for its utility but above all for its symbolic layer. Subcultures and countercultural movements contested the social and political system through clothing, they manifested views and feelings, although sometimes this was done unconsciously and without a specific purpose.

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