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By Birgit Lyngbye Pedersen, PhD student.
Centre for Business History, Copenhagen Business School
Porcelaenshaven 18a, DK-2000 Frederiksberg, DK
E-mail: blp.lpf@cbs.dk

Dressed Up for the International Market: A Study of Copenhagen Fashion Week promoting the Danish Fashion Industry, 1947 - 2006

Abstract

The present article explores how the Danish fashion industry¹ was promoted via the Danish fashion fair² from 1947 to 2006. Since 1947, the fashion fair has been an important venue for the Danish fashion industry to exhibit its products. The article examines how the fashion fair has promoted and legitimated the narratives of the Danish fashion industry in the process of attracting a wide and diverse audience of buyers and agents over time. The contribution of these actors is too often left out of accounts of the Danish fashion industry. This may be because very few formally trained historians have taken a detailed look at the rise of Danish fashion. The paper claims that the success of Danish fashion export is also due to a narrative construction of specific meanings and that the fashion fair has played an important part in the construction. In this article, I use text and images as my starting point for analysing the interaction between the clothing industry and the Danish fair as an actor, an “agent of transfer” in a fashion system (McCracken 1986).³ Seen from this theoretical perspective, the fashion industry has been promoted via the fair in three core areas. I will mainly discuss how the fair has promoted the industry and changed from addressing the domestic market to focusing on the export market. Subsequently, I will focus on the relationship between the industrial towns of Herning and Copenhagen and how for two decades, starting in the late 1940’s, the two

¹ I use the term *fashion industry* well aware that content changes, including specialisations, took place during the period. In the post-war years, the industry itself used the term *textile industry* broadly about several specialised industries, namely textile, knitwear and ready-made clothing industries, and spinning mills (wool and cotton) as well as weaving mills (cloth factories), all of which have also been included in the term. During the 1960’s the distinction between knitwear and ready-made clothing industries becomes finer, because several factories manufacture both knitted and woven yard goods. The industry then evolves into a textile and clothing industry, and as the concept of fashion evolves, parts of the industry regard and describe themselves as a fashion industry.

² The Danish fair undergoes a conceptual change from 1947 to 1970 in step with the specialisation and change that the fashion industry experiences in the same period, which is reflected e.g. in the change of the name of the fair. From being a textile fair showing products from all branches of the post-war textile industry, the fair is divided into two separate fairs in 1964: a knitwear fair centred in Herning and a fashion fair in Copenhagen.

³ The basis of the article is taken from my PhD dissertation at the Center for Business History, Copenhagen Business School, and it deals with the importance of design as a competitive parameter for the development of the Danish fashion industry from 1945 until today.

towns or cities competed for the position as the centre of the Danish textile and clothing industry. Finally, I will discuss the development of the trade towards a fashion industry.

Introduction

In August 1947, the Jutland town of Herning hosted the first trade fair, *Jydsk Textil Messe* (Jutland textile fair). The first fairs were presentation fairs, open to all, consumers as well as professional buyers. Due to rationing, however, the products could only be seen, not purchased. Starting in 1950, consumers were no longer allowed access to the fair, and since that time it has been held as a closed trade fair for retailers. In the article, I have chosen to focus on the years of both the Herning fair and the Copenhagen Fashion Week. From 1947 to 1970 the fair was held 19 times in Herning before being moved permanently to Copenhagen. From 1964 to 1970, Herning and Copenhagen competed to host the fair, which started a new era in the history of the fair, centred around Copenhagen.

Today, Copenhagen Fashion Week⁴ is held twice a year and consists of three fashion fairs, the most important of which is Copenhagen International Fashion Fair (CIFF). One of the main objectives of the present-day Danish fashion week is to promote Copenhagen as a capital on the international fashion map.⁵ This was definitely not the case when the Jutland textile fair presented products from Jutland, yet Thyge Thoustrup, chairman of *Jydsk Tricotagefabrikantforening* (the Danish knitwear association), understood that the purpose of the fair was not just to show the world what the industry was capable of. At the time he stated, “the Herning trade fair is central to the Danish textile industry, and it will make clear to all textile merchants where the cradle of the industry stood, particularly in the Nordic countries, where marketing efforts have now been initiated.”⁶ The fair was not only intended to present the products of individual companies, its purpose was to place Herning at the centre of the industry and at the same time serve as a marketing event for the entire business. Tradespeople had long considered the fair more important than just a sales fair. In 1951, Christian Grøn, chairman of the retailer association *Dansk Textil Union* (Danish textile union), observed that the fair created connections between manufacturers and consumers that could be useful. He noted that “on the fair, representatives of the trade get more directly in contact

⁴ The Danish Fashion Institute (DAFI) markets the semi-annual Danish fashion week as Copenhagen Fashion Week, whereas the trade association Danish textile and clothing (*Dansk Textil og Beklædning*) uses the term Copenhagen Fashion Days about the same week. In 1993 the name of the fashion fair was changed from Future Fashions Scandinavia to Copenhagen International Fashion Fair, when Danish textile and clothing took over responsibility for organising it.

⁵ See the website www.copenhagenfashionweek.com

⁶ *Textil* 1948, no. 33, p. 9 (author’s own translation)

with their customers, and this gives them the opportunity to learn more about the retailers' and consumers' needs and any criticism of the products.”⁷

The above statements from the early days of the fair about the interaction between the industry and its consumers and about the fair as a centre, as a marketing event and as a meeting place create the basis for theoretical considerations that have thus far completely escaped any research attention. The fashion industry has been the subject of some research; however, the main focal points of this research have been the technological development and financial and economic aspects (Hyldtoft and Johansen 2005), changes in industrial activities (Christensen 1998), and structure and organisation of industrial societies (Tønsberg 2004). Consequently, it is high time that research attention is directed towards the Danish fashion industry and one of its most central events, the Danish trade fair, which brings together members of the industry twice a year. This raises the question of how the Danish fashion industry was promoted by means of the Danish trade fair from 1947 to 2006.

The trade fair as a meeting place for the fashion intermediaries

British fashion researchers Joanne Entwistle and Agnés Rocamora (2006) point out that today, the fashion industry fairs serve as a ritual, as a meeting place for designers, models, journalists, stylists, celebrities and – not least – professional buyers from all over the world. The fashion fairs are not just an event for the industry; it is also a cultural event through which fashion is expressed and reproduced as culture. According to Entwistle and Rocamora, the main role of the fashion fair is that it produces, reproduces and legitimises both fashion as a field and the actors operating within the framework of the fair.

The fashion fair also serves as a meeting place for the “fashion intermediaries”⁸ who are in contact with the market and the consumers and thus in a position to channel information from the consumers back to the manufacturers (Błaszcyk 2005, 2006). Błaszcyk points out that the successful promotion of new colours and fibres in respectively the inter-war and the post-war period was mainly due to the fact that these fashion intermediaries assisted the manufacturers in maintaining their focus on consumers (2006, 2006a). Along the same lines, the trade fair may be regarded as a fashion intermediary meeting place that facilitates a complex dialogue between manufacturer and consumer and back to the manufacturer. This viewpoint establishes the trade fair

⁷ *Textil* 1951, no. 32, p. 7 and *Tidsskrift for Textilteknik*, July 1952, p. 145 (author's own translation)

⁸ Błaszcyk uses the term “fashion intermediaries”, which is an extension of the term used by Grant McCracken, “agents of transfer” (1986) and those of Yuniya Kawamura, “gatekeepers” or “fashion professionals” (2005).

as an actor and part of the organised network which, as a recurring event, is an element of the system that may be called a ‘fashion system’ (McCracken 1986; Kawamura 2005).

The fair, marketing and the fashion system

My point is that the trade fair is part of a ‘fashion system’. In 1967, French literature scholar and semiologist Roland Barthes introduced and dispersed the term ‘the fashion system’ (1983). Barthes shifted focus from regarding fashion as clothes to regarding it as *a system*. My main focus is the interpretation and identification of the concept ‘the fashion system’ developed by American consumer theorist Grant McCracken (1986), supplemented by a more recent fashion theory tradition defined by Japanese sociologist Yuniva Kawamura (2005). McCracken interprets ‘the fashion system’ as a trajectory that allows transfer of meaning to flow from the socially constituted world to consumer goods, aided by both individual and collective “agents of transfer” as well as by marketing activities (1986). According to McCracken, a ‘fashion system’ is not to be interpreted as a fashion cycle. The fashion fair is not only a cultural event, as described by Entwistle and Rocamora (2006), that expresses and legitimises fashion; it is a commercial activity that promotes the industry and, in its capacity as an “agent of transfer”, also serves as a component of the network in a ‘fashion system’ that creates relations between certain values and meanings with both the clothing and the industry. It is its relation to the consumer that makes the trade fair part of a ‘fashion system’. The start of the trade fair in 1947 coincided with an overall post-war shift in the market economy (Hansen 2006, 34). The industry was no longer preoccupied with the earlier production problems, which had now been overcome; the main problems were now to be found in the market. The trade fair was a meeting venue that reflected economic factors and different interests, and where the fashion cycle and marketing activities had increasingly become the centre of attention. The fair attached special values to products, but also to the industry as such. I will discuss how the industry was promoted and the understanding that has evolved over time.

In contrast to McCracken, who focuses on consumer goods as a general concept, Kawamura focuses on clothes. Kawamura makes a distinction between clothes as physical production and fashion as symbolic production (2005, 44). She interprets ‘the fashion system’ as an institutional structure that shapes fashion as a concept through the meanings attached to the clothes, and thus transforms clothes into fashion. Both McCracken and Kawamura focus on networks and various network activities. According to Kawamura, ‘the fashion system’ consists of institutions, organisations, groups, manufacturers, events and practices that all contribute to creating fashion,

which in this context is interpreted as different from creating clothes or apparel (2005, 43).

My intention is, through a focus on social relations, to invite a broader understanding of production and consumption issues in the context of cultural change. In this article, I focus on marketing and the meanings that the fair attaches to the business from a theoretical standpoint that establishes the fair as an actor in 'the fashion system'. This reflects the geographical concentration of the industry, the development of the trade towards a fashion industry, and the increasingly international orientation of the industry.

Jydk Textil Messe from 1947 to 1950

The first steps towards presenting the products of the trade at a trade fair in Denmark were taken by a Jutland manufacturer at a meeting of an employers' association, the Jutland knitwear manufacturers' association *Jydk Tricotagefabrikantforening* in 1946. His ideas were well received by the other manufacturers in the area, and the following year the Jutland town of Herning hosted *Jydk Textil Messe*, the industry's first collective exhibition of products made by knitwear manufacturers in the Herning area.

A modern industry rooted in tradition

The 1947 trade fair poster presented Herning as the textile centre of Denmark. The poster illustrated the Jutland industry by showing smoking chimneys, modern industrial plants and iron structures as symbols of what had already been achieved and what lay in the future. The old travelling hosiery peddler, the wool merchant, was shown as a faint contour at the top of the poster and symbolised the roots of the Danish modern fashion industry, at least in the opinion of the people of Herning. "The old heath farmers' knitted socks have turned into big industry," the local newspaper, *Ringkjøbing Amts Dagblad*, reported in August 1948.⁹ Both the poster and the trade fair itself were portrayed as a modern industry rooted in tradition, modernisation on traditional terms. This established connections to the past, a linearity that legitimised the present. The first years of the trade fair established a certain understanding of the industry as modern and future-oriented, but at the same time rooted in the past. However, the purpose of the first trade fairs was more than making Herning the industry capital.

⁹ *Ringkjøbing Amts Dagblad*, 1948. "Fra Bindestue til Textil-Industri".

Danish textiles to Danish consumers

The demand for yardgoods and clothing was huge; however, the industry's credibility had to be restored. The purpose of the first trade fairs was to teach consumers to choose Danish products based on their quality, manufacture and price. Consequently, the first trade fair was advertised under the slogan "Danish textiles to Danish consumers". At the outset, the industry was neither integrated in the fashion cycle nor oriented towards the export market. Its members were preoccupied with recovering after the war, and they had to live with and overcome substandard raw material supplies, comprehensive restrictions and low consumer credibility. However, in step with society's development in the post-war era, the trade fair gradually gained increased importance as a recurring event and developed from a textile fair into a fashion fair.

***Dansk Textil Messe* (Danish textile fair) from 1950 to 1966**

In 1950, *Jydsk Textil Messe* was renamed *Dansk Textil Messe* and turned into a closed trade fair for the retail industry. The objective was now to make the fair a nationwide event and not just to present the Jutland section of the industry. The poster for the 1952 fair featured a drawing of a fashionably dressed woman and the words: "The big fashion show. Youth, beauty and new fashions in a festive cabaret setting." *Dansk Textil Messe* was creating an opening towards fashion, and the fashion cycle was to become an industry condition. The trade fair brought fashion into play at an early date, and although the concepts of beauty and youth were not unknown parameters in a fashion context, they now became naturally related to mass-produced fashion.

***Dansk Damemoderåd* (The Danish ladies' fashion council)**

In 1959, Copenhagen manufacturers started *Dansk Damemoderåd*¹⁰ in an attempt to move the trade fair to Copenhagen. Their plan was to have semi-annual fashion weeks intended to show their collections to retailers in Denmark and other European countries. They wanted to draw "a picture of how the Danish dressmaking- and ready-made clothing industry has adapted to international fashions that suit the consumers' tastes and needs"¹¹. It was more like a fashion industry that took shape during the 1950's with mass-produced clothes in standard sizes. During the second half of the

¹⁰ The Danish ladies' fashion council, *Dansk Damemoderåd*, was established by the association of Danish ready-made ladies' clothing manufacturers, *Danske Damekonfektionsfabrikanter Forening*, and the association of Danish dressmakers, *Danske Kjølefabrikanter*. Inspiration for *Dansk Damemoderåd* originated from the Danish men's fashion council, *Dansk Herremoderåd*, which was established in 1938 by a group of men's fashion professionals.

¹¹ *Textil* 1959, no. 13, p. 13, author's own translation

1950's, the Copenhagen and Jutland associations grew further apart, and Copenhagen made strong efforts to take over the trade fair.

Dansk Damemoderåd wanted to move the trade fair to Copenhagen and put consumers' tastes and needs at the centre of an industry that was adapted to international fashion. To some extent, this made them more strongly oriented towards the market and the new conditions that had facilitated new ways of design, manufacture, marketing and consumption. With time, international fashion gained a stronger influence on Danish fashion; however, it took quite a while before Danish fashion addressed an international audience.

The Marshall plan, the market and fashion

The fashion industry was not struggling with the same problems that it had encountered in the period immediately after World War II. From 1950 and onwards, the industry became capable of mass producing clothes in standard sizes. The industry developed into modern, market-oriented production plants. This development should be seen in context with the development of the modern Danish democracy.

After the war, the establishment of the welfare state and the public sector growth rate were the main items on the political agenda. The Danish welfare state that evolved during the 20th century and which was started after 1945 was based on the idea that the state is responsible for the welfare of its citizens (Christiansen 2003, 140). The concept of welfare epitomised the trust in progress, the belief that what was to come was better than that which had been. The modern society developed and saw the creation of workers' movements, democracy and liberal economic regulation, particularly in the post-war years (Hansen 2006, 23).

Study trips to other countries, in particular the United States, helped fuel these processes, and the post-war Marshall plan helped rationalise the industry and make it more effective and efficient. The fact that textile products could be manufactured, transported and sold more cheaply is an important part of the story, as is the development of standard sizes and trademarks. The emergence of synthetic fibre on the Danish market is another special chapter of the story. The post-war revolution of the industry coincided with the gradually increasing influence of both the domestic and the international market. Paris' era as a fashion monopoly was challenged as New York, London; later, Milan entered the scene as alternative fashion cities, and international markets started opening (Merlo and Polese 2006, p. 417).

The concepts of fashion and society were linked in the period after World War II, and the industry developed from the centralised system of the 1950's, in which a single style was created and disseminated, to the more complex and decentralised system of the 1960's. This started a new era in the 1960's that held a conscious design and designer strategy. The modern production industry had to become more attentive to consumers who had become active and selective and no longer bought clothes for their practical use. Clothes became a main component of the way consumers built their social identities, and Danish industry developed from class fashion into consumer fashion (Crane 2000, 134).

Denmark grew into a consumer society where the competition for consumer spending power to an increasing extent originated in other industries experiencing a similar development. Frequent changes in tastes and lifestyles became a natural part of life, assisted by the rapid changes in fashion, and ready-made clothing factories developed from small scale factories into modern, market-oriented production plants. This was where the trade fair offered another perspective for competing businesses. The fairs presented all their products – and often the same products – side by side, and this made marketing an important parameter for the businesses to distinguish themselves from the rest.

The trade fair on its way to Copenhagen

In 1964, the trade fairs, *Dansk Mode-Uge* (Danish fashion week presenting Danish ladies' ready-made clothes) and *Dansk Herremode Messe* (Danish men's wear fair presenting Danish men's ready-made clothes), were organised in Copenhagen as precursors to *Dansk Textil Messe* in Herning. The distinction between textile and fashion is no coincidence; rather it stresses both the local affiliation of the industry and its content. Copenhagen became the centre of *fashion* (fashion week), and Herning that of *textile* (Danish textile fair). Whereas the concept of textile covers knitwear industry and traditions, the concept of fashion indicates a changing business that is open to new ideas, in other words a business oriented towards the future.

From 1964, the trade fair put fashion on the Copenhagen agenda. This development coincided with a new industrial development that took place in the same period, led by designers that profiled themselves by creating designs for a new youth culture. Design and designers in production and marketing were now a fact of life. In the period from 1964 to 1970, it was only possible to organise the Herning trade fair in 1967 and finally in 1970; after that, the organisers had to give up. You have to put the net where the fish are, as they said.

Scandinavian Fashion Week from 1966 to 1983

In late 1966, *Dansk Textil Messe* was renamed Scandinavian Textile Fair; at the same time it was turned in to a knitwear fair directed towards all of Scandinavia. It no longer dealt with Danish textiles to Danish consumers, but rather with Scandinavian textiles to Scandinavian consumers. The days of the Herning fair were numbered. The Copenhagen fairs, on the other hand, adapted to the growing orientation towards international markets in 1966. *Dansk Mode-Uge* was renamed *Scandinavian Fashion Week* (ladies' ready-made clothing) and was now organised under the auspices of *Dansk Textil Union* (the Danish textile union).¹² Since 1947, the Herning fair had marketed the business and Herning as the industry capital. But now the *Dansk Textil Union* claimed that "Scandinavian Fashion Week positioned Copenhagen as a European fashion capital"¹³. The goal was to make Copenhagen a European fashion centre as opposed to Herning as the centre of Danish industry.

In the wake of Scandinavian Modern

Copenhagen had taken over the fair and thus the promotion of the industry, which was now profiled through fashion and design rather than knitwear and ready-made clothing. The fair became a venue primarily for "working fashion people, with all their senses open for new fabrics, new designs, new models ... that will lead to increased turnover and profit"¹⁴. The advertisements for the first Scandinavian Fashion Week fair held in Copenhagen had it that the clothes "put Scandinavian fashion at the top of the class, and no far-sighted buyer of ladies' wear would dare make any plans before having checked the Scandinavian Fashion Week"¹⁵.

In 1966, both the Scandinavian Textile Fair and the Scandinavian Fashion Week drew attention just from having English names. The fairs aimed at promoting the industry by means of a common Scandinavian denominator; this led the Scandinavian Fashion Week to use the term "Scandinavian Look" in its marketing efforts.¹⁶ In the late 1960's, the term *Scandinavian* was intended as a promotion tool for a united Scandinavia as well as a conscious marketing strategy. Modern Danish furniture had become known all over the world as a concept and a brand under the

¹² In 1984 the fairs were united under the name Future Fashions Scandinavia. In 1993, its name was changed to Copenhagen International Fashion Fair, and the trade association Danish textile and clothing (*Dansk Textil & Beklædning*) took over responsibility of organising the fair.

¹³ Textil 1966, no. 14, p. 4, author's own translation

¹⁴ Textil 1965, no. 8, p. 11, author's own translation

¹⁵ Textil 1966, no. 7, p. 11, author's own translation

¹⁶ Textil 1970, no. 4, p. 4

term Danish Design or Danish Modern, with its prime stretching from the late 1940's to around 1960 (Hansen 2006). By means of the fair, the industry profited from the connotations that were related to the Danish Design concept. Along the same lines, Scandinavian Design created a number of associations and a framework for the narrative through which the fair marketed the industry.

Not until 1966 did the fair turn into a semi-annual event organised around the two seasons of the fashion cycle. At the fair, the industry was promoted through concepts of fashion and design, which meant that the fair also became a forum for industry professionals, where they learnt about new trends, and where fashion was put into a cycle. The fair gradually developed into a centre and became increasingly sales oriented. The vision was to facilitate early and concentrated orders that would lead to rational and efficient production, which in turn would result in low prices and early season deliveries. This way the fair rationalised the sales aspect, and businesses were able to concentrate on selling rather than buying. In other words, the fair reduced transaction costs. Whereas the Herning fair closed down, the Bella Center in Copenhagen opened its doors to Scandinavian Fashion Week.

The fair became the forum for an increasingly intense dialogue between the designers and their clients, and this was stressed as the common denominator in how the designers described the value of the fashion fair. The response and feedback that designers received from customers and salespeople about the latest collection and sales patterns prior to the season became the foundation for their next collection.¹⁷

Hans Christian Andersen as a marketing asset

Design was established as a term and concept in the fashion industry in the course of the 1960's and 1970's, and the industry marketed itself in this period by means of the design concept. In the 1980's, a new narrative found its way to the fashion fair, which used the fairy tales of the Danish author Hans Christian Andersen to market the fashion industry. The 1983 poster showed the, in Danish terms, world-famous comedian Victor Borge as the emperor in the fairy tale "The Emperor's New Clothes". Shown under the canopy in his bare shirt, he avoided a scandal by going to the fashion fair, where he was dressed up in fashionable clothes. The fashion fair strategy was to maintain the image of Copenhagen as a centre for Scandinavian Fashion. 20,000 audio cassette tapes containing Victor Borge's reading of the fairy tale were distributed with the purpose of getting more people to come to Denmark; this was also a conscious strategy aimed at ensuring larger future

¹⁷ Textil 1984, no. 3, p. 32

exports. In this phase of fashion fair history, the fair was also marketed through other Hans Christian Andersen fairy tales. Posters showing paper cuttings of the fairy tales were accompanied by the slogan, “Simply a cut above all the others”¹⁸. The narratives about the Danish fairy tales were intended to ensure the industry’s success in the 1980’s where competition became fiercer; the Danish fashion fair was met with competition particularly from the Stockholm fashion fair.

Future Fashion Scandinavia 1984 to 1993

In 1984, the Copenhagen fairs were gathered under the name Future Fashion Scandinavia and presented under the heading, “Copenhagen – where fashion goes international”. In his characteristic signal colours, Per Arnoldi, a Danish artist, created a new logo and a poster aimed at international buyers. This coincided with the DK Trend initiative taken in the mid80’s by a trade organisation *Beklædningsindustriens Sammenslutning* (the clothing industry association). DK Trend was a joint Danish trend system intended to strengthen the industry companies, of which the manufacturers were the first target group. However, the trend proposals were also included in the fair catalogue, which meant that buyers were now able to make arrangements using DK Trend. At the same time, the press supported the trend and wrote about the new fashion immediately before the clothes arrived on the shop shelves. This led to more efficient and targeted manufacturing and sales. In 1984, the Danish periodical *Textil* reported that Danish fashion was at a par with the most up-to-date international trends, “It’s Quite True – and not just a pleasant daydream from the book of fairy-tale tellers. Copenhagen is again a Fashion capital – with a capital F”¹⁹.

Copenhagen International Fashion Fair 1993 to 2006

The Herning Fair was established in 1947 with 140 Jutland exhibitors, and the number of exhibitors decreased until the last fair in 1970, which had 115 exhibitors. When Copenhagen took over the fair, the number of visitors went up, and since the 1980’s the number of exhibitors increased gradually until 2006, where more than 1,000 exhibitors were represented at the fair.

In 1993 the fair was renamed again, when the trade association *Dansk Textil & Beklædning* (Federation of Danish Textile and Clothing) took over responsibility for organising it. Future Fashion Scandinavia became Copenhagen International Fashion Fair (CIFF), and it was no longer a fair with the sole purpose of marketing Scandinavian fashion. One of the objectives of the present-

¹⁸ *Textil* 1983, no. 17, p11

¹⁹ *Textil* 1984, no. 5, p. 10, author’s own translation

day Danish fashion week is to promote Copenhagen as a capital of fashion, but this time worldwide, which is also reflected in its name. In 2006, the alternative fair CPH Vision, positioned itself as a trend-setting event and exists together with Copenhagen International Fashion Fair. Others are Copenhagen Unfair, an underground fair launched last year that combines music, art and fashion, and Gallery, an exclusive fair for Scandinavian renowned designer brands. Since the late 1990's, the Danish fashion industry has been marketed via the fair by means of narratives that do not contain the same, unambiguous metaphors as before. The imagery has turned more avant-garde and uses a diversity of cultural signs with changing key signatures from one year to the next.

Summary

I have argued above that the fair can be regarded as an actor in a "fashion system" and thus part of a network. The fair can also be regarded as a venue that brings together the actors of the industry in the hub of a network, which in the inter-war period consisted of a group of manufacturers and hosiery knitters as well as *Jydske Tricotagefabrikantforening* in Herning. They organised and created the framework of the fair, thus getting the opportunity to promote the Jutland industry, which the fair marketed as an industrial centre focusing on product quality. In the early years, marketing efforts focused on legitimising the present in the past.

The problems started when the Herning industry had to focus more on the consumers. With the new meaning of fashion and the emergence of design in the course of the 1960's, the consumers were to an increasing extent setting the agenda. And the market had to follow suit. This had been predicted by the Copenhagen manufacturers, which was the reason why the fashion cycle and marketing activities gradually gained more and more importance and eventually, in the late 1960's, gained a central role. The fair attached special values both to the products, but also to the industry as such, in order to create more sales. In the latter half of the 1960's, the concepts of fashion and design acquired new meanings through the manner in which the fair was marketed. "The fashion system" and the fashion cycle became central to more commercial efforts, where the fair was still the meeting place for the network actors, which had now been supplemented by a new group of actors, namely the designers. In this period, the fair was a forum for the fashion intermediaries, facilitating a complex dialogue from manufacturer to consumer and back to the manufacturer. The fair was a commercial activity which over time gained an increasingly economical effect that contributed to reducing companies' transaction costs.

I have pointed out that the fair can be seen as a centre, as a promotion event for fashion and the industry, and as a meeting venue for industry professionals. Over the years, the fair has created a specific understanding of the industry. This leads me to deduce that the marketing of the fair reflected the geographical centralisation of the industry, the development of the industry towards a fashion industry, and its increasing internationalisation. Naming the fair an actor in a “fashion system” makes it obvious that Herning and Copenhagen competed for the position as a centre of the industry at the same time as the industry evolved from a textile and clothing industry into a fashion industry. Simultaneously, the fair itself developed from a textile fair into a fashion fair. I have also demonstrated that the fair initially addressed the domestic market and later the export market. The fashion fair produce, reproduce and legitimise fashion as a field. The same thing happened to the actors that operated within the framework of the fair. However, the fair also created, produced and transformed the existing image of the industry. My focus on the fair as an actor and a part of the organisation of a network leads me to point to the fair as part of a system, a ‘fashion system’.

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